



## SUPERPOWERING URBAN ENACTMENTS

Advanced Architectural Studio. Summer 2013

Columbia University. GSAPP

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The SUPERPOWERING URBAN ENACTMENTS STUDIO will work designing *superarchitectures*<sup>1</sup> for the existing networks of cohabitance produced by New-York-located open-to-the-public-facilities (OTTPF). OTTPF include material devices such as gyms, discos, flesh scrawl tattoo parlours, swimming pools or psychotherapy centers that could be perceived as objectively slovenly, whereas they tend to be in fact relationally plentiful.

The studio projective work will focus on the empowerment of selected OTTPF by equipping them with an evolved materiality, an enhancement of their associative schemes and a revolting spatial distribution. Projections will share the goal of untangling their hidden potentialities and of challenging the subalternities embodied in them. Studio work will be the result of three parallel activities: 1. Engagement in advanced design. 2. Field work to inspect the selected OTTPF like a private detective would do. 3. Group discussion of statements and techniques addressing the account and design of the daily production of the 'urban'.

<sup>1</sup> Superarchitectures is a provisional name to refer to architectural projections (or design exertions) meant to reinvent exiting urban networks by redesigning the different agencies they are composed of, their distribution in space and the way those agencies relate to each other.

## WHAT ARE WE GOING TO BE WORKING ON?

New York's urbanism is daily produced in association with a number of disregarded open-to-the-public architectures. They are ordinary places, such as gyms, real state agencies or vegan marketplaces, that gain importance if we think of them as passing points of the enactments in which urban life and societies are performed day by day. Gyms are, for instance, passing points of entire communities of diverse humans, apartments, discos, magazines, protein supplements, medical engineering, private parties, occasional trips and outdoor activities. Vegan markets, as a second example, are part of compositions in which bodies engage with on line discussions, TV shows, productive land and private home kitchens. In these cases, urbanity, when studied in detail, could be accounted as '*assembled coinhabitances*' of which these open-to-the-public architectures are important promoters and required passing points.

As isolated devices these open-to-the-public architectures might be perceived as objectively slovenly, but it is the associative roles they play what renders them relevant and where their designs prove to be effective in bringing together bodies, technologies, offline and online spaces, resources and political and fictional engagement. Whereas architectural practices tend to distribute scales in sequential design practices (territorial planning, urbanism, architecture, interior and industrial design) and to inscribe the urban into fix city constrains, the *performative turn* and associative perspective that the studio proposes is meant to gain competence in operating with multilocal, interscalar and evolutionary urban constructions.

**SUPERPOWERING URBAN ENACTMENTS STUDIO** considers activism and advocacy offices, adult day services, adult only bookshops, alcoholic anonymous (AA) centers, animal medical centers, associations offices, barbershops, basketball courts, beauty parlours, bingo halls, blood donation units, bookstores, car rentals, casinos, charity collection tables, confessional centers, community gardens, community TV channels, convenient stores, dancing academies, data centers, daycare centers, dialysis centers, discos, clubs, dry cleanings, flesh scrawl tattoo parlours, florists, funeral homes, grooming parlours, gyms, training centers, hair saloons, justices of the peace, laboratories, laundries, liquor stores, nails parlours,

neighborhood radio stations, newsstands, notaries, wi-fi cafes, patisseries, pawnshops, psychotherapy centers, public baths, punk houses, real state agencies, rehab centers, restaurants, salsa saloons, shared homes, squat houses, swimming pools, tennis court, vegan markets, wedding suppliers or yoga centers, to name just a few of them, and their 'Urban Enactments' tangle potentialities, opportunities, alternatives to domineering hegemonies, also impediments, exclusion, submission and incapacities. The design work will consist on revolting and redesigning them, to untangle undeveloped possibilities, enhance their inclusivity and challenge the subalternities they contain.

### **HOW ARE WE GOING TO WORK?**

Each studio member will select a number of open-to-the-public facilities located in New York, of which one will be soon selected after a session of presentations and group discussion. The group will then engage on detective-like fieldwork to map the urban network of which the selected OTTPF are part of. In the account, studio members will found both the site and the demands to engage on a design activity to reconstruct and project the *superpowered* version on the network of which each one's OTTPF is part of. As a third activity, developed in the studio, a series of weekly reading and discussions will address some of the open transdisciplinar current discussions on both the account and the projection of the urban.

### **WHAT ARE WE GOING TO PRODUCE?**

Studio production will be design-oriented from the very first moment. Studio members are asked to develop a single document that will be progressively charged with more and more layers of decisions and design. By 'document' could be considered any working support that proves to be open, available for informative accumulation and technological accuracy (model, digital 3d modeling, plan or composition of plans or other support proposed by the studio members). **Studio members are requested to develope an architectural project in which a composition of material devices, with an associative functioning will be presenting a superpowered reinvention of the open-to-the-public architecture detected, and of the networked urban enactment it is passing point of.**

## SCHEDULE

Week 01 June 5-9

*The Start*

**June 5 · Lottery**

**June 7 · 1<sup>st</sup> Studio Meeting. AJ: The studio approaches.**

Week 02 June 10-16

*Moving the Studio Out There*

**Preliminary Field Work**

**Presentation of detected OTTPF, election of working cases.**

**AJ: Field-work techniques and methodologies**

Week 03 June 17-23

*Summoning the Urban, as it Gets to be Daily Produced, into Design*

**Studio work and pined up revision**

**Short reading and discussion · The 'symmetric' and 'performative' turns:**

**Michel Callon, Bruno Latour and John Law**

Week 04 June 24-30

*The Urban as a Parliament of Confronting Alternatives*

**Studio presentations and discussion of the state of the works**

**Short reading and discussion. 'Reflectivity' in everyday life: Harold Garfinkel**

Week 05 July 1-7

*Superpowering as Design*

**Studio work and pined up revision**

**Short reading and discussion. 'Material turn': Noortje Marres**

Week 06 July 8-14

**Mid-Term Review**

*Week 07 July 15-21*

*Responsibility*

**Studio work and pinned up revision**

**Last short reading and discussion. Responsibility and precautionary principles: Edgar Morin and Andrew Barry**

*Week 08 July 22-28*

*Production Management*

**Studio work and development group assistance**

*Week 09 July 29- August 4*

*Making Projects Transferable*

**Studio work and pinned up revision**

*Week 10 August 5-11*

**Final Review**