

MBArch
Contemporary Project

**Architectures
of
Collective
Living**

Edition 2025/26

Academic Coordinator
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Proletarian abode
(The dwelling of the classes of the subsistence minimum)

room with a cooking range
or
live in kitchen

Dean

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Prof. Dr. Ernest Redondo

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Cover: Ramon y Cajal (1899) Corteza cerebral humana. Source: CSIC.

Fig. 01 Karel Teige's diagram of a collective dwelling (1932)

Fig. 02 Pier Vittorio Aureli. The Communal Villa (2022).



Architectures of Collective Living

The *MBArch Contemporary Project* is a postgraduate program that investigates the role of architecture in shaping contemporary forms of coexistence. It examines how spatial design engages with the social, cultural, and environmental dynamics of collective life, from the domestic scale to the urban and territorial, and explores the complex relationships between architectural production, shared ways of living, and the broader ecological and cultural systems that constitute our environment.

The program is a full-time course of advanced studies that welcomes international students and is organized around design studios, seminars, and workshops. In addition, students complete a Final Master's Thesis, developing a theoretical-critical and propositional dissertation independently, with the guidance of the program's supervising professors.

By studying the *MBArch Contemporary Project - Architectures of Collective Living*, the master's degree program explores the possibility of understanding the architectural project as the design for the materialization of an idea of coexistence spaces. It proposes the complementarity of architectural projects and theoretical speculation as a foundation for conception, reinvention of new forms, and replication of existing proposals.

Students are expected to demonstrate competencies in theoretical research and architectural design methodologies. The master's degree program encourages critical thinking and architectural action. It is focused on rethinking how we build and how the architecture of collective life takes shape in our coexistence.

Introduction

“How do we want to live together? How can we continue to live together?”¹ These are the questions that the *MBArch Contemporary Project – Architectures of Collective Living* aims to explore. It looks deep into the issues associated with the current environmental, social, and productive crises, rethinking the role of architectural projects within diverse cultural, social, political, and economic scenarios. Few approaches in architecture are as fundamental as housing, and few are as strongly influenced by contextual forces.²

The current focus of the master’s degree program is the architecture of collective life in its various forms and manifestations. The objective is to investigate, through design-based and analytical studies, the distinct organizational, typological, programmatic, and technical characteristics that define contemporary coexistence. The program includes theoretical seminars that analyze historical and contemporary case studies, as well as experimental sessions where students can test action protocols aimed at addressing the challenges posed by their environment.

This postgraduate course is proposed at a critical moment of our contemporary times, marked by the reevaluation of the values of architectural postmodernity, because of the consequences of its materialization in the decades leading up to the Global Financial Crisis of 2008.³ Protests around the world against the unequal distribution of property and access to housing became powerful expressions of social movements opposing neoliberalism in crisis. Demonstrations in Barcelona, Madrid, Athens, Berlin, Wall Street, London, Moscow or

Fig. 03 Fernanda Canales, *After the House*, 2021. Vertical vecindades and collective spaces with no divisions between living/working, private/public, owners/dispossessed

1 Sarkis, H. (2021). *How will we live together?* : Biennale architettura 2021. La Biennale di Venezia.

2 Fernanda Canales, *After the House*, 2021. Vertical vecindades and collective spaces with no divisions between living/working, private/public, owners/dispossessed

3 Mc Leod, Mary (1989). *Architecture and Politics in the Reagan Era: From Postmodernism to Deconstructivism*

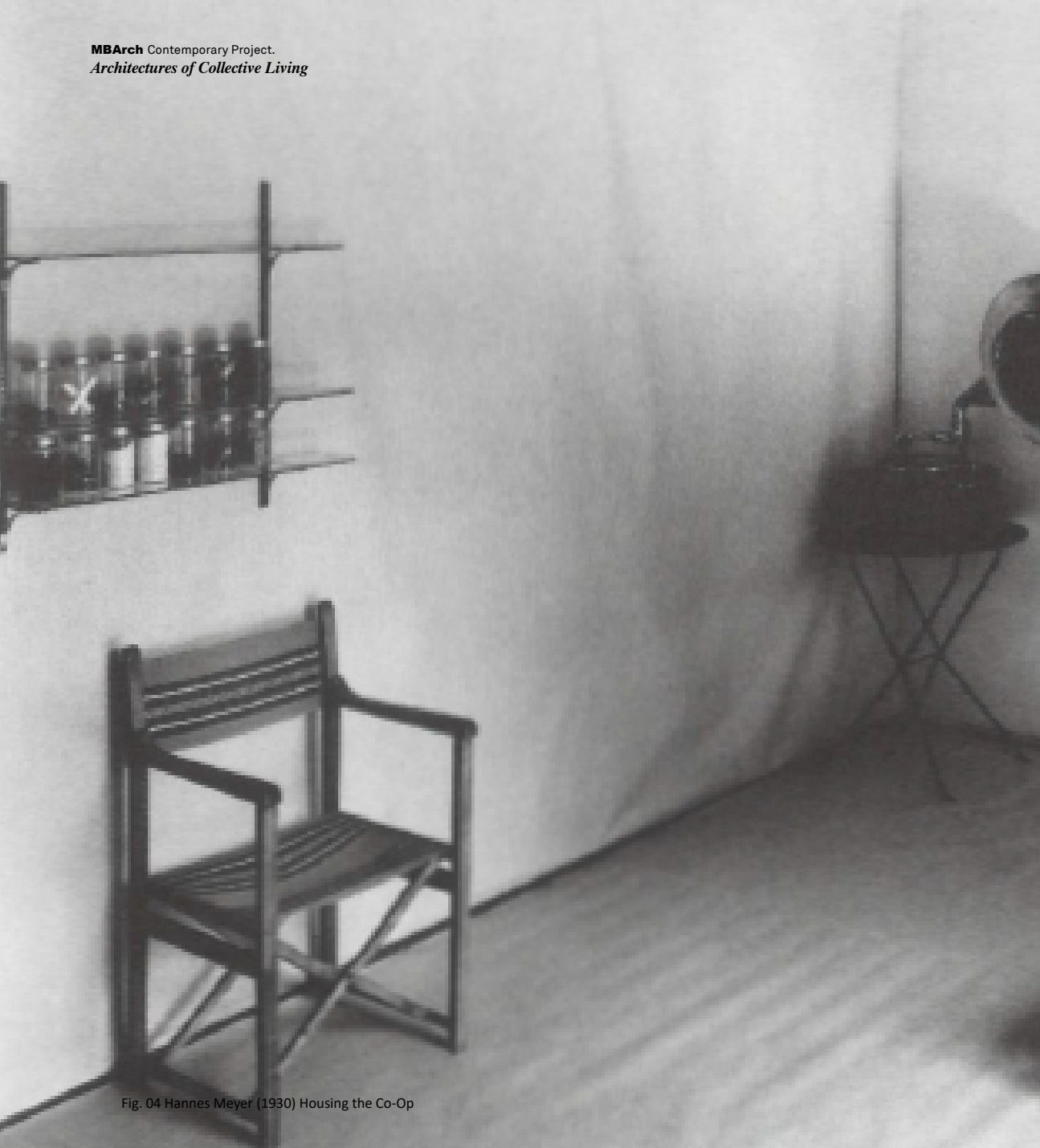


Fig. 04 Hannes Meyer (1930) Housing the Co-Op

Tel Aviv⁴ are well-known, showcasing relevant experiments in collective living that arose from the occupation of underutilized structures or the implementation of new housing types and policies resulting from extensive public debates.

At this stage of the studies, it is recognized that the need for critical evaluation and the political nature of contemporary collective housing projects can no longer be overlooked. As described by K. Michael Hays⁵ the project is inherently political, not due to any specific ideology it adheres to, but because it actively shapes, limits, and materializes solutions for communal living that transcend the internal logic of the object on a given site. It involves engaging architecture with aspects such as the economy, work, culture, and production systems.

As the *Architectures of Collective Living* is influenced and shaped by various socio-economic and cultural factors, elements such as the definition of the minimum unit for the existence, aggregation units, circulation elements, shared activity spaces, service spaces, or spaces for care, establish specific relationships and tensions between public and private life, including aspects related to class or gender.⁶ Different forms of collective housing or mixed program types organize social interactions, and the blurred boundaries within contemporary projects allow for discussions on family structures, wealth distribution, or the class structure within domestic environments. Changes in the boundaries between home as private and work spaces as public sphere, for example, can lead to transformations at multiple levels and scales, both within the architecture itself and in response to contextual forces or tensions.

4 Fernández, Joseba, Ed.; Sevilla Alonso, Carlos, Ed.; Urbán Crespo, Miguel, ed. (2012). *Occupy the world: Barcelona, Madrid, Athens, Tunis, Cairo, Lisbon, Iceland, Oakland, Wall Street, London, Moscow, Tel Aviv--*. Barcelona: Icaria.

5 Hays, Michael K. (2010). *Architectures desire*. MIT Press.

6 Hayden, Dolores (1981). *The grand domestic revolution : a history of feminist designs for American homes, neighborhoods and cities* ([2nd printing]). MIT Press.

Nowadays, the traditional model of working-class housing based on the idea of the nuclear family units⁷ is being challenged by new contemporary proposals for living. Constantly emerging approaches are redefining how people live together and share certain aspects of collective life, continuously reshaping the spaces for intimacy, exclusive use, or common use. In this regard, typological transformations, from an architectural perspective, cannot be studied isolated; they cannot be approached by individually examining the different layers or systems that constitute them. Instead, they need to be understood as a whole. While a total system does not exist due to the contradictions and tensions inherent in the transformation of collective life, it is crucial to comprehend their complexity at different scales and levels.⁸ The architectural project for collective living is thus a fundamental undertaking to address some of the complex challenges of the future coexistence.

Various conceptions of the domestic, family, gender, class, normative frameworks, and decision-making processes, as well as public and private development strategies, define the formal relationships of coexistence. It is challenging to deny that the contemporary fabric to inhabit is strained by various developmental forces.⁹ Therefore, architecture for collective living and its specific characteristics have the potential to address these tensions through architectural projects.

The design and materialization of any form of collective life are characterized by a network of relationships that exist at multiple scales. This network is specific and particular to each context, yet it is universal due to the presence of asymmetries and conflicts that require a framework for resolution. In this sense, architecture plays a

⁷ Canales, Fernanda (2023). *Mi casa, tu ciudad. Privacidad en un mundo compartido*. Puente Editores

⁸ Somol, Robert; Whitting, Sarah (2008). *Notas alrededor del efecto Doppler y otros estados de ánimo de la modernidad*. CIRCO 2008.145. La Casa del Aire.

⁹ Madden, David; Marcuse, Peter (2016). *In defense of housing : the politics of crisis*. Verso.

crucial role in establishing parameters such as the definition of units, the relationships between different parts, and the manner in which these resolutions are materialised.

The *Architectures of Collective Living* is difficult to be studied detached from the realities of the real estate market, the available design tools, the construction methods, or the known standards, however, they often fail to reflect the aforementioned transformations. The challenges of new forms of collective living are frequently approached as financial or demographic issues. Nevertheless, living together in different ways has the potential to unleash social and spatial imagination. Currently, there is a wealth of intriguing experimentation in the field of collective living and its architectural configurations. Therefore, one of the challenges posed by the postgraduate course is to explore how architecture can respond to changing political, cultural, economic, and urban contexts. It aims to propose new ideas and models for the architecture of collective living. The central question is: *what is the role and agency of architecture in shaping our coexistence?*

Fig. 05 . Álvaro Siza, Participatory Process in The Hague (1983-1988)

Methodology

The *MBArch Contemporary Project - Architectures of Collective Living* is designed to provide architects with specialized training in the socially relevant subject of collective living. It encompasses political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions, focusing on a set of parameters derived from common goals and ambitions. The program aims to develop interdisciplinary collaboration between academia and practice, building awareness of how cultural, social, technical, and economic factors intersect in the *Architecture of Collective Living*. This is facilitated by the diverse expertise and approaches of the teaching staff, which includes professionals in architectural design, urban design, structural design, and architectural theory.

The Master's program prepares students for independent research by introducing methodological tools and design-based approaches. The first semester establishes a conceptual framework and facilitates discussions on collective living types. It also includes an introductory course on research methods, academic writing, and preparation for the thesis project. The second semester focuses on the development of an integrated dissertation that combines critical reflection with design experimentation.

Program and Teaching Organisation

The *MBArch Contemporary Project - Architectures of Collective Living* is structured as a one year program, from 25 September 2025 to 30 September 2026. The first period contains the common and compulsory subjects of the MBArch in order to establish the conceptual framework on which students will work. The second period contains most of the optional subjects, to deepen the specialisation path chosen by the student and aims to establish a framework for experimentation in which to work.

Both semesters begin with workshops on design projects and critical analysis to initiate and experiment with research methodologies through design. The Final Master's Thesis (FMT) begins with the second term and its need for dedication and monitoring increases until its defence in the last week of July 2026 or as extraordinary defense in October 2026.

Final Master Thesis and Research by Design

At the stage of developing a Final Master Thesis, students are required to showcase expertise, encompassing both theoretical frameworks and design methods, while also demonstrating a profound understanding of the subject's context, literature, and historical antecedents. The Dissertation should articulate a strong theoretical argument and define a rigorous design process. Students are thus expected to clarify how written analysis and design interact and complement one another within their Dissertation. An essential aspect of this challenge is clarifying the structure of design research and how written research complements and integrates with it. The drawn research must be supplemented by written and theoretical exploration, amounting to approximately 20,000 words.

Both aspects should look into the histories, theories, tools, and practices that underpin the dissertation project, while also detailing the research methodologies employed. Additionally, the Dissertation must delineate a distinct research problem that holds disciplinary relevance and contributes to advancing knowledge. Building upon this, as outlined by the program, the Dissertation will set out a research agenda addressing how different spatial scales, from the domestic to the urban, interact through architecture. This should be structured as two research questions—one framing a clear hypothesis and the other formulating a related problem.

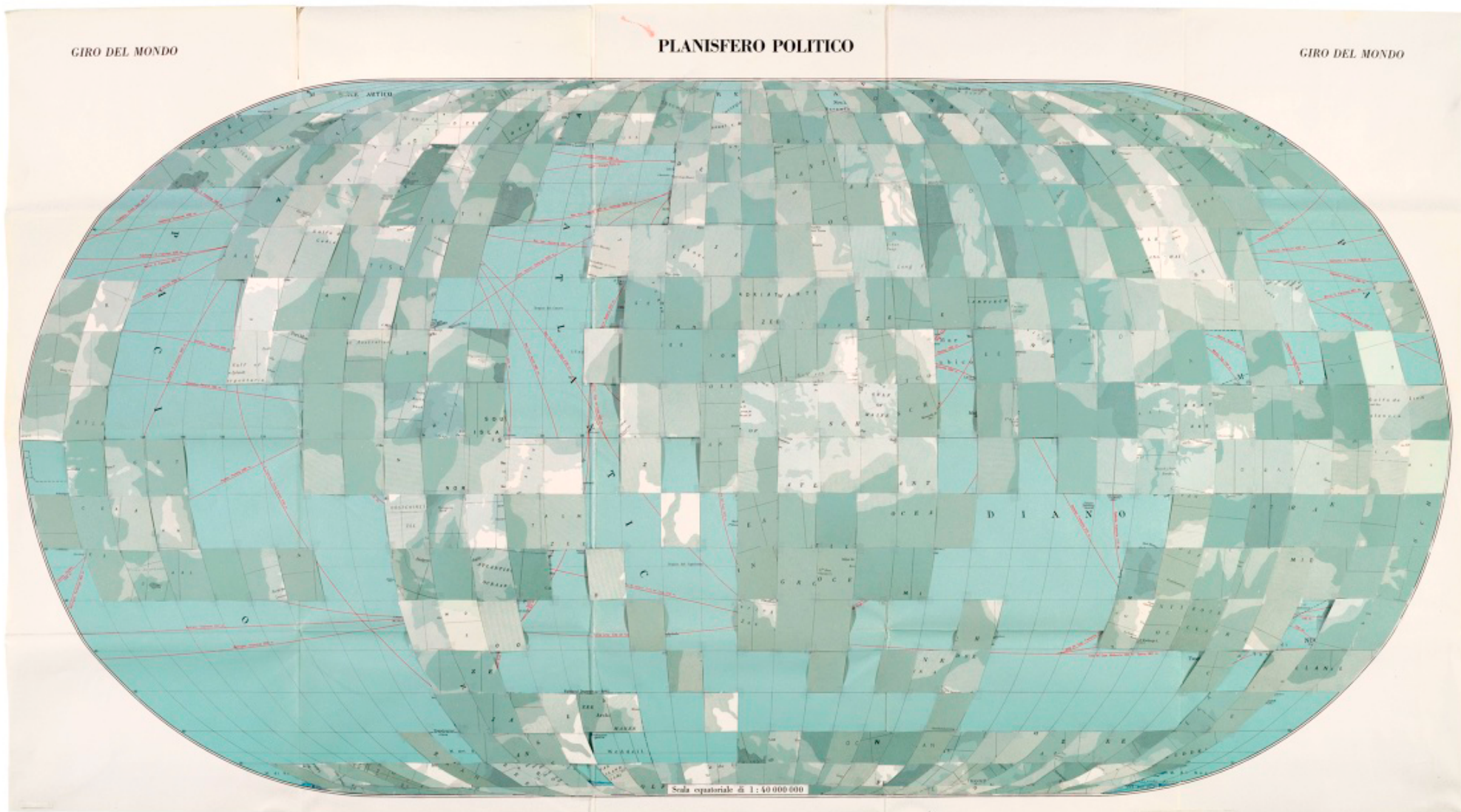


Fig. 06 Planisfero Político. Venice Biennale 2021. Giuditta Vendrame

Module I

Circular Shelter

[25 Sep. 2025 - 13 Oct. 2025]
CB 8 - ETSAB

Common I: Architecture, City and Project [5 ECTS]

Marta Domènech + Olga Felip
Tue-Thu 3pm - 8pm

Elective: New Representations, New Conceptions [5 ECTS]

Queralt Garriga + Sebastian Harris
Mon-Wed 3pm - 8pm

** Visits and special events*
Fri 3pm - 8pm

Module II

Laboratories of the Future

[14 Oct. 2025 - 16 Dec. 2025]

Common III
Architecture,
Theory and Criticism

Common III
Architecture,
Environment and Technology

Elective I

Contemporary Issues

Mies Foundation Archive

Ruben Navarro

CB 8 - Mon 3pm - 7pm

Research Groups Architectural Design Department

CB 8 - Tue-Thu 3pm - 7pm

Lecture Series

Lecture 1
Typology
Fernando Altozano

ARIENS Lab 1
Architectural Design
Technology
Representation

Lecture 2
Complexity
Peris Toral

REARQ Lab 2
Architectural Design
Technology

Lecture 3
Utopia
Beatriz Borque

HABITAR Lab 4
Architectural Design
Urbanism

*** LABS**
presentation
[14.10.2025]

Typology I
Marta Domènech
+ Nacho López
[21.10.2025]

Typology II
Marta Domènech
+ Nacho López
[28.10.2025]

Final Presentation
Alberto Peñín +
Oscar Linares
[4.11.2025]

Complexity I
Marta Domènech
+ Nacho López
[11.11.2025]

Complexity II
Marta Domènech
+ Nacho López
[18.11.2025]

Final Presentation
Pere Joan Ravellat
+ Jose Toral
[25.11.2025]

Utopia I
Marta Domènech
+ Nacho López
[2.12.2024]

Utopia II
Marta Domènech
+ Nacho López
[9.12.2025]

Final Presentation
Núria Salvadó
+ Mònica Tàrrega Klein
[16.12.2025]

Presentation
Alberto Peñín +
Oscar Linares
[16.10.2025]

Lab
Oscar Linares
[23.10.2025]

Lab
Oscar Linares
[30.10.2025]

Presentation
Pere Joan Ravellat
+ Jose Toral
[6.11.2025]

Lab
Joan Casals + Jose Toral
[13.11.2025]

Lab
Joan Casals + Jose Toral
[20.11.2025]

Presentation
Núria Salvadó
+ Mònica Tàrrega Klein
[27.11.2025]

Lab 3
Núria Salvadó
+ Mònica Tàrrega Klein
[4.12.2024]

Lab 3
Núria Salvadó
+ Mònica Tàrrega Klein
[11.12.2025]

*** TFM**
Topic presentation
[18.12.2025]

*** Research**
Workshop
[Jan 2026]

Joan Casals, Marta Domènech, Olga Felip, Queralt Garriga,
Sebastian Harris, Eva Jiménez, Oscar Linares, Nacho López,
Rubén Navarro, Anna Sala, Alessandro Scarnato, Pau Villalonga;

Module III

Collectivity

[2 Feb. 2026 - 23 Feb. 2026]
CB 8 - ETSAB

Elective: Urban Project: Ideas and Praxis [5 ECTS]

Joan Casals + Marta Domènech + Pia Fontana
Tue-Thu 3pm - 8pm

Elective: Materiality and Project [5 ECTS]

Còssima Comadó
Mon-Wed 3pm - 8pm

** Visits and special events*
Fri 3pm - 8pm

Module IV

Design Critique - Critical Design

[24 Feb. 2026 - 22 May 2026]

Guidance

Master Thesis

SEMINARS

Research Groups Architectural Design Department

Seminar Room - By appointment with tutors

Elective IV

Elective: All Scales
of the Project

Nacho López + Pau Villalonga
CB 8 - Tue 3pm - 7pm

Elective II

Architecture,
Theory and Thought

Alessandro Scarnato
CB 8 - Thu 3pm - 7pm

#1
Introduction

#2
Research
Workshop
[10.4.2026]

#3
Development

#4
Final
Workshop
[22.5.2026]

ARIENS	ReArq	Habitar
Research Group Seminars	Research Group Seminars	Research Group Seminars

Joan Casals, Marta Domènech, Olga Felip, Queralt Garriga,
Sebastian Harris, Eva Jiménez, Oscar Linares, Nacho López,
Rubén Navarro, Anna Sala, Alessandro Scarnato, Pau Villalonga;

ARIENS	ReArq	Habitar
Research Group Seminars	Research Group Seminars	Research Group Seminars

Joan Casals, Marta Domènech, Olga Felip, Queralt Garriga,
Sebastian Harris, Eva Jiménez, Oscar Linares, Nacho López,
Rubén Navarro, Anna Sala, Alessandro Scarnato, Pau Villalonga;

Week 1

Episode 1
(Design)
[24.2.2026]

A conceptual Journey
(Theory)
[26.2.2026]

Week 2

Episode 2
(Design)
[3.3.2026]

Past
(Theory)
[5.3.2026]

Week 3

Episode 3
(Design)
[10.3.2026]

Future
(Theory)
[12.3.2026]

Week 4

Episode 4
(Design)
[17.3.2026]

Destruction
(Theory)
[19.3.2026]

Week 5

Mid Presentation
(Design)
[24.3.2026]

Construction
(Theory)
[26.3.2026]

Week 6

Episode 5
(Design)
[8.4.2026]

Urban
(Theory)
[10.4.2026]

Week 7

Episode 6
(Design)
[14.4.2026]

Rural
(Theory)
[16.4.2026]

Week 8

Episode 7
(Design)
[21.4.2026]

Intimate
(Theory)
[23.4.2026]

Week 9

Episode 8
(Design)
[28.4.2026]

Collective
(Theory)
[30.4.2026]

Week 10

Final Presentation
(Design)
[5.5.2026]

Final Presentation
(Theory)
[7.5.2026]

Week 11

Week 12

Week	Module	CP MONDAY ETSAB CB-8		CP TUESDAY ETSAB CB-8		CP WEDNESDAY ETSAB CB-8		CP THURSDAY ETSAB CB-8		CP FRIDAY ETSAB CB-8	
01	Module 1: Circular Shelter [25.09.2025-13.10.2025]							Arch., Environment and Technology [WS 1: Introduction] Marta Domènech + Olga Felip	Thu, 25.09.2025 15:00 – 20:00	New Rep., New Conceptions	Fri, 26.09.2025
02		New Rep., New Conceptions [Urban Studies] Queralt Garriga + Sebastian Harris	Mon, 29.09.2025 15:00 – 20:00	Arch., Environment and Technology [Urban Studies] Marta Domènech + Olga Felip	Tue, 30.09.2025 15:00 – 18:30	New Rep., New Conceptions [Urban Studies] Queralt Garriga + Sebastian Harris	Wed, 1.10.2025 15:00 – 20:00	Arch., Environment and Technology [Urban Studies] Marta Domènech + Olga Felip	Thu, 02.10.2025 15:00 – 20:00	Arch., Environment and Technology External activity	Fri, 03.10.2025
03		New Rep., New Conceptions [Project] Queralt Garriga + Sebastian Harris	Mon, 06.10.2025 15:00 – 20:00	Arch., Environment and Technology [Project] Marta Domènech + Olga Felip	Tue, 07.10.2025 15:00 – 18:30	New Rep., New Conceptions [Project] Queralt Garriga + Sebastian Harris	Wed, 08.10.2025 15:00 – 20:00	Arch., Environment and Technology [Project] Marta Domènech + Olga Felip	Thu, 09.10.2025 15:00 – 20:00	New Rep., New Conceptions External activity	Fri, 10.10.2025
04	Module 2 Laboratories of the Future [14.10.2025 - 19.12.2025]	New Rep., New Conceptions Arch., Environment and Technology [WS 1: Final Presentation]	Mon, 13.10.2025 15:00 – 20:00	Architecture, Theory and Criticism [LAB'S Presentation] Lab's + FMT Tutors	Tue, 14.10.2025 15:00 – 19:00	Contemporary Architectural Issues [Archives and Databases] Ruben Navarro	Wed, 15.10.2025 15:00 – 19:00	Architecture, City and Project [LAB 1: Introduction] Alberto Peñín + Oscar Linares	Thu, 16.10.2025 15:00 – 19:00		
05		Contemporary Architectural Issues [T1: Housing Models] Ruben Navarro	Mon, 20.10.2025 15:00 – 19:00	Architecture, Theory and Criticism [TYPOLOGY] Nacho López + Marta Domènech	Tue, 21.10.2025 15:00 – 17:00			Architecture, City and Project [LAB 1: Presentation] Alberto Peñín + Oscar Linares	Thu, 23.10.2025 15:00 – 19:00		
06*		Contemporary Architectural Issues [T1: Housing Models] Ruben Navarro	Mon, 27.10.2025 15:00 – 19:00	Architecture, Theory and Criticism [TYPOLOGY] Nacho López + Marta Domènech	Tue, 28.10.2025 15:00 – 17:00			Architecture, City and Project [LAB 1: Presentation] Alberto Peñín + Oscar Linares	Thu, 30.10.2025 15:00 – 19:00		
07		Contemporary Architectural Issues [T1: Housing Models] Ruben Navarro	Wed, 03.11.2025 15:00 – 19:00	Architecture, Theory and Criticism [LAB 1: Final Presentation] Alberto Peñín + Oscar Linares	Tue, 04.11.2025 15:00 – 19:00			Architecture, City and Project [LAB 2: Introduction] Jose Toral + Joan Casals	Thu, 06.11.2025 15:00 – 19:00		
08		Contemporary Architectural Issues [T2: Rehabiting] Ruben Navarro	Mon, 10.11.2025 15:00 – 19:00	Architecture, Theory and Criticism [COMPLEXITY] Nacho López + Marta Domènech	Tue, 11.11.2025 15:00 – 17:00			Architecture, City and Project [LAB 2] Jose Toral + Joan Casals	Thu, 13.11.2025 15:00 – 19:00		
09		Contemporary Architectural Issues [T2: Rehabiting] Ruben Navarro	Mon, 17.11.2025 15:00 – 19:00	Architecture, Theory and Criticism [COMPLEXITY] Nacho López + Marta Domènech	Tue, 18.11.2025 15:00 – 17:00			Architecture, City and Project [LAB 2] Jose Toral + Joan Casals	Thu, 19.11.2025 15:00 – 19:00		
10		Contemporary Architectural Issues [T3: Contingency] Ruben Navarro	Mon, 24.11.2025 15:00 – 19:00	Architecture, Theory and Criticism [LAB 2: Final Presentation] Jose Toral + Joan Casals	Tue, 25.11.2025 15:00 – 19:00			Architecture, City and Project [LAB 3: Introduction] Núria Salvadó + Mònica Tàrraga	Thu, 26.11.2025 15:00 – 19:00		
11		Contemporary Architectural Issues [T3: Contingency] Ruben Navarro	Mon, 02.12.2025 15:00 – 19:00	Architecture, Theory and Criticism [UTOPIA] Nacho López + Marta Domènech	Tue, 03.12.2025 15:00 – 17:00			Architecture, City and Project [LAB 3] Núria Salvadó + Mònica Tàrraga	Thu, 05.12.2025 15:00 – 19:00		
12				Architecture, Theory and Criticism [UTOPIA] Nacho López + Marta Domènech	Tue, 09.12.2025 15:00 – 17:00	Contemporary Architectural Issues [T4: Utopia] Ruben Navarro	Wed, 10.12.2025 15:00 – 19:00	Architecture, City and Project [LAB 3] Núria Salvadó + Mònica Tàrraga	Thu, 11.12.2025 15:00 – 19:00		
13		Contemporary Architectural Issues [T3: Contingency] Ruben Navarro	Mon, 15.12.2025 15:00 – 19:00	Architecture, Theory and Criticism [LAB 3: Final Presentation] Núria Salvadó + Mònica Tàrraga	Tue, 16.12.2025 15:00 – 19:00					Research Workshop [Presentation of Topics] Nacho López + Marta Domènech	Fri, 19.12.2025 15:00 – 20:00
JAN 26	Special Events					Research Workshop [WS1] Anna Sala + FMT Tutors	Wed, 07.01.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Research Workshop [WS2] Anna Sala + FMT Tutors	Thu, 08.01.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Research Workshop [WS3] Anna Sala + FMT Tutors	Thu, 09.01.2026 15:00 – 20:00

Week	Module	Elective CP MONDAY ETSAB CB-8		Elective CP TUESDAY ETSAB CB-8		Elective CP WEDNESDAY ETSAB CB-8		Elective CP THURSDAY ETSAB CB-8		Final Master Thesis MBArch CP Seminar Rooms	
01	Module 3: Collectivity [02.02.2026-23.02.2026]	Urban Project. Ideas and Praxis [WS2: Introduction] M. Domenech + Pia Fontana	Mon, 02.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Urban Project. Ideas and Praxis [Analysis - Design] M. Domenech + Pia Fontana	Tue, 03.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Materiality and Project [Analysis - Material] Còssima Cornadó	Wed, 04.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Urban Project. Ideas and Praxis [Analysis - Design] M. Domenech + Pia Fontana	Thu, 05.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Materiality and Project [Analysis - Material] Còssima Cornadó	Fri, 06.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00
02		Materiality and Project [Analysis - Material] Còssima Cornadó	Mon, 09.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Urban Project. Ideas and Praxis [Analysis - Design] M. Domenech + Pia Fontana	Tue, 10.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Materiality and Project [Analysis - Material] Còssima Cornadó	Wed, 11.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Urban Project. Ideas and Praxis [Analysis - Design] M. Domenech + Pia Fontana	Thu, 12.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Materiality and Project [Analysis - Material] Còssima Cornadó	Fri, 13.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00
03		Materiality and Project [Analysis - Material] Còssima Cornadó	Mon, 16.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Urban Project. Ideas and Praxis [Analysis - Design] M. Domenech + Pia Fontana	Tue, 17.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Materiality and Project [Analysis - Material] Còssima Cornadó	Wed, 18.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00	Urban Project. Ideas and Praxis [Analysis - Design] M. Domenech + Pia Fontana	Thu, 19.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00		
04	Module 4 Design Critique - Critical Design Final Master Thesis [24.02.2026 - 22.05.2026]	New Rep., New Conceptions Materiality and Project [Final Presentation]	Mon, 23.02.2026 15:00 – 20:00	All scales [Episode 1] Pau Villalonga + Nacho López	Tue, 24.02.2026 15:00 – 19:00			Architecture, Theory and Thought [A conceptual journey] Alessandro Scarnato	Thu, 26.02.2026 15:00 – 19:00	Final Master Thesis [Seminar] FMT Tutors	Weekly By Gropus
05				All scales [Episode 2] Pau Villalonga + Nacho López	Tue, 03.03.2026 15:00 – 19:00			Architecture, Theory and Thought [Past] Alessandro Scarnato	Thu, 05.03.2026 15:00 – 19:00	Final Master Thesis [Seminar] FMT Tutors	Weekly By Gropus
06*				All scales [Episode 3] Pau Villalonga + Nacho López	Tue, 10.03.2026 15:00 – 19:00			Architecture, Theory and Thought [Future] Alessandro Scarnato	Thu, 12.03.2026 15:00 – 19:00	Final Master Thesis [Seminar] FMT Tutors	Weekly By Gropus
07				All scales [Episode 4] Pau Villalonga + Nacho López	Tue, 17.03.2026 15:00 – 19:00			Architecture, Theory and Thought [Destruction] Alessandro Scarnato	Thu, 19.03.2026 15:00 – 19:00	Final Master Thesis [Seminar] FMT Tutors	Weekly By Gropus
08				All scales [Mid Term Presentation] Pau Villalonga + Nacho López	Tue, 24.03.2026 15:00 – 19:00			Architecture, Theory and Thought [Construction] Alessandro Scarnato	Thu, 26.03.2026 15:00 – 19:00	Final Master Thesis [Seminar] FMT Tutors	Weekly By Gropus
09				All scales [Episode 5] Pau Villalonga + Nacho López	Tue, 07.04.2026 15:00 – 19:00			Architecture, Theory and Thought [Urban] Alessandro Scarnato	Thu, 09.04.2026 15:00 – 19:00	Final Master Thesis [Mid Term Presentation] FMT Tutors	Fri, 10.04.2026 15:00 – 19:00 *provisional
10				All scales [Episode 6] Pau Villalonga + Nacho López	Tue, 14.04.2026 15:00 – 19:00			Architecture, Theory and Thought [Rural] Alessandro Scarnato	Thu, 16.04.2026 15:00 – 19:00	Final Master Thesis [Seminar] FMT Tutors	Weekly By Gropus
11				All scales [Episode 7] Pau Villalonga + Nacho López	Tue, 21.04.2026 15:00 – 19:00			Architecture, Theory and Thought [Intimate] Alessandro Scarnato	Thu, 23.04.2026 15:00 – 19:00	Final Master Thesis [Seminar] FMT Tutors	Weekly By Gropus
12				All scales [Episode 8] Pau Villalonga + Nacho López	Tue, 28.04.2026 15:00 – 19:00			Architecture, Theory and Thought [Collective] Alessandro Scarnato	Thu, 30.04.2026 15:00 – 19:00	Final Master Thesis [Seminar] FMT Tutors	Weekly By Gropus
13				All scales [Final Presentation] Pau Villalonga + Nacho López	Tue, 05.05.2026 15:00 – 19:00			Architecture, Theory and Thought [Final Presentation] Alessandro Scarnato	Thu, 07.05.2026 15:00 – 19:00	Final Master Thesis [Seminar] FMT Tutors	Weekly By Gropus
14										Final Master Thesis [Seminar] FMT Tutors	Weekly By Gropus
15										Final Master Thesis [Final Presentation] FMT Tutors	Fri, 22.05.2026 15:00 – 19:00 *provisional
JUNE 25										Final Master Thesis [Official Deposit+ Defense] Ordinary (June - July 2026)	Deposit: 15-16.06.26 Defense: 1-14.07.26
SEPT. 25										Final Master Thesis [Official Deposit+ Defense] Extraordinary (sept. - Oct. 2026)	Deposit: 21-22.09.26 Defense: 12-23.10.26

Key Dates 2025/26*

First Semester [25 Sep. 2025–9 Jan. 2026]

Thu. 25 Sep 2025

Opening day of the *MBArch Contemporary Project*:

The Architecture of Collective Living and presentation of Module 1

*Schedule to be confirmed by the School

Fri. 26. Sep – Mon 13. Oct. 2025

Workshop I: *Circular Shelter*

Arch. Tech. and Environment + New Representations, New Conceptions

3pm CEST at CB8

Tue. 14. Oct 2025

Labs presentation + Lecture: Research in Architecture

3pm CEST at Room CB-8

Tue. 16. Oct 2025

Beginning of the Labs

3pm CEST at Room CB-8

Fri. 19. Dec 2025

Presentation of the Final Master Thesis Topics

3pm CEST at Room CB-8

Wed. 7. – Fri 9. Jan 2026

Final Master Thesis Research Workshop

3pm CEST at Room CB-8

*Dates subject to possible variations

Second Semester [02 Feb. – 22 May 2026]

Mon. 3 – Mon 23. Feb 2026

Workshop II: *Collectivity*

Urban project: ideas and Praxis + Materiality and Project

3pm CEST at Room CB-8

Feb 2026

Beginning of MBArch Final Master Thesis Guidance

Schedule: By appointment with tutors

Tue. 24 Feb 2026

Beginning of MBArch Electives

3pm CEST at Room CB-8

Fri. 10 Apr 2026

Final Master Thesis Mid-Term Presentation

3pm CEST at Room CB-8

Fri. 22 Mai 2025

Final Master Thesis – Final Presentation

3pm CEST at Room CB-8

Final Master Thesis deposit and defense:

Ordinary Deposit: 15th and 16th of June 2026

Defense: Between 1st to 14th of July 2026

Extraordinary Deposit: 21st to 22nd of September 2026

Defense: Between 12th to 23rd of October 2026



Fig. 07 Buckminsterfuller, Manhattan 1960.

Module I

Urban Shelter

[26 Sep. 2025 - 13 Oct. 2025]

Architecture, Environment and Technology [5 ECTS]

New Representations, New Conceptions [5 ECTS]

Marta Domènech, Olga Felip, Sebastian Harris, Queralt Garriga

Living and Working

Module I Module I is the initial workshop of the MBArch Contemporary Project. This year, it focuses on the urgent need to design micro-infrastructures for climate resilience in Barcelona. Instead of approaching public space only as a site of circulation or socialization, we will reimagine it as a network of care and shelter—spaces that mitigate the impact of heat waves and provide well-being in moments of climatic stress. Our investigation will concentrate on the public transport system and its associated spaces—bus and tram stops—as critical sites where daily urban life intersects with climate vulnerability. We will explore how architectural and urban strategies can transform these points of transit into ecological and social micro-ecosystems, equipped with passive systems, vegetation, and low-impact materials.

This architectural program was specifically selected to highlight the integration of environmental and social agendas in contemporary design, while challenging the conventional perception of public infrastructure as purely functional. Through mapping, simulation, design, and prototyping, students will be asked to develop new models of urban climate shelters that are not only protective but also catalysts for community, biodiversity, and sustainable mobility.



Architecture, Environment and Technology

Climate Shelter

[25 Sep. 2025 - 13. Oct. 2025: Mon-Wed 15-20. ROOM CB-8]



Marta Domènech Rodríguez, Professor (ETSAB)

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Olga Felip Ordís, Professor (ETSAB)

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In response to the increase in extreme weather conditions, several institutions have implemented shelters to reduce the impact of heat waves and ensure well-being by reducing temperature, controlling humidity and wind, and air pollution. However, many of these initiatives are not based on solid theoretical models or fully integrated into active city use.

Our urban public space is facing increasingly extreme and severe climatic conditions. While several public institutions study and provide shelter spaces to alleviate the impact of heat waves, there are currently no models that help to think about the new types of infrastructures in urban public spaces that are needed. Spaces that should not only be considered as a place for socialization and active life in the city but also as a facility for care and shelter. To address this urgent ecological challenge, cities have begun implementing climate shelters, which aim to transform public spaces to ensure a maximum temperature of 26°C during heat waves. These adapted spaces seek to improve urban comfort

Fig. 08 Oase No. 7 by Haus-Rucker-Co, documenta 5, 1972. Photo: Dennis Conrad

by reducing temperature and air pollution, particularly for populations most vulnerable to the effects of heat waves.

Barcelona stands out for its adaptation measures, strategies have been implemented to mitigate climate effects and protect the health of citizens. During this time, a network of climate shelters has been developed in existing spaces (libraries, public schools, parks, etc.) to offer thermal comfort during episodes of extreme weather, in order to alleviate the heat island effect. These spaces include interiors and exteriors with vegetation, water, humidity control and air renovation. The initiative comes from the 2018-2030 Climate Plan. However, most projects are designed without adequate theoretical and simulation models. At the same time, these are not linked to the active use of the city to improve the well-being of citizens, such as the need to use public transport, especially in the case of the vulnerable resident population.

In this workshop, we seek to innovate and contribute to this agenda with the design of a prototype linked to and supporting urban surface transport infrastructure systems with an adaptable system equipped to improve well-being and health in the use of public space as an environmental and social micro-ecosystem.

It is therefore a question of proposing the implementation of urban elements with low impact on their energy consumption, built with local materials from km 0 and local vegetation that produce tangible improvements and, therefore, also lead to improvements at a social level: promoting the use of public transport, an essential asset for the city's residents, as well as the interrelationship between the people who inhabit our neighborhoods, contributing to improving levels of well-being and health in times of extreme weather and allowing active use of the city during these periods.

The goal is to create an adaptable system that improves well-being and health in the use of public space, not as an isolated intervention, but as part of a broader environmental and social micro-ecosystem.

The approach should prioritize:

- Low-energy, passive systems that reduce environmental impact.
- Local materials (km 0).
- Native vegetation, which contributes to biodiversity, evaporative cooling, and ecological resilience.

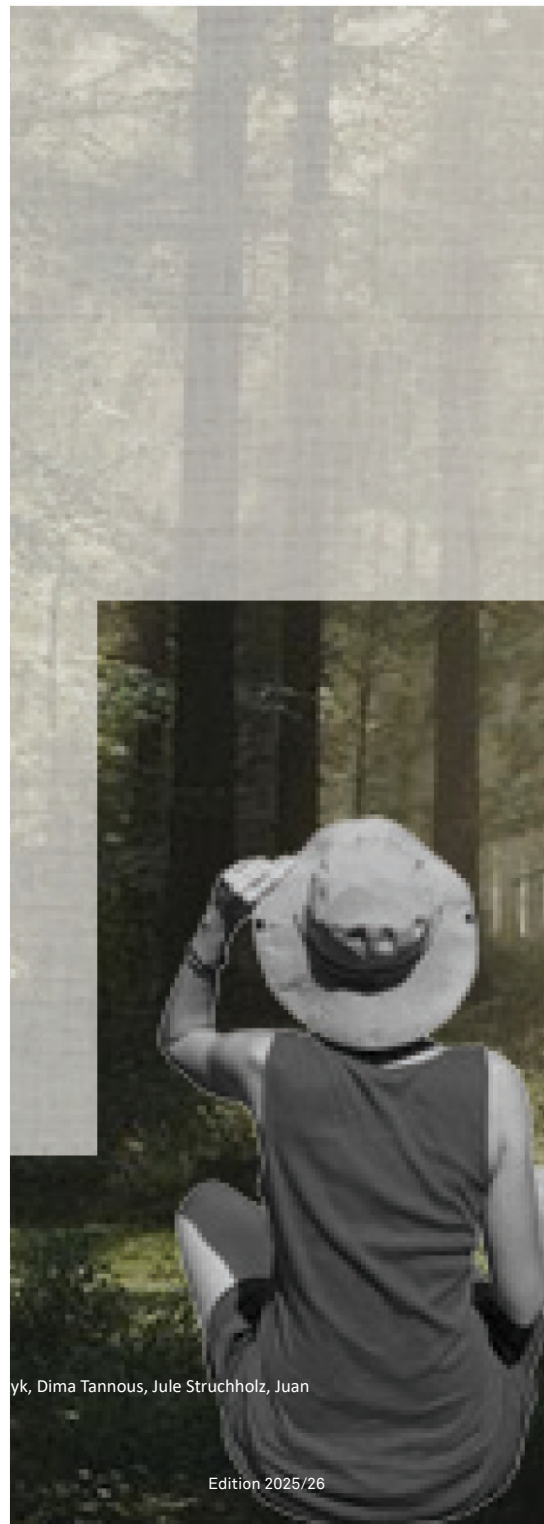
These shelters are not only environmental infrastructures but also social infrastructures. By making public transport more attractive and accessible, they foster sustainable mobility, strengthen neighborhood relationships, and improve overall levels of health and social well-being during periods of extreme heat.

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1. Barcelona Climate Plan 2018-2030: https://www.barcelona.cat/barcelona-pel-clima/sites/default/files/re_illa_de_calor_placlima.pdf
2. Generalitat de Catalunya. "Climate Change Adaptation Strategy in Catalonia 2021-2030." Department of Territory and Sustainability, 2020. <https://canviclimatic.gencat.cat/ca/ambits/adaptacio/estrategia-catalana-dadaptacio-al-canvi-climatic-2021-2030/index.html>
3. United Nations Habitat. "Guidelines for the Implementation of Climate Resilient Urban Infrastructure." UN-Habitat, 2020. https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/05/cityrap_tool_booklet_2020.pdf
4. IPCC. "Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability." Cambridge University Press, 2022. <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/>



Fig. 09 Students collage Edition 2023/24. Zuzanna Sienk, Dima Tannous, Jule Struchholz, Juan Santamaria Morales.



New Representations, New Conceptions

Intimacy_ Inhabiting

[25 Sep. 2025 - 13. Oct. 2025: Tue-Thu 15-20. ROOM CB-8]



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"The body itself is a house and a world. The territory defined by our extension is the most intimate refuge."
—G. Bachelard.

To design spaces of intimacy, we must find a balance between the sensory opportunities offered by the space and the inhabitants' needs for shelter, refuge, isolation, and rest. In this balance, there are numerous possibilities for dialogue.

Objectives

The goal of this exercise is to develop a space/refuge project based on a narrative and an understanding of the concept of intimacy/living.

The designed space should serve as the setting for this narrative and must have a maximum size of 6 square meters. It should include an entry element, an element for sitting/resting, and one or several elements for connection with the outside and light.

Methodology

Autonomous work
Individual tutorials
Group discussions

Submission Requirements

Drawings: Plan, elevation, and section of the designed space
Axonometric Representation
Collage/Photomontage: Interior and exterior/context views
1:10 Model:
Including material details and elements of domesticity/life
All representations must reference the user and their actions.

Submission Format

Class presentation: 10 minutes maximum, plus 5 minutes for feedback
Submission to ATENEA: Project files uploaded to the course platform
Physical Submission: A printed project summary dossier.

Evaluation criteria

Ideation and Conceptualization: Ability to develop criteria and parameters related to space and habitability (35%)
Project Coherence: Consistency in developing the project according to the concepts presented (35%)
Communication and Graphic Representation: Ability to visually communicate the project (30%).

Bibliography

Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*.

Pallasmaa, Juhani. *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*. Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gili, 2016.

Tanizaki, Junichiro. *In Praise of Shadows*. Madrid: Ediciones Siruela, 1933.



Fig. 10 110 Rooms in Barcelona. MAIO (2022)

Module II

Laboratories of the future

[14 Oct. 2025 - 9 Jan. 2026]

LABS

Architecture, city and project [5 ECTS]

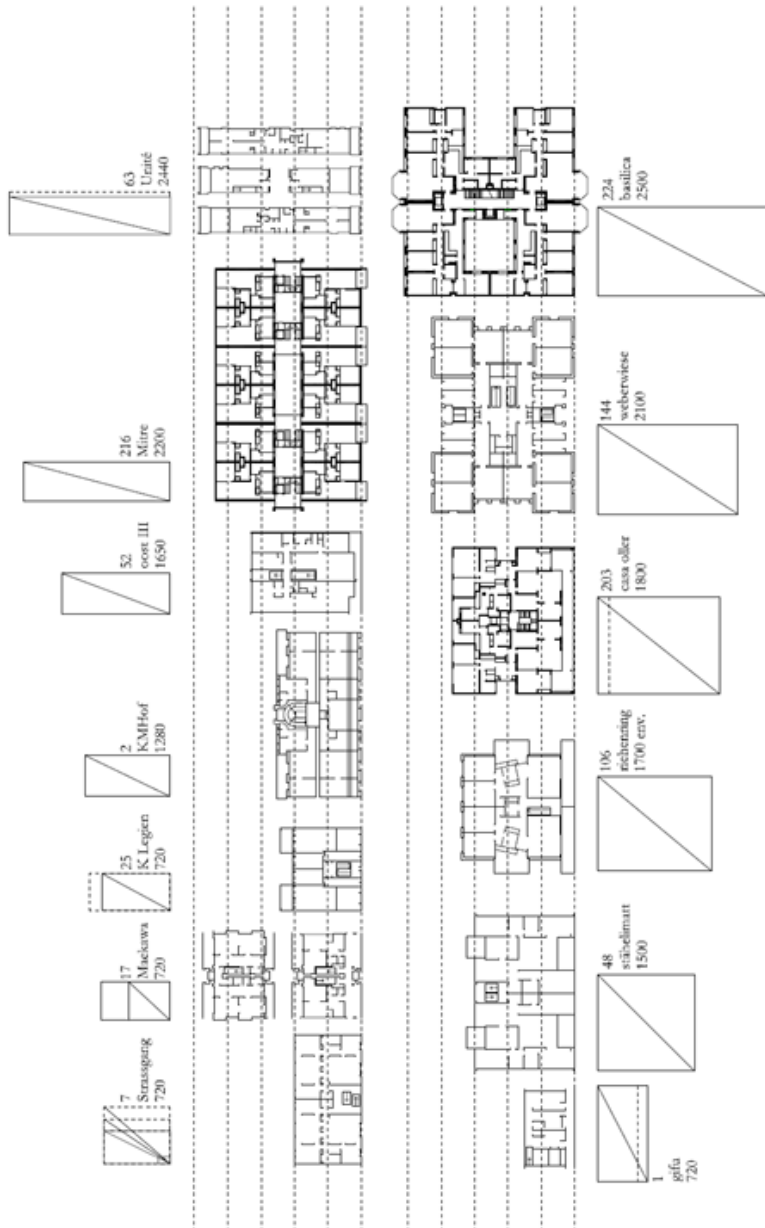
Architecture, theory and criticism [5 ECTS]

Elective

Contemporary architectural issues [5 ECTS]

Module II is structured through seminars and laboratories that delve into various aspects of the *Architecture of Collective Living*. The mandatory courses, “Architecture, city and project” and “Architecture, environment, and technology,” consist of four laboratories both theoretical and projectual to explore the concepts of Type, Mutation, and Utopia. In addition to these mandatory courses, there is the elective subjects. “Contemporary architectural topics” with the support of Mies van der Rohe Foundation, will work on the architectural archives by analysing case studies, and visiting relevant housing projects in Barcelona.

In summary, this module aims to help students understand the framework of debate in Southern Europe regarding issues related to the *Architecture of Collective Living* so that this discussion can then be applied to other parts of the world.



Lab I_Typologies

Morphometries of collecting housing

[16 Oct. 2025 - 4. Nov. 2025: Tue-Thu 15-18:30. ROOM CB-8]



Alberto Peñín, Full Professor (ETSAB)

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The notion of “type” carries multiple meanings in the field of architecture. Some associate it with use or program, thus referring to residential, sanitary, cultural... and other architectural typologies. Others, however, prefer to refer to the term “type” from a deeper perspective, one that is not linked to use but rather to the architectural form itself. When we speak of form, we refer to those formal characteristics (not figurative or design-related) that are connected to the deeper spatial structure, independent of its use. A widely known historical example is the basilical form, characterized by a high central nave flanked by two lower side aisles. While in classical Rome it was used as a public building, in Christian Europe, it became a religious building: the same archetype with different uses.

From this perspective, in this laboratory, we will analyze types related to collective housing, focusing not on domestic use itself but on its architectural organization. This analysis will consider both the components that make up the housing unit, the horizontal and/or vertical aggregation systems of different units, their access systems, structures, infrastructures, lighting, and built depth. Therefore, the unit of repetition and its aggregation system [integration, aggregation, “sitegration”] will be examined.

This analysis will not be conducted in a canonical or taxonomic manner using a predetermined catalog; rather, each student will undertake the concrete analysis of a collective housing project previously selected by the teaching team. This will be a propositional analysis based on two concepts: first, the notion of “morphometry,” understood as an abstract graphic analysis based on measurable parameters and geometric relationships; second, the notion of “form,” understood as an abstract model capable of typological, topological, and programmatic “transformation.” Each case study will undergo various transformations: transforming a specific project into an abstract system (like the Bull by Picasso); modifying the original system into another by altering a parameter or hybridizing it with another system; and implementing the system in a specific location. This process will progress from the housing unit to the city, passing through the type.

Mandatory Bibliography

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Lab II_Mutation

Co-Habiting Housing States

[6 Nov. 2025 - 26. Nov. 2025: Tue-Thu 15-18:30. ROOM CB-8]



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The large residential complexes, largely built in Europe during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, form part of the themes that have marked the teaching, research and professional practice of the members of the REARQ Research Group - Architectural Rehabilitation and Restoration, focusing on tasks relating to the improvement of the existing habitat and building, as well as its relationship with the city.

The passage of time and the transformations in the socio-political, socio-economic and urban context, together with the interventions developed by the different administrations and by the residents themselves, have shaped a contemporary reality that is increasingly complex, making a multi-scale and multi-disciplinary approach necessary.

Fig. 12 1975. Bellvitge, Barcelona

This fact leads us to the convenience of rigorously observing and understanding the existing complexity, with the aim of being able to consider the improvement and conservation of large residential complexes without renouncing their genuine architectural and social values of origin, so threatened or disrupted with the passage of time. Knowledge of the complex problems shared by a large number of large European residential complexes, although they vary greatly from country to country, city to city and neighbourhood to neighbourhood, shows that the architectural and urban planning measures that have been applied to date are insufficient in quantity and cost in terms of discipline and scale.

This exercise is based on the desire to show that the large residential complexes have not reached their limit of use and existence, and that there is therefore much to be done to prevent, slow down and eradicate the processes of degradation initiated and consolidated in some extreme cases, both from the physical point of view of the existing building and the urban environment, and from the social point of view of the resident population. The facts posed by the contemporary reality of large residential complexes justify the interest in carrying out the fields of diagnosis and action by incorporating sociological questions into the strictly technological questions, in such a way that the specific characteristics of the resident population and the physical, urban and architectural environment are considered simultaneously. Likewise, from a scalar point of view, it is necessary to simultaneously take into account the habitat, the community of neighbours, the building, the urban environment immediately afterwards and the neighbourhood as a whole.

With this idea of opening the traditional field of action to prevent the degradation of our large residential complexes, and with the awareness that resources are increasingly scarce, and that therefore, reuse must be understood as an aesthetic, economic and ecological opportunity, we propose to reflect on the idea of mutation. Thinking about how a series of punctual renovation actions have the potential to achieve a significant spatial, functional, aesthetic and environmental improvement in the whole of a pre-existence.

In this sense, we propose to focus on the ground floor: to discover whether it is possible to introduce elements that improve the relationship with the city, expand community services or improve the accessibility and privacy of the building; on the façade: to reflect on how to improve efficiency, expand the surface area or update the expressiveness; on the roof: to debate whether by eliminating volumes or adding new structures it is possible to improve living spaces; on the typology: to discover current lifestyles, possible new types of residents or new infrastructural needs; and the morphology: to understand how volumetric manipulation can lead to a better relationship between architecture and the city.

To develop this idea of mutation, we will look at a representative building of post-war Barcelona urban planning located in Bellvitge. The Bellvitge neighborhood is part of the last period of mass housing estates (1965-75). A residential complex made up of linear blocks and high-rise towers, built with industrialized systems, which respond to the traditional stereotyped image of the modern periphery of our cities. A periphery, which today has ceased to be peripheral, becoming

a new centrality. A new existence that is now at the center of contemporary debate.

Undoubtedly, the opportunity arises to reflect on the possible evolution and future perspective of a large residential complex. And it is in this location where we have to ask ourselves about how it is possible to reinforce the character of the urbanity? What fruitful effects could revitalizing the lower floors, improving access or incorporating spaces for new activities trigger here? And what interest can diversifying the typological range or finding a better balance between scale and density through occasional mutations be of interest here?

The student of the Workshop will have to choose a fragment of a block under study; ground floor, façade, roof, typology or morphology and discover in the chosen area, opportunities for improvement and physical and urban renovation of the pre-existence. The exercise will be carried out in groups of 2 people. Each group will deliver a project report in A4 (maximum 500 words) and a drawing of the project in 3 A3 (a constructive axonometric plan with the chosen focus on the pre-existence on one side and the proposal with the effects of the proposed mutation on the other).

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Lab III_Utopia

Utopic histories of greenery in ecological design

[28 Nov. 2025 - 16. Dec. 2025; Tue-Thu 15-18:30. ROOM CB-8]



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Beatriz Borque, Guest Lecturer (ETSAB)

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Ecology has come to represent encirclement, circular reasoning, and a sense of totality based on the interconnectedness of all things. In many ways, encirclement is a mental and political construct that allows all things deemed to be incorporated into controllable and determined worldviews.

But the circle is not a given figure on which power acts. The very task of political action is to encircle and transform knowledge, organic life, and bodies into sovereign entities and instrumentalize them as modes of discourse and hegemonic power structures.

Ecology is not one thing. Like water, which exists in various material states and whose power can both instill and destroy life, ecology (and

Fig. 14.5 Another Arcadia_Peter Cook_2023

consequently ecological design) comprises a universe of fragmented worldviews and their constellations. It is a cloud of stories about human and nonhuman agencies and the way in which these encounter the earth, correlate with its parts, nurture it, or are nurtured by it.

We will go through a variety of histories ecological design in positioned in the plural, as a series that from a matrix of open associations between diverse narratives. It is also a journey rather than a singular perspective, one that enables voyages between different times, places, and objects of investigation. The journey is at once spatial and temporal; it allows us to inhabit secrets. The concepts that emerge may appear as new, but ideas are a long migration from one epistemological field to another.

In today's world of climate crisis, environmental inequality, and pervasive toxicity, however, such fantasies amount to nothing more than the crumbling ruins of a world, now lost, but once regarded as whole and encircled.

At LAB 4 we will explore ecological utopias throw different stories with a special focus on the greening of the planet, imagining better futures by exploring possibilities of the city of Barcelona to increase the greenery.

Mandatory Bibliography

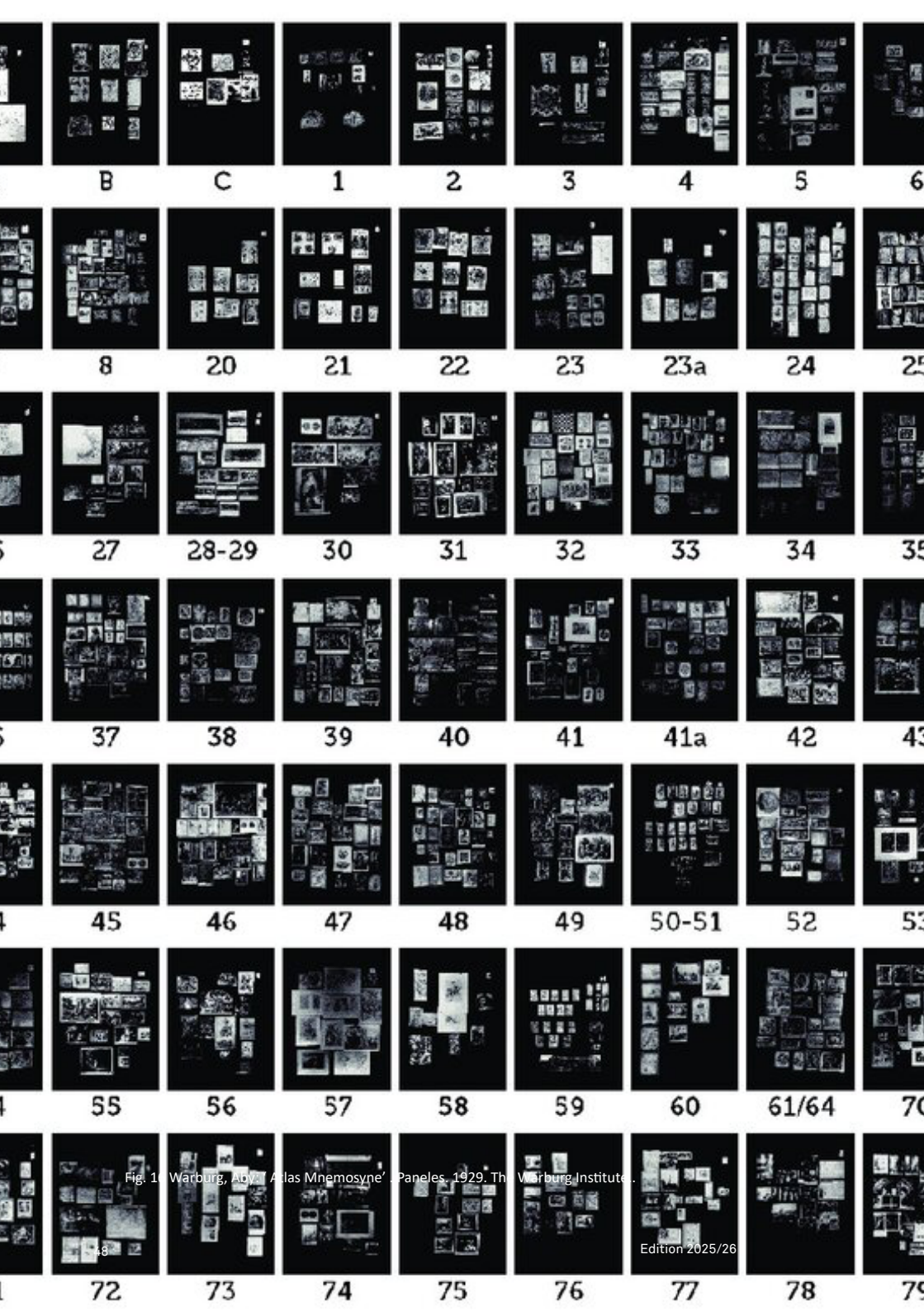
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Koolhaas, Rem: *Countryside. A Report*, Tashen, 2022

Latour, Bruno: *How to Inhabit the Earth: Interviews with Nicolas Truong*, Polity Press, 2023.

Byung-Chul Han: *Vita Contemplativa: In Praise of Inactivity*, Polity Press, 2023.

Kallipoliti, Lydia: *Histories of Ecological Design: An Unfinished Cyclopedia*, Actar Publisher, 2024.



Lab critics_Architectural Theory

Typology-Complexity-Utopia

[28 Nov. 2025 - 16. Dec. 2025: Tue 15-17. ROOM CB-8]



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Ignacio López Alonso, Professor (ETSAB)

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This course explores the critical and theoretical foundations of architecture through three pivotal concepts—typology, complexity, and utopia—each of which has profoundly shaped architectural discourse and practice from the late Enlightenment to the contemporary period. By examining these themes in historical, theoretical, and design-oriented contexts, students will develop the tools to interpret architecture as both a cultural artifact and an intellectual project.

Through lectures, readings, and seminar discussions, students will learn to analyze architecture as a discourse shaped by theory, criticism, and cultural aspirations. Assignments will include close reading of theoretical texts, written critiques of selected projects, and the development of an essay that synthesizes the three thematic strands of the course. By the end of the semester, students will be equipped to articulate informed, critical positions on architectural works and ideas, situating them within broader intellectual and cultural debates.

Contemporary Architectural Issues

Mies van der Rohe Foundation Archives

[15 Oct. 2025 - 15. Dec. 2025: Mon 15-19. ROOM CB-8]



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The ideas of architectural modernism, which have conventionally been interpreted as an adaptation and update of the positivist, universalist and technocratic approaches of the Enlightenment project, have had unquestionable influence on our cities, our understanding of buildings in relation to technology and the human being, and on urban culture of developed societies during the 20 th century.

But as it is also known, their ideological basis, social ideas, political views and their derived design methodologies have been increasingly contested since the end of the Second World War. As the presence of modernist practice has become common and mainstream in globalised cities, the problems, limitations and inconsistencies of such positions have also become increasingly evident. Just as 19 th century cities had to deal with problems such as urban hygiene, urban functionality or rights of the working classes when adopting industrialisation, the current metropolis, partly built on modernist ideals, now faces its own challenges, a significant part of them emerging from the problems laid out by the modernist dream of systemised mass production



Fig. 17 Study Pavilion on the campus of the Technical University of Braunschweig by Gustav Gising and Max Hacke, © Leonhard Clemens.

and mechanisation. Consequently, some of the trending topics in architectural and urban planning discussions nowadays may be how our cities should react to political and social imbalance, cultural complexity, heterogeneous globalisation processes, ecological challenges, pollution and planetary warming, pre-existing built heritage, acceleration in social changes, lack of dwelling facilities and public services, appearance of new functional needs, the effects of digitalisation, growing or shrinking population, or even gender issues, among others. Definitely, the CIAM years seem to have fallen far behind our present, and their visions and theories to be mainly unfit to solve our current worries.

Furthermore, the second half of the 20th century gave birth to an epistemological revolution in globalised societies: So, the postmodern philosophical and ideological contributions of trends like new aesthetics, structuralism, post-structuralism, deconstructionism, phenomenology, existentialism, situationism, formalism, semiotics, etc. have been seen as an attempt to update, confront or correct modernist mistakes. How did all this influence dwelling cultures and the practice and conceiving of architectures as a tool for shaping habitats in the last fifty years in Europe? When discussing residential contemporary architecture, can we even use the same concepts, categories and words as we did with modernist buildings? The course aims to explore these last questions by taking advantage of the wide catalogue of the Mies van der Rohe Foundation (1988-2022). By focusing on the analysis of relevant real residential buildings, it intends to let students become familiar with the current problems, discussions and dilemmas around housing nowadays, while providing them with intellectual tools and methodologies which they can apply in their own master thesis, but

also in their future professional careers, when facing and trying to understand and interpret ...contemporary architectural issues.

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation will be driven upon the following compulsory submissions set during the course: Conventional file card (1.00 points), Specific file card (2.00 points), Article (2.50 points), Jury report (2.50 points), Verdict (1.00 points) and Feedback conclusions (1.00 points).

Bibliography

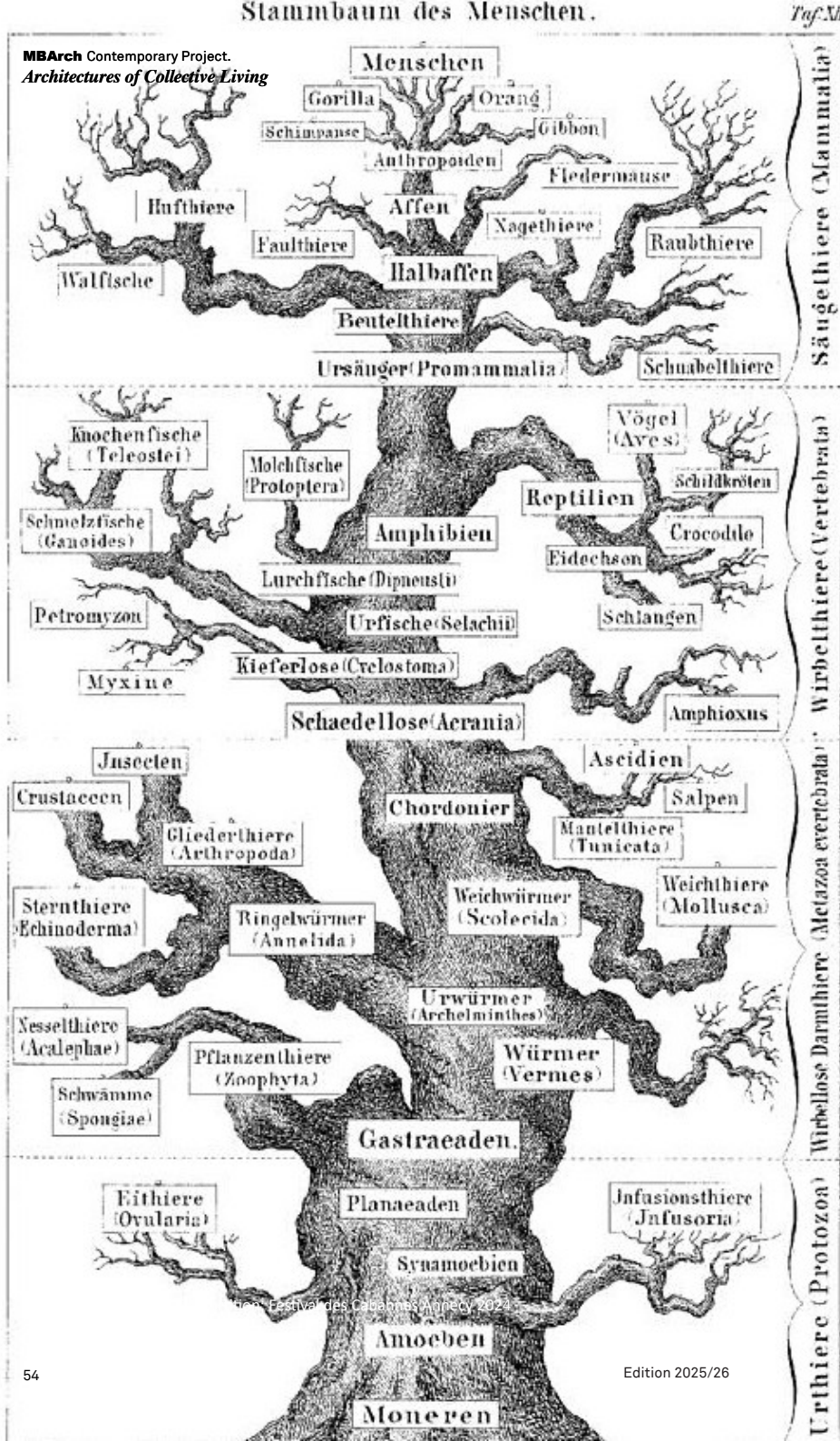
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MALLGRAVE, Harry Francis & CONTANDRIOPOULOS, Christina (ed.) Architectural theory. Volume II. An anthology from 1871-2005. Massachusetts, Oxford, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2008.

MALLGRAVE, Harry Francis & GOODMAN, David. An introduction to architectural theory. 1968 to the present. Massachusetts, Oxford, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

PRESTINENZA, Luigi: New directions in contemporary architecture. Evolutions and revolutions in building design since 1988. New York: Wiley, 2008.

LANGE, Alexandra. Writing about architecture. Mastering the language of buildings and cities. New York: Princeton architectural press, 2012.



Module III

Collectivity

[2 Feb. 2026 - 23 Feb. 2026]

Materiality and Project [5 ECTS]

Urban Project. Ideas and Praxis [5 ECTS]

Joan Casals, Còssima Cornadó, Marta Domènech, Pia Fontana.

Critical Design - Design Critique

Module III is the initial workshop of second semester of the MBArch Contemporary Project. The idea behind this event centered around the theme of analysis to raise awareness about the question of how can we do research. The housing analysis raises the question of the materiality of the elements that are inscribed within the territory. Materiality is not limited to the material itself.

From this perspective, the workshop encourages students to question the relationship between form, use, and context, moving beyond the surface of architectural representation to uncover the hidden systems and logics embedded in the built environment. The analysis of materiality is approached as both a technical and cultural inquiry, connecting construction processes, patterns of labor, and territorial resources with broader social, political, and ecological frameworks.



Fig. 20 Denise Scott Brown. Learning from Las Vegas (1968)

Urban Project, Ideas and Praxis

Design Analysis

[2 Feb. 2026 - 23. Feb. 2026: Mon-Wed 15-20. ROOM CB-8]



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Marta Domènech, Professor (ETSAB)

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Maria Pia Fontana, Professor (ETSAB)

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<https://www.mayorga-fontana.com/>

During the first month of the Spring Semester, Urban Project: Ideas and Praxis together with Materiality and Project are an intensive workshop that provides a framework for the critical examination of architectural practices that engage with the notion of collective living. The course is structured as a research-oriented exploration that combines theoretical inquiry, fieldwork, and analytical exercises, with the aim of equipping students with methodological tools to address contemporary questions relevant to their Master's thesis research.

At the core of the program is the development of analytical methodologies that enable students to initiate and structure research projects related to The Architectures of Collective Living. These methodologies are not limited to descriptive analysis but emphasize

the formulation of research questions and the construction of interpretative frameworks. Students are encouraged to investigate the relationship between spatial morphology, patterns of inhabitation, and the forms of social appropriation that emerge from them.

A fundamental component of the course is the selection of three case studies, which serve as focal points for the development of individual research projects. These cases are approached from a dual perspective: on the one hand, their architectural and urban qualities are examined in detail; on the other, the lived experiences and practices that unfold within these spaces.

Based on these investigations, students will prepare a graphic document of critical analysis, structured across different scales: urban, architectural, and technical. This document is conceived not as a purely representational exercise but as a research instrument capable of synthesizing spatial observations and social dynamics. The integration of diagrams, and analytical drawings is intended to foster the ability to translate complex realities into rigorous visual arguments. Producing this document represents a key step in articulating research findings in a precise and analytically consistent manner.

The semester culminates in a final critical presentation, in which each student presents the outcomes of their research and situates the selected cases within contemporary architectural and urban debates. This concluding exercise aims to consolidate the analytical work developed throughout the course while also fostering a collective discussion on the relevance of the studied cases. The final review thus serves both as an academic assessment and as a platform for

intellectual exchange, underlining the shared dimension of architectural research.

In summary, the workshop is conceived as a research-based academic experience that situates architecture within the broader field of collective practices. Through methodological training, case study analysis, graphic interpretation, and critical presentation, the course provides students with the tools to critically examine the role of architecture in shaping the spaces of contemporary collective living.



Princesa
 Sostre Civic Association
 2022



La Xarxaire
 La Mar d'Arquitectes
 2017-2022



La Borda
 Architects: LaCol
 2014-2018



Co-HAB Raval
 Oasi Urbà Association
 2020-2022



32 viviendas cooperativas
 Vivas Arquitectos
 2020-2022



APROP Pilot Project
 Stradle3
 2017-2022



Edificio de viviendas plurifamiliar
 Architects: Lagula
 2005-2010



La Marina del Prat Vermell
 Architects: Jaime Coll and Judit Leclerc
 2022



Housing in Robador's Street
 Architects: Pere Joan Ravetllat + Carme Ribas
 2021



79 Social Housing in Sant Boi de Llobregat
 Architects: Mariona Benedito + Martí Sanz +
 Estudio Herreros slp
 2020



85 Social Dwellings in Cornellà
 Architects: Marta Peris + José Toral
 2022



Public Housing in Poble Nou
 Architects: Jaime Coll and Judit Leclerc
 2022



Materiality and Project

Material Analysis

[2 Feb. 2026 - 23. Feb. 2026: Tue-Thu 15-20. ROOM CB-8]



Còssima Cornadó, Professor (ETSAB)

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This subject investigates the relationship between architectural design and the material conditions that shape it. Materiality is approached not only as a matter of physical substance, but also as a cultural, social, and environmental construct. Students will explore how materials carry meanings, enable techniques, and mediate between form, function, and territory.

Through case studies, lectures, and design exercises, the course examines the role of construction methods, local economies, and ecological contexts in shaping architectural practice. Attention is given to questions of sourcing, assembly, and performance, as well as to the symbolic and experiential dimensions of materiality.

By the end of the course, students will be able to critically assess how design decisions are embedded in material choices, and how these choices resonate across scales—from detail to city, from craft to global supply chains. The subject emphasizes materiality as a key field of experimentation, reflection, and innovation in contemporary architecture.

Fig. 21 Spanish Pavilion, Venice Biennial 2025.



Fig. 22 Andrés Jaque. Office of Political Innovation. MAK- Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art, Vienna. 2017

Module IV

Design Critique - Critical Design

[24 Feb. 2026 - 22 May 2026]

Master Thesis Seminars [15 ECTS]

Architecture, Theory and Thought [5 ECTS]

All Scales of the Project [5 ECTS]

The MBArch Contemporary Project - *Architectures of Collective Living* program specialize candidates to make a distinct and valuable contribution to the field's knowledge. This entails showcasing proficiency and precision in research methodologies and design techniques, along with a thorough grasp of the subject's context, references, and past instances. This is demonstrated through a dissertation that intertwines both written analysis and design, serving as the culminating and most substantial output of the program.

The Module IV is a combined course of design study and seminar where students develop their Thesis Proposal. Underlying the Module IV is the hypothesis that critical and speculative projects about the Architectures of Collective Living, whether oriented towards practice and/or theory, manifest an "idea of the society" that can be understood through corresponding typological and social diagrams. Some of these ideas and different historical, theoretical, and epistemological perspectives will be discussed in seminars through critical projects from the recent past.

Final Master Thesis Tutuition

Critical Design - Design Critical

First Semester: Students Independent Work. Sporadically with tutors

Second Semester: By Appointment, weekly with tutors



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<https://eumiesawards.com/>



Alessandro Scarnato, Professor (ETSAB)

<https://thatc.upc.edu/ca>
<https://www.blast.es/>



Monica Tarrega Klein, Professor (ETSAB)

<https://habitar.upc.edu/>



Pau Villalonga, Professor (ETSAB)

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<https://sonestudi.com/>



Fig. 23 El jardín de las delicias. El Bosco



All scales

Critical Design

[24 Feb. 2026 - 5. Mai. 2026: Tue 15-18:30. ROOM CB-8]



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Throughout architecture's history, working on different and simultaneous scales is a constant. In 1977, Charles and Ray Eames, with their film "Powers of Ten" recalled the power of the relativity of scale, depending on the frame of observation, different realities are revealed. Considering the journey as a whole activates a holistic view that allows us to establish relationships between scales, linking concepts or realities.

At the Stanford's Commencement Address lecture, Steve Jobs indicated the importance of connecting the dots by looking backwards to build our future. A series of theoretical classes will complement the process carried out by the students from examples of architecture relevant to the approach to the project, its thinking and communication, from multiple scales and dimensions.

Rafael Moneo, “Comments on drawings of 20 contemporary architects”, indicates that the first construction of architecture is the drawing. In this course, students are proposed to construct a single drawing in a vertical format of 2100x297mm that reflects a transversal insight and study of their own final master’s thesis research topics. Each student will address the issues of spatial scale (from millimeter to kilometer) and temporal scale (past, present and future). It is also intended to add at least one extra dimension extracted from its own research theme or case study (construction, use, phenomenology...).

Class work will be based on a combination of theoretical classes and comments by teachers and students on the proposals under development. This course aims that students deepen their own research from a polyhedral and multiscale point of view. The result of their work will be an open document, with the possibility of being further developed in the future, reflecting the specific time dedicated during the course and added value to their Master Thesis.

The different lessons will be structured in workshop time in the classroom, weekly review of assignments and theoretical classes. In addition, there will be an intermediate and final submission with critical sessions.

Bibliography

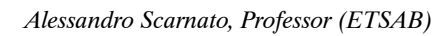
Powers of ten: A film dealing with the relative size of things in the universe and the effect of adding another zero (Santa Monica, California, United States: Charles Eames, 1977).

Steve Jobs, «Steve Jobs’ 2005 Stanford Commencement Address» (Stanford University, 12 de junio de 2005), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UF8uR6Z6KLc>.

Juan Antonio Cortés Vázquez de Parga y Rafael Moneo Vallés, Comentarios sobre dibujos de 20 arquitectos actuales (Barcelona: Escola Superior d’Arquitectura de Barcelona, 1976).



[26 Feb. 2026 - 7. Mai. 2026: Thu 15-18:30. ROOM CB-8]



<https://www.blast.es/>

Such observation could make us think that architectural space could be intended as encapsulated within the boundaries of a materiality which determines the width of possibilities for design.

During the course, technical and material considerations are, therefore, integrated with others of social, urban and ecological nature, within the framework of a more sustainable vision of the reality of

our cities and landscape. History never reaches a defined ending and each new project does nothing but add another layer and, maybe, move one further step. Therefore, we will also play with the concept of “heritage” as a structural component of any materiality and we will try to investigate through all the complexities intertwined within such a concept.

The subject proposes a theoretical journey through the most recent evolution of the debate, with specific approaches on concrete architecture and public space projects. The course is structured through lectures, discussions, visits and the individual assignment. The idea of architectural heritage will not be studied in a conventional way, since we want to develop the participant’s skills in terms of architectural intelligence, rather than provide some specific technical knowledge on the topic.

In order to do so, we will explore some fundamental antinomies particularly important for the general theory of architecture and beyond: past-future; destruction-construction; urban-rural; intimate-collective. Each concept will be examined both from a theoretical point of view and under its practical applications. We will observe the existing architecture in urban and rural territory and we will discuss its possible development playing with the abovementioned concepts. Like in many aspects of human life, the balance between these antinomies is crucial in order to acknowledge and, maybe, understand the dynamics of reality around us. In other words, our philosophical journey through architecture will be successful not because of a certain destination we will reach, but because of how we will be able to properly set and enjoy the journey.

Therefore, we will also encourage watching movies that forecast some kind of light onto our concepts and we will discuss them in class. We will also examine and visit some significant places in the area of Barcelona. The texts we will suggest to read won’t be taken as a learning tool in the classical way, since they shall be considered as a source of theoretical inputs.

Regarding the assignment for the course, this will be in form of an academic paper, it will be individual and it will mandatorily follow the template uploaded in Atenea. This paper will be a short essay on one of the topics of the course. By the day of the first hand-in (April 2nd) you will have to publicly present your topic with a provisional title for the paper. The day before, you will have to upload on Atenea the proposal using the dedicated template.

On the day of the second hand-in (April 23rd) you will have to upload on Atenea the draft of your paper with the abstract, the structure, the bibliography and the state-of-the-art of your work. The final version of the paper (between four and six A4 pages vertically oriented in Arial Narrow 11 single line type) will be uploaded on Atenea not later than May 14th in *pdf format of max 5mb, named as follows: surname-name- final paper.pdf.

The final exam is meant to be attended only by those students who didn’t achieve a sufficient evaluation along the regular course. Also, those who are not satisfied with the achieved grade can attend the exam and the higher grade will be the final one. This exam will consist of a short extemporaneous essay on a topic given the day of the exam and it will be done with computer in the class and directly uploaded to Atenea.

The following books represent a suggestion

ABRAMSON, Daniel M. (2016) *Obsolescence: an architectural history*. Chicago: University Press. ARENDT, Hannah. (1979) *The origin of totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

BENJAMIN, Walter. (1935) "The destructive character". In *Reflections: essays, aphorisms, autobiographical writings*, ed. Peter Demetz, trans. Edmund Jephcott. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

CARERI, Francesco. (2003) *Walkscapes: walking as an aesthetic practice*. Barcelona: Gustavo Gili. DAVIS, Mike. (1998) *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster*. London: Verso Books. D'ERAMO, Marco. (1995) *The pig and the skyscraper: Chicago: a history of our future*. New York: Verso.

FEYERABEND, Paul. K. (1975) *Against Method: Outline of an Anarchist Theory of Knowledge*. London: Verso Books.

FOUCAULT, Michel. (1979) *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage- Random House.

HOLLIER, Denis. (1989) *Against architecture: the writings of George Bataille*. Cambridge/London: MIT. KOOLHAAS, Rem. (1978) *Delirious New York*. New York: The Monacelli Press.

POCH, Arcadi; POCH, Daniela. Eds. (2013) *Urban creativity experience. Creative experiences in contemporary cities*. Madrid: Lemo Editorial.

RAHM, Philippe. (2020) *Histoire naturelle de l'architecture: Comment le climat, les épidémies et l'énergie ont façonné la ville et les bâtiments*. Paris: Editions du pavillon de l'Arsenal.

SUDIJC, Deyan. (2006) *The edifice complex: the architecture of power*. London: Penguin. WOLFE, Tom. (1981) *From Bauhaus to our house*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

The following movies are a suggestion.

ALLEN, Woody. (1979) *Manhattan*. USA.

AMENÁBAR, Alejandro. (2001) *The Others*. USA / Spain / France / Italy.

CARCAS, Carlos; LOPEZ AMADO, Norberto. (2010) *How much does your building weigh, Mr Foster?* UK / Spain / USA / Switzerland / France / China / Hong Kong.

GREENAWAY, Peter. (1987) *The Belly Of An Architect*. UK / Italy. KASSOVITZ, Mathieu. (1995) *La haine*. France.

KUBRICK, Stanley. (1969) *2001, A Space Odyssey*, USA. LANG, Fritz. (1927) *Metropolis*. Germany.

REGGIO, Godfrey. (1982) *Kojanigatsi: life out of balance*. USA. ROSI, Francesco. (1963) *Le mani sulla città*. Italy / France.

SCOTT, Ridley. (1982) *Blade runner*. USA. TARETTO, Gustavo. (2011) *Medianeras*. Argentina. TATI, Jacques. (1967) *Playtime*. France / Italy.

We consider that the following web (mostly news and blogs) are worth check from time to time...

<https://www.re-thinkingthefuture.com> <http://www.rotordb.org> <http://afasiaarchzine.com> <https://bigthink.com> <https://archimodels.info> <https://urbannext.net> <https://archidose.blogspot.com> <http://www.arquitecturaviva.com>

Last, but not least, a bit of music might help.

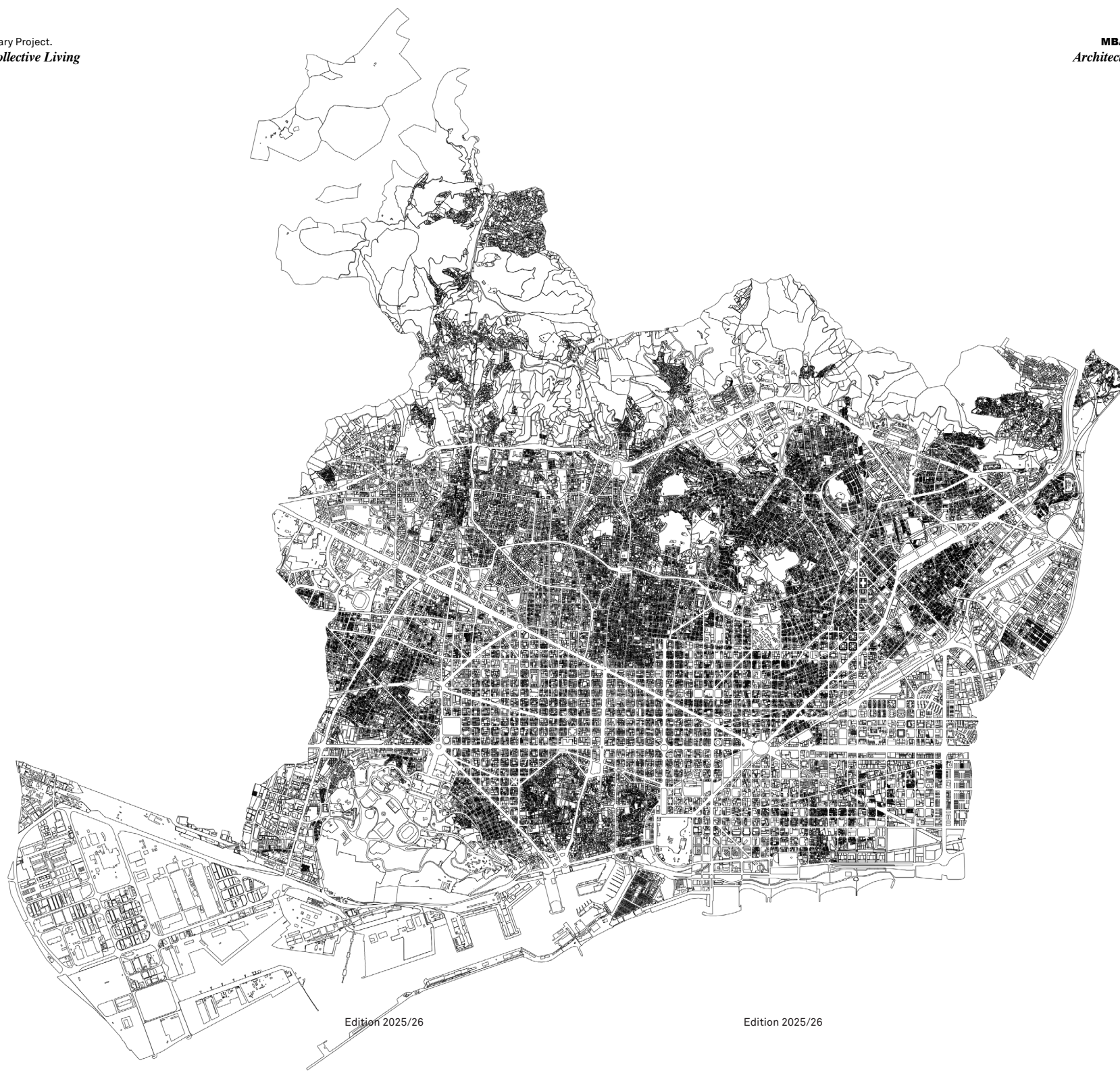
STRAVINSKY, Igor. (1962) *The Flood*. NINE INCH NAILS. (1992) *Broken*. BATTIATO, Franco. (1979) *L'era del cinghiale bianco*. HENDRIX, Jimi. (1968) *Electric Ladyland*.

PRINCE AND THE REVOLUTIONS. (1983) *Purple rain*.

DAVIS, Miles. (1968) *Miles in the sky*.

FATBOY SLIM. (1998) *You've come a long way, baby*. LLACH, LLuís. (1975) *Viatge a Itaca*.

XILOURIS, Niko. (1976) *Sillogi*. SONIC YOUTH. (1990) *Goo*.



“...until now, the architect was defined as a drawer, which meant that architects were given a great deal of training, not very good but very artistic. They drew a lot of capitals and a lot of columns, and when they came to the problems of space they were totally lost...”¹

1 Henri Lefebvre, *The production of the Space*

Fig. 25 Dachbegrünung im Block 103 in Berlin-Kreuzberg. Foto: Adam Bernfried (1991)