Containing, Alienating, Colonizing, Cannibalizing, Disrupting, Occupying, Regulating, Extracting, Refining, Producing, Training, Performing, Wearing, Fulfilling, Maintaining, Supporting, Reusing

Taken in 1972 by the crew of Apollo 17, “The Blue Marble” is one of two images of the Earth said to have inaugurated in the popular imagination an environmental consciousness of the planet as a shared and finite ecosystem. All at once, the world was made interior—a “Spaceship Earth,” argued Buckminster Fuller. Here, recasting the globe as an ecosystem of mutual precarity deployed the colonizing logic of World’s Fairs and Wunderkammer toward different ends, but with mixed results. Inaugurated at the turn of the century by the “scientific” workflow management practices of Taylorism and the stimulation management practices of psychological aesthetics, the modern era staged a collision between self and system, reaching one of many final forms in the “hospital-theater” of late capitalist or logistics space where the regulating, training, and displaying of bodies or things for work merges with therapeutic and supportive practices, both aspirational and monetized. Meanwhile, the migration of people, data, materials, and pathogens—and their facilities for control or distribution—become the site of today’s most fundamental political struggles. What kind of revolution can be launched from the inside?

This theory and history seminar analyzes how the urban is produced through interiorizing practices that oscillate between the personal and infrastructural. It also engages critically with the attitudes and environments that sustain interiority or that require the maintenance of interiority to function. It asks how interiority operates, includes, and excludes, and who or what it serves. Given the climate-driven imperatives of retreat, resettlement, adaptive reuse, conservation, and survival, the production of an equitable urbanism—a re-inhabiting of the environment—will begin with an interrogation of interiority.

The course will include lectures, guest talks, readings, and discussions, and will culminate in a small exhibit or installation of student propositions/operations on interior practice.

Subject Area Elective, Urban Architecture and Design