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M.Arch 1 & 2

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Juan Heriberto Carádenas Jr. 19
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Zhifei Chen 23
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Graduate Thesis Review at Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles
Graduate Thesis Weekend

Graduate Thesis Coordinator
Florencia Pita

Advisors
Matthew Au
Hernan Diaz Alonso
Ramiro Diaz Granados
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David Ruy
Natasha Sandmeyer
Marcelo Spina
Maxi Spina
Peter Testa
Devyn Weiser
Tom Wiscombe
Andrew Zago

Superjuror
Mark Wigley

Theory Advisors
Erik Geniou
Marrikkka Trotter

AT
Claudia Wainer

TA’s
Samuel Flower
Juan Villarreal

Friday, 2pm – 6pm
Saturday, 9:30am – 6:30pm
Sunday, 10am – 2pm

All school exhibition of thesis work reviewed by members of the SCI-Arc faculty and distinguished local and visiting architects.
Students, guest critics, and faculty: as we get ready to discuss our graduate thesis, I wanted to say a few words about its context.

First: Be Optimistic…

This is meant neither to discourage you, nor to give you too much permission to do things that you shouldn’t. It is meant to help you focus on thesis as a particular “format” for architecture and for SCI-Arc. A thesis is an individual input into the collective conversation called architecture. It’s not about what architecture can do for you; it’s about what you can do for architecture. As peculiar as that may sound, the sooner we realize that, the sooner we gain the discipline to do what we really want to do.

Thesis, believe it or not, shouldn’t be about inventing something completely from scratch that nobody has ever seen before. Instead, we like to think that it’s about identifying some very specific and hopefully important part of the larger architectural conversation that is presently at a critical inflection point. It is about always looking for an ingenious way to push the conversation in a new direction.

Secondly, this is probably the last chance for our students, at least for a long time, to come up with a project that can deliberately go beyond what is possible or even what makes sense. This is part of what the architectural conversation needs from us. That means that a thesis can shift, in its own small way, where we are going as a discipline.

Because we are arguing that this is the direction where things are heading, this makes a thesis a very specific contribution to a very specific conversation. 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’s going, and then figure out how, in our own unique way, to move the line of what is possible and what is impossible.

I will tell you what that means that at SCI-Arc. This is most certainly not a traditional place in which to enter the conversation. If you are smart you will use this to your advantage. People expect you to do something unusual and amazing or surprise them with a completely lateral move.

Here at SCI-Arc we don’t really see architecture as part of the world, as much as we see the world as having: (1.) parts that are architecture in which we are interested, and (2.) parts that aren’t architecture, which we are happy to steal ideas from, and hope that the rest will take care of itself. It is assumed that you 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. We do it for the love of architecture, for those who think that we change the bad, improve the good, challenge the reality and always be generous.

One real last point: be optimistic. Architecture is an act of Optimism. Period.


On the 7th of December, 1954, Philip Johnson held a lecture at Harvard University called “The 7 crutches of Modern Architecture,” an enumeration of intellectual excuses that architects use to project relevance to their projects: Johnson’s list included History, Pretty Drawings, Utility, Comfort, Cheapness, Client and Structure. He likened these to Trojan horses, presented to the public to prove the validity of an architect’s work, often losing a wider perspective on what constitutes architecture in the first place. Such crutches, he implied, are often accepted by the public as sufficient, because they comply with the standard obligations of architecture seen as a professional service. Johnson framed such crutches as 19th-century romantic, mechanical, and ethical misconceptions of architecture. To an expert audience, Johnson claimed, such categories of meaning are insufficient and become an intellectual trap that architects are caught into believing.

Our summer thesis seminar for the graduating class of September 2018 took that lecture as its title. As students prepared for their final reviews, guest from the SCI-Arc faculty lectured on 7 clichés based on Johnson’s talk, slightly modified to reflect our contemporary academic context: History, Pretty Drawings, Formalism, Intentionality, Philosophy, Art and Ethics. Their lectures offered insight to the various design trajectories of the school.

The idea for the class came from the earnest desire for students to think critically about how they justify work and what establishing meaning might entail in the long run. The goal was to provide pragmatic advice and theoretical background to students in the final stages of their theses as they face the conundrum of choosing
a way of working and representing their proofs of concept. We wanted to give them the tools to recognize crutches within their own bodies of work.

Our graduating class was encouraged to distinguish between disciplinary meaning and creative processes, professional obligations and architectural concerns, stylistic sorcery and historical awareness, the up and down sides of lying and the necessity to always keep it real with oneself. After all, the awareness of one’s creative formula is the first step towards a personal design language, and this is the best sign that a student has earned his or her graduate degree in architecture. The greatest measure of an academic program’s success is its ability to guide and support the growth of a personal language, which is the foundation of creative work.

Ultimately, the soul of the graduate curriculum lies where maturity, risk, novelty, failure, boldness, growth and fragility coexist. Graduate Thesis reviews are the moment when each student, faculty member, practitioner and theorist has to own that conversation about their personal architectural language in a public arena.

Please join me in cheering to our 2018 Graduate Thesis Class that left its crutches behind!

Elena Manfredini
SCI-Arc Graduate Programs Chair
There is an intimate relationship between architecture and war. War unsettles the urban configuration and rends gaps in the city’s tissue. Ancient cities were defined by their defenses; modernism developed in the ashes of the great world wars. What if we acknowledge war’s creative potential and cede some of the city’s changeable plan to its agency? This project is situated in Aleppo, Syria. The Civil War (2011–ongoing), has generated a number of unfinished and unoccupied buildings that the artist and writer Caitlin Berrigan characterizes as “a web of ghost architecture fixed in time.”

In addition, urban memory has been profoundly disrupted. There are places with different names, without names, and sites where the name is all that is left. This thesis intends to acknowledge such loss while refusing to elevate ruination to the status of iconicity by using the accumulated debris of multiple bombardment campaigns as material for rebuilding. The project explores the textural possibilities of composite walls produced from rubble, referencing but not recreating a historic construction technique with deep cultural resonance.
FAT investigates the use of excessive thickness as functional primary programming within the context of residential architecture in Los Angeles. Rather than assume a previously dead wall space to be useless or secondary, an entire unit is created from the leftover space between interior and exterior walls. FAT exploits a classic, thickened diagram in an attempt to challenge our understandings of interior, exterior, and interstitial spaces. As a result, solid and void relationships become both pronounced and muddled with unconventional programming and circulatory perversity.

Architects give interior designers a bad name. The common narrative is that architects work theoretically through rigid, enduring materials while decorators, instinctively through movable objects in delicate fabrics. A paradox, furniture sits in both a place of mutual necessity and of conflict. Architects at once require furniture to realize the programmatic needs of their architecture, while they distrust that furniture is an interruption of form. Interior designers on the other hand value it for exactly this reason—furniture softens the austerity of form alone. The tension between the two disciplines over furniture reveals social hierarchies of gender, sexuality, and class. My thesis dismantles the binary between interior decoration and architecture through an exploration of furniture in a train station. I am interested in celebrating continuous domesticity as part of the urban landscape.
In today’s city, various zoning regulations and building commission stipulate that even the most banal developments feature a certain amount of surface detail. My thesis asks instead what opportunities might emerge from the radical reduction of applied ornament. Rather than disguise repetitive blocks generated by the same late capitalist financial logic of risk and ROI (return on investment) with faux-differentiated ornament, this project proposes that a completely blank pedestrian interface could clear space for a new understanding of the city experience. By adding a layer between architecture and urban space, this thesis will aim to give a thickness to emptiness and refuse the commodification of thin and meaningless surface treatments.

Does the silhouette give the real shape of the building? The single forms can produce multiple silhouette and separate form, viewed differently, can give the appearance of a unified shape. This thesis argues that the silhouette is an architecturally significant entity precisely because it oscillates between epistemological and ontological ways of experiencing the built environment. My project aims to use the silhouette to instigate a looser and more dynamic relationship between form and shape, and doing that by exploring the building through minimum silhouette, because the minimum silhouette gives us ways to see the absolute in packs of silhouette.

Starting with many types of shapes and how they come together to produce massing, this project will focus on the building’s outline from various human and non-human vantages. Series of possible forms will come by doing this technique.
American Power Box investigates ontological weakness in the architectural expression of power. If modern architecture used to embody hegemonic national power with equally singular form, today more striated and heterodox political structures require more multiplicitous modes of expression. At the same time, states still require symbolic and physical manifestations of their authority. This thesis explores the potential in this conflict with an embassy prototype that simultaneously enacts and represents the United States’ newly fraught status on the international stage. A holographic, opalescent cube that indexes the security apparatus within presents a luminous yet impervious state of being in the world.

Momentary Compromise investigates the column-to-wall relationship through the lens of the human perception and experience. Building on Alberti’s fundamental distinction between these architectural elements, this thesis explores new possibilities for columns and walls in the expanded field offered by modern understandings of symmetry and alignment. Combining elements of a hypostyle (all columns) and a labyrinth (all walls) to create a disoriented grid that must be navigated by means of singular column-wall arrangements and adjacencies. Following on the Renaissance invention of design as separate from constructability, this thesis posits a purely compositional relationship between columns and walls rather than assigning structural roles to either. The architectural relationships thus construed present productively challenging spatial sequences to the observing gaze, requiring the subject to establish their own order in the midst of a composition that refuses to completely coalesce.
My thesis is to do a mixed-use building by changing the conventional mixed-use tower into a new prototype. In a conventional mixed-use tower, residential, commercial, retail and office spaces are vertically stacked in layers. These vertically stacked layers are like that of a sandwich where the bread, meat, lettuce and tomato are stacked atop one another. A mixed-use building is like a sandwich. Taking these sandwich layers, we can take the reasoning even further to the curve of a taco. There is also salsa, cheese, onion, and meat put together in layers, but curved back upon itself. By using the taco as a premise, it helps me to have reinterpret the mixed-use building with new layer organization.

In 1922 the Russian philosopher Vladimir Vernadsky imagined a layer of shared knowledge, or the human neural network. Termed “noosphere”, this layer of shared knowledge is a precursor to the way in which we are connected today through data network and digital information. “Moosphere” is the 21st-century version of this concept for the countryside. It is an extension of the digital network over the rural system of agricultural technology.

Situated in the town of Coalinga, the cultured meat facility consists of a network of programs that are connected by the production process of lab grown meat.
This thesis follows the cultural deference to the wonders of inorganic form by proposing with a new hybrid between human artifice and the natural world. Mixing apartment housing and artificially constructed boulders, the thesis experiments with novel interfaces between crystalline logics of cleavage and fracture and the orthographic conventions of architecture. The disjunctions and loose fits that occur when these formal properties are thrown together create unique spatial possibilities that can provide a new experience of living.

The thesis aims to propose a neighborhood scale redevelopment in Yangon, Myanmar, where we began reshaping the relationships between the existing city grids (generated from street site lines, and axis), blocks, and volumes. There are lack of special relationships between grids, blocks and volumes. The streets divide the blocks where the blocks divide into individual private properties placed with individual buildings. We believe we are currently only experiencing a single layer in the city of Yangon (which is the street level). We want to change the city fabric into multiple layers of grids in order to understand a rich set of potential spatial relations that are generated out of but not similar to those site conditions. We apply that not for the production of streets but for an entire spatial strategy to make this neighborhood be both embedded in the urban fabric around it and be meaningful in relationship to it but also richly varied and interesting in ways that existing grids cannot accomplish. We try to enrich possibilities of the site.
Technology is the substructure to support modern life. It always brings out the conflict between convenience and comfort, and we try hard to learn and get used to it. Rather than confronting and neglecting this fact, we rethink architecture to better adapt to this modern lifestyle. In this project, architecture is a system of circuitry, and human activity is a result of the connections between modules, dynamics of moving and static objects, a play of colored visual clues and scales. Ultimately, this is a visual embracement of the machine in our everyday life.

BREATHING CORAL
Zhikai Laura Chen — Advisor: Hernan Diaz Alonso

Coral, the object that I am studying, is the shelter of animals underwater. It provides soft extensive living space and also helps protect the environment of the ocean. It bleaches when coral is stressed by heat, cold, chemicals, or other factors by breathing water in and out.

My building challenges the stiff, rigid, static volume we are limited to. Instead, it creates the soft, extensive and moveable interior volume space. It proves more possibilities and imaginations of void space that could be. The interior furniture uses Maglev power to make everything float, which is from the extensive moving skin.

From the aspect of environment, the building would behave like an environmental detective which will keep detecting the health of the city. The hair from the outer skin will bleach like coral when the atmosphere of the city is getting worse. The tube is like the filter of a sponge, which sucks in the air accumulating particles and releasing the fresh air back to the surroundings.

FICTIONAL TECHNOLOGY
Shao-Lun Chien + Francisco Tam Silverinha — Advisor: Anna Neimark

Technology is the substructure to support modern life. It always brings out the conflict between convenience and comfort, and we try hard to learn and get used to it. Rather than confronting and neglecting this fact, we rethink architecture to better adapt to this modern lifestyle. In this project, architecture is a system of circuitry, and human activity is a result of the connections between modules, dynamics of moving and static objects, a play of colored visual clues and scales. Ultimately, this is a visual embracement of the machine in our everyday life.
This thesis will explore a critical solution of architecture as a scope of imagination through the context of post-apocalyptical site in Chernobyl, Ukraine for the possibility of post-human occupancy: a place that neither invites nor needs human interaction, yet contest for human intervention. This thesis proposes an architectural solution to procure the desolated land by attempting to reconfigure the equilibrium between human and nature through the monumental challenge that redefines the relationship of architectural role from its existential relationship to the site. The thesis will renew the manufactured relationship of the ground, as the secret garden of Eden; as the landscape that is made.

Through history, architects have composed, layered, and crafted images from a privileged and singular perspective—delivered to a singular viewer. From Piranesi, to Mies, and the Eames, we witness the careful construction and arrangement of spaces, figures, and objects that together create a world. It is in these images that their architecture lies.

Today, with the proliferation of perspective (and the reality that everyone has a camera and opinion), the singular is obsolete. This thesis argues for multiplicity on all fronts—author(s), image(s), viewer(s), site(s), and context(s), and contends that architecture is the relationships constructed between them.
Heaven or Las Vegas documents the life of the motel as an anonymous, temporary space. The project explores image culture, how we see, and in turn, produce architecture. The familiar form of the motel room is fragmented and presented through the physical artifact of the model and the digital affect of the split-screen video. The video denies a singular viewpoint and engages the viewer to resolve the space again and again. Unlike static images, video is enriched through movement, atmospheric color, and tactile textures. The project seeks to engage multiple subjectivities in an animate architecture through haptic visuality.

My thesis intends to elevate the status of the parking structure within Los Angeles and go through an exploration that evokes an expressive horizontal plane. The removal of the façade allows the floor plate to operate as a visual element and the impact is achieved through a formal language of graphic sensibility and compositions. The blank horizontal plane has the potential to do so much if reawakened by its repressed identity and the use of graphics sponsors new optical effects that engage the public. Shifting the conventions associated with a parking garage for a certain activity can generate a new presence or style for it that loosens the building’s traditional relationship with that activity and allows people the freedom to creatively respond to it.
My thesis explores the mereology of architecture. All architecture is composed of parts, but these are typically seen as subsidiary to some whole. This project, in contrast, takes on part-to-part relationships without the expectation or implication of any total form or composition. Working with radically increased scale, the thesis asks what might happen when the spaces between parts become cognizable as parts themselves, undoing the old distinction between positive and negative and calling attention to the importance of absence.

This thesis explores how highly contrast of use of light and shadow can work with architecture that is embedded in the site to create a partially concealed, spatially ambiguous, and phenomenologically intriguing strategy. The project advances further by investigating depth, tectonic qualities of the natural form of shadows, which open the possibility of looking at nature and artifice. Figure grounds and antagonistic materials with utilizing the background created an ambiguous object that adopts to nature and negotiates from up to low. It is referring us to experience the discovering of the object with all the hidden strength of itself by embeddedness and elusion.
Phantasmagoria originated as a form of projection-based horror theatre in 18th century Paris. In the 21st century, the word has evolved to define a multi-faceted framework with socio-technological, philosophical & aesthetic implications within the built environment. Like the lurid, fantastical situations conjured by Robertson in dusky Parisian cloisters, architecture can explore parallel realities through employment of the digital. The proposal is developed through a nested series of phantasmagoric references: the fall & ruin of Detroit, the utilization of America's Rust Belt, the aural spectacle of Detroit Techno, the declining typology of the nightclub arena & contemporary phantom virtuality.

Figure Relation tests the implications of exposing the formal tension generated when plain primitives come in close contact with one another. As the abstract objects maintain a monolithic character, the points of convergence become moments of intense architectural figuration. The figuration seeks to negotiate the oblique orientation of the masses, creating instants of empathy yet resisting a full integration. As the formal composition highly depends on planar conformity among the primitives, orthographic projection drawings corresponding to the individual objects is a key form of representation for this thesis.
Will it be possible to add more density in the city of Los Angeles without major infrastructural investment by utilizing accessory dwelling units, 2D drawing techniques, and universal design guidelines? ADUs have recently been legislated throughout California to densify existing single family plots of land to help with the regions with housing crisis. With this recent changes of regulation in mind, this research investigates Boyle Heights in Los Angeles with the aim to re-imagine the premise of ADU’s by offering vertical solutions that can be incrementally developed, individual units as distinguishable entities through variations of color, form, and texture.

Games of Deletion is a mixed reality game based on the additive and subtractive manipulation of an urban environment’s visual information. The game’s visual nature and emphasis on the transformative properties of spatial elements can best be demonstrated through the use of urban objects found within a city. In our thesis this augmented reality game engages multiple players gathered together in front of a series of urban mural spaces in Los Angeles. Murals are already a form of augmentation of space. Murals create an ideal union between graphic composition and scale cutting across digital and physical space.
Our proposal repositions in a vertical manner the way the past, present and future may be understood in an urban realm, in this case the abandoned Hashima Island, in Japan. We physically lift up the present (new buildings) to let it be superimposed above the past (existing ruins). Creating and redefining the outline of the negative space between the past and present creates a dialogue between them and contributes to emphasizing the new experiences of ceiling and ground (the future). This new future is defined by the present and the past as a negative space, filled with color, urban spaces, and augmented realities. The placement of this as a negative space has an effect on the upper and lower boundaries of both isolation but also connection.

Why build up when we can spread out? Why divide when we can multiply? Why stay sane when we can go a little mat... This is Matness! addresses what it means to push the limits of density in architecture. It reimagines what a city could look like by introducing radical strategies to urban design. Mat buildings were the 20th century’s proposal for creating urban sprawl with flat buildings. They introduced horizontality as a means to think about city planning as a way of filling in, instead of building up. Buildings are no longer auxiliary components to infrastructure — matness sees buildings as infrastructure.

LEAVE IT FOR FUTURE
Yang He + Ge Wang — Advisor: John Enright

THIS IS MATNESS!
Ashley Morgan Hastings — Advisor: Marcelyn Gow
Our thesis engages the fourth wall of architecture by exposing the mundane elements that serve as the supporting infrastructure that enables the artifice of a hotel to be effectively staged. The insulation required to create acoustical isolation between rooms and the individually controllable HVAC systems that enable different atmospheres to coexist within the building are selected as they play a central role, yet normally go unnoticed. These elements perform in the built environment in accordance with established conventions while simultaneously resituating themselves within another play; actively turning and engaging with other architectural elements. This duplicity causes fixed meanings to slide, resulting in an architecture that is capable of questioning its own reality.

My thesis investigates the potential for an alternative high-density urbanism that moves away from the conventional grid. If Le Corbusier’s Radiant City imagined city as a fixed grid system; Ebenezer Howard’s Garden City sketched an idea of planning the city with towns incorporated. Rather than either the radiant or the radial, my project explores a push-pull, interjectional urbanism that plays with the graphic forms of Roy Lichtenstein or Jeff Koons artwork, whereby abstraction and figuration converge. The Giddy city mediates between attracting and repelling urban programs, architectural elements, and landscape features to shift the urban diagram from static to dynamic.
“With architecture, we don’t want to exclude everything that is disquieting.”
Wolf D. Prix
This thesis drops the traditional usefulness of architecture and gives it a theatrical role to construct and intensify atmospheres. With a preference for an aesthetic that is disquieting rather than reassuring, the project takes form of a short film that intentionally incites discomfort, uneasiness, and disturbance, using architectural uncanny as metaphor to portray an unlivable modern condition. The film aims to provoke anxiety and paranoia, and serves as a critique project that makes the problematics of smart devices more visible in an unhomely, disharmonious, grotesque, and monstrous way.

In the Bavarian Rococo, as Karsten Harries describes, the sacred intersects with the profane, aiming to pull the faithful from the mundane world into a spiritual reality that renders all else into insubstantial theatricality. These interiors demonstrate the architectural ability to intensify the thresholds between bodily and emotional registers. In our current context of architectural thresholds that are typically banal and thin, the experience of crossing from exterior to interior is over before it can be psychosomatically explored. This thesis posits, instead, that the richest moments of a building should be its transitional spaces. The threshold should be understood as a sequentially unfolding event that both differentiates architecture from and connects architecture to its context.
During the 19th century, Rem Koolhaas and James Wines argue that structure has been the frame of architecture, and that when the house (program) became the plug in to the building, structure lost its meaning to architecture. In my thesis, I try to provide structure another meaning by plugging in different kinds of Hypostyle Hall (structure) to provide a variety of spatial experiences through structure itself. And use it to create a new water and power build in DTLA, to create a new water culture symbol in Los Angeles.

My thesis examines a subset of the infinite fold, represented by a work of art by Jackson Pollock. First, by examining the color intensity, balance, and the splatter of paint. Then incorporating action painting techniques digitally, using particles, while using programmatic spaces as my canvas. By defining spaces onto which the paint can splatter, and controlling a myriad of settings, the resulting splatter is allowed to play out with semi-predictable results. This creates an architectural interpretation of Pollock’s work, that captures the infinite fold as a subset. The limitless potential of informal paint splatter onto a medium, is now frozen in actual form.
The thesis examines how a building might become a framework for producing mental images. When we see buildings and use them, an individual experience generates a rememberable image(s) spontaneously. A building generally gives a coherent image, and the experience can be captured by a single photograph. This is so normal that we often do not notice that in actual experience, we see something other than a photograph of a famous building. But how about designing a building as a loose mixture of incomplete spatial concepts, never adding up into an icon.

Imagine the classic Chinese novel Red Dream Mansion incarnate through modern architecture, with a rich heterogeneity of characters assembled in grand mosaic. With architecture traditionally associated with individual objects, this is a profound contemplation. We can parallel this notion to western literature, frequently tending to focus on a single protagonist as opposed to a grand ensemble. The novel serves as a vernacular reference, taking a literary form, translated into contemporary architecture that remains abstract. Applying such a concept to architecture evokes a sprawling cloud involving many individuals and much distinction, and somehow enables one to think this in a discontinuous way.
This thesis aims to suggest different types of residence after the 4th industrial revolution by using Metabolism idea. Urban nomads who work by projects are keep traveling and seek jobs from city to city for a better career. They don’t need to carry their whole house every time they move. What if we to drain the “share-able” program from the trailer and leave the most critical parts? Then we can consider “mobile room” and settled docking station, which will be a whole residence system without a private room. This idea will be pretty similar to the Metabolism. With this idea, those took-out-programs from trailers could be modulized. They can be deployed any place in the world. So, this thesis is about the “moving module”, “settled module” and “the platform”.

This thesis offers a fresh take on reconstruction in the wake of disaster. Instead of leaving ruins alone or completely destroying them, my project proposes 3D printing a new ground on top of them. The existing landscape is scanned and run through a custom digital workflow that generates a landscape-like structure on which a series of prefabricated shelters can be installed.

In keeping with the traditional association between ruination and the Gothic aesthetic — ranging from the atmospheric haunts of the Gothic novel to the architectural stratigraphy common in Gothic cathedrals — the workflow I have designed privileges medieval form-logics like fan vaults and buttresses.
In architecture, we use lines in very specific manners in blueprints. It’s our status quo. My project challenges this status quo through a different perspective: by using lines to represent spatial relations, materials, process, objects, and views, the additional data lead to a more informed design. A winery, for example, is already a space that uses lines in the physical world. Its mechanical, chemical, and labor processes can be further represented by lines to detail the complexity involved for a deeper understanding and, therefore, a more complete story.

Architects use drawings and models as tools to break down complicated building systems. Interesting structures emerge from the imperfections that appear when one brings these systems back together. My exploration primarily focuses on manipulating models, specifically using the method of unfolding and folding. The virtual peeling away of the facade from the programmed spatial masses in representative models allows the facade to be cut, thickened and sewn. The slippage or excess created by the reapplication of the facade as the design is translated back to the original building creates opportunities to generate new forms and ways of organizing space.
My thesis investigates how architecture can bridge contemporary urban conditions and the rich cultural history of Nanjing, China, in a fresh way that avoids post-colonial cliches. Thus far, attempts to create a relevant architecture for modern China have sought to attach meaning to projects via formal literalism. This project, in contrast, uses constructional elements typical of ancient Nanjing, like tiles, black bricks, and lattice windows, to connect tradition to modernity. In addition, the form of the building, a museum, is abstracted from traditional Chinese characters that flicker in and out of legibility; from certain angles visitors might glimpse a familiar glyph, while from other vantages the project will seem to be a completely abstract composition.

My thesis is trying to challenge contemporary building practices in the process of urban transformation and prepare for the pace of gentrification. In order to make it a lively varied space of community, construction needs to think of the various units and also have various types of aggregations and smaller groups and subgroups. The idea of urban co-living could contribute to make a satisfying environment for the new generation of entrepreneurs and workers. These residents would be ideally young entrepreneurs participating in the creative industry hubs who are sharing space for real in the coal living environment with very small individual units. It is invention of forms of living to visualize not only the form the space but the life process.
This thesis speculates on the architectural implications of creating an interior world. There are multiple biomes that co-exist within the same volume, as if a universe could be folded up within one massive shell. In the gaps between savannahs and cities, there are glimpses of dense technological infrastructure that reveal the practical logistic at work. So this seemingly fantastic landscape is in fact an intense and productive machine. The black reflective exterior of this enormous volume implies the interior holds the entirety of a world within itself. The skin also achieves a peculiar and placeless dissociation from its environment by distorting and reflecting everything that surrounds it.

My thesis engages ugliness in architecture, as a way to articulate a cultural alternative against the central role of beauty. Ugliness in this thesis is an overturn of the accepting ideas or methods. It refuses anything that looks “nice” but “similar” with each other. This project refuses to apply itself the same style as the surrounded building with long history in downtown London. This local context provides the texture (brick) of my project but behaves different – the project is challenging the limitation of brick. The building is made of shreds cuts in the volume, but these cuts are still articulated with bricks. By creating broken and folding opening out of monolithic mass to against the integration into a coherent whole. Ugliness in this situation means that using architectural elements create unique assemblage that is less available for established channels of consumption.
In early religious structures such as mountain shrines, temples and totem poles, architecture negotiated mythological claims of religious meaning on behalf of many respective cultures. We can argue that buildings have embodied myth since time immemorial by giving mythologies form and embodying them at building scale. How can design embody an affect of new mythologies? This project aims to use design to imagine a set of new mythologies and embed them in place in order to create a dramatic architectural affect.

The meaning of elevation and section has been fully explored so far. Traditionally, they are defined as enclosure and content of architecture, between which the relationship is read by the discussion of symbolic representation. In that case, we are exploring the potential of breaking traditional recognition of inside and outside and bring section to elevation. We are experimenting on the possibility of applying all these qualities on elevation to respond to the exterior. In this way, we create ambiguity in the boundary between elevation and section, and even the identification of interior and exterior. It also changes how people feel about the interior consequently.
This thesis explores the architectural possibilities of shrouding. A layer that withdraws an architectural body from the established routines of quotidian existence, a shroud both protects and partially obscures what it covers. Architecturally, shrouding is a way to refuse immediate metabolization by the eye. It favors a slower reading of the objects it withdraws through a combination of opacity and its own competing figuration.

The shroud frustrates the reading of the interior, only allowing glimpses of the body within as it embosses itself on the otherwise mute exterior.

This thesis investigates new architectural potentials for excessive density of information. Historically, architects have relied on intricate ornamentation like carvings, stained glass, and carefully composed details to produce an architecture of high resolution, often in the service of a narrative or didactic “legibility.” Paradoxically, as access to information has widened, and our ability to generate and manage it has improved, our need for such architecture parlante has arguably diminished. This begs the question of whether new kinds of resolutions might generate new types of value as opposed to the obsolete decorative densities of the past.
Cloud Fabuland is a state of fictitious extravagance and a place where everything is possible. Life is a performance and you never know if you are looking or looked at, if you are the spectator, the performer, or the creator. It is also possible to be all of the above. Cloud Fabuland is an atlas of ideas that explores performance in all its dimensions, and culminates in an architectural space where aesthetics are thought anew and multilayered programs come into being. The building is both a stage for human performance and a performance in its own right, and the intersections between architectural and human agencies create unexpected realities. In Cloud Fabuland, exposure, representation, and power are reconsidered.

Displaying a gradient style throughout the building with color, materials and special effects to negotiate the transitional experience of the user. Most architectural is composed of areas with a precise idea or name tag which allows the user to navigate through it in a rush. These project instead grasps the idea of using materials as color and special effects with the transparency of dark to light, on the users subconscious to help them navigate through the program without them knowing. Using materials and special effects in a gradient way helps deploy a transitional experience of the building without them feeling it since the areas will go from small to large and dark to light materials and colors, as well as lighting to help the user to its final destination and have them explore the area to reinforce the structure and flexibility of the building.
To see the HOUSE IN CHAINS is to ask, how does one erase perception? What are the CHAINS? A list of potential suspects all point to "the working space" itself. If percept is the object of perception, the delaminated working space suspended between screen and object, between 2D and 3D, between drawing, image and model, is one form of a working space construct.

HOUSE IN CHAINS, HOUSE IN NO CHAINS
Rebecca Tesia Park — Advisor: Andrew Zago

This thesis proposes a new development typology – the “mega mass”—for the flash city of Shenzhen, China. Now, as Shenzhen’s economy has matured and begun to shift to the tertiary sector, the city has entered a phase of economic and spatial restructuring.

MEGA MASS
Junxi Peng — Advisor: Marcelo Spina

The project speculates that a mega-mass, defined as a mixed-used project that is massive in scale and self-supporting, could model a new kind of urban density for the constrained site of this fast-growing and rapidly changing urban environment.
Still life - inanimate commonplace objects, arranged within a composition to provide a new perspective on subject matter that surrounds us in daily life. The fundamental nature of still life is that it turns 3 dimensional reality into 2 dimensional representation. It takes independent objects, all existing within their own identity, and composes them in a scene which is balanced and framed - the individual parts are not more important than the composition itself. With Architecture we can’t use the same tools that still life’s use, but we need to find a way to make that composition work in a 3 dimensional world. This project is an attempt to do that, by creating a formation that allows the objects to remain discreet, but exist in harmony with the strategy of balance and framing as a way to engage with urban space in a more intricate relationship.

Many years ago, Venturi and Scott Brown tried to use architecture to create a big donut in Las Vegas, and the building gave people an impression of an image in the city. Then the Symbolism of architecture got popular. Architecture is a symbol, and there are many different ways to create a symbol in Architecture, such as form, shape, color, shadow and so on. With the development of the technology, now LED and light projects are be used more and more in the architecture field. We can use the light to create the image instead of using building. In this thesis, I put light on the building skin and use the changing of physical light system to created the virtual facade.
Controlling C aims to examine architecture as a stratigraphic sequence; as a series of layers that are presented with a primary intent, that morph, conform, and adapt over time, and that inevitably submerge or subside making way for the new. I have taken three iconic architectural precedents and stacked them atop one another on a sinking site with the idea that the building and its layers will sink over time. The layers are treated separately and programmed differently with both immediate and prospective usage, each space adjusting to a set of existing and potential uses. Controlling C attempts to develop a new way of imagining architecture over a longer, larger concept of time, of geographic time, of perhaps deep time. It attempts to imagine architectural loss as architectural gain, and attempts to reconcile the interfacing between ruin and construction.

With about 55,000 people sleeping on the streets and another 500,000 in need of affordable housing, it’s time to have a serious conversation about LA County’s housing crisis. Local government agencies are investing funds to stop the bleeding but their efforts alone are simply not enough. Private developers are discouraged from doing more than the bare minimum by the dense bureaucracy and antiquated regulations that surround affordable housing. This thesis aims to get people talking about what is possible in today’s housing market by proposing a pair of high density, mixed-income, residential towers in the heart of downtown Los Angeles.
This womb model is composed in layers. It is structured with an interior wood framing system, organized on a 6 inch by 6 inch grid. The framing is reinforced with 2 inch aluminum angles and sits on six 2 inch by 4 inch wood studs, topped with a half inch MDF floor plate. The interior of the model is left void and its walls are layered in standard upholstery cushioning, covered in one-eighth inch volara foam sheeting, coated with brush-on flexible plaster, and finished in a composite layer of tissue paper, plaster adhesive and mesh wiring for texture. The outermost layer is finished in gypsum plaster tape and rubber meshing over a polyethylene foam coat, painted with pigmented rubber gesso.

The thesis is about mediation between image and object constructed by its own pixel data, opens up new possibilities to retranslate canonical architecture through digital technologies to photogrammetry. These two different mediums can reproduce a collapse of geometries made from a series of digital photo images with different image settings such as resolution of image, pixel noise, blur effect, brightness, contrast and cropping the frame of images from a certain vantage points, which means the geometry is only defined by input data of images. As a result, a new output of canonical architecture becomes a scenographic object that has fragments of geometry constrained by the input data of images and starts blurring the boundary between image and object.
Atelier of the Error is a preschool and kindergarten that prioritizes the child’s freedom to choose. In Italian, errare connotes both mistake and wonder. Here, a dynamic yet labyrinthine environment aims to challenge and stimulate each child’s sensorial acuity. Flexible configurations and a wide variety of materials and colors complement the school’s spatial complexity and offer students and teachers a wide developmental palette. The architecture becomes a “third teacher” of sorts, presenting the child with opportunities for both error and enchantment. The school functions as a rhizomatic, nonhierarchical network composed of creative workshops, individual and group ateliers, and multifunctional zones, all connected by circulation designed to dissolve hard borders between spaces. The goal is to create “editable” spaces where children can experiment with configurations that range from “good matches” to extreme dissonance.

Atelier of the Error
Eugenio Superchi — Advisor: Elena Manferdini

Most architecture and design tend to have a strong stance or position while showing its features. Loud and quiet, straight and curved, soft and hard, practical and artistic. This thesis refuses to take a side. By using primitive elements such as roof, wall and ground, this thesis focus on designing some sort of a grey zone instead of deciding between “black or white”. The program of the project is a tomb for myself in 2088. Instead of a sad and serious tomb, this thesis offers a not serious but also not funny tomb.

NOTHING
Mikiko Takasago — Advisor: Andrew Zago
The new development in transportation, Hyperloop, promises to dramatically change the way we perceive time by moving people through space at unprecedented speeds. Taking the two stations in Los Angeles and San Diego at either end of this high-speed rail project as its program, this thesis will speculate on the architectural opportunities afforded by this kind of accelerated travel experience. The results mimic the lag or gap between the distance people intuit they have traveled and the actual distance covered, producing an architecturalized extension of the disorientation passengers have just experienced to give a buffer between here and there.

This thesis examines the perception and experience of scale. As a challenge to today’s trend toward unsustainable overconsumption, it seeks to shift our focus from the massive to the minute. Miniatures and dioramas focus our attention on a framed moment in space or time, allowing our sense of scale to oscillate between the usual and the other. Like the giant peach in Roald Dahl’s classic novel or Willy Wonka’s factory that is soon to undergo a merger and acquisition, my project creates an environment within a grocery store which prompts shoppers to be hyper-cognizant of their full range of ontological possibilities.
The shopping mall, the invention of Victor Gruen on 1950’s, is dead. The megastructure, which was carefully designed with a balance between the science of financial and the psychology of shopping experience during the post-war age, has now become the most banal space after the digital revolution. The number of parking spaces, the dimension of each store, the regiment of shop front design, the must-haves arranged through the circulation, the neutral color and material, were designed as a muted background for the products. This project is trying to intervene the banality of the most generic typology of contemporary architecture and make it into an alienated, defunctionalized space by rethinking the materiality, circulation and articulation.

How flat is flat? Flatness can be interpreted as geometrically flat, digitally flat, and philosophical flatness. My thesis explores flatness by combining all three of these versions. Using landscape architecture as a primary topic, this thesis aims to flatten nature and synthesize its digital and physical qualities. It also redesigns the garden square by bringing multiple garden genres together such as flattening of nature and symmetry from the French garden and informal circulation paths from the English garden. Full views are produced by projecting a flat image on to volumes and flat surfaces to confuse what is volumetric and what is not. Volumes of Flatness reveals the dimensionality of flatness by employing techniques of projection and perspective and it challenges what you can see but can’t access and vice versa, questioning the tradition of privately owned spaces.

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Traditionally, architecture is designed based on the tripartite format with a base, a shaft, and a crown. This could be further redefined into the basement, body, and attic. The focus is often on the body, with the attic and basement becoming forgotten spaces. Bachelard, in his “The Poetics of Space”, calls the attic a space for dreams, whereas the basement is a space for fears. By reorientating the iconic masses of a building, a void formed, doing so this project seeks to refocus the attention on the forgotten spaces.

Seeing time and motion as materiality, the thesis started by looking at the cloud, an existing “constantly changing constant”, as the trigger of the transforming of architecture objects.

I investigated into the visualization by intervening these selected streetscapes in New York. The constant process of breaking-down and re-constructing redefines the new staticity, and explores the embedded alternating potentials of architectural materiality.
There are nine architecture “objects” and each one of them has their own identity and possesses the possibility to be heterogeneously interpreted. Instead of tracing back to styles and elements from any historical background or context, we have used the primary shapes as basic elements, combined with formal methods such as projection, juxtaposition, and boolean operations that create a series of architectural objects. These objects start from the extrusion of abstract primary shapes. A process of multiple iterations creates a series of changes to the formal language of the objects. This process generate multiple readings depending on the viewers’ position in the space, and the particular formal condition at any one moment in the project. The language is inherently abstract and non-historical, aiming to speak to a broader cultural viewer.

Disassociating architectural forms from their meaning allows them to be recognized authentically. Non-Western architecture has persistently been classified as “lesser than”. Making assumptions about non-western architecture is an act of cultural appropriation. The pinnacle of Western civic architecture is the neoclassical style, representing power and not diversity. Los Angeles is a pluralistic metropolis that is culturally robust. To represent the cultural heritage of its residents, atLAs proposes to break down iconicity through physical representation and a mapping of unconventional examples in the Civic Center. Introducing non-western forms, unassociated to any meaning and repeating partial forms of the existing Civic Center buildings allows a mutual presence without interpretation.
For a number of reasons, the border policy, since 1971, has made the US-Mexico border more and more closed. It leads to the emergence of two phenomenons. On the one hand, the reunion of family members separated in two countries has become more and more difficult. People have to come to the certain place at a fixed time, and touch the other with fingers through layers of iron mesh to get solace. On the other hand, the number of people who cross the border illegally for survival instinct has not decreased, and the number of people who have died as a result of crossing the border increases year by year.

I hope to create a place for families to reunite with dignity, and at the same time build a memorial site for the dead, it can also give a kind reminder to those who are preparing to cross the border illegally.

This Thesis, titled “MARSCHITECTURE”, combines the utopian urban design and terraforming to take advantage of the recently discovered existence of water on Mars to develop a possibility for colonization. It will answer the questions: What is the strategy to achieve the plan in next 30 or 50 years? What kind of extreme environment will Mars architecture face? How to use its resources to help Mars’ architectural design? How will the architecture on Mars be different from those on Earth? It will give a strategy to set up a certain scale colonial city on Mars in 30 years. And shows how to use the low gravity and strong interior air pressure on Mars to create a new architectural construction form that are impossible on Earth and how to develop it into urban or city scale.
The project is seeking an opportunity to bring the city up to the hill to study different relationship between the building space and landscape, such when buildings go underground, blur into the natural landform, lift above the hill, or carve into the ground. Changing the landform through either surface manipulation or the creation of artificial terrains, and set up a new compiling urban environment that can stretch the flat city system vertically into different depth to create recognizable space amount repetitive blocks.

There is a grain of truth in every joke, or to put it the other way around, nothing is funny that is not also true. Even though architecture rarely identifies as funny, comedy is an untapped way to reveal its truth. When architecture is built, comedic moments are inevitably constructed. Comedic architecture comes via a variety of scales and components. It can reveal itself through laughable window arrangements, faulty doors, misaligned outlets, and facades that are arbitrarily ornamented with pipes, ducts, and gutters. Such moments provide opportunities for necessary self-awareness and contain the potential to expose architecture’s darker truths.
There are many methods of designing architecture, to begin with form, to begin with fiction, or to take elements from other fields. But there is an inevitable issue with the process, the plan. It is an essential connection between design and execution. Drawing is the key that makes the form work.

The action that generates the form in the project is inspired by the destruction of the World Trade Center. The modules of the building façade collapsed after the strike and piled up under the gravity finding another order of arrangement. In this project, one cube represents a module, but the way of assembling is more near to the opposite end of the balance.