
TITLE

Our Archives as a Treasury in Architectural Education; the Potential of Institutional and Personal Archives in the Development of Creative Practices

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ABSTRACT

What did you look at when you developed a design?

What did you go back again and again to inform your thinking and drive your designing (and designing your teaching)?

This paper considers the tacit and explicit role of archives generated and held both by institutions and individuals in the development of architectural and creative practice, and the shaping of the teaching programmes that support these trajectories.

Working within a school of architecture that has had autonomy over the archives it creates has allowed our archive to develop over time, reflecting and representing the forms of materials that have been values and prevalent. While our collecting or gathering has focused on quality

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and been selective from the output of our students, the range of materials it has accumulated is seldom used as the focus of teaching, either to inform the consideration of programme, technology or context.

This is quite different to the use of our institutional archives, which collect from across a range of design and fine art practices, and whose collections are often seen as a treasure house, a resource and a tangible and valuable asset.

Through considering the development of a personal archive, and the teaching of tactics to recall, reveal, organise, use and value our research sources, the paper describes how these can become active sources of our creativity, rather than passive records of a previous time.