



Carrara Marble Quarry, Carrara, Italy

DRAWING SITES

ARCH4509/6509

Dasha Khapalova, Visiting Critic

This is a class about analyzing, interpreting, drawing and physically modeling sites. It is based on the notion that a site is a complex, layered construct that must be “read” and understood— and that such a reading of site is able to reveal an intention and a spatial and formal language for an intervention that might occur there. In order for an understanding of site to become generative rather than just factual (i.e. in order for it to be truly helpful in the design process, to help inform ideas of space, form, material, structure, construction process, siting, program, sequence and use), it must go through a process of abstraction through drawing and physical modeling that begins to delaminate and re-present its characteristics, conditions, and elements.

Before architecture, there is site. Choosing a site is the first architectural act. Each student will choose a place to work with somewhere on Earth, the only limitation being that it cannot be primarily urban. Expanding conventional notions of site (the ground plane, the scenic view, immediate physical surroundings) to include the temporal, material, formal, geological, technological, hydrological, climactic, ephemeral, archeological, molecular, scalar, and cultural, we will define an ecological understanding of context that will be the foundation of our work in the seminar.