

AR-670

Affirming Actions

Tombesi Paolo

Cursus	Sem.	Type
Architecture and Sciences of the City		Opt.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	3
Session	
Exam	Term paper
Workload	90h
Hours	62
Courses	22
Exercises	8
TP	32
Number of positions	

Frequency

Every year

Remark

03.03 + 24.03-26.03.2023

Summary

The course presents a particular type of architectural firms, established and led by women. Partly a reflection of marginal positions within professional markets, they indicate original directions for the future of practice and the architectural profession as a public endeavour.

Content**AFFIRMING ACTIONS****Models of architectural agency from the work of women-led practices**

This doctoral seminar is built upon the public activities planned for the 2023 EPFL Symposium sponsored by the Latsis Foundation, "Affirming Actions", the aim of which is to present and discuss the contribution of a particular type of contemporary architectural firms, prevalently small-sized and established and led by women, to the shepherding of the built environment.

In order to do so, the symposium will highlight and reflect upon goals, strategies and trajectories of successful independent female practitioners that, through their work, have shown an ability to articulate and engage with polity concerns by using building projects as platforms for ideas and systems of values with collective import. The underlying premise is that, while partly a reflection of marginal positions within professional markets, the work identified indicates original directions for the future of practice, and for anyone interested in the relevance of the architectural profession as a public endeavour.

The symposium will look at the work of the selected female architects from a reflective socio-technical perspective, which will cast light not only on the methods employed in their design practice but also on the network of relationships put in place to generate and sustain the required knowledge.

The type of analysis has been chosen with the belief that it has the potential to change the terms of the discussion around women and design but also about the models of architectural practice to privilege, today, in different economic environments. In particular, by suggesting both the need and the relevance of carrying out disciplined reflection in areas that are strategic, yet traditionally tangential, to the task of the architect as conventionally understood.

The discussion will also enter the role universities may have to play in facilitating the models of practice envisaged. By the nature of its very concerns, the symposium engages with diverse regions of the world and modes of practice whilst emphasising intellectual energy, entrepreneurial spirit and eventual achievements. Intended participants come from different countries and continents, represent different ethnicities, and comprise practitioners of varying ages at different stages of their careers and with varying academic experiences.

The list of invited speakers comprises:

- Anna Chavepayre, Collectif Encore, Auterrive
- Laurane Coornaert, Degré 47, Bruxelles
- Sophie Delhay, Sophie Delhay Architecte, Paris
- Alessia Griginis, Vibes, Turin
- Rozana Montiel, Rozana Montiel Estudio de Arquitectura, Mexico City
- Toshiko Mori, Toshiko Mori Architect, New York
- Salima Naji, Agence Salima Naji Architecte, Tiznit
- Hannah Robertson, The University of Melbourne
- Claudia Rodriguez, Taller Nuevos Territorios, Mexico City
- Carol Ross Barney, Ross Barney Architects, Chicago
- Kerstin Thompson, KTA, Melbourne
- Elisa Valero, Elisa Valero Arquitectura, Granada
- Xu Tian Tian, DnA, Beijing

"Affirming Actions" will be held in the auditorium of the Rolex Learning Centre over three days, from March 24 to March 26.

The event will start on the night of the 24th with an introduction by the organiser, Paolo Tombesi, and a keynote address by Toshiko Mori.

On the 25th, there will be four 60 + 45 minute thematic conversations, each involving two architects and the facilitator. Each conversation is structured around a loose topic, chosen as an opportunity for the invited guests to articulate some of the important aspects informing their architectural positions - initially by making a TED-like short but focused presentation of their work, and then by engaging in a panel and Q+A discussion with the public.

The same format will continue the morning of the 26th, with another two pairs of speakers. In the afternoon, an open group session on the role of university in facilitating the experiences relayed will complete the symposium.

Doctoral students are expected to participate in the conversations as part of the public, by posing informed questions to the presenters and engaging in the debate. At the end of the symposium, they are required to prepare a succinct outline of a research proposal dealing with some of the practice-related issues and/or questions emerged during the colloquium.

An information session focusing on the theory of architectural firms and the evolution of architectural markets will be offered three weeks before the event, on March 3. The workshop will also provide a scholarly bibliography on the subject matter, to read before the start of the symposium, and material concerning the work of the invitees.