

FALL 2017 ADVANCED STUDIO COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:

(INCLUDING INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE, ARCHITECTURE, & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE ADVANCED STUDIO CLASSES WHICH ARE AVAILABLE TO RISD STUDENTS & BROWN 4 + 2 STUDENTS)

Markus Berger (INTAR)

Prosthetics for Interiority

*Prosthetics for Interiority, an advanced design research studio, investigates what it means to make prosthetic interventions into architectural spaces. The word prosthesis, from its original Latin derivation *protheticus*, means an addition that “furthers, gives additional power” and as such is much more than its more ordinary usage as a substitute for a missing or defective part of the body.- Thus making a prosthetic intervention into the body of a building requires thinking beyond merely fulfilling a functional requirement – but rather go beyond to affect the circulatory and sensory experience of the built environment, to make one “addition” that substitutes, enhances and transforms the capacity and power of an existing built environment.*

Prosthetics for spaces and buildings aims to investigate minimal, but intelligent and responsive interventions to allow existing buildings and spaces to regain and advance function, communication, sensory quality and performance. The studio and research aim is to investigate intelligent systems that incorporate environmental and occupant information to achieve both, greater building efficiency and greater user qualities. The research studio aims to go beyond smart buildings, which are often more concerned about the ability of the digital process rather than to accommodate responsive change to the user, space and the environment.

Silvia Acosta

ARCHIPELAGO OF THE IMAGINATION

Overview

The élan that draws humans towards islands extends the double movement that produces islands in themselves. Dreaming of islands—whether with joy or in fear, it doesn’t matter—is dreaming of pulling away, of being already separate, far from any continent, of being lost and alone—or it is dreaming of starting from scratch, recreating, beginning anew. Some islands drifted away from the continent, but the island is also that toward which one drifts; other

islands originated in the ocean, but the island is also the origin, radical and absolute. –Gilles Deleuze

The fascination with isolated places, the attraction of a void, the magnetic draw to the relationship between here and there, all form the basis for the studio. Voyages of exploration can yield strange findings extending the bounds of one's awareness. New insight appears from drawing, making, and filling empty spaces. The island is both a real place and a metaphor for a process of discovery. To discover these islands is an act of creation by inventing new worlds.

In the open sea where navigation was imprecise, early explorers found verifying geographical conditions to be difficult. Errors were marked and remained on maps for centuries and consequently, some non-existent landmasses appeared; others were the result of legend and fiction. These mythical islands form the foundation for your investigations while stimulating curiosity and prompting the imagination in the shaping of an architectural work.

The studio supports multiple lines of inquiry, sometimes overlapping, sometimes parallel, and sometimes even bearing contradictions. Guided by personal interests, the objectives are to bring order out of vague, fragmentary beginnings as we try to understand the world and our place in it. Gradually, this geography of legend gives way to a geography of constructed reality through the making of spatial and material relationships.

The semester will revolve around:

I. **MAPPING THE UNKNOWN** using drawing to plot a destination course. Maps are abstract and concrete at the same time; for all the objectivity of their measurements, they can only represent an interpretation of reality.

II. **STRUCTURING THE NAVIGATION** by carefully organizing a narrative through imagery. The unfolding story is composed of events, places, and things and the islands offer a stage for them. Fact and fiction become intertwined: fact is fictionalized and fiction is turned to fact.

With minimal instruction from the studio, each participant will explore and define particular subjects of their choice, including a program of use. The generative triggers for beginning the process of investigation are influenced by the myth of the chosen island. There is no better way to learn than by doing, so with this in mind, you will engage in consistent self-directed work. You have your sensibilities to guide you, and it's up to you to supply the will to make things and the interest to try out different possibilities.

Phantom Islands: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phantom_island

Jim Barnes

A “Maker” Building for RISD: Creative Work and Urban Life.

This past summer Allison Arieff of the NYTimes wrote a critical piece about Apple's new headquarters in Cupertino, CA., designed by Foster Associates:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/08/opinion/sunday/silicon-valley-architecture-campus.html?smprod=nytcore-ipad&smid=nytcore-ipad-share>

“Solving this isn’t rocket science; it’s common sense. Don’t design buildings that function only as pristine objects with no relationship to their surroundings. Don’t put workplaces in locations inaccessible to transit. Do consider the broader context.”

There are now stunning new corporate headquarters in the Bay Area, and particularly in Silicon Valley, all aspiring to attract the most creative and engaged critical thinkers in the world. Tech start-ups also occupy older urban buildings in many cities around the globe where they become drivers of economic development (Detroit, et al). All the “Starchitects” are engaged. Much has been written about these open and flexible centers for the creation of our future digital world. Is there a link between these spaces and those that “makers” employ? Is there an evolving “Type” of building for creative people? How do tech buildings express their cultural connection to modern American cities, if at all? Arieff suggests that tech buildings such as Apple’s HQ are completely out of touch. How iconic should these buildings be and what role in city-making should they play? Do the new batch of tech buildings have an “afterlife” similar to late 19th and early 20th century structures?

But wait...isn’t that what we have here in the BEB? Perhaps in some ways the world has finally caught up to us. For half a century RISD-Architecture developed a “studio culture” that proved to be a model for design practice...a place of “problem making” as opposed to “problem solving;” communal, collegial, untethered to traditions, seeking new questions rather than answering old ones.

While the BEB has served us well for 40 years it would be instructive to examine what we might do if we started from scratch. How should we imagine our home if we could construct it for ourselves, on this campus, in this City? Can we imagine a structure able to serve for as long as the BEB has been in use (160 years)?

Our work will be about constructing a home for studio practice in the 21st century.

Hansy Better: “UN-WALL THE BORDER”

Hansy Better Barraza in collaboration with Roberto Pasini, Universidad de Monterrey (UEM), Mexico

RISD/UEM Joint Architecture Studio – Fall 2017

The entire debate about the construction of ‘the wall’ between the United States of Mexico south and the United States of America north has generated numerous narratives, interpreted by artists, architects, and planners. The theme of the wall has been mostly used as a pretext for the enunciation of gratuitous, self-referential formulations, with no practical purpose other than that of benefitting the popularity of the authors.

Does ‘the wall’ offer any real opportunity for design to contribute to the improvement of living conditions of the ones whose life, for different reasons, happen to be suspended, poised, or fractured in between the two sides of the border?

Challenging the idea of a ‘border wall’, by and large an abstract line of no thickness whereby only operations such as ‘separating’, ‘crossing’, ‘moving along’, etc. can be performed, the studio will try to expand the two-dimensionality of this notion into a tri-dimensional space allowing for the performing of social and intersubjective activities. On one or more sites along the border, the studio will take up the design theme of a ‘Non-Crossing Area’, where people from both sides of the border go to stay (as opposed to crossing), socialize, and create/produce beyond barriers.

The studio work will be articulated in 3 major phases: ‘Research’, ‘Territorial/Urban Concepts’, ‘Architectural Project’. The first phase is devoted to the investigation of conceptual themes and practical analysis of design sites, the second phase prefigures an urban or territorial scenario, while the third phase precipitates into a physically defined architectural proposal.

In summary, the assignments throughout the semester will explore issues of:

- identity
- culture
- agriculture
- and fabrication

And the analysis and design problems proposed will require alternative conceptualizations of:

- spatial border conditions
- territories of social interchange
- structures for the virtuous and fair production and creation

The RISD/UEM joint Architecture Studio Fall 2017 will be offered in collaboration between the Rhode Island School of Design and Universidad de Monterrey. UDEM students will travel to RISD at an early phase of the work in September to set up the common guidelines of

the activities, while RISD students will travel to UDEM at a later phase in November to collectively present and review the final progresses. *Travel to UDEM is optional.*

Aaron Forrest

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At the beginning of the 20th century, the architectural avant-garde was confronted with a fundamental question: how to use new materials - steel and concrete - as a catalyst for rethinking the core principles of architecture. Today, sustainable mass timber materials are poised to be as central to 21st century architecture and steel and concrete were to the 20th century. This studio will focus on how these materials can drive a reevaluation of the very same principles of form, organization, light, and structure, in a global architectural context. The studio will take an experimental approach to the material and how it can spur investigations into new architectural forms and types. The studio will begin by conducting a critical reexamination of canonical Chicago precedents through the lens of mass timber construction, and will culminate in the proposal of a contemporary 'universal space' in the Chicago Loop.

John Gardner & Warren Schwartz

PERFORMANCE MATERIALS + PERFORMANCE SPACES

- Work with state of the art building materials.
- Design high performance music facilities.
- Meet world class: suppliers, fabricators, acousticians and theatre designers.
- Attend a classical concert and draw.
- Design 3 projects.

OVERVIEW

Technological advances in materials and engineering have historically enabled Architecture to evolve significantly with results that reinforce eras and support social changes. We propose that the effective use of hydrocarbon based composite structures are in their infancy with respect to Architecture and so are well placed to fulfill this role today. Industries like the

marine, aeronautics, outer space industries and the military have a proven track record of assimilating and, now, relying on composite structures to successfully fulfill their requirements. We believe that forward thinking Architects are well served when knowledgeably understanding, specifying and designing with this technology.

This studio will focus on understanding and researching composite materials and then applying them to three projects of increasing scale, complexity and time.

Project #1 (1 week): Timepiece

Design/build/ and present a completed free-standing timepiece. Composite material and a timing mechanism will be provided.

Project #2 (3 weeks): Pavilion

Design a year round, all weather, open, freestanding pavilion constructed of composite materials. The pavilion shall be able to accommodate up to 24 seated performers under cover. The site will be at RISD's Tillinghast farm.

Project #3 (10 weeks): Music Hall

Design and position, on a clear and level site on Goat Island in Newport, RI, a new-build music hall for 500 occupants. Address issues of vision, image, materials, orientation, massing, acoustics and connections to the community.

Nick Safley

Character Building

This studio is going to make some characters! Character has had a long, often contentious, history in architecture, but one that is poised to reinvigorate contemporary discussions. Historically, character has had multiple definitions, ranging from expressing the genre of a building, to expressing the inner character of a building's maker. In these, and most other definitions, character was used to relate the exterior understanding of an architectural object to its interior subject. Following Michael Fried's analysis of minimalist objects, we will embrace the

theatricality of objects and explore the potential for contemporary architectural notions of character to produce objects that exude and possess implied interior vitality. Through their posture, position, and persona these objects will behave more like you and me, subjects among other subjects. The semester will be divided in half, first we will develop digital techniques that explore character's relationship to discourse on shape and form. While theatrical in spirit we will avoid reverting to stage construction, as material and detail will be an important consideration in the second half of the semester where we will look at character's relationship to construction.

It should be fun, or at least character building.

Nick Winton

Fabricating The Machine in the Garden

As the Advanced Studio within the emerging Architecture Concentration, the focus for the semester will be to pursue conceptual and representational clarity that leads to a comprehensive design solution. The studio will build upon the earlier work of the introductory studios, and students will synthesize the conceptual and technical concerns of a specific architectural program. Students are expected to meet the drawing and modeling requirements for benchmark presentations, set forth at the beginning of the studio but of course will also be encouraged explore other media of architectural representation as the most appropriate means of delineating the conceptual, formal, and spatial character of the project.

The "Machine in the Garden" is architectural rhetoric used to describe the (often tense) relationship of modernism and technology to the pastoral landscape, initially appropriated from Leo Marx's work of literary criticism (*The Machine in the Garden*, 1964). The pedagogical mission of this studio is to explore the concept of the machine in the garden through the lens of an accessory dwelling within the conventional single-family house lot. While the studio will reconsider the customs of the house and the backyard, the project will also develop a prototype that engages systems of assembly, including kit-of-parts, pre-fab, and other means of replication and fabrication.

The studio will conduct research into the means of fabrication that will guide the students work, while also analyzing the site and the program to understand latent conditions and develop a strategy to synthesize building and landscape within the limited requirements of a micro dwelling. The scope and program are intentionally limited so that students can develop a proposal at a high level of conceptual clarity and design resolution.

Michael Blier

XIANG-TANG: The Reanimation of a Classic Chinese Village

Site: Xiang-Tang Village, Nanjing China

The studio will focus on the rejuvenation of the quintessential Chinese Village: Xiang-Tang. Building on existing site conditions, students will evolve strategies related to: open space/landscape (parks, streets, etc.); village infrastructures; ecology; potential housing options; recreation; social spaces sufficient to reanimate and reignite the viability of the village as a sustainable cultural hub and as a counter to macro-urbanization and related relocation strategies.

For the past several decades and in correlation with the rate of urbanization in China, the village culture/fabric of China has been experiencing a troubling period of entropy and neglect. As population growth has been directed toward new urban centers, the local village has been experiencing significant decline in population, dwindling basic resources, insufficient economic opportunities (for remaining villages) and a loss of a general sense of social value and standing as part of a larger cross section of Chinese culture. In short, the several villages which define this particular region of Nanjing are fighting for their survival. On a regional scale, the fight is for the survival of local culture, not only as historical artifact or for nostalgic effect, but as an active and engaged layer of Chinese culture moving forward into the foreseeable future. On a highly local scale, the challenge will be to envision scenarios whereby new life is brought back via the reimplementation of village culture, public open spaces, energized infrastructures, economic opportunity and character. Realizing what a tragic loss these failing villages would represent to Chinese culture, the Central Government has placed special emphasis on developing sustainable and tactical approaches to reinvigoration.

As a mechanism for speculation and projection, the studio will study closely the challenges and deficiencies of empty and dilapidated housing stock, aging and/or failing village infrastructures, a neglected and failing water conveyance network, an under-activated open space network and declining economic opportunities for the remaining villagers.

The Studio will begin by reviewing a recent, comprehensive study prepared by AECOM. In this AECOM Study, several villages across the mountain range were evaluated according to various social, environmental, and economic factors and their relationship to one another as a collection or network of local economic 'centers'. Accordingly, the Central and local governments have assigned particular new functions or programs to various villages as a

mechanism or catalyst for future growth and rejuvenation. According to the Master Plan Study, for Xiang-Tang Village, the basic structures of 'active open spaces, recreation, agri-tourism (fruit cultivation, peaches), will become the loose 'frameworks' for future growth. This will become the basis for our work as well.

In the first half of the semester students will work in groups to evaluate the site and to establish a basic Master Plan for the entire Village. Students will then work independently in the second half of the semester to develop the design for a site selected during the Master Plan Phase.

Katy Foley and Nick DePace

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD

Site: Swan Point Cemetery, Providence Rhode Island

Burial practices reflect the breadth of traditions and theologies of humans throughout time and the across the globe. The manner a body is interred to the earth in landform, structure, or otherwise is indicative of perceived relationships to the geophysical world where the remains of all temporal beings return.

The rural cemetery is a public landscape of traditional familiarity in the west. The 19th century idyllic burial practice reflects a collective social intimacy that distinctly shares territory with the dead in the form of recreational parkland for the living. Contemporary pressures including the perceived sacrifice of open grounds, physical responses to an emerging global climate consciousness, updated positions on diverse spiritual practices, local and global resource management, economic realities of the disposal of human remains, and urban constraints on grounds expansion challenge accepted rites of burial. This accelerated change has subsequently revolutionized practices originating with Roman Catholic policies as evidenced by cremation amounting to 50% of recent burials in Rhode Island.

This studio will build questions around of the expanding historic Swan Point Cemetery analytically and uncover a basis of research which examines various burial typologies, ramifications and contexts from woodland cemeteries to decomposition labs. This work will orient the practical considerations of full-body inhumation as it is evidenced in the landscape via ecological exchange, vegetative planning, details of architectural construction, and space for the bereavement of the living. We will evaluate the resources and challenges present in the parkway, residential neighborhoods, and riverfront adjacencies as well as the geological and hydrological constraints limiting viable locations for burial. Informal, and formal specialist

guided eschatological discussion will provide a framework to aid in the development of ethically resonant design responses toward the future placement of the dead.

Emily Vogler and David Katz

ACEQUIAS: Infrastructural Logic | Material Logic

Site: Albuquerque, New Mexico

This studio will investigate the irrigation ditches that weave through the city of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Unlike most urban water infrastructure which is buried underground or sealed in concrete, the irrigation ditches in Albuquerque are earthen and are able to function as living systems that engage with dynamic ecological and hydrological processes. The “leaky” irrigation ditches serve to recharge the aquifer and maintain the region’s riparian habitat by spreading the water and associated ecologies across the river valley. In addition, the ditches are an important part of the city’s public open space network. However, every year as the water flows in the earthen channels it slowly erodes at the soils along the ditch banks. Over time this has led to severe erosion along many of the ditches. The city responds to the erosion by lining the ditches with concrete. This treatment impairs the other hydrological, ecological and aesthetic functions of the ditches as well as often leading to worse erosion.

In this interdisciplinary studio, students will be asked to design and fabricate a module that can help to stabilize the edge of the embankments while supporting the multiple functions of the ditches. Students will explore the formal aspects of the module to understand how it performs within the different hydrological and ecological conditions as well as supporting the aesthetic human experience of the space. Some of the material, formal and performative questions we will ask are: How does the module aggregate and disperse to respond to different site conditions? How long should the materials persist? How does the module support human and riparian habitat? How can new digital fabrication tools such as CNC molds and ceramic 3D printers be used in the development and fabrication of the module? By the end of the semester, students will design and fabricate their module, test a scaled model to see how it performs hydrologically, and design a segment of the ditch to explore how the module responds to different site conditions.

This studio will take advantage of the unique interdisciplinary opportunities that arise from studying at RISD. It will be co-taught by Landscape Architecture faculty, Emily Vogler and Ceramics faculty, David Katz. This studio will provide an opportunity for students to address a regional scale infrastructural system through a 1:1 material exploration. Studio will often be

held in the ceramics studio where students will learn traditional and digital fabrication techniques for working with clay, plaster and concrete.

In addition to providing the space for interdisciplinary learning at RISD, this studio will provide a unique opportunity for students to learn and engage with distinct cultures of the American Southwest. The ditches provide an ideal lens to understand the local culture of New Mexico because they weave together the histories of the Native American, Hispanic, and Anglo cultures. An optional 4 day trip to New Mexico will be offered as part of the studio.