

# Dulux Study Tour 2018

I feel elated when I reflect on the time spent on the tour.

I didn't expect to make such fun & fast friends, or the intensity of dialogue that we developed. It was unique to be able to spend an intense time travelling with Leah, Jason, Kim & Joseph, as a group of architects reflecting upon the specificities of architectural practice in a variety of cities and how this might reflect upon our own experiences and future endeavours.

Being able to work with Katelin as an editor was a treat that kept our discussions focused and the relaying of written ideas sharp.

I previously hadn't considered what benefits there would be in spending time with Helen, Alison, and Richard, and the sort of questions and thinking that came from the strategising of an organisation like Dulux. An unexpected & valuable contribution.

Joshua allowed me to appreciate some of the policy questioning and advocacy that makes the AIA relevant and a valuable instrument of the profession. & Mai kept everything and everyone together and happy. It was a very big, and I am sure exhausting, role that made the tour all the more potent due to her dedication and consideration.



Detail of graphic on doorway in the building of the office of Realities United



**Leah Gallagher** Kin Architects  
**Jason Licht** Cumulus Studio  
**Kim Bridgland** Edition Office  
**Joseph O'Meara** BVN  
**Dirk Yates** Speculative Architecture  
**Katelin Butler** Architecture Media  
**Joshua Morrin** AIA  
**Mai Huynh** AIA  
**Helen Fitzpatrick** Dulux  
**Alison Mahoney** Dulux  
**Richard Hensen** Dulux

Here I have compiled notes & ideas that I made during the tour, developed through conversations, inspired by what we were introduced to, and responding to considerations of the generous practitioners and hosts that shared themselves with us.

Thank you to Dulux, Phil White, the Australian Institute of Architects, and Architecture Media, for affording me this opportunity of the tour and introducing me to such a wonderful group of people and experiences.

Thanks & big smiles to Jason, Joseph, Kim, Leah, Katelin, Joshua, Mai, Alison, Helen, & Richard. It was a pleasure to travel with you and spend a memorable two weeks together.

Photos are largely used to act as markers for me to remember occasions or as prompts to fill in gaps that weren't documented or written into.

One thing we seemed to all agree on was that each others profile photos, that individuals had selected for themselves to be published by the AIA, made each of us look uninviting and perhaps not so fun to travel with. I have tried to redress this issue here, hopefully with some success.



## London

### What They Said, What They Do, and Finding Ourselves In-between

Clichés of the importance of journeys over the importance of destinations come to mind when reflecting on our travels through London, mostly because it felt particularly pertinent reflecting on my time spent with Jason, Joseph, Kim, Leah, Katelin, Joshua, Mai, Alison, and Helen, in our extended Uber drives between practice visits. Travelling with these individuals while moving between one provocative and stimulating practice to the next, the times in the car were intense moments of reflection, criticism, laughter, sharing of personal experiences, and the unexpected development of quick-sprung friendships across the whole of the group.

In one such liminal car journey, we each reflected on the range of practices that we had visited, the physical nature of the offices, how each practice chose to present itself, and the apparent methods of the practice. Carmody Groarke's office in the refurbished storage warehouse-cum-architect-studio, reflected the opportunistic manner in which the practice produces thoughtful designs. In each project it seemed that the particulars of the building being developed, and the qualities of the site, came together to give the project its trajectory towards a unique building. Historical analyses of sites, consideration for how the desired experience of people using the facilities may influence the program, and the contextual relevance of proposed materials and forms, were familiar to our group but seemingly estranged concepts to most but not all of the London practices that we visited.

Housed in a multi-storey brown-brick factory building, perhaps originally used for the efficient manufacture of affordable clothing in the early twentieth century, we met with the office of Zaha Hadid Architects'. Driven by data inputs and rationalisations of how residential buildings may be deconstructed and put back together again, the still speculative but *coming to a city near you soon* building designs, the practice offers up Uber and other similar sharing-economy models to property developers. While the physical nature of this

work-house may have contrasted sharply with the large-curvaceous buildings that are synonymous with the brand, there may be a consistency with other European luxury brands that have gone global in the past twenty years and swapped boutiques for warehouses.

Located within their own design of the Leadenhall Building or cheese grater (completed in 2014), with the influence of the city literally pushing up against the office like some kind of positive panopticon, Rogers Stirk Harbour and Partners (RSH+P) is practising in what they have preached. Standing in the plaza at the base of the 'Grater, a contemporary edition to the city's rich history of private interests offering up public spaces, we were able to observe the Lloyds of London building (also designed by RSH+P). Although completed almost 40 years apart, seeing these two buildings standing side-by-side, I cannot help but think that in the near future people will confuse which building came first. Confident in its own position, without fan-fare, services and workings all exposed (in a way that isn't dissimilar to the refineries that I would guess funded it), the Lloyd's of London building still feels progressive leaving the 'Grater to feel mannered and a little retro.

AL\_A (Amanda Levete Architects) drew our group to the hard working area of London's inner-north N7 area-code. Working our way around fork-lifts and the rattle of passing lorries we stepped off the oil-stained footpath, leaving our shoes behind, and onto the bright red (colour S04G8 in the Dulux Colour Atlas) carpet of the largest of the refurbished workrooms. By describing how they test the performance of materials, how these are then put together, and who has the knowledge and training to test the propositions, the practice presented itself as a workshop for research and development of facade systems for their clever building propositions. Working, training, testing, making, each of the refurbished areas of the AL\_A office was more like a refresh of finishes to the operations of the warehouse building than a complete reworking of functions that is typical when a professional office

occupies a light-industrial building.

When we arrived at the mews where Ash Sakula Architects have accommodated its office in the lower level of their family home, there was a warmth and eccentricity you might expect from visiting your best-friend's parents. Quirky yet sitting comfortably as a whole, it seemed that every element of the office had a unique story to tell, even the kitchen sink (as we were told).

In a street of garages converted into workshops, the start-up appearance of Studio Octopi belied the fact that they are working on one of the most historically significant memorials in Britain. The Runnymede Project, commissioned to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the sealing of the Magna Carta, is the work of artist Mark Wallinger who invited Studio Octopi to collaborate on the memorial in Surrey. Sensible and poetic, the collaboration will represent the best of what can be generated when artists and architects collaborate to complete conceptually rich built work.

From the office of Studio Octopi, on our way to Heathrow, there was another opportunity for us to reflect upon the practices that we had visited in the four days in London, and for me to consider my own emerging practice. The business models that we encountered, the nature of workspaces, commentary on style, process, and client types, were all rich reference points to consider how we as architects choose to work in different ways.



Tin House by Henning Stummel. Living / kitchen room & Step-in wardrobe



London Millennium Footbridge by Arup Group, Foster and Partners, and Sir Anthony Caro. Axial view to St Paul's Cathedral, by Sir Christopher Wren, typically of considered planning strategies positively shaping the city.



Leadenhall Building (Cheese Grater) by Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners. Detail at Plaza diffusing boundaries of public & private spaces.



Fence detail opposite FAT's / Sean Griffith's Blue House.



The Battersea Powerstation is enormous. The eight of the future adjacent development will diminish this.



Office & Home of Ash Sakula Architects. Instruments of occupation and demonstrations of consideration.



Woodbluck House by dRMM Architects. Detail of lamp artwork by owner, and view of the robust, resilient / not too fussy, but delightful interior.



Test sample from the industrial-like office of AL\_A.



At some offices models felt more trinket-like than design tools.

The Design Museum (former Commonwealth Institute building by Sir Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners, and Harris & Sutherland). The powerful parabolic roof diminished by the 2016 renovation, and terrazzo plinth.



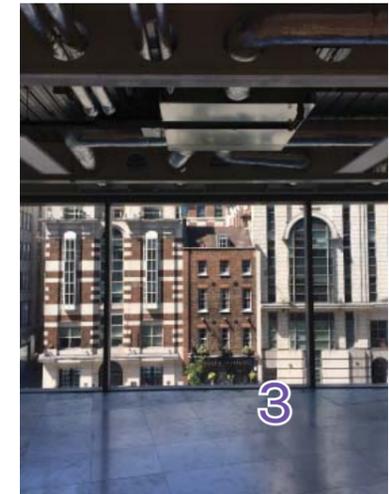
The office of Foster + Partners was described as a campus of buildings. It certainly felt university like with structured working and learning areas, an inspiring materials and construction techniques library, a mix of work-type areas, and dedicated workshop. (Perhaps with AL\_A) this felt like British Hi-tec at its best. Detail view of the London Millennium Footbridge.



Kevin Carmody.



Outlook from Denton Corker Marshall's office building.



## Berlin

### Order versus Rules: the Social Capital of Berlin

When visiting the baugruppen project ze05 by zanderrotharchitekten, and discussing the use of large communal spaces with many young families, one of group asked architect Christian Roth whether there were any rules. Roth's reply was, "Of course not, it took some time to for everyone to get used to the spaces and their use, but people just understand what it means to live together, what is right and what is not." This attitude, towards social living and the considered use of spaces over prescriptive formulations seemed symptomatic of Berlin as a whole.

Berlin doesn't feel like a fussy city. In the parks, there are few fences or closely clipped lawns of the type that you might find in London, instead there is a well designed structure in which plants, people and structures find their comfortable place together. This attitude provoked me to think about the recent political histories of Berlin and how this attitude may have arisen and how it may be changing.

The socialist attitudes of the East seem to be exemplified by simple housing construction, developed in an industrial method, to provide egalitarian housing following the devastation of the city post-war. This sensibility can also be seen in numerous public buildings of simple yet modern building techniques, and also the relatively low-maintenance but generous public parks. The capitalist economics of the West appear to have been slightly perverted due to the lack of post-war re-construction works in West-Berlin and incentivising people to move into West-Berlin through more favourable welfare payments that inadvertently encouraged collective living and active participation in informal political groups.

Next year will be the thirtieth anniversary of when David Hassellhoff, in his flashing light leather jacket, sung the song Looking for Freedom, in celebration with the German people as the wall separating East & West Berlin came down. In this time the merging of the Socialist & Capitalist attitudes that are unique to Berlin have made for some

interesting architectural models, particularly around planning and housing, that have begun to be picked-up in Australia. The Baugruppen model of collective housing development is one such example that looks to design and build apartments with investors that, rather being designed for resale, are designed as primary residences with the economic benefit of collective financing and efficiencies of scale. The ze05 project by zanderrotharchitekten is a fine example of this model and an example of how architects may actively engage with the agenda of the city beyond the isolated design of buildings.

A phrase that I found particularly compelling from Martin Glass at GMP Architekten, as a suggested motivation for the practice of architecture, was for people to "consider the social responsibility of the project". A hypothetical means to respond to this came from Matthew Griffin at Deadline Architects. His *Initiative for Rethinking the City* proposes that any project built on public land has to have an architectural competition as a means to test which ideas are most appealing to the city. In addition to this the sale of public land would have to go through an 18 month tender period in which a consortium / co-operative would need to be formed to tender on the sale of public land. The consortiums would be required to be made up of education organisation, architects, musicians, businesses, etc.

A practical example in which the social engagement of architecture is looking to contribute to the city is the Flussbad project by Realities:United. Initiated in 2012 the project proposes to create a linear waterpark in an existing canal of the Spree that runs through the centre of Berlin. By improving the water quality of the river to be suitable for swimming, through natural filtration bonds at its edges, the project aims to focus peoples' attention to the environmental value in the heart of the city and to demand more.

In terms of a social agenda in practice culture, I was curious about the workplace structure of David Chipperfield Architects in which design &

management personnel are paired at various levels of the organisation rather than management assuming a top-tier position regardless of their practical influence or ability to operate in the best use for the practice. As a form of innovative corporate structuring, it is interesting to see practices not only look outwards to the structuring of the city but also inwards to the dynamics of how to best operate as a practice.

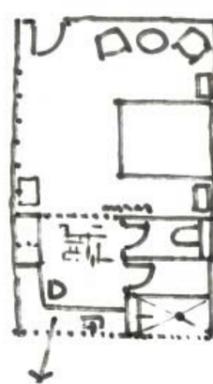
### Notes for reference:

Socialism, the political and economic theory of the public ownership of assets and their democratic control, is characterised by words like public, collective, cooperative, and equity. Key to its success is the fair distribution of wealth without impairing economic growth.

Capitalism, an economic and political system in which a country's trade and industry are controlled by private owners for profit, rather than by the state.



Flussbad Berlin project by the inventive Realities:United. Speculative proposals for the city at its best.



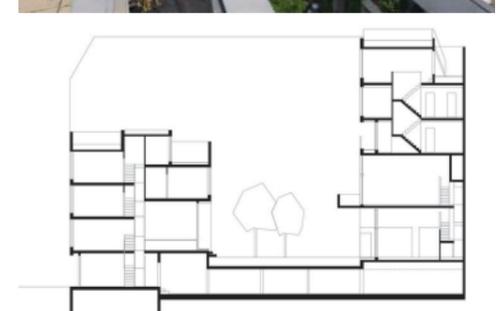
I was impressed by the floor plan at the Casa Camper Hotel where we stayed. The typical hotel room is flipped, skipping the awkward corridor entry, and positing occupants at the window of the dressing room bench come study. Delightfully inventive.



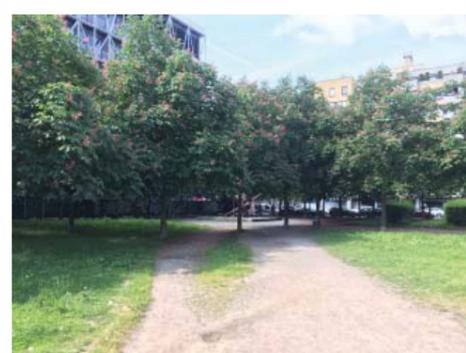
Coat rack as spectacle at the office of ACME Berlin. Great!



3 mirrors fixed together as a dressing room, at an unrecorded shop in the Mitte. Neat.



ze05 by zanderrotharchitekten. A wonderful example of high-density housing developed from social and economic considerations. The width of the multi-storey apartments is approximately 3.65 metres.



The use of parks in Berlin felt more curated than prescribed. Structure without fuss.



Layering of vegetation separating public and semi-public spaces at housing project by Bruno Taut.



Ventilation grille incorporated into the landscaping at the Neues Museum. Nice.



Happy times digesting events and each other. Brisbane can afford beer gardens like this.

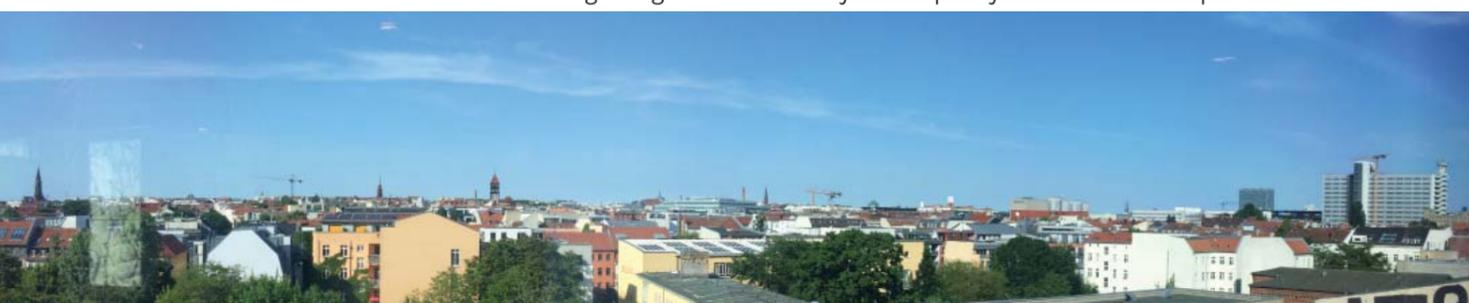


(T) Courtyard at the office of David Chipperfield Architects. (TR) Detail of insulated concrete from DCA office. (M) Brass panelled toilet entry at the Neues Museum and floor detail (B).



Memorials in and of the city. (L) I think that these may be modest memorials for individuals persecuted during the Nazi regime. There were many small plaques, typically adjacent doorways, identifying individuals names and date of birth. In this image people are placing flowers adjacent the small plaques. (M) The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe by Peter Eisenman and Buro Happold. The memorial rises from the city and doesn't always illicit the type of behaviour you find at other memorials. (R) Cobblestones are used to identify the path of the former Berlin Wall.

Berlin skyline, with building of a public nature popping their heads above the rooftops, beginning to be obscured by contemporary commercial developments.



Slender-Bender by Deadline Architects.



## Milan

### Style, Fashion, Taste: Milan and the Dirty Words of Architecture

Arriving in Milan after our flight from Berlin, the group took in the cocktail lounge at our hotel's rooftop. Being delivered into this centre of fashion and design I was impressed at how quickly the city's reputation of beautifully styled people became apparent. This could be due to the privilege that we were afforded by our incredibly generous hosts, at Dulux and the Australian Institute of Architects, to be in a more glamorous part of the city than I would otherwise find myself or it could be that the Milanese people are simply the fashionistas that we expect them to be. Of course it is probably a little bit of both and I think our time in the lounge gave our group a sense of how ideas of style, fashion, and taste may be working to shape the architecture in this city.

On the afternoon of our arrival we visited the Casa della Memoria (House of Memory), completed by Italian architecture collective Baukuh in 2015. A kind of library come archive, where the community's memories may be deposited and catalogued for posterity, this peculiar cultural centre allows memories to be readily shared and expressed amongst the community - all made available by a bright and dramatic yellow spiral stair. Considering how Milan has chosen to deal with its memories of recent history I couldn't help but reflect back on the Neues Museum, by David Chipperfield, that we had visited in Berlin the day prior. All surface, mannered proportions and material compositions, the Neues Museum subtly expressed the history and significant recent events of the city. Retaining the scars of conflict and destruction on the surfaces of the building, along with this time of renewal, the Berlin building was a restrained exercise in the expression of how the material of a building could hold and express attitudes to memories in its fabric.

In discussing this with Jason he suggested that how these two buildings deal with memory, feeling, and its expression could be symptomatic of the cultures of the cities that they are in. In our limited experience on the tour we agreed that German people are typically characterised as being restrained, keeping their emotions and feelings to themselves to be resolved privately, whereas the Italian people are characterised as being expressive, sharing with those around them what their concerns and feelings are in the moment.

Our first practice visit in Milan took us to the office of the precocious Stefano Belingardi of BE.ST. Not dissimilar to how the practice name appears to be formulated, Belingardi's designs appear to be compositions of parts that are familiar, simply brought together to form a whole that is both traditional and inventive while also serving to reinforce his reputation. In his designs this style of working is developed through predominantly visual compositions that use conventional materials such as glass and the native stone of Milan, to moulded plastics and folded timbers that readily brands and links his work to the fashion and design community of the city. As a marked shift from the architectures that we saw in London and Berlin, that were concerned with practice culture and community engagement respectively, this was the practice of an individual producing a brand that is distinctively of their styling. And if you want to be part of the Milano design scene, you can simply buy some to surround yourself with.

A short train ride from Milan, on an enriched whim facilitated by our wonderful and gregarious tour organiser Mai Huynh from the AIA, we had made a mini pilgrimage to Verona to take in Carlo Scarpa's Castelvecchio. Following a lunch of pizzas, salads, and grape juice, I have to admit feeling a little queasy initially taking in the former fortification come museum. All rich, expressive, and carefully orchestrated in all manner of details, moving through the ensemble of spaces you could be forgiven for having the sense that Scarpa had licked every surface and junction of the building - it was that intense. The care that was afforded to the conservation and reworking of the building was applied in equal measure to the presentation and curation of the artworks in the various spaces. Rather than feeling overtly contrived, or that the architecture / architect was in competition with the artworks, the consideration that was afforded to the presentation of these 16-17C paintings and sculptures made for an enlivened and heightened sense of awareness of the viewing experience and the engagement with individual works.

While in Milan one of the pertinent ideas that we discussed was the question of what is the appropriate amount of design. Restrained,

mannered, and sophisticated in its simplicity, the Chipperfield refurbishment of the Neues Museum in Berlin seemed to appropriately reflect the sombre and meditative attitude that the German people have to their rich and alive history, warts and all. By comparison the work of Scarpa being all colour, texture, the making and breaking of patterns, indulgent in expression, perpetuated the intense cultural history of painting, architecture and sculpture that has defined much of contemporary artistic expression typically exemplified by individuals. We agreed that of course neither approach is necessarily more favourable than the other, but that each was appropriate for the context in which it was responding to and formed from.

Here are my take-aways from the wonderful bike tour with Carlo Berizzi:

1. The level of the city is 27 metres high;
2. In describing the Libeskind apartment, Carlo said "It is a conventional building with the dress of the architect". This was consistent with a good amount of the other architects that were keeping existing building structures and replacing the facades.
3. The architectural style in Milan developed in the 1950s and 60s, blending Italian tradition and modernity, and is pragmatic. Italy is an older culture with typical furnishings of a gold-framed mirror, old lounge, and an eighteenth century paintings, which do not fit with hard Modernism, therefore neo-classicism has been incorporated into the modern Milan style.
4. The knowledge of working with steel, aluminium, glass, and marble came from architects working with upper middle class clients while also rebuilding factories, post war.
5. Leah asked how does the municipality engage with people of knowledge or who have ideas for the development of the city? Carlo is part of a group called the Association for Metropolitan Interest that engages with the municipality.
6. Italian secondary school education teaches history up to the eighteenth century and then stops, therefore there is little appreciation for Modernity.
7. Italy has more than 200,000 architects which is more than required. When there isn't enough work, architects get involved in other types of work such as furniture design, films, etc



Foundazione Prada by OMA. Of and In the City, the buildings (as suggested by the model) subtly and at times explicitly reflected the qualities of the city of Milan. A little like Willy Wonka's chocolate factory, glass elevator and all, the campus of buildings was a treat to get around and explore. With a wonderful art collection to match - i'm embarrassed to say that this felt like a profound experience to top off the very stimulating tour.



House of Memory by Baukuh. A fascinating public institute to archive and share the memories of the city.



Detail of marblish concrete wall adjacent the mushroom-like Torre Velasca.

Rooftop garden terrace at the office of Piuarch. The opportunistic making of gardens about the city is supported by tax incentives by the City of Milan.



Academic Carlo Berizzi provided some incredible insights into the Milan-style of architecture, and developments in Modernism & Post-Modernism. This was a rich starting point worthy of further discussion in regards to the continuing relevance of post-modernism in contemporary architecture.



Bosco Verticale by Stefano Boeri.



Winding-down in the renaissance garden of the Palazzo Giusti, Verona.



Every moment a moment at the Civic Museum of Castelvecchio by Carlo Scarpa. (L) Exhibition space curated to suit the works. (M) Light-weight & sensible stair. (R) Ways of doors inviting contemplation of succession.

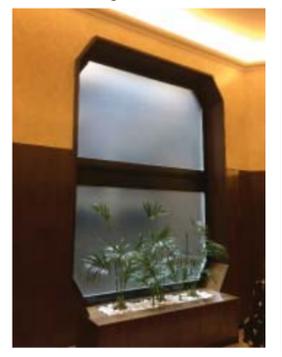


The new City-Life district of Milan, reminiscent of Jacques Tati's Mon Oncle. International drop-ins not at their best.

Enter! Doorway to the Banco di Verona by Carlo Scarpa. Gratuitous detailing at its most delightful best.



Details from building housing the office of BE.ST. (L-R) Glorious portal doorway; window as instrument of light and form rather than view; display-like clear acrylic letter-boxes; security, Milano-style.



Steel & brass footpath great, typical in parts of the city.



## ITINERARY

### LONDON

#### Saturday 12 May 2018

Walk in Kennington Gardens

#### Sunday 13 May 2018

Project Visit - Tin House by Henning Stummel, 2 Smugglers Yard, W12 8HU

Walking tour with David Garrard:  
Design Museum, Battersea Power Station  
- boat ride to -  
Tate Modern, Millennium Bridge, St Paul's Cathedral, Paternoster Square, One New Change, Bracken House, Bow Lane area, Wren churches, Bloomberg Place & Temple of Mithras, New Court (Rothschilds Bank), Mansion House, 1 Poultry, Bank of England, Royal Exchange, Threadneedle St/Throgmorton St/Cornhill area, 30 St Mary Axe (Gherkin), Leadenhall Building (Cheesegrater), Lloyds Building, Willis Building, Plantation Place, more Wren churches, Fenchurch St (Walkie Talkie).

#### Monday 14 May 2018

Practice Visit - Carmody Groarke, 62-70 Shorts Gardens London WC2H 9AH.

Project Visit - Office building by Denton Corker Marshall, 20 Farringdon Street London.

Project Visit - Woodblock House by dRMM Architects, 20 Coate Street, E2 9AG, London.

Practice Visit - Zaha Hadid Architects, 10 Bowling Green Lande London.

Practice Visit - Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners, 122 Leadenhall St, London.

#### Tuesday 15 May 2018

Practice Visit - AL\_A (Amanda Levete), 14A Brewery Road, London N7 9NH.

Practice Visit - Ash Sakula, 6 Doughty Mews London.

Practice Visit - WilkinsonEyre, 3 Bowling Green Lane London.

Practice Visit - Foster + Partners, Riverside, 22 Hester Rd London.

#### Wednesday 16 May 2018

Practice Visit - Studio Octopi, 1c Burrows Mews London SE1 8LD.

### BERLIN

#### Wednesday 16 May 2018

Stay at Casa Camper Berlin, Weinmeisterstrasse 1, 10178 Berlin.

#### Thursday 17 May 2018

Project Visit - Frizz23 by Deadline Architects, Friedrichstrasse 23/23B, 10969 Berlin.

Practice Visit - David Chipperfield Architects Berlin, Gesellschaft von Architekten mbH, Joachimstrasse, Berlin.

Practice Visit - ACME Berlin, Gipstrasse 14, 10119 Berlin.

Practice Visit - Deadline Architects, Heissische Str. 5, 10115 Berlin.

Practice Visit - GMP Architekten, Hardenbergstrasse 4-5, 10623 Berlin.

#### Friday 18 May 2018

Project Visit - ze05 by zanderrotharchitekten, Zelterstrasse 5, Berlin-Prenzlauer Berg.

Practice Visit - Realities United, Falckensteinstrasse 28, 10997 Berlin.

Visit to Australian Embassy Berlin.

#### Saturday 19 May 2018

Bicycle Tour with Richard Ollig (Ticket B): Reichstag Building (Foster + Partners), Neues Museum (David Chipperfield), Jewish Museum (Daniel Libeskind), Konig Gallery (Werner Duttmann), Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe (Peter Eisenman).

### MILAN

#### Sunday 20 May 2018

Project Visit - House of Memory by Baukuh, Via Federico Confalonieri, 14, 20124 Milano.

#### Monday 21 May 2018

Practice Visit - BE.ST (Stefano Belingardi), Via Filippo Turati, 3, 20121 Milano.

Trip to Verona to visit Carlo Scarpa projects: the Civic Museum of Castelvechio and the Banco di Verona; and the Palazzo Giusti renaissance garden.

#### Tuesday 22 May 2018

Practice Visit - Piuarch, Via Palermo, 1, 20121 Milano.

Practice Visit - arcHITEcts srl, Via Pontaccio, 10, 20121 Milano.

Practice Visit - Progetto CMR, Corso di Porta Ticinese, 53, 20123 Milano.

Practice Visit - Park Associati, Via Benvenuto Garofalo, 31, 20133 Milano.

#### Wednesday 23 May 2018

Bicycle tour with Carlo Berizzi: Castello Sforzesco, City Life, Duomo, Museo del Novecento