

AR-402(b)

Studio MA2 (Gugger)

Gugger Harry

Cursus	Sem.	Type
Architecture	MA2, MA4	Obl.
Mob. AR	E	Opt.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	13
Withdrawal	Unauthorized
Session	Summer
Semester	Spring
Exam	During the semester
Workload	390h
Weeks	14
Hours	6 weekly
Lecture	2 weekly
Project	4 weekly
Number of positions	28

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

Remark

Yearly studio. Inscription period in September 2017 only.

Summary

laba's focal theme is Urban Nature. Due to the scale and character of today's territorial expansion, the definition of the urban becomes more diffuse and complex. laba's didactic method takes students through design scales ranging from the territorial to the architectural in a year long course.

Content

The word 'environment' comes from the French *environer*, meaning 'to surround, enclose, encircle'. The word object comes from the Latin *objectum*, meaning 'thing lying before, opposite' (the mind or sight), from *obicere*, 'to present, oppose'. The environment envelops the spectator; it is infinite but its perceptual limit is the horizon. It is real but immaterial, ethereal. It is the *milieu*, the 'mid-place', the medium in-between. The object, on the other hand, is finite. It confronts the environment by creating a limit, a form. It is objective, meaning it has intentions, it occupies a position. In its delineation, it encloses an inside and excludes an outside. In doing so, it creates a subject, a point of view and a sense of belonging in familiarity set against the strange otherness of the outside.

To think of architecture as an environmental object means to question this very opposition by analyzing some of the inherent dichotomies of separation here at play — figure and ground, inside and outside, autonomy and analogy. By refusing them, we hope to replace separation with confrontation, and segregation with coexistence. If ecology is the 'study of the house' (from the Greek *oikos*, 'house' and *-logia*, 'study of'), it must also be the practice of thinking the threshold of the house — who do we live with, who do we extend our hospitality to?

The house is the place where we attempt to divide the familiar from the unfamiliar, the domesticated space from the otherness of the environment, and where everyday affairs are ritualized into a spatial organization, a form of life. Its sense of permanence (residence, from *residere*, 'to remain') makes the confrontation between architecture and place all the more evident. It raises questions of limits, naturalizes social reproduction, and frames our point of departure towards the outside, our worldview.

The choice of Portugal as case study derives from its rich architectural history and from its peripheral position, from which a distanced critique of Western modernism and industrial capitalism is easier to ascertain. We find traces of these ideas in the architecture of the so-called 'School of Porto', but also in older historical examples where a tradition of asceticism and Franciscan aesthetics already foregrounds a sense of 'environmentality' over iconic form and spectacle.

Keywords

Portugal, architecture, landscape, contextualism, climate change, territory, cartography.

Learning Prerequisites

Required courses

Spring Semester at laba is a mandatory follow-up to previous fall semester. laba takes yearly subscriptions only.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Create and follow a project through the various design phases: feasibility study, schematic design, design development and presentation documentation.
- Conduct field research including the survey and documentation of a site.
- Present the project through various media: drawings, models, text descriptions, photography, as well as through oral presentations.

Transversal skills

- Use a work methodology appropriate to the task.
- Continue to work through difficulties or initial failure to find optimal solutions.
- Manage priorities.
- Take feedback (critique) and respond in an appropriate manner.
- Make an oral presentation.
- Access and evaluate appropriate sources of information.

Teaching methods

In the Spring semester laba students must write their own project brief (site + program + spatial intention) that leads to the development of an architecture project based on the territorial reading carried out in the first semester. Each student is asked to critically appoint a site and program, and then the project design unfolds in a sequence similar to the official phases: feasibility study, schematic design, design development, presentation documentation. Lectures on the subjects of context, structure, façade, building services, and fit-out provide inputs to each phase accordingly. This procedure can be seen as a dress rehearsal for the master thesis project. Students work individually or in pairs.

Assessment methods

Each review (both intermediate and final) will be assessed by the laba staff and an appointed guest jury.

Supervision

Office hours	Yes
Assistants	Yes

Resources

Bibliography

Attached to the course booklet.

Notes/Handbook

Each student will receive a course booklet. You find more detailed information on our teaching methodology and what we expect from our students by visiting our website < laba.epfl.ch >

Websites

- <http://laba.epfl.ch>

Prerequisite for

Projet de Master