This thesis design studio is a think-tank and design laboratory dedicated to a broad-based critical inquiry into new possibilities for architecture. It is geared toward those of you who aspire to challenge existing conceptions and assumptions about architecture, rather than simply emulate the status quo. It is dedicated to helping you to demonstrate how architecture can meaningfully intervene within the world in order to create powerful new experiences.

It does not have a specific topical or formal agenda. Instead, it is open to a broad range of specific interests and pursuits, and is structured to help you to focus your specific interests and talents into an architectural proposition that presents a compelling new idea about architecture in the form of a well-researched and totally awesome thesis project.

This studio will encourage profound, ambitious, and radical propositions for architecture. These propositions will range from extremely speculative and experimental to those that are realizable with present or near-term materials and techniques. They will examine form, space, materials, technologies, cultural habits and customs—and even discoveries and modes of thinking from outside of architecture—in ways that open up new understandings of and possibilities for architecture. And they will be manifested in an incredible variety of compelling thesis design projects that could include buildings, furniture, cities, processes, games, virtual realities—and demonstrated across a variety of media and formats that include renderings, drawings, diagrams, physical models, full-scale prototypes, fictional or sci-fi narratives, films, graphic novels, or through some other creative means.

This studio recognizes the increasing degree to which architects must be responsible for creating the political and cultural conditions for ambitious and paradigm-changing work to be realized, and so therefore emphasizes the skills required in this regard—including the ability to generate interest and support through persuasive verbal and written argument in addition to provocative design work.

Although the work you produce in this studio will make comprehensive use of all that you have learned and experienced so far, it is not a studio that is about looking backward. Rather, it is about looking forward. The thesis work produced during this year will help you to strategically define an opportunity to make a profound impact on architecture and culture, and will therefore serve as an ambitious beginning to a long and fruitful career of culturally significant and profoundly visionary work.
Introduction

Architecture is a struggle. Of course, such a statement must seem obvious to you at this point, since your entire time here at Cal Poly might uncharitably be described as a series of struggles against deadlines, against sleep, against your professors’ criticism, or even against your own occasional creative constipation. However, apart from these sort of everyday challenges, architecture is also a struggle of another sort: whether it is a struggle against time, a struggle against gravity, a struggle against environmental forces, a struggle against environmental degradation, or even a struggle against the legacy of its own production, architecture is ultimately a struggle against reality. In other words—architecture is marked by its ability to manifest forms, spaces, and experiences that are profoundly different from the everyday world, and which derive their meaningfulness, poignancy, and value from that difference.

This struggle against the status quo is paralleled by an internal struggle that arises from architecture’s dual nature as both a discipline and a cultural practice. As a discipline, architecture maintains a proprietary body of knowledge that is enlarged and refined over time, and that gives it both a degree of integrity and prestige as well as an inertia that resists sudden or rapid change. Thus, to some extent, architecture is characterized by what it has already done, and what it has been historically good at doing.

However, architecture is also a cultural practice, which means that it must operate within and respond to contemporary cultural conditions in order for it to produce work that is meaningful to our contemporary society. However, contemporary social and cultural conditions are neither homogenous nor static, which means that architecture’s existing body of knowledge and its familiar techniques might not be capable of producing work that makes any kind of meaningful difference. Rather, constantly evolving social, cultural, and technological realities require architecture to also evolve—and for architects to speculate about and debate the potential course of this evolution.

So, this begs the question: what is architecture, anyway? How should it operate? What is its value? How should it be valued? Who should decide? The contemporary practice of architecture demonstrates numerous different ideas about the current nature of our discipline, and where it might be headed. And although this plurality of ideas makes architecture a rich and fertile field, it also calls into question the discipline’s own sense of identity, and complicates its ability to assert this identity to society. That means that voices from outside of our discipline—such as developers, planners, investors, clients, and others—have an unusual ability to weigh in on the definition and scope of architecture, and to thereby limit and constrain its practice. In fact, no other discipline or profession is so potentially vulnerable to the assumptions and misperceptions of those who do not practice it.

Therefore, the role of architects today is not simply to design architecture, but also to persuasively define it—to assert its relevance and its value within a diverse and discordant culture, and to proactively create the cultural conditions necessary for it to exist and to thrive. If architecture is more than just mere building then it not only needs to be designed as such, but architects and their works also need to persuade the public of that distinction, and to cultivate an appreciation for it. So, the question of how architecture should be defined is no longer one that is summarily answered in school. Rather, it remains an open question, and the purpose of a contemporary architectural education should be to prepare students for the continuing responsibility to persuasively address that question.

above: “Social Interchange,” by Melissa Peter. Her thesis argues that the physical infrastructure of the city, particularly its transportation infrastructure, does more to socially and experientially segregate the city than it does to cohere it together. While the freeway system is often analogized to a network, Melissa demonstrates that it fails to provide the unstructured openness and combinatorial possibilities of a true network. Recognizing that such a physical network is impossible to construct, and that the intangibility and invisibility of the wireless network does not allow it on its own to remedy the problem, Melissa’s thesis develops a hybrid strategy that integrates the social connectivity of the wireless network with the physical presence of an architecturalized mutation of the freeway system—one in which its surfaces have been genetically altered into mixed spatial constructs for both vehicular and pedestrian social interaction.
That, in short, is the challenge of this particular thesis studio—for you to understand your thesis not simply as a tool to demonstrate what you currently know about architecture, but rather as an opportunity for you to change what everyone else thinks they already know about architecture.

In contrast to a more traditional architectural design project, an architectural thesis recognizes architecture's continuing need to meaningfully engage in a form of public speculation and discourse about the future of its own evolution. It is therefore less about the world as it is currently given, and more about the world as it might yet become. It is an idea, a desire—and your thesis design project becomes then the instrument through which your idea or desire about architecture is publicly communicated.

This is truly a unique opportunity for you to create work that is critical, visionary, persuasive, and transformative—work that has the potential to change the architectural discipline, the culture, and the world.

above: “Agitative Ecologies,” by Grant Cogan. His thesis argues that strategies premised on social engagement and cooperation falsely presume that architecture can overcome the self-directed interests of a highly individuated public. Instead, he proposes a more ecological model, in which the architecture becomes a set of experiential and spatial resources for which individuals compete and negotiate. The resulting architectural space thus becomes a series of temporary equilibrium states that result within a never-ending competition among individuals and groups for control over public space, atmosphere, and experience. Grant demonstrates this within a cultural center that serves the various low-income and ethnically distinct neighborhoods segregated by Chicago's infamous Dan Ryan Expressway.

below: “Toward a Monstrous Architecture,” by David Hupp. David's thesis argues that the architectural discipline's rhetoric of radicality and innovation masks an overwhelming conservatism. He contends that architecture is inherently constrained by history and precedent, by its own discourse, and by the premeditated and authored nature of design itself—all of which narrow the field of potential for architecture's formal and spatial production. Consequently, David explores forms of spontaneous production and differentiation which occur through evolutionary processes of mutation and selection, and interrogates the possibility of such heuristic and wasteful form of production as a type of “undesigned” and evolutionary architecture. Such an architecture would privilege monstrosity, freakishness, and otherness—and might ask humanity to evolve in relation to it, rather than assume humanity's current condition as its basis for evaluation.
What is an Architectural Thesis?

A major goal of the studio and associated seminar class will be to assist each of you in formulating a true architectural thesis based on your unique ideas or interests, and in selecting the appropriate project within which to demonstrate that thesis.

The difference between these two terms is crucial to understand. An architectural thesis is not a design project, but is instead a hypothesis, conjecture, or idea about architecture. It is not only a statement of personal interest, but rather an intellectual contribution to the architectural discipline that synthesizes your cumulative experience, knowledge, and insight into a critical idea that has value, both to the discipline and society. (While that might sound premature at this stage in your careers, you should remember that an undergraduate thesis like this is really just a chance to make an attempt at it and to learn from that attempt—and this studio is designed to provide you with tons of help and support along the way.)

The thesis project, on the other hand, is an architectural design project that is employed to embody and demonstrate the architectural consequences of your thesis proposition. Its primary task is to showcase the value and credibility of the ideas you are proposing. However, like all design projects, it also becomes a vehicle for discovery during the process of design, and will therefore likely suggest refinements or modifications to the original thesis ideas that produced it. In that way, while the thesis argument might be the initiator of the thesis design project, each will inform the other, such that both are developed in tandem throughout the year.

This particular studio will encourage theses (and thesis projects) that are radical, visionary, provocative, and critical of the status quo. It should appeal to those of you who are not simply interested in demonstrating what you have learned so far, or of imitating architecture-as-we-know-it, but who are instead interested in demonstrating a new vision of how architecture and the world could be. In short, it is designed for those of you who want to make a difference in the world, and in architecture’s relation to it.

While united under this common goal, each thesis and project will obviously vary greatly according to your unique interests. This balance between a shared sense of purpose and a rich variety of thesis positions, areas of research, and design projects will be crucial to ensuring a dynamic and synergistic studio—a studio that will operate more like a think-tank or laboratory dedicated to exploring the broad spectrum of future possibilities for architecture.

above: “Localizing the Elusive,” by Justin Tien. His thesis argues that the overwhelming commercialization of urban space renders the city global and generic in nature, and relegates any remaining idiosyncratic “local culture” to elusive and marginal sites within the city, such as alleys and parking lots. Consequently he contends that architecture can provide a means to monumentalize and give presence to these otherwise local cultural events, and demonstrates this possibility in a temporally-programmed local cultural arena located in downtown Los Angeles—which is developed as part of a downtown network of distribution and parking structures for shared lightweight inner-city electric vehicles.

below: “Networked Authorship,” by Sam Clovis, which postulates that an architecture that truly engages the network would be one that monumentalizes the competing flows of authorship and feedback that characterize the contemporary experience of social media. The resulting immersive quality of perpetual experiential remix is demonstrated in a large micro-housing complex along New York City’s Highline—comprised of a large matrix for DIY individual dwelling pods linked by an array of responsive space-making mezzanines and partitions within a shared atrium, and screened by a “pixel skin” that amplifies the spontaneous social media interactions between the inhabitants and the public on the Highline and city streets below.
below: “Creative Commons,” by Cameron Northrop. His thesis argues that architecture's legacy as a monumental embodiment of a collective, top-down cultural message is obsolete given the culturally heterogeneous and ideologically diverse nature of contemporary culture, but that its nature as a mass medium can in turn be employed to give form and status to the bottom-up creativity of the contemporary public. His Think-Net project for New York City, grafted onto the Port Authority Bus Terminal and opposite the New York Times Headquarters, provides a highly visible infrastructure to support the individual and networked creative and intellectual production of the public, to frame that production as important, to allow it to compete for attention within the otherwise highly saturated corporate-driven commercialized context of Manhattan, and to provide a space of public social encounter for the face-to-face exchange of information.

above: “Four Footnotes to History,” by Zach Crocker. Zach’s thesis targets contemporary architecture’s predominant post-critical emphasis on engagement in “the real” (through discourses of performance, sustainability, material production, etc.) by arguing strongly for a value in the un-real or not-yet-real. In asserting the social and cultural value of fiction and architecture’s ability to productively engage individuals in such fictional constructs, he identifies four types of essential experiences which have largely disappeared within contemporary culture, and develops four corresponding fictional dwellings within which one can once again inhabit these crucial experiences. Each house is “sited” in Berlin—a timeless and fictional Berlin, in which the Berlin Wall still haunts the city, and is reincarnated in the form of these four houses.

below: “IDIOSYNCRicity,” by Natacha Schneider, proposes a series of interventions designed to introduce difference and indiosyncracy into the modern city as a means to mitigate the homogeneity of use and activity that results from modern city planning’s emphasis on zoning similar uses into segregated urban zones, as well as its requirement of large amounts of time spent in transit through unengaging circulation spaces. Located in London, Natacha’s interventions take cues from the internet’s abundance of idiosyncratic, individually authored and customized content that can be aimlessly surfed through. They then translate this affordance of non-identical, inexact, and unpremeditated experience into physical spaces that allow Londoners to wander, discover, make program up as they go along, and revel in their own and others’ craziness.
below: “Restricting Optimization Through Guerilla Architecture,” by Ryan Craney, examines a potential dystopian future for architecture in which algorithmic design software has supplanted the disciplinary expertise of architects with respect to those quantifiable criteria valued by developers (economy, code compliance, etc.) and, as a result, the city has lost those non-quantifiable qualities that the architectural discipline has also historically been concerned with, such as the creation of social space and spaces of spontaneity. Ryan postulates that architects will need to develop new techniques in order to find opportunities to address these issues—such as creative real estate and tenant improvement strategies that permit the creation of clever shared spaces between like-minded tenants, and the radical appropriation of augmented reality in order to establish forms of social and spatial experience that are unhindered by the developers’ compartmentalization and commercialization of the city.

above: “Lucidity: The Threshold of Immersive Space” by Ben Pennell. Ben’s thesis asserts that one’s perception of reality is a constructed fiction that depends upon a limited perception of space, form, and atmosphere from which the mind constructs a seemingly coherent and objective whole. However, psychological distress occurs when new environmental information conflicts with the seemingly objective reality that the mind has constructed. In turn, Ben’s thesis explores the consequences of architectural space designed to frustrate the development of such a seemingly coherent reality. In his project for a mixed use development on the site of New York’s Penn Station, Ben demonstrates how space and spatial relationships can be structured in order to produce conflicting environmental information, and thereby permit a conscious awareness of the contingency and subjectivity of one’s sense of reality.

above: “Little Bits of Los Angeles,” by Marki Becker. Her thesis argues that the reciprocal “non-spaces” of Los Angeles’ freeways and its sprawl of experientially sequestered suburban neighborhoods can be addressed by a series of intermediary structures designed to facilitate the spontaneous and unpredictable experiences and encounters that each can provide to the other. These “freespace” structures artfully mix pedestrian and vehicular spaces and programs in order to maximize the productive and playful interactions between the two, thereby neutralizing the social and experiential segregation that currently exists.
Arch 481 Thesis Design Studio (Fall, Winter, Spring)

Studio Description

The overarching goal of this thesis class is to formulate, investigate, and demonstrate new possibilities for architecture. While the realm of practice rarely provides the opportunity for such a dedicated self-reflection of the architectural discipline, it is nevertheless crucial to the healthy growth and development of architecture as it continually negotiates its relationship to constantly evolving social, cultural, and technological realities.

In this studio you will each produce work that is ambitious, radical, provocative, and visionary. Each thesis proposition will be conceptually profound, rhetorically convincing, well-researched, and of disciplinary consequence—and each will be demonstrated in a thesis project that is thoroughly designed at multiple scales, architecturally compelling, and represented in a diverse range of media that might include high-quality drawings, renderings, animations, diagrams, physical models, full-scale prototypes, fictional or sci-fi narratives, films, graphic novels, and more. If this sounds daunting, don’t worry: the studio is structured to help you achieve all of this.

In terms of scope, this studio will approximate (within reason) the level of investigation and production typical of a graduate level design studio—and consequently it will be an excellent preparation for those of you who intend to one day supplement your undergraduate education with a graduate degree in architecture or a related field.

In terms of schedule, the Fall Quarter will begin with the development of an actual architectural thesis (not simply a project or area of interest). One-on-one discussions, group discussions, and suggested readings—both in studio as well as in the associated Arch 492 Thesis Design Seminar—will assist each of you in developing your specific interests into an actual thesis. Meanwhile, additional reading, research, and writing will help you to enlarge and refine your thesis, help make it more relevant and compelling, and also help you to identify an architectural design project in which to demonstrate your thesis. Concurrently, the studio as a whole will begin the Fall Quarter by participating in a preliminary design study, and which is designed to help each of you to engage certain key issues and ideas related to your thesis in a tangible way, and to serve as a useful complement to the reading, research, and writing that is occurring both in studio as well as in the associated seminar class (see below). This project will result in the design and construction of a large-scale physical construct that will serve as a conceptual study for your thesis, and which will be in the form of a conceptually critical piece of furniture to be submitted as part of the Vellum Competition. This large-scale study will be complemented by numerous other smaller-scale design investigations and studies—all of which will assist you in clarifying a design direction for your thesis project.

By the end of the Fall Quarter each of you will have not only developed and clarified a thesis, but will have identified a thesis project within which to demonstrate that thesis, and will also have begun significant work on that project. During the Winter Quarter these projects will be developed thoroughly, with an emphasis on both radicality as well as the plausible and compelling manifestation of your thesis position within your design project. By the end of this quarter you will have a substantially complete thesis project, supplemented by a substantially complete thesis book. Both of these will be subsequently developed and refined during the Spring Quarter in order to constitute a complete, compelling, radical, critical, and relevant architectural thesis. These will be on display not only at a final 5th Year Show (the Chumash Show), but also in a final comprehensive (and totally kick-ass) student-designed show of just our studio’s work to be on display in the Berg Gallery or a comparable gallery space. You can see some examples of previous studio shows on pages 9-11 of this prospectus.

Within this overall schedule, we will attempt to take at least one major studio field trip. The specific destination and time of such a trip will be decided by the studio as a whole. During such a trip, if possible, we will also attempt to present our work at another school of architecture—both in order to make our work public as well as to gain constructive feedback from noted critics at other institutions.

In addition, we will do other things as a studio—day trips, dinners, drinks, movies—both to bond as a studio but also just to have fun.

above: “Social Machine” by Anthony Stahl. His thesis contends that rampant vertical urban development cannot produce the requisite amount of public social space according to the current model, since such social space continues to be relegated to the ground plane, which is becoming increasingly removed from the city’s occupants as the city grows vertically. Accordingly, Anthony’s thesis proposes a vertical infill typology meant to extend public social space upward along with the city’s growth, thereby promoting a coherent and vibrant three-dimensional social fabric integrated with the city’s future urban development.
Arch 492 Thesis Design Seminar (Fall)
Seminar Description

The seminar class in the Fall Quarter is meant to provide an intellectual foundation to the studio as a whole. In this class we will read assigned texts and engage in intellectual discussions designed to increase your command of important architectural issues and opportunities, which are designed to help you frame your own unique interests and ideas in relation to new and ongoing concerns of the architectural discipline.

The readings, discussions, and presentations in the seminar class will cover both contemporary as well as timeless topics, and will be tuned along the way in order to most effectively relate to and clarify your theses and thesis projects as they develop. However, some of the issues that might be dealt with include:

- the idea of architecture as both a discipline and a cultural practice, and the resulting question of relevance
- contemporary cultural paradigms, and the possibility for architecture to engage such contemporary cultural practices
- the distinction between representational and performative techniques in architecture, and the manner in which each produces cultural value
- the relationship between time and space in architecture, especially with respect to pre-modern concepts of space-time and the effect that modern concepts of time and space have had with respect to the understanding of architectural space
- post-industrial forms of production (digital, open-source, crowd-sourced, etc.) and their emphasis on individual authorship and content reformulation, the notion of an “open-content” structure, and the question of whether architecture is a mass medium
- a critical look at the existing discourse surrounding digital/parametric practices with respect to form, procedure, design intelligence, material practices, spaces of flows, and emergence
- a critical look at the existing discourse of sustainability and contemporary concepts of “nature,” as well as a discussion of environmental consciousness as a mode of thinking and perception triggered by qualitative phenomena rather than quantifiable performance
- the relationship between architecture and monumentality, particularly in light of cultural changes due to the growth of a globalized network culture
- iconoclastic architecture, the manner in which this work challenges mainstream architectural polemics, and how this work highlights architecture’s delicate balance between radical change and disciplinary integrity
- issues of play, ludic space, openness, appropriation, mis-use, and individual creativity through the lens of parkour, the Situationalists, and other examples
- architecture as a spectacle vs. architecture as a means for participation or engagement, with a critical look at contemporary responsive/interactive art and architecture
- the relationship between the idea of architecture and virtuality, including the question of whether architecture is really “real” or operates more like a simulation

I realize that some of this stuff sounds abstract, opaque, or complicated. When I was an undergraduate thesis student it seemed that way to me too. But it’s actually all pretty straightforward, interesting, and fun—in addition to being essential to understanding contemporary discussions about architecture, and really helpful in developing an architectural thesis. So, part of the goal of the Arch 492 Seminar class is to demystify this material, and to help you each to have a better command of many of the basic ideas that motivate contemporary architectural practice. This will, in turn, help you to frame your own ideas, interests, and values in relation to contemporary conversations about architecture.

above: In previous years the studio has traveled to New York, and has taken the opportunity while there to present its work at schools such as Parsons and Columbia. Critics at these reviews have included, among others, the artist and architect Allan Wexler, Mitchell Joachim of Terreform ONE, and Michael Webb from Archigram.
above: In 2013 our final studio show was titled “PROBE.” Like in previous years, the show was intended to simultaneously feature the distinctiveness of each project while also providing a means of displaying the work that would engage visitors and entice them to fully explore the vast amount of content of each project. In this case, the primary 2D content was projected from above onto hanging display surfaces, each of which featured a hacked Xbox Kinect that allowed for interactive multi-touch capability—including swiping, zooming, pinching-to-resize, rotating, and selecting—just like using a smart phone or tablet. In addition, this 2D projected content as well as the 3D physical models triggered additional augmented reality overlays that were revealed with built-in tablet viewers—allowing visitors to explore videos, animations, and projections layered on top of the drawings, renderings, and models.

below: In 2014 our studio show, “EVERYTHING,” featured not only the students’ thesis projects, but also an array of additional printed and projected content related to the sources, influences, and ongoing discussions of the studio that provided the intellectual context within which the various thesis projects were developed. The physical infrastructure of the exhibition was comprised of a series of fabric-covered walls containing a variety of zippered compartments, which functioned both as canvases for projected images as well as containers for physical artifacts such as models, drawings, and other printed material. These zippered compartments also housed iPads, trackpads, and headphones—devices that allowed for additional means by which to interact with the projected content. Check out the links in the yellow box below for photos and videos from the show—including some of the topical “extra content” videos featured in the show itself.

* You can view more images of this show at the following link: https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.655073227842990.1073741824.100000209555980&type=1&l=7088008836

* You can view more images of this show at the following link: https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.859023327447978.1073741827.100000209555980&type=1&l=5a989c97e5


AT THE END OF SPRING QUARTER OUR STUDIO DISPLAYS ITS WORK IN A FINAL EXHIBITION...

THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BOTH PRESENT EACH STUDENT’S THESIS PROJECT AS WELL AS TO CREATE AN ENGAGING ENVIRONMENT THAT ENCOURAGES VISITORS TO FULLY EXPLORE THE CONTENT OF EACH PROJECT.
Studio Show 2015: STRIPEASE

* You can view more images of this show at the following link:
  https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10722363961279.1073741830.100000209555980&type=1&l=096f3e3d90

* You can also view videos from this show at the following links:
  https://vimeo.com/134890595
  https://vimeo.com/128518003

* This show was also featured on Designboom! Check it out here:

above: In 2015 our studio show was titled “STRIPEASE.” This exhibition featured two rear projection screens comprised of curved and straight sections that meandered through the gallery, and which featured a continuous image crawl of all of the students their projects. Visitors could interact with this image crawl using Leap Motion controllers, which tracked their hand movements—allowing for a fun and engaging interactive interface. By pushing their hands forward to select images, pinching their fingers together to grab and move images, and pinching fingers on both hands and moving them closer or further apart in order to scale the images up or down, individuals were able to customize their own viewing experience of the work. Both the scripting required to synchronize the moving images across multiple projectors as well as to create the user interface for the Leap Motion controllers were produced by the students in the studio. The gallery opening was streamed live to the web, and included interviews with visitors to the exhibition. An archived version is available on Vimeo. In addition, the exhibition was featured on Designboom. Please see the links above.
Studio Show 2016: LUCID

* You can view more images of this show at the following link:
https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.1320917574391882.1073741831.100000209555980&type=1&l=c445cdcd07

above: Last year our studio show, “LUCID,” presented each thesis project as an interactive web presentation that was custom designed by each student. These presentations were rear-projected onto a lightweight fabric enclosure suspended within the Berg Gallery, and engaged through cantilevered trackpad controllers. The presentations began with a blurred title screen that only came into focus once the trackpad was engaged, and after a period of inactivity they reverted to this blurred default state. Accordingly, this act of bringing each project into focus through direct interaction emphasized each visitor’s unique engagement with the work. This sense of direct personal engagement was further dramatized by the use of atmospheric fog, which helped focus attention on one’s personal space by reducing visual detail in the distance. In addition, periods of thick fog suggested a dream-like ambiance within which visitors could imagine themselves as lucid dreamers navigating the various architectural dreams of each student in the studio. Furthermore, although each thesis project dealt with unique architectural concerns, they were developed within a studio of individuals engaged in a collective discourse about the discipline of architecture—its history, its ideas, and the possibilities it has for offering new and meaningful spaces and experiences. Therefore, in order to present a sense of this collective discourse to the public, each thesis presentation triggered “pop-up” content that reflected the collective ideas and discussions of the studio as they related to each specific thesis project. This “pop-up” content manifested itself as small yellow boxes of text, covering a variety of topics and written by the studio as a whole. The visual distinctiveness of this “pop-up” content allowed it to provide a thread of graphic continuity to the otherwise visual diversity of the presented projects.
Bio

I am an architect, writer, and educator. Prior to coming to Cal Poly my entire career revolved around questioning assumptions about architecture, designing work that embodies new ideas about architecture, and sometimes even constructing that work. Now, at Cal Poly, I am thrilled to get to help students do all of that as well.

Previously, I served as a principal along with Wes Jones in the award-winning and internationally-acclaimed office of Jones, Partners: Architecture (J,P:A), and during this time our innovative work was widely exhibited and was featured in numerous national and international publications, including the monographs *Instrumental Form* and *El Segundo*, published by Princeton Architectural Press in 1998 and 2007 respectively. While with J,P:A I was responsible for the design and management of a variety of projects, including the Confluence Point Bridges and Ranger Station in San Jose, the Andersen Consulting Corporate Headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, the India Basin Technical Center in San Francisco, the “Shuffle” installation at Sci-Arc, and the HSI Productions Satellite Office in Culver City. I was also the graphic designer for our award-winning monograph, *Instrumental Form*, the graphic director for our follow-up monograph, *El Segundo*, and the author of our firm’s patent for our Residential Program Deck (PRO/dek) system.

In addition, I have maintained an independent design practice whose constructed as well as speculative design work has been featured in numerous books and design journals, and has also been exhibited both nationally and internationally—most recently at the Architecture + Design Museum in Los Angeles and the GA Gallery in Tokyo. (Below are just a few images of some of my work, and I’d be more than happy to talk to you about any of it, if you’d like.) I am also currently working on a book titled *SOUPERgreen*, which will be published by Actar Publishers later this year, and for which I received a grant from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts.

I received my BArch from Virginia Tech and my MArch from Princeton University. Before coming to Cal Poly I taught graduate and undergraduate design studios at the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (as the Hyde Chair of Excellence), and have served on studio and thesis juries all over the place, including Sci-Arc, UCLA, UC Berkeley, CCA, Harvard, and Columbia.

I am also a licensed architect in the State of California.

Anyway, I’m around most of the summer, so if you want to talk to me about my studio and your thesis ideas then please don’t hesitate to call, e-mail, or drop by my office.

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