

MICRO-INDUSTRIAL URBANISM

a hybrid prototype for living and working in the city

The project to be designed in this studio brings together two issues.

- 1) The idea of the city as a place of production and not only consumption is re-emerging as economic and environmental imperatives combine with the desire of people to be closer to the making of everyday things and the production of food. Although globalized production will continue, local manufacture is also increasing in scale and impact.*
- 2) Cities are becoming increasingly divided in social and economic ways, and we need to find means, through policy and design, to “re-knit” the urban social fabric.*

This studio will involve the design of a prototypical building that incorporates four kinds of components supporting a renewed approach to urban industry and urban life:

- *dwellings*
- *workshops & small production facilities connected to, or near the dwellings*
- *shared production space that serves all the dwellings and attached workshops*
- *a related space of the designer's choice that serves immigrants, refugees and/or homeless people, or the development of the dwellings and workshops in ways that deal specifically with the needs of, and opportunities for these people*

The site will be in Portland, in a place suitable for light industrial and residential uses. We will work alongside Professor Hajo Neis's studio, which will deal specifically with housing for refugees.

In the contemporary city, goods are bought, used and disposed of, but no longer made. Although “knowledge work” forms a new information economy, manufacture has moved to places with low labor costs, using low-cost container shipping. This studio is based on the idea of an emerging parallel system to globalized production: we conjecture that contemporary cities might again be places where material goods and food are produced.

At the same time, world cities are now faced with changing populations, incorporating immigrants, refugees and more and more people at the low end of the “economic ladder.” How can the revival of industry in the city help provide economic opportunity for these people?

The emerging economy that includes a range of small-scale industry and craft production has design implications at scales from urban form to neighborhoods to buildings. In the studio, we will design prototypes for buildings at one particular scale—that of the small crafts person/ manufacturer whose workshop/small factory is next to his/her own

dwelling and who is sharing capital-intensive facilities with other people working in similar ways.

Within the overall framework of a program that includes the four components mentioned above, each student will investigate the production of a particular product (possibilities include but are not restricted to bicycles, furniture, musical instruments, food...) to develop understandings of the spaces required to house that process while at the same time provide opportunity for underserved people. The studio will emphasize (1) the careful design of dwelling units/individual workshops-production spaces; (2) the design of spaces for particular crafts or industries, based on research into the industrial process itself; and (3) developing a strong connection between the building and the surrounding community.

The studio will be run in an intense, collaborative way, with weekly pinups and a professionally-presented final project. It will show the possibility of a new way of seeing urban industry integrated with everyday urban social and economic life.