

A Workshop: Is New York City Dead?

Columbia University GSAPP

Open to a cap of 24 graduate students from all programs.

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Fridays 10am-1pm

New books, articles and social media posts abound proclaiming the death of New York, portraying the metropolis as a cultural wasteland laid barren by chain stores, luxury condos and neoliberalism; while ample evidence exists to support these claims, evidence also exists to refute them with the emergence of new cultural institutions, grassroots arts organizations, and population growth surpassing projections, all of which begs us to ask in this workshop, is New York dead?

For students in the fields of architecture, planning, development and preservation studying in New York City, this workshop asks the fundamental question “Do you agree?” If you disagree with that which is being built, what alternatives would you propose, under what policies, and for whom? Would you build more formal cultural facilities, like Lincoln Center, or would you design and plan more fine-grained cultural venues, and for whom? Or would you design and build artist housing on the premise that culture is not about the needs of the consumer but the needs of the producer? In short, if you had to reimagine New York today, what design, development, planning and preservation approaches would you pursue to create a city reflective of its values. Would the “culture of congestion” lauded by Rem Koolhaas in *Delirious New York* still be operative in the city of your dreams?

These questions are equally about design, development, planning and preservation, which is why this new interdisciplinary course is open to all students in GSAPP with an enrollment limit of 24. **By definition, as a workshop, all work for the course will occur during class hours.** There will be no external assignments or readings. Attendance is therefore critical and mandatory, as is participation. Most assignments will consist of interdisciplinary group work, which will be informed by lectures from the instructors as well as guests who can speak to specific case studies. Most classes will be iterative, interactive design sessions similar in format to design studios.

The class will culminate on the April 18th GSAPP evening symposium of the same title. For that symposium students will produce materials that will be displayed or otherwise presented at the symposium.