

PAPERSPACE

# EDITORS' NOTE

Following a fruitful (and at times heated) discussion on a bitter November evening, a vote was held which decided this issue's theme as "Systems". As for the interpretation of this single word prompt, our initial meetings left us with more questions than answers.

For our contributors only one thing was certain - modern life is full of systems. From the social and economic systems that bind or alienate us from one another to the architectural systems that support our buildings and shape the spaces and environments we inhabit - systems seem an inescapable component of the fabric of our lives.

Some systems are bad, some are good, and others work just fine - this rather mediocre aphorism is about as definitive a conclusion as we could possibly hope to reach given the thematic diversity of the contents of this issue. From the exploration of urban landscapes in "Drifting through Bath" and "Copenhagen Harbour" to reflections on knowledge and domestic life in "Education Systems" and "Multigenerational Living". Outrage-driving think-pieces are interspersed with literary analysis, interviews, philosophy, and artwork.

Throughout it all there is an investigative spirit - a desire to question and critique the reasoning behind the way things are the way they are.

This issue of Paperspace is not intended to be read as a compilation of doom, but rather as an empowering opportunity to examine and uncover the secrets of the plethora of systems that regulate our modern lives.

Paperspace is an independent, non-profit design magazine based in Bath. Whilst we have a range of international contributors we are entirely student-led.

A huge thanks to the University of Bath for their logistical support, to Magalleria for their endless wisdom, and to our donor practices, without whose support this issue could not be in your hands right now.

There are only 200 copies of this magazine in print. So if you have a paper copy (the ideal format) we hope you find as much joy in reading as we did in creating.

Thank you for reading,

Jesper-Jay Harrington & Daria Shiryaeva

Editors-In-Chief 2022-2023

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# DRIFTING THROUGH BATH: A PSYCHOGRAPHIC ADVENTURE

## [Introduction]

*"Beneath the stones, the beach!"*

Psychogeography calls upon us to examine the structure of the spaces around us. It deals in relationships: connections between places and the people which inhabit them. Why does a street corner feel a certain way? Why are you attracted to a specific town square? It attempts to distinguish 'unities of ambiance': areas which find themselves as one for no obvious reason. Psychogeography does not concern itself with regions as defined by municipalities, marketing teams or tourist boards, instead seeking to discover the reality of the city as made by the people who live and spend time there.

One method to study this is through the *dérive*, or drift – a technique created by Guy Debord, a Situationist writer. It asks the drifter to move through an urban space with no preconditions; led by only the environment around them. The drifter might be pulled by the flow of people, a colour, the weather, the topography, or any number of unintended conditions. In some ways, psychogeography studies the vernacular city: that made by the inhabitants in an ad-hoc manner, rather than the city planned by suited men with pen and paper.

I carried out a drift through Bath, and catalogued my journey through the notes and photographs exhibited here.



## [The dérive]

Start - Kingsmead Square

Towards Green Park now - following the flow of people. To my right I note there are three red restaurants next to each other. Now I am opposite Green Park Station.

I then circle around to opposite the New Theatre Royal. Here I find a stasis. In front of me a tour guide speaks about the theatre's history.

Continuing onwards, I trail an old man until I find myself pulled down Trim Bridge by a large archway.

I am now at the end of Quiet Street.

There are people walking away from Milsom Street, so I follow the counter-current.

I take a look down Green Street but nothing directs me that way.

I stop to take a look inside an artist pop-up after following a man in a shirt around the open space here.

After a while I have still not find a direction to move in. There is no obvious movement - am I trapped in a unity of ambience?

Following the slope of the terrain (this seems a compelling enough reason) I move down Milsom Street towards the old Royal Mineral Water Hospital. Seemingly derelict, this hulking mass feels more like a cliff edge looming over the street that a building.

Around the corner, I find an instance of scaffolding becoming a covered walkway. A modern, haphazard colonnade. I walk through it a few times, intrigued by the way the scaffolding beams press against the gauze covering them.

I carry on down Union Passage; its lineality is irresistible.

I continue into Northumberland Place, where there is a characteristic sound of crockery from the bars and restaurants.

Before I even leave this space, I am drawn into the Guildhall Market by a framing of archways.

I walk through the market, where an old lady giving me weird looks pushes me out onto the street on the opposite side.

Here, I am suddenly confronted by an expansive view of Bathwick Hill. The city seems to drop away. It is unclear where to go from here, so I take some time to watch the weir instead.



I then find myself called by a small step-filled archway across the river, so I cross Pulteney bridge to go down through it.

Emerging to see the river, and across it the ever-alluring loggia blocked off from Parade Gardens.

Behind me there is an interesting archway which runs under the road. I can get through it from here.

The archway is dark with a few small entrances off it into private spaces.

On the other side I come into a silent, empty, and light-filled street.

There is no clear reason to continue down this street, but curiosity pulls me along.

Walking down this road, I occasionally see glimpses across the river.

I drift into a seemingly derelict garage site, which turns into a small lane. I carry on down, but it finishes in a dead end.

Back on the road it starts to feel more suburban and endless. The main thing pulling me now is the desire to get off this road. Finally, I cross Cleveland Bridge and decide to end the dérive here.

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Alex Whitwell

Photography by Author



# TRIAL BY BUREAUCRACY

BY JESPER-JAY HARRINGTON

*"Someone must have been telling lies about Joseph K., for without having done anything wrong he was arrested one fine morning"<sup>1</sup>*

In *The Trial*, Franz Kafka's author surrogate protagonist Joseph K. navigates a labyrinthian and enigmatic legal system, the true nature of which, along with his accused crime, is never revealed to him. Kafka's *The Trial* is layered with metaphors and symbolism, with the novel exploring themes of alienation, guilt, and control through its dreamlike and absurdist narrative.

Throughout the novel, Kafka explores the ways in which the built environment can shape and influence the behavior of those who inhabit it. From hazy, cluttered passages and inexplicable antechambers to grand, imposing housing blocks, in this nightmarish exploration of space, doors themselves cease to function merely as gateways and instead trap K. in a series of increasingly tragic situations.

The architecture in *The Trial* mirrors the bureaucratic society in which K. lives, where rules and procedures are nebulous and power is concentrated in the hands of the few. The buildings of the court, with their endless corridors and hidden chambers, symbolize the secretive and manipulative nature of the legal system. They are places where justice is elusive and truth is subjective, and where K.'s innocence or guilt is determined by unseen forces beyond his control.

Kafka's writing envisions a distinct fluidity of space, in which the dichotomy between inside and outside of a door melts away in K.'s very hands.

K. begins then to inhabit the space *within* the door both figuratively and sometimes literally, as he quickly becomes fixed in a transitory state between freedom and imprisonment<sup>2</sup>. K.'s inability to delineate between sides of a door and the trance-like state he slips into whilst in the presence of the court reflects his own psychological turbulence as he is forced to come to terms with his newfound existence on the threshold between guilt and innocence; between reality and fiction.

The spaces K. inhabits are depicted as being deeply intertwined with his sense of self. The form of these spaces not only echo the power dynamics at play but also serve to reflect K.'s shifting state of mind as he becomes increasingly disillusioned and paranoid.

Kafka plays with the fluidity of time just as easily as he does with space. From the moment K. is arrested, time ceases to be a sequential constant and becomes fluid. The disempowered K. wanders through his trial, suspended in time and space, on a forward journey to nowhere. This nonsequential dimension of time highlights the impossibility of a definite conclusion to K.'s trial being reached, except through his tragic demise...

The fascinating aspect of Kafka's work stems from his recognition of the dimension of totalitarianism that cannot be understood through the traditional model of despotic command. The hierarchy of the Law Court in *The Trial* is not presented as a top-down structure, but rather as an abstract entity without a discernible center, to which the masses willingly submit themselves - thus becoming their own oppressors.

K's quest to find the ultimate authority who can finally resolve his case can never end. The centre is missing. The "Big Other" of the court can never be encountered in itself; there are only officials - cogs in a wider machine - senselessly interpreting the court's intentions<sup>3</sup>.

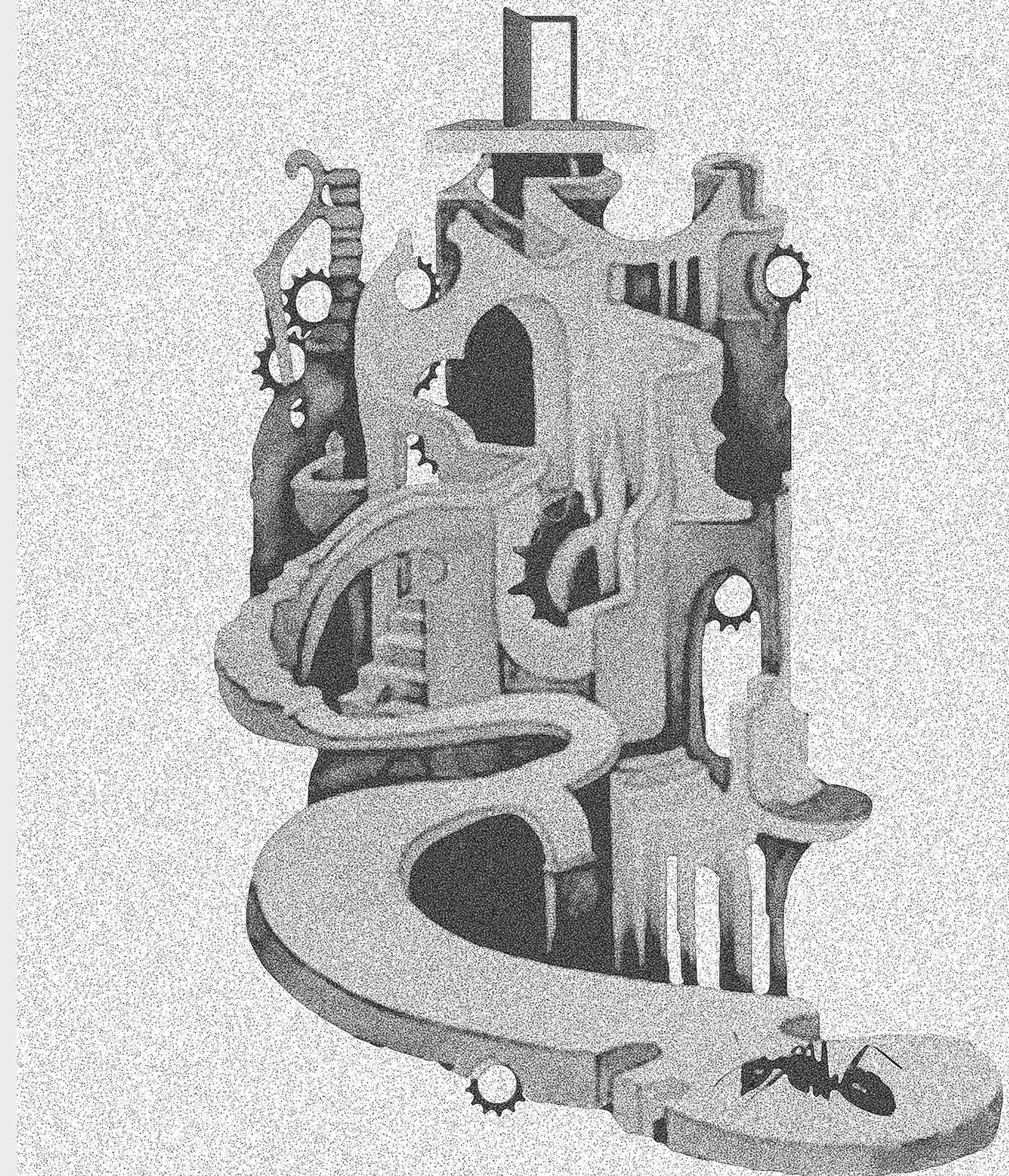
Ultimately, Kafka's timeless novel not only speaks to the universal experiences of powerlessness and uncertainty but also provides us with a potent critique of the alienating, impersonal, and oppressive structures that govern our modern lives.

References:

- <sup>1</sup> Kafka, F., 1935. *The Trial*. The Complete Novels of Franz Kafka. London: Vintage.
- <sup>2</sup> Auerback, D., 2011. The Stasis of Spaces in Kafka's Trial [Online]. Available from: <https://www.waggish.org/2011/the-stasis-of-spaces-in-kafkas-trial/>
- <sup>3</sup> Fisher, M., 2009. Capitalist Realism. Winchester: Zer0 Books

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Graphics by Anushka Gupta



# COPENHAGEN HARBOUR: STRUCTURES OF A CITY PART I

The harbour of Copenhagen is complex. An area of social juxtaposition, a mix of typology, ideology and scale, it is within this urban context that I found myself in August, tasked to create a film participating in Copenhagen Festival of Architecture's summer school. This project never materialised, however, with three-fifths of my footage blank after sending it to be developed at a laboratory, but my investigation is presented here with it being reconstructed from a film project into a written project. My exploration of these relationships co-existing in the same structural environment through interviews and interactions forms the basis of my experience, and allowed insight into a transitory moment in the harbour of Copenhagen.

The area has been changing hands between military, industrial and public use, and its current composition is explained in deindustrialisation, the squatters movement and its most visible and continued existence in the asserted sovereign nation of Freetown Christiania. Professionals, students, artists, academics, chefs and tourists inhabit where heavy industry and the navy once dominated, and, in this transition, beauty occupies where it was once disregarded in the pursuit of industrialisation and national interests.

One space I visited contributing to the rich culture of the harbour can be seen along Kanonbådsvej, a collection of old boat sheds once occupied by gunboats of the Royal Danish Navy. Now populated by studios, offices and headquarters of various businesses, its character is now creative and corporate, and is where I found the studio of KHR Architecture. This is where I spoke to Kristian and Vicki, and discussed what I saw as a sharp contrast

between this professional world that I found myself situated in and an anarchist commune just over one hundred metres across the water.

The relationship is a source of inspiration for the architects and researchers working on this side of the water. "Surrounded by many different typologies, Christiania is of them", Vicki explains, and further describes that "[Christiania] does not present these commercial aspects or solutions where money has a great power; where on the other side, you've got a lot of housing with a completely different ideology".

On my trip by bicycle to this side of the harbour, I saw these grand architectural gestures under construction, projects in which economic relationships have greater authority than human relationships.



In many ways, the overarching influence of these developments on the harbour does make the studio of KHR Architecture and the world of Freetown Christiania feel closer together. In the relation of building scale, as Kristian informs, but also in the embrace of collaboration, seen in the non-hierarchical open plan of the office.

Architecture is a vessel, and this is displayed continuously within the harbour of Copenhagen. Ideology determines the nature of the built environment, and expressed in the architecture of Freetown Christiania is the inhabitant's non-hierarchical, decentralised philosophy. "A different approach to life, and to how a day works, how a life works," as Vicki describes.

One kilometre from the archway into Christiania declaring 'You are now leaving the European Union' is an opposing ideology and a very different perspective, one that is tax-deductible and funded by the foundation of Maersk's tycoon founder, Copenhagen's Opera House. Another layer to add to this complexity is Bjarke Ingel Group's Copenhill, an industrial landmark unescapable in most views of the harbour, that can be framed with this Starchitect's impression on the skyline of Copenhagen in the background, and a community that rejects the notion of private property dominated by nature in the foreground.

It is juxtapositions like these that continually present themselves when navigating the Harbour of Copenhagen, and allowed me in my final day of conducting interviews to visit an architectural studio, an anarchist commune, student accommodation, shake hands with the deputy prime minister of the Czech Republic and see the world's most famous living architect, Bjarke Ingles, on his houseboat whilst cycling past. All within a couple of hours.

Continued on page 22



# DESIGNING DESIGN EDUCATION

BY JULIETTE KHOO

On the day of my final review, I made my way down for a coffee to supplement my modest sleeping time of two hours and fifteen minutes. As I waited in line for my turn, I shut my eyes in an attempt to simulate a mini power nap, but the group behind me started to chat. I had absolutely no intention of eavesdropping, but at the same time, they were hardly whispering.

*"It's amazing how the architects in our group have this hive mentality. They know exactly what their place is and what to do at any point in time."*

Good thing I wasn't drinking my coffee yet, or I might have choked on it.

I don't intend to take these words out of context and put them into an article out of spite. On the contrary, I suspect that the reason why I'm sat down writing this is because I found a sliver of truth in them.

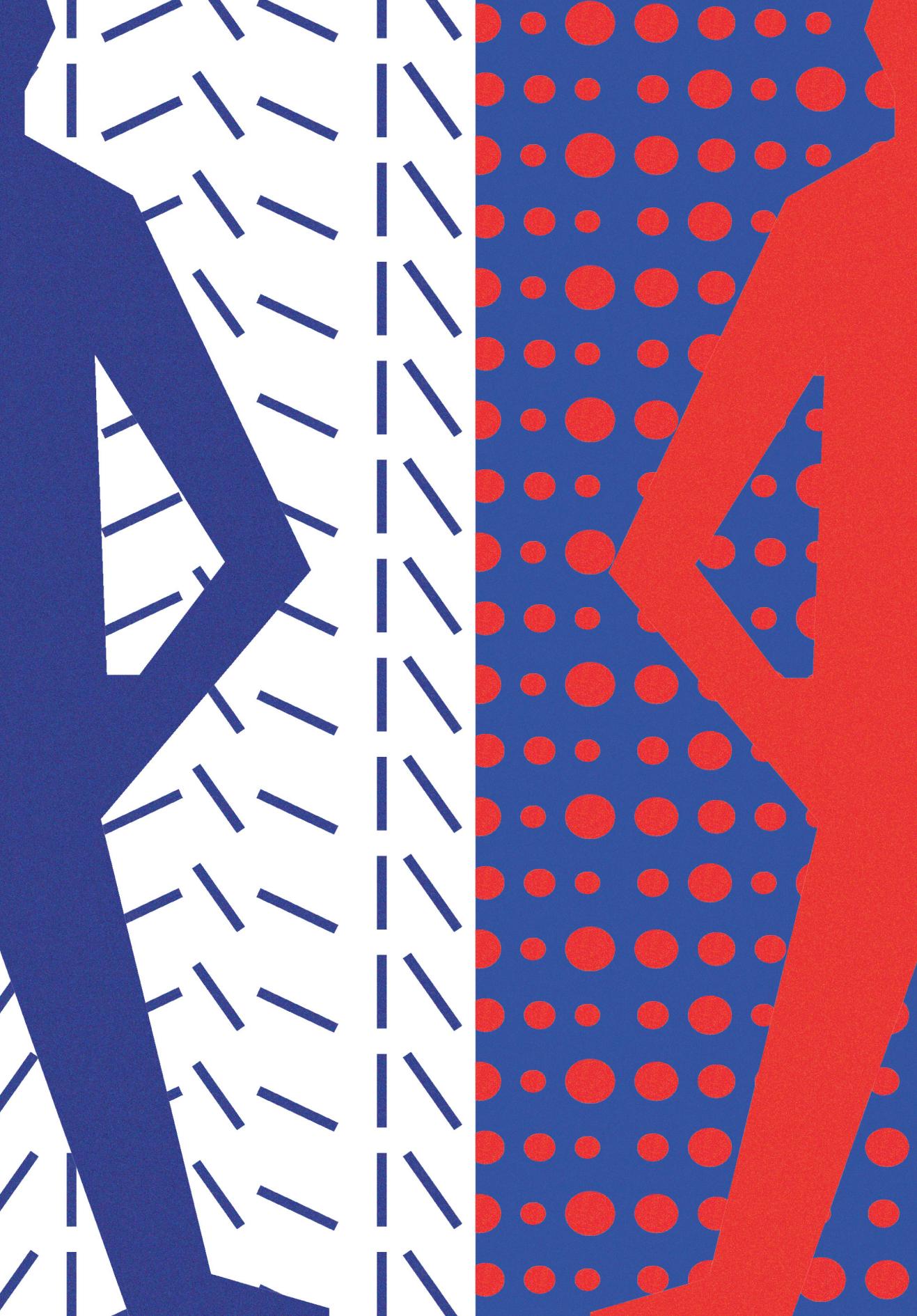
Throughout the course of my architectural education, a few questions have resurfaced themselves over and over again in my head. If design is subjective, how can we grade and quantify design projects by marking them against a rubric? Is there a "universal truth" in design? Does the 'design sense' truly exist? Is it beyond teaching? At the crux of it all, the questions turn into self-doubt. Do I really have the talent? Am I on the path to becoming a good designer? No matter how much we rationalize the design process, a huge part of it is still believed to rely on one's intuition, contributing to the idea that a designer, much like an artist, is born, not cultivated.

Parallel to this belief, the rise of rationalist thought since the Enlightenment has led to the current cultural paradigm of "form follows function".

Anything decorative is abhorred, and each visual element of the design has to be justified in a way that avoids any mention of "aesthetics". Anything that isn't structural is scorned for a lack of faithfulness to the principles of tectonics.

This divide between emotional and rational, subjective and objective, artistic and scientific has long been a point of heated debate, compounded by C.P. Snow's "Two Cultures" lecture in 1959 at the University of Cambridge. In this lecture, Snow expressed his alarm at the cultural divide between two intellectual disciplines (the arts and the sciences) and forewarns that unless English education is reformed to remove educational specialisation, this divide will increase exponentially. In the 1960s, the neurobiologist Robert Sperry found that the two halves of the brain can operate independently. He hypothesized that each person has a "dominant" side of the brain that determines their way of thinking. Left-brained people were thought to be more logical and analytical, while right-brained people were more visual and artistic. This theory has long been disproved, but till today the divide between the two cultures is very much apparent (as evidenced by unhappy engineers and architects).

I remember reading *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* by Betty Edwards as a student studying art, fascinated by the approach Edwards takes in teaching drawing principles and convinced that this split-brain theory must be somewhat true. But after navigating my way through numerous tutorials, reviews and observing how professionals design in practice, I began to question my own assumptions of design epistemology.



As architecture students, we straddle between the peripheries of these two cultures. It is common for different schools to tend towards either a more "conceptual" approach or a more "rational" approach. The studio culture only further encourages students to espouse whichever approach is taught, resulting in so-called "cookie cutter" projects where students prefer to err on the side of caution for the sake of their grade. I myself am not exempt from this mindset, nor am I suggesting that we should all discard whatever we've been taught for the sake of being different. What I would like to comment on is this distinction between the theoretical and technical modes of thinking.

In the words of Kathryn Moore, "The differences between science and art are based on idiom, culture, tradition and means of expression rather than engaging different conceptual spheres of knowledge." How many times have you been perplexed at being told to think "creatively" or to be more "practical"? The assumption that we have a switch in our brains that allows us to do one or the other is fallacious to me. The belief that creative minds are born, not cultivated, has also lost its grounding to me. To imagine, articulate and realise a design concept, one must go through a process of deliberate inquiry, not unlike how a scientist approaches an experiment with a hypothesis and an aim. Perhaps the characteristic that differentiates a skilled 'creative' from a less abled one is not technical ability, but a hunger and curiosity for the world around us.

What does this mean for design and design education? Perhaps this current system, where students are only critiqued on the work they produce and not guided through how to produce them, how to analyse, observe, investigate, and substantiate, is doing more harm than good. Students may become concerned with pleasing tutors rather than critically thinking about the feedback given and how they can improve as a designer.

At the same time, the plethora of ways one can go about designing make it virtually impossible to come up with a framework where we can confidently say doing A, B and C will produce a great scheme. At worst, establishing such a framework might even result in a form of dogmatic paradigm, that hive mentality that students become bound to. However, I strongly believe in inculcating a culture of design inquiry through strategies and techniques meant to prompt one's intellectual creativity.

These could be carried out as class exercises in a tutorial group, led by a design tutor. The purpose of each exercise should be explained clearly so that students understand how they can adapt these techniques in their own design process in subsequent projects. If we, as students, are able to shift our focus to designing with purpose, to treat design as a journey to be deliberated upon instead of a means to an end, I trust that we can put the hive mentality to bed.

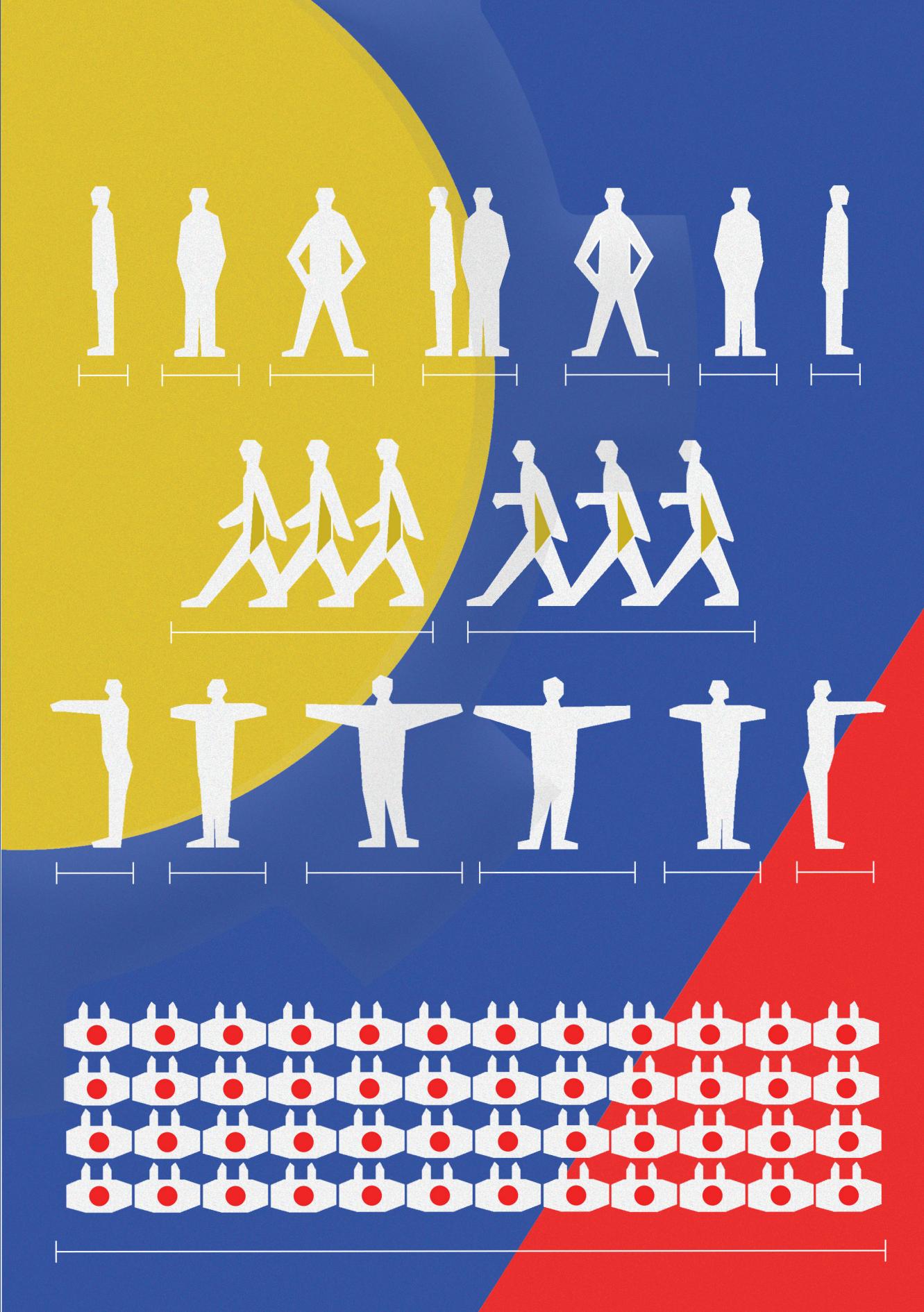
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C. P. Snow, "The Two Cultures," *Leonardo* 23, no. 2/3 (1990): 169–73, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1578601>.

Kathryn Moore, *Overlooking the Visual : Demystifying the Art of Design* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), 13.

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Graphic by Daria Shiryaeva

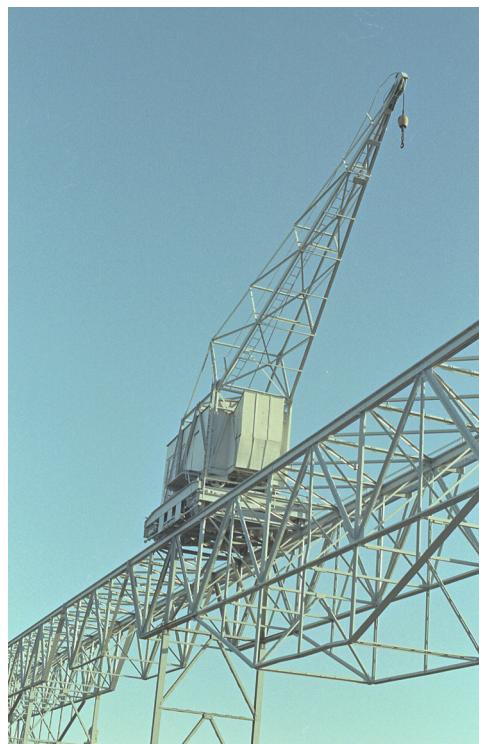


# COPENHAGEN HARBOUR: STRUCTURES OF A CITY PART II

Leaving Kanonbådsvej, and cycling beyond the world of professionalism inhabited by charming brick barracks and warehouses, I passed idyllic timber framed buildings, houseboats and cafés to an environment of the twentieth century, contrasting the nineteenth and previous centuries that had characterised the context before. Here observations are dominated by corrugated iron, steel and concrete, reflected by the Urban Riggers, that are constructed using recycled shipping containers that now form student accommodation.

The systems that interact just a short distance from where I had interviewed Kristian and Vicki contrast sharply with what I had just left behind, and present a very different set of interactions and juxtapositions. Here, on board Bjarke Ingel Group's supposed solution to global housing shortages with a post-industrial landscape as a backdrop, I talked to Eva and Meret, students who had the privilege to call the Urban Riggers home. The social juxtapositions contained here seemed even greater than the one existing between Freetown Christiania and Kanonbådsvej, with student accommodation positioned alongside the incredibly exclusive world of fine-dining.

At the edge of Christiania is chef Rene Redzepi's gastronomical mecca, also known as Noma, where you can be served a 20-course meal demonstrating excellence in New Nordic Cuisine. Two hundred metres away from Eva and Meret's home is Amass, described as the industrial chic space for global dishes where one can discover Matt Orlando's thrilling Scandi fare. And, of course, the elevated choice for avant-garde meals, the Alchemist, exists beyond two fantastically ornate sculptural bronze doors a short walk away.



'I don't have a connection to them at all', Meret explains, with the perceived contrast very real between the two communities who share this space. However, even without the level of co-operation and influence that exists between KHR Architecture and the anarchist commune they overlook, here systems co-exist and do not infringe on each other. Eva describes these venues for the upper strata of Copenhagen's society as 'a little bit outside and a little bit hidden', and allows agreement and harmony in this dynamic part of the city.

As we sat in the central courtyard of the Urban Rigger, conversation drifted from pasta makers used for community dinners serving home-made pasta produced from bread waste, to the supposed imminent visit of dignitaries from the Czech Republic. I began to understand the sense of belonging that exists for Eva and Meret, only briefly disrupted by state officials, within the context of Copenhagen's most exclusive restaurants and bars. "I feel like this is my home and then there's a whole restaurant scene around it" Eva adds, and for home to be in such an improbable environment at the edge of the fading presence of industry seized by the gastronomical elite of Copenhagen does not seem out of place within the context of the harbour.

Interlaced with the social and economic structure of the harbour is also the physical, where the expanse of the water is a great influence to the systems that operate alongside it. There is a very visible dichotomy between the professional environment of Kanonbådsvej and the alternative lifestyle embraced in Christiania, but it is the water where these borders diffuse, where 'you become the same person and you have the same life there', as Kristian explains. This blue space is crucial in the interaction between the two communities, as it is 'the water [that] makes this interaction, because on both sides there is an opposing contrast but in the water we become the same, because you interact in the same way.' Copenhagen subverts what is typically a void in a modern metropolis, with water as an act of division and at most a vista in a city such as London.

Not only emphasised in conversation is the social aspect of the water, but also its impact on the studio in its physicality, as this "very special closeness to the water affects you a lot and has major dimensions". Vicki also details that "the rhythm of how you work is affected by the dialogue that appears between the space and the reflections of the water".

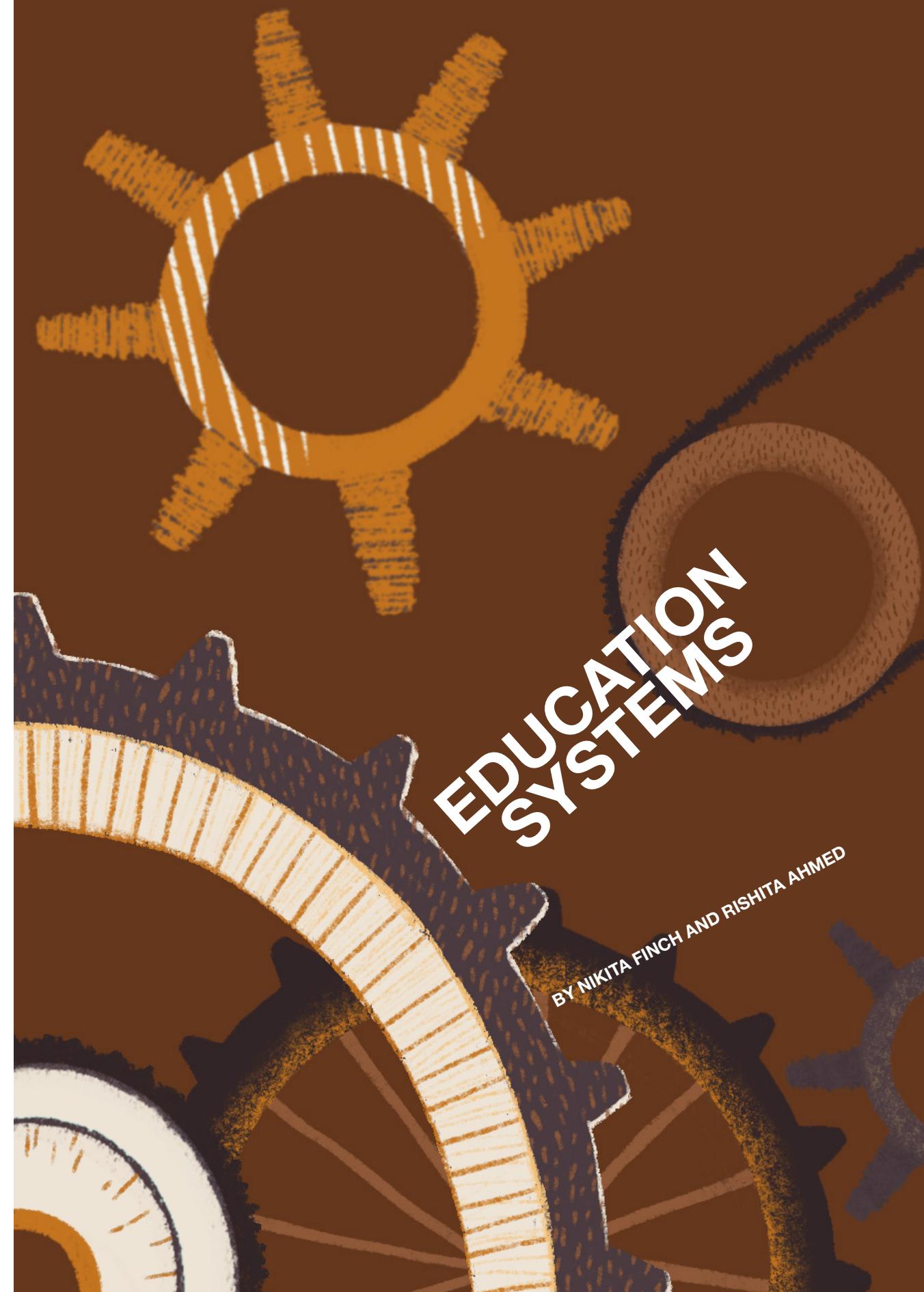
Nikola, who I had the pleasure of meeting on the summer school and is a student in the city, told me of her day before we met jumping off the Urban Rigger with Meret and Eva into the tranquil blue water below. With the only association between the Urban Riggers and the land a gangway, the dialogue that exists in relation to the water could not be more dramatic.

As my time in Denmark came to an end, I gained a feeling that this description of the Harbour of Copenhagen is one that can only exist in time, as the systems I have explained adapt, expand and decline. An artificial island to house thirty-five thousand people to the north of the harbour has been approved by the Danish government and is already impacting the region. Soon the rooms that Eva and Meret personalised will be occupied by others, and the urban rigger I was welcomed on to will possess a different personality.

Since I had last visited Copenhagen, I have seen incredible change in less than 3 years. Bulldozers and hazard signs had been replaced by much more permanent statements of architecture. Cranes still dominate this landscape and symbolise more projects to alter the interactions that exist within the context of the harbour. The context I engaged with is a fleeting moment, but one that has certainly left an impression on me.

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James Lansbury  
Photography by Author



### [Education Profile]

Name: Nikita Finch

Education history:

Primary: Church of England Primary School  
Year 7: Girls Grammar School  
Year 8: Private Girls School  
Year 9: Private Mixed School  
Year 10-11: Comprehensive Mixed School  
Year 12-13: A Level College

There are typically two tactics people employ to get someone to do something: possibility of reward or threat of punishment. Giving them a positive incentive or instilling a fear of the consequences if they don't. Arguably, the UK education system employs both simultaneously.

At what cost to the students?

This strategy includes one key assumption: that kids must be incentivised in order to participate in learning. Does this leave room for enjoyment and exploration of passions outside of the strictly controlled curriculums? I enjoyed History - until I stopped being taught about it. We used to be given lessons dedicated solely to answering exam questions and I expect this is not an experience unique to myself. That in itself encapsulates the distorted priorities of the system.

For children that are already highly capable and motivated the system doesn't work. If they don't need to be pushed into doing the work, the pressure often instils them with a strong performance anxiety instead. For kids that do need extra motivation, would it not be better to give children a real passion for a subject that will outlast the exam, rather than focusing on a possible consequence?

It is common that parents give incentives for certain GCSE grades; a guitar if you get 5 A's, £10 for every B, £9 for every C etc. What I saw amongst my friends is that this didn't work. It may have given them short term motivation, but far less than an actual desire to achieve. We need to be giving the less motivated children an opportunity to find an interest outside of the strict curriculum and to have a system that values this too.

I'm not saying this is easy. Children wouldn't be jumping at the opportunity to complete their homework if they weren't given some sort of incentive. It would require less of a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Education systems are vitally important to the well-being and success of any country. A better system could help reduce the alarming anxiety rates of UK teenagers, as well as helping people grow up to be less focused on external validation and material rewards.

Art is one of the clearest ways in which these issues can be seen. Students' work is quantified by measures that favour some styles and overlook others. Nothing has made me dislike art more than taking it as an A Level subject.

### [Education Profile]

Name: Rishita Ahmed

Education history:

Primary: Attended five primary schools including a bilingual school in Vienna  
Year 7-11: Girls Grammar School  
Year 12-13: Mixed Sixth Form within boys Grammar school  
University for the Creative Arts: Foundation Diploma

Having studied Art continuously before starting a degree in Architecture, I have been exposed to multiple approaches of teaching within this subject. Rooted in creative thinking, Art has a reputation for being a 'can't be taught' subject. This mentality carries itself within the UK's education system, with the GCSE and A-Level curriculum largely placing emphasis on how well a candidate can create 'transcriptions' of existing works and photographs.

In my opinion, this has always limited the student's exploration of their own artistic callings. They are instead consumed with how photo-realistic their version of [insert famous artwork here] may look. The emphasis of this skill in the classroom feeds the stigma that the higher grades can only be awarded to candidates with existing talent. In turn, students (including myself) become consumed with ticking off grade boundary descriptors in other areas to secure the higher grades. Nine out of ten times this approach works, and students come away with the As and A\*'s they hoped for, thanks to the toxic grading system.

Desperate to enjoy Art again, I decided to take a foundation course during my gap year. It was here that I unlearnt the deceptive idea of what I thought Art education was. I was encouraged

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Nikita Finch and Rishita Ahmed  
Graphic by Karoline Woggon



We are anonymous

Rushing to buy that morning coffee; briskly dashing to work; hurrying home with groceries in hand. We pass each other by, without noticing each other. We are strangers, yet we are united. A web of people doing different things, at different parts of their day, in different stages of their lives. A crowd.

Printed silhouettes and detailed figures overlap each other, as we move through each other.

There is a sense of anonymity and social isolation. Why do we feel lonely when we are surrounded by people? We are unknown and unacknowledged. Simply obstacles to each other; obstructions to step around.

There is impermanence to us. Layers of transparent paint give a sense of dynamism and chaotic movement. Figures are just passing through space and will soon be gone and replaced. The same random formation of people will never be in the same unified crowd again. We are temporary; constantly changing.

There can be social discomfort within us, but we are accepting. We sit next to complete strangers whilst putting on our makeup, calling friends about personal matters, and too loudly listening to music. Personal and intimate things, all hidden inside the business and mayhem.

Acts of kindness are disclosed to us. A young businessman holds the crowded elevator for the elderly man. A charismatic group of teenage girls approaches the solitary individual to ask for their picture. A patient woman holds the door open for the frantic family. Are our actions stemmed from empathy or self-interest? We sense other people's needs. We are interconnected.

The vibrant, contrasting colours, and sweeping, overlapping shapes create an overwhelming visual impact, drawing our attention. Our curiosity gets the better of us as we get caught up in 'People watching', and find ourselves wondering about other individuals' behaviour. We watch; we listen; we judge.

Do we feel protected by our own anonymity? We get caught within the mass of bodies and hide within the chaos. We are unrecognisable. We don't know each other, but we are in the exact same place at the exact same time. We have a common identity.

We are a community.

# THE ANONYMOUS CROWD

BY EMMA RICHARDS

Graphic by Author

# A SUPPORT SYSTEM

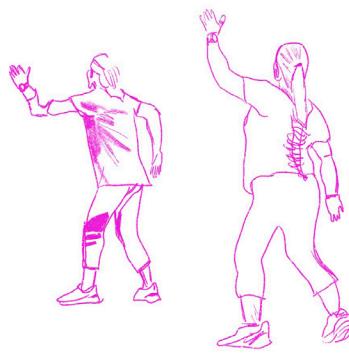
BY MEGAN SLOM

*If a system is defined as a collection of elements that are organized for a common purpose, then the domestic helpers in Hong Kong form their own beautiful system.*



*821 miles away from home, they find comfort in one another. They find comfort in their culture, traditions and passions.*

*Every Sunday, they join together and fill the streets of Central with pure joy and exultation. Scattered game cards on cardboard pieces, the fresh aroma of Adobo and Kare-Kare.*



*They smile at passersby and invite them to belt their favorite songs into a small microphone attached to their portable karaoke machines. This is their home now, this is their system.*



What is other?

*Other is something we  
don't associate with  
ourselves*

Things that we consider foreign  
has and always will be considered  
"other"

Not self

How do you fit into this  
world? *(by being alone)*

**YOU DON'T**

I do not fit in nor do I stand out.  
I am an outsider to others but  
foreign to myself while I exist in  
the worlds of others. *(disgusted by your voice)*

I'm pretty happy not fitting in yanno.  
Happy chilling here in me own lil world.  
I don't think I ever will fit in and  
don't intend to. Does anyone fit in?

# OUT- SIDER

Do you?  
Are you an outsider looking in?

*(reg. 1 mat  
is my life for us school  
regards who is speaking)*

# ON THE OUTSIDE ALWAYS LOOKING IN #  
(go watch Dear Evan Hansen - it's great  
wrt the film, the musical,  
actually, the musical is closed  
in the West End now \*sadge\*  
so listen to the sound track  
or watch it on Broadway.)

# OTHER- NESS

*(we define 'other' as not self  
then we familiarize ourselves the  
moment we are born.)*

WHEN  
IT BECOMES

# PER- CEP- TION

#coolkid  
#girlboss

Do you want to be perceived?

No, not really... I don't really  
care. Everyone is a subject  
to their own opinion, even about me.

SOMETIMES I CARE...  
BUT I SHOULD  
STOP CARING

LOVE

I do not need to be perceived nor  
do I care about being perceived.  
I simply want to be acknowledged  
for what I am worth, good or bad.

~~crossed~~ I care a lot about what  
others think of me (less so there  
years but definitely in high school).

I would say I am quite a "self-  
conscious" person but I'm starting to  
learn to care less about the  
perception of others and just live up to  
my own standards. However, I  
would like others to know me as a  
kind, honest & caring person be-  
cause that is how I aim to treat  
others.

When I see something /  
someone & spend enough  
time with them & get  
used to their existence.

What is familiar?

Something that no longer  
evokes fear

# FAMILIARITY

# LIFE AS AN ARCHITETTA I

INTERVIEW WITH FRANCESCA PERANI BY TARA HODGES IN TWO PARTS



A conversation with Francesca Perani, architect, designer, activist and co-founder of RebelArchitette, a creative collective raising awareness of equality, particularly for female architects, and the need for diversity in the design industry. We explore her own journey in architecture and her perspective as a female architect on the current attitudes and priorities of the industry, alongside her role and the wider aim of the RebelArchitette initiative. (14.12.2022)

**T: Can you expand on the origins of RebelArchitette and your own personal experience of that journey?**

F: My first interaction with the representation of women in architecture started in 2010, when I was elected as a member of the Architectural Association in Bergamo. In this role, I began thinking about my duty to represent the local architects. I first thought that I needed to do something about women in architecture, because how can a young female aspire to become an architect if she doesn't see any reference in the media? With other members, I founded a group called Archidonne – which is an invented name. At the time, we were used to referring to ourselves by a term defined for male architects: architetto. So, we conceived this imaginary name to declare, 'We are women in architecture advocating for an equal profession'. This is how I became more aware of the problems and discrimination faced by female architects. Our main aim was to improve women's visibility in architecture via dedicated events and activities carried out locally. Once I ended this experience at the Architectural Association, two other members of this group and I decided to ask for the female term to be applied to the professional stamp used for the issue of official documents.

We obtained it, as the first Italian professional association, but we understood we hadn't yet 'won the fight'. While the new term sparked a massive debate across social networks, it drew our attention instead to the broader problem – the lack of acceptance of our presence in the field. The name is simply one example of this – the name 'architetto' has always been there, only it has not been used enough due to a historically male-based profession.

**T: As you were choosing the architectural profession for yourself, were there key role models, female or otherwise, that were inspiring to you at the time?**

F: For sure. I decided to become an architect because of the house I lived in, designed by the 1960s architect Armen Manoukian, who approached house design in a modernist way – diagonal soffit, continuous windows; everything was custom made like a giant concrete sculpture. I always thought that creating a house was very much an artistic opportunity to allow people to live fulfilling lives. During my academic years, I met amazing female professors; Ida Farè taught social housing which really interested me. Marisa Galbiati was dedicated to filmography and set design in architecture. Apart from these two, all the professors I met in design exams were male and I guess this led me to think that my main ambition in the future was to become the 'second in charge' to a great male 'master' designer. But of course, all these male references contributed to this perception from a very young age – the media and the books I studied were only talking about men. While I recognise male masters of architecture, I think we now need to discover new female architects and present them as role models with different approaches to architecture.

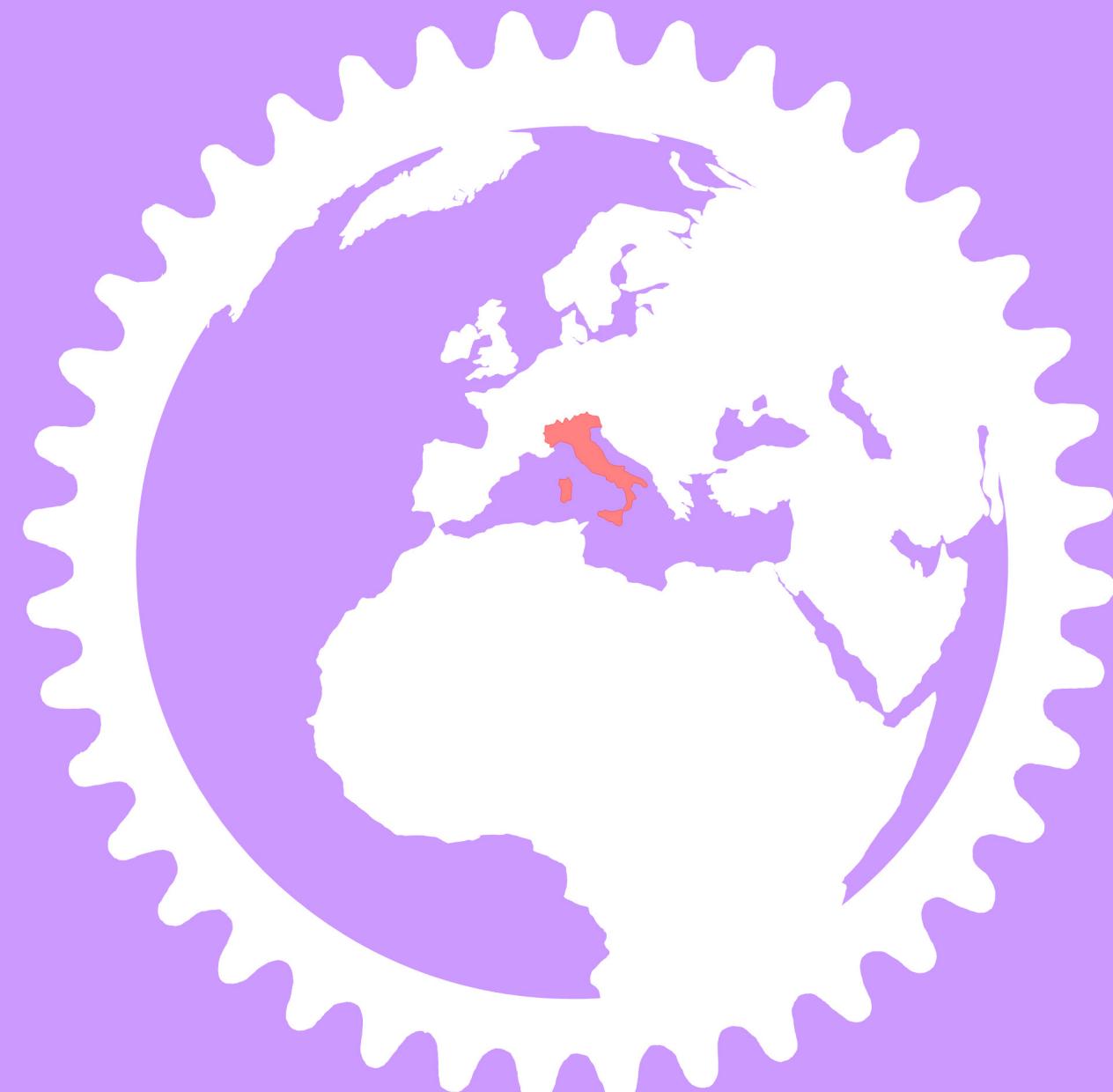
After working in Italy for Enzo Mari, an Italian modernist artist and furniture designer, I moved to England and worked in London at a highly well-structured office called TTSP (The Thomas Saunders Partnership). For the first time, I met a female director, architect Sarah Jane James. She was my first role model. I didn't know at the time, I just thought it was nice to work with her - but I know now that she had been mentoring me, pushing me to overcome my insecurities, and all the other behaviours that I am only now aware came from a patriarchal and stereotype culture.

**T: Connections to other initiatives are highlighted on the RebelArchitette website – how important is this collaboration, and what role does it have in the initiative itself?**

F: RebelArchitette is a not-for-profit association confounded by more than 15 members, originally a creative collective of archi-activists raising awareness of the need for equality in the architectural field at national and international levels. The group's main activities started in 2017 and are: highlighting female role models; promoting the professional title in the feminine, Architetta; monitoring male-dominated industry events; cooperating with other international networks and mentoring on the ground.

In the beginning, we created an e-book, finding 365 outstanding female architects by the opening of the Venice Biennale 2018. We opened up to all possibilities, including others' work on female architects. In doing so, we found associations around the globe such as Parlour, an Australian association creating a list of female professionals to act as speakers, teachers etc. Initially, we gathered all the information, then selected the architects we thought reflected our criteria for a new evaluation of success. We designed an international map to reach 1000 female-led studios in 2022. Through the assistance of many associations and individuals worldwide, we can promote and share this work as widely as possible in an open-source, accessible way on our online platform.

Continued on page 40



# SEVERANCE

BY JACK JOHNSON



What it would be like to live in a city without cars and pollution, where everyone has access to nature within a 2 minute walk? The Line poses these questions, but it is not the answer.

Announced 18 months ago as part of Saudi Arabia's marketing machine, NEOM, the Line is a 170km long linear city which seeks to resolve the failures that plague today's urban environments. It 'prioritizes health and well-being over transportation and infrastructure'<sup>1</sup>, thus defining a typology supposedly fit for the future. The scheme's radical concept coupled with compelling visuals have led the project to dominate media outlets. In response, the project has sparked debate amongst the general public, scepticism from experts and fierce opposition from indigenous populations, who are being ignored and forcibly displaced.

A linear city is nothing new – the concept has preoccupied the imaginations of architects and urban planners (the likes of Arturo Soria y Mata and Le Corbusier) for the last 150 years. During this time there have been several proposals for a linear city (each catching public attention), however none of them were ever realised. The most notable precedent comparable to the Line is the Continuous Movement by Italian collective Superstudio in the 1970s. This was intended not as a utopian vision but rather a design exercise critical of the rapid urbanisation of our cities, evidenced by cold, relentless architecture. They conceived monotonous, monolithic blocks cutting through cities, mountains and deserts, indiscriminately encircling the Earth.

The Line's architects (American studio Morphosis) argue it condenses sprawling

urban settlements into three neat levels: Pedestrian (parks, walking and cycling), Service (commercial, health and education spaces) and Spine (goods and rapid transit system). This ensures almost all human needs are facilitated within a 5 minute journey<sup>2</sup>, slashing the 15 minute city model which planners commonly aspire towards today. In addition, the footprint of the city is reduced by 95%, thus giving up more space for neighbouring ecosystems<sup>3</sup>. Whilst it is easy to be fooled by this convincing design intent, closer examination suggests that the project creates more design problems than it solves.

Across the world evidence of man can be found everywhere from roads and train tracks to bridges and power lines. Each of these pieces of linear infrastructure sever ecosystems by disturbing migration patterns and biodiversity as well as causing inbreeding and genetic disorders among species. If the Line truly cares about the natural environment it might cohabit, why does its entire concept cause the same devastation? Instead of embracing its irregular desert context, the Line ignorantly forces its way through, failing to take advantage of the most basic geographical feature close by: the coast. Furthermore, its mirrored facades could lead to declining populations of birds and bats as well as create intense heat zones that fry anything nearby, thus increasing the footprint of ecological damage.

It is not only ecosystems which the Line severs – there is a human cost too. A linear arrangement by definition spreads apart some areas of the development in the furthest possible way, congesting mass transit into a singular 'spine'. Worse still, these unnecessarily



long travel distances are poorly justified by high speed rail technology which does not even exist yet or account for stoppage time. In high speed rail technology which does not even exist yet or account for stoppage time. In addition, squeezing the footprint to such a high density forces the Line to build upwards... to 500 metres! This triggers a reliance on vertical transit over longer journeys (i.e. lifts) which is often the perfect medium for spreading disease.

The developers have attempted to dilute these counter arguments by claiming any amenity someone requires would be accessible within a 5 minute walk. Whilst this sounds desirable, in practice such strategy could isolate neighbourhoods, potentially encouraging segregation and a faction based society. If we have learnt anything from COVID, it is the value that accidental human interactions have on the cross pollination of ideas, the absence of which is detrimental to innovation and the mental health of its inhabitants. If the Saudi government are pitching the Line to symbolise a progressive future, how will such a rigid way of living appeal to the innovators and leaders it is hoping to entice? Furthermore, this is ironic as the project's choice to omit roads and streets from the public realm is aimed at eliminating the acts of severance they create between neighbourhoods. However, the linear city in itself is an act of severance so the negative social divisions remain, if not amplified.

Even from the initial series of visuals, it is evident that the Line's quest for promoting health and wellbeing is undermined by its hyper-planned design approach. With a concept that needs expensive and unconceived technology as a means of constant firefighting, one has to conclude it to be fundamentally flawed. A complex, thriving city cannot be home to innovation if it is confined to a primitive arrangement which severs ecosystems and inhibits human interaction. If the designers know anything about ecology, they will be aware of evolutionary theory. It is those species which adapt who thrive and those which do not who perish.

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Graphic by Alexander Whitwell

I needed to do something about women in architecture, because how can a young female aspire to become an architect if she doesn't see any reference in the media?



'Ask a teacher to be a mentor, be a mentor for a younger female student, no matter how much you can give'

**T: On the topic of collective voices and collaboration, could you expand on the #TimeFor50 campaign?**

F: The #TimeFor50 campaign arose from a document we created, containing data collected during 2017 and 2018. Out of 411 events, 37% had all male panels. Even recently, at the 2021 Milano Design Week, only male architects were asked to be on stage, even if their female colleagues were involved. This is still a problem, so we produced this data and created this campaign, asking other associations to join us in demanding a 50-50 ideal presence. Of course, diversity does not only belong to those in the binary system, but we feel this focus on equal representation of female professionals is still needed, particularly in Italy.

A key struggle we have found in architecture is the idea that we can collaborate and sustain each other, without being enemies all the time. This mentality of a competitive profession is the hardest thing to change. For us, extending any recognition we receive to others and their work is mandatory. When invited to be part of conferences, we always ask, "Can we recommend more speakers?" Pushing someone else into the spotlight is the only way to change the world – if you want to achieve, you must bring someone else with you.

**T: What advice do you have for all architects, but particularly the younger generation on using their voices and contributing to this change?**

F: My suggestion to younger generations and to female architects in general is to ask for mentors - ask a teacher to be a mentor, be a

mentor for a younger female student. The best reward is supporting each other from the very beginning. It is also essential to change our references in the field; to look at a decolonized culture and study architecture produced by a team of professionals, rather than individual masters. Otherwise, we leave university believing the ideal situation is to be 'the boss', when in reality, architecture is a collegiate work. The prevalent – and outdated – ideal of a single individual designing perfect spaces comes from the precedents history provides. Our search for these amazing women has been both eye-opening and mind-blowing. We had never heard about 90% of them, yet they have each produced work that uniquely shapes architecture. The industry needs this diversity in success ideals and perspectives to enhance the profession and its potential for future generations.

**T: Are there any other aspects of your experience of the industry or your role in the initiative that you would like to expand on?**

F: Firstly, even though you're interviewing me, I speak for the whole team - without them none of this would have been possible.

When we first selected the architects in 2017, we had to ask ourselves, "How do we define success?" We looked at their achievements and their work and its function, formality, aesthetics - everything we are trained to see as ideal perfection. However, we also wanted to provide a space for those challenging the architecture framework, in terms of sustainability, integration, social engagement and equality. Among those chosen, many are already highlighted by the media, while others

## LIFE AS AN ARCHITETTA II

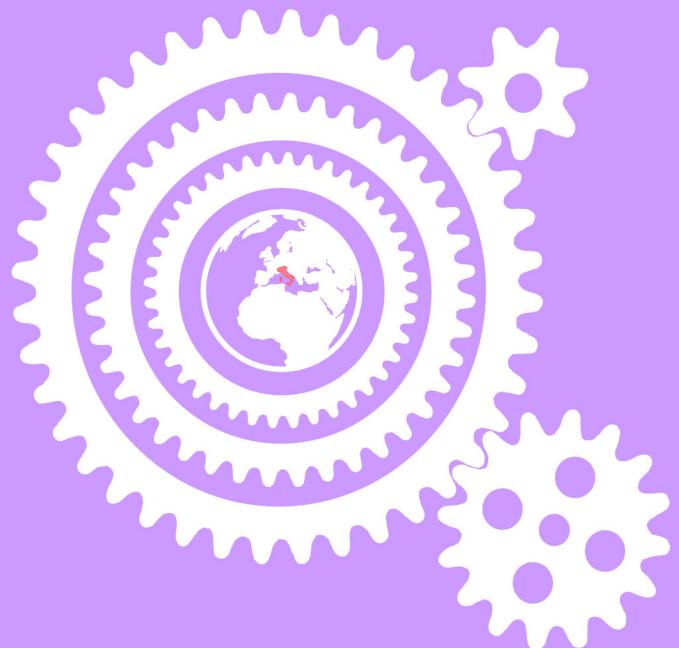
INTERVIEW WITH FRANCESCA PERANI BY TARA HODGES IN TWO PARTS

are younger, emerging architects. Personally, this has created a bit of a crisis. As an architect, I feel inadequate to the task now presented to me, having been trained to pursue perfection and success in prescribed, restrictive forms. However, after seeing all these female architects finding new paths, I can see architecture with so much more potential, and I hope that your education at university reflects this too, celebrating the architecture in its entirety.

**More information on the RebelArchitette collective can be found at: <http://www.rebelarchitette.it>**

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Graphics by Viviana Vargas-Sotelo



# MULTIGENERATIONAL LIVING

BY SANTUSHNI GUNETILLEKE



Keeping Indian Matchmaker on in the background as I make renders for the TED project, while being equal parts wildly entertaining and mind-numbing, has given me somewhat of an insight into the marriage market. It's a long and laborious search and the process of finding a suitable partner is not always painted as a decision solely for the eligible single person. Auntie Sima makes this point; "it is not only the boys and girls that are dating but also the families".

While Sima's comment is meant to poke fun at the potential pitfalls of arranged marriage, it speaks to a way of life for many families. The idea of marriage being a union of two families may now seem to be an outdated notion, however, it is an ideology strongly upheld by many families today as well. To me, this exemplifies the concept of multigenerational living – where the lives of parents, grandparents and children are deeply intertwined, for better or worse.

The basis of multigenerational households is the exchange of the elderly securing emotional and financial support from their children, whilst the children benefit from household or economic support from their parents. This harkens back to primitive dwelling systems where tribes and early villages formed incredibly close-knit, interdependent communities.

## [WHY IS IT MORE COMMON IN ASIA?]

Multigenerational households are more widespread in Asia, than in any other part of the world, despite the continent encompassing a huge variety of ethnic, cultural, and geographic differences. This is a phenomenon I have observed within my own family. Particularly in the later stages of life, it is uncommon for one to live alone in Asia.

The norms behind family systems are often supported by cultures, demographic realities and economic opportunities. Religion is also a key factor which promotes mixed households. This can be attributed to the deep-rooted religious backgrounds of most Asian families and the values these impart. Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Islam, amongst many others, emphasise the importance of filial piety as a part of one's moral integrity. Particularly in South Asia, a la Indian Matchmaker, it is often expected that a bride will join her husband's family, living with and ensuring its continuation.

It has been observed that with countries' economic growth, the number of multigenerational households tends to decrease<sup>[1]</sup>. This is consistent with the idea that economic power is associated with independent living and communal living is the result of practical financial provision.

## Opposite

Family 1: This dwelling houses three generations in a bungalow-style, single-storey home. The accessibility of the house means grandparents, their children and grandchildren can all use the same terrain. The rooms are hemmed by two shared zones, which can be occupied by any of the three parties without disturbing the others.

## [PROS AND CONS]

Multigenerational households bring certain benefits. They subvert the practice of house sharing as young professionals, which is often seen in the UK, and keeps family homes from becoming empty nests. Designing houses to accommodate this cyclical lifestyle may potentially be a way to keep houses at optimum capacity.

Other benefits in terms of reducing the burden of childcare and providing social support to the elderly in addition to providing support for daily instrumental tasks. This includes acts done for elderly people with lower mobility, such as dressing or bathing. It also refers to acts which require a level of cognitive functioning that the elderly may lack, such as going to the supermarket or scheduling and attending medical appointments. Social support involves easing loneliness and improving mood and life satisfaction in cognitively healthy elderly individuals.

## [HOW TO MAKE IT WORK]

All parties benefit from close contact, but this can sometimes become a point of friction. Intergenerational cohabitation can generate supporting actions as well as conflicts, but at the same time may evoke role resistances, cultural shocks, and relationship issues. In light of this, how have architects accommodated the needs of multiple generations under one roof? Below are some interesting house forms designed to hold up to three generations, while also providing privacy and autonomy.



### Opposite

Family 2: While the previous example provides an all-accessible dwelling, this one maintains privacy within togetherness by removing accessibility. The house is occupied by an elderly mother and daughter, with the mother inhabiting the ground floor bedroom and the daughter's room situated atop a spiral staircase, with shared space in between. The distinct zones allow both mother and daughter to help each other while still having a room of one's own.

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Photography by Author



# BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

BY HANNAH KENNEDY

Although what should have been an unlimited exploration of possibility, the playground games of my childhood were closely tied to adopting stereotypical gender roles. Despite often favouring playing with construction toys, growing up my observation of many of my classmate's fathers being builders or architects reinforced my perception that some industries had greater barriers for women to enter. Increasing pressure on toy retailers to market their products with gender neutrality and encouragement for parents to purchase these non-discriminatory options are the first steps to reforming societal expectations about the careers that are considered suitable for women. The prospects for girls entering the construction industry, however, are still being diluted by the challenges of cultural bias within a male-dominated sector.

It is difficult to not be instilled with a sense of optimism when surrounded by an evenly mixed cohort in the studio, inducing an exciting perception of progression towards equal opportunities within the architectural education system. This idea of changing attitudes within academic admissions boards is reflected by the almost equal split of male and female architects, under the age of thirty, as stated by the ARB in their 2019 Annual Report (ARB, 2019). As a wider representation of the profession, however, a lack of diversity is highlighted by female architects only constituting 29% of the register (ARB, 2019), indicating a high volume departure from the industry, commencing at the average age for a woman to give birth, in the UK (ONS, 2021).

Although a more balanced gender ratio among newly qualified architects could be a sign of improving opportunities for young women, the correlation between the time of maternity leave and the decline of the number of women in practice is no coincidence and is highly suggestive of difficulties for some parents to sustain an architectural career. Although not all women may want or be able to bear children, it is imperative that greater support is provided to those that do, in order to not disadvantage those who have trained equally as hard as their male counterparts.

to truly achieve equality, however, this additional support for absence should be extended beyond just maternity leave, but also to paternity leave and absence for physical illnesses, breaks for mental health and caring for family members.

Condensing the period of architectural training so that the Part 3 Examination can be undertaken earlier is unlikely to be feasible, due to degree programmes already being high intensity to ensure that the necessary content is absorbed. Another option could be increasing financial support for approved leave, however, this could have an inflationary effect, putting further pressure on businesses in the current cost of living crisis, and would be unrealistic in an industry where profit margins can already be tight. Karen Fugle, in her Women in Architecture report, identified a common feeling of disappointment, with 46% of women interviewed being unsatisfied with the rate of their career development, and an additional 41% only being somewhat satisfied (Fugle, 2020). 82% of interviewees stated that they viewed their career progression as their responsibility, indicating willingness to take initiative, but 73% identified a lack of time being the primary barrier against training (Fugle, 2020). A key area highlighted was a depletion of confidence that women felt in their workplaces, due to their male colleagues often being favoured for managing projects (Fugle, 2020).

To improve opportunities for women and provide additional training to compensate for absence during pregnancy, the ARB and RIBA should be including the percentage of women who are project leaders in their annual report, to encourage firms to meet an equal target, highlighting firms who do so as successful case studies. Practices should also provide extra CPD sessions, within working hours, to support re-entering the workplace following extended leave, and offer flexible working hours, where the firm has the worker capacity to do so.

As a representative of the profession, the RIBA also must undergo workplace reforms to decrease their gender pay gap and set a precedent for member practices. Greater awareness and education of sexism existing within architecture is needed to combat institutionalised biases, exemplified by the increase in the median gender pay gap from 9.49%, in 2020, to 11.32% in 2021 (RIBA, 2021). Until this gap narrows towards equality, member architects and the government need to put greater pressure on the RIBA to evaluate the split of their workforce across their pay scale.

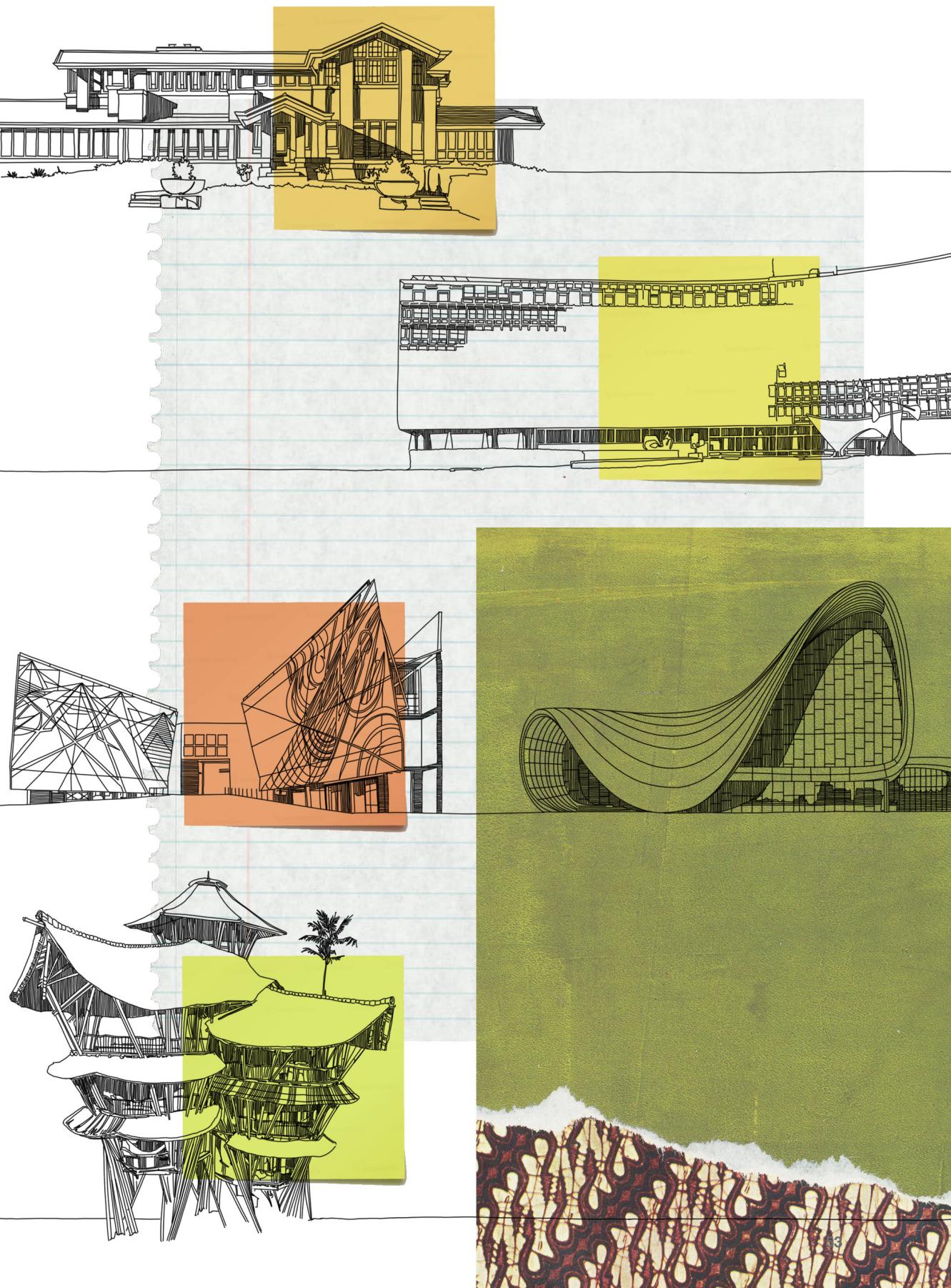
Education is arguably the most powerful driver of change. Due to the patriarchal dominance in Western architectural history, lecture content concerning design evolution often revolves around the theories of male figures, further painting an image of women having less of a voice within the profession. Although much of this information is essential to cover, there would be a great benefit to focussing on a wider view of developments, looking at Eastern architecture, as well as highlighting the contributions of women in relation to stylistic shifts, such as their influence in the arts.

Collectives such as FAME and Women in Architecture represent a progressive movement towards equal working environments for minorities. Architecture schools should establish groups for underrepresented demographics to share their anxieties and experiences, as well as invite female guest speakers to inspire and empower women to continue with their pathway of training towards becoming an architect. Ultimately, only when corporations set precedent for equal treatment shall gender stereotypes begin to dissolve, towards an endless realm of possibilities that will be celebrated in new pieces of architecture, which leave a permanent reminder of the power of collaboration of ideas and experiences amongst diverse teams.

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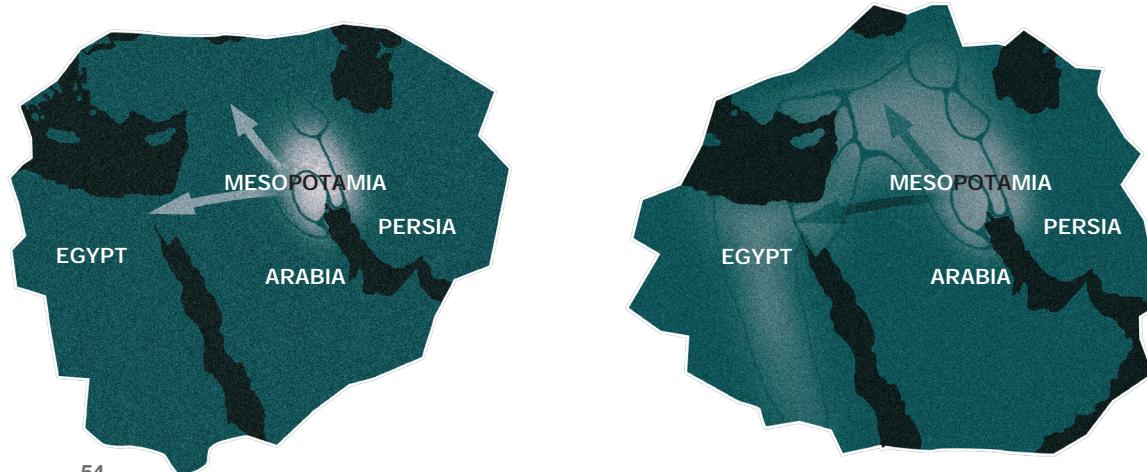
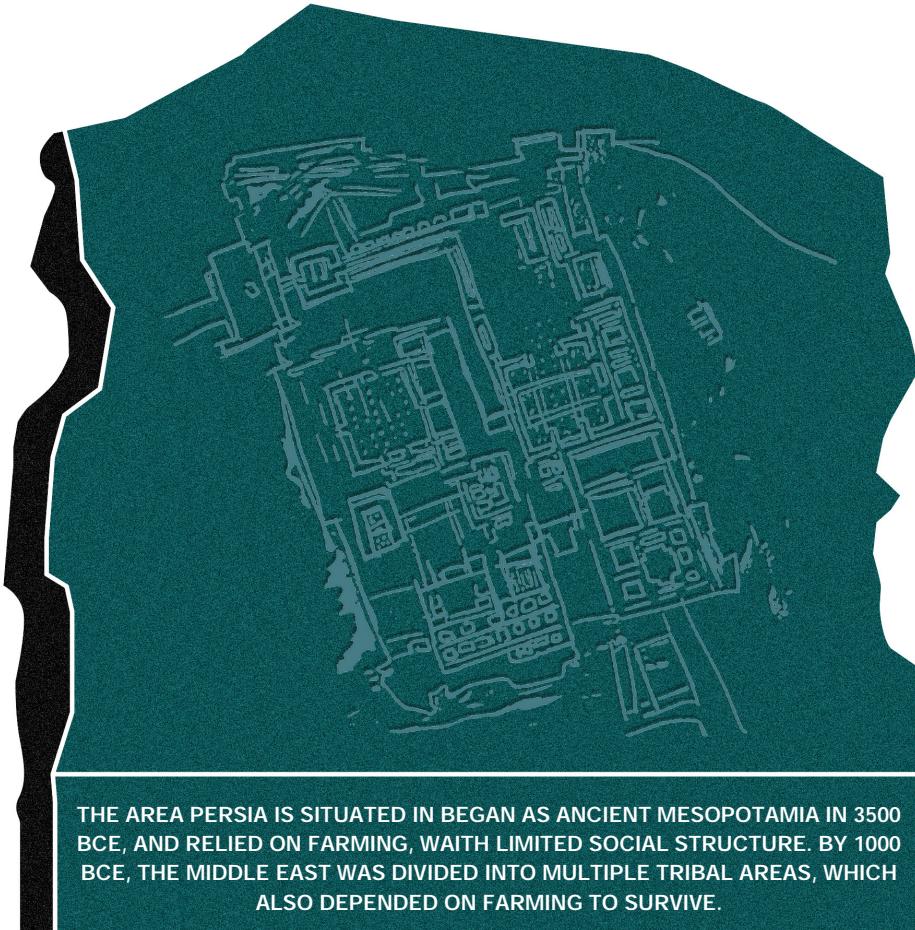
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Graphics by Gatoralis



# THE CREATION OF PERSEPOLIS

BY CHARLOTTE MARTIN

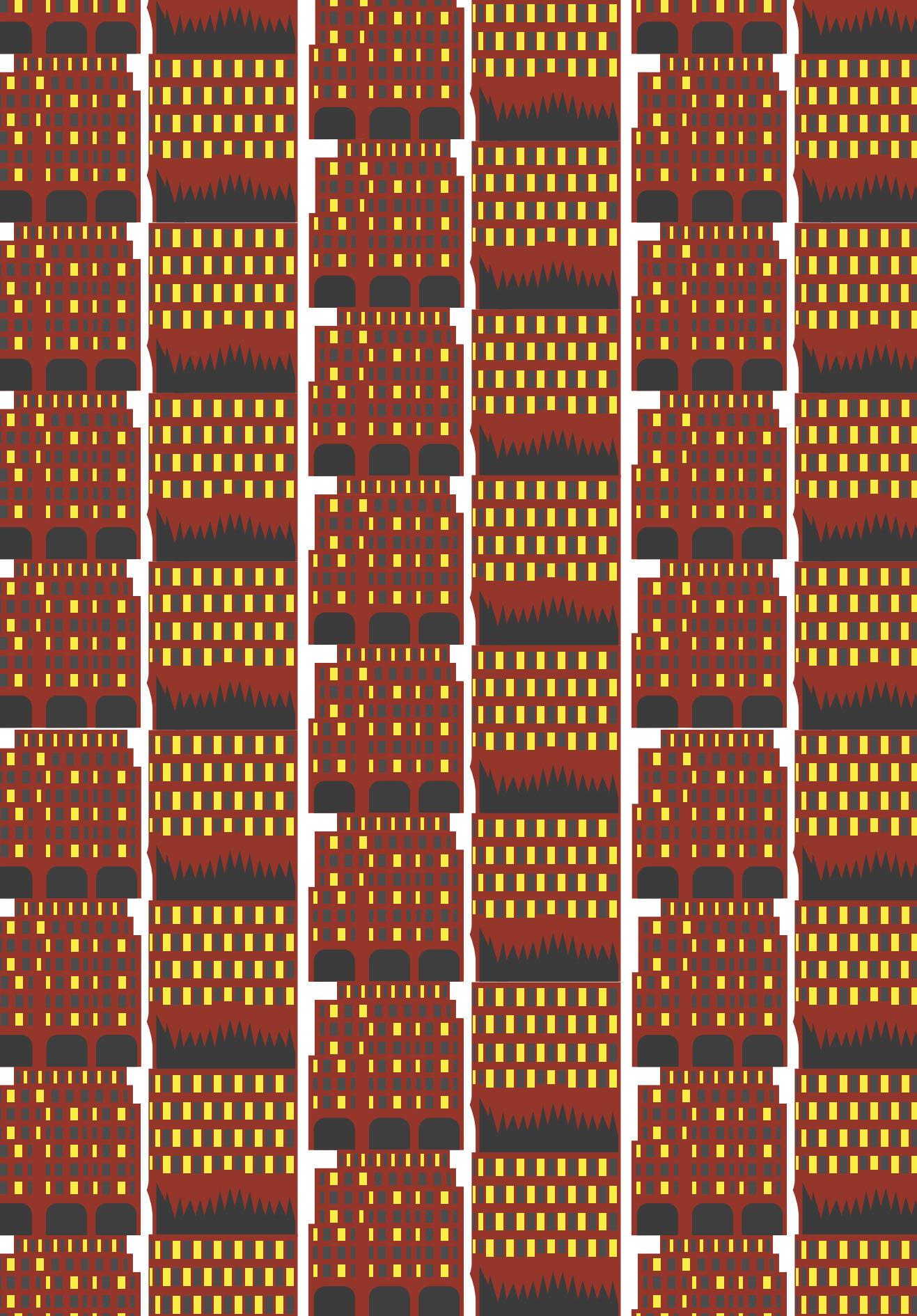


In 550 BCE, one tribe conquered the rest to create the Achaemenid Empire (dynastic name for Persian Empire), which developed a political system and infrastructure. This allowed architecture to be developed and created a purpose beyond survival, allowing art and religion to evolve and define class.

The first three kings of the Persian Empire built Persepolis (or in Roman, Parsa). It became a seat of government, and the palace, a symbol of monarchy. Persepolis therefore symbolises the development of a system within an Empire, allowing grand architecture to take shape, supported by the many areas the Empire ruled over. This temple city symbolises the beginnings of a hierarchy, and a social structure which allowed secondary and tertiary industries to thrive off of an ever-increasing farming population.

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Graphic by Charlotte Martin and Daria Shiryaeva



# WEAVING FACADES WITH IDENTITY

BY JUSTIN NICHOLLS

Visiting the 2012 Bauhaus Exhibition at the Barbican in London, I was blown away by the work of weaver par excellence Anni Albers – illustrating how joyful the illusion of depth, texture and colour can be despite a surface being only a stitch thick. Fellow textile artist Gunta Stolzl described weaving as “an aesthetic whole, a unity of composition, form, colour and substance”<sup>[1]</sup>. I left intrigued, wanting to explore how these systems could inform the design of an architectural façade where depth is also limited.

At Fathom Architects we strive to create architecture embedded in its place, enhancing the identity of an area by growing out of it rather than landing in it. Many of our projects sit in the context of traditional masonry structures, listed buildings and conservation areas. Rather than trying to replicate these bygone systems, we started thinking of the façade as a fabric – as the ‘tectonics of dressing’<sup>[2]</sup>.

The fundamental systems of weaving and facades are very similar. As Briony Fer writes about Anni Albers’s wall hangings ‘they work entirely with horizontal and vertical bands as their basic structural and formative components’<sup>[3]</sup>. The inherent rigour of the weaving process can be seen in playful but mechanical weaving notation – it’s often hard to differentiate drawings of notation and elevations of buildings.

We have fused the modernist concept of a ‘curtain wall’ – facades hung from a flexible structural frame – with the process of weaving to create a system that assists us in the design of facades. The tension of the vertical warp and the playfulness of the horizontal weft relate well to a building’s vertical loads and

requirements for horizontal sills, solidity and shading.

Experimenting with ‘woven facades’ has allowed us to explore materiality, directionality, depth, texture, tone and hue in our architecture. Combining these threads helps us create places which enhance the identity of sensitive sites whilst delivering environmentally responsive buildings using contemporary methods of construction.

## References:

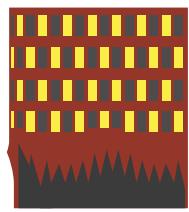
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3. Ed. A. Coxon, Anni Albers, (London: Tate Enterprises, 2019), p27.

## Further reading:

Fathom projects - other experiments in façade design can be explored at our website  
<https://fathomarchitects.com/projects/>

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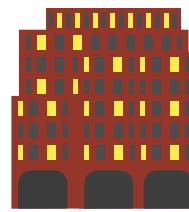
## [FATHOM PROJECT EXAMPLES]



### 80 NEW BOND STREET, WESTMINSTER, LONDON

Working with a fabric concept, the façade creates a draped curtain flowing vertically downwards, with the hem lifted at the base to reveal the retail at street level. Fluid pleated lines are expressed with a repeating curved terracotta profile, creating rhythm to the façade and drawing the eye to the activated ground floor. The woven material analogy gave us the flexibility to easily adjust the design according to changes in retail and workspace needs.

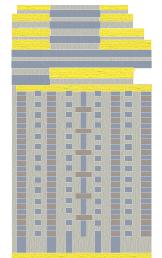
<https://fathomarchitects.com/projects/newbondstreet/>



### BROOK STREET, MAYFAIR, LONDON

For this building on Brook Street, brick is proposed as a material deeply ingrained in the Mayfair vernacular. Freed from load bearing duties as prefabricated elements, it can be used as a delicate fabric screen dressing the building with expressed stitches, seams and texture. Read as a calm volume from a distance, up close the brick façade displays complexity and depth via a delicate play of light, shadow, rhythm and pattern

<https://fathomarchitects.com/projects/brook-street/>



### BLACKFRIARS ROAD, SOUTHWARK, LONDON

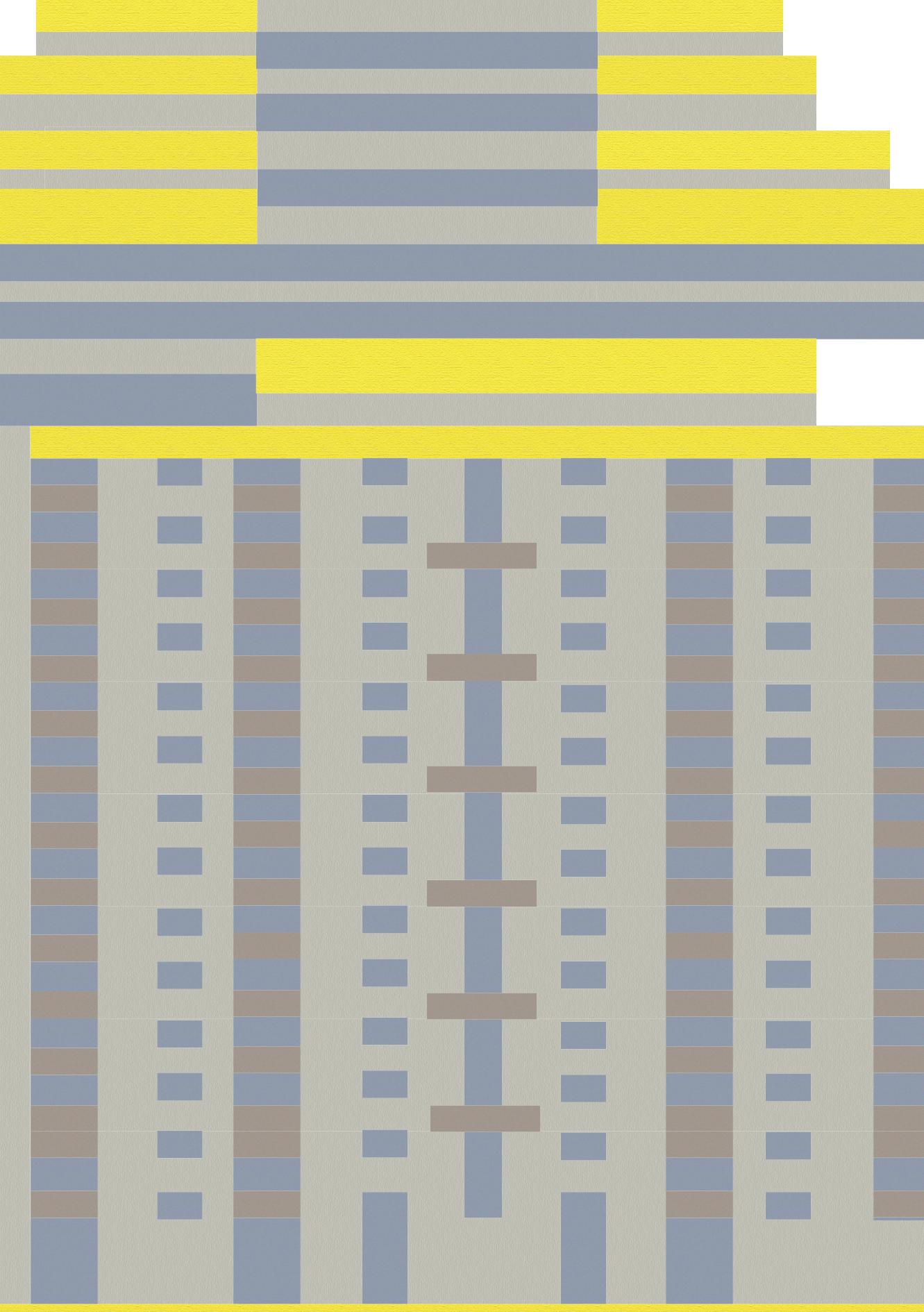
A development for social good providing 62 contemporary almshouses, 22,500sqm of workspace and a new public garden in Southwark, London. Facades draw on the site's historic use as tenter grounds – where dyed fabric was stretched and pinned outside to dry – conceived as pinned threads between tenterhooks, articulated with pleating, gathering and softly curved corners. The office façade mediates between traditional brick warehouse buildings and modern glass towers towards the River Thames, with richly detailed red terracotta. The almshouses are expressed with paler terracotta 'threads', with Juliet balconies creating animation across the facades.

<https://fathomarchitects.com/projects/blackfriars-road/>

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Justin Nicholls is a Bath Alumni and a  
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Graphic by Daria Shiryaeva



# ASTOIC FRAMEWORK

BY SCOTT CHAPLAIN



*Never let the future disturb you. You will meet it, if you have to with the same weapons of reason which today arm you against the present.*

*Marcus Aurelius*

In today's society, we frequently encounter such phrases as "live in the moment" or "you only live once" being casually employed as dismissive responses to the various difficulties we all meet. Within our culture is embedded a strong focus on the future. Perhaps construed from the idea that we should plan out our lives, that everything will be certain if we only make the 'right' choices.

Fundamentally this notion relies on the idea that we have control. It presumes that the world is ours to make our own, by our own actions. I believe this is a great error in our understanding. Over 2000 years ago a philosophy emerged which understood this error and sought to offer the tools to cope.

Beginning in Athens as a philosophy presented in public lectures by Zeno of Citium, Stoicism became a popular (if not the most popular) form of philosophy for most of the Roman Empire for the next 400 years. Most famous and influential of all the Stoics is Marcus Aurelius, the last of the 'Five Good Emperors'. Aurelius was man who led the Empire through times of plague and war, and during his reign wrote what would become one of the prominent pieces of Stoic literature to this day.

'Meditations'<sup>[1]</sup>, was the journal of Marcus Aurelius, and a collection of his thoughts and opinions, something which was never intended for publishing. As a consequence of this, the writings are unfiltered and truthful. It is inherently, Aurelius' attempt to make sense of the world, and to reason the complexities of human nature. Strangely, although being written nearly 2000 years ago, it has a relatability to life today, with some of the struggles he journals mirroring issues we still struggle with in the present. Personally,

in reading Meditations I have developed a better understanding of the universal nature of struggles in my life. That something as simple as struggling to get out of bed in the morning, was a struggle faced by those living 2000 years earlier, as mentioned by Aurelius.

Practicing journalling in the same way Aurelius did, can let us approach the world with reason. By writing in private, your stream of thoughts, we can comprehend our daily perceptions and reason with ourselves on the quandaries we face. The simple action of writing has been beneficial for me, in putting me face to face with the thoughts I have and tackling them with reason.

In relations to Meditations, I believe the main idea repeated throughout is that of control, moreover Aurelius reminding himself of the lack of control we have over the will of the universe.

*You have power over your mind, not outside events. Realise this, and you will find strength*

*Marcus Aurelius*

At its core Stoicism divides all things into two groups: things within our control and things that are not. This notion surmises that no matter the effort or anger we spend fighting against them, we simply have no power to change certain events or experiences. Consider you go on a walk and it begins to rain, soaking your clothes through. There was nothing you could have done to stop the rain, no amount of yelling at the world will change the weather. Even the idea we have a grasp on the things closer to us in life, such as the people around us, or the day-to-day events we experience, is something we also get wrong. Yes, at some level things we do affect the world around us in some way. We can act kindly to a stranger and change the course of their day. However understanding that the cause and effect of actions is not simple, that there is no guaranteed outcome, is where we gain strength. This strength is

derived from reacting with reason and wisdom rather than getting caught up in emotions or trying to control the uncontrollable.

The Stoics suggest that we should act Virtuously, do the best we can, and be the best person. And this virtue should be enacted in the present. If we act on the things we can control, in the present, in the best way possible, we are doing the best we can, and we are pursuing virtue in our lives. The only space we ever occupy is the present. We are always within it, as the previous moment becomes the past. So, if in every moment, where possible, we act reasonably, acting on what we know to be true, and what we face in the present, we need have no other worries. When the future comes, we shall face it, with the strength and knowledge that we acquire in the ever-moving moment of now.

In a world so fraught with chaos and indifference, for me Stoicism seems to add a touch of clarity to a confusing world. Acknowledging that there are things we cannot change, allows for us to approach these concerns with an aura of indifference. Furthermore, we can emerge with a focus on what we have power to make better, notably ourselves. When I find myself becoming anxious, worrying about what will come. Sometimes taking a Stoic approach and realising that my anxieties are derived from events yet to come, of which I have no control, nor understanding of their probability, is calming.

I believe it was put best by Ryan Holiday in his podcast 'The Daily Stoic'<sup>[2]</sup>, which looks at modern life through the lens of ancient Stoic philosophy. In one specific episode he suggests that "anxiety is arrogance". When we become anxious, we are usually making a negative presumption about the future, predicting a devastating outcome. In actual fact, most of time these things never occur. Our anxious minds are so certain they are right, when most of the time they get so much wrong. As another great Philosopher put it:

*We suffer more often in imagination than in reality*

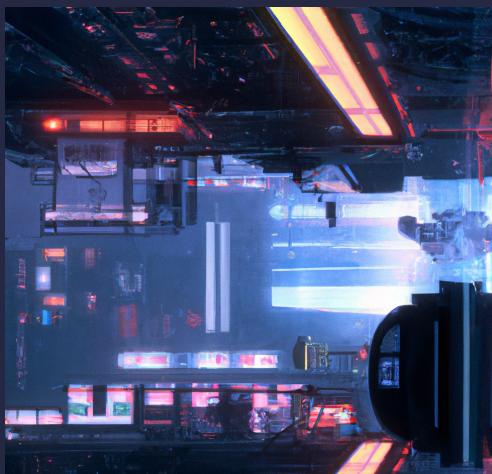
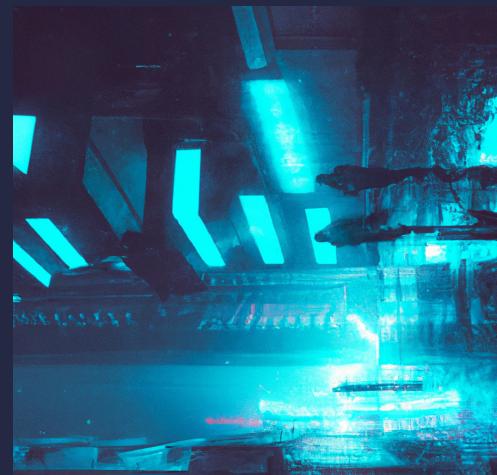
*Seneca<sup>[3]</sup>*

Stoicism is a misunderstood philosophy, many assume to be stoic is to be unemotional and cold. In my opinion it is far from that. Stoicism offers a perspective on the world which aims to keep us in check of ourselves, our emotions and our actions. It aims to bring into focus all those things which we should be grateful for in our lives, and disregard things which neither affect us nor matter in the grand scheme of things, such as fame, wealth or material possessions. A life lived by stoicism is not easy, and takes a great deal of mental strength to cultivate, something I have come nowhere close to when trying to live by Stoicism. Nonetheless I expect there is one aspect of this ancient philosophy which can aid us all in bettering ourselves as individuals and in turn as a society. There is a Stoic within all of us, let them take the wheel for a while, and see how things go.

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# BLADE RUNNER 2049

BY JOHANNA LUUPP

*[INTERLINKED]*

*Monolithic Despair.*

*A hopeless, suffocating city looms,*

*Its multilingual labyrinth an endless expanse.*

*Solar farms abandoned to the dust and wind.*

*Depressing, Disgusting, Dead, Dehumanizing.*

*No endpoint in sight, no respite to be found.*

*A sterile gleam of evocative whiteness.*

*Impractical and senseless, what higher purpose does this serve?*

*[INTERLINKED]*

*Triggering anxiety and disgust.*

*Love, a fleeting hope, emerges.*

*"What's it like to hold the hand of someone you love?"*

*Escapism, Abandonment, Duty, Purpose.*

*"An angel should never enter Heaven without a gift."*

*No humanity, hierarchy permeates all aspects of life.*

*Authorities play their role, but for what use?*

*[INTERLINKED]*

A selection of thoughts, observations and connections made during a screening of Blade Runner 2049

Graphics (ironically) generated by DALL-E



Systems are in place to ensure every component and process can work in harmony and deliver the desired outcome. Their ability to create a whole that is greater than the parts is one of the many reasons why we trust them, why we believe in them. However, like all things, they must adapt to their era and to do this requires questioning their operation, no matter how well intentioned they may be.

Today's architectural education is one we are almost familiar with on a regular basis. It is a system many of us will be components of for the better part of a decade. When a labour of love demands such a high price, it must be as refined as can be. Unfortunately, this is where it falls short.

Over the last two and a half years, Decolonise Architecture has examined the state of today's architectural education and it is clear that there is much progress to be made when it comes to creating a level playing field. From the under-representation of minorities to whitewashing of the historical canon, today's system has not accurately represented its context for a long time. Over this time, DA has undertaken many approaches to tackle these issues on a 'solutions first' basis.

This September, at the end of Freshers Week 2022, DA hosted its first ever in person event, 'The DA Festival' at the University of Bath. The event was conceived as a testbed for our ideas, a large scale forum where students, staff and practitioners alike could share ideas and solutions on the shortcomings of architectural education.

With featured talks from university faculty, activists and a keynote panel including the incoming President of the RIBA, Muyiwa Oki, the event highlighted the very real appetite for change within the staff and student body.

Ideas were put forward on how a more inclusive approach could further climate action and produce an educational environment where no student felt that they could not contribute. It emphasised the importance of representation within the industry and that listening to previously marginalised voices can only benefit the system.

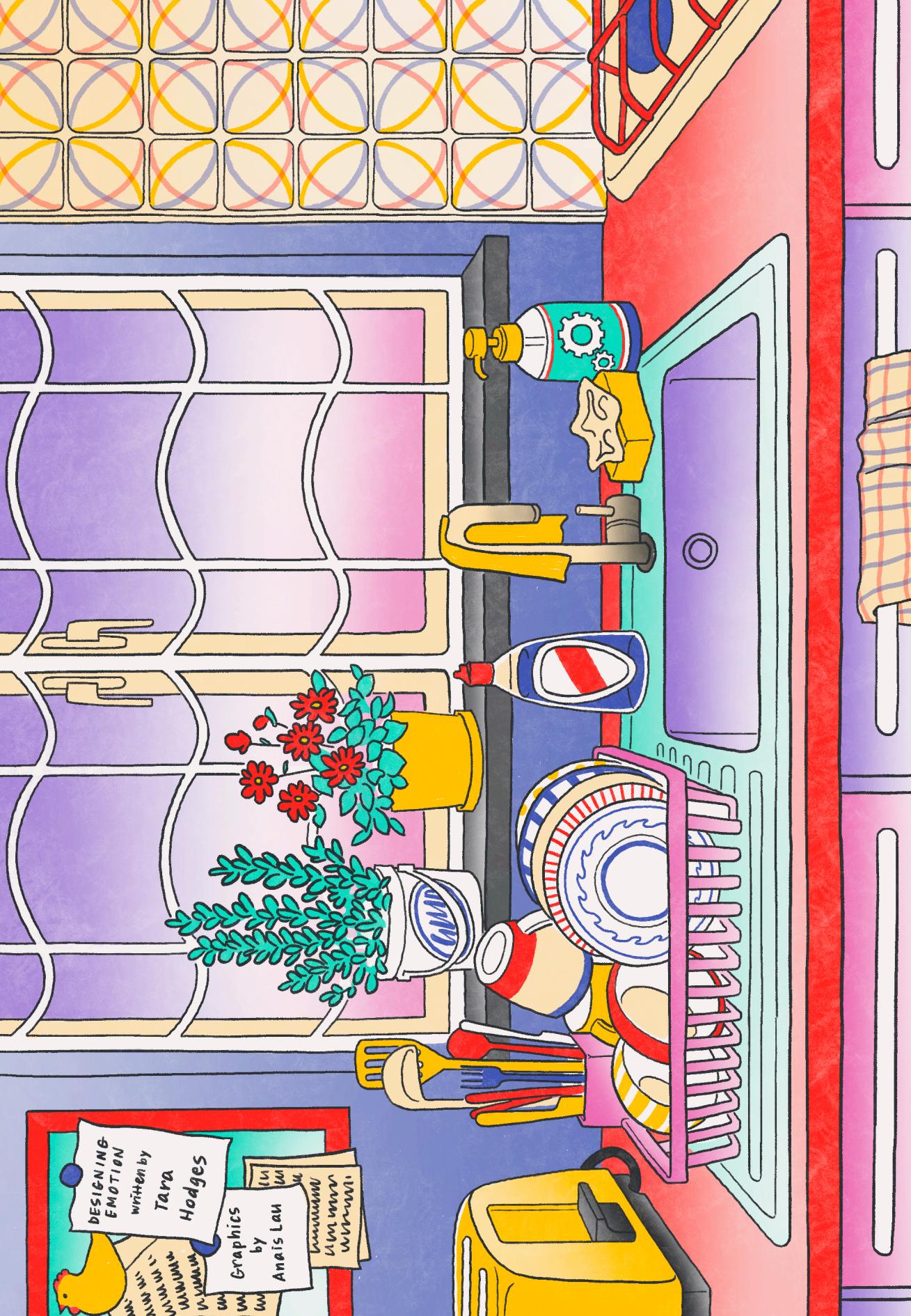
Raising awareness will always have its place within the timeline of change but the festival made it evident that many of us already know where the intervention is required. What is left is to create the platform where individuals feel comfortable to share such opinions and have faith that they will have an impact on the future of architectural education. By documenting such opinions and ideas, we can create an informal guide to the architectural education of tomorrow and work towards creating a system that truly benefits from its many contributors.

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Photography by Author

# DECOLONISING THE SYSTEM

BY MOHIT BUCH



experiences and shared instinctive response. While his Modernist contemporaries were moving towards a modular, mass-produced era of design, Kandinsky and many of his Bauhaus colleagues challenged the generalisation of individual experience, with colours and forms as the foundation of this emotionally conscious approach to design.

The concept of art and design as a device for emotional stimulation is mirrored in our interaction with the built environment. Through design, we have the potential to influence the subconscious 'feel' of a space, whether a grand public building or intimate living room, to characterise and define the experience of the user. Philosopher Alain de Botton explores this in his book *Architecture of Happiness*, discussing our receptiveness to architecture, and its capacity to influence and enhance the fluctuation of daily life. We spend our entire lives surrounded by the built environment – it is the



Colour plays a fundamental role in how we interact with the world around us. It explodes from every corner of life, enriching and quietening, calming and overwhelming. This visual phenomenon has been explored for millennia, a fascinating and accessible method of connecting with both the inanimate and the animate around us. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe is among those who have engaged with this in his book *Theory of Colour* (1810). His theory revolved around colour as a psychological influencer, with the capacity for inducing subjective emotional responses. Strongly influenced by Goethe (1), Wassily Kandinsky's colour theory is one of the most prominent of the twentieth century, retaining significant influence on modern art and design. In his book, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, Kandinsky writes, "Colour directly influences the soul," a poetic one-liner encompassing his theory that colour is an emotive, psychological thing, drawing on individual

Every aspect of the world around us incites some form of instinctive response, significant or minor, positive or negative. Typically, these arise from our five senses, which allow us to engage with our surroundings as we move through life. In design, these senses can be stimulated by intentional features and creative decisions. A dim, quiet room encourages solitude and reflection, while a vibrant, open space attracts lively, dynamic interactions. There are many factors to these responses, such as colour, light and material, all of which complement and contrast each other to create an identity of the space – an identity which is fundamental to the experience of those who inhabit it. This concept has been explored by innumerable figures, from theorists to artists such as Wassily Kandinsky and architects such Luis Barragán, each playing a key role in shaping how the built moments of the world stimulate emotion.

encompassing background to our life, and therefore holds a monumental capacity for emotional engagement. De Botton suggests that this engagement already exists, in the little ways we adapt our spaces to accommodate our lives – flowers on the windowsill, pictures on the wall, furniture picked because its colour, texture, or shape appealed to us in some way. The instinctive ‘pull’ that draws us to these personal, emotive features is what others like Kandinsky and Barragán interact with and seek to manipulate in their work.

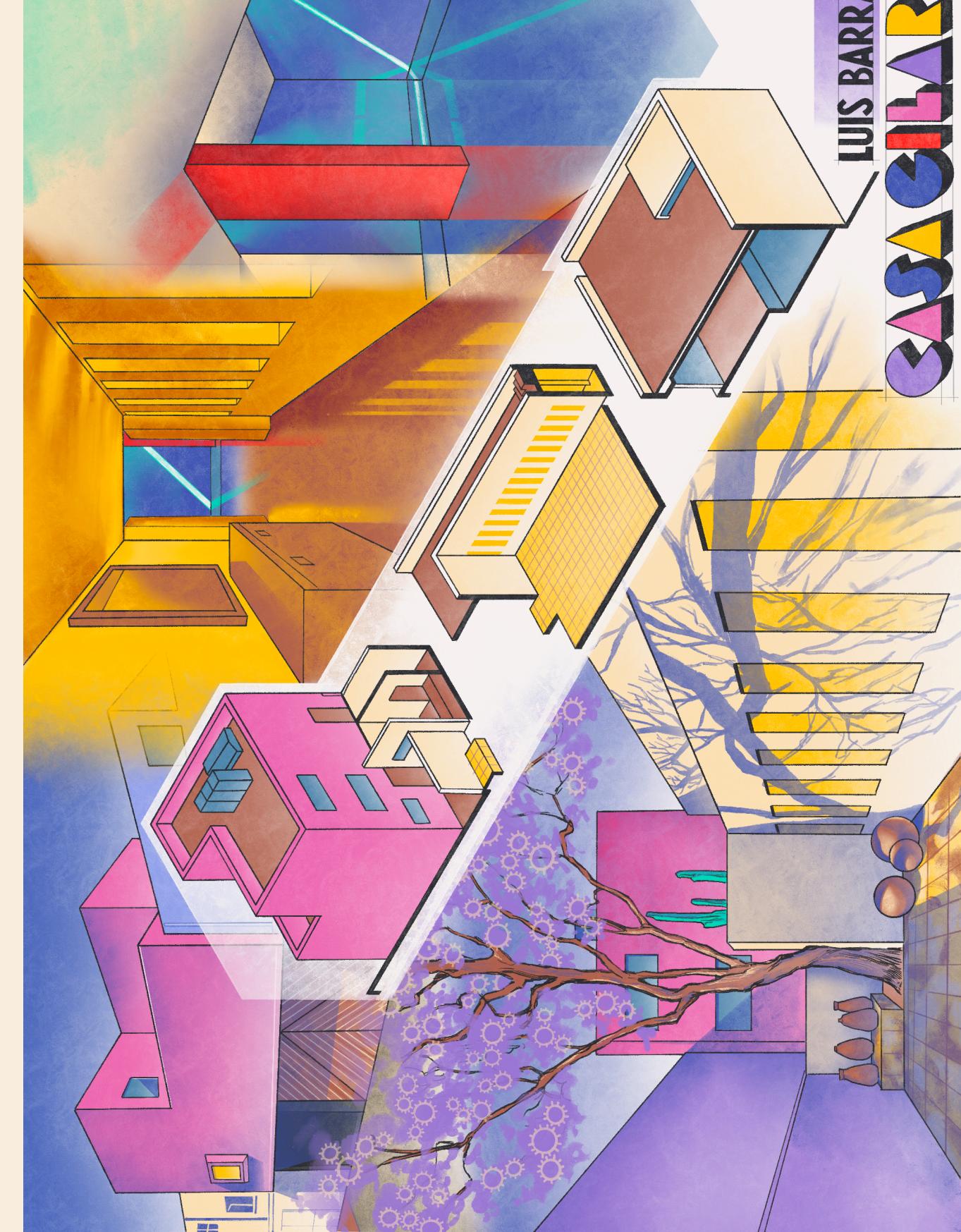
Application of these principles can be found throughout the built environment, such as in the work of architect Luis Barragán. The principle of architecture as a psychological stimulant is something that Luis Barragán is renowned for, particularly in his later works following an introduction to Modernist icon Le Corbusier and other bold, enigmatic designers of the 18th Century (2). Like Kandinsky, Barragán engaged with the Modernist principles of the time, but diverged from the “house as a machine” Modernist concept, instead aiming for “emotional architecture” (2). Bold block-coloured feature walls characterise his take on the Mexican International Style, in collaboration with dynamic light sources and varying textures internally versus externally. A key example of this style is Casa Gilardi, Mexico City, which comprises of two structures which separate the living and private accommodation spaces. Pink and lilac walls frame the patio and pool between the two, creating a vibrant transition. The linking corridor is filled with an optimistic and welcoming yellow, complimented by the light filtered in through vertical panels. Light was a fundamental influence on Barragán’s work; its influence on the identity of spaces was both acknowledged and

celebrated in his designs. Barragán was said to have first sketched out the various areas within a design, and then given presentations to local architects and artists on the technical and emotive aspects of the design. It was during construction that decisions on colour and adjustments to light and detailed elements were made, once the architect was able to observe the space and interpret its identity and intended emotional purpose.

The opportunities presented from the integration of emotional stimulation in architecture are significant, broadening the depth with which the purpose of a design can be realised and experienced. The built environment plays an incredible role in daily life, and therefore has the power to enhance the ways in which life unfolds within it. This is both a huge responsibility and a wonderful privilege for designers, and should be approached with full awareness and resourceful utilisation of all devices available to them, ensuring the technical does not overshadow the abstract.

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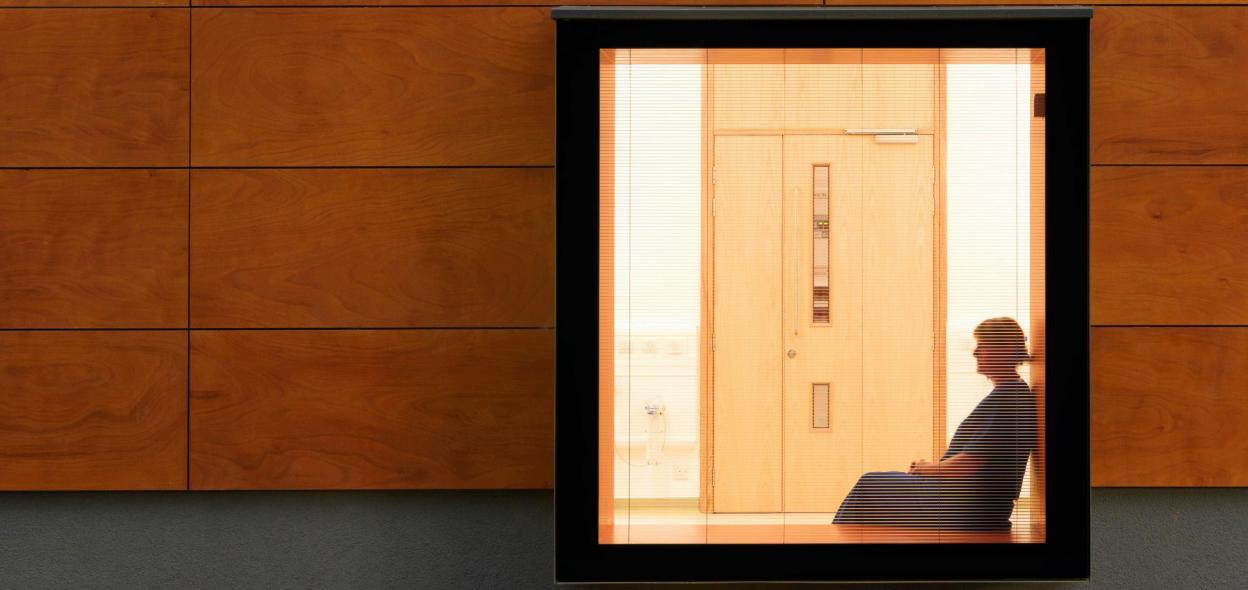


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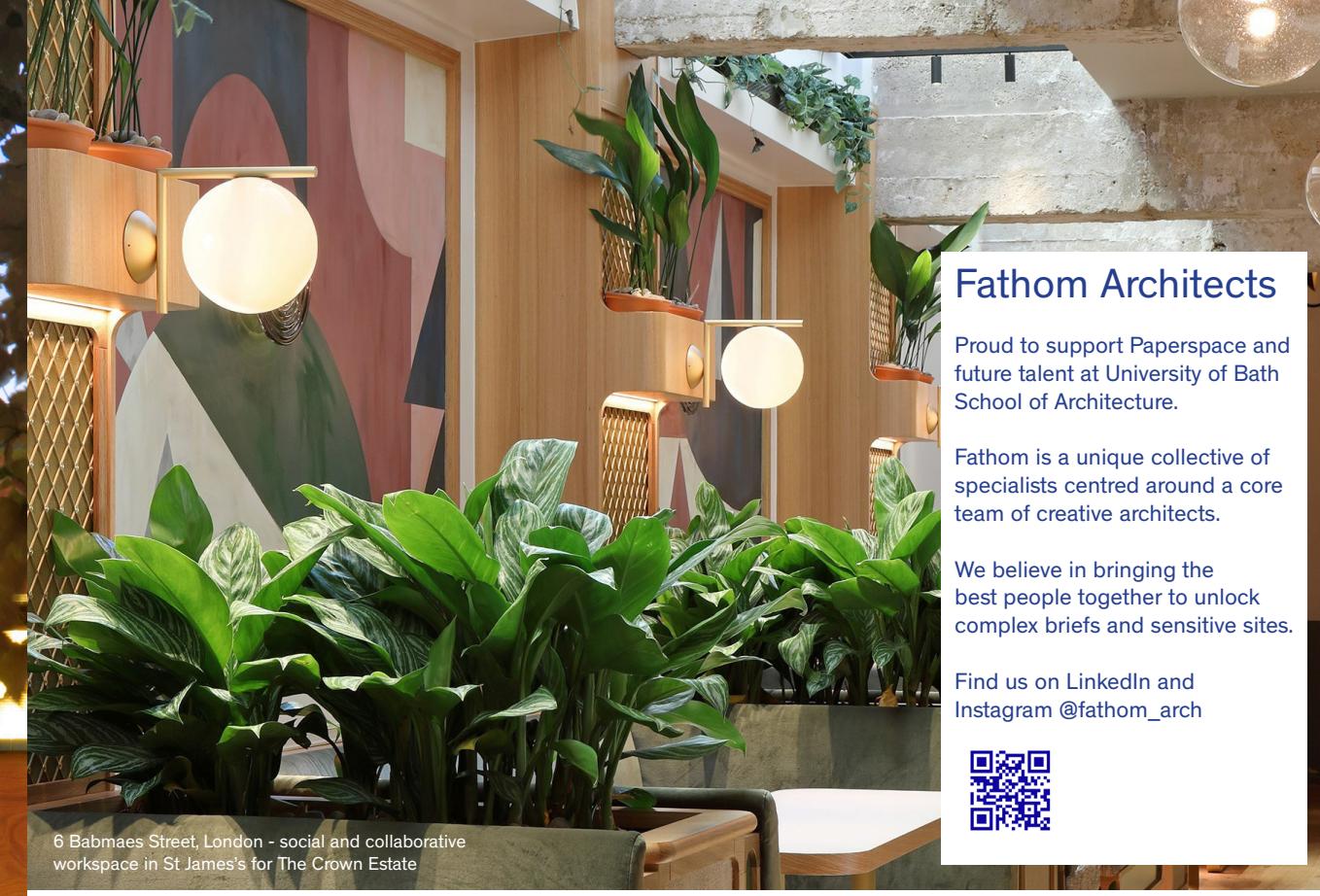
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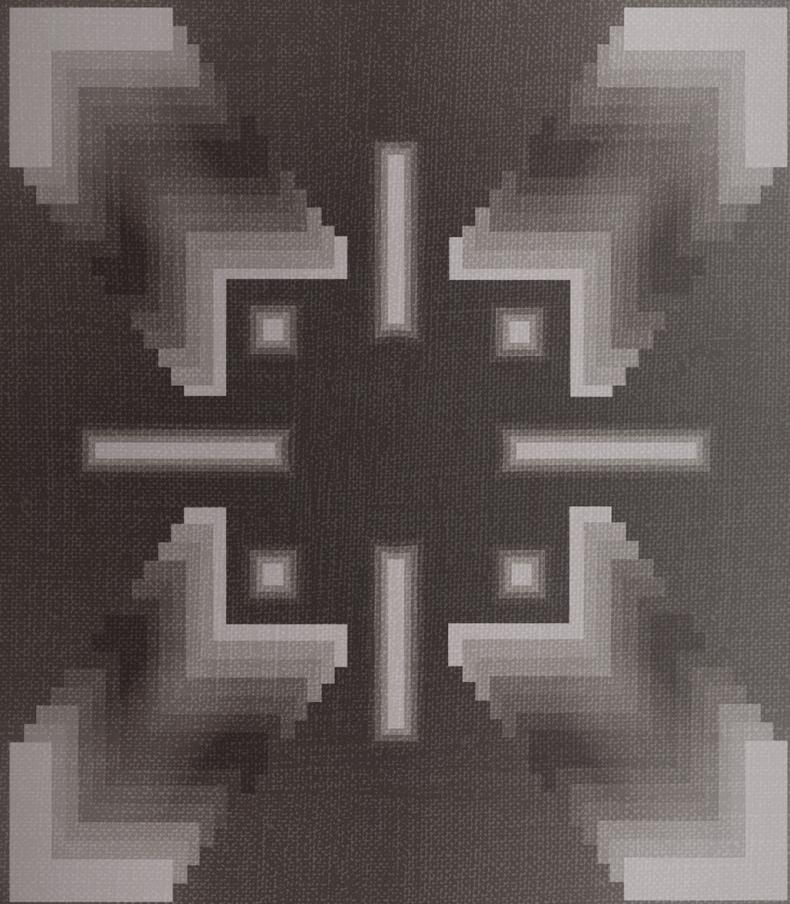
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