

AA Intermediate Unit 3

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TERM 01: Genesis/ Destruction/ Rebirth



The Sandman's many incarnations; created by Neil Gaiman, illustrated by J.H. Williams III

“The regions of the unknown (desert, jungle, deep sea, alien land, etc.) are free fields for the projection of unconscious content. Incestuous libido and patricidal destrudo are thence reflected back against the individual and his society in forms suggesting threats of violence and fancied dangerous delight – not only ogres but also as sirens of mysteriously seductive, nostalgic beauty.”

--- The Hero with a Thousand Faces, Joseph Campbell

In the book ‘The Hero with a Thousand Faces’ author Joseph Campbell discusses how all stories in the world are in fact ever recurring narratives. From the quest journey and the transformation of the hero to destruction/rebirth tales Campbell articulates great narratives as part of archetypal trunks that have been reinterpreted over centuries. Instead of using Campbell’s concept as theory/truth we will vocalise his ideas in relationship to land canons and their big recurrent structures.

Utilising literature, architectural projects, paintings and contemporary game designs as investigative ground we will study key concepts of land based on the following three thematics / territories:

- promised land: genesis, the idea of a perfect future world historically inherited;
- cursed land: destruction, dystopia, cataclysm, disaster;
- wonderland: alternative, delirious, dream like places that respond to the logic of imagination

01.1: Departure

Duration: 4 weeks

We will start our study of land canons by researching and analysing existing drawings and paintings that have explored concepts of land to generate new drawings exploring personal interests and ideas within the subject. From ancient mythology to contemporary global cities and digital dreamscapes we will research how land stories have evolved and constantly revisit, adapt and reinvent similar concepts. We will enter the world of the Italian architect Massimo Scolari and re-interpret his calm scenery paintings by inserting details and imagining the unseen.

After this quick initial study of drawings you will choose one of the three territories and develop pictorially and textually your own version of canonical land. One individually selected piece of reference shall serve you as departure point (painting or drawing) from which you will propose a re-composition or a new version based on your definition or re-interpretation of land.

The outcome will be the creation of a semi-fictional drawing that discusses the selected land thematic. The update or re-interpretation can be related to a contained story, new media or contemporary issues etc. However it has to be related to land and should communicate the argument you have discovered by looking at precedents of land canons. The work will be mainly developed through iterative versions of drawings.

In this first phase you will start to:

- understand a given precedent based on three mythical land types in fictional literature;
- research and select a precedent producing short literary based texts exploring alternative use and customs of the land;
- produce one final drawing that composes an idea and the type of land territory;
- incorporate the concept of time and its passage into the drawing by producing a three stage diagram explaining how land and its use evolve positively, negatively or in its own right.

Crit Date: 03 November 2014

01.2: The Crossing

Duration: 6 weeks

Following our first incursions into new lands we will re-shape and further develop the initial ideas in the form of models and finally a short film. We will advance the design and the consistency or inner logic of the narrative.

City-building strategy games like Sim-City, Banished and to some extent modes in Minecraft include a system of constraints and algorithms that relate actions and direct and indirect consequences to the simulation growth of the model game/land/city. Analogically we will constraint our narratives utilising textual storytelling and physical modelling to explore how design can play a role in the evolution of our land idea.

New skills such as Arduino and interactive design will be added to the palette in order to enable you to design in different ways. Arduino is a microprocessor developed to ease the interaction between objects also known as physical computing. You will incorporate the potential of Arduino and physical computing in your designs furthering the creation of a new land type.

In summary you will:

- incorporate the element of time and evolution in the proposed design study of land;
- learn and apply Arduino to explore time and land interaction opportunities;
- develop a story board and script for a one minute film;
- produce a one minute film for the end of term crit and set up an installation with the constructed models and props.

Crit Date: 16 December 2014

01.3: Book of Lands

Term 1 Dossier

All term 1 work will be submitted in the format of a dossier or the *Book of Lands*. The dossier is an investigative document that should compile all your research and ideas in a clever and creative way including traces, pieces, hints and tips brought together to assemble a case / an argument. In Inter 3 this dossier is a fantastic chance to mount a picture of the world explored and start to create parallels to the forthcoming unit trip = site visit. You are welcome to try different formats, materials, papers and drawing modes to convey relationships, ideas and environments.

Dossier Hand-in: 13 January 2015 (tbc)