

April 13, 2020

Dear GSAPP Family,

Over the past few weeks, I have been struck by how often I've heard faculty, alumni, friends, and colleagues reference a class or a professor they once had, and how much this encounter with new ideas shaped their personal trajectory. Perhaps, following on last week, out of crisis comes a heightened awareness and appreciation for the figures and questions that have been impactful, personally and collectively as a field, and have offered us different ways of seeing architecture and cities, of defining the social or the environmental, of engaging questions of representation, and even of undoing our own assumptions about technology, about history, about our disciplines and their supposed boundaries.

These encounters have often been surprising and unexpected. They speak to the unique power of the individuals and context of our studies and to its capacity to be forever transformative. At times, it seems these references leave an indelible mark—the things we simply keep coming back to, over and over again, in our writings and practices. Being a student so often means searching for these inspirations, refusing to settle for reductive definitions, authoritative declarations and other dogmas, to pursue instead the voices and ideas that open up possibilities or that simply ring a little truer and more real.

These encounters also may be as simple as a drawing, or even just a page in a book. I still remember my first time seeing the blurry introductory photograph of “Generic City” in Koolhaas’s *S,M,L,XL*, Tschumi’s Advertisements for Architecture collages, DSR’s television renderings in the Slow House, the Situationists’ Naked City counter-mappings, *Learning from Las Vegas*’s thick-pen cartoon “I am a Monument,” the early paintings of Zaha Hadid, and the stricken woman on the cover of Colomina’s *Sexuality and Space*. Each image, however simple, stood in contrast to the accepted disciplinary norms of their respective times—they were “activist drawings,” as Wigley and De Zegher titled their edited collection that reconsidered Constant’s work for the possibilities it posed to architecture and the urban and environmental imagination.

Today, of course, our disciplines and our means of representation have changed. Yet, the power and search for new ideas and epistemologies, which invite us to reconsider what architecture and planning, design and development can be, are more crucial than ever. As we find ourselves reduced to the space of our screens—removed from our loved creative, interpersonal work environments, our tools, materials, and messy techniques—we are by necessity re-engaging with an economy of means to explore our expanding ideas. These exchanges and encounters, across forms and formats, will most certainly have a lasting influence on our individual and collective trajectories, and thus, on the future of our field.

This week, I invite you to reflect on what these generative projects, ideas, and questions are for you—as we simultaneously revisit the work of figures who reshaped the field in their time, and continue to spark different modes of re-engagement in the present and for the future.

Sincerely,

Amale

## #GSAPPFAMILY2020

Please continue to share your experiences on social media using the hashtag [#gsappfamily2020](#), or send us photos or videos directly. Students and faculty are also invited to submit works-in-progress using this [google form](#).

Image Credit: DARK SPACE: Architecture Representation Black Identity Seminar led by Associate Professor Mario Gooden.

## WEEKLY BROADCASTS

PASSING THROUGH  
ARCHITECTURE: THE  
BIOLOGICAL ART OF GORDON  
MATTA-CLARK**Monday, April 13**  
**1:00 PM**

Mark Wigley

Gordon Matta-Clark graduated from the architecture school at Cornell in 1968 then spent the 10 years before his early death relentlessly challenging the limits of art and architecture—most famously in a series of vertiginous “building-cuts” that became cult works that continue to inspire artists and architects today. This talk will ZOOM into those transgressive surgical operations to show how they were actually biological works.

BULLETPROOFING AMERICAN  
HISTORY: RACE,  
REMEMBRANCE AND  
EMMETT TILL**Tuesday, April 14**  
**12:30 PM**

Mabel O. Wilson

Compelling architectural and urban designs like the recent Memorial to Peace and Justice by Mass Design have been erected to aid the public in remembering the historic and geographic scope of America’s legacy of racial violence. As architects, planners, urbanists, and historian how do we commemorate America’s fraught history when recent protests by the white nationalist group Unite the Right at historic sites like the University of Virginia or the need to bulletproof a historical marker at an important site of the Civil Rights struggle tells us that violence still simmers and erupts in the nation’s public spaces?

## CLIMATE SUMMIT

**Wednesday, April 15**  
**1:00 PM**

Andrés Jaque

The Climate Summit convenes students across all GSAPP programs to present specific stories of CLIMATE and CLIMATE CRISIS, to trigger a collective discussion on the learnings that GSAPP, as a collectively inquiring milieu, can extract from the details of climate as it happens. The discussion will focus on rethinking what are the methodological and ontological evolutions design practices face, in entering and operating in a CLIMATE paradigm.

ECOLOGICS AT STEVEN HOLL  
ARCHITECTS 1992-2020**Thursday, April 16**  
**5:30 PM**A Lecture by Steven Holl  
Hosted by David Benjamin

Steven Holl discusses the topic of ecology as it relates to his firm’s work.

## OPEN CLASSES

CARIBBEAN RECONNECTIONS  
– A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR  
PUERTO RICO**Monday, April 13**  
**2:00 PM**

Richard Plunz and Douglas Woodward

This joint Urban Planning and Architecture studio focuses on three sites in Puerto Rico that share transportation problems and general developmental issues, and were heavily impacted by the presence of the U.S. military activities until 2004 by Hurricane Maria in September 2017. This studio engages the study of infrastructure, building, and livelihood futures, while expanding the scope of architectural design to include planning, policy and implementation.

PUBLIC SPACE: RHETORICS OF  
THE PEDESTRIAN**Tuesday, April 14**  
**11:00 AM**

David Smiley

“Public space” is among the most widely used tropes in the spatial disciplines and it shapes discussions about control, freedom, status, and identity in the spaces of the city, suburb, and elsewhere. To refine an examination of public space, this seminar focuses on the pedestrian, the walker in the city and the prime user of public space.

## URBAN INFORMATICS II

**Tuesday, April 14**  
**5:00 PM**

Anthony Vanky

Students are challenged to think about how data can support agendas in spatial and environmental justice, as well as enumerating use of public space. The course asks in what ways sensing technologies can validate or challenge theories of public space and social interaction, and how they can intersect with aspects of environmental quality and justice, sustainability, equity and overall general well-being.

ON SPATIAL EXCLUSION AND  
PLANNING**Wednesday, April 15th**  
**11:00 AM**

Hiba Bou Akar

This course investigates the idea of geographies of exclusion through a multi-disciplinary inquiry which locates spatial production and planning practice at its center. The course cross-thinks issues of spatial exclusion and social justice across cities in the Global North and the Global South. This week’s topic is “resistance and change: on current housing take-over movement.”

## MSRED CAPSTONE CLASS

**Thursday, April 16**  
**9:00 AM**

Patrice Derrington

The course synthesizes the analytical, comparative, and critical processes involved in real estate development projects, transactions and investments. Students demonstrate their understanding of the dynamics of real estate development.

## ARCHITECT WRITERS

**Friday, April 17**  
**9:00 AM**

Hilary Sample

Taking stock of the architecture profession today, this seminar brings together a select group of architects who have written about their design work as a means to better understand the built environment while reflecting on the field of architecture as a whole. This week the seminar hosts Julia Gamolina from Madame Architect, and as a point of discussion will look at the writings by architects Farshid Moussavi, and Mariam Kamara.

## MINING THE ARCHIVE

This week, I invite you to revisit the work of figures who reshaped the field in their time, and continue to spark different modes of re-engagement in the present and for the future.

November 16, 2011

What is New?

A presentation by Zaha Hadid on the conceptual morphologies of her practice and on building a theoretical and utopian project around the world.

February 8, 2012

Will You Tell Me a Story?

A presentation by Laurinda Spear and Bernardo Fort Brescia on their “expanded” practice of Arquitectonica.

October 3, 2012

Fuse: In, Re, De, Pro, Con

A lecture by Denise Scott Brown on her eighty-first birthday on five architectural acts: to infuse, refuse, defuse, profuse, and confuse.

April 29, 2013

Write: Diller Scofidio + Renfro: Architecture after Images

A Buell Center conversation with Michael Sorkin and others on the “endangered practice of architectural criticism” – on what it means to think out loud through writing in print and online – assembled around a book on Diller Scofidio + Renfro.

February 26, 2016

Critical Dialogues on Race and Modern Architecture

A panel discussion organized by Mabel O. Wilson on the how “race,” as an aesthetic category, has been deployed to form spaces of modernity from the building to the city to the nation to the planet; from Winckelmann’s idealization of Greek bodies to Le Corbusier’s evocations of the “primal energy” of Black jazz.

October 9, 2017

Arch-Art – A Conduit to Context: The Role of Buildings in Social Change

A provocation by James Wines on architecture as a form of public communication and commentary.

Please feel free to send us your own favorites.

## AVERY SELECTS



In the spirit of keeping connected during these extreme times, Columbia Books on Architecture and the City is going digital and uploading chapters from our newest titles once a week. This week, we’ve published excerpts from [Ways of Knowing Cities](#), edited by Laura Kurgan and Dare Brawley.

As for the [Avery Review](#), we invite you to peruse [The Institutions of Architecture](#), a collection of essays that reconsider the professional, pedagogical, curatorial, and critical institutions that construct architecture’s foundations, limits, and ambitions.

We suggest starting with two pieces that evaluate the ideas of two foundational figures: [Brendan Cormier’s “I Watched Frank Gehry’s MasterClass So You Don’t Have To”](#) and [Amale Andraos’s “Beyond Bigness: Rereading the Peutinger Map.”](#)

We’ve also gathered a selection of [Avery Shorts](#) exploring ideas, projects, and discourses that reorient our ways of seeing and understanding architecture.

From Season 1, [Sara Ahmed](#) explains how citations can be deployed as building material for feminist discourse. And just as we don’t write alone, in Season 2, [Ziad Jamaledine](#) argues that we never build alone, indicting the modernist architectural project as a practice of colonial erasure. And finally, from Season 3, [Douglas Spencer](#) interrogates architectural criticism itself, particularly “spectacular criticism,” which fails to locate architecture’s complicity with capital.

## SUPER CRITS

**ADVANCED VI ARCHITECTURE STUDIO EXCHANGE**

**Friday, April 17**  
**3:00 PM**

David Benjamin

MARCH and MSAAD students present work completed during the Advanced VI studios.

**ADVANCED IV STUDIO SUPERCRT**

**Wednesday, April 22**  
**3:00 PM**

Ziad Jamaledine

The Advanced IV studio framework looks at the scales of the environment through a specific geographic context, within which all studios operate. The focus is the rural areas of upstate New York, an entry point to an exploration of the relationship between architecture and nature while unpacking the environmental history of the Northeast region of the U.S.

## CORE II FINAL REVIEWS

**Thursday, April 23**  
**2:00 PM**

*A Building Made of Buildings (and other Readymades)* Studio  
Emmett Zeifman

*The XR School Studio*  
Gordon Kipping

*School for Outsiders Studio*  
Christoph Kumpusch

*Adaptation Studio*  
Daisy Ames

**Friday, April 24**  
**2:00 PM**

*More School: Integrating School, Life, & City Studio*  
Benjaminadena

*Grounds for Play Studio*  
Erica Goetz

*Tending: Intertwined Impact Studio*  
Karla Rothstein

*Conceptual Architecture Studio*  
Jose Araguez

## TUESDAY TALKS WITH ALUMNI

Thank you to the GSAPP alumni who participated in last week’s Tuesday Talks!

The next Tuesday Talk will be on April 14. Registration will open Monday, April 13 at 12pm EST. Preview the alumni participating this week before requesting your appointment! Please contact [gsappalumni@columbia.edu](#) with any questions.

A list of participating alumni can be found on our website.

## LEARNING FROM ALUMNI

For this series of events, GSAPP alumni and leading professionals share insight and advice with current students.

**TAKING THE NEXT STEP IN UNCERTAIN TIMES**

**Wednesday, April 15**  
**1:15 – 2:45 PM**

A conversation among Amy Boyle '08 MSUP; Assistant Professor Leah Meisterlin '06 MSUP, '09 MArch; and Adjunct Assistant Professor Sybil Wa.

Hosted by the Urban Planning Program.

**CREATING YOUR OWN URBAN IN THE EXPANDED AGENCY DESIGN FIELD**

**Friday, April 17**  
**3:30 – 5:00 PM**

A conversation with alumni moderated by faculty members Kaja Kuhl and Geeta Mehta and organized by the Urban Design Program.

Participants include Emily Weidenhof '09 MSAUD; Zarith Pineda '17 MSAUD; Milton Garavito '10 MSAUD; Ban Edilbi '18 MSAUD; Johannes Point '12 MSAUD; and Mansi Sahu '11 MSAUD.

Organized by the Urban Design Program.

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