



Architecture is a medium through which we swap bodily substances, exchange heat, build immunological cultures, and share breath. Representing a massive component of the technosphere (or: “the summed material output of the contemporary human enterprise”), architecture is itself composed of chemicals and compounds that drift across state lines and dermal membranes, unevenly distributing toxicity. In 2020 reports began to emerge from the scientific community detailing evidence of a global plastic ambient: human tissue samples laced with plastic monomers, shit dotted with microbeads. Our built environment conditions bodies, modulating hormonal and reproductive systems and psychological well-being, and engendering certain ways of becoming-together over others.

In this studio, we will corrupt notions of design rooted in purity or autonomy, exploring the openings that emerge from recognizing that any act of design is embedded within compromised and compromising systems. We will ask what queer animacies bubble up when adjacent things are encouraged to infect one another, leading to aesthetic, material, and programmatic hybrids and mashups. We will rethink the instruments through which existing conditions are assessed, like the site survey and post-occupancy report, to absorb more mess into our neat design protocols. We will borrow from discourses of trans-materialities, repair, eco-feminism, and materials science to help us imagine latent pathways between toxicity and flourishing.

Students will develop their own trans* or crossing set of design practices, through a sequence of cumulative exercises that build in additional troubling variables. Students will perform “materials research,” assembling palettes of absorbing, emitting, and repellent materials, which they will use as regimens of sorts to design kiosks that facilitate rituals of exchange, among bodies, between body and building, and across bodies via environment. Working individually, punctuated by moments of group inter-mixing, students will proliferate and combine these micro tests to form larger assemblages at the building scale, identifying real sites and constituencies as breeding grounds. Through this dirty work, students will adapt ways of holding together toxic sites and bodily effusion: waste treatment facilities as spas of collective repair, biohazard sites as zones of wilderness, dance clubs as health clinics...