

Havana Micro X

GSAPP Spring 2020

Advanced Studio VI

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Subject: Modernist City planning model in a Post-modern world



Current housing crisis in many parts of the world makes one look back to the utopian efforts of the 60-ies and 70-ies with the touch of envy and nostalgia. Seemingly homogenous modernist urban fabric, that is left behind as a result of that effort, lives forth differently depending on conditions it found itself after the social paradigm has changed and the market economy took a hand. Amsterdam Bijlmer blocks are partially demolished and mixed with low-rise and row housing, Moscow suburbs are being densified, East Berlin blocks have been renovated and became sought after real estate. Generic ubiquitous urban model might have more in store than one expects.

Havana presents a curious case being a test ground for built ideologies. First having a Spanish colonial grid, then being a showcase of international style, and later a model for peculiar, state organized, participatory models of modernist housing production.

Soviet prefabricated city was an export product brought around the world to Eastern Europe, Africa and South America despite differences in culture and climate. In 1964, a large panel factory was gifted to Cuba as the country also imported a micro-district urban planning model. In 1970-ies, another Yugoslavian factory for prefabricated concrete was built to be used in construction of public buildings. When the prefabrication proved to be too expensive, micro-districts were built by «microbrigades» instead, changing the technology of production but not the mode.

Being abstract in initial set-up, these areas turned to adapt well to the changing world during the Special period and after Castro's death. The transition state, from full state control to more entrepreneurial freedom showed how people claim space, occupy and use it.

We will be proposing urban hybrids able to question inherited cultural, economic, environmental or technological assumptions. Using modern precedents will help us to re-interpret historical efforts and ideologies and hopefully propose an alternative urban discussion able to address contemporary issues.

Students will work in pairs for the first urban part of the project, splitting later to work out a building each. We will take 6 tissue samples of Havana modernist fabric to study how they develop in the current conditions of a weakened state.

We will work together with the urban planners and landscape architects from Amsterdam Academy of Architecture.

During our trip to Havana we will analyze the existing urban fabric, experiencing the city going by bike on a two-days tour during Kinne week. There will be a workshop and an open exhibition at Art Factory in Havana to exchange ideas and get inspiration in dialog.

The result will be an urban proposal for the 6 selected areas and a zoom-in into a single hybrid building.

Studio will consist of 3 blocks.

Block 1 Reconnaissance

We will study 6 urban samples corresponding to different moments of modernization of Havana. Each group will work on a sample to understand what led to its formation and select a specific object whose role might help us re-think current conditions.

6 weeks

Urban and typological analysis, M 1:2000

Block 2 Adjustment

We will delve into the role of our specific objects within the urban sample and Havana as a whole to re-calibrate its program, proposing a hybrid urban artifact able to address some of the conditions discovered during the first part of the studio.

Travel Kinne week

Site visit Havana

2 days workshop with Amsterdam Academy students

Block 3 Run-up

We will develop our artifacts taking special attention to its material construction and the consequences of alternative scenarios/narratives proposed.

5 weeks

Project Development, M 1: 500, M 1: 200

Schedule

* Dates when Olga Aleksakova and Julia Burdova are present at the studio are marked in green.

Week	Task	Homework	Deliverables
	Block 1 Reconnaissance		
Week 1	Wed January 22 Lottery		
	Th January 23 R:412 Avery Introductory session	Havana analysis: history structure	

	<p>Site lottery Hometown map 1:2000 Scale comparison Start conversation with Amsterdam Academy Bouwkunde, set up skype sessions</p>	<p>housing economics culture</p>	
Week 2	<p>Mo January 27 R:505 Avery Lecture: Claudia Castillo de la Cruz Pin up Seminar Havana Presentations</p>	Write a Manifesto	Drawings 1:25 000
	<p>Th January 30 R:200 Buell North Lecture: Belmont Freeman Pin up Seminar Micro X Site analysis Define the urban model scale Manifesto presentation</p>	<p>Micro-district re-development projects: Moscow Renovation 4 cases Dvorulitsa Meganom Bijlmer, NL Eastern Germany Pendrecht France? Upload</p>	<p>Text Drawings 1:25 000, 1:2000</p>
Week 3	<p>Mo February 3 R: tbd Pin-up</p>	Site analysis	Drawings, axon, site model 1:2000
	<p>Th February 6 Desk crit Object proposition, program proposal</p>	Work on project	Drawings, axon, model 1:2000
Week 4	<p>Mo February 10 R:412 Avery</p>	Work on project	Drawings, model, axon 1:2000

	<p>Desk crit</p> <p>Massing, diagrammatic plans, sections.</p>		
	<p>Th February 13</p> <p>Desk crit</p> <p>Plans, sections, diagrams</p>	<p>Work on project</p> <p>Start digital presentation draft</p> <p>Upload</p>	<p>Drawings, axon, model 1:500</p>
Week 5	<p>Mo February 17</p> <p>R:412 Avery</p> <p>Pin-up</p> <p>digital presentational draft</p>	<p>Work on project</p>	<p>Concept diagrams drawings 1:2000</p> <p>Urban model 1:2000</p> <p>drawings 1:500</p> <p>model 1:500</p>
	<p>Th February 20</p> <p>Desk crit</p> <p>Narrative development</p>	<p>Work on project</p>	<p>Drawings, model 1:2000, 1:500</p>
Week 6	<p>Mo February 24</p> <p>R: 115 Avery</p> <p>Mid review</p>	<p>Work on project</p>	<p>Drawings 1:2000, 1:500, urban model 1:2000, conceptual model 1:500</p>
Week 7	<p>March 2 - 7</p>		
	<p>Block 2 Adjustment</p>		

Week 8	<p>March 9-14</p> <p>Trip to Havana, site visit with the Dutch students. During a two days' workshop you will test your hypothesis from the previous weeks. Mutual exposition at Art Factory</p>	Exposition materials	Travel diary
Week 9	<p>March 16-21</p> <p>Spring break</p>		
	<p>Block 3 <i>Run-up</i></p>		
Week 10	<p>Mo March 23</p> <p>R:412 Avery</p> <p>Desk crit</p> <p>Adjustment project development</p>	Work on project	Drawings, conceptual model 1:2000 1:500
	<p>Th March 26</p> <p>Desk crit</p> <p>Adjustment project development</p>	<p>Work on project</p> <p>Upload</p>	Drawings, conceptual model 1:500
Week 11	<p>Mo March 30</p> <p>R:408 Avery</p> <p>Pin up</p> <p>Plans, sections, axon, model, structural proposal</p>	Work on project	Drawings 1:200
	<p>Th April 2</p> <p>Desk crit</p> <p>Plans, sections, axon, model, structural proposal</p>	Work on project	Drawings 1:200

Week 12	<p>Mo April 6</p> <p>Desk crit</p> <p>Plans, sections, axon, model, structural proposal</p>	Work on project	Drawings 1:200, visualisations
	<p>Th April 9</p> <p>Desk crit</p> <p>Define the presentation format, Images/collages Project development</p>	Work on project	Drawings 1:200, visualisations
Week 13	<p>Mo April 13</p> <p>R:412 Avery</p> <p>Desk crit</p> <p>Define the presentation format, Images/collages Project development Images/collages</p>	Work on project	Drawings 1:200, diagrams, visualisations
	<p>Th April 16</p> <p>Desk crit</p> <p>Define the presentation format, Images/collages Project development Images/collages</p>	<p>Work on project</p> <p>Upload</p>	Drawings 1:200, diagrams, visualisations
Week 14	<p>Mo April 20</p> <p>R:408 Avery</p> <p>Pin up</p> <p>Digital presentation draft Project development</p>	Work on project	<p>Drawings 1:200, diagrams, visualisations,</p> <p>Final model 1:500, 1:2000</p>

	Layout format discussion		
	Th April 23 Desk crit Project development Narrative development	Work on project	Drawings 1:200, diagrams, visualizations Final models 1:200, 1:500, 1:2000
Week 15	Mo April 27 R:504 Avery Pin up Narrative development	Work on project	Digital presentation, Pin up materials
	Th April 29 R: Warelounge Final review		Digital presentation, Pin up materials, urban model 1:2000 object model 1:500, 1:200

References:

1. The New Town Travel guides, Alamar, International New Town Institute, 2017 https://issuu.com/internationalnewtowninstitute/docs/travelguide-alar-2016-web_61959b8dc2cfb4
2. Public housing in Havana, History of ideas, Studio Basel, ETH Zurich, http://www.studio-basel.com/assets/files/files/028_HAV_12_publichousing.pdf
3. The Havana Project, Architecture Again, edited by Peter Noever, Prestel
4. The Havana Guide: Modern Architecture 1925-1965 1st Edition, by Eduardo Luis Rodriguez (Author)
5. Microbrigades - variations, movie <https://www.florian-zeyfang.de/microbrigades-variations/movie/>