

AR-302(o)

Studio BA6 (elii)

Fogue Herreros Luis Uriel, Gil Lopesino Eva, Palacios Rodriguez Carlos

Cursus	Sem.	Type
Architecture	BA6	Obl.
HES - AR	E	Obl.
Mob. AR	E	Opt.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	10
Withdrawal	Unauthorized
Session	Summer
Semester	Spring
Exam	During the semester
Workload	300h
Weeks	14
Hours	6 weekly
Courses	2 weekly
Project	4 weekly

Number of positions

Il n'est pas autorisé de se retirer de cette matière après le délai d'inscription.

Remark

Inscription faite par la section

Summary

Fiction is one of the laboratories that architecture uses for its tests. This should not come as a surprise, since architecture has always been a "science of fiction". The studio holds by elii [architecture office] will work in Madrid on housing, domesticity and fiction.

Content

Domestic theatres, shared futures 2.0

1. OTHER "HOME STORIES". Before the COVID-19 crisis broke out, we would never have imagined that our lives would change so drastically in a moment. In this short period of time, households have transformed and become spaces for participation in public health policies, because until a few months ago, they were the only effective "vaccines" available to control the pandemic. Citizens and experts from different disciplines have participated in an "ordinary" collective experiment, where our homes and houses have become new social laboratories. The daily routines that previously took place in different locations has been concentrated in a few rooms. What used to happen "out there" has been confined "inside". Narratives inherited from the recent past has to be immediately examined and updated. All of a sudden, various collective crystallized notions about domesticity, such as intimacy, the public-private relationship, shared spaces, work, health, safety, housework, education, leisure, care, sexuality, coexistence, etc., have been challenged, displaced, questioned and radicalized. Our homes have become domestic theatres. Our rooms, have become stages where new scripts and new domestic fictions have been performed.

One thing that we can extract from this situation is that the future is unpredictable, and therefore, that uncertainty is a key element to take into account in our lives, and consequently, in the architectures that host them. The future is also an opportunity to imagine ourselves and other beings in more speculative and purposeful environments, settings, contexts and realities. In this sense, we must be able to propose spaces, devices and architectures that can adapt to the changes that are taking place in response to multiple issues: with respect to the pandemic (work from home, outdoor spaces, spaces adaptable to different functions throughout the day, etc) but above all, and at the same time, environments that can adapt to other changes that right now we cannot know. Working on uncertainty is a great challenge, but on the other hand it offers us a certainty: the assurance that the future will not always be stable. Thus, in these last 17 months we can affirm (because each one of us has experienced it in our own bodies) that the concept of "the domestic" has changed and has expanded to unsuspected limits. The old modern narratives that used to describe the home and domesticity as an interior space, as the area reserved for individual freedom, as a neutral framework, alien to the social, political or natural processes, have been challenged. Paradoxically, in this radical situation, reality challenges us to rethink our domestic fictions. We have been able to confirm that domestic spaces have always participated in urban and territorial metabolism; that they have never stopped being crossed by all kinds of social dynamics, gender roles, body politics, care

rituals, normative biases, health practices; that they were part of a socio-technical and infrastructural continuum; that they were co-involved in many worlds, both material and symbolic; that they participated in a decisive way in the political ecology of the common; that they were enrolled in sanitary, disciplinary, regulatory and economic models; and that they were experimental places. What we have experienced these months is "the city inside our homes". And, therefore, that thinking of domesticity means, at the same time, rethinking other different scales, both in material and symbolic terms; because all these spheres co-belong and co-determine. It is, from this ecosystem condition, from where, we think, we need to open up a reflection on domesticity.

During this semester, we are going to focus on this notion: domesticity (life at home with your family, taking care of the house, etc.; home or family life, an atmosphere of happy domesticity, a life of domesticity and motherhood; domestic quality). It is not a closed concept due to the fact that it is continuously changing through history and times (for example, as Beatriz Colomina argues, after the Second World War a new domesticity emerged in the United States as part of a carefully orchestrated propaganda campaign). We will work with it as an open concept: to enlarge its meaning, to rediscover, reinvent and redefine its definition. As in a laboratory, we should explore and research, all together, its possibilities, opportunities, limits, etc.

From this point of view, we can embrace the text that opened the exhibition "Home Stories 100 Years, 20 Visionary Interiors", inaugurated last March 2021, at the Design Museum Gent, that states: "Our homes are an expression of the way we live. They shape our everyday routines and have a fundamental impact on our well-being" and thus rethink our homes.

In this semester we intend to influence the students and influence also those who intervene in the process of creating houses and imagining other domesticities. But, above all, contribute to forming in users a critical culture about housing and domesticity. To be able to unlearn from our own experiences, daily routines and clichés and imagine ourselves in other domesticities and scenarios.

2. LEARNING FROM FICTION.

We need new domestic fictions. How can we face this issue? Following an important tradition in architecture, one that could be called a "learning from" (Las Vegas, Manhattanism, Tokyo, the four ecologies of Los Angeles) tradition, we shall transform our studio into a laboratory in order to explore how fiction determines our way of understanding, perceiving, performing and inhabiting reality. Architecture-fiction projects are true testing grounds for domesticity and are capable of challenging the prevailing disciplinary narratives. As professors Gregory Currie, Heather Jane Ferguson and Stacie Friend said "We are sympathetic to the idea that readers learn from fiction." During the first weeks of the semester, we shall "learn from fiction", analyzing a series of domestic fictions that challenge cohabitation frameworks, forms of habitation, home routines, relational environments on different scales, experiments with subjectivity itself, etc. These fictions are going to help us to escape from our own experiences, memories and clichés, in order to explore, enlarge and enrich our imaginaries related to domesticity.

We are going to ask ourselves: How do we want to live? How can you rethink domesticity? What domesticity could become?

And to explore these questions we are going to follow a specific script. A housing and domestic proposal needs a script, like a film, a play or a choreography. It can be simple, but it must describe an unfolding journey between a sequence of relationships, spaces, devices, displays, series of themes, circulations, flows, etc, as a cosmopolitics proposal. We are going to follow different chapters of this proposed script during the fourteen weeks of the semester:

Urban metabolism. Housing as an infrastructural terminal. How many flows go through your domestic space? How can these flows become an architectural matter? // Interscalarity / Transcalarity. The house in the city and the city in the house. How many exteriors can fit in your domestic space? // Units of coexistence. Interspecies relationships (with others, humans, non-humans, objects). Who lives there? // Domestic experiments with yourself. From blackbox to reblackbox. How many domestic melodramas are you living? // Bodies politics. How does your domesticity touch your body? // Productive and reproductive spaces and logics. Domestic gender, race and age. What counts of labor? // Neighborhood, levels and gradients of interaction. Coexistence units. How do we live together? The art of living together.

3. SHARED STORIES, SHARED FUTURES. Fictions and myths are always shared matters. They build us as a society. Fiction imaginaries virtualize other possible shared futures and conceive other ways of living together. The second part of the semester we will focus on the shared dimension of domesticity, putting together all that knowledge "learned from fiction" into a collective housing proposal, located in the city of Madrid. As Laborda (a Spanish cooperative) once stated: "We build housing to build community". We could add "to build other futures". The first phase in a collective housing project is a shared fiction: a future world in common. We will work in a Vertical Studio teaching methodology, trying to learn from each other, to enrich ourselves, configuring a group (students, tutors, assistants, guests' critics, etc) that will work with negotiation, dialogue, collective intelligence, disagreements, etc. We will inculcate teamwork among students from different levels through social learning, considering that people learn from one another, including such concepts as observational learning, imitation, and modelling. We will test master/apprentice relationships during the semester. Students are encouraged to interact and collaborate across different levels on a design project and proposal of domesticity and housing in the city of Madrid. Social learning theory focuses on the learning that occurs within a social context.

Keywords

Fiction, Domesticity, Housing, Architecture, Collective Intelligence, Negotiation, Madrid

Learning Prerequisites

Important concepts to start the course

The language we are going to use during the semester is English. French and German would be use informally. Due to the covid-19 situation and some restrictions for traveling, we are going to combine presence and synchronous online teaching at the Campus (hybrid teaching could be develop also) during course 2021-2022. A specific schedule and syllabus will be provided at the beginning of the semester. Laptop and/or computer, a good internet connection at home and microphone and headphones are necessary to follow properly our classes.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Develop independently an architectural and canonical definition form different cultural products.
- Analyze and understand architecture as a fiction matter.
- Develop in group a precise and consistent architectural project.
- Develop in group shared narratives.
- Produce models, drawings, prototypes, storyboards, films, scripts and other documents, elaborating on the idea of their design.
- Conduct a research based on fiction and domesticity.
- Apply models, drawings, prototypes, storyboards, films, scripts and other documents to explain properly the idea of their design.
- Construct architecture from an urban, collective and ecosystemic approach.

Transversal skills

- Plan and carry out activities in a way which makes optimal use of available time and other resources.
- Negotiate effectively within the group.
- Make an oral presentation.
- Identify the different roles that are involved in well-functioning teams and assume different roles, including leadership roles.
- Use a work methodology appropriate to the task.
- Evaluate one's own performance in the team, receive and respond appropriately to feedback.

Teaching methods

During our course 2021-2022, we will combine physically present classes on Campus and synchronous online classes, live streamed and recorded in ZOOM, SWITCH Tube and Moodle. Our Studio will be 14 weeks long, with classes every Monday and Tuesday, during the mornings, from 9:00 until 14:00. We will provide the students a complete syllabus, schedule and calendar, including activities with the procedure week by week. The semester is going to be organized in two Modules: Module_01: individual work will last three weeks; Module_02: collective work will last 10 weeks in groups of two or three people. The students acquire the capacity of working individually and in groups for two or three people, organized in a Vertical Studio learning methodology. Each group for the Module_02 will be configured by one student from Bachelor and one or two students from Master. The teaching activity will develop through lectures, specific reviews and weekly design work. Students will present their work regularly, every week, some times in a public pin-up session. Intermediate and final reviews with guests' critics will be organized.

Expected student activities

Possible travel to Spain (Madrid) to visit the environment and some examples of Spanish housing proposals (depending on the covid-19 situation at that time and the conditions to travel). Other visits to Swiss exhibitions or examples could be done during the course.

Students are expected to:

- to be present in the studios to work on their projects amongst their peers the whole day, Mondays and Tuesday mornings.
- to practice and master the different assignments in the development of an architectural project that tackles spatial issues and different scales from the body to the territorial.
- to show, share and explain to the class their design process and proposal.
- to attend all the lectures and the reviews and participate in all the activities proposed by the Studio.
- to prepare questions and reflections for seminars by watching the uploaded lectures and reading the relevant texts in order to be able to participate in a discussion.
- to engage in discussion with their studio tutors, assistant, guests, and peers in order to progress their projects.
- to structure their work into succinct presentations for pin-ups and reviews and to be able to argue for and defend their choices and decisions through demonstrating their work, but at the same time to be self-critical and able to receive criticism and feedback.
- to document the progression of their projects (drawings, models, images, texts and other elements of work) by sharing regularly in class, on MIRO boards and our Facebook group.

Assessment methods

We will provide the students a complete syllabus, schedule and calendar, including activities, the procedure week by week and the rating system. There will be a Final Jury (14th week) after each Module and a Midterm Review for the Module_02 in the middle of the process. These several pin-ups and reviews will be organized inviting guests' critics to give feedback and critics to all the students. There will be lectures related to the chapters of the script. During the feedback-session (Final Jury), that will span one or two days, each proposal will have an in-depth evaluation. The discussion and reflections among the critics and tutorial team is part of the didactic aims of the studio, students are invited to fully participate in this. Rating and grades will be based on continuous evaluation, attendance and participation in class, the evolution of each project, the collaboration level achieved with their peers and the content of the middle reviews, the Final Jury and all the submissions and assignments. Rating and grades will be based on the EPFL usual code. All the students will be attending every week to learn from the feedback provided by the invited critics and the tutorial team. We will develop dynamics and activities to enrich this participation in multiple ways.

Students will be evaluated during the semester on the material evidence of their work according to the eight skills and ability to demonstrate mastery of its management in an adequate and precise way, since the elaboration of ideas until their translation into spatial proposals and built in a specific territory. This process should be progressively documented in the MIRO boards, Moodle and private Facebook group in addition to the physical production of the works that will be exhibited / presented in the studios. These abilities will be expressed in different ways at first, but over time they should interact and support each other in the expression of the project.

1. CONCEPT PROPOSAL: to design and create a coherent position and situated position based on their own arguments and facts, regarding to the questions proposed. Speculative proposal exploring the limits and the opportunities of the concepts of domesticity, housing and the art of living together.
2. NEGOTIATION / COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE: at various levels - within the Group (between peers), within the Studio (between students, different groups and projects), within the project (constraints, conditions, ideas), within the Vertical Studio (students and tutors), and also within the environment, context and territory.
3. ORAL AND VISUAL COMMUNICATION: clarity, coherence, structure, narration, audience participation, attention.
4. COMPLEX DOCUMENTS / DRAWINGS: transitive, domain, analytical force, spatiality, expression, precision, execution.
5. MODELS / MAQUETTES / PROTOTYPES / MOCK UPS: conceptual consistency, technical accuracy, speculative and evocative intention, precision of execution, fetish objects, understanding of scales.
6. CULTURAL / ARCHITECTURAL / ART REFERENCES: understanding of the relationship between the architectural project and the requested cultural references for their development.
7. CONSTRUCTION OF ATMOSPHERES / IMAGES: mastery of techniques, image quality and strength of the message it transmits.
8. TEXT: narrative, conceptual and editorial quality to reactions and reflective response. Transitive, evocative.
9. CONSTRUCTION: demonstration of constructive thinking at different scales, from detail to site.

The tutorial team consists of Eva Gil Lopesino, Carlos Palacios Rodríguez and Uriel Fogué Herreros from elii [architecture office], with the assistance of Léonore Nemeč, as part time assistant.

Supervision

Office hours	No
Assistants	Yes
Forum	Yes
Others	Léonore Nemeč, architect, part time assistant.

Resources

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More bibliography will be shared during the semester.

Websites

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- <http://elii.es/en/portfolio/what-is-home-eng/>
- <https://arquitectosdecabecera.org/AC/en/portfolio/milcasasentucasa/>