

LOT-EK_ADV STUDIO VI (Ada Tolla & Giuseppe Lignano, Thomas de Monchaux)
Monograph Studio, Spring 2014

01.

The Monograph Studio generates (and documents to a standard book format) a very large volume of work, rapidly, and then ruthlessly studies, edits, and transforms this work." We say: Eat it up, throw it up, clean it up... The first half of this process requires instinct, the reliance on habit, and a high-stakes/low stakes dynamic in which each assignment is very hard, but the time span is so fast, you just have to jump and commit quickly--one way of revealing yourself to yourself.

02.

The Monograph Studio asserts that there are 5 useful weeks before the break and 5 weeks after. There is no warm up, no fake research, no mind-reading of instructors, no fake progress, no anticlimactic midterm, no right answers right away, no exit, and no time to lose.

03.

The Monograph Studio will invite you in the first 5 weeks to design 5 buildings in Manhattan. We estimate that in your educational career you have already designed 5. These are the next 5. You will be designing your city within the city – polemic, utopic, and synthetic.

04.

The Monograph Studio likes paper. The monograph studio likes dirt. The monograph studio likes books, and believes architects should buy them, own them, make them, and sometimes read them. The monograph will not look over your shoulder at unfinished rhino models on your screen. Your work will be presented each week in a standard book format: 20 pages, 10 spreads, with requirements for each. You will have 10 chapters ready before the midterm. The midterm will be unexpected.

05.

The Monograph Studio so far will have interested, inspired, bored, and burned you. You will be ready for a seemingly empty page. You will be ready for a trip to a pre-and-post-architectural landscape; you will be ready to empty yourself of thought and suffering; you will be ready for a place of cyclic accumulation and erasure; you will be ready for a critique of scholastic and urban density; you will be ready for a trip to the desert. We will be traveling to South Africa, Johannesburg and the Kalahari desert.

06.

The Monograph Studio embraces and advances a working method of iterative prototyping in search of a cluster of optimum results. We seek to develop a more complex, cloudy, dynamic, and dusty definition of the parameters with which such optimization is located. We seek to develop this practice of repetition and variation beyond the artifacts of software into a robust and surprising method of discourse, design, and material practice. And to therefore drag it relentlessly

back into the past. We believe in strategies of repetition, variation, hesitation, anticipation, recollection, sampling, mash-up and re-mix. These strategies reward and require the book format, in which there is a seemingly unavoidable narrative and tangible sequence, embedded in the logic of the physical object.

07.

The Monograph Studio believes in retroactive continuity and reverse engineering. You will parallel process an evaluation and documentation of all your career so far, destroying the evidence and establishing a new prehistory for your work. Projects will be produced to continuously interfere with and affect each other; to make you a better narcissist and a better altruist.

08.

The Monograph Studio is not a portfolio studio. A portfolio is comprehensive; a monograph is compromised.

A portfolio is objective; a monograph is subjective.

A portfolio is universal; a monograph is personal.

A portfolio explains; a monograph mystifies.

A portfolio hastens; a monograph hesitates.

A portfolio is slick; a monograph is slippery.

A portfolio is honest. A monograph is deceptive.

A portfolio is graphic. A monograph is therapeutic.

A portfolio is defensive. A monograph is adaptive.

09.

The Monograph Studio is a dirty, papery studio.

10.

The Monograph Studio reminds you of the words of Samuel Becket, who in 1983 wrote,

All of old.

Nothing else ever.

Ever tried.

Ever failed.

No matter.

Try again.

Fail again. Fail better.