ARCHITECTURE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Some mischievous spirit has defined America as a country that has moved from barbarism to decadence without enjoying any intermediary phase of civilization. The formula could be more correctly applied to the towns of the New World, which pass from freshness to decay without ever being simply old.

It is not simply that they have been newly built; they were built so as to be renewable as quickly as they were put up, that is, badly. When new districts are being created, they are hardly integral elements of the urban scene; they are too gaudy, too new; too gay for that. They are more like stands in a fairground or the pavilions of some international exhibition, built to last only a few months. After that lapse of time, the fair closes and the huge gewgaws lapse into decay; the facades begin to peel, rain and soot leave their grimy trails, the style goes out of fashion, and the original layout disappears through the demolitions caused by some new building fever.

Claude Levi-Strauss,
Tristes Tropiques

This change (in the relative environmental presence of architecture and objects) has not just shifted the centre of gravity from architecture to design but has in fact created a new metropolitan theorem. This theorem recognizes that changes in the metropolis take place not only through the construction of architectural structures, road systems or urban services, but also through the renewal of the system of objects and individual commodities that improve and transform the cultural and technical fitness of places for habitation, creating the city of the present inside that of the past and that of the future inside that of the present one.

Andrea Branzi,
Learning from Milan

To study everyday life would be a completely absurd undertaking, unable even to grasp anything of its object, if this study was not explicitly for the purpose of transforming everyday life.

Guy Debord,
Perspectives for Conscious Alterations in Everyday Life

Sous les paves, la plage. (*Under the paving stones is the beach.*)

1968 student motto in the Paris barricades

Well, sir, it's this rug I had. It really tied the room together.
Jeff "the Dude" Lebowski in "The Big Lebowski"

Course: 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm Fridays, main lecture hall

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Office hours and test help seminars to be arranged in discussion with the class.

CITY-BUILDING

Planning and Design

The city as it was in the past, as it is today, and as it could be built, will be the broad subject of this course. Along with an equally broad philosophical and theoretical picture of the relationship between the city and its constituent architecture, the course will also offer a basic introduction to the divergent practices of urban design and planning.

To architecture students, urban study and especially the more abstract policy driven methodology of urban planning, will at times seem un-architectural and moving into overly generalized territory, one having little to do with the pleasure of designing and making concrete things: buildings, gardens, objects of daily use to name a few.

To experienced architects, however, the city has often been the field of their speculation, one that gives a unifying ground to all of their other design work and theoretical frameworks; the city, like Lebowski's rug, that pulls the ensemble or collage of individual, often fragmentary, architectures together. Speculation is meant here both as a theoretical understanding or as an economic venture, the former giving a broader significance to individual works, and the latter as the socio-economic driver of professional practice; how an architect "gets the job" as 19th century Chicago architect H.H Richardson so pithily remarked.

Urban design of the type practiced by architects and promoted in their journals and online publication often appears to urban planners to be the reverse of what might be considered good urban planning methodology. Professional planners typically think of architects as being overly pre-occupied with building physicality, form, material exposition, and ultimate appearances. Planners are convinced that architects are unwilling to understand the underlying social and economic processes at work in urban development.

Urban planning today, especially as practiced in North America, usually stops its working process at the level of public policy and regulation of land use. It often remains satisfied with being a kind of referee for a very competitive financial game of privately driven speculative urban development. This refusal to specifically shape the physical form of our cities is usually built into the planning acts and founding legislation of most North American planning systems, a situation that for most architects is simply wrong-headed and frustrating if the desired goal is a well-designed urban place.

In this situation, the big question for architects is, where is urban design to find its place in the "big picture" of city building with all of its actors: urban planners, engineers, landscape architects, land developers, politicians, citizens, and also, other architects? In contrast to urban planning, and more typical of the discipline and focus of architectural design, the emphasis in urban design is, and has always been, on the desirable concrete built result, the city itself as an object of objects with a broader set of designated and protected liminal spaces that allows all to co-exist and function effectively, and elegantly. Urban design, as is practiced in all its various ideological and methodological "colours", is a design discipline which has filled that gap in the relationship between the city as an object of policy and functional control, and the city's designed and evolved physical form. It is a discipline which gives pre-eminence to the urban project, and not necessarily only to good urban policy and regulation of urban functions, building setbacks, and population densities.

The physical form and character of the city is the goal of urban designers, and not an end result based solely on adherence to good policy as is normally emphasized and practiced by planning

professionals. For that reason, urban designers in practice today have usually been trained primarily in architecture or landscape architecture schools. Urban design is the professional territory of architects.

The Focus is on the Urban Design Project

The urban project will be a central focus in this course. It and its qualities will be defined with respect to the more concrete aspects of the city: its buildings, neighbourhoods, streets, parks, infrastructures, and institutions. Urban design is about conceiving and building a "big picture". It is not about creating complicated architectural projects done at a large scale, and this truth must be emphasized in a course taught in an architecture school.

Urban design projects must still seriously deal with issues that are normally unfamiliar or peripheral to architects' primary concerns of building. Instead, property relationships, social divisions, politics, finance of real estate speculation, and the interaction on every level between buildings and the physical implications of the urban infrastructures that sustain our cities, all become key issues and elements of the urban design project.

The course will also examine a middle ground between the two disciplines of architecture and urban planning. This view of the urban design profession emphasizes urban projects as a means for changing the city; concrete urban interventions to give form and structure to the more "abstract" issues of speculation and governance, finance and politics, and the search for a shared destiny. This middle ground of building the city will be the main subject of this course.

Urban Design and Civic Destiny

The course will not offer ideal urban design approaches as panaceas for resolving the above middle ground. There will be no favoured ideological viewpoint from which design will be made easy; no simple formulas like "Modernism" or "New Urbanism" or "Landscape Urbanism" or the "New Metropolitan Field".

This course will instead locate urban design theory and practice at the heart of the societal conflict between the deeply rooted forces of history and destiny, and those more weightless Modernistic impulses of technology and ongoing unstoppable search for "the new". It will offer a range of definitive points of view for understanding the role of planning, and building and landscape design, in the urban environment. Finally, it will seek to offer useful tools and concepts for the architectural 'player' in the economic and political dynamics by which cities are conceived and developed.

The architecture of the city and that of the broader metropolitan area will be conceived both as an analytical discourse with its own terminology, and a synthetic discourse emphasizing the physical construction of the city as a continuing series of projects. Its approach will be founded in architecture as the ultimate physical manifestation of the entire complex discourse that goes into shaping the broader urban development process and, even more, shaping the places in which we all live, work and play.

LIST OF READINGS

Books

- Aldo Rossi, "Architecture of the City", MIT press

On LEARN
- Alex Lehnerer, "Grand Urban Rules", naio1o publishers, Rotterdam, selections on LEARN
- Chapters from John Sewell, "Shape of the City"
- Le Corbusier, "The City of Tomorrow", (pp. 106-126), (pp. 157-247)
- Paul Virilio, "The Overexposed City" from "Zone 1 / 2"
- Gerald Hodge, Planning Canadian Communities, (pp. 137-169), (pp. 221-248)
- Michael Hough, "Cities and Natural Processes", (pp. 32-96)

There will be readings assigned on LEARN which will cover the Garden City, urban parks, and post war suburban Modernism, and gentrification of urban centres.

COURSE WORK AND EVALUATION

Reading Test 1 on theory, In-class test, 1 hour	**30**
Reading Test 2 on theory, In-class test, 45 min.	**30**
Final Urban Design Exam, 11th December, 2 hours, e-classroom	**40**
Total	**100**

TIMETABLE, WEEKLY READINGS, AND TESTS

Date	Lecture Topic	Cities	Readings Due
Week 1 **September 07**	Course Introduction, Urban Plans and Urban Planning Rossi's,' Architecture of the City' Urban Artifacts, Monuments, Typology, and Morphology Primary Elements, Permanences	Rome, Siena, Padua, Florence	**Studio work, Mon, Thurs** **Weekly structures assignment**
Week 2 **September 14**	Residential Areas or Districts Architecture and Public Space	Fruges, Bordeaux The Beaches, Toronto	Rossi, Introduction and Ch.1 (Description, Classification, Typology, Urban Artifacts), (pp. 21-61) **Studio work, Mon, Thurs** **Weekly structures assignment**
Week 3 **September 21**	Roads and Streets: Space and System Infrastructure and the Metropolitan City	Metro Toronto Boston Big Dig City Beautiful: Chicago and Toornto	Rossi, Ch.2 (Study Areas, Residential Areas (pp. 62-85), (Primary Elements, Morphology, Transformation) (pp. 86-101) **Studio work, Mon, Thurs** **Weekly structures assignment**
Week 4 **September 28**	Public Space and Locus	Traditional cities, Torino, Paris Ottawa, Washington	Rossi, Chapter 3 **Studio work, Mon, Thurs** **Weekly structures assignment**
Week 5 October 05 **No Arch 327 class Oct. 12 for study days**	**Test 1, Urban Theory, Analysis** 30%, Two hour in class test		**Thanksgiving Weekend Oct 6-8 followed by study days** **Studio work, Mon, Thurs** **Weekly structures assignment**
Week 6 **October 19**	Garden City Land Systems	Hampstead Garden Suburb, London Central Park and Riverside Toronto Don and Erin Mills	Garden City readings, Sewell and more, TBA, Michael Hough, TBA **Responsible on test for reading material to end of Week 4.** **Studio work, Mon, Thurs** **Weekly structures assignment**
Week 7 **October 26**	Speculation		**Studio work, Mon, Thurs** **Weekly structures assignment** **Toronto co-op interviews**

Date	Lecture Topic	Cities	Readings Due
Week 8 **November 02**	Land-Use Planning and Speculation Land-Use Planning and Regulation Zoning, Controls, Guidelines	Ataritiri (now West Donlands)	Rossi, Chapter 4 Hodge, Planning and Zoning, (pp. 137-169), (pp. 221-248) **Studio work, Mon, Thurs** **Weekly structures assignment**
Week 9 **November 09**	Modernisms and Modern Planning **Test 2: Planning & Development** 30%, Two hour in class test.	Chicago, New York, The Barbican, Tallinn Soviet City, Brasilia, Firminy	Le Corbusier, selections from "The City of Tomorrow" **Studio work, Mon, Thurs** **Weekly structures assignment**
Week 10 **November 16**	Edge Cities Downtown Gentrification	Yorkdale and Square One Suburban Intensification Main Streets/Avenues/LRTs	**Studio work, Mon, Thurs** **Weekly structures assignment**
Week 11 **November 23**	Post-Modernisms: New Urbanism Neo-Modernism	New Urbanism: Seaside and Cornell	Virilio, "The Overexposed City" from Zone 1/2 Rynnimeri, "The Metropolitan Village from" AD, The Periphery", "Deep Pockets" from "Canadian Architect" **Studio work, Mon, Thurs** **Structures Final Exam**
Week 12 **November 30** **Last lecture**	The Green Hybrid Metropolis The Informal City **In class review for the Final Design Exam**	Seaton New Town The "Healthy Village" Zanzibar	Hough, "Cities and Natural Processes", (pp 32-96) **Studio work, Mon, Thurs** **Weekly structures assignment**
Week 13	**End of classes, December** **Exams begin, December**		**December studio hand-ins**
Last Week **December 11** **Final Exam**	**Final Exam, Urban Design 40%** **Exam will be written in the e-classroom, 10 am to 1:30 pm**		**Please bring a calculator, a mid-sized set square, an architect's scale and a roll of tracing paper (useful for an 11" by 17" page size) to the final exam.**

UNIVERSITY POLICIES ON ACADEMIC BEHAVIOR

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information.]

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm. When in doubt please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/] to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 (Student Petitions and Grievances) (other than a petition) or Policy 71 (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 (Student Appeals) www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm.

Note for Students with Disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without comproising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

ARCH 327 TEST ONE ON URBAN THEORY
30% OF THE FINAL GRADE (CITY IMAGE TO BE PROVIDED IN THE TEST)

Analysis of urban places inevitably involves the interpretation of documentary material whether an urban plan, a city view, aerial photographs, or simply finding a high point like the CN Tower or Mont Real. The intent of this test is to engage your ability to infer analytically useful patterns from an image of a city. This will help when you are in a new city like Rome with its seven hills. Finding and examining these patterns will use the basic theoretical terminology of the course. The terminology used in the two questions below is from Aldo Rossi's "Architecture of the City" and the class lectures. I will place a number urban images of 19th century cities on LEARN to use for your practice study as outlined below.

The Question

Question 1 will have five parts and will be answered in reference to the city image provided in the test. Answer each question in a brief paragraph combined with any necessary small sketches. Observe and be precise. Each of the five sub-questions below is worth 20 marks out of a total of 100.

1. What are the primary elements of the city in the image and how have they propelled the development of the city form?

2. What is the more detailed morphology of the city's plan? Describe its street hierarchies, public spaces, natural places, plan geometries, and any other significant features.

3. What are the urban artifacts of the city? Are there any monuments? Are there any interconnections between the urban artifacts, the monuments, the primary elements, and the plan morphology of the city?

4. Are there any more general or generic building types evident in the image? Where are the residential districts in the city? What are their predominant residential building types? Show directly on the city image, with approximate indications, the location of those more general residential districts and their relationship to the city's broader morphology and urban artifacts. You may provide explanatory notes on the borders of the city image.

5. What are the infrastructures and networks that contribute to the city's overall functioning by providing a safe and comfortable place to live, and an efficient and profitable place to work? Are there any of those infrastructures that are represented by singular built objects that stand out in the city fabric?