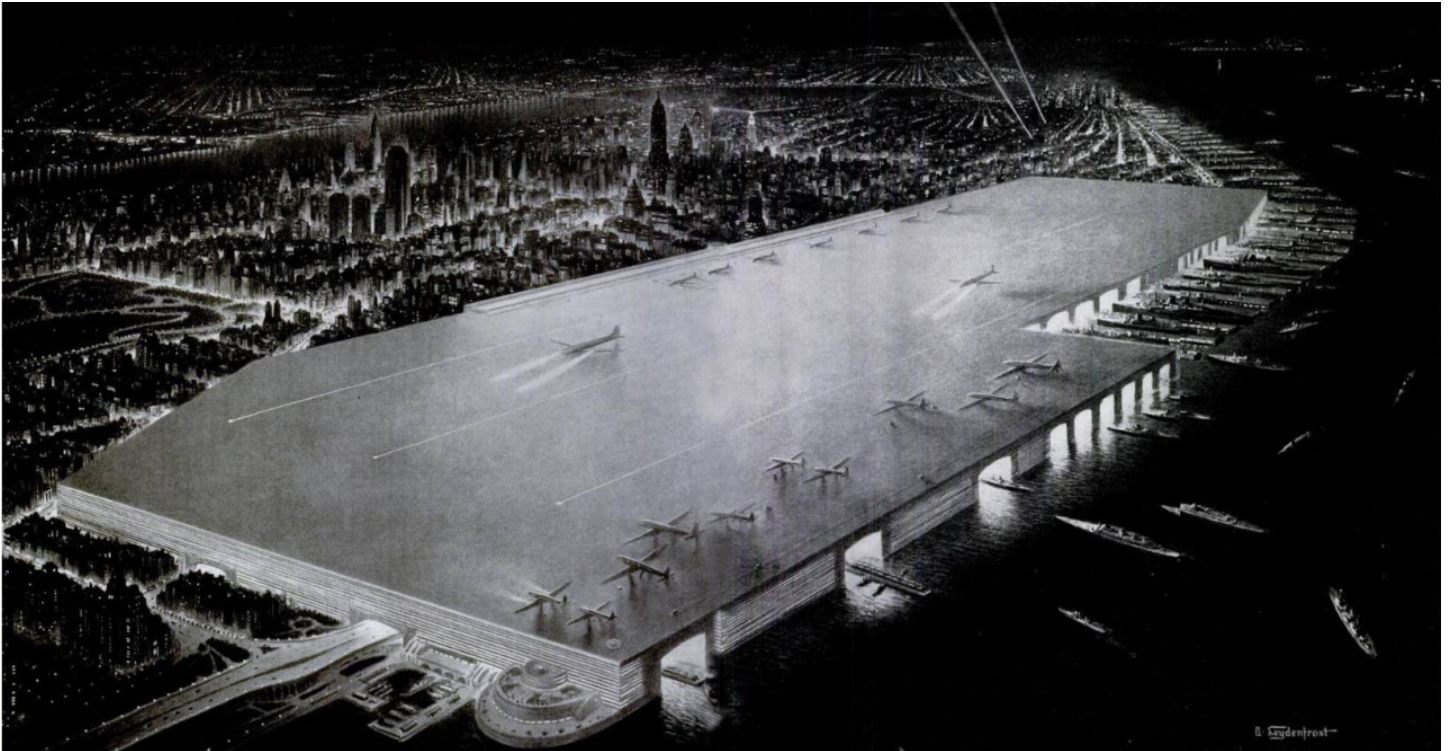


LaGuardia Airport – Project Brief  
Mega-Cityfication/Habitable SuperAirport:  
A Vision for Manhattan's Future



"New York City's Dream Airport." LIFE 18 Mar. 1946: 76-77. Print.  
Artist of the image Alexander Leidenfrost, idea proposed by William Zeckendorf

Critic:  
Markus Dochantschi

New York City has historically been the classic model of a dense hyper-connected metropolis. While most global cities are adapting to unmeasured rates of growth, New York City's infrastructure is archaic at best. Built in 1939 as a modern airport and home to the first luxurious American Airlines Admirals Club in the world, LaGuardia Airport today is out-dated and dilapidated. With the aim of maintaining New York City's international position, the studio will investigate closing Rikers Island Jail Complex and expanding LaGuardia airport to create a new airport typology: The Habitable SuperAirport.

Looking forward into the 21st Century, the studio will be challenged to investigate the typology of the airport by cross utilizing program and media tools. Many traditional industries have been interrupted by new technologies and business models: Booking systems like Kayak (search one and done) have

changed how airlines operate systematically and economically; the transportation network has been subject to Uber-fiction (everyone's private driver) and the housing market will soon drastically change since airbnb (belong anywhere) replaced hotels worldwide. The Habitable SuperAirport will allow travel, housing, recreation, and work to coexist with an unprecedented maximum of efficiency.

In recent years, airports have been dominated by two distinct goals: shopping and safety. The studio will rethink this priority as a transportation shopping hub, to a Habitable SuperAirport.

### Background and Context:

The United States opened the world's first airport in 1904 and has since built iconic airport structures like the 1962 Terminal by Eero Saarinen for Trans World Airlines in New York or the 1961 Theme Building in Los Angeles which is uncontested as one of the best examples of 1960s pop futurists.

In more recent years the United States' leading edge and ground-breaking developments in aviation architecture have diminished. The airport has been demoted from a socially celebrated transportation facility mirroring the optimistic spirit of a nation, to a maze of mini shopping malls that passengers are forced to tolerate.

In comparison, global cities in Asia, the Middle East, and across the world still see the airport as a cultural ambassador welcoming each visitor with an abundance of cultural, social, and economic pride.

What is the role of the airport in the future? The fact is that we will have more people traveling to global cities. With urban architecture embracing the power of "cross programing" and office buildings being converted into residential buildings, the era of mono-programatism is obsolete.

After London, the New York City airport system is the second largest in the world with over 115 million passengers a year. Of three New York airports, LaGuardia is located only four miles from Manhattan, serving 27 million passengers a year. While easily reached by bus or car, it still has no direct rail or subway link. The airport currently only handle domestic flights, so its facilities do not include border control or immigration processing. LGA in its current state has often been described as America's worst airport.

### Studio Summary:

The studio will be tasked to design a Habitable SuperAirport, defining a mixed program, and to design an airport which will represent the spirit of a new global community. It will shape the way New York City functions locally, and globally.

## Studio Research:

Each student will be tasked to research LaGuardia Airport, airports around the world, and Rikers Island (currently used as a prison). Students will also be asked to analyse the infrastructural system connecting LaGuardia airport to the local infrastructure, and develop a strategy to better connect it. We will use data collected by the City of New York to develop a master planning strategy and to inform the design of the Habitable SuperAirport.

## Studio Project:

The goal will be to develop a Habitable SuperAirport: design and program should be in symbiosis with a visionary design aspiration, reminiscent of the demands of the global traveller.

## The Program:

While the focus is on designing an airport we will investigate and cross-program hotel, housing (short term/long term), recreational facilities (local/visitor), conference centre (local/visitor), shopping (local/visitor). We will take investigate the rise of the sharing economy, take advantage of tools like *Kayak*, *Airbnb*, *Uber*, and look into shared work/living spaces like *Neuehaus* and *wework* and *welive*.

The design should incorporate sustainable goals and minimize energy consumption, reduce emission and noise, and be operational during a flood event. The transportation system should explore land, water, and airways to provide faster congestion free access. The Habitable SuperAirport will provide a destination for locals and globals.

## Site:

The site will be a combination of the existing LaGuardia Airport location (between Grand Central Parkway and Flushing Bay in the Northwest of Queens), and Rikers Island (located in the East River between Queens and the Bronx).

### Phase 1: 2 weeks

In the first phase of the studio, we will dive directly into developing a program and master plan for a new habitable SuperAirport typology. We will research airports around the world, but we will also look into how the rise of the sharing economy (uber, airbnb, and weework) have changed the way we move, live, and work and how architecture can create new typologies to accommodate a nomadic, sharing society. This methodology will equip the studio to design a new, perhaps ideal, airport.

### Phase 2: 2 weeks

In the second phase we will test programmatic assumptions in real scale and develop a first draft of a masterplan to also include infrastructural solutions. The studies will be done as a massing study.

### Phase 3: 10 weeks

In the third phase of the studio, we will design the SuperAirport implementing the goals developed in the first two phases. The designs will be somewhere between the scale of a neighbourhood and a building. The set goals will be tested against the specifics of the site and context. Modelling and animations will be used to simulate and analyze the architectural proposal.

The emphasis will be on the creation of a fully developed architectural scheme. We will invite environmental, civil, and structural engineering consultants, as well as representatives from large New York real estate developers, shopping mall operators, and housing experts (HP New York) to discuss the projects.