MUSEUM OF FUTURE PASTS: A CULTURAL CENTER DEDICATED TO THE INVESTIGATION AND EXHIBITION OF NARRATIVES OF HUMAN MIGRATION

ARCH 571 | Fall 2018 | 6 Credit Hours
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Premise for the Studio: The tendency of humans to relocate geographically is longstanding and can be traced to the earliest of times. Generally, people have voluntarily chosen to move through a decision making process predicated on the idea that one will find better conditions where they go. According to a 2018 report written by the International Organization for Migration this trend is also contemporary as can be seen in the following statistics: more than 740 million people have migrated internally (within country of birth) and the UN estimates that more than 258 million people are living in a country other than their point of origin. However, the decision to move is not voluntary for all. Recent turbulence has forced a large number of people to flee the places they had called home. The UN Refugee Agency reported that 65.6 million people have been subject to forced displacement. Numbers of this magnitude necessitate great social, ecological, political and territorial adaptation and transformation. The premise of this studio is that architects must be actively engaged in a dialogue about these issues and prepared to create solutions that address these problems through the design of the built environment.

Program for the Architectural Project: The program for this design studio will be the Museum of Future Pasts, which is conceived as a cultural center that will house exhibitions that narrate the history of human migration with an emphasis on recent narratives of forced migration that have drastically increased the quantity of people affected and the urgency of the matter. The challenge is to create an architectural project that is able to house a diverse set of artifacts and multimedia exhibits that tell this story, a lobby, laboratories, classrooms, a theatre, parking, services and administrative offices. Each student of this studio will be individually responsible for skill building exercises at the beginning of the term and teams comprised of two students will be formed to design the museum.

Site: The country of Colombia is host to a rich Latin American cultural heritage and has been chosen to host the Museum of Future Pasts because its citizens are sympathetic to issues involving forced migration. More than 8 million people have been internally displaced and are eager to improve this situation. The site of the project is located in Bogota, Colombia, which is a thriving metropolis that has been praised for being an innovative center for urban policy that places importance on equality and social integration. (Site visit is voluntary. All information is accessible online or will be provided)

ARCH 571: Detail + Fabrication: The course catalog description states that the design studios in this program area are places of investigation of multiple techniques and methodologies addressing the design and fabrication of small-scale architectural constructions, explorations of specific sites and places, and interdisciplinary projects. To that end, this studio will value a design process that incorporates both analog and digital tools. A variety of media, materials, fabrication techniques and prototyping will be utilized to test hypotheses, speculate, propose and develop design at a variety of scales. Computational design thinking and digital tools can help foster novel approaches to design so each student will be encouraged to cultivate their own design communication skills and design abilities through intensive use of parametric modelling, simulation and fabrication. Students of this course will have special access to digital fabrication equipment and to the expertise of the FAB LAB. The skills gained in this design studio will be valuable in academia and practice.