

techniques of resistance

fall 24

MIT

techniques of resistance

architecture design workshop

4.183

Instructor:

Rocio Crosetto Brizzio

MIT / Dept. of Architecture

Fall 2024

Techniques of Resistance looks into communal construction practices in South America as a fertile territory of knowledge for contemporary architecture. The interest is centered on buildings, techniques and devices that offer a deep understanding of their natural and cultural ecosystems, offering insights that could transform contemporary architectural practices.

Could we imagine a possible scenario where ancestral techniques meet high-tech systems in a hybrid assemblage of parts? What happen when we collage together different forms of technologies? How do we design buildings that frame new relationships between architectures, cultures and ecologies, and at the same time resist the homogenization of global production?

Techniques of Resistance aims to create an archive of communal construction practices located across the heterogeneous territory of South America through the research and documentation of paradigmatic indigenous, vernacular, and popular buildings. This research will form the basis for the design proposal of a contemporary radical project that will emerge from these ancestral techniques and the cases studied in the course.

Architecture, when built, mobilizes a huge —and often invisible— network of resources, knowledge, beliefs, and people involved in



the construction of a building. Techniques of Resistance will focus on the study of buildings that are strongly rooted in the environment and ecologies where they are located, with a sensitive understanding of communal cooperation and material cyclability.

From the Uros Islands in Lake Titicaca and the Putucos in the Peruvian plateau, to the Shabonos and Churuatas' large structures in the Amazon, the buildings that we will study offer a collection of construction techniques that serve as a resistance to the homogenization of architecture and the destruction of collective forms of construction.

The creation of an inventory of Techniques of Resistance presents the opportunity to broaden the definition of what a building could be in terms of its material technology and its role in a community, and will serve as the launching point for the development of a project that could redefine these techniques in a contemporary way through an understanding of material behavior, systems, structural details, and geometry.

The course will consist of a combination of theoretical lectures, discussions, research, and design. During the first half of the semester, students will develop drawings and graphic essays as methods of research and documentation of the case studies. These deliverables will be compiled to create the Archive of Techniques of Resistance, which will take the form of a publication.

In the second half of the semester, students will work on a conceptual design project for a communal building, structure, or infrastructure, proposing a critical revision of the cases and techniques previously documented. Considerable time will be given for the design process, working together to develop a conceptually and technologically strong project. Classes will take the form of workshop sessions, with design desk critiques and pin-ups. The projects will be communicated through large-scale, delicate, and well-developed drawings and, if possible, a small model.

The materials produced during the course—both the archive and the design projects—will be presented in an exhibition at the end of the fall semester.

The course will value commitment, technical precision, detailed representation, and a radical and critical approach to design.

Techniques of Resistance will also include contributions from guest speakers whose practices and built projects engage with the technologies and materials discussed during the semester.

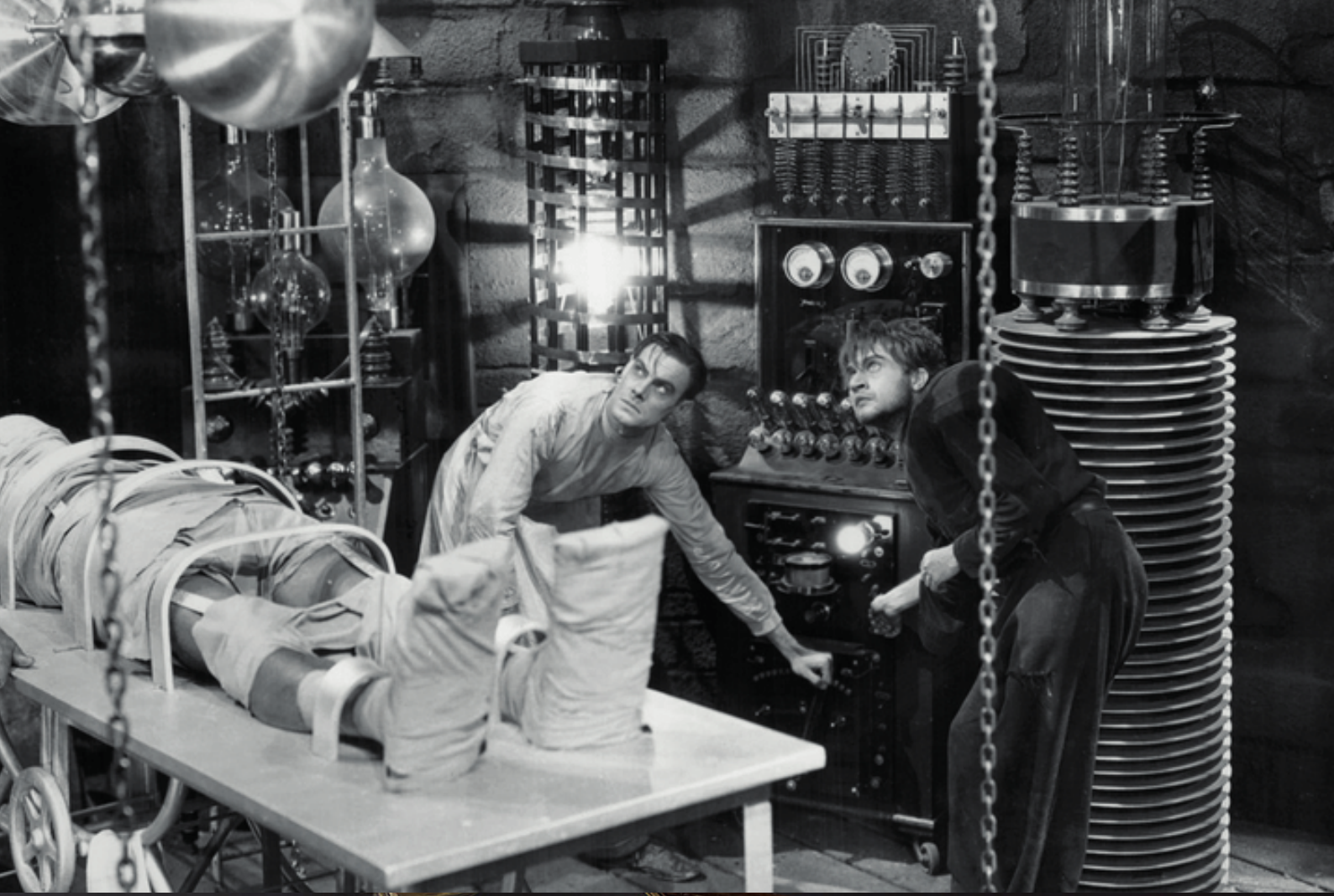




SCHEDULE

Week 01 09 / 04	Lecture 1 Power Alliances: Mingas as Practices for Collective Empowerment in South America, & Presentation of Case Studies Kick-Off Research. Each student picks 3 Case Studies. Desk-Crits: Case Studies Research
Week 02 09 / 11	Lecture 2 Housing a Village: Large Structures for Collective Life Desk-Crits: Case Studies Research
Week 03 09 / 18	Lecture 3 Collecting as a Research Practice, or How to Build an Archive? Desk-Crits: Case Studies Representation
Week 04 09 / 25	CASE STUDIES REVIEW
Week 05 10 / 02	Lecture 4 Invited Speaker (tbc) Desk-Crits: The Archive
Week 06 10 / 09	THE ARCHIVE REVIEW

Week 07 10 / 16	Lecture 5 Architectural Assemblages, or How to Build a Frankenstein? Presentation of the Design Project Exercise Kick-Off Design. Desk-crits of conceptual ideas
Week 08 10 / 23	Design Project Session Desk-Crits: Design Project
Week 09 10 / 30	Lecture 6 Invited Speaker (tbc) Desk-Crits: Design & Arguments
Week 10 11 / 06	Design Project Session Desk-Crits: Design Project
Week 11 11 / 13	Design Project Session Desk-Crits: Project Development
Week 12 11 / 20	Design Project Session Desk-Crits: Representation
Week 13 11 / 27	THE DESIGN REVIEW
TBD	EXHIBITION OPENING



TASKS

ARCHIVE

The course is structured in two phases. The first half focuses on research, during which students are expected to develop a series of drawings to document their case studies and contribute to the creation of an archive of Techniques of Resistance, which will be a collective piece developed by the entire class. This work will take the form of a publication or website that we will curate together.

PROJECT

During the second half of the semester, students will apply their research in a design process, developing a small building, structure, or infrastructure that will involve a critical and contemporary implementation of the techniques and construction logics previously documented. This work will include the production of well-crafted, large-scale drawings and, if possible, a model.

EXHIBITION

As the final stage of the course, the work developed during the semester will be curated and presented in the form of an exhibition.

DUE DATES

09 / 25	CASE STUDIES REVIEW
10 / 09	THE ARCHIVE REVIEW
11 / 27	THE DESIGN REVIEW
TBD	EXHIBITION OPENING

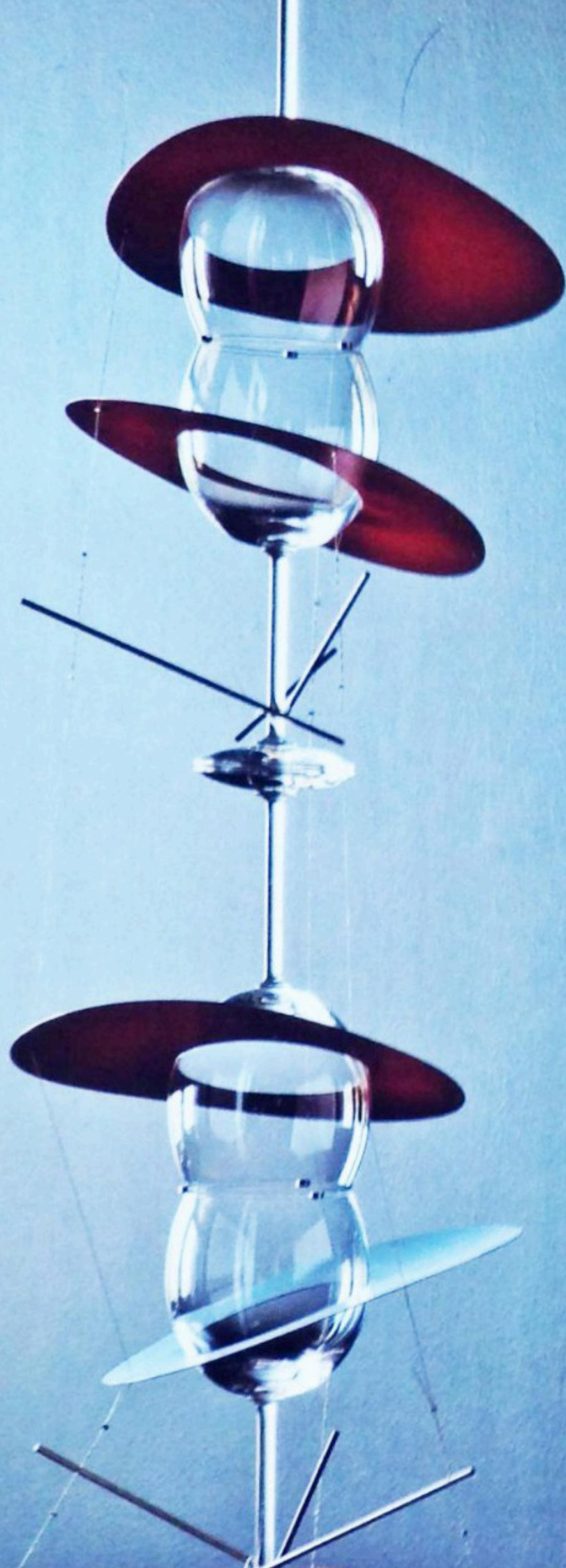


**EVERY BUILDING
ON THE
SUNSET
STRIP**

EDWARD RUSCHA

1 9 6 6





BIBLIOGRAPHY

Rudofsky, Bernard. *Architectrue Without Architects. An Introduction to Nonpedigreed Architecture*, 1964.

Deplazes, Andrea. *Constructing Architecture: Materials, Processes, Structures: a Handbook*, 2025.

Aureli, Pier Vittorio. *Longhouse Lecture at Harvard GSD*, 2023.

Superstudio. *Twelve Cautionary Tales for Christmas*, 1971.

Wigley, Mark. *Returning the Gift, Running Architecture in Reverse*, from *Non-Extractive Architecture, On Designing Without Depletion*, 2021.

Colomina, Beatriz & Wigley, Mark. *Are we human?* 2016

Vriesendorp, Madelon. *The World of Madelon Vriesendorp: Paintings / Postcards / Objects / Games*, 2011.

Branzi, Andrea. *The Fluid Metropolis*, 1970.

Branzi, Andrea. *10 Humble Recommendations for a New Athens Charter*, 2010

Danowski, Déborah & Viveiros de Castro, Eduardo. *Is There Any World To Come?* 2015.

Tavares, Paulo. *In the Forest Ruins*. 2016.

Pagano, Giuseppe & Daniel, Guarniero. *Architettura Rurale Italiana*. 1936.

Moholy-Nagy, Sibyl. *Environment and Anonymous Architecture*, 1955.

Moholy-Nagy, Sibyl. *Native Genius in Anonymous Architecture*, 1957.

Scott, Felicity. *Bernard Rudofsky, Allegories of Nomadism and Dwelling*, 2016

Kallipoliti, Lydia. *The Architecture of Closed Worlds. Or, What is the Power of Shit?* 2018

Faas, A.J., *What Is Minga?* 2023

Giedion, Siegfried. *Architecture You and Me. The Diary of a Development*, 1958.

Rubin, William. *Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage*, 1968.

Constant. *New Babylon*, 1965.

Office hours:

By appointment only

