

Kester Rattenbury

Output 1: Archigram Archival Project, 2010

Abstract

The Archigram Archival Project made the works of seminal experimental architectural group Archigram available free online for an academic and general audience. It was a major archival work, as well as a new kind of academic archive, being purely digital, displaying material held in different places around the world and privately and variously owned. It was aimed at a wide online design community, discovering it through Google or social media, as well as a traditional academic audience, and it has been widely acclaimed in both fields.

The project has three distinct but interlinked elements. It's first was to assess, catalogue and present the vast range of Archigram's prolific, and varied work, of which only a small portion was previously available. It's second was to provide reflective academic commentary on Archigram and on the wider picture their work represented. It's third, emerging during the project, was to develop a new type of non-ownership online archive, suitable for both academic research at the highest level and for casual public browsing. This itself related to Archigram's own arguments about fun-based learning and about technological resources replacing building-based institutions. The relationship between the resource and the material it showed became a

subject of the authors' major essay included in the project.

The project thus hybridised several existing methodologies. It combined practical archival and editorial methods for the recovery, presentation and contextualisation of Archigram's work, with digital web design and with the provision of reflective academic and scholarly material, and it aimed to be highly accessible for both scholarly research and casual browsing. It was designed by the EXP Research Group in the Department of Architecture in collaboration with Archigram and their heirs and with the Centre for Parallel Computing, School of Electronics and Computer Science, also at the University of Westminster.

The Archigram Archival Project was shortlisted for the 2010 RIBA President's Award for Outstanding University-Located Research. Launched publicly on 19th April 2010, as of 23rd September 2013 the website has received 159,678 unique visitors from 180 countries around the world, and between them they have made 361,794 visits and 1,695,968 page hits.

Key Words

Archigram, experimental, archive, 1960s, 1970s, pop-up, inflatable, pods, walking city

Context

The experimental architectural group Archigram is recognised as one of the most important architectural groups in the UK of the last 50 years, evidenced by the award of the 2002 RIBA Royal Gold Medal. Some of Archigram's ideas/ projects are well known through exhibitions around the world or scholarly interpretations by the likes of Simon Sadler and Hadas Steiner. However, only a limited number of Archigram's many and varied projects were written about, far fewer were available through museums, and it was impossible for most people to read the original source of this work, the Archigram magazines, which are now extremely rare. Thus, though the group's work was considered vastly influential, only a small portion of the work was known, and the great majority, held in private and domestic collections, was extremely hard for researchers to access or study. There was therefore a clear need to extend the information available to architects, academics, students and the wider public.

General Description

Website URL: <http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk/>

The Archigram Archival Project was instigated by the newly-formed Research Centre for Experimental Practice in the Department of Architecture at the University of Westminster. It won a £304,000 Resource Enhancement Grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council in 2006 and was rated 'Outstanding' by them on completion in 2010. It was run by a team lead by Dr Kester Rattenbury (Principal Investigator) and Prof Murray Fraser (co-investigator, now at The Bartlett School of Architecture) and in collaboration with the surviving members of Archigram or their heirs. The website was developed in collaboration with the Centre for Parallel Computing, School of Electronics and Computer Science, also at the University of Westminster.

The website is a newly extensive kind of digital academic source, which no longer depends on ownership or existing collections alone, and which can reach new kinds of non-academic audiences as well as more traditional academic ones.

The website created by the Archigram Archival Project includes almost 10,000 images which are organised into 202 projects categorised by date, author, type, publication format (exhibitions, magazines etc), and by many other classifications and linking codes. These 202 projects are accompanied by original Archigram texts where available, and sometimes by contemporaneous descriptive or critical texts, as well as by new identifying texts written by the researchers. The website also includes

new biographical material about the members of Archigram, a range of supplementary projects and ephemeral material such as personal archives of photographs and articles, and also other projects done by members of the group independently of their role in Archigram. Furthermore, it includes a host of fresh information and analysis that is provided through the following components:

- entirely new interviews with each of the surviving members of Archigram or else their heirs, made accessible in both video and transcript formats;
 - new texts written by leading academics in the field (Barry Curtis, Emeritus Professor of Visual Culture, University of Middlesex; Simon Sadler, Professor of Architecture and Urban History, University of California; Leon van Schaik, Innovation Professor of Architecture, RMIT, Melbourne);
 - the first truly comprehensive bibliography of writings about Archigram's work and the debates which surround it;
 - the only substantial attempt to record the whole range of collaborators on these projects, including many who are little known today;
 - a long reflective and critical essay about the Archigram Archival Project, and what it reveals, written by the authors.
- After many stages of development and beta-testing, the website has been custom-designed so that it can be browsed in a number of different ways, and just as easily accessed visually (i.e. by what one likes the look of) as by the usual academic identifiers (e.g. project title, name of architect, or keyword searches). The definite intention was to allow a sense

of serendipitous exploration for those who wished to view the material in that manner, just as one is able to browse extensively in an actual physical library. Above all, the final website is aimed directly a range of users and audiences: architects, academics, architectural students, and a far wider casual audience of browsers who are able to access and discover the site through internet search engines or a range of social media.

The research work for the Archigram Archival Project began in early July 2006 and the eventual website was launched in mid-April 2010.

Research Questions

- 1) What is the full extent of the work of the seminal architectural group Archigram and what does it show about this influential group?
- 2) How can one make the important work of Archigram available to a global public in a situation where the majority of the source material remains in private hands, or where items are being sold off in fragmentary manner to different cultural institutions?
- 3) How can this work be critically contextualised and presented at an international academic level in a way that does not simply perpetuate the existing limited knowledge and understanding of the group?
- 4) Can the format of a digital archive allow for academic archives to become accessible and widely accessed through popular online formats, thereby taking them to a wider audience, while still retaining their academic credentials?
- 5) How might the development of a freely available online archive change or develop the nature of what we understand about the architectural archive itself

Aims and Objectives

- 1) To access, record and catalogue the work of the Archigram group as a new form of archive

The first aim was to access and record a massive resource that was clearly of major international significance to the global architectural community, and to make this openly available online for public browsing and academic use. Archigram is widely regarded as one of the most influential forces in mid-to-late-20th century experimental architectural thought, and its output between 1961- 1974 was truly prodigious. However, the vast majority of the group's work previously remained unknown – indeed, only a few canonical projects were ever really shown and discussed in books and journals – and almost all of the source material was still held in the private collections of various members of the

group, often being housed in curious domestic conditions (even under beds or in garden sheds). Some of the more famous pieces had been sold off to major collections such as FRAC (Fonds Regional d'Art Contemporain) in Orleans, Centre Pompidou in Paris, DAM (Deutsches Architekturmuseum) in Frankfurt, and MoMA (Museum of Modern Art) in New York. All the time there was considerable interest in the possible sale of the collection as a whole, although no agreement has been reached on this, while the Archigram collection itself was extremely hard to access, largely un-catalogued, and subject to damage and loss.

- 2) To uncover and display the full extent of Archigram's work in a way that could be made freely accessible to the general public and to an architectural/academic audience

The second aim was to uncover the vast range of the work which the various members of Archigram had produced, jointly and severally. Because of the difficulty of accessing much of the material, knowledge of the group's work had mainly been limited to a few images of the most famous projects which were then repeatedly re-published to diminishing returns. Hence the value of the Archigram Archival Project has not only been to uncover the full extent of the projects created by Archigram, but also the extremely diverse, and often conflicting and contradictory, nature of the works produced by the group (including magazines, imaginary projects, competitions, completed buildings, exhibitions, polemics, events), which extend from the absolutely realistic (and sometimes built) realm of conventional practice through to highly polemic and abstract tirades against the shortcomings of conventional practice. Academics within the field had speculated previously about the extent of this internal range and debate within Archigram. What this research project therefore does is to expose, illustrate and extend the potential for insights and observations fulsomely in future detailed research (see, for instance, the work and essays of Professor Simon Sadler included in the online website).

3) To explore the potential of a new digital archive format thoroughly to allow for easy, widespread access for a global audience

The third aim emerged through the development of the research work itself, and in effect shadowed many of Archigram's own intentions and preoccupations. A number

of challenging questions arose. Can an architectural archive exist in purely online form? How can it be made popular, through seductive imagery, and yet also be a scholarly contribution to knowledge and discourse? Can an archive become truly portable, viewable through portable hand-held electronics, and how would that change what the archive is and how it works? As the project developed, the deliberate aim was to maintain and protect its 'pure' academic criteria, while also arranging the material so that it appealed to, and could easily be used and accessed by, the more casual browser. In this the aim was to enact a small part of Archigram's own playful, provocative vision of a world in which fixed buildings and institutions are becoming increasingly irrelevant and, conversely, portable personal entertainment technologies are becoming ever more central to our cultural values.

4) To reflect upon the ways in which this new kind of freely available online archive can change or develop the nature of the architectural archive, and thus rethink the methods of architectural research

This fourth aim is also something which really only began to crystallise towards the final stages of the Archigram Archival Project, and as such it is an aspect which is explored in more detail the substantial reflective essay by the authors included on the site and reproduced here in Appendix 1 as well as in the new essays provided by other academics who kindly contributed to the project.

Research Methods

Initially, the methodology for the Archigram Archival Project was principally archival. Through this work, some tens of thousands of images were uncovered, digitised, named, according to the project list which has been provided by Dennis Crompton of Archigram, and which itself developed and grew during the course of the research project.

Initially the content was to be contained within the AHDS online data website which was at that point was still being run by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Then, however, with the suspension of any new material going onto the AHDS system, the opportunity emerged for the project team to develop an entirely new and custom-built website which could be used to organise, structure and cross-reference the collection, and at the same time extend its audience to a wider design audience and to social media users around the globe. The research project therefore developed iteratively, first grouping and categorising the material, and then organising and structuring it through the emerging website itself and in collaboration with Archigram members and their heirs. Beta-tests of the developing site were run at key points on a selected group which included students, 'digital natives', technophobes, and sundry architects and architects who were closely linked to or interested in the Archigram group.

In the later stages of the project, the extensive descriptive and analytical writing was added to the project, and the accompanying essays were commissioned or written by the project researchers. The extensive bibliography and list of Archigram collaborators was developed

throughout the course of the project, but was given especially extensive input for the very final stages prior to launch so that both would be as up-to-date as possible. Indeed, all of the content on the Archigram Archival Project has been designed so that it can be easily updated as and when new material becomes available, or major news insights and understandings of the group emerge.

The methodology therefore was intended to be hybrid and reflexive, in that it combines elements of classic archival practice along with the academic editorial judgement required for the compilation of the 'oeuvre complet', as well as cutting-edge computer design and testing to create a new type of freely available online website archive. What therefore developed during the project was a self-reflexive methodology which drew upon and also extended both the subject matter being presented in the website and the nature of the digital resource itself.

Dissemination / Impact

The project attracted considerable press interest at its inception. Research work was launched with a two-day event at the ICA, parts of which are still available on YouTube. The finished project was launched at the Old Cinema, University of Westminster, 19 April 2010, with a parallel Skype hook up to New York via The Architects Newspaper (NY). Almost 200 people attended the event, amongst them architects, journalists, academics, students etc.

At the same time, the site was announced to the wider online community by tweets, blogs and reviews, and proved immediately popular, with 40,000 users and more than 250,000 page views in the first two weeks, taking the site into twitter's Top 1000 sites, and a steady flow of visitors thereafter.

By August 2012 it had received 1,377,514 page views, 288,502 visits to the site, 133,351 individual visitors from 176 countries. Google Analytics accessed in August 2013 shows a constant pattern of use at around 100 visits per day; 75,000 visits in the past year from 27,488 unique visitors. There is a very significant proportion of return visitors (around 60%) with 40% being new visitors. There is also a long average use time: more than three minutes on average, breaking down into a large number of people who are using it for very long periods of time, which suggests a high volume of academic-style research, but with a significant proportion coming in through social media. The main access sources are 'direct visitors' i.e. unknown sources, people coming from Wikipedia and The Guardian. It is mainly

viewed through desktops, and a substantial number of people are using it massively; though it is unclear whether this figure groups all users from the same University; certainly there is a large volume of use from the University of Cambridge. All of this suggests a large volume of classic research, academic and student use but with a significant proportion of a new kind of casual usage.

Direct feedback and praise from major international research institutions and Archigram scholars report widespread student use. For instance Simon Sadler, Professor of Architecture and Urban History, University of California wrote this in his letter to the RIBA in 2010 when it was shortlisted for the RIBA President's Award for Outstanding University based research:

The Archigram Archival Project is perhaps without peer even among the best generally-accessible online resources (for instance, those of the FRAC, NAI, and the Fondation Le Corbusier). Indeed, I believe its accessibility should be an inspiration for other archival projects. ... The Archigram Archival Project is already surrounded on Google by blogs that are talking about it, and even undergraduate students at my university feel compelled to tell me about it. This is a significant cultural change for archives and augurs a demographic change in the way that archives are accessed and how interest in architecture is generated.

The project has been presented at a wide range of different academic / educational institutions worldwide, including for instance

Prof Murray Fraser at The Technical University of Malaysia and Istanbul Technical University in 2009; Daphne Chalk-Birdsall at the ARCLIB conference (architecture librarians group) in Portsmouth, July 2010; Dr Kester Rattenbury at the opening programme of Strelka in Moscow in June 2010 (student presentation, filmed); at the Ecole Supérieure d'Art et Design, Grenoble-Valence, 2012; (transcript due for publication, 2014) and at Salon Suisse, Venice Biennale 2012.

It was also well reviewed in the more conventional press: The Architects' Newspaper, (New York) Building Design, RIBA Journal, The Architects' Journal, Architectural Design, Architecture Today.

It was rated as Outstanding by the AHRC; Grant no 11768/ 119249). Letter 01 Nov 2012/ RE PID 11768; AID 119249. Assessor comments include:

Much more was achieved than was anticipated...The project seems to have grasped the opportunities provided by new online presentation techniques... The project is hugely important for provoking further interest in the recent history of contemporary architecture and theory... The project is a real coup for the AHRC. The successful outcome was never inevitable and the project seems to have been superbly managed. There is no question that it represents extremely good value for money...

Academic support for the site includes international presentations and letters of support such as Simon Sadler's letter for the RIBA Award submission in 2010 quoted

above. Part of the same dossier, the letter from Irena Murray, Director and Sir Banister Fletcher Librarian, British Architectural Library stated:

The Archigram Archival Project has created a truly outstanding new model for research-rich digital based projects internationally. With some 10,000 images culled from the original Archigram Archive, it has made manifest a virtual palimpsest of narrative and visual content that brings not just the work but its creators and the whole era brilliantly to life. Easy to use, effective in its design and structure, it makes vast quantities of information available under basic typologies: projects; exhibitions, magazines and people. The AAP will be invaluable for specialists, but its colourful mosaic leads and clear navigation will attract and stimulate the general public. It is a great tribute to all its creators that the AAP retains the quality and even re-presents the heady excitement of the original work by Archigram members complete with the often controversial response to it.

And Leon van Schaik (Innovation Professor of Architecture, RMIT, Melbourne) wrote in his letter of support:

I believe this website to be a very significant research project, one that transforms any user's understanding of one of England's most influential avant garde architecture movements. Perceptions of the nature of the contribution made by Archigram are radically altered by the extent and scope of the archive and the exceptionally user-friendly form in which this impressive body of work and contemporary commentary has been assembled in

the rigorous, organised (historically and thematically) communication system. The interactivity of the website cannot be faulted. This research will make this era of architectural endeavour live for those who were there, so to speak, and for generations to come.

However, the form of the website has also generated an extraordinary amount of attention online, marking a really significant change in the outreach of traditional academic projects. It is particularly relevant to its subject matter, as it is just these sorts of effects that Archigram's work predicted; and forms the kind of influential project which EXP records in accessible academic forms. Thrilled reviews by users on blogs and through twitter began at the launch, but continue until today, for instance:

sacculi says: this is as good as it gets on the web <http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk/index.php>

kieranlong says: Is this the best website dedicated to a single architect ever?

By translating this oeuvre into the contemporary website format, those behind the AAP ... have outblogged the image blogs, flooding a genre reliant on constant visual stimulation with imagery that is simultaneously avant-garde, archival and inspirational. . It's a mental short circuit to be presented with so much at once, especially when so many of these projects are predictive of the myriad complexities of the modern condition." <http://www.thingsmagazine.net/>

The project has received the highest praise from major academics for instance:

The Archigram Archival Project is perhaps without peer even among the best generally-accessible online resources (for instance, those of the FRAC, NAI, and the Fondation Le Corbusier). Indeed, I believe its accessibility should be an inspiration for other archival projects. ... The Archigram Archival Project is already surrounded on Google by blogs that are talking about it.... This is a significant cultural change for archives and augurs a demographic change in the way that archives are accessed and how interest in architecture is generated.

The site has also been reviewed on literally thousands of blogs, and continues to be discovered by new converts, such as:

<http://bldgblog.blogspot.co.uk/2010/04/archigram-archive.html> <http://www.canadianarchitect.com/news/archigram-uncovered/1000368216/>

<http://www.dezeen.com/2010/04/22/archigram-archival-project-launched/>

Tweets include:

<http://twitter.com/melstarrs/statuses/12878844171>;

<http://twitter.com/domusweb/statuses/12425824347>;

<http://twitter.com/mienoergaard/status/12515922601>; <http://twitter.com/jbacus/status/197156848879681536>;

Project Details

Authors: Dr Kester Rattenbury and Professor Murray Fraser
Co-authors: Management support at the University of Westminster from Clare Hamman; Technical support from Filip Visjnic, Pierpaolo di Panfilo, Thierry Delaitre, Professor Steve Winter, Dr Nick Lambert; Content input from Dennis Crompton, Peter Cook, David Greene, Mike Webb, Simon Herron, Daphne Chalk-Birdsall, Gail Murray.
Funding Body: Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)
Budget: £304,000
Completion: 19th April 2010
Consultants: Professor Barry Curtis, Professor Adrian Forty, Professor William Menking, Dr Irena Murray, Professor Simon Sadler, Professor Leon van Schaik, Dr Hadas Steiner, Professor Mark Wigley.

Evidence

1 Site Tour

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| Fig. 01 | The Archigram Archival Project Website: Home Page | Fig. 05a | The Archigram Archival Project Website: Project Batiment Public, Monte Carlo |
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- Fig. 09b The Archigram Archival Project Website: People, Collaborators, Detail
- Fig. 10a The Archigram Archival Project Website: About
- Fig. 10b The Archigram Archival Project Website: About, Bibliography
- Fig. 11a The Archigram Archival Project Website: Graphic Site Map
- Fig. 11b The Archigram Archival Project Website: Sketch of Website Structure
- Fig 11c The Archigram Archival Project Website: Draft Layout, January 2009

2 Textual Evidence

- P.01 The Archigram Archival Project Website: About, Essay by Kester Rattenbury and Murray Fraser (10c in Clare's folder)
- P.02 The Archigram Archival Project Final Resource Enhancement Report to the AHRC, 2010
- P.03 AHRC response letter to the Final Resource Enhancement Report, November 2010
- P.04 Supporting statement from Leon van Schaik to the RIBA Research Awards, 2010
- P.05 Supporting statement from Simon Sadler to the RIBA Research Awards, 2010
- P.06 Supporting statement from Barry Curtis to the RIBA Research Awards, 2010
- P.07 Parnell, Steve. 2010. 'The Archigram Archives go digital.' Architects Journal, 13 May.
- P.08 Zeiger, Mimi. 2010. 'The Archigram Archival Project cues up the '60's pop

- group's hits and B-sides.' Architect, August 10.
- P.09 2010. The Archigram Archive.' Bldblog, April 19.
- P.10 Dezeenwire. 2010. 'Archigram Archival Project launched.' Dezeen, 22 April.
- P.11 Reed, Martha. 2010. 'The Archigram Archive.' Bdonline, 07 May.

3 Launch

- Fig. 13a Peter Cook and David Greene Launch Event, University of Westminster, London
- Fig 13b Michael Webb and Dennis Crompton, Launch event, New York
- Fig 13c EXP (Kester Rattenbury, Murray Fraser and Clare Hamman), Michael Webb, Dennis Crompton and dog at launch

4 Archigram Drawings as Postcards

- Fig. 14 Michael Webb, Temple Island, Section through Cone of Vision.
- Fig. 15 Michael Webb, Temple Island, Static landscape and Accelerating landscape.
- Fig. 16 Michael Webb, Photograph of Dome with Leaves.
- Fig. 17 Michael Webb, Temple Island, Photo Finish of the Regatta. Leaves.
- Fig. 18 Ron Herron, Walking City (partial).
- Fig. 19 David Greene, Pod Vivo / Pod Muerto
- Fig. 20 Peter Cook, Lump and Secret Garden.
- Fig.21 Peter Cook and David Greene. Archigram Magazine 1. Broadsheet Layout.

- Fig.22 Peter Cook, Instant Village Moment.
- Fig.23 Peter Cook, Dennis Crompton, Ron Herron, Diana Jowsey. Summer Session 72: Aeroplanes.
- Fig. 24 Warren Chalk, Walking City Original Model.

Evidence

1 Site Tour

<http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk>



Fig.01. The Archigram Archival Project Website: Home Page

HOME **MAGAZINES** PROJECTS SHOWS PEOPLE ABOUT

Archigram Began Life as a Magazine produced at home by the members of the group, showing experimental work to a growing, global audience. Nine (and a half) seminal, individually designed, hugely influential, and now very rare magazines were produced between 1961 and 1974. The last 'half' was an update on the group's office work rather than a 'full' Archigram magazine.

One **Two** Three Four Five **Six** Seven Eight Nine Nine and a half

ARCHIGRAM MAGAZINE ISSUE NO. 1 Project No: 100.1 Year: 1961

Home / Magazines / Archigram Magazine Issue No. 1

Project No: 100.1 Year: 1961

Peter Cook, David Greene, Michael Webb

Video Pages Projects Included

3 images



Archigram Paper One. Edited (nominally) by David Osborne, 64 Regent's Park Road London NW1. Produced by Peter Cook and David Greene; text largely by Greene; composition largely by Cook. Produced in James Cubitt's office. Copies are rare.

ARCHIGRAM 1, 1961. Interview with Dennis Crompton

Dennis Crompton
The very beginning of things. It was just two sheets. The first sheet was produced on an office duplicating machine; one of those things where you write or cut a stencil and then sort-of wind it around. And a piece of potato was cut out to make the red dot on it. This, basically, was done by Peter (Cook) and David (Greene); David providing the sort-of-poetry words and Peter putting it together.

When I talk about these magazines, what's interesting from my point of view as somebody who does books, is that this was the beginning of the availability of offset litho(graph), as a generally available thing, rather than something within a professional context. So this was right at the beginning.

This was, as you might say, 'properly' produced, the second

Fig.02a. The Archigram Archival Project Website: Archigram Magazine Issue No. 1

HOME **MAGAZINES** PROJECTS SHOWS PEOPLE ABOUT

Archigram Began Life as a Magazine produced at home by the members of the group, showing experimental work to a growing, global audience. Nine (and a half) seminal, individually designed, hugely influential, and now very rare magazines were produced between 1961 and 1974. The last 'half' was an update on the group's office work rather than a 'full' Archigram magazine.

One Two Three Four **Five** Six Seven Eight Nine Nine and a half

ARCHIGRAM MAGAZINE ISSUE NO. 5 Project No: 100.5 Year: 1964

Home / Magazines / Archigram Magazine Issue No. 5

Project No: 100.5 Year: 1964

Warren Chaff, Peter Cook, Dennis Crompton, Rae Fether, Ben Fether, David Greene, Ron Herron, Michael Webb

Video Pages Projects Included

FRONT COVER (3 versions below) 1 of 23




archigram 5 metropolis archigram 5 2/-

Fig.03a. The Archigram Archival Project Website: Archigram Magazine Issue No. 5

archigram.westminster.ac.uk/projects.php

HOME MAGAZINES **PROJECTS** SHOWS PEOPLE ABOUT

The ARCHIGRAM Archival Project

More Than 200 Projects are included in the Archigram Archival Project. The AAP uses the group's mainly chronological numbering system and includes everything given an Archigram project number. This comprises projects done by members before they met, the Archigram magazines (grouped together at no. 100), the projects done by Archigram as a group between 1961 and 1974, and some later projects.

LIST BY: **Project Number** Project Name Grid View List View Compact View

1956 1957 1958 1959 1960 1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975+

Project County College for Girls, London (LCC)

Shoreditch Secondary Modern School, London (LCC)

Palsley Technical College, Scotland Competition

Clapham County College for Girls, London (LCC)

Hall of Residence Northampton CAT, London (LCC)

Hotel Project, South Bank, London (LCC)

TV Centre and Offices, South Bank, London (LCC)

Enfield Civic Centre Competition

Chelsea College Hall of Residence and Fire Station...

Mosque Project

Fig.03b. The Archigram Archival Project Website: Projects Grid View

HOME MAGAZINES **PROJECTS** SHOWS PEOPLE ABOUT

The ARCHIGRAM Archival Project

More Than 200 Projects are included in the Archigram Archival Project. The AAP uses the group's mainly chronological numbering system and includes everything given an Archigram project number. This comprises projects done by members before they met, the Archigram magazines (grouped together at no. 100), the projects done by Archigram as a group between 1961 and 1974, and some later projects.

LIST BY: **Project Number** Project Name Grid View **List View** Compact View

1956 1957 1958 1959 1960 1961 1962 **1963** 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975+

	SIN CENTRE	Project No: 25	Year: 1961-63
'Entertainments Palace' on the site of the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, London. Originally 'failed' as student final thesis project at the Regent Street Polytechnic.			
	EUSTON STATION REDEVELOPMENT, LONDON (TAYLOR WOODROW)	Project No: 33	Year: 1962-65
Redevelopment of Euston Station by Taylor Woodrow Construction. Platforms and freight handling areas completed, office development deferred.			
	LIVING CITY EXHIBITION, ICA GALLERY, LONDON	Project No: 36	Year: 1963
Exhibition of Archigram work, designed and curated by Archigram at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, 19th June-2nd August 1963. Also exhibited at Manchester City Art Gallery and Walker Art Gallery, Cambridge.			
	LIVING CITY ARTICLES: LIVING ARTS MAGAZINE	Project No: 37	Year: 1963
'Catalogue' of the Living City exhibition at the ICA, published as articles in issue 2 of Living Arts magazine.			
	COME-GO PROJECT (CITY WITH EXISTING TECHNOLOGY)	Project No: 38	Year: 1963
Speculative proposal for an infrastructure of services, communications and facilities which allow cities to 'come and go'. Shown in Living City Exhibition.			

Fig.04a. The Archigram Archival Project Website: Projects Chronological View

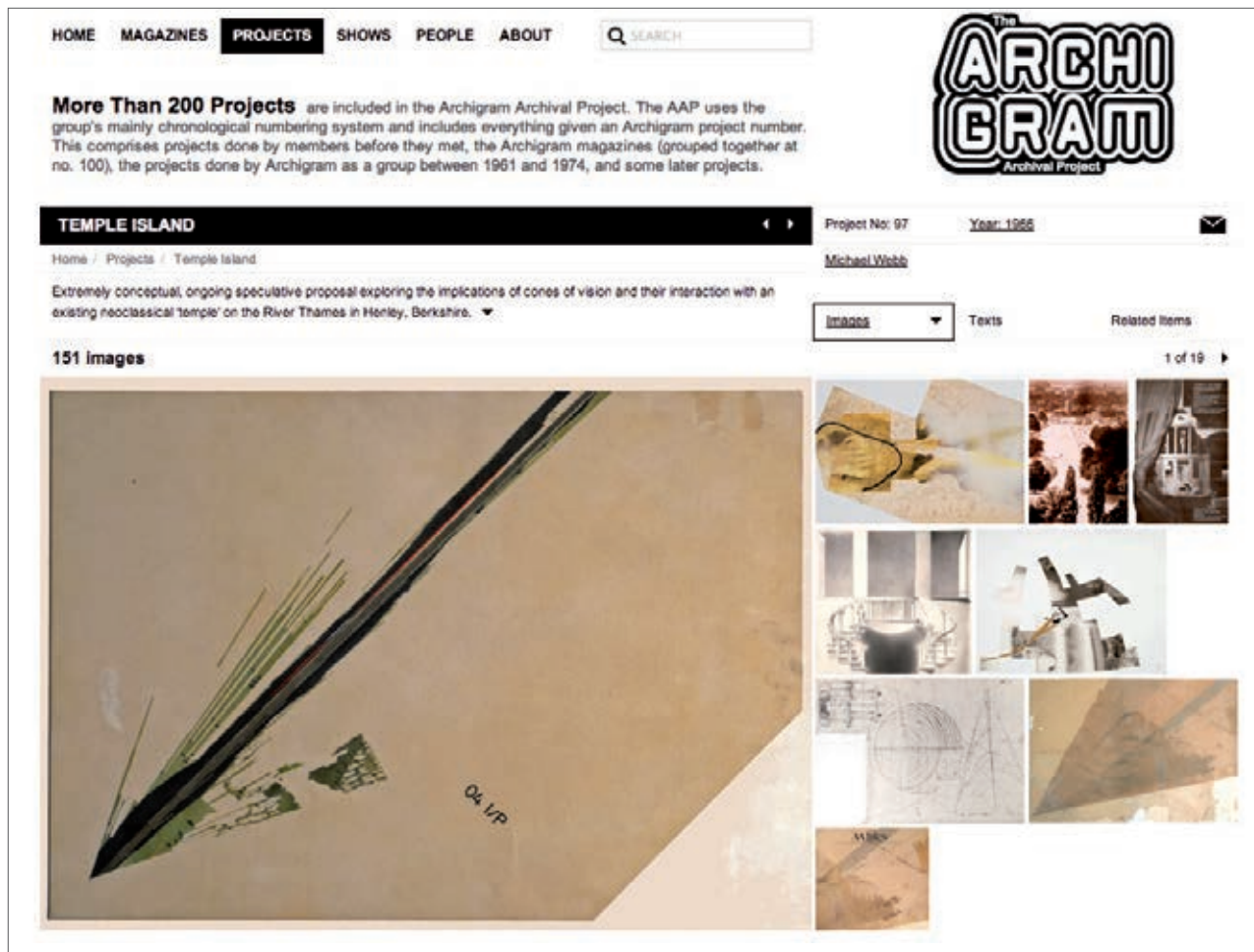


Fig.04b. The Archigram Archival Project Website: Project Temple Island Detail

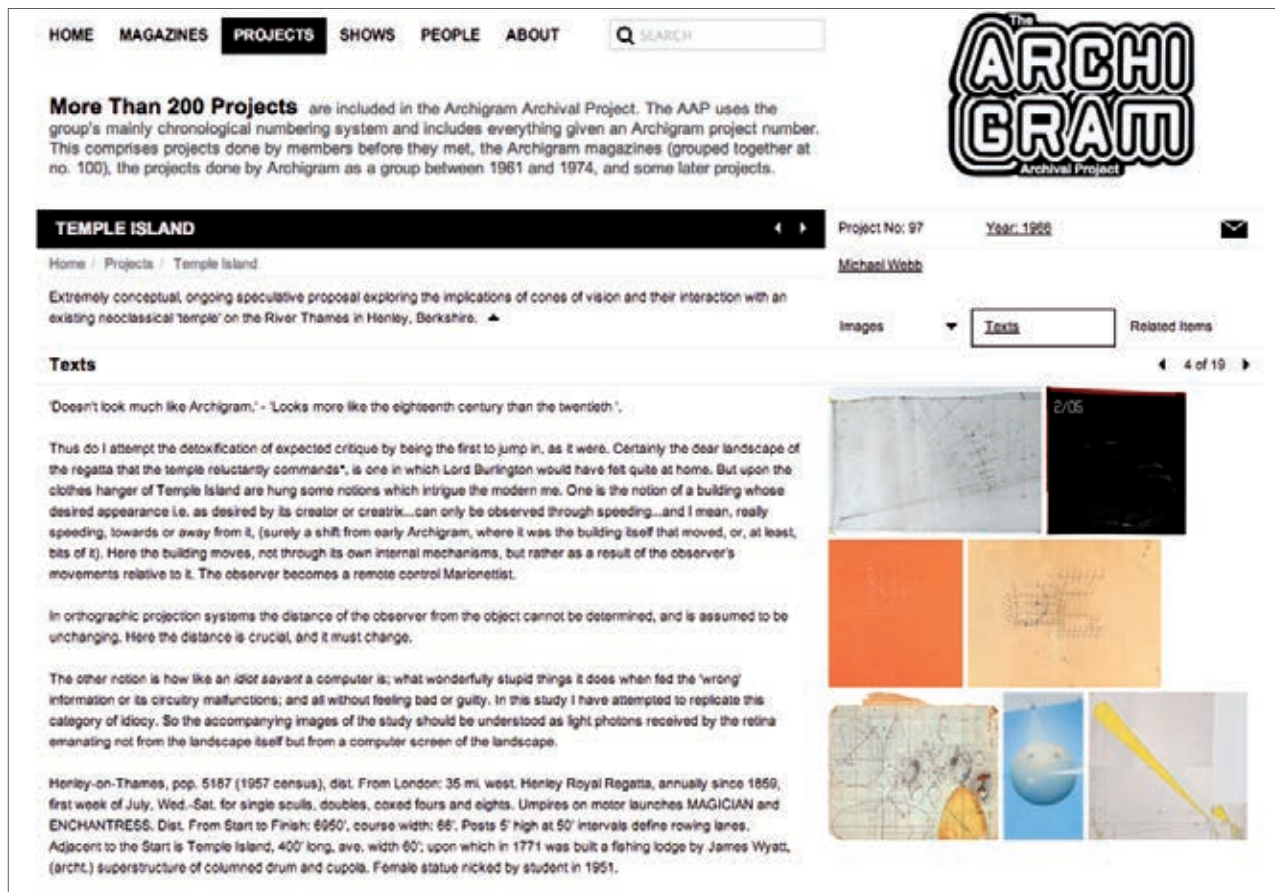


Fig.04c. The Archigram Archival Project Website: Project Temple Island Text

HOME MAGAZINES **PROJECTS** SHOWS PEOPLE ABOUT

More Than 200 Projects are included in the Archigram Archival Project. The AAP uses the group's mainly chronological numbering system and includes everything given an Archigram project number. This comprises projects done by members before they met, the Archigram magazines (grouped together at no. 100), the projects done by Archigram as a group between 1961 and 1974, and some later projects.


THE ARCHIGRAM
Archival Project

TEMPLE ISLAND Project No: 97 Year: 1966 ✉

Home / Projects / Temple Island

Extremely conceptual, ongoing speculative proposal exploring the implications of cones of vision and their interaction with an existing neoclassical temple on the River Thames in Henley, Berkshire. ▼

Map of Henley Royal Regatta Course, Observed Through Intermittent 1 of 108



Projects 10 Results >

- Mosque Project
- Free Time Node
- Liverpool Roman Catholic Cathedral Competition
- Touch No...

Ephemera 48 Results >

- P018 - Transport Car And Boat
- P003 - Car Boat
- P017 - Car Boat

Fig.04d. The Archigram Archival Project Website: Project Temple Island Connections

HOME MAGAZINES **PROJECTS** SHOWS PEOPLE ABOUT

More Than 200 Projects are included in the Archigram Archival Project. The AAP uses the group's mainly chronological numbering system and includes everything given an Archigram project number. This comprises projects done by members before they met, the Archigram magazines (grouped together at no. 100), the projects done by Archigram as a group between 1961 and 1974, and some later projects.

THE ARCHIGRAM
Archival Project

BATIMENT PUBLIC, MONTE CARLO Project No: 134 Year: 1969-73 ✉

Home / Projects / Batiment Public, Monte Carlo

Unrealised project for an entertainments building and public park in Monte Carlo, Monaco, with further temporary amenities. Three stages: successful competition bid; technical assessment stage; working drawings. ▼

190 images 1 of 24



Fig.05a. The Archigram Archival Project Website: Project Batiment Public, Monte Carlo



More Than 200 Projects are included in the Archigram Archival Project. The AAP uses the group's mainly chronological numbering system and includes everything given an Archigram project number. This comprises projects done by members before they met, the Archigram magazines (grouped together at no. 100), the projects done by Archigram as a group between 1961 and 1974, and some later projects.

BATIMENT PUBLIC, MONTE CARLO

Home / Projects / Batiment Public, Monte Carlo

Unrealised project for an entertainments building and public park in Monte Carlo, Monaco, with further temporary amenities. Three stages: successful competition bid; technical assessment stage; working drawings.

Project No: 134 Year: 1969-73

Ken Alison, Peter Cook, Dennis Crompton, Colin Fournier, David Greene, Ron Herron, Diana Jowsey, Stuart Lever, Frank Newby

Images Texts Related Items

Plan Detail (L'Avenue Princesse Grace) (2 versions below)

24 of 190

3 of 24

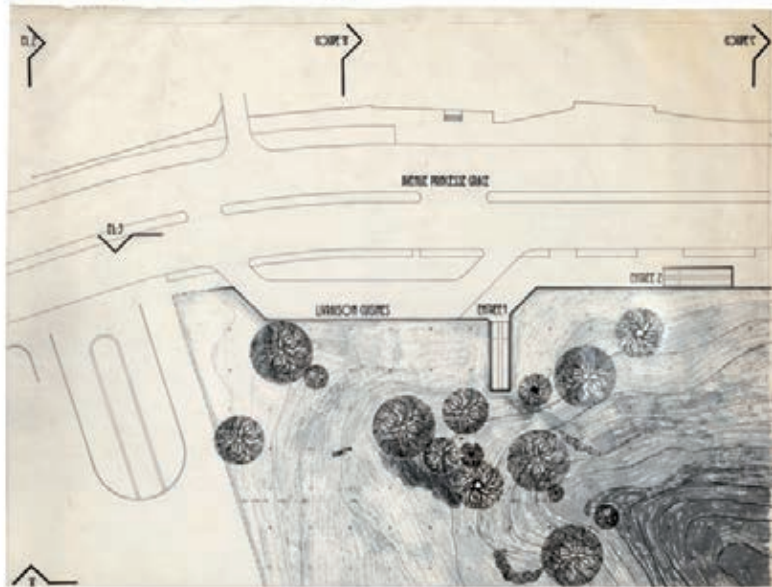


Fig.05b. The Archigram Archival Project Website: Project Batiment Public, Monte Carlo, Detail



Slideshows, Talks, Exhibitions and Events form a big ongoing part of Archigram's work. This section features the 'backup' of Archigram's shared slides, lists the venues of the 'World Tour' of the Archigram Exhibition 'Archigram: Experimental Architecture 1961-74', re-collects the group's exhibition and event projects, and will show a version of the 'Archigram Opera' multi-media show.

Slideshows Exhibitions and Events Dates Opera

'Backup' sets of slides maintained (by Dennis Crompton) for Archigram's use. Individual slide collections can be found on the People pages.




Fig.06. The Archigram Archival Project Website: Shows

HOME MAGAZINES PROJECTS SHOWS **PEOPLE** ABOUT

The Six Members of Archigram are Peter Cook, David Greene, Mike Webb, Ron Herron, Warren Chalk and Dennis Crompton. Cook, Greene and Webb met in 1961, collaborated on the first Archigram magazine, later inviting Herron, Chalk and Crompton to join them, and the magazine name stuck to them as a group. Archigram projects are by named individuals and include other collaborators.

Archigram Members Collaborators



Warren Chalk Peter Cook Dennis Crompton David Greene Ron Herron Michael Webb





2010 © Project by Centre for Experimental Practice  Bibliography Sitemap Contact  UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER 

Fig.07a. The Archigram Archival Project Website: People 1

HOME MAGAZINES PROJECTS SHOWS **PEOPLE** ABOUT

The Six Members of Archigram are Peter Cook, David Greene, Mike Webb, Ron Herron, Warren Chalk and Dennis Crompton. Cook, Greene and Webb met in 1961, collaborated on the first Archigram magazine, later inviting Herron, Chalk and Crompton to join them, and the magazine name stuck to them as a group. Archigram projects are by named individuals and include other collaborators.

Archigram Members Collaborators



Warren Chalk Peter Cook Dennis Crompton David Greene Ron Herron Michael Webb




2010 © Project by Centre for Experimental Practice  Bibliography Sitemap Contact  UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER 

Fig.07b. The Archigram Archival Project Website: People 2

HOME MAGAZINES PROJECTS SHOWS **PEOPLE** ABOUT SEARCH

The Six Members of Archigram are Peter Cook, David Greene, Mike Webb, Ron Herron, Warren Chalk and Dennis Crompton. Cook, Greene and Webb met in 1961, collaborated on the first Archigram magazine, later inviting Herron, Chalk and Crompton to join them, and the magazine name stuck to them as a group. Archigram projects are by named individuals and include other collaborators.

THE ARCHIGRAM ARCHIVAL PROJECT

PETER COOK

Projects Ephemera Other Projects

Background

Archive Interview with Peter Cook and Ron Herron by Barry Salt

AAP Interview with Peter Cook by William Menking at the ICA

CV

Peter Cook

19 Photos >

The most talkative and "public" member of the group. Enjoys inventing situations and very much enjoys forming analogies between the quirks and experiences of individual people and possibilities for the environment that are ambiguous and unexpected. Preoccupied by the idea of "Metamorphosis". Enjoys drawing illustrations of these analogies and metamorphoses rather than writing about them.

Archigram, Edited by Peter Cook, Warren Chalk, Dennis Crompton, David Greene, Ron Herron & Mike Webb, 1972 (reprinted New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999).

89 Projects >

8 Ephemera Folders >

8 Other Projects >

Links

Fig.08a. The Archigram Archival Project Website: People, Peter Cook

HOME MAGAZINES PROJECTS SHOWS **PEOPLE** ABOUT SEARCH

The Six Members of Archigram are Peter Cook, David Greene, Mike Webb, Ron Herron, Warren Chalk and Dennis Crompton. Cook, Greene and Webb met in 1961, collaborated on the first Archigram magazine, later inviting Herron, Chalk and Crompton to join them, and the magazine name stuck to them as a group. Archigram projects are by named individuals and include other collaborators.

THE ARCHIGRAM ARCHIVAL PROJECT

RON HERRON

Projects **Ephemera** Other Projects

Home / People / Ron Herron / Ephemera

ARCHIGRAM
1 Item >

SKETCHES
2 Items >

PROJECT RELATED
25 Items >

DRAWINGS / SKETCHES
3 Items >

103 Projects >

15 Ephemera Folders >

16 Other Projects >

Fig.08b. The Archigram Archival Project Website: People, Ron Herron



The Six Members of Archigram are Peter Cook, David Greene, Mike Webb, Ron Herron, Warren Chalk and Dennis Crompton. Cook, Greene and Webb met in 1961, collaborated on the first Archigram magazine, later inviting Herron, Chalk and Crompton to join them, and the magazine name stuck to them as a group. Archigram projects are by named individuals and include other collaborators.

TRYING TO FIND OUT IS ONE OF MY CONSTANT DOINGS

Home / People / Warren Chalk / Other Projects / Trying to find out is one of my Constant Doings

Warren Chalk

Essay by Warren Chalk. First published in *Architectural Design*.

Horror stories of man systematically destroying his environment are still snowballing, but by now, all too familiar, and dull, the boom is about to bust. Give a bloke a bulldozer and what can you expect? It depends where you look and whose gang you belong to. Man's resistance to change, desire for stability and permanence, and need for static identification are overemphasised. Survival is easy – let's get stoned. What we really need is increased environmental stimulus. Because the environmental stimulus is weak, man is inventing novelties like wife-swapping and Unisex dressing. He is bored. Work on the threshold of specialisation reveals a skilful but spiritless existence; people with enormous fatigue trying to cope with the banalities of not-too-well-serviced environments.

The future need is for environmental super-stimulus, interfacing, and soul-engineering. Current revolts against 'reason' are a strange, deliberate confusion mechanism – a kind of mental anarchism that could produce good vibes. The irrational, the new unreason, are distinct, ignorance-surmounting ploys towards a greater communications sensitivity. Super-stimuli, like sit-ins, drug-taking, or voyeurism, are not accidental. This is man the inventor; playing for all he is worth, in a quick turn-over field. Desperate attempts to communicate with something or someone or to discover himself when 'normal' communications break – produce super-stimulus pressure devices. This is the dawning of the age of Aquarius, and 'What sign are you?' is a good opening gambit at any chance meeting of kindred souls. Watch how many people succumb to exposure they would not normally allow, through the mind-shift device of the horoscope. See those who hide behind the traditional disbelief guise shaken into response, recognising some vague character trait, good news, or astrological prospects of love and good fortune. Apart from the obvious horoscope page in the women's fashion glossies, there is a sharply increasing interest in tarot cards, numerology, teacup reading, palmistry and even the psychic powers of candle wax drippings. Currently the occult is moving into the computer field with up-to-the-minute knock-out personality analysis. United Industries Electronics Division have Anavac, which gives a semi-computerised electrographic analysis of your handwriting, while Time Pattern Research Institute have a computerised in-depth personalised horoscope. Twenty-five million bits of astrological data are stored in an IBM/360 computer memory bank; you just feed in your date of birth, place of birth, time of birth, name, address and Bank Americard number for a 15,000-word personal horoscope printout.

Anyway, why should the human animal control inferior present satisfaction on the grounds of being too intelligent for all that kind of stuff? Could it be possible that individual man has dim recollections of belonging to a civilisation that once had mental powers with greater depths of understanding and sensibility?

Those cosmic religious ground patterns discovered in the area of Glastonbury Ring (see Gandolph's Garden published by Gandolph's Garden, World's End, London SW10 and Glastonbury published by Research into Lost Knowledge Organisation, 6 College Court, London W6) indicated a mental source run dry. This kind of soul-engineering, dealing with alignments of sacred sites and routes across countries and continents, implies some lost system of prehistoric magic, difficult to comprehend. But don't laugh – it's not that easily dismissed. This is not something of mere archaeological interest: more important is the notion of, in Professor Mary Williams' words, 'the archaeology of ideas'.

Reaching even greater heights of speculative extravagance, we could ask if this is the equivalent to today's UFOs? Or are there some Rip van Winkles in our midst? Science fiction based on science fact mirrors the power and the enigmas of scientific thought. The paradoxes and consequences drawn out to their extreme, with absurd hypotheses, scandalising common sense, are usually the result of harsh mind-searching and a more ambitious logic. Is magic more ambitious logic, and more ambitious logic synetics? We are accustomed to judge by images and the limited significance we attach to words. If we try to discover where it's really at, irrespective of preconceived notions, the bewildered imagination may come up with an idea. To make the familiar strange, stand thoughts on their head or put them out of focus, then you have that anxious insecure creative bit. Try-it-and-see, make the familiar unfamiliar, the invisible visible, cast new light on old problems to drag out fresh solutions. Now try it to music. Russian scientists are working with a team of physicists and electronics engineers to develop a system in which machines can be controlled by the simple act of thinking about them. A research team is investigating this fantastic use of the human mind. Before it moves the muscles of the body, the human

will is no more than an electric signal conducted along a nerve path. These electric signals can be intercepted and transferred into electric circuitry, switched through a special control panel and straight into the works of a machine. Refinement and improvement of this system could enable man to operate machine controls without ever twitching a finger, simply by thinking about it – real soul-engineering. The Russians also claim to have two women who have already mastered this wish-control system. One of them, a female demonstrator at the Polytechnic Museum in Moscow, by clenching and unclenching their fists and with ESP, creates nerve signals that are picked up by a toy train radio control unit. From a distance of several feet the girl makes the train start, stop or go backwards. Another woman directs her thought impulses into controlling an electric clock, making it go faster, slower, or stop.

The permutations are endless and impressive: produce your own scene machine today. EAT (Experiments with Art and Technology Inc.) have been at it for some time now. Based at 236, Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10003, and headed by pop artist Robert Rauschenberg, Billy Kluver of Bell Telephone Laboratories, Walter Allner, Art Director of Fortune magazine, Gyorgy Kepes, Professor of Visual Design, MIT, John Cage, the composer, and Buckminster Fuller, etc., EAT is evolving a network of artists, technicians, and other nuts in professions exploring the possibilities of the new technology. The collaboration between artists and electronics engineers has produced a range of varied audio-visual programmes, including computer-generated films, kinetic art, liquid sculpture, psychedelic environments, anti-gravity machines, computer-controlled audio-visual conversion, etc. EAT's exhibition 'Some More Beginnings', at the Brooklyn Museum, demonstrated the importance of matching artists' brainstorming with electronics engineers' hard know-how. Some crazy-headed interfacing resulted. But it isn't hard to go along with the Tom Wolfe outlook – See AD [Architectural Design] 7/69 – like Melvin Zeitvogel already did it – and there is a lot of catching up to do before we make with the environmental super-stimulus and get out of the upright studio workshop scene.

Woodstock Music Festival shares common characteristics with whiz king Cedric Price's Non-plan ideas (AD 5/69). Woodstock, a 600-acre farm, young people from all over the United States, Blood Sweat and Tears, Canned Heat, Creedence Clearwater, Grateful Dead, Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin and The Who.

A field turned on, a three-day city, half a million young people, elbow-to-elbow, in the most uncomfortable kind of situation, the only hardware sleeping bags and mind-blowing amplification, but no violence, not so much as a fistfight. Here is your electronic environment, instant city and (it reverted to farmland after the three days) a non-plan ecological cycle with power points.

This is a super-stimulation, interfacing, and soul-engineering in one, it's like a fairy story, enchantment taken for granted and magic as the rule. Although the super-stimulation qualities of the fairy story are equitable with neo-pornography, and one is tempted to suggest that the brothers Grimm, Hans Christian Andersen and Hugh Hefner are the same bloke. Nevertheless the children's fairyland world is remarkably stable, because they tend to create their own environmental stimulus, regardless.

And this environment is never sufficiently established for stress to occur. Children seem to adapt themselves easily, and create their own never-never situation, with natural penetrating insight into evading the absurdities of the adult world. How about this for expediency? A geography test paper for nine-year-olds asked for observation on Canada. Two super replies: 'I am not sure how many provinces there are in the altogether part of Canada but trying to find out is one of my constant doings.'

and

Lake Winnipeg is in Manitoba
Maybe it is in North Manitoba
Maybe it is in South Manitoba
I do not know
It takes me all my knowing
To know that Lake Winnipeg is in Manitoba.

Fig.08c. The Archigram Archival Project Website: People, Essay by Warren Chalk

HOME MAGAZINES PROJECTS SHOWS **PEOPLE** ABOUT

The Six Members of Archigram are Peter Cook, David Greene, Mike Webb, Ron Herron, Warren Chalk and Dennis Crompton. Cook, Greene and Webb met in 1961, collaborated on the first Archigram magazine, later inviting Herron, Chalk and Crompton to join them, and the magazine name stuck to them as a group. Archigram projects are by named individuals and include other collaborators.

Archigram Members **Collaborators** Compact View List View

Hundreds of people collaborated with Archigram, helping with the magazines, collaborating on designs, working on exhibitions and publications, providing occasional sources of funding (more frequent!) in-kind support. This list is drawn from the material in the collection itself and is mainly limited to those who worked with Archigram during the period 1961-74, as well as some who had parallel careers. We welcome information from other people who collaborated on these projects.

Ken Allison	Worked on Airplane Panels for the Milan ...	Christine Hawley	Dave Martin	Adrian Sansom
Will Alsop	Gary Crossley	Brian Haynes	Paul Maymori	Israel Schein
Andrew Anderson	James Cubitt	Pat Haynes	Marshall McLuhan	Eckhard Schulte-Fielitz
Art Farm	Luiz Corbica	Margaret Helfand	Archie McNab	Fred Scott
Graham Anthony	David Curry	Andrew Herron	James Meller	A. Sebasi
C. Antonici	Barry Curtis	Simon Herron	William Menking (Bill)	Susan Scott
Ian Archer	Francois Dalozet	Craig Hodgetts	Metabolist Group	Clava Selomann
ARCHIGRAM	Mike Davies	Hana Hollein	Doug Michels	William Siddons
Architectural Association (AA)	Keith de Wit	Andrew Holmes	Harry Moon	Barry Snowden
Architectural Design (AD)	Johnny Davies	Ian Horner	Philippe Moreno	Paolo Soleri
Architectoom	G. Di Salvo	Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA)	Ingrid Moris	Jerzy Soltan
John Atterborough	John Donat	Arata Isozaki	Gail Murray	Alan Stanton
J. Baker	Tony Dundale	Roger Jeffs	Peter Murray	Peter Spad
Ben Barham	Norman Finkelback	John Johansen	George Nelson	F. Steinbruchel
Mary Barham	English Electric Co Ltd	Philo Johnson	Frank Newby	Terry Stewart
Peter Reyner Barham	Ralph Erskine	Walter Jonas	Peter Nichol	Antoine Stingo
Michael Barnard			Constant Nieuwenhuis	Terry Stuart

Fig. 09a. The Archigram Archival Project Website: People, Collaborators

HOME MAGAZINES PROJECTS SHOWS **PEOPLE** ABOUT


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Ken Allinson

Architect, author, teacher and architectural guide. Just after qualifying as an architect, he worked on several projects with Archigram which included Bournemouth Steps, 1970 (Project no. 145); Paris Exhibition (COI), 1970 (Project no. 148); Malaysia Exhibition, 1973 (Project no. 166); Balmont Public Monte Carlo, 1969-73 (Project no. 134); Sporting d'Elite (Summer Casino) - Monte Carlo Palm Tree, 1971 (Project no. 152). Allinson was also a contributor to Archigram 9X, 1974 (Project no. 100.95). He has worked at various practices, including Wolff Olins Design. Latterly he co-founded London Open House (now London Open City) and is a partner in Architectural Dialogue with Victoria Thornton. Author of London's Contemporary Architecture: An Explorer's Guide (2009).



[Architectural Dialogue](#)
[London Open House](#)

[Back to compact view](#) [Back to top](#)

Will Alsop

Highly influential and colourful architect and painter. He was taught by all six members of Archigram and went on to work for Cedric Price. With Paul Shephard, he was one of the exhibitors at the Adhocs Gallery (Project no. 184). He went on to set up practice first with John Lyall and then on his own in a variety of offices and with a variety of collaborators, winning the Stirling Prize in 2000 for his Peckham Library. He is an OBE and a Royal Academician.

[Royal Academy](#)

Fig. 09b. The Archigram Archival Project Website: People, Collaborators, Detail

HOME MAGAZINES PROJECTS SHOWS PEOPLE **ABOUT**

The Archigram Archival Project is run by a team from EXP, the Research Centre for Experimental Practice at the University of Westminster and was funded by a Resource Enhancement Grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Collaborative help was kindly provided by the surviving members of Archigram or their heirs who retain copyright of all images.

About Archigram Archival Project About Archigram Supplementary Texts About EXP Terms & Conditions Bibliography **FAQ**



CONTACT US

Enquiry type
Project/Drawing

Your Email address

Message

Security Code
46P3D

The extraordinary influence of the mainly unbuilt 1961-1974 architectural group Archigram is internationally acknowledged.

Fig. 10a. The Archigram Archival Project Website: About

HOME MAGAZINES PROJECTS SHOWS PEOPLE **ABOUT**

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About Archigram Archival Project About Archigram Supplementary Texts About EXP Terms & Conditions **Bibliography** FAQ

More articles, books, exhibitions, TV programmes, exhibitions etc, have been produced about and by Archigram than can easily be counted. Many of the books, magazines and articles which the members wrote themselves have been reprinted by different publishers in different countries, sometimes in translation, either in their own right or to accompany exhibitions, lectures, events, etc. More items are being written and produced all the time, and increasingly, more information on the group is available online. Most books on Archigram inevitably can only offer a selective bibliography. The following is therefore intended as an extensive but not necessarily complete list of sources.

1. Magazines by Archigram

Usborne, David; Cook, Peter; and Greene, David. *Archigram Paper One*, 1961.

Cook, Peter; Greene, David; and Webb, Michael (with contributions by Crompton, Dennis; Chalk, Warren; Herron, Ron; Martin, Ken; Anderson, Andrew; Gwilliam, Tony; Price, Cedric; and cover design by Taylor, Peter). *Archigram 2*, 1962.

Chalk, Warren; Cook, Peter; Crompton, Dennis; Greene, David; Herron, Ron; and Webb, Michael (with cover design by Taylor, Peter). *Archigram 3: Towards Throwaway Architecture*, 1963.

Chalk, Warren; Cook, Peter; Crompton, Dennis; Greene, David; Herron, Ron; and Webb, Michael (with cover design by Chalk, Warren). *Archigram 4: Zoom Issue*, 1964.

Chalk, Warren; Cook, Peter; Crompton, Dennis; Greene, David; Herron, Ron; and Webb, Michael (with cover design by Fether, Ben and Fether, Rae). *Archigram 5: Metropolis*, 1964.

Cook, Peter (ed.); Chalk, Warren; Crompton, Dennis; with Greene, David; Herron, Ron; and Webb, Michael (includes 1940s selection by Chalk, Warren and Herron, Ron; with cover design by Reeve, Geoff). *Archigram No. 6 (reverse title The Forties)*, 1965.

CONTACT US

Enquiry type:
Project/Drawing

Your Email address:

Message:

Security Code
L5Le87

Fig. 10b The Archigram Archival Project Website: About, Bibliography

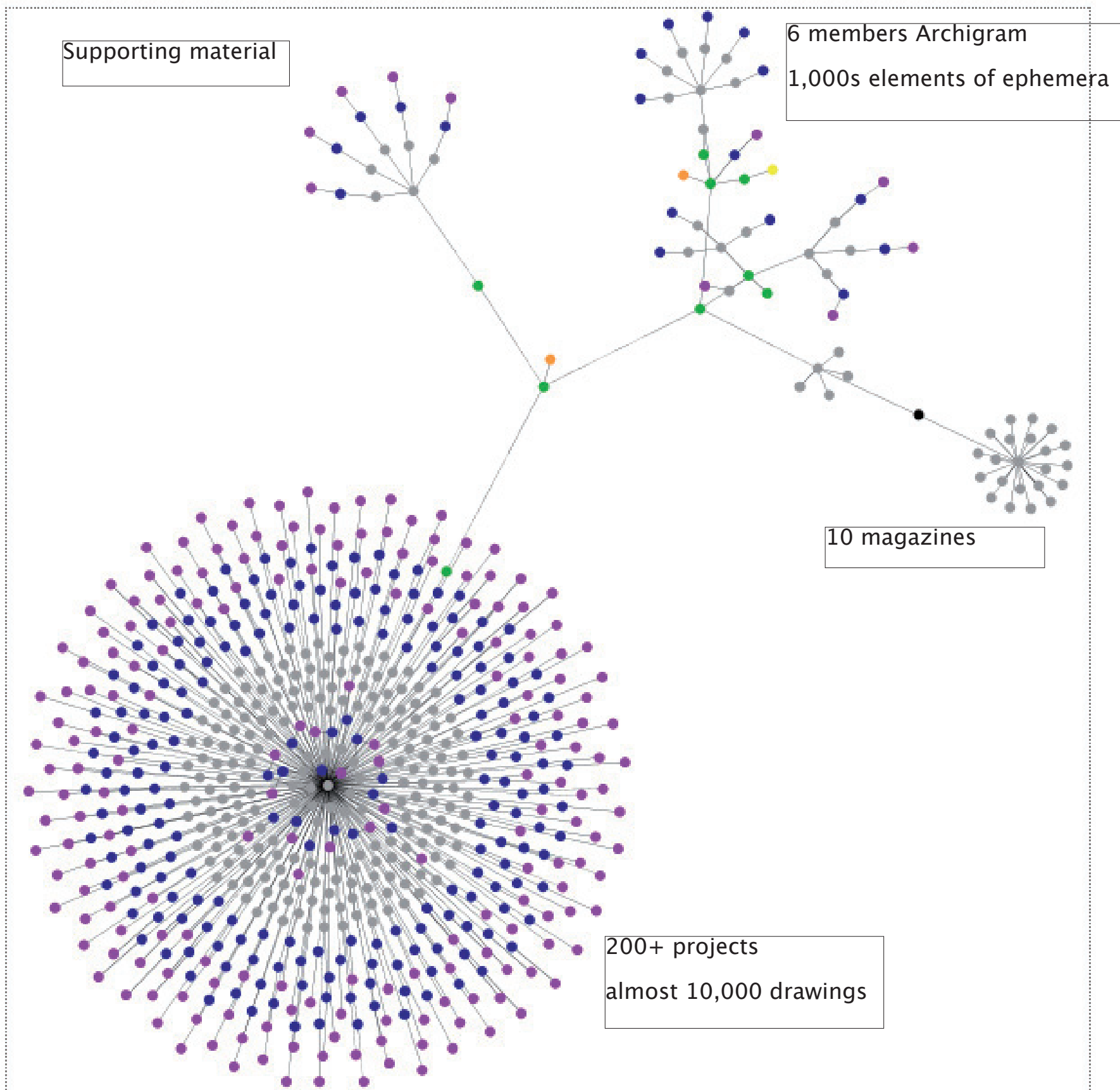


Fig. 1.1a The Archigram Archival Project Website: Graphic Site Map

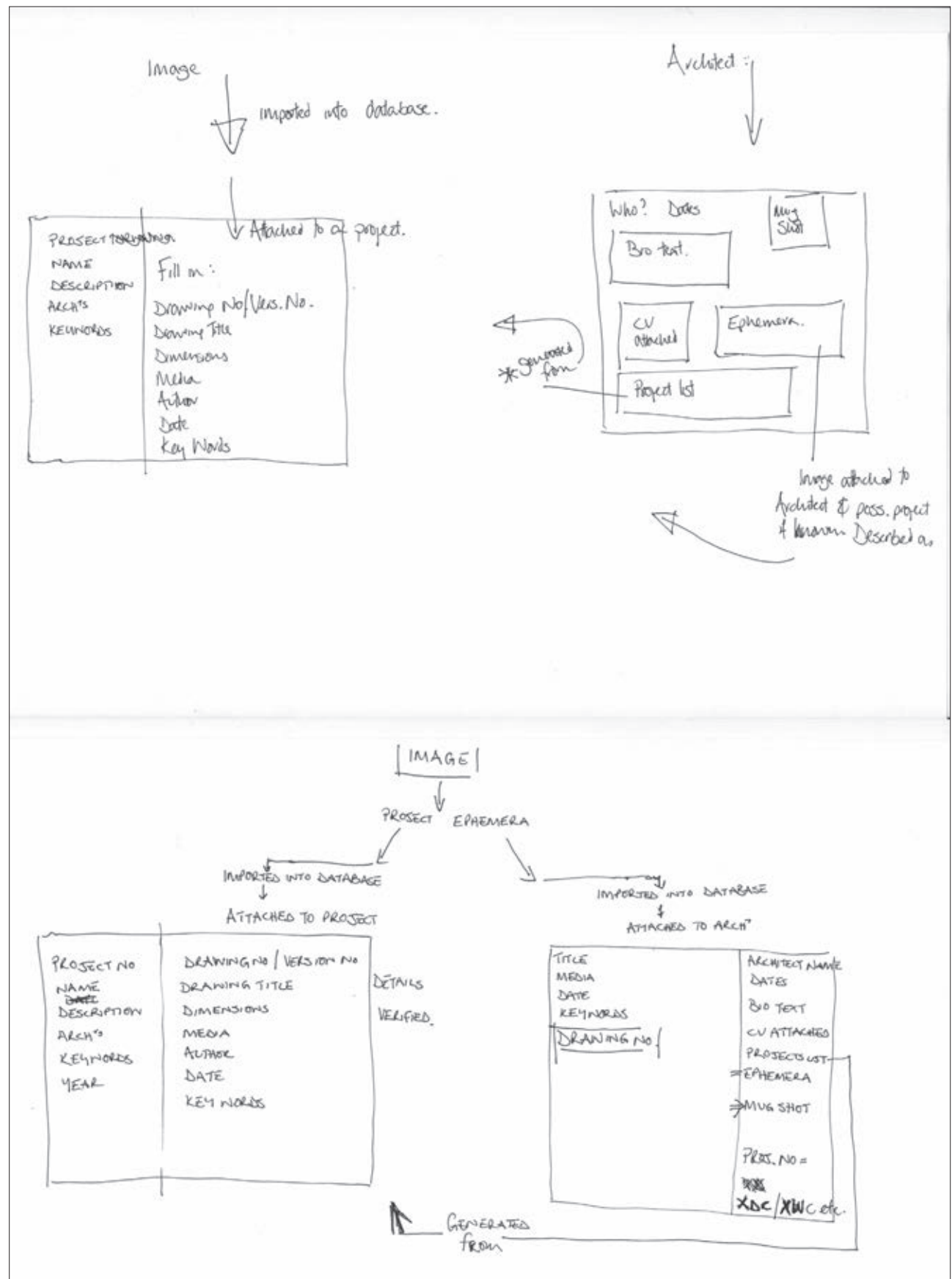


Fig. 1 1b The Archigram Archival Project Website: Sketch of Website Structure

EXP / AAP

EXP / AAP
search


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- Projects
- People
- Exhibitions
- Bibliography
- Contributors
- Links

Aboth AAP

- Guide to the Archive
- Copyright
- Information
- Contact

The Archigram Archival Project aims to make the works of the iconoclastic architectural group Archigram available online for free research and browsing. The project is run in collaboration with the surviving members of Archigram and their heirs by the research group EXP (Experimental Practice) at the University of Westminster and is funded by the AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council). The Archigram Archival Project was set up by the Research Group EXP in the department of architecture at the University of Westminster xxxx

EXP / AAP
search



Magazine name | page number of image

Produced throughout the main period of Archigram's activity as a group, the ten magazines produced offer a direct route into the group's work and can be seen as a snapshot of the year in which they were created. ...

More detailed description re: the magazines.

Anecdotes about their production. (eg. Printing in the basement of their first office)

The way they all have unique formats, with added extras (eg. The seeds in Archim. 9)

Although the majority of the work included was in the magazines was by the main six members of Archigram, many of their friends, associates and acquaintances also contributed to the content and creation of these pieces. ...

The Archigram Archival Project aims to make the works of the iconoclastic architectural group Archigram available online for free research and browsing. The project is run in collaboration with the surviving members of Archigram and their heirs by the research group EXP (Experimental Practice) at the University of Westminster and is funded by the AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council). **MORE**

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search

- About Archigram
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- Exhibitions
- Bibliography
- Contributors
- List of Contributors
- Projects described
- Links
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- Contact

Prj name appears as you hover over an image

Maybe also a place to have short bios/links to 'actual' Archigram contributors eg Cecil ? ...

Thumbnail projects spoken about / authors ...

The Archigram Archival Project asked some of Archigram's hundreds of collaborators, critics, friends, historians to contribute short descriptions to projects of their choice. This is what they say.


EXP / AAP
search

- About Archigram
- Magazines
- Projects
- People
- Exhibitions
- Bibliography
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About AAP

Contact


Magazine name & date appears as you hover over an image



Thumbnail page-layouts / zoom area...

Browse and research the projects, working practises and ideas of the iconoclastic British architectural group Archigram.

EXP / AAP
search



Indicate the magazine cover/ bold mag. name

Magazine name | page number of image

Thumbnail page-layouts / zoom area...

Factual detail description – taken from database

Eg. Title
Authors
Format
No. Pages
Publishers

EXP / AAP
search

- About Archigram
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- People
- Exhibitions
- Bibliography
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- Books by Archigram
- Books featuring Archigram
- Articles on Archigram
- Articles by Archigram
- Articles including Archigram
- Contributors
- Links
- Aboth AAP
- Contact


Text box

Thumbnail page-layouts / zoom area...

Maybe links to Amazon/ GoogleBooks

The works and ideas of Archigram have appeared in countless locations, as a description of 1960s culture, as inspiration for other architects, as the subject of a book or a critique. ...

EXP / AAP
search



About Archigram

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Name block

Archigram is many things – a set of magazines; the people who came together as a group; the projects they designed; ideas for a way of living in the present. The name which fuses the built form of culture (architecture) with its transmission and communication (telegram), encapsulates the group's approach to design and modern living. ...

The group formed in 1961 when Peter Cook ...


Archigram's period of greatest activity is generally regarded to have been between 1960 and 1974, although the opus of work extends before the official formation of the group and in some cases is still being re-designed today.

The central edifices to Archigram's practice are the ten magazines that were produced. Since 1991?, a selection of the drawings, models and projects have toured the globe, being exhibited in many galleries.

As well as having major expos about the group (eg. Design Museum 2002), a number of their works have been collected by art galleries and museums around the world (eg. MOMA, FRAC) ...

Archigram is many things - magazines, projects, group of people ...

EXP / AAP
search



Prj name appears as you hover over an image

Full project list

- By type
- By date
- By author

People

Exhibitions

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Thumbnail page-layouts / zoom area...

Have all thumbnail image tiles in the background, faded down; text runs on top. – click on the images and this reverses.

The archive currently includes over 150 projects by the members of Archigram, generally between 1960 and 1974. These projects are principally unbuilt and speculative design work, usually done for publication or exhibition, individually and collaboratively, but also include many competition designs, the exhibitions themselves and a few built or proposed 'real' projects. Through Dennis Crompton's careful storage and records of the archive, many of the drawings, notes and sketches connected to the projects have been preserved. This means that the evolution of a project can be witnessed, through the changing designs of a drawing at the time, as well as more recent revisions. There are also projects that fall before and after Archigram's main period of activity that have been incorporated into the opus of Archigram's body of work.

Fig. 11c The Archigram Archival Project Website: Draft Layout, January 2009

EXP / AAP

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Living Pod on Flickr

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Prj name | year.

Thumbnail drawing images – different versions of same drawing etc

Thumbnail drawings/ zoom area... Thumbnail pages of writings

Thumbnail websites for external links?

Project details as per database
Eg. Project Title
Year
Author/s
Short description

drawing details: title
Year drawn
By whom
dimensions
link to e-mail for more info.

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David Greene
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Person's name & dates?



The six members of archigram worked together from XXXX

Archigram itself is largely seen as active between 1961, when David Greene and Peter Cook met and began collaborating and 197X

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Pictures of David
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Texts
Reading

This is a movie of David talking to Sam Jacob and unpacking one of his boxes. Click to play movie or open box (handwriting?) Watch the movie! Look in the box! Do both together!

Maybe photo/still from filming day? Hyperlink things to access details – eg. Box to get full ephemera list camera to see film ...

The six members of archigram worked together from XXXX

2 Textual Evidence

HOME MAGAZINES PROJECTS SHOWS PEOPLE **ABOUT**

The Archigram Archival Project is run by a team from EXP, the Research Centre for Experimental Practice at the University of Westminster and was funded by a Resource Enhancement Grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Collaborative help was kindly provided by the surviving members of Archigram or their heirs who retain copyright of all images.

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ARCHIGRAM ARCHIVAL PROJECT

Kester Rattenbury + Murray Fraser

*'... the creation and design of Archigram itself was the actual project they were engaged upon, each in their own way.'*¹

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This essay provides an overview of the scope and purpose of the Archigram Archival Project (AAP), carried out from late-2006 with a major grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It will set out the context of the project and suggest its most important aspects, notably about the relation of archives to architectural discourse, while also offering along the way some fresh insights into Archigram's ideas and projects. More than ever before, the conception of Archigram as a constructed project that was created collaboratively by its six core members -- Warren Chalk, Peter Cook, Dennis Crompton, David Greene, Ron Herron and Mike 'Spider' Webb -- becomes apparent from viewing the new AAP website/database. The aim of the AAP was likewise to acknowledge the contributions of the many collaborators and external influences that helped to create the larger Archigram project, and in doing so to highlight the staggering diversity of outputs - - texts, magazines, speculative projects, built projects, exhibitions, events, prototypes, etc. -- which were created as a result.


There seems little need to underplay the importance of the AAP website/database. It is by far the largest and most ambitious publicly accessible archive dedicated to a single architectural group, as well as a new kind of purely digital archive -- one

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There seems little need to underplay the importance of the AAP website/database. It is by far the largest and most ambitious publicly accessible archive dedicated to a single architectural group, as well as a new kind of purely digital archive – one which collects together digitised copies of source material which in its original state is owned by many different people and institutions scattered across the world. Nothing else like the AAP exists at present as an online resource about contemporary architecture, and as such it sets a new model and standard for others to follow. As the Director of the RIBA's British Architectural Library, Irena Murray, observes:

'The Archigram Archival Project has created a truly outstanding new model for research-rich digital based projects internationally. With some 10,000 images culled from the original Archigram Archive, it has made manifest a virtual palimpsest of narrative and visual content that brings not just the work but its creators and the whole era brilliantly to life. Easy to use, effective in its design and structure, it makes vast quantities of information available under basic typologies: projects, exhibitions, magazines and people. The AAP will be invaluable for specialists, but its colourful mosaic leads and clear navigation will attract and stimulate the general public. It is a great tribute to all its creators that the AAP retains the quality and even re-presents the heady excitement of the original work by Archigram members complete with the often controversial response to it.'³

This relationship of the Archigram Archival Project to architectural discourse will be explored in the essay that follows, but it is worth starting by making a basic point about our society's increasing immersion in digital culture. Many of the earliest commentators on the novel trans-spatial digital and communications technologies of the post-war era, notably luminaries from North America like Marshall McLuhan or Melvin Webber, foresaw a condition in which digital data – and the concomitant media flows of what later became known as the internet – would in effect kill off history, forcing us to live in an ultra-contemporary and deeply immersive world. From there it was but a short jump to more fanciful projections such as the Wachowski brothers' film, *The Matrix* (1999), in which all the past is collapsed into a pixel-thin, simulated, illusory present. However, our current experiences of reality are proving to be far more complex and interesting. Cyberspace and the internet have instead become another fertile location for the recording and writing of history; indeed, if anything, digital technology now links us closer to greater numbers of rival interpretations of the past. This is particularly true of the Archigram Archival Project, where the idea of creating a facility/object that could stand simultaneously in history and in the present was very much in our minds. Our aim throughout was therefore to stand outside the actual content of the new website/database as much as possible, so as to avoid putting our own – or anyone else's – interpretation onto the material. It is of course impossible to adopt a totally neutral position in relation to any intellectual work, but our aim was certainly to make the website as non-directed as we could. To explore these ideas further, this essay will discuss the nature of architectural archives in general before going on to analyse the AAP in particular. By necessity, it is structured into a series of sections as follows:

- The notion of an architectural archive
- Digital archives and their impact on research
- Implications for studying and understanding architecture
- The scope of the Archigram Archival Project
- Methods and issues encountered by the AAP

- New insights into Archigram (What are they like?)
- A definition of architecture through its media

1. The notion of an architectural archive

The term 'archive' suggests an entity which has been assembled, indeed constructed, with the aim of claiming ownership of a specific idea or place, and of being bequeathed as a deliberate residue for historical interest – in this way it is opposed, for instance, to the more eclectic and ad-hoc 'collection' that an individual or institution might build up out of more generalised motives. It also means there is a blurred but necessary distinction from the term 'library', partly no doubt because the Greek derivation of the word archive comes from *arkheion*, the town hall/ repository of official records, and *arkhein*, to govern.⁴ Archive hence carries a more instrumental purpose, with the idea that a directed assemblage of historical records provides the means to achieve this purpose. It hints at something which is created by a person or a like-minded group to shape the impressions and thoughts of those who are to come; it thus has as its core the expression of a particular moment or viewpoint in history. Interestingly, as a word, archive shares with library the ambiguity of referring both to the physical place where the historical material is stored, and the actual historical material itself: such a distinction, as we shall see, becomes ever more slippery when it comes to the digital archive.

There is much debate about when the first consciously constructed archives began to be put together, with some arguing it was a direct consequence of attempts to rewrite history by the post-revolutionary government in late-eighteenth century France. At this date, it is claimed, we moved from a situation where collections had simply been written down with no clear sense of where they would end up, such as with the ancient Dead Sea Scrolls created between 150BC-70AD, to a self-conscious process by which historians started to appropriate these collections and classify/catalogue them into the spectrum of knowledge. While this essay cannot delve too far into such questions, some interesting points arise. In the earliest archives and libraries, the role of drawings was far from clear. Illuminated manuscripts were one hybrid product, but the value of the drawing as a historical object-in-itself doesn't appear to have emerged until the Italian Renaissance. Then the practice of design took on a dual meaning of being a physical drawing and also the act of envisaging a new building. 'The term "design"', writes Jonathan Hill, 'comes from the Italian *disegno*, meaning drawing, suggesting both the drawing of a line on paper and the drawing forth of an idea.'⁵ Given such a radically new conception, the existence and meaning of a drawing as something full of meaning as an object-in-itself – and not merely an adjunct to or amplification of written knowledge – became entrenched in European (and later, global) culture. And with it, the whole notion of the architectural archive was born: in this sense, the modern conception of an architectural archive is normally about a set of historical drawings, even if other associated material has been collected alongside them.

A key moment in the development of the architectural archive was surely the preservation in the mid-16th century by Vincenzo Scamozzi of drawings by his mentor, Andrea Palladio, coupled with those which had been kept by Palladio's own son. By keeping these drawings as historical artefacts, especially of the unbuilt Palladian villas, it made it possible later for Inigo Jones to appreciate and examine them on his 1613-14 'Grand Tour', and duly buy much of the collection to take back to London. There he would sit and annotate and learn from the drawings; in turn, Jones's studies of the Palladio archive – today largely in the hands of the RIBA in London – became an object of scrutiny by 18th-century neo-Palladians such as Lord Burlington and William Kent. And these compounded analyses of the Palladio archive were then studied by subsequent architects, and so on; in this manner, an architectural discourse was created. Also crucial in the early-modern era was the widespread reproduction of architectural knowledge through the printing press, transforming the role of the unique, place-bound archive within architectural circles. The mass production of books likewise helped to push the concept of the public library as a building type which took over from the monastic repositories of the pre-modern age, as recounted by architectural historians like Nikolaus Pevsner and Simon Pepper.⁶ Later on, from the mid-nineteenth century, there was a proliferation of printed architectural periodicals such as *The Builder*. The obverse side of this coin was again the relative diminishment of the importance of specialised archives within the spreading body of architectural knowledge.

With the advent of 20th-century modernism, and the resultant 'decline of the aura' of traditional artistic works observed by Walter Benjamin – paralleled one might imagine by the significance of the unique, collected archive – would the need for architectural archives evaporate alongside everything else solid that was being turned to air?⁷ No, was the answer, and it's worth at least asking why. Perhaps here it is worth turning to another famous Benjamin text in which he talks of the 'angel of history' in a painting by Paul Klee, later echoed by Manfredo Tafuri and others as a shining representation of capitalist modernity. The interpretation was of a distraught angel being blown forwards, viewing havoc and destruction as he does so, yet all the time with his face turned back to look in fascination and horror at the damage being created in the wake. Benjamin wrote:

'A Klee painting named 'Angelus Novus' shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes

are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.'⁸

As a metaphor for modernity it remains unsurpassed, and from this one gets the sense that no matter how 'advanced' and 'modernised' a society may wish to present itself as, the purpose of archives as a means to protect and remember even a small part of the inherent destruction of culture and memory, remains powerful. The more we dream of being ultra-modern, the more we are tied to a sense of history as represented by the archive, and this is as true of architecture as of any other area of human activity.

For this reason, the architectural archive has continued to hold its thrall despite the prevalence of printed books, journals and subsequent media, as seen for instance by the assiduous collection of the Fondation Corbusier of that designer's work. According to the Fondation, Le Corbusier – aware of his own mortality – began to think about creating his own archive in 1949, and had formalised the plan by 1960, five years before his death.⁹ Today we find even Rem Koolhaas, ostensibly the apostle of throw-away globalised consumerism, carefully donating his office archives – physical models and all – in staged chunks to the Netherlands Architectural Institute.¹⁰ So the idea of a group like Archigram creating an architectural archive seems only too necessary within such a cultural condition.

2. Digital archives and their impact on research

No longer does the search for archives necessarily rely on a pilgrimage trip to a dusty room where the historical material is shelved and brought out ritualistically in special folders or boxes. What was once the privilege of individual scholars can now be accessed by a Google search or other trans-spatial links, as shown by the Archigram Archival Project. On this new website/database, one can surf instantaneously from Ron Herron's early sketches for *Walking City*, to detailed textual descriptions of Archigram's magazine, to hearing the observations of a hitherto less vocal but engrossing Archigram member such as Mike Webb, gaining a sense of the pleasure and frustration he has experienced over the years from being a member of the group. Whilst exhilarating, is this kind of digital ubiquity going to sound the death-knell for traditional academic research, if everything that happens to be referred to is now freely available to anyone who cares to click on it to check whether they actually agree or not? In other words, will the advent of digital archives render traditional paper archives redundant?

One suspects that it won't, but nonetheless the patterns and methods of research will need to adapt as a result. Previously, if one happened to be lucky in one's doctoral research in architectural history, say, then one would stumble across a hidden seam of archives, feeling rather like a gold prospector in 1850s California. If one was even luckier, there had been no-one before who had looked at that archive with any real scholarly attention, and if one did one's job well enough, there was also a chance no-one might ever look at it again. The remote, place-bound historical archive once generated a sense of power and exclusivity for the researcher. Indeed, Rem Koolhaas recounts that discovering boxes of overlooked photographs of Manhattan architecture lit the touch-paper for his celebrated 'retroactive manifesto' for that city, published in 1978 as *Delirious New York*.¹¹ But such a spatially exclusive approach to research is no longer sustainable in an era of growing globalisation. Research interests and topics now stretch far beyond one's immediate locality, while financial and time restrictions still exist. Digital archives, along with other digital networks, offer a way out of this conundrum of globalised knowledge. Useful precedents have come from other fields, such as history, with for instance the digitising of Christopher Columbus's Spanish archive being a key early move. Since then the spread has been remarkable, as anyone who wishes to zoom close into an Old Master painting can do via the excellent website of the National Gallery in London, where over 2,300 paintings can now be scrutinised in astonishing detail.¹² Literally thousands of historical archives from all academic subjects are being digitised and put online every year, as part of what some are now even terming 'a digital arms race'.¹³ Perhaps a more benign description is of 'a second Renaissance'. In 2009, the United Nations launched the Digital World Library in an attempt to draw together many of these emerging online collections from around the world, as a gesture of international scholarly solidarity.¹⁴ Within the architectural sphere, we find the Canadian Centre of Architecture (CCA) in Montreal engaged on a long-term project to digitise its Cedric Price archive (although it is unclear whether this material will ever be made freely available online), or here in Britain, under the aegis of Irena Murray at the RIBA, a team led by Barnabas Calder is producing an online catalogue of the archive of Denys Lasdun, the once famous but now overlooked designer of the National Theatre and Royal College of Physicians; as part of this latter project, an online exhibition of some of Lasdun's work will be created towards the end of the process.

So what happens when this kind of digitised material is externalised to all, reshaping the way in which we engage with architectural sources? Does the erasure of time and space caused by digital networks help to democratise the methods of research? We certainly argue it does in the case of the Archigram Archival Project, and the task for us therefore seemed to be to present the available material in as open and neutral a manner as possible, so as not to substitute one kind of restriction with another. Trans-spatial digital technology permits far greater freedom but at the same time it has the potential also for greater control and censorship, precisely because everything appears so open. The sheer weight of online sources might also be seen by some as a problem. As Simon Sadler points out:

'Should future historians be kind enough to spare a thought for the efforts made by their predecessors to scratch together any evidence at all, then those same predecessors might sympathise with new researchers faced by the magnitude of evidence tipping out from fully opened and searchable archives. Academic scoops will be made less and less by finding things, more and more by saying something significant about those things.'¹⁵

Yet there are immense benefits as well. Drawn material and architectural models, so precarious and cumbersome in their original state, can be put into archives in a manner not possible before. So too can film, video and other 'atypical' media, and as a consequence the architectural archive offers scope for huge advances. This also allows the different media of architecture to co-exist in entirely new ways: the conventional paper archive has always had great difficulty in accommodating the multiple media used to create architecture. It's for this reason that the Koolhaas/OMA archive at the Netherlands Architectural Institute is making such a big play of including the many study models produced by that practice to generate its designs. Hitherto, it would have been all but impossible for any architectural archive to present as much non-digital material in this way. Another significant benefit of digital archives, which the Archigram Archival Project demonstrates so clearly, is of allowing the source material to be easily and quickly re-ordered in many different ways. The idea of 'the principle of first order' (i.e. the order in which the documents initially entered the collection), which archivists previously attached so much importance to, is thus replaced by all sorts of other ordering possibilities. Hence it's not just a matter of making documents more accessible, but of allowing groups of documents, and indeed the archive as a whole, to have the potential to become something rather different – thereby giving it the means to be thought about afresh.

3. Implications for studying and understanding architecture

With these wider possibilities of digital archives in mind, there seems a corollary implication for our analysis and understanding of architecture itself. As Adrian Forty pointed out so eloquently in *Words and Buildings*, citing Freart de Chambray and John Evelyn as his early-modern guides, there is a necessary interdependence of text and image, of word and drawing, in all architectural practice and discourse.¹⁶ Such a point might seem so obvious to be almost not worth stating, yet Forty also shows there has been an uneasy relationship between words and drawings/buildings at least since the advent of modernism. Modernists such as Mies van der Rohe displayed dissatisfaction with the expression of architecture through words – given that the design concept or actual building was seen as the thing, manifest unto itself – and even those who regularly used both words and buildings to articulate their ideas, such as Le Corbusier, tended to keep these aspects essentially apart. It led to an unfortunate schism that Forty's book aimed to counter. As he argued:

'More particularly, architecture has, like all other art practices, been affected by the longstanding assumption in Western thought that experiences mediated through the senses are fundamentally incompatible with those mediated through language: that seeing something bears no relation to being told about it. Nowhere was this assumption more evident than in early twentieth-century modernist art, where it was held that the particular property of every art was to offer an experience unique to its own particular medium, incommunicable through any other medium.'¹⁷

This dichotomy between word/non-word within architecture created other undesirable tendencies, such as an over-separation of theory from design, and even the denial of design as a medium for research investigation. Interestingly, both of these aspects are something which Archigram's archive helps to problematise so well. Here for instance is a group known for their exquisite visual imagery – even to the extent that Mike Webb refers to what he and other members produced as architectural 'eye candy' – and yet they take their name from a magazine that openly mixed words and images, frequently in the style of a comic book. There were certain Archigram members, notably Warren Chalk and David Greene, who effectively gave up architectural drawing altogether, preferring to write prose poems about contemporary society and its technological relationships. If Greene has a life goal, it is to shift architectural thinking away from the actuality of physical building and the need to represent ideas in static form through drawings; indeed, if one conceives of a dissolved techno-spatial field in which modern everyday life take place, as Greene does, then it is almost impossible to imagine what one might even start to draw.

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And yet there are other Archigram members like Mike Webb that continue 'to draw like a dream', obsessively reworking his old projects – some even from college days, like the *Sin Centre* – almost 50 years later. Ron Herron was another who realised the undoubted power of the visual image, and whose son Simon recalls as having had the end-goal montage of *Walking City* arriving in Manhattan in his mind right from the beginning of that project; hence everything else was done as quickly as possible to get to that seminal image.¹⁸ Peter Cook is another Archigrammer who has always spoken about the importance of the visual image in architecture, virtually to the exclusion of any other considerations; his admirers appreciate this continuing dedication to architecture-as-drawing, while others detect a latent anti-intellectualism or love of pure form-making in his approach.

The purpose of this essay, however, is not to argue either way for any particular architectural approach, nor indeed is that desirable; text and image in architecture function along a sliding scale, and in myriad interdependent ways. What is useful to point out is the ability of the Archigram Archival Project to spike any pretensions for the division – or supposed superiority or inferiority – of the written/spoken/filmed word as opposed to the drawn image/physical model/building in architecture. A study of the new website/database shows precisely the extent to which Archigram was created as a dynamic amalgam of all these aspects: take away the images and one has a lot of interesting words, but which carry far less impact; take away the words, and one has images that don't fully communicate their radical intent. If there ever was an architectural resource, in this case a historical archive, which proves the importance of Forty's argument for an integrated understanding of architecture as both words and buildings – while also recognising the need for both aspects to posit their own forms of expression and knowledge systems – then it is the AAP website. All of Archigram's various media were intended to operate and communicate with each other in a complex universe of signs and systems.

4. The scope of the Archigram Archival Project

It therefore seems poetic justice that making Archigram's work available online posed such fundamental problems and yet also suggested a lateral, technologically-enhanced alternative to traditional architectural archives. In many ways, the aims of the AAP mirrored Archigram's own concerns, especially in terms of exploring how technology might re-order staid institutions through a purely digital resource. In other regards the project could be seen as anathema, applying academic structures and strictures to a group that were inherently, according to Reyner Banham's famous quote, 'short on theory'.¹⁹ Placing this sort of challenging and essentially 'live' material into academic boxes could be said to be one of the paradoxes of the academic practice of our age (like offering research degrees in Pop Music), which is in many ways more conventional than the era it is now documenting as history. With Archigram itself – i.e. most of the people, and all the phenomenon – still very much alive and kicking, the paradox presented us with particular challenges and opportunities.

The Archigram Archival Project is, as a result, a new kind of archive. This is not just because it happens to be the largest and most ambitious public archive of any architect or architectural group: 'Is this the best website dedicated to a single architect ever?' asks Kieran Long.²⁰ It is also an entirely new construct. It is not the digitisation of an existing, fully catalogued physical archive, such as with the collections, say, of Koolhaas/OMA at the NAI or Cedric Price at the CCA, but the formation of a purely digital archive out of spatially disparate collections. It is, moreover, designed for use both in an academic manner and as part of the wider, evolving and far more informal world of new online media. This is an invention born of necessity. The bulk of Archigram's work is held privately in two main collections: the Archigram Archive, which is managed by an Archigram member, Dennis Crompton, the group's own de facto archivist, who began collecting and recording their work in the 1960s; and the smaller Herron Archive, containing most of the material by Ron Herron, managed by his son Simon. Other members of the group, or their heirs, hold further material. Moreover certain items have been sold individually or in batches to major cultural institutions, including FRAC (Fonds Regional d'Art Contemporain) in Orleans, Centre Pompidou in Paris, DAM (Deutsches Architekturmuseum) in Frankfurt, and MoMA (Museum of Modern Art) in New York. The sum value of the overall Archigram collection is enormous – potentially in the realm of millions of pounds – and yet ownership of work done by so many people will always be complex. Although several major institutions in America are reportedly keen to purchase the Archigram archive, 'it' is at least two distinct collections, which makes it very hard to be sold as a whole, or indeed even in part. Meanwhile, the work remains stored in domestic conditions, creating a huge responsibility for those holding the collections and with few resources available to record, catalogue or reproduce material that is inevitably in danger of decay and/or loss.

The aim for placing the whole Archigram collection online was therefore to bypass all issues of source, ownership and current location, working instead simply to make available a digital archive at the low-resolution size of images which Archigram usually allow students and others to use freely, with no copyright complications. We were, in effect, doing something which traditional institutions believed to be perverse (as they so carefully told us): in other words,

we were working to increase the public accessibility and cultural value of an archive that we didn't even own. But their comments missed the entire point. For us, the wider academic value was enormous: that of free and flexible access to a previously inaccessible and yet phenomenally influential architectural resource.

5. Methods used and issues encountered by the AAP

In many respects we might agree that the Archigram Archival Project was a perverse project. Archigram was always a collection of highly disparate individuals, who – in every conceivable way – sought to challenge the idea of straightjackets. They wanted above all to resist categorisation, to overthrow convention, to reinvent things, to refuse to be tied down, to challenge endlessly, and to work through spontaneity, reaction, naughtiness and fun (albeit a rather architectural kind of fun). Archigram consciously made their name by both adopting and overturning typical academic conventions. For decades, all the members were supported principally by various schools of architecture in which they acted as iconoclasts, and whose ideology they effectively reshaped.²¹

And yet to carry out the Archigram Archival Project, we also needed to have 'official' backing and support. This came from our host institution, the University of Westminster – publicly funded, bureaucratic, and not fundamentally flexible or spontaneous – and from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), another publicly accountable body. Both required a clear, deliverable and detailed programme of research work, with step-by-step planning and predetermined academic outcomes. It required an organised process that was broadly antithetical to the spirit of Archigram, and which didn't necessarily suit the kind of material being included. At the same time, the project team had to work in close collaboration with the Archigram group or their heirs, who imposed their own requirements onto the eventual outcome. The process of working with them – as depositors, advisors, experts, members of the steering group, contributors and gatekeepers – was crucial to all aspects of the project.

Financially, the AAP was funded by a Resource Enhancement Grant of almost £305,000 from the AHRC, and the resulting website/database was originally meant to be deposited onto their online repository, the Arts and Humanities Data Service. The cancellation of this service shortly after the project began forced us to rethink and customise our own website/database, one that was more specifically designed to suit the organisation and idiosyncrasies of the Archigram archive. This flexibility meant we could produce a 'big friendly online database' that improved the clarity and user-friendliness of the resultant website. Shaping the database to our needs also meant we could maintain the highest levels of research and scholarly standards, thereby offering considerable opportunities for cross-referencing throughout the site. This freedom to design our own website/database was thus a revelation, since by then we had come to realise that cataloguing Archigram inevitably posed major practical and conceptual problems which kept arising. What, for example, counted as an 'Archigram project'? How could one deal with projects which are still effectively ongoing? How could one (and why should one) catalogue things which themselves were meant to resist categorisation?

It is worth teasing out a few of the complexities. The Archigram era is usually taken as having lasted from the first Archigram magazine in 1961 until the closure of the Archigram Architects project office in 1974, suggesting then that 'Archigram projects' were those done within that time period by individuals or collaborations amongst the six core people in the Archigram group. Yet even the group's own archival material includes (and claims as being 'by' Archigram) projects that were designed before they even met, such as when working for the London County Council, or as students at various colleges. Furthermore, all of Archigram have continued to collaborate, exhibit and stage events since the 'end' date of 1974, and some – though by no means all – of these later events or projects are designated as 'Archigram projects' in the group's own records. For instance, Warren Chalk collaborated on some projects with Ron Herron which aren't seen as being 'Archigram projects', and only the first iteration of the touring Archigram show has (so far) been given a project number by Dennis Crompton as the group's archivist. Some members continue to work independently on designs which have long been numbered as 'Archigram' projects, most notably Mike Webb, who is still drawing his astonishing Temple Island scheme whose first seeds sprouted back in 1966. David Greene also continues to pursue his L.A.W.u.N. series of projects, but not necessarily in a sequentially numbered or clearly defined sequence (his recent book with Samantha Hardingham, L.A.W.u.N #19, has 20 alternative subtitles, for example).²² Then again, Greene has always specialised in elusive, anti-architectural projects with multiple names, or even projects-within-projects. Is L.A.W.u.N. part of Bottery? Or is it the other way round? Either way, his various iterations even numbered as projects by Crompton, although newer material generated by them has lately been absorbed into the Archigram Archives.

Another unavoidable issue is that the act of archiving implicitly involves a subjective categorisation and imposition of a way of organising and displaying the material within it. However impartial one tries to be, there is always be an element of debate around what is included, how it's included, and where. This is all the more sensitive when dealing with a group like Archigram, whose graphic style and multivalent output of projects, drawings, events and opinion refutes simple categorisation. Two circumstances, however, enabled us to come up with a workable, easily searchable system. One was that Dennis

Crompton in his role as Archigram's archivist since the 1960s has defined his own project numbering system. By adopting this wholesale, with its definition of what was 'in' and 'out' and what drawings/ephemera belonged to particular projects, we were therefore following definitions used (at least in part) by Archigram themselves.²³ So this then became a staple part of our would-be impartial research approach, which also included using Archigram's original projects texts in unmediated fashion, wherever possible, since they too represent historical records in themselves. Through close discussion with Crompton, the organisation of the AAP became effectively that which he had established on Archigram's behalf – and therefore it is 'authentic' to Archigram, as well as offering a pragmatic system for finding things rather than us trying to analyse them first.

The second helpful circumstance was, as noted, the latitude we had to devise our own website/database format and hosting mechanism, once the AHRC had closed their service down. Designed by two digital specialists, Filip Visnjic and Pierpaolo Di Panfilo, along with the rest of the project team, the AAP started out from Dennis Crompton's system and then developed this material into complex overlapping groupings. This in turn allowed for a more detailed cross-referenced structure of links and tags that gives the viewer comprehensive access to Archigram magazines, projects, texts, images and ephemera – aided not only by the serendipity of being able to input any term on the model of search-engines like Google, but also by the site's simple navigation structure and consciously 'invisible', non-Archigram graphic design. We introduced as little as possible of our own text, and indeed only identified our presence through a discrete EXP 'blob' on each page. Content material can be explored either by the search box and by using the 'related items' function, leading the user to menus which then offer up other projects, personal ephemera, written texts, video interviews, etc. This subtle system was developed throughout the final eighteen months of the project by continual testing and refinement, principally orchestrated by the project manager, Clare Hamman.

Archival organisation and graphic navigation thus aimed for absolute clarity in all ways – including breaking the material down into simple understandable sections, which were then developed as the particular subject area demanded. The categories were intended to be useful rather than definitive. For this reason, the sections on 'Magazines' and 'Projects' contain much of the same material, but while 'Projects' privileges the process of searching in different ways by treating all the projects as if they are alike, the 'Magazines' section is specifically customised to allow the viewer to browse the actual pages of Archigram or watch a video for each issue in which Dennis Crompton demonstrates how it was put together. Similarly, the sections on 'Shows' and 'People' offer different ways of ordering or grouping what is often overlapping information. 'People' acts as a profile page for the individual members of Archigram, and enables the viewer to reassess the whole archive from the perspective of any of the members; it also includes a long and growing list of Archigram collaborators, themselves tagged to relevant projects. 'Shows' links the exhibition projects to the 'back-up' collection of slides and to a digital version of the multimedia Archigram Opera (as adapted for the internet by Dan Crompton), providing an events-based view of the group's work. Both these sections are conceived as 'stubs' that will easily allow new information to be attached in future.

The structure, design and navigation of the website/database are thus deceptively simple as well as highly innovative in terms of digital architectural archives. Filip Visnjic notes:

'We have always been striving for simplicity and clarity. It is hard to even call it web design, but rather a framework for the incredible work that needed no introduction. The more we worked on it, the less we added, to a point where we even spent many days debating which logo should be used – how can a site like this be branded when the brand is the work itself? It is amazing to see now that we have achieved something that is totally transparent with only the work being in the forefront.'²⁴

Design-wise, the site was made as clean and simple as possible so that our navigation systems did not detract from, or become confused with, Archigram's work. The main home page, for instance, looks like a patchwork of beautiful projects, but in fact the strip of bigger images at the top are in fact from Archigram projects picked at random every time someone logs in, so as to surprise and entice the viewer, while the mass of smaller thumbnails below can be scrolled over to find out what they are. They also act as an index of all the numbered projects, so that the familiar user can use them as a short-cut to a project they want to look up. Establishing this simplicity of the site in use took an enormous amount of work and beta-testing, for which we used people who knew Archigram well and those who were new to the subject. We knew of course that some visitors would come looking for visual material only, and would navigate around in that way, whereas others would rely more on textual descriptions. Flexibility of navigation and content material was therefore critical, and involved a large degree of digital customization, as Pierpaolo di Panfilo notes:

'The software has been created from scratch to fit perfectly to the needs of the project. Firstly, a customised online back-end manager has been developed

... to understand how the research team wanted to build up this extensive data source. It needed to be very simple to use and accessible from several workstations while in progress, because of the massive amount of input needed for the cataloguing of Archigram work. For both the back-end and front-end of the site, we've been in some way developing it together. We didn't follow a "standard" project development plan, in that we had always changing requirements (as more material emerged and consultation continued) that an initial project plan could never foresee. So I firstly created a core system and then we've been adding the needed bits as we worked on it. In this way, we created exactly what was needed and delivered in a reasonable time-frame, which would have been quite impossible with a standard project development plan.

The website has been through many visual redesigns too, and ... for each step we've been working on it to reduce it to the strictly necessary bits because we wanted it to be "invisible" to the content of the archive. The website is just the Archigram work itself; no more is needed.'²⁵

Our collaborative, team-based method of working meant also that the AAP could be developed as a hybrid, interlaced academic and populist tool; this was entirely the outcome of employing website designers whose task was to conceive and design it in a way the general public could interact with easily. This approach has clearly reaped dividends. The 'launch' of the AAP website/database on alternative, less formal conduits of communication – such as Twitter and Facebook – immediately outpaced the more conventional launch party and press releases we also lined up. This tweeting, blogging, portable reorganisation of data flows was of course itself foreseen many decades ago in so many of Archigram's projects. As Visnjic explains:

'The site went live on Sunday night, attracting visitors from Twitter mainly. Hundreds of re-tweets generated about 30k page views on Monday and even more on Tuesday. We believe this is only the beginning: people are linking to the main site, and the real traffic will come from references to specific projects, quotes, image linking, social bookmarking and much more.'²⁶

At the same time, however, we always intended this research project to meet the highest possible academic standards. It provides the largest and most objective survey of Archigram's output to date. All the main project items were identified, cross-checked and sourced as far as we could, in conjunction with Crompton and others. The short text introductions for each project, which were written by the AAP team, draw on all this research material – but also fundamentally on a reading of the Archigram images themselves, since these are often by far the most informative documents. We have further added interview sessions we organised with each of the depositors – whether they were surviving Archigram members or their heirs – along with a wide range of contextual information wherever this was made available to us. The website/database also contains a major list of Archigram's collaborators and a genuinely authoritative, scholarly bibliography. Besides this we solicited essays from major academics and practitioners – such as Barry Curtis, Simon Sadler and Leon van Schaik – which have been included in conjunction with some of our own writings on the subject. Beyond this, the website/database has also been designed to act as an ongoing and interactive archival checking process, whereby users are invited to email us with additional and/or better information. This is already happening; for example, the CCA have been able to help identify and check work which was done in collaboration with Cedric Price, so we can provide links to related material in their collection. Former collaborators of Archigram have also been contacting us to tell us more about their own roles.

The AAP does not in itself aim to create an authoritative contextualisation of Archigram, as would be perhaps the goal of a traditional archiving project. However, it does of course imply a form of contextualisation, even in its decision to use Dennis Crompton's numbering system and the way it chooses to accept his 'rational and normative' treatment of the core Archigram archive. A collection which has been based on the analyses of David Greene or Mike Webb would offer an unimaginably different construct. But in its favour, the very openness of the AAP cuts out some of the more typical contextualisation's of Archigram that have been provided through the selective lens of previous historical studies. It allows new readings. Leon van Schaik, for instance, notes the way in which the site effectively cuts Archigram adrift from the traditional arthistorical studies that always want to link them to the Smithsons and the 1950s Independent Group, and places them closer to the normative practice of the LCC Architects Department:

'There are things we all 'knew': that many in the group came through the LCC; that some took the Smithsons as mentors; that they all worked on Taylor Woodrow projects ... Nothing much about the Smithsons surfaces in this record, though there are startling similarities to Robin Hood Lane in the courtyard views of some housing projects done under the aegis of Taylor Woodrow.

What the website does is to present the LCC period as a substantial under-the-water element of the iceberg that is Archigram. It is startling to see how many core group ideas – plug in components for example – first manifest as built concrete forms. These seem challenged by the light touch of Webb and

Greene's student projects – although they first appear as collaborators on a Taylor Woodrow project.'²⁷

Archigram have been typically portrayed (in books by architectural historians) as part of a thematic and consistent revolutionary movement in modernism – a movement possibly appearing more consistent in the historians' selective view of history than it did to those making it up at the time. As other historical archives come online – such as the Smithsons or Cedric Price – this wider historical context for Archigram may inevitably start to re-assert itself. But for now, the freshness of the AAP is entirely revealing: we are seeing now the whole of the material they created, which is indeed more, as Barry Curtis observes, than outsiders saw even at the time. As such, the AAP touches on the ambition that Archigram brought to the jaded British architectural scene in the early-1960s:

'The comprehensive and flexible Archigram website conveys some of the fractal excitement of first encountering the original magazines.'²⁸

Hence we regard the Archigram Archival Project not as a basic information site, but as a substantial academic achievement in itself. It achieves this partly by following in the tradition of the oeuvre complet (itself inevitably contextualised and selective); partly in the tradition of an architectural archive, albeit now in digital form; and partly in the completely new format that emerges from the media which produces it, enabling different types of research methodologies and patterns of use from the academic to the everyday. In this way, it suggests a re-reading of what archives might be in the age of the internet, when they may well exist as a hybridised academic/methodological authentication of 'non-academic' material which already exists online – as noted, challenging the outmoded location-and-ownership notion of research.

The AAP is therefore, in Marshall McLuhan's terminology, a mixture of temperatures, being both 'cool' and 'hot'.²⁹ It consciously mixes text and image, academic study and casual browsing, and relies on different types of user interaction and experience. The website/database consists of a core of managed and defined items, each of them numbered, named, indexed and referenced; but at the same time it taps seamlessly into a network of connections, links, related sites – some of them suggested by us through tagged, linked or randomising features – the invisible structures which govern internet information. This latter aspect has grown exponentially from the first inaugural tweet sent by Filip Visnjic deliberately to 'launch' the site into an unpredictable, yet traceable, seething mass of use. In this manner, our concept of a 'big friendly online database' has been threaded into a tweeting, blogging technological forest. It is now amongst the most visited architectural websites around.³⁰

6. New insights into Archigram (What are they like?)

The major reaction from our test sample of experts – architectural historians, design tutors and such like – was one of astonishment at the sheer volume, the generally dazzling beauty, and the incontrovertibly contradictory range of Archigram work which oscillates overtly from one kind of project to another. It's a key point that mustn't be overlooked. Dennis Crompton often starts his lectures by asking how many Archigram projects his audience can name. He says the average is about four or five; the best figure – from 'a really good audience' – gets up to fifteen. The Archigram projects that people can remember are, of course, the most famous one, the most quoted, and those which tend, as in old-style pre-social media, to possess a single famous iconic image. It is perhaps understandable why this comes to be. Authors and journalists have to request a specific image to accompany their written words, and they can only ask for images from those projects they already know about, which are therefore the ones which get endlessly repeated. This means that those few famous iconic images of Walking City, Instant City, Plug-In City – the big, Sci-Fi, inflatable, megastructural visions of a revolutionised society – are effectively defined as being Archigram, being used even at a stretch to illustrate and explain the group's complex and contradictory ideas.

What the AAP reveals so clearly is that these famous projects are only one part – and indeed often an atypical part – of the ongoing heated arguments between various members of Archigram as to what architecture might be, or what it might do, in the dawning age of technological innovation and consumerism. Their whole endeavour was thus always far wider, more unpredictable and more challenging than it often appears. And while this story of wider debate and internal dissension has been said by Archigram members themselves (famously, they called themselves a 'dysfunctional male family' at the RIBA Gold Medal award ceremony), and has been described by Archigram's major historian, Simon Sadler, this inside view is contradicted by the recurrent consistency of the images selectively reproduced by the architectural media.³¹ Up till now, there has always been the extreme difficulty of coming across any other, competing imagery created by Archigram, much less of seeing it as part of a seething, project-based debate within the group. But now the AAP provides all those elusive images that one might need (whether talking of disappearance, as discussed by Sadler, or of digital dissemination and communication, described by Hadas Steiner).³² The website/database also enables the Archigram archive to be viewed in the context of sheer numbers: in other words, the amount of projects which prototyped audio-visual or quasi-digital

innovations, for example; or the constant churning out of exhibition designs; or the counterbalance between the real, sometimes built, projects and the growing phantoms of anti-architecture which gathered towards the end of Archigram. Our cataloguing system deliberately offers a startling measure of equivalence between these and other competing strands.

As a consequence, the AAP, as launched, contains 202 numbered projects (not all chronological) and almost 10,000 drawings and images, including Archigram's source slides for the lectures they gave, and other related ephemera. All this in itself starts to loosen our previously rigid definitions of the group. Simon Sadler praises the loose, fluid connections of subject matter which provides insights when one looks at their lecture slides:

'The singularly moving sight within Archigram's archive is, accordingly, its slide collection. Things. Things seen. Places. Signs and Structures—hmm, not a lot of architecture, to be honest, and precious little of what there is, is of canonical standing.'³³

In the eyes of Leon van Schaik, he is fascinated by interrelation of built and buildable work with the apparently more fantastical projects:

'Despite the ways in which Archigram is often (these days) lumped with 1960s avant-garde movements with very tenuous interests in the real-politik of the construction industry, the website reveals that this is not a 'paper' architecture avant-garde, but a set of researches intent on being built. Fascinating to compare Peter Cook's current designs for a university in Vienna with his competition entry for the Lincoln Civic Centre (1961) – almost the same parti ... Perhaps we do all begin with an idea and pursue it remorselessly throughout our careers.'³⁴

The Archigram Archival Project thus contains heady stuff. The project numbering starts off with a potent mix: elegant modernist built schemes (including the Chelsea Fire Station and College of Art) by Warren Chalk and Ron Herron, and later Dennis Crompton, at the ICC, leading up to their better-known role in the South Bank centre – a still controversial project that linked Brutalism to a more picturesque informality which somehow evaded the usual 'iconic' definitions of architectural form. Next up on the list is the radical, would-have-been-failed student projects produced by those two natural resistors, Mike Webb (Sin Centre; Furniture Manufacturers Building) and David Greene (Mosque), while still students at ostensibly conventional modernist schools of architecture. And all this had happened even before the first meeting between Cook and Greene triggered the formation of the Archigram group.

Archigram's own project numbering often belies strict chronology. Also predating the idea of an Archigram 'group' at all was the first of the nine-and-a-half issues of Archigram magazine. Spanning from 1961 till 1974, and put together in the offices and homes of Archigrammers (with their children helping with cut-outs and even trying to sell copies at school), these constitute an innate description of the Archigram story. Archigram was, as historians point out, originally conceived primarily as a mechanism of communication, but the original magazines themselves, printed in various complicated formats, have become impossibly rare and are too difficult to reproduce, so they are little seen now. For the first time since they were produced, they are widely available on the AAP, albeit in size-restricted form due to copyright reasons.

These issues of Archigram magazine switched from simple collage techniques – indeed, almost poster formats – intended as a way to publicise ideas and work that was 'refused' by modernist journals of the times, to become increasingly polemical and themed. Soon they were dealing with issues of throw-away architecture, science fiction, population growth, cities, etc. Archigram also acted as a proper freeform agit-prop magazine, collecting work by other sympathetic contributors as well as the group themselves, but increasingly it shaped a coherent argument – one in which ideas, texts and projects operated together to rethink the scope and limits of architectural imagination via the specific medium of a printed magazine. Intriguingly, this defining aspect of the Archigram phenomenon ends with what can be seen as a symbolic fork: Archigram 9, which was the famous 'seed issue' from 1970, pointed towards the abstract potential of design, whereas Archigram 9½, antithetically, was a showpiece for the 'real' architectural projects which were then being designed by the 'real' Archigram Architects office four years later.

Initially, it had been our intention to make the magazines the central interpretative device for the entire AAP website/database, so that viewers could enter the site and browse through the magazines, and from there move seamlessly on to explore the projects, to create analogous experience to that of the original readers. In the event, this proved impossible, principally because of the restrictions placed upon the size at which we were allowed by Archigram to put their images on the internet.³⁵ But we now also realise this would have fore-grounded our interpretation of the material over Archigram's own ordering system, which in the end we accepted was a more appropriate format. However, the re-reading of the Archigram magazines as a framework for the whole group's output – as suggested both by Denise Scott Brown and by the 'Little Magazines' project led by Beatriz Colomina at Princeton University

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– remains a tasty project for future researchers.³⁶

The Archigram magazines can nonetheless be treated as an explanatory framework of concerns for a range of projects which emerge as startlingly distinct – if endlessly overlapping – types. There are the famous Archigram tropes: large-scale urban visualisations that adopted the technologies of the space race and oil refineries and highways to propose pre-'Oil Crisis' ideas for the reinvention of modern cities, either as a series of megastructures or as highly serviced, mobile, temporary elements: one was meant to be able to plug in, clip on, drop out, drop in. Then there are the tiny designed components for this new vision of urban life – clothes, gadgets, gizmos, and working prototypes of a consumer-driven technological revolution – which have proved to be by far the most accurate of Archigram's speculations. Even the names of our current communication tools – pods, apples, blackberries and tweets – are profoundly in the same vein as Archigram's language from almost fifty years ago.³⁷ So these components may have begun as adjuncts to the brazen megastructures, but they increasingly superseded them as the real smallness – and cultural vastness – of urban reconfigurations took centre stage. Increasingly, Archigram came to suggest a world in which architecture would even supersede itself, with new communications technology rendering traditional architecture (buildings and cities) of little importance as patterns of everyday life took over.³⁸

By looking at the AAP format, viewers can actually see the heated argument in project form about what architecture could be; indeed, about what Archigram was and should be. Amongst the strands of work which developed, one spots a clear, central urge to create exhibitions/events/publications – suggesting that Archigram remained, as it had begun, essentially a communications project. Yet even this emphasis on communication systems might be said to have taken on highly differentiated forms. Ron Herron's work suggested a kind of easy-add, real-world adjustment through built projects; another approach from the rather old-fashioned form of global iterations of the travelling Archigram exhibition; while yet another – and possibly the most significant of all – came from communication within architectural educational institutions worldwide, whereby, as noted, members of Archigram served to shift attention towards experimental approaches to design projects. Again, the AAP offers rich material for future study of each of these different communication strands within Archigram's work.

At the same time, however, the website/database reveals the relatively unknown extent, as Leon van Schaik stresses, of the body of 'real' work that ran right through the wider Archigram project from beginning to end. This refers not just to those projects done by various members in their 'day jobs', but also those they did when together, and which are duly listed as being Archigram projects. They include straightforward, eminently buildable competition entries – lots of housing projects, for instance, with sensible technological innovations designed not to scare the horses (or planners). Then there were what Dennis Crompton at the AAP launch event described as the 'boring' projects, such as Rod Stewart's swimming pool or a basement restaurant fit-out in central London.³⁹ Indeed, there are many examples of the kind of work that any practice which is starting up tends to do, including the aforementioned competition entries – often done in multiples, with two or more entries submitted at a time by different members of the group, as if they were really determined to win something. These pop up all the way through, and are particularly notable towards the end in the early-1970s, when the 'real' Archigram practice was in operation. By then, they appear in stark opposition to Webb's and Greene's ephemeral, beautiful and powerfully 'invisible' projects.

Amongst all the competing positions within the Archigram oeuvre, it is these 'invisible' projects while are perhaps the most compelling of all. Fascinating schemes like Mike Webb's Drive-in Housing/ Auto Environment grow from a simple enough Archigram-like proposal to an extraordinarily obsessive, gorgeous cul-de-sac exploring the beauties of the automobile. Or, like David Greene's L.A.V.V.u.N., they propose a moratorium on building, an argument for the total disappearance of architecture. Or, like Temple Island, in its mind-expanding attempts to draw what is invisible, they offer some of the most potent analyses of architectural aesthetics of those, or any other, times. Bizarrely, these latter conceptual projects – all meditations, in some ways, on absence, and indeed on absence as the essence of beauty – form an invisible core at the heart of the Archigram project, profoundly antithetical to all conventional notions of architecture.

In the end, these mutually challenging strands of work can also be read as a sort of uber-argument: how can architecture re-invent itself? Is real architectural practice a suitable medium for doing this, or does it always provoke inherent compromise? A sense of this internal debate could be seen in David Greene's waspish criticisms of Richard Rogers over the Pompidou Centre at Supercrit#3, held at the University of Westminster in April 2005, or in Peter Cook's determined argument in favour of 'real' architecture expressed in his speech at the AAP launch event.⁴⁰ The big parallel test-case on the scale of Pompidou for Archigram would have been the unbuilt Monte Carlo casino project, but this was of course cancelled in 1973. So it remains a moot point between members of the group – and their heirs, their pupils, their critics, etc. – as to what exactly 'is' and 'isn't' Archigram. Safe to say this is something on which, by definition, there will never be agreement.

While we cannot claim that our insights are altogether new, the Archigram

Archival Project is already provoking new thoughts and reactions even from experts. Indeed the project helps scholars like Simon Sadler to articulate their views, as he openly acknowledges:

'... what appears is approximately what I would have expected to see in the days when the Archigram Archive was still mysteriously hidden "under beds and behind walls." Here, still, is the rhetorical disappearance of architecture, whereupon one half of the Archigram group disappears into a meditation upon that disappearance, David Greene affecting suicide by photocopier, only for the other half to design its way out of the impasse, Ron Herron converting the kitchen and swimming pool at Rod Stewart's Berkshire home. Both sides of Archigram affect contemporary architecture so deeply, I continue to think, that it is impossible to isolate their legacies as they seep into today's architectural landscape of flows and folds and interfaces and ecologies.'⁴¹

Sadler's own research, like this essay, is written largely for an academic audience, and thus (like this essay) for a 'not-very-Archigram' sort of audience. Thus a distinctive feature of the AAP website/database is that it is meant instead for Archigram's original audience, i.e. the general public. A total of almost 250,000 page views in two weeks after launching would suggest, however belatedly, that the AAP site is probably beating all others hollow in reaching that audience. And in this new medium, albeit at restricted resolution, you can see all the diversity, all the argument, with Archigram, as well as just reading about it. So this digital archive makes Archigram's resistant-to-categorisation-material open for viewing, not just by dedicated academics but by anyone who has access to the internet, in a way which releases the subject for entirely fresh interpretations.

7. A definition of architecture through its media
McLuhan may or may not have been right to say that the medium is the message; probably it is more the case that the message is selected, shaped and fused with the contemporary forms of media, both in terms of content and the way we receive it. In this sense, content cannot be seen as a separate thing. Architecture has been somewhat reluctant to admit that it too operates in such a way, although some scholars have pointed this out all too clearly.⁴² Because it uses such a new form of media, the AAP proposes a very different model of constructing architectural archives. In one way, just as new forms of media always tend to follow old ones, it could be seen as a copy of a 'real' archive online (albeit with rather enviable abilities to cross reference and reorganise).⁴³ But in quite another way, it is an entirely new animal; one which has a different economy of production and reception, and therefore a different ethos. With help from its collaborators and funders and host institution, the EXP research centre has in effect created an archive which it does not own. This new freedom of ubiquitous low-resolution copies opens up major possibilities for the types of things which can be archived in future. It doesn't mean archives will ever become independent of ownership and money or institutional protocol – indeed, in many senses it complicates all these issues, because so many different criteria come into play. The AAP still has powerful relationships to financial issues, naturally, even if this is not expressed through direct financial reward: but it has to be acknowledged that the AHRC funding reinforced the academic criteria to which the archival project had to adhere, and the process of archiving was duly compelled to happen independently of any private discussions between the holders of the Archigram collections – which might well still be for sale – and potential purchasing institutions.⁴⁴ In fact, this mutual self-interest of academic researchers and owners of archival material through the AAP offers maybe a useful model for future collections as long as our current consumerist-technological society lasts.

And in this regard, the AAP also bears another definite imprint of Archigram. The group's work consisted of a love affair with the possibilities of combinations of technology and consumer culture on modern society, and yet it is notable that the longevity of Archigram – the ongoing influential careers of the members themselves – hasn't been sustained by media companies like Apple or Microsoft.⁴⁵ Instead, financial support for Archigram members has derived largely from educational institutions, and specifically from that educational form which is so fertile at reinventing ways of doing things: the architecture school. Even more particularly, it has been the kind of architecture school in central London which sustained, and in the end was reinvented by, Archigram members who taught there.

Today, it is possible to say that the internet itself, that new great medium of our age, is changing the nature of all our definitions. It makes research faster than ever before, and yet seems also to make it more unstable and unreliable: the 'Wiki' phenomenon being the great parable of this condition. But is the seeming fixity of old-fashioned printed text media any kind of guarantee of intellectual probity? Haven't academic mistakes and misconceptions, indeed fakes, been pretty consistent through the ages? Doesn't the sheer volume and speed of digital knowledge in itself offer its own kind of alternative, numerical form of scientific authenticity? As when Googling medical symptoms, the internet offers amazingly fast links to high-quality scientific information, while also allowing us to discern the reflected shapes of our own paranoia within the seething mass of information – thereby offering a working demonstration of just how easy it is to 'prove' anything if one is a hypochondriac. As such, does this also not show us

just how provisional our supposed 'fixes' on information can be?

Whether or not we are presupposing or supporting this kind of flexible reading – having elected to create a website/database in the first place – the AAP does appear to 'fix' Archigram as having been astonishingly prescient: they were a good fifty years ahead of the game in envisioning our consumerist, largely apolitical, hedonistic yet environmentally concerned, technologically-enabled, image-obsessed culture. Archigram seem to have foreseen the pleasures (if not the problems) of portable technology, of the confusion of work and fun, of the rise and rise of the human being as a consumer. The AAP also suggests (if not proves) that architecture schools are indeed the 'laboratory of ideas' that we keep telling people they are. They rehearsed and indeed played out the arguments besetting the architectural education which they reinvented in their own image – was it to turn students into artists, critics, builders, form-makers, anti-architects, or superstars? And are these aspirations inherently in conflict? Or is it precisely these conflicts which generate such a rich, influential and predictive field of activity for architects in the first place?

Those nagging problems of definition – e.g. what 'is' and 'isn't' Archigram, 'what is' and 'isn't' an archive – remain the live and insoluble ones, about which academics can do no more than lay down their provisional markers. In this new, far more active and varied archival medium, we are – ever more it seems – only tiny members of a vast swarm of people who have conflicting and changing opinions about such questions. Users of this new digital medium, as they view and post material onto the AAP website/database – creating their own imaginative structures from it – will be as traceable as our self-conscious, research-recorded tracks in producing it.

Like all academic propositions, the Archigram Archival Project makes as safe and reliable as it can a solid core of information, so that it is available for addition and contradiction and reinterpretation by subsequent scholars. As such it is a part of ongoing academic research practice. Yet in another way, the AAP seems to us also to mirror the types of projects emerging from the conceptually remodelled architectural schools which Archigram reshaped, as well as the types of ideas generated by the group. Seen as this kind of proposition – part-database, part-technological forest – it could even be claimed as being equivalent to a design research project. And that shifting definition of what architecture is, and what architects can be and should do, is something which Archigram members – each in their own separate ways, and maybe most strongly in their inherent challenges to each other – demanded that we should continually reinvent.

Endnotes

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4. Definition obtained from the Oxford English Dictionary.
5. Hill, Jonathan. 'Introduction to Criticism by Design', in Rendell, Jane et al (eds.). *Critical Architecture*. London/New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 167.
6. Pevsner, Nikolaus. *A History of Building Types*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1976, pp. 99-110; Pepper, Simon. 'Storehouses of Knowledge: The Free Library Movement and The Birth of Modern Library Architecture', in Black, Alistair & Hoare, Peter (eds.). *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland - Vol. 3, 1850-2000*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 584-608; Black, Alistair, Pepper, Simon & Bagshaw, Kaye. *Books, Buildings and Social Engineering: Early Public Libraries in Britain from Past to Present*. Aldershot/Burlington, Vt.: 2009.
7. Benjamin, Walter. 'The Work of Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1935), reprinted in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*. London: Pimlico, 1999, pp. 217-252.
8. Benjamin, Walter. 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' (1939) – a slightly different English translation of which can be read, for instance, at: <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/benjamin/1940/history.htm>, Marxists' Internet Archive website (accessed 25 April 2010).
9. <http://www.fondationlecorbusier.fr/corbuweb/morpheus.aspx?sysId=19&sysLanguage=en-en&itemPos=1&sysParentId=19&clearQuery=1>, Fondation Corbusier website (accessed 25 April 2010).
10. http://en.nai.nl/collection__research/archives__collections/ready_to_use/detailready/_rp_left1_elementId/1_131568, Netherlands Architectural Institute website (accessed 25 April 2010).
11. Comments made by Rem Koolhaas at Supercrit #5: Delirious New York, Department of Architecture, University of Westminster, London, 5 May 2006.
12. <http://nationalgallery.org.uk/artists/>, National Gallery website (accessed 25 April 2010).
13. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124173896716198603.html>, Alter, Alexandra. 'Next Age of Discovery', Wall Street Journal Online website, 8 May 2009 (accessed 25 April 2010).
14. <http://www.wdl.org/en/>, World Digital Library website (accessed 25 April 2010); For a discussion of how these new digital resources are actually

impacting on knowledge and learning, see Roberto Simanowski, Roberto et al (eds.), *Reading Moving Letters: Digital Literature in Research and Teaching*. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2010.

15. Simon Sadler, essay on 'On Opening the Archigram Archives', written specially for the AAP website, February 2010.
16. Forty, Adrian. *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2000.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.
18. Interview with Simon Herron by Murray Fraser for the Archigram Archival Project, viewable at <http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk/person-interview.php?id=8&iid=26>.
19. Reyner Banham's quote in Cook, Peter (ed.) *Archigram*. London: Archigram Group, 1970 [second edition published London: Studio Vista, 1972; subsequent editions include New York: Praeger, 1972; Basel/Boston: Birkhauser, 1991; New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999], p. 5; the frequent misquotations and misuses of this quote themselves demonstrate the complex nature of the media that Archigram worked with and are discussed in relation to – collage and text, generated and borrowed images, homemade compositions and with unreliable spellings, and above all urgent, free and definitely not academic.
20. Twitter comment by Kieran Long, 19th April 2009.
21. See, for example, Sadler, Simon. *Archigram: Architecture without Architecture*. Cambridge, Mass/London: MIT Press, 2005, pp. 8, 140-191 – this book discusses the group's educational impact, as was also shown by the joint-award of the Annie Spink Prize in 2002 to Peter Cook and David Greene for lifelong achievement in architectural education.
22. Greene, David; and Hardingham, Samantha. *L.A.W.U.N Project #19: The Disreputable Projects of David Greene*. London: AA Publications, 2008.
23. In fact, Dennis Crompton's numbering system is ongoing, in the sense that he continues to collect ever more items of their work, and so the AAP team expects that material brought lately into the archives (e.g. Greene's most recent L.A.W.U.N. projects) may well gain Archigram numbers at some time. Hence the numbering system for AAP has to be seen provisional, but is up-to-date at time of 'going to press' (i.e. April 2010). 'Missing' numbers may relate to missing projects or to those projects which cannot be included for copyright or technical reasons: typically this refers to films, television programmes and audio-visual material. Where we have information on these items, they are found listed in the AAP bibliography.
24. Email message from Filip Visnjic, WAG Architecture, to the AAP team, April 2010.
25. Email message from Pierpaolo di Panfilo to the AAP team, April 2010.
26. Email message from Filip Visnjic, WAG Architecture, to the AAP team, April 2010.
27. Leon van Schaik, essay written specially for the AAP website, February 2010.
28. Barry Curtis, essay written specially for the AAP website, February 2010.
29. McLuhan's ever-challenging definitions of media 'temperatures' are set out in his seminal book: McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. New York/London: McGraw Hill/Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964.
30. By 22 April 2010, just four days after the AAP went live, it had received more than 100,000 page views; two weeks later, it had generated over 42,000 visitors and almost 250,000 page hits, largely as a result of activity on Facebook and Twitter. Indeed, within ten days of launching the AAP was on the top 1000 sites on Twitter as rated by Topsy, as can be viewed at <http://topsy.com/archigram.westminster.ac.uk/index.php>.
31. See, for example, http://www.strangeharvest.com/mt/archive/read_mes/archigrams_pastoral_futurism.php, Sam Jacob's website (accessed 27 April 2010).
32. Sadler, Simon, op. cit., 2005; Steiner, Hadas. *Beyond Archigram: The Structure of Circulation*. London/New York: Routledge, 2009.
33. Simon Sadler, essay on 'On Opening the Archigram Archives', written specially for the AAP website, February 2010.
34. Leon van Schaik, essay written specially for the AAP website, February 2010.
35. This means that it is in many cases impossible to read all text and images together as in the original magazines, except on the high-resolution version which can be viewed by researchers by appointment at the University of Westminster. The online version on the AAP, however, provides transcripts of the texts instead, while protecting the originals from pirated reproduction.
36. Scott Brown, Denise. 'Little Magazines in Architecture and Urbanism', *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, vol. 34 no. 4, July 1968, pp. 223-232; <http://www.clipstampfold.com>, Little Magazines website (accessed 25 April 2010).
37. This technological theme is pursued in Steiner, Hadas, op.cit.
38. Greene, David and Hardingham, Samantha, op. cit.
39. The full video of Dennis Crompton's speech at the AAP launch on 19 April 2010 can be viewed on <http://www.exp.edu.org/>.
40. Rattenbury, Kester, and Hardingham, Samantha (eds.). *Supercrit #3: Richard Rogers, Pompidou Centre*, London/New York: Routledge, forthcoming; Peter Cook's talk at the AAP launch on 19 April 2010 can also be viewed at <http://www.exp.edu.org/>.
41. Simon Sadler, essay on 'On Opening the Archigram Archives', written specially for the AAP website, February 2010.
42. Rattenbury, Kester (ed.) *This Is Not Architecture: Media Constructions*. London: Routledge, 2002.

43. See, for instance, James Ackerman, 'On the Origins of Architectural Photography', in Rattenbury, Kester, op. cit.

44. The commercial potential of the website/database was always a concern for the AHRC, and so the University of Westminster had to stipulate that it would not make any commercial gain from the AAP project, although such financial realities are of course a side-effect which enabled the whole enterprise to happen in the first place; even a low-resolution website might well unavoidably help to market images for Archigram.

45. Interestingly, as part of the L.A.W.U.N. project carried out while at EXP, David Greene and Samantha Hardingham in fact visited Orange to seek commercial funding; viewers of the long-running series of movie ads in recent years, in which famous actors pitch for funding for their ideal movies, may be amused to note that money wasn't forthcoming.

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COMPLIANCE WITH THE DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998

In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the personal data provided on this form will be processed by AHRC, and may be held on computerised database and/or manual files. Further details may be found in the **guidance notes**

Resource Enhancement Final Report Document Status: With Owner
AHRC Reference: 119249

Scheme: Resource Enhancement

Award Holding Organisation

Organisation	University of Westminster	Research Organisation Reference:
Division or Department	School of Architecture & Built Environment	119249

Title of Research Project

Online searchable item level catalogue and sample digital surrogate of the Archigram archives

Project Details

Start Date	01/06/2006	Duration of Grant (months)	44
End Date	31/01/2010	Total Grant Value	£ 304207
Report Due Date	30/04/2010		

Investigators/Fellow

Role	Name	Organisation	Division or Department	Hours per week to be worked on the grant as stated in the proposal (Estimated Average)	Actual hours per week worked on the grant
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'The Archigram Archival Project has created a truly outstanding new model for research-rich digital based projects internationally. With some 10,000 images culled from the original Archigram Archive, it has made manifest a virtual palimpsest of narrative and visual content that brings not just the work but its creators and the whole era brilliantly to life. Easy to use, effective in its design and structure, it makes vast quantities of information available under basic typologies: projects, exhibitions, magazines and people. The AAP will be invaluable for specialists, but its colourful mosaic leads and clear navigation will attract and stimulate the general public. It is a great tribute to all its creators that the AAP retains the quality and even re-presents the heady excitement of the original work by Archigram members complete with the often controversial response to it.'

[Email message from Dr Irena Murray, Sir Banister Fletcher Director of the British Architectural Library, RIBA, London, April 2010]

Archigram has long been credited with broadening the scope of architectural thinking and practice, including new approaches to technology, lifestyles, temporary events, landscape, urban planning and popular culture. Their vast influence on architectural practice and architectural culture has been recognised by the award to the RIBA Royal Gold Medal in 2002 and exhibitions, books and articles published worldwide. They are also essentially 'popular', with their spectacular imagery and provocative work, and their predictions of lifestyles changed by consumer culture and technology. Yet prior to this project, knowledge of their work was limited to a few famous images and projects, and most of their work was impossible to access. In doing this project with the collaboration of Archigram, we have been able to open up this hugely influential, scattered and practically inaccessible resource to not just the academic community but also to an enthusiastic public already using the technology which Archigram partly foresaw.

I believe this website to be a very significant research project, one that transforms any user's understanding of one of England's most influential avant garde architecture movements. Perceptions of the nature of the contribution made by Archigram are radically altered by the extent and scope of the archive and the exceptionally user-friendly form in which this impressive body of work and contemporary commentary has been assembled in the rigorous, organised (historically and thematically) communication system. The interactivity of the website cannot be faulted. This research will make this era of architectural endeavour live for those who were there, so to speak, and for generations to come. [letter from Leon van Schaik to RIBA]

Besides this, the project stands out as a new kind of research archive; one which is both not constrained by ownership (the digital resource collects information which may be scattered physically and owned by different people) and which is specifically designed to suit its material, to easily accommodate further scholarly discoveries, which conforms to the highest levels of academic scholarship, and yet which is specifically designed also to be easily accessible from and appealing to the wider and more popular forms of information culture, which are now developing so fast and which Archigram's work anticipated.

There are a number of online architectural archives emerging around the world, but nothing of this scale and depth, and nothing which is independent of traditional institutional collections. It therefore sets the bar for other digitised collections (such as the Denys Lasdun Archive being assembled by the RIBA/V&A or the Cedric Price Archive at the CCA in Montreal).

'The Archigram Archival Project is perhaps without peer even among the best generally-accessible online resources (for instance, those of the FRAC, NAi, and the Fondation Le Corbusier). Indeed, I believe its accessibility should be an inspiration for other archival projects. ... The Archigram Archival Project is already surrounded on Google by blogs that are talking about it, and even undergraduate students at my university feel compelled to tell me about it. This is a significant cultural change for archives and augurs a demographic change in the way that archives are accessed and how interest in architecture is generated.' (letter from Simon Sadler)

In this regard, the new Archigram Archival Project website establishes the absolute world-leading standard for others to match, and push forward: online scholarship in architecture could be said to be coming of age with this project. The website thus sits firmly within a growing field of digital knowledge, and can currently claim to be the richest online resource of any kind about contemporary architecture.

Grade for Subject Area

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Considerable	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> None
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Outside Academia

"By translating this oeuvre into the contemporary website format, those behind the AAP (Kester Rattenbury, Murray Fraser, Clare Hamman and designers Filip Visnjic and Pierpaolo Di Panfilo) have outlogged the image blogs, flooding a genre reliant on constant visual stimulation with imagery that is simultaneously avant-garde, archival and inspirational. It's a mental short circuit to be presented with so much at once, especially when so many of these projects are predictive of the myriad complexities of the modern condition." <http://www.thingsmagazine.net/>

The impact on non-architects has been outstanding for a new academic project. The Archigram Archival Project received well over 100,000 page hits in the first few days, and more than 40,000 visitors and quarter of million page views in the first two weeks, as well as featuring on an increasing number of blogs, which can be followed through Googling Archigram and going to 'blogs' (under 'more'). A tiny sample of the enthusiastic Twittering (the sites listed in Twitter's top 1000 after launch) is featured below:

grovehouse says: Absolutely fascinating! I could spend hours surfing around this site: Archigram Archival Project <http://bit.ly/d9tViY> - 14 hours ago

villetikkanen says: WOW: Archigram Archival Project!
<http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk/index.php> - 19th Apr, 2010

hareesun says: #archigram is wonderful! If you've not already, check it out!
<http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk/cc/@creativeapps> - 19th Apr, 2010

sacculi says: this is as good as it gets on the web
<http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk/index.php> - 19th Apr, 2010

kieranlong says: Is this the best website dedicated to a single architect ever? Well done Kester et al on the Archigram archive <http://tinyurl.com/y534558> - 19th Apr, 2010

Grade for Outside Academia

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Considerable	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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Further research directly arising from the project, including specific projects that you or your project partners are undertaking, whether funded or not.

The resource has been designed to easily accommodate future material if more becomes available. In particular, there is TV, audio visual and photographic material on Archigram which would have separate copyright and/or technical requirements, and future bids would need to be made to include this material. There has also been specific discussions about including 3-dimensional photographs of the architectural models made by the group.

or digitising more of their experimental short films, but these are still at discussion stage.

There are also discussions concerning other possible collections which might be digitally archived in the same way.

Meanwhile there are more advanced plans to further publicise and extend the project with an event at this year's Venice Architecture Biennale in 2010, a lecture at Pratt University in New York in 2010, and the University of Westminster is further proposing an exhibition in 2011 to mark the 50th anniversary of Archigram, plus a discussion event and associated book.

Grade for Further Research

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Considerable	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> None
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People

Role Name	Name / Post Identifier	Grade on Joining	Current Grade	Position on Joining	Current Position	Start Date	End Date	% FTE	Comments
Principal Investigator	Dr Kester Rattenbury					01/01/0001	01/01/0001	0	
Co-Investigator	Professor Murray Fraser					01/01/0001	01/01/0001	0	
Researcher	Ms Clare Hamman	Freelance consultant	Freelance consultant	Project manager	Project manager	01/03/2008	19/04/2010	60	Project manager on the project from March 2008 until completion. By agreement with the AHRC, this post was converted from a salaried and graded post to a freelance consultancy, with adjustments to timing to suit the agreed revised timetable.
Technician	Mr Filip Visnjic	Freelance Consultant	Freelance consultant	Website design and development	Website design and development	01/05/2009	19/04/2010	40	Working as a freelance consultant, Filip was responsible for the design and development of the final website (especially front-end)

									design navigation and graphics), in collaboration with database designer Pierpaolo Di Panfilo
Technician	Mr Pierpaolo Di Panfilo	Freelance Consultant	Freelance Consultant	Database design and technician	Database design and technician	01/05/2009	19/04/2010	30	Freelance consultant and technician working with the School of Informatics and Parallel Computing at the University of Westminster on the database design and development of the Archigram Archival Project, working closely with Filip Visnjic.

Interactions, Collaborations and Networking

Interaction Details	New Interaction	Interaction Locations
The collaboration with the surviving members of Archigram or their heirs was fundamental to this research. They acted as depositors, consultants, advisors and experts. All were members of the Steering Committee and were invited to its regular meetings, with further individual collaboration as they chose and the material required. All were interviewed as part of the interpretative material provided, and all were invited to participate in testing, development etc. We are particularly indebted to Dennis Crompton, who shared the organising structure of the Archigram Archives with us and allowed us to use this as the principal and 'authentic' organising structure for the AAP, and who also gave us extensive support, advice, information, help and access to material throughout. The website structure was designed in collaboration with Professor Stephen Winter and the Centre for Parallel Computing in the School of Electronics and Computer Science at the University of Westminster.	Yes	UK non-Research Organisation
Based on the information provided, how would you describe the importance of formal collaborations, either within the project team or with external partners.		Considerable
Based on the information provided, how would you describe the importance of formal networking activities?		Considerable
Was your research multidisciplinary?		No
Was your research interdisciplinary?		Yes

the course of the project, and the current and custom-built version was developed instead, reshaping the output as described in this document. We have not informed Intute because that service has also just been discontinued.

Have you established a web-site? **Yes**

Have you informed Intute? **No**

Please provide the URL.

<http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk>

Outputs and Outcomes

Electronic Outputs - Dataset		
Originally Envisaged: 1	Completed: 1	Not Yet Completed: 0
Completed (Y/N)?	Yes	
Originally envisaged (Y/N)?	Yes	
Joint Output (Y/N)?	No	
Non-Academic Audience (Y/N)?	No	
International Audience (Y/N)?	Yes	
Further Details	High-Resolution Surrogate Archive	
Electronic Outputs - Website		
Originally Envisaged: 1	Completed: 1	Not Yet Completed: 0
Completed (Y/N)?	Yes	
Originally envisaged (Y/N)?	Yes	
Joint Output (Y/N)?	No	
Non-Academic Audience (Y/N)?	Yes	
International Audience (Y/N)?	Yes	
Further Details	Archigram Archival Project website	

Electronic Resources (mandatory)

Are there any digital resources arising from the project? **Yes**

Have they been offered to the AHDS? **No**

Please outline briefly the strategy for maintaining any such resource(s) in the longer-term.

The public website is being hosted on a special server by the School of Computing and Electrical Sciences at the University of Westminster, who collaborated on this project (see people) and who are going on to develop this expertise in developing and hosting specialist research-based website projects; they were also responsible for the AHRC-funded Arts on Film website. They are responsible for maintaining this site under their agreement with the project team, using in-house specialist staff to carry out any necessary work involved. Further bids may be made by EXP for major work on future phases of work on future related collections.

The high-resolution version of the site including almost all material deposited is held and maintained by the University of Westminster on a locked and offline dedicated computer at the University of Westminster Archives, Great Titchfield Street (from September 2010, before that date access will be through contact with the research team). Bona fide researchers seeking academic study of this material can apply to the University Archivist Elaine Penn through the website or in writing. This version is held as part of the University's archives.

The website was not offered to the Arts and Humanities Data Service because the latter was withdrawn during

Principal Investigator	Dr Kester Rattenbury	University of Westminster	School of Architecture & Built Environment	8	12
Co-Investigator	Professor Murray Fraser	University of Westminster	School of Architecture & Built Environment	4	4

Summary (mandatory)

Please provide a revised summary of your project or programme expressed in a manner suitable for a non-specialised audience. If the summary in your original proposal is shown you may copy and edit this

Revised Summary

This project makes the work of the seminal 1960s-70s architectural group Archigram available free online for public viewing and academic study.

The extraordinary influence of Archigram is internationally acknowledged through the award of the RIBA Gold Medal in 2002, exhibitions, books, and through their role in shaping many of the world's greatest contemporary architects and buildings. Yet prior to the completion of this project, just a few of their projects were well-publicised, while the bulk of their visionary work remained practically inaccessible, stored in domestic conditions, subject to dilapidation, sale and loss.

Through the AHRC grant and in collaboration with surviving Archigram members and their heirs, our team has made the main body of their work available online through a custom-built, easily searchable database and catalogue containing almost 10,000 images deposited by Archigram, including drawings, collages, paintings, models, magazines, original texts and multi-media. The site covers more than 200 projects currently listed in Archigram's own records. It also includes interpretative material, notably: new interviews with Archigram members or their families; a major bibliography; a list of collaborators; new and contemporaneous critical texts.

The database is available free online for general public use at a restricted image size. A high-resolution version has further been deposited with the University for use by bona fide researchers.

The website marks a new kind of archive: a scholarly, online collection of material which does not depend on ownership, and which is designed to operate in the popular digital media as easily as it forms a reliable academic source. Besides receiving acclaim from academics internationally, the website's easy access, livelier and yet scholarly design has drawn a vast number of enthusiastic informal users, mainly coming from Twitter and Facebook, suggesting a new model for academic archives, receiving nearly quarter of a million page views and 40,000 users in its first two weeks of operation.

The project is as originally conceived and described in the AHRC application except that we have been able to include almost twice the number of images estimated, and that the changes following suspension of the AHDS gave us the opportunity to design a highly customised website-database, developed to suit the peculiar demands of the collection, and facilitating public digital browsing as well as subject-specific academic study. This has allowed us to develop a new kind of archive far beyond our original expectations.

Changes

You will be logged out automatically after two hours of system inactivity. Typing in a text box is not detectable by the system and is regarded as system inactivity. Please remember to save text regularly.

Please indicate any changes, during the lifetime of the research programme, to the original Aims and Objectives.

The project meets and exceeds the aims and objectives set out in the AHRC application (See Achievements, below, for a detailed account of aims and objectives). We have been able to include almost twice the number of images estimated, and the changes following suspension of the AHDS gave us the opportunity to design a highly customised website-database, developed to suit the peculiar demands of the collection, and facilitating public digital browsing as well as subject-specific academic study. This has allowed us to develop a new kind of archive far beyond our original expectations.

Please indicate any changes, during the lifetime of the research programme, to the original Outputs.

The outputs have remained consistently the same throughout the project, although with a new focus on the design and usability of the website. We have delivered: an online digital catalogue, freely available at <http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk>.

A high resolution version of the entire website, available to scholars by application via the website and held by the University of Westminster's archivist. This improves on the original bid's plans for a limited sample of high-resolution work.

The website and high resolution offline version are identical, except for resolution, and both contain extensive interpretative material including new interviews with all depositors (members of Archigram and heirs), a new and extensive bibliography, a new and extensive list of collaborators and new and contemporaneous essays.

The project has been disseminated via publicity and articles in the architectural and design press and online, by presentations at conferences, papers, journal articles etc, and by a two-day event at the ICA. Beyond this, we held a physical and virtual launch, generating a mass of online activity (see Dissemination, below) with both scholarly and public reviews praising its graphically engaging and academically thorough format. Further proposals for an exhibition and future events and publications are now being developed.

Please indicate any changes, during the lifetime of the research programme, to the original Dissemination plans.

The dissemination of this project has already fulfilled and exceeded our plans, as follows:

The website was launched on April 19th with a physical and online event and is available at <http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk>; almost 200 people attended the event with a Skype link to Archigram members in New York (prevented from joining through volcanic activity). From the start, the site has proved hugely popular, with 40,000 users and more than 250,000 page views in the first two weeks, taking the site into twitter's Top 1000 sites, and we have also received direct feedback and praise from major international research institutions and Archigram scholars, reporting widespread student use.

Reviews of the site have so far appeared or are forthcoming in *The Architects' Newspaper*, (New York) *Building Design*, *RIBA Journal*, *The Architects' Journal*, *Architectural Design*, *Architecture Today* as well as in thousands of blogs. See for instance <http://bldgblog.blogspot.com>, www.canadianarchitect.com, www.thing.com, www.projectfreerange.com, arknetblog.wordpress.com, www.dezeen.com; and many others.

As reported in our interim report, we held a two-day event at the ICA during the first year of the project, funded

- Espresso as PHP IDE
- Adobe Photoshop
- Google Maps for image zooming
- Perl as scripting language
- ImageMagik for image processing
- PHPMyAdmin
- Firebug
- JW Player

Technical methods used:
- 2d scanning and photography
- General website development
- Server scripting
- Web browser scripting
- Cataloguing and indexing
- Searching and querying
- Interface design
- Streaming media
- Accessibility analysis
- Iterative design

Data formats created:
TIFF, JPEG, PNG, GIF, MPEG4 videos, SQL database, XML

Data transformation for resource dissemination:
Conversion from FileMaker Pro datasets to standard sql database
Production of compressed JPEG files from uncompressed TIFF files for web dissemination

Metadata standards:
embedded exif metadata in images.

The work was done in collaboration with the Centre for Parallel Computing in the School of Electronics and Computer Science at the University of Westminster, under Professor Stephen Winter. This department will host and maintain the site, and are planning to expand this role in developing and hosting university research websites.

Please indicate any changes, during the lifetime of the research programme, to the original Timetable of Activities.

There was a short deferral of the start date at the beginning of the project. Once the project was under way, and as reported in the interim report, a 6-month extension of time was granted by the AHRC because of legal difficulties in finalising a workable Deposit Agreement with the holders of the original material, and because of the rethinking needed to consider options for the destination of the material following the suspension of the AHDS. This revised timetable was met, with the AHRC allowing a further period for testing for both robustness and usability due to the design of such a substantial website having not been part of the original bid. All of these matters were discussed with the AHRC, and the corresponding timetable changes agreed.

The original methodology was devised as a phased and flexible programme to take account of the special conditions of the project, and this flexibility was fundamental to keeping the project on track.

For instance, the approach taken to cataloguing the material was adjusted. As per the bid, the main Archigram collection was held and recorded in the University (once a project room had been provided). However, the majority of other loose items were recorded in situ, rather than transporting it all to and from the University. This was due to the severe fragility of many of the items - collages with glue collapsing, items that had not been removed from their current location for as much as 40 years. As the material was not being moved permanently

by LCACE. Further proposals for a major exhibition and future events and publications are now being developed.

The project has been presented as work in progress at The Modern Architectural Archives conference at the V&A in June 2007, The Technical University of Malaysia and Istanbul Technical University in 2009, and at the LCACE conference in March 2007 as well as at the ICA event in London, 2006. Further presentations are planned for ARCLIB conference on Portsmouth, July 2010, and at Strelka in Moscow in June 2010.

Three new scholarly papers were written for the project by international scholars Barry Curtis (Emeritus Professor of Visual Culture, University of Middlesex), Simon Sadler (Professor of Architecture and Urban History, University of California) and Leon van Schaik (Innovation Professor of Architecture, RMIT, Melbourne), and a further substantial 10,000 word article was written by the project investigators Dr Kester Rattenbury and Professor Murray Fraser. All are available on the website and may also be published in other refereed journals.

The project has been entered for the RIBA Research Prize.

If a technical appendix was completed, please indicate any changes during the lifetime of the research programme, to the original Technical Specification.

There were no substantial changes to the original technical specification for the project, in that due to copyright restrictions the size of images made available on the Internet was restricted by agreement with Archigram.

However, with the withdrawal of the AHDS as the principal end destination of the material, we had the opportunity to tailor-make the database and especially to develop its usability and graphic appearance to suit the material and its academic structure, as well as to design for the diverse audience groups expected to use the site. We have therefore been able to design the site to suit the specific academic structure of the material, to improve its accessibility and user experience for academics and casual users alike.

The software was created from scratch to fit to the needs of the project. Firstly a customised database was created that was later translated into an online backend manager. This was developed by the website designers working in close contact with the project manager (see people) to understand how to build up this extensive datasource. The site needed to be very simple to use and accessible from several workstations while in development because of the massive amount of work needed on the cataloguing of the Archigram works.

Both the backend and frontend site development were developed by the website designers working together with the team. The project demanded that we did not follow a "standard" project development plan, to allow for changing requirements (for instance, as more unknown material was found by the depositors and added) thus changing organisational requirements in a way that an initial project plan could never have foreseen. The technical team firstly created a core system and built on this as the project developed. In this way we developed exactly what was needed in a reasonable time frame, which would have been quite impossible with a standard project development plan.

The website also went through many visual redesigns too, working to reduce it to the strictly necessary navigation because we wanted it to be just a kind of "invisible" medium for viewing the content of the archive: the Archigram work itself.

The technical details of how the site has been constructed are as follows:

Software tools used:
- LAMP configuration for server (Linux + Apache + MySQL + PHP)
- Apache 2.2 as web server
- MySQL as database backend
- PHP5 as programming language
- JQuery as javascript framework
- eAccelerator for caching

to a new home, it was agreed to not jeopardise further the delicate drawings. This in situ work also enabled greater interaction with the members of the Archigram group who have the best knowledge of what the individual pieces are and they could fill in further information about them at the time of recording. Inevitably, this involved changes to the detailed timetabling of the work, though procedures and staff training remained as described.

As another example, and as predicted in the original bid, the project team was not always able to make a full assessment of the amount of material to be deposited prior to its actual deposit, as individual depositors holding material in domestic conditions found and deposited new material right up until the closing days of the project.

The detailed timetable therefore varied from the original, but the overall structure of work, which had been designed to account for such problems, remained the same and the revised timetable was met.

Steering groups were held regularly with all depositors who wished to attend, with minutes circulated. Additionally, individual meetings were held with specific depositors as they requested or the work required. Because of the new structure of the website design, the collaboration with the Centre for Parallel Computing in the School of Electronics and Computer Science at the University of Westminster, under Professor Stephen Winter, and the emergence of a new technical team (see below) to deal with this, a new series of regular technical meetings were held throughout the final year of the project.

In effect, the project has been able to adapt itself to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by emerging technological developments through the life of the project, and to manage the idiosyncrasies of the project. The flexible rolling programme (and changes to the organisation of the people working on the project, see below) has allowed us to do this.

Please indicate any changes to the People who have worked on the research programme.

Principal investigator: Kester Rattenbury (as per bid)
Co-Investigator: Murray Fraser (as per bid)
Technical Manager, Dr Nick Lambert (as per bid, 2006-9)
Project Manager, Clare Hamman (2008 -10 revision in timing and appointment type)
Website design and development: Filip Visnjic, Pierpaolo Di Panfilo, (in collaboration with the Centre for Parallel Computing in the School of Electronics and Computer Science at the University of Westminster, under Professor Stephen Winter and replacing Systems Simulation and the AHDS)

Please indicate if you have Missed Milestones during the research programme.

None. We anticipated processing around 5-6,000 images and in fact have included almost 10,000. Beside this, the output itself is better than would have been possible with technology available even a year or less earlier because of major development in social media which were incorporated into the design of the website / database.

Please indicate any changes, during the lifetime of the research programme, to the original Methodology.

There were no changes to the methodology during the project, which was principally archival, including photographing, scanning and recording material and building up an archive. As already described, it proved more effective to record some of the work and especially large and fragile articles in situ, rather than bringing

them into the University. In discussion with the depositors, we agreed to photograph many fragile images in their frames where appropriate to avoid any possible damage.

We were further given a new opportunity to design a website which mirrored and developed the structures of Archigram's own numbering system, so that the structuring and text of the AAP is based on 'authentic' Archigram definitions and descriptions. We have based all our information, titles, texts, numbering etc., on authentic and original material as far as possible, using Archigram's project numbering and original texts, which we have sourced and used where possible. We have identified the sources of any new material and have also added fully referenced contemporaneous text where appropriate. We have also sought new texts from major academics for inclusion in the site and produced our own scholarly essay accompanying the text. In addition to this, we have developed a major and substantial academic bibliography, and a substantial list of collaborators. All these go beyond what was specified in the original bid.

Please indicate any changes, during the lifetime of the research programme, to the original Project Management plans.

The basic structure remained as planned and as reported at the interim report, with Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator running the project as proposed, and with regular Steering Group meetings held throughout. Dr Nick Lambert was employed as technical manager from June 1 2006.

Within this, (and as described in the Interim Report), the employment of full-time staff on this project with its combination of flexible schedule and academic constraints proved inappropriate, especially given the delay and the ongoing flexibility required in the schedule, which would have made a fixed-term appointment system unworkable.

Instead, we developed a programme for employing Post-Graduate and Research students to work on a range of tasks including scanning, data entry, photography, and some basic textual research (eg finding original texts). These people were employed at an hourly rate and, as agreed with Archigram, were given initial training in handling archival material by the University Archivist Elaine Penn. This team of assistants were managed first by the Technical Manager and later by the Project Manager, Clare Hamman, and their detailed timetable was adjusted to suit the specific requirements of the various phases of the project.

Clare Hamman, the Project Manager, was also employed on a daily rate with hours to suit the project schedule. She joined the project team in 2008, taking over responsibility for day-to-day running of the project and management of the other junior staff members, described above. Dr Lambert's fixed term contract came to an end in 2009 just as main scanning processes were coming to an end. The development and design of the new website format passed to Filip Visnjic (contracted from WAG) and Pierpaolo Di Panfilo (working with Centre for Parallel Computing in the School of Electronics and Computer Science at the University of Westminster, under Professor Stephen Winter) who formed the new technical team, attending Steering Group meetings and holding more regular progress meetings and co-working sessions with the team.

These alterations to the way in which staff were employed and paid were discussed at relevant times with, and approved by, the AHRC throughout the project. In effect, this proved a far more responsive personnel structure than that originally foreseen, and one far better adapted to the changing technological and timetabling demands of the project than fixed term staff arrangements.

If there are any additional unforeseen changes to the research programme, please provide details and reasons below.

There are no other changes to report.

The AAP already forms a notable part of such a network. Along with the critics, academics and journalists reviewing this site, we believe that this project sets a new standard within that network, forming a site designed both for the highest academic standards and for the easiest possible public access. In support of this, see quotes in Importance, below.

If there are any additional achievements that do not clearly relate to your aims and objectives, please indicate these below. You may, for example, wish to provide evidence of intangible achievements that could not have been anticipated when you commenced the research programme. If you have identified such achievements under the 'Changes' section, there is no need to repeat the information here.

The new form of the website, and in particular its accessibility from Google, and its designers 'launch' of it on Twitter etc, has meant that it has received an extraordinary amount of public attention online and especially among the social media which could not possibly have been predicted at the start of the project, but which the project and especially the website design, was adapted to take advantage of. This marks a really significant change in the potential outreach for academic projects, and is particularly relevant to the academic subject matter in that it is just these sorts of effects that the members of Archigram predicted in their projects. See, for example, these comments, one from a leading Archigram academic, one from a web blog:

"The Archigram Archival Project is perhaps without peer even among the best generally-accessible online resources (for instance, those of the FRAC, NAI, and the Fondation Le Corbusier). Indeed, I believe its accessibility should be an inspiration for other archival projects." ... The Archigram Archival Project is already surrounded on Google by blogs that are talking about it, and even undergraduate students at my university feel compelled to tell me about it. This is a significant cultural change for archives and augurs a demographic change in the way that archives are accessed and how interest in architecture is generated." (letter from Simon Sadler)

"By translating this oeuvre into the contemporary website format, those behind the AAP (Kester Rattenbury, Murray Fraser, Clare Hamman and designers Filip Visnjic and Pierpaolo Di Panfilo) have outlogged the image blogs, flooding a genre reliant on constant visual stimulation with imagery that is simultaneously avant-garde, archival and inspirational. It's a mental short circuit to be presented with so much at once, especially when so many of these projects are predictive of the myriad complexities of the modern condition." <http://www.thingsmagazine.net/>

This was an effect which could not have been foreseen at the time of the original bid, when the format was designed to suit the AHDS.

Importance

Please comment on the potential importance of the project and its findings in advancing creativity, knowledge and understanding in the following areas and also in stimulating further projects. You should ensure that you refer to Help for further guidance.

Subject Area

Along with leading academics, critics and journalists, we believe the project to be of major significance both to the understanding of one of architecture's most influential design groups and in marking a new phase in online scholarship.

Achievements

Using your original aims and objectives as a framework for your response, please briefly identify the achievements or highlights of your research programme. Your response should, where possible, be evidence-based. If your aims and objectives have been amended following consultation with the AHRC, please refer to the amended version. Please also refer to Help, as scheme-specific guidance may apply.

We believe we have met and indeed exceeded our aims, which were:

To make the first comprehensive survey of Archigram's work

This has been extensively done. Our estimates were that the project would hold around 5,000 images. In fact, the AAP now contains almost 10,000 items including ephemera, contextual and related material and original and new texts and interviews.

To record material in danger of loss and dilapidation

This has been extensively done, with more than twice the project estimate of items being recorded, and where possible the condition recorded on the website, with the methodology adapted to avoid any damage to work (see Methodology, above).

To make the material available in long term and scholarly form

This has been extensively done receiving wide praise from leading scholars and academic institutions, who have already described it as 'setting new standards' and 'perhaps without peer even among the best generally-accessible online resources'. (See Methodology for more on this). In support of this, please see quotes in Importance, below.

To take advantage of the co-operation of Archigram members and their heirs to provide detailed identification and first-hand interpretation of material

The co-operation of Archigram has been completely essential to this project and has provided us with material, factual information, contextual and interpretative advice through both formal management structure (regular Steering Group meetings) and informal working relationships. All depositors provided interpretative material and were interviewed as part of the project, the interviews being available as transcripts and videos online. All depositors also have their own web page allowing for CVs, links, videos, other projects and other non-standard pieces of information, and new projects are planned relating to some of these.

To form the academic basis of an ongoing, broader and more public series of projects studying Archigram and experimental design.

The project already operates on both these levels. The website itself is now being used enthusiastically by both public and academic audiences. In the first four days after launch there were more than 100,000 page views, and after two weeks this has risen to 45,000 visitors and more than quarter of a million page views. We hosted a two-day event at the ICA (Archigram Cheer-up 2 <http://www.ica.org.uk/Archigram%20Sunday+12150.twl>) during the first year of the project. The final project launch at the University of Westminster <http://www.exp-edu.org> was attended by around 200 people, (despite the closure of UK airspace), with links by Skype. Further events are in discussion (eg presence at the Venice Biennale; a lecture at Pratt University, USA, a new exhibition of Archigram work and other further events and publications at Westminster)

To form a key part of development of EXP, a new research group exploring the role of experimental design in architecture and architectural teaching

The AAP marks the emergence of EXP (already a well known new research "brand" in architecture) as a serious research body, able to integrate serious scholarly activity with creative and popular design experimentation. Crucially, the final form of the website grew partly out of, and partly instigated another EXP-instigated project, the Open Studio website launched in 2009 (www.openstudiowestminster.org). EXP is also generating plans for further projects and exhibitions growing from the Archigram Archival Project, as described above and below.

To form part of a network of online archives



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Dr Kester Rattenbury
 School of Architecture and Built Environment
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 Marylebone Campus
 35 Marylebone Road
 London
 NW1 5LS
 01 November 2010
 Dear Dr Rattenbury,
Resource Enhancement Award: Final Report
Project Title: Online searchable item level catalogue and sample digital surrogate of the Archigram archives
Our Reference: RE / FID number: 11768 / AID Number: 119249
 Thank you for your Final Report for the above Resource Enhancement award which we received on 21 May 2010. Final reports for Resource Enhancement awards are assessed through peer review and graded as either outstanding, good, satisfactory or unsatisfactory.
 If the assessors consider the conduct and delivery of the project to be satisfactory, then they will also provide an indicative assessment of the level of achievement during the process of research and the potential importance of the project as a whole. This informs the allocation of one of three grades: Satisfactory, Good or Outstanding. Please note that the grade is a judgement of the research process and the project's potential importance. It is not a judgement of the quality of any outputs produced.
 The precise grade (Satisfactory, Good, Outstanding) will remain confidential to the award holder and the AHRC. In the event that you submit any further applications to the AHRC, the panel considering your application will only be informed of the satisfactory outcome, and not the precise grade. The grade will be used in summary alongside those for all other such projects to inform the AHRC's overall evaluation of the research it supports.
 I am pleased to inform you that your report has been assessed as Outstanding. This assessment may be taken into account in considering any subsequent applications you make to the Council. Feedback is contained in the enclosed assessment(s).
 I would wish to remind you that, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the award, due acknowledgement of support received from the AHRC should be made in or about any publication (printed or electronic) or public output - including exhibitions and performances - resulting from the funded research. In the case of outputs which involve collaboration with other organisations, you should ensure that all parties are aware of the need to incorporate an acknowledgement of AHRC support in all publicity material. It is also a condition that one copy of any such publication or output should be sent to the Council. Where the research programme results in a non-permanent output such as an installation or performance, photographs or reviews, these constitute an acceptable record of the output. I should therefore be grateful if you could arrange for a copy of any relevant outputs to be forwarded to the Council once they are available.
 May I take this opportunity of wishing you every success with your research activities in the future.
 Yours sincerely,

 Ian Devine
 Programme Co-ordinator
 T 01793 416055
 E i.devine@ahrc.ac.uk

	personal involved
2. Achievements Please comment on the achievements highlighted by the award holder, relative to those anticipated in the project's aims and objectives. You are asked to comment both on those achievements that relate directly to the project's aims and objectives and to any that were not anticipated when the project commenced. If possible, please refer to each achievement in turn as identified by the award-holder.	
Achievements	Comments
*To make the first Comprehensive survey of Archigram's work.	Achieved, and image targets exceeded.
*To record material in danger of loss and misplacement.	Done. The report indicates how this was handled.
*To make the material available in long term and scholarly form.	It seems there are two standards of material available: in public web standard format and high resolution material. The latter requiring permissioned access from Westminster. This seems entirely sound. With contemporary institutional server configurations one can assume indefinite life for such resources. The material is obviously kept in databases. As presentation formats and content management techniques change then the digital material can be accessed in different ways in the future.
*To take advantage of the co-operation of Archigram members and their heirs to provide detailed identification and first-hand interpretation of material.	This is a major strength of the project, and the execution of the project is obviously very timely considering the age of the original contributors to Archigram.
*To form the academic basis of an ongoing, broader and more public series of projects studying Archigram and experimental design.	The public aspect of the project is reported well.
*To form a key part of development of Experimental Practice (EXP), a research group exploring the role of experimental design.	This achievement seems plausible as outlined in the report.

	Comments
Academic, technical and other staff	Difficult to ascertain from the report, but one can readily infer substantial career development through the success of this project, as well as enhancement to skills base through the development of new techniques.
Post-doctoral researchers	As above.
b. Interactions – Collaboration & Networking With reference to the final report, please comment on the range and effectiveness of the formal collaborations and networking activities within the project. Taking account of the evidence provided in the report, your comments should incorporate an evaluation of whether you consider the award holder's self-assessment of the significance of these interactions to be credible.	
Formal collaborations	Obviously interaction with the Archigram participants and their heirs has proven extremely valuable. It looks as though the project itself had a socialising effect on the community. The video interviews are a good indicator of this.
Networking activities	Digital networks are being deployed to very good effect, and the report seems to have yielded effective research network effects. The report presents this very well.
5. Outputs/outcomes With reference to the final report, please comment on the delivery, nature and range of outputs and outcomes relative to those anticipated in the original scheme of research. You should also comment on the effectiveness of dissemination and knowledge engagement activities, in terms of whether they have been, or will be, adequate to make the research findings available to both the research community and any relevant audiences beyond academia. If you consider that there might be opportunities for further such engagement that could be considered by the award-holder or by the AHRC, please highlight these below.	
Outputs indicated relative to those initially anticipated	I think the repeated claim in the report that expected outcomes were exceeded is entirely credible and backed up by the evidence. Having the online resource available makes it extremely easy for the review to confirm the claims of the report.
Effectiveness of dissemination and knowledge engagement activities	These are well described and plausible. There's a 'viral' aspect to the dissemination. Thanks to the media deployed, and the general interest in Archigram, I suspect the dissemination is taking on a life of its own from here on.
6. Electronic Resources If the award holder has indicated one or more electronic resources as an output arising from the project, please comment on the strategy proposed for their storage, dissemination and maintenance in the longer-term. Knowing how institutions deal in such resource investments the claim for the longevity of the resource at Westminster is entirely plausible.	


Arts & Humanities Research Council
Resource Enhancement Scheme Assessment of Final Reports (AR1)

Award Holder:	Dr Kester Rattenbury	Institution:	University of Westminster
Project Title:	Online Searchable Item Level Catalogue and Sample Digital Surrogate of the Archigram Archives		
Dates of Project:	01/06/06 – 31/01/10	Panel(s):	B Creative and Performing Arts

Please note that your comments will be forwarded, alongside a final grade, in an anonymised format to the award holder.

1. Changes
With reference to the original scheme of work and changes to the project reported in the final report, please comment on the impact of any changes that were made to the project, particularly the extent to which such changes:

- might have been anticipated by the award holder at the time of application
- were due to factors beyond the award holder's control
- were made following appropriate consultation with the AHRC and, where appropriate, the AHOS
- had an impact, positive or negative, on the outputs and outcomes of the project as a whole.

	Comment
Aims and objectives	The aims seem not to have changed, but targets were in fact exceeded, i.e. number of resources scanned, impact of the project.
Methodology	No change, but rather the development of new methodologies to do with accessing resources, scanning, dissemination.
Project management	No substantive changes.
Outputs	Much more was achieved than anticipated.
Dissemination	As often happens in the life of a project, the technology for digital dissemination became more accessible, with good exemplars available. The project seems to have grasped the opportunities provided by new online presentation techniques, and developments in social media. Other dissemination channels, such as exhibitions, events and publications seem to have been enhanced by this.
Technical	Moving out of the AHOS service (due to its closure) seems to have been the best thing for this project and gave the researchers scope and incentive to innovate.
Timetable	6 month delay was reported and approved and seems of no deleterious consequence.
People	The core team was a constant, but there were inevitable changes in other

	Comments
in architecture and architectural teaching	This is inevitable now considering the nature of blogging, social media, and the proliferation of publicly accessible archives of this kind.
*To form part of a network of online archives.	
3. Importance Please comment on the award-holder's self-assessment of the potential importance of the project and its findings in advancing creativity, knowledge and understanding. Taking account of the evidence provided in the report, your comments should incorporate an evaluation of whether you consider the award holder's self-assessment to be credible. You should, if possible, refer separately to the potential importance of the project to the award-holder's subject area and to the wider academic community, to the non-academic domain and to any further projects that have directly arisen from the AHRC award. Your comments should be relative to the amount of AHRC funding provided and the size and scope of the project undertaken.	
Subject area	The grant award was a modest 300k+. The achievement is remarkable given this funding. The outcomes of this project are there for all to see. The project is hugely important for provoking further interest in the recent history of contemporary architecture and theory. For this late digital age, where everything is presented as new, it is easy to forget the legacies on which so many current developments in construction and communications technologies were built. The final report communicates this very well and credibly.
Outside academia	The imagery in the archive, the videos and texts are compelling for practitioners in art, design, and media. The report explains this very well.
Further research arising from this award	There is obviously more that can be added to the archive, and there are further links to other resources that can be made. One looks forward to engagement with the material, positioning it critically within 20th century cultural development, analyzing further its sources and effects, learning further lessons about design, aspiration, urbanism, utopia, heritage, social attitudes to technologies, etc. This archive will enable that. There are also ways that the dissemination of such materials can be enhanced, eg through mobile media. As the report suggests, there's a fascinating resonance between the digital storage and dissemination technologies deployed, the social networking aspects and Archigram's "johweezy".
4. People a. Staffing With reference to the final report, please comment on the extent to which the project has helped to realise the career potential of the project participants, which should include both established academic staff working on the project and any research staff and students. Please also comment on the role of, and effectiveness of management and supervisory arrangements for, any post-doctoral researchers or project students, including training provision.	

Value for Money
In light of your comments in the sections above - particularly in relation to achievements, importance and outputs/outcomes - and the information on the total cost of the project in the end of award report, please comment on the project's overall value for money. Do you consider that the project represents an effective investment of the AHRC's funding? You should not comment on the detailed budgetary information in the end of award report as these will be analysed by Officers of the AHRC.

This project is a real coup for the AHRC. The successful outcome was never inevitable and the project seems to have been superbly managed. There is no question that it represents extremely good value for money. I assume the AHRC will foreground the project on its website.

The website slowly immerses you layer by layer into past political milieus. The deepest layers are imbued with the post WW2 socialist ambition to make a world fit for everyone. This is the architecture of reconstruction, of massive catch up after years of destruction and stasis. The fragile projects: Sin Centre Leicester Square (1961) Bournemouth Leisure Centre (1961), Bournemouth Nets (1966), and especially Instant City (1968) are all (in the context of the class culture of England) highly political assertions that the good things of life should be made accessible to everyone, not kept as the preserves of those who have inherited access, or won it through wealth. 'Pop' populism emerged in the art of Richard Hamilton at the same time, and in the same social milieu.

The website also allows you to track the roles of the members. Rather like those histories of the contemporary music groups in which the Base Guitarist seems always to change at a critical moment, here you can watch people fading in and out (and in Archigram's case in again as often as not) of the spotlight of the groups' interests... This is a record of collaboration and of a generosity of spirit that this record of its extraordinary productions suggest peaked in the early 1970s.

For me this is the consistent message brought home by having all of the projects here in one place: et in arcadia ego – for everyone. And not whimsically, but practically and effectively. These projects – often expressly about 'industrialised building (Hospital 1965) all envisage the technology needed for their realisation, but they surf ahead of its ability to deliver.

I have spent more time than I can afford on this seductive website, it greatly enhances my appreciation of the enormous contribution of the group – well beyond the books. I have been dwelling on images familiar, images half remembered, images never properly absorbed before. This is a marvellous resource, though I do wish I could tag images as I move through, so that different arguments can be constructed at different times...

As I recall, I first consciously encountered Archigram when I arrived in the combined fifth year studio at the Architectural Association School of Architecture in autumn 1970. This was run by Peter Cook, and Bernard Tschumi and Colin Fournier were tutors. That is not to discount subliminal awareness: my fourth year project set on the southern side of Oxford Street in London (1969-70) bore an uncanny resemblance to Peter Cook's City Mound: speculation for an underground city (1964), combined with the mechanics of Peter Cook and David Greene's Nottingham Shopping Centre (1962). This was a resemblance that did not trouble Peter Cook, who generously embraced the project as being (I suppose) in a worthy lineage. After that I was 'embedded' – as we say now – in an Archigram world, beamed from the lecture theatre through Goonhilly Downs to Bill Busfield in Perth Western Australia (1971), Cheer Up! It's Archigram at the ICA (1972-3) Artnet (1974-1980). How poignant now looks Peter Cook's inscribed circles layout drawing for this! How quaint Quant-like the various completed fit-outs for airlines done by Ron Herron and Warren Chalk!

There are things we all 'knew': that many in the group came through the LCC; that some took the Smithsons' as mentors, that they all worked on Taylor Woodrow projects... Nothing much about the Smithsons' surfaces in this record, though there are startling similarities to Robin Hood Lane in the courtyard views of some housing projects done under the aegis of Taylor Woodrow. What the website does is to present the LCC period as a substantial under the water element of the iceberg that is Archigram. It is startling to see how many core group ideas – plug in components for example – first manifest as built concrete forms. These then seem challenged by the light touch of Webb and Greene's student projects – although they first appear as collaborators on a Taylor Woodrow project.

The Taylor Woodrow period weaves more organically through the experimentation, but it is extraordinary now to see how much that experimentation was focused on almost realisable 'real' projects. Despite the ways in which Archigram is often (these days) lumped with 1960s avant-garde movements with very tenuous interests in the real-politik of the construction industry, the website reveals that this is not a 'paper' architecture avant-garde, but a set of researches intent on being built. Fascinating to compare Peter Cook's current designs for a university in Vienna with his competition entry for the Lincoln Civic Centre (1961) – almost the same parti... Perhaps we do all begin with an idea and pursue it remorselessly throughout our careers. There are some schemes – Leverton Place (1971) that Archigram are lucky were not built: this would have cemented in place as a pathetic fallacy all the moving parts that the designs were striving to effect.

A possible exception to the determination to be real lies in the fragile projects of Greene – many of which project a longing for locations lyrical and untrammelled by the weight of construction, and the Temple Island project of Webb. This last romantic confection seemingly taken up in some later projects by Peter Cook – Urban Mark (1972) and Lump and Secret Garden (1973) – projects that almost suggest that the idea of actually building has been abandoned – prematurely as we all now know. The group certainly did not draw any such distinction. . In Archigram Magazine No.1 (1961) the Piccadilly Circus proposal of that year is compared to David Greene's final student project – his 1958 Mosque

It is extraordinary – thanks to the website – to see the bulky forms of Ron Herron's Walking City (1964) emerge out of a 'real' Taylor Woodrow project (City of London Office Block) of the same year. This most fantastical of projects – one can imagine – was mostly drawn as part of the designing of a building that could well have been built: a sort of doodle of 'what ifs' done after hours and at the same time? The probing tentacles in walking City emerge from City Interchange (1963), another project with Taylor Woodrow. The telescoping effect of these probe-like forms seemingly a serendipitous outcome of using axonometric projections and perspective to convey tubular links.

'Plug In' has a long lineage. It is evident in stacking of components in the Metal Housing Project by Peter Cook (1961) "car-body type units on pre-cast guts" well before it emerges in Plug In City (1964). Moshe Safdie's Habitat was completed in 1967... proof of Rupert Sheldrake's morphic resonance theory in which ideas always emerge all over the world at about the same time, or the result of industrial espionage...

Simon Sadler

People/Animals. Friends.

I had a dream that a website opened and with it THE ARCHIVE. "Write 200 words or so"—a nonchalant way for the people at EXP to introduce me to a well-nigh life choice: whether to enter these suddenly-opened back corridors of Archigram, with their never-before-seen drawings, slide collections, magazine insets, or whether to let younger and fitter academics burst through one digital cabinet after another unobstructed, Kittler and Žižek at their sides.

With trepidation I press the hyperlink to Archigram's new museum without walls. When he finally saw all his beloved Poussins side by side at the Louvre, it's said, Anthony Blunt decided that the conclusions he'd reached by viewing the paintings separately were erroneous. So I spend time flicking through the pages of the Archigram Archival Project asking myself whether I stand by the findings I'd earlier drawn in the absence of this virtual catalogue raisonné.

Hitting the site for the first time, the files organize themselves chronologically, a veritable flashback moving from early sixties monochrome to late sixties colour, from form to *informe*, from Corb to Carnaby Street. Aside from the visual and intellectual pleasure of it all, it's a reassuring anti-climax: what appears is approximately what I would have expected to see in the days when the Archigram Archive was still mysteriously hidden "under beds and behind walls." Here, still, is the rhetorical disappearance of architecture, whereupon one half of the Archigram group disappears into a meditation upon that disappearance, David Greene affecting suicide by photocopier, only for the other half to design its way out of the impasse, Ron Herron converting the kitchen and swimming pool at Rod Stewart's Wiltshire home. Both sides of Archigram affect contemporary architecture so deeply, I continue to think, that it is impossible to isolate their legacies as they seep into today's architectural landscape of flows and folds and interfaces and ecologies.

The full import of this live legacy is somewhat belied by the site's dutiful reproduction of some clichés about the Archigram group, etched four decades earlier in the Archigram anthology—"David Greene: The poet of the group." "Ron Herron: Draws like a dream ... apparently effortlessly." In coming years these will be surely demoted by scholarly and critical apparatus. That can wait, though, because researchers are going to be kept busy by the new wealth of detail. Imagine when more archives take the gallant leap made by Archigram and EXP: archives will no longer be the gatekeepered preserve of Ph.D. students with good references, but will cross into the light of the virtual public sphere. How odd it seems, as slides spill out from this website at the touch of my cursor seven thousand miles away, that a decade and a half ago we were fumbling around in a darkness barely illuminated by the internet. Yet it was merciful, I find myself wondering, that this much information wasn't available as I started working on Archigram. Should future historians be kind enough to spare a thought for the efforts made by their predecessors to scratch together any evidence at all, then those same predecessors might sympathize with new researchers faced by the magnitude of evidence tipping out from fully opened and searchable archives. Academic scoops will be made less and less by finding things, more and more by saying something significant about those things.

Simon Sadler

People/Animals. Friends.

Archigram's work looks comfortable on the web (I completed my site visit on a phone—I'm sure Archigram would approve). Archigram was accused by its critics of willing the destruction of architecture, but we see now that it was trying to *save* architecture—to be its St. Christopher, carrying the art form safely across the rushing streams of communications separating the Industrial and Postindustrial eras. Still, my admiration for Archigram tends to be slightly begrudging and embarrassed, for the same reasons perhaps that I am slightly begrudging and embarrassed about the survival of my own profession, that of the academic able to produce insight into a modularised and mediated world but little meaningful response to it.

It's always easier to leave Archigram stranded by such criticism than it is to account for the group's vitalism. One thing that the website conveys, as it lays out its gridded electronic fields, is an appetite for life dismissed since the sixties as naivety. To capture in our own time some better sense of Archigram's stance one has to turn to Twitter, Facebook and Flickr with their strange upbeat take on this planet of anxiety, horror, fundamentalism, risk. They evince that desire to grab and exchange the world in some reckless existential search, to produce a happier archive of lived experience and of the contemplation of being.

The singularly moving sight within Archigram's archive is, accordingly, its slide collection. Things. Things seen. Places. Signs and Structures—hmm, not a lot of architecture, to be honest, and precious little of what there is of canonical standing. Folder titles like "People/Animals. Friends." A picture of Michael Webb, awkwardly impersonating an ordinary man standing in front of his Honda Civic. Drastically aging 'pinks' (to use slide library parlance) of San Francisco. David Greene's collection of 'Random Nature'. Pedagogical mysteries, such as the uses Warren Chalk found for a picture of a woman looking at her teeth in a mirror.

When I published my book about Archigram, I knew there was quite possibly an undiscovered something in the archive that could turn everything upside down—secret correspondence with the Smithsons, say, or copies of books by Marcuse with carefully considered marginalia. An initial sweep through the new website turns up no smoking guns—in fact there are relatively few textual documents, and some of those that are posted are at a resolution too low to be legible, while doubtless some items will remain undisclosed even at this moment of Archigram's unprecedented largesse. So the impression left by the traces in its archive of Archigram's less public life is of a sense of fun, of wry lectures and memorable field trips.

Conversing during a car trip last week with a sociologist who studies political crisis and a political journalist investigating social injustice, the insights were troubling enough for me to ask whether one must finally accept that there is no hope. "For God's sake man, stick your head out the car window, breath, take it in, that's all still there," the driver retorted, as though to contradict the very world of which he was just speaking. I conclude this review of the Archigram Archive contemplating David Greene's bewitching, high-contrast, color-saturated slides of "Random Nature," and then step out into the garden.

Barry Curtis
Archigram

The comprehensive and flexible Archigram website conveys some of the fractal excitement of first encountering the original magazines. Impact alternates with fascination in the details, and the affinities they set up, inside and outside the image. The organisation of the site offers unfamiliar variants of well-known illustrations, and some surprising might-have-been projects that haven't been previously reproduced, such as a proposed Globe Theatre and a National Gallery extension. There are precursors of the Pompidou Centre and some 'Oz'-like transitions between monochrome projects for a world that is identifiably of its time and the visionary formulations of a possible future. In even the most conventional projects there is a perceptible reaching out to a more dimensionally complex architecture.

The chronological bar that traces the twenty years of Archigram activity offers the opportunity to trace timely enthusiasms – ideas taken up and explored individually and collectively. There are themes that relate to specific projects and preoccupations that are refined and re-oriented. Incredulity at the achievement of so much in such a short time is compounded by the scope of reference. Every page and project is imbued by the extended sensorium of the group and their extensive travels and contacts. The images and texts testify to an urgent mission to dissolve and reconstitute architecture in relation to cultural and technological change, and to take advantage of the full range of fictions and realities encountered en route.

Forty years ago, Archigram were speculating on an architecture 'whose labels had come off' (It's a... (1970)) In spite of the stubborn persistence of planning regulations and the retardant effect of 'labelling' –many of the images of a potential public realm are beginning to look a little familiar. Virtuality is perhaps more in the software than could have been envisaged but the vividly rendered public pleasures have been partially realised and we are all 'Infogonks' now, even if the architectural hardware is not as adaptive and participative as Archigram would have liked. Towers that share some of this imaginative energy are being built, suburbs are timidly tuned and homes are, at last accessing infotainment in the spirit of these grandparental times.

The more you zoom, the more astonishing the fragments and details are. The page-by-page access to the magazines 1 – 9½, establishes them as vividly of their time, but also as radically prescient. The sheer hard work and virtuosity is visible throughout, particularly in the surviving records of exhibitions and events. In spite of the urgency of the polemic there is a prevailing visual pleasure, a sustained creative energy that makes this now-visible body of work iconic, surprising and timeless.



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The Archigram Archives go digital

13 May 2010 | By Steve Parnell



Archigram ruled the architectural avant-garde in the late 1960s – 50 years on, its playful vision of a technocratic future is freely available online. Steve Parnell reports

Almost half a century on from their initial protest sheet, interest in Archigram – architecture's answer to The Beatles – has, incredibly, never been stronger. The amazing thing is that until recently, it was the Archigram group themselves – Peter Cook, Dennis Crompton, David Greene, Mike Webb, Ron Heron and Waman Chalk – who were most fascinated with their creations. No books, not even those written by Archigram, contained the full back catalogue. This was frustrating because since the 1960s pop group split up, very little independent critical assessment – with the exception of Simon Sadler's superb 'unofficial biography' in 2005 – has occurred. They have therefore been able to successfully embed themselves deeply into architectural history and even won the RIBA Gold Medal in the process, having built no more than a playground in Milton Keynes and Rod Stewart's swimming pool.

If the world of cuisine were as obsessed with awards as architecture is, this would be akin to a celebrity chef winning the Golden Toque (or whatever it is they secretly covet) by simply writing recipes involving nonexistent food (probably aphrodisiac), drawing beautiful people eating them, and publishing myriad cookbooks without ever switching on an oven. Once the fly in the establishment's ointment, Archigram now represent the epitome of architectural establishmentarianism. One could argue about the influence of Archigram on the metabolists, on the high-tech movement and on building in general. Many people have. But it's architectural culture rather than practice where the 'six wise giants' are important.

Until the 1960s, architectural culture was a by-product of practice. However, partly in response to a growing disillusionment with modernism, this hierarchy has been reversing ever since so that now, architectural practice is a by-product of its culture. And it is Archigram that most emphatically represents this inversion, as the first architects to make a career almost entirely out of architectural culture (lecturing, teaching, exhibiting, publishing) rather than building.

So the Archigram Archival Project – an online catalogue of the group's work – is incredibly important. Until the launch of this site, there was simply nowhere you could view the magazines in which the majority of its work was first published, that generated the phenomenon as an entirety. They are now available for free viewing in glorious, low resolution technicolour. The site is superb, both in content and form. It won't make the corners of your browser round, but there are videos of Kester Rattenbury interviewing Crompton about each of the 10 magazines, a bibliography that will take a lifetime to read and almost 10,000 original items – mostly drawings of course, but also photographs of slide shows and exhibitions – scanned in, cross-referenced and searchable. As well as many of the items being transcribed, there are supplementary texts to locate Archigram in history, in case you missed it the first time.

And at last – every page of every magazine is there too. My only criticism is the resolution of the images. This is a direct consequence of the difference between culture and practice: whereas the products of architectural culture (documents) are easy to copy, and therefore copyrightable, those of practice (buildings) are not. In the UK, until the recent hyper-paranoid anti-terror laws at least, it was permissible to freely photograph any building from the public highway. The surviving Archigram four and the heirs of Chalk and Heron don't want anyone raiding the cash cow by freely printing the contents.



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Now we can all access the incredible quantity of Archigram material and feed off the abounding optimism

<http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk/>

Archigram's rise to fame

Archigram's productions include exhibitions, shows and even an opera, as well as the magazines. Their first, following in the wake of the Independent Group's 1950s exhibitions, was Living City at the ICA in 1963. The problem facing our cities is not just that of their regeneration, but of their right to an existence," wrote Cook in the introduction.

However, one critic questioned the need for an exhibition promoting the vibrancy of the city, in the middle of swinging London. Nevertheless, the catalogue was published as the second of Theo Crosby's Living Arts magazine and the logo won a COID award.

Archigram 4, the 'Zoom' issue of 1964, was the key year in Archigram's fortunes. This most brilliant of issues took more than inspiration from sci-fi comic books and Roy Lichtenstein imagery in order to present architecture as a consumable, popular item rather than the stuffy high culture that modernism had become.

Reyner Banham, who lived opposite Peter Cook, took six copies with him to the US, where, the story goes, Philip Johnson and Peter Blake saw it and the 'zoom wave' really took off, giving Archigram international notoriety.

Beyond the magazines, Archigram produced an immense amount of ideas and drawings depicting an optimistic, fantasy, fun future where you and your partner are eternally beautiful. Many of these previously unpublished images form a large portion of the archive and are well worth investigation.

For example, there's the 'tuned suburb' (which today might be called 'pimp my suburb'), the Enviro-Pill – a pill that induces a virtual reality environment in the mind, and many competition entries from when the group attempted the move from culture to practice.

It would have been interesting to see their ideas turned into material reality, although that would have spoilt the Archigram mythology.

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The Archigram Archival Project cues up the '60s pop group's hits and B-sides.

By Mimi Zeiger

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Credit: John Wright

Thanks to the diligence of Archigram member (and de facto archivist) Dennis Crompton, the Archigram Archival Project site includes a number of previously unpublished images. "I used to regularly collect this stuff out of the waste bin," he says.

Archigram has always been more rock star than starchitect. The six-member group—Warren Chalk, Peter Cook, Dennis Crompton, David Greene, Ron Herron, and Michael Webb—produced some of the most revolutionary designs of the 1960s and early 1970s. Drawing on consumer culture as well as new technologies, their self-published pamphlets challenged stuffy high Modernism and the architectural status quo by envisioning, among other fantastical things, walking cities. As the bad boys of pop architecture, they've made giddy fans out of students, academics, and practitioners over the years. Yet it was still a surprise when the Archigram Archival Project, an online visual database of the group's work that launched in April, immediately went viral, racking up 100,000 page views in its first week.

Conceived when the firm received the 2002 Royal Gold Medal from the Royal Institute of British Architects, the site was developed by a team from the University of Westminster's research center for experimental practice in the Department of Architecture. "Archigram's work is not finite," says project manager Clare Hamman. "We designed a site that could grow, so that extra things—like films or all of Ron Herron's boxes of ephemera—could be added later."

Yet the site is already a research gold mine. In addition to some 10,000 images, it includes collaborator bios, cross-linked to projects, and long interviews with Crompton about each of the nine (and a half) magazines Archigram produced between 1961 and 1974. (The holder of Archigram's archives, Crompton worked with the Westminster team to make the site a reality.) The trove seems to offer up endless new material for analysis: sketches from the "Living City" exhibition, for example, or a master-planning proposal for a London shopping center. Finding evidence of visionary and mundane projects in the archive underscores the fact that while Archigram is best known for whimsy, its members were, and are, quite serious about architecture.

"I think we were curious about everything," Crompton says. "What has become apparent in the last 10 to 15 years," he adds, "is that we've become the subject of legitimate academic study."

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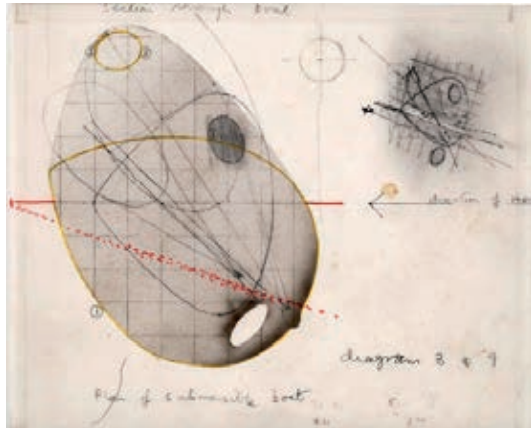


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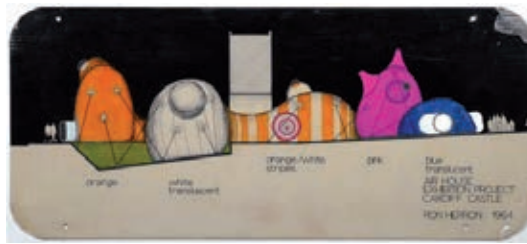
THE ARCHIGRAM ARCHIVE



[Image: From an "ongoing speculative proposal exploring the implications of cones of vision and their interaction with an existing neoclassical 'temple' on the River Thames in Henley, Berkshire," by Archigram/Michael Webb].

As of roughly 16 hours ago, the [Archigram Archival Project](#) is finally online and ready to for browsing, courtesy of the [University of Westminster](#): the archive "makes the work of the seminal architectural group Archigram available free online for public viewing and academic study."

The newly launched site includes more than 200 projects; "this comprises projects done by members before they met, the [Archigram magazines](#) (grouped together at no. 100), the projects done by Archigram as a group between 1961 and 1974, and some [later projects](#)." There are also brief biographies of each participating member of the collaborative group: [Warren Chalk](#), [Peter Cook](#), [Dennis Crompton](#), [David Greene](#), [Ron Herron](#), and [Michael Webb](#).



[Image: "Proposal for a series of inflatable dwellings as part of an exhibition for the Commonwealth Festival, located in the lodge of Cardiff Castle," by Archigram/Ron Herron].

Even at their most surreal, it feels as if Archigram did, in fact, accurately foresee what the architectural world was coming to. After all, if Chalk & Co. had built the things around us, there would be electricity supplies in the middle of nowhere and drive-in housing amidst the sprawl; for good or for bad, we'd all be playing with gadgets like the [Electronic Tomato](#), that perhaps would not have given the [iPhone](#) a run for its money but was a "mobile sensory stimulation device," nonetheless. We might even live together on the outer fringes of "extreme suburbs," constructed like concentric halos around minor airports, such as Peter Cook's "Crater City," an "earth sheltered hotel-type city around central park," or "Hedgerow Village," tiny clusters of houses like [North Face tents](#) "hidden in hedgerow strips."

There would be temporary, inflatable additions to whole towns and cities, pyramidal diagrid megastructures squatting over dead neighborhoods like malls; [dream cities](#) like Rorschach blots stretched across the sky, toothed and angular [Montreal Towers](#) looming in the distance; [plug-in universities](#) and [capsule homes](#) in a computer-controlled city of automatic switches and micro-pneumatic infrastructure.

At its more bizarre, there would have been things like the [Fabergram castle](#), as if the Teutonic Knights became an over-chimneyed race of factory-builders in an era of cheap LSD, reading [Gormenghast](#) in Disneyworld, or this proposal "for technology enabling [underwater farming](#) by scuba divers, including chambers, floats and tubes for walking and farm control." After all, Archigram asked, why live in a house at all when you can [live in a submarine](#)? Why use airplanes when you can ride a [magic carpet](#) constructed from shining looms in a "reverse hovercraft" facility where a body can be held at an adjustable point in space through the use of jets of air?"



[Image: "Speculative proposal showing use of the 'Popular Pak', a kit of architectural parts for 'tuning-up' existing buildings, applied to an invented suburb," by Archigram/Ron Herron].

It might not be architects who have realized much of this fever dream of the world to come, but that doesn't mean that these ideas have not, in many cases, been constructed. Archigram spoke of instant cities and easily deployed, reconfigurable megastructures—but the people more likely to own and operate such spaces today are Big Box retailers, with their clip-on ornaments, infinitely exchangeable modular shelving, and fleeting themes-of-the-week. Archigram's flexible, just-in-time, climate-controlled interiors are not a sign of impending utopia, in other words, but of the reach of your neighborhood shopping mall—and the people airdropping instant cities into the middle of nowhere today are less likely to be algorithmically trained [Rhino](#) enthusiasts from architecture school, but the logistics support teams behind [Bechtel](#) and the U.S. military.

Another way of saying this is that Archigram's ideas seem unbuilt—even unbuildable—but those ideas actually lend themselves surprisingly well to the environment in which we now live, full of "extreme suburbs," drive-in everything, KFC-supplied army bases in the middle of foreign deserts, [robot bank tellers](#), and huge, HVAC-dependent wonderlands on the exurban fringe.

The irony, for me, is that Archigram's ideas have, in many ways, *actually been constructed*—but in most cases it was for the wrong reasons, in the wrong ways, and by the wrong people.



[Image: Proposal "fusing alternative and changing Archigram structures, amenities and facilities with traditional and nostalgic structures," by Archigram/Peter Cook].

In any case, what was it about Archigram that promised on-demand self-transformation in an urban strobe of flashing lights but then got so easily realized as a kind of down-market Times Square? How did Archigram simply become the plug-in units of discount retail—or the [Fun Palaces](#) of forty years ago downgraded to Barnes & Noble outlets in the suburbs? How did the [Walking City](#) become Bremer Walls and Forward Operating Bases, where the Instant City meets Camp Bondsteel?

Archigram predicted a modular future propelled by cheap fuel, petrodollars, and a billion easy tons of unrecycled plastic—but, beneath that seamless gleam of artificial surfacing and extraterrestrial color combinations was a fizzy-lifting drink of human ideas—as many ideas as you could think of, sometimes imperfectly illustrated but illustrated nonetheless, and, thus, now canonical—all of it wrapped up in a dossier of new forms of planetary civilization. Archigram wasn't just out on the prowl for better escalators or to make our buildings look like giant orchids and Venus Flytraps, where today's avant-bust software formalism has unfortunately so far been mired; it wasn't just bigger bank towers and the Burj Dubai. Instead, Archigram suggested, we could all act differently if we had the right spaces in which to meet, love, and live, and what matters to me less here is whether or not they were *right*, or even if they were the only people saying such things (they weren't)—what matters to me is the idea that architecture can reframe and inspire whole new anthropologies, new ways of being human on earth, new chances to do something more fun tomorrow (and later today). Architecture can reshape how we inhabit continents, the planet, and the solar system at large. Whether or not you even want inflatable attics, flying carpets, and underwater eel farms, the overwhelming impulse here is that if you don't like the world you've been dropped into, then *you should build the one you want*.

In any case, the entire [Archigram Archival Project](#) is worth a look; even treated simply as an historical resource, its presence corrects what had been a sorely missing feature of online architecture culture: we can now finally link to, and see, Archigram's work.

(Note: Part of the latter half of this post includes some re-edited bits from a [comment](#) I posted several months ago).

POSTED MONDAY, APRIL 19, 2010 • 7 COMMENT(S)

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7 COMMENTS:

Ian Milliss said...

archigram (and Cedric Price) were among the heroes of my youth, good to see that so much of their work is available again. Everyone else is still playing catch up.

APRIL 19, 2010 7:40 PM

Taliesin said...

This seems like an archive waiting for a powerful multimedia accessing transcoding to ipad style format (whatever it is)

I think we'll start to see more post production type historical work emerging soon.

4/archigram-archiv.html

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Archigram Archival Project launched

22 April 2010 | [Leave a comment](#)

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Dezeenwire: an online archive of work by architects Archigram has been launched by the University of Westminster in London. More details in the press release below.

ARCHIGRAM UNCOVERED

Almost 10,000 images from one of architecture's most revolutionary groups, Archigram, go online in a free website in April 2010. This initiative, from the University of Westminster's Department of Architecture, creates probably the richest digital resource for modern architecture in the world. Now the astonishing range, sheer volume and continuing challenge of Archigram's work can be seen as never before through the openly available information technology they helped to predict.

Archigram were the most provocative and visionary of all the 1960s architecture groups. No architects before had looked so creatively at post-war consumer culture and the new possibilities that digital technology would offer. Much of Archigram's work became iconic such as Ron Herron's image of Walking City arriving in Manhattan.

Their importance to architecture was recognised when Archigram were awarded the RIBA's Royal Gold Medal that institution's highest honour in 2002. But till now, it has been almost impossible to get a comprehensive view of Archigram's work.

Viewers of the Archigram Archival Project can for the first time examine the full range of drawings, photographs and other material from over 200 projects created mainly in the 1960s and 70s by this group of six of architecture's most influential figures: Warren Chalk, Dennis Crompton, Peter Cook, David Greene, Ron Herron and Michael Webb.

The site reveals the extent of Archigram's ongoing challenges. World-famous projects including Walking City, Plug-in City and Instant City, can be readily explored in detail, and seen against other visions of, and prototypes for, tomorrow's lifestyles.

A substantial body of built designs including a swimming pool for Rod Stewart – as well as other larger proposals - like an unrealised multi-million Monte Carlo casino - can be seen against elusive and beautiful 'invisible' projects which refused to accept the conventions of traditional practice. Among the little-seen highlights of the new website are: full copies of the nine-and-a-half magazines which literally made the group's name; Temple Island, - Michael Webb's mind-blowing explorations of the nature of perspective in architectural representation and Soria Moria, a collaboration with Cedric Price.

Archigram's involvement was central to the Archigram Archival Project which builds upon the extensive work done by Archigram member Dennis Crompton on their collection, and links it to the archives held by Ron Herron's son, Simon, -- as well as to private collections of other Archigram members and their heirs.

The project was run by a team from EXP, the research centre for Experimental Practice in the Department of Architecture, University of Westminster. The project team was led by Dr. Kester Rattenbury and Professor Murray Fraser, with Clare Hamman acting as project manager. The website was devised by Filip Visnjic along with Pierpaolo di Panfilo and Professor Stephen Winter from the University of Westminster's Centre for Parallel Computing, in the School of Economics and Computer Science.

The work was funded by a £304,000 grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. For copyright reason, images on the web are size-restricted. A high resolution version is also available to view at the University of Westminster fro accredited academic researchers.

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Saturday 24 August 2013

The Archigram Archive

07 May 2010 | By Martha Reed

The Archigram Archive<http://archigram.westminster.ac.uk>

4/5stars

A new website allows us to plug in to the timeless Archigram archive

Who more fitting than Archigram to have its archive available to all through the world wide web. It illustrates the radically broadened way of thinking they brought to the discourse, their imagination fuelled by anything but the architectural canon. Appliances, rocket technology, science fiction, infrastructure, biology, suburban living — even scrambled eggs on toast — inspired projects that behaved more like clothing, add-ons, systems, creatures, and gadgets than traditional buildings.

With their bold graphics and psychedelic visions of the future, the group was completely of their time, yet much of the work appears strangely timeless. The speculative projects of course prefigured modern means of communication, while several recent and current architectural projects — Mitchell Taylor Workshop's temporary farm in the City of London being just one example — might have come straight from an issue of Archigram. Their influence on academia has been resounding, and themes that recur in the archive — cities, networks, biomorphism, representation and narrative, to name but a few — have continued to preoccupy architectural students.

Along with the array of speculative projects, drawn or collaged brilliantly to give the illusion of buildability, the archive includes a surprising number of drawings that hoped to lead to buildings — mostly competition entries, as well as a few built projects.

The projects can be viewed chronologically or by member, revealing the development of the movement and the contributions of the individuals involved, the more serious LCC architects versus the dreamier members, with David Greene emerging as perhaps the most rebellious in his rejection of architecture in favour of invisible networks.

Warren Chalk brings a rare note of disillusion to temper the prevailing sense of excitement at technological advances, writing in *An Unaccustomed Dream* that “the urgent appeal of the sixties has cooled for me. Man has leapt up and down on the moon, played a golf strike even, and we are not much better for it.”

While many of the works lend themselves well to the computer screen, some detailed close-up views would have been nice, both to see and understand the work better and to get a sense of their texture as artefacts. The Living City Exhibition, Sin Centre and Soria Moria competition drawings especially left me longing to see the original drawings.

While the somewhat mysterious “Ephemera” sections add some context, what to me is missing to make the archive truly comprehensive is access to primary source texts. This lack is felt the most when it comes to the magazines, but we are also teased with illegible images of text that went with projects such as the Soria Moria competition. The same goes for secondary material such as a Sunday Times article on Plug-in Cities, and a 1967 article in *Perspecta*. Meanwhile, under “Supplemental Information” we find only a lonely, though interesting extract of Murray Fraser's *Architecture and the “Special Relationship”: The American Influence on Post-War British Architecture*. Perhaps more is to come, copyright allowing, but for now, the archive does not liberate the serious researcher from the library stacks.

Original print headline – Impossible dreams



Fig. 13a Peter Cook and David Greene Launch Event, University of Westminster, London



Fig 13b Michael Webb and Dennis Crompton, Launch event, New York



Fig 13c EXP (Kester Rattenbury, Murray Fraser and Clare Hamman), Michael Webb, Dennis Crompton and dog at launch.

4 Archigram Drawings turned into Postcards



Fig. 14 Michael Webb. Temple Island, Section through Cone of Vision.



Fig. 16 Michael Webb, Photograph of Dome with Leaves.



Fig. 18 Ron Herron. Walking City (partial).

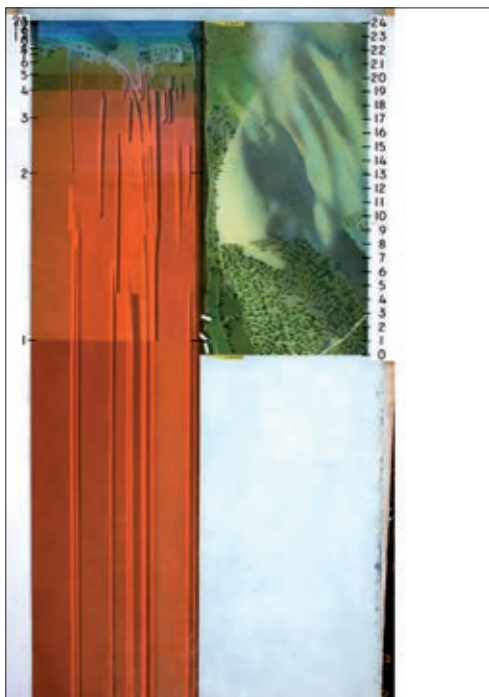


Fig. 15 Michael Webb, Temple Island, Static landscape and Accelerating landscape.



Fig. 17 Michael Webb, Temple Island, Photo Finish of the Regatta. Leaves.

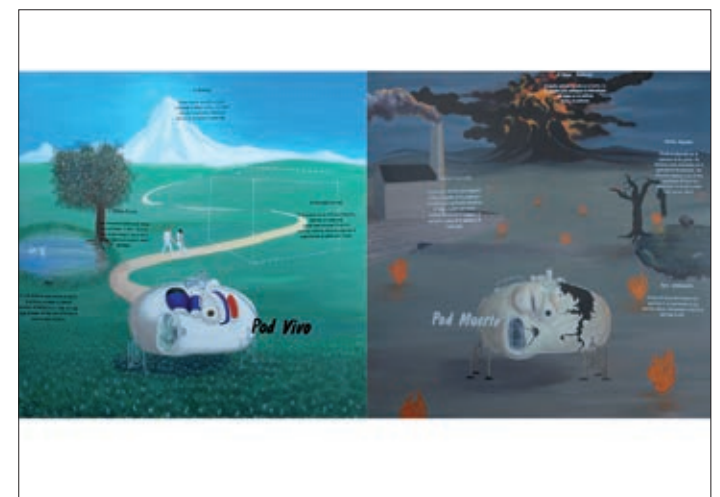


Fig. 19 David Greene. Pod Vivo / Pod Muerto

