Summary

An attempt to bridge art, architecture and engineering. The experimental setup of the atelier is meant to challenge our routines, work processes, approaches and our relation to art and architecture.

Content

During the fall semester we will attempt an experiment bridging art, architecture and engineering. Starting from a research process we develop site-specific interventions, that are supposed to be fit for an infrastructural purpose. Is it possible to create structures that work as art, architecture and infrastructure at the same time? The subject of our investigations will be related to the alpine landscape. We will be looking into the history of the domestication of the Alps and how the Swiss society installed itself in the inhospitable mountainous environment. By this we will find out about the human relation to and the reception of landscape, nature and the world. We will examine site-specific art and land art and relate those to big infrastructural projects.

Outgoing from these historical studies we want to examine our current state of mind. How do we as as architects / artists / designers / engineers want to react on contemporary challenges, caused by climate change? Mountain slides induced by the disappearance of permafrost, declining of glaciers, sea-level rise confront our societies with various menaces. According to our research we develop a personal approach that will result in site-responsive concepts. Our interdisciplinary research group will develop an exhibition, showing the results of our critical and physical examination, trying to fuse our actions with landscape and nature.

The experimental setup of the atelier is meant to challenge our routines, work processes, approaches and our relation to art and architecture.

Keywords

art, architecture, engineering, infrastructure, contemporary art, site-specific, land art, conceptual art, sculpture

Learning Outcomes

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

- Create
- Analyze a site
- Contextualise
- Manage
- Develop
• Examine architecture from an art perspective
• Explore
• Justify

Transversal skills
• Plan and carry out activities in a way which makes optimal use of available time and other resources.
• Use a work methodology appropriate to the task.
• Demonstrate a capacity for creativity.
• Demonstrate the capacity for critical thinking
• Take feedback (critique) and respond in an appropriate manner.
• Give feedback (critique) in an appropriate fashion.

Teaching methods
lectures, field trips, thinking with the hands

Expected student activities
attending lectures, developing a project, giving presentations, creating an exhibition

Assessment methods
The students are evaluated on a continuous process during the semester. Several presentations and submissions are taken into account. The semester is divided into three main phases.
1st phase: The students were asked to work in groups on a general site research and further groups for historical research. In parallel to this research, each of the student was attributed an artist which they had to present.
2nd phase: The students started their individual projects, which were evaluated during two mid-term critics. In these projects the students developed site-specific project that were meant to be art- and architecture related. The criteria of evaluation for the individual works are as follow:
General approach (ideas, concept...)
Site reflexion
Graphic documentation (drawings, images, pictures)
Sculpture, model
3rd phase:
Outgoing form the site-specific projects, the students developed non-site projects for our exhibition space on EPFL campus. These projects and the process will be displayed in an exhibition.
The semester ends with a final critic which will take place in our exhibition. We will then evaluate their contribution to this exhibition.
The criteria of evaluation for the exhibition are as follow:
General approach (ideas, concept...)
Non-site reflexion
Sculpture / Materialisation
Presentation

Supervision
Assistants Yes

Resources
Bibliography
**Lucius Burckhardt**
*Why is Landscape Beautiful?: The Science of Strollology*
*Building—A Process with No Obligations to Heritage Preservation (1967)*
Ann Reynolds
Robert Smithson: Learning from New Jersey And Elsewhere

Miwon Kwon
One Place After Another - Site-specific art and locational identity

Adrian Forty
Concrete and Culture: A Material History

Richard Sennett
The craftsman

Concrete and earth dams in Switzerland today
Digues et barrages récents en Suisse
Schweizerisches Nationalkomitee für Grosse Talsperren
Nos barrages en Suisse romande (Charles Borel; CollectionPages suisses - Werner ; 8 [1942])

Ressources en bibliothèque

• One Place After Another / Kwon
• Nos barrages en Suisse romande / Borel
• Concrete and Culture / Forty
• Concrete and earth dams in Switzerland today
• Building: A Process with No Obligations to Heritage Preservation / Burckhardt
• Why is Landscape Beautiful? / Burckhardt
• The craftsman / Sennett
• Robert Smithson: Learning from New Jersey And Elsewhere / Reynolds

Websites

• https://www.letemps.ch/suisse/rechauffement-climatique-transforme-alpes