SPECULATIVE CITY
CRISIS, TURMOIL, AND PROJECTIONS IN ARCHITECTURE

A4397-1 Design Seminar
Spring 2019
504 Avery Hall, Columbia University GSAPP
Wednesday 11:00am - 1:00pm

Instructor:  David Eugin Moon, dem2177@columbia.edu
Office Hours: By appointment
Session: Full Semester, 3 points

Course Description

This seminar outlines changes in the discourse and practice of architecture responding to crisis and uncertainty as an opportunity for new potentials, exploring social, political, and economic contexts and their influences on visionary architecture and urbanism. The last tumultuous decade was compounded by disrupted economies, contested political grounds, and realizations in climate change. These crises and turmoil upended traditional notions of the typical processes of architecture and question top-down and bottom-up hierarchies, public and shared realms, and other norms. The course will study the current practices of the architecture of crisis and disruption as well as the historical significance of previous post traumatic yet
productive periods from the post-war periods in the U.S., the nadir in New York in the late 70s, and other seminal moments that projected and shaped the modern environment.

Examining a selection of initiatives and their geographies, the course will also investigate architecture in the current context of shifting demographics and social conventions, privatized collectivity, rising migrant populations, and heightened ecological and environmental concerns. The seminar will be comprised of lectures, readings, discussions, as well as a final project intervening in the existing context of selected cities which will be reviewed with outside critics and will culminate in a final booklet. Guest lecturers will be invited for specific topics. Work from the seminar will be presented at the 2019 Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism, more information will be available at the first meeting.

Course Requirements

Class Discussion and Participation
Each week will begin with a presentation by the instructor followed by a discussion on the readings distributed across the seminar students from a weekly selection. Students will be evaluated in part on their level of participation in the discussion.

Student Work Updates
At end of each class, several students will do a presentation of the progress of their final projects which will become the basis for a discussion. There will be periodic workshops when the class will discuss their projects as a whole.

Final Project
As the final project, each student will submit a research project as a case study using the context of a specific city and timeframe. Students will submit a paper topic and bibliography well in advance of the final submission (schedule t.b.d.). The subject of the project will be decided in consultation with the instructor and the final format will be a booklet which includes a design component and a 2,000 word essay. Evaluations for the final assignment will favor a concise, focused, well structured, and compelling project that supports a convincing thesis.

Course Schedule (tent. as of 2/6/19)

Week 1  (1/23)  Introduction : The Speculative City

Week 2  (1/30)  Revolution and the Russian Avant Garde

Readings Selected From:
Van Toorn, Roemer. "No More Dreams? The Passion for Reality in Recent Dutch Architecture... And Its Limitations.”

**Recommended Reading:**

**Week 3 (2/6)**

**Workshop / Readings Discussion (Vacancies and Voids)**

**Readings Selected From:**

**Week 4 (2/13)**

**Post-Bubble Economies and Changing Demographics**

**Readings Selected From:**

**Week 5 (2/20)**

**Post War: Architecture, Urbanism, and Culture**

**Readings Selected From:**

**Week 6 (2/27)**

**Guest Lecture**
Week 7  (3/6)  
**Workshop / Alternatives in Production**

**Reading Selected From:**


Week 8  (3/13)  
**L.A. Nadir (Kinne Week)**

**Readings Selected From:**


**Recommended Readings:**

**“Final Project Topic and Bibliography Due T.B.D.”**

Week 9  (3/20)  
**Spring Break (no class)**

Week 10  (3/27)  
**Workshop / Readings Discussion (Resilience)**

**Reading Selected From:**


**Recommended Reading:**


Readings Selected From:

Week 12 (4/10)  New York Nadir

Readings Selected From:

Week 13 (4/17)  Over-speculation: Foreclosed, Big boxed, and Mismatched

Readings Selected From:

Recommended Readings(Politics of Scarcity) Selected From:

Week 14  (4/24)  Final Workshop with Outside Critics / Closing Discussion

**FINAL PROJECT DUE DATE May 8th (tent.)**