

## Advanced Design Studio VI

### Something of Value

Arguments for Architecture as Value Proposition

### Beijing, China

#### Spring 2019

Graduate School of Architecture Planning and Preservation

#### Columbia University

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**Kinne** Trip to Beijing, China

Trip Dates 4 or 5 nights in March 12 to 22, exact dates TBD

#### Studio Parameters:

**Client:** Our studio will design for an assumed “client,” who is a wealthy graduate from GSAPP with a combined degree in Architecture, Real Estate, and Critical Studies. Upon returning to his native Beijing, our “client” is put in charge of a company comparable to SOHO of China, headquartered in Beijing.

**Project:** Our studio project is to design a building(s) as a “gift” to the city of Beijing, which would allow the client’s company development rights somewhere else.

**Program:** The company owns millions of square feet of real estate around the world, the majority of which is commercial office space. With commercial office space currently shifting towards sharing types (wework, knotel, incubators, navy yard) the client wishes to experiment with new hybrids that combine work, art, commerce and education. The exact program is left undefined. Yet the mission is states: **design something of value**...What does it mean to design something of value? Value to whom?



Zaha Hadid Architects, Galaxy Soho Beijing, 2015

**Site:** The exact site is to be determined. It must be in the proximity of Zaha Hadid’s Galaxy and Kengo Kuma’s Santilun Soho, in the Sanlitun area of Beijing.



Kengo Kuma Architects, Sanlitun Soho, Beijing, 2016

### **Method**

The studio shall be divided into 3 segments;

- Research (01 weeks – Jan 24 to Jan 30)
- Argument (01 weeks – Jan 31 to Feb 4)
- Design (12 weeks – Feb 5 to May 1)

**Research:** Drawing from an array of contemporary and historical examples, our research concentration will be to examine the idea of **value** in Architecture and the contexts of Art and Real Estate. How is **value** different for each area of knowledge?

Before our visit to Beijing, China in March, our studio will study the Santilun, 798 and Caochangdi areas of Beijing as well as buildings by Zaha Hadid, Kengo Kuma, Vectors Architecture, MAD, OMA and Buro Scheeren to understand what constitutes value in this context.

**Argument:** In practice, the part of the architecture aligned with real estate **values** that makes large commercial buildings is thriving. With record corporate profits, as recorded by the American Institute of Architects, projects such as Hudson Yards here, or Royal Wharf in London, are evidence of the value and utility of architecture to solidify and expand capital. The professions that shape our built environment, and architects, in particular, expand and make wealth secure and visible.

Hudson Yards is a new 18 Million square feet extension of New York City's west side, nearing completion in 2019. One would imagine that with 4,000 new residences and 14 acres of new open space, there would be plenty of shared enthusiasm in the architecture community and the city at large. However, this is not the case as this is understood as a mostly a private development, which the majority of the city does not expect to benefit from.

Within Hudson Yards, The Vessel and The Culture Shed are among the 20 buildings that are currently being built. Often described as public art and public space, The Vessel, is a set of 154 interconnected flights of stairs designed by Thomas Heatherwick. This project exemplifies our argument. Is the Vessel of Value? To whom?

The Vessel in this case, is used as Trojan Horse to chaperon a process that enables the transfer of valuable land. The argument here is not whether the Vessel -or Shed- is worthy of praise as art or architecture, as it may be the case. Our argument here is about the process and what it teaches us about the relationship -and agency- of Architecture in the exchange from public to private trusts.



Thomas Heatherwick, The Vessel, Hudson Yards, New York, 2019

What does the city or the commons gain? Architecture paired with Art have become incredibly useful in the validation process. In turn, this utility has altered their function in the public realm. Permitting and financing processes are facilitated by branding something as public art or public space, and “gifting” these to the city. The public will be allowed in, yet the public will not control these, as these will not be theirs.

**The Commons:** Throughout evolution, whether we hunt, gather or code, humans have relied on each other's strength, talent, and expertise. Now that sharing—economies, platforms, cars, workspaces, living spaces, tools, child care, elder care—is on the rise, what is at stake for each one of us? How can society maximize the efficiency of resources while maintaining choice, allowing individuation and freedom of expression? How do we maintain the link between freedom and responsibility? How can Architecture make things better?

By better, we mean: allowing more opportunity for expression, creativity, beauty, wellness, efficiency and a new kind of fluency. A fluency where each person can access what they need; and give back what they produce; where gender differences are attenuated, work and leisure have room, one does what one is best at, and things get done more efficiently and at a higher level than ever before. Our view is that sharing in culture, art, commerce and education is of **value**.

By definition, architecture is a proactive profession, one that imagines, plans and programs the future. The architecture community is engaged yet will gain from asserting its **values further and getting more in the exchange**.

My expertise is in the making of things, not in politics. I will guide you to design spaces that change the way people live, work, and play. We will question why don't architects feel comfortable in asserting their own **values** for the common and in the cities? Why so many architects claim to be powerless?

**Design:** After the initial phase of research and argument, the studio will turn its focus to design. Each student or student team will design hybrids buildings where architecture and art, work and play, commercial and educational, mix and assert new ways of being. Beauty and efficiency will be considered as a pair, where, like in nature one gains from the other.

The studio will seek to understand how the formation of buildings affect the urban space as well as the space in between buildings, and how through design we create value and not valuable areas.

The studio goal will be to advance ideas, linking East and West, past, and future, theory and practice, considering architecture design as a key ingredient in **value creation**.

**Size:**

- The building is to be 150,000-square-foot
- The program should be a hybrid of public and private
- It should include meeting spaces and workspaces
- For the use by visitors, artist, students and scholars
- A 200 and 500-seat gathering spaces are requested
- All the building's outdoor areas, plaza, and gardens should be designed with the same care as the building interior areas.

**Schedule:**

- The Spring Semester has 24 scheduled studio meetings.
- It meets Monday and Thursday from January 23 to April 24, 2019 from 1.30 to 6 pm.
- The Studio will not meet on February 7, because of a planned trip.
- The Studio will not meet on President's Day, February 18th
- Midterm Review is on February 28 at 1.30 PM
- The studio will visit Beijing for 4 or 5 nights sometime between on March 12 and 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Spring Break is March 18 to 24, 2018
- Final Review is on May 1 at 1.30 PM