

RAILTOWN REMIX :

Ecologies of Making in Vancouver Harbour

Instructor: Cedric Jacques Yu // cyu@sala.ubc.ca

Schedule: Tuesday & Friday 1:30 – 6:00 PM

Railtown is within the traditional and unceded territory of the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, and Squamish First Nations. For many thousands of years there have been seasonal camps in the protected coves along the waterfront that Railtown is part of, including places called Luq'Luq'i (variously translated as "maple leaves falling" and "grove of beautiful trees" - COV RIA Context 2015

INTRODUCTION



OVERVIEW

Vancouver is often lauded for its proximity to water and scenic nature. Sleek residential towers and green leafy neighborhoods framed by mountains, seals, kayakers, SPF 30, and the sea. But another city runs in parallel at the water's edge - one less curated, more muscular, shaped by the rhythms of movement, industry, and commerce. This is a city of tracks, trades, and tides: a city of logistical corridors, marine infrastructure, rail yards, commercial and industrial forms and the labor and businesses that sustain them.

In this studio we will journey into the unique characteristics of industrial and commercial places of production both at a regional and local level. Through documentation, analysis, film, discussions, and site visits we will examine themes of 'making' and the places and practices that sustain them.

Railtown Remix challenges you to turn your creative generosity and gaze toward places of production and to interrogate the specific precinct of Railtown for both its unique tensions and opportunities.

Core provocations of the studio brief:

- A. What forms of making do you imagine for Railtown's built future?
- B. What industries & practices present in Vancouver Harbor & Railtown can amplify the remix?
- C. What programmatic hybrids including rituals of making can be imagined and implemented?

CONTEXT

According to a 2023 study conducted by the Business Development Bank of Canada (BCD) nearly half as many people are launching business as 20 years ago. Despite a population of 40 million, Canada has 100,000 fewer entrepreneurs than it did 20 years ago. (1)

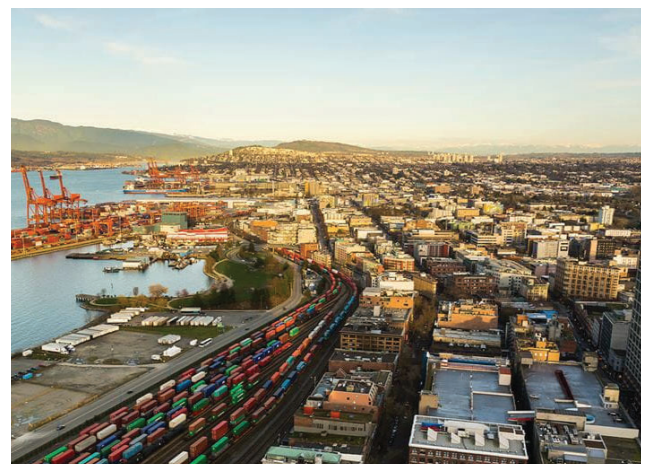
Changes in technology, political cycles, consumer preferences, and changes to local and global supply chains have influenced cycles of expansion and contraction for various industries and commercial activities over the years. These shifting dynamics have put pressure on existing light and heavy industrial areas within the lower mainland making their fate vulnerable to a changing future.

At a time where housing affordability issues continue, industrial lands face increasing pressure for replacement and erasure. While the crisis of affordability in the region is most often attributed to supply and demand dynamics of shelter an often overlooked side of the equation is tied to labor resiliency, making, and places of production.

Ten years following the 2015 area plan study by City of Vancouver a new political climate is emerging. One where monofabric industrial areas are being adapted to allow nascent forms of production, hybridity, and making.

With this in mind, what is Railtown's prospect in this post-industrial or re-industrialized future? How will its future be shaped by the unique context of Vancouver Harbor and downtown East Side?

1. <https://www.bdc.ca/en/about/mediaroom/news-releases/nearly-half-as-many-people-are-launching-businesses-as-20-years-ago>



Photos: N. Procylo Left: Fire maps - courtesy COV

MODULES



DECONSTRUCTIONS:
Todd McLellan

TRAVEL

For the following field trip we will meet @ Location TBD and travel in groups to site.

1. **Shipyards** - Group walkthrough
Meet in front of Polygon Gallery Benches at 2pm
2. **Railtown** - Group Walkthrough
Meet at Maple Tree Square in Gastown at 2pm
Visit @ Architectural Offices (TBD)
Visit @ Maker Labs

FILMS

Tsukiji Wonderland - Nataro Endo 2016
(Manufactured Landscapes - Jennifer Baichwal - 2006)

PART 1: MAPPING OF VANCOUVER HARBOUR (3 WEEKS)

Starting from inquiry and curiosity the first project will analyze one of several urban region in Vancouver Harbor and chart systems of making and forces that govern it. Through mapping, deconstructive diagrams, and site visits the students will unpack the region as a grounded land, physical space, urban formation, and place of robust production and industry. Through your research you will identify existing forms of making as well as emerging ones. Research collected will be reported back and presented to the studio to form a collective understanding and foundation for Part 1 & 2.

PART 2: RAILTOWN - A SITE & CONCEPT (4 WEEKS)

Students will focus specifically on one of 2 sites in Railtown considering their spatial, programmatic, social and/or formal relationships. Building on research in project 1 teams will explore and develop programmatic hybrids of their choosing that include at least 1 form of making in their program. This will set the foundation for your final project. Students will explore proposals through precedents, iteration, diagrams, drawing, and physical sketch model.

FINAL PROJECT : A PLACE OF MAKING (8 WEEKS)

Your proposal will continue to build iteratively off project 1 and 2 submissions. In the final module each group will refine designs of a hybrid or mixed-use place of making. Students may select a fragment or whole to represent aspects of their project. The deliverables for the final project will include a range of drawings and scaled physical model.



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