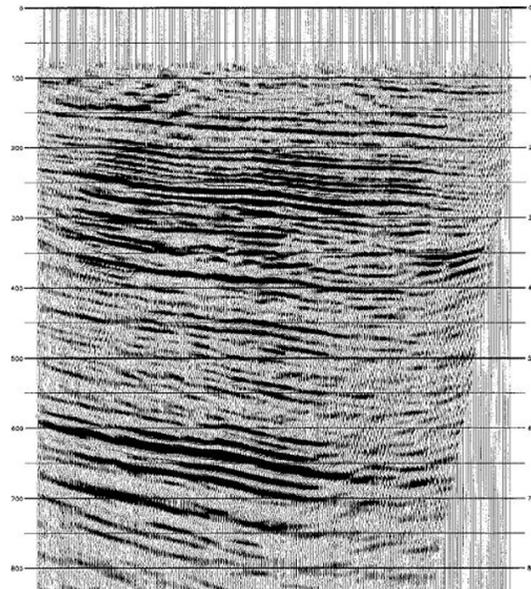


DE ARCHITECTURA

LIBER XI

FIRMITAS



Studio BAUKUNST

Our studio at EPFL is conceived as an investigation into the archetypical elements of architecture in light of the challenges of our present age. By imbricating the contemporary and the fundamental a framework is set up in which a critical reflection on what architecture might be today can take shape. Research is envisaged as a project and the project is envisaged as research. Establishing a critical viewpoint is therefore regarded as the primary act of building an architectural proposal. Stemming from the overarching approach of Vitruvius's Ten Books, the studio addresses a different theme each academic year. After *Performative Objects* in 19/20, *Elements of Climate* in 20/21 and *Umwelt* in 21/22, in 22/23 the theme of *Firmitas* will be dealt with. *Firmitas* as a core attribute of architecture is challenged by the gradual realization that the planetary crisis we are facing profoundly obfuscates our notion of the (im)permanence of our built environment. The studios are split up in two parts of different character, adressing a specific aspect of the overarching theme each semester.



Part I - Deconstructivism

*I entered town, pensively, through the arched gate, pondering it. Why, I thought, does the arch not fall down being without any support? It remains standing, I answered my own question, because all the stones would wish to fall at one and the same time.*¹

The first semester is called *Deconstructivism*. The term opens the possibility of dismantling deadlocked concepts of architecture, allowing the search for a repertoire of possible transformations. As the building industry is pursuing the acceleration of entropy, architecture might have to look at what is already there, abandoning the strange idea that a building is a static structure, aiming to reverse the irreversible. As every act of (un)building, may it be cutting, taking apart, or blowing up, is both the subtraction and addition of material, the studio will demand an intimate knowledge of, and perhaps complicity with, the structure of the examined case studies, fusing analysis and design. Considering them as raw material, any intervention will have to navigate structural requirements, techno-logical frameworks, environmental effects, and civic potentials. Through this non-architectural, as it were deconstructivist perspective, our methods will acquire critical resistance. Only through this resistance our project will be able to assume agency.

The formats of *Part I* will be models, plans and 3D based visualizations. They serve both as working documents and as final representations, meaning that both process and result, narrative and argument, the disciplinary and the non-disciplinary are valued. The evaluation of the work will focus on the commitment, inventiveness, and quality that the proposals display, as well as the critical reflection that informs them. The case studies of *Part I* are located in the city of Lausanne. This will allow for multiple visits and a close examination of the material at hand. The work on them will be undertaken in small groups.

In mid October the studio will go for a field trip to Lisbon. Next to some small exercises and workshops, the *Lisbon Trienal* and in particular the exhibition *Tendency and Fact* by *Baukunst* will be visited.

