Many works of pre-modern architecture are daring, poised at the very edge of structural stability. Others are well-supported, but strive to give an illusion of precariousness or even of levitation. This seminar invites students to explore the sublime effects of precarious architecture through visual and literary representations, as well as simulation models that examine the dynamic behavior of ancient and medieval monuments. Discussion topics will include: the a priori and culturally specific aspects of daring architecture; the ancient and medieval sense of the sublime and aesthetics; environmental psychology; and strategies for reading architectural forms. Students will present two or three readings during the semester, participate in class discussions, and write a short midterm essay and a final research paper.

Time: Wednesdays, 1:00-3:00 PM
Room: 412 Avery Hall
Instructor: Rory O’Neill
ro32@columbia.edu

Jan. 22: 1. An Introduction to Structural Daring and the Sublime

Jan. 29: 2. Heavy Architecture I: Ancient Works


Feb. 5: 3. **Heavy Architecture II: Medieval Works**


Feb. 12 4. **Height, Light and Levitation**

*(First student presentations)*


[Massimiliano]


[Florencia]

[Jack]


[Yixuan]

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**Feb. 19 5. Gothic Structure**


[So Jin]


[Eduardo]


[Chenyan]


[Peter]
Feb. 26  6. **Patrons and Desires**

Procopius, Vol. 7: *On Buildings* (London; Cambridge, Mass, 1940), Book 1, Ch 1

[Gabriel]


[Yulin]


[Jonathan]

Mar 4 7. **The Medieval and Modern Senses of the Sublime**


[Joud]
[http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15043/15043-h/15043-h.htm#PART_II]

Part I, Part II

[Melissa]


Yaxin

Mar. 11. No Class (Kinne Week)

Mar. 25 No Class (conference)

Apr. 18. Space, Place and Precarious Architecture

Tuan, Y. 1977. Space and place: The Perspective of Experience (Minneapolis). Intro, Ch. 3-4 (19-50),

[Lihan]


[Alex]
Apr. 8 9. **Workshop: Designing Structural Daring**

This workshop session will use the Unity-based structural simulation application to provide for a hands-on approach to exploring structural daring in realtime.

Apr 15 & 22 11. **Final Paper Presentations**

Present your ideas for your final research paper (~10 minutes). Please bring several images for your discussion. The paper itself is due on Friday, December 26 and should be no more than 8 double-spaced pages. In the paper, choose one or more pre-modern works of art and/or architecture (and possibly a modern work for comparative analysis) and discuss your observations on structural daring in the use of components such as slender supports, spans, and overhangs). You should also consider sublime responses generated from the work/s related to vertigo, levitation, precariousness and gigantism.

May 8 **Final Papers Due**