Feminism is in a state of rapid expansion and instability. Having transformed from a taboo to a trend, feminism is now serving as a rallying cry for political solidarity, and as a marketing tactic to sell everything from jeans to coffee to real estate. Simultaneously, feminist political agendas are multiplying and transforming, as greater awareness of gender fluidity and intersectionality have broadened the discourse. In the midst of these changes, this studio takes stock of what feminist practice can mean for architecture now.

Looking back at seminal projects from the 1970s through the 1990s, the studio critically assesses past definitions of feminism in art and architecture, and asks how to transform them for contemporary design. Rather than seeking one singular definition of feminist practice, the studio is an open-ended conversation about what is possible. The course is open to anyone, not only those living as women, and explores how the tools and principles of feminist practices can be applicable to architecture broadly.

In the first phase of the studio, students are immersed in case studies of radical projects from the 1970s to the present, which offer alternative models for the architectural design process, program and/or materiality. For process, students examine projects by Muf, Matrix, and Feminist Architecture Collaborative that develop non-hierarchical, collaborative, and user-informed design. For program, students consider projects such as the Woman’s Building and the New York Feminist Art Institute as models for collectivity. Finally, for materiality, students remake projects of feminist art from the 1970s to the present that involve textile, fiber, and craft techniques once designated as “women's work.” By remaking projects by Claire Zeisler, Senga Nengudi, and Lin Tianmiao, students explore in the physical logic of wrapping, weaving, dyeing, unravelling, and spilling—processes for producing environments outside of normative architectural techniques.

Learning from these case studies, students develop their own design proposals for remaking the women-only co-working space The Wing. With three locations in New York City and many locations across the U.S., the Wing is a rapidly growing business model that bills itself as a feminist work space and social club. But with expensive, exclusive membership and private venues, the Wing is also not accessible or affordable to most women in New York City. The studio re-imagines the site of the Wing in Dumbo, Brooklyn both in terms of its architecture and business model, to create a different version of collective work space that is inclusive, affordable, and connected to the surrounding public space.
CASE STUDIES

PROCESS

**Womens Design Service**
At Your Convenience, 1990

**Matrix Feminist Design Co-Operative**
Jagonari Women’s Educational Centre, 1991

**Muf**
Pleasure Garden of the Utilities, 1998

**Feminist architecture collaborative**
#ICalled

PROGRAM

**The Woman’s Building**
Founded by Judy Chicago, Sheila de Bretteville, and Arlene Raven in 1973

**New York Feminist Art Institute**
Founded by Miriam Schapiro and Nancy Azara, et al., in 1979

**Dolores Hayden**
What Would a Non-Sexist City Be Like?, 1980

**Mark Wigley**
Untitled, the housing of gender, 1992

MATERIALITY

**Judy Chicago**
The Dinner Party, 1974-79

**Claire Zeisler**
Coil Series III, 1978

**Harmony Hammond**
Hunkertime, 1979-80

**Faith Ringgold**
For the Woman’s House, 1971

**Senga Nengudi**
Inside / Outside, 1977

**Miriam Shapiro**
Theater of the Egg, 1979

**Liz Collins**
Distance Pursuer, 2013

**Lin Tianmiao**
Protruding Patterns, 2014
The site for this studio is The Wing, a national chain of coworking spaces geared towards women, which has emerged as part of the recent rise in coworking spaces catered to freelancers, entrepreneurs, and creative practitioners. The Wing is one of many female-only coworking spaces that have opened internationally, including the AllBright in London, the Riveter in Seattle, and Make Lemonade in Toronto. The Wing has carefully marketed itself as a feminist version of a coworking space, tracing its roots back to 19th- and 20th-century womens clubs, and offering amenities catered to female-only members such as lactation rooms, beauty rooms, and a program of speakers and gatherings. But the Wing has also come under heavy criticism for being elitist, exclusionary, for offering an under-informed representation of feminism. The forms of exclusion are many: this is a private club with a high membership fee, a long waiting list, and a practice of eliminating applicants on the basis of sex.

This studio re-imagines the Wing to create an alternative model of collective spaces that are inclusive, affordable, and public, and serve as better platforms for political agency. Students will develop alternative architectural and financial models for collective spaces of work that are available to a broader range of women of within New York City. The Wing has currently has three locations within NYC, in the Flatiron, Soho, and Dumbo. Students have the option of re-envisioning in detail the Dumbo location at 1 Main Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201, or of creating a kit of parts for transforming all three locations. Proposals will rethink the audience, funding, organization of program, architectural form, materiality, and connections to public space.
SCHEDULE

**Week 1 - Introduction**
Thursday, Sept 6 - Introduction, readings assigned

**Week 2 - Case Studies**
Monday, Sept 10 - Discussion of readings, selection of case studies
Thursday, Sept 13 - Desk crits - case study research, draft of diagrams

**Week 3 - Case Studies**
Monday, Sept 17 - Desk crits - draft of case study models
Thursday, Sept 20 - Desk crits - finalize case study models + Guest lecture

**Week 4 - Case Studies / Site**
Monday, Sept 24 - **Presentation of Case Studies - Research and Models**
Thursday, Sept 27 - Research Site - The Wing, the 1 Main Street building, Dumbo context

**Week 5 - Site**
Monday, Oct 1 - Desk crits - Site research + Guest lecture
Thursday, Oct 4 - **Presentation of Site Research** + select Process, Program, Material precedents

**Week 6 - Concept Design**
Monday, Oct 8 - Desk crits - Five studies for concept design - drawings and sketch models
Thursday, Oct 11 - Desk crits - Three studies for concept design - drawings and sketch models

**Week 7 - Concept Design**
Monday, Oct 8 - Desk crits - Refine concept design
Thursday, Oct 11 - **Presentation of Concept Design**

**Week 8 - Schematic Design**
Monday, Oct 15 - Desk crits - Schematic Design
Thursday, Oct 18 - Desk crits - Schematic Design

**Week 9 - Midreview Week**
Monday, Oct 22 - **Draft presentation of Midreview drawings and models**
Thursday, Oct 18 - **Midreview - 1pm - Room 504, 505**

**Week 10 - Design Development**
Monday, Oct 29 - Desk crits - Revisions after Midreview
Thursday, Nov 1 - Desk crits - Design Development

**Week 11**
Monday, Nov 5 - Election Day Holiday
Thursday, Nov 8 - Desk crits - Design Development

**Week 12**
Monday, Nov 12 - **Interim Review**
Thursday, Nov 15 - Desk crits - Design Development
SCHEDULE (Continued)

Week 13
Monday, Nov 19 - Desk crits - Representation
Thursday, Nov 22 - Desk crits - Thanksgiving Break

Week 14
Monday, Nov 26 - Draft of Final Review presentation
Thursday, Nov 29 - Desk crits - Revisions to drawings, models, verbal presentations
Friday, Nov 30 - 3-5pm - Super Crit

Week 15
Monday, Dec 3 - Desk crits - Revisions to drawings, models, verbal presentations
Thursday, Dec 6 - Desk crits - Revisions to drawings, models, verbal presentations

Week 16
Tuesday, Dec 11 - Final Review - 1pm, Ware Lounge
REFERENCE TEXTS

ARTICLES


VOLUMES


CONTEMPORARY PRACTICES AND COLLECTIVES
Architexx
Atelier d’architecture autogérée
FATALE
Feminist architecture collective
Liquid Incorporated
Muff
Mycket
Parlour
Taking Place
Jane Rendell’s Situated Design track at the Bartlett School of Architecture
COURSE INFORMATION

Class meetings: Mondays and Thursdays, 1:30-6:30pm
Contact information for Bryony Roberts: bryony@bryonyroberts.com

EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to be independent and to take initiative to find the resources and supplies that they need to complete their work. Students are expected to be active participants in group conversations, to attend all studio meetings, pin-ups, and reviews and to keep up with a rigorous level of production. Students are expected to spend a large portion of their time in the studio working and to be active participants in the collaborative studio environment. Sharing knowledge, techniques, and ideas with your fellow students is incredibly important to your own creative development and to your success in this studio. Students are expected to keep the studio space orderly and clean, and to keep clear a large table and wall space for group meetings and pinups.

EVALUATION

The final grade in the course will be given on the basis of:

Attendance and design production for twice-weekly studio meetings: 40%
Assignments and Midreview presentation: 30%
Final review presentation: 30%

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be present and working during all studio meetings, which occur twice a week. Students are also expected to be present during all reviews. Absences from studio meetings and reviews will affect the final grade and multiple unexcused absences will result in course failure.

DESIGN PRODUCTION FOR STUDIO MEETINGS

Students are expected to be self-motivated and ambitious in their design development. During each twice-weekly studio meeting, students will discuss new work on their project. Students are expected to revise their work for each session in response to earlier feedback from their instructors.

MIDREVIEW AND FINAL REVIEW

Work presented for both the midreview and the final review will be evaluated for:

CONCEPTUAL CLARITY

Students should demonstrate proactive engagement with the material and self-motivated intellectual pursuits that enhance their own design ambitions. Students are expected to clearly articulate their ambitions and the intellectual underpinnings of their work in pinups and desk crits.

TECHNIQUE

Students are expected to execute all assignments with care and precision. Assignments will be evaluated not only on the basis of the ideas, but also to a large degree on the quality of the execution. Students are responsible for planning sufficient time for developing appropriate and thorough representation.

DEADLINES

Students must complete assignments by the given deadline. Deadlines and required deliverables are not negotiable. No printing is allowed after the deadline. Deadlines can only be extended in cases of illness or family emergencies, and requests for extensions must be submitted before the deadline in writing, accompanied by a medical certificate when necessary. Keep your active files backed up - loss of data is not an excuse for an incomplete project.