



Pezo von Ellrichshausen, 30812201629, pencil on paper, 14x21cm, 2020

OPEN CASE

SPRING 2021, OPTION STUDIO, TU/TH, 8:30–1:25 EST
PEZO VON ELLRICHSHAUSEN

While every building is a unique case (located both in an infinite stream of time and on the finite surface of the world), all cases together are the universe of Architecture (a discipline, the architectonic institution). According to the original treatises, every case finds a specific discontinuity with its surrounding domains. Following popular myths, architecture is an artifice within the natural world. A case, a simple box, a chamber or a hall, is in fact defined by its degree of interiority, by the encompassing boundary that holds (and protects) a certain volume of air. This conditioned air (mechanically transported and tempered in recent times), in any case, is the ultimate adjournment of the so-called natural elements. The glass case, in its fictitious discontinuity, can actually revert the object-landscape relationship by encapsulating an artificialized wilderness filled with exotic flowers, plants and trees from all over the world. From Wardian's portable herbarium to the high-tech Eden project, we should understand the case as the reservoir it is: an optimistic repository of life, of cycles, growth, evolution and decay. As another variation of our "naïve intention" program, this semester's project is a botanical shelter (with small guest apartments adjacent to a large greenhouse) for resident ecologists (as a satellite program for the United States Botanical Garden in Washington, at the very Paradise, near Mount Rainier National Park). This shelter will be conceived as a fragile glass and steel structure that has to resist both a large range of vegetal species and also the weight of heavy winters. This exotic dwelling will be developed in paired authorship and depicted through a single large format oblique drawing and a small format book, with hand made drawings, models and paintings.

Mauricio Pezo and Sofia von Ellrichshausen, Associate Professors of the Practice and founding partners of Pezo von Ellrichshausen, will be in their farm at the Andes mountains, with regular on-line meetings every Tuesday and Thursday.