



KIMONO MY HOUSE (ENLARGEMENT STUDY), SEPTEMBER 2009

## SLIGHTLY OFF THE GROUND

*'I BEGAN TO LIKE NEW YORK, THE RACY, ADVENTUROUS FEEL OF IT AT NIGHT AND THE SATISFACTION THAT THE CONSTANT FLICKER OF MEN AND WOMEN AND MACHINES GIVES TO THE RESTLESS EYE.'*  
F. SCOTT FITZGERALD, THE GREAT GATSBY

GATSBY, THE SURVEYOR, ALWAYS FELT LIKE A SPECTATOR RATHER THAN AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT. HIS OBSERVATIONS DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION WERE AKIN TO EDWARD HOPPER'S PAINTING *NIGHTHALKS*, SOLITARY YET OLFACTORY. YOU TOO WILL ACT AS SURVEYORS BUT UNLIKE GATSBY OR HOPPER YOU WILL INTERVENE IN THE SPACES YOU DOCUMENT, YOUR PRESENCE BEING THE FIRST TENTATIVE STEP TO DEVELOPING A PROJECT FOR THE COMING YEAR.

YOU WILL CHOOSE A SITE OF CONSTRUCTION IN AND AROUND SOHO AS A STARTING POINT. SEVERAL EXIST, ONE ON THE CORNER OF *CHARING CROSS ROAD* AND *OXFORD STREET* AND ANOTHER BEING A GAPING HOLE CAUGHT BETWEEN *AIR STREET*, *BREWER STREET* AND *GLASSHOUSE STREET*. BOTH WERE THE SITES OF OLD THEATRES AND ARE NOW BEGINNING A PERFORMANCE OF THEIR VERY OWN. THEY OFFER A WEALTH OF OPPORTUNITY, NOT SIMPLY THROUGH THEIR REDEVELOPMENT BUT THROUGH THE CHANGE IN PERSPECTIVE THEY GIVE THE VERTICAL LANDSCAPE. FROM HERE YOU ARE TO WALK AWAY FROM THEM AS SIMPLE CONSTRUCTION SITES AND IMAGINE THEM AS STAGE SETS THAT YOU BEGIN TO DRESS. YOU WILL BE PHYSICAL WITH YOUR INTERVENTIONS BUT TO BEGIN WITH YOU ARE TO BE QUITE ILLUSIONARY. YOU MAY WISH TO ADD OR EXPAND ON THE PHYSICAL PERIMETERS OF WHAT YOU DISCOVER OR, ALTERNITIVELY, YOU MAY SIMPLY WISH TO AUGMENT YOUR VISUAL EXPERIENCE DESCRIBING A STATE OF FLUX OR AN IMPOSSIBLE RATE OF CHANGE AS SEEN FROM STREET LEVEL OR BELOW THE GROUND WITHIN 'BASEMENT' AND 'SUBWAY'.

AS WE SURVEY, WE NOTE THE STRANGE AND MUNDANE AS MAGNIFICANT AND MARVELOUS. WE DO THIS BY EXAGGERATING THEIR PLACE IN THE REAL WORLD, BY WAY OF AN EXPRESSION, AN EXPANSION OR AN OVERLY ATTENTIVE GAZE. THIS COULD BE DONE BY THE USE OF A RED VELVET CURTAIN HANGING SLIGHTLY OFF THE GROUND AS IF IT WERE IN A DAVID LYNCH FILM OR AS A WINDOW'S REFLECTION SEEN AS IF IT WERE A PAINTING BY CY TWOMBLY (*SNOW*, c.1960, SAUL LEITER). THESE RATHER ABSTRACT MOMENTS ARE TO BE TREATED AS YOUR LOCATIONAL INFORMATION. THEY ARE THE TAPESTRY FROM WHICH YOU RECORD THE SPACE BETWEEN YOU AND THE GROUND PLAIN ABOVE/ BELOW. YOU MAY TAKE A RATHER REACTIONARY STANCE AND RECORD THINGS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A SOCIAL AGITATOR OR SIMPLY BECOME OBSESSED WITH THE CURIOSITIES FOUND ABANDONED AND LEFT UNNOTICED, PICKING OUT ODDITIES TO NOT ONLY UNDERLINE A ROUTE THROUGH BUT ALSO YOUR SENSE OF HUMOUR.

THE INFORMATION YOU CHOOSE TO DOCUMENT DEPENDS UPON YOU. HOWEVER, THIS YEARS WORK IS NOT SIMPLY AN EXERCISE IN BEING OBSERVATIONAL. YOU ARE EXPECTED TO INVOLVE YOURSELF AND BE PROPOSITIONAL. PUT SIMPLY, YOU ARE TO PROPOSE PROJECTS WITH AN ARCHITECTURAL IMPLICATION AND A SENSE OF YOUR ENGAGEMENT IN THE WORK NOT JUST RECORDINGS OF WHAT YOU SEE AROUND YOU.

ONE OF THE THEMES OF THIS YEAR WILL BE *LIVING ARCHITECTURE* OF WHICH THERE IS A WEALTH OF REFERENCE AND YOU WILL BE EXPOSED TO THESE THROUGH ALL M.ARCH TUTORS. ULTIMATLEY IT IS UP TO YOU TO QUESTION WHAT *LIVING ARCHITECTURE* MEANS TO YOU AND WHAT IT IS IN RELATION TO YOUR PROJECTS.

### **DOCUMENTATION**

YOU MUST ALL CREATE BLOGS IN WHICH TO PROVE YOUR DOCUMENTATION AND TEST OUT IDEAS BOTH WRITTEN AND VISUAL. THIS WILL BE AN INVALUABLE AID WHEN IT COMES TO PUTTING TOGETHER YOUR WRITTEN THESIS REPORT. BLOGS NEED TO BE VISIBLE BY THE END OF THE FIRST STUDIO WEEK.

### **INITIAL REFERENCES**

*LIQUID CITY*, MARC ATKINS AND IAIN SINCLAIR, 1999  
*THE ENDLESS HOUSE*, FREDERICK KIESLER  
*SUBWAY* (1985) DIR. LUC BESSON  
*PHILIP-LORCA DICORCIA*, 1986, *UNTITLED SERIES PORTRAIT*, NEW YORK CITY  
*PARIS, TEXAS* (1984), WIM WENDERS  
ALEXANDER TRAUNER - <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0871202/>  
YOHEI TANEDA - <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0849222/>  
*KIMONO MY HOUSE*, SPARKS, 1974

### **INITIAL GROUP MEETING**

22<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2009 - M.ARCH STUDIO (*TO BE CONFIRMED*)

### **BIOGRAPHY**

STUART MUNRO graduated from the Bartlett with distinction and is currently a graphic designer/ photographer and is published internationally and widely. He has previously worked for Vaughan Oliver, v23 (4ad; *Pixies*, *TV on the Radio*, V&A) and David Connor Design (Vivienne Westwood, Anish Kapoor). Stuart runs design workshops in London and Norway at AHO; Oslo School of Architecture. He has also participated in a workshop-series run by the design collective Tomato in both Yokohama and Sapporo, Japan and frequently travels to Tokyo.

<http://www.foldie.net>

<http://www.foldie.co.uk>

<http://foldie.tumblr.com>

<http://ihardlyknowher.com/stuartmunro/big>