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DKA IN NUMBERS...

25 years as an architecture practice in Bath and...
members of staff and growing!
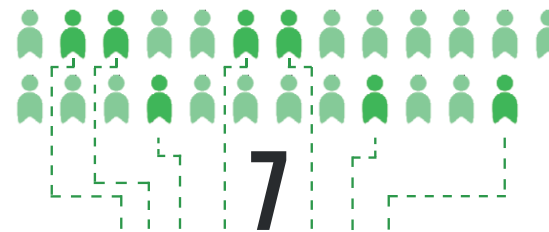
7 University of Bath alumni currently working at the practice, including two Directors

3 staff members mentoring University of Bath architecture students as part of RIBA Student Mentoring Scheme

14 DKA Award winners for the most inspiring computer-generated images from the Architecture end-of-year show
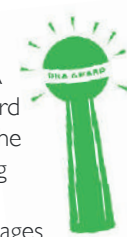
16 our current projects span 16 counties from Devon to Yorkshire
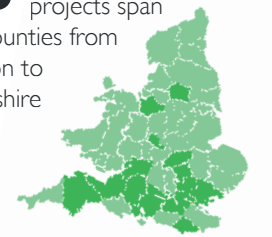
2020 target opening for the University of Bath IAAPS project; DKA are technical architect

FIND OUT MORE AT OUR *NEW* WEBSITE
WWW.DKA.CO.UK

People in the city
Venice Moments
Eleanor Hyde
2018

People in the city
A Child in Marrakech
Sophia Babiolakis
2018

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Venice Moments
Eleanor Hyde
2018

PaperspACE is opening its 6th year. I am delighted to introduce this issue exploring the idea of Union.

In the face of new economic and political changes, we choose to stay positive and explore the unions that can be created from divides, changes and migration. Some topics in this issue explore the theme not only in an architectural light, but also socially through actions such as living and eating.

In our own department, the union between Architecture and Engineering students results in great work. That collaboration makes the proposals stronger and helps both sides to develop skills they would never have expected to find in themselves. You can observe the outcomes and processes behind the projects representing this: from the 4th year's work on the **Basil Spence Project** to the the 1st year's **Reciprocal** sculpture.

This issue, we explored beyond the campus and beyond architecture. Two interviews are featuring the work of three students that have an equally strong passion for architecture and painting - **Portrait Artists**; and stunning photographs by a Bath Artists' Studios based former English Literature teacher **Jez Truelove**.

Unions of bodies are present in urbanism and the fabric of a city, especially in its layering either historical or physical. You can find out here how places like **New York**, **Ushguli**, **Bucharest** or geographically closer such as **London** are connected or divided.

Unions usually link two or more separate elements that are not necessarily different. They can be beneficial for some, while detrimental for the others. The unions can be also broken or chaotic. They can be between disciplines or between people.

The issue 11 explores those topics in a varied, sometimes surprising way. I hope you will enjoy it!

Oliwia Jackowska

Editor in Chief of PaperspACE

Inward

Union

FIRST YEAR:

RECIPROCAL

By Matthew Pembery

Starting at Bath, the first studio work was the joint project between Civil Engineers and Architects to design a structure which incorporated a cantilever around the theme of 'Reciprocal'. The cantilever also had to support a three kilogram weight. Our palette of materials included canvas, timber, OSB and rope, each of which could only have a limited number of cuts. The project was a great introduction to designing in groups, which overall was an enjoyable process. The designs of four different groups are shown below.
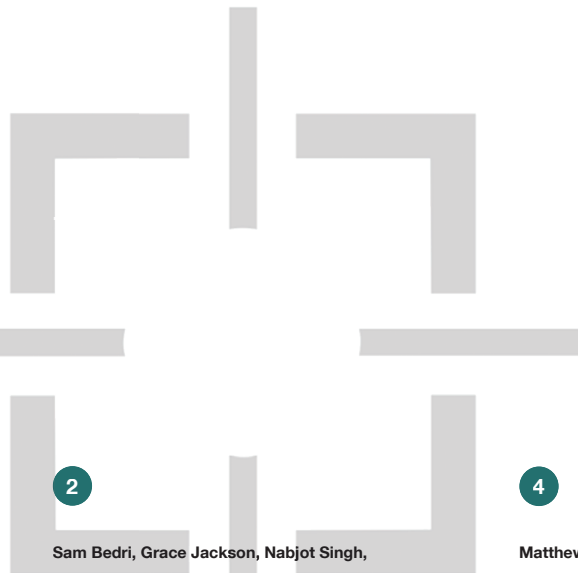
1

Polina Pashonina, Iris Gao, Nicole Johnson, Bruce Carpenter, Arthur Li, Nick Whiston

A reciprocal action or arrangement involves two people or groups of people who behave in the same way or agree to help each other and give each other advantages.

Our design philosophy focused around the idea of two mutual parts acting against each other, to balance out and counteract each other. To embody the theme of reciprocal, we felt that repeating units of the same or similar shapes, elegantly designed to work together, would lead to a strong design. We developed the design significantly through group discussions and tutorials. For the final design, we kept the reciprocal support strings and balsa struts as this was a very effective and elegant combination.

2

Sam Bedri, Grace Jackson, Nabjot Singh, Janek Trace Kleeberg, Yana Shaban

In our project, the theme of reciprocal is expressed through the modular nature of the assembly. Triangles are repeated in a variety of materials. As the form reduces in perceived mass as height increases, an organically shaped cantilever forms, supported by tensile forces in the rope used.

3

Ki Tae Kim, Emily Arnold, Alice Gaukroger, Josie Shirn, Akul Tawar

Our cantilever reflects reciprocal through the repetition of geometric shapes and patterns.

4

Matthew Pembery, Beth Lewis, Jordan Sweeny, Dan Vizard-Williams, Saorla Hanley, Maria Burnell-Romeo

Our design incorporates a large cantilever with reciprocating triangles repeated throughout, formed through a range of materials. All the elements work with each other to provide stability to the structure, with the rope element being especially important. We can take a lot from the process to incorporate into future group work situations and design projects. It was a really enjoyable and rewarding start to studying architecture at Bath.
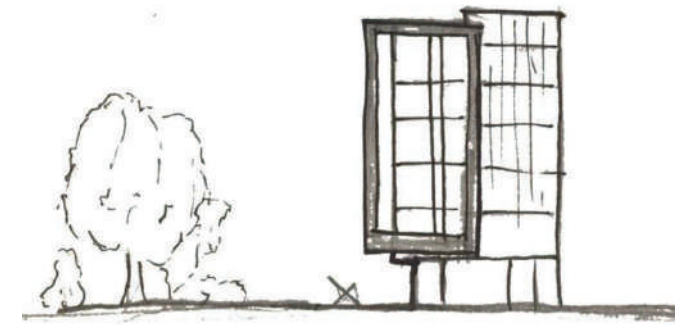
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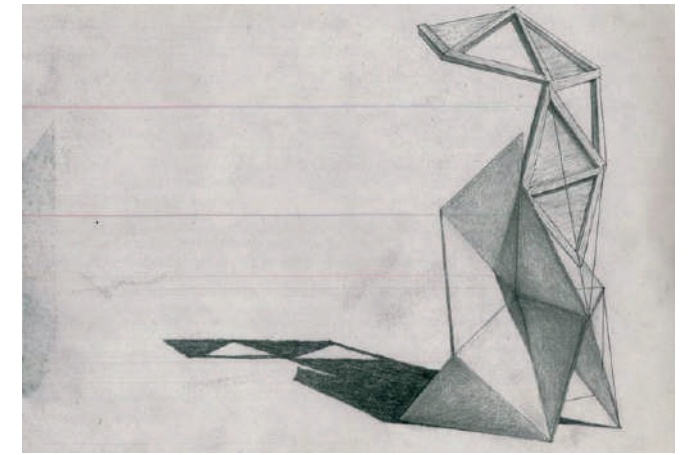
2

3

3

Third Year:

Venetian Fields
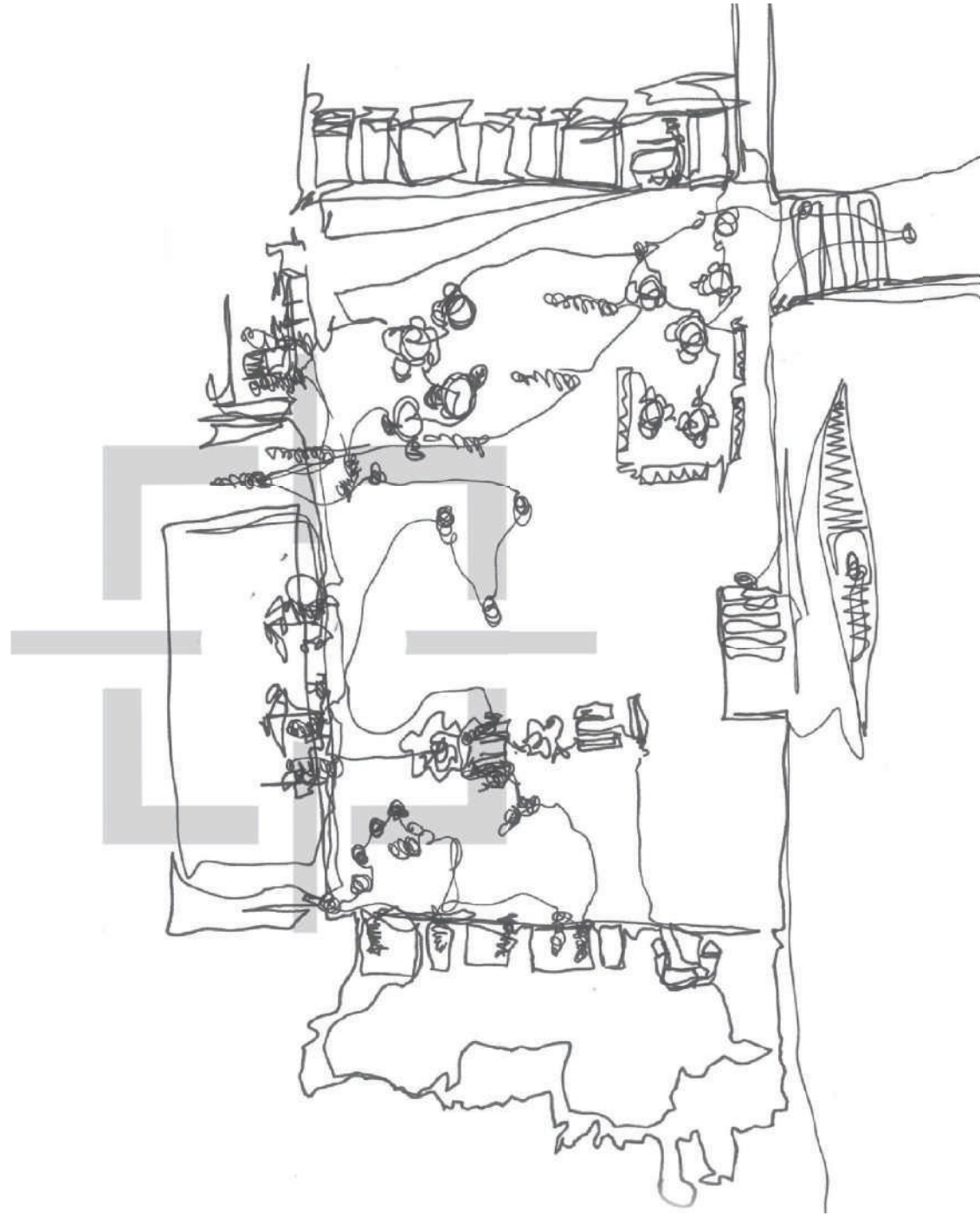
Still not quite safe on this bench, but oh well… curiosity killed the cat, as they like to say.

By Elena Oliinyk

"I will spend my entire day at my campo" - didn't happen unless your days start at 12 pm. A 1.8-kilometre walk becomes longer if you stop at each crossroad, or should I call them cross-rio, to take a photo. You will never find two identical bridges, bricks, walls, roof, gelaterias, anything really in Venice. **I have to stop.**

From tiny and dark *Calle del Spezier* to overexposed *Campo Santa Maria Nova*. The eyes need to readjust. Too many things happening at the same time, need to breathe. Red bench.

Putting earphones in is my not very unique survival mechanism. Usually takes a certain period of time to allow me to be somewhere alone with my thoughts with no distraction.

12: 37 pm. Earphones out. Two men get into a quarrel over a barking dog. Cannot miss out on details like this one. Still not quite safe on this bench, but oh well… curiosity killed the cat, as they like to say.

Fine liner repeats the movement of my eyes on the paper. Who knew that one small campo can have more than ten distinct windows? Most certainly they all will become one in a future SketchUp context model. Why are these closed? Oooh, that is a nice pattern.

Chimney. Weirdly majestic and surprising white. *Need to ask Daniel later if I am allowed to keep it.* Little steps, why are they there? So many details concentrated in one architectural element for such a bland building. Fire will do it good. Not keeping that 20 %.

Despite having only two and a half trees, the site has an unexpected range of greens. Fun fact for you, each individual wooden panel will decay in its specific way, changing the original paint with hues and dirt.

A little girl is looking behind my shoulder. Curiosity, interactions. She looks so intently, too scared to breathe out, not to interrupt the pen movement. Don't worry, darling, you can be as destructive as you want, it is part of the experience. Mum dragged her away. Oh, no one walked there today. Well done on being different.

Smells of *duo cappuccino* and alarmingly burning *calzone* in the microwave waltzing around the field. Don't you dare to call it a square. Sun comes out. Want lunch. Managed to burn my insides with that pasta. It wasn't even tasty. This is the tourists' side, learnt it the hard way.

Basic knowledge of Italian allows you to find out that the woman's cousin's brother is cheating on his missus with a lady from the bookstore. *How dare he.* After all these years.

The **noises**, the **smells** and the **wind** and the **sunshine**. Let me put these leaves in my sketchbook, I am officially a crazy plant lady at this point.

The church is too scary. Have to pay for the entrance. Not much of the FREESPACE, is it? Marble, blue marble, yellow marble, stairs. I am afraid to talk, which rarely happens. *"Let's go, this place disturbs me, feel too small and miserable."*

Cold marble steps are getting even cooler as the Sun is on it's way to California right now. Soft and smooth, enjoying sitting on it, despite potential hypothermia.

The restaurant didn't have *tiramisu*. What kind of restaurant in Italy does not serve *tiramisu*?? At the same time, the pasta was the tastiest yet. One cannot spend an evening without Aperol Spritz before/after/instead of dinner.

A lovely little creature in a pink coat. *"We gonna have 6 kids, you raise 3 your way and I will raise 3 of them mine. Let the competition decide." "I will create a tribe"*. My godchildren will be weird, that's for sure, all 6 of them. Girl fell down. Waiters lifted her up. She seems to be local, even if she is not, she is very welcomed. Everyone is. ●

#BATHBASIL18

Follow the progress of the Basil Spence Project

inward

paperspace
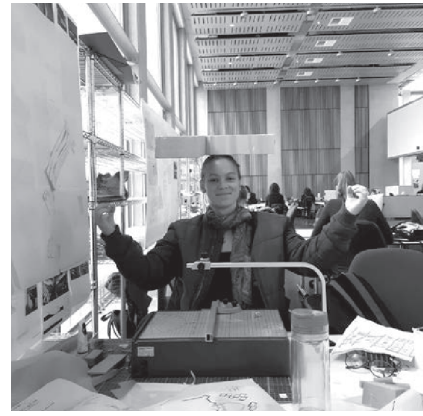
Group 9

Group 6

Group 6

Group 6

Group 5

Group 29

Group 1

Group 23

Group 23

SITE PLAN

By Oliwia Jackowska

This year's Basil Spence Project is heavily documented on Instagram. If you missed the final crit or want to know more about the progress of this extraordinary and slightly infamous competition, just follow one of the hashtags.

Taking into account the size of the site, difficult and abstract context, as well as the general expectations from the project, all groups produced competitive proposals taking really differing approaches.

Personally, I have learnt that work on a group project, especially Basil Spence is all about compromise. Not only between the team members or between architecture and engineering, but also about compromising ideas for the sake of the decisions we are making.

With my group, throughout the whole process we were going through different stages - uncertainty, excitement, moments of craziness and even more uncertainty.

However, we took the approach of testing solutions and pushing through the ideas by logic. If something was not working we would try to alter it in a way that it would. Bad interim crit is the best thing that can happen to you during this project. When we were put back in the beginning after our interim review, we started experimenting even more. Every time we were in the crossroads not sure where to go, we would test all the possible solutions and find the one that is well compromised.

It seems that even though it is the second longest project in the whole degree, the most important thing is to have a strong concept. Given the time that we have (which still did not seem enough for the complexity) the projects shoud be worked out in detail in terms of its functioning, construction, environmental solutions and concept. What matters a lot, however, is producing an interesting, innovative and 'cool' idea. It is pleasing, however, to observe Forth Years living up to those expectations every year.

ACE INFOGRAPHIC

COFFEE BREAK

Place of origin?
54% United Kingdom **25%** Europe **21%** International

Have you ever done an all nighter? **67%** Yes **33%** No

Zaha Hadid... **59%** Love **41%** Hate

Are you a... **41%** Early Bird **59%** Night Owl

Do you prefer... **32%** Mies van der Rohe **68%** Frank Lloyd Wright

Are you... **13%** Left Handed **87%** Right Handed

Do you prefer... **47%** Coffee **53%** Tea
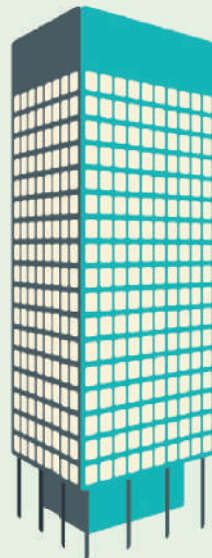
Do you use... **41%** Mac **59%** Windows

Should pineapple be on pizza? **41%** Yes **59%** No

Cambridge reject? **47%** Yes **53%** No

By Stefano Towli and Lesley Chung

*In this article we engage in the conversation with three different architecture students: **Adriana** (4th Year), **Guillaume** (3rd Year), and **Violante** (2nd Year) that are very passionate about art. Looking at their point of view, we explored the topic of union between architectural studies and their art.*

Interview: **Portrait Artists**

Violante Piccolomini's painting

By Francesca Beltrame and Anna Godefroy

What was the creative urge of studying architecture after having started with art?

G: I started my collages in high school in my mom's atelier just for fun. She is a painter and so I have always been in this field. She gave me the idea of making the collage of a figure sketch I made. I began only with the spare paper from her atelier. I really enjoyed it and people coming to visit the gallery were encouraging me to go in this direction. Being then 16 I felt that I had to create something for the world. I am very proud of my first artworks and didn't realise how powerful they were even if my skills weren't so refined at the time. This was the same creative urge that made me do architecture. I feel the need to create, and architecture represented a fascinating way of manifesting ideas into the physical world, because of the number of parameters to consider, therefore I felt the need to take on that challenge.

A: Art is something that has always been in my life since childhood. My whole family is very creative. My aunt paints a lot, my cousins are graphic designers and film directors. I remember we used to set up theatres and dance. There is a funny story about my first model: I was 9 and made my room in a shoe box for my grandmother's

house. My approach to the practice of painting became more consistent during the teenage years. I pursued Art at A levels and I really enjoyed it. The freedom we were given made it more personal. In year 13 I wrote an essay on a topic of Perspective. Then, I believe, I started visualizing space and focused on the people in it. Architecture is the way in which you look at things, but mainly it's about people and that is how I interpreted my topic. It was about the perception rather than 3 dimensional spaces.

V: I actually wanted to study architecture before I started painting and got into Arts because it was a requirement for attending Architecture at University. However, I have always been a creative child and enjoyed making things by hand. I was good at drawing and enjoyed watching art documentaries. The painting started during my Art course in High School. At first, we were exploring two dimensional representations and then I discovered oils and acrylics. I feel that I had decided studying architecture before even realizing it. *I grew up in Rome, it was like growing up in a museum, everything around me was incredibly stunning.* The atmosphere of the architecture inspired in me a sense of aesthetic proportions.
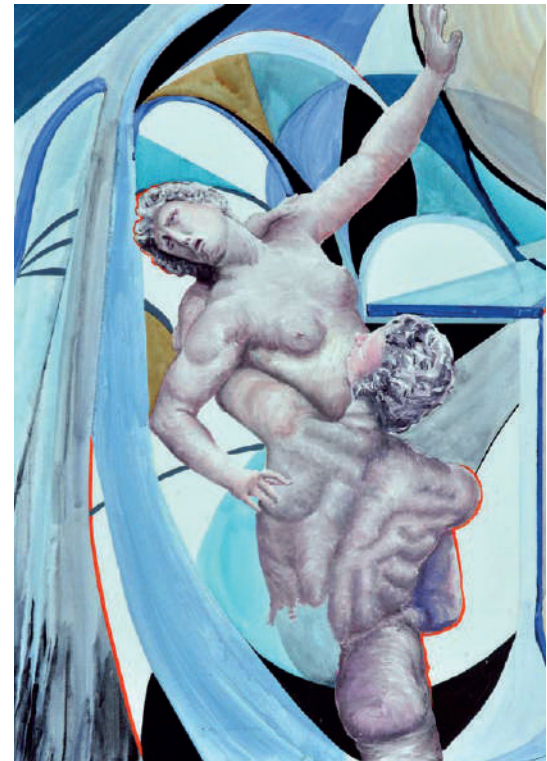
Violante Piccolomini's painting

How do you combine the two disciplines?

G: Art and architecture are the same for me. They are a way to express my creativity. Art, architecture, design, they are all energies and expressions of a vision. It doesn't matter what you want to create as long as you do it, as long as you are being different, innovative, inventive. It's about bringing something new and special for people and yourself. My goal is to create sensations and feelings. *On a more practical level, I guess my process of collage is a bit related to the design of a building. It's just a way to shape an idea with technical constraints and assemble pieces coherently.*

A: The link between drawing portraits and architecture is that it makes you feel things: art is about the impact on people. With art the idea is more important than the outcome, while architecture ought to stay coherent from intent to the outcome. This is what I have developed in Bath - architecture is not only creating a shelter but also a philosophy ruling the design of a building. *When I paint portraits, I put my emotions on to the canvas. I lean on it. All my paintings have an intent.* Peaceful and calmer paintings are more detailed and lighter. Others are the opposite - they express empathy towards people. While architecture is giving a space for the emotions of everyday, my art is in the instant, the emotions are happening in that moment.

V: Art and Architecture are both related in some ways, yet in many aspects they are independent and unrelated. A building usually needs to be functional, as it is built to fulfill practical and social criteria. I agree that Architecture should not be just an architect's individual invention. Art, however can be sometimes selfish, as it embodies the vision of the artist and does not need to be accessible to everyone who will experience it. I want to make Architecture that serves people. We need poetics, feeling and sensation to recreate unique atmospheres even behind just a piece of concrete. It seems to me that composition and detail in architecture is beautifully expressed in Carlos Scarpa's work. Similarly to his buildings, the perspective and composition in painting are composed of elements that connect and look for relationships with each other.

Materiality and technique: What's the importance of representation in both?

G: Materiality is key, and technique is just minor. What you need is to feel, and the way to achieve it is up to you. That's why I think that technique is mainly there to help translate materiality into emotion as powerfully or elegantly as possible. Materiality helps to create a

sense of space and feeling and this applies for both Art and Architecture. For my collages, the composition and the choice of materials were extremely important to give a sense of texture, of depth and to make a reality perceptible out of the abstract composition of papers.

A: Regarding the aesthetics of my work, I think the tectonics of a face and that of a building can be similar. Every face is beautiful, and I like to notice and appreciate the differences in them. The beauty is not at all the ideal that the society portrays nowadays. You can experiment with art, just like architecture - with materials, lights and colours. My stroke is very loose and free when I paint. Unconsciously, I relate art to architecture through elegance. In first year, my elevations were done with the aquarelles. They were quite sketchy, yet watercolour was perfect to express the corten steel. For my portraits, I mainly use oils, I draw the outline very faint first and then go over it. Without caring about the final outcome I free my expression.

V: I would love to experiment with the representation of my architecture projects. A "rougher" approach would express my emotions and conceptual ideas better. This conversation already inspired me to try more art techniques in my projects. There is a thin line between art work and architectural illustrations and I think what really differentiates them is the intent behind it. Although it seems that the representation in architecture has a lot of restrictions, showing a building in a very powerfully artistic way might be more appropriate when you strive for your building to move people visually.

What do you envision your future to be regards to art and architecture?

G: *I do not want to be an architect. I want to be a multi-disciplinary artist and designer, mixing many different forms of expressions, abstraction and function to find new ways and techniques to create.* I am inspired by the researches on new materials and new way of constructing. For example, materials that we use in fashion or furniture could be applied to buildings and vice versa. Each field can enrich the other and the key is to move forward on our techniques and knowledge of what we can do. I always intend to create a gut feeling, something primordial and it can be expressed in so many different ways.

A: I want to give something to people, something they can lean on, while having an impact on the world. A painting is an instant way of communicating, it can reach anywhere in the world through travel, while a building has a continuous impact on a place

and its people. I somehow enjoy the pressure in architectural education and the stimuli such as a brief, a structure and a client. In art you need to be free in your inspiration and I do want to keep exploring that freedom. I feel architecture is dualistic; on one side the creative, and on the other - the rational. I am happy to just embrace that rather than struggle my personality. I don't know precisely what I want to become, simply I am getting more and more excited about relating the two disciplines.

V: Painting is something I know that I enjoy even though I find it hard to balance with my studies. I don't want to rush it and I feel the need to finish what I start. For now, I am focused on architecture but if I could be able to combine a bit of both it would be amazing. I really see myself as an architect in the future, I know this is what I want to do and for now I think I should really try to put more of myself into my projects and see what happens! ⬤
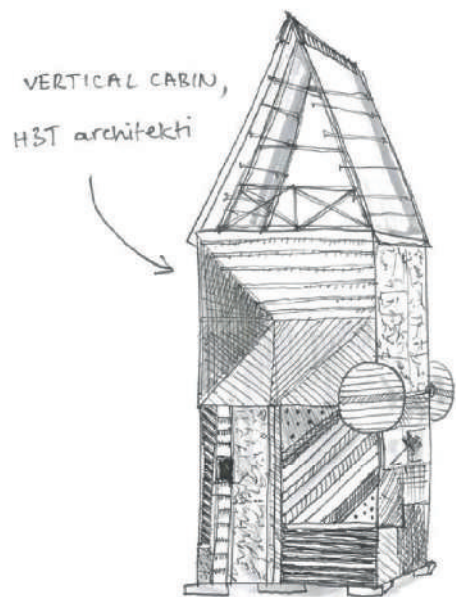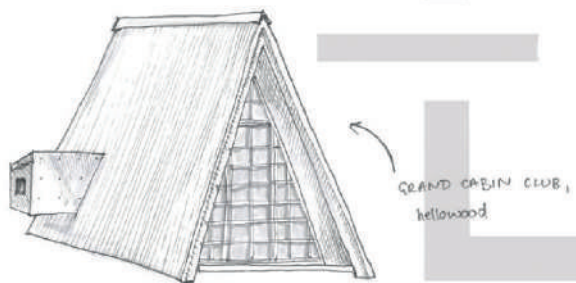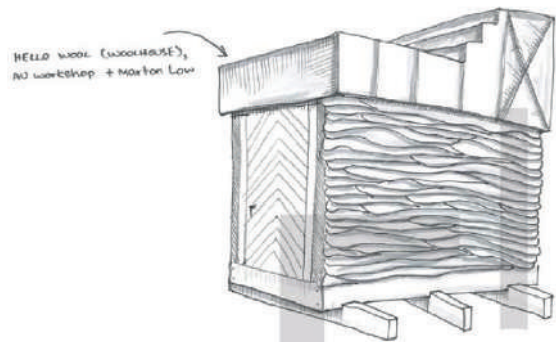

Guillaume Goursaud's *Janis*

Guillaume Goursaud's *Profile*

Adriana Coca's painting

Adriana Coca's painting

CABIN MODULES,
iR arquitectura

HelloWood 2018:

CABIN FEVER

HELLO WOOL (WOOLHOUSE),
NU workshop + Morton Low

GRAND CABIN CLUB,
hellowood

I AM A MONUMENT,
Josep Garriga + Officeshophouse

OUR SLEEPING CABINS

VERTICAL CABIN,
H3T architekti

TREEHOUSE,
frundgallina
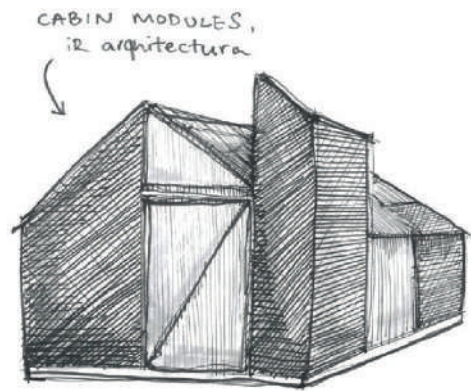
By Lesley Chung

Surrounded by a seemingly endless expanse of fields dotted with round hale bales is Csóromfölde, a two and a half hour coach journey from Budapest - and this is where I found myself in the second week of July, with nothing but a weeks worth of clothes, a sleeping bag and no idea what to expect for the next 10 days to come. Hellowood was one of those things for me that I just applied to on a whim, not really caring if I got onto it or not and just thinking that "it would be a really nice thing to do, plus I could put it on my CV/ portfolio". But looking back at it now, I realise that I was completely unable to foresee the incredible experience it would be.

Hellowood describes itself as an "International Summer School & Festival for Architecture" with an obvious focus on timber construction. To make each year different from the last, there is always an overarching theme - with this year's being **"Cabin Fever"**.

"One nowhere feels as lonely and lost as in the metropolitan crowd" - Georg Simmel, philosopher, 1950

So what is "cabin fever"?

Cabin Fever is described as the restlessness and irritability one feels following a long period of confinement and isolation within an indoor environment - a feeling that may also be felt in the urban environment of the metropolitan city. Hence, Hellwood aimed to provide a remedy for this, by encouraging interaction with nature; and they definitely delivered as I don't think we were ever 'indoors' throughout our time at the camp - that, and the fact that takes a LOT for me to become completely desensitised to wasps and earwigs.

Once we arrived and got over the inevitable mix of initial awkwardness and mingling during the first couple of days, the 150 or so of us fell into a routine for the next week:

7 am: Wake Up. Whether you wanted to or not, the morning sun probably forced you awake, and if not...the shouted megaphone greeting of "Good morning beautiful people" surely would.

7-10 am: Shower and Breakfast. Buffet style breakfast catering to all dietary requirements: good. Waking up as early as possible in the hopes of getting a hot shower: less good. But at least you knew you weren't alone, as the sight of your fellow campmates struggling to eat breakfast with their eyes open would very soon become very familiar.

10am -1pm: Working. Whole day spent in the scorching Hungarian summer sun, getting a fresh set of splinters and bruises on the daily? Nothing brings a group closer together than shared suffering towards a final goal.

1-2pm: Lunch. A.k.a salvation and a sample of some typical Hungarian foods and dishes - be prepared for cheese… a LOT of cheese, which for some reason seems to exclusively be of the cottage type.

2-7pm: More working on our sites. It was only until I had to construct a cabin within ten days from scratch did I realise the truth in "teamwork makes the dream work".

7-9pm: Dinner. Salvation 2.0 and the reason for not being able to fit into my clothes once I got back from Budapest…. Who knew manual labour could make you so hungry?

10pm-2pm: Maybe some live music, probably some drinking, and definitely a bonfire. Drinking? Optional. £1 a pint? Count me in.

On an allocated day each person would also have chores to do, ranging from cleaning the toilets, food prep or kitchen duties - and I had the pleasure to do all the morning washing up from the previous dinner. However, as bad as the mandatory chores were, they really did make the camp seem and function like a mini village.

Split into groups of seven, we were given the opportunity to build timber cabins under the guidance of architects from around the world who designed these proposals. The project that I took part in was titled "Project Vertical Cabin", lead by two members of H3T Architekti from Prague. The main concept of the design was to provide a mobile structure that could be transported when in a vertical position, due to large timber wheels fitted to the side of the structure. Personally, what made me fall in love with this project was how all of the external cladding comprised of reused scrap materials that had been left over by the hellowood projects from prior years - giving the cabin character, or as the leaders of my group would say: "spunk".

Reflecting on the camp and what I took away from it, something that particularly struck me was the paradoxical nature of the internet and connection. Every single day we have access to millions of people at the tips of our fingers, which means that we have never been as connected to each other as we are today. Yet, as soon as I disconnected from the internet (admittedly not something I would ever think to do by choice), I realised the other connections I was able to make in person were so much more personal and valuable - learning from huge range of people and getting a glimpse of how others live. Don't get me wrong, I will never be like one of those baby boomers that love to shake their fists and rant about "millenials and young people with their phones and their screens", but maybe sometimes it is a good thing to just disconnect in order to connect in a different way.
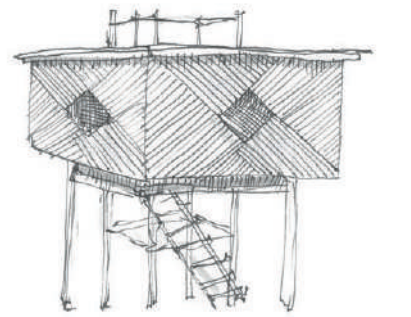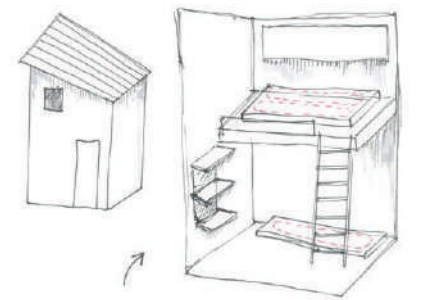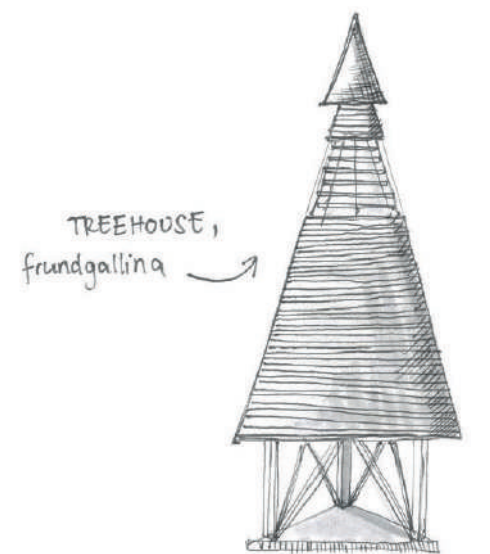
The **Placement** Struggle

Like most things we do, the process and result of placement hunting do not only depend on our ability, but also on luck.

By Constance Hui

Sometimes I still cannot believe how lucky I was to have found someone who wanted me after sending out ten applications in February in both years. The purpose of my sharing is not to tell you that it is a wise move to leave it to the last minute like I did, but that it is not the end of the world. More importantly, I hope to give you some ideas of what you might expect.

In second year I started working in a small practice in my home town, Hong Kong, in mid-March. Before that I did not have any work experience longer than a week and no words could describe how nervous I was, not knowing what to expect. What's worse, they knew as little about me as I knew them, as an interview did not take place. Would I not be skilled enough to complete any tasks I was given, or would I even be given anything important to do? To my surprise, to fit in was not difficult as no one in the office was over 40 years old, and among the 12 senior architects and assistants there were people from or had studied in the US, Spain, Taiwan, the UK, mainland China, Australia and locally. Everyone had different experiences and skills which would enrich projects in a unique way and, more importantly, everyone was still learning from each other.

At the start of our placement, when they are still getting used to having our assistance, it is normal that we are finishing tasks at a faster pace than they are giving you work. I have heard from other people that some directors would prefer us not to keep asking them for new tasks. In my case, these gaps were the time for me to refine my work and to explore new ways of doing it, and some eye contact would remind him that I was waiting for his call. Given the size of the firm, as well as getting to work with different combination of everyone in the office, I sometimes had tasks given directly by the boss, which made me undeniably stressed and cautious when I did them. However, the approval from him following plenty of trial and error was especially encouraging.

Asian offices are probably notorious for the ridiculous working hours, and this one was no exception, if not extreme. The most frustrating part is that all the effort we put into one design of a project might be changed entirely the next day, not to mention the competition entries which might be going nowhere. Nonetheless, the sense of fulfilment following a proposal submission after two weeks of continuous over-time, including the weekend, made everything worth it.

The long working hours and 6-month duration of my placement left me with only two precious weeks of 'summer holiday' which felt truly well-deserved. Some people preferred committing to shorter periods of placement and sparing more time for other kinds of exploration, while the others wanted to make use of the full semester to get as much work experience as possible, none of which is a better option than the other as it is entirely up to personal preference. Speaking from my own experience, the longer you have stayed with an office, the more easily they could give you work of a variety of nature and complexity. Projects and colleagues are also the best resource for picking up a new software – here I learnt how to use Rhino with V-ray and Adobe Illustrator, which was undoubtedly useful for my studies and career.

What was special to this particular experience with this small and young firm was that I had the honour to, throughout the 6 months, witness their growth in terms of the scale of projects they were commissioned to do and to grow with them at the same time. From office and shopping mall interior designs to supertall towers and multi-use developments, it had been an absolutely eye-opening and exciting experience. What's more, I felt that my work was valued. My colleagues were often in awe of 'Bath students' standard of work' and the Director was generous with his compliments, which was genuinely affirming because I barely had any confidence in my work at university seeing everyone else seemed to be so much more talented and skilful than me.

Ideally I would have learnt from the previous year and started my application earlier in third year, but that did not happen. Hoping to get a different experience, I applied to medium-sized to large offices this year, mainly in London. Somewhat hopeless after being rejected by several offices, I suddenly received a phone call from another office of one of those companies. An interview was scheduled in a week's time and I was given the names of my interviewers through email. There came an unexpected mixture of emotions – I saw chance and hope, but I also had to prepare a full portfolio for the first ever proper job interview in my life. An unconfident speaker I had always been, I was definitely over-worried, as the interview was almost entirely going through the images shown on my portfolio, rather than them testing my knowledge about their projects. I selected images which best represented each design and showcased varied skills, including design sketches, coloured drawings, strategy diagrams, perspectives and model photographs. What they were most interested in was how each product was made and my contribution in group projects. By honestly and modestly-confidently talking about my own work, I got the offer on the same day and work commenced the following week.

This practice hardly shared any similarity with the one I previously worked with. There was such an established system to deal with placement students, communication between project teams, files, timesheets, leave booking, finances and BIM. There was even a Revit training course for new employees like me. A larger and more systematic office inevitably meant the type of tasks for a Part 1 student was more or less set – I was asked to do report documents and drawing amendments quite often and relatively little design work compared with my placement with the small practice previously. Nevertheless, these tasks enabled me to learn about the evolution of a design in a different way and would be significantly useful in pursuing my career in the future. Observing how British people communicate professionally, such as by overhearing how my colleagues talked to client on the phone, was also something new to me and which I would benefit from subconsciously.

I was mainly based in the residential team, within which there were senior living, student living and private residential. Resourcing meetings happened rather often among the directors and I was jumping between teams depending on the urgency of work. This worked well with the hot-desking system in the office, as I had the chance to sit with different teams I was working with and get to know them more quickly. Even though the office housed more than 100 employees, everyone was friendly and made me

feel like a part of a huge family. There were seniors who had been there for decades but also Part 2 and 3 architectural assistants, all of whom were inspiring individuals to learn from. It was intriguing to chat with each of them and find out what kind of path they had taken to get to where they were, and it reminded me the importance to stay open-minded.

One of the greatest perks of working in this office is the regular working hours and 10 days of leave I was entitled to. This gave me the opportunity to maintain my work-life balance – to focus on work from 9 to 5 and take care of my health and housing issues at other times; to travel and explore a new city with friends at weekends (and catch up with my social life after a whole semester). Even at the office there were events like the Green Week involving international food tasting and smart car display and yoga sessions. The flexible and open running of the company allowed

for a strong sense of belonging and positive working environment for the employees, which made my experience even more enjoyable.

A 'best' working culture does not exist, but only the most suitable one for each of us, and you will only find out by trying. Even though the thin sandwich placement system gave us all a headache during the house hunting process (and I ended up paying full-year rents in both years), I have to admit it is definitely more beneficial than it is troublesome. I hope everyone sees the opportunity in it and makes the most out of the two shorter placements we are 'forced' to do as opposed to a full year-out. No matter how extraordinary or boring you think your experience is and will be, go to work and learn with a modest and grateful attitude and keep reflecting, and you will realise how much your brain has picked up when you enter the new semester.
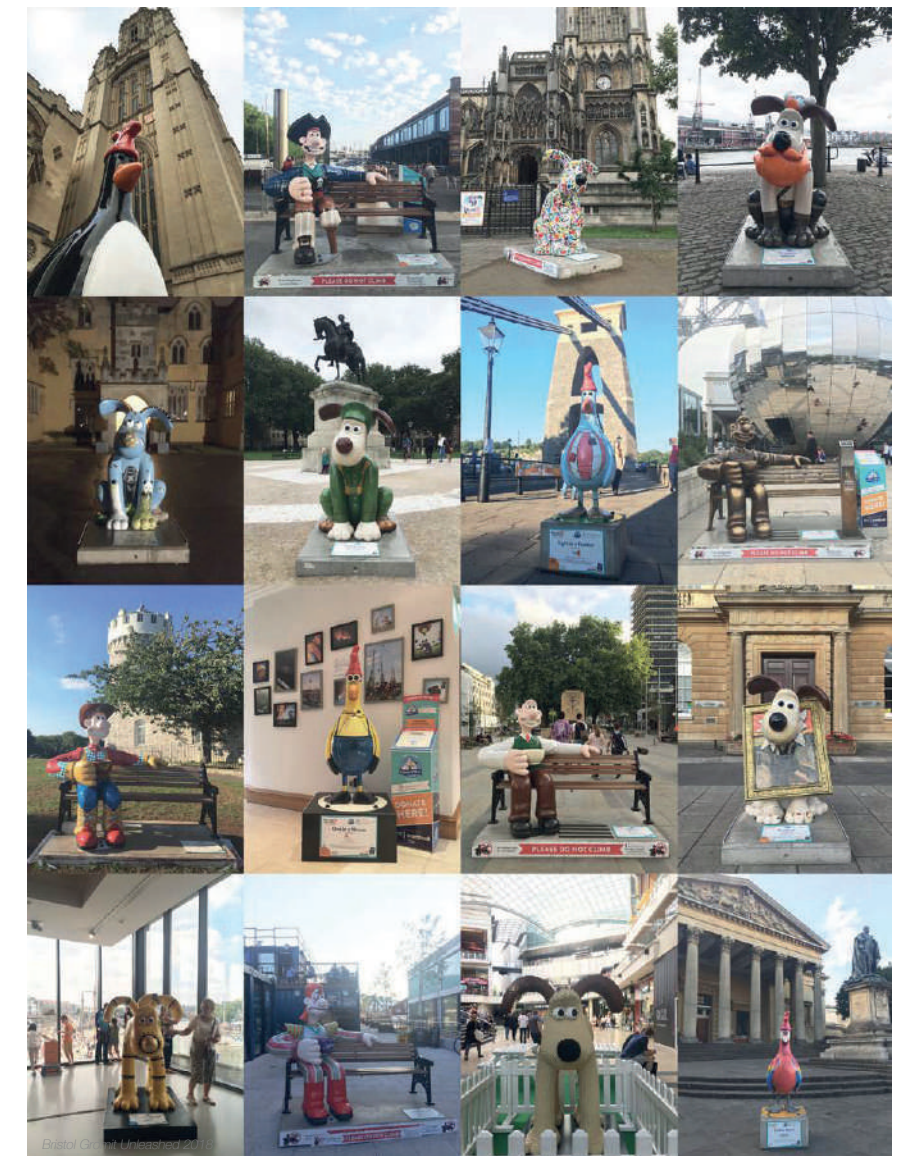
Bath Communities

By Eleanor Hyde

This collection of photographs explores a range of local communities within Bath. Often we think of 'community centres' as council buildings, education systems and outdated religious centres. These images show the reverse. Bath communities are living, thriving and defining the spaces around them. Some communities appear to be more the traditional, while others seem to be a modern approach to the idea of 'community.'

Bath

defines

its

spaces

Jez Truelove is a photographer who I had the opportunity to meet at the Bath Artists' Studios open day in September. His attention to detail and to the methodology of creating an image can be seen as architectural, and I was interested to hear more about his creative process and experiences.

Interview in Bath Artists Studios:
Jez Truelove

Nigella Damascena

inward

paperspace

By Lauren Dennis

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed for PaperspACE. Many students enjoy taking photos in their spare time, and having a good eye for images is important for studying architecture.

Would you be able to introduce your approach to photography?

Jez Truelove: I would be described as a fine art photographer. My subject matter can be very varied but usually I am just trying to capture and convey the beauty I find in the world, sometimes in unexpected places. In many ways the subject is irrelevant. Photography has provided me with my own space for creativity and self-expression for almost all of my adult life, always there, in the background, often only in my head when I was too busy to actually do anything photographic, but always there.

I am very deliberate in my way of working – I work slowly, often shooting and re-shooting images until I get the effect I want. I still use film for all of my work and I always shoot in monochrome. The craft element of producing a fine-art print is very important to me and the whole process of choosing the right camera and film, processing the film, developing a printing plan to suit the

image, toning and spotting the final print, choice and style of mount, choice of frame is very satisfying. I do have a digital camera and a reasonable level of knowledge about digital image capture and processing but it just doesn't do it for me. I have come to accept that I am primarily a darkroom printer who takes photographs to print and share. When I am shooting, I don't set out intending to say something through the images I choose to shoot. I am just looking for subjects that will make interesting prints. In practice, that means that I am usually looking for the right light, either beautiful light or unusual lighting effects which bring out the essence of the subject I am looking at.

You mentioned your background as an English teacher, how did you progress from this to an interest in photography?

JT: The two ran in parallel - my interest in photography began as a very deliberate decision, sparked by my wife's request that I find a hobby so that I did not become a total workaholic as a teacher. So photography, particularly being in the darkroom, was always a way of switching off from teaching. For many years I only shot maybe 8 rolls of film a year (in fact, I know I averaged 8 rolls of film a year because I keep records of every frame I shoot...) Along the way, I read books about techniques, went to a few photographic groups, enrolled for workshops but most of all I talked to and learned from as many old school film photographers and darkroom workers as I could find before their knowledge and experience was lost . Now that I am retired from teaching, I have more time to devote to photography and I have become a member of the Bath Artists' Studios to help me develop the artistic side of my work. The learning goes on!

When I spoke to you, I was surprised to hear that despite your background teaching English, you don't often try to develop metaphors in your photography, preferring to focus more on developing techniques. Would you be able to say more about this?

JT: This comes back to the fact that I am not seeking to say anything profound or even personal in my images, just that this is literally how I see the world. I shoot what I find and often take things back to my studio to study through photographing them. I have also realised that when I am working on a neg in the darkroom, I only think about the qualities of that image as a final print and what techniques I could employ to bring out those qualities – the composition, the crop, the size of print, the range of tones, the density of tones, the possibilities for burning areas or dodging areas

to reveal or disguise details, the choice of paper, the possibility of toning the final print, etc. I am only concerned with producing a satisfying, aesthetically pleasing final print which a viewer will enjoy looking at. For a long time I felt that this was a weakness, but now I just see it as part of my style – that is who I am as a photographer. For me, form has primacy over content. But I have taken inspiration from poets I became familiar with as an English teacher. Keats is very out of fashion these days but I still find a relevance in his admittedly optimistic, "Beauty is truth, truth beauty - that is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know". Similarly, the Greek philosophers developed the concept of 'haecceitas' or 'thisness'. Gerard Manley Hopkins sought to capture this in his poetry, for example, in The Windhover, in which he captures the essence of what we see when we catch a glimpse of a falcon, a "dapple-dawn-drawn, Falcon". As Ruth Padell, a contemporary poet, has said, "Poets notice things", and so do photographers.

What has been your favourite subject to photograph?

JT: Not an easy question because every successful image becomes a favourite until the next one eventually comes along! However, I think it would have to be shooting the elephants at the Okahuejo water hole in Etosha, Namibia. Elephants are amazing creatures and I was very lucky to be able to see them in their natural habitat – that may not be possible in the future. But most of all it was the light – it was late afternoon and a large herd had come in from the bush to drink at the waterhole and then enjoy a dustbath. I was shooting into the sun which was diffused by all of the dust they threw up. I had a basic SLR on a tripod, loaded with Ilford HP5 film and I just guessed at the exposures. I had no idea what the images would look like, the combination of air thick with dust and the bright light of sunset meant I couldn't see much through the viewfinder. So I just kept shooting until I had finished the roll. I managed to get four distinctive images from that one film – the Gods must have been on my side that day!

What themes are you enjoying focussing on most at the moment?

JT: I am currently working on a joint project with other artists from Bath Artists' Studios which will focus on Avebury. It is already fascinating to see how different artists respond in different ways to the same place and I'm curious to see how this subject and this way of working might influence my own practice. I am also keen to experiment with much larger prints which will involve developing new working methods to handle larger sheets of paper than standard trays and washing systems. I've heard about people applying

developer, etc, with mops to sheets hung vertically which should be interesting!

I saw some amazing images on your website from your visit to Kolmanskop, an abandoned diamond mining town in Namibian desert. What were your reasons for visiting, and what was it like there?

JT: I'd been to Namibia before and found the whole country breathtakingly beautiful but I didn't get to Kolmanskop because it is a long way off the beaten track. I had read about it in the guidebooks and seen a few pictures so when I had a second opportunity to visit, I knew we would have to organize our itinerary to include it. Although it is very remote and has few visitors, you do have to get a permit to visit so I had 4 hours in which to get some images. The day started badly with the approach road and the whole abandoned town covered by a ferocious sandstorm which made photography very difficult – the sand was in my eyes, my ears and stung any exposed skin. And, of course, I was using a film camera and needed to change films and lenses! All very stressful. However, as so often, the circumstances probably worked in my favour – I could only work inside buildings so that focused my work straight away and, as I realised later, the sandstorm effectively wrapped the whole area in a huge light tent thus diffusing the normally glaring sunshine. That meant I was able to cope with the exposure range inside without needing extra lights which, obviously, I didn't have with me. Nevertheless an exhausting but exhilarating four hours. Kolmanskop itself has a poignant beauty. I found it a very calm place, a refuge still from the ravages of the sandstorm outside. The buildings are still well preserved, even though they were abandoned to the desert in the 1950s, because there is no moisture to cause decay. So, it was easy to see the care which had gone into constructing the homes of the Europeans who lived there, even down to the art deco wallpaper which must have been imported from Europe. At the same time, it was still an example of one of the worst aspects of European colonialism in Africa – the exploitation of a local community and the theft of a valuable natural resource.

Do you prefer to travel for your images, or develop them in your studio?

JT: When I was teaching, travelling gave me my best opportunities for photography but now I prefer to work in the studio. I am enjoying working on a body of work, developing ideas, developing a style.

inward

paperspace

Buzzard

The theme of the next PaperspACE issue is Union. When I visited Bath Artists' Studios I was struck by the sense of community between the artists. How has having a studio there helped you develop your work?

JT: In so many ways. First of all, just to be accepted as a member of the community as a fellow artist is a major source of validation for my work. I have discovered that most artists are their own worst critics but this can be countered by opportunities to show work in well-curated exhibitions and all positive feedback is always gratefully received. At the same time, taking a studio is a very public statement that you are or aspire to be an artist and that is a

good motivation: it has certainly made me raise my game! And, of course, it is very valuable to observe other artists at work, including painters, sculptors, ceramicists. To witness their creative process, to see how trying and failing, experimenting, thinking outside of the box, are intrinsic parts of being creative, as well as just putting in the hours.

More of Jez's work can be found at www. jeztruelovephotography.co.uk, and he is happy to answer any questions by email at jtruelove@hotmail.com.

Jez's tips on taking and developing film photography on a budget:

1 Buy second hand to start with. There are lots of bargains about, not just on Ebay but also with reputable dealers.

2 Start with a basic 35mm camera that has fully manual controls for shutter speed, aperture, film speed and focusing.

3 Don't be put off by the challenge of processing film and printing. Consider buying a changing bag to enable you to load films into developing cans so that you can process film to the negative stage. It is then possible to scan your negs and work on them digitally or send the best to a processing lab for printing.

4 Or find a darkroom you can borrow or rent. Try http://www.localdarkroom.com/countries/index.php

Or send film / negs to one of the processing labs (Ilford Harman)

Or just devise a system for temporarily blacking out a bathroom or other small room and get an enlarger and get going!!

5 Concentrate on black and white, at least to begin with: it is much easier to develop and print than colour.

6 Don't worry about shooting images that you know have been "done" already – use them as a learning tool, but also try to stand back and see how you can develop or are developing your own signature style of image-making.

7 Shoot as much film as you can afford and have fun!
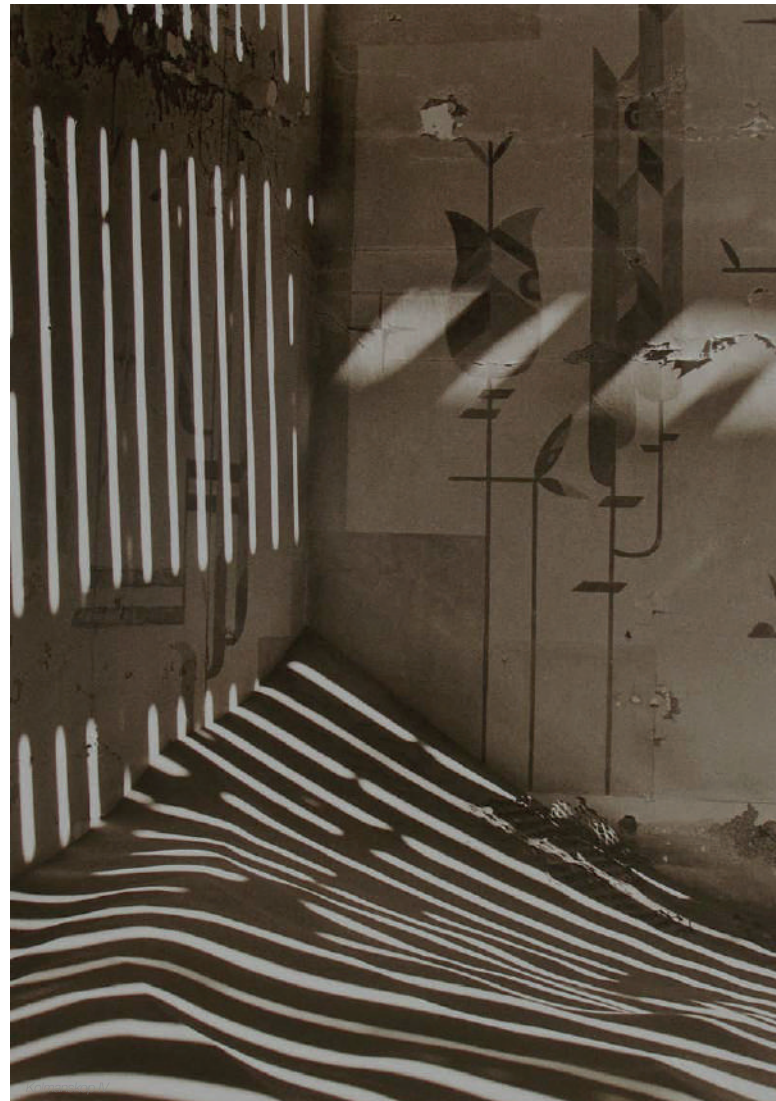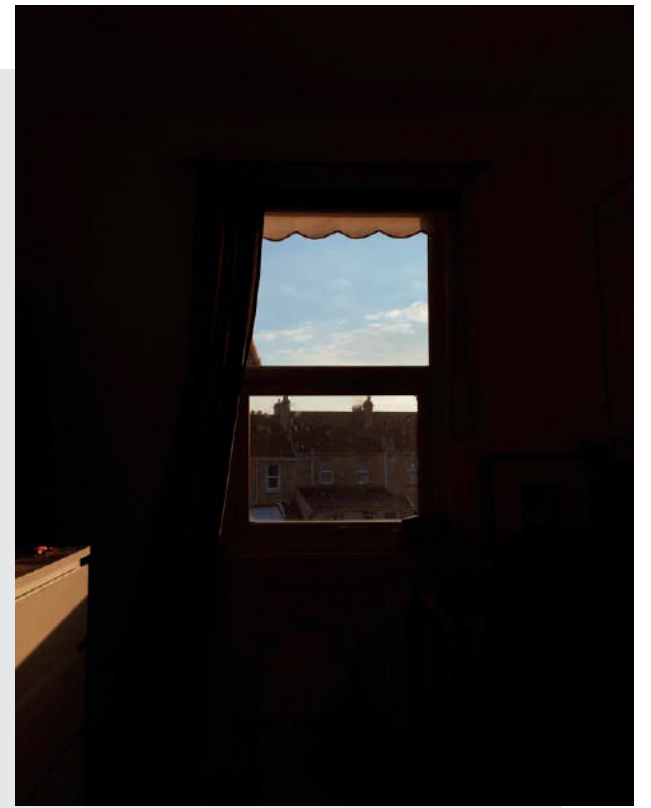
ROOM

2nd Year's Room
Amy Young
2018

The New York High Line as an example of the power that green spaces can have in modern cities to shape and strengthen a sense of community.

The New York High Line:
Twine of Greenery

By Sara Medas

A horizontal green line appears crisp and simple among many vertical grey and red ones, finding its way in between the high buildings of Manhattan. The High Line, as a symbol of the power in the landscape of modern urban environments, has become a feature of the Green Apple, a place where to find a small green bell slightly set apart from the frenetic and ever changing New York.

It was a sunny late September morning when I went for a stroll in this amazing garden, raised above the chaotic streets of the Manhattan urban grid. Time seems to stand still, in a transparent bubble where no other noise can be heard apart from the subtle wind moving leaves, and no other smell apart from that of colorful flowers. The garden, created on top of an abandoned old railway line, strangely feels at the same time part of the old and historical New York as well as of the more modern city.

The interchanging relationship established between the steel rails and the vegetation makes the link even stronger and acts as a manifesto of how landscape regeneration projects can become pivotal elements of the city fabric.

The old rails have been left untouched as a reminder of the historical memory of the city, and they suddenly appear in between flowers or they merge with seating areas. In the same way as someone is guided in New York by the long streets and avenues, laid on top of the urban grid, here in the High Line, the old rails guide the visitor in a journey through flowers and trees.

Another important aspect of the High Line is that it successfully merges with the urban city fabric always establishing connections with the surrounding buildings. View cones appear along the walk focusing the visitor's attention towards old building facades, modern buildings and scenes of urban street life.

This green pocket of the city can be overall considered as an example of how old abandoned and derelict areas of cities can be regenerated through the implementation of green spaces to serve and enrich the community. The High Line is in fact not only visited by tourists that consider it as an architectural attraction, but in my personal experience, it seems to have been a well integrated part of the daily life of New Yorkers. Families strolling with their kids on a Saturday morning, runners and people jogging there coming up and down the stairs, the youth meeting for coffee, people enjoying the late autumn sun or reading a newspaper. Community regeneration projects such as this one clearly show how green environment should be a key feature of big cities which sometimes lack places for the community to gather and foster a sense of belonging to the place.

Another aspect, not less important than the previous ones, is the implementation of biodiversity in places where it could at first seems almost impossible to achieve. The High Line, in this sense, has proved that a carefully integration of a landscape strategy, tailored to the place and the local climate as well as the city environment, can create a realm for species to live and reproduce.

In addition to this, great attention has been given to the details of the project which have been focused in the active re-use of the old railway lines, making them a vital part of the overall scheme. They infact appear and disapper in between the greenery or they are integrated in the floor and seating details so that the visitors are always aware of the history behind the park and its relationship to New York. Such a careful use of the existing railway line into the modern intervention has resulted in a design which belongs to the place.

In conclusion, a walk in the New York High Line will show how the greenery can be a synonymous of unification as well as integration. Modern city environments are in need of more green spaces to create places where the locals can meet and gather to strengthen their sense of community . The New York High Line has now become an integrated part of the modern city and it has at the same time provided the surroundings with a colorful public park.
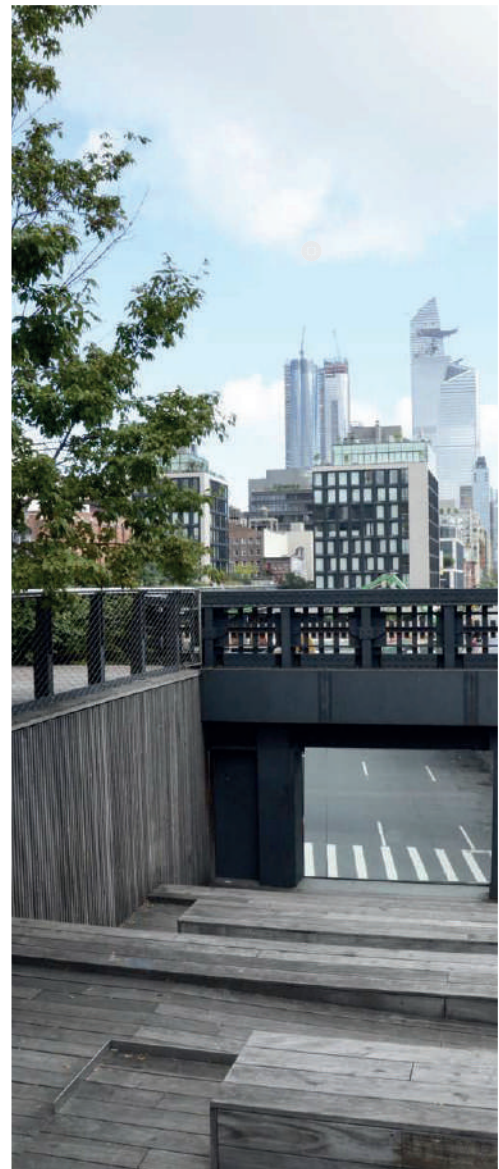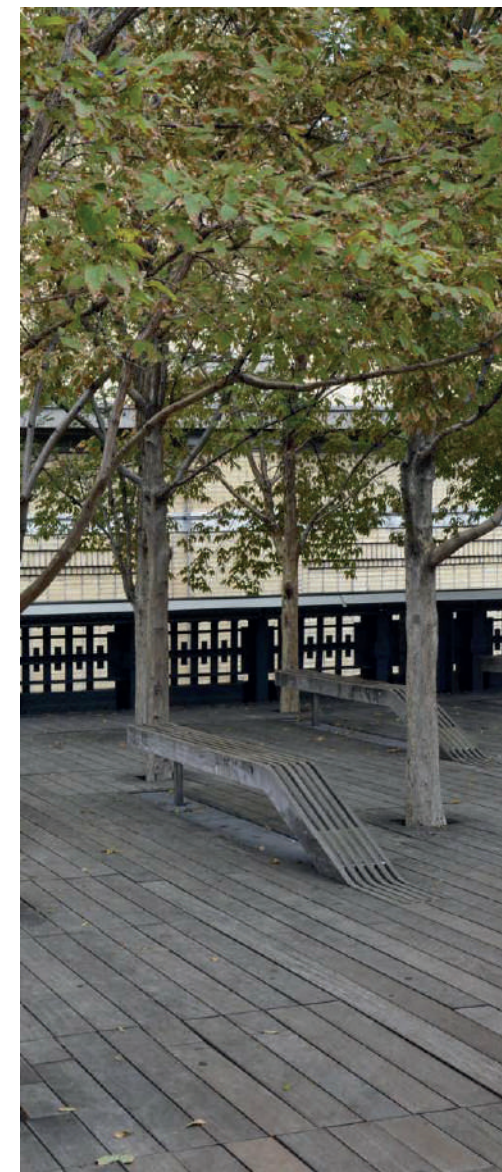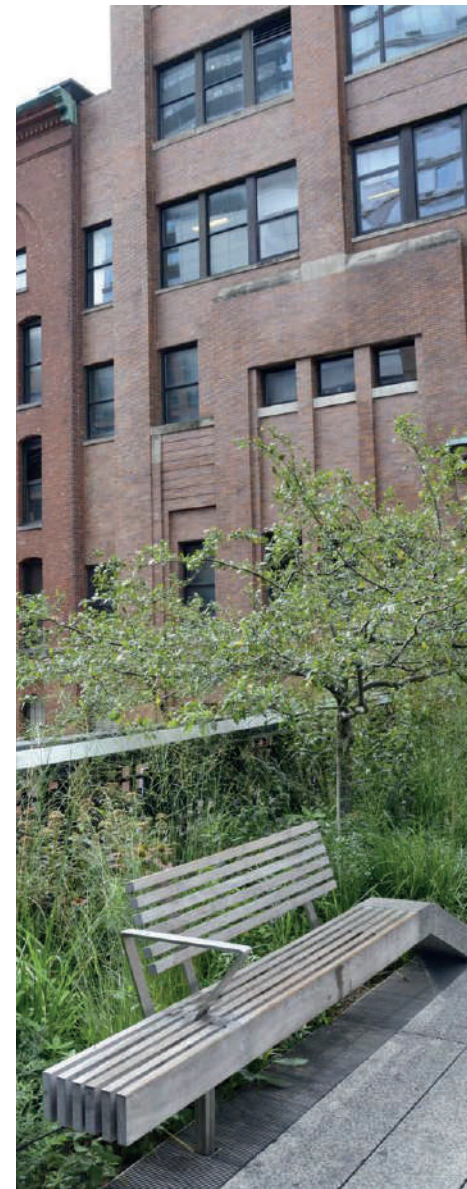
Ushguli:

Georgian Mountains Hydropower and Vernacular Architecture

By Matthew Pembery

Located at the foot of the Shkhara glacier at 2100m above sea level, Ushguli is the highest continually inhabited settlement in Europe. The village is situated in the Upper Svaneti region of the Georgian Caucasus, designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site for the area's medieval vernacular architecture and towering mountains. Church like houses, characterised by the 'koshkebi' towers are immediately recognisable in the Svaneti, designed for defence against avalanches, invaders, or neighbours waging notorious blood feuds. Koshkebi are an original solution to a unique problem and feature decreasing wall thickness with height, facilitating a taller and more stable structure. The Koshkebi are connected to Machubi (stone houses) which are home to families of up to 20 people. Livestock are kept on the ground floor of Machubi to provide warmth in the bitter winters for the families sleeping above them.

"People who build their own home tend to be very courageous. These people are curious about life. They're thinking about what it means to live in a house, rather than just buying a commodity and making it work." - Tom Kundig

For the Svan people building is about surviving and thriving together as a family and this translates directly into their architecture, as Kundig proposes. In Ushguli the house is a family's private space: "Svan culture suggests that households own their land from the fence round their house, all the way 'up to the sky'". Everything else is shared, promoting a strong community ethos.

Despite this the Svan people have never been fully unified with the people around them - no group of people ever have lived in perfect union, there is always some form of disagreement, compromise or conflict. Yet the Svans are unified with almost perfectly with their environment, as a result of the way of life that their landscape demands and their villages facilitate. For millennia they have relied upon their surroundings for food and shelter, developing a profound connection with the land. The mountains have mostly protected the Svans from invaders, disease and other threats as no one dare venture too far into the Caucasus. Soon, the Svans may need to return that favour.

The Svaneti region, its culture and natural landscapes have been incredibly well preserved to date, with tourism largely working with local cultures, with an absence of hotels and other tourist infrastructure. As a result, the Svaneti contains one of the world's most diverse cultures in one of its most dramatically beautiful landscapes. It is a largely untamed wilderness where bears and wolves roam freely and glaciers flow from some the highest peaks in Europe. But how long will this last?

Between 1986 and 2014, the Shkhara glacier, which decorates the 5,201m peak of the Shkhara mountain has shrunk by 200m. Climate change has arrived in the remote Svaneti, cruelly impacting upon its natural landscape and people who have had virtually no influence on global warming. Ironically, the Svans are set to be impacted even further as 29 hydropower projects are planned in the Svaneti area on the ancestral lands of the Svan people. 19 of these hydropower projects will be located in protected areas. They will flood villages and agricultural land, but provide important renewable energy for Georgia. It poses an important question: should the hydropower projects still go ahead? The answer is not straightforward.

Hydropower is a compromise as despite its benefits in providing a reliable source of renewable energy, it also has significant environmental, social and economic impacts. Dams prevent normal river migration cycles, have caused the displacement of more than 40 million people worldwide and major dams have a median cost overrun of 27% (average is 96% overrun).

Yet hydropower produces 17% of the world's total energy and 70% of renewable energy, with CO_2 emission reductions over fossil fuels and lower environmental impacts than almost all methods of fossil fuel extraction. The Enguri Dam in Georgia provides over 40% of the nations energy, providing a reliable indigenous energy source that is vital to the countries energy security in the politically unstable area where the country is situated.

The advantages of dams do not necessarily outweigh the disadvantages of dams and vice versa, as highlighted by World Commission for Dams (WDC). They suggest that no new dam projects should be approved without a comprehensive impact assessment which considers and consults all stakeholders. The Nenskra hydropower dam planned for the Upper Svaneti Valley does not do this effectively and whilst locals have been consulted and offered compensation, there is no debate on whether the project should or should not go ahead, only on the best way to mitigate the impacts of the dam. This follows a common theme worldwide where indigenous communities are offered monetary compensation for fossil fuel and infrastructure projects already approved to go ahead – for these people the money can never compensate the losses to their natural environment and culture.

So should the hydropower projects in the Upper Svaneti go ahead? Firstly, every project should be considered on a case-by-case basis with a detailed impact assessment report for each project. If other renewable technologies, located closer to the population centres of Kutaisi and Tblisi with less energy loss in transmission are possible, then these should surely take priority over a hydropower project. Wind and solar have many disadvantages, but

cause significantly fewer environmental and social impacts than hydropower and are economically comparable to hydropower, once mitigation of environmental impacts is considered (the Three Gorges Dam has environmental mitigation costs of $26bn dollars, 40% of the cost of building the dam). If other options are not viable, then serious consideration of constructing the dams should occur, with regular consultation with the Svan people.

Whatever solution is agreed there are lessons to be learnt from the culture and vernacular architecture of the Upper Svaneti and the dilemmas which the region faces.

Architecture and Civil Engineering are all about union, whether that is designing a space which shapes social interactions, or crafting bridges that

facilitate connection between new groups of people. Architecture and Civil Engineering also impact upon existing unions and in the Svaneti new developments threaten the union between the Svan people and their home. There is no easy solution in the Svaneti, though a potential resolve could involve reducing energy usage in cities, with more localised low carbon energy production in Kutaisi and Tblisi, resolving some of the need for dams, though this may not be possible.

We cannot create projects without any adverse impacts, but we can educate ourselves as far as possible on the social, cultural and environmental issues that we face globally and also locally in the projects we work on. We can use that knowledge to create the best solution for everyone.

Height comparison:

Height	Location
2100 m	Ushguli
1345 m	Ben Nevis
830 m	Burj Khalifa
310 m	The Shard
272 m	Enguri Dam
185 m	Claverton Down
0 m	Sea Level
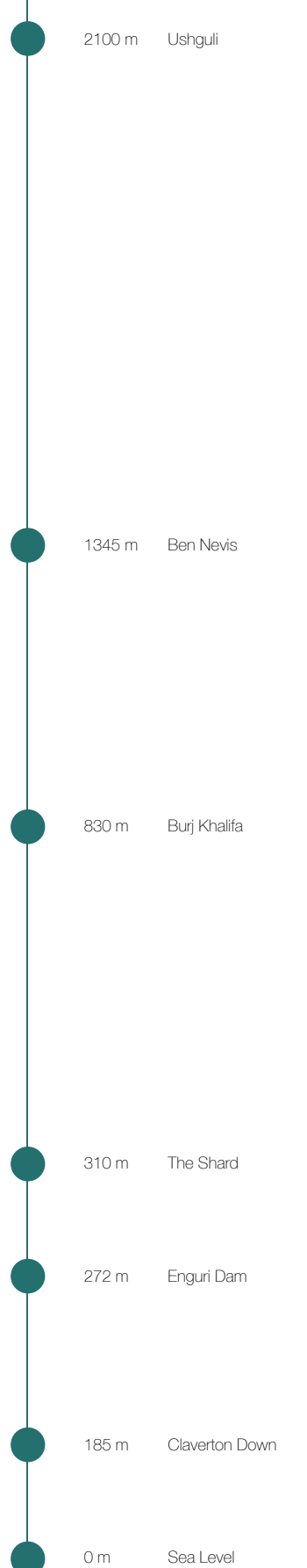
The questions that young architects should be asking themselves and the never ending conflict between generations.

A Union of Architects:
Team 10, Modernism and Capitalism

union

paperspace

By Oliwia Jackowska

As young yet-to-be architects, it is easy to become frustrated when confronted with the status-quo, like many new generations have been before us. Youthful and fierce we might feel that our beliefs are underrepresented in the stagnated industry or that the world is going in the wrong direction.

'Who will stand up to the giants of Modernism?' the young architects asked themselves in the early 1950s at another congress of CIAM (*Congrès international d'architecture moderne*). In their eyes, the Machine of Modernism dehumanized communities by reducing an individual to numbers and some normative dimensions. Therefore, the young architects banded under the name *'Team 10'*, with the core members being, amongst others, Peter and Alison Smithson, Giancarlo de Carlo, Jaap Bakema and Aldo van Eyck, to propose an architecture grounded in a sense of community identity. They believed that an architect isnot omnipotent - they encouraged gathering knowledge from the public.

CIAM was formed as a series of conferences founded in 1928 by a group of European architects with Le Corbusier as a leader. There architects would gather to discuss current issues in architecture and urbanism. When the conferences resumed after the War and new city planning ideas were adopted to rebuild Europe, the conflict was triggered.

The younger section of architects, including Alison and Peter Smithson, had an intention to rejuvenate CIAM and hence they started actively participating in the organization. The junior architects could not stay silent in the face of the congress's disregard for individual diversity and their uncritical support for the high-rise housing blocks. As opposed to what was intended, that action prompted a conflict between generations, which dominated the debates and later created a schism resulting in a formation of a new group – Team 10.

For them, the fine-grained context of a city that Modernism had lost perception of was a key aspect in the new proposal for urbanism. Instead of building outsized towers in parks, they praised the short, narrow streets of the working-class neighbourhood. Although Team 10 knew what they wanted to achieve through architecture, there was no apparent theory or school in the traditional sense. According to the introductory text of the Team 10 Primer, the individual members 'sought each other out, because each has found the help of the others necessary to the development and understanding of their own individual work'. Hence, it could be argued that the meetings were the only product of Team 10.

The ideas, however, can meet on three major principles: **Association, Identity and Flexibility**. The principle of Association proposes an urban planning that considers how people group within four growing categories: House, Street, District and City. As opposed to functionalism, The House is understood as a home, not just fulfilling the minimum needs for existence. Also opposing the abstract and anonymous urban environments, the young architects emphasized the importance of recognizing the space as your own, with room for individual expression of identity. The third principle referred to the idea that cities do not only grow, but also change – therefore urban structures should be designed in a way that allows a later architect to continue the change from where it was left.

The critics of Team 10 argue that in practice, the principles were not so clear, and the most provocative proposals seemed to hint on inner doubt and landed not so far from what they were escaping from – Modernism. As such a chaotically created organisation, Team 10 never managed to fully work together and to interpret their statements in a similar manner. Hence two main movements emerged from this union – **New Brutalism** (represented by the English members) and **Structuralism** (by the Dutch members).

In 1958 Peter and Alison Smithson submitted an entry in the competition for East Berlin which interprets the city's historic core as a base for superimposed pattern of elevated streets and walkways broken down by modern towers. Although the proposal is a denial and a critique of Le Corbusier's planning that imposed his vision of a motorized city, the Smithson model still undermines the romantic character of the old city.

According to a show at the Yale School of Architecture, *"Team 10: A Utopia of the Present"*, the most successful work of Team 10 was conceived to be on a more manageable scale. Hence, with a different approach to the principles, Aldo van Eyck completed an extraordinary municipal orphanage in Amsterdam. Following the thought of Structuralism that aims to express individual lives bound into a collective whole, the complex becomes a series of interlocking domed pavilions arranged around open-air courts.

Another working trio, Georges Candilis, Alexis Josic and Shadrach Woods, proposed a structure of a flexible network of rooms in war-ravaged Römerberg (an area in Frankfurt), where patios and streets could continually be readapted by the city's inhabitants. The proposal was conceived as softening the difference in scale between building and city, foreseeing the current obsession with fluid landscapes that dissolve the boundaries between buildings and street. Later, the same group of architects proposed the same model in their design for Freie Universität in Berlin. However, the introverted academic reality is not so similar to a fluid urban scheme in its organisation.

In reality Team 10 never achieved their goals, and maybe their results never matched the rhetoric. Despite the young architect's declarations of rooting their work in everyday realities, only few escaped the shadow of Modernism and their earnest methodical approach was verified by the reality. Some had retreated into sci-fi rather than architecture, proposing glass-and-steel structures that extended across entire continents.

Although we cannot really talk about failure, Team 10's projects never lived up to the principles and expectations. They named their initiative *"Utopia of the Present"* and were aiming to address existing human issues. **Despite all the criticism the formation of Team 10 was an undeniable evidence of their general concern about the world of architecture as a whole.** In the face of capitalism, as well as huge corporations and organisations monopolising the growing market, architects become commercial and tend to forget about the bigger picture.

In his recently published book "Capital in the Twenty-First Century", Thomas Piketty states that 'if the 20th century really was an anomaly, then perhaps so were its ideals: an entire period characterised by an enlightened belief in progress, social emancipation and civil rights can be retroactively discarded'. Starting from the Modernism to Brutalism and Structuralism, the past century taught us the idealistic thinking, but equally the 21st century does not mark the lack of utopias. **Nowadays, judgement of our work depends on the market – architecture is worth whatever others are willing to pay for it, and accordingly the design process happens in reverse: computer renderings precede technical drawings.**

It seems to be an outdated idea that the architect's social mission is to establish a decent standard of living for all. Architecture quickly becomes a tool of capital, contradicting its original purpose and ideology. Despite increasing rates of poverty and homelessness as well as a growing housing crisis in most major European cities, large social housing estates of the 20th century, such as the Robin Hood Gardens or Glasgow's Red Road flats, are being demolished, and even more complexes of private unaffordable estates are being built instead.

As a new generation of architects, we ought to ask ourselves: **'Who will stand up to the giants of Capitalism?'**. Where is this contemporary political model of architecture going and where do we see ourselves in it? Seventy years after Peter and Alison Smithson's conflict with the older generation triggered a change in the modern architecture, we might witness or participate in the repetition of the history.

Disturbed Union.

By Maddi Gomez-Iradi
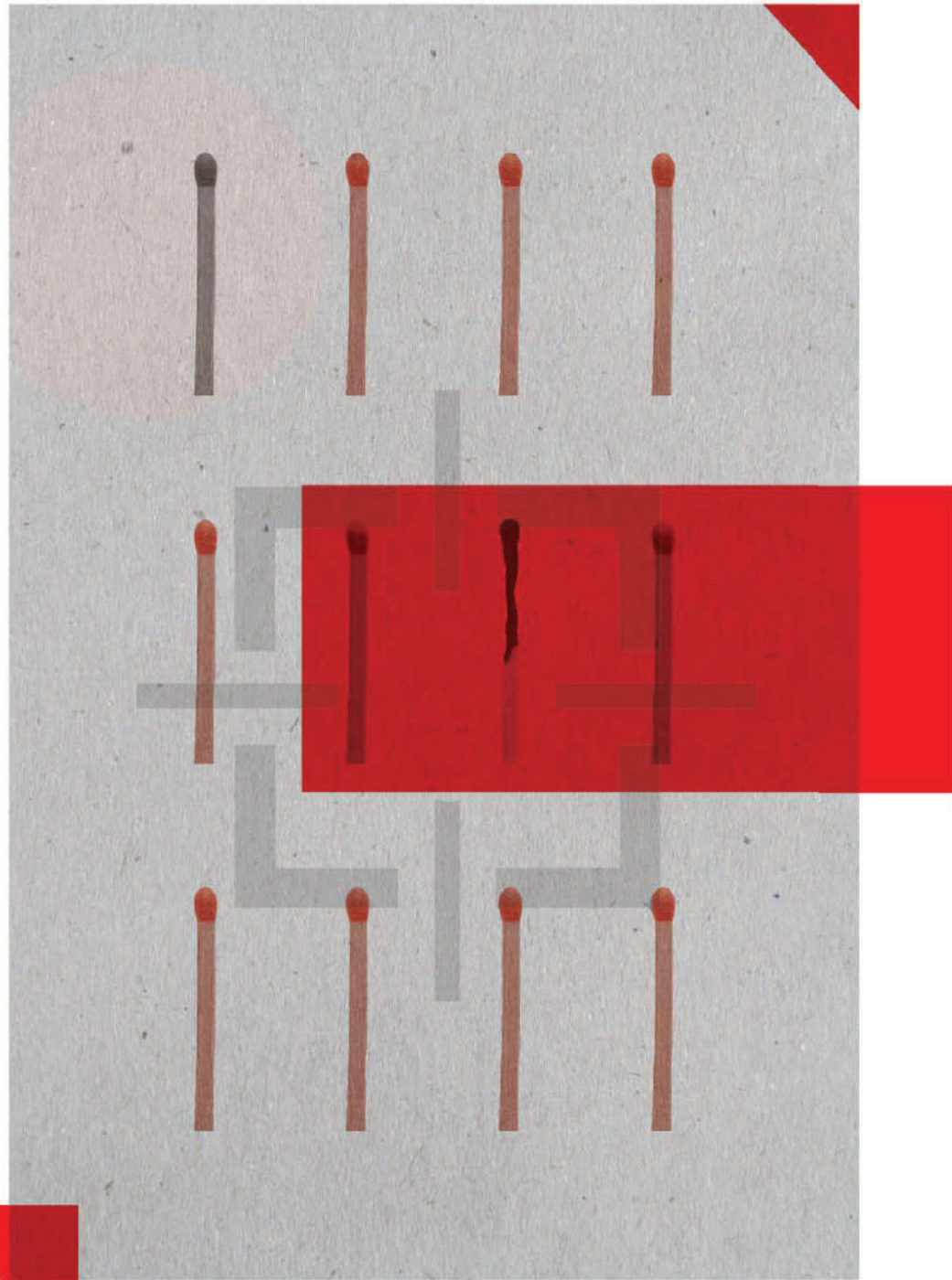
A superficially coherent front is intruded upon by a superimposed layer of disorder. A cruder depiction of unity is revealed from within the contained façade.

Architecture and Autism

By Juliette Moutin

From ramps and lifts to handrails and braille signage, architecture has learned how to accommodate its disabled users. While nowhere near perfect, the accessibility of architecture for people with physical disabilities has been improved in modern buildings and infrastructure. But how does architecture approach mental disabilities? These disabilities are often overlooked and misunderstood. The ignorance surrounding this subject is surprising, considering that one in four people will be affected by mental or neurological disorders throughout their lives. Architects, to create spaces in which all individuals, independent of their physical or mental state can enjoy, we cannot remain ignorant to such a broad pool of users whose experience of the world varies incredibly from what is considered the norm.

In recent years, with growing awareness of mental health and mental disabilities, architecture has started to tackle the inclusion of mental disabilities. Spatial experience stimulates one's senses, hence it is vital that architecture takes into account the perception of users, particularly that of users with atypical sensory perception. This is the case of individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

ASD are a category of developmental disabilities affecting cognitive, sensory, and social capacities. Autistic individuals are alternatingly hypo- or hypersensitive, affected in different ways by light, colours, sound, textures, and physical contact. Autism could be described as a synesthetic disability much like architecture is a synesthetic experience. One in one hundred and sixty children have an ASD and in response to this growing number, architects and specialists have united to design autism-friendly learning environments and residential-educational centres as well as residential facilities suitable for adults with ASD. These facilities, while better than nothing, only respond to a fraction of the needs of autistic users. How can we accept that the built environment outside of these sparse facilities is unadapted and sometimes hostile toward autistic individuals?

Like all other users, autistic people desire accessible public spaces and more importantly comfortable family homes. The latter is crucial as autistic individuals often experience difficulties forming relationships with their family members, who in turn struggle to care for their autistic kin. The overwhelming presence of stimuli in an environment causes sensory distress to autists which can lead to avoidance and even meltdowns. These meltdowns manifest themselves verbally and physically, jeopardising the safety of both the autistic person themselves and those around them. Architecture can help minimise into its design: excluding sharp corners and edges, using durable materials, and installing safety locks and systems. But a more thorough solution is to reduce stimuli inducing

negative autism associated behaviour, which improves the quality of life for both the autistic individual and their family members and caregivers. Architecture determines these stimuli therefore directly influencing the well-being of autistic individuals and their entourage.

What features does an autism friendly building have? As autism is a spectrum it is challenging to generalise but research involving family members of autistic individuals, mental health professionals, as well as architects has outlined key aspects which can be considered autism-friendly.

In response to the need to control and diminish sensory stimulation, it is suggested to include sensory rooms in homes as well as in public spaces. Sensory rooms are quiet and comforting spaces providing an easy get-away for autistic individuals should they go into sensory overload or require some time alone. external and internal, can be limited by means of acoustic insulation or even sound-proofing. This has the added advantage of covering the noise those with autism produce themselves, which often disturbs siblings and nearby-residents, causing tensions within families and between families with autistic individuals and their neighbours. In terms of visual stimuli it is recommended to ensure access to natural daylight and use soft finishes and light colours so as to not create a harsh visual environment to the sensitive eyes of people with ASD.

Beyond taking into consideration the impaired sensory processing of those within the autistic spectrum, architecture can also accommodate their need to avoid social situations without alienating them from their family and peers. An effective way of doing so is to provide larger spaces allowing a gradation in social interaction. That is to say spacious rooms in which the autistic individual can be present at the same time as family members and peers without being the centre of attention or participating in the same activity as other occupants. Wider spaces also allow the autistic individual to anticipate their environment, to preview it and what is happening inside of it, before entering it, helping them feel more in control and cope better with an otherwise unfamiliar or unpredictable space.

The impact architecture can have, both negative and positive, on the lives of people with autism and their family members and peers is non-negligeable. Autism and other mental illnesses are so common that accommodating spaces for them should be considered a banality. Work and research on this topic is still ongoing and the venture into possible co-designing with affected individuals is quite promising. While architecture cannot always be tailored to suit each user's needs, architecture can strive to understand the range of these needs in order to be as inclusive and safe as possible.

Identity is the social glue that binds us together, whether as colleagues, families or nations. They are the stories we tell ourselves about who we are, where we come from and where we are going.

Faces of **identity**

By Sebastian Stripp

From an early age I knew who I was. The son of a bank teller and a naval officer. I also had a vague idea of who I was going to become – an older son of a bank teller and a naval officer. However, at the age of 15, life threw us a curve ball. We packed our bags and left the country.

Most of our identity is based on our context, our heritage, communities and beliefs whether they be religious, scientific or otherwise. From this we craft the story of ourselves. We do not view ourselves as a collection of coincidences, experiences or facts, but rather as a continuous storyline with a past, present and future. Our future story is created in the present by taking bits from the past and catapulting them in front of us. This can give us great comfort; we know who we are and where we are going. Unfortunately, this roadmap is also our greatest limitation, because it is created from a limited place; our past.

I spent the first fifteen years of my life in the same neighbourhood, on the same street, in the same house. The first shock came when my immediate neighbour and playmate moved at the age of 10. We later moved

abroad. This afforded me the opportunity to mould and shape who I was to become.

The current rise in nationalism as seen through Brexit, Donald Trump and the resurging fear of foreigners is to some extent due to a loss of identity. In Denmark the political debate is coloured by discussions of whether you are truly Danish if you do not eat pork, perhaps because of your religion.

I often think of an immigrant Muslim girl with headscarf, two native languages and parents, who only speak one of them. This girl, I say to myself, she could be more Danish than I am, more Danish than I will ever be.

Anyone living in the U.K. may remember the 'Scottish Referendum'. The one that the British fought against, only to walk down the same path. These decisions are not made on rational or economical grounds but are rooted in what we believe ourselves to be and what we believe our futures are becoming. Most systems are too complex to fully comprehend. We try to tease out the answer through statistics, natural experiments, lab experiments, thought experiments or evidence; often anecdotal. In the end these 'facts' or 'truths' all become simplified stories

of what we believe. Once we have settled on a certain belief, we will bend the world into shape, so we can view it through our own lens.

As the turmoil in the U.K. illustrates, our identities are highly driven by the context in which they are viewed. This is very apparent when travelling far abroad. If we meet somebody from our country, we immediately feel more connected with them. This is due to the mental groupings we constantly make in order to assess the people around us.

Even in our Danish group in London, we are quick to subdivide ourselves based on which Danish island we are from.

The same happens at cocktail parties, in fact this is how most conversations start; a common point of reference – an identity that brings us closer together. This sense of connection makes us feel safe and at ease with the people around us and, therefore, we subconsciously chase such commonalities, however trivial. By doing so we are dividing ourselves into subsets of us and them. This is an idea that is gaining traction in various fields, though it is nothing new. In fact, many argue

from an anthropological point of view that humans have always acted like this in our social groupings. This tribalism is completely natural, in fact it is part of the brains lazy or efficient way of dealing with the outside world by dividing it up into friend and foe. Thereby, less energy is expensed as the stereotypes associated with each group, tribe or identity provide a framework for potential social interactions.

I have an idea of what it is to be Danish; I even socialise with Danes, but much of what I know, I have never myself experienced.

In order for groups to form and tribalism to thrive there must be either an out-group, an enemy or a common purpose, which usually also implies some antagonistic spirit. This antagonist works best if it is real, can be labelled and has some physical form. This applies across the board and can have some interesting implications. For instance, experiments have been carried out with children divided at random into two groups; red and blue team. Unlike control groups who where not divided, the children ranked peers of their own group as more likeable, intelligent and would not swap them for anyone from the other team. This tribalism reaches far beyond small groups of children, which the blitz of London is a great example of. As the bombs rained down across the capital, psychologist and state officials feared a city-wide mental breakdown. To their big surprise, the chaos, the terror and this singular struggle gave the citizens a newfound identity and perhaps a purpose; something to fight for, or in this case against. Suicide rates, mental hospital admissions and other indicators of social welfare improved, even though, every day lives were blown into pieces – some even recounted how they missed the blitz and the sense of community they felt in the underground shelters.

Hiking through Greenland; crossing through barren landscape, fighting the unforgiving weather and always keeping a loaded rifle on the shoulder in case you should come across the infrequent animal – either food or deadly enemy. In these moments, the concerns of city-life seem more distant than the brightest stars, the people at your side closer than the clothes on your body.

The architect Adolf Loos once wrote that only convicts and criminals had tattoos and anyone with a tattoo who had not yet committed a crime would do so sooner or later. Popular opinion has since changed, but tattoos, clothing and other bodily accessories are still used as a main driver to portray or solidify identity.

Just like picking my clothes for the day, I sometimes consider getting a tattoo. However, not knowing if I will be me when I wake up tomorrow morning usually

holds me back. It would be a still-image of who I was, rather than the sketch of who I am.

Modern society with all its technological and social advances has eroded its social cohesion. As our social institutions have systematically made group behaviour redundant, we have gained freedom as individuals, but lost any form of connection to a meaningful community. By the virtue of our institutionalised and systematic social interactions, it is now possible to move through a whole day only interacting with strangers. Even a whole week, a month or a lifetime. This liberation has allowed us to carve our own paths, follow our dreams and live in very stable societies, but it has alienated us from the people right in front of us. Never have so many people lived in metropolises, yet the feelings of alienation and loneliness have never been this widespread.

My personal quest for answers and my research into identity leads directly to my upcoming bachelor thesis project; a rehabilitation centre for navy veterans.

While the most obvious and straightforward rehabilitation is physical followed by mental, the social is just as important. Nowadays few veterans come back physically wounded, but most will have emotional scars from what they have experienced and the internal moral struggles they have faced. On top of that, in our current society we identify heavily, arguably too single-mindedly, with our work; I bet the third question you ask a stranger after 'how are you?' and 'what's your name?', is 'what do you?' You would not expect to hear about how they care for their children, hobbies or engagement in the community, but rather – 'I work in finance', engineering or any other professional field.

To rebel and counteract this tendency I would respond 'what do I do? I'm here to change the world for the better!' – I have yet to be brave enough to say that to strangers, let alone friends.

This identification with work runs even deeper in the armed forces as they sometime spend months on end together through all kinds of challenges. In fact, it often becomes more than a mere job.

My father, a naval officer, always said, half jokingly, that he never worked a single day, he executed a service for his country.

Therefore, for any rehabilitation to be successful, the social integration must be considered. Imagine the shock of change being sent home after the last mission, having spent six months in a foreign country with the same platoon day and night and then return home to an alienating society. Reshaping our

identities can be both soul-shattering and liberating but it is sometimes necessary. But then again if we work the clay too much it becomes dry, hard and brittle. Leave it in the open for too long and the clay will solidify. Either way, the act of change is never easy and often painful.

Our natural tribalism has also been used, or rather exploited, in warfare. It is often believed and expressed verbally that the soldiers fight for their country and the freedom of their fellow citizens. However, on the battlefield, the challenge has always been to get the soldier to kill the man standing opposite. Some statistics indicate that less than 20% of the soldiers in the First World War shot at the enemy. This figure rose by the Second World War and rose further in the Vietnam war. The theories and training practices suggest this has been due to the group identity fostered within the platoons of soldiers. On the battlefield, facing the enemy, looking them in the eyes, we rarely think about our national pride or the fatherland we are supposedly fighting for. Instead our brains analyse the threat to ourselves and our platoon; to kill or to be killed. Every action should be immediate, deliberate and without hesitation. Therefore, it is of little use to fight for our concocted country, we must protect our tribe. Studies show that the body and mind react more severely to a wounded comrade than had you incurred that same injury yourself. This willingness to injure, harm or kill for your tribe is further enhanced by the ability to stigmatise the enemy. It is much easier to kill 'an evil terrorist' than it is to kill a lone farmer struggling to provide food and shelter for his family due to poor economic circumstances, which forced him to become a seafaring pirate.

My own father sailed around Africa and the Indian Ocean to protect civilians and container ships from opportunistic pirates scouting the seas. However, in order to sleep at night, we tell ourselves that we did the right thing, and if we repeat it enough times, we may even start to believe it.

Family, friends, community, work, hobbies; all of them colour the masks that we wear in society. They allow us to split ourselves into groups that divide or bridge gaps with strangers, whom we have never met. The stories that we tell ourselves convince us of who we are, where we have been and where we are going. Through our actions, choices and habits we sketch our character onto the canvas of society in order to paint in union with strangers the masterpiece of our identity.

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Union of Styles: Bucharest

A Union of Cultures: Britain's Chinese Places of Refuge.

By Amy Young

In the summer of 2018 I had the opportunity to visit Bucharest, the capital of Romania; whilst visiting a friend who lives in Targoviste, a town 50 km north of the capital. Bucharest is eclectic and diverse; the architectural styles vary greatly from street to street. Namely, there are obvious Brancovian, Neo-Romanian, Art Nouveau and communist styles of Architecture throughout the city. Each separate style and piece of architecture manage to come together to form the identity of the city.

My plane landed late on a Monday afternoon and we headed straight for the centre of Bucharest. Whilst driving from the airport, we passed the Arcul de Triumf, a replica of Paris' Arc Arch de Triumph. It sits there, as a reminder of the Romanian army's victory in the first world war. The similarity to the French version of it gave Bucharest the nickname *'Little Paris'*, along with the art nouveau architecture dotted around the city which bares similarities to Parisian architecture. *It gave Bucharest a grandeur and elegance that I had not expected.*

After a short drive further into the city, we sat down for dinner in a courtyard restaurant, designed in a rather medieval style. The Curtea Veche, a medieval palace was adjacent, the ruins excavated by archaeologists in the 1950s. The masonry was intricate, with arches and vaults running the length of the site. I found the medieval style to be less common in Bucharest, most likely due to influxes of redevelopment in the 1900s. However, further north towards Brasov in Transylvania there were castles and villages that retained a clear medieval influence. Perhaps the most dominating architecture style in Bucharest I noticed was the communist era style. Between 1948 and 1989 Romania was urban landscape in

Bucharest. The Palace of Parliament, otherwise known as the People's House, sits in the centre of Bucharest and is a statement of Nicolae Ceausescu's power and exercised control. It is the largest administrative building in the world, aside from the Pentagon, dominating the city with its scale.

On the approach to the Palace of Parliament we drove along the Boulevard of Victory; *a street that required entire neighbourhoods to be destroyed and relocated in order for it to cut straight to the palace.* It was part of an urban planning method called systemisation, in which communist style architecture replaced the Art Nouveau style that had previously filled Bucharest; for the purpose of *"alienation, homogenization, the transformation of the Romanians into "automatic machines of modernity" in order to finally fulfil their evolution towards the 'new man'.*

The residential parts of the city were also changed significantly during the systemisation. Concrete tower blocks became the standard type of housing; with people densely packed into relatively small apartments. *I spent a night in one of the housing blocks, the bedroom had one small window above eye level; making it feel incredibly cellular.* The architecture felt dilapidated and it seemed like a constant reminder of what the communist regime did to Romania and its people.

Bucharest's architecture intrigued me by the way it told the story of Romania's changing political climate and dynamic history. The architecture is constantly changing, forming a diverse and complex cityscape; in which the buildings somehow sit in union with one another, despite the lack of a constant style and pattern.

This article looks at the range of **Architectual styles** *visible in* **Bucharest***, as a result of* **Romania***'s varied and turbulent history.*

By Micheal Tsang

The first Chinese immigrants to Britain came in the early 19th century. Setting up restaurants, food was the means by which many Chinese immigrants established their lives in Britain - my own family came to Britain in this way and to this day many still do. **The role of food, therefore, in Chinese culture is one of union - it brings people together and even extends to the places in which we gather, forming these places of refuge.**

The aforementioned **restaurants** were the first such places of refuge. For the British-Chinese community they serve as a place for gathering and sharing, both in the way that the food is eaten - as shared dishes at the centre of the table - and in the way of socialising. In our increasingly globalised world with the wide availability of options when it comes to eating-out it has also become a constant upon which Chinese people may depend as a 'familiar option'. I see this in the way that my parents seek out the Chinatown of any new city they visit when travelling - to them it is a place of familiarity and comfort, and in this way serves as a place of refuge. My own experience differs, however. Unlike my parents who know all the items on the menu, I, not speaking Chinese, do not know all the names of all the foods, despite being very familiar with many of their tastes and appearances. My experience is uniquely British-Chinese in this sense, in its blending of ignorance with familiarity.

Related to the restaurant is a **takeaway** - as both are places which serve food. The role of the takeaway as a place of refuge for the Chinese, however, is more notably through work - the provision of work for those who have come to Britain looking for a better life, for the opportunities that may be opened to their children. The opportunity for work in food service is one that first brought my grandparents to this country, and many of

my family continue in this line of work. It is by bringing the Chinese, been able to find a life here in this country. As such takeaways have served as refuges to many Chinese people in Britain. My experience of Chinese takeaways have therefore been shaped by my familial connection to them. In accustoming themselves to Britain in this way, "Chinese people" serving Chinese food to the "British people", perhaps it would therefore be more accurate to call them 'British-Chinese' takeaways.

Still relating to food is a **Chinese grocery shop**. This is a place which catalyses gathering through the provision of ingredients for home-cooking - an essential part of Chinese life. It also serves for many as a connective link back to home, for those 1st generation Chinese immigrants, as a place of familiarity. In going to any such Chinese shop, it is not uncommon for Chinese people to see other Chinese friends or acquaintances - following my parents on such a shopping trip almost always accompanies bumping into family friends, or failing that, at least the staff working there whom are also amongst the many friends and acquaintances in this Chinese community. It is a place to which all in the British-Chinese community will go, owing to this shared culture of food. Therefore this provision of familiarity is such that it provides another place of refuge for the British-Chinese.

Reflecting on these **'places of refuge'**, they evocatively highlight some of the key aspects of British-Chinese culture, particularly revolving around food and the places inhabited by food. In any country where immigration occurs a blending of cultures is inevitable, and this is not restricted to the British-Chinese example. It is interesting to observe this union of cultures, yet perhaps what is even more interesting to note is how this relationship may evolve in the future. My hope is that it is one that blossoms with both counterparts managing to complement each other without detracting from the other.

Co-happiness

We know that one of the cures to the environmental problems of a modern city is greater human density within its core. Can flatshare be a lifestyle choice? Do we have a say when it comes to the quality of our living spaces? Can they simply make us happy?

By Julia Korpacka

We know that one of the cures to the environmental problems of a modern city is greater human density within its core. Co-living is a cheap and instantly accessible means of escaping the daunting reality of a dispersed city, yet it is considered more of an annoying necessity, and definitely the opposite of luxury. Can flatshare be a lifestyle choice? Do we have a say when it comes to the quality of our living spaces? Can they simply make us happy?

A study found that loneliness increases the likelihood of mortality by 26 per cent and that its effect on mortality is comparable to the impact of well-known risk factors such as obesity, and has a similar influence as cigarette smoking (15 a day to be precise). To me, a 21 year old who has spent her entire adult life sharing rooms, flats and houses (it feels like more than 3 years) this is hardly surprising – I have lived with friends, strangers who became friends, and people I barely even opened my mouth to, but however great having the flat just to yourself feels at first, after some time that emptiness becomes terribly lonely. Being alone is healthy when you can choose the company of others, or just your own, according to your needs. The ability to adjust the distance, to control the degree of privacy, is a key factor influencing our perception of others, as well as ourselves. It seems very simple in theory, but the urban reality and ridiculous rent prices force us into overcrowded flatshares which seem to prove that a pile of dirty dishes in the sink and queue to the shower may be just as bad for our mental health as being lonely.

You have heard of Patrik Schumacher. His controversial opinions are quite well-known within the architecture world. In a paper published by Adam Smith Institute this spring, he claims that "for many young professionals who are out and about networking 24/7, a small, clean, private hotel-room sized central patch serves their needs perfectly well." I always found it funny how people who were able to buy their first house before the age of 30, or who most probably own a penthouse somewhere in central London, are self-proclaimed experts in the current housing situation of… who? Millennials? Generation Rent? Not really. SpareRoom revealed that between 2011 and 2016 the number of people living in flatshares between the ages of 55 and 64 has risen by 343 per cent, the over 65s have seen a rise of over 600 per cent. It concerns everyone, not only the ever-networking-70k-a-year-whoevers. The co-living concerns any age, gender, ethnicity, temperament, and there is potential in this social diversity. Yet, we often end up not really knowing the people we live with. I chose to live without a living room (ironic?) or a dining table for 7 months while on

placement in London and I survived, but my advice is don't. I knew exactly how long I would live in this situation and as much as I loved my time there, I was relieved to move out. I did not actually get to know the people I was sharing the flat with, mostly because there was virtually no space left to actually share. We keep lowering the threshold for the quality of accommodation we deem acceptable forced by our budget, timeframe, availability, and our mental health suffers. The problem is not the fact that we are sharing our home with other people, it's how we share it. The housing demand shrinks kitchens, replaces the living rooms with more bedrooms and leaves corridors empty. The result is a system of binary privacy – one is either at arm's length from their flatmates or behind the closed door of the bedroom. The distance is either too large or too small, especially when so many people actually live with strangers. The need for the in-between spaces is imperative for good cohabitation – being able to choose whether we sit in our bedroom or in the living room, keep the door open or closed, share a meal or not gives us the 'crucial blend of control and conviviality' that Charles Montgomery applies to streets, restaurants and apartments in Happy City. The example of a study of two student halls at a New York university in his book shows how the architecture of public and private zones influences the mood, social behaviour and relationships between people. Our very own case of the two architecture studios is very similar in terms of sharing space. The open space of the new studios allows everyone to keep track of what is going on and not miss anything important. I remember having breaks from work in my first year, just walking along the rows of tables, checking out everyone's models. It is the bittersweet aspect of it – everyone is on display, everywhere is a public space, and if you want to work alone you put your headphones on, make a barricade from the desks and pray that no one will bother you. The corridor between the desks and the crit bays serves only as a passage - you would block the way if you stopped halfway. The old studios, however, are a bit more diverse – individual rooms are small enough to feel more private, you can decide to keep the door open or close them if you need to focus. The corridors are wide enough to have a chat with a neighbour from the studio next door.

This brings me to another aspect of the idea of co-living – co-working. Independently, but together, sharing wifi, coffee machines and meeting rooms, those spaces have been sprouting in cities all around the world. The rise in the freelance market and micro-businesses, combined with widespread flatsharing and higher mobility, resulted in the need for those collaborative office hubs, creating an environment more stimulating than at-home-office or a café, facilitating the access to resources often

unavailable or too expensive for individuals. Privacy and productiveness are key, but there's also the social, collaborative aspect of it which populates those spaces. It is interesting to think why does co-working function generally quite well and co-habiting not so much? Could it be the design? After all, the first ones, in order to attract potential users, have been designed or adapted to accommodate desks, meeting rooms, kitchenettes. And what did your landlord do to adapt your current flat to be inhabited by a group of unrelated people with different lifestyles and temperaments? Installed locks on the bedroom doors and most likely converted the living room into one extra bedroom that costs between £30 and £100 more in rent each month. As a flatsharing architecture student I think there is more to happy co-living than that.

If someone told you to sit down right now and draw a plan for a student residence, what would it look like? What about a block of flats for young professionals, including school teachers and NHS nurses? What about a retirement home? What about a socially diverse mix of all three? Hopefully none of those would end up being a superblock of mirrored studios on each side of a corridor with an unused 'common room' stuck by the staircase at one end of it. Being single, living alone should not mean being lonely. Human beings are gregarious creatures with a twist – we need others as much as we need privacy and we get anxious about loneliness as much as about crowds. We have to remember that as humans and as architects. It is an issue of the adaptability of residential architecture, both existing and not yet designed. Privacy should not be a luxury, but neither should flatshare have a pejorative connotation. Of course architecture is not going to teach your flatmate to wash their dishes right after the meal or solve the mystery of who's turn it is to buy the toilet paper, but it might make you talk to them a bit more, form stronger bonds, be less worried… I think it's a start.

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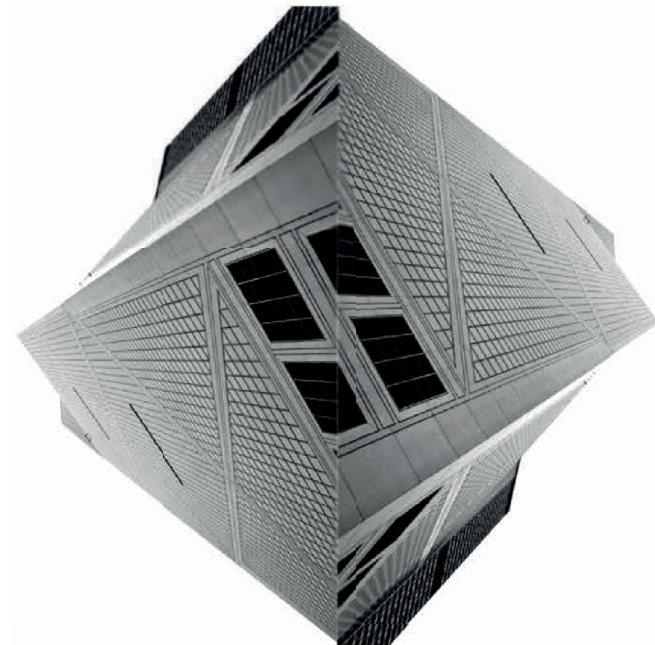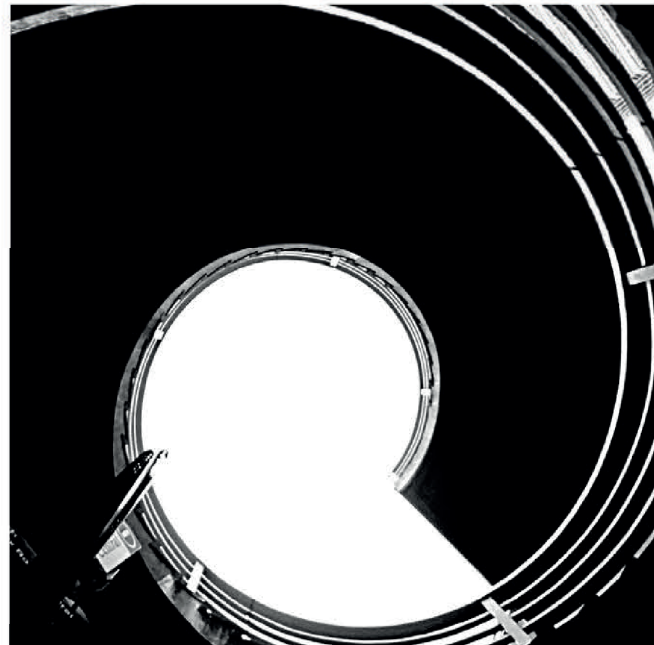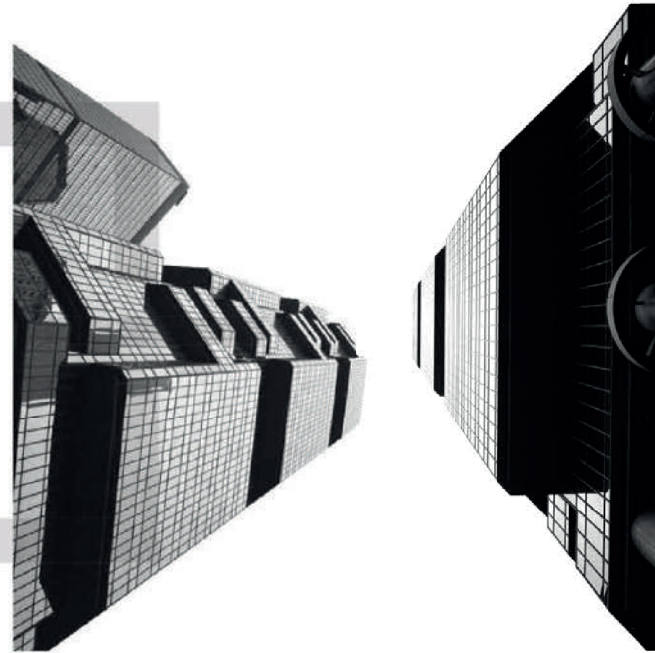
Squares
Suki Fong
2018

How to draw **Boundaries**

Our country is divided. Deliberately.

By Harry Wyatt

For the purposes of our locally represented democracy it is necessary that the country be cut into clean chunks, or constituencies, to decide who gets to vote on which seat. At the 2022 general election there will be 600 MPs, reduced from the current 650 and thus these boundaries have come under much scrutiny as many need to be redrawn. One of the major needs for review comes from the disparity of voters making up each constituency, ranging from 21,769 in Na H-Eilaenan an Iar in the Scottish Outer Hebrides to 110,697 in the Isle of Wight. There is an evident need for the boundaries to be drawn more fairly so that each individual's vote may carry a more even weighting - the MPs from these two constituencies have equal powers in voting despite the vast differences in the numbers who they represent. The Boundary Commissions are non-partisan independent bodies for each country within the UK who have put forward recommendations for how the new boundaries should be drawn.

Apart from physical barriers such as major roads or physical geography it can be very hard to pinpoint the line which marks the edge of a community or town. For example what might seem like a simple question of 'what is the population of London' draws different results depending on what you define as London. When considering the metropolitan area (referred to as the 'London commuter belt') a figure of over 13.7 million arises (2011 census), for the Greater London Urban Area the 2011 population was 9.8 million. Just looking at Greater London itself the population was 8.2 million in 2011. Even at this level of division the boundary includes areas not universally considered to be London - for example Romford which was once in Essex and still considered by many to be better described as being in Essex rather than London.

The proposed boundary changes could see the town of Milton Keynes split into three constituencies, one of which would include parts of the rural neighbouring county. Council Leader Pete Marland commented that 'The proposals break up Milton Keynes shifting areas out of the new city, reversing thirty years of work to create a coherent, cohesive new city'. At the same time, giving Milton Keynes two or three constituencies would give it an unfair over or under representation in parliament.

There is also much discontent over the proposed changes in Cornwall, which could see a constituency straddling Cornwall and Devon. The Guardian quotes a local as saying 'We've nothing against people from Devon […] But we want to stay Cornish.'

With globalisation and increased mobility, the trend over the last 50 years has been for borders to be broken down at both a micro and macro scale, both politically and physically. In cities we have seen the growth of suburbia and the commuter belt, in Europe we have seen the EU and Schengen and in local government we have seen the creation of unitary authorities. Before 1972 there were 1086 urban and rural districts and 79 county boroughs in England. Now English local government consists of 27 county councils, 201 district councils, and 125 unitary councils. Bigger councils can serve broader areas more efficiently and are less vulnerable to being tiny pockets of poverty which struggle to internally raise sufficient taxes - though of course this is still a problem for some councils.

As a result of the boundary changes pockets of locality are being eroded. The result will be greater fairness across the country and greater efficiency. Maybe in a world where locality is a thing of the past and people are increasingly expecting to grow up, study and work at different locations around the country - or indeed the world - we will eventually lose local representation. Maybe in the future we will not have MPs elected by area, or perhaps the constituencies will become even larger as the areas people inhabit grow. As we increasingly inhabit digital space our lives and ideas can be everywhere and nowhere at once. If you spend your working life in London but live in Surrey to which place do you truly belong? If you study in Bath but live in Milton Keynes which MP should you really be voting for?

With public backlash against loosening borders and erosion of localities rooted in the past showing itself through Brexit and Trump, the debate over what it means to live in a place and how this affects your democratic rights is only going to become more intense.

The **RIBA** Union

A Worldwide Union - which could be better.

By Sebastian Stripp

Identity – The RIBA is a closed union with the power to accredit architects. But beyond being an exclusive club for members who manage to jump through all the hoops, the union lacks a sense of pride or notion of excellence. A qualified architect may scorn their un-qualified counterparts and feel a sense of righteousness as they are now 'the real deal'. Nevertheless, there is no ethos of excellence or shared responsibility for our profession. At best we are a collection of individuals.

Fees – Many practicing architects I have come across complain that it is a race to the bottom; lowering fees, trying to exceed client expectations and taking on non-profitable work to keep the office busy. This tendency has several causes, including architects self-imposed identities as struggling artists misunderstood by society, the fact that in our scientifically driven world many architects fail to understand or at least articulate any value they may add and finally that most architects, like other members of the public do not really understand money or even worse; finances. The RIBA does try to give advice behind the scenes, but I think further value could be added by communicating to the public the real value, tangible and intangible of architecture rather than mere building – many architects would also benefit from knowing what it is they actually do.

Education – Being the gatekeepers of architecture, the RIBA also regulates and shapes education. While this may look like a minor administerial task, this is hugely important for the future of the profession. What we teach today, they preach tomorrow. Of course, it is extremely difficult to know what to teach, and most universities scramble to define what makes a good architect – this can be seen qby the great variation in philosophies and classes taught or untaught at universities across the country. However, this diversity may end up being the strongpoint of the profession, especially through changing times. The RIBA should allow the mavericks to co-exist and focus on instilling a passion for learning, exploring and being open-minded.

Architecture – The definition of an architect has never been quite clear, and history does not help. A mayor runs the city, a doctor saves lives, and a teacher instructs our children, but does the architect build the cities? Not really. Architects are usually found at the side-lines with their hands in their pockets yelling at the builders, contractors or developers. This kind of behaviour does not do us any favours. Add to this the occasional blunder which portrays us as mere decorators; The 'Building More, Building Beautiful' initiative. Most young boys and girls would like to grow up and marry a beautiful partner, but I assume there are more factors than surface treatment when it comes to finding the right one.

Our Future – The RIBA offers many discussions and exhibitions about our shortage of housing and the new approaches that could help bridge the gap. At one of the discussions I raised the issue of our profession's narrow definition of what makes an architect worthy of that title. The President's short answer was that his hands are tied until the Brexit deal has settled… Nevertheless, we must open our minds to the fact that we cannot do this alone, especially if we are only going to be shouting from the side lines. We do not have to start by defining what an architect is, but we could start by acknowledging all the people working at the fringes of architecture. Not necessarily the builders or contractors, that would be too much for some, but rather those who choose not to qualify, but still end up shaping the future due to their hard work and diverse thinking. By not acknowledging such outside the box talent we end up doing the RIBA a disfavour, or shall I say; they end up doing themselves a disfavour – Even if I do spend my time jumping through the hoops, I am not sure I would feel comfortable staying in their restrictive boxes.

1

METROPOLIS
Fritz Lang
Germany, 1927

Metropolis by Fritz Lang could be considered both an expressionist and a futuristic movie for more than one reasons. Firstly, it is a science fiction movie, probably the first of its kind opening a new genre for the early times in which it was produced (1927). The story takes place in a distant future reality where technology has taken over in an extremely dystopian manner. The architecture shows how much impact it had on the urban scale, skyscrapers and highways on different levels connect a sleek and modern city as if avoiding the ground. The setting is full of symbolisms and references to religious/mythological elements such as the legend of the Tower of Babel and the obsession to reach the heavens. The time in which the movie was produced tells us a lot about the vision on technology. In the beginning of the 20th century cars, trains, the "machines" were being introduced and brought a lot of change, the movie shows the potential of these technology in a time that is far from its audience. He wants to arouse the audience with mixed feelings on this theme using a stylized interpretation of what the worst guess of the "future" city could be. In this way Metropolis, is extremely expressionist and futurist at the same time. Apart from the setting, the characters are full of emotions more than words. It is by their expressiveness that we can relate to their feelings.

2

UN CHIEN ANDALOU
Salvator Dalì and Luis Bruñuel
France, 1929

I found Un chien Andalou by Salvador Dalì and Luis Buñuel particularly interesting for the way that it explores the themes of surrealism on screen and tries to give it a formal outcome (movie) that can be, even more than painting, relatable to our daily experience. Surrealist art explored the effects of unconsciousness and symbolism which I find even more involving on screen then in other art mediums such as painting or sculpture. Thus, what I liked the most was the lack of a plot and incongruousness of the written text giving times and seasons that followed no chronological or logical order. Similarly the scenes preceded themselves with what seemed to be no related content but just symbols that would occur as to feel like they are connected. The eye scene and the moon cut by a cloud seem related whereas with a rational approach they are completely distinct. I appreciated the end scene where the couple is first strolling on the beach and then "le pringtemps" (spring) comes, and like flowers, they are buried half way into the ground.

3

BAUHAUS
Frank Whitford
United Kingdom, 1994

The BAUHAUS documentary explains the political and social context in which the Bauhaus school was founded in Germany and the dynamic environment made of students and masters that encompassed the whole atmosphere of the Bauhaus.

One of the biggest contributions of the Bauhaus to today's art, design and architecture scene would be the new approach to learning that it proposed at the times and which is still used today. It is the studio-based culture, the idea of craftsmanship and of having a methodological approach to all the arts by combining hand-on and theoretical approaches that made the Bauhaus such an important school. This because the main goal was the concept of having all the arts together and not distinguishing them but working on them all at the same time (painting, sculpting, architecture, design...).

I feel that today the general conception of the Bauhaus is sometimes mistaken. It is often forgotten that the Bauhaus was very much a community with a more or less social political agenda then just an aesthetical style. They explored the possibilities of design as a social agent for example with the idea of functionalism. The layout of a kitchen proposes a certain type of lifestyle. Finally, I would say that from the Bauhaus we have learned the importance of multidisciplinarity to fully embrace the idea of art as life. Regarding architecture, it is no longer about ornaments but how to filter the many layers of realities and information into a final outcome.

By Francesca Beltrame

FILM REVIEW

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