Abstract: The cathedral Saint-Pierre in Beauvais, Normandy, is the tallest Gothic structure ever attempted. The monument collapsed twice during construction and was eventually left abandoned after the crossing-tower fell down in 1573 just a few days after completion. Only half of the cathedral has been built, including the choir and the transept.

This project’s objective is to complete, in a contemporary and secular way, the fragmented cathedral and to re-invent its immediate urban context. In this ambitious task, history is not seen as a ‘closed book’ but valued as a complex, inspirational source for resolving major architectural problems of our time – such as the lack of urban complexity, the meagreness of public spaces, and the loss of material quality and craftsmanship – and as a mirror to understand and question our own positions.

We will be interested in the monumentality of this building fragment, caused by its odd proportionality; in the radicalism, courage and ingeniousness of the Gothic visionaries; and in the fact that the abandoned super-cathedral epitomises the abrupt succession of the experimental Gothic style by a revival of the classical style, the Renaissance.

By transforming sacred space into civic space the project taps into important contemporary questions of socio-cultural transformation and the role of architectural discourse in this. In seven preliminary experiments, students will explore issues of incompleteness, structural and tectonic innovation, scale and context, and typology and function – echoing John Ruskin’s 1849 essay The Seven Lamps of Architecture. Underpinning the work will be juxtapositions of students’ own observations at great French and English cathedrals with Gothic Revival theories, as well as consideration of other unfinished precedents like Narbonne Cathedral and Sagrada Familia.

A conceptual unit for innovators, Diploma 3 is not interested in imitating any particular architectural style. Instead, it aims for inventive, diverse and unprecedented solutions, and for architectural form as result rather than anticipated intention. The portfolio will include a large digital ‘painting’ and a substantial timber model.

The unit will be inspired and critiqued by international professionals including artists, engineers, historians, theorists and entrepreneurs.
What is it about?

Set in the Middle Ages and the 21st century, the project inhabits historic and present-day territory, underpinned by the substantial body of Gothic Revival theory produced in the 19th century.

The unit regards time as a tangle of events of continuously changing relevance to the present. History, often disparagingly referred to as merely ‘past’ should be seen as an inexhaustible database of ideas. Building airships or sailing ships in the 21st century, for example, is not a reactionary backward step, but an intelligent and sustainable solution to pressing problems of our time. One would wish architects to think more like engineers or scientists for example, in an unbiased and multi-disciplinary way.

The complex project centres around three major topics: the completion of monuments and its surroundings; the transformation of sacred into civic space; and the renewal of craft.

1) The urban monument longs for the city as much as the city longs for the monument. The unit is particularly interested in the simultaneity of the monumental object and its urban context – the extraordinary and the ordinary at the same time – and the space between them.

What were the ideas of the medieval patrons and their architects (aka ‘master masons’, Wilson p.293) when, initiated by Abbots Suger’s revolutionary design for the first Gothic structure – the choir of Saint-Denis, they started building cathedrals all over northern France? What were the reasons behind their continual race for the tallest and grandest cathedrals? What drove our medieval ancestors to push technology to the limits? Had the 153m central tower not collapsed, Beauvais Cathedral would have been the second tallest building at the time, only surpassed by St. Olaf’s church in Tallinn, Estonia.

Should a civic extension be monumental too, and how would a completed monument be perceived in the 21st century? What powers could it represent, and how could its size be justified? Or should the monumentality be opposed?

2) Transforming sacred space into civic space requires understanding the meaning behind religious typologies as well as contemporary associational practices. What’s the meaning of a cruciform plan? What is the deeper meaning of multiple towers? And what are the functions of the choir and its apse and chapels? The side aisles and triforium above? What might the contemporary equivalents to these be and how do we ‘plan and build socio-cultural meaning’ today?

Traditionally, cathedrals were not only used as places of worship but also for civic activities. The unit is particularly interested in this early model of multi-functionality. Bruce Smith wrote about the interior of St. Paul’s Cathedral, which was at time used as a market place: “The noyse in it is like that of Bees, a strange humming or buze, mixt of walking, tongues, and feet: It is a kind of still more or loud whisper.” (Peter Ackroyd, London: The Biography, p.73).

How does modern society differ from medieval society? How have our desires for civic and sacred space been transformed since then? How has culture changed since the cathedrals were conceived? And what might society look like in the near future?

3) Disappointed by the current state of craft and a wide lack of care for materiality and workmanship, the unit aims to renew interest in craft, construction and tectonics, and a new inventiveness in the making of buildings.

The unprecedented challenges of the Gothic era had a revolutionary impact on construction, building trades and related arts. New construction and building methods emerged, guilds were founded, and the organisation of building sites transformed.

The unit will be inspired by the writings of John Ruskin, one of the most influential 19th century Gothic Revival thinkers who was regarded by Richard Sennett as a romantic craftsman (The Craftsman, Chapter 3: Machines). His views on Gothic craft will help the unit find answers to questions like: What does ‘craft’ mean in times of rapidly increasing CNC fabrication? What are the opportunities and risks of CNC? How might it affect a craftperson’s self-conception? What could a future of craft and manufacturing look like?
There are few rocks, even among the Alps, that have a clear vertical fall as high as the choir of Beauvais.
John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, 1849

The Parthenon of French Gothic.
Eugène Viollet-le-Duc on the choir of Beauvais Cathedral
Teaching

The unit is aimed at the student as a creative individual – not at teaching a specific design style. This gives students a maximum of design freedom and enables them to continue and refine their personal research interests, or to try something diametrically opposed.

Students are encouraged to develop their proposals logically, not formalistically, and to support their work with a clear conception. The unit is not interested in shape as anticipated formal intention but as result of an intellectual and aesthetic process. Thorough analysis and research are key values of the unit.

The unit promotes architectural diversity and fosters students who are interested in the social, cultural or technological drivers behind shape, i.e., its reasons. It pushes for the innovative and the unprecedented, for risk-taking and for setting-off to explore new territories.

Depending on the size of the unit, we intend to see each student twice per week. Individual tutorials will mostly be with one, sometimes with both tutors. Fellow students are welcome to listen and contribute to these personal discussions.

Frequent internal pin-ups, some of them with up to two guests, will put the work up for discussion. These pin-ups will help students to understand their work better, and to train them for juries and reviews. They will also stimulate diversity.

Group seminars with guests and unit lectures will underpin the theoretical discourse within the unit. Tuition in the use of software is not intended but can be discussed if requested by the students.

Expectations

The unit welcomes students concerned with understanding the reasons behind shape and form. Students should also have a great interest in general and building history, contemporary art and the history of art. They should be interested in building materials, related crafts and tectonics, should be precise, possess rigour, will and conviction.

A great emphasis is put on physical production; this does not mean that academic work is of less importance. Students are advised to work a minimum of ten hours per day, split up into nine hours production, and one hour reading and reflection on the read. Daily reading and reflection is recommended as more efficient than longer but less frequent reading.

Although the medieval builders realised the greatest cathedrals with a bare minimum of technological and representational means – hardly any drawings survive and there was no understanding of perspective at that time – it would be irresponsible to down-play the great importance of the computer for our time-limited endeavour. This includes excellent 3D and rendering skills.
Aurum nec sumptus, operis mirare laborem – Do not marvel at the gold or expense but rather at the craftsmanship of the work.

Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis, inscription on the portal of Saint-Denis Cathedral, c. 1140

Hydro-electric power station, Reckingen, Germany, 1937-43
© 1939 Robert Bach, Waldshut-Baden
Herzog & de Meuron

ETFE roof cladding mock-ups, Beijing National Stadium, 2003-2008
© 2006 Herzog & de Meuron
Year Structure and Timetable

The year will be divided into three phases: Preparation & Concept; Design; and Production & Compilation. These phases correspond with the three terms.

The first phase will be dominated by prescriptive experimental exercises which are aimed at basic concerns of the project. This will be a rather intense time characterised by individual tutorials and pin-ups with guests. Ideally, students come up with a conception for their main project by the end of that phase.

In the second phase, the Winter Term, students will concentrate on their main project. Its brief will be indicative rather than prescriptive to allow for a great diversity of projects. The phase will be dedicated to the individual needs of the students. Individually tailored tutorials will predominate, supplemented by pin-ups with selected guests.

The third phase will be reserved for resolving and visualising the final design and for preparation of the portfolio.

A detailed draft timetable can be found in the appendix of this document. For reference, inspiration or information, there are various elements allocated to each week, for example a virtue of the week, an illustration, a recommended reference book, a film, a historic date etc.

Field Trips and Precedents

The main field trip in Week 6 will be to Normandy. The unit will visit some of the finest examples of French Gothic cathedrals including Saint-Denis – the first Gothic cathedral – Saint-Chapelle and Notre-Dame in Paris, Reims, Amiens, Rouen, and most importantly, Beauvais.

Additional daytrips will lead us to great Anglo-Norman cathedrals in England: By and Cambridge; Salisbury, Wells and Gloucester; Canterbury and Rochester. It is recommended to take binoculars to all trips for close-up observations of towers and spires, as well as laser devices for measuring.

Besides the cathedrals mentioned above, other great churches will include the similarly fragmented Narbonne Cathedral, Gaudi’s masterpiece the Sagrada Familia and his lesser known Iglesia Colonia Guell.

Contemporary ‘non-cathedral’ precedents will include Herzog & de Meuron’s Beijing Olympic Stadium and their concert hall in Hamburg (under construction), as well as buildings and projects by Enric Miralles, Simon Ungers and Valerio Olgiati.

The structure of the year will roughly look as follows:

Autumn Term (Preparation Phase & Concept Phase):

Weeks 1: Introduction week.

Weeks 2-4: Collective drawing and physical as well as digital modelling of Beauvais Cathedral.

Weeks 5-11: Seven weeks of experimental exercises along John Ruskin’s Seven Lamps of Architecture; field trip to Normandy; seminar with Nicholas Choy.

Week 12: Issue of the main brief before Christmas.

Winter Term (Design Phase):

Week 1-12: Tutoring of individual projects; day trips in England.

Week 3: Sculpting workshop with Hilary Koob-Sassen.

Spring Term (Production & Compilation Phase):

Weeks 1-8: Production and compilation of the Portfolio and the Technical Design Thesis (Fifth Years).
Exercises and Portfolio

At the beginning of the year students will pick one French cathedral each as a personal precedent. The idea is that over the course of the first term the students will become experts on ‘their’ cathedral.

After a collective survey of Beauvais Cathedral, which includes the production of simplified drawings, a digital model and – most importantly – a model at scale 1:100, made from laser-cut MDF layers, laser-cut plywood windows and 3D-prints of portals, students will work individually on seven experimental exercises during the Autumn Term.

As anticipated in the prospectus, these specific exercises will be tailored around John Ruskin’s influential book The Seven Lamps of Architecture of 1849. The exercises will run – overlapping – over two weeks each so that students will be working and thinking on two briefs at a time. Each exercise will include writing a single line aphorism similar to Ruskin’s thirty-three aphorisms in his The Seven Lamps of Architecture.

The following are draft versions of the exercises:

1. The Lamp of Sacrifice

“It is not the church we want, but the sacrifice; not the emotion of admiration, but the act of adoration; not the gift, but the giving.” Chap. I, §VIII.

This first experimental exercise will be on tectonics and the invention of a complex window. The design of the wall, in which the window is to be integrated, is part of the exercise.

Students will, individually, prepare 4no. rendered elevations in A2 format. The first elevation should show a closed wall, for example in ashlar or brickwork, concrete blocks, timber logs etc. Considering the joints or a bonding pattern is part of the exercise. The second and third elevation should show an elaborate design for a large window, one looking at the window from the outside, the other looking from the inside. The latter elevation should show glaring light and shade – this is to understand the impact on how the design is perceived under simulated real conditions. The fourth elevation should show wall and window as a ruin.

The shape of the window should be derived from the tectonic nature of the wall, and structural and constructive aspects are to be addressed. The glazing is to be ignored in that exercise. The second elevation is to be annotated in such a way that each data point, be it the start and end of a line, the degree of a radius, the start of a curve, the end of a line, the degree of a radius, the degree of a curvature, should vary in the photographs.

Students will produce 2no. A2 sized composite images, depicting a situation before and after its transformation. They will be asked to challenge the craft related to the situation’s material, i.e. stonemasonry, carpentry or bone carving. The material of the final representation will however be at the students’ discretion, as long as the way it is used is inspired by the nature of the situation.

2. The Lamp of Truth

“It is no deceit, therefore, when the weight to be borne is necessarily unknown, to conceal also the means of bearing it, leaving only to be perceived so much of the support as is indeed adequate to the weight supposed.” Chap. II, §VII.

In this typological exercise students will transform west portals of French cathedrals and study the effects of the changes applied. Means of transformation could be deformation, reduction, addition, completion, transcription, change of material or colour, change of architectural style etc. Transformations can be subtle or extreme.

The process of transformation is to be recorded in 12no. single images (portrait format). The images, arranged on 1no. A1 portrait sheet, are to be supplemented by 1no. complex and dense palimpsest-like line drawing, also portrait format, revealing the invisible behind all changes applied, including the process of proportioning elements, reference lines or frames, grids etc.

3. The Lamp of Power

“It has often been observed that a building, in order to show its magnitude, must be seen all at once; – it would, perhaps, be better to say, must be bounded as much as possible by continuous lines, and that its extreme points should be seen all at once; or […] that it must have one visible bounding line from top to bottom, and from end to end.” Chap. III, §VI.

This exercise will be about massing in the urban context. By means of abstract model studies, students will explore what role massing, proportioning and shaping plays in completing Beauvais Cathedral. This exercise will also touch on typology, for example the potential function and meaning of city towers in the 21st century.

The digital or physical models should cover the immediate context of the cathedral and, preferably, depict its intended materiality. Part of the exercise is to get a sense for how different materials and their tectonic behaviour impact on a situation.

The objective is to produce 4no. A2 photo montages, digital or manual. The artistic expression of the images is of great importance.

4. The Lamp of Beauty

“…for whatever is in architecture fair or beautiful, is imitated from natural forms.” Chap. III, §II.

This morphological exercise will be about transforming nature into architecture: A rock into a façade, a cave entrance into a portal, stalactite sforitto into a ceiling, a tree-trunk into a pillar, an alley of trees into vaults, and a large skeleton’s leg into a buttress. Constructional honesty will be of great importance.

Students will produce 2no. A2 sized composite images, depicting a situation before and after its transformation. They will be asked to challenge the craft related to the situation’s material, i.e. stonemasonry, carpentry or bone carving. The material of the final proposition will however be at the students’ discretion, as long as the way it is used is inspired by the nature of the situation.

5. The Lamp of Life

“All things are noble in proportion to their fullness of life.” Chap. V, Aphorism 23.

In Saenredam’s painting ‘Interior of Sint Bavokerk’, two dogs are fighting in the background of the church; in another of his atmospheric paintings one can see people graffitiing the cathedral walls.

In this exercise on atmosphere students will produce a series of greyscale photographs of a 1:100 interior model made from manually cut thin white card, with silhouettes of people made from black card. The exercise is about space, light plus shade, and inhabitation, but also about geometry and the projection of complex shape. Materiality is to be disregarded.

The purpose of the exercise is to invent different architectural interiors with different scenarios of inhabitation. The photographs can be taken from the same or from different positions, but they should all be taken at eye level. Daylight and shade, as well as the life inside, should vary in the photographs.
Antoni Gaudí
Iglesia Colonia Güell, inverted model of hanging weights and strings, c. 1898
© Junta Constructora del Temple Expiatori de la Sagrada Família
The production of an accurate model pattern, most likely a fold-out drawing with measurements, radii, etc., is part of the exercise.

6. The Lamp of Memory

“For, indeed, the greatest glory of a building is not in its stones, nor in its gold. Its glory is in its Age (…)”. Chap. VI, §X.

Rib vaults are an important characteristic of Gothic architecture. Considerations of prestige and security against fire were probable reasons for their introduction (Wilson p.17).

In this geometrical exercise students will be asked to compare and interpret the ceilings of one French and one English cathedral, and to transform them into a third version – a hybrid. That hybrid can be of completely different shape to the rectangular cathedrals. It can, for example, form an octagon, or a distorted polygon.

The two ceilings are to be accurately drawn, in comparative style, as a reflected plan at scale 1:100. The process of transformation should be recorded on the drawing.

The new ceiling is then to be made into a scale 1:100 plaster model. The making of the mould forms an important part of the exercise and its projected geometry is to be shown on the comparative drawing.

7. The Lamp of Obedience

“There is no such thing as liberty.” Chap. VII, Aphorism 32.

This structural exercise will help to understand the flow of loads and their influence on form. Students will be asked to investigate a typical section through a French or English cathedral by means of an inverted – flat – 1:100 model of hanging weights and strings similar to Gaudí’s legendary experiments.

The complex model is to come as close to the original cathedral section as possible. The weights needed to pull the exterior and interior silhouette lines, as well as the central thrust lines, into the right position, are to be recorded in a drawing.

Main Brief

The main brief will be issued at the end of the Autumn Term. This will give students time to mull it over during the Christmas break.

As anticipated in the prospectus, the project’s objective is to complete, in a contemporary and secular way, the fragmented cathedral and to re-invent its immediate urban context. Secular means a non-religious use and refers back to the second common use of cathedrals as markets and assembly halls. What could a future use of Beauvais Cathedral be? Could it be used for both religious and secular functions? And how could a wider definition of the term ‘cathedral’ be conceived?

Dealing with the context includes defining a position on what to do with the small Romanesque church of the 10th century, the so-called Basse-Œuvre. The church still occupies the site destined for the nave. Students will be free to amend the existing post-war surroundings or to change it radically – for example in the form of a contemporary interpretation of a historic situation. Or to make tabula rasa, meaning inventing a new neighbourhood for the cathedral which links into the wider context of the city of Beauvais.

The choice of material will be free, but students are expected to be interested in the related craft and how it can be challenged. For example, students interested in artificial stonework would be expected to also be interested in how to cast and amend blocks, and how to transport, lay and connect them. If the interest is with steel, then bolts, welds, rivets and other means of connections should be regarded as equally important.

Deliverables will include large drawings – some of them fully rendered, i.e. indicating textures and shadows; a large digital ‘painting’ depicting the completed cathedral in its immediate context; a scale 1:500 urban model with 3D-print of the completed cathedral; and a scale 1:100 model of the final proposal (the collectively made model of the existing choir and transept will be shared).

Technical Studies

There are various options for the Fifth Year Technical Design Thesis. Here are some examples:

- From point-cloud to laser-cut: the making of Beauvais Cathedral at scale 1:100.
- Surveying traceries and mouldings at Beauvais Cathedral.
- The medieval Tas-de-charge technique and its modern interpretation.
- The making of Sagrada Familia over the centuries.
- Historic and modern building techniques in comparison.

Sculpting Workshop

The workshop with Hilary Koob-Sassen is planned over three days. Students will explore, by means of sketching and sculpting, the following themes:

- The colossus as urban ornament.
- Traceries, mouldings, roses, portals, figures.
- Space as introverted sculpture.

The workshop is likely to take place at Hilary’s London workshop.
Caspar David Friedrich
Ruine Eldena, c. 1825
© Schloss Charlottenburg, Galerie der Romantik, Berlin
Andrei Tarkovsky
Nostalgia, 1983
© 1983 Rai Radiotelevisione Italiana
Beauvais Cathedral, point cloud model of cathedral and Basse-Œuvre
© 2001/2006 Columbia University, Department of Computer Science/CyArk
Reading and viewing

The reading list is divided into three categories of books: essential, recommended and further reading. Students are advised to read all essential books or chapters, and to know the content and exemplary passages of books recommended, or referred to in the timetable.

Essential reading includes Murray’s Beauvais Cathedral and Gothic Revival theorist Ruskin’s The Seven Lamps of Architecture. The latter, a comparably short and easy read, will be a key book in the Autumn Term and should be read carefully and critically. Students are advised to get the Dover edition, ISBN-13: 978-0-486-26145-4, which will make it easier to refer everyone to the same text passages.

Other French and English theorists of the Gothic Revival include Viollet-le-Duc, Durand, Pugin, Ferguson and Morris. It is recommended to read the relevant chapters in Kruft’s History of Architectural Theory – an incomparably rich and intelligent book.

Evans’ eye-opening The Projective Cast should be regarded a must-read on geometries and goes well with Kruft.

Wilson’s The Gothic Cathedral is a compact book on the most important cathedrals. Unfortunately it’s in greyscale only but Toman’s bursting Gothic: Architecture, Sculpture, Painting will compensate for this with excellent large-scale photographs. It’s worth getting the hardcover version rather than the smaller paperback.

Benevolo’s History of the City provides, with over a thousand pages in total, a feast for every architect’s eye and gives a rich and highly inspiring overview on architectural history, stretching from prehistoric to modern cities and their architecture.

The first three chapters of Frampton’s Studies in Tectonic Culture, and Deplazes’ Constructing Architecture, are inspiring reads on tectonics and material. They should be supplemented by Sennett’s The Craftsman.

Duby’s The Age of the Cathedrals is an exciting read on art and society in the Middle Ages. It is recommended to read at least chapter 2 which is on cathedrals and society. Sennett’s The Conscience of the Eye and his highly acclaimed The Fall of Public Man contribute with valuable knowledge and inspiring thoughts on early and modern society.

The Oxford Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape is a small but very helpful reference book for understanding Gothic terminology.

Gombrich’s wonderful A Little History of the World, originally written for children, is a very informative and easy read to understand the historic context. Written in plain English it is a masterpiece of concise writing. A parallel reading of the corresponding chapters in Gombrich’s The Story of Art is highly recommended.

Kasparov’s How Life Imitates Chess is more concerned with management than chess. It contains intelligent and inspiring thoughts on strategy, tactic, innovation, etc. It is not essential but recommendable.

Viewing includes Andrei Rublev, Tarkovsky’s epic masterpiece on medieval icon painting and the casting of a bell, and his Nostalghia with the famous final scene shot in San Galgano Abbey in Tuscany.

Herzog’s Fitzcarraldo is a masterpiece on risk-taking and enjoyment, and a great interpretation of a real story. It is also about entrepreneurship and dealing with failure. Heart of Glass, also Herzog, is a feature about the art of making ruby red glass.
Essential Reading:

History and Theory

Stephen Murray, Beauvais Cathedral: Architecture of Transcendence, 1989
John Ruskin, The Seven Lamps of Architecture, 1849
Christopher Wilson, The Gothic Cathedral, 1990
Rolf Toman (ed.), Gothic: Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, 1999
Georges Duby, The Age of the Cathedrals: Art and Society 980-1420, 1981, esp. ch. 2
Richard Sennett, The Fall of Public Man, 1974, part 2
Hanno Walter Kuff, A History of Architectural Theory, 1994, ch. 21-23
James Stevens Curl, Oxford Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, 1999

Aesthetics and Art

Philip Ursprung (ed.), Herzog & de Meuron: Natural History, 2005

Urban Design

Leonardo Benevolo, The History of the City, 1980
Camillo Sitte, City Planning According to Artistic Principles, 1889

Construction

Jordi Fauli, The Temple of the Sagrada Familia, 2006
Andrea Deplazes (ed.), Constructing Architecture, 2005
Steven Groarke, The Idea of Building, 1992
Alain Erlande-Brandenbourg, The Cathedral Builders of the Middle Ages, 1995

Recommended Reading:

History and Theory

Kenneth Frampton, Studies in Tectonic Culture, 1995, ch. 1-3
Robert G. Calkins, Medieval Architecture in Western Europe, 1998
Roberto Cassanelli, Die Baukunst im Mittelalter, 1995
Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, Dictionnaire raisonné de l’architecture française du XIe au XVIe siècle, 1856
Nikolaus Pevsner, A History of Building Types, 1976
Robert Venturi, Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture, 1977

Aesthetics and Art

Donald Judd, Specific Objects (essay), 1965

Urban Design

Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm, Die Dritte Stadt, 1993
Aldo Rossi, The Architecture of the City, 1966

Construction

Nick Callicott, Computer-Aided Manufacture in Architecture, 2001
John Fitchen, The Construction of Gothic Cathedrals, 1961

Practice and Management

Gary Kasparov, How Life Imitates Chess, 2007

Further Reading:

History and Theory

John Ruskin, The Stones of Venice, 1851-53
Celina Fox, The Arts of Industry in the Age of Enlightenment, 2010
Rosario Assunto, Die Theorie des Schönen im Mittelalter, 1963
Carl F. Barnes Jr, The Portfolio of Villard de Honnecourt, 2009

Aesthetics and Art

Remy Zaugg, Die List der Unschuld: Das Wahrmehmen einer Skulptur, 1980
Christopher Alexander, A Pattern Language, 1977
Essential Viewing:
Andrei Tarkovsky, Andrei Rublev, 1966
Andrei Tarkovsky, Nostalghia, 1983
Werner Herzog, Heart of Glass, 1976

Recommended Viewing:
Nicholas Echevarria, Cabeza de Vaca, 1992
Werner Herzog, Aguirre, the Wrath of God, 1972
Werner Herzog, Wheel of Time (documentary), 2003
Andrei Tarkovsky, Stalker, 1979
Andrei Tarkovsky, The Sacrifice, 1986
Andrei Tarkovsky, The Mirror, 1975

Further Viewing:
Andrei Tarkovsky, Solaris, 1972
Werner Herzog, Fitzcarraldo, 1982
Werner Herzog, The White Diamond (documentary), 2004
Werner Herzog, Nosferatu the Vampyre (interpretation of Murnau’s Nosferatu), 1979
Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau, Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror, 1922
Unit Staff

Peter Karl Becher worked for Herzog & de Meuron in Basel, Beijing (The Bird’s Nest) and London before establishing Studio Becher in London in 2007. He studied at the Städelschule in Frankfurt under Enric Miralles, Peter Cook, Mark Wigley and Cecil Balmond, as well as the SCI-Arc in Los Angeles. He has taught at Kingston University London, London Met and NTNU Trondheim.

Matthew Barnett Howland is co-founder of MPH Architects. He studied at Cambridge University and the Bartlett and has extensive teaching experience from Kingston University London, London Met, Cambridge and the University of East London. In 2004 he was awarded the RIBA Tutor Prize. Matthew will join Peter on one of two teaching days per week.

Advisors, Critics and Lecturers

Nicholas Choy, a Canadian architect, will advise the unit on Christian Architecture. He studied, with Peter, at the SCI-Arc in Los Angeles where he received his Master in Architecture in 1999. In 2007 he completed a Master of Arts in Christian Studies at Trinity International University in Deerfield, USA, with a thesis focusing on the relationship between theology and architecture. Nicholas currently resides in Oxford.

New York born multi-disciplinary artist Hilary Koob-Sassen, who lives and works in London, will run a workshop on sculpting in January. Hilary studied art at Yale University before he moved to London in 2005. He has been artist in residence at the ZKM in Karlsruhe, Germany, and the Serpentine Gallery in London and presents his music, performance, sculpture and film internationally.

Besides critics from the AA environment the unit will invite international experts from various professions: history, history of art, architectural theory, CGI making, manufacture, writing, fine arts and architecture.

Unit internal lectures will include several talks by the unit tutors such as on the Beijing Olympic Stadium roof, on making and on the Crystal Palace. Nicholas Choy will speak about cathedral typologies and their religious meaning, and the Belgian historian Dr Birgit Martens about the historic context around the year 1573 – the year Beauvais Cathedral was abandoned – with a focus on globalisation and the conception of the world at that time.

Peter Karl Becher & Matthew Barnett Howland
London, September 2010

Hilary Koob-Sassen
Filletville, marble and porcelain parts, 2008
© 2008 Hilary Koob-Sassen
Appendix 1

Image Sourcebook
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<th>Date</th>
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<td>23.07.</td>
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