

Roca London Gallery

DRAWING ATTENTION: The Digital Culture of Contemporary Architectural Drawings

Curated by

Jeremy Ficca, Carnegie Mellon University

Amy Kulper, Rhode Island School of Design

Grace La, Harvard University Graduate School of Design

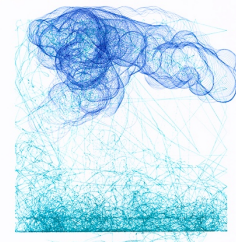
17 September 2019 – 11 January 2020



Neil Spiller's Skybadium & Hippodrome
The Geometry of Clouds



CJ Lim, Ocean Cleaning



Carl Lostritto, Storm

Roca's autumn exhibition examines the state of contemporary architectural drawing, revealing its potential to describe so much more than simply the detailing of a building's construction.

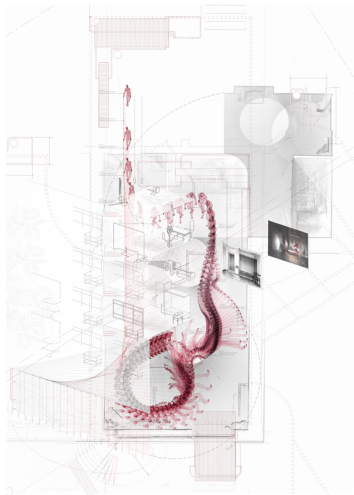
In what is now being referred to as the 'postdigital era' – a time when technology is so pervasive that it is the basis of all we create and the medium through which we think – contemporary architects are wielding the digital as an ever more powerful tool.

Jeremy Ficca, Amy Kulper, and Grace La, Professors at Carnegie Mellon University, Rhode Island School of Design, and Harvard GSD respectively, have curated a diverse and surprising collection of some seventy contemporary drawings from established and emerging practitioners around the globe. This work is stimulated by a wide range of inputs: from waste, to olfactory cloud patterns; from political borders to airflow.

The curators say "Historically, the explicitness of the architectural drawing resided in its capacity to directly communicate the building it anticipated. Contemporary digital culture liberates the architect from these demonstrative constraints, creating a context in which the architectural drawing possesses an unparalleled freedom of expression and latitude of operation."

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Whilst many of the drawings on display do relate to actual buildings – from O’Donnell + Tuomey’s unfolded façade study for the V&A East Museum, to Jimenez Lai’s proposal for the Guggenheim Helsinki – others trace a fine line between the real, the imagined, and the virtual. UK architect Neil Spiller’s image represents a sky garden, only accessed in augmented reality, above the site of an actual garden. Spiller says “I wanted the Garden to have another virtual side, a side that would augment the simple world of walled space, trees, conic forms and statues I had created. This I saw as a new area of architectural detailing, one barely explored by contemporary architects, I wanted the drawings to explore this juxtaposition of virtual and actual, of points of view, ghosts, light and black.” *The Reinvention of Jakob K* by Thomas Pearce refers to a collaboration between performance scholars, performers and architects about fictional Bauhaus choreographer Jakob Klenke where conflicting versions and states of entangled historical proof generate a quasi-reality.



Thomas Pearce, The re-invention of Jakob K.



Detail from Shimmer House by Adam Dayem

Many of the works on display re-awaken an interest in the hand-drawn: Catty Dan Zhang’s *Measured Drawings of the Sculpted Air* - renderings of the airflow generated by a robotic thermal device - appear to be charcoal on paper, but are in fact computed pixels, an homage, of sorts, to traditional drawing methods. Carl Lostritto’s *Storm* uses data from a weather log file - six million characters charting the development of a storm - to instruct a vintage pen plotter, creating a non-linear and inaccurate, but aesthetically convincing, onomatopoeic image of storm clouds above the sea. Adam Dayem’s starting point for *Shimmer House* is the Hudson River School painters, who created a sublime aesthetic as a counterpoint to emerging urbanism in North America, reappraising nature in a way that Dayem sees as crucial to dealing with today’s ecological problems. The drawing takes imagery from the Hudson River School, glitches it in two dimensions and projects it into three dimensions, creating a ‘shimmer’. C J Lim’s propaganda-comic *Ocean Cleaning* shows another approach to architectural drawing as an environmental campaigning tool, ‘drawing attention’ to the plastics threat to marine life with its alluring childlike imagery; Lim’s stated aim is “to help deliver change”, well beyond buildings and urban infrastructure.

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The curators say “*at the crossroads of architecture and information environments, resides the promise and the speculative future of the drawing. Its capacity to structure, imagine, realize, speculate, transform, politicize, and activate makes the drawing an enduring vehicle for the discipline. DRAWING ATTENTION poses the question: can drawings posit possible futures that eschew vaporization and establish architecture as an agile and critical agent in contemporary digital culture?*”

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Notes to Editors

This exhibition is an adapted iteration of *Drawing for The Design Imaginary*, which was presented at the Carnegie Museum and Carnegie Mellon University on the occasion of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture’s 2019 national conference. Building upon the ACSA conference’s theme on the current state of architecture’s core, this initial exhibition explored the role of drawing as pedagogical and imaginative instrument, including drawings by architects, faculty and students.

Exhibition design by Cellar Door

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Roca Galleries are part of Roca’s international strategy to express the brand values of design, innovation, sustainability and wellbeing. They also convey a desire to maintain an ongoing dialogue with society and professionals who share an interest in shaping the future of bathroom spaces. The various Roca Galleries in Barcelona, Madrid, Lisbon, Shanghai and London are a vehicle for expressing this desire, while providing a meeting place and area for interior decorators, designers and architects worldwide. First opened in October 2011, the Roca London Gallery is the result of a cooperative effort with Zaha Hadid Architects. The Roca London Gallery is a functional and flexible area where the Roca product showroom shares its space naturally with exhibitions, presentations, professional meetings and events relating to design, architecture and sustainability.

Location and opening times

Roca London Gallery, Station Court, Townmead Road, London, SW6 2PY
W: www.rocalondongallery.com T: 020 7610 9503 @rocalongallery

Mondays to Fridays from 9am to 5.30pm; Saturdays from 11am to 5pm;
Admission Free

Events

Tuesday 17th September, 18:30 - 21:00

Opening Event: Drawing Attention - Private View in the presence of the curators.

Further events will be listed on the [Roca London Gallery](http://www.rocalondongallery.com) website as they are confirmed.