ITTA: Option 2: Marko Jobst - LOOK! BODIES AND IMAGES

Written by Teresa Stoppani
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INFLUENCES, THEORIES & TECHNIQUES IN ARCHITECTURE (ITTA)
200607

Code: ARCT1024
Programmes:
Dip Architecture FT1 & PT,
MA/MSc Architecture,
MA Urban Design (elective),
MA Media Arts Philosophy (School of Humanities - elective)
Term: two/three
Credits: 20
Course Coordinator: Teresa Stoppani and Marko Jobst (Jan-Jun 2007)

Option 2

Marko Jobst
LOOK! BODIES AND IMAGES

The course looks at a series of theoretical takes on visual perception in relation to architecture and urban environments. Each of the eight sessions focuses on a key text/theorist and offers possible readings of their approaches to conceptualising vision. The course is loosely divided into two parts: the first concerns itself with the notions of corporeal inhabitation of space ('bodies'), while the second deals with spatial representations ('images'). Sessions are accompanied by a series of architectural examples and cinematic illustrations. The expected outcome of the course is a 4000 word long essay on (one of) the discussed concepts of visual perception, which the students are asked to confront with a particular spatial/architectural/urban occurrence of their choosing.

BODIES

1. Domestic Gaze
   In looking at Beatriz Colomina’s text ‘The Split Wall: Domestic Voyeurism’ the first session opens the seminar series with the question of domesticity and interior space. Some basic visual terms are introduced (gaze, framing) and their relevance is shown in relation to architecture (Loos, Le Corbusier). The cinematic example utilised to illustrate the topic is Alfred Hitchcock’s Rear Window (1954).

2. Architectural Object
   The lecture discusses the notion of the architectural object as a viewing device - and a device to view - through Barthes’s seminal text on the Eiffel Tower. The key concept introduced is distance, and the notion of vision as a tool of (spatial) distancing is related to the relationship between vision and knowledge. Excerpts from Mathieu Kassovitz’s La Haine (1994) are used as an illustration.

3. The Space of Power
   The lecture uses Foucault’s text on panopticism to discuss the notions of power. It is shown how some of the concepts discussed in sessions 1 and 2 (gaze, frame, distance, knowledge) lead to the interpretation of power implicit in visual perception. This is discussed through the notion of ‘instrumental’ vision (sense of vision that implies mastery of the object observed.). Cinematic example: David Fincher’s Panic Room (2002).

4. Urban Movement
   The lecture introduces the notions of movement and mobility in visual perception. How do perceptions of space/architecture change once the eye has been rendered mobile? What are the consequences of the practices of walking/driving/travelling on our perception of urban environments? De Certeau’s text serves as a starting point for a wider discussion of the relationships between space and time, body and image, rounding off the first part of the course. Cinematic example: Alexander Sokurov’s Russian Ark (2002).
IMAGES

5. Image Reproduced

Benjamin's text 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' is used to introduce the notion of visual representation and the paradigmatic shift that took place in visual culture with industrial revolution and the advent of modernity. Questions of photographic and cinematic representation are raised in relation to architecture and urban studies. Cinematic example: The Man with the Movie Camera (1929), dir. Dziga Vertov.


6. Simulated Image

Baudrillard's text on simulacra and simulation questions the distinction between the original and the copy. As such, it redefines visual representation, pushing it a step further from Benjamin's (from reality to hyper-reality). Cinematic example: Ghost in the Shell (1995), dir. Mamoru Oshii.

Baudrillard, Jean, Simulacra and Simulation (excerpt)

7. Urban Limits

Virilio's text 'The Overexposed City' progresses Baudrillard's preoccupations and discusses the questions of urbanity and the impact of late 20th Century visual culture on the ways in which we experience and perceive the city. Particular focus is placed on the concept of spatial limits, and how the proliferation of visual representations alters the urban realm. Cinematic example: London (1993), dir. Patrick Keiller.


8. Visual Touch

The lecture introduces the notion of haptic vision, which is defined as non-instrumental, tactile and mimetic. This concept shows how vision can be understood to collapse the distance between the observer and the observed and how this operation ultimately implies a different understanding of visual perception in architecture, both in the corporeal and representational senses. Cinematic example: Sans Soleil (Sunless), dir. Chris Marker (1982).


Bibliography


TIMETABLE ITTA 200607 Marko Jobst

Thu 19 Oct 2006 17.00-20.00 M055
Open Lecture introduction Teresal Stoppani

Thu 02 Nov - Sat 04 Nov 2006
H&T visit to the Architecture Biennale, Venice

Thu 09 Nov 2006 17.00-20.00 M055
Open Lecture 1 Doreen Bernath

Thu 16 Nov 2006 17.00-20.00 M055
Open Lecture 2 Andrew Leach

Thu 23 Nov 2006 17.00-20.00 M055
Open Lecture 3 Lorenz Holm
Thu 30 Nov 2006  17.00-20.00  M055
Open Lecture 4  Oren Safdie

Thu 07 Dec 2006  17.00-20.00  M055
Open Lecture 5  Grafton Architects

Wed 13 Dec 2006  18.30-20.00 M140
ITTA course introduction and lecture series presentations

Thu 14 Dec 2006  17.00-20.00  M055
Open Lecture 6  Johan Lagae

Thu 11 Jan 2007  17.00-20.00  M055
Open Lectures Introduction  Kieran Long

Wed 17 Jan 2007  17.00-18.30  T405
ITTA Lecture 1. Domestic Gaze

Thu 18 Jan 2007  17.00-20.00  M055
Open Lecture 1

Wed 24 Jan 2007  17.00-18.30  T405
ITTA Lecture 2. Architectural Object

Thu 25 Jan 2007  17.00-20.00  M055
Open Lecture 2

Wed 31 Jan 2007  17.00-18.30  T405
ITTA Lecture 3. The Space of Power

Thu 01 Feb 2007  17.00-20.00  M055
Open Lecture 3

Wed 07 Feb 2007  17.00-18.30  T405
ITTA Lecture 4. Urban Movement

Thu 08 Feb 2007  17.00-20.00  M055
Open Lecture 4

Wed 14 Feb 2007  17.00-18.30  T405
ITTA Lecture 5. Image Reproduced

Wed 21 Feb 2007  17.00-18.30  T405
ITTA Lecture 6. Simulated Image

Thu 22 Feb 2007  17.00-20.00  M055
Open Lecture 5

Wed 28 Feb 2007  17.00-18.30  T405
ITTA Lecture 7. Urban Limits

Thu 01 Mar 2007  17.00-20.00  M055
Open Lecture 6

Wed 07 Mar 2007  17.00-18.30  T405
ITTA Lecture 8. Visual Touch

Wed 21 Mar 2007  17.00-18.30  T405
Tutorials

Wed 18 Apr 2007  17.00-18.30  T405
Tutorials

Wed 25 Apr 2007  SO