Promiscuous Encounters: Seminars on Critical, Curatorial and Conceptual Practices in Architecture

Interpretations:

Promiscuous Encounters has two main ambitions: first, to examine the fascinating blurriness and productive interplay between the critical, curatorial and conceptual capacities of architecture, including how and where they intersect and overlap and, second, to expand the definitions of what these terms mean in relation to theory and practice by reexamining the sites of criticality and their modes of operation. When and where, we might ask, is an architectural practice Critical, Curatorial or Conceptual today? Can we, or would we want to, separate these kinds of practices or are we subject to an inevitable and productive promiscuity?

Not so long ago, in 1988 Mark Wigley provocatively suggested that critical work was only possible in the realm of building. Today, after multiple paradigm shifts in the nature of building and architecture, we want to ask: what is it to produce a critical work now? How is criticality achieved? Is being critical an urgent or a captious position, the latter in the sense of being contentious for its own sake?

Following an interrogation of our keys concepts and concerns, we want to question, in turn, whether a lack of, or a strong commitment to, being critical has facilitated the opening up of our field, architecture, to many forms of curatorial practice. Does curatorial practice have to be strictly guided by a critical position in order to avoid falling into the trap of mere compilations of objects, images, texts, etc.? To what extent is curatorial practice a new trend in the field? Does it lack or produce specialized knowledge? What are the main constraints emerging from the field of curating within architecture?

The close articulation of concept and project has taken multiple forms within the recent history of conceptual architecture. What concepts are currently at play within or driving contemporary architectural production that succeed in producing scenarios we might still call conceptual? Does conceptual practice have a freer or a more limited palette for production? In what ways can critical, curatorial or conceptual practices be made to work in tandem in projects that harness their potential in a directionally productive manner?

Program

12:00pm
Greetings / Opening Remarks
Felicity D. Scott / Curatorial Team

12:15pm
First Seminar Session
Keller Easterling / Andrés Jaque / Reinhold Martin / Pelin Tan
Moderated by Mark Wasiuta and the CCCP Class 2013

2:45pm
Coffee Break

3:15pm
Second Seminar Session
Joseph Grima / Markus Miessen / Rodrigo Tisi / Mitch McEwen
Moderated by Mark Wasiuta and the CCCP Class 2013

5:45pm
Break

6:30pm
Lecture
Andrés Jaque
Andrés Jaque Architects and the Office for Political Innovation
Wood Auditorium

8:00pm
Final Discussion / Closing Remarks
Moderated by Felicity D. Scott
All participants on stage

8:30pm
Reception at Brownies

March 23rd
12:00-20:30
Fayerweather 200, GSAPP
Columbia University
New York City / 2012

Keller Easterling, Joseph Grima, Andrés Jaque, Reinhold Martin, Mitch McEwen, Markus Miessen, Felicity D. Scott, Pelin Tan, Rodrigo Tisi, Mark Wasiuta
Promiscuous Encounters will take the form of a day-long, multidisciplinary seminar with invited speakers from multiple backgrounds to open discussion. The seminar is organized as two sessions, each with four 10-minute presentations addressing critical questions regarding the Critical, Curatorial and Conceptual Modes of Practice. Each presentation within the event is invited to actively engage in the conversation. The seminar will not be video or audio recorded, however, everyone attending is encouraged to “recruit” their own interpretation of the Encounters via their notes, sketches, photographs or subsequent reflections. These interpretations will form the basis of a forthcoming printed publication of the event.

Promiscuous Encounters Curatorial Team
Francisco Diaz, Nora Valente Kobravskis, Marcelo López-Dinardi, Marta Olvera
Class of 2013
Alibain Carola, Jillian Lee, Jesus Raga, Helene Nguyen, Sarah Raban, Bonnie You

Program
12:00pm Greeting / Opening Remarks
Felicity D. Scott / Curatorial Team
12:15pm First Seminar Session
Keller Easterling / Andres Jaque / Reinhold Martin / Park Hyun
Moderated by
Mark Wasiuta and the CCCP Class 2013
2:45pm Break
3:15pm Second Seminar Session
Joseph Grive / Markus Meessen / Rodrigo Tisei / Mitch McEwen
Moderated by
Mark Wasiuta and the CCCP Class 2013
4:45pm Break
5:00pm Final Discussion / Closing Remarks
Moderated by
Felicity D. Scott
All participants on stage
8:30pm Reception at Brownies