

Living Arts City

The Ecological Thought: Workshop for an Urban Transaction

Spring 2013

Friday, 03.08.13	12:10 pm - 2:50 pm	66 5th 603
Tuesday, 03.12.13	12:10 pm - 2:50 pm	66 5th 603
Friday, 03.15.13	12:10 pm - 2:50 pm	66 5th 603

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M.S. Candidates, Design and Urban Ecologies

School of Design Strategies, Parsons The New School for Design

Course Description:

This three-class workshop will challenge students to deepen their analysis and understanding of the “Urban Ecology” through the lense of Living Arts City. Providing a break from the normal flow of Senior Year Studio, the workshop is intended to provide a space for students to experiment with new ways of knowing about the city, and use this new knowledge to develop an “Urban Transaction” in small groups. These transactions, in which an exchange takes place within the urban ecology, will be informed by exploring the practices and places of three New York artists.

The students will be asked to think creatively and intelligently when executing these transactions on the simple scale of everyday life, and then create a **video** and present the transaction, as well as their thinking behind these transactions, at the last session of the workshop. The student’s individual and group thoughts will be sketched in **notebooks** to be handed in on the last day of the workshop as well. Successful presentations and notebooks will engage creatively and rigorously with the Urban Ecology.

Deliverables:

Group video (roughly 1-3min) of/about their Urban Transaction. Other materials necessary for explanation. - 3/15

Individual Notebooks containing sketches/notes/etc about the workshop - 3/15

Working Definitions:

Urban Ecology: Urban (*is*) ecology, City ~~and~~ Ecosystem --interconnected actors: diverse, complex relationships.

Urban Transaction: a deliberate exchange of any kind between actors in the Urban Ecology

Everyday Life: the systems and ecology of our routine, so regular as to become unnoticed.

Rigorously: self critical, deep analysis that seeks to find real solutions.

Course Context

From Senior Studio Syllabus

Living Arts City a multi-course practicum which links multiple courses and events at The New School to provide an intellectual context for Season of Cambodia, a major international arts festival taking place in New York City throughout April and May of 2013. Learning from Cambodia artists, and our Phnom Penh Living Arts City Workshop January 14th - 18th 2013, this class will continue to ask the following questions: How can innovative community-based practices in arts and education that elude rational notions of urban governance participate in the transitions of post-crisis cities? How can we as design students facilitate Cambodian design students, artists and other urban actors to foreground the operation and production of the informal cultural ecologies in Cambodia? Where else do we see this happening in other parts of the world? For example how can both Phnom Penh and New York be sustained as a “living arts cities”?

Course Objectives

1. Break from normal studio flow with a new creative energy
2. Develop and question critical thinking on the scale of Urban Ecologies
3. Critique contemporary urban art practices in light of their relationship with the city
4. Conduct fieldwork as a group in a specific urban setting
5. Define, develop, perform, and document an “urban transaction” as a group
6. Document and reflect in field notebooks using diagramming, drawing, creative writing, mixed media, etc.
7. Strengthen student’s future urban practice

Course Requirements

From Senior Studio Syllabus

- Participate in class discussions
- Complete assignments and readings
- Prepare fully for In-process presentations and fieldwork
- Present a final synthetic project
- Submit archive

Evaluations and Grading

From Senior Studio Syllabus

- Class discussion, presentations and participation 20%
- Assignments 30%
- Final project including archive 50%

School Policies: Please refer to: <http://www.newschool.edu/parsons/current-students/>

Guidelines for Studio Assignments

From Senior Studio Syllabus

Work from other visual sources may be imitated or incorporated into studio work if the fact of imitation or incorporation and the identity of the original source are properly acknowledged. There must be no intent to deceive; the work must make clear that it emulates or comments on the source as a source. Referencing a style or concept in otherwise original work does not constitute plagiarism. The originality of studio work that presents itself as “in the manner of” or as playing with “variations on” a particular source should be evaluated by the individual faculty member in the context of a critique. Incorporating ready-made materials into studio work as in a collage, synthesized photograph or paste-up is not plagiarism in the educational context. In the commercial world, however, such appropriation is prohibited by copyright laws and may result in legal consequences

Assignments, Attendance and Participation

From Senior Studio Syllabus

All assigned readings, tasks and written work must be completed by their due dates. No late work will be accepted. Exceptions will be made only when the student contacts the Instructor prior to the due date and can provide written documentation for the lateness. Travel plans or social commitments do not constitute a legitimate excuse.

Students are required to develop a design project led by their own intellectual inquiry; therefore students are expected to bring new drawings and new research to every class. In addition students are expected to share in structured group discussions. This means that students must be prepared to participate at all times while maintaining a respectful and constructive approach to the views expressed by others.

According to University policy, more than four absences mandate a failing grade for the course unless there are extenuating circumstances. Significant (or consistent) lateness to class will also count as an absence. The only legitimate grounds for an excused absence are as follows:

- An extended illness requiring hospitalization or visit to a physician (documentation required)
- A family emergency – e.g. serious illness (with written explanation)
- Observance of a religious holiday

It is expected that all students will arrive on time to class and turn off all electronic communication devices (mobile phones in particular) before entering the classroom. We will take a short break roughly halfway through each class and it is requested that students refrain from leaving the classroom until then.

Living Arts City Resources:

<http://www.livingartscity.com/>

<http://theoryofurbanform2012.wordpress.com/>

<http://seasonofcambodia.org/visual-art/>

Cambodia Resources:

Dropbox: [Phnom Penh Reader](#)

Dropbox: [Phnom Penh Historical Maps](#)

Shared by Shelby Doyle: See separate doc.

New York Resources:

<http://maps.nypl.org/warper/>

<http://www.oasisnyc.net/>

<http://www.usgs.gov/pubprod/>

Schedule

Friday 03.08.13

- Braden Crooks - *The Ecological Thought: Patterns of Daily Life*
- Screen *Ilha das Flores (Island of Flowers)* - 1989 Brazilian short film by Jorge Furtado
PART 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3AyWcptRx0>
PART 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3AyWcptRx0>
- Discussion
- Alexandra Castillo-Kesper - *Arts and Social Engagement*
- Discussion (including observations of New York artists)
- Discuss final project and fieldwork
- Meet in groups

Tuesday 03.12.13

- Discuss field visits & share observation
- Aubrey Murdock - *Drawing as Process*
- Diagram/visualize transaction ideas with group on whiteboards
- Desk critiques/ group work
- Closing discussion

Friday 03.15.13

- Presentation of transactions
- Review

- Submit Field Notebooks
- *If time permits we'd like to discuss what worked in the workshop and what didn't - what was helpful? what can we improve in the future?*