

ARCH 7104 - DIPLOMA STUDIO

DOMESTIC FUTURES

Spring 2023 Syllabus

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University of North Carolina at Charlotte, School of Architecture

5 Credit Hours: M/W/F 2:00 - 5:30 pm



Filarete, The Primitive Hut

"In a landscape where nothing officially exists ... absolutely anything becomes thinkable, and may consequently happen."

Reyner Banham

Premise

Residential architecture is both a fundamental need that has been at the forefront of practice since the beginning of civilization, and a vehicle of experimentation that has been at the forefront of theory since antiquity. This studio asks students to participate in one or both of those trajectories by developing a design provocation on how we may live today and/or in the future. How may architecture accommodate the primal need for shelter while also stimulating our imaginations and inspiring us to rethink what is possible?

In this studio, design provocations are concerned primarily with space, and students are encouraged to think speculatively, not realistically. In the real world, economic and political circumstances impose limitations on architects exploring the possibilities of residential architecture (sometimes productively, sometimes not). Here, students engage in world-building so as to establish the socioeconomic and sociopolitical contexts of their projects. Those contexts may range from the semi-realistic to science fiction. In all cases, provocations are stories that explore the boundaries of our discipline.

Experimentation is privileged over practicality, but that bias does not disengage provocations from the lived-reality of the built environment. Students must impose social, environmental, and/or material constraints on their design processes. The point is not remove ourselves from the difficulties facing the world, but rather to engage them through critical thinking and avant-garde traditions of play and transgression, as opposed to instrumental thinking.

The ultimate objective is to take advantage of the final semester of students' professional education to develop intellectual agility and design skills applicable to a wide range of professional endeavors—life skills, not merely job skills.

Program and Site

Students develop a program and select (or create) a site that somehow engages the umbrella theme of residential architecture. The theme is deliberately broad, so as to allow students to pursue a specific interest while still participating in a studio-wide investigation. The only requirements are that students address how architecture may accommodate the domestic sphere, and that they think speculatively and creatively. Provocations may address a range of typologies and themes: the single-family house, the "missing middle," collective/communal housing, large-scale mixed-demographic housing, futuristic ways of living on earth and/or beyond, etc.. Provocations may include supplemental programs related to housing, including urban design schemes.

Method

Design methods may vary according to the skills and aspirations of students. The instructor will guide students to insure that their chosen methods are rigorous and that their production meets the high standards of a capstone studio.

Group projects are encouraged but not required.

Video analysis in support of the design provocation is encouraged but not required, as it is the expertise of the instructor.

Bibliography & Precedents

An extensive collection of precedents and texts will be provided during lecture and discussion on 11.2.22. In advance, students are asked to read the foreward, preface, and epilogue of Richard Plunz's *A History of in New York City, revised edition* (Columbia University press, 2016), and to browse other chapters in order to understand the rigor of the book. A goal of the studio is to produce a publishable body of design work that complements and furthers Plunz's scholarship. Design as knowledge-building.