

Columbia University GSAPP
Fall 2016 Advanced Design Studio V
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PRODUCTION+ ZONE

PREAMBLE

In reaction to the gradual disappearance of local manufacturing since the middle of the last century, New York as well as many other cities from Zurich, Switzerland to Melbourne, Australia have over the past decade stepped up efforts to attract creative entrepreneurs as well as new types of manufacturing to their urban centers. Behind this effort is a desire to diversify the economy and population of the city, to counterbalance the increasing polarization of the white collar and service industry sectors as well as to revitalize derelict urban areas while promoting responsible environmental strategies.

Recently we have seen Maker Culture bring new methods of producing, collaborating, sourcing and distributing into the mainstream and cast a light on both conventional and non-conventional modes of “Production”. With its roots in DIY, the sharing economy, customization, artisanal techniques combined with cutting edge technology and hacking, Maker Culture however remains tied to a limited scale of production and output.

This studio seeks to build on this tradition and to envision architectural prototypes for a future “**PRODUCTION+ ZONE**” along the Brooklyn Newtown Creek waterfront that will accommodate NextGen or scaled up versions the production capacities of the Maker Culture as well as other forms of larger scale Production.

Given the popularity and increasing significance of the Maker Movement it remains never the less relevant as a scale model that provides a lens on how we might reconceive of the programming and the design of larger scale spaces of Production as well as revisit the concept of “Productivity”. Here Productivity is not (only) a measure that assigns “value” in conventional and quantifiable terms relative to output and related economics, but potentially also in qualitative terms, and to a broader idea of Production, and hence valorizes the Architecture that enables it.

The studio will investigate architectural concepts with respect to a broad range of large scale places of “Production” that are appropriate for the future waterfront site. These will include not only the production of objects and assemblies, but we are also interested in the production of energy, of food, of materials, of content, of culture, of events, of ideas, and more. Within any of these we will also engage a new concept of “Productivity” by anticipating and accommodating in the architecture and its program, a range of desirable “ByProducts” (the “+” in “Production+”). By these we mean other types of outputs, collateral programs or spaces, that are publicly engaging and have a cultural, social, environmental or other type of collective benefit – yet are also intrinsic to and perhaps even drive the project design strategies and their architectural outcome.

PROCESS

The studio will operate as a laboratory; through research, speculation and the design of architectural prototypes we will collectively and individually explore a wide cross-section of “**Production +**” possibilities.

Research

The studio will engage in an ongoing and simultaneous collection of data and research with respect to various topics such as relevant NYC Zoning and urban policy, the future of the Brooklyn Waterfront, Maker Culture and the Sharing

Economy, as well as other trends in urban manufacturing and the next generation of innovation in transportation and conveyance, Digital and Robotic fabrication, urban farming, building materials and technologies, etc.

Case Studies and Prototypes

The studio will explore a wide cross-section of “**Production +**” precedents that may include not only examples for the production of objects and assemblies, but also the production of energy, food, organic materials, film, culture, content, events, ideas, and much more.

We will dissect case studies representative of these different types of “Production” according to various criteria and ideas relating to materials, logistics, movement and conveyance, accessibility, modes of exchange, human interaction, manual and automated processes, packaging, waste, energy, distribution and dissemination and so on. This methodology will apply across a broad spectrum of forms of “Production” with criteria re-interpreted as appropriate.

Investigations and the elucidation of discoveries and evolving concepts will be accomplished through exploratory yet conceptually rigorous drawings, and multiple models (both virtual and physical), along with other media as needed.

SCHEDULE

Midterm: Through the process of conducting their speculative case studies the students will create **Production +** “Prototypes” that will be presented at Midterm along with a printed document and a catalog of reference objects (digital and physical models) that will communicate the unique and diverse aspects of the case studies and the ensuing Prototype.

Final: Following the midterm the students will develop their Prototypes into proposals for the “**Production+ Zone**” and generate drawings and models at the appropriate scale and levels of detail for presentation at the final review along with an updated versions their midterm documentation.