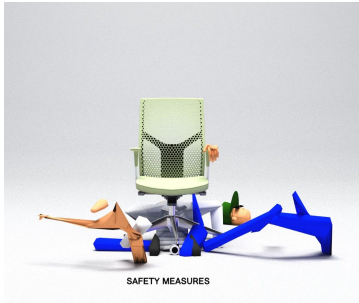# B+C | A

Barnard and Columbia Architecture, *Spring 2021*
ARCH 1010V: Design Futures, NYC

Virginia Black
e: vab2130@columbia.edu

Remote office hours available by appointment

From Left: Gucci x coco capitan for the 2017 campaign, as advertised in NYC; Simone Niquille, Safety Measures; Arakawa and Gins, Bioscleave House (Lifespan Extending Villa); FaceApp, as applied to Katie Holmes

DESIGN FUTURES COURSE DESCRIPTION

"In the future food will be 3D-printed, or there won't be any food. In the future there will be no borders, or your passport will be embedded in your iris. In the future, gender will be flexible, or nonexistent, or just like it is now but better. In the future there will be no cops, or cops will stop killing black people, or cops will be tiny drones the size of flies. In the future you will be happy, or you will be unhappy, or you will be dead. But the future never comes, because it's not habitable by any part of the human body apart from language, and so the future is only ever a way to talk about the present and the past."

-Editor's Note, Vol. 38: Futures, The New Inquiry

How do we make futures, and what is futurity's relationship to design? What do the images, products, and processes we create to bring about futures say about the desires, hopes, and fears of the present moment? What is the power of design in ushering forth future visions? How does it operate on the world, and our ideas of what is possible? What can we learn by looking to designs on futures past?

This course looks to design methods, artifacts, and visions across multiple scales-- from the nanochip, to our bodies, to the earth-- to better see how futurity is conceived of and represented, and how it acts on the world. We will not only explore how design has been used to subvert existing norms, and even to organize protest, we will also question its intentions and blindspots, examining how it has contributed to and exacerbated existing inequity.

We will look to varied disciplinary histories to understand their impacts on the present, and we will pursue design's contemporaneity as decidedly interdisciplinary. Students will apply concepts presented in class and readings in design workshops, exercises and case studies. Taking New York City as a site of analysis, we will take digital field trips and be visited by guest speakers to learn more about design's operations within the city. We will focus on events of the last year including the COVID-19 crisis, the Movement for Black Lives, and climate change and will consider these topics through the lens of design.

FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS

The class will be comprised of the following components:

READINGS: Weekly readings will be posted to Courseworks. It is essential that they are completed in order to have a productive discussion in class. It is necessary that the students demonstrate through the class debates their understanding and analytical capacity.

CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS: Students will work in groups of 2 or 3 to prepare case study presentations to the class. A separate brief will be given for the presentation guidelines and the topics will be discussed with the instructor.

DESIGN PROJECTS: During the course of the semester we will develop three design projects. Projects will be assigned independently during the semester as shown on the schedule. There will be workshops and pin- ups during class (conducted online through Miro) to encourage active development of the design projects.

INSTAGRAM RESPONSE:

Each week, students are required to post to instagram in response to the week's reading. Students will write a 3 sentence statement accompanying an image, video, or GIF.

FIELD TRIPS/ GUEST LECTURES: We'll make a series of field trips as well as host some guest lectures to complement our discussions of the projects. These are included in the schedule and/or will be announced as we get closer to them.

EVALUATION

Students will be evaluated on their own capacity to fulfill the course goals, not just meeting the requirements. Working in this field goes beyond completing the requirements, it implies a stronger engaging with the given material and a passion to accomplish things. Students need to develop their critical thinking skills, analytical comprehension, and rigor in the process of making the projects. These exercises are based not only on a final product, they are based on a daily progression and evolution of the work as an active process.

Case Study	20%
Design Project 1	20%
(Activist Zine)	
Design Project 2	20%
(Body Armor)	
Design Project 3	20%
(Mapping Collage)	
Class Participation	10%
Weekly Instagram Post	10%
Total	100%

COSTS

For the design projects there may be a materials cost. In total, students should expect to budget around $40 for the entrance fees and material costs. If students have a concern about the costs, please contact the instructor by email for alternative arrangements.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Students who participate fully in the course will:

+ Develop a basic understanding of a range of design disciplines
+ Develop a basic understanding of the design process as a collaborative endeavor
+ Be able to articulate (orally and in writing using both text and images) a cogent position on the design of a product, project, or system
+ Be familiar with various designers, design institutions, and design practices in New York City