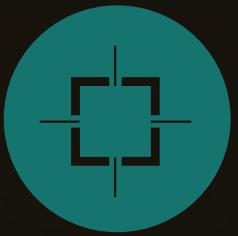
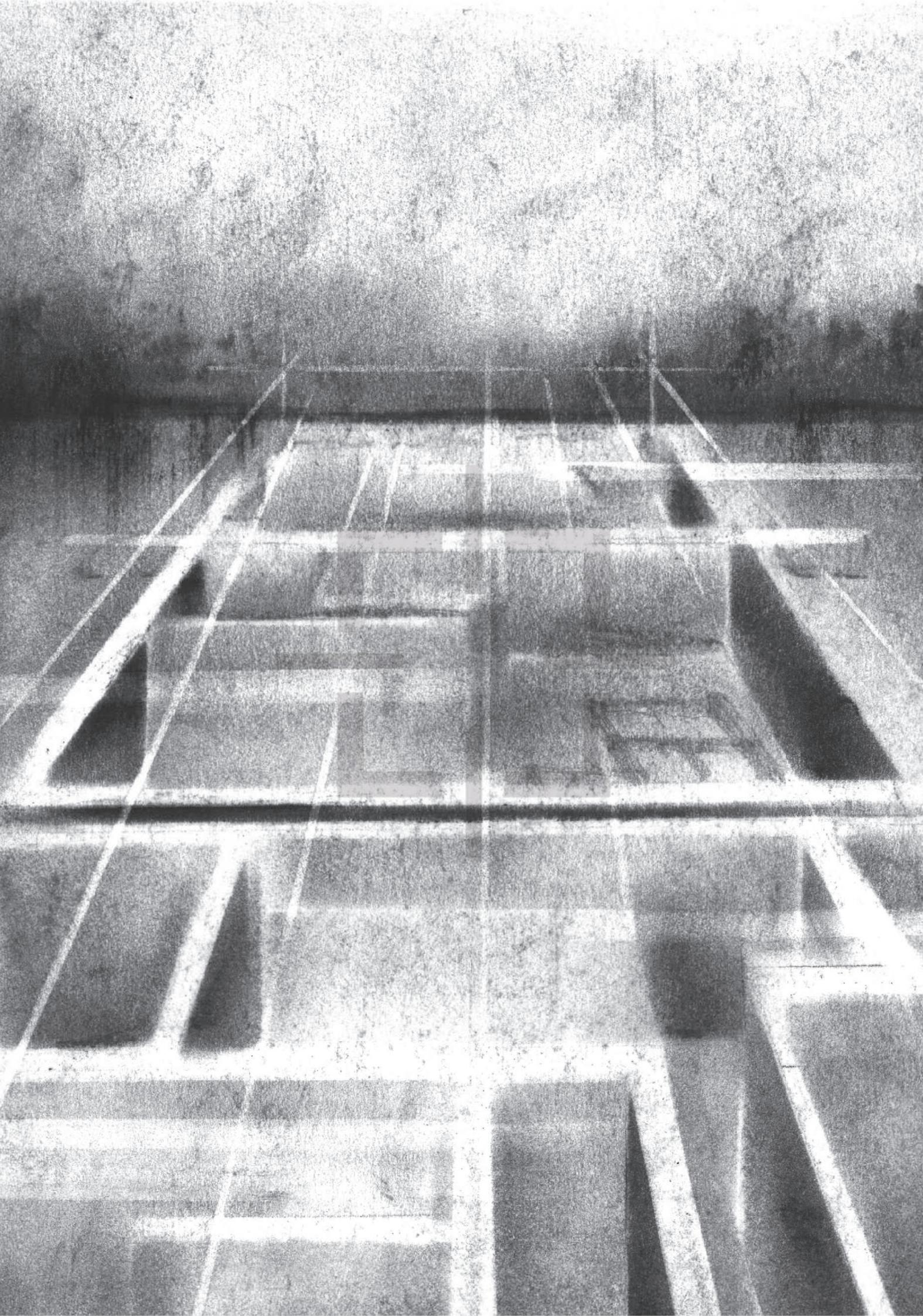


The background of the page features a dark, abstract image of blurred lights, possibly from a city at night or a light trail photograph, creating a sense of motion and depth.

paperspace



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ISSUE EIGHT JUNE 2017 TRUTH(S) STUDENT HISTORY
JUNE 2017 TRUTH(S) STUDENT HISTORY
OPINION REVIEW



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Thank you to those who contributed their photos, work and drawings.

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Lilian Lam

Well Hello there, Thank you for stopping by for Issue 8 of Paperspace, now 4 years strong. We are really excited to share with you this issue, and its consequent theme Truth(s).

While musing on this theme, I stumbled across this quote by Louis Aragon and thought I would share:

'Light is meaningful only in relation to darkness, and truth presupposes error. It is these mingled opposites which people our life, which make it pungent, intoxicating. We only exist in terms of this conflict, in the zone where black and white clash.'

The articles in this issue of Paperspace playfully and bravely tackle a multiplicity of truths; this grey zone of juxtapositions, contrast and subjectivity in what one holds to be true. Several of the articles address our conscience as designers, such as **Re-thinking 'Honesty' & Architecture** and **Fashion: A New Truth**, questioning our social responsibility and impact to the planet. **Truth & Style** investigates the relationship between these two concepts, and questions of style also arise in **Seeking Truth through Minimal Living** which addresses the ideal of a simplistic way of existence. Representation, reality and how we see things are also key issues disclosed. **Letters in Language of Lines**, questions our design process whereas **The Functionalist Aesthetic: Form or Function?** challenges the continuous dilemma of honesty in materiality and structure. I hope you will enjoy the eclectic variety in topic and tone.

I'm exceptionally proud and overwhelmed by the brilliant people who contribute to this magazine. It is amazing how there has been a snowball effect of people wanting to contribute: this is our biggest issue yet. People often ask me how many people are involved in Paperspace. I thought I would tally up the number of contributors over the last eight issues, and it is a whopping 60. This is not even including those who have been kind enough to share their photos or their work to feature. Sadly this is my last semester at the University of Bath, and I write this farewell letter with nostalgic humility and sheer gladness of what we have achieved. From sitting in the 6E Crit room and trying to brainstorm ideas, to the launch party and to all the people I have been lucky enough to get to know, it has been such a great part of my time at Uni. I just want to say a huge thank you to everybody who has ever contributed or been involved in anyway, had a conversation about or ever read Paperspace. Thank you so much and enjoy this issue.

Editor in Chief of Paperspace

Issy Spence

Student

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Just Another Brick In The Wall: First Years Visit Ibstock

First years headed to the Ibstock brick factory in Bristol in anticipation for our final and biggest project of the year, Hearth.

By Ella Thorns, Peilin Liao, K Thin Zar Min and Zibo Zhang

When we first got told we were going to a brick factory it's easy to say some of us were less than excited. All we could imagine was a pile of bricks in a dirty old warehouse, not quite the glitz and glamour we had expected. But are you really an architecture student if you don't get over excited at such meagre materials? The literal building blocks of civilisation.

Cattybrook¹ was one of the first brick factories in England 200 years ago and it is still as popular as ever with waiting times as long as six weeks for an order. You can tell just how passionate the staff are which is seen in their products. The sheer scale of production was incredible, in Bristol alone 200,000 bricks are made in a day and travel on average only 62 miles to reach their new life.

As we wandered around in our high vis jackets feeling very important, we were in awe as thousands of bricks every hour were cut, shaped, fired and wrapped, ready to become a part of somebody's home or office.

Machinery, so perfectly timed, hypnotised us as it worked together to produce Ibstock's own gold brick from clay quarried just metres away.

After exploring the factory, we were given further insight into the vast variety of bricks available, from blue bricks to hand crafted curved bricks specially commissioned. Our understanding was deepened into how, as architects, we can design a building to celebrate the simple brick and use them to their full potential.

Sample bricks are now a regular sight in the studio, brought back as souvenirs. Never have I seen so many faces lift when they are told they can pick a brick to bring home. The tabletops are scattered with them acting as desk tidies and storage for the many pens us architects love so much as testament of our final project based around the humble brick.

¹The name of the factory at Bristol



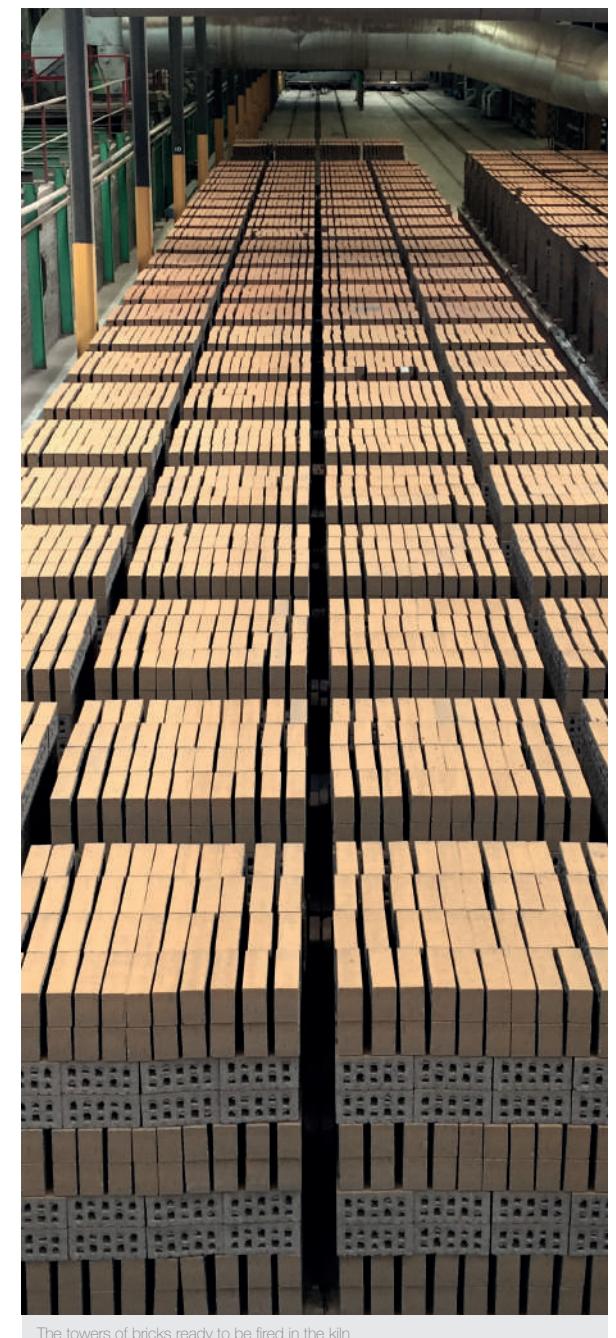
The aesthetically pleasing selection of ceramic coated bricks that are made at Cattybrook



First year students proudly wearing their high vis jackets



Missshapen bricks making up the road to the quarry



The towers of bricks ready to be fired in the kiln

Interview: ACE heads to Zambia

This summer six of our Civil Engineering students are heading to Zambia as part of the Volunteer Zambia project, with several other Wallace Group universities.

By Lana Harding

The project aims to support young people in deprived areas through sport, aiding the development of self-reliance, ambition and teamwork. The role of the ACE, or 'Bath Build' team is to design, build and maintain facilities for the project. Students from the department first went out to Zambia last year, which was a huge success, with the construction of netball and volleyball courts.

During the 6 weeks in Zambia, this year's projects are to include the design and construction of netball courts, maintenance of changing facilities and investigation and surveying sites for future projects. A focus is on sustainability and efficient design, enabling designs to last as long as possible.

We've spoken to members of this and last year's team about the what they're doing.

What excites you most about going to Zambia?

Max, 4th year: I'm most excited about going out there and doing something helpful. It sounds a bit obvious but not often do students get the chance to go to a developing country and actually do something the locals will (hopefully) be grateful for. Not only will we leave Zambia knowing we did 'good' but by volunteering rather than just travelling around we'll really be able to experience the culture and learn from the people we work with. That said, I'd be lying if I didn't say I'm also excited for the weekend trips to Victoria Falls and the baby elephant sanctuary. I expect it'll be well deserved after the long weeks of hard work!



Meet the ACE 2 Zambia Team 2017: Lana Harding, Max Blatjak, Dani Trevalli, Sam Rawes, Camille Cowan, Sam Auger

How are you feeling about the project?

Camille, 3rd Year: The prospect of being involved in this project is really exciting, although a little nerve wrecking and stressful at times, but that's all part of the process isn't it! We've been running around like headless chickens, juggling the organisation of the project alongside our university studies, but the prospect of going to Zambia to volunteer with such a lovely group of people makes it so worthwhile!

What do you think is special about this project?

Sam, 2nd year: I think it's great that we're not hopping on the bandwagon under the banner of 'charity volunteering'. The sports facilities simply wouldn't happen if we weren't involved: as we are funding, designing, and managing construction of the project. For us as Civ. Eng. students, some coming to the end of our degrees, it's a chance to transfer some of the skills and knowledge we have gained into constructing facilities that have longevity and will support the work of Sport In Action for years to come.

It will be awesome to be working with Zambian contractors too. They've been doing it for years, and don't need to be told how to use a pick-axe, and will be far more adept in construction in a less developed context. On the flip-side, in terms of health and safety, setting out and general precision, there's a lot that we bring to the table - a good balance I think.

Any super fun fundraising events?

Max: We had an acoustic night where some of the amazingly talented people of Music Soc performed. It was a great night with acts including Selena Goaway and Ed Shearstress.

Lana, 3rd year: At the beginning of April we held a pub quiz which was an absolute blast, including a marshmallow and spaghetti tower building round. We couldn't have asked for a better turnout, although a team of lecturers did manage to come out top beating everyone!

What are the team like?

Camille: The team this year are great (we're not biased or anything). As a bunch we are quite similar in a lot of ways and we seem to have bonded well together. We didn't all know each other at the start, but it is exciting to have been able to meet new people who have such good intentions at heart. I'm sure we still have a lot more quirky qualities we have yet to learn about each other and no doubt some of these will pop out in Zambia.

From last year's team

What was the best thing about Zambia last year?

Fraser, 4th year Civ. Eng.: The people are hands down the best thing! Not just the Zambian residents, who are the most welcoming and happy people I have ever met, but also your team members who I went out with. Over the course of the six weeks you become a very close group, creating friendships that have and will last for a long time.

Funny story?

Whist on our weekend trip to Livingston, the coach broke down about 500metres from the border crossing, leaving us stuck three hours. All the locals were very helpful and managed to; source a mechanic who diagnosed the problem, got him a taxi to the store, purchased the required part, taxi back to the coach and then somehow welded the new part on with a car battery contraption! All of this came to a grand total of £12.50!

If you want to find out more or donate check us out:

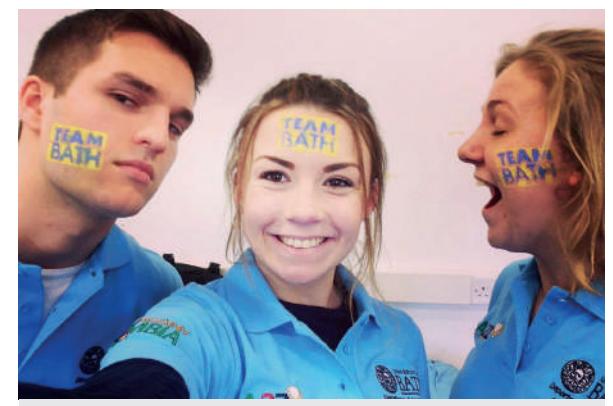
Facebook: [facebook.com/ACE2Zambia/](https://www.facebook.com/ACE2Zambia/)

Just Giving: [justgiving.com/fundraising/ACE-2-Zambia2017](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ACE-2-Zambia2017)
Or drop us an email a2z@bath.ac.uk

All donations go towards materials and contractor's wages for the projects – not our flights!



Hot competition between students and lecturers at fundraising pub quiz



Collecting donations on BUCS match days, go Team Bath



The opening event of a netball court built by last year's ACE 2 Zambia team

Volunteering at the Holburne Museum

Make connections, meet interesting people, learn something new.

by Paulina Konkina

Since its re-opening in 2011, the Holburne Museum has expanded its volunteering program to help to organise and run some amazing exhibitions as well as its delightful permanent collection. I found out about this program by chance during my spontaneous visit to the Holburne Museum on a cold, wintery day a few months back. It was easy to find out more information and apply on the Holburne Museum website, and after a couple of weeks, I received an email telling me that I was accepted into the volunteering program. During my first induction, I was introduced to the history of the museum and my role as a volunteer and the importance of the scheme that helps to deliver the range of events, exhibitions, and education in the absence of any state funding.

It was a little daunting to start at first as the roles undertaken by volunteers here at the Museum are considered some of the most important across the organisation. However, I was positively surprised how people of all ages and from a variety of past experiences create a friendly environment and it is easy

to socialise and make new friends. The majority of volunteers work within galleries as Gallery Stewards and assist with visitor questions and queries whilst keeping a watchful eye on the most precious pieces in the collection.

From the first day, I learned that it is vital to the role to balance the time between visitor service and collection security. There is also an opportunity for everyone to get involved in other areas through interviews and informal discussions.

You can feel that the Museum encourages a greater involvement to ensure continued learning, enhancement of skills and personal development through engagement and commitment to the collection.

Whether you are able to offer a few hours a month or a day or two a week it is a great opportunity to use your time and energy and help the Holburne Museum to become one of the most exciting, innovative and engaging museums in the country.

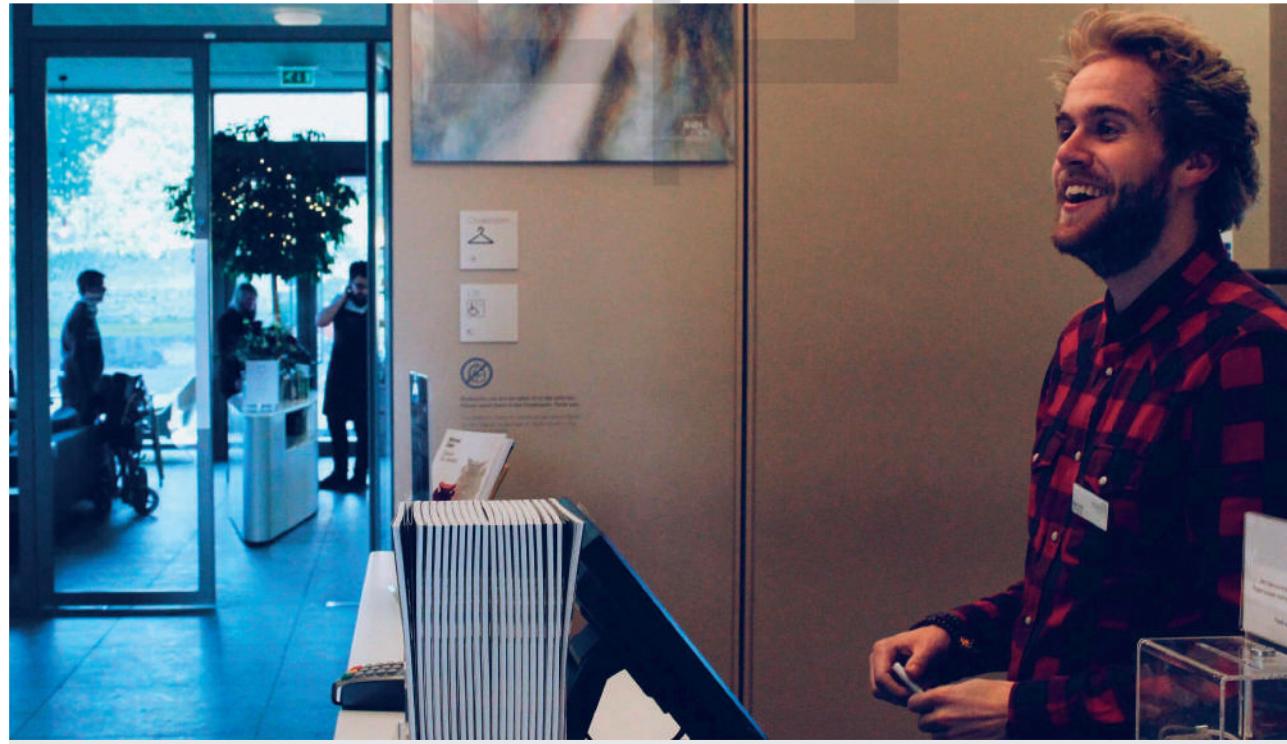


Fig. 1. Handrail detail on the Querini Stampalia Bridge in Venice, by Carlo Scarpa.



The Cult of Ugliness

or why brutalist architecture is back in the spotlight

Are we becoming bored with sleek, glazed architecture based on parameters and algorithms? Is the growing re-appreciation of brutalist architecture just a guilty pleasure to indulge in while actually admiring and designing the contemporary sustainable?

By Julia Korpacka

Only after joining what I believe was the third or fourth social media group admiring brutalist architecture I realised that their members (me included) have a really, well, peculiar taste. What else could possibly explain flooding your wall with images of cheap and often severely derelict social housing, soviet monuments and heavyweight concrete megastructures from all over the world? Having been raised in Eastern Europe and now studying in the United Kingdom I will try to analyse the story behind the hype and discuss what it is like to live in béton brut.

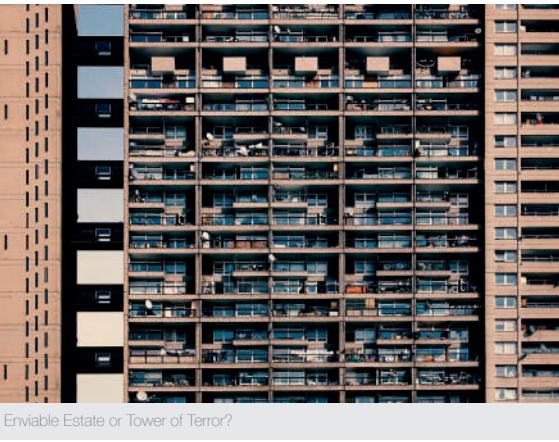
How it all began

In the United Kingdom, the golden years of brutalist architecture fall between 1950s and 1970s when architects were challenged to rebuild the post-war world aiming for a socialist utopia – think high-rise, affordable (both in terms of construction and inhabiting) housing and public buildings. This somewhat Corbusier-esque approach to the society was, however, meant to be stripped of the modernist symbolism and philosophy of the 1930s, perceived by the system as bourgeois and unnecessarily expensive. Embracing raw concrete after which they are named¹, the brutalists designed, inspired and encouraged by the newly built

Unité d'Habitation, London's high-rise icons such as the Barbican Estate by Chamberlin, Powell and Bon, or Ernö Goldfinger's Trellick Tower.

The rise of the high-rise

The famous Barbican, conceived in the 50s, built between the 1960s and late 70s, was primarily intended to accommodate a mixed society of residents. However, due to the political changes, it has soon been sold almost entirely to private landlords and owners, and quickly established its reputation as a hip inner-city oasis for creatives and professionals. Rumour has it the Barbican has the highest density of architects' flats per square metre in London. Central location, floor-to-ceiling windows, private and public gardens, world-class arts centre, carefully planned and detailed architecture – that's what attracts the profession. I had a chance to talk with Živile and Ian who have lived in the Barbican for the past two years. She is a Part 1 Architect and he is an interior designer, hence their choice to rent a flat there was in no way accidental. 'It is an architectural masterpiece and we have always wanted to live here, but we didn't think we would', Živile explains. 'Before we moved here we lived in the Golden Lane Estate which is just around the corner². It was a really nice housing estate, but since there is no communal space or



Enville Estate or Tower of Terror?

garden, we really wanted to try the Barbican. Everything is so close, we can appreciate the city of London by actually living in it rather than travelling to it every day and we really enjoy it'. For both, the greatest advantage of living in the estate is the thought of the design. 'It is the fact that it has been built as flats, not converted like the majority of London where there is always a bit of a compromise. The longer we have lived here, taking the time to observe things, we have come to realise that the flats have been carefully considered, there have been some proper decisions made, and they work. Like the kitchen – of course the appliances are new, but the furniture has lasted 40 years and it is still absolutely fine', says Ian. There is only one thing they admit the Barbican lacks. 'Those small high streets with little coffee shops, the bits that give you that local feel.' I think it was primarily considered', Živile admits. 'You see quite lot of those weird, empty spaces that were definitely intended to be a shop or a restaurant. Or the public area by the church, it clearly was intended to be like a town square of the estate, but there is just nothing going on there', adds Ian. 'It seems like the Barbican is becoming inhabited more and more by young people. With that vigorous, youthful approach, maybe they will start setting up markets and cafés, get more involved in the community life.'

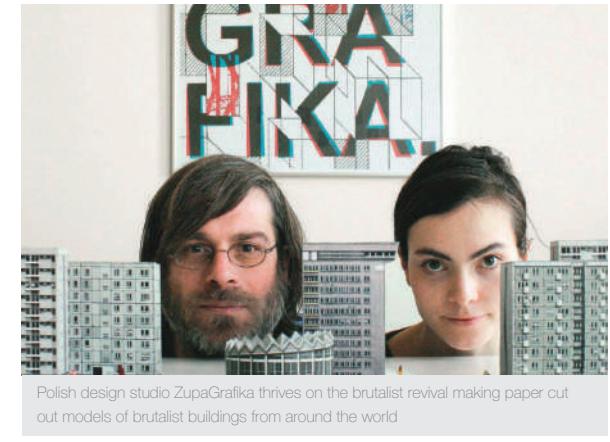
The inspiring antihero

The Trellick Tower, however, also known as the Tower of Terror, owes its charming nickname to the troublesome residents who had caused this block of council flats to descend into crime, neglect and decay in the 1970s. It is said to have inspired J. G. Ballard to write 'High-Rise' – a novel, probably lesser known than the 2015 film under the same title starring Tom Hiddleston and Jeremy Irons. Moreover, this thrilling tale of Le Corbusier's Ville Contemporaine meets human nature and goes terribly wrong is not the only British dystopia with brutalism in the background (Kubrick's Clockwork Orange, anyone?). Fortunately for the Trellick Tower and to the horror of many, 1998 brought a twist in its story, listing this 'monstrous disfigurement' a Grade II* building. From then on, the infamous Tower of Terror has been slowly becoming a second, less prestigious and less charming but still classically brutal, version of the Barbican. They are now extremely desired estates not only because of central location and interesting

¹ Béton brut is the French name for raw concrete, hence the 'crude' name of the movement

²The Golden Lane Estate is Barbican's younger sibling from 1950s, also designed by the Barbican trio

³On 16 May 1968, a gas explosion caused a collapse of one entire corner of a 22-storey East London residential building – it was a result of both poor design and poor construction. It gave rise to a shift in the public attitude towards the high-rise architecture and encouraged changes in building regulations



Polish design studio ZupaGrafika thrives on the brutalist revival making paper cut out models of brutalist buildings from around the world

architecture, but they actually turn out to be extremely convenient to live in. In the United Kingdom, that is. Brutalism of the post-soviet countries is a completely different story.

Behind the curtain

Let's come back to 1950s. The general idea behind the post-war architecture of the Eastern Block was roughly the same, however known under the name of socialist modernism. Those buildings were far more politically expressive (in the case of public architecture) and of much poorer quality (in case of housing). The designs were incredibly versatile though, mostly due to the vast, culturally diverse area the USSR occupied. Ranging from 'Manhattan' housing complex in Wrocław, Poland, through Eastern and Western Gates of Belgrade in Serbia, through the 'Telephone Palace' in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, to the Russian State Institute of Robotics and Technical Cybernetics in St. Petersburg. Today, there is a certain nostalgia to it. Not for the soviet times though. The generation of the 20-30 year olds is not restrained with the politically-charged baggage our parents and grandparents carry. Moreover, and that concerns both continental Europe and the UK, we don't remember Ronan Point³ or the hardship and the paper-thin party walls. Instead, we remember a brilliant childhood spent playing outside alongside a bunch of other kids from residential blocks from all around the neighbourhood. Hence, to the horror of the family, we now appreciate the creations of this infamous era.

Just a fashion?

Since the brutalist revival takes place mostly in the social media and operates rather by the means of visual art and merchandise than actual contemporary design, does it mean that we are yet to experience its 'real-life' comeback in architecture or is it just one of the ever-changing trends, like the 90s fashion being back in style? Can we use the clothing analogy – from the streets to the haute-couture runways? If so, it is now the street-style phase that will soon inspire the designers to incorporate some of the features of this trend in a better or worse fashion. Do we actually want it or should brutalism remain a cool part of the architectural history? You decide.

craft, material, detail: A Book and A Building

"It is a really generous thing to build a building well" – Sasha Bhavan

By Ben Hair

Having spent my third-year individual project under the tutorship of Sasha Bhavan, and the resulting 6 months of placement working with Sasha in the firm ran by her and her partner, Simon Knox, I feel very familiar with the style, process and produce of Knox Bhavan Architects.

Knox Bhavan set up in Peckham in 1995 and have since collected innumerable awards owing to the quality and craft of their portfolio. During the six months, I spent working with them I contributed to a range of exciting and ambitious projects, the most interesting being the drawings for Knox Bhavan's new office, that was on site just down the road.

Today Knox Bhavan's new base is complete, and I went to Peckham once again to see Sasha and the team to see how things are getting on. The first time I saw the office, just after my interview in February of 2016, the digging out of the basement had just been finished. Now it stands as the most meticulously crafted building I have ever experienced; every single inch of it designed, debated and drawn until its glorious fruition.

I am greeted by Sasha, and Mimi the office dog, and led through to see the rest of the team. The new studio is flooded with natural light and complete with my personal favourite element of the scheme; the main work bench that runs the length of the studio can be worked at standing, seated, or anywhere in between. As I sit in our own studio back in Bath editing this article, I am extremely envious of the vertical versatility of the Knox Bhavan desk.

The new office includes all the hallmarks of a Knox Bhavan building: Intricate joinery is littered throughout, employing the practices' exacting knowledge of materiality. An ingenious mezzanine floor constructed of two layers of birch faced ply is fixed to a shallow chassis formed from ply cut to form beams supported by water-jet cut steel straps in tension. All this allows a shallow construction enabling the extra floor to float above the entrance lobby. The triple height frontage brings light to all parts of the front of the building and to the rear a brise soleil constructed of reflective mirror polished stainless steel petals provides shading from glare whilst reflecting the dancing light off the pond that is home to a family of Koi Carp that also made the move from the old office. The new office seems like the manifestation of the ideals of Knox Bhavan; craft, material, detail.

Ben: You've been in the new office for nearly five months now, how long has the prospect of a new office been in motion?

Sasha: We were looking for about a year for a potential site. The existing building was being used by our stationary supplier and then we found out they were closing. We bought the site in February 2015. We measured everything and put in our planning application before the contract handover was complete and then we started on site the day of completion. We just went straight in and started building and did everything we knew we could that didn't need planning permission or party wall awards. So we started April 2015 and moved in November 2016. It was a bit nail biting to be honest!



In the end, we somehow managed to fit in another floor without the outside of the building appearing to change at all. But it's all on the same footprint. It was all rotten, we rebuilt everything except the top of the front elevation and the side walls, that's it. All of the floors are new, but we managed to squeeze a hell of a lot into it!

Ben: Although you're only 10 minutes down the road from the old office (also a design by Knox Bhavan), how do you think the change in environment has affected the way you work?

Sasha: I thought that I might find it quite difficult because we had been practicing from home or next to home for 20 years, but I really like the walk to work! And I thought that I would go home and work from home but I don't. It all feels much more like I've got control of what's work and what's home. Now I go home and I watch the telly, which I've never done before!

We each have our own space and because of that the office stays really tidy and it really orders your thoughts. The desk is always left clean every night and it's very calming. So, I think it has affected the way I work, it's made me a lot more focussed on what I'm doing. It's also a lot more collaborative, we've got the magnetic wall downstairs so we can pin up drawings and everyone can look at them and comment on them. I can't tell you how nice it is to work here.

Ben: Your new book, Knox Bhavan, craft, material, detail, talks in depth about the value you place on good clients. What was the biggest challenge about being your own client?

Sasha: The challenge is, as the challenge is with every project, money. But it was less of a challenge in the sense that the process was much more efficient. We weren't drawing things over and over again for somebody to scrutinise, we just drew

it and then did it, that made it very efficient. The connection between having the thought and having the thing was much more immediate and I think that saves money. I think clients waste an enormous amount of money beating around the bush. I'd love to just do projects for ourselves. The other thing was that dealing with the builders was great because we have a very close relationship and the quality of work here is amazing.

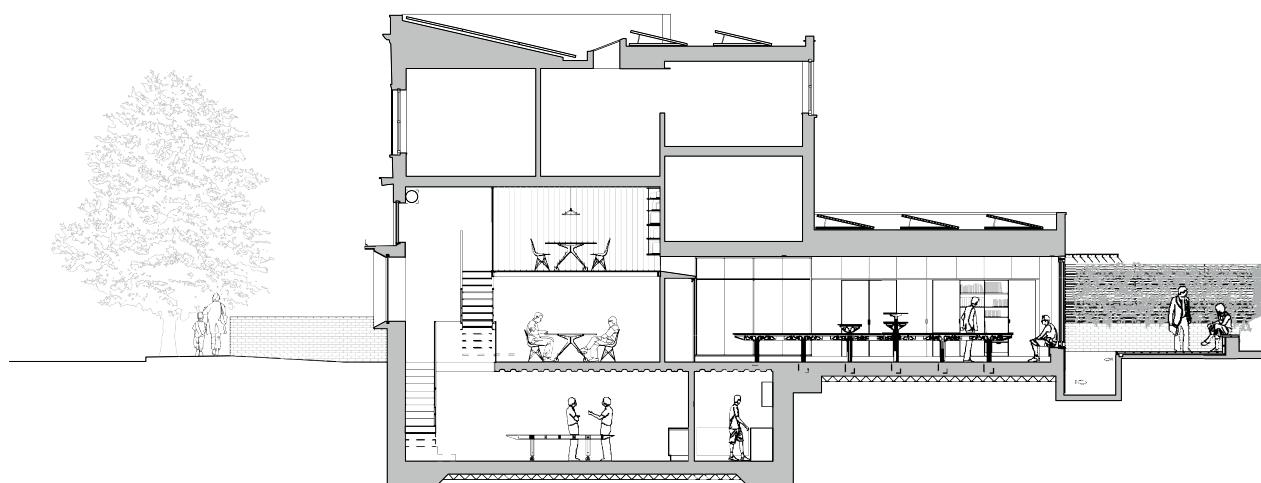
You've just released your book and moved into a new office designed and built by Knox Bhavan, what's next for KBA?

I just don't know, I'd like to get some interesting housing work. But also, I think it would be quite interesting to try and carry on doing our own building work. There's a huge investment in the guy's we've been working with, they're part of the team now. There's a level of trust going on. So, I'd love to that, more of our own building work.

The theme of this issue of PaperspACE is truth, does truth play its part in the work of Knox Bhavan?

Yes, I think it does, because you see the materials and how they're put together we're not trying to splurge materials together behind some ugly facia board! The truth is in the materials, how you put them together, and it takes craft to put them together. Every material has its own depth of quality.

Knox Bhavan's book, craft, material, design, is a series of nine essays detailing the designs of buildings and furniture realised by Knox Bhavan throughout their illustrious career. It can be brought from their website with 10% student discount: <https://www.knoxbhavan.co.uk/product/craft-material-detail/>



Documentary Review: 'Abstract - The Art of Design'

Is the entertaining and fascinating Netflix series telling the truth about design process?
Does it matter, if watching it is just uplifting and inspirational?

By David Janosi

Abstract is not a conventional documentary, it is contemporary and optimistic. For me, it brings back the hope in the joy of being creative. As we follow 9 designers from different fields we get an abstract glimpse into their profession, their way of creating and thinking. However, I believe it reveals more about the personality of the designer rather than the reality of their work and profession.

Abstract THE ART OF DESIGN

The colourful gradient of the logo is a very fresh design itself.

Each episode tells the story of the creation of one object or piece of art. Although, it only gives the surface, the big ideas, through scenes that often feel staged, judging by the episode on Bjarke Ingels, the architect. We follow the story of his serpentine pavilion and it is far from what I ever imagined an architectural design process would look like. It doesn't show any struggles, any debate about design, any clash between dreams and reality or any of the all-nighters to produce the drawings. I understand that it was out of the scope of the programme to show the 'boring truth', but it is slightly annoying that designers are celebrated as half-gods, who just love design and do it too easily. Bjarke comes in, draws 3 lines with the fat pen: 'That's the kind of shit we do' and boom, job done. Me and the readers of this magazine can imagine the untold part of the story, but those who never designed got an idealised picture. So, first I got annoyed that it doesn't tell the truth, but then I started to think about the title.

The title 'Abstract' explains the concept: we only see a brief introduction to the subject and also, we see an unrealistic image of the process, a distorted reality. The show is more about the ideas that inspire and not the actual design process. Each episode has its own style of presenting the designer and their everyday life, the cuts and the special effects are very creatively used to adapt to the individual. We get to know the individual behind the great and innovative work very well or at least the image they reveal.

After understanding this concept, it becomes very enjoyable to watch and inspiring to see how one's unique way of thinking and seeing the world influences the art they create. (I must note, that Bjarke is not the most sympathetic of the characters, but that would be another article to discuss.)

I recommend to all those crazy creatures, who call themselves creatives or designers to watch this series, which is a refreshing cocktail on a sweaty day, full of inspirational quotes about art, design, life and everything. The cool, often funny and creative way of documenting design, full of infographics, upbeat music and positive vibe intended to show us the future. The future I sense here is very optimistic, well thought ideas shaping a better world. Lovely future, even if it is just an abstract idea.



Illustration by Peilin Liao

I would highlight one common theme that warmed my heart: almost every designer mentioned empathy as one of the key aspects to design. I want to believe that Abstract inspires people to be creative, innovative and emphatic and if it does, who cares if it is telling the truth or not! I am looking forward to the next series!

Venice Architecture Biennale 2016: Reporting from the Front

The Venice Architecture Biennale of 2016 focused on addressing world affairs; an event filled not only with architectural research and development, but an inspiring desire to reach further.

By Diana Smiljkovic

The Venice Architecture Biennale of 2016 held the theme 'Reporting from the front' - a strong topic which all architects took on as an opportunity to present what we as architects can do to help resolve growing problems and develop a joined society; addressing issues such as segregation, inequalities, peripheries, access to sanitation, natural disasters, housing shortage, migration, crime, mistreatment of the environment and participation of communities as well as expressing the concern of dull, lifeless surroundings created due to the powers investing in the built environment for economic profit.

It stepped away from the idea of glamorising architecture and its flamboyant brilliance, not only pushing architects to research and develop there understanding of larger subjects, but was an opportunity to bring this knowledge and message to the masses.

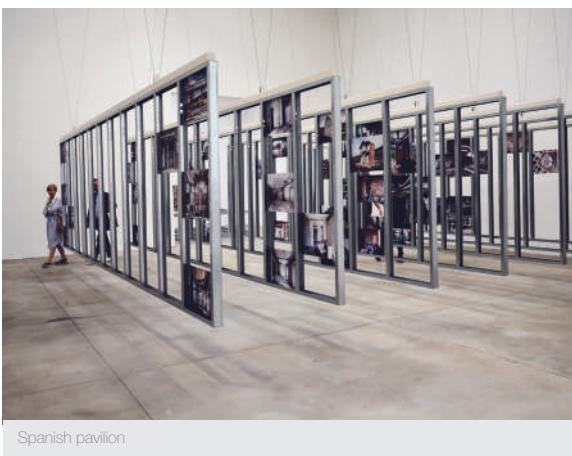
Alejandro Aravena - the curator of 'Reporting from the front', explained in his introduction: "The modest ladder is the proof that we shouldn't blame the harshness of constraints for our incapacity to do our job. Against scarcity: inventiveness ... Against

abundance: pertinence ... Given the complexity and variety of challenges that architecture has to respond to, Reporting From the Front will be about listening to those who were able to gain some perspective and are consequently in a position to share some knowledge and experiences, inventiveness and pertinence with those of us standing on the ground."

His opening pavilion in the Arsenale reused 100 tons of "waste" material that had been previously used at the 2015 Venice Art Biennale. The recycled 10,000m² of plaster board and 14km of metal creates a pavilion that gives a grand welcome showing how creativity is sparked when subject to limitations.

The Giardini itself houses each countries permanent pavilion. Inside each, stirring installations, exhibitions, messages which either through simplicity or through overwhelm informed the viewer of their concerns and hopeful answers. The architect not only acted as the storyteller but as the creator and initiator.

Denmark's pavilion acted as an exhibitory space where one half took the viewer to the words of architect Jan Gehl as the other half featured models and case studies where user-orientated



Spanish pavilion



Danish pavilion models

and environmentally-friendly solutions could be studied, viewed and perhaps inspire other architects to take on such ideas. It spoke of a rising problem: urbanism; a topic otherwise ignored in architecture as singular clients demand isolating complexes, buildings, areas. It incorporated both new built and existing, whilst tackling the problem of a disjointed society.

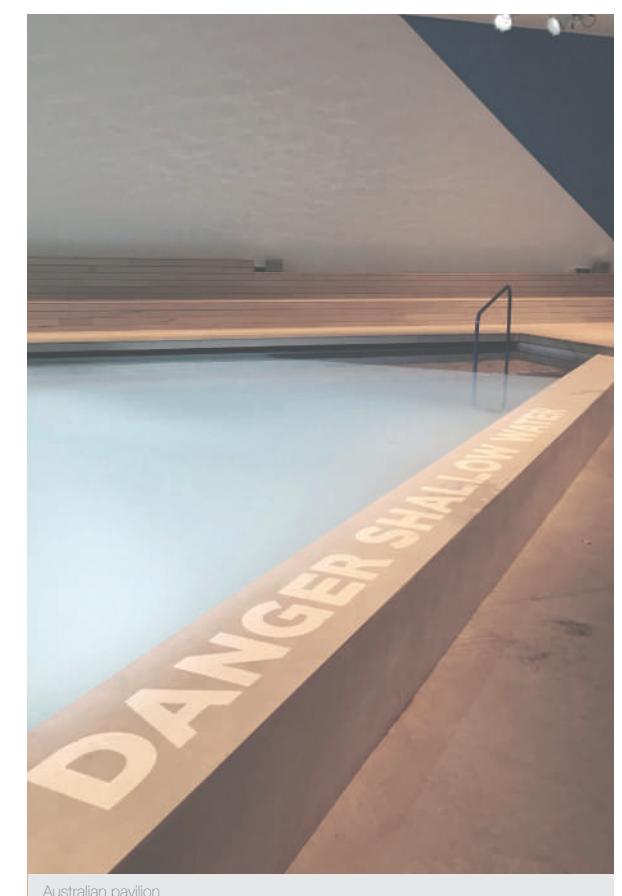
Spain, undergoing economical difficulties presented Unfinished: a number of case studies placed on a steel structural grid. Unfinished held the intention to evoke the effect the crisis has had on architecture in Spain (the profession and the rising unemployment levels).

The projects at hand stirringly evoked stances of elegance and subtlety, a story of melancholy with hope for a better future. This was shown as even with minimal resources, lovely buildings and spaces have been realised.

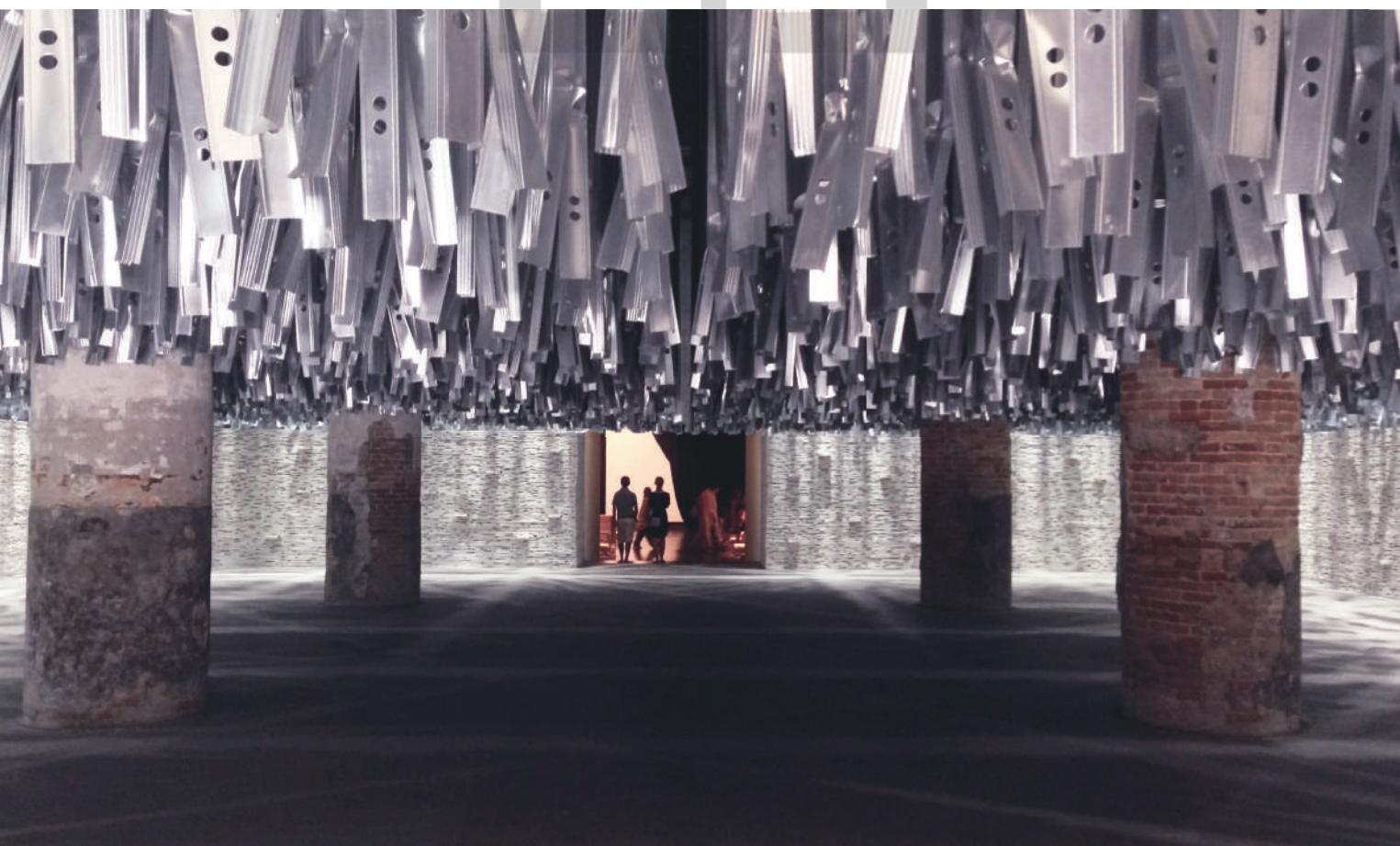
It won the Golden Lion for Best National Participation as it looked at a tragedy as a potential for a new start.

The Vara Pavilion by Peto von Ellrichshausen comprised 10 teal-coloured volumes that were all different sizes. They combined to create a labyrinth of enclosed open-air spaces. Described to be a "series of exteriors within other exteriors". Sizes varied corresponding to the dimensions of a vara – an imprecise rod used as a measuring tool to trace out cities during the colonial migration to America. The pavilion isolated the visitor from the external world creating a symbolic relationship with the present as well as current surroundings. Stimulating a connection between nature and the built environment the pavilion traced a space of losing and finding oneself. It made me feel a comfortable silence within myself as well as slow down my walking pace, and realise all that is around. Illustrations and drawings done for the pavilion are one of my favourites as it tastefully speaks the same language as the pavilion.

'Incidental space' created by Swiss architect Christian Kerez reflected that of a cloud made of sprayed fibre cement. It invited visitors to crawl into the space's interior cavity. Unlike most, it did not literally take on the theme, Switzerland's expressive interactive pavilion allowed the visitor to contemplate its message.



Australian pavilion





Scaffolding took place calling for "Fair trade" buildings, a system where the value of labor is recognised. Visualisations were presented on the walls bringing to scale the number of labourers - both physical and in the design sector - comparing them to the few at the top of the chain.

Australia took on the element of water, straying from the materials used within other pavilions. The pool can be said to be a oxymoron: acting as a physical edge, as well as a social frontier where animals and people come together to connect over an integral need.

Natural or man-made, a pool is where the communal and the personal intersect. Said to be a vital force in Australian life, the pool constructs childhood memories, holds family gatherings, events, sports.

As you relaxed by the poolside with the view of the canal, the words of peoples' personal definitions of a pool were played in the background. It brought peace, contact and reconcile to the user as it acted as a community space to share and enjoy with loved ones as well as strangers - showing no matter the differences, such simplicity can bring such peace.

"only place you can defy gravity as a mortal" - Australian Pavilion

As you pass through the Central pavilion mezzanine of the Giardini, grand pavilions leave the viewers in awe whilst tucked away and easy-to-miss is a dark curtain through which you enter a fantastical realm. Aires Mateus' installation was about beauty.

Expressing that beauty is not a facade or layer added but the "capacity to capture and express human desires." To me it felt as if I had left reality and entered the magical dimension of sensory architecture. Architecture creates a unique, personal journey for each individual and therefore space/void, light/dark and so on are factors embodying another vital factor in the built environment: Its effect on the mind and soul.

As you would make your way through the Arsenale multiple enticing projects are scattered throughout, one of which: the Thailand Pavilion "The Class of 6.3: Rebuilding Nine Schools after the 2014 Chiang Rai Earthquake" presented hundreds of wooden buildings suspended on sticks. Producing a seismic movement the installation informed the viewer of the earthquake-proof educational facilities which were the focus of the project.

Being part of C+S Architects, I had the opportunity to work on the C+S Pavilion focusing on the topic of education systems. C+S concentrates on fighting inequalities within the education sector where new ideals should be developed as education is a vital component for the future as well as a space for connectivity and resource.

Named Aequilibrium, the structure aimed to find balance throughout overhanging, the loop portraying stability through imbalance; constantly changing in forces yet resettling to an equilibrium. It wrapped around the historic column of the Corderie dell'Arsenale, holding the past and the present with an aim of a new horizon Interactive, it allowed users to take on the journey, rising up and going down in a infinite path.

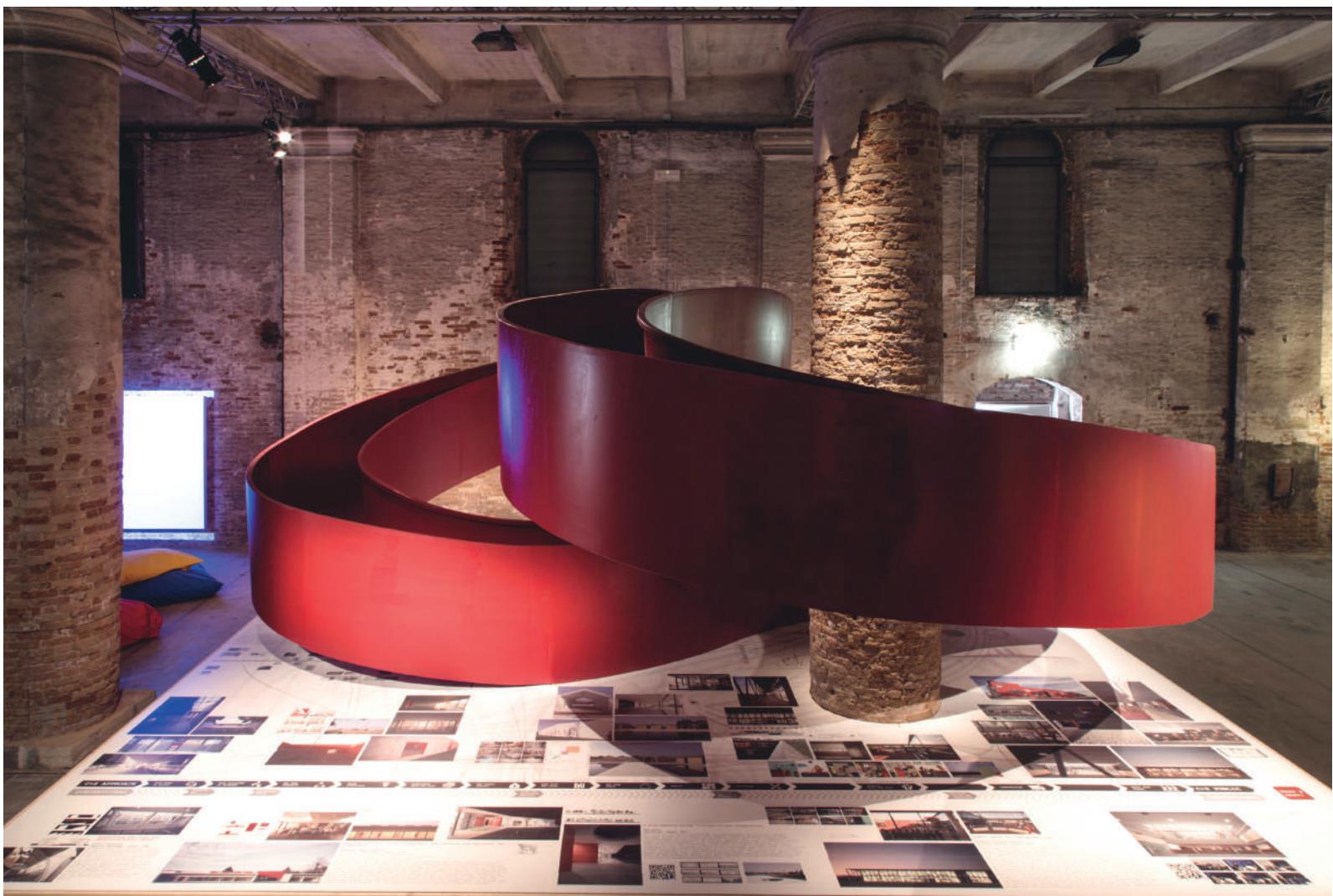
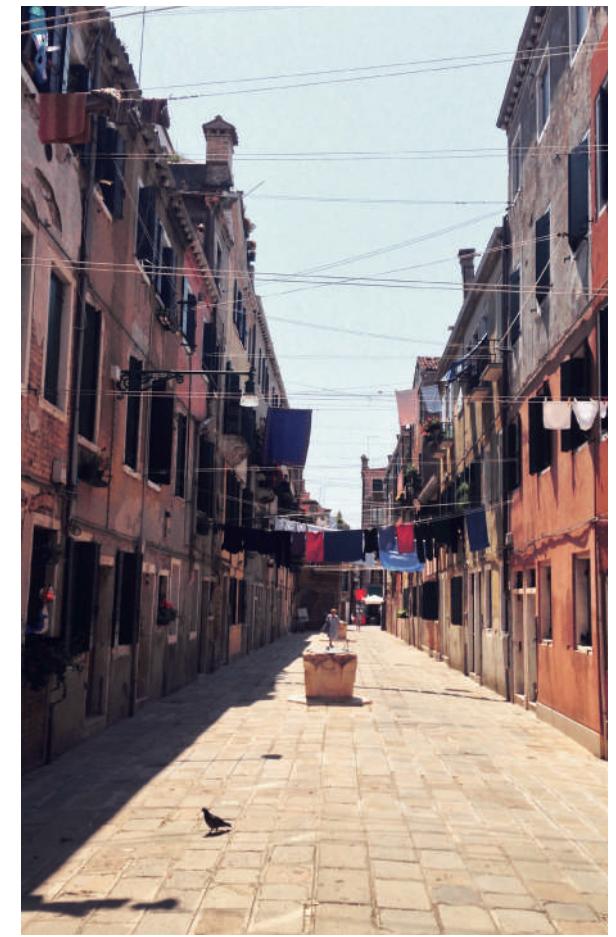
Entirely made of steel the pavilion floated elegantly as it discarded vertical support. A knot was designed as to show how it ties together factors such as economic, human, social, energetic values.

The schools designed by C+S Architects are also public spaces which are used as community areas for multicultural happenings; this pavilion like these schools provided fun spaces of interaction. Painted red, the pavilion made a statement.

Amongst many other projects I worked on with C+S, the biennale pavilion was one I had the opportunity to see through drawing to realisation. I witnessed the strenuous work going into research, drawing, discussion to the constant reviewing of it being built on site. The buzz of workers, architects, and others working in collaboration to complete the final piece. This involved the office moving to the arsenale. We sat on platforms, other pavilions, self-made workspaces and worked on projects and the C+S book to be published for the biennale, whilst consulting with workers and reviewing the work being done. The dynamic of the atmosphere was something that will forever be fresh in my memory - the historic arsenale full of heritage and monumentality booming with creatives setting up intricately thought through masterpieces. Every morning I would walk through silent Venice, flowing canals, sunlit cobblestones and the subtle sounds of Venetians waking up and getting ready for the day - to arrive to the arsenale where to arrive to our C+S station, the walk down

the arsenale promenade would have me daily witnessing the evolution and growth of lighting, screens, and building. This time taught me that in architecture no two days are identical, it is a profession of constant fluctuation and intellectual stimulation. To then witness the vernisage where all this hard work would be finely presented to the community. The buzz and passion of professionals, students, families and children curiously viewing and interacting with each story - for each pavilion was one. It was not one studio's work, or one stroll through the venues, but the entire composition of emotion, thought-provoking conversations and interactions, witnessing the time-lapse of its build up, and the passion intricately woven from the professional to the viewer - from Aravena's altruistic idea, to the collaborative work of all architects involved, to the contribution of the masses - the biennale shaped to be much more than just an architectural expo, but an experience of what is true in architecture and world affairs.

These are only few of a plethora of outstanding pavilions and exhibitions held at the Venice Architecture Biennale 2016. With an aspiration of correct action, help and reconcile, of progress and unity each pavilion successfully embodied the theme and its importance. Countries brought to focus that architectural heritage and culture is being lost in globalised, identical cities, others ranged from a plethora of topics which addressed cases that have too long been subject to suppression; economical value, natural disasters, etc. but mostly they portrayed that to bring across a message and spark a movement one does not need high expenses, simply a platform to speak, exhibit, lure and therefore ignite.





Letters in a Language of Lines

In a discipline where product is experienced without words, to what effect do we use words in the design process?

by Yacine Abed

Imagine an architecture project review - of a graphic presentation or a newly completed building - where the architect/student could not use text or speech to describe any of their decisions to the critics or clients. In other words, imagine a review where the work truly had to speak for itself, and its creator's presence was not required. As inconceivable as the idea may seem in the academic context, this is evidently how we experience most of the buildings we use in our lives, as purely experiential forms and textures stripped of any verbal narrative. Ironically however, the most employed tool to communicate a design in architecture schools is language, or speech. This may come of little to no surprise as words can express fleeting thoughts with great immediacy to a tutor or colleague, but what happens when one starts allowing words to design, rather than just describe? Enter the murky waters of metaphors, symbolisms, and, God forbid - "concepts".

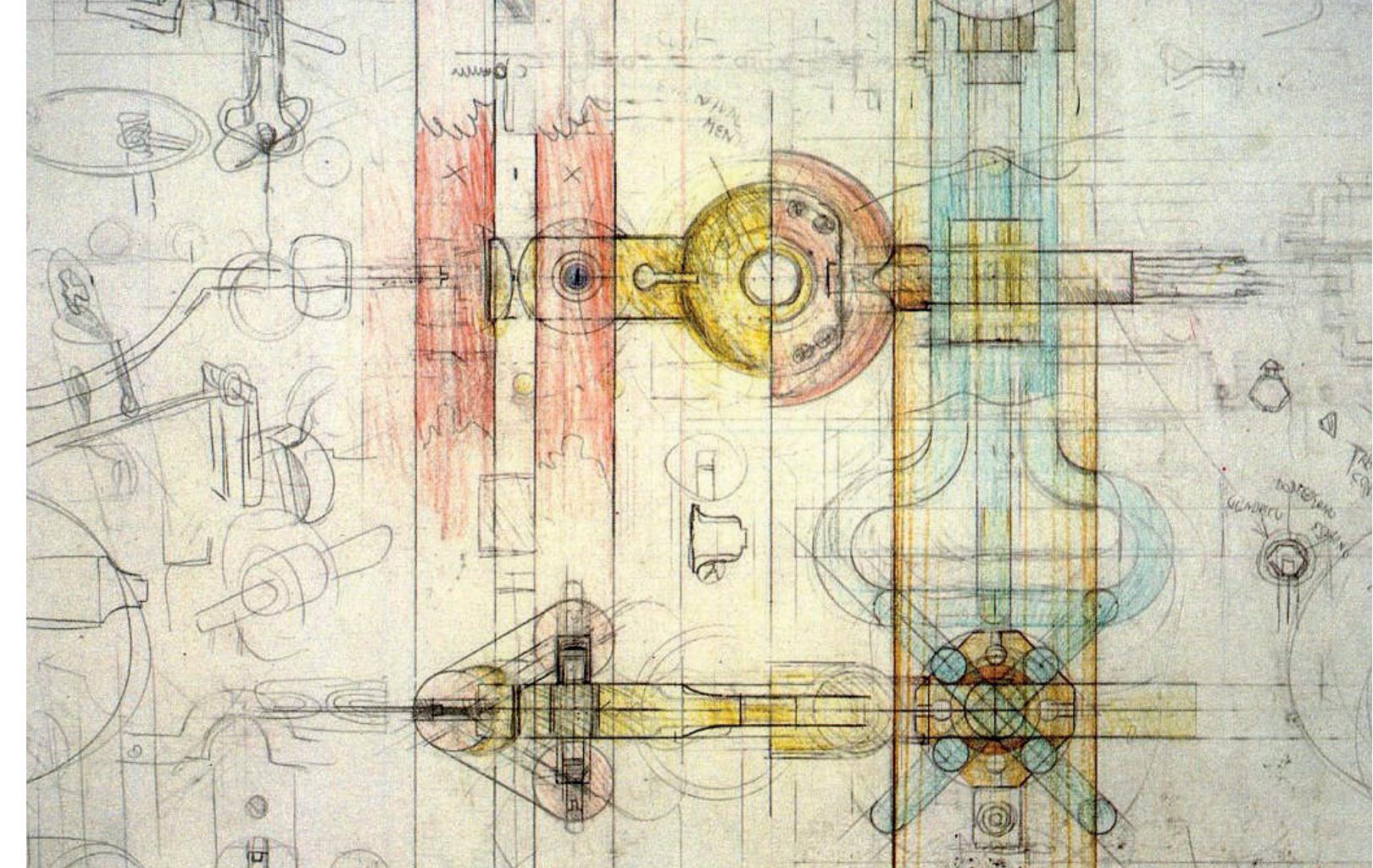
I am convinced to suggest that language is the crux of the mistranslations between the architect's vision and the user's experience. This rather ambitious supposition can be traced back, in part, to a somewhat unexpected piece of reading I had come across two years ago: a short story written by none other than Lewis Carroll in 1873. "The Vision of the Three T's" recounts a fictional conversation between two fishermen about a monument they can see across the lake they're fishing from. Captivated by the building's unusual forms and apertures, they each begin to ponder how it has come to be. Fortunately for them, the architect happens to pass by some time later and they rush to the opportunity to ask him about the design. The architect, described as 'the Lunatic' in this story, embarks on an extravagant and confusing lecture about how the design came to him partly via a 'vision' he had at his dinner table, whilst observing a block of Stilton cheese, a cheese scoop, and a lobster - objects that went on to inform a lot about the round shapes and peculiar openings of the monument. Then, in a more matter-of-fact tone, he goes on to state two Latin dictums that he implies as rules to justify the architectural inventions. One of the fishermen recognises that the dictums are taken out of context and are in fact intended as rules of Latin grammar, not built environment. When he makes mention of this however, the architect - or the Lunatic - is quick to respond 'Sir, if we are not grammatical, we are nothing!'. The fishermen are left bewildered and resume fishing.

In essence, Carroll's piece underlines the problem of defining a common ground of signification and understanding for both architect and non-architect. He suggests that many works of architecture can only be truly understood by those with a very specific type and level of education, and that this education is ultimately flawed since the buildings must be accompanied by words to be fully appreciated.

We have come a long way since the publication of Carroll's manuscript. Architectural thinking - along with all the other mechanisms that govern the world - has been shone with a multitude of new lights, from theories to technologies. Despite architects still binging on philosophical and abstract jargon to establish a sense of intellectual legitimacy, there seems to be an increasing appreciation for the segments of projects that are born from a purely material and pragmatic intent. These moments in projects could be defined as self-referential; the forms and



Fig. 1. Handrail detail on the Querini Stampalia Bridge in Venice, by Carlo Scarpa.



textures are direct inventive responses to the conditions and purpose of the piece of site they sit in – they do not attempt to make reference to any precedent, archetype, or textbook formula. In essence, they are designed from first principles (gravity, light, warmth etc.), shutting out preconceived ideas of what a stair or a door or a window should look like, for example, and instead suggesting openings and level-changers that are 'invented' specifically for that fragment of Earth.

If not cavemen, this method of design can clearly be exemplified by the works of mid-20th century Venetian architect, Carlo Scarpa. The tectonic resolution of the materiality, joinery, and layering of most of his individual building components cannot be traced back to any obvious architectural precedents or schools of thought, yet upon attentive visual and tactile inspection, it presents an extensive logic as to why every piece of the building is the way it is (apart from Brion Cemetery). As Marco Frascari puts it: the detail tells the tale. To state one example of hundreds, the timber handrail on the Querini Stampalia Bridge is capped at its ends by thin sheets of brass as the timber section would otherwise wear and tear if it were exposed. A portion of the brass plate recedes towards the tip of the handrail to show that it is indeed a brass plate wrapping over the timber rather than a brass block stuck to the end of it (see fig.1) – the entire design process is exposed like an open book if one takes time to read it.

Scarpa's projects are void, in most part, of any literary dimension forwarded by himself. His design process was intensely visual, and this is best epitomised by the sketches that came off his drawing board. Scarpa would arrest in images the forms and figures that his visual memory and imagination allowed him to

perceive in the context of the site and piece of programme he was designing. This resulted in a sort of memory map (see image above), scattering and superimposing lines and layers on paper, pertaining to varying scales of physical and narrative planes. He would then rationalise in a multitude of further sketches different detail connections emerging from this memory map. These sketches have an argumentative character, and the tensions are resolved in favour of the plurality of his inventions and singularity of each detail. This highly personal way of linking the various geometries together follows a logic much different to the more conventional logic derived from language. It seems instead to stem from a rationale that demanded steps to be taken that, at first, appear unnecessary or too obvious, but turn out to be highly productive. As a result, one can look at a single fragment within a Scarpa building, without having seen the whole, and still extrapolate a profound appreciation and understanding of what that fragment is trying to achieve in its own right. Words are not needed.

The critical point that ties Scarpa's method back to what was expressed about architectural education in the introduction is that Scarpa never formally studied architecture, but solely practiced fine art, glass-blowing, and draughtsmanship - pursuits that most probably preserved him from the linguistic trapdoors of conventional architectural practice that we know too well. "Mm I think I'm going for a David Chipperfield façade with a post-modern twist, yeah that's nice... The minimal window frames could represent the silenced voices of the oppressed people of Bethlehem". Why let words dictate a form, when lines can materialise a story?

Truth & Style

Styles are our primary method for categorising and describing architecture, but can our own preferences reveal something more than aesthetic taste?

By Oliver Cassidy

The practise of architecture can be boiled-down to a long series of decisions. At every turn, we make choices. We choose where to place rooms and how to create openings, we choose the width of floor tiles and the colour of paint. No element of a building is created through chance. This decision-making process is influenced by a great number of factors: locality, client, available resources, public opinion and planning to name a few. Every time an architect makes a design decision they reflect these factors as well as their personal philosophies, logics and beliefs. In each decision they make, the architect weighs up all the factors and places value on them as they see fit.

The resulting building will reflect each one of these choices and, as a whole, the architect's fundamental ideologies. We are then able to judge, both consciously and subconsciously, the motives and priorities of the architect which in turn allows us to determine whether we like the building. Alain de Botton relates the idea to concepts of beauty: "A feeling of beauty is a sign that we have come upon a material articulation of certain of our ideas of a good life." Our initial reaction to a building is also a judgement we place on the principles on which its design was based.

The same is equally true on a macro level as well as micro. Just as an individual architect's work allows us to judge their philosophies, a group of buildings of the same style speaks of the creators' collective conscience (i.e. a modern building embodies modernist principles). These broad stylistic trends are the result of more powerful political and social forces which can shape architecture for decades. This explains our like or dislike of certain styles; the ideals of a style we dislike are normally at odds with our own beliefs.

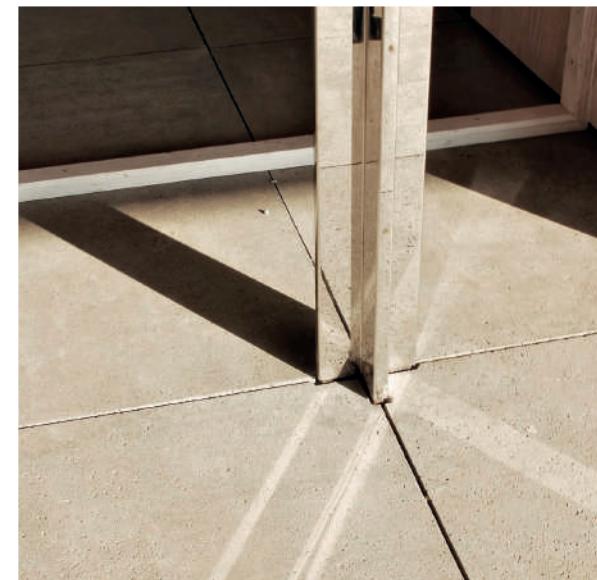
For this reason, people with socialist leanings will dislike the international style. Its faceless, mirrored-glass homogeneity represents an indifference to its locality. The choice of the designer to show nothing of what happens inside reflects the detachment of the corporations from the viewer of the building. The people feel this and, consequently, dislike it. In this way style transcends aesthetics alone.

Sometimes, however, great architecture can overcome our stylistic leanings and certain buildings can win us over in forms that we would not normally expect. This happens when a building's logic of design process is so clear that its designer's

motives are easily understood; a building which is so true to the philosophies of its decision-making that its outcome is a pure representation. This is something which can be appreciated by everyone. When every aspect of a building is designed following the same principles there are no contradictions: the creative expression becomes clear, this above all is what we value in architecture.

This may be why the classic works of architecture are so widely-appreciated. Although most of us would never design in the specific style of masters like Frank Lloyd Wright or Mies Van Der Rohe their work is still appreciated for being a pure representation of its' style; for being a perfect picture of the values they held. In each of theirs works and all the masters' work there is an unashamed devotion to each of their principles. The devotion is such that we ignore any flaws and focus on sacrifices made for these beliefs.

It seems that truth is the prevailing trait in great architecture. Just as we appreciate integrity as a characteristic in people; we find hypocritical buildings, whose features contradict each other, to be the most offensive. When visions become muddled and unclear a building loses its vigour. It seems that style should be an unconscious decision: in following a philosophy diligently, one is truthful to its values and a building of integrity is created. It will transcend aesthetic style and have universal value as an emblem of truth.



The Architecture of Social Barriers

Architecture, like other forms of design and art has the power to change society. We need to make sure it is for the better.

By Zeid Truscott

As Architecture students and future Architects we are the designers of the built environment and the public realm. Our clients can be large corporations with million pound projects or the couple from down the road who just want an extension on their house, but ultimately our client is society as a whole, as everyone has the potential to interact with the spaces we create. If we unpack what that means for the design process, it means we cannot just ignore the basic needs of everyone just because it isn't convenient or cost effective. However, when we do ignore these needs we create social barriers which damage the society we live in and exclude certain groups.

The most prominent social barriers that architects create are those for disabled people, the reluctance and afterthought that goes into making spaces accessible is shocking. Regulations are in place to ensure that the bare minimum is done to ensure disabled people can access buildings and their basic facilities, but these regulations do not ensure that the spaces are fully accessible and that disabled people are fully included in our society. We as designers need to be more proactive when it comes to disability, we need to think past the numbers and restrictions and understand why exactly the legislation is the way it is. When our space force disabled people into having to take a different entrance because 'the levels didn't work out' or having to go to a different floor just to use the entrances the sense of exclusion that many disabled people feel in our society.

Another prominent issue that has gained popularity in recent years is that of providing gender neutral facilities. These accommodate for those who do not identify within the gender binary and transgender people. Our University has taken steps towards increasing the provision for trans student but their policies are not perfect and there is still a long way to go before our campus is fully inclusive. The provision of gender neutral facilities in new buildings is also often overlooked in the design process and has a massive effect on how people use the buildings we design. The lack of accommodation for the needs of transgender and non-binary people means that their basic needs aren't being met and our architecture is failing them.

These issues are not something that should be an afterthought, we as architecture students have an ethical responsibility to

design for everyone, not doing so affects the overall success of our projects. This ethical responsibility also extends to works that we decide to take up when in practice. We should be careful when working on architecture that perpetuates institutionalised discrimination, whether that be prisons, care homes etc. as our work helps in securing these issues in our society.

Prisons are an issue in the sense that the criminal justice system that they are part of is inherently racist with a disproportionate number of Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) people in the system, as well as BME people having higher rates of prosecution and sentencing compared to white counterparts. If we take on jobs that facilitate the criminal justice system, we should be conscious of how our design is going to be used. Should our design conform to the status quo or should it challenge the system and ensure that the system is more fair for those who end up in it.

Care homes and 'special schools' also promote the segregation and institutionalisation of disabled people and follow a medical model of disability. The medical model focuses on 'curing' disabled people and promotes disabled people adapting to their environment. The social model on the other hand promotes the universal design, environmental adaption and inclusion into society. The adoption of the social model was fought for by disability rights campaigners and lead to the creation of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Part M Building Regulation. When designing we should be inspired by the concepts behind the social model to ensure that our end product is accessible to all.

We need to ensure that these issues in society are taken into account when we design, and make sure that the spaces we create are ethical and accessible to all. We have the tools to shape our society not only in the short term but for the length that our buildings are standing, and it is an opportunity we shouldn't let go to waste.

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Beyond The Lingo

Let's get real. For what we do is for real people. With real potential to be heard.

By Latifa Al Khayat

To any close friends reading this, I am sure I have repeated this conversation to you before, so apologies in advance. Usually, I wouldn't regard myself as one to write, but with an issue title as such, I finally gained the courage to share an opinion through something a bit more personal.

Over the past few years, while studying, observing and witnessing architecture, I've developed a lot of thought towards our attitude when it comes to the title, the 'architect'. Having had inevitable conversations about architecture with those around me, from those who were intrigued, to those uninterested in our niche terminology, I've come to realise the universality of what we practice. Ultimately, what we do is create and form for the people. Hearing what these 'ordinary' people have to say about spaces, through their humble opinions, captivated me.

Long ago, people, as end users of their own built environment, were all architects of their surroundings. We often view and

appreciate this idea as a primitive concept that we have moved well away from in this world. However, I think it is about time this concept is reborn and utilised to help us design habitable settings that fulfilled user needs. This means involvement beyond brief writing.

This leads me to a project that very much influenced my entry into the field of Architecture. Designed by an Accountant, my Arabian-Japanese hybrid of a family home in Busaiteen, Bahrain, successfully offers us what we need from a dwelling. It continuously makes me question the extent to which all people are designers by default, regardless of whether they hold a certificate to prove it or not.

Construction of the house began shortly after a small orange tree was planted into the centre of the plot. The house literally wraps around the growing tree, creating a courtyard to protect the plant lover's treasure from the wind and sun it is exposed to. Quite relatable to the primitive man protecting sources of life I suppose, and it works.



View approaching the entrance with a glimpse of the courtyard.



The infamous tree.

As a family with a strong connection to nature, this courtyard offers us a green view out. It also creates a transparency, through this central void, to bring us closer together. The circulation around the courtyard frames our movements and keeps us aware of one another's presence.

Moreover, the aspiring busy artists of the household are constantly present. Rather than being locked away, enclosed for hours, they are within reach of the rest of the family's whereabouts. Narrow studio spaces in the mezzanine overlook the open plan living, dining and kitchen spaces, maintaining coexistence through a visual and spatial connection.

The Accountant who knew my family's habits so well happened to be my mother. During the design process, she identified our comforts, hobbies and routines. She planned accordingly, positioning the spaces we inhibit throughout the day based on these routines, on waking up and taking off to our individual whereabouts, and on reuniting later on in the day in the shared space, central to our private bedrooms.

This daily reunion takes place though the seasons by the courtyard, where we watch our orange tree grow and blossom.

I used such a personal example because it allowed me to witness first-hand the possibilities and potential when end users take design decisions themselves. Simple intentions and aims can be translated into beautifully functioning spaces. As users of public and private spaces, people adjust and alter their environments to best suit themselves, for they know themselves best. Don't get me wrong, I am not trying to degrade our profession or practitioners. Not every Accountant can translate how they aspire to dwell onto paper. However, as those given the responsibility to offer them something as close to that aspiration, it is important that we become better listeners.

Listeners to simple, humble words and opinions that transcend our jargon, and enlighten our design process.



Fashion: A New Truth to Consumerism

We are witnessing a shift towards a more technology based fashion industry.
Can we utilise this transition to educate consumers and promote more sustainable lifestyles?

By Cora McLean

Consumerism has had a significant impact on society as a whole and in turn our global built environment. We make consumer choices almost daily, based in part on material reality but also as a result of fantasy. Shopping consequently becomes a powerful tool that equips us with materials to transform both our physical and mental selves, making it integral to the fashion industry.

However, the success of physical clothing stores is dwindling due to technological changes and societal issues. The model for retail environments must therefore change. Rather than simply improving individual features within these environments, could a more holistic approach be adopted in order to address controversial problems within the industry?

Today, affordable clothes inspired by runway styles and global trends can be bought anytime, anywhere with very little effort. This is known as globalised production, where the majority of garment construction has been outsourced to low cost economies with very low wages. As a result, clothing has become a deflationary product and 'fast fashion' has emerged, think H&M, Zara, Primark and so on. Here, new styles quickly supersede the old and disposability is encouraged. This is not a sustainable system.

Essentially, we have adopted a linear production process which, amongst other things, has resulted in a lack of consideration for raw materials and does not suit a planet with finite resources. In addition, fast fashion only really caters for big business interest whose custom is essential for factory owners.

With such low cost product, garment factories are forced to squeeze the price at which they sell goods, despite their own increasing expenditure. Therefore working conditions are becoming exceptionally poor and the factories become sweatshops. Surely, there is an alternative.

Aspects of fashion have been transformed by the internet. Online shopping has led to an increase in business-to-consumer selling and customers are often addressed directly by the manufacturer. Theoretically there is no longer a need to go to a physical store in order to purchase goods, especially given the rise of 'return anything' culture.

Arguably the change is a result of the increasingly standardised experience that shopping centres currently offer. The need for difference is paramount in today's society, where an increasing focus on an experience based lifestyle and sustainable consumption is obvious. So how can that change?



Initial prototypes for Feetz's 3D printed shoes

Evidently, we live in a society where sharing information and educating others could not be easier. Today people want clothes that tell a story and show their origin. So what if you could witness this by creating your own garments? If consumers were involved in the creation, it could positively influence the way clothes are experienced and cared for.

Now I'm not suggesting we each get out a needle and thread but instead we could have an impact on our clothing design in a model where retail allows for customisation and personalisation. Examples of this are already emerging. Feetz, is an online company where the consumer can photograph their feet using a specific app and order. Shoes are then 3D printed but suit an exact foot size, size me rather than size 6. Whilst this does mean that clothes are more difficult to resell or donate, it is likely to promote more a sustainable lifestyle where consumers are encouraged to take better care of their products.

Combined with the internet, new technologies like these could lead to a refreshingly honest method of producing clothes where



'Shoes of Prey' allows customers to design their own shoes!

the consumer has greater influence on the product. Perhaps physical clothing stores should promote this by offering in-store exclusive services such as body scanners and material samples. Rather than their current role as good looking storage units, shops could therefore have an increasing focus on the customer experience as well as the design, fit and construction of products.

Production could happen on demand and in an industry that revolves around 'the new' nothing could be more suitable; waste is reduced, customisation is simplistic and repairs are easy. In essence fashion could become an online industry with localised (high street) production units offering a specialised service. Instead of fighting e-commerce and technology, we could work with it to enhance the retail experience. Your future clothing store could become transparent and truthful by nature where consumption will act as an education tool that impacts society's perspective on global issues.



Rendering: The Convenient Lie

One of the most important elements of architecture is the presentation of vision. Renderings used as a marketing tool can trigger disappointment, anger and debate.

By Marcin Karczewski

Every major project will undergo a severe critique before it can progress to the stage of construction. Visualisations are an inseparable part of architecture. One can see the results of digital rendering everyday when looking at new investments which underlines the significance of a first impression. Consequently, we begin to doubt how accurate it is and find ourselves asking whether the image we see is just an unrealistic projection of the future. So where can we draw the line between a realistic vision and an artistic misdirection?

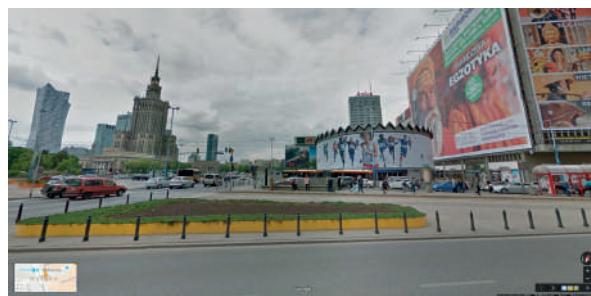
In 2015, I went to the Expo in Milan with my family. From the numerous fascinating projects I saw, there was one which grabbed my attention. It was the UK's pavilion designed by Wolfgang Buttress.

Before seeing the pavilion with my own eyes, I was only familiar with visualisations and pictures before its grand opening. My experience was not as I had expected due to the adverse weather conditions – it was pouring with rain. The moment I saw the pavilion, I was overwhelmed by an uncomfortable feeling of disappointment. The pictures that served to help me imagine how the project was supposed to look like were skewed – there

were few people, lots of free space and a beautiful sunset in the background with stunning god rays penetrating through the structure. Instead, what I saw was far from that. It was more like waiting all soaked-up in the line only to see one room while looking at a grey structure thrown at the grey background in a claustrophobic narrow path in the garden full of other soaked-up tourists. Furthermore, a couple of broken glass panels prevented anybody from entering the dome which was supposed to be the most important part of the exhibition.

The assets of the visuals can become the biggest weakness in reality. The size of the dome was much smaller in reality and due to how crowded it was it seemed like I was simply tricked into a long wait with a very predictable ending. Since this project was claimed to be one of the best in the entire Expo, my expectations were simply too high and uncontrolled factors affected my first impression.

At times, visualisations can be more controversial than we expect. Looking back at when the first project to renovate the Rotunda (a small branch of Poland's largest bank in the most central point of Warsaw) was announced, my first reaction was of disbelief – I could not recognise my own city. There were numerous changes made to hide a much less utopian reality.



The real life captured by Google Maps: old cars, posts, bus stop and loads of advertisement.

Firstly, there were completely new buildings added on the left which never existed and are still in plans till this date.

Next, the most important landmark of Warsaw's skyline; the Palace of Culture and Science was no longer visible. The intention may have been to bring attention to more modern architecture than the one from a 230 metre high tower.

Thirdly, all the small and ugly details such as the uneven surface of a pathway, roads in poor condition, omnipresent cigarette butts and tram lines were erased. Even details of greater significance (bus stop and tram stop) were taken for granted.

Last but definitely not least, there are no advertisements at all. This is a huge issue since the biggest plague of the city centre is the covering of entire façades of buildings surrounding and rotunda as well. You cannot imagine how much attention was brought in the media - everybody was talking about it. Lack of advertisements has been brought the most of the people's attention. This soon resulted in a new law for the area of ads to be smaller. Bartłomiej Gowin's and Krzysztof Siuta's project unexpectedly became a drive for change in the centre of Poland's capital by showing what the surrounding buildings actually look like. Architects did

not lie by showing the neighbourhood without commercials, they exposed what the city has to offer when shown in a proper way.

But I believe that visualisation is not what the building will look like – it's how it can look like, just the odds of the perfect timing that seems unrealistic.

"Perfectly set furniture with perfect children running around in the garden with colourful balloons in perfectly clean clothes and people in the background having perfect time while talking to their perfect friends by the perfect sunset that leaves bright hexagonal lens flares. When does this happen? Never."

All in all, rendering is just a selling tool. No matter what, people will be pleased with something that looks attractive, and even buy it, like in case of apartments.



Seeking Truth through Minimal Living

In a societal system of constant stimulation and consumption, it is perhaps through reduction that the individual can be reintroduced to truth and surrounding.

By Diana Smiljkovic

Conspicuous consumption has entered the lives of the modern day dweller through food, material items, and housing. If anything, it has created a demand for larger and larger dwellings for the storage of an ever-growing number of items - decorations, clothes, gadgets and so on. It has even altered the perception of space in the minds of society; individuals having the ability to reestablish a home that is in that an office, entertainment space, a spa and recreation area amounting to this all-functioning bubble. This in itself gives birth to the idea that one does not have to leave their marked territory - food is delivered, online shopping enables all possibilities on just one screen, and services appointed to your doorstep: the ever expanding growth of the material self in a finite world. Each dwelling a country whose thirst for conquering borders is never quenched. The individual is then trained to feed the industry with their time by devoting themselves to work to then fuel it with their consumption. Walter Gropius states in his research of sociological premises for the minimum dwelling "the family was a self-sufficient microcosm, the unit of production and consumption in the state." This model has made a shift from the family as a microcosm to the individual.

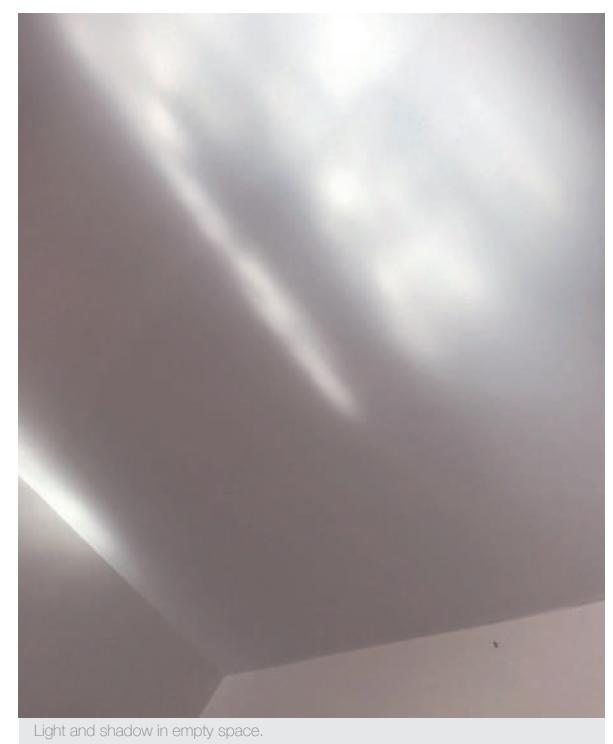
Humanity is staring at a mirage of oases in a dry desert: the effect of this consumption leads to scarcity in a global, social and individual scale: scarcity in resources; the exploitation of land, nature, and environment, the disconnection between society leading to an underdeveloped social system and lastly the self: a mental and psychological haze.

The individual is then dedicated to possession. The physical aspects of being human — the need for food, water, shelter and sleep — will never change, but social preconditioning has created the notion of the home and its necessary requirements which in that leads to an extent use of space otherwise unnecessary; leading me to ask you, what defines a home? To me it is not a place but a feeling - and the global dilemma is that home and emotion are too defined by material things.

As creatures of habit and comfort when routine or 'normality' is disrupted people tend to go against what is instinctual - 'adaptation' - as they are so engrained into their physical representations of past notions which in that only holds them down. As one allows adaptation to take place and puts away biases, one notices that a new found way is in fact preferred.



Light and shadow in empty space.



Light and shadow in empty space.

No individual person has a permanent or fixed identity. For a healthy state of being one must constantly be growing, changing, adapting, whilst keeping key values at core. Physical possessions hold the individual down and restrict them from mentioned adapting, changing, moving. They are a representation in the physical realm of the past - a reason why it is so difficult to get rid of things. As physical beings perhaps elimination is a representation of a mindful change - it is the acceptance that everything around you is not permanent; and neither are you.

This global shift towards consumerism has been systemised through the power of advertising; it presents an alternate reality where happiness is achieved through the purchase of certain goods - the perfect self is through consuming and 'assumed' sentiment is presented. Advertising targets the insecurities and presents a temporary satisfaction - it plays on intentions, lust, ignorance, fear and dreams.

Then once the consumer follows orders a planned obsolescence (a policy of producing consumer goods that rapidly become obsolete and so require replacing, achieved by frequent changes in design, termination of the supply of spare parts, and the use of nondurable materials) is set in order. Which resets the cycle over again.

However, by reassessing what is necessity and not dictated desire, society can move away from the societal obsession of functionality. Leading to reduction. A reassessment of priorities slowly leads to a reduction of physical possessions. Items and space that do not bring true value to ones life are not of necessity. In principle anything that can be digitised is expendable; true necessity is minimal in physical shape. Through reduction the individual is reintroduced to the self.

In less is more: creativity through scarcity Goldern states "When necessity drives innovation, design can move building technology beyond conventional resource and economic patterns."

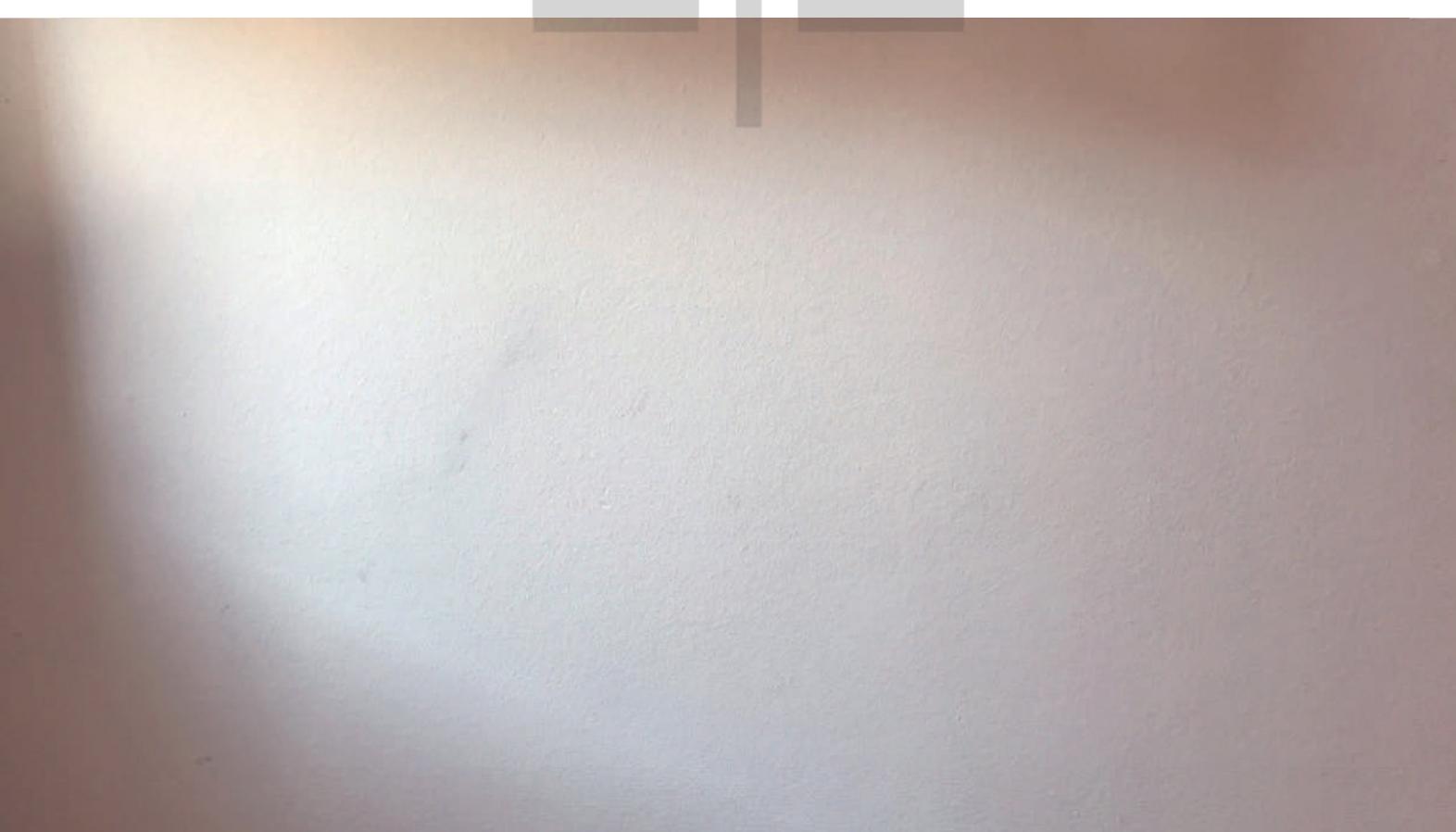
"The relationship between constraint and design fluctuates as the parameters used to describe conditions of scarcity change," she states. Scarcity can range from resource to that of a socially constructed state. Eventually aesthetic surplus value can be gained even if not in search for it. When the circumstances of production are revealed the issues at hand can come to the foreground. Absence therefore becomes the initiator of a heightened state of awareness.

Emptiness becomes a key factor of such design. The Dalai Lama describes emptiness to be "the true nature of things and events," also warning "to avoid the misapprehension that emptiness is an absolute reality or an independent truth." Therefore emptiness is not separate from the here and now but is instead amongst us - it is that which we are (purposefully) blind to.

Emptiness should be disassociated from absence or voidness, but regarded "as a charged presence whose character modulates with the changing light conditions," as John Pawson states.

The role of the architect. Many architects follow an interest or focus of the everyday and discovery of the ordinary. Mies Van Der Rohe, the Smithsons and Alvaro Siza to name a few.

Reduction is a means of architecture that has been thoroughly exercised and examined by many and so to say it is not a means of designing but a way in which the context (socio-physical, historical, geological, material etc) shapes the architecture.



Confessions of a Scandinavian

A misconception is that reduction translates to minimising already conditioned spaces - but as Gropius states that a program for a minimum dwelling is not solved by "simply reducing the conventional, larger apartment in number of rooms and effective area." He suggests that a new formulation is required based on a knowledge of the natural and sociological minimum requirements, "unobscured by the veil of traditionally imagined historical needs."

"We must attempt to establish minimum standards for all countries, based on biological facts and geographic and climatic conditions. This approach is in the spirit of the impending equalization of life requirements under the influence of travel and world trade." And such a formulation does not only apply to single dwelling but to network and city design.

What is the architect to achieve through a process of attentive design? a modality of presence. It is mentioned by Benjamin as 'passage' or Heidegger as 'Überlieferung' or handing down, which in that results in an all encompassing monumentality. An environment where one is present physically and mentally. Mies does so successfully by bringing forth the subject of modernisation and mass production through his engagement with the perceptual and expressive characteristics of surface and mass.

"Creation itself should be left to the creative forces, the project of architecture being understood instead, to illuminate, make visible and direct the currents of the spiritual and concrete situation in which we stand rather than to evaluate it"

In a society where production dominates it is to the minimal living - or better yet being - where the individual eliminates unnecessary physical burdens entering an alternate state; one which the individual unknowingly is in search for. The home - or the architecture of society - is not a physical place, rather a presence embodied in the simplicity of being.

Slowly a re-introduction to self and architecture - the extension of body - is experienced. Through personal observation and experience the following occurred. First you start noticing the light/shadow and sound/silence, the volume of space and its interaction with sound waves and light rays. the way the light diffuses through glass and sound reverberates on walls. you start noticing the details such as the steam dancing its way out of your cup of tea, to the texture of walls and floor. Then something more happens, you start noticing your breath, your physicality, the way your body interacts with the space. you start noticing your thoughts more clearly; at first they are a chaotic tumble of thoughts but then slowly sieve out to complete clarity. You start noticing your physical impermanence and your spiritual infinite.

The body is described by Anodea Judith as "far from being a place where we are trapped in physicality, it is a most exquisite vehicle - one that can take us anywhere we want to go with full sensory involvement. The mind may rationalise and believe things that aren't true, but the body never lies. It contains a grain of truth that is undeniable."

As is our body, so should its extension be - architecture should hold its truth, which through slow searching and observing we as the experiencer will slowly unveil, word by word, by touch and sight, we compose its narrative by being present and attentive.



My search has finished! I have finally *found myself!* My true self was in a bookstore! In the many books about how to be Scandinavian and how to 'hygge'...

By Sebastian Stripp

Up until age fifteen I lived a happy life of low ambitions, public education and dead centre middle-class. In short, life was good. However, I was torn out of this idyllic P.S. Krøyer painting and thrown into a broken Tudor Empire, Britain. Like an ugly duckling, abandoned to be raised by ravens. After struggling through years of resistance, I have slowly adjusted to the lifestyle, which George Orwell beautifully described in his novel, 1984. Nevertheless, soft and Danish, I am still very naïve.

The books will tell you 'hygge' is about candles, woollen socks, fireplaces, hot drinks and spending time with loved ones. Some of it is true, though most of us only light candles on May 4th, to celebrate being freed from the Nazis. And of course, if we are having guests over for dinner, we light candles. Or if it is dark outside, which is mostly. Or if you have the seven-armed 'The Plough' candelabrum from Piet Hein, of course you light it to show your great design sensibilities. Woollen socks and fireplaces, however, are additional, because it is not necessary in our warm homes. We have an expression; 'feet-cold', but after many years I understand why it is not in the English vocabulary, as it is simply part of the Brits' constant state of being. The irony of fireplaces is that in England they have all been blocked up or refurbished into eyesores. Whereas, in Denmark, due to our futuristic city heating they are fairly obsolete, but we still add them into new homes. Perhaps the British are afraid of running out of firewood, but I think if we started with all the disgusting carpets and then went on to get rid of all the neglected, overgrown and dead trees, we would get quite a long way. Many people also seem scared of ancient invention, but we have been taming fire for far longer than we have dogs. Of course, the danger does not lie in the thing itself, but in its creator, owner or master. It is like a girl 200 years from now being scared of manually operating a light-switch, fearing electrocution.

Always when I visit Denmark I think of it as some hippie commune. I only visit, because they do not fully accept me as one of their own, living outside their Thousand-Year Reich. I say hippie, because in the corner stores, besides the old-school natural mineral water, Evian and the like, you can buy locally sourced tap water in gender-neutral, recyclable cardboard cartons. Their slogan would send marketing companies the world over into sceptical confusion, like that feeling right after a magic trick; 'Drink water from the tap whenever possible.' Hippies!

Hygge is very simple, let me break it down for you. It is about living in the present, having fewer worries and companionship usually helps. You may think it is limited to Nordic countries, but hygge can be created out of almost any situation if we let it. Round up your housemates or family, put on some cracking tunes, break out some dance moves and start cleaning the house! If you let it, this would be hyggeligt. It is about no judgement, no concerns, equality, peace and love. Besides, according to Jante, nobody cares about you anyway! So why not choose hygge. Of course, you can add to the atmosphere with some heavy rain or thunder, a comforting drink or some classy woollen socks, but it is primarily a shared state of mind.

Now it is up to you. Go home from work on time, or before time. Lose your ambitions, burn your bras, drive a second-hand car, be mediocre, or less, take it easy, spend time with your loved ones and get rid of your dreams.

Then, live hyggeligt ever after.

<u>Becoming Danish Checklist</u>	
X	Develop the ability to drink coffee at 10pm and still go to bed at 11
	Start your Mega Mussel collection
X	Start your Georg Jensen Jule-uro collection <small>lots of catching up!!!</small>
	Be a member of at least two local groups
	Leave work at 15:45 to pick up kids
	Live by the Law of Jante
X	Eat only two meals a day <small>one of them taking at least five hours</small>
X	Eat brown bread, very brown bread <small>- Use said bread to make half sandwiches</small>
X	Learn how to hygge
	Scale back your ambitions
	Be mediocre
X	Be happy with who you are
X	Go to the beach, even though it's freezing <small>- Start winter bathing</small>
	Dress in black, grey or shades thereof <small>- Bring out the colours in summer</small>

Impotens Architecture

Impotens. No more truth, no more difference.

By Sara Medas

I look and stare
at impotent buildings,
at motionless places,
at static forms
which are buried
in a century
with tedious times
with tedious places.

"Impotens" is a latin adjective which somehow describes the current state of modern architecture and its inability to fully express itself. It can be translated in English with adjectives such as powerless, with no strength, therefore impotent, assuming the meaning of paralised, lost and disorientated.

In times of fast changes, architecture seems to be unable to rapidly absorb and express this situation in powerful architectural forms, resulting in the partial loss of the architectural heritage of our society.

Big metropoles and megalopoles are urban demonstrations of a hidden problem, the uprooting of the human being in modern society resulting in the loss of all cultural traditions, architecture included. Finding a national identity is becoming day after day harder due to phenomena of globalisation and production techniques and processes. The diversity of shapes seems to be apparent, leading us to ask ourselves one question:

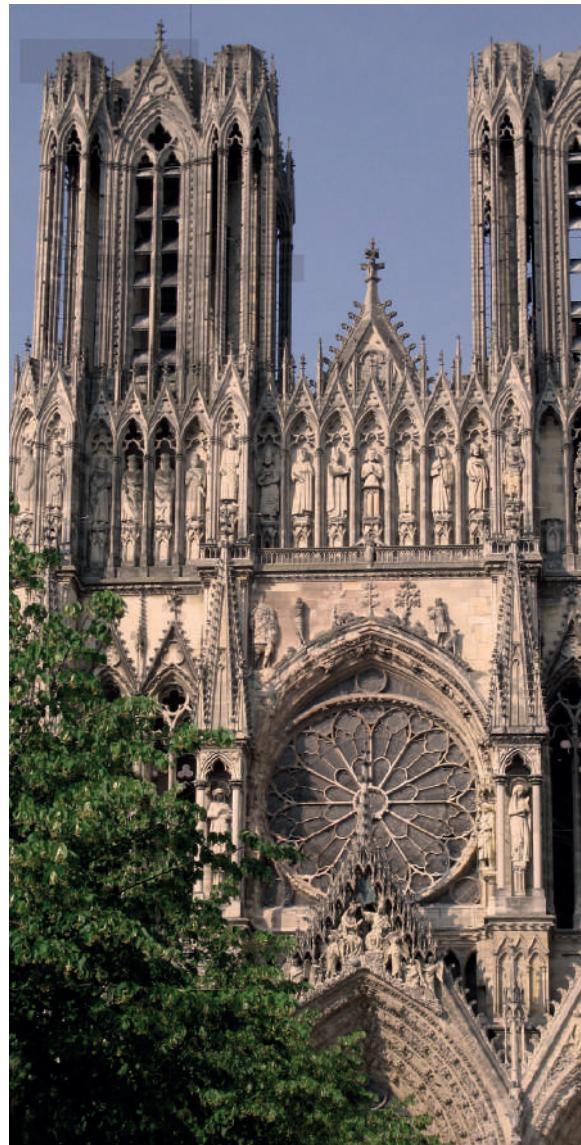
"What is true about architecture? Its construction methods, its architectural expression, its sense of place?"

Architecture seems today incapable of hindering a given set

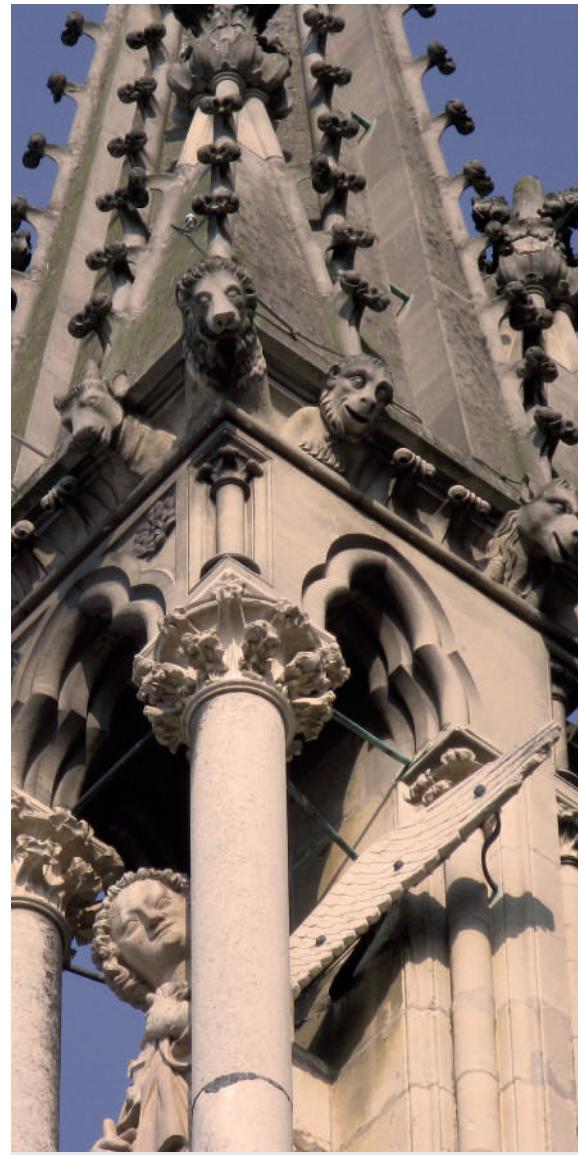
**"What is
true about
architecture?"**

of rules which is super imposed by a sequence of events and situations peculiar to modern times. If we look back in time, either Classic and Medieval or Renaissance times, architecture

was also a much more powerful tool to educate and generally shape society. A clear example of that were stainless glass windows beautifully crafted to explain the Bible to illiterate people. Architecture was also a powerful tool of education to religious rules, which played a key role in shaping a cohesive community.



Façade of Reims Cathedral, North of France. Picture by S. Medas, 2010.

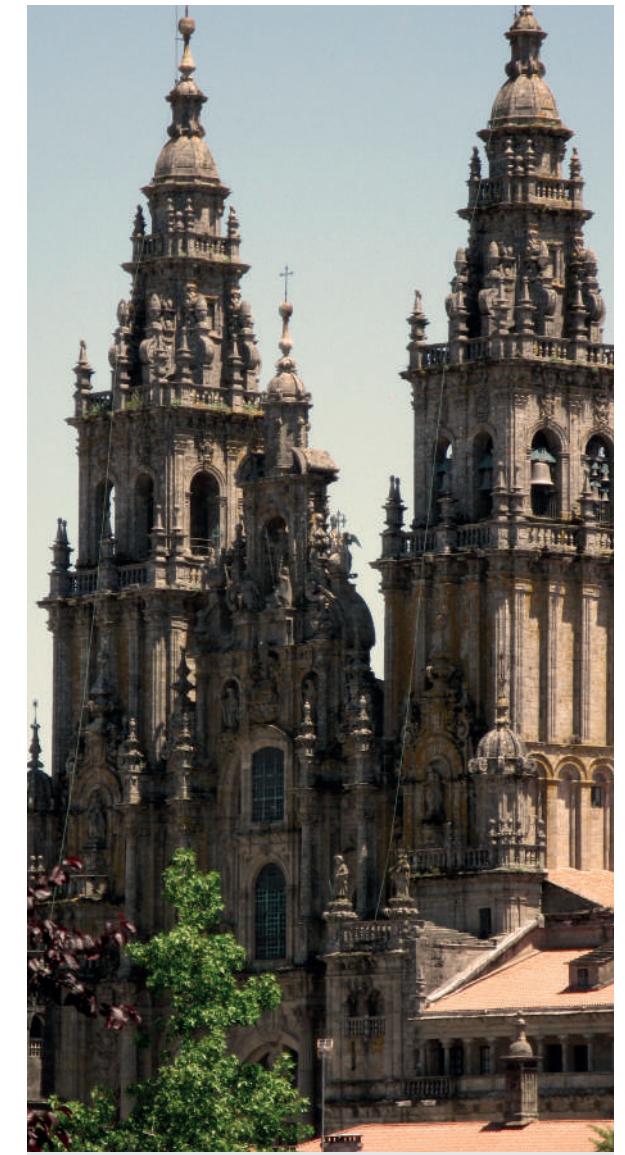


Detail of Reims Cathedral, North of France. Picture by S. Medas, 2010.

Another example being the gargoyles and grotesques outside the high walls of Gothic cathedrals, which at the time were used to instil religious fear in people, therefore contributing to create social order in the community. It is not even a coincidence that such buildings were the most prominent, central and the highest in the city in order to mark their power and influence the way a society was ruled and governed. So, the question that arises is:

"What is architecture doing in our society? Which is its role? Is it acting as a primary guide in our times?"

Nowadays, architecture seems so lost and disorientated that it maybe even be argued that a monotonous expression mostly characterises it and we should aim, as an advanced society, for a much stronger presence and value of our buildings in our cities. The digitalisation of architecture can be considered one of the main causes of this trend because it is now possible to create and build whatever shape in every part of the world regardless of the natural rules and constraints. Another major cause, which can be considered a consequence of the previous one, is the



Santiago de Compostela , North of Spain. Picture by S. Medas, 2009.

progressive loss of social influence of the architect in our society. In times when the architect was the only one to have all the knowledge needed to design, clients had to rely solely on his expertise. Today, as human knowledge spreads and increases in every field, architecture has become a more specialised and complex activity than in the past. Unfortunately, what should have been an opportunity to strengthen the power of architecture in our society, has proved to be a weakening factor, with once ancillary expertises gaining a growing role.

Today, in order to complete a building, whatever its function, the design team is composed of so many figures taking care of different aspects of the project, resulting in the loss of the overall influence that the architect has on the project. As a consequence of this, same and similar forms and construction methods have been applied to places which are radically different from each other. This phenomenon, mainly occurring in big cities, has caused the progressive loss of a vernacular approach to building, with a consequent globalisation of architecture. An untrue architecture.

Circling the Square: RIBA Exhibition Review

On the other side, there is that type of simple but vernacular architecture, quite unconsidered, which has remained truthful to its location. I am primarily referring to those places which have remained untouched by globalisation and which still use local methods of construction because of the lack of modern digitalised facilities. In essence, what is happening, is the fact that architecture is now deeply broken and fragmented. On one side, there is the modern, super digitalised architecture, emotionless and untrue, on the other side a simple, hand crafted one resulting in a more true expression. It almost seems that, in what we considered an advanced society, actually all these processes which should have marked and distinguished our times for progress, are indeed slowly and progressively eroding it from the inside out. And so,

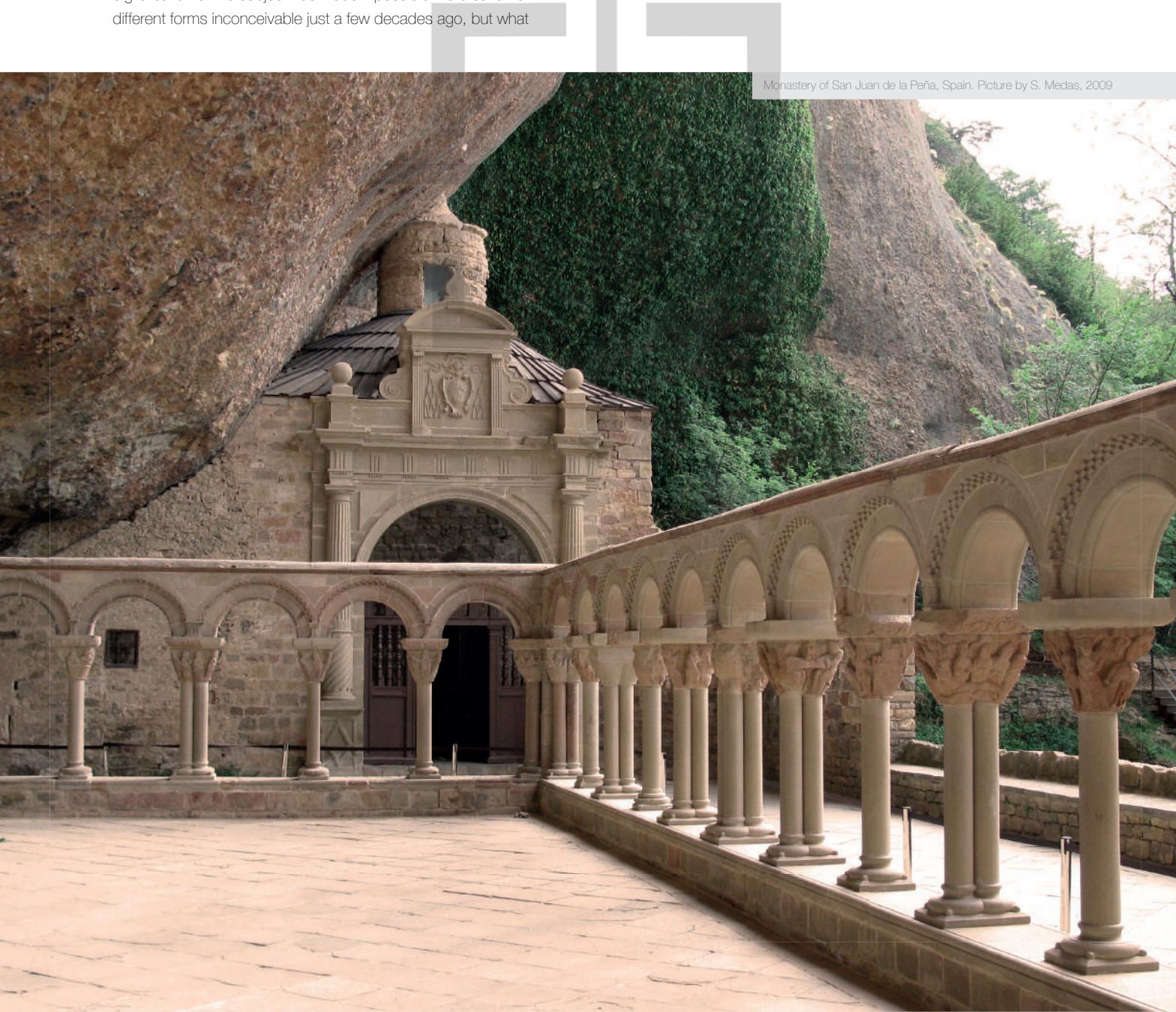
"Is our society and its much wanted race to progress the inner cause of an untrue expression of architecture?"

We have just to wonder if progress could be used in favour of and not against architecture in what concerns the developing of buildings more rooted in our culture. It is no doubt that the digitalisation of the subject has made it possible the creation of different forms inconceivable just a few decades ago, but what

"Is our society and its much wanted race to progress the inner cause of an untrue expression of architecture?"

in my opinion lacks is the next level of complexity which touches upon the question "How do we define a modern digitalised architectural movement?". I reckon the clue to the problem lies partially in the lack of understanding of the nature of our times. Bringing into architecture theoretical knowledge about modern philosophy, history, sociology and economy would add an invaluable instrument to help to define the characters of modern buildings.

Monastery of San Juan de la Peña, Spain. Picture by S. Medas, 2009



Two iconic schemes, two brilliant architects, one London exhibition. Did the RIBA succeed in comparing what is and what could have been? Read below.

By Julia Korpaska

Not often does an exhibition about architecture focus on the design process that goes beyond the aesthetic finish. Even less often it offers a chance to have an insight into what happens after the design stage, that has more to do with PR and marketing than actual architecture. Public inquiries, the letters between the (more or less involved) parties, publicity campaigns – these show what a complex and difficult process it is to actually see a building completed. The RIBA retrieved a great amount of archive materials to commemorate two iconic schemes – the unrealised Mansion House Square by Mies Van der Rohe and its built successor – James Stirling's Number One Poultry. Although I don't find either of those projects entirely successful in terms of combining aesthetics with consideration of the context, I must say the RIBA did a great job presenting a thorough examination of the thought behind both schemes. Circling the Square shows, despite the obvious stylistic dissimilarity between the two proposals, the not-so-obvious resemblance in the consistency of approach of the two architects.

It is the consideration of detail that make Circling the Square not only interesting but also a very enjoyable experience. The impressive collection includes the Stirling's famous 'worm's eye' axonometric views showing incredible skill and thorough consideration of every angle of the scheme.

The copies of the sets of Mies' drawings can be browsed through as if through the originals. My favourite piece is a travertine ashtray designed by Van der Rohe, highlighting his attention in projects he worked on. However the crown jewel of the collection is a detailed site model of Mies' scheme which is one of the most impressive architectural models ever made, displayed for the first time in over 30 years.

The exhibition's focus shifts from the socio-political context to the buildings themselves as one moves through the space. In this way, any changes in the designs or controversies around them are understandable. Similarly, Stirling's incorporation of some of the features of Mies' scheme and the neglect of others are possible to trace without a thorough background research. Contrary to what we are used to, the purpose of this exhibition is not to make us like the proposals, but rather understand both.

¹ It is the title of a special report prepared by the Terry Farrell Partnership in conjunction with SAVE Britain's Heritage, published in Building magazine in March 1984

It is quite relieving, not having to choose the better one while being able to examine the advantages and disadvantages of both. I am glad that I don't have to appreciate the postmodernist architecture of the Number One Poultry. I am equally happy having learned why 'Mies is great. London is greater.'

Although the amount of reading material may be quite overwhelming at first, you can discover how important it is to have the support of fellow architects or find out how Prince Charles almost made James Stirling resign his RIBA Royal Gold Medal. Circling the Square gives a fantastic insight into the political, social and architectural context the schemes were conceived in and is definitely worth paying a visit.

Mies van der Rohe & James Stirling: Circling the Square, 8 March – 25 June RIBA, London



Close-up of the famous Mansion House Square model by Mies Van der Rohe.

Re-thinking 'Honesty' & Architecture

In a world where more increasingly bigger, shinier and edgier is better, is there still space for an architecture of social value, cultural identity and above all - humanity?

By Nathan Davies

We often use the term 'Honesty' in architecture to discuss the extent to which a building's structural strategy is supported and revealed through its architecture. But this fairly limited application of the word is used almost exclusively by those within the industry itself. What if we were to measure buildings, not by their structural honesty, but by their moral and social honesty?

The Rural Studio is one such case of humanist architecture in practice. The design-build studio is run by Auburn University, Alabama and aims to teach its students the social significance and responsibilities of their profession. Projects are designed to provide thoughtful, responsive and inspiring homes and civic buildings for poor communities in West Alabama.

The co-founder of the studio, Samuel Mockbee, writes in *Architecture Design* "Architecture can learn something from an architecture of honesty. It is about stepping into the open and expressing the simple and the actual rather than the grand and the ostentatious. Architecture, more than any other art form, is a social art and must rest on the social and cultural base of its time and place." If we broadly examine the architectural landscape today, we can see it is indeed this contextual significance of buildings that has been consumed within the fiery pit of capitalism; not only in their physical manifestation but through their societal relationship to those around them. Only through a comprehensive understanding of the *genius loci* of any project will a socially responsive architecture be born. Mockbee then states "I believe all architects are given a gift of second sight and when we see something that others can't, we should act."

It could be disputed here that this 'second sight' is in fact the result of years of hard-work and dedication compounded by a socially and contextually focused architectural education- an argument for an increased prevalence of the socially mindful in architectural training and perhaps to a greater extent, within wider architectural discourse.

This requirement to 'act' extends beyond just creating beautiful spaces; it is a dogma to practice conscientiously with economic, social, and cultural responsibility. He continues "theory and practice are not only interwoven with one's culture but with the responsibility of shaping the environment, of breaking up social complacency, and of challenging the power of status quo"

Throughout all of Rural Studio's projects, particular attention is paid to the choice of materials. In many built works, unconventional materials such as rubber, tires, windscreens, windscreens wipers and hay bales find their way into the building fabric, evidencing the studio's environmental and economic sustainability model while responding to the wider social context of the building. This architectural philosophy suggests that everyone, both rich and poor, deserve the benefits of good design; a design that champions equality and community, a design that responds to its physical and societal context, and a design that enhances the local and unique cultural understanding between occupants.

As such, we - as young architects - have a moral responsibility to strive to practice with integrity, honesty and above all – humanity.



Rural Studio's Glass Chapel (above) uses car windows salvaged from a Chicago scrap yard provide to striking roofing material on the north side sitting upon rammed earth walls.

Autonomous Architecture

A world without manual driving won't just be convenient. It'll be a redesign of how and where we live. Here's a "what if?", with a lot of question marks.

By Isaac Frost

Most people would surmise - if pushed to think about it - that the future of our society is a driverless one. So far, most discussion about this is limited to agreeing that it'll be great to have your Autonomous Vehicle (AV) take you home when drunk. Maybe the conversation could get as far as how great it will be to sleep an extra hour during your morning commute (and yes, it will be great). But how will the world really change, and how will architecture, homes, lifestyles, and city planning adapt?

The current thinking of owning your own AV is short-sighted. The reality is that nobody would own their own AV; rather, that you would choose to be part of a variety of shared ownership schemes, which keep vehicles always in use, never parked. Call an AV when you need it, have it go away when you're done. We do away with the very idea of a car being stationary. AVs will be serviced, refueled and stored far out of sight, only ever appearing when they're here to do their job.

Congratulations! Your city no longer needs a ghastly car park (or ten) right in the centre. In fact, your city can have large pedestrian zones with no need for any vehicles at all. This is already in place in many places around the world, and is almost universally appreciated by the people who live in these zones. What about when this is the norm? Great. Time for architects to start designing AV hubs (for arrival / departure) that are safe and work with the pedestrian-only areas. Time for a new wave of businesses that cater to people arriving from an AV.

More congratulations! You no longer need a driveway, or a garage. Your street isn't lined with parked cars. Societies rejoice as they figure out what to do with all that extra space. Bigger gardens? Or, does architecture respond to the changing environment with something else? How do we re-think the gap between house and street now that we have extra space?

In fact, how do we think about this, now that our street doesn't look like the streets we grew up on? As longer commutes become quicker and more enjoyable, we may see increased suburbanisation. No need to live in an expensive, smoggy city if a 100 mile commute from a green suburbia takes less than an hour. Time for a look back at the drawing boards of 60's futuristic suburbia. Cool new stuff, maybe?

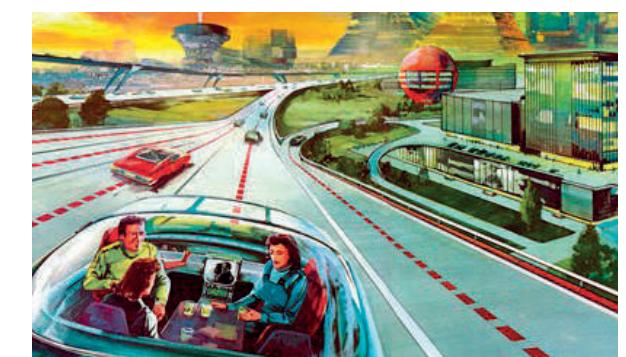
People often say, with a slight frown, "but some people just like driving". Of course. So, the most logical thing is that we should cater to those people by holding back human progress and safety, right? Nope! Imagine brand new types of activity park, where you go to drive manually. Architects of today - fancy designing Nostalgia Parks where people can whiz around in genuine old gas guzzlers, fill up at just-right retro petrol stations, and drive round realistic artificial towns where the traffic lights are always green?

But seriously now... There will be a huge amount of change we'll have to undertake as a society, as people, as an economy, to be able to transition to this new world. Many sectors (garages / mechanics, petrol stations, delivery businesses, cargo transportation, public transport) and the employees within them will have to undergo serious changes or find themselves out of business. The world will struggle, and it will be a period of great change.

But in the ashes of the old world, the new world can be built. An unknown multitude of new buildings must be made, or refitted for purpose. When every Halfords / RAC / Kwik Fit in the country is closed, what do we build in those spaces? When town centres find themselves with giant derelict concrete monstrosities, what do we do with them?

What should a driverless street look like? How do homes get rethought to not include garages? Whole architectural movements will be borne out of turning the useless into the useful, as well as all the extra space we have, and what we can do with it.

Time to start thinking.



Caption: "Man, I heard that back in the day, you just had to trust the judgement of everybody else on the road!"

The Functionalist Aesthetic: Form or Function?

"A house can have integrity, just like a person," said Roark, "and just as seldom." - Ayn Rand

By Harry Wyatt

Most people cannot look at an average building and have an immediate understanding of how it works. The steel frame, or maybe timber or block, is often hidden behind a largely aesthetic façade. As architects and engineers many of us may deplore the dishonest structure and loathe the paper thin bricks developers plaster onto concrete or steel lintels to give the false impression of a brick arch. Instead we become excited by exterior tensioned cables, glass curtain walls that leave a building naked or one of Rogers' inside out buildings which shout 'look at me, I have nothing to hide'. But taking a step back from these prejudices we have to remember that while we strive to build a better world, we are building for the layman who has little correct knowledge of how a building truly works and whose structural understanding is based only on what he or she has experienced at their human scale. What is structural honesty to them and why is this important?

In Ayn Rand's 'The Fountainhead' Howard Roark explains to Mr Heller why he likes his house:

"What is it that I like so much about the house you're building for me, Howard?"

"Well, look at it. Every piece of it is there because the house needs it - and for no other reason ... The ornament was determined by the method of construction, an emphasis of the principle that makes it stand. You can see each stress, each support that meets it. Your own eyes go through a structural process when you look at the house ... You've seen buildings that ... contain a single hall, but with a facade cut up into floor lines, band courses, tiers of windows. Do you understand the difference? Your house is made by its own needs. Those others are made by the need to impress."

An honest architecture is desirable because it can be understood in a logical sense. We have all stacked things up as children, we have all spent time in playgrounds or climbed trees. Whether someone has studied structures or not, everyone has a basic understanding and expectation of what should and should not work and certain architecture 'feels' like it can be understood.



Figure 1: The columns of the second temple of Hera in Paestum give the effect that they are being squashed under the weight of the roof (N. Nagel, 2013)



Figure 2: The columns on the Parthenon are also shaped to give the impression that the stone is deforming, but to a smaller and seemingly more realistic magnitude (S. Swayne, 1978)

But of course a building can look a certain way that helps the layman, or indeed architects and engineers, understand it, without being truly honest. While the idea of structural honesty to express a building (particularly over the use of ornament or classical ratios) is often thought of as a 20th Century ideal, there are clear aesthetic choices which have been made in the past to emphasise the structural nature of buildings. The classic Greek temple, for example, has tapered columns which give the visitor a sense that they are being compressed by the sheer weight of the stone above. While arguably entirely dishonest, as stone never deforms in this manner, it is striving for the result that the forces in the structure can be 'seen' and appreciated by the layman. We have all trodden on soft ground and felt it deflect beneath our weight, we have all trodden on twigs and felt them



Figure 3: The Seagram Building - an early example of the international style now used all over the world - the St Helen's tower, London (shown left) is an example of this global replication (Noroton, 2008)

bend to breaking point. It is a basic human understanding that as a material is stressed it is forced out of shape. Whether you have studied the Poisson's effect or not you have an expectation that when something is squashed it becomes shorter and wider. At our scale we have no real concept of how heavy stone columns are or how much weight they are able to support, this tapering allows the grand scale of temples to be understood by us and our lightweight experiences. It is worth noting that this visual compression of the columns differs from temple to temple.

The second Temple of Hera in Paestum uses wide columns with small intercolumniation which makes each one appear to be almost comically burdened by the compressive forces above, which feels somehow unnatural. The later Parthenon in Athens uses more slender columns, which gives a different visual impression about its weight and the properties of the stone. Le Corbusier writes in 'Towards a new Architecture' that 'all the temples of the time were of the same type, and the Parthenon surpasses them all beyond measure.' Considering that these buildings were constructed for the masses, who were not builders, getting this structural lie that told a hidden truth right was a delicate process. By trial and error, always shooting for the same end goal, the ancient Greeks eventually found the perfect amount of tapering the stones needed to tell the story that felt most natural to the public.

In a similar move Mies van der Rohe's Seagram building was clad in 1500 tons of bronze I beams to create its famous grid façade which appears to hold it up. The thin, reflective, glass wall is clearly doing nothing and the layman assigns the forces holding the tower up to this bronze as they try to understand how it works. As an early international style, functionalist aesthetic, building, this work can be attributed to kickstarting the modern skyscraper we see all over the world today with glass cladding over a visible internal structure. This replaced the older skyscraper designs clad in masonry where the building hid its true structure and seemed, visually, to be supported by load bearing walls.

While most people may not understand the specifics of a building's forces, we are all subconsciously aware that loads must be transferred to the ground (which is why a stepped building feels most natural whereas cantilevers feel gravity defying). Therefore the strong vertical lines in the Seagram building feel very natural as means of support to the visitor.





Like the Parthenon, the aesthetic of the Seagram building was designed to tell the truth about how the forces hold the building up, but also like the Parthenon it was not entirely honest in how it did it. The bronze cladding is theatre to tell the story of the hidden structural steel within as the tapered columns is a hyperbolic retelling of what would usually be invisible. For anyone who feels somewhat betrayed by Mies' bronze cladding it is important to remember that his original concept did indeed have structural elements visible - but American building codes dictated that the structural steel be clad in concrete for fire proofing reasons. Would concrete clad steel as a facade for the building be a greater lie about the buildings construction? The Bronze I beams at least tell the story of what was inside the concrete.

Structural honesty in most recent times can begin to conflict with our desires to make buildings perform in an environmentally conscious manner. The Seagram building scores a shocking 3/100 energy star rating¹ whereas its deceitful, limestone-clad neighbour, the Empire State Building, scored 52/100 before a recent retrofit and a stunning 90/100 afterwards. It is well acknowledged that glass curtain walls are never going to live up to masonry or concrete in terms of insulation and this throws up troubling questions for those aspiring to design something that is structurally honest. How can that beautiful truthfulness be so pure and clean when you know that if you were to hide the frame in masonry you could be doing so much more for our future? 7 world trade centre may be considered 'structurally honest'. The floor plates are clearly visible as an array of horizontal lines and the vertical columns that keep them apart can be seen and appreciated from inside and out.

The lightness of the curtain wall of glass which wraps entirely around structural grid is clearly just a skin to both architect and

layman. In spite of all of the technology that we have at our disposal the building achieves an energy star rating of only 74, below the minimum 75 required for it to be called 'high efficiency'. A building (admittedly retrofitted) built over 80 years ago can perform better. There are, of course, a number of increasingly complex solutions to these problems. The Leadenhall building, for example, has a veil of double glazing around the outside, with a wide cavity behind it housing automatic blinds and then an internal layer of glazing. The structure is beautifully exposed but the glass is being made to work really hard to make its exposure environmentally - and arguably morally - acceptable.

'What do you want, Brick?' And Brick says to you, 'I like an Arch.' And if you say to Brick, 'Look, arches are expensive, and I can use a concrete lintel over you. What do you think of that, Brick?' Brick says, 'I like an Arch.' And it's important, you see, that you honour the material that you use. [...] You can only do it if you honour the brick and glorify the brick instead of shortchanging it.' - Louis Kahn

In most climates does glass really want to be a curtain wall? Is making glass into a massively thick cavity wall with a blind in between any different from plastering wafer thin bricks onto a concrete lintel? Most of us would decry the second for dishonesty despite the fact that if it is done well you really cannot tell. Having visited the Leadenhall building I can only say that cavity glass curtain wall really does help to create something quite special - a route closer towards glass working with sustainability whilst maintaining floor to ceiling views and visible steelwork.

Ultimately, the virtues of structural honesty are that the building can be understood and appreciated - and sometimes this is achieved via hyperbole or ornament. Being true to the material

and asking it what it wants to be is held very dearly at Bath and I am by no means suggesting that we ought to start hiding all steelwork behind stone façades as Howard Roark's opponents are so keen to do in 'The Fountainhead'.

However, we as architects and engineers have a responsibility for both the building's aesthetics and its function. Structural honesty is often billed as part of the functionalist agenda and indeed for the most part it is well placed there, but function today absolutely must consider the buildings environmental impact and the traditional approach to structural honesty using the glass curtain wall is either flawed from the outset or requires a huge amount of care - which arguably departs from being true to the material - to compensate for it.

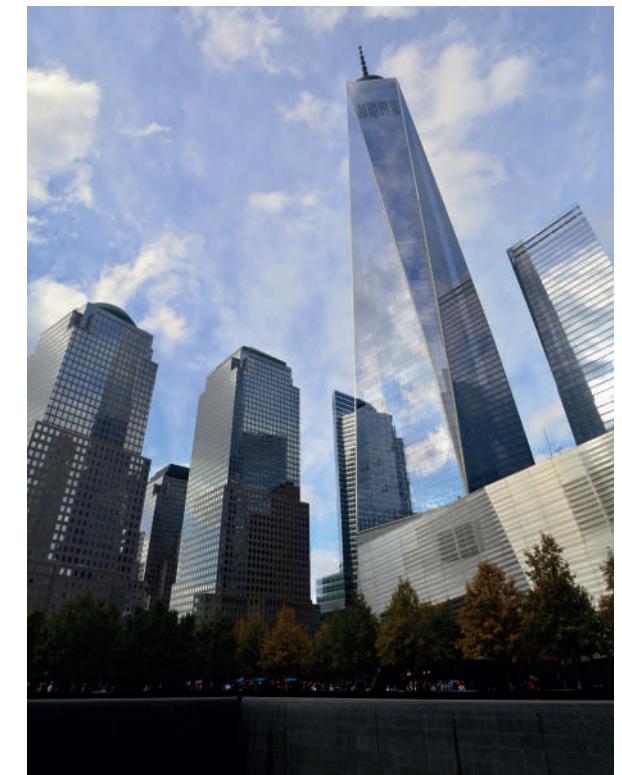
In some ways the functionalist aesthetic has become just that, an 'aesthetic' and is no longer functionalist. How is a glass skyscraper ever suited to Dubai? How can this possibly be functionalist? Equally, for all its structural honesty, for the vast majority of cases how is a cable-net structure exploiting modern technology when it often fails to do the basic job of keeping water out? Maybe we can get away with using clever glass in Britain, maybe we can't in Dubai.

Equally, while it pains me to say this, maybe the concrete arch with fake bricks isn't always wrong. Is it more right to use a curved lintel with fake bricks on the front than a flat lintel with fake bricks on the front? At least, to the observer, the curved lintel with the fake bricks tells a story about the forces being transferred in the concrete arch behind. The flat lintel with fake bricks is obviously impossible to be made truthfully in bricks so this must be how those forms in Accordia must have been created. Perhaps some of us think distastefully of Accordia, but to a lot of us it is a breath of fresh air from Barratt homes and offers a genuinely good solution for housing in Britain.



Figure 4 - Accordia uses flat brick covered lintels

Maybe the Accordia houses should have had a brick arch to be more 'honest' - but then that would have meant that less light would reach the internal courtyard. Maybe Accordia should have not been built from brick, but in Britain we have such a close cultural relationship between bricks and housing that to many it feels the most natural material. I don't think Accordia has committed any architectural crime in being built the way it is and I don't think most of us care about its honesty in construction, rather the integrity and principle with which it has been designed to cater for the living needs of the 21st century.



Glass Towers such as 7 World Trade Center (far right of image) and 1 World Trade Center (centre of image) are a standard feature of today's world city

Maybe it wouldn't have integrity to Howard Roark, but for me its fine balance between public and private space and layout which makes using a bike preferable to a car gives it integrity as homes, even if not a structure.

Architecture will always be a fine balance between form and function and whether you believe that form always follows function or that both always dictate each other it is important not to let the functionalist aesthetic lose the function to the form.

¹ The 1-100 energy star rating is calculated by comparing a building to those of the same primary use across the US, accounting for various factors such as size, location and occupants. The median score is 50.

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Sudanese Architecture: The Truth behind a Development

Can modern a modern architectural development learn from the vernacular architecture of Sudan and create efficient home with the same social quality?

By Heba Tabidi

My last visit to Sudan was in 2007, when I was 10 years old. Born and raised in England, a part of me always felt connected to my Sudanese heritage. We're simple, and build for ourselves a life we love on the backs of a supportive community which exchanges good energy. On starting my degree I always understood that this went beyond our western ideologies and climate, and that this knowledge gained, when understood, can be adapted to accommodate the social, cultural and economic needs of any community. But, on my return this April I came to the realisation that this view wasn't shared by everyone, and discovered the truth behind development in North Sudan

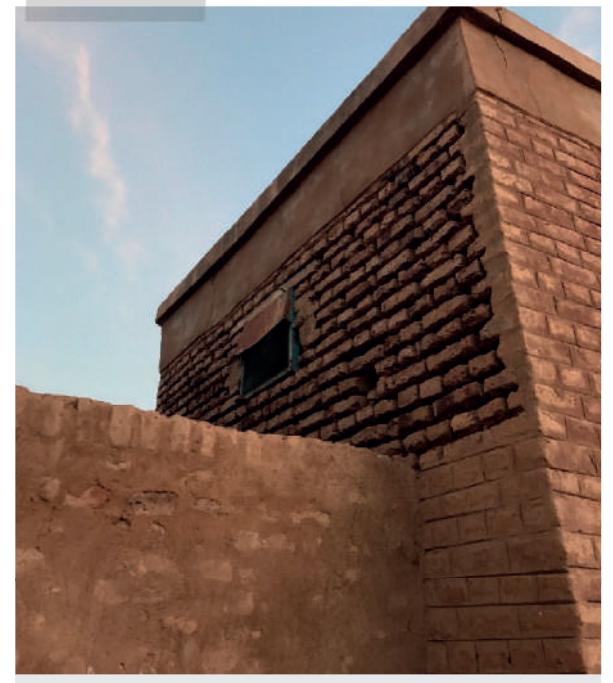
The explosion of rural-urban migration has been evident all over the world, and particularly prominent in countries which are undergoing rapid development. This mass exodus has resulted in 54% of the world population living in cities, a hallmark of our civilisation. The abundance of Sudanese petroleum has attracted billions of dollars' worth of investment from Arab transnational corporations, accompanied by a new social class, and they build. (resulting in rampant building developments) The 'Gulfiraion' of Khartoum is epitomising their power and success through the power of architecture as civilisation has done throughout history. We've witnessed it throughout the Arab peninsula, the transformation of an inhospitable desert to a thriving urban jungle, and it's now making way into eastern Africa. However Sudan, which is still bearing its scars from a history of colonisation, civil war and social unrest is struggling to pull it off. The truth is, these developments are destroying the Sudanese vernacular and the cultural practices which are tied to it. There's a clear desperation for development and wave of new builds, large scale and local, to satisfy it. The result is an architectural form and built environment totally unsuitable for the people.



Street in Al Noba

Al Noba is a village on the Blue Nile 90 minutes south of Khartoum. It is located in the Al Jazirah state, Sudan's largest agricultural region and where my parent's, freshly recruited graduates from the University of Khartoum, story began. It's what we call *النوبة* (the real Sudan), although so close to the rapidly urbanising capital, it's a spectacular display of the Sudanese vernacular. Each house is built of the same materials. The first you immediately identify is mud, an essential building material in the area, which offers superior levels of thermal comfort for energy efficient design. Temperatures indoors can reach up to 10 degrees less than outside where hot summers can reach up to 42 degrees. You're greeted by a generous amount of light in the foyer making the transition from the blinding sun to the internal environment comfortable and welcoming. There's no noticeable draught but an abundance of openings along the height of the building confirming that there is in fact a steady air flow.

There's a basic network of incredibly narrow footpaths that can be used to make one's way from one end of the Noboa to the other. But these are rarely used. Each house is beautifully interconnected and has created a Labyrinth which is a powerful embodiment of the sheer importance of hospitality and community spirit in Sudanese culture. Families gather outside in communal



Vernacular architecture: environmental genius

courtyards in the evening and call out to passing neighbours, inviting them in for dinner. In times of hardship, or celebration, locals flood to the respective house bringing their support. Humans are incredible. Immensely intelligent social and creative creatures, cities are where we flourish. The Islamic Golden age in Baghdad, The Renaissance in Florence and New York's creative boom in the 20th Century are all instances where human ingenuity gave birth to pivotal technologies. It's therefore clear that development in cities is more than the construction of buildings. It's about creating a public realm which can accommodate the development of people and ideas, and creating spaces in which a diverse community can congregate. Taking a few steps down the scale of magnitude this doesn't change. These communal courtyards are safe, clean and free from litter; filled with children in the warm afternoon and adults in the cool evenings, sharing stories and ideas which could blossom into successful ventures. What's more there's a whole new generation of Nobians who are commuting to higher education in Khartoum and upon their return, discussing their new found knowledge and ideologies with the community.

A short walk takes you to the Blue Nile and its floodplains. I'm told that on Thursdays (Sudan's start to their weekend) villagers gather en masse for a swim and heading over I can see why. A cool air hangs over a riverbed that's covered with vegetation and teeming with life. It's Tuesday and the guys are out cannonballing from the pontoon.

After returning to Khartoum from my time in Noba, the flaws in the built environment became starker. I was due to visit my great aunts in their newly built family home which was an example of 'modern Sudanese living'.

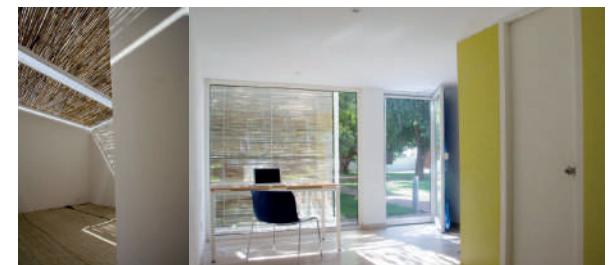
As an occupant moves from the external environment to an indoor space in a warmer climate the transition should be comfortable, particularly as they are accustomed to a warmer temperature. On entering its clear this hasn't been accounted for as you're welcomed by a sudden cold draught. Air conditioning unit number one is directly above. Two and three can be located on either side of the living room, accompanied by 2 ceiling fans.

Once it's understood how to achieve thermal comfort in a particular climate, glazing can be tactically integrated into this early stage of design to enhance it, as well as provide daylighting. Based on the principle of passive mitigation, the Salam Centre for Cardiac Arrest was constructed with high performance walls made of two layers of bricks. They are separated by an insulating air cavity with small windows, which are filled with highly performing glass panels. The outcome is a beautifully lit and comfortable space, where the close proximity between people and space is encouraged.

When a house lacks adequate air flow it must be designed to be cooled mechanically thus 'thermally sealed' and unable to interact with the environment it's within to continuously maintain an impractical internal temperature relative to the climate, it's clear why glazing would not be integrated into the design. The result: a house almost entirely illuminated by electrical lighting.

In attempt to adapt the vernacular it's clear that the living room is a take on the traditional courtyard: a central space which has access to each room and the kitchen, but one which is unsuccessful. What Nobians have understood is the balance between privacy and community. If each bedroom door opens to this single space which also acts as a foyer, there's no differentiation between domestic areas and communal ones, making it obtrusive and uncomfortable. Yet it appears to be the only shared space and this isn't uncommon.

Each house is encased in a 3m high wall, laced with barbed wire at the top. Beyond the well kept front lawns lies a neglected



The new development

public realm. In such an arid climate, shrubs and trees could be used to protect those walking from the heat and mitigate the effect of the harsh climate. Instead the unpaved streets which are barely accessible by foot, are filled with litter. A recent approach to housing is a wave of high rise apartments which are juxtaposed with the traditional Sudanese approach to community living. This marks an unwelcomed shift in our domestic architecture and years after completion debris still lies outside. I'm told that an elderly disabled woman lives inside and realise what the horrific ramp was for. "She tried it once, but it was so steep she fell all the way to the bottom, she just doesn't leave the flat anymore"

In fact, the overall inability of architects to design suitable spaces is a reflection of the deteriorating community philosophy in which we thrive - the very foundation of our culture. Families are investing to buy land in order to build in these new emerging neighbourhoods, but by doing so are removing themselves from a community which has formed ties stretching back for generations. As the less affluent are left behind the condition of these areas start to decline, driving the growing disparity of wealth in North Sudan. Their buildings are unsustainable socially, environmentally and economically as a result of the desperate attempt to rid themselves of the stereotypical 'African poverty' connotations.

These ventures appear to be revitalising greater Khartoum but are in truth ignoring the city's realities.

"These ventures appear to be revitalising greater Khartoum but are in truth, ignoring the realities of cities."

The Great Escape

Architectural incarceration and the quest to break free: is escapism from studio design projects an integral duality to the creative process?

By Tom Gregory

As this semester's work draws to a final, panic-stricken conclusion, many of us might be tempted to ponder over 'what could have been' with each of our design projects, if only we were freed from that cruellest of restraints – time. Why do we fool ourselves that we are surprised by how soon the project's inevitable deadline is approaching? After all, the months have been in a similar sequence for centuries. What is peculiar about this wistful yearning for an extension of time is the active methods of distraction and procrastination often employed in the earlier stages of a design project. Like an inmate scrabbling to escape a psychological prison, one could be forgiven for wanting to grasp at any opportunity for reprieve. This temptation to avoid reality and the project work itself is an escapism central to the working method of many of us.

The all-consuming nature of the work involved in architectural projects leads to a certain amount of bewilderment from those not directly involved, be it friends or other-halves of architecture students. The creative *locus* of an architect's project, the studio, is a place that acts simultaneously as a home and chief tormenter to the individual. The word 'studio' is as much an active verb and descriptor of a mind-set, as it is a word to describe the physical work space itself. To those uninitiated in the essence of studio, it can appear an almost mythical realm, described in terms both contradictory and unappealing. Perhaps then there is an element of Stockholm Syndrome to the architect's studio existence, in which through sheer exposure to it, it becomes the *de facto* location of architectural life. It is both the location of the architect's chief oppressor – the design project itself – and a place of refuge in which to escape from it.

The feeling of oppression from design projects is common amongst designers and is difficult to assuage. Students of architecture schools are the true masters of procrastination, with miraculous achievements attained in random pursuits entirely unconnected to architecture. For one designing a craft-house for example, it might seem essential to become a master potter within weeks; these noble acts of empathy to one's proposed client provide great opportunity for postponing the design work itself.

So too do acts of self-sustenance – the drinking of coffee and the making of food – which take on newfound levels of importance. These are elevated to creative acts worthy of Instagram



Ongoing metamorphosis of newly opened design studios in 4ES

documentation, allowing each student to gain comprehensive knowledge of the Bolivian quinoa growing season or to become a discerning coffee connoisseur.

Regardless of the methods of elusion employed to clear one's mind of the design project at hand, great mental effort both conscious and unconscious goes into each scheme. This is not an optional choice for the student but a result of the emotional investment in each design. The projects can never truly give back the time and devotion invested into them over many tears and late nights, but offer a solemn reminder to their respective authors of the mistakes made during their duration.

Ask any student to point out what really annoys them about their project and there will be countless gripes about minuscule parts of their building – invisible to the naked eye and common observer – which keep the project's designer up at night. This devotion and investment in projects is hard to fathom and describe, but is a signature of student design projects.

As the final deadline approaches, projects become a form of self-confinement, absorbing ever more of the student's life. This is the moment at which the previous methods of obfuscation meet cold reality and the scale of the challenge becomes apparent.

Studio here passes from a merely physical space to a state of mind, in which everything becomes subservient to the impending design deadline. To the untrained observer, this morose studio

existence could not seem further from a desirable state of being – all the more for it being a voluntary act of internment.

Through the gloom and despair often present in the approach to this final crit (perhaps even the almost obligatory all-nighter (or two, or five) immediately prior to it), the light shining vaguely in the distance is the promise of release immediately after the crit. It feels almost mandatory to celebrate the freedom from the oppression of the project but, like a captive released from long-term imprisonment, there is uncertainty in this new-found freedom. There is perhaps a sense of vengeance from the student directed towards the project, a sense that enjoying the freedom from work might spite the design scheme. Alas, in being both inanimate and silent, this final victory belongs also to the project.

The longing for this freedom and the escapism practiced to avoid studio work is best described in opposition to the mental totality of a design project. The architectural critic Manfredo Tafuri once wrote of "how ineffectual are the brilliant gymnastics carried out in the yard of the model prison, in which architects are left free to move about on temporary reprieve".

It is a prison yard of architecture's own making, full of the games of design and self-deception so favoured by architecture students. However well-designed and intentioned this mental prison is, it becomes all the more ensnaring in its distracting beauty. Perhaps then, your author should stop writing this article and get back to the main design project itself...

I don't want to play architect anymore.



Truth about Failure

This short article is a trial against failure in residential housing in a small town in Poland, where the investor, contractors and the local government should be sent away for social works.

By Oliwia Jackowska

Accusation: Six multi-family blocks are to be built in a remote village area, where locals lead peaceful lives, nearby a lake and forests. The region is assigned for one-family houses, where the city can no longer disturb their peace. The new buildings are not only out of place, they are also ugly and not functional.

Evidence No. 1: External arrangement

All one can see, when looking at the site view of the project is six copied and pasted, randomly arranged blocks. Having no idea, what does the thing in the right corner represent, I do not understand why the investor did not decide to use that space to provide decent amount of light reaching each flat. In addition to that, all blocks are exactly the same and there is no relationship between them. The 'design' does not take any context, light or orientation into account, which not only gives the space less value both inside and outside, but also does not provide positive space for children to socialise outside, together with parents.

Evidence No. 2: Internal flat plan



The form of each block suggests that the design was not driven by the idea of providing positive space and functional internal plan of each flat. It was the other way round - the plan had to be adapted to the set form of a building. The flats are arranged, so that 3 consecutive ones fit within a square, where one dimension is the width of the whole block. Type B flat is rectangular and two A type flats are L-shaped. It is truly impressive how the designer managed to arrange space, in order to produce as many flats as possible in limited space. But why? There is so much lost space in this project.

The plans of each flat are very closed - imagine how much space and air the residents could gain if we got rid of some doors. Even though the type B flat is very compact, it is very tight and closed - it is difficult to move around there. However, what I find even more surprising is type A flat - it's not only the fact that you can fit only single bed in this flat, but the living room is separated from the rest of the flat (imagine taking there two cups of coffee from the kitchen).



A diagram showing the arrangements of blocks.



Photograph of houses in the course of construction.



Photograph of houses in the course of construction.



Photograph of houses in the course of construction.



A plan of 3 combined flats - A,B and A (sourced from <http://www.smkormoranolsztynek.pl/>).

Who is responsible for this?

We cannot put guilt on one particular person or role. It is a very multifaceted problem, and unfortunately this means that it is more difficult to fight it. It starts with the mentality, and what people find important - how much money can they gain with the lowest costs. In this case, everything started with the local government, as weirdly assigned the site for multi-family housing, instead, as it should happen, one-family houses. Additionally, the conditions and standards that the new buildings were supposed to fulfill, were very basic. It means that the district council's idea was to gain as many new inhabitants (and taxes) as possible without spending too much.

Then, the investor shows up on the stage and with the lowest standards, quality and costs provides an awful proposition, which very quickly fulfills the basic conditions and becomes a fact. The fact that apart from designing a physically separated block the role of architect is reduced to minimum is truly frightening. Sadly, Poland is not the only country, where money and system wins over the space.

Punishment:

The punishment for that kind of crime should be very high, since it undermines the chance to create infrastructure consciously. The only punishment is that we, as inhabitants of the world, like prisoners, need to deal with this kind of crime everyday.

"The only punishment is that we, as inhabitants of the world, need to deal with this kind of crime everyday."



The World through a Lens

We are all the Alice of our own wonderland.

By Maddi Gomez-Iradi

In earlier years, a photograph that captured an environment was considered as valid as observing a place in situ. The contents of the photographs were truthful as they had not been manipulated and hence could be used as reference... or were they? Tampering of photographs dates back almost as far as the invention of photography.

The first step to manipulation will already be taking place as we prepare to take a shot; the world through the lens of the camera will certainly be biased, since the photographer will only capture what she/he wants others to see. A sequence of photos from a place will reveal the intent of the photographer and how she/he sees or wants others to see the world.

Deception and manipulation is in our nature. Pretending to be something we are not or portraying a reality that does not exist is not a new concept. We each create our own reality based on what we want to or do believe.

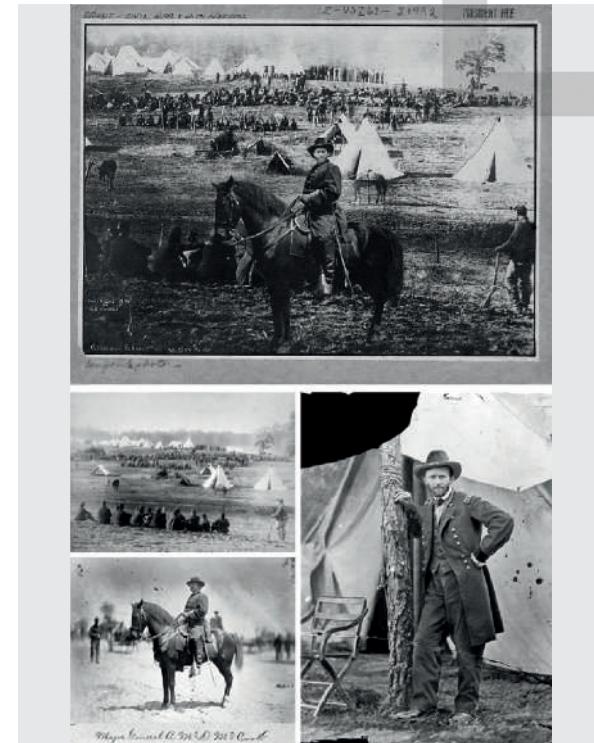


Photo manipulation during the American Civil War. Researchers at the Library of Congress revealed that this print is a composite of three separate prints.



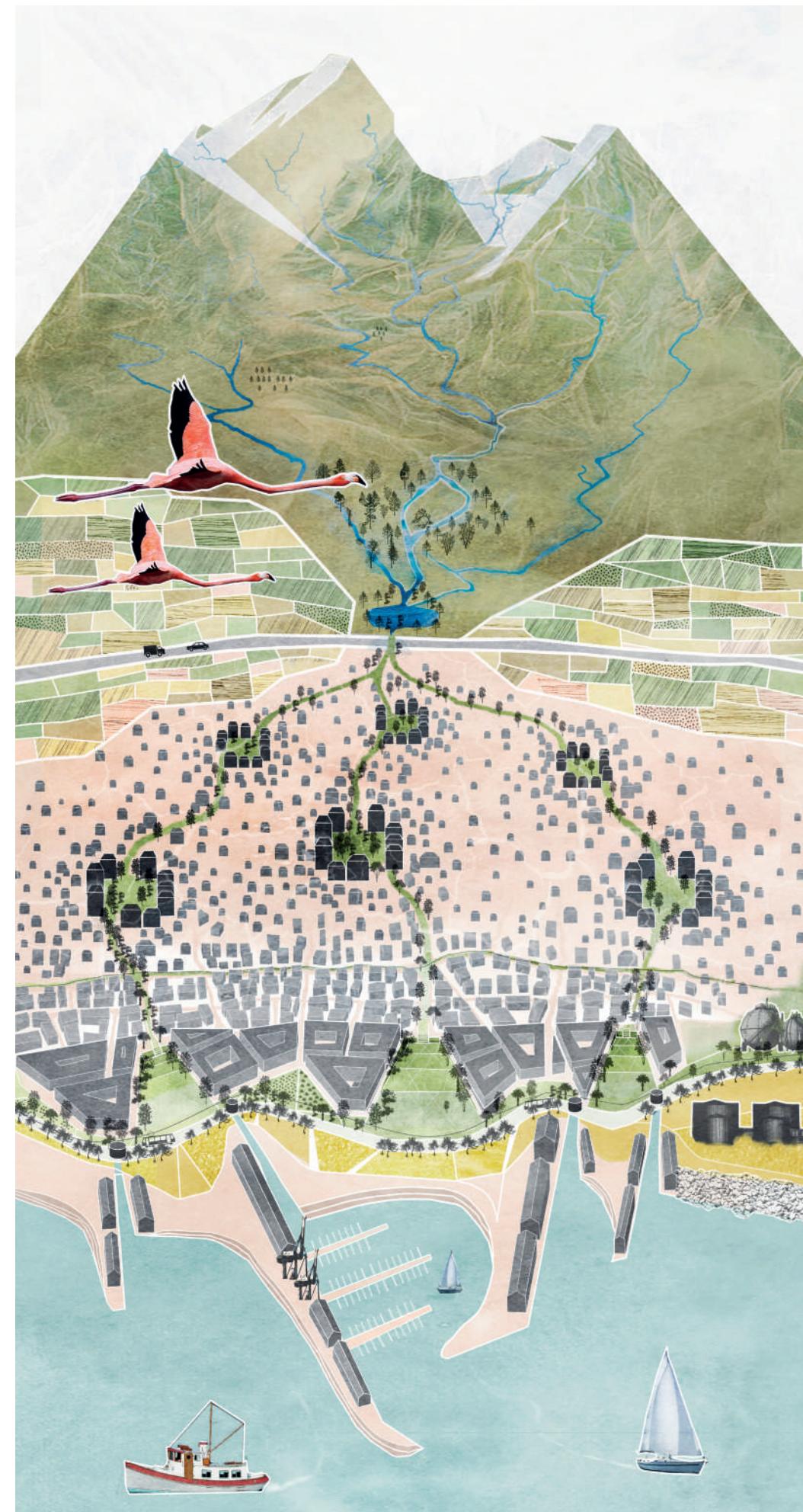
Left: Dancing House, Prague (real)

Right: More acceptable than the left one, but fake

Over recent years, photographic manipulation has caused even the simplest photographs to be suspected of having been altered. It is often very difficult to realise if the photograph you are looking at is in fact a photorealistic render or if it is just your own paranoia. The more you look at something, the odder/stranger it becomes; just like when you repeat a word over and over to the point that it loses its meaning after a while. We might have reached a point where it is near impossible to distinguish between real and creation, especially since an illusory picture will have been based off reality.

Photographs of buildings that defy all logic may lead one to think that they cannot possibly exist in reality. If we are given two images like the ones above, and asked which one is real and which one is not, considering we are not familiar with either of the buildings, our minds will rephrase the question and think of it in terms of which of the two is the least plausible.

Having become acclimatised to viewing the world a certain way, we have subconsciously established values that are hard to override. We are used to looking through a pre-established lens based on our personal experience, and hence, the most logical answer will be the one that blends into our world. It is easier to believe in a 'comfortable' reality instead of processing everything we see through a sceptical lens. Preconceptions lead us to create a distorted and easier to accept truth, which is why, when we come across an answer that we do not expect, we start to question previously made assumptions. It is very easy to get caught up in questioning everything around us and lose sense of what is real and what is not. It is a matter of time before we end up going down the rabbit hole. We are all the Alice of our own wonderland.



Larnaka Masterplan MArch Year 2



Photography: Behind the Lens

Out and about brainstorming during a roam around the University and more

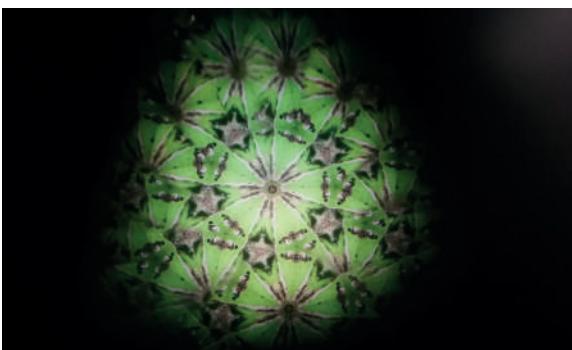
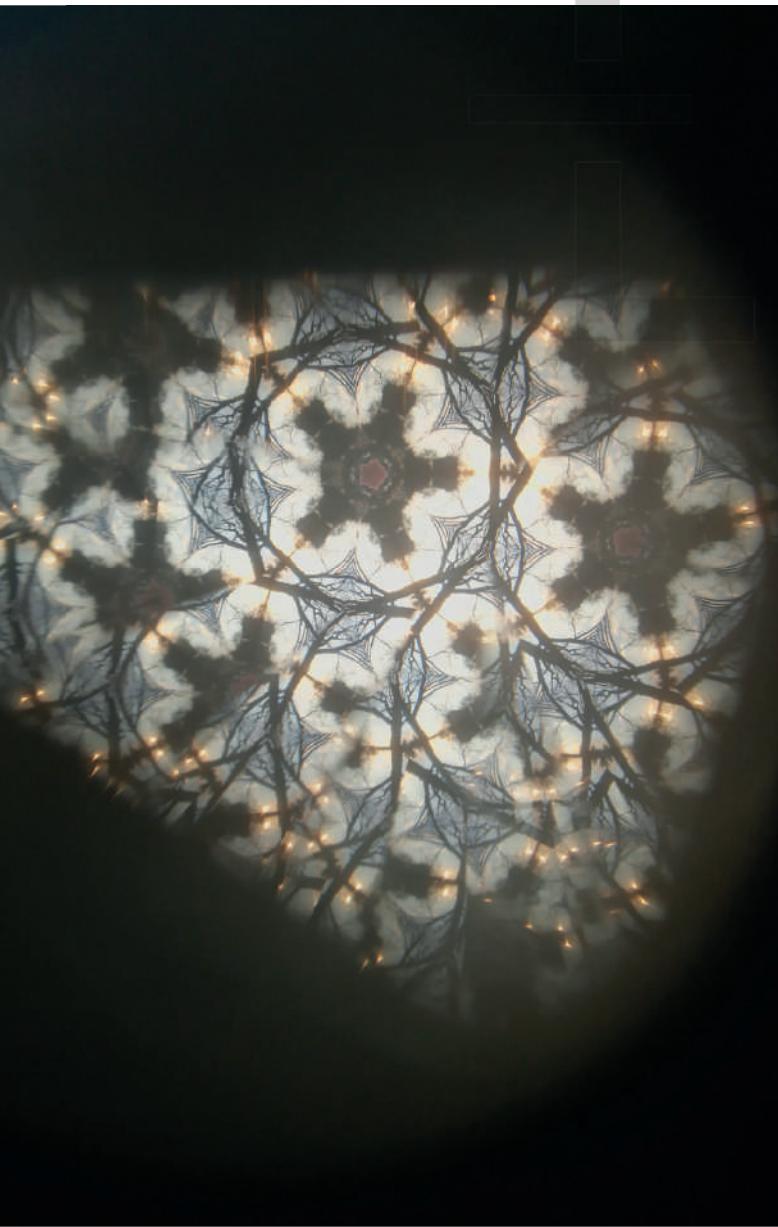
By Peilin Liao

I guess you will call this a pattern without any doubt if I didn't tell you where they come from. Pattern, by definition, is an arrangement or design regularly found in comparable objects.

I have been wondering if we can still define something that is not artificially created a pattern. This is my attempt to explore the boundary between reality and design:

These stunning photos are all taken from somewhere in our school by using either a kaleidoscopic lens or a normal camera.

Having created the first shot, I began to ask myself why our eyes cannot be structured differently. Can we have fish eyes or compound eyes like the insects? If half of the population are having another type of eyes, say they see in a completely different way, we probably need to redefine what reality is.





The Truth Behind PaperspACE: Issy Spence

Come July 4th, the University of Bath Architecture and Civil Engineering department will be bidding farewell to one of its greatest assets...

By Ben Hair

The printing of this issue of paperspACE carries far greater weight than may initially be apparent. Come July 4th the University of Bath Architecture and Civil Engineering department will bidding farewell to one of its greatest assets; Issy Spence.

For the last four years Issy Spence has been the life blood of this student led magazine rising to the role of Editor-in-Chief in 2015. My involvement has been somewhat shorter, only joining the team this year, but in that short time I have learnt of the astonishing scale of Issy Spence's contribution.

As Editor-in-Chief, Issy reads, writes, and reworks every article to varying degrees almost independently, all the while retaining the smiling affable demeanour she is known and loved for. With diplomatic creativity, she cultivates the conversations that become the topics, the topics that become articles and the articles that become paperspACE. There are scarce few people who would work until the early hours of the morning, tirelessly compiling a magazine that promotes the department and its students alike, all the while with a 4th year studio project to wrestle with.

This article was initially intended to be an investigation into the truth behind paperspACE, but in truth paperspACE is just one of the many hats that Issy Spence wears with unwavering enthusiasm and cheer. It is fair to say that the Bath End of Year Show 2017 will owe a significant debt to the time and effort Issy has put into its co-ordination. She leads with fervour and exuberance and gives the enormous chicken that is the 4th year cohort a head.

I could list the countless societies, troops and causes that Issy associates herself with, giving each an exorbitant amount of care, but its perhaps more fitting (and aligned with Spence's own humble nature) to just say this; Issy Spence is as caring as she is charismatic and as committed as she is crazy.

It is impossible to condense all that Spence has done for her fellow students in just 800 words, instead let this article be a small salute to the relentless positivity, consideration and love that she has given to every facet of her time at Bath.

Thank you, Issy Spence.



Issy's peers were asked to sum her up in one word.
These are the words that they put forward.

Omnipresent
Fuelled
Bodacious
Selfless
Kooky
Enthusiastic
Caring
Kindhearted
Wonderful
Bubbly
Vivacious
Boozy Legend
Bootylicious
Vibrant
Quirky
Happy Hippo
Inviting
Genuine
Legend
Mental
Charismatic
Fizzy
Effortlessly Likeable
Kind
Sparky
Exuberant
Effervescent
Bohemian
Flexible
Relentless
Tingly
Magical

