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As a preeminent institution for architectural education, the Department of Architecture provides an interdisciplinary research-intensive environment for incoming students from around the world. The scale and breadth of topics examined are influenced by our geographical position at the epicenter of the most massive rural to urban migration in human history. Our studios shape the department’s culture as forums for exchange, while our community of students, faculty, and alumni impact Hong Kong, Asia, and the world.

International experiences inform our educational approach and enliven our worldview. We currently offer courses taught in France, Brazil, England, Norway, and Korea and exchange programs with UC–Berkeley, University of Sydney, University of Sao Paulo, ETH Zurich, and the Architectural Association, among other world-leading institutions. Every year distinguished visiting professors contribute to our studio culture, including figures such as Wang Shu, Yung Ho Chang, Jing Liu, Sam Jacob, Špela Videčnik, and Eyal Weizman. Graduates from our foundational BA(AS) program progress in their professional education either in our MArch program or at other leading architecture schools in the world. HKU has a global alumni network allowing the educational dialogue to span generations, with each generation informing the next.
Architecture exists at the core of civilization itself. A design emerges in response to the immediate and direct needs of society and the designer behind that response is responsible for identifying those needs as much as addressing them. With the world’s attention currently focused on issues related to public health, it is essential to look to architecture for lessons regarding today’s crisis in historical responses to global pandemics such as cholera. Originally identified as a disease in 1817, the first three cholera pandemics killed fifteen million people and brought about changes in medication, quarantine policy, and crowd control. 1

A turning point came through research that revealed a link between cholera and the built environment, leading to consequential steps taken to reduce cholera’s spread within the fields of architecture and urban design. These steps included the widespread modernization of infrastructure that have nearly eradicated urban cholera deaths globally. 2

The principal design tenets of the architecture that currently defines our cities emerged in relation to disease. The first steel and concrete building in Switzerland was a tuberculosis sanatorium for patients evacuated from urban areas to recover in the mountains. 3 Although tuberculosis accounted for one out of seven deaths in Europe during the 19th century, in dense urban areas such as London it was closer to one in three. 4 Modern architecture was situated as a form of utilitarian salvation, with buildings raised off what was perceived to be contaminated ground. Steel and concrete construction were in part promoted in the name of more sterile environments that diminished bacteria and improved air quality.

In the past decade we have seen infectious outbreaks of H1N1 (2009), MERS (2012), Ebola (2014), and now, COVID–19. In response to these contemporary crises, three of which played out in modern cites filled with modern technology, we need to question how cities should be defended against infectious disease. How should architecture change? Will our current crisis dissipate without any innovation put in place that may make our cities more resilient?

HKU Architecture organizes its research studios around critical questions impacting society. Architects have a role in leading the public debate on how society invests in urban infrastructure. Health security is one topic, another is inequality. The Gini coefficient measuring income inequality in global cities such as Hong Kong is becoming substantially worse each year. 5 In comparison to the airport which occupies 1.2% of the land and is currently expanding, public housing occupies 1.5% of the land in Hong Kong 6 but houses 46% of the population. 7 Our architectural research labs are working to address these kinds of imbalances while also studying inequality as it relates to topics ranging from the impact of urbanization on rural communities across Asia and the growing humanitarian crises arising as a direct consequence of subdividing residential micro apartments in dense urban areas. Collectively, we need to think more critically about what equity means, what defines our priorities in our society, and where we intelligently invest our financial resources.

Buildings account for 36% of global energy use and produce far more carbon emissions than any other sector. 8 Yet buildings can serve as a carbon sink instead of contributing toward climate change if they are designed for their microclimate, constructed with appropriate materials, equipped with technology that generates electricity from sustainable sources, and are optimized over their entire lifetime. Buildings can, by design, be built for disassembly, so components can be dismantled and intelligently reused in the future. Considering the embodied energy used to create a building, whole–life design for energy and carbon optimization requires that the materials, structure, construction, operation, demolition, and recycling costs are determined during the design process. Within our cities the creation of more versatile buildings serving numerous purposes will maximize how they are used, in order to have fewer buildings overall. Sometimes the most sensible decision is not to build anew, but to identify what not to tear down. In addition to reducing our carbon emissions, such acts demonstrate the value we place on the artifacts of our culture and define who we are as a society.

The education of an architect focuses on the historic, the analytical, and the visionary. Architects produce designs that accommodate and, in turn, shape complex systems of behavior. Cities such as Brasilia that were built from scratch take decades before they come to life as people, society and the economy adapt to their structures. More than ever we need to plan for adaptability, for the future cities we design will house occupations that are unknowable today. For a student entering primary school it is estimated that 65% or more of the jobs they may seek after university do not yet exist. 9 The rise of automation and AI–intensive technologies prompt us to question how we can meaningfully contribute to society by providing greater insight into the human condition. HKU alumni are building the future cities that will dominate the skylines of Asia and elsewhere and their designs will shape individual lives, businesses, and economies for generations. The education of an architect requires a context capable of exploring the complexities of the human condition and there is nowhere better situated to study architecture than Hong Kong.

2. Today 95,000 people die each year from cholera and infrastructural work still needs to be implemented in many regions of the world. UN World Health Organization et al., Ending Cholera—A Global Roadmap to 2030, Global Task Force on Cholera Control, 2017.
5. Oxfam Hong Kong, Hong Kong Inequality Report, 2018.
8. Today 95,000 people die each year from cholera and infrastructural work still needs to be implemented in many regions of the world. UN World Health Organization et al., Ending Cholera—A Global Roadmap to 2030, Global Task Force on Cholera Control, 2017.
REVIEW 2020 / PROSPECTUS 2021

DESIGNING BUILDINGS
US MUCH MORE THAN
ARCHITECTURE
EDUCATION TEACHES
WHY AND HOW
SPECULATIONS ON
standards Yingzao Fashi
In the East it has its treatise on architectural methods and classical languages that all knowledge was gauged against. Architecture is old, in the West it is as ancient as Latin and Greek. Alter ego of the Beaux-Arts, had already been dismantled and established as the future of all progressive societies. By the mid 30’s the Bauhaus, the put on hold during the Second World War were now being built and promoted thinking of the twenties and thirties that brought about the Bauhaus and was promising prosperous global future societies. The Modern utopian ambition. They allow us to enter the most intense and imaginative moments of our histories. All can be qualified as architecture that have allowed us to describe, debate and construct common cultures as well as to demonstrate humanity’s genius, intelligence and visions, techniques and technological discoveries, material innovations and resilience across centuries. The University of Hong Kong Department of Architecture is 70 years old. Architecture at HKU was born in 1950 when post war euphoria and technology were promising prosperous global future societies. The Modern utopian thinking of the twenties and thirties that brought about the Bauhaus and was put on hold during the Second World War were now being built and promoted as the future of all progressive societies. By the mid 30’s the Bauhaus, the alter ego of the Beaux-Arts, had already been dismantled and established into two important schools in the USA: Black Mountain College and the Illinois Institute of Technology. Walter Gropius had fled Germany, becoming the first spiritual director of the Graduate School of Design at Harvard under Dean Joseph Hudnut. Radicality, criticality and resistance were building up in art and architecture schools; paving the way through to the 60’s for groups such as the Situationists, Superstudio, Archizoom and the rebel youth who probed technology, progress and capital as the most dangerous elements of the capitalist societies leading to poverty and inequality.

Locally, in the wake of the Shek Kip Mei fire, Hong Kong architects and engineers had to join forces to house the homeless population of the city. This meant that architecture was not immediately essential, the urgency of housing people would only allow for efficient fire and flood proof structures leading to large volumes with small footprints. This was perhaps the beginning of the discourse on density and land allocation as the most important ingredient of Hong Kong’s urbanism.

This was also a fantastic opportunity for our public university, HKU, to introduce the field of architecture into its already other well-established disciplines since 1912, with Gordon Brown appointed the first Dean of Architecture.

The 1950’s were the hinge years, modernism was struggling to prove that housing should be the substance of our cities, WWII had finally ended and though we were marching toward the most difficult years of the Cold War, the world economy was on the rise. Housing was in demand, some of the most important monuments to everyday life were being built. The 50’s and the swinging 60’s gave rise to some of the most incredibly critical years of our discipline’s history. The Beaux–Arts school in France saw its dissolution following the riots in 1968, when architecture separated itself from the arts and claimed autonomy as a fully independent discipline. The Architectural Association in London had live lecture series and debates with the likes of Rayner Banham, Cedric Price and the young fun bubble gum colour Archigram group on the balcony and sometimes even in the front row. Japanese architects such as Kenzo Tange, Fumihiko Maki, and Kiyonori Kikutake were busy creating a sense of identity for Japan after Hiroshima. Japan’s economic supremacy, the potential exponential population growth, the reduction of land and resources gave birth to some veritable speculative architecture such as the Agriculture City of Kurokawa, A Plan for Tokyo by Tange, and Kikutake’s Marine City. The Metabolists were perhaps the last movement and manifesto in 20th century architecture. Their architects built all that was to be called utopian much later. Their radical ideas became the thrust of another Koolhaassian magnum opus called Project Japan: Metabolism Talks, published in 2011.

When the first group of students graduated from the HKU program in 1955 the world was politically as unstable as it is today, economically in great shape due to the post war massive reconstruction projects and the booming oil industry. There was so much building and so much attention to newness and visionary new towns and mobility infrastructures like highways and rail connections connecting everything from the most remote parts of

Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it. That’s what I have been doing my whole life.

Kisho Kurokawa

Architecture is old, in the West it is as ancient as Latin and Greek the classical languages that all knowledge was gaged against. In the East it has its treatise on architectural methods and standards Yingzao Fashi 營造法式 as early as the 11th century.

However, architecture is generally known through some of the most incredible edifices and urban pieces in the world: The Pyramids, Persepolis, The Forbidden city, Chand Baori in Jaipur, Temple of Bacchus, The Parthenon, The Pantheon, Chandigarh, Brasilia, The National Mall in Washington, Notre Dame cathedral, Eiffel Tower, Crystal Palace, but also The Sydney Opera House, The Seagram building as well as the HSBC and Bank of China in Hong Kong or the CCTV tower in Beijing and thousands more. These monuments, buildings, cities, and urban areas are very different and varied in form, function and ambition. They allow us to enter the most intense and imaginative moments of our histories. All can be qualified as architecture that have allowed us to describe, debate and construct common cultures as well as to demonstrate humanity’s genius, intelligence and visions, techniques and technological discoveries, material innovations and resilience across centuries.
the territory to this amazing financially stable island. The first group of graduates walked into a world of development frenzy, a world of construction of infrastructures and new lives; a world that had no limits to growth.

The global political events of 2019 and the 2020 COVID pandemic are for the very least unforgettable and extreme conditions that force us to come together and write the future of our discipline; this time from the East. If the 17th and 18th century “grand tour” enabled the European and English bourgeoisie to send their young men to Europe as a sort of rite of passage before their full education, then perhaps to celebrate our 71st year of existence we transform “architectural education” to become a new rite of passage to greater knowledge about our societies that we design for. A reverse “grand tour” is desperately needed, the Silk Road is our cultural heritage, it is time for younger generations to appropriate its potentials and capacities as an integrative architectural territory.

Let us look at the education of architecture as the ancients looked at the learning of the two essential languages of Latin and Greek and relate it to very specific local methods of construction as the Chinese taught us to do. If the classics allowed for an openness and capacity of reinterpretation toward the world, then architecture has all its chances to become the 21st century classical studies.

To study architecture will not “only” lead to designing buildings, but be open and inclusive to all other disciplines. We will study it to learn the complexities and intricacies of the socioeconomic and political aspects of all that have specific spatial and material consequences on territories, cities, landscapes, environments and our societies. Then and only then, architects would have the capability to propose varied and multiple possibilities and scales of engagement surpassing the status quo of architecture only equals buildings. This is not something that Walter Gropius would have supported in 1950 at Harvard Graduate School of Design. But then again, we have moved seventy years ahead.
Diversity and intensity is intrinsic to the architecture and urbanism of Hong Kong, the Greater Bay Area and China, characterized by innovation, sustainability, and the demands for intense development. Unique cultural riches and values make it possible to address issues of complexity such as high-density urbanism, the rapidly changing urban-rural scenario, the high-rise typology, the conservation of nature and sustainable development in architecture and landscape.

Design and research in the Department of Architecture responds proactively to this unique region and these specific issues, optimizing the synergy between ideas and practice. A diverse faculty, including globally recognized designers, renowned historians and theorists, experts in building sciences and technology, leads the department in a constant questioning of global and regional issues. Their efforts in the design studio, laboratory and classroom have led to innovations recognized with awarded built projects, exhibitions in international venues, and publications of theoretical investigations and design works in leading journals and books.

Research programs and design studios at the graduate and postgraduate levels offer students unique opportunities to study the contemporary architecture, cities and landscape of China and the Asia-Pacific region. Programs in architectural history and theory, urbanization, rural construction and conservation, housing and urbanism, computation design and digital fabrication, as well as technology and sustainability, form the foundation of our research agenda.

With strong links to society, industry and government, the design research by members from Department of Architecture bring architecture into communities through building, successfully contributing innovative ideas from scholarship to community projects integrating with design studios or funded by external bodies. The Department’s research programs believe in the reciprocal relationship between teaching and research through the design of architecture. By making stronger ties between teaching and research as well as design and knowledge exchange, the Department brings together students and teachers from different degree programs and disciplinary specialties to the society.

The Department of Architecture believes in the capacity of architecture for making better human conditions and their natural environments. We are committed to developing excellence through unique opportunities in this particular place and time. We engage communities and developments in Hong Kong and China for building up knowledge and innovation, sharing globally our experience on the betterment of architecture, city and nature.
A historical consciousness is imperative in the education of an architect. Rather than limiting the students’ vision to technical aspects of professional training, an education in architectural history and theory encourages an examination of the discipline within a broad sociocultural context. This helps students hone the necessary critical skills needed to navigate the diverse aspects and demands encountered in the practice of architecture.

Conventionally, architectural history survey courses have been taught in accordance with a strictly linear chronological order: from classicism and neoclassicism, to modernism and the contemporary. Such a history curriculum, beginning with the ancient Egyptian, Greek and Chinese temples often dampens a freshman’s enthusiasm for architectural history at the very beginning of their studies. It also perpetuates the already obsolete idea of architectural history as an exclusive discipline with its own tradition, which stems from a distant space and time rather than as a complex of synchronic and diachronic sources, contexts and interrelationships. Students tend to think of architectural history as irrelevant to their own living conditions and remain woefully disconnected from their current architectural design courses.

We offer a series of five history survey courses. These began with 20th century modernism, focusing on the discussion of modern architecture in relation to modernity and modernization (1); tracing back to the various pre-modern architectural periods from a global point of view, with an emphasis on cultural exchanges and comparative studies (2, 3); extending to a survey on the global urban history, encouraging students to examine the spatial issues in the larger settlement and territorial scale (4); and concluding with a review of contemporary issues, prodding students into considering history in relationship to the contemporary.

The teaching of history and theory at HKU is in an evolving relationship with research on issues that concern architecture, the city and the region. Research on design development and discourses in the Mainland; transcultural exchanges between the postcolonial city of Hong Kong and Chinese cities, especially Shanghai and Shenzhen; between Southeast Asia, particularly Singapore, Asia at large, and the United Kingdom and beyond; challenge typical binary Oppositions and asymmetrical analyses. Collectively, these various intersecting research trajectories have produced new notions of historiography in which Hong Kong’s east-west adage is continually scrutinized and reframed. The feedback loop in teaching and research is crucial in the training of an architect and a citizen who is conscious of his or her participation in the thinking, making and inhabiting of the environment. In a society dominated by bureaucracy and consumerism, the goal of architectural history and theory is to enable students to develop a critical awareness of the contemporaneity and the social consequences of their spatial practices, making their actions more intelligent, considered and reflexive.
Research and design in architecture within an urban context is a fundamental principle and strength of HKU’s architecture programs. Over the history of architectural thought, shifts and changes have often arisen out of a critical reflection on its evolving urban context. The present global trend of urbanization has changed the practice and discourse of architecture fundamentally. The importance of understanding the city is more pertinent today than ever before. HKU recognizes the complex and rapidly changing city of Hong Kong as an authoritative site of learning, providing a live classroom for the research of urbanisms, both past and emerging.

In the MArch program, urbanism and habitation are core knowledge categories that are taught through the format of advanced seminars. The seminars offer a stimulating learning framework within which to explore emerging concepts, knowledge and design tools to research and design the built urban environment. The seminars are taught through learning activities including textual readings, case studies and fieldwork. Graduate students can choose study options from diverse courses, ranging from mass housing, sustainability and globalization to rural-urban development, and urban renewal. The research seminars complement the advanced design studios in the MArch program, where design projects are often situated within complex social and spatial urban environments.

At the undergraduate level in the BAAS program, foundational knowledge of urbanism and habitation is taught both through lecture courses and design studios. The lecture courses of urbanism are embedded within history and theory course sequences. From the first year to the final Year Four, the design studios engage architectural projects situated within sites of increasing urban complexity. In addition, Year Four students have the opportunity to select a graduate-level seminar course to advance their knowledge of urbanism.
As recent technological evolutions are radically reshaping all aspects of the architecture profession, it is essential for future generations to not only explore the potential of latest advancements in digital media and design computation, but also gain a critical understanding of new modes of operation. While architects have described buildings traditionally through drawings and physical models, today, new means and methods exist to develop work through digital models in which project data is used as an instrumental driver in the architectural design process. These models can then directly inform the building process, since building information control allows instructions to be sent directly to machinery for building. As part of this, computer-numerically-controlled mills, three-dimensional printers, robots, and laser cutters facilitate the rapid prototyping of designs, making physical models, including experiments and full-scale prototypes, a useful medium in the design evaluation process of building systems.

The digital modelling of complex conditions informs the assessment process, so that an understanding of both the technical problems and the design potential can be gained. Computational design techniques allow for building performance simulations and analysis on issues related to structure or environmental factors such as solar, thermal, and ventilation conditions. Recursive feedback loops can be applied to study optimisation possibilities and options and to dynamically alter designs for a more precise response to environmental factors. Similarly, real-time finite element analysis allows approximation of structural deformation and stresses from the early design stages onwards. These can be combined with evolutionary solvers to, for example, optimise positioning and dimensioning of structural elements to find unknown design solutions and principles. Construction optimisation scripts can improve building efficiency, using fewer materials and decreasing the need for a higher number of unique elements, while maintaining the overall design intention.

Digital models can organise intricate temporal systems, for instance predicting how the fluctuation of a currency could alter costs all the way through from construction to the demolition process. Building information modelling manages the budget, the project, and construction, and once the structure is completed, the maintenance and operation. In addition to broadening the available creative design solution space, the rationale for designing with these systems is to increase productivity while understanding and controlling a greater number of parameters for a more precise overview of the built environment.

Research regarding design computation incorporates developing methods to generate, utilise, and enhance the information a model may hold. Other areas of study can, for example, include developing interactive components for a building with kinetic facades programmed to respond to changing environmental conditions, or the incorporation of sensors and intelligent systems to design buildings with a more ecological approach. These systems can be developed to become almost invisible, so that a technological language of efficiency does not displace the cultural and historic implications of a work of architecture.
One of the most important issues driving today’s culture of design and construction is the idea of environmental sustainability. What does it mean for a building to be environmentally sustainable? How do we measure, analyze and understand the environmental performance of buildings? What can we learn from well-tested indigenous “vernacular” knowledge of climate and construction? And how should we combine this knowledge with contemporary technology to create new potentials for architecture that are good for both people and the environment? These questions underpin the design research agenda and teaching pedagogy for the environmental technology curriculum at the University of Hong Kong.

Environmental forces are naturally dynamic. Exploring the challenges and creative potential of airflow, sunlight, moisture and sound in the process of architectural design requires new knowledge about the various technologies and building systems available today—whether passive or mechanical—and how they affect and are affected by environmental flows. Heating, cooling, lighting and comprehensive building services are examined, not as discreet and isolated problems but in the holistic sense of being integral parts of the larger task of environmental manipulation.

Of primary importance in this process are the fundamental design considerations of building technologies and their impact on formal geometry; the relationships between spaces in plan and section; the admission and control of solar radiation; daylight; airflow; and the adaptive mechanisms for occupants to enable thermal and visual comfort. Defining the conditions for a symbiotic relationship between architecture and the environment is of paramount concern for the appropriate use of technology in architecture. Knowledge and an understanding of the physical principles underlying this relationship, and the computational tools needed to translate them into the design process, are essential learning objectives for any serious student of architecture.
The career of an architect, whether working locally or internationally, demands a wide range of skills and expertise. Besides design ability and technical knowledge, an architect needs a wide range of professional knowledge, managerial skills, and personal integrity to realize their projects. The curriculum of Master of Architecture courses on practice and management are aimed at preparing the graduates to obtain their professional qualification, and to address these requirements in professional practice.

To practice, an architect must be able to advise the client for any current legislations and development control mechanism to bring about the full development potential and the successful implementation of the project either in the public or private sector. The underlying principles of development control, building regulations and codes of practices are universal with local adaptations in different countries: to ensure building safety, the health of the occupants and the general public, and to achieve a sustainable environment for us and the future generations. Our community at large will demand every one of us in our profession to be as competent as we can and to deliver our professional services at our best.

An understanding of cultural, legal, socioeconomical, administrative, and business issues that affect architectural practices are critical for a professional architect. Architects need to understand the business of architecture, to ensure a viable and healthy environment for our creativity to flourish. The basic frameworks of office organisation, marketing, business planning, fee negotiations, architect’s agreement of services and most importantly, financial management are addressed. Architects must be familiar with various business legislations that regulate the profession.

The requirement on the individual architect in terms of ethic and conduct is paramount as a professional. The ability to lead and to coordinate different parties and disciplines fairly in realizing a project, from getting a job, understanding the work stages: project inception, feasibility and design, approval and consent, through to contract documentation, contract administration, construction, post-occupancy evaluation, and facility management. The values and the underlying principles of building contract are addressed to enable future architects can execute the contracts and to act impartially with their clients and contractors.
BASc Design+ is an undergraduate degree under the Bachelor of Arts and Sciences program. It is aimed at nurturing highly effective, adaptive and creative graduates who can lead across multiple disciplinary subjects, and who will become known globally for their distinctive qualities of creativity, analytical ability, critical thinking and innovative problem-solving. Cutting across traditional disciplinary boundaries, the program is structured around design thinking as a distinct foundational approach to interdisciplinary studies, innovation and enterprise.

This degree prepares students to be innovators and creative leaders, training students who want to capitalise on both entrepreneurial and creative abilities. Combining insights, theory, research, methods and practices that embrace a combination of design thinking, functional design and process design, the academic focus provides students with a blend of thinking tools that will equip them for the challenges facing all sectors of society.

The new Bachelor of Arts & Sciences degrees, involving all ten faculties at HKU, are aimed at nurturing globally-minded thinkers and leaders able to leverage their interdisciplinary knowledge and skills to address the contemporary and future challenges of our increasingly complex world.
The BA(AS) Undergraduate Program offers an approach to architectural design that is rooted in the human condition and the spirit of making. It promotes design innovation, conceptual rigour and technological expertise to address the issues facing Hong Kong and the region.

The program is organized into four tracks: Design Studio, History and Theory, Building Technology and Visual Communication. Each track develops an independent trajectory over the course of four years. As knowledge is acquired, it is applied within the studio on scenario-based problems that intersect each track.

The design studios are organised to offer a progression in terms of challenge and complexity. They begin in Year 1 with Tectonics, continuing on to Year 2 and Year 3 with Architecture and City, and culminating in Year 4 with an Integrated Project that brings together the knowledge gained in the three preceding years. Students work on projects that build knowledge from the fundamental principles of space-making, material form, and abstraction before going on to explore the impact of contextual relationships and pressures on an urban site. They conclude with working on developing a complex, multi-programmed building. The specific locations and problems investigated relate to critical issues facing the region; including rural development in China, urban regeneration in Hong Kong and Shanghai, and housing development in various cities throughout East Asia.

The aim of the program is to develop the core abilities necessary within the architectural profession including a strong connection to the historical and cultural foundation of the discipline. Skills and knowledge are complemented with an awareness of contemporary architectural issues, perceived from the unique intersection of global and regional perspectives that define Hong Kong.
The course introduces first semester students to architectural design as a symbiosis of space and structure. This complex task is addressed through theoretical lectures, hands-on workshops, project analysis and presentations, as well as iterative design tasks focusing on conceptual sketching, technical drawing and crafting of models. The studio is taught using the methodology of research by design, with students interacting and engaging in parallel to creatively investigate a multitude of solutions and share their individual insights.

The studio is taught in three exercises, focusing on structure, prototypical design, and media. In the first exercise “structure,” students are asked to create an one-meter timber structure for various support and load conditions. The structures are tested with weight until failure. Their deformation and collapse are documented in film and technical hand drawings.

The main part of the semester is focused on the second exercise, “design.” Students create an abstract, volumetric site model of either CITY, COURTYARD, or SLOPE. Students then had to join up in groups of four to create a neighbourhood and assign circulation and assembly tasks for architectural intervention. Each student designs two models in timber, which are related to the site context. The model should demonstrate structural and spatial understanding, and develop an architectural language that interacts with fellow team members.

The final block is conducted remotely and focused on technical drawings and digital modelling at a closer scale. Students are asked to survey their individual room, create technical hand drawings at 1:10 and create a detailed 3D model and axonometry of this room. The rooms are finally referenced together to create a common labyrinth connecting the individual spaces.
This project introduces context, program and volume for architectural design. Students work in three neighbourhoods with different topologies, interacting with their neighbours and the urban slope. The studio focuses on the building type of Tong Lau, a Hong Kong-specific type of the shophouse, which consists of a ground floor shop and an upper floor which is used for storage and/or the owner's living quarter. A courtyard is located either at the backend or in the centre.

1 Analysis. The first exercise focuses on observation and abstraction. Students learn from an existing context by observing, studying and drawing. Students choose any shop in Hong Kong (hawker stalls, wet market, shopping mall etc.), take one specific spatial photo in black and white of that space and draw an isometric drawing, a section, and write a 100 work analytic text.

2 Speculation. The reference project only acts as a starting point to critically investigate a spatial idea and its potentials. Students sketch a speculative section and write a 100-word concept about its purpose and function/performance.

3 Variations. Each student proposes three options for a single shop focusing and emphasizing aspects of their speculative section. This creates an important transition from abstract drawing to a scaled and functional architectural intervention.

4 Design. Three imaginary urban sites were given with specific site conditions. Each student designs a spatial concept for their Tong Lau based on the previous steps 1–3, interacting with their neighbours and taking into consideration aspects of the environment, context, tectonics and construction.

5 Detail. This exercise focuses on synthesizing the conceptual idea of the shophouse into a constructive detail, and emphasizes the consistency of design from big idea to small detail. Students summarize their shophouse in one particular spatial detail at scale 1:20.
This studio is devoted to looking at the house – firstly through an analysis of modernist architectural works, followed by design exercises which propose to renovate the house in response to some of the most urgent and pressing issues we face today. Beyond the skills and knowledge required for these projects, the studio is a contemplation on the role of the architect in society – our social contract. On one hand, the studio rigorously analyzes the house, dissecting the house and framing architectural arguments strictly through the language of architecture itself (plans, sections, models, details, construction). On the other hand, the studio also conducts a series of seminars to explore the house from cultural, philosophical, social perspectives. Through the design of the house, we are anticipating the home.
This studio revisits the toolbox of modern living and sees if we can make use of our collective history. The goal is to critically re-examine and borrow some ideas about modernity, details of construction or strategies for organizing spaces, and apply these to an urgent and contemporary problem: how to reinhabit the abandoned traditional houses of rural China? Taking inspiration from the “spontaneous builder,” the studio also considers the role of the architect in relationship to the natural evolution of vernacular architecture. By bringing together two traditions: modernism and the vernacular, it is a process that looks backwards and forwards while questioning the role of the architect.

Perhaps the cultural tendency of the Chinese to live in multi-generation families where grandparents are responsible for child rearing has also served to bring these contrasting lifestyle tendencies together. Is this the beginning of a new design program for rural households, combining industrial and craft techniques in a new functional dynamic, neither rural or urban, traditional nor modern – but capturing the best of both worlds, signifying a novel approach to sustainable living.
The studio challenges the conventional notion of a building’s completeness through examining the material consequences of the construction process, reconsidering architecture’s temporality in relationship to natural systems.

Weather and architecture have a very troubled relationship; the tension is a result of the desire that architects have to design structures that are enduring and resistant to changes and the inevitable erosion caused by the natural environment and atmosphere. Our first-hand experiential knowledge of weather accentuates this sense of collective anxiety by revealing the fact that there is a great degree of unpredictability in the life of a building after the construction process has been completed.

Apart from the challenges that Modernist architects confronted since the early 1920s – providing shade from the sun, improving interior ventilation, controlling humidity levels, and protecting inhabitants from the rain – this studio questions elements of vital importance regarding our current atmospheric conditions, on meteorology and the climate; on temperature, humidity, cloud cover, wind speed, atmospheric pressure, and the natural elements; and the limits of our ability to forecast decay.

We reimagine how architectural projects must utilize elements more comprehensively to modulate the environment. The ambition is to recognize the inherent uncertainty that exists and the indispensable recuperation of the forces necessary when buildings are designed independently for a specific site.

The studio observes the conflict between technological advancement and cultural continuity that exists in all architectural projects. We argue that the act of building is not a matter of restoring regional identity by recreating familiar signs, but understanding the material consequences and the building process, where the precise placement on a specific site accounts for its temporality.
Where Are You?
Ambiguity and Layers of Spaces

In an alleyway close to the Langham Place in Mong Kok, Hong Kong, people walk through the structure and arouse public awareness of sustainable use of energy and resources. Oasis No.7, a transparent structure, is inspired and named after a utopian metaphor of the city. The project is undertaken to make an urban ecosphere out of the detected energy map of the urban situation. It aims at collecting the essence of energy distribution. In temperature or humidity, the structure appears as a natural product of the urban situation. It’s a natural metaphor of the essence of energy and architecture in an urban area.

Daisy Nick, while remaking the urban energy consumption system of the city, sets out to redefine the urban situation. The structure appears in the early morning. “The alleyway used to be a place full of movement and noise, with a super intense atmosphere. Everyone passing by has a perfect walking speed, but being in the same area makes people feel each other”, says a porter working nearby. “Yet everyone passing by is separated by walls, but we somehow realized we do not want to be to the contact here and is seeking all of these varied effects.”

This finding situation, which is called Oasis No.8, is the latest product of the city-wide energy-visualization project initiated by the Environment Bureau of Hong Kong under the frame of 2030+. According to the chief leader of the project, the idea is building up an urban metabolism and reshaping people’s spatial experience in urban space. The design and construction of Oasis No.8 is highly autonomous, deriving from the internal energy map of the proposed urban context. Specific building conditions are also defined by the urban qualities of energy distribution. In this way, the structure can be regarded as a naturally grown product of the urban situation.

People’s spatial experience in Oasis No.8 will also be influenced by the urban situation. This kind of urban situation is created from the urban, from physical changes caused by the urban energy distribution system, or the spatial conditions created from machine to people indirectly. "When someone lights a cigarette on the ground far at alleyways, I can feel the structure appears in the early morning.”

The project is set out to redefine the urban situation. It’s an urban oasis in the city shaped by the urban situation. It’s a natural metaphor of the essence of energy and architecture in an urban area.
This design studio consists of two parts. In project 1, each student is assigned with one of the 69 subjects/objects in John Hejduk’s The Lancaster/Hanover Masque project. Through the process of close reading, students are expected to see the unseen, and decipher the enigma of Hejduk’s masques, then reinterpret and reconstruct the investigated masques into a collection of 60 second stop-motion films.

The exercise of close reading is then shifted from the site-less masques in project 1 to a highly specific site of project 2 – Matthäikirchplatz, Berlin, a site heavily charged with the history of Berlin, and the history of Kulturforum in particular. Each student is required to design a 3000m² mediatheque building on site. Being surrounded by iconic buildings such as the New National Gallery, the Philharmonie and the recent winning museum proposal by Herzog & de Meuron, the mediatheque proposed on site is expected to form a unique dialogue with the context. Meanwhile students are challenged to question and explore the role of mediatheque in relation to the past, present and future of Berlin, and of the world at large.
Chromatic Narrative

Mediathèque seems to be an exhibition place of our recollection of this constant loop of adjudication and incitement.
XIAO YU YANG
The goal of the studio is to develop new structural articulations for high-rises that are more agile in transiting from one type of program to another within a complex. These aim to project gradients of communal spaces and living types that reconcile for instance outdoor living issues in a sub-tropical climate.

To address new kinds of structural transitions, we revisit the work of some key engineers-architects who pushed to great effects the full potential of reinforced concrete: a short-lived liquid mass in space, in search of new solid formations. They placed a strong emphasis on experimentation towards the development of formwork design, supported by well-articulated geometries and methods of construction that would liberate concrete once again from an all too safe and predictable approach. But the restored attitude towards structural concrete did not come without a high level of risk taking and occasional failures. These structural mavericks took reinforced concrete to the limit of what the new material could do, both structurally and spatially. The studio learns from their process as a good practice methodology for experimentation.
The studio approaches the issue of adaptive reuse of postindustrial architecture and urbanism in Shanghai by critically researching the Yanshupu Power Plant complex. Students collect data through site visits, field trips, research, and meetings with city officials and power plant representatives to document the existing buildings in the complex. The studio culminates in architectural solutions that address/reveal postindustrial heritages and its role to the future development in Shanghai.

Based on the findings and in-depth analysis of certain industrial buildings/structures and their interest in particular issues relating to postindustrial spaces, each group of students are expected to develop a prototypical model that embodies a spatial strategy which could be carried out in their further design development. This spatial strategy is meant to be an operative and productive tool that starts to address/resolve particular issues/problems identified by the students and to enable them to further develop their own positions. The prototype is also a tool to negotiate a set of relationships between space, use, site, scale and etc. Techniques employed include physical modeling, drawing and diagramming.
Tapping into architecture’s capacity to synthesize different forms of natural and political data into dynamic spatial models, the studio aims to develop prototypes for a series of field stations that enable the observation and collection of environmental data and its accessibility to the public. Addressing issues related to environmental politics, the studio embraces the Hong Kong territory working with Fung Shui Woods and proposing a facility for scientific observation, education and public leisure.

As a class, students discuss the increased migration from the countryside to city centers that has been taking place worldwide in the last decades and the role tourism and education can have in the development of rural landscapes. The studio pursues a rigorous study of the natural and geomorphological conditions of a series of sites, culminating in the design and development of architectural prototypes that reflect on the current needs of the local communities and the transformation rural territories have been facing, leaving old agrarian economic models behind and adopting leisure based economies.
The studio gathers, updates and renews social and environmental drivers appropriate to a “New Building” and experimentally gauges the formal repertory left salient and open-ended by the Bauhaus and Constructivism. Through employing the Bauhaus as a critical lens, the studio aims at circumventing the superficial reading of style and to reclaim technology’s open-ended, projective potential. Fundamental creative inquiry through open-ended design and form-finding processes shall gradually condense into a diagrammatic system that can offer multiple directions to be developed according to the specificities of any given brief and context. The interrelationships and reciprocities between material-concept, form-affect, context-autonomy, function-meaning etc. shall enable the navigation and mediation of architecture and the development of a personal focus and corresponding technique in preparation for the final project.
Housing remains by and large the backbone of our cities today. Yet, a relentless process of urbanization continues to pressurize the demands for high-density occupation in Hong Kong and Asia. Hong Kong’s built fabric consists mainly of an addition of one predominant building type: the podium-tower. It is for the most part duo-functional; commercial at the base and residential above. Socially, these point-blocks towers tend to promote individual living, by virtue of being limited to an aggregation of condensed units around a single core, generally sealed off from their natural environment. At the urban scale, the accumulation of point-block towers remains a simple sum of independent living entities, often acting as walls within the city (wall effect) but unable to capitalize on the greater (massing) whole.

The overall building type under scrutiny for this term will be the wall-building or slab-block. Architecturally, we will rethink the articulation of a habitable wall by revisiting ideas of porosity, deep shaded space, thickness change, scalar transition, double-sidedness, structural facades, modularity, mass subtraction, linear distribution, ground articulation and integration to existing infrastructure. Environmentally, physical aspects such as wall effect in building, cross-ventilation, light exposure (diffused vs direct) will also be investigated. In doing so, we revisit the spatial character and environmental performance of a wall as an urban manifesto.
Until the early 1950s, more than 60% of the total housing area in Shanghai consisted of Lilongs. This ground-related building block is characterized by an outer perimeter along the main streets that is dominated by workshops and shops and an inner circulatory rational system that gives access to the two to three-story high residential units. This setup provides a high degree of security and privacy, while at the same time delivering social cohesiveness through an active neighborhood community.

Taking the qualities of the Lilong settlement as a point of departure, the premise of the studio is to work out alternative building types for high-density housing that seek to negotiate between the original low-rise character and network of the city, while offering at the same time the density needed today. The studio aims to develop solutions that can preserve the identity and urban quality typical of Shanghai, without neglecting the call for densification. In fact, the studio is aiming to find a compromise between the need for compaction, the desire to preserve, and the idea of an architectural organism that combines vertical built volumes with ground-level private and public spaces.
The studio explores strategies to densify Mei Foo Sun Chuen with a program centred on a model of collective ownership for housing.

Mei Foo deals simultaneously with both intimate domestic and vast territorial scales, through the repetition and variation of the individual units. On the one hand Mei Foo is an “urban landscape” but it is also a collection of individual dwellings, or “interior landscapes.” Mei Foo speaks to the importance of housing as a repeated element within a wider territory, as well as to the essential role of the individual dwelling unit, as the driver of this vast landscape.

By examining and altering (ultimately densifying) the existing conditions already found within Mei Foo, students propose new collective models of dwelling based on housing cooperative strategies, that (augments/counters) the private model currently in place on the estate. Through this act of transformation, students will show how housing policy and the form of existing models can be harnessed to create new forms of living.
In the capital city of Manila, affordable housing initiatives take the form of displacing residents living in informal settlements to new suburban developments at the city’s periphery. There are an estimated 3 million residents currently living in squatter settlements in Metro Manila. These communities live precariously under threat from fire, flooding and unhygienic conditions. But for many of these residents, staying near the economic engine of the city center is preferable to resettlement. Part of this sentiment is driven by the city’s transit woes. Manila has among the worst traffic congestion in the world; a problem compounded by deficient public transportation systems. New approaches are required that address the staggering quantity of homes needed, the interests of the communities being displaced, and the chronic dysfunction of Manila’s transit systems. In contrast to the current suburban model of housing development, we attempt to redress the adverse impact of peripheral resettlement with low-rise, high-density proposals in the heart of Manila.
After torrential rainfall in the beginning of 2020, Indonesia’s capital Jakarta suffered the worst flooding in recent history, with 60,000 residents evacuated and large areas of the metropolitan area destroyed.

Outside the rainy season, rush hour traffic is bringing the city to a standstill, there is a shortage of available land and infrastructure is seriously lacking. The Indonesian government has just thrown the towel and declared to build a new capital city on Borneo. The vast majority of the current 33 million residents of the metropolitan area are bound to remain so new strategies for recuperating the ground plane and the procurement of new, safe housing are urgently needed.

The relocation will free-up Jakarta’s current state government sites for redevelopment. This becomes an opportunity to begin with deploying nodal inner-city locations to perform catalytically as local valves and continuities, to calibrate extreme water conditions and vastly improve flow and connectivity for the surrounding fabric and the whole city. Shifting to a condition of permeable tissue not only greatly improves the urban context but also introduces opportunities for truly mixed-use conditions that offer vibrant urbanity to residents and the community at large.

For this studio, each student designs an inner-city housing superblock articulating how it provides high quality dwelling units that enable current and future social constellations, needs and lifestyles. Furthermore the final material shall demonstrate the integration of communal areas, discernible semi-public spaces to be shared among residents, ancillary facilities, local centre(s) and mixed-use programs to serve the community as well as how the project offers permeability and connectivity for the neighborhood and beyond.
This studio examines the potential of the terraced housing typology to respond to issues of topography as well as introduce its own internal landscape. In the context of the contemporary hyper-dense Asian city, the terrace typology’s use of layering allows the terrace typology to be an opportune intermediary between the horizontality of the single family house and the verticality of high-rise towers. Through the study of precedents, the studio investigates how tiered housing units operate on different scales, how green/communal space and urban infrastructure is integrated, and considers how different massing strategies balance the presence of the individual with the collective.
The Master of Architecture Program aims to influence architectural and urban discourse regionally and internationally. It is committed to taking on the most pressing issues affecting architecture and urbanism today. The creation of unique spatial conditions brought on by the interplay of urban dynamics between political, social, cultural and environmental forces, have led to a diversity of challenges that must be addressed by a new generation of future architects. This is intensified in the context of Asia, as rapid and expansive forms of urbanisation reshape the ground, alter communities, build infrastructures and change ecological systems. These urgencies act as a framework for the curriculum that drives the content of design studios, technology workshops and history and theory seminars. Issues also reflect the research interests of faculty and are broad in scope and ambition; including the impact of big data, digital craft, informal settlements, toxicity, extreme density, peripheral urbanisation, rural transformation, and our changing ecology.

Over the course of the MArch Program, students will delve into a range of these topics and acquire techniques for design and research inquiry, building up expertise in order to formulate and test their own unique position. This culminates in the thesis project that synthesizes the student’s approach and critical contribution to the discipline. It operates both as a conclusion and more importantly as a beginning of the student’s future career as an architect.

The Department’s location in Hong Kong enables it to be a hub connecting academics and practitioners from across the globe. Forums for discussion and debate bring together multiple voices from the US, China, UK, Brazil, Australia, Europe and Asia. In 2019, we initiated the first Visiting Professor program where we invited 5 visiting professors from around the world, selected for their emerging significance to the discourse, to lead our design studios. This together with our international lecture series and exchange program with leading institutions, maintains the Department’s unique position as a leading voice and interface for the exchange of ideas.

Looking to the future, HKU offers a new 3-year MArch (Design) degree for students wishing to study architecture who have a degree in another subject. This encourages the development of new perspectives on architecture, enabling HKU to work with talented individuals who have the potential to make a valuable contribution to the field and to practice.

As the world around us transforms, we aim to enrich and influence the future of the discipline as it responds to these new challenges.

JOSHUA BOLCHOVER
The new MArch 3-year Design Degree was initiated in September 2019. The course offers the chance for students from a diverse set of undergraduate degrees to study architecture. Whether from science or arts backgrounds, the intention is to enable talented individuals who have the passion, discipline and drive to study architecture, a chance to do so. In time, these students will develop a broad spectrum of knowledge empowering them to make valuable contribution to the field and to practice.

In the first year, students will become fully immersed in the study of architecture. They will undergo intense design exercises involving physical modelling, drawing and analysis as well as developing principles of construction and structure, and an understanding of history and theory. This rigorous training ground, learning design methods and procedures, equips students to enter the two year MArch program in the following year, undertaking exactly the same studio courses as their colleagues.

This course, although common in many US schools is unique to Asia. By offering this course, the Department of Architecture is creating a platform of knowledge made up of a rich mix of attitudes and positions towards architecture that will be necessary to tackle the key issues impacting the future of Hong Kong and the region.
The manner in which a culture attends to its dead is indicative of its capacity for empathy. Spaces of memorial and remembrance provide a structure through which we can express our grief and a means of securing a measure of consolation in the face of mortality.

In Chinese culture, it is important for a deceased family member to be buried close to his or her native place, so that he or she can watch over descendants. However, in the world of the dead, as in the world of the living, space and permanence are commodities readily available to those with money to spend. The average waiting time for a space at a public columbarium, which costs approximately HK$3,000, is currently four years – similar to the waiting list for a public housing rental flat. A space in a private columbarium costs approximately HK$1 million.

Columbaria are spaces which must accommodate not only the dead, but also the living, as columbaria must hold thousands of the latter during the Gravesweeping Festivals each year.

Through analysis and experimentation, and engaging with the promise of new modes of making, students develop a position on both funereal architecture and public space – restructuring the relationship between the living and the dead in Hong Kong.
In architectural practice there is no such thing as the past. Whatever still exists today, and has not died, is the historical present.

Lina Bo Bardi

Cities are dynamic; in constant states of transformation. Urban fabric is erased and replenished, augmented and altered in cycles that respond to the economic and political forces acting upon them. As architects we are key actors in this process of renewal, constantly negotiating between the built legacy of the past and the demands of the future.

Buildings that stand today contain vast amounts of embodied material, energy, labour and finance. Demolition requires additional labour and investment and its waste will no doubt end up in landfill or in the sea. Not all existing buildings will however be suitable for the new demands and functions required for new uses. The agenda is to rethink how buildings can be repurposed, retuned, grafted onto and spliced. At the core is a critique of homogenous city building, prioritizing economy over all other values, that dominates much of the motivation behind urban development in contemporary Asian cities.

Hong Kong is a city which has never shied away from wholesale redevelopment: sites are wiped clean, and with it communities are disbanded, businesses relocated, building typologies become obsolete and histories forgotten. In the last 10 years alone this has included the development of the Graham Street Market; Wanchai Wedding Card Street and Kwun Tong Town Centre to name but a few. Change is at the core of urban thinking and this semester we will focus on Wong Chuk Hang as a site in transition, in which we will question and challenge how its future may evolve.
A support structure is a construction which allows the provision of dwellings which can be built, altered and taken down, independently of the others...

A support structure is built in the knowledge that we cannot predict what is going to happen to it. The more variety housing can assume in the support structure, the better...


Across the world, the demand for affordable housing is an emerging crisis that exists as a problem both in the developed world and in developing regions. From London to Hong Kong, or from Chinese villages to Brazilian favelas, there is a desperate need to provide people with homes. Yet, where are the architects in this discourse? Since the 1970s, the heroic social project of mass housing has been admonished amidst failed social engineering, poor construction, planning mistakes and ghettoization. Now housing is predominantly provided by house-builders and developers, and in the most part, architects are out.

The studio attempts to find a way back in by addressing affordable housing as an intellectual project within the discourse of architecture. Rather than focusing on the specificities of a community, inhabitants’ social welfare or their participation in a design process, the studio focuses on housing as a support-structure for living.
The studio agenda is to explore the potential conversion of a man-made reservoir into an inhabitable infrastructure for swimming. From an architectural point of view, students are engaged in a series of site and program analysis with a view towards implementing a highly articulate, critical, and comprehensive structural design proposal for the selected site.

The challenge is to propose a construction that reduces to the minimum the negative impact onto the site and aims to maximize the richness of architectural qualities. The studio considers the built structure as a framework to articulate the existing qualities of the place and pay particular attention to behaviour it produces. Activities such as swimming, sunbathing, picnicking, gathering, showering should take place within, above, under and besides the construction and help us to interrogate the traditional boundaries between inside and outside.
The studio looks at two modes of thinking through architecture: first, the back and forth between descriptive and analytical study that can be used to generate discursive, problematizing narratives; and second, the transformation of this narrative into a speculative fiction through projective design propositions. The studio will consider how these modes of thinking through architecture function when high-definition satellite images are primary sources of information; and specifically at how data visualisations can be described, analysed and manipulated into tools of architectural projection.

The context of the work is a new capital city designed for 3.2 million people on fertile, flood prone terrain in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. Construction of this new city – named Amaravati after the important Buddhist trading centre that occupied the site in the 2nd century BCE – began in 2016, based on a masterplan determined by a Singaporean engineering consultancy and major government buildings designed by Norman Foster.

Nearly twice as big as Chandigarh, Amaravati, even before its existence, embodies the contradictions of growing cities around the world. Its status as a new, planned capital offers an opportunity to consider the role architecture can play in territorial, urban and infrastructural scale questions and the role of the architect within the complexity of such planning processes.

Can the architect make a contribution through the design of singular moments within such a landscape? Can she offer speculative visions that synthesize, frame and propel larger scale considerations? Or is the architect’s role to critique underlying assumptions and objectives through dystopian visions? The studio asks students to articulate for themselves a position toward these questions.
Human presence in Antarctica, necessary to conduct essential scientific investigations on the pressing global problems of climate change and sea level rise, is not conceivable without technologically advanced architecture. A detailed analysis of Antarctic settlements (from historic whalers shelters to the hyper-advanced contemporary scientific stations) will be instrumental to assess the logistic and technological complexity of building in such an extreme environment, the physical and psychological effects of remote inhabitation, and the levels of self-sustainability attainable with today’s technology – the latter being of utmost importance when considering life on other planets.

This studio contributes to an international collaborative project – Antarctica 200, a cross-disciplinary project that aims to unveil the unique traits of the continent-laboratory, assess its indisputable role in the global ecosystem, understand the conflicting and fragile geopolitical implications of the Antarctic Treaty System, and document the evolution of Antarctic architecture to challenge the state of the arts and bring to the foreground prototypes for inhabitation in the extreme. Participating institutions include the Architectural Association (UK), Scott Polar Institute (UK), Escola de Cidade (Sao Paulo, BR), Ness (Buenos Aires, AR), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (Santiago de Chile, CL).
The program turns out to be a comparatively short-lived condition, which is why it is no longer suitable, despite the functionalist method of design propagated by modernists, as a point of departure. However, fulfillment of the program does constitute an obligation on the part of the architect. Both the clients and the users of a building expect smooth operations and sensible arrangements of the space. The creation of enduring structures and the positioning of a building volume with respect to urban planning cannot contradict one another. Analytical skills on functions, programs, and critics on the relation between building structure typology and transformation of uses are important in architecture practice.

The studio explores the relation between program and structure in architecture. The students are encouraged to analyse the functional programs of buildings, and make proposals of alternatives in the changing circumstance. By investigating the issues of program history in architecture, the studio investigates the relation between the static structure, and the transformations of program in the life span of the building.
The studio’s objective is to revisit structure as the main methodological architectural design tool and explore the spatial potentials that lie within the relation of structure and program. Architectural space and structure are symbiotic in a building. However, structure as the domain of engineers has lost its relevance as an imminent design tool for architects. In the contemporary production of architecture, structural models merely solve problems of the shape of architecture. The studio revisits the spatial and design potentials of structure, becoming the driver of concept and space and the therein resulting spatial opportunities. We challenge the high rise typology and its predominant podium–tower configuration. The studio will specifically investigate the idea of structural transfer.

The urgency of architectural and structural integration lies in the recent trends in Hong Kong’s planning regulations to incorporate mandatory wind tunnel tests into the high-rise design in order to evaluate the structural integrity. With the tendency to reduce flat sizes even further, structure has to be optimized to allow for more usable space. This opens up the potential to speculate on alternative structural design solutions for contemporary high rise building.
3.1 PRODUCTION: SPATIAL PLANNING

inhabiting the space

Lee Rachel Tsz Man

M Arch Program

Review 2020 / Prospectus 2021

Lee Rachel Tsz Man
Working primarily in model, this studio explores new sectional dynamics and successionary futures for the Greater Pearl River Delta Bay in response to climate change and sea level rise. Rather than rehearsing reactive, restorative, or defensive techniques, the studio will speculate on new ways of engaging what are typically considered problematic issues as productive agents of change instead. We engage a range of questions on what the future could hold for the Greater Pearl River Delta Bay.

The studio looks at adaptation scenarios for 2050 and beyond. How can architecture be an active medium of change? How can living with rising tides be a positive force for future development and transformation? How can new landforms be made through successionary processes to create new urban domains? What new forms of land and habitation could respond to an undersupply of land and housing?
The industrial revolution 4.0 is ubiquitous in almost all industries. Though some say that the outlook is frightening, since many jobs will be affected by AI and automation, for architecture, we could develop a counter-argument. If the industrial revolution of the 1850s was the beginning of standardization, repetition, and dullness in generic architecture, the current results of Robotic fabrication seem to offer a wide variety of specificity and richness in architectural expression and materiality. The uniqueness in each material system could be automated and therefore result in economic competitiveness to off-the-shelf products. The trend has the promise that not only our built environment would be enriched by a whole new palette of materials but also that the architect might gain back power over the craft of making, changing the role of the architect from a specifier to a fabricator.

This studio redirects our attention to structural capacity and techniques of assembly. Traditionally bricks are put together via a level and a plumb line. That method is suitable for walls, but more complex systems such as arches and vaults need temporary scaffolding or a specific falsework to achieve accurate assembly and structural strength. The studio, therefore, investigates how robotic 3D printing and novel fabrication processes for falsework can rethink and transform structural brick systems that rely on pure compression. The ultimate goal of the studio is to develop, make, and test experimental prototypes, and to understand their fitness for inventive programs, types, and spaces.
While Venice and other European historical cities have stated the crisis brought by over-tourism, more and more Southeast Asian developing countries are opening their doors to tourists and making use of their architectural heritage as a marketable commodity.

Since the economic reform in 1980s, Vietnam has opened her door to foreign investors to redevelop the country after a century of war time. The upsurge of commemoration is a paradoxical by-product of the capitalized-style modernization. The city of Hue, listed as one of the three UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Central Vietnam, was once severely damaged during the French occupation and later the Vietnamese war. While the ancient citadel, royal tombs, and Buddhist pagodas are being restored one by one, the city is now depicted by tourist literature as a “City of Romance” together with the glory of imperial Vietnam and the elegance of French colonial architecture.

While the past is repackaged by the tourist industry to meet tourists’ appetite for exoticism and social media “likes,” the selected attraction sites become the built form of a narrative of “new” Vietnamese identity which is very distant from the experience of the people of Vietnam. This studio examines architectural heritage as the object of communication for tourists’ consumption and the impacts of tourist driven architecture under the context of globalization and extreme mediatisation.
In 2008, the city of Seoul announced a development plan in the Gangnam district which includes the 1988 Olympic complex, COEX, and waterfront area. Its ambition is to link a commercial corridor with a new proposed transit hub, waterfront and rehabilitated Olympic complex to meet the increased future activities of the area while providing the new urban identity of Gangnam to maintain and renew its status as a highly prized district in Seoul. Since then, a number of master plans have been proposed under the overall project narrative that the metropolitan government has outlined.

Instead of repeating what has already been put forward by the city and other submitted proposals, this studio will turn the current situation around, and introduce the idea of Expo 2050 at the site under the theme, “Peaceful Confrontation” with a scenario of a united Korea to explore the transnational political dimension in the project.

Students investigate key moments in the history of Expos to comprehend the mechanics of how a different set of ideals are produced and implemented from their inception to construction. Once students develop a literacy of cultural construction in architecture, they identify issues to exploit in the social context of Korea. Afterwards, the goal of the project is to construct a strategy that allows architecture to perform in the domain of national interest that goes beyond the self-economic interest of Gangnam for the future generation.
What are the alternatives to the ongoing reclamation process in Hong Kong? Compressed between the sea and mountains, the territory appears today as chaotic and hybrid built crystallization with specific densities. Informed by a complex geography, the idea of concentric growth and continuous spread is replaced by a non-linear development of hyper dense cores coexisting with the natural landscape accounting for more than 75 per cent of the total land mass.

With the historical struggle and the stress on land resources, Hong Kong’s geography is a narrative that is defined and redefined according to consecutive political intentions, social and economical variations. The development of the city has been fluctuating in a conflicting appropriation of recognized land and sea. With the new Lantau reclamation project absorbing small islands and their water, the notion of an archipelagic, sporadic density, and coastline diversity will immediately disappear for one single, homogeneous, living model. In this context, there is an urgent necessity to explore the possibilities of designing new typologies detached from the land.

The studio looks for alternatives to homogeneous reclamation projects with the aim to document existing floating houses and floating communities to understand their current needs and everyday relation to the sea; to re-territorialize forgotten or invisible island territories by defining a liquid trajectory from Cheung Chau, to Sunshine Island, Peng Chau and Lantau; to develop new tools for architecture to respond to the rising of ocean levels and the increasing magnitude of storms; to challenge the design of new modular infrastructure that includes ecological and economical benefits of living on water.
Hong Kong is a city of intermediaries in terms of both culture and architecture. In response to issues of density, terrain, climate, and communication, connectors are crucial to the operation of the city and often take on dramatic proportions and forms in order to respond to the urban context. They can be understood as small infrastructures or monuments throughout the city. What can architecture learn from these urban objects? Can we extract a set of vocabularies and apply them to different programs? The studio studies the small and large scale side by side, from handrail and roof connection details to urban figures.

The extreme pace of growing cities requires the same growth in urban infrastructure. The studio looks at what kinds of techniques architecture can appropriate from these infrastructures and vice versa, with the aims to identify and articulate a set of architectural vocabularies that relate to hyper-dense urban contexts – strong integration of site research into individual design projects; develop a set of representational techniques through physical models and drawings; clearly articulate the relationship between the site and architectural proposal.
Villages in China are facing critical physical and social-economical challenges due to drastic urban–rural migrations in the last few decades. Among various urgent issues on population, production, employment, and education, there are also critical issues on their physical environment including dilapidated buildings and the poor condition of community and public spaces, as well as a lack of awareness on heritage and environmental conservation.

The studio begins by searching, documenting village artifacts and their typology; buildings and elements, infrastructure and landscape, their certain original value and remaining functions. We contemplate the value that remains and try to ascertain their connections with the building’s materiality. The studio also encourages students looking into what our ideas on architecture are, our memory of it as a product of the collective, leading us to seek ways of transformation, ways of changing the condition by designing the new programs and artifacts, and to identify what relationship it affords us with this innovation and collective.

Through designing three houses with an architecture narrative, the studio encourages students to develop positions and methods of design in traditional villages under transformation, defining critical issues and strategies for architectural and urban design in the context of rural China. Highlighting knowledge developed from understanding site, history, fabric and typology, the studio addresses the dual-role of architect as a practitioner and also researcher. By promoting a method of typological transformations, the studio advocates an urban–rural strategy of village design through activating architecture, rebuilding narratives of architecture and public spaces for Chinese villages.
The Diagram is based on the Genealogy of Tanghou Village From Google Earth
The MSB (Municipal Services Building) is a unique type of architecture created by the HK government in the early 1980s. Every MSB, distributed more or less evenly in each district, within its own entity provides a wide range of public services, such as dry and wet markets, cooked food centre, library, gymnasium, and government and NGO offices. Not only efficient in terms of land use, some of the MSBs possess high urbanistic and architectural qualities. While connecting well with their surrounding urban fabric and street networks through their lower levels, they host diverse public activities in the air. They are “social condensers” made of vertical program–space stacking.

Chongqing, a metropolis of more than twenty million, has an extraordinary urban density and hilly topography similar to those of HK. Over the past four decades the city has produced a spectacular array of iconic buildings and tourist attractions, earning itself the nickname “magic capital.” Behind its breathtaking urban spectacles, however, the city’s civic infrastructure and public services are severely lagging behind. The Chongqing municipality has become aware of the situation and is willing to change. This studio attempts to promote HK’s MSB as an approach to improve Chongqing’s public service and general urban renewal process.
The studio research focuses on key global concerns such as environmental issues, climate change, increasing social and economic inequalities, mass tourism, waste management and the growing population by exploring the limits of habitation in severe environments. These habitats represent a unique testing territory for human settlements because of its inherent climatic singularity. Understanding the performance of architectural proposals in these areas is essential to anticipate what might become standard in the rest of the planet for years to come. The research through design proposes schemes for specific sites while addressing issues such as the latest technological breakthroughs, vernacular tradition and local identity. The aim is to produce a coherent concept to cope with the exposed facts for each scenario. The final result of the studio is a specific buildable proposal, accurately developed and defined by 3D models, plans, sections, construction details, physical models and prototyping for some parts.
With ourselves as both subjects and objects of study, Millennial Architecture looks into tools, strategies and prototypes for our very own. Millennial Architecture’s efforts concentrate around reinventing a future for what increasingly sits at the centre of the millennial struggle: housing. While housing was at the core of the 2008 financial crisis, in the millennial condition, it remains inaccessible for the many, from London to Los Angeles and from Beijing to Barcelona. Meanwhile, architecture as a profession itself is taken hostage by the housing-crisis, reduced to mere visual marketing at the hands of speculators and developers.

The studio develops a platform based on questions of peer-funding, crowd-funding, new modes of ownership, rent, co-housing and shared living. Ultimately the goal of the platform is to disrupt the assumed developer-led model for housing and enable large groups of people to take the housing question in their own hands. In terms of building technologies, we work within the so-called Discrete Design paradigm, which advocates parts rather than whole. Discrete Design is based on a digital understanding of assembly, architectural modularity and prefabrication and attempts to create functional wholes that emerge from the assembly of generic, serialised, accessible and versatile form of architecture with a short production chain that is prone to automation and therefore able to disrupt the current building industry. Discrete Design is a collective project which aims to reinscribe the “digital” in architecture in a framework of social, economic and political relations rather than merely stylistic ones.
Today, the majority of the global human population lives in conditions of poverty and scarcity. In order to change this we need to create opportunities for those who don’t have any; we need to invert the process; we need to “do what we don’t know how to do” (yet). As architects, we need to protect the habitability of our world through evoking the matter.

In a world that is expanding but lacking resources, the wisest way to protect it is to try to be as austere as possible in respect of the matter that surrounds us. Being austere does not only mean using low-cost materials. Being austere means understanding that any material has its own structural capacity and making efficient use of it. This can be investigated through the way in which the material is arranged, through who lays it and who uses it, and how it is produced. We might just have at our disposal the worst brick that has ever been produced; but we can design its use so that the workforce – even the unskilled one – is able to manage the characteristics of the material in favor of architecture.

The studio starts upside–down, inverting the common architectural process that goes from design to construction. We start from the matter: investigating its attributes, transforming it into a material: giving matter with a purpose and allowing matter to serve. Imagining the ways in which the material can be arranged, define the necessary protocol to implement it into a construction material by proving its constructive relevance, defining the best program to which it can be applied and develop it as a construction hypothesis, as an architectural proposal. The proposal must be set in a fragment of an urban utopia called “Little Hong Kong” and its program must be adapted to a public space as a proposal for human development.
**Mobilizing**

Lightweight materials encourage the material transition through movement, allowing for a more mobile design strategy.

**Clustering**

The design concept revolves around moving spaces and the dynamic use of restricted areas. This approach creates a more interactive and adaptable environment, allowing for a more versatile use of space.

**Educating**

The use of materials such as paper and paperboard provides a sustainable and low-cost solution for constructing the project. The use of paper and paperboard also helps to reduce the overall cost of the project and contribute to a more environmentally friendly design.

**Lightweight**

Assembly vs Disassembly

Ecosystem

Soft/Natural Touch

Layering

Usable Surface Area

Material Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stainless Steel (SAR G42)</th>
<th>Copper (SAR G42)</th>
<th>Aluminium Alloy (SAR G42)</th>
<th>Wood (SAR G42)</th>
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<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.40 (Sapele)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kwok Tsu Yi + Zhang Kai + Durand Cecile

Muye Ma
Tear gas, banned in warfare under the Geneva Protocol except in the use for riot control, has been used extensively throughout the city since Hong Kong’s anti-extradition protests began in June 2019. Over 16,000 rounds were fired in a 6-month period (dated 8/12/2019) in this densely populated urban landscape. Playgrounds, shopping malls, MTR stations, nursing homes and residential areas have all been infiltrated by these formless toxic clouds.

Hong Kong civilians are not only physically, but psychologically, socially and environmentally impacted by the police response to the protests. The dense nature of Hong Kong’s built environment has resulted in residential neighbourhoods being affected by the use of tear gas – entering through civilians’ windows, stairwells, cracks in the built fabric, air ducts and building ventilation systems to displace breathable air in residential spaces – transforming them into temporary “gas-chambers.”

Our studio adopts investigative practices developed by Forensic Architecture in order to map the effects of tear gas in the city and to analyse how the system of architecture presents itself as an accomplice, weaponised by the choreography of the clashes between police and protesters. From the scale of the object, to the individual dwelling and the urban environment, we will examine how complex social, political and architectural forces entangle across multiple strata of the city.
In late Modern city planning, street design was almost entirely driven by traffic planning parameters with moderate consideration for vegetation. Today, from the homeless population in LA’s Skid Row and London’s tunnels, to the surveillance system deployed via street cams in Beijing and Hong Kong, from Google’s much contested Sidewalk Labs pilot in Toronto, to the pink Pussyhats and the yellow vests, the street in the new millenia is nothing short of the new frontier of cultural expression, public discourse and technological transformation.

Thus in the streets around the world, along with the apparent as well as latent fault lines of social fabrics and technological apparatuses, profound fractures can be seen everywhere. Domesticity of the disenfranchised confronts civility; camouflage tactics evades state control; the under-represented parades in a rainbow of colors. The old discourse of street design rooted in managerial ethos is fundamentally insufficient. With critical urgency, a new discourse fueled by new polemics needs to be forged in the emergent void.

In this studio, we research the new players in the street, rediscover past experimentation that might still offer relevance and study possible new typologies that might be constitutive of a contemporary discourse.

On the island of Hong Kong vibrant street life and informal cultural activities take place in the shadows of high-rise developments amassing global capital. Traffic congestion dominates the urban experience and the social space oscillates violently between control and liberty.

We map the studio project onto a decade-long advocacy of pedestrianizing a stretch of DVRC (Des Voeux Road Central). We observe and document the various constituencies fighting for the precious ground here. We situate ourselves in the near future where smart mobility has reduced congestion in Central significantly, freeing up DVRC to become a new kind of public space shaped by its own time and people.
Anatomy of the Lense Kit

A. Structural Truss Frame
B. Viewfinder Window
C. Vertical Curtain Wall Slab
D. Internal Floor Finish
E. Truss Floor Support
F. Glazing
G. Structural Tie back
H. Internal Wall Lining
I. External Paneling
2019–2020, A Year to Remember

We keep changing our position, we are looking for a different angle that neither adds nor subtracts, forever on the margin, forever in transition. We write with pens of different colours, but these things, too, easily become superficial. Is this how history is constructed?

Excerpt from “Images of Hong Kong” by Leung Ping Kwan (1949–2013)

What an academic year this has been. From June 2019 to June 2020, university life was not defined by the standard school schedules—summer workshop, first week of school, midterm exams, and final reviews. Rather, we marked our agenda by overcoming interruptions to the calendar. From protests in the streets of Hong Kong to a pandemic that has impacted cities around the world, we have witnessed historical events unfolding in real-time. June, July, August, September, October, November, and December, followed by the new year’s January, February, March, April, May, and June—each month seemingly more destabilizing than the one prior. As a result, this year’s students and teachers alike have faced challenges that were impossible to previously fathom.

Thesis, which has always presented unique challenges of its own for generations of aspiring architects, has been even more difficult this year. Years of education and training, leading up to a graduate thesis project that is both a dreaded final test and a hopeful rite of passage. Architectural thesis topics here at the University of Hong Kong have always tended to be conscientious and serious, tackling challenging issues in this city and around the world. This year, there is an increased level of somberness in the thesis as developed, decreased production in terms of models and drawings, as well as more noticeable uncertainty and hesitations in the verbal presentations. And yet, as evidenced in the works presented in the studio space, the conversations prompted by such work, and the ideas introduced here in this book, the architectural thesis at HKU is more ambitious than ever. From engendering housing affordability to designing architectural activism in Hong Kong, from remediating ecologically damaged new towns in India to speculating architecture in a post-Anthropocene Arctic, this year’s thesis projects challenge the status quo of not only how architecture should be constructed, but how the world should be built.

Painstakingly, we have learned to work from home, teach on Zoom, study online, draw on screens, breath through masks, sanitize our hands, social distantly, talk remotely and yet walk intimately. We have learned to appreciate simple social interactions that were previously taken for granted: marking on the same drawing, touching the same model, being in the same room, and breathing the same air. Ideally, we have also learned to plan with contingency, anticipate the unexpected, question the doctrine, understand the differences, and respect the humanness in us all. What an academic year this has been.

JUAN DU
This thesis is a retroactive manifesto based to set in the year 2000, focusing on the context of a dense urban environment within Hong Kong which has increasingly shaped a stressed population. The project is about creating “momentary otherness” booths all over the city where individuals can stop by as a therapeutic momentum. The locations of the booths will be replacing various selected existing public payphone booth locations. Where distractions and interactions within smartphones have yet to exist, the thought of connecting to someone to assist or having online apps to soothe the mind is not simply a click away. With virtual applications that practice mindfulness and therapeutic uses existing now, this thesis will move forward to the exploration of the virtual realm and discover how the virtual can inspire and be extracted back to the real as physical spatial elements. The momentary otherness capsules placed in the past will then become a fragmented memory of architecture today. This artefact is then to be discovered throughout the thesis as a vital element within the urban context of the city in the period of ten to twenty years from 2000.

Phone booths in Hong Kong Year 2000–2020: a personal yet public place, now obsolete and maintained by having a second life. The methodology of using the past as a lens through which the project can imagine the future will not merely be highlighting the interconnectedness of the past, present, and future, but using existing phone booths as a symbolic representation which serves a fragmented memory of architecture within the urban context of the city. Once a tool to connect to others, now to be disconnected from others but to connect with one’s inner self.
The thesis is inspired by the exhibition “Paradise Lost – Gazing at Contemporary Urban Civilization and its Metaphor” in Taipei.

_The city is like a great house, and the house in its turn a small city._
Leon Battista Alberti

The thesis aims to reinterpret the ruin of 21st century Hong Kong by analogical thinking allowing for both memory and history; mixes autobiography and civic history, individual and collective. History has to be constantly rewritten according to the needs and anticipations of new generations. In the museum, such writings take the form of new additions and the remodeling of former parts. A museum can be a narrative and a system that assumes an architectural form.

The thesis touches upon the issue of ruin. In the Renaissance a ruin is described as a fragmented scripted text of antiquity of monuments, tombs, columns. For the 21st century, a modern ruin is the result of rapid urban transformations. A monument is dialectically related to the city’s growth being the primary elements in the city which are persistent and characteristic urban artifacts. In the short history of modern development in Hong Kong, human impacts can be traced in the coastal reclamation in shorelines and development of highways, shaping the barren rock.

Since the modern ruin is closer to our age of living, the modern ruin evokes emotions to the loss of prosperity and security of the recent years. If the progress of the 20th century becomes the ruin of the 21st century, how will one look at the problem of the 21st century from the lens of the 22nd century? Through ruins, one can see the progress. How can architecture regain its power through the mistake it has made as opposed to the glory it has had?
The thesis attempts to explore the phygital constitution of political architecture in the post-digital context of Hong Kong. The phygital denotes the blending of digital experiences with the physical world. By utilising and experimenting with various digital tools and workflows, the project synthesises digital and physical entities to encourage discourses in the city.

A phygital forum network engaging Hong Kong citizens to heterotopic spatial encounters of the city’s political future in the post-digital age is proposed. The scheme establishes new forms of political participation connecting multiple locations in the city to the main forum space through post-digital means. Taking the Rostra from the Roman Forum as reference, the design captivates the power of the citizens influencing the city’s policies and addresses the polarizing views in the city through the phygital promotion of rational opinion expressions. The project with Augmented Reality, digital imaging and photogrammetry integrations generates and connects citizens’ discourse of social issues beyond certain constraints of time and space while advocates phygital assemblies in the post-digital era. The proposal, situated at Statue Square, Central, becomes the prototype of phygital forums that can be further implemented across the city. The thesis questions the role of the digital in the field of architecture, with incorporating digital tools and techniques to bring the physical and the digital in equilibrium.

The phygital architecture embraces the post-digital as well as it reinterprets, concretises, and amplifies true values and beliefs of Hong Kong citizens.
AR KIOSK PROTOTYPE ONE: MTR STATION PLATFORM
From Admiralty Station to Podium Forum Space at Res Publica, Central

AR Content:
Live Streaming/Portal to Podium Forum, Res Publica

AR KIOSK PROTOTYPE TWO: RESTAURANTS/CAFES
From Cha Chaan Teng to Rostra Corner at Res Publica, Central

AR Content:
Portal to Interior of Rostra Corner, Res Publica

AR KIOSK PROTOTYPE THREE: LANDMARKS
From HK Cultural Centre to Court of Final Appeal, Central

AR Content:
Portal to Open Space in front of Court of Final Appeal

AR KIOSK PROTOTYPE FOUR: PHONE BOOTHS
Replacing Phone Booths: AR Streaming Live Speeches at Res Publica, Central

AR Content:
AR Digital Overlay of Live Debates/Speeches
A caveat of the Hong Kong 2030+ development scheme is that it would enable the erasure of the city’s aging built fabric and further increase the real estate cartel’s accumulation of territory, thereby entrenching developers’ capacity to control housing prices. Given that this is a consequence of state and developer collaboration, there needs to be an alternative.

Hong Kong’s first cooperative model, the Civil Servant Building Societies, was distributed across the territory as a means to limit their values and potential political power. This project, Nomos Syndicate, proposes a cooperative housing scheme that reframes this act of distribution as a potentially potent form of collective agency against private accumulation, as well as an alternative mode of urban domestic life.

At the scale of the territory, Nomos Syndicate proposes a proforma to meet the anticipated gap of 50,000 flats in private housing supply for the 2030+ scheme. Nomos Syndicate proposes to replace two types of sites currently on the market that are undesirable for developers, but affordable for non-profits: undissolved Civil Building Societies and single plots of decaying buildings.

At the district scale, these sites are scattered across blocks as a means to preserve the aggregate block structure from its inevitable erasure and consolidation post-2030. The syndicate shares facilities across this network as a means to promote a porous urban domesticity.

At the scale of the building, a collective housing prototype is proposed that frames the notion of individual and collective living without enforcing the deterministic divisions of contemporary housing.

Altogether, through the survey of Hong Kong’s built fabric, housing history, and contemporary real estate landscape, Nomos Syndicate is a thesis on how an architect may contribute.
This thesis explores the potential of a palimpsest drawing in communicating spatial change over time as a new mode of documentation in architectural design. It aims to rethink the drawing as a 1 to 1 spatial synthesis of past histories to generate anachronistic constructs.

In the digital era the non-hierarchical structure of the internet treats information in a way that alters not only our understanding but also our perception of it. Culture is presented as a fragmented whole amidst a flatland of undifferentiated parts resulting in the current construction of our built environment. It becomes increasingly decontextualized and often disregards traces of the past.

Searching for a new method of archival documentation, the thesis utilizes architecture as a medium in tracing the specifics of both the history and the narratives of space. A new methodology is developed to allow the transcription of the temporal effects of time. It aims to reterritorialize these forgotten fragments of the past to construct a space that is not merely a single-handed representation of the present, the past or the future but a negotiation of what once was, what presently is and what will exist.
What will a city turn into when it is all about one company?

In the age of urbanization, where cities are dominated by mega-corporations, there ought to be a renewed understanding of urbanism initiated by company towns since the 19th century. This thesis is interested in reviewing the complicit role of architecture in the development of the Samsung R&D City of Suwon-si. The project showcases the rise of a cybernetic society in search of an alternative urban mindset in a city dominated by real estate development led by a single corporation.

Indeed, the city has become a corporate tool for growth. One prosperous and closely controlled Samsung Utopia would coexist with another neighborhood of high-tech lowlife. Corporate managers, service staff, laborers and urban dwellers at the grassroots level are equally adept at accessing and hacking into the city’s processing power in an effort to survive in the city. The stance of this thesis is not to promote or be overly critical of the inequality and contradictory future of Suwon-si.

Instead of producing value judgements on corporate power, this work is structured as a multi-perspective recording of the chaos of expansion, taking place both in the metropolis, the adjacent urban village, and the gray zones in between. The built architecture of corporate towers and village tenements will persist as a legacy of the past, while becoming the scaffolding for the society of the future. Through the imagination of multiple actors and agencies, each playing out his or her contrasting and authentic roles, the project is presented in vignettes of constant adaptation. This study presents all manners and shades of top-down planning, informal global networks, localized sprawl and the in-between layers of obsolete and adapted existence. This thesis explores the dynamic nature of urban change and alterations in every fiber of the city. It challenges the common understanding that society and the city is best served by purpose-built architecture with a well-defined ownership.
This elective course in visual communication explores methods of appropriation and compositing as a means to arrive at architectural invention. The course is based on the premise that visual practice, in tandem with or in anticipation of architectural practice, has the capacity to expand the architect’s formal and spatial vocabulary. As such, the course positions itself as an opportunity to develop fluency in multiple modes of visual expression. The main instrument of investigation is orthographic projection, intended as a device allowing for a limited but focused visual inquiry and speculation. The visualizations produced in the course are understood as artifacts and simultaneously expected to unfold as cinematic narratives, ready to be occupied and exploited as speculative architecture. Visualization assignments rely on appropriation and compositing as the base mode of operation. The spatial and formal lessons embedded in the selected subjects are to be inspected, displaced, transformed, combined, and thereby become available for future invention. The methodology aims to transform commonplace source visuals into entry points to powerful formal and spatial outcomes.
One to one or full scale design is not an issue of how large a physical output becomes but rather how the properties of real materials are vigorously experimented with at any particular scale. It is no longer intended merely as a representation of something larger but rather an effort to become itself. One to one mockups can potentially perform across a large range of sizes and the proposed course will strive to bring forward inventive means of making that engage material properties in response to external forces at work while receptive to its investigated size. Making ways for such prototypes will address the necessity to define well-articulated geometries and construct intermediary frameworks which will become an integral part of the making process.

This course is a workshop-based seminar supported by a series of lectures where students will explore procedural logics of making that expand on and revisit initial design premises from a series of progressive physical explorations.

Each scale of investigation has its own design focus and informs the overall conception of a well-crafted prototype at the end of the course. The seminar takes on a hybrid approach towards a range of tools for making (traditional and contemporary) and puts emphasis on craftsmanship and on assembly details of materials.

The core ideology for the seminar is to influence the process of architectural design in reverse; that is by synthesizing an architectural proposal from the findings emerging out of a succession of built experiments.
Chinese architecture is prominent for its timber-framed building system: the structural skeleton is an organic whole that any subtle variation may result in a drastic change of entire architectural forms. Producing architectural form and style in pre-modern China and East Asia is not merely a matter of building technology but also variously related to concerns of functions, regional traditions, dynastic aesthetic ideas, and design motivations. For the final course project, students conduct close and meticulous examinations of historical monuments and represent their structural space in oblique projections.
The MPhil/PhD program in architecture offers independent research in architecture, landscape architecture and urbanism. It is intended for individuals who wish to enter teaching and advanced research careers with a commitment to make an original contribution to the field. The program places emphasis on originality, significance, and methodology in topics engaging pertinent issues in Asia and China, as well as important intersections with international and cross-cultural contexts. The Department leads a number of research centers associated with the HKUrbanLab, the research arm of HKU’s Faculty of Architecture, including the Architecture, Urbanism and the Humanities Initiative (AUHI), Centre of Chinese Architecture and Urbanism (CCAU), Rural Urban Lab, Urban Ecologies Design Lab, and Virtual Reality Lab of Urban Environments and Human Health.

Course requirements are designed to prepare entering students with disciplinary knowledge, theoretical discourse and methods, and allow sufficient flexibility to stimulate and support individual research projects. A broad range of research is supported through the diverse expertise of the department, active collaborations and relationships with other departments in the faculty, throughout the university and beyond.

Academic training opportunities extend beyond coursework. Apart from the regular workshops conducted by members of the supervisory committee, the program is also supported by organized visits by international renowned scholars from leading institutions including Columbia University, DTU Denmark, ETH Zurich, IAAC Barcelona, MIT, NUS Singapore, SUTD Singapore, Tsinghua-Tongji China, TUDelft, UC Berkeley, UNSW Australia, and University of Washington. In 2020, the Department joins the Canadian Centre for Architecture Doctoral Research Residency Program (CCA DRRP) network. Each year, a selected candidate will participate in a summer residency with other doctoral candidates from the U.S., Canada and other parts of the world to undertake research and writing towards the completion of their dissertations.

The MPhil/PhD program hosts a biannual Research Postgraduate Student conference and a CIB Student Chapter, which organizes international conferences at regular intervals. The most recent biannual conference on Mobilities and Knowledge Transfers in the Built Landscapes of Asia and Beyond took place in late spring 2019. Students also present their ongoing research work at monthly departmental seminars. As part of their educational training, students are expected to participate in the instructional activities of the Department.

MAJOR RESEARCH AREAS

History and theory of architecture, urbanism and habitation; built environment and urban landscape for public health and well-being; architectural and sustainable technologies; analysis and development of buildings, landscapes and regions with focus on social, cultural, economic, technological, ecological and infrastructural systems; and urbanism with attention on high-density, compact cities, housing research and design methods.

EUNICE SENG
Amid Hong Kong’s extreme high density, the compact urban form with multi-layered pedestrian system emerged as a manifestation of capitalist economy and land policies. This dissertation research attempts to develop a new methodology for understanding and decoding the pedestrian system and composite elements of vertical high-density urban form. Unique to the vertical spatial structure of a city such as Hong Kong, the building–pedestrian complex is defined as a cluster of developments connected at the podium level, above ground level, underground level or hill slopes, via elevated walkways, on ground passages and underground subways. This study contrasts with conventions of urban morphological studies developed in European and North American cities that focus mainly on planar figure-ground relationships. Empirical cases will be selected from both urban core areas and new towns in Hong Kong. In addition to the relationship between urban morphology and pedestrian network, human thermal comfort will be an element of consideration in this study, especially given the subtropical climate in which this and many other developing cities are situated. By attending to the interconnections between urban morphology, pedestrian movement and the environment, this study extends existing theoretical methods of understanding the spatial structure and patterns in Hong Kong. In so doing, it aims to add to future studies of urban form in high-density cities in the Global South and contribute to urban design guidelines and policies with emphasis on pedestrian-friendly and thermally comfortable strategies.

China’s economic reform since 1978 has facilitated the rapid growth of domestic rural-to-urban migrant workers in search for wealth and prosperity. A significant part of their income has been used as remittance to construct new houses in their rural hometowns. This dissertation explores these burgeoning developments and the attempts of migrant workers to realize their dream homes. Borrowed from architectural historian Sarah Lynn Lopez, the term “remittance houses” refer to the buildings constructed by migrant workers. These houses are associated with particular economic and architectural practices that involve migrant workers’ decision-making based on personal aspirations and values. The trans-spatial contexts of the study offer a window to understand how migrant workers choose to allocate their money (i.e. spending, saving, and investment) and determine the locations, types and designs of the houses as well as their ongoing improvements. The study uses an ethnographic approach to investigate the conceptions and uses of three typologies of remittance houses in Yunan, Sichuan, and Fujian: commodity housing in the county, self-constructed house, and in-site rebuilt house. This dissertation suggests that remittance houses in China are material emblems of migrant workers’ moral economy, revealing their determination to enhance their families’ wellbeing even in their precarity with regard to the identity of household registration (including the possession of land and property right and access to public services and welfare in cities). The work aims to offer a useful vantage point to understand the role of architecture as socioeconomic practices and the essence of and relationship between the urban and the rural.
Ciudad Lineal (linear city) is a key site in Spain’s modern urban planning history. The urban planner and entrepreneur Arturo Soria first described his proposal for the Ciudad Lineal in 1882 as an elongated urban formation – 500 meters-wide and unlimited in length – with a “backbone” formed by railway infrastructure that would channel urban growth of world metropolises, connecting cities such as “Cadiz, St. Petersburg, Brussels or Beijing.” In 1894, Soria’s project became a reality when he founded the company Compañía Madrileña de Urbanización (CMU) for the construction of his linear city in Madrid and other projects. Conceived to become a 50-kilometer development along the periphery of Madrid as a nexus between city and countryside, the project was truncated at 5.5 kilometers in the 1930s. Currently, the original completed section of the project is a main axis of Madrid’s downtown district with a suburban character.

This dissertation examines Soria’s theoretical thinking on linear planning in its multiple dimensions, with focus on the international circulation and interpretations of his linear city as an urban model and the specific reality of Madrid within a global context. The significance of Soria’s project is twofold: in urban planning history and theory, the Ciudad Lineal is the first modern linear utopia that integrates the city and the countryside; in terms of global capitalism and urban development, Ciudad Lineal is a paradigmatic urban space shaped by sociopolitical and economical shifts. The dissertation analyzes the twentieth century evolution of Soria’s project by attending to its role in Madrid’s socialist-to-liberal urban planning and class formation, the dialectics of private and public space, capitalism and Catholic moral values, globalization and localism, city and countryside, new technologies and traditions.
The Department of Architecture offers students a variety of opportunities for international study and travel. Design studios go on study tours within the region to sites of particular interest for architecture and urbanism in East Asia, offering students a unique opportunity to gain a first-hand understanding of the context of China’s urban and rural environment. The Department also hosts undergraduate academic exchange programs with leading institutions in North America and Europe. Jointly taught graduate level studios with other leading universities offer opportunities for students to engage with their peers globally.

The Department has a strong commitment to the environment, and to engaging communities in the South China region. Design studios and research projects see staff and students participating in design projects in China and Hong Kong, ranging from the construction of housing, school and public architecture to the building of pavilions in public spaces.

The Public Lecture Series, discussion forums, symposia as well as exhibitions held by the Department offer a platform for students, outside professionals, and the broader public, to engage critical issues emerging from within the discipline of architecture.

An Artist-in-Residence Program strengthens the vitality of the arts in architecture by serving as a catalyst to broaden our understanding of the disciplines. Invited artists deliver an innovative curatorial and artistic approach that constitutes a contribution to the contemporary discourse on architecture, urbanism, and landscape design. The artist offers meaningful conversations to students and faculty to sustain the development of artistic research and education pedagogy through a work-shop seminar, an exhibition, and a public lecture.
PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

The Public Lecture Series organized by the Department of Architecture at the University of Hong Kong is a platform to engage critical issues emerging from within the discipline of architecture.

SPRING 2020

ZOOMIN: VISITING PROFESSOR TALKS @ HKU ARCHITECTURE

ZOOMIN, an online lecture series organized by the Department of Architecture, HKU, explores a new way of idea exchanges amid the COVID–19 pandemic.

In the spring of 2020, five distinguished international architects were invited as Visiting Professors to teach at HKU. Since mid-January, they all had been managing to overcome tremendous challenges to teach and communicate with HKU students via internet, from their own home–bases in London, Ljubljana, New York and Asunción. This program invited each of them to give a public lecture, via Zoom.

Speakers shared with the HKU community and the general public their architectural thinking and works. After each talk, a HKU professor opened a dialogue with the speaker, to discuss how the current pandemic is impacting our working, living and thinking, and how architecture can confront the dire social and environmental crisis alike.

April 28, 2020
Eyal Weizman + Tao Zhu
Counter Investigations

May 5, 2020
Gilles Retsin + Olivier Ottevaere
Building

May 12, 2020
Špela Videčnik + Juan Du
Inspiring Limitations

May 19, 2020
Jing Liu + Sony Devabhaktuni
Public Space

May 26, 2020
Gloria Cabral + Guillaume Othenin–Girard
Our Construction
This lecture series exploits our relationship with the screen: we pay homage to many directors and creators of the “Seventh Art.” We turn our public lecture series into a publicly global film-lecture series, screenings of many films that have directly or indirectly situated architecture in a larger context of the city and its socioeconomic intricacies will be the centre of our debates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Speakers</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>September 11</td>
<td>Frédéric Biamonti + Nasrin Seraji</td>
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<td>From Geography to Technology – Are Bricks Any Different Than Wine</td>
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DISCUSSION SERIES
FALL 2020
METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT: ARCHITECTURE AND THE HUMANITIES

This discussion series tackles questions related to the role of interdisciplinarity in contemporary architectural design and scholarship. It brings humanities-oriented researchers, artists, and writers from outside the discipline of architecture to the Faculty of Architecture to share their scholarly approaches to questions that are shaping debates both within and ancillary to architecture and the humanities.

Through this series, we hope to begin conversations and introduce new approaches and ways of thinking that might influence how we research, study, and practice. Are there ways in which interdisciplinary approaches can help address chronic imbalances and deficiencies in the ways architecture has been historically conceived, produced, and studied? Does interdisciplinarity risk eroding the specific methods of inquiry that make architecture unique?

The Architecture, Urbanism, and the Humanities Initiative (AUHI) comprises a group of designers, theorists, and historians at the University of Hong Kong. Collectively, we work to understand how buildings and cities shape our relationship to each other and to the world at large. One of the objectives of the AUHI is to address the complexities at work in architecture and urbanization through a range of sources; this lecture series is part of that attempt to open architecture to a broader cultural debate.

September 10, 2020  Dung Kai Cheung  
Mapping Time and Inscribing Space

October 8, 2020  Wen Yau  
Performing the Publicness: From Public Space to Public Sphere

October 29, 2020  Joanna Mansbridge  
Places of Performance in the Anthropocene

November 12, 2020  Peter Cobb  
Investigating Together the Material Space of the Past
FABRICATION AND MATERIAL TECHNOLOGIES LAB

REFOMATIVE CORAL HABITATS

CHRISTIAN J. LANGE, LIDIA RATOI, DOMINIC CO, JASON HU

MARINE BIOLOGY: DAVID BAKER, VRIKO YU, PHIL THOMPSON

Jointly developed by architects and marine scientists at the University of Hong Kong, this project is a novel method for coral restoration making use of specially designed 3D printed artificial reef tiles for attachment by corals to enhance their chance of survival in the Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park in Hong Kong waters.

The restoration project was commissioned by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) as part of the active management of coral communities in the Marine Park. Architects from the Robotic Fabrication Lab, under the Fabrication and Material Technologies Lab of the Faculty of Architecture, and marine scientists from the Swire Institute of Marine Science (SWIMS) of the Faculty of Science at HKU collaborated to produce reef tiles tailored for coral attachment and to monitor the development of the coral community in the Marine Park.

Under the project, 3D printed terracotta reef tiles, designed and developed by the Robotic Fabrication Lab, covering roughly 40m² in total, were deployed in July 2020 at three selected sites within the Marine Park, including Coral Beach, Moon Island, and a sheltered bay near the WWF Marine Life Centre.

The artificial reef tiles are specially designed to aid coral restoration by providing a structurally complex foundation for coral attachment and to prevent sedimentation, one of the major threats to corals. They provide anchors for corals of opportunity, i.e. dislodged coral fragments that are unlikely to survive on their own, giving them a second chance to thrive.

The tiles, seeded with coral fragments, were outplanted in July 2020. Three coral species historically common in the Marine Park, namely Acropora, Platygryra and Pavona, were selected for the study. They have different growth forms, representing the branching “staghorn,” massive “brain,” and foliose “plating” colony forms, creating a diverse habitat for other marine species. Marine scientists at SWIMS will investigate the success of restoration using the mono-, mix- and polyculture of the three coral species, while researchers will monitor the performance of corals on the tiles for the next one and a half years.

The 128 pieces of reef tile with a diameter of 600mm were printed through a robotic 3D clay printing method with generic terracotta clay and then fired at 1125 degrees Celsius. The design was inspired by the patterns typical to corals and integrated several performative aspects addressing the specific conditions in Hong Kong waters.
FABRICATION & MEDIA LABORATORIES

Coupled with a robust network infrastructure and expert staff, the Faculty of Architecture provides a rich educational and research driven environment, allowing students to merge traditional craft-based construction with digital-imaging and fabrication techniques. The Faculty has created a comprehensive, state-of-the-art Fabrication & Media Laboratory, through a combination of the traditional wood workshops with substantial computing, imaging facilities and digital fabrication. The Fabrication & Media Laboratory comprises a wood workshop, CAD lab and individual laboratories focusing on different materials and methods. It is open to all students enrolled in the Faculty of Architecture and provides a range of fabrication equipment, including laser cutters, CNC milling, 3D printers, various traditional machinery and end effectors for the robotic arms. Trained technicians are on hand to offer advice and assistance, and moderate access to the equipment.

WOOD WORKSHOP
The Wood Workshop is equipped with standing machines and both hand and power tools for working in wood, in some plastics, and in soft non-ferrous metals. Students are provided with instruction, and with facilities for model-making and general fabrication methods.

CONCRETE CASTING LAB
The Concrete Casting Lab allows students and researchers to cast prototypes at a variety of scales. The Lab is equipped with a concrete mixer that can mix material up to 80 litres. Students are provided with the necessary instructions from trained technicians to develop successful casts.

PLASTIC FACILITIES
The Fabrication Laboratory offers a set of tools to work on plastic sheet material and foam blocks. The vacuum forming machine allows students to create complex surfaces out of various plastic sheet materials. The foam cutting machines offer students to build simple study models for massing or concept models.

CERAMICS FACILITIES
The Fabrication Laboratory has two electric kilns to work on ceramic models. Models can be made of a variety of clays at different sizes. Students are provided with the necessary instructions from trained technicians to develop successful prototypes and models.

LASER CUTTING LAB
The Laser Cutting Lab operates seven laser-cutting machines of various sizes and capabilities allowing students to cut or engrave patterns into materials such as paper, cardboard, MDF, and cast acrylic sheets. Material thickness can be up to 6mm.

CNC ROUTING LAB
The CNC Routing Lab offers students to fabricate complex geometries via a digitally driven subtractive manufacturing system. Models and prototypes can be milled out of foam and various types of hardwood.

3D PRINTING LAB
The 3D Printing Lab houses a number of digitally driven additive manufacturing systems. Students can utilize the machinery to fabricate simple sketch models, presentation models or even actual parts in a larger assembly system.

ROBOTIC FABRICATION LAB
The Robotic Fabrication Lab consists of two industrial robots with various end-effectors and caters to both subtractive and additive manufacturing processes. The Lab provides the capacity to work on a large range of material systems, such as foam, timber and clay. Its main agenda is to explore the implications of robotics in architectural design through research and teaching.

WATER JET CUTTING FACILITIES
The Fabrication Laboratory provides state of the art water jet machining. Students can cut 2D profiles in materials up to 10cm thick. Materials that can be cut are metal, concrete and ceramics. Students are provided with the necessary instructions from trained technicians to develop successful prototypes and models.

AUDIO VISUAL FACILITIES
The lab is equipped with various audio, visual and sensor-controlled tools to allow students to document their projects to the highest standard. Equipment can be borrowed for field survey and documentation.

CAD LABORATORY
The CAD Laboratory is the main room for teaching software. It hosts more than 50 computers and a third of the computers are replaced each year and most of the software is purchased with upgrade subscriptions.
THE KENNETH FRAMPTON
ARCHITECTURAL BOOK COLLECTION

The Department’s collection of books is primarily focused on architecture and urbanism, and has been assembled over the past half century by Kenneth Frampton, an internationally revered architectural historian and critic. Consisting of approximately 10,000 books, the library combines original architectural documentary material covering a wide range of geographical areas, as well as complementary critical studies and scholarly interpretations. A vital centre of architectural knowledge, the collection embodies the passion and dedication that sustained Professor Frampton’s tireless pursuit of architectural ideas throughout his long career.

In the spring of 2016, with a generous donation from a group of architects in Hong Kong and Mainland China, and the gracious consent of Professor Frampton, the Department of Architecture at HKU shipped the books from his apartment in New York to Hong Kong, where they are placed as part of the permanent collection in the Department. The collection is accessible to HKU teachers and students, visiting scholars and professionals and serves as a cultural base for the Department to build its archival collection and support a broad range of academic programs. With the installation of the Kenneth Frampton Architectural Book Collection, the Department offers a rich source of knowledge, enabling a unique cultural exchange between HKU, the architectural community in Hong Kong, the Asian region and the world at large.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

HKU and the Faculty of Architecture provide merits and need based scholarship opportunities for incoming and current students, including the following:

HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund
HKU Foundation Scholarships for Outstanding Mainland Students
HKU Worldwide Exchange Scholarship
Aedas Travelling Scholarship
P&T Travelling Scholarship
Chiap Hua Cheng’s Foundation Scholarship
Francis Lau Scholarship
Jardine/Henry Lo Scholarship
The Italian Cultural Society of Hong Kong – Leo Tung-hai Lee Fund
The Nascence Scholarships for Postgraduate Students in Architectural Studies
Szeto Wai Architecture Scholarship
Wong Tung & Partners Scholarship
Yu Chun Keung Memorial Scholarship
David Wong Memorial Prize
Fosroc Prize
Ho Fook and Chan Kai Ming Prizes
Hong Kong Institute of Architects Student Medal
J.H. Kinoshita Prizes

Professor K.C. Lye Design Prize in Architecture
Leigh & Orange Design Prize
Minnette de Silva Prize
Sir Ove Arup Prize for Structure
Y.M. Wong Memorial Prize
Reaching Out Award
Rev.Fr.E. Bruzzone Memorial Travelling Scholarship
The Centenary Scholarship Fund
Wharf Architectural Internship
HKIA Student Medal
K&W Architects Scholarship

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

In line with the University of Hong Kong’s commitment to developing a global perspective and cross-cultural understanding among its students, the Department of Architecture has an international student exchange program for advanced undergraduate degree students in architecture with top ranked schools worldwide. This program provides students with invaluable opportunities to benefit from broader perspectives and experiences that diverse academic and cultural environments offer.

Established and semester-long international student study programs are hosted by the following institutions:

EUROPE
Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (Austria)
Ecole Nationale Supérieure d’Architecture Paris Malaquais (France)
IE University (Madrid, Spain)
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (Switzerland)
University of Amsterdam (Netherlands)
University College London (United Kingdom)
Aalto University (Finland)
The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (Denmark)

UNITED STATES/CANADA
University of California (Berkeley, USA)
University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, USA)
Université de Montréal (Quebec, Canada)

MAINLAND CHINA/ASIA/AUSTRALIA
Tsinghua University (Beijing)
Tongji University (Shanghai)
Tianjin University (Tianjin)
Southeast University (Nanjing)
University of Tokyo (Japan)
Griffith University (Brisbane, Australia)
National University of Singapore (Singapore)
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<tr>
<td><strong>AlSayyad, Nezar</strong> President, International Association, IASTE Editor, TDSR Professor, Architecture and Planning, UC Berkeley</td>
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</table>
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