USC

Architecture

ARCH642L - Landscape Architecture Design

Units:

Spring —Mon. Fri—12pm till 6pm

Location: TIMME RESEARCH CENTER, 3rd FLOOR WATT HALL

USC SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

Instructor: Peter Culley

Practice Office: Spatial Affairs Bureau, 333 S Spring Street, Unit G1

Office Hours: 9-6pm generally, but appointments must be made in advance

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IT Help: contact Architecture Office

Hours of Service: architecture office hours

Contact Info: architecture office

As a follow on from last semester's studio prompt, each student will now continue with their own directed research.

For reference, here is the original studio prompt from semester 1.

Los Angeles. Non-Native, Rich, Thin?

Cosmopolitanism is often cited as a definer of the healthy city. Yet we grapple with the fact that in Los Angeles only a very small proportion of the population is truly 'indigenous'. In Southern California there is a lingering sense of displacement in the name of the advancing megalopolis. Meanwhile, other idiosyncrasies of our city might be described as curiously or even unacceptably 'foreign'.

The film industry continually remakes the city in fiction as it chooses, and the freeway network lays itself down as a thin layer of engineered geometries seemingly at odds with the ground surface. And yet these are also new native conditions in the eyes of outsiders, ecologies that define the city if not the earlier region. And in fundamental terms, the city's primary reason for being, the Los Angeles River, has no resemblance to its natural course, materiality or even water provision, and is in many ways a motif for the city's extraordinary and fast move away from its native mode. The many species of plants found in well-tended front yards, corporate plazas and public parks are historically typical in being conspicuously non-native and often deemed invasive. Now a growing best practice approach has become the use of plants native to the region and an increased focus on drought tolerant xeriscapes.

But if currently perceived best practices in water recycling—"gray water"—develop as legislation intends, in the generally flat and densely populated LA basin, a picture of gray water abundance emerges— think of every washing machine load run and every shower taken—way beyond the limits of what a typical 'native' habitat can handle. An image of verdant gardens, perhaps even micro-farms and citrus groves from one back yard to the next sits at odds, set against the arid expanses of uninhabited 'too steep' hillsides, themselves a picture of the effects of increased drought and climate change. The theme of this year, which we have set in another, namely 2027, takes for granted this new potential gray water scenario, but also focuses heavily on the native/non-native discourse, on many levels.

Looking initially at the wider Los Angeles area, and then observing the microcosm of the riverside community of Frogtown and its strong binary conditions, we will look for poetry between the natural and artificial, and both rigorously and open-mindedly form individual positions. Armed with visits to the consciously 'concocted' interpretive setting (Huntington Library, Descanso Gardens); the more domestic yet highly controlled (Beverly Hills); balanced with moments of the corrupted wilderness (Griffith Park, Elysian Park and Ballona Wetlands), we expect proposals and theses that range from urban scale to domestic, that revel in 'thin' as much as 'deep'.

Course Notes

Grading Type:

Credit, No-Credit system.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Basic skills in Rhino, Adobe Creative Suite, model making,

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Reading list for reference:

Conspicuous California Plants, Ralph D. Cornell, 1938

Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies, Rayner Banham, 1971

The Culture of Nature, Alexander Wilson, 1992

The Landscape Imagination, Collected Essays of James Corner, 1990-2010, Edited James Corner andAlison Bick Hirsch, 2014

Never Built Los Angeles, Greg Goldin and Sam Lubell, 2013

Selected Essays by Gilles Clément

Description and Assessment of Assignments

The already distributed 'thesis folio' is the backbone of the structure for the semester. The pdf of the folio is included with this statement.

The contents summary, which is effectively a basis for the timetable, is included here for reference:

Semester 1 should have given you a strong starting point for the first two headings, Thesis Orientation and Seeking a Tone.

Thesis Orientation
Title
Subtitle
Abstract

Seeking a tone
Mise en place
Interrogation
Pitch
Mise en scène

Ensure that you have included all work to date, in analogue or digital form (most likely some combination) in these sections.

In this semester, you will complete each of the following components, with three formal assignments: 'myopic alternates', 'the interface' and 'atmospheric immersion'.

Position
Site geography
Archival research
Interlude 1: myopic alternates
Survey
Analysis
Function: occupation
Interlude II: the interface
Design iteration
Ecological positioning
- Material research
- Technologies
- Horticultures

Proposition
Interlude III: atmospheric immersion
Exhibit
Publication

Conclusion
Reflection
Resilience statement

Reference
Bibliography
Image Credits
Lab notes
Appendix I
Appendix II

Review
Domain expert review

Key dates

Jan 9 – Jan 16

Assignment 1: Myopic Alternates

Feb 6 – Feb 10

Assignment 2: The Interface

Feb 24

Mid term review

March 13-17

SPRING BREAK

March 20 – March 24

Assignment 3: Atmospheric Immersion

May 8-10

THESIS PRESENTATIONS

May 12

COMMENCEMENT

all dates provisional and subject to confirmation

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* http://equity.usc.edu or to the *Department of Public Safety* http://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/ provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage http://sarc.usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information http://emergency.usc.edu* will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.