

Autumn 2012

ARCH 5290: Motives, Alibis, and Modus Operandi

Schafer

This seminar will consider the relationship of architectural discourse and practice over the last twenty years. Specifically, we will look at a series of issues and trajectories that have driven—or have arisen from—design practices. Like detectives at the scene of a crime, we will consider the physical evidence (buildings and projects) and the architectural alibis (writings, lectures and interviews) with the intention of uncovering various coherences and trajectories at play in the field.

The course will be structured around a series of topics in contemporary architectural discourse, investigated through texts and projects that allow comparisons and relations between the work of different architects and different contexts. As such, this class does not attempt to provide a comprehensive survey of contemporary practice, but rather simply addresses certain issues where there are productive relationships between the thinking and the making of architecture. Texts and projects will be investigated concurrently and are intended to complement each other without creating a direct correspondence. The intention is that this disjunction might provide a working space for our exploration, testing and development of ways of thinking the discipline today.

ARCH 5290: Positioning Nature: Contemporary Narratives

Tilder

This seminar presents an introduction to the contemporary discourse on nature by situating a series of trajectories that shape the discipline of design as an ecological practice. We'll position the important voices in this debate through the examination of critical essays and case studies concerning the relationship of architecture, landscape and nature that emerge after the technological-rationalism of modernism. We will situate a wide range of theories and practices concerning the construction of nature by fashioning a series of contemporary narratives, encompassing everything across a wide gamut including the naïve and neo-luddite; the expanded, performative, and productive; and the degraded, dystopian and nihilistic. Students will participate in fabricating a metanarrative as an analytical tool and produce a synthetic final project.

All KSA students and related disciplines are welcome.

Class numbers: 10815 (GRADUATE); 11727 (UNDERGRADUATE)

ARCH 5590: Excessive Volume

Balliet

Historically, the relationship between volumetric interiors and the exterior massing has ranged from periods of literal offsets in geometry to fantastic sectional differences that surprise and delight. Through the calibration of thickness and depth the architect curates to what extent the technical necessities of a building correlates with the aesthetic experience. Recent design techniques and technology have resulted in 'thinner' architecture comprised of many layered surfaces, the impact of which we will explore and evaluate through architectural elements such as fenestration, volume and surface. Using contemporary tools, we will reintroduce massive strategies of 'punching' and 'carving'. The seminar will review the development and history of interiors and subsequent sectional drawing. Emphasizing volumetric precision and monumental interiors, students will develop techniques for utilizing surface distortions (pochè). The seminar will combine lectures, discussion and design workshops to abstractly focus on the dynamics of channeling multiple crowds, the sequencing of volumes, choreographed junctures, and orchestrating a spectacle. Through the experimentation across multiple mediums and the fabrication of large physical models, the objective is to provide tools to imagine and represent with precision and dexterity the depth and detail of the three-dimensional form.

ARCH 5590: Simulating Natures

Roth

Survey into the discursive role of nature within nineteenth and twentieth century architectural and landscape architectural practices. Focusing on nature as a social construction directed towards particular social and political ends, and the role of design in reconfiguring nature's relationship to the artificial world. The class will be staged around the simulation of debates between irreconcilable concepts of nature embodied in specific works or periods of architecture and landscape design, with the intent of exorcising the ineffable ghost of nature which continues to play a role in structuring contemporary architectural and landscape thinking.

Register for class number 23931.

ARCH 5590: The Appearance of Performance Furnishing, Arraying and Decking It Out

Turk

The "Appearance of Performance" will investigate the emergence and changing nature of the idea of performance in the architectural discipline over the course of the last quarter century. The relationship between the contemporary use of the term performance and the word's historical connection to the concept of "furnishing" will be elaborated through presentations, readings and an in-depth installation

project. Two parallel ideas connected to long standing disciplinary questions concerning ornament will be explored: the concept of “arraying,” the preparation for environmental exposure, and the notion of “decking out,” the process of surface modification to produce perceptual effects. Finally the return of an interest in the ways that material phenomena produce “affective” qualities will be investigated relative to postmodern notions of subjectivity, affectation in personality, contemporary media and the post-humanist body. The seminar will be structured in part as a research and discussion group and in part as a design workshop in which students produce a group fabrication project exploring these issues.