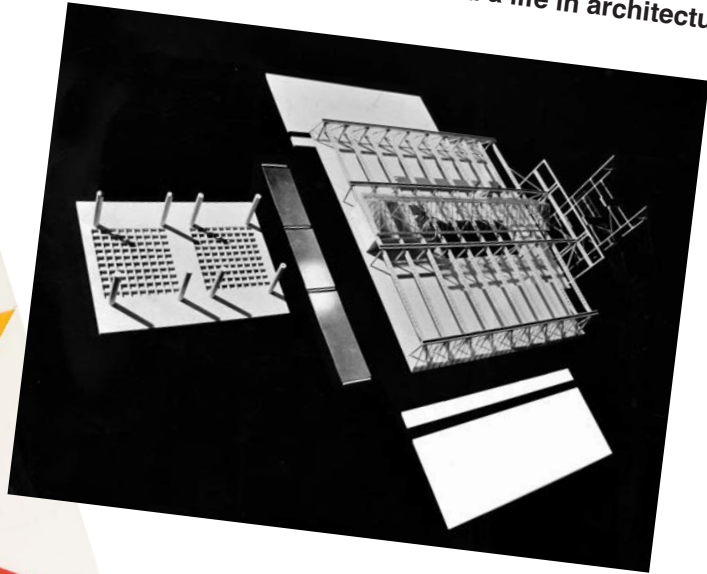


DK80

and how the liverpool school has influenced a life in architecture...



DK80 - how can this be.... 60 years in architecture? no way - but then they tell me that dates can't lie - so there it is!



*'if I'd been asked to write this 60 years ago without the help of 21st century technology I'd have been floundering with either a square italic fountain pen given to an unenthusiastic (about writing) schoolboy or a graphos, but I digress - this is to be about the famous liverpool school of architecture - the **LSA** - and it's monumental effect on the life of a particular then rather reluctant prospective architect who's career came to be entwined with the famous place - anyway, as can be seen, I now don't have to use a T square or a typewriter to set this up...!'*

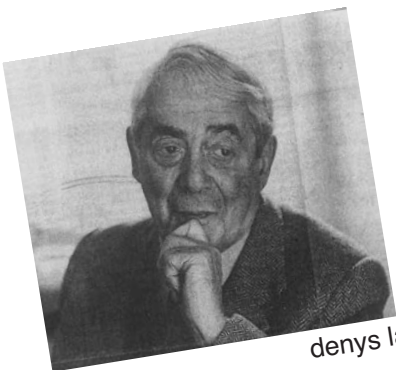
DK80 (dave king) was 18 when he first encountered the LSA - the interview was in a ground floor room on the corner of abercromby square and was conducted by a trio of men of age in smart suits. 'well mr king' (this was the first time he'd been addressed as such) 'how would you describe the decorated period in gothic architecture?' needless to say that in his somewhat incoherent reply a dislike of pointed arches was mentioned and - interview over...!

so without telling anyone he applied to manchester and was accepted to study under prof RA CORDINGLY - an avowed classicist & author of 'parallel of the orders' - perhaps this book had some influence, but no more so than the presence norman foster in the small studio group which had settled in a quadrant ended wing of what had been the dental school - so which exerted the most influence? probably norman who was 5 years older...

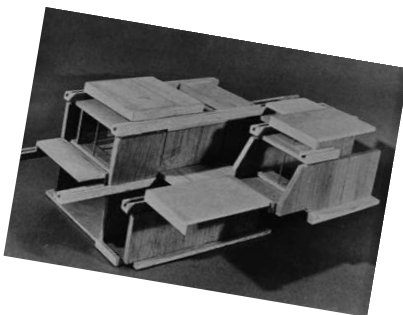


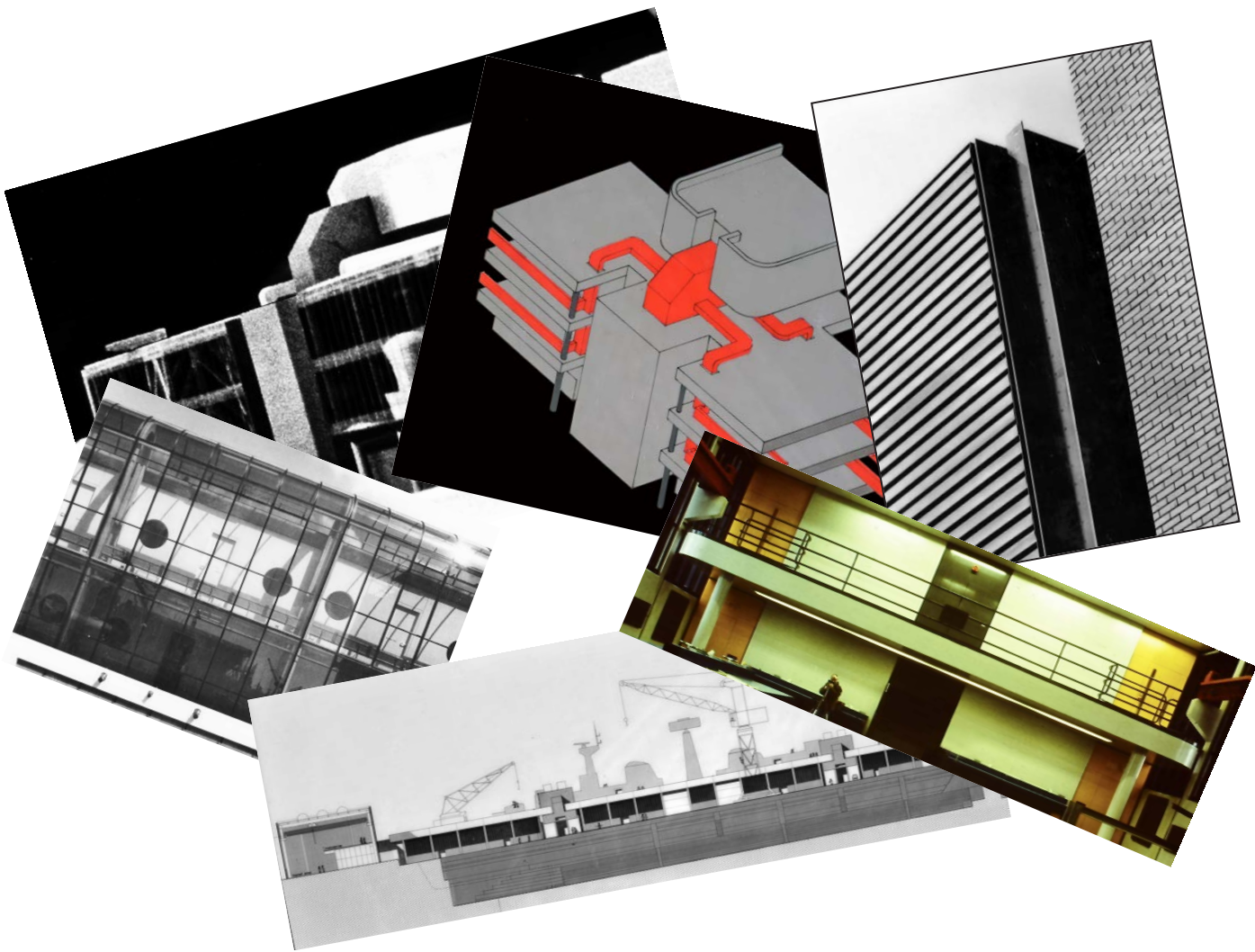
1956 - 1970

'to draw a final thesis on stretched whatman art paper in ink was certainly a challenge, but a previous 5th year (which included mike mckinnell who went on to win the boston city hall competition) had presented on flush doors & plate glass, so inevitably I suppose we had to suffer a more traditional technique. in those days a 'crit' was the best of us watched in awe - this was my first encounter with **denys lasdun** who later came to have as much personal influence on my life as norman foster - both of whom I came to know quite well.'



denys lasdun





1970 - 1978

'moving to arup associates after the late '60's lasdun experience I felt something beginning to take hold. lasdun taught me about concrete, AA taught me steel & collaboration. lasdun was monochrome - my love of de stijl & mondrian started to emerge in the naval base. shunji ishida (later renzo piano's top man) & I took advantage of the fact that the partners were not all that interested 'in what was going on behind the 'wall' - we had all signed the official secrets act and there was to be no publicity. 7 years and another recession loomed - for me it was to be sent to do a bank in bahrain or choose liverpool. I applied and was accepted - over 2 decades after my fateful first interview. this became a crucial life choice - such things happen... the **liverpool school of architecture** was then my home for the next 15 years'

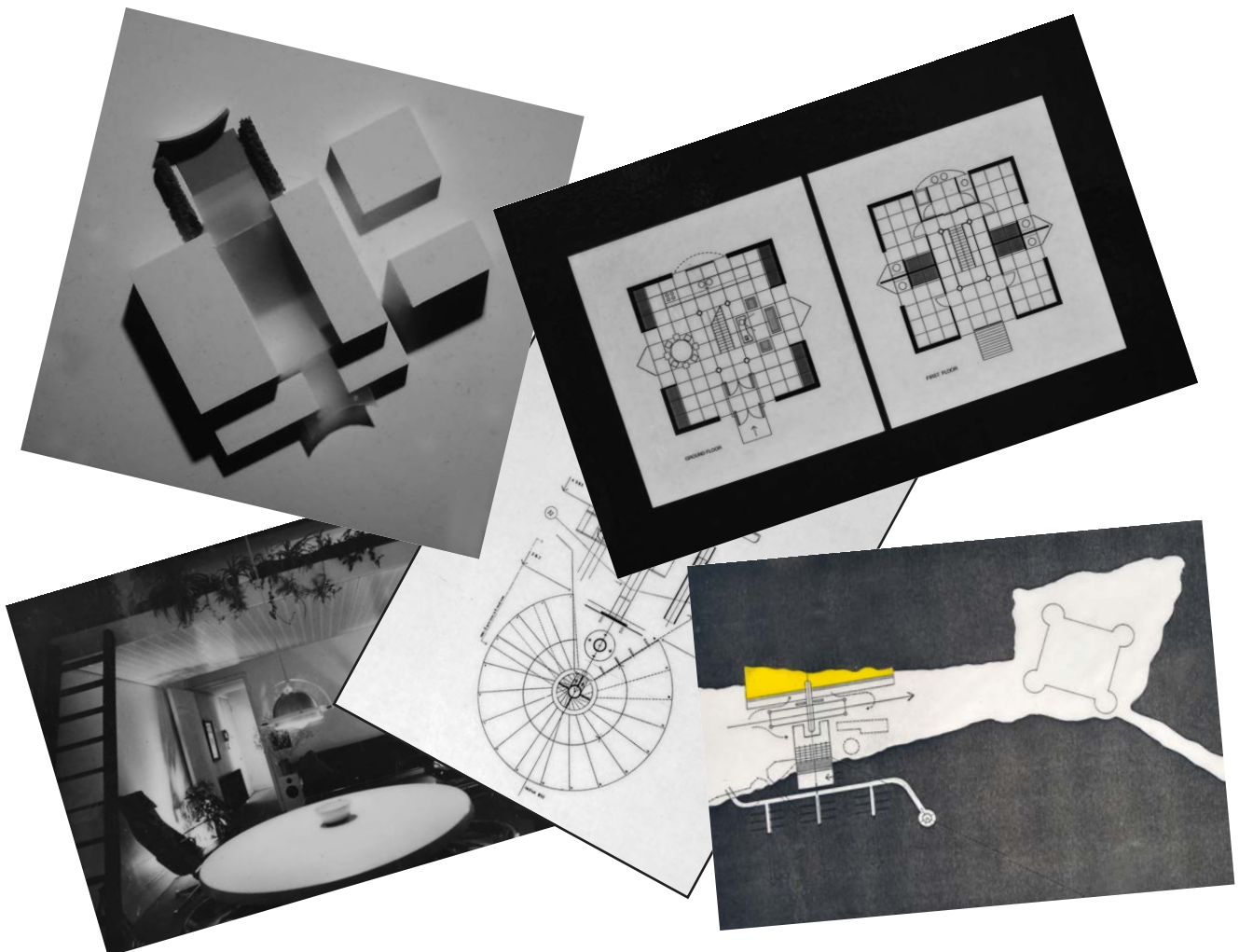
(and after a 20 year break I'm now back again albeit on a more casual basis.....!)

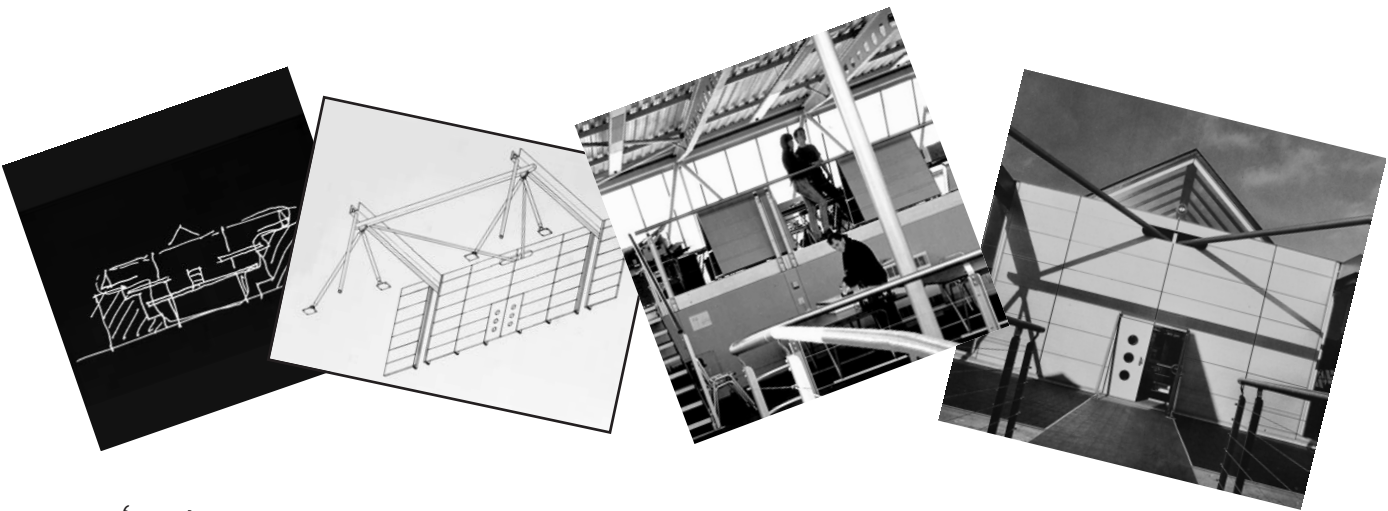
after being award his diploma at the manchester school in '62, dave worked initially locally before heading for london to join deny lasdun - firstly on the university of east anglia, then the national theatre. moving to arup in 1970, he became project architect for a series of developments in portsmouth naval base - a lone architect in a multi-disciplinary team of engineers, surveyors and administrators. the 5 projects completed are still operative...

by 1978 dave had left arup associates to join the staff of the liverpool school of architecture over 20 years after his application to study there had been turned down. he was an experienced architect by then and found academic life very unsettling at first. things changed though - meeting and making friends. vacation jobs for foster and ABK kept him on track and student relationships proved to be just about the best investment that he ever made....

1978 - 1988

'yes - academic life was difficult at first - I'd been used to a highly pressured office environment. **dick smith** the laconic american put me right one day on a coach full of students passing over the forth road bridge 'just relax - you're here to tell these guys what it's about - you'll learn too.' he was right - and contact with students and their idealtic projects was very productive. in some ways 15 years stacked with complex experiences and always under pressure to produce, had overlaid my 'teaching' (if that was what it was). but slowly, through friendships and vacation jobs with foster, ABK etc, I managed to construct a way of being which satisfied both practical & theoretical instincts. I became involved in writing, in organising european field trips with graphic design and filmmaking as an aside. I felt more a student than member of staff which of course did not suggest a permanent full time career in academia. I was however never short of ideas for schemes and even though living (it seemed) on the lime st - euston train I prospered both intellectually and in a design sense at the LSA - exceptionally good years!'





1988 - 1990

*'and then... how could this have happened? I was just in the process of forming an architectural film company following work I'd done for the RIBA first '40 under 40' show - also for arup associates with students **nik randall** & **pete brimelow** on the building of the new garden festival hall, when **gerry beech** (senior lecturer) asked me if I could take on the design of the new studio for him... well never being one to forego a chance I moved very quickly - so quickly in fact that by the time he came back from 2 weeks vacation there was a design on the table, consultants appointed and a whole fastrack process under way. the design itself was not to gerry's particular style, but pragmatist that he was he let it go forward under my name - I was then joined by **rod mcallister** and other students leading to a nucleus for king mcallister (KM) to develop. so this was it - film making was dropped to allow architecture to emerge!. one afternoon in milan - when rod & I were traipsing around italian publishing houses, we began to realise the magnitude of the breakthrough - I was aged late '50's, rod a new graduate - this appeared to be the beginning of something very special - but what?'*

contract period -1 year



contractor - monks

cost £1M - inc re-furb existing

in 1988 after 10 years without a major project dave started work (initially for gerald beech) on the new studio for the liverpool school of architecture. the building - then called the 'new studio & galleries' went on to win RIBA, civic trust & british steel awards - also to be published internationally - DOMUS/DETAIL/ABITARE/AR/AJ/BD + inclusion in EDITIONS MONITEUR 'new universities' + 'new british architecture' - the studio had become an icon for the LSA....

