

Advanced Design – Europe Program

ARC 561 R

Professor Igor Siddiqui

School of Architecture

The University of Texas at Austin

Fall 2018

AROUND THE BLOCK



The studio deals with the urban block as a framework for developing architecture in relation to the city.

SOLID/VOID + POPULATIONS

We will approach the design of the block by looking at it in two distinct ways: SOLID/VOID and POPULATIONS.

SOLID/VOID refers to the relationship between buildings and spaces that surround them, the definition of open spaces relative to buildings, connections and boundaries between inside and outside, articulations of the ground in relation to the site's overall organization. It is a multi-scalar condition that registers in different ways from the scale of a dwelling unit to the scale of the city.

POPULATIONS refers to the users of the site. A site is to be designed for a mixture of types of users, including those who live there, those who work there and those who are visiting the site temporarily for a range of reasons. Populations serve as a way to examine activities on the site, determine future programs, and speculate upon the project's use over time. The starting population ratio for the project is **50% residents, 25% workers, and 25% of others** who may be there to use the site as a public space, an amenity, or a destination (this ratio is reflected by the similar mixture at the Clichy Batignolles development in Paris).

HOUSING

The project is motivated by the questions, *How Can We Live Here?* What makes housing sustainable as this site? What programs support and are supported by housing on this block? What kind of housing is best suited given the circumstances? Each project is to accommodate a range of housing unit types, with a minimum capacity for **350 housing units**.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The site is defined by a range of existing conditions, from infrastructure, existing buildings, to existing uses. **Consider the existing activities on the site** and how they may be edited as a part of a future projection – amplified, removed, added to, further developed, relocated – relative to housing and other new programs on the site. The existing building, the Halle aux Cuirs, can be used as a reference – both as a sectional datum and as a volume capable of certain kinds of activities with the total area of 16,000 m² contained by its two main levels.

DENSITY

The minimum total building floor area (not including open spaces) is to be 48,000 m². This will determine the minimum density for all projects.

SCALE

Pedagogical question:

How do we envision an architectural proposal for a large-scale site without the temptation to first produce a master plan?

Between now and the final review, each group will work on developing their design research by simultaneously focusing on 3 interrelated scales: Small (S), Medium (M), and Large (L).

- (S) UNITS (1:100)
 The scale of dwelling units, individual spaces, in relation to the body
- (M) BUILDINGS (1:200)
 The scale of aggregation of units and assemblage of parts
- (L) BLOCK (1:500)
 The scale of the site as a system

There is also the XL scale (1:1000) – the urban scale – which includes Parc de la Villette, the neighborhood that cross the boundaries of Paris and Pantin and all the infrastructures (Tramway, Bld Périphérique, Bld des Maréchaux, Canal de l'Ourcq, Gare de l'Est railway). Use the XL scale for contextual clues that inform your decisions.

SITE

The block in question is located in the 19th arrondissement of Paris bordering the suburb of Pantin. Its perimeter boundaries are defined by two busy roadways along the northern and western edges, a pedestrian street with a tramway along the eastern edge, and the Canal de l'Ourcq – built in the early 19th century as a shipping route and an urban water supply channel – as its southern boundary. Administratively the site forms the northeastern extension of the Bernard Tschumi-designed Parc de la Villette built in 1987, although it was not included as a part of the park's original 55.5 hectare design. Bisecting the site along the north-south axis is the Boulevard Peripheries, the major ring-road that surrounds the city along its perimeter. While the level of the Périphérique varies throughout – below grade, at grade, and above grade – the section captured by the site is elevated, providing an underside with some porosity between the two parts of the site. The primary architectural artifact on the site is a tannery, the Halle aux

Cuir – a two-story concrete shell of a building – constructed in the 1960s in relation to the complex of slaughterhouses, but soon thereafter made obsolete by their closure in the 1970s (thus clearing the ground for the Parc de la Villette), at the same time that the completion of the Périphérique would effectively cut it off from the rest of the city. Currently, the building on the site is used as a storage facility for a number of the cultural venues in the park and its grounds occasionally open up to the public for music festivals; a temporary structure serves as a circus school and the spaces under the elevated road are regularly appropriated by muralists. The block as such is not a part of a singular urban plan, but is rather a byproduct of a number of urbanistic decisions that have occurred over time. It is one of the last remaining sites in Paris open to future development whose destiny is not yet known.

The studio is a collaboration between the UT School of Architecture and the École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Paris-Belleville, with ENSA-PB faculty and students involved in collaborative studio work throughout the semester. Professors Gaëlle Breton and Jean-François Renaud from ENS-PB co-teach the studio. All the coursework is conducted in English.

SCHEDULE

Studio meets on Thursdays and Fridays from 9 AM to 6 PM. The dates below represent the weekly benchmarks for the semester. In addition, given that this studio is a part of a travel program, scheduled visits to sites and case-study projects throughout Paris and elsewhere will take place regularly.

THURSDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2018

Introduction and Site visit

FRIDAY, 5 OCTOBER 2018

Case Study Presentations by Belleville Students

THURSDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2018

Team Work (Students Only)

FRIDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2018

SOLID/VOID + POPULATIONS models at **all scales**

THURSDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2018

Team Work (Students Only)

FRIDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2018

SOLID/VOID + POPULATIONS models at **all scales** (round 2)

THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2018

Team Work (Students Only)

FRIDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2018

Midterm Review

THURSDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 2018

School Closed; Case Study Visits (TBD)

FRIDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2018

Team work – synthesis across all scales

THURSDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2018

Team Work (Students Only)

FRIDAY, 9 NOVEMBER 2018

Synthesis across all scales

THURSDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2018

Team Work (Students Only)

FRIDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2018

Pin up of progress for Final Review

THURSDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2018

Team Work (Students Only)

FRIDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2018

Final Review

GRADING

The evaluation will consider the rigor, precision and sophistication of both intellectual thought and iterative investigation. Informed participation in discussions and completeness of assignments is crucial. Refer to individual assignment and final project handouts for specific criteria.

GRADE SCALE

A/A- : excellent

Project surpasses expectations in terms of inventiveness, appropriateness, verbal and visual ability, conceptual rigor, craft, and personal development. Student pursues concepts and techniques above and beyond what is discussed in class.

B+/B/B- : above average

Project is thorough, well researched, diligently pursued, and successfully executed. Student pursues ideas and suggestions presented in class and puts in effort to resolve required projects. Demonstrates potential for excellence.

C+/C/C- : average

Project meets the minimum requirements. Suggestions made in class are not pursued with dedication or rigor. (Note: C- does not meet the minimum grade to be counted toward the student's degree.)

D+/D/D- : below average

Basic skills including graphic skills, model-making skills, verbal clarity or logic of presentation are not level-appropriate. Student does not demonstrate the required design skill and knowledge base.

F : failure

Minimum objectives are not met. Performance is not acceptable. Note that this grade will be assigned with excessive unexcused absences.

X : excused incomplete

Given only for legitimate reasons of illness or family emergency. Incomplete assignments are not a cause for assigning this grade. An incomplete is assigned after consultation with the Associate Deans' offices. Incomplete coursework must be completed prior to the beginning of the following semester.

Any grade can be re-evaluated based on student concern. Subsequent evaluations can cause the grade to be reduced, remain unchanged, or increased. Grades can only be discussed on an individual basis, not as a comparison with other students' grades.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is mandatory. Participation is expected. The minimum penalty for more than three unexcused absences is a full letter drop in your final grade for the course. Please contact the instructor prior to class if you expect to be late or miss class.

Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. If you miss an examination, work assignment, or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day you will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence. You must notify each of your instructors as far in advance as possible prior to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent to observe a religious holy day.

DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. Five business days before an exam the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed.