

# Course Syllabus

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## Architecture Research Seminar

### Art and Social Infrastructure

#### Towards an understanding of how Art Institutions change Cities

Spring 2018

Graduate School of Architecture Planning and Preservation

Columbia University

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This seminar seeks to investigate the relationship between art, architecture, community and real estate development. We propose to evaluate the models and tools used to deploy art in service of community and/or economic prosperity.

Drawing from an array of contemporary and historical examples, the seminar will examine the efforts and successes of private cultural institutions, as well as governments operating at city, regional, and national scales.

The intention is to investigate precedents where a significant art institution like the Guggenheim Bilbao, or event, like Miami Beach Basel Art Fair, acted as urban catalyst, and assess the impact of the institutions or events on these cities – Bilbao and Miami in these cases- over time. What have these cities gained? How have them transformed?

The premise is that as cities around the world seek to nurture 21 century industries, lively urban centers, and harmonious communities—while simultaneously adapting to a whirlwind of social, technological, and environmental changes, all under severe budgetary constraints—it is imperative to better understand the ways in which a city can express its values, enhance its identity, and quantify its growth.

**How does art and architecture participate in community development and economic growth?**

**What is the boundary between sustainable growth and rampant gentrification?**

Method:

Our research will analyze precedents at different scales. The seminar will examine how investment in art and culture affects the growth and development of cities. We will look at the role art, architecture and cultural institutions play in the built environment, across urban and socio-economical scales.

We will explore the conditions, coincidences and contradictions of art and culture, education and development, community and capital, citizenry and gentrification, valuation and devaluation, at the small, mid-sized, and global city scale.

Through an exploration of existing art-based developments, this seminar seeks to understand and contribute to the conversation on city-building around arts and culture as drivers and developers.

Examples to be studied include:

1. Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao
2. Art Basel in Miami and Hong Kong
3. Documenta in Kassel
4. The neighborhoods of Williamsburg, Greenpoint and Bushwick in New York
5. Cannes Film Festival
6. Dia:Beacon in Beacon, New York and the Hudson Valley.

These examples shall allow us to investigate how cultural and art organizations, at different levels of investment and scales, have influenced the growth, vibrancy, and economic development of regions and cities.

Since the 1980s, artists and arts organizations have become the de facto 'pioneers' of the urban development process, serving as unintentional 'foot soldiers' of real estate development, as they 'rediscover' and 'open up' previously marginalized and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods.

In seeking out new creative spaces and communities, establishing new venues and urban frontiers, artists generate public interest and investment, and are subsequently 'priced' out (and pushed out) of the places they create, along with the long-time residents of these communities who have called these 'new' neighborhoods 'home' for generations.

Among citizens—particularly those in economically disadvantaged communities- 'development' is sought after, but 'gentrification' is feared.

As artists and long-time community members feel increasing pressure from the rising cost of housing and services, urgent questions arise about what drives development and how to achieve a balance between development and stability, and between revitalization and respect for longstanding communities with rich, if often devalued, histories.

The seminar will explore the idea of the *colony*, as it pertains to the gathering of like-minded people such as artists in cooperative art colonies, or communes with shared interest, but also as it relates to the emergence of a colonial tendency to occupy, subjugate and control the sites where the art venues are established.

## **Questions**

- Do Arts and Culture create better conditions for growth and community development or are they simply a Trojan horse for developers to make a land grab?
- How are communities and citizens affected by the success of art events and attractors such as Museums, art fairs, and global film festivals?
- What types of art practices and models can be more responsive to the needs and values of communities and citizens that form them?
- How can art be leveraged as lasting driver of community development and growth?
- What is the global phenomena behind the steady influx of money into the Art World?
- Why does money go to Art more now than ever before?
- What do cities like Bilbao, Miami, London, New York gain from Art centric development?
- What do these Cities lose?
- How can the location of a prestigious Art Venue affect an underserved neighborhood?
- Dollar for dollar, how does the Return on Investment (ROI) in Arts and Culture compare to the ROI for other pieces of urban infrastructure like transportation or affordable housing?

## Case Studies

Through the following precedents, the seminar will review existing evidence and compile a list of cause and effect factors from a 'place making' perspective.

1. Documenta, (Various Architects) Germany *and Post World War II*: Documenta is a recurring -every 4 years- art show in Kassel, Germany. The event was established in war-devastated Kassel to present a new, progressive, art-centric image of post-war Germany.
2. Guggenheim Museum, (Gehry) Bilbao, Spain, *From the Franco era to Bilbao and Today*: Spain developed a multi-focal network of world-renown regional museums to affirm its democratization in post-Franco era Spain, generating what is now widely known as the "Bilbao effect" and other remarkable regional and global cultural sites and events.
3. Serpentine, Art Pavilions, (Multiple Architects), London, England, *The Serpentine Pavilions and Globalization*: England transformed its colonial legacy into a well-endowed network of art fairs, international museum shows and an annual staging of pavilions that attract global attention and centers cultural discourse as well as a fierce commercialization of art as commodity.
4. Art Basel Miami Beach, (Arquitectonica), Art Fair in Miami, US. This case study examines how the Art Basel Miami Beach Art Fair has totally transformed a neglected area of Deco Miami into an exploding art district that peaks for 4 days a year
5. Dia:Beacon, (OpenOffice/Solomonoff/Irwin), Beacon, New York, This case study examines how after experiencing post-industrial urban devastation, the city of Beacon, NY re-urbanized around the Museum, with the benefit of the Metro-North Train connection and the Hudson Waterfront.
6. Prada Foundation, (OMA/Koolhaas), Milano, Italy. This case study examines how fashion and art patronage merge to create lasting changes in a post-industrial zone of the Italian city and the region around it.

7. *Art Detroit and its post-Fordian re-urbanization*: Post-industrial American cities are anchoring new urban development strategies through the agency of cultural institutions.

The seminar output includes research, cost/benefit analysis, planning data, maps and visualizations.

### **Students Deliverables**

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- Class participation and attendance -30% of grade
- One 30-minute presentation about an agreed upon topic – 40% of grade
- One 1,500-word term paper with reference images/graphics of the same topic -30% of grade

### **Schedule**

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The Spring Semester has 12 scheduled seminar meetings.

It meets Thursday from January 18 to April 28, 2017 from 11 am to 1 pm.

There will be no seminar during Kinne Trip week, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Spring Break is March 13 to 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Final Research is due on April 27<sup>th</sup> at 1.30 PM

### **Bibliography**

Forthcoming

## Course Summary:

**Date**

**Details**

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