

Northumbria University Architecture Portfolios

# CROOME REDEFINED ARCHIVE ROOMS

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## 1. Project Details

Principal Researcher	Shaun Young
Title	Croome Redefined: Archive Rooms
Output type	Design competition proposal
Location	Croome Court, Pershore, Worcester, UK
Client	National Trust
Funding source	Heritage Lottery Fund
Budget	£40,000
URL	<a href="http://www.northumbriaarchitecture.com/research">www.northumbriaarchitecture.com/research</a>

## 2. Summary

This practice-based design inquiry was carried out to inform architectural proposals for the National Trust's 'Croome Redefined: Archive Rooms Competition' in 2016. The competition was an open, international design competition inviting proposals for a temporary installation to celebrate the return of the historic archive to Croome Court in Worcester.

The design inquiry reconsiders the work of the eighteenth-century architect Robert Adam, one of Croome Court's principal designers, speculating as to how concepts and techniques from his practice might be used to inform the design of a large-scale, contemporary installation within the Courts interior. Design proposals attempt to recreate the intensity of Adam's highly particular interiors on a modest budget and in the context of a Grade 1 listed building of international significance. The research begins with a review of Adam's architectural practice, focusing on his large scale remodelling of country house interiors in order to understand the concepts and techniques that characterised his approach. Alongside this historical research into Adam's practice, a survey of the rooms, in which the installation was to be installed, was carried out to identify the opportunities and constraints of the project. These two strands of research came together to inform a design strategy in response to the competition brief.

Usually, academic studies on the work of Robert Adam have considered his practice through a historical lens, where it is understood as an eighteenth-century curiosity, of great importance in its time, but with little relation to contemporary architectural production. This inquiry looks not only to describe the thematic and conceptual tenets that characterised Adam's practice, but re-actualise them and explore the ways in which they might find application in contemporary design scenarios. Herein lies some of the originality in this practice-based inquiry.

### 3. Research Context



Fig. 02\_ Richard Wilson  
Croome Court  
1758

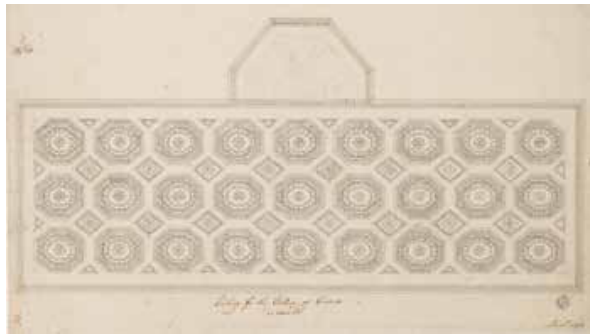


Fig. 03\_ Robert Adam  
The Long Gallery, Ceiling Plan  
Croome Court  
1761

The following section outlines the context in which this research was carried out and establishes the territory from which the research questions emerged.

#### Research Context: Design Competition

This design inquiry informed proposals submitted to an international design competition, organised by the National Trust, seeking proposals for a temporary architectural installation at Croome Court in Worcester.

#### Croome Redefined: Archive Rooms Competition Brief

In February 2016, the National Trust announced an open international design competition, inviting proposals for the 'Archive Rooms' installation at Croome Court, a Grade I listed Neo-Palladian mansion in the centre of a landscape garden of "far reaching" international significance in Pershore, near Worcester (Hay, 2012, p.415). The estate is largely the work of Lancelot "Capability" Brown (1716-83) with interiors and garden pavilions designed by Robert Adam (1728-92).

The 'Archive Rooms' project invited proposals for a £40,000 installation within the court building to commemorate the return of the historic archive to Croome after a 70 year absence. Croome's extensive historic archive dates from the late twelfth century and documents the storied history of the estate and its former owners; the Coventry family. The 'Archive Rooms' installation was to allow for the exhibition of historic records and current archival research in an "imaginative and surprising" way. Rather than providing a permanent home for the returning archive in its entirety, the 'Archive Rooms' installation was to provide a setting for key pieces from the archive (and or facsimiles) to provide an interface between current archival research and the visitor. The installation would act to inspire the exploration of both the wider archive and other areas of the house, landscape gardens and estate. The 'Archive Rooms' were to be installed on the first floor of the Neo-Palladian mansion house in a suite of rooms along the North front.

Due to the status of the court as a Grade 1 listed building, any installation had to be fully reversible with no permanent alterations to the building fabric permitted. The installation had to be robust enough to last for five years and withstand multiple reconfigurations and updates allowing for the display of different and emerging research themes. The installation had to be easy to maintain, refresh and update.

#### Croome Redefined: A Major National Trust Initiative

The competition was part of 'Croome Redefined' (2014-2017), a major transformational project initiated by the National Trust and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, which sought to "redefine the country house for the 21st century" by finding new and creative ways of telling Croome's stories to its 273,000 annual visitors. The aims of 'Croome Redefined' were characteristic of the National Trust's light touch approach to the renovation of Croome since it acquired the property in 2007. Firstly, the Trust looked to make any essential repairs to the house and landscape to facilitate safe visitor interactions. Secondly, the Trust commissioned a number of low cost, temporary installations in the house and landscape to reveal the layers of Croome's rich history in new and creative ways. This light touch approach with strategic, temporary interventions placed into existing buildings and the wider landscape is demonstrative and indeed prescient of a broader sea change in the National Trust's approach to dealing with its portfolio of historic properties. Rather than employing a strategy of painstakingly restoring historic buildings to recreate the building in its heyday – as an ideal in static repose - the Trust recognise that in order to make properties year-round destinations for repeat visitors they need to provide an ever-refreshing offer, which sees their properties reframed on an almost seasonal basis. Rather than telling one, coherent and revisionist story, they are keen to explore the whole multitude of narratives that emerge in and around buildings and landscapes over time.

#### "Capability" Brown Tercentenary Celebrations

Over the first two years, the 'Archive Rooms' would display material celebrating the contributions of Croome's principal designers; Lancelot "Capability" Brown and Robert Adam. The launch of the 'Archive Rooms' project overlapped with celebrations marking the tercentenary of Brown's birth. In this way, the project was part of a much wider National Trust initiative to celebrate Brown's life and works.

Through these celebrations the Trust hoped to encourage an increased number of people to visit, learn about and enjoy Brown's landscapes, and to encourage a greater appreciation of our designed landscape heritage (Gregory, Spooner, and Williamson, 2006). At the time of the 'Archive Rooms' project, the National Trust were also preparing for celebrations of the bicentenary of the death of the landscape designer, architect and theoretician, Humphry Repton (1752 - 1818), a follower of Brown who played a significant role in establishing and Picturesque aesthetic theory in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. In 2018, the 'Archive Rooms' installation would be used to host an exhibition celebrating Repton's contributions to the field of landscape design and architecture.



Fig. 04\_ Robert Adam,  
The South Front at Kedleston Hall  
(1759–1765)



Fig. 05\_ Robert Adam,  
Oblique View of the South Front at  
Kedleston Hall  
1758



Fig. 06\_ Robert Adam,  
Detail of the South Front at  
Kedleston Hall  
(1759–1765)

#### Research Context: PhD Research

This practice-based inquiry constitutes a component part of a practice-led PhD, entitled ‘Contemporary Applications of the Picturesque in Architecture: A Practice-led Approach’. The doctoral inquiry critically reappraises the eighteenth century picturesque, a “seldom visited landmark in western culture” (Macarthur, 2007, p.2), exploring its potential value in contemporary architectural design practice. Here, rather than a defunct set of aesthetic treatises confined to the past, concepts and techniques from the Picturesque are re-actualised and explicated through a series of design projects, which collectively delineate a potential contemporary picturesque in the form of a framework for application in contemporary design scenarios in both practice and academic contexts.

#### Robert Adam and the Picturesque

In the broader context of the doctoral research outlined above, this design inquiry explores the picturesque practices underpinning the work of Robert Adam, one of Croome Court’s principal designers. Adam’s oeuvre is widely understood in the context of eighteenth century neoclassicism in England (Stillman, 1966; Summerson, 1993), but the significant role he played in inculcating ideas from picturesque aesthetic theory into architecture is often overlooked or oversimplified. This is predominantly to do with the fact that Adam’s picturesque is less conspicuous than that of other picturesque architects (Kondo, 2012). Whilst others sought the picturesque in architecture through the adoption of asymmetrical planning and irregular form, Adam initiated an alternative line of thinking, whereby buildings designed according to the well established classical and neo-Palladian conventions of symmetrical planning and regular form could also be picturesque provided that they were instilled with the quality of ‘Movement’.

‘Movement’ is one of the most important concepts to emerge from the picturesque (Kondo, 2012), but it is also one of the most elusive (Macarthur, 2007). In Adam’s work, ‘movement’ is used to intensify the relationship between the viewer and the scene (the user and the building). It is used to enliven the surface of architecture in a way that stimulates “the eyes, the mind and the feet” of the viewer (Hausberg, 2019), the spectator’s mind is set in motion, “his eye attracted by this object and that; he notes their meaning” (Fitzgerald, 1904, p.28). Adam’s early education under the tutelage of Thomas and Paul Sandby, had instilled in him a “painterly concern” and an interest in expressing the newly fashionable idea that “the role of architecture was to raise feelings and excite the imagination”, much like a landscape or, indeed, a landscape painting (Macarthur, 2007, p.235). To do this, Adam sought to imbue architecture, an inherently static form of artistic expression, with a painterly dynamism. A quality that Adam had identified in the Italian Baroque and in the architecture of John Vanbrugh in early eighteenth century England. Here, ‘movement’ in buildings could be achieved through a certain mimesis of qualities found in landscape:

“Movement is meant to express, the rise and fall, the advance and recess, with other diversity of form, in the different parts of a building, so as to add greatly to the picturesque of the composition. For the rising and falling, advancing and receding, with the convexity and concavity, and other forms of the great parts, have the same effect in

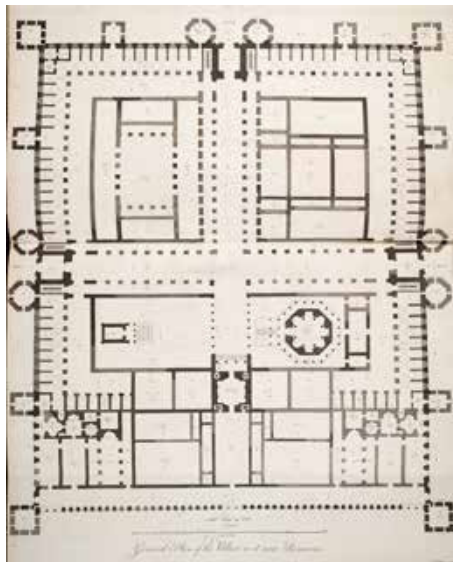
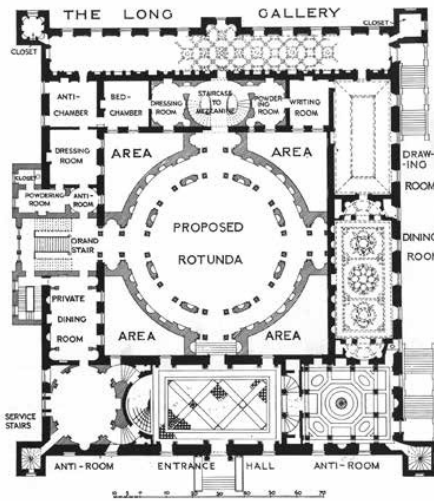


Fig. 07\_ Robert Adam,  
Plan showing interventions at Syon  
House  
1761-64

Fig. 08\_ Robert Adam,  
Plan Drawing of Diocletian's Palace  
in Split  
1764

architecture, that hill and dale, fore-ground and distance, swelling and sinking have in landscape. That is, they serve to produce an agreeable and diversified contour, that groups and contrasts like a picture, and creates a variety of light and shade, which gives great spirit, beauty and effect to the composition" (Adam, Adam, 1764 cited in Adam, Adam and Hope Reed, 1980, p.1).

It was this variety of form and modulation of surface that guided Adam in his design of plans, elevations and interiors (Hausberg, 2019). Adam's conception of 'movement' finds its most powerful external expression in the south front at Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire (figs. 04, 05 and 06). However, it is in his interiorisation of the concept that it achieves its most meaningful expression. Adam extended the province of the architect to include the interior (Adam, Adam and Hope Reed, 1980, pp. v-xii), and "it was in the planning and adornment of the most lavish interiors of his time that he fulfilled himself" (Summerson, 1993). Here his intention was to delineate a truly modern architectural style that "expressed to perfection, the sophistication, gaiety and elegance of the time (Girouard, 1978, p.179). He sought an alternative to the "dull succession of similar apartments" (Adam and Adam, 1764) produced by his contemporaries who followed the Burlingtonian model of neo-Palladianism. In contrast, Adam's interiors were rich and varied, conceived as unfolding, spatio-durational experiences, where the user would pass from one elaborate and vivacious room construction to the next within the framework of a carefully orchestrated sequence inculcated with the picturesque quality of 'movement'. Adam aspired to the interior condition that he had discovered when surveying Diocletian's Palace (Brown, 1992) where he encountered "a remarkable diversity of form" and "a variety, which if it doth not constitute Beauty, at least greatly heightens it" (Adam and Adam, 1764).

This effect is perhaps most emphatically achieved in the sequence of interiors that Adam installed at Syon House

(1761-64). Here, Adam's interior employs a variety of visual and spatial effects to stimulate the senses, the imagination, and bodily movement through space. At Syon, the eye is challenged to trace the varied contour of the complex volumetric composition, having to adjust in each room to a new set of formal, material and decorative conditions. The mind is stimulated by Adam's use of diverse references to constructions and compositions from a multitude of different architectural epochs and styles, and through the varying patternation covering the wall surfaces. Finally, he prompted bodily movement through space by offering glimpses between interiors, and through manipulation of the shifting levels of the site in an attempt to "increase scenery and add to the movement" (Adam, Adam and Hope Reed, 1980). In the long gallery, the final room in Adam's sequence, he used the awkward, stretched proportion of the Jacobean room to his advantage, distributing clusters of Corinthian pilasters with wide intervals down the long side of the room to draw the eye along, and project the body through the space (Beard, 1978, p.10).

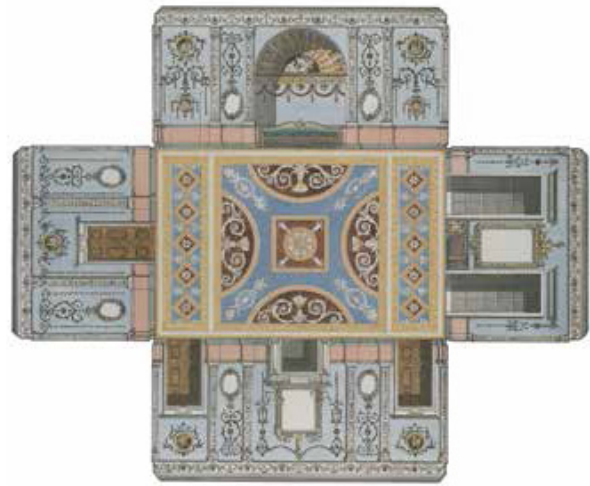


Fig. 09\_ Shaun Young, Will Pirakis and Jonas von Wartburg

Robert Adam Room Pavilion, Earl's Court, London  
2011

Fig. 10\_ Robert Adam,

Drawing Room, Lansdowne House  
1763

#### Research Context: Past Practice

This design inquiry develops a set of themes and interests from the PI's past and present professional practice. The 'Robert Adam Room' pavilion design drew creative inspiration from the garden pavilions, interior design techniques and drawing practices of Robert Adam.

#### Robert Adam Room, Earl's Court, London

In 2011, the PI (Young) worked in collaboration with architects Will Pirakis (Caruso St John Architects) and Jonas von Wartburg (Sergison Bates Architects) to design and build a pavilion for Kingston University School of Fashion at Graduate Fashion week in Earl's Court, London. The brief had many similarities with the National Trust's 'Archive Rooms' project at Croome Court. Like the installation at Croome, the pavilion had to be temporary, structurally self-sufficient, quickly demountable and wholly reversible, whilst allowing for the exhibition of artefacts in imaginative and surprising ways. The pavilion was approximately 1/4 the size of the 'Archive Rooms' installation and was designed and built to approximately 1/8 of the budget at £5,000.

The client, Kingston University School of Fashion, were interested in the idea of making a room with the qualities of an eighteenth century 'Drawing Room' in which they could exhibit garments and large scale drawn portfolios by recent graduates. The brief was to make an interior which offered a moment of privacy and intimacy in the loud, bustling environment of Earl's Court in exposition mode, but also felt connected to the larger space beyond the plot boundary.

The pavilion was made using a structurally self-sufficient timber stud-work frame with translucent fabric stretched across it until taut and then fastened to offer additional structural stability. Decorative wall panels designed by Robert Adam were printed onto the translucent organza fabric by a company who usually print advertisements onto hoarding for scaffolding around inner city buildings

that are under construction. The stud-work frame was painted in thinned white paint to give the impression of ghostly construction lines, which describe the essential constructional lines and proportions which underlie Adam's complex interior designs.

#### Drawing Rooms

The act of drawing was central to the practice of Robert Adam. Indeed, as his drawing practices changed, the architectonic expression of his architecture changed. Early in his career, Adam made more traditional types of drawings to describe his architectural proposals. However, when Adam returned from his Grand Tour in the early 1750s, the period of great estate building in England had largely come to an end (Stillman, 1966; Summerson, 1993), and although Adam was commissioned to design a number of new buildings from scratch, the vast majority of his commissions were for the redecoration of existing country house interiors. In these projects, the client's budget was often modest and proposals were often drawn up incrementally, one room at a time, as and when the client could afford it. Accordingly, Adam modified his drawing practices in order to accommodate this new type of commission and developed a drawing style that allowed for the "targeted descriptions of individual rooms" (Evans, 1997, pp.195-231). This type of drawing typically showed all of the internal room elevations laid flat and folded out around a central plan, which gave the drawing the appearance of a geometric net. These "developed surface drawings" were not an entirely new drawing type, but a modification of an existing technique that was formerly used for drawing enclosed gardens (Evans, 1997, pp.195-231). For Adam, this isolation of the individual room was an opportunity to luxuriate in the total design of an enveloping surface, where all four walls, the ceilings and the floors were tied together by a network of geometrical shapes, allowing ultimately for what the Rykwert's have called, "the control of space by surface" (Rykwert and Rywert, 1985).



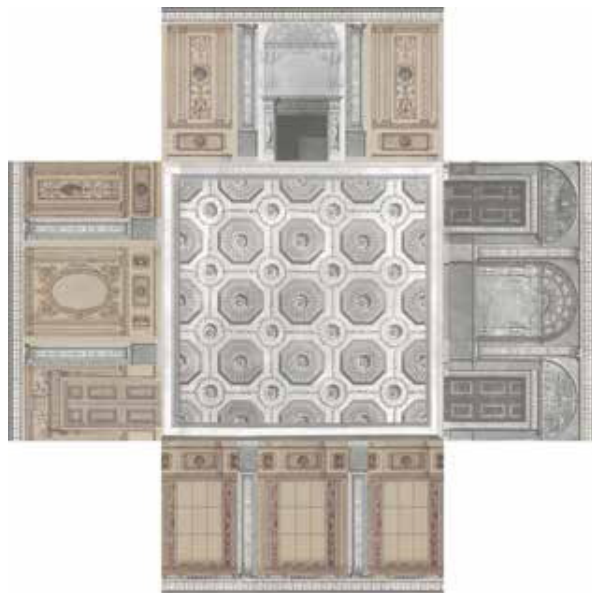
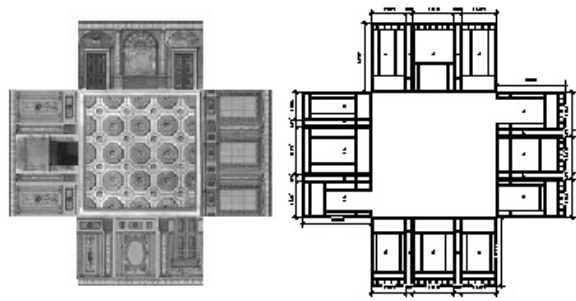


Fig. 11\_ Shaun Young, Will Pirkis and Jonas von Wartburg  
Final fabric print and studwork frame drawings  
2011

Fig. 12\_ Shaun Young, Will Pirkis and Jonas von Wartburg  
A new composition of Adam room elements  
2011

As the rooms were to be installed in existing buildings, Adam no longer had to worry about incorporating load-bearing structural elements into his interior compositions and his drawings showed a “low relief treatment devoid of constructional significance” (Lees Milne, 1947). As Adam’s two dimensional depictions of buildings reduced in depth, so his interior surface treatments became progressively more attenuated. The two dimensional detail remained, but the three dimensional quality of the interior surfaces diminished and the once deep, architectonic projections, began to retreat back to the wall surface, ultimately becoming painted or pencil drawn motifs on a taut paper surface.

The ‘Robert Adam Room’ pavilion embodies these ideas about the closeness between drawing and physical construction in Adam’s practice, occupying an ambiguous territory between representation and reality. On one hand, it is a physical enclosure with the qualities of an exploded architectural drawing. On the other hand, it is a developed surface drawing that is folded to become an architectural enclosure.

#### Pattern Books: A New Adam Composition

The increasing two-dimensionality of Adam’s style, as outlined above, lent itself to replication, and the Adam Style was proliferated in eighteenth century pattern books. These pattern books provided a repertoire of elements that could be disposed in a new design (Hill, 1999), and it became possible to pick and choose panels designed by Adam and rearrange them into a new composition to fit the particular dimensions of any room. This coincided with advancements in off-site construction techniques and pre-fabricated elements that allowed for the style to be replicated at low cost.

The ‘Robert Adam Room’ pavilion is designed in this spirit, taking a series of wall panels and a ceiling designed by

Adam for various different rooms and combining them to form a new composition.



Fig. 13\_ Robert Adam Illumination and Transparency at Buckingham House  
1763



Fig. 14\_ René de Girardin Drawing of a full scale building mock-up at Ermenonville  
1778



Fig. 15\_ Shaun Young, Will Pirkis and Jonas von Wartburg  
Robert Adam Room Interior  
2011

### Illumination and Transparency

As well as commissions for the reconfiguration and redecoration of interiors, another kind of commission that Adam received throughout his career was for small garden buildings, pavilions follies and monuments in the grounds of country estates. These small buildings were made with an equivalent intensity to Adam's interiors within the house. Some of them enacting an exteriorisation of interior conditions in the landscape. Usually, these structures were permanent installations in the landscape, but there are a few pavilions by Adam that were temporary pavilion structures. The project 'Illumination and Transparency at Buckingham Palace' is one such example (fig. 13). It was commissioned by Queen Charlotte at Buckingham House as a surprise to mark her husband George III's twenty-fifth birthday. These designs are the proposals submitted by Adam for a temporary structure to be erected in the garden of Buckingham Palace in June 1763 at the time of the celebrations to mark the start of royal occupation of the house, purchased in the previous year. The pavilion was a timber structure comprising of 17 arched openings. Each opening was covered by a 'transparency' – a painting on a translucent material such as linen, which was lit from behind. The pavilion was to be unveiled at night when it was illuminated in the garden by 400 lamps. This project served as the primary material and constructional inspiration for the 'Robert Adam Room' pavilion.

The project also invokes the picturesque practices of René Louis de Girardin and his designs for the French landscape garden at Ermenonville. Here, De Girardin would encourage the apprentice landscape gardeners to place on the site full-sized models of the various elements that they wish to build in it. These mock-ups (fig.14) comprised "poles stretched with white cloth for the masses of plants and facades of buildings" (Bois, 1984, p.38). The full-scale mock-up of buildings in white fabric to simulate the eventual constructions in the landscape. In this way, the 'Robert

Adam Room' pavilion can be seen simultaneously as a small building or interior in its own right, but also a mock-up of room that only ever previously existed as a drawing.



## 4. Research Question

1. How can the interior design techniques of Robert Adam, inform the design of a contemporary, low cost and wholly reversible architectural intervention in a Grade 1 listed building?



## 5. Research Methods

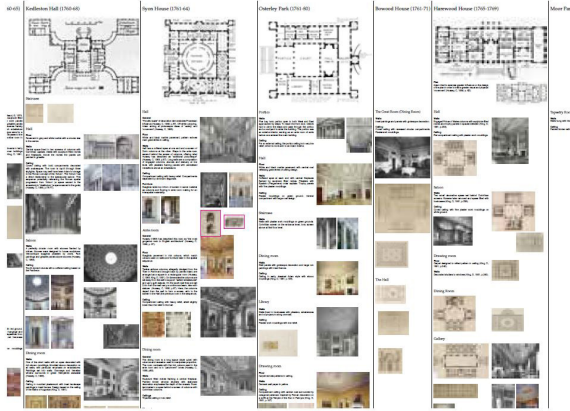
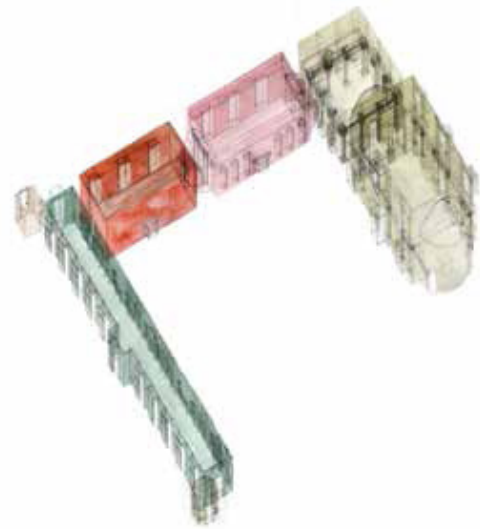


Fig. 16\_ Fragment of wall chart mapping the interior design techniques of Robert Adam

Fig. 17\_ Drawing showing a sequence of Robert Adam interiors at Syon Park



This inquiry involved extensive practice-based design activities as well as more traditional research methods to answer the research question and realise the design of a series of room installations for the 'Archive Rooms' project at Croome Court. A qualitative mixed methods approach was deemed to be the most appropriate methodology, allowing for a number of different methods to be used to collect and generate information resulting in design proposals.

### Literature Review

A literature review was carried out in order to gain an overview of the practice of Robert Adam and the broader cultural context in which he worked. After an initial search, the literature review was refined according to the research question to include information relevant only to Adam's country house interiors.

### Visual Methods: Wall Chart Mapping

Due to limitations with the traditional, text-based literature review, visual methods were adopted to accurately represent the various forms of information unearthed during by the literature review. Here, the country house interiors made by Adam were visually mapped in the form of a large scale wall chart (fig. 16), where text, images and drawings were brought together in a way that allowed relationships between the projects, and the design techniques of Adam to emerge.

### Inscriptive Methods

Architectural drawings were made to explore and understand the design techniques employed by Robert Adam in his most significant interior interventions in detail. In the first instance this included large scale, hand-drawn isometric projections of Syon Park (fig. 17), Osterley Park, and Newby Hall. From here, a series drawings were made to explore Adam's techniques at the scale of the individual room. These interiors; The Rotunda at Newby Hall; the Long

Gallery at Syon Park; and the Etruscan Dressing Room at Osterley Park.

### Building visits

A number of visits to significant works by Adam were carried out in order to more holistically understand his practice and the techniques he employed when designing interiors. Visits to Croome Court, Syon House, Osterley Park and Kedleston Hall were carried out as part of this research. Furthermore, the PI also visited an exhibition of drawings by Robert Adam in the Soane Museum, London. These visits were recorded through photographs, sketches and notes.

### Practice-based design activities

A number of practice-based design activities were carried out in order to answer the research question and develop design proposals. Generally speaking, these methods are well established and traditional working methods in architectural practice.

### Surveys

A number of different survey activities were carried out in the early part of the project. These surveys facilitated historical, phenomenological and cartesian readings of Croome and, collectively allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the existing condition to emerge which would both inform and facilitate design proposals.

Measured drawings were made to explore the architectural qualities of the estate at three scales; landscape, building and room. Large scale site drawings were made to explore the relationship between the Court building and the landscape garden in which it is situated. Drawings of the Court building itself were made in order to explore existing spatial relationships within the house. Drawings of the suite of first floor rooms in which the installation would be built were made in order to understand the opportunities and constraints presented by the competition brief, and also



Fig. 18\_ Design development drawing for the 'Archive Rooms' project

Fig. 19\_ Design development sketches for the 'Archive Rooms' project

compile an accurate set of measured information as a base for making design proposals. These drawn or cartesian surveys were supplemented by a phenomenological surveys in the form of sketches and photographs of the existing condition. Photographs of the landscape, the building and the interior described the atmospheric, spatial and material qualities of the existing condition. A historical survey of Croome Court was also conducted. Here, key texts about Croome were studied in order to understand the historical significance of the estate and its principal designers.

#### Design Drawings

Sketches and speculative watercolour studies were made throughout the project as a way of exploring, recording and developing design ideas and strategies (fig 18). Design ideas were developed through iterations of traditional, measured, two dimensional architectural drawings (plans, sections and elevations) at various scales. Three-dimensional computer modelling was used to test design proposals and generate views (fig 19). A final set of presentation drawings were produced for the interview at Croome Court. These drawings are large scale drawings which attempted to tell a clear design story and demonstrate how the earlier research into Adam's practice had come to bear on the final design proposals.



#### Taxonomy

- Conceptual design iterations
- Drawing
- Model-making
- Construction methods
- Spatial analysis
- Participatory activities
- Text-based research
- Phenomenology
- Theoretical research
- Fieldwork
- Photography
- Topographic survey
- Design research
- Trial and error experimental design processes
- Design-led research
- Historical research
- Typology research
- User experience
- Diagramming
- Interviews/user consultation
- Scale modelling
- Digital fabrication methods
- Site analysis/study
- Visiting similar building types

## 6. Discussion

**Design Proposals:** The application of Adam techniques in a low-cost, wholly reversible way

Having obtained a detailed understanding of both the interior design techniques of Robert Adam, and the existing situation at Croome Court through the aforementioned design research activities, the final part of the design question required the application of this knowledge in design proposals, which answered the National Trust's competition brief.

### Design Statement

The design of the installation within the first floor sequence of rooms at Croome Court was carried out in the spirit of Robert Adam with the intention of creating a series of characterful interiors that provided a series of distinct atmospheric conditions in which the returning archive and travelling exhibitions could be displayed.

Each room in the series was designed to have a distinct formal, spatial and material character, drawing inspiration from other country house interiors designed by Adam, and attempting to intensify the as-found qualities of the first floor rooms at Croome. Collectively, this varied sequence of rooms aimed at the painterly quality of 'movement' in architecture that Adam and other picturesque practitioners so coveted.

The plan form of the existing sequence of rooms is fundamentally altered with the imposition of new, strong geometries within and between rooms (see fig.42). Each room has a distinct wall and ceiling treatment, with linings and decoration becoming more attenuated as the spatial progression unfolds (as in an Adam sequence). Each room in the sequence has a distinct colour palette which references either colours used by Adam or reinstates a historical idea about colour associated with the particular room at Croome.

The proposed installation is very light touch, only making contact with the existing built fabric at floor level with no fixings back to the existing building at all. This is achieved through a series of low-cost, light weight, structurally self-supporting timber stud-work frames, which are installed within the existing rooms as an armature for various fabric linings. The design of the stud-work frames responds to the architecture of the rooms as-found, incorporating door ways, windows and fireplaces where appropriate. This layer of construction is low-tech, with stud-work frames simply screwed together and then painted with a layer of thinned white emulsion paint to form a relationship with the existing white painted door and window joinery assemblies. In two instances, large sheets of aluminium sheeting are fixed to the back of the frame. These are mirror-like surfaces which determine the character of the one of the rooms in the sequence. This humble, base layer of construction draws inspiration from the seminal Patio and Pavilion project by Alison and Peter Smithson (see fig.43), where humble materials such as softwood boarding and aluminium sheeting were used to make an enclosure for the display of artefacts at the 'This is Tomorrow' exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1956.

Fabrics of varying type, colour, thickness and opacity are hung from or stretched between the stud-work frames with varying degrees of gathering and pleating depending on their location within the sequence of rooms. Robert Adam drawings are printed back onto the fabric and stretched between frames in some rooms to give the spectator the impression of being in a ghostly apparition of an Adam interior, or, of being within a 1:1 folded developed surface drawing characteristic of Adam's design practice. The Adam drawings printed back on to the fabric are carefully chosen in line with the overall design intentions for the space and in accordance with the room's location in the spatial sequence.



Fig. 42\_ Robert Adam  
'Developed surface drawing' for Lansdowne House  
1763-71

Fig. 43 Alison and Peter Smithson  
Patio and Pavilion  
1956

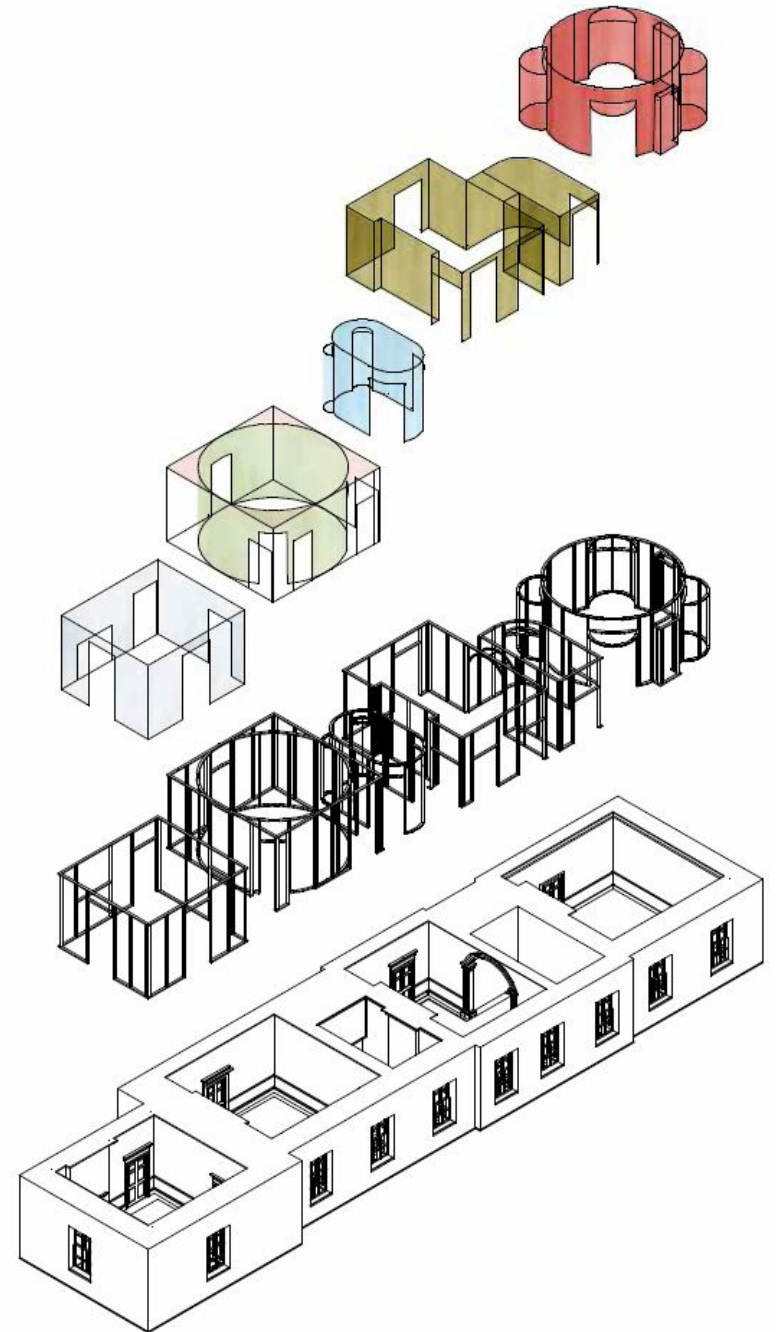
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Fig. 44\_ Exploded isometric drawing describing the design strategy for the 'Archive Rooms' design project

3. Fabric Linings

2. Timber stud work framing

1. Rooms 'As-found'



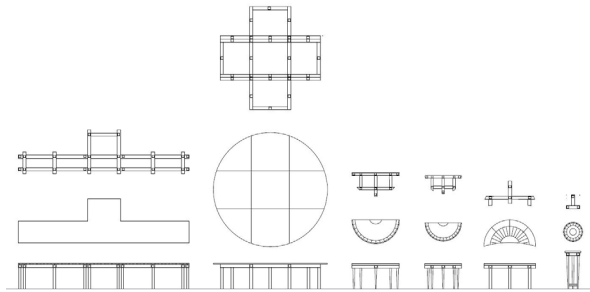


Fig. 45\_ Furniture designs for the  
"Archive Rooms" installation at  
Croome Court

Fig. 46\_ Interior of the Palazzo  
Pesaro Orfei (Palazzo Fortuny)  
Former studio of fashion  
designer Mariano Fortuny (now a  
contemporary art museum)

Finally, a series of bespoke, but low-cost furniture pieces were designed for each room. Each piece of furniture makes reference to the particular room which it is designed through its form, colour and decoration. The furniture is made using painted MDF, varnished plywood with routed patterns, and thin aluminium sheeting. Each piece of furniture is varied in size and height, offering a series of difference kinds of surface for the exhibition of artefacts.

Underlying the design proposal is a clear idea about the way in which artefacts and archival material should be exhibited. The project does not aim to make an installation that is about the display of artefacts, rather it seeks to provide a good set of rooms, each with a clear architectural character, which demands to be curated with each new exhibition, providing multiple curatorial possibilities to ensure an ever-changing visitor experience. This thinking is in line with the idea that when art and artefacts are exhibited in a particular and specific architectural setting, they become part of a new and productive dialectic with the room in which they are being exhibited. An example of such an approach is the Palazzo Fortuny in Venice, whereby artworks are exhibited within the former studios of the fashion and textile designer Mariano Fortuny y Madrazo. Here, artworks are curated in and around the studio spaces, forging curious and unexpected relationships with the patterned hanging fabrics that divide the tall, dark spaces (fig. 46).



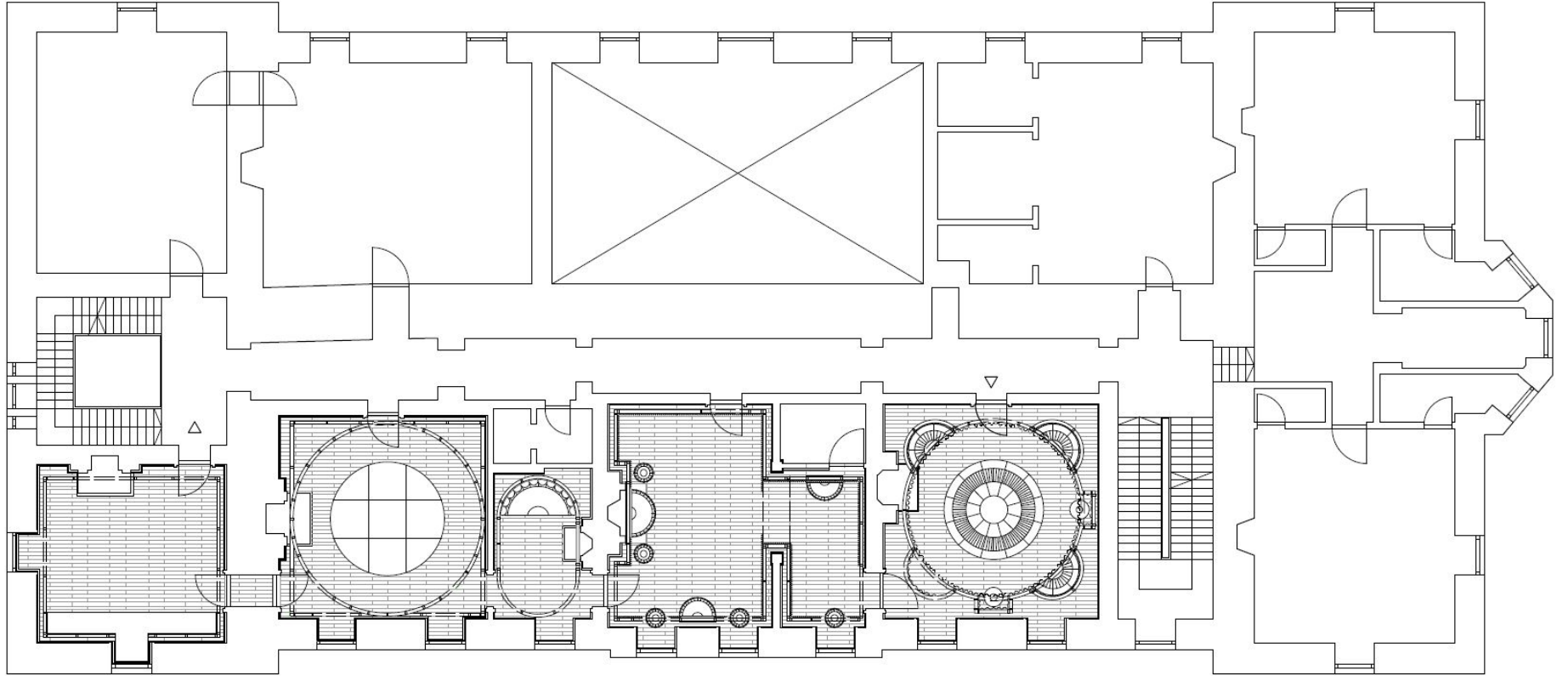


Fig. 47\_ First floor plan as proposed



Fig. 48\_ Robert Adam  
Rotunda Sculpture Gallery at Newby  
Hall

Fig. 49\_ Robert Adam  
Tapestry room for Croome Court  
(reconstruction at Metropolitan  
Museum of Art, New York)  
Designed in 1763

right

Fig. 50\_ The Red Room interior as  
proposed



### The Red Room

The Red Room is the first room in the sequence of rooms designed for the 'Archive Rooms' installation at Croome Court. The design of the room draws inspiration from the central rotunda gallery in the sculpture gallery Adam designed for Newby Hall. A new circular enclosure is constructed with the almost-square rectangular form of the existing room. The walls are in a red that matches the red of Gobelins Tapestries that were once installed in the Adam designed Tapestry Room on the ground floor at Croome Court. The fabric is semi-transparent but hung in a way that it gathers in deep folds as a quite reference

back to the more heavily articulated, architectonic wall decoration which characterised Adam's room designs for halls and ante rooms. Within the wall surface there are a series of niches, some semi-circular and some narrow and rectangular. Within these niches painted MDF and varnished plywood furniture is situated for the display of artefacts and archival material. The plywood tops of the furniture have a routed pattern which is a continuation of the lines radiating from the centre of the circle in the ceiling design. The varnish gathers in the routed channels to give them a darker tone and emphasise their linearity. They join a geometric network of lines on surfaces which binds

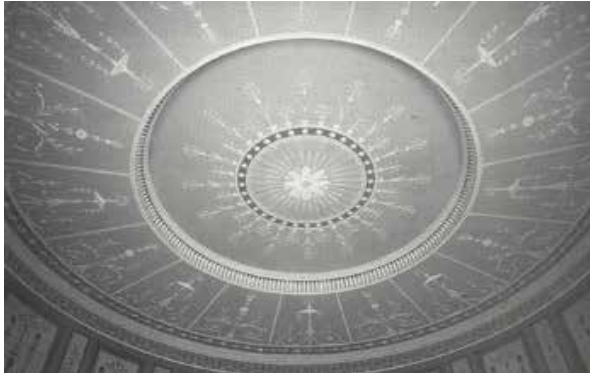


Fig. 51\_ Robert Adam  
Drawing Room ceiling at Moccas  
Park with raised central circular  
compartment  
1781

Fig. 52\_ Robert Adam  
Design for the bed in the "Green  
Bedroom" at Croome Court  
1760-65

the room together. White circles are painted on the top of the legs of the furniture and these look back, like owl's eyes towards the centre of the room. On the floor is a low lying surface, a timber console for the display of artefacts. The plywood top of the console has a routed pattern with circular motifs, which reference the ceiling design as was customary of the carpets and pavements that Adam designed for the floors of his interiors. The timber top is varnished in a shade similar to the existing floor boards to emphasise its belonging to the floor.

A piece of white organza fabric with a drawing of Adam's rotunda gallery ceiling from Newby Hall is stretched across the tops of the stud-work frame to form a false ceiling. The print is of a reflected ceiling plan drawn by Adam's office. Even though the domed space is represented on a flat surface, there is enough of a suggestion of the form of the volume of the concavity of the domed space. In this way, the ceiling makes a reference to the central uplift characteristic of a dome in the way other ceilings by Adam do, for examples the ceiling he designed at Moccas Park with its raised central circular compartment referencing the domed construction he most probably would have rather made in its place should the existing architecture and exigencies of budget allowed. Above the false ceiling additional flood lighting is installed to spray light across the fabric surface and down into the room. This luminosity is equivalent to a light-box and is a further reference to Adam's project entitled Illumination and Transparency and Buckingham Palace mentioned in the first section of this document.

#### The Green Bedroom

The spectator passes through a red curtain and through a deep, white painted timber lined reveal into the next room in the sequence: 'The Green Bedroom'. The room is known historically as 'The Green Bedroom' due to an earlier design by for the Earl of Coventry (Hay, 2012) where the walls were lined in green paper and domed bed upholstered in

green fabric sat in the niche or ante room through which one enters the room in the current configuration. The pleated, acid-green fabric walls and pale green ceiling are a reference to Adam's original design, but also to an extant room with similar characteristics - the State Bed Chamber at Osterley Park (fig. 53).

The walls are in acid-green, partially translucent fabric that is pleated similar to the wall covering in the Bed Chamber at Osterley (fig. 54). The folds in the fabric are shallower than in the Red Room as the articulation of surfaces becomes slightly more attenuated as the sequence progresses. The fabric is draped dramatically in a triangular tent-like form over windows and door openings, significantly altering the character of the existing room and referencing the dramatic drapery of the bed, designed by Adam, which used to stand in the space. There are a number of large, mirrored surfaces in the room, which are partially obscured by the form of the drapery. These are not mirrors, but aluminium sheets which offer blurred reflections and act to bounce the rays of light allowed in by the drapery over the windows around. The false ceiling in this room is made from a slightly paler acid green fabric with a print of a reflected ceiling plan for a tripartite ceiling by Adam.

The central compartment is a square which sits in the space directly between the existing arched opening which subdivides the space and the chimney breast. There are two smaller, rectangular compartments either side. This helps divide the room into three parts, with a small arrangement of furniture (and artefacts from the archive) in each zone. IN the small space the ceiling is also tripartite with the central bay a print of the underside of the domed canopy above the bed in State Bed Chamber at Osterley.

There are three furniture ensembles in the room, with grouping of tables and stands arranged beneath the aluminium sheets or in the window openings, with artefacts always displayed in pools of light. The combination of the table and the aluminium sheet is reminiscent of Adam's



Fig. 53\_ Robert Adam  
State Bed Chamber at Osterley Park  
Wall details: Mirrors and pleated  
fabric



Fig. 54\_ "The Green Bedroom"  
interior as proposed



Fig.55\_ Robert Adam  
Drawings of the bed in the State  
Bed Chamber at Osterley Park  
1761-80

designs for pier- glasses. The furniture is once more in painted MDF with varnished ply tops with patterns reflecting the principal lines of the ceiling design routed into their surface.

#### The Ante Room

The next room the visitor passes through is the small 'oval' (small rectangle with two semi-circular ends) shaped ante room. Here, the walls are in a blue fabric matching the topaz blue of the boudoir or vestibule to the Bed Chamber at Kedleston Hall (fig. 55). The fabric is semi-translucent and hung in a way that it gathers in shallow, but tight folds. The ceiling is in white fabric with a print of a tripartite design for a unrealised Adam ceiling with a central square compartment flanked by two circular compartments. There is a low, semi-circular timber console in the semi-circular space to the back of the room which could house a larger artefact or facsimile from the collection.

#### The Drawing Room

The next room in the sequence is the Drawing Room. The drawing room is a circular space within a larger square stud-work frame. The visitor enters in a small interstitial space between the square and circular stud-work frames. The walls are in translucent pale green fabric stretched taut across the stud-work frame. The ceiling is in red-pink translucent fabric stretched across the top of the stud-work frame with a central circular section missing to frame a view of the incredible exposed timber lathe ceiling in the existing room. The pale green and pink red were commonly used by Adam and the pale-green echoes the colour scheme of the Adam designed Long Gallery on the ground floor at Croome. A reflected ceiling plan of Adam's ceiling for the Music Room at Home House (fig.59) is printed back onto the ceiling and wall fabrics. The design is carefully reconfigured to ensure the circular pattern joins seamlessly at the junction between wall and ceiling and continues

uninterrupted around the whole surface of the interior. In this way, the visitor is completely engulfed in the drawing, one of Adam's most spectacular designs. In the centre of the circular enclosure there is a large, circular table with a sheet aluminium top. The aluminium provides a blurred reflection of the exposed existing timber lathe ceiling above, in this way, fulfilling the role of an Adam carpet and quietly reflecting the qualities of the ceiling above.

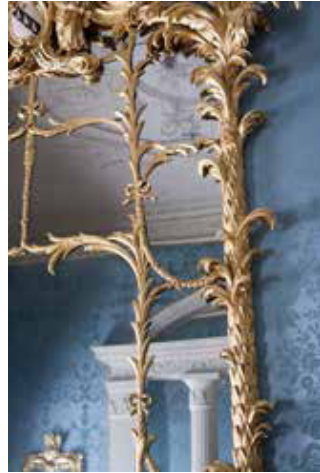


Fig. 56\_ Robert Adam  
The Boudoir (Ante Room to State  
Bed Chamber) at Kedleston Hall  
1760-68

right

Fig. 57\_ The Ante Room interior as  
proposed

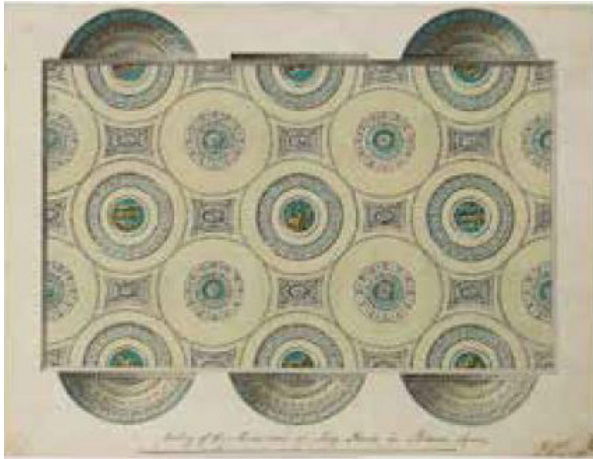


Fig. 58\_ Robert Adam  
Music Room at Home House  
1771

Fig. 59\_ Robert Adam  
Ceiling Plan for the Music Room at  
Home House  
1771



Fig. 60\_ The Drawing Room interior  
as proposed

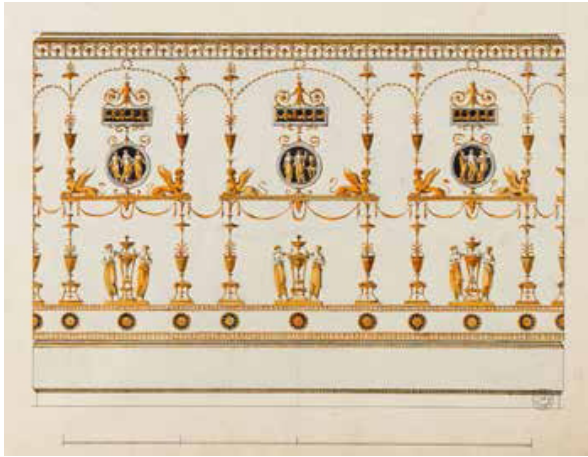


Fig. 61\_ Robert Adam  
Etruscan Room for Osterley Park  
1761-80



Fig. 62\_ Robert Adam  
Sketch of a mirror frame  
1772

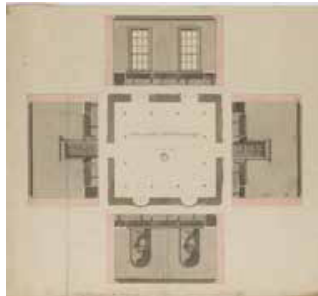


Fig. 63\_ Robert Adam  
Design for a room for Lady  
Coventry at Croome  
1761-80



### The Etruscan Room

The final room in the sequence is the Etruscan Room. Here, the walls and ceiling are in pale pastel blue translucent canvas-like fabric, which is stretched taut across the white painted timber stud-work frames. The colour is the colour of the grounds used by Adam in his Etruscan Room at Osterley Park (fig.61). The walls and ceiling are decorated with Adam's hand-drawn pencil sketches of designs in the Etruscan Style (fig. 62). This is in reference to the incredibly delicate decoration of Adam's Etruscan Room at Osterley Park, where pencil marks are still visible on the surface of the walls where the designs were drawn in situ onto the stucco before being coloured in paint. There is a single

piece of furniture in the room, a long, table which runs the length of one entire side of the room and projects into the window recess. This table draws inspiration from an unrealised design by Adam entire perimeter of the room, breaking only to allow for doorways (see fig. 64). The table is in painted MDF and has a pale pastel blue-grey top with white painted legs. It provides a long, deep surface for the display of archival information and artefacts. The existing black, grey and white marble fire place in the room is framed by the new installation and becomes an integral part of the new configuration. ■

right

Fig. 64\_ The Etruscan Room  
interior as proposed



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## 8. Illustrations

Fig. 01 \_ Young, S (PI). (2016) Red Room at Croome Court [Pencil and watercolour].

Fig. 02 \_ Wilson, R. (1758) An Extensive View of Croome Court, Worcestershire, from the South [Oil on canvas]. National Trust Collection: Croome Park, Worcester. Available at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Richard\\_Wilson\\_002.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Richard_Wilson_002.jpg) (Accessed: 5th April 2016).

Fig. 03 \_ Adam, R. (1761) Ceiling plan of The Long Gallery, Croome Court [Pencil on paper]. Soane Museum Collection, London. Available at: <http://soane.collection.org/THES86395> (Accessed: 3rd February 2020).

Fig. 04 \_ Young, S (PI). (2016) The South Front at Kedleston Hall [Photograph].

Fig. 05 \_ Young, S (PI) (2016) Oblique View of the South Front at Kedleston Hall [Photograph].

Fig. 06 \_ Young, S (PI). (2016) Detail of the South Front at Kedleston Hall [Photograph].

Fig. 07 \_ Adam, R (1764) Plan Drawing of Diocletian's Palace in Split [Etching]. Royal Academy of Arts, London. Available at: <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/work-of-art/plan-of-the-diocletian-palace-in-split-after-restoration> (Accessed: 3rd February 2020).

Fig. 08 \_ Bolton, A.T. (1922) Plan showing Robert Adam interventions at Syon House [Pen and ink on paper]. In King, D. (2001) Complete Works of Robert and James Adam, Architects of the Age of Enlightenment. Oxford: Architectural Press. p.236.

Fig. 09 \_ Young, S (PI), Pirkis, W. and von Wartburg, J. (2011) Robert Adam Room Pavilion, Earl's Court, London [Photograph].

Fig. 10 \_ Adam, R (1763) Drawing Room, Lansdowne House

Fig. 11 \_ Young, S (PI), Pirkis, W. and von Wartburg, J. (2011) Fabric print and studwork frame drawings [Vectorworks and photoshop].

Fig. 12 \_ Young, S (PI), Pirkis, W. and von Wartburg, J. (2011) A new Adam room composition made from Adam designs for wall panels and ceilings [Vectorworks and photoshop].

Fig. 13 \_ Adam, R. (1763) Illumination and Transparency at Buckingham House [Etching]. In Adam, R. and Adam, J. (1980) The Works in Architecture of Robert

and James Adam. Introduction by Henry Hope Reed. New York: Dover Publications.

Fig. 14 \_ de Girardin, R (1778) Drawing of a full scale building mock-up at Ermenonville [Unknown medium]. Available at: <http://2beaujeu.free.fr/chapitre2.htm> (Accessed: 23 July 2019).

Fig. 15 \_ Young, S (PI), Pirkis, W. and von Wartburg, J. (2011) Robert Adam Room Pavilion Interior, Earl's Court, London [Photograph].

Fig. 16 \_ Young, S (PI). (2016) Fragment of wall chart mapping the interior design techniques of Robert Adam.

Fig. 17 \_ Young, S (PI). (2016) Drawing showing a sequence of Robert Adam interiors at Syon Park [Pencil and watercolour].

Fig. 18 \_ Young, S (PI). (2016) Design development drawing for the 'Archive Rooms' project [Pencil and watercolour].

Fig. 19 \_ Young, S (PI). (2016) Design development sketches for the 'Archive Rooms' project [Pen and coloured pencil].

Fig. 20 \_ Young, S (PI). (2016) Literature Review: The interior design techniques of Robert Adam.

Fig. 21 \_ Young, S (PI). (2016) Visual mapping: A taxonomy of Robert Adam's interventions in country house interiors.

Fig. 22 \_ Young, S (PI). (2016) Visual mapping: A focused study of Robert Adam's most extensive interior interventions - Syon House, Osterley Park and Newby Hall.

Fig. 23 \_ Young, S (PI) (2016). Isometric drawing showing the sequence of Robert Adam interiors at Syon Park [Pencil and watercolour].

Fig. 24 \_ Young, S (PI). (2016) Isometric drawing showing the sequence of Robert Adam interiors at Osterley Park [Pencil and watercolour].

Fig. 25 \_ Young, S (PI). (2016) Isometric drawing showing a sequence of Robert Adam interiors at Newby Hall [Pencil and watercolour].

Fig. 26 \_ Unknown author. (Unknown date) Apse at the end of the Sculpture Gallery at Newby Hall [Photograph]. In Hussey, C. (1956) English Country Houses: Mid Georgian, 1760-1800. London: Country Life. p.147.

Fig.27\_Unknown author. (Unknown date) Screen of columns in the Library at Newby Hall [Photograph]. In Hussey, C. (1956) *English Country Houses: Mid Georgian, 1760-1800*. London: Country Life. p.145.

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Fig.29 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) Site drawing: the historical extents of Croome Court ca. 1760-65 [Vectorwork and photoshop].

Fig.30 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) Site drawing: the current extents of Croome Court [Vectorwork and photoshop].

Fig.31 \_Young, S (PI) (2016) Photograph showing the principle elevation addressing the landscape at Croome Court

Fig.32 \_Adam, R (1760-65) Designs for the Greenhouse at Croome Court (as executed) [Pen and ink]. The Soane Museum Collection, London. Available at: <http://collections.soane.org/THES89806> (Accessed: 3rd February 2020)

Fig.33 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) Site plan exploring the relationship between the landscape and the architecture at Croome Court [Pencil and watercolour].

Fig.34 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) Ground floor plan of Croome Court as existing [Vectorworks line drawing].

Fig.35 \_Young, S (PI) (2016) First floor plan of Croome Court as existing with spaces for the 'Archive Rooms' installation shown in grey [Vectorworks line drawing].

Fig.36 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) Isometric drawing showing the location and Robert Adam rooms on the ground floor at Croome Court [Pencil, vectorworks and watercolour].

Fig.37 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) Isometric drawing of the sequence of first floor rooms in which the 'Archive Rooms' installation will be installed [Pencil, vectorworks and watercolour].

Fig.38 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) View from first floor room to St Mary Magdalene Church in the landscape [Photograph].

Fig.39 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) First floor view between rooms through deep, painted timber door reveals [Photographs].

Fig.40 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) Exposed timber lathe ceiling structure in first floor room at Croome Court [Photograph].

Fig.41 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) Survey drawings of a first floor room [Vectorworks line drawing].

Fig.42 \_Adam, R. (1763-71) Developed surface drawing for Lansdowne House

Fig.43 \_Smithson A. and Smithson, P. (1956) Patio and Pavilion, This is Tomorrow, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London [Photograph]. Available at: <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/6b/a2/a2/6ba2a29ce3d92bc516b6f9b3cfed487d.jpg> (Accessed: 20th April 2020).

Fig.44 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) Exploded isometric drawing describing the design strategy for the 'Archive Rooms' design project [Vectorworks, pencil and watercolour].

Fig.45 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) Furniture designs for the "Archive Rooms" installation at Croome Court [Vectorworks line drawing].

Fig.46 \_Unknown author. (Unknown date) Interior of the Palazzo Pesaro Orfei (Palazzo Fortuny) [Photograph]. Available at: <http://hibernianhomme.blogspot.com/2012/05/mariano-fortuny.html> (Accessed: 20th April 2020).

Fig.47 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) First floor plan as proposed [Vectorworks line drawing].

Fig.48 \_Unknown author. (Unknown date) Rotunda Sculpture Gallery at Newby Hall [Photograph]. In Hussey, C. (1956) *English Country Houses: Mid Georgian, 1760-1800*. London: Country Life. p.146.

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Fig.50 \_Young, S (PI) (2016) The Red Room interior as proposed [Pencil and watercolour].

Fig.51 \_Unknown author. (Unknown date) Drawing Room ceiling at Moccas Park with raised central circular compartment [Photograph]. In King, D. (2001) *Complete Works of Robert and James Adam, Architects of the Age of Enlightenment*. Oxford: Architectural Press.

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Fig.53 \_Young, S (PI). (2016), State Bed Chamber at Osterley Park Wall details: Mirrors and pleated fabric [Photographs].

Fig.54 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) "The Green Bedroom" interior as proposed [Pencil and watercolour].

Fig.55 \_Adam, R (1761-80) Drawings of the bed in the State Bed Chamber at Osterley Park [Drawing]. The Soane Museum Collection, London. Available at: <http://collections.soane.org/THES87373> (Accessed: 3rd February 2020).

Fig.56 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) The Boudoir (Ante Room to State Bed Chamber) at Kedleston Hall [Photographs].

Fig.57 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) The Ante Room interior as proposed [Pencil and watercolour].

Fig.58 \_Nairn, J. (2018) Music Room at Home House [Photograph]. Available at: <https://twitter.com/JWNairn/status/1057248717164724224/photo/1> (Accessed: 20th April, 2020).

Fig.59 \_Adam, R. (1771) Ceiling Plan for the Music Room at Home House [Drawing]. The Soane Museum Collection, London. Available at: <http://collections.soane.org/THES86783> (Accessed 20th April 2020).

Fig.60 \_Young, S (PI). (2016) The Drawing Room interior as proposed [Pencil and watercolour].

Fig.61 \_Adam, R. (1761-80) Internal elevation drawing of one of the walls for the Etruscan Room for Osterley Park [Drawing]. The Soane Museum Collection, London. Available at: <http://collections.soane.org/ARC4350> (Accessed: 14th March 2016).

Fig.62 \_Adam, R (1772) Sketch of a mirror frame [Pencil on paper]. The Soane Museum Collection, London. Available at: <http://collections.soane.org/ARC3242> (Accessed 20th April 2020).

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