

## TURNING CLOCKWISE TO SOUTHWARK

‘Let’s work with context and ask questions...’

CONTEXT: ‘Learning from the city, can we identify what variables make up today’s true context for the insertion of transformative spatial interventions?’

CIVIC: ‘Turning clockwise from Tower Hamlets, what civic spaces and buildings, which give priority to the user over the consumer, should we propose to transform the Borough of Southwark?’

POLITICS: ‘In politics, after the referendum, it is all change, but can the political be reintroduced into architecture?’

SITUATIONS: ‘Using situations to isolate the live realm and to reassess how social situations influence physical space, should we construct situations when we design space?’

SPACE: ‘By redefining the variables that make up context, we will experiment with, propose and find ways of representing space, but can we create spaces that intrinsically combine physical and social structures?’

TERRITORY: ‘Choosing random territories within Southwark and acknowledging that the city effortlessly incorporates multiple physical, social, political and cultural territories, can we apply the multilayered and hybrid nature of a city territory to the making of architectural space?’

ABSTRACTION: ‘Building on architecture’s abstract forms of representation, we will invent new types of working drawings and further develop the use of a spatial digital construct, but can we use abstraction to generate new ways of engaging with the reality of the city?’

DIRECT: ‘After scanning a situation, an architectural space and a territory in Southwark and accepting that the term “direct” acknowledges and exploits the fact that the city’s space is made up of a combination of the fabric of the city and the situations that take place within it, how can we insert, rather than impose, architectural interventions composed of situations, spaces and strategies that have a direct effect on their context?’

'Let's reassess architectural space and answer these questions...'

#### AIM:

To experiment with the relationship that exists between physical and social structures and develop appropriate methods for designing complex spatial interventions that directly affect the live realm of the city and transform the urban fabric.

#### GENERALLY:

Why are we turning clockwise from Tower Hamlets to Southwark? We are again concentrating on a London Borough to continue our exploration of how municipal power, which has a continuing responsibility over its territory, could or should influence the transformation of the city.

Why are we asking questions? In the current climate of political uncertainty, of uncreative commodity-led developments and of inconsequential academic projects, it is critical to ask some key questions about the production of space.

Why redefine context? By scanning context in a random area, identifying the variables that make up its space and constructing a spatial construct, we will set out to question the very make-up of space and to generate salient spatial insertions at the architectural and urban scales.

Why look at situations? We will focus on situations because situations form an integral, but underexploited, part of the composition of space.

Why use sections? By cutting sections through the spatial urban construct, through situations and through our insertions, we will be able to highlight, interpret and represent the relationships that exist between physical and social structures.

#### PART 1:

We will start by changing our understanding of what makes up the context of the city.

Using the 'scan', a process developed over the last few years, we will identify the urban, architectural and live variables that make up the reality of the city's spatial experience. Once identified, variables such as structures, mechanisms of control, instances of conflict amongst others, will be used to generate a digital construct that will form, in parallel to the real site, the revised context for our 'insertions'. This duality of context will enable us to juggle between the abstract and the real and to experiment more freely with

the production of space. Moving away from London's given areas of change, we will deploy a more random approach to the city. We will use 'situations' to isolate the live realm and 'sections' to articulate the interrelationships that exist between physical structures and social situations.

- Introduction to the unit's work and the concept of Direct Urbanism.
- Introduction to the book 'London +10' and its ten themes.
- Introduction to the 'scan' and the 'digital construct': the physical and the social; the abstract and the real.
- Introduction, discussion and initial response to the year's topics: context, civic, politics, situations, space, territory, abstraction and the direct.
- Overview of last year's work in Tower Hamlets.

#### Scan and Construct:

- Start investigating the Borough of Southward by focusing on the its edges, on its boundary conditions.
- Identify the key urban conditions that exist within this London borough.
- Speculate on and devise methods for scanning the city.
- Choose a random site; select a perimeter of 1 km by 1 km, a polemic territory, and scan it to identify the physical and social variables that make up the reality of this area's spatial experience.
- Consider the discordant qualities that make up the city's space.
- Consider the current state of London's development strategies.
- Consider the fabric of the chosen area.
- Respond to the year's topics: context, civic, politics, situations, space, territory, abstraction and the direct.
- Examine how conflict, control, exchange, fiction, groups, life, power, space, structures and time influence the city.
- As a starting point, explore how control influences the space of the city and, then, expand the spatial potential of one or more of the other urban themes.
- Devise methods for immersing in the urban conditions of the scanned area.
- Speculate on the types of structure that make up this urban condition.
- Collect any relevant primary evidence and identify any existing spatial strategies.
- Investigate the relationship that exists between the urban conditions and the city's fabric.
- Devise ways of including, representing and modelling the identified urban, architectural and live variables within the digital construct.

- Together, construct a 3D computer model, a digital construct - a spatial construct of the scanned area.
- Define, in relation to your scanned area, what makes up the true context for your spatial insertions.

#### Situations 1:

- Situations Workshop 1 with Nick Green (Publica and ON/OFF) and Nichola Barrington-Leach (Urban Projects Bureau): Isolating situations.
- Speculate on how the live realm and situations articulate and activate the city's physical structures.
- Identify a situation (video).
- Speculate on the use of the constructed situation as a form of spatial intervention.
- Develop strategies for creating interactive relationships between social and physical structures.
- Devise appropriate methods of representation and communication using video and text.

#### Sections 1:

- Speculate on the relationship that exists between physical and social structures.
- Cut sections (a minimum of 2) through the chosen situation(s) to highlight the interactive spatial nature of situations.
- Cut sections (a minimum of 2) through the selected 1 km by 1 km area of Southwark to articulate the interrelationships that exist between physical structures and social situations.
- Devise appropriate methods to draw these hybrid sections.

#### PART 1A:

Avoiding the limitations of current, commodity-led, development strategies, we will focus on the idea of random 'insertions' as an alternative form of development.

Using the redefined variables that make up context, we will make preliminary and experimental spatial proposals that will aim to have a transformational influence on the random, individual, scanned areas of the city.

#### Insertion 1 (Spatial Insertion):

- Investigate and question the current forms of urban transformation.
- Within the area of the scan, choose a site of at least 100 x 100 metres, which should be an arbitrary fragment of the city and not a conventional building site or block.

- Consider the composition, make-up, of an existing urban block.
- If appropriate, analyse a chosen brief and adapt it as necessary.
- Address a salient urban condition within Southwark.
- Consider how the discordant qualities of the city can be applied to the making of architectural spaces.
- Develop sets of components and interactive elements that will, deliberately, blur the distinction that separates the space delineated by architecture from that of the city.
- Consider the role that will be played in this area by public, service or civic buildings.
- Consider the potential of insertions as spatial interventions.
- Devise an alternative and experimental form of architectural intervention: an insertion.
- Prepare a preliminary spatial proposal.
- Construct a 3D computer model, a digital construct, a spatial construct of the preliminary spatial proposal.
- Insert this preliminary proposal into the digital construct of the scanned area.
- Devise appropriate methods of representation and communication.

## PART 2:

Experienced city space, with its formal, social, cultural, economic and political factors (variables), undoubtedly, encompasses physical and social structures, built forms and situations, but can these qualities be adopted in the making of architectural space? We will try. At the architectural scale, we will develop and refine a composite spatial language of hybrid structures, layered enclosures, components and interactive elements.

Responding to context and exploiting the complex nature of city space, we will design an architecture that addresses the civic and the political, delineates the territories of architectural space, creates spatial configurations that combine physical and social structures and develops an architectural language that embraces spatial complexity and encompasses multiple structures, materials, layers, geometries and components. We will then insert our detailed spatial, architectural, design into the city's context in a manner that experiments with and proposes ways of blurring the boundary that separates the city's space from that of architecture.

We will aim to generate an architecture that matches the complexity of the city.

Insertion 2 (Detailed Design):

- Develop strategies for creating interactive relationships between the preliminary spatial proposal and its surrounding urban conditions.
- Define the role played by interactive spaces within the scanned area.
- Respond to the year's topics: context, civic, politics, situations, space, territory, abstraction and the direct.
- Question the role that the urban themes of conflict, control, exchange, fiction, groups, life, power, space, structures and time play in the making of architectural space.
- Reassess the configuration of the spatial proposal, Insertion 1, and evolve it into an architectural proposal.
- Workshop with Eric Parry (Eric Parry Architects): Context and Insertion.
- If appropriate, analyse a chosen brief and adapt it as necessary.
- Identify and make use of relevant agents and initiatives.
- Consider the civic and the political role played by architecture.
- Develop ways of spatially combining physical and social structures.
- Develop an architectural language that embraces spatial complexity and employs multiple structures, materials, layers, geometries and components.
- Design and detail a hybrid structure or structures.
- Design and detail a layered enclosure or enclosures.
- Design and detail one or more interactive components.
- Define what makes up the perimeter of the architectural proposal.
- Design the perimeter space of the architectural proposal.
- Speculate on the potential of the architectural proposal to transform its surrounding urban area.
- Produce a full set of working drawings: plans, sections (cross sections and elevations) at architectural scales ranging from 1:100 to 1:20.
- At the architectural scale and within the scanned area configure a digital spatial construct to represent the architectural proposal, its perimeter and the surrounding urban conditions.

#### TECHNICAL WORKSHOP:

Using a composite architectural language that integrates combinations of spaces, situations and strategies, we will develop a technical thesis that focuses on hybrid structures, layered enclosures and interactive components. We will define and specify the technical role that physical and social variables play in the making of architectural and urban space. The technical thesis, TS5, will concentrate on structure, enclosure, components and interactive elements at the architectural scale, but will also aim to contextualise this spatial scale within the technical topics that govern the urban realm.

- TS5.

- Workshop with Javier Castanon (Head of Technical Studies).
- Workshop with Alex Warnock-Smith - Dip 10 Technical Tutor (Urban Projects Bureau).
- Workshop with Nick Green (Publica and ON/OFF).
- Develop and design a hybrid structure or structures.
- Develop and design a layered enclosure or enclosures.
- Develop and design one or more interactive components.
- Design the key elements of structure and enclosure at 1:50 and 1:20.
- Design the physical components of the interactive perimeter at 1:500.
- Design the interactive elements, rules and situations that contextualise the architectural proposal within the surrounding urban condition.
- Finalise the design of the architectural proposal.
- Devise appropriate methods of representation and communication.

#### Situations 2:

- Situations Workshop 2 with Nick Green (Publica and ON/OFF) and Nichola Barrington-Leach (Urban Projects Bureau): Constructing situations.
- Speculate on how the live realm and situations articulate and activate the city's physical structures.
- Experiment with the use of the constructed situation as a form of spatial intervention.
- Propose a series of constructed situations (video and text).
- Develop strategies for creating interactive relationships between social and physical structures.
- Devise appropriate methods of representation and communication using video and text.

#### Sections 2:

- Speculate on the relationship that exists between physical and social structures.
- Cut sections (a minimum of 2) through Insertion 2 to articulate the interrelationships that exist between physical structures and social situations at the architectural scale.
- Cut sections (a minimum of 2) across the 1 km by 1 km scanned area of Southwark, including Insertion 2, to articulate the interrelationships that exist between physical structures and social situations.
- Devise appropriate methods to draw these hybrid sections.

#### PART 2A:

Unit Trip to Hong Kong.

Scanning workshop with Tobias Klein (City University of Hong Kong).

### PART 3:

After the spatial experiments of Insertion 1, the architectural experiments of Insertion 2, we will expand our experiments to the scale of the contextual scan and the borough. Can spatial interventions influence their surrounding area or form part of it? Is there a perimeter, a curtilage to a spatial intervention that is part-and-parcel of an architectural insertion? Responding to the redefinition of context, the emphasis will be on the civic, on the political and, particularly on the direct.

We will continue to speculate on the future of London, its physical and social transformation. At the urban scale, we will delineate an expanded perimeter as an interactive curtilage around the architectural proposal, analyse its structure and transform it into a propositional territory of action by designing spatial and strategic interventions at the scales of 1:500 and 1:1000. By tweaking the digital construct and reconfiguring the variables, we will reassess the city's mechanisms of transformation and generate, at the scale of the city, new transformative structures, situations and strategies.

#### Insertion 3 (Urban Insertion):

- Explore the potential of the designed architectural proposal with its interactive perimeter as an urban component and explore its relationship with the urban surroundings that make up its curtilage.
- Devise methods for working with interactive elements, physical structures and social situations, that allow for an overlap between the internal and the external spaces of the city.
- Consider the civic and political role played by your proposal.
- Reconsider and redefine how conflict, control, exchange, fiction, groups, life, power, space, structures and time influence the city.
- Reconsider the 'scan', 'situations' and 'sections'.
- Identify and make use of relevant agents and initiatives.
- Adapt and appropriate any related urban initiatives.
- Define and design the expanded perimeter and the urban curtilage at 1:500.
- Finalise the design by combining the architectural proposal - Insertion 2, the perimeter and the curtilage into a composite urban strategy.
- Produce a full set of urban drawings: plans, sections and elevations.
- Together, construct a 3D computer model, a digital construct, a spatial construct of the scanned areas and the transformative insertions.

- Devise appropriate methods of representation and communication.

#### Situations 3:

- Situations Workshop 3 with Nick Green (Publica and ON/OFF) and Nichola Barrington-Leach (Urban Projects Bureau): Converting situations into strategies.
- Speculate on how the live realm and situations articulate and activate the city's physical structures.
- Devise ways of proposing constructed situations as urban strategies to create interactive relationships between social and physical structures.
- Devise appropriate methods of representation and communication using video and text.

#### Sections 3:

- Speculate on the relationship that exists between physical and social structures.
- Cut sections (a minimum of 2) across the 1 km by 1 km scanned area of Southwark, including Insertion 2 and the proposed strategies of Insertion 3, to articulate the interrelationships that exist between physical structures and social situations.
- Devise appropriate methods to draw these hybrid sections.

#### Insertion 3 (Urban Insertion) - Conclusion:

- Define the mechanisms that are required to procure and support the proposed composite urban strategy and devise the appropriate methods of representation and communication.
- Devise salient methods to insert the proposed urban strategy into the surrounding context and fabric.
- Combine Insertions 1, 2 and 3 and, together, finalise the transformative evolution of the digital spatial construct.
- Test the composite spatial proposal by engaging directly with the physical, social and economic reality of the London Borough of Southwark.
- Using digital and physical constructs, sections, videos and texts, combine the individual composite spatial proposals to challenge, physically and socially, the ongoing transformation of London.

#### BOOK LIST:

1. London +10, Edited by Carlos Villanueva Brandt, AA Publications.
2. Occupying Architecture, Edited by Jonathan Hill, Routledge - (Chapter 6, Space Within by Carlos Villanueva Brandt).
3. The Production of Space, Henri Lefebvre, Blackwell.
4. Toward an Architecture of Enjoyment, Henri Lefebvre, University of Minnesota Press.
5. Slow Burn City, London in the Twenty-First Century, Rowan Moore, Picador.
6. Ground Control, Anna Minton, Penguin.
7. Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture, Robert Venturi, The Architectural Press.
8. Restless Cities, Edited by Matthew Beaumont and Gregory Dart, Verso.
9. Life: A User's Manual, Georges Perec.
10. Ulysses, James Joyce, Penguin.
11. Rethinking Architecture, Edited by Neil Leach, Routledge.
12. Royal Festival Hall - London County Council, Leslie Martin and Peter Moro, Architecture in Detail, Phaidon
13. New National Gallery, Berlin, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Maritz Vandenberg, Architecture in Detail, Phaidon.
14. Igualada Cemetery – Enric Miralles and Carmen Pinós, Anaxu Zabalbeascoa, Architecture in Detail, Phaidon.
15. The Great Builders, Edited by Kenneth Powell, Thames and Hudson.