

COOP
DESIGN
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PROGRAM

CURRICULUM FOR UNCERTAINTY

VALUE OF UNCERTAINTY IN ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

[Macro scale] Lifestyles, practices of everyday life, and needs and dreams of society are changeable fashions which have been subliminally reflected on trends in architecture. Predictability of these fluctuations for the interest of design have proven to be unfeasible, despite the efforts of analytical approaches which have aimed to reduce uncertainty and indeterminacy in design processes. Likewise, the demands of the evolving construction industry, accelerated by technological change and the increasing growth of information, have constantly produced rifts which the inert body of knowledge have been unable to bridge synchronously. Uncertainty and instability are thus characteristics of changing situations in professional practice. As patterns of situations change, or tend to be unique, so the usable knowledge must follow the pace to escape obsolescence. Yet many architectural schools prefer to restrain, staying trapped in a figurative time warp, pursuing their own interest regardless of any larger relevance. Apart from being unable to prepare students for the ever-changing realities of everyday practice, schools are already struggling to keep up with changes that affect transformations in architecture. The question for contemporary architectural education is how to prepare students for the uncertain conditions in which they will operate.

[Micro scale] Architectural design is an enterprise of bringing novel things to existence. It is doubtless that the process of delivering the design solution faces many uncertainties on its trajectory. Even when designers seek to find a source in clients' needs, clients often do not know what they want due to lack of imagination or simply find it hard to express what they want. Nevertheless, in situations of indeterminate outcome, uncertainty can be a motivating factor for experimentation and exploration of undiscovered terrains. Through such encounters, uncertainty can trigger intellectual curiosity, interest, and excitement, fostering imagination, creativity, and innovation.

This thesis strives to indicate alternative routes to the current pedagogical situation by suggesting that uncertainty is a constitutive part of the design process. It will argue the importance of uncertainty in architectural education, regarding it as a valuable factor which fosters creative and innovative design. Assumptions aim to lead to a general method for acknowledging uncertainty in the continuous process of architecture design.