Section IT (Italy):
Killing Floor: La Biennale Architettura 2014. Venice, Italy (limit 12)
Instructor: Mitchell Squire

The title and emphasis of this studio is in no way intended to reference the video game or film bearing the same title, or any such mindset or cultural form that depicts violence against humans or which trivializes the massacre of animal or environmental resources. Rather, it is offered as a diabolical opposite, that is, as a contemplation of love and love’s loss, of the kind we hear in the blues standard played and sung by Howlin’ Wolf in 1964 and Jimi Hendrix, et al., shortly thereafter. Yet therein resides the challenge: how to effectively operate in the dynamic range of global culture without tripping over the vast referential capacity inherent in its many forms. Meaning proves to be malleable. Particularly for those productions having so generous a conceptual girth as to invite the messy harborage of opposites within an intended singularity. But, then again, it’s possible that ‘killing floor’ hasn’t anything to do with the metaphorical mourning of the troubled plane upon which a rocky love relationship has fallen. Perhaps it’s a jubilant—albeit flippant—declaration of victory not unlike “We be killing it with this paso doble, baby!” (“it” being the floor, likely).

With such considerations, our semester project is to design a production facility for an Italian toy company in Venice Italy. We will be anticipating the same varied richness and breadth of nuance in both the conception and execution of our projects as implied above referenced song, but with a particularly creative and technically sophisticated focus on architecture’s most elemental plane, the floor. Our sites will be equally varied, ranging from a Renaissance convent church to a former customs house. Our initial resources will range from works of fiction to theoretical treatises, and from historical accounts to court proceedings. Our resulting work will be speculative yet comprehensively determinant, ambiguous yet cogently argued, and supported by keen representations visually bearing their intensity, performativity, multivalency and, if need be, their ephemeral nature. We will work in teams. We will, as a talented dance duo, kill the floor of architecture—so to speak.


Important Note: our field trip will be to the Venice Architecture Biennale, on Oct (14)15-19. This section of Arch 403/603 is designated to represent ISU.CºD.DºA at La Biennale Architettura 2014 – The 14th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice Italy. The field trip will be financially assessed as a University Study Abroad Program. Therefore, in lieu of typical “course fees,” the total program cost that will appear on each student’s U-Bill is $1,105.00 USD. This cost will cover round trip air travel and lodging for four nights ($1000), and a minor university fee ($105.00). The College will make arrangements for travel and lodging. There will be no additional “course fees” billed to the student. The student must pay their own costs for food and other incidentals out-of-pocket. We have estimated out-of-pocket expenses to be $300 for meals and incidentals and $175 for passport, if needed. Because of the Study Abroad status of this program, participating student may be eligible for financial aid through the University to cover all of the above costs, if the student qualifies. A student should decide to take this course only if they can make the financial commitment and secure the appropriate travel documents prior departure date of October 14. Non-US citizens requiring visas will need to compile application materi-
als during the first week of the semester. US citizens without passports will need to apply immediately, as regular service to receive a passport is generally running at 4-6 weeks, and expedited service 2-3 weeks for an additional cost. Information regarding passport application is available here: http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/passports/apply.html. Other questions regarding travel documents can be directed to the College’s International Programs Coordinator, Erin French efrench@iastate.edu.

In Venice, we will form a partnership with the other designated studio, Arch 401 taught by Peter Goché, and with the talents of Cameron Campbell and Chair Deborah Hauptmann, and engage the ISU.C².D.D²A Biennale Session. This featured session will consist of two parts: a two-day student workshop that addresses the Biennale theme Elements of Architecture; and a one-day colloquium of invited speakers that will address the theme Absorbing Modernity 1914-2014. Our participation in the Biennale is, in part, a celebration of our department’s centennial. More on the ISU.C².D.D²A Biennale Session will be distributed on the first day of studio.

**Section 3:**
**Experiential Architecture: Influences of Place & Production, Marfa, TX**

**Instructor:** Robert Whitehead

**situation**

The challenge of comprehensively addressing various scales of occupation with informed considerations of materiality and building performance unique to a particular setting is both formidable and informative. To achieve these opportunities, this studio will focus on the creation of elemental and experientially powerful designs influenced by the climate and culture of the unique setting of Marfa, Texas and the Davis Mountains of west Texas.

**location & methodologies**

This unique culture of the town and beauty of these remote settings (Marfa is nearly the same elevation as Denver, CO) provides particular constraints and unique design opportunities, as many designers (including Donald Judd) have discovered throughout the years. How these constraints affect design choices for the potential structures, materials, construction methodologies, and related environmental performance without sacrificing experiential considerations will be a key aspect of the studio.

**projects**

Working in teams, this studio will complete two separate projects. The first project is a small multi-unit housing project design competition sponsored by Design Marfa Housing Competition (http://www.designmarfa.com/housingcompetition.html). The project opportunities are interesting, realistic, and challenging and the deadline for submission is October 6th.

The second half of the semester will be spent designing a winery in the Davis Mountains outside of Marfa. Interestingly, the unique ecology of this appellation qualifies as an official American Viticultural Area and yet only 100 acres are currently being grown in the area. This project type allows the studio to focus on various key architectural principles of occupation, adjacency, and climate. The production goal for the final review would be to produce work that demonstrates five separate scales of consideration—including large-scale details and/or constructed mock-ups.

**field trip information:**

Our field trip will be between September 10-14th (I know it’s the Iowa game). To coordinate our travel through the remote areas, we will all be on the same flight from Des Moines to El Paso and then drive a rented van to Fort Davis, Marfa, and the Davis Mountain State Park. Our mode of transportation on the tour will include driving and walking. Tours will include several key outdoor
locations, key architectural areas within Marfa, including the world-renowned Judd Foundation and Chinati Foundation installations. We will be staying in a lodge in a State Park and in trendy/alternative settings within Marfa. Because the cost of the flight will be included as part of the overall costs, the total anticipated cost would be between $850-900 (not including spending money).

It will be a very different type of field trip, and studio, that hopefully expands your view of architecture, art, and landscape connections.

Section 4:
Zappos: The Downtown Project, Las Vegas, NV
Instructor: Cal Lewis

Scenario- At the National AIA Convention in Chicago this summer, Tony Hsieh, the CEO of Zappos was the featured speaker. He engaged our professional audience with the holistic vision of both his highly successful corporate culture and the Downtown Project team that he had established to help reshape the downtown of old Las Vegas. Rather than building an isolated corporate campus that only dealt with work-life issues, Tony decided to embed his company and staff within a community setting, where they could help create a healthy, enriching, sustainable, and stimulating environment that addressed the whole-life needs and desires of his company and staff. I was inspired by the potential of his progressive corporate strategy and contacted Tony to offer the mutually beneficial engagement of our successful program in the architectural potential of his vision; he responded quite favorably. Take time to explore Tony Hsieh, Downtown Project, and Zappos to learn more, including Tony’s book, “Delivering Happiness”.

Project- Our studio will collaborate with Tony’s Downtown Project team to develop one or more potential new projects within their old downtown Las Vegas setting. I will work with them to determine the specific project type(s) and site(s); our class will analyze both through joint research to begin the semester. Following the site visit, we will select project teams and embark on our comprehensive design process. Each team may engage different projects on different sites, which could include the incorporation of existing buildings, as did our studio’s 1st place project for the National AIAS “Frozen Music” Design Competition last fall.

Process- A goal of this studio will be to simulate the architectural design process within an architectural office; including our real project type and client. Learning how to blend and communicate our very highest aspirations into solutions that could influence real projects can be an extremely empowering experience. The client’s message to me stated that they hoped our studio would, “generate some fresh, innovative ideas” to spur their thinking. We will consider recording the design and review process; the client will stay involved and may offer recognition.

Place- Our studio will be visiting Las Vegas 10-14 Sep; the flights are currently less than $350 (United), which you will secure on your own (arrive early). Much of the other cost information is not yet determined; I will generate the accommodations at some typical room rate, or we may be staying in modest housing provided by our client (shared rooms). We will determine if group transportation in Las Vegas is necessary (van?). We should be well under the maximum course fee of $950.

Expectations- In addition to the personal opportunities, this studio will put the reputation of our architecture program up for critical evaluation and valuable recognition by a high identity national audience. If you do not wish to perform at that advanced and very visible level, consider yourself forewarned… choose wisely.
Section 5:
Music on the Boundaries, Boston, MA
Instructor: Jungwoo Ji

PROJECT NARRATIVE
As part of public space, music program can activate city space as well as cultivate local culture. Boston Innovation district has been filled and planned with several institutions and cultural facilities. With reading the visible and invisible context of the area, each team should propose a music complex for not only the audience but also general public. The site area is on the boundary of waterfront. The music complex itself should have many kinds of boundary. The boundaries between innovation and music, indoor and outdoor, public and private, old and new, and globalism and localism need to generate the music complex. We can say that ‘porosity’ is an attitude of dealing with those boundaries physically and conceptually. The music complex must present a more progressive range of programming if it is to truly complement the various music venues of the city. Before designing it, we will do sound installation to investigate people interactions with a format of street furniture. This initial project can be a part of actual building design or generating the design. Expecting an incorporation of experimental music, sound performance, and study into the program, it is hoped that this new venue will attract an evermore diverse demographic of audiences, musicians, and scholars interested in being and experiencing the 21st century pioneers of contemporary live music performance.

SITES
Our studio is considering couple of sites in the Boston Innovation District (www.innovationdistrict.org) which is a waterfront area and has some cultural facilities. During the Boston field trip, each team will explore potential sites in the area and discuss with the other teams to decide our studio common site.

FIELD TRIP
We will meet in Boston on Wednesday, Sep. 10th. Making arrangement for your air ticket from Des Moines to Boston and transportation from Ames to Des Moines airport is your responsibility. Transportation in Boston is also yours. There will be hotel rooms (four students per one room) booked for four nights and we will be back to Ames on Sunday, Sep. 14th. Site visits, firm visits, and architecture school (Harvard and MIT) visits with guest lectures will be arranged by your instructor.

Section 6:
Blacktop Gold Rush, Dallas/Fort Worth, TX
Instructor: James Spiller

situation
Popular American culture has long romanticized and promoted the open road as a symbol of American freedom, mobility, and opportunity. Beyond such sentiment, the roads are essential to an American economy dependent on the mobility of resources, products, and persons. And what keeps the road flowing is oil. Oil has been, and will continue to be a crucial matter in contemporary America with serious and long reaching economic, political, and geo-political ramifications. This studio, Blacktop Gold Rush, will explore the complex issues of oil industry and its impact on American car and truck culture, designing responses to moments when the production and distribution of oil needs architects. BGR will study two such moments (projects) over the course of the semester. The first project of the semester will investigate and propose itiner-
ant housing for oil workers (no larger in scale than a tractor trailer unit) in the current oil boom and housing crisis of North Dakota. The second (and primary) project will examine car and truck culture in the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex, a place built on the past booms of the American oil economy. The project will culminate with the proposal for a new fueling station, a blacktop truck stop. The truck stop will consist of fueling stations for a variety of vehicles, service bays for tractor trailers, overnight accommodations, commercial spaces, and rest areas for weary travelers. BGR asks how architects should engage and design the spaces used in today's energy economy by its workers, consumers, and travelers.

location

As boom towns form quickly, typically without proper infrastructure, the mobile itinerant housing project (project 1) will not have a defined site, beyond the flatbed of a trailer tractor. The primary project (project 2), a blacktop truck stop, may be defined as urban or sub-urban along the ever-expanding Dallas/Fort Worth interstate highway network. There will be three locations for design consideration.

field research

We will meet in Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) at 5:00pm on Wednesday, 10 September and return to Ames on Sunday, 14 September. There will be opportunities to tour great architectural structures, including the Kimball Art Museum, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, the Nasher Sculpture Center, and other relevant cultural institutions. Students will be responsible for their own travel between Ames and Dallas/Fort Worth. There will be hotel rooms booked for Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights billed to your U-Bill. The U-Bill cost should be around $300 - 400 each for those with shared rooms. Travel costs are at your discretion. Flights between Des Moines and DFW are, on average, around $300-$400 round trip. As an alternative, flights from Kansas City to DFW are, on average, $200-$300, although you would also be responsible for traveling to and from Ames-Kansas City.

Section 7: Center for Contemporary Music, Chicago, IL (limit 4)
Instructor: Thomas Leslie

SCENARIO: The Chicago Symphony Orchestra is expanding its operations and seeks a venue dedicated to the composition and performance of contemporary music. While forming some part of most performances, the CSO wishes to develop a fellowship and performance program that will support and celebrate the vitality of contemporary music per se. Often at odds with conservative tastes, such music represents some of the most important intellectual and stylistic development in music today, and by creating a dedicated center the CSO hopes to increase awareness, appreciation, and audience for experimental composers today.

The CCM is to consist of performance, rehearsal, research and composition, and administrative space for the orchestra and various ensembles, as well as serving as a home base for 6-10 fellows each year who will require studio, library, and rehearsal spaces. A preliminary program has been assembled that represents the institution’s best guess as to what will be required, however this is considered preliminary and malleable as design ideas develop. In particular, the nature of performance is very much in flux, and innovative solutions to acoustical and seating layout issues are encouraged. The CSO is committed, however, to the actual performance of music, and the comfort and engagement of its audiences is paramount.

SITE: The CCM is considering two sites: one on the SE corner of 9th and State St. in the South Loop, and one adjacent to the existing CSO complex, on the SE corner of Adams and Wabash. During the semester’s first week, your team will conduct a feasibility study of the two
FIELD TRIP: We will meet in Chicago at noon on Friday, 12 September to tour the sites and to see the CSO’s existing facilities. There will also be opportunities for walking tours of the Loop, IIT, and Oak Park. Students will be responsible for their own travel between Ames and Chicago. There will be hotel rooms booked for Friday and Saturday nights and billed to your U-Bill. The U-Bill cost should be under $250 each for those with shared rooms. Travel costs are at your discretion--driving is an option, though not a preferred one.

TEAMS: You’ll be expected to work in teams of 2, although one team of three may be necessary.