

RC12 2017-18
Sandra Youkhana +
Luke Caspar Pearson

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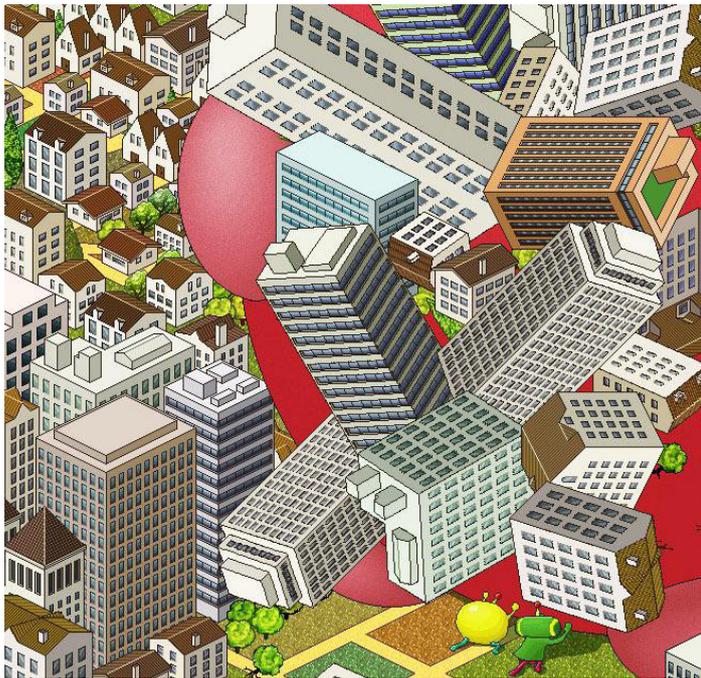
RC12

PLAYING THE

METROPOLIS

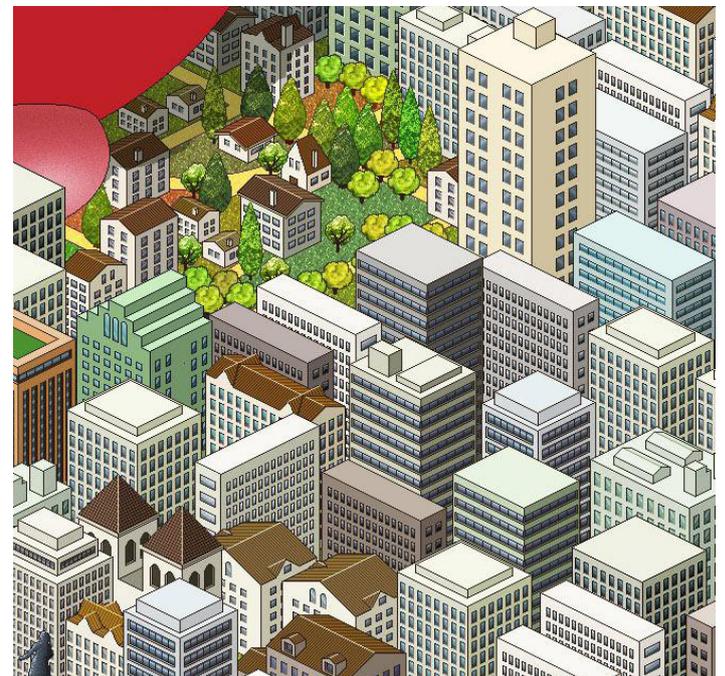
OF

TOMORROW



RC12 pursues urban design through video game technologies.

We operate as a think tank on the future of cities by challenging the media through which urban design is communicated. We use video games as an alternative model of computation to speak about real conditions, and allow people to inhabit these worlds through playable interfaces.



RC12 collaborates with architects, authors, game developers, museums, curators and critics to understand how video games can contribute to the design of our cities. This year we will hold a number of workshops and masterclasses with industry and cultural partners. Through these events we will explore how games can involve new audiences in the process of designing cities.

This year we will examine the relationship between speculative representations of cities and the rules that define the way cities grow. We will travel to New York, the city defined by the early 20th century drawings of Hugh Ferriss. Blending fact with fiction, his work influenced both the legal morphology of New York and its popular image as 'Gotham City' for decades to come. From Rem Koolhaas to Superstudio, New York has regularly been used as an urban representation of power and modernity. But their speculative tools were static. What if Ferriss or Koolhaas could have made dynamic manifestations of their ideas?

RC12 will use videogames to allow people to play out our urban speculations and witness their affect on the city. Game engines and real-time computation are being adopted in urban data analysis, generative design, and even film making. Our videogame worlds will combine real data with fictional scenarios to analyse and propose new futures for our urban environments.

Together we will play the metropolis of tomorrow.



Term One *CAPTIVE METROPOLIS*

In term one we will introduce you to the Unity game environment through a project that combines traditional tools with game engine computation.

Inspired by Rem Koolhaas and Madelon Vriesendorp's *City of the Captive Globe*, we will work individually on blocks and collectively as a city to compress multiple design ideologies and seminal projects into one virtual space. We will study the history of speculative urban design, manifesting each approach into the design of an urban block, first as a physical model, then as a virtual game space.

This project will be developed in parallel with skills modules in 3D modelling and the Unity game engine to provide you with the technical knowledge to design and construct virtual playable environments.

Term Two *REPRESENTATIONAL METROPOLIS*

In the second project we will study New York from afar through representations of the city.

Nowadays, many people might understand New York through its portrayal in culture, whether that is driving its streets in *Grand Theft Auto IV* or the everyday sites of a TV sitcom such as *Seinfeld*. These virtual versions of the city become real places in their own right.

You will create a game that examines New York as an image of itself and the ways in which it is communicated to the rest of the world.

On our trip we will share our work with other universities including the NYU Game Center which runs cutting-edge games design programmes.

Term Three *POLITICAL METROPOLIS*

In the third project we will return to London and investigate how it is developing as a city.

We will use games to interrogate the legal and political frameworks through which a future London will grow, from planning procedures to government initiatives. Could London's rules be redefined to allow it to develop in new ways, and how can we use games to test all those possible futures?

We will use research to critique the existing protocols for designing London and define new ones through the design of our games. We will accompany these with drawings, pamphlets, interactive models and critical writings to frame our design research methodologies.



Theory

This year we will be joined by games writer and critic Gareth Damian Martin, editor of *Heterotopias*. In seminars and tutorials with him you will develop a unique written report over the course of the year.

We will also hold a number of **MASTERCLASSES** across the year where we will be joined by industry specialists to workshop ideas together.