

USC School of Architecture

ARCH 563: Contemporary Architectural Theory

Professor: Vittoria Di Palma

Spring 2017

Tuesdays 9:00-10:50

Harris 101

Class Assistants: tba

Office Hours: Tuesdays 11-12, and by appointment

Contact Information:

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Course Description

This course is a survey of contemporary architectural theory. Focusing on key figures, movements, and texts, it provides an overview of the principal theories that have informed, animated, or destabilized the architectural discourse of the past three decades. It begins with the rise of critical theory in the 1980s, considers the challenges mounted against theory in the 1990s along with the introduction of new topics of concern, and concludes by addressing key topics of debate since the turn of the 21st century. Theory can be used as justification, as propaganda, as a guide for practice, as a set of principles, as a vehicle of thought, as a platform for debate, and as an architectural project in itself. This course considers the changing role of theory with respect to practice over the past thirty years, and aims to furnish students with a set of questions, techniques, and tools for criticism and self-critique.

Course Requirements and Grading

Attendance and Participation: 5%

Reading Responses: 5%

Reading Response Journal: 10%

Midterm: 40%

Final: 40%

Attendance and Participation (5%):

Students are required to attend each class and to complete the required reading assigned before each class session. Readings will be available in the library or posted on Blackboard.

Reading Responses (5%):

For each class session, students will be expected to submit a brief (1 page) commentary that responds to the required readings. This should take the form of an analytical summary that briefly summarizes the main point of each reading. The reading responses are to be submitted electronically on Blackboard, and are due no later than midnight on the day before each class meeting. No late reading responses will be accepted.

Reading Response Journal (10%):

At the end of the semester, the weekly reading responses are to be revised and submitted once again as a reading response journal, which should take the form of an annotated bibliography.

Exams (Midterm 40%; Final 40%)

There will be two exams: a midterm, and a final. Review sessions will be held prior to each exam.

No late work is accepted--i.e. no partial credit will be given for work that is turned in late. Being absent on a day that a quiz, exam, presentation, paper, or final is held or due can lead to a student receiving an "F" for that assignment.

The School of Architecture's attendance policy allows a student to miss the equivalent of one week of class sessions (in our case, that means ONE class session) without penalty. If additional absences are required for medical reasons or a family emergency, a pre-approved academic reason, or religious observance, the situation should be discussed, in advance if possible, with me. For each absence above this number, the final grade may be lowered by 1/3 point (i.e. from A to A- for one unexcused absence, from A- to B+ for two; from B+ to B for three, etc.). You are responsible for making sure your presence in class has been recorded by the Class Assistant.

Any student not in class after the first 10 minutes is considered to be tardy. Three late arrivals constitute one unexcused absence. Students who are physically present but mentally absent (whether because they are asleep, or distracted by technology) will be marked as absent. Leaving class before it ends, or taking an extended bathroom or water break that lasts 1/3 of the class time or longer, will be considered an unexcused absence.

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

Course Overview

January 10	Introduction: Architecture and Theory
January 17	Deconstruction
January 24	The Fold
January 31	Diagram
February 7	Network
February 14	Landscape
February 21	Theory and its Discontents
February 28	Midterm Review
March 7	MIDTERM EXAM
March 14	SPRING BREAK
March 21	Ornament
March 28	Megacity
April 4	Wasteland
April 11	Ecology
April 18	Climate
April 25	Conclusion and Final Review
May 9	FINAL EXAM To confirm the date and time of the final for this class, please consult the USC <i>Schedule of Classes</i> at www.usc.edu/soc

Weekly Topics and Reading Assignments:

January 10	<p>Introduction: Architecture and Theory</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Sylvia Lavin, The Uses and Abuses of Theory," <i>Progressive Architecture</i> 71:8 (August 1990): 113-114, 179</p> <p>Jeffrey Kipnis, "Rebuttal: Theory Used and Abused," <i>Progressive Architecture</i> 71:11 (November 1990): 98-99</p> <p>Michael Hays. "Rebuttal: Theory as a Mediating Practice," <i>Progressive Architecture</i> 71:11 (November 1990): 98-100</p> <p>K. Michael Hays, "Introduction," <i>Architecture Theory Since 1968</i>, edited by K. Michael Hays. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998: 10-15</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> K. Michael Hays, "Critical Architecture: Between Culture and Form," <i>Perspecta</i> 21 (1984): 14-29</p> <p>Peter Eisenman, "Aspects of Modernism: Maison Dom-Ino and the Self-Referential Sign," <i>Oppositions</i> 15/16 (Winter 1980): 119-128, reprinted in <i>Oppositions Reader</i>, edited by K. Michael Hays (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998): 188-198</p>
January 17	<p>Deconstruction</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u></p> <p>Bernard Tschumi, <i>The Manhattan Transcripts</i> (London: Academy Editions, 1981): 7-12 + look at images</p> <p>Philip Johnson and Mark Wigley, <i>Deconstructivist Architecture</i>. New York: Museum of Modern Art and Boston: Little, Brown, 1988): 10-20</p>
January 24	<p>The Fold</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Mario Carpo, "Ten Years of Folding," reprint of <i>Architectural Design</i> 102 (March/April 1993) (London: Wiley, 2003): 12-19</p> <p>Greg Lynn, "Architectural Curvilinearity: The Folded, The Pliant, and the Supple," <i>Architectural Design</i> 102 (March/April 1993) reprint (London: Wiley, 2003): 20-31</p> <p>Gilles Deleuze, excerpt from <i>The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque</i>, printed in <i>Architectural Design</i> 102 (March/April 1993) reprint (London: Wiley, 2003): 33-37</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> Mario Carpo, <i>The Alphabet and the Algorithm</i> (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011)</p>

	<p>Antoine Picon, <i>Digital Culture in Architecture: An Introduction for the Design Professions</i> (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2010)</p>
January 31	<p>Diagram</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Toyo Ito, "Diagram Architecture," <i>El Croquis 77</i>: Kazuyo Sejima, pp. 18-24</p> <p>Stan Allen, "Diagrams Matter" <i>ANY 23</i> (1998): 16-19</p> <p>Robert Somol, "Dummy Text, or the Diagrammatic Basis of Contemporary Architecture," in Peter Eisenman, <i>Diagram Diaries</i> (New York: Universe, 1999): 6-25</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> Anthony Vidler, "Diagrams of Diagrams: Architectural Abstraction and Modern Representation," <i>Representations 72</i> (Autumn 2000): 1-20</p> <p>Ben Van Berkel and Caroline Bos, "Diagrams: Interactive Instruments in Operation," <i>ANY 23</i> (1998); reprinted in <i>This is not Architecture, Media Construction</i>. London: Routledge 2002: 99-109</p> <p>Stan Alan: "Artificial Ecologies: The Work of MVRDV," <i>El Croquis 86</i> (1998): 26-33</p>
February 7	<p>Network</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Stan Allen, "From Object to Field," <i>AD: Architecture After Geometry</i>, vol 67. no. 5/6 (May-June 1997): 24-31</p> <p>Mark Wigley, "Network Fever," <i>Grey Room 4</i> (Summer 2001): 82-122</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> Beatriz Colomina, "Information Obsession: Multiscreen Architecture," <i>ANYthing</i> (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001): 189-198</p> <p>Toyo Ito, "Tarzans in the Media Forest," <i>2G, #2</i> (1997): 121-144</p>
February 14	<p>Landscape</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Julia Czerniak, "Challenging the Pictorial: Recent Landscape Practice," <i>Assemblage 34</i> (December 1997): 110-20</p> <p>James Corner, "Edietic Operations and New Landscapes," <i>Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture</i>, edited by James Corner. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999: 53-169</p> <p>Charles Waldheim, "Landscape as Urbanism," <i>The Landscape Urbanism Reader</i> (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006): 35-53</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> <i>Is Landscape....? Essays on the Identity of Landscape</i>, edited by Gareth Doherty and</p>

	<p>Charles Waldheim (London: Routledge, 2016)</p> <p><i>Landscape Urbanism: A Manual for the Machinic Landscape</i>, edited by Mohsen Mostafavi and Ciro Najle. London: AA Publications, 2003</p> <p><i>Large Parks</i>, edited by Julia Czerniak, George Hargreaves, and John Beardsley (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007)</p>
February 21	<p>Theory and its Discontents</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Robert Somol and Sarah Whiting, "Notes Around the Doppler Effect and other Moods of Modernism, <i>Perspecta</i> 33 (2002): 72-77, reprinted in A. Krista Sykes, <i>Constructing a New Agenda: Architectural Theory, 1993-2009</i> (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010): 188-203</p> <p>Michael Speaks, "Design Intelligence Part I: Introduction," <i>A + U</i> 387 (December 2002): 10-18, reprinted in A. Krista Sykes, <i>Constructing a New Agenda: Architectural Theory, 1993-2009</i> (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010): 204-214</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> George Baird, "'Criticality' and its Discontents," <i>Harvard Design Magazine</i>, Fall 2004/Winter 2005, Number 21, pp. 1-6</p> <p>Reinhold Martin, "Critical of What? Towards a Utopian Realism," <i>Harvard Design Magazine</i> 22 (Spring-Summer 2005): 104-109, reprinted in A. Krysta Sykes, <i>Constructing a New Agenda: Architectural Theory, 1993-2009</i> (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010): 348-362</p>
February 28	Midterm Review
March 7	MIDTERM EXAM
March 14	SPRING BREAK
March 21	<p>Ornament</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Adolf Loos, "Ornament and Crime," (1908), in <i>Ornament and Crime: Selected Essays</i>, edited by Adolf Opel, translated by Michael Mitchell (Riverside, CA: Ariadne Press, 1998): 167-176</p> <p>Farshid Moussavi and Michael Kubo, "Introduction," <i>The Function of Ornament</i> (Barcelona: ACTAR, 2006): 6-11</p> <p>Vittoria Di Palma, "A Natural History of Ornament," <i>Histories of Ornament: From Global to Local</i>, edited by Gülru Necipoğlu and Alina Payne (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016): 20-33</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> Jeffrey Kipnis, "The Cunning of Cosmetics," <i>El Croquis</i> 84 (1997): 22-29</p> <p>Siegfried Kraacauer, "The Mass Ornament," <i>The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays</i></p>

	<p>(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998)</p> <p>Robert Levit, "Contemporary Ornament: The Return of the Symbolic Repressed," <i>Harvard Design Magazine</i>, no. 28 (spring/summer 2008): 70-85</p>
March 28	<p>Megacity</p> <p>Film screening: <i>Lagos/Koolhaas</i> (written and directed by Bregtje van der Haak, 2003)</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Matthew Gandy, "Learning from Lagos," <i>New Left Review</i> 33 (May-June 2005): 37-52</p> <p>Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," <i>Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization</i> (University of Minnesota Press, 1996): 27-47</p>
April 4	<p>Wasteland</p> <p>Ignaci de Sola-Morales, "Terrain Vague," <i>ANYplace</i> (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995): 118-123</p> <p>Antoine Picon, "Anxious Landscapes: From the Ruin to Rust," <i>Grey Room</i> 1 (Fall 2000): 64-83</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> Alan Berger, "Drosscape," <i>The Landscape Urbanism Reader</i> (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006): 197-217</p> <p>Vittoria Di Palma, <i>Wasteland, A History</i> (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014)</p>
April 11	<p>Ecology</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Félix Guattari, <i>The Three Ecologies</i> [1989] translated by Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton (London: The Athlone Press, 2000): 19-45</p> <p>Sanford Kwinter, "Notes on the Third Ecology" <i>Ecological Urbanism</i>, edited by Mohsen Mostafavi with Gareth Doherty (Zürich: Lars Müller, 2010): 94-105</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> Mohsen Mostafavi, "Why Ecological Urbanism? Why Now?" <i>Ecological Urbanism</i>, edited by Mohsen Mostafavi with Gareth Doherty (Zürich: Lars Müller, 2010)</p>
April 18	<p>Climate</p>

	<p>Required Reading: Klein, Naomi. <i>This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate</i>. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014: chapter 1</p> <p>Pope Francis, <i>Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home</i> (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015): 7-43</p> <p>Further Reading: Behringer, Wolfgang. <i>A Cultural History of Climate</i>. Cambridge: Polity, 2009</p> <p><i>Climates: Architecture and the Planetary Imaginary</i>. Edited by James Graham, Caitlin Blanchfield, Alissa Anderson, Jordan Carver, and Jacob Moore. New York: Columbia Books on Architecture and the City/Lars Müller Publishers, 2016</p>
April 25	Conclusion and Final Review
May 10	<p>FINAL EXAM</p> <p>To confirm the date and time of the final for this class, please consult the USC <i>Schedule of Classes</i> at www.usc.edu/soc</p>

Selected Bibliography

Architectural Theory, volume II: An Anthology from 1871-2005, edited by Harry Francis Mallgrave and Christina Contandriopoulos. Oxford: Blackwell, 2008

Architecture and Feminism, edited by Debra L. Coleman, Elizabeth Ann Danze, and Carol Jane Henderson. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996

Architecture Theory Since 1968, edited by K. Michael Hays. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998

Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. University of Minnesota Press, 1996

Augé, Marc. *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*. New York: Verso: 1995

The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture. edited by Hal Foster. New York: The New Press, 1998

ANY 23: Diagram Work: Data Mechanics for a Topological Age, guest editors Ben van Berkel and Caroline Bos (June 1998)

Architecture and Theory: Production and Reflection, edited by Louise King. Hamburg, Germany: Junius Verlag, 2009

Architecture Culture 1943-1968: A Documentary Anthology. Edited by Joan Ockman with the collaboration of Edward Eigen. New York: Rizzoli, 1993

Banham, Reyner. *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (1960). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1980

Constructing a New Agenda: Architectural Theory, 1993-2009, edited by A. Krysta Sykes. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010

Corner, James. *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999

Crib Sheets: Notes on the Contemporary Architectural Conversation. Edited by Sylvia Lavin and Helene Furján with Penelope Dean. New York: The Monacelli Press, 2005

Deleuze, Gilles. *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, translated by Tom Conley. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992

Ecological Urbanism, edited by Mohsen Mostafavi with Gareth Doherty (Zürich: Lars Müller, 2010)

Eisenman, Peter. *Diagram Diaries*. New York: Universe, 1999

Forty, Adrian. *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2000

Guattari, Félix. *The Three Ecologies*, translated by Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton. London: The Athlone Press, 2000

Introducing Architectural Theory: Debating a Discipline. Edited by Korydon Smith. London: Routledge, 2012

Johnson, Philip, and Mark Wigley. *Deconstructivist Architecture*. New York: Museum of Modern Art and Boston: Little, Brown, 1988

Koolhaas, Rem. *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan (1978)*. New York: The Monacelli Press, 1994

Koolhaas, Rem, and Bruce Mau, *S, M, L, XL*. New York: Monacelli Press, 1995

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Lynn, Greg. *Animate Form*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999

Martin, Reinhold, and Kadambari Baxi, *Multi-National City: Architectural Itineraries*. Barcelona: ACTAR, 2007

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Payne, Alina. *From Ornament to Object: Genealogies of Architectural Modernism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012

Rossi, Aldo. *L'architettura della città* (1966), translated as *The Architecture of the City* by Diane Ghirardo and Joan Ockman. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982

Rowe, Colin, and Fred Koetter, *Collage City* (manuscript in circulation from 1973; published later) Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978

Tafuri, Manfredo. *Teoria e storia dell'architettura* (1968), translated as *Theories and History of Architecture*. London: Granada, 1980

Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995, edited by Kate Nesbitt. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996

Tschumi, Bernard. *Architecture and Disjunction*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994:

Venturi, Robert. *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966). New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2nd revised edition, 1977

Venturi, Robert, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1972

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to the TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Religious Holidays

The University recognizes the diversity of our community and the potential for conflicts involving academic activities and personal religious observation. The university provides a guide to such observances for reference and suggests that any concerns about lack of attendance or inability to participate fully in the course activity be fully aired at the start of the term. As a general principle students should be excused from class for these events if properly documented and if provisions can be made to accommodate the absence and make up the lost work. Constraints on participation that conflict with adequate participation in the course and cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the faculty and the student need to be identified prior to the drop add date for registration. After the drop add date the University and the School of Architecture shall be the sole arbiter of what constitutes appropriate attendance and participation in a given course. Any student concerned about missing class for a recognized religious holiday should bring this matter up with your instructor at the start of the semester. A list of recognized religious holidays may be found at: http://www.usc.edu/programs/religious_life/calendar/.

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and

the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.