

Inside/Out Upside/Down

Course Description:

What happens when we turn the familiar upside down? How can we break conventional form to bring “outside” elements “in” and vice versa? Can playfulness be a tool for reimagining how we experience space? This design course is an invitation to disrupt the ordinary, challenge architectural norms, and experiment with spatial storytelling.

By flipping preconceived notions of space and form, we will explore how play—both as a method and an outcome—can lead to more engaging, productive, and flexible architecture. Through hands-on exploration, intuitive making, and iterative design exercises, teams will cultivate an experiential approach to architecture that values surprise, adaptability, and the sensory experience.

The course will culminate in an experimental design proposal that reimagines an everyday spatial typology through the lens of play. Students will be encouraged to build, prototype, and test their ideas in real-time, turning theory into lived experience. This studio-based course blends workshops, field explorations, guest talks, hands-on experiments, and collective play. Students are encouraged to embrace failure, surprise, and joy as part of the design process.

Key Themes & Explorations:

- **Architecture as Play:** How can we engage curiosity, improvisation, and interaction in design?
- **Learning by Doing:** Emphasizing hands-on experimentation, model-making, and mixed media visualization.
- **Nature as a Co-Designer:** Investigating blurred boundaries between built environments and the natural world.
- **Hybrid + Adaptive Spaces:** Exploring the unexpected intersections of function and program.
- **Scalability & Surprise:** Designing experiences that unfold differently at multiple scales.

Inspirational Playmakers:

- **Junya Ishigami & SANAA** – Fluid, boundary-blurring environments that challenge architectural conventions.
- **MVRDV** – Radical urban interventions driven by a playful process of analysis.
- **MOS Architects** – Minimalist yet experimental approaches to form and materiality.
- **ASSEMBLE** – Community-driven, participatory design that fosters engagement and fun.

- **Atelier Bow-Wow** – Playful interpretations of everyday spaces and micro-urbanism.
- **Olafur Eliasson** – Sensory, interactive, and immersive spatial experiences.
- **Lois Weinberger, Eva le Roi, David Lemm**

Experiential Learning & Play-Based Process:

This course embraces an open-ended, exploratory approach to design, emphasizing **learning through making**. Weekly activities may include:

- **Design Games & Exercises** – Quick interventions and experiments that challenge assumptions about space.
- **Material Play & Hands-On Making** – Engaging with unconventional materials and techniques to spark discovery.
- **Spatial Storytelling** – Exploring how movement, time, and user interaction shape the experience of space.

Final Project: The Playful Reimagination of Space

The course will culminate in an experimental design proposal that **reimagines an everyday spatial typology through the lens of play**. Students will be encouraged to build, prototype, and test their ideas in real-time, turning theory into lived experience.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Develop a **playful, iterative, and hands-on** approach to design.
- Cultivate a sense of **spatial curiosity and experimentation**.
- Learn to balance **rigor and intuition** in architectural thinking.
- Gain a deeper understanding of **user experience, interaction, and adaptability** in design.
- Build a final project that embodies **play, participation, and discovery**.

Course Format:

This studio-based course blends **workshops, field explorations, guest talks, hands-on experiments, and collective play**. Students are encouraged to embrace failure, surprise, and joy as part of the design process.