

# URBAN FLUXUS

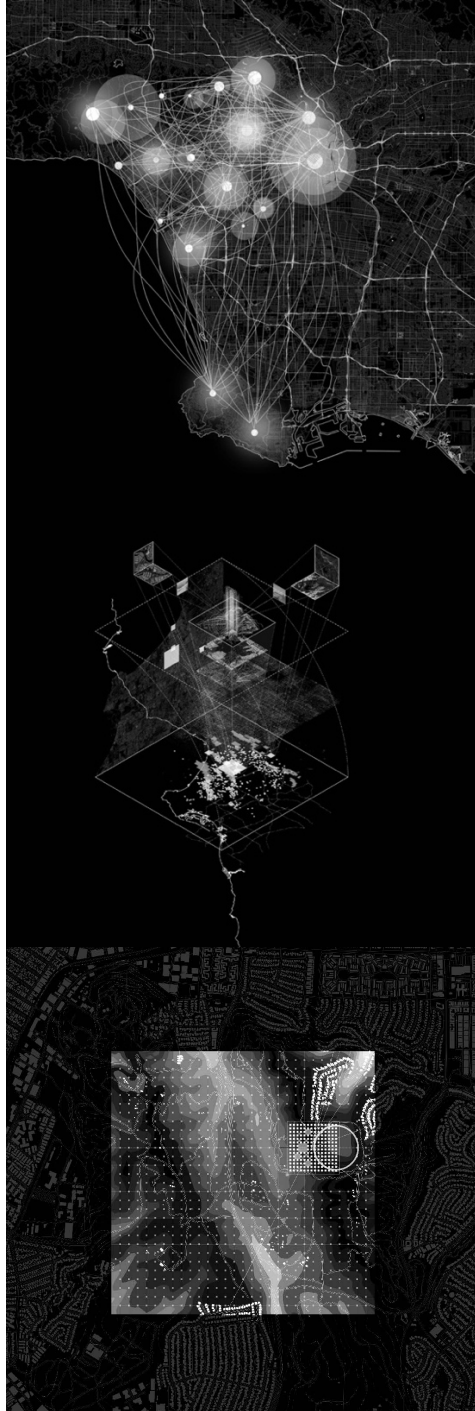
ARCH 4509/6509-105 Cornell AAP

Instructor: Naomi Frangos

Time: F. 10:10a.m.-12:05p.m.

Location: 144 East Sibley Hall

Credits: 3



*The Masks of Los Angeles*, Erik Jakob  
Variable Typologies Studio, Naomi Frangos

*“Map devices such as frame, scale, orientation, projection, indexing and naming reveal artificial geographies that remain unavailable to human eyes... the surface of the map functions like an operating table, a staging ground or a theatre of operations upon which the mapper collects, combines, connects, marks, masks, relates and generally explores.” James Corner*

At a few thousand feet above the earth’s surface, one notices intersecting lines, natural landmarks or iconic structures. A city’s grain, fibers, networks, nervous systems, connective tissue, hidden realms, natural evolution is marked by patterns, peripheries, edges, nodes, and centers that make up its various field conditions. Yet, as defined by theorist Stan Allen, field conditions are “bottom-up phenomena defined not by overarching geometrical schemas but by intricate local connections, [where] interval, repetition, and seriality are key concepts.” Through evolutionary growth and decay, consistencies and interruptions, disturbances, and irregularities in the urban fabric created by geological, topographical, and environmental infrastructures, historical and cultural framings, social systems and political governance, etc., a city makes and re-makes itself as a “macro-field” through unfinished “micro-worlds” – its grain and identity in constant “urban flux.” This phenomenon is best understood through inter-scalar investigations. A few decades since Charles and Ray Eames’ film *The Power of Ten* offered a revolutionary visualization of the importance of scale and interconnectivity of the universe to the nanoscale of human cells, Google maps along with GIS software and the ability to zoom in and out, rotate panoramic views, turn layers of data on and off, seemingly allows us to imagine and virtually experience multiple representations of the world. While statistics are generated through live-data tracking, what they don’t perform is a critical analysis of the human and non-human relationships or effects of one data set to another, in the past, present or future. This seminar seeks to unveil a city’s hidden dimensions through inter-scalar analysis, a process that is part of and not precursor to productive design. Using a combination of readings, mappings, measuring devices, visualization and representational techniques as vehicles for gaining insight into the dynamics of a city and its various forms of agency, students will study a particular city and construct a set of serial drawing-narratives that will also evolve to imagine and reconstruct a ‘new city’ as a possible future reality engaging multiple sites, ecologies, topologies, and scales. The class work will culminate in a rigorously formatted ‘Atlas of Urban Fluxus’ curated as a mini-exhibition / publication.

*\* Instructor permission is required. Students should attend first class.*