Drive, Teach, Shop:

Designing for Dual Futures

(*Version 1/15/19*)

Houses in a Former Baseball Stadium in Osaka, Japan

Questions

The studio will explore the concept of *dual futures* that require designing for two building types that transform from one to another. In our societies of continual change, an intended program is often outlasted by the building itself, raising questions about how we define architectural completion. Can designing for a state of continual incompletion become a final architectural act? In our societies of change – with climate, programs, and even sites –when is architecture ever truly "complete"? The near future will be types that are common today but are hypothesized to become obsolete in the future. The distant future will require adaptation to a new program—a Learning Campus of the Streets.

The ex-urban city of Newburgh and its surrounding rural Quassaick watershed is a region with multiple possible futures. This formerly industrial city, which has sustained decades of economic downturn, will be the studio's starting point to investigate the region's risks and opportunities. The corridor that connects Newburgh to the Stewart Airport identifies three sites to be selected by the students— a site within Newburgh, its surrounding rural watershed area, and in Stewart Airport. These sites will prompt designing for dual futures, connected to each other by a shared state of architectural incompletion.

This studio is not based on adaptive reuse. Instead, it is about designing for two uses from the outset, prompting questions about what qualifies "progress" in a region with a complex relationship to change itself-- whether from environmental or social forces. The transformation between the two types will necessitate adaptability to changing environments. Each site also prompts the idea of a *second nature*; in which architecture and nature are not in opposition but function as extensions of each other – with architecture as an extension of nature and vice-versa.

Challenges

Students will be challenged to design for incompletion, adaptability and multiplicity. Each project will transform from the selected first building type—either a big box supermarket, rural school, or parking deck---into a second program: Learning Campus of the Streets. Each student will research and define this new program. It is speculated that each project's near future will become obsolete as it is disrupted by social or technological change (autonomous cars, food tech, self-paced learning). The learning campus will occur in a future climate scenario also to be defined by each student. This will challenge the fixity of architectural types and prompt an open and adaptable relationship to the environment.

Students will conduct research in the differences between education and learning. In Cedric Price's 1968 article, "What About Learning," he defined education enrolling in an institution for a fixed time period-- such as the four-year university-- while learning can be a self-paced process that occurs periodically throughout one's life. Education is for the select few gathered in classrooms while learning is for the many acting individually. In many rural communities, traditional schools are at risk with demographic changes; learning spaces offer more adaptability to change by allowing different engagements in both time and space. The studio argues that learning, as opposed to education, is a more adaptable activity for Newburgh and its surroundings as it anticipates obsolescence as well as life's unpredictable events.

The concept behind a Learning Campus of the Streets, a future learning model for post-secondary or adult learning, is a suitable framework for the dual futures proposed by the studio. Each argument towards a learning campus will define a new model of self-paced learning over varying time periods— whether in different time and places, personalized learning, online learning, professional experience, project based, etc. In each project, the physical spaces of the learning campus will have adapted from the selected building type and its accompanying climate scenario.

Where We Will Work

The studio will present 3 sites along the corridor connecting Newburgh with Stewart Airport. This corridor offers a range of environments: ex-urban (Newburgh), rural (watershed) and infrastructural (Stewart Airport) regions. The Newburgh site will be designed for a supermarket since the city does not currently have one. The rural site will be used for a rural school. The Stewart Airport site will provide a current need for a parking deck. Within this context, a learning campus born of a parking deck, supermarket or rural school will address both the changing physical environments as well as the social environments within it. The studio imagines that the three sites can be designed to meet the current needs of their communities while transforming over time to the future scenario of a Learning Campus of the Streets.

How We Will Work

The studio will be conducted as an open workshop in which conversation and criticism between students is required. Working in groups of two or three is encouraged but not required. Students will design for one of three sites, thus allowing for parallel discussions between classmates. Expanding the boundaries of the architecture discipline will be integral to the studio methodology. The students' work will be trans-disciplinary in their nature and will be influenced by conversations with the social sciences, arts and sciences. A series of trans-disciplinary discussions with sociologists, climate scientists and artists will be integral to each student's project.

Schedule

Project 01: Designing For Adaptability

(Review on February 11th; 2 weeks)

Simultaneous research of adaptable architecture case studies and the design of an intervention for a near future scenario. The research and design will establish an argument towards the project site and its surroundings. This work must be iteratively explored for its potential in formulating a concept argument towards the project.

Project 02: Mid-review

(Mid-review on March 7th, 3 weeks; Ware Lounge)

Each student will present at the mid-review the research and the design proposal for both near and distant futures on the site. The proposals will be based on innovative strategies that allow for transformation from one building type to another. The proposals should clearly and precisely define the project's argument relative to both site and program.

Spring Break

(March 18th – 22nd, 1 week)

Project 03A

(First final review date TBD, 2 weeks)

Project 03B

(Second final review on April 29th, 3 weeks; Avery 115)

Studio References:

To be determined