
 Gabriela O'Connor
Teaching Portfolio

Design cannot be taught. Rather, it is revealed through an ongoing learning process that is reliant on curiosity about how we experience and engage the (un)built environment. Because there is a notion that everything has been done in the architecture and design realm, it is important to implement and develop new ways of seeing in terms of critical thinking and problem solving. This is successful in educational environments where thinking, trial and error, experimentation, and reflection is not only encouraged, but expected. Moreover, an architecture and design professor is an experienced learner in the profession, cultivating and promoting investigation in the educational realm.

My interest in teaching is grounded in challenging the pre-conceived notions of making and how one experiences their surrounding environment. This is particularly important in understanding self-awareness within a space. Innovation is derived through immersive exploration and continuous inquiry about how to continue to push the boundaries of design. In my experience, for example, while developing an architectural scheme that consisted of a series of “cone” shaped buildings, I was asked why I had drawn a traditional, standard door for entry. Discussion revealed an opportunity to develop an original design in re-thinking the doors, and I was encouraged to have my stream of design consciousness be as consistent and thorough as possible. A prompting to re-evaluate something as simple as the design and function of a door is the approach and level of engagement I seek to foster.

I encourage thinking through doing and take an open-minded approach to a student’s expression. Whether that be research, making models, drawings, or even cooking, each student’s creative process is unique. Moreover, though there is always an end goal and final resolved design product to be expected, the success of a student’s learning process is most evident in their progress and evolution. Design is iterative, not a silver bullet. Through establishing a collaborative environment and presenting and explaining one’s ideas each meeting session, multiple perspectives and interpretations can be expressed. Also, often times, one can get stuck or tunnel visioned about the possibilities and potential of his/her work. Because of this, beyond presentations and talking through his/work work, I encourage each student to write and refer to a design manifesto as he/she goes through their respective design process. This method has been beneficial to myself and my peers in maintaining focus and prioritizing the intentions of a project. In verbalizing one’s design ideas into concrete words, the intention and clarity of the design is revealed.

A student has as much to contribute as his/her peers and myself. Promoting the ability to question our environment through revealing and immersing into the design processes prompts critical thinking. Reflection and collaboration of these endeavors results in successful design learning experiences.



COURSE DESCRIPTION

How can we create a spatial experience without constructing a physical space? A pre-cursor to Architectural Design, this introductory design studio teaches students examines approaches to space making and architectural design tools through explorations of the senses (touch, smell, taste, sight, and hearing). In emphasizing studies through model making, students will develop and produce prosthetics that manipulate the senses, and consequently, how one perceives space. Prosthetics ranging from limiting one's range of arm motion to creating eyewear that limits visibility act as engaging methods to understand the extension of a designer's ability to manipulate a physical environment. Through presentation, testing, and discussion of these models, students will experiment and analyze how a space can be interpreted and experienced. Weekly Rhinoceros tutorials will be given in correlation to these exercises to familiarize students with digital drafting, as well as facilitate with the production of technical drawings for their models. An introduction to Adobe Suite will also occur to assist in graphic presentation and organization. The studio will culminate with a series of five prosthetic models and technical drawings, as well as a developed, critical approach to space-making.

6 units | Major Elective Studio, open to non-majors by permission



COURSE DESCRIPTION

A three day music festival has approximately 250,000 attendees. With these events growing in popularity, an emerging and arguably stronger focus has been on the design installations rather than the musical performers. This advanced studio will investigate the festival environment as the infrastructure to create an ephemeral architectural installation and expose students to engaging and interactive methods of creating. The semester will begin with research on music festivals, and collectively cataloging and analyzing installations to identify successful approaches to interactive design. Students will apply and reference these works as they develop their own project concepts throughout the semester. The scope of the studio will range from detail to overall scale-with explorations of how the installation functions in relation to its users, as well as its overall assembly and construction. Through models and development of portions of the design at full scale, students will better comprehend design intentions and interaction. The product will be a series of iterative explorations as well as a final design with proper documentation of drawings and model. Overall, the studio looks to encourage and see the value of interactive design, gain insight on construction tectonics, as well as create for this growing popular culture environment.

6 units (Topic within Advanced Studio) | Pre-Requisites: Architectural Design



“We know time only indirectly by what happens in it: by observing change and permanence; by marking the succession of events among stable settings; and by noting the contrast of varying rates of change” -George Kubler

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Time is constantly in flux, and often undervalued in its complexity. However, we can challenge preconceived notions of time and explore alternative methods to express it through the process of making. In the first half of the course, students will be given instructions each week to construct, participate, and record a time-based activity or “event.” Ranging from dripping paint at different heights to attaching a pen to a moving pendulum, these “event” exercises act as an alternative method to render a duration of time. Students will then analyze and interpret each visual through drawing or model to infer systems such as structure, process, duration, and/or other forms of reflection. This enables the visualization of immaterial characteristics often found within the design process. These 2D findings will then undergo 3D manipulations and explorations, applicable to a variety of scales or programmatic purposes. Final outcomes are a “time freeze” series of works including the event and analytical drawings as well as a final 3D model. Students should have a basic understanding of digital model making and its relation to 3D digital fabrication. Overall, the course is interdisciplinary in its approach to visualizing and fabricating complex data to convey analysis—and maybe even stopping time.

INTAR 2814 | Winter 2016



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OBJECTIVES

- To challenge preconceived notions of time through the process of making
- To recognize the immaterial and ephemeral characteristics of our surroundings as generative design tools through data visualizations
- To develop a stronger awareness of design process through active participation
- To identify and infer systems of logic to a seemingly chaotic work/drawing

OUTCOMES

- Exposure to a variety of analytical systems and approaches to visualizing data
- Ability to translate 2D analytical drawings into 3D tectonics
- Series of “event” drawings
- Diagrammatic analysis of “event” drawings
- A three dimensional object representative of time

MATERIALS

- Students are expected to purchase their own materials for Co-Works and/or Lab 06
- 3D Printing: a tank and resin (can be split amongst multiple students)
 - Laser Cutting: chipboard, museum board, plywood, plexi, etc
 - CNC: foam (1” thick min)

GRADING POLICY

Your final grade is determined by a 100 point scale:

- Class participation and attendance (10 points)
- “Event” series and analytical diagrams (30 points)
- Three dimensional exploration analysis (20 points)
- Final submission and review (40 points)

A | Excellent (90-100 points)

Work and analysis surpasses expectations in terms of craft, inventiveness, and cohesive process and concept throughout the entire semester. Student engages in discussion and can clearly verbalize concepts related to the course and his/her work.

B | Good (80-89 points)

Work and analysis is completed in a thorough manner. Effort and progress is evident in all aspects of the student’s work and his/her participation in class.

C | Acceptable (70-79 points)

Some aspects of the student's work and analysis is not cohesive or complete. Suggestions/discussions for improvement are not pursued or evident in the process/completion. Student is not present for class and/or does not participate in group activities and discussion.

D | Poor (60-69 points)

Multiple aspects of the student's work is unclear and/or incomplete. Student does not demonstrate any indication of improvement or ability to perform at level design expectations. Student does not engage with the class.

F | Unacceptable (under 59 points)

Minimum expectations are not met. Student's performance is unacceptable.

ASSIGNMENTS

Over the first half of the course students will construct and participate in a series of "events" in class. Each event [total of seven events] is time specific, and representative of an alternative rendering of how to express time. Students will reflect on these "events" and the drawings they produce through in class discussions as well as diagrammatic analysis. These diagrams are to be printed/presentable for pin-ups [refer to schedule]. After midterm, students will choose an analysis he/she would like to focus on further developing and ultimately project into three dimensional space.

Event 01 | *"Interpreting Time"* | A series of preliminary, introductory activities to introduce alternative tools that represent a duration of time that have varying results from user to user.

Event 02 | *"[Re]Interpreting Time"* | Expanding on alternative tools, the use of color is incorporated to begin to decipher and infer systems/logics of the activity.

Event 03 | *"Back and to the Future"* | Utilizing tools that evoke visual ephemeral qualities of disintegration or change in form over a period of time.

Event 04 | *"[Super]Imposed Time Burst"* | To contrast Event 03, focus on how tools and visual aids can emphasize encapsulating duration.

Event 05 | *"Time Twist"* | Utilizing tools that enable a series to be created that has varying levels of control in their action and effect.

Event 06 | *"Chronological [Dis]Order"* | Looking at tools that are ephemeral in their presence to render the passing of time.

Event 07 | *Your Own Time Capsule* | Based off experience of the previous events and knowledge from readings and lectures, observe or create your own "event" to capture a duration of time.

PARTICIPATION

Students are required to participate in all class activities. This includes participating in the drawing series, lectures, and discussions. Students should engage the class with relevant questions, comments, or additional information they pertain relevant to the subject matter.

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be present when class is in session. If a student is more than 15 minutes late, it will count as an absence. If a student has more than 2 absences, it will affect their overall grade. Please be in contact if any emergency or situation arises that conflicts with class sessions.

RISD POLICIES

ACADEMIC HONESTY - RISD is committed to the principles of intellectual honesty and integrity. Members of the RISD community are expected to maintain complete honesty in all academic work, presenting only that which is his/her own work in tests and assignments.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES - Any student who feels he/she may require accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately at the beginning of the semester to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Office of Student Development and Counseling Services directly to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

READINGS

- Deleuze, Gilles. *Difference and Repetition*. trans. P. Patton. 1994. London: Althone Press.
- Grisewood, Jane and Carali McCall. *The Sense of Drawing: An Approach to Drawing, Marking and Experiencing Time*. 2011. London: University of the Arts.
- Huggett, Nick. *Space From Zeno to Einstein: Classic Readings with a Contemporary Commentary*. 1999. Bradford: MIT Press.
- Kubler, George. *The Shape and Time: Remarks on the History of Things*. 1962. New Haven: Yale University.
- Maizels, Michael. *Barry Le Va: The Aesthetic Aftermath*. 2015. Minneapolis: Univ of Minnesota Press.

How Do We Stop Time?

Fabricating Ephemeral Events

SCHEDULE

Week 01		
01.07	Introduction + <i>Tools for Marking Time and Performance</i> + Event 01 and Event 02	Readings: Kubler [1962]+McCall, Grisewood [2011]
01.08	<i>Visualizing Change over Time</i> + Reading Discussion + Event 03 and Event 04	Reading: Deleuze [1994] + Develop diagrams
Week 02		
01.13	Small group[s] pin-up of diagrams for Events 01-04 + Reading Discussion + Event 05 and Event 06	Reading: Maizels [2015]
01.14	<i>3D Modeling Methods and Digital Applications</i> + Reading Discussion + Event 07	Develop diagrams
01.15	Group pin-up of all diagrams + Overview of Mid-term Review + Work session	Prepare for midterm
Week 03		
01.21	Midterm	Write a one page reflection on comments from midterm review
01.22	Visit to RISD Museum [How Do We Infer Time Within a Museum?]	Reading: Huggett [1999]
Week 04		
01.27	Presentations of initial 3D schematic models + Reading Discussion + Work Session	Continue developing 3D model [prepare file for test prints]
01.28	Work session + Test runs of fabricated models [in Lab 06]	Modify model file and continue updating diagrams
01.29	Individual desk crit of updated diagrams and 3D models	Progress with presentation
Week 05		
02.04	Work session / finalizing presentation [fabricated models are completed]	Finalize and prepare for final
02.05	Final Review	

How Do We Stop Time?
Fabricating Ephemeral Events



[RE] Interpreting Time

[Event 02] How can we actively engage with time? Can we speed it up? What if it slowed down? This exercise challenges our pre-conceived notion of time as a regulating, repeating system through direct self experience. Split into three parts, this event consists of a single, repeated action. Each part will have an independent outside factor incorporated in conjunction with this action, further altering our perception and awareness of time. In rendering this “event” through the making process, we create visuals for these manipulations. These visuals can then be digitally analyzed and post-rationalized for systems and patterns to develop new ways of representing the passing of time.

Goals

- To challenge preconceived notions of time within the process of making
- To introduce alternative representing of time
- To establish awareness of self in time and space
- To introduce outside factors that manipulate experience
- To introduce basic inference systems or logics [repetition, consistency, composition, duration]

Outcomes

- Three alternatives to rendering a duration of 5 minutes
- Post-rationalization of systems [3 diagrams]
- Recognition and ability to discuss what can influence and alter the perception of time

Materials

- [3] 24”x24” sheets of paper
- a straight edge [NOT A RULER]
- 12 pack of colored pencils
- brown paper bag
- cloth or blindfold

Method: (Instructions)

Part 01: Repetition

1. Open colored pencils and place into paper bag.
2. Without looking, grab a pencil from bag
3. Using the straight edge, draw a 4” line on sheet of paper
4. Place colored pencil back in bag
5. Without looking, grab a pencil from bag

How Do We Stop Time?

Fabricating Ephemeral Events

6. Using the straight edge, draw a 4" line 1" away from previous line

7. Place colored pencil back in bag

*When/if one runs out of space on paper, reset/begin in new location on paper

Repeat steps 5-7 for the next 5 minutes. Screen will have timer/countdown for 5 minutes.

Part 02: Blind Repetition

Place the blindfold over your eyes. Repeat the instructions for Part 01. An audio loop of 60 bpm metronome will be played as a timer.

Part 03: Accumulative Repetition

Pick a partner. Use the blindfold to tie wrist [dominant hands] together. *Depending on one's hand dominance, sit either next to or across from your partner. No indication of time passing will be given until 5 minutes have passed.

Discussion | Reflection

- How many lines can you draw in 5 minutes?
- How many lines of each color are represented?
- Is there a pattern?
- Is the spacing between lines consistent?
- Are the lines the same length?
- Are the lines perpendicular to the page?
- Is there a difference between the lines you made versus your partner's? What are those differences?

Time is no longer is conceived as a duration 5 minutes [or 1 minute repeated 5 times, or 300 seconds, etc], but instead possibly:

- The frequency [amount] of lines drawn
- The amount of blue lines compared to green lines [or any color comparison]
- The density or spacing of lines [does that mean time was moving faster or slower...?]
- The layout of time [composition of linework on page]

Diagrammatic Analysis

- [3] diagrams
- Create a digital diagram for two of the three compositions created. Infer a system that you recognize in the drawing [pattern, repetition, composition, etc]. Select two drawings to overlap and create a diagram. DO NOT use color to create diagrams.

Upload images of each composition to the Google Drive.

How Do We Stop Time?

Fabricating Ephemeral Events

Assessment Rubric

CRITERIA	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor Unacceptable
Class Participation	Positive commentary to contribute each meeting session	Positive commentary in most meeting sessions	Occasionally contributes to discussion	No participation, poor attendance record
Integration of concepts discussed in class visually evident in individual assignments	Demonstrates high level of competency integrating class concepts	Integrates concepts	Struggles to relate concepts in independent work	Concepts not evident in work
Can discuss and relate ideas and concepts from class to individual assignments	Goes beyond class discussion to relate to own thought process	Shows understanding of in class discussion in independent work	Has basic verbal notion of relating concepts	Can not express concepts
Growth and development in critical thinking [presentation and 2D to 3D projections]	Exceeds expectation in progress of developing work	Demonstrates basic and consistent level of progress and effort	Minimal level of development is evident	Does not attempt to develop work in a cohesive manner
Methods and techniques for making	Explores methods for making to express concept	Has physical models of work	Minimal effort put in model making	No physical models
Creative interpretations and solutions in approach to assignments	Uses inventive and creative means to complete assignments	Solutions are resolved and show evidence of thorough exploration	Attempts and completes the assignment	Does not turn in assignments

MIDTERM EVALUATION

Please complete the following form. Your responses are a valuable tool in helping me make improvements for the second half of the course that benefit both your efforts and learning experience as well as my teaching practices.

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Why are you taking this course?

What method of learning (lectures, readings, activities, discussions) has been most useful? Why?

Is the feedback constructive / helpful in understanding what the professor is looking for? Why or why not?

What improvements could be beneficial to your learning experience in the second half of the course?

Class is organized and an effective use of time	1	2	3	4	5
Assignment instructions are clear	1	2	3	4	5
Assignments relate and build upon each other	1	2	3	4	5
Concepts are carefully explained	1	2	3	4	5
The amount of work (inside and outside of class) is appropriate	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

Additional Comments: