

Race & Space: Land and Architecture

ARCH 684

Instructor: Rafico Ruiz

FRONT MATTER to be inserted

Learning outcomes; evaluations; accommodations; etc

Description

How do we think about the direct relationship between architecture and the land? This seminar positions race, space, and the built environment as a series of methodological propositions. Thinking with a literature of black and brown consciousness, decolonial theory, and Indigenous environmental scholarship, the seminar will interrogate the agency of design, representation, and research in relation to land and architecture under conditions of imperial duress, dispossession, settlement, and extraction. Students will learn how to apprehend racialized evidence in architectural research; how to recognize alternative legal orders in the built environment; and the architectural foundations underpinning property and land.

The seminar works through the damaged ecologies created by modernization in order to examine their sited ramifications for architecture and land. The building of 'modern' architectures, infrastructures, and other material arrangements of the world have concealed forms of title to stolen land. Yet these arrangements, through their current rethinking, can also push architects to understand decolonization as a material process whose specificity centers the role of architecture (and its histories) in the dispossession of land and its return.

Land and architecture coincide in a material politics that spurs inquiry into historical regimes of ownership and resurgent claims to inhabited, borderless ecologies. Students will explore radical histories of land and architecture, with a view to creating new methodological propositions for design research.

Structure

Each seminar will be structured by two phases. The first, Study Room, consists of student-led presentations of the assigned readings. This is a space for critical reflection and for the asking of questions. Also, various guests will appear here and lead our discussions. This space depends on participants being generous and coming to the seminar prepared. The second, Studio, will allow for group-based work around a collective project. This is a space to make and try out ideas, arguments, ways of representing. When it is useful it will also be a space for experimentation, with groups presenting work in progress for feedback and dialogue.

Assignments/Project

Each student will lead or co-lead one week of seminar discussions (ie the Study Room). They will come prepared with a brief presentation that lays out the key areas of debate the readings open up.

The semester will be geared towards a single collective project (with sub groups of 3-4 participants) that the entire seminar will work towards. While evaluation will be based on the small groups, the aim is that the areas of focus of these subgroups coincide so that the seminar as a whole can collectively make a shared intervention in the field. In addition, each sub group will contribute primary research towards a shared seminar archive that will be the basis of the collective project as a whole. The Studio portion of the seminar during weeks 1 and 2 will be given over to group discussion around potential collective project themes. For example, these could range from diverse models of alternative territorial ownership and/or stewardship, to sited 'kin studies' that complexify how architecture and land are in relation.

Seminar organization:

W1 – Introduction– Race & Space: Land Practices

Part I – Race & Space: The Field

W2 – Racial Evidence in Architecture (& Guest Lecture - tba)

W3 – Legalities

W4 – Guest Lecture - tba

Part II – Race & Space: Land

W5 – Property

W6 – Indigenous-led Design (& Guest Lecture – tba)

W7 – Guest Lecture - tba

Part III – Race & Space: Infrastructure

W8 – Water

W9 – Energy (with material in the CCA Study Room - *public health measures permitting)

W10 – Guest Lecture - tba

Part IV – Race & Space: Mapping

W11 – Planetary Futures

W12 – Group presentations

W13 – Group presentations

Sample Readings

Amimoto Ingersoll, Karin. *Waves of Knowing: A Seascape Epistemology*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2017.

Bhandar, Breanna. *Colonial Lives of Property*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2019.

Campt, Tina. *Listening to Images*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2017.

Dafnos, Tia, and Shiri Pasternak. "How does a Settler State Secure the Circuitry of Capital?" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 36(4) (2018): 739-757.

Fujikane, Candace. *Mapping Abundance for a Planetary Future*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2021.

Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2017.

Hilal, Sandi, Alessandro Petti, and Eyal Weizman (eds.). *Architecture After Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2013.

Sharpe, Christina. *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016.

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Todd, Zoe. "Indigenizing the Anthropocene." *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters among Aesthetics, Politics, Environment and Epistemology*. London: Open Humanities Press, 2015.

Tuck, Eve, and Wayne Yang. "Decolonization is not a Metaphor." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1(1) (2012): 1-40.

Yusoff, Kathryn. *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018.