

# BRIEF03: TEMPLE



*The Apple inc. Logo by Rob Janoff*

**We are seeking modern interpretations of the 'temple' archetype, relevant to our age.**

Building upon earlier work students are free to propose individual topics and sites but these must be found within two weeks of receiving the brief and defined clearly in the form of a concise A4 abstract for which we will provide a template.

Students should question what activities or rituals take place today, beyond, but not excluding religious practice such as the cult of celebrity, mass media, brands, internet, ecology, science, finance etc, and question through what collaborations and working social, cultural and economic relationships may these rituals give rise to contemporary temples.

## **What is Sacred?**

A temple by definition is a "building for worship" or "any place regarded as occupied by a divine presence" from the old English tempel which is in turn, from the Latin word templum "a piece of ground consecrated for the taking of auspices, building for worship," The etymology of the word stems from either from 1) to \*tem- "to cut," on the notion of a "place reserved or cut out," or 2) to \*temp- "to stretch," on the notion of a cleared space in front of an altar.

We therefore ask that you consider what spaces are reserved or cut from the normal architectural fabric, and what artefacts, activities or programs are considered divine in the current age or deemed worthy of worship in whatever form that worship may take. What is respected enough to be lifted above the mundane?

## **Time, Space and Money**

Historically temples have been built for numerous reasons, to heighten experience and alter the senses, to engender feelings of awe, to display power, to educate people, to provide gates for the afterlife or from a desire to reach the deities. Temples too are the longest lasting pieces of architecture, would building a similar typology make sense in today's post-crisis society? In what form? What does the longevity of temples mean, does the amount of energy and time invested in their construction imbue significance? How does this relate to today's throwaway culture? Why were the huge investments of time and labour made historically to build temples, to what end, and for whose benefit? What societal and power structures were

in play then and what takes their place today?

## **Systems and Buildings**

Temple design is often closely linked to geometric, astrological, temporal, solar and cardinal systems, and were often very innovative structurally for their time. With the parametric tools that you have learned in the previous briefs we would like you to continue exploring these relationships in a large scale architectural proposal. This is the time for you to start designing and therefore to use the advanced digital design tools on a much larger architectural scale.

## **Case Study**

We encourage continuing the exploration of the themes of beauty, wonder, mysticism, magic and awe. We also suggest that students look at historical examples of temples and try to understand the driving forces behind their creation, to look for the rules which dictated their form. Students should also look at non religious temples, ones that are less obvious but serves similar purposes. Is the local Apple store or Starbucks a form of contemporary temple for instance?

We are definitely not designing for the everyday, but seeking spatial proposals which bring the experience of the collective or the individual above and beyond the ordinary. Nevertheless, in DS10 we expect realism in your proposals, and for you to think about the finance models, construction logic and material logic necessary for the potential realisation of your proposals. The proposals should be larger than your Burning Man and wiki projects while hopefully still keeping a certain continuity with earlier work.

Similarly to last year, students will also be able to propose their own programme for discussion if their project requires a different path.

## **Suggested reading list, that should be read!**

The perennial philosophy - Aldous Huxley  
The doors of perception and heaven and hell - Aldous Huxley  
Quadrivium - Wooden Books  
Alchemy and mysticism - Taschen  
Facing the Gods - James Hillman  
The archetypes and the collective unconscious - Carl Jung  
Man and his symbols - Carl Jung  
The secret history of the world - Jonathan Black  
Architecture and geometry in the age of the Baroque - George L Hersey  
The secret teachings of all ages - Manly P Hall  
The power of myth - Joseph Campbell  
Sacred architecture - Caroline Humphrey  
Massive change - Bruce Mau  
Mythologies - Roland Barthes  
The book of tea - Okakura Kakuzo  
In praise of shadow - Junichiro Tanizaki  
Tao te ching - Lao Tsu  
I Ching - Fu Xi