

CARTHA

I confrères, june 2015

Grafton Architects

Andrew Mackintosh | Benjamin Krüger | Luis Pedro Pinto | Rasmus Norlander | A.S. Bramble
Whoodstudio | Maria Barreiros | Atelier Angular | Migrant Garden | Victoria Collar Ocampo

I confrères

3	Cartha Editorial
5	Interview Matilde Girão Grafton Architects
10	Andrew Mackintosh Sharing without dialogue
12	Benjamin Krüger My eyes are not our eyes
24	Luis Pedro Pinto A letter to RG
26	S.A. Bramble On Rasmus Norlander
33	Whoodstudio Les Garages
37	Maria Barreiros Hierarchy and process in architectural working structures
47	Atelier Angular Bridging the Gaps
49	Migrant Garden 40 architects making 40 birdnests
51	Victoria Collar Ocampo Shared concerns – Inquietudes compartidas

Confrère: “fellow member of a profession”

How do architects relate to each other nowadays? Before trying to address this question it is pertinent to make a clarification, to distinguish between ways of relations and ways of communication. Although they inform each other, they are not necessarily the same. The relation amongst architects is a very intriguing and inclusive map of these three elements, architectural representations, balance between “I” and “We” and time.

In this sense, when we talk about ways of communication, we are referring to ways of experimenting architecture. Hence, we could say that the only impartial way of doing this is by visiting buildings and cities. Contrarily, partial ways of experimentation are representational media such as texts, drawings, floor plans, sections, elevations, perspectives, renders, images, as well as representations of built architecture such as photography or video. All these ways of communication share a partial or edited view by the person who produces them.

What are the types of relation amongst colleagues? Historically, we could mention a number of professional relationships: the master-apprentice, and so the evolution in complexity of this structure over time, but that nevertheless finds its reason in the transmission of knowledge within a more or less hierarchical decision

making system; the arena of the public competitions and public and published debates; schools; professional associations and manifestos or groups.

However, what is of the upmost relevance is that these ways of relations or any other are governed by the timeless fight of the binomial “I” vs. “We” or creator-author vs. group-collaboration.

Our time allows for unconscious or non-orchestrated relations globally nurtured by the increase of exposure to architectural representations and designs and the consequent impact on projects of architects often geographically and culturally distant. Accordingly, communications and travel means also allow for collaborations no longer based on territorial strings. This advises for a revision of the figure of the journeyman. Nowadays, we are all involved in an intensified and perpetuated journeyman state.

Competitions: as with all other service providers inserted in the capitalist system, architects have two paths they can choose from when approaching the acquisition of a job: present a better quality or present a cheaper price than their competitors. The quality is not always clear, it remains, from a certain point on, open to interpretation. Prices are numbers and, as such, easy to compare.

This apparently democratic system of acquiring/appointing a job, through an open competition, can push up the general quality of architecture and allow

young architects to fence with established ones on a neutral ground but, on the other hand, it can also create situations of precarity when the prices to pay for the services architects provide sink, in a desperate struggle for assuring “work”. In which situation do we find ourselves in?

School and professional associations: it would be pertinent to ask whether they are carrying out their labour of being platforms for communication and exchange amongst architects and towards society for dissemination of architectural knowledge. We could question if the number and size of schools in each country truly allows those goals. Are these institutions failing or not at supporting the profession?

Manifestos: do they make sense nowadays? Are they coming up to the frontline? This is the cyclic connotation of Time. Will we soon witness a revival of manifestos? Or maybe they never really left us.

Where is the focus in the binomial “I” vs “we”? Is it the current relations amongst architects more affected by the idea of collaboration and of a social agenda? Is the focus coming back to the “we” to a broader social- politic dimension of architecture?

2008-2015, we could list Madrid, London, New York, Hong Kong, Arab Spring; the beats of these manifestations keep resonating. The precariousness in the profession due to the failing balance between the number of architects and the size of the market, as well as to the non solved adaption of architecture to new professional scenarios where the architect has very limited control over the cities and the construction processes, is silently eroding the professional panorama in no so few countries.

2015, we are at the dawn of a new time and we have just witnessed the decline of an era characterized by the celebration of excess at different extends. On the one hand, the excess on construction, with a dramatic impact on the number of built properties, the housing market collapse, and the territory; on the other hand, the excessive celebration of the “I” that gave origin to the late 20th century architectural star system and marked a period. Nowadays, it seems that it is not the way to go. This phenomenon was in part the reverse of large public expenditures in iconic buildings that no

longer enjoy the acceptance of citizens. In addition, ecological concerns are growing every second. Ecology understood as something collective, social and energetically efficient. The new generations, and by new generation we mean practicing architects regardless their age, are affected by an increase awareness of this conception of community.

We believe this is the global scenario that conscious or unconsciously informs the experiences of our contributors. Indeed, such a perfect cocktail results, as stated, not only in a major awareness of ecological and collective issues but also in a greater interest on collaboration as a strategy to face a challenging time.

Living in a network culture, where communication travels at a speed of a link, we position ourselves to stay one station away from a destination. Plugging in/out; switching on/off; signing in/out is our response to a working agenda. There is no address to where the interview took place. There is a common virtual space of communication.

„(...) supermodernity produces non-places, meaning spaces which are not themselves anthropological places and which, unlike Baudelairean modernity, do not integrate the earlier places: instead these are listed, classified, promoted to the status of “places of memory”, and assigned to a circumscribed and specific position” (Marc Augé, Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity, 1995, p. 77-78)

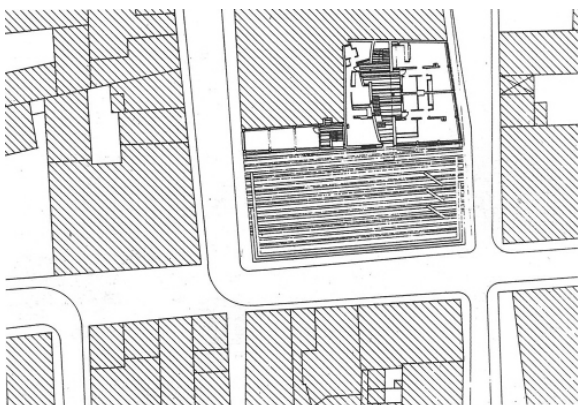
It was both 4pm local time, in Dublin and in Lisbon. Our distance was as far as logging in; entering our username and accepting the invitation to establish a virtual connection space via Skype - a telecommunication video chat. And that's that. Proving right our condition in today's society, from that moment on, we were both conditionally framed in each other's screen. There was no place of reference, but an ephemeral transitional entity.

Sharing common grounds since 1970, Shelley Mc Namara and Yvonne Farrell, both graduates of UCD – University College Dublin – established Grafton Architects in 1978. They are Fellows of the RIAI (Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland); International Honorary Fellows of the RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) and are elected members of Aosdána, the eminent Irish Art organization. They have recently won the fourth annual Jane Drew Prize.



West elevation, Temple Bar Square

1 graftonarchitects.ie



Axonometric drawing of courtyard

What is the meaning of confrère to you?
By confrère you mean collaboration?

Exactly. As a form of engagement between architects.

Right. I think Architecture is a collaborative endeavor. Whether it's within the studio or beyond the studio. In one of your questions, from the review you sent previously, you ask about Group 91 and how the collaboration worked. Maybe I'll speak about that first and then come back to the meaning of the word. Why and how did people alert you?

So, in Ireland, I think without us realizing, three generations of architects were teaching together ever since being students together. And, what happens when you are teaching together is that you develop very long conversations and, again, maybe without us realizing, we were developing a common ground. Our common ground for Group 91. We felt, especially in Ireland, that there was an architectural culture to be built. We were conscious that in other countries there was a much stronger culture of contemporary 20th century architecture and this is to do with the fact that we were a young country in terms of our independence. And there were a lot of issues, I suppose, of identity and many of these things. So, Group 91 happened because this was in the air. And when in 1991 Dublin was City of Culture, we knew it was time to react and do something. We came together to make a project, which was about developing new typologies based on the eighteenth century houses in Dublin – eighteenth century Dublin is a city of houses – and because at that time it was quite derelict in the city center, we felt that it needed its streets rebuilt with new house types. So that was our first reason for setting up Group 91, to make this exhibition. Then because this group was already formed, when a competition was announced for the regeneration of a very large quarter in Dublin, called The Temple Bar, we were shortlisted to be one of the practices to enter this competition. We were against all the big commercial offices including some international commercial offices – SOM. So a group of seven small practices came together to make this competition and we won.

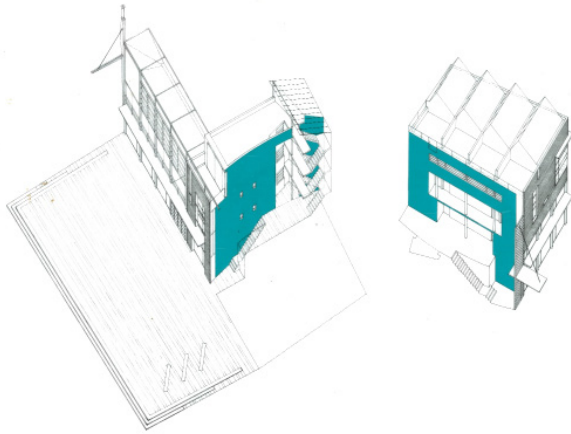
And did you have a sort of group manifesto?
We had an unspoken manifesto that we had developed over time. We believed in the repair of the city. We believed in the idea of city as a series of layers not needing the tabula rasa approach and so we took, not knowing the word at the time – which Manuel de Sola Morales coined – which is the Urban acupuncture philosophy. That was what we were doing – repairing and stitching back this piece of city together. So it was a very exciting and important time for us. For seven offices to come together was not an easy task and what was good was that each practice came to make one project.

Ok, so this was the starting point?

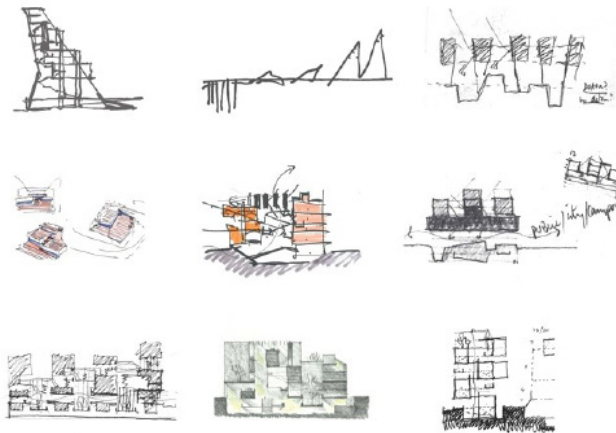
Yes, this was the starting point. And going back to your question about confrères, in general, I think there is a strong connection between teaching and practice in architecture. We find this a very fruitful relationship. We try to make our office¹ feel like a studio. We absolutely believe in collaboration as the very core and basic idea in the practice of architecture.

I imagine this also links to the number of collaborators you have in your studio.

Yes, we keep our studio quite small. The largest we have ever been is 21, maybe 22. This is probably, at the limit of being able to have a very direct and personal relationship with each project and with each group, allowing to cross-fertilize between groups, so that sometimes a group of people working on one project jump to reinforce another, which we believe to be one of the most important resources as a practice. For instance, recently we are doing two competitions and, the instinct is to break down the practice into two teams but we decided not to do that. Instead, we decided to group ourselves together in a melting pot, so to speak, for a short stage and only divide for the final production. We believe in the chemistry and the accident that happens when you ask a diverse group, with diverse talents, to think about one thing. And sometimes it's the outsider that makes a comment or a proposal that acts as the catalyst.



Plan of Temple Bar Square



Diagrams of intent, DNA of each project

In one of your lectures you explain your Diagrams of Intent as “a secret enigmatic symbols that form a part of DNA of each project”. Do they appear at the beginning or are they the result of something achieved during the process, after all do procedures?

It is always different. Sometimes it happens early on, where a sketch captures something and because we know there is something in there, we try to translate it into architecture. And other times, it comes from after a lot of struggle, where everything seems foggy and confusing and we question ourselves a lot until reaching to this sketch, this kind of hieroglyph, that captures the core of each project. It is amazing how essential these sketches can be, as a form of communication between us, and between the outsiders.

Are these sketches produced by both you, and Yvonne?

Yvonne and myself produce them, but other people in the office also produce them. The ones that are published and credited to us are our sketches. So, many of them come from us but very often a sketch that someone in the office draws becomes also part of the process.

Going back to Group 91, how did it close-up?

It is very interesting. I remember young architects saying to me – you really failed because Group 91 finished – but we had never thought about it as being something that would go on. We felt that it was something of magical that came together and was completed, because everybody made a project. I suppose, things happen naturally.

A built project?

Well, not everybody actually. One of the architects, McGarry Ni Eanaigh, unfortunately didn't because they were doing a bridge across the river Liffey and that project stopped. It was a tragedy. But effectively, people made their projects and when the project was done everybody went their own way. Although we have spoken about collaboration, and some people within the group have collaborated since, I think if there were certain opportunities it could work.

Again, I suppose you have to believe when things happen naturally. It's hard to force collaboration. And in fact, we tried once or twice to collaborate with people with whom we thought we had common ground, and we do, but then the chemistry of working together was quite difficult. So it doesn't always work so easily. It depends on how big the project is and how independent you can be and respect egos.

And boundaries, I suppose. Understanding where those boundaries touch and distance themselves. How was the working space of Group 91 organized? Was there a physical space or did each practice work independently?

We worked closely together, meeting once a week. We divided the area into different parts and each practice had to make proposals for those areas and then we worked on how to stitch them together. We reviewed each other's work. Which was very painful, at times, because you know your peers; you respect your peers and so, criticism from your peers is painful and some people are more fluent than others and make beautiful drawings and some people are slower and make not so beautiful drawings. There was always this balance to be held. In the end, a number of collaborators undertook the mission of bringing together our proposal, in terms of format and graphical representation. It was important that it looked like one project.

Exactly. So here we reach the issue of authorship. How was this preserved?

I don't think, at the time of the competition, authorship was an issue because everybody had made a huge contribution and, we really did feel everybody owned that project. No one individual or no ones office owned that project. There was a very strong sense of it being a team project. Everybody invested their energy at a same level and everybody made a very important contribution. So, there was no issue of authorship, really. Well, I certainly didn't feel it. It was Group 91 project and that was it. And then, of course, when the projects were completed, the authorship became very clear. Here, we were dealing with individual projects after the competition phase.

Do you feel it would make sense to go back to A Group 91 collaboration?

Absolutely, if the combination was right and if the scale is right. We are always open to collaboration; it's just that there hasn't been that many of those opportunities in Ireland, in terms of a whole urban quarter being regenerated by one company. See, The Temple Bar project was effectively administered by the state. Many of the collaborative projects are now run by developers, commercial developers, that are not so interested in us.

You describe "The role of an Architect as the translator of need into built work, into the silent language of space". This is, in every dimension, a simple yet complex explanation of what architects do. What if the need is questioned?

We always question the need, actually, the need in terms of the brief; the ambition of the client. For instance, in educational buildings, which we are lucky to work upon very often, the need is questioned in terms of: what is ethos, what is the hidden ambition that the client wants but can't always express. Considering the Bocconi University in Milan, in some ways you could say that the brief, the ambition, or the perception of Bocconi, may have been that it's quite a conservative university of economics but, in reality, because of our belief in the role of education in the city, we thought beyond that and felt that the university is a place of exchange, as a marketplace, that it has an urban and a social role to play. We perceive the university as very important institution in any city and so, the idea of opening the university up to the city was part of our philosophy. Allowing a clear relationship between the university and the city. So, in this sense, you could say we were questioning the need in terms of architectural values.

I think an architect brings a set of values in a project as a form of reaction to a very precise analysis. We believe we go in a precise analysis, like a detective or psychiatrist, and question ourselves – what does the client want and what is our translation of that need into space or into architecture. And the discussion and the answer is very different. For instance, in Lima it was a completely different situation, because of our understanding of the culture and of the climate. Then there

are times that you question need, for instance, if a commercial developer is trying to make too much profit and is pushing the architects in a compromising direction, one has to resist that, even at the risk of walking away.

You give a great example of how architects should collaborate with contemporaneity and its tools – "About computers and technology it is the way you are directing technology and technics of architecture" – and then you mention the pavilion of Siza and Souto Moura for the Serpentine Gallery of 2005, in Hyde park, as piece of traditional timber construction, beautifully crafted and highly sophisticated made by computers, because each piece and each shape was different, cut with a laser. The process was computerized but the result felt like craft.

Well, we felt that very strongly. A year ago, maybe two years ago, we were going to an exhibition in Verona and we saw the most beautiful stair case made by the building workshop of the university of Syracuse, in Sicily. They made this fantastic stone spiral stair with cantilever steps. They were combining solid stone with post-tensioning. So, again, it is the combination of a new technology with the historic craft. There is nothing more exciting than to be able to hold both and not lose the presence of one because of the sophistication of the other. To be able to hold those two things together is wonderful and important. Then you are not afraid because you can place a value on the ancient and bring it together with the highest of technology. It means one has to orchestrate.

How would you describe the daily meaning of the relation between master and apprentice?

The way that we feel is that we are always apprentices. We are always learning from younger architects; from architects that are alive; from architects that have passed away; from younger colleagues. I think we are always apprentices and that is wonderful because you're always being challenged and always learning.

You once also said "Something fantastic about architecture is that still at the age of 95, you are

still realizing you are learning. Architecture is an amazing discipline”.

Yes, and it is. Alejandro de la Sota said a wonderful thing about teaching, which I can’t remember exactly but something as “The only difference between the teacher and the student is that the teacher has more experience, and the thing that they both share is doubt”. This is really interesting and really important because nobody is sure in the making of the project. Nobody has the answer. It’s not because you are older that you have the answer. I mean, very often the younger architect finds the answer much more quickly than the architect with more experience, or experience gets in the way of being able to see clearly. It’s very interesting. There is no certainty.



Yvonne Farrell & Shelley McNamara, Grafton Architects

I believe it is also something very positive about teaching. Shifting from academic approaches to office projects allows one to open the spectrum of reality. And for last, did you have a master figure, a reference?

We did, for sure. Le Corbusier was our master. We apprenticed ourselves to Le Corbusier almost fully, as the nature of our education. We still go back to that work because of the fantastic range. Of course, you have a master when you are young and then you put the master aside and you go off and find many other things that enthusiast because you are free and open but, I would say the solid ground, still is that initial deep exploration of the work of Le Corbusier.

Sharing without dialogue

Andrew Mackintosh

In Architecture we are in a position in which we can share our work and thoughts without the need for written or spoken word. Through drawings we have the ability to communicate with one another on a common basis and exchange on an agreed method of representation. With plan, elevation and cross section, we share all the facts required to construct a building and explain its use. This is an extremely clear and concise method of sharing information, one could say it is similarly found in mathematics, through working almost exclusively with numbers and symbols, ideas are able to be exchanged and understood universally.

During this process of translating thoughts into an accessible format, we gain the skills necessary to later analyse them. It is fruitful that in the experience and knowledge we gain through producing drawings, we expand our own vocabulary in reading drawings.

Analysts learning by doing

Let's take an escape stair as an example, this is an area usually completely reduced to its minimum legal and functional requirements and is one of the most easily identifiable objects in our catalogue. Once you have had to design and move around a fire stair in a couple of different projects, you begin to understand the requirements and rationale which lead to that element being placed in that exact position within a building. In this way we can think of them as a kind of pictogram, a symbol on a plan which you can almost immediately

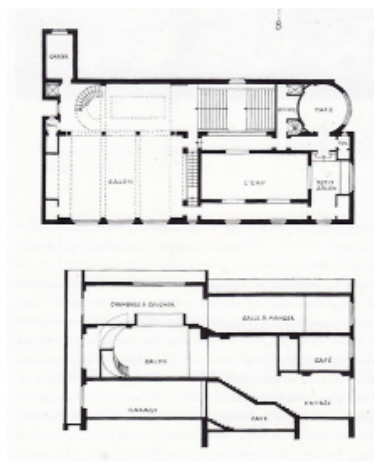
visualise and comprehend.

With more time we continue to consciously record our experiences and define categorisations for Architecture. You can't put Architecture in boxes, but you can recognise through analysis that what you're looking at is a hotel for example. Through our everyday working with the basic architectural elements such as door, window, stairs, we can not only directly get an idea of size, scale and proportion from a drawing but then formulate educated assumptions as to its function.

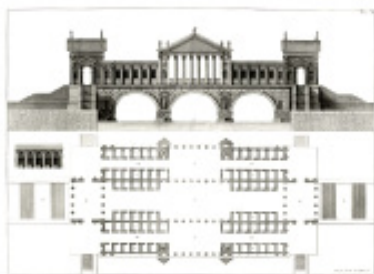
Fantasies in the undefined

Of course in this act of sharing through drawing, we lack key parts of an Architecture which we require to allow us build a real picture in our minds. In most cases materials are lost and the reader must begin to speculate on what sort of finish would be in this space, how would it be treated, what colour would it be? These are critical points in helping construct a complete understanding of what someone is trying to share. However, one can look at these lapses of information as an opportunity to romanticise about what we would like to envisage.

What one can conceive as a strong solid space of white concrete with a light green marble floor and dark oak doors, might in reality just be plasterboard walls with a carpet floor and plastic doors. This possibility to fantasise through the missing pieces creates an internal dialogue in which we begin to expand our own



a



b

1 Bacia, E, John Soane and The Bank of England, Essex, Longman Group UK, 1991, p132.



c

wishes and thoughts in the context of what somebody else is providing us.

Stranger than fiction

The way we can communicate with one another fictional architectural ideas without the need to produce a physical building is a very cathartic experience. From the freedom of the drawing board, one can propose and express the radical and take it no further than a pulse of expression with no commitments.

Nevertheless, we must then ask the question whether a drawing ever become a piece of Architecture if it does not go through the final obstacle of being built.

Think of the Baker house by Loos, in this unbuilt masterpiece, through its drawings alone, we are provided with all we require to distinguish it as piece of Architecture. We can picture what lifestyle would exist in this palace for the glitterati, the champagne fuelled parties of the voyeurs and how one would inhabit the spaces, walk around and swim in the pool. Similarly to Palladio's design for a Rialto bridge in Venice which appeared in his 3rd book of architecture, the project was never realised but had been so widely published that it represents the Palladian Bridges as a building type.

Hereafter

The ability for a piece of work to continue even after physical destruction through the medium of drawing is reassuring for its capability to carry on a participation in Architecture.

Perhaps one of the most recognisable and over-used references for this, is the floor plan for the Bank of England by Soane¹. It is intriguing by its complex arrangements and legendary by its destruction. Nearly 100 years after its demolition, all what we are left with today is a mere outer wall and the drawings in which to analyse this Architecture which use to live.

Perhaps, however, this interest and trust only works for projects of a not so distant past, if we had no accurate record of the floor plan from Soane, would we still be so enticed by it? The lack of hard evidence could, in this case, destroy any truth we hold on such a project and reduce it to an indeterminable study and piece of mythology.

A Monochrome Manifesto

Through the accessibility of communicating by drawing, ideas are able to continuously resonate in our discourse of Architecture and enable borderless debates without the need to be physically present. While this is certainly in our consensual approach of sharing at the moment, drawing will always remain completely undemocratic.

In this way we have a particularly eccentric medium; we define enough of a common language by consensus to understand each other while allowing ourselves enough space to define our own attitude and position within the established frame. The "It's not what you say that's important; it's how you say it" approach of representing one's self. This inevitably produces mixed results, some in which representing is more important than content and vice versa.

By creating these wordless manifestos we put ourselves in the best position for being read in the future, we define everything and nothing, all at the same time. Without writing we give no solid explanation for our reasoning, no guidebook or precise statement to be attached to. Instead, we use a mixture of common values and individual attitudes to share our positions with one another.

Andrew Mackintosh studied architecture at the Scott Sutherland School of Architecture in Aberdeen and is presently an architect at Christ & Ganzenbein in Basel having previously worked for Sou Fujimoto in Tokyo and Christian Kerez in Zurich. He was awarded the 2010 Norman Foster travel scholarship for his research entitled "In search of cold spaces," a global study of northern public spaces. Prior to this he has participated in the student exhibition for the London Architecture Biennale 2006 and the Six Cities design festival, Scotland 2007, both in collaboration with Jonathan Woolf.

Images:

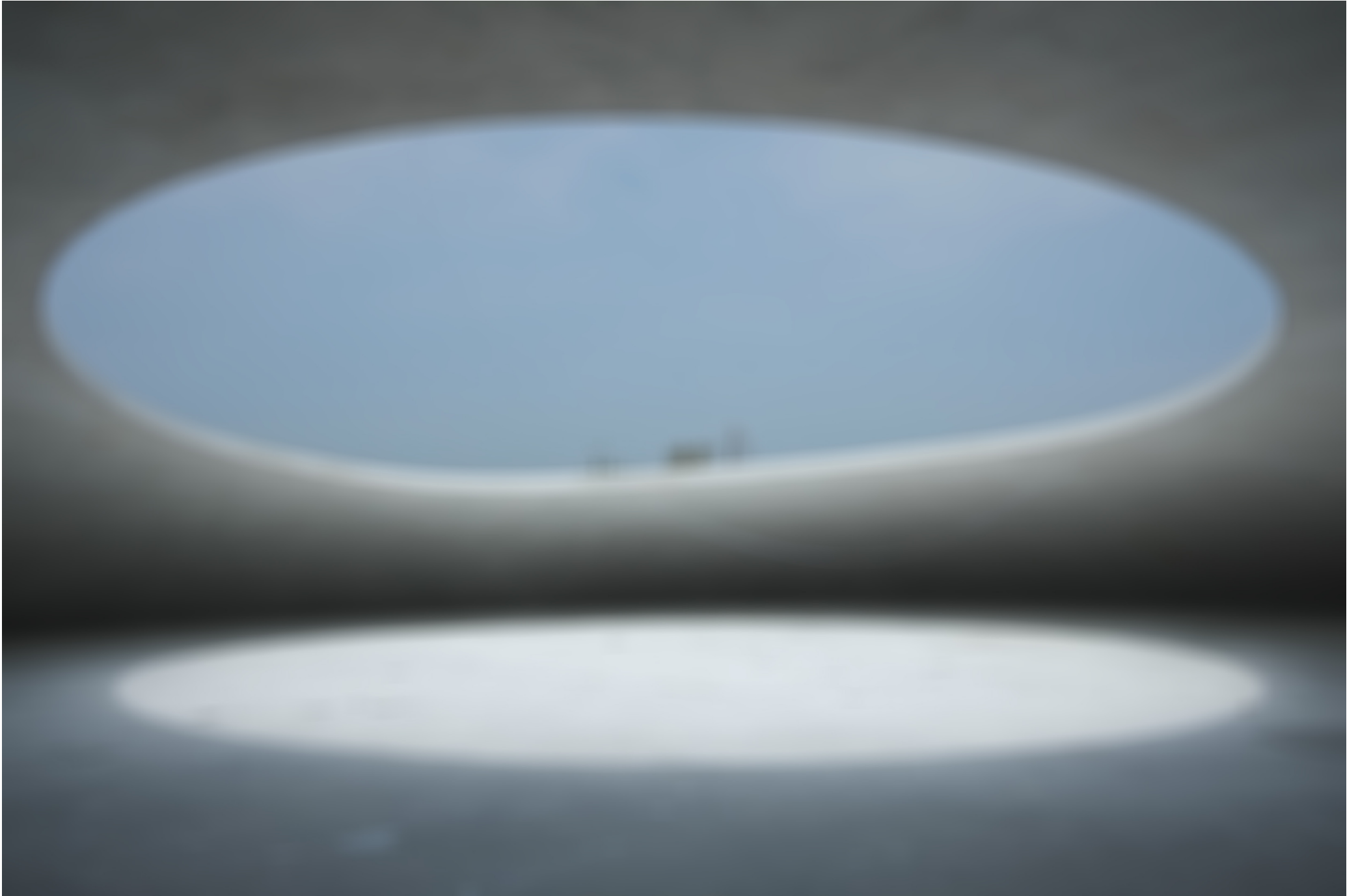
- a Adolf Loos, Haus für Josephine Baker by Paul Groenendijk and Piet Vollaard
- b Rialto Bridge ©Palladio Museum
- c Ground plan of the Bank of England

My eyes are not our eyes

Benjamin Krüger

Images of the same places, buildings and details are taken over and over again. For the most part taken without consciousness, just as marks of footprints on a map, which creates an endless, fatigued stream of architectural photography. The work “My eyes are not our eyes” wants the viewer to look at known architecture of our collective memory again to question: why did that building become a masterpiece? At the same time the consciously blurred photographs reduce architecture to the most basic shape in order to provoke a discovery of new traces and meanings.

Benjamin was born into a young family in 1982. He had a strong interest in clouds in his youth. In 2002, he started to study industrial design but switched to architecture at the Bauhaus University in Weimar. After a semester in Sweden, he graduated and started working with Herzog & de Meuron, where he remained for three years. At the moment, he is an associate at HHF Architects and interested in cloud studies again.



Teshima Art Museum by Ryue Nishizawa, Photograph 2012



Einstein Turm by Erich Mendelsohn, Photograph 2014



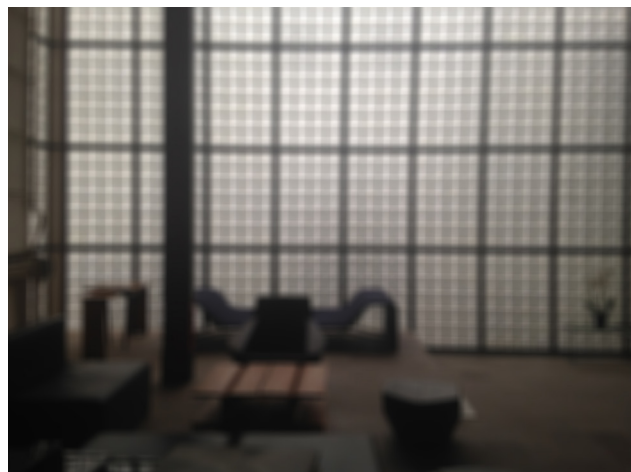
Bauhaus university by Henry van de Velde, Photograph 2015



Pestana Casino by Oscar Niemeyer, Photograph 2012



Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana by Ernesto Lapadula, Giovanni Guerrini and Mario Romano, Photograph 2014



Maison du verre by Pierre Chareau, Photograph 2015



Haus Wittgenstein by Ludwig Wittgenstein, Photograph 2010



Skogskyrkogården by Gunnar Asplund and Sigurd Lewerentz, Photograph 2006



Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum by Ásmundur Sveinsson, Photograph 2014



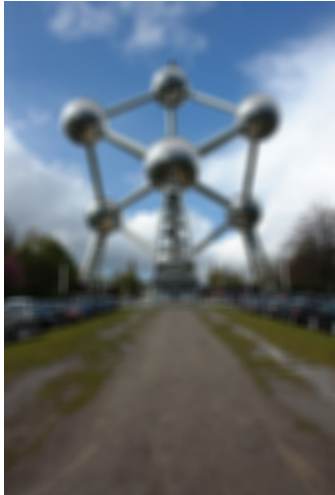
Collection Goetz by Herzog & de Meuron, Photograph 2009



Chiesa di Santa Maria Annunziata by Donato Bramante, Photograph 2014



Katsura Imperial Villa, Photograph 2012



Atomium by André Waterkeyn, Photograph 2012



Le Bureau central de Poste by Jean-François Zevaco, Photograph 2015



Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum by Frank Lloyd Wright, Photograph 2011



Studio Aalto by Alvar Aalto, Photograph 2006



Glass House Pavilion by Philip Johnston, Photograph 2011



Rusakov Club by Konstantin Stepanovich Melnikov, Photograph 2012



Villa Müller by Adolf Loos, Photograph 2007



Villa Tugendhat by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Photograph 2007

A letter to RG

Luis Pedro Pinto

1 Independent worker are workers of a company but are not their employees, at least regarding a legal point of view

2 Valorsul is the company responsible for the treatment and recovery of urban waste in the area of Great Lisbon.

At the time of the events reported, my employment contract with the architecture studio in Lisbon where I was working, was inexistent or, actually, I was an “independent worker”¹. In this situation it was not specified if working outside the studio was illicit or not, although I have always questioned myself about the Republican idea that ethics only exist within the law.

Lisbon, May 2015

Dear RG

The story I wish to tell you goes back about ten years. For a number of reasons I never shared this neither with you or anyone else, and so this story has become a secret. A secret that now I share with you.

When in 2001 I started to work in your studio I was twenty-two and although I often seemed to appear very certain, I had great doubts about the world, about work and architecture. University had taught me some theoretical concepts, little practice and a great deal of illusion. Working for you was the beginning.

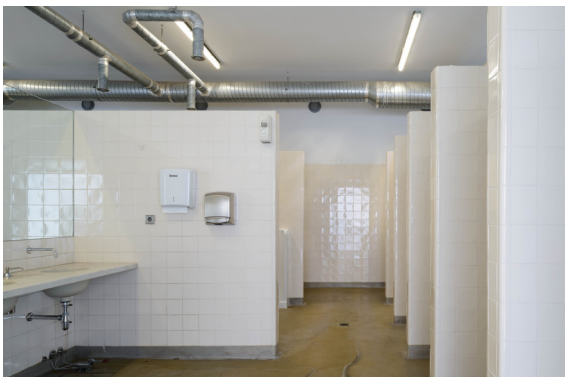
The beginning was marked with a project and a client. Such an extraordinary client, PCR himself! Unlike that saying, “when you sign a contract with the client

you get to know your enemy”, in this particular case this was totally untrue. PCR triggered the story of a friend, the story of a house, the story of how to build a house and develop a project, many projects. No gimmicks, no recipes, no bullshit.

During that time, while I was doing the Portuguese Architectural Association internship and I was a wage earner at your studio, I got an invitation through my father, who knew one of the administrators, to present a fee and cost proposal for a building of washing facilities for Valorsul.² I confess I don’t quite remember what went through my mind in that moment. I remember a tremendous amount of happiness, almost childish. That project could facilitate being on the road towards my own built project! But I also remember being afraid and having real doubts about if I could do it alone, after all, it was natural that I felt that way considering that I hadn’t even finished the Portuguese Architectural Association internship. I was not even officially an architect.

Three possibilities emerged in that situation. The first one was to decline the invitation by claiming my intern condition. The second one was to bring this project to your studio. Finally, the third one was to present the mentioned financial proposal and do the potential project by myself.

The first option was never really an option because it meant quitting, and I had already learned with you



not to do that. So the doubt remained between the other two options. Bringing this project to your studio would certainly result in a real structure and negotiation leverage with the client and it would also win an undoubtedly level of quality. On the other hand, although this would reduce the level of risk, I could waste a real opportunity of working by myself, which probably would never be repeated again and I would also lose access to the entire profit of my work. Oh mercenary spirit!

I chose the third possibility. I presented my proposal, elaborated according to the current established financial and covenanted logic and I didn't tell this to anyone, especially to you. And my proposal was accepted! From one moment to another I had my first commission. I was about to design a proper building, with time schedule, a real location and a client to work with.

If projects weren't already easy to execute at the studio together with you, imagine this one alone! Working between the kitchen table and the desk of my room, models, preliminary studies, execution drawings, budgeting, billing and all the necessary tasks, which we very much enjoy to do, found their way. Everything was done during the night, after dinner and through entire weekends at my parent's house where I had just recently finished the final project for the university.

Beyond my enormous hesitations about what I was architecturally offering, constantly accompanied by my appreciate Herzog & de Meuron monograph, and beyond the difficult task of fitting 250 lockers and I don't know how many toilets from that program, time management was so far the hardest and most complex task. Especially during the construction period, where weekly technical meetings and construction visits had to take place during the day. I strategically scheduled them for 8 a.m. so that I could be fresh at the studio at 10.30am the latest, as if nothing had happened. All this for one entire year.

I remember passionately defending the option of using Viúva Lamego's tiles in the restroom walls during a construction meeting. The contractor wanted to change for a cheaper option, claiming that it was a misuse the tiles in restroom facilities. I couldn't dis-

agree more with him! For me there is no such a thing as first or second-class work. The tiles stayed. The exposed concrete I also managed to keep it. And the same goes for the U-glass at the main facade, the white crushed stone in the garden, and all what I had thought about at home, alone.

Even considering the circumstances, it didn't went that bad. During all this process, I guess some sort of innocent luck accompanied me, beginners luck maybe. Adding to this, the willingness of the client to forgive some extra work and dubious choices.

So many times I wanted to tell you. I wanted to share with you my anguishes and architectural doubts. I am sure that you would have greatly helped me. That you would have said "change this, do this instead of that, sun!" that you would have told me to come to work later and that I could have skip some work in order to go the site. But I didn't! At a certain point I thought it was too late and that you would be upset for me not having told you about the project since the beginning. I thought that you would have considered that as a disloyalty, a breach in our friendship, which was long by then.

And this is it. The construction was finished. There was even an opening ceremony, which I did not attend because it coincided with my working schedule at your studio. Likewise, I had never photographed the building. In fact, I never went back there. This was probably my way of keeping it a secret.

Luís Pedro Pinto was born in 1978, in Lisbon. Fascinated by cities, he graduated in architecture at Universidade Lusíada de Lisboa. For over a decade he has worked enthusiastically in projects and constructions at Bak Gordon Architects. In the 2015 spring, as a consequence of a natural state of restlessness, he thought it was about time to continue... on solo.

Photography: Daniel Malhão

Enclosed Moments

A.S. Bramble on Rasmus Norlander

“Need one point out that (...) the gentle warmth of enclosed regions is the first indication of intimacy? This warm intimacy is the root of all images.”¹

¹ Bachelard, Gaston, “The poetics of Space”, pag. 154, 2 pp.

Rasmus Norlander produces still images, not movies, not shouting photos, not unsettling dynamic pictures.

As an architectural photographer, Rasmus has, in my opinion, a bold stance regarding his profession. His photographs do not try to reproduce the buildings they depict, they do not try to replace the actual experience of the space, they are two dimensional representations of the reality of a certain building, in a certain place at a certain time.

I find this honesty and humbleness extremely valuable in architectural photography. Distancing his work from a noisy spectacularity, he allows the projects to be enticing and suggestive in a very subtle way, denying the need for a fast readability of the architecture’s dynamic and spaciality.

Spaces are shown in a generic way, open wide to be read and interpreted, almost scaleless in their cool nudity. Warmth is scarce in his photos but comfort is still, somehow, a constant. People are, most of the time, absent from his frames and, when present, they acknowledge the camera in a technical interaction, gazing into the lens. Rooms are flattened into the bi-dimensional plane of the image, bringing to our attention the materialisation of the spaces.

There is a peaceful stillness to these works. Shapes and colours seem to retrieve to a quieter place within the frame, still present, still dynamic and full of meaning but toning down to a balanced warm whisper, allowing us to discover our own path into the beauty of the still image.

In his “Zurich West” series he manages to isolate the quiet roughness out of the ever-growing, hektik, ambitious, constant construction site that Zurich has become in the last decade. The playground of numerous architects, where they interact with each other in a multitude of ways, is here shown in a fair manner, with a complete absence of favoritism in the way buildings are pictured, giving us the rare chance of reading their intentions and presence as they were intended to be read. A part of the city that lives and acts as a beehive, full of movement and noise, presents itself frozen in the calm frames of the series. Details are allowed enough time to appear to our eyes, are allowed the needed significant presence to act as markers on the evolution of the cityscape. The diffuse treatment of light lays a thin tissue over the scene, enabling the abrupt verticality of the pictured neubauten to smooth into the unsharp horizon.











MANIFORESTO

Time is like a river but the photographer stands still. Techniques, styles, clients and commissions are like floating branches that can brush you when they pass but never move you. The water is tempting and seem easy to ride. But if you dive in you loose your perspective among the waves and risk drowning in the currents. It will take you away, tumble you around and you will never find the same place again. Maybe it is possible to find a new perspective by holding on to a rock against the current, but most likely you will sink. To navigate in a current is almost impossible.

By refusing to dive you foster your own perspective. The more branches that float by, the more you learn about the forest above.

As a photographer you have a limited time with each branch. They might float fast or slow, straight or in circles. But every branch floats the same way as the others. They are all from the same forest caught in the river of time and ideas. When they have passed, others are sure to come, as long as you stand still and wait. Some of the branches you can reshape, brake or push into a faster stream.

Some are bigger and stronger than you. The bigger they are the harder it is to touch them. You must be careful not be pushed into the stream and lose your point of view. Once you have fallen, there is no way to swim upstream. You can only hope to be lucky and grab another stone further down.

Patience and consistency will always be rewarded in the end.

rasmusnorlander.se

Photography: Rasmus Norlander

Les Garages

Whoodstudio

*We, ourselves and I;
new spaces for modern nomads*

Four months ago, in November 2014 we started a project entitled les Garages: a collection of experimental living units inside a former exhibition space for second hand cars. There are two important things to say about the project.

One thing is that it is dealing with socio demographic transformation that we experience that I would like to entitle: the modern nomads. Especially young people have become increasingly mobile, geographically, socially and professionally. For many people I know, only few things are stable. I think it might be that an overwhelming amount of opportunity leads to an increasing difficulty in taking decisions. I myself am, at this very moment, sitting in the train with my laptop, reading the slogan of the CFF, the swiss train service: “Unterwegs zuhause”, at home on the go. Architecture as an economic process forming the built environment, rather than the academic discipline, has still a way to go to address this phenomena, as well as other demographic socio-economic developments. There are more and more projects sensibly addressing these issues, but they usually depend on very strong organisational structures to really achieve their goals, as these initiatives still go against the current market dynamics. Les Garages is situated somewhere among these initiatives that are

slowly finding their way into our built environment.

Another point that is worth mentioning in the context of this article, is exactly that organisational structure that evolved from the specific condition that les Garages originated from. In this project, over 30 people collaborated on the production of what now are six prototypes for mobile sleeping units inside an open space. Modules that, in principle, allow empty spaces to be quickly transformed into rudimentary living spaces, serving as a landing platform for the intermediate situation that so many young people find themselves in. These modules are part of a design series that we are developing for the modern nomad. A series of modules that are specifically designed for people who have their home inside a backpack and their work inside a laptop. If you want to take this further, for the argument's sake, a building could become just a skeleton of concrete slabs and façades. The interior constantly evolves, lightweight structures would be perpetually replaced and recycled, adapting to the ever faster, ever changing demands of society and the market. The true domino House and some evolved type of furniture, nothing else. But this is another story.

Let's start at the beginning

Many people who arrive in Lausanne as students from abroad, or even from other parts of Switzerland, have great difficulties to find accommodation. Often



students are camping on the camp-site near the universities, or sleep in dormitories at the youth hostel. The local housing situation in general is very difficult due to the steady economic growth of the Lemanic Arc, the densely populated zone along the Lac de Lemane stretching from Montreux until Geneva. For a well functioning housing market that allows for the necessary mobility, an average amount of 1.5% of housing should be vacant. In the case of Lausanne the vacancy was down to 0.6% in 2012. In these conditions Students are the last ones served, creating the inevitable situation described above. But it was 27 ago, not in 2012, that students took the initiative out of their personal need for affordable housing and occupied abandoned apartments in Lausanne. The 1980's were a profitable period for squatters, and Geneva was surprisingly the city with the highest percentage of occupied buildings in Europe at the time. Out of this heritage evolved in 1988 an Association in Lausanne called ALJF (Association pour le Logement des Jeunes en Formation) that houses students in buildings that are temporarily empty prior to renovation or destruction. The concept is known, especially in Holland, as anti Squat, because of the benefits that the owner of the building has. Empty buildings are problematic for a number of reasons but, most importantly, they can still be used even if only for short periods.

As young, recently graduated architects, we are interested in the topic of housing and temporary use of empty spaces due to our individual experience. But also due to larger issues such as the topic of student and professional mobility within an European context. A mobility that we like to categorize as modern nomads. These people break free from their original social environment, on an individualist search for fulfilment, success or escapism. Of course the story of the journeyman is as old as history, but the acceleration the phenomena has witnessed in the last decade, due to transport and communication technologies as well as political and social transformation, justifies the affix modern.

During our studies we were lucky enough to become members of the ALJF, and Christoph now has become a member of the comité, managing housing

for over 200 students in Lausanne, in otherwise empty buildings. Our recently founded office Whood-studio was not created with the aim of completing the largest number of projects possible, but it is rather an open structure allowing us to explore multidisciplinary issues that we are interested in. Our studio is part of a number of young emerging architectural collectives in the French part of Switzerland with a similar work ethic. Even though there is no real structure connecting the individual studios, there seems to be some sort of cohesion in attitude amongst them. The intention not to work for an already established office, but finding an own path, often original and paired with multidisciplinary activities and design research is clearly evident.

Garage

Les Garages was initiated by Christoph Holz, but he is far from being a solo act. In September 2014 the ALJF received a space formerly used as exhibition space for a second hand car dealer. This is not the typical place for student housing proposed to the ALJF, and a transformation into real apartments was not a worthwhile option. However, the topic of temporarily transforming industrial and commercial property into housing is very relevant. It recently caused a controversy in Geneva, where a proposition to change the LDTR (Loi sur les démolitions, transformations et rénovations de maisons d'habitation) was discussed and almost put to vote. The current vacancy of available office space in Geneva is about 240'000m², or 5.9% of the total available surface in 2015 (source: DTZ). We find similar statistics for the entire Lemanic Arc.

The topic of temporary transformation, mixed with a space that is ideal for the exhibition of car sized objects, produced the proposition for an exhibition of prototypes for mobile housing units. These could be tested as part of a real life experiment. The ALJF mailing List is littered with emails of people looking for a couch or a room for a few weeks or months. The concept was developed by Christoph Holz, Gabriel Gonzalez and Mattia Pretolani, the latter two also being members of the association, forming a research group called 'habitat minimal' with the aim of exploring alternative possibilities for cheap and simple housing.

The ALJF, with its origins in the squat movement, still signs contracts called Contrats de Prêt à Usage (article 305 et suivants du CO) with the building owners (usually public institutions) that imply the use of the building without the payment of rent, only covering repair and running costs. This situation has generated a benefit, and thus the Garage project was funded with 5'500 chf by the association.

From this point, the work group circulated an invitation for participation to the project, asking young architects or designers to design a module for a maximum of 1000 chf, with at least a bed and a maximum surface of 7m². Another criteria was that the structure had to be transportable and pass through an opening of 1.6m by 2m (Which is based on the fire exit door sizes in most commercial and industrial buildings). It is fair to mention that Le Repaire Fantastique, one of the young architectural collectives in Lausanne already proposed a type of cadavre exquis collaboration between young architects. The project never saw the light of day, but LRF invited all collaborators and friends to a meeting where the ideas for the project were presented. At this meeting we also proposed the Garage project. After this meeting and the circulation of the idea amongst the network, six teams confirmed their participation:

PSHHH (Guay Antoine/Reverdin Gaspar/Reymond Aurélien) are recent graduates from the HEAD¹ in Geneva in interior architecture, and proposed a structure based on a collage of several types of primitive huts, all based around a central fireplace.

Gabriel Gonzalez, sociologist, member of the ALJF and the Habitat Minimale work group, conducted a workshop with students from Athenaeum, a private architecture school in Lausanne. The proposition by Eric Essa was adapted and became a cube space, consisting of several stackable elements.

Whoodstudio (Holz Georg-Christoph / Wéry Jeanne in collaboration Widmer Regis) are recent EPFL graduates. The project KASA is an envelope made of recycled cardboard that joins second hand furniture around a bed in the middle.

The Project 'Diogenes Grid' was conceived by Pretolani Mattia (member of the ALJF and group habitat minimal, student in architecture at EPFL) and Guex-Crosier Grégoire (also student in Architecture at EPFL). The module hides a bed within a bookshelf made up of OSB panels and insulation made of crushed glass and wax.

La Bifanas was conceived by Renens Breitling Lawrence in collaboration with Le Pommelet Nicolas from the Creative collective Le Sapin in Renens, near Lausanne and uses only 3 by 5 timber slats and rope for the A frame structure.

Laurent Chassot (LRF), Agathe Mignon (currently PHD doctorate at EPFL) and Victoire Paternault joined forces to build 'One Sheep to Sleep'; a very well detailed indoor tent made of real wool felt.

Conclusion

All the participants to the project, however diverse, are locally based. The place, the location is important. Any link must be supported by a network and a physical place where this network can find some form of manifestation. Through fast diffusion, everybody can be a part of a project, by deciding to come and participate or just have a look. Everything is quicker but then quickly forgotten too. The heart of a project has to be as strong as before to stay in the memories of those who, somehow, presence it. At least this does not change. In French speaking Switzerland, the architectural community, or the people actively participating in events and generation of ideas, feels like a village. And a really small one too, when compared to the villages that we find in much larger countries such as Germany and England. In the end, the people who took part in this experiment all knew each other through some connection from before, they all agreed on a common method, idea, and basis for working, without ever agreeing on it. There is a manifesto because there is none. In the case of Les Garages, we see that choosing six groups of architects to collaborate together, but letting them choose and interpret the theme (microhabitat in this case) was a good way to proceed. Doing this we let the

1 HEAD Geneva: Geneva University of Art and Design



small group to practice the “I” under a theme of a “WE”. Everybody felt attached to a cause, but was free to create how they wanted. There is something very efficient in the structure of smaller groups that follow a specific structure, but are otherwise free to evolve within its boundaries. It has a much less complicated organisational structure, it is more bottom-up. The original form of collaboration, the “WE” is a top down, hierarchical system. The “I” generation is strong and needs to make its own proof, to succeed or fail, and then learn the consequences. A new way of collaborating is emerging and, maybe in a few years, we will be able to call it dogma, but the dogma as a large signification, more open and extendable.

Hierarchy and process in architectural working structures

Maria Barreiros

Painting

For the last years I have worked in two different architecture practices. Similar in size and kind of work they are, however opposites in their working processes and, as a consequence, in their workload. At first, the hierarchical structure also looks similar but the presence of a non-architect as the manager in charge, and the management of, not only the design process, but also of the construction work by the entire architecture office, completely changes the office complexity. This is reflected in the map of relationships created through the entire process, the amount of responsibilities assumed over the design process by the entire team members and the produced quantity of support material.

Type A

In Portugal, the typical author-workshop seems to persist, where one figure and one only – the architect, concentrates in itself the search for clients, the investment prospect, the team management, and the pursuit of design decisions and solutions. Plus, and quite frequently, this tasks are overlapped with a teaching position in an architectural school.

Here, the creative process, as well as the team coordination, is usually open to input from all the team members. Normally, one or more architects (depending on the practice size and amount of work), ad-

opts the position of project manager and assumes a higher position in the hierarchic pyramid taking on more responsibilities, but not precisely more decision power. The project manager works closely with the architect in the development of the entire design process. This figure develops, following the architect first ideas and input, a complete design proposal, from the conceptual to the detailing stage, crossing in between the needed and specified phases of a design process and the contact with all the involved workers, entities, specialists and suppliers. The collaborators, and/or interns, of the architectural practice, answer directly to the figure of the project manager and the architect, and usually produce support material to each and every phase of the design process.

When contacting this practice, the client is in search of, even if not voluntarily, a specific design made by a specific author. Here, one buys a piece from an author. In this sense, the work cost cannot be easily compared to current market indicators and negotiable parameters. By default, a higher starting price is assumed and defined by an a priori cost classification.

After the design process, the relationship with the client moves forward to the construction phase. But, by this time, the main responsibility shifts from the architect to the contractor, which reduces its position to a consulting one.

Type B

When the managing figure of a practice is a non-architect, the office seems to open up and pursue a more entrepreneur structure. The manager concentrates the search for clients, the investment prospect, the team management, and above all the control of all budget ceilings and production timings, among contractors, workers and suppliers.

Here, the creative process, as well as the team coordination, is mainly supported from the team members, with few input from the manager, but deeply coordinated by the existing figure of the project manager. This figure coordinates the development of the entire design process, distributes work accordingly to each team member, controls time and cost production, contacts and assures the dynamics between all the involved workers, entities, specialists and suppliers. The collaborators, and/or interns, of the architectural practice, answer directly to the figure of the project manager and the manager, and usually produce support material to each and every phase of the design process. Depending on their capacity, and due to the workload, they see their responsibility quickly increased.

When in contact with this practice, the client is in search of a service. Here, one buys a product. This is especially relevant, when the practice not only offers an architectural service, but a complete control of the entire phases of the process developing afterwards. The practice does not only suggests and comments on contractor's proposals, and monitors construction work, but assumes entire responsibility over the construction phases including the contact with every contractor and their workers, the handling of all legal issues, the negotiation with suppliers, the control of time and costs involved, and all the unpredicted events that occur during the construction process.

This obviously increments the responsibility over the architectural practice, overloading the workers availability and time, but at the same time increases the practice margin for economical profit. By controlling the entire process, every choice of worker, supplier and material, is revised time and time again in search of a better price. The building process is deconstructed and

reorganized in small packages to allow the negotiation of each of every phase and /or work needed. The same happens to one and each material and equipment supplier. This process demands a huge capacity of negotiation from the practice manager. And, since the client budget is discussed in the beginning, this continuous negotiation allows to increase the practice income, and leaves margin for the definition of extras not considered in the previous handled budget.

The negotiation of a construction work phase by phase, also allows for a phased payment. After the completion of each construction phase, a charter, with the quantities, measurements and percentage, of work done is emitted, and the payment is made accordingly to what has been really done in the construction site.

However, even though the economical advantages, this continuous negotiation demands a tremendous capacity from the practice architecture professionals to juggle and be flexible. Since the choice of suppliers and materials is in constant negotiation, the design proposal also needs to be in constant adaptation. To assure quality and the utmost respect of the architectural proposal, the team needs to be one move ahead to prevent mistakes and misconducts from oscillations in previously selected solutions.

Carving

By enlarging the work spectrum and responsibility of a practice to the construction process, one may find a way out for stability in a profession that is, in its current state, economically not viable. In this sense, the difference lies not on either the management is made by an architect or a non-architect but mainly on the chosen attitude towards the current market and service provided.

At the same time, this position allows for a greater responsibility from the architecture professionals which comes hand in hand with an increase in training, by the way of learning by doing. Here, the discipline autonomy is maintained, even improved by the exchange of know-how and information between the entire team, workers, suppliers, entities, etc. And every professional is positioned at a correct and fair place in the decision and responsibility hierarchy and

in the productive process. With this, not only the entire working structure assures an increased dynamic but it also tends to feel and be more involved in the complete working process.

But if a positive view can be carved out from this type of practice in what concerns the work process and experience, something lacks. At this point, we are left again with the ghost of the author-architect. The idea of a practice future, built together with the collaborators support never appears as a concrete possibility. The openness from the employer-employee structure to alternatives such as partnership, limited liability company, etc., is never considered.

A closer, partial and sequential involvement of the collaborators in the company structure would allow for the sharing of responsibilities and, as a long term solution, for the practice sustainability and team maintenance. The sharing of responsibilities would extend not only to the work production but also to the financial and organizational model of the practice. Investments, partnerships, customers collection and selection, payments, contracts, budget control and negotiations, would be done with a more professional approach. The finances of the practice would not be turned into a mixture between the manager private expenses and the company ones, as frequently happens in Portuguese companies. Staff hiring and management, schedule, timing and wages would effectively be discussed and well provided, avoiding burned out collaborators, precarious and badly paid working positions, with a scarce quality free time.

If this kind of practice, conduct and structure are not odd to many countries, it seems to be far away from most of Portuguese architectural practices. To treat the architectural practice, not as an author workshop, but as a profitable and regular service, but still aim to reach a high quality standard, guaranteeing a social, urban and aesthetic commitment and a sense of respect for the entire working team, seems to be the logical approach of a discipline, alike many others which strives in the actual market economy.

Maria Manuel Barreiros (Coimbra, 1986) is an architect, graduated from the Department of Architecture of the University of Coimbra. She was

an editor of Revista NU, from 2005 to 2012 and maintains a regular collaboration with different architectural publications. In the last 5 years she collaborated as an architect in two different offices in Lisbon and Oporto.

Relationship Map - Type A

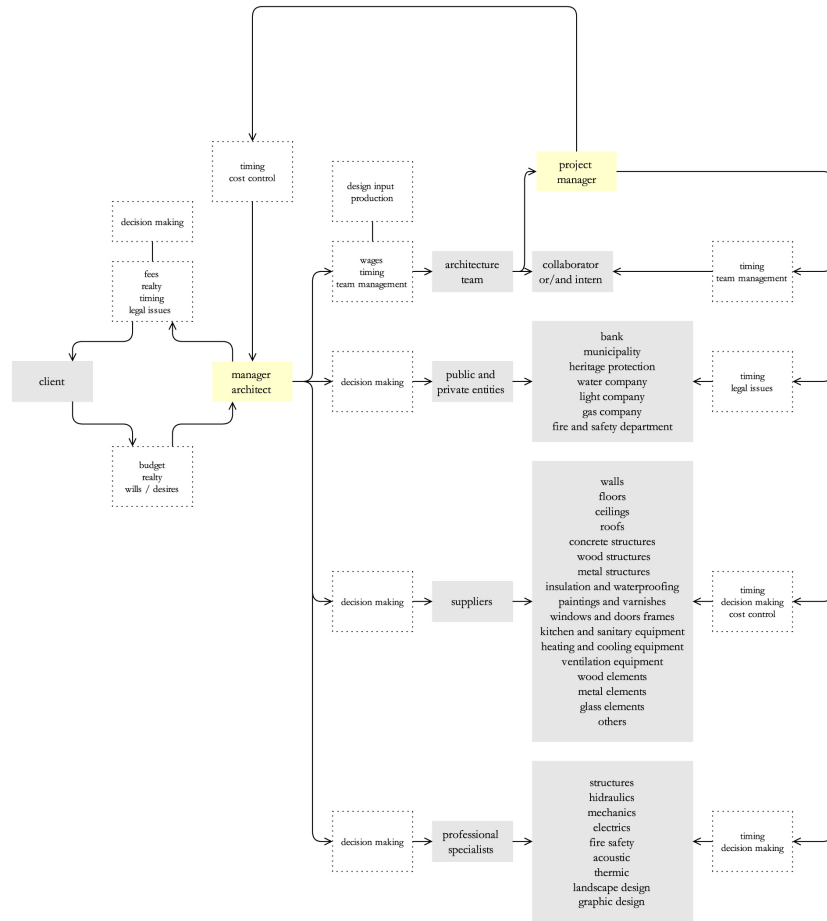


Diagram of the interactions created in a typical author-workshop office, here named type A. As the architect concentrates in himself the decision power so his responsibility towards the end product increases, while diminishes the project

manager autonomy. At the same time the project manager workload persistently increases and with it comes his responsibility towards team management. A fewer control of the project cost is evident.

Relationship Map - Type B

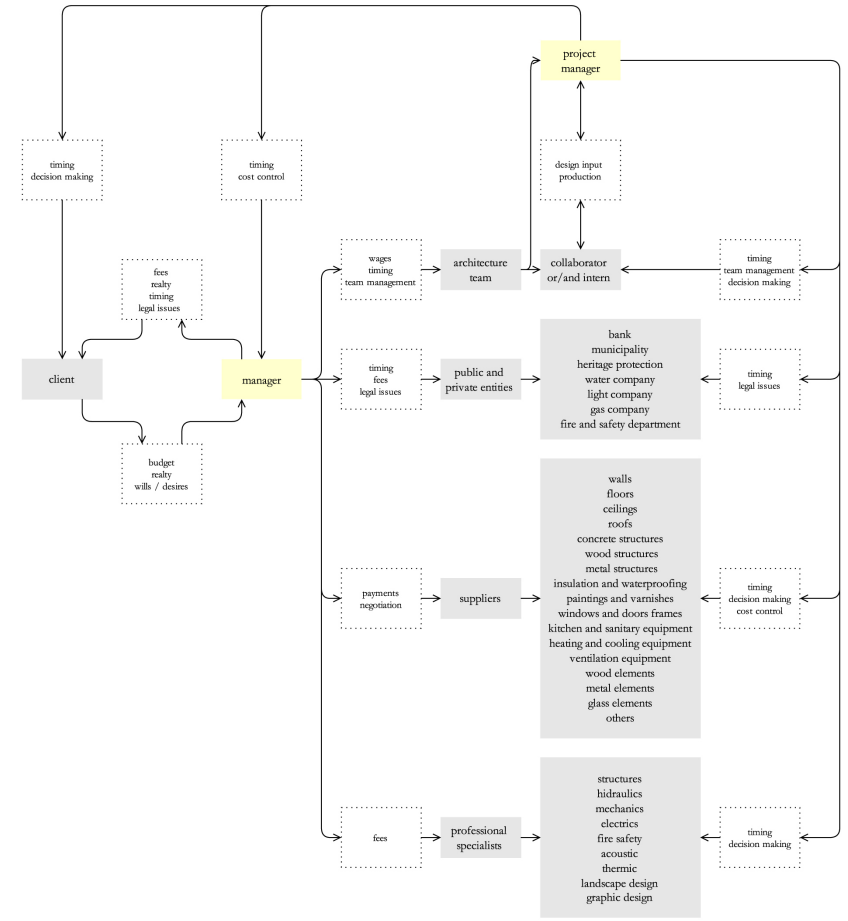


Diagram of the interactions created in a type B office. As the manager influence in the design process decreases, augments his investment in the office negotiation capacity. At the same time,

responsibility is divided with the project manager, which in turn divides is persistently huge workload, with the entire team. A bigger pressure by the manager on the project manager is evident.

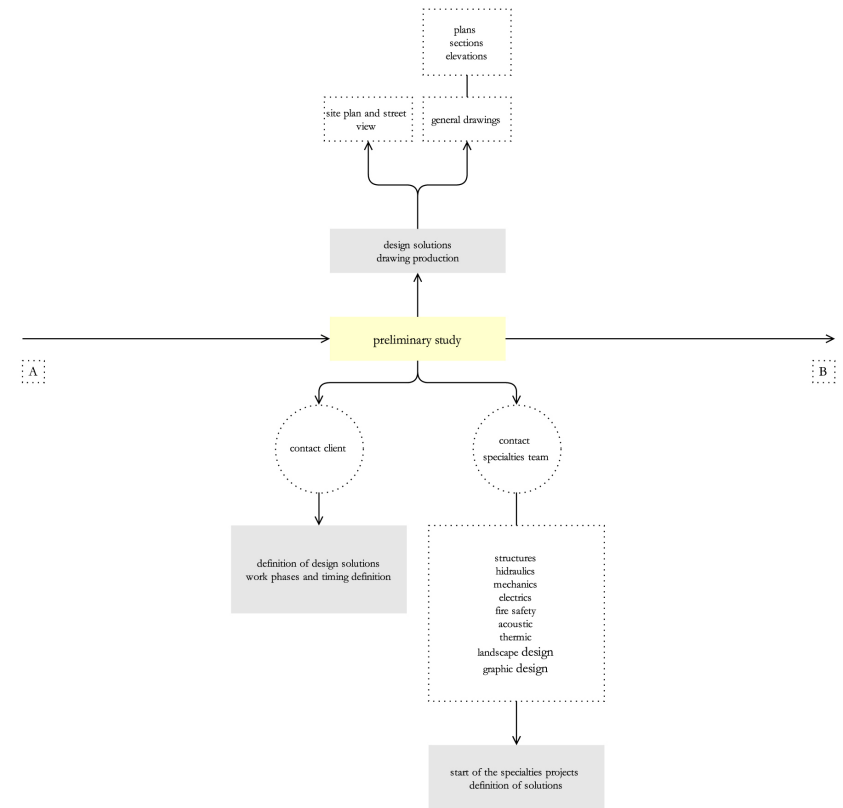
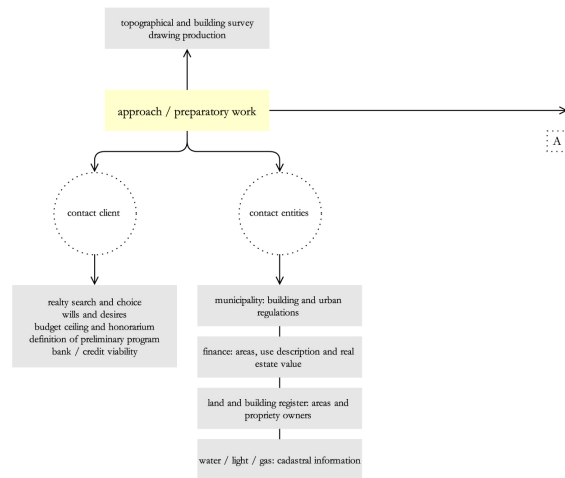
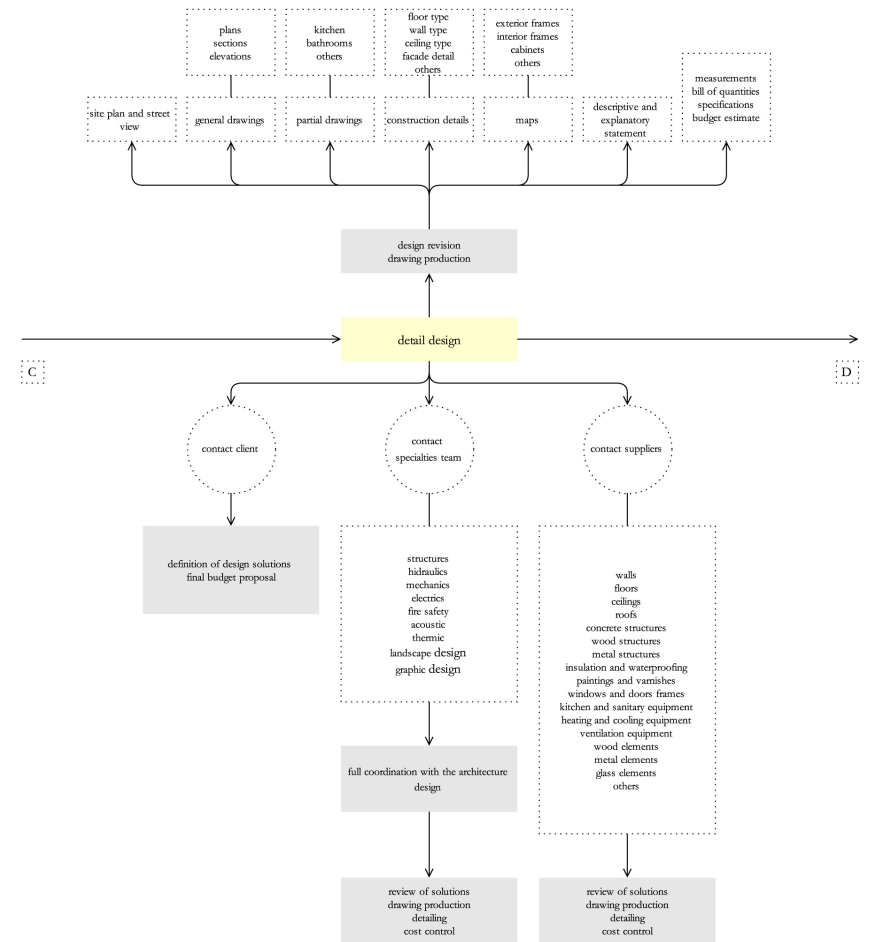
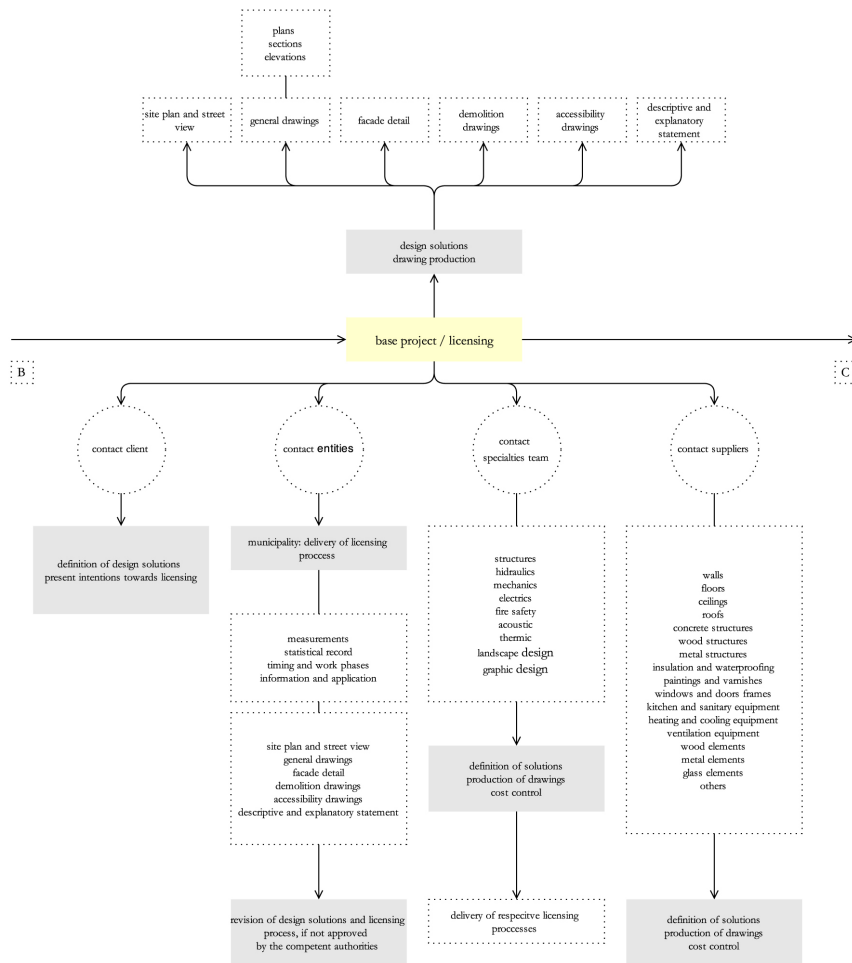
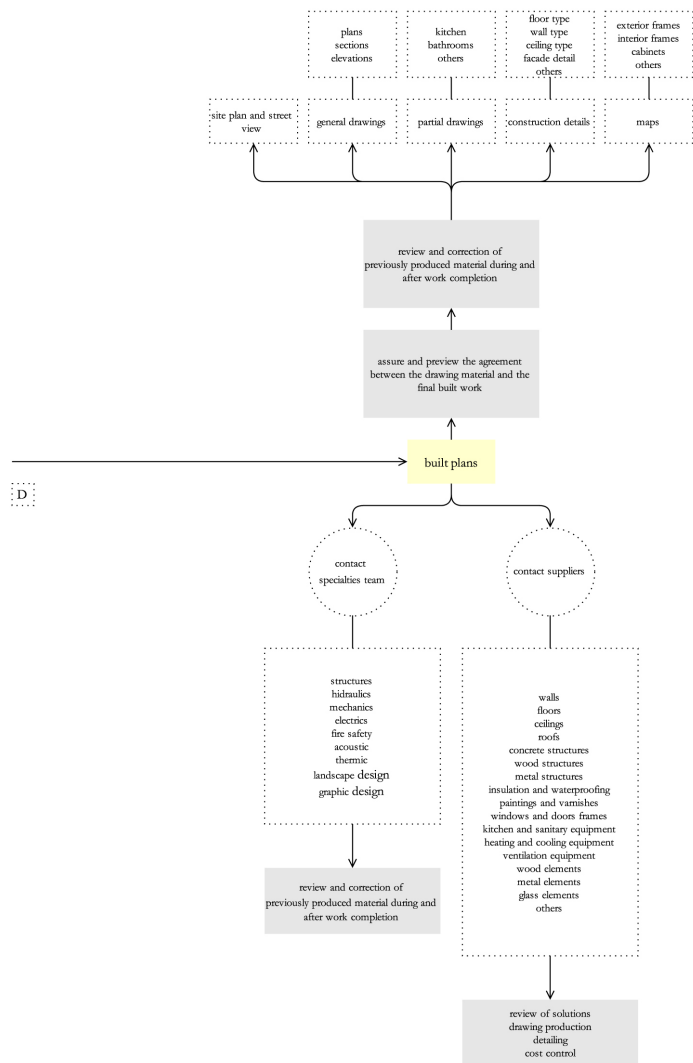


Diagram of the amount of work involved in both type offices (A and B), specifying the most common phases of the development of an architectural design. Also are specified the responsibilities concerning this same development and the relationships which those responsibilities entail.





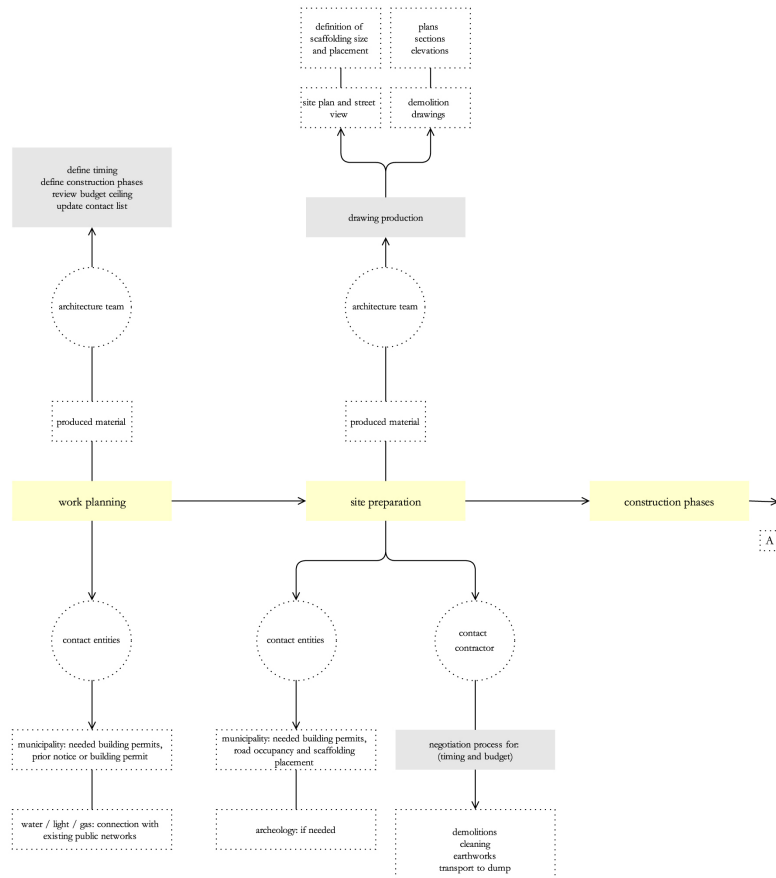
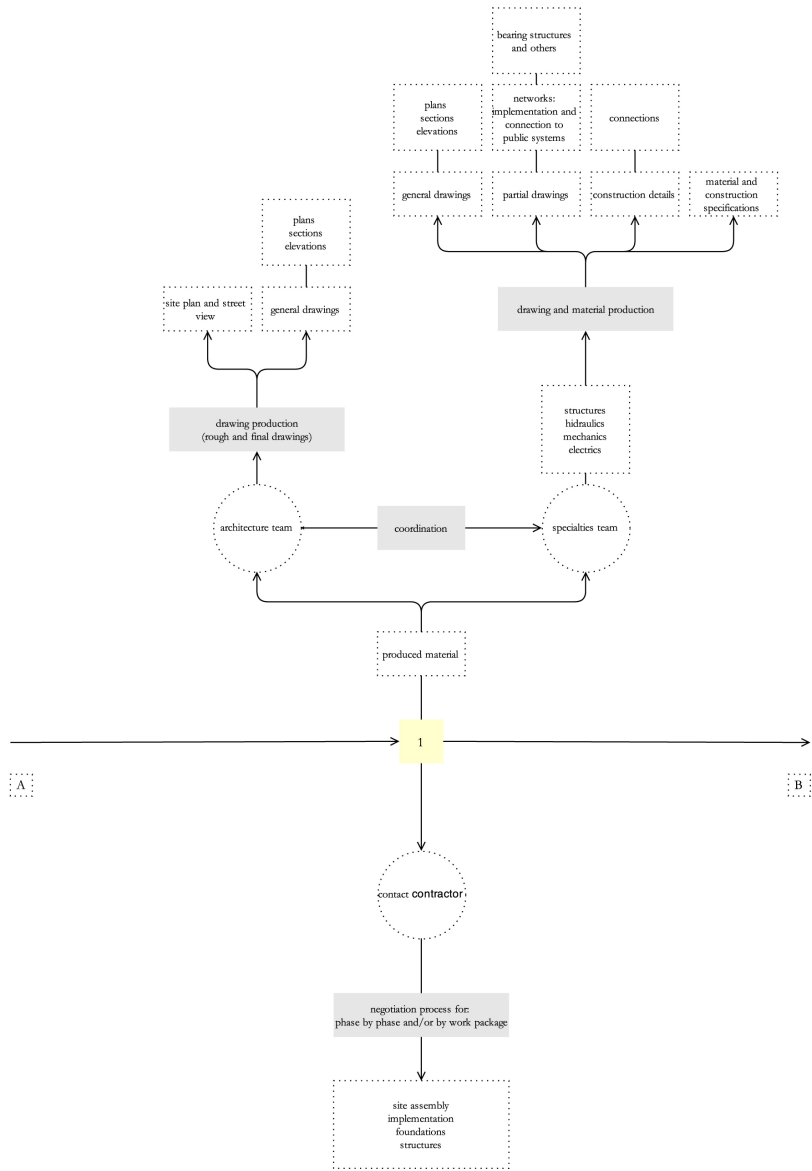
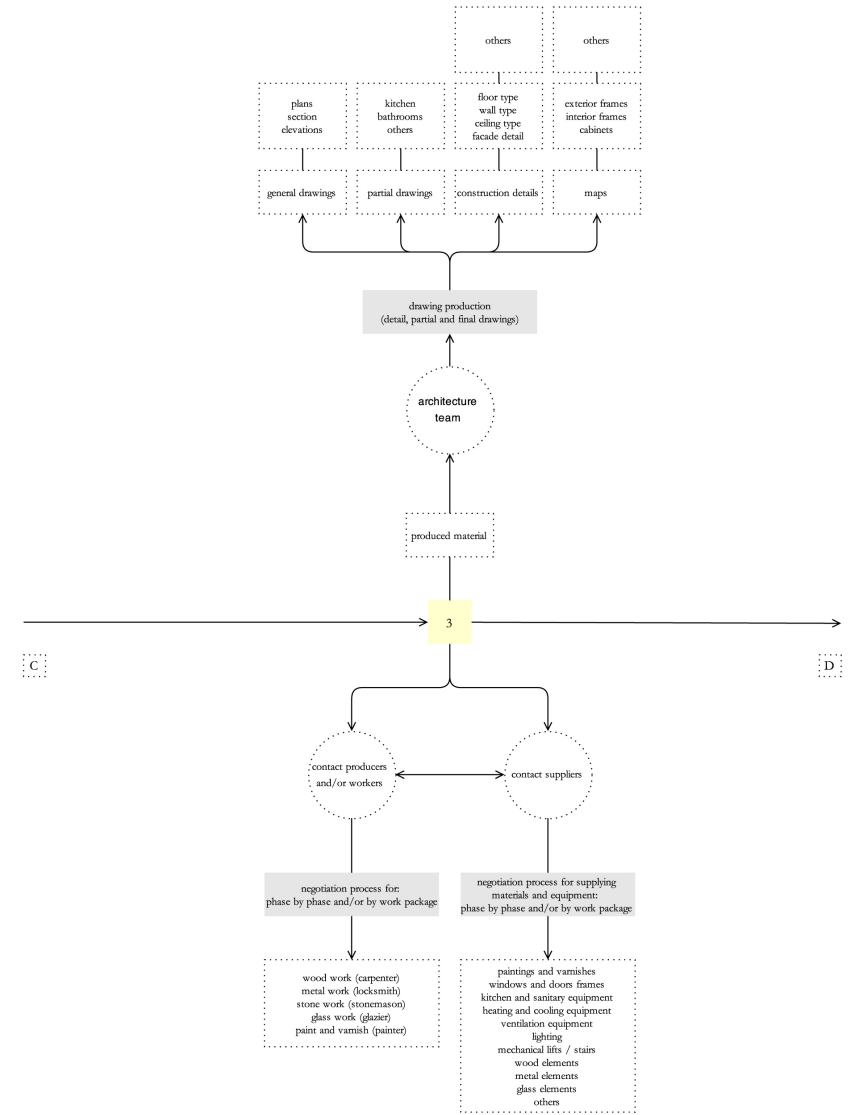
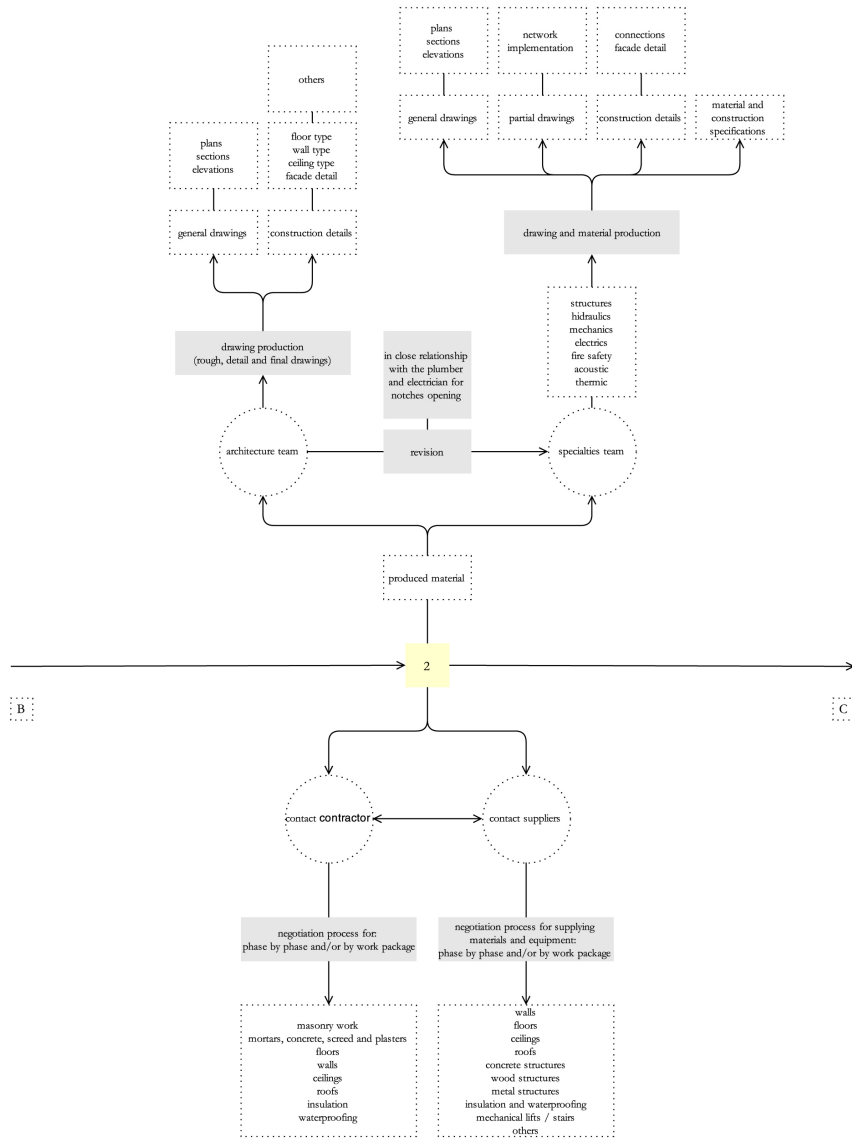
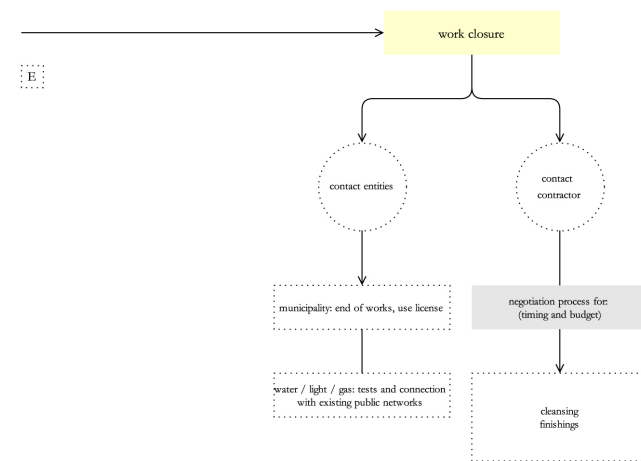
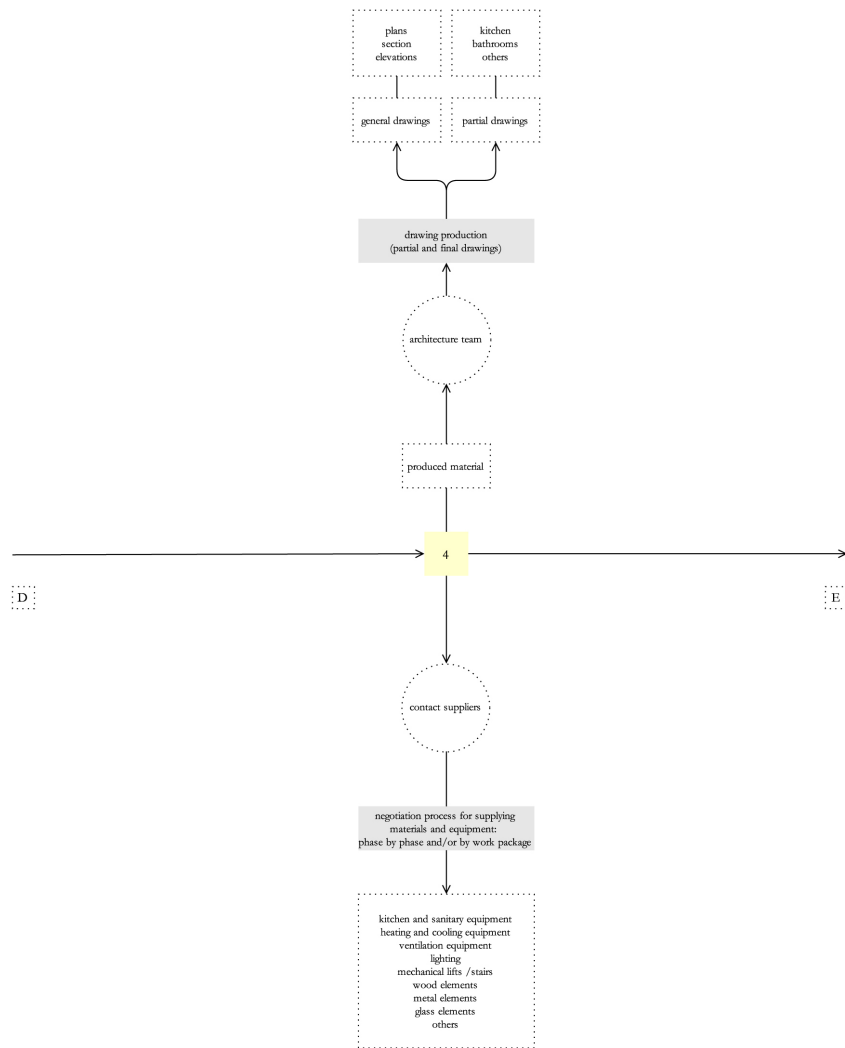


Diagram of the construction phase developed in a type B office, specifying the most common phases of a construction work. Time is divided between producing

drawings, establishing contacts and making negotiations. In every construction phase the cycle is reinitiated, and time is consumed.







Bridging the Gaps

Atelier Angular

Context

Any social, cultural and academic intervention, for its good comprehension, needs a context. The context of what we are developing it's our own background, it lies within our society.

We are facing a fast shifting and quality decreasing panorama in our country. There's a clear constant process of decaying in the population's labor conditions, a cut down in our families' economic capacity and a general life quality decreasing. We are watching live the collapsing of many of our statal systems, such as judicial, educational and health care, the bankruptcy of some of our institutions and an enormous political disreputation. We are testifying the death of the middle class and the fall of the social state. Our young population and new graduates face harsh employment conditions, that lead to the migration of qualified workforce, to a strong decline of active population and birth rates, and to a steady aging of the population. This is the general picture.

In the environment we chose to insert ourselves in, we notice the lack of support and promotion of the cultural and artistic panorama; the depreciation of the human being as a thinker, a creator, of someone gifted with sensorial, sensitive and creative capacities and as a being that expresses its condition through all forms of art. Focusing on education, we see a generalized educational program, a qualification homogenizing process,

an inadequacy of the educational system to this new generation and, almost contradictorily, an increasing overspecialized, overvalued population. We also feel the absence of a more global, eclectic and holistic way of observing, of thinking, of perceiving things. In the background of this situation, we face an alienation of the population and a lack of critical capacity and response, the absence of the desire for change, what leads to a scarcity of alternatives to the status quo.

Genesis

'Angular' starts as a group of seven architecture students who get together to create a young collective, aiming for practical skills and teamwork experience, through partaking in competitions and developing cultural and architectural projects. Before we met, we already discussed some theoretical architectural themes, consequently also focused on society and how it perceives architecture. At ENEA (National Architecture Students Meeting), in Porto, we met and realised that beside these preoccupations we shared some thoughts about the insufficient dynamics in our Universities actions.

We got together because we believe that group reflection and debate can lead to more productive and complete conclusions. It allows us to have a more accurate and wider range of action.

We started seeing architecture as a very interes-





ting tool to change society. Of course it is closest to our capacities and areas of interest, but it has this very peculiar characteristic of being broad and extended to almost all fields of knowledge. Architecture somehow has the capability of bonding scientific, social and artistic areas in its own character, revealing itself as a product of this eclectic combination. However, this potentially wide scope of Architecture gets reduced by the unadapted common path we have come to expect from our architecture students and by the actual professional activity in our country, both insufficiently open to these other areas of knowledge. So, if we first started as a group of students that enjoyed working together and debating architecture with each other, we soon concluded we should define our stance facing the major problems we detected, starting with the nearest ones.

Zoom-In

Contextualized by the Bologna Process, our architecture course at Faculdade de Arquitectura da Universidade de Lisboa suffered a great compression of working hours, project classes and a constriction of programmatic contents. These factors, allied with the lack of proactivity and motivation by professors, due to salary cut offs, and students, conducted to an almost total abandon of complementary activities and actions.

We deem this “extra-curricular” activities absolutely necessary to the health of our school. Students’ works exhibition, interdisciplinary contests, visits to architecture offices and buildings, travelling and getting to know other realities, are absolutely necessary because we see formation as more than what you absorb from classes, it is about what surrounds you and the creative environment that can push you further. Plus, we noticed an inexistent connection between all six Lisbon’s schools of architecture, a great handicap in what could, or should, be a Lisbon School of architecture. Maybe this way, with a consortium of the Lisbon’s schools, we would get more diverse architectural thoughts and conceptions and we would be able to treat this new potential diversity as an advantage, pushing for a positive communication between these conceptions. Thus, facing these problems as potential leaps forward, adding the overspecialization concern

and the holistic mindset, we made an effort to generate structures that would allow us to approach the task of closing these gaps in our learning system in a proactive way.

Past-Present / Reactions

We enrolled in NAVE – student’s cultural core of the school of architecture – that is, at this moment, institutionalized. It incorporates about thirty students and produces a regular program for the academic community. With this initiative we intend to promote events such as conferences, debates, competitions, exhibitions, and to quake our school panorama. Leading students to events outside the classroom, creating a critical mindset not only between students but also among professors, promoting a contact between them, developing opportunities for students to show their work, to see each others work, to work together and to get to know other disciplines: we believe this to be a good way of starting to practice a new education dynamic.

The “mesa redonda com belas artes (round table with fine arts)” project has proportioned the interaction between architecture and beaux-arts students, trying to recover their long time relationship. This interdisciplinary development produced an exhibition, hosted at Lisbon Architecture Triennale’s headquarters, showing very good results about this thought sharing experience.

Intentions / Future

Keeping the same course, we intend to, throughout the next year, work on PONTE (bridge) project. This venture aims at stimulating strong bonds and a wide thought sharing mass among all six architecture schools in Lisbon and also between other schools of artistic, technical and social areas, thus generating a broad intellectual platform of critical valid reactions to our panorama.

angular collective is a group of architecture students from Faculdade de Arquitectura da Universidade de Lisboa who are, at this moment, completing the third year of the Integrated Master Degree in Architecture.

Catarina Mateus, Madalena Caiado, Henrique Pintão, João Romão, Manuel Santos, Pedro Mendes, Ruben Silva



40 architects making 40 birdnests

Migrant Garden

Migrant Garden is an experiment about Architectural manifestos.

Camilo Rebelo, Rudy Ricciotti, Point Supreme, Atelier Branco, Emilio Marin, Atelier Fala, Michele De Lucchi, Go Hasegawa, Anna Barbara, Gonzalo Del Val, Francesco Librizzi, Miniatura, Juan Carlos Dall'Asta, Perry Kulper, Cini Boeri, Matilde Cassani, Buildin Building, Fosbury Architecture, Pezo Von Ellrichausen, FormaFantasma, Amunt, Filippo Orsini, UNULAUNU, Eduardo Castillo, MoBo Architects, Nieto Sobejano, Marcio Kogan, Fabio Alessandro Fusco, Altiplano, NETWERCH ARCHITEKTUR DESIGN GRUND-SÄTZLICHES, Mio Tsuneyama, Fuminori Nousaku, Bureau A, MVRDV, Italo Rota, A12, Beniamino Servino, Sergio Crotti, Luca Molinari, Purini Thermes.

Migrant Garden called a heterogeneous panorama of forty architects, offices and designers to investigate upon "architectural manifestos". Each architect is requested to design and think by hand a bird house, starting from a house shaped block of Acell foam respecting a series of defined rules.

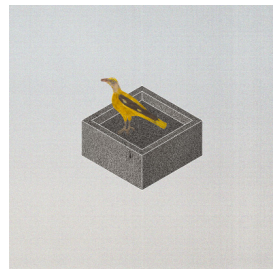
40 designs, 40 different ages, 40 different formations, 40 offices, 40 cultures, 3 different generations, 15 countries, 4 continents, organized in a temporary travelling architecture exhibition.

What happened to the Architectural manifesto? Why should manifestos exist? Are they still meaningful in a globalized panorama of cultures and influences or does a geographical, cultural, economical substantial difference between architectural languages of design still persist? Are they no longer necessary, in a job that does not refer to the 'lone genius' but, on the contrary, to a set of anti-heroic gestures as Felicity Scott Stated in 2011? Is it true that the manifesto has been tamed, losing in inventiveness, in its capacity of investigation and interpretation.¹ Each office, with between 1 to 100 collaborators, has its own different approach to the practice of Architecture. Sometimes that approach is based on an image and sometimes on a methodology. Sometimes the same approach is characterized by a shallow pragmatism of solving and creating problems, sometimes it reveals a strong and deep stance. This is what manifestos are dealing with. Manifesto comes from the latin Manifestus, manus the hand and fest: taken in hand. With the same hand we draw, we sketch, we express ideas and we shape the future. A Manifesto can be considered as the way in which someone aims at declaring it's critical perspective on the world in order to improve it. A manifesto can be found in many disciplines, from arts and design, to poetry, literature, Architecture and more. Different approaches have to be considered under three main contexts: [1] generational, [2] geographical and [3] cultural.

1 „What Happened to the Architectural Manifesto?", Columbia University's GSAPP, 18.11.2011



a



b

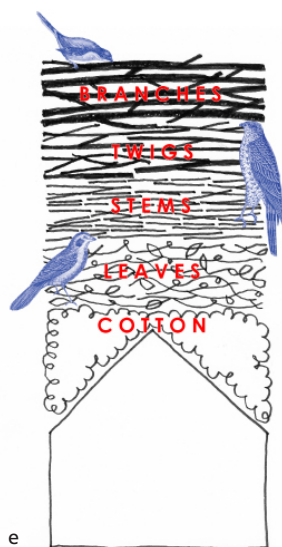


c



d

2 Claude Levi Strauss,
"Races and History", 1952



e

[1] In the last fifteen years due to Internet and the economic revolution, we have been taking part in a big change. The way of experiencing the world has drastically change. Today a flight ticket costs less then a T-shirt and this economic issue has caused totally different ways of perceiving the world by younger generations of students and architects. This situation has created an environment of hybridization, with new cultures coming into contact what, in turn, influences new approaches to Architecture.

[2] Genius loci has always been a central question on the debate about Architecture and it can be considered as the whole kaleidoscope of cultural and architectural characteristics, of languages, of habits that characterize a place, an environment and a city. If society is somehow moving to globalization, belonging to a territory still persist as a fundamental component for an architect's formation. The place in which we live in is unintentionally influencing our aesthetics and, since in the contemporary it is common to travel among numerous places, this fact has determined a different perception of the world and of Architecture.

[3] "Human cultures are more numerous than human races".² Each culture, some more then others, has its own strenght to determine a sensitivity and human habits that directly influence Architecture. History, as Architecture, is something cumulative and today we cannot say that Japanese architecture is made only by Japanese people. There is a sort of hybridization of references and formations. Today we are living the traveling era and it is common that lots of people travel around the globe living in several nations, mixing their culture with the new one they find themselves in. These stratifications of cultures composed by differences and similarities are necessary to form new cultural identities and, in that sense, are strongly influencing architectural production.

Migrant Garden started in May 2014 thanks to a team of seven architects, with a common passion for Architecture. The project has been immediately accepted and supported by the Politecnico di Milano and by Acelltec industries. During one year, the project has been displayed in a temporary preview installation, it has been published in many national and international

magazine and it collected numerous positive reviews from architects and general population.

Migrant Garden promotes culture as an horizontal value. Nowadays, older age is commonly synonym of higher knowledge but, if we consider that Michelangelo Buonarroti at the young age of 17 carved the Centauro-machia, that postulate does not make sense. Formal hierarchies have no more importance. The focus is on the quality of the ideas and not on the label.

Forty architects have enthusiastically decided to accept the challenge: designing a bird house. Every house will be an architectural manifesto. Each participant has the same rules, the same possibilities and the equal starting point: an house shaped block of Acell foam.

Each architect has been chosen according to three parameters:

- Geography;
- Age;
- Size of the office.

The result is an heterogeneous panorama of 40 architects belonging to 15 different nations, from 3 different generations with a number of collaborators that ranges from 1 to 100.

Migrant Garden "Architecture zoo" will be inaugurated on 19.06.2015 at the Politecnico di Milano in Piacenza.

After the 1.0 inaugural exhibition Migrant Garden will move forward to other art galleries, institutions and museums in order to sprawl this 40 visions of Architecture all over the territory. At the end of the project the bird houses will be sold and the raised fund will be given to charity.

That is Migrant Garden untouchable landscapes.

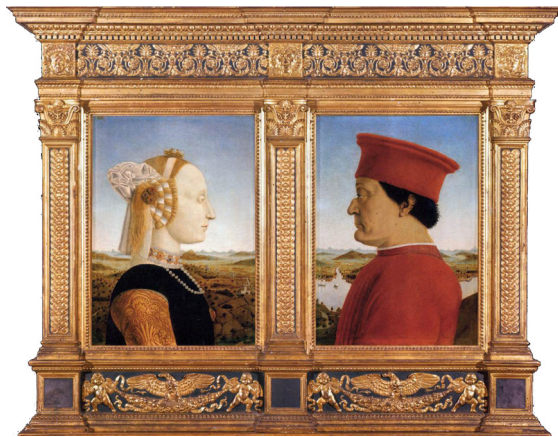
migrantgarden.com

Images:

- a Perry Kulper
- b Altiplano, Rigogolo
- c Beniamino Servino
- d Beniamino Servino, Bird's cathedral
- e Mio Tsuneyama & Fuminori Nousaku, Ashedas Resources for Birds Nests

Shared concerns – Inquietudes compartidas

Victoria Collar Ocampo



Diptych of the Duchess and Duke of Urbino, Piero della Francesca, 1472.

Prologue

This is a fictitious conversation between two “confrères” sharing their opinion about the contemporary relations between architects.

By establishing a conversation about the current ways we behave and relate to each other, we might then understand the importance of processes, of valuing the information we deal with and of always trying to go beyond image. One could maybe go as far as to conclude that one’s attitudes towards similar situations we, architects, are faced with, could act as the new common guidelines to follow.

Dialogue

@arch88: Do you think that the relations between architects still exist at all? And by relation I mean the will to really see and understand each other, to truly collaborate, etc.

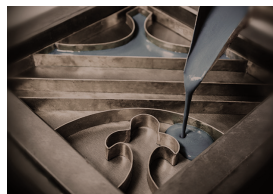
@iamnotanartist74: Nowadays there does not seem to be a direct relation between architects, at least, not as we understood it in the past. Apparently, the straight lines that we used to follow throughout the last decades turned into more complex architectural approaches. There is not just a one “truth” anymore. In fact, there are so many lines that we no longer meet to discuss future guidelines, as we used to. We do not establish the basis for the way to proceed. There are no CIAM, manifestos, rules or styles anymore.

@arch88: But then, do you think that there no longer is a common way of thinking? We are still dealing with similar elements and often use common procedures or find similar solutions. Where then, do architects diverge? Why do they differ? Where is the inflection point?

@iamnotanartist74: I guess the answer could be related to the new media. Today we receive much more information than a few years ago. Until now, when we needed a reference we had to search for it, whereas today we have an overdose of information, which comes to us even if we make no effort whatsoever to reach it. Social networks, blogs and so on have a lot to do with this situation. The risk with this volume of information and images is that there is no filter applied; no attention is paid upon what lies behind it.

@arch88: I see your point. However, I find it more relevant to say that architects have an increasingly multidisciplinary behavior and as we open broader fields, we receive and produce even more information.

@iamnotanartist74: Certainly, this is very important. The tools that we use for working nowadays such as computer programs, parametrical design, 3d printing and modeling machines are increasing in number and complexity. We have access to much more resources than a few years ago, mainly thanks to the Internet providing us a huge database, blogs or sharing platforms. As you said, we are getting into a much more multidis-



1 Hydraulic tile, Mosaic del Sur.



2 Dying textiles in Japan.



3 Dying textiles in Morocco.



4 Cross rail underground infrastructure in London.



5 Metropolitan Opera House in Taichung, Toyo Ito.

ciplinary system; one in which different “professions” mix up and limits get blurry. We can no longer get a satisfying result simply by applying direct rules. We need to try to understand the different processes and similitudes between different disciplines in order to interiorize them.

@arch88: As Balenciaga used to say: “A couturier must be an architect for design, a sculptor for shape, a painter for color, a musician for harmony, and a philosopher for temperance”. Likewise, architecture covers several fields: sociology, politics, cinema, photography, design, etc.

@iamnotanartist74: So then, could we say that the process is as important as the result? When somebody explains the process behind an image, much like the concept of the project, we start to give more value to the object. By knowing and understanding these processes, we discover new interests in formerly unknown topics and thereon widen our scopes.

@arch88: Therefore, it is worth when sharing an image to describe why it attracts our attention as well as to reveal the processes behind the object or the concept itself.

@iamnotanartist74: I agree with you, and would even argue that, for instance we should not only be amazed by a hydraulic floor tile because we find it “beautiful” but rather because we have understood its process of fabrication and have interiorized the value of its craftsmanship.¹ This critical thought could be applied to textile as well. For instance, we like to touch a fabric, we like its texture and its color but only when we have truly understood the complexities of the process, can we really admire the product.^{2,3}

@arch88: Exactly. Another example could be the way we find relations and similarities in the proceedings of very different projects such as an architectural project like the Metropolitan Opera House in Taichung and an engineering one, like the Cross rail underground infrastructure in London. It is often in the details or even the anomalies that we discover the intricacies of a project. But we should be mindful to share our findings with care; instead of sharing our ideas as absolute truth, we should emphasize on our interests or concerns.^{4,5}

@iamnotanartist74: Then we both agree that there is still a line, a common relation.

@arch88: Well, is this not just a way of behaving towards different situations? This way of observing should be considered not solely towards different processes, objects or images, as mentioned before but as a lifestyle by developing our critical minds as architects and making decisions by analyzing what is behind what we see. Perhaps we do not need more rules. Perhaps this could be the relation between architects: sharing concerns.

Victoria Collar Ocampo graduated as an architect at the University of Barcelona ETSAB, having also studied at the ETH Zürich. She currently works at “Herzog & de Meuron” in Basel after various experiences in offices in Barcelona and Zürich. In 2014 she founded a blog called “Ochentaydoskilometros” (82km.tumblr.com) with Jon Garbizu Etxaide in which they share their various concerns, following the line stated in this dialogue.

Images:

2 Image from Tectonicablog

3 Image from Tectonicablog

4 Image from 82km

5 Image from 82km

Editorial Board

Aurélien Caetano

Elena Chiavi

Francisco Moura Veiga

Francisco Ramos Ordóñez

Matilde Girão

Pablo Garrido i Arnaiz

Graphic Design

Esther Lohri

Permanent Contributors

Gonçalo Frias

Mariana Matias

Featuring

Grafton Architects

Andrew Mackintosh | Benjamin Krüger | Luis Pedro Pinto | Rasmus Norlander | A.S. Bramble

Whoodstudio | Maria Barreiros | Atelier Angular | Migrant Garden | Victoria Collar Ocampo

Sponsor

FUNDAÇÃO
SERRA HENRIQUES

carthamagazine.com