During the fall semester we will attempt an experiment, trying to bridge art, architecture and engineering.

Starting from a research process we will develop site-specific interventions, that are supposed to be fit for an infrastructural function. Is it possible to create structures that function as a work of art, architecture and infrastructure at the same time?

The experimental setup of the atelier aims to challenge our routines, work processes and approaches and to question our relation to art, architecture and landscape.
We will be looking into the history of the domestication of the Alps and how the Swiss society installed itself in the inhospitable mountainous environment. By this we will discover the human relation to and the reception of landscape, nature and the world. We will examine site-specific art and land art and relate them to big infrastructural projects.

Outgoing from our historical studies we want to examine our current state of mind: How do we as architects / artists / designers / engineers want to react on increasing problems, caused by climate change. Mountain slides induced by the disappearance of permafrost, declining of glaciers, sea-level rise confront our societies with various menaces.

According to our research we will develop a personal approach that will result in site-responsive concepts. Our interdisciplinary research group will develop an exhibition, showing the results of our critical and physical examination, trying to fuse our actions with landscape and nature.
We will examine two sites with current landslides: Gondo with its landslide from 2000 and Bondo’s mountain slide of 2017.

What measures do we want to suggest? The participants will be free to develop their own approach and a resulting program and project.
When questioning our relation to landscape and its cultivation with big infrastructural projects, we automatically will have to question our relation to concrete.

In our current times with the discourse of the anthropocene and the drying up of resources such as gravel we want to question the use of concrete. What’s the state of the art of material research? How do material and structure correlate and what possibilities do we gain from this?
LECTURE SERIES

In a series of lectures and presentations we will focus on site-specific art, architecture related art and land art.

Furthermore we will examine the history of the cultivation and domestication of the alpine landscape and the current state of geo engineering.

We will connect to the EPFL laboratories for material research and geo-/water engineering.
Lucius Burckhardt
Why is Landscape Beautiful?: The Science of Strollology
Building—A Process with No Obligations to Heritage Preservation (1967)

Ann Reynolds
Robert Smithson: Learning from New Jersey And Elsewhere

Miwon Kwon
One Place After Another - Site-specific art and locational identity

Adrian Forty
Concrete and Culture: A Material History

Richard Sennett
The craftsman

Comité national suisse des grands barrages
Concrete and earth dams in Switzerland today

Charles Borel
Nos barrages en Suisse romande
The studio will be accompanied by a series of film- and movie screenings related to our investigations. Screenings will happen on Monday evenings.

Fitzcarraldo, 1982 by Werner Herzog
Working Man’s Death, 2005 by Michael Glawogger
1818, 2018 by Christian Berrut
Il capo, 2010 by Yuri Ancarani

Artist films by
Gordon Matta Clark
Adrian Paci
Richard Serra
FIELD TRIPS

We will do two field trips together:

Sep 21 -24
The first will consist of a tour of the suisse alps, including visits to Bondo, Gondo, and Brienz GR. We will also see the Grande-Dixence Dam, the Pyramide d’Euseigne and Eglise d’Hérémence as well as bridges by Robert Maillart and Jürg Conzett.

Oct 05 - 08
The second field trip will lead us to Germany. In the area of Cologne and the Ruhr district we will visit the surface mine Garzweiler and former coal mining sites such as Landschaftspark Duisburg Nord and Zeche Zollverein which have been transformed into post industrial landscapes providing culture and leisure.
Another highlight is a visit to Museumsinsel Hombroich with its outstanding landscape interventions between art and architecture.
Furthermore we will see architecture by Peter Zumthor and Günther Böhm.

Participation at the field trips is mandatory.
Cost frame for the two field trips is about CHF 600 altogether.
The 2020 edition of the summit collaborates with DIA Art Foundations director Jessica Morgan and offers a collaboration with a group of our studio for the next years topic:

RESOURCE HUNGRY: OUR CULTURED LANDSCAPE AND ITS ECOLOGICAL IMPACT

The Verbier Art Summit is an international platform for discourse in a non-transactional context. The Summit connects leading experts to key figures in the art world to generate innovative ideas and drive social change.