AR-401(bf)

Studio MA1 (Grillo et Vasiu)

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

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

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

Remark

Inscription faite par la section

Summary

This studio approaches architecture as a dynamic field of information, using data as a core design material. Students analyze existing complex fragments of territories with the goal of inserting opportunistic architectural and infrastructural interventions.

Content

We will start with pieces of land, fragments of a territory. A piece of territory, already organized into a grid.Ten zones. Ten fragments of a territory that pretends to be neutral, orderly, finished. It is not. Nothing is finished. Everything is data waiting to be read.
Choose one fragment. Not because it is interesting, everything is interesting, this is the first illusion to abandon, because you must start somewhere, and starting is arbitrary.
Trust this arbitrariness. Intuition is not the opposite of method's method before it has been asked to justify itself. Instinct gets you into the territory faster than analysis ever will. Analysis comes after. Let it.
Find the agent. Every territory has one: a force pretending to be background. Traffic. Water. Bureaucracy. Boredom. You will not find it by looking for it directly will find it the way you found your fragment: by sensing where the pressure is.
Scan it. Not survey : scan. Surveying implies you already know what you are looking for. Scanning admits you don't, yet.
Move across the territory the way a machine reads a surface: quickly, indiscriminately, before judgment sets in.
Interrogate it. Extract it.
Dissect it anyway. Expose it. This is not documentation. Documentation is what you do when you have already given up.
Here is the paradox the studio insists on: data is objective, and yet the moment you touch it, it becomes opinion. There is no way around this. The landscape will be manipulated. Not "enhanced," not "activated," manipulated until it becomes an ecosystem that did not exist before you arrived and will not survive after certain decisions are made. This is not failure. This is architecture's oldest function, disguised for a century as neutrality.
Use the digital tool not because it is fashionable, but because it is the only instrument honest enough to admit it is reshaping reality rather than representing it.
Your intervention, a building. An infrastructure. Inserted, not composed, not integrated, inserted into a context you have just finished inventing.
The architecture is not a response to the site. The site, by now, is your response.
Find the opportunity in the mess you created. Exploit it. "Opportunistic" is not an insult here it is the only honest description of what architecture has always done.
Blur the boundary between context and building until neither can claim priority over the other. Let them need each other. Let neither survive alone.

This is not harmony in the decorative sense. It is codependency, dressed as design.

Teaching methods

1.Find your spot and your intuition.
2.Create your own ecosystem within a real, existing territory: Switzerland.
3.Find your digital tool.
4.Support your world through supportive infrastructure.
5.Find an opportunity through opportunistic intervention.
6.Negotiate with your neighbours, your intervention may extend beyond your grid portion, if agreed with adjacent students.
7.Use architecture to complete and support your ecosystem architecture is the solution and the key.
Study trip (max cost :250.-)

Assessment methods

Part I: 30%
Part II: 70%
Evaluation criteria:
Intuition, finding, discovering
Idea
Translation of the idea
Capacity for elaboration
Capacity for formulating thesis and conclusions
Architectural design

Supervision

Assistant.e.s	Yes

Resources

Websites

- https://poly.cam/library
- https://www.blender.org/download/
- https://www.cloudcompare.org
- https://viageo.ch/donnee/telecharger/300168/carte

Moodle Link

- https://go.epfl.ch/AR-401_bf