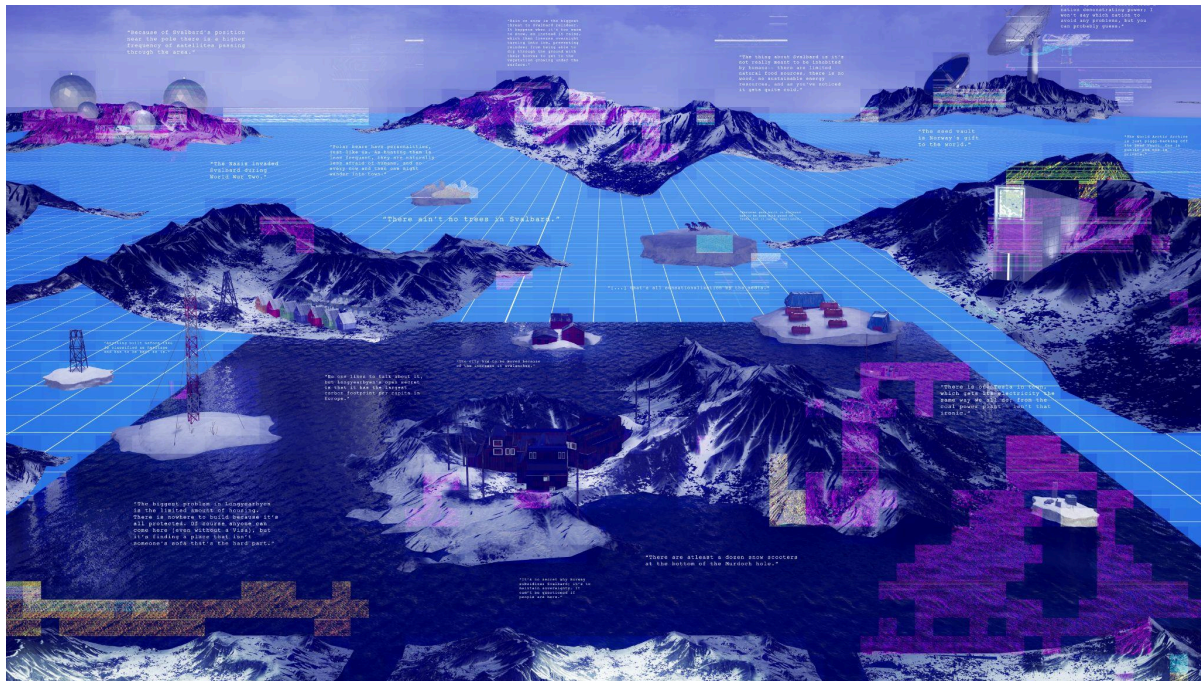


COLLAPSE! Seminar

Narrative as Manifesto

23/24 MAA01 program



Credits: Preid

Syllabus

In recent years the image of the world as a dynamic yet stable and predictable ecosystem has been disrupted and accelerated due to various breaks in different prediction patterns. Natural catastrophes, resource overmining, deforestation, desertification, food scarcity, mass migration, are all interconnected in one way or another, or at least all part of the same kind of crisis. However, the notion of 'collapse', in our case and as will be explored through the seminar, does not necessarily entail a downfall or an apocalyptic end, but rather the understanding that through continued accelerated modes of technologies, mediatization and interactions across various architectural and urban scales everything is connected, entangled, and 'collapsing' into one another.

The seminar will emphasise narrative and worlding as a means to critically analyse pressing issues of our times, discussing themes through hashtags (see below), constructing potential realities which include buildings and

landscapes, as well as finer grain details that reveal behaviours and overall atmospheres through the use of video game engines. Each group will select a specific city and examine its past, present and future. Starting from a research driven approach, a specific topic distinct to each city will be established and form the basis for determining what role architecture will play.

Each team will design three things:

1. An architecture or device that responds to the local specifics of the city.
2. An environment for their architecture to exist in.
3. A coherent positional narrative / interactive environment.

Understanding the 'everything' of today and projecting it forward, the goal of the seminar is to test the combination of geo-engineering, policy, design, and speculative fiction into hybrid architectures as part-ecosystem, part-machine, part-space.

"COLLAPSE!" is a speculative brief designed to provoke imaginations and strategies of architecture that asks "what if?". Some questions might sound like:

- What if geothermal energy became the new standard?
- What if the soil pollution could be remediated autonomously?
- What if humans returned to living nomadically?
- How will infrastructure necessarily be created and/or adapted?
- What effects will this have on architectural production, habitation and its environment?
- What role(s) will ubiquitous data and sentience play?
- What models of mitigation, resistance and acceptance will result, and from who/what?
- How will these experiences be felt and through what mediums?

Hashtags: Each team will start with a detective wall that develops a series of relationships around particular #hashtags – these will serve as entry points into a particular issue and will become the basis for speculation.

- Decentralisation
- Automation
- Artificiality / Artificial Intelligence
- Copyright
- Cloud Seeding / Homogenitus
- Archiving
- Deforestation / Reforestation
- Anthropocene /Anthropogenic Territories
- Carbon Offsetting
- Decolonization
- Non-Human
- Antenna trees
- Uncanny valley ...

Learning Objectives

At course completion the student will:

- Develop a critical understanding and position towards a current and relevant topic.
- Understand the use of tone, attitude, dramatisation and normalisation as narrative techniques.
- World build using a combination of assets and ad-hoc designs at various scales.
- A short movie trailer and/or interactive environment.

Hardware / Software requirements

Unreal Engine 5.0 or higher, can be downloaded for free [here](#)

Blender 3.0 or higher, can be downloaded [here](#)

Rhinoceros 7.0. The 90-day trial version can be downloaded from this [website](#).

Adobe Creative Cloud (Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, Premiere Pro, After Effects): Subscription to all Creative Cloud applications with the student discount could be done [here](#).

Basic schedule: activities and faculty

1. INTRO to UNREAL + CONTEXT // Haden Charbel, Deborah Lopez and Joris Putteneers (Friday Jan 19)
2. INTRO to BLENDER + CONTEXT // Haden Charbel, Deborah Lopez and Joris Putteneers (Friday Jan 26)
3. RECORDING and COMPOSITING + NARRATIVE // Haden Charbel, Deborah Lopez and Joris Putteneers (Friday Feb 9 AM)
4. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW // Haden Charbel, Deborah Lopez and Joris Putteneers (Friday Feb 9 PM)
5. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT // Haden Charbel, Deborah Lopez and Joris Putteneers (Friday Feb 16)
6. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT // Haden Charbel, Deborah Lopez and Joris Putteneers (Friday Feb 23)
7. FINAL PRESENTATIONS // Haden Charbel, Deborah Lopez and Joris Putteneers (Friday March 1)

Exercise

1. Intro to Context + Detective Wall + Unreal
 - Introduction to the methodology, past examples, intended outcomes.
 - Research into assigned city/topic and climate/socio-political projection.
 - Initial skill development, making a small world in Unreal. Bringing in assets, making an asset, and controlling lighting.
2. Intro to Blender + Detective wall
 - Research can still be ongoing at this point.
 - Students should identify what their design proposal is and what the purpose is.

- Asset making, texturing, optimization.
- 3. Recording and Compositing + Narrative
 - Unreal and Blender continued
 - Intro to Premiere and After Effects
 - Detective wall and research should now be a narrative and finalised.
- 4. Project Development and Review
 - First narrative test including scenes, audio, assets, etc..
- 5. Project Development
 - Iteration and Evolution of project world, assets and narrative.
- 6. Project Development
 - Iteration and Evolution of project world, assets and narrative.
- 7. Final Presentations.
 - Presentation of Detective Wall + Narrative Film.

Deliverables

- 3D detective wall.
- Narrative film (60-180 second)

Students are requested to submit all the material on the IAAC Gdrive and a Blog post need to be curated on blog.iaac.net for each project (see "[IAAC | Publication Guidelines](#)") within a maximum of 1 week after the end of the Seminar.

Grading System

- 0 - 4.9 Fail (submission of a supplementary work by April)
- 5.0 - 6.9 Pass
- 7.0 - 8.9 Good
- 9.0 - 10 Excellent/Distinction.

Evaluation, Assessment, and Final Grade

Students will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Attendance and participation - 15 %*
 - Blog posts and Submissions 20 %*
 - Academic performance - 65%
- Articulated into: > please feel free to change criteria for the evaluation. but should be shared with coordinator beforehand*
- Demonstration of imaginative and critical thinking skills.
 - Clarity, precision of argument, creativity and depth.
 - Development of a project that is appropriate to the criteria developed in class and that of the discipline of architecture, design and engineering.
 - Demonstration of technical knowledge essential to the making of architecture and film.

- Ability to communicate intentions verbally and graphically.
- Understanding of cultural, architectural, technical, and historical ramifications of projects.
- Conscientious effort over the course of the entire quarter.
- Completion of all requirements in a timely manner.
- Participation in individual and group reviews.

**Attendance and completion of submissions are mandatory, students failing to submit or not being present to at least 75% of the classes, without justification included in IAAC Terms & Conditions, will fail.*

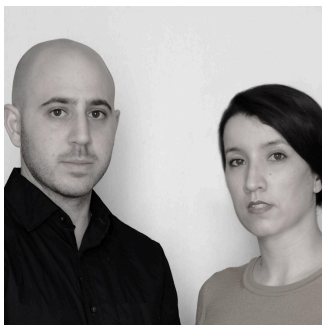
Students who submit after the deadlines defined by the faculty and coordination will be subject to penalty and the grade will be automatically lowered by 0.3 point for every day of delay.

Incomplete submission is considered as missing submission.

References / Bibliography

- Bestiary of the Anthropocene, edited by Nicolas Nova & Disnovation.org
- Dark Ecology, Timothy Morton
- The Estranged Object, edited by Young + Ayata
- Forensic Architecture: Violence at the Threshold of Detectability
- Machine Landscapes, Liam Young
- Monumental Wastelands, Vol 1. Autonomy, edited by Deborah Lopez and Hadin Charbel
- Planet City, Liam Young
- When We Cease to Understand the World, Benjamin Labatut

Faculty



Déborah López and Hadin Charbel approach design from various fields and contexts addressing topics related to climate, ecology, human perception, machine sentience, and their capacity for altering current modes of existence.

They are both co-founders of Pareid and Associate Professors at the Bartlett School of Architecture. Practice and pedagogy intermingle at Research Cluster 1 entitled “Monumental Wastelands” where climate fiction (Cli-Fi) is used as a vehicle for engaging various ecologies and challenging current economically profitable models through imminent fictions (if).

Through research and interdisciplinary techno-bashing, projects are narrative driven while varying in scales and mediums, often positioning themselves within a socio-political discourse as a tool for disruption.

www.pareid.com

Instagram: @pareid.architecture, @monumentalwastelands



Joris Putteneers is an architect and researcher, interested in speculating the anthropocene through means of software, hardware and media technologies.

His work has been exhibited at MoMA New York, London design festival, Venice Biennale and multiple film festivals. He has taught studios and workshops internationally at the Bartlett UCL, Texas A&M, KUL Faculty of Architecture and TU Wien.

Since 2017 he has been actively working in his practice where he develops solutions in the fields of Data driven design, Machine learning applications, web and software development, visualisations and Art direction.

<https://putteneersjoris.xyz/>