



WHAT IS FEMINIST PRACTICE?

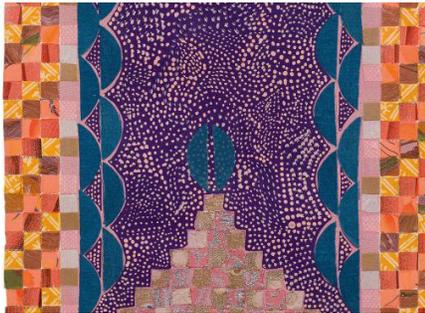
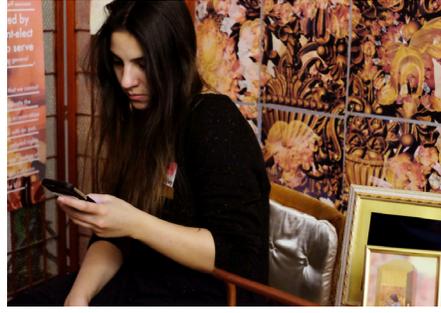
WHAT IS FEMINIST PRACTICE? / ADVANCED STUDIO V / COLUMBIA GSAPP / FALL 2018
CRITIC: BRYONY ROBERTS

Feminism is in a state of rapid expansion and instability. Having transformed from a taboo to a trend, feminism is now serving as a rallying cry for political solidarity, and as a marketing tactic to sell everything from jeans to coffee to real estate. Simultaneously, feminist political agendas are multiplying and transforming, as greater awareness of gender fluidity and intersectionality have broadened the discourse. In the midst of these changes, this studio takes stock of what feminist practice can mean for architecture now.

Looking back at seminal projects from the 1970s through the 1990s, the studio critically assesses past definitions of feminism in art and architecture, and asks how to transform them for contemporary design. Rather than seeking one singular definition of feminist practice, the studio is an open-ended conversation about what is possible. The course is open to anyone, not only those living as women, and explores how the tools and principles of feminist practices can be applicable to architecture broadly.

In the first phase of the studio, students are immersed in case studies of radical projects from the 1970s to the present, which offer alternative models for the architectural design process, program and/or materiality. For *process*, students examine projects by Muf, Matrix, and Feminist Architecture Collaborative that develop non-hierarchical, collaborative, and user-informed design. For *program*, students consider projects such as the Woman's Building and the New York Feminist Art Institute as models for collectivity. Finally, for *materiality*, students remake projects of feminist art from the 1970s to the present that involve textile, fiber, and craft techniques once designated as "women's work." By remaking projects by Claire Zeisler, Senga Nengudi, and Lin Tianmiao, students explore in the physical logic of wrapping, weaving, dyeing, unravelling, and spilling—processes for producing environments outside of normative architectural techniques.

Learning from these case studies, students develop their own design proposals for remaking the women-only co-working space The Wing. With three locations in New York City and many locations across the U.S., the Wing is a rapidly growing business model that bills itself as a feminist work space and social club. But with expensive, exclusive membership and private venues, the Wing is also not accessible or affordable to most women in New York City. The studio re-imagines the site of the Wing in Dumbo, Brooklyn both in terms of its architecture and business model, to create a different version of collective work space that is inclusive, affordable, and connected to the surrounding public space.



CASE STUDIES

PROCESS

Womens Design Service
At Your Convenience, 1990

**Matrix Feminist Design
Co-Operative**
Jagonari Women's
Educational Centre, 1991

Muf
Pleasure Garden of the
Utilities, 1998

**Feminist architecture
collaborative**
#ICalled

PROGRAM

The Woman's Building
Founded by Judy Chicago,
Sheila de Bretteville, and
Arlene Raven in 1973

**New York Feminist Art
Institute**
Founded by Miriam Schapiro
and Nancy Azara, et al., in
1979

Dolores Hayden
What Would a Non-Sexist
City Be Like?, 1980

Mark Wigley
Untitled, the housing of
gender, 1992

MATERIALITY

Judy Chicago
The Dinner Party, 1974-79

Claire Zeisler
Coil Series III, 1978

Harmony Hammond
Hunkertime, 1979-80
Floor Piece VI, 1973

Faith Ringgold
For the Woman's House, 1971
Street Story 1985

Senga Nengudi
Inside / Outside, 1977

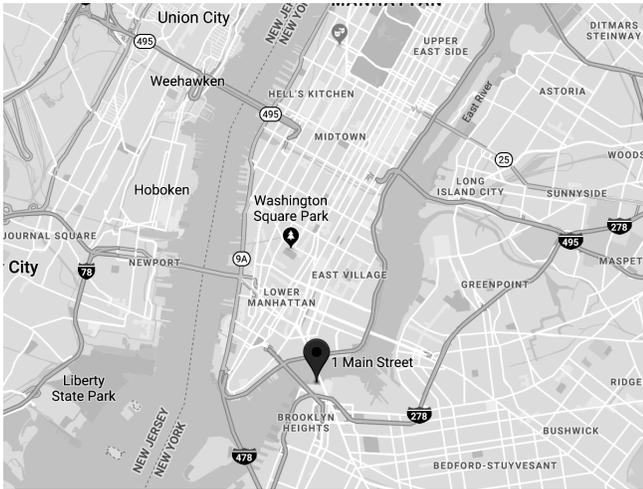
Miriam Shapiro
Theater of the Egg, 1979

Lynda Benglis
Untitled (VW), 1970

Diller + Scofidio
Bad Press, 1993

Liz Collins
Distance Pursuer, 2013

Lin Tianmiao
Protruding Patterns, 2014



SITE: THE WING

The site for this studio is The Wing, a national chain of coworking spaces geared towards women, which has emerged as part of the recent rise in coworking spaces catered to freelancers, entrepreneurs, and creative practitioners. The Wing is one of many female-only coworking spaces that have opened internationally, including the AllBright in London, the Riveter in Seattle, and Make Lemonade in Toronto. The Wing has carefully marketed itself as a feminist version of a coworking space, tracing its roots back to 19th- and 20th-century womens clubs, and offering amenities catered to female-only members such as lactation rooms, beauty rooms, and a program of speakers and gatherings. But the Wing has also come under heavy criticism for being elitist, exclusionary, for offering an under-informed representation of feminism. The forms of exclusion are many: this is a private club with a high membership fee, a long waiting list, and a practice of eliminating applicants on the basis of sex.

This studio re-imagines the Wing to create an alternative model of collective spaces that are inclusive, affordable, and public, and serve as better platforms for political agency. Students will develop alternative architectural and financial models for collective spaces of work that are available to a broader range of women of within New York City. The Wing has currently has three locations within NYC, in the Flatiron, Soho, and Dumbo. Students have the option of re-envisioning in detail the Dumbo location at 1 Main Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201, or of creating a kit of parts for transforming all three locations. Proposals will rethink the audience, funding, organization of program, architectural form, materiality, and connections to public space.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 - Introduction

Thursday, Sept 6 - Introduction, readings assigned

Week 2 - Case Studies

Monday, Sept 10 - Discussion of readings, selection of case studies

Thursday, Sept 13 - Desk crits - case study research, draft of diagrams

Week 3 - Case Studies

Monday, Sept 17 - Desk crits - draft of case study models

Thursday, Sept 20 - Desk crits - finalize case study models + Guest lecture

Week 4 - Case Studies / Site

Monday, Sept 24 - **Presentation of Case Studies - Research and Models**

Thursday, Sept 27 - Research Site - The Wing, the 1 Main Street building, Dumbo context

Week 5 - Site

Monday, Oct 1 - Desk crits - Site research + Guest lecture

Thursday, Oct 4 - **Presentation of Site Research** + select Process, Program, Material precedents

Week 6 - Concept Design

Monday, Oct 8 - Desk crits - Five studies for concept design - drawings and sketch models

Thursday, Oct 11 - Desk crits - Three studies for concept design - drawings and sketch models

Week 7 - Concept Design

Monday, Oct 8 - Desk crits - Refine concept design

Thursday, Oct 11 - **Presentation of Concept Design**

Week 8 - Schematic Design

Monday, Oct 15 - Desk crits - Schematic Design

Thursday, Oct 18 - Desk crits - Schematic Design

Week 9 - Midreview Week

Monday, Oct 22 - **Draft presentation of Midreview drawings and models**

Thursday, Oct 18 - **Midreview - 1pm - Room 504, 505**

Week 10 - Design Development

Monday, Oct 29 - Desk crits - Revisions after Midreview

Thursday, Nov 1 - Desk crits - Design Development

Week 11

Monday, Nov 5 - Election Day Holiday

Thursday, Nov 8 - Desk crits - Design Development

Week 12

Monday, Nov 12 - **Interim Review**

Thursday, Nov 15 - Desk crits - Design Development

SCHEDULE (Continued)

Week 13

Monday, Nov 19 - Desk crits - Representation

Thursday, Nov 22 - Desk crits - Thanksgiving Break

Week 14

Monday, Nov 26 - **Draft of Final Review presentation**

Thursday, Nov 29 - Desk crits - Revisions to drawings, models, verbal presentations

Friday, Nov 30 - 3-5pm - Super Crit

Week 15

Monday, Dec 3 - Desk crits - Revisions to drawings, models, verbal presentations

Thursday, Dec 6 - Desk crits - Revisions to drawings, models, verbal presentations

Week 16

Tuesday, Dec 11 - **Final Review - 1pm, Ware Lounge**

REFERENCE TEXTS

ARTICLES

Fausch, Deborah. "The Knowledge of the Body and the Presence of History--Towards a Feminist Architecture." In *Architecture and Feminism*, edited by Deborah Coleman, Elizabeth Danze, and Carol Henderson, 38-59. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996.

Hayden, Dolores. "What Would A Non-Sexist City Be Like? Speculations on Housing, Urban Design, and Human Work." In *Gender, Space, Architecture*, edited by Jane Rendell, Barbara Penner and Iain Borden, 266-281. London: Routledge, 2000.

Lorde, Audre. "The Masters Tools will Never Dismantle the Master's House." In *Gender, Space, Architecture*, edited by Jane Rendell, Barbara Penner and Iain Borden, 53-55. London: Routledge, 2000.

McLeod, Mary. "Everyday and 'Other' Spaces." In *Gender, Space, Architecture*, edited by Jane Rendell, Barbara Penner and Iain Borden, 182-202. London: Routledge, 2000.

Rendell, Jane. "Gender," and "Gender, Space, Architecture." In *Gender, Space, Architecture*, edited by Jane Rendell, Barbara Penner and Iain Borden, 15-25, 225-239. London: Routledge, 2000.

Rendell, Jane. "Feminist Architecture from A to Z." Accessed August 5, 2018, <https://www.readingdesign.org/feminist-architecture-a-z/>

Rendell, Jane. "Architecture and Interdisciplinarity." *Building Material*, No. 19, Art and Architecture (Autumn 2009), pp. 10-17

Wigley, Mark. "Untitled, the housing of gender." In *Sexuality & Space*, edited by Beatriz Colomina, 327-389. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997.

VOLUMES

Auther, Elissa. *String Felt Thread*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009

Brown, Lori, ed. *Feminist Practices: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Women in Architecture*. London: Routledge, 2011.

Bryan-Wilson, Julia. *Fray: Art and Textile Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017

Coleman, Deborah, et al., ed. *Architecture and Feminism*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996.

Haraway, Donna. *Staying With The Trouble*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.

Parker, Rozsika. *Subversive Stitch*. London: I.B. Taurus, 2010

Rendell, Jane, et al., ed. *Gender, Space, Architecture*. London: Routledge, 2000.

CONTEMPORARY PRACTICES AND COLLECTIVES

Architexx

Atelier d'architecture autogérée

FATALE

Feminist architecture collective

Liquid Incorporated

Muff

Mycket

Parlour

Taking Place

Jane Rendell's Situated Design track at the
Bartlett School of Architecture

COURSE INFORMATION

Class meetings: Mondays and Thursdays, 1:30-6:30pm
Contact information for Bryony Roberts: bryony@bryonyroberts.com

EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to be independent and to take initiative to find the resources and supplies that they need to complete their work. Students are expected to be active participants in group conversations, to attend all studio meetings, pin-ups, and reviews and to keep up with a rigorous level of production. Students are expected to spend a large portion of their time in the studio working and to be active participants in the collaborative studio environment. Sharing knowledge, techniques, and ideas with your fellow students is incredibly important to your own creative development and to your success in this studio. Students are expected to keep the studio space orderly and clean, and to keep clear a large table and wall space for group meetings and pinups.

EVALUATION

The final grade in the course will be given on the basis of:

Attendance and design production for twice-weekly studio meetings: 40%
Assignments and Midreview presentation: 30%
Final review presentation: 30%

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be present and working during all studio meetings, which occur twice a week. Students are also expected to be present during all reviews. Absences from studio meetings and reviews will affect the final grade and multiple unexcused absences will result in course failure.

DESIGN PRODUCTION FOR STUDIO MEETINGS

Students are expected to be self-motivated and ambitious in their design development. During each twice-weekly studio meeting, students will discuss new work on their project. Students are expected to revise their work for each session in response to earlier feedback from their instructors.

MIDREVIEW AND FINAL REVIEW

Work presented for both the midreview and the final review will be evaluated for:

CONCEPTUAL CLARITY

Students should demonstrate proactive engagement with the material and self-motivated intellectual pursuits that enhance their own design ambitions. Students are expected to clearly articulate their ambitions and the intellectual underpinnings of their work in pinups and desk crits.

TECHNIQUE

Students are expected to execute all assignments with care and precision. Assignments will be evaluated not only on the basis of the ideas, but also to a large degree on the quality of the execution. Students are responsible for planning sufficient time for developing appropriate and thorough representation.

DEADLINES

Students must complete assignments by the given deadline. Deadlines and required deliverables are not negotiable. No printing is allowed after the deadline. Deadlines can only be extended in cases of illness or family emergencies, and requests for extensions must be submitted before the deadline in writing, accompanied by a medical certificate when necessary. Keep your active files backed up - loss of data is not an excuse for an incomplete project.