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Instructor: Andy Ku

Units: 2

Term: Fall 2024

Arch 590 Directed Research Proposal

Extending Gay Asian American Culture in West Hollywood



(Nymphia Wind 2024, the Black and Lesbian Gay Centre in London 1985)

The goal for this research project is to investigate building space for the gay Asian American community inside West Hollywood. By studying different precedents involving person of color space making as well as cultural context within the queer community, I plan to develop a design form that promotes Asian American cultural inclusion within West Hollywood's built environment - inspiring multiculturalism that promotes diversity and inclusion of different queer identities. From this, I hope the project not only inspires gay Asian American community and sense of belonging within West Hollywood, but also generates elation in representing shared values.

Proposed Research

The gay Asian experience in West Hollywood based on Dr. Gilbert Caluya's writings of "belonging."

Dr. Gilbert Caluya discusses how for many members of the gay Asian community, they experience of a sense of "unbelonging" within the gay community. He defines that belonging "is a fantasy of a socio-cultural space where differences do not impede on feeling connected with others." Unfortunately, many not only experience "unbelonging"

within their heteronormative family unit and general society due to their queerness, but they also experience additional layer of “unbelonging” within the gay community due to their race and culture. Since the built gay environment is primarily cisgender gay white representative, members of the gay Asian community often experience anti-Asian racism within the community if not at least a lack of Asian cultural representation in queer spaces. My directed research proposal is investigating to the causes of the lack of Asian belonging within the built environment of West Hollywood’s gay community and propose small scale design interventions asserting representation and positive Asian American community affirmation, by utilizing architectural and cinematic cultural research.

The analysis of urban designer John Chase’s significant impact on the urban landscape of West Hollywood and the lack of people of color representation.

Urban designer John Chase outlines much of his thought process in designing West Hollywood from 1992 to 2009 in his book Glitter Stucco, and Dumpster Diving. Although he pushed for an abundance of public open spaces serving the community, his fervent embracement of Anglo-revivalist architecture left little room for representation of people of color in the built environment of West Hollywood. His adamant push for John Woolf and Wallace Neff’s Neo-Georgian and Spanish Colonial Revivalist Architectural, coupled with his disdain for architects being “free to pursue their own concerns,” resulted in West Hollywood’s primarily white cisgendered upper middle-class identity within the built environment, forcing out other queer cultural representation. This undoubtedly proves Queer Theorist Jose Esteban Munoz’s critiques of Lee Endelman’s theory of “No Future” regarding the queer community. The future of queer communities outside of the cisgendered gay white male identity is not secure or represented in the built environment. Therefore, the press for multicultural queer futurism and the “queer utopia” is essential.

Analysis of gay cinematography and possible project applications.

Reflective of Munoz’s elucidation that the future of people of color within the queer community is not guaranteed, Dieyi’s realization that 1977’s China has no room for his queer identity leads to dire consequences in the film, Farewell my Concubine. Similarly in the movie, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Hedwig Schmidt comes to the same realization in Communist East Germany. However, it was Hedwig’s musical storytelling that paved the road in their hero’s journey to self-love and acceptance. Ironically, despite the tragic storyline, Farewell my Concubine’s international success as a film lead to China’s de-censorship of the film and indirect acknowledgement of the existence of queer identities within China. This emphasizes the idea that defiant art and cultural expression outside governmental regulations and corporate stipulations is essential to push multicultural representation that drives the progress of a community.

Exclusivity of West Hollywood and solutions to push people of color inclusiveness and community.

West Hollywood has been embracing further gay white cis male exclusivity, while ostracizing other queer and racial communities. This can be seen by its recent practices of adopting major corporate sponsorships and charging \$139 for general admission to pride when pride had historically been free of charge to ensure accessibility to all queer groups with variant financial means. Therefore, I plan to research maverick government independent queer spaces such as the Black and Lesbian Gay Centre in London, a space where “black lesbians and gay men challenging homophobia in the black communities and racism in the white lesbian and gay communities.” Pop up queer spaces in Dhaka, Bangladesh are another source of inspiration regarding creating space despite existent laws. I also plan to study Frei Otto’s temporary tensile structures such as the Munich Olympic Park for the 1972 Summer Olympics as well as the Dance Pavilion in the 1972 Federal Garden Exhibition. Through the study of Otto’s tensile structures, I hope to gain insight in designing a temporary space that is easily packable, portable, and assembled independent of West Hollywood’s city regulations. I also plan to research Felicia Davis’s use of textiles and weaving methodologies in her projects and installations. Through the study of garment and textile design, I hope the space is not only easily packable but also evocative of the aesthetics and design rationale of Peking opera costuming.

Applying gathered research to a small-scale design solution in West Hollywood.

Utilizing gathered research, I intend to design a temporary tensile multipurpose structure that can be quickly assembled and disassembled in West Hollywood Park outside city regulations. Utilizing the concepts of phenomenology, the pavilion will allude to the aesthetics of *Farewell my Concubine*, *lianpu*, and gay Asian design rationale that West Hollywood is severely lacking. The project would create an easily assembled community gathering space for the gay Asian community in West Hollywood. Resultantly, Asian American culture is extended to West Hollywood. From this I hope to progress multicultural “belonging” in West Hollywood.

Required Reading

Ahmed, Sara. *Orientations: Toward a Queer Phenomenology*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.

Caluya, Gilbert Phd. “The Gay Scene of Racism: Face, Shame, and Gay Asian Males.” *Australian Critical Race and Whiteness Studies Association*. Vol. 2, No 2, 2006.

Caluya, Gilbert Phd, "Unbelonging: Anti-Asian Racism in Australia's Gay Community." *Melbourne Asia Review* Edition 16, 2023.

Chase, John. *Glitter Stucco, and Dumpster Diving: Reflections on Building Production in the Vernacular City*. New York: Verso, 2004.

Furman, Adam Nathaniel and Joshua Mardell. *Queer Spaces: An Atlas of LGBTQIA+ Places and Stories*. London: Riba Publishing, 2022.

Hsu Jen-Hao. *Queering Chineseness: The Queer Sphere of Feelings in Farewell my Concubine and Green Snake*. Ithaca, Cornell University, 2012.

Moatasim, Faiza. *Master Plans and Encroachments: The Architecture of Informality in Islamabad*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2023.

Munoz, Jose Esteban. *Cruising Utopia; The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York: NYU Press, 2009.

Nguyen, Melissa and Long Ding. *Queering Public Spaces: Exploring New Design Methodologies to Liberate Queer Experiences in Public Buildings and Community Spaces*. Los Angeles: Perkins & Will, 2023.

Norberg-Schulz, Christian. *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*. New York: Rizzoli, 1979.

Vallerand, Olivier. *Home is the Place We Share: Building Queer Collective Utopias*. Montreal: McGill University, 2013.

Required Movie List

Kaige, Chen. *Farewell My Concubine*. Miramax Films, 1993.

Mitchel, John Cameron. *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. New Line Cinema, 2001.

Tsai, Ming-Liang. *The Hole*. Fox Lorber, 1998.

Tsai, Ming-Liang. *Days*. Grasshopper, 2020.

Wong, Kar-Wai. *Happy Together*. Golden Harvest Company, 1997.

Deliverables

A 10 page paper investigating the history of the city of West Hollywood, John Chase’s impact, the current built environment, and a design proposal for its future.

A 10 page booklet of precedents (1) investigating queer space and sport activities in West Hollywood through original photography, (2) diagrams and photography of material and fabrication studies, (3) diagramming of Peking opera in terms of costumes, *lianpu*, and character performances as design palette studies, (4) spatial analysis as well as circulation diagramming of the West Hollywood Park site, (5) diagramming of transport, assembly, striking, and packing of structure (6) diagramming of the assembly, play, and socializing pattern of the gay kickball leagues in West Hollywood and the role the structure would play during games.

Preliminary digital designs of a temporary structure with corresponding drawings of (1) plan, (2) site, (3) elevation, (4) section, and (5) exploded axon of parts in relation to packaging and transport.

Schedule

Date	Task/Objective	Deliverable/Assignment
8/29/24	Reading List <i>Orientations: Toward a Queer Phenomenology</i> <i>Glitter Stucco, and Dumpster Diving: Reflections on Building City</i> <i>The Gay Scene of Racism: Face, Shame, and Gay Asian Males</i> Unbelonging: Anti-Asian Racism in Australia’s Gay Community	Intention Paper Progress
9/5/24	Reading List <i>Queering Chineseness: The Queer Sphere of Feelings in Farewell my Concubine and Green Snake</i> <i>Queer Spaces: An Atlas of LGBTQIA+ Places and Stories</i>	Intention Paper Progress

9/12/24	Reading List <i>Orientations: Toward a Queer Phenomenology</i> <i>Cruising Utopia; The Then and There of Queer Futurity</i> <i>Master Plans and Encroachments: The Architecture of Informality in Islamabad</i>	Intention Paper Initial Draft Complete
9/19/24	Reading List <i>Queering Public Spaces: Exploring New Design Methodologies to Liberate Queer Experiences in Public Buildings and Community Spaces</i> <i>Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture</i> <i>Home is the Place We Share: Building Queer Collective Utopias</i>	Intention Paper Final Draft Complete
9/26/24	Precedent Research <i>Frei Otto, Felicia Davis</i>	Precedent Booklet Progress. Diagrams (1-3)
10/3/24	Precedent Research <i>Black and Lesbian Gay Centre</i> <i>Anita May Rosenstein LGBT Center</i>	Precedent Booklet Initial Draft Complete. Diagrams (4-6)
10/10/24	Precedent Research <i>Queer spaces in Dhaka, Bangladesh</i>	Precedent Booklet Final Draft Complete
10/17/24	Initial Form Study	Study Models
10/24/24	Digital Modeling	Digital Models
10/31/24	Digital Modeling	Digital Models
11/7/24	Digital Modeling/Organizing Drawings	Drawings (1-5)
11/14/24	Organizing Drawings	Drawings (1-5)
11/21/24	Presentation	Organizing Presentation/ Drawings
12/5/24	Final Presentation and Review	

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Use of AI Generators:

AI-generated tools are allowed in this course on a selective basis. Since creating, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this graphics-dominant course, all final graphics should be prepared by the student. Student may not have another person or entity complete any substantive portion of the final submission. When/if AI tools are used to generate draft graphics for this course, they need to be explicitly cited in the final graphic captions.

Academic Integrity:

The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, compromises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university’s mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or “recycle” work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the student handbook or the Office of Academic Integrity's website, and university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct.

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information. Spring 2024 Syllabus for ARCH 590, Page 5

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.