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Mr David Boyd, *mago di rappresentazione*

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Reconstructing Architecture: Inventing Anarchist Spatial Practises

(Available online at: https://www.studiointernational.com/index.php/gordon-matta-clark-works-1970-1978-review-david-zwirner-gallery

'You mean, how can you create something that's genuinely different? You look for the story that grabs your imagination and that feels different from anything else. That's all. There's nothing else. Then you've seen the future. You can try and copy what you're supposed to do, which you should do, to begin with. But after that, everything is about making sense of the fragments. That's how you see the future.'

Adam Curtis (Journal #33 – Hans Ulrich Obrist – In Conversation with Adam Curtis, Part II [2012] available at: https://www.eflux.com/journal/33/68302/in-conversation-with-adam-curtis-part-ii/)

Exploring architecture in its fullness is the central aim of the Reconstructing Studio, but facilitating students' discovery of their own architecture is the primary objective. To arrive at this, students are challenged to articulate design projects as fully as possible, beginning with interrogating modes of production from drawing board to building site. How buildings are made to how they are represented is valued equally. Reflection on the impossible striving for artistic autonomy and the burden of use also figures prominently. Students are encouraged to push their architectural conceptions to points where they exceed execution, even as they attempt to bring the two closer together.

The neo-avant-garde interests us for it's attempts to reconstruct architecture in tension with capitalist production, even if its desires for artistic autonomy and fantasies of freeing architecture from the burden of use ultimately defeats it. However, because above all else formalist, the neo-avant-garde has no meaningful political programme. By overlooking questions regarding the production of space, the neo-avant-garde is incapable of resisting building industry imperatives that require architects to become technicians in its service. As such, reconstructing links between form and structure, drawing and building, and abstract conceptions and concrete materialisations (from detail to city-scale) entails remapping the neo-avant-garde, to move beyond banal practise towards reflections on use and the body, and community.

As a starting point, in this studio, we reject neo-avant-garde conceits that architecture is in the drawing alone, with building an irrelevance. For us, architecture is building, use is the

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test. Nevertheless, reconstructing architecture starts with remapping the neo-avant-garde (as the only game in town), leading toward inventing anarchist spatial practises that oscillates between from bricolage to more rough and ready DIY approaches.

Resourcing Work

Across the two stages of the **Reconstructing Architecture Studio**, built and unbuilt projects provide generative models for addressing the complexities of intervening in historical contexts; for reimagining existing structures; for making work that rethinks traditional urban settings; and for responding to the deepening crisis of institutional structures (architecturally and processually) that marks modernity, from its origins to the present. **Although modernism was always a fragile construct, architecture and urbanism have been riven by an increasingly pronounced ideological crisis since the 1970s**, evident architecturally in the persisting irreconcilability of form and content, signification and representation, theory and practice, structure and surface, poetry and technology, art, and architecture, and use and exchange, amongst other apparent oppositions. Facilitating students' discovery of their own architecture – beyond skilling alone – is construed as a promising tactic for responding to the architecture's crisis. If architecture's crisis mirrors global crisis more generally, Lefebvre asserts,

> 'Change life!' 'Change society!' These precepts mean nothing without the production of an appropriate space. [...] To change life, [...] we must first change space.
>
> Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, pp. 59, 190

So, remaking the world begins with remaking its settings (architecture), the formal enclosures of open-ended social processes.

Socializing Formalist Methods in the Production of Space

Since architecture's former disciplinary coherence is obsolete, with architects now less liberal professionals than technicians in a building industry, tactics for revivifying architecture are required. **Reconstructing architecture through the invention of anarchist spatial practises** unlocks other possibilities by inhabiting a borderland between building technicians and disciplinary expertise (in its extinct classical sense), where artist-architect, engineer and builder come together in spaces permitting drawing, site, material, technology, and use to comingle, rendered operative by **a radical** PUNK/**DIY ethos**.

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Across both semesters and stages, students in the studio explore the historical conditions of architecture's fragmentation by responding critically to the prevailing situation, through the invention of their own architecture. Rather than affirmation or resolution, intensifying irreconcilable tensions – including between artistic autonomy and the burden of use – is introduced as the most promising ground of architectural invention. Developing one's own understandings of present conditions is asserted as prefiguring architectural responses to them. The interrelation of history, form, structure, building systems (materials, technology,

construction – tectonics), building character and function (or use) is presumed as central to the cultural work of architecture (building in the city), and for the emergence of designs, enriched by theory can bring whatever sense of order one can imagine to the unruly bunch of demands confronting architecture. Beginning by intensifying tensions, rather than by attempting to neutralise them.

Water Towers at Open City, Ritoque, Chile. Photographer: Leonardo Finotti, 2010, printed 2016
Available at: https://collection.cmoa.org/objects/887b836d-054a-4cf4-9d70-f0ec2bc27b66

Architecture as Construction

If architects neglect problems of building (material assemblies), engineering, service integration, and use as central to the architectural endeavour, others will take charge of the process, inevitably side-lining architects. Relying on the 'extreme virtuosity and flexibility' of engineers and other consultants to make possible the construction of any conceivable form, or to remediate architects' disregard for the 'mechanical and technical sides of architectural production' (as Fabbri, c. 1991, observed), diminishes architects' social significance. As such, **the fragmentation of architecture into apparently disparate disciplines, comprising history, theory, design, form, structure, building systems, architecture, urbanism, building character and function (or use), to name a few, is a prevailing condition students in the Reconstructing Studio will interrogate, not by resolving tensions but rather by inviting their intensification.**

Three conditions: abandonment of the material reality of architecture, emphasis on visuality and form, and a narrowing of the subject breadth (and depth) of architectural education have been exacerbated by a fourth, which is arguably the central problem common to the study of architecture almost everywhere: the tendency of students to arrive at their studies with a limited range of cultural references and resources, mirrored by a general move away from cultural considerations in architectural practices toward more strictly commercial (entrepreneurial/neoliberal) or technical preoccupations.

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Responding to the crisis of architecture (its education, as a profession, and as a discipline) requires cultivating a more active, relevant, and integrated role for technical disciplines in the study of History, Theory, and Design, without allowing technology – or technicity – to dominate either compositional or representational imaginaries. Cultivating broader and

deeper perspectives benefits design projects by encouraging consideration of as many of a project's constituent parts as possible, augmented by intensifying tensions, rather than through their attempted reconciliation. Accordingly, general cultural knowledge is inextricable from architectural invention, as an imperative equal to cultivating technical and professional skills. However, the objective is 'not to create a malformed engineer but rather a well-formed architect' (as Italian architect Gino Vale asserted, c. 1991). First and foremost, architects invent settings, there is no reason for them to pose as historians, theorists, or technocrats.
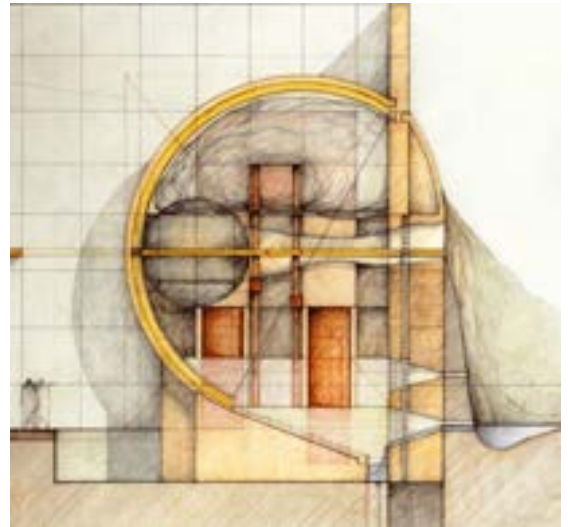
'Indoor Space' (Human Head as architectural space, colored pencils), Giuliano Fiorenzoli, 1977. Available at:
http://giulianofiorenzoli.com/_Pages/Drawings/Image%20of%20the%20Home/Image%20of%20the%20Home%20DrawingsGallery.html

Houses and Machines
What changes if the emphasis on defragmentation shifts toward a form of negative dialectics eschewing synthesis in favour of embracing tensions as the motive force of strong work (architectural and otherwise)? Arguably, inviting tensions, by intensifying them, anticipates reconstructing architecture alongside invention of anarchist spatial practices.

By collapsing hierarchies and divisions without neutralising tensions, inventing anarchist spatial practises holds promise for reconstructing architecture. Tactics for doing this include DIY, co-production, and emphasizing use. As Lefebvre, posits: 'To answer one question with another, how could a constructed space subjugate or repel otherwise than through use?' (*The Production of Space*, p. 128). What would an architecture be like if the primacy of representation persisted but was inflected emphasising use? What happens when use takes precedence? Equally, what might result if the unrepeatability of works eclipsed the tendency toward standardized production and products? By emphasising use, anarchist spatial practises are crucial for reconstructing architecture.

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Tensions between machines and bodies are another irresolvable tension with great potential. But as Italian philosopher and former mayor of Venice, Massimo Cacciari asserts, while 'architecture is an exercise in the cult of mathematics' (emphasising a search for harmony), engineering, which according to him finds its architectural expression as High-Tech
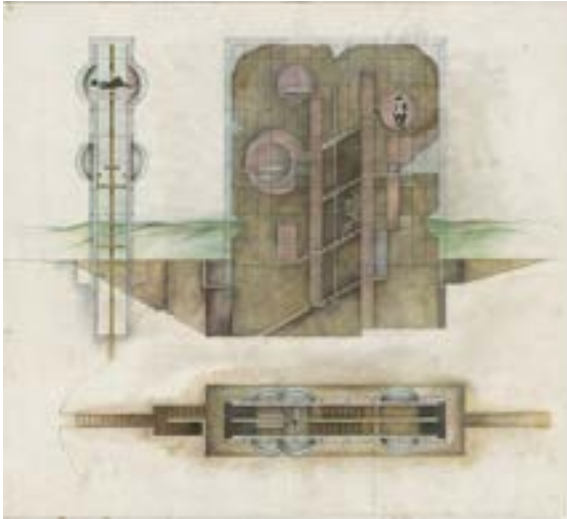
Raimund Abraham, The House without Rooms Project, Elevation and plan, 1974. Available at: https://www.moma.org/collection/works/792?artist_id=47&page=1&sov_referrer=artist

building, has limited capacities for resolving tensions. High-Tech's 'hyper-technical', 'fetishistic', and abstract emphasis on the visual makes it, in Lefebvre's terms, more product than work (c. 1991). What though if the ideal of harmony were detonated, not to invite chaos but rather to introduce alternative orders, perhaps informed by anarchism as a theory of organization.

Before assembly (industrialization of building), craft prevailed, there was no separate discipline of engineering (limits of structure were arrived at through trial and error), and even if basic rules existed, these were matters of practice, not modern (techno) science. The decisive disciplinary split between architecture and engineering around 1750 was symptomatic of a transforming consciousness that has altered self-understanding of both architecture and engineering. At its most reductive, engineers represent science and technology, architects, art, and dreams. At their best, both engage in a poetics of construction.

Reconciling art and science; form and structure; expression and systems integration; desire and use, depends on collapsing divisions between architecture as drawing and building as construction. If it isn't yet obvious, anarchist spatial practises suggest ways for tolerating infuriating tensions between conflicting desires and demands. Architecture is an open question that each architect tentatively responds to, most effectively with the clarifying help of history and theory. Reflections on anarchism, though, suggest we might want to begin with junk playgrounds.

Architects, Film Directors, and Technicians

Acknowledging the liberation of form from structure as likely destructive constitutes a first step towards shifting consciousness toward imagining how they could commingle, even in tension. But in whose interests does the split between architecture and engineering serve? Mightn't the anarchistic virtues of DIY suggest recuperation and co-production

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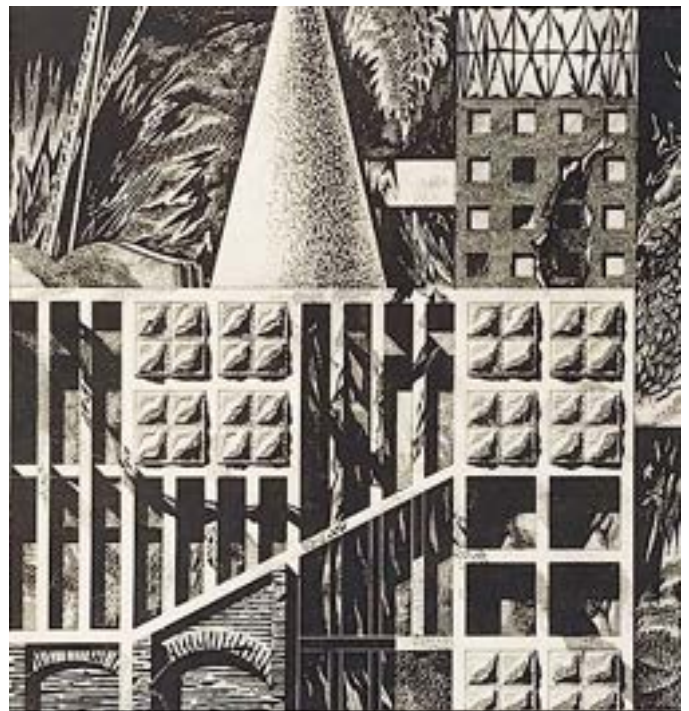
simultaneously. Total control is surrendered, while learning material and structural limits, and how to work together, is embraced.

Film directors might suggest a viable model for architects to consider, as neither must fully submit to the technicity of their disciplines. Both film directors and architects share responsibilities for organising diverse specialties under their direction, whose integration is required to realise the work. Although architects and film directors both guide the work of others, neither is expected to be an expert in everything. Nor is authorship fully renounced (even if shared through co-production). Although identifying architects with film directors might seem either conciliatory or conventional, it is neither. In the refusal to accept architecture as a collection of marks ostensibly made by architects but held together on pages determined by others (all the other disciplines comprising the building enterprise), the proposition is arguably radical.

False Promises of Utopia?

The apparent failure of architectural and urban Modernism to deliver on promises of supposed Utopia has left architects anguished and disappointed. Beating a retreat, they skulk into corners, from where they attempt to build nostalgic bridges to some Past Edenic Unfallen Golden Age. More alienated architects gravitate toward destructive frenzies, characterised by cutting up and scattering fragments of architectural and cultural memory. And yet, Plan and Section persist as the generators of Form. (Fabbri, c. 1991).

Franco Purini + Laura Thermes, The `Tiberian Wall / Il Muro Tiberino (*A Walk Along the Tiber / Un Viaggio Lungo Tevere*), Roma.
Cornell Univerity / Università di Roma, 1987, p. 2.

Architecture education and practise take shape within a cultural landscape informed by the failures of supposed Modernist Utopia, fostered by the realities of the first Industrialised Machine Age, intensified by the fading lustre of Post World War II promises of new (and better) futures. Construing the possible impossible of anarchist pragmatics begins with *use*, emphasised over *exchange*. Use determines form, whereas exchange is obsessed with novelty and consumption, often at the expense of use.

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Tactically, we are all for operative criticism and histories, of the sort Tafuri denounced. As the provence of artists (including architects), <mark>operativeness</mark> counters historians' (etc.) mythologies of (detached) objectivity. As such, operativeness copilots architectural

Tadashi Kawamata, Paln 9, 1989 (maquette / wood on wood), Project in Roosevelt Island, Exhibition Catalogue, New York, 1990.

imaginaries. In the Reconstructing Studio, as students cultivate their own architectural (and urban) imaginaries, they are challenged to cultivate critical historical perspectives on architecture, the city, and production. Poetics of construction, rather than solving for 'x' is emphasized, as is the operativeness of fine artists.

Paradoxically, perhaps paradoxically, the invention of radical spatial practices within architecture – encompassing

building and city – begins by accepting the (disciplinary) specificity. As students in the studio develop their projects throughout the coming year, and for some into the year following as well, it is worth reflecting on how such reconstructions of architecture could be enriched through invention of radical spatial practices, not least by problematising ideas of 'essence', of sort characterising continuous waves of aborted attempts by architects to either lose or find architecture's vocation.

Why Italy
For a number of reasons, the Reconstructing Studio is set in Italy, albeit virtually again this year. Italy is history, which in Italian is delightfully written as *la storia*, whereas story is *storia*. A small point perhaps but for me it already encompasses a reconciliation between form and structure: if all history is a story, then claims to scientific detachment are at best illusory. Making it possible to find in history sources of the new, in just the ways suggested by the lead quote at the beginning of this brief.

Because of the weight of Italian cultural inheritance (socially and spatially), Italians' strivings to make their particular moment meaningful is instructive. In Italy, the later arrival of industry and the vast amount of existent historic fabric– as well as persisting traditions – makes the present at times seem anomalous, while revealing the past as ostensibly more

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certain, no matter how illusory. In Italy, it is easier to understand the ways that Architecture and History share a common ground, even if not the same relationship to it. Although students are encouraged to cultivate critical historical perspectives on the invention and production of architecture, history and architecture do not share the same approach research differently, which is why Lefebvre's attempt to construct a history of space independent of art and architecture history is so valuable.

Competition over the shared territory of history and architecture can prove remarkably fertile. If art and architecture history overemphasise the visual and connoisseurship, a history of space as Lefebvre imagined it, would concentrate on production, use, the social, and bodily experience. Since any return to the past brings with it a measure of invention, imagining a future beyond the present often enough begins by reflecting on a past before the present became the dominant condition. While students are encouraged to get lost in history, doing so is construed as a tactic for finding cracks in the present revealing possibilitie beyond its apparent totality. Finding traces of continuity in divergence – across space and time – suggests tactics for reconstructing and inventing (architecture).

View through Portico d'Ottavio, toward Ghetto Ebraico, Roma, (Augustus, 27-23 BCE, rebuilt 203. (Photo: © N. Coleman, 2019).

Students in the Reconstructing studio are challenged to identify locations where Design Research and Historical Research appear to intersect (without being defeated by either conservatism or novelty), enhanced by intensifying tensions, rather than resolving them. Carlo Scarpa comes to mind, his projects can seem to have occurred by 'accident', assuming a quality of permanence that more fashionable creations lack. The apparent common sense of his work seems to have come about 'because [he went] in search [of] solutions (and [built] them) in order to understand [the Italian] present and prefigure [its] future', (presumably shaped by an unshakable bond to the past that lives through the body, without being shackled to it). (Fabbri, c. 1991).

The heavy burden of history (social and spatial) is less easy to disregard in Italy, than in younger nations. Confronted with the pervasiveness of history and cultural artefacts, the design profession often finds itself in an ambiguous position, challenged to bridge the

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present with the past to face the future, not least by intervening directly in historic urban settings, or by adding to, or transforming, existing buildings. The generative paradox raised by Italy's at times difficult and burdensome past is that this usable inheritance lives side by side with a present that as architecture, urban form, or subjected to use, often enough does do not compare favourably with the remains Italy's ancient, premodern, Renaissance, or Baroque past. As in much of the world, the inherited fabric of the past stands as an indictment of present constructions.

What makes Italy worthy of study – even virtually – and reveals it as a most promising site for exploring how the neo-avant-garde could be remapped, are the perpetual perpetual spatiotemporal tensions, played out socially and spatially. Moreover, many of the neo-avant-gardes architectural can be traced back to Italy's struggles with modernity and tradition during to the first half of the 20th century (and earlier).

Studio Structure

REMAPPING: INVENTING ANARCHIST SPATIAL PRACTISES
Autonomy Myths: the Failure of the Neo-Avant-Garde
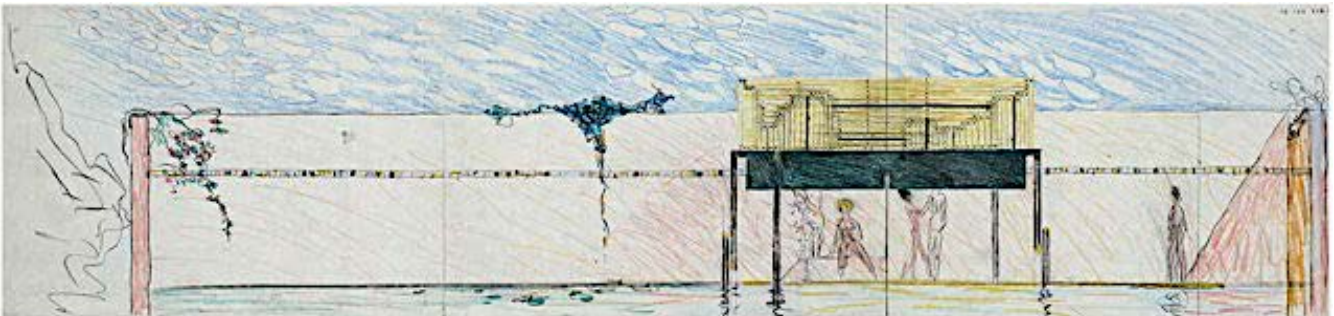
Carlo Scarpa, Tomba Brion, San Vito d'Altivole (TV); 1968-1978; Prospetto del padiglione sulla vasca grande e del muro di cinta con le tessere musive; s.d.; matita e matite colorate su carta tipo extrastrong courtesy Fondazione MAXXI. Available at: https://www.professionearchitetto.it/mostre/notizie/18714/Non-basta-ricordare-Collezione-Maxxi

During Semester 01, students will conduct urban investigations set within Rome (or by agreement with the tutors, one of other Italian cities we will visit virtually during the semester. In each instance, the aim of these urban studies is to seek out the internal contradictions animating architecture since at least the end of the World War II, especially evident in so-called neo-avant-garde work. Students are invited to work with one of Rome's key structures or settings from any period as an urban architectural catalyst. All students are encouraged to study the Casa del Fascio (Como), Scarpa's Castelvecchio (Verona), Koolhaas/OMA's Il Fondaco dei Tedeschi (Venice), and Zaha Hadid's MAXXI (Rome), as staking out some of the conceptual poles of the studio.

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A series of Warmup exercises (details to be issued early on in the semester) will precede the urban investigations introduced above, which which will parallel our ongoing virtual study visits to Italy..

Process & Content
Although students are encouraged to use the work developed during Semester 01 as a foundation and catalyst for elaborating on their work in greater detail during Semester 02 (and for Stage 05 students, perhaps in Stage 06), there is scope to choose an alternative building (or complex) to work with, from any period in Rome (or by agreement with the tutors in one of the other cities).

Thematics
A principal thematic of the studio is the proposition that architecture manifests official stories determined by the dominant power (and modes of production) at any given moment, including as formulated by the architectural discipline itself. While representations of identity, community, and power constitute architecture's immemorial vocation, these can include structuring rigidly delimited ideological expressions, whether of State Socialism, State Capitalism, Fascism, or emblems of its own putative autonomy. Accordingly, fascist, state socialist, or capitalist realist conceptions of the world, as well as myths of progress and artistic autonomy dominate conceptions of architecture, and architects' imaginaries, and thus will inevitably inform students' work as they struggle with the inescapable influence of dominant practises on the production of space. In developing their individual projects, students are challenged to consider how buildings participate in conserving particular narratives, in order to render them as permanently legible as possible. The *detournment* of these narratives are also of interest – how they can be shifted, bent, or subverted.
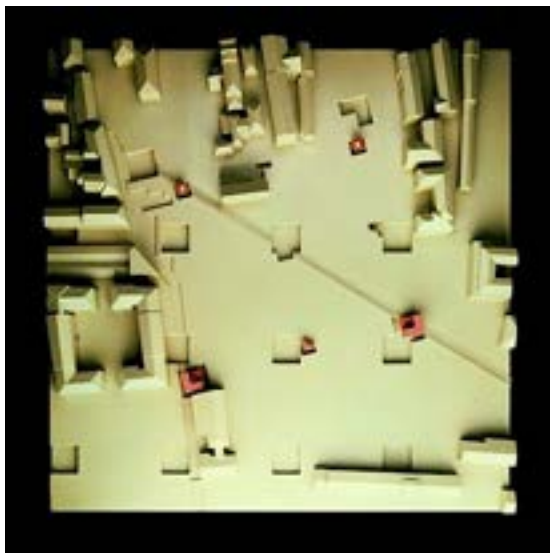
Eisenman Architects, CANNAREGIO TOWN SQUARE (Project), Venice, Italy, 1978.
Available at: https://eisenmanarchitects.com/Cannaregio-Town-Square-1978

Representation
Successful work in the studio will speak for itself, at the moment of perception (or experience). A significant challenge at both Stages is to resist too much post- rationalisation and filling in of gaps in project representations with words. Each pin- up, no matter how provisional or rough, should be thought of (and crafted) in a manner that could be evaluated in the absence of the project's author. Whatever the emphasis in the Studio on representation, history, theory, and criticism, architecture is an

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art (or poetics) of construction. As such project proposals should be construed as conceptual and tectonic problems simultaneously.

It isn't possible to separate architecture (intellectual labour) from building (manual labour). Without building (constructing/assembling) it isn't architecture. Inevitably, translations from drawings to building ensnares work (no matter how artistically autonomously minded) within dominant modes of production, making autonomy a fantasy. Architecture untested by material manifestations and bodily encounters (even prefiguratively) is something else, not quite architecture, or not at all. Architecture that uncritically exploits dominant spatial practices and modes of production results in alienating built environments inimical to everyday life, leaving us with cities that don't measure up to inheritances from the past.

As students in the Reconstructing Studio develop their projects they are challenged to press against the boundaries of possibility; not least by examining the proposition that autonomy myths and domesticating Utopia ensure the continuous failure of any putative architectural Neo-Avant-Garde, while guaranteeing the dominance of trivial practice.

Virtual Fieldtrip: Como, Verona, Venice, Rome – Italy (Semester 01).
- Como: Guiseppe Terragni's Casa del Fascio (1932-1936); important for neo-avant-garde architects, including Eisenman & Libeskind.
- Verona: Carlo Scarpa's work, especially the Castelvecchio Museum
- Venice: Carlo Scarpa's work, especially the Fondazione Masieri and Fondazione Querini Stampalia; Peter Eisenman's Canareggio project (1978) site; Le Corbusier's Venice Hôpital project (1964) site.
- Rome: study intersections, tensions, and rhythms of traditional urbanism in a 21st century city continuously reimagined during 2,000+ years. Mussolini's Urbanism and Zaha Hadid's MAXXI museum (2000-2010)

Physical Fieldtrip: Roman Britain – Hadrian's Wall to Edinburgh
Our short physical trip will explore the links between Britain and Rome, with Edinburgh – as the most continental of British cities – acting as a surrogate for Rome and Italy.
- Visits to Roman sites along Hadrian's Wall and Corbridge village, via coach from Newcastle, on <u>Wednesday 18 October</u>. We will continue to Carlisle Station for onward travel by train to Edinburgh at 17.02 (TBC).
- On <u>Thursday 19 October</u> Walk through Edinburgh, visiting Old Town, New Town, and No Town. We will also visit the Grassmarket, the Royal Mile, and the National Gallery. Other sites can be visited if time permits.
- On <u>Friday 20 October</u> Exploration of Edinburgh continues with a visit to the Scottish Parliament Building, benefitting from an exclusive private tour. We will return to Newcastle via train from Edinburgh Waverly Station after 15.00 (TBC).

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Contours:

Between the beginning of Semester 01 until the Interim Reviews (2/3 Nov.), students will develop multidimensional understandings through a series of exercises informed by bricolage, Punk, DIY and Arte Povera, framed within a developing familiarity with anarchist spatial practices, the Italian context, (and virtual sites visited, primarily through films, mostly set in Italy). Developing habits of reuse, or up-cycling found materials and existing buildings is encouraged, framed by ongoing spolia studies. Your own memories and fantasies about the fieldtrip will provide key virtual and/or physical reference points. These distanciated cognitive mapping exercises will help students cultivate imaginaries, or anticipatory illuminations, of architectural possibilities beyond polite conceptions of context, heritage, tourism, or place. Distanciation is a method for thinking

EMBT – Miralles / Tagliabue, (Definitive project, general model, 1998), Miralles Tagliabue, Architettura e Progetti, Marco De Michelis and Maddelena Scimemi (Eds.),Milan: Skira, 2002, p.

beyond the limits of the given. Surrealist methods and Psychoanalytic Free Association are forms of distanciation that could prove useful. Reverie (dreaming/daydreaming) is another promising method for catalysing architectural invention.

Leading up to the Interim Reviews students working individually or in cross-stage groups will begin imagining urban methodologies characterised by what Ricoeur calls 'reconstruction-memory', as opposed to 'repetition-memory':

> For the ==repetition-memory==, nothing is worth anything except the well-known, and the new is odious; for the ==reconstruction-memory==, the new must be welcomed with curiosity and with the desire to reorganize the old with a view to making room for this newcomer. It is no less a question of de-familiarizing the familiar than of familiarizing the unfamiliar.
>
> (Paul Ricoeur, 'Architecture and Narrativity', p. 40)

After the Interim Reviews, work in both stages becomes more individually focused, with students concentrating on a specific site (mostly in Rome) they've selected to develop in greater detail. Work will continue in this manner until the Final Reviews (14/15 Dec.). Work produced earlier in the semester should be continuously revisited and revised to, reflect developing familiarity with the places, buildings, and themes discussed in the studio week-to-week. By the end of the semester, will have developed (and declared) experimental urban

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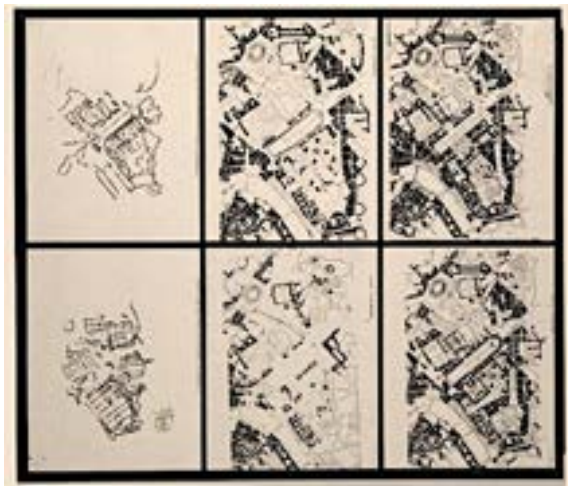Mr David Boyd, *mago di rappresentazione*

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strategies that interrogate the commonplaces of conventional urban and architectural practises, including in sensitive historical settings. While the above applies to both stages, Stage 06 students are encouraged to develop a personal research project (thesis) that lends itself to architectural exploration and expression (in the broadest terms). If desired, we can explore possibilities for working in groups until the Interim Reviews, and possibly beyond, across both stages.

GuidePosts

Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* (1972) models myriad generative possibilities for virtual fieldtrips, not least by suggesting slippages between paper architecture and building; between formalism and the burdens of use. Tafuri 's reflections on the neo-avant-garde will also guide us. Questions on formalism and history, between use and exchange, and on the difficult relationships between works deemed exemplary but designed by architects, and built by regimes considered unredeemable, are central to shaping the the studio's *Virtual Fieldtrip* to Italian cities, which will ground the work students develop. While sites in Rome provides the ground for developing project work across both semesters, other Italian cities, including Como,

Peter Carl, Judith Di Maio, Steven Peterson, Colin Rowe, Roma Interrotta, Roma Interrotta, Exhibit, Roma: 1978. Available at:
https://monoskop.org/images/a/a5/Roma_interrotta_1978.pdf

Venice, and Verona will be *visited*. Our journey along Hadiran's Wall and to Edinburgh (as a surrogate for ideations of Rome) should not be neglected, and more than spolia (as a tactic for responding to the waste and climate crises).

While attempting to make sense of Rome and other cities, a dislocated touristic perspective is encouraged as a means of distanciating (or dislocating) oneself from overly precious, nostalgic, or fetishized attachments to preconceived notions of history, heritage, everyday life or culture, or place. In each virtual city visit will concentrate on one primary topic: Fascist Regime architect Giuseppe Terragni in Como; modern Byzantine architect Scarpa in Venice and Verona; and Le Corbusier's the 'Lesson of Rome' in Rome, inflected by considerations of the Centro Storico, Michelangelo, Borromini, and Hadid's Maxxi Museum, and Mussolini's *disemboweling* of Rome.

In tandem with *Invisible Cities* and real and virtual city visits, Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter's *Collage City* (1978) and *Roma Interrotta* (1978) can guide us in Rome, and in Italy more

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generally. Both books inform our considerations of the pressures bought to bear on historical cities, including as influenced by Rem Koolhaas' *Delirious New York* (1978), with its adoration of Manhattanization, instant cities, and spectacularising overdevelopment. 'Interview with Peter Eisenman – The Last Grand Tourist: Travels with Colin Rowe' (2008) provides a loose schema for both semesters. As does Paul Ricoeur's 'Architecture and Narrativity' (1996).

Whatever one chooses to read or study, no matter how much or little, work in the studio is expected to be underpinned theoretically and informed by developing critical historical perspectives.

Modes of Working

Throughout both stages, ARB criteria will form a datum for exploring the limits and possibilities of professional education but also the tensions between architecture (as idea) and building (as production), mirrored in analogous tensions between design and technology. Tectonics – as a poetics of construction – is central to the studio. In both stages and across the year, students are encouraged to actively reflect on imaginative ways of meeting (exceeding, augmenting and challenging) criteria. Although there are variations between semester 01 & 02 and between Stage 05 & 06, the Reconstructing studio is construed as a laboratory for conducting ongoing experimental research into the possible-impossible of producing architecture in the city today. Developing tactics for inventing modes of production and cultivating an individual architectural consciousness wily enough to swerve past

Anselm Kiefer, torre con oggetti, proprietà La Ribotte, presso Barjac (foto A. Rosellini) Rosellini, Anna. (2016). 'Concrete in the eyes of Uncini, Smithson and Kiefer: art of building, geological nature, decaying material.' *ArcHistoR Architettura Storia Restauro - Architecture History Restoration.*

capitalist realist obstacles characterizes the R&D (Research & Development) aims of the studio, as lab for experimental architecture.

DIY: Anarchist Corrective to the Neo-Avant-Garde

As conceptualised here, no matter its failure, the architectural Neo-Avant-Garde imagined as remapped according to anarchist spatial practises (including Punk/DIY) represents something of culture's last stand against its all but total subsumption by the culture industry (which continuously transforms works into products).

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Although only silence can fully resist consumption, Punk's overegged nihilism, especially its DIY ethos, promises more relative independence than the putative autonomy of the architectural neo-avant-garde. In *Collage City*, Rowe promoted bricolage as offering a corrective to the fundamentalism of orthodox (20ᵗʰ century) architectural modernisms. Bricolage is the 'construction or creation' of something 'from a diverse range of available things', which aligns it with Punk's DIY ethos but also with the consideration of fragments infusing this brief. In the event, bricolage translates as 'do-it-yourself' (DIY). Using available things also represents a meaningful response to the illogic of progress, expansion, and waste that threatens planetary and species survival, as a tactical response to

Jannis Kounellis, Untitled 1968, Tate © Jannis Kounellis. Avaialble at: https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/a/arte-povera

climate crisis. If the perfectionist consciousness of architecture renders bricolage a consumable style; by examining (as Boyd has observed) the 'parallels and deviations between' Punk and the architectural the neo-avant-garde, strategies for defragging architecture could be cultivated.

PUNK outlines corrections on the doorstep of architectural neo-avant-garde illusions of autonomy (as if the building industry could actually be avoided). PUNK's DIY ethos, embrace of failure, and implicit/explicit critique of capitalist spatial practises and modes of production may be all but invisible to the neo-avant-garde in architecture (as much as to banal practise), but alongside the Italian Arte Povera movement, anarchism, and Gordon Matta-Clark (amongst others), Punk/DIY provides clues to alternative spatial practises and modes of production that lend themselves to architectural transposition.

Schedule of the Brief, and Stages

Both Stage 05 & 06 projects are expected to pursue critical engagement with myriad modes of architectural production at every scale, from ideation to the site, and from initial conception to considerations of construction. Although semester 01 revolves around development of urban strategies and interventions, and semester 02 has a technology emphasis for Stage 05, details and material assemblages offer both stages promising opportunities for exploring modes of production, from initial sketches to final finishes across both semesters and stages. Overall, the studio concentrates on details and modes of production more generally, from studio practices to building sites, as the locus of reinvention. For both stages, project sites are

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in Rome, Italy (selected by agreement with the Studio tutors; alternative sites can be considered).

Semester 02 sites and projects will derive from Semester 01 urban explorations in Stage 05 and ongoing design theory research in Stage 06 and should expand on earlier work through revision, sharpened focus, and complexification.

Stage 05 students are expected to delineate a comprehensively developed project for a reasonably complex building, for which there is strong evidence of having considered site, material, use, and technology (tectonics, material assemblies, construction, and systems integration, as well as sustainability, and life safety). Stage 06 students are expected to declare a thesis and 'prove it' through experimentation and declaration.

Joseph Beuys: I Like America and America Likes Me, NYC, 1974. Available at:
https://www.kidsofdada.com/blogs/magazine/35963521-joseph-beuys-i-like-america-and-america-   likes-me

The key difference between Stage 05 and Stage 06 is the differing degrees of depth and breadth of project inquiry and results. While students at both stages are challenged to develop research-driven modes of production, the scope and intensity of the exploration will be appropriate to each Stage. In short, whereas Stage 05 students produce urban inflected projects in Semester 01 and detailed building projects in Semester 02, Stage 06 Students work on a more focused explorations across both semesters, grounded in theoretical questions lending themselves to architectural investigation, representation, and declaration. The specific technology emphasis for Stage 05 doesn't apply with the same force for Stage 06, so long as considerations of Technology are evident in Stage 06 projects, and technology criteria were met in Stage 05. Stage 06 projects are expected to demonstrate testing of a clearly defined thesis question, such that the idea basis of projects is explicitly discernable.

Across both Stages, projects are student-led, constrained only by an expectation that whatever takes shape responds directly to this brief (affirming it, negating it, extending it, or admixture). The aim of the studio is for both Stages to learn from each other, even if week-to-week expectations may well prove to be more precisely articulated for Stage 05 than for Stage 06, which is expected to develop projects more explicitly driven by independent research.

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Stage 05/6 Reconstructing Studio

Semester 01 Key Events (Dates and criteria as per Degree handbook)

Thursday & Friday – Interim Reviews (2/3 Nov. 2023)
Presentations of research findings and project work developed during the first weeks Sem. 01. Inclusion of process work and visual notebooks.

Thursday & Friday – Final Reviews (14/15 Dec. 2023)
Adequately refined visual, verbal and textual presentation of project work, demonstrating engagement with the Remapping Studio brief, evidencing exploration of various modes of production. Inclusion of process work and visual notebooks.

Portfolio Submission – 11 Jan. 2024.
Digital submission deadline of Semester 01 portfolio of work (see degree handbook for details).

Semester 01: Stage 05 Marking Criteria

(For more detail, see Degree Handbook)
- Thesis [20%]
- Design Development [15%]
- Context [15%]
- Criticality [20%]
- Representation [20%]
- Studio Specific Criterion [10%] – To what degree do process work and final presentations demonstrate explorations of, and critical responses to, the Reconstructing Studio Brief and tutorials? Does the resulting project work evidence developing understanding of the interrelations of site, material, use, history, form, structure/construction, theory, building systems, and building character ?

Semester 01: Stage 06 Marking Criteria

(For more detail, see Degree Handbook)
- Thesis [20%]:
- Design Development [15%]:
- Context [15%]:
- Criticality [20%]:
- Representation [20%]:
- Studio Specific Criterion [10%] – To what degree has theory been put to work? Has design been verified by theory? Has theory been verified by design? Have dominant modes of production been interrogated? Does the project demonstrate development of a critical-historical perspective?

Semester 02 STUDIO SPECIFIC CRITERION:

Stage 05 – As above for Stage 01, with the addition of evidence of having put theory to work in exploring Materials and Meaning in Architecture through a transposition from (macro) urban scale to (micro) individual building scale (in detail).

Stage 06 – As above for stage 01, with the addition of evidencing putting theory to work, by transposing Materials and Meaning in Architecture Transposed in tandem with cultivation of an architectural consciousness, encompassing considerations of the bodily experience of buildings; the unproductive opposition between architecture and building; and by intensifying the depth and

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breadth of the work begun in semester one (reflecting on the thingness of buildings).

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