

SCI-Arc Future Initiatives Master of Design Research Degree

Southern
California
Institute
of
Architecture

PETER ZELLNER
DAVID BERGMAN
SCIFI COORDINATORS

Looking at cities through the lens of architecture, the Future Initiatives Program at the Southern California Institute of Architecture develops innovative tools for reimagining urban environments.

Participants focus on identifying adaptive and holistic—rather than rigid and segmented—responses to economic, social and environmental pressures.

As a center for research and discussion, the program connects academics, theorists and architects with public agencies and those in private development to generate debate around the role of cities and urban systems. The Future Initiatives program promotes and extends its academic mission nationally and internationally via its publications, public forums, exhibitions and competitions.

Established in 2005 to complement other post-professional programs offered at SCI-Arc, Future Initiatives draws on the resources of the school, its faculty and the surrounding community. Additionally, it draws on the expertise of a global network of peers established to support its mission.

Completion of the one-year program leads to a Master of Design Research (MDesR) degree in City Design, Planning and Policy.

The SCIFI program is open to students who hold a professional degree in architecture or a bachelor's degree or equivalent in any field; it requires attendance in the fall, spring and summer terms.

Future Initiatives connects city-makers, public agencies and architects in order to imagine new possibilities for cities.

CURRICULUM

Future Initiatives provides an integrated curricular focus on urban-scale issues. It is positioned as a center for the discussion of contingent and variable planning strategies and the development of new tools for urban research and design. Combining intensive research into the near-term future of cities with the use of open source design tools, Future Initiatives aims to invent new ways of modeling and testing variable design scenarios.

PROGRAM SEQUENCE

Working over three sequenced terms, Future Initiatives students develop solution-seeking research and design grounded in the study of the history of urban and regional development methods, city planning and city management tools. In the fall term the Future Initiatives program begins by introducing students to fundamental planning problems by operating at the scale of the urban parcel. In the spring term our research and design work quickly jump up in scale to encompass a series of complex issues associated with work within the urban district. Finally, in the summer term the program investigates the wide variety of issues associated with regional urban planning. By moving from the unique and particular to the global and generic, SCIFI students gain expertise in the subject of city making through a

comprehensive, nuanced understanding of design at all scales.

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE INTEGRATION

SCIFI Students integrate skills from across SCI-Arc's programs, including design technologies, cultural studies and hard technology applications. The SCIFI program is calibrated to incrementally build research skills, urban design expertise and unique strategic thinking about cities and urban regions. The sequencing of context and city-scaled based teaching and intensive workshop-based learning is intended to inculcate understanding of city formation along with mastery of urban research methodologies and design tools.

FINAL PROJECTS AND RESEARCH

The program culminates in the production of directed design or research projects. Working individually with SCIFI's core and visiting faculty, students generate deliverables—individually and as part of a group—that form the basis of a dissertation quality research portfolio. It is envisioned that students will be able to apply these experiences as part of an ongoing dialogue. ♦



A New Infrastructure competition exhibition opening.

SCI-ARC FUTURE INITIATIVES

(L-R) Thom Mayne, Gail Goldberg, Eric Owen Moss

A New Infrastructure competition jury.

Future Initiatives conducts studios, hosts competitions and public forums.

RECENT AND UPCOMING STUDIOS

The studios progress in three stages. The fall studio is focused on Los Angeles, the spring studio nationally, the summer internationally.

LA Civic Center (Fall 2008)

Instructors: David Bergman, Peter Zellner

Students developed a reuse plan for the site of the old State Civic Center Building in Downtown Los Angeles. This studio introduced students to the core ambitions of the program, its tools and city formation by working for one semester on the ground in Los Angeles, the paradigmatic global city. The studio placed particular emphasis on understanding and translating urban policy and management into tangible urban arrangements, with an emphasis on producing new urban models and policy proposals for LA.

Detroit—Empty Density (Spring 2009)

Instructor: Andrew Zago

The program turned its attention to the district scale, working with guest instructor Andrew Zago in Detroit. The spring studio traveled to Detroit to create proposals for the development of a four block stretch of Woodward Avenue in Midtown. The goal of these proposals was to use architecture, rather than planning, as a spark for urban imagination and as a provocation for discourse on the city's future.

Beijing (Summer 2009)

Instructors: David Bergman, Peter Zellner

Research focused on the regional effects of Beijing's Five-Year Plan. Students investigated issues in the context of China's globalization and focused on the use of the plan and its consequences for contemporary urbanization. Using tools such as Scenario Planning, students attempted to unravel both the logics of themed zoning and the legacy of the 2008 Olympics. The results were exhibited in China as part of "Divergent Convergence: Designing China," a ground-breaking exhibition of academic research and design work by 15 leading Western schools of Architecture, including

Harvard, Yale, MIT, Cornell and the Architectural Association.

SCI-Arc's contribution followed student travel to China, led by David Bergman, in conjunction with a studio led in Los Angeles by Peter Zellner. The studios work was included in a Beijing exhibition curated by Joseph Grima, director of Storefront for Art and Architecture, along with Jiang Jun, editor of *Urban China* magazine, Charlie Koolhaas, artist and writer, and Qin Lei, editor *Domus China* Magazine.

Los Angeles Boulevards (Fall 2009)

Instructors: David Bergman, Peter Zellner

The scale, diversity and uses of boulevards in Los Angeles—an issue particular to the city's development—are investigated. The project was conceived in collaboration with the City of LA's Urban Design Studio.

Urban Rivers (Spring 2010)

Instructor: Laurie Olin

Students join leading urban landscape architect Laurie Olin, who frequently incorporates water systems in his work, for a studio on the status of urban rivers in North America.

TBA (Summer 2010)

The studio course will study a regional urban problem in the context of an international location.

COMPETITIONS

To stimulate public discussion and action, SCIFI hosts competitions and exhibitions directed at finding solutions to urban problems. The program's inaugural competition focusing on Los Angeles transit drew an international response.

A New Infrastructure: Innovative Transit Solutions for Los Angeles (2009)

SCIFI staged an open ideas competition invited architects, engineers, urban planners and students to propose new ideas for LA County's transit infrastructure. The Future Initiatives competition, developed in partnership with The

Architect's Newspaper, encouraged entrants to develop solutions that dramatically reconfigured the relationship between transit systems, public space and urban redevelopment. Competitors were encouraged to work within the parameters of LA County's Measure R, which provided major new funding for infrastructure. More than 70 entries from five countries were received. The competition jury included Thom Mayne, of Morphosis Architects; Aspet Davidian, director of Project Engineering Facilities at LA Metro; Neil Denari, of Neil M. Denari Architects; Gail Goldberg, director of Planning for the City of Los Angeles; Roland Genick, urban designer for the Exposition Line; Cecilia V. Estolano, CEO CRA/LA-Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles; Eric Owen Moss, director of SCI-Arc and founder of Eric Owen Moss Architects, and Geoff Wardle, director of advanced mobility research at the Art Center College of Design.

Following an exhibit of the winning entries in the student and professional categories, public forums were held at Metro Headquarters, the MAK Center at the Schindler House, GOOD Space, and as part of the AIA Mobius/ Dwell Conference at the Los Angeles Convention Center. The competition launched numerous other conversations about the future of transit infrastructure in Los Angeles. The entries and surrounding commentary are the subject of a book published by the SCI-Arc Press. The results of New Infrastructure competition are also being exhibited as a part of Otra/Another, an annual architecture symposium based in the U.S./ Mexico border cites of San Diego and Tijuana.

PUBLIC FORUMS

Each semester the Future Initiatives program sponsors a series of public forums in order to generate debate and dialogue around the future of cities and urban regions.

The City after the Economy (Fall 2008)

This symposium explored the urban consequences of the fiscal downturn by asking

a panel of presenters and respondents to consider what urban design opportunities it might open up. The status of urban growth and redevelopment was viewed in light of effects regulation of financial markets might have on real estate, development, urban culture, planning and architecture. An often singular conversation around issues of capital and its movement was expanded to a multivalent one embracing cultural production, aesthetics, ecology and social movements. The panel included presentations by David Bergman (The Credit Crisis and the City); Amale Andraos and Dan Wood, founders and principals of Work AC, New York, (49 Cities); and Rene Peralta, architect and founder of Generica, Tijuana, and associate professor at Woodbury University, (Mimetic Acts of Urbanism). Guests invited to offer response to those presentations were Joshua Decter, director of Public Art Studies Program at USC Roski School of Fine Arts; Eric Owen Moss, director of SCI-Arc and principal at Eric Owen Moss Architects; Kevin L. Ratner, president of Forest City Residential West, Inc., and Stephanie Smith, founder of Ecoshack. Moderating the exchange was Peter Zellner, SCIFI coordinator.

Neville Mars: From Book to Buildings (2009)

China-based Future Initiatives Network member Neville Mars addressed the potential and problems of the practice of architecture in China. Mars, director of the Dynamic City Foundation in Beijing, presented a range of projects, from commercial architecture and urban design to documentaries, art installations, urban research and creative writing. Throughout, his presentation at SCI-Arc, Mars shared his passion for China's evolving metropolitan centers. The Dynamic City Foundation specialized in rapidly changing environments in an effort to combat what he has called "the present dream and the future nightmare" of people-packed mega-cities in China.

Midtown Detroit (April 2009)

At the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, SCIFI students led by faculty member Andrew

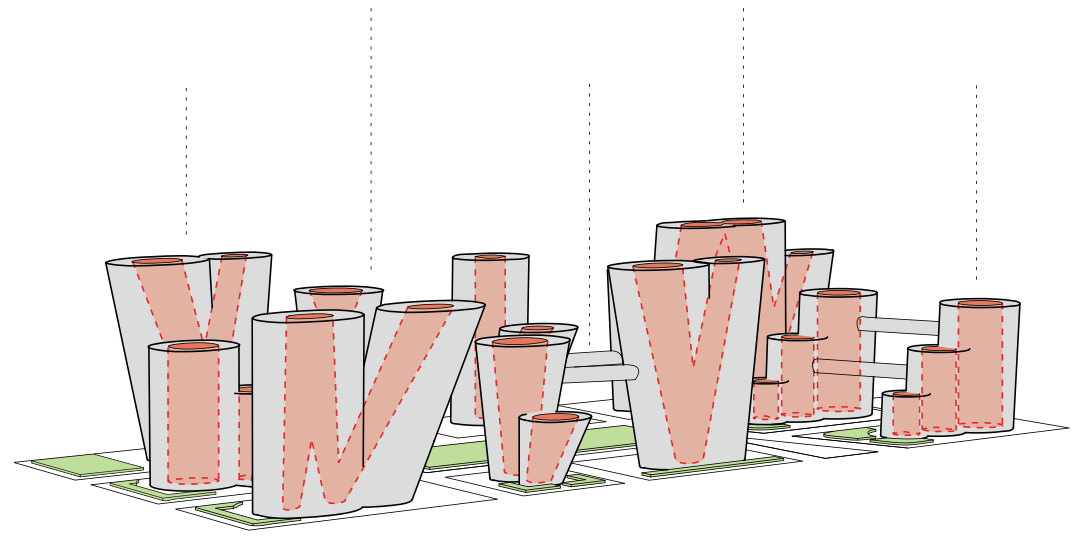
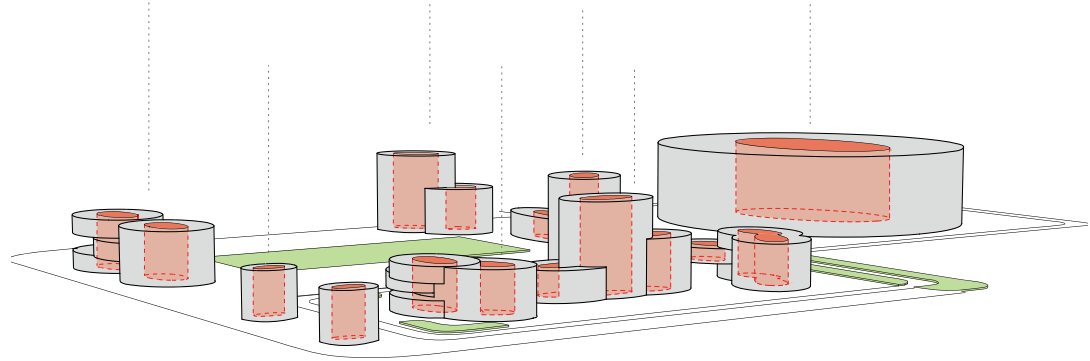
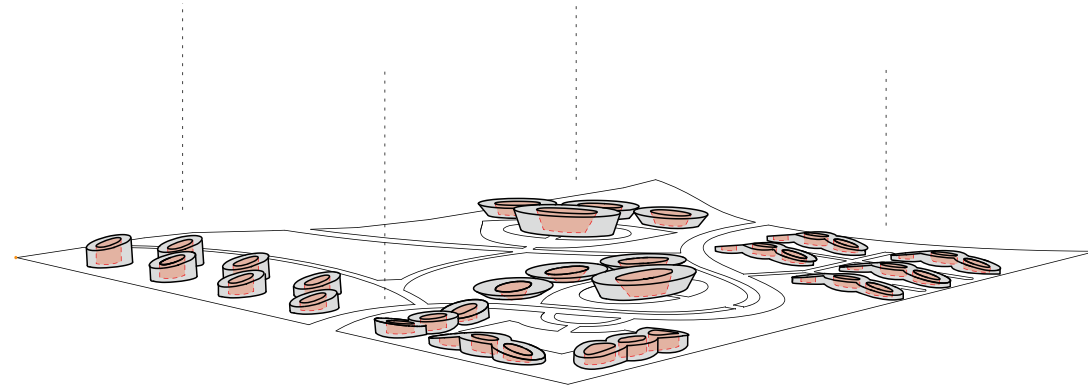
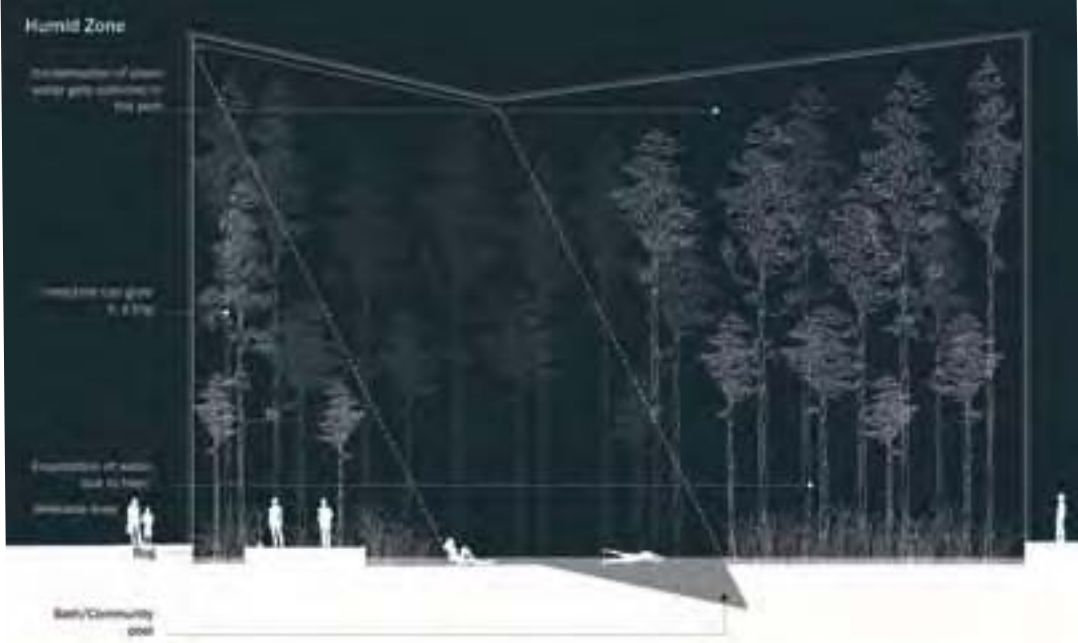
Zago presented new urban visions for the city's Midtown. Following introductory remarks by SCIFI Program Coordinator Peter Zellner and Zago (the architect who designed the MOCAD building) three student teams shared their proposals for the development of a four block stretch of Woodward Avenue. A public discussion followed the presentations and the students' work was exhibited at MOCAD.

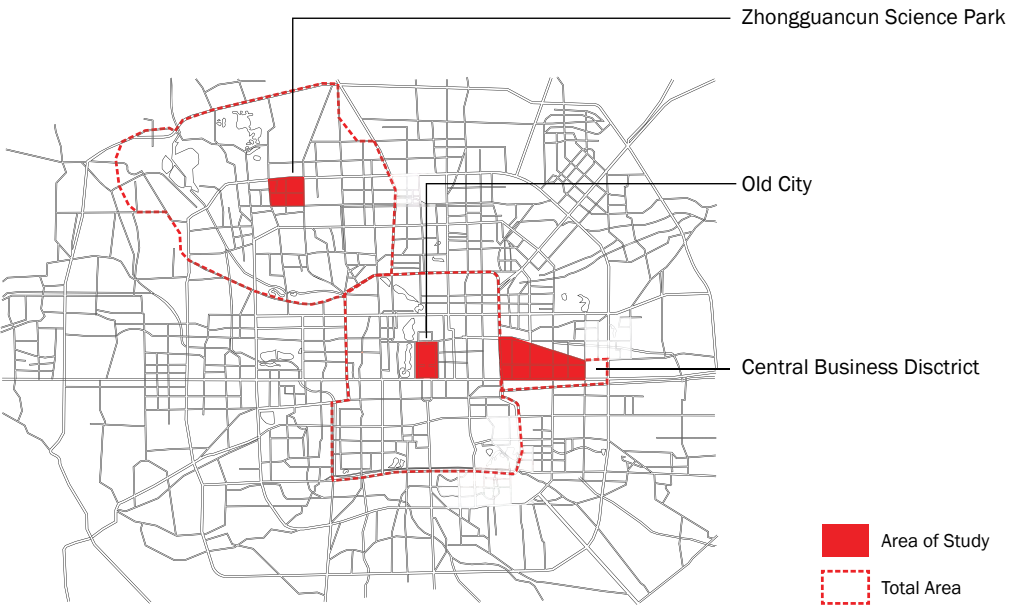
From Mumbai to Los Angeles (September 2009)

In a roundtable discussion, Indian urbanist Prathima Manohar detailed the infrastructure and transit issues Mumbai is experiencing in the face of dramatic population growth and escalating poverty. Manohar is founder of The Urban Vision, a Mumbai-based foundation furthering thinking on sustainable urban development. The discussion included a comparison of urban development in Mumbai and Los Angeles, focusing on the re-densification of sprawling cities, the challenges of implementing mass transit in established urban zones, and the effects of megacities on climate change. The discussion was presented in partnership with the Architect's Newspaper. ♦

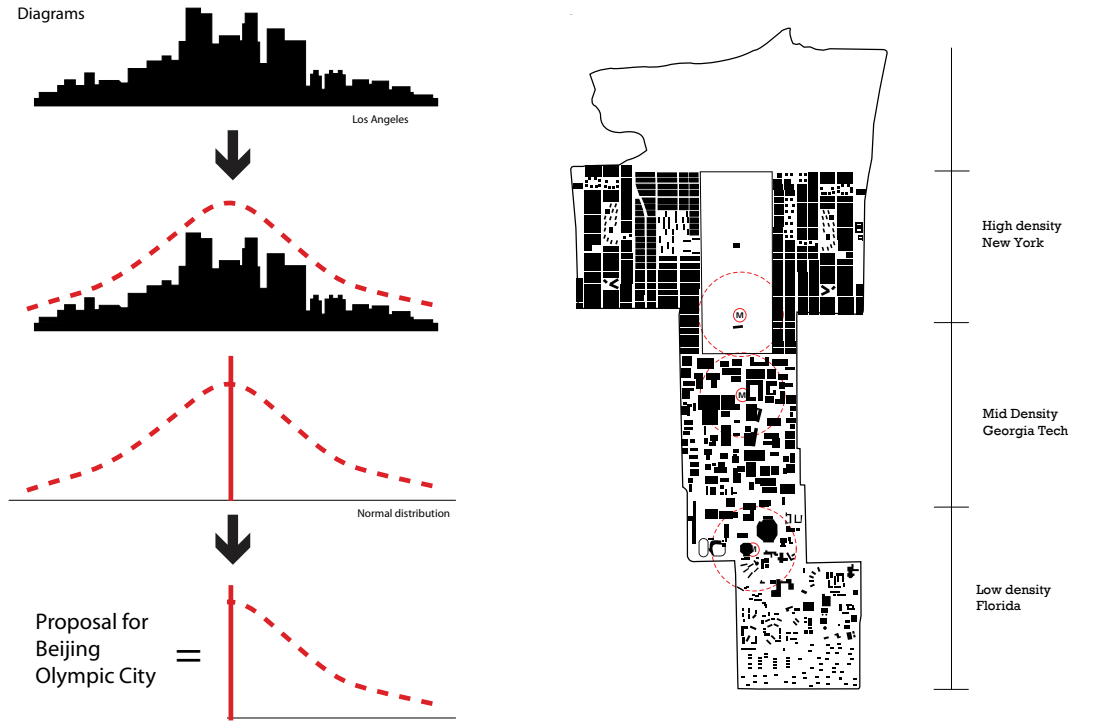


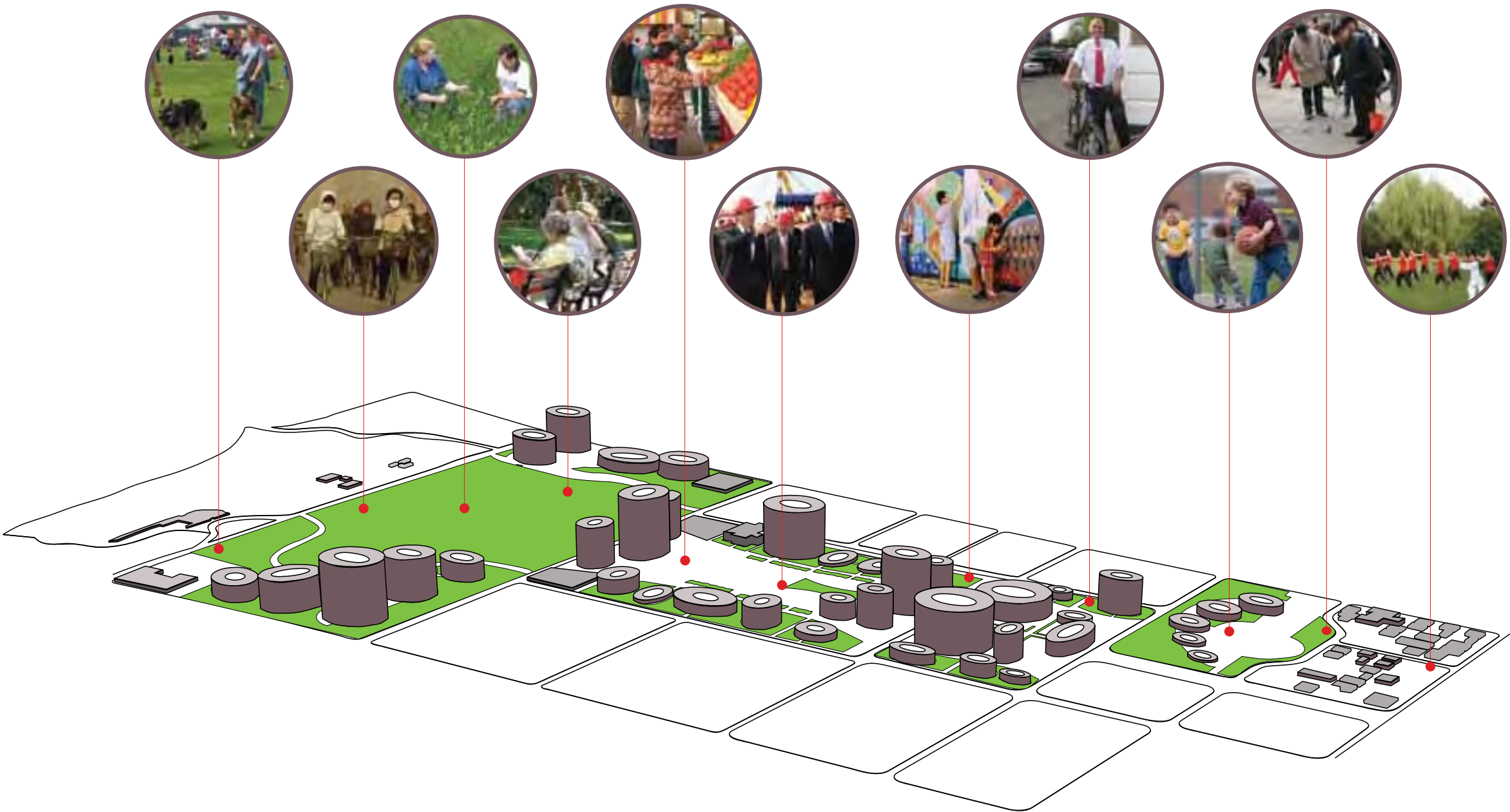


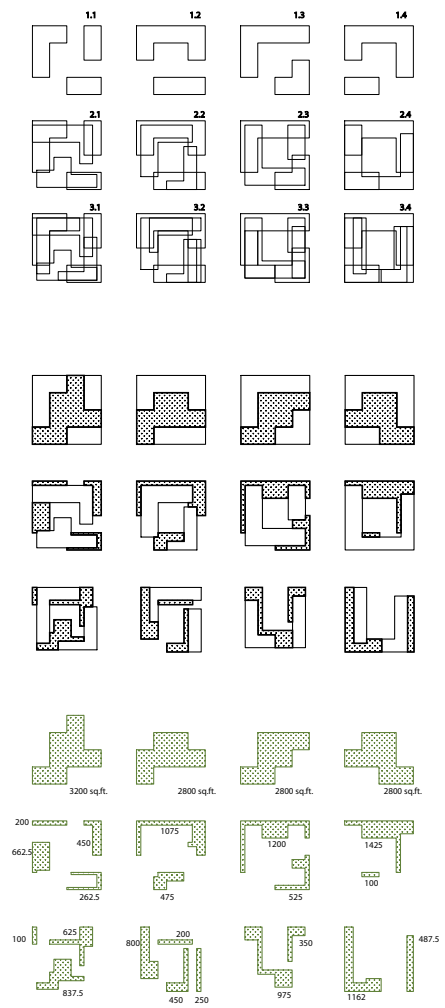
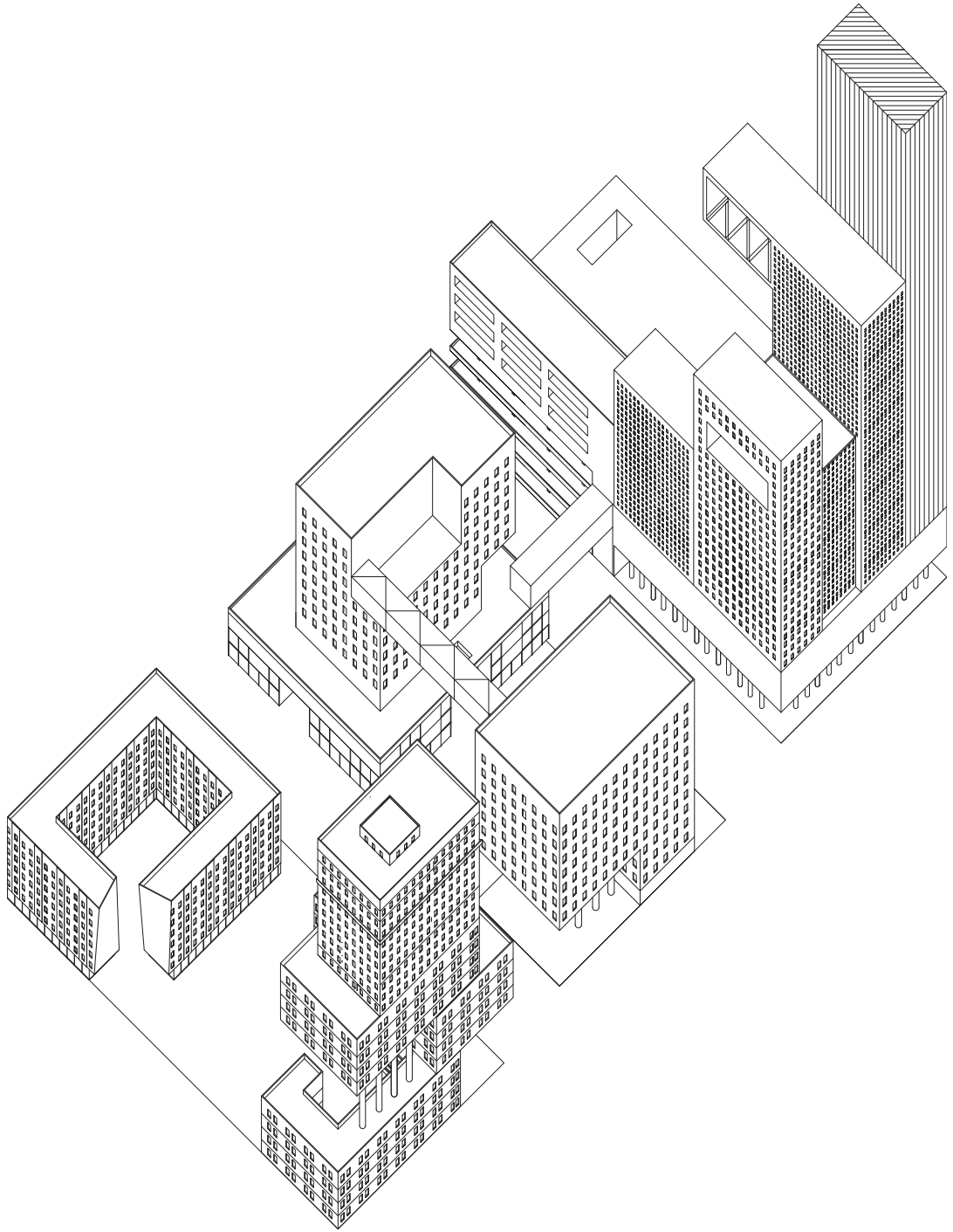




Diagrams







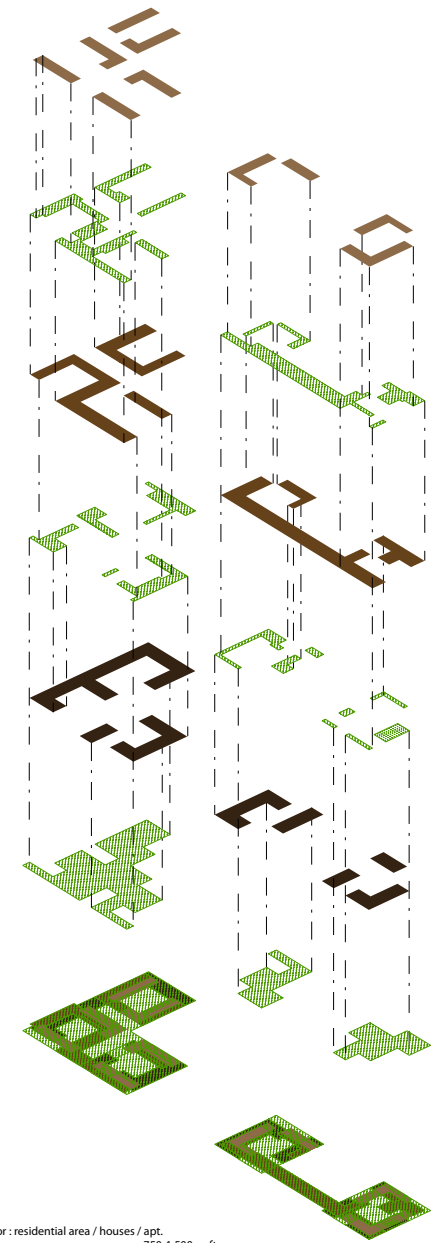
1st Floor : commercial area / retails / restaurants / grocery / store
 approx. area = 800-2,800 sq.ft.
 - public space
 - facing courtyard
 - approachable
 - 50% of area in each unit touching open space
 - 20 ft. width
 - stand alone
 - can be removed to create alley / walkway / open space on Ground Fl.

2nd Floor : semi-public area / office space / bridge parking
 approx. area = 800-2,400 sq.ft.
 - semi-public space
 - stand over retails
 - create shade / shadow / indoor space underneath
 - 40% area of area in each unit touching open space
 - 15-20 ft. width
 - bridging / connecting single unit on 2nd fl.

3rd Floor : residential area / houses / apt.
 approx. area = 750-1,500 sq.ft.
 - private space
 - stand over semi-public space
 - create shade / shadow / indoor space underneath
 - 30% area of area in each unit touching open space
 - 10-15 ft. width
 - bridging / connecting single unit on 3rd fl.

Parking Lot / Bridging System
 - Cross over alley / street / open space = connecting each cluster
 - 1 parking bldg for _____ units
 - 1 parking lot for _____ persons
 - ___ parking lot(s) for 1 family

Open Space / Courtyard
 - each cluster must have courtyard on the ground fl.
 - connected with courtyard from the next cluster and create open space in between clusters



SCIFI offers innovative teaching in a collaborative environment backed by a global network.

SCIFI GLOBAL NETWORK

MEMBERS 2010–2011

The SCI-Arc Future Initiatives Network is a global peer-based academic research council dedicated to supporting the Future Initiatives program's academic mission. The network promotes innovative teaching and content delivery. Members interact with the SCIFI studio in person and via remote web-based conferencing tools.

Stan Allen

Dean, Princeton University School of Architecture
Principal, Stan Allen Architect, Princeton

Amale Andraos & Dan Wood

Founders and Principals, Work Architecture Company, New York
Adjunct Faculty, Princeton University School of Architecture

Jose Castillo

Principal of Arquitectura 911sc, Mexico City
Faculty, Universidad Iberoamericana
Faculty, School of Design of the University of Pennsylvania

Odile Decq

D.P.L.G. and D.E.S.S.-Urbanist
Founder and Principal, ODBC, Paris
Director, Ecole Special d'Architecture, Paris

Neil M. Denari

Principal, Neil M. Denari Architects
Professor, Architecture and Urban Design Department at UCLA

Joshua Decter

Director, Public Art Studies Program, USC Roski School of Fine Arts

David Fletcher

Principal, Fletcher Studio
Landscape Architecture and Urban Design
Adjunct Professor, Architecture, California College of the Arts

Roland Genick

Chief Architect, Parsons

Joseph Grima

Director, Storefront for Art and Architecture, New York

Mark Hinshaw

Principal and Director of Urban Design LMN Architects, Seattle

Jeffrey Johnson

Principal of SLAB Architecture PLLC, New York
Director, China Lab, GSAPP
Columbia University

Sam Lubell

The Architect's Newspaper – Editor, California Edition

Qingyun Ma

Dean, USC School of Architecture
Principal, MADA s.p.a.m., Shanghai / Beijing

Neville Mars

Architect and Chairman of the Dynamic City Foundation, Beijing

Thom Mayne

Founder and Principal, Morphosis, Los Angeles and

New York

Professor, UCLA Department of Architecture and Urban Design

Rene Peralta

Architect and Founder, Generica, Tijuana
Associate Professor, Woodbury University School of Architecture, San Diego

Wolf Prix

Founder and Principal, Coop Himmel(b)lau, Los Angeles and Vienna

Chris Reed

Principal, Stoss Landscape Urbanism, Boston
Design Critic in Landscape Architecture, Harvard University Graduate School of Design

Michel Rojkind

Principal, Michel Rojkind Arquitectos, Mexico City

Peter Trummer

Head of the Associative Design Research Program, Berlage Institute, Rotterdam

SCIFI COORDINATORS

Peter Zellner

Principal, ZELLNERPLUS Design
Planning Research

Peter Zellner is the founding principal of ZELLNERPLUS, a Los Angeles based architectural firm that has designed public and private art galleries, residences, institutional facilities and corporate spaces in Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York. Institutional spaces include the LA><ART, Sweeney Art Gallery for UC Riverside, the Redcat Lounge and Bar at Disney Concert Hall. Private clients include Napster, LAXART, Harris Lieberman, Maccarone Inc., Matthew Marks Gallery, Sony, Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects and Wallspace Gallery. Zellner is the author of numerous essays and publications including Hybrid Space (Thames & Hudson 2000) and the curator of exhibitions such as Sign as Surface (Artists Space 2003.) He holds a Master in Architecture from Harvard University (1999). At the Harvard GSD he was a participant in the Harvard Project on the City led by Rem Koolhaas. He received a Bachelor of Architecture with First Class Honors from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (1993) in Australia where he was a Faculty Member between 1994 and 1997. He has held Visiting Professorships in Architecture at UC Berkeley, FIU and USC.

David Bergman

SCIFI Coordinator
Principal, Metropolitan Research
and Economics

David Bergman is the principal of MR+E, a Los Angeles based consulting firm focused on economic analysis related to urban planning. He has participated in a broad range of economic development and planning projects. In particular, he has worked intensively on issues surrounding the formation of urban and regional development strategies and the role of culture industries in economic development. With a strong background in public policy analysis, and the communication of economic development goals to community stakeholders, Bergman's practice has centered on community plan and land use economics, redevelopment, economic impact analysis and culture industries. With over 20 years of planning and development experience he provides the program with a foundation in planning and project implementation based on his work in Southern California and internationally.

CORE AND VISITING FACULTY

Wes Jones

Principal, Jones, Partners:
Architecture

Eric Kahn

Principal, IDEA Office

Jeffrey Kipnis

SCI-Arc Visiting Faculty
Professor, Ohio State University

Andrew Zago

Principal, Zago Architecture

The Southern California Institute of Architecture is dedicated to educating architects who will imagine and shape the future. It is an independent, degree-granting institution offering undergraduate and graduate programs in architecture. Located in a quarter-mile long former freight depot in the Arts District in Downtown Los Angeles, the school is distinguished by its vibrant studio culture and emphasis on process. SCI-Arc's approximately 500 students and 80 faculty members—most of whom are practicing architects—work together to re-examine assumptions, create, explore and test the limits of architecture.

SCI-Arc values diversity and welcomes applicants who demonstrate the interest and ability necessary for the study of Architecture, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or physical abilities.

ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATIONS

SCIFI is open to applicants with a professional degree in Architecture or a Bachelor degree or equivalent in any field. SCIFI welcomes interdisciplinary applicants from fields such as architecture, planning, urban design, landscape architecture, real estate and geography.

Applications for admission to the 2010–2011 class are due on or before March 1, 2010. Late applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis. For information on applying to this program, please contact SCI-Arc's Admissions Office: 213.356.5320 or admissions@sciarc.edu.

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