

FRAGMENTS

Contemporary Architectural Conditions



Luigi Ghirri, Ravenna, 1986

In a time of anything goes that shows no uniform theoretical agenda but rather a series of very personal explorations into the possibilities of space-making, this seminar seeks to explore six different notions – Presence, Surrealism, Archaism, Freedom, Space-Time, and Loss – of how to possibly frame the contemporary architectural condition. It is no secret that from an operative standpoint the internet has proven its worth: as a tool that enables the easy transfer of data and communication, it has revolutionized architectural working procedures and allowed numerous offices to build globally on an hitherto unknown, at least quantitative, scale. Besides, in recent years several blog-based architectural sites have arisen, which with their additive structures have demonstrated perfect ease to track down the ever new. Both in terms of their pace of collecting information and their array of outlook they make the classical project-oriented and printed periodical look outdated. Gathering dozens of yet unheard of voices, these sites allow for the first time in history architects from all parts of the world to be present in the architectural discourse, herewith shifting the focus from a former elite and American-European dominated debate towards new centers of activity. At the same time, however, also the culture of criticism and theoretical production has changed: while the architect increasingly seems to 'just' build but very rarely writes – in basic terms, he or she follows the project-oriented online-demand – it is often times hired historians that try à posteriori to analyze and situate their work. Counteracting that trend, this seminar will look precisely at the little that is written by mostly young, contemporary architects about their work and position it in the wider conceptual framework of the six different notions. In sum, the course intends to sharpen the students' critical sense, work with their memories and personal interests, besides expanding their general architectural awareness of what are important issues being discussed today. In its format, it is highly interactive and discussion-based. Short presentations on selected texts are to be made throughout the semester, while a short paper on a chosen topic has to be handed in at the end.

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Architecture 3308 / 6308
Architecture 4408 / 6408

Wednesday 10:10 – 12:05
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