THE CONTINUUM
Diploma 9 2015-16
This year Dip9 will explore context in relation to the continuum. How can a line interrupted by points, elements, events, or islands, become architecture? And how will you, as the designer of that line use it to position yourself within your cultural milieu? In a world where originality is often prized over all else, the unit asks that you use a simple line as a means to invent your architectural persona and provocatively frame and shape the identity of your world, within the contemporary stage.

Nothing comes from nothing. All ideas come from an aggregation of thoughts, experiences, and references. They are often collective, or at least coincident. And so this year, the unit will mark and stretch apart the critical points along a path that extend from past to future in order to establish the trajectory of a single project – where it comes from and what it leads to. The project itself will be understood as the very embodiment of those points along the continuum. This is intended not only to provide a foundation or grounding for a project that swings between fact and fantasy, but also will ask the student to draw the connection and legacy lines of their own thoughts and design criteria, alongside their project.


Lineage is critical. To not know where you come from ideologically, who or what you align yourself with, will leave you adrift in a sea of ambiguity. As the unit actively seeks to build individual personalities, a key aspect of this is the establishment, and understanding of your trajectory, where it comes from, where and why it converges, intersects or deviates, in order to better design one of the innumerable paths that lay before you.

The continuum enables the setting up of eccentric briefs, projects and timelines that explore the various paths possible within the unit agenda. The brief demands that you formulate your own position regarding the shaping of both an architectural and personal path within the deluge of possibility. The ambition is that you leave the unit with two crucial things: 1. an architectural question that extends beyond the academic year. 2. an architectural project that is the very embodiment of that question and is the first iteration of a response. Your year should mark the beginning of your future.

We will straddle, overlap and confound the constraints of reality with absolute conceptual innocence. Imagine an architectural time that is as vast as it is minute – all expressed through an exploration of a dot on a line. The brief asks that you speculate, invent and create a fantastical world in which to craft and produce an architecture. The context of the project, and the medium through which it is communicated will define the distinctive attributes and promise of your new world. If context means to join or weave together, then context refers both to the physical material but also to the ephemeral and theoretical conceits that make up the discipline or culture of architecture. Dip9 argues that it is architecture's discourse, not its GPS coordinates that determine its locus. The expectation is not that you make a buildable world. Rather, the thing you build will be your trajectory.

Brief: The Continuum

Marfa Redux

Miruna battled Donald Judd's concept of the fixed and permanent installation by arguing that although performance art is a fleeting event, it embeds itself within site and time as part of its record. Below, Miruna embeds the making of her project, and its presentation in Marfa alongside other art performance pieces. Above, Miruna isolates each event as a discrete (and discontinuous) island - removing them all from the ability to relate to site, and each other.
Weeks 1-7

The first project is the foundation upon which you situate your entire year's work. It will establish the ground within which you will work, alongside the connections and interwoven linkages between artefacts, people, places and events that describe and form a world. The first step in making your project will be to establish its start and end points. From there the continuum will operate as an interconnected set of self-contained worlds or moments that sit within the collective and interrelated terrain of ideas, artefacts and protagonists. Your continuum (and project) will feature an almost constant rearrangement of fictional (and factual) past, present and future architectures all leading towards the goal of describing an architecture and architect, alongside the context within which it sits. As Matthew Butcher wrote, 'the idea of architecture as a feedback machine means that the project becomes a mechanism for collapsing architecture and time into itself, thus creating a loop of endless production.' (Little Worlds, 2014)

Piranesi has long been the unit’s muse and precedent for our work. He was the first great fragment master, storyteller and reworker of space-time. In 1762 he etched the Campo Marzio and in that singular piece of work redefined the practice of describing place and space. In this one plan, he collapsed, overlaid, reworked and relocated buildings from across time, and across a spectrum of geographies to create a plan of Rome that documented the city's essence rather than its formal geographic precision. Crucially, this version of Rome is no less authentic than the real city. It's precisely this expanded form of rendering a city that we will take as precedent in order to layer what would otherwise seem like disparate, unrelated places and events together into one super coherent (and beautiful) world view.

This year Connect the Dots will ask that you: 1. establish your continuum, and 2. set points (islands) along it to establish the relationships (real or invented) instrumental in the making of your project. 3. write a text that parallels your continuum. 4. develop three islands. Each student will draw from at least 5 grains of sand from the collection on the following pages. The purpose will be for you to establish the relationships you will have with your context – how it informs you, what you take from it, how you locate yourself within it, and what you offer to those that come after you. It is this collection of fragments, that we will use as the markers of your continuum. From the individual islands of events and artefacts, you will begin the process of stitching together the terrain of your archipelago; your interrelated landscape of cultural elements that form your architectural world.

Connecting the Dots
From Island to Archipelago

From Trends to Timelines

Top Left: the genealogy of Pop/Rock music by Reebee Garofalo that makes visible the relationships between the various trends and styles. Bottom Left: Nelson Mandela's timeline as drawn and described by the New York Times. It is a subjective view of a life lived - Mandela's own view of his life's key events would no doubt differ.
Grains of Sand

Before flying back to Chicago and leaving Germany forever, Mies, who is unable to walk, watches from his car as the roof of the Nationalgalerie is lifted into place. An axe murderer kills seven people in Taliesin, and burns it to the ground. Frank Lloyd Wright rebuilds it, and 11 years later it burns again. He rebuilds. Oscar Niemeyer is denied a visa to enter the US for being a communist and, consequently, is unable to teach at Yale. A young professor named Louis Kahn is hired instead. The following year he begins work on the Yale University Art Gallery, launching his career. Piranesi dedicates Campo Marzio to his friend Robert Adam. Robert, together with his brother James, brought back to England two of Piranesi’s sketches that they later give to Soane. In 1959 Khrushchev and Nixon debated everything from American kitchens to American capitalism. Lord Burlington scribbles notes in his original edition of the four books by Palladio. In 1927 modernism is born with the Weißenhofsiedlung designed by 17 architects. In 1972 Charles Jencks declares the death of modernism as Minoru Yamasaki’s Pruitt-Igoe is demolished. Philip Glass later composes Koyaanisqatsi for Godfrey’s Reggio’s film of the same name, which includes the demolition. Gordon Matta-Clark is invited by Peter Eisenman to take part in the idea as Model exhibition. He brings a rifle and a set of photographs of housing projects with broken windows. On the afternoon of the opening he shoots out all of the windows in the gallery. Fashion imitates architecture in 2014 when Chanel turns a photograph of Barkow Leibinger’s Trutek building in Seoul into suit. Hannes Meyer spends the waning years of his career building in Mexico City. Lina Bo Bardi works for magazines in Italy but builds in Brazil. Duchamp takes a urinal and turns it into a fountain by another man. Andy Warhol tips his canvases on the floor, pees on them, calls them the Piss Paintings. By 2150, Venice and Atlantis share a similar fate. The Eameses get the wrong steel delivered to site, change their design and build the house we know today as the Eames House. Reynier Banham records his thoughts on tape while driving through LA. These recordings become his Four Ecologies. 75 years after Loos’ death, Ines Weizman reenacts his unbuilt House for Josephine Baker in Ordos, Mongolia. In the future, the phrase ‘in the future’ is understood to mean something else entirely. In 1966, Antonioni rounds up a group of AA students to film a scene for Blow-Up, in which they drive through the newly completed Economist Building by the Smithsons. Frank O’Goldberg one day changes his name and decades later steals what would have been a great building right out from under Zaha Hadid. In 1949, Philip Johnson builds a house in which to die. Architect Giangio Trissino took a young assistant mason under his wing and renamed him Andrea Palladio, in 2044 building-sized 3D printers will make copies of what cities were supposed to look like as described in old-fashioned science fiction novels. Godard’s use of the red towel in Le Mepris was thinking of was on the set of Dr. Strangelove. Tommie Smith and John Carlos raise their fists at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics medal ceremony. Bikini island was bombed and vaporized over the course of a decade. FAT engineered its own death as a means for reinvention. When candidate Nerendra Modi appeared as a hologram in rural communities in India, many believed him to be magical and voted him into the office of Prime Minister. The polka-dotted field conditions of Yayoi Kusama are an art so extreme that to produce them, she teeters between real world and installation space within her psychiatric care home. Darwin’s On the Origin of Species is the culmination of research initially launched with his observations on species similarities across the Galapagos Islands. Buster Keaton receives a one-week build-it-yourself house as a wedding present, and a train demolishes it as soon as he is finished.
In 2014–15 Felix designs a house surrounded by four mirrored perimeter walls, ensuring that the building’s reflection, and context, is always and only itself. The house continually transforms from idealised version of domesticity to a factory workspace.

From Baroque Garden to Junkyard

In 2014–15 Felix designs a house surrounded by four mirrored perimeter walls, ensuring that the building’s reflection, and context, is always and only itself. The house continually transforms from idealised version of domesticity to a factory workspace.

Drawings by Felix Brinkhege

Our forms of representation will this year be constrained to those that can operate as a sequence. Film, triptychs, graphic novels, and other forms of iterative or time-based media will be the vehicles through which we draw the continuum. We will exploit all forms of representation that draw on a before, a now, and an after. From Kiesler’s Le Larves d’Imagie d’Henri Robert Marcel Duchamp, Bosch’s Garden of Earthly Delights, to Ware’s Building Stories, from Nolan’s own distortion of events in Memento, and to Godard’s multi-layered story of the making of a film will be central precedents in our quest to mash literal with fantastical, now with then, authentic and distorted to create a spectrum of architectural truths.

Your project with therefore be drawn and assembled through a series of fragments, that when seen together form a coherent whole. Connect the Dots will see you develop the first 3 islands and by the end of Term 1 you will already have a small grouping of 5+ drawn, filmed or otherwise recorded. Each territory will have its own complete narrative and form of representation, but will also have clear linkages to some of the other islands in your archipelago. Term 2 will see a divergence between 4th and 5 year students. 5th year students will deeply invent/explore 2 islands, while the 4th years will continue to grow their world. Term 3 will see us enter into a phase by which we begin to understand the full extent of the archipelago and how the islands relate to others in the landform.

Drawings by Felix Brinkhege
Formless
“Formless is not only an adjective having a given meaning, but a term that serves to bring things down in the world, generally requiring that each thing have its form. On the other hand, affirming that the universe resembles nothing and is only formless amounts to saying that the universe is something like a spider spit.”
- George Bataille

Swamp
The quagmire of an architectural project’s space of invention. ‘Yes, though you may think me perverse, if it were proposed to me to dwell in the neighborhood of the most beautiful garden that ever human art contrived, or else of a Dismal Swamp, I should certainly decide for the swamp.’ - Henry Thoreau

Peak
“We should not judge people by their peak of excellence; but by the distance they have travelled from the point they have started.” - Henry Ward Beecher

Observatory
A building or place set apart for, and equipped with instruments for making observations of natural phenomena.

Atlas
A thematic collection of maps, drawings, illustrative plates, or large engravings.

Antecedent
An action, event or figure that happened before another and had an impact or effect.

Musee Imaginaire
‘An art book is a museum without walls.’
‘The museum was an affirmation. The imaginary museum is a question.’ - Andre Malraux

Context
stems from Latin contextus (a joining together) or contexere (to weave together).

Museum Imaginaire
An art book is a museum without walls.

Valley
“I was in Bangalore, India, the Silicon Valley of India, when I realized that the world was flat.”
Thomas Friedman

Locus
The place in which something is situated or occurs. A center of activity or concentration.

Island
And isolated group or area. A landform surrounded by water.

Relativity
A comparison, a comparative relationship; (hence) the relative position or status of two or more things; a difference, a disparity.

Line
The line is the primary element of drawing. As an element that obeys the Euclidian geometrical rules, the line exists in any two-dimensional representation of the architectural object. The line, in Euclid’s system, is one of the three basic elements – the point and the surface being the other two.

Derivative
A new work based upon, or includes aspects of, one or more existing works. Characterised by transmission, or passing from one to another.

Original
That is the origin or source of something; from which something springs, proceeds, or is derived; primary.

Museum Imaginaire
An art book is a museum without walls.

Reference
a source of information and/or influence.

Dot
‘Everything starts from a dot.’
- Wassily Kandinsky

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The technical study of the project will be devoted to the production and making of a detail investigation that examines small pieces of the proposal in extreme depth as you continue to pursue your agenda at an intimate scale. These bore holes into a aspects of your work are not to be considered extracts from the project. Rather, they are an essential aspects of the project’s continuum. They are themselves islands within the larger archipelago.

This project is not a technical solution of an ideological project. A successful and integrated TS project will further investigate crucial questions of the thesis. 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 details 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.

From Surface to Core
Georges Massoud (AA Dip 2013) at top: installed a hole that carved a giant void from the Dip9 space through to the Lecture Hall. Although it was merely a paper illusion, his TS dealt with it as a real hole.
Antoine Vaxelaire (AA Dip Honours 2013) below: pulverised a swatch of German landscape to propose a new Europe defined by latent ambiguous forms of the future rather than fixed finite ones of the past. He crunched up old historical grounds to make a bland surface ready to write on.
Reading List & Bibliography

LINE
Abbott, Edwin, Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions, 1884
Klee, Paul, Pedagogical Sketchbook, 1973
Benjamin, Walter, The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, 1936
Evans, Robin, Translation from Drawing to Building, MIT Press, 1997

CONTINUUM
Calvino, Italo, Six Memos for the Next Millennium, Penguin, 2009
Joyce, James, Ulysses, Sylvia Beach, 1922
Purves, Alex, Space and Time in ancient Greek Narrative, Cambridge University Press, 2014
Murch, Walter, In the Blink of an Eye, Silman James Press, Los Angeles, 2001
Michaud, Philippe-Alain, Aby Warburg and the Image In Motion, Zone Books, NY, 2004
McGuire, Richard, Here, Pantheon Books, 1994

ISLANDS
Ballard, JG, Concrete Island, 1974
Deleuze, Gilles, Desert Islands in Desert Islands and Other Texts 1953-1974, MIT Press, 2004
Eisenstein, Sergei, Towards a Theory of Montage, IB Taurus & Co, 2010
Rowe, Colin, Collage City, MIT Press, 1984
Plato, Timaeus, circa 360 BC.
Ware, Chris, Building Stories, Pantheon Books, New York, 2012

SWAMP
Borges, Jorge Luis, The Garden of Forking Paths, 1941
Smithson, Robert, The Collected Writings, University of CA Press, 1996
Gideon, Sigfried, Mechanization Takes Command, 1984
How We Work
Manifesto, White Book, Blog, etc.

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 context along a spectrum of scales and times from the personal to the collective, from conceptual to material.

The unit goals in terms of the portfolio are to align the conceptual ambitions of this project with its forms of representation. It is inevitable that you produce work across a range of media including images, films, books etc, alongside a single piece of work to operate as a project index. All of these forms of exploration may 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 of your project development.

In previous years, the unit has defined the portfolio with 4 distinct pieces of work: the manifesto, artefacts (models or objects), 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 in particular, as mentioned earlier in this text, your media should have further developed and taken on more significant forms – in some cases (AV 2012) a year-long portfolio was embedded in a single piece of work to operate as a project index. 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 of your project development.

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The White Book will document the ongoing development of your project and thesis. All aspects of your work, including your related History Theory writings, if applicable, should be formatted for the book.

www.aadip.net will serve as our expanded and off-site space of unit collaboration. We will continue to develop and maintain the unit blog 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.

TERM 1

| Week 1 | Mon | Diploma Presentations |
| Week 2 | Tue | Interviews |
| Week 3 | Tue | Group Tutorials - Atlas Workshop |
| Week 4 | Tue | Group Tutorials |
| Week 5 | Tue | Group Tutorials |
| Week 6 | Tue | Group Tutorials |
| Week 7 | Tue | Group Tutorials |
| Week 8 | Tue | Group Tutorials |
| Week 9 | Tue | Group Tutorials |

TERM 2

| Week 1 | Tue | Group Tutorials - Review White Book |
| Week 2 | Tue | Individual Tutorials |
| Week 3 | Tue | Archipelago - JURY |
| Week 4 | Tue | Group Tutorials |
| Week 5 | Tue | Individual Tutorials |
| Week 6 | Tue | Tutorials & TS INTERIM REVIEW |
| Week 7 | Tue | Group Tutorials |
| Week 8 | Tue | Individual Tutorials |
| Week 9 | Tue | Tutorials & TS FINAL SUBMISSION |
| Week 10 | Mon | 4th Year Previews |

TERM 3

| Week 1 | Tue | Archipelago - JURY |
| Week 2 | Tue | Individual Tutorials |
| Week 3 | Tue | Individual Tutorials |
| Week 4 | Tue | Group Tutorials |
| Week 5 | Tue | Archipelago - FINAL JURY |
| Week 6 | Tue | Individual Tutorials |
| Week 7 | Tue | 4th Year Final Tables |
| Week 8 | Tue | Individual Tutorials |
| Week 9 | Wed | RIBA External Examiners |

Events and dates are subject to change.