Borgo Digitale
on Distributed Proximities

Program Prompt

Under the pressure of a global pandemic, the built environment and the protocols for its inhabitation are being challenged and re-formatted at unprecedented scale and speed. A series of colliding thresholds – from Zoom screens to facial masks and quarantines – can be understood as the sites of transformation of a long-established social contract negotiating private and public spaces of individuals, communities and regions. At the core of this is a fundamentally architectural question: *"How do we structure spatial protocols of distribution and movement to support the welfare of a larger community?* Put more simply: *How do we co-exist with others?"*

Taking cues from AMO's recent body of research highlighting the radical reorganization, abstraction and automation that occurred in the 'Countryside' to support the densities and excesses of modern urban life, this program will look at the distributed network of the Italian 'Borghi' with its long and rich history as a fertile site to rethink contemporary patterns of inhabitation.

The program will offer two courses that closely engage with each other to support both the critical understanding of the social and cultural contexts of these small towns, as well as the development of a shared digital skillset to imagine the future of these sites.

ARC 407 - Studio Prompt

The Italian countryside is punctuated by one of the densest networks of small Towns, Borghi and Villages in Europe: what Stefano Boeri referred to as an 'Archipelago of Borghi'. These can be understood as the physical traces of the peninsula's articulated political and cultural history. Often bonded, both economically and administratively, to the political center of larger urban nodes, the Italian Borgo negotiated its autonomy by managing, cultivating and monitoring these peripheral territories. What once were vibrant nodes of this cultural network, today most of these agglomerates are afflicted by a shrinking and aging population, a decaying built-environment as well as an ever-expanding lack of services and digital infrastructure. This studio takes recent State led initiatives to reinvigorate these territories as a starting point to imagine near-future scenarios of transformation. Engaging closely with the existing built environment, and negotiating between historical identities and projective scenarios, we will implement contemporary food production strategies, autonomous systems and an ever-growing

digital infrastructure to re-imagine these sites. What is at stake in these territories is the possibility to re-negotiate their historical identities between local and global values.

The studio will look closely at issues of building in existing conditions, leveraging a multitude of digital survey materials made available at the beginning of the course by our team on the ground. Digital models ranging from aerial LiDAR scans to high resolution photogrammetry models of specific sites will be used as the starting point to re-think the physical and digital infrastructure of these Borghi. Using immersive imaging platforms as well as practices of digital storytelling the studio will focus on narrating near-future scenarios of radical transformation.

Course Format:

The studio is structured around two projects, building on each other to introduce the students to the specificities of these territories and to address different scales of resolution in their design interventions.

Project #1 will engage with the semi-regional network established along the 'Via Francigena': the aim is to understand the figure of the borgo both in its territorial configuration - engaging with its economic, social and political infrastructures - as well as to highlight its formal, spatial and organizational peculiarities.

Project #2, while focusing on a single project site in a borgo (precise location will be presented at the beginning of the project), it will attempt to embed projective design speculations as strategies to rethink the larger territorial environment of the region. Students will start from a shared investigation in two programmatic venues seemingly disjointed from each other: a 4G/LTE mobile internet infrastructure, to address the digital divide experienced in these communities, and a network of *'accoglienza integrata'*, a series of strategies of integration that go beyond housing and feeding for individuals seeking asylum in Italy. From there each student will construct specific near-future scenarios to position these borghi within a digital and social infrastructure stretching across local and global identities.

Throughout the course, students may elect to work either independently or to form groups (of no more than 2 people) to complete the assigned projects. In recognition of the collective nature of the design profession as well as the potential for significantly higher level of resolution of the final design submission, instructors strongly encourage group work throughout the course. Instructors should be notified in a timely manner.

Project #1: *BORGHI INVISIBILI*
taught by Luca Ponsi | Weeks 1 - 4

"*What is dear to my friend Marco Polo is to discover the secret reasons that led men to live in cities, reasons that could be valid beyond all crises. Cities are a set of many things: memories, desires, signs of a language; cities are places of exchange, as all the economy history books explain, but these exchanges are not just exchanges of goods, they are exchanges of words, desires, memories"*

Italo Calvino, Columbia University, New York, 29 March 1983

Starting by analyzing and understanding the structure and characteristics of a selection of historic *borghi* located in the center of Italy, by focusing on a series of specific issues as "*limits & fortifications*", "*orography & conformation*", and "*urban voids & density*", students will each be assigned one unique city of the 55 cities described by Marco Polo to Kublai Khan in Italo Calvino's 1972 novel "*Invisible Cities*", as a starting reference point to conceptualize projectively a vision and interpretation for a near-future scenario of development and transformation of the assigned borgo. AMO's "*Countryside, A Report*" will be the subtext to inform programmatically the direction of future development of the *borgo*, in a progressive, dynamic and non-nostalgic form.

The output of the exercise will comprise a series of maps, axonometric views and collages to represent the students vision.

Project #2: BORGO DIGITALE
taught by Daniele Profeta | Weeks 5 - 15

Issues of building in context and strategies to articulate multifaceted understandings of '*site'* will be foregrounded in the conceptual underpinning as well as in the methodology for the development of this second project. We will focus closely on a single Borgo from the series analyzed in Project #1 to articulate programmatic, social and material scenarios of transformation. In particular we will ask: *"How can we construe inclusive aesthetic forms of co-existence?"* The often too rigid reading of these communities understood as the traditional core of Italian culture will be put under the combined pressure of much needed strategies for social integration amidst rising circulation (and displacement) of global populations, and a growing digital infrastructure delivering radically different spaces of publicness, accelerated access to e-consumption together with dramatically larger and smaller scales of (smart)-land management than have ever been possible.

Rather than articulating comprehensive, seemingly fully resolved design propositions aimed to singularly 'fix' an issue, students will be asked to work through partial, episodic projections to multiply the possible futures of these complex sites. We will leverage a database of digitally surveyed fragments of the selected borgo together with a series of still videos captured on site to develop discrete scenarios of transformation. No single, all-encompassing view-point will be prioritized; rather we will favor a body of work that actively suggests the possibility of multiple formal, programmatic and cultural assemblages.

FALL 2020 — Issued: 08/23/2020

W	Mon	Tuesday	Wed	Thursday	Friday	Sat	Sun
1	8/24	8/25 **SUF Intro DP + LP** Issued Project #1	8/26	8/27 Small group reviews Research_Borgo	8/28 Small group reviews Invisible interpretation	8/29	8/30
2	8/31	9/1 **Group Pin-Up** Borgo Analysis and Vision	9/2	9/3 Individual Reviews Draft analysis of Borgo	9/4 Individual Reviews Draft analysis of Borgo	9/5	9/6
3	9/7	9/8 Small group reviews Draft collages	9/9	9/10 Individual Reviews Possible Lecture SoA 9-10 am (EST)	9/11 Individual Reviews Draft collages	9/12	9/13
4	9/14	9/15 Small group reviews Draft collages	9/16	9/17 Final Production Draft collages	9/18 **Project #1 Review** Presentation of Invisible Borgo	9/19	9/20
5 No Studio Deadlines	9/21	9/22 **Survey Review	No Class**	9/23	9/24 **Readings Discussion** Possible Lecture SoA 9-10 am (EST)	9/25 **Project #2 Begins** DP Schedule	9/26	9/27
6	9/28	9/29 Small group reviews Program Description + Site Translations	9/30	10/1 Individual Reviews SAM JACOBS Lecture 9-10 am (EST)	10/2 Individual Reviews Program Description + Site Translations	10/3	10/4
7	10/5	10/6 **Group Pin-Up** Program + Site Translations	10/7	10/8 Individual Reviews MARINA OTERO Lecture 9-10 am (EST)	10/9 Individual Reviews Site Postures	10/10	10/11
8	10/12	10/13 Small group reviews Site Postures	10/14	10/15 Individual Reviews AFARAI Lecture 10-11 am (EST)	10/16 Individual Reviews Site Postures	10/17	10/18
9	10/19	10/20 Production Reviews Partial Models and Image Compositing	10/21	10/22 Production Partial Models and Image Compositing	10/23 **Project #2 Mid-Review** Partial Models and Image Compositing	10/24	10/25
10 No Studio Deadlines	10/26	10/27 **Survey Review	No Class**	10/28	10/29 Design Charrette Mid-review edits identification	10/30 Design Charrette Mid-review edits possible translations	10/31	11/1
11	11/2	11/3 Small group reviews Mid Review edits incorporation	11/4	11/5 Individual Reviews Zoom-in Partial Chunks	11/6 Individual Reviews Zoom-in Partial Chunks	11/7	11/8
12	11/9	11/10 **Group Pin-Up** Zoom-in Partial Chunks	11/11	11/12 Individual Reviews Final Production	11/13 Individual Reviews Final Production	11/14	11/15
13	11/16	11/17 Small group reviews Final Production	11/18	11/19 Individual Reviews Final Production	11/20 Individual Reviews Final Production	11/21	11/22
14	11/23	11/24 **Group Pin-Up** Draft Review Full Presentation Set	11/25	11/26 **Thanksgiving Break**	11/27	11/28	11/29
15	11/30	12/1 Final Production Drawings / Renderings / Videos	12/2	12/3 **Project #2 Final Review** Deliverables TBD / Details TBD	12/4 **Project #2 Final Review** Deliverables TBD / Details TBD	12/5	12/6

STUDIO POLICIES

Attendance:

Class will meet on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. To facilitate attendance across different time-zones, class meetings will be regulated as follow: students in time-zones from UTC to UTC+8 will be required to attend studio sessions from 4am to 7am (EST); students in time-zones from UTC-7 to UTC-1 will be required to attend studio sessions from 12pm to 4pm (EST). Every student, regardless of their time-zone, will be required to attend all-class sessions scheduled from 11am to 12pm (EST). Due to the difficulties of the current COVID-19 pandemic, attendance will not be used as a basis for grading. It is important to note that for online classes logging in is not sufficient indication of attendance. Active participation is required. Examples of active participation are: discussion boards, submitting or completing an assignment/project in Blackboard or through email.

Preparation and Effective Use of Studio Time:

Students are expected to log-in to studio meetings fully prepared for each day. This means that you have done the appropriate reading, research, analysis, and/or design development to keep your project moving forward; you are prepared for desk crits, reviews and digital pin-ups by generating drawings, 3d models, etc. and to describe the current state of your work. Because of the limited hours of access to studio you are strongly encouraged to use effective time-management strategies. Studio is a setting for shared and individual learning. You are encouraged to discuss studio work with your classmates taking advantage of the shared resources and platforms of engagement made available to the class (digital pin-up boards, studio blog, shared chat-rooms etc…).

Class Discussions:

Students are expected to participate actively in all class discussions: several avenues of participation are made available, both as direct verbal presentations as well as asynchronous written submissions. Students can select their preferred methodology as long as they actively participate in the development of the studio research.

Online Etiquette:

Students participating remotely are expected to do so as if they were in the classroom. They will be expected to have their webcam on and to be called on as if in a face-to-face class. To maintain a clear line of communication during all-class meetings, students should use the 'raise hand' function to ask questions and refrain from interrupting the class. Faculty may wish to download and review the "chat" transcript

from each class session. Please review the resource at the ITS Answers page for additional information on this.

<u>Use of Class Materials and Recordings:</u>
Original class materials (handouts, assignments, tests, etc.) and recordings of class sessions are the intellectual property of the course instructor. You may download these materials for your use in this class. However, you may not provide these materials to other parties (e.g., web sites, social media, other students) without permission. Doing so is a violation of intellectual property law and of the student code of conduct.

<u>GRADING STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES:</u>

Letter grades will be assigned to each project/assignment using a standard 4.0 grading scale following the reference below:
- Project #1 Mid-Review: 5%
- Project #1 Final Submission: 15%
- Project #2 Mid-Review: 20%
- Project #2 Final Submission: 50%
- Participation and Communication: 10%

The grade of each project will be made per its ability to meet stated assignment objectives and the instructor's judgment. In addition the grade can include the instructors assessment of individual growth, overall effort, and contribution to the studio's shared learning through discussions in class, during pin-up reviews, and in the field. For this course, successful work will combine a demonstrated commitment to the course material; consistent effort to learn from the instructors, others, and yourself; and an exhibition of care (through craft, repeated efforts, and willingness to take risks) in the design process. The production of facile work, an unwillingness to experiment, or the presentation of a carefree attitude will be reflected in the project grades.

In conformance with the policy of the School of Architecture, the following criteria will be used in evaluating studio work and assigning grades. This text is taken from a statement published each year in the School of Architecture's Rules and Regulations:

A: Performance of superior quality; intellectually, formally, and technically. There is clear evidence of genuine talent and architectural insight. Reserved for work that is extremely sound and not merely flashy.

B: Performance of good quality that has aesthetic merit and technical competence, although some problems are noted. Work reflects a solid commitment to the learning process and an understanding of the issues.

C: Performance of acceptable quality that meets the basic goals of the exercise, is presented in a complete manner and does not contain serious errors of judgment or omission.

D: Performance of inferior quality that may reflect a conscientious effort on the part of the student, but contains many serious errors of judgment, lacks aesthetic skill and/or is incomplete in presentation. The work did not measure up to the instructional goals in several areas.

F: Performance that is seriously deficient in merit and effort; given to those projects that reflect a lack of class attendance, significant incompleteness and/or lack of interest in the subject material.

If students elect to work in groups for any of the assignments, the group will be given one grade for each project, with each individual member of the group receiving an additional plus or minus 0 to 10 points, depending on their commitment to the group work.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Syracuse University's Academic Integrity Policy reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy defines our expectations for academic honesty and holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit. Students should understand that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific expectations, as well as about university-wide academic integrity expectations. The policy governs appropriate citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. The policy also prohibits students from submitting the same work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. Under the policy, students found in violation are subject to grade sanctions determined by the course instructor and non-grade sanctions determined by the School or College where the course is offered as described in the Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric. Syracuse University students are required to read an online summary of the University's academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check- in on MySlice. All academic integrity expectations that apply to in-person studio courses also apply to online studios. In this

course, all work submitted for reviews must be yours alone. For more information and the complete policy, see http://academicintegrity.syr.edu.

DISCRIMINATION OR HARRASSMENT

The University does not discriminate and prohibits harassment or discrimination related to any protected category including creed, ethnicity, citizenship, sexual orientation, national origin, sex, gender, pregnancy, disability, marital status, age, race, color, veteran status, military status, religion, sexual orientation, domestic violence status, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression or perceived gender.

Any complaint of discrimination or harassment related to any of these protected bases should be reported to Sheila Johnson-Willis, the University's Chief Equal Opportunity & Title IX Officer. She is responsible for coordinating compliance efforts under various laws including Titles VI, VII, IX and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. She can be contacted at Equal Opportunity, Inclusion, and Resolution Services, 005 Steele Hall, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 13244-1120; by email: titleix@syr.edu; or by telephone: 315-443-0211.

DISABILITY-RELATED ACCOMODATIONS

Syracuse University values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. There may be aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion and full participation in this course. I invite any student to contact me to discuss strategies and/or accommodations (academic adjustments) that may be essential to your success and to collaborate with the Center for Disability Resources (CDR) in this process.

If you would like to discuss disability-accommodations or register with CDR, please visit Center for Disability Resources. Please call (315) 443-4498 or email disabilityresources@syr.edu for more detailed information.

The CDR is responsible for coordinating disability-related academic accommodations and will work with the student to develop an access plan. Since academic accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact CDR as soon as possible to begin this process.

FAITH TRADITION OBSERVANCES

Syracuse University's Religious Observances Policy recognizes the diversity of faiths represented in the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their traditions. Under the policy,

students should have an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors no later than the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes and by the submission deadline for flexibility formatted classes. Student deadlines are posted in MySlice under Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances/Add a Notification.

UNIVERSITY POLICY REGARDING EMAIL

Syracuse University has established email as a primary vehicle for official communication with students, faculty, and staff. Emergency notifications, educational dialog, research, and general business correspondence are all consistently enhanced in institutions of higher learning where email policies exist and are supported by procedures, practice, and culture.

An official email address is established and assigned by Information Technology Services (ITS) for each registered student, as well as for all active faculty and staff members. All University communications sent via email will be sent to this address. Faculty and staff members must use the officially established University email address to communicate with students registered in their classes. Keep in mind that student records sent to a non-syr.edu email address may create a FERPA violation (See the complete policy at Syracuse University Email Policy).

THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) sets forth requirements regarding the privacy of student records. FERPA governs both the access to and release of those records, known as education records, and the information they contain. Under FERPA, faculty have a legal responsibility to protect the confidentiality of student records. For additional information about FERPA and Syracuse University's FERPA policy, see Compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act or contact the Office of the Registrar (315.443.3535).