

Drawing Matter Summer School 2025



This year marked the ninth edition of the Drawing Matter Summer School, hosted at the Zaha Hadid Foundation from Wednesday 27 to Saturday 30 August. Thirty students took part, working with six young architectural tutors. The school was designed to give these emerging practitioners the chance to teach, making the week a learning experience for tutors and students alike.

Over four days, the students worked both as a group of thirty and in smaller tutor groups of ten, testing ideas through workshops and exercises that explored drawing, mapping, and the relationship between space and representation.

The week began on Tuesday with a training day for tutors. Andrew Clancy, Sakiko Kohashi, and Ben Machin led discussions about architectural pedagogy and tutors discovered and discussed exercises for the week ahead.

On Wednesday students arrived. After a morning of icebreakers and collective exercises we split into three tutor groups. Thursday was spent between Drawing Matter and Hauser & Wirth before a move back to the Zaha Hadid foundation on Friday to commence with design activities. Sites were identified collectively before tutor groups split off to think about interventions.

The following pages present more detail about the workshops and exercises that made up this year's Summer School.

All photographs were taken by Anna-Rose McChesney.

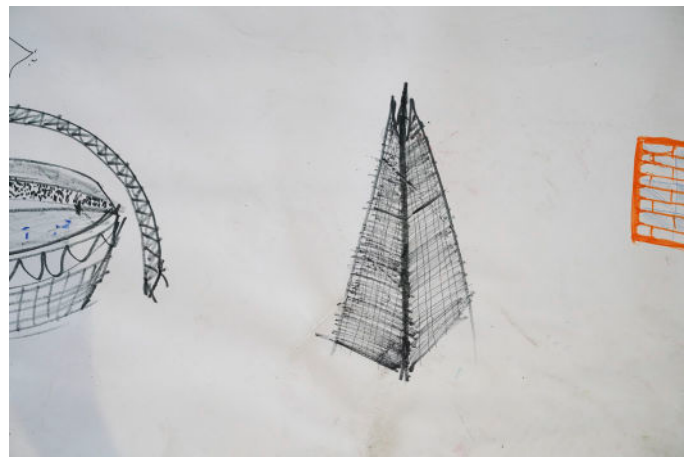
Our Collective Map



On the first morning of the summer school, we invited the students to make their first marks on paper on what was to become a gigantic map across the whole floor of the gallery space at the Zaha Hadid Foundation. Carrying on from what Andrew Clancy said in his opening statement – that architectural knowledge is not strictly something learned in education, but rather something we all have in us – we wanted the students to begin exploring their own tacit knowledge in conversation with each other, and with themselves on the page. The ensuing drawing serves as a collective mind map, mapping the students' journeys, bedrooms, memories, and observations. The drawing would grow and deepen as the week went on.

We came back to the map on Friday morning. Having spent the day on Thursday in the Drawing Matter archive space and then mapping the streets around Savile Row, we returned to the foundation with new skills, new places observed, and with exposure to diverse new drawing ideas from the archive.

We asked the students to locate these new experiences on our collective map. Students were prompted to reflect on their journeys, aided by their photos and sketchbooks, and to consider the ideas on drawing that have been discussed and tested in the previous days.



Archive workshop at Drawing Matter



The morning began with a talk from Peter Wilson. He talked students through a selection of his drawings, describing his process for different projects.

We then proceeded to lead a workshop using material from the archive. Students engaged with a curated selection of over fifty drawings, spanning from the eighteenth century to the present day. The drawings ranged from formal presentation pieces to exploratory process sketches – some highly abstract, others never intended to be seen beyond the studio.

Each student was first invited to respond instinctively, marking with dot stickers one drawing that excited or energized them, and another that they found off-putting, confusing, or uninteresting. These intuitive choices served as entry points for deeper reflection.

Through a series of guided exercises, students returned to their favourite drawing, asking: What made this drawing compelling? Why was it made, and for whom? Did it depict a building that was ever realised, or one drawn in retrospect? They then sketched the drawing from memory, comparing their version with the original, which sparked lively conversations about memory, perception, and interpretation.

Attention then shifted to the least favourite drawing. In pairs, students discussed what they found difficult about it. With additional contextual information, new readings often emerged. We then challenged them to fix the drawing, redrawing it in a way that made more sense to them, whether by extracting fragments, shifting perspective, or clarifying form.

The workshop concluded in group conversation, reflecting on how these exercises were less about taste and more about developing sensitivity, curiosity, and critical tools for looking at drawings and the intentions behind them.



Mapping Mayfair from Hauser & Wirth



In this exercise, we started by walking through London, setting up the idea of observation and documenting the objective qualities of a space. We took over a crossroad in Savile Row and spread out along the streets. Students were asked to face one side of the street for 40 minutes and really observe, digging deep into the spatial qualities, textures, sounds, life, or whatever stood out to them, and document it in an elevation drawing. We then turned around and drew the other side, considering the contrast between them, before gathering at Hauser & Wirth and assembling into one large collaborative drawing capturing the qualities of a large space. We added another layer to the drawing in a plan drawing of the ground from above - drawn from memory.

A fantastic discussion followed about how each person interpreted the task and what each drawing focussed on. How did the raindrops on the page contribute to the recording of the moment? What was similar and different across the drawings, and what does this suggest about how different people experience the objective space? What does drawing from memory teach you about observing the space around you?

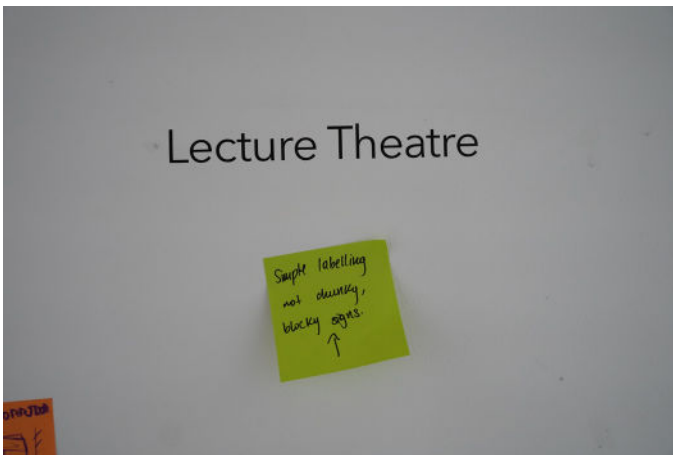


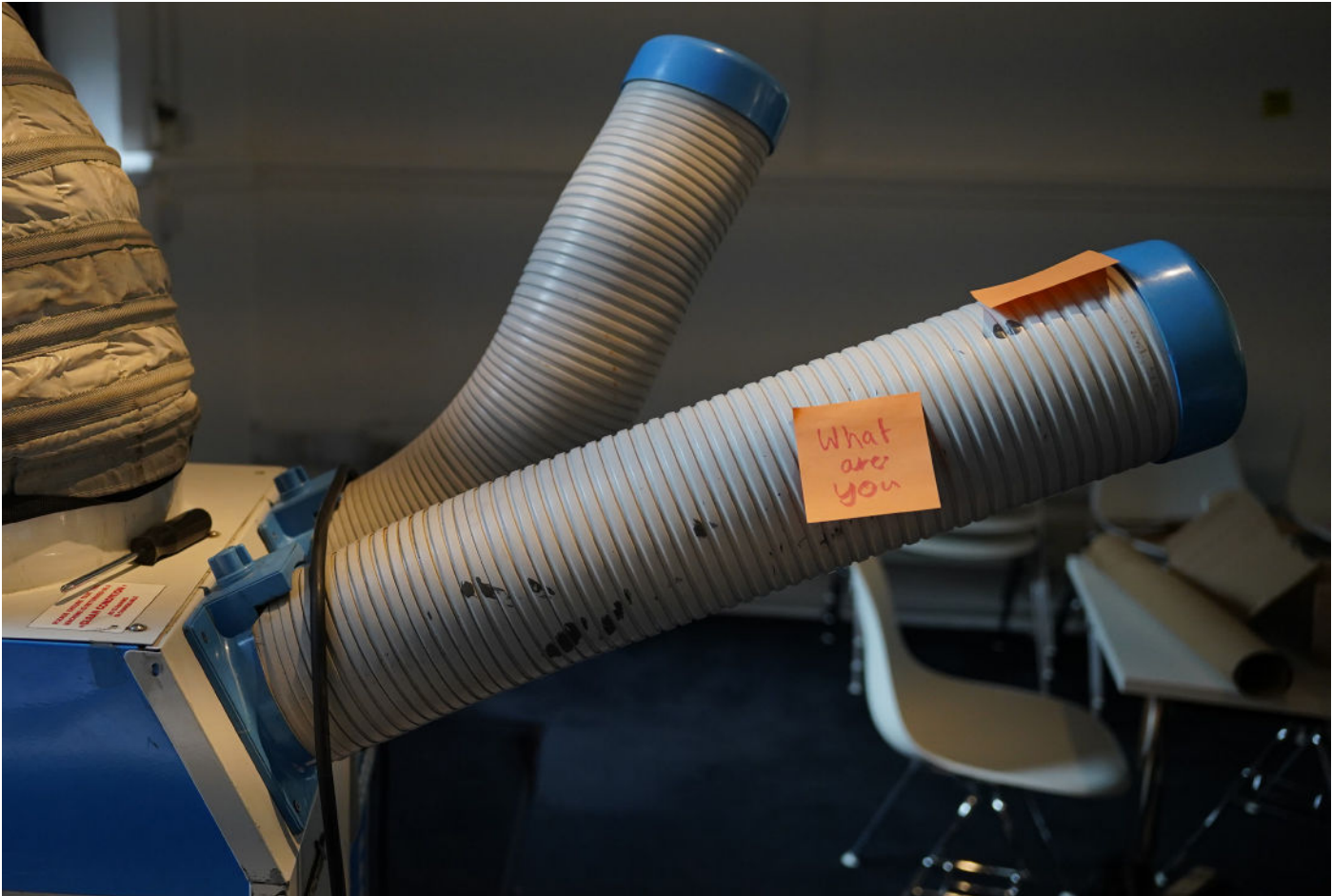
Site Interventions – Post-it notes

The students returned to the ZHF on Friday with new skills, new places observed, and with exposure to diverse new drawing ideas from the archive.

Now, with a keen eye, the students explored the building through a critical lens. Students marked features they appreciated with green Post-its, and (more importantly), areas they didn't in orange. The school became peppered with small sketches, sharp observations and witty critiques - becoming a physical map of design opportunity.

Each tutor group had a wealth of design problems to respond to.





“SpaceTools” led by Inês Guilherme and Heba Mohsen

Students: Vlad Holovatskyi, Roy Kim, Adrianna Markham, Cecily Martinez, Rowan Mash, Krutagn Mistry, Najmi Mohamed Razil, Raodah Opeolu, Victoria Pires, Jude Shalaby

On Wednesday afternoon, students began by creating tools designed to change their interpretation and perception of space through the five senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste). These tools took many forms, from models and mock-ups to experimental objects that encouraged new ways of experiencing and understanding the built environment. The making process lasted about two hours. Then, the students used these tools to explore the Zaha Hadid Foundation space, attempting to design and represent it through the tools while also exchanging them among each other to experience diverse perspectives.

The activity concluded with a group discussion reflecting on how these tools reshaped their perception and representation of space. The debate highlighted issues of inclusivity, considering how architecture can respond to people with different needs and sensory experiences. It also raised questions about representation -how drawing can either simply show or also tell an idea- and the challenges of conveying subjective spatial experience through visual means.

On Friday, all students were asked to identify parts of the building they liked and disliked, sticking post-it notes with comments and sketches around the spaces. When we returned to our tutor groups we began discussing and debating the orange and green post-it notes surrounding us, building a critical awareness of the space and how we each experienced it differently.

Then, we asked students to think about an intervention that changes the experience of a space. We started with quick sketches, closing our eyes, banning pencils and letting ideas flow without hesitation. The sensory devices from Wednesday stayed in our minds, guiding how we thought about perception and experience.

Together we reflected on what an intervention could be - an object, a conversation, even a body in space? We considered the context of our site - light, acoustics, materiality, weather, history.

We each chose a part of the room to focus on and began designing.

Early sketches bloomed into 1:1 explorations on the walls. We drew big to engage with your site physically, testing how proposals related to the room's architecture and context. At 1:1 design became real, not something that just lives on the page but something that lives in reality, at real size, responding to real things. Ideas not just drawn, but inhabited and experienced.

Throughout we pinned up our ideas, sketches and even failures. We treated the room as a working site.



“From 2d to 3d and back again” led by Jim Pope and Jesper Authen

Students: Georgia Cyrus, Chloe D’Souza, Asheika Dumbutshena, Boran Hayta, Kay Kouassi, Sabira Logun, Ganisha Moganathas, Evie Morris, Oliwia Wilkowska, Arash Zanjirani Farahani

Before the summer school each student made a drawing of a window or doorway that had some significance to them. This drawing served as the basis for our next exercise, in which the students would take the drawing through a series of translations. The first translation was from two dimensions to three, wherein the students had an hour to make an interpretive model of their drawing. This was followed by a series of two-minute drawings in pencil of drawing their model as a neutral object.

Each drawing had a different prompt; only use lines, only use shading, only draw the negative space, draw it with your eyes closed, and draw it with your non-dominant hand. Our aim was to get the students to find different ways of observing, and thus understanding, what they were looking at through drawing. The students took this toolkit to the rooms of the Zaha Hadid Foundation, and drew, drew, and drew.

On Friday, all students were asked to identify parts of the building they liked and disliked, sticking post-it notes with comments and sketches around the spaces.

In the afternoon, with the room filled with green and orange post-it observations, we returned to the exercise we did on Wednesday; translating three-dimensional spatial qualities to the flat page. Once again we asked them to do a series of very quick and expressive observational drawings using pastel, each with a new prompt and different site: draw it from memory; draw it blind with your right hand by touching a surface with your left hand; draw it only by looking at the object but not the page; draw it in plan; and do a rubbing on a surface. We were exploring problems and opportunities in the space, which prompted discussion of ideas like shape, colour, program, old vs new, natural light and furnishings.

Gathering in small groups we started to generate ideas for interventions to affect the experience of the space based around these discussions. For each proposal we discussed what it achieves in the space, who is it for, and how to best represent and explain the idea in the limited time we had. We ended up with a diverse set of design proposals responding to architectural and spatial observations.



“Learning from the Courtyard” led by Michael Becker and Adam Cowan

Students: Merlin Akomian, Shanza Chaudhary, Andres Crosdale, Haris Khalid, Miranda Leigh, Sumpeng Nim, Elizabeta Petraityte, Kira Polyanichko, Xiahne Wright

The aim of this task was to encourage the act of surveying and observing. There was a secondary aim for each pair to structure their observations through ‘themes’ of features occurring on a building, which would encourage individual pairs to observe certain aspects more deeply. This led towards the group assembling a more vivid picture of the building, together.

We began with a group discussion on the parts of a building, identifying themes. We split into random pairs, each given a drawing board to share. Students filled their boards with observations on the exterior of the building, suiting their chosen themes. When students filled one sheet, a new one was supplied, and a new theme selected.

Halfway through the afternoon, we moved indoors and the second part of the task was revealed. Students began to cut up their sheets into individual drawings, to create a collective set of building elements.

Students were asked to arrange their elements across a model, and provided materials to do so. The format and construction of the model, composing of the building elements, and the coordination of the work was left up to the students.

Poet Paul Valéry says seeing is forgetting the name of the thing one sees. Joined at the hip, pairs of students roamed the courtyard in search of fragments. Pieces of our site captured, studied and stored, collected on crowded drawing boards. Our archive is brought together and cut up. Redistributed over the courtyard in miniature, a collective vision from ten pairs of curious eyes.

On Friday afternoon, we returned to the outdoor site. Working outside can be challenging. But we say yes, we like that. Risking dry comfort for the wet winds of uncertainty we make a shelter and say, let us see what comes. From scattered seeds of questions posed on pink and green post-it notes we grew curious. Talking and teasing and trusting our doubts, we tried to make the site we saw with fresh eyes.

The aim of this task was to grow a collective and critical attitude towards the site from which students can begin to propose an intervention that would change a visitor’s perception of the place. Grown from group conversations students worked together to produce a design reflective of their own observations and ambitions for the site.



Tutors: Jesper Authen, Michael Becker, Adam Cowan, Inês Guilherme, Heba Mohsen, Jim Pope

Students: Merlin Akomian, Shanza Chaudhary, Andres Crosdale, Georgia Cyrus, Chloe D'Souza, Asheika Dumbutshena, Boran Hayta, Vlad Holovatskyi, Roy Kim, Haris Khalid, Kay Kouassi, Miranda Leigh, Sabira Logun, Adrianna Markham, Cecily Martinez, Rowan Mash, Krutagn Mistry, Ganisha Moganathas, Najmi Mohamed Razil, Evie Morris, Sumpeng Nim, Raodah Opeolu, Elizabeta Petraityte, Victoria Pires, Kira Polyanichko, Jude Shalaby, Oliwia Wilkowska, Xiahne Wright, Arash Zanjirani Farahani

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All photographs by Anna-Rose McChesney

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