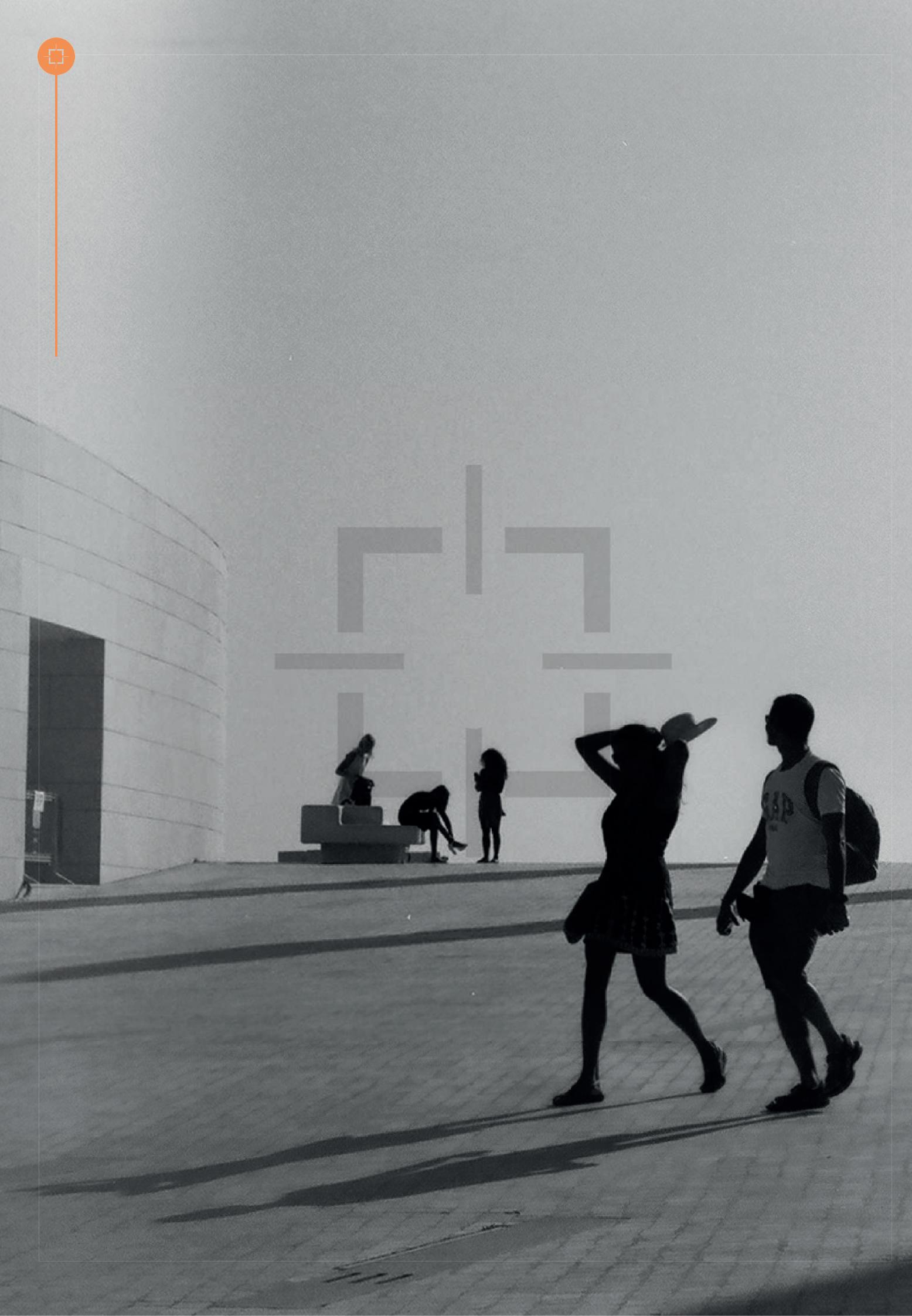


# paperspace



THE UNIVERSITY OF BATH   DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND CIVIL ENGINEERING  
ISSUE FIVE   JANUARY 2016   BOUNDARIES   NEWS   HISTORY  
OPINION   REVIEW



paperspace



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

**Cover**

Marie D'Oncieu

Paperspace is 3 years old. This issue explores visible and invisible boundaries, covering a range of scales and topics.

The image on the front cover was captured by Marie D'Oncieu on a visit to Istanbul. The waterway, The Bosphorus, is a physical boundary dividing the city; with one foot in Asia, and the other in Europe. Recent plans to 'renovate' 50% of the city's buildings has led to destruction of entire neighbourhoods and communities. The photo is captured on a demolition site, previously old houses, which will now be replaced by a hotel. Boundaries here exceed the merely physical: renovations and expulsion is leading to an increased social and economic divide.

In our own department, I am proud that the boundary between civil engineer and architect is blurred. The collaboration between the two roles makes for strong design work. In this issue we have expanded the student section, to show more of what is going on in 6E. You can see the outcomes of this collaboration: from the 4th year's work on the **Basil Spence Project** to the 3rd Year **Fringe Theatre Project** and the 1st year's **Equilibria** sculpture.

This got me thinking, what if we could integrate further disciplines into our education? Imagine less focus on computer and more on making. Summer schemes such as **Hello Wood** (Hungary) and **Meds** (Serbia) are student workshops where projects are designed and built in teams of design students from all over Europe. Some of our students attended these workshops and found the experience invaluable.

Boundaries have a strong connection to urbanism and the fabric of a city. Some of the pages of this magazine look at cities of **Brasilia**, **Istanbul**, **Berlin**, **Dublin** and **Sheffield**.

Boundaries are physical, geographical, and dividing. But Boundaries can be crossed, removed, evolve, and provide safety. Boundaries are limiting and limitless.

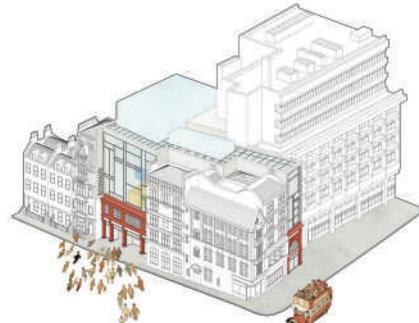
This issue explores these aspects, and we hope you enjoy it.

Editor in Chief of Paperspace

Issy Spence

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# First Years: Equilibria

A showcase of photographs from First Year Civil Engineers and Architects group project: to design and construct a sculpture

By Issy Spence



# Bath Takes Hello Wood - Project Village 2015

Last summer three second year architects took part in a architecture camp where they were given a new insight into the world of design.

**By Marina Mylonadis, Joe Ridealgh and Sonya Falkovskia**

When my friends would ask me what I had been doing in Hungary by myself this summer I had no clue how to answer. There is no one liner to summarise what went on in the little village of Czoromputza during that week in June. Hello Wood sticks out like a sore thumb in my memory. I had never been in a working environment where no one would complain and each individual was more passionate and energetic than the next. People had come across the world from a palette of cultures purely to celebrate and exercise their love of architecture and innovation. As this was the uniting element of everyone's being there, architecture and the arts would be the most instinctive and natural conversation. It didn't matter who you were or who you knew, from the moment we all arrived, got our wristbands and unpacked into our wooden huts you were stripped down to the most basic human principles and categorised by which of the 15 teams you were in. It suddenly became OK to approach a stranger and ask them who their favourite architect was or their

views on Punchdrunk theatre. Everyone became ageless, even the initially intimidating group leaders who had come from the AA and Delft – to name a few – would become your peer and colleague, after all we were all working towards the same goal of building this universal concept of a village. We were situated in the absolute depths of the Hungarian countryside, only a single building in sight surrounded by wheat fields as if you had stepped into a Wes Anderson set where somehow the sky seemed to be bigger and the colours more lucid than what I knew. Within a few days the patch of countryside we were staying on had become a homely microcosm where you would sleep, eat, by day work on

**"People had come across the world purely to celebrate and exercise their love of architecture and innovation."**



your team's pavilion and by night be trained how to party by the experts of the work hard play hard ethic. The Hungarian sunshine made it acceptable to walk around half naked all day and people slowly but genuinely began to lose any cares they had about their appearance or anything happening outside the radius of Czoromutza.

A new language of 'international English' developed through a variety of gestures and incorrect paraphrasing for me, my Italian, Hungarian, Spanish, Czech and German teammates to all understand how we would go about building our pavilion.

I was lucky enough to be part of the Bivak project with the youngest project leaders of Hello Wood Ákos Eleőd, Zoltán Kalászi, Tamás Máté, and Áron Vass-Eysen. A 'Bivak' is a concept referring to the minimal yet comfortable solution of a human's movement in to nature. The design was based on the process of citizens retreating into nature and taking shelter, shown in the

**"We had a chance to experience the potential of 100 people working as a collective, united by a mutual goal"**



enclosing form that focuses on the internal experience of it. It makes you feel safe, secluded and private from the village, hence why it also adapted the name of 'love cabin'.

[BIVAK TEAM: : Ákos Eleőd (Leader), Zoltán Kalászi (Leader), Tamás Máté (Leader), Áron Vass-Eysen (Leader), Barbora Tothova, Maria Roy Deulofeu, **Marina Mylonadis**, Márta Schmidt, Mathilde García-Drimmer, Riccardo Onnis]

Perhaps the most iconic building of a village is the church. In my project, the design led by Jennifer Argo and Lee Ivett, we considered how this central religious building could be reinvented for people in contemporary society. In the 21st century, more and more people are choosing to move away from organised religion; as a result of this our 'church' became less about the imposition of religion to become a more modest sanctuary space. The design centred around the idea of three main zones – memory, sanctuary and ceremony, each offering their own seclusion or openness to be shared by varying numbers of people. The structure has a visual humbleness in its simple frame, hemming in the fractal nature of the triangular contents, yet remains wildly organic inside. The entire interior of the building is formed from OSB triangles, zipped together with cable ties and screwed to the outer timber frame. This project, although starting with a clear design, grew and developed around us as we created it in a way that seemed natural to the team. Jennifer Argo's illustrations were perhaps manifested in the internal composition; we built up a shell





"The structure has a visual humbleness in its simple frame, hemming in the fractal nature of the triangular contents, yet remains wildly organic inside."

around ourselves piece by piece in the way her drawings built up a natural form. There was a real sense of community in cocooning ourselves away from the outside world and achieving what we thought was the perfect balance of public and private space.

[SANCTUARY TEAM: Lee Ivett (Leader), Jennifer Argo (Leader), Flavia Notarianni, Bianka Hajdú, **Joe Ridealgh**, Johannes Fandl, Kate McAleer, Pablo Martinez, Sarolta Rab, Raya Boyukova, Tomasz Budnicki, Zsófia Kőműves]

'Mazzochio' - otherwise known as 'the big circle' amongst fellow HelloWood-ians was a 16m in diameter geometric timber circle

raised 3.5m above ground on spindly legs. The ambiguous name for those who don't know of Paolo Uccello's geometric drawings represents the concept for the project - to form an interactive circular space using light. Our group leaders were a pair of wonderfully creative, excitable and most of all French architects - Martial Marquet and Nicolas Polaert. They led us - the unassuming but eager future architects and designers - towards building this ambitious structure. We began by designing tables with specific built-in tools to create a production line of components - 24 in total - which in the end allowed us to become one of the most efficient groups in producing our project.



However, creating the components proved to be the easiest part of the project as once we started to combine them all into a circle we quickly realised that accuracy was perhaps not our strongest suit. Nonetheless, we successfully raised each section of components onto their corresponding legs to then combine everything into the impressive structure it became. Lighting then became the most important part of the project. As dusk fell so did the vast array of shadows below Mazzochio where these forms were used to further develop the physical nature of the installation. Working hands-on with a project that changed every day for me was the most exciting part.

[MAZZOCCHIO TEAM: Martial Marquet (Leader), Nicolas Polaert

(Leader), Andrea Ballesteros, Juan Ezcurra, **Sonya Falkovskia**, Vojta Němec, Gábor Tajnafői, Sári Weichinger, Carina Zabinj]

Throughout the camp there was a real sense of community spirit, we built, danced, surfed and drank all as one big architectural family. Isolated from the rest of the world in our own architecture student bubble, summer camps really must be a part of the architectural coming of age. To be able to work with other architecture students from all over the world made us learn and understand different ways of thinking and approaching design - something which is difficult to achieve in current architectural



education but still it an extremely important aspect. Regardless of culture we learnt that all architects and art types tend to perceive the world in the same way; with similarly analytical minds, words became superfluous. Without trying to sound cliché we came back a different person. Above all it gave us hope as young people. We had the chance to experience the potential of 100 people working as a collective being driven and united by the passion of a mutual goal; how our future as architects, engineers and designers building for a better world can only be promising.

For more information on the projects or about how to apply for this year check the Hello Wood website <http://www.hellowood.eu/>



# MEDS Workshop: Tara, Serbia

Meds (Meeting of European Design Students) changes location every summer and is an opportunity for Architecture and Design students to involve themselves in design and building projects.

**Diana Smiljkovic**

Two weeks in August were set aside to bring forth architecture and design students from multiple nations. Leaving the city lights behind we set out to the wild mountain of Tara in Serbia. Finding inspiration in traditional work and nature enabled us to expand our minds in terms of design and thought. It allowed us to embrace and really notice our surroundings; incorporating them into our daily lives.

I had the remarkable opportunity of being part of an exquisite team. Composed of 15 talented architecture and design students, our group set out to finalise a design as well as build it. Led by Alin Voitescu, the Pop-Up deck; later christened Eva Holly; revolved around the theme Ground Zero. Voitescu's idea directly applies to ground zero as it is a floating device which integrates pop-up furniture within it. Set in the Zaovinska Lake, the deck's aim is to create a social space where surrounding nature can be embraced from within the lake.

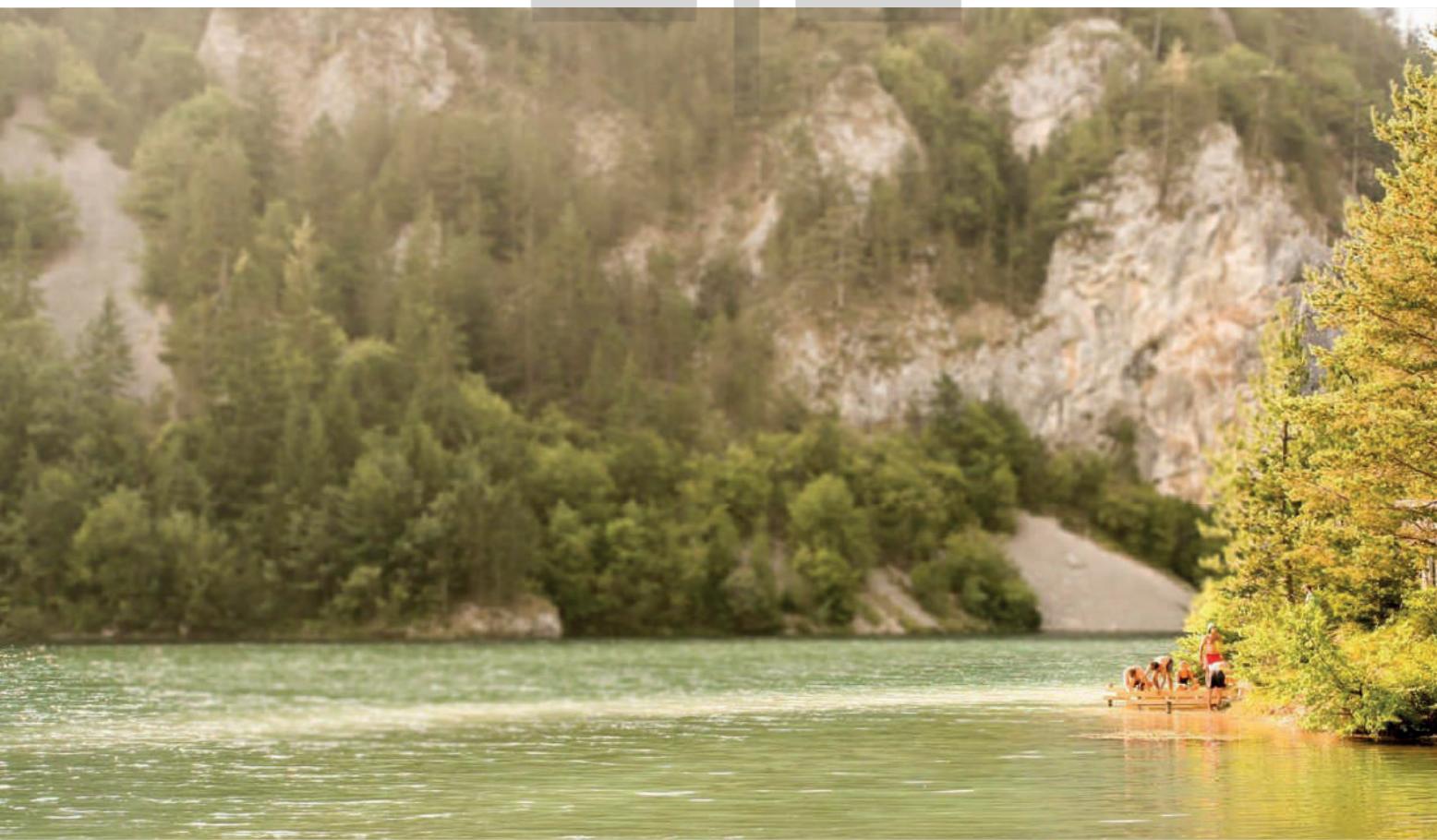
Its design composes a sense of community as the seating components are directed toward each other for socialising, whilst from each seating point, the view is of the surrounding cliffs and

forest.

The perforation in the centre of the deck is an essential part of the design. Its centre gives structure and purpose towards the social aspect as diving, fishing and other activities are enabled, as well as giving the deck a focus point, bringing it all together.

Meds (Meeting of European Design Students) promotes the interaction between architecture and design students, exchanging different forms and aspects of design allows each individual to broaden their understandings in different fields. Being in such an environment stirs ones creativity and promotes innovation, allowing us to learn about different cultures and fuelling our thirst for travel as one learns more about all of Europe's cultural riches.

The projects varied from photography workshops which focused on teaching various photography techniques and methods to 8 meter tall structures such as the 'typhoon' which wrapped itself around a pine tree, providing climbing and viewing opportunities for passer-bys.



Forest Clearing



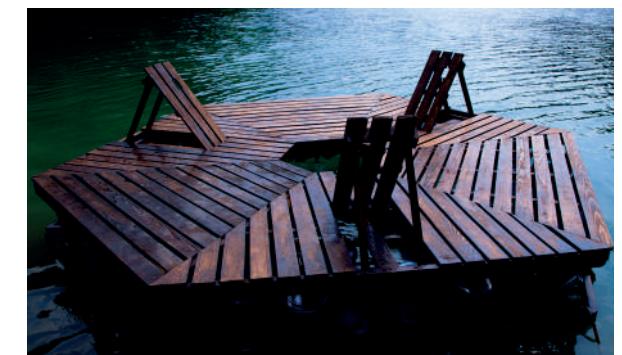
Screwless and Clueless



Across The Universe



Pop Up Deck



Pop Up Deck





# The Big Day Out: The 2nd Year School trip

The 2nd years leave Bath for a day, heading out on an adventure full of selfies, school buildings, and terrorising chickens

By Issy Spence



First stop: Stonehenge



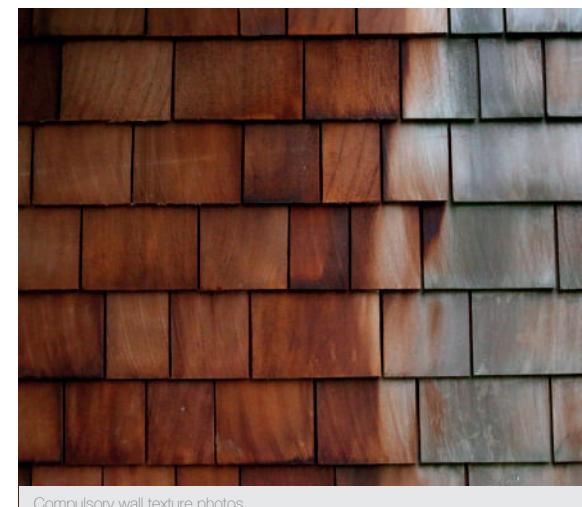
Getting to grasps with the concept of Perspective



Excited faces for a day out of studio



'This would have to be a photo that sums up the trip' - School Chickens immediately caused 2nd years to revert to their child instincts and chase them



Compulsory wall texture photos



Snooping around schools for design inspiration



With 2nd year's 2nd project to design a Primary School, they visited 2 x schools and an activity centre



Architects from Hampshire County Council spoke to them about school design

# 3rd Year Through the Eyes of a 3rd Year: Urban Ghosts, London

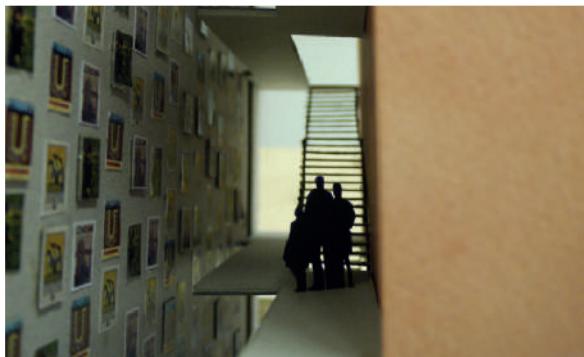
It's good to be back. Having been away from our beloved 6E since February on work placement, it's great to be back together, and with our new friends the Civil Engineers.

## By Issy Spence

With only the instructions to bring a powerful torch for our site visit to London, we feared for the worst: a sewer. Thankfully, our worst nightmare didn't come true, and to our delight were told the group project would be set in an abandoned tube station, Aldwych on The Strand. The project entitled 'Urban Ghosts' required us to re-inhabit the station (which closed in 1994 and is currently used for tours by Transport for London and film set) with Fringe theatre spaces and performance areas as well as an exhibition space for the London Underground's poster collection. Groups were made up of 3 architects and 2 Civil Engineers, and this was the first time working with civil engineers since the beginning of first year, which seemed an absolute age ago. (You can see what 1st years have been up to this year, with Equilibria on the previous pages) It was exciting to break the stereotypes of architects dreaming and



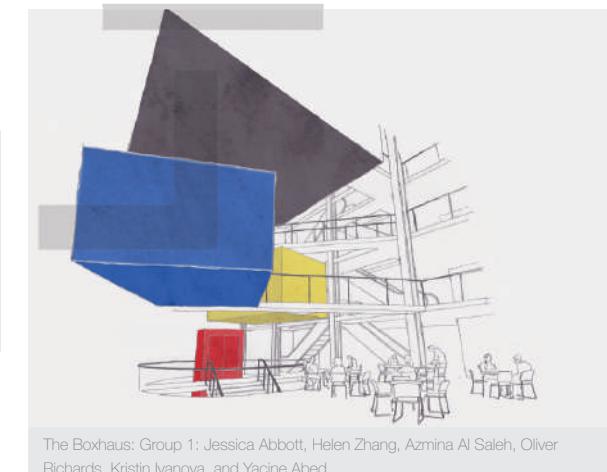
Bet you've never seen a Tube Station this empty. Disused Aldwych Station: The Site



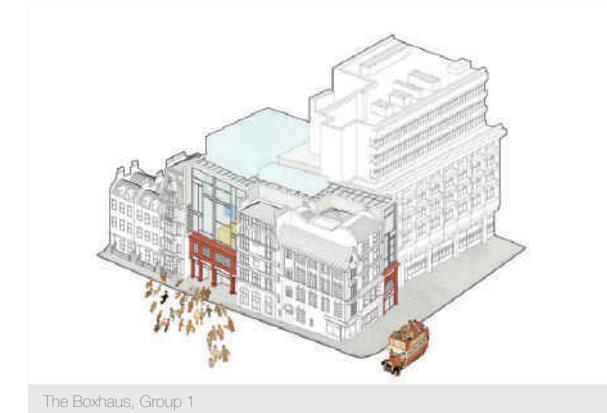
Group 30: The Sublime, Ross Startin, Nefeli Eforakopoulou, Xenia Strohmeyer, Joseph Ling, Nalin Tan, Luke Peel : Poster Exhibition

engineers doing calculations, and all work together on the project, as a happy family.

I'm pleased to announce that models are back. And I am so happy. 0 Models were made in 2nd year which seemed a bit of a shame, because there have been some incredible ones this year! I have to say a particular favourite was Group 9 who dared to use modrock for a 1:20 elevation which caused some critics to curse in surprise. I love how suddenly everyone is feeling more experimental and stepping away from the immediate scramble towards SketchUp. With only 4 weeks, this project was rapid, but there was a huge volume, variety and different media of work produced and have to say after seeing the year collectively tired, it was such an interesting project. With 'Urban Ghosts' completed, it was now onto our individual project, set in Dublin...



The Boxhaus: Group 1: Jessica Abbott, Helen Zhang, Azmina Al Saleh, Oliver Richards, Kristin Ivanova, and Yacine Abed



The Boxhaus, Group 1



Group 9: Nothing New, Oliver Jack, Emma Ward, Kelubia Onaro, Chin Yeit Yang, Fraser Robinson: The Beastly 1:20 Elevation



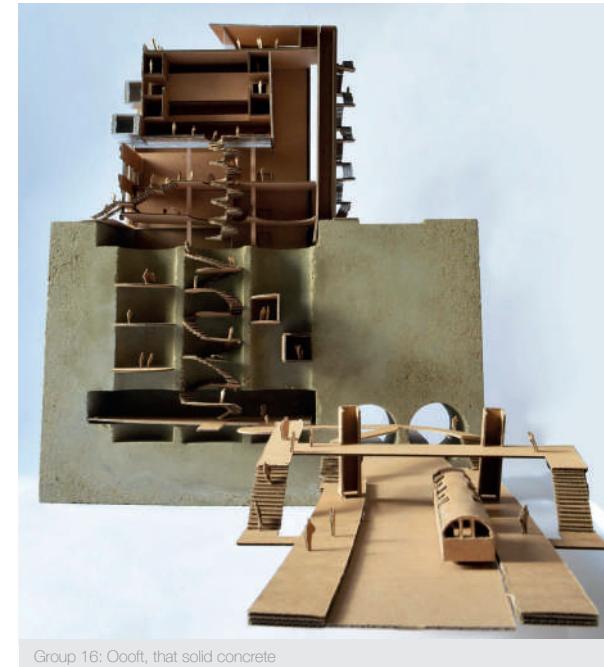
Group 22, The Walled Garden: Helen King, Stefan Ullmann, Sara Medas, Ulyssa Danielle Trevail, Michael Tsai



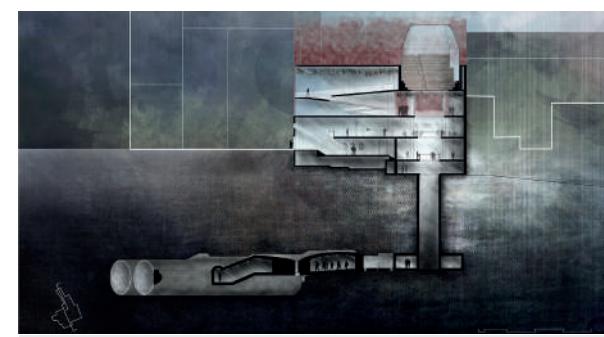
What is Fringe Theatre?



Group 33: The Wilson Theatre: Beth Scorey, Maijuna Toivakka, Isaac Tam, Junshi Wace, Dan Tram



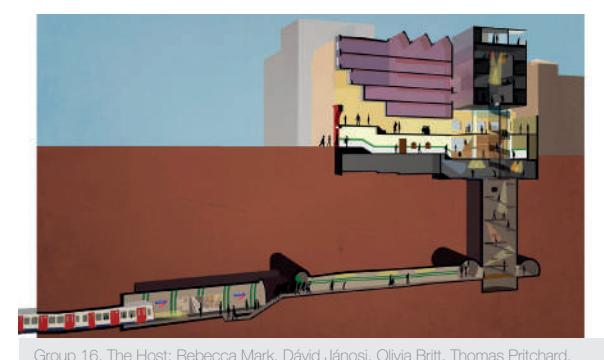
Group 16: Oooft, that solid concrete



Group 25: Vel Mladenovic, Flash Okunribido, Pitch Chayavorapapa, Will Morgan, Emily Jones, Elsa Hui Zhang's long



Positive vibes on Crit Day, Group 25



Group 16, The Host: Rebecca Mark, Dávid Jánosi, Olivia Britt, Thomas Pritchard, Chan Liao, Victor Delegreco

# 3rd Year Through the Eyes of a 3rd Year: Postcards from Dublin

The next chapter of 3rd Year takes us to the Irish Capital, Dublin

## By Issy Spence

Despite a slight hiccup at the start, where several flights were cancelled and some students having to stay in a 'Weston-super-Mare' Premier Inn (It was in the middle of nowhere) and the moment of confusion where perhaps we wouldn't have any tutors for the week, not a moment was wasted and Dublin was fast paced and packed.

It was filled with architecture sightseeing, site visits, mapping activities and lots of walking. And when I say a lots of walking, I mean probably more exercise than I have done so far this semester. I suppose it's good to get out and about. The 2nd project of this year was to design a Children and Young Adult's Library, on 1 of 4 sites in the North of Dublin. It includes 2 of the following: a Design, Music, Education or Inter-cultural Centre, to be located. The design needs to include a Public Park: we had to 'Start with the Park.'

The week was full of inspiring lectures from Ali Greehan (Dublin's City Architect) Frank MacDonald (Irish Times Environment Editor, Writer and Social Commentator), Dermot Boyd (Lecturer and Head of the Masters Course at the Dublin School of Architecture, DIT and Partner of Boyd Cody Architects), Kieran O'Brien (Grafton Architects). We were grateful for their wise words and sharing their knowledge of the city.



Kieran O'Brien from Grafton Architects speaking about the new Central Library, DIT  
On the Thursday of the trip, we were asked to present our conclusions from Walking the Spine, a route through the city prescribed by the Council (I said there was lots of walking). This presentation was of 3 x 'Postcards of Dublin'. The word postcards was ambiguous meaning we could present what we'd found in any media (Computers were banned). Despite feeling like a trapped class of children in wet play, (it was raining and we weren't allowed out in the DIT playground) it was brilliant to act

like a 5 year old again in the name of architecture and producing these postcards. Colouring pencils, scraps of bright card and people 'playing' with building blocks turned Dublin School of Architecture's Crit Room into an environment that reminded me of my primary school days. My group may have invested our time and efforts into creating a stage production, including a set, complete with Georgian facade costumes. I am not sure I will give up on my architecture degree to pursue a career in costume design.



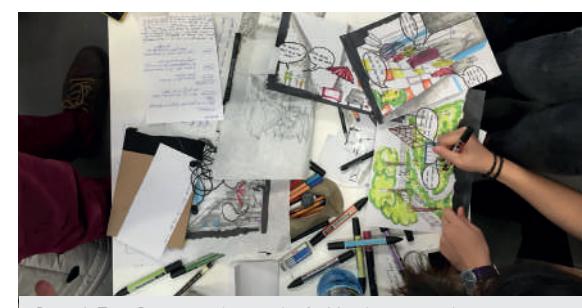
The Georgian Facade: Cat's Tutor Group present the idea of Fronts and Backs

The Dublin School of Architecture students were such a friendly bunch and it was nice to feel so welcome. It was also great to have a nosey around their Studios. In summary, they don't like CAD and love their models, like a lot. I didn't see a single laser cut model. Not a single one. Which was rather confusing at first, but then I realised how refreshing it was. I think too many people rely on it. And since 3rd Year marks the year where we are finally handed the 'keys' to the laser cutter room, like a new toy for Christmas, everyone is desperate to use it. So I applaud those who step away from the laser cutter and actually try other model making methods. Go those who use the workshop, that beautiful blue foam or whatever other weird and wonderful model materials you feel inclined to use. It was good to have a chat with the DIT lot, and see their work. We got too caught up in the 'Bath Bubble' and forgot that there are others schools and there are other students like us (Sleep deprived and obsessed about buildings).

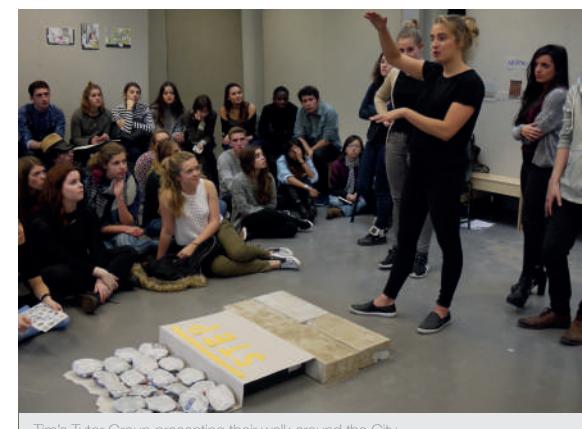
They joined us for an evening, a band called Juliette and The Romoes, that Daniel had found busking and requested they play for us. It was a wonderful way to round off the week. I think on behalf of all the year, I can say thank you so much to Daniel Wong (Head of Year) for all the time and effort he has put in and that 3rd year has been the absolute craic.



Bath meet DIT students: A look at their studios and work



George's Tutor Group at work, preparing for Mapping presentation



Tim's Tutor Group presenting their walk around the City



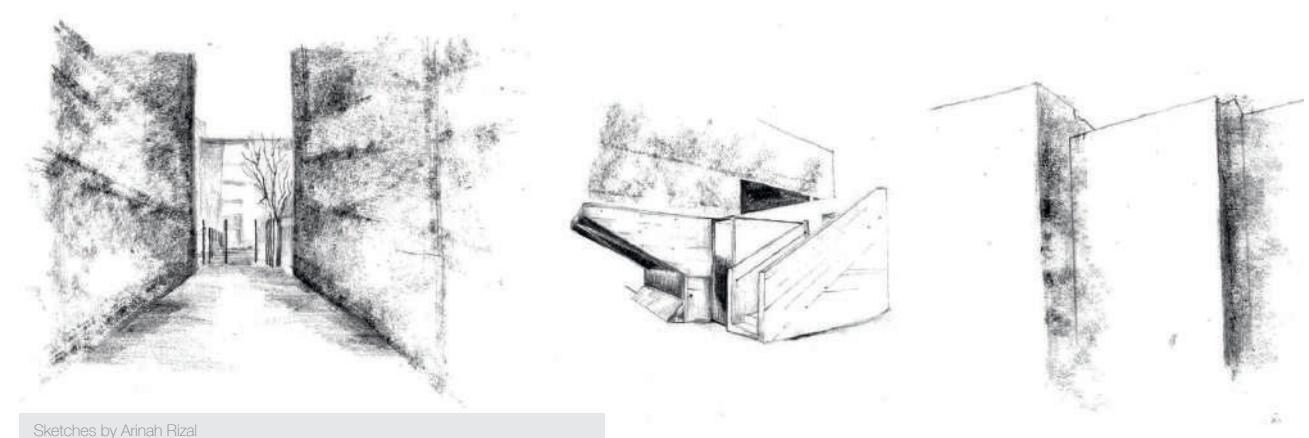
Huddle Tests: Students immersing themselves in the Contemporary Arts scene in Temple Bar Gallery + Studios



The Guinness Factory: A crucial building to visit to understand Dublin's Culture



Working hard and carrying out detailed research on Dublin's current Park facilities



Sketches by Arinah Rizal

# The Basil Spence Project: Headlines

It's that time of the year again: The Basil Spence Project. The ultimate group project where Architects and Civil Engineers pretend to get along and produce a lot of work.

By Issy Spence

1. Aqua is all the rage. (Not Barbie girl) Set on the Portland Coastline, this year's Basil Spence project was called 'Pelagos' meaning deep sea. These Marine projects literally projected out into the Big Blue. Whether it was 'floating', 'sunk', 'emerging,' it's all about reconnecting with the sea. Schemes showcased Piers, Grandstands and a Marine Museum, as well as extra programmes.

2. Laser cut wood was so last year. The Laser cutter has had enough of wooden boards. So time to try something else or think of some alternative model making technique. This greatly increased the range of different models, compared to previous years. And this brings us swiftly onto our next story.

3. Poured Concrete is so in. I love concrete. Maybe it's because I have been raised in the Smithson's 6E building and Bath University campus, or perhaps it's because I hate fun and colour. Either way, what better way to rock the concrete, than architectural models and cute little renderings of buildings. Basil Spence showcased some spectacular models using this. Some larger monolith forms even needed to use Rebar /

reinforcement to keep them standing. Besides from the limelight stealing concrete, the challenge of modelling the big blue was tackled excitingly, with materials ranging from perspex, blue card, watercolour, black card, actual water, clear resin, the list goes on. So looks like the ban on wood on the laser cutter wasn't such a bad thing.

4. The critics ability to disappear / diss-a-pier, Not to crack under peer/pier pressure and deep philosophical questions such as 'Why did you not argue with your peers/piers?' (Bedford, 2015)

5. Mini-Fresh profits are up by 200% - Balsa, card and scalpel blade sales have rocketed this semester at our nearest and dearest convenience store. Starbucks and Costa have also seen an increase in profits to make those long hard nights more caffeinated and bearable. Everyone looked fabulous. Smart clothes, suave blazers and polished shoes were whipped out, despite the lack of sleep evident by the large coffee consumption throughout the day.

In summary, what an intense day in the 6E Crit Room. A truly remarkable body of work and the fourth years should be proud of what they've achieved. Until next time.



Birds nest in the walls of Group 13's winning project



Nice use of resin and concrete from Group 13



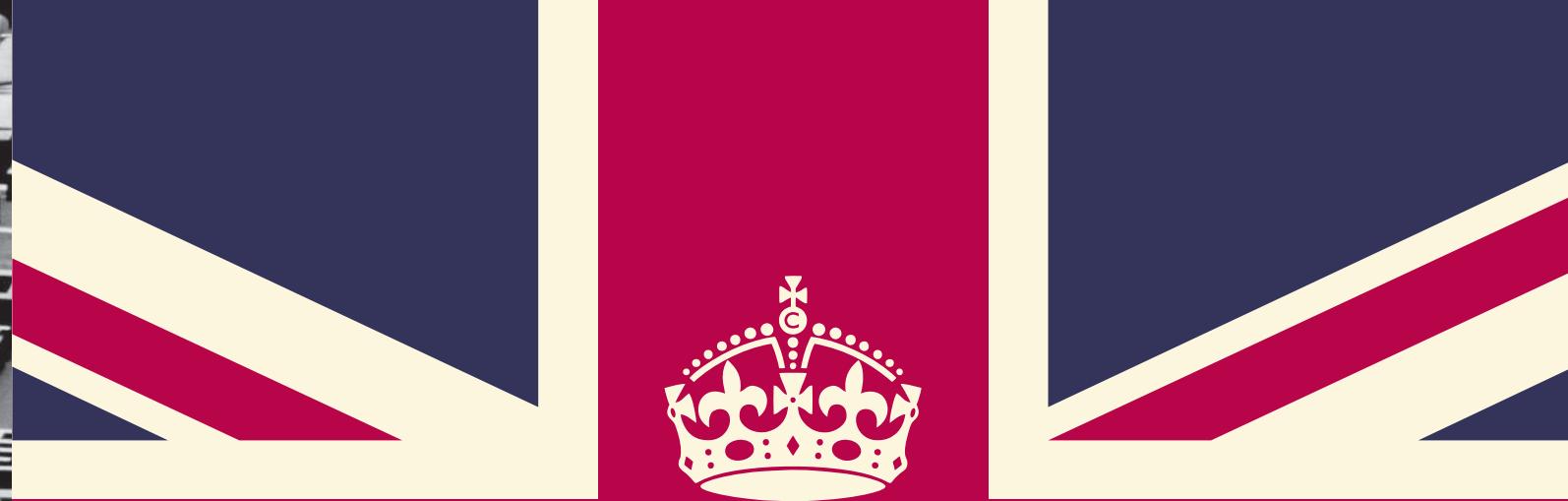
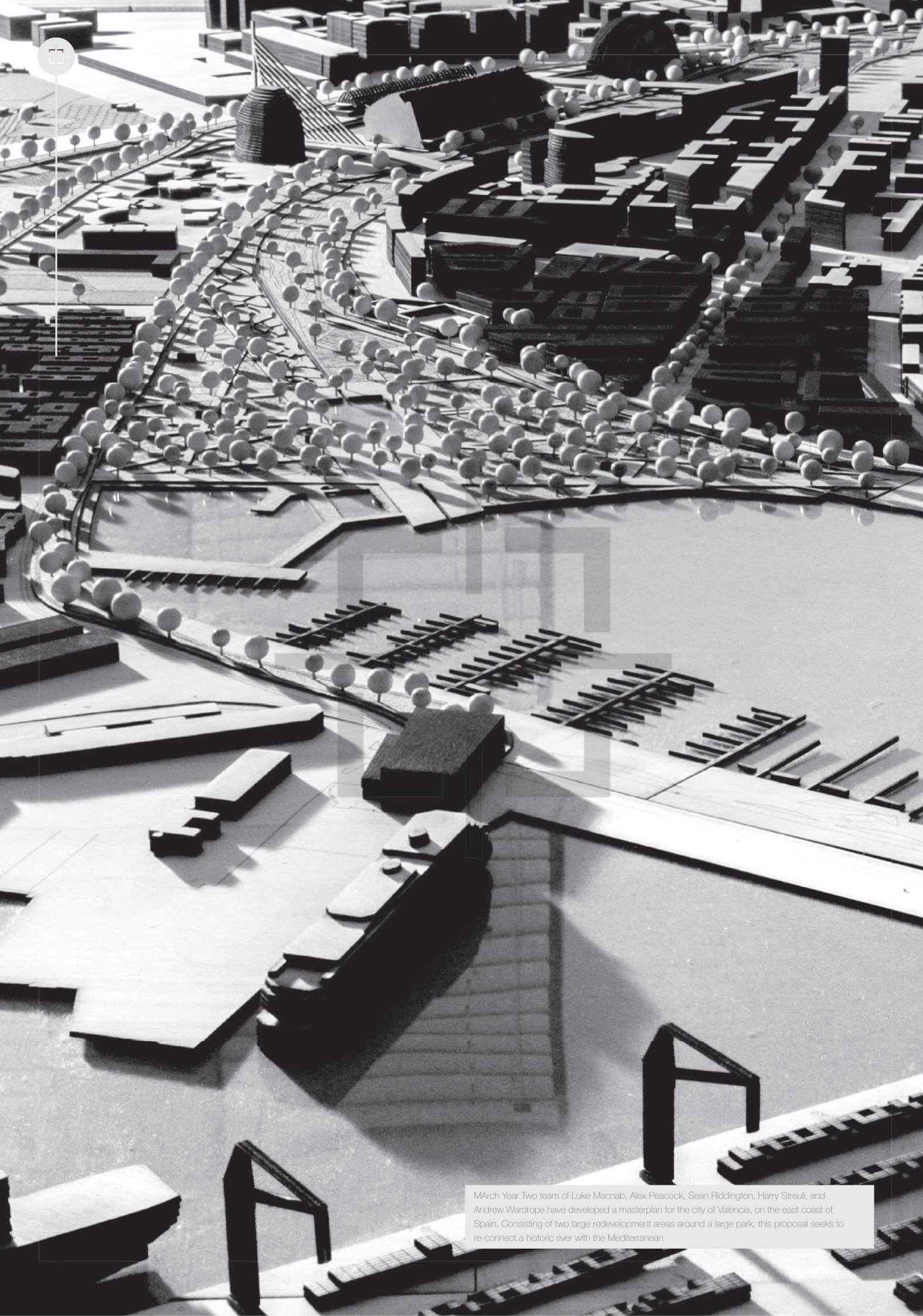
Group 6's Reinforced Concrete Monolithic Beast won 2nd prize



The Crit Room in full swing



Group 10 had a go at making their own material: BioRock is used to create artificial reefs by passing a small current through a submerged, steel structure leading to mineral accretion and rock formation over time. Pretty cool.



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# Brasília: ‘Modernism is Dead and Rotting’

A first hand insight into the city of Brasília - a place with some of the most widely discussed architecture and urban planning but leaves you surprised at what you receive.

**By Sonya Falkovskia**

Brasília - the unexpected capital of Brazil for most unbeknownst travellers, separated from the exuberant vibrancy of Rio and the deep-rooted carnival culture, away from the metropolitan cultural boom of São Paulo, the capital stands as proof of one of the greatest architectural experiments to ultimately fail in the modern age. Only 55 years after the idea of Brasília was born (the city was founded in 1960), the city is already crumbling under your feet. Designed as a whole from the outside inwards, Niemeyer as the principal architect created the master plan which is the primary fault causing everything else after it to fall both on an aesthetic and functional level.

A city should convey the soul of the people who inhabit it, who

**“The city layout represents a bird - a delicate metaphor for a city that in reality is not.”**

mould it to their needs and desires. Brasília does no such thing. Its regimented layout leaves no option for the development of culture



Cathedral of Brasília - exterior bells

even in the simplest terms. There are no social spaces - unless you count a dirt ditch patch under the Torre de TV a hub for social interaction - let alone any interior spaces for people to experience the city. I know that Brasília was created to be the ‘administrative capital’ of Brazil, implying that no such cultural developments were needed - but this is where my problem lies. How could you deny Brazil’s capital city to exhibit everything it has to offer? Even if the majority of the capital’s population is visiting business people and political figures, the rest of the city are normal inhabiting people and Brasília does not do them justice.

The city layout from afar literally represents a bird - a delicate metaphor for a city that in reality is not. The central axis running through the whole city acts as the spine, with no interruptions of the vista from one end to the other - leaving a huge uninhabited space where perfectly symmetrical winding roads have been placed like artificial roots as the basis. Transport is only possible by cars and buses if you want to walk, well too bad, because the planning was done in such a way that even if you want to walk from one place to the next there aren’t even any pedestrian pathways to do so. Flanking the main axis is the murky sea of ministries - all identical to each other apart from the faded bronze titles each one adorns. And amongst here is a huge area of generic hotel blocks and Niemeyer’s countless



National museum



Monumental axis - city masterplan

monuments to himself.

Moving on from the city layout to the architecture itself. We’ve all seen the impossible looking modernist forms of Niemeyer and no one can deny they look impressive in the books, but in person, unfortunately it is a different story. A prime example is the Modern Art Museum where it literally looks like a UFO had landed in the middle of an expansive tarmac square with nothing contextual surrounding it. A building implied to be spotless and pure has the majority of its plaster peeled off with only one third of it open to the public. The National Theatre is worse with it being suspiciously closed permanently to the public. Each building acts as a monolith to Niemeyer with no one using them at all. Countless number of derelict bus stops and seemingly random pavilions remain empty as the public doesn’t use the non-useable social spaces. Now I know that in a way the concept of this style of architecture was to experiment with form and push the boundaries of what was acceptable and not so. But to create a building simply to be an object, a closed off ‘gem’ not being used seems unfair to the city and its architecture.

Even though it definitely seems like I have gone on an endless rant about how poor Brasília acts as a city, there are a few notable examples, which almost try to redeem its failures. The Itamaraty Palace is a beautiful example of what I imagine Niemeyer wanted to portray



Derelict concrete pavilion



Itamaraty Palace



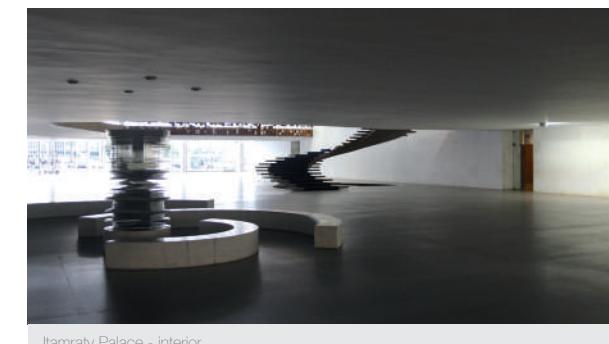
National Museum

for the city as a whole but ultimately failed. The proportions are a great example at how a massive building can still look timelessly elegant. The interior of the building is just as impressive with a ground floor spanning 40 meters with no supporting columns through the space is definitely impressive. The classic Niemeyer staircase is also a lasting classic. But as with the rest of the city it has fall backs. This building is only used for about 2 days in the year for the elite of Brazil and its esteemed guests with a large portion of it permanently closed to the public.

To speak of all the buildings in Brasília could last a while so I won’t delve into the National Congress, Cathedral de Brasília or the many other buildings, which make up the concrete jungle of Brasília. Speaking as a brief visitor to this city I know my impression of it was limited, but I still can’t shake the feeling that I was left cold and disappointed by what I was looking forward to for many months prior to the visit. Nonetheless, I would still highly recommend a visit to this strange but intriguing place because regardless of if you like Niemeyer or not, I’ve never been to such a place where the architecture has influenced the way people live to this extent. It was most certainly an interesting project - or perhaps experiment is a better term - and even though its creation was not so long ago, I feel its life has already come to an end and now is the time to see how this place can possibly be rejuvenated for the years to come.



Itamaraty Palace overlooking the Congresso Nacional



Itamaraty Palace - interior

# Designing For The Human Context

Architects need to care more...

By Joe Ridealgh

Architecture is universal – designers have the ability to enrich the lives of everyone; there is no excuse for us not to provide for all walks of life. Yet we as students are restricted by our ambition to propose the most original form and be the next 'starchitect'. The media encourages the built environment to be pushed to a futuristic and spectacular aesthetic, designing to drive the developed world further ahead of those countries still tackling basic needs. In an era of parametric revolution, we must look at returning to the vernacular roots of architecture and focus on creating a world that can be lived in.

Context is a term that has been heavily used in second year, most commonly applied to landscape and the existing built environment. Yet these connections are merely aesthetic, they are pointless if the human context is not considered. What will benefit a community best will almost certainly not fuel an architect's ego or enhance a portfolio. This is where I feel the showy world of Zaha falls flat.

This attitude of caring is best embodied in the work of Cameron Sinclair and Architecture for Humanity. The schemes he puts forward, perhaps best summarised in his 'My Wish' TED talk, provide simple and beautiful built solutions to the hardest problems faced by humans. For example, in parts of Africa where the main concern is finding a solution to the AIDS crisis, the quick growing plant kenaf can be used to grow a temporary clinic for travelling doctors to treat the patients; the shelter is created by stretching a tensile material between the plants in a mown section of crop.

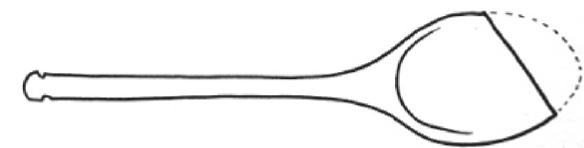
As a material, the kenaf plant provides fast-growing tall walls



The tall stems of the kenaf plant.

as well as being edible when the clinic is no longer needed, in this way the architect gives the scheme worth to the community throughout its entire life cycle. This charitable architecture is something being neglected by most in the industry, when more moral action needs to be taken and more care needs to be taken to the communities. Cameron Sinclair's work is an architecture born from a need; this prioritisation of what is built must be carried through to architecture today.

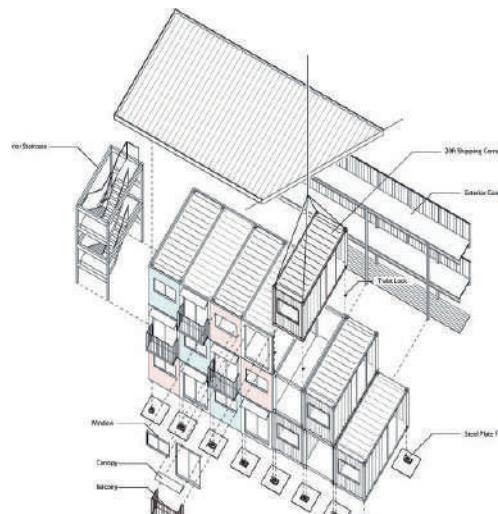
Italian designer Bruno Munari's words in 'Design as Art' helped me to understand the most basic principles of good design. Munari talks about how art is nothing unless it can be appreciated by someone and the most successful art can be appreciated by all. In design we must strive to create buildings and objects that are accessible to the wider population and are sculpted into the best form for the job. He gives the most relate-able example in a wooden spoon – over time the spoon noticeably becomes less spoon shape, the curve wears away in one corner with years of stirring in the same direction. Munari's response to this was to design a spoon already formed in this 'deformed' way, closer to the perfect form for a spoon. In this Munari is responding completely to context, in the way that Louis Kahn asked a brick 'what do you want to be?' Munari is asking a spoon what it wants to be. If this principle idea of human response is followed, then the space will become more and more perfect.



Munari's sketch of what a spoon wants to be.

Most modern architecture chooses to ignore the human context, failing to understand the needs of the occupants completely. This is evidenced in the brutalist mass housing developments of the 60's, which were designed for a community of sociable people – not the type of person, previously isolated from society who was moving in. In this way the architect chases their own ideal living situation, assuming people they design for share their mentality, which is not true for all. This creation of communal spaces led only to crime, vandalism and a hostility in the community. Not everyone can understand the conceptual intricacies of architecture, and they shouldn't have to.

With this understanding of humane architecture in mind, it seems that countries should be far more forthcoming with



Axonometric of Shigeru Ban's Onagawa temporary housing scheme.

their architecture by accommodating those who are not yet accommodated. This unwillingness to be compassionate has been evidenced in the current Syrian migrant crisis. Few countries is willing to accept any new potential strains on their resources, yet there are people in need and space to accommodate them. How can the government turn a blind eye to the situation, as over 6,000 people set up temporary camp in slum-like conditions in Calais in desperation to join our welfare utopia?

These people should not be shunned and ignored, we need to 'Design like we give a damn' in true Architecture for Humanity style and be compassionate as a country.

But how can we accommodate refugees when we can barely accommodate ourselves? The so-called 'housing crisis' and rising rents currently at work in London are forcing residents into squatting in the disused buildings scattering the city. What if these spaces could be reclaimed from the overseas billionaires and given back to the people as newly designed flats?

*'A Guardian investigation has revealed there are an estimated £350m worth of vacant properties on the most prestigious stretch of The Bishops Avenue in north London, which last year was ranked as the second most expensive street in Britain.'* (Quote from Inside 'Billionaires Row': London's rotting, derelict mansions worth £350m)

To illustrate how ridiculous this 'housing crisis' is, I imagine Buckingham Palace reinvented as accommodation for refugees. The building boasts 77,000m<sup>2</sup> of floor area, all ready and waiting to be converted into flats to solve the housing crisis. Shigeru Ban fit a small flat and circulation in to 30m<sup>2</sup> in his temporary housing scheme in Onagawa. Using this value, over 2500 houses could be fitted into the palace; this could accommodate over 5000 people! It is clear that the government needs to open up to the real people of the UK, instead of fuelling the high-rise economy of the select few.



How Buckingham Palace should be inviting refugees.

# Boundaries in the Process of Architectural Design

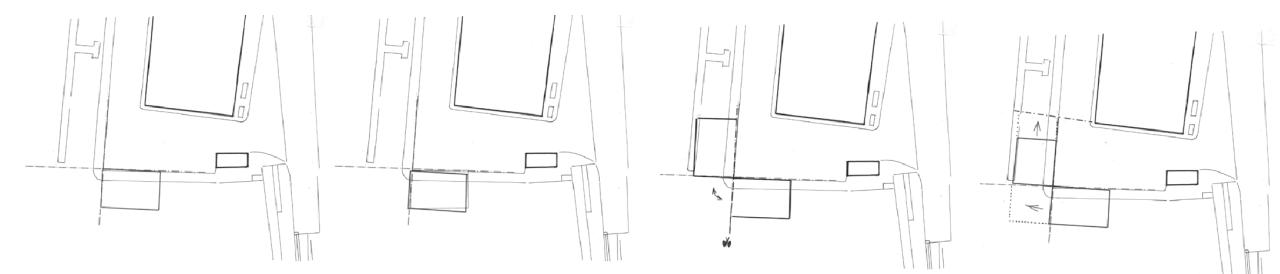
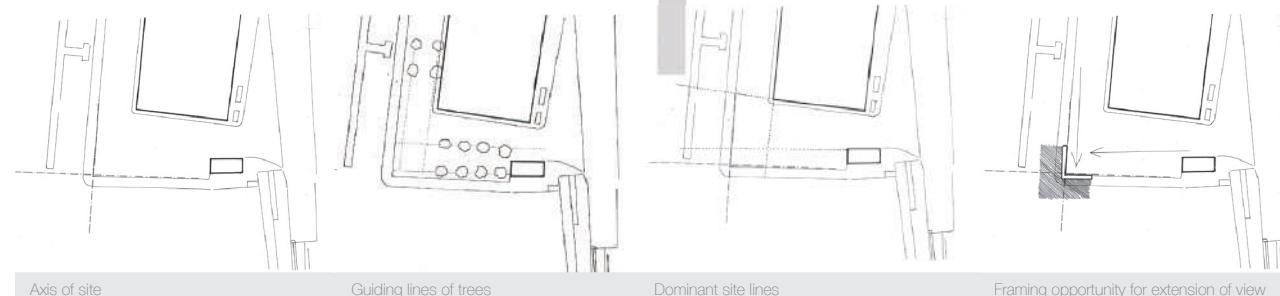
Architectural Design involves a process of analysis, where one must read the physical and implied boundaries and forces of not only the site, but of what the design entails.

## Diana Smiljkovic

Architecture is not a subject of solely physical elements, but a series of constructed spaces for our embodiment; a series of solid and void for occupancy. A place where dwelling can occur and therefore a construction of space where all senses join to conceive a sense of presence; an extension of both nature and body.

When given a brief, an architect must take on multiple roles. A piece of architecture must be understanding and sympathetic of its surroundings; speaking the same language, whilst holding a cohesiveness of its own. Analysing the site, its predecessors and current occupiers, the architect must also consider its geography, geometry, the natural qualities that establish the features and attributes. They then go on to examine the necessities of what is to be designed. A whole process of unspoken studies have to be done to enable the architect to design a member rather than a stranger in its area.

A relationship between existing, and suggested exists and therefore must be confronted. In this, an architect involves themselves in a process of examination, and understanding. A compositional system that analyses the interference between the plan and the natural state of the site forms into a design; not by



Mass rectilinear as existing timber structure      Rotate to neighbouring alignment      Cut at axis and rotate      Push/Pull to connect

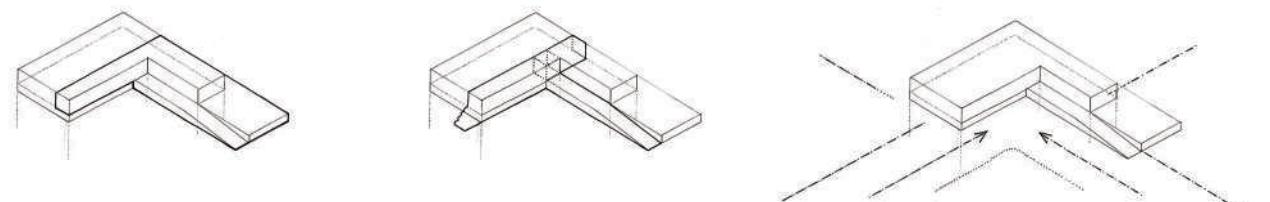
the singular will of the architect, but by their analytical, spatial and emotional consideration.

In Year Two of Architecture at the University of Bath such boundaries compose the design briefs to challenge the student. We are not to create stand alone structures, but ones that share a language with their environment, whilst still holding their own identity.

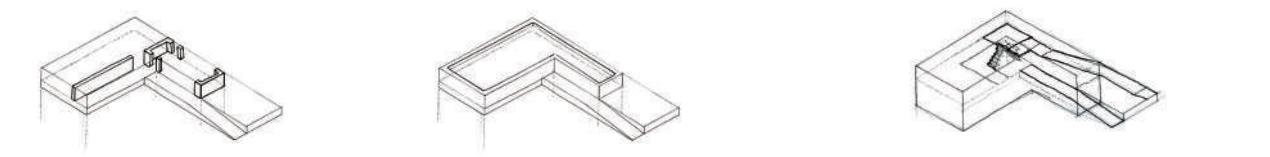
**"Architecture is the thoughtful making of space."** – Louis Kahn

Salman Rushdie states in The Thinking Hand "literature is made at the boundary between self and the world and during the creative act this borderline softens, turns penetrable and allows the world to flow into the artist and the artist to flow into the world." carrying on to suggest "Architecture is surely likewise conceived and experienced as this existential boundary line and there is no artistic or architectural experience without the margin of the space and the viewers, listeners and occupants sense of self."

A selfish design is not a truthful one; The architect needs to internalise the client, and develop the design for his 'altered self.'



Secondary use      Entrance      Order



Features      Entrance      Vertical circulation

This personal identification with the client/user the architect only resolves the explicit requirements of the brief and satisfies the intentions and desires of the other. "Thus, a profound house is always a double portrait; it is an image of the client or a specific cultural condition and the architect at the same time."

As an architect one must convince and compose an understanding within the client, allowing them to see the situation through a designers aspect.

Materiality - A material and its traits should be carefully acknowledged. A material will act and perform best when understood and designed to the best of its abilities. It is only then that it speaks out and owns a presence.

A number of counterweights should be considered to introduce balance. "countermanding the acceleration of other urban activities, is the need for a strategy of deceleration in which these oases of peace and moments of quiet can figure." suggests De Wit in The Enclosed Garden.

Compactness and scale are the factors that affect the user. It issues the way in which the space is used, approached and perceived.

Movement is an ever-changing factor, yet there seems to be a consistency to its flux. The connection, route and programme must be coherent and read with an internal logic whilst being able to either accelerate, decelerate or cease movement, depending

on the sites suggestion or the architects intention.

In Paul Franks' analysis of architecture he suggests that these factors come into play:

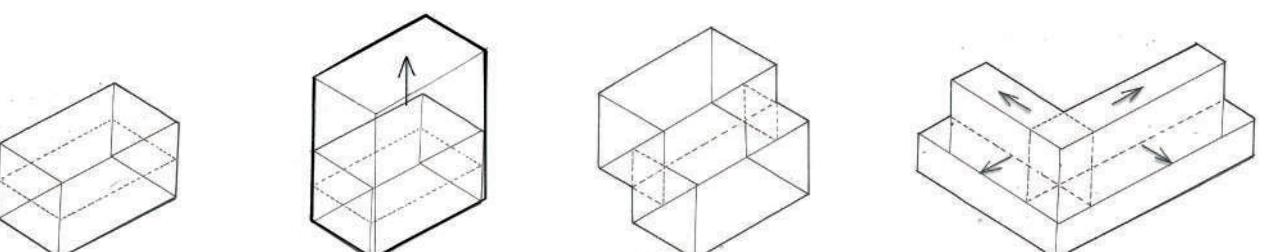
Corporeality - the generator and transmitter of forces  
Space - where spatial addition and spatial division is taken into consideration  
Light - where nature touches man made - The impermanence of the views composed with the altering light.

Intention, the freedom or constraints appointed to the architect

Corporeality, space and light converge to create the form, which in itself is the expression of the intention.

Determine the site forces and what shapes the surroundings, an appreciation for negative space must be made. How the elements shape a space, and how your design must be constructed from the analysis rather than ones own empty space..

The architect primarily has to embody the inhabitance. They must consider not only present relevance, but the embodiment of its future. "Just as we acquaint ourselves with materials, and just as we must understand functions, we must become familiar with the psychological and spiritual factors of the day. No cultural activity is possible otherwise, for we are dependent on the spirit of our time." Mies Van Der Rohe



Massing responding to site      Double Level Mass      Subtract difference in levels      Wrap around edge

# Istanbul: Seven Hills In Seven Days.

With our first year of Architecture finished and our second about to begin, we set out for Istanbul, Turkey.

**By Sonya Falkovskia, Diana Smiljkovic**

Istanbul's geographical specification is yet another factor that adds to the plethora that makes Istanbul a city like no other. Built on 7 hills, the city rises and falls following the path of its contours. Its composition shapes the way the city is built only to make a series of winding streets enhancing the senses. As we ascended and descended with the hills, no view was an expected one. Narrow roads contrasted by the wide, vivacious squares always seemed to compose a sense of curiosity whilst they're forms all compromised together to blanket the shapes of the hills. With their minarets protruding up, a mosque could be seen from any point and their prayers would echo through, bouncing off one mosque from the next at their specific prayer times. The topography of the city represents and mimics the life of it as well. Never flat or dull, the lively people fill the squares, as does the myriad of different smells and sounds.

The SALT institution houses a series of exhibition spaces as well as research centre, workshops and library. Located in Beyoglu on the pedestrian street Istiklal Caddesi as well as Galata. Its exhibitions primarily revolve around fundamental moments in Turkish history, exploring critical issues in visual and material culture as well as incorporating the introduction of modernity. Its research centre is composed of art, architecture, design and social history, encouraging the visitor to dive deeper into these

subjects. SALT presents the Turkish contemporary art scene which spreads through Istanbul. Due to Istanbul's location, it has been deemed a gateway between East and West. The art scene in Istanbul is one that draws on topics such as culture and national identity and therefore displaying works of artists from all across the world, the fair is a means of creating a cultural bridge, allowing the integration of ideas to take place (went to art international fair).

Beneath the public square of the First hill of Constantinople lies the Basilica Cistern; a subterranean structure constructed from the ruins of Constantinople's empire similarly to its neighbouring Hagia Sophia. Built to provide a water filtration system for the Great Palace, the cistern is the largest to lie beneath the city of Istanbul. Its water came from the Belgrade Forest 19km north of the city. 336 marble columns extend upwards creating a forest of support. Ionic and Corinthian capitals compose most of the support whilst a few of Doric style are to be found as well. Descending into the dark depths of the cistern a new sense of mystery is added to the sensual city of Istanbul. Rows of columns echo outwards only to multiply the depth of the space and its shadows. The lack of light intensifies the sound of dripping only to magnify the echoes. The murky, still water acts as a mirror, reflecting the repetition of vaults and arches; however, by looking closer, schools of carp seem to patrol the water only to lead us towards what is known as Medusa's head. The origin of it



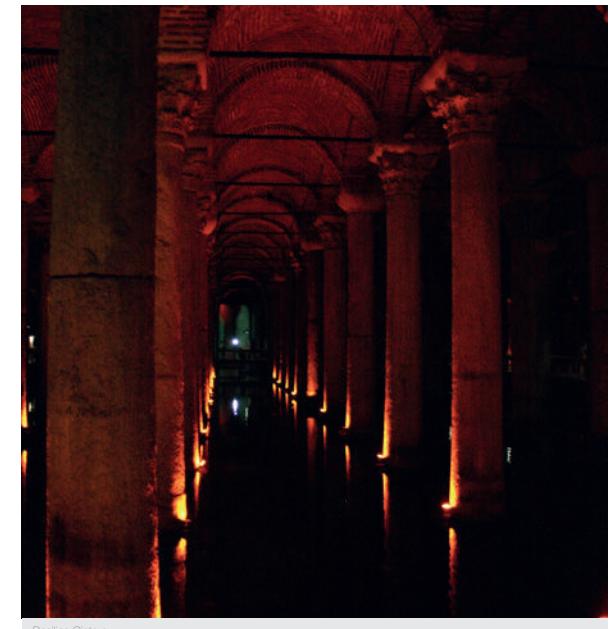
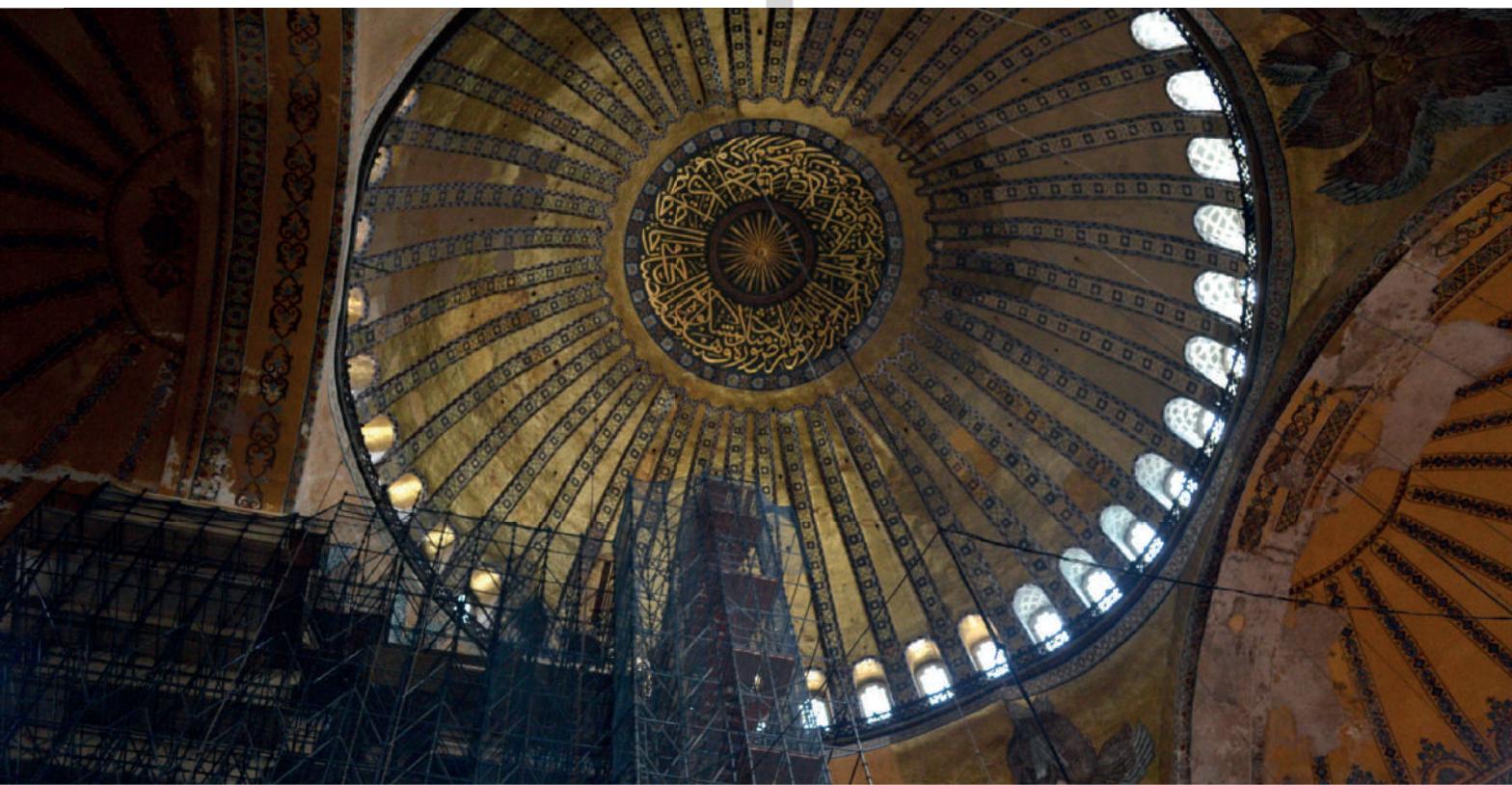
View from the Süleymaniye Cami



Istanbul Art International

unknown, yet believed that its placement - being inverted - was to negate the power of her gaze. The cisterns cavernous depths enhance a sense of mystery and elevate the sheer grandeur and symmetry.

A market to a market from another market - perhaps the best phrase we came across to describe what being in Istanbul makes you feel like. From the seemingly endless bazaars to the unbelievable scales of their mosques, Istanbul left us hungry for more but still in awe of its dense cultural heritage. Crossing the Glata Koprusu bridge into 16th century Istanbul brought a shock to our senses. Immediately hit with the nearly overwhelming hustle of the spice bazaar we soon realised that this place was unique. One would think that all these markets and tourists would provide the perfect situation for a corrupted cultural experience but to our very pleasant surprise authenticity was at the top of the agenda in this part of historic Istanbul. The spice bazaar Eminönü quarter of the Fatih district was housed in Koca Kasim Ada's 17th century court and the history of the place was definitely felt. Every vendor had deep-rooted history within each of their own stalls and this theme continued to the Grand Bazaar. Getting lost here seems compulsory and immediately inevitable. The vast structure containing 3000 small shops began construction in 1455 and still to this day has parts continually being refurbished to maintain it. Vendors ranged from 24 carat gold to hand-crafted pottery and kilim rugs providing something for everyone. The products being sold however, weren't what interested me the most. It was the atmosphere and the heritage that came with the place, you could really feel that it wasn't just for the unassuming tourist but was used by locals the same way it was 500 years ago. Getting lost in the Grand Bazaar is a must and with it being so surprisingly easy there is no excuse not to become immersed in such a historic part of the city. These bazaars are at the core of Istanbul and date back to its strong trading past. The city at first glance is chaotic but once you look closer you realise how wonderfully organised it really is. Every district has its own set of trades each confined to a few streets at a time. The specificity of these trades were what really astounded us. Looking for a specific rubber fitting for your broken appliance? Well in Beyoglu there is an entire street dedicated to just that and nothing else. Or perhaps fishing wire, women's socks or children's fancy dress costumes - all had their own specific areas within the city. Walking through each section gave a real sense of how locals use the city without tourists affecting their day-to-day lives. This aspect of the ancient city plan still being so strongly used today was what made Istanbul feel so authentic even amongst the century-old architecture surrounding you at every corner.



Basilica Cistern

Now, being architecture students we must comply with the cliché of visiting and admiring in total ignorance the mosques of the city. Admittedly Islamic architecture isn't our strong suit but now thinking back on it (with more knowledge of the style and its history) perhaps it was better that we didn't know so much. Entering the Hagia Sophia was a different architectural experience to anything I've had before. Never have I walked in through the threshold of a building and had goose bumps. I'm not sure if it was the sheer scale, the overwhelming but modest decoration or simply being in such a large uninterrupted internal space which evoked such a reaction from me. This building truly is something different and its a place that makes you feel the history without having to know it all beforehand. Another mosque which perhaps is considered to be more low-key than the Hagia Sophia was Süleymaniye Cami mosque to the east of Istanbul. It is to many peoples surprise by far the largest mosque opened in 1558 - more than 1,000 years after the Hagia Sophia. This mosque provided the best view of Istanbul giving an almost 360° view of everything below it. This building which is still a very functioning mosque gave us the strong sense of culture from religion which was perhaps missing from the Hagia Sophia (as it is now a museum and no longer a practicing mosque - even though previously it was Orthodox and Catholic during its tumultuous past). The Süleymaniye Cami is a simple but impossibly elegant mosque feeling surprisingly modern in hindsight. It watches over Istanbul with its four towering minarets but only pronounces itself to those who go looking for it.

# The Threshold Between the Old and the New.

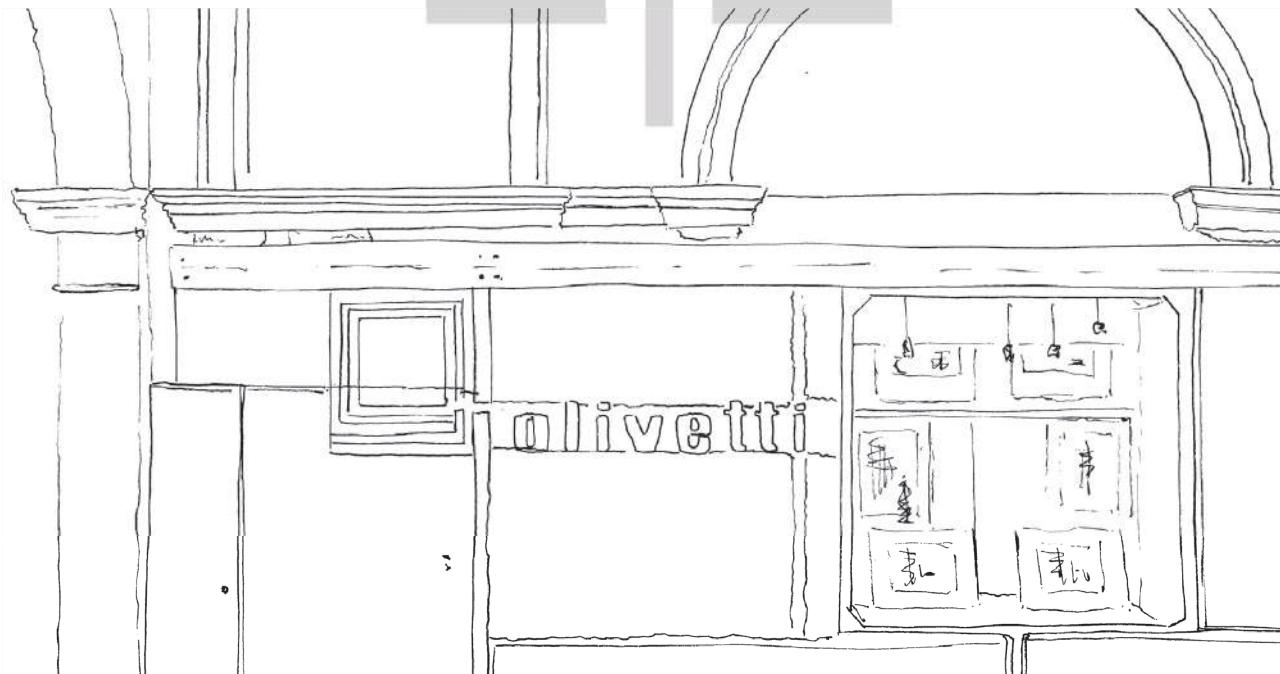
Finding inspiration in the simplicity of the architectural details by Italian architect Carlo Scarpa.

By Sara Medas

Geometries, materials, edges, meeting points and meaningful details to deeply express the threshold between the old and the new. This was one the core principle of the architecture of Carlo Scarpa in the 20th century in Italy.

Born in Venice and trained in the Accademia delle Belle Arti, Carlo Scarpa soon became one of the leading architects of the past century. In my opinion this was mainly due to the fact that his architecture was far from being conventional or stereotypical. Carlo Scarpa has in fact been able to give his architecture an everlasting character perceptible not only through the restricted material palette that he used, but also through the subtle but meaningful details joining them.

Scarpa practiced in Venice and spent part of his life working with renovations, exhibitions and museums. The fact that his work was developed in Venice, I feel must have surely had a deep influence in the way he perceived architecture and the arts in general. Through all the history of art and architecture, Venice has always identified itself from all other Italian cities, such as Rome and Florence, for being much more liberal and opened to influences



Carlo Scarpa, Olivetti Showroom, San Marco's Square, Venice, Italy, 1957 / 1958.

from the East. The combination of such influences and the fact that Scarpa was an architect like no other during the Nineteenth century, led him to develop a kind of architecture which creates boundless and immense spaces.

The ideas of edges, voids and different materials touching one another play a primary role in the architecture of Scarpa and I feel this can be perceived best when looking at details. Although they have a primary role in the design, one can never perceive them being either too elaborate or out of place. They always go along with the materials chosen reinforcing their natural characteristics and especially the point in which they meet with an existing one. Details are subtle, meaningful and they pay homage to the

**"Although details have a primary role in the design, one can never perceive them being either too elaborate or out of place."**



Carlo Scarpa, Castelvecchio Museum, Verona, Italy, 1959 / 1973.

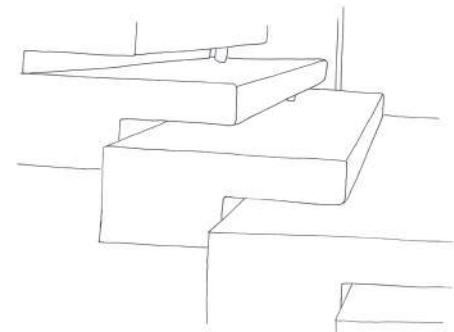
Italian quality of work of those years. In my opinion, they can be better appreciated in restoration projects where Scarpa had to deal with existing materials and find a way to harmoniously join the old and the new in an architectural composition. The projects which better demonstrate the importance of details for Scarpa are according to me the Olivetti showroom in Venice and Castelvecchio Museum in Verona.

Under the arcades of San Marco's square, in the Procuratie Vecchie, between shops, bars and restaurants, an architectural jewel can be found. It is the Olivetti showroom designed by Scarpa to pay tribute to the national producer of typewriters. With this project Scarpa demonstrated how it is possible to turn onto the architect's side the challenging conditions of the existing site and make these even a strong point of the design. The stretched nature of the site, not suitable for a showroom, becomes a fundamental element dictating the design and the choice of details and materials. The staircase connecting the mezzanine

**"Details are subtle, meaningful and they can be better appreciated in restoration projects."**

level to the ground floor not only acts as a physical connection between the two levels, but also as a visual element reinforcing the depth of the site. The deep marble steps, which I feel look as floating in the room, dissolve themselves into a few bigger slabs used as showcases. Big front windows allow for as much daylight to penetrate deeply inside the room giving in this way a deeper and more predominant meaning to the majestic staircase. It seems to me that this project shows how it is possible to deliver high quality design without making the design itself the core center of the whole project. The purity and integrity of the design is there just to pay homage to one of the most important Italian industries and not to become the focal point of attention.

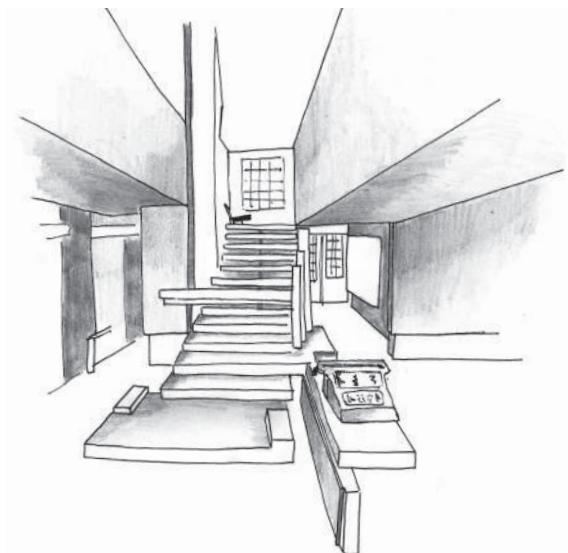
Another project which in my opinion shows the outstanding quality of Scarpa's design is the restoration of the Museum of Castelvecchio, a medieval castle near Verona in Italy. New and old architecture harmoniously merge together in such a way that the former never assumes control over the latter. Once again



Carlo Scarpa, detail of the staircase in the Olivetti Showroom, San Marco's Square, Venice, Italy, 1957 / 1958.

the thoughtful simplicity of the design not only shows Scarpa's attention to details but also allows for a great display of the artworks. Scarpa decided to display statues and artworks in such a way that they visually reinforce the alternation of the rooms one after the other. Moreover, the long view through the corridor and its arcs is strengthened by the presence of a beam in the roof which leads the beholder's eye towards it. In addition, the role played by the statues' shadows reinforces the sobriety of the spaces.

Scarpa can be considered one of the most important architects of all times for the way in which he intended architecture and the importance he gave to the details. His architecture is at the same time simple and contextual. In recent years, the architecture world has seen examples of built projects which stand just for the sake of themselves with no real relationship with the environment. The architecture of Carlo Scarpa I believe can on the contrary be taken as an example of outstanding design which never takes over the reason why it has been made for. Edges, borders, old and new materials and simple shapes create a type of architecture which stands for its self-control and solemnity at the same time. I feel that today more architects should look back at the architecture of Carlo Scarpa and take inspiration from his principles in order to avoid delivering projects whose aim seems to be sometimes an exercise of self-glorification.



Carlo Scarpa, interior of the Olivetti Showroom, San Marco's Square, Venice, Italy, 1957 / 1958.

# Berlin. After the Wall

"Yet, it is here in Berlin where the wall emerges most clearly; here, cutting across your city..."

(An extract from speech by Ronald Reagan at the Brandenburg Gate, 12 June 1987)

**By Paulina Konkina**

Drawn to the city's historic Brandenburg Gate as word spread on the night of Nov. 9, 1989, both East and West Berliners clambered up the wall and crowded Pariser Platz to take part in the opening. Two years earlier at this spot, Ronald Reagan had implored Mikhail Gorbachev in a speech to "open this gate; to tear down this wall."

Now, 26 years after its fall, little is remaining of this physical boundary that once split the city into two different worlds. With the exception of six conserved sections and brass plaques marking the wall's location, the physical wall - and the formal division between East and West Berlin - has disappeared. Replacing this division was a new political space.

It is not difficult, however, for the attentive observer to notice that a geopolitical wall continues to divide the city. In the West, the scars of the Second World War, symbolised by the bombed-out Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church and the more recently reconstructed

Reichstag – with its glass dome symbolising transparent democracy, serve as a continual reminder of the stain of Nazism on German history. In the East, little trace remains of the Nazi influence, even though the past is now somewhat recalled in the recently rebuilt Rykestrasse synagogue in the city's Jewish quarter.

**"The wall's destruction created a new range of urban possibilities."**

The wall's destruction created a new range of urban possibilities. It left vast empty spaces that have turned out to be civic boons in ways nobody could foresee, just as it freed citizens from the constraints of oppression to explore ambition and opportunity. The

emptiness attracted a new generation. It provided space to dream up clubs in bunkers, galleries in old department stores. Berlin was unfinished, like this generation, which pioneered ad hoc, improvisatory, piecemeal development.

Not far from the Brandenburg Gate, Potsdamer Platz was a no man's land during the Cold War. Before that, almost all of



View on Postdamer Platz after the fall of the wall (2009).

the buildings in the area were turned to rubble by air raids and heavy artillery bombardment during the last years of World War II. So after 1990, it was perceived more than just a building site; Potsdamer Platz became a "linking element," reconnecting the two halves of the city in a way that was symbolic as well as physical, helping to heal the historical wounds by providing an exciting new mecca attracting Berliners from both sides of the former divide.

**"Potsdamer Platz became a "linking element," reconnecting the two halves of the city..."**

Unfortunately, these social aspirations were compromised by commercial intentions. In 1991, the city government organised a design competition for the redevelopment of Potsdamer Platz and much of the surrounding area. Eventually attracting 17 entrants, a winning design was announced in October 1991, that from the Munich-based architectural firm of Hilmer & Sattler. The area was divided into four parts, each sold to a commercial investor, who then planned new construction according to Hilmer & Sattler's masterplan. The largest of the four parts went to Daimler-Benz, who instructed Renzo Piano to create an overall design for their scheme of 19 buildings, including the headquarters of Daimler-Benz, offices and the "Panoramapunkt", a viewing platform, located 100m above ground level. The second largest part went to Sony, who erected their new European office on a triangular site immediately to the north of Daimler-Benz. Another two sites became the Beisheim Center and the Park Kolonnaden, a range of buildings running down the east side of the Potsdamer Bahnhof site.

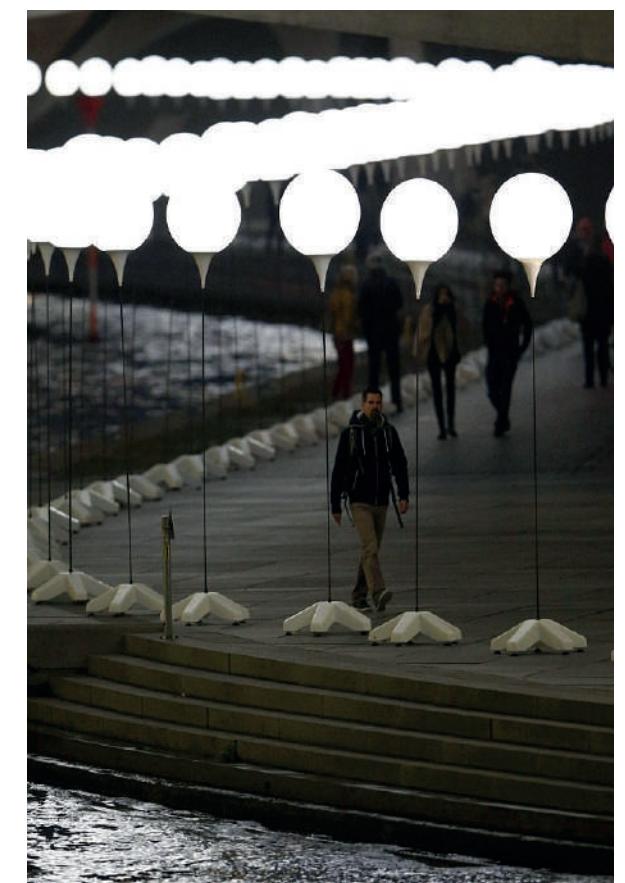
Checkpoint Charlie, a crossing point between East and West, is another significant symbol of the Cold War that turned into one of Berlin's primary tourist attractions. An open-air exhibit was opened during the summer of 2006; the gallery walls along the Friedrichstraße and the Zimmerstraße inform the viewer of escape attempts and how the checkpoint acted as an "in-between space" during the Cold War. The course of the former wall and border is now marked in the street with a line of cobblestones, reminding you of the contrast between life before and after the wall.



View on Checkpoint Charlie after the fall of the wall (2012).

A year ago, Berlin organisers lined more than eight miles of the inner-city border with an installation of 8,000 illuminated (biodegradable) balloons to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The "Lichtgrenze," or Border of Light, installation was to evoke the brutal division of the past. At the same time, its use of modern materials and techniques symbolised how much the city and the world around it has changed in a quarter-century.

Even though the wall acts a reminder of the post war period and still separates the city geopolitically, I believe that we need to remember its existence and mustn't forget all the horror of the systems of the events that brought this about and what a man can do to a man.



The "Lichtgrenze," or Border of Light, installation was meant to evoke the brutal division of the past.

# Park Hill Sheffield: Regenerating Social Housing

Will the estate be successfully transformed from sink estate to thriving community space?

**By Ciara Hunter**

Park Hill flats in Sheffield was a ground breaking design of its time which helped clear out post-war slums and improve the quality of life, however, by the 1980s it became known as a 'sink estate'. It has maintained its reputation and is known as a deprived area of Sheffield. The regeneration plans for the area, which are currently part way through, have evoked mixed feelings in the city. Could this shiny new exterior really improve the society within it? Statistics have shown that crime in the area is reducing, but this is in part due to gentrification of the area. Will this reinvention of a once revolutionary building bring it back to its former glory?

Park Hill was opened in 1962 to rehouse people living in the post war slums. The project replaced tenements with 995 new homes and it is one of the largest brutalist buildings in Europe. Jack Lynn and Ivor Smith were originally inspired by Le Corbusier's Unité D'habitation, using 'streets in the sky' to unite corridors. These 3m wide corridors were supposed to give the sense of a street, they were social public areas without the danger of traffic so children could play. Other measures taken to ensure the community thrived were that old neighbours from the slums were housed next to each other, the streets given the same names and even pubs and shops were included within the complex. All these aspects

contributed to the thriving community in this revolutionary new project of the time.

However, when the steel industry collapsed in the 1980s, it didn't take long for Park Hill to spiral down into a 'sink estate'. This is a term used to describe council housing estates that are characterised by high levels of economic and social deprivation. Sheffield is famous for steel and the majority of the working class at this time were employed by the industry so people living at Park Hill were badly affected. It was easy for crime to thrive in the long corridors as they weren't overlooked so were much harder to police. The flats became a symbol of the city's decline. Since this time the community has never been able to shake this awful reputation.

The controversial decision to make Park Hill a Grade II listed building in 1988 meant it was unable to be simply demolished and re-built, which is the solution used for most buildings of this type, for example the Red Road tower blocks in Glasgow. Instead, a £142 million pound investment to regenerate the area was embarked upon. The exterior has been clad in colourful aluminium sheets still leaving the exposed concrete frame so as to maintain a brutalist style. The individual flats themselves have been stripped down exposing concrete on the inside and fully



Old Facade



New Facade

redecorated. The main change is the decision to privatise the blocks by putting security on all entrances. The flat sizes have increased by reducing the size of the 'streets', therefore erasing the original ideology of the project.

Part one of the refurbishment was completed in 2013 and was nominated for the Stirling Prize because "It stands as a beacon for imaginative regeneration, quality mass housing and the bold reuse of a listed building", a quote from RIBA. The aesthetic has definitely improved and there is also evidence this project has had a positive social impact too. Reports from the University of Sheffield show that crime in the area improved from a peak of 624 cases in 2006 to 224 in 2012 and are continuing to fall, which is a staggering improvement.

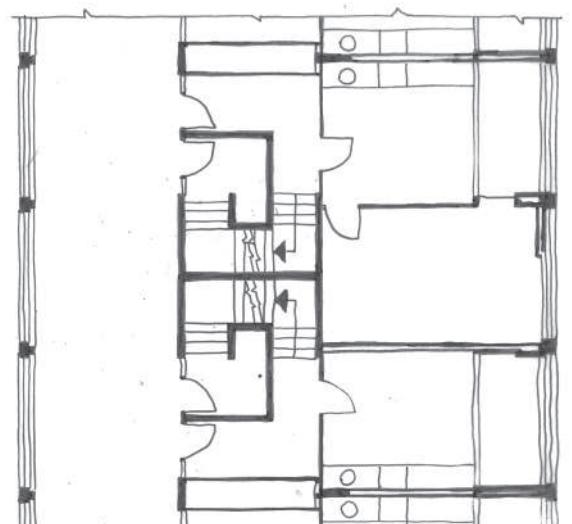
Perhaps it is wrong to attribute this change solely to the redevelopment. The number of flats in the complex is being reduced from 995 to 870 in total, with the majority of the prices rising to a level higher than the average price for a flat in the area which shows these statistics are largely due to gentrification. The regeneration isn't improving the community, it is creating a new one. A similar scheme in Haygate saw only 212 out of 2535 flats being used for affordable housing with the whole Elephant and Castle redevelopment losing a total of 1194 affordable houses.

Trellick Tower in London, which is also Grade II listed, plummeted straight into a crime ridden area when it was opened in 1972, but today is one of London's most sought after properties. This drastic change of attitude is due to a number of things: the

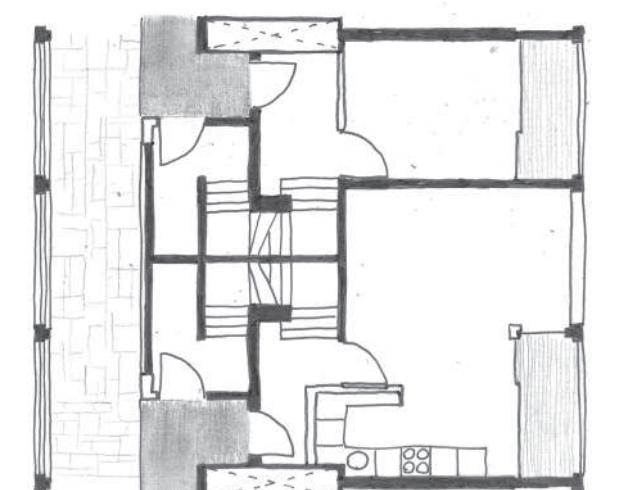
extensive modernisation of the interior, the improved security on all entrances, the introduction of 'right to buy' schemes which allow council tenants to buy their council home at a discount and the formation of a resident's association. These changes meant people took more pride in their homes and crime rates dropped. The psychological impact of improving how something looks, improves the way you treat it. Park Hill is aiming to emulate good aspects of the Trellick Tower development. Only time will tell if people's attitudes towards the area will ever improve.

The initial 1960s development of Park Hill worked extremely well for its time but is a clear example, along with the other blocks mentioned, that high rise buildings are much harder to adapt to a changing social climate. Trellick Tower and Park Hill help to promote the use of redevelopment over demolition because they show it can be possible and it works well. Gentrification contributed to improving these towers but community projects and improving public spaces also helped to improve the quality of the areas. This may encourage cities to think twice before demolition even if the building is not listed as this will also save time, money and has a much better environmental impact.

Perhaps the most important lesson to be taken from this is that when designing a building, social factors of the area must be considered as part of the design process in order for the building to function, as well as having the aesthetic you want. Whether Park Hill will eradicate the bad reputation altogether is yet to be seen but it is definitely improving and shows how architecture plays a part in improving society.



Old Plan



New Plan



# Designing for the Dead

"Nothing is more creative than death, since it is the whole secret of life ... When a man knows this, he lives for the first time in his life. By holding his breath, he loses it. By letting go he finds IT." ~Alan Watts

By Helena Francis

It is perceived as morbid to discuss the subject of death: with its accompanying emotions of grief associated with memory; not to mention the fear of loss and the unknown. But perhaps this should not be the case. Especially in architecture.

The exchange (or boundary) between life and death when accepted and celebrated can become a wondrous thing. As well as a sense of perspective for all, this acceptance of death as being a part of life could take steps to alleviating grief on a more personal level.

Architect Alison Killing suggests that "if we want better buildings for dying, then we have to talk about it, but because we find the subject of death uncomfortable, we don't talk about it, and we don't question how we as a society approach death". Killing designed an exhibition at the 2014 Venice Biennale including an interactive map of London that shows just how much of the real estate in the city is given over to death and dying. It showed people's homes, hospitals, cemeteries and mortuaries; they tell the story of the different spaces that we pass through on either side of death.

"We wanted to show that where we die is a key part of how we die."

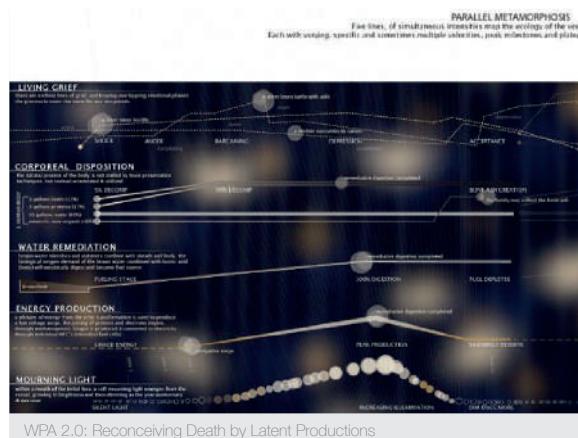
She comments that people were dancing and running and jumping as they tried to activate the exhibits, and at a certain points they would stop and remember that they were in an exhibition about death, and that maybe that is not how one is supposed to act.



Death in Venice by Alison Killing

"But actually, I would question whether there is one way that you're supposed to act around death, and if there's not, I'd ask you to think about what you think a good death is, and what you think that architecture that supports a good death might be like."

Design, reinforced by research, reveals an urgent call to especially liberate city life from the burden of outmoded practices. An urban community's need for sanitary and sensible disposal of corpses is intertwined with the need of survivors to organize suitable rituals and memorialise the deceased. While architecture associated with death is not tackled by most architectural practices, a few students from different schools, have taken the challenge to explore this fascinating exchange between life and death in multiple scenarios, including the recognition of the poetry of impermanence, contemporary thoughts of memorialising the individual, and the re-mediation of polluted soil and water through microbial digestion.



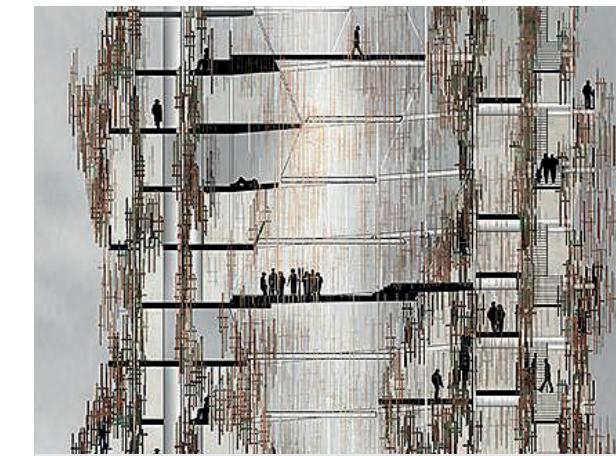
WPA 2.0: Reconciling Death by Latent Productions

One example shown, WPA 2.0, achieves 'bio-remediation' of corpses through the use of fuel cell technology to convert chemical energy into hydrogen energy.

The architecture is a resilient infrastructure of short-term shrines dedicated to the production of energy, remembrance, and remediation rises amidst the city offering loved ones and citizens a contemplative stroll, while the deceased are transformed into the vibrant energy they literally embody.



Museum of Life, Liminality and Death by Paul Tran - An exploration of the physics and the phenomena of death juxtapose the natural with the supernatural, the secular with the religious, and the socially accepted with the taboo.



Sacred within Mundane by Aya Macea

Whereas the project Sacred with the Mundane deals with re-inserting a new typology for memorialisation back into the center of the city. The memorial is a slow paced public place - a vertical street lined with individual markers. Through its public program, it allows the urban dwellers to once again engage with death and life their daily encounters.

Finally the Museum Of Life, Liminality, And Death by Paul Tran is an exploration of the physics and the phenomena of death juxtaposing the natural with the supernatural, the secular with the religious, and the socially accepted with the taboo.

These projects which integrate emerging science and visionary architecture are examples of how we can re-weave the cycle of life and death into the fabric of the everyday while considering ways to support grief, memory, and the processes of acceptance.

# Design for Construction

Each issue, we hear from a recent graduate of the faculty. This semester, Konstantinos Vouliotis contributes from his new home in Vancouver.

**By Konstantinos Vouliotis**

If you're reading this and you are a young professional, you may feel the pain that, after graduating from a brilliant architecture or engineering faculty, your wonderful concepts, ideas and daring designs crumble before your eyes in the realisation of the real world constraints. If you're a student, you may have experienced the above in your work placement or heard stories by your professors. Go out there to build your Basil Spence Project world-shaking idea and good luck breaking through the walls of budget, design codes, durability, warranties and many more. Above all, good luck finding a contractor willing to take the risk to build the crazy idea you threw on the table late at night in your studio or home or the computer room of the inspiring-to-work-in CB.

Don't worry, the world is not as bad as I just introduced it. I'm currently working in an environment where engineers, fabricators and builders are all in the same premises. Therefore the crazy idea thrown here is immediately filtered by the team who will fabricate the components and will actually go out there to build it. The idea is taken to the workshop, mockups are fabricated and tested and feedback is used to develop that initial idea. And this two way process enables amazing results: you end up with complete solutions; elegant, carefully detailed, expertly crafted



Figure 1: Steel base for a column, specially detailed, engineered and fabricated for this particular project in Vancouver.

projects.

Guess what: you just took down the biggest communication barrier, that one between the design and construction teams. I will argue that the architect – engineer communication barrier which we have all been used to in Bath, is easier to overcome! Now try to imagine what happens if you really unleash your imagination while having the entire team in symphony. What if, for example, you want to make a curve out of straight pieces, so you take thin pieces of wood, the simplest raw building material in the timber industry, and stagger them along your curve? And what if you want to span your creation a rather long distance and you add a post and two cables to create the simplest truss? Boom!

What if you want to construct a building with many leaning columns, each at a different angle, without having to fabricate bespoke connections for each column? Maybe you can sit down with the fabricating gang and discuss possible, complete solutions. How about a two-way rotating node which you can use for every angle?

What if you combine all the above with some high tech software and machinery that can cut your wood in precise shapes to fit a complex jigsaw puzzle? You make large Lego pieces, then you

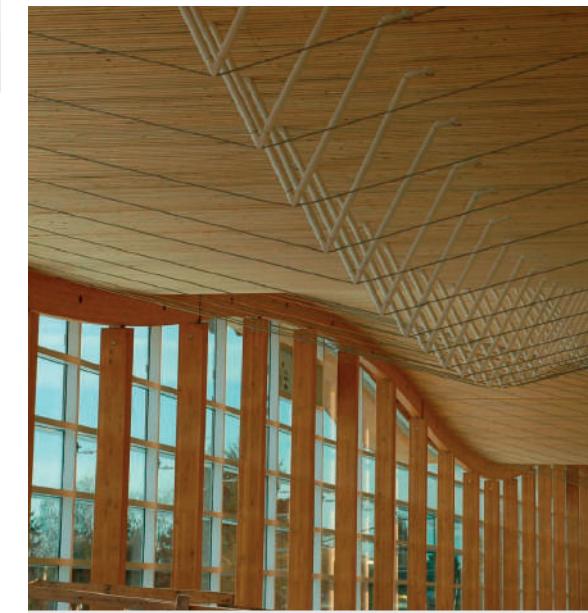


Figure 2: I'm not joking, try this with balsa in your studio.

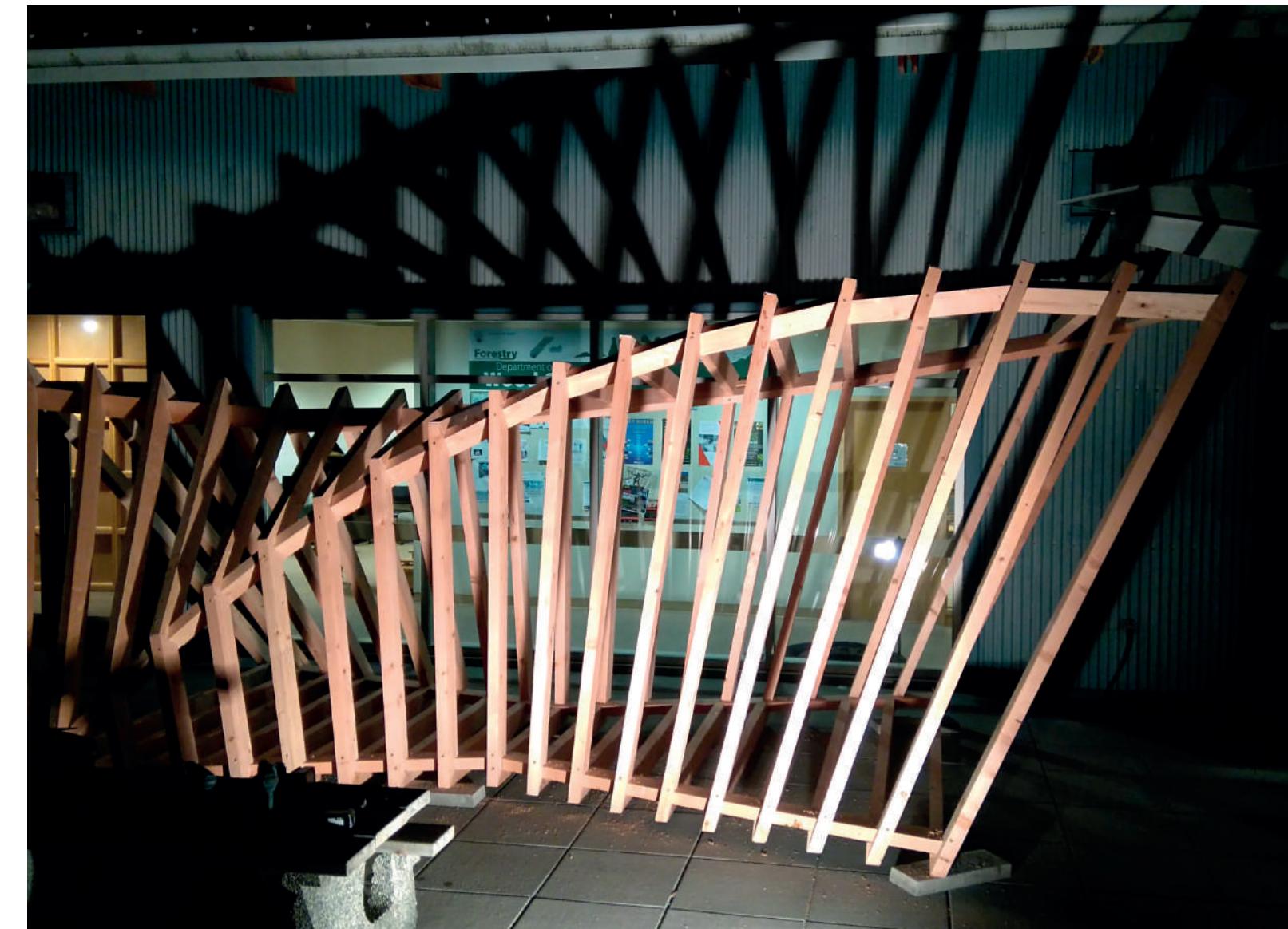
can create structures that were previously only in the sphere of imagination for the timber fans. And you can do it fast.

The above scenarios are certainly not the same as the (rather unique) challenges posed by the ACE faculty. However the principles remain: collaboration. Sit down in person with your other disciplines and resolve the design and construction issues over a blank piece of paper. Get creative, all together, drop the egos and have this common goal, a vision you want to achieve. The results will flabbergast you.

Konstantinos finished his MEng Civil Engineering degree in Bath in 2015 and moved to Vancouver, Canada, where he works for StructureCraft Builders. All photographic material is ©StructureCraft Builders Inc.



Figure 3: All nodes are identical and they fit all columns in this project in Qingdao, China.



# Safe as Houses

Western and Eastern attitudes towards building new private houses are vastly different. As an architect interested in residential design, which side of the world is the best place to be?

**By Bethan Scorey**

In the Western world a house's commercial value will generally increase over its lifespan; safe as houses goes the logic. Since the average British person will move house eight times in their lifetime and houses are generally considered temporary investments. It is therefore safe to assume that when building or buying a house they will be anticipating selling it at some point in the future. Designing a house in the Western world so often means tempering personal tastes and eccentricities so as not to deter future buyers. Deviation from the social norms could jeopardise a home's value in the long term, which would not be strategic considering the probability that the owner will sell it in their lifetime. So people resort to buying existing houses, naturally.

Of course there are a minority of unconventional private homes being built, so often the 'avant garde' of architecture in the West. These require unconventional clients with budgets to match who either intend to stay in their house for the duration of their life and are indifferent to its commercial value, or who simply have enough money not to care; hardly your average middle class family.

Eastern attitude to houses is very different. They are far less confined by boundaries on residential design that exist in the

West. Japan is the perfect example since 87% of their home sales each year are new builds, compared to 11-34% in Western countries. This puts their completion rate of new homes on par with the USA, with only a third of the US's population. So why don't they value their old homes as we do in the West? Why are they building so many new ones?

The Eastern world values impermanence, it is an embodiment of cultural and religious values which explains why popular culture is consumed by newness, the latest trends and technological developments. Undoubtedly the severity of earthquakes has taught people not to take architecture for granted; their houses are regarded as temporary installations. Some buildings are temporary installations, for example Ise's Grand Shrine which is rebuilt every twenty years on an adjacent site, serving as a practical way of passing building techniques from one generation to the next. The process stems from the Shinto belief 'wabi-sabi'; the impermanence of all things and the inevitable death and renewal of nature.

Homes in Japan are like consumer goods. They rapidly depreciate in value over their lifespan like a fridge or a car, until they are demolished. This is a major obstacle to affluence and accounts for 4% of Japan's total GDP not to mention carbon



Apollo Architects & Associates, Knot House, Tokyo

footprint. It is the plot of land on which you build your home that is most valuable, a repercussion of the collapse of Japan's economic bubble in the 1980's. Following World War II, in an erratic rush to industrialize and rebuild cities to rehouse those who had lost their homes, contractors built waves of cheap, low quality wooden framed housing with no insulation nor seismic reinforcement. No wonder then, that old houses are perceived as substandard, a stark contrast to the West where generally the older the house, the more valuable it is. Of course by now most houses in Japan are robotically prefabricated and capable of far outlasting their thirty year time stamp, yet they continue to demolish them.

**"Japan has become a pioneer of pushing the boundaries of residential design, and their homes are fertile environments to test new, innovative ideas."**

Unlike the Western population, Japanese people simply cannot expect to sell their homes. You buy your plot of land for yourself and your family, and then you stay there. It is a nation of loyal salarymen with secure employment for life making geographic immobility completely normal. Generally the individual is given more worth and freedom in the West, whilst in Eastern society it is family that matters most, and your duty to provide for your family, which often involves caring for your elderly parents too. No individual can be truly independent where the bond with the family precedes anything related to the self.

When you are resigned to living in a home for the duration of its lifespan before demolition, on average about thirty years, naturally you would cater the design specifically towards your own personal tastes and needs. This makes architecture far from elitist in Japan, since the majority of first time homeowners will hire an architect to build their small middle class homes, an uncommon idea in the Western World's developed economies where generally only the wealthy hire architects. Perhaps this explains why Japan has the most registered architects per capita in the world.



Apollo Architects & Associates, Arrow, Tokyo

So how does this effect the architecture and design process?

There is far greater personal freedom as a client, which extends their architects creative licence. Homes without windows, stairs and balconies without railings, rooms cast open to their surroundings to create vast internal courtyards. Japanese architects are far less weary of planning regulations and civil lawsuits than Western architects, since neighbours and communities have no say on the appearance of houses built on the plot of land just next door. Whereas in the West there is a collaborative incentive to maintain aesthetically coherent design across neighbourhoods and respect context, in Japan homes become self-contained boxes, with no design consistency from one to the next.

Japan has become a pioneer of pushing the boundaries of residential design, and their homes are fertile environments to test new, innovative ideas. But the self-contained nature of each architecture practice lacks the collaborative approach and responsibility that Western architecture exudes.



Apollo Architects & Associates, Still, Chiba



# Social Boundaries in Architecture

The Third Year's second project is set in the peripheries of the cultural and tourism zone of Dublin where a clear economic divide is apparent.

**By Benedict Hignell**

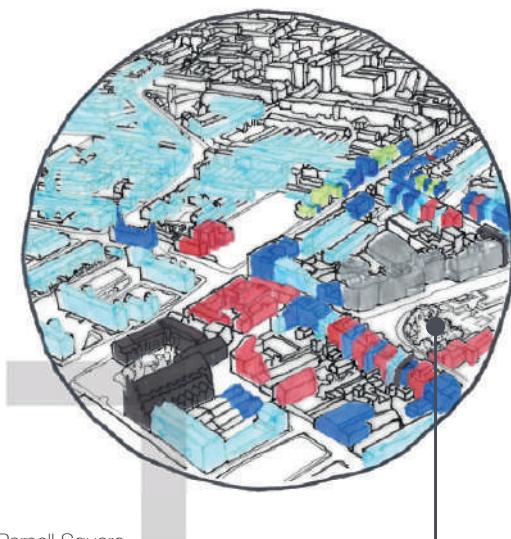
At the Northern tip of Dublin's cultural route, or Civic Spine as it has been named, there is a startling condition where within 100m of the supposedly affluent Parnell's Square, the wealth of the inhabitants falls close to the lowest of anywhere in the nation. These streets tell a clear story of the hidden struggles of North Dublin. They contain deserted social housing units, multiple homeless shelters and a large Salvation Army centre. Some of the housing estates in that area are also known to be the most violent and plagued by addictions of any in Ireland.

A new City Library on the North side of Parnell Square has been proposed as part of the Civic Spine development. Our project is to design for this a satellite library aimed at children and young adults. One of the design challenges is how to produce a library that can both function as an educational and community hub for the local population as well as acting as an extension of the main library for tourists and other Dubliners. This library creates the opportunity to improve the social and economic wealth of the surrounding community and of Dublin by encouraging empathy between the two disparate groups and eventually move those in power to action. The Molcajete Urban Think Tank in Mexico City believes that this can simply be done by providing joint public activities that will stimulate visibility between the different social groups.

Recent research experiments have shown that one of the main reasons for these societal injustices is in fact money. In a TED Talk, Paul Piff explained his extensive research on this subject. He and his team found that wealthy drivers are significantly less likely to stop at a zebra crossing and are also less philanthropic than people not as economically well off. One study showed how quickly one can lose empathy with others and become obnoxiously boastful about your wealth. This study was on rigged games of Monopoly where one person starts off with twice the



Dublin's Civic Spine



- Parnell Square
- Social Buildings (E.g. Youth centres and homeless shelters)
- Religious Buildings
- Museums and Galleries (E.g. The new City Library)
- Businesses
- Residential

money and is allowed to use two rather than one die. As the first player quickly gets ahead and more wealthy they also start to become less sympathetic to their opponents plight and move their pieces more loudly. By the end of the game they feel that it was mainly their good strategy and skill that won it for them rather than their obvious unfair advantage.

**"Wealthy drivers...less likely to stop at a zebra crossing."**

Fortunately, Piff's research also found that this reduction of empathy is easily reversible. He found that simply by presenting the economically advantaged groups with real stories of people from the disadvantaged groups they immediately became more willing to give up their time and resources to help others.

This act of confronting the wealthy with those from less affluent backgrounds can clearly be done in our projects by physically creating spaces and opportunities for these people to connect and form positive alliances with each other. This would benefit both the economically vulnerable and help maintain Dublin's re-emerging prosperity.

# Curbed by the Kerb

The urban British streetscape can be portrayed as a familiar medley of lights, lines, and signs, separating cars from pedestrians and roads from facades. Is this really the best way to design the sacred space between buildings?

**By Yacine Abed**

There's a very fun game you can play on the internet at [geoguessr.com](http://geoguessr.com). The website places you on a street anywhere in the world at random using Google Maps Streetview, and the aim is to pan around/move along the street to guess which country you are in as quickly as possible. A great way of improving your geographical intellect and an even better way of wasting some precious project time... So when I play the game, there's this one country I always manage to guess immediately without hesitation – the United Kingdom, and it's not because I live here. Something about the UK makes it instantly recognisable, whether you're in Essex or in Edinburgh, and believe it or not it isn't the weather nor the pubs. It's the roads. The traffic lights, the stop signs, the speed limits, the kerbs, the single yellow lines, the double yellow lines etc. Britain's religious approach to Health & Safety procedures has utterly banned the strip of land between two façades from having any sensitive architectural relationship to them. UK roads are easy to recognise but visually anonymous. They're colourful and consistent, but not so clever.



Can you guess in which country this junction is? That's right. The United Kingdom.

Jumping across the sea into mainland Western Europe, we quickly notice a very different sensitivity to urban street-scape. Especially when focusing on smaller European cities, we notice a much more subtle form of traffic control and witness streets that create a real dialogue between buildings – streets that invoke an architectural continuity rather than a boundary. Whether you're in Munich or Milan, streets that merge roads and pavements and make drivers and walkers share the same space are not a rare sight. By prioritising pedestrian circulation and minimising road signs, motor traffic is both slowed down and reduced. This template results in less air pollution, a more physically active populace, a clearer relationship between opposing façades, and a highly adaptable civic surface that can host different events such as markets and festivals. I think it's safe to assume we all prefer festivals to 'one-way-only' signposts.



Milan. A street with no traffic signs nor level difference makes all the difference.

People might think that the British approach to road design leads to less motor accidents, but several studies have shown that both drivers and pedestrians become so reliant on the lights and the signs that they lose awareness of immediate environmental activity. For example if somebody crosses the road whilst the light is still green for the cars, they are more likely to get run over as an unfocused driver responds systematically to the light colour rather than the human right ahead. In contrast, the European pedestrianised road template obliges motor drivers to be more mentally engaged with the bustling, ever-changing urban environment, and hence more responsible. So that's 1-0 to Italy.



Fellow Irish neighbours taking a step in the right direction by combining road signs in Dublin to reduce unnecessary urban cluttering in a new government scheme.

# Borders

People, ideas, buildings, Netflix accounts. All are victims of the greatest enemy to modern man: the national border.

**By Olly Ridgley**

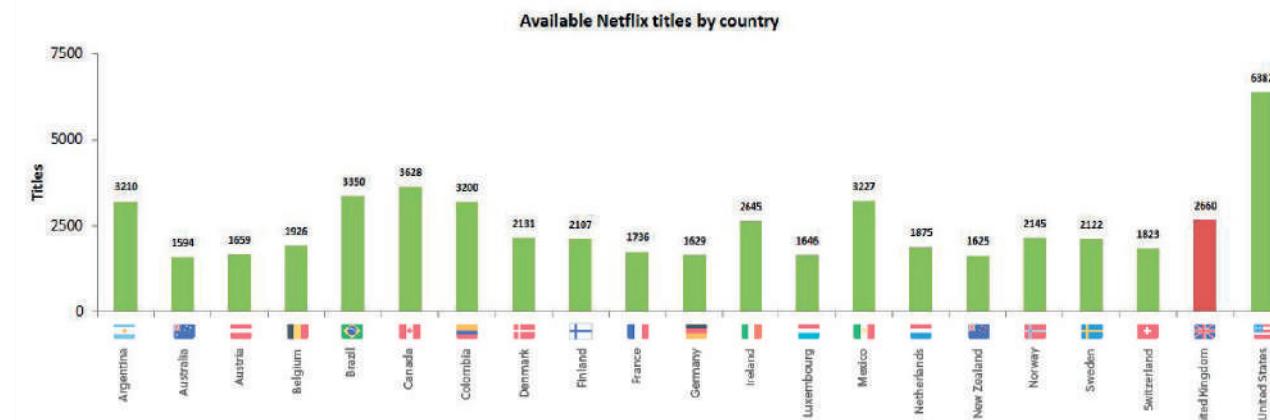
It is coming to the end of 2015, and borders still exist.

Imaginary lines, dividing people, cutting each other off. Impeding the spread of ideas. Making our lives as Architects harder, as anyone who has tried to get a visa for a placement overseas will know. Starting petty arguments that become ludicrously out of hand, resulting in wars.

The whole concept of Nationalism comes from borders, and with that I would argue so does racism. The idea that one bit of land is better than another bit of land, for no reason other than it's the bit of land on which you just happened to be born. It makes no sense.

**"Britain's Got Talent was won by a dog, and now all the bees are dying."**

Borders affect everyone, sometimes without us even realising. Want to relax and watch a film? Too bad, the licensing agreement in your country means you can't stream your favourite film. Date night is ruined. Why should one set of people be allowed greater film-viewing privileges than others? I spent far too long researching this, and made a very informative graph to highlight this unacceptable discrimination [see Fig. 1].



Source: <https://blog.unblock-us.com/how-many-titles-are-available-in-each-netflix-region/>  
Fig. 1/Inequality in action: the devastating effects of borders on a nation's ability to Netflix and Chill.

These people are fleeing a war. They are escaping for their lives. They haven't thought '*These neighbours are a bit noisy, what with their rockets and chemical weapons and rampant murder, I think I'll take what's left of my family on a nice, benefits-scrounging jolly to the UK.*'

They have left everything behind because they cannot stay in a place where children are dying from chemical attacks. That's why they're coming here. Not because they want to steal your bus pass and defecate on your lawn.

How can anyone think that they are more entitled to a way of life because of where they were born? What right do they have to prevent others from sharing in a better quality of life? Especially when those others are facing the atrocities currently occurring on a daily basis in the Middle East.

Yet here we are, forcing thousands to live in a makeshift ghetto in Calais which regularly gets bulldozed by the French border control, egged on by the world's number one police dog and fence enthusiast, Dave 'Compassionate' Cameron.

National pride is dangerous, pick up any history book.

Borders incite ignorance. They are harmful, isolating things. North Korea shows us how borders can be used in an extreme way to oppress and abuse. We are one race, inhabiting one planet.

**"Birmingham may be dirty and a bit depressing, but at least it's interesting to look at."**

People shouldn't be told where they can and can't go.

When Eugene V. Debs was arrested for conscientiously objecting nearly exactly 100 years ago, he said '*I have no country to fight for; my country is the earth, and I am a citizen of the world.*' It's cringe-worthy to hear, and a very hippie concept, but it's true. As an extra-terrestrial being, would any of humanities ridiculous antics (wars, oppression, suffering, etc.) that have occurred because of these imaginary lines, make any sense?

Now, I understand that a national identity is an important human construct: it breeds culture, helps create beautiful architecture, and people do have an inherent desire to feel like they 'belong' somewhere. But can we honestly say that these things would not exist if borders were to disappear?

Places around the world would still associate with a particular culture and way of living. The local environment is an important factor in culture, as Architects we know that stuff like this gives rise to a vernacular style.

Only a very shallow person, would be so foolish as to think a place would lose its inherent place-ness, just because a few new people have moved in. Undoubtedly, streets might be busier. New clothes would appear. New foods in supermarkets. Superficial things.

Obviously, there might also be some compromise, and there may have to be new buildings built to accommodate for more people. But the important stuff, like really old buildings, will remain (case study: London).

Even then, is losing the odd bit of historical architecture so bad? Take a look at Bath. Every building is old and beige, and while this is kind of pretty, the novelty wears off after about a year. Everywhere you look, all is the same urinary-infection-yellow colour of stone. Birmingham may be dirty and a bit depressing, but at least it's interesting to look at.

Birmingham, a place once utterly devoid of anything vaguely fun aside from its canals, has been made completely excellent by immigration.

The Balti curry and Triangle, reggae and dub, drum and bass, the Chinese Quarter, the Jewellery Quarter, pretty much every cool building in the city owes its existence to either Irish, Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani migrant construction workers depending on when it was built, UB40, Steel Pulse, The Beat, Musical Youth, Digbeth Dining Club, the beautiful, ever-present smell of Tandoori chicken, the Lord of the Rings trilogy in its entirety, all of these things and more were forged in the crucible of Brummie immigration.

Migrants made the city an exciting place to be, as they have done to countless others around the world.

All this has happened while borders exist. Look what can happen even while we're actively hindering people's freedom. Imagine the possibilities if these silly lines were erased.

