

THE BRIEF

Creative Directors: Thom McKenzie and Naomi Stead

PREAMBLE

Breathe in.

“Through something as natural as breathing, we are as humans inseparable from the cosmos, the earth and our inner world. That is the essence of meditation. Whatever exists outside, exists inside: what we experience outside, we also experience inside. And when we live consciously, we experience this everyday - even without meditation. As the phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty wrote: *for human consciousness there is coincidence of the inner and the outer; my sadness is the melancholy of a rainy day.*” Hilde Bouchez, *A Wild Thing*

Breathe out.

In / Out. It is spatial. We spend a lot of time inside. Inside buildings, inside our heads, inside virtual networks. Do they give us space to breathe? Do they give us time to breathe?

Close your eyes. Find your centre.

Do you remember where it is? Are you within or without?

We are constantly drawn out. Through digital devices and social media we travel, mentally, to other spaces and other settings, social, cultural, domestic, professional. This is a spatial and physiological condition. It has an impact on our bodies and our relationships to ourselves and to others. Did you forget to breathe?

Imagine a room.

Do you imagine something rare? What qualities does it possess? Seldom are spaces designed for the actual people who inhabit them or the landscape within which they sit. They are designed as devices that facilitate activity, labour, study, production, commerce etc or as a form of capital, real estate, a house, an asset that is maintained by someone. We are more than this. Can we design a space that is *as light as air*, yet still an *antidote to ungroundedness*. Can we design space to breathe.

There is much to do.

This is not a space for rest. We are connected with the events that occur around us even if we choose to ignore the reality of the world that we live in. It is a space for life, for action, for living. With each breath we sustain life.

Open your eyes.

Can we design consciously? To be conscious is to be aware.

Can we design unconsciously? This is magical. Here we can design with depth and connect our work with the world, cultures and humanity.

Go for a walk.

Fresh air, a clear head, fresh ideas. Many buildings have forgotten how to breathe. The air is stale and filled with artificial compounds from artificial building products. Do we have a responsibility?

PROGRAM

On the site where you are participating in Superstudio each team is to design a new typology that supports student life, and emphasises student wellbeing. The nature of the program, it's physical and virtual dimensions and how it responds to the local and global context of the multifaceted and diverse social groups that are part of student life are to be considered.

Does the public and the private overlap? Can you live, study and work in the same place? How can you create difference within homogeneity? Do different functions require different spatial conditions? Does the physical fabric effect our mood and manner in which we socialise? Are you designing for the individual *and* the collective? What qualities of space supports mental and physical wellbeing? How is it possible to have solitude but also connection, privacy but also conviviality, a feeling of groundedness even given the virtuality in almost every aspect of contemporary life?

Consider the collapse of contexts: the distance and boundary between workplace and home and university and family and friends and study and leisure and work and life becomes narrower and blurrier by the day. Is this a good thing? Is it contributing to your health and happiness? How can it be made into a good thing, both spatially and experientially?

METHOD

This is a Superstudio. It is unlike other studios. So the method will also be different. During the course of the two days participants cannot use the internet and are discouraged from connecting to wifi or using phones whilst completing the task of producing a design for the studio. If you need to research something, you will need to use the library.

For the first two hours students cannot use computers and are encouraged to share and communicate their ideas to each other using their voices, hands, sketches and stories from their own experience and education to date. We encourage students to feel confident in their own lived experiences, of both life and architecture, and their own and collective imaginations.

Final presentations will be a 3 minute powerpoint presentation using information of your own curation and selection. There are no specific parameters around the number or type of drawings. Consider how you will represent the intangible.