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GRAPHIC ARCHITECTURE PROJECT III: DESIGN SEMINAR

Why does James Bond drink martinis? The answer to that question elucidates essential aspects of narrative, the way parts can stand for wholes, the distinction between mood and plot, the difference between things that happen in sequence and things that happen simultaneously, and the way details tell stories. We will try to investigate those issues through careful reading and watching, but most importantly, by making.

Graphic Narratives is closely linked to our own work dealing with the relationship between architecture and visual presentation. We have both been interested in the way that architectural ideas are broadcast through things like books, magazines, posters, diagrams, collages, videos, web posts, and so on.

Both at 2x4 and AMO, we were interested in the way the graphic and the architectural informed one another. Over time, we became deeply involved in another aspect of storytelling: how an architecture reveals itself both as a process and as a spatial experience.

So in this class we aim to look at both aspects of narrative: how we tell the story of an architectural project, and how thinking about narrative informs the design process.

The class is a hybrid of a workshop and a seminar. In the first half of the semester there is a very straightforward visual project every week that will be critiqued and discussed in class. These short assignments are designed to investigate a single facet of making narratives.

At the same time, there are weekly readings and viewings that support the work in class. Each student will be responsible to make a presentation on several of the additional materials throughout the semester.

In the second half of the semester we will concentrate on a multi-week project that uses your own work as a subject. You will develop a modest book that both describes your process and reveals your project using the techniques developed in class.

Our intention is that Graphic Narratives is an extremely practical class – the tools you acquire should be immediately applicable to problems of presentation and documentation of your work. Simultaneously, we hope that through practicality we can

investigate the structure of narrative itself in precise and profound ways that will influence the way you think about making design.