

*Held in conjunction with a forthcoming Guggenheim exhibition and the advanced design studio of Leong Leong.*

This is a course about original ideas.

As a discipline modeled on artistic genius as an animating principle – many call it ‘design’ – architecture is a fragile anachronism in a world whose foundation is built on bedrock of computation.

Computation introduces a new physics into the idea economy that Silicon Valley has mastered by an emerging apparatus of rituals and beliefs.

Their success has spawned a new religion for reliably driving the critical path of history by ‘inventing the future’ with a steady flow of original ideas that have tamed the unpredictability of genius.

Flow has replaced fixity as the steady state of contemporary life.

Privileging agility, architectural thinking and practice – planning, vision, design – is not only anathema to this new ethos, it is a liability.

Bifo Berardi's incantation - "I will never be able to live in peace with the automaton, because I was formatted in the old world." - highlights the incongruity of this cadence with the evolutionary neurochemistry of the human mind.

This seminar will explore the Silicon Valley idea space, the nature of digital technology, and its consequences for the social mind and body through architecture practice.

The writing of Venkatesh Rao will serve as our compass to the weird terrain of Californian ideologies (see map below, and link [here \(Links to an external site.\)](#)), from the Dark Enlightenment of Peter Thiel to the Bayesian rationality of the Singularitarians.

We will take a transhistorical and transcultural journey through architecture's past in order to scope out new models of practice on this emerging cultural map.

We will study contemporary thinking in strategic disciplines like business, war, forecasting, and sport to steal their techniques for organizing original ideas into sharp knives to cut through the pathological anxieties of architecture.

We will build novel mental models to explain cultural phenomena that we will test against reality data, from Kanye to Burning Man to the Berlin Biennale, in order to [get smart \(Links to an external site.\)](#) about the new world order and its aesthetic regime.

We will be visited regularly by guests from these real worlds to test our assumptions and update our models, leveraging the Guggenheim network of cultural actors.

We will mine new forms of spirituality that respond to the dehumanizing effect of technology, from [technopaganism \(Links to an external site.\)](#) to SoulCycle, to sketch the figure of a new architecture clientele.

You will apply this conceptual apparatus to work you are doing in other courses, including studio design work, to bolster your performance as your deliverable for this seminar.

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