

**AA SCHOOL
DIRECTOR**

**OPEN CALL FOR
APPLICANTS**

**DEADLINE
NOON
20 11 2017**

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search.aaschool.ac.uk**

DUE : 'A roadmap to success,' the stereotypical adage for self help books, motivational speakers and J.P. Morgan execs alike. Despite its cliché it seems the search committee has been tasked with a similar ambition and goal – to draw a path which has the greatest potential for the AA's future success. This idea implies a different notion of space, territory and orientation in our case. From your perspective, the cartographer, how do you understand the idea of a map here? How do you map territory that is shifting faster than you can note. The groundwork to define a territory or orientation to somewhere you have not been, the act of making a roadmap for a terrain that does not exist prior to the map itself.

Search Committee: The AA Search Committee is composed of eight elected members representing the different constituencies of the School Community (students, tutors and administration) as well as three appointed members representing the AA Council.

In this case, 'the roadmap to success' boils down to simply being able to attract the best possible candidates for the Directorship of the school from wherever they might be on the map geographically, culturally, politically. The map here operates as a survey tool to scan the field with. Have we reached out far enough? It is an expedition in a direction given by the school community and as all expeditions there is no predetermined destination. The point is not to map but to interrogate far and across the current landscape of architectural education for voices that would articulate a clear and radical vision for the AA. We experience the pace of the – indeed very fast – shifting territory from the vantage point of a school that aspires not to be a part of an established avant-garde but to actually formulate one in real time.

DUE: In a 2014/15 interview published in AArchitecture #25, the publication's editors interview Monia de Marchi regarding a brief she put forward to her First Year students. The brief was to rerun a famous architectural competition and the interview picked up a very curious position from de Marchi where she talked about the role of the deadline. If I remember correctly the point was not entirely that there was a fixed end date, but rather that any deadline or competition presupposes a fixed start date. That at one point in time a call is put out and from that point on work begins around a specific topic and continues. This attitude runs in contrast to the famous Picasso anecdote where he made a drawing during the course of a cigarette and when questioned he claims that it in fact took him a lifetime of experience to create. With this in mind the idea of a 'start' date becomes interesting for the director's call. In what capacity do you understand the idea of a fixed 'start' in this context?

SC: The role of the committee is indeed as brief and precise in time as Picasso's cigarette. It's

lit at a specific moment, and will be put out when the 'drawing' will be ready. Yet, the subject of the accumulated experience is not the committee, but the one the committee is looking for. In a certain sense, the anecdote is reversed; the cigarette is looking for its Picasso.

DUE: 'The director must maintain the confidence of the AA School Community....' Presumably you as a committee wrote this sentence and chose these words slowly and wisely. Can you speak some about the word 'confidence'? There seems to be a double meaning, on the one hand the unequivocal belief in something while on the other a more intimate encounter, to confide in someone. This marks a very interesting duality for the director's position, at once leader and lover.

Of course there is also the idea of time in this sentence, as in 'maintain' or 'maintenance'.

SC: The job description echoes the expectations of the School Community as they were communicated to us during the period of consultation from the election of the Search Committee until this October's community meeting. The notion of 'confidence,' in the context of a direct democracy such as the one the AA operates, is a quite literal one. It translates into the ability of all members of the School Community to participate in voting for and expressing continuing support (or lack thereof) for a director. Leader and lover is definitely an intriguing interpretation of the issue of confidence – both in the instance of the vote and also in the *dureé* of the directorship. The responsibility of the School Community, in placing its faith and confidence in the new director should perhaps be regarded as much as the responsibility of any director to remain in a constant and intimate dialogue with the school. ♥

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