

DESCRIPTION:

the WICKED HOME graduate studio environments

Students who wish to graduate with a project that explores notions of Home/Housing/(co-, in-)Habiting in their design research are invited to develop their design project within the context of the Academic Design Office *The Wicked Home*¹. In this ADO we offer a multidisciplinary learning environment where you will become the catalyst for developing your graduate project (bachelor project or master dissertation project), supported by a wide range of interdisciplinary expertise present in the ADO.

The Wicked Home ADO guides various studio environments both in the Bachelor/Master of Architecture and Interior Architecture programmes (Marg42, Maig42, Miag22, Biag65, lab-O45 – EXPRESSIE 3). This allows strategic opportunities for cross-fertilization. Shared between all Wicked Home environments is the central focus on the home, considered as both the most foundational concept and fundamental action underpinning every architectural operation.

“Home Sweet Home” – nothing is as familiar as home. However, materializing homeliness remains a complex and wicked architectural challenge that we habitually answer using a variety of well-known housing types. In transitioning from an industrial to an ecological era, we must also challenge the foundations of the archetypical housing standards (including consideration of other-than-human perspectives), and start to *re-think* and *re-form* the central notion of home as an expression of inhabiting our environment. To start this process, we invite you to embrace “wickedness”—or, irreducible complexity—as an explorative vector for thought and design activity. In design contexts, “wicked” takes on additional meaning related to incomplete, contradictory, and changing requirements that are often difficult to disentangle from each other. Etymologically, “wicked” stems from the Old English *wicca* “witch” (Dictionary, n.d.) and refers to magic, risky, and flirtatious attitudes, instructive amusements and wrong doings, which invites you to dare and explore what might be a contrary answer to a familiar architectural question.

The different studio-environments participating in this ADO, differ in their response to the specific nature of the wicked perspective (wicked structures, wicked materials, wicked forms, wicked experiences, wicked performances, wicked spatial setting, wicked philosophies...). Adopting a particular “wicked” perspective, your individual design proposals will become manifestations of new types of home fit for a true ecological era. This ADO does not expect you to start from scratch, reinventing architecture itself—but to reimagine and re-define the values that comprise what is arguably the most humble entity of the built environment. These values become the principles of the “wickedness” that shapes the systems framing your home and helps describe its inhabitable spaces, the bodies it houses—as well as how it sits within and relates to the larger environment. (re)Designing the notion of “home” might range from designing a backpack, to hyper-detailing a room, to making a single family—or kangaroo house, to master planning an allotment, to engineering a super-block of apartments. There is no preset scale for situating your work. You can prototype something new, or retrofit an existing structure. Your re-formations can be slight, or major, focusing on one aspect, or several. All proposals will explore form finding and design principles that take into account more and other things than the human perspective. The ADO teaching team will help you articulate your proposal and help you interrogate its limits.

¹ More information on the ADO *The Wicked Home* can be found here (link to booklet version #2)



Image: Huyghe, P. (2017). *After Alife Ahead*. Skulptur Projekte Münster

_ Kick-off theme

WINDOWSCAPES (Marg42, Maig42) _

As an entry point into your master dissertation project we invite you to consider the architectural element of the window, or windowscape. This familiar detail of the home is all too often presumed self-evident. From the window as an everyday architectural element to the window as a metaphor to structure interactions between different “worlds” (as for instance, the spaces of Zoom and Skype as extended architecture...)—we invite you to thoroughly interrogate the nature of windows, and then, informed by your understanding of “window,” develop a designerly hypothesis for a construct (of whatever type) that embodies the idea of a “wicked” windowscape (be it technologically, materially or conceptually...).

To approach this challenge, you might look back at your previous body of work and consider how you conceived the windows in your projects, reflecting on what role and quality of attention you gave them. You might respond to your recent experience of the lockdown period, where you spent time observing the world through a particular frame. You might ask yourself how much you consciously cared for your windows and how well informed you were and are about their characteristics and uses? Did you regard them as the embodiment of an observation point, or a gateway that draws together inside and outside in spatial, temporal and psychological terms, or the fenestration of structures, or an active border zone filled with energy-harvesting technologies, or frames for positioning vistas and specific instruments of



“Lockdown life #13” by Hans Cogne, 2020.

EXPECTED OUTPUT

Your project can result in a complex architectural element, an installation, a performance, a building, a public space, an artificial ecosystem, or a mixture of all of these. It can be detailed through a range of media (drawings, manifestos, models, ...).

Graduate projects in this ADO can be developed either (1) with the focus on design with theoretical underpinning or (2) with focus on theory including design-based testing.

In the ADO *The Wicked Home* we choose to make one collective ‘reflection paper’ with individual contributions. Each graduating student makes an individual contribution within a predefined number of pages (text and image). This individual contribution presents and discusses the design proposition that the student developed as a response to the general design hypothesis regarding The Wicked Home.

SUGGESTED REFERENCES

You may draw from a range of influences such as *new materialism*, where matter is considered alive, vibrant and possessing an agency of its own or within its congregations with other matters; literary sources as in *Le parti pris des choses (The Nature of Things)* by Francis Ponge, *If on a Winter's Night* by Italo Calvino, *The Woman in the Window* by A.J. Finn, *The Angel of the West Window* by Gustav Meyrink, ...; sociological theories (e.g. broken window theory by James Wilson and George Kelling); notions of closed ecology and biosphere; notions such as interstice between adjacent worlds and the window as a space for computing (Windows metaphor); unique architectural details such as Pierre Huyghe’s opening and shutting pyramid-shaped windows in the ceiling of a former ice rink feeding the strange ecology growing beneath them or the heavy framed windows of Adalberto Libera’s Casa Malaparte, Carlo Scarpa’s, Peter Zumthor’s and many other architect’s varieties of thresholds; typological urban spaces such as balconies, smart facades; phenomena such as flight paths of migrating birds where millions die each year on panes of glass...

- Inventive window designs, Dezeen.

<https://www.dezeen.com/2017/10/06/10-inventive-window-designs-portholes-architecture-facade-pinterest-roundup/>

- Facades for bird flight-paths

https://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Bird-Friendly-Building-Design_Updated-April-2019.pdf

- The Woman in the Window, Official Trailer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0hTmzISOIQ>

- Future Architecture "Surveillance Society" by: Paul Cetnarski, Elmira Kakabayeva, Yulia Popova, Natalia Shavkunova; Curator: Kuba Snopek; Strelka Institute for Media, Architecture and Design, Wrocław, Wrocław, Poland.

<http://www.strelka.com/en/research/project/surveillance-society>

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ADO TEACHING TEAM (in alphabetical order)

Rachel Armstrong is professor of Experimental Architecture at Newcastle University and an interdisciplinary practitioner. Her career is characterised by integrative design as a fusion element for interdisciplinary expertise. She creates multi-disciplinary research teams to address complex and "wicked" real world problems through conceptually pioneering design prototypes that advance innovation at the point of implementation.

Annelies De Smet currently teaches in LAB-O and works on a post-doctoral research entitled *Animated Room* at KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture.

Rolf Hughes is professor in the Epistemology of Design-driven Research at the Department of Architecture, KU Leuven, and director of artistic research for the Experimental Architecture Group. An interdisciplinary

artist and performer, his writing spans creative and critical genres and his interests include artistic research, monsterring/ecologies of practice, performance and the prose poem.

Nel Janssens teaches architectural design mainly in the Master of Architecture program. As an architect and urban planner she has worked at T.O.P.office/Luc Deleu, FLCextended and Magnificentsurroundings. She is currently associate professor at KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture, with an interest in critical design, utopian thinking and the role of research by design in establishing a new relation between human and environment.

Jo(han) Liekens teaches architectural design mainly in the Master of Interior Architecture program. He is an architect and partner at *STUDIOLOarchitectuur*. He is a post-doctoral researcher at KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture, with an interest in agency and performativity of (architectural) matter and of those deploying it.

Laurens Luyten teaches mainly building structures in the Architecture and Interior Architecture program. Trained as architect and civil engineer he worked at B.A.S/Dirk Jaspaert, BABEL ingenieurscollectief and as independent structural engineer on over 300 projects. Currently he is associate professor at KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture, with a research focus on structural education of architects and the collaboration of architects and structural engineers.