RIOT

Academic Year
2023/2024
RIOT

Agenda

Teaching

Spring:
A Moratorium on New Construction

2023
Stop Building!
The Case of Lausanne

2023
Fix the Office

Fall:
In Service of

2023
Marseille

Research

Action
Fall: In Service

Spring: In New Construction

Freire: “The education of architects in the future has to become an emancipatory process, pursuing a “reflection and action upon the world to transform it.” Yet emancipatory for whom? Can an emancipatory spatial education lead to the design of spaces that are genuinely emancipatory for those who use them? Question “Normality”: Denaturalize the idea of “standards” and make designing for all different bodies routine by centering disability justice.

Challenges: Property is (neo) colonialism and (neo)imperialism spelled differently. Question it as the only ordering regime of how we think spatially.

Recognize Labor: Acknowledge that architecture is labor, not a calling. Don’t fall for the pseudo-democratic narratives of “participation” that ignore that this, too, is work. Know the bodies that make the architecture. Be frank about the working conditions in academia because “our working conditions are your learning conditions.”

Adopt an Anticolonial Way of Seeing: looping back to Morrison and Franz Fanon, the impossibility of spatial innocence must impregnate our curricula as we embrace an anticolonial way of seeing, which Nicholas Mirzoeff sees as a refusal of the “aesthetics of respect for the established order.”

Decenter “Neutrality”: Challenge the outdated understanding of architects as professionals and experts. As Atikka Zupancić frames it, a “neutral” position is always and necessarily the position of the ruling class: it seems “neutral” because it has achieved the status of the dominant ideology, which always strikes us as self-evident. The criterion of objectivity in such a case is thus not neutrality, but the capacity of theory to occupy a singular, specific point of view within the situation. And not just theory.

Recognize Life as a Source of Knowledge: Make room in the classroom for students to use their lived experience as a source of knowledge rather than denigrating that knowledge in favor of abstract canonized knowledge. The classroom should be a safe space where trust is built and not assumed. Building on lived experiences challenges the overrepresentation of the specific experience as the universal; it insists on multiplicity and rejects competitiveness.

Unfreeze History: Activate history as a nonlinear critical tool to understand the present.

Mistrust Technologies: Technology increasingly mediates how we love, live, and die; how we interact with students, clients, and future users. Digital tools completely transformed the process in architecture classrooms and practice, changing the speed and accelerating the deskilling, reskilling, and reskilling cycles. It is, therefore, important to resist the unbridled enthusiasm we are conditioned to have for technological innovation and fixes. And, remember, the archive is technology as well.

Critically Engage with Images: Architects pretend to ignore the immense power residing in images produced to sell and conceal. The curriculum should not only focus on teaching students how to produce stunning images but also address the responsibility they have for the futures they create.

Be Entangled with Other Species: The transformed spatial curriculum must challenge extractive relations enacted between humans and by specific groups of humans on non-humans, other species with whom we share this planet. To accept that “interdependency is not a contract, nor a moral ideal—it is a condition.” How can we learn to design for and with that condition? Natasha Myers considers plantation, a human-plant relation, as a society’s basic political unit. What kind of teaching and design emerge when the human-non-human relation is understood as the basic spatial unit?

Intergenerational Thinking: Decentering adulthood to work with those outside of it. Not only are there 2.2 billion children on Earth, but as Olufemi O. Táíwò says, “we should think about our ancestors. But we will win and lose our own ethical battles based on what we do for our descendants. We are defined by what kind of ancestors we choose to be.”

Interrogate the Idea of Home/House: “Home is where the heart is,” Gil Scott Heron ominously suggests. House is a site of disciplining. Architecture may have started out as a shelter, but it can also be a trap. As Robyn Maynard and Leanne Betsabesisk Simpson tell us, there are “one hundred forms of homespace.”

This work on curriculum repair is never finished. It flourishes in ongoing reorientation, reconfigurations, and rearticulations. Thus, we would like to invite readers to add their frameworks at the end of this text. If you want to share your frameworks with us, you can reach us at: curriculum.repair@gmail.com
Teaching

Fall: In Service of

Spring: A Moratorium on New Construction
Teaching

Fall: In Service of

Spring: A Moratorium on New Construction
IN SERVICE OF:

to do something for the benefit of something or someone else.

MARSEILLE
“To be useful, helpful, of assistance to someone.” The ‘In Service Of’ studio conducts a reflection on the architectural project as a form of public service. ‘In Service Of: Marseille’ explores the myriad ways architecture and design can serve and assist activist communities engaged in spatial struggles in Marseille.

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Architecture and design are powerful tools to fashion new narratives’ around architecture and urban design, instead an attempt to learn and unlearn from the recent history of the discipline and the reference in terms of city development. In that sense, ‘In Service of’ was born. The ‘In Service Of’ studio seeks to articulate an agenda for a political, economic, cultural and environmental (i.e., social, legal, ecological) exploration of the forces (i.e., social, legal, economic, cultural) that generate and control space at first, and then the future, living in the present.

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Trip: 6-10.10
Teaching

Fall: In Service of

Spring: A Moratorium on New Construction
A MORATORIUM ON NEW CONSTRUCTION

1) STOP BUILDING
2) HOUSE EVERYONE
3) CHANGE VALUE SYSTEMS
4) HALT EXTRACTION
5) REVOLUTIONIZE CONSTRUCTION
6) FIX THE OFFICE
7) REFORM THE SCHOOL
8) DON’T DIG
9) TAKE CARE
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Join the