

## ARCHDES 300 | DESIGN 5 | TOPIC OUTLINE | SEM 1 2019

Design 5 presents an introduction to complex architectural thinking. It examines both conceptual and exceptional spaces and develops an understanding of corresponding architectural methodologies and systems. Topics will explore the cutting edge of architecture, with an individual emphasis on the theoretical, contextual, architectonic, communicative, material, spatial, sociological or topographical.

**NICK SARGENT**

*Nick Sargent is a designer and educator who is currently a M.Arch research candidate at University of Auckland studying how architecture contributes to social transformation. He has previously taught at UTS, The University of Sydney and Victoria University, has practiced in New Zealand and Australia, and has worked in post-disaster situations in Christchurch and Sri Lanka. He believes design studio should be a friendly, inclusive and collaborative space, and specialises in teaching studios that utilise group-based frameworks for learning.*

## CONTROVERSIAL ARCHITECTURES



*Office for Political Innovation: Superpowers of Ten, a prop based performance that critiques scale to explore the relationships between objects*

## GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

<b>Course :</b>	Design 5 ARCHDES300
<b>Points Value:</b>	30 points
<b>Course Director:</b>	Sarosh Mulla: <a href="mailto:s.mulla@auckland.ac.nz">s.mulla@auckland.ac.nz</a>
<b>Course Co-ordinator:</b>	Uwe Rieger: <a href="mailto:u.rieger@auckland.ac.nz">u.rieger@auckland.ac.nz</a>
<b>Studio Teacher:</b>	Nick Sargent
<b>Contact:</b>	<a href="mailto:n.sargent@auckland.ac.nz">n.sargent@auckland.ac.nz</a> (for general use); <a href="mailto:niksrgt@gmail.com">niksrgt@gmail.com</a> (for urgent matters)
<b>Location:</b>	TBC
<b>Hours:</b>	Monday and Thursday 1:00-5:00pm

**For all further general course information see the ARCHDES300 COURSE OUTLINE in the FILES folder on CANVAS.**

## CONTROVERSIAL ARCHITECTURES

*Note: In this studio you will work in groups of 3-4 but also be responsible for the individual design of components. You are welcome to sign up individually, in pairs or groups of 3-4 and we will form the project groups during the first class based on how you sign up.*

**This studio will focus on:**

- Studying an urban controversy to better understand the relational dynamics of architectural design processes and architectural objects within social and material networks
- Developing skills in conceptualising and making architecture collaboratively
- Considering the agency of non-human objects like architectural drawings, models and construction materials
- Thinking critically and imaginatively about the role of architects, and better connecting your design practice to your ethical and political concerns
- Developing your skills in architectural representation
- Lightly introducing some theoretical ideas from Actor-Network Theory, Cosmopolitics and New Materialism as useful conceptual tools for thinking about the (political and material) relations between people, their environments and various other non-human objects and entities



*Andres Jaque Architects '12 Steps to Make Peter Eisenman Transparent' was a series of interventions during the construction of a Peter Eisenman project intended to generate public engagement and debate*

A 'black box' is a concept taken from Actor-Network Theory and means that when something is working well it appears as a single entity (a black box), not as the complex network of parts and relationships that it really is. But when this black box breaks its internal relationships are revealed creating an opportunity to question how this entity does what it does and indeed if it could do anything else. For example, the control of water in a building might go largely unnoticed until its plumbing breaks whereupon the water-infrastructure, now spraying dramatically in the hallway, suddenly reveals a new set of questions. Perhaps this is just a moment to call the repairperson, but it could also be an invitation to wonder where this water is coming from and if it could be handled in a different way: indeed what relationship can we have with our scarce resources when they are made to be invisible in this way? Beatriz Colomina and Mark Wigley claim that 'good design is anaesthetic,' in that it typically conceals complexity (think of the minimal design of the iPhone) in an attempt to make life simpler. Suspicious of the effects of this concealment, Colomina, Wigley and also this studio, wonder what a 'good design' without anaesthetic might be? How might design reveal uncertainty, flexibility, materiality, complexity, consequences and so on?



*Protestors against development at Ihumatao* <https://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/local-news/manukau-courier/86270957/ihumatao-the-parihaka-of-south-auckland>

With this question in mind, this studio approaches architecture through the lens of controversies; dynamic moments when the problems and processes of urban development are made visible. In controversy we see the contested nature of the built environment, the way various socio-material assemblages form around issues and the role architecture and design play within this. Rather than being concerned about minimising the complexity controversy might cause, we'll use controversy as a tool for exploring and asking questions. Who has the authority to make decisions and how is this authority constructed? Who is effected by these decisions and how? Who does not have the authority to meaningfully participate? And, most importantly for us, what role do architects and architecture play in controversies of the built environment?

Drawing from careful research into contemporary local projects, we'll inhabit the controversies as performers imagining ourselves, on the one hand, as participants (as developers, authorities, protestors and so on) and, on the other hand, as architects whose designs are enmeshed in this socio-material network. As such, this brief will ask you to wear more than one hat and consider more than one point of view as you explore the relationship your architectural designs have to what Anne Salmond calls cosmo-diversity: the right of individuals to construct their own realities (ontologies).



*Offset House by Other Architects is a project for exhibition that, through selective deconstruction, finds opportunities for the public within a typical private suburban development*



*Santiago Cirugeda uses his architectural knowledge to help others circumvent expensive laws, here exploiting a rules loophole that allows for self-build of unpermitted balcony extensions.*

## TOPIC STRUCTURE AND CONTENT



*Forensic Architecture use architectural tools to analyse the spatiomaterial unfolding of conflict, producing maps that can mobilise legal proceedings.*

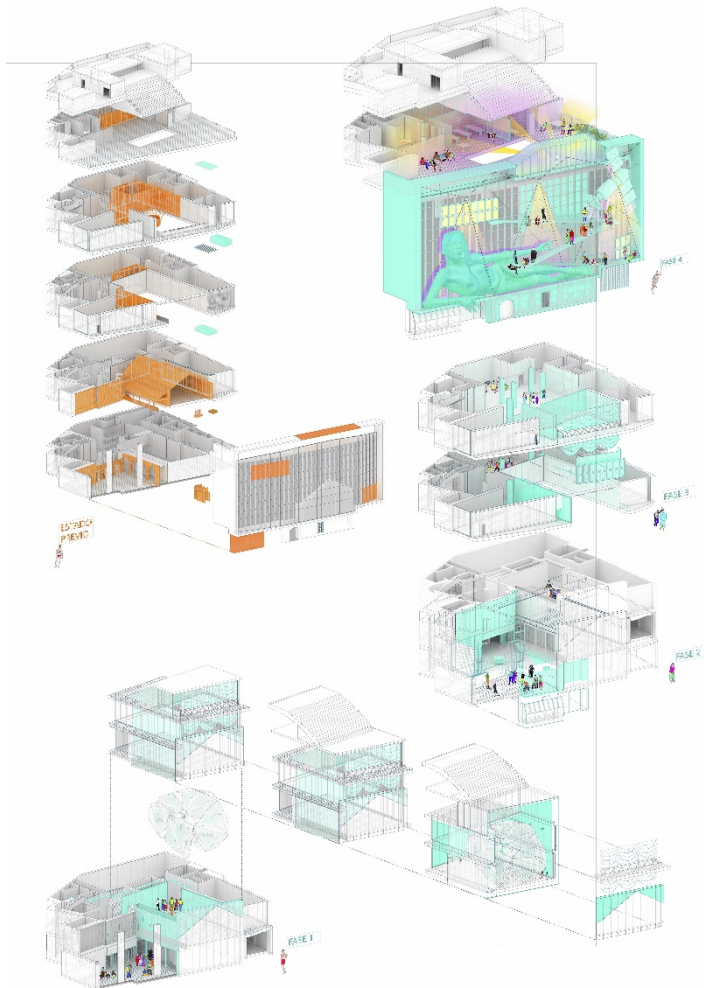
### **Assignment 1: Mapping and performing a controversy (groupwork)**

Each group will select a controversy from the list below to investigate:

Fletcher's development at Ihumatao  
Eden Park problems and Stadium Relocation  
Auckland Port relocation  
Light Rail connection to the Airport  
University of Auckland CAI library closures  
Kiwibuild in Auckland  
Tamaki regeneration  
Sea level rise in Auckland  
(Student's are allowed to suggest others they'd prefer to explore)

Students will research the actions of actors who participate in these controversies through time. You will compile a **dossier of collected information** and produce a **3-5 Minute Animation** for projection at reviews. Using this understanding of the conflicts and dynamics of urban development through a specific controversy, you will inhabit the role of key participating actors (stakeholders) assisted by the design of supporting **props and costumes** and, working with your tutor, write a **2 x A4 design brief** (Assignment 2 brief) for another group to design to. You will continue to **perform the role of stakeholders** (eg. clients, developers, city council, affected community groups) at stakeholder meetings where you will review and direct the design development of your studio colleagues.





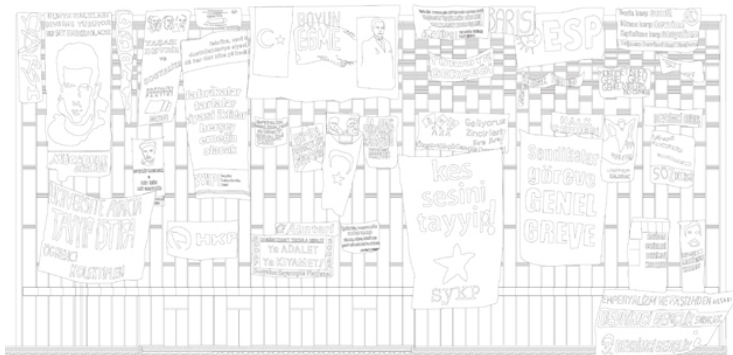
*Andres Jaque Architects renovation of the CA2M museum makes an accessible and evolving event of the renovation and construction process, hoping that lessons learned during this slower construction will influence ongoing design changes.*

## **Assignment 2: Design for controversy (individual and group components)**

Each group will design a project in response to a design brief written in project 1 (not the one you've written). This design will **produce a coordinated group design strategy that separates the larger project into components** that can be individually designed. These projects will then be presented at stakeholder meetings where the group responsible for authoring the brief will provide feedback from the perspective of actors involved in the controversy. In response

to this feedback, each design group will have to **take a political position**: do you support the project, do you try to subvert it or do you work against it (perhaps you will resign and your project will instead become a protest!)? You will **invent a communication strategy** that suits your political position; should the project presentation attempt openness and transparency or should it be more guarded, even deceptive, in what it communicates to certain stakeholders? Do you work with the conventions of professional client presentations or against them? How far can you push these boundaries before you get yourself fired?

*An example of how this might play out: Group A might research Fletcher's development at Ihumatao, and Group B, working to Group A's design brief, might be redesigning this residential development to better account for the needs of marginalised voices. Within this design project three students could be individually designing housing typologies and one student designing a small public building like a community centre. Group A would perform the roles of Fletchers (and various other actors) in critiquing Group B's design development. Having being unable to come to agreement with Group A but not wanting to be fired from the project, Group B might decide to subvert Fletcher's goals and invent a communication / drawing strategy that allows them to conceal certain aspects of their design. At the final presentation their drawings show two designs overlaid: the fake one and the real one.*



*Protest banners at Taksim Square drawn by Architecture for All*



*Note: This calendar below is indicative only and will be updated during the course in response to progress and student feedback. As this brief sets up a complex scenario with several moving parts, Monday class will start with a short round-table discussion to clear up any issues and make plans for the week ahead.*

Week	Date	Event
Week 1	Mon 4.3	12:00 All architecture meeting, rm 311
	Thu 7.3	2:15 Design 5 staff presentations and studio ballot Design 5 Studio classes commence: Form groups, library introduction, mapping brief
Week 2	Mon 11.3	After Effects tutorial
	Thu 14.3	Readings 1 & 2 discussion, Actor-Network Theory Introduction
Week 3	Mon 18.3	Brief writing workshop for assignment 2, Costume exhibition Mapping Controversies Stakeholder Meeting 1: Brief presentation in costume
	Thu 21.3	
Week 4	Mon 25.3	Readings 3 & 4 discussion, group concept design workshop
	Thu 28.3	Mapping controversies review
Week 5	Mon 1.4	Group concept design workshop
	Thu 4.4	Stakeholder Meeting 2 (group concept design)
Week 6	Mon 8.4	Working session – select individual materials for study
	Thu 11.4	Design 5 Mid-semester crits / Stakeholder Meeting 3: Mapping controversies, group design concept (1x axo, 1x site plan) and material choice
		MID-SEMESTER BREAK: Non-human actor work: material studies
Week 7	Tue 29.4	Readings 5 & 6 discussion, Material studies Exhibition, individual concept design workshop
	Thu 2.5	Cross-crit Presentation DATE TBD
Week 8	Mon 6.5	Individual design working session – Section and plans (drafting tutorials available if required)

	Thu 9.5	Individual design working session – Section and plans
Week 9	Mon 13.5 Thu 16.5	Stakeholder Meeting 4 Group presentation strategies and physical artefact workshop
Week 10	Mon 20.5 Thu 23.5	Individual design pin-up Individual design – int. / ext. perspectives
Week 11	Mon 27.5 Thu 30.5	Pre-final pin-up Self-directed working session
Week 12	Mon 3.6 Thu 6.6	Self-directed working session Design 5 Final Studio Reviews

## RESOURCES

- Awan, N., Schneider, T., & Till, J. (2011). *Spatial agency : other ways of doing architecture*. Abingdon: Oxon.
- Bennett, J. (2010) *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.
- Callon, M., Lascoumes, P., & Barthe, Y. (2009). *Acting in an uncertain world: An essay on technical democracy*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Colomina, B., & Wigley, M. (2016). *Are we Human?: Notes on an Archaeology of Design*. Lars Muller Publishers.
- Easterling, K. (2014). *Extrastatecraft: the power of infrastructure space*. London: Verso.
- Fallan, K. (2011). *Architecture in action: Traveling with actor-network theory in the land of architectural research*. *Architectural Theory Review*, 16(2), pp. 184-200.
- Farias, I., & Blok, A. (2016). *Technical democracy as a challenge to urban studies*. Introduction. *City*, 20(4), pp. 539-548.
- Gieryn, T. (2002). *What buildings do*. *Theory and Society*, 31(1), pp. 35-74.
- Goodbun, J., & Jaschke, K. (2012). *Architecture and Relational Resources: Towards a New Materialist Practice*. *Architectural Design*, 82(4), 28-33.
- Latour, B. (2005). *Reassembling the social an introduction to actor network-theory*. New York : Oxford University Press.
- Obrist, H. U. (2013). *Andres Jaque Interviewed*. In A. Jaque (Ed.), *Andres Jaque: PHANTOM. Mies as Rendered Society* (pp. 22-29). Barcelona, Spain: Fundació Mies van der Rohe.
- Till, J. (2009). *Architecture depends*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Yaneva, A. (2012). *Mapping controversies in architecture*. Burlington: Ashgate Pub. Co.

### Related Architecture Practices:

- Andres Jaque / Office for Political Innovation:  
<https://officeforpoliticalinnovation.com/>
- Assemble Studio: <https://assemblestudio.co.uk/>
- Forensic Architecture: <https://www.forensic-architecture.org/>
- Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency: <http://www.decolonizing.ps/site/>
- Center for Urban Pedagogy: <http://welcometocup.org/>
- David Roberts Balfron Tower building archive: <http://www.balfrontower.org/>
- Jeremy Till: <http://www.jeremytill.net/>
- Spatial Agency: <http://www.spatialagency.net/>
- Santiago Cirugeda: <http://www.recetasurbanas.net/v3/index.php/es/>
- Muf Architecture/Art: <http://muf.co.uk/>
- Dunne & Raby: <http://www.dunneandraby.co.uk/content/projects>

**Resources for researching controversies:**

News websites: Stuff, NZ Herald, Scoop, The Spinoff, RadioNZ, Newshub

Council information: TBC

Government information: TBC

**REQUIRED PRODUCTION****DURING TUTORIALS:**

As a general rule, new work needs to be brought to every studio class, irrespective of whether specific class deliverables have been set. Students also need to bring the resources to work in studio during class time. Certain classes will have specific requirements and arrival times, for example the “stake-holder meetings,” that will need to be met to allow workshops to run as planned. Students are also encouraged to take charge of their learning in this studio – feedback is welcome and the studio timelines and plans are flexible and can be easily adjusted.

**AT PROGRESS PIN-UPS:**

Although progress pin-up work can be incomplete and should always be presented as cheaply (and time efficiently) as possible, it is expected that these pin-ups are carefully organised, clearly explain your work and focus your reviewers/stakeholders attention on the aspects you would most like to receive feedback on.

**AT THE CROSS-CRIT:**

As a tutorial group we will collectively design and realise a presentation that summarises your work for the whole year group, to be presented at the studio cross-crit. Date TBD.

**FINAL PRESENTATION DELIVERABLES:**

- A 3-5 minute controversy map video per group
- A dossier of collected information about the controversy
- 1 x 1:500 site plan per group
- 1 x whole project axonometric per group
- 1 x A1 map of design and decision making process per group
- 1 x A4 book documenting design process per group
- 1 x physical artefact (a model or other physical communication machine)
- 1 x 1:100 section per individual
- 1 x 1:100 set of plans per individual
- 1 x exterior perspective per individual
- 1 x interior perspective per individual
- Material studies per individual

## ASSESSMENT & FEEDBACK

This course is assessed as 100% coursework. Conversational feedback is given throughout the semester. Written feedback, with indicative grading, is given at a date around the mid-point of the semester. All further information regarding assessment is available in the ARCHDES 300 Design 5 Course Outline (on Canvas).

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

General Course Outcomes: On successful completion of this course students should be able to:

- Theory: Show evidence of engagement with selected / prescribed areas of architectural theory and knowledge. Further, to show evidence of the exploration of the possible influence of this upon the development of architectural propositions.
- Architectonics: Demonstrate abilities to project, explore and develop the tectonic characteristics of the project through the creative engagement with material, structural or constructional propositions.
- Programme: Show evidence of engagement with identified cultural, social and functional positions as they might inform speculative architectural propositions.
- Performance: Show abilities to advance conceptual thinking through engagement with environmental and contextual conditions that could bear upon the project, and to examine the way in which the architecture may affect those same conditions in return.
- Form and space: Demonstrate abilities to develop speculative three dimensional architectural form and space.
- Media: Display skill in the communication and development of design propositions through the considered use of architectural media.

**Specific Topic Outcomes:** This studio topic will engage the general course outcomes in the following ways:

- *Theory: Contribute to class discussions about readings, experiment with discussed concepts in individual and group design work and active engagement with workshops and other collaborative activities. Clearly document and present your design process (including group decisions and stakeholder conflicts).*
- *Architectonics: Demonstrate how the material you have selected influences the design outcome of your architectural proposition and that you have considered the performative and temporal agencies of this material (Eg. Environmental effects, aging, suitability for refurbishments, effects on building use or atmosphere).*
- *Programme: Use your understanding of your specific controversy to take a clear critical position in relation to your program, and show evidence of engagement with identified ecological, cultural, social and functional positions through your design decisions.*

- *Form and space: Show an understanding of how organization of form and space relates to the critical position you have taken towards your brief.*
- *Performance: Show an understanding of the networked relationships building systems have with issues of concern.*
- *Media: Invent an imaginative and critically considered communication strategy that clearly demonstrates the critical position you've taken in response to the controversy and brief. Clearly document and present your design process (including group decisions and stakeholder conflicts).*