THE FACTORY
Manufacturing Identity

The early 20th Century was a period of radical architectural and cultural revolution. Modern industrialization forced a fundamental rethinking of the spaces, forms and practice of architecture, suddenly understood within newfound forms of production.

Architects grappled with this new reality in inventive ways. At the outset of the last century Le Corbusier designed himself before he designed his Machine for Living, invented to streamline the very living of modern life. Half a century later, Charles and Ray Eames were inventing and selling architecture as lifestyle, shaping the appearance and performance of lives already being molded by entirely new kinds of architecture.

The early 21st Century now finds itself at another moment of transformation. We have suddenly arrived at a point of rampant, unstoppable production – where now its rate, more than its content, is giving form to our world. How does an architect construct his or her identity in an age when we all now own the same stuff, do the same things, imagine the same futures? This year Diploma 9 will carry forward our ongoing interest in manufacturing architectural identities, but do so from the distinct perspective of industrialized making, and its most important setting: that of the factory.

The invention of the factory was an essential factor to the sweeping industrial revolution of the European 19th century, confirming the presence and consequence of architecture in modernism’s great cultural revolution. While Andy Warhol’s ‘Factory, his brilliantly-named Factory, was a production space of an entirely new kind, confounding cultural norms associated with the practice and making of Art. This space manufactured artistic identity with the kind of precision and exacting control found in a Bucherer watch factory.

It is precisely into this gap, between the making of an identity versus that of an artifact, that Diploma 9 will situate itself. We will engage the cultural project by considering the fundamental questions of invented identity – that of an architecture and its author - by focusing on the realities and processes of this condition confronting architecture today.

Oliver Pershav (2014) draws the busy looping interior of the AA School, rendering it as a hive of intellectual and material production. Ananth Ramaswamy (2014) draws the stages of development that transform a thought in the mind of an architect into a tangible material reality.
THE BRIEF: THE FACTORY
From Assembly Line to Artist Studio - From Fagus to ‘Factory’

The unit brief, as always, sits in the middle of a spectrum of interpretations and reimaginings. This year, more than ever, the unit straddles the line between the real and the fictional – between the measurable, physical quantities of a factory and its material output, and the more elusive intangible defining characteristics that shape one’s identity. If last year explored the medium of production, this year it is the space of production. We are shifting from how we work to where we work.

On the one extreme, the brief can be read as a call for the rethinking of the forms of production and manufacture in a global economy that has long since shifted east. It asks for the factory to be reconfigured, and above all to exploit its position (both geographical and cultural) within the European context; to reintroduce Europe as the production space of the future, instead of its outdated historical precedent.

On the other hand, the factory refers also to a period, space and intellectual reawakening sparked by Andy Warhol’s artist studio, The Factory. In this form, the brief explores the spaces of artistic production as a means to shape, manufacture and construct the identity of the individual and the collective. The brief asks that you speculate, invent and create a fantastical world in which to craft and produce architectural identity.

As the unit actively seeks to build individual personalities, this brief enables the setting up of eccentric briefs and projects that explore the various takes on the unit agenda. It is at this point where the brief demands that you formulate your own position regarding the cultivation of both an architectural and personal identity within the contemporary swamp of architectural, sameness. Our point of departure will be the Factory. We will straddle, overlap and confound the constraints of reality with absolute conceptual innocence. We will exploit the collision between the material and ephemeral, the possible and impossible, the authentic and artificial. Your factory will operate as the frontier for ideas that transgress convention. It will oscillate between the scales of big and small, as you design your world through all forms of event and space.

The Factory asks that you provocatively frame and shape the identity of your world, within the contemporary stage. The context of the project, and the medium through which it is communicated will define the distinctive attributes and promise of your new world. The expectation is not that you make a buildable world. Rather, the thing you build will be your identity.
SOME TERMS TO CONSIDER (to elaborate on, and perhaps redefine):

It's like this puzzle. You spend ages putting things together—things that weren't meant to fit together, disjointed things, things no one would ever think you could put together...It's like you're building your own little world.  
- Tom Rowlands (Chemical Brothers)

FABRICATE: 1 a: invent, create, b: to make up for the purpose of deception 2: construct, manufacture; specifically to construct from diverse and usually standardized parts (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

IDENTITY: 1. The state of having unique identifying characteristics held by no other person or thing 2. The individual characteristics by which a person or thing is recognized. The scales of identity (national vs individual) alongside the means by which we interpret identity (products, social affiliations, aesthetics) are fundamental questions an architect faces when dealing with today's issue of context. Identity is no longer tied to a fixed geography; rather the contextual ties that frame allegiances, identity and affinities occupy terrains that are at best ephemeral and fleeting. They exist more often that not in our pockets and in our social networks.

MANUFACTURE: 1. To make something using machinery. 2. To invent – for example a story, or evidence.

MANUAL: a document or book of instructions; a handbook. Your manual will collapse the world of invention with that of manufacturing.

FACTORY: is a building or set of buildings with capacity for manufacturing. It is the place of production. A factory can

The FACTORY: Andy Warhol's studio between the years of 1962 and 1984. It was at one point the epicentre of a thriving and transformative New York, where artists, musicians, writers and movie stars came together to hang out, bask in the aura of its legendary parties. It was also an intensive production space for Warhol's silkscreens; one in which he mass-produced his art works much like the process of an assembly line.

ASSEMBLY LINE: First widely implemented in the U.S. meat-packing industry (refer to Upton Sinclair's novel, The Jungle on the Dip 9 reading list) and quickly followed by Henry Ford's automobile assembly plant. Assembly lines are organised sequentially, and most often these systems are highly mechanised. An assembly line is a method whereby parts are added (assembled), usually in a linear fashion, until the entire product has completed the manufacture process. Assembly line work can also be operated in reverse to dissemble, as in the meat industry. It generally creates a highly specialized division of labour.

UNIFORM: To be uniform is to be unchanging, the same. A uniform is a piece (or pieces) of clothing worn by members of an organisation (a factory, a school). The uniform removes identity from its wearer, and instead replaces it with the identity of the organisation. This can create a collective feeling of community; a sense of belonging, and that one is part of something larger than the individual. On the flipside, the uniform limits self expression and can be seen as a symbol of control.

FABRIC: cloth produced by weaving or knitting textile fibres. Also, can be referred to as the texture of a city, ie the fabric of the city. The fabric, and cotton industry in particular, was one of the driving forces of UK's industrialisation- led in particular by Arkwright's Cromford Mill in Derbyshire.

FABRIK: German translation of the term, factory.

STUDIO: a workroom or rooms used for the pursuit and development of the practice of the arts. Dip9's unit space is a collaborative studio often filled with heated discussion, production, and invention. It is located on the top floor of 36 Bedford Square.
**THE RE-CON (Weeks 1-7)**
**Re-Make, Re-Produce, Re-Invent**

The ReCon is the foundation upon which you situate your entire year's work. In order to frame, make and shape a factory and identity, you will pick apart and re-imagine that of a precedent. It requires you to formulate a critical propositional argument regarding the factory; as a maker of things, or maker of culture.

*We have our factory, which is called a stage. We make a product, we colour it, we title it and we ship it out in cans.*  - Cary Grant

With the Re-Con you will experiment with 3 things; 1. how to write a brief, 2. how to build into that brief a set of relationships that you define as instrumental in the making of the project, and, 3. how much of the brief (and those relationships) are real and how much you deliberately invent to recreate a new framework for your own work.

The Re-Con should extract the ultimate essence of the precedent, then heighten, exaggerate, and reshape it. The purpose of the Re-Con is to define the relationship you intend to have with your context – how it informs you, what you take from it, and what you give back, how you locate the architect, and ultimately how you locate yourself within the work. The Re-con project is a reengineering of time and place; transforming our past and no doubt radically rewriting our present.

As usual, our precedents sit along a broad spectrum of time and place, from the highly controlled environments of factories to the more loosely organised (but no less rigorous) artist studios, and in some cases, the fictional spaces described within paintings and films. Be irreverent, intuitive and most importantly use them to ask a question that you will spend the year trying to answer. The intent of this project is to reconstruct a context for the precedent in order to speculate on its cultural influences, alongside the innovations and the legacies it provoked.

**IDENTITY / CULTURE FACTORIES**
- Typologies by Hilda and Bernd Becher
- Untitled Series by Cindy Sherman
- SESC Pompeia by Lina Bo Bardi
- The Watermill Center by Robert Wilson
- Factory, Andy Warhol in NYC
- Mnemosyne Atlas by Aby Warburg
- Facebook
- 101 Spring Street by Donald Judd
- Boite en Valise by Duchamp
- Pinewood Studios, Buckinhamshire

**PRODUCT FACTORIES**
- The Arsenale in Venice
- Olivetti Underwood Factory by Louis Kahn
- Faguswerk by Gropius
- Cromford Millin Derbyshire
- Atelier Jean Prouve
- Bata Shoe Factory in Zlin
- Fiat Lingotto Factory by Matte Trucco in Turino
- Ford Engineering Lab by Albert Kahn in Detroit
- Royal Saltworks by Ledoux in Saline de Chaux
- Novartis in Basel

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*Eleanor Dodman (2014) repairs the identity of the London Council Estate; here seen in multiple states: through the window, as a model, background, and in the four walls of her studio.*
As in previous years, much of Term 2 will be devoted to the production and making of a detail investigation that examines small pieces of the project in extreme depth as you continue to pursue your agenda at an intimate scale. The detail is not just a piece of the larger project. Rather, it is an essential statement of the project’s argument.

The identity you establish for the project and world must be translatable to the detail. This project is not simply a technical solution of an ideological project. A successful and integrated TS project will further investigate crucial questions of the thesis. Can identity be defined by and embedded within the detail, and how will your project begin to address this question? Does the full materialization or detailing of a project limit its potential for innovation, or is it possible that innovation can come from building a small piece of the vision? The speculative quality of the Technical Study will play an important role in setting a part of the project’s trajectory. We will continue to work within the realm of reality and fiction as you explore the potential of the same detail to be resolved in different contexts and scales. Central to this part of the project will be a material reworking of the thesis to explore its manifestation through this set of details.

Students are encouraged to explore inventive solutions to material, organisational and structural problems. Particular attention will be paid to understanding the various assembly and material options available to each site students are working in.

Group Meetings every 2nd week for TS5 beginning in Term 1 Week 9
For 5th years this brief will form your Technical Studies. You are also strongly encouraged to seek consultants from outside the AA to meet with a specialist in your chosen topic of exploration. 5th years will still be required to hold regular meetings with your TS tutors. At the end of Term 1 5th years will submit a 2-page TS5 proposal including a text and supporting drawings which will outline your chosen area of exploration. During the latter part of Term 1 and throughout Term 2 one of your weekly tutorials will be devoted to both the design and technical development of your project.

Georges Massoud (AA Dipl 2013) installs the hole that carves a giant void from the Diploma 9 unit space through to the Lecture Hall.

Ariadna Barthe (2014) tests the lift sequence of her megalith - here a scaled-down version of her 200m tall programless slab cut from the fabric of London. The model uses the labour of one person, while the physical site would incorporate the labour and involvement of hundreds, if not thousands; creating a participatory architecture.
DIPLOMA 9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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McQuaid, Matilda, Envisioning Architecture, MOMA, New York, 2002
Michaud, Philippe-Alain, Aby Warburg and the Image In Motion, Zone Books, NY, 2004
Seider, David, Artists’ Studio, Thames & Hudson, London, 1999
Wachsmann, Konrad, The Turning Point of Building, New York 1961 (on HTC Alonso Programme Shelf)
UNIT EXPECTATIONS

The unit is focused on the development of the individual student, as opposed to an overarching unit style or methodology. By writing a statement at the start of the year you enable early on, a critical means with which to design and assess your project. You will be in a position to outline your thesis and ultimately your specific criteria for developing and evaluating your project. While the unit does not promote an explicit formal typology, it does require that you relate your project to the larger cultural debate regarding the question of identity along a spectrum of scales from the personal to the collective, from conceptual to material; to cultivate the cultural frisson necessary for ideological evolution alongside technological advancements within the field of architecture.

How does your project sit within the overall unit agenda? What is an identity? What are your historical and contemporary precedents? How do you define your thesis in a sentence? What is the relevance of your project to our broader cultural context? Does your vision require a tabula rasa on which to sit, or does it spring from the existing context? How do you articulate the distinction between your project, its models, drawings and images? Do they each have a role to play within your body of work? How do you use the medium of the drawing to overlay the material production of identity with its more conceptual conversion? What are your technical precedents, and what is your material and structural context? Who are your collaborators?

OUTPUT

The unit goals in terms of the portfolio are extreme – students are asked to develop a single defining work to describe the universe of your work. While it is inevitable that you produce work across a range of media including images, models, books etc it is strongly encouraged that you define a single piece of work to operate as a project index. Models, plates, writings and books may still find their way within the overall folio, but they will have defined relationships with one another, as if part of a single narrative. In addition you will also write a manifesto, a written argument, and all work produced throughout the year will be documented in an A4 White Book.

We will work with writing consultants to craft the metafiction and narrative arc of the projects – to enable spaces of possibility within the texts alongside those of your images, drawings and other media. These texts will operate as the written form of your thesis. They should outline not only your intellectual ambition, but also your working concepts and tools in terms of your project development.

In previous years, the unit has defined the portfolio with 4 distinct pieces of work: the manifesto, models and artefacts, the plates, and the White Book. Recently the plates have evolved to take on more significant forms – in some cases (AV 2012) a year-long portfolio was embedded in a single image, or short film. In other cases the plates and models were the same thing (ED 2013) – thoroughly confusing the distinction between 2 and 3d, and in one case (AS 2014) the white end of year tables which you all share, became, literally, the site of a project, challenging the limitations of each form of media. This year’s work will again challenge fixed forms of media – to make elastic that which is rigid, animate the still, and inflate the flat.

The White Book will document the ongoing development of your project and thesis. What we will explore this year is the possibility that the book acts as a kind of instruction manual - outlining the concepts and forms of production for your (or your architecture’s) identity. All aspects of your work, including your related History Theory writings, if applicable, should be formatted for the book.

The Blog will serve as our expanded and off-site space of unit collaboration. We will continue to develop and maintain the unit blog at www.aadip9.net as a public forum for students, tutors, consultants and visitors to comment on student work as it happens. Each student will maintain an individual page and upload work as it is developed to encourage cross-unit dialogue, openness, and a willingness to expose both our strengths and weaknesses.
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FOR THE RECON JURY:
1. Complete the Re-Con text, drawings and artefacts. All pieces should be finished, installed, framed etc.
2. Conclude presentation with an introduction into your Thesis Proposal accompanied by A4 written abstract supported by images.

THE FACTORY: MANUFACTURING IDENTITY
1. Define initial scope of your thesis and determine what form of manufacturing your will undertake.
2. Where do you sit along the factory spectrum?
3. Develop initial response through drawing and model.
**BREAK: 20 DECEMBER - 11 JANUARY (AA CLOSURE FROM 20 DEC - 4 JAN)**

During the break: Revise Term 1 work, ensuring that all work is photographed and documented, compiled / formatted in your White Book. Book is to be printed and submitted in Term 2, week 2.

### TERM 2

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# Diploma 9 Calendar 2014-15

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**Break: 28 March - 26 April (AA Closure from 3-21 April)**

During the break: Revise Term 2 work, ensuring that all work is photographed and documented, compiled / formatted in your White Book. Book is to be printed and submitted in Term 3, week 1.

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**Term 3**

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