GT
Graduate Thesis
2016

SCI−ARC
Hernan Diaz Alonso
Director & CEO

John Enright
Vice Director & Chief Academic Officer

Elena Manferdini
Graduate Programs Chair

Tom Wiscombe
Undergraduate Program Chair
### Graduate Thesis Weekend

**Friday, September 9, 2pm-6pm**  
**Saturday, September 10, 9am-6pm**  
**Sunday, September 11, 9am-4pm**

**Florentina Pita**  
Graduate Thesis Coordinator  
**Coy Howard**  
**Brett Steele**  
Special Advisor  
**Dwayne Oyler**  
**Florencia Pita**  
**David Ruy**  
**Casey Rehm**  
**Cultural Advisors**  
**David Ruy**  
**Peter Trummer**  
**Andrew Zago**

*All school exhibition of thesis work reviewed by members of the SCI-Arc faculty and distinguished local and visiting architects.*

### Guest Critics Include

- Frances Anderton
- Donald Bates
- Barbara Bestor
- Pippo Ciorra
- Didier Faustino
- Peter Frankfurt
- Axel Friedman
- Fabrizio Gallanti
- Dominique Jakob
- Bruno Juricic
- Jeffrey Kipnis
- Birgit Lohmann
- Brendan MacFarlane
- Thom Mayne
- Ciro Najie
- Peter Noever
- Francisco Pardo
- Antonino Saggio
- Jennifer Siegal
- Brett Steele
- Ben West
- Meejin Yoon
- Michael Young

### Advisors

- Hernan Diaz Alonso
- Matthew Au
- Ivan Bernal
- John Enright
- Marcella Gow
- Elena Manferdini
- Jake Matatyaou
- Anna Neimark
- Todd Gannon
- Florentina Pita
- Casey Rehm
- David Ruy
- Andrew Zago

### Graduate Thesis Students 2016

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Conversations are inherently collective even if sometimes in architecture one or two people dominate them for a little while (or think that they do when actually most everybody ends up ignoring them). We need to understand where our part of the conversation came from, where it is now, where other people think it is going, and then figure out how, in our own unique way, to move the line of what is possible and what is impossible.

Graduate Thesis students come from two programs: the M.Arch I and the M.Arch II. Both have very unique pedagogical inflections, the first program being geared towards an advancement of the principles of architecture, and the second program challenging the boundaries of the principles of architecture. Two other Postgraduate programs will also share graduation on thesis weekend: Emerging Systems, Technology and Media (ESTm) and SCIFI. The ESTm program focuses on new technologies and the highly specialized design tools, while the SCIFI program deploys its expertise in the city and urban design thinking.

Here at SCI-Arc we do not really see architecture as part of the world, as much as we see the world as (1) parts that are architecture in which we are interested, and (2) parts that are not architecture, which we are happy to steal ideas from and hope that they will take care of themselves. It is assumed that architects can and will borrow inspiration from the strangest places and mix them together into something new, hopefully something that is not horrible.

It should go without saying that our job is to bring all of this stuff into architecture and figure out what it can do for the architectural conversation. It is somebody else's problem to worry about the other way around.

Hernan Diaz Alonso
Director & CEO
The idea for the class came from the urge to define a new canon for the production of thesis. Format is the place where ideas, subject matter, medium and content come together in various combinations to define specific ways of working. Over the past five years, some breeds of thesis got trapped in the widespread tendency to escape the problems of the medium of one art by taking refuge in the effects of another. There is no problem in using and abusing various sources of creativities. In fact, there are advantages and benefits in this diffuse practice, as Jeff Kipnis has been advocating for several years in our classrooms. But also there are instances of irrelevance and naiveté when the potency of these format shifts is not fully understood. Ideas become subject matter in the best of our post postmodern trend; media and meanings went their separate ways towards other forms of creative masquerades, while departing from a strong intellectual and formal initial allegiance.

To be clear, the reason we are even talking about format in thesis is that the final work produced in the past five years reached a level of proficiency that allows us to have a mature discussion on the nature of our discipline. The ambiguous relationships between ideas, subject matter, medium and content in the realization of a thesis come from an inherent ambiguity of the working space of architecture. The working space of a writer is the text, of a painter is the canvas, of the film-maker is the screen; by contrast, an architect almost never works at full scale. The medium of architecture is large and--apart from the various forms of installation and pavilions--as architects we do not work directly on the built architectural medium. Instead, we work on forms of representation and memory for other people to work on at full scale. This scalar documentation (two or three dimensional) can manifest itself as a set of instructions on how to build in the real architectural medium, or intuitions of what the fully present architectural object could look like. The risk associated with working through graphic techniques (rather than a proper medium) is that our architectural practices, especially in school, may become hostages of other disciplines. Architects develop a tendency to wonder in other fields of representations where such relationships have a very different coherency and different disciplinary traditions (from movies, to painting, to sculpture…). As Paul Schimmel acutely proclaimed “...architects know artworks but often they do not fully know artists, nor art”. And this confusion is as dangerous as it is beneficial. And yes, almost forgot... liberating.

This year, our graduating class was urged to distinguish content from subject matter and define in more rigorous terms the relationship between medium and meaning. The coming-apart of an established creative formula allowed for a deeper awareness of what one does (if not why). And being aware of how a personal design language comes to be is the best sign that a student has earned his or her graduate degree in architecture.

Congratulations to the 2016 graduating class.

Elena Manferdini
SCI-Arc Graduate Programs Chair
IN IS THE NEW OUT
Oscar Abrahamsson
Advisor: Elena Manferdini

In Is the New Out explores the ‘free section’ at an urban scale, emphasising programmatically the interstitial spaces, while proposing a new publicity within blank interior voided figures, thereby offering a radical reexamination of the interior as the last urban refuge in 21st century Los Angeles.

For Los Angeles, a city with total lack of civic space—at its nexus, an interior city, where ‘public’ spaces are semi-internalized or privately owned, a scenario can be found where internalization of civic space is taken to the extreme: where the developmental difference between open space and built structure disappear and the dichotomy between shared street space and private building space is eliminated. Inside of huge voided figures, embedded as part of the city, this thesis proposes a semi-internal, semi-autonomous world of interior urbanism that destabilizes the traditional tropes of urban space and proposes a new configuration for an increasingly denser Los Angeles.

Double Readings
Sara Abalkhail
Advisor: Ivan Bernal

Figure-ground is a type of perception which is used to recognize objects through vision. It can be considered the negative space of an object; a façade/skin of a building is a two-dimensional object that acts as a transition point from the exterior to the interior. By expanding the role of the façade through designing a threshold that allows slowing the movement to enter the building, a double reading is created to enhance mystery and attract procession. Through techniques of creating layers and inlays of patterns projected onto a wall, between a double skin three-dimensional façade. This effect reflects the concept of creating a double-blurred reading based on viewpoints, forming a duality between the façade and the program located in lower Manhattan, New York.
Bricolage in the Barrio

Jesus Abril
Advisor: Coy Howard

Bricolage in the Barrio establishes an alternative design approach for an architectural addition to a commercial structure in East Los Angeles. By cataloging ad-hocism found in El Sereno, a community of East L.A., the project will develop a conscious aesthetic through techniques of bricolage. Specifically, aggregations of different parts and materials will be the driving force for the design of the addition. The documented findings will undergo a transformative set of operations at multiple scales in order to juxtapose contrasting geometries, materials, and stylistic expressions. Through this process, Bricolage in the Barrio aims to substantiate multiple needs and foster active, individual participation in the creation of identity for a local environment. In doing so, it will create an architectural equivalent to the transformation of a low culture aesthetic into high art.

Vertical Liminal

Ehsan Adibian
Advisor: Ramiro Diaz Granados

Transcendent spaces of how we change from one stage to another stage. So spaces the mediate between two different modes of being. These two different types of building which is radically different in terms of one being capitalism and one being theology. Both spaces established basically change the user or individual in terms of persona that they take on when they enter that space.
Our Imagination Is Our Reality
Polina Aleseeva
Advisor: Hernan Diaz Alonso

Contemporary architecture has always used visionary architecture within science-fiction movies as an excuse to speculate about the present and try to move the discipline forward. A lot of science-fiction movies have inspired generations of scientists to research and develop new technologies. Some of them predicted the design building future, while others simply serve as a warning.

My thesis aims to challenge the traditional discipline as a vehicle to anticipate where architecture will be in the future and, at the same time, comment on the present. Analyzing architectural representation in feature films and visionary architecture, learning general principles and applying them to create my own visual world.

By using three main concepts that have to do with traditional architecture, it operates in the realm of Visionary tradition, Material effect phenomenology and Parallel reality. It is not about how it can be made or what material it can be made of, rather it is about the Effect and Atmosphere that it produces.
This thesis explores representations of landscape and geology, translating topographic information into a large-scale building that still has the detailed quality of the mountain. Developing strategy of taking topographic representation to produce building mass, alternative strategy to integrated landscape and building.

Orogeny, the process of mountain formation, especially by folding of the earth's crust. Also, Orogeny refers to forces and events leading to a large structural deformation of the Earth's crust. By folding the continuous topography area in Los Angeles, I will find new open spaces in different levels of the building. This new orogeny building will bring the idea of the Mountains into the urban context.
To Fit, or Not to Fit

Rachael Burke
Advisor: Anna Neimark

To Fit, or Not to Fit argues the end of the architectural object and proposes working on backgrounds. The overcrowded contemporary city requires fitting very large things inside of tight spaces. Packing architecture within a small site can be used as a way to develop new form, and preserve the iconic context it is squeezed between.

A series of buildings wrapping around Daniel Burnham’s Flatiron Building are proposed in New York City. Preservation is achieved as the project defines a new context for the Flatiron Building, while the existing context becomes the background for the new buildings. With open space obsolete in Manhattan, To Fit, or Not to Fit proposes a new way to build in the city, working somewhere between object and context, foreground and background.

Aniform

Agustin Bernal
Advisor: Marcelyn Gow

Aniform is an experimental approach to design in which the product possesses qualities and a unique personality through the combination of texture and posture. The word “animate” is very important to the definition of Aniform, and is not to be confused with “motion”. According to Greg Lynn, “while motion implies movement and action, animation suggests animalism, animism, evolution, growth, actuation, vitality and virtuality”. Therefore, Aniform is meant to evoke the idea of movement, rather than literal movement, through its form, posture and texture. The use of textiles as casting start to produce unique qualities and personalities through the combination of texture and posture. This creating soft forms that nest and lean on each other and its surroundings.
Experiential Qualities of the Sublime

William Calvert
Advisor: Coy Howard

I bet a multi-part monument scattered throughout downtown LA can evoke the sublime by forcing the viewer of part or all of the monument to confront the unknowable qualities of time, space and life.

The Artificial or The Humanoid

Kellan Cartledge
Advisor: Casey Rehm

By utilizing an artificial neural network, this thesis seeks to create algorithmically generated architectural criticism and theory at a level of intelligence relative to human understanding of content. In creating this artificial intelligence, this thesis proposes the use of this technology as a tool to remove architectural critics from the failings of modern media. Artificial neural networks are algorithms used in the computer science industry for machine learning and to explore cognitive science. Neural network algorithms simulate the biological nervous system and can be trained to learn specific skills, such as speech or image recognition. By training a coupled neural network with an unbiased corpus of architectural theory and criticism, as well as, to recognize architecture within images, the network learns to write critically about the architecture it sees. By introducing this technology to the architectural discourse, this thesis examines the future possibilities of neural networks and artificial intelligences within the fields of architecture, design, and journalism.
Through glass
Tsu Hsu Cheng
Advisor: Hernan Diaz Alonso

From the Crystal Cathedral to Bruno Taut’s Glass Pavilion to the numerous “glass houses” of Mies van der Rohe, Philip Johnson, Charles and Ray Eames, Richard Neutra, glass was understood as a crucial material for modernism. Nowadays, technology allows us to have the ability to produce thicker and more durable glass. By experimenting with different chemical compounds, glass is no longer fragile as in the past. Instead, it can become a more reliable architecture material. With different shapes and thicknesses to have all the effects of glass to represent futurism is my thesis.

Laying in Ruins
Mun Yi Cheng
Advisor: David Ruy

I am interested in misappropriating symbolic content. More specifically, I’m interested in how the blending of incompatible regimes of signs ruins meaning, while bringing forth new meaning. I’m interested in how this might open up alternatives to erasure and replacement. Aside from my interests, my thesis involves inventing compositional techniques that maximize the effect of tension in the observer as incompatible regimes come together.

The pain of a Syrian refugee, forced to completely reinvent his life in a completely foreign culture, is fraught with tension and existential angst. Commissioned by the city of Magdeburg in 2026, the brief is an architectural proposal to upgrade the deteriorating East German prefabricated housing stock that the refugees were settled in. Ten years down the road, it is their turn to contribute as they help to finance the renovation of the Neu Olvenstedt housing estate to reflect the unique cultural identity and experiences of its community.
Symmetry, a composition of corresponding elements, is generally identified in two dimensions where interchangeable parts are understood to be identical. Such a restricted interpretation results in unexplored territory in symmetry, and limits our ability to use symmetry in the discussion of design. The proposal of a residence is formulated by testing the boundaries of symmetry. Here, symmetry is analyzed in three dimensions, realized quantitatively by the doubling of elements as well as through equal volume and area. The whole remains aesthetically satisfactory through a balanced proportions created by equal yet distinct figures.

Frame For None Framing
Eui Hyuk Choi
Advisor: Ramiro Diaz Granados

In his description of painting technique, Leon Battista Alberti instructs the reader to imagine a window on the surface of the canvas through which the subject can be seen. Le Corbusier also used the window as a vehicle to deliver two of his five points of architecture. In both cases, a window is used as an equipment for certain purposes. However, window has not been considered as important factor as massing, surface, and plan to construct an architectural idea of a building. This research will investigate a series of windows, especially from architectural projects after 1900’s, in order to present a design that shows solely the quality of a window as itself.
You move through Los Angeles and the city watches you; an ever-captive audience towers over the performance of your life. From time to time you stop to admire the character of a building standing before you, almost unaware that you share a stage in this city of lights. So who is the audience and who is the performer? Can a building play both parts and can it cause you to do the same?

This urban stage is designed to put into question our designation of these roles with nine hundred seventy two diverse yet similar objects that sway with the rhythm of the city. Inside, three hundred twenty four objects allow for you to shape your participation as an audience member and as a performer.

Consider the horizontal monument. When BIG buildings are horizontal, the urban landscape in which they stand is the context rather than the skyline against which the vertical giants are framed. This project proposes to intervene on an XL urban scale to revitalize the inner core of a postcard worthy but perhaps economically outdated Western European city. Centrally embedded in the oft photographed 6th arrondissement of Paris, the site is an approximately 40,000 m² relic of 19th century Beaux-Arts style, framed by Haussmann’s boulevards, the Luxembourg gardens and a predictably old church. A modernist box unifies existing ground floor courtyards and creates commercial space. Postmodern, distorted 19th century facades and rooflines create interiority and opportunities for live-work-play. Miniature residential towers grow out of existing courtyards. In its entirety, the interlacing of ideas produces new forms and coalesces the site into an XL monument to 21st century life.
NEW SUBURBAN DREAM
Matthew Diack
Advisor: Peter Trummer

This thesis examines how the Los Angeles residential block can be densified while creating individuality, diversity, and a sense of ownership between separate homes. New Suburban Dream proposes a different relationship between house-to-house and house-to-land, allowing for an alternate to the current block in response to increased density. While not a pragmatic solution to the problem, this thesis seeks to continue a conversation on issues of development, densification, and property ownership in Los Angeles. By unifying the existing typologies of the parking lot and the dingbat house, a residential block is produced that allows for new functions, types, and living situations to emerge. Rather than a parking-housing hybrid, this project unifies the dingbat house and parking lot into a new arrangement by removing them from both their initial formal significance and functional purpose. In doing so, the parking lot floors become a datum, while the dingbat houses become space. By fusing them together, it allows for a Los Angeles block partitioned following a series of three-dimensional property boundaries, and the development of a new relationship between land and houses.

Moving Machinations
Jacob Falk
Advisor: Matthew Au

Moving Machinations looks to rethink an existing project by exploiting machine vision as a creative tool. Falling back on an established method of “machine” representation (called machinations by fortification designers from the 1400s) an exploration of this new space through camera movements in animation and video. Using the points of human ingress in an otherwise closed process allows some agency in the final result, but also ways to move away from well-established paradigms of “redrawing” a building.
The drag queen is a self-identified man who has no desire to live as a woman nor become a woman, yet mocks hyper-femininity and ridicules female gender stereotypes. Drag dressing is considered a transgression because of its ability to inhabit and mock contradicting ideas. To transgress is to go beyond the boundaries set by law, discipline or conventions. Transgressions have the potential to cast new light on what is considered as the norm, and through doing so both re-energize and prompt new forms of representation and social engagement.

This thesis uses the concept of drag as a way to transgress architecture in order to create a new whole which exaggerates and mocks the stereotypes of the two contradicting architectures.

Through years architecture and societies have been built upon standards, stereotypes and rules. The new whole, created through the idea of drag, will form extravagances of these stereotypes by going beyond the boundaries set by the past conventions.

The duality of light and shadow, prevalent in the designing of facades for centuries, was replaced by reflection as the implications of curtain wall technology entered the discourse and the profession. While reflection became the focus of composition and consideration, refraction remained, to a large extent, unconsidered at the scale of the curtain wall panel.

Close analysis of refraction and reflection reveals a disconnect between the interior and exterior. A second duality of contradicting ideologies emerges within the architecture, mirroring the political disconnect between the symbolic gesture of glass and its consequences as demonstrated by the Grand Projects of Paris in the late 20th. While replacing the existing Tour Zamansky on the grounds of Jussieu Campus, Bend/Break displaces transparency with alternate realities of mass, interiority, and the city.
Architectural Nonsense
Karen Ghaidar
Advisor: David Ruy
This thesis deals with creating an “architectural nonsense” miniature set based on Alice’s Adventure in Wonderland. In this set, the compositional games are not complex. They are experiments on scale, shape, orientation, scaffolding, and symbolic versus non-recognizable abstract shape. However, what gives the set a peculiar personality is that all these structures are being imagined from a robotic point of view. Like Lewis Carol’s Alice, who was the architect of her wonderland, this robot creates a wonderland through its vision, through how it understands its world. The reason these architectural elements are used in this manner and not like typical architectural manner, is that the machines may understand their usage of these elements differently.

Coincidently
Patrick Geske
Advisor: Elena Manferdini
This is a convention center. Convention centers require 3 types of spaces: the Open Floor, the Hallway, and the Object (i.e. a specific point of gathering, such as a boardroom, cafe, hotel, etc.). While here they function together as a singular thing and are formally related to one another, these 3 types of spaces exist as 3 differentiated wholes. The Open Floor is housed by a shed, the Hallway becomes a continuous bent extrusion, and the Object celebrates form in banal places, existing as enigmatic signposts against the background of the convention floor, where they stand as attestants to Barthes’ claim that “the mark of the utopian is the quotidian.” The Open Floor, in other words, from holding a boat show to emergency shelter, plays host to utopic possibilities on the short-term and small-scale.

#posthumanistaesthetics #formalism #newformalism #microutopia #temporaryutopia #enigmatic #difference #postdigital #constructeddifference #constructedground #losingground #climmatechange #sealevelrise #miamibeach #boatshow
Penetrated Light

Junjie Guo
Advisor: Hernan Diaz Alonso

Penetrative Light is a library in New York City that creates form and space through new aesthetics relying on the interaction between the light and varied forms of transparent objects. The way to achieve this is to penetrate a beam of evenly distributed light through a transparent form and capture the light as two-dimensional profiles on a sequence of vertical planes that are evenly separated. These profiles create forms with specific fuzziness and clarity, which is the outcome of the interaction between light and the transparent forms. This project aims to expand the disciplinary boundary of architecture by creating a dialogue between light as a visible physical form and natural energy as an invisible form.

Stairs, Stacks, and Setbacks

Madeleine Hahn
Advisor: Ramiro Diaz Granados

This thesis explores the integration of floor slabs (discrete) and circulation paths (continuous). Rem Koolhaas and his firm, OMA, have explored this spectrum in numerous projects since the 1980s. Further back in history, Frank Lloyd Wright’s Guggenheim Museum introduced the idea of a singular continuous path, directly contrasting the repetitive floor plate typology of the adjacent modern high-rises. On a residential scale, Sou Fujimoto’s House NA also starts to blur the distinction between discrete and continuous modes of circulation with stacked boxes replacing floor slabs.

The stack typology can but does not always disrupt the discrete floor slab. Instead, it offers the potential for more continuous methods of movement within a space. Most notable of these examples is OMA’s Seattle Public Library. The continuous movement in the Guggenheim is even more extreme than the library, where the circulation is the predominant floor space and forces one direction of movement. SANAA’s New Museum in New York, on the other hand, has a circulation core that connects but does not integrate into the building’s function of movement.
On the Emancipation of Typology...

Daniel Hapton  
Advisor: Andrew Zago

This proposal for the Obama Presidential Center exists tenuously between multiple worlds - worlds of logic, worlds of physics, and worlds of Architecture. Effects of multiplicity, strange familiarity, and categorical error compose the language of this thesis. These effects are achieved by techniques that emancipate Architecture’s most prosaic typological elements. Free of their original functions, forms and categories, these elements wander obliviously between multiple realities. They form a discordant ensemble of rude relations, strange affinities, and surprising performances; an alternative coherence is projected. Like so much contemporary culture, it is heterogeneous, sampled, and juxtaposed. It is form reinvented through its insistence on backhanded legibility.

Fragment of Reference

Kenji Hattori  
Advisor: Anna Neimark

Los Angeles is a city without an orientation. While it is commonly held that it is a city that faces the ocean, at its core it is an interior city. The skyline of Downtown LA reflects this lack of alignment; there is nothing for it to reference to. This project proposes a series of buildings situated along the Los Angeles river in Downtown LA. Fragmentary and monumental buildings work to imply connection and cohesion amongst themselves while becoming the antithesis to the city by provoking the common typologies of the skyline. They work to reorient and provide a new frame of reference for the city, opening a dialogue with where the city has been, is now, and will be.
Stuttering

Yunke He
Advisor: Andrew Zago

A lot of architects are interested in repetition and lining something up such as panels, bricks windows. However, I realized that something that doesn’t line up is interesting too. Most of the work of Carl Andre consists of repeated letters and numbers which are applied within the mechanical grid. Delia Solomons argues that “Andre’s refusal to connect his words in sentences (i.e. his denial of syntax as communicative glue) is a direct precursor to his rejection of joints or rivets to connect his clastic units, which would have stabilized his sculptures.” This thesis seeks to explore the issues of repetition in architecture. It employs a branch of elements that each have the same form, color or material and arranges them in a specific way to get the rhythm and the “shape” of poetry.

Screenvironment

Yunxin Hu
Advisor: Jake Matatyaou

The project is an office complex that reimagines the ways in which humans and machines interact through illuminated screens. The complex is conceived as an infinite three-dimensional spatial condition which reflects current and near future informational societies where there are no psychic boundaries between inside and outside.

This project works through scenarios in a typical work environment by de-familiarizing conventional architectural materials in order to confuse the relationship between machine and human. The project aims to comment on current society’s extravagantly designed spaces that ostensibly offer lots of choices and freedom, but that is only a false promise.
Brute
Colin Jacobs
Advisor: Ramiro Diaz Granados

Architecture has an image problem. While traditional methods of representation continue to be useful and effective means to present ideas and designs, alternative methods of representation can be more effective as tools for architects to represent projects and ideas. One such way is through film, narrative, and fiction. Currently these methods are used by other disciplines as effective ways to present ideas, deliver messages, and represent visions of the directors and writers who work on them. Through the use of documentary-style film-making and parafiction, architecture can be recast in a new light, in a way traditional methods of representation have struggled to accomplish. By studying, filming, and presenting Brutalism, a style of architecture that is often heavily criticized, this thesis aims to create an alternative view on how Brutalist projects are seen and understood.

Mode Variant
Meghan Hui
Advisor: Marcelyn Gow

Mode Variant proposes a design method derived from that which we cannot see. A system of simulation tools is created to represent acoustical conditions as they collide with a surface.

The initial point of contact between sound and exterior surface defines the volume of the interior, whereas the interior sounds reverberate to further articulate the interior space and to add more inflections to the exterior. The amplitude of sound determines the area of the deformation, the frequency, its depth. The simulated forms that emerge are streamed to a robotic arm, pushing material into space using a single-point incremental forming technique.

The materials into which simulated abstraction of actual conditions are inscribed, like all media, impose physical constraints on the abstractions represented through them. The extent of these constraints can be calculated through the simulated behavior of the surface. The unseen is made physical through a process that links simulation and material study, which can be applied to all scales of architectural design.
My thesis is about the face recognition on architecture facade. I was interested in the phenomenon that people tended to respond to the composition of facade elements which implied faces, no matter how cartoon like they were or how exaggerate the proportion was. This composition was more popular on classical architectures for their symmetrical arrangement such as Ledoux’s Mason De Campaign. In this Ledoux’s house series, we could read faces on each facade which were hard to be told if they were intended designed. But we could see the contribution the face made to the facades.

The multiple reading effect on Ledoux’s facade really interest me. This effect make the facade more complicated and subtle. The effect is based on the symmetrical distribution. I am trying to make it an unsymmetrical way.
HelioUrbanism: Urban Solar Desalination

Jacob Johnson
Advisor: Ramiro Diaz Granados

The world’s leading three most difficult challenges we face today are maintaining clean water resources, urban planning for the influx of people moving to cities, and finding new renewable energy resources. Helio Urbanism offers a solution to all three issues through designing macroscale urban incisions in dormant urban districts. This prospective city is located in Barcelona in the Diagonal district where a new urban planning is required for the 21st century. This plan is an unusual union between the medieval plan of the 1400’s and Cerda’s 20th century rationalist grid with considerations to solar, geothermal and meteorological conditions. The geometry of the plan proposes that our cities in the future will act as a network that generates energy from the sun while decreasing our dependency from consumable resources.

Counter figuration Clearness or unclearness-absolute and relative clarity

Zhang Jiashu
Advisor: Dwayne Oyler

My research has been on the forms of clarity and lack of clarity created when two different forms, spaces, or objects encounter one another. This thesis is concerned with the “gap” created between entities of different character, and the ambiguous set of characteristics and tensions produced within that “gaps”. My studies began with the production of an object that explores this idea as an object—moving to the exploration of sectional conditions, potential ground relationships, and architectural orientations and organizations—all that seek to maintain those essential relationships between parts.
“Misfit” is a proposal for a movie theatre in a corner site located in Broadway st. in downtown LA. This thesis is introducing some techniques to move from familiar to unfamiliar through distortion resulting in a misfit version of the original object. By mainly taking something too familiar, like a classical order column, as a fundamental architectural element that have a rich historical content and is ideal in terms of proportion and level of details. One technique is using the opposite technique minimizing the amount of the details by solely using the profile of column. Second, is disturbing the scale by blowing up the column capital and turning it into the building’s mass; converting something that is not occupiable in its original form into something occupiable. Textures and seaming come to play to create a balance between familiarity and unfamiliarity. These techniques help advancing figural legibility through abstracting profiles.

“Funny Cyclops and Serious Symmetries” is a proposal for a science center and anthropology museum, located in the city of Lyon, France. The building’s form stems from the union of two contradictory terms: the concept of “Character” and the operation of “Symmetry.” While character is closely related to eccentric features that provide irregularity and figuration, symmetry produces regularity and homogeneity within the composition.
Maneuvered Attractions
Christian Kisereu
Advisor: Dwayne Oyler

Maneuvered Attractions proposes that inherent material qualities and behaviors have the potential for production of particular architectural outcomes at various scales. Iron filings are applied to a series of manipulated magnetic fields that allow for moments of control and freedom. These instances tend to be specific depending on the distance from the source of attraction. For example, control seems to occur closer to the magnets, while freedom gradually develops as that distance increases. Beginning with a series of experiments as a way of obtaining a more intimate understanding of the material, the project gravitates towards two outputs— one at the scale of the wall (intended to demonstrate material qualities), and another at a scale of an inhabitable space (intended to show its potential for a more spatial and organizational outcome). This thesis emphasizes an importance of material and the technique(s) of creation, where the inherent material behaviors guide and inform the manipulation of the magnetic fields to generate a desired result.

In between phenomenal and literal space
Jin Hee Kim
Advisor: Andrew Zago

Offering opportunities for intimate experience from seeing and feeling the space could be one of the moves taken to allow color and pattern to support in between phenomenal and literal space. Material qualities of objects are defined by color and texture, and human beings are largely affected by them both on subconscious levels and in real life as in psychological way. In other words, light, sense of scale, and the relationship of the architecture with its oriented context could be just a small part of architecture affecting the party’s atmosphere, mood, and decision making in it. Surface ornamentation can be interpreted with different experiences of color, texture and construction. Not only can it bring visual aesthetic but also it adds different learning experience, which can transfer to constructional functions and programs. In my thesis, I experiment in between literal and phenomenal space, especially how it can be translated in three-dimensional constructions.
Ensemblespiel
Paul Krist
Advisor: Marcelyn Gow

In an ensemble, the tone of a singular instrument becomes difficult to distinguish at the moment when all of its players strike a note. Each sound vibrates to produce a unifying harmony, an emergent sensation. My thesis translates the ensemblespiel as an investigation of the role of objects in the space of a room and their potential to produce a mood.

Techniques from cinema that include framing, lighting, scalar shifts, and montage are used to transform the rooms of domesticity and the object groups that inhabit them. Drawing inspiration from still life paintings and the picturesque, the careful arrangement and composition of objects within each space produce a condensed visual narrative.

Applying surface strategies of “accumulation, lamination, decoration, coloration, agitation, plastification and environmentalization” to archetypes of the home, the banal transforms into an atmosphere and evokes effective moods (Lavin, The Temporary Contemporary). The four screens accentuate particular elements of each scene and, in other moments, give uncertainty to their configuration.

Looking at Stuff
Bryan Kobe
Advisor: Coy Howard

Looking at Stuff is a catalogue of common material combinations described in drawing by the tools of their construction. The aim is to produce an aesthetic around the amount of complexity involved in simple construction.
The Ether Hotel
Charmaine Lam
Advisor: Florencia Pita

The virtual is generally perceived as a drive against the spatial or physical world. Nevertheless, as telecommunication buildings demonstrate, though usually undetected in cities, the virtual world requires an infrastructure that exists in the physical and spatial world. Traditionally, telecommunication is only dominated by a select few company giants and its buildings are built like menacing black boxes and fortresses without physical presence or ability to signify its function. Then the thesis aims to rethink of a telecommunication carrier hotel—an uncanny machine building, in the urban fabric of downtown Los Angeles, representing both of our information eager era and celebrating our ongoing obsession with the now. A reveal for transparent function and user friendly aesthetics for various free carrier tenants are to be tested to peddle a celebratory image for uncanny carrier hotel. The project then undermines the concept of an autonomous virtuality, revealing instead the simultaneous importance and abandonment of the physical world.

Chance
Elena Larionova
Advisor: Coy Howard

Chance: a set of possibilities, precisely, the choice of events with unpredicted effect. Chance can be used in design process. As much as gains and failures of this process, the uncertainty of it allows for greater degree of vulnerability.

This thesis sets the conditions, their occurrence and development in order to generate a stair. Following Marcel Duchamp’s 3 Standard Stoppages of 1914, which use chance operations to create new units of length, 35 generated meter-long unrolled spirals are thrown onto surfaces at respective angles of a stair. The random profiles of interactive surfaces are then taken as templates.
Unpredictable  
Cunhoa Li  
Advisor: Hernan Diaz Alonso

Built upon history, architecture has a strong internal reference system that promotes the associative thinking of many buildings when looking at a specific one. And this reference makes each building too predictable to the extent of functional purpose and interior space organization. For example, the level of monument quality which is built up on the choices of material and the proportion layout may indicate if a building is a confidential government facility or a private vacation house. There are too many hints to predict with, and those hints are providing the ground to make an unpredictable building. Such building should be capable of luring the observer into an “either-or” prediction while the true answer is hidden. In this sense, a building should be unpredictable in two levels: 1. The appearance cannot show the true identity of the building; 2. The inside organization cannot be foreseen by the observation from outside. In order to do that, my thesis is going to propose a masked building in downtown LA that stirs the hints and prevents itself to be properly referenced.

IN-Accessible  
Ke Li  
Advisor: Elena Manferdini

Even though buildings do not literally speak, they are not necessarily silent. They communicate through signs and representations. People are told by buildings where the entrance is. It is odd then that the need to communicate accessibility seems to outweigh other voices. Perhaps they “talk too much” in this respect. Decorated entrances and, countless windows, clutter facades and drown out other messages in their incessant chatter. When we listen to the building, what else might we hear?

Taking up the role of opening dialogue, the exterior communicates with the interior through signs (entrances, windows...), which are important devices that serve as a transparent representation of the building. This thesis seeks to find how architecture would operate if it did not respond to the fear of needing to situate ourselves within it, of being ‘mute’. Through IN-Accessible, architecture can find a subverted way to communicate.
Contextual Autonomy

Hongyang Lin
Advisor: Ramiro Diaz Granados

My thesis is to use ornament to create a new building with both similarity and discrepancy to the context of a city. Traditionally, ornament is a system that is separate from the structure of the object or building. It is not core to the structure, but rather adheres to it. It has a syntactic relationship to the building it ornaments as well as to itself. Furthermore, ornament is the perception of a city.

The relationship between a building and a city is always controversial, especially in Venice. Ornaments from the context are catalogued as elements of the building. A new system is set up to redefine the perception of ornament in both its traditional form and new composition as one. The ambiguous relationship of the building and context raise the question—is the building strange to the context or the context strange to the building?

REVERSE CITY

Junzhe Liu
Advisor: John Enright

With the growth of the population and high speed development of the city, our public spaces are getting condensed gradually. High-rises and towers occupied the road and left the narrow street space to our citizens. However, the space between towers is always empty. So what I am thinking is what if our city reversed upside and down? We replace the limited street zone with the empty space among buildings. As the heights of towers is always various, we obtained distinct volume of space which is open and vivid. So this thesis focuses on creating a reversed city from possibilities and technique experiments.

Buildings and towers in Manhattan are isolated from each other. People in two buildings are hardly related to others even they are not far away in distance. So this project tries to create a village in sky level.
To begin, let’s describe it. We are looking at a friend that people can stay with. It is not a serious building. It does not solve problems. It creates new ones, unexpected ones, problems of architecture and humanity. Perhaps six months won’t be enough to do both. So, it will hover somewhere between the dimensions of architecture and the scale of the human body. All of this makes me hopeful that it meet the minimal conditions of being a best friend.

Three Sizes in One

Joseph Lock
Advisor: Dwayne Oyler

Three Sizes in One proposes a different reading of traditional part to whole relationships by making tectonic variations in four distinct forms that are configured in three different sizes. These forms are derived from a partial section of Eero Saarinen’s TWA terminal at JFK Airport in New York City. I am designing an extension to the terminal using four primitives at three different sizes—the size of a building, the size of a detail, and an intermediate size—to make a tectonic argument about variations in tectonics at different scales. All of the primitives have inherent qualities in their forms that enable them to be arranged in specific configurations and in different variations of traditional building elements such as slab, wall, and circulatory elements. Because of the unique figures of the primitives, the resulting spaces are both formally similar and yet stand apart from their parent forms.

Elements apart and human non scale

Jiahe Lu
Advisor: Anna Neimark

To begin, let’s describe it. We are looking at a friend that people can stay with. It is not a serious building. It does not solve problems. It creates new ones, unexpected ones, problems of architecture and humanity. Perhaps six months won’t be enough to do both. So, it will hover somewhere between the dimensions of architecture and the scale of the human body. All of this makes me hopeful that it meet the minimal conditions of being a best friend.
Recognizable Identity

Trenton Mays
Advisor: Casey Rehm

We do not live in a world where three dimensional massing and volumes are any longer real things that architects want to take command of. In fact, they do not exist at all in a world that lives entirely on the surface. The form of a building is not as strong of a presents as we, as architects, wish. Architecture acts as a background for our lives. My thesis is to make a facade or surface condition in a building that, if we acknowledge a facade or elevation is a two dimensional surface, that is going to have the capacity to instill three-dimensional effects that are different than the massing or volume behind it. Looking back at early 20th century at the great early modernist masters that wanted to do that with fields like painting, create 3 dimensional form out of 2 dimensional effect. In the 1960s it is updated by Victor Vasarely and Bridget Riley whose two-dimensional patterns generate this complex 3 dimensional effects. The facade can be transformative in its ability to communicate with its surroundings.

Overlay Interaction

Zhaoji Luo
Advisor: Florencia Pita

Interactions between people depends on the composition of communication through words, gestures and actions. Mainly dependent on human interaction symbols, symbols represent something. Symbolic interaction long ruled the micro-sociological, its purpose is to explain symbolically completed interactive how people truly become a person. The significance of this theory focuses on the people in the different symbols conferred interactive owner how to grasp the interactive scenarios, whether the symbols have the same meanings to different people and so on.
Levitation
Rayka Mirzaie
Advisor: Ramiro Diaz Granados

Levitated mass is set to be at Downtown Los Angeles as Levitated Theater. Greg Lynn calls for a reappraisal of architecture’s relation to the ground by shifting away attention from vertical gravity. A sleight of hand Magicians know how to create the illusion of levitated bodies by shifting our attention away from the mechanisms doing the actual work. Levitation is an effect, a visual illusion achieved by diverting one’s attention away from the supporting medium. This effect actually relies upon the standard understanding of a body’s relation to the ground vertical gravity. The downward flow and swaying movements of the garment on a levitated body is intended to mesmerize us and reinforce the levitated effect. This thesis will look at how drapery in architecture can be used to levitate on a simple operated rectangular mass, and hide structure in order to give opportunity to Architecture for how building seats on grand.

Long-cuts and Low-Lines
Kaveh Naeeni
Advisor: Coy Howard

High-Cuts and Long_Lines are alternative public pathways and spaces in a metropolitan city. These public areas are new horizontal grounds that do not follow the grid plan of the city and sit above rooftops and on selected extended walls of existing buildings. Most of new metropolitan areas are densely populated and have sacrificed their outdoor public areas and this project aims to bring them back and these long cuts offer urban residents new perspectives of the city.
Randomness is a form of order born from destruction. Randomness involves a generation of fractional patterns which can then be used to order architectural systems in a non-rectilinear and non-orthogonal manner. Similarly chaotic systems are predictable for a while and then appear to become random. In Chaos Theory, the butterfly effect is the sensitive dependence on initial conditions in which small change in one state of deterministic nonlinear system can result in a large effect in a later state. The random patterns that are generated in this later state can be used for reconstruction.

Mirror, Mirror
Nairi Nayirian
Advisor: Elena Manferdini

Mirror, Mirror is set in the center of the historic courtyard of Plaza de San Francisco in Havana, Cuba as the U.S. Embassy. Architecture here is staged in a performance as it expresses itself and its context. Much like Dan Graham’s exhibition of Two Audiences, the architectural stages will create double roles for the audience and performer, but also with architecture and its context. This role of staging architecture within its context, and with its spectators, creates moments of political and psychological discourse as issues of surveillance and safety arise. The stage for this performance will be set like Jeff Koons’ Coloring Book as the staged reflections will create moments of transparency. The use of mirrors enhances the stage, and it allows it to flip viewers into performers, or it objectifies performers into spectators. A viewer’s perception of space is questioned as they’re staged to view, and coincidentally staged to perform within architecture.
On June 24, 2015, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named The Factory (Mitchel Cameral Company Factory) to its list of America’s 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in recognition of the growing threat to an icon of the early entertainment industry and West Hollywood’s pioneering Disco community. Stephanie Meeks, president of the National Trust says: “The Factory is a trove multi-layered history that simply cannot be replaced.”

What is it exactly what these people with different interests are trying to preserve in The Factory? Is it the dilapidated and defaced façade? Are preservationists just nostalgists who refuse progression? I find that when a copy is made of a building to capture its essence, it must deviate from the original and its unique characteristics must be amplified and embellished. With this result, which is something that has maintained the same information but is expressed differently, it will in turn exhibit more qualities worthy of preserving, even more than the original.

Shoulder to Shoulder continues investigation into the ‘sectional object’ as a driver of form in architecture with a proposal for the Taichung City Cultural Center in Taiwan. In this proposal two volumes collide and overlap, while the shared spaces of their intersection becomes dislodged to produce a third embedded object between them. This arrangement of forms both fuses and separates the competing building programs of a fine arts museum and public library, as dictated in the 2013 competition brief.

In addition, the project explores varying densities of perforation across multiple layers of building surface both internally and externally. This perforation, developed through techniques of image sampling and orthographic projection, imbues a level fuzziness and complexity that blurs the interaction between the volumes and challenges the viewer with shifting levels of opacity and transparency. The combination of these aesthetic effects and formal arrangements generates multiple layers of interstitial space, which in turn blurs the boundary between inside and outside; the seen and the unseen.
Once Upon a Time

Dylan Perkinson
Advisor: Elena Manferdini

Once Upon a Time explores the relationship between icon, materiality, and meaning. This exploration exists inside the life of the tableau—or still life—where inanimate objects become animated. This animation is the beginning of a narrative, an entirely new temporal world, a fantasy world parallel to everyday reality. This world is miniaturized, as objects are represented as toys, lending themselves to private fantasy, and their ontologies become multiplied. Once Upon a Time is to play, to try out different sets of contexts, and to explore different meanings without the scrutiny of the absolute.

City as Architecture

Kazuhiro Okamoto
Advisor: Andrew Zago

“The City as like a Great house, and the house in its turn a small city.”
Leon Battista Alberti

“Late Style is in, but oddly apart from the present”
Edward W. Said

Producing an archipelago in Manhattan reimagines the position of architectural methods in the urban discourse. Unwrapping the ‘Muller House’ to decode the architectural space, and imposing it on Manhattan breaks the current repetitious and non-hierarchical fields. This produces a new urban typology to influence the future urbanization.
This thesis investigates the balance between the design of process (how) and the design of product (what) in the field of the translation from digital simulation to materialized object and vice versa. It focuses on specifically the aesthetic aspect of the outcome and attempts to seek for a change of the current situation where a difficult, well articulated theory/workflow tends to end up in entropy.

There are two sets of vectors: the vector of chaos, and the vector of control. Accident is such moment where the vector of chaos overpowers the vector of control. In the context of workflow, the “uncontrolled” moments can also be described as a sort of accident. As uncontrollable as it sounds, there are many other form that accident takes other than the generic decay. Through the research of such forms and how they’re achieved (namely the product>process hierarchy), the thesis is attempting to, in the specific context of digital-analog workspace, establish a more dynamic relation between the design of process and the design of product. It is my speculation that re-introducing the awareness of the product into the context might bring us new inspirations and new understanding of the workflow design.

Burgeon

Alexander Petrikos
Advisor: Ivan Bernal

“In Greek, ‘nostalgia’ literally means ‘the pain from an old wound.’ It’s a twinge in your heart far more powerful than memory alone. This device isn’t a spaceship, it’s a time machine. It goes backwards, and forwards... it takes us to a place where we ache to go again. It’s not called the wheel, it’s called the carousel. It let’s us travel the way a child travels—around and around, and back home again, to a place where we know are loved.”

Don Draper

Burgeon is an architectural narrative paralleling the lifespan of a human to that of architecture, and to incorporate nostalgia for progressive architectural representation. This narrative will be portrayed through the medium of film. Working within the semiotics of cinematography, architecture can be represented in new forms past the traditional drawing and physical model.

Digital Craft

Ruizi Qin
Advisor: Andrew Zago

This thesis investigates the balance between the design of process (how) and the design of product (what) in the field of the translation from digital simulation to materialized object and vice versa. It focuses on specifically the aesthetic aspect of the outcome and attempts to seek for a change of the current situation where a difficult, well articulated theory/workflow tends to end up in entropy.

There are two sets of vectors: the vector of chaos, and the vector of control. Accident is such moment where the vector of chaos overpowers the vector of control. In the context of workflow, the “uncontrolled” moments can also be described as a sort of accident. As uncontrollable as it sounds, there are many other form that accident takes other than the generic decay. Through the research of such forms and how they’re achieved (namely the product>process hierarchy), the thesis is attempting to, in the specific context of digital-analog workspace, establish a more dynamic relation between the design of process and the design of product. It is my speculation that re-introducing the awareness of the product into the context might bring us new inspirations and new understanding of the workflow design.
The goal of this thesis is a disruption of the coherency of space through a juxtaposition of two geometric ideals—accomplished by conflating two heterological systems—a mixture of Euclidean and non-Euclidean geometric techniques. The first system is a domain of solids, and the second system is a domain of imprecise vectorial paths. The result is a series of entities which interact in an erratic clasp—an invented construct that, while not entirely discernable, has recognizable qualities.

The modern philosophy of object oriented ontology posits an existential flaw in the scientific method, echoing Greg Lynn’s concept of inexactness. These ideas are coupled with a contemporary understanding of space to capitalize on the philosophy that we actually live in a world with constant curvature—and, additionally, that the natural expression of architecture within curved space would somehow be an expression of it—a disruption surface, structure, and volume.

In the process of designing a building finish usually comes last. We are taught to think about site, context, massing, interiority...everything else before finish. Finish is the end of the project—but what if it was the beginning? Since they are not dependent upon form, color and finish are autonomous—an idea that opens new design opportunities.

This project is a proposal for three mixed used developments in Koreatown, Los Angeles that explore finish as a tool for design. Each building has a generic program, massing and facade and relies solely on finish to develop its architectural concept.
Metrics, program, and place are three compositional principles Alison Smithson addresses when analyzing a mat-building. By dismantling these ideologies of the modern period, and through the re-organization of architectonic and urban concepts, *Urban Motherboard* aims to create a network of housing units that operate along machine standards. With the current housing shortage in San Francisco, this thesis returns to some of the Utopian schemes for social living, updating them for the 21st century.

**SCREEN CITIES**

Jackie Salazar McCallion
Advisor: Peter Trummer

*HYPOSTYLE HOUSE* is an independent bilingual school, dormitory, and nonprofit library in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. San Pedro Sula’s street-level facades are dominated by a preponderance of perimeter walls, barriers, and screens, a legacy of the grid cities of colonial New Spain, and the constant perception of imminent urban danger. *HYPOSTYLE HOUSE* confronts this ruthlessly fenced urban characteristic at the scale of the urban block by creating a porous ground condition, entirely elevating its enclosed program. The volumes above are supported by a series of swelled columns and rounded spaces which act as seating and circulation at different levels throughout the project. The formal character of the spaces and their hypostyle arrangement were originally drawn from the Mosque at Cordoba, a progressively built, hypostyle dual program urban block project which creates horizontal space through narrow, evenly spaced columns and vertical space through stacked columns and rounded voids. *HYPOSTYLE HOUSE* inverts this relationship; columns become vertical, individual spaces while rounded sectional voids create horizontal collective spaces.
Pyramids, period.

Kyla Schaefer
Advisor: Anna Neimark

Pyramids is a 2.8 million square foot convention center adjacent to LAX in Los Angeles. Juxtaposing surface and mass, two equivalent formal typologies meet matching program typologies in order to create maximally different outcomes within the same iconic form.

Blow Up

Zhengxuanizi Shang
Advisor: Florencia Pita

“By developing with enlargers things emerge that we probably don’t see with the naked eye. Hence there’s a moment in which we grasp reality, but then the moment passes. This was in part the meaning of Blowup.”

Michelangelo Antonioni, as quoted in The Complete Films

The photographer in Michelangelo Antonioni’s 1966 film, “Blow-Up”, wants to see things closer up. But if so happens that by enlarging too far, the object itself decomposes and disappears. In one moment the photographer thought he captured the reality, but the next moment he couldn’t tell what is reality or imagination. The movie indicates that it is impossible to establish what is objectively true, and to separate reality from imagination. The relationship between reality and imagination are always subtle and uncertain. So this project aims to create an architectural language which can express the relationship between reality and imagination.
Recast
Xiangtai Sun
Advisor: Casey Rehm

A contemporary approach in architecture toward distinguishing reality from its representation is to translate information extracted from existing objects into other entities. There are myriad ways to manipulate and use information, but it is essential to maintain the legibility of the referent. The balance of using images of things that are familiar in order to produce things that are unfamiliar is much more difficult than to transform the image into something totally different. The focus of this work is that it seems to replicate things in an exact way but at a certain point we notice that some specific things like details are absent, which begins to change the way we understand both reality and its representation.

Appropriated Original
Anthony Stoffella
Advisor: David Ruy

The problem of originality is at the heart of architecture, and has been present in many different ways. On the most basic level, people are capable of telling the difference between one building and another, which as a meaning, is enough as an architectural definition of originality. This thesis focuses on reversing the banality that corporate architects frequently produce today while maintaining no formal alliances to any particular style. This done through exploring methods of appropriation of the surrounding context. Such a methodology may seem perverse in some respects, as cheap building elements are used to produce a high end aesthetic. Yet in doing so, I hope to develop a compositional sense of what distinguishes one formal system from another and what constitutes an original architecture.
modus vivendi
Cassandra Tavolarella
Advisor: Marcelyn Gow

“We were the people who were not in the papers. We lived in the black white spaces at the edges of print.”
Margaret Atwood

Modus vivendi, or ‘way of life’ is an arrangement that allows conflicting parties to coexist. We typically understand buildings through traditional drawings and viewpoints, such as an elevation, plan, and section. However, we never experience architecture through these apparati. We explore the city through frames, only reading certain information that is within our visual field, or fits within a lens.

Modus vivendi proposes a new government center in place of an old railway station in Budapest, which would house the 32 ministries responsible for each district. Using mannerist techniques of juxtaposing language and architectural elements in a different context from a panorama, we can reimage the urban context through a way of seeing not only familiar to us, but also enfranchises our experience and autonomy.

Representation of models
Tri Ta
Advisor: Anna Neimark

This thesis searches for a new identity for the cube through the view of a camera. The two-dimensional image of a subject created through the camera lens contains hidden information which exists in the three-dimensional environment. Reproducing the cube through its abstracted, two-dimensional identity provides the opportunity for its reconfiguration. This project investigates the restricted courthouse program through this rendering technique to produce new architecture form.
The countryside is no longer only a green territory of nostalgia, but also an increasingly digitalized place where architecture is reaching a posthuman scale saturated by semi-abandonment. This thesis will explore architecture for the countryside as a globalized place of big business where the architecture is transforming from human-scale sanctuary to extremely abstract hyper artificiality of posthuman scale. The specific medium is the data server farm and the usage of color sensitive paint pigments as a representation of this type of architecture, specifically from a google art and architecture perspective, to capture the awkward pairing of strangeness and familiarity, reality and disguise, stagnation and transformation.

Literal Phenomenality
Emre Turan
Advisor: Peter Trummer

Architecture has conveniently been reduced to two dimensions ‘a drawing’ for representation purposes. This thesis builds the drawing into a form of architecture. However, this architecture does not create spaces for humans; it does not seek to be functional for humans; or it does not seek to be aesthetically pleasing. Instead, through the use of textiles, the inherent qualities of textiles such as variable transparency, two-dimensionality, flexible rigidity emerges an aesthetic that is close to a digital drawing but is as real as an existing architecture. Use of existing drawings from other sources overlaid on each other to create this architecture, bases the process on reality rather than abstraction in the process of turning the drawing into a reality. In the end, the final product is a play between two dimensional and three dimensional space, hence the abstraction and the reality.

The New Sublime
Mimmi van der Vliet
Advisor: Elena Manferdini
The digital turn in architecture has opened new possibilities for design. With the technologies and tools at our disposal today, ornament can be pushed into unexplored territories. This project aims to reclaim Ornament in a different configuration. The argument here is that once ornament is reconfigured in an excessive manner, it loses its decorative character and becomes something new. The multiplicity of ornament masks the singularity of one. In order to push beyond the decorative, this project will investigate the representational and functional dimensions of ornamentation in architecture. Through the exploration of the extents of excessiveness, a new artifact will emerge. In order to incorporate high function and design in architecture, this project will take the form of a solar panelized pavilion.
Urban expansion happened since cities were established, and never stop. In our thesis project, we are seeking a new possible type of urban expansion. Infrastructure like road, freeway, subway, stations, airports such places have taken much valuable land resources in urban space, for example, streets took over 25% of Manhattan’s area. It limits the spatial possibility three dimensionally. City should get increasingly dense, so does infrastructure.

Civil airport never changed. But the land value raised up supper fast. This project is like an attempt on possibility of urban expansion. This project is a city in a city. Size of this project is gigantic, and the project itself is complicated. Urbanizing infrastructure, make it dense enough to develop the spatial value behind is our thesis of this project.

“Design was appendage of objective logic to art and acted to replace sensate consciousness in the cultural application of technology, with the resulting lie that you can replace subjective consciousness with a system of aesthetics. This is attested to by our present humanist starved environment, symbols of life quality have replaced subjectivity felt qualities.”

Robert Irwin

As a place isolated from the outside world, domestic space amplifies the sensation of the atmospheric environment, which will further enhance the characteristic of the space being acted upon by the inhabitants. Instead of separating the domestic space into their program defined rooms, the thesis is trying to explore a way to design felt quality driven spaces which will bring the multiplicity of impressions, sensations and emotions for us to discover.
Hybridized Morphology
Chun Mei Yuan
Advisor: Marcelyn Gow

Two extreme landscape conditions influence the design of a visiting center located on Abraham Lake in Alberta, Canada. The fundamental design approach is produced through the interpretation of two images of landscapes, taken from Antelope Canyon and Abraham Lake. Both images contain features that inherently challenge architectural qualities. When scaled, these qualities change identity but maintain their intrinsic characteristics producing an artifact of the original landscape. Through sampling features from the graphic data, visual elements are adopted with the aim of producing an architectural composite where the form is influenced by more than one landscape to create a dual atmospheric effect.

2D Depth
Xiaonan Yang
Advisor: Andrew Zago

Depending on the position of observing an object, the result could be different. Objects shift from a hovering perfect flat plane to a bent and curved continuous surface of light and shadow which allows the brain to exist in blurred states between knowing and not knowing. During the process of translation between two dimensions and three dimensions, the huge amount of information missing brings the consequence of vague explanation and self-misreading. These mistakes are the impact that pushes the design forward. 2D Depth is a description of this dubious condition of uncoordinated translation. Objects stay in diverse explanations simultaneously. From the same point of view, since there are too many explanations which are tenable so that it is hard to tell the correct condition, all answers are both right and wrong. Along with the change of position, the form varies continuously which brings the time dimension into the object.
In the world of plastic surgery, skins are pushed, pulled, and moved to transform individuals into new versions of themselves. In the world of architecture, masses are pushed, pulled, cut, pasted and chopped to transform primitives into hyper-formal versions of themselves. Masses are massed and skins overlaid as a secondary/tertiary procedure. Limitations within the field of plastic surgery force surgeons to operate and transform on a surface level. Can architecture operate in the same way [on surface] to transform/mutate form into new project? This thesis looks to define and create a project from primitive forms through the overlaying of [hyper-textural] skins with underlying intentions to confound readings of the original covered mass. What can this newly found dis-associated relationship between mass and skin offer to the architectural project? Can this separation evoke newly read re-associations?

This thesis is to study the part to whole relationship and to take the Gundam toy as a reference. It is exploring the vague limits between different components in one combining object. I began with both organic and inorganic source objects. I recombined the components. Some of the limits between different parts are blurred while some remained clear. When these different kinds of components are gathered and limited inside a glass box, the spaces between all of them could create the interior.
Integrity / Completeness and purity is the speciality of most modern and contemporary chapels. It is totally different from the ones in the early stages, which have a feature of complexity and mixture. By disintegration of MIT Chapel, completeness and purity are destroyed and replaced by unsteadiness. At the same time, the oculus is distorted, broken, and converted to scattered holes aligned on surface, reconstituting the relationship between light and space. Distortion brings typical cathedral languages back to MIT Chapel, with contrast between simpleness and complexity, order and disorder. Ruins, with a disappearance of original overall impression, are dead moments of architecture, and are going to be reconstructed in the future. In order to bring ruins back to life, it needs to be integrated with new material and imagination. This project is not static but is limbo, is solidification of moments. Immediate construction is always on previous ruins. Coexistence and coherence of construction and deconstruction make architecture live forever.

“SHIKUMEN”—the residential lane house in Shanghai has been undergoing widespread demolition. In the effort of preservation, old bricks have been replaced; paint has been covered. New facades are made to look “same”. The indifferent approach toward preservation is questionable. This project tackles the typical perception of preservation through the making of replica based on one picture of SHIKUMEN. The manipulation speculates one point perspectival drawing by transforming existing information to re-imagine a possible space within the image. The space is reconfigured through literalizing the perspectival view of the inner lane. By deliberately taking apart and reconstructing the perspectival, new entrance spaces are created, through deep rather than thin thresholds. Foot traffic also alters when internal lanes are inverted, flipped, and dislocated.

What exists here on the picture becomes the reality of SHIKUMEN. The replication through image offers insights to speculate with a more evocative and specific approach.
Unexpected Aspects of Control
Agustina Alaines & Galileo Morandi
Studio with Marcelo Spina and Casey Rehm

Glorieta de Insurgentes is used as a formal and geographical point of reference to develop a complex object that operates at multiple levels - urban, architectural and constructive. By approaching it at different scales, the relationship of what is part and what is whole interchange subject.

This object is conceived as an expandable system. It is generated by a designed process of image reading that decompresses spatial graphic information coded in a solidity gradient of architectural characteristics.

The tension between the technical approach and the architectural - and human - interpretation of data offers a blurry limit for unexpected aspects of a highly controlled process. The unexpected is the object of design.

Distortions and Alterations of the Real
Fuzzy Objects & Misfigured Fields

Instructors: Marcelo Spina and Casey Rehm
Collaborators: Jake Newsum and Francisco Pardo
Architectural Technologies / ESTm Degree Studio

The tension between object and field has been at the center of architectural debate from Gilles Deleuze “A Thousand Plateaus” to Grant Harman “Object Oriented Philosophy”. The friction between continuity and discontinuity or fragmentation, the seeming opposition between volume and surface, even the conception of architecture as either thermodynamic flow or biologic motion versus that of inorganic nature and mineral crystals, all suggest a strong dichotomy within the field. While the materialist philosophy of Deleuze advocated that objects were nothing but incremental accumulations of continuous matter, O3 presupposes the existence of objects as entities but offers no insight into how these are made-dwelling instead on their sensual manifestations and withdrawn essential characteristics...

The studio centered on the tension between multiple, discrete, even disparate parts [fields] and complex, indeterminate vague monolithic wholes [objects]. The impossibility to unify parts with whole, or the necessity of many wholes were the unresolved questions posed by the studio. Rather than only understanding parts as essential, we imagined them as physical glitches within both architectural objects and urban fields. How to imaginatively translate graphic texture into physical matter and tectonic assembly was a dominant subject within the class.

Specifically, the studio looked at Mexico City as a site for investigation. By concentrating on a nodal site within the world’s largest Megalopolis, with a widespread urban fabric that extends from a former basin of a lake over adjacent mountains and enjoys one of the most polluted airs worldwide, the studio pursued new territories for technologically enabled and architecturally driven explorations. Taking a “speculative realist” stance, the studio generated a range of speculative proposals that are still grounded on real problems of today. Rather than utopia or plain futurism, the studio’s intention was to engender architectural propositions for a near future, visionary yet plausible, real but not realistic.

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ESTm
Studio with Marcelo Spina and Casey Rehm

STUDENTS:
Agustina Alaines
Chuang-Ting Chang
Elias Jackson Darham
Min Duan
Oren Harris
Karin Hedlund
Alexander Iraklis Kallioras
Yichao Li
Mengting Liu
Matias Lopez Llovet
Galileo Morandi
Gürhan Pekuz
Shilpa Sushil
Correlation and Reflection

Chuang-Ting Chang
Studio with Marcelo Spina and Casey Rehm

While the density of urban development increases, land open to the public decreases. Global trends are transforming cities into megacities. A megacity can be considered a future architectural mechanism. Hence, searching for and constructing new spaces within the dense urban fabric has become a primary challenge for architects.

By scanning the city from a satellite, an automatic system helps define appropriate zones and development areas. This system assembles and constructs new spaces, distributes living, open, public, green and intermediary spaces, bridges and platforms. Through this combination of artificial intelligence and technology, a blueprint for future megacities may be constructed.

Figure, Volume, Tectonics

Elias Jackson Darham
Studio with Marcelo Spina and Casey Rehm

The production of figures enables the activation and intercommunication of multiple systems of material intelligence. Using procedurally developed systems, the project asserts that partially autonomous processes may articulate context and form, producing varied agency and porosity over multiple masses.

This linear monolith is comprised of three primary masses, which in turn are aggregations of figural volumes. Each of these volumes give agency to varied modes of tectonic assembly and construction. The intelligence of the communication across volumes, therefore, becomes central to the success of both mass and tectonics.
Irriguous matter
Karin Hedlund
Studio with Marcelo Spina and Casey Rehm

As the computer becomes the ocular user subject the relation between the real, the image, and the human eye changes. The pixelated flattened image is reinterpreted and layered with new information as perceptive algorithms respond to visual data, and information is both added and removed with each translation.

This project reinterprets and amplifies the surrounding chromatic hues from an infinite material resolution via computative translation to the amount of embedded information that matter can hold. A collapse between the real and the perceived is the result when new readings are made as information with both strong and weak ties are stacked and materialized.

The building is a water retention tower that collects and stores moisture from its environment with a pigmentation responding to water amount and composition.

Bestrewn Composite
Oren Harris
Studio with Marcelo Spina and Casey Rehm

This structure is an argument for the void in the solid void relationship and its creation of form. It blends the lines of the whole by creating structure through destruction of mass, subtraction from mass, and the combination of voids into wholes. The discussion is further blurred by the application of atmospheric pollution onto the form through a process of natural precipitation and electrostatic charge. An ever-changing form is deposited and eroded on the preexisting structure, bringing the creation of further solid spaces and their erosion to void into the fourth dimension.
Reflection, Reality and Space Continuum

Alexander Iraklis Kalliorias
Studio with Marcelo Spina and Casey Rehm

This project is an attempt to merge time and space under the flattening view of architectural representation. This is a speculation on the way objects are transformed throughout time. How they would be perceived if we could take ourselves in a higher dimension and look at time spatially.

The RE-fraction, the RE-flection and materiality blur the threshold between reality and space continuum.

By multi-layering objects with the properties mentioned above, the project exceeds the theoretical sphere and acquires status and notion in the physical realm.

Floating Inhabitation

Yichao Li
Studio with Marcelo Spina and Casey Rehm

This project speculates about the ideas of aggregation and assembly by exploring the potential of image processing techniques. A process of assemblage is used to create an art museum, which establishes the foundation structure of a residential tower typology. Moreover, the aggregation strategy forms the living spaces floating above the art museum to assume heterogeneous performance and rhythmical aesthetic effects. This mixed-use project proposal is sited in the Glorieta Insurgentes of Mexico City. In order to help cut emissions and to make the city a greener place, eco-friendly strategies are utilized to improve the local inhabited environment.
Based on performative qualities that a wall can achieve, such as privacy and controlled climate condition, the project focuses its goal in splitting these properties from a single wall into different planes.

Between these planes, the project creates a filtering space that acts as a buffer, allowing the building to modify the street relation or condition determined by the distance between the interior and exterior mesh. Inherent to the distance between these two meshes, the frames in the interior mesh are scaled to allow more or less light acting as a second filter system.

Hybrid Canopies
Min Duan & Mengting Liu
Studio with Marcelo Spina and Casey Rehm

This project explores different methods to extract formal and tectonic information from planometric site images, translating them into three dimensional forms. In order to acknowledge the need for affordable housing and to improve the quality of pedestrian life around Glorieta de Insurgentes, three typologies of assemblage respond to the needs of this area: residential buildings, canopies and landscape structures. With the combinations of different material processes and performative ambitions, we are trying to extend the use of 3D printing techniques beyond extrusion into the fabricated world of architecture.
Vertically (Re) Defined
Shilpa Sushil
Studio with Marcelo Spina and Casey Rehm

re-define
1: to define (as a concept) again: reformulate <had to redefine their terms>
2a: to reexamine or reevaluate especially with a view to change b: transform

The ever growing needs of Mexico City—the world’s largest megalopolis in this project are catered to by a vertical reconfiguration or redefinition of the city; a system that allows the city to propagate vertically. Through image analysis and interpolation with the vertical, a new definition of varied spatial qualities and functionalities are created as an integrated system.

Inversion
Gürhan Pekuz
Studio with Marcelo Spina and Casey Rehm

This project takes place in Glorieta de Insurgentes in México City. This structure provides shading and adds gardens into different levels. The aim is to create a new definition to the existing glorieta. Scripting and design investigation of images is the core foundation of the design process. This project questions different production techniques and undertakes possibilities of mixed material use. Inversed robotic 3D printing and mixed-material use is investigated in model making, redesigning and rethinking procedure.
The project is based on the old urban context of the city of Riyadh, it consists of small alleys and roads with compacted residential units which created a condensed urban fabric which was caused of the surrounding wall of the old city while the city was growing.

The small alleys was used as circulation in the building by placing the cores of the kingdom Tower and the Fasalia Tower as the two main high rise buildings in the city of Riyadh in the project, the two high rise buildings where placed in a horizontal position to make use of the cores and the shafts for circulation and the floors has become the dividing walls.

The high rise buildings where compacted on top of each other on the base of the old urban fabric of Riyadh city and was surrounded in a spherical shape to end up with the final version of the 260 m tall building, the sphere consisted of deferent articulations on the facades that represents the local culture and context and consisted of a number of wholes and openings to show the interior from the exterior.

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King Abdullah Financial District Master Plan
David Ho – Sara Milani Nia

This project is located Saudi Arabia. The idea behind the project is the relationship between object, field and the mutation of them to create a new urban form. This new presentation of form tries to achieve a new term between what Koolhaas considers as event and what Eisenman considers as form; therefore Sears tower in Chicago is taken as an object and the metro map of Paris is been considered as a field. The vertical shafts created a network of circulation within the building acting as an urban network which creates city and this circulation is organized according the Paris’s metro map. The internal shafts of sears tower changed into the main circulation of the new object/field urban mass in order to play the new role in the new urban scaled building. The sears modernist structural elements such as columns changed into façade texture in the new mass.

LEARNING AND WRITING FOR TIJUANA
New Visions for a possible future across the US-MEX Metropolitan Border
Riccardo Del Fabbro – Nicola Montuschi
Advisor: Peter Zellner – SCIFI: Independent Studies

Tijuana and San Diego are divided and connected. How can we treat a wide scale that absorbs social-political fragmentations? How can we manage different ecologies inside an urban and anthropic landscape? This plurality belongs to different social geographies in conflict. They persist to produce mutual profits through diverse interdependences. If we think about these ecologies, what are the solutions to connect them? Are there possibilities to read the micro realities and understand them, while at the same time reading the macro trends? How can we mix diversities while not denying identities? Developing aggregations that can support cultural and economical growth. Let’s think about dense and dynamic scenarios. The Tijuana/San Diego metropolitan area gives us the chance to produce an understanding on possible realities. Realities in which differences are the common ground for connections. Realities in which divisions become permeable and discrepancies become generative moments of social and economical patterns.
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