

4.154

Architecture Design Option Studio

Architecture as Landscape

Fall 2016

Instructors:

Fabrizio Barozzi

Jongwan Kwon TF

Syllabus



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Credits: 0-10-11 G

Room: 3-401

Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1-5pm

Prerequisites: 4.153

1. Abstract

The studio investigates the boundaries between architecture and landscape, and examines the relationship between the specific condition of a place and the autonomous nature of architecture.

The project site is located in Granada, Spain, in a place called “Carmen de los Catalanes”, within the grounds of the Alhambra.

The studio suggests to design the new Museum of the Alhambra with the aim to determine method of physical and spatial intervention in a region that is complex and sensitive in terms of historical, environmental, and urbanistic aspects.

2. Introduction

The boundaries between architecture and landscape are labile.

Landscape understood in all its facets – physical, material, atmospheric, mental, and economic – influences the configuration of architecture. The architecture, in its turn, has the capacity to transform, modify and alter the landscape in which it is inserted. Each needs the other: there is a mutual feedback between landscape and architecture.

The role of architecture consists not only creating objects to house human activities but also to form a whole, an artificial landscape for social relations. The process of constructing an artificial landscape requires interpretation of a place and different realities that shape it: physical, material, atmospheric, and imaginary.

The architecture must absorb all of these various dimensions and translate it into a project that will be specific to the site and bring out the uniqueness of things and their diversity through an empathic, perceptive, and emotional relationship with the surrounding environment.

The course will investigate the boundaries between architecture and landscape; it will explore the relationship between the specific condition of a place and the autonomous nature of an architecture.

3. Context

The project site is located in Granada, Spain, in a place called “Carmen de los Catalanes”, within the grounds of the Alhambra.

The “Carmen” is a traditional housing typology surrounded by a high wall that separates the house from the street and includes a small orchard or a garden. It is typical that the neighbourhoods exist on the hills of the city such as Albaicín and Realejo.

The Carmen is a fundamental element of the urban pattern and the historical richness of Granada as a patrimonial city.

The project site, “Carmen de los Catalanes”, is located exactly between the borders of the ‘Realejo’ neighbourhood and the ‘Bosques de la Alhambra’ which is the forested area surrounding the Alhambra. The total area of the site is 207,528 sq ft.

The “Carmen de los Catalanes” is a large garden, decadent, stratified, and conditioned by the traces of historical buildings and its rugged terrain. It is a unique enclave with a Romantic air characterized by the integration of perspectives and the intimacy which are traditional features of Granada’s nineteenth-century typology of the “Carmen”.

However, “Carmen de los Catalanes” exists in a state of semi-abandonment. The site has walls and foundations of historical buildings, pools from the Nazarí period and some areas of gardens and orchards. Most of the surface of the Carmen is dotted with small natural caves formerly used as dungeons.

It was originally a private area but has been recently acquired by the Alhambra patronage in order to protect and preserve the surrounding of the Alhambra and offer it a public use. Since then, the ways of reinventing this important area have been discussed; however, all speculations were considered unsuccessful.

4. Program

The studio suggests to design the new Museum of the Alhambra in the area of El Carmen de los Catalanes.

The Museum of the Alhambra currently occupies part of the ground floor of the Palace of Charles V, and the permanent exhibition presents only a part of the museum's collection, primarily pieces related to the medieval Islamic period.

The Museum of the Alhambra, as an institution, is part of the heritage of the Alhambra, and has its roots in the nineteenth century, with the founding of the Museum of Antiquities of the Alhambra. In the course of its history and successive evolutions, it has been housed in different parts of the monumental heritage complex, in such emblematic locations as the Tower of Comares and the Courtyard of the Lions.

Recently, there has been a debate about creating a larger and more comprehensive museum of the Alhambra that would bring both preservation and display of archaeological treasures from across different historical periods of the Alhambra.

In addition, a number of possible sites for the new museum were listed. One of the proposals was to extend the existing museum to the entire area of the Palace of Charles V, which at present also houses the Museum of Fine Arts and other temporary exhibition spaces. This would entail the Museum of Fine Arts to be relocated in the city center's military building or to the outskirts of Granada.

To date, the possibility of locating the Museum of the Alhambra in El Carmen de los Catalanes has never been explored.

This idea carries opportunities to transform the site into a key locus of the city's public and cultural life with its proximity to many important cultural places; the Rodriguez Acosta Foundation, the Manuel de Falla Auditorium, the Torres Bermejás complex, the Alamedas, and the Alhambra. Potentially it can also generate significant synergies of uses which would be a powerful stimulus to the public and cultural value of this hill that is adjacent to the Alhambra.

However, due to the fragile environment and the exceptional heritage value of the Bosque de la Alhambra forest, inserting new architecture is challenging.

The aim of the studio is precisely to reflect on these critical issues and examine methods of physical and spatial intervention into a complex and sensitive region in terms of historical, environmental and urbanistic aspects.

The total project area will be approximately 32,290 sq ft and the program will consist of multi scale interior and exterior exhibition spaces, a restoration and conservation workshop, an archive, educational spaces, an entrance foyer, a café, a small auditorium and technical and service areas.

5. Subject Objectives

The project has to respect the patrimonial and environmental bonds and create new public spaces that open to the city and boost the collective and social use of this area. It must include studies of the potential of the existing topography to identify adequate exhibition and public spaces for the Museum of the Alhambra's collection.

Each student must precisely determine the project's location within the designated boundary. Each project must develop its own urban theme to praise the site, while decisions concerning architectural configuration and its spatial character will be defined by establishing the way to experience the surrounding environment.

The project defined by the student's decisions should be respectful to the existing conditions and integrate with the "Carmen de los Catalanes" configuring an architectural sequence closely linked to the experience of the place.

We will work with physical models, images, and drawings to study the relations with the existing conditions, the transformation of a topography, and programmatic requirements, and exhibition to define a microcosm in which architecture and landscape can meet needs.

6. Studio Travel

With collaboration and support from the MIT's Aga Khan program, the studio organizes to visit Granada, Cordoba, and Madrid. The purpose of this travel is to discover the studio's site and learn how historical masterpieces such as the Alhambra, Mosque of Cordoba, and a number of contemporary architecture have constructed an artificial landscape that perfectly integrate with its context.

Studio travel schedule: Flying out on October 6th evening and returning on 11-12th (to be confirmed).

7. Studio Meetings

The studio will meet every Tuesday and Thursdays. Jongwan Kwon will be in every session.

Fabrizio Barozzi will be present in the following sessions and during the studio travel:

September: 8, 13, 15, 20, 22

October: 13, 18, 20

November: 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 29

December: 1, 6, 8, 12

Mid Review 11/10
Penultimate Review 11/29
Final Review 12/12

8. Requirements

- Attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in the studio (without early notice, failure to attend the class will affect the final grade).
- Advanced knowledge of graphic representation tools, and 2d and 3d modeling.
- Assignments and deadlines are set up to be completed in time. It is required that every student meets the defined standards and able to defend their project publicly.

9. Evaluation Criteria

- Attendance: 5
- Research: 10
- Process and Pin ups: 20
- Mid-term: 25
- Final Presentation: 40

The grading will consider individual growth over the semester, ability to communicate clearly and objectively, and originality.

10. Grading Definition

A - Exceptionally good performance demonstrating a superior understanding of the subject matter, a foundation of extensive knowledge, and a skillful use of concepts and/or materials.

B - Good performance demonstrating capacity to use the appropriate concepts, a good understanding of the subject matter, and an ability to handle the problems and materials encountered in the subject.

C - Adequate performance demonstrating an adequate understanding of the subject matter, an ability to handle relatively simple problems, and adequate preparation for moving on to more advanced work in the field.

D - Minimally acceptable performance demonstrating at least partial familiarity with

the subject matter and some capacity to deal with relatively simple problems, but also demonstrating deficiencies serious enough to make it inadvisable to proceed further in the field without additional work.

F - Failed. This grade also signifies that the student must repeat the subject to receive credit.

Final Studio Deliverables: Grades will not be posted for students to view on their grade report until their work has been archived. The projects need to be properly prepared and formatted, and delivered to the Archiving TA. Studio instructors will collect project archives from each student immediately following the review. Detailed requirements and instructions for formatting will be posted to CRON, the Department website, and sent to students at the beginning of the semester.

Academic Integrity + Honesty: MIT's expectations and policies regarding academic integrity should be read carefully and adhered to diligently: <http://integrity.mit.edu>

11. Reading Sources

a. Historical Maps and General Cartography

- Council of the Alhambra and the Generalife. Investigation Resources
<http://www.alhambra-patronato.es/ria/pages/alhambra-browse>
- Interactive Map of Alhambra's Site
https://abierta.ugr.es/la_alhambra/mapa/

b. Granada, History and Urbanism

- Bosque Maurel, Joaquín. 1962. *Geografía urbana de Granada*.
Editorial: CSIC, Zaragoza [Edt. facsímil Universidad de Granada. Granada, 1988]
- Gallego Burín, Antonio. 1961. *Granada. Guía artística e histórica de la ciudad*.
Editorial: Fundación Rodríguez-Acosta, Madrid
- Seco de Lucena Paredes, Luis. 1975. *La Granada nazari del siglo XV*.
Editorial: Patronato de la Alhambra, Granada

c. The "Carmen" as urban typology

- Tito Rojo, José. 1997. *Restauración en Arquitectura del Paisaje. Ensayo metodológico aplicado al Carmen de los Mártires y otros jardines granadinos del siglo XIX*.
Tesis doctoral inédita. Universidad de Granada, Granada
- Tito Rojo, José. 1998. "Permanencia y cambio en los jardines de la Granada morisca (1492-1571). *Los cármenes y el paisaje urbano*", en: Felipe II, el Rey íntimo. Jardín

y Naturaleza en el siglo XVI. Editorial: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V. Aranjuez

- Calatrava Escobar, Juan y Tito Rojo, José. 2011. *Jardín y paisaje. Miradas cruzadas*. Editorial: Abada Editoriales, Madrid
- Seco de Lucena Paredes, Luis. 1971. *Cármenes de Granada*. Editorial: Obra Cultural de la Caja de Ahorros de Granada, Granada
- Council of the Alhambra and the Generalife. The Catalans' Villa
<http://www.alhambra-patronato.es/index.php/Carmen-de-los-Catalanes/187/0/>

d. Carmen Rodríguez Acosta Foundation

- Moneo, Rafael; Fernández, Francisco. 2001. *El Carmen. Rodríguez Acosta*. Editorial: Fundación Rodríguez Acosta, Granada
- Rivas López, Esteban José. *El carmen de la Fundación Rodríguez-Acosta. Una indagación gráfica*. <http://ojs.cc.upv.es/index.php/EGA/article/view/1115/1189>
- Rodríguez Acosta Foundation
<http://www.fundacionrodriguezacosta.com>
- Carmen of the Rodríguez-Acosta Foundation
<http://kauharquitectos.blogspot.com.es/2013/02/carmen-rodriguez-acosta.html>

e. Museums

- Museum of the Alhambra
http://www.museosdeandalucia.es/cultura/museos/MALH/index.jsp?redirect=S2_2.jsp
- DOMUS browser
<http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/cultura/WEBDomus/domus.do?acron=MALH&lng=es>

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