

## **Animal City: towards a non-anthropocentric urban ethic**

The course will elaborate spatial visions around a possible new pact between the natural, the rural and urban sphere. The seek for an ethical positioning of the human specie within the wider planetary ecosystem, will give the chance to investigate the spaces of transition between the different spheres while crossing through different polarities such as *control* and *abstention* (to what extent it is necessary and desirable that the human specie controls the spaces of interaction with other species, and from which point is it rather desirable to refrain from intervening?), *extension* and *retraction* (is it desirable that the human specie remains concentrated in small portions of urbanized territory thus avoiding to impose limits to other forms of life, or should we make space for forms of recolonisation by the nature of the anthropised land?) *cohabitation* and *autonomy* (how to deal with invasive species that threaten to overwhelm the other species by imposing their presence at the expense of biodiversity?).

These arguments will be explored through an interdisciplinary seminar conducted by Leonardo Caffo and Valentina Sonzogni on behalf of Labont, the Laboratory of Ontology of the Faculty of Philosophy of the Università degli Studi di Torino. The aim of the seminar is to elaborate a strong theoretical basis to the spatial interventions which will constitute the final outcome of the course.

### *Seminar of Architecture and Philosophy*

#### **Paradoxes of anthropocentrism.**

##### 1) *Scrap and Biodiversity*

(Muzzonigro+Careri)

**Thursday 15/10/2015, h. 14-18**

##### 2) *Invisible infrastructures: spaces of containment and the animal 'disassembly'*

(Sonzogni)

**Friday 23/10/2015, h. 14-18**

##### 3) *The food cycle: from cannibalism to veganism*

(Sonzogni+Caffo+Cimatti+Cupi)

**Friday 30/10/2015, h. 9-12**

##### 4) *Environmental enrichment: habitat and measurement of space*

(Caffo+Santarcangelo)

**Friday 06/11/2015, h. 14-18**

##### 5) *Zoomorphic architecture: from Kiesler to protocells*

(Sonzogni)

**Friday 13/11/2015, h. 14-18**

##### 6) *Zoo, ooZ and animal shelters: animal spaces between protection and confinement*

Trip to Animal Refuges + Tiziana Pers)

**Friday 20/11/2015, h. 14-18**

7) *Animal perspectives: other geometries of urban space*  
(Caffo+Alleva+Ferraris)  
**Friday 27/11/2015, h. 14-18**

**1) *Scrap and Biodiversity:***

curated by: Azzurra Muzzonigro (Polimi)  
guests: Francesco Careri

This seminar will explore the relationship between biodiversity and residual urban spaces. As Clement suggests in defining the Third Landscape, residues are the opportunity to refuge diversity and to create non-gerarchical spaces of encounter in between other things. This potential will be explored through spatial practices, particularly through the lens of Stalker's activity through and within the margins and the 'actual territories'.

**Bibliography**

Careri, F., *Walkscapes*, 2006, Einaudi, Torino.  
Clement, G., *Manifest du Tiers Paysage*, 2004, Editions Sujet/Objet, Quodlibet, Macerata.  
Deleuze & Guattari, 'Introduction: Rhyzome' in *A Thousand Plateau*, 1988, Athlone Press, London.  
Foucault, M., 'Of other spaces: Utopias and heterotopias' in *Rethinking Architecture*, 1977, ed. By Neil Leach, Routledge, London.

**2) *Invisible infrastructures: spaces of containment and the animal "disassembly"***

curated by: Valentina Sonzogni (Labont)

This seminar will reconstruct the genesis of the modern slaughterhouse starting from Siegfried Giedion's seminal book *Mechanization Takes Command* (1948), to the latest development of food industry. The seminar will focus on some crucial experiments in factory farming such the the Chicago and the Shanghai Slaughterhouse, some projects by Tony Garnier and the techniques proposed by Temple Grandin to reduce animal suffering.

**Bibliography**

U. Sinclair, *The Jungle*, 1906. <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/140>.  
S. Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command. A Contribution to Anonymous History*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis-London 2013 (1948).  
P. Young Lee, *Meat, Modernity, and the Rise of the Slaughterhouse*, University of New Hampshire Press, Lebanon 2008.

**3) *The food cycle: from cannibalism to veganism***

curated by: Leonardo Caffo (Labont)  
guests: Felice Cimatti, Cupi

This lecture aims at investigating how our perception of food has changed and how defense mechanisms are activated when one is confronted with eating choices. What is Veganism and its existential implications as well as its ecological impact will be also discussed here.

#### Bibliography

P. Singer, *Animal Liberation*, Harper Collins, New York 1975.

M. Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*, The Penguin Press, New York 2006.

R. Scruton, *Animal Rights and Wrongs*, Bloomsbury Academic, London 2006.

J. Safran Foer, *Eating Animals*, Little, Brown and Company, New York 2009.

#### **4) Environmental enrichment: habitat and measurement of space**

curated by: Leonardo Caffo (Labont)

guests: Vincenzo Santarcangelo

Gibson's ecological approach to visual perception, the reality of space and rational aesthetics will be presented and discussed in this seminar. The interaction between different life forms will be analyzed through the philosophical argument known as "della ciabatta" in which sense and conceptual grids, ontology and epistemology are at stake.

#### Bibliography

J. von Uexküll, *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans: with A Theory of Meaning*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis and London 2010 (1934).

J. J. Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual*, The Psychology Press, New York 2015 (1986).

M. Ferraris, *Introduction to New Realism*, Bloomsbury Academic, London 2014.

L. Caffo, "The Anthropocentrism of Anti-realism", in *Philosophical Readings*, Vol. VI, N. 2, pp. 65 - 74.

#### **5) Zoomorphic architecture: from Kiesler to protocells**

curated by: Valentina Sonzogni (Labont)

In this seminar the relationship between architecture and animality in the context of architectural design will be analyzed. Starting from the digital revolution of the Nineties, carried out by a generation of architects "born with the computer", we will look into some intersections between the book by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980) and some architectural practices by Greg Lynn and Bernard Cache, amongst others. The seminar includes an analysis of the synthetic protocell in this context. Isolated from the outer worlds while self-replicating, the protocell emerges from the primordial soup promising endless structural possibilities to architecture.

#### Bibliography

G. Lynn, *Folds, Bodies & Blobs. Collected Essays*, La lettre volée, Bruxelles 1998

M. Carpo in *The Alphabet and the Algorithm*, The MIT Press, Cambridge-Londra

2011

AD Procell Architecture", a cura di N. Spiller e R. Armstrong, marzo 2011.

**6) Zoo, ooZ and animal shelters: animal spaces between protection and confinement**

curated by: Valentina Sonzogni (Labont)

guests: Trip to Arese / Vitadacani TBC

Nonhuman animals that are saved by dangerous situations or are liberated by farm factories, medical facilities etc. are hosted by volunteers in shelters that are undefined from both a philosophical and an architectural point of view. This workshop on site will involve the students directly in order to produce some projects and draft a theory about these not-yet-places.

**Bibliography**

R. Acampora, *Corporal Compassion, Animal Ethics and Philosophy of Body*,

V. Sonzogni, *Salvi! Appunti per una teoria e una pratica dei rifugi per animali*, goWare, Pisa 2015 (e-book).

**7) Animal perspectives: other geometries of urban space**

curated by: Leonardo Caffo – (Labont) and Azzurra Muzzonigro, (Polimi)

guests: Maurizio Ferraris, Enrico Alleva

How do nonhuman animals perceive space? How do they build the world around them and is it possible to understand reality as that which emerges (Theory of Emergentism)? These and other questions connected to ethology and neuroscience will be introduced in this lecture.

**Bibliography**

K. Lorenz, *Behind the Mirror. A Search for a Natural History of Human Knowledge*, Harcourt Brace, New York 1978 (1973).

G. Vallortigara, *Cervello di gallina. Visite (guidate) tra etologia e neuroscienze*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino 2005.

M. Ferraris, *Documentalità. Perché è necessario lasciar tracce*, Laterza, Roma-Bari 2010.

P. Waldau, *Animal Studies. An Introduction*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2013.