

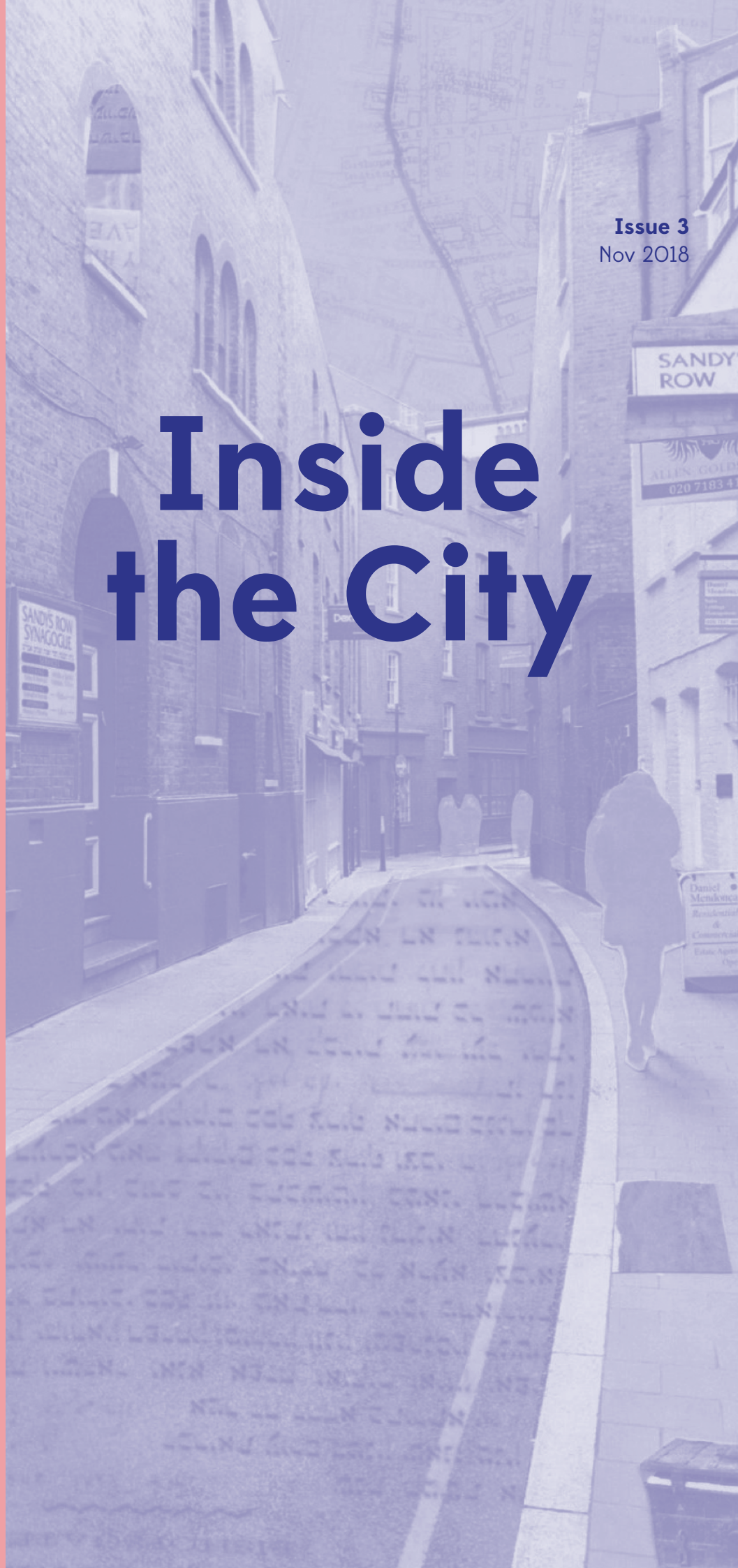


IE:Studio

Issue 3
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Inside the City

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This issue of IE:Studio, the 3rd in the series, is a companion publication to Interior Educators' Inside the City conference at The Cass, London Metropolitan University, on 22-23 November 2018. The intention for both IE:S and the conference is to explore the way in which the city informs the production, practice, thinking and education of Interior Designers. This issue is guest edited by Andrew Stone, with David Littlefield.

Introduction

Andrew Stone - Guest Editor

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The city is the interior. It is where our discipline began. It is our provider and provocation; a shifting, challenging, enriched, antagonistic context for our practice. Its cultural, economic and physical offer is an Interior Designer's brief, providing a dynamic context through which commissions are offered and ideas are born.

Context for the interior is a complex discourse, underwritten by the principle that the Interior is an inherently synthetic condition and that the successful practice of its design requires the designer to choreograph and curate diverse factors and understanding. At the scale of the city, the urban and architectural setting, the historical and socio-economic circumstance of the interior's creation and its subsequent development has not always been prominent in either the production or critique of interior design. It was on this basis that the conference theme was proposed.

Contextual thinking has been more prominent, or more overt, in education. Student projects readily engage the physical context of and beyond a site and project briefs have evolved to engage the social and economic conditions informing a programme, integrating these into students' investigation and consideration.

The papers in this issue reflect Interiors students' engagement of history, social response, interpretative acts, and the evolving typologies that as designers we articulate and make tangible. They also demonstrate the increasing engagement with other agencies and concerns by introducing students to the matrix of interests, including their own, necessary to design the interior.

This approach is evident in two of the papers included here, albeit in quite different ways, and working with students at different stages in their studies. Orit Sarfatti and Andrea Placidi's 'the homeless project' demonstrates the value of integrating a client, Crisis, who brings an explicit expertise and position into the studio to stimulate another understanding of Oxford city centre and its inhabitation. This informs the design process and challenges pre-conceptions and received values through the direct engagement of the students.

The underpinning of the Interior Design students' professional knowledge and imagination with the awareness of their social and cultural responsibility is critical. The cultural context, the capacity to employ a breadth of knowledge whilst anticipating, engaging and provoking change - the means to reveal and positively affect what is not seen - is part of that role.

As advocates of change, whether of spaces, programme, function, uses, there is a responsibility to what remains, what is left behind and, critically, the people who contribute to or are affected by the designer's acts. These do not make simple criteria.

In the city these can be immediate, economically or technologically charged but simultaneously rooted in histories and narratives that weave a rich matrix of culture and place.

Janette Harris' paper describes a vivid 'live' client-led project with Sandys Row synagogue in London that benefitted from the integration of a strong interlocutor in writer Rachel Lichtenstein. This 1st year project provided a rapid introduction to project research, process and thinking that required the students to address complex layers of requirement and expectation from both a lay and design audience at the outset of their studies.

The way in which interior designers enable different experiences of spaces, interpretations of stories and the realignment of an interior's use are evident here.

In the city there is a required oscillation between the intimate engagement of objects, people and space to those more scoping, anticipatory interventions that reveal ways of inhabiting the city, of realigning buildings' use and form to accommodate new programmes and experience.

These different scales of thinking are familiar processes. But the prospective value, for students and Interior Designers, is to pursue the recognition that our contribution and responsibilities are beyond a project's immediate domain. Life inside the city requires, and we must seek to provide, a civic generosity, engaging socialised conditions that are responsive to individual and collective contemporary spatial needs.

The city is more and more an internally focused experience offering controlled, secure, fragrant, user-focused places of spectacle; or technologically managed, functionally driven environments that incorporate an interplay of programme and activity.

In her paper, Nerea Feliz emphasises her studio's engagement of how new typologies were introduced to the power and presence of public and semi-public interior spaces in Austin, Texas. In working with students at different levels, and from different disciplines, priorities and approaches were tested. This programme exposed students to the expectations of different participants in the spaces – shoppers, tourists, retailers – and the interpretation of different, evolving and perhaps conflicting typologies and the impact these have.

The nature of how design responds to a more complex, diverse and information-saturated clientele raises different challenges - concerning both the use and reading of spaces, whether using brands in a mall or images in a guide book. The designer's role in clarifying and reimagining this language is fascinatingly described in Colin Priest's 'Ways of Finding' essay.

Working with students from another culture as well as other disciplines requires a disassembling and reassembling of tools and knowledge. The collaborative learning that is described here identifies how this consequently informs new ideas and approaches in practice.

Interior designers have a particular capability to collaborate, to draw together diverse elements and recompose these as a cohesive response to a client or site. But perhaps there is a greater responsibility. The civic expectation of interior spaces, whether public or private, and the reciprocity of their contribution to the city remains a challenge. The designer's knowledge and actions are key to this. The application of theoretical and historical knowledge to establish a spatial presence of mind, to engage precedent and recognise our social contribution to the city in spaces we produce is key.

Interior designers and architects are familiar with the use of casually dialectical pairs – inside-outside, public-private, solid-void – to distinguish an idea. These are familiar terms that anticipate or even presume a relationship, but these are rooted in a concept of the interior as abstract architectural space. Interesting as this is, it is a construct that consciously avoids inhabitation, the social dialogue, the most dynamic condition of the interior and of the city.

Inside the City holds an ambition that interior designers are recognised for their capacity to choreograph the interior experience of the city at different scales and with different contributors; as a component of the urban realm whilst curating the haptic qualities of an object or material in its composition. The ambition of the conference and the evidence of the projects described here anticipate a more articulated condition, one which considers the interconnectedness of social actions, places, people and things with and within the interior, the building and the city.

The seen and unseen interior: how reflective practice enabled a live project with Sandys Row Synagogue, London

Janette Harris

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This paper reflects on an approach to a live project undertaken for Sandys Row Synagogue by 1st Year interior students, and how collaborative conditions were created between students and client to enable proposals for the development of the Synagogue's basement into a cultural heritage museum/educational and event space. The outcomes reveal how the cultural, personal and building history can be revealed and interpreted, through 'living' and 'situated' practice. This project was tutored by Janette Harris, Kaye Newman, Suzanne Smeeth-Pouras and Karl Harris.

Introduction

At the beginning of the 2017-18 academic year, the CASS Projects office and year 1 Interiors were invited to propose a brief to convert the basement of Sandys Row Synagogue, the oldest surviving Ashkenazi Synagogue in the UK. It is located in Sandys Row, Spitalfields, London, on the boundary of Tower Hamlets and the City. [Figures 1 & 2]



Figure 2: Interior of Sandys Row Synagogue (image by Janette Harris)



Figure 1: Sandys Row Synagogue (image by Aleksandra Jagodzinska)

This synagogue, similar to many places of communal worship, is looking towards diversifying its premises to allow for private, semi-private and public space for a multitude of reasons, but with an underlying resolve to secure the future, for their community and site. In recent years, archivist, artist and writer Rachel Lichtenstein with Harvey Rifkind, director of the Synagogue, have researched how to breathe new life into the disused basement and celebrate the diversity and rich cultural historical context and building history. This work has included applications to the Heritage Lottery fund.

The project, the students' major piece of work, was conceived as lasting 15 weeks. Given the ambition and potential of the project, a learning and teaching strategy needed to be carefully devised to enable student engagement and skills development, while fulfilling the brief and our commitment to the Synagogue to produce viable schemes. How could the tutors create meaningful tasks to encourage reflection, action and speculation when researching area and site, while embracing the client's brief?

Process and practice

In recent years, Cass interiors Level 4 (1st year) students have been developing a programme that includes live projects and connection to industry. Within the projects it has become clear that reflective practice is an essential and dynamic creative tool that can promote depth and breadth, develop creativity and enable students to analyse space and its context - to understand the 'seen' and the 'unseen interior'.

However, the introduction of reflective analysis can leave students feeling as if the task is a barrier, rather than using it as a tool, a means of immersion, enquiry and speculation. Many students may have experienced reflection and evaluation as a summative exercise only; however, research at the start of the process is essential given the sensitivity of the site and the complexity and transitional nature of the area. Three distinctive areas of approach were implemented:

1. Investigation/Enquiry
 - Secondary research starts to inform and underpin before the primary experience.
2. Immersion
 - Dynamic action where by primary and secondary research becomes the basis for the project;
 - Experience is key to reflection actions and speculation;
 - Events, research, walking research, primary and secondary research.
3. Evaluation of experienced
 - Events, research, walking, primary and secondary;
 - Further enquiry through making, drawing, leading to actions, questions and speculation to enable concept testing and development;
 - Reiteration leading to a deeper understanding.

Investigation and Enquiry

The design of the learning and teaching approaches, to enhance "investigation", "immersion" and "evaluation", asked students to form communities of practice. This "situated learning" after Lave and Wenger (1991)^[1] and "living practice" after Higgs et al (2011)^[2] encouraged students to share and discuss initial research into the historical, political and cultural contexts of the Spitalfields area, the Synagogue and the building. This approach helps to discourage surface learning and encourage the initial research to be a launch pad for deeper and broader understanding, while encouraging the student voice. Once the students found an interest or position, they could undertake their own path of development and discovery; their conclusion and findings were demonstrated as individual outcomes. To document and enable reflection, action and speculation, a week-by-week practice journal became the key document. The journal acted as the vehicle to demonstrate and test thoughts, actions and decisions, enabling the student to speculate through drawings and diagrams, evidencing their process and

practice. It further encouraged and developed communication skills, to give the students their own voice. The challenge was to ensure the journal was used as a tool while the immersive investigation was taking place, avoiding retrospective entries.

Immersion

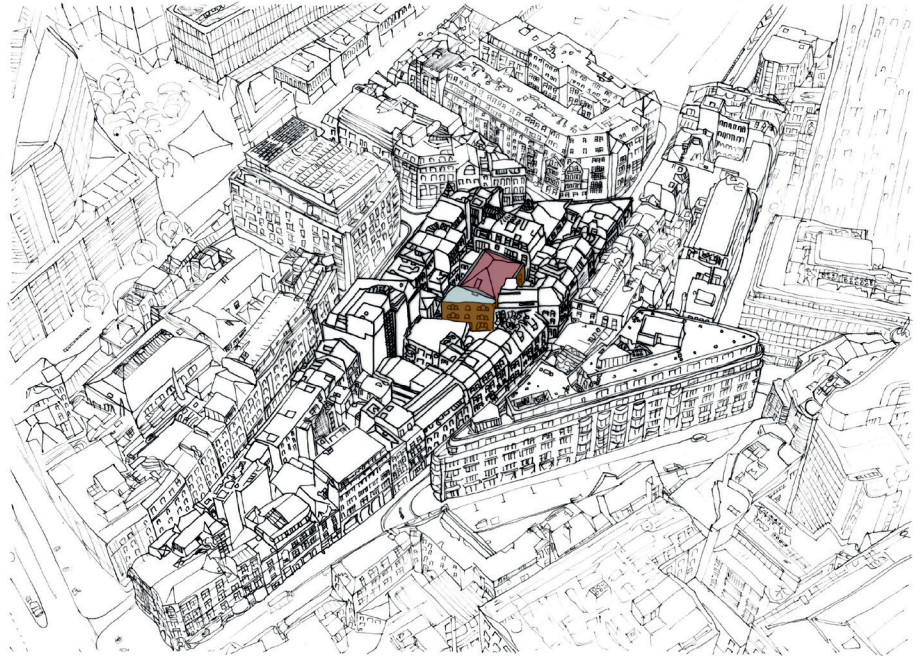


Figure 3: Spitalfields area (image by Aleksandra Jagodzinska)



Figure 4: Sandys Row Basement (image by Maria Klimko)



Figure 5: Legacy Sea Chest with bird decoration (image by Melanie Denton)

Students were introduced to the site, whereupon they researched the history and cultural context of the area, collectively developing their findings. In 1681 a wooden chapel was built on the former Artillery grounds of Henry VIII. A brick chapel was established in 1766 and converted into Sandys Row Synagogue 1840 [Figure 3]. Today the narrow streets evoke the atmosphere of Victorian London: to the west Liverpool Street station looms large; to the east, Brick Lane diversifying and reinventing itself yet again, this time as a design hub. While the modernised Spitalfields market to the north bustles with food vendors and Fosters-designed market stalls (in stark contrast to the tradition of Petticoat lane market to the South) there is a connection with the Synagogue as it once stored market stalls in the basement. The contrasts of scale and complex cultural/social contexts, provide a richness of hidden personal histories.

The basement [Figure 4] has been recently cleared of knee-deep stored and discarded elements. Among the crumbling paper work, fabrics and general debris, were: preserved silks and prayer shawls; a velvet Bimah cover, created and paid for by the local women of the area for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897; and a faded Torah scroll. An old sea chest, believed to be circa 1700, with painted birds on the side [Figure 5] hints at the heritage of those who travelled from afar.

Grade II listed oak columns and four more recent brick piers support the beams to the exposed ceiling, interrupted by the lagged heating system that asks us to duck and bend our heads to navigate around the space. A crumbling, uneven concrete floor is punctuated occasionally with embedded old buttons and other small items, a legacy from when the market stall holders of Petticoat Lane stored their wares overnight. In the beams, nails and chalk writing are further reminders of this connection, as well as the ramp that allowed easy access for the stall holders from the street into the basement. The challenge posed by the client was how, through research and reflection, could the integrity of the space be maintained, embracing these palimpsests and materiality.

One of the first exercises on site was for students to individually voice-record the environmental, sensory and emotional impact of the space, on experiencing it for the first time. These initial impressions and observations were later used as an underpinning for observational drawing, photographic and measured surveys (the latter being a group exercise). These reflections were edited and recorded within the journals [Figure 6]; images were used to support findings, questions and suggest future approaches.

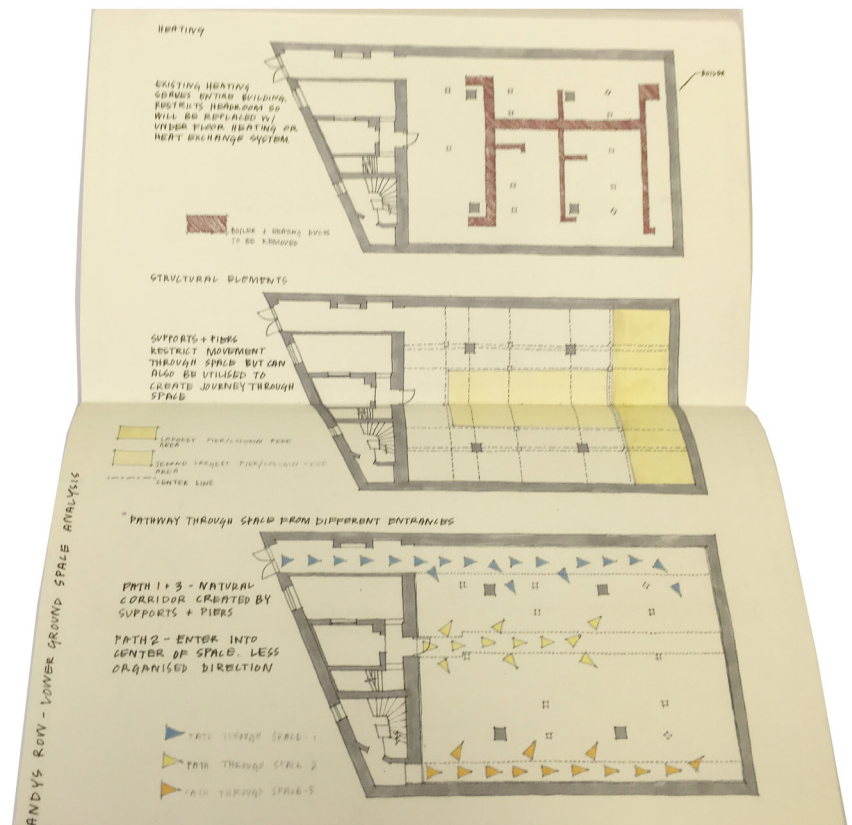
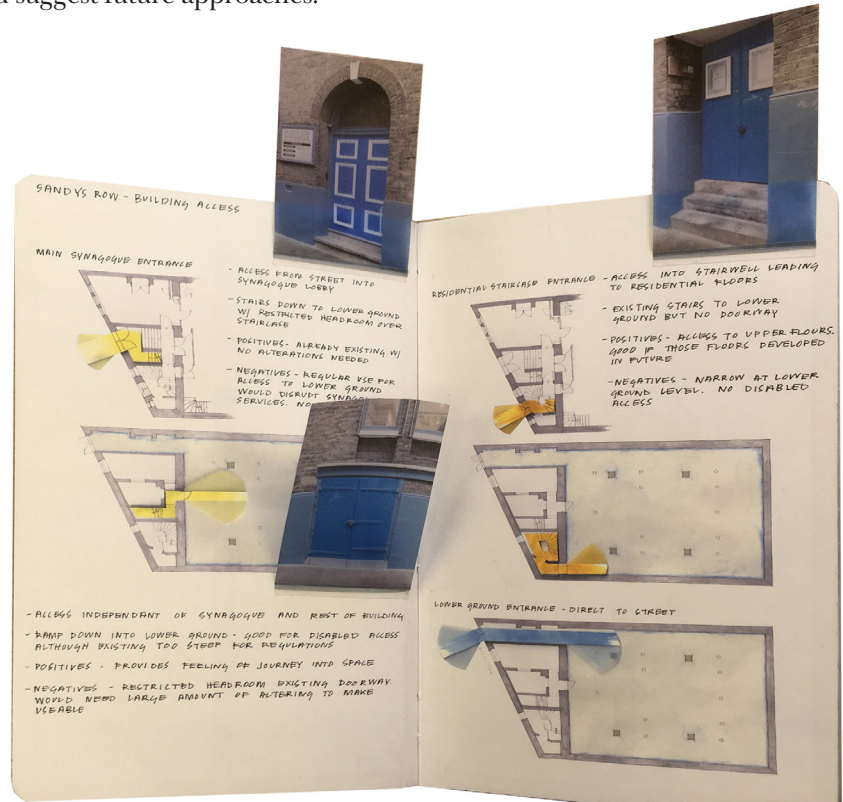


Figure 6: Practice Journal reflection through diagrams (Eleanor Hopwood)

“It felt strange talking to myself walking around the space. But later I realised that I would have forgotten that first experience of the basement, the warmth and sense of history... Later when I talked to my friends they all had different experiences,” reported one student.

To provide support and structure to the programme of learning a series of talks and walks by Rachel Lichtenstein and Harvey Rifkind were arranged [Figs 7-9], coupled with site and area drawing sessions with tutors. We were very fortunate that we could visit on several occasions, while the investment of time and knowledge from Rachel and Harvey revealed ‘unseen’ research and understanding that could not have been sourced using secondary resources. The students’ response to this approach was incredibly positive, as the quotations from two students below testifies:



Figure 8: The crypt Christ Church Spitalfields, with Rachel Lichtenstein (image by Karl Harris)



Figure 9: Harvey Rifkind immersing students into the Synagogue’s cultural context and traditions (image by Miriam Aggett)



Figure 7: Immersion into the historical context of the area with Rachel Lichtenstein (image by Suzanne Smeeth-Poaros)

“The walking tour given by Rachel Lichtenstein has been a brilliant source of inspiration for our project based at Sandys Row Synagogue. Part of the brief is to involve the history and demographics of the local area into the cultural space that we design. As much as you can learn from researching and reading there is nothing like hearing someone who is passionate on a subject talk about it. Rachel showed us the area of Spitalfields, Aldgate and Whitechapel as she has experienced it watching it change over decades as she carries out her work as a social historian. Hearing the stories behind the buildings and streets was exciting and meant you can start to imagine how the area might have been different to what we see today”.

“As Rachel Lichtenstein is a social historian and artist, her expertise and knowledge helped us in a better understanding of the area through walking tours and discovering what life looked like before, during and after the synagogue’s golden age. In addition, Sandys Row’s president, Harvey, offered an insight into Judaism that made us all more aware of its fundamental ideas and traditions and which in turn made it possible to offer design proposals considerate of the day-to-day life at the synagogue.”

Further visits were arranged to the Bishopsgate Institute, where Lichtenstein is establishing the synagogue’s archive, for the students to further primary research to develop into meaningful concepts connected to personal histories of the local community. Once again, the students found the exercise to be useful and a source of inspiration for their design work.

Evaluation



Figure 10: Artillery Way, leading into Sandys Row (image by Aleksandra Jagodzinska)

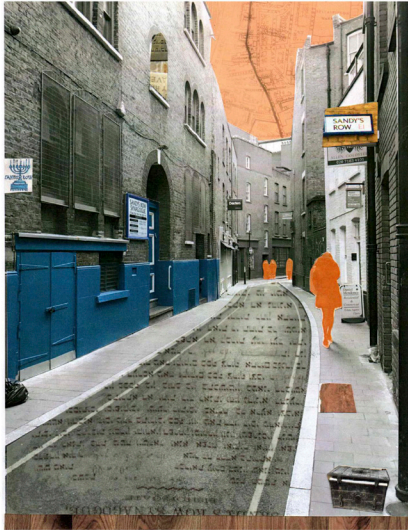


Figure 11: Summary of findings (image by Courtney Curtin)



Figure 12: Building and area research (image by Eleanor Hopwood)

By week five students had amassed a great deal of information. They were then asked to evaluate and summarise their initial research for the building, area and key interests through a series of drawings and collages, rather than writing dense text [Figures 10-12]. In addition, research of the building through model-making was key to understanding the spatial requirements and opportunities [Figure 13].

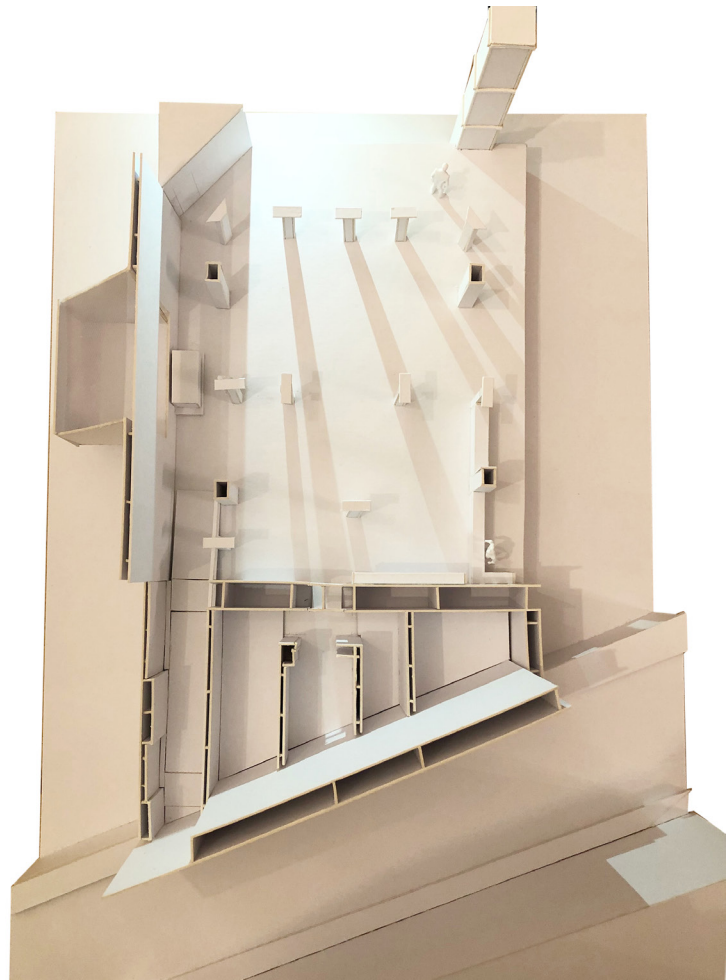


Figure 13: Modelling the existing space before design development (image by Melanie Denton)

Conclusion

The decision to place such a great emphasis on the research for this project, employing ‘living’ and ‘situated’ practice to immerse students into a live project to reveal hidden conditions, proved very successful from both a student and client perspective, as the following comments illustrate:

“The Sandys Row project has been an incredible opportunity to have an insight into the real world of interior design. It let us experience how a client’s briefing could look in the future and how creative constraints can actually work in our favour.”

– Student AJ.

“This project for Sandys Row was one that pushed me to grow as a designer. Getting the opportunity to work on a live project with such dedicated and knowledgeable patrons of the Synagogue is something that has helped me to build a strong foundation for my future studies and career.”

– Student MP.

“I just wanted to write and let you know how utterly delighted Sandys Row Synagogue are with the truly exemplary work produced by the interior design students relating to the basement project at the synagogue... Today they brought some of the students back to the synagogue to present their work in situ and I am so very impressed. The concepts, production and quality of the work is of an extremely high standard and we would very much like, with the students and the Cass’s permission, to publish some of their collages and drawings in a forthcoming publication and potentially take elements of this ideas forward for our HLF capital works project. It has been a really productive collaboration so far and we very much hope to continue this ongoing relationship with Cass.”

– Rachel Lichtenstein

The outcomes [Figures 14-16] are a testament of hard work and dedication of the students, who have invested in the client wholeheartedly with the ambition of the project becoming real. The next step is for the Synagogue to choose elements from the projects they would like to pursue and for a group of students to package that up into a proposal.



Figure 14: Thresholds connection to the city and Sandys Row Synagogue (image by Aleksandra Jagodzinska)



Figure 15: *Unpacked Migration to the East End* (image by Miriam Aggett)



Figure 16: *Presentations to Rachel Lichtenstein* (image by Maria Klimco)

Notes & Citations

1. Lave, J. Wenger, E. (1991) '*Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*'. Cambridge University Press
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Ways of Finding: wayfinding in 'Little Edo'

Colin Priest

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The idea of the public interior^[1] frames a space for civic life to perform and simultaneously challenge the experience and construction of a city image^[2]. This paper narrates how undergraduate students from the UK and Japan embarked upon a series of interdisciplinary activities via two Wayfinding Summer Schools in 2017 and 2018 around the 'Little Edo' district in Kawagoe, Japan. Famous for its low-rise historic buildings, this collaboration was conceived as a way to emphasise the city's vitality through its built environment and communicate the value and legacy of intangible cultural heritage to an anticipated larger international audience beyond the 2020 Olympics.

Virtual and augmented realities were investigated alongside analogue practices (including interviews and peripatetic scavenger hunts) to evidence the contemporary city and its spatial processes. With the goal of designing a non-linguistic wayfinding system to help visitors navigate and orientate themselves, this complex 'matsuri-like' pedagogic approach offered a rich learning and teaching space in a live project context^[3], enabling students to situate their learning^[4]. Participating students were from the University of the Arts London - specifically Interior and Spatial Design, Chelsea College of Arts, and Graphic Design at Camberwell College of Arts - together with Human Sciences (Psychology, Sociology and Welfare) at Bunkyo Gakuin University, Tokyo.

The design of a complex space and visual information system infuses the idea of wayfinding. Commonly associated with signposts, exhibitions or transport stations, this particular design practice fundamentally orients and navigates an experience of where to go that extends into everyday city life. Today the contemporary city is often framed as a nostalgic place, typically with a "historical field of vision"^[5] blurring the threshold of public and private space to frame a public interior "regardless of its scale... informed and shaped by ideas"^[6]. Boyer suggests in *The City of Collective Memory*, that "packaged environments have become vital instruments enhancing the prestige and desirability of place"^[7], urging a reappraisal of our shared responsibility in the symbolisation, visualisation and gathering that Norberg-Schulz characterises as a "sense of place"^[8]. Here the role of wayfinding to guide people also constructs a city image that is more than material substance, shape, texture and colour. The thinking of urbanist and theorist Kevin Lynch is instructive in this regard, where the constituent parts of the city, landmarks, edges, paths, nodes and districts combine to provide a "visual form"^[9] (Figure 1). He elaborates saying "despite a few remaining puzzles, it now seems unlikely that there is any mystic 'instinct' of wayfinding. Rather there is a consistent use and organization of definite sensory cues from the external environment"^[10].



Figure 1: Bunkyo Gakuin University and University of the Arts London students collectively evaluate data from the Image of the City workshop (Photo: BGU, 2017)

In this way we experience the city and its collective memory, exterior and interior, past and present “superimposed on each other... [to] culminate in an experience of diversity”^[11] and where “nothing is experienced by itself, but always in relation to its surroundings, the sequences of events leading up to it, the memory of past experiences”^[12]. As such, finding a way demands a critical position to what has gone before and, as Boyer encourages, “we are compelled to create new memory walks through the city, new maps that help us resist and subvert the all-too-programmed and enveloping messages of our consumer culture”^[13]. This encourages the exploration of the city and its interiors as a resource with fresh eyes, where other perspectives challenge spatial perceptions, socio-cultural identities and interdisciplinary boundaries.



Figure 2: Students from University of the Arts London visit Candy Alley, Kawagoe. (Photo: Colin Priest, 2018)

Over a period of 4-5 weeks, undergraduate students from University of the Arts London - BA (Hons) Interior and Spatial Design, Chelsea College of Arts and BA (Hons) Graphic Design, Camberwell College of Arts - embarked upon a collaborative wayfinding project with human sciences undergraduate students from Bunkyo Gakuin University, Tokyo. Taking place over the summers of 2017 and 2018, six students and two lecturers travelled to Kawagoe in the Saitama Prefecture, north west of Tokyo, to experience, explore and engage with the city, famous for its sweet potato delicacies, romantic kimono walks and historic 'Little Edo' district (Figure 2). From the outset, the programme encouraged various forms of knowledge exchange and enquiry that merge site visits, meeting local makers and planners and collaborative working inside and outside the classroom context. The structure of activity over an intense four-day week work schedule encouraged thoughtful productivity and celebratory engagement with architecture, people, objects and food. Festival-like collaborative activities were invented, involving spatial audits across commercial and heritage areas, social gatherings inside cafes, exhibition halls and museums and participatory workshops throughout the city that supported a simultaneous sense of risk-taking and reflexive learning on all sides via an array of interior contexts (Figure 3).



Figure 3: University of the Arts London students undertake an Age Simulation workshop inside the classroom led by Bunkyo Gakuin University students. (Photo. Charlie Abbott. 2018)

Such activities are reminiscent of a Matsuri (broadly translated as a festival), a civil and religious Shinto shrine ceremony in Japan. Serving many purposes, the festival constructs a binary relationship between space and atmosphere, temporally underlining Norberg-Schultz's note in *Existence, Space and Architecture* that "most [...] actions comprise a spatial aspect, in the sense that the objects of orientation are distributed according to such relations as inside and outside; far away and close by; separate and united; and continuous and discontinuous"^[14]. The intention was to simultaneously link the past with the present, introducing opportunities for evolution and public understanding of particular communities, intangible cultural heritage^[15] and socio-cultural contexts. This format of public immersion is significant - it is both frenetic and ordered to those who are both familiar and unfamiliar with the nature of the occasion, nurturing excitement, good-will and cooperation. This directly translates to the educational atmosphere of the Wayfinding Summer School environment. Students from different disciplines were introduced via formal welcomes, spontaneous celebrations and study-based activities to different modes of thinking and acting; their collaborations mirrored the intensity and variety of festival life. Students from both institutions designed and

delivered cooperative workshops that established boundaries of knowledge and understanding of the city, inside and outside the classroom and the city. This expanded upon the Design Council's "Double Diamond" model^[16] that moves from problem to solution via the four stages of "discover", "Define", "Develop" and "Deliver".

Activities deployed various forms of peripatetic practice, including "memory walks", "scavenger hunts", "pattern pictograms" and "colour audits". In addition, there were interviews and demonstrations with local makers inside their shops, and inside City Hall with the Mayor and planning department to discuss conservation guidelines and planning policy. We also met inside a traditional guest house (Ryokan) and tea house for interactive workshops, while lectures and presentations inside the classroom brought together the accumulated data. The identity of the city and its interiors, through this Matsuri-like behaviour, gained momentum through the design of an interdisciplinary project brief via a common commitment to deliver a range of wares for public display in the city itself (Figure 4).

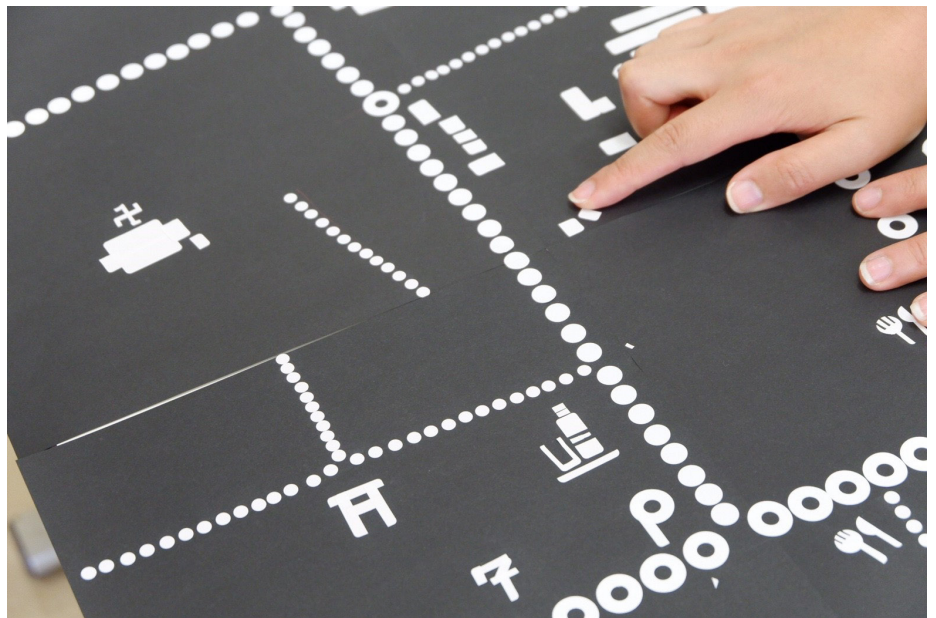


Figure 4: Developing a non-linguistic map of 'Little Edo' to be transferred to products. (Photo. BGU. 2017)

Notably, in the 2018 session, the emphasis was on the design of a wayfinding product that was: for the city and about the city, underscoring the need to connect associated communities. The project thus moved from a speculative one to a mutually beneficial live project^[17] that negotiated a brief, timescale, budget and product between an institution and external collaborator - in this case the city of Kawagoe.

Common Narrative

Whilst 'Hackathons' and 'Idea Festivals' are now commonplace (and some of the classroom workshops did resemble robot wars) the significant difference in this case was the necessity to maintain a meaningful relationship to the city and the experience of the city's public interiors. Primarily due to the extreme summer weather, students worked and navigated the city's shaded streets, interiors and air conditioning; meeting, celebrating and working through language barriers to understand how a place lives (Figure 5).



Figure 5: Bunkyo Gakuin University and University of the Arts London students share field study evidence Hikawa Shrine in Kawagoe. (Photo: Charlie Abbott, 2018)

Actively situating their learning, the project was conceived as a demonstration of Lave and Wenger's theory that "learners inevitably participate in communities of practitioner and that mastery of knowledge and skills requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community"^[18] to engage across disciplines. The programme was also enlivened by the use of augmented reality (significantly social media) connecting distant and local audiences. With both institutions using different virtual learning environments, University of the Arts students chose to display their experiences through instagram, @afterthemelodyends and @unfold.kawagoe; Bunkyo Gakuin University students used LINE, a freeware app for instant communication on electronic devices supported by the institution. In some way reminiscent of Walter Benjamin's fascination with ephemera and "shock experiences" that "enabled the spectator to think through images and to achieve a critical awareness of the present", this image-based approach also emphasized the "frenzy of the visible"^[19] noted by Boyer. However, the platforms were used in very different ways, the former a slow public story, the latter a fast collective data pool. Combined the efficiency of these sharing platforms perpetuated an unprecedented diligence and an awareness of the common narrative as students engaged simultaneously inside and outside the classroom, adding to the sense of excitement and commitment to the project as a whole (Figure 6).



Figure 6: Bunkyo Gakuin University and University of Arts London students share research and vote using mobile phones to decide winners of the 'Kawagoe Scavenger Hunt' at the end of a field study session on site inside a visitor centre. (Photo: BGU, 2017)

Over the two years, the idea of sharing has become an integral part of the programme. From spatial and graphic design students actively learning about each other's design discipline and about human sciences in the 'classroom'; psychology, sociology and human welfare students learning about the creative process in a 'studio' or 'on-site'; to the urban scale, encouraging students to learn about the constituent identities of their own city, design and human sciences. Acts of generosity, like an impromptu visit to a construction site of a 100-year-old guesthouse (Figure 7) to UAL students being invited to a family dinner, revealed the complexities of the city interior, alongside private and public life to shape social confidences and a deeper understanding of cultural differences and commonalities that contribute to a sense of place. This was highlighted by a testimonial from a participating Interior and Spatial Design student stating: "The most significant takeaway is that as designers we have an uncanny role in bridging cultures, people and philosophies, a unique power of our practice that gives us leverage to exercise positive impact, especially at the cusp of a very turbulent century."



Figure 7: Students from University of the Arts London visit Chabudai Kawagoe guesthouse refurbishment. (Photo: Colin Priest, 2018)



Figure 8: Unfold Kawagoe Exhibition Opening, visitors playing with a Toki No Kane (Bell) Tower soft toy. (Photo: Charlie Abbott, 2018)

The variety of engagement, including physical and digital modes, scaffold a pedagogic space that is in a state of perpetual flux, highlighting Lave & Wenger's theory about "legitimate peripherality" and how "a nexus of relations otherwise not perceived as connected"^[20] echo Jonathan Meades statement in Museum without Walls, "there is no such thing as a boring place"^[21]. Two years in, the city transformed visibly from one year to the next, with improved pedestrian signage and walkways and a tangible expansion of the 'Little Edo' district as young entrepreneurs arrive to open pop-up concessions and small traditional shops into the main commercial high street. Priced out from the conservation 'Little Edo' area, they are shifting the retail experience landscape by pioneering contemporary products that speak with a traditional language and are keen to explore how the city represents itself to different visiting communities. This perspective perhaps also informed the character, type and scale of the prototype products designed by the students in 2018. A composition of patterned products inspired by the textures and colours of 'Little Edo' architecture, students co-designed origami, tenegui (folded cloth), a solar-powered backpack, a folded chair, soft toys and seven stamp rally books with handmade symbol stamps. As a collection, the work was displayed in the city exhibition and information centres, with the public, local businesses and city mayor offering feedback and conversation about the student's findings, proposals and exhibition design (Figure 8). Different to the 2017 programme, where students designed typefaces, benches and maps, clearly suggests the changing identity between the historic and contemporary city to open up continued opportunities for the questioning of what and how wayfinding can proliferate and evolve as the city develops post-Olympics in 2020.

Conclusion

This international programme has provoked a number of collaborative relationships and opportunities, institutional and public, via a city-focused international live project. Through engagement and dialogue with external communities and city life, focusing on wayfinding adeptly encouraged the development of transferable and professional skills, socio-cultural sensitivity and confidence. The fluidity of finding a way in the city has enabled memorable and tangible identities that connect heritage and contemporary life, city and interior, through visual, spatial and human sciences that are apposite and place-centric. Enhanced through social media, physical and digital pedagogy, this matsuri-like approach enabled, as Boyer suggests, a space of "common experiences, stories integrate these into the experiences of a community of listeners; they actually structure the community"^[22].

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The homeless project: social agency and Interior Architecture

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This paper sets out the stages (theoretical and practical) by which Interior Architecture students proposed temporary homes for homeless people, culminating in a public exhibition. The paper introduces the term “furniture”, and considers how designing for such a vulnerable group involves more than simply providing shelter.

The design briefs in the Interior Architecture studio at Oxford Brookes University have, in recent years, increasingly focused on socially-oriented themes. Accordingly, the Interior Architecture programme staff have refined the pedagogic sequence in the design studio, as described below, for a better integration of social awareness into the design of architecture. In our studio we foster the idea that design is a powerful resource to address community needs and, if necessary, to challenge divisive social and cultural conventions which oftentimes are reflected in the built environment.

The disciplines of Interior Architecture and Interior Design are often perceived as the superficial application of aesthetics to high-end residential projects, or as a set of skills required to install seductive qualities in retail environments. They are not perceived as fields of knowledge with positively resolving fundamental human aspirations and needs within the built environment. The initial expectation of many students enrolled in our programme is to learn basic design skills that will ensure them access to a professional world, in which high-end design is the most financially rewarding outlet. For these reasons the students consider designing for vulnerable categories, for example homeless people, less relevant to their professional development. The challenge of motivating students to work on ‘social’ briefs led us to look for ways in which to instil in the students a sense of professional social-responsibility and to stimulate them to consider design objectives beyond aesthetic appearance, or superficial understanding of functionality.

Those issues have been discussed and addressed in our Interior Architecture studio through a variety of design themes, conducted over the years with the active participation of the beneficiaries of the design proposals, which in some cases have led to an actual construction. The list of socially-inspired-briefs, in which we have encountered an ever-growing set of different social situations, have included: the design and furnishing of two nurseries in Grandpont Oxford and Bognor Regis (2005/09); spatial devices for shared activities for Oxford-based co-housing communities (2014/15); the refurbishment of a local community-owned pavilion (2015/16); and the redesign of a canteen facility for an Oxford primary school (2016/17). Thus this year’s design brief, structured as a two-semester-live-project^[1] with Crisis Skylight Oxford^[2] continued our ongoing quest for social awareness and made use of our accumulated experience: both in its initial development in the studio, introducing the students gradually to the complexity of the issue, and in its external relations to the various key players relating to homelessness. The brief demonstrates an interdisciplinary approach, involving psychology, phenomenology, and architecture, and the importance of interior architects’ expertise to society (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Public exhibition of students' design proposals at Crisis Skylight Oxford, May 2018 (credit: Francis Varela)



Figure 2: Joint workshop for year 2 and 3 on representation of experiential spatial field, October 2017 (Credit: Orit Sarfatti)

During the first two weeks, the students met with Crisis staff members and a police homeless liaison officer; both offered different and informed perspectives on the topic. This introduced the students to a variety of forms of homelessness of which they, and likely much of the general public, were not aware. These included 'hidden homelessness', a form of homelessness that consists of 'couch-surfing', through to overcrowded accommodation.^[3] The first objective was not to fall into clichés about homelessness, as well as to evaluate ethical issues that may arise with direct contact with homeless people (Austin, 2016). Students were also exposed to social statistics concerning the expansion of homelessness in the UK, and specifically in Oxford,^[4] as well as to the diverse underlying reasons for homelessness. After their initial discussions with Crisis, the students familiarised themselves with individual stories from Crisis database,^[5] and attempted to understand how each homeless person related to the world. To facilitate this process, the students considered different connotations of house and home. It became apparent that someone can lose their house and be technically homeless but still have possessions and memories, and meaningful social interactions and/or a particular affiliation to certain places which might be un-orthodox buildings. Thus, ironically, the homeless can be said to have 'homes', and the students were to enable the individual cases to reconnect these inner homes with physical spaces.

The students subsequently participated in workshops which aimed to make them aware of general concepts in the discipline of Interior Architecture, such as the way people experience space as a continuous spatial field (Figure 2) and the selective perception of visual/bodily stimulation, which provided valuable insights as the project progressed. The homeless project itself consisted of four stages: a) Suitcase brief; b) Support Van brief; c) Furniture, and; d) Final Brief.

At the culmination of the project, the students designed short-term accommodation for homeless people to be placed under the supervision of Crisis Skylight in Oxford, based on the refitting of ZED pod prototypes.^[6] The academic year concluded with a public exhibition held at Crisis Oxford, attended by the press.

a. The Suitcase brief

Each student was asked to modify a suitcase augmenting the spatial properties of a piece of luggage to reflect the notion of “home” for a specific homeless person. The emphasis of the exercise was on the individual: his/her social background, the circumstances that led to homelessness, the meaning of home(lessness), and the different paths that he/she was taking to integrate into mainstream society. Because a suitcase is a portable personal space that contains one’s most precious and basic objects,^[7] we asked the students to find and modify suitcases that represented the individual story of their chosen homeless person – who became their client for the duration of the year’s work. Inside and around the suitcase, each student constructed a set of relationships between meaningful objects and spatial contraptions that captured the complexity of a life in a situation of crisis - the life of a homeless person (Figure 3).

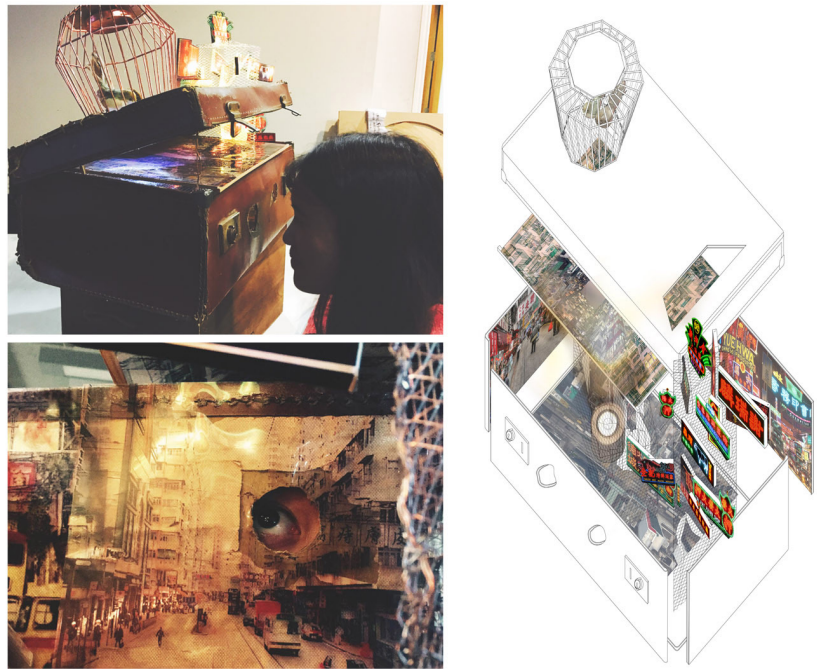


Figure 3: Two photos of a suitcase and an axonometric drawing. Chi Pun chose to investigate the life of an immigrant from Hong-Kong. The suitcase included cultural habits and artefacts and suggest the student’s understanding of the notion ‘personal space’ is a cultural construct. (Credit: Chi Pun)

The use of ‘real’ suitcases allowed the students to focus on finding material qualities which they felt suited the story rather than reinventing them, thus shifting the focus from the container to its content and the ways the two intertwined (or not). The outcome presented a powerful set of narratives of homelessness; some students depicted specific moment of crisis, and others concentrated on everyday routines. The students’ final pieces were exhibited in our studio and members of Crisis Oxford’s staff were invited to review the work. It was at this point that Kate Coker, the director of Crisis Oxford, offered to exhibit the work in their city centre headquarters. This was the first time this group of students identified and acknowledged a direct relationship between design and social impact.

b. The Support Van project

Alongside the suitcases, a more 'practical' second assignment addressed the understanding of the daily functional needs of a homeless person. The students were to adapt the chassis of a commercial van to become a mobile service for homeless people. The variety of designs included domestic provisions such as laundrettes, where both clothing and bodies could be washed (Figure 4), meeting places and intimate spaces for encounters with friends and relatives, and services for recycling waste and produce basic commodities. The designs included work-space concepts, small enterprises to provide employment: a bakery, a plastic recycling centre, a digital carpentry that furnishes the cityscape, and a florist who grows flowers for urban spaces. Whereas the suitcase assignment helped students identify with the psychology of homelessness and reflect upon the individual's mental space, the second assignment focused on bodily conditions, traditionally addressed in a domestic environment. Further, it considered the interaction between practical needs and human dignity, which can be compromised or damaged by the enforced exposure to the urban realm.

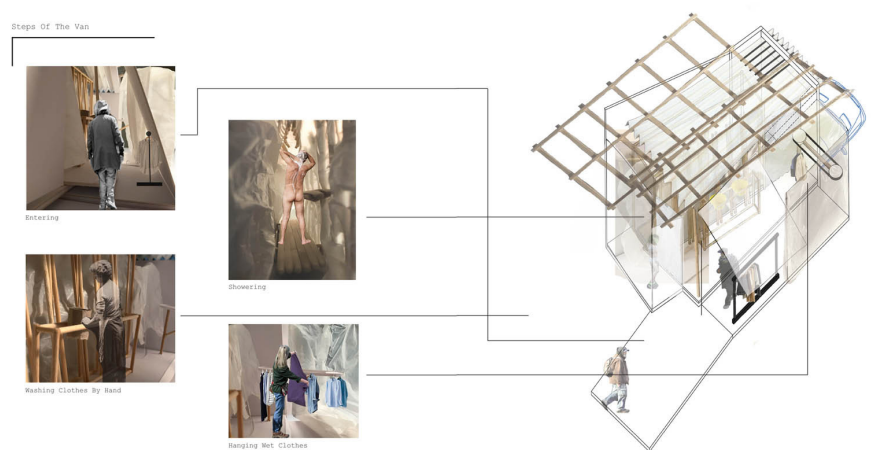


Figure 4: Katerina Doung designed a van that collects rain water for body and clothes washing. The proposal borrows the idea of a conveyor belt from automatic car wash in order to reinforce the notion of 'just another everyday city-life activity'

c. Furniture

Each student was tasked to build a deep frame (open-sided box) 40x40x40cm (1:10 scale of 4x4x4 metres cubic space) with durable materials and to model a series of spatial elements to allow a number of functions to take place, without necessarily sub-dividing the space into smaller units. Here it is important to note that each student had to consider what his/her person would prioritise as a need, and not to provide a range of conventional domestic furniture such as stand-alone bed and tables. To promote and encourage this mode of thinking, the students modelled first at 1:10 some pieces of furniture acting as functional props (sleep, store, sit, rest, work). They then merged them into one multi-functional spatial entity, thus creating a "furniture"^[8] – defined as a spatial device that is larger than a piece of furniture and able to manipulate architectural space. The various functions were controlled by small ergonomic adjustments while defining meaningful portions of space. This design approach enabled students to comprehend that designed spaces are perceived as a continuous membrane (even when made of separate objects).^[9] Elements of the suitcases and functional parts of the support vans were redeployed to articulate the spatial qualities of these deep-framed boxes.

d. Final Brief: Redesigning ZED Pods interiors

The culmination of the didactic process occurred in the last stage of the brief. The students were asked to adapt the structural frame of a ZED pod prototype, placing them on the characteristic metal props over the Nuffield car park, a site next to the Crisis building in Oxford city centre and other relevant services (job centre, train station etc.). Once the site was introduced, the studio discussion focused on the possibility of modifying an urban environment using domestic design terms, thus fostering the relationship of the pods with other services into the design process, including consideration of accessibility, visibility, proximity, comfort and dignity. Changing the students' perception on homeless people from 'social-outlaws' rejected from the city-space to dwellers who perceive and use the city differently had a profound impact on the students' design decisions. This was expressed both in functional terms (some domestic functions were designed to be provided outside the pods) and in psychological terms: homelessness need not be hidden away, degrading the city by its presence, but represents an opportunity to build a resilient and proud local community.

The elevated line of ZED pods in the Nuffield car park provided the unifying context for the final designs. The students could opt for a single pod design (to be mirrored as in English terraces), or to merge two pods for a compact co-housing solution. The internal allowance of space (smaller than in the previous furniture boxes) required a further process of compacting and streamlining of functions, as well as increasing overlapping and flexibility of use. All resulting designs were unique, despite being placed in identical pods. The difference reflected the process of refinements, which started with the suitcases of individual psychological considerations and spatial sequencing, and travelled through the other practical and functional steps of the assignment. Each solution was suited to specific 'social' groups: for example if the homeless individual had children, the pods allowed space for them to visit, or if the individual was a maker, the pod contained a small workshop area or art making space. The designs operated like an extension of the person, and so the different categories of homelessness emerged naturally.



Figure 5: Ayesha Kansal, final pod proposal on site.

Most importantly, the pods did not resemble small houses (Figure 5).

The design criteria did not require a conventional sub-division of the spaces into rooms. Instead, the pods provided a continuous spatial field that could extend into the public space with semi-permanent partitions and changes of levels to establish variable degrees of intimacy. In form and articulation, the design proposals (models and drawings) were similar to shelters or natural organic spaces that provided refuge.^[10]

To conclude, the social-brief worked successfully to support the idea that the design studio can function in the role of social agent: the brief has proved its social impact via the public exhibition and media coverage that prompted public discussion. It offered alternative views and options to those currently used with little success when tackling homelessness. In the long term students learned that well-being and psychological aspects are key when attempting to rethink urban issues in the context of individual spheres of interaction. This understanding does not abandon functional requirements, but rather expands the understanding of what functions mean, and by doing so restores dignity to individuals. The students also began shaping their critical awareness and willingness to proactively engage with local and global communities via a professional prism. Student Chi Pun, for example, summarised her learning in the project: "Before this project I didn't know much about homeless, but throughout the design process I learnt that homelessness can be both physical and psychological. I developed closer feelings to homeless people and understood their struggles and needs. In my design, I reflected the features that could support them to overcome their situations."

At the students' exhibition of models and drawings at Crisis Oxford, it was the combined psychological and practical design approach that caught public attention. Andrew Gant, Leader of Liberal Democrats on Oxford City Council, offered the following comment: "Big hostels have their problems, and new homes tend to be built out of the city centre, where people are far away from the services they need... Obviously you would have to think carefully about the practicalities of something like this [the students' proposals], but it is a great idea and brilliant to see young people being so involved in this issue that resonates very strongly with everyone." Rachel Lawrence, who manages Single Rough Sleeping services for Oxford City Council, added that the work suggests a deep understanding of homelessness issues; one which takes into account the psycho-social trauma and not only the need for a "roof over the head".

Notes & Citations

1. A live project involves a negotiation of a brief, time-scale, product and budget between external collaborator and an educational institution, (Anderson & Priest, 2014)
2. A national charity whose aim is to end homelessness whilst providing an education, training and employment support to homeless people.
3. On other types of homelessness in the UK: <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/types-of-homelessness/>, last entered 23 August 2018
4. Since 2010 the number of rough sleepers on any given night across the UK has doubled: <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/about-homelessness/>, last entered 23 August 2018
5. Crisis run an online campaign 'Everybody in' that aimed at breaking stereotypes about homeless people by telling their personal stories.
6. The ZED pod is a prototype developed by ZEDfactory for an affordable and highly sustainable accommodation, placed on raised platforms to let cars to be parked underneath, a characteristic that potentially allows carparks and other urban left-overs sites to become suitable for accommodation. For more information: <https://www.zedfactory.com/zed-pod>. Last entered 22 August 2018
7. For example Marcel Duchamp's *Boîte-en-Valise*, a reproduction of some of his famous work into a miniature version kept in a bespoke suitcase that works like a miniature museum: "Everything important that I have done can be put into a little suitcase," (1952). Other examples include Robert Golber *Untitled*, 1997 which used a suitcase as a gateway to a private world, and Yin Xiuzhen's *Portable City* series, depicting famous cities in a suitcase using clothing items, where the 'suitcase becomes the life support container of modern life'.
8. The concept of Furniture as a 'living membrane' is presented in Andrea Placidi 'Furniture' in *InHabit: People, Places and Possessions* (eds Buxton, Hulin & Anderson) (2017) Peter Lang Oxford
9. Conventional use of this design approach is imbedded in caravan or sailing boat design, and appear also in architecture, for example in Frank Lloyd Wright's domestic architectures distribution and internal orientation with overlapping 'functions', and Adolf Loos's *Raumplan* with the vertical progression of social hierarchies.
10. The theory of Prospect-Refuge, as proposed by Jay Appleton in *The Experience of the Landscape* (1975) Wiley, was used as a design methodology to understand the primordial response to our environment.

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Places where I have slept

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The following paper describes a project, for both Interior Design and Architecture students, which reconsiders the hotel as “social condenser”. The project also explores regeneration and gentrification within a North American context – city centres characterised by strip malls and the car.

“Touristic time is reversible and touristic space is elastic... correspondences between time and space, between histories and geographies become negotiable.”^[1] Diller+Scofidio

In cities largely dependent on automobile navigation - such as Austin, Texas - public gathering tends to be displaced from the public “outdoors” to the private or semi-public “indoors”. In the absence of pedestrian-friendly streets and squares, public life mostly takes place in semi-public interior spaces. An Interior Design Studio offered in the spring 2018 sought to reflect on the potential role of public interiority and temporary dwelling in the American city with a commitment to urbanity as a condition of diverse and informal conviviality among people from various socio-economic groups and cultural backgrounds. The project was to design a hotel within a vibrant strip mall located in an inner suburb of downtown Austin.

Hotels raise a number of core design issues related to branding, globalization, gentrification, and lifestyle. Airbnb has radically challenged the hospitality industry. Budget constraints and tourists in search of “authenticity” and integration within the local community have made Airbnb the choice of many travelers, altering real estate markets by increasing rental values in tourist areas, and transforming residential neighborhoods into tourist destinations. Digital platforms and social media are shaping the physical world by generating international trends and influencing global taste. International hotel chains were always generic, but as Airbnb has extended worldwide, temporary dwelling spaces in domestic interiors are, arguably, increasingly looking alike. While globalization inevitably homogenizes the built environment, the tourism industry relies on cultural identity to maintain itself. The analysis of Diller + Scofidio’s projects and writings, “Suitcase Studies”, “Slow House” and “Homebodies” was used to reflect on the way that the commodification of the tourist gaze manifests in the built environment and how critical observation can be expressed through design propositions. The tension among opposing forces is at the heart of the hospitality industry: local versus global, authenticity versus familiar comfort, the appeal of uniqueness versus the influence of worldwide trends. Within this contradictory arena, students looked at hospitality as an unspoken pact of semi-fiction between travelers and hospitality designers, resulting in a highly structured play between the real and the imagined where symbols, illusions, and expectations are also part of the design agenda.

What is “authentic” anyway? Isn’t the strip mall a truly “authentic” typology? Operating within the generic realm of the strip mall typology was both a design challenge and an opportunity. The course looked at Interior Design’s capacity to transform neutral space into a time-specific cultural product. The reading of Nicolas Bourriaud’s “Postproduction, Culture as Screen Play, How Art Reprograms the World” manifesto, provided the studio’s conceptual grounds to inspire the creative appropriation and reinterpretation of existing built form.^[2] In an architectural context of no context, such as the non-specific architecture of the suburban mall, students explored spatial organisations defined by the active role of interior elements such as interior surfaces and furniture. As a starting point in the semester, students were asked to consider the design of a hotel room (13’ x 18’ surface area – 3-9 x 5.5m) with a particular

emphasis on the design, documentation, production, and placement of objects and surface treatments. The objective of this exercise was to explore the capacity of interior elements to inform space, and drive the generative design process. The direct relationships between the furniture/surfaces, and their impact on space, guided the design proposals. Students followed the thread of their interests to both uncover and discover new salient material and spatial conditions. Sleeping is a very intimate experience; participants in the studio aimed to create unprecedented oneiric spatial encounters with their guests resulting in long-lasting memories. Experimentation with different materials, physical models and fabrication techniques was encouraged. The outcome was a combination of material studies and spatial investigations.

“The room is the beginning of architecture. It is the place of the mind... The plan is a society of rooms,” wrote Louis Kahn.^[3] On the second half of the course, participants in the studio looked at strategies of adaptability, transformation and reuse of the existing retail structure. Starting from the inside out, the room’s material and formal vocabulary was deployed and further developed to generate a society of rooms: private and public, indoor and outdoor. The advanced-level course was integrated by a total of 15 upper-level undergraduate and graduate students, from Interior Design and Architecture backgrounds (five graduate students from the Interior Design program; eight undergraduate and two graduates from the Architecture program). Students worked individually across the semester. The combination of student’s backgrounds in an interior-focused design studio was unique. Interior Design and architecture students brought different skills to the classroom. Interior Design majors were comfortable working with surfaces and furnishings and engaging materiality at a very early stage of the design process. Architecture students were more reluctant to let interior material choices and atmospheric effects drive their design decisions. After the anxiety associated with the early design exploration, there was a genuine sense of spatial discovery and collective relief. During the semester, there was a very productive exchange of skills - Interior Design students were challenged to consider the possibilities enabled by drastic manipulation of form, and architecture students discovered the capacity of surface treatments and objects to also produce radical spatial transformations.

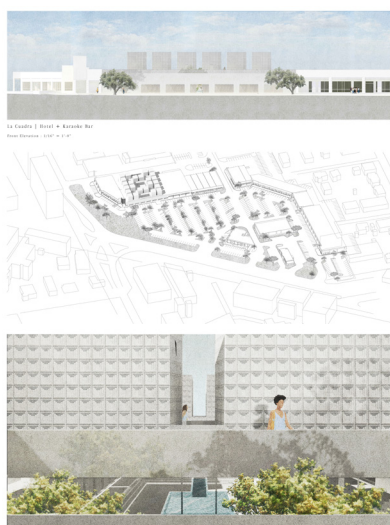


Figure 1: Hannah Frossard's Preliminary Room Design

Here, two projects illustrate the studio design sequence across the semester. Architecture student Hannah Frossard proposed an elevated orthogonal grid of 24 rooms. Her room is conceived as a private sensorium with a voyeuristic scenography inspired by a close analysis of Adolf Loos’ spatial and material interior organizations. The project turns its back to the street creating an unexpected interior. The rich material palette, and the recurrent use of mirrors, make the interior space of the hotel an infinite voyeuristic condition, a rich and endless interior hidden within a banal box (Figures 1 and 2). Interior Design graduate student Georges Fares proposed a youth Glam Hostel. He invested a significant part of the semester designing a multi-functional textile screen/curtain that serves as a mutable interior partition mechanism. Four large communal rooms (12 beds each) are elevated from the ground plane. The screen allows each room to be sub-divided according to different levels of occupancy, individual travelers and groups of friends. The design of the curtain involved a digital exploration of design issues that dealt with serial variation, digitally derived patterning, and digital fabrication. The intricate and multi-faceted felt geometry of the curtain helps with noise absorption. Where conventional hotels resort to mediocre art to decorate and fill interior surfaces, the curtains’ sculptural nature make them an integral decorative element of the hostel. At the same time, the curtains transform the ordinary architecture of the strip mall by “dressing” its walls and transforming it into an extraordinary and theatrical space (Figure 3).

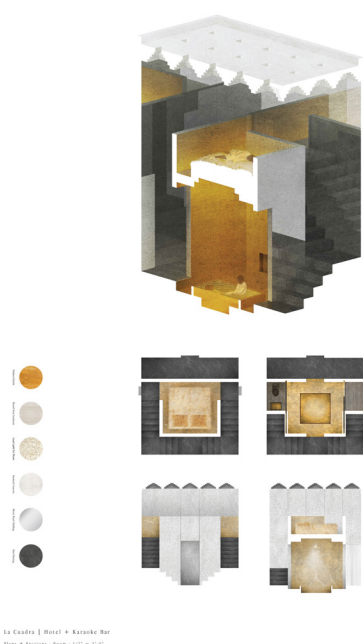


Figure 2: Hannah Frossard's Urban Insertion in Strip Mall

Hostel Area User Scenarios

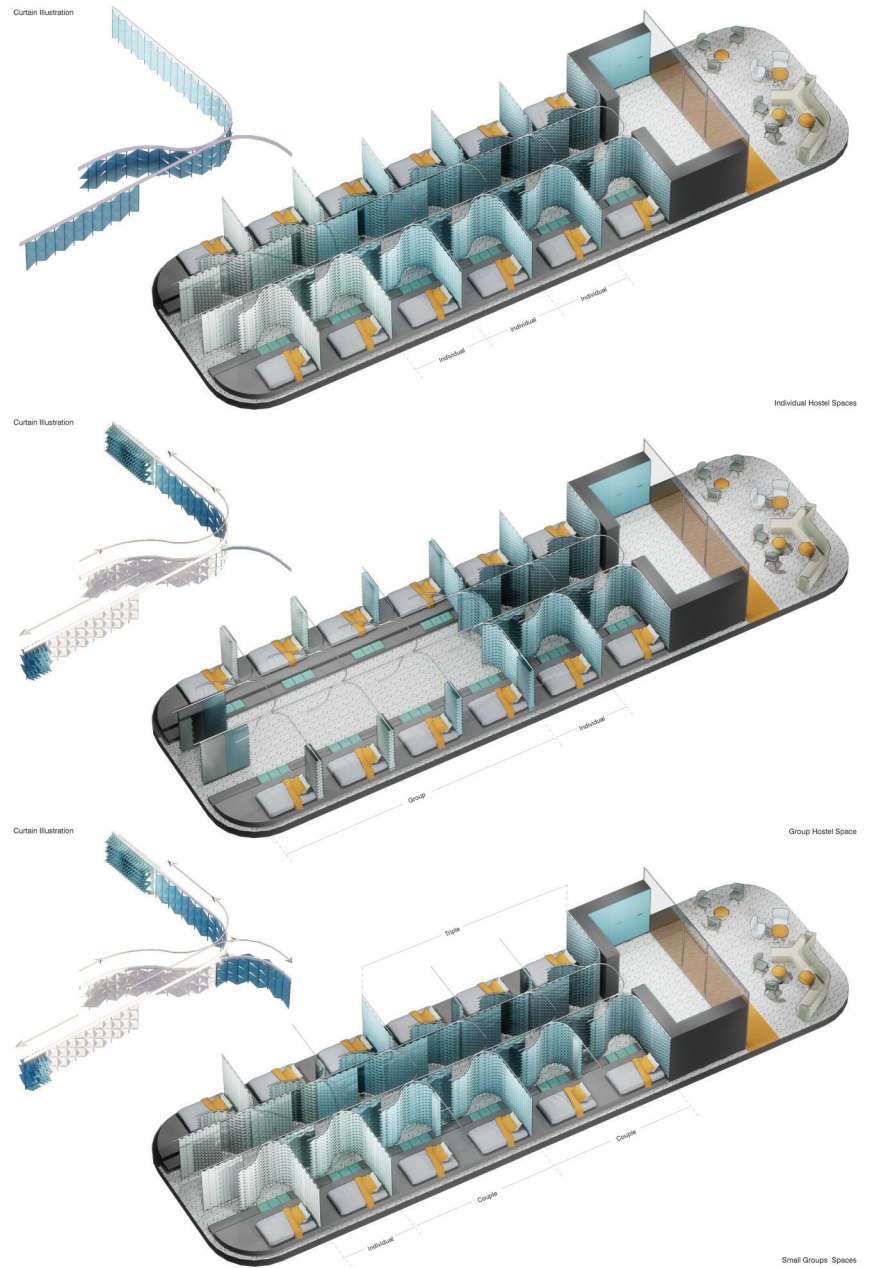


Figure 3: Georges Fares' Hostel Room

When considering the addition of the hotel to the existing socio-economic ecology of the strip mall, students were asked to view the hotel as a social condenser. The studio observed how, as fading commercial strip malls have declined in value, businesses owned by the immigrant population have occupied these spaces. Despite the general unpopularity of this car-driven typology, in gentrified city centers such as Austin's, ironically, the rich diversity of small business and "mom and pop stores" populating strip malls, offer residents the closest to a true "urban" experience. Within the studio site, a 116,000 sq ft strip mall in north Austin, one can take a shirt to be altered at the local tailor, wait for it to be ready while having lunch in the taqueria next door, and kill some extra time in Kikokuniya specialized Japanese bookstore.

A Dollar General, a Taiwanese American supermarket chain, a revolving-belt sushi bar, a hairdresser and an H&R block, are other business occupying the lot. Within the course programmatic requirements, lodging was to be intrinsically combined with another public or semi-public program of the student's choosing, to be deployed strategically to activate and enrich the strip mall's social ecosystem, the neighborhood and the city of Austin.

In Sorkin's words, "cities are juxtaposition engines" [4]. Students were encouraged to carefully consider program juxtapositions that would enable encounters among the immediate local community, extended city residents, and temporary travelers. Hannah Frossard proposed a Karaoke bar at ground level. This program would attract locals and travelers at night, activating the strip mall also during evening hours making it a safer location (Figure 4). The ground floor below the communal hostel rooms designed by Georges Fares is left fully opened to pop-up uses such as temporary markets, food trucks, and music performances. An aluminium version of the room's interior curtain allows the ground level to be sub-divided as needed. Interior elements, the aluminium curtain and furniture pieces are used to define outdoor rooms. Outdoor public space is "domesticated" and treated as an interior (Figures 5 & 6). By embracing the hotel as a social condenser, the studio gained a better understanding of the benefits and challenges of socio-economic diversity and the risk of gentrification. Like a form of urban acupuncture, small and incisive actions have the potential (positive and negative) to radically transform established buildings and urban forms, altering the recursive relationship between the micro (the interior) and the macro (the city's social make up) and therefore changing the way we experience the city.



Figure 4: Public Program, Karaoke

Exploded Axonometric Drawing

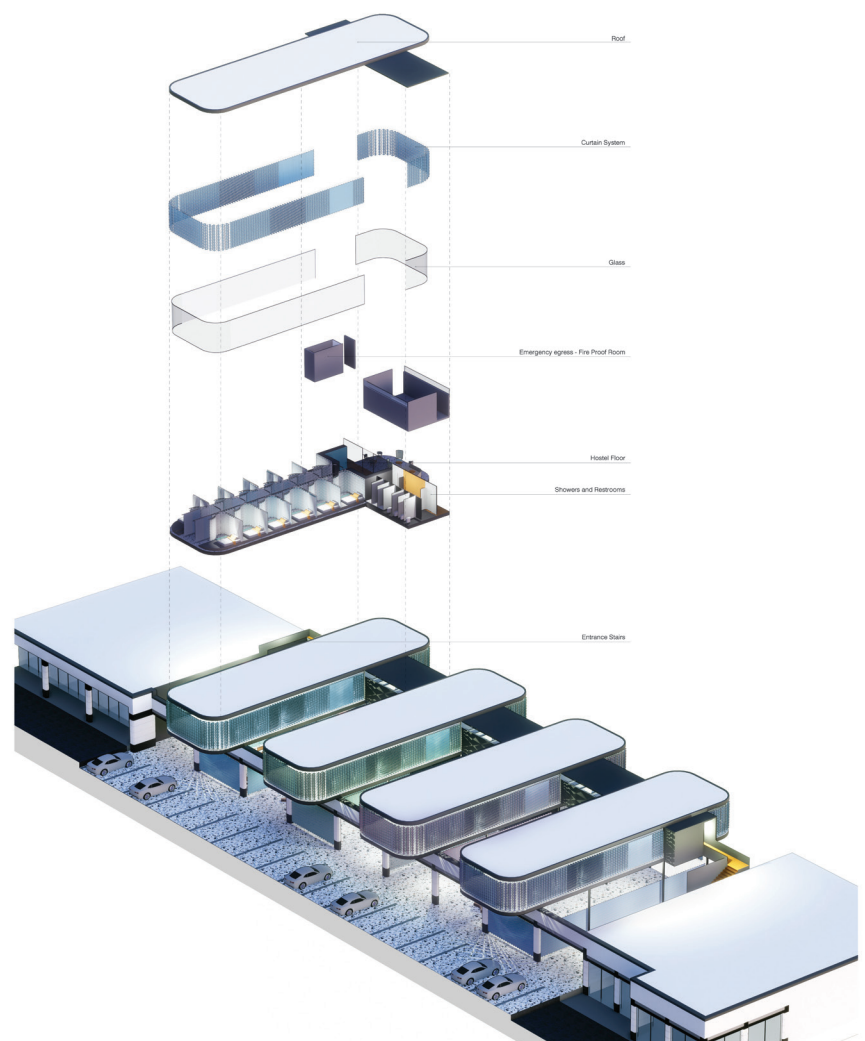
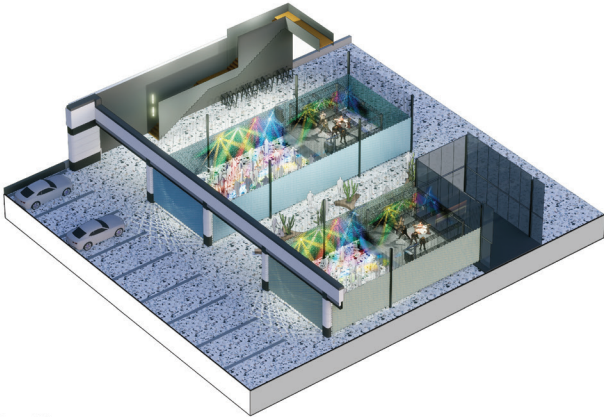


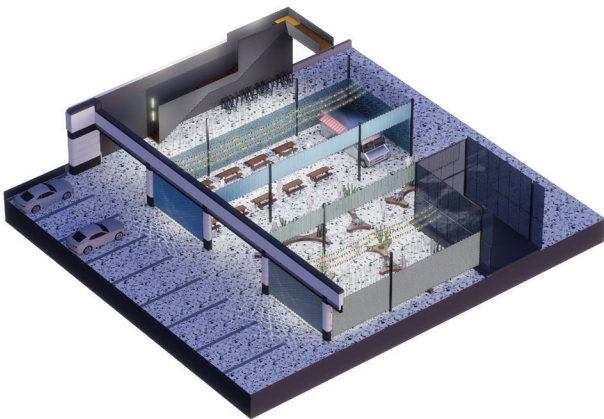
Figure 5: Georges Fares' Intervention in the Strip Mall.

Public Area User Scenarios

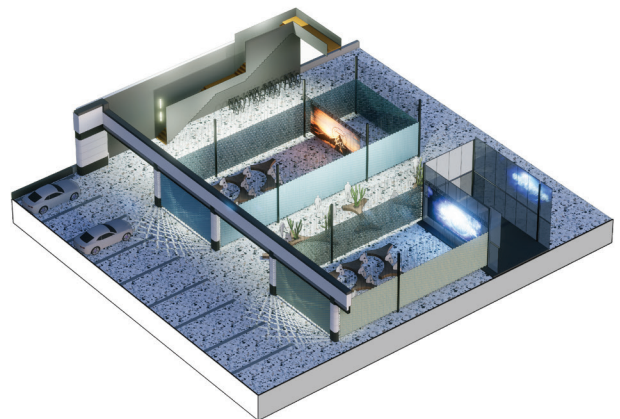


Concert Venues

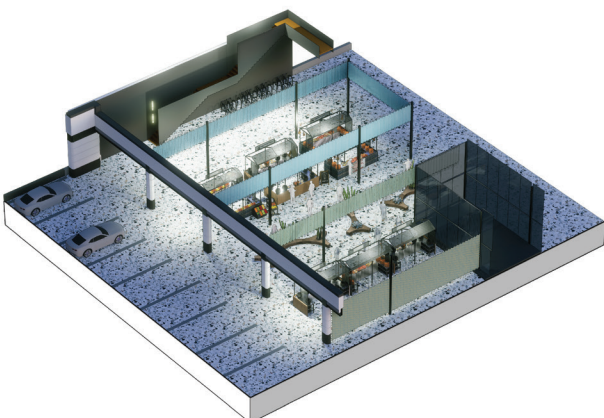
Austin, Texas, is known for its all year long activities and events, from two major music festivals per year to smaller events that pop-up and open in different locations around the city. The flexibility of the Curtain Walls allows it to accommodate any scenario in the public space. based on the event or preference, the system can stack up to open up the space and allow more space to be used, or can close down to create privacies and divide the space into smaller parts.



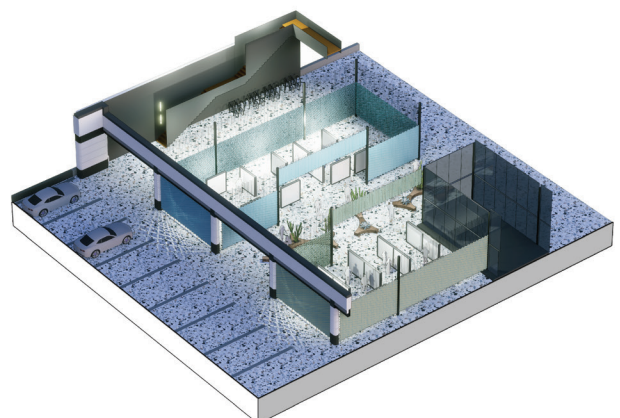
Food Truck Park



Theatre



Market



Exhibition

Figure 6: Georges Fares' ground floor pop-up scenarios. Temporary outdoor rooms.

Notes & Citations

1. Elizabeth Diller & Ricardo Scofidio's "SuitCase Studies, The Production of a National Past" in *Back to the Front: Tourisms of War* (France: F.R.A.C Basse-Normandie, 1994), 32-108.
2. Students read Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction, Culture as Screenplay, How Art Reprograms the World*. New York: Lukas & Stenberg, 2002.
"This art of postproduction seems to respond to the proliferating chaos of global culture in the information age, which is characterized by an increase in the supply of works... It is no longer a matter of elaborating a form on the basis of a raw material but working with objects that are already in circulation on the cultural market, which is to say, objects already informed by other objects. Notions of originality...and even of creation...are slowly blurred in this new cultural landscape marked by the twin figures of the DJ and the programmer, both of whom have the task of selecting cultural objects and inserting them into new contexts."
Extract from, Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction, Culture as Screenplay, How Art Reprograms the World* (New York: Lukas & Stenberg, 2002),13.
3. Lois I Kahn, "The room, the street and human agreement" in A+U January, 1973. <https://www.japlusu.com/news/room-street-and-human-agreement>
4. Michael Sorkin, *Some Assembly Required* (Minneapolis:University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 8.

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Andrew Stone is the Head of The Sir John Cass School of Art, Architecture and Design at London Metropolitan University. He has been involved with art, architecture and design education for over 25 years; teaching, leading, examining and developing courses throughout the UK and overseas. Andy studied Interior Design at Middlesex and then a Masters in the History of Modern Architecture from the Bartlett School of Architecture at UCL, and has practiced in various Architecture and Design studios in London. His fascination is the interior, and particularly the Interior Designer's role in producing environments that choreograph inhabitants' spatial relationship between the city, interior and those daily artefacts and components that support and inform our lives.

Andy was Chair of Interior Educators (2008-10) and Vice Chair (2010-11). He is on the editorial board of *Interiors: Design, Architecture, Culture* (Berg Publishers), and for the peer reviewed e-journals, *IE: Studio and Architecture_Media_Politics_Society*.

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