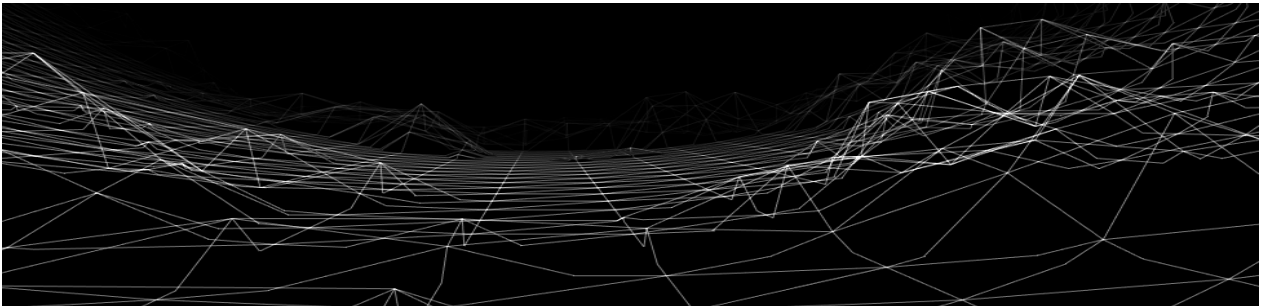


Cornell Architecture, Art and Planning, Department of Architecture
Option Studio Arch 4101/4102/5101 & Arch 5116 & Arch 7112
Spring 2021, LCR Graded
MWF 12:30-4:30 Milstein hall
Prof. John Zissovici jez2@cornell.edu, Prof. Wolfgang Tschapeller

Architecture MEDIA:

Library of the 21st Century



"We, the things and their image, are all one"

T. Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, 1st-century B.C.

"Technical images are phantoms that can give the world, and us, meaning."

Vilém Flusser

The studio will re-examine the meaning of a **"state of the art library"** of the 21st century, using the lessons learned from the current global pandemic and their implications for the new library. The recently completed Mui Ho Fine Arts Library will be the test case for this exercise and Wolfgang Tschapeller, the architect of the library and winner of the 2020 European Prize for Architecture, our collaborator. He will join us for early discussions and reviews.

The Fine Arts Library, in its various earlier manifestations and locations, was the highest use library per volume and rate of circulation of all the libraries on the Cornell campus. It had always been thought of as a browsing and studying library, where the focus was on the physical books which have greater significance in the visual disciplines. The overriding desire was to house as many books as possible, and leave space for the ever expanding collection. **The role of digital technologies, their ability to develop expanded ways to organize, access and distribute the books and their contents will be the starting point for the first exercise. Augmented reality and the modes of visualizations it engenders will be integral to the architectural presentation.**

The pandemic has forced unimaginable changes to the library. Social distancing has increase space requirements for all aspects of public life. With staff working mostly from home, and the stacks closed to the public, new protocols have been developed for the use of the library. Books are ordered online, retrieved by staff, and sent to public spaces on campus for contactless pickup. More digitized books are available than ever before. The ground floor is used for studio space which has no access to the books. The library as such no longer really exists.

One can say that Tschapeller used the illusion of lightness to make both the body of the books and their potential dissolution legible in the final design. This design and this moment, with **the library literally suspended in time, is the starting point of the studio.**