

Libraries types potentially evolve to foster a variety of abilities, helping city dweller to maintain their independence and participate in their communities. To support well being and longevity, the library environment will need to be programmed for exercise, accessibility, and healthy levels of light, air quality, sound, and temperature – ideally, with activities as part of the building. The investigation and design of the library of the near future is potentially taken on through the deployment of a system. From that assumption one can list the familiar, the known and studied systems inherent in the form and methodologies embedded in the semester's library case studies.

This studio would add another library to that list, The Warburg Institute. Edited from Adam Gopnik's March 2015 New Yorker article, the Warburg Institute is a place described where, *"It was the idea that art stood, and stands, for something more important and more fundamental than just the work of artists on their own. Beside each elevator bank, a chart displaying, in capital letters, the library's curious organization helps guide the bewildered student: "FIRST FLOOR: IMAGE," "SECOND FLOOR: WORD," up to "FOURTH FLOOR: ACTION-orientation," with "Action" comprising "Cultural and Political History," and "orientation" "Magic and Science." It is catalogued according to themes. The methodology of serendipity is what it's all about, and the methodology of serendipity is responsible for most great ideas. As a consequence, Warburg is now seen increasingly as an early master of modern disorder, a bookend and rival to Walter Benjamin. But where Benjamin famously saw mass reproduction as separating art from ritual, mystery, and "aura," Warburg's vision was more like that of a banker: images were a currency, circulating freely through time, and even collecting compound interest as they aged. We reaped the profits as images proliferated, growing in intensity and varieties of possible meaning: Nympha, born on a sarcophagus, could, multiplying through the ages, end happily on a stamp. Warburg's essential insight—that imagery is viral, communicable, contagious, and crossbreeding—was, I realized, right. Reproductions, like the black-and-white photographs that Warburg himself used, don't serve as stoppers to meaning; they serve as carriers of the force of symbols from imagination to imagination. This process, already accelerated in the Renaissance, goes still faster in our time, and is not just the primary dynamic of our visual experience but also the primary matter of our art. We live now on Mnemosyne screens. For good or ill, the methodology of visual serendipity is our own."*

The Warburg Institute is a place, a concept and library based on serendipity. Serendipity then will be the system through which this semester's project will be addressed. Not the colloquial serendipity of dumb luck or mere happenstance. It is our project to embrace the original definition of the word that *"at its birth, serendipity meant a skill rather than a random stroke of good fortune."* Serendipity is something done, rather than received. Or is defined in Guy Talese's book New York: A Serendipiter's Journey, that firmly places serendipity into the toolbox of the protagonist or the practitioner through a taxonomy of observations and findings on New York made into a series of discoveries that make clear the art or ability to know what you want when it is found.

Of course, serendipity will always be a slippery undertaking, *"given that the phenomenon is difficult to define, amazingly variable and hard to capture in data. The clues will no doubt emerge where we least expect them, the journey will be maddening, but the potential insights could be profound: we might be able to stumble upon new and better ways of getting lost."*