

CRYPTOME

21 June 2014

We visited the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture Planning and Preservation on 20 June 2014. We asked to speak to the Dean, Mark Wigley, to congratulate him for a highly successful program which features latest technology for architects. Mr. Wigley was out so we left our names with his assistant, identifying ourselves as alumni of the Class of 1968.

Then we toured the upper floor studios and subterranean complex where summer students were diligently working.

We were surprised at the decrepit state of the historic building, Avery Hall, home of the world famous Avery Architectural Library. But recognized the decrepitude customarily displayed by non-profits to induce generous contributions from donors like us. We introduced ourselves to staff and students as oligarchs who abandoned architectural practice to acquire serious wealth now beating off deans and architects with a 2x4.

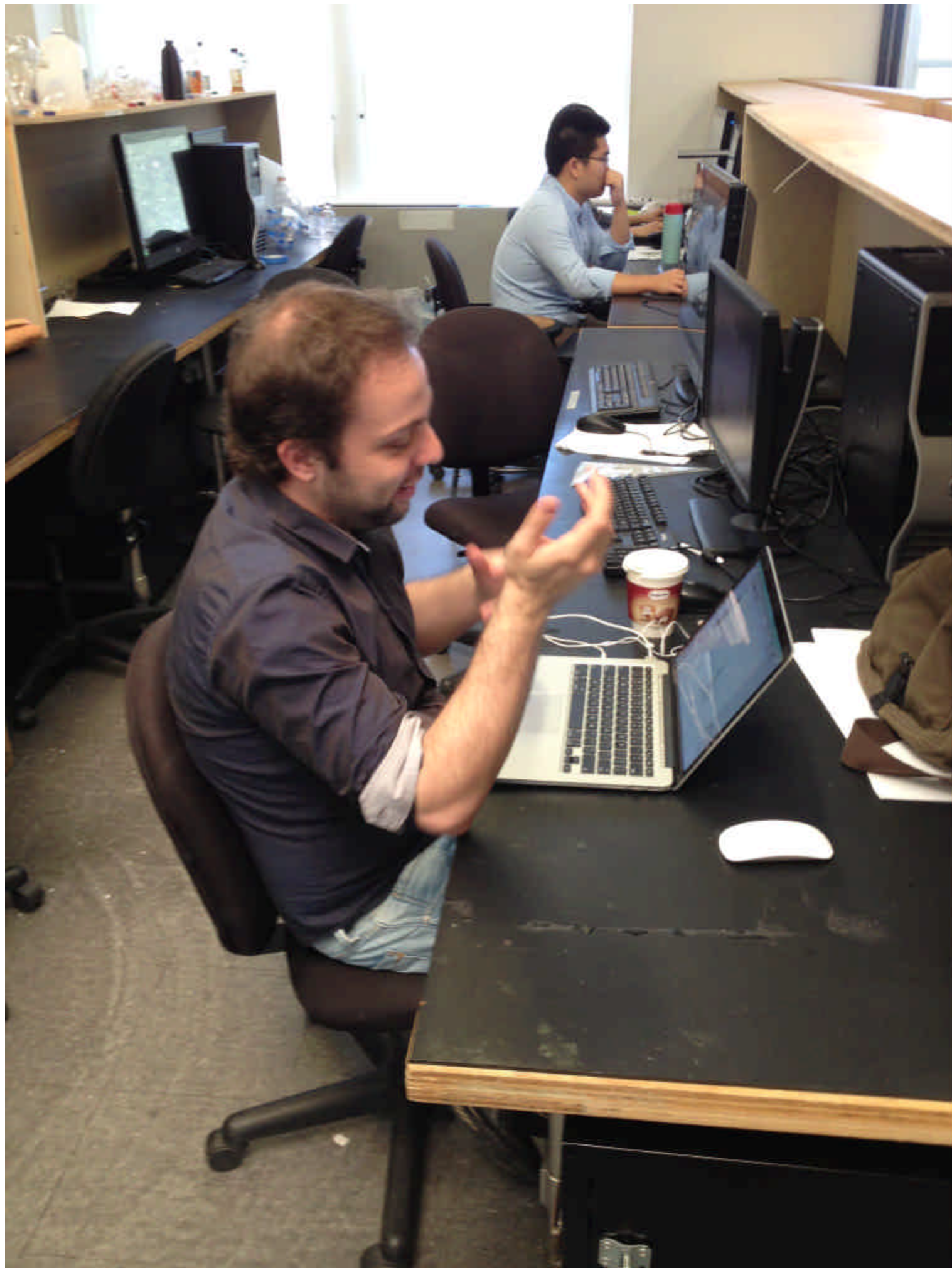
The students were not impressed by our performance, having been beaten by 2x4s for years on the way to becoming masterful wielders of abusive tools of the ugliest and most environmentally damaging property ever created, design, fabricated, exported and outsourced by universities from the Five Eyes of US, UK, CA, AU and NZ armed with the most exquisitely destructive technology to assure steady customer consumption of hardware and software architecture of armaments to spy on and terrify their citizens, neighbors, allies and each other.

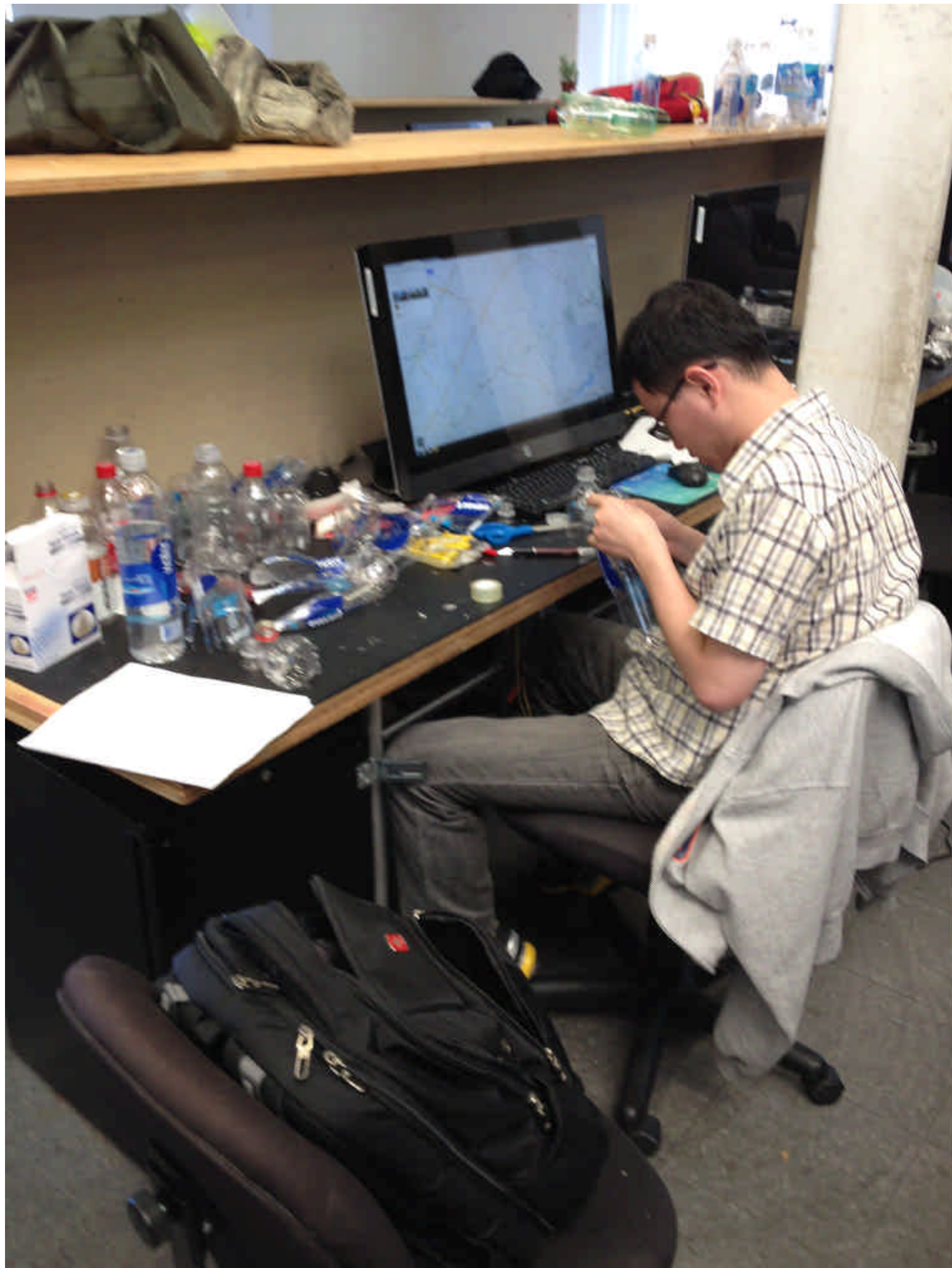
A business development partner at "world-class" architectural firm KPF brags of projects in 147 countries as if reproducing these globally placeless world finance piles was not shameful. Even at this time there is a US architectural scherzade being choreographed for the US State Department by the misleadingly named "Storefront for Art and Architecture" at the Venice Biennale, glorifying US financial architecture of greed celebrated by bold names erecting vulgarest of totems to centralized wealth and power..

Virtually all the students appeared to be from outside the United States, a reminder that US universities could not survive without foreigners' capability to pay highest of tuition to learn how the US dominates the architecture of the planet through finance, armaments, spying, technology, professions and "higher" education.

Below a few photos of the disrepaired historic landmark and students, followed by a class curricula in urban design titled "Theme: Housing Eight Million New Yorkers." Domiciled in curated high-rise million-dollar favelas.







6th Floor Studio Urban Design



6th Floor Studio Urban Design



6th Floor Studio Urban Design with Oligarch



5th Floor Studio from 6th Floor



5th Floor Studio



20 JUNE 2014

A6849 Urban Design Studio I: TRANSFORMATIVE URBAN ENVIRONMENTS

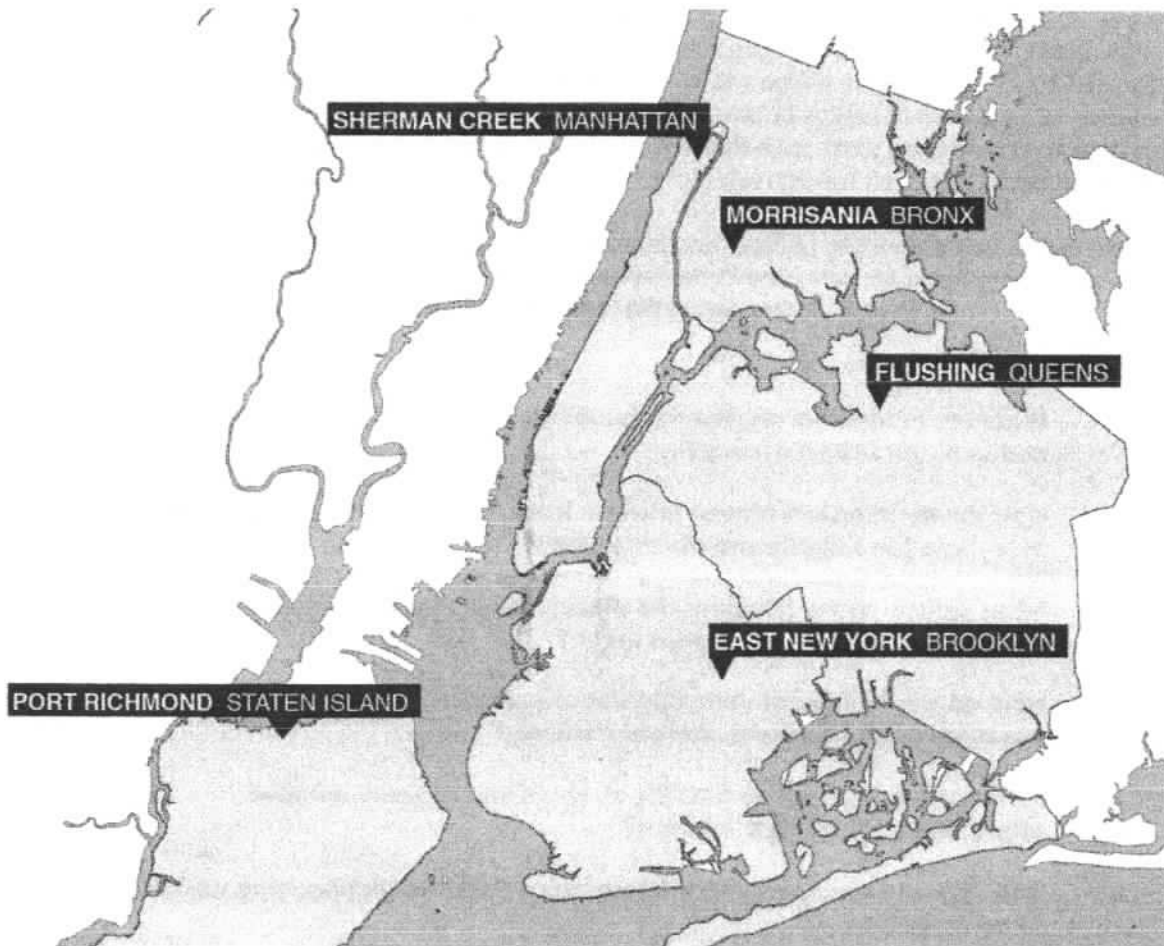
Columbia University GSAPP

MSAUD Summer 2014

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 2:00 – 6:00 pm

Faculty: Kaja Kühl, Ben Abelman, Brian Baldor, Jamie Chan, James Khamsi, Tricia Martin, Michael Piper

THE FIVE BOROUGH STUDIO



ABSTRACT

This first semester will introduce you to an urban design process, where site and program are not a given, but are treated as principal variables of urban design thinking. Working in multiple scales as well as multiple time frames will be an integral part of this investigation to design an intervention that follows a speculative hypothesis for the future of the City.

New York City will be your laboratory for experimenting with this process that re-thinks, re-shapes and re-generates the city in the 21st century. Working in a post-industrial city requires the critical investigation and re-definition of the many layers of existing and past urban fabric and urban infrastructure to shape the city to the needs of its future inhabitants.

THEME: HOUSING 9 MILLION NEW YORKERS

New York City has been in a state of *housing emergency* since World War II. This is defined by a vacancy rate of residential units at or below 5%. Housing has also become increasingly expensive in the city with more than half of all New Yorkers pay more than 30% of their income on housing.¹ It is becoming increasingly difficult for the majority of New Yorkers to find affordable housing. To address this housing crisis the new mayor of New York City has set an ambitious goal for the city: **To create and preserve 200,000 units of affordable housing in the next 10 years.**

In this studio, we will explore the questions this plan puts to urban designers. What do these units look like? Where will they be? Who will live in them? As urban designers, we are interested in understanding the relationships between urban policies, real estate mechanisms and urban fabric and design. **How do we work with these tools to envision not just apartments but complex neighborhoods in which future New Yorkers can live, work and play?**

We will take a look at existing policies and fabrics but also at changing demographics and life styles to develop new visions for how New Yorkers live together. With an emphasis on the neighborhood as the critical unit for change embedded in the larger system of the city, we want to consider the following questions:

What are innovative models for housing that respond to contemporary needs of our urban society?

How do we integrate places to work, learn, exercise, shop, meet and enjoy into the neighborhoods in which we live?

What values do we attach to the places we live in that make them "home" and how do we design these?

How do we incorporate thinking about energy efficiency and sustainability into new models of housing?

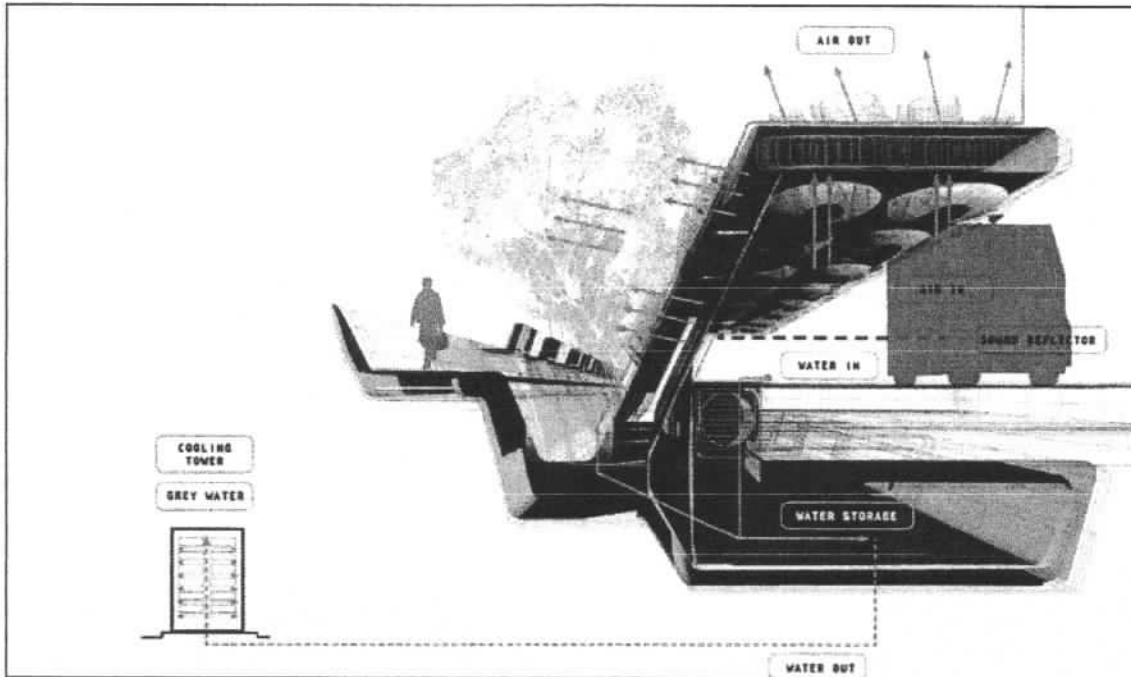
How can we manipulate funding streams and costs to achieve affordability for all New Yorkers?

What are the hard and soft infrastructure systems that housing needs to connect to?

How do we consider time and generations as a dimension in designing for housing and neighborhoods?

¹ The federal government defines "affordable" as paying 30% or less of you income on housing.

NEW YORK CITY AS A LABORATORY

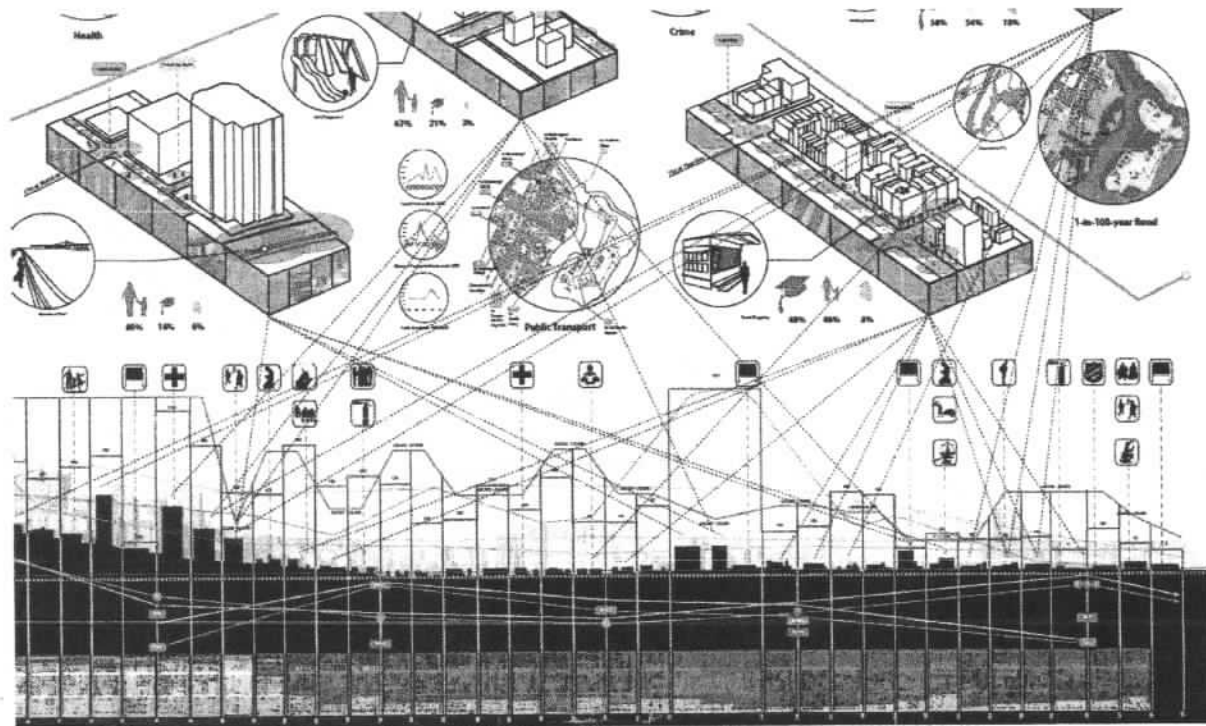


Jamie Fajardo, Dongsei Kim, pUMp, Summer 2008

New York City, the most populous and the most urban of America's cities will serve as a laboratory for these investigations. As a post-industrial city it offers a multitude of areas for transforming the urban environment in order to support the city to face the challenges of the 21st century. At a point in history, where its population is expected to grow to 9 million by 2040, New York City relies on a physical infrastructure that was planned, designed and built in the past two centuries. The Commissioner's Plan of 1811 laid out the street grid of Manhattan; the city's subway system, begun in 1904, now carries over 5.4 million passengers a day, and the city's intricate system of watersheds, aqueducts and tunnels, date back to the late nineteenth century. Many of these projects were visionary in scale and transformative for New York's residents. However, they were not envisioned for a population of this magnitude and technologies and life styles of the 21st century. Similarly, 87% of New York City's over 3.3 million housing units were built more than 40 years ago². Throughout the 20th century, housing in New York City was developed through a complex system of public policies and financing mechanism paired with urban and architectural ideologies that produced a great variety of urban fabrics and neighborhoods throughout the 5 boroughs. Many of these fabrics and buildings do not adequately reflect the social, economic, environmental and cultural circumstances of New Yorkers today.

² 2011 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey

DESIGN PROCESS



Johannes Pointl, Gilmar Campos, Minyoung Kim, Lowell Day, Pocket Urbanism, Summer 2011

Site and Program

In urban design, "site" is not a given; designers must identify and investigate the complex, layered contexts, operating at multiple scales, within which urban places are embedded. Similarly, the construction of "program" is within the urban designer's purview; opportunities exist to extend and expand the field for human action and interaction.

Making Knowledge

The techniques of investigating a site, its physical and non-physical context, –its geographic, historical, or socioeconomic aspects, its boundaries and networks, its areas of influence and impact create knowledge about the site. They establish the horizon for a design project, a reference and means of communication between the different disciplines involved in the design process.

In this studio, we treat drawings, diagrams and models not as final representations of a proposal, but as material evidence for a process of "thinking through making". You will be introduced to a variety of different techniques throughout the semester and we encourage you to test, refine, and sharpen your skills of representation as a means of thinking and communicating your ideas.

Process

In developing an urban design project, the process by which we imagine a project being implemented is an essential part of design itself. Who are the stakeholders that would advocate for or pay for the project? Who are the users that would benefit? What is the timeframe in which it is envisioned? Speculative answers to these questions inform the decision-making process for the physical manifestation of the urban design project.

Hypothesis

You will be asked to translate your investigation of site and program, and the making of knowledge about an urban site into a series of conceptual hypotheses for your site that operate on several scales and in several temporal dimensions. In the context of this studio, you will be asked to speculate with innovative models for housing New Yorkers in the 21st century and mechanisms to develop such models.

You will then be asked to apply your hypotheses to your specific site and develop design proposals that translate your speculations about housing into physical space.



Urban Systems Charette, Summer 2012

STRUCTURE

Urban Design is teamwork. Practicing how to communicate in teams, how to negotiate different interests, challenges and strengths, both visually and verbally is an important aspect of Urban Design. For each of the distinct parts of this semester you will be asked to work in teams of different size and constellation.

PART I

Urban Artefact

Individual

1 Week

Introductory exercise to explore, interpret and represent one of five sites in New York City. You will construct your site in a physical model using material from the site and constructed on site.

Constructing Site

Groups of 3 or 4

3 Weeks

Students will incorporate a variety of modes of investigation to map and diagram the condition of the site finding new knowledge that leads to the construction of a site, a hypothesis of its characteristics, and several scenarios of opportunities for its future.

PART II

Urban Fabric

Groups of 5 (One from each site)

2 Weeks

Students will examine one of many mechanisms that produce housing and visualize its footprint in the city. Students will then work across sites to understand and experiment with systemic linkages between sites and larger regional patterns to identify potentials for public investment on a larger scale and develop working hypotheses for the growth of the city.

PART III

Applied Systems

Groups of 3 or 4

4 Weeks

Students will develop an urban design proposal for their original site of investigation. Building on the constructed site as well as the developed hypotheses for the growth of the city, students will focus on implementation strategies that have the potential to transform the city at the neighborhood scale as well as the city-wide scale.

In addition, there will be three activities that will be continually 'growing' throughout the semester:

Site Knowledge

1 group per site

10 Weeks

Throughout the semester, students will be responsible for introducing guest critics to their specific site conditions at each of the 5 sites through a 3min. introductory movie. You are encouraged to incorporate images and video footage as well as your own representation of site, geography, social, economic and environmental data. Utilize voice over as another layer of information.

Postcards from Home

Individual

10 Weeks

Housing is more than just shelter. It is a place we call home. Each week, students will be asked to solicit input from another New Yorker and send a postcard-size design to the studio that interrogates the question "What makes this place home? You are free to use any media of your choice (sketch, model, writing, rendering, photo-collage) as long as it fits on a postcard. The entire collection will contribute to an exhibition curated by the art collective "No Longer Empty" in Sugar Hill, Harlem.



READING URBAN DESIGN

Over the course of the semester, there will be several seminars in which we discuss readings pertinent to your design process. You are expected to familiarize yourself with the authors and context of these readings and be prepared to discuss them during each seminar session.

Seminar 1: Defining Site

Mon, June 17, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

Kahn, Andrea. "Defining Urban Sites." in Carol J. Burns and Andrea Kahn, eds. *Site Matters* (New York: Routledge, 2005)

Corner, James, "The Agency of Mapping: Speculation, Critique and Invention." in *Mappings*, Cosgrove, Dennis, ed. (Reaktion Books: 1999).

Seminar 2: Designing for the Public(s)

Mon, June 24, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

Cuff, Dana and Sherman, Roger, "Introduction" in Cuff, Dana and Sherman Roger *Fast-Forward Urbanism: Rethinking Architecture's Engagement with the City* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2011)

Harvey, David, "The Political Economy of Public Space." in *The Politics of Public Space*, edited by Low, Setha M., and Smith, Neil. (London, Routledge 2006)

Seminar 3: Affordable Housing

Mon, June 30, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

Susanne Schindler, Grahame Shane, Karen Kubey and Juliette Spertus, "Affordable New York: On instruments of subsidized housing and its impact on the city and its architecture" in *bauwelt 10.12* (Bauwelt Verlag Berlin 2012)

Center for Urban Pedagogy, "What is Affordable Housing? Envisioning Development / Guide No.1" (Center for Urban Pedagogy, 2009). See also background on the project here

Aaron Betsky, "Mayor de Blasio's Plan to Build More Cells" in *Architect online*, May 7th 2014

Seminar 4: Design Strategies

Mon, July 21, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

Models of collective living and shared space in the City: For this last seminar, we will **read projects**. Each student will post a case study to the class website. Case studies should investigate the thresholds between private, public and shared spaces in housing and neighborhood design. A template and login will be given to you prior to this seminar. Here are short articles on collective housing development and shared cities as an inspiration for discussion.

STUDIO LOGISTICS

Attendance

Attendance is expected for all studio events. The studio curriculum includes class sessions, lectures, seminars, site tours, pin-ups and reviews. Studio meets M/W/F 2:00 – 6:00 p.m. Lectures are at 12.30 p.m. on Wednesdays. Attendance is mandatory for all reviews.

This studio is team-taught. Students will work with all seven faculty members throughout the semester-long project, but may be affiliated with particular critics at different points in the process.

Grading

Studio work is done in groups, but all grading is based on each individual student's design product, process and progress, and their contribution to the group effort. Assessment in these areas will be evaluated by how you demonstrate and communicate design thinking through drawings, models, and presentations, and your participation in group discussions. To PASS the course you must engage the studio agenda; consistently contribute to group work; articulate clear design goals; develop coherent design proposals; demonstrate verbal and graphic communication skills and a willingness to explore and test new modes of design research. HIGH PASS grades reflect a concerted effort to consistently exceed basic course requirements. Failure to meet basic course requirements will result in a LOW PASS or FAIL.

Any student considered at risk of receiving a "low pass" or "fail" grade will receive a formal notification by email. Receipt of final grades depends on submission of full project documentation. (See **Archive** below)

Office Hours

To schedule meetings regarding administrative issues, contact the studio coordinator:

Kaja Kühl kk730@columbia.edu +1 917 916 5478 (for emergency only)

Faculty contact information: Ben Abelman benabelman@gmail.com, Brian Baldor

baldor@gmail.com, Jamie Chan jc776@columbia.edu, Tricia Martin tmartin@wedesign-nyc.com,

Michael Piper mppiper@gmail.com,

Material

While much of the work will be digital (each student will have a computer), students are responsible to have legible print material of their design process ready for use in each studio session. Physical model making also plays a key role in the studio working process, and the studio will have working space to facilitate their production. Familiarize yourself with equipment and facilities available.

Citing Work and Ideas

In producing a professional body of research, you are required to acknowledge and cite sources for ALL material referenced in your graphic as well as textual work.

STUDIO ARCHIVE

You are responsible for archiving your work after each review. Please make sure to include the final product (PDF of boards, PPT or movie, etc) as well as **all original editable files** included therein. For every archive submission, please take time between review and due date to correct spelling mistakes or similar errors. Please make sure that no files are corrupt and that they are downsized to the extent possible without losing quality.

Standard File Naming Conventions and Archiving Considerations

Submit all graphic material as image files (.tif) or illustrator files (.ai) at 300 dpi. Movies should be Quicktime (.mov). Written material should be edited for spelling and grammar and exact notations to be suitable for public dissemination, and be submitted as a Word document, if not embedded in the image file.

Please use the due date and author name (for individual work) or site location name (for group work) and a 3-digit number to identify the work as shown below.

yymmdd_lastname_001.tif or yymmdd_lowereastside_002.swf

Before submitting, create a directory with subdirectories as necessary to organize your submission. The main folder should be named using the due date and the names of group members or the name of the site.

yymmdd_lastname_firstname or yymmdd_lowereastside

Within the main folder create subfolders for images, presentations, diagrams, text, etc... as you see necessary.

Studio Archive Schedule

Archive of your work is due for each of the four parts on the following days. Please submit all archive work on the due date to the studio TAs on a CD or USB drive or place them in the appropriate folder on the studio server.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Urban Artefact Review June 9 | Archive due June 13 |
| 3. Constructing Site Review June 27 | Archive due July 2 |
| 3. Urban Systems Review July 14 | Archive due July 18 |
| 4. Final Review Aug 07/08 | Archive due Aug 15 |

SCHEDULE

Week Date

1 URBAN ARTEFACT

Wed June 4 Introduction to studio and five sites

Fri June 6 Individual site visit / no studio

2 CONSTRUCTING SITE

Mon June 9 REVIEW: URBAN ARTEFACT

Wed June 11 **12:00pm Lecture: Richard Plunz**
Studio

Fri June 13 11am GIS Workshop
Studio

3 CONSTRUCTING SITE

Mon June 16 Seminar 1: Defining Site
Studio

Wed June 18 **Lecture: Juan Saldarriaga, SIDL**
Studio

Fri June 20 **6pm: Pecha Kucha: Positions in Urban Design**
11am GIS workshop
Studio

4 CONSTRUCTING SITE

Mon June 23 Seminar 2: What is Urban Design?
Studio (Meet with site groups)

Wed June 25 Studio

Fri June 27 **7-9pm: Exhibition Opening: New York is my Home**
REVIEW: CONSTRUCTING SITE

5 URBAN SYSTEMS

Mon June 30th Seminar 3: Affordable Housing
Studio

Wed July 2 Studio

Fri July 4 Holiday

6 URBAN SYSTEMS

Mon July 7 Charette: The Future of Housing in New York City

Wed July 9 **Lecture: Jacob Moore, Buell Center**
Studio

Fri July 11 **6PM: Panel: Housing New York**
Studio

7 APPLIED SYSTEMS

Mon July 14 9-6pm REVIEW: URBAN SYSTEMS
Wed July 16 **6:30PM: Lecture: Vishaan Chakrabarti, SHoP (at SHoP)**
Studio
Fri July 18 Studio

8 APPLIED SYSTEMS

Mon July 21 Seminar 4: Design Strategies
Studio
Wed July 23 **Lecture: Eric Bunge, Mimi Hoang, nArchitects**
Studio Pin-up
Fri July 25 Studio

9 APPLIED SYSTEMS

Mon July 28 Studio
Wed July 30 **Lecture: Jeremy Alain Siegel, BIG**
Studio Pin-up
Fri August 1 Studio

10 APPLIED SYSTEMS

Mon Aug 4 Studio
Wed Aug 6 No Studio / Final Review material will be collected at 9PM
Thu Aug 7 FINAL REVIEW: APPLIED SYSTEMS
Fri Aug 8 FINAL REVIEW: APPLIED SYSTEMS
Sun Aug 10 Closing: Exhibition New York is my Home

12 ARCHIVE DUE: FRI AUG 15

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