

Intro [TESSA]

[Slide: Imagine the future, build what's missing]

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa,

Thank you all for being here, and thanks of course to Objectspace.

Tonight we launch pre:fab school, and later in the presentation we will provide details of an upcoming 8 week pre:fab school pilot program. But before we get into that, as both a simultaneous beginning and deferral of that task, we invite you to reflect on the built environment we inhabit tonight. That this event is happening here, and now, is because of the exhibition we are surrounded by and sitting on.

This event, and therefore now all of you, are part of a conspiracy instigated by Martino Gamper at Objectspace: For around six weeks, the space is hosting an exhibition of furniture that can be used by anyone who books the space for talks, workshops, and other gatherings.

In conversation about the exhibition, Gamper described his own education: a design school that involved one day of theoretical learning alongside four days of practical application with an employer who paid for his fees.

Gamper reflected on how society sees your "job or trade" and your "study" as two paths that aren't meant to cross after school, and how unproductive this division can be. He called on us all to "create the bridges" across this division, and allow space for experimentation and play that commercial work often curtails. Tonight we invite you to build a bridge with us.

Conspiracy Workshop [SIMON]

You will have hopefully received a mysterious envelope when you arrived, now is the time to open it. [PAUSE]

Inside you will find a playing card detailing a historic conspiracy from the Whakapapa of architectural practice in Aotearoa.

The idea of 'conspiracy' produces a kind of clandestine subjectivity. It's a primal feeling of togetherness, a shared vision for the future, of imagined possibilities that can be held secretly, or not. This appeals to the deep human desire to be included, to be *in* on something. It's this *feeling* of 'conspiracy' that encourages a community of conspirators working towards a common goal to have each other's back, to support and promote each other's work, to seek out and create opportunities for mutual benefit.

[Slide: Studio 19, Parihaka cards]

Conspiracy is about *gathering* and about organising those gatherings through ritual to realise a future that could have otherwise been different... In this way Dave [Strawn]'s Studio 19 and the Parihaka resistance movement are both examples of past conspiracies that continue to influence us as built environment practitioners today.

Using this definition of conspiracy, we invite you to think of a conspiracy that *you yourself* have been involved in from your life, this could be something professional or personal, with very high or very low stakes, (e.g. an intervention to get your mate to finish high school, a secret language you made up with your sibling, etc.) A conspiracy that I was involved in was [speaker example here], [second speaker example here] [third speaker example here]

Now we ask that you conspire with 3 others on your table by first sharing which architecture conspiracy card you have and then discussing conspiracies *you* have been involved in, for the next five minutes. These can be related to architecture, or not.

Please use the blank cards provided to fill out the details of one of your conspiracies to add to our collection.

[Call out to one person from each table to read their conspiracy]

pre:fab School intro [LEONARD]

Our behaviors and decisions are not just momentary acts—they can be recorded, replicated, and mined as training data for future action. Everything we do is a potential conspiracy in waiting. That today's actions are tomorrow's conventions reveals an empowering truth: that all cultural norms and received practices were once marginal ideas.

[Slide: pre:fab School Conspiracy Card]

“pre:fab School was an alternative route to education and licensure in architecture and the built environment. Informed by past experimental models onshore and abroad, in 2026 architecture collective pre:fab decided to create a new kind of architecture school for people who wanted a cheaper, faster, better, and more fulfilling way to learn.”

We are speaking of course from the future, because pre:fab school hasn't happened yet.

Alternative schools have been tried before—studio 19, rural studio, Ciudad Abierta/Open City, and other models have been a huge inspiration for us, and the things they generate are a great reason to imagine that something like them is appropriate for—perhaps even demanded by—the time we are all in now.

[Slide: showing school-making experience]

In fact, we have been imagining this school, and working towards being capable of realising it for a long time through a series of education experiments both here in Aotearoa and globally.

pre:fab School Exchange Value Proposition [OLLIE]

With this in mind, informed by past experiments in education in Aotearoa and beyond, and with a long list of contemporary co-conspirators, many of them in this room, we present our vision for pre:fab School:

[Slide: pre:fab School: Cheaper; Faster; Better]

pre:fab school is a 3 year vertically integrated intensive program composed of 2 8 week learning blocks per year, with associated research and LBP-licensing mentorship schemes, delivered through a combination of participatory seminars and workshops, and the design and construction of real community building projects around the motu, facilitating applied learning in community organising, documentation, procurement, and hands-on building work.

[Slide: pre:fab School: real people]

Teaching and learning at pre:fab School emphasises: architecture as gathering; learning through doing; and research and licensing.

The program as a whole will experiment with forms of gathering—grounded in the collaborative design of rituals, games, workshops and seminars, and structured play—that make the learning experience more dynamic, and generate tools and strategies for life as an architecture worker.

pre:fab school centers students as active contributors to the construction of our shared environments, and is structured around community building projects—demonstrating our pillars of learning through developing practical skills from practical experience in organising, design and building on site, and effecting change in the built environment.

[Slide: pre:fab School: Architecture As Gathering; Learning Through Doing; Research and Licensing]

Alongside workshops and hands-on building and organising, pre:fab School offers two parallel mentorship programs, the first to obtain LBP licensure, and the second to support a self-directed research project across history; theory of practice; teaching and learning; communication; and organising for the purpose of personal, professional and disciplinary development.

pre:fab School Curricula [TESSA]

[Slide: pre:fab School: History, Theory of Practice, Community Organising, Mātauranga Māori, Materials]

Curricula at pre:fab School will foreground five key subject areas—our pillars of learning—delivered with a local focus:

pre:fab School understands history, theory, and philosophy as sites for connecting your practice with a vast world of complementary, competing, central, and inconsequential threads of knowledge, and for building a conceptual apparatus to engage ideas to their fullest potential. As Kant said “if you're not doing philosophy you're just living by someone else's dogma.”

pre:fab school positions practice as an always-in-construction approach to architecture projects, that should be constantly observed, questioned, and theorised. pre:fab school provides the convivial settings, practical tools, and relational networks to support students in developing and theorising their practice.

pre:fab school grants agency to its students in shaping their environments by teaching tools, strategies and processes that enable them to interact with and influence legal and regulatory systems, mobilise people around a vision, and build momentum through local grassroots action and organising with their communities.

pre:fab School's vision for the future is one where mātauranga māori forms a key part of our collective understanding of, and approaches to, practice and our shared environments. At the school we join the vital process of making matauranga māori a central part of building and architecture.

Supply chains emerge at the intersection of culture, technology, economics, and politics. Pre:fab School's Materials pillar will examine what buildings are actually made of, and how these materials appear. We will experiment with making new materials, new alternative supply chains, as well as engaging materials with well established histories and communities that are typically ignored by the mainstream construction industry.

pre:fab School Beyond Capitalism [SIMON]

[Slide: lots of good vibe portfolio photos]

pre:fab School delivers a programme of theory, research, and learning-through-doing that presents a viable alternative to dominant models of education in architecture and the built environment, and delivers this programme in a way that is faster, cheaper, and better.

There is, however, an important *additional* value proposition embedded in what we are presenting, and which both contains and exceeds the criteria we have just discussed: In pre:fab school there is also the hopeful idea that we can nurture and promote forms of individual and collective empowerment apart from those required to meet the punishing demands of everyday economic life.

Mātauranga Māori is not just a key competency in the profession – it is a doorway to deep connections with place, the natural world, language, and a world view that can begin to reconcile tensions in the socio-political landscape of Aotearoa, and also personal understandings of self and belonging.

Architecture as gathering is not just a way to learn more effectively – it is the foundation of a form of life that provides more security, more purpose, and more meaning through the building of long-term commitments to place, people, and the shared practices that sustain them.

Learning through doing is not just a better way to gain skills and tacit knowledge – it is

also knowing what you are looking for and how to transform it into what you need, which forms the basis of individual and collective agency in the built environment.

Together these practices enable individuals to imagine and build the communities they want, and those communities to reclaim forms of self-determination and autonomy grounded in their ability to realise the built environments that reflect their needs and aspirations.

pre:fab School Pilot details [OLLIE]

[Slide: pre:fab Pilot Accepting expressions of interest now. Students. Collaborators. Supporters]

This year we intend to run an 8 week part-time pilot for pre:fab School. A kind of cultural petri dish for this vision, a catalyst and collective brainstorm to generate the School's programme in the years to follow. This is a space for all involved to test, develop, discuss and refine this vision, ahead of the establishment of the full programme next year.

The Pilot will run from mid-June to mid-August this year, and we are accepting expressions of interest to attend now.

The Pilot will be structured so as to make attendance possible for the broadest possible demographic - we hope to invite already studying architecture students, practicing architects, graduates, builders, grandparents, friends, or anyone with an interest in learning about the built environment through the construction of a small community building project.

We will be building this pilot around the design and construction of two community build projects - a rain catchment and timber kiln at Carin Wilson's whare, art studio and gathering site *Pukeruru* near Lang's beach, and a new outdoor education space at Kelmarna Gardens in Grey Lynn. The pilot will include at least three weekend build sessions, 1-2 weekly evening workshops, and regular Saturday gatherings.

[Slide: Student, Collaborators, Supporters]

For us the pilot is an opportunity to gain invaluable feedback before we set out on the task of delivering the full programme. If you have insights into educational models and strategies, we encourage you to attend the pilot, and to be a part of the creation of this new experiment.

All conspiracies begin with the people who believe in them, and those who refute them too. pre:fab School is seeking co-conspirators: students, programme collaborators, funding and promotion partners and anyone else interested in contributing to teaching, learning, and licensing in architecture and the built environment come talk to us! We need your help!

Close [LEONARD]

Thank you all for joining us tonight. This is an evening of both great and small

consequence for us. The end of a path we have been walking for sometime, and the tentative, hopeful beginning of a new one, pointing in the same direction, traveling with same intentions, but now with new and different qualities; Unknowable. Exciting. Terrifying... Real.

We will now come join you at your tables, to hear any ideas you have about the future of education, and to answer an important question: What do you want to learn?