

Fall 2018

Course Number

ARC 561R, 696

Course Title / Unique Numbers:

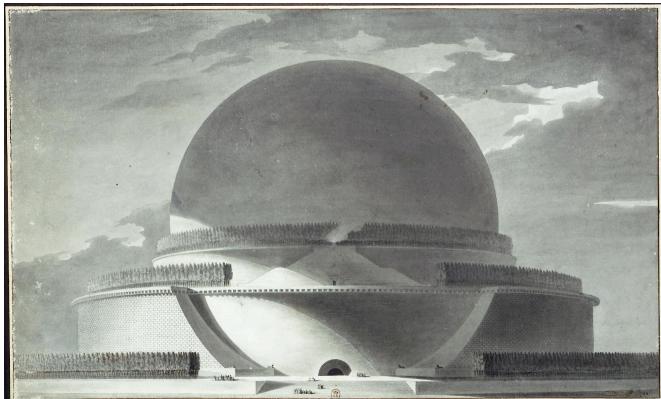
Advanced Architectural Design /

Instructor:

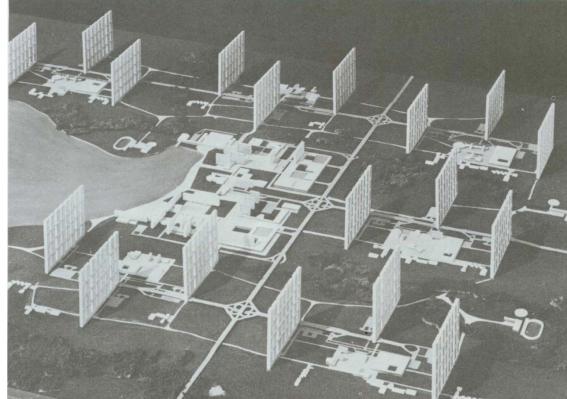
David Heymann

Advanced Studios

In the Advanced Design Studios you explore pressing issues in current architectural discourse through the vehicle of the design of buildings and public spaces of substantial size. These issues have components both timeless and current, as the question of value and meaning in buildings continues its constant evolution. Consequently the Advanced Studios require that you take a thesis-based approach to arguing for the value of your concrete proposals. In the Advanced Architectural Design Studios competency in design is not the end, but the means. Your design cannot be excused on the circumstances of the brief, but must take part in a larger discourse of architectural history and theory. You must make a convincing argument for the *improved structure of the world that your proposed construction would enact* in order for your work to succeed.



Étienne-Louis Boullée, Cenotaph for Newton, 1784



Rino Levi, Brasilia competition entry (superblocks), 1957

A Building Makes The World

Course Description / Brief

The amount of construction around the globe in the last twenty years staggers the imagination. Landing in Panama City you see towers stretching to the horizon — almost all of which were not there a quarter century before — and they are merely sentinels of what has happened at street level. The same is true of San Paulo, Austin, Berlin, Beijing, Melbourne. And almost everywhere else. Quito, for example. Everywhere this construction is tied to a loosening of strictures — on lending, on zoning, on planning, on

tradition and propriety, on political financing — and a triumphant international real estate market. It's perhaps this loosening in favor of a desperate, blind impulse to build that makes the consequence to you as an architect so profound. You can happily work on a perfect door detail for a day, then walk home, eyes open to the world happening around you, wondering if, really, a good building by an architect makes any difference at all. Perhaps the capacity of architecture, so long idealized, is in fact a relentless, surreal pursuit of the irrelevant, at least as it is currently imagined. This has merit, though it cannot be said to be *public*, at least in any conventional meaning of that term.

The assignment for this advanced architectural design studio has three simple variables. First, you must design a very large, monumental building in Quito, to which we will travel for a week (if you work as a group you must propose two related constructions, on which more in a moment). Second, the building must influence the city's explosive growth positively, and it must clearly add to the city's primary identity. Third, while the building must be good *now*, it *must also be good 100 years from now*. That's the design problem.

This project is driven by cultural identity and theories of value, not program. It is speculative, and meant to be part of a long history of influential proposals, which includes the speculations of Piero della Francesca, Boullée, Ledoux, Garnier, Melnikov, Tatlin, Speer, Taut, Le Corbusier, Wright (the mile high skyscraper!), Archigram, Krier, and OMA, among many, many others. You must place your project in that history. Some of those speculations are, of course, built, so you have to also be aware of the concrete history, which is a history of architectural landmarks — Abu Simbel, the Colossus of Rhodes, the Colosseum, Cologne Cathedral, step wells, the Vatican ... actually, *all of them*.

The studio will undertake this project in parallel with architecture students in a studio led by Professor Maria Isabel Paz at the University of San Francisco in Quito [USFQ]. Quito is home to the most intact Spanish Colonial city in the Western Hemisphere. That city is now, of course, only a small piece of a vast urban expanse — 1.6 million inhabitants — growing ever outward north and south along a hanging valley originally settled by the Inca (traditionally bound on the east by a mountain ridge, and on the west by the Pichincha volcano). In terms of architecture, that expansion has been defined roughly along a line by large and iconic constructions (monuments or monumental buildings) or public voids. These give the city both a rhythmic scale and a physical identity. Chronologically the buildings and objects include, among others, the Cotopaxi volcano and the Panecillo hill, the towers of the churches of the old city, the statue of the Virgin on the Panecillo, the Basilica

of the Vota, the Quito Hotel, the original International Airport Terminal; the immense new federal buildings in the north and south of the city, and an as yet unbuilt-on mountain range just to the north of the city.

The voids include the valley separating Cotopaxi from Quito (which serves to sequester ash during eruptions), former lagoons, the urban squares of the old city, a sequence of late-19th and early-20th century urban parks that include La Carolina (essentially Quito's central park, at the heart of the post-Colonial expansion in the north), the new park on the old airport runways, and the public space of the Equator monument, which more or less marks the furthest edge of Quito's northern reach.

Though that urban order exists, the current explosive growth in Quito — driven by an energy economy, a new subway line, continued movement from country to city, foreign investment, etc. — lacks any plan that respects it. New architecture in Quito, like almost everywhere else, has lost its capacity to clarify the city in favor of just more construction. The studio assignment accepts the economic circumstance of current growth but not its consequence. You have to propose *how a large, monumental building can drive a viable urban future*. You have to propose the next primary object on Quito's line.

You'll see when we get to Quito that there are two distinct architectural opportunities in this regard: a monumental institution, or a pure monument. If you work alone you must make an institution. You may also work with a partner, in which case you must jointly propose an institution and a monument. You will see that, in the general area we are working, the city allows for this possibility.

As noted, this design studio will be run parallel to a nearly identical course in the School of Architecture at USFQ. The two studios will collaborate on initial site and precedent analysis, use the same site and same program, and will undertake a series of shared design and cultural activities and site visits during the studio visit to Quito. USFQ will be providing base drawings and CAD files for Quito site information; help arrange site visits; and serve as a general host both in case of emergencies, and in the normal day to day activities of the studios in Quito. USFQ students will, for example, travel around Quito with UT students, etc.

Crucial Note About Travel

Read this section carefully. This is a travelling studio: we will visit Quito for one week, departing Austin on Saturday, September 29th and returning Sunday, October 7th. Quito (and most of Ecuador) is

Category 4, the safest of the State Department's listings for Restricted Regions. This travel will require additional cost to the student beyond tuition, fees, and supplies. As of this writing the approximate additional cost to students will range somewhere between \$850 and \$1,750. A number of variables control this additional cost, including airfare, which cannot be purchased until after the studio lottery; hotel costs, which cannot be established until the number of participants is set; and the amount of Mebane funding available, which has yet to be determined. Please note that the above high and low figures *already include* assumed Mebane funding of between \$600 and \$800: this amount is traditional, but not guaranteed.

You must have a valid passport to travel; it must be valid for six months after the date of our return. Please check. If you are not a US citizen you must verify if entry visas for Ecuador are required of you. Prior to the studio lottery you must verify that you can obtain those visas in a timely manner. You will need to obtain any necessary visas on your own, but must wait until the studio lottery result to proceed.

Finally, Quito is 9,500 feet above sea level. Note that high elevation can have adverse physical effects, and may not be recommended for certain health conditions. Verify with your doctor if there are any reasons why you should not take part in this travel *prior to the studio lottery*.

Pedagogic Subject Matter

The deep subject of this studio is monumentality — generally and, in particular, as it might relate to sustainability. Monumental architecture appears cyclically over the course of architectural history. It has more or less been out of fashion in Modern architecture since it was usurped by the Nazis before World War II (there you see it leap from left to right, as Poelzig and Behrens produced remarkable monumental architecture associated with organized labor movements), and by the Soviets thereafter. But there are exceptions, notably the remarkable, ruthless, systematic work of Louis Kahn. Kahn's essential architectural argument — that the purpose of the monumental was to protect certain institutions within society (like the *museum*, or the *library*, or the *meeting room*, or the *laboratory*) is a useful starting point for your considerations. What is it that is worth protecting in society today?

This question is at the basis of one of the more interesting recent monumental buildings: Toyo Ito's Tama Art University Library. Though this building appears to echo work by Kahn, its distinction is crucial. In the ultimately irrational geometries of the Tama library

you can see an attempt to have both the monumentality that arises from systematic geometries — which stress the importance of public institutions — and what Ito calls *subjective experience*: the clear and legible registration of an individual's distinct perception within that space. As important, in the work of Ito and others (Pezo von Ellrichshausen, et. al) you can sense a return of the *desire for the monumental* over the geometries of picturesque asymmetry that have for so long defined acceptable humanistic form in after-Modern architecture. There is strong evidence easy asymmetrical practice is coming to an end. Why that might be is a second deep subject of this studio. Clearly sustainability is partly responsible, as the idea of program-driven form — that hallmark of the Modern — slips into the past. A building like Baumschlager Eberle's 2226 (which is designed to require no mechanical heating or cooling system at all) gets at this point exactly.



Toyo Ito, Tama Art University Library, Tokyo, Japan, 2007



Baumschlager Eberle, 2226, Lustenau, Austria, 2013

In this studio you must utilize systematic geometries rather than picturesque massing derived from program to resolve spatial composition in plan and section (moreover, your work must have symmetry as a base condition with which to struggle — I want you to tackle the question of symmetry head on). In the history of architecture, systematic logics originally began as construction formats, but qualities present in the resulting spaces frequently became the subject of the evolving design investigation, superseding constructional logic in favor of the spatial consequence. Examples of such evolutions include the arc of Greek temples leading to the Parthenon, the history of Renaissance courtyard columniation, the growth of the Modern skyscraper frame, the long development of Roman basilica form, etc.

Of these examples, you likely know that the long-evolving Roman basilica became the basis for early Christian churches, which went through their own intense development and hyper-refinement from the Medieval through the Baroque. This points to something inherently interesting about systematic or rule oriented building

making. How such buildings are *wed* to their programs is a conundrum. Kahn famously noted that form (at least conceived this way) comes *before* program, and his work is notable for the many fascinating, almost complete false starts he threw out. Each was a good building, but not all fit the various programs Kahn had been tasked to resolve (the Salk is the most famous example of this: Kahn completely changed his mind right at the end of his first schematic pass). This is a crucial subject in this studio: the slippery problem of system and inhabitation, or, if you like, *inflexible order* and often circumstantial *program or purpose*. Kahn was, of course, the master of this, and it is a difficult and far more interesting problem than merely making orders!

But the larger point is that program in this studio is NOT the justification for form. Urban consequence is the justification for form in this studio. Your building, as noted, has to be good now, and 100 years from now.

Format:

The studio will be broken into three parts: a four week session during which we undertake various analysis and precedent exercises; a week-long trip to Quito for site exploration and joint work with USFQ students and faculty; and an eight week development of a single or group proposal.

Required Material:

What is typically required in design studio along with items necessary for hand drawing and modeling (a parallel bar will be required). The SANAA rule will also apply in this studio: “if you do not have a model, you do not have anything to talk about.”

Review Culture:

We will have frequent pin-ups with visitors. I am a firm believer in a critical review culture: I believe in that culture the basis of professionalism is *honesty*. Honest public assessment of your own work can be a difficult experience. Review dynamics have an element of instability, and criticism can often seem personal. If you feel criticism you have received is unwarranted and personal rather than professional, either from me or any visiting critic, do not hesitate to speak with me about it. Note that often reviews do not discuss what you think they should. I admire the particular discourse that happens in reviews (just as I admire the particular discourse that happens in desk crits). It will often seem tangential to your work; but one definition of architecture is that it is “the activity that architects do,” and one way that architecture happens is by projection in conversation.

Required Texts:

TBA

STUDIO COURSE GRADING POLICY

Grading will be based on three areas of performance:

grasp: The ideas and understanding of the project at hand, combined with an appropriate process of inquiry

process/effort: The consistent and rigorous development and abundant testing of ideas

resolution: The demonstration of competence, completeness, and finesse through representation and designs that responds to a range of critical positions

Your work will be evaluated on its rigor and evolution over the semester.

Grading descriptions:

A : excellent work
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. Project is more than complete on all levels.

B : good work
Project is thorough, well researched, diligently pursued, and successfully completed. Student pursues ideas and suggestions presented in class and puts in effort to resolve required issues. Project is complete on all levels and demonstrates potential for excellence.

C : acceptable work
Project meets the minimum requirements. Suggestions made in class are not pursued with dedication or rigor. Project is incomplete in one or more areas.

D : poor work
Project is incomplete. 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 : unacceptable work
Project is unresolved. Minimum objectives are not met. Performance is not acceptable. Note that this grade will be assigned when you have excessive unexcused absences.

X : (excused incomplete)

Can be given only for legitimate reasons of illness or family emergency. Simply not completing work on time is not an adequate cause for assigning this evaluation. It may only be used after consultation with the Associate Dean and Program Director's offices and with an agreement as to a new completion date. Studio work must be completed before the second week of the next design semester in which you are enrolling, according to School of Architecture policy.

ALL GRADES ARE SUBJECT TO DEDUCTIONS FOR ABSENCES, LATE WORK AND LATE ARRIVALS.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is mandatory. Participation in discussions and work in studio is expected.

Students with three (3) unexcused absences may be dropped from the course without further notice. The minimum penalty for more than three unexcused absences is a full letter drop in your final grade for the course. Please contact me prior to class if you expect to be late or miss class. A student who misses classes or other required activities for the observance of a religious holy day should inform me as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence. A student who fails to complete missed work within the time allowed will be subject to the normal academic penalties.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty: Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Refer to the Student Judicial Services website for official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty. Please refer to The Role of Faculty in Confronting Scholastic Dishonesty brochure published by Student Judicial Services for information on confronting students who violate scholastic dishonesty policies. For further information, visit the SJS website at <http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/> or call 471-2841.

DISABILITIES

At the beginning of the semester, students with disabilities who need special accommodations should notify me by presenting a letter prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities Office. To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided; students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641 TTY.

SECURITY, SAFETY: STUDIO

The studio is an exceptional learning environment. Since it is a place for all, it necessitates the careful attention to the needs of the individual. Please see me if there are any problems (music, visual pollution) that you are unable to resolve on your own. All spraying of fixative, spray paint or any other substance should be done in the shop. Security is a necessary component for a studio that is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. *Please keep all exterior doors locked after hours.*

CONTACT:

heymann@utexas.edu, 512-232-4083

OFFICE HOURS:

By appointment