

(UN)

ARCHITECTURE
FRINGE

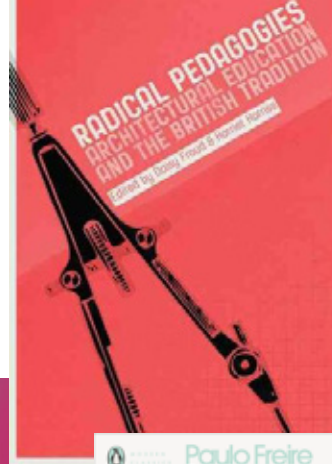
.Learn
—ing



Education in
Architecture

Modes of Travel
(Un)Learning
Education
ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION
YEAR 01 DEPARTURE

Dr. Harriet Harris,
Dean, Pratt Institute School of Architecture



Book cover for 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed' by Paulo Freire. The cover is white with a black and white image of a pencil and a small object.

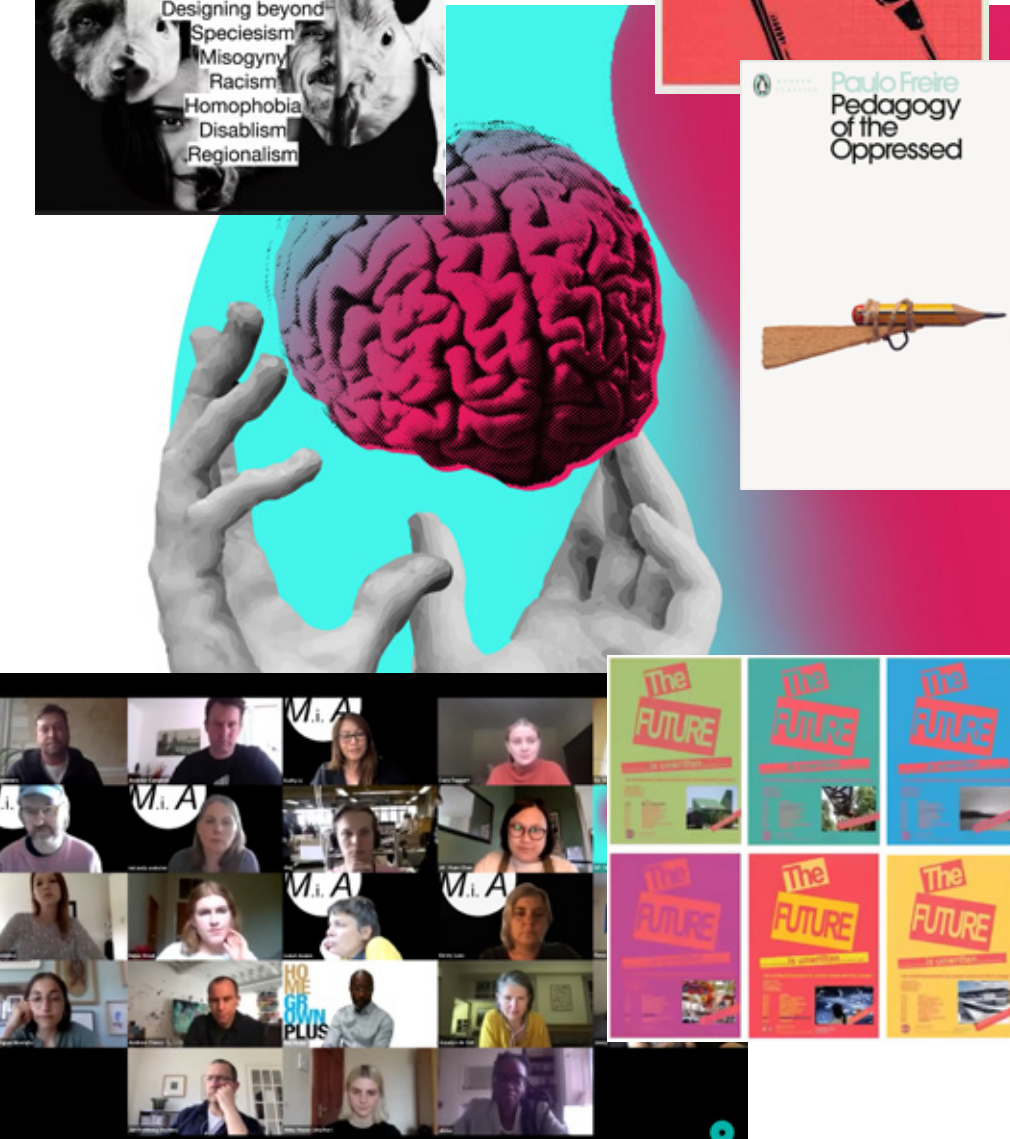
Provocation: (Un)Learning

The majority of systems and structures that we have built to bring order to our lives are destroying us and life on Earth.

Architecture is uncritically complicit in its reliance on these systems and structures for its very creation, with little resistance or defiance in its making or deployment. We have arrived at the intersection of a climate emergency, global pandemic and racialised capitalist economy and the ground on which we stand is shifting at speed. We are in transition, from one world to another. Things are changing, and in order to make that change positive and transformative we need to engage in a process of unlearning and learning anew. To (un)learn. There is hope.

'Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.' **Arundhati Roy**

In a complex and interconnected world, with systems large and small, fast and slow, how can architecture as a process, as a way of thinking, help us (un)learn in order to firstly navigate this complexity to then reimagine a much better way of doing things? How can we radically rethink architecture's environmental impact on the Earth? How can we refocus architectural education away from a whitewashed Western lens? How can we redefine our relationship to the land, from ownership to stewardship? How can our neighbourhoods and cities achieve greater equality for those who live there, realigning architecture as a progressive force for a wider common good? The Architecture Fringe 2021 invites you to (un)learn with us, to interrogate your own behaviours, beliefs and biases in order to acknowledge how the world really is, to reimagine how it could be.



The Architecture Fringe is a non-profit, volunteer-led organisation based in Scotland which explores architecture and its impact within our social, political, cultural, and environmental contexts.

We seek to critically pluralise and expand architectural culture. It is a platform that encourages and supports both ideas and agency. We believe in thinking, testing, prototyping and taking risks. We believe that is our actions in response to our discourse that ultimately sets the tone for the culture that we create.

Since the inaugural Architecture Fringe Festival in 2016 we have inspired, commissioned or platformed over 300 projects, exhibitions events and happenings across Scotland and further afield.

Our aims are:

- to support emerging practice in architecture by commissioning new voices, new ideas, and new work
- to offer platforms and opportunities which encourage a wider conversation about architecture and design in our contemporary social, political, cultural, and environmental contexts
- to develop a friendly but critical community of voices to connect, support, and challenge each other
- to engage internationally with other people and organisations for the wider common good

Join others in helping us reach our ongoing aims by supporting us on Patreon; patreon.com/ArchitectureFringe – Thank you!

Contents

- 8 Introduction:
(Un)Learning Education
in Architecture by Andy
Summers

Context

- 12 A Forum for Year 1
Educators by Kathy Li
18 Year 1 Architecture
Education: The Scottish
Situation by Kathy Li

Modes of Travel Symposium

- 22 The Symposium
25 Modes of Travel: Arrival
31 Modes of Travel:
Participation
37 Modes of Travel:
Departure
42 Observations on the
Symposium

Essays

- 48 Terms of Engagement
with Harriet Harriss
64 Straw Men and
Telescopes by Penny
Lewis

- 68 We Have Never Been
Modernists by Ruth Lang
74 A Pedagogy For Those
Who Seek Liberation by
Alisha Morenike Fisher

Reflections

- 77 Lina Khairy - Scott
Sutherland School of
Architecture
79 Ilja Anosovs - University
of Strathclyde
81 Dag von der Decken,
Abby Hopes, Cara
Taggart - Mackintosh
School of Architecture
85 Re-Framing the Institution
by Andy Campbell
79 The Chance of a
New Wave by Missing in
Architecture

Action!

- 90 What We've (Un)Learnt
100 Contributors, Biographies,
Credits, and
Acknowledgements

(Un) Learning Education

Introduction: (Un)Learning Education in Architecture Andy Summers

There are moments in our shared history which initiate and demand profound change. The year 2020 marked an intersection of the climate emergency, racialised capitalist economy and continuing movement against sexual abuse and harassment, all within the context of an ever-expanding global pandemic. The clear, long overdue change required in how we collectively organise our societies, treat people and live upon the Earth has continued to be signposted by grassroots movements of people across the world.

Architecture, along with the education and training within it, has everything to do with the world around us. Looking ahead to look back, if we consider and compare the architectural education of 2019/20 with that of 2021/22 we would hope to see a serious shift in how we teach and learn, with recognition that something happened in 2020, that things changed. That change, of course, has been required for quite some time and is distinctly lagging in many quarters. The daily lived experience of millions of people attest to this, and the ongoing tepid response that architecture offers towards the climate emergency (us included) is now indefensible.

The discussion on and review of architectural education is restless and perennial, driven by a recurring, revolving questioning (or crisis) of structure and relevance across multiple areas of activity. Back in 1995 in 'Critical Pedagogy and Architectural Education' C. Greig Crysler highlighted the inequality of opportunity and reward for an increasingly diverse student body in both education and in practice

depending on one's own characteristics, noting that in tandem with this wider acknowledgement, '...new political formations organized by feminists, people of color, gays and lesbians, and 'postcolonial' subjects from the Third World are challenging a curriculum that continues to define professional expertise in relation to the history and theory of a self-actualizing, white, heterosexual, Euro-American male consciousness.' How far have we come, in 2021?

In 2012 as part of the *Architectural Review's* 'Big Rethink' Peter Buchanan called for a 'fully human' paradigm shift in learning, arguing that architectural education was becoming detached from its own contemporary critical realities, distracted by a frivolous collective naval-gaze in learning lead by the self-interest of too many tutors and lecturers which offered no larger relevance to society and culture. The broadening of design generative perspectives and the acknowledgement that one space really doesn't fit all continued through reflections upon architectural education in two collective editions of *Field Journal* published by the University of Sheffield (volume 5, 2013 and volume 7, 2017), and 'Radical Pedagogies - Architectural Education and the British Tradition' of 2015 edited by Dr Harriet Harriss and Daisy Froud. The expansion, too, beyond the 'lone genius' so often cited in architectural education and practice has been a key aspect of the research undertaken by the Radical Pedagogies team at Princeton University lead by PhD students and historian Beatriz Colomina.

The thematic provocation for the Architecture Fringe 2021 is (Un)Learning, and it is within this context that we acknowledge this change as we seek to explore education across schools of architecture and landscape architecture in Scotland and further afield. Working with educators and students alike, we have sought to create an independent space to come together to provoke, imagine and help enact

change in how we undertake the teaching and learning of architecture. The work has specifically focussed on the first year of architectural education, which is a special, critical and often under-appreciated period of study.

For many in architecture the teaching, learning and assessment methods we deploy in context to the project briefs we explore are very near the same as to when we were students five, ten, twenty years ago. How can this be? The pressures upon people within the financialised institutional structures of further education are acute, and the time and space available to take actual stock of our evolving contemporary context are often too few and far between. The constant, distracting demand for our collective attention within the university system can be the perfect cover for a slow, incremental deterioration in the tracking of change within wider society.

The events of 2020, then, are a prompt of magnitude for us to come together to share, reflect and reprioritise. The work has brought together staff and students within the schools of architecture and landscape architecture across Scotland - itself sadly rare. We have, in turn, reached out to educators who are further afield to broaden our own, collective (un)learning. Our overall aim, here, is to induce a wider conversation to help provoke, inspire and take action towards the changes required within our teaching, within our learning, and within the field of architecture itself.

Context

A Forum of Year 1 Educators Kathy Li

In 2020, for the first time, the heads of Year 1 in the Scottish schools of architecture created an informal 'first year educators forum'.

Instigated by Laura Harty from ESALA, the forum was joined by Susana Do Pombal Ferreira (ESALA), Andrew Campbell (Strathclyde), myself Kathy Li (Mack), James Tait (Mack), Gillian Wishart (Scott Sutherland) and Andy Summers (ESALA / Architecture Fringe). The forum also included our colleagues from Queen's University in Belfast.

The initiative emerged from a desire to share information, knowledge, and experience from the teaching in Year 1, in particular to the effects of moving online as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. We sought to productively collaborate, build mutual support, and share insight on best practice. It was also to serve as a platform to discuss and reflect upon the student experience in their first year of study, and how this could be nurtured, supported, and improved. The forum has been a very useful support network for all involved.

It is hoped that the outputs from the Modes of Travel symposium will contribute to and support this new forum. A wider mission for the Architecture Fringe will be to continue to provoke and highlight the good work being done within education, to draw attention to aspects which require our collective energies to improve and to engage with everyone involved with Year 1 education both in-teaching and in-study.

As part of the work for the symposium and this publication, some outline information has been kindly provided by members of the forum, gathered to help provide an initial

overview of Year 1 architecture in Scotland touching upon current diversity within the schools, and upon the appointment of staff and external guest critics. There is a great deal of further research that Missing in Architecture and the Architecture Fringe would like to undertake in this area, working in partnership with the schools, to truly take stock of architectural education in Scotland, and how we might all work together to ensure it is diverse, empowering and responsive to our evolving social, environmental and pedagogical contexts.

Entry into Scottish Schools

On the following pages we highlight some baseline data on Scottish Schools of Architecture, looking at staff demographics, employment patterns and cohort size.

- ① Mackintosh School of Architecture, Glasgow School of Art, University of Glasgow
- ② Department of Architecture, School of Engineering, University of Strathclyde
- ③ Edinburgh School of Architecture & Landscape Architecture (ESALA), Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh
- ④ Architecture & Urban Planning, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design, University of Dundee
- ⑤ Scott Sutherland School of Architecture & Built Environment, Robert Gordon



School Data

HEADS OF SCHOOL

Ethnicity

Robert Gordon: White
Dundee: White
ESALA: White
Mack: White
Strathclyde: White

100% WHITE

HEADS OF SCHOOL

Gender

Robert Gordon: Man
Dundee: Man
ESALA: Man
Mack: Woman
Strathclyde: Man

80% MEN

WOMEN

MEN

RGU

DUNDEE

ESALA

MACK

STRATH

YEAR 1 STAFF

Gender

Robert Gordon: 4 Tutors, Women 75% / Men 25%
Dundee: 8 Tutors, Women 50% / Men 50%
ESALA: 10 Tutors, Women 50% / Men 50%
Mack: 5 Tutors, Women 20% / Men 80%
Strathclyde: 10 Tutors, Women 40% / Men 60%

YEAR 1 STAFF

Contract type

Robert Gordon: Permanent contract
Dundee: N/A contract type
ESALA: Permanent contract /
Guaranteed Hours
Mack: Permanent contract
Strathclyde: Rolling Zero Hours
contract

HEADS OF YEAR 1

Ethnicity

Robert Gordon: White
Dundee: White
ESALA: White
Mack: Mixed Chinese
Strathclyde: White

80% WHITE

NUMBER OF YEAR 1 STUDENTS

Robert Gordon: 35
Dundee: 86
ESALA: 140
Mack: 81
Strathclyde: 120

HEADS OF YEAR 1

Gender

Robert Gordon: Woman
Dundee: Woman
ESALA: Woman
Mack: Woman
Strathclyde: Man

80% WOMEN

Year 1

External Guest Critics; Paid or Unpaid?

Robert Gordon:
£250 a day
Dundee: Unpaid
ESALA: £150 a day
Mack: Unpaid
Strathclyde: Unpaid

Year 1 Staff

Ethnicity

Robert Gordon: 4 Tutors, Middle Eastern 50%,
White 50%
Dundee: N/A Tutors, N/A ethnicity
ESALA: 10 tutors, Asian Other 8%, African 8%,
White 84%
Mack: 5 Tutors, Asian Other 20%, White 80%
Strathclyde: 10 Tutors, White 100%

Year 1 Architectural Education: The Scottish Situation

Kathy Li

In Scotland, there are five schools of architecture and one school of landscape architecture. They are:

- Scott Sutherland School of Architecture & Built Environment, Robert Gordon University
- Architecture & Urban Planning, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design, University of Dundee
- Edinburgh School of Architecture & Landscape Architecture (ESALA), Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh
- Mackintosh School of Architecture, Glasgow School of Art, University of Glasgow
- Department of Architecture, School of Engineering, University of Strathclyde

The Association of Scottish Schools of Architecture meet and coordinate at the level of Heads of School, but generally there is no collaboration or cross school activity between schools. This happens only intermittently and at an irregular and informal level. The schools do share an awards system, coordinated by the regional Chapters of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS) and Architecture & Design Scotland (A&DS), but these focus on the individual performance of students generally from graduating years.

The five schools of architecture are different in size. For the Year 1 cohorts within the 2020/21 academic year ESALA was the largest at 140 students, with Strathclyde hosting 120 students, the Mack at 80, Dundee at 86 and Scott Sutherland the smallest with 45 students in the first year.

Equality & Diversity

Across the schools as a whole, gender balance within the Year 1 student population is a 50/50 split for women and men. There is no breakdown of non-binary people available. This is not quite matched by the split in teaching staff with some schools having a better balance than others. Greater depth of statistical detail on equality and diversity for staff and students was uniformly not available and this is something that requires attention. Only one school was able to provide statistics on the ethnic backgrounds of their student population, with 80% of the cohort identified as 'white'.

Entry into Scottish Schools

Each school recruits separately with admissions being processed through the UCAS system. Some schools use a portfolio and interview as part of the process, whilst others simply select by grade results with teaching staff being removed from any admission process. All schools recruit using Open Days and some provide portfolio preparation courses and events. One school was able to share statistics on where applicants 'hear about us' which highlighted that most applicants (34%) obtained their information about studying architecture from a school teacher or directly from the universities themselves, 22% from friends or family, with 11% via the UCAS portal.

Entry requirements vary across the schools, too. Most require English (or another literate subject) and Maths or Physics at Higher level. Only one school requires these at Nat 5 level only but, interestingly, has the highest entry requirements of all the schools. Entry grade levels vary across the schools. Students often study HND & HNC subject specific courses such as architectural technology, built environment or interior design, while others study art and design more generally. All of these courses help prepare students in different ways for entry into architecture school.

Programmes

All Year 1 programmes are run as a 'flat' two-semester structure in undergraduate, that is to say that all students follow the same curriculum set by their individual school. None of the Year 1 courses in Scotland host individual studio units. A typical spread of subjects and credits is usually 50% allocated to studio/design work with the remaining credits split between technology, history and humanities subjects. Most published course specifications for Year 1 do not explicitly address the climate emergency and new RIBA /ARB mandatory competencies. This needs to be addressed.

Programmes tend to be led by a single person who is 'head' of year and who is either a fulltime employee or has a significant part-time contract. Only one school uses more than one person to share the leading of the year, with others using a co-pilot system. Interestingly there is a predominance of women as 'heads' of Year 1 across the schools, with only one school's Year 1 being led by a man. All schools use local practitioners as part-time studio teaching staff, usually coming in for tutorials one day a week. Many of the part-time staff are engaged on short-term contracts for the duration of the teaching period, with only two schools employing all its studio staff on permanent fractional posts. All schools work to an approximate staff to student ratio of 1:12.

As expected studio projects vary across schools, with most heads of Year 1 having a good level of autonomy in terms of devising briefs. For most schools there is an emphasis on developing basic, traditional, practical skills such as drawing by hand. Whilst only one of the schools has officially declared a climate emergency, many projects in the 2020/21 academic year have begun to address the current urgencies of the climate emergency. Both ESALA and the Mack run projects looking at the adaptive re-use of existing buildings. Scott Sutherland and Strathclyde introduced an awareness of decarbonising design.

More formalised strategies on tackling the new RIBA & ARB competencies in the Year 1 syllabus are still in development. Year 1 courses do have a history of 'live' or 'live-build' projects such as the decade of collaboration at Wiston Lodge undertaken by Strathclyde, but this approach and opportunity is not consistent and is something that would benefit from closer collaboration. Other schools have worked with real clients in their local communities as an integral part of the course.

The Symposium

The Modes of Travel symposium was held online on 10th June 2021 as part of the Architecture Fringe 2021 core programme of events.

Framing the investigation of Year 1 architectural education around the (un)learning provocation was certainly a challenge. It is the crucial formative part of a student's development, often being the most overlooked of all the seven years that it takes to train as an architect. It's also given the least time by external examiners, with few awards or professional recognition by the RIAS or RIBA.

Over the course of seven weeks of regular preparation meetings the Architecture Fringe, Missing in Architecture and Dress for the Weather began to explore the nature and focus of the inquiry. A key approach taken at an early stage was to involve students in a collaborative and non-hierarchical manner. Their voices and experiences of Year 1 were crucial in informing the work. All the academic contributors have recent or current experience teaching in first year studio or are heads of a first year programme. Some also had very useful experience in student recruitment combined with the delivery of portfolio preparation classes.

An informal online forum between Year 1 educators based in Scotland was also established on the back of the pandemic, with a desire to share information, insight and experiences between staff and the schools. This coming together was again rare, and the opportunity to connect with colleagues across the schools was enriching and welcome.

The student contributors come from all five schools of architecture in Scotland and represent a variety of year groups and different academic and professional stages with some having recently completed Year 1 and some at masters level.

Through the development of the project it became

clear that the focus couldn't simply be on activities within the schools themselves, but that entry into architectural education was important to explore, as was the evolution of the student throughout the Year 1 experience, and exit from it. Who should they be? How do they get there? What should they know and be capable of by the end of Year 1? These experiences, transitions and journeys through architectural education informed the structure and name of the symposium, **Modes of Travel** in which we could explore the **Arrival** into, **Participation** through and **Departure** from Year 1.

Since the pandemic, Zoom has become a beneficial and useful format for our profession, requiring participants to be located only by time. With only three hours for the event the format was required to be engaging but also useful as a vehicle for gathering data. The team settled upon a series of guest 'provocateurs', each presenting for around 5 minutes to provoke and make key points for debate and discussion. The format of the symposium thus hosted three provocateurs within each of the Arrival, Participation and Departure sections followed by an open discussion led by facilitators. A MIRO board was set up to enable symposium ticketed guests to collaborate in the discussion and post their own viewpoints. Questions were also taken via the Zoom chat facility. The event was recorded and is now available via the Architecture Fringe YouTube channel.



Watch the
symposium here

Modes of Travel: Arrival

Provocateurs

Andrew Clancy, Alisha Morenike Fisher, Missing
in Architecture

Arrival Provocation

Arrival into architecture starts a long way before the first day at architecture school, and we will seek to examine pathways, perceptions and how architecture is presented to would-be entrants. Why do people want to study architecture, what do they think it is, who gets to study, and how do they get here?

Andrew Clancy gave us an insight into his work in Year 1 at Kingston University. He opened the *Arrival* mode with a poetic description of incoming students reflecting upon a window that they remember, to help them talk directly about light, space and their individual backgrounds and experiences. Describing architecture and the built environment as a "generous" subject that benefits from drawing upon lived experience, Clancy expanded upon the key themes of *Arrival* by sharing insights into how a supportive and open atmosphere of learning helped new students draw on their lived experience to design and create space. Clancy concluded with a thought-provoking examination of how doubt and ambiguity within the curriculum could be contrasted to the doubt and anxiety that debt burdens and the "muddy transaction" of recruitment induces.

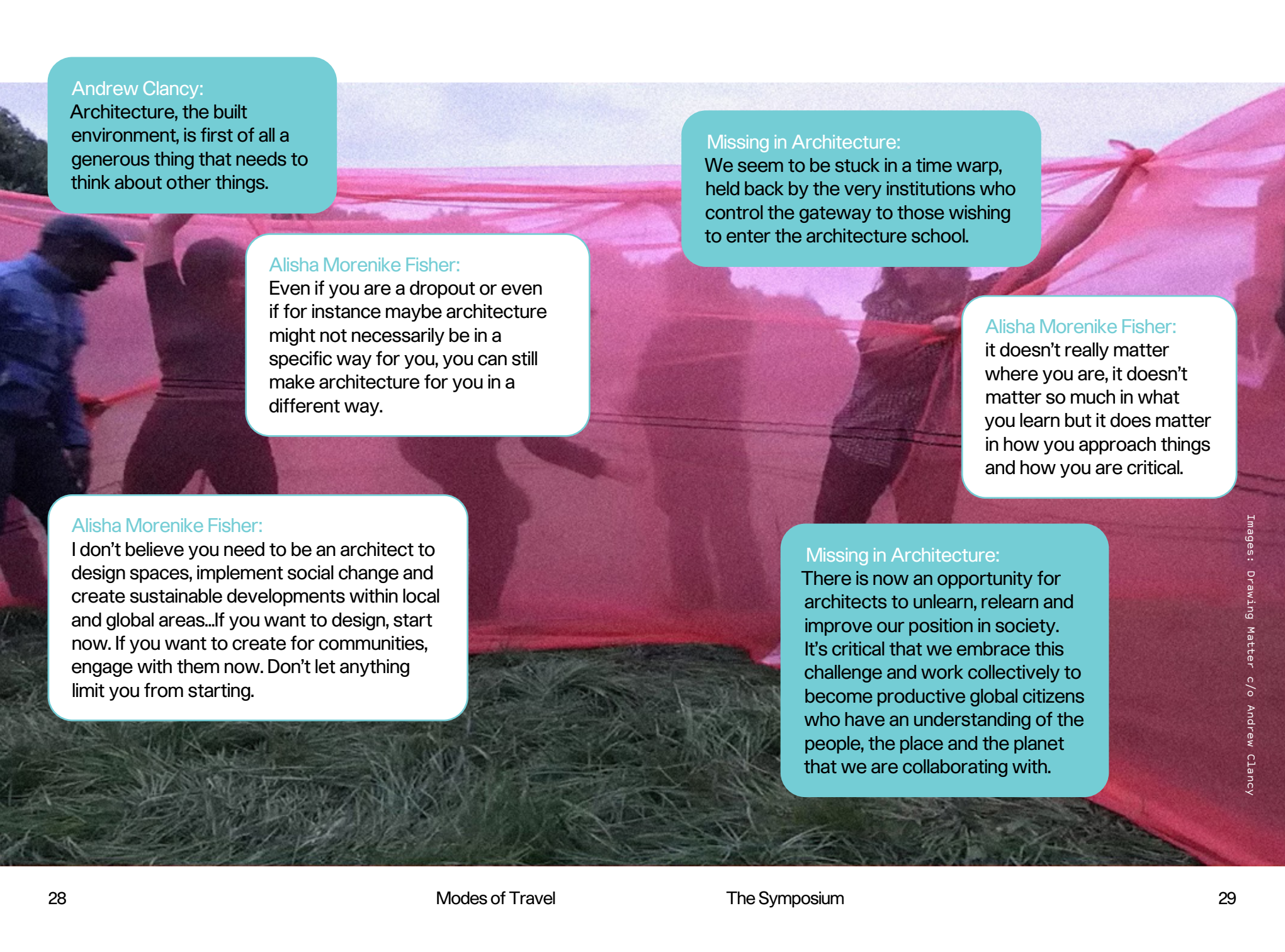
Alisha Morenike Fisher examined the student experience through an evaluation of her own personal journey through architectural education, navigating the ability to articulate cultural roots and foundations in tandem with how these might be expressed in architecture. Advocating for students

to make architecture important to them, Fisher called upon architectural education to recognise the value of diverse lived experiences, and to help provide the means for each student to explore and express their own cultural and personal responses to architecture. Fisher evidenced the practical application of this approach through her own work to date with Migrant's Bureau, for those seeking to understand and define their own path, as a means of widening the diversity and pluralising the conversation.

Missing in Architecture concluded the Arrival mode with a critique of how architecture is represented, what society's perceptions of an architect are, and how architectural education is described or presented by the institutions who control the gateways. Key themes included an examination of the language and imagery used that perpetuates stereotypes of architects and the profession, a look at the sources of influence that inform a decision to enter the profession or otherwise, and a calling-out of outmoded practices and routes into architecture that required review. MiA also advocated for a broader definition of what architecture is, what it does, and the diversification of student and staff cohorts. MiA proposed that a re-examination and re-discovery of architecture through a wider critical lens would aid the profession, as citizens of the world, in addressing some of the most pressing issues and challenges of our time.



Images: Drawing Matter c/o Andrew Clancy / The Future is unwritten c/o Missing in Architecture / Rosa Parks riding a Montgomery bus c/o Wikipedia / Migrant's Bureau

A background image showing several people from behind, pulling on a large, translucent red net that is suspended in the air. The scene is outdoors, with green grass visible at the bottom. The net is being pulled taut, creating a grid-like pattern. The people are wearing casual clothing, and the overall atmosphere is one of collective effort or a performance.

Andrew Clancy:
Architecture, the built environment, is first of all a generous thing that needs to think about other things.

Alisha Morenike Fisher:
Even if you are a dropout or even if for instance maybe architecture might not necessarily be in a specific way for you, you can still make architecture for you in a different way.

Alisha Morenike Fisher:
I don't believe you need to be an architect to design spaces, implement social change and create sustainable developments within local and global areas...If you want to design, start now. If you want to create for communities, engage with them now. Don't let anything limit you from starting.

Missing in Architecture:
We seem to be stuck in a time warp, held back by the very institutions who control the gateway to those wishing to enter the architecture school.

Alisha Morenike Fisher:
it doesn't really matter where you are, it doesn't matter so much in what you learn but it does matter in how you approach things and how you are critical.

Missing in Architecture:
There is now an opportunity for architects to unlearn, relearn and improve our position in society. It's critical that we embrace this challenge and work collectively to become productive global citizens who have an understanding of the people, the place and the planet that we are collaborating with.

Modes of Travel: Participation

Provocateurs

Piers Taylor, Neal Shasore, Scottish Student Societies: MASS (Mackintosh School of Architecture), 131 Society (University of Strathclyde), 57°10 (Robert Gordon University), EUSAS (ESALA), ADAS (University of Dundee)

Participation Provocation

Participation within Year 1 will explore how architecture is pedagogically structured, framed and engaged with in reference to (un)learning but also our social, political and cultural contexts. If the studio is a place of inspired learning, what is it we are teaching, who is teaching it, and how can climate, lived-experience and community knowledge be better embedded within all that we do?

Piers Taylor provocatively opened the proceedings by stating that 'participation' shouldn't set the architect as the 'master'. Referring to his local town of Lincoln as an example, Taylor noted that the majority of our places were formed and developed without the involvement of architects, that they did not need architects, and that they were more interesting for it. He critiqued formal architectural education as irrelevant, with the required learning better done outside the traditional university 'studio'. Taylor proposed that learning is better done collaboratively, involving non architects, to develop structures through discussion and hands-on testing, a collective way of creating buildings that could be ad-hoc rather than pre-designed and orderly. Taylor featured the work of Invisible Studio, and praise was given for Elemental's Quinta Monroy housing in Chile, and the development of Almere in the Netherlands as

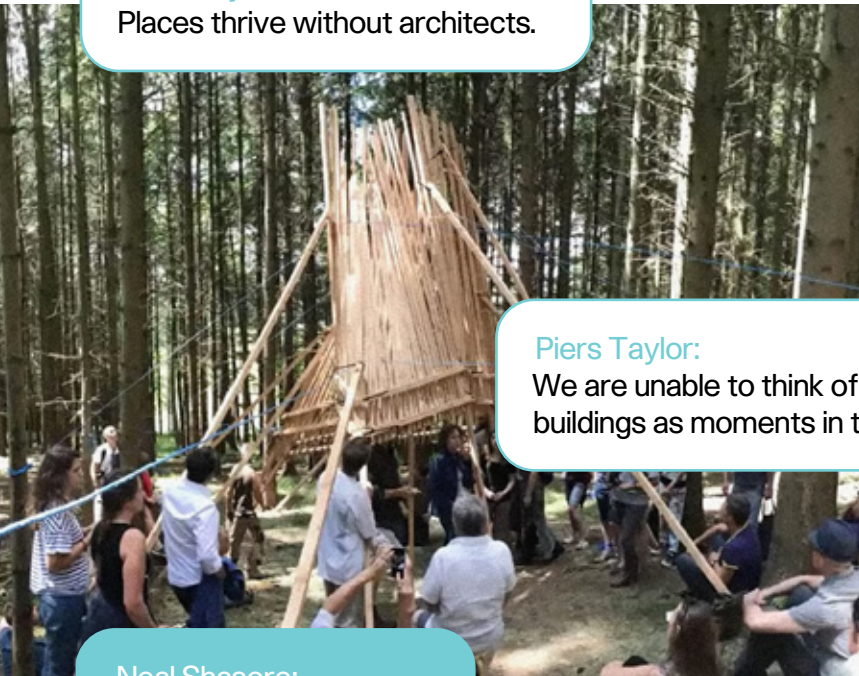
examples where architectural input is only a moment in time. It was a fascinating but damning critical view of our profession and contemporary education.

Neal Shasore gave us a historian's 'outsider' point of view. Leading us through his interest in architectural culture by positing that examining the past can help drive our practice forward. Shasore identified the need to re-energise and recalibrate education in light of Brexit, Grenfell, and policy changes in England to post-18 education and funding. In his critique of 'top down' hierarchical pedagogical frameworks of architectural education, with Modernism as its central panacea, Shasore suggested that a more holistic approach to education should be taken, revisiting Ruskin, Lethaby, Morris and the traditions of collaboration to set up new fellowships that shared learning across all built environment sectors. Shasore noted that architecture has a civic and a municipal role to play, as well as an environmental and ecological mandate. Finally he touched upon issues of 'decoloniality' to embrace pluriversality. As the new head of the London School of Architecture, Shasore has the opportunity to enact these changes.

The presentation by the Scottish Architecture Student Societies was a manifesto for architectural education. Presenting collectively, the students challenged their educators to deliver inspiring and exciting courses which relate to the pressing problems of the outside world, noting that architects have a social responsibility and that Year 1 should reflect this. The manifesto included a plea for live-builds, field trips and more relevant projects tackling climate change and social inequalities. The students noted that they felt institutionalised, and desired to be free from grading systems, stress and anxiety. On the contrary, they highlighted their need to direct their energies towards nurturing a diversity of processes and self discovery where a bridging of the imagination between studio and the real world could be achieved without fear of grading failure.



Piers Taylor:
Places thrive without architects.



Piers Taylor:
We are unable to think of
buildings as moments in time.

Neal Shasore:
What can history DO, as
much as it can say.

Neal Shasore:
We need to challenge the
teleological assumption, that
is implicit in architectural
education, that modernism
(early 20th century European) is
a kind of panacea.

Neal Shasore:
We need to collapse
the boundaries
between architecture
and craft, architecture
and building.

Scottish Architecture
Students Societies:
We want to design with a
sense of humanity.

Scottish Architecture Students Societies:
An outcome of the brief shouldn't be
expected. Architectural educators need
to drive a discussion rather than infuse
pre-thought values onto students.

Scottish Architecture
Students Societies:
Studio needs to bridge
imagination and reality. It
needs to foster diversity
of process and group work
over individuality.



Modes of Travel: Departure

Provocateurs

Neil Pinder, Annelys de Vet, Harriet Harriss

Departure Provocation

Departure from Year 1 reflected on what we imagine (or hoped) that students, staff and schools are learning and taking with them towards the next stage as the annual cycle comes to an end. What does the way forward look like at this point of transition, what (un)learning have we done, what skills do we have, and how plural does architecture remain?

The departure session commenced with an engaging and dynamic presentation from Neil Pinder, demonstrating his use of TikTok, video and social media as relatable platforms for younger audiences to engage or feel connected to the creative industries. Pinder noted that these media platforms talk more directly to the younger audience rather than through the cloak of "learned" archi/academia speak. Thinking about alternative and new ways of supporting diversity and demonstrating the value and opportunities of an art school education, Pinder posited support for conversations and engagement at an early stage, to help provide continued reassurance that a career in the creative industries can open opportunities for both the student and the discipline.

How do our courses help us to imagine shared futures and ways of being in the world? A question posed by Annelys de Vet who's presentation 'Un-institutionalize Learning' offered up a debate around how institutions engage with student activism and wider societal issues. Increasingly the student cohort are concerned with contemporary issues



facing the world which are not always addressed within the course curriculum. How could these issues be addressed through parallel or independent platforms to architectural education that can bring together people from different cultures and backgrounds to enrich student experiences and create connections between people? To allow for an unconstrained awareness and freedom without being regulated by forces that promote exclusivity?

Harriet Harriss spoke about seeing Year 1 as a transformative process for students on their way to becoming future place makers and problem solvers. She questioned how architects can be more present and relevant in the development of solutions for many socio-political and environmental issues which affected society and the built environment. Harriss went on to question what continues to be reinforced through the historical canons and values systems that have consistently been reinforced within architectural education and that serve a particular, narrow, demographic? Harriss noted that it is hard for most students to see themselves reflected in this reduced profile. Updating the value system, de-colonising the canon, creating alternative pathways to becoming an architect and questioning the cost of this experience would, Harriss proposed, provide an intersectional and ethical approach to understanding what the architect's role could be in the world.



Images: Architecture's Canon, (2020) presentation collage, Harriet Harriss / An 'other' Architecture School, presentation collage, Harriet Harriss

Annelys de Vet:
Reawaken our understanding of coloniality, and our accessibility to knowledge networks and resources.

Neil Pinder:
The circular economy of education where young people who have come through the system come back to feedback.

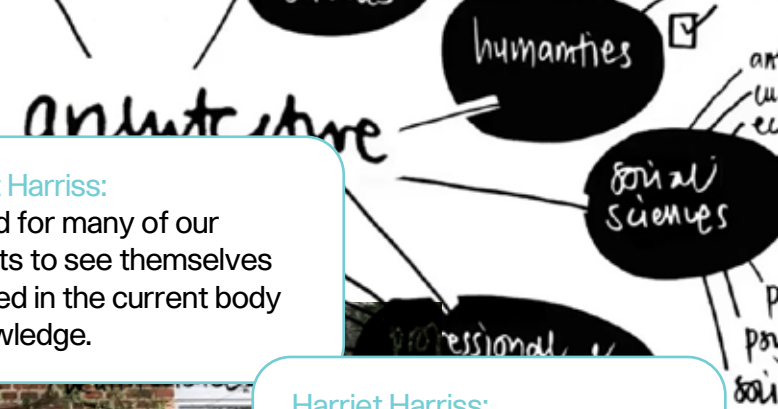
Harriet Harriss:
It's hard for many of our students to see themselves reflected in the current body of knowledge.

Harriet Harriss:
We should divorce ourselves of our object fetishization and start thinking about producing outcomes, even valuing outcomes, and alternative pathways beyond architecture.

Harriet Harriss:
Getting to the heart of architecture as a discipline, one has to ask whether or not it will necessarily survive? Why should it be left to students who are themselves crawling through the subjugation of 'scarcity' economics and debilitated by debt to expend what little energy they have left to ensure architectural education and the profession better serves the needs of others?

Annelys de Vet:
How can we contribute to a wider awareness different organizational structure and alternative design platforms.

Harriet Harriss:
We *should* allow people to carry the title architect even if they do not design buildings, but are architects of other things.



Observations on the Symposium

There were some positive observations arising in the **Arrival** discussion, notably that the fundamental motivation of most architecture applicants is humanistic and positive, and that students arrive with the intention of making a positive impact upon the world. Those beliefs being the easy part, it became clear that the hard part is for staff to turn that into something that's experiential, pedagogic and liberating. Architectural study shouldn't just be confined to buildings, but should focus on the ethical context of architectural education. Perhaps a re-evaluation of certain terms and titles within architectural education is needed to reflect a wider audience and make it more relatable. Architecture is not about the title, but about the process, the community and the labour. Year 1 tutors are in a prime position to help facilitate a space where students feel safe and supported, free from grading, to engage with and explore systemic barriers and contextual issues in tandem with their own lived experience.

The **Participation** provocations resulted in discussions covering the need to reframe what we do as architects, and to understand that we are part of the overall process of design and not lone heroes in charge of a singular object. The established individualistic studio culture in architecture schools must change to reflect that we are not the epicentre nor in control of everything around a project. We need to go beyond a preoccupation with aesthetics, and comprehend other important aspects of a project such as production, supply and maintenance. Crucially the responsibility to 'save the world' should not be the sole burden of the students but an aim that is shared. Promoting collaboration throughout the creative disciplines to empower each other would help, and should be

incorporated and start early during the educational process.

The provocations in **Departure** generated discussions on the view that architectural education should promote and celebrate individuality through collaboration and collective actions. The need to understand each other's positions and backgrounds and start learning from different experiences was important. Schools need to create the conditions and the environment in which these exchanges can take place. If architecture is about changing people's perspectives of the world, the problem with the gateway year into architecture is that we don't take enough advantage of perspectives extant within the studio.

Institutions should also take more responsibility and be accountable for their contemporary actions and past mistakes. Optimism today is by far a more powerful way to move things forward, with coordinated collective action an optimistic and effective method of coming together in order to create change.

Summary Observations from the MIRO comments board by attendees

Some of the pre-arrival perceptions on the comments board were that applicants are unsure as to what to expect when applying to study architecture. The wording describing the profession to prospective architects in UK, from UCAS (University & Colleges Admissions Service), the RIAS and RIBA, needs updating. The truths about overall costs, debt burden, and expected levels of future pay also need to be properly communicated.

In relation to the curriculum, within the Participation mode, we observed that it seemed important that the studio engage with real-life communities, clients and people throughout the course, with the project briefs used to help guide and instruct upon empathetic methods and examples of appropriate behaviour which supported civil agency and

a commitment to the common good. Learning by doing and re-engaging with craft and construction as a process to learn through was also noted as being important.

People questioned how schools can support the identity of the individual student as they continue to develop throughout their education. Particularly apt was a comment which noted 'you are not a bullet fired by the gun of your architecture school'. Other observations were to refocus the Western, white, male canon, allowing students to build their own canon of wider and more plural references.

In pedagogical terms this meant supporting students in their understanding of who they are and how they learn. Critical self-reflection to engage and embrace doubt and confusion, when trying to work through a design proposal, would also be important. Developing a peer practice of constructive feedback, confidence building and mentoring will help establish a working methodology that determines the criteria for 'success', as opposed to being in thrall to and ruled by grading.

'Educators are (should be) coaches, helping to co-create (not dictate) the journey of each individual learner' *Miro Attendee*

There were general comments too questioning our role and relevancy as a profession and how we train new architects. What is the value that architects bring to the process of building and what is their importance in relation to larger disciplinary teams? Should architecture be taught as a separate discipline or should it be taught as a multidisciplinary course from the outset?

Lastly, a comment noted that an 'architect for the 21st Century could be a strategic designer with a broad

understanding of the possibilities and risks of building, who facilitates and unleashes stakeholder engagement and know-how, from the very start of a project to its final outcome, occupation and long-term performance and impact.'



Watch the
symposium here



View the Miro board here
miro.com/app/board/o9J_l_hdxXM=

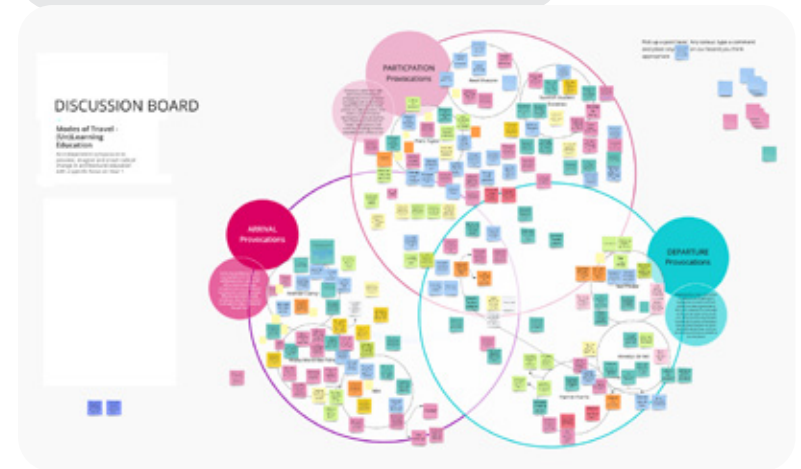
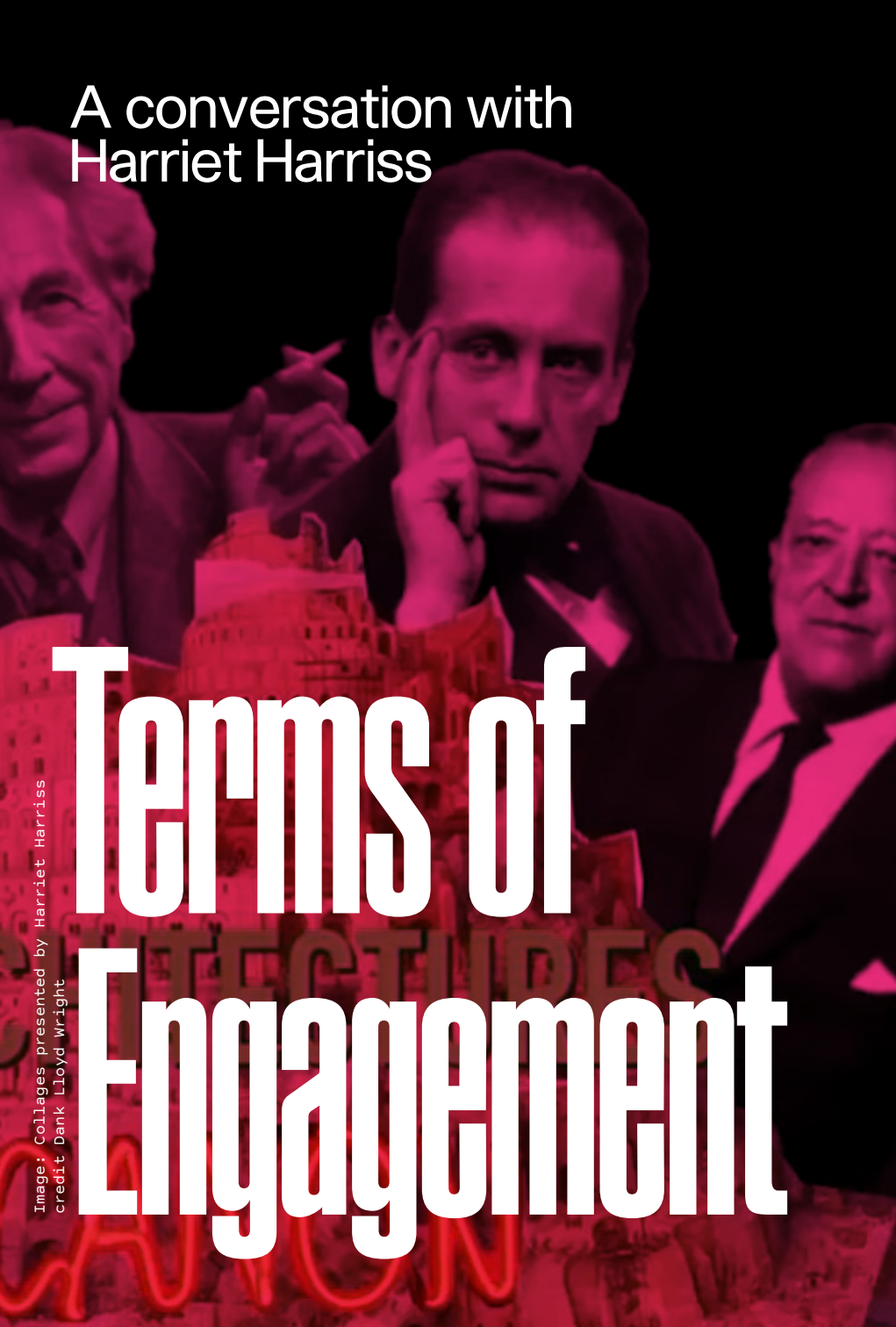


Image: Modes of Travel Miro board

Essays





A conversation with Harriet Harriss

Terms of Engagement

Image: Collages presented by Harriet Harriss
credit Dank Lloyd Wright

This is an edited version of a conversation held between **Harriet Harriss**, **Kathy Li** and **Andy Summers** on Zoom on Wednesday 2nd March 2022 reflecting upon the role of the institution in architectural education, the differences in culture between the US and UK, and the agency of both staff and students in reframing our terms of engagement.

Andy: Hi Harriet. Thanks so much for joining us. If we can start by chatting about the work you are currently undertaking at the Pratt Institute as Dean. What institutional or educational strategies are you developing? What initiatives are you supporting?

Harriet: That's a great question. The idea that the Institution is separate from education is a really important one. The infrastructure of an institution with all of its internalized hierarchies and systems tends to constrain. Some may argue it's a machine, and quite frankly, a rather a brutal one that just creates qualified people. What education institutions are trying to do is make people employable but I would argue that people become employed, whether or not they have a qualification. So, what does this mean then for the Dean of an architecture school? I think it's about understanding there is a balance to be struck between what is an institutional experience and an educational experience. An institutional experience involves compliance with its traditions and its values within an environment that separates the learner - quite literally - from the rest of society. In contrast, an educational experience is about learning about any discipline or method - and it doesn't have to be inside an institution at all. It can be anywhere. An educational experience is

broadly comprised of an assembled community with a shared learning objective. Access should surely be about the shared objective, but in a fee-paying higher education system, it's a matter of money.

As Audre Lorde once said, you can't deconstruct the Master's house with the Master's tools. And, given many institutions exist because a group of white male imperialists needed an infrastructure that would help rationalise, justify and expand the colonial project, it's hard to deconstruct this infrastructure from inside the institution itself. No individual discipline can provide a solution to the world's problems - we surely know this by now. While things can get exciting when there is tension and mobility between disciplines, we are facing crises so serious that we should be questioning what is the value, purpose and impact of any discipline is and do we still need it? A discipline is an inherited construct, and in some cases an extension of the imperialist project, that invites us to adulterate John Lennon's thesis and, 'imagine there are no disciplines', just to see what happens. What kind of pioneering pedagogy could be created without this conceptual constraint?

“Even the word ‘discipline’ is too easily associated with control, punishment, and even violence.”

Even the word ‘discipline’ is too easily associated with control, punishment, and even violence. Etymologically derived from Middle English, the word ‘discipline’ describes a process of, ‘mortification by scourging oneself’, which for many students, precisely describes their experience of the night before a final review. By insisting that architecture is a ‘discipline’ we unwittingly concur with its controlling

and calcifying tendencies. This is surely something to be cautious of.

Andy: The definition of what architecture is, which is essentially self-generated and policed by the discipline itself, is increasingly narrow and archaic.

Harriet: Educators and students have to operate within any institution's rules and obligations to achieve a qualification, but then there are the rules of obligations associated with accreditation, too. Meeting these requirements can limit any authentic questioning of a discipline or any part of its knowledge base. Student fees are another limitation. Colleges and universities are not always populated by the cleverest people in society, because access to education requires both cleverness and cash. Education at its best is a free-thinking, didactic and empowering space, where determining what is necessary to be understood in order to respond to the various existential issues facing the planet is determined collectively.

I sometimes remind my faculty and students that I want to support them not just because I'm paid to be their dean in order to advance their careers within Pratt, but because I'm just a regular human being who wants young people to live lives of consequence, outside of Pratt, too. A dean's responsibilities aren't limited to advancing students futures, but the futures of talented faculty, too. I have been working towards making Pratt SoA a school that graduates future Deans and educational leaders - both faculty and students, not just future architects.

This idea of distributed, democratic leadership and developing talented faculty is really important. It involves more than asking someone what they want to teach or research during the next academic year. It also requires that we ask where do they see themselves five or ten years

from now – independent of institution, region or even discipline. The tenure system here in the US presents all kinds of challenges to any attempt at building a caring school community. For those in the UK who aren't familiar with what tenure is - in a very crude summary, it's halfway between a casino and a fraternity – in that the house (or institution) takes a gamble on what constitutes a meaningful and relevant set of universal, trans disciplinary objectives and then lets each individual discipline subjectively interpret and evidence them, by setting the rules on the disciplinary equivalent of a dormitory corridor.

“Much like the zero-hours contracts crisis that's been unravelling in the UK's academic workforce, precarity can operate as a political tool for keeping people in line. By implication, curricula and pedagogic innovation are stymied, and the diversity imbalance in higher education is harder to redress.”

Disciplinary colleagues including accreditation systems then play a key role in determining whether their members honor these rules, and if you do, tenure gives you a job until death, so you can essentially take it down a notch once tenure has been awarded. It's highly expensive for institutions committed to supporting academic advancement and by implication, non-tenured faculty often find themselves forced to wrestle lower pay, contractual precarity and anti-collegial competition.

Much like the zero-hours contracts crisis that's been unraveling in the UK's academic workforce, precarity can operate as a political tool for keeping people in line. By implication, curricula and pedagogic innovation are stymied, and the diversity imbalance in higher education is harder to redress.

Kathy: Could you share some thoughts about the differences in education you've observed between the UK and US, and how aspects of the different societies manifest in teaching or studio culture?

Harriet: Aside from tenure, perhaps the next main comparison concerns accreditation. Within the US, the NAAB (National Architecture Accrediting Board) validates schools within US jurisdictions, whereas the RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) accredits around 100 schools worldwide. One of the reasons we pursued and achieved RIBA accreditation at Pratt SoA in 2021 was to encourage student mobility between institutions as diverse as the Beirut Arab University, Lebanon to the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile. Pratt SoA is serious about partnering with schools located in what is known as the Global South (a political and economic group of countries, not a geographical land mass), and RIBA accreditation helps facilitate this.

Andy: What are instances, do you think, of positive progress being made by people, collectives, or indeed institutions across the world in the teaching of architecture, to highlight inspiring good work?

Harriet: I think we need to start by reminding ourselves that at only 250 years old, architecture is still relatively young in a disciplinary sense and has never truly reconciled the tension between being both a discipline and a practice, to paraphrase Jane Rendell. Within the UK, architecture was until quite recently predominantly taught in former Polytechnics rather than Universities. 'Polys' emphasised teaching practical and vocational skills over the Universities whose priority was more inclined towards 'academic' and theoretical thinking. While the two typologies were merged in the 1990's this

origin story offers us useful insight into why architecture might resist the prescription to prioritise 'academic' rather than 'professional' and 'practical' pursuits. Within the US, the fact that almost all state college architecture schools used to feature some kind of Community Design Center or CDC illustrates a similar lean towards practical and well as a civic sense of purpose, something that has perhaps gotten lost in our attempts to emphasise and assert our academic 'integrity' over the last few decades.

And added to this mix are the contestable origins and obligations of learning within 'the academy' – a hybrid concept derived from the idea of academe as 'engine of innovation' within the German tradition and academe as an 'intellectual project' from the French tradition, where the emphasis rests on developing interpretative, philosophical frameworks for action than necessarily determining a course of action in itself. And while this pithy, ingredients label-sized summary of institutional history neglects concepts far more complex than we have time to discuss, it's easy to see how all disciplines benefit from being the unplanned offspring of an uneasy marriage of ambitions and obligations, between these two traditions.

So, to now respond to your question more directly - when attempting to define what 'progress' or 'good work' look like within architectural education - it becomes clear that our disciplinary and epistemological DNA makes it impossible to isolate any one form of architectural activity as preeminent, given architecture's ingenuity is characterised as a confection of possible actions that is not tied to one self-limiting process or outcome. In other words, there are multifarious forms of architectural 'good work', it's just that our assessments criteria, accreditations, and awards systems are generally quite bad at recognising and rewarding them.

As my co-authors, Rory Hyde and Roberta Marcaccio, discussed in our recent book entitled, '*Architects After Architecture*,' architects are often at their most effective when operating outside the discipline rather than within it – as the testimony of game designers, politicians, artists, planning advocates and Bitcoin pioneers we featured within the book serve to illustrate. By implication, true evidence of 'progress' or 'good work' in architectural education lies in its latent pedagogic superpower whereby it combines operating as an incubator for nascent sub-disciplines such as Project Management, while simultaneously running a pet adoption center for other professions like the film industry. For example, a film studies student will spend far less time developing skills in cinematic CGI (Computer Generated Imagery) than an architecture student will, making architecture students a far more competitive hire for an industry where our curriculum is one of the most industrially transposable. This is one of the main reasons that I have long argued in favor of allowing graduates to retain the title of 'architect' independent of whether they do or don't not design buildings, but are architects of other things. If we did this, the value and recognition of the integrity of our pedagogy would increase a thousand-fold, along with a deeper understanding of the scale of impact and societal relevance of an architectural degree. Thirdly - and forgive me for taking advantage of the airtime that your original question provokes – accrediting architecture's trans-sectoral afterlife would provide a kind of quick-dry diversification of the profession, given more women and BIPOC or BAME students leave architecture education and practice than Caucasian men do. The knock on effect would also serve to transform architecture's canon, alongside its academic and professional demographics, too.

Afterall, it was American architect Louis Kahn that once said, 'a good question is more brilliant than a good

answer,' so by limiting the definition of our actions and the metrics of our success to our built rather than non-built processes and outcomes, we easily lose sight of asking questions about whether we are really making a difference or not. To paraphrase Dana Cuff, we are overly preoccupied with what she described as 'the primacy of the individual,' within our pedagogies, and then wonder why we aren't paid enough when we can't even see the true value and potential of our expertise.

Changing this will require the profession's pedagogues and professionals to stop pretending that architecture is anything other than collective endeavor. It's never individually created, conceived and constructed. I think there are still some schools that give students the impression that they haven't chosen a degree programme, but instead wandered into a monastery or a cult – where students huddled together during all-nighters working in isolation and at the expense of their mental and physical health is not only a pedagogical pre-requisite but also perpetuates the mythological specter known as the 'starchitect.'

Of course, what we define as architectural 'expertise' exists in a state of near-constant recalibration – as emergent technologies and global crises convene to challenge both our curricula content and our principled, professional conceits. Too many schools task students with designing a formalist fantasy from scratch on a fictional tabula rasa in the middle of a city – despite the fact that few such sites exist – instead of emphasising adaptive reuse, for example. Why don't our design briefs ask students to design not only how their building is constructed, but how it is deconstructed, too – for example, how it could be repurposed, its materials detoxified, and even how the original building plot or residual infrastructure can be made food productive, or native habitat reinstated? It also just as much about 'immaterial'

architectures such as energy and air quality as it is about material matter, such as sustainably sourced timber, or lumber. To do this, institutions and accreditation boards need to support educators prototyping pedagogies that offer some kind of resistance towards imminent, anthropocentrically-driven climate collapse.

This also means understanding that architects' public liabilities don't begin when we break ground on site and end when the client 'signs off' on the build. Instead, they extend from the extractive geography of each component – as in the how, where and when it was sourced and by whom and under what conditions - and the ecological impact of its extraction – and end in the polyurethane pulse emitted from an abandoned building whose toxic remnants are polluting the local drinking water some 50 years after it became uninhabited. It is less about the 'lifespan' of a building and more about its afterlife, given most of today's buildings amount to a toxic legacy whose ruins will endure for centuries - or as Jeremy Till puts it, 'waste in transit.' It's a question of ethical concern, as much as it is existential threat. Economic imperatives don't endure past mass extinctions as it turns out.

Kathy: You talked about concentrating on institutions that are about purpose not performance. Do you find that there's resistance from students to this because we're so academically grade based? The purpose and the big questions have gone because it's all about an investment in an education, that you have to perform at the end.

Harriet: It's such a good point. It's essential that we start from a position of student needs and desires, and a willingness to appreciate if not understand the pressure to 'succeed' that debt and mandatory part-time work only serve to exacerbate. When Britain's 'New Labor' significantly expanded access to

higher education in the 1990's it politically positioned this move an act of economic mobility and enablement, when in fact it was also a thinly veiled attempt to conceal the lack of employment opportunities for high school leavers caused by the UK's transition from a manufacturing economy to a service economy. Thirty years ago, 16-19 year old school leavers with half-decent GCSE's and A Levels were told that those qualifications were good, but that getting a degree would guarantee employment and economic mobility. Fast forward to the last decade, and it's the 21 year old graduates who are often told that only a post-graduate degree can offer the same employment prospects that their lesser-qualified parents enjoyed. And more generally, the cult of 'qualification as credibility' has rendered us all complicit in convincing our graduates that their lack of employability is essentially their problem and not the responsibility of pedagogies, professional practice or government policy – when of course all three are implicated. Added to this is the spectre of what the late David Graeber described as 'Bullshit Jobs' whereby capitalism needs to create meaningless unnecessary work to keep us all subjugated and distracted from a Lennon-eque attempt at 'imagining there's no working week, I wonder if you can.' While at the same time, the pay inequities and contract precarity within each institution's 'academic community' comprised of the 'at will' hires to the tenured until death-do-us-part (but not necessarily incompetence or misconduct) that only serve to direct the struggle among ourselves, and not beyond ourselves - towards the individuals and socio-economic infrastructures that are largely responsible.

With all this in mind – and, to return to your first question about institutions – education as in 'real learning' is never qualification-contingent. A qualification may acknowledge that some form of learning has occurred,

but most of a lifetime's worth of learning is 'unqualified'. It's why I sometimes feel inclined to say that I work in the 'qualification sector' as opposed to the 'education sector' because real learning cannot be affirmed by an institution's assessment metrics or the effervescence of its sepia scrolls. Our participation in the cult of qualification is what gives them learning credibility – and not the other way around.

More often, the institutional assessment processes deployed on young people as mechanisms for judging their alleged 'ability' instill more doubt than confidence. It is beyond irony that if a truly original thought is not anticipated by an assessment criterion then it's essentially unqualified, ungraded work. And if a student doesn't see themselves reflected in the profile of either the faculty or the architectural precedent, registering a protest, from a minority of one, isn't really possible.

Kathy: The key for us, for the theme of (Un)Learning, is a better understanding of the nature of architectural education. We don't listen to our students enough to understand the things that are preoccupying them.

Harriet: I think you're right in that (un)learning means challenging the false binary between educator and learner. We can only learn within a community as anyone raised by a wolf serves to illustrate. What comprises useful 'knowledge' are thoughts and actions that remain relevant and useful, and that are robust enough to thrive being challenged, expanded and enriched by the necessary critique offered by the eyes of others. I think that mechanisms for assessment need to reflect that too. Much of the future of education is in the past – in the indigenous pedagogies that consider learning to be a process of unknowing rather than knowing – or even pre-knowing. If we were to, 'imagine there's no canon, it isn't hard to do,' and

let students determine architectural content based on the pre-knowledge of 'unqualified' experience, would we genuinely anticipate a professional community void of expertise or once whose expertise reboots and redirects an entire epoch?

Kathy: That's one of the things that came out of a discussion with the students after the symposium, is that they came up with the issue of 'cost vs happiness'. They are really struggling with being happy on the course, knowing that you're going to end up with basically a mortgage at the end.

Harriet: Many economists consider student debt to be the next subprime mortgage crisis, and predict that when we reach peak non-re payment the deficit will trigger the next great recession. There are lots of humanitarian reasons why student debt is a bad idea, but when the campaign capitalists think so, then we really have a problem.

Andy: Do you anticipate that there'll be a collapse in education systems then? How in turn do these institutions survive? How do they evolve?

Harriet: As long as there is a need for food and for shelter, our learning priorities will always concern meeting our basic needs, at least initially. But given there is so much homelessness and hunger it seems we can't even learn the basics of how to do that. Our institutions have not yet provided the solutions nor have our disciplines, and yet we regard this inefficacy with sentimental affection, while mumbling quietly to ourselves about the importance of 'tradition'. So many educators seem trapped in their expertise somehow – not liberated by it – condemned to an infinite loop of reiterating outdated histories, theories, methods and approaches, having been convinced that their status

and employment depend on it, and all while the planet quite literally burns down around them. And much like the smoldering ruins of the cathedral of Notre Dame, it is only when the institutional infrastructure has burned itself out and left only the scaffold, then we seem able to realise it is the students who give any institute it's sense of authority, integrity and value - and all while the institution seems hell bent on stripping them of theirs.

The existential threat of climate collapse demands urgent and immediate action. I'm not convinced we have nine years left - the average time it takes to qualify as an architect – before our species has un-architected the habitat of every living entity on the planet due to its destructive tendencies. If our institutions, education systems, and professions burn to the ground, its only because real learning is finally ready to reignite, be reimagined, and take place elsewhere.



Straw Men and Telescopes

Penny Lewis

The Architecture Fringe (Un)Learning event on education was highly provocative; it opened up a whole world of memories of student life and reflections on my teaching. I can't do justice to the discussion here, so I've picked at a few things that provoked me; "The canon is like looking down the wrong end of a telescope" Andrew Clancy spoke very evocatively about the way in which architectural institutions often force visitors (new ideas, new buildings and new practices) to 'wipe their feet at the door' before being admitted to the discipline or profession. Many of the speakers echoed this experience and it's very familiar to me. However, we have been talking, teaching and practicing within an 'expanded field' for two decades now and I don't know of any schools that still teach history based on a canon led by the Modern Masters. We have already abandoned the canon and perhaps it's time to reflect on what was lost in this process?

In our eclectic and unbounded times there is real value in a good, balanced reading list or a conversation about our favourite buildings - and there is a value, too, in the canon. Clancy's telescope provides a good visual critique, i.e. the canon is narrow and unhelpful, but is it true? The selection of key buildings based on excellence or innovation seems like a good starting point for any student's independent studies.

The real question is, once we draw up lists of important buildings or great architects, do they restrict our capacity to look critically at new things? I don't think so. Our 'canons' are built and rebuilt on an ongoing basis through practice, scholarship and teaching; they help us to talk about architecture and to learn to exercise judgement. Students

should draw upon their 'lived experience', but they also need to transcend that individual experience (or group identity) and start to develop their own thinking about what constitutes good architecture.

Is racism deeply embedded in architecture?

I don't think racism is embedded in the discipline or the profession. Perhaps I think this because I have a worldview conditioned by my whiteness? The thing about 'worldviews' is that we all have them and they are often shaped by our political experience as much as our personal ones. The real issue is can we come together to share our understanding?

Although it wasn't mentioned, Critical Race Theory (CRT) appeared to underpin the outlook of several speakers. CRT has its uses, as it has inspired new scholarship on race in architectural history such as the recent 'Race and Modern Architecture: A Critical History from the Enlightenment to the Present' by Irene Cheng, Charles L. Davis II, Mabel O. Wilson, and there are also some crude attempts to mash 'whiteness' and architecture such as Mark Wigley on Chronic Whiteness published on e-flux.

It's good to see Bannister Fletcher's 1890s Tree of Architecture and its relationship to racial thought being discussed, as it opens up a broader discussion about class, elitism and global history. However, Bannister Fletcher is a straw man; thirty years ago we were discouraged from reading him due to his 'imperialism'. One thing I find irritating about the current discourse is that racism and modernism are often treated as if they are inextricably linked. We forget that it was the modern values of the Enlightenment that inspired many of the most significant anti-racist struggles.

CRT is one understanding of racism and society, it's not the only understanding but it is being adopted, often uncritically, by many universities' HR and Equality and

Diversity departments. Both CRT and the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire (quoted within the Modes of Travel symposium event blurb) challenge the idea that educational systems are neutral, objective and colour-blind. Claims of neutrality are understood as camouflage for the self-interest, power and privilege of dominant groups.

It's right for students to challenge the idea that teachers are neutral, but is it right for teachers and universities to abandon the aspiration of neutrality? A colleague recently told me that I was conditioned to think of Le Corbusier in a positive light by my 1980s education (in truth my history teachers hated Le Corbusier). I don't accept this emerging understanding of knowledge, as it underestimates our capacity, as teachers and students, to think independently and to evolve our own critical understanding and ability to act.

Do we need to (un)learn?

Unlearning theorists complain that students cannot incorporate new knowledge into old paradigms. It's a very psychological reading of the way in which social attitudes shift over time. It sees changes in institutional behaviour and awareness training rather than politics as the key to allow for new knowledge.

Many architecture schools have already decided that old lessons on the Modern Masters must make way for new ones on climate, race and gender. Strangely, discussions on decolonisation remind me of the founding Bauhaus manifesto of 1919. Gropius wrote "the old human spirit is invalidated and in flux towards a new form. Our concepts, space, homeland, style! To hell with them, odious concepts! Destroy them, break them up, nothing shall remain! Break up your academies, spew out your old fogies Blast! Blast!"

This desire to destroy the old - buildings and learning - is one of the least appealing aspects of the Modern Movement

as it leads to an overbearing presentism, where presentism is the uncritical adherence to present-day attitudes and the tendency to re-interpret past events in terms of modern values and concepts. It stems from a broader cultural discomfort with the past and for that matter the future. The idea that drastic changes can provide shortcuts to genuine political and social change was part of the architectural imagination in the 1920s and it's getting something of a revival today.

I place a high value on history and on already existing knowledge. Many who talk about the latter often exclude the modernist experience from existing knowledge. A superficial critique of modern capitalism and consumerism often leads to the assumption that only the knowledge and experience gained before the Enlightenment or geographically outside the West is worthy of study. Le Corbusier is the ultimate strawman in this discourse, where by excluding him from the curriculum, or marginalising him because we have been overly reliant on him in the past, we deprive our students of a proper understanding of our immediate past and leave them with a very pessimistic outlook. One honest student contributor said she longed to be optimistic, but the only source of optimism she could find was the detached fantasies of Archigram. We can do better than that.

We Have Never Been Modernists

Ruth Lang

As architects we tend to like to think of ourselves as modern - if not necessarily Modern - in our conduct, embracing all the contemporary opportunities that training and practice afford us in the pursuit of making great architecture. But whilst architectural style has shifted from Modern to Postmodern to post-Postmodern, the ways we teach and learn the practice of architecture have deferred to an approach which is distinctly Beaux Arts. The shackles of historically accepted hierarchies and the colonial attitudes towards the master-student relationship this entails still perpetuate in some form within even the most seemingly subversive of schools in the UK at present. If ever there was a time to push for radical change, this is it. Yet before we turn completely from our historical roots, there is a lot to be learnt from the Modernist era as to how we might get there.

Seeking to overcome historic and pre-war problems of overcrowding, inefficient urban planning and poor hygiene, Modernist architecture sought to take advantage of the burgeoning technological advancements available at the time, breaking free from historically accepted typologies and spatial distribution, whilst advocating new social and tectonic approaches which architecture could adopt to build a Brave New World. This much we are familiar with. But what is often less appreciated is how the experiences of war had revealed alternative ways of working, and of producing architecture. Warfare had unsettled the previously ingrained class system, recognising qualities in even low-status workers which could

Images: Louis Kahn at the University of
Illinois c/o wikicommons credit Miranda
M Martin / Frank Lloyd Wright at DU
School of Architecture c/o wikicommons





Images: US Office of War Information c/o
wikicommons credit US Office of War / A
portrait of an architect c/o wikicommons
credit Deutsche Fotothek



be of huge benefit to the collective whole. This continued into peacetime, when architects were happy to work towards a communal reputation over personal glory, where civic employment was more aspirational than private practice and the concept of 'every man doing his bit' to rebuild Britain remained part of the national ethos. Rhizomatic systems which were explicitly collaborative, group-orientated and less hierarchical infused the education system too, with forms of teaching in evidence at schools such as the Architectural Association in the interwar period producing Modernist architecture and Modernist architects who led postwar reconstruction across the UK (as Patrick Zamarian explores at greater length than this article will permit in his book on 'The Architectural Association in the Postwar Years').

Yet parallel to this, practices more common to the pre-war Ecole des Beaux Arts still perpetuated on the whole. The Beaux Arts tradition - as James Gowan experienced at Kingston School of Architecture after the war - required students to learn architectural design by rote, through copying what was deemed to be the work of 'masters' rather than 'constantly inventing'. Surprisingly, such practices were even evident in the pioneering Modernist work produced in the Hertfordshire County architects department, where graduates were expected to work on reproducing exemplar construction detailing before being given responsibility to undertake their own projects, in order to mitigate the Council being exposed to the risk of trusting new designers with large projects. Such practices effectively constrained their working processes and output to small variations on what had gone before, providing an echo of the traditional system of architectural tutelage. So, whilst Modernism sought to break with the architecture of the past, the focus on revolutionising output rather than practice hindered its potential.

Although, this approach seems to stem from another

era from which we have since emerged, these processes of repetition and replication are precisely what is tended towards in contemporary education in the UK, and we must be mindful of the constrictive effects they have. Despite continually overhauling the form and content of the curriculum in the interim, architectural pedagogy has historically called upon the 'atelier' method for delivery of its aims, which is still tethered to the Beaux Arts tradition, and adopts the 'watch me and learn from me' approach to spatial composition, tectonic detailing and representation. It is a pedagogical system which encourages convergence rather than divergence, looking for certainty and reassurance, and prompting the search for the 'right' or 'approved' answer in what is an inherently subjective course. Furthermore, such an approach in this context perpetuates overwhelmingly Western approaches to design research and implementation, passed down from tutor to student - and reinforced by the approval of the awards system - leaving little opportunity for alternative perspectives to be nurtured. The perspectives which are excluded from this process are from those who have traditionally been underrepresented in the discipline, who have not yet achieved the position of authority to go unchallenged, leaving our educational context subservient to the existing hegemony and all the worse off as a result.

Operating within this framework narrows not only how and what we study, but also how and what we teach. With most educators moving directly to teaching from practice, or from their own education, there is a tendency to replicate the experiences we have received previously. We find ourselves repeating teaching practices which have been tried and tested by our mentors, rather than branching out into new, experimental territories which run the risk of encountering failure and - even more critically in the marketisation of

education - confrontation with systems of Quality Assurance.

The philosopher Bruno Latour argued that although the Modernist frameworks within which we operate assert neatly segregated subjects by theme - dividing considerations of ecology from politics, ethnography, economics, etc - there is an interconnectedness which renders such efforts not only futile, but actively destructive to how we perceive the world. Of course the same is true for architecture, for which the act of construction is inseparable from questions of site, labour, economics and regulations, produced through networks of collaboration rather than via the singular, Fountainhead-esque pantocrator. Yet contemporary assessment practices fight against this, framing students' mindsets to consider each subject separately, reliant on their own universal skill to confront all challenges equally.

But we could yet build an alternative, anti-Modernist pedagogy; a different framework which adopts an inherently integrated, intersectional appreciation and approach. In place of co-production and co-construction, we might instead embrace the potential for co-discovery. Can this be delivered with ever-increasing student numbers? No. But who benefits from ever-increasing student numbers, if the quality for all is compromised as a result? By more radically questioning the aspiration set by our frameworks of assessment, education - like practice - might yet become holistic, collaborative, pluralistic and multivalent, offering space to diverge and to fail, and to embrace this as part of the creative process. As educators, we need to adopt a stance of humility, opening up to alternative perspectives, and ensuring we create space and offer support for finding out something we don't yet know. Modernism is dead. Long live the Anti-Modern.

A Pedagogy For Those Who Seek Liberation

Alisha Morenike Fisher

Being educated doesn't mean that we are liberated. This is one of the most important concepts that we must grapple with in our current state and the crumbling society that we live in today. Education is only an access point for information and it's on us, as individuals, to determine how it is interpreted, challenged and passed down within our own groups and circles. In each classroom, facility, bedroom, library, green space and cramped condition there are people opening up different portals to a world unknown.

To move forward, the failings of the past must inform the process of renewal. In our architectural world, our failings are evident on a day-to-day basis if we care to look or perceive. When we walk outside, for example, are we aware of the extra platforms or steps that may hinder people who may have mobility challenges? Do we consider the lived-experiences of those who are predominantly left out of traditional educational means? Do we understand that certain cultural norms override others and we must therefore question why? These are rhetorical questions because we have already failed in their provision and continue to do so. Acknowledging that our past ancestors have built and remodelled our spaces is politically important. Collectively, learning from our own failings offers guidance for what we must do next.

In 'Rogue Urbanism: Emergent African Cities' by Edgar Pieterse and AbdouMaliq Simone, a discussion is held with architect Mokena Makeka which brings some context to the urbanisms found on the continent. "It is vital to recognise

that the absence of these spaces that cater for vital cultural practices actually dictate and orders activity in the city, marking the texture of its Afrocentricity. Architecture and urban planning is still dominated by the western tropes, both in terms of curriculum reference points and the world-view of largely untransformed education establishments. The possibility of an Afro-centric urbanism is therefore stymied by these structural factors that seek to reproduce the city as it is known (Euro-centric), not as it could be (Afro-centric). An Afro-centric sensibility is ideally typified by generosity in what it means to be African or Afropolitan." This important discussion identifies the urgent need for us to rewrite our narratives, from our points of reference. Learning this in context to African cities allows us to relate that learning back to our own immediate surroundings, surroundings which can still have a heavy colonial taste in the air.

The reason I point this out is because liberation starts with language. The recognition of a language that is losing its power throughout generations often means that a culture is also being lost. What is architecture if not a language? Who is being visually prioritised? These are important aspects within the mechanism in which we contextualise how education cannot be the only journey to liberation. Liberation cannot be found in a book. Once we understand the culture, we can contextualise who is then prioritised to read a book in the first place and understand who the author/(s) are who have been able to write and tell their own narratives, in their own language, in their own culture.

So the sentiments I have for you is to think about the possibilities that can be birthed from experiencing the city you are from. Wherever that is, whatever that looks like. Remind yourself of the memories that are caught up in the specific tensions of that city and find the gaps. Document the gaps. Seek, listen, and record the tongue of the locals wrapped

in different hideout spaces and along the canals. If you are able to explore another city, absorb all of the languages. Be a nomad. Merge into the spaces in which you then become one of the locals, feeling the awkward moments of not being fully included. Then compare and contrast these other worlds because here lies the liberation of existing in a space where you belong and where you don't. Here is where your own practice emerges, not only from classrooms that are now heavily online and financialised, but to imagine all the possibilities that the lived-experiences of people sitting right next to you can offer through designing with them, to experience the world in real time with all its contradictions and wonders. Here lies your own liberation - it's already in your tongue.

Student Reflection

Lina Khairy - Scott Sutherland

School of Architecture

Although each provocation had its own focus and often ventured beyond the university setting, there were many common themes that, in the end, all tie back to architectural education. For example, Piers Taylor argued that it is not just buildings that make architecture, it is the place as a whole: people's lives, needs, the passage of time, the process of building itself. Many places have been built and continue to be built, without architects. In the end cities are built in a collaborative, organic process and therefore, to plan something is to destroy it. This draws an interesting parallel to architectural education. Delivered through a studio setting, it has inevitably become formalised, perfect, something that has to be controlled, when in reality the opposite is true. The confines of studio therefore create architects that are out of touch with reality. [better as a rhetorical question?]

This raises a few questions. If architecture is dependent on so many other factors, if it is so uncertain, then why is it so rigidly planned in studio? Why is it not more intuitive and collaborative? Why are students not made aware of all the outside factors that make architecture so uncertain? If towns, villages and cities were built without the need for architects, then why has the profession become elitist? In addition to Piers highlighting architects' tendencies to pursue perfection, Andrew Clancy remarked that students think they need to be already 'good' at architecture, innately talented and skilful, a misconception that he endeavours to correct. The student societies also argued that the structure of studio makes students stress about their grades and quality of their

drawings rather than tackle big societal issues.

It therefore seems that everyone connected with architecture, whether prospective students, current students or professionals, tend to put the profession on a pedestal and have unrealistic high expectations of what they need to 'produce.' This is the reason we need radical change within architectural education.

In my opinion, when learning communication and engagement, the student experience would change and reduce the negativity sometimes associated with architecture schools. Alisha Morenike Fisher points out how challenging it was to articulate her cultures in the form of design. The current institutionalised way of learning limits the ability to express and contribute.

Student Reflection

Ilja Anosovs - University of Strathclyde

There is much to explore in architectural education. From the voices of the Year 1 students to established architects and educators, from institutions to independent thinkers, the common notion of unlearning to learn is what made me think. What is the learning outcome of architectural education?

I think the truth lies in the ability to develop empathy, collaboration and communication. We do not need architects to build buildings. We need architects to bring people together, communicate and most importantly - listen.

Andrew Clancy showed how collaborative and experience-based education can be delivered with the summer school, where students engaged and learned through communication and each other's experience. Piers Taylor demonstrated examples of successful places, and how architecture becomes irrelevant; how natural evolution and life become the best placemaking tool. Piers' Invisible Studio and Studio in the Woods allows non-architects to contribute and challenge the way we in which we, as architects, imagine and think. Learning by doing and learning by collaborating leads to discoveries and new ways of teaching. In my opinion, when learning communication and engagement, the student experience would change and reduce the negativity sometimes associated with architecture schools. Alisha Morenike Fisher pointed out how challenging it was to articulate her culture in the form of design. The current institutionalised way of learning limits the ability to express, to contribute.

Architectural education has to go through a rebirth.

Firstly, I think it should prepare future architects to tackle current global issues of social inequality and climate change by allowing students to experiment and challenge the curriculum. Secondly, it should enable architects to concentrate on people's needs, through the learning of engagement, communication and empathy. Finally, universities should concentrate on collaborative and inclusive environments. This way architectural profession would not struggle with its identity and would manage to aid places and communities.

Student Reflection

Dag von der Decken, Abby Hopes, Cara Taggart - Mackintosh School of Architecture

On Arrival

It is important to note that when entering an architectural education, we do not arrive at the school with a clean slate. Whether we enter the profession immediately from school, part-time or as a mature student, we are the products of our past. Andrew Clancy described the exercise he presents new students with, 'I remember a window'. This provocation allows students to look back to a childhood memory, where architecture is certainly present but merely the frame to a greater image. Andrew's talk brought us to a clear consensus, that we must value our own lived experiences. These experiences are what have brought us to this point in our lives, and through learning, continue to shape us going forward. Entering Year 1 we believe there should be greater diversity and understanding of different backgrounds, cultures, ages and levels of experience within the learning environment. The winding paths of each individual's development must be acknowledged by our educators, emphasised by Missing in Architecture's stance as a group looking to co-create rather than dictate a student's journey into and throughout their architectural education. Alisha Morenike Fisher's talk was also one which truly resonated with us, particularly as it was so personal. She highlighted that each student's journey into architecture could be so different and when we arrive our experiences are completely individual. She reminded us all

that it was okay to make mistakes and how important it was to embrace the inevitable unknowns on every journey.

On Participation

Architecture should be more of a choreography of collaboration and construction, not as a result of our imagination, but of our being in the world. Piers Taylor provocatively questioned the role of the architect by asking what the value of the architect actually is. He provided the basis for a thorough discussion by claiming that places thrive without architects. Neal Shasore also emphasised the need for a common spirit in the built environment, one of collaboration between the disciplines. This leads to the bigger picture of the need for new models of trans-national collaboration and education. Architecture can play a role in civic agency, to shape municipal frameworks and a collaborative way of thinking. Students representing the Scottish Schools of Architecture made provocative statements questioning the current state of architectural education, by again pointing out the dangerous threshold between competition and collaboration within education, as a result of the link between funding and grading, and process and presentation. Architectural education needs to be a process of self realisation and learning by doing, but most importantly it has to provide the basis for creativity, independent of institutionalised thinking.

On Departure

As we began to reflect on the Year 1 experience within architectural education, we reflected on the intersections of privilege and how inclusivity is necessary for students to feel like architecture makes space for them. And then we found ourselves asking: where do we go from here? The provocations from Neil Pinder, Annelys de Vet and Harriet

Harriss made us consider the institution of architectural education itself as a potential starting point. Challenging the framework of what and how we learn could make future architects feel welcome to stay. Neil Pinder discussed early engagement through seeing role models and alternative methods of learning as a gateway for young people to become interested in architecture. It's also clear to us as architects that we should be responsible for telling them what architecture actually is! Annelys de Vet reminded us that architecture is always political and therefore always up for debate. Her perspective on a practical approach takes architecture into the real world, encouraging students to take up space and see the streets as their studio. We were inspired by Harriet Harriss' outlook on the alternative pathways that a degree in architecture can lead you down. We agree with her perspective and feel that an architectural education is about the journey and not always the end destination. Perhaps it should be the institution's responsibility to support students on their way and for us to stay when we are feeling lost.

'POWER, CONTROL & MONEY'

HOW TO BE AN ARCHITECT

GO TO SCHOOL

GO TO SCHOOL

DRAFTING TOOLS

DRAFTING TOOLS

BUILDING CODES

Image: Presentation slide, Neil Pinder

Re-Framing the Institution

Andy Campbell, Dress for the Weather

We set out to investigate modes of travel that could take us, as students in architecture (including educators), from one place to another. The starting point for our journey isn't necessarily a bad place, but we sought to chart a route to a place which is more diverse, inclusive, sustainable and exciting.

A common theme to the provocations and discussions, designed to map this route, involved the collapsing of boundaries between architecture and building, architect and non-architect.

As a profession and as departments we are perhaps guilty of exceptionalism – “there is no other course like architecture”. We say this usually because the subject involves engagement with so much outside of it and is interconnected with ‘almost everything’. It is precisely because of this that we must resist this exceptionalism and ‘otherness’.

We were provoked to break down the boundary of master and student and treat all new arrivals to architecture school as “proto-architects” with their own architectural canon to draw from. As educators we must be welcoming hosts who carefully consider how we use language, drawing and making to help students synthesise their own experiences to solve new problems and make new places from resources of an already depleted planet.

This conundrum needs to be approached critically from the first day of Year 1. We practice approaches to this through studio design projects but these simulations should involve collaboration with people, place and the planet. The idea of collaboration with the planet is something Grafton

Architects also touched on in their curation of the 2018 Venice Architecture Biennale when they talked about 'Earth as Client'.

To achieve all this, we were asked to re-frame the architecture school as a vehicle to engage with wider social and environmental issues. We were challenged as students and educators to depart Year 1 asking how to design beyond anthropocentrism, how to create a space that is about change, how to not let the institution hold you back, and to act like the climate emergency is real.

The Chance for a New Wave Missing in Architecture

The impact or action that a 3 hour online symposium can provide or inspire is limited. Hearing our provocateurs impart their wisdom has been a validation of many of the things MiA have also identified as missing in architectural education which we (and others) raised in the recent RIAS Quarterly issue on Activism in Architecture, published in Autumn 2020 and co-edited by Andy Summers of the Architecture Fringe and Scott McAulay of the Anthropocene Architecture School. In the issue we called for more inclusive and sustainably responsible education at all levels, so it was valuable to us to open the symposium floor to alternative modes and opinions on education. Listening to the experiences of Andrew Clancy, Neal Shasore, Neil Pinder and Alisha Morenike Fisher was uplifting to hear the good things that already occur in and around our schools, and sobering to listen to first-hand experiences of being marginalised. Piers Taylor critically presented our profession as others may see us and offered alternatives to current Higher Education pedagogy, whilst Annelys de Vet and Harriet Harriss gave us insights into the wider political picture. Importantly it was a chance for our own students to offer their perspectives and demands from a position of first-hand experience.

As architectural practitioners and educators who have all been deeply involved for many years at first year level, the symposium provocations have brought about a well-overdue debate about first year education. Rather than be treated as the least important part of architectural learning, it is in fact extremely crucial, particularly at this juncture of the climate and ecological emergencies and ethical dilemmas of working

in the built environment. It begs the question, what should we do and what can we do NOW to make architectural education as vital to the health of our planet and people as we can? If we were to embrace a total reform of the content and delivery of first year education, focussed around many of the proposals made here, then a new wave of creative architectural thinkers and doers could be given the opportunity to thrive.



Image: Studio In The Woods c/o Piers Taylor

Action! What We've (Un)learnt

The Modes of Travel symposium brought together a plurality of voices, experiences, and opinions on the future of architectural education.

There is no singular 'way forward', but the debate and discussions from the event leads us to some points of action; notes on future directions that we might collectively take towards a progressive future for architectural education in Scotland and further afield.

We hope you find the points of action intersectional in nature, constructive and inspiring. The Architecture Fringe and Missing in Architecture will continue in working towards making these points a reality. We look forward to working with you on these, too.

Action!

A Networking / collaborating / sharing

1. To establish an annual open-access forum for educators and students to come together to share experience, discuss best practice, learn from one another and inspire progressive change in architectural education / Beyond meetings by the Heads of Schools, there is currently no coordinated mechanism for people in different schools of architecture in Scotland to formally meet and support each other. An annual open-access forum held in person and broadcast online would allow people to professionally network, learn and understand what is happening in other schools, discuss shared challenges and opportunities, and work together in solidarity towards a better learning environment.

2. To lobby the schools of architecture in Scotland to issue a joint Climate Emergency Declaration /

The declaration should be accompanied with details on how understanding and responses to the climate emergency will be holistically implemented throughout the curriculum.

3. To encourage all schools to freely publish their studio briefs online / Freely publishing our studio briefs online encourages a culture of sharing, collaboration and mutual inspiration.

B Curriculum

1. To embrace risk-taking and experimentation in Year 1 / Many students progress to the second year of study, with a great deal of attention and worry, directed towards achieving a good grade. To create a learning environment that is about purpose and not performance, we encourage all schools to embrace the more liberal academic framework within the first year of education by clearly structuring the curriculum around educational risk-taking, open experimentation and 'failure' as a learning tool under the clear guidance that an appropriately pitched pass is all that is required at this time.

2. To embed lived experience into the curriculum / Good work is already underway in some schools to embed lived experience and real-life clients into project briefs by properly engaging with people and communities outwith the institution. Authentically engaging people in this way helps students to understand and practice how architects empathise and respond to the needs of different building users and client types. Working in this way also helps reveal the varying dynamics, roles and responsibilities in bringing a project to fruition, clearly placing our training into a real-life context.

3. To build in Scotland's great outdoors /

Inspired by the University of Strathclyde's work at Wiston Lodge, we call on all schools to coordinate and share resources to embed within the curriculum an outdoor classroom focused on the design and construction of small self-build structures. Set somewhere within Scotland's vast natural landscape, the outdoor classroom would enable first-hand experience of materials, construction and team-building contextualised within a rural environment.

4. To create a national summer school for architecture, landscape and construction in Scotland

/ Building upon the outdoor classroom, we call for the creation of an internationally-orientated national summer school for architecture, landscape and construction set within Scotland's natural landscape. The week-long residential summer school, held in mid-June, would be unit-based with a plurality of contemporary approaches to practice lead by invited guests. Centered upon the creation of temporary interventions and structures, the summer school would also host a variety of workshops, talks, film screenings and social events taking full advantage of our rural landscape and indigenous material industries.

5. To embrace co-creation into the curriculum /

By taking advantage of the more liberal academic framework within the first year of study, we encourage schools to embrace the co-creation of specific parts of the curriculum by staff and students together. Co-creation rebalances the relationship between student and tutor, encourages active learning and re-emphasising that learning is a shared endeavour.

C Finance, pay, fees and debt

1. To be honest about the costs of architectural education / The costs and debts, related to architectural education are exclusionary and debilitating. Beyond the payment of fees for many, the hidden costs of equipment, materials, books and study trips needs to be better estimated, understood and communicated by schools to prospective and current students. In being honest about these costs, schools should in turn assess essential requirements, explore potential alternatives and establish more sustainable systems of sharing to bring down costs for all students. Taking drawing boards as just one example, currently many schools require that these be used for Year 1 only, with each student

to provide or purchase their own board. This necessitates a wasteful and expensive annual economy which could easily be dismantled if schools offered a maintained supply of boards based on an annual deposit system.

2. To better create, share and ensure uptake of bursaries and all available financial support / In general there is a lack of awareness by staff and students of all available avenues of financial aid and support. All schools should work towards making these more explicit to staff and accessible for students, including the creation of a nationwide database of available funding.

3. To create consistent, fair and equitable contract appointments for all staff / Often within the same institution or even year group, teaching staff are appointed on a variety of different contract types. Some studio staff in Scotland are still on zero hours contracts. Some are on hours-to-be-notified contracts. Some are on fractional contracts. Some are on permanent contracts. Pay levels vary between institutions. Many are never offered an annual appraisal or any constructive staff development. The type of contract has a direct influence on an individual's career options in academia, financial security, credit score and pension. We call on all schools to end the use of zero hours contracts, to

harmonise contract appointments and to work towards offering staff permanent contracts with appropriate pension contributions.

D Diversity and representation

1. To better reflect the student body in diversity and representation / 'Equality, Diversity, & Inclusion' are often capitalised and viewed as something that needs to be done rather than understanding that this work is holistic and is required to be embedded within everything that we collectively do. It has been difficult to acquire an overview of how diverse and representative the staff and student body is within architecture schools across Scotland. To understand where things stand, we call on all schools to undertake a check on the diversity of teaching staff, guest lecturers, visiting critics, and external examiners and to share this information in the spirit of constructive, collective improvement.

2. To diversify sources of knowledge / Architectural education touches upon many intersectional aspects of life on earth, such as climate, geography, landscape, bopdiversity, culture, history, anthropology, materials, and the organisation of societies in time and space. We encourage schools to see this as an opportunity to open up to a wider

network of people beyond architecture itself who could critically help to further contextualise and inform the first year of study, from guest lecturers, visiting critics, and studio tutors.

3. To diversify and expand our shared points of reference and influence / The core strength of any architecture course is through an initial anchoring to the place within which the institution is located. Any context offers opportunities for learning and exploration. In tandem with this initial grounding, however, as the world increasingly draws closer together, we encourage all schools to actively expand their points of reference and influence beyond an exclusively Western and Eurocentric gaze. There is much to understand and learn from a wider array of building cultures, societal histories, and material technologies.

E Perception and communication

1. To collectively review and revise how architecture and the profession is perceived and presented /

The publicly-accessible descriptions of what architecture is and what being an architect is like published by the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS), the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), and the UCAS (Universities and

Colleges Admissions Service) are outmoded as they require revision to be more appropriate and relevant to the changes in the profession.

2. To better coordinate how architecture is presented and discussed in primary and secondary schools /

There are a number of initiatives that seek to introduce architecture as a subject and future career to school children. We can, however, be better organised at doing this by building upon existing endeavours through cross-school collaboration and mutual support. We call for schools and practice to co-create of a ready-made teaching module for school teachers, appropriate to the Scottish Government's Curriculum For Excellence. This should be a properly coordinated priority.



Contributors

The following people have contributed to the work at hand and to this publication. A big thank you to everyone for their energies, ideas and collaboration.

CORE PROJECT TEAM

Architecture Fringe

Andy Summers, Matthaios
Lymperopoulos

Missing in Architecture

Isabel Deakin, Kirsty Lees, Kathy Li,
Nick Walker, Miranda Webster

Dress for the Weather

Andy Campbell

Architecture Students

Ilja Anosovs, Dag von Der Decken,
Abby Hopes, Lina Khairy, Jordan
Mok, Kirsten McDove, Helen Stout,
Cara Taggart, Zuzanna Woznicka,
Fiona Wylie

SYMPOSIUM

Arrival

Andrew Clancy, Alisha Morenike
Fisher and Kathy Li, Miranda
Webster, Isabel Deakin for Missing in
Architecture

Participation

Piers Taylor, Neal Shasore, Lina
Khairy and Dag von Der Decken

Departure

Neil Pinder, Annelys de Vet and
Harriet Harriss

REFLECTORS

Harriet Harriss, Ruth Lang, Penny
Lewis, Alisha Morenike Fisher

For Scottish Architecture Student Societies

Dag von Der Decken, Abby Hopes,
Lina Khairy, Cara Taggart

For Missing in Architecture

Isabel Deakin, Kirsty Lees, Kathy Li,
Nick Walker, Miranda Webster

For the Architecture Fringe

Andy Summers, Matthaios
Lymperopoulos



Biographies

Ilja Anosovs

Student Provocateur (Participation),
Core Team

Ilja is a first year architecture student at the University of Strathclyde. Currently getting his second degree, Ilja comes from a town planning and urban design background. He values sustainability, placemaking, urbanism and socially inclusive design. He is a chartered member of RTPI and previously worked in the public and private sectors. Ilja adopts his multidisciplinary approach to create architecture that is purely people and climate centric.

Andy Campbell

Core Team, Event Facilitator,
Reflector

Andy Campbell is an architect and co-founder of Dress for the Weather and has led the studio for over 10 years to become an established and alternative model of architectural practice. In 2020 the practice was listed on the AJ 40 under 40 and AJ100 Disruptors lists.

Andy's work as an educator in architecture schools has developed alongside the practice, he is currently the Year 1 Leader at University of Strathclyde having previously taught at Newcastle University and Glasgow School of Art working across all stages and scales.

Andrew Clancy

Provocateur (Arrival)

Andrew Clancy is an architect and educator. He is a director of Clancy Moore Architects, which he established with Colm Moore in 2007. He has a PhD from RMIT and is a member of the Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland. He is Professor of Architecture at the Kingston School of Art, London and directs REGISTER - a research grouping which encompasses a wide range of means to engage with, research and disseminate thinking about the built environment. Prior to joining Kingston Andrew was Visiting Professor at the Aarhus School of Architecture, Denmark and led the M.Arch in Queens University, Belfast. He co-founded the Drawing Matter Architectural Summer School for pre A level students in 2016, and continues to lead its pedagogy. He has examined and been a guest critic in a wide range of schools around the UK, Ireland and Europe.

Dag von der Decken

Student Provocateur (Participation),
Core Team

Dag von der Decken is a recent Part I graduate from the Glasgow School of Art, Mackintosh School of Architecture, now working for Dogma in Brussels. The problem-solving work process in the areas of Art and Design, paired with a big share in shaping where humanity is

going, is what fascinates Dag about the profession of Architecture. To deal with the complexity as well as the diversity of this design process, interdisciplinarity is essential to provide a great framework for creativity and creation.

Abby Hopes

Core Team, Reflector

Abby recently graduated with a Part I architecture degree from the Mackintosh School of Architecture. At the Mac she was a Lead Rep for student voice, as well as founding the student collective Reset Architecture. In 2020 she was awarded the Women in Property Central Scotland student award. She has just begun her year-out in practice working for dRMM in London. Abby is really passionate about inclusive architecture and accessible education. She is interested in the political nature of architecture and how the urban landscape has been shaped into what we experience today.

Dr Harriet Harriss

Provocateur (Departure), Reflector

Dr Harriet Harriss is an architect, writer, historian and Dean of the Pratt School of Architecture in New York. Prior to this, she led the Architecture Research Program at the Royal College of Art in London until 2015 and the Masters in Architecture Program at Oxford

Brookes from 2009-2015. Her work focuses on pioneering new models of design education and pedagogies exploring gender imbalance in architectural education and confronts themes such as feminism; equity, decolonization, diversity and inclusion; civic engagement; and climate justice with publications including Radical Pedagogies and A Gendered Profession.

Lina Khairy

Student Provocateur (Participation), Core Team

Lina is an MArch graduate from Robert Gordon University. She has a passion for sustainability and collaborative design. During her studies, she helped set up and was a sub-committee member of the RGU Climate Action Network, a newly-formed student group that focuses on improving climate literacy within the university. She has also won the Passivhaus Trust's Icebox Challenge, a design competition whose aim was to demonstrate the benefits of energy-efficient buildings. She believes in adopting a collaborative process to design and that good architecture is created by people, for people. In her free time, catch her sketching on a street corner somewhere.

Ruth Lang

Reflector

Ruth Lang is an architect and writer, teaching critical practice at the Royal College of Art and the London School of Architecture. Her research explores the tension between bureaucracy and creativity in the networks and mechanisms of practice, and the alternative agencies that operating within these can afford. This work has formed the basis for a three-part exhibition with the Victoria and Albert Museum in London in 2016-17, and a photographic series exhibited at the Jerwood Gallery in Hastings in 2018. She is an editor for Architectural Research Quarterly, and contributes to a broad range of non-academic publications. She is currently writing two forthcoming books highlighting the opportunities for responding to issues of diversity and the Climate Emergency within contemporary practice.

Penny Lewis

Reflector

Dr Penny Lewis is the academic lead for the University of Dundee's Architectural Studies programme, a partnership with Wuhan University in China. She studied architecture and practiced in Manchester before becoming an architectural journalist. From 2001-2007 she was editor of Prospect, the Scottish Architecture magazine and she has contributed to many architectural magazines

and newspapers. Her most recent publication is Architecture and Collective Life for Routledge. Her research interests include the ecological imagination, public life and the work of Hannah Arendt.

Matthaios Lymperopoulos

Architecture Fringe Core Team, Event Facilitator, Reflector

Matthaios Lymperopoulos is a Part 2 architectural assistant working at JRP Architects in Coatbridge and is a Co-Producer of the Architecture Fringe. After his first degree in Structural Engineering he decided to pursue his passion and study architecture. Matthaios obtained his bachelor from UEL and then in 2016 he moved from Athens to Glasgow to complete his studies at the University of Strathclyde, graduating in 2018 with a Master in Advanced Architectural Design. Matthaios has a community-led and contextual approach in architecture and over the past years he volunteered in architectural and community projects both in Athens and Glasgow. He is a member of a community group in Glasgow while he is frequently invited to the Year 5 design review panels at Strathclyde.

Kirsten McDove

Core Team

Kirsten is soon heading into her second year studying Architecture at The Glasgow School of Art. Her

studies here have been a career change for her having previously worked as a Bespoke Savile Row Tailor. Kirsten cares deeply about social values, and felt that by choosing to study architecture that she could gain the knowledge to help make a difference in people's lives, in helping to design and build community centres, hospitals or temporary homes for refugee camps. She feels very passionately that this should also be done with the greatest environmental respect and care.

Missing in Architecture

Provocateurs (Arrival), Project Team Lead, Event Facilitators MiA is based within the Glasgow School of Art and was established as the result of many conversations between friends and colleagues around shared interests, aspirations and frustrations with architectural pedagogy and practice. MiA - Kathy Li, Isabel Deakin, Miranda Webster, Nick Walker and Kirsty Lees - seeks to promote creativity and action within the profession. MiA are interested in filling in the missing gaps in architecture and providing a voice for those that are often overlooked.

Jordan Mok Core Team

Jordan is a recent MArch graduate at the University of Edinburgh. While Eero Saarinen said, "The purpose

of architecture is to shelter and enhance man's life on earth and to fulfill his belief in the nobility of his existence", Jordan believes that an architect is the vehicle to deliver a consumer's will, which may have at times been unknown to the consumer yet. As a recent graduate, he is also prepared to face architectural challenges in a practical world.

Alisha Morenike Fisher

Provocateur (Arrival) and Reflection Alisha Morenike Fisher is an entrepreneur, environmental facilitator and educator. After finishing her Part 1 architectural degree, Alisha co-founded 3.09. This later transformed into Migrant's Bureau, a multi-disciplinary practice investigating social design and urbanism surrounding disenfranchised and migrant communities. Alisha Founded & Co-Directed Black Females in Architecture in 2018, a network and enterprise that aims to increase the visibility of black females and black mixed heritage females within the built environment. She also created the self-organised network, 'Young Architects Network. She has worked for the award-winning studio HTA Design, UrbanWorks in Johannesburg, Public Practice, and Arcadis.

Neil Pinder

Provocateur (Departure)

Neil Pinder is an activist and educator. He has taught in a number of inner-city schools for over 25 years and has been a trustee of Blue Print (formerly the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust) for the past 15 years. Neil is currently Head of Product Design at Graveney School in south London where he introduced Architecture to the curriculum approximately 15 years ago, winning various Open House competitions and being honoured as "Open House Teacher of the Year". One of his most successful initiatives, Celebrating Architecture, in which he recognised the work of young talented Non-Traditional and Traditional students at Graveney School with prestigious and speakers along with national and international architectural practices.

Neal Shasore

Provocateur (Participation)

Neal Shasore is the newly-appointed incoming head of the London School of Architecture. Neal is an architectural historian and currently a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at Liverpool School of Architecture, working on twentieth century civic centres in Britain. He is a trustee of the Twentieth Century Society and Secretary of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain (SAHGB). He has a particular

interest in the architectural culture of the 1920s and 1930s, and is currently writing a new history of the RIBA's building at 66 Portland Place. His first monograph, Architecture and the Public in Interwar London is forthcoming. He has published in Twentieth Century Architecture, Architectural History and Arq.

Andy Summers

Architecture Fringe Project Team Lead, Symposium Anchor

Andy Summers is an architect, curator, and public programmer specialising in architecture and the built environment. He is interested in developing and contributing to a pluralised, progressive culture of architecture which seeks to support a just common good. His work questions and explores the conditions within which architectural cultures emerge, often challenging existing structures and cultural norms. He is a co-founder and co-director of the Architecture Fringe, and currently teaches architecture part-time at the Glasgow School of Art and the University of Edinburgh.

Cara Taggart

Core Team, Reflector

Cara Taggart is a student from Mackintosh School of Architecture and recently started her Part I year out, working for O'Donnell + Tuomey in Dublin. She is interested

in architecture that prioritises the community that it is built for, both understanding and involving those people that it will eventually belong to. Cara understands that the spaces we occupy can have such a resounding effect on us so we must design them to function as well as they possibly can, both for us and the planet.

Piers Taylor

Provocateur (Participation)

Piers Taylor was the inaugural Studio Master at the Architectural Association for the Design & Make Programme at Hooke Park, a former Design Fellow at the University of Cambridge, an external examiner at the Arts University, Bournemouth and the Convenor of Studio In The Woods. Piers founded Invisible Studio, an innovative and award winning architecture practice in 2012.

Annelys De Vet

Provocateur (Departure)

Annelys De Vet is a designer, educator and researcher. She founded DEVET, a practice for gentle power and radical imagination. She edited 'Design Dedication' a publication on adaptive mentalities in design education, and headed the MA in Design 'Thinktank for visual strategies' at the Sandberg Instituut in Amsterdam until 2019. There, the new temporary MA course 'Disarming Design' has

been initiated by De Vet, which is committed to design practices in situations of oppression, acting on the overlap of design, crafts, politics, pedagogy, community and activism. She co-founded the thought provoking design platform 'Disarming Design from Palestine' and initiated the publishing initiative Subjective Editions that map countries from inside out, from a human perspective by the inhabitants themselves.

Zuzanna Woznicka

Core Team

Zuzanna Maria Woznicka has just completed her first year of study as a student at the University of Strathclyde. Before university, she studied Architectural Technology, Art & Design, and Italian Language at Edinburgh College. After months spent in Italy, she found a big interest in Italian heritage and historical buildings, and by observing the best of the past, tries to bring this into modern design. She values sustainability and believes that the most sustainable architecture is the one already built.

The Core Team were also assisted by students Helen Stout from the University of Dundee, and Fiona Wylie from the University of Strathclyde.

Credits

(Un)Learning Education in
Architecture

ASSEMBLED BY

Andy Summers and Kathy Li

EDITED BY

Andy Summers and Kathy Li

DESIGNED BY

Fiona Hunter, Neil McGuire and
Andy Summers

FRONT COVER ILLUSTRATION BY

Dhamintha Wickremasinghe

PUBLISHED BY

Architecture Fringe CIC

PRINTED BY

J.Thomson Colour Printers Ltd.

Acknowledgements

Our sincere thanks to our wonderful
contributors for sharing their
experiences, ideas and imaginations
in joining us in this work.

Thank you, too, to our supportive
and attentive audience.

We thank our funders and
supporters for enabling this work.

We thank Missing in Architecture
- particularly Kathy Li - and Andy
Campbell of Dress for the Weather
for collaborating with us in
this work.

We thank Laura Harty of the
University of Edinburgh, Gillian
Wishart of Robert Gordon
University, and Carol Robertson of
Dundee University for their early
conversations.

We thank the students from all five
of Scotland's Schools of Architecture
and Landscape Architecture for
being active participants in this
work.

Special thanks go to the
Architecture Fringe volunteer
production team for their
imagination, commitment and
resolve in continuing to explore
and expand a critical culture of
architecture.

The Architecture Fringe 2021
Production Team:

*Raina Armstrong, Liane Bauer,
Louisa Butler, Shona Common,
Matthaios Lympieropoulos, Neil
McGuire, Scott McAulay, Andy
Summers and Rūta Turčinavičiūtė*

© ARCHITECTURE FRINGE CIC

architecturefringe.com





Funded by:



Supported by:



moxon

COLLECTIVE
ARCHITECTURE

helen lucas
ARCHITECTS