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Graduate students who choose to design dwellings as a major component of their project can use this studio to satisfy the studio requirement of the housing specialization.

food, building, performance: architectures of productive urbanism

This terminal studio project involves the design of a complex urban building intended to house a set of activities that advance the idea of the city as a place of cultural and/or economic production. Each student will choose among several options for the specific program, but will all design their project on the same Brooklyn, New York site.

Each option is intended to foster local production in a way that supports local arts and/or the local economy, and brings disadvantaged kids and young adults into training and apprenticeships. (For an example of the kind of program this building might house, please see the following story on PBS):
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/innovative-pittsburgh-job-center-trains-disadvantaged-youth

The options are as follows:

1. **a building to support performance art.**
   A community theater for music, dance or drama, that incorporates production as well as the arts of production, and includes craft-based training and apprenticeships in the performing arts (set design, costume design, lighting design, musical instrument production). It welcomes street art, world music, incorporation of minorities into artistic life, and is intended to act as a center of its neighbourhood.

2. **a building to support building art.**
   A building workshop and research facility, that incorporates a historical research center/museum on the building arts and the history of building in New York linked to an experimental/training facility for contemporary building techniques. It will include apprenticeship programs in building and space for the involvement of local people in building and planning decisions.

3. **a building to support local food production.**
   A facility to advance and make visible local food production that will incorporate a public market, distribution center and commercial/demonstration kitchens and restaurants. It will emphasize the Importance of food equity and support of the local food economy.

Any one of these projects may or may not include dwellings—that is up to you. If dwellings are included, they will incorporate workspaces connected to the building’s productive purpose.

**The site**

A site near the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn, NY, will be chosen for its suitability for artistic, industrial and dwelling uses. The common site will allow for a single site model and the opportunity to share research and design approaches. A report by the NY Dept. of City Planning describes this neighborhood and its potentials:

A trip to New York may be arranged at the beginning of winter break; we are trying to provide partial funding for it. The trip is not assured, but even if it does not take place, there is ample material available about the neighborhood, including historic information, zoning and land-use data. In any case, Howard will visit the neighborhood again before the studio begins, to identify and document two or three specific sites within the larger area for discussion among the studio members.
The site will be located within an old industrial area of Brooklyn, centered around the Gowanus Canal, that is undergoing transformation into a mixed-use neighborhood incorporating dwellings, light industry and creative businesses. The site will be chosen to be suitable for any of the three possible programs, as well as for dwellings.

**Conduct and schedule of the studio**

The studio is a hybrid between a thesis and a set program. The common site and theme will help facilitate common discussion in the studio. The variety of projects will allow each student to develop their own “thesis,” or focus and approach to the project, within the common theme. The studio will be run rigorously, with frequent pinups and the expectation of intense and engaged work, leading to a professionally developed and presented project.
Architectural ideas and historical and contemporary precedents will be engaged at a full range of scales: from issues of context and urban design to architectural organization and typologies, to systems of materials and structural and environmental performance. In this studio, performance and aesthetics will be equally important. The year will be organized as follows:

**Fall**
- a few informal meetings to discuss overall project idea, and make individual decisions about project scope, program, and inclusion of housing, plus joint decision about choice of site within Brooklyn area.
- Possible trip to New York at the beginning of winter break.

**Winter**
- Schematic design, ending in a project with the scope and detail of a well-developed 4/584 project.

**Spring**
- Project development, including building systems and further, detailed development of project focus. This may include detailed material studies, development of detailed aspects of interior and/or exterior space, detailed dwelling development, etc.

*Five tenets of the studio. The building and its functions:*

1. ...will be an example of “productive urbanism” —the idea that instead of the city being a place of passive consumption, where people buy a lot of things, use them briefly and then supply landfills with them, the city is a place of production—of art, of food, of the city itself—and that production gives life to the city.
2. ...will be socially inclusive, engaging people of all economic means, races and ethnicities, sexual orientations, and physical abilities and disabilities.
3. ...will support the local economy & local life. It is not a branch of a multi-zillion-dollar corporation elsewhere in the world, but contains institutions that keep resources local.
4. ...do not put an inappropriate burden on the climate. This comes from the architectural organization of the building, and the performance and life-cycle characteristics of systems, materials and details.
5. ...are working together in a beautiful and approachable work of architecture. The building incorporates the best of what we know about the relationships between architectural form and materials, including a deep knowledge of historic, modern and contemporary precedents.

Together, these tenets represent an affirmation and renewal of urban life with buildings that elevate the human spirit...an interpretation of what Henri Lefebvre called “the right to the city.”