

ALAMEDA CORRIDOR

The Architecture of **X** Ecologies

Spring 2008
Studio 2GB

Marc Frohn - Margaret Griffin - Ilaria Mazzoleni - Mary-Ann Ray

Introduction

The 2GB Studio begins with a simple premise. Cities [yes, they start with a plan and yes, evolve through the complex efforts of planning and even, sometimes, urban design - especially with respect to infrastructural systems and certain elements] are the result of an accumulation of buildings. If the makers of those buildings develop a set of ideas about the city past and city present, and visions about the city becoming, then the city may develop in ways that accumulate richness and allow for necessary variety and diversity as opposed to cancellation, reduction, and exclusion. This understanding (of the city's past, present, and future) is best expressed through the buildings themselves - through architecture's ability to embed critical thinking, theory, vision, and armatures for living. This understanding is also housed in the myriad of texts that directly and indirectly reflect upon the city. These texts are from within our discipline, but also, and perhaps most powerfully, from within in literature, film, art, and mass media.

The 2GB studio continues with some footnotes to the above premise.....

1.

Archaeologists of the 'New New'

Developing understandings of the city (again in terms of the complexities of the past/present/future) requires both **intense 'living in' and 'hovering above'** on the part of the designer/activator. Thus, the designer needs to become both a natural and critical participant of the city. And the designer probably needs to become an actor in order to participate fully, and act within the complexity of the city. It is surprising how often architects and planners speak about lives and places they have no direct experience with. The 2GB Studio asks the student and instructor to move about the city and to participate first and foremost. We also ask that we become a kind of archaeologist (of the 'new new') - one that digs into the physicality and workings of the city, with a special interest in buildings, in architecture. The archaeology will be by the nature of our work incomplete and arbitrary (but we are counting on this activity accumulating and becoming part of our being an architect working on the city).

2.

See/K

The 'digging' activity requires a **sharp and intense seeking and seeing.** We will define here the act of seeking (and seeing) to be one of the modes of designing. To seek/see is to change. We need to develop techniques of seeking that allow us to see the many layers of the city. The bias of the 'collective' architect has narrowed vision and even established a virtual and simple reality to the many realities of the modern city. Techniques of seeking/seeing need to be thought about and developed. And we are defining seeking/seeing as requiring an action - an action that results in a photograph, in a drawing, in a text, and perhaps a model. And we are also defining seeking/seeing as an analytical/critical activity.

3.

Drawing (Out)

If the making of buildings is seen as drawing upon the city, then the activity of drawing becomes essential. We have developed far too few ways of **representing the city and the parts of the city.** Nolli's mapping of Rome sometimes stands alone as the way to represent something quite distant from early 18th century Rome - the modern American city. Venturi, Lynch and Co. began a

OBJECTIVITY

ASKING QUESTIONS

HYPOTHESES

MAPS

DIAGRAMS

MASH UPS

conversation that needs continuation and updating. The mapping of the modern city is in its infancy. Again note that this mapping is not limited to plan mapping, but also needs to involve sectional, sequential, and other kinds of 'slices' through the city. And that mapping includes the representations of the parts of the city (streets, buildings, rooms oddities, city paraphanelia, megashapes, stims, etc.). See the 'map/representation' as a critical modelling activity. Most things are left out, but those things that are represented have the ability to explain. The complexity of the modern city and its parts should require many kinds of mappings. The mapping of the city (and obviously part of the city) is a way of drawing the building.

4.

Courting Invention

The many 'tendencies' (glimpses of physical change) that exist in the developing city can be isolated through careful seeing and critical analysis. Projecting these tendencies into incomplete visions of the future the 2GB Studio will be useful in seeing and being critical of the many directions of change occurring simultaneously. These visions will require, yes, an understanding of the latent tendencies and natural forces of change, but will also require a courting of invention. The building of Studio 2GB involves a sensitivity to the situation that exists and that is emerging, and also an openness to intrusion through invention (but a kind of '**grounded' invention**).

5.

The Single 'Piece' of Architecture

The ability of a single building to affect the city is of course small. We are counting on the effects to be felt through tactical accumulation. For the 2GB Studio the making of the single building and its parts, we ask for a slippage into a relationship with the established yet still emerging city of Los Angeles. In this scenario for city building, the act of city making as accumulation [an accumulation of single buildings] also leads toward a network or labyrinth of connections, links and bonds, and a tangle of connections. These will be found in our explorations and analyses of Los Angeles and the Alameda Corridor. The new single building will house a program. This new building will also have a site whose position and/or meaning and/or space might also nudge the position, meaning, and space of the new building more closely into a relationship with the emerging city at large, and with the particular situation of the Alameda Corridor of Los Angeles.

6.

Other Devices

The 2GB Studio adds a final possibility. Can we find within the city hidden large scale structures. The architect/planner/and even the city participant all seem to desire expressions of wholeness. Thus, conversations of city centers, city edges, landmarks, skylines. Thus, industries producing postcards, knickknacks, etc. of the city. If there is a loss of public space, is it in some part due to this loss of city identity? Issues of scale and scalelessness, and place and placelessness come up when discussing the modern city. The traditional methods of making edges, centers, skylines, clear districts, landmarks, etc. are either not possible or are not able to encompass the complexities of modern life and cities. We will search for other devices. We will move forward based on the hunch that there might be hidden or latent large scale structures that can be found and strengthened - strengthened through the act of building. We will try to see these emerging in the Alameda Corridor, and perhaps speculate about others that are not so apparent.

Design has emerged as one of the world's most powerful forces. It has placed us at the beginning of a new, unprecedented period of human possibility, where all economies and ecologies are becoming global, relational, and interconnected. In order to understand these emerging forces, there is an urgent need to articulate precisely what we are doing to ourselves and to our world. Bruce Mau, Massive Change

PROPOSE

INTERVENE

ALAMEDA^{CORRIDOR} : The Architecture of X Ecologies

Studio 2GB - Spring 2008

Marc Frohn - Margaret Griffin - Ilaria Mazzoleni - Mary-Ann Ray



Research Trajectories

Made in Alameda

Factories, Farms, Studios, Shops, Slaughter Houses, Sweat Shops, Open Air Locations - Prefabricated Buildings, American Apparel, Corn Crops, Smoked Fish, Palettes, Pig to Pork, Ducks to Duck, Jeans, Movies, Knitted Lingerie Fabric, Movies, T.V. Episodes, Auto Commercials, Upholstery, Aluminum Casting/Foundry, Furniture, etc..

Human/Cultural Alameda

Census, Human Conditions

Prostitutes, pimps, Johns, 35% of Americas homeless population (an average of one dies each day), Artists, Loft Dwellers, Truck Drivers, Architecture Students, Coyote Traders, Micro-Entrepreneurs, Macro-Entrepreneurs, Mariachi Musicians, Factory Workers, Third Strike Inmates, etc..

"Los Angeles is one of the largest third world cities in the world today" Connie Rice, Civil Rights Lawyer and

Second Cousin of Condoleezza Rice.

See the World Without Leaving Alameda

90 languages spoken in Los Angeles, forming a sort of horizontal field of Babel

Import/Export

Chinatown

Little Tokyo

Little Saigon (a stretch)

East L.A. (where house is casa and neighborhood is barrio)

and ?

(un)Natural Alameda

Weather, local micro-climates (e.g. urban heat islands, ...), geology, atmosphere, flora, fauna, river, land, sky, air, Lerupian Mega-shapes, (ref. After the City : Suburban Metropolis reading). "Black Monday" June 1943 was the first horrific smog attack in Los Angeles (ref. After the City : Suburban Metropolis reading). "LA has beautiful (if man-made) sunsets." - Miles, Intrnational Times

Alameda Temporal - Futures / Pasts

Economics, Real Estate, Zoning and Programming, Environment, Urban Planning, Resources, Energy Sources, History of early settlements and land use, Legends, Architecture. "A City 70 miles square but rarely 70 years deep...Los Angeles is instant architecture in an instant townscape." - Reyner Banham.



Alameda Energies

What moves along, across, and through the Alameda Corridor From the Los Angeles Port to Chinatown. What is producing energy, consuming energy, altering energy in the Corridor? "In Los Angeles people think of space in terms of time, time in terms of routes... and of automobiles as natural and essential extensions of themselves." Miles: International Times

Alameda Aerial / Perependicular 2D+3D

Orders, Grids, Geometry, Infrastructures, Densities, Patterns, Megashapes, Land Use/ Programming, Space, Color Palettes/Effects, Image, Scenes, Graphics, Materiality, Surfaces, Objects

ALAMEDA CORRIDOR : The Architecture of X Ecologies SOURCE GLOBE

The Studio 2GB research will be compiled and formatted to be of use for all members of the studio. A technical and design team will be formed to oversee the design and compilation of this SOURCE GLOBE for the Alameda Corridor.

A l a m e d a 2 4

24 TEAMS, 24 HOURS

As a way to cover the territory quickly, the studio 2GB will occupy the Alameda Corridor for 24 hours. Each of the Studio's 24 teams will 'take' one hour of the 24 hour clock and do a **deep read** and a careful analysis of the **corridor** during this particular hour.

PARTICULARS

Each team will be open to what is particular about the Corridor at this particular hour, but at the same time and most importantly, will be **focused upon the content of the particular research trajectory**. And of course, our 'meta-theme' is ARCHITECTURE + the City/the Urban/the Metropolis.

TIMELINE

Each team will produce a timeline for the given hour formatted on 8.5 x 11 landscape (length is limitless, and vertical 'swellings' using the same module are allowed). The timelines may be produced from Text, Photographs, Images, Drawings, Diagrams, Audio Recordings. Work toward producing strong relationships between the modes of representation and the content being studied. For instance, in your documentation, might you need a thermal camera? A stop motion command? An acoustic recording? Or?

DATA WALL

For 2:00 PM Wednesday, have the timelines mounted on the studio DATA WALL.

The Shape of L.A.



Schedule:

week 1	m	jan	7	intro: studio, project 1
	w		9	pin-up 24 hr
	f		11	
week 2	m		14	
	w		16	2pm Lecture: David Fletcher - LA river
	f		18	
week 3	m		21	MLK – no class
	w		23	Project 1.2 due + site selection
	f		25	
week 4	m		28	
	w		30	Final review Project 1.2 and 1.3
	f	feb	1	
week 5	m		4	
	w		6	THESIS due
	f		8	final Project begins
week 6	m		11	
	w		13	
	f		15	
week 7	m		18	
	w		20	
	f		22	
week 8	m		25	
	w		27	
	f		29	MID-TERM
week 9	m	mar	3	
	w		5	
	f		7	
week 10	m		10	
	w		12	
	f		14	
week 11	m		17	
	w		19	
	f		21	
week 12	m		24	PRE-FINAL REVIEW
	w		26	
	f		28	
week 13	m		31	
	w	apr	2	
	f		4	
week 14	m		7	
	w		9	
	f		11	
week 15	m		14	
	TUE		15	FINALS

NOTES: For detailed schedule please refer to projects handouts. / Dates may be subjected to changes.

ALAMEDACORRIDOR

The Architecture of X Ecologies

Studio structure:

It is imperative that you feel comfortable in your work environment. As your instructors, we will promote an open environment where everyone's ideas, concerns, critiques, and feedback are welcome. As we proceed through the semester, it is important that everyone operate under the same rules and guidelines to ensure that all have equal access to a fruitful working and learning environment.

Your presence in the studio is not only greatly appreciated, it is mandatory.

A major part of cultivating an energetic and conducive environment is that every member of the class works at studio. You will realize, that much of your growth and awareness, as designers, will come from the personal daily (& hourly) interaction between you and your colleagues. Working outside of studio not only takes away from the potential you have to learn, it also takes away from others around you.

The studio meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 2:00p – 7:00p. Studio will begin promptly and attendance is mandatory. Arriving late and/or leaving early will constitute an absence. Three absences with or without a legitimate excuse will result in the student being dropped from the studio, as per school policy. Attendance is mandatory at critiques, pin-ups, and reviews. Your work will be reviewed only if ready to be presented at the scheduled time. Errands, trips for supplies, copies, outside research, etc. should be taken care of during non-studio time. During studio hours no cell phones, instant messaging or any other digital device are allowed, if not related to studio work.

If absence from studio is unavoidable, notify your studio instructor 2 days prior either in person or via e-mail.

Studio time is set aside for studio projects. You are not to work on other class work during studio hours.