If there was one constant during this turbulent year of debate over The Cooper Union’s financial crisis, it was the dedication and resolve of the students in The Irvin S. Chasin School of Architecture to the task of developing their projects at the highest level. In the words of one, that stand for all, “We have to demonstrate by the quality of our work that the school is worthy of rescue.”

This year’s exhibition, while responding to the general call for frugality, provides an opportunity to assess the varied and imaginative ways that students answer the call for an architecture that at once continues the fundamental traditions of drawing and design that have always marked out the school for distinction while seeking to confront the rapidly changing conditions of theory and practice.

For, beyond any immediate economic exigency, architects are faced with the need to re-think their strategies in the light of the urgent questions raised by increasing scarcity—of shelter, food, water and energy. Many of these issues have to be seen in a holistic and global frame of reference and, of course, not all of them can to be solved by architecture. But architecture, envisaged at its most expanded scale, as form and space, within the urban fabric in relation to the idea of the “Temple” in the contemporary city. The Fifth Year Thesis is a full year research and design studio that allows each student to identify a problem field—local or global—considered especially susceptible to architectural intervention at different scales. Studies ranged from the challenge of declining agricultural production and aquifer exhaustion in the Mid-West to the construction of “memory theaters” in the context of Australia’s checkered history with its indigenous populations, the potential of landscape ideas to transform urban rev-formulation, the research into new materials and spatial techniques for going beyond orthodox geometrical design, the crisis of the growing “informal” cities of the developing world, to finding ways through drawing in which philosophical thought might be explored in its three-dimensional implications. The Graduate studio looked at the structure and form of urban regions in order to draw out their environmental and programmatic potentials, following by a study of large scale landscapes and their possibilities considered as architectures of nature. The Graduate students will complete their program following the development of their individual thesis projects this summer.

The first might be subsumed under the rubric of drawing, an art and technique that enters into every discussion at Cooper. Drawing is at once a motion of the hand and a response to the eye, and an exploration of thought as it parcels the three and four dimensions of space and time. It is also a direct mark of the role of the hands in touching and making, and whether the mark is literally hand drawn by hand or virtually imaging a gesture, the relation between hand and mind is that which binds design to the construction of space. As the great artist, Henri Focillon concluded his seminal essay “In Praise of the Hand,” “The mind rules over the hand; the hand rules over mind. The hand wrenches the sense of touch away from its merely receptive passivity and organizes it for experiment and action. It teaches man to conquer space, weight, density and quantity. Because it fashions a new world, it leaves its imprint everywhere upon it. Trainer of man, the hand multiplies him in space and time.”

It was no accident that, receiving this essay from Focillon in 1943, Le Corbusier was inspired to design the Open Hand for Chandigarh. It is also the sentiment that has guided and enabled the practice of an especially unique architectural education at Cooper.

The second theme would be that given by Peter Cooper, his demand that the central purpose of the Union would be to create the conditions for the education and uplift of a citizenry, free to think and create, debate and disagree, in the context of an always-evolving democracy. The role of architecture in this debate has taken many forms over the last half-century, but the dynamic interaction of inventing and making, conceiving and constructing, remains its task and its challenge in a world increasingly divided, in economic wealth, resources, and ideologies.

Anthony Vidler
Dean and Professor
The Critical Moment: Architecture In The Expanded Field
The Arthur A. Houghton Jr. Gallery
September 15–November 5, 2011

This is a critical moment for the re-thinking of the object of architecture with a critical approach to architectural discourse, questioning the very boundaries of Architecture itself.

The work produced in the Advanced Design Research studio, while exploring specific problems, addresses simultaneously the question of the place and relevance of the problem in architectural discourse.

Without prescribed boundaries, the projects address a myriad of critical issues affecting architectural discourse, ranging from craftsmanship to the present condition of globalization and the continual emergence of new scientific developments and technologies. The exhibition illuminates the Master of Architecture students' year-long exhaustive research using texts, photography, drawing, technology, science and history to develop innovative programs, all of which feature configurations and narratives that bring forth potential.

On View—The Inauguration Exhibition
October 17–25, 2011
Third Floor Lobby
Curated by Steven Hilzer

In conjunction with the inauguration of The Cooper Union's twelfth president, Jamshed Bhrucha, the School of Architecture mounted an exhibition of student work in the third floor lobby. Culled from the 2010-11 End of Year Exhibition, this presentation included selected works from all five Design Studios of the previous academic year. Meant to highlight the pedagogy of the school for the large number of visitors attending the annual events on October 17 and 18, the exhibition complemented student work presented by the Schools of Art Engineering in other parts of the Foundation Building. On the 7th floor, work from all three schools was displayed in the lobby outside the president's office.

Additionally, an exhibition of research and publications by Cooper Union faculty members of all disciplines was displayed in the first floor arcade.

Crisis Pin-up
November 2011–February 2012
The School of Architecture Hallway Gallery

In October, the Cooper Union community was informed by its president that the school was in a potentially catastrophic financial state. Many people were moved to create: to make images, pieces of writing, speeches, films and other forms of expression. The engagement of the creative intellect in time of crisis can be seen throughout history as the most productive of crises and can be the catalyst for cultural evolution.

The Crisis Pin-up emerged naturally as a way to create a space that would simultaneously gather creative energy and further exude expression in regards to the current financial state of The Cooper Union. The pin-up sought to provide a physical, objective base to inform and be informed about the developments within and around The Cooper Union.

The content of the exhibition included writings, artworks, newspaper articles, and copies of original documents that were often referenced during public addresses. These were printed up side by side in the Foundation Building 3rd floor hallway. Over the duration of the exhibition, the community continued to act on the wall by adding material, highlighting important information in articles and documents, and pointing out contradictions between public addresses, actions by the administration and original documents.

The exhibition has been consolidated and is now available for viewing in the School of Architecture Archive.

Selections from A Monograph: McKim, Mead, & White

March 2–April 25, 2012
The School of Architecture Hallway Gallery
Curated by Patrick McElvee

"In New York, then, I seem to appreciate the Italian Renaissance. It is so well done that you could not believe it to be genuine. It seems to a stranger a new freshness which is not Italian, but American."
—Le Corbusier on a visit to New York City in 1935

During the spring semester, the School of Architecture Archive presented the printed work of McKim, Mead, & White, a recent acquisition from The Cooper Union Library. The architectural firm is credited with shaping American Beaux-Arts Architecture in New York at the turn of the twentieth century. This selection of 65 prints from a monograph of 100 highlighted a wide range of institutional spaces. Although each of the three architects had different methodologies, all of the projects shown represented an effort to compartmentalize singular styles and functions, so that the eclectic parts of Classicism are isolated and clearly organized. Plans, sections, elevations, details and photographs of a programmatic cross section and scale of institutional spaces were included in the exhibition. These included the Army War College in Washington DC and New York's Madison Presbyterian Church, Bellevue Hospital and the Gorham Building. Projects such as these McKim, Mead, White, unily formal taxonomy (in its many parts) with symmetries of social sorting; what is already figured into these plans is the cultivation of their occupants by their attendant buildings.

As seen in the New Bellevue Hospital plan, for example, the wings are classified according to specialization just as the facades legibly partition its elements. Plan and program are pragmatically aligned; our bodies are meant to inhabit these spaces as templates inhabit quadrants, as names, label rooms. This very particular kind of arrangement, the ‘look’ of cultivation in real space, is perhaps the ‘strange new firmness’ to which Le Corbusier refers, and raises questions about what is designated at the page.

Carlo Scarpa: The Architect at Work
Villa Ottolenghi and Villa Il Palazzetto
The Arthur A. Houghton Jr. Gallery
March 20–April 21, 2012
Curated by Steven Hilzer, Guido Zuliani and Sara Jones

Architect and educator Carlo Scarpa (1906–1978) is arguably one of the great architects of the Twentieth Century. Although oftentimes misunderstood as an artistic genius who left only a few precious works behind, he was, in fact, an extremely prolific architect. At the time of the design of the two projects presented in this exhibition, Scarpa was at the height of his career and his small studio was busy with many important works. These include the monumental tomb for the Brion family, considered by many to be his opus magnum, the restoration of the Car D'Oro in Venice, the Banca Popolare in Verona, the project for the renovation and extension of the canton of St. Moritz in Switzerland. By 1974–79 a number of Scarpa's most important built works: Villa Ottolenghi, Stabrodino, Venice 1971–79 and Il Palazzetto (Monvecce, Padua, 1969–1978).

Original drawings were supplemented by historical photographs and drawing reproductions. These materials collectively demonstrated Scarpa's unique approach to the practice of architecture, wherein the development of architectural space through drawing at first appears fragmentary, but upon closer study, reveals how the architect's process of drawing allowed him to envision an entire project and its individual components in unison.

Scarpa was a superb draftsman, but unlike Wright, the architect he most admired and who most influenced his early work, he almost never made illustrations or renderings. Instead, his drawings, perhaps first read as autonomous architectural statements—especially those heavily annotated with sketches, detailed studies and notes—are, in fact, always directly and exclusively preoccupied with the material realization of his architectural intentions and most important built works: Villa Ottolenghi, Stabrodino, Venice 1971–79 and Il Palazzetto (Monvecce, Padua, 1969–1978).

The exhibition was made possible by The School of Architecture Professor Guido Zuliani and Guido Pietropoli, an Associate of Scarpa for ten years, as well as a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the symposium On Drawing and Building was held in the Arthur A. Houghton Jr. Gallery, with participants Kenneth Frampton, Ware Professor of Architecture, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University; Michael Cadweel, Director and Professor, Knowlton School of Architecture, The Ohio State University; Diane H. Lewis, Professor, The Iwan S. Chern School of Architecture and Guido Pietropoli, Scarpa's former Associate.
The hallucinatory effect derives from the extraordinary clarity and structure of the artifact, including perspective, light, and facts. Each drawing should be approached as an artifact—containing both artifice and not from mystery or mist. Nothing is more fantastic than precision.”

—Robbie Grilz on Kafka

1. Locate two film cameras in the studio: one on the east wall and one on the west wall.

Start the film.

2. Tools of Drawing: work with the tools of drawing to construct the following drawings:

1-Plan of the tools of drawing
1-Section of the tools of drawing
1-Plan and section of the tools of drawing capturing their motion as they draw themselves.

3A. Construct a drawing that captures the particular choreography of the instruments of drawing and the body in motion as a spatial/temporal structure.

3B. Film the construction of 3A from two station points.

3C. Construct a singular image from still frames extracted from each of the two films.

4. A plane of a photographic, is a straight line? Define a strategy, a theory of distance.

Construct three critical vertical sections and three critical horizontal sections cutting through the singular photomontage constructed for 3C. The photomontage (3C) is contained within the photomontage.

5A. Construct an axonometric of the space of drawing.
5B. Construct one axonometric of the space of drawing contained within the photomontage.

6C. Clean a space, define a site, raise the roof beams and construct a horizon.

Full-class working together, construct a cylinder: 96” X 146” built of 1.5” x 1.5” wood members located 14” o.c. in both the vertical and horizontal. Mount a surface of paper on the cylinder. Mount two projectors at the locations of the two cameras. Construct 12 curved parallel edges and mount them on the cylinder.

Social Space: An embodied experience of representation.

5A. From absorbing to projecting: project the film. Turn on the two projectors and continue to absorb footage with the cameras, at the end of each day add the day’s footage to the projecting film.
5B. From projecting to absorbing: absorb the room.

Using descriptive geometry and perspective the entire first year drawing studio is absorbed into the cylinder. Each student locates their desk within the cylindrical picture plane and constructs the intersection of the cylinder with the axonometric constructed from each individual montage mounted on the desk.

The representation is the social space. Working individually within a group, construct the following drawings:

1. Locate your individual axonometric projection on the surface of the cylinder.

2. Construct four critical vertical sections and one critical horizontal section of the first year studio space. These drawings are cut through the cylinder and are absorbing the individual specified axonometric Scale: $2’ = 1”$.

3. Two critical vertical sections and one critical horizontal section cutting through the cylinder. These sections locate the individual specified axonometric Scale: $6’ = 1”$.

Six Interventions: Working together as a class, each group according to its self-defined area of inquiry will UPDATE A BODY OR BODIES within the site. Each intervention will create a situation of passage and habitation within the site. The interventions must anticipate passage of light, passage of the vision, passage of the body. These interventions are relational; they at once crystallize the existing conditions and propose architectural nuances anticipating a body or bodies within the site.

ARCHITECTONICS: SPRING SEMESTER

Professor Lubosch Woods
Professor Aida Miron
Professor Uri Wegman

This semester we focused on the design of four houses, which we term ideal house because each occupies a different elemental volume—cube, cylinder, cone, or pyramid—and each embodies a program of habitation based on a different cardinal time—day, noon, dusk, and midnight.

Furthermore, the inhabitants of each house are assumed to be ideal, in the sense that they embody, for our purposes, only certain universal human characteristics, such as physical size, capabilities of movement, perception of their environment, and interaction with it. The site of each of the four houses is also ideal, meaning sloped or flat, horizontal or vertical, and disregard any inherently dioptric features. In the design of each house, equal emphasis is placed on the interior and exterior of its volume. In taking this approach, we realize that these ideal types exist only as ideas, yet find these ideas useful in the laboratory of the design studies as a means of understanding the fundamental tectonic elements of architecture.

There is considerable historical precedent for our project. We find ideal architecture—of exactly the sort we are engaging—in examples from Vitruvius, through Alberti and Da Vinci, Lodovico, Semper, Taut and Le Corbusier, Archigram, up to the present in ideal projects by Hadid and Holl.

We arrive at the designs of the four ideal houses by a series of stages or steps, working both individually and in four teams, one for each house. As the design of each house progresses, it will evolve from the ideal forms of its beginnings to the particular forms of its development and conclusion. If we assume, for example, that the House of Dawn has the form of a cylinder, we can expect that its dawn-like ambiguity (neither fully night or day) will make any changes made to the volume uncertain in their purposes; yet, human habitation requires changes enable specific uses, such as going in and out of the cylinder, and letting in light and air. Consequently, each opening in the volume might be determined, say, by enabling several uses simultaneously. In any event, such a transformation will, in itself, be considered a next higher level of the ideal, in that it embodies a fundamental aspect—a continual evolution in time—of both the human and natural worlds.

Stage One is studies of the four cardinal times—a dawn, noon, dusk, midnight—and the four elemental volumes—cube, cylinder, cone, pyramid. This focuses on identifying the essential (universal) characteristics of each. It is accomplished by dividing the class into two teams, one concerned with cardinal times, one concerned with volumes. These teams are further divided into four teams, one for each cardinal time or volume.

Stage Two begins with the class divided into four teams, one for each volume, now with the program of its selected cardinal time, which we refer to as its house. These teams work together for the duration of the semester. Each team conducts a design competition, in which each team member proposes a design scheme for a specific house. These are presented in a pin-up review. After each review, a single scheme is selected for each house, in the sense that the team's work for the semester.

Stage Three is the development of a schematic design for each house by its respective team. The distribution of tasks within each team is discussed with the faculty at the time this stage begins.

Stage Four is the development of a final design for each house by its respective team.

STUDIO COURSES

FIRST YEAR
ARCHITECTONICS: FALL SEMESTER
Professor David Gerstein
Professor Aida Miron
Professor Uri Wegman

“T he hallucinatory effect derives from the extraordinary clarity and structure of the artifact, including perspective, light, and facts. Each drawing should consider the space, syntax and structure of the artifact, including perspective, light, geometry, gravity and substance.”

1A. Construct the photomontage on your drawing surface.
1B. Construct one axonometric of the space of drawing.

2C. Clean a space, define a site, raise the roof beams and construct a horizon.

Full-class working together, construct a cube: 90” X 146” built of 1.5” x 1.5” wood members located 14” o.c. in both the vertical and horizontal. Mount a surface of paper on the cylinder. Mount two projectors at the locations of the two cameras. Construct 12 curved parallel edges and mount them on the cylinder.

Social Space: An embodied experience of representation.

5A. From absorbing to projecting: project the film. Turn on the two projectors and continue to absorb footage with the cameras, at the end of each day add the day’s footage to the projecting film.
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Using descriptive geometry and perspective the entire first year drawing studio is absorbed into the cylinder. Each student locates their desk within the cylindrical picture plane and constructs the intersection of the cylinder with the axonometric constructed from each individual montage mounted on the desk.

The representation is the social space. Working individually within a group, construct the following drawings:

1. Locate your individual axonometric projection on the surface of the cylinder.

2. Construct four critical vertical sections and one critical horizontal section of the first year studio space. These drawings are cut through the cylinder and are absorbing the individual specified axonometric Scale: $2’ = 1”$.

3. Two critical vertical sections and one critical horizontal section cutting through the cylinder. These sections locate the individual specified axonometric Scale: $6’ = 1”$.

Six Interventions: Working together as a class, each group according to its self-defined area of inquiry will UPDATE A BODY OR BODIES within the site. Each intervention will create a situation of passage and habitation within the site. The interventions must anticipate passage of light, passage of the vision, passage of the body. These interventions are relational; they at once crystallize the existing conditions and propose architectural nuances anticipating a body or bodies within the site.

ARCHITECTONICS: SPRING SEMESTER
Professor Lubosch Woods
Professor Aida Miron
Professor Uri Wegman

This semester we focused on the design of four houses, which we term ideal house because each occupies a different elemental volume—cube, cylinder, cone, or pyramid—and each embodies a program of habitation based on a different cardinal time—dusk, noon, dusk, and midnight.

Furthermore, the inhabitants of each house are assumed to be ideal, in the sense that they embody, for our purposes, only certain universal human characteristics, such as physical size, capabilities of movement, perception of their environment, and interaction with it. The site of each of the four houses is also ideal, meaning sloped or flat, horizontal or vertical, and disregards any inherently dioptric features. In the design of each house, equal emphasis is placed on the interior and exterior of its volume. In taking this approach, we realize that these ideal types exist only as ideas, yet find these ideas useful in the laboratory of the design studies as a means of understanding the fundamental tectonic elements of architecture.

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Stage Three is the development of a schematic design for each house by its respective team. The distribution of tasks within each team is discussed with the faculty at the time this stage begins.

Stage Four is the development of a final design for each house by its respective team.
FREEHAND DRAWING
Professor Michael Webb
Professor Gra Wall

It is the magical transformation from the corporeal to the incorporeal, drawing's supreme act that we emphasize in this drawing course. The drawing boards are gone from the architectural office today. The draftsmen who could spin their pencils (to keep a joint operation—you are using your own skills and those of the original programmers. The result of all this is the ability to make a perspective projection without the slightest understanding of what a perspective is.

We want the student to think of drawing, not only as a means of conveying an idea existing in your head or of an actual thing existing in space, but as a means of developing that idea or thing. Drawing is an act of exploration. Success can only be achieved through trial, error, and a willingness to rework each piece. No first attempt is precious and, once that is accepted, the drawing will begin to take on a life of its own and reveal new possibilities and potentials.

DESRIPTIVE GEOMETRY AND COMPUTER APPLICATIONS: FALL SEMESTER
Professor Michael Young

The plane drawn through its traces

This course develops the student's knowledge and skill in architectural representation through a close examination of the geometric procedures that underlie representation. The students are encouraged to develop a critical and creative approach to understanding the relationships between conceptions, perceptions, tools, and techniques.

In the fall semester of this course we explored the geometrical underpinnings of architectural representation. The course covered the Plane Geometries of Euclid, basic algorithmic procedures, Monge's Descriptive Geometry, Axonometrics, Perspective and Projective Geometry. Simultaneously, research was opened into the relations between manual drawing and digital modeling. The coursework was documented in a series of notebooks that the students generated through weekly drawing assignments. These notebooks organize the material of the course into a document that the students will be able to continually reference throughout their architectural studies.

Part of this scenario left only two opposite alternatives: the reconfiguration of neomodernist boxes ignoring the displacement of the discipline by post-structuralist theories and post-structuralist boxes ignoring the presence of types and stable structures. What this studio proposed, was to transcend this pendulum opposition between the establishment of a renaissance and its baroque displacement (H. Wölffle).

Students studied the constitution of form through the development of source codes and systems that straddle them. Considering representation as a critical creative moment where questions become problems to work with, visual logic functions as the recognition of formal systems. Critiquing oppositions between structure, embodiment and perception, students were asked to investigate implicit conflicts between referential structures and the intrinsic quality of representation through perception, materials and the presence of the body, which both inter and displace metaphysical notions of structure.

Structures and typologies were activated and deconstructed both top-down and bottom-up through multiple definitions of topological displacements: topology as a way of resisting predetermination; topology as relative forces, or as degree deformations; topology as the topologies or the logic of the place; non-Euclidean geometric topology of bi-continuous surface deformations; topologies as immersive experiential space.

The enfolding of contemporary canons to revisit architecture limits, propounds the institution of a state of suspension that demands the recognition of a hybrid transitory space. Therefore a space historically suspended between a potential topological surface-space and its absolute stable referential Cartesian coordinate system. This space is defined as Cartopological.

Design II studio concluded with the development of an on-house for two individuals.

SECOND YEAR

DESIGN II: FALL SEMESTER
Professor Pablo Lorenzo-Eiroa
Professor Katerina Kourkoutzi
Professor James Loder

Enfolding the Expanded Field: Cartopological Space

Design II builds upon the observation that many contemporary canons, in reaction to the architecture of the previous decades, have abandoned the engagement of spatial structures. Referential structures in spaces of representation have been progressively replaced by the apparently un-problematic stratification of computer algorithms. Architecture has been informed merely by technology through computation, which has been providing material for its disciplinary expansion. But this expansion has also been deeply structured by other issues, such as the post-structuralist reaction to universal space informed by the logic of place derived from the integration of the architectural object and the landscape.

This direction produced a new tectonic for landscape continuity, spatial continuity, and the autonomy of the surface. The aim of the studio was to work with the redefinition of the disciplinary limits after this expansion.

Through the reconsideration of structure, the studio investigated strategies to redefine post-structuralist theories as a continuation of structuralist theories. The reconsideration of stable structural organization and relative displacement to activate organizational typologies, is based on the revision of latent ideas in the common nine square diagram (Mittal's analysis of Palladio's villas, Rowe's analysis between Palladio's Villa Malcontenta and Le Corbusier's Villa Stein, Terragni's underlying spatial organization based on Palladian strategies, Hepok's and Eisenman's Houses serial). These constitute a structuralist axis of reference.

Post-structuralist canons, on the other hand, relate to a reactionary criticism of the modern paradigm of universality, which demanded the reconsideration of universal order and the generic container space in regards to the role of the place and the territory. Architecture incorporated a new philosophy displacing its canonical relationship between contained space and ground. By assimilating the logic of space with that of the place and the territory, architecture resolved in the canonical thickening of the ground as an inhabitable surface (R. Forster), its new tectonic. After a few decades of experimenting with landscape-buildings, this process culminated with the autonomy of the vectorial surface. This disciplinary expansion based on the aesthetic of surface continuity, evolved most recently into the emergence of spatial warping (A. Vidor), which provided new conditions for topology.
This year we reinvented the third year. The faculty group was consistent for the entire year. The project sequence was unusual, but it is differentiated critically by a abandoning the teaching in each, and indefining a trajectory that explicitly embraces the social purpose of construction and an ecological consciousness. Guided more by less unconsciously by Felix Guattari’s ecosophy, and Bruno Latour’s insistence on a perspectival shift from matters of fact to matters of concern, the work of the studio is simultaneously pragmatic and utopian, speculative and realistic.

This is important, particularly for the third year. It is often difficult, a rule of passage in the strange journey of the individual. One student may be confident enough that they can fail without breaking bones, and that confidence should come with knowledge. There is a lot to learn.

We started with a short project describing the Bowery, inspired by Martha Rosler’s The Bowery in two inadequate descriptive systems (1974–5); the students worked in groups, examining specific qualities offered by the Bowery, reading those qualities with a bias provided by a specific architectural provocation: Learning from Las Vegas, The Manhattan Transcripts, Deconstruct New York, The As Found (AS & PS). Par-Architecture (808W). They then looked for a hidden archipelago of islands – cultural production/spaces, mines and majors. St. Mark’s Church, The New Museum, STOREFRONT, the PRADA store, The Cooper Union (Foundation Building), The Armory, Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, The MoMA sculpture garden, The Whitney, The Guggenheim. Choosing one, each group made analytical drawings and models developing graphic acuity and analytical skills, in multi-dimensional representations of a setting that could be visited, so that the building could be touched, measured, and experienced – but also discovered in books, movies, newspapers and magazines, on paper and on-line. They then made a project for the site of The Guggenheim Lab on Houston Street, speculating about the future use of the provisional cultural production site established by the Lab, another island in the archipelago.

For the spring semester everyone worked on the design of a school, on or near 125th Street in Harlem, engaging with the Harlem Children’s Zone Promise Academy program. We identified three sites. One was too small, one too big, and one was just about the right size, but was next to the elevated Metro-North railroad line. Each site had specific challenges. The most compelling challenge for the students being the character and quality of the school itself, addressing the needs of children and families living in Harlem, providing free support for the children and families in the form of parenting workshops, a pre-school program and child-oriented health programs. Defining the spatial and material consequences of this combination of Educational and Civic programming is a prerequisite, elaborating it, as architecture is the real obligation.
FOURTH YEAR

DESIGN IV: FALL SEMESTER
Professor Kevin Bone
Professor Susanah Drake
Professor Rail Seagal

Since the post WWII years, the suburban way of life has become embedded in the American consciousness as the popular manifestation of the American Dream. More than any other form of development, North Americans have invested their newfound wealth in the suburb in promise of affordability, space, mobility and a better family life. The studio calls to challenge patterns of American Sprawl and the life it brings with it. Particularly rapid world transformations must lead us to questions of sustainability, economy, and the broader cultural value of this automobile dependent, form of human settlement. Our working assumption is that suburbia will and must change. We ask whether architecture can play a role in this change? Can we imagine a better environment in place of the suburb?

THE SITES

The studio designates five general sites for study. Each represents a specific ecological condition with different environmental and topographical conditions of the different designated sites: different environment conditions (climate, habitat, different physical settings—topography, lay of land, different densities, infrastructure and building typology). The sites can be generally characterized as outer ring suburbia, which have been developed in the past thirty years and present particular conditions yet all the same can be seen as typical of American sprawl.

STUDIO STRUCTURE

Phase 1

The first project was a short one week exercise, undertaken in groups, which looked at the larger township sites (25 sq miles, 6 x 6 mile squares) of diverse environmental and topographical conditions of the different designated sites: different environment conditions (climate, habitat, different physical settings—topography, lay of land, different densities, infrastructure and building typology). The sites can be generally characterized as outer ring suburbia, which have been developed in the past thirty years and present particular conditions yet all the same can be seen as typical of American sprawl.

Phase 2

For the second project, each student was asked to choose a single sq mile out of the township scale, and examine it more closely in order to identify the element, point, space or condition from where a potential transformation can emerge. Students developed analytical drawing as a reading of the environment, drawings that called out certain phenomena and defined environmental conditions. This exercise can already entail a possible architectural action of transformation, i.e., an architectural/urban/landscape strategy that has implications on multiple scales.

Phase 3

For the third and final phase of the semester each student worked independently to develop a specific design proposal that tests the strategies arrived at in the second exercise and further explored some of the suggested transformations. Each project was expected to establish a narrative that takes into consideration the early analysis and observations of the larger scale studies, and a series of operations, which can be deployed and tested at the larger scale.

DESIGN IV: SPRING SEMESTER

Professor Diane Lewis
Professor Peter Schubert
Professor Marsha Velez
Professor Daniel Meridor
Professor Daniel Sherer

TEMPLE: Ancient in the modern

The single order temple form, the precinct, the pre-existing skeleton of the site, the civic still life, the orders, the approach and the span.

The studio focused on the fact that the most obvious attribute of many of the definitive structures of twentieth-century architecture such as the Neue Nationalgalerie, the Heidi Weber Pavilion and Ronchamp, is their formulation as single order structures akin to the ancient temple. This recognition opens literal and theoretical questions of order that emanate from the pursuit of the temple concept and the temple form without the pictorial aspects of the academic styles.

A consciousness of the manner by which a single order structure can evoke a spatial autonomy and emit a field of measure and proportion to transform the surrounding, existing urban fabric into a still life and a dialogue across time and space is one of the founding objectives for the studio.

In addition, a study of the principles by which the “skeleton” of the Greek and Roman city plans that cradle the memorable architectural still-lives that are the art of the city, were initiated with an initial visit to Seagram’s, Upper, and CBS. This experience of the temple concept in the acropolis of midtown Manhattan on the first day of the studio was directed toward a revelation of the power of the ancient in the modern as a visceral spatial initiation to the knowledge necessary to the project at hand.

The ancient precincts composed from a succession of temples and the civic, spatial, and programmatic relationships were studied as a key to the art of determining the character for a contemporary civic domain. As were readings of Semper’s ethnographic based derivation of architectural form, which explore the genesis of the hearth to the house to the templeum, the domestic to the civic. The Semperian definition of architecture, the formation of identifiable orders and distinct structural elements were considered in the drawings and scales with which the project is implemented.

A reading of Francesco Pacioli’s essay entitled “Magic for the Soul of Art,” published by The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture, was the introduction to the Semper text, in support of the formal and conceptual aspects for the derivation of structural form, ambulatory, and plan.
STUDIO COURSES

Professor Anthony Vidler
Professor Stephen Rustow
Professor Lydia Kallipoliti

FIFTH YEAR

THESIS: FALL AND SPRING SEMESTERS

The Thesis studio is organized to support each Fifth Year student in the discovery of a broad topic of research and a valid axis of inquiry that will occupy the entire school year, gradually leading to a concisely defined project in the Spring term. Pedagogically, the claim of the thesis, the refinement of an appropriate working method and the elaboration of a critical position with respect to the research are the most significant goals of the year. This however in no way diminishes the enthusiasm and self-imposed pressure that students bring to the development of an architectural project that attempts to synthesize the year’s exploration.

The fall semester began with a series of brief “warm-up exercises” wherein the juxtaposition of a seemingly random group of buildings and objects was intended to help students arrive at a plausible hypothesis along some clearly identified line of inquiry. The semester was punctuated by a series of rich and suggestive lectures by visiting Professor Kurt Fostler, which provided a succinct overview of relevant methodological questions by tracing the evidence for an operative thesis in a series of projects by architects as diverse as Karl Friedrich Schinkel, Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright.

As students began to determine their individual research agendas a broad range of subjects emerged; nevertheless, certain underlying similarities could be traced among groups of projects. For example, the significance of built or implicit axial relationships in the natural landscape was explored in settings as varied as the demilitarized zone that divides the two Koreas; the Australian desert site of the first continental telegraph; the regional habitats traversed by the transcontinental Canadian highway; and the hemispheric latitudinal connection that justifies the representation spaces of Lima, Peru with those of Washington D.C. Similarly, a number of research efforts coalesced around the documentation of complex formal patterns in, for example, the traces of tools used both to map and to exploit the plains atop the Ogalalla Aquifer; or the transposition of urban grid fragments to the geologic strata of the Colorado plateaus; or the random web of neighborhood sites where court witnesses have been murdered in Brooklyn. Yet another series of investigations sought to isolate the formal properties and generative potential of various architectural fragments, in sources that range from the ecclesiastical structures of the French Gothic to the housing blocks of Manhattan’s Lower East Side. Finally, a number of students began to experiment directly with specific materials and to examine their intrinsic formal qualities.

By mid-term review, students began to draw from their research a line of inquiry that would clarify the thesis as a concise claim and define the project to follow. While the range of individual projects is ultimately as diverse as the students themselves, here again one map distinguishes three broad types of proposals. First there are those who posit their thesis as a project of documentation in which a deep understanding of a place, process or phenomenon in the real world will be presented in descriptive and analytical terms. Their work has been focused on fashioning the set of documents and the hierarchical organization of material that most effectively conveys the narrative of their understanding. Next are those who see their project as a kind of experiment, or series of experiments, in which the creation of a controlled condition throws into relief the behavior of some variable. Their efforts are concentrated on refining the experimental procedures and the methods of observation so that some predictive understanding of behavior can be presented, whether the subject be light, structural stability or interactivity with virtual stimuli. Finally, there are those who are determined to push their inquiry to a conclusion in which a clear design project is discerned, with the questions of site, program, form and materiality all embodied in a suite of conventional architectural drawings and models.

In all of these theses there is strong evidence of structured design thought; taken together they document the breadth and diversity of interests that animate this graduating class.
Thesis statements include:

**De facto/de jure neutrality**

The DMZ is a 4km wide strip of uninhabitable land across the Korean Peninsula that serves as a buffer zone between North and South Korea since the Armistice Agreement in 1953. Unlike the barbed-wire fence of the DMZ, that diminishes the clarity of the demarcation. For the past decades, violations of the border has threatened the island with political reterritorialization, and this thesis explores a new interpretation of the island in political, social, and spatial contexts. By introducing a dialectical relationship between a mother and an infant during pre- and postnatal periods as a metaphorical parallel to a relationship between North and South Korea before and after the division, this thesis provokes a reconsideration of binary conditions through architecture.

Two places are one, one place is two. The ground is constituted into numerous pieces of earth form together to create a vast composite whole. Its vastness cannot be captured by human limits. It must be broken down to be understood. What new terrain is formed when these new disparate pieces are put back together again? Through conflating two sites, one is transposed onto the other in order to produce a new composite. This new terrain is the product of three imposed limits: an idea of measure, an idea of extraction, an idea of re-composition. These limits are explored in two separate case studies. Both studies confine a site in the wilderness and a site in the city. One takes place immediately in space, while the other takes place over a much longer time.

**A Summer House:** Truly, as is often said, the lessons of our childhood make a wonderful impression on our memory, for I am not sure that I could remember all the discourse of yesterday, but I should be much surprised if I forgot any of these things which I have heard very long ago.”—Plato's Timaeus, 26b-c, trans. Josswell

Death and the idea of Mexico—Moments mort. Mexico is currently subject to a civil war. Individual existence is conditioned by the permanent possibility of Death. The project begins with an analyzed four architectural archtects, which are related to Mexico’s sacred tombs: the Templo Mayor was the navel of the Aztec cosmos; the flag rises up on the main square, the Zocalo; the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe is a sanctuary to contemplate the figure of the Virgin; the house of the Mexican architect Luis Barragan is a refuge connected to the sky. Four sanctuaries of Mexican identity are designed: a rose garden, a crypt, a tower of rest, an ancestral chamber. The passage from the original grid to a new system of projection activates sites in the city. The sanctuaries become an archipelago of places for contemplation of life.

**PROLOGUE/PROJECT ODEA:** The genesis of my thesis began with an investigation into the Overland Telegraph Line constructed in 1872, which ran from the Southern to the northern most tip of the country. A straight line that cut through the heart of Australia’s vast desert interior connected the country via underwater cable to Java, Indonesia and then across, land through Asia and the Middle East into Great Britain. My thesis design is for theatres that rest on a wide site in the city of Darwin, in the Northern Territory of Australia. Situated in the most northern and tropical end of the continent at the end of the telegraph line. When Darwin was bombed by the Japanese in 1942, the Overland Telegraph Line was severed by the citizens of the city out of fear that this infrastructure would be used to take over the country in the event of an invasion. With the cutting of the line the country’s voices were severed and history was dismembered and dismembered. The theatre therefore functions as an archive of memory, a site for stories dispossessed and those yet to be written.

Hospedaje/Pedaje (Lodging/Bridge Toll). Within the narrow sliver of forest that remains between South America’s largest slum and one of Rio de Janeiro’s wealthiest neighborhoods, my thesis tests the claim that architecture can bring together members of socio-economically disparate societies and facilitate their mutual examination. This has been achieved through the design of a public promenade, which wraps the northern edge of the favela Rocinha, to be used both as a key circulation route for favela dwellers as well as a path leading to the entrance of a hostel designed to house outsiders. The project body in the site of the un-scaled. The thesis investigates the capacity of forgotten spaces of the city to expand an understanding of perception in the body and the mind. The proposal opens several sites beyond Manhattan Bridge to create platforms for performance of distinct spacing and timing that re-introduce the projected body to this site of the un-scaled. Through its accompanying proximity to structures of transition and movement, it is a constant reminder of the precariousness of the city upon which real and imagined worlds play out.

NYCHA’s social housing towers that line the Lower East Side of Manhattan. It proposes a method for demolishing and diversifying the projects through the insertion of a new layer of programs that are built in such a way that redelines and reinterprets the urban space around the towers. In doing so, it deals with the identified issues of connectivity, engagement of the surrounding neighborhood, variety and hierarchy in public open space, which result in the creation of a new identity for the superblock.

Cultivating the Map. The way we live leaves traces on the Earth. The tools we use to situate ourselves in the landscape leave marks and inscriptions of these processes on the ground, becoming a direct reflection of the society that formed it. The map acts as record of these inscriptions. It is an outcome of a gathering of elements for the construction of a narrative about the site’s reality. This thesis finds itself in the territory of the map, proposing that the map is also a generative tool. Using the drawing as a foil form, this thesis attempts a predictive organization of territory through the design of four new tools for the management of natural resources in the Great Plains, a region threatened with the cumulative adverse effects of industrial farming. Each tool proposes new ways of drawing the land and acts as an instrument that reveals the landscape’s new potential.
DRAWING FROM THE ARCHIVE

The Interior Renovation of the Foundation Building

The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture Archive continues the history of exhibitions and collections at The Cooper Union that dates to the “galleries of art and scientific collections,” that were part of Peter Cooper’s initial program for the institution.

The many collections housed within the Archive are used for the purposes of publishing, study and research. They are built upon the foundation of its largest collection—a photographic repository of student work dating back to the 1950s, which serves as a record of the pedagogic history of the school. Pictured here are selected images from the collection of the architectural history of the Foundation Building: the design development drawings by the architect John Hejduk and accompanying construction photos of the interior renovation of the building, which took place from 1971-74.
I had no desire to critique or alter the established norm; that would assist those in the process of cultivating their personal vision of the curriculum and form of a school that they would otherwise miss. Each of these markers are shelters for the distance traveler; the programs changing constantly—from resting shelter to cooking shelter, cleaning shelter, etc.—to create a complete temporal experience that must be accumulated by crossing the entirety of Canada, and once at Halifax, marks the end of a journey.

**SELECTED ELECTIVES**

**ADVANCED DRAWING SEMINAR**

Professor Sue Ferguson Gussow

Students enrolled in the Advanced Drawing Seminar are encouraged to develop a series of drawings based on themes of their own choosing. There is no predetermined syllabus; the course nemelizes itself each fall semester. Examples of topics include: (1) a multi-layered investigation of a student's own utterly familiar denim jacket opened his quest “to move fluidly from observation into abstraction.” (2) Meditations on gravity were expanded by another student in her series of drawings of banana peels. In the act of drawing, the peels were commanded “to dance, to rise, and slowly sink.” (3) In searching for a metaphoric “animal presence” in the walls of the Foundation Building, another student penned in on the interplay of light and reflection discovered in the building’s lobby windows—extracting from their transparent and mirroring properties a parable of arsistic mood.

In order to explore and develop a project that ranges from the observable to the realm of imagination, it is imperative for the student to have first attained a certain level of technical proficiency and a grasp of the basic concepts of drawing. It is the pedagogical thrust of the Advanced Drawing Seminar that in pursuing freely chosen themes, the student will be motivated to expand and hone those skills and to take risks in further exploring new media.

**THE FELTMAN SEMINAR**

(Professor Michael Young)

Light can be understood as a fundamental phenomenon underlying the relations between perception and representation. It binds together nature and culture in numerous ways. Light can be employed as the translation medium for the verification of objective scientific representations, it can also be the phenomenon summoned to artificially create the illusions of depth in the plane of a canvas. Light occupies a pivotal role in the discussions between science and art, between the aesthetic and the conceptual, between the ideal, the empirical, and the phenomenalological. This interdisciplinary seminar looked at five of these exchanges:

1. **Light as Truth—Changing Understandings of Objectivity in Science and Philosophy**
2. **Light as Geometry—Perspective and Projection**
3. **Light as Illusion—Shade, Shadow, Depth and Movement**
4. **Light as Sensation—Color Theory and Optical Vibration**
5. **Light as Media—The Ages of Technological Reproducibility**

Each topic was paired with a set of readings for discussion and explored as two-week modules of investigation.

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The Lost Memory of the Site: ONE LINE, THREE TIMES. In this era of the transient, the temporal aspect of a site has been abstracted to a line. I investigated the contraposition of historical time, event time and superimposed arbitrary time to the development of a city: Lima, Peru. My initial site was the longitudinal line 77°2’W of Greenwich Mean Time, which intersects the center of Lima as well as Washington DC, connecting the two capitals across the equator. The line also exposes the expansion of Lima from the Spanish cuadrícula to the lotal edge. The thesis focuses on the juxtaposition of a forgotten ruin and the modern city to reestablish the present via conditions of the site through the introduction of an archive for the space of memory, a tower, for the space of observed time, and a plaza for the space of public time.

A Chance Encounter With Light. I am interested in establishing primary relationships of light within a space, in tackling the nature of light itself. By viewing architecture as a chance encounter with light, architecture can transcend measurement. In much the same way that John Cage understood the sound of a note and could construct music as a series of chance incidents, architecture can create qualitative experiences that may accept the unanticipated. I propose to create a museum in Camino, California which challenges the conventions of light in contemporary museums, engaging the temporal nature of light and its relationship to art, dissolving the false dichotomy between natural and artificial light, and using light and material relationships to construct a specific spatial experience.

I sought to reflect the idea of school: “... the poet would define the amount of the unknown a rising to the developme ntofa city: Lima, Peru. My initial sitewas the longitudinal line 77°2’W of Greenwich Mean Time, which

The MetaPhysics of recent work. This thesis is a work completed through drawing. Considering the metaphysics of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, a study of monastic spaces had been conducted. The ordering of a nave, chapel, baptistery, cell and tomb are the architectural objects of this research.

Coney Island: Shadows of a Spectacle. The Fountain of Youth, El Dorado, Xanadu, the Land of Milk and Honey, Shangri-La, Hubbard Khan, Atlantis, Coney Island: the place of fantasy, ease, and plenty has many names. Its form and image are necessary for its existence beyond the physical, a construction that is constant in the re-fueling of their legend. These fantasies and their aforementioned spaces/hectonics become incarnations in our own pleasure/leisure seeking society. Coney Island, a simulacrum of fantasy, real fantasy in and of itself, has become a ruin. This thesis explores its run in close relationship to its nostalgic image to create an exhibitionary process of embalment, which crystallizes the melancholic atmosphere of its dermo and celebrates the passing of its architecture and image.

Documentation of a cross-Canada bicycle tour. Completed in the past summer, this tour was an investigation of the vastness of the Canadian landscape and the various historical narratives that are present between major cities. By introducing a system of markers at 50 km intervals along the route, one traveling along the lengthy highways would understand the passage of time and distance traversed. Travelers are encouraged to make a stop at such moments that they would otherwise miss. Each of these markers are shelters for the distance traveler; the programs changing constantly—from resting shelter to cooking shelter, cleaning shelter, etc.—to create a complete temporal experience that must be accumulated by crossing the entirety of Canada, and once at Halifax, marks the end of a journey.
GRADUATE SEMINAR IN TECHNOLOGY: ADVANCED GEOMETRY & DIGITAL FABRICATION
Professor Michael Young

Taking our cue from the moiré effect, this course seeks to explore the “interference” between the material, the sensory, and the geometric in architectural design and fabrication. Although the emphasis is placed on digital modeling and notations, this course opens a dialog between the working methods of a digital environment, and the physical, visceral, sensory relations we have with our material environment.

The course set out to understand contemporary digital techniques by investigating the theories and history of geometry in relation to architectural construction, computation, and representation. The topics under investigation included explorations of curvature sensation and notation, gradient field manipulations, ornamental pattern through continuous variation, digital fabrication through contouring, folding, and aggregation, and material feedback in a computational system. Exploring these concepts opened alternate understandings of contemporary architecture in relation to construction, geometry, representation, and aesthetics.

ARCHITECTURAL TOYS
Professor Tamar Zinger

Play belongs in the category of ‘tacit knowledge,’ meaning it is immediate, intuitive and universally understood. Moreover, the sense of vision is most crucial to play. At any age, one sees toys—their colors, their shine, and appealing forms—and wants to grab, handle and manipulate. It is true of dolls, of toy trucks, of a variety of trinkets and also of construction toys.

But what if there was no sense of sight?

What then would play consist of? How would the elements of fun, surprise, humor and curiosity, which are all aspects of play, be experienced? How to experience the initial visual excitement provided by bright colors that so many toys display? How would one know that this is a toy to be handled and that one could enjoy?

These questions were debated and ideas were shared as the students followed and critiqued each other’s project throughout the semester, leading to the building of a full scale prototype of an architectural toy, a kit of parts that allowed for a variety of combinations, and that could be constructed and taken apart over and over again. By emphasizing the haptic in an architectural object, albeit on a small scale, this project encouraged incorporating senses other than sight in architectural design.

CONSTRUCTING INFRASTRUCTURAL NARRATIVES
Professor Lala Siewing

Infrastructure: the basic physical and organizational structures needed for the operation of a society or enterprise. A narrative: A spoken or written account of connected events, the practice or art of telling stories. This seminar aimed to understand infrastructure and narrative as political tools in the field of contemporary urban design. It focused on the often-downplayed importance of infrastructural underpinnings to the way that cities develop. The course tackled infrastructure from both a physical standpoint (how it shapes urban space and development, what technologies have influenced its effect through time) and a political standpoint (why these happen within the larger social history of the city and who are the main actors). Simultaneously, we examined, and explored, a range of different narrative structures for their ability to effectively, sometimes indirectly, communicate meaning and agenda through mapping, fiction, myth, allegory, symbolism, and rumor. By defining a field in between infrastructure, as material context, and narrative, as performative communication, we began to answer the underlying question: what is the validity of, and how it is possible to, have political and social agency in architecture and urban design in the twenty-first century?

This seminar is structured around readings of contemporary urban theory, different narrative representations of the city, presentations of case studies, and class discussion of concrete urban projects arranged around a common infrastructural theme.

EcoRedux: THE RESURGENCE OF ECOLOGICAL IMAGINATION
Professor Lydia Kallipoliti

The main product of this course will be the assemblage of an archive for ecological material experiments that architects and designers explored during the twentieth century. We will collaborate in small groups in order to create a major database of ecological design strategies and to seek tentative connections with the remarkable contemporary resurgence of ecological strategies in architectural imagination. The scope of the seminar has a dual function: first, as a tool to explore the history of the sustainable design throughout the twentieth century, but also as a pedagogical tool for radical design initiatives in the contemporary city.

The starting point for this course will be the existing online archive www.ecoredux.com. EcoRedux currently maps visually and verbally the trajectory of habitation experiments that underground architectural groups conducted during the 1960s and 1970s. Such experiments include garbage housing, recycling housing components, stone molding, vacuums, foam houses, pneumatics from used parachutes, hand-crafted domes et-al. Along with the documentation of historical material, the website also features contemporary interpretations of the experiments using various media, such as diagrams, drawings, animations, interviews with the architects, computer codes and instruction manuals for sustainable living. The course will aim to transform the existing online archive into an open source groundbreaking collection of ecological experiments, tracing environmental policies and sustainable design building systems in line with the history of ideas and experiments in the twentieth century.
MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE II

GRADUATE RESEARCH DESIGN STUDIO
Professor Diana Agnese
Professor Daniel Meridoro
Professor Laila Seewang

The M. Arch II program explores and questions the boundaries of architecture as discipline and as discourse. Architecture has been characterized in recent years by an anti-intellectual attitude. Moreover, it has been a reflection of an ideology of extreme consumerism and as thus, "object"-oriented architecture. The Advanced Design Studio focuses on projects dealing with critical issues in architecture at the specific assignments, but its simultaneously addresses the present time. The work produced does not only respond to the specific assignments, but also addresses the question of the place and relevance of the problem in architectural discourse. The assignments, while given for the whole class, afford opportunities for individual students to focus on their area of interest, be it Urban Studies, History/Theory or Technologies. Emphasis is placed on the design process developed through a series of productive and as an intrinsic part of the process completed by models.

FALL
FILM AND THE CITY

Each student selected a film in which they considered the city to be a protagonist and extracted a fragment of 3 to 5 minutes from the film where this was expressed. Through diagrams and text the specific fragment in relation to Urban/Architectural and Filmic parameters was described.

INCURSIONS INTO URBAN FORM AND DISCOURSE

This studio focuses on the process of generating Urban Form through the exploration of the process by which multiple different forms intersect in generating it. Two cities, Moscow, Russia and New Delhi, India—two cities in accelerated economic growth and expansion, in new conditions—were given as the site of this inquiry, revealing through the readings their many not obvious specifics. Readings were produced on each selected city, through concepts related to an Urbanistic, Theoretical Historical, or Technological perspective. Readings, as the articulation between a creative subject and the various texts of the city such as writings, drawings and photographs, reveal and manifest, through drawings and models, produced in the process “another” city. Emphasis is placed on the design process, initiated through a series of Productive Readings of the selected sites. Drawing as a tool for critical thinking and as an intrinsic part of the process was at the heart of this process. Through the drawings produced in the reading process another city is revealed and manifested.

SPRING
ARCHITECTURE OF NATURE/NATURE OF ARCHITECTURE

This studio focuses on the question of Nature from the philosophical and scientific discourses that have explained it throughout history, in its transformations to the present conditions of the natural world as they affect our modes of habitation. A different dimension of space, time and scale is the object of this exploration. In this project, those questions take a prominent position in the type of natural sites selected and the subsequent process of transformation. The scale is vast in most cases, dealing with places such as deserts, canyons, rivers, glaciers, fault lines, volcanoes, salt lakes, or seashores. These are places that took billions or millions of years to develop and thousands for transformations to be perceptible until the most recent history where processes of transformation have accelerated. Time here is of a cosmic dimension that relates to the Universe. It not only becomes essential in every transformative proposal, but also places them outside the traditional boundaries of Architecture, Urbanism or Landscape. Historically, there has always been an active interaction between Nature—as a real object and as an object of study—and architecture, but this interaction takes a prominent position at this moment in time. The subject of Nature in its many complex modes of interaction with Architecture—scientific, philosophic, economic, political, ideological—is critically reexamined in this studio, through a process of “reading and rewriting,” at various scales ranging from the national to the regional and the local. Architecture in all its modes of configuration at every scale is the locus where these conditions of the natural world are enacted, going from the ideological concepts on which the architectural discourse and the architectural project are based, to its interaction with other domains. “Potentials” is the leading concept for this exploration: potential sources, potential sites, potential elements, potential new architectural/urban concepts. Traditional concepts such as Site, Land Use, Materiality, Ecology and Energy are critically reassessed.

PRO-SEMINAR: FALL SEMESTER
Professor David Turnbull
SNOW-ANGELS

The purpose of the pro-seminar is simply to stimulate thought and to explore the ways that these thoughts might be communicated, verbally and visually, and enriched by research and representation. Like Charlotte Perriand who brought things into the office at the Rue De Sorens, the students bring some-thing into the seminar each week. Much of the discussion during the semester addresses topics that appear to be outside architecture—the design of anamorphic plastic toothpick dispensers, Pokemon, pebbles found at Auschwitz and carried for years, cookies, very precious German things, very imprecise recipes for delicious things (which are promptly cooked and eaten) and mind-boggling codes for perplexing patterned things.

Readings are taken from ADILKNO, Bateson, Guattari, Latour, Semes, Sloterdijk, and time is spent on the roof of the Foundation building, breathing, and looking (at the sky, not the city); Echoes of Bataille, ACHÉPHALE, Sperr, Dubuffet, FLUXUS, Debord, McHale, East Village Poets, Tzara and OuLiPo are enlisted to confound and confuse, partly because we are where we are, and who we are, and partly because the end-game of confusion is the pursuit of clarity. Norse Myth, Chinese Losan, French Water, and Apples are served up, opening a discussion of networks, ecologies, and their interdependence…the life-styles of bees, the digestive tracts of worms, and the feeding habits of orcas entangle and publicize this idiosyncratic but purposeful conversation.

Some time is taken on the topic of kissing. They talk, they write, they draw. Worlds are imagined, stories are written. The final weeks involve an intense engagement with hairs, messages and messengers. Angels enter our thoughts, binding Doors to Daughters, Sisters to Brothers, Places to Places… and one angel draws itself into the snow, creating a hollow—an ephemeral imprint of the aetheric body… floating, tantalizing… architecture.
Due to human's impact exceeding the capacity to sustain it, Extraterritoriality is a concept that refers to the territory and therefore changes due to human activity are exceeding the capacity to sustain it. Extraterritoriality, in many ways, is used as a political tool to subscribe order over the unrecognized. The context of extraterritoriality is not given: it has to be created. Implanting the notion of exception and encouraging the creation of a broader, interdisciplinary context in the creation of a new ecological spectacle. A constitutive mobility. An elusive implication. The nexus for investigation on Extraterritoriality is the city of Los Angeles. Due to its magnificent and rich yet dangerous and unpredictably wild atmosphere, the departure for explorations in a socio-ecological context.

A section: Filmic reading of the City

Considering the section as a research tool that reveals the invisible, this Thesis proposes to investigate this dimension as a tool to penetrate urban space. The initial focus of this exploration will be a series of films in section has an essential role as a medium between the ‘real’ and the ‘fictional.’ A reading of Vienna through ‘The Third Man’ reveals a narrative-developed through section in the city and a dynamic relationship between aboveground and belowground conditions and assumed viewpoints. Transformations based on this readings propose new urban relationships in the articulations of those two urban fields.

An Atmospheric Sense

Sand dunes are a visual manifestation of wind forces. A constantly vibrating field of sand grains created by wind molding. The Odyssey is a journey negotiated through goal-controlled winds and his return is expedited or obstructed depending on wind directions. This thesis is an exploration of the possible modes in which architecture can engage and interact with the invisible force field that is in constant flux called wind in its interaction with water and land. The Odyssey may be read as the relationship between natural forces and those of ideology and politics.

Urban Entropy

The city’s many and diverse energy forces are bound into a constantly changing complex social and physical form. It is these energies that act upon the city as a radical change, mutating the urban landscape into new potential configurations. Using the traced spaces of human occupation in relation to driving in Los Angeles as a generative force that defines the dynamic transfer of energy, potential energies and infrastructures are proposed as defining forces for the new city.

Floating Figures

We are highly mobilized. We are nomad. In an environment composed of nested structures of speed, and control, architecture calibrates space, providing an inhabitable index of movement. Its essential function is to continuously accommodate the body, between natural and mechanized systems—at all scales—for performative and sensorial effect. This thesis will explore various domains and scales in which these important issues are probed in the air terminal particular conditions where the flow is constantly interrupted by a series of barriers in a process of physical controls of all kinds.

Strange Co-operation

Based on the issue of water shortage in Hong Kong, this thesis proposes a new urban water system for this high-density city. The site of the final proposal is an area between the more ‘natural’ hills and the fabric area in HK Island. The project provides a new possibility of reusing rainwater in an urban environment. Hong Kong has an elaborate system of rainwater collection, only to discharge it into the sea. By transforming this system, I propose to gather this precious water and direct it to new urban water storage tanks underground.

Urban Light

The concept of void is at the center of this thesis, explored through the effect of light and shadow in the Manhattan fabric. Readings of Manhattan reveal two effects, the vertical effect of “Canyon” streets and the horizontal effect by skyscrapers shadows. Shadows are transformed into a carving tool generating other voids in the city.
The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture/ City of New York Planning, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Housing, Environmental Protection/ Cultural Affairs, Embassies of France French Institute Alliance Française/ French American Foundation/ Institute of Fine Arts, New York University/Center for Architecture AAIA/Chapin Institute for Urban Design/Maison Francaise, New York University
ATELIER PROJEU URBAIN/ URBAN DESIGN WORKSHOP The New Manhattan—Strategies and Urban Regulation
Thursday 4/7
Amanda Burden, Chair, City Planning Commission, City of New York
Benjamin Appuy, French Secretary of State for Housing and Urban Development
Diana Agnese, Professor, The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture; Principal, Agnese/Desmond Architects
Friday 4/8
Sustainable Development and Urban Regeneration
Casself R. Holloway, Commissioner of the City of New York’s Department of Environmental Protection
Mayora Carter, Founder, Sustainable South Bronx, President, Majority Group
Adam Yarmolny, Principal, Architectural Research Office
Reclaming the Waterfront and the Bay
Adrian Benepe, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation
Eliza Greenfield, Professor, Princeton University, Principal, Diller Scofidio + Renfro
Roland Lewis, President and CEO, Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance
Moby’s Floats
Walter B. Hailey, Assistant Commissioner of Urban Design and Art, New York City Department of Transportation
Thursday 4/19
Theresa Cutler, Executive Director, Regional Plan Association of New York
Michael Sorin, Architect and Theoretical Professor, City University of New York
Regulation, Zoning, and Architectural Creativity
Cecilia Rousher, Special Assistant to the Director of the New York City Department of City Planning
Christian de Portzamparc, Architect
Michael T. Silberman, Partner, Kramer Laxin law firm, Co-chair, Land Use Department
Organized and Moderated by:
Jean-Louis Sz牽erce, President and Historian, President, New York Architectural League
Ariella Sussman, General Inspector for Sustainable Development, French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transportation & Housing
Barbara Chiest Camus, Engineer and Urban Planner, BCC: Council Urbanism Transborder

The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture/ The Architectural League of New York

The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture/ The Architectural League of New York

Thursday 10/6
Michael Malizia, Principal, Michael Malizia Architecture

The 2012 ELEANOR PETTERSEN LECTURE
Tuesday 11/12
Kent Hornbeek, President and CEO, The Cooper Union Institute for Sustainable Design
Moderated by Annaelle Saldoff, Principal, Saldoff Architects
The Eleanor Pettersen Lecture, in honor of Cooper Union alumna Eleanor Pettersen through a generous donation to The Irvin S. Chanin School of Architecture, is dedicated to the voices of women in architecture as a lasting tribute to Ms. Pettersen, her significant impact in the worlds of architecture, and her love of The Cooper Union.

Sustainable Design InnoVation Laboratory, a center promoting design research and connecting students, professionals, and industry supporters to explore working possibilities in social, environmental, and urban design.
Tuesday 4/10
URBAN PLANT: EMERGING ECOCITIES

Introductions
Anthony Willer, Dean and Professor,
The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture
Alfredo Brillembourg, Founder and Director, Urban Think Tank
Co-founder, S.L.U.M. Lab
Sustainable Living Urban Model Laboratory, Co-chair, Architecture and Urbanism

The Swiss Institute of Technology [ETH Zurich], Zürih
Technology and Urban issues for Cities of the South
Jean-Claude Bélard, Director, UNESCO Chair in Technologies for Development, Professor, Laboratory of Urban Sociology – EPFL, Lausanne
Post-Sustainable: The Future of Socio-Ecological Cities
Michel Jasch, Co-President, Terreform ONE; Partner, Planetary ONE, Professor of Practice in Architecture, Urban and Sustainable Design Gallatin School of Individualized Study, New York University
Round Table
Carolina Barros, Project Manager Sustainable Cities, IADB
Debra Hoffman, Executive Director, Landscape Architecture
Bernard and Anne Galperin School of Architecture, The City College of New York
Alexander Veinot, Director, Urban Ecology and Design Laboratory, Partner, Planetary ONE; Professor and Director, Joint Degree Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and NYU School of Architecture

D. Graham Shaw, Professor, The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture; Principal, Sustainable Design

Kevan Bone, Director, The Cooper Union Institute for Sustainable Design; Professor, The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture
The School of Architecture

Student Lecture Series

This lecture series provides the opportunity for students to invite architects, writers, theorists, and artists to speak to the school.

Friday 10/7
Christoph Lindner, Professor of English Literature, Director, Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis, University of Amsterdam; Research Affiliate, University of Lyon 2; Founding Director, Netherlands Institute for Cultural Analysis Global Cities and Architectural Difference

Thursday 10/20
Keith Minchuk, Professor of Architecture, Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan; Principal, Minchuk Riddler

Special Lectures

Fall 2011 Seminar Series: The Subterraneans. Five comments on the prehistoric European cave-paintings Remo Gunderi, Professor of Anthropology and Aesthetics, Nantes University, Paris, Co-Founder, Rev. Journal of Anthropology and Aesthetics

Tuesday 10/11
Initial Scenery

Friday 10/14
Painting in the Dark

Friday 10/21
Geometry and Naturalism

Friday 11/4
Body’s Double

Student Honors

2012 Menschel Fellowship
Zulakha Ayadi (AR’13) and David Yen (AR’13)
Alexandra Alora (AR’13) and Benjamin Johnson (AR’13)

Late Foundation Prize in the Arts
Sean Gaffney (AR’12)
Jessica Russell (AR’12)

Graduate Study

This year graduating students and recent graduates were offered admission to Pratt University.

Graduate Thesis Research Tutorial

Professor Diane Ager

D. Graham Burnett, Professor, History of Science, Princeton University
Adam Madoff, Professor, Department of Geosciences, Princeton University
Joachim Ochser, Professor, The University of Pennsylvania School of Design
Lucia Allais, Professor, History and Theory of Architecture, Princeton University
Open: Prazak, Professor, Department of History, Princeton University
Yale School of Architecture
Ruben Galla, Professor, Department of Spanish and Portuguese Languages and Culture, Princeton University

Tappen Zee Bridge Workshop

As part of the Advanced Topics course taught by Professor Laila Sewagw, Constructing Infrastructure: Narrative, this workshop tackled the question of aging infrastructure in general, and the decommissioning of the existing Tappen Zee Bridge in particular. Held a matter of days after Governor Cuomo announced the possibility of turning the existing bridge into a 3 mile linear park, the one-day workshop continued the practice of encouraging The Cooper Union students to engage in contemporary social and design problems of the broader community.

Four workshops were generated by students following presentations and discussions with a Tappen Zee Bridge advocate (Magnum Lescaze), a structural engineer (Professor Sheng Shi), and a Landscape Architect (Alamo Nicholas Pozner). Finally, three designs and accompanying narratives were further refined in groups and the final designs published in The New York Times in March. Group works by Danny Wills, Pamela Cabrera, ten Gilh, Brenton Moor, Jeremy Jaschik, Sean Gaffney, Karim Ahmed, Jinjoo Yang, Ganen Peng; Jessica Russell, Nicolás Libeaux, Achim Thapper and Main Heyman were featured in the article.

Spring 2012

William Cooper Mack Thesis Fellowship Awards

The William Cooper Mack Thesis Fellowship program was established in 2008 by John and Harriet Mack at The Irwin School of Architecture in memory of William Cooper Mack, class of 2006. The Fellowship supports primary research and inquiry in the development of a significant and original thesis project. The award may be used for travel, documentation, access to archives, invited costs for interviews and observation, etc. as may be informative for the thesis project.

This year four students received WCM Thesis Fellowships: Pamela Cabrera traveled to Washington DC and Lima, Peru. Pamela realized that these two cities share the same line of longitude, that is, they have the same "ubic time." She was interested in studying how the cities reflect their different "experiential" times, one above, the other below the equator. Jae Woon Chang traveled to Toongpyeong island, 3 kilometers from the international line separating North and South Korea. Jae Woon was interested in creating a dialog of neutrality through architecture. Because of the highly strategic location of the island, there is no published documentation of the island, so field research was essential to her project. Jessica Russell traveled to New Mexico. Extending a project she did last summer in central Australia, Jessica studied the relationship between myth and water, between myth and survival, in pueblo cultures, especially the Zunis, Hopi and Tsimi Indians. Daniel Wills traveled to Havana and Cienfuegos, Cuba. Daniel studied and mapped the urban agrarian culture currently thriving in many Cuban cities, in order to bring back lessons and models of invention to the U.S. agrarian system.

Recent Fellows

2011 Menschel Fellowship
Sean Gaffney, Daniel Gagliardi, Galen Browning (Art). The four corners, a place of both vastness and limits. A four square grid imposed on the land creating Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. Within the confines of this grid, the surface of the earth is always in flux. We looked at these four conditions in a way applicable to our cities, to the town, and to the city, and to the 6th floor lobby of The Cooper Union—one square foot of a city. One bit among millions of bits. A piece of information the same size as the tiles on the floor.

Student Talks

Spring 2012 Faculty Talks/Sponsored by the School of Architecture Student Council

Faculty Talks is a series of conversations between students and faculty to foster interaction in the school outside of the formal structure of lectures and studios. The talks are completely open and limitless.

Tuesday 3/7
Uri Wegman, Professor, The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture

Friday 3/9
Anthony Villar, Dean and Professor, The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture

Architectural Autobiography

Jesús Aparicio, Architect
Paolo Caprioli, Architect
Luciana Guerra, Architect
Jason Guffey, Architect
Sean Gaffney (AR’12) and Rachel Browning (Art): The four corners, a place of both vastness and limits. A four square grid imposed on the land creating Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. Within the confines of this grid, the surface of the earth is always in flux. We looked at these four conditions in a way applicable to our cities, to the town, and to the city, and to the 6th floor lobby of The Cooper Union—one square foot of a city. One bit among millions of bits. A piece of information the same size as the tiles on the floor.
TEDxCooperUnion
Professor David Turnbull, Event Design Coordinator
TEDxCooperUnion was held in 61 Cooper Square on 23–24 April 2012, which included a reception and a conference.

The theme set by Engineering Alumni and TED Fellow Nivola—100 Years of Creativity, organized by the New York City office of the Cooper Union Foundation and published by Ashok Raiji, an exhibit designed by the architectural firm of EIROA A RCHITECTS (EA) for the exhibition program and content for the Museum of Urbanism, the centerpiece of the Urban Constellation, a series of open-air pavilions in Faliron Bay, Athens, Greece, designed by Soula Danalopoulou and Michael Albert.
Instructor Adjunct Laila Seaweed became a registered architect in the state of New York and established her own practice after leaving Pie Cobb Frey and partners, completing two small projects this spring. She held a workshop for her Advanced Topics course, Constructing Institutional Narratives, on the Taung Zee Bridge, which was published in The New York Times. Seaweed was an invited lecturer in The DesignMon on Melbourne and she taught a graduate architecture studio at Columbia University.

Visiting Professor Ralph Sagal participated with (Studio Gang) in the MoMA exhibition “Fireside Re: Housing the American Dream.” He was among the four architects selected to participate with (Stall Design) in the “Making Room” design scenarios project for NYC, organized by Citizens Housing & Planning Council and the Architecture League of New York. He authored the chapter called the Atlas—Architectures of the 21st Century (Madrid, Arquitectura Viva, 2011), and the essay, “Whitened City—Tel-Aviv’s Culture of the Now” to appear in the book Life in the Cities (Harvard GSD, Lars Müller, forthcoming 2013). Sagal received a Foundation Grant in support of his publication project. Space Packed Architecture: Alfred Neumann’s Alternative Modernism, which establishes the term “Packed Object” and discusses its impact on contemporary architectural thinking. Construction has begun on the Kigoma Parish Museum and War Arch in Uganda.

Professor David Turnbull was an awardee for the European Business awards for the Environment, an Advisory Board member for the RSA US Student Design Awards (which will be hosted by The Cooper Union in 2013) and a member of the organizing group for TEDxCooperUnion. He was also a member of the Revenue Task Force examining the future of The Cooper Union. He has been appointed Visiting Professor and has held the Visiting Professorship in the Department of Science and Technology in Abuja, Nigeria. He participated in the Changdah Urban Lab at the Changdah College of Architecture, Taiwan, in June; on the Conference on Engineering and Innovation at Pratt Institute, in the summer of 2011; and as well as in events in New York City including White Box’s Sustainable Work Lab, The Ver-Allen’s new publications program, and The Spectacular Realism conference in Arizona. He contributed to the 304700 book, Making a Case, and The Screamers; An Anthology, edited by Moe Rassell, published by Ediciones Polycra. He is currently working on a book about the greenest building in China for publication in early 2013. PITCH-Africa was established as an independent social business, and the first WATERBANK school is under construction in the central highlands of Kenya, where his non-profit ATOPRA Foundation is working in partnership with the Weltz Foundation.

Instructor Adjunct Mersija Veledar is currently working in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, on the house LP on what will be the first Net Zero energy school project in Staten Island, New York. P3E2R will begin construction this summer and is the first Net Zero prototype of its kind by School. Construction Authority for future educational public projects. In addition, autobiographical stories she wrote during her studies at Princeton University, reflecting on her life and a path of survival from a war torn country, will be featured in Edition 4 of the Forthright Journal.

Instructor Adjunct Michael Young had a solo exhibition during the summer of 2011 titled, “Michael Webb: Sin Palace,” at the MacKenzie Gallery, New York, NY. The traveling Archigram Group Exhibition (with Cook, Crompton, Chalk, Greene and Herron) will be exhibited in Guernicae, Poland during Fall 2011. On going major projects include the Study of Perspective Projection.

Associate Professor Adjunct Georg Windke has been invited to speak at the Researching the Intelligent City conference in the EUREF: Campus, a zero-emissions science and business park in Berlin. He was a speaker at the Neppel Building Talks, a series of lectures dedicated to the integration of urban energy and mobility systems with innovative building technologies. In his professional practice he has been working on the remodeling of townhouses and loft buildings in Brooklyn. He has been consulting on the construction of an affordable housing project by Kwan Wiet, MCA in architecture in LIm, Germany. He is working on the design of new energy-efficient envelopes for SONY campus buildings in Purchase, NY, and on the restoration of the historic landmark Duke House on 5th Avenue for Superstructures Architects and Engineers in New York City.

“ArchiArt: Three Acts” was a workshop held at the ArchiArt School of Architecture, Denmark, from February 2 to 4, 2012. The film “Jasper Stirling: Notes from the Archive—Crisis of Modernism” at SCI-Arc; “Modern Mantle: Films from Estonia” with Kristian Le Corbusier at Northwestern University. “An Architectural Autobiography”, as part of the New York Society of Architecture Talks series; as well as participating in the RICA Architecture Lecture Series 2011/12: “Future Frontiers—The Battleground for Ideas in the 21st Century.” Young participated in the Urban Planet: Emerging Ecologies symposium organized by The Cooper Union for Sustainable Communities and the Arch Schools at Cooper Union. He was a panel participant in the panel discussion on Denny and Jep Sanders publication Grundsker: Between Landscape and Architecture, and Shaikholesha’s publication Urban Design Since 1960, both co-sponsored by the Architectural League of New York. Vidler published two essays as part of The Architectural Review’s “Trouble in Theory” series, and recently published the article “Up Against the Wall: Colins Lines” in L00D. His recently released collection of essays, The Scenes of the Other and Other Essays (Monacelli, 2011), was the subject of a panel discussion and celebration at McNally Jackson Books, New York, NY. The exhibition he curated “Notes from the Archive—Jasper Stirling,” traveled from the Tate Britain to open in the fall in the Staatgalerie, Stuttgart, and opens in May at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.

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