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IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DESIGNS:
THE FILM-SET AS MILITARY SET-UP

To coincide with a September 2009 forum on Canada’s military role in Afghanistan the Canadian Embassy in Washington, DC announced plans to stage a series of Taliban-led attacks on a mock Afghan village to be erected in the embassy compound. While this proposed PR campaign was unique in terms of its stated function to engender greater respect for the efforts of Canadian Forces in Afghanistan, the building and destruction of ersatz architectural sets for playing out the theatres of war is not. The utilisation of cinematic modes of production, specifically the design and creation of provisional architectures (better known as film-sets), has been inextricably linked to the operations of tactical-training and warfare from WWII onwards. The collusion between cinema’s architectural

ABOUT THEORIESALON

Theoriesalon is a loose series of architectural and design theory seminars that aim to challenge the presently expanding concepts of design and architecture. The seminars will discuss theory in terms of everyday design practices, including the issues of whether design can be seen as a political practice. Within this perspective, it is important to address interventions in the material world that strive to change our reality in an egalitarian way.

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Theoriesalon is an initiative by Expanded Design, an office for architecture, design and research based in Vienna.

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