

Official Course Title - Global/Local

Unofficial Course Title - Same As Above

Instructor - Christian Hubert (HubertC@newschool.edu)

Tuesdays, 12:00pm to 2:40pm

Spring 2008, CRN# 3751 (3 credits)

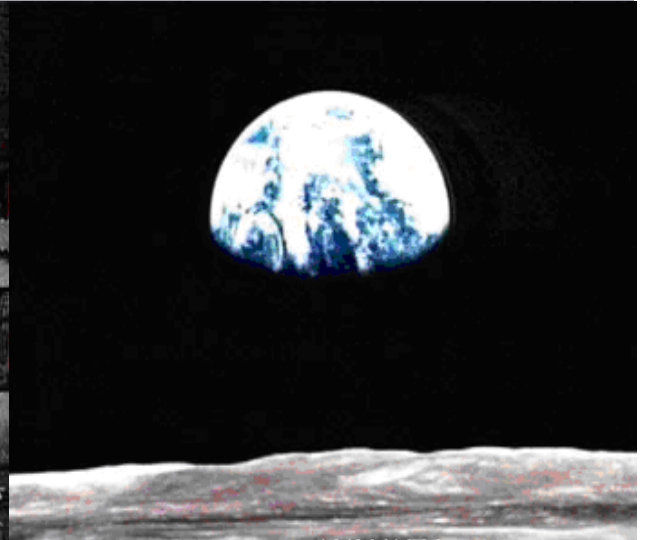


"think globally, act locally."

Sofia, Bulgaria courtesy Wikipedia



China 2007



Earthrise 12/29/1968

This course will examine contemporary debates about local and global cultures and their consequences for architecture and urban life.

The rhetoric for thinking about architecture as an instrument of globalization comes from a variety of sources. They include: neo-liberal, free-trade economics, the commercial interests of global brands, the diffusion of technological innovations, the cultural effects of mobility and communication, and the environmental movement's stress on planetary effects, such as greenhouse gases. Today, powerful emerging economies, such as China's, or city-states seeking visual identity, such as Dubai, have enlisted architecture and design in their projections of global presence in a world of instantaneous communication.

On the other hand, architecture is often identified with the production and the protection of locality. In this conception, architecture enables the mediation of local physical and cultural contexts; it resists the homogenizing forces of global "techno-capitalism"; it emphasizes "place" over "space", and it empowers the "ground up" politics of local subjects into cohesive communities.

In this seminar, we will examine some of the modalities by which architects currently address the tensions between "thinking globally" and "acting locally." We will look at architectural practices that claim a global reach – in the work of international "stars" such as Rem Koolhaas, Norman Foster, Renzo Piano, and Frank Gehry, and Herzog and de Meuron. We will identify contemporary forms of an "International Style," as well as the spread of generic architectural objects: the mall, the suburb, the "big box" and even the "blob." We will also examine ways in which architecture identifies itself with locality -- through materials, through relations to "site," building techniques, "community," and local cultural forms. We will also look at resistances to globalization: for example, work that claims to embody a "critical regionalism" -- from Glenn Murcutt and Peter Zumthor to Samuel Mockbee's "rural studio."

This course will be structured as a seminar. Students will be expected to give in-class presentations and prepare a research paper.