

Friday 25 June

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**Proposal for a Spatial
and Economical**

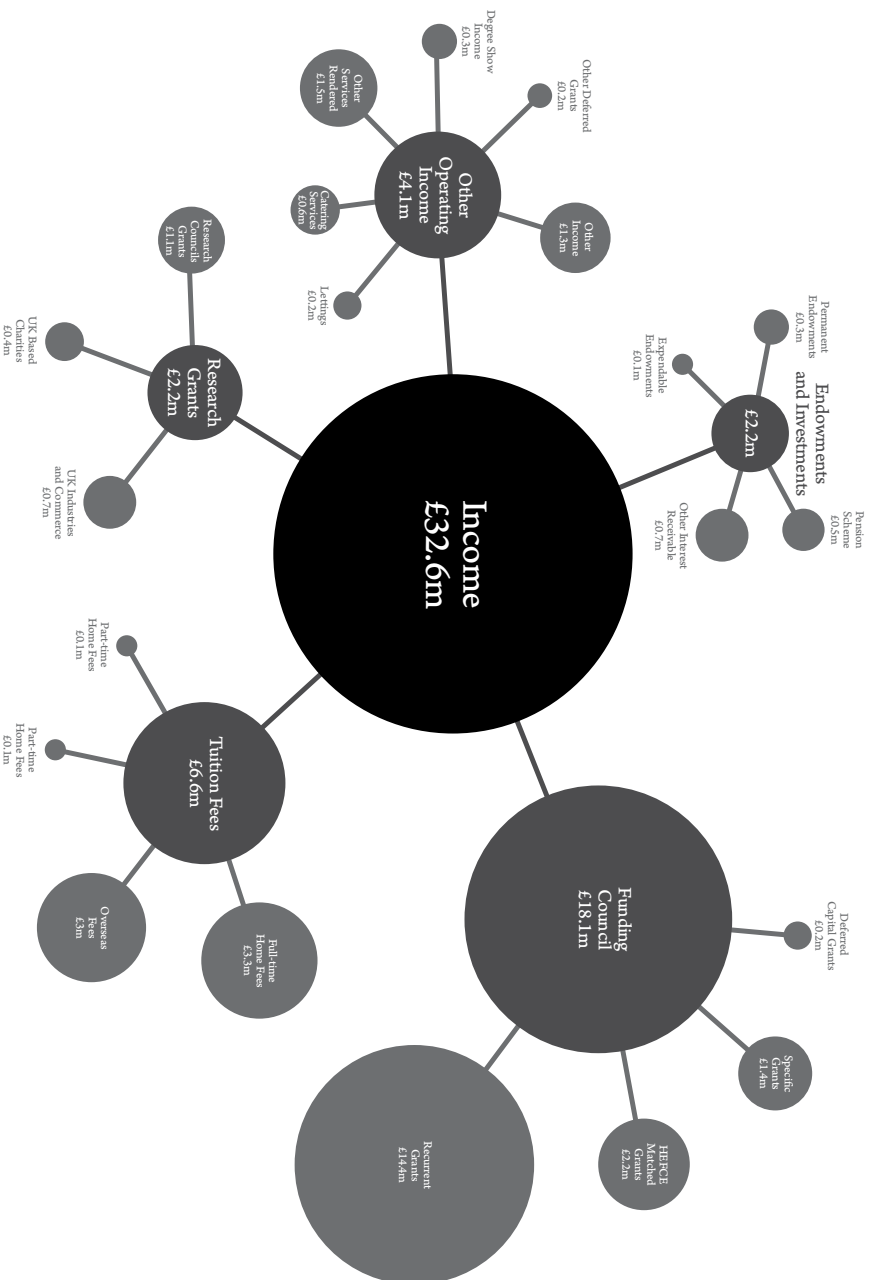
Reorganisation of the RCA

.ORG: Architecture for art and design education

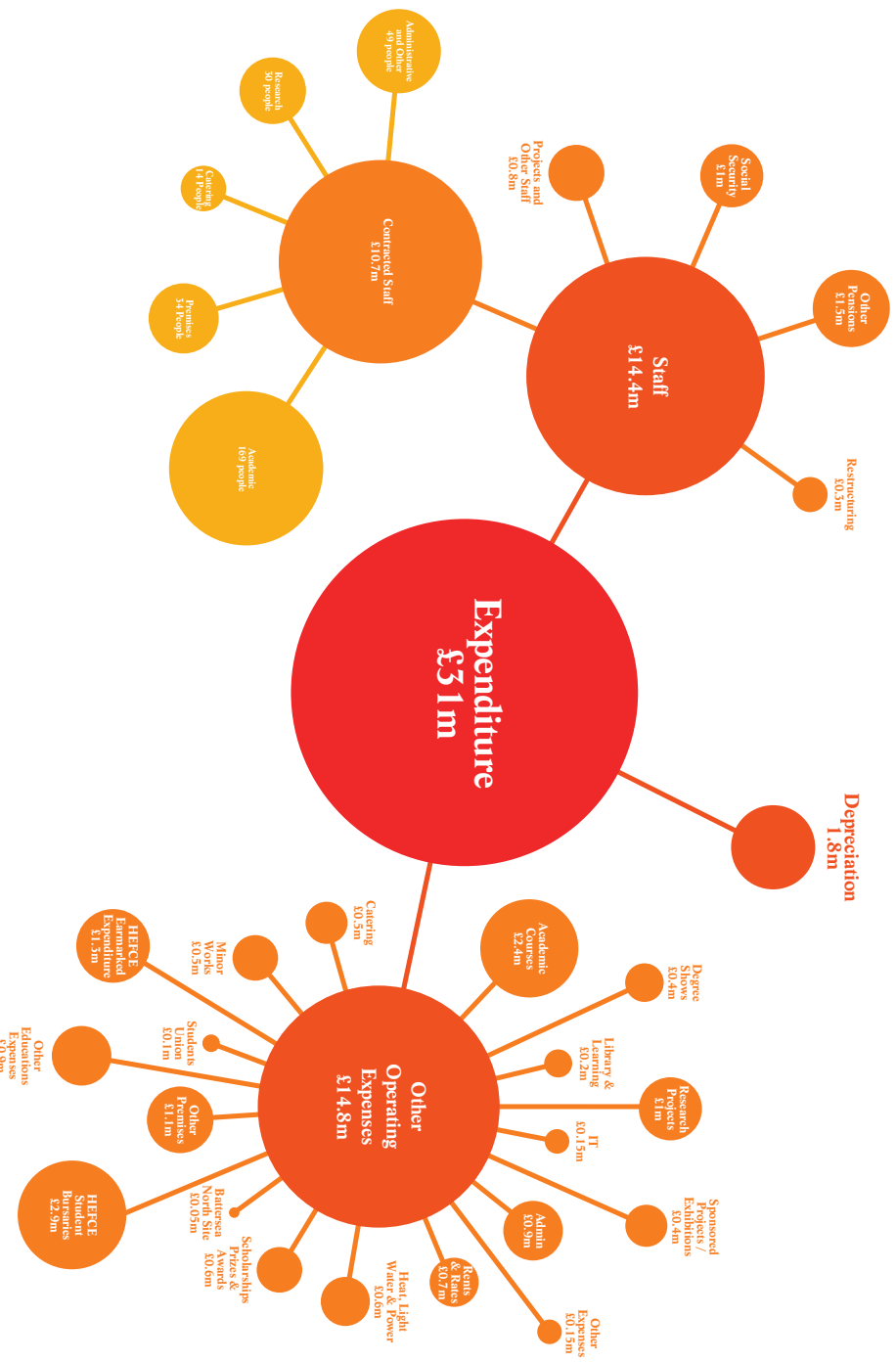
The following proposals emerged from an all day workshop with Roberto Bottazzi and Finn Williams. Together we created, compiled and discussed both practical and Utopian ideas for the spatial reorganization of existing art & design schools.



Consolidated Income Account for the Year Ended 31 July 2009



Consolidated Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31 July 2009



RCA: Royal Condominium of Arts

The RCA currently spends £2.9m annually on student bursaries. These grants are inevitably spent on the costs of living in London – rent, food and travel.

By creating subsidized / free student accommodation within the RCA site these costs could be dramatically reduced for live-in students, meaning money currently going into the pockets of landlords and the coffers of Transport for London could be redirected to the RCA.

According to the NUS the average annual cost of a room in London is £7,852.

The cost of an annual zones 1-4 travelcard is £1,472.

Assuming each student at the RCA currently spends £9,324 a year on accommodation and travel, if all 920 students at the RCA could be accommodated on site the potential saving is £8,578,080.

Live-in students could double up as night-time security for the RCA buildings, allowing a cut in the number of premises staff employed. Cutting back from 34 to just 5 premises staff could save an estimated £750,000.

Extra accommodation could be created on the RCA roof in temporary scaffolding structures, or even

in an extruded cylinder structure on top of the dome of the Royal Albert Hall. About 150 students could live in the Darwin building [approx. 7-8 per department]. Charging each student the average rate of £7,852 would bring in £1,177,800.

Estimated Annual Savings per Student

<i>Accommodation</i>	<i>£7,852</i>
<i>Travel</i>	<i>£1,472</i>
<i>Time saving</i>	<i>Immeasurable</i>

<i>Total Annual Saving for 920 Students</i>	<i>£8.6m</i>
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RCA: Rationalised College of Art

Currently facilities for computing, printing, making etc... are duplicated across every department in the RCA.

Estimated Savings

<i>Technician's wages</i>	£0.2m
<i>Facilities operating costs</i>	£0.8m

Bringing all of these workshops together in one facilities hub that is open to everyone in the RCA would be a more efficient use of technicians' time, supervision and space. It would also allow for more interaction between students from different departments, and working across mediums or finding new combinations of manufacturing processes.

<i>Total Saving</i>	£1.0m
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The consolidated facilities hub should be open 24 hours for more efficient use of equipment in demand, and would have a shared timetable for booking slots in advance to use the facilities.

Whilst capital expenditure on hardware could be reduced to some extent, the real saving would be made on the associated revenue costs – technical support, maintenance, security measures etc... On top of that, some relatively simple services such as printing could be outsourced, for example to Lulu.com.

RCAalendar

Costs associated with technical assistance and services could be reduced by collectively sharing experience and expertise through an online knowledge-based network or forum.

‘Crowdsourcing’ could be used to find and share ideas or solutions to technical queries. Bringing these conversations together in an online forum would mean other students can search and access the same information efficiently.

All students, alumni, tutors and technicians would have access to an online calendar where they could offer their services at certain times, or book slots of time with others. It is expected that many alumni would be willing to give some of their time in return for teaching/tutoring experience. This is how the current system of ‘critting’ works across London.

Artisans could run real small creative businesses inside the college and give technical support to students for which they are paid on the hour (e.g. typesetting, glass blowing etc...)

Each technician would be available for the whole school rather than just for one department. Student cards should be unlocked for all floors and areas of the building.

Estimated Savings

<i>Academic courses</i>	<i>£2.4m</i>
<i>Research projects</i>	<i>£1.0m</i>
<i>Admin</i>	<i>£0.9m</i>
<i>Rents and Rates</i>	<i>£0.9m</i>
<i>Heat, lights etc.</i>	<i>£0.5m</i>
<i>Other premises</i>	<i>£1.1m</i>
<i>Contracted staff</i>	<i>£3.8m</i>

Estimated Costs

<i>Restructuring</i>	<i>-£0.3m</i>
<i>IT</i>	<i>-£0.9m</i>
<i>Enabling works</i>	<i>-£1.4m</i>

<i>Total Saving</i>	<i>£5.5m</i>
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The RCA Hour

Could costly services currently provided by salaried staff be provided on an in-kind / barter basis?

The introduction of a time-based RCA currency would mean the time students invest into shared activities in the RCA is rewarded through receiving other time-based services in return.

Teaching, workshops and tutoring could be allocated across departments using a network based on the time-currency. The same currency could extend to sharing catering, security, maintenance etc... This will reward people who already engage with the wider RCA and other students, and encourage people that have not done it yet.

Estimated Savings

<i>Staff</i>	<i>£2.00m</i>
<i>Administrative</i>	<i>£0.20m</i>
<i>Technicians</i>	<i>£0.05m</i>
<i>Catering</i>	<i>£0.50m</i>
<i>Catering people</i>	<i>£0.35m</i>
<i>Premises</i>	<i>£0.10m</i>
<i>Academic courses</i>	<i>£1.00m</i>
<i>[trips organised using the same exchange mechanism]</i>	

Total Saving *£4.2m*

ICA: Infrastructure-less College of Art

The physical premises of the RCA account for a substantial proportion of expenditure. The location of the main campus in Kensington, where floorspace is expensive to rent, could be a potential way of generating extra income.

Estimated Savings

£4.8m

The RCA could follow in the footsteps of academic institutions like the Open University, the Flying University in Warsaw, and Cedric Price's (unrealised) Potteries Thinkbelt, and do without any fixed physical presence.

The RCA could disperse and relocate into surrounding public and commercial institutions (i.e. RCAfe in Costa, printing facilities in Service Point, the library in the V&A, studios in students' flats, exhibition space in private galleries etc...) leaving the existing buildings vacant.

Initial savings from not needing any premises would amount to approximately £4.8m. Further income could be generated by renting out the current building, or alternatively selling the site outright. With nearby development One Hyde Park selling for £6,000 per square foot, the potential profits are big.

Self-Taught RCA

The costs of employing 169 teaching staff could be cut by running the whole RCA according to the ethos of Department 21, where the students take ownership of their education.

In order for students to take full ownership of their studies they should be able to take up teaching roles within the RCA – by running workshops, proposing student-led projects, lecturing. This mode of operating where learning is teaching, and teaching is learning, should also apply to MA and PhD students.

This student-led self-teaching could be provided through evening schools – free for RCA students, and providing paid-for professional development for external individuals.

In general, teaching contracts should be reduced in length to prevent complacency and institutional lethargy, and encourage a consistently fresh approach to teaching. Head of Departments should be given a maximum stay of 4 to 6 years.

At the beginning of every year all internal partitions in the departments should be taken down, all furniture moved to one side or removed, so that each year the studios can be arranged from scratch by the students themselves.

All studios should be regularly cleared of broken and unused items. Unwanted or unclaimed materials should be held for 2 weeks before they go to be recycled in a dedicated area from which all students can take what they need.

Estimated Savings

<i>Student Union</i>	£0.1m
<i>Admin</i>	£0.5m
<i>Staff</i>	£2.5m
<i>Prizes</i>	£0.6m
<i>Other expenses</i>	£0.9m

Estimated Costs

<i>Summer school</i>	-£0.5m
<i>Total Saving</i>	£4.1m

RCA Manufacturing

Many RCA Graduates generate brilliant ideas for products while studying at the RCA that are later developed and sold by mainstream / industrial manufacturers. At the same time, these manufacturers may not always offer the best deals or creative freedom to graduates.

The RCA could capitalise on products developed by students by establishing their own independent manufacturing company. The company could offer graduates a fair deal in return for first rights over concepts developed at the RCA (e.g. Min-Kyu Choi's Folding Plug). As a guide, Dyson makes an annual pre-tax profit of around £80m, which marks the top end of what it might be possible for the company to achieve.

An RCA Manufacturing Company could offer graduates a platform for moving into independent practice, whilst also acting as a showcase for turning critical academic practice into products for the real world.

Estimated Earnings

Operating profit £5m-£25m

Estimated Costs

Set-up costs -£3m

Total Saving £2m-£22m

RCA : Rentable Collection of Art

The RCA's biggest asset is the intellectual capital of its former students. The school should capitalise on this more by requiring every student to donate one piece of work to the school from their final show. The selection of these pieces could be curated by internal departments, as could the art collection on display in the senior common room.

Whilst the school waits for the value of these pieces to appreciate, the collection could be available for rent by public or private institutions, or even individuals who would pay a rental fee to keep the work at home, like a library. The renting of pieces would reduce the need for storage, and help publicise and exploit the commercial value of the collection. Individual pieces could be sold as and when necessary to mitigate funding cuts (e.g. the Francis Bacon piece sold to fund the Battersea Building).

Estimated Savings

<i>Rental income</i>	£0.01m
<i>Profits from sales</i>	£5.00m

Estimated Costs

<i>Storage</i>	-£0.05m
<i>Administration</i>	-£0.06m

<i>Total Saving</i>	£4.9m
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RCA: Royal Consultancy Agency

RCA takes advantage of the unique quality and range of knowledge that 21 departments provide by working with cities on specific briefs and issues. Similar to the model inaugurated by Berlage Institute, RCA approaches cities lacking cultural organisation of international prestige to re-think the cultural future of that city. Mid-size cities or entire regions are perhaps the ideal target. What future for Detroit? A new cultural masterplan for Verona or the Ruhr? Or a public art strategy for Saudi Arabia?

Extra income is generated by sponsorship from local authorities, partially covering teaching costs (intellectuals, artists, designers from the area will help tutor students).

All departments involved will spend a term in the area studied on a rotational system. This will allow for increased student numbers to participate.

This outward-facing world-wide programme will in turn encourage recruitment from international students (non-EU).

Estimated Savings

<i>Sponsorship</i>	<i>£1.0m</i>
<i>Extra students</i>	<i>£2.0m</i>
<i>Tuition fees</i>	<i>£1.5m</i>

Estimated Costs

<i>Extra staffing</i>	<i>-£0.5m</i>
<i>Total Saving</i>	<i>£4.0m</i>

Department 21 at Show 2



Each day of Show Two will see Department 21 addressing a different critical theme within art and design practice through a series of conversations and workshops in the RCA's central courtyard, joined by graduating students, alumni, invited speakers and the Show-going public.

Please drop by and get involved in anything or everything. All are welcome

For further information:
www.department21.net

Department 21
at RCA Final Show 2010
25 June — 4 July
From 11pm to 8pm

Saturday 26 June
EATING PRACTICE
Food in art and design

Sunday 27 June
CHALK AND TALK
Modes of teaching and knowledge distribution

Monday 28 June
FILLING IN THE BLANKS
Amateurism-by-numbers

Tuesday 29 June
**SEVEN CENTURIES IN HALF
A MILLION WORDS**
Current ideas in design history

Wednesday 30 June
STAYING ALIVE
Collaboration for survival

Thursday 1 July
DOCTORS IN CHARGE
Research students take over

Saturday 3 July
FINESSING THE FINITE
Sustainability in art and design

Sunday 4th July
CULTURES OF RESISTANCE
Commodification of cultural production