

## WHEN ECONOMIES BECOME FORM

### Micro-economic models as spatial prescriptions in Northeast Brazil

Berlage Institute, Rotterdam  
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#### Program brief

In a time of global economic challenges – paralleled by a resource crisis as the result of an increasing awareness regarding the looming depletion of crude oil – there is arguably the potential for a reverse globalization: that of extreme locality and context production. While international trading, shipping, and physical logistics are becoming increasingly expensive, even tax-exempted islands of economic potential will no longer hold true to their visionary frameworks. When transport becomes a luxury, economies will thrive locally. Such an exacerbation of localities arises in tandem with the reverse logic and proliferation of global tourism. When paradise becomes generic, the touristic and market value placed on the local, and localities, proliferates.

There is an odd notion hidden in this appeal of localities. We are skeptical about intervening in foreign lands. One should try to avoid the risks of authenticity and progress turning into the opposite of what they promise, i.e., either mimicking local customs by emulating their formal characteristics, or introducing planning frameworks that result in a pretense of heterogeneity through individual pedigree architectures.

This 18-week research studio will investigate a strategy for local intervention. The current economic climate and emergence of six resorts within the emerging sub-urban economy of Northeast Brazil, which has proven resilient to the current economic crisis, will be invoked as a case study. The six-star Duas Barras resort under development along Alagoas' 143 miles of unspoiled coast will provide a backdrop for investigation.

Students will investigate twelve meta-topics via micro-economies in which content-productions become formal interventions and spatial prescriptions. Individual interventions will arise out of explorations considered on local, regional and super regional scales, which will in turn be considered as an accumulation or composite to produce a new, generative layer for the (sub-) region. Communication design will enter as content. Text will be developed as a material construct.

Studio structure will be akin to that of an office, in which students maintain individual areas of responsibility, within the context of a collective effort. The studio will adapt the working and collaborative structure of the Duas Barras project, in which Tina DiCarlo assumes the role of Editor and Curator and Markus Miessen, Architect.

#### Site

The site of intervention should be considered both physical and strategic, within the given locale of Duas Barras, Poxim, Coruripe, Alagoas, Northeast Brazil and that of generative micro-economies on local, regionale, and supra-regional scales.

- Coruripe (913km<sup>2</sup>) is located on the southern coast of Alagoas has a greater urban population of 17000 people. Primary industries are fishing, sugar cane, coconuts and passion fruit. Alagoas is bordered by the (São Francisco River) to the south. It has an average temperature of 24.4 C and boasts some of the most beautiful coastlines in Brazil. The service industry accounts for nearly 60% of its GDP.
- Alagoas is currently one of the fastest growing economies in Brazil due to the influx of capital for tourism and sugar cane farming used in the production of ethanol. Northeast Brazil comprises over 30% of Brazil's population and remains the poorest state in the country.
- Duas Barras is 200-hectare former sugar cane farm located between the towns of Poxim and Coruripe. It is currently being developed as a six-star luxury resort, with 50 villas, a state of the art mediateque, wellness clinic, 30-room hotel, and restaurant. Villas developed on site will have a price point of \$5,000,000.00 and will be on average 10,000ft<sup>2</sup>. An *Aman* resort will be adjacent to Duas Barras.

#### Knowledge

Knowledge and expertise gained are proposed in terms of methodology, content and formal techniques:

- as a strategic approach and methodology (i.e., way of thinking) developed through specificity and empirical research, that can then be applied to a multitude of contexts; architecture will be developed as a generative strategy that includes economic, political, programmatic, legislative, zoning, qualitative, ecological, and material models proposed as alternative spatial practices
- in-depth and specific content that pertains to Brazil, produced and broadly disseminated;
- journalistic writing, text as material construct, communication design, policy writing, alternative spatial modeling and methodologies

## **Research Strands: Micros as Metas, and Vice-Versa**

### Phenomena / Meta-Topics

- (01) Brazilian Modernism & Materials
- (02) Vernacular Architecture (Portuguese Colonialism)
- (03) Coastal Developments
- (04) Common Architectural Typologies
- (05) Transport
- (06) Ecology & Sustainability
- (07) Literacy & Technology
- (08) Indigenous Cuisine & Seasonal Food (Rituals of Eating)
- (09) Domestic vs. International Tourism
- (10) Brazilian Economy/ Finances & the Service Industry
- (11) Micro-Economies & Innovative Companies (Havaianas/ Ethanol-related)
- (12) Medical/ Clinical

### Economies / Micro-economies

- to be extrapolated and defined throughout the course, as Meta-Topics and vice-versa
- thought of different areas of valorisation, this value is not necessarily monetary but can be framed by labour-time or expanded capitalist profit, dissensual enterprises, to consider social and aesthetic profitability and values of desire
- market as aesthetic-political

### Localities

- to be extrapolated and defined throughout the course, as Meta-Topics and vice-versa

### Meta-Question

- How do these phenomena manifest spatially?

## Timeline

Studio meets Mondays from 8 – 4, unless otherwise specified.

General structure: 8 – 12 am critique and/or pin-up. Noon – 1:30 lunchtime lectures. 2-4 remaining discussion.

### wk 10: 3-4 Mar

#### Framework

- Introduction to Site and Project
- Program and brief presentation
- Method of studio, of research, studio structure (as office)
- Metatopics and Typologies (12 strands of research) assigned
- Table of Contents
- Letter of Inquiry
- Hand-outs (reader, assigned readings, studio schedule)

### wk 11: 9-Mar

#### Proposals

- Written proposals due (e-mail 8-Mar)
- 8-12: Proposal presentations and review
- 12-1:30: Architecture as strategy, participation and politics
- 2-4: Discussion
  - method and the construction of an argument
  - form as content
  - micro-economies, introduction
  - textual typologies (re)presentation

### wk 12: 16-Mar

#### Micro-Economies

- 8-12: Pin-Ups
- 12-1:30: Martino Tattara: Brasilia, Lucia Costa
- 2-4: Pin-Ups and Discussion

### wk 13: 22-30 Mar

#### Localities: Brasil Field Trip

arrive 22\_Mar (morning)  
depart 30 Mar (evening)

S 22 Mar

arrive Maceio, drive to Surf Paradise Hotel  
dinner and briefing

M 23 Mar

Site  
Duas Barras  
Aman (next door)  
Poxim, Coruripe  
El Truco (dinner)

T 24 Mar

Client Presentations  
Itacare Objectives and Developments (to include: Community Center)  
Edith Bertoletti: Social Structures and Legal Programmes  
Andy Gruber: Local Climates of Development (Black Brasil)  
Pedro de Martinez: Economic Modeling and Feasibility ??

#### Local Authorities

Secretary of State: The Town of Coruripe, State of Alagoas  
Local Lawyer (Lobbyist): Local Economies and Markets  
Social Worker: Literary and Social Programming  
Zoning Authority: Urban Development and Growth ??

W 25 Mar

Poxim, Coruripe  
Independent Research #1: Getting Lost  
Evening Film: City of God

R 26 Mar

Poxim, Coruripe  
Independent Research #2: Micro-Economies, Meta-Typologies Data  
Evening: Drive to Penumbra & Maceio

F 27 Mar

Maceio  
Independent Research #3: Regional Micro-Economies, Typologies  
SENAC  
Night: Fly to Sao Paulo

S 28 Mar

Sao Paulo  
Ibirapuera Park and Niemeyer Buildings

MASP by Lina Bo Bardi

S 29 Mar	<u>Sao Paulo</u> Independent Research #4 Night: SP-Amsterdam
	To Be Determined: Visit with Oscar Niemeyer, Isay Weinfeld Brazilian Media research and interviews conducted from each student.
wk 14: 30 Mar	no meeting (travel back from Brasil) •synthesis, collation of research upon return, due 6-Apr for discussion
<b>wk 15: 6-Apr</b>	<b>Workshop 1: Content as Form</b> •Zak Kyes •Edwin Heathcoate •Steve Teruggi
<b>wk 15: 14 Apr</b>	<b>Workshop 2: Economic Modeling</b> •Mark Leonard (or Lisa Smirl)
<b>wk 17: 21-Apr</b>	<b>MIDTERMS: Localities</b>
wk 18: 27-Apr	<b>Comparative studies and precedents</b> • Estudio Teddy Cruz; • Elemental with Alejandro Aravena; • Caracas Urban Think Tank; • Sub-urban economies Jeffrey Inaba; • Kazys Varnelis; • Urban Age Sao Paolo;
wk 19: 4-May	Re-Proposal
<b>wk 20: 11-May</b>	<b>TOOLBOX 1: Micro-Economies</b> •Design of strategic means of intervention: economic, spatial, social; •Pin-up, critique
wk 21: 18 May	Re-Proposal Toolbox 1
wk 23: 2-Jun	Open
<b>wk 24: 8-Jun</b>	<b>TOOLBOX 2: Meta-Phenomena (Typologies)</b> •Pin-up
wk 25: 15 Jun	<b>Accumulations</b> •Composite review •Submission of written work and editorial review
<b>wk 26: 23 Jun</b>	<b>FINAL REVIEWS</b> <b>Spatial Prescriptions: ATLAS of Projective Economies in Northeast Brasil</b>

**External Agents** Teddy Cruz (Architect and Urbanist, Estudio Teddy Cruz)  
Edwin Heathcoate (Financial Times Architecture Critic)  
Itacare Capital Fund (Brazilian Developer)  
Zak Kyes (Communication Designer, Architectural Association)  
Mark Leonard (Economist, European Council on Foreign Relation)  
Lisa Smirl (Centre for International Studies, University of Cambridge)  
Michael Speaks (Dean, University of Kentucky College of Design)  
Steve Teruggi (Consultant and Partner, Winkreative)  
Others to be determined;

**Participating Institutions** University of Kentucky (in negotiation, academic year 2009-10)

**Related Lectures and Conversations** (in addition to those mentioned above)

Political Materialism vs. Political Action Alejandro Zaera-Polo and Markus Miessen  
Moderated by Tina DiCarlo and Roemer van Toorn

Border Neighborhoods Teddy Cruz

Coastal Tourism beyond Fordism? Olaf Gipser, Ben Van Berkel, Steve Teruggi  
Moderated by Tina DiCarlo and Markus Miessen

Social Entrepreneurialism as Design Intelligence Michael Speaks

**Products** **TOOLBOXES** published as:

- Special series Financial Times, Economist, Monocle and/or others;
- Chapter of final publication;
- Video Conversations on Studio blog/ website/ DVD;

PUBLICATION/BOOK

**EXHIBITIONS**  
Sao Paolo Biennale  
Rotterdam Biennale

**Visiting Professors** Tina DiCarlo & Markus Miessen

**Schedule** Attached

## Reading List

### MANDATORY

*(Excerpts from each title will be assigned and discussed in studio sessions. Students should familiarize themselves with the core arguments of each text, though will be responsible for reading the assigned excerpts only.)*

#### ARCH+, Special Issue on Brasil

Pier Vittorio Aureli, The Project of Autonomy: Politics and Architecture within and against Capitalism, pp. 4-14, 53-83.

Basar, Shumon, Antonia Carver and Markus Miessen, With/Without: Spatial Products, Practices and Politics in the Middle East, New York: Bidoun (Dubai: Moutamarat), 2007

“Sidewalk Magic,” Yto Barrada & Simona Schneider, pp. 24-31

“Permanent Vacation,” Brian Ackly, pp. 34-39.

“City and Citizenship: Gated Communities and New Urban Identities,” pp. 52-55.

“Collection and Collage,” Celia Peterson and Richard Allenby-Prats,” pp. 58-65.

“A Refusal of Obligatory Extravagances,” Markus Miessen in conversation with Rem Koolhaas, pp. 90-101.

“The Freedom to Create,” Shumon Basar, pp. 102-107.

“Logopelago: Erandi de Silva’s ultra Luxury Lifestyle Islands,” Shumon Basar. pp. 144-151.

Baumeister, Ruth and Sang Lee. The Domestic and the Foreign: Architecture in Globalisation. 010 Publishers, 2007.

Burdett, Richard. Urban Age: Sao Paulo.

Burdett, Ricky and Deyan Sudjic (eds), The Endless City, London: Phaidon, 2007

DiCarlo, Tina, “Texting Beijing,” Perspecta 39 (Yale: 2008), “Tropical Green,” LOG 8, summer 2006; “China World,” LOG 6, fall 2005.

Easterling, Keller, Enduring Innocence - Global Architecture and Its Political Masquerades, Cambridge (MA): The MIT Press, 2005

Economist, The World in 2009. Selected pages.

ETH Studio Basel, Switzerland: An Urban Portrait, Basel: Birkhäuser, 2005

Guattari, Felix, Molecular Revolution in Brasil. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2008. Originally published as Micropolitica: Cartografias do desejo. Petropolis: Vozes, 1986.

Guattari, Felix. Three Ecologies. London: Continuum, 2008. First published in France, Editions Galilée 1989 Les trois écologies.

Hilal, Sandi, Alessandro Petti and Eyal Weizman, “Decolonizing Architecture,” 80 ZAR Architecture.

Koolhaas, Rem, Ole Bouman and Mark Wigley (eds), Al Manakh, New York: Columbia University / Amsterdam: Archis, 2007

Kyes, Zak and Owens. Forms of Inquiry. The Architecture of Critical Graphic Design.

Leonard, Mark, What Does China Think?, London: Fourth Estate, 2008

Introduction, pp. 5-18.

Economic Growth, pp. 21-22.

Special Economic Zones, pp. 115-123

Leonard, Mark, Why Europe Will Run the 21st Century, London: Fourth Estate, 2005

Miessen, Markus and Shumon Basar (eds.), Did Someone Say Participate. An Atlas of Spatial Practice, Cambridge (MA): The MIT Press, 2006

Ruby, Ilka and Andreas Ruby (eds), Urban Transformation, Berlin: Ruby Press, 2008

Ilka and Andreas Ruby, Foreword, pp. 10-13.

Marc Angelil and Cary Siress, City of “and ... and ... and,” pp. 14-19. [session 1]

Fernando Diaz, Between Ecology and Economy: Beyond Programmed Obsolescence,” pp. 20-1.

Keller Easterling, “Zone,” pp. 30-45. [session with Mark Leonard]

Chris Jourdan (artwork), “Running the Numbers,” pp. 68-83. [session with Zak]

Juan Alfonso Zapata and Supersudaca, “Caribbean Strips: Tourism in the Caribbean,” pp. 116-123. [session 2, micro-economies]

Donald L. Bates, “Permanent Visitors,” 124-7. [session 1 or before Brazil]

Teddy Cruz, “Trans-Border Flows: An Urbanism Beyond the Property Line,” pp. 226-238.

Rosenberg, Tina. "A Payoff: Out of Poverty?" *The New York Times Magazine*, December 21, 2008, pp. 47-51.

Speaks, Michael, "Design Intelligence," *Organizing for Change* (Basel: Birkhauser, 2006), ed. Michael Shamiyeh and Dom Research Lab

Thierstein, Alain and Agnes Förster (eds), The Image and the Region: Making Mega-City Regions Visible, Baden: Lars Müller, 2008

#### **DAILY/WEEKLY/MONTHLY READINGS**

- Google Daily on Brasil
- Financial Times
- Economist

#### **END-of-TERM**

DiCarlo, Tina, ed. Duas Barras: Letters of Inquiry.

#### **OPTIONAL**

Anderson, Benedict, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, London: Verso, 1991

Appadurai, Arjun, Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996

Bhabha, Homi K., The Location of Culture, New York: Routledge, 2003

Ballesteros, Mario, Albert Ferre and Irene Hwang, Verb Crisis. Architectural Responses to Unprecedented Conditions, Barcelona: Actar, 2008

Biemann, Ursula and Brian Holmes (eds), The Mahgreb Connection – Movements of Life Across North Africa, Barcelona: Actar, 2006

DiCarlo, Tina. "32 00 N, 35 15 E," *LOG 4*, Cynthia Davidson ed., winter 2005 (co-authored with Tali Krakowsky).

Doherty, Claire, Contemporary Art – From Studio to Situation, London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004

Domela, Paul, Manifesta Coffee Break, Liverpool: Liverpool Biennial of Contemporary Art, 2005

Easterling, Keller, Enduring Innocence - Global Architecture and Its Political Masquerades, Cambridge (MA): The MIT Press, 2005

Esen, Orhan and Stephan Lanz (eds), Self Service City: Istanbul, Berlin: b books, 2005

ETH Studio Basel, Switzerland: An Urban Portrait, Basel: Birkhäuser, 2005

Feher, Michael, Gaëlle Krikorian and Yates McKee (eds), Nongovernmental Politics, New York: Zone, 2007

Franke, Anselm, Rafi Segal and Eyal Weizman, Territories – Islands, Camps and Other States of Utopia, Berlin: KW Institute for Contemporary Art / Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2003

Franke, Anselm and Eyal Weizman, The Frontiers of Utopia and Other Facts on the Ground, Malmö: Malmö Konsthall / Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2004

Koolhaas, Rem, Stefano Boeri, Sanford Kwinter (eds), Mutations, Barcelona: Actar, 2001

Koolhaas, Rem and AMO (eds), Post-Occupancy, Milan: Domus d'Autore, 2006

Latour, Bruno and Peter Weibel (eds), Making Things Public - Atmospheres of Democracy, Cambridge (MA): The MIT Press, 2005

Latour, Bruno, We have never been modern (tr. by Catherine Porter), Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 1993

Miessen, Markus (ed), East Coast Europe, Berlin & New York: Sternberg Press, 2008

Miessen, Markus and Shumon Basar (eds.), Did Someone Say Participate. An Atlas of Spatial Practice, Cambridge (MA): The MIT Press, 2006

Möntmann, Nina (ed.), Art and Its Institutions: Current Conflicts, Critique and Collaborations, Black Dog, 2006

Mörtenböck, Peter and Helge Mooshammer, Networked Cultures, Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2008

Müller, Vanessa Joan and Nicolaus Schafhausen, Under Construction: Perspectives on Institutional Practice, Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2006

Pietromarchi, Bartolomeo (ed.), The [un]common place: art, public space and urban aesthetics in Europe, Barcelona: trans.it/ Actar, 2005

Rockhill, Gabriel, Introduction to Jacques Rancière's Politics of Aesthetics. London: Continuum, 2004. First published in France under the title *Le Partage du sensible: Esthétique et politique*, La Fabrique-Éditions, 2000.

Said, Edward W., Culture and Imperialism, New York: Vintage, 1994

Segal, Rafi and Eyal Weizman, A Civilian Occupation – The Politics of Israeli Architecture, Tel Aviv: Babel / London: Verso, 2003

Sejjdel, Jorinde and Liesbeth Melis (eds.), OPEN: Cahier on Art and the Public Domain. Art as Public Issue (no. 14), Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2008

Sheikh, Simon (ed.), In the Place of the Public Sphere, Berlin: b books, 2005

Speaks, Michael, "Everyday is Not Enough," *Everyday Urbanism: Michigan Debates on Urbanism*, vol. 1, ed. Rahul Mehrotra (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 2005).

Speaks, Michael, "Individuation without Identity," Urban Affairs and Veronique Pettecuw, ed., *City Branding: Image Branding: Image Building and Building Images* (Rotterdam: Netherlands Architecture Institute, 2002).

Weizman, Eyal, Hollow Land, Israel's Architecture of Occupation, London: Verso, 2007

Young, Robert C., Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003

Zaera Polo, Alejandro, "Politics of the Envelope," LOG 13, fall 2008.

## **CASE STUDIES**

- Eyal Weizman
- Alejandro Aravena
- Teddy Cruz
- Caracas Urban Think Tank
- An Architektur
- Substitute
- European Kunsthalle
- CityMine(d)
- Ursula Biemann & Brian Holmes
- Armin Linke
- Stalker
- Multiplicity
- AMO Gulf Study
- The Great Pyramid
- Sadar Vuga: Local Architecture??

## **HISTORICAL & LOCAL PRACTITIONERS**

- Oscar Niemeyer
- Isay Weinfeld
- Lina Bo Bardi
- Artur Casas
- Campana Brothers
- Marcio Kogan
- Paulo Mendes da Rocha
- Roberto Burle Marx
- Lucio Costa
- MMBB