

ARCH UN3202**ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN 2**

Monday and Wednesday 9:00am – 11:50am / 116A Lewisohn Hall, Columbia

Instructors:

Kadambari Baxi, Brad Samuels; Irina Verona (studio coordinator)



Photo of Barbara Ann Teer, founder of NBT (left); NBT performance of "Blood at the Root" (middle); Street Mural, Harlem (right).

**ARCHITECTURE, ART AND ACTIVISM:
THE NATIONAL BLACK THEATER IN HARLEM**

*(Social) space is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products: rather: it subsumes things produced, and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity.*¹

This semester we will examine how architecture and design can support multi-faceted cultural and social narratives. Our object of study will be Harlem – an urban neighborhood in northern Manhattan that is, at the same time, a quintessential center for African-American life, art, culture and history and for the African diaspora. We will partner with the National Black Theater (NBT), a pioneer organization now approaching its 50th anniversary, and we will explore NBT as a lens into Harlem’s layered cultural, social, economic and physical histories, as well as into Harlem’s future.

As a subject of inquiry, Harlem offers many opportunities yet also many challenges. An urban site of unparalleled richness and complexity, Harlem can only be understood by engaging intertwined visible and invisible narratives. With events such as the Harlem Renaissance, or the Harlem riots, Harlem flourished, then declined; experienced enchantment, then disenchantment. Today’s gentrification can be seen as yet another complex chapter. Yet unlike in any other neighborhood, Harlem’s development is inseparable from that of the arts and certain forms of artistic expression. We can argue that arts spaces such as the Apollo Theater, the NBT, or the Studio Museum have been central to Harlem’s history and have enabled the transformation of an urban site into a social and cultural place unique to African-American identity and heritage.

In our explorations, we will focus on the program and typology of the performance space. Especially in the context of Harlem, the theater – as both an institution and a space – is uniquely poised to shape social urban interaction, activism and (community) participation. We will think about current models and examples and create new visions for the future.

The Design 2 studio is one of six classes that are participating in the Harlem Semester, a humanities initiative organized by the Department of Africana Studies and the Barnard Center for Research on Women that immerses students in Harlem’s cultural, social, and political history through partnerships with Harlem cultural institutions (see pages 8 for list of courses).

1 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 73.

RADICAL EXPERIMENTS: THE NATIONAL BLACK THEATER

The National Black Theater was founded by Barbara Ann Teer in 1968 as a space uniquely devoted to the Black Arts Movement in general, and to Black theater culture in particular. Teer founded NBT as a way to give voice to the urgent realization that “the Negro artist much examine the need for a Black cultural art form before he can take any step forward.”² Teer’s transformational theater builds on the philosophy of “‘what might be,’ ‘what is possible,’ ‘what’s missing,’ and ‘what can we provide for what’s missing.’”³ Since its inception, the NBT has fostered a crucial and much-needed artistic conversation. At the same time, as a financially independent and revenue-generating complex – the first Black art complex to do so – it has played a crucial role in the community and has been able to realize Barbara Teer’s “lifelong commitment to community service through the arts.”⁴ In the words Sade Lythcott, NBT CEO and daughter of Teer, NBT provides a “radical space” for activism and engagement with current social events and a platform for creativity, action, and community building.

NBT is located at 2031 Fifth Avenue, between 125th and 126th streets. The current building dates from 1984, when Teer secured funding to purchase the entire lot and to erect their building. As part of the design, she commissioned artists from Nigeria to create site-specific installations, which create a unique experience throughout their space. The NBT is now in the early stages of an expansion plan – which will raze the entire building and create a multi-use complex. A new NBT facility will be the anchor tenant to this space.

In many ways, NBT (as an institution) positions itself as a spatial and temporal bridge. This bridge links contemporary artistic pursuits of African-American artists, actors and playwrights to the traditions of West African Arts. As an alternative to the hegemonic tradition of American theater, Dr. Teer turned to African roots – namely, the Sacred Art of the Yoruba people of West Africa – as a reference and inspiration for ideas, images and experience. More recently, NBT has sought to strengthen the connections between its own artistic legacy and its future – that is, to understand and celebrate its past, in order to usher in the next generation of ideas. Particularly important to this vision has been an understanding of their extensive collection of original art, which extends throughout the entire building and is part of the audience experience.

TOWARDS A NEW ACTIVISM

With a focus on NBT and Harlem, we will study the space of performance as a key component of urban social space. Using NBT as a starting point, we will explore the role of cultural and civic spaces in Harlem today, as well as the unique synthesis between identity, art and politics that has existing throughout Harlem’s history. As we project forward to the future, we will ask the following questions: What is a cultural and civic space today, and/or in fifty years from now? How do we engage with multiple and / or (often) contradictory social spaces? How do new developments in technology and media enable a rethinking of the space for performance and/or the dissemination of performance to a wider audience? How do we incorporate new (digital) technologies, while maintaining links to past ideas or traditions? And, in an age of dominant digital technologies and virtual space, how do we participate in social space? Finally, what is the architectural potential of social spaces and cultural institutions in in Harlem today, and in contemporary culture in general? Students will be asked to formulate a very specific thesis and proposal.

The semester will unfold in two parts. The first part will be a research exercise that looks at the ideas and spaces of NBT and Harlem. The second part will focus on the design of a new cultural and research center (approx. 50,000 sf), located on the current NBT site.

Part 1 (6.5 weeks): Research

Part 2 (7 weeks) Building Design

² *New York Times* editorial, 1968.

³ Marie Thomas Lundean, *Barbara Ann Teer and the National Black Theater*, 29.

⁴ <http://www.nationalblacktheatre.org>

PREREQUISITES

The following 3 studio courses are prerequisites: Abstraction; Perceptions; Design 1.

STUDIO TEACHING METHODOLOGY

Design is a unique type of knowledge production requiring unique working methods. This course is taught by the studio method – an iterative process that requires dialog, design production, and risk taking by the student to explore ideas in the form of a variety of media. The Studio will be divided into small, individual sections, each led by a Studio Critic. The core method of instruction is that of 'desk crits', a one-to-one dialogue at the desk between the student and the Critic. At the desk crit, previous design work is reviewed and discussed and the student and critic formulate the next steps in the process. Desk crits are supplemented by Interim Reviews, or 'Pin-ups', where all students in the Section (sometimes teamed up with another Section) present their design ideas for group critique and discussion. The culmination of each project is the Final Review in which students present their work for public evaluation by a group of Studio Critics and Visiting Critics.

Each student will remain at the same desk, for each semester. The first part of the semester will be co-taught by the three critics; in the later part, students will be working closely with their assigned critic. This way, each student will be exposed to multiple different approaches to design methods. Teaching Assistants will be conducting workshops focusing on techniques and methods relevant to ongoing projects.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is mandatory at all scheduled classes, field trips, and reviews. Studio is held Monday and Wednesday beginning promptly at 9:00 AM. Any student arriving after 9:20 AM will be considered late and anyone that arrives after 10:00 AM will be marked absent. Absences due to acute illness, a personal crisis (e.g. a death in the family), religious observance, or for other reasons of comparable gravity may be excused. In all such cases, students must promptly email their instructor to communicate the reason for their absence and to arrange an opportunity to review any important information they may have missed. Students who know they will miss a scheduled class due to religious holidays should email their instructor during the first week of classes with a list of dates for their anticipated absences. Unexcused absences, late arrivals, or early departures from class will reduce your course grade. Three non-consecutive absences will result in a grade reduction by one-third (1/3) of one letter grade (e.g., A- to B+). Three consecutive absences or four non-consecutive absences will adversely affect your final grade.

SKETCHBOOK

You will be required to keep an up-to-date sketchbook during the semester. Include: sketches, comments, inspiration images, collages, photographs, etc. Sketchbook is due right after Spring Break. Refer to attached schedule.

GRADING

Each Studio Project will be graded with a letter grade and a written evaluation. Your work will be evaluated by the following criteria: (1) idea/concept; (2) conceptual development and design process; (3) final execution.

Instructors recognize learning and improvement as important factors in determining the final grade. Students are required to present their work in all Interim and Final Reviews. Failure to do so will reduce the grade of the exercise by a minimum of one letter grade (e.g. B to C). Work not presented at the designated time will not be reviewed at a later date. Project grades will be based on the work you present at your Final Review. Required work that was not completed at the Final Review must be completed in time for grading. Additional work completed after the Final Review and before grading will not be considered at the grading session unless otherwise stated by the Studio critics.

Grading distribution will be as follows:

Project 1	40%
Project 2	60%

REQUIRED BOOKS AND MATERIALS:

There are no required textbooks for this course.

Studio materials and supplies may be purchased at the following locations:

- Janoff's Office and Art Supplies; Located on Broadway between 111th and 112th Streets, Janoff's is the closet art supply store to campus.
- Blick Art Materials- has several locations in downtown Manhattan, offering a large choice of art supplies, tools, and materials.
- Canal Plastics Center- offers plastics and fabrication services and sells acrylics in hard to find colors and sizes. They also offer a student discount.
- Artist & Craftsman Supply - located on 126th St and Adam Clayton Powell Blvd. They offer a student discount (with student ID).

STUDIO PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

You are strongly encouraged to work in the studio and to take advantage of the shared learning environment to discuss your work with your peers. Students will remain at the same desk, for each semester.

- You must provide your own lock for the locker
- The studio must remain locked at all times.
- Use the spray hood in the model building room for spray paint or fixative.
- Use headphones for listening to music.
- You are responsible for keeping your desk and your storage area clean and organized. If you are using an empty desk adjacent to your assigned seat, it is also your responsibility to keep this area free of debris.
- 100% of the work surface of your desk space should be covered with 3-ply chipboard or vinyl board cover. Do not cut, carve, glue or otherwise destroy the plywood desktop.
- Please help us recycle and reuse extra materials by donating anything you don't need to our recycling locations in the studios.

SECURITY

Please attend to the security of the Studio space. After the first week of classes, students will be granted 24-hour access to the studio and DAL through their school ID. It is crucial that the doors to these spaces remain closed and locked at all times for your personal safety and your belongings' security. Please do not prop open the door and do not leave any valuables unattended at your desk. The studio and the DAL are open to all students in approved courses; please respect other critics and students that are using the space. Barnard and Columbia Security officers do periodically check the studio but security is a responsibility that we all share; please help us maintain a safe and productive environment.

If your personal belongings are stolen (or go missing) please notify your instructor and Barnard Public Safety (for room 404 Diana) or Columbia Public Safety (for 116 Lewisohn).

HONOR CODE

The Barnard Honor Code applies to all students in this class regardless of academic affiliation. Approved by the student body in 1912 and updated in 2016, the Code states:

We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.

The Columbia College Honor Code and the Columbia College Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity can be viewed here:

<https://www.college.columbia.edu/honorcode>

<https://www.college.columbia.edu/faculty/resourcesforinstructors/academicintegrity/statement>

ACADEMIC ACCOMODATIONS

If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodations, you must visit the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for assistance. Students requesting eligible accommodations in their courses will need to first meet with an ODS staff member for an intake meeting. Once registered, students are required to visit ODS each semester to set up new accommodations and learn how to notify faculty. Accommodations are not retroactive, so it is best to register with ODS early each semester to access your accommodations. If you are registered with ODS, please see me to schedule a meeting outside of class in which you can bring me your faculty notification letter and we can discuss your accommodations for this course. Students are not eligible to use their accommodations in this course until they have met with me. Barnard ODS is located in Milbank Hall, Room 008. Columbia ODS is located in Wien Hall, Suite 108A.

WELLNESS STATEMENT

It is important for undergraduates to recognize and identify the different pressures, burdens, and stressors you may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. We as a community urge you to make yourself--your own health, sanity, and wellness--your priority throughout this term and your career here. Sleep, exercise, and eating well can all be a part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you in several sectors of your life, and we encourage you to make use of them. For more information about available resources:

- Barnard Students: <http://barnard.edu/wellwoman>
- Columbia Students: <http://www.college.columbia.edu/resources> Click on Health-Wellness
- Columbia GS Students: <https://gs.columbia.edu/health-and-wellness>
- Columbia SEAS Students: <http://gradengineering.columbia.edu/campus-resources>

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students in Design 2 should be able, at an advanced level, to:

1. Visually communicate architectural concepts and design intent using discipline-specific techniques including:
 - orthographic projections (plans, elevations, sections),
 - paraline projections (axonometrics, isometrics),
 - physical models using various techniques and materials,
 - multiple media and/or combined representational strategies
2. Verbally communicate architectural research methods and spatial concepts
3. Demonstrate an understanding of precedent and site analysis
4. Demonstrate an understanding of design method as a step-by-step, iterative and incremental process of research, synthesis and feedback
5. Demonstrate an understanding of design thinking as responsive to and shaper of social and cultural context
6. Demonstrate the ability to work independently and collaboratively
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the historical and theoretical contexts for architectural representational conventions
8. Utilize both analog and digital techniques in the design process
9. Demonstrate an understanding of program, use and activity
10. Demonstrate an understanding of material and fabrication
11. Utilize a range of analog and digital techniques in the design process

OFFICE HOURS & CONTACT:

Kadambari Baxi	kbaxi@barnard.edu	by appointment
Brad Samuels	brad@situ.nyc	by appointment
Irina Verona	iverona@barnard.edu	Wednesday, 12:00 pm - 1:00pm (Diana 500H), by appointment

TAs:

Fiona Ho, fiona.ho@columbia.edu

Ivy Wang, xw2452@columbia.edu

BIBLIOGRAPHY: ON HARLEM

- Adams, Michael Henry. *Harlem, Lost and Found: an Architectural and Social History, 1765-1915*. New York: Monacelli Press, 2002. Print.
- Against the Odds: The Artists of the Harlem Renaissance*. Alexandria, VA: PBS video, 1993. Videocassette.
- Anderson, Jervis. *This Was Harlem: A Cultural Portrait 1900-1950*. New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1982. Print.
- Earle, Jonathan. *The Routledge Atlas of African American History*. New York: Routledge, 2000. Print.
- Gill, Jonathan. *Harlem: The Four Hundred Year History from Dutch Village to Capital of Black America*. New York: Grove Press, 2011. Print.
- Harlem: a Century in Images*. New York: Skira Rizzoli International Publications, in association with the Studio Museum, 2010. Print.
- Hughes, Langston. *Book of Rhythms*. New York: Oxford UP, 1995. Print.
- . *A Pictorial History of the Negro in America*, 3rd rev. ed. New York: Crown, 1969. Print.
- Mallory, Noreen. *Harlem in the Twentieth Century*. Charleston: History Press, 2011. Print.
- Gooden, Mario. *Dark Space: Architecture, Representation, Black Identity*. New York: Columbia Books on Architecture and the City, 2016. Print.
- Griffin, Farah. *Harlem Nocturne: Women Artists & Progressive Politics during World War II*. New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2013. Print.
- King, Shannon. *Whose Harlem Is This, Anyway? Community Politics and Grassroots Activism during the New Negro Era*. New York: New York University Press. Print.
- Lewis, David. *When Harlem Was in Vogue*. Oxford University Press, 1989. Print.
- Lundeana, Marie Thomas. *Barbara Ann Teer and the National Black Theater*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1997. Ebook. **(Required; posted on Courseworks)**
- Powell, Richard J. *Black Art and Culture in the 20th Century*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1997, 2003. Print.
- Rhodes-Pitts, Sharifa. *Harlem is Nowhere: A Journey to the Mecca of Black America*. New York: Back Bay Books, 2011. Print.
- Schoener, Allon. *Harlem on My Mind; Cultural Capital of Black America, 1900-1968*. New York: Random House, 1968. Print.
- Siskind, Aaron. *Harlem: the 30s*. Petuluma: Pomegranate Artbook, 1991. Print.
- Stewart, Donald. *A Short History of East Harlem*. New York: Museum of the City of New York, 1972. Print.
- The Harlem Reader: a Celebration of New York's Most Famous Neighborhood, from the Renaissance Years to the Twenty-first Century*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 2003.
- Wilson, Mabel. *Begin with the Past: Buiding the National Museum of African American History and Culture*. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2016.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (GENERAL):

- Abrams, Janet & Peter Hall. *Else/Where: Mapping. New Cartographies of Networks and Territories*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.
- Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford, OX, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1991.
- Serra, Richard. "Verb List" and "About Drawing," in *Richard Serra: Writings/Interviews*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994. Print

SPRING 2018 SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Class	Notes
01	Wed - Jan 17	Introduction; Project 1.1 assigned	
02	Mon - Jan 22	Meeting with NBT at 10am (at NBT)	Meet at 9am in studio; we will walk together to NBT
	Wed - Jan 24	Desk Crits and/or field research	
03	Mon – Jan 29	Project 1.1 – documentation due	
	Wed – Jan 30	Desk Crits	
04	Mon - Feb 05	Desk Crits	
	Wed - Feb 07	Project 1.1 – network drawings due; Project 1.2 assigned	
05	Mon - Feb 12	Desk Crits	
	Wed - Feb 14	Desk Crits	
06	Mon - Feb 19	Desk Crits	
	Wed - Feb 21	Desk Crits (interim pin up)	
	Feb 21-25	NBT Performance: <i>Crowdaton: I will Not Lie to David</i> , written by Angelica Cheri, directed by Cezar Williams	See note 3 below
07	Mon - Feb 26	Desk Crits	
	Wed - Feb 28	Desk Crits	
08	Mon - Mar 05	Project 1.2 due; Project 2.0 assigned	
	Wed - Mar 07	Desk Crits & Site model	
09	Mon - Mar 12	No Class (spring break)	
	Wed - Mar 14	No Class (spring break)	
10	Mon - Mar 19	Desk Crits	
	Wed - Mar 21	Sketchbooks due Desk Crits; Group Site models due	Zoning/Massing workshop in class
11	Mon – Mar 26	Desk Crits	
	Wed – Mar 28	Desk Crits	
	March 28-Apr 1	NBT Performance: <i>Serious Adverse Effect</i> , written by Derek Lee McPhatter	See note 3 below
12	Mon – Apr 02	Interim pin up	
	Wed – Apr 04	Desk Crits	
13	Mon - Apr 09	Desk Crits	
	Wed - Apr 11	Desk Crits	
14	Mon - Apr 16	Desk Crits	
	Wed - Apr 18	Desk Crits	
15	Mon - Apr 23	Pre-final pin up	
	Wed - Apr 25	Desk Crits	
16	Mon – Apr 30	Final review	
	Tues - May 01	Install End-of-Year show	

Notes:

1. Dates may be subject to change. Stay tuned for announcements in class.
2. Several events related to the Harlem Semester -- including a book talk, a movie screening, and a walking tour -- will take place throughout the semester. Dates will be confirmed as they become available.
3. **Students must attend at least one NBT performance.**
4. TAs will lead a series of digital workshops during class. Schedule and format will be announced.

HARLEM SEMESTER – SPRING 2018

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

IN ADDITION TO OUR COURSE, THE FOLLOWING COURSES ARE PART OF THE HARLEM SEMESTER:

AFRS BC3532 – ROMARE BEARDEN: HOME IS HARLEM DIEDRE HARRIS-KELLY, INSTRUCTOR

This seminar explores one of the greatest American artists finding an inspirational home in Harlem. Romare Bearden (1911-1988) noted painter, collagist, intellectual and advocate for the arts, spent his childhood and young adult life in Harlem. The *Odyssey*, one of Bearden's most well-known series, was created in 1977 and inspired by Homer's *Odyssey*. The course takes up the issues in The *Odyssey* series, and beyond, examining Harlem as home through Bearden's eyes, from an artistic perspective, and around what inspired him most – the history, the people, and jazz music.

AFRS BC 3552 – BLACK WOMEN, PERFORMANCE, AND THE POLITICS OF STYLE SHIRLEY TAYLOR, INSTRUCTOR

Black Women, Performance, and the Politics of Style provides a historical overview of Black women in entertainment. Beginning in the early 20th century, the course will explore various Black female archetypes presented on stage and through audio and visual media, performance as both an intentional/unintentional political stance, and consider the impact Black women have had on the entertainment industry overall.

AHIS BC2018 – FREESTYLE AND DISPLACEMENT IN CONTEMPORARY ART PRACTICES SHARIFA RHODES-PITTS, INSTRUCTOR

"Freestyle," the important 2001 exhibition held at the Studio Museum in Harlem in New York, helped usher a generation of artists into public discourse and scrutiny by challenging the art world and questioning conventional thinking about art made by artists of color in the twenty-first century. Taking this exhibition as a point of departure, the seminar will explore the multiple modes of expression apparent in contemporary art practice, and the complex set of aesthetic, philosophical and political motivations that these modes of expression expose.

ARH BC3948: JACOB LAWRENCE'S HARLEM ELIZABETH HUTCHINSON, INSTRUCTOR

2017 is the centennial of the birth of the artist Jacob Lawrence, who grew up in Harlem, studied art as a child with some of its leading artists and frequented the cultural institutions established for the community at this time. Along with his famous series of paintings dedicated to Black history, such as *Migration*, and *Toussaint L'Ouverture*, Lawrence made a large number of works recording the places and people of his home, seeking creative means to both document Black experience in this time and place and give it meaning. This seminar looks at Harlem through three archives of Harlem at this time: James Vanderzee's street photographs, Aaron Siskind's *Harlem Document*, and Lawrence's paintings of his community. We will look at the aesthetic debates of the Harlem Renaissance and each artist's biography to investigate how they chose to depict Harlem.

JAMES BALDWIN'S IMPOSSIBLE AMERICA (IRAAS) RICH BLINT, INSTRUCTOR

James Baldwin was one of 20th-century America's most exacting and loving critics. He probed, with forensic insight, bracing vulnerability, sly wit and unsurpassed lyricism, this country's inability to face up to its brutal history. His incisive interrogations of the moral history of this country are newly and urgently relevant. This course will consider Baldwin's body of work—not just in relation to his own time, but to our peculiar climate of renewed crisis and revanchist politics—and place it in dialogue with a range of classic and cutting-edge cultural productions by the likes of Toni Morrison, Kerry James Marshall, Fran Lebowitz, John Akomfrah, Meshell Ndegeochello, and Dave Chappelle.