

AR-401(ah)

Studio MA1 (Malterre-Barthes)

Malterre-Barthes Charlotte

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

Language of teaching	English
Credits	12
Withdrawal Session	Unauthorized Winter
Semester	Fall
Exam	During the semester
Workload	360h
Weeks	14
Hours	6 weekly
Lecture	2 weekly
Project	4 weekly
Number of positions	

Remark

Inscription faite par la section

Summary

"To be useful, helpful, of assistance to someone:" The "In Service Of: Marseille" studio reflects on the architectural project as a form of public service. It explores how architecture and design can assist activist communities engaged in spatial struggles.

Content**Teaching Format:**

Depending on enrollment, students will work in groups of two/three after the first week. Each desk crit will require the attendance of at least (2) student groups for peer-to-peer feedback. Desk crits will happen on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. All group attendance is required for episode reviews, guest lectures, mid-term and final reviews. Note that some lectures may be online.

Course Description

"The uncanny that disturbs the critical going on above it, the professional going on without it, the uncanny that one can sense in prophecy, the strangely known moment, the gathering content, of a cadence, and the uncanny that one can sense in cooperation, the secret once called solidarity."

Ruth Wilson Gilmore, in Stefano Harney, *The Undercommons : Fugitive Planning & Black Study*, ed. Fred Moten, *Fugitive Planning & Black Study* (New York, Port Watson: Minor Compositions, 2013), 42.

Architecture and design are powerful tools to conjure, materialize and unlock horizons. But who has access to and can afford design? 'In Service of:...' is a studio series that seeks to redress uneven access to design and to planning literacy by the majority. To do so, it places architecture as a tool at the service of a place, a population, a narrative, in order to benefit the common good. In this class, we will seek to deploy architecture processes "with values and interests different from those of capital." In that sense, 'In Service Of:...' conducts a reflection on architecture as a form of public service. Seeking to 'detoxifying narratives' around architecture and urban design, there shall be no claim of righteousness, but instead an attempt to learn and unlearn from the sites and the people encountered. Architects can no longer claim to be "the bearers of a compass" or of any absolute truth, and 'expertise' a highly contentious term. Through a comprehensive exploration of the forces (i.e., social, legal, political, economic, cultural, environmental) that generate and control space at first, and then diving into the selected contentious sites, the studio seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the reciprocal relationship between architecture and community, recognizing the potential for design to foster social cohesion, enhance well-being, and contribute to the overall betterment of society. The studio will also conduct a reflection on its own format, to question architecture attachment to solutionism, the expectation to 'fix problems' and other tropes that have conducted to socially and spatially unjust developments, such as the massive Euroméditerranée project in Marseille. It also seeks to produce works that have utility for active local groups engaged in struggles against gentrification, state violence and expropriation strategies, and unsafe housing to name a few of the questions faced by inhabitants of Marseille. By focusing on the idea of being useful without romanticizing the task, this design studio seeks to articulate an agenda for a self-critical architecture with a heightened sense of responsibility and a commitment to creating spaces that truly serve

the needs of the people.

Site

Marseille is the setting for the "In Service Of..." first design studio because of its historical and ongoing position as a rebel city, which had belligerently addressed official powers, urban challenges, and is home to active communities and political engagement.

Trip

A 4-days excursion will take us on-site (date TBD).

Scales

This studio is based on a conception of urban design as a multidimensional trans-scalar discipline. Not only political, economic, social, cultural, and geo-tectonic forces affect and shape the built environment at the global scale, at the territorial and landscape scale, at the neighborhood and urban scale, down to the architectural and material scale- and to the body, but space and its arrangements have a reciprocating effect on these forces, humans, and non-humans acting upon them. We will design within these gradations, positing that each constituent scale is distinct and can be considered on its own, yet the piece as a whole is only complete with each scale, resulting in the sum of all the small scales producing a large-scale total.[2] We will also think around temporal scales to challenge "impatient capital" as it dictates architectural, urban, and landscape projects for immediacy, exploring seemingly contradictory notions of ephemeral and impermanent, durable, and longevity as frameworks for operation.

1.

Pedro Fiori Arantes, *The Rent of Form: Architecture and Labor in the Digital Age*, ed. Adriana Kauffmann et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019), 152

2. Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988)

Learning Outcomes

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

- Critique a specific project brief and a specific context and respond with a meaningful data-driven design concept.
- Translate a data-driven design concept into meaningful architectural and/or urban propositions at appropriate scales and levels of granularity.
- Produce coherent architectural representations and models at sufficient levels of detail.
- Formulate the morphogenetic narrative and create convincing arguments for the design propositions.
- Develop Develop convincing final diagrams, drawings, renderings, simulations, physical and digital models.

Teaching methods

Structure/Method

Choreographed by episodes that set the tone both graphically and politically- (i.e. templates, graphic standards, references), exploring actors and forces, resistant schemes and spatial programs, researching the site and entering in dialogue with local actors and topics, to ultimately draft and draw our field of action, the studio articulates the design project as the product of cultural, social, economic, and political mechanisms imagining a promising and emancipated future. Episodes 1 & 2 are based on a take-give logic, where examples are handed over and students provide others to expand the conversation and everyone's knowledge. Episodes are paced across the semester with a counter-crescendo, first rapid and later slowing down to let the project emerge.

Expected student activities

Goals/ Learning Outcomes

The studio's goal is to articulate questions about design's role in inventing futures liberated from the debilitating inert structures we find ourselves entrenched in, facing social and climate crises, to start articulating an understanding of practices that are truly at the service of people. We will attempt to deploy the skills and organizing abilities of designers to think about new constructions of emancipated practices. We shall develop abilities to think critically about the status quo while developing ways of engaging with the built and the unbuilt environment, pushing forward forms of spatial practice. For that, we will develop literacy in policy, economy, technology, intersectional activism, care, preservation, etc. borrowing from other disciplines, and learning to doubt, while staying hopeful as we help planning disciplines to pivot toward becoming better practices of stewardship.

Assessment methods

Evaluation

The grading will be based on the consistent engagement and learning/unlearning curve of the students with each

episode in the Studio. The grades will be proportionately distributed over the episodes listed as follows. The studio relies on self-assessment questionnaire to help the grading.

- Episode 01: 15 %
- Episode 02: 15 %
- Episode 03: 20 %
- Episode 04: 50 %

Supervision

Office hours	Yes
Assistants	Yes

Resources

Virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI)

No

Bibliography

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