The atelier will reflect on the role of architecture and technology in an environmentally sensitive, production-specific and culturally rich setting such as Lavaux, where the students will consider cork-based systems to design hostel facilities for year-round trekkers and seasonal harvesters.

If the Sri Lanka atelier in Semester 1 dealt with the critical management of abundant resources in population-pressured environments, the atelier in Semester 2 seeks to reflect on the role of architecture and technology in settings pressured by completely different conditions. The place selected for this investigation is Lavaux, the terraced vineyards stony landscape east of Lausanne that stretches along the south-facing northern shores of Lac Leman. Exploiting a system of land use dating back over one-thousand years, Lavaux was inscribed in the UNESCO list of world heritage sites in 2007, and is now protected from development. But what does development mean in this instance? Could one consider infrastructural interventions aimed at ameliorating the local organizational capacity of the wine-making industry while expanding the service offer for environmentally conscious and culturally attuned tourism? In the belief that answering a question such as this is critical at the more general level of the possible living relationship between heritage sites and places of production, the atelier will concentrate on a design proposition for hosteling facilities within the Lavaux terraces for multiple groups of users. Given the link that has long existed between the area and Portuguese harvesting workforce coming from the Douro region, cork-based building systems will constitute a privileged terrain of architectural discussion.

Keywords
Lavaux, temporary housing, terraces, wine, cork, trans-national identity

Learning Outcomes
• Carry out a functional analysis of a living territory
• Formulate development alternatives for its future
• Defend the arguments at the base of what proposed
• Plan spatial facilities within identified constraints
• Critique the results obtained
• Formalize technological solutions at an architectural level
• Develop an approach to design and construction that is based on the maximization of industrial and natural assets
• Explore limitations and opportunities contained in the way the building fabric is produced

Transversal skills

• Use a work methodology appropriate to the task.
• Communicate effectively, being understood, including across different languages and cultures.
• Evaluate one’s own performance in the team, receive and respond appropriately to feedback.
• Demonstrate the capacity for critical thinking
• Manage priorities.
• Access and evaluate appropriate sources of information.
• Set objectives and design an action plan to reach those objectives.
• Plan and carry out activities in a way which makes optimal use of available time and other resources.

Teaching methods

As a group, students will produce an analysis of the environmental and industrial context of Lavaux against its cultural significance. This is aimed at articulating the potential of the program while teasing out its structural constraints. Students will then work in small teams of up to three to develop a building proposal that will address the opportunities identified in the analysis whilst embedding a possible blueprint for the future integration of infrastructural and cultural activities in the area. The progression of the work will be facilitated by a parallel series of lectures dealing with: a) the economic history of Lavaux and the socio-environmental issues defining its functioning; b) the use of cork or other industrial waste by-products as construction material; and c) the potential of architecture to respond reflectively to strict normative frameworks. Unlike Sri Lanka in Semester 1, the Lavaux atelier will benefit from direct physical experience of the locale and close conversations with the actors involved.

Assessment methods

Evaluation of student-produced work at three set deadlines across the semester, with varying weightings applied to the work.

Resources

Bibliography

Documentation of site, industrial context, social conditions and architectural references will be provided by FAR.