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## ADV STUDIO VI - The Architecture of Neighborhood - Istanbul / New York

**Architecture as Neighborhood**

GSAPP / AUDI Extreme Cities Project

Advanced Studio VI

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Introduction

Neighborhood is an idea that is uniformly liked. Very few other types of spaces have as much appeal. There are so many things to appreciate about it. A neighborhood is the ideal urban scale: within its footprint there are places to shop, eat, have coffee, and hang out. A neighborhood provides a social infrastructure: it offers a sense of community where people live and interact with one another and because of this, it serves as the prime context of transactions of all sorts: it enables exchanges of ideas, goods, information, and acts of generosity. A neighborhood also has a special status when it comes to mobility: it is a place of privileged transportation insofar as it is an area that is enjoyable to get around; it is the one place that is truly convenient because we can move about with ease; in addition, it is where we transition from one form of mobility to all others – traveling from where we live to the rest of the city, switching from walking to bike, bus, train, or car, etc.

While we would all concur the neighborhood is a desirable urban type and that a good neighborhood is indispensible to one's life in the city, there is no agreement whatsoever on its ideal form. There is no consensus about how big it ought to be. There are strong contrasting opinions about what should be its mix of program. Ideological differences abound over the use of its streets. In architecture there are notable advocates of quite opposing definitions of its form (Le Corbusier, Jacobs, Banham). Architects have proposed radically distinct visions for it (Bakema, Smithsons, Candilis Josic Woods, Ungers, Rossi, MVRDV). And there are others who, perhaps wary of its loaded nature and polarizing effect, have avoided its mention but whose work can nevertheless be a useful source to define it (Superstudio, Archigram, Eisenman, Venturi, Koolhaas, Allen, Aureli).

As a result, there are very basic assumptions about the form of the neighborhood that today remain surprisingly open for debate: What's its size? Is a neighborhood a center? Is open space a must? Should it be by necessity horizontal in massing? Must it consist of a coherent urban fabric? What are good ways to accommodate movement?

GSAPP / Audi Extreme Cities Project

An emanation of the Experiments in Motion collaboration with Audi, the Extreme Cities project focuses on the nature of the future city. Instead of the usual mindset that sees the growth of cities as an overwhelming set of unmanageable problems, the Extreme Cities project reaches beyond entrenched assumptions and

methodologies to propose alternative visions for urban life. The city of the future, the city fifty years from now, will be unlike the city of today. The scale of transformation is beyond comprehension. No amount of study of contemporary trends can help to predict this condition. No extrapolations of current reality will accurately anticipate how the future will unfold. A new mode of thinking is required.

Extreme Cities sets out to intensify the aspects that have existed in great cities throughout history.Rather than reactive, Extreme Cities is based on a proactive model of maximizing these unique assets of cities. It draws on the past and present to identify core urban qualities and to develop extreme versions of them to project into the future. To launch the project we will investigate some of the central principles of urban aggregation, the catalysts through which cities have evolved. To this end, the studio will explore the neighborhood as a transhistorical element of urbanism. It has been around since the beginning of cities; it has been an essential source of its survival and transformation. The studio will speculate on the extreme future of urbanism by proposing a future based on the neighborhood.

## Objectives

The objective is to employ techniques of figuration to produce an architecture of the neighborhood. In order to intensify its core attributes, the studio will develop proposals that condense qualities of the neighborhood into a single architectural form. We will use architecture as an instrument of urban design and create a single large building or a set of a limited number of buildings that produces a coherent formal gesture with discrete boundaries within the existing fabric. In this extreme form, the proposal will serve as an incubator of urban potential.

## Structure

The studio will be structured as a series of design problems. We will start with two short exercises that explore strategies of form making at an urban scale. This will be followed by an equally short master plan exercise allowing the bulk of the course to be spent on developing the architectural proposal.

## Program

The program will incorporate some basic assumptions of the near future including the merging of the automobile and the elevator cab, vehicle sharing, and a shift in residential real estate from a model of sole ownership of a single property to time-sharing multiple properties.

Students will work in pairs to design a building or complex of buildings of 250,000 SF consisting of housing, commercial offices, retail, and open space.

## Site

An area of Brooklyn having a non-descript urban fabric that is adjacent to traditional urban infrastructure (bridges, roadways, etc.)

## Travel

To understand the great potential of cities the group will travel to one of the world's most historically complex and rich urban centers, Istanbul. The studio team will have the benefit of exploring the city with local experts and participating in workshops with a select group of architects. On the way back to NY we will visit London to visit neighborhoods with both historic and extremely contemporary features. Travel will occur the week of 10 March.

Note: Emphasis will be placed on a collaborative approach to formulating ideas. To promote this collective process of contributing and sharing concepts, please remember that any insight, observation, or comment made in the context of the course will be considered to be authored by the group rather than any one person, and available for use and interpretation by all.