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Active Studio v.1.5

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Introduction

Four case studies from Active Studio are presented. They are three student projects and a prize winning national competition entry. Being driven by the uniqueness of individual contexts each highlighted a different issue concerning the use of CAD as an image making tool.

Four Projects

The Art of CAD: A prize winning design team shows how CAD can be used as the preferred medium for expressing the feelings of a design and the early concept work, while final technical images may be more appropriately produced on a drawing board.

Computers *Don't* Collage: By scanning an image it is freed from the physical existence that bears the marks of its history. Seamlessly, imperceptibly, data interacts with numerous fragments to become new data as fresh as the original scanned image. There are no marks, no tears nor thickness of layers; with a computer the artist can cut and paste but the effect cannot be called collage. It is something quite new.

Ambient Climate: Raytracing usually offers an "ambient" light setting, but this is merely an indiscriminate application of a single brightness to every surface in a model. In predominantly cloudy climates like the British, ambient light levels are a significant proportion of overall lighting. One simple CAD technique is shown to give interestingly "moody" results.

Reading CAD Technique: Students in architecture schools using CAD are risking the mis-understanding of the technically uninitiated who will ultimately judge the work. Some aspects of CAD images are system determined while others reflect the student's ideas about the design. When the former is mistaken for the latter the student suffers by the technology that promised to aid visualisation having had the contrary effect.



From left to right: CAD for Feeling, Not Collage, Ambient Shadow and Bad Communication.

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