Introduction:

The rapid and substantial changes in the field of architecture mean that there is no longer a set of rules that define what architecture is or can be. The resources of contemporary architecture are no longer a closed body of knowledge: therefore what must be taught - and learnt – is that the field of architecture should be subject to a permanent research condition.

Studio Project(s)

1. Xanadu / House with No facades

The exercise is to be an exploration of new techniques and maybe seen as a pilot project or series of investigations to be tested as a precursor to the main project.

In Citizen Kane – besides the strong moral plot (which is somehow how the brief for the first exercise is derived) - the films unorthodox nature is located in the cinematography technique. Greg Tolland developed a technique for deep focus photography that allows the foreground, middle ground and background to be in focus at the same time, allowing the eye to focus on any part of the image.

At the time, this technique was heavily criticized for drawing attention to itself and breaking the rules of classical cinema. Somehow the intention of open studio is to break the rules that are established as expected norms.

2. Rapid representation: Hotel

The second part of the exercise represents a conscious and intentional shift away from the private realm and will attempt to engage the project as a fragment of the city.

What are the characteristics that make current modes of architectural representation so readily consumable? So intricate that we need an entire book to explain the project - yet so evasive to critique, that we no longer question their validity?

Are these new forms contemporary enough in a time where we define everything from Prada to McDonalds as contemporary?

The purpose of the exercise then, is to locate our position within the current architectural status quo.

This represents a departure from a more conventional mode of representation to a more radical / critical / questioning form.
1. This studio will frame an investigation of architecture’s relationship to the city / urbanism. The Hotel project will study the capacity of an architectural project to operate as a fragment of the city.

The project is intended to be an exploration of a prototypical condition rather than of site or context. The project will be removed from any specific site, but instead refer to a hypothetical condition of the city. The intention here is to allow the architectural object itself to generate its own context and critique of the current situation.

It is a basic typology that has multiply repeated elements combined with specific one of programmatic constructions. It should be more conceptually aligned with Chungking Mansions than Prada. (see Rem Koolhaas definition of ‘Dirty Realism’ in SMLXL, 1995)

From the now defunct website:
For hardened backpackers, budget travellers and third-world traders, Hong Kong’s Chungking Mansions needs little introduction. “The mansions” is a shuddering collection of some 920 guesthouses, hostels, shops, restaurants, flats and factories crammed into an aging 17-storey tenement. By reputation it’s a place you can satisfy almost any vice.

The requirements of the project are:

1. Develop a brief that allows you to position the project within a broader context of critical architectural thinking.

2. The site should have only one geometric limitation in that it’s dimension should be a multiple of 10m. Eg 10x10, 10x100, 100x100, 10x1000, 100x1000, 1000x1000 etc.

3. Examples of Hotel types may include:
   - Data Hotel
   - Love Hotel
   - Generic Hotel (Formula One Hotel)
   - Detention centre hotel
   - Just-in-time office hotel
   - etc

4. The project should establish framework capable of simultaneously discussing both hypothetical objectives and tested outcomes of the project – and although the end product is of absolute consequence, the research methodology, techniques explored and processes of procurement are seen to be equally important.

5. The format is open however, during all stages of the project there will be an emphasis on experimental but precise presentation materials of very high quality.
Assessment

W1-4: Xanadu 20%
W4-11: Rapid Representation 20%
W7: Interim presentation 20%
W11: Final Presentation 60%

Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wk</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>recess</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9/03/05</td>
<td>16/03/05</td>
<td>23/03/05</td>
<td>30/03/05</td>
<td>6/04/05</td>
<td>13/04/05</td>
<td>20/04/05</td>
<td>27/04/05</td>
<td>4/05/05</td>
<td>11/05/05</td>
<td>18/05/05</td>
<td>25/05/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Studio Objectives

1. The studio will focus on the development of an architectural project, employing the technique of research by design. “Characteristic for this type of study is the generation of knowledge and understanding by studying the effects of both design solution and context actively and systematically.”

2. The main objective for the design studio is to collectively build a body of work that is positioned within a contemporary architectural discourse. It is used as a forum for the exchange of ideas and arguments with the proposition that a collaborative effort is capable of formulating key positions and generating a source of design intelligence.

3. Design intelligence (from Michael Speaks Lecture at Berlage Institute)

“Design Intelligence is the unseen array of techniques, relationships, dispositions, and other intangibles that enable practices to discover these opportunities, exploit them and add value. One of the ways this occurs is by researching and analyzing the conditions under which problems are posed. …..Research also enables such practices to learn and evolve and this occurs precisely to the degree that they transform chatter into intelligence. (Which is the basis of the studio + the reason of the collaborative effort)

This may take the form of “versioning, a kind of rapid prototyping in which vector based info is used to create techniques adaptable to any scale of intervention……

It is thus not the final design that distinguishes these from their vanguard predecessors, but rather their ability to seek out chatter and turn it into credible intelligence, an innovative process that occurs through interactive non linear learning. (Michael Speaks Lecture at Berlage Institute 2004: Design intelligence)

Conclusion

The studio is very much about the discovery of new techniques that may help you assemble an architectural project that is able to respond to shifting cultural phenomena.

\[T.M\ \text{De Jong and D-J-M van der Hoort (Eds), Ways to study and research. Urban Architectural and Technical Design, Delft, 2000, p21.}\]