Title Yale Advanced Studio Fall 2016
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Yale Advanced Studio Fall 2016

Background:
Jeffery Kipnis, in a recent essay *By Other Means*, suggested an alternative activism for architecture other than the one proposed by the curator of this year’s Venice Biennale, Alejandro Aravena. For Kipnis, this other activism questions architecture’s 5000-year-old complicity with entrenched power. Kipnis argues that any architecture that contests that relationship to entrenched power is a bona fide project of activism.

During Modernism, architecture was seen to embody an idealism latent in the utopian technology of the industrial revolution, an idealism stemming from Immanuel Kant’s late 18th c. Critique of Pure Reason. The idealization of technology was a dominant force in the mid-19th c. industrialization, uniquely affecting architecture and allowing Modernism to take a different route in architecture than in painting, sculpture, or literature. Yet while these other arts turned to strategies of defamiliarization, architecture’s idealization of technology in people like Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe inhibited architecture’s ability to estrange.

Russian Formalist Viktor Shklovsky articulates the idea of estrangement in his description of the device. Unlike the idealizing sentiments of the other modern, the device was a tool for the thickening of experience, for the renewal of perception. By making strange, art and architecture could force close reading and compel an estrangement from power, thus allowing the denial of the idealism latent in technology, which could then be seen for what it was: a powerful repression of the individual. Fast forward to Rosalind Krauss. Her essential argument in *Death of a Hermeneutic Phantom* is that Modernist architecture, through its unacknowledged idealism, failed to estrange. But Kipnis writes, “whenever a work of architecture demands close attention, close reading, its palette of effects cannot but change in character from the emotive to the intellectual, and it can no longer serve so easily the ends of power.” So in its failure to estrange, Modernism could only side with power. As a result, we are seeking the ineloquent in architecture. As Bernard Berenson argues regarding art, the most satisfactory work is one that resists the sensational and remains “ineloquent, mute, with no urgent communication
to make.” It is in this way that architecture can draw upon the cognitive rather than the emotive and thus interdict power and destabilize meaning.

**Subject:**
If architecture today can be said to be witnessing a paradigm shift similar to what took place between modernism and postmodernism in the 60s and 70s of the last century, how is it possible to understand the nature of that shift and where it might be going?

There are many explanations of what happened in the past in the time of such shifts; one of those explanations concerns a term used by Victor Shklovsky called “baring the device.” According to Shklovsky, to bare the device is to dam up the transparency of signification and force a kind of opacity on the object. In so doing, one removes the object from the sphere of automatized perception. Once one is able to see conceptually, rather than simply recognize, a device can impede the flow of idealized meaning through the object. In its opacity, the object transforms from a vehicle for external meaning into a cognitive object, whose inherent structures provide new sources of meaning. The object itself becomes newly visible, allowing us to “see what, until then, had not and could not yet come into view.” It is through the study of devices that it is possible to understand the transformation of ordinary objects into art objects, of ordinary language into literary language, of literal transparency to phenomenal transparency, of buildings into Architecture.

Krauss states that within any paradigm there appear anachronistic manifestations that logically don’t quite fit into the then-existing paradigm, which in fact are, in retrospect, the signals for a future paradigm. For example, she states that the linguistic model had no logical relationship to the formal model of the modern. Yet by tracing the shift from Formalism to Structuralism, Krauss not only shows that the linguistic model had been accepted by the 1960s, but that it was the arrival of a device able to posit an entirely different ground for meaning in architecture that ultimately signaled the beginning of a new, post-modernist paradigm. Thus the baring of the device not only changes perception of the object, but can also make visible the seeds of paradigmatic change.
Project:

The goal of the studio is to design, in Berenson’s words, an ineloquent architecture. Students will begin the semester with four weeks of intensive analysis, beginning with analysis of buildings of their own choosing. Their task will be to examine architectural devices, finding sources of estrangement and ineloquence while becoming familiar with methods of close reading. This exercise will be followed by an intensive site analysis. Since one of the objectives of the course is to deny the direct communication between the object and its users – to interrupt, to dam up any one to one relationship between subject and object – the same idea should hold between object and site. To do this the site needs a measure of iconic presence in order to begin to contextualize any iconic presence. Situated between the President’s office, the Beinecke Rare Books Library, Woolsey Hall, and the new Schwartzman Center, the site displays classical axiality, modernist iconicity, and political power (see site plan).

Students will be asked to design a functional building of 70,000 sq ft. The program is a multipurpose facility on the Yale campus that functions between an archive, a museum, and a multipurpose student center. The objective is to use close reading in order to disinter the iconicity of site and to deploy architectural devices that challenge existing paradigms through disruption and dissonance.

Schedule:

**Week 0**
- Thursday, 1 September 2016
  - Advanced Studio lottery, introduction

**Friday, 2 September 2016**
- Analyze a typical device from Modernism

**Week 1**
- Monday, 5 September 2016
  - Labor Day, no classes

**Thursday, 8 September 2016**
- Analyze a typical device from Modernism, pin-up

**Week 2**
- Monday, 12 September 2016
  - Analyze an estranging device from Modernism, desk crits
Thursday, 15 September 2016
- Analyze a typical device from Modernism, \textit{pin-up}

**Week 3**

Monday, 19 September 2016
- Analyze how the typical and estranging devices differ, \textit{desk crits}

Thursday, 22 September 2016
- Analyze how the typical and estranging devices differ, \textit{pin-up}

**Week 4**

Monday, 26 September 2016
- Site/program Analysis, \textit{desk crits}

Thursday, 29 September 2016
- Site/program Analysis, \textit{pin-up}

**Week 5**

\textit{Travel week}

Saturday, 1 October – Saturday, 8 October, 2016
- Rome, Gennazzano, Piazza del Popolo, Voltera, Piranesi

**Week 6**

Monday, 10 October 2016
- Device selection, site/program analysis, \textit{desk crits}

Thursday, 13 October 2016
- Device selection, site/program analysis, \textit{pin-up}

**Week 7**

Monday, 17 October 2016
- Design, \textit{desk crits}

Thursday, 20 October 2016
- Design, \textit{pin-up}

**Week 8**

\textit{Midterm week}

Monday, 24 October 2016
- Design, \textit{desk crits}
Thursday, 27 October 2016
- Midterm Jury, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Week 9
Monday, 31 October 2016
- Design, desk crits
Thursday, 3 November 2016
- Design, pin-up

Week 10
Monday, 7 November 2016
- Design, desk crits
Thursday, 10 November 2016
- Design, pin-up

Week 11
Monday, 14 November 2016
- Design, desk crits
Thursday, 17 November 2016
- Design, pin-up

Week 12
Thanksgiving week, no class

Week 13
Monday, 28 November 2016
- Design, desk crits
Thursday, 1 December 2016
- Design, pin-up

Week 14
Monday, 5 December 2016
- Design, desk crits
Thursday, 8 December 2016
- Design, pin-up

Week 15
Finals week
Monday, 12 December 2016
- Production, desk crits

Thursday, 15 December 2016
- Final Jury, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Readings:

Berenson, Bernard. “Piero Della Francesca or The Ineloquent in Art”, (1954)

Kipnis, Jeffery. “By Other Means,” (2016)
