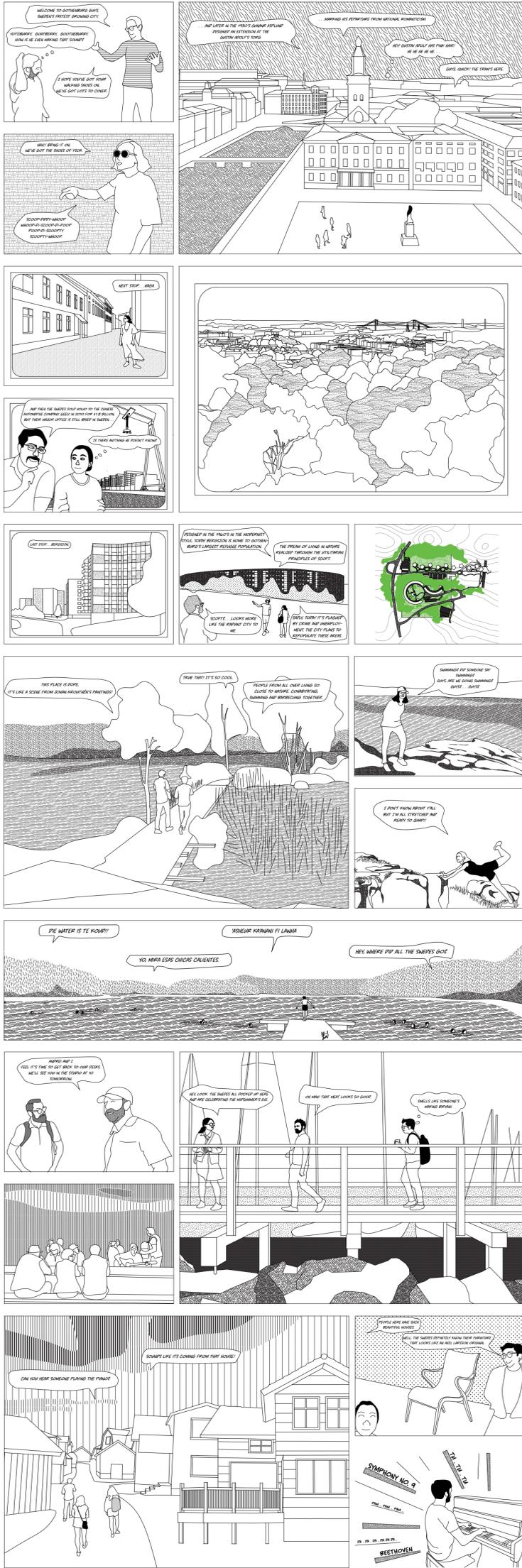


**CARTOONS FROM SWEDEN**  
Varoon Kelekar, M.Arch II 2019



**ROMAN TIME**

By Dimitris Hartonas, M.Arch II 2019

Landing in Rome after a delayed flight, the need to reach your apartment as soon as possible forces you to speed up. Power-walking through the airport's corridors gets you to the luggage claim "on time." But lacking a specific rendez-vous time with your luggage, the sense of urgency you feel is primarily self-imposed - or is it? The same sense seems to be shared by everyone around you - the hasty movements of the passengers through the airport testify to that. The shuttle driver asks you to wait; he has to find two more passengers. The next ten minutes of waiting are agonizing. It feels like the pain comes from the act of pausing. Your pace is interrupted. You are now standing in the middle of the airport, forced to look around and observe. Passengers move in every direction, the clerks try to direct the human traffic, the shuttle drivers are on the lookout for more clients. "Ok, we are ready." Finally the excruciating delay is over, back to moving.

The Robert A.M. Stern Summer Rome Program assembles at the Piazza del Popolo to start the first day of moving through the overstimulating past and present. Reaching the meeting point is exciting. No matter how many times one has been to Rome, there is always more "wandering around history" to do. But first, a long pause. Right in the middle of the piazza, spread within the shadow cast by the obelisk, the assembled crowd awaits the marching signal.

This pause is no less excruciating than the one in the airport, although its objective soon becomes clear. It forces us to stand and look around, to stop assuming and start observing. Sketchbooks quickly make their appearance. It's clear that this month in Rome will force us to slow down. What seems an agonizing interruption of our hasty pace at first will be one of the program's most interesting lessons.

The rhythm of the days to come varies. Hopping on buses, boarding trams, climbing the Capitoline Hill, and walking through the ruins of the Roman Forum quickly transitions to a pause on the plateau by the Tabularium or a stop inside Sant'Ivo. Slowing down, though forced at first, allows for sketchbooks to emerge and observation to begin. One can read about both the Star of David that organizes Sant'Ivo's plan and about the palimpsest of the city. Being on site does not necessarily reveal secrets, but sketching what you see imposes its own rules. Slowing down and looking closely is a valuable way to learn about architecture that goes beyond the Tabularium, Sant'Ivo, or Rome.

This halt provides the time needed to investigate if a shape derives from a circle or an ellipse, question whether the confusion is deliberate, appreciate the optical illusion from various points, and position the effect within the larger context of that architecture. It allows for more complicated readings to emerge, and resists reduction. Inevitably, not all that each site has to offer comes to light, but that realization serves as a reminder to stop, observe, and reflect - for a minute at least - without worrying about doing. The pain of disruption to our hasty pace fades away as the urge to investigate takes over.

**Counselor at a jump rope camp**  
**Stone masonry with an ex-architect from Germany**  
**Close tie between Joeb Moore & Partners and Chipotle**  
**Arctic diamond exploration, Great Bear Lake, Northwest Territories**  
**Eurofood deli counter**

**Now You See Me, Now You Don't**

By @ghostofpaulrudolph

As students abandoned Rudolph Hall at the beginning of summer, mountains of trash spewed out from bins and littered the floor, still damp with tears and Elmer's glue. The thought of freedom filled everyone's minds. While some daydreamed about eating gelato in Rome, acquiring a tan at the beach, or wearing new suits to their first day at RAMSA, others were stuck here in Rudolph Hall. Not the kind of stuck where you find yourself back in school simply because you don't know what else to do, but the kind where you actually have an obligation to be there. Things happened that most of you won't ever see or experience. There is something special and uncanny in the summer banality of Rudolph Hall.

While you were away, the building continued to live a weak, quiet life. Studios were so empty that one could hear every cough, every clack of a keyboard, and every footstep reverberating off the concrete walls. Traversing the taupe and paprika spaces felt like panning through the movie set of *Spreadsheet, New York*; something didn't feel quite right. Since there were so few people in the building, one felt impelled to say hello to any passerby - even those you would never greet during the school year. The fourth, fifth, and seventh floors were closed off, so the likelihood of running into someone on the accessible floors was high. This summer I befriended the janitors, the security guards, John Blood, and the Architecture Foundations students (they don't call them Viz I kids anymore, R.I.P. Viz). Richard became my biggest ally, while the DM guys couldn't wait to get rid of me. One day, Rosalie begged for a visit

to her desk to be relieved from her boredom, and Tim hobbled up to the sixth floor to comment on how rested and happy I looked. Summer Blood whipped out a personal printer and a separate scanner from his unassuming tote bag during the middle of a Viz IV drawing session, refusing offers from his TAs to use the school's all-in-one printers instead. The *Retrospccta* editors burst into cheers and snapped their fingers in the air every time they completed a portion of their book. Architecture Foundations students tore their hair out over the idea of hand-drawing axonometric staircases. Our heroic janitors vanished the piles of garbage, leftover materials, superglued desks, and abandoned model bases. The traces of trash that once exploded from all corners of studio disappeared, and new computer monitors stood shiny and proud on top of pristine desks. The entire building was wiped clean of our presence, as though none of us were ever there.

Today, Rudolph Hall will take on a new life as students filter through the building and come down from the buzz of an end-of-summer high. For another academic year, we will claim this building as our own: our work space, our home, our jail, and our bubble away from the real world. We will become a seemingly integral part of Rudolph Hall and fill it with our experiences and creations, only for them to be erased again next summer. The building will continue to live on without us, for we are merely temporary inhabitants in this concrete shell. In a year or two, other ambitious academics will take our desks and our favorite seats in Hastings Hall, and all of the things we accomplished here will become nothing but traces of our own memories. Like the experiences I viewed from near and far this summer in Rudolph Hall, everything that happens here will mean nothing to anyone but those who profess these memories as their own.

# paprika!

## internal memo

THE ANNUAL FIRST YEAR SURVEY  
HOME IS...

- Shenzhen
- Connecticut
- Jiangsu Province
- Columbus, Ohio
- The Pacific Northwest
- Toronto
- London
- Shanghai
- Quito, Ecuador
- New York City
- China
- Royal Oak, Michigan
- Los Angeles
- Beijing
- Cincinnati, Ohio
- Mumbai, India
- Lakewood, Ohio
- Taiwan
- South London

**Site Analysis: COFFEE ADJACENCIES**

X. Christine Pan, M.Arch II 2020

Comrades, compatriots, consumers - as the school year commences, I bequeath to you the wisdom of one year's time.

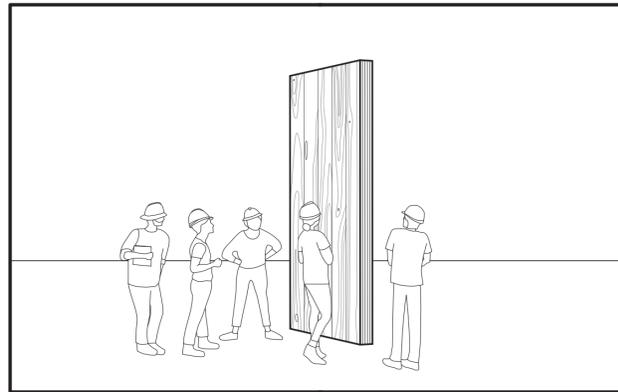
If you seek caffeine, I implore you to ignore the allure of the corner cafes and travel further for your liquid lifeblood. Why would you settle for brown drainwater when Atticus is a few meters down the street, proffering its glittering \$1 coffee deal? You'll blow your budget on cookies and that new square pizza thing, but at least you won't be spending your loan money on whatever burned nonsense Book Trader or Willoughby's is passing off as coffee.

It's not that the intersection of York and Chapel doesn't have some pluses. If you don't mind smelling like what you order, Book Trader makes a decent bagel egg sandwich. When PV is in town, you can find him there almost every morning.

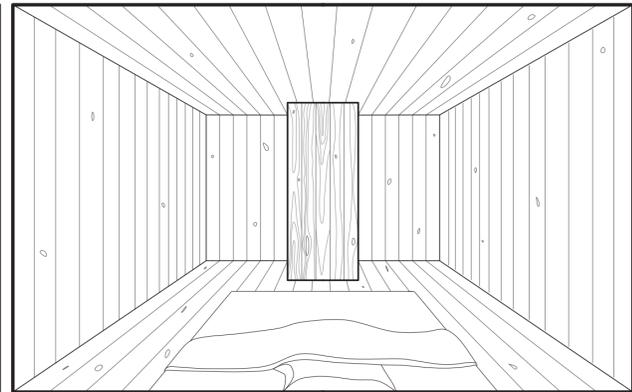
Willoughby's is only acceptable during the traditional five-minute breathing break from Structures or during a rainstorm, but their bagel prices are the best in town. If you adopt the common affectation of brewing coffee in studio, you can buy freshly ground beans here by the quarter pound. The beans are good, as they have yet to be tortured into Willoughby's coffee.

Jojo's coffee, which you can get on the other corner of our block, is similarly non potable but, depending on the employee, you can get a nice americano. Go for the weird atmosphere and to take a break from Atticus.

The latest hours kept by any coffee place is Blue State, which stays open until midnight. However, it's so far away (two blocks? three?) that you might as well go home.



BUILDING PROJECT 2018, KATIE LAU, M.ARCH I 2020



WHY ARCHITECTURE?

I dream of designing special spaces.

Yikes, idk!

Because I like people.

It can be related to everything else, it's flexible.

It's inherently optimistic.

TO: Yale School of Architecture Student Body

FROM: Katie Lau, Andrew E. Miller, and X. Christine Pan

SUBJECT: *Paprika!* Volume 4, Issue 00

DATE: August 30, 2018

*Paprika!* is about us. It's a purely student-driven platform where we decide what's relevant - what we want our peers and faculty to know and discuss. *Paprika!* is a publication built directly from our point of view, so let's use it.

Internal Memo is a letter to ourselves. It's a place to explore our experiences and relationship to our pedagogical environment, and a testing ground for what we would do differently - a space to put forward our conflicting ideologies, and rant about our problems.

This issue, and the publication as a whole, aims to be the mouth of a student body with ideas worth sharing. At the start of a new semester, it's time to reflect on the past year and prepare for the next, so we're sending an Internal Memo.

Graphic Designer: Rosa McElheny  
Coordinating Editors: Andrew E. Miller, Katie Lau, and X. Christine Pan  
Publishers: Matthew Wagstaffe, Dina Taha  
Web Editor: Seth Thompson

The views expressed in *Paprika!* do not represent those of the Yale School of Architecture. Please send comments and corrections to paprika.ysoa@gmail.com. To read *Paprika!* online, please visit our website, www.yalepaprika.com.

I would like to one day do a door schedule.

Just felt from early on that it's what I am supposed to do.

**A SEAT AT THE TABLE**

How often do you feel comfortable taking on a leadership role at your school? Do you feel like all of the students at your school are treated the same regardless of gender? Would you say that ego plays a large role in architecture schools? Take the survey! @ www.aseat.org. Data from the responses will be featured in an exhibition about gender and implicit bias in architecture schools that will open at Yale in October. The names of schools will be part of the exhibition, but all students will remain anonymous. Equality in Design believes it is important to engage critically with the social implications of and within the discipline of architecture. For more information email equalityindesignysoa@gmail.com.

**correction**

We are aware that a comment made in an anonymous survey published in the April 26, 2018 bulletin "Shitty Architecture Men" was unfounded and we wish to clarify any misunderstandings.

The statement that Joel Sanders offers unpaid internships to graduate students is false. JSA has and continues to remunerate all of its employees, including graduate students.

While the issue of unpaid labor in architecture remains important to *Paprika!*, the content of the surveys do not necessarily reflect the views of *Paprika!* or its editors. The published surveys were anonymous opinions. As such, their content was not verified and their veracity should be considered accordingly.

## MEMORANDUM from the desk of

## Darryl Weimer, M. Arch I 2020

### Re: M.Arch I Curriculum Changes

Please pardon the hurried nature of this memo, there just isn't any time to get into this at length at the moment. Anyhow, this past spring Dean Deborah Berke and now Assistant Dean Sunil Bald announced a suite of changes to the curriculum that will take partial effect for the M.Arch I class of 2020, and full effect for the following class years. I would here refer to a document of those changes, but at present I'm unable to locate one. Instead, allow me to recount what I know, what I've heard, and what I can only surmise.

As mentioned by the administration several times now, the curriculum had not undergone any major changes in eighteen years. Again I cannot locate any evidence of this stagnation, but common understanding is that the former Dean at YSoA kept things the way he saw fit. Now under new leadership, the school is anxious to herald a new era – after all, eighteen years is a long time without change.

# Architecture can change people’s lifestyles, the way we think, and further change the world.

# I love it, against my better judgement.

whYSoA?

## That damn building.

# I wanted to attend an institution that would challenge my understanding of design.

## Loved the community

# RESULTS OF THE 2018 Curriculum Survey

Maya Sorabjee, M. Arch I 2020 & Luke Stuebaker, M.Arch I 2019

At most schools, the beginning of the semester is marked by a ritual of online consultation – the feedback of past students informing current ones about the classes they are poised to take. At the School of Architecture, this ritual has long been replaced by a sacred void into which completed feedback forms are ceremoniously dropped, never to be seen again. Instead, students gather at 6 on 7 to pass on advice and opinions in the oral tradition. Perhaps this is better for community and all that, but as an experiment in transparency, a student-issued curriculum survey was conducted in Spring 2018. Below are the results pertaining to Fall core classes.

## COURSE SCORES

Percentages represent the number of students expressing a certain opinion about a course they had taken.

### Most applicable to profession

M.Arch I 3rd Sem. Studio	78%
Structures I	66%
Intro to Planning	57%

### Least applicable to profession

M.Arch I 1st Sem. Studio	31%
Modern Architecture	27%
Formal Analysis	23%

### Assignments are a strength of the course

Formal Analysis	67%
M.Arch I 3rd Sem. Studio	52%
Intro to Planning	50%

### Assignments are a weakness of the course

Visualization II (R.I.P.)	65%
Environmental Design	50%
Structures I	46%

### Readings are a strength of the course

Modern Architecture	56%
Formal Analysis	39%

### Readings are a weakness of the course

M.Arch II 1st Sem. Studio	30%
Intro to Planning	28%
Environmental Design	17%

I cannot recall the overarching goals or a new mission statement to accompany these changes, but presumably, change is inherently good. We don't need to get into the fine print regarding the class-by-class changes; rather a brief glance at the headlines will tell us what we need to know:

OLD: Students will take five courses per semester during the first and second years of the program, and only three courses per semester are required in the third year.

NEW: Students will take four courses per semester for all three years.

PROS: Students are required to take fewer courses overall, thus students can dedicate more time to each individual course of study.

CONS: Students won't enjoy the benefit of taking fewer courses while enrolled in advanced studios.

OLD: Students will be required to take two theory courses during the second year of the program.

NEW: Students will only be required to take one course on theory, now taught during the first year of the program (with the unique situation of the 2018–2019 academic year, during which the first and second year students will be combined into one joint lecture group of approximately 110–120 students. Also, Anthony Vidler will no longer

teach any component of the required theory curriculum).

PROS: Good news for students who don't like theory. Redundancies between the material covered in Professor Forster's history course and the two theory surveys will be eliminated. A comparison between those syllabi would be helpful to identify said redundancies, but time won't permit it just now. One fewer required class means students will have more opportunities to take electives with smaller enrollment, presumably a better environment for engaged learning. We have been assured that plenty of these electives will engage various aspects of theory for those students looking to tailor their education in such a manner.

CONS: Bad for students who like theory. Twice the students, half the time, and fewer faculty. Limited-enrollment electives mean there are fewer overall opportunities to take courses dealing with matters of theory. The student body as a whole will no longer share as robust a foundation in conversations dealing with architecture theory, the ripple effects of which may be inconsequential.

OLD: The Jim Vlock Building Project is the main component of first year, spring semester studio.

NEW: The Jim Vlock Building Project is primarily a part of Building Technology.

## and its design and drawing focus.

# The curriculum prepares students for broader social impact and encourages cross pollination with other fields.

## Paul Rudolph is my zaddy.

## The paprika carpet.

# I loved the wider graduate school community and the class sizes within the program.

# Because of the @shoes.of.YSoA Insta page.

WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY FASCINATED WITH?

# Cacti Architectural tourism

## STUDENT OPINIONS

### Environmental Design

Does not expose us to what is new and possible, only the most conservative methods of building.

This course needs to be more than an inventory of existing ways we outfit our buildings and, in addition, look to ways to think outside the box. The instruction method for Systems Integration is very effective and should be considered for Environmental Design too.

### Formal Analysis

Such an important way to view and read architecture. Everyone who is in architecture should take this course. Readings, however, were often confusing to the central ideas of the course and were just there for general purposes rather than advancing the coursework.

The course is in a way a cult and the politics around whose drawings are chosen and who becomes TAs is exhausting and singular in the school.

Formal Analysis is a bit of a hazing experience for first-year M.Arch I students, but a worthwhile one. The chance to learn the practice from one of its greatest proponents was valuable. Professor Iturbe also adds some freshness to the material. It would be beneficial if the professors worked on the explanation of successful/unsuccessful drawings. There were times where their method of assessment was unclear.

This course should be a second year course. First year students are not equipped with the necessary tools for this class.

### Intro to Planning and Development

It was short-sighted, capitalist, soul-crushing information. A horrible introduction to city planning, and honestly – that just made so many of us taking the course feel even worse toward developers.

I felt that this course only covered planning in regards to real estate business and development, but ignored social and political implications of planning i.e. racially biased history of zoning etc. Lacking in any type of nuance about history, race, socio-economic demography, or other relevant issues in the historic implementation of zoning and planning from governmental organizations and private developers.

The “games” are great learning opportunities but the TAs need to take more responsibility in leading productive workshops. There should be an alternative.

PROS/CONS: I have no idea how this is going to work. I invite you to draw your own conclusions.

OLD: Students will take 3–4 courses in the Visualization sequence during the first year of the program.

NEW: No more Viz.

PROS: Most people didn't love Viz.

CONS: Viz employed five students as teaching assistants each semester.

OLD: Formal analysis has nothing to do with Viz.

NEW: Formal analysis is somehow integrating aspects of Viz.

PROS/CONS: Again, I invite you to draw your own conclusions.

Of course, there's much more being done on a fine-grained level. Every course syllabus has been reviewed, and the conclusions of those reviews are probably somewhere. I regret being unable to go into any further detail at this juncture. However, should you have any questions, my email inbox is always open, presumably so are others. I will conclude with one suggestion: when considering the motivations behind – and impact of – the curriculum changes, it is probably natural to ask, “cui bono?” I would suggest you suppress that urge because, in fact, it's already too late.

# The Advanced Studio Survey

KATIE LAU & DAVID SCHAEINGOLD, M.ARCH I 2020

When I first arrived at YSoA, a third year advised me to tell Dean Berke what critics I would like to have for Advanced Studio. They told me that Dean Berke appreciates student input and that by telling her in my first year, there would be time for her to take my opinions into consideration.

David Schaeingold and I thought it would be even better to collect opinions from our entire class and present them to Dean Berke. While there are many factors that go into selecting Advanced Studio critics, we hope that this information about our interests will help inform her decision-making process.

In the survey, students could add new names to a list and “like” names that were already on it. In the spirit of transparency, we are publishing our results.

Tod Williams  
Billie Tsien  
Elia Zenghelis  
Tatiana Bilbao  
Pier Vittorio Aureli  
Michael Young  
OFFICE KGDVS  
Diller Scofidio + Renfro  
Sam Jacob  
Alejandro Aravena  
David Chipperfield  
Assemble  
SANAA  
Jeanne Gang  
Weiss/Manfredi  
Eduardo Souto de Moura  
Greg Lynn  
Snøhetta  
Renzo Piano  
Keller Easterling  
Sou Fujimoto  
Thomas Phifer  
Forensic Architecture  
Alan Ricks  
Lacaton & Vassal  
Luis Callejas  
Annabelle Selldorf  
Norman Foster  
Bernard Tschumi  
Sylvia Lavin  
James Wines  
Aires Mateus  
Pezo von Ellrichshausen  
Caruso St John  
Andrew Atwood/  
Anna Neimark

## Perception

## The new pace of life in America

# Infectious diseases in cattle, yellow journalism, the Elon Musk/Grimes relationship, and the Oxford Comma Settlers of Catan Indigenous sovereignty

# My new camera Gut health and inflammation

WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY READING?

# Invisible Cities Brecht, but not really

**M.Arch I First Semester Studio**  
Three different prompts in a single semester steers students to produce only what they know, especially in a new environment during the first semester.

Very demanding. Not a lot of time to think through ideas because of so many demands.

A tiring amount of time to spend considering the issue of “storage.”

**M.Arch I Third Semester Studio**  
Good, focused semester with interesting check-in points. I liked the daylighting model as an exercise. Generally strong and open-minded faculty.

I thought this studio was very well organized and well instructed.

**Modern Architecture and Society**  
Curriculum was too Eurocentric.

Lectures were both a strength and weakness because they were expertly delivered, but for students (like myself) with no foundation in architectural history, the subject matter felt very niche. I can't say with confidence that I know anything about the major movements of Modern Architecture, even after completing this course.

This class seemed unfocused, like it wasn't sure if it was architectural theory or history or both.

### Structures I

In theory, connecting to studio was a good idea but in practice it turned out horribly.

I might consider offering Systems and Structures in reverse order. I think it would have helped a great deal to know the basic function of structural members/common materials before taking a more theoretical class.

**Visualization II (R.I.P.)**  
The Viz series should be offered as a series of one-month workshops that address different concepts and most importantly, software/fabrication techniques. There should be more options than the required amount of workshops so students can choose which skills they would like to bolster.

Hand drawing is a useful skill but assignments and lectures could have been better formatted and more applicable.

Outdated, more trouble than it's worth, not applicable to today's architecture; this is an undergraduate level course.

Thom Mayne  
RCR Arquitectes  
Smout Allen  
Alfie Koetter  
Frank Gehry  
Ensamble Studio  
Mansilla y Tuñón  
Michael Meredith  
formlessfinder  
Herzog & de Meuron  
Christ & Gantenbein  
Clark Thenhaus  
Oyler Wu Collaborative  
W X Y  
Emre Arolat  
Valerio Olgiati  
LTL  
Point Supreme  
Stan Allen  
Bruther  
CJ Lim Studio 8  
Norman Kelley  
WOJR  
amid.cero9  
Bolles+Wilson  
Joshua Prince-Ramus  
Jason Payne  
Estudio Teddy Cruz + FONNA Forman  
Philippe Rahm  
O’Donnell + Tuomey  
Álvaro Siza  
Winy Maas  
David Adjaye  
Andrés Jaque  
Anna Heringer  
Ma Yansong  
Ole Scheeren  
Büro Koray Duman  
Mauricio Rocha  
Oualalou + Choi  
Alberto Kalach  
Giancarlo Mazzanti  
Anthony Acciavatti  
Gregory Crewdson  
Pascal Flammer  
Michael Spooner  
The Open Workshop  
Nemestudio  
PARTI  
Christian de Portzamparc  
Amanda Levete  
Alejandro Zaera+Polo  
Pier Paolo Tamburelli  
nARCHITECTS  
Millions  
Emmett Zeifman

## The Handmaid’s Tale

## The Power Broker

# The Memoirs of General William Tecumseh Sherman

# The Vegetarian Design of Cities

## Thinking Architecture

## The Sacred Hoop

## The IKEA catalog

# The Stand Bad Feminist Magician 1984

## Supercritical

## The Lure of Technocracy

# I Am a Cat Horror in Architecture Warlight

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST INTERESTING SUMMER JOB EVER?

## Büro Ole Scheeren

# Social Media Influencer

# Interning as film production intern at The Weinstein Company

# History & Theory (6 Credits)

Andrew Economos Miller M.Arch I 2020

Disciplinary history is one of the most contested parts of an architecture curriculum. It neither imparts technical skills nor – seemingly – hones immediate design abilities, so why teach it in a professional program? Built into any architectural history course is the idea that architecture is more than a technical field. Architectural history, by its very existence, proclaims that the larger discipline is a cultural endeavor. Implicit in every history course is an argument for architectural pedagogy. Yet, there is a crisis in academia's treatment of history. Traditional methods of historical pedagogy are being questioned and reframed in response to changing attitudes toward the use and relevance of the subject. At Yale, our curriculum has changed to require only one comprehensive theory course, implying that only a cursory glance is truly necessary for a “professional” education. But the apparent abandonment of history does not fix the crisis in academia or in the way that architecture disseminates throughout culture.

Take the recent crisis surrounding European Medievalism for example. After last year’s “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, medieval symbolism became a lightning rod for criticism. White supremacists decorated themselves in medieval garb, creating a whitewashed fiction of Northern Europe in that period.<sup>1</sup> Academic medievalists fought the appropriation of these symbols through a public letter on The Medieval Academy Blog. They wrote, “By using imagined medieval symbols, or names drawn from medieval terminology, [white supremacists] create a fantasy of a pure, white Europe that bears no relationship to reality. This fantasy not only hurts people in the present, it also distorts the past.”<sup>2</sup> The far right understands that by shifting the perception of particular histories, they can legitimize their positions. By appropriating Western medieval symbols, they build the fiction of a historical white ethnostate that never existed. These tactics aren't limited to the use of coats-of-arms or regalia; in an article for The New Statesman, Sarah Manavis shows how architectural imagery has been weaponized on social media.<sup>3</sup> These accounts post images of traditional European architecture and vehemently deny any exterior influence, going so far as to erase all Moorish impact on the Alhambra in Granada. By reducing the role of history in the architectural discipline and in the ways that architects share our discipline, we allow bad faith actors to take control of the narrative and shape it for their own agendas.

## Artist assistant in Karlsruhe, Germany

# Art director for a pizza truck wannabe-franchise run by a crazy, fast-talking New Yorker

## Selling fruit

# Designed a house in the Himalayas this past summer

# This summer, I had an internship at Price-WaterhouseCoopers Barber’s apprentice

## Can students change the DNA of the Built Environment?

LlWEI WANG M.ARCH I 2020, MBA 2020

On July 9th, UN Environment and Yale’s CEA (Center for Ecosystems in Architecture) unveiled an Ecological Living Module on the UN Plaza.

This 22-square meter microhouse was intended to be the product of a collaboration between the students of the Brooklyn Navy Yard summer program and CEA, led by professor Anna Dyson. The Brooklyn program, an unpopular option with the second year students, attracted eight students based on an understanding that we would be working on a real project – something where we would participate in the design, fabrication, and execution. The syllabus introduced us to Anna’s mantra for the summer: “Transforming the DNA of the Built Environment,” and stated that “The seminar will culminate with the collaborative design and execution of a Built Environment Ecosystems Unit or ‘BEE Unit’ that integrates emerging technologies for metabolizing energy, water, air flows, and food and waste streams in novel ways that address global environmental imperatives.”

During the spring semester, the program underwent several logistical changes so dates were more closely aligned with the Rome program. As a result, the program ran for a few weeks shorter than what was previously anticipated.

When we arrived at our space in New Lab in May, I was impressed; by the comprehensive symposium-style meeting held on the first day, where Anna’s many collaborators presented new ideas and technologies that could lessen the negative impacts the built environment has on our planet; by the spacious, industrial-tech building where I would be working for two months; and by the receptionists wearing blue, dystopian jackets who showed us that there was sparkling water on tap. However, the grand first impression soon gave way to reveal a great deal of uncertainty. Schedules were made on a week-to-week (and sometimes day-to-day) basis. We knew that there would ultimately be a building delivered to the UN plaza, but our exact involvement remained unclear. Yet, I was optimistic during the first portion of the program. The space, Anna’s collaborators, her many acronyms and prototypes, and the sparkling water painted a rosy picture of the significance of our involvement.

This all changed when we later discovered drawings for a microhouse by Gray Organzchi Architecture strewn across the conference desk in our space, and it quickly became clear that we would have nothing to do with the house to be built on the UN Plaza. Instead, we were to pair up and to design alternative houses in cities around the world – in other words, another studio project. For the remainder

As a response to the original letter on The Medieval Academy Blog and the anti-racist medievalist work undertaken by Dorothy Kim, Rachel Fulton Brown, an associate professor at the University of Chicago wrote: “Richard Spencer and company that are making arguments bringing back a particular vision of Europe, they’re bringing back a fantasy that is their own making, and [that is] instantly punctured if you actually study the history of the Middle Ages; we are creating a fear that is unnecessary.”<sup>4</sup> For many in the field, Brown’s comments left much to be desired. Kim argued that medievalists need to be specifically antiracist in their work, while others pointed out that the general public doesn't study medieval history. Shortly after her initial statement, it came out that Brown was well-acquainted with alt-right pundit Milo Yiannopoulos, likely revealing her initial intent.<sup>5</sup>

This unfortunate anecdote is proof that the academic sphere of architecture requires strong historical pedagogy. As shown in Manavis’s article, architectural history is already being rewritten by the same bad faith actors who have appropriated medieval history, and while academic history courses do not have the reach of a Twitter account, these problems must be fixed here too.

Our historical pedagogy is overdue for reform. It is often taught too directly through objects rather than through the meta-conditions that led to the creation of the architecture, it is often too Euro-centric and hero focused, and it always does a poor job of showing its own relevance. The appropriate response for these issues is not an abandonment of our disciplinary past, but a thoughtful, measured approach to how and what we study as architects. If we stop making our own histories, through both writing and building, then we open ourselves to appropriation and malicious reinterpretation.

1 Brent Bambury, “Medieval History Scholars are Suddenly on the Front Lines in the Fight against White Supremacists,” CBC Radio, October 3, 2017, accessed August 24, 2018, https://www.cbc.ca/radio/day6/episode-357-little-rock-nine-historians-vs-neo-nazis-tabatha-southey-fired-robots-yuval-harari-and-more-1.4309188/medieval-history-scholars-are-suddenly-on-the-front-lines-in-the-fight-against-white-supremacists-1.4309219

2 Chris Cole, “Medievalists respond to Charlottesville,” The Medieval Academy Blog, August 18, 2017, accessed August 24, 2018, http://www.themedievalacademyblog.org/medievalists-respond-to-charlottesville

3 Sarah Manavis, “How Architecture-themed Twitter Accounts Became a Magnet for White Nationalism,” The New Statesman, August 14, 2018, accessed August 24, 2018, https://www.newstatesman.com/science-tech/social-media/2018/08/how-architecture-themed-twitter-accounts-became-magnet-white

4 Nick Roll, “A Schism in Medieval Studies, For All to See,” Inside Higher Ed, September 19, 2017, accessed August 24, 2018, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/09/19/one-professors-critique-another-divides-medieval-studies

5 Josephine Livingstone, “Minutes,” The New Republic, accessed August 24, 2018, https://newrepublic.com/minutes/140786/university-chicago-professor-gone-off-milo-yiannopolouss-opponents-calling-spineless-cnts

# Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad

# Facilities Assistant at the Knowlton School of Architecture

# Conducting design workshops with rural artisans in the interior villages of India

## Muralist assistant

# Muralist assistant

# Muralist assistant

of the program, I was left feeling frustrated. We were drawing airflow

diagrams while the other members of CEA participated in working sessions and conference calls about the UN House. In addition, it was clear that the UN house was CEA’s main priority, and there did not seem to be enough time to properly plan a thoughtful scope of work or engaging field trips. As another student of the program put it: “It was obvious the day-to-day work was not well thought out, and our ultimate projects only materialized as an addendum to an ongoing larger project we could only glimpse from the periphery.”

I made a commitment to the program based on the expectation that I would contribute to the design of a built project. I’m sure each of the eight students in the program gave something up to be a part of the Brooklyn program: paid wages and work experience, or time spent with family and loved ones, to name a few. However, at New Lab, I felt that CEA didn’t trust us with the task of contributing design work. In turn, I was disappointed when I realized that we were, once again, working on a paper project. Personally, I don’t care about working on the UN House. What I do care about is the difference between expectations and reality; between what we were sold (because we were sold on this) and what we got. This difference is a problem because, in my opinion, the establishment of trust is deeply important in learning environments, as it forms the basis of knowledge exchange. We have to trust the information we receive in order to process and learn from it.

I don’t want it to sound like I gained nothing from this summer program. I created work that I am proud of, and I did indeed learn from Anna, as well as her team of PhD students who shared their research and ideas with us. Furthermore, it was fun to live in Brooklyn. This article is less about what happened, and more about the why: why did this program exist in the first place? It seemed, if anything, we were a burden to CEA. Why were we not given the opportunity to at least provide feedback, much less work on the UN House? After all, most of us have gone through the Building Project; surely we were qualified to produce drawings for a 22-square-meter house.

On the last day of the program, we had a final review for the four student projects. It proceeded in a typical fashion; each team presented to a panel of invited guests who engaged us with thorough discussion and critique. After the student presentations, Lisa Gray from Gray Organzchi Architecture presented the UN House. In what felt like a surreal parody of the architecture review, the to-be-built project received a chorus of superficial praise from critics who only minutes before were examining our proposals with a magnifying glass.

Issues of objectivity aside, this reaction makes clear the difference between student and professional projects, and illustrates the underlying dynamic of this summer program: They were transforming the DNA of the built environment, not us.