



"Mountains of Corn and a Sea of Farm Subsidies." by Alexei Barrionuevo, NYT 2005

A REGENERATIVE ARCHITECTURE MOVEMENT

FALL 2020 OPTION STUDIO

Michael Murphy & Caitlin Taylor

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:00 am - 1:00 pm EST

Food shapes the world around us, and setting the table for a shared meal is a powerful force for transformation. The arc of the insurgent, if flawed, local food movement has been a reaction to widespread global industrialization, and is decades ahead of the architecture and construction industries in its effort to ask hard questions about ecological impact and human health, the relationship between social and environmental justice, the value of place-based cultural memory, and the economic and legislative power structures that shape the world around us. As we face converging crises of planetary heating, social injustice, and global pandemics, the food system will be a bellwether by which we measure necessary change.

The food system has a long way to go, and architecture has so much to learn. This studio will explore the entangled production of food and our built environment as tangible, material manifestations of our societal and cultural values, and as powerful and urgent drivers of rapidly accelerating climate change. We will set out in search of a regenerative architecture movement in which our buildings and our food provide meaningful nourishment, and in doing so we will design architecture that is perennial, delicious, durable, resilient, indeterminate, and welcoming of limits.

The semester will be structured around two assignments, which will each operate at multiple scales. In the first six weeks of the semester, we will undesign the plate - through research, data collection, mapping, and drawing, students will locate the ingredients on their plates within their spatial, infrastructural, social, ecological, political, and economic context in the region and beyond. Students will conclude the semester with a building design project for a grain mill, bakery, R&D lab, and hub for a newly-regional grain economy on the campus of Stone Barns Center for Food & Agriculture in Tarrytown, NY. Students' previous investigations into regional production ecologies, material science, and infrastructural adaptation will inform the design of architectural terrior at the building scale. Through collaboration with interdisciplinary experts at Cornell's College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, we will explore the material science of our food system in parallel with the material science of our built environment through detailing and model building (and model growing, model harvesting, and model eating).

Michael Murphy, executive director and co-founder of MASS Design Group, and Caitlin Taylor, Director of the Food Systems Design Lab within MASS, will co-teach this studio. Michael will participate in virtual meetings with students regularly throughout the semester, and Caitlin will be present (virtually or physically) for studio T/Th every week. She will be in Ithaca for in-person instruction approximately two weeks of every three.