At the core of the AA is our five-year ARB/RIBA-accredited Undergraduate School, leading to the AA Intermediate Examination (ARB/RIBA Part 1) and AA Final Examination (ARB/RIBA Part 2) and the awarding of the AA Diploma.

The Undergraduate School also includes a one-year full-time Foundation course for those contemplating studies in architecture or associated creative fields. The focus of our undergraduates’ academic lives is our famed ‘unit system’ of study, in which students pursue year-long design projects in intensive and agenda-driven design units while also attending complementary courses in History & Theory, Media and Technical Studies.

www.aaschool.ac.uk/undergraduate
AA School
The Undergraduate School sits at the heart of the larger AA School, a community of 750 students and almost 250 teachers and staff. Two-thirds of AA students and teachers comprise the Undergraduate School. Every year nearly 85 per cent of our full-time students come to the AA from abroad, creating a setting for a global discussion, debate and exchange of architectural ideas that makes the school unique.

Students in our Undergraduate School have the opportunity to engage in an open dialogue with the students and teachers from other parts of our school – which includes the AA’s Graduate School, global Visiting School and Foundation course as well as visitors and participants in the AA’s Public Programme, a year-long programme of public events dedicated to contemporary architectural culture, the arts and design.

First Year Studio
The First Year design studio brings together students who work both individually and in groups in an open shared studio space located in the heart of the main school. Through continuous interaction with experienced design tutors and collaborators who offer tutorials, seminars, workshops and presentations throughout the year, students can begin to develop their talents, strengths and modes of working to their highest potential.

AA Unit System
Student life in the Intermediate and Diploma Schools is organised around year-long design studios or ‘units’. This innovative approach to architectural teaching and learning emphasises the development of comprehensive design projects undertaken within the setting of a single unit selected by a student at the outset of the year.

The unit system first emerged at the school in the 1930s, during a period in which the AA played a vital role in introducing modern architecture to the UK. Alongside this innovative, project-directed form of teaching, the school implemented increasingly collaborative, experimental approaches to architectural education, refining a model of open, participatory study that has since gone on to greatly influence the teaching and learning of architecture across the world.

In 2017/18 there are 16 units that make up the Intermediate School, and 15 more units that form the Diploma School. Students work in close contact with unit masters and tutors who independently set each unit agenda, aims and objectives. Unit masters work at the AA School on a part-time basis while maintaining their own practice beyond the school.

AA Agendas and Projects
Today the AA Undergraduate School is a place of unparalleled diversity, exchange and experimentation. A growing range of alternative practices, projects and forms of critical engagement offer students an unrivalled setting for the formation of young careers, agendas and future ambitions.
Students in the Undergraduate School are encouraged to pursue their own individual paths through the range of possible units and projects they are exposed to, defining for themselves the basis for their future architectural development, interests and goals. In 2017/18 unit briefs will explore the relationship between space and behaviour; design a museum to house an architectural archive; construct visionary architecture for the real world; engage with time-based constraints; collaborate with a three-Michelin star chef; define strategies to revive the architectural heritage of Tangiers; redefine an East London suburb through cinema; investigate possibilities for civic intervention from the London Borough of Lambeth to Athens; introduce sustainability into sprawling metropolises and reflect on our own urban condition; and design and build an installation for a contemporary art biennial.

AA Legacies
From Denise Scott Brown and Richard Rogers in the 1950s; to Peter Cook and Elia Zenghelis in the 1960s; and Rem Koolhaas, Zaha Hadid and many others in the 1970s, AA graduates are responsible for many of the most important, iconic architectural projects and visions of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Today’s students work hard to live up to, and surpass, the legacy of open experimentation, critical enquiry and professional accomplishment of those who have come before them.

AA graduates and former teachers are also amongst the world’s leading architectural educators – serving as deans, directors, chairs and professors at architectural schools across the world. Many have taken lessons and ideas from their time at the AA back to other countries and distant settings.

Applicants
The Undergraduate School actively seeks candidates who share our view that architecture is both a professional and cultural form of human activity, enquiry and knowledge. Applicants should demonstrate relevant prior experience, background, knowledge and skills, as well as a genuine willingness to want to work, learn and grow in a setting that demands constant levels of engagement, exchange and communication with the world’s most diverse, active and intelligent architectural community.
Inter 14 students using the AA’s green screen
Queuing for Diploma unit interviews
To me the most appealing part of the AA is the freedom it provides in pursuing your passions and interests. Its culture is warm and welcoming. And although it educates some of the smartest and most creative people in the world, the atmosphere is not as competitive as you might expect. On the contrary, people are very willing to help and learn from each other. – Caspar Schols

Caspar joined the AA School in 2016 and has now completed his First Year of the five-year ARB/RIBA-recognised course in Architecture (ARB/RIBA Part 1 and 2)
The best part of studying at the AA is the varied fields of interest that all of the units provide. Each unit has a very different focus, allowing students to engage with many different themes. This breadth of interest, along with the open nature of the school, promotes the cross-over of units where students learn from each other’s work. – Emma Fraser

Emma joined Fourth Year in 2015 and has now completed her Fifth Year of the five-year ARB/RIBA-recognised course in Architecture (ARB/RIBA Part 2)
Final jury models of Athens proposals, Intermediate 15
Jack Hardy, Diploma 7, The Old Ken Toad, photo Ping Ping Lu
3D screening in AA Cinema for Diploma 4 students
2017 Diploma Honours presentations in lecture hall
First Year
The First Year at the AA School provides students with an intellectual environment that fosters their interests and explorations in architecture and prepares them for entry to the AA's unit system in the Intermediate and Diploma Schools.

The dynamic and experimental studio encourages young architects to focus on the challenges of the twenty-first century. Throughout the year, architecture is taught as a way of thinking and designing that not only absorbs external inputs and influences but also engages with and generates particular consequences, audiences and cultures. In this way, First Year prepares students for the complexities and possibilities of the profession.

The year is organised around the combination of a design studio and complementary courses in History & Theory, Media and Technical Studies; the crossover between seminars, workshops and debates helps students to develop an individual portfolio as a comprehensive body of work that includes text, projects and speculations. When completed, each portfolio becomes the basis for moving up into the Intermediate School, which covers the second and third years of study at the AA.

www.aaschool.ac.uk/firstyear
First Year

First Year at the AA is the initial exposure to the five-year study of architecture ending with the AA Diploma. The course is not an introduction to the discipline, but the beginning of an approach to architecture as a way of thinking projectively. Every year we focus on understanding and learning about how architects have expanded the possibilities of architecture by looking at the ways in which intentions, theories and visions have found material form in past projects and buildings.

Specific topics such as form, programme, scale, experience, technology, media and communication are therefore studied and re-imagined each year within a different physical and theoretical framework. Since 2011 we have positioned ourselves in opposition to London’s physical context, looked at the abstraction of form and scales, tested the boundaries of visionary projects, adapted past procedures and precedents and explored existing living conditions. This year we will look at buildings constructed in the last 20 years, understanding them as the embodiment of ideas and theories that both affect and are affected by the discipline. Architects are improvisers with the ability to see beyond what exists (and who are aware of what has been done). They possess a distinct way of thinking visually by translating complex forces and information into new spatial inventions, and this year focuses on strengthening this essential skill. Unpredictability opens up new possibilities, and finding ways of reaching different audiences can foster new forms of communication. By investigating a variety of past projects, buildings and figures, the First Year studio will challenge students to look beyond what is apparent and to be adaptive in their thinking.

Fieldwork: Experiencing Buildings
The First Year Studio is not a physical space containing tools and equipment. Instead the physical world is our laboratory. We will learn about our present condition by looking at projects from the last 20 years and their associated contexts. From the multiple theories of architecture that arose in the mid-1990s, to the rise of digital technologies and their effect on space, to the expansion of the area of action for an architecture practice, to the role that architecture-lovers (clients, patrons) play – all of these facets of the discipline are ways that it can be experienced and studied.

Unit Staff
Head of First Year  
Monia De Marchi

Studio Masters  
Pol Castello Esteve, John Ng, Nacho Marti, Costandis Kizis, Alexandra Vougia, Sara Saleh

Studio Assistants  
Thomas Randall-Page, Patricia Mato-Mora, Delfina Bocca

Visiting Tutor  
Shany Barath
During the year we will alternate between our studio space and the world, focusing on buildings and cities in the Middle East and Asia. The First Year is constructed around six studies – each one an exercise in observation that asks students to look at one specific architectural object before re-briefing and re-imagining this work within the present world. We will search and reimagine architectural and built elements such as: tectonics as they relate to specific technologies; programmes where time-based scenarios can construct synchronicities of activities; form with extensions and adaptations of a given context; the shaping of volumes while questioning style; and the lifespan of a building and the role of complete or incomplete parameters.

Over the course of the year students will learn how to communicate and synthesise their discoveries into a personal portfolio of work, informed by various modes of writing, designing and arguing. In the First Year, reacting matters more than planning; imagining comes before experimenting; and experiencing is the basis for reinvention.
Monia De Marchi graduated from the Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia and holds an MArch from the AA DRL. She has worked on projects in Egypt and Vietnam and has collaborated in the fields of fashion and graphic design. She has taught at the AA since 2005, first within the Intermediate and Diploma Schools and since 2011 has served as head of the First Year.

Shany Barath is the co-founder of ShaGa Studio, a practice fusing extensive practical experience with technological innovation. She previously worked for UNStudio and West 8 in the Netherlands. She has taught at the AA since 2010. She holds an MSc in Architecture from TU Delft and an MArch from the AADRL.

Delfina Bocca works as architect at Zaha Hadid and has previously worked in the UK, Italy and Argentina. She holds an MArch from the AA DRL and is a registered architect in Argentina, where she completed her studies. She has participated in numerous workshops and taught at schools in both Argentina and the UK.

Pol Esteve graduated from the Escola Tècnica Superior d’Arquitectura de Barcelona in 2009. He holds a Masters in History and Critical thinking from the AA and is a PhD candidate at the Bartlett. He is the co-founder of GOIG architecture studio. In addition to teaching in the First Year he directs the AA Visiting School in Brussels.

Costandis Kizis holds a PhD from the AA, an MSc in Advanced Architectural Design from Columbia University and a diploma in architecture from NTU Athens. He has taught at the AA, Central Saint Martins and Leeds Beckett University. He is principal at Kizis Architects and has been repeatedly recognised in architectural competitions.

Sara Saleh obtained her degree in architecture at the American University of Sharjah and a holds an MArch from the AA DRL. Previously she worked for Zaha Hadid Architects (2010–17) on projects in the Middle East including Kapsarc in Saudi Arabia and on furniture/product collections such as the liquid glacial and varied Citco marble collections.

Alexandra Vougia studied architecture in Thessaloniki, Greece, holds an MS in Advanced Architectural Design from GSAPP, Columbia University, and a PhD from the AA. She has worked as an architect in New York and Athens and has taught at the AA since 2012.

Nacho Marti is a graduate of the Elisava School of Design in Barcelona and the AA. He founded his design studio in 2004 and since then his projects have been exhibited, published and awarded internationally. In addition to teaching in the First Year he is a Technical Studies lecturer and director of the Visiting School Amazon.

John Ng studied architecture at the University of Bath and the AA, where he has taught since 2011. He founded ELSEWHERE and practises architecture in London. His work has been shortlisted for, and has won, a number of international competitions.

Patricia Mato-Mora studied architecture at the AA, before studying materials at the RCA. She now works alongside artists and architects to realise large-scale projects employing various craftsmanship methods, while practising independently as an artist.

Thomas Randall-Page studied architecture at Glasgow School of Art, Aalto University and London Met. As a student he worked at 6A Architects and after graduating joined Heatherwick Studio. He co-founded Building Works Unit in 2011 and currently co-leads a design unit at Oxford Brookes University.
Intermediate
The AA Intermediate School includes students in their second and third year of studies in the AA’s ARB/RIBA-recognised five-year course in architecture (ARB/RIBA Part 1).

The Intermediate School provides students with the opportunity to work in the structure of the unit system, which covers a diversity of questions and innovative approaches to material, craft and techniques of fabrication. Explorations of cultural and social issues are often set in inspiring places around the world. In parallel to the unit work, skills are developed through History & Theory, Media and Technical Studies courses as well as Professional Practice.

In addition, students from overseas schools of architecture who wish to participate in the activities of the AA as a year away from their home institutions can apply to the AA One Year Abroad – Visiting Student Programme (VSP). Students are accepted into the programme at either second or third year levels.

Each year interested applicants from around the world apply to Second or Third Year for entrance into the Intermediate School. Alongside completion of an admissions application and the submission of letters of reference and a sample portfolio, applicants are invited to attend interviews held with AA tutors, students and staff, during which they can learn more about the school and study at the AA.

www.aaschool.ac.uk/intermediate
Tools for Architecture - Human Behaviour

What we design ends up designing us back. Intermediate 1 – Tools for Architecture – designs from the inside-out, beginning with the psychological effects of architecture, working our way towards the immediate space around the body, to how these elements of a building system can generate experience across multiple places and for different purposes.

This year we will look at the relationship between space and behaviour, focusing in ontological terms on the feedback loop that exists between us and what we design. From the first primitive hut to the International Space Station, it is increasingly difficult to draw the line between us and architecture. The boundaries get blurred. Maybe we are the architecture we design. With this in mind – and in the firm belief that before we design for others we must first understand ourselves – our investigations will emphasise how humans inhabit space and speculate on its many possible alterations.

Simulating the spatial experience in real-time using virtual digital models will give us insight into our mental and bodily understanding of architecture. Building a vocabulary that can objectively describe architectural experiences will enable us to accurately design them. Designing and resolving building systems to deliver such experiences will give us the chance to learn from the past and imagine the future of construction. And our collaborations with professionals in the fields of psychology, neurology, VR and sense-analysis technologies will give us insight into the worlds to come.

Intermediate 1

Unit Staff
Lara Lesmes and Fredrik Hellberg founded the design and research practice SpacePopular in Bangkok in 2013. After spending five years teaching and developing the school at INDA they returned to London, where they have completed installations, lectured internationally, are currently designing houses in Spain and developing research for architecture for virtual reality.
Drawingscape
A fresh alternative to the intellectual and formal mannerism associated with architectural drawings in the West since the Renaissance, Pierre-François-Léonard Fontaine’s *Drawing Model for a Music Room* explores a simple and direct way of communicating a spatial proposition. To access his vision we need not be familiar with the conventions of technical drawings, nor must we know how to read a plan or a section. We do not need to be initiated – this is a drawing that can be understood and appreciated by everyone. We must simply crease the edges to see the once flat depiction in all three dimensions. This drawing offers a certain air of mystery, especially if we compare it to sleek modern-day renderings. There is a charm in the suggestion that a room or a building may be regarded as the mere consequence of folding a piece of paper with a certain degree of care and zeal.

Honouring a long-standing tradition to work with real commissions, this year our client is Drawing Matter, a trust established by English art collector Niall Hobhouse, which over the last 30 years has put together an extraordinary assemblage of architectural drawings spanning from neoclassicism to the avant-garde, from sixteenth-century engravings to Fontaine’s nineteenth-century *Music Room* to late-twentieth-century photo collages.

Our job is to transform a site in the beautiful countryside of Somerset, southwest England, into a museum to house and display the Drawing Matter collection of more than 10,000 sketches, renderings and technical drawings, together with models, prototypes and publications. Local landmarks include the legendary estate of Stourhead, the eccentric gardens of Montacute, Alison and Peter Smithson’s Upper Lawn Pavilion and a branch of Hauser & Wirth contemporary art gallery. We will take inspiration from collection and context to create a museum like no other: a monument to architectural imagination, a sort of earthly paradise.

Unit Master
Ana Araujo is an architect and researcher interested in the relationship between architecture and subjectivity. She recently launched Donana, a design studio that explores the psychological intricacies of architectural practice while also promoting craft and historical awareness. She has published and exhibited her work internationally, including at the Milan Triennale 2017.
Self-Fulfilling Fictions

Things need not have happened to be true. Tales and dreams are the shadow-truths that will endure when mere facts are dust and ashes, and forgot. —Neil Gaiman, The Sandman

Narrative structures have often been used to mould collective dreams, lifestyles, communities and cities. Both the myth of a better future and the nostalgia of the glorious past exist as devices that help us think about and design our built environment. In land disputes across the world past and future are presented in tension with each other. But the fight between progress and tradition is not the only thing at stake. Across forests, rural grounds and the outskirts of cities lies the possibility to shape a radical alternative to our dominant consumerist culture. Could mythologies be used to shape a progressive form of future living? What would that space be like? Could mythical land and its vernacular tradition shape a new chronology of rituals and social practices?

Intermediate 3 studies how the past and the future influence, and are influenced by, forces of context and accelerating technological innovation. In more concrete terms, this year we will investigate the role of fiction – specifically time-based storytelling – to reveal the liminal borders of city and nature.

Within this fluid territory we construct worlds that are not only visionary but also part of real contexts – architectures of voluptuous forests, emerging crystal cities, primal rituals and technological mantras. We will utilise film and animation to bring our ideas to life and, in a more haptic sense, we will produce rich compositions, models and props to understand how the complex ecology of digital realities and physical realms overlap. The unit will provide technical and theoretical workshops, lectures and group conversations on fiction, the city and nature, context and architecture imagination.

On this journey fiction is not a denial of reality but its multiplier. Will these fictions ever be fulfilled? Could they be pushed far enough to become reality? If yes, then we may call them self-fulfilling fictions.

Unit Staff
Nannette Jackowski and Ricardo de Ostos are principals of NaJa & deOstos. They are the authors of The Hanging Cemetery of Baghdad, Pamphlet Architecture 29: Ambiguous Spaces and Scavengers and Other Creatures in Promised Lands (AA Publications, 2017). In 2012 they were nominated for the Iakov Chernikhov prize for young architects around the world. Nannette has worked for Wilkinson Eyre and Zaha Hadid. Ricardo has worked for Peter Cook, Future Systems and Foster + Partners. He has taught at Lund University in Sweden and was an associate professor at École Spéciale d’Architecture in Paris.
Intermediate 4

Sublime Disappearances & Savage Surges
Intermediate 4 slides between the real and the fictional to define both the emerging territories and inhabitants that characterise today’s Shrink-Age and celebrate processes of both savage growth and thinning.

After exploring the loss of our capacity to inhabit certain spaces and developments within the city, this year Intermediate 4 will address a disappearing Europe, tracking infrastructures now rendered obsolete – either stopped, abandoned or rejected – due to shifts in our environmental, cultural, economic, socio-political and ideological models. In the last two decades the ways we consume technology and approach out-of-home and leisure experiences have rapidly changed: amusement parks and squares have fallen into disuse; surges in low-cost airlines and in Airbnb reservations have changed our vacation habits and destinations while many conventional beach resorts are closing down and rising temperatures and the lack of snow are putting an end to ski stations in the Italian Alps. Moreover, past political alliances and ideals abandon undesirable construction sites while the global economy is turning European sites of production into ever emptier landscapes. These realities are symptoms of fluctuating global issues that require both our consideration and local and adaptable solutions.

Informed by the contemporary pressures that have left these places behind, we will embark on acts of speculative re-appropriation to explore new modes of inhabitation – because inhabiting is also adaptation; not only enlargement but recovery; not only constructing but dismantling. Working within the scale of architectures and infrastructures – those ‘man-made geographic systems’ that generate their own ecologies – we will consider how both natural and artificial elements can reveal the relationships between an environment and its inhabitants. By understanding architecture as an environmental construction (a hyper-place constituted by dynamic, unfinished and evolutionary situations), students will explore their fantasy.

Unit Staff
Arantza Ozaeta Cortazar and Alvaro Martin Fidalgo are founding partners of the Madrid-based TallerDE2, which develops architectural spaces in environments that connect local identity with contemporary culture. They were recognised as an emerging design talent in Europe for 2017 and Arantza was recently commended as emerging woman architect of the year.

They studied at TU Delft and the Madrid Polytechnic ETSAM, where Alvaro is now an associate professor. In addition to their work as visiting lecturers internationally and as directors in the AA Visiting School, since 2008 they have been developing a masterplan for shrinking contexts in Germany that has won numerous awards.
In 1592, as the story goes, Galileo Galilei paced back and forth at the bottom of the Leaning Tower of Pisa, stewing in the shadows cast by its 5.5° angle and deciding once and for all that he was going to knock that ancient Greek farce Aristotle off his perch. Determined, he discarded his chopine footwear and ascended the 284 steps to the top, carrying two objects of different weight in his hands. Sweating through his linen shirt and pulling at his collar ruff he gazed down from the bell tower at the ground below, his beard dangling over the iron railing. Defiantly he dropped the two objects and watched how their trajectory – along a straight line – fell to the earth at exactly the same time. At last, Aristotle’s long held theory of gravity (that the speed at which two identically shaped objects fall is proportional to their weight) was obsolete. And now an emboldened Galileo understood that the line was a means to not just challenge conventional thought but to free himself of it. With this in mind, the unit will act upon ‘lines of flight’, those trajectories which leak from and escape the systems and machines that dictate our everyday life.

Intermediate 5 will walk the 1851 Prime Meridian (0° 00’ 05.3101”), drive along the 1767 Mason-Dixon Line (39° 43’ 0” N, 75° 47’ 0” W) and set sail down the 1884 International Date Line (0° 0’ 0” N, 180° 0’ 0” W). This continues the unit explorations along a colinear slice through London that unveils the diversity of the city’s architectures, infrastructures, cultures and inhabitants at the local scale while expanding beyond the M25 towards the global scale. With time as our guide these examinations will offer a series of social, technological, time-based and sometimes playfully random constraints as catalysts for generating the central aim of each unit project – a material architectural intervention to question the mechanisms that govern our existence.

Synthesising urban exploration and design, students will translate ideas through two- and three-dimensional drawing, writing and physical models that measure time. Focusing on current social and physical contexts and technological advances, Intermediate 5’s objective is to use the fourth dimension as a line of demarcation within the built environment, optimistically altering our perception of everyday life by splintering the status quo into oblivion.

Unit Staff

Ryan Dillon has been Unit Master of Intermediate 5 since 2013 and also teaches in both the History & Theory programme and the AA DRl. He has also taught at the University of Brighton and has previously worked at Moshe Safdie Architects on projects such as the Khalsa Heritage Complex and the Peabody Essex Museum.

David Greene, born Nottingham, England, 1937, usual English provincial suburban upbringing, art school, and onto London to begin a nervous, nomadic and twitchy career, from big buildings for developers to T-shirts for Paul Smith, to conceptual speculation for Archigram, which he founded with Peter Cook. Currently, perhaps, the Provost of the Invisible University.
The Everyday Transfigured

I am a beginning.
I am a community project of individualists.
I am an attempt to create closeness without compulsion.
I am quarrelsome and obnoxious, quiet and comfortable.
I am a chaos workshop – with indisputable success.
– Kraftwerk 1, Cooperative Housing in Zurich

The notions of opportunity and freedom traditionally associated with the metropolis are shifting in cities driven by speculation. Hyper-inflated property costs in places such as Tokyo have led to a stranglehold on those forced to squeeze out every last drop of space, time and productivity. In London, a surging array of corporations have hijacked the idea of sharing, expanding for-profit models of co-living, co-working and co-riding that drive up costs. A lack of ownership would appear to set us free, inviting nomadic, adventurous, flexible and open ways of living. Often though, these are marketing ploys that disguise the nature of the relationship between business and stakeholders and ultimately tend to eliminate diversity, spontaneity and the self-organisation of culture.

This year Intermediate 6 will re-imagine housing as an architectural framework for live, work and play. We will study past and current experimental projects such as Zurich’s Kalkbreite, which combines a multitude of domestic unit types around common kitchens, baths and cultural spaces, challenging concepts of strangers and family. We will co-opt existing tendencies in London and re-orient them towards radical proposals for new types of cooperative economic, programmatic and spatial models. We will reject freedom and possessions as individual claims to be ‘conquered and defended’ and instead re-situate freedom as that which is to be experienced ‘in and as a relationship’ to others. The appreciation of conflict, diversity and differences as perpetual, desirable and beautiful will allow us to conceive of new forms of living together, setting the stage for the construction of new forms of architecture.

Unit Staff
Jeroen van Ameijde has taught at the AA since 2007 and is the director of Urban Systems, an office specialising in generative design methodologies. He has previously taught at the University of Pennsylvania and the AADRL and has lectured, published and taught workshops internationally.

Brendon Carlin, Unit Master of Intermediate 6 since 2011, is also an AA PhD candidate, director of AAVS Tropicity, and co-founder of Urban Systems. Lecturing, teaching, learning and practising architecture on six continents within a mix of institutions has kept him busy since 2007.
Intermediate 7

Material Life III – Tabula Automata
Intermediate 7 continues developing its systemic approach to architecture, looking at how forms of organisation define conditions of existence while establishing a dialogue with the external forces to which architecture must respond. The unit works along the notion of ‘applied research’, oscillating between disciplinary autonomy and heteronomy, virtual and actual modes, systems and discrete parts, material and digital forms. For us, the main objective of architecture is to organise – not to turn chaos into order but to create the conditions that allow architecture to surpass itself, reaching a higher form of elegant synthesis. Organisation is an engine.

Automation and artificial intelligence will increasingly change the built environment. New technological breakthroughs are already rendering labour redundant, maximising efficiencies in energy and material saving and improving quality, accuracy and precision. While automation makes routine activities vulnerable, AI threatens intellectual labour through a combination of mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, electrical, electronic and computational devices. Heavy industry, logistic infrastructures, retail, leisure, agriculture and transportation are all being radically changed. What is the role of architectural organisation when processes of automation render obsolete the need to organise the cycles of production in the contemporary city?

Placing itself in the future – year 2050 – Intermediate 7 will imagine a scenario of new hybrid building types where automation is fully integrated into the fabric of architecture. In turn, we will question how new technologies can change the way we experience the spaces already controlled by machines.

We will develop new ways of organising large-span mat-buildings by interrogating the interface between architecture and machinic automation. We will continue investigating the building envelopes as the boundary between internal and external forces, public and private spheres, human and non-human agencies. In particular we will develop trans-scalar material prototypes and organisational systems for testing ideas in a workshop environment. We will experiment with manufacturing processes, materials and computation.

Unit Staff
Marco Vanucci is founding director of OPENSYSTEMS Architecture, an architectural and design practice specialising in systemic design methodologies currently developing projects in the UK and the Middle East. He has taught at KTH Stockholm and has taught at the AA since 2014. He has lectured internationally, and his work has been published and exhibited throughout Europe and North America.

This year the unit will be supported by Anna Muzychak and Francis McCloskey, who will lead workshops and tutorials to help both with the development of the portfolio and its representation and with the material and computational aspects of the unit.
Intermediate 8

Politics of the Hyperwall: Snaky Lines of Densification in Mexico City

As Mexico City has grown to become one of the world’s most sprawling metropolises, its population has increased in exponential terms. The results of the city’s endless urbanisation are distressing, with an unequal distribution of infrastructure and services, both visible and invisible barriers and daily commutes that cover extraordinarily long distances. Yet this seemingly unmanaged megalopolis is rethinking itself through the new CDMX Plan that proposes to insert 40,000 new homes a year into the existing urban fabric between now and 2030. And yet the plan does not address the biggest challenge: social inclusion.

In a city dominated by its own informalty, there is a need to both articulate and reimagine the living conditions of emerging social structures beyond the assumed possible horizon of housing commodification. Intermediate Unit 8 therefore proposes a new line of densification – a hyperwall that exploits existing infrastructural, natural and socio-spatial conditions to break through the barriers that hijack the informal megalopolis. Students will make individual proposals for snaky, mixed-use strips related to city infrastructures (ranging from 1–3km long and 20 × 50m in width) with a relevant housing component for an estimated 5,000 users.

Examples of linear urban configurations – such as Ciudad Lineal by Soria, the Sotsgorod by Miliutin, Le Corbusier’s Cité linéaire, Affonso Eduardo Reidy’s Pedregulho Housing Complex, and L’illa by Rafael Moneo and Manuel de Solà-Morales – will be scrutinised to understand this urban typology. Like the Aztec deity Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent, these urban proposals will delineate sinuous linear intervals along conditions of supposed mutual exclusion – between humans and nature, politics and economy, life and death.

Unit Staff

Francisco González de Canales and Nuria Álvarez Lombardero are co-founders of Canales & Lombardero and Politics of Fabrication. Francisco studied architecture and theory at ETSA Seville, ETSA Barcelona and Harvard University, and worked for Foster + Partners and Rafael Moneo.

Nuria studied architecture and urbanism at ETSA Madrid and the AA and worked for Machado & Silvetti Associates. Both have lectured and published widely and are co-authors of Politics and digital fabrication: an ongoing debate (2017).
A Wood Ant, a Five-Year-Old and a Waffle

While architecture succumbs to the global forces of finance, efficiency and the standardisation of BIM, cuisine has evolved as the last stronghold of context. We'll continue to use the most contemporary operative form of contextualisation – foraging – as a method of discovery and designing to create a deeply resonant and particular architectural language.

Avoiding what Noma chef René Redzepi describes as the foolhardiness of attempting to transform classical French cooking into Nordic cuisine (‘How do you make a Scandinavian crème brûlée?’ he asked), we’ll similarly side-step the myriad of ‘panel’ architecture scattered around Oslo to emphasise a ‘home-grown’ idiom made up of a lot of what is conventionally overlooked. In the same way that Esben Holmboe Bang and his team at the three-star Michelin restaurant Maaemo take to Oslo and its outskirts, scouting for ideas and influences, we’ll take to the same terrain – including Lyngør Islands, the Faroe Islands and Iceland – to fill each of our own individual ‘larders’.

In collaboration with Empirical Spirits in Copenhagen, our explorations will be guided by the mysterious processes of distillation and fermentation. Through extracting essential meaning and transforming material characteristics we’ll discover unfamiliar architectural languages, move Maaemo to Ekebergparken, and create new layers of building and cultural history by tapping into the rich vein of Nordic mythology. Via radical experimentation and meticulous documentation, we’ll head into the unknown careful to avoid the intoxication of the ‘drunken God’.

In Intermediate 9 each student is a studio. While delving deeper into Oslo’s existing city fabric, our work will smell, sound, look, feel and taste like nothing the city has ever never known or witnessed. We’ll continue to emphasise drawing, stop-motion models and films that articulate the time-based nature of projects.

Unit Staff

Christopher Pierce completed his architecture studies at Virginia Tech and gained a PhD at the University of Edinburgh. He has published widely on seventeenth-century drawings, contemporary architects and buildings, and food.

Christopher Matthews is director of PMA Studio and a graduate of the Bartlett. He worked for James Stirling, Michael Wilford and Associates on projects including the Singapore Arts Centre, the Lowry and No 1 Poultry before setting up PMA Studio in 2000.

Amandine Kastler has worked at OMA/AMO Rotterdam and David Chipperfield Architects and now directs her own studio as well as the AA Visiting School in Lyngør, Norway. She studied at the AA, graduating with Honours in 2010. She was awarded multiple prizes including the RIBA Bronze Medal.
In Goethe’s 1707 poem ‘The Sorcerer’s Apprentice’, an old wizard leaves the workshop to his student with instructions to fetch water. Empowered by his newfound freedom, the novice enchants a broom to perform the chore – which it does more than sufficiently, again and again, until it has flooded the establishment. Eventually the apprentice is left with no option but to attack the bewitched besom:

‘Crash! The sharp axe has undone you.
What a good blow, truly!’

‘There, he’s split, I see.
Hope now rises newly,
And my breathing’s free.’

Cut to Milan in 1958, onto the sudden change in surface tension when Lucio Fontana slices his canvas; to a London hospital and the breathless moment when the umbilical cord between a newborn and its mother is snipped; to Baron Haussmann incising axes into the historic fabric of Paris; to another budget cut to the NHS; to the glistening cut given to a diamond in the rough; to the disturbing yet seductive slicing of the eye in Luis Buñuel’s *Un Chien Andalou*; to this academic year, as Intermediate 10 focuses on the moment and aftermath of such forced rupture.

When something is cut out of (or into) a given context, a new composition is stimulated. The initial focus will be on the existing – that which comes before us, a process not unlike the survey of a newly discovered land, species or language (bearing in mind that sometimes one must set out for India to reach America). It will be our task to establish a position that allows us to perceive, record and evaluate, only to then transform, subvert or even endorse our enticing findings with an informed design proposition. Our venture could lead to the cutting of the Gordian knot, or to the severing of the re-growing heads of Hydra – or even right back to the apprentice’s troublesome cleft broom:

‘Woe betide me!
Both halves scurry
In a hurry’

‘Rise like towers
There beside me.
Help me, help, eternal powers!’

Unit Staff
Valentin Bontjes van Beek runs vbvb studio in London, has taught at the AA since 2001 and is a professor at the Munich University of Applied Science (MUAS). He trained in Germany as a carpenter and worked as an architect in New York with Bernard Tschumi and Raimund Abraham before returning to London to practise and teach.

Winston Hampel studied architecture and design in Hamburg, Paris and Stuttgart, where he received his diploma, before graduating from the AA’s History & Critical Thinking programme. He has taught in the First Year Studio, History and Theory Studies and in the DRL. Having worked in Germany and France, he is now in a collaborative practice based between Munich and London.
Total Immersive Tour Operator 2017: Black Toxic
This year the unit will continue its exploration of toxic contexts through radical touristic speculations, engaging with urgent global environmental issues whilst amplifying the relations between body and altered natures, triggering a new consciousness towards these complex landscapes.

Following our investigations last year into the Rio Tinto mines, this year we will dive into the biggest ecological disaster in Europe: Portman Bay, located in the south of Spain, where an immense, artificial black beach is just one consolidated register of almost half a century of toxic waste disposal. Invisible and almost abandoned, Portman Bay is paradoxically adjacent to one of the most popular tourist destinations of the 1970s, 80s and 90s – La Manga del Mar Menor – and is surrounded by a delicate environmental and cultural ecosystem of beaches, religious traditions and flamenco festivals.

We will engage with these obvious tensions through immersive experiences, exploring how the body and technology can be fundamental instruments in expanding knowledge and intervening in the environment. In doing so we will adopt equally immersive design tools, from 360-degree perspectives to virtual reality, and will draw on the countercultural practices described in the *Whole Earth Catalog* to generate critical and creative responses to this hyper-contemporary black and toxic context.

Unit Staff
Manuel Collado Arpia and Nacho Martín Asunción are founders of the Madrid-based office Mi5VR. Since 2003 they have taught at various institutions such as UAH Madrid, UA Alicante and UCJC and IED Madrid. They have won several architectural competitions and regularly participate in juries, guest lectures and have exhibited their work at the Venice Biennale, RIBA London, IVAM Valencia and GD-NYU. They both obtained their PhDs from ETSAM Madrid in 2013.

Nerea Calvillo is an architect, researcher and curator. Both the work of her office, C+ arquitectos, and her visualisation projects have been widely published and exhibited. She has taught at the UEM, Alicante University, the AA and Harvard GSD. Formerly a Poiesis Fellow at NYU and curator of Medialab-Prado’s Connecting Cities Network European project, she is assistant professor at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies at the University of Warwick. She holds a PhD from ETSAM Madrid.
Isolated but Connected

The surest way to rise above prejudice, and to judge of things in their true relations, is to put ourselves in the place of an isolated man.
— Jean Jacques Rousseau, Émile, or Treatise on Education, 1762

The modern metropolis is increasingly built from faceless extrusions of stacked volumes of space and capital. Glass, steel and concrete are organised as efficiently as possible to form a commercially optimal machine for living and working. With today’s cities amplifying all the least favourable attributes of the Anthropocene and witnessing a growing interest in virtual reality and tech-fuelled, self-sustainable lifestyles, they could soon become endangered resorts of co-habitation. While a direct critique of the homogenised city would constitute a valid brief, Intermediate 12 will instead imagine its antidote – an extreme urban sprawl to reclaim the land we occupy.

Driven by simultaneous maximisation of local anchorage and a minimisation of ownership, we will start the year by creating our own ‘desert island discs’ of architecture. Our belongings and favourite memories of the city will form a kit of parts – a disordered collection of things and an instrumental bricolage for understanding our environment. A collaboration with goldsmiths will immortalise this process of collecting and will allow us to speculate on a post-digital habitat in an increasingly automated society where proximity to saturated urban centres has become questionable.

The core of the architectural experimentation for the students is mixing together local raw materials in building processes and researching traditional techniques and digital tools to blur the existing dichotomy between digital and natural. In addition to building large-scale models, we will be working with triptychs that describe a place and the project in relation to time, atmosphere and context. By bringing together sound, video or photography, physical and digital models, we will research the possibility of projects becoming speculative and layered architectural instances.

Unit Staff

Tanell Mansikkamäki is an architect and musician and has taught at the AA since 2011. He is a founder of A Geometry Office based in London. His background is in interdisciplinary media practices with an interest in sound, space and geometry. Since relocating to London he has worked with several architectural offices, including the late Jan Kaplicky’s Future Systems.

Max Turnheim is an architect based in Paris. His work focuses mainly on the relationship between architecture and its hosting regime and ranges from domestic spaces to urban projects. Notable works include La Barre, on display at the FRAC Centre (2017); the urban plan of Tirana’s Lake Park Entrance; and Maison Garder. Parallel to his practice, he has taught in numerous French schools of architecture.
Computational Ornamentation

Ornamentation in architecture has long been debated in terms of its suitability, its ability to be measured or controlled, or whether it fulfils a structural or a functional role. Intermediate 13 aims to challenge these traditional notions of ornament by looking at the way its shape, geometry and spatial qualities are driven by structural principles and by architectural use. What interests us is ornament that is inhabitable, functional and rich in information or, in other words, intelligent ornamentation.

In examining these ideas, our underlying conceptual methodology will be informed by computational design thinking, in particular shifts in contemporary design paradigms towards non-standardised architectural production and mass customisation avoiding serial repetition. Specifically, the constant evolution of digital fabrication processes – such as 3D printing and robotic fabrication – enables us to work at a pace and resolution unimaginable just a few years ago. However, the manner in which these techniques have traditionally been utilised does not address the fixity of architectural space or the linearity of building process. With this in mind, Intermediate 13 will continue to conduct research into systematic yet delicate and complex fabrication methods that can be continuously automated and reproduced to produce different architectural or non-architectural elements.

Through a series of 1:1-scale prototypes, the unit will investigate a number of design and fabrication techniques, driven by material behaviour as well as by specific crafting techniques, both digital and analogue. Through a focus on geometry and materiality, we will constantly look to pursue unique spatial formations where both internal and external experiences are informed by the specificity of applied processes. This will be achieved by using a number of computational and algorithmic design techniques, each corresponding to a unique material system. It is hoped that the resulting digital simulations will operate in constant feedback with the development of parallel material systems – an integrated model allowing computational techniques to be a fundamental part of the design process rather than merely a representation tool.
Radical Foundations in Bloomsbury

Great change is upon us and radical new foundations need to be sought. In a world confronted by unknown political, social and technological distortions, the time has come for a fundamental realignment. What is at stake is nothing less than the opportunity for world-making, in which the role of architect is paramount.

In 1692 Thomas Slaughter opened Slaughter’s Coffee House in St Martin’s Lane, which became the haunt of artists, architects, designers, players of games, makers and wasters, and home to the first radical schools of art in the Seven Dials and Bloomsbury neighbourhoods. Great Queen Street Academy, the Free Academy and St Martin’s Lane Academy were all born out of Slaughter’s and in turn they prompted the founding of Fanny McIan’s Female School of Art, Central School of Arts and Crafts, the Art Workers Guild, Felix Slade’s School of Fine Art and Saint Martin’s. Taking cues from the uniquely fertile culture that both spawns and develops great schools of art, this year you will design new foundations – a new art school in Bloomsbury.

Looking at both Slaughter’s pioneering establishment and the establishments it created, you will cultivate strategies to found your own practice – the intention is not so much to develop a school per se, as to devise a complex set of ingenious spatial interrelationships that will form a full-blown notational system for your building. Parts of the building might twitch, hum or sing you a lullaby, or spaces might be replayed over different times.

Foundations are essential elements of architecture and allow for complex shifting relationships between people and environments. Will you, as a designer, take on different roles in the design process – as an ‘editor of situations’ or ‘reader of spaces’? Beginning with the design of an aedicule composed of nine carefully considered architectural elements – threshold, foundation, wall, floor, ceiling, aperture, stair, ramp and corridor – extraordinary and radical orchestrations of elements will ensue.

Unit Staff

Shaun Murray is an architect and director of ENIAtype and holds a PhD from the Planetary Collegium, CAiiA hub of Plymouth University. He is the author of Disturbing Territories and editor of Design Ecologies, which explores the connection between human communication and ecological accountability in architectural design.

Simon Withers is a thesis tutor at the Bartlett and the University of Greenwich. He has a background in architecture, fashion, film and electronics. His research, ‘Captivating the Attention of Strangers’, radiates from the baroque architectures and landscapes of Greenwich.
The Athens Studio

Athens is a city of contradictions: a city at the centre of European identity and yet at the edge of the ‘western’ world; a city with massive influxes of voluntary tourists and involuntary immigrants; a new city that thinks it is old; a city defined as much by its amorphous sea of generic white buildings as by its perfect monuments of architecture. Above all Athens is a city in crisis. Many are looking for an economic or political solution, but the space of the city goes overlooked and under examined. It is both a city in need of immediate work and the contemporary European city that most dramatically embodies the urgent, alarming and intractable crises that face our cities today. This year we are once again immersing ourselves in this complicated context, attempting to render legible a city that is stubbornly difficult to grasp, and revealing new opportunities for intervention.

Change is most possible during times of crisis. We’re hoping to take advantage of this current moment of precarity to make projects that are sensitive to the very real constraints of contemporary Athens but also move beyond traditional logics to imagine radical alternatives to the present.

Although much has been written about the polykatoikia, the quintessential modernist building typology whose endless repetition has paradoxically resulted in an un-modern formless city, we’re choosing to focus instead on the moments of exception in the city. Architecture has the power to break the monotony, to register difference and to frame spaces of collective exchange and debate. Creating more public space in itself isn’t enough. The challenge of Athens is best approached by rethinking its civic institutions, the monuments and voids that orient us in the isotropic fabric of the city.

This year Intermediate 15 will continue to rethink the institution of the university, starting from the hypothesis that the architecture of academic institutions is uniquely able to reorganise and reinvigorate the city. We will examine how these institutions are currently manifested in Athens, identify and critique emerging models and historical precedents, and imagine radical new propositions at both the urban and the architectural scale. Only by reinventing these institutions – both their logics and their forms – can we reinvent the future of the city.

Unit Staff

Xristina Argyros is co-founder of Neiheiser Argyros, a London-based multidisciplinary architecture practice. Originally from Athens, she graduated from Princeton University and received her Masters from the Yale School of Architecture. She has worked for WORKac, OMA New York and Ateliers Jean Nouvel, has taught at Cardiff and Yale universities, and has been teaching at the AA since 2016.

Ryan Neiheiser is co-founder of Neiheiser Argyros. He holds a dual-degree in engineering and art from Swarthmore College and a Masters from Princeton University School of Architecture. He has worked for OMA Rotterdam and Diller Scofidio + Renfro, has taught at Princeton University and has been teaching at the AA since 2014.
Archaeology of the Future: Exploring Tangiers

If I said that Tangiers struck me as a dream city, I should mean it in the strict sense. Its topography was rich in prototypal dream scenes: covered streets like corridors with doors opening into rooms on each side, hidden terraces high above the sea, streets consisting only of steps, dark impasses, small squares built on sloping terrain so that they looked like ballet sets designed in false perspective, with alleys leading off in several directions. – Paul Bowles, ‘Image of Tangiers’, Autobiography, 1972

The Moroccan city of Tangiers sits at a crossroads of civilisations – the closest African city to Europe, it has supported a mixture of cultures that since the fourth century BC have included Phoenicians, Romans, Berbers, Vandals, Arabs, Portuguese, Spanish, English and French. More recently, from 1923 to 1956, Tangiers became a destination for a number of writers and artists from all over the world: Henri Matisse, Jean Genet, Paul Morand, Truman Capote, Paul Bowles, Samuel Beckett, Tennessee Williams. Today, however, the city is in danger of becoming dispossessed of its mythical past through years of rapid urban development. The city’s architectural heritage has been largely destroyed or abandoned, creating a kind of semantic gap in its residents’ abilities to comprehend or appreciate architectural reference.

This year Intermediate 16 will explore positive transformation strategies to revive this architectural heritage, similar to those we adopted in Paris last year. Undertaking a sort of archaeology of the future, students will be invited to look for the origins of forms, researching reminiscences from the multitude of cultures that once sustained the city. More specifically, each student will choose a representative existing building and will transform it into a new institution, either cultural or educational (theatre, museum, university, library, etc), with complex programmatic scenarios to allow creative hybridisation and urban renewal. These buildings themselves will have emerged out of research into four areas within the city: the medina, the Kasbah, the old city and the port of Tangiers opposite the Straits of Gibraltar. Through making large-scale models, collages and material experiments, students will learn to understand architecture’s ability to create new forms of space-making inspired by strong historical and cultural narratives.

Unit Staff
Salwa and Selma Mikou founded their Paris-based Mikou Studio in 2006. Both studied at Paris-Belleville School of Architecture and have since worked at a number of international practices, namely Ateliers Jean Nouvel (Salwa) and Renzo Piano (Selma). Since founding Mikou Studio they have won numerous competitions worldwide. In 2014 they were selected to take part in the Moroccan pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennale. Most recently they were nominated for the 2016 Arcvision Prize for women in architecture.
Diploma
The AA Diploma School includes students in their fourth and fifth year of studies in the AA’s ARB/RIBA-recognised five-year course in architecture. Long acknowledged as a worldwide leader in architectural education, the Diploma School has been home to some of the most innovative, challenging and experimental thinking in architecture.

The Diploma School offers opportunities for architectural experimentation and consolidation across a broad range of interests and teaching methods. Students work in an environment that fosters the development of creative independence and intelligence, where the aim is to marry drawing and technical proficiency to complex intellectual agendas in an atmosphere of lively and informed debate. As they refine research skills and develop proposals into high-level design portfolios, students begin to find both their voices as designers and ways of articulating their own academic agendas to carry with them into their future professional careers.

www.aaschool.ac.uk/diploma
Film City: Dagenham
Sadiq Kahn, Mayor of London, is backing plans to build what will be the city’s largest film studios in Dagenham, east London. Feasibility reports have been approved and land was purchased at the end of last year. The economic rationale of such a project is clear. Once home to the Ford Motor Company’s main European automotive plant and employing more than 40,000 workers, since the 1970s Dagenham has struggled with what is now a familiar post-industrial malaise. But with the rapidly growing film industry generating over £4bn for the UK economy, and London positioned at the centre of this activity, a new film studio – or more tantalisingly, ‘film city’ – could transform the eastern periphery.

But putting the financial and the prosaic to one side, is there a way of thinking about film and its effect on the city in more poetic terms? London is both real and imagined – a place whose architecture and spaces are nurtured by legend, fine art, literature and theatre. Film also plays a principal role in this process of myth-creation, and it this cultural dimension that we will theorise and research as a unit.

We will consider London itself as a ‘set’ and test the possibilities of experimental space and temporal use between the imagined and the real. We will visit established studios to understand techniques for creating the external within the interior and abstracting foreground from background. The unit will place particular emphasis on large-scale model-making and filming with the intention of creating alternative myths and readings of the city. Weekly screenings will include British kitchen-sink realism from the 1960s and the work of Federico Fellini with its emphasis on both Italian neorealism and the archetype.

Unit Staff
Miraj Ahmed is a painter and architect who has taught at the AA since 2000. He is also an associate lecturer at Camberwell College of Art and was a design fellow at Cambridge (2006–14).

Martin Jameson is a partner at Serie Architects. He has an AA Diploma (Hons), a BA in Philosophy and Politics from Oxford University, and an MBA from IMD, Switzerland.
The Skins We Inhabit

Humans… build to shelter and protect but… they also build to define the ontological conditions and limits of selfhood. In many ways, then, the boundaries of the forms we build become the limits of our consciousness. And if we also accept that a being’s mental states can never extend beyond those boundaries, then setting the right kind of limits is essential for who we are. —Lambros Malafouris

In the early twentieth century architecture’s longstanding allegiance to mass was increasingly surpassed by its tendency towards more volumetric principles, with interiority and structure gradually disengaging from the envelope of a building. Partially instigated by the ground-breaking curtain wall, which simultaneously defined both the limits of a building and modernism’s selfhood, design discourse shifted towards principles of top-down regularity, and composition. And so, what was initially a means of ideological expression in early modernism became standard practice in the years to come.

But in a contemporary context, what was abandoned – the idea of the envelope – has now become both the object and the subject of design: this two-dimensional plane is the last frontier of expression, allowing the unhindered realisation of architectural fantasies that are free from functional or market-driven constraints. A stylistic jungle has emerged, made up of 2D forms, shapes and sizes, in which the facade-centric self-definition of a building – how it is perceived by the city and the newness it is supposed to convey – veers between the subject of recent tragic incidences or comical aesthetic results.

Responding to this condition, the unit will question the modernist – hylomorphic – envelope-first design of buildings, shifting from an object-oriented understanding of architecture to a more procedural one, operating in the grey area where interiority and context conflate. Envelope and space will be reconsidered from a non-anthropocentric perspective, not as exercises in aesthetic embellishment, but as the new continuum between materiality, cognition and inhabitation. In this attempt to unleash architectural creativity from its two-dimensional entrapment our main questions are: how can we rethink the weak correlation between inhabitation and its defining limits? How can this rethinking be informed by contemporary material realities and a ‘hylonoetic’ process of design?

Unit Staff
Kostas Grigoriadis holds a PhD in Architecture by Project from the Royal College of Art and a Masters in Architecture and Urbanism from the AA DRL. His work focuses on new material design methodologies and draws from cognitive and materialist theory.
The Coast of Europe

The technosphere – the quasi-autonomous interrelations between humans, domesticated animals and plants, plus the energy, material and information flows that sustain them – is rapidly becoming a new paradigm of the Earth. A dynamic and volatile system comparable to the lithosphere, the hydrosphere, the atmosphere and the biosphere, it operates largely by consuming and processing fossil fuels and modifying environmental processes. It is a new intensification shaping relations between technologies, humans and non-human entities. It is an architecture in the making that influences how humans sense and affect the Earth.

We investigate through design: how can architectural knowledge intercept these processes of transformation, measure them, interact with them and form them? Fathoming, sounding, measuring and evaluating – sensing the material basis of the technosphere – involves a set of procedures that reveal how architecture today faces a shift in agency: what we thought we controlled is now becoming a vast self-organising system of geological amplitude. By sampling specific conditions of intensification, we characterise the transformations of the European project as an architecture, a physical set of processes undergoing unprecedented reorganisation.

We consider how the entry into the Anthropocene and the rise of the technosphere are transforming relations of cohabitation in the European peninsula – the stretches of land wedged between the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, North Sea, the Baltic and the Arctic Ocean. Open on all sides, the architectures shaping the contemporary European project face multiple forces and are crossed by many divergent circulations of ideas, languages, cultures, goods, information and people. They are both registering the epochal transformations in their material structures and relaying across a multiplicity of institutional, sensory, control and planning devices. The project is to envision new ways to articulate and distribute agencies of the shifting relations between material processes and institutional procedures. It is to recompose the many trajectories of the unstable European project into new territories for an open future.

Bios

John Palmesino and Ann-Sofi Rönnskog are co-founders of Territorial Agency, an independent organisation that combines architecture, analysis, advocacy and action for integrated spatial transformation of contemporary territories. Recent projects include The Museum of Oil; Anthropocene Observatory; the Museum of Infrastructural Unconscious; North; Unfinishable Markermeer; Kiruna. They are fellows at the Centre for Research Architecture, Goldsmiths, University of London, where John also convenes the MA and is a PhD candidate. He has been research advisor at the Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, and previously led the research activities of ETH Zurich/Studio Basel – Contemporary City Institute, and he is a founding member of Multiplicity. Ann-Sofi is a PhD research fellow at AHO in Oslo. She was previously a researcher at ETH Studio Basel.
Un-Rules
The game is the only serious thing worth referring to.

When you project, play. When you write, play. Suspend your critical judgment and embrace it with strength and radicalism later.
Repeat this process as many times as you can.
Leave behind all kinds of known logic and make DIY para-logics.
Abandon all kinds of parallel narratives or fictional constructions.
Develop forms of engagement with reality as it is, even though it is difficult to understand or seemingly incomprehensible. Get out there.
Stop assuming what a building or project is. Project a violent, sudden and radical action.
Cultivate a critical stance on digital tools, media and data, as a kind of technological inquirer.
Be aware of how digital technologies and their businesses have transformed the way we produce, transmit and consume cultural artefacts. Avoid relying on this commonplace as your narrative.

Stop saying ‘I’ve seen it’, or ‘I know this’. Cultivate a deep knowledge of things.
Honour construction of new materialities through amalgams or aggregations. Afterwards subject them to a process of distillation or synthesis.
Embrace a playful attitude and celebrate forms of beauty unknown or unexpected, those without conventional frames of reference – the unclassifiable.
Go technical.
And then, play. And play again, like chess players or tennis players, but play with intense seriousness and never feel inclined to laugh. At least for the time being.
This list is provisional and has only limited temporal validity.

Unit Staff
Cristina Díaz Moreno, Efrén Gª Grinda, Benjamin Reynolds

Cristina Díaz Moreno & Efrén Gª Grinda are both architects and founders of the Madrid-based office amid.cero9 (cero9.com). They are visiting professors at SOA Princeton, visiting professors in the GSD Harvard, Städelschule Frankfurt and they were in the IKA Vienna. They have taught at both ETSAM and ESA in Madrid during more than 10 years and they have been lecturers throughout Europe, Asia and the US. Their projects and writings from the past 15 years are documented in Third Natures, a Micropedia (AA Publications, 2014) and more recently in a monographic El Croquis (no 184). They recently completed the Institución Libre de Enseñanza headquarters in Madrid.

Benjamin Reynolds is a co-founder of Basel-based PA/LAC/E (palacepalace.com). He has been a fellow at the Van Eyck Academie (Maastricht), the Koneen Säätiö Foundation (Helsinki) and OMI (New York). PA/LAC/E recently won first prize in the 50th Central Glass Award (Tokyo). Their first major monograph, Paris Hermitage, was published in late 2016 with Cooperative Editions).
Meta-Elements and Integrated Morphologies

The unit will continue its disciplinary project on the city, engaging with the interdependencies between disparate domains – imagination and reality, concept and form, text and image. We assert the urgency of the evolved visionary project that is rooted in a deep knowledge of the contemporary European city and architectural history. This year we will conflate several scales and levels of work on new models for ‘dis-continuity and coherence’, tackling urban ‘meta-elements’ as architectural diagrams and morphologies.

Building upon our previous cities of multiplied utopias and artefacts, ruptured transfers, systems and frameworks and, ultimately, conceptual and spatial playgrounds in space-time, we will allow our pursuit of emerging urban models to inform new phases in the breakdown and re-integration of an architectural object itself. Our search will go beyond straightforward augmentation – of Hyper-Buildings, Super-Blocks and Meta-Streets – as we try to circumscribe and categorise architectural segments of the city. And we will also question previous shortcuts in scale and complexity – from containing diffused fields of architectural particles within mega-frameworks or variations on Arks, Babels and Arcologies, to enforcing and indexing systemic models of accumulation and growth – seeking internally coherent objects-devices that can also tackle fraught issues of monumentality and identity, agency and resilience. To do so, we will need to short-circuit current contextual demands with long-standing disciplinary pursuits – utopias and ideal plans, figure/ground and typology, diagrammatic system and formal assemblage – by exploring unlikely ‘friendships’ and mediations within the streams of precedents (from Filarete to Soleri and Koolhaas; from Boullée to Ungers and Krier). Combining creative methods and processes, we will ‘cycle’ between analysis and synthesis, creative withdrawal and critical re-engagement with the exchange platforms of the unit and the architectural culture beyond it. Emphasising aesthetic achievement and theoretical coherence (as seen in trademark ‘meta-drawings’ and final books), these catalogues of architectural ‘morphs and monsters’ will be embedded within robust Projects on the City – works that reaffirm architecture’s unique capacity to evolve and grow from within, and to effect profound change in the cities and the minds of the future.

Unit Staff

Maria Fedorchenko has been a Unit Master at the AA since 2010, where she has taught in the History & Theory Studies, Housing & Urbanism and the Visiting School programmes. She has also held teaching positions at UC Berkeley, UCLA and California College of the Art. Primarily an educator and theorist, focusing on diagram and infrastructure, she is also a co-founder of Plakat (a platform for provocations), an urban consultant and co-director of Fedorchenko Studio.
P2P: Panning to Pantopia
Among the many (r)evolutions witnessed by society, there is one that stands out as fundamental: the birth and rise of the paradigmatic twenty-first-century individual: the Panneur. Very much like its nineteenth- and twentieth-century predecessors (the flâneur and the voyeur), the Panneur embraces the totality of progress that makes up its world, optimistically believing that creative newness can only emerge from an entirely re-programmed individual. Born on the Internet, the Panneur is a native of contemporary network culture and therefore its default setting non-exhaustively includes collective intelligence, radical open-endedness, extreme diffusivity and constant ‘world-sourcing’.

As always when a new individual appears, s/he needs a ground on which to stand. For the Panneur, that ground is nothing other than the long-awaited update of our infamous Utopia: Pantopia. If Utopia (no-place) was a faraway land that couldn’t be reached, Pantopia (all-place) is the familiar ground we frenetically consume every day. Relentlessly panning over every piece of land and every byte of information, we will create the keys to an innovative future by embracing all of Pantopia’s incredible volume, velocity and variety. We will build projects on three distinct yet inseparable scales: the Land of Pantopia itself, the Individual that navigates through it, and the Machines through which we pan. Simultaneously working at all three scales, we will design hybrid portfolios and architectures that oscillate between truly sustainable built environments, dense information fields and political provocations.

Embracing the unrelenting onslaught of Pantopia, the unit will work as a multi-lingual incubator where many Pantopian ambassadors will challenge us to constantly re-think how we create, resist and leak Architectural Pantopias. In a world where we have seen it all, touched it all and are about to consume it all, the Panneur acts as the translator of the twenty-first century’s beauties and absurdities.

Unit Staff
Antoine Valexaire graduated from the AA with Honours in 2013. He has worked for several offices in London, Brussels, Zurich, Tokyo and Mexico City. In 2016 he co-founded TOI T, a Creative Consultancy studio based in Barcelona and Brussels.

Stefan Laxness is an AA graduate, architect, researcher and Project Coordinator at Forensic Architecture. His work has been exhibited at the Venice Architecture Biennale and the recent Antarctic Pavilion in Venice. He has worked in architectural practices in Paris and London and has researched the changing landscapes of China and Central Asia’s borders.
HE WHO PANS, FINDS.
Turning Clockwise to Lambeth

What role will the 32 London Boroughs play in the future of London?

After ten successful spatial insertions in Tower Hamlets and ten in Southwark, Diploma 10 will turn its attention to Lambeth where, working with situations, space, territory, abstraction, politics and the direct, we will create new types of civic insertions.

But before we insert anything into the city, we need to establish what the context for this insertion might be. Although we tend to culturally acknowledge and accept the complexity of the city’s context, we rarely apply the same reasoning when we set out to transform it. We, as users, recognise the effects that, let’s say, groups, trends, religion, terrorism and crime have on our experience of the city, but architects and city-makers rarely include these factors into their design equations. This raises the question: why not?

If these types of factors truly affect our experience of space, we need to find ways of incorporating them into our designs.

Learning from the city, we will experiment with the representation and inclusion of the city’s more imponderable factors; we will reassess, redefine context and then find ways to work with it. To do this we will deploy a random approach to the city, one that focuses on an arbitrary territory centred on a city block or an urban condition. The arbitrary nature of this approach will allow us to speculate on alternative forms of urban transformation and to experiment with new spatial configurations that include physical structures, situations and strategies.

Through a scanning process, a spatial construct, situations, architectural insertions and direct strategies, we will apply the multi-layered and hybrid nature of the city to the making of architectural space and develop appropriate methods for designing complex spatial interventions that directly affect the live realm of the city and transform Lambeth’s urban fabric.

Unit Master

Carlos Villanueva Brandt has been Diploma 10 Unit Master since 1986 and was awarded the RIBA President’s Silver Medal Tutor Prize in 2000. The varied work of Carlos Villanueva Brandt Architecture, formed in 1984, has been published widely and exhibited internationally. He is a founding member of NATØ (Narrative Architecture Today), has taught in Housing and Urbanism at the AA, was visiting lecturer/professor at the RCA and is currently a visiting professor at Tokyo University of the Arts. He has been a lecturer, critic and examiner at various schools in Britain, Europe, Latin America and Asia, has written numerous essays and his book, London +10, was published in 2010.
Architects are like children. The objects they make are the toys they use to play with and learn about the spaces and complexity of the city. While occupying a physical space, holding onto a familiar toy in her hand, a child might look out the window of an imagined house and invent a journey away from her comfort zone to the unknown. But as toys are replaced, or models become buildings, these objects lose some of their meaning, and our sense of wonder is gradually dampened.

How, then, to reignite and sustain the sense of myth that is inherent in the land where a city is built? This year Diploma 11 continues to explore ways of making familiar things unfamiliar. Taking the idea of the ‘city as space for learning and play’ as the theme of their exploration, students will look at London as both found and imagined. While unearthing the objects and knowledge that are embedded in the city and researching unrealised visionary architectural schemes for the city, we will reimagine missing pieces of architecture as the links between the imaginary and the real.

What could help us to become sensitive to the experience that city could potentially offer? As economic and political uncertainties take their toll on London’s social fabric, the unit will pay attention to the ambiguous small and playful things – the elements often most vulnerable to the forces of urban erasure.

Students will begin the year by making two types of objects. One is a toy for relearning the sensory aspects of architecture that we may have forgotten, such as gravity, balance, density, and movement. The other is an instrument for registering the landscape of the city through its textures, microclimates and other quiet expressions found in its interior. Using these objects, we will collect, collage and recompose cities with a sense of wonder and absurdity, making a journey, not unlike Alice, when she stepped through the looking glass.

As they play the city, students will write an individual design brief that speculates ways of cutting, unearthing and stitching its fabric to take it apart and reassemble its resources. Our interest is to reimagine the city as an interior, a place for all kinds of mobility where knowledge and objects are gathered, exchanged and transmitted.

Unit Master
Shin Egashira makes art and architecture collaboratively worldwide. He conducts a series of landscape workshops in rural and inner-city communities across the world, including Shanghai, Brooklyn, Tokyo and Koshirakura, Japan, and Muxagata, Portugal. He has taught at the AA since 1990 and has been unit master of Diploma Unit 11 since 1996.
World Building: Scripting Spaces

If you say in the first chapter that there is a rifle hanging on the wall, in the second or third chapter it absolutely must go off. – Anton Chekhov

Working as detectives Diploma 12 will search for the loaded rifle that will go off in the third act. We will collect examples of worlds within worlds and forensically unpick their underlying and often invisible governing rules to understand how they might unfold over time. We will look at cultural institutions, such as large-scale biannual art fairs, sub-cultural trends of music and fashion, evolving spiritual movements, political or economic experiments in alternative social models and emerging technological developments. These case studies will serve as catalysts to build worlds of our own that are carefully crafted for future communities, creating visionary architectural models that reflect their precise ideals and dreams.

In the film Zócalo the artist Francis Alÿs charts the movement of the sun across Mexico City’s Zócalo Square. Here, the central flagpole shifts from the innocent rifle on the wall to the proverbial smoking gun – as the sun rises higher in the sky the flagpole transforms into a large-scale sundial, altering how the space is performed as people take refuge in its diagonal shadow. Similarly, the unit will work with existing conditions to deploy strategically designed objects and events that test how the architect can enhance or disrupt the hidden scripts, codes, messages and instructions that provoke specific behaviours and influence how spaces are inhabited over time. We will investigate urgent trends and use them to create new architectural visions, define new emerging communities and construct critical propositions – all in an effort to channel the rifle’s bullet to hit its target or skim harmlessly past.

Collaborating with filmmakers, magicians, set designers, image capturers and trend forecasters, we will uncover new tools for capturing the elusive, dark-matter scripts to build these worlds. Choreographed scores, animated drawings and cinematic narratives will serve as time-based media for tracking our proposals as they unfold into the near future. Ultimately the goal of Diploma 12 is to sharpen each proposal to achieve the most precise aim, the cleanest trajectory, the greatest impact – to find the best possible weapon to bring about change.

Unit Staff
Inigo Minns works as an architect with storytelling, performance and curation. He exhibits his work internationally and has taught in a range of disciplines both in the UK and abroad.

Manijeh Verghese is a designer interested in communicating architecture through various media and formats. She curates the AA Public Programme, edits the website AA Conversations and teaches a design studio at Oxford Brookes University.

Francis Alÿs, Zócalo (detail), Mexico City, May 22, 1999, in collaboration with Rafael Ortega
Detail of video projection, colour, sound; 12 hours
© Francis Alÿs / Courtesy David Zwirner, New York/London
Sick City Rehab

The health of our civilisation is defined by how we institutionalise care and look after those in need. Diploma 13 calls for the urgent application of both formal, clinical abstraction and pleasurable, bodily atmosphere in architecture to interrogate the relationship between the body and the institution, and resuscitate our democracies.

Following three years of research into the NHS, the unit will now widen its scope beyond the UK to research health in other parts of the world. We will learn from and act inside other cultures, as we review the wide-reaching histories, rituals, policies, laws, infrastructures, institutions, economies and typologies of healthcare systems elsewhere. From the Hippocratic Oath and the healing powers of the temple at Epidaurus, to Cuba’s preventative healthcare model with home visits by lifelong family doctors, to the Trump Administration’s attempts to undo the Affordable Healthcare Act in the USA – the unit will question what it means to be healthy and to care for people in the contemporary city.

Addressing the most private parts of your body and the most public image of care, we will investigate problems of literal and political transparency and test forms of care across three scales: urban, architectural and detail. Rather than focusing on points of treatment such as hospitals, clinics and surgeries, our sites of interest will be potential spaces of preventative care. Working first at the scale of urban infrastructure – from housing to rivers to forests – students will intervene with a family of types that promote health in the city in unexpected ways and question existing relationships between bodies and public space. Next, by using the lens of the body, we will develop a sensuous and witty materiality in the architectural detail, emphasising its atmospheric effects. We seek an architecture so sensuous that you lean in for a kiss, as Sylvia Lavin suggests, ‘extending and intensifying architectural effects through the short-term borrowing of the partner medium’s flavour’. From these two scales of operation – the plan and the kiss – will emerge institutions of promiscuity and plurality that can help care for our sick cities.

Unit Staff

Lily Jencks is the founder of JencksSquared and LilyJencksStudio, which looks at how content-driven forms can create strong identities for meaningful public interaction through architecture, landscape and interior projects in the UK and abroad. She studied at Columbia University and the University of Pennsylvania.

Jessica Reynolds is a director at London-based vPPR Architects, which creates housing and cultural projects with a focus on communal space. She is a co-founder of the Architecture Exchange. She studied at Cambridge University and Princeton University.

Alex Butterworth graduated from the AA in 2016 and now works at 6a architects. She is also a graduate of the University of Cambridge.
Welcome to the Jungle
The Project of the ‘Void’

This year Diploma 14 will focus on the project of the ‘void’. Far from being empty, the void is everything that is not occupied by buildings or other forms of built density, and it appears to us as a ‘natural’ reservoir. This void can exist inside or outside the city, and it is often a contested territory where the tendency to enclose space for the sake of profit meets the resistance of the citizens’ desire to use it freely. The urban ‘void’ is therefore a site of struggle, between processes of exploitation and reappropriation, and perhaps the most direct testimony to the enclosure of resources that marked the beginning of capitalism.

Our project looks to address this condition by defining strategies of de-commodification that can be made visible and tangible through specific architectural interventions. In order to advance this idea we use the concept of the park as our starting point. As one of urban modernism’s most problematic figures, the park has been used to naturalise the conflictual history of urban territories. And within the modern city it has, often controversially, played the role of the ‘jungle’: a piece of wilderness enclosed by the artificiality of the city. Yet the jungle is an ambivalent allegory because the more it celebrates a primordial return to nature, the more it casts a shadow on the city as an (un)governable place in which order and disorder are no longer opposing forces but, rather, two faces of the same coin. Indeed, the image of the park as pastoral retreat is often used to hide the violence of dispossession that has produced the contemporary city.

The question of the studio will therefore be how to use the park not as an idealisation of nature and rurality, but as a territorial system that allows the reappropriation of resources and makes legible the forces and conflicts that produce our own urban condition.

Unit Staff

Pier Vittorio Aureli
Maria Shéhérazade Giudici

Pier Vittorio Aureli is an architect and educator. His research and projects focus on the relationship between architectural form, political theory and urban history. He is Louis Kahn Visiting Professor at the School of Architecture at Yale and the author of The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture (2011) and The Project of Autonomy: Politics and Architecture Within and Against Architecture (2008). He is co-founder of Dogma, an architectural studio based in Brussels and focused on the project of the city.

Maria Shéhérazade Giudici is the founder of the publishing and educational platform Black Square and the coordinator of the history and theory course at the School of Architecture of the Royal College of Art. She holds a PhD from TU Delft with a thesis on the construction of modern subjectivity through the project of public space. Before joining the AA, she taught at the Berlage Institute and BLArch Barcelona and worked on large-scale urban plans with offices BAU Bucharest, Donis Rotterdam and Dogma Brussels.
AA Museum Lab: The Manifesta Edition
The AA Museum Lab’s ongoing investigation of the role of museums and cultural institutions, their paradoxes and transformations will focus this year on the Mediterranean and its epicentre: Palermo. Selected as the 2018 Italian Capital of Culture and the venue for the nomadic Manifesta art biennale, this complex Sicilian city – once the destination of enlightened Grand Tourists; the target of severe bombing during the Second World War; home to the infamous ‘quadrangle of powers of politics, mafia, religion, aristocracy’; terminus of multiple waves of immigration; and a contemporary laboratory of global conditions – is the site of our unit project.

Aiming to reveal unknown practices of cultural production in the city and in the sites of origin/destination of its fluctuating and (at times) temporary population, students are invited to develop their thesis projects based on independent research and to articulate their findings through an expanding collection of work-books critically edited, designed and produced. Ultimately formatted in their own provocative media of choice, the individual projects will be presented in Palermo as part of a collective exhibition, an official collateral event of Manifesta.

Developed in close collaboration with Technical Studies, the choice of exhibition venue, design and construction of the installation and the analysis/manipulation of its architectural substance will be developed as a live project of the Diploma 15 ‘office’.

Innumerable abandoned and unfinished architectures that punctuate the urban landscape of Palermo – testaments to the city’s destruction, corruption and speculation – will be visited during the unit trip to Sicily to collectively choose the site of our curatorial intervention.

As in previous years, the unit programme will be enriched by numerous specialised visits and seminars. External collaborators will be invited to host regular workshops and to access the unit blog (dip15.aaschool.ac.uk) to maintain a close dialogue with the students throughout the year.

Unit Master
Giulia Foscari is an architect, researcher and author. Having taught at Hong Kong University from 2007–10, she has been a unit master at the AA since 2015. In 2014, she published Elements of Venice with Lars Müller Publishers. In 2016, following a six-year collaboration with OMA/AMO in Asia and South America, she founded her own Hamburg-based architectural practice, UNA.

Unit Tutors
Harikleia Karamali is project architect at Rare Architecture. She is an AA graduate (2014) and has been a unit tutor since 2015. She has worked at John Pawson Architects and is involved in visiting schools and workshops.

Giacomo Ardesio is an architect at OMA/AMO and was involved in Palermo Atlas, an urban study for Manifesta 12. He is also a member of Fosbury Architecture, a design and research collective in Milan and Rotterdam.
The Ecological Revolution I: Buildings as Architecture
Today, buildings are world's largest polluting agent, accounting for around 40 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions. And while science, technology and regulatory frameworks develop at lightning speed, the design of buildings evolves slowly – even as the complexity of construction and performative requirements increases at an exponential rate.

If the medium for architecture is the building, then Diploma 16 focuses on design experimentation to explore volumetric, subtractive and projective geometries and stereotomy to provoke new sensibilities beyond surface-based design techniques and outcomes or narrative experiences. The aim is to develop a regenerative and resilient architecture for our time, capable of transforming an existing situation, adaptable to future change and able to incorporate technological inventions and innovation that support resilient lifestyles and environmental technology. The challenge, then, is the design of a complex building with a particular formal, spatial, material and experiential character integrated with a positive ecological footprint in an intense and expanding urban environment of your own choosing.

The unit’s work is organised in a reiterative manner, whereby thesis, design and output co-evolve in parallel with topical research and analysis over the year in order to develop an individual architectural design repertoire, culminating in the production of a singular large-scale physical model, a singular large-scale composite drawing and a comprehensive progress document.

Unit Staff
Andrew Yau and Jonas Lundberg are members of Urban Future Organization, an international architectural practice and design research collaborative. Urban Future has won a number of international competitions and exhibited its work globally. Currently they are working on micro to macro-scale urban and architectural projects in Europe and the Far East.
Maximum Comfort

Spectacle is the sun that never sets over the empire of modern passivity. — Guy Debord

During the last decade, the rapid expansion of digital infrastructures and apps has drastically transformed our way of life, our way of behaving and our way of thinking. Self-driving groceries allow us to finally avoid supermarkets. Smart passive heating and cooling systems sense our movements and learn our living patterns for ideal temperature control. Nanotechnology is enabling continuous illumination anywhere and anytime. We enjoy the freedom to work from a distance, book a room on Airbnb in the private house of a Roman, share a car with a stranger, download a record and learn German through Skype. This is simply the way we live. What used to be the high street now comprises the nine buttons of an iPhone. In a world obsessed with the suppression of effort, this year the unit will question our current paradigm: maximum comfort.

Diploma 17 is interested in the socio-political role of architectural form. Over the past few years, we have studied the implications of information and communication technologies on occupancy. The unit strongly believes in architecture’s capacity to enact and affect participation, stimulate the corporeal experience of space and provide a framework for public life. We will explore tactics of destabilisation of the body to disrupt our normative understanding of architectural space in search of the unexpected.

The production of architecture, and to a large extent our creativity, is increasingly conditioned by norms, the industrialisation of architectural elements and the design tools we use. While numerous digital design packages and product libraries promise endless variation, the outcome is always somehow predetermined. Rejecting this condition, we will reconsider the politics of ‘the making of architecture’ to speculate on and develop sophisticated, but nevertheless affordable, fabrication strategies to counter the homogenisation of space. Rooted in socio-political issues, we will develop urban proposals through research and intense design experimentation. The unit will investigate material testing, prototyping, photography and film as a way of negotiating our ideas with the real.

Unit Staff
Theo Sarantoglou Lalis and Dora Sweijd are the principals of LASSA architects, an architecture studio based in London and Brussels. They have been teaching at the AA since 2009. They have also lectured internationally, led workshops and taught undergraduate studios at Chalmers and LTU in Sweden. Theo has taught postgraduate studios at Columbia and Harvard GSD.
Be Indigenous: The Home of Performance
Diploma 18 encourages sustainable living through a holistic analysis of the idea of ‘home’: our domain, our family, our roots, our cosmos, our collections of tools and objects, our sentience, our memory, our tribe. Your Home is Your Action: Monument Valley and the Navajo; Taliesin West and Frank Lloyd Wright; the Eames Foundation; the Art Centre College of Design; IDEAS lab at UCLA; Robert Wilson and the Watermill Center. Science is TS: the molecular scale, a science towards an architecture of particles – our bodies, our environment, our phenomena, our ecosystem. The Architect as Activist: think out of the box, off-grid, fight global warming, believe architecture is a political act, demonstrate that architecture is an ethical performance and that architecture is the platform of society. These together build The Performance.


Act 6: Time, Space, Performance.

Unit Staff
Enric Ruiz-Geli, Simon Taylor, working with Robert Wilson

Enric Ruiz-Geli is the founder of Cloud 9 office in Barcelona. He belongs to the Scientific Committee of Tecnalia. He is the architect of projects such as Villa Nurbs, Airbus FoF, Ampo Retrofitting, Audi AUFA and El Bulli Foundation. Cloud 9’s project in Taipei, H108 by Farglory, recently earned LEED certification.

Simon Taylor is a founder of the multi-disciplinary communication and design studio, Tomato. He works with institutions including the European Commission, Olympic Legacy Corp, the UN, International Expo and has exhibited work around the world.

Robert Wilson is theatre director and visual artist.
A MAN

A WHITE WASHED WOOD BOAT

A MOON

AN OPEN FRAME HOUSE

A CYPRUS TREE

"TOTEM MONTPELIER"

ROBERT WILSON 2017
Complementary Studies
Complementary Studies courses – History & Theory Studies, Media Studies and Technical Studies – form an essential part of the Undergraduate School. Through term-long courses and shorter projects, students obtain knowledge and gain experience related to a range of architectural learning. Third and Fifth Year students additionally take a Professional Practice course as part of their RIBA Part I and II requirements. These courses also provide opportunities for students from different units to come together in a shared setting.

History & Theory Studies includes courses that develop historical and theoretical knowledge and writing related to architectural discourses, concepts and ways of thinking. Media Studies asks students to consider traditional forms of architectural representation alongside today’s most experimental forms of information and communication technology. Technical Studies offers surveys as well as in-depth instruction in particular material, structural, environmental and other architectural systems, leading to technical submissions that build upon the ideas and ambitions of projects related to work within the units. Together, Complementary Studies courses enable students to develop their individual interests and direction within the school.

Please note that you cannot apply to the Complementary Studies courses independently of the five-year ARB/RIBA-recognised course in architecture, as they are mandatory components of the Undergraduate School.

www.aaschool.ac.uk/compstudies
History & Theory Studies

History & Theory Studies (HTS) courses run over all five years of academic study at the AA. They introduce students to the nature of architecture, not solely through the issue of design but also in the larger context of the discipline’s relation to past, present, future and diverse cultures. Writing is a central skill for the developing architect – at a professional level, architects are increasingly expected to describe and analyse designs and buildings in written form. In response, History & Theory Studies has renewed these aspects of the courses, enabling students to articulate their own points of view in seminars and to develop their skills in writing for course requirements.

The first three years of HTS aim to provide a broad framework for the comprehension of architecture at different levels. First Year students are introduced to a number of concepts and categories central to design. Intellectually, work in the Second and Third Years (Intermediate School) weaves what students learn in their design units into the broader questions of architecture. Through a combination of personal tutorials, seminars and lectures, the course prompts students to question the relationship of architecture to the bigger picture of politics, history and professional organisation. Students in the Intermediate School will have access to a number of one-on-one tutorials in order to develop their essays and investigate, with tutors, their broader architectural interests and goals. Drawing on work undertaken in the Intermediate School, the HTS courses offered in the Diploma School allow students to continue to develop their practice as architects, researchers and writers. As in the Intermediate School, Diploma students produce written work. However, this submission can be supplemented by drawing or with other ways of representing their discourse. Students in each year can take part in the annual writing prize, held at the end of Term 3.

A full account of courses and reading lists will be given in the Complementary Studies Course Booklet, which is available at the start of the academic year.

Unit Staff

Department Head
Mark Cousins

Department Staff
Pier Vittorio Aureli, Manolis Stavrakakis, Gili Merin (AA PhD Candidate), Dorette Panagiotopoulou, Klaus Platnergumer, Alexandra Vougia, Aikaterini Zacharopoulou, Mark Morris, Sylvie Taher, Eleni Axioti (AA PhD Candidate), Tatjana Crossley (AA PhD Candidate), Francesca Dell’Aglio, Georgios Eftaxiopoulos (AA PhD Candidate), Sofia Krimizi (AA PhD Candidate), Ryan Dillon, Costandis Kizis, Zaynab Zena Ziari, Nerma Cridge, Roberta Marcaccio, William Orr (AA PhD Candidate), Mercedes Rodrigo Garcia, Ricardo Ruivio Pereira (AA PhD Candidate), Edward Bottoms, Susan Chai, Judith Clarke, Mark Cousins, Brian Hatton, Francesca Hughes, Sofia Krimizi, Mercedes Rodrigo Garcia, Thanos Zartaloudis, William Firebrace, Mark Campbell
First Year

Architectural History

Course Lecturer: Pier Vittorio Aureli (Terms 1–2)
Course Tutor: Manolis Stavrakakis

Second Year

Architectural Knowledge

Course Lecturers: Mark Cousins (Terms 1–2), Mark Morris (Term 1)
Course Tutor: Silvana Taher

The second year examines the knowledge produced and used in architecture from a precise point of view – that of the architecture student. The course encourages students to develop an awareness of concepts and categories in architecture and ask how they work in practice.

Whether we are examining the past or examining forms of architectural representation, we ask how the move from concept to practice is achieved. Simply, this course attempts to demystify and clarify architectural knowledge.

Third Year

Buildings and Cities

Course Lecturers: Ryan Dillon and Costandis Kizis
Course Tutor: Zaynab Zena Ziari

The course will examine how a single architectural project captures the features of the city in which it is located. Focusing on a close investigation of case studies from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, each lecture will unpack how an urban context can be read and understood through its architecture exposing the social, political and cultural theories of its time.
Diploma Courses

Brave New World Revisited
Ed Bottoms
This course will explore the postwar climate of idealism that engendered over two decades of public housing projects in London. We will consider how such optimism and utopian plans translated into reality and how, by the late 1960s, these projects were perceived as part of a dream gone sour. Taking an investigative, archive-based approach, students will use a broad range of sources, including oral histories, contemporary newspapers, film and popular music.

Spaces of Criticality
Mercedes Rodrigo García
The course is designed to help students navigate their way through texts and arguments within the field of critical spatial practices, drawing on vocabularies of political theory in order to design spatial interventions. Using space as a system of critique, each meeting will concentrate on one category of space and seek to elucidate it. Categories include modernity, humanity and the post-human, critique, situatedness, sustainability, the politics of aesthetics, action and identity.

Architecture’s Truths/Architecture’s Lies
Francesca Hughes
Truth is in crisis, or so we are told. The very tenets of deductive reasoning – from the Royal Society’s code of Nullius in verba to empiricism’s ad oculus – are in question. If the cross-examination is the crucible of truth in a court of law, what are our methods for distinguishing truth from falsehood? This course considers architecture’s in-house processes for constructing and verifying its own synthetic truth indeed, its own synthetic lies. Seminars will interrogate architectural culture’s peculiar formulations of truthfulness: from truth as (typologically authenticated) origin to computed truth; from materials that lie to drawings that don’t; from veracity to virtuality and back; from the irrefutable testimonies of the transparent to the dissimulation of the (only-apparently) aleatory.

Architectures in Revolution
Ricardo Ruivo
This course looks at the history of early Soviet architecture while at the same time stimulating a critical reading of the western narrative that has emerged which tends to present this history as mythology. Our examination will confront the difficult associations that architectural discourses and practices establish with political realities.
Presentation

Mark Cousins

The course is a theoretical examination of what is culturally signified by the idea of presentation. Equally it is a practical course to allow students to reflect on and improve the way in which they present their work.

Portfolio

Silvana Taher

The course will examine the logic, history and potential of the portfolio in the life of both the student and the architect.

Learning from Learning from

Sofia Krimizi

Architects travel, and students of architecture travel to become architects. Le Corbusier listed his trips in lieu of his academic degrees. Venturi and Scott Brown turned the trip into a unit project. This course will create a genealogy of radical architectural travelling and ask how these famous trips have defined a theory of learning and a pedagogical precedent of architectural travel.

Parallax Subjects

Brian Hatton

Film can present architecture in two ways. First, by movement from shot to shot, focus to focus, vantage to vantage, it reveals space through effects of shifting parallax in time. Second, subjects in fictional movies may interact with settings in ways that expose potential and latent qualities in sites and places. The filming of architecture is here examined through the architecture of filming.

Commanding Architecture? Between Life and Government

Thanos Zartaloudis

This course considers architecture both as an experience of thought and as an experiment — a life. We will examine, through a series of close readings and discussions, writings and related architectural strategies in conjunction with the work of the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben. The central line of enquiry is: What is the power of architecture?
Diploma Thesis Option
supervised by Mark Campbell with Manolis Stavrakakis

At the conclusion of the Diploma HTS seminar programme, Fourth Year students wishing to develop their research into an extended written thesis may attend a series of seminars, workshops and tutorials delivered by Mark Campbell. These sessions, held over Terms 2 and 3, serve as an introduction to the thesis. They explore the rigorous nature of undertaking scholarly work and help students develop a topic. Students then progress the thesis over the summer between the Fourth and Fifth Years. Based on individual work as well as a series of individual tutorials, the thesis is submitted at the end of Term 1 of the Fifth Year, in line with the Fifth Year HTS requirements.
Department Staff

Pier Vittorio Aureli is an architect, educator and unit master of Diploma 14. He is Davenport Visiting Professor at Yale University and co-founder of Dogma.

Edward Bottoms is the AA Archivist and has published on a range of subjects including art collecting, cast museums and the history of architectural education.

Mark Campbell directs the MPhil in Media Practices in the Graduate School.

Mark Cousins is Director of History and Theory at the AA. He was educated at Oxford and the Warburg Institute. He is guest professor at Southeast University in Nanjing, China.

Nerma Cridge holds an MSc in Architectural History from the Bartlett and a PhD from the AA, and runs her own practice, Drawing Agency.

Francesca Dell’Aglio is an architect and writer. She holds an MA in History and Critical Theory from the AA and edits the Venice-based journal Engramma.

Ryan Dillon has been unit master of Intermediate 5 since 2013 and teaches in the AA DRL.

Mercedes Rodrigo García is an architect and PhD candidate at Birkbeck College. She obtained her MArch from Research Architecture Goldsmiths and has taught at Oxford Brookes.

William Firebrace is the author of Marseille Mix and Memo for Nemo. His latest book, Star Theatre, on planetariums, will appear later this year.

Brian Hatton has taught on many AA courses since the 1980s. He is a Graham Foundation grant recipient and was 2009 Senior Mellon Fellow at the Canadian Centre for Architecture.

Francesca Hughes was a unit master of Diploma 15 from 2004–09. She has published a number of titles and is a partner in the Hughes Meyer Studio.

Costandis Kizis is is completing his PhD at the AA. He teaches at Leeds Beckett University and has practised with Kizis Architects since 2006.

Sofia Krimizi studied architecture in Athens and Columbia University GSAPP. She has taught design studios and research seminars at the Cooper Union, Cornell University, University of Pennsylvania and the Pratt Institute.

Alison Moffett is an artist and educator. Originally from Tennessee, she obtained an MFA from the Slade School of Fine Art and an MA in History and Critical Thinking from the AA.

Mark Morris is Head of Teaching and Learning at the AA. His research focuses on questions of visual representation in the context of the history of architectural education. He previously taught at Cornell University.

Klaus Platzgummer is an architect based in London and Zurich. A graduate of the ETH Zurich and the AA, He now practises as a writer, curator and editor.

Ricardo Ruivo Pereira is a researcher, educator and architect. He is currently an AA PhD candidate.

Manolis Stavrakakis holds a PhD from the AA. He has been practising and teaching as an architect since 2005.

Silvana Taher is a writer and architect. Her writing has appeared in Publica, Blueprint and The Architectural Review.

Alexandria Vougia holds a PhD from the AA and has worked as an architect in New York and Athens. She teaches at the AA and the University of Westminster.

Thanos Zartaloudis is a reader in Law at the University of Kent and a lecturer at the AA.

Zaynab Dena Ziari completed her postgraduate studies in History and Theory at the AA. She has written for various journals on the intersection of architecture, culture and the body.
Media Studies

Media Studies is a testing ground for exploring the processes and methods involved in making architecture. Operating a diverse multidisciplinary programme, it encourages students to interrogate the tools with which we speculate, manipulate and play; compute and control; communicate, seduce and provoke. By actively testing modes of production through focused acts of doing and making, Media Studies presents a range of opportunities for students to develop individual practice and hone dexterity with both established and progressive media. As techniques and concepts in fabrication, computation and representation continue to evolve, the programme deploys a range of tools – from pencil to point-cloud – in order to both reinforce and reinvent the methods by which students approach design and architecture.

AA Media Studio
First and Second Year students are required to enrol in studio-based courses, while Intermediate Media Studies courses are open to any Third Year or Diploma student. The department staff possesses a breadth of expertise – encompassing architecture, the arts and technology – and this year’s courses address a wide range of creative media, including: hand drawing, 3D scanning, video, photography, typography, digital modelling, narrative, textiles, analogue and digital fabrication, casting, scripting, immersive and interactive media, fieldwork, curating and electronics.

AA Media Saturday School
Media Studies also offers a range of extracurricular, weekend workshops and courses for students to develop new skills and working methods to support their studio projects.

Labs
Working with the AA Computer Lab, Media Studies offers a range of one-day software courses allowing students to quickly grasp fundamental techniques in major digital applications for architecture.

Unit Staff

**Department Head**
Kate Davies

**Department Staff**
Projection and Speculation, Miraj Ahmed
Architectural drawings are tools that enable a series of exploratory steps that lead to the physical building of propositions. The course will build your knowledge of 2D and 3D orthographic projection and the importance of precision as a tool for the imagination, moving from the measured re-drawing of an existing architectural precedent towards transformations and invented possibilities expressed through architectural drawing and other media.

Peripheral Landscapes, Sue Barr
This course uses digital photography to examine peripheral landscapes where urban and suburban landscapes are equally complex and mysterious, and the photograph is only discovered through committed observation.

Translation of Objects through Drawing, Shin Egashira
The course explores the unfamiliarities of familiar objects by cutting, splicing, hacking and reassembling through drawing, physical modelling and collaging. Alternating between cutting, drawing and describing, the course introduces the ambiguity between forms of representation and forms of designing.

The Body as a Site, Juliet Haysom
This course examines the idea of the survey. Using observational techniques, historical and contemporary measuring devices and their own invented apparatus, students will identify and record salient quantities and qualities of a body in the form of 1:1 drawings.

Seeing Your Way to Draw, Anderson Inge
This course is defined by looking and drawing, and in turn, exercising a language for both. Each session has a distinct theme and covers powerful approaches and techniques in drawing. Sessions take place in nearby national collections. Each begins with a short talk or demonstration, with the bulk of our time spent actively working through exercises proven to develop evocative drawing.

Materiality of Colour, Antoni Malinowski
This course focuses on the potential of colour in creating/manipulating space. Students will be introduced to the materiality of pure pigments with the focus on colour as micro-structure. Students will be encouraged to create their own distinctive notational system sensitive to space, time, light and the characteristics of materials.

Sonic Geometry, Taneli Mansikkamäki
Focusing on visualising three-dimensional sonic data from frequencies to field recordings, we will work with 3D software to propose audio visual compositions and notations that carry the dynamics and context of the
collected sounds. This sonic arrangement will accompany the final geometric visualisation by further strengthening our understanding of a proposed space, place and the context within.

The Drawn Mistake, Alison Moffett
This course will convert an investigation into space into a way of thinking about drawing. By looking at examples and techniques, including different drawing tools, blind drawing, reconfiguring shapes and collage, and the trace left through action, we will create individual drawings that capture the magic of opposition.

One-Minute Animation, Joel Newman
In four sessions students will make an animated gif and a 1500 frame (one minute) animation with original soundtrack. The gif will focus on the individual as the subject. For the animation, all methods of production will be considered but stop-motion will be emphasised.

The Knowhow Series – Hooke Park, Emmanuel Vercruysse
This course is an optional addition (not assessed) to your required Media Studies courses, and places will be allocated separately from the main course registration. The Knowhow Series is a sequence of hands-on experimental workshops held in the forest at the AA’s campus in Dorset. The workshops aim to provide an in-depth exploration of the exciting facilities of Hooke Park, which act as a laboratory for architectural research through 1:1 fabrication. We will investigate a diverse set of fabrication methods and technologies to make components for a permanent feature at Hooke Park. We will also venture out of the lab, immersing ourselves in the idyllic forest and learn about the different species that make up this ecosystem, which forms both our material library and our site.

First Year, Term 2

Concept Emergence, Sebastian Andia
Students will engage with digital drafting and crafting of concept drawings, learning both polygon modelling and digital prototyping so as to develop their own ideas into final prototypes. The course uses Polygon Modelling (Autodesk Maya) as the main drafting tool.

Collaborative Transformations, Kasper Ax, Thomas Tørslev Jensen
This course pushes beyond the conventional understanding of architecture as a linear process to explore the collaborative potential of design. Through separate but interconnected exercises, design artefacts will pass from one designer to the next, gradually transforming from simple everyday objects into reinterpreted architectural designs. The course introduces digital drafting, 3D modelling, visualisation and prototyping.
**Ordinary Domesticity, Flavien Menu**

What makes a space a place? Taking inspiration from Georges Perec’s *Species of Spaces*, we will explore everyday situations – from a windowsill, to the kitchen wall, to vaulted ceilings – to observe how these uncanny details instill ideas of comfort and domesticity or provoke malaise and irritation. We will explore and experiment with this wide range of sensations, all found in our daily life.

**Stuff, Inigo Minns**

This course explores the fundamental qualities of everyday materials. Taking familiar materials in their raw form, we will misuse and abuse them and develop 1:1 details that force new readings and interpretations of often overlooked substances and products. The end result will be a design that considers both the material qualities investigated as well as their application and spatial impacts.

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**Continued from Term 1**

*Translation of Objects Through Drawing, Shin Egashira*

*The Body within a Site, Juliet Haysom*

*Materiality of Colour, Antoni Malinowski*

*Sonic Geometry, Taneli Mansikkamäki*

*The Drawn Mistake, Alison Moffett*

*The Knowhow Series, Hooke Park, Emmanuel Vercruysse*

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**Second Year, Term 1**

**Shapes of Fiction, Charles Arsène-Henry**

In 1897 Stéphane Mallarmé discovered the multiverse in the form of a poem. Equipped with metafictional instruments you will enter and adapt it as if reanimating an abandoned spaceship. Meta: a state of fiction in which operations – tropic movements, scopic shifts, transitions, speeds, etc – are entities equal to heroic characters.

**Dada-Digital IV, Kasper Ax, Thomas Tørslev Jensen**

Inspired by the dada movement, where 3D objects were reinterpreted as purely expressive spatial artefacts, this course opens up creativity through computational means. We will reinvent everyday objects as architectural components, transforming them into spatially complex constellations through plug-ins and visualisation techniques. This year will focus on 3D printing and associated modelling and preparation techniques.
**Seeing Slowly: Photographic Typologies, Sue Barr**
Throughout its history photography has been used to classify the world and its people. We will use 35mm colour analogue photography (shooting just one roll of film per week) to investigate typologies of the everyday - objects and events that ordinarily escape our notice but are revealed through the photographic process. The course will introduce students to the technical aspects of camera controls and to aesthetic and conceptual issues in photography.

**The Household Glitch Mounted Regiment, Oliviu Lugojan-Ghenciu**
The Motion Studio is the AA's time-based media and digital storytelling garage. This year’s course addresses the field of augmented reality (AR). For their structure architectural tectonics no longer rely on matter but on imagination and narrative. And ‘world building’ now happens in our pockets, accessible through the successful marriage of an LCD screen and the camera lens on the opposite side of our AR-enabled devices.

**Drawing in the Nation’s Cupboards, Anderson Inge**
This course draws on the cultural and visual richness of world-class collections and archives near the AA. Weekly sessions entail drawing from observation and discussions about seeing and drawing the range of materials, form and space. An independent study provides opportunities to apply techniques to unit work.

**Painting Architecture, Alex Kaiser**
By bridging and exploiting the space between hand-drawn and computer-aided representation, this course remixes an aggregation of drawings at a high speed, using digital collage, line drawing and rendering techniques. Later in the course, large-scale compositions are constructed to allow investigations of new types of spaces, typologies and landscapes.

**Stuff, Inigo Minns**
This course explores the fundamental qualities of everyday materials. Taking familiar materials in their raw form, we will misuse and abuse them and develop 1:1 details that force new readings and interpretations of often overlooked substances and products. The end result will be a design that considers both the material qualities investigated as well as their applications and spatial impacts.

**Making Fictions, Nicholas Mortimer and Joseph Popper**
This course makes objects and scenes at 1:1 scale with a hands-on approach to prototyping ideas. We will create engaging imagery and films using simple materials, exploring how we can communicate complex ideas through visual narratives. Our emphasis is on production, play and iteration while introducing critical and speculative design methods for exploring wider scenarios.
**Forest Forensics, Mara Kanthak and Thomas Pearce**
This course will stage a forensic dialogue between Hooke Park and Bedford Square, the former as a landscape of fabricated truth, the latter as a lab for the analysis and production of its evidence. We will introduce 3D Lidar and photogrammetric scanning, mesh/NURBS modelling and digital fabrication, enabling students to use digitised natural geometry as a projection plane for meaning by designing and fabricating sub-millimetre accurate surgical incisions into found fabric.

**Printed Matter, Caroline Rabourdin**
Taking its name from a New York bookshop dedicated to artists’ books, their dissemination and, sometimes, production, this course looks at the book as a site of exploration for the architect. Students will learn about bookbinding methods, visit some of London’s best archives and learn about the technicalities of paper. The aim of the course is to consider ‘paperspace’ and experiment with both its format and materiality in the context of a personal project.

**Data-Scape, Mattia Santi and Francesca Silvi**
Contemporary spaces extend beyond physical reality through layers of virtual relations. Data interpretation is one of today’s greatest challenges. Designing through data allows to us to understand and shape the new information that drives society. Beginning with the fundamentals of programming, students will develop digital installations in processing alongside using digital platforms such as Rhino and Grasshopper.

**Compo[site] Realities, Nathan Su**
Working digitally and constantly moving between 2D and 3D, we will compose images that merge the real with the unreal –sometimes seamlessly and sometimes with powerful and destabilising junctions. Using cameras, Photoshop, Cinema4D and VRay, we will manipulate light, surface, texture and colour to render complex new realities. We will then explore our compositions as sites, building worlds around their production that elaborate the techniques behind their making, their formats of consumption and their agency as critical instruments.

**Fluids/Fabrics/Forces/Forms, Thomas Randall Page**
This hands-on fabrication course will explore the relationship between forces and forms through the medium of fluids and fabrics. We will use a methodology of analogue experimentation and critical analysis to produce objects from objects such as 1:1 prototypes of details or scale models of far larger structures.
Second Year, Term 2

*Works on Paper, Miraj Ahmed*

‘Works on paper’ describes a fine art practice whereby art is made on or with paper – such as drawing, collage, pigment or mixed media. But when applied to the discipline, ‘works on paper’ suggests the idea that such drawings might exist for their own sake. This course explores the architectural drawing and the spaces that lines inhabit on paper and beyond.

*Field Operations, Kate Davies*

We are hunting the invisible, the intangible and the elusive as we explore the hidden dynamics of site through active and obsessive field recording. The product of fieldwork is, at its core, the telling of a story. This course explores the capture or recording of a complex site beyond the use of photographic images. We will use data and information as raw material for mysterious, abstract and notational readings of place.

*Inflected Space, Anderson Inge and Antoni Malinowski*

The course focuses on fundamental, abstract aspects of form. Our working sessions will exercise the use of line, tone, colour, texture, shape, space and rhythm. We will weave between 2D drawing studies, photography, 3D experiments including full scale and 4D studies involving movement. We will focus on the perception and experience of space throughout. Our work will clarify a vocabulary of form, and show how its use can enable and enrich the process of design.

*Sandbox Architecture, Sergio Irigoyen*

Real-time rendering, video game engines, virtual and augmented reality devices are the new creation tools. This course will provide students with the skills to design and visualise space using those tools, mainly focusing on Unreal Engine. We will use the engine as a sandbox for architecture to explore space through different mediums, whether still, moving-image or as immersive realities.

*Video, Joel Newman*

After an introduction to pre-production and camera craft, students work together to make original video pieces and soundtracks that emphasise experimentation and question accepted forms and structures – ie, live-action footage, editing techniques, narrative and non-narrative explorations, performances and spaces created by chance.
Continued from Term 1
Shapes of Fiction, Charles Arsène-Henry
Seeing Slowly: Photographic Typologies, Sue Barr
Painting Architecture, Alex Kaiser
Forest Forensics, Mara Kanthak and Thomas Pearce
Data-Scape, Mattia Santi and Francesca Silvi
Printed Matter, Caroline Rabourdin
Compo[site] Realities, Nathan Su
**Department Staff**

Kate Davies is an artist, architect and co-founder of nomadic design studio Unknown Fields, art practice LiquidFactory and field robotics group RAVEN. She undertakes site-specific and expedition-based work and operates between writing, drawing, film and photography. Kate was unit master of Diploma 6 for eight years and taught MArch at the Bartlett, UCL. She is now director of the Unknown Fields Research Studio at the AA.

Miraj Ahmed is a painter and architect. He has taught at the AA since 2000 and is an associate lecturer at Camberwell College of Art. He was a design fellow at Cambridge University from 2006 to 2014.

Charles Arsène-Henry founded the speculative research agency White Box Black Box in 2009. He is conceiving The Library is on Fire with the Luma foundation and writing Metacamera Suspense Bluedrift.

Kasper Ax is a founding partner of AxJensen Design/Architecture in Copenhagen and previously worked as an associate architect at the Brussels/London-based practice LASSA Architects and Asymptote in New York. He holds an MArch from the Bartlett and has since 2009 taught at the AA, Bartlett and the University of Westminster.

Sue Barr studied at the London College of Printing where she specialised in photographing brutalist architecture and now works internationally as an architectural photographer. She holds a PhD from the RCA.

Shin Egashira has taught at the AA since 1990 and has been the Unit Master of Diploma 11 since 1997. He conducts landscape workshops in rural communities around the world.

Juliet Haysom trained at the Ruskin School, University of Oxford, the RCA the AA. She is developing two solo artist’s commissions on the site of a nineteenth-century prison and a new pedestrian route in Bristol. She is the lead artist for a new park on Unity Street in Bristol.

Anderson Inge trained in both architecture and structures at MIT, and in fine arts at Central St Martins. He has developed a pedagogy for drawing and visualisation, which he delivers at numerous institutions, currently at the AA and the Rural Studio.

Sergio Irigoyen is an architect, computer graphics artist and video game developer, currently leading the department of real-time visualisation and virtual reality at Neutral Digital. His main research focuses on video games tools and techniques applied to architectural visualization and design. He holds a Masters from the Bartlett.

Thomas Tørslev Jensen is an architect and partner of Copenhagen-based AxJensen Design/ Architecture. He holds an MArch from the AADRL and has taught at several schools including Aarhus School of Architecture, the Royal Academy in Copenhagen and Diploma 17 at the AA.

Alex Kaiser studied architecture at Oxford Brookes and the AA. In 2011 he co-founded the practice Ordinary Ltd, an East London-based studio focused on creative investigations at the intersection of architecture, digital fabrication, material sciences and theory.

Mara Kanthak works at the intersection of art and architecture. Her approach is inspired by literature and theatrical performance, narration and speculations on culture, societies, ecosystems, landscapes and technologies. She works for muf Architecture Art and has taught at both TU Berlin and the Bartlett.

Oliviu Lugojan-Ghenciu is senior interaction designer and art director at Neutral Digital, an agency that specialises in VR and other immersive interactive solutions. He has taught at Princeton University School of Architecture, the Bartlett and the AA.

Antoni Malinowski works with pigment, light, movement and time to investigate the relationship that exists between pictorial and architectural spaces. He has taught the Materiality of Colour at the AA since 2002 and in 2012 initiated the research cluster Saturated Space, now an independent colour research platform.

Taneli Mansikkamäki is an architect, musician and a studio master of the Foundation at the AA. He is a founder of A Geometry Office, based in Clerkenwell. Previously he worked with Future Systems.
Flavien Menu studied at the École Nationale Supérieure d’Architecture de Versailles and has a postgraduate degree in Urban Affairs. He has been published widely, and his expertise includes developing strategic research projects as well as complex urban development schemes for BIG Copenhagen.

Inigo Minns has taught at a variety of colleges in different disciplines in the UK and elsewhere for 12 years and runs Diploma 12 at the AA.

Alison Moffett is an artist and educator. Originally from Tennessee, she obtained an MRA from the Slade School of Fine Art and an MA in history and critical thinking from the AA.

Nicholas Mortimer and Joseph Popper are artists and co-founders of Scene Everything studio. Both work with narrative and fiction in a range of media including film, sculpture and performance. As Scene Everything they specialise in installation art and exhibition and set design.

Joel Newman studied fine art at Reading University. He has been a media studies tutor since 1998 and has exhibited his video works at galleries including the Architecture Foundation, the ICA, the Whitechapel Art Gallery and the AA.

Thomas Pearce is an architectural designer, researcher and cultural historian. He has worked in practice as a specialist for digital capture, design and fabrication and is currently working on a PhD by Design at the Bartlett, where he is also an undergraduate unit master.

Caroline Rabourdin graduated from INSA Strasbourg, the Bartlett and holds a PhD from UAL. Her research interests include spatial theory, phenomenology, geometry, spatial literature and comparative literature. At the AA she teaches on the History & Critical Thinking MA and directs the AA Visiting School Paris.

Thomas Randall-Page is an architect and co-founder of Building Works Unit. He also leads a unit by the same name at Oxford Brookes University, where he focuses on teaching through making and working at 1:1 scale. Prior to setting up his own practice he worked at both 6a architects and Heatherwick Studio.

Mattia Santi is an architect and computational designer based in London. He holds an MArch (AADRL) and has collaborated with a number of practices including Robofold, Farshid Moussavi Architects and Alvisi Kirimoto+Partners. He is now an architect at Zaha Hadid Architects.

Francesca Silvi is an architect and computational designer based in London. She holds an MArch from the Bartlett and completed a Masters in architectural engineering in Rome. Having previously worked in Rome, she now works as an architect for Zaha Hadid Architects.

Nathan Su is a designer and storyteller who works through speculation, architecture and film. His short films include *Through Leviathan’s Eyes* and *The Atlas of False Desires*, which was awarded Best Short Film at the 2017 Sci-Fi-London Film Festival. He studied architecture at the University of Melbourne and at the AA, and has tutored a unit at the AA Summer School. He is currently working as an animator at Forensic Architecture.

Emmanuel Vercruysse trained in both furniture design and architecture. He co-directs AA Design + Make at Hooke Park, is co-founder of LiquidFactory and a member of Sixteen Makers and RAVEN, a field robotics group. He was a senior teaching fellow at the Bartlett, where he also led the Robotics and Cad-Cam research lab, overseeing its development into one of the UK’s leading design fabrication facilities.
The Technical Studies (TS) programme stands as a complete and coherent technical education over five years and constructs a creative collaboration with the material demands of individual unit agendas. TS is founded on the provision of a substantial knowledge base developed through critical case studies of contemporary fabrication processes, constructed artefacts and buildings. These studies involve high levels of critical reflection and experimentation with taught ideas and techniques. The knowledge gleaned from such exercises generates a set of principles for negotiating the technical requirements of construction in unforeseen futures and unpredictable contexts. Courses are taught by tutors from leading architecture firms, engineering practices and research institutions. Students are required to enrol in a selection of TS courses to ensure a complete and well-rounded experience of structures, materials and the environment, with a particular focus on coursework in First, Second and Fourth Years.

In the Third Year, lecture coursework, workshop experiments and technical ambitions, all supported by Technical Studies tutors, are synthesised in a detailed Technical Design Project (TS3) – the result of the student-initiated design research to explore and resolve the technical issues of their main unit portfolio project. Early and later options are offered to the units – TS3 Interim Juries take place in Week 6 of Term 2 with the Final Document Submission in Week 9 (early TS), or in Week 9 of Term 2 with the Final Document Submission in Week 1 of Term 3 (later TS). At the Interim Juries student make individual table-top presentations of their TS3 work and receive feedback from the TS tutors before submitting the Final Document for assessment on the assigned date.

In the Fifth Year, students undertake a Technical Design Thesis (TS5), a substantial individual work supervised by Technical Studies tutors. The thesis comprises a broader dialogue between the technical and architectural agendas of the student’s unit and is developed through case studies, material experiments and extensive research and consultation. The Interim Juries and Final Document Submission arrangements are the same as described for TS3.

**Unit Staff**

**Head of Technical Studies**
Javier Castañón

**Diploma Master**
Javier Castañón

**Intermediate Master**
Kenneth Fraser

**Department Staff**
Xavier Aguiló, Francesco Anselmo, Laura de Azcárate, Carolina Bartram, Simon Beames, Giles Bruce, Chris Davies, Simon Dickens, Ian Duncombe, Wolfgang Frese, Evan Green, Pablo Gugel, David Illingworth, Alistair Lenczner, Ciaran Malik, Tim Marcot, Emanuele Marfisi, Nacho Marti, Anna Mestre, Federico Montella, Ioannis Rizos, Camila Rock, Nina Tabink, Giancarlo Torpiano, Anna Wai, Manja Van de Worp, Lei Zheng, Mohsen Zikri
TS tutors aim to integrate the TS3 and TS5 work with the unit agendas as much as possible, developing wherever necessary the unit’s technical brief and supporting it with additional specialised information – ie, seminars, lectures, visits, etc. Technical Design tutors offer each student the wherewithal to materialise the ideas, concepts and ambitions born in the intimacy of the unit. Technical Studies reinforces the plurality and variety of the units by adapting the requirements of TS3 and TS5 to the individual unit agenda.

The Prospectus contains a brief summary of the programme and courses offered. Full details can be found in Complementary Studies Course Booklet, available at the beginning of the academic year.

First Year

Technical Synthesis – Introduction to Integrated Design
(Compulsory Course – Term 1)
Giles Bruce, Federico Montella, Ioannis Rizos, Laura de Arzcarate
(Environnement)
Nacho Marti (Materials)
Manja Van De Worp, Ciaran Malik (Structures)

This course introduces students to the three core TS branches (structures, environment and materials) and shows they are not separate realities but different lenses for looking at the built environment. By activating a series of structural, environmental and material manipulations of architectural models, students will analyse and evaluate outcomes in relation to other technical aspects. As a result of this iterative modelling, students will gain an understanding of the basic principles associated with structures, environment, materials and their relations while exploring how TS can inform the design process and how a model can form a testing ground. The course is supplemented by a series of lectures.

First Applications
Compulsory Course, Term 2
Giles Bruce, Paul Thomas, Laura de Arzcarate (Environment)
Nacho Marti with Camila Rock (Materials)
Ciaran Malik (Structures)

This course offers a hands-on and experimental approach for a greater integration of Technical Studies with the First Year design portfolio. TS design tutors attend the First Year studio, joining First Year tutors and contributing to tutorials and consultations in the areas of structures, materials and environmental issues. The submission for the course will be made as part of the TS workshop during Week 11 of Term 2 and will be assessed by the TS tutors in the presence of the First Year studio tutors.
Intermediate School

The TS requirements for AA Intermediate and RIBA Part I require each student to undertake and pass: Structures, Material and Technologies and Environment & Energy I in the Second Year and the Structures course in Term 1 of the Third Year. In addition Third Year students must undertake a Technical Design Project (TS3) as part of their main project, synthesising their individual architectural ambitions with an account of the material production of the proposal.

Second Year

Structures – Typologies & Design
Compulsory Course, Term 1
Anna Wai
This course forms the basis for understanding how the behaviour of a structure affects architectural design. Each structural typology’s unique characteristics will be explored through weekly lectures and the application of research, analysis and testing. Teams will design, fabricate and test their own structure based on a specific typology addressed in class. Students will gain an understanding of why structures are the forms they are, how loads are transferred, which loads they are and how they can be applied to architectural design.

Material and Technologies
Compulsory Course, Terms 1 & 2
Nina Tabink
This course will conduct an investigation of a range of materials used in contemporary structures including concrete, timber, brick and blocks, glass, fabrics and composites. Material properties, methods of manufacture, durability, cost and appearance are significant factors that will be reviewed, leading to an understanding of how different materials can be used in a variety of applications.

Environment & Energy
Compulsory Course, Term 2
Giles Bruce, Evan Green, Federico Montella
This course aims to show how every decision architects make has an immediate and quantifiable impact in terms of the environment of the buildings we inhabit. The course is structured as part-lecture, part-workshop to equip students with the analogue and digital analytical techniques to inform fundamental design decisions. The submission for the course is a detailed study of environment/energy in each student’s home, demonstrating the application of the analytical methodologies.
Masterclass in Integrated Design
Compulsory Course, Term 1
Giancarlo Torpiano and Anna Wai, Giles Bruce, Ioannis Rizos
This series of masterclasses builds on the understanding of structural, environmental and material behaviour. Using a research-based approach, the course will explore the behaviour of particular structural, material and environmental combinations to gain a holistic understanding of the design and technical system. Researching each system’s specific structural behaviour in combination with material and environmental parameters enables the capture and design of an integrated performance of a building. Students will model, simplify and extract the actual behaviour of the buildings, analysing how this relates to the large-scale performance, to ultimately develop alternative realities for the chosen building according to changed performance criteria.

TS3 Design Project
Kenneth Fraser, Wolfgang Frese, Simon Beames, Simon Dickens, Pablo Gugel, Nina Tabink and Alistair Lenczner
Third Year students undertake a comprehensive design study exploring and resolving the central technical issues of their projects alongside individual unit agendas. The study records technical decisions made as the design
develops, integrating knowledge of the environmental context, use of materials, structural forms and processes of assembly. Projects develop with support from unit tutors and Intermediate TS staff.

**Diploma School**

Fourth Year students undertake two courses in Term 2 from the selection on offer and may attend others according to their interests:

**Piece by Piece, Simon Beames**
Built architecture is an organisation of component elements. Each proposition offers the chance to design bespoke pieces that respond to particular functional requirements, manufacturing processes and assembly conditions. In addition to group work and critical analysis, the course will focus on technical innovation through an examination of ‘pieces’ chosen as exemplary case studies. The work will centre on the construction of full-scale reverse-engineered prototypes.

**Sustainable Urban Design, Ian Duncombe**
The course aims to impart the fundamental knowledge needed to design tall. We will consider tall buildings in an urban context, the strategic considerations defining form, the impact of climate, the environmental drivers affecting form and fabric, servicing strategies and various approaches to low-energy and sustainable design. Students will apply the course principles to the development of their own tall building concept.

**Process in the Making, Wolfgang Frese**
This course investigates the complex underlying forces that transform architectural designs into built forms. We will focus on interdisciplinary collaboration since the architect, as lead consultant, has to constantly adjust and evaluate designs to address often contradictory forces. Guest speakers from other consultancies will discuss the importance of collaboration.

**Light and Lighting, Francesco Anselmo**
The course explores the symbiotic relationship between architecture and light with the aim of helping students to develop a sensitivity to the qualities of light while also using physical and computational tools to explore and validate their design ideas. Lectures will alternate theoretical discussions on the science and design of light with experiments and individual or team exercises.
Studies in Advanced Structural Design, Emanuele Marfisi and Chris Davies
This course will build on knowledge developed during previous structures courses and apply it to real projects, class exercises and workshops. Students will be required to analyse an existing building to gain an understanding of its structural principles while developing alternative concepts of the existing structure. This is achieved through research and study of existing drawings and photographs; correctly interpreting the structural principles through sketching the structural behaviour of the building; and by developing alternative concepts or alterations of the existing structures.

(Un)usual Performances, Nacho Marti
This course challenges students to develop new approaches to materials in design where inventiveness is as important as fabrication, technology and material properties. Throughout the course students will design and test a new composite material and speculate on its potential architectural applications.

Bridging Technologies, Manja van de Worp
This course explores methods for transforming a concept into material. Bridging fashion, product design, information technology, science and nature with architecture, we will interrogate what is happening around us in technology and apply methodologies of other disciplines to our work. This course teaches how to see with the eye and the mind of a technological design researcher.

Environmental Design of Buildings, Mohsen Zikri
The course examines the links between building form, energy and the micro/macro environment, and reviews strategic options for the building skin. Sustainability issues, passive energy and renewable energy sources are examined through real projects that feature energy-efficient solutions. Lectures explore the application of computer modelling in the design of buildings, including the use of Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD). Students will complete a project with a futuristic programme, and will research completed buildings in different climatic zones.

Energy & Environment, Giles Bruce, Federico Montella, Ioannis Rizos and Ian Duncombe
This seven-week course provides students with more in-depth understanding of environmental design and the analytical tools that inform design decisions. We will focus on the interplay between thermal, luminous and acoustic environments within a number of building typologies, informing our research through site visits and digital environmental simulation. The submission for the course is a detailed study of environment/energy within a case study building demonstrating the application of the taught analytical methodologies.
Anti-disciplinary Integration: Migration from Nzeb to Zib, Xavier Aguiló, Anna Mestre
Today, many necessary systems have become disintegrated, and as a result technology is being applied independently. This course focuses on the integration of all building requirements with the objective to merge various disciplines into one anti-disciplinary system.

Integrated Structural Design, David Illingworth
Why do some buildings give you everything you want but seem so effortless? The course looks at a technical approach of integrated problem-solving. It aims to build multi-layered solutions to complex briefs, focusing on the technical challenges and how these can interact with and drive the design. Students will be asked to interrogate previous solutions, then redeploy and modify materials and technologies to respond to a brief.

TS5 Design Thesis (TS5), Javier Castanon, David Illingworth, Nacho Martí, Federico Montella, Francesco Anselmo, José Monfá, Andrew Usher and Laura de Azcárate
The Technical Design Thesis is a substantial individual work developed under the guidance of Javier Castañón and the Diploma TS staff. Tutorial support and guidance is also provided within the unit. The central interests and concerns may emerge from current or past design work, or from one of the many lecture and seminar courses the student has attended in previous years. Its critical development is pursued through case studies, material experiments and extensive research and consultation.
Department Staff

Javier Castañón has taught in the AA (on and off since 1978 and continually since 2000) and is in private practice as director of Castanon Associates (London) and Castañón Asociados (Madrid).

Kenneth Fraser has taught at the AA since 2007 and is a director at Kirkland Fraser Moor Architects. Past projects include Rome Auditorium and Padre Pio Church.

Xavier Aguiló studied industrial engineering in Spain, specialising in architectural structures. He qualified as a master engineer in 1999, whilst working with BAC Barcelona as a structural consultant. He became an associate of the office in 2001 and then director in 2007, responsible for running their Madrid office.

Francesco Anselmo holds a degree in architectural engineering and a PhD in environmental physics. He is a senior lighting and interaction designer at Arup.

Laura de Azcaráte is an acoustic designer and architect within the acoustics team in BDP’s environmental design studio. Along with degrees in architecture and music, she holds an MSc in environmental and architectural acoustics from London South Bank University.

Simon Beames is director of Youmeheshe architects. He has worked for Foster + Partners and Grimshaw Architects, leading the design team for Battersea Power Station. He has been a diploma unit master at the AA and University of East London schools of architecture.

Giles Bruce studied architecture in University College Dublin Ireland, and subsequently received an MArch in Sustainable Environmental Design at the AA. He is currently director of A-ZERO architects.

Chris Davies is a structural engineer and associate at Engenuiti in London. He has worked with architects including Allies and Morrison, Foster + Partners and Aedas across education and commercial sectors.

Simon Dickens is co-founder of Youmeheshe and has worked on projects including Bath Spa, the Rolls-Royce Manufacturing Plant and Headquarters, Lords Grandstand and the Britannia Airport proposal in the Thames Estuary. He leads Unit 10 at the the Bartlett, together with CJ Lim.

Ian Duncombe is a board director of the international engineering practice ChapmanBDSP. He has worked on environmentally engineered projects worldwide including Zayed National Museum in Abu Dhabi, Century Tower in Tokyo and Britam Tower in Nairobi. His UK work includes two winners of the RIBA Stirling Prize.

Wolfgang Frese studied architecture at the Arts Academy in Stuttgart and received a Masters from the Bartlett. He is a senior project architect at AHMM

Evan Green is a Senior Acoustics Consultant at Sound Space Design. He holds Masters degrees in both acoustics, from the Institute of Sound and Vibration Research, University of Southampton, and physics, from the University of Bath.

Pablo Gugel studied architecture at the ETSA of La Coruna and gained his MArch in Sustainable Environmental Design at the AA. He is an environmental analyst at BDSP Partnership.

Alistair Lenczner, director at Expedition, is an experienced architectural and engineering designer. Past projects include Wembley Stadium and Millau Viaduct. He currently sits on on the HS2 Design Panel.

Tim Marcot graduated from the University of Sydney in 1998 and has worked at Price & Myers since 2003. He has taught courses in structures at London Met, University of Greenwich and University of East London.

Emanuele Marfisi is a structural engineer with ten years’ experience in engineering design. After a number of years in London he is now Project Director for Setec Batiment in Paris.

Nacho Martí graduated from Elisava School of Design in Barcelona and the Emergent Technologies and Design MSc at the AA. He founded his design studio in 2004 and is director of the AA Amazon Visiting School.

Anna Mestre graduated from the school of architecture at the Polytechnic University of Barcelona and holds a masters in project management in building and urban planning from the Professional Association of Technical Architects of Barcelona.
Federico Montella received his MSc in Sustainable Environmental Design from the AA in 2006 and is currently senior sustainability advisor at HLM Architects.

Camila Rock graduated from University of Talca (Chile) and the Emergent Technologies and Design March (Distinction) at the AA. She works at Grimshaw Architects London, focusing on material systems and the use of computational processes as an instrument for architectural design.

Ioannis Ruzos is a senior environmental design consultant at Atelier Ten. He has worked on numerous projects including the Olympic Velodrome in Queen Elizabeth Park, LSE's student centre in London and the Natural History Museum's grounds redevelopment programme.

Nina Tabink trained as an architect and structural engineer at the Technical University of Eindhoven and holds an MRes in the Built Environment from Cambridge. She is a senior structural engineer for Arup.

Giancarlo Torpiano studied architecture and structural engineering at the University of Malta, before completing his MArch at the AA. He works as a structural engineer in a multi-disciplinary team at Arup.

Manja van de Worp trained as an architect and structural engineer at the Technical University of Eindhoven and Emtech at the AA School. She has worked for Arup in London and is now a principal at NOUS Engineering London. She also teaches at the IAAC in Barcelona.

Anna Wai obtained a civil and architectural engineering degree at Bath University and is a structural engineer working at Price Myers. She has taught structures courses at London Met and University of East London.

Mohsen Zikri is a director of Ove Arup & Partners and a chartered building services engineer specialising in the environmental design of buildings.
Developing an understanding of architectural practice is a requirement in the Intermediate and Diploma Schools, and specific courses are run for Third Year and Fifth Year students. A Professional Studies Advisor is available for year-out students and post-Part 2 students to help with work experience. Developing practice experience is essential preparation for the final Part 3 examination that may be taken after several years’ office experience working on building projects.

Part 1

Professional Practice for Third Year
Javier Castañón
This course prepares Third Year students for their year out, a time for practical training taken after completion of RIBA Part 1. It aims to provide students with an idea of what working in an architectural practice entails. Students will learn how to ‘make themselves useful’ in an office with the intent that the sooner they are perceived as useful, the sooner they will become part of the action and the more they will benefit from the experience.

Part 2

Architectural Professional Practice for Fifth Year
Theo Lorenz
This course develops and deepens the professional practice themes introduced in the Intermediate School and encountered in year-out work experience and integrates these with design considerations. It is delivered through a series of lectures and seminars on key issues relating to the professional contexts of design and construction. Examples of and strategies for conventional and unconventional models of practice are also introduced in preparation for the next stages of work experience and professional qualification.

Unit Staff

Head of Professional Studies
Theo Lorenz

Coordinator
Rachel Sim

Part 1
Javier Castañón

Part 2
Theo Lorenz

Javier Castañón has taught at the AA since 1978 and is in private practice as director of Castañón Associates (London) and Castañón Asociados (Madrid).

Theo Lorenz is an architect, painter and media artist. Trespassing between art and architecture, his interests lie at the convergence of digital and physical space. He has taught at the AA since 2000 and has directed the AA Interprofessional Studio since 2008.
Alternative Professional Practice

Over the course of their five years at the AA students are exposed to a broad spectrum of ideas. However, between unit work, crits, tables and their Complementary Studies coursework, it can be difficult to make time to think about how they might professionally translate their ideas into their professional future. This is all the more true within the final year of the Diploma School. Alternative Professional Practice, which makes up the Fifth Year Professional Practice curriculum, will give students both the time and the framework to formulate ideas and strategies for what they want to do – how to archive their student work and plan for their future once they receive their diploma in June.

Each student will be asked to present and submit a business plan laying out their own individual practice, which starts the day after graduation. Supporting this work will be a tranche of references, case studies and case stories that are relevant to the student’s ideas. The format of the submission depends entirely on the approach of the individual and should be in itself an example of the actuated form of practice. The process will be framed by a series of seminars and lectures showing various forms of practice, networks and business models.
The AA Professional Practice and Practical Experience Examination (ARB/RIBA Part 3)

Each year the AA provides two Part 3 course and examination programmes. The examination is formally recognised by the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). The course is currently offered in two formats: in the Autumn as a full-time block course over two weeks; and in the Spring as a ‘Saturday School’ over 11 weeks for candidates who may prefer study over a longer period or who may have difficulty in getting weekday release from their offices.

Both the intensive full-time two-week and the 11-week one-day-per-week courses cover all topics central to professional practice, including building contract, planning and building regulations as well as business management and soft skills such as personal presentation, and also provide an introduction to the examination process. In addition to lectures and seminars, the AA provides lecture notes, past papers, an extensive bibliography and access to study groups.

A two-day optional course, the ‘Contract Game’, was introduced in 2012, with student teams working together to devise strategies to overcome contract issues and practical problems during project negotiations. The 6-month AA Part 3 course is also available as a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme for UK-registered professionals who wish to refresh their practice knowledge, and also for registered practitioners who trained elsewhere in the EU.

Students wishing to join the course to take the examination must first establish their eligibility by submitting a series of documents for an Initial Assessment by the PSA. These comprise evidence that shows they have achieved their Part 1 and Part 2 professional qualifications or their permitted equivalents, which are prerequisites for entry; evidence of English language skills for students who do not have English as their first language; and evidence of any disability or impairment the student wishes to be taken into account. Students must also submit their signed records of practical training (usually in PEDR format), a career schedule illustrating experience to date and a 2,000-word career profile essay. All required documents must be submitted no later than two weeks before the start of the course. Exceptionally, students may be allowed to sit the examination without attending the course and, in those circumstances, must submit the documents required for the Initial Assessment no later than four weeks before the start of the examination.

Students must have completed a minimum of 24 months of appropriate practical training no later than four weeks before the start of the examination.
Paul Crosby studied the Polytechnic of Central London (University of Westminster). He has extensive, international experience having set up an office in Germany and holding senior positions in the offices of Zaha Hadid, David Chipperfield and Martha Schwartz. He consults small upcoming design studios on practice-related matters and has a particular research interest in the nature of future practice.
How to Apply and Entry Requirements

Please note: This booklet provides a summary of the application procedure and entry requirements for 2018–19. For full details, please carefully read the AA website.

Undergraduate

Institution/School Validation
The AA has been reviewed annually by the QAA since 2012 in order to maintain Tier 4 Sponsor status with the Home Office / UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). In its 2016 Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) carried out by the QAA, the AA was found to meet UK expectations in all four assessment areas. The 2017 annual monitoring confirmed that the School has continued to make progress.

The five year full-time course in architecture is officially recognised and also meets the professional criteria set out by the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) for the professional qualifications of AA Intermediate Examination (ARB/RIBA Part 1) and the AA Final Examination (ARB/RIBA Part 2).

Open Days
Prospective students are encouraged to visit the AA. Open Days are an opportunity to meet current students and staff, tour the AA’s facilities, view presentations of student work and get advice on the application process. These events will be held on:
Friday 20 October 2017:
Foundation and First Year
Wednesday 25 October 2017:
Foundation and Undergraduate
Open Evening
Friday 12 January 2018:
School Open Day (Foundation, Undergraduate and Graduate)

The Foundation and First Year event will provide key information and guidance for current AS / A Level students and others who are considering architecture as a career. The other events are open to all prospective architecture students, from Foundation to Fourth Year.

Please see the AA website for full event details and to register your interest in attending the Open Days. Individual or group visits for those interested in applying can also be arranged with advance notice.

For further details please contact the Undergraduate Admissions Team on T + 44 (0)20 7887 4051/4011 or undergraduateadmissions@aaschool.ac.uk

Application Procedure
The AA is a private institution and does not belong to UCAS. Anyone interested in applying to the AA must:
- Complete the online application form
- Pay the relevant application fee
- Submit a portfolio of art/design work

before the deadlines to be considered for the 2018/19 academic year.

All applicants must be 18 years of age or older by Monday 17 September 2018 to be eligible to enter the school for the 2018–19 academic year.

The application procedure is the same for all applicants, regardless of where you are applying form. Applicants wishing to join the One Year Abroad (VSP) follow the same application procedure as Intermediate (Second and Third Year) applicants, but must tick the One Year Abroad box in the online application form.

Both school-leavers and mature applicants with previous experience are encouraged to take advantage of the wide range of possibilities offered within the school. Students are admitted into the courses at Foundation, First Year, Intermediate (Second and Third Year), and Diploma (Fourth Year) level. We do not accept students at Fifth Year level.

Please note the AA does not have a module or grade assessment procedure and does not partake in a credit system, therefore you cannot transfer credits from another university. Upon signing the application form applicants certify that the work submitted is entirely their own. Plagiarism is unacceptable in the academic setting. Students are subject to penalties including dismissal from the course if they commit an act of plagiarism.
Application Deadlines

Early applications close:
Friday 17 November 2017*

Late applications close:
Friday 26 January 2018

Both your online application, and your portfolio, must arrive by the dates listed above.
Applications made after this date may be accepted at the discretion of the school.
Application fees are as listed on the AA website.
* If you wish to be eligible for a scholarship, please carefully read the section below regarding deadlines.

Scholarships
The AA is committed to giving as many talented students as possible the opportunity to study. Approximately one in four AA students receives financial assistance through our Scholarship, Bursary and Assistantship programme.

The AA offers scholarships to new students entering First, Second and Fourth Year who demonstrate exceptional promise and financial need. AA Scholarships cover up to two terms (66 per cent) of the fees. Special full-fee scholarships are promoted on the AA website. Applicants are eligible regardless of age, nationality or background.

To be eligible for a scholarship, applicants must complete the main application form and submit a portfolio no later than Friday 17 November 2017 stating their interest in an AA Scholarship in the ‘Scholarships and Awards’ section. Applications received after this, but before the 26 January 2018 late applications deadline, will be assessed for financial assistance at the discretion of the school.

Applicants whose work is considered to be of scholarship standard will be asked, after an entry interview, to complete a scholarship application form, provide financial information and submit a portfolio for the scholarship committee.

Continuation of all scholarships is subject to continued progress in the school during the defined scholarship period, ie, three academic years for First Year students, and two academic years for Second and Fourth Year students.

Academic Entry Requirements

Minimum Academic Requirements:

First Year
The minimum academic requirements for students entering the First Year of the ARB/RIBA-recognised course in Architecture are:
- Two A level passes* (grade C or above); plus
- Five GCSEs (grade C or above) including maths, a science subject and English language.
* If one A level is an art/design subject, it must be accompanied by at least one A level in a non-art/design subject.

Overseas applicants are required to have the recognised equivalent to the above examinations, such as the International Baccalaureate, Abitur, etc, plus the required English language qualifications.

Intermediate and One Year Abroad (Second or Third Year)
Students with previous architectural or design experience may apply to enter the Intermediate School/One Year Abroad (VSP). The minimum academic requirements for students entering the Second or Third Year of the five-year ARB/RIBA-recognised course in architecture are:
- Two A level passes* (grade C or above); plus
- Evidence of a minimum one/two years of full-time architectural study.
- One Year Abroad students are accepted at second or third year level only and must be EU/EEA passport holders
* If one A level is an art/design subject, it must be accompanied by at least one A level in a non-art/design subject.

Overseas applicants are required to have the recognised equivalent to the above examinations, such as the International Baccalaureate, Abitur, etc, plus the required English language qualifications.

Diploma School (Fourth Year)
Applicants wishing to enter the Diploma School (Fourth Year) to gain AA Final Examination (ARB/RIBA Part 2), the professional qualification/AA Diploma, must have gained ARB/RIBA Part 1 by 30 July 2018, prior to entry to the school.
- Applicants who have studied for Part 1 in the UK must have gained at least a 2:2 in their degree.
- Applicants who hold a complete Bachelor’s degree from outside the UK (UK BArch 2:2 equivalent) are required to make an application to the Architects Registration Board (ARB) for Part 1...
exemption independently. Successfully gaining Part 1 exemption does not automatically ensure an offer of a place in the Diploma School. Applicants are advised to apply by 17 November 2017, and await the outcome of the interview, prior to applying to the ARB for exemption. For further information please refer to the ARB website www.arb.org.uk

- International applicants who will not complete their Bachelor's degree (UK BArch 2:2 equivalent) until mid-2018 are encouraged to contact the Undergraduate Admissions Team prior to applying for the 2018/19 academic year.

- Overseas applicants must also have the required English language qualifications.

- Please note: In order to be eligible for the AA Diploma and the AA Final Examination (ARB/RIBA Part 2), the Fourth and Fifth Years (minimum of six terms) must be successfully completed.

Submission Portfolio Requirements
All applicants are expected to submit a bound portfolio of art/design work which emphasises their skills, interests, creativity and personality. There is no single way of preparing a portfolio and every portfolio we see will be different. Please include a selection of highlights that will show the admissions panel an overview of your work and the processes behind it, including sketches or development drawings/models in addition to final images.

- First Year applicants should include a summary of current interests and sketches, models, photographs, paintings and essays all help to build up a picture of your particular interests and skills. Intermediate and Diploma applicants should include a summary of work carried out during their course, as well as any self-motivated projects undertaken outside of their course.

- Sample portfolios should be no larger than A3, and between 20 and 30 pages. Applicants who submit a portfolio larger than A3 will be asked to resubmit before their application can be processed. Please do not submit original artwork with your initial application; successful applicants will be asked to bring original work to the interview.

- Further suggestions on preparing your portfolio can be found online at www.aaschool.ac.uk/apply/admissions/undergradportfolio

English Language Requirements
All applicants must be able to provide evidence of competency in both spoken and written English. The AA reserves the right to make a place in the school conditional on gaining a further English language qualification if deemed necessary.

- To meet both the AA and the Home Office/UKVI English language requirements you will need to have one of the acceptable language qualifications listed below, unless you are from one of the following groups:
  - You are a national of a ‘majority English-speaking’ country as defined in the UKVI Tier 4 policy guidance;
  - You are a Tier 4 (Child) student;
  - You successfully completed a course in the UK as a Tier 4 (Child) student or as a student under rules in force before 31 March 2009, where you were under 18 when granted leave. The course must have lasted for at least six months, and must have ended no more than two years prior to your CAS was assigned;
  - You have successfully obtained an academic qualification (not a professional or vocational qualification) from an educational establishment in the UK, which meets the recognised standard of a Bachelor’s degree or above; or
  - You have successfully completed an academic qualification equivalent to a UK Bachelor’s degree or above, which was taught in a majority English-speaking country as defined in the Tier 4 policy guidance.

- Please note: In order to assess the equivalency of an overseas qualification, you must provide official documentation produced by UK NARIC which confirms your international academic qualification is comparable to a UK Bachelor’s or Master’s degree. For full details please see the Undergraduate application page of the AA School website.

If your place is conditional on providing an English language qualification the following qualifications satisfy both the requirements of the Home Office/UKVI and the entry requirements of the AA:

- International applicants: IELTS for UKVI (Academic): 6.5 overall with at least 6.0 in each category – two-year validity period: must be within the two years at time of visa application. Please check Appendix O and the Approved secure English language tests and test centres issued by the UKVI to ensure you book a test with an approved SELT provider.

- EU applicants: IELTS (Academic) 6.5 overall with at least 6.0 in each category – two-year validity period: must be within the two years at time of application to the AA.
Trinity College SELT Test (ISE II (B2) or ISE III (C1)) with a minimum pass in each category – two-year validity period: must be within the two years at time of application. Please check Appendix O and the Approved secure English language tests and test centres issued by the UKVI to ensure you book a test with an approved SELT provider.

Please note the English language qualification requirements are subject to frequent change in line with Home Office/UKVI regulations. Please check the AA website for up-to-date English language requirements prior to submitting your application for the 2018/19 academic year.

Applicants are required to meet the scores in each category and overall – we cannot accept lower scores. In addition, the certificate must show that the required scores have been achieved during a single sitting of the examination. Applicants must submit their English language examination results by Friday 25 May 2018, prior to entry in Term 1.

It is the applicant’s responsibility to remain up to date with all English language changes, which can be accessed on the Home Office/UKVI website www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests

Assessment
Applications are initially assessed to ensure that they meet the academic entry requirements and age eligibility.

Applications that meet these requirements will be assessed by an admissions panel of tutors. The panel will carefully consider the personal statement, reference and portfolio, in addition to reviewing academic grades.

Applicants will be informed if they are invited to an interview at which a full portfolio can be presented. Further details regarding the assessment process can be found on the AA website.

Interview Procedure
Successful applicants will be invited to attend an interview at the AA School in London. The AA does not undertake Skype or telephone interviews.

The interview is a two-way process. The panel is interested to see what skills and interests the applicant has, so it is important to spend time preparing a portfolio. The applicant, in turn, has the opportunity to ask questions about the school and have a look at its working spaces and facilities. The purpose of the interview is to try and assess each applicant’s potential, ability and suitability to benefit from the course.

In addition to your portfolio, it is essential that you bring all your original documents with you to the interview for verification. Failure to present these documents may delay your chances of obtaining an offer of a place at the AA.

Portfolios for AA Interviews
The AA is looking for students with a creative imagination and plenty of motivation. It is important to read the AA website and First Year, Intermediate and Diploma Unit micro-sites, which will give you an idea of the wide range of work carried out in the school.

It is important that any drawings should be from life, or drawn on site. The interview panel likes to see original images wherever possible, but understands if reproductions have to be shown due to size or weight constraints. It is better to bring more work rather than less so that you have a range of examples to demonstrate your skills. However, please take into account how much you can carry, and the finite amount of time available for the interview – you may not be able to show every piece of work. Portfolios brought to an interview can be taken away directly after the interview.

There is no single way of preparing a portfolio and every portfolio we see will be different. Further suggestions on preparing your portfolio can be found online at www.aaschool.ac.uk/apply/admissions/undergradportfolio

Applicants to the First Year are not necessarily expected to submit an ‘architectural’ portfolio. The panel particularly likes to see evidence of current interests. Sketches, models, photographs, paintings, sketchbooks and essays all help to build up a picture of your particular interests and skills. Many applicants will have artwork from school, but the AA is interested in any kind of project that is self-motivated and it is best not to bring a portfolio based solely on school artwork. Portfolios should include some recent work; models or sculptures can be photographed and live performances recorded in a variety of ways.

Intermediate and Diploma applicants should show a range of work that they have carried out during their course, as well as any self-motivated projects undertaken outside of their course.
Please be sure not just to present final images, but to show the process, development and thinking behind your work, perhaps in the form of sketchbooks or working drawings.

**Offers**
Successful applicants will receive an offer letter within two weeks of the interview. Applicants who receive a conditional offer letter must meet all of the specified conditions prior to entering the school. In order to secure a place at the AA the Admissions Team must receive a completed signed admission form and a one-term non-refundable/non-transferable deposit.

Applicants holding an unconditional offer must pay their deposit and return a signed admissions form by the dates outlined on the offer letter/admissions form. Applicants holding a conditional offer should contact the appropriate admissions coordinator prior to paying the deposit. The AA School takes no responsibility for applicants who pay their deposit prior to obtaining an unconditional offer.

Upon securing your place a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) can be issued for students who require a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa to study in the UK. This confirmation, together with other documentation, can be used by overseas students to apply for a visa. Please refer to the Home Office/UKVI website for further information www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration

All undergraduate students commence the course in September and conclude in June. Students cannot start mid-year.

**Fees**
Fees for 2017/18 academic year are £20,352* plus a £95 AA Membership and Student Forum fee. Applicants are required to pay a deposit of £6,784* to secure their place at the AA. The deposit will then count towards the cost of the tuition fees for the final term of study.

Fees are payable in advance or on an annual or termly basis. A three per cent* discount is applied if a full year’s fees are paid by Friday 13 July 2018.

Before the registration process can be undertaken during Introduction Week, applicants must have paid Term 1 (September–December) tuition fee inclusive of AA Membership and Student Forum membership fee, in addition to the deposit already paid.

*Fees and discounts are subject to review annually.

**Financial Assistance**
The AA is committed to giving as many talented students as possible the opportunity to study. Around one in four AA students receives financial assistance through our Scholarship, Bursary and Assistantship programme.

**Scholarships for New Students**
New students applying for First, Second and Fourth Year are eligible to apply for a scholarship. Please see page C15 for full details.

**AA Bursaries for Existing Students**
Bursaries are offered to existing AA students and must be applied for on a yearly basis. New applicants for the five-year ARB/RIBA-recognised course are not eligible for a bursary until their second academic year of AA studies, ie 2019/20. Bursary application forms are available from the end of March and should be returned by mid-May.

The Undergraduate Bursary Committee, which meets in June to distribute the awards, bases its decisions on academic performance, recommendation from the tutor and financial need. For further details regarding the bursary application procedure please see the AA website.

**AA Assistantships for All Students**
A number of assistantships are offered to eligible full-time registered students who are experiencing financial hardship. Students are able to work up to ten hours per week, providing assistance with certain administrative, exhibitions, or maintenance functions. New eligible students wishing to apply will be told the procedure when they register at the beginning of the academic year.

**Grants/Student Loans**
This information applies to undergraduate students on the five-year ARB/RIBA undergraduate course only and is subject to current government legislation. Applicants to the One Year Abroad (VSP) and Foundation Course are not eligible to apply for funding.

Eligible students are able to apply to the Student Finance England (Student Loan Company) for Tuition Fee Loans/Living Expenses (if applicable) www.slc.co.uk

For further information please review the AA website www.aaschool.ac.uk/apply/financial_aid/overview.php
Accommodation
The AA does not have halls of residence. However, we enlist the services of the University of London Housing Services (ULHS), who run a private housing service for many students in London.

The ULHS can offer advice to students on how to find accommodation, which areas to consider, what the options are, pricing and more. They have an online database of accommodation offers from registered landlords and letting agents which operates throughout the year. These offers include flats and houses for groups as well as rooms in shared flats and houses. The ULHS works with a number of other providers of accommodation including short-term providers and private student halls of residence.

The ULHS also offers housing advice including a contract-checking service which allows students to have their contracts for private accommodation checked before they sign. Legal advice can also be provided should students encounter difficulties with their private accommodation. For further information please visit www.housing.london.ac.uk

Contact
More detailed Admissions information can be found on the AA website www.aaschool.ac.uk

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the Undergraduate Admissions team on +44 (0)20 7887 4011 / 4051 / 4060 or undergraduateadmissions@aaschool.ac.uk
Apply today to be a part of the UK’s oldest independent school of architecture.

See the AA for yourself by attending an Open Day or contact the Admissions Office. For information about the interview process, applying for a bursary and to make your application to one of the world’s most prestigious schools of architecture see page B 122.

Open Days
Friday 20 October 2017:
Foundation and First Year Open Day
Wednesday 25 October 2017:
Foundation and Undergraduate Open Evening
Friday 12 January 2018:
School Open Day

Please see the AA website for full event details and to register your interest in attending the Open Days.

Application Deadlines
Early applications close:
Friday 17 November 2017
Late applications close:
Friday 26 January 2018

* Applicants wishing to be considered for a bursary must submit by this date.

www.aaschool.ac.uk/foundation
undergraduateadmissions@aaschool.ac.uk
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