

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
Session	Summer
Semester	Spring
Exam	During the semester
Workload	390h
Weeks	14
<b>Hours</b>	<b>6 weekly</b>
Lecture	2 weekly
Project	4 weekly
<b>Number of positions</b>	

**Remark**

Inscription faite par la section

**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**

With special incidence from the 16th century onwards the transition from feudalism to capitalism created a new class of people – the *proletariat* – which suddenly became dependent on a cash-based nexus for its survival. In England – the country where this trend was more heavily felt – the creation of such wage-laborers was closely connected with the “enclosure” process. Championed by the so-called “improvement writers” for its increased “efficiency” and “productivity”, this process divided communal fields into individually owned private properties in a “land grabbing” action which Karl Marx famously classified as a “systematic theft of communal property”.

Amidst this stark transformation, the “manor house” – one of the fundamental units within the feudal system – was necessarily subject to a number of re-adaptations and re-uses. Most of those which managed to keep their vast properties did so by being integrated in the National Trust, an environmental and heritage organization set up in 1895 by social activists who, in part, used the Trust to fight the “enclosure” process and allow for the access and usufruct of these properties to remain public.

Today, our contemporary condition and the way in which it is still governed by the abstract apparatus of the capitalist markets imposes a critical reading of the unequal distribution and exploitation of human and natural resources, land appropriation/ownership and the ongoing destruction and simplification of our ecosystems.

The choice of the West Country (England) as a case study stems from its geographical condition - relatively distant from the country's main urban centers – which has kept it as the most rural area of the country. At the same time this condition will also allow us to question what the “countryside” stands for today and how the pervasiveness of planetary urbanization has decisively eroded the classic opposition between “city” and “countryside”.

The *Manor Studio* will address such questions by tackling the idea of dwelling as a testing ground to investigate the confrontation between object and environment, stretching its understanding to utopian approaches that should include programs which venture into a radical reading of the territory and go decisively beyond standard housing strategies and typologies.

Main themes to focus on will be those of ecology, semi-rural settlements, the privatization of land use, forms of production, the importance of typology to create a stable means of human association and the relation of different communities with the territory.

**Keywords**

Commons, Manor House, National Trust, West Country, England, Land Ownership, Contextualism, Ecology, Productive Landscape.

## 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](http://laba.epfl.ch) >

### Websites

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

**Prerequisite for**

Projet de Master