EPFL

AR-401(c)   **Studio MA1 (Geers)**

Geers Kersten

Cursus	Sem.	Type
Architecture	MA1, MA3	Obl.
Mob. AR	H	Opt.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	13
Withdrawal	Unauthorized
Session	Winter
Semester	Fall
Exam	During the semester
Workload	390h
Weeks	14
Hours	**6 weekly**
Courses	2 weekly
Project	4 weekly
Number of positions	**35**

It is not allowed to withdraw from this subject after the registration deadline.

Remark

Inscription faite par la section

Summary

Through the notion of classicism, we want to investigate the possibility of architecture to reinstate the common cultural identity. As the identity of every culture always lies at the frontiers, we will be looking at Europe from Switzerland.

Content

Trouble With Classicists: Elizabethan Architecture

After four years of *Architecture Without Content* at EPFL we feel the time is right for a change. In many ways, the advancement of the previous studios implied the current process of transformation. Starting from the idea of architecture as a perimeter or a 'big box' – a container that organizes the completely urbanized even covered field of the Modern Project – we explored the program on the fringes of the contemporary realm, obsessed and dependent on the information and sites of technology. This theme prompted questioning the notion of residence and its temporality in the condition of a constant flux and migrations. Shifting the focus from the singular object, to a universal territorial architecture, and from the American West to Europe, the aim was to (re)discover the means to establish a sense of order and hierarchy in an increasingly unpredictable world. Finally, as the pervasive metropolitan environment restricted this world to the scale of the individualized interior, our objective shifted to the domain of the commons and the classical. The consistency of this narrative hinted at an interest in universal values, provoking our research for common knowledge. This endeavor produced a considerable body of work, a canon of sorts that includes hundreds of ancestors, as paradigms that demonstrate certain intentions in architecture. The works collected in the twenty-five volumes of *Architecture Without Content* studio reports complemented the students' projects, but also established a methodology of learning architecture by observing architecture. We now want to expand on this practice by not only examining buildings, but also ways of working, considering the complexity of authorship, the negotiation between the projected and the realized, the strategies of a project and its possible significance; in other words our interest lays in the cultural ambition of architecture.
Our cultural sphere remains Europe. Tackling the current state of enduring crisis is perhaps only possible by considering the European cultural heritage; not as a pretext for conservative policies, but as an opportunity to reconsider humanistic values architecture is supposed to articulate. Tracing the lineage from the idea of the Roman empire, through the Renaissance and the notion of classicism, we want to investigate the possibility of architecture to reinstate the common cultural identity. As the identity of every culture always lies at the frontiers, we will be looking at Europe from Switzerland – with its border regions manifesting the forever shifting condition of the European borders themselves. In order to explore this lineage we will look for traces of its influence, visiting places like England, and Elizabethan architecture contemporary to Italian quattrocento. Moreover, we will do so by introducing a number of different coinciding narratives.

By focusing on particular oeuvres (of Aldo Rossi, Vincenzo Scamozzi, Baldassare Peruzzi..) our aim is to investigate the possibility of inducing a common field of knowledge that can support a design theory. This studio presents a starting point of such an undertaking, which will continue over a longer period of time – accepting *Conventional Wisdom*, while being fully aware of its false comfort.

Keywords

Form, difficult whole, the even covering of the field, Roman Architecture, Europe, Conventional Wisdom, Trouble With Classicists, Architecture Without Content.

Learning Prerequisites

Required courses

UE L : Art et architecture: construire l'image I (Schaerer).
De la structure à l'ornement (Picon).
Visions et Utopies (Braghieri).

Recommended courses

UE N : Art et architecture: construire l'image II (Schaerer)
Architecture autonome (Lampariello)
Architecture et construction de la ville I et II (Gilot)
Projets métaphoriques : d'Archizoom à Koolhaas (Gargiani)
Urbanisme en Asie (Ruzicka / Ferrari)
Urbanisme et territoires (Ruzicka).
Caractères architecturaux et urbanismes de l'Islam. (Gachet)

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, the student must be able to:

- Develop indepedently a consistent architectural project with a critical mindset and a precise cultural foundation.
- Produce drawings, models, perspectives that are able to communicate the idea of the project.
- Conduct a research of historical architectural types.
- Elaborate on the Even Covered Field, Roman Architecture and Metropolitan Architecture.

Teaching methods

The students acquire the capacity of working alone and in small groups.
The teaching activity will develop through lectures, specific workshops and table work.
Lectures by external lecturers will address specific topics.
Students will present their work every second week in a public pin up session.

Assessment methods

Intermediate sessions (35 %). Final sessions (65%).

Supervision

Office hours	Yes
Assistants	Yes
Forum	No

Resources

Virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI)

No

Websites

- http://form.epfl.ch