



*"In a landscape where nothing officially exists (otherwise it would not be 'desert'), absolutely anything becomes thinkable, and may consequently happen..."*

**Reyner Banham**

Unit 24 is a group of architectural storytellers, employing film, animation, drawing, VR/AR and physical modelling in pursuit of spatial propositions that harness the potential of time-based media. We nurture freethinkers who investigate ideas and techniques in collaboration with other like-minded experts. We find inspiration in the dialogue between film and architecture and their intertwined histories; film has the power to construct the psyche of a city while architectural ideas are changing the way that film is generated and understood.

This year we will turn our attention to the growing frictions between urban bubbles of overabundance and post-urban pockets of debilitating scarcity. We will ask: Can a cinematic **architecture of 'make-believe'** address this dichotomy with deft and brave proposals that marry fact and fiction?

#### **LA/Arizona**

In November, in the immediate aftermath of the US Presidential Election, we will explore the contrasting territories of Los Angeles and the battleground state of Arizona: tracing a path across the underlying geographic, social and fictional fault-lines that separate these neighbouring, yet deeply diverse regions.

Since it first swelled out of the Californian desert in the late 1800's, the growth of LA, has been inextricably linked to the business of making moving images and storytelling. Conversely the cinematic landscapes of Arizona have provided the outward gaze towards which America reflects on its history. This sense of emptiness breeds the mythical and surreal, triggering sightings of unexpected objects and the birth of conspiracy theories.

Departing from, and finally arriving back at the Hollywood-produced city, we will embark on a road trip to Arizona to discover how the American psyche has been shaped by the barren-ness of the desert and The Western. Within these febrile territories, we will search for new kinds of make-believe that blur the boundaries between truth and reality.

visit us: [www.unittwentyfour.com](http://www.unittwentyfour.com)

watch us on the BBC: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-33757862](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-33757862)

We will search out states of absence in defunct military sites from the pre-digital age, occupy the epic land art projects of Walter de Maria and Michael Heizer, encounter forgotten ghost towns and visit the desert-inspired utopias of Taliesin West, Arcosanti, and Biosphere 2, where architecture playfully imagines an alternative make-believe future.

#### **Home**

Upon our return, Year 4 will interpret and adapt their sun-bleached findings into the local climate of the post-Brexit maelstrom. Following a long period of make-believe politics, London was given the shock of its life, discovering that the UK's hinterlands felt disenfranchised, disconnected and forgotten.

Using a period of intense skill-up and inspiration in the first term we will carefully construct and conjure new visions for these towns with proud, yet long-lost pasts: from Stoke to Scunthorpe, from Portsmouth to Peterborough. We will experiment with speculative new narratives for half-forgotten towns like these, creating stories that might beggar belief, but which are so hair-brained that they might just work.

Year 5 projects will build on their last year's investigations, creating architectural 'essay films' that explore wild new frontiers and states of speculative magic.

A series of workshops with games designers, visualisers, VR developers and sound technologists will support this year's work along with access to Oculus Rift and an HTC Vive Developer Kits.

Join us on our journey to become virtual storytellers, snaggle-toothed mythmakers, digital hoaxers, political yarn-spinners, as we aim to make believers out of any one who might care to listen.

**Penelope Haralambidou and Michael Tite  
with Kei Matsuda**

image: Kozo Miyoshi, 'Sonoran Desert Display', 1989