

ARCH5131A TOPICAL STUDIES IN DESIGN THEORY
URBAN PAUSES: A TAXONOMY OF HONG KONG'S RESIDUAL SPACES
2015-16 1st Term

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Online course TBC
Student Assistant TBC

DESCRIPTION

"Urban Pauses" are conditions that exist within the fabric of the city which have no prescribed function and exist simply by default; i.e. they are by-products of specific urban situations. Although "pauses" are not planned nor were they designed by any architect/engineer, they constitute an integral part of the DNA of any contemporary city, offering a fertile medium for both cultural and social renewal. The word "pause" has deliberately selected for the purposes of this research, compared to the more commonly associated term "Urban Void" as it implies a space that is only momentarily dormant, awaiting an imminent latent energy to activate a new existence.

How to address redundant urban spaces is becoming a major concern for most contemporary cities. At a time when architects seem to have lost their social consciousness, succumbing once too often to the demands/temptations of the ubiquitous developer, the activation of these hidden spaces offers new possibilities for architects to critically engage with the social realm, allowing them to think outside the box and design solutions for specific problems. The first exponents of and the pioneers of this new way of thinking was the Tokyo architectural practice Bow Wow, led by Professors Tsukamoto and Kajima (Tokyo Institute of Technology), who in their seminal book "Made in Tokyo" (2001) first coined the expression "by-product Urban Spaces" when referring to interstitial world created by rapid modernization.

OBJECTIVES

This class is structured around 2 methodologies:

FIELDTRIPS > Participation is mandatory

During the course of 9 outings students will record various typologies of Urban Residual spaces around the territory of Hong Kong. From these pilot excursions the students will conduct a series of survey (using both photographs and drawings) with the intention of 3D modelling the sites with the latest software. Finally, the students will categorize the various sites into different typologies, identifying their physical as well as the political and legal properties such as: ownership, planning regulations, boundaries and critically offer potential design solutions for future activation.

LECTURE > Class Format and Student Presentation

There will be in total 4 lectures where students will be presented with readings and case studies on the topic. IN these classes, students will also present their findings and work in process.

DELIVERABLES> Book

The final output from the class will be a book, consisting of 12 chapters, identifying 10 different typologies. Students will be working in teams of two to both make the research and to produce the representational documentation.

The aim of this project is to awaken an awareness about the forgotten city, those spaces we collectively see but never question. By documenting, recording and analysing multiple residual urban conditions this research will become a valuable index for planners, local government and the citizens of Hong Kong to think of alternatives modes of activating dormant sites

LEARNING OUTCOME

The learning outcome associated with the course falls into four categories:

Reading and observing the city

The documentation will be carried out at two levels: Macro and Micro.

Macro

The Macro documentation will involve the localization of potential areas of interest within Hong Kong. Due to the enormity of the territory involved, this process will be very strategic focusing on selecting a sample of the most diverse types of urban residual spaces.

A series of sites will be determined for further in-depth analysis at micro scale.

Micro

The micro stage of the documentation will be more comprehensive. It will involve photographic and drawing surveys for the most important examples. The photographic survey will be carried out by our team and it is for this reason that we apply for the semi-professional camera.

Graphic Representation

The translation of an urban understanding into an architectural proposition, via a graphic lexicon.

Editing

An important part of the course will be the filtering and organization of thoughts and arguments through editing. Students will be taught a basic knowledge of Adobe InDesign, an editing software that will be used to format the report.

Critical thinking

Upon producing the digested/edited information students will start to critically assess the findings; defining the potential characteristics of each unplanned place. Rather than generically associate standard programmatic uses, the research will highlight how flexible programmes might colonise the spaces in an attempt to open up different spaces that offer alternative uses to the normative conditions we are so accustomed to.

ASSESSMENT SCHEME

Assignments (30%)

The course will require weekly assignments to be carried out by individual students.

Final Report > Book (50%)

Each team will be responsible for the content of each chapter

Participation (20%)
This includes field trips and Lecture sessions

COURSE FORMAT

9 Fieldtrip outings and 4 lectures with student presentations

REQUIRED READINGS

Arieff, A (2010) "Space is still a Frontier"

The New York Times, February 3, 2010

Topic: Empty Spaces in the City

Cupers, K and Miessen, M (2002). "Spaces of Uncertainty"

Wuppertal: Verlag Muller and Busmann

Topic: Potential of vacant plots

Gruentuch, A and Ernst A. (2006) "Convertible City"

Journal: Archplus No. 180 and catalogue to the 2006 German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

Topic: How Re-Use can become the new paradigm for urban regeneration.

Lang, P (2007) "Stalker on Location"

In K. Frank and Q. Stevens (eds) Loose Spaces: Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life, London: Routledge.

Justiniano, I (2014) "Rethinking Leftover Spaces as Public Spaces"

Blog: Cuidades Emergentes: Sustainable Cities

Topic: Exmaples of realized projects in the United States

Lee, P. and Matta-Clark, G. (2000). Object to Be Destroyed: The Work of Gordon Matta-Clark.

Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

Topic: Vacant Spaces

Matta-Clark, (2005). "Odd Lots: Revisiting Gordon Matta-Clark's 'Fake Estates'. New York"

Cabinet Books, Queens Museum of Art and White Columns

Topic: Taxonomy of abandoned spaces in NY

Picout, L. (2014) "Building is Learning"

Journal: L'architecture d'Aujourd'hui No. 401

Topic: New Practises using Residual Spaces

Rossi, A. (1966) "Architecture of the City"

Oppositions books, The MIT Press, Cambridge: Massachusetts and London.

Topic: Urban Design Theory

Ruby, A and Ruby, I (2008) "Urban Transformation"

Idea Books, Amsterdam

Topic: New Urban Concepts

Frampton, J.D. Solomon and C. Wong (2012) "Cities Without Ground – A Hong Kong Guide Book"

ORO Editions – Gordon Goff Publisher, Hong Kong
Topic: Hong Kong's Footbridge Urbanism/Architecture

Gutierrez, L. and Portefaix, V.(2001) "Mapping HK"

MAP Book Publishers, Hong Kong
Topic: Hong Kong Accelerated Urbanism

Christ, E. & Gantenbein, C. (2012)"Typology: Rome, New York, Hong Kong, Buenos Aires. Review No. 2"

Park Books Publisher, Basel
Topic: Building typologies

FIELD TRIP

A total of 9 mini outings will take place on Tuesday afternoon.

IMPORTANT NOTE TO STUDENTS:

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations.

Details may be found at:

<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/> . With each assignment, students will be required to submit a statement that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.