

CITY, LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGY



Olafur Eliasson, *Double Sunset*, Utrecht, 1999

Fall 2018 UN3120 Barnard and Columbia Colleges Architecture Department
 Meetings: T/Th 2:40pm - 3:55pm (Lecture + Seminar Course)
 Instructor: Ralph Ghoche, rghoche@barnard.edu; TA: TBA
 Office Hours: TBA / 500K Diana Center

COURSE DESCRIPTION

City, Landscape, Ecology is a thematically driven course which centers on issues and polemics related to landscape, land settlement and ecology over the past two centuries. The course interrogates our changing attitudes of nature from the 18th century to the present, focusing on the artistic and architectural responses to these perceptions. It aims to demonstrate the important role that artists and architects have played, and are to play, in making visible the sources of environmental degradation and in developing new means of mitigating anthropogenic ecological change.

City, Landscape, Ecology is divided into three parts:

Part I explores important episodes in the history of landscape: picturesque garden theory, notions of “wilderness” as epitomized in national and state parks in the United States, Modern and Postmodern garden practices, and the prevalence of landscape in the work of artists in the 1960s and 70s. The purpose here is to better understand the role that territorial organization plays in the construction of social practices, human subjectivities, and technologies of power.

We then turn to ecology and related issues of climate, urbanization and sustainability in Part II. Here we will examine the rise of ecological thinking in the 1960s; approaches to the environment that were based on the systems-thinking approach of the era. We look at the work and theories of John McHale, Buckminster Fuller and Stewart Brand and situate these approaches within a larger context of environmental awareness advanced by such pioneers as Rachel Carson and David Brower. In the session “A Commons for Whom” we examine the history of the “crisis” of scarcity and population growth from Thomas Robert Malthus, to Paul R. Ehrlich (*The Population Bomb*, 1968) to today and look more critically at questions of environmental violence and equity. Part II concludes with architectural responses to energy scarcity in the 1970s in the form of off the grid, low-tech, and passive climate control solutions and looks at the key theorists (E.F. Schumacher, Herman E. Daly, Murray Bookchin) of the era.

The course concludes with Part III (*Hybrid Natures*). At this important juncture in the course, we will ask what is to be done today. We’ll examine the work of contemporary theorists, architects, landscape architects, policy makers and environmentalists who have channeled some of the lessons of the past in proposing lasting solutions to our land management and ecological crises of the present and future.

PT I / LANDSCAPES

- W1 THE INVENTION OF WILDERNESS
- W2 MODERN AND POSTMODERN LANDSCAPES
- W3 LAND ART AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCULPTURE
- W4 TECHNOLOGY, TERRITORY AND POWER

PT II / ECOLOGIES

- W5 FROM CONSERVATION TO ENVIRONMENTALISM
- W6 THE RISE OF ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS
- W7 CAPITALISM, RACE AND POPULATION GROWTH
- W8 OFF THE GRID: APPROPRIATING TECHNOLOGY

PT III / HYBRID NATURES

- W9 CONTEMPORARY ECOLOGIES
- W10 A COMMONS FOR WHOM?
- W11 URBANIZATION AND LANDSCAPE FUTURES
- W12 TERM PAPER PRESENTATIONS
- W13 TERM PAPER PRESENTATIONS