OPTION STUDIOS FALL 2020

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John Bass

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INTRODUCTION ~ This studio will consider the interests and aspirations of Yunesit’in, B.C., one of six communities of the Tsilhqot’ in Nation (TNG). Its leadership is allowing us to explore possible futures for Yunesit’in and the Dasiq’ox Tribal Park, and ways of life within the cultural, physical, ecological, and economic dimensions of its ancestral and unceded Land.

OVERVIEW ~ “What is the Indigenous in-between ...?” This is the question posed by Yunesit’in Chief Russell Myers Ross when we discussed the possibility of this studio. How will looking inward help Yunesit’in develop strategies for engaging the wider world? How does it use space, material, function, and time to regenerate and self-determine? Embedded in these questions are opportunities to produce work that reflects Yunesit’in’s aspirations and provides paths to pursue individual research and design interests.

The studio will include online exchanges with Yunesit’in leadership and community members as well as with a network of environmental groups and foundations with whom the Yunesit’in work, including EcoTrust Canada and Tides Canada (now MakeWay). We can fill a gap in this network’s capacity, using our skills in research, visualization, and design to complement policy and inspire action. Since travel to Yunesit’in is not possible, these online exchanges will ground research and support the play and curiosity of speculation happening in our own online conversations and collaborations.

Key research materials will include Nagwedizk’an Gwanes Ganau Ch’inidzed Ganexwilagh: The Fires Awakened Us, a TNG climate change and planning document; and Appendix 3: Tsilhqot’in Pattern of Claim Area Occupation, a monumental legal document about Indigenous practices and rights. We will also learn of the many initiatives already well underway in Yunesit’in. These will be important points of connection and departure for your ideas.

“The story beings in darkness, where we learn to shed light on truth. Then we reveal our story, within a story.”
From “Voices From Here: Chief Russell Myers Ross”

“In modern Athens, the vehicles of mass transportation are called metaphorai. To go to work or come home, one takes a “metaphor” - a bus or a train. Stories could also take this noble name: every day, they traverse and organize places, they select and link them together; they make sentences and itineraries out of them. They are spatial trajectories.”

SCHEDULE ~ For the day-to-day of desk crits and group meetings, we will be flexible and work out our meeting times to respond to student locations and circumstances. The studio itself is organized in four parts. We will begin with an initial three-week research and knowledge exchange with our collaborators, using this exchange to generate a collection of “spatial trajectories.” We will hang elements of stories onto a hypothetical “trail” beginning from the Chilcotin Highway, passing through Yunesit’in, and moving through the Tribal Park. Overlapping with the first exercise will be a two-week analysis exercise to situate specific interests somewhere along the trail by illustrating intentions about material, program, phasing, and partnership. This will provide a foundation for an eight-week design project, done either individually or in small groups, at appropriate sites and scales, from material investigation to landscape ruralism and everything in between. The studio will conclude with an online community presentation and final review.
Ahoy, SALA Students!

I am writing to request your design services. Since 2011 my team has been working tirelessly to bring a new vision of cruising to market, one that will appeal to a younger demographic which has not set sail before. To attract this group, we knew we would have to completely reinvent the industry – so that is what we at Virgin Voyages are doing.

From the design of the hull to advanced energy capture, and the integration of waste to energy technology – our ships are being engineered differently. Once onboard you will notice small changes too, like the absence of single-use plastics, reduced food waste, and no teak railings. We are also supporting local economies, small businesses, and contributing to protecting and restoring the health of our oceans. We are setting ourselves apart by bringing sustainability and good environmental practices to the industry.

You will be happy to know that we at Virgin also understand the importance of good design. For the first ship in our fleet, the Scarlet Lady, we worked with the designers at Tom Dixon, and the architecture and interiors firms of Concrete and Roman and Williams. Together they brought a completely new attitude to ship design, having previously worked only on dry land. I expect that for many of you, this will also be your first time thinking about designing on a moving site, floating out at sea. This brings us to the challenge.

Recently, the writing of your esteemed colleague Patrick Mooney was brought to my attention. He opened the second chapter of his new book Planting Design: Connecting People and Place (2019) with the statement, “Today, people living in developed societies still believe that nature supports wellbeing by reducing stress and mental fatigue.” Like many of you who are also physically distancing or in quarantine, I have recently become more keenly aware of the importance and healing effects of time spent in nature. I suppose you are also aware of the challenges that my industry is currently experiencing. Unfortunately, cruise ships do not have an established track record of being healthy environments. To date, our focus on well-being has been through the design of our spa & fitness spaces. What we want now is for Nature to be a part of our well-being strategy.

I am not exactly sure what Nature is, or if our cruise ship already has some. I hope by completing in-depth research and studying our spaces, infrastructures, and operations, you will be able to enlighten me. Once you have a working definition of Nature in place, I will be curious to see how you establish the content and spatial configuration of Nature onboard. You have my full commitment and are encouraged to redesign any of our spaces - on the ship, at a port of call, or along the waterways we travel. From entrepreneur to activist, you each bring valuable insight that will certainly challenge our standards. I look forward to learning from you and seeing your design proposals.

Welcome aboard!

In behalf of
Tom McAlpin
President and CEO
Virgin Voyages
Plantation, FL United States

Attached please find a small print from Thomas Struth’s New Pictures from Paradise, a self-reflexive musing on the nature of nature. I hope it serves as inspiration.
On June 4, the NBA approved a plan to move to Disney World near Orlando, Florida in order to resume the season. Players, coaches, officials, select members of the media, and a myriad of other support staff moved to Disney World to live, full-time. The conditions of their stay are spelled out in a 100+ page manual, which describes protocols on entering and exiting the NBA bubble, situations in which a mask must be worn, and how often individuals will be tested. Disney MagicBands were reprogrammed to serve as both passport and contact tracer within the bubble. Players are notified if they fail to log their temperature in their health charts, and can expect to be denied access to facilities if the info is not properly kept up to date. The NBA Bubble is proving to be an effective way to keep the league continuously pursuing its season. The low rate of Covid–19 transmission within the bubble stands in stark contrast to the much higher rate evident outside the bubble in Florida in the same time period.

The Covid–19 Pandemic has forced reconsideration and redesign of spaces for living, work, and play. Many people now work in the same rooms where they sleep, others are modifying the backyard to include a purpose–built home office shed, or setting up school “pods” in what used to be a living room.

The surface of the city has become one grand surface for improvised inscriptions, variously made of chalk, tape, string, sticker dots, orange cones, dabs of pink spray paint, and yellow and black striped caution tape. As individuals, we have each developed an inner GPS which helps us recalibrate our own carefully perimetrered pathways; skirting the sidewalks in order to maintain the semblance of a 6’ distance. Following familiar paths is now like a complex drawing exercise enacted by the body throughout the spaces of the city. It is an adaptive and algorithmic overlaying process and requires that the other urban drawers have a similar sensibility for 6’. An imperfect negotiation, one wherein the boundaries of public and private spaces, previously delineated by territory or utility, have been perforated, eradicated, or replaced to accommodate an invisible spatial protagonist that flows between us: the essential commodity of distance. We use what we can, including our bodies.

Living in a Bubble studio will explore future forms of live–work–play in a post–pandemic future.

While early stages of the pandemic were characterized by a world created extemporarily; an adhocracy born out of benign paranoia and anxious hope. The emerging future might also be impulsively decided – sketched on the world by chalk–wielding drones and supermarket clerks with tape guns. But how many more versions could there be? How might we draft change on a world so willing to begin again?
Buildings have many histories. Those of design conception and implementation. Followed by the initial operation when idea intersects with the complexity of our world to slowly reshape the project. And finally, there are the future histories: abandonment, reuse, additions, subtractions, etc. Each stage meaning something a bit different to the various stakeholders. Taken together these histories form our understanding of a project and give the place meaning within a community. The challenge of this studio will be to translate those many intersecting accounts of the iconic entertainment venue, Ontario Place, on the waterfront of Toronto into a new chronicle that both preserves the story of its past, and reshapes the building to engage the evolving context of the city and its environment.

Last year Premier Doug Ford’s government posted an opaque solicitation for proposals to redevelop Ontario Place centered around a reprogramming of the site. In response the non-profit, Future of Ontario Place, formed to develop alternative ideas that take into consideration the history of the facility and the voice of the surrounding communities. As part of that effort the group is sponsoring a design competition for students across Canada. Our studio will operate parallel to that initiative allowing the students to build off the competition’s resources and to submit a proposal for the competition in January.

The studio will begin by exploring the ideas that shaped the original Ontario Place designers’ intent, and the challenges those ideas faced with the energy crisis of the 1970’s. The initial individual projects will include both a case study of a similar project as well as a short design exercise (3 weeks). Following that exercise larger teams will develop visioning statements for the future of Ontario Place and Toronto that will serve as the context for the final design interventions (3 weeks). Ultimately for the final review teams of at least two will develop design proposals for Ontario Place (6 weeks). While the implementation of those design proposal will occur now, their representation will look to the year 2070 as the building completes its next 50 years of life and begin another cycle of use.
Cascadia is a bioregion, it belongs to no one - a place of cedars and rain, redwoods and fire, lakes in Alaska, south to Northern California, east to Idaho, and the watersheds everywhere between - look to the mighty Fraser and Columbia Rivers.

But Cascadia is a separatist movement?

Let's make our own utopian country!

Okay, and after some threats, let's join together in one big beautiful space, physical or virtual, somewhere up on the volcanos, or in a dome; there's one parliament, might we find another way to talk?

Cascadian Theatre
5 weeks.

Cascadian Parliament
3 weeks.

Cascadia was once a land of many nations, and still is.

But what kind of country? What kind of collective identity?

So why don't we all get together and make a Cascadian parliament! A symbolic centre, a shared space...

... a place to parlar...
Lifeways: Reimagining Community, Spirit & Place in Northern Haida Gwaii

Annie Liang, Adjunct Professor, Co-Director- Eudaemonia Network (annie.liang@ubc.ca)

Studio Hours: Tuesday & Friday 13:30 - 18:00 PST | Office hours: Friday 9:00 - 10:00 PST via email request

Current worldwide conditions remind each of us just how fragile our existence in the world can be, from physical and mental health challenges to social injustices. For some communities, these conditions have always been present, long-ranging and systemically rife with multiple forms of inequity. But in displays of unbridled optimism, Indigenous and Minority peoples around the world are now voicing their experiences on social media and in public demonstrations, promoting lasting positive change. Here in Canada, 150 years since the country’s inauguration, First Nations communities, some with over 14,000 years of local history, are working to create communities centered around strength, vibrancy and resiliency. Their collective healing takes form as an unbridled optimism for the future.

Northern Haida Gwaii is our chosen site, as it holds both opportunities and challenges. As Old Massett Village ventures into the realities of the 21st century narrative — beset with histories of racial and cultural discriminations; rampant external resource extraction; community health and wellness shortcomings, to name few — our studio will participate in the co-creation of a re-envisioned story for Old Masset. We will contribute to the community engagement phase of a multi-year-long visioning process, organized by Eudaemonia Network (EN) and Old Massett Village Council (OMVC). While the design and construction of natural trails, learning, meeting and places of contemplation, and a longhouse in Northern Haida Gwaii is the ultimate goal for EN & OMVC, our studio will contribute to the imagining process, to explore new beginnings through thoughtful strategies of reconciliation.

The course has three modules in this order, Reflection & Expression (2 weeks), Respect & Reciprocity (5 weeks) and Recognize & Reimagine (5 weeks). There are 4 investigations accumulating into a final video, with reading & media seminars in between. We will be working individually and in groups in order to address a range of topics, from environmental protection to socio-cultural rituals. We will explore various forms of multimedia, utilizing the animated story™ to engage and to capture the imaginations of local community members and prospective investors alike.

NOTE 1: This studio highly encourages both students from landscape architecture and architecture to participate.

NOTE 2: To those who embark on this course, do so with an open mind and open heart.
... entirely unprecedented yet utterly familiar...

ARCH 501/20/40: Vertical Studio, Fall Term 2020

A curious time to be sure, but perhaps a moment to engage the ongoing interaction between theory and practice and – especially - to take a hard look at what theory per se contributes to practice anyway.

This studio will begin with the underpinnings of some serious texts concerning art/design/architecture practice and encourage participants to discover their own voices in the midst of this extraordinary time. In particular we will be establishing a partnership with a professional practice in Montreal – the Lemay LAB – which operates as a kind of research and development unit within a large and successful professional practice. We have worked with the lead designer, Andrew King, previously and anticipate a constructive and powerful collaboration, and with this project including project lead Marie El-Nawar.

We will 'shadow' one of their current schemes at a design development phase, and Andrew's team are committed to an ongoing participation in our studio. The pretext of the studio – that is to say the programme and the site as such – will be relatively ambitious, including mixed uses and the rehabilitation of historic structures. After a brief – 2 week - individual project that focuses on the theoretical discussions that provide context – and hopefully inspiration! – we will form into groups of 3-4, adjusting our virtual space accordingly.

The first two texts should help give a clearer sense of what the studio proposes, while the subsequent arguments will invite – I expect – more spirited discussions.

Against Interpretation, Susan Sontag

Shell, Cladding, Lining: Adam Caruso
OASE 47 - 54 Shell cladding lining (1).pdf

If the Sontag essay positions a kind of historical context for our discussions, perhaps the Caruso essay suggests at least the beginning of a sense of how this ‘cry to arms’ might find itself into the discourse and practice of architecture.

The other two key references will be available in pdf format as we begin the term. These represent what on the face of it are two diametrically opposed positions, but surely come to some not dissimilar conclusions.


As we begin the term and come to grips with communications’ protocol, ‘Miro’ application, etc. we will be discussing these texts and sharing them with our professional colleagues in Montreal. The combination of a serious enquiry into contemporary theory and collusion with a successful practice should prove stimulating and constructive: I welcome the dynamic that will ensue!

Chris Macdonald FRAIC: cmacdonald@sala.ubc.ca
Mismatch
How Inclusion Shapes Home

Overview
In an overwhelming race to offer housing solutions, the valuable qualitative design process that prioritizes and critically involves end-users is minimized or sometimes eliminated altogether. Sadly, our society knows a housing crisis better than housing options, which has then normalized the current limited housing choices. In this context, we often produce housing defined more by financial constraints and marketability instead of the emerging new societal realities and individual needs. When we think of families and individuals at the intersection with other factors such as (dis)ability, poverty, and illness, we delve into an audience of even greater vulnerability. Marginalized into institutions for decades, these groups have been affected and disenfranchised across many spheres, including access to housing. The latter, in combination with a lack of design sensitivity, has resulted in spatial mismatches, creating barriers, often affecting health and social outcomes, further isolation and stigmatization. But what are the changes we need in the build environment to be inclusive and how can we understand and design for change?

Students are asked to discuss the meaning of inclusive housing and ask fundamental questions: how can housing projects adequately deal with human diversity? Where are the opportunities and limits for inclusion in unit-design, building-design and the neighbourhood context? And how can we find a balance between the needs and constraints? How can we plan for inclusive housing and communities? How do we instill change in the development process? How can we learn from the experts with lived experiences? And what tools and methodologies do we need to learn from the experts with lived experiences?

The Studio will provide a collective research Lab setting to question how “Inclusion can shape home”, a space to explore new ideas and concepts. Our client, the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion, has provided us with two “real” sites and programs for us to test the ideas. The studio is structured in four Loops with weekly invited guests joining for workshops and lectures.

Loop 1 Context mapping and Graphic storytelling (1 week 10%)
Loop 2 Learning from present and past build projects (2 weeks 20%)
Loop 3 Innovation mapping (3 weeks 25%)
Loop 4 Design-and Prototyping (6 weeks 45%)

Graphic by Nord Architects, Denmark
Gardens are... Buildings
A Garden’s Role in Unprecedented Times

LARC 504 sec 001 / LARC 505 sec 001
Fall 2020 | 9 Credit | Vertical Studio

Landscape Architecture Program - School of Architecture & Landscape Architecture - University of British Columbia
Assoc. Prof. Daniel Roehr droehr@sala.ubc.ca

Course Overview
The global pandemic caused by COVID-19 is putting pressure on cities throughout the world to rethink how they should develop and operate. This studio examines how gardens have been and how they should continue to be a significant element within the urban fabric of cities. It discusses the role of gardens today and examines the public health impact of gardens and access to urban green space. The studio also explores the idea that gardens should be designed in order to create a more multi-sensorial experience so that the health, ecological, social and other benefits can be most effective.

This studio is based on a journal article the instructor co-authored and which will be published in September 2020 for this studio called Gardens are... Buildings, where the authors ask the following questions: (1) What role does a garden have today in this unprecedented pandemic? (2) How will this pandemic alter opinions on access to local gardens and parks? (3) How can planners and designers help to provide more gardens and greenspace in cities to help to mitigate the effects during and after the COVID-19 crisis and in future crises?

The instructor developed a broad planning matrix which supports urban planners and designers in the integration of gardens as part of their initial building policies and design approach. This matrix can be applied worldwide. The matrix uses garden activities as a basis to determine garden design and use in conjunction with building typologies, for example, a hospital, a three-story housing, a factory or a museum. This studio applies this matrix at three scales: 1) garden 2) urban block and 3) urban scale. The participants of the studio select a site where they reside for the individual phase. For the team phases, the urban block and urban scale site selection will be by group decision with the instructor’s support. The studio will examine how garden design can alter the spatial approach to designing buildings, urban blocks and cities, and try to prove that Gardens are... Buildings and not an afterthought after the architectural space has been determined.

Course Format
The studio has three design phases:
Phase 1 (Week 1 – 5) Individual Garden Design for One Selected Building Typology
Assign. 1 Garden Activity Analysis Assign. 2 Building Typologies & Garden Activities Assign. 3 Garden Designs for Different Buildings

Phase 2 (Week 6 – 8) Small Teams Urban Block Garden Designs for Multiple Building Typologies
Assign. 4 Urban Block Garden Activity Analysis Assign. 5 Urban Block Garden Design Strategies

Phase 3 (Week 9 – 13) Larger Teams Urban Scale Garden Designs for Multiple Building Typologies
Assign. 6 Urban Scale Garden Activity Analysis Assign. 7 Urban Scale Garden Design Strategies

The difference of this studio to other studio practice and set up is the reverse order of design, from small (garden) to larger (urban) instead of large down to small scale. To learn to read landscape architecture scale, it is best to start at site - garden scale - a familiar scale, before the larger urban scale. Reason being that site - garden scale - everyone has experienced, while larger urban scale is not easy to grasp when learning to design the environment. As the studio is a hypothetical online exercise, the workload is also reversed with the intensive individual design of this studio placed at the beginning of the semester when students are not stressed with multiple hand ins for other courses such as GP.
Collecting Acorns, 2 weeks
Leaving to Return, 2.5 weeks
Building as shelter, 6 weeks
when it's not all about you
Introduction: This studio is an antidote for restlessness, aimed at those nomadic souls among us who are going stir-crazy in the time of Covid-19. During the semester, we will travel virtually, fanning out far and wide across the globe. Channeling those great adventurers who take off on pious pilgrimages and rowdy road trips, each student will plot a journey and retell their adventures through the design of an accommodation.

Psychologist Jean Piaget proposed there are two ways of processing new information and experiences. The first is through assimilation, where new knowledge is filed into existing mental categories or schemas. The second, of particular interest here, is the more difficult accommodation which requires reshaping an existing category, or in some cases, creating a wholly new category to accommodate unfamiliar, incoming information.

Our conversations this semester will focus on how to make encounters with new precedents productive in the design process; this will include discussions about schemas and types, fuzzy sets and basic level categories. We will consider the role of metaphors, chance and arbitrary ordering systems (like grids and alphabetizing) in the formation of new types, and explore the distance between expectations, reality, perception and memory. Short readings will be pleasurable and wide-ranging, from Henry David Thoreau’s “Walking” and excerpts from Umberto Eco’s Infinity of Lists, to Rafael Moneo’s seminal text “On Typology.”

Week 1: Meet and greet, Course introduction
Weeks 2-3: Trip prep: Plotting the route, anticipating rendezvous with fellow travelers/potential collaborators, packing, site selection and analysis
Weeks 4-8: Travel: Accommodating relevant precedents encountered along the route
Week 9-13: Design development

Program: In this studio, architectural program is defined as architectural agenda, including, but not limited to, the function of a building. Students will design an “accommodation” (as defined by each student) for travelers.

Site: The accommodation will be sited in the city of origin.

Routes: Anchorage to Accra, Buenos Aires to Beijing, Cairo to Calgary, Dhaka to Dallas, El Paso to Edinburgh, Fez to Fukuoka, Guangzhou to Granada, Hong Kong to Hollywood, Istanbul to Ibagué, Juneau to Jerusalem, Kansas City to Karachi, Lima to Lagos, Mexico City to Melbourne, New Orleans to New Delhi, Oslo to Osaka, Pretoria to Paris, Quito to Quebec City, Rio de Janeiro to Riyadh, Santiago to Shanghai, Tokyo to Tehran, Ulaanbaatar to Urbino, Vladivostok to Valparaiso, Wellington to Wichita, Yagoua to Yuma, Zurich to Zamboanga