TITLE:

Drinks

AUTHORS:

DUE = Hunter, Sofia Pia, Tobias

DUE BAR

23 SEPT · 30 SEPT
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00:00:00

4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

Let's have a drink … I mean talk … I mean work … I mean, let's talk about our research over coffee … I mean, let's have a beer and talk about the project … fuck it lets go get drunk.

The origin of the tea break, now incorporated into law in many countries, stems from scientific research undertaken in England during the early 1900s. A. F. Stanley Kent's work focused on industrial fatigue, looking at the monotony of labour and the effect of alcohol on muscular activity and mental exhaustion.

As typologies the bar and cafe bridge a curious gap between leisure, labour and academics. Coffee rooms continue to be compulsory in workplaces, conference and seminar intermissions and tea breaks are the site of critical discussions and networking, the academic cafe hosts impromptu debates and last minute working sessions and more recently a fashionable place for remote working and studying.

Once, access to trusted knowledge and education was largely bound to the physical space and opening hours of the library, the meeting hours at the professor's offce and scheduled seminars primarily taking place in lecture halls.

Today however such centralised facilities for learning have undergone considerable changes, albeit changes which began long ago, leaving historically significant modes of exchange freely accessible online—available anytime, anywhere. Secondly our notion of trust continues to come into question, moving from a system centered around institutions (or the figure of an institution e.g. teacher / librarian) to one centered around seemingly intimate interpersonal exchanges (e.g. social networks becoming social net-worth).

It appears, and perhaps rightfully, today's idea of trust found in 'open-source,' 'open access,' or 'free access' has supplanted the figure of academic institutions while at the same time such platforms have also shifted the time scale of education, as learning opportunities permeate every second of the day.

The cafe is full of strangers working together but apart. Coffee as a beverage is directly correlated with productivity in the workplace. The world's first webcam was created to check a coffee pot in 1991.

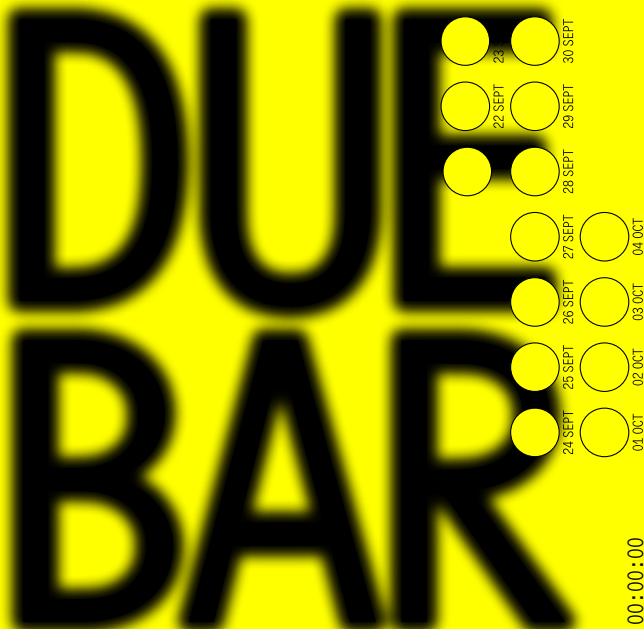#yolo #lifelongstudent
#upallnight #alwaysworking

A constant mantra of this (re)inversion. Exemplified in a host of apps, DIY culture, exercise, 'easy-to-learn,' books 'french-for-dummies' and of course the strongholds: lunch meetings, working dinners and finally drinks with colleagues. The latter being a primary intersection between education, networking and socialising.

As banality, moments of inactivity and social lives become displaced by a constant stream of information our relationship to education and productivity shifts. Yet this constant need to perform, both academically and professionally, encounters a perverse situation in the context of the bar or pub where productivity, efficiency and memory come into question.

As typologies the bar and cafe have long been a part of education. The intimacy of conversations at a bar, an unrealised project or debate left floating in a caffeinated or drunken haze. Schools out. Sips in between emails, coworking space for the price of an hourly latte.

'POWER LUNCH.'

DUE invites you to drinks with a deadline.

DUE BAR

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10:04:13

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DUE =
Welcome. It seems fitting somehow us meeting first in the morning, me coming in quite late last night and you coming all the way from New York, so we are in this jet-lagged haze of confusion already.

AP =
Yes and in this city, which is also a confusing city.

DUE =
We need the coffee desperately. I think for all of us, for our first bar conversation to be getting hyper caffeinated and sugar high just straight away for our conversation series seems like a good idea. In your work there's this idea of architecture turning to the service of the mind, and the service of society and ultimately to the service of thinking. Within that, we're wondering, as we sit at a bar which has a different idea of service, in what way do you understand architecture as a service provider, or as this kind of initiator?

AP =
I think that the profession of architecture is in a moment that it's being questioned. What is the mission of being an architect? For example, I was just in a lecture and they were explaining how the whole role of architecture is changing because of economy. It was explained that now buildings are being built to be unoccupied. Because there are huge investors that buy properties as assets. They need buildings only to translate their money into something physical because that money is invisible. So they build buildings but they don't want those buildings to be occupied.

DUE =
It's almost like a bank account. Just like stashing money in a bank.

AP =
Exactly. So what is then the role of the architect when designing a building, if those buildings are not going to be occupied?

DUE =
It's a bit weird, it's like a risk-management strategy.

AP =
I think this is just one part of the very complex issue concerning what is the profession of an architect. I think designing a building that never will be occupied requires different skills, different goals, different things than the ones that are supposed to be the role of an architect. Right?

I am investigating a topic here at the biennale concerning what is real and what is unreal. Architecture was something that was meant to be occupied, to be inhabited. But now with social networks, you don't occupy the spaces but you see them and you occupy them mentally. So what is the real architecture? The one that is on social media? Or the one that can psychically be seen? So that's another very important question and it is the one that I'm questioning at the biennale.

DUE =
Oh, I love that. I think this is a very critical question as well because maybe now, the role of the architect is not just to build a building, but to maintain. Maintain both its structure and its image.

AP =
Exactly, to maintain the kind of information that it produces not just the maintenance of the physical building. It's the maintenance of the memory of that building.

DUE =
This brings in a new sort of degree of maintenance, and to think about the maintenance of fantasy is especially intriguing.

DUE =
But what if the building doesn't actually even physically exist? It only exists as an image.

AP =
Exactly, exactly. Which is what happens with a lot of buildings that they have all over the internet.

DUE =
Hyper realistic renders.

DUE 82

AP=

Exactly. The renders don't exist, but at the same time they completely exist.

DUE=

Sometimes I don't even know if the buildings are real or not. So what about that reality? Why is that one not real?

AP=

Fantasy can go both ways right? You can have the fantasy of a future but you also have the fantasy of a past.

DUE=

Like the hanging gardens, that we're not sure if this was built by Nebuchadnezzar. We don't know if it was actually built but we have a fantasy of it. So then you can start to fantasise about the maintenance of the past as well through this sort of imagery.

AP=

How are selfies affecting architecture? Is it affecting it a lot? We talk about the selfie points of a building and that is to be part of the design.

DUE=

I've been asked by a client 'where is the selfie moment of your building?'

AP=

Oh, really? Of course, of course.

DUE=

Where will people take the pictures? Where is the selfie moment? Where is the Instagram moment?

AP=

Exactly, if you do a building that doesn't have that selfie moment and that marketing, it's going to be less successful. So there is always a worry about how technologies are affecting what it means to be an architect, what the role of an architect is, what maintenance means.

DUE=

It's fundamentally changing the way that we also visit cities. A lot of times people just look on Instagram, 'What should I see in Istanbul? Okay everyone takes a picture on this hill - so I will do that too.' Everyone taking the same pictures from the same angle. It was almost like they have a guide to where the most Instagram liked photos were taken.

AP=

Amazing. You see? So this is just the beginning and with social media it can be manipulated, it can be done and undone very quickly and very easily. So maybe architecture will be affected by this quickness or this speed of our new life, as well as us. I use architecture for questioning because there are so many things that I don't take for granted. It's not about solving things, it's about questioning. I don't know if I'm a problem solver. I am a problem creator.

THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING…WITH SOCIAL MEDIA IT CAN BE MANIPULATED.

DUE BAR

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JS =
[inaudible 00:00:00] Or maybe just edit it out. [inaudible 00:00:05][inaudible 00:00:0012]

DUE =
Sure. Okay. Amazing. I think there is a very interesting train of thought in your work around teaching through multiple and atypical sources. In a way it feels a bit like being in a bar or osmosis. On one hand trying to maintain a line of thinking or conversation and on the other being heavily influenced by all these external forces around you, overlapping one another. Can you explain how you understand machine learning in such a non-algorithmic way, and what that ends up looking like for you?

JS =
I recently did a project I did in London at Somerset House around machine learning by teaching a machine to speak on behalf of certain entities, entities that usually communicate in terms that we as people do not typically recognize as speaking. In that case, I used microscopic footage of Bacillus Subtilis, a bacteria I have been looking into which is present in fermented soybeans called Nattō. Bacillus Subtilis is a very potent probiotic often believed to be the secret to a long life. It is one of the main bacteria species used to test the viability and limits of extraterrestrial life on Mars, for example.

I use these bacteria, or their microscopic movements, as one set of teaching material for the machine—specifically using it to generate a script. On one hand I work a lot with text and language but on the other hand I also use microorganisms and entities that don't speak human language. Related to machine learning I'm interested in the question, 'how do we communicate?'… Like, 'what's the correct way to speak?' Because we don't really share a language yet. I am trying to break down our understanding of language, so I use the bacteria's movements to create a script, tracking how they interact.

I'm really interested in Martians and outerspace, which I think comes from my interest in language. I recorded bits from the late 19th century ideas of Martian language with the French medium Hélène Smith who used to speak in tongue to communicate with aliens. There was this early Martian mythology starting from [inaudible 00:05:02] telescope that apparently had scratches on it which essentially looked like the 'inverse' of Mars when viewed. Hélène Smith would mediate or channel Martian messages and her seances were documented by [inaudible 00:05:29] and in writing according to her instructions. This is considered one of the earliest forms of glossolalia or speaking in tongues.

I record the written texts with my voice and train the machine using a combination of my recordings and the archival material of Smith's original channeling. The bacterial movements and early Martian speak are connected to each frame with audio according to how the computer 'sees best'. It is a very mystical process, but at the same time the idea of machine learning and vision today is also a process of learning to communicate with a kind of alien which we created or are creating—we don't know exactly what it's doing. Of course, we make the algorithms, we teach it, we give it certain material. But there is the black box problem and what comes out is a bit mystical.

These machines make our infrastructure and communication devices as well, even though they are sort of alien to us. Then there's this other alien, this Bacillus Subtilis bacteria. The origin of the Bacillus Subtilis is uncertain and it is possible that maybe it came from space and now it's part of us—the alien is in us. This pushes the boundaries of anthropocentrism, or the body boundaries, that on one hand there is individualisation or some sort of limit between us and the other, but at the same time these bodies are connected.

DUE 83
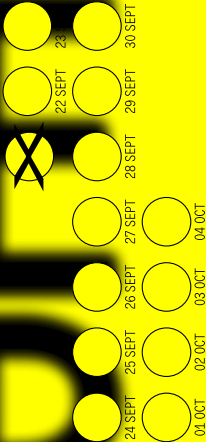
DUE=

Earlier, you said that you teach the machine through both scripting and glossolalia. I imagine that those two 'languages' have very different syntaxes? How does the machine respond to these two very different kinds and how do they affect the biological processes and manipulation of bacteria?

JS=

Hmm it's interesting because of course one could say I'm feeding this misinformation to the computer. The question of fidelity or valid information is one thing but beyond that or parallel to that is this set of mystical material and glossolalia—one doesn't exist without the other.

Certain algorithms are in place to process rational and seemingly irrational inputs, it feels kind of crazy, I've become really technically attuned to a process. For example, the video I presented in London at the Somerset House recently was more or less twelve minutes of bacterial footage and a sonic output. I became really anal, 'okay this needs to be presented next to this because this is what the computer put out and this is how the algorithm treated this material.' Although it is completely [inaudible 00:10:05] from a human or viewer's perspective, I still believe I need to adhere to the algorithm to maintain a scientifically honest process.' So it is a weird combination and really hard to decipher whether or not it's going the right way. There is also the risk or potential that, as an editor, one can become a slave to the algorithm.

DUE=

What does the difference in the output look like when you work with an algorithm, coding it very precisely, asking for something specific, and when you use a chant or glossolalia?

JS=

Yeah, I guess there's the idea of randomness. The roots of my interest in bacterial Martian languages come from an earlier project called, Gut Machine Poetry. The project was a kombucha, the culture operated like a homebrewed computer and worked as a random number generator. So that idea kind of applies to this later project that kind of oversees the renaissance.

The most intelligent machines we have been creating are modeled after, or are anagrams for, the human mind. But these machines miss the point that the human mind is intuitive, making it algorithmically impossible. There are irrational factors that play into the process which an algorithm cannot account for yet. Machines follow certain rules or procedures and lack certain kinds of flexibility. Living material is random and programming for or with that kind of bacterial randomness is very diffcult.

In that first project I basically inserted kombucha culture into the 'gut' of the computer and looked at it through a microscope to see how its movement generated random numbers. In a way the true random number generators are inputs like ambient noise or something we can't precisely calculate ahead of time. Of course this relates to the gut-brain connection.

DUE=

Is your intention to recreate some kind of consciousness close to the human one?

JS=

Yeah, I guess so. And I guess there are also all these ideas from the history of alternative cybernetics that have had a big impact on my thinking. They put forward the idea that the world is not a closed jar but an open ecosystem and therefore it is always changing.

DUE=

How did you decide on using the kombucha culture?

JS=

The homebrew computer idea definitely comes from The Homebrew Computer Club. Steve Wozniak, all of the IBM and garages in California where a lot these tech companies started. It also refers to beer and the relationship between tech and drinking culture. No it was funny, when I started this homebrew I was doing a residency in London in Hackney Wick. The area was home to a lot of new tech companies and startups mushrooming and whatever. Somehow the whole area was fermenting, there were so many microbreweries and kombucha makers and so I was like 'this is it.'

DUE=

Literally, every other corner in that area is now a microbrewery.

JS=

So somehow that sparked the interest in probiotics and the gut-brain. I'm really into kombucha and probiotic competencies.

DUE=

You could even take a sip of your computer at one point or?

MACHINE LEARNING IS A PROCESS OF COMMUNICATING WITH A KIND OF ALIEN WE ARE CREATING.

DUE
BAR

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SO=

In this biennale we have a set of works related to post earthquake emergency housing.

We started with the idea of this post emergency floating housing in 2017, following a newspaper headline that was announcing the privatised public emergency gathering areas. It's expected that Istanbul will have an earthquake bigger than seven on the richter scale, probably in 20 years, because we are on this North Anatolian Fault and it's moving towards Istanbul.

It's like every 250 years, it repeats. But 15 years ago, there were almost 400 emergency assembly points because after the earthquake you need the empty space to go and put your tent, as most of the houses, especially in the center would probably have collapsed or been damaged. So that's why we need these gathering places. We saw that these gathering spaces are decreasing quite significantly. So what we have right now is something like 75 remaining and the population has almost doubled. We need to have more than 400, but the number is actually instead decreasing. We forget the effects of earthquakes, because all these 400 gathering assembly points were announced right after the last big earthquake in 1999. Since we started to forget, all these areas have become privatised. There was this big construction boom in Istanbul—the 'star time' of Istanbul—between 2005 and 2015. Most of these areas transformed into housing projects or shopping malls—commercial projects.

DUE=

With the ones that still remain, how are they used?

SO=

They're like parks. Green areas. Not like in Japan. They're not disaster prevention parks, but at least they're empty spaces where you can put your tent or gather in case of an earthquake. But that is only for 10% of the population. So we started with this newspaper headline. We were thinking about what architecture could do for the city, and the initial response was to design a low budget emergency house.
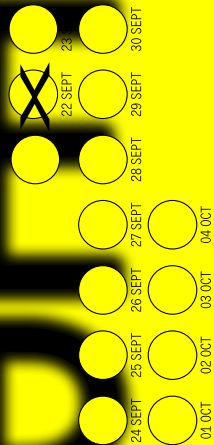
Then, in Istanbul, the question is not how the house is going to be designed, but where the house is going to be located. When we saw the facts and stats about the emergency gathering areas, we decided we could maybe put it on the water. There is no more place on land. Floating Emergency. It sounds like an absurd idea. Why the hell do you need to put it on water, but in this case, it was a reaction to what is happening on land in the city. The project grew when we collaborated with other scientists, because this is an issue you cannot solve as an architect alone.

We realised that the house wasn't the most important thing, it was where to put it. Without a place, a super-designed house doesn't matter. You cannot put it on open sea because of heavy rain and the movement of ships. So we thought that maybe The Golden Horn would be a very good place as it's like a small lake in Istanbul. It doesn't have big waves nor big ships.

It's there on the map. So we are here, this is the densest area in Istanbul, and this is the most historical area. All the fragile buildings are located around this area and also the population is very high. If you overlap the maps of most damaged buildings and the safest area for the tsunami, that's this area. So we decided to work on that site as a case study, and we collaborated with two professors from the University of Sociology and Civil Engineering. Then we designed it as an interdisciplinary course that we are teaching in parallel to our practice.

DUE=

That is super interesting. What is the timeframe you expect for these places to be occupied?

SO=

They can be occupied from six months to two years while new houses are constructed.

DUE=

So you could potentially be living on a floating house for two years?

DUE
84

SO=

Yeah, exactly. Even more than three years. We had an earthquake in the very east of Turkey, and there were these emergency houses. Most of them were very simply containers without any insulation.

… and people had to live there for more than two years. Another really important aspect was how we were going to put the houses on water, and the other question was how can we design the houses so that they are insulated? We then divided the research into a project with six different sub-themes: energy, infrastructure, site, material, social life, and logistics. In terms of temporality, it is a very fragile issue when you propose to build something on water. That's why we have to keep it temporary from the beginning. The project is only for a case of a very serious emergency.

DUE=

This is such a rich and thought provoking topic with a lot of similar cases that must face similar challenges to Istanbul. You mentioned that one of the themes for the houses was concerned with social aspects. While two years is temporary, it's also a long time. I'd be curious to hear a little more about that.

SO=

That's why from the beginning we handed this over to sociology students and also sociology teachers, because it's very connected with the engineering parts of the project. For instance, how much you are moving around between the houses. It's very important, because the physical design has a very important impact on the sociological experience and output. Sociologists must always do controls and show what the effect of a certain design solution would be on the city, on the people. They have to be in that position because otherwise, architects could design anything. The sociologists would say, 'Sorry. There is life here, it's not only about the object itself' et cetera. Also just in terms of garbage. If you put a neighborhood on water, there'll be a huge amount of garbage that needs to be collected periodically which is a cross-disciplinary challenge for us to think about and design. Sociologists calculated how it should be working and then architects adapted it to their scenarios. Like 'What can the distance be? So if you are living here, how long can you walk? How does it affect the older people, the very fragile, and younger people?' They tried to understand all that, but of course, this is an initial resource. It is a very big topic so this is just the beginning.

Also, sorry, just to add one thing about social impact. Normally, architects don't start the design with the question of 'who do we design for?' but sociologists design with that question from the very beginning.

DUE=

We have one last question, that is, what is your working drink preference?

SO=

It depends on the time, I guess. Of course, for the morning it's always coffee. Early in the morning, cappuccino … and then turns it into espresso. For me, I'm not really … Some people, they really need a fuel drink. I'm not like that, because when I'm focused, I'm like I can't do anything else.

DUE=

And in the evening?

SO=

… Beer.Yes. [inaudible 00:15:24] vodka. [crosstalk 00:15:24]. [crosstalk 00:15:27] vodka.

NORMALLY, ARCHITECTS DON'T START THE DESIGN WITH THE QUESTION OF 'WHO DO WE DESIGN FOR?'

DUE
BAR

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15:09:08

JM =
How does the AA view you? What is your relationship?

DUE =
I think as an independent publication they host.

JM =
Do they ever have an issue with the idea that it represents the school?

DUE =
They've never come up to us. We've published things that were controversial. Nobody from the administration of the school ever came to us saying that what we were publishing was not okay.

There are other publications like the AArchitecture that have to show everything to the Director to be edited and don't have as much freedom. But our budget has been granted with no strings attached.

JM =
Oh, so you do have a budget from the school?

DUE =
Yeah, the AA funds it. It's been a very long tradition at the school to fund these kind of small zines and publications.

JM =
So will you guys move on at some point? And someone else will inherit the one page format?

DUE =
Maybe. We're actually planning on ending after this biennale when we'll hit 100 issues. And we kind of want to leave it at this moment where it's getting some attraction and momentum.

It's also just nice to sort of end on a very high note with a lot of excitement rather than dragging something out for too long. It will of course not end but develop in other forms.

DUE =
Could you tell us about your roles as an editor and a curator?

JM =
It started at the AA, actually. In the print studio, in 1999.

DUE =
Oh. I didn't know that.

JM =
Yeah. Mary was editor of AA Files. And I was only there for about six months. But I was editor of the events list, working on books and everything.

DUE =
We are curious to hear more about your thoughts on the role of the editor. Sometimes, we have felt we have maybe intervened too much in a text and have taken on a very proactive role, maybe altering or changing things too much …

JM =
I commissioned a piece by Emilio Ambasz recently. We're doing a show called Home Futures at the Design Museum in London, which is about rapid revisions of the home, and what happened to those ideas.

Because of The New Domestic Landscape exhibition, which influenced me—and I think of course lots of other curators—I asked him to write an afterword for the catalogue. And he did it. But it wasn't quite what I wanted, because he was talking too much about the Italian part and not enough about the domestic part. So I asked him if we could add a few paragraphs about the domestic part. And he said, 'I'm going on holiday. Why don't you write them?' So I wrote three paragraphs and I sent them to Emilio. And he said, 'Ah, that's brilliant! You made me look very clever, and, you know, if any brunettes come to congratulate me, I'll give them your number.'

DUE =
Ha that's great. What differences do you see between the way of working as an editor and as a curator?

JM =
I think I'm still in the early stages of trying to intellectualize it. But I have an instinctive understanding of the difference, which is that being an editor, or editorialising, is a very rational process.

DUE 85

And it is one that reasons through argument. Whereas curating is really thinking through objects. It's rather different, and I think, when I started at the Design Museum, I had curated a couple of shows before, of course, but not in a museum context.

And this business of thinking through the objects, instead of having an idea and trying to illustrate it with objects, is a big difference.

And often, I think as someone who has been editing for 20 years, I look for rational explanations of why certain objects are in the show and how they rearranged. What that arrangement says. And I think there's an aspect of curating that is not as rational as that. Actually, it's interesting … I think the important thing is not necessarily the argument, but the arrangement of objects in space.

I sometimes wish that curators on my team would give me a more rational explanation of what those things are doing there. And sometimes I think… well, it's there because they want it there because it's a good object. And maybe sometimes the story has to sacrifice a little to the experience of the exhibition. You see what I mean? Which is very different from an editorial practice—one would never sacrifice that in editorial terms, I think.

I mean, one could always throw in a story that is simply embellishment or entertainment. But with objects, there's so much … You know, one can make a perfectly reason-based exhibition, which is an argument, which is also a great exhibition. So it's really about the primacy of the objects in the experience, they assume their own logic, which is not necessarily one that can be predetermined on paper. Do you see what I mean?

DUE=

So each of those objects are individual, but they speak to a larger whole within the exhibition? Similar to DUE where each week is an individual single text, not connected to the one before it. Maybe you would design an exhibition that was just one object. How does that collective relate to the singular, in terms of the authorship of an exhibition versus a publication?

JM=

Interesting question. I have no idea of the answer. But genuinely, I mean, I could try and formulate one, but I actually don't have the answer.

Well, I just started thinking about that now. It's such a different way of working.

DUE=

With this publication, we've really managed to compartmentalise. And I think it makes it much easier for us, in some ways, difficult in others, to do a weekly.

We don't work in a series of themes with several articles around one topic, instead it is individual voices. I think that's a really different way of doing a publication or a magazine or an exhibition than …

JM=

Well, I think that a biennale like this one offers a sort of unfiltered aggression, because most of the exhibits are not an object. They are a display. A collection. Each contribution is already a collection of text, video, photography, and objects, or some permutation of those things.

And it's not like an object in an exhibition is a mini-exhibition. Whereas I could imagine that you could make an exhibition where everybody contributes one object. You know? But that's a very different model from—I use this word hesitantly—a kind of authorship that a curator can have over an exhibition, if that curator wants that. Which I think a lot of curators do.

But yeah, I think there must be other interesting models where you move away from a kind of curatorial authorship where the curator often gets in the way.

DUE=

We have one last question that we ask everybody: what's your favorite drink while working?

JM=

Well, tea, actually. Black tea without milk, kind of Turkish style, actually.

DUE=

Standard PG Tips?

JM=

No! No … Well, it depends … I go through phases. Actually, I had a Russian delegation visit the museum recently. And one of them very kindly gave me a present. It was a packet of this very smoky Russian tea which comes from an estate outside of Moscow.

And I got totally addicted to it. And I finished it and I don't know what to do anymore … I'm lost. There's nowhere I can buy it.

…MOVE AWAY FROM A KIND OF CURATORIAL AUTHORSHIP WHERE THE CURATOR OFTEN GETS IN THE WAY.

DUE

BAR

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DUE =

Part of what we're excited with around the bar is the play between formal and informal spaces. This happenstance, you come across each other and have a casual conversation over drinks. We're quite interested in your interpretation of time and what you're setting up with Uchronia.

HS =

Everyone, especially in architecture, is familiar with the idea of utopia and utopian thinking. What utopia is for place, uchronia is for time. I want to open up this idea of alternative time systems. The starting point for me was today's time crisis. Why we are always stressed, why is there no time. Everything is done in a rush. Why are we not having time? To do this I am collaborating with sociologists of time as well as chronobiologist looking into body rhythms.

Considering our contemporary state of flexibility and individualisation it seems we are moving away from the typical working model of nine to five and instead working more towards deadlines.

Deadlines are not restricted to any time norm. There are no laws for this type of working models. Whereas in the UK, we have to zero our contracts —people pay quite a high price for temporal serenity, just for that freedom.

If we are working towards a deadline, it becomes really interesting when you understand your body rhythms, when are the times when you really concentrate? How much should you sleep? Every one of us is very different. Some people need five hours of sleep, some 11, sometimes you need more, sometimes you need less.

For the biennale the idea is to really build a circadian space. It's a diagrammatic representation of what I actually want to do. At the moment, how we move through space is related to clock-time. So a lot of people use an alarm clock. That's the time you set, then you go to your bathroom, your kitchen and at some point you leave your house. You have a commute time and an offce time.

It's the clock that guides us. What happens if we use your own body rhythm to move from one space to the next? That would mean you build a circadian space. In each of the spaces, you think of a new typology of space.

The bedroom is probably the closest to sleep-time, but after this, you come into a wake up phase. You go from lying to standing. What would it mean to design a 'wake-up room?' What would this room look like? Light is very important for your body. Light would be a very important quality for each uchronic space. In a way it's the sunrise moment, but it's more also about the body stretching and opening up. You can really adjust the room to these conditions, because you are never reusing a room. You have to think about this as one cycle.

DUE =

24 hour house.

HS =

It can be 24 hours, it can be longer, shorter. It really depends on how your day is. The same when you go into the cognitive performance phase. It's the circadian lighting that's important. You've probably noticed blue light activates your mind. The light spectrum and intensity really have an influence. Our visual system is different to our circadian system. People who are blind, still perceive light, and their body clock is still triggered. Red, orange light triggers melatonin, making you sleepy. That's why nap phases and sleepiness phases have these very intense colours. That's what you see in the installation.

This project is, in a way, just one example of what uchronian design thinking can be, but it's never the same as utopia, it's never a blueprint. It's a test for us to just rethink about the complexity of time.

We can look into other cultures, perception or nature. I'm especially interested in rhythms, not just as predefined structures as in this has to be your body rhythm or natural rhythm but more as in the flow of a conversation.
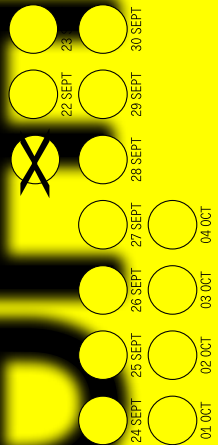
DUE 86

DEADLINES ARE NOT RESTRICTED TO ANY TIME NORM. THERE ARE NO LAWS FOR THIS TYPE OF WORKING MODEL.

Do I have a limit for this conversation? A limit of words, of time? Maybe some people need five words to express what they say, I at least, want a book.

Where can we introduce this? It has to do with thinking of different values. I also run uchronia workshops, I'm working on one here in Istanbul. It's a week long workshop. I remove peoples' phones and all clock giving devices, and then ask them to think about a time giver which forms chronobiology.

It's a bit like being on a swing set that's your own body rhythm. Then, you have external pushers—alarm clocks, your partner, a baby, your work and so on. Your interaction with time becomes a negotiation between these two rhythms. Do you let the alarm clock interrupt you or not? In the workshop each person thinks about another time giver to live by for 48 hours.

But it's an understanding that is the social construct that we have developed together. It is clear with daylight savings time, it's totally absurd. But because we agree on it. That's why within small communities, they can do whatever they want. Time is just a synchronisation tool.

One group was reading out [Proust 00:07:49] I've run this for four times at the [RCA 00:07:53]. One time when I ran a uchronia workshop at the RCA, one group was reading Proust out loud for 48 hours, someone always had to be reading. One person was allowed to sleep, but someone had to be awake with some light, so they got into a very strange rhythm. My idea is to really implement this uchronian thinking. As it is for utopia, there's so many ideas and possibilities. I don't want to limit it. Because of the complexity my current expertise is focused more on the sociology and chronobiology related to time. But I also, at the moment, work with cosmologists, really trying to embed it almost as a … I don't know. It would be nice to have time as a subject in design education or even in school as you have math. Why don't you have time, too?

DUE=

I remember when I was a kid, and my mother told me about daylight savings time. I think it broke me for several years. I couldn't get my mind around it. That you could just choose a different time.

And time zones. We also look at how time relates to borders. Radio EE was broadcasting and saying, 'Oh, in America, our listeners are just waking up, so maybe we want to be a little quiet, because they're in a different time.' It really changes the way you work and communicate with people, what jobs you can have and how borders are reinforced. Related to this I'm curious what you think about the 24/7 work culture and Jonathan Crary's argument of work and life blending into one, cities that never sleep? Especially with the idea of a deadline. Is this something you're pushing against or questioning?

DUE=

The bar is very much a space where time get blurry. Are we working? Are we just chatting, socialising? Spaces which allow for this kind of blurriness of time could also be [inaudible 00:10:35]

HS=

Crary was of course part of my bibliography. If you go back, let's say to 1500 or something, considering farmers for example their society had a more fluid schedule, there wasn't a differentiation between free time and work time in that sense. Of course, you have this religious element on Sunday in certain cultures -

DUE=

With the monk's bells …

HS=

Yeah. The idea of leisure time and labour time is very much based on industrialisation in the factory. It's been a model for almost 200 years, our separation of time, this fluidity, and now it's coming back again.

Of course, what Crary says is about a deadline culture. Here it becomes interesting, the politics of time. Time norms are not laid down by law, so they constantly shift, which also means they're something you can fight.

You have this temporary serenity, giving you the freedom to sleep till 11 or 1:00 on a Wednesday. But on the other hand, it also makes you work much more, or maybe until times you wouldn't have otherwise without the deadline.

When you look at burnouts they appear to come from people loving their work. It's not like they're forced to. You work so much because you're so into it, that's more the problem of our society, the black and white comparison. I

think it needs another kind of education for you to understand, where do you draw the line? How many options do we have to grasp? What are your values systems?

OR =

There are a few points where I'm actually worried about post-labour … Maybe I can start with a criticism of my own project. I'm researching automation and labour—framing it as a topic that has existed since industrialisation. My aim was to help guide people through this process, this transition over time.

The biggest problem I saw in our transition was actually based on a philosopher in the 1980s who suggested to the automobile industry and its workers that they should split the work in half rather than firing 50% of the employees. Companies in Germany are doing this today. They're not splitting in half, but they have flexible working hours, depending on production, to accomplish the same principle.

When this was suggested in the US it was actually the workers who refused. Their explanation was that they didn't know what to do with their time. They would have had six months free and six months of working. The main problem was that they had this newly gained time and they didn't know how to fill it with meaningful things.

That was my starting point where I said, 'Okay, that's something, because this transition is happening and we have to do something about it.' So I invented or I came up with a fictional speculative offce.

DUE =

He said he didn't have Turkish coffee, that's why I brought this.

OR =

In this offce there are engineers, designers but also psychologists that help you to abolish your own labour with the idea of not automating the activity in itself, but automating all the surrounding conditions that turn that activity into labour. Quickly defining the separation between labor and work may be important. Labour as an activity that you do out of an extrinsic motivation, and work as an activity you do out of an intrinsic motivation. What I realised is it's not about the activity, it's actually about the conditions around it.

Before, we talked about the fluidity. My worry is we're already in this transition of, 'We're all freelancers. We don't have an offce where we go every morning and come back,' the typical idea of labour is already loosening.

At the same time, especially in cultural or creative fields, it's much easier to get exploited because of ambiguity. My idea of a post-labour society is actually that in the end, we do everything because we love to do it. But at the same time, your activity can get exploited super easily.

HS =

I think it's a problem of organisation … Maybe I read something from [inaudible 00:18:49]. He pretty much says, 'You don't have a boss that tells you, but you, yourself, are the driving force.' It's so much better, even for capitalism, because no one else would exploit you as much or push you to that extreme, ever.

DUE =

It's the final trick of capitalism.

OR =

It was the last try to make it run again.

DUE =

Right there, I think within in education, we accept that we do work for free, obviously, because we're learning from it. I think within a post-labour thinking school extends, it consumes your whole life.

OR =

I think what makes humans, what drives us, is learning. That's also why we're active, why we're producing things, that's the drive for innovation. I think the best would be if we were lifelong learners, and I think there are different ways of learning. It doesn't mean that you were in school or an institution. If you look at surveys around the universal basic income, a lot of people say what they would do if they had a universal basic income, is actually learn. Exploring different ways of learning was always a very important aspect. That's the base of the offce. It's that everyone together is actually building up this post-labour, this very personal post-labour life. One aspect of this is the plan, the psychological plan, and the other part is physical, either artificial intelligence, software, machine or robot, whatever you need to liberate yourself.

DUE =

The machine learns about you.

OR =

Yeah, that's true. The machine or the robot becomes your apprentice. You teach your apprentice. Like this, you also leave your personal touch.

I THINK WHAT MAKES HUMANS, WHAT DRIVES US … IS LEARNING. THAT'S WHY WE'RE PRODUCING THINGS.

TITLE:

Killing the Bauhaus

AUTHORS:

MW = Mark Wigley

DUE X

DUE BAR

23 SEPT · 30 SEPT
22 SEPT · 29 SEPT
28 SEPT
27 SEPT · 04 OCT
26 SEPT · 03 OCT
25 SEPT · 02 OCT
24 SEPT · 01 OCT

18:46:27

4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

DUE =

We wanted to hear more about The Floating University you attended recently and your project there.

MW =

The Floating University was an amazing project, designed by Raumlabor, as a sort of Archigram like space with a kind of sustainability and sensitivity to labour, in a very open space. Beatriz Colomina and I came at the end of the summer, at the very end of the Floating University to do several projects around the Bauhaus. Beatriz and I, we are running parallel seminars at Princeton and Columbia on the idea of undoing the Bauhaus. Basically the Bauhaus that everybody knows is this super repressed image of the Bauhaus that Walter Gropius constructed, in which he's a very important player. What they hide is all the sex and violence and rock and roll of the actual Bauhaus, which was the kinkiest place ever.

The current representation of the Bauhaus represses all that, the radical diets, radical sexuality, radical performances. I was concentrating with my students on the performance, what was required to be a Bauhaus student or a Bauhaus actor. Beatriz was concentrating with her students on perversity, all the different perversities of Bauhaus. Then when we came to Floating University, the students presented this secret life of the Bauhaus, which is so hardcore, you cannot believe.
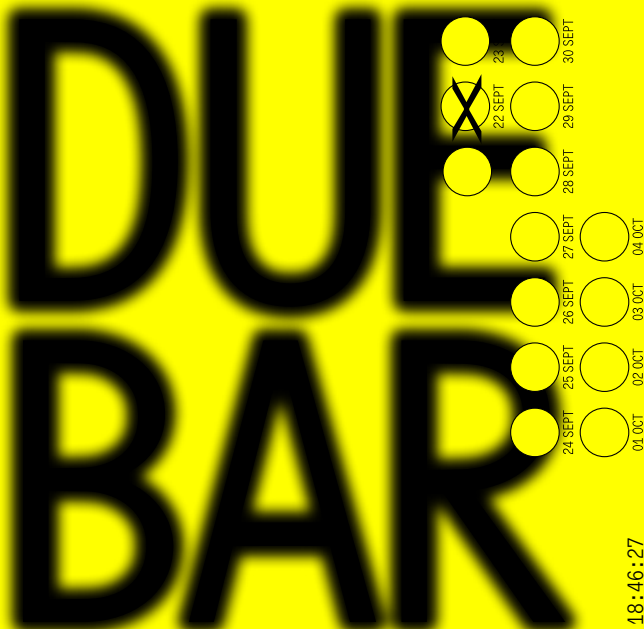
The teachers were forcing them to make parties, so they had to always be pretending that they were having a good time. Our students from Princeton and Columbia came to the Floating University and made a five-hour unbelievable demonstration on the truth of the Bauhaus. Extreme performances and haircuts. So while people were getting their haircuts and doing this sort of thing. But we were also trying to rethink the Bauhaus and kill the Bauhaus off because we hate the Bauhaus or to be more precise, we hate the image of the Bauhaus that now dominates the global economy, and not just design skills and all of that.

We're on our way, we're trying to kill the Bauhaus. And the problem is, like one's parents, they're already dead. So Bauhaus is not easy to kill, because it's some sort of a zombie movie. The question is: how do you kill the undead, the Bauhaus that is in our pockets, in our brains, in our politicians.

So being historians, our first move is to say okay, let's reveal the secrets and the secrets are really not what people are going to want to celebrate on the 100th birthday of the Bauhaus. For Beatriz and I, it's interesting because it's really the second major project we do together. When we did the design Biennale here, that was the first experiment. Of course, this comes right out of that. Basically, I think we started the project in Istanbul. And it didn't finish, and here we are again, with you guys.

[crosstalk 00:04:42]

DUE BAR

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16:46:27

DUE =

Okay. So, we were interested in that Barber Shop Project, that you did in Lisbon …

MM =

You Googled it.

DUE =

Yeah, it looks so cool. I think that was something we thought about a lot with the space of the bar, when we made this proposal. We were interested to know how the space of the barber shop influenced the work that you put on there and how that affected the project. It's such a great space.

MM =

The barber shop was located in a building from the 19th century in downtown Lisbon. It was on a building with six floors, with more or less forty artist studios, and other project spaces. So when they lent me this barbershop, I was really happy because I wanted to start a space for exchange, and it was sort of a market space. Fantastic.

I should say, the space was a working barber-shop until ten years before. And we had everything but the chairs. So the mirrors, the setting, the wooden panels, it was kind of a small space and was perfect for conversations.

When I started the project, I wanted to be curatorially really free, and started small, kind of informal, pedagogical spaces, and also a little bit of a cultural embassy to bring people over. Because Portugal is very much in the corner of everything that's happening, so it's not a place that you take a train across. So people wouldn't drop by.

It was run by myself alone, absolutely underfunded, and we had different strengths in terms of programming. So there was a focus always on media studies, like post-humanism, cybernetics, and philosophies around the arts. There was another strand on the conditions of cultural labor, and copyrights, sessions with lawyers, yeah, different things on the rights of artists as cultural producers and designers. It was always a trans-disciplinary project, so many ideas at the same table. We also hosted temporary performances and installations, like marathons, stuff like

that. We had weekly reading groups, walking in the Lisbon forest, cooking together, always dancing together and always ending the summer schools with a sonic session.

So actually the barber shop started as a space of exchange. And for critical theory as well.

DUE =

I would imagine within the barber shop, it's a quite intimate space, somehow. You get maybe slightly closer to each other then you would usually do if you had a normal conversation. What does this spatial condition produce for the conversations?

MM =

Yeah I think, it does create this intimacy you talk about. So, that's always very important to come closer, no? To create this space of exchange. So, that was always there. But it's kept sprouting, no? So different people brought different methodologies with their projects and we have absorbed and transformed and so on. So yeah, the scale of the space was very important.

DUE =

Tell us a bit about the work you're doing here.

MM =

Yeah, the digestion school. It is very exciting. Because it's a platform for thinking about metabolism. I don't know anything about design. I really think about infrastructure a lot and for me design could be this debate on supporting structures. So the digestion school starts from responding to different proposals of engagement with an exhausted land, with redistribution, with altering the food chain and its massive industrialization.

So I tried to study different projects that have very different approaches, from the anthropologically and archaeologically forensic. To speculative design and prototyping. History on the guts, brain, cognition. I was doing a workshop today on artificial intelligence information.

DUE
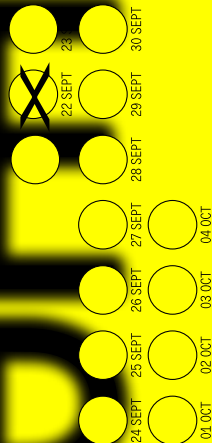
Two different collectives were exploring a trans-disciplinary form of approach in problem finding, not problem solving but problem finding, through their common ways of living. So this idea of caring and cooking and oral tradition is pretty much coming out and sprouting in different projects. You can look at the digestion school through all these kind of stratas of methodology and also it's kind of a smuggling school. We have to smuggle in so many different kind of ingredients and components for the installation. From—

DUE=

Like what, like what?

MM=

[inaudible] Yeah, from a whole bag like that size.

DUE=

Wauw.

MM=

Full of different powders for each collective and food additives, like a whole bag had to come through customs. We bought a lot of Mycelium. So there is like a lot of metabolic things. We had to smuggle edible clays from Latin America.

DUE=

Is there like a whole smuggling division within the digestion school?

MM=

Well, I just started noticing that we had this whole pirate system, which was really nice. The kitchen has been really in use. For the last few days, so there is a lot of works in construction. So yeah, it just feels really good to have this kind of chemical space in combustion there. All the time.

DUE=

That's awesome. Okay we have one question that we've been asking everybody. What is your drink of choice when you are working?

MM=

I really like Japanese Cherry Green Tea. It has a very nice scent. So that's the leisure drink. At the bar … depends on the bar, depends on the situation … I can say that here I've been having whisky sours.

IT'S KIND OF A SMUGGLING SCHOOL… WE HAD TO SMUGGLE EDIBLE CLAYS FROM LATIN AMERICA.

DUE BAR

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25 SEPT · 02 OCT
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17:43:07

4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

TS =

I think we should talk about open education and open relationships.

DUE =

Alright let's go.

TS =

Well, there's a kind of implication now, that you can't learn everything that you need to in school and you should teach yourself.

DUE =

We were just talking about that actually. It's not even an implication, it's outright explicit.

DUE =

The AA has an expectation that you will teach yourself almost everything. In fact I think that's one of it's strong suits, I mean that's one of the things it markets. I mean I don't want to go to a technical university, but the AA for sure says, 'We're not gonna teach you anything technical. So if you wanna know something technical, you better teach yourself [crosstalk 00:02:40]'

DUE =

But then it's weird because then it's like what are you actually learning?

TS =

Maybe not even learning but what are you getting … I mean I guess the thing is that, why couldn't you do it the other way that you just go to cool films and eat at cool restaurants and you don't go to the AA?

DUE =

I think you could. And just hang out at the AA bar, you probably could meet the same people. We have one friend that went to Columbia for one semester and then he dropped out, or he didn't drop out, he just stopped paying, he stopped enrolling, but he still kept going to all the classes… went to all the lectures, he made incredible connections and after half the year of being there, he started his own firm, super successful. No one has to know he was just technically there one semester. But the space of the school gave him these opportunities and these connections, but they were mostly social, they were mostly through talking in the café with people.

DUE =

What has been your experience with this open learning thing?

TS =

Well I guess I had it in two ways, in University of Virginia, I took a lot of courses outside the architecture school and I really enjoyed them actually. I feel like I think about them more than I think about the architecture school courses, at least I think about the connections between them.

I had one course that was called East-West Architecture, and was just a long history of co-influence between European, American and East Asian architecture. I think about examples from that course so much, I don't know why. Especially I think about the digestion of Japanese architecture through things like pop-culture, which they didn't talk about that much in the architecture courses. In this course the teacher was saying that how Frank Lloyd Wright was one of the first importers of [inaudible 00:05:13], like the floating world. And [inaudible 00:05:18] in the U.S., and also how he had to go to Japan because he had too many affairs.

At the same time I was very much sleeping in the school, three days a week. As the computers would do their processing or I don't know what, but they were inaccessible from 4-6 am. So then I would line up three rolling office chairs, and sleep through the arm rests.

DUE =

I was wondering how you were gonna negotiate that.

TS =

Yeah. I don't know, I feel like, when you're young you can do that. But in Eindhoven it was different, people do not have the culture of working all night in design there. I think because you need to be alert. I mean you definitely cannot use machines when you're really tired. Especially, circular saws or welding tools.

A SCHOOL WAS LIKE AN ISLAND … ONCE YOU WERE IN IT YOU WERE CUT OFF FROM THE WORLD.

But there, it was definitely a sense of teaching, I felt I had to teach myself a lot because I didn't know that much about design coming into it, and I had to piece together some kind of education … which is probably more like AA to be honest, it's this kind of school where they promise you this money shot at the end, and in the middle, nobody knows what's going on. But, I don't know, I feel like there's something with open relationships there.

DUE=

I do too, I do too.

TS=

Well I think there's something about it, in the past there was this idea that, a school was like an island, and you could say something about a classical vision of a relationship, once you were in it you were cut off from the world. Now it's like, oh well, you should be able to find different aspects of support, intimacy, physical or interests in pieces outside of the bounds of that.

DUE=

But I think that if we look at… okay, we know the AA so, at the AA, a big role of the school is to connect you with things outside. 'Oh, there's this workshop over here, oh there's this person studying this over there, there's this offce doing that over here.' They're often like, 'get the hell out of here, go over there to this thing, go over there to that thing.' It's about sending you out to this whole larger network.

DUE=

I think in terms of an open relationship though I think of all these bad breakups and one night stands that inform you, that shape you and make you who you are in some ways. I also feel that way about my education, I've done a weekend workshop that was more important than a whole year at another university - there are more than just a degrees in the end. That's much more interesting to me. It's a really privileged thing to say, but, I think the idea of a degree is probably fading, out. At least within design.

DUE=

I think the license is going away, it's just so crazy that if you are licensed in the U.K., you're not licensed in the U.S., you're not licensed in Asia. Of course you're always going to be working with other people. If I'm gonna build a house in Hong Kong, I'm not gonna do it on my own, I'm gonna work with someone that understands the codes and the laws there. But the fact that I'm not technically an architect in Hong Kong …

I think this whole idea of going through the licensing process when it only provides you the ability to work in on country or one community is crazy.

TS=

I guess, well, God I'm like everything is like relationships. No 'cause I think that, well, I would say yes but then I also think that there's a counter … I find that there are more and more masters programmes in Europe, and that also maybe has to do with funding structures of universities in Europe now where a masters is cheaper, so they're encouraged to increase the number of masters students versus bachelor students because-

DUE=

And a shorter amount a time … it's a one or two year commitment …

TS=

And I guess there are two things, one is the need for self-definition, and maybe people feel uncomfortable defining themselves. I also think that weirdly design is not a unified term, design schools, in Europe at least, are very different from one another. If somebody's a design academy graduate versus an ICA graduate, they're really, really different.

DUE=

Well I think this is exactly what you're bringing up, the idea of open relationships. I think that in Europe particularly, the idea of a masters is very different than it is in the U.S.

DUE=

Well also it goes back to the cost of education. The openness of the system here allows for people to find out who they are and through different programmes. Whereas in the U.S., if your masters education cost you $70,000 a year, you have to be pretty damn sure this is what you want to do with your life.

TS=

Wait 70?

DUE=

Yeah, $60-70,000-

TS=

Where's that? Holy—

DUE=

Columbia, Harvard etc.

TS=

Including cost of living?

DUE=

No. NYU—

TS=
Oh you mean for two years?

DUE=
No! First year-

TS=
For one year! Oh my God! That's too expensive.

DUE=
Yeah, it's way to expensive! It's cripplingly expensive.

TS=
But we were saying that you have to be a bit of a masochist to go to architecture school. Maybe it's kind of related to an abusive relationship. Because, nothing against the BDSM community, I realise that's entirely consensual, I suppose there's also that thing of thinking that you're gonna change something. If you just stick at it and are really good and really committed and-

DUE=
He'll love me.

TS=
It's also like … sorry, do you guys want..

TS=
Yeah white wine.

THEY PROMISE YOU THIS MONEY SHOT AT THE END, IN THE MIDDLE NOBODY KNOWS WHAT'S GOING ON.

DUE BAR

17:32:42

4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

DUE=
Open bar. That's a good way to start.

CMP=
I brought you a gift.

DUE=
Wow, it's so nice. It's not everyday that somebody brings me … brings us soap and presumably you made the soap?

CMP=
No I did not make the soap. I packaged it and also smuggled it, repackaged and rebranded it.

DUE=
It's amazing, can you tell us about the project through the soap?

CMP=
Well the project is called Open Sesame. So it's all about Open Sesame. It was just kind of like through the practice of simply offce. Which is a practice where I explore entrepreneurship in relation to cycles of production and the scale of an individual against mass production. Exploring the limitation of that system, as a dream that is sold from liberal values and how I go and explore and do exercises as an entrepreneur. The project started with trying to put two narratives together, Alibaba.com the company and Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. I was really interested in this really old tale that started from Syria. It's believed to have originated in Syria and been brought back to Europe. I was interested in the fact that now ablibaba.com falls under the category of theft or thievery due to its association with counterfeiting. Inside Alibaba.com you can find pretty much anything. As an entrepreneur I am exploring that as my platform. At the same time keeping the notion of the forty thieves in the back of my head and what that means in today's economy. I am writing a contemporary version of that. It started with the soap because the soap is one of the oldest crafts or trades from Syria. At the same time it is also a recipe that is believed to have been stolen during the Crusades. It's a tale about who started what, recipes, knowledge of a craft and an object not knowing its origins, being reproduced and appropriated.
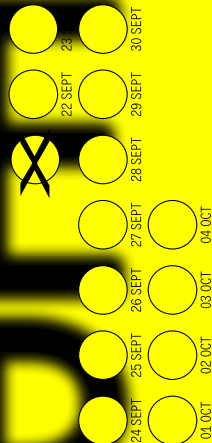
So I wanted to buy soap from Aleppo but because of trade regulations and political climate it's really diffcult to find, most of the factories are closed. I discovered that they had to move the factories themselves to Mersin in southern Turkey, that the soap making tradition migrated.

DUE=
It's super interesting because it brings up the idea of copyright which seems embedded in your practice, ©MP Offce. On one hand the copyright symbol and on the other the implication of an offce as an entity larger than a single individual but a collective ambition situated in a particular place or space.

CMP=
Authority.

DUE=
It seems that within education there's a gray area within authorship and authority, on one hand you think that this is about expanding knowledge and just learning but of course, there's also the feeling that 'this is my research, don't steal it because it's mine.' But in the space of a bar there's a gray zone, where it's always uncertain where and how ideas come from and emerge. If we've had a few drinks and being in a social context the dynamic shifts, and ironically maybe comes closer to part of the ambition of education, to simply develop ideas. Of course there's also the case of crosstalk and overhearing interesting conversations in these spaces. It seems that, like a lot of notions of authorship and authority, ownership somehow breaks down in a bar.

CMP=
Well that's part of what I was exploring also, not just the Ali Baba part of the title but the Forty Thieves. The idea of stealing or stealing as creating. I've made these handbags that are a speculative combination of Alibaba.com and Louis Vuitton.

I think in terms of copyrights, getting back to your question, it was really interesting to come to Istanbul and try and make those bags. Having to find the counterfeit workshops, to work with them, to make the bags and convince them to do something illegal, which they were already doing, but in my case the product was not necessarily for commercial purposes. So I am having a discussion with them in detail what it is we're making. I think for them there was no question that we were making fake bags and were using monograms from Louis Vuitton or Alibaba.com.

For them it was ©MP Offce Bags. But at no point was my name anywhere on there. It's the combination of two things that shouldn't be together that made it something original but at the same time it's not authentic. You see the bag is from Louis Vuitton. It was really interesting to write and discuss those things with them. In terms of education and authenticity, it's also a bit open source, open borders.

We are kind of beyond originality, beyond trademark or anything like that in the context of education, especially because now everyone has access to information and knowledge. So most likely it's not really about the craft or the ability or the creativity itself. It's more a question of where do you find the information and how you create interesting links as opposed to what do you make and how well do you make it. From the point of view of design at least. For me it's more a question of finding the information and how to recreate an original narrative from it.

DUE:

It's a bit like vandalism.

CMP:

Yeah, it is. That is also something that really interests me but it's also a sign of primitivity. Survival. Especially with this project, the real entrepreneur or thief today is both the individual and the company. It's like this blood line where everyone is just trying to survive a crisis.

THE REAL ENTREPRENEUR OR THIEF TODAY IS BOTH THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE COMPANY.

DUE BAR

23 SEPT / 30 SEPT
22 SEPT / 29 SEPT
28 SEPT
27 SEPT / 04 OCT
26 SEPT / 03 OCT
25 SEPT / 02 OCT
24 SEPT / 01 OCT
18:05:23

4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

DUE =
Just now?

MW =
No. No. A couple days ago, but then we were installing, do we wait for the others, or we just—

DUE =
No, it's casual.

MW =
Yeah, so the thing we're doing is called No-Stop Classroom. For the past couple of years we've been looking at something we call control syntax.

DUE =
Building on the Storefront show?

MW =
Exactly, and the Seoul Biennale last year. On one level those projects look at the way in which sensor technologies and algorithms are entering the city and form a new type of visuality within the city, a new political culture, a new system of administration that we're calling 'computational urbanism.' But those projects have expanded to consider the early history of computational urbanism, the early moments of when computerisation enters the city, and how it's applied, in what context, and what the expectations are for importing computerised systems to the administration for the city. And so when we thought about proposing something to Jan, we initially proposed some version of that project.

DUE =
And a school is a form of city in a way.

MW =
Well, I guess our point was that the city is a form of school, in the sense that with sensing and control technologies, the city is perpetually learning about us. So we were interested in that inversion of how learning circulates, and how learning transfers from certain ideas of conventional, to something that's so diffuse that there's absolutely no moment in which something is not being learned about us, or we're not being asked to learn something.
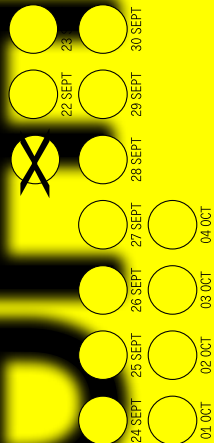
No-Stop Classroom is the idea of that development. But what I think is interesting for us is that we started to do a lot of research onto the history of what's called visual attention. Cheers. Nice to meet you all.

DUE =
Cheers. You too. Visual attention?

MW =
Yeah, trying to understand something about these forums and interactions, because if we come back to the idea that the city is a place that is perpetually learning from us, obviously it's not just the city, it's all the spaces of interaction and communication, primarily through online activity. We know that there are patterns of behavior and use that determine our market characters, and personalities. We became very interested in psychologists' and usability studies that use eye-tracking software. We started looking at the way in which visual attention has become a technique that helps sharpen that characterisation of our behaviour. So the way in which the city, and all of the screens that we interact with, is a place of learning, has to do with microseconds of eye vibration. We started looking at an early history of visual attention and landed on the absolutely unbelievable expansion of what we now know of as audio visual education in America in the '50s. We all know something about this. We know that at some point schools started using tape recorders, films, and film strips. I think every recounting of the '50s includes that. But when you start looking at that, what's quite astonishing is the industry behind it. Not only are there an absolutely mind boggling number of new pedagogical instruments that are invented, but there is a new form of expertise that develops around these instruments and the teaching they provide.

DUE

VISUAL ATTENTION BECOMES ELEVATED TO SURVIVAL …

Journals are being published called audio visual education. New techniques of AV instruction, there's a vast learning system that is organized around these mediatic technologies.

DUE=

And who is the company behind this?

MW=

All kinds of companies. The ones we know of, companies that take four annual quarters, like the ones who take four quarters, Bell and Howell, everybody's in on the game, it is surprising how big the market was for a while. That's fascinating in its own right. It's fascinating what claims are made. But if you dig back a little further, the story that starts to emerge is this one. In the second World War, when America entered, the US Military discovered that they had a substantial problem with their recruits. The problem was, that because of the depression and its aftermath, much of the population that would be recruits for the war, were, in the words of the military, 'substantially below normal mental level.'

DUE=

Where is that published? The cover of Time magazine?

MW=

No, not that overt, but also not that hidden. It was pretty easy to come across this. That many recruits were illiterate. So the government had this incredible problem because there was a massive mobilisation, they had all of these troops that needed to be trained, and their own assessment was they were not so smart and they couldn't read. The military looked around for a solution. What happened at that point, at least in our reading, was a fairly marginal and esoteric mode of instruction, called audio visual education. There had been companies and groups that had been organising around AV education who were proselytising this from the 1920s on. The military takes this on, and they recognise that it does a number of things for them. It allows them to standardise instruction. Because one of the problems was that if they relied on teachers, then there was no coherence. The theory was that you needed to standardise instruction and learning because to produce you needed to be able to mold people into competent interacting agents, you needed to have a way of normalising, and universalising, and standardising education for them.

DUE=

Is this where the standardised test comes from?

MW=

I'm sure that's related somehow, but I don't exactly know that history. So they start relying on filmed visual graphics. They developed topographies that they think communicate most directly. And they also invent, develop and theorise what this means for the troops. The idea that comes out of this that is pushed even further in the mid-20th century America, is that audio visual education accelerates learning. Somehow through these forms of interaction, which bypass conventional modes of apprehension and reading, one learns more quickly.

The military at the time pushes this quite heavily. They have something called the Psychology Film Unit, which also tries to understand the impact of film on learning and informing the character of the troops. The U.S. Navy produces something called the Synthetic Training Manual in 1944, which describes the use of audio visual instruction as a way of better producing fighting soldiers.

The object that we looked at, that was most fascinating to us, is something called the Celestial Navigator. This is the comprehensive multi-media environment that was built in what looks like a grain silo, there are hundreds of these, floating inside is a metal container that roughly looks like the fuselage of an airplane. It's got a bomber, a navigator and a pilot. This mechanism is placed on a column with a universal joint and hydraulics letting it vibrate around.

Below is a controller who tells the navigator, bomber and the pilot their mission while they fly on this simulated flight machine. Below is a large screen onto which is projected a film of a landscape. So they're flying over this projected landscape and as they're returning the projection rotates below so that they have the sense they're flying across a terrain.

DUE=

An early video game.

MW=

It's a multimedia environment. One of the things that starts being said about audio visual education is that it provides a more real experience and somehow bypassing reading more directly relates to the behavior one exhibits when fighting. It's also related to a notion of accelerated learning. At the same time, they have a smoke machine that starts obscuring their view of the landscape below and their location, so they have to rely on the instruments. They have engine noise and smells pumped in, so it's not just multimedia but a multi-sensory environment. The theory is that the multiple forms of visual attention that have to be practiced are always in competition with distraction. What's being tested and formed at the same time is the recruit's capacity to remain visually focused and to remain concentrated. Because if not, then they will die. So visual attention becomes elevated to survival, becoming part of a multimedia environment through which one has to grasp the most important features.

DUE=

I would imagine that when you fly you would have certain type of super intense sound. This implies some idea of recovery or ones rate of recovery. So what is the role of recovery around attention here?

MW=

Great question. I can't answer that in relation to what the military was doing in the '20s but I think it raises a very interesting point.

DUE=

Attention economy today.

Exactly. In the attention economy, it's the way in which we're always cycling through moments of attention and distraction. If you think about our online activity, we're becoming trained into expecting small moments of delays and interruptions. We just start to anticipate that that is the part of the attention economy that we are being written into. It's those moments of scripting, it's not like there's a time code, but they're present within all of our daily interactions where interruptions and distractions occur. Those moments of delay when something else happens. Many of the studies now think about what happens in that moment of pause. How can that be mobilised? Those moments are also the time in which your eyes travel sideways and look at something else on the screen. So delay is not a break from attention, it's a shift into another mode of viewing. All of this is concentrated on the eyeball; our conscious and unconscious perceptions simultaneously are part of what we're interested in. Do you want to hear more on this? There's just one other study.

It's fascinating. All of these studies are related to what we call control syntax in learning and precise moments of technology. When we think of control in the 20th Century, we're all familiar with the literature, we're familiar with what that meant. We're familiar with the idea that the 20th and 21st centuries are the centuries of control. Yet we often don't really know what that means. We can read Deleuze's Control Society and have a sense of what he means when he catalogues it. But it seems so elusive, amorphous and absolute. Our project has been trying to pinpoint what it is. What are the exact technologies and algorithms? What are those economies of attention and distraction, but also the economies of urban vision and learning? This project tries to find the precise moments in which those questions are either asked or enacted. We end up with an amazing study of Sesame Street. I don't know how much you know about Sesame Street, but you've all seen it. The show was developed in America in the late '60s by the Children's Television Workshop (CTW). They had rather public-minded ideas about how education could be made more democratic. Television was their mechanism to do that. The expectation was if educational television was available to the impoverished parts of the country, then that would raise education levels and balance the social disparities that were obvious in the United States.

Sesame Street had that mission and CTW performed all their own studies as they developed the show. Studies of what children would pay attention to. Psychologists, who were especially interested in problems of attention and early childhood development, produced their own studies. The one we look at is a 1972 study by Levin and Anderson.

They furnish a lab to look like a domestic living room with couches, coffee tables, drinks and a TV. But, like all of these labs, it also had a glass wall behind which there are two video cameras recording the event. They invite children to participate as test subjects. On the TV are carefully chosen episodes of Sesame Street. In front of the TV are toys, stuffed animals, G.I. Joes and Barbies.

The test is, when do they look at the toys and when do they look at the TV? What attracts them about Sesame Street? They have an observer with a toggle switch, toggling when their attention shifts from the TV to the toy. So at some level these studies are good for Sesame Street to understand what works. Do they like the puppets? Do they like the animated numbers? Etc. Today we are trying to understand that toggling, what it means about our attention and what that tells us about an attention market that we enter even as young children.

DELAY IS NOT A BREAK FROM ATTENTION, IT'S A SHIFT INTO ANOTHER MODE OF VIEWING.

DUE
BAR

10:33:58

4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

AM =

But at least I can have the accent, the French one, the one that people like.

DUE =

Haha exactly, not bad. Tell us a little bit about the work you're doing here in Istanbul.

AM =

Here? Okay, so there are two things that I'm curating. One is called the Abecedarium. I'm used to attending and participating in symposiums and I'm really bored most of the time. Because 45 minutes for one person, when it's great—it's really great but most of the time, scholars might not be great speakers, or it's not that exciting, so I thought how can we kind of revisit that question and that's the way that the Abecedarium format popped up. The idea was to combine doers and thinkers with different formats that they would choose—a performance, a duo, a magic trick, a talk, whatever, so it's a roster of people. And to do it every time in a new city and a new country. This time, I called it 'Babydarium' because it's a separate tiny format. The idea here is to explore images and non-talking as a communication form, exactly the opposite of what I'm doing with you guys. It's like if we don't talk and instead go through other means of communication, like clair-voyance or telepathy or hypnosis—the kind of dream of a student. So we're going to explore these kind of ideas within the realm of design and the second project here is a film festival.

In architecture, film is often used as a medium to promote or explain or make a policy on how to use an object in a show or exhibition. But, I've been extremely interested in experimental film. Film as a tool of political issues in the design realm. As it used to be in the 60s, in architecture, that's why we are also presenting a new film by Superstudio.

DUE =

Very cool. Where have you done the Abecedarium in the past?

AM =

The first time was in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. The second one was at MoMA with Paola Antonelli, and then at the Pérez Art Museum in Miami. I did a recent one in June about film and design in Paris again, this time it's in Istanbul, we'll see where it goes next, I'd love to bring it to London.

DUE =

How do you approach storytelling through film making in relation to design?

AM =

Your question is already biased in a way that you're talking about storytelling. And I'm dealing much more with experimental films, like the work of Jonas Mekas or Michael Snow, where story-telling can be a part of it or not. If you speak of storytelling, I would go with a contemporary designer, such as artist Noam Toran. And that's one part of it. Most of the time, when people look at what film is in the world of design, when they do a symposium, or write a text, it's always about some pieces of furniture and the décor. This is absolutely not interesting. I'm like miles away from that kind of things.

I found an article describing the Eames Archive where they deposited 750 thousand slides and photos at the Library of Congress. And I was like '750 thousand?? Before digital?'. You have to realize how much that is in terms of storage. In 1952, Charles Eames declared that design cannot fuel the incomplete dream of modernity, film and information design is the only way.

It's a really strong statement, for someone who's doing chairs and tables and metal living artifacts. Film shapes the way you think, in re-verse. Because of what you see in a way. The storytelling—from my point of view, should be a much more potent concern. Not only for films but also for curating shows. I'm a curator, so that's really something that I believe.

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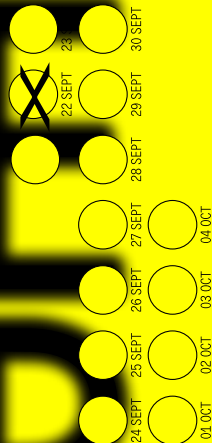
We spoke to Justin McGuirk yesterday about the world of editing and curating and the difference between them. He said that as an editor, sometimes it becomes very rational in the way that one wants to present the arguments as clearly as possible but within the show and the curation of objects. But one could leave it much more open because the objects will speak for themselves.

AM=

Oh, you should definitely come to the Abecedarium today. Okay. There are many things to say about it. First thing, a design show should not be about objects. Why? Is architecture only about buildings? Certainly not. Okay, same for design. It's time, that we go out of these stupid, nonsense constrictions of the 1930s created by some people who came to England, like Nikolaus Pevsner, a modernist, who wrote the first history of design, but he didn't even know what design was and he didn't care. I will not go into details, I don't want to bore everyone with that kind of things, it is developed in my next book, 'Design by Accident', for a new history of design.

So the first thing is, this focus on the object is not reflecting what happens seriously in the world of design, but it is reflecting what is happening in the economy of design. They are two separate things. The focus on the object is in my point of view super romantic: the division between the writing as extremely rational and the show as part of a personal sensibility. I'm caricaturing, of course, to make it simple, please forgive me Justin, he will never invite me anymore. But I disagree with that completely, because I think that for everything you do, the process can rely, which is my case, on intuition and then I'm building up out of my intuition.

To go back to one of your earlier questions, the fact that designers won't talk is a strategy of design that is extremely strong for many reasons. One of the reasons is that they don't feel comfortable with articulating their thinking because it comes from the inside.

The object can speak by itself as if ventriloquism was not a trick. And the best for that is Jasper Morrison, who did a work without words. In 1988, he was invited to give a talk, but he didn't like to talk, so he decided to do a film that would be screened and he would be at the café exactly like you guys, in front of the screening, waiting for people to come and talk in a more mundane way afterwards. This is really strong. And it makes lots of sense, he cut images from his collection of books which is immense and the film is really great. It's really a word without words.

And you're screening that?

AM=

I'm screening it on Sunday, because the strategy of non-talking is, most often, lazy but sometimes when it's not lazy, it's extremely interesting and Jasper Morrison, is really the best for that.

Late 19th century, in England, there's a book about that, called 'The Household Gold, 'there was a kind of rebellion of the objects against their owner. This was because they were produced by workers in the factory, because they were not signed by someone, because they were supposed to be possessed by the bourgeois. Then they decided that they were not possessed anymore. They were doing practical jokes through lots of drawings and caricatures in British popular newspapers. There's a political rebellion against the owner from the object, which is also part of the history of design, which is really interesting I think.

THE STRATEGY OF NON-TALKING IS, MOST OFTEN, LAZY BUT WHEN IT'S NOT LAZY, IT'S EXTREMELY INTERESTING.

DUE
BAR

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11:00:46

4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

PT =
There is a special thing in this buffet that you should eat.

DUE =
Which one? Atlantis?

PT =
It is called 'the [inaudible 00:00:15].'
'Dil' means 'tongue.' It is sliced tongue with cheddar together, on toast, this is very Istanbulian so you should eat this toast. It is my favourite.

DUE =
What was it called again?

PT =
[inaudible 00:00:31][crosstalk 00:00:32] [inaudible 00:00:33]

DUE =
So just like biting into your tongue?

PT =
If you are vegetarian of course you cannot eat it but if you not vegetarian you can just ask for [inaudible 00:00:43] it means dil with cheddar.

DUE =
What are you doing today? What is your schedule?

PT =
At 2pm we're starting a conference … So I have to go to a copy shop, to copy things and then go check the space.

DUE =
What's the theme of the conference? What's the conversation …

PT =
It's called Urgent Pedagogies it's a discussion about pedagogies in very marginalised spaces and …[inaudible 00:01:38][crosstalk 00:01:35]

DUE =
Well that relates quite well to your research, are you presenting some of your work there too?

PT =
Yes, I'm presenting my research and also hosting the conference.

DUE =
Can you tell us a bit about your recent research?

PT =
I work in different, varied, geographies, like South East Turkey, currently I'm in the Greek part of Cyprus. I also do field research in many places, currently in Hong Kong among others. It's a kind of architectural anthropology. I'm a sociologist and I'm also using the methodologies of field research, artistic practice and visual production in order to understand these geographies but mainly I'm a teacher in a university, this is actually my main profession. The basic thing is how to re-invent new methodologies of pedagogy with my students. Especially in architectural education. I'm not an architect, I'm a sociologist but have worked for a long time in architectural faculties so I'm trying to, as a sociologist, let's say outsider, really understand how we can challenge architectural education. Of course, there's the urban too. Urban for me is from the outside and is a little bit different. The scale as you come into it and the theoretical discussions that surround an archi-tectural element or urban element are a bit different so I am trying to focus on this kind of scale. [crosstalk 00:03:53]

DUE =
Do you have a brief with your students? What does their year look like? What are they investigating?

PT =
I have a few parallel things, although I rsigned from the architectural faculty I'm still advising Master and PhD students, I have two PhD students, one working on China the other working on Beirut, and four Master students a few working on [inaudible 00:04:31] management in South of [inaudible 00:04:31]

DUE =
What, sorry?

DUE
93
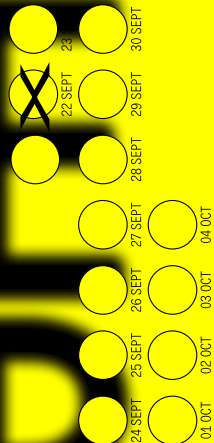
PT=

Risk management. Another student of mine is comparing the neighborhood, the village in [inaudible 00:04:47] with a refugee camp in Palestine on [inaudible 00:04:51] from a female perspective and [inaudible 00:04:57]. I currently have four more master students working on eight cities along the Southeast border of Turkey [crosstalk 00:05:05] which is a mainly Kurdish and Arabic population and region, it's quite a traumatic region because of the conflict with the Turkish government and Kurdish movement.

I'm also currently the visiting professor in the architecture faculty at the University of Cyprus. Socrates Stratis, the head of the faculty, has been working on border ecologies for something like 15 years. As you know Cyprus has been divided between its Turkish and Greek territories since 1974. It's also a very traumatic place and Stratis is trying to find a guide to common practice for two sides of the border. He currently runs an urban design studio focused on the region. Our topic is demilitarisation, Cyprus Island is the most militarized island, or space really, due to its size and density. UN soldiers, Turkish and Greek soldiers and also the British soldiers are still there. So there are many military zones spread around the whole island and even the facilities for these zones are more extensive than the civilian infrastructure, so it's a very interesting case for this research. We are imagining that one day the troops will withdraw, the whole military will withdraw, from Cyprus so only civilian societies will exist and how to decolonise the design program of the military spaces and zones without demolishing them, so this is the proposal that the students there are working on.

DUE=

What kind of installations are currently there from the military and what kind of proposals or interventions are you doing? [crosstalk 00:07:14]

PT=

We are currently in a research stage, the students are analysing eight military camp sites, four from the Turkish side and four from the Greek side. We are working on mapping our understanding of these zones. The social network, the transportation system as well as their infrastructure because military doesn't mean just a war concept anymore. It's a very economical concept right now … The military can also function as a real estate agency, you know. It contributes to the real estate economy and both financially and physically. The military forms logistic infrastructures like airports, these in turn bring new infrastructure and builds another new kind of society or settlement. Military's not … I don't think the military's main function is fighting someone, I mean of course invading something or somewhere, but the military as a kind of physical battle combat, I understand that is happening, but it's not the only the military's only role, it has a lot of economical construction and real estate functions.

SPKR3=

[inaudible 00:08:47]

PT=

Hi!

SPKR5=

We're following you![crosstalk 00:08:53]

PT=

How are you? Hi [crosstalk 00:09:04]

DUE=

Can I get you guys some drinks? Coffee, tea, water, alcohol, beer … [crosstalk 00:09:23]

SPKR5=

Beer

SPKR1=

[inaudible 00:09:28][crosstalk 00:09:31]

THE BASIC THING IS HOW TO RE-INVENT NEW METHODOLOGIES OF PEDAGOGY WITH MY STUDENTS.

The Taobao bed

AUTHORS:

MM = Martina Muzi

DUE X BAR

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4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

MM =

So this is a bed. It's a bunk bed. So basically, I've been researching the Chinese design ecosystem for two years now I think. One of the most interesting things is that design appears without the designer. There are several platforms taking content from the physical market to translate onto their online markets. Through the observation of one object we can begin to understand the ecosystem of design itself. I'm not the first one speaking about this bed.

Its pretty famous - the Taobao Bed. Taobao is an E-commerce platform that is a smaller platform owned by Alibaba group. Alibaba is the largest platform that connects customers, buyers to factories. But Taobao is a bit different. It's a Chinese platform only for Chinese commerce. Where it's not connecting the buyers and factory but connects buyers and retailers. Buyers and shops.

The Taobao bed is the most sold bed on the site, its extremely popular. So the first thing that I thought was, okay this is the product to tell us the story- the complex stories of how the Chinese ecosystem works. Because it's basically a frame that they say was copied ten years ago from IKEA.

IKEA has this wooden bunk bed. Really simple frame. Someone probably went around and saw it in the IKEA showroom and connected it with the small apartment prototype with growing families. In addition there is this culture in China of the temporary apartments where workers live together with bunk beds. So thirty square meters are occupied by four to ten people.

This is special because it doesn't quite fit in the current market. The market of bunk beds is generally for kids. It's interesting because it's in fact a frame that you can potentially trace back from a copy of IKEA but then it exploded on Taobao in 1,000 variations. Variations that go from themes, colors, details, materials, typology of wood. So by observing one object or one family of objects, that's what I like to call it. You can see how the factory network works, there is a product that is pushed—for example a shirt—which then each factory makes their own interpretation of. Which has a place on the market because the market has a double existence. One is physical, a city consumed by its production, but it also has an existence online.

If we look at rural China especially, how villages are turning into E-commerce villages. E-commerce actually is opening a production window for small factories to reshape themselves into new trends, and this is exactly the specific product to do that.

The E-commerce factory operates in the physical production but also requires someone to live online, 24 hours a day.

DUE =

Online. Oh my god.

MM =

The factory I visited is outside the main city but is still connected through multiple showrooms. The village is cheaper for production than in the city, but this is also changing. This will last another 5 years then this will also become expensive. They have several Taobao shops online, and they manage to sell the bed in different configurations so that you as a buyer have choices.

DUE =
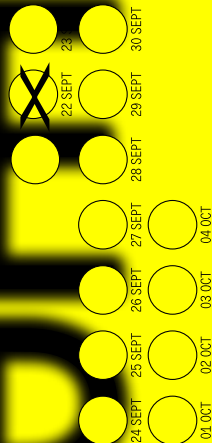
Is it a on demand product like a Nike shoe, like red fur on the railing or whatever? How flexible or how on demand are these beds for use?

MM =

Super flexible. Depending on how many beds you want to produce they call in more employees in the production.

MM =

Is it freelance ? Where one would need three or so different jobs to sustain themselves at three different places?

DUE 04

MM:

It's not freelancing. It's a contract. So it's really on demand. For example, I am a hotel owner in Italy and want 20 beds. The factory will respond that it will take one to three months to deliver. I say no, that I actually want it in three weeks. Then the factory would just find more employees, which will cost more. 'Will you pay that?'. So it's pretty flexible.

DUE:

I know Alibaba is quite heavily invested in infra-structure in other parts of the world. Particularly in Africa. I'm wondering if this is part of something that you deal with?

MM:

Okay, this is a complex thing. There are many forms of these infrastructures. The two biggest ones, at least in my eyes are the internet infrastructure and the road infra-structure. 'First comes the road, then comes money', and this is extendable not only city by city, or city to village, but also, country to country. That is also a really complex story that many researchers are investigat-ing. Tracing new trading routes between China and the Middle East.

At a domestic scale, it is also about the infrastructure from city to rural areas which is based again on both internet and roads. So the villages and mountain villages are now moving goods on roads where they were once moving them by rivers or lakes. That's why E-commerce is possible because these companies take care of the shipment. This is the fundamental column of the design ecosystem—that is why it is possible.

YOU NEED TO LOOK AT RURAL CHINA … AND HOW VILLÄGES ARE TURNING INTO E-COMMERCE VILLAGES.

DUE
BAR

23 SEPT · 30 SEPT
22 SEPT · 29 SEPT
28 SEPT
27 SEPT · 04 OCT
26 SEPT · 03 OCT
25 SEPT · 02 OCT
24 SEPT · 01 OCT

13:45:23

4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

DUE=
We haven't seen any of the biennale yet.

ER=
Well, I have only been at my project as well.

DUE=
A little bit about DUE: we are a weekly publication out of the Architectural Association. Each week we invite someone to write a piece or respond to a series of questions from us, it's published online and in print. We've been running now for two years and we're about to hit 100 issues. Over this weekend instead of a weekly publication the conversations will result in an hourly recording. It won't be the full conversations but snippets, portions of it.

So, within the context of the bar, we were interested in your understanding of the image as something that's hazy or fuzzy as a memory. Somehow, the idea of a bar where you're either half-caffeinated or half-drunk, you have a different idea of an image, that one can't quite grasp. We're wondering if you could talk a bit about how you understand an image in terms of clarity.

ER=
In my research, we came up with the term 'crying pixels', because I based my tapestry on downloaded Google images. In this project, I invited other people via a social media call to do the same with me, so we all Google searched 'textile industry Turkey' and come up with some not-so-nice images. We then re-read these images, everyone invested around 70 hours in one tapestry, and the image made is one from the Google search hits. With the 'crying pixels' term, think of it like you had the flat image on Google, and then with this technique it falls out. The image grows slowly from one side to the other, a pixelated side where you can see the image and then the other where the imagery gets blurry. I'm definitely interested in that.

DUE=
You're going to exhibit both sides? How is it displayed here?

ER=
It's hanging in the middle of the space. You kind of walk into a Google search.

DUE=
Wow, sounds beautiful.

I remember that you were discussing the social issues around the fabrication of the copy and the fabrication of your textile work. Basically, you were very critical and conscious about the tools you use and how you produce these works. I was wondering, what are your thoughts on this and how have you worked with this in your work?

ER=
We just came from this designers' conversation where we touched on this subject a bit. What I see is that the ethical part is really important. Of course, if you just use an image and don't reflect on the ethical part, but instead work with your hands into the topic an exchange in labour happens. I can't say that I'm rescuing anyone from this labour. You can't. You can't stop wearing clothes. We can't make our own clothes. It's not possible, but it's one way to think about, to reflect on this horrible industry which is one of the biggest industries in the world. It's global.

I think the problem with it is when you pair the image with the words, the caption. The image is just something. It's one thing, and then you pair it with the caption, 'Textile labour Turkey.' If you Google it, you get, 'Oh, this is textile labour Turkey', but it's not true. It's just a Google version of it. But someone in the conversation earlier also said that one of the images from the project came up when she Googled 'textile labour Turkey'.

DUE=
Wow. So you kind of infiltrated Google.

ER=
Then it's also about creating awareness for people to see a work and experience it. Either online or physically.

DUE
95

DUE=

Can you speak to the idea of making fabric as an exchange, but also as a collaboration, bringing together a collective from very different parts of the world.

ER=

We also talked about this recently, so it's fresh in mind. It's interesting with this word 'collaboration', which is so fancy in the art world and everything should be a collaboration, it's so beautiful to work together. But if you think about it when you look at collaborations, one thing that is not displayed so much is all the failed collaborations because it's really hard to work with people. It doesn't always work well. Then also, in this project, which did turn out really well, raises the question of in what sense it is a collaboration? Everybody was working in their own environment and we just shared on Facebook. We created something on Facebook, but it's really interesting to kind of unfold the word 'collaboration' in the art context because, should you have your hands on the same material? What counts as collaboration? I'm not sure.

DUE=

One last question that we have been asking everybody. What do you drink while you work?

ER=

Well, nowadays I don't drink alcohol at home, but before I did drink a lot of white wine. I had enough in my life. Now, I would say I don't drink when I work but I reward my-self with drinking in between because I'm a practitioner. I weave, so can't really weave more than 40 minutes and then I take a break and drink something. It would be water or coffee or whatever, but I don't drink at work.

DUE=

It's always these 40 minute intervals with weaving, more or less?

ER=

It's painful to weave. Also, it's because I work with pixels, even if it's in a material way. It gets kind of blurry, so I have to step out.

DUE=

What is the meaning of the break in your work?

ER=

It's reflection. With weaving, it's visualizing time. I always set a goal, like I'm going to weave 20 centimeters or so-and-so many rows. The break is like a deadline. It's a micro-deadline.

DUE=

Should we break now, would you like a cup of coffee or tea?

I WORK WITH PIXELS, EVEN IF IT'S IN A MATERIAL WAY. IT GETS KIND OF BLURRY…

DUE BAR

16:36:44

4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

BC=
Architecture of Do Easy

DUE=
I'm not sure what that means.

BC=
There is a student film by Gus Van Sant from the early 80's—

LB=
1978

BC=
At At Rhode Island School of Design, called 'Do Easy.' It's one of my favourite films ever made. It's about eight minutes, it's a black and white, 16mm short. He basically rips off a text by William Burroughs about the idea that life is about refining tasks so that everything becomes simple.

Basically, the movie shows this guy going through his house and learning how to wash his dishes with the least amount of movement. It recalls early modernist practices, like the Frankfurt Kitchen, and early ambitions to rationalise both everyday tasks and the architecture of house, as well as everyday life. I think it's interesting that … well, Lev you're into classical music. I first trained as a professional cellist.

LB=
Oh wow. Where did you study?

BC=
I studied music at McGill. The funny thing is that doing something really easy, like playing an instrument, takes a shit load of work. It's that paradox of doing things really easily actually being really really hard to do. I think that's a really interesting paradox for the architecture practice. It's a practice which is notoriously overworked. There was a report that came out last year about architecture students being the most worked students, logging the most hours of any kind of student. Of course that continues in the professional world where you get a commission and do eighteen too many options, always inventing something from scratch. There was a great article that Bart Goldhoorn wrote in an early issue of Volume where, as a polemic, he basically said, throughout the 20th century we've made really great examples of housing, if one of the biggest urgencies today is to still build housing, because populations are booming, why are we constantly reinventing architecture? Why aren't we just using the already good off the shelf examples that we have. There are all these interesting provocations about whether we need to re-architect everything from scratch or if there are simpler, more zen-like, ways we could work. So I think architecture practices and architecture schools should really reflect on this idea of the simplest path to take. That's basically it.

LB=
That makes me think of something I reflect on sometimes; the mentality of the amount of time you put into something correlating to its quality. I remember in school people would brag about how many nights sleep they lost and it was kind of shorthand for, 'this is really deep, I spent a week on it.' That seems to be firmly in the culture.

BC=
Yeah, it's in the culture everywhere. I work at a museum and still people brag about long hours that they work. It is part of modern society to say, 'how're you doing,' and then you answer 'busy.'

DUE=
It's perceived as a good thing.

BC=
Yeah and a badge of you being an upright citizen.

DUE=
It's hard to say if it starts in the school and efects the workplace or the other way around.

DUE=
I think it does, but I am kind of hopeful that this is changing and we're going to start questioning why we are living this way. We left New York, we were studying at GSAPP, and after a year of that we thought, we just can't survive, we'll burn out.
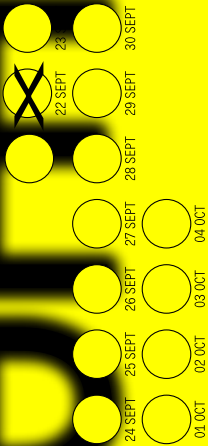
THE SCHOOL IS WHERE YOU LEARN THIS TRADITION OF OVER-WORK.

LB=

It's a question of automation too, like all this incredible productivity, whether you buy those definitions or those measurements, it's grown so much per capita. Especially in the States in the last twenty years. No one has any more time.

JTF=

I disagree with the idea that it's either from or to workspace or education. It's all pervasive in the sense of a general mentality. In the broader sense, I'm thinking specifically about technology at this point in time. When you think about where things stem from, they stem from an unending desire to obtain more, to create more, to accelerate more rapidly. Now we have the tools to do that in a larger sense. But when you start to boil it down, when you think of social media as a phenomenon, it represents ultimately, what we're starting to recognise now as, the inability for us to understand the implications of something before we actually dive into it. We go for it, then we worry about it later or we have to deal with the consequences later. I wonder whether it's an impossible thing to say it's going to change; that this is ultimately a mental health issue which it connects to. I think one of the most all pervasive mental health issues is loneliness in society today. Architecture has a lot to answer to and can rectify a lot as a practice.

DUE=

Personal but also professional insecurity.

LB=

Yeah, I think that's the right word. Some of it is an ambition to produce more, but a lot of it is just a reality of work and trying to survive. I disagree though, I don't think it's a chicken and egg problem. I think it's school. That's where people are really inculcated with culture. They arrive and if they've chosen design they know something about it probably, they have an interest, but the school is where you learn this tradition of over-work.

BC=

But by school, you're talking about higher education level?

LB=

Like in design studies, let's say.

JTF=

I wonder whether it happens earlier.

LB=

I would totally agree that we're talking about a kind of general condition of culture in capitalism. We're all thinking of ourselves. Increasingly it's like little businesses, how much are we producing? It's everywhere, but I think in the tradition of architecture and design it's especially sharp. There are probably worse examples, I know people in medicine who spent years working eighteen hour days and it's just how you do it. It seems crazy.

BC=

But then I think the point is that we need new role models. Can we exalt the idea or the character of the slacker architect? Look at someone like Bill Murray. Bill Murray is like the quintessential slacker comedian actor. Does that translate to architecture? Can you have that kind of clever person who seems to effortlessly come up with architectural responses.

LB=

I think Rem does that a little bit. It's part of the myth.

BC=

Well, at great expense.

LB=

No, no exactly, as the sort of, you could say, figurehead, of an immense machine.

DUE=

But Rem came from the AA. One of the reasons we left Columbia and went to the AA was that it had a radical response to this idea of time and deliverables. Coming from a school like Columbia when you had to design a tower in one week, and the next week a housing project and the next week a park. When we got to Columbia, they explicitly said to us, you should just do this drawing, then do it like twenty more times, the exact same drawing, until it's five in the morning, and you'll just magically get better.

BC=

Really?

DUE=

Literally, that was a quote. 'It will just … nobody can explain how, but it will just get better if you just do it a ton.'

BC=

So that's the Malcolm Gladwell / Columbia approach to architecture.

DUE=

Then at AA they said, 'the whole school is open from nine a.m. to ten p.m. At ten p.m. we close the doors, it's not open twenty four hours. Then you should go see films, you should go eat together, you should go hang out with friends, that's part of your education.'

LB=

Any school that contains a bar already suggests another sort of relation with these things.

DUE=

With deliverables, I remember an AA tutor telling me, 'at the end of the year if you want to show one drawing and it's a fucking amazing drawing and it's interesting, then just show the one drawing, or one film, or one idea.' It was never this stack of papers, which always felt I was just producing for the sake of producing. There was a reason behind the medium and format that we were working in. That

WHY ARE WE CONSTANTLY REINVENTING ARCHITECTURE?

for me was totally radical compared to the way they were teaching architecture in the U.S.

LB=

I would maybe suggest adding to this idea of the slacker, the figure of the weaver, and going back to the idea of mental health, with weaving it's obvious, it's a physical thing, your fingers get tired, you get sloppy. There's kind of a limit that you can't really argue with. But how do we start to think about that in terms of work like design?

BC=

During my brief stint as an actual architect working at an offce, the keyboard itself starts to resemble the keyboard of a piano. You start to learn physical tricks so you're not looking at things and your hand forms a claw until you slap down like this. It becomes a kind of performance. You could go back to Richard Sennett's book The Craftsman, I hate to mention Malcolm Gladwell again, but it is the idea that you put in your hours and get to a point you become a master. Once you're a master, this work should, in theory, flow from you.

LB=

It's that ten thousand hours. That's very suspicious to me.

BC=

It's a very suspicious claim. But the whole idea in the world of music is that you put in your hours as a student. You put in grueling hours and you don't have a life. I remember, not my teacher, but other teachers telling their students, don't have a girlfriend, it goes back to that Whiplash movie. You sacrifice your youth and you get to practice and then you can have a life. It seems similar in architecture but then you get to practice and nothing changes.

DUE=

In fact it's worse.

DUE=

Double down. Why do we do that to ourselves? Why do we agree to these conditions? It's kind of confusing because right now I'm doing a project for my friend and we're helping out another friend and we're curating a show and it's so much fun. So are we working or hanging out with our friends?

BC=

It goes back to this question about the course of labour over the 20th century and new technologies that have been introduced. At moments, you get claims saying, at the rate of new automated technologies expansion we'll only be working five to ten hours a week. I'm doing a lot of work right now about car manufacturing. Of course, from Henry Ford's assembly line to modern factories today where robots are doing ninety-five percent of the work, cars have gone up in price and people are still working as hard as they've ever been working, but the work just moves itself around. It's almost as if there's a kind of invisible hand that finds work for us to do as we automate, we come up with new jobs.

DUE=

Or we're working harder to match the speed of the machine.

DUE=

Isn't there also confusion about passion in relation to time? Doing what you love will always hurt if you do it too much. Why would you love it more when you do it more? What's the relation between time and passion?

LB=

Or the reverse, time and boredom. I think the book came out a few months ago by the anthropologist, David Graeber.

BC=

Bullshit Jobs.

LB=

Bullshit Jobs. Basically, this extra labour productivity has been captured by capital and people just need to be kept being busy so there's been this incredible boom in what he calls useless, bullshit jobs.

Systems want to perpetuate themselves. There's people that would argue that, no these are not bullshit jobs these are very important … someone's got to manage HMO.

BC=

Here's a really good example. I work at an institution of eight hundred people. You work at an institution of, how many people?

LB =

Ninety.

BC=

Ninety people. So you're one tenth the size of ours, but arguably your proportional output is probably higher, you're doing more with less. That's because the larger an institution becomes the more burdened it becomes with these kinds of extra conditions, processes and protocols.

LB=

At the same time, your space is huge. I don't know the numbers, but it's got to be-

BC=

I would argue there's more bullshit jobs.

JTF=

My institution is now bringing over an exhibition from your institution. My institution is forty people max. The amount of interesting conflicts that have been raised by the fact that the systems in place at an organisation of your size, which do not exist in ours, are completely conflictual. We're having to compromise on fundamental levels to make this work. No one expected that.

LB=

Is that positive? Is that interesting?

JTF=

It's positive, yeah. Ultimately.

BC=

The other thing I would say from the client's perspective is that clients are putting more and more demands on architects. I see the V&A asking very small architecture firms to do exhibition design, there's a lot of extra work for the institution's purposes, rather than the act of designing.

DUE=

What do you mean?

BC=

A lot of disaster mitigation planning. Lots of visitor flow calculations, outsourcing the work to the designer to build a design team and coordinate the work between different graphic designers and A/V designers. All of a sudden the architect is also a mini project manager. A lot of the work gets shifted in unfair ways.

DUE=

So architects are really—

BC=

Gullible.

DUE=

Yeah, somehow quite happy to do that. 'Yeah, totally, I'll do all of that and have a really shitty contract. Sure, yeah I'll sign a really shitty contract.' But does it also have something to do with respecting our own work? It's also about valuing the work.

BC=

Well, to get back to your passion question, because I think it does go back to that, I notice within my own institution, if we take on extra work, what needs to be budgeted are the 'non-passion' tasks. The mount makers, the conservators who have to spend 'x' hours looking at and treating objects. What isn't budgeted are extra curatorial hours, with the assumption that curators are people who will work out of love or fame as their reward. That's probably the same that happens with architects.

JTF=

This idea of ego, this reward, which I think is something deeply imbued in architecture starting at school. Why are you becoming a project manager? Why? Because you're assuming it's going to lead to something greater at some point. Assuming that a payoff will come at some point. That is part of the ego that is instilled or inherent in the idea of world building. I don't know.

DUE=

It's a very good idea for architecture. Reusing stuff is really interesting. When we lose the authorship and idea of originality it becomes less about ego and more about what we can actually do with our time.

BC=

I don't necessarily know if its a good idea. It's more of a provocation, like, 'Yeah let's just take the good shit and copy it.' Why are we reinventing? One of my biggest complaints about the Biennale is the reuse of these mount systems, which are a really effective and good way of pulling off a Biennale of this scale, but does become repetitive over time. The logic is completely there. It makes complete sense, but there is something about a collective desire to see constant stream of new production that reflects changes over time.

LB=

To connect these three things, how many people know the designers of modular systems?

BC=

There are very few.

LB=

Right, but I mean there are so many ginormous and successful ones that could be exported, like the concrete modular systems and factories in Cuba and Chile during the '60s and '70s.

JTF=

Do you not also think guilt plays a part? Going back to what you were saying earlier, 'We're doing it because we love it,' and there's some implied guilt in that, no? Not everybody loves what they do.

DUE=

So we're the lucky ones. We're the lucky so we should, no?

LB=

Yeah, stay quiet.

JTF=

Stay quiet and take on ridiculous work for no money because that makes us feel less self-centered, more balanced.

BC=

Capitalism grinds you down and you expect nothing. If you have a little of what seems like creative agency, like, 'oh this is precious, I must protect it,' even if that means not sleeping then so be it.

THE POINT IS THAT WE NEED NEW ROLE MODELS. CAN WE EXALT THE IDEA OR THE CHARACTER OF THE SLACKER?

TITLE:

Publishing as School. Publishing as Activism.

AUTHORS:

DPR=dpr-barcelona

DUE BAR

23 30 SEPT
22 SEPT 29 SEPT
28 SEPT
27 SEPT 04 OCT
26 SEPT 03 OCT
25 SEPT 02 OCT
24 SEPT 01 OCT

17:06:59

4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

DPR=

It's a good spot you guys have. The bar creates a very different level of conversation, it's unusual for these kinds of events where everyone brings their book and intends to talk about an agenda and blah, blah, blah. Also, I think the space of a bar is really important in terms of both academia and the design world. It's where a lot of ideas happen and get born. Especially in the case of the AA for example, the bar is one of the …

DUE=

Exactly.

DPR=

It's the most central place.

DUE=

And the most social, yesterday you mentioned publishing as a social act, as a thing that brings people together, can you expand on that?

DPR=

We like to always think about the book as a space of encounters. For us it's that. In the years of economic growth, when all these big publishing houses were producing a lot, the collaborative process of editing and printing was so important. I think that process gained value since the book would quickly disappear into the sea of other publications.

DUE=

But what happens after the production of a book? How can you create these social interactions?

DPR=

The readers of the book. This is something that is also very important for us. It's a perfect excuse to find comrades. The act of publishing is not simply just publishing, because there is also an underlying will to spread a very specific message. In our case, it's also a form of activism, some critical thinking. For instance, one week before coming here there were politicians in Spain trying to justify selling weapons to Saudi Arabia, saying that, 'Those are not our good weapons… they are very precise with some laser… they won't kill any Yemeni civilians.' It was like, 'Are you serious about what you're saying?' And they keep repeating this same mantra. For us, even if
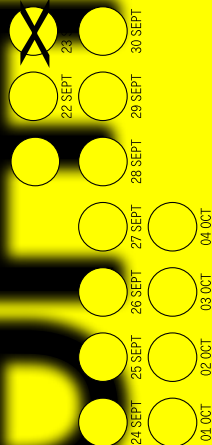
we are in the field of architectural social space, there are things which are deeply related to the freedom of expression. We believe it's important to make something like this public. To create counter-narratives.

Maybe there's another example. We are working with a group of activists that are related to the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico. They are using architecture as a means to create urban enclaves for people who are out of the system in one way or another. They don't talk about integration, which is a dangerous word, they talk about inclusion. From our perspective it's about spreading that message, finding spaces to inseminate it. It started as a book project but now it has evolved into something very different. This is the kind of project that we see as publishing. But then the book also develops another thinking around either, a constant term, or as a way to expand on a certain issue, to give it a different nuance and depth. We started the project with Chiapas in 2014. After that came the so-called refugee crisis here in Europe, bringing with it the concepts of inclusion, inclusivity, otherness and belonging. The book doesn't end in some fixed printed page, you can learn from previous experiences, add them to other contexts, see them evolve. We are also going to publish a book called, 'Vocabulary and Hospitality.' The research started years ago with the Zapatista movement and we see these two terms, 'vocabulary' and 'hospitality,' as related to the way we think about publishing. Let's say that we don't see our books as independent projects, they all overlap and mix.

DUE 07

WE LIVE IN THIS BUBBLE THAT WE CALL CRITICAL THINKING, BUT... IS THERE ENOUGH DIVERSITY IN OUR OPINIONS?

DUE=

I'm curious about the audience that you are reaching with books carrying a very strong, very clear, political message. Are you trying to reach a specific audience in the way that you advertise or distribute the book? Are you targeting certain people? Or how are you working with the audience for your publications?

DPR=

It's really nice that you ask that, those are good questions. We find that there is a very specific space in design, and spatial practice education, in which it's quite important to intervene. We would say that you guys would be our desired audience.

DUE=

Well, you've reached us.

DPR=

Right, because you are in that moment of start expanding your practice. There is a lot of goodwill here, later time passes by and each one of you will have different commit-ments. But now, there's a moment that's quite important. You have been trained and have developed a critical way of thinking, it's important that this moment can expand. You are sensitive to these kinds of topics. This is very important. That way, also, the publication is really an educational tool. This is another motivation we have. You know, in publishing, distribution is the hardest part. You put all your effort to spend one year, two years working on a publication and then it's gone. That's why, as we were saying yesterday, we are experimenting and research-ing other business models. Our physical books, our printed books, are all crafted in common license, and we share content, part of the books, online. We are developing this tool with the architecture platform that we explained yesterday, because it would very hypocritical to say, 'I'm working with books as a pedagogical tool,' and then everything is closed. It's difficult as well because you also have to make a living. Trying to explore these boundaries, the research is not only about content, but about a way to do this sustainably.

DUE=

I thought what you were saying was interesting about making publication available at a flexible price, allowing the reader to name the price. The result being that actually the value that we as readers and supporters of your project put on it is much higher than maybe what you yourself put on it or expect.

DPR=

We were super happy when we started this model. To receive some emails saying for example, 'Guys, I have been trying to buy the book for three days and I couldn't decide how much to pay. After three days, I paid this...' It made them think about the value of it. It gives the opportunity for our audience to think, 'Hey, why should I pay one euro, 10 euros for this? What is the process behind it?' That's our intention.

DUE =

For us with DUE it's been really interesting to make a publication that's just a sheet of paper, because a sheet of paper for a lot of people feels like it has no value, it's just one sheet of paper. But, actually, we found that producing a publication that is single sheet becomes almost more valuable than if it was a whole magazine. People actually sit down and read it. We find that if we had made a publication that was monthly and had 40 issues, people would buy it, maybe, but they wouldn't sit and read each issue. Then you store it in your shelf, and you don't have the time to read it. Also, there's this weird dynamic with care, with this sheet of paper. You can fold it and put it away, but also, maybe you don't, I don't know. If you want to keep it you have to be quite careful with a single sheet not to totally destroy it.

DUE has actually also been used for protests—for the Trump visit in the UK, one of our pieces that took issue with the election featured a big 'NO' on the back and was held up by activists. It's also been really nice with the authors when you ask someone to write just 500 to 1000 words, and you explain that it's just a single piece of paper. It puts this ease and lack of pressure on the written word. Suddenly, we find that we find people willing to write manifestos or writing things, taking their words and finding that they have to think about, 'Okay, how do I edit what I'm really thinking about into one piece of paper?'

DPR=

See, that's why we say that people like you are very important actors. We need several of your teams. You can quote that. Provoking critical thinking is always needed, no matter what your position is.

It reminds us of when Brexit happened, we had this conversation with friends living in the UK. They told us, 'I never imagined that this would happen because I don't know anyone who would vote leave. And we started thinking, perhaps this is the problem, that we don't get challenged enough on our opinions. Because we live in this bubble that we call critical thinking, but it's the same critical thinking, is there enough diversity in our opinions?

We architects are specialists in trying to make things sound difficult and complicated. Quoting Derrida, quoting … Okay, it's nice, we need to think, but then we need to find other ways to communicate ideas effectively.

DUE=

And slightly more inclusively.

DPR=

Exactly. It doesn't mean getting rid of a critical position. It means you have to try and communicate your beliefs. In this case, formats that are very humble like DUE, are very useful.

DUE=

I am also really curious to hear about your ways to find the audience at a very practical level, how you make it work with the economy. It might be too personal a question …

DPR=

Not at all. No. Not at all. I think it's very important to talk about publicly, we have all faced the same struggles. If we don't share the knowledge, we don't learn. The prime example that we showed yesterday featured bitcoins. Architects don't have bitcoins but everybody was excited about bitcoins. Also, because those excited about the currency are the same group that criticize Amazon for capitalist reasons, et cetera. We keep selling the same eBooks in Amazon on a daily basis, two issues, one issue. No one is buying them with bitcoins. It is one thing to promote critical thinking and produce work, but really, to apply it to your own lifestyle, apply it to how you behave … that's often a different thing.

Going back to your question. Practically speaking, our work is a mixture of commissions, funded projects, associations with the author of the editors and occasionally personal investment.

Then you need to find a way to present the work because often when you get the funding the institution or the organization expects a specific outcome. As long as you fulfill that outcome, you can justify other side activities that can be useful to push other projects. That's our strategy. Part of this is going to be used to develop another tool. For instance, our tool of mixing content was built that way. The institution didn't ask us for that.

We were thinking 'That would be a very interesting model. We have money to test it.'

So we paid a coder to do that work. We pay all the people working because that's how it needs to be done. There, you have your book, okay. But it has been produced in a different way. For funding institutions it's all about requirements. You are fulfilling your commitment, but then you are using the resources wisely. I think it's quite important to build that reputation.

DUE=

What do you mean by reputation?

DPR=

Reputation in the sense that you are coherent in the way you work. Not because, 'Oh, I need to do more things, I will do whatever.' No. So a form of consistency. It's the example I was saying about pedagogical tool. It will be inconsistent if we talk about critical thinking, spreading the message, pedagogies. To be coherent in that way gives you credibility perhaps. This attitude allows you to connect to an institution because they have the confidence that you are doing…

They trust you.

…very coherent work. When I say institutions, I am also saying initiatives that approach you because this is the content, or way of spreading content, that they want to get attached to. I think this is, even more than ever, quite relevant in these years of urgency, that we need to keep producing things, stop a bit, and work on that slowly.

I think this is very important to the economical part etc. But also you befriend the people who you are working with, so your network expands. People believe in your work, and you believe in their work, so you start finding common projects together. It's another way, also, based on care and friendship, and not on a capitalistic approach. They are all related. This is a good outcome, it's also a present for you guys.

DUE=

Wow. It's beautiful. I love the size, too.

WE NEED SEVERAL OF YOUR TEAMS. YOU CAN QUOTE THAT.

DUE
BAR

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17:02:40

4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

DUE =
Should we start with a cheers?

AATB =
Cheers!

DUE =
Cheers! We particularly wanted to speak to you about the role of automation in robotics related to non-productive, non-financial gains in labour. We were just having a conversation shortly before you arrived about overworked architects and designers. This demand to produce constantly. Somehow the idea of using robotics in the way that your work does re-questions this idea of value in terms of consumable outputs. We would be curious to hear your thoughts on that.

AATB =
It really started because we have been working quite a long time together and we've been working a lot on projects with machines that have some sort of kinetic component or interactive component. It started really as a very low-tech idea ten years ago. For us it was about drawing—moving pens in a very precise manner. We started to use the robots mostly because we didn't really see them as automation devices, but as prototyping platforms.

Now, it's becoming a joyful mess of basically doing everything that is forbidden to do with these robots. It is developing as a practice where we try to see the purpose of these machines from a completely blank slate and use them in different contexts. I think now we position the studio deliberately outside of the factory so that we get away as much as possible from the reflexes that will come with it. But it's hard sometimes because we are brought back quite quickly to these ideas of automation and being able to produce more and produce quickly.

DUE =
How do you understand abstraction of space as you work in a 3D program or scripting. In 3d platforms like Rhino, we still see the objects shadow.

AATB =
I think that is central to the practice, I think we are really interested in this translation between an idea and then the actual result without really seeing it. Or just seeing a sort of a proxy of it. But the proxy can be nothing at all of what it will look like in the end. Because the only thing that we could preview of this project, for example, were just these curves and vector paths while in the end they turn into this super smoothed out, dug out part of foam. And I think it's very often that we like to explore this relationship between the design intent and then through the machining process, the result.

DUE =
When one first learns to play an instrument you actively thinks about what to do, where to place their fingers. Then at a certain point, you just read with a muscle memory. Do you reach that kind of flow when scripting that the code becomes a spatial language?

AATB =
That's usually the first part of the project. To understand technique. What you basically can do to internalise it. So then when you start to work on these super abstract parameters, when you have the final result you can understand the impacts of its inputs. You have to develop this really intimate link between the script and then the actual process that we sculpt. Because by understanding the process, then you can really understand how it works. We did some projects with hot wire cutting and then it goes to the point of having to understand that we have to adjust 2 volts more for the foam to cut in a better way or that we can tune this with software by changing the parameters. And you talk about balancing each other out.

DUE =
Is it a little like learning a language every time you start a project? As you develop an understanding of its parameters.

DUE
98
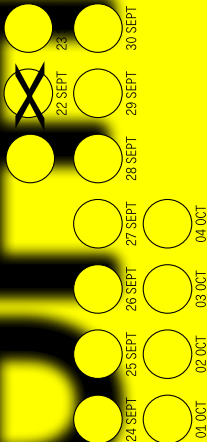
AATB=

Yeah! We are both trained as graphic designers. We never had this academic experience of working with these sort of machines. And it was a self-taught process to discover and learn and appropriate this craft and these tools. And now we are developing an expertise in robotics. We bought an old scrap robot online and then just figured it out. Which also is quite interesting I think. It's really an approach we like. The fact that it's a bit some sort of grass root way of learning about these really heavy industrial machines.

It kind of breaks the glass cage. Usually robotics are put in this cage and you're never supposed to touch them. They are just magical machines but nobody is allowed to use. Suddenly the first robot I have, the first moment I turn it on, I was with my hand on the controller like this, turning on the power, and it was this feeling of, 'Okay, I'm really not supposed to do that because I might kill myself.' And then you turn it on and you actually start to understand that it's not that complicated and that it's not that hard to learn. I like this process of appropriating technology.

DUE=

I think that that is a central thing in education that you're presented with some sort of brief dilemma and then you have to find out how to deal with all these complex parameters to work within. I'm curious, what is the tricky part? What is the point that hurts the most in this process of learning?

AATB=

There is a learning curve is really long. In the beginning it can be frustrating not knowing how to use a tool.

[inaudible 00:16:50] Car passes

AATB =

Very quickly you start to learn most of the important stuff. When we were working on this video installation for the biennale, we had proposed a video for the hotel rooftop. We had never really done animation before. It was really frustrating how to realize that it's actually quite tricky to animate eyes. It was really hard. The robot worked and everything but then we could not animate the eyes! It seems like such a simple thing actually, you know?

Monday, I was really very desperate, it can't be that difficult! But it's actually super time consuming and to understand how animation is … how the motion should feel. I was not happy with how it was turning out. Then on the day before the opening we downloaded a custom processing software to actually control the eyes with the mouse.

We switched our strategy, usually when there's a huge pain point it means we have to change the way we are working. The strategy there was, 'Okay, it's just not gonna work by doing normal animation so let's write our own software.' And then we did it in the airplane coming here. Often the pain point is that you approach it in the wrong way and you just have to decide a new entry.

But I think for the robots, the biggest thing is actually the logistics that come with them. Because you're really getting the feel of having machines that weigh a ton and a half when you have to bolt them to the floor and use 400 volt power with thick cables. The infrastructure is actually the most difficult to work with. It's actually a very accurate approach. But in the real sense of not just pirating, really going and trying to understand technology at its core and then making something out of it that was not maybe planned for.

IT'S BECOMING A JOYFUL MESS OF BASICALLY DOING EVERYTHING THAT IS FORBIDDEN WITH THESE ROBOTS.

DUE BAR

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19:43:20

4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

JTF =

George Steiner said a couple of things I often think about. He argued that the thing that makes Europe, or has made Europe, is its walkability; that it's a place in which you can walk between nations, over the landmass. But the other argument that he made was that Europe's history is also tied to the idea of the café, or the idea of the grande café, to be more precise. From Florian's in Venice sat facing "the drawing-room of Europe", to Les Deux Magots in Paris, and all the way to the café of Vienna. He chose to make a very specific point, though, by saying that England has historically never had a 'café culture'.

DUE =

They had the pub.

JTF =

Yes—England had the pub, right? And it's a very different thing, a different typology. Because the kind of grand cafés that Steiner was describing were places of political discussion, of dissent and activism, of intellectual assimilation across converging cultures and languages, and England just had the pub—the place in which most people met during the evenings and got themselves completely wasted. It's a very different sort of concept, for obvious reasons.

And it's also got me thinking very much about the idea of Europe. I think that Denmark is a very specific case in contemporary Europe, for instance, because Denmark feels like it's dancing between the Nordic region and Central Europe, in the Germanic-Low-Country region, and my feeling is that Denmark, economically, in terms of culture, is no longer Scandinavian. Probably quite a controversial, generalised statement to make. I don't know precisely what it is, to be honest, but Denmark moved so far away from its Nordic-Scandinavian neighbours. There's something about the northern fringes of Europe in regards to 'café culture'. Copenhagen has it, but if you look to Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki, all very close and somewhat culturally entwined: there is no real 'café culture', historically nor today.

DUE =

The coffee houses and assembly spaces for the cooperative movement and civic associations in Denmark were really important as places for public, uncensored debate in the 19th Century leading up to the establishment of democracy with the Constitution mid-century.

I don't know about in Denmark, but in the U.K., even if there are political debates in pubs, the pub is very much an interior space, whereas the café is on the street. The typical pub might have a garden behind, but you go into the pub and you sort of look inside. And then with the café, you're almost always on the street. From the interior you're almost always looking at the city.

JTF =

You're touching upon something interesting there. We're sat in Istanbul right now, which also has an amazing history of 'café culture', connected perhaps to the climate here? Take the climate of the Nordic region, the U.K.—it's hostile in comparison and, at the very least, not conducive to prolonged street activity.

DUE =

True—you need the fireplace.

JTF =

The interior tends to be totally significant of the exterior. I'd say that London today is confused—it is an indoor city, trying to be an outdoor city. Stockholm is inherently an indoor city. But only a few hundred miles south, you arrive in Paris—which is far from an indoor city, right?

DUE =

Recently living in Berlin, there are these huge café windows that just open towards the street; even in the winter people sit outside with blankets—it's a completely different culture with regard cafés.
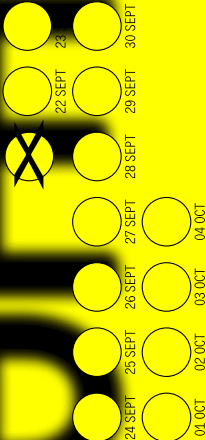
THERE WERE PEOPLE CHECKING ALL THE PORTA-POTTY DOORS BASED ON A RUMOUR!

JTF=

It connects to bar culture, too. Take Berlin's bar culture that developed in the 90s, for instance, which had a dance floor at the back of the interior and then the bar at the front and then a confusing spillage onto the street. There's this district in Manchester called the Northern Quarter, which describes itself as the Kreuzberg of Northern England—completely incomparable, of course—there's a lot of bars modeled on the Kreuzberg-Berlin bar typology. But why didn't it work? Take street spillage—in Berlin, irrespective of climate, you spill onto something quite different than you do in Manchester.

PT=

Hi guys!

DUE=

Hey!

JTF=

Hey!

PT=

How are you? [crosstalk 00:05:07] What a summer we had! [crosstalk 00:05:13] Nice to meet you. I used to live here for over ten years. And this was my café, so I'm giving somebody a little tour of where I was living. So you found this café? Or it was…

DUE=

Found for us by the biennale. They said, 'it's the best café, has strong Wifi, everyone will be here anyways.'
[crosstalk 00:05:39]
We started doing research into the history of the bar at the Architectural Association, a very prominent space in the school, and it goes back to the 1930s. There was always a bar at the school, always super central. Look at some of these incredible old menus we found in the AA archives.

JTF=

It's part of what makes the AA, no? It's the bar!

DUE=

And the fact that there's alcohol served all day long. You can meet your professor over a glass of wine to talk about a project. I think what is so central to part of the AA's success is the space of that bar.

JTF=

I've never studied at the AA, I've never taught at the AA, but I have been on juries. And sometimes, if I'm around Bedford Square, or I just walk into the bar, there's always ten people I know; it's super informal, and that's completely unique for an architectural institution anywhere! I've not experienced that anywhere else.

DUE=

But that's actually how the school started, it was basically a bar with a reading room, and membership. You would just meet at the bar, discuss your work, and then go back home to work.

DUE=

We need a fully fledged bar at ArkDes in Stockholm.
Walking onto the island of Skeppsholmen, where ArkDes is located, you don't immediately see that there's a museum there—there's actually two—because there's nothing shouting 'This is a Museum!'. You've got to find it, it's relatively hidden behind the facades of historical buildings. And I also now pose this as a challenge: when people think of museums today, they often expect these sorts of environments to be loud, to announce themselves appropriately ArkDes doesn't really announce itself and, for that reason, it can be read as intimidating. Museums are often considered to be intimidating environments anyway because they're so often 'clean': marble floors, white rooms, etc., and, for a certain kind of person who spends a lot of time inside cultural environments, this is a normal environment to spend time in. But for a lot of people who simply don't do that, there are challenges that come with feeling comfortable in spaces like these.

DUE=

That sounds somehow perfect for a bar.
Yeah, exactly. Because you would have a moment of tension. But then you would also have a moment of discovery, like a speakeasy.

At Burning Man this year there was an amazing thing… I wasn't there this year, I'm a bi-annual burner, I guess. But obviously at Burning Man there are no toilets, right, apart from these lines of porta-potties all over the place. After three days they are the most disgusting things, but they are beautifully lined up. Someone took advantage of this and made a kind of hidden club where the only access was through one of the porta-potty doors. Once through, you stepped through a curtain and then you were in this dimly lit speakeasy environment. But there was no sign on the door. Either you were going to the bathroom and you stumbled upon it, or there were people checking all the porta-potty doors based on a rumour!

DUE=

That's hilarious.

JTF=

Anyway, what is a museum? It's public space, right? In Sweden in particular, in which ArkDes is a national authority, for which all of the buildings we occupy are owned by the government, it is a public space in the conventional idea of the term. It's similar to any kind of square in the middle of the city, except that it's got opening hours. A challenge is: how do you create a mindset in which people think, 'Okay, this floor may be marble, these walls may be white. But this is public space.'
I actually think that a bar could be the solution. I mean, if you take the AA, Bedford Square is a fairly

intimidating public place—but the AA is essentially a condensed domestic environment. There's something comforting about that, and definitely something bar-ish, or pub-bish, about it.

DUE=

Yeah, I remember when I first came to the AA, I was trying to ring the bell, wondering 'how do I get in?' It felt very intimidating, and then once you realise that the door is unlocked and then as soon as you walk up the stairs and you find this bar, I immediately felt a part of it.

And as you enter, once you have pushed past the door, you can hear the coffee machine and the hissing of the steamer… so you have an awareness that something is going on there that might be like a bar.

Sound is crucial. Smell is crucial. It's important to make a noisy bar.

JTF=

Yeah, a noisy bar. How do you indicate a place of gathering, when you haven't gotten a situation like we're in now, where this room sort of bleeds into a busy street-scape? In the case of ArkDes, we don't have a streetscape and we don't have a context by which you can announce to that kind of public realm.

DUE=

Well we would be happy to come and design a bar with you. It would be amazing. And do a series of events.

JTF=

I think we have to seriously [crosstalk 00:14:48] contemplate this. I think it could be very interesting…

DUE=

For sure. An interesting challenge. Great. That would be fantastic. I have one question that I'm asking every-body. What is your go-to working drink? What do you have?

JTF=

What do I drink while I work? I have a super old percolator, which I haven't cleaned in what feels like ten years…

One of my Venetian friends once gave me one and said, 'never clean this'. And it's getting to the point where it's probably completely disgusting now, and I shouldn't be using it, but it's also impossible to clean by this point. I have a pretty common ritual—I'm trying to stop smoking, by the way—but the habit of waiting for coffee to percolate and having a cigarette can be timed so perfectly. And I think that's it, I mean…

DUE=

That's your morning.

JTF=

That's my morning. That's my mid-morning. That's my lunchtime. That's my mid-afternoon and that's what I drink before sleep, to be honest.

DUE=

Kindred spirits…

JTF=

I think these working drinks are all just rituals and habits. I probably shouldn't be drinking so much coffee. It's probably extremely damaging. It's probably why I am having sleep problems! But there's nothing more comfort-ing than that ritual … In Sweden there's a very particular coffee-related ritual. They don't drink espresso, instead it's bryggkaffe—very watered down, quite bitter, but very strong caffeinated coffee. A 'fikapause' is essentially a break in which you stop and you get around with a group of people and you have a kardemummabullar, a cinnamon bun, or the like—and a coffee. And you have one in the morning. And you have one at three o'clock. It's a ritual that I'm perfectly happy to get on board with!

THE HABIT OF WAITING FOR COFFEE TO PER-COLATE AND HAVING A CIGARETTE CAN BE TIMED SO PERFECTLY.

TITLE:
Chatter

AUTHORS:
DUE, Mark Wigley, Mark Wasiuta, Tamar Shafrir, James Taylor Foster

DUE BAR

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4TH ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL 2018
A SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS

SPKR2=
I didn't realize, I'm sure you realized some [inaudible 00:01:01] from his campaign.

SPKR4=
Well no they were involved with it, its true they sent …

SPKR2=
Yeah they sent them there and they worked on the campaign and Hillary Clinton was offered the same thing and she didn't take it. So now they invent the rule that they shouldn't do that. But this idea that they somehow are innocent [inaudible 00:01:23] it's insane.

SPKR4=
This Cambridge Analytica thing was so you know they were also …

SPKR2=
Yeah this I knew.

SPKR4=
Terrifying but I really believe that that is what one part of it was.

SPKR2=
Yeah understanding that media and its complete expectation.

SPKR4=
That was so powerful it's absolutely [inaudible 00:01:44].

SPKR2=
Sarka was saying maybe it's true, maybe it is not, but he said it likely it's true. That Cambridge Analytica figured out a correlation between buying Nike sneakers and some kind of cheap chocolate bar. Means that you are more likely to be persuadable to Trump. This was the kind of thing that they want [inaudible 00:02:06].

SPKR2=
So if you wear Nike sneakers and eat KitKat bars …

SPKR4=
I don't like Kit Kat bars

SPKR2=
Statistically you're safe then

SPKR4=
I'm safe. No but it was really emotional and like individual targeting that they were doing. A new reality.

SPKR2=
Well this is the reality that we know.

SPKR5=
But I guess it's just the [inaudible 00:02:39] jurisdiction in this era like its still very ambiguous or maybe [inaudible 00:02:44].

SPKR4=
When we [inaudible 00:02:57] and we filmed in Veles where they were making the fake news so it's just like these crazy [inaudible 00:03:02] I didn't go on the trip but I looked through all the footage and saw all these small internet cafes and bedrooms and living rooms that this content was being produced and they were like 'no we don't like Trump' it was just like that's what people were paying money for, click bait.

SPKR5=
Paying customers [inaudible 00:03:20].

SPKR2=
No it wasn't actually to produce content that would be interesting to Trump it was just anything that they were making about Trump got so many more clicks than anything about Hillary.

So it was just a more profitable … they weren't like pro-Trump, it was just the highest paying posts and they just found that 'okay, these were just more sensational and more click worthy and so…'

SPKR2=
[inaudible 00:03:45]. Its 6 hours and there's metal… I should have brought my own cushion. And it's like really noisy designed [inaudible 00:04:07]

SPKR4=
Wait what's the name of this jewelry store?
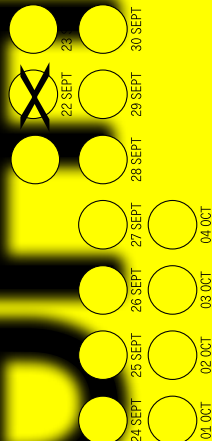
DUE 100

=SPKR2=

It's called Mors … it is really very inventive. She takes things like very very old pieces of brass and mixes them with slightly new things. Sometimes they look sort of vaguely military or something like its a kind of medal but you realize that it's not you know it's sort of …

=SPKR2=

Yeah lets check I think it's MORS.

Just MOR [inaudible 00:04:55] feel like I shouldn't though. I should go inside and buy jewelry.

=SPKR6=

I lost it yesterday in my jacket.

=SPKR2=

You lost it?

=SPKR6=

I don't know where I went to [inaudible 00:05:14].

=SPKR2=

Same [inaudible 00:05:24] what it was sort of brown.

=SPKR6=

It was gray checkered and [inaudible 00:05:30] the university and.

=SPKR2=

Where are you saying it is—there or there or …

=SPKR6=

Or here?

=SPKR2=

It happened in the same [inaudible 00:05:42].

=SPKR6=

I am going to change that sort of conference, I heard that [inaudible 00:05:54] its very [inaudible 00:05:56] conference.

But that would be great subject.

=SPKR6=

Or maybe conference I don't know.

=SPKR2=

But that would be a great subject to discuss … discuss introduction you know like body and relationships and theories but they would find it [inaudible 00:06:17].

=SPKR6=

[inaudible 00:06:20] [inaudible 00:06:26] [inaudible 00:06:27] [inaudible 00:06:27] [inaudible 00:06:28] [inaudible 00:06:28] [inaudible 00:06:28] [inaudible 00:06:30] [inaudible 00:06:31] [inaudible 00:06:32] [inaudible 00:06:32] I'm for real.

I think the pressure is for the woman, it's of course huge.

=SPKR6=

It is.

=SPKR2=

So the men are supposed to be with less brain … even if they had a decision to make they would realize they wouldn't make a very complicated decision. Okay for me it was like okay don't wear this shirt.

=SPKR2=

I always saw this guy in New York City that was a naked cowboy—there was something good about what he was doing. Not seen his pinkie or the way it was but he was wearing like a diaper. I think he was finally banned … maybe he was banned. Yes, yes.

=SPKR6=

I'm serious you know [inaudible 00:07:41].

=SPKR2=

Oh take a picture. [inaudible 00:07:52] [inaudible 00:07:57] [inaudible 00:07:59] only if you're interviewed can you get a print.

=SPKR3=

We're not a real printer. There's a coffee shop down the street.

=SPKR2=

Sometimes the trip is [inaudible 00:08:10].

=SPKR6=

You can hear me or not? [inaudible 00:08:15].

=SPKR2=

[inaudible 00:08:21] She might say to me I have it but I can't give it to you but it's okay I will say don't worry.

=SPKR6=

I lost [inaudible 00:08:36] I lost it.

=SPKR2=

University. She may have sold it. Somebody said how much this one is.

=SPKR6=

I don't want the jacket but I want the [inaudible 00:09:13] you can give me that.

=SPKR3=

Thanks [inaudible 00:09:18].

=SPKR2=

I thought I finished it all last night.

=SPKR3=

Its chocolate with a gummy inside.

=SPKR2=

[INAUDIBLE 00:06:28]
[INAUDIBLE 00:06:30]
[INAUDIBLE 00:06:31]
[INAUDIBLE 00:06:32]
[INAUDIBLE 00:06:32]