



CHOREOGRAPHY OF THE PUBLIC SPACE

Arch 509

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3 Credits

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Our built environment in form of cities or buildings cannot be detached from the connecting tissue of the public space. Like a mycelium, the public space makes life possible in our urban context and allows us to communicate, access resources, and obtain information. This omnipresent network of spaces is the lifeline for the existence between our homesteads and public institutions, cultural places, recreational destinations, and workplaces. It is designed to perform in various capacities for all people.

The public space incorporates differentiated functions and characteristics, such as vehicular infrastructure, sidewalks, paths, bike lanes, alleys, greenways, parks, waterfronts, plazas, courtyards, rivers, and lakes. One can detect a gradient from engineered spaces, man-made landscaped spaces to natural environments and provides transportation, data exchange, supply chains, recreation, ecological and environmental functions, escape and rescue, social interaction, and shelter.

This seminar offers the opportunity to explore how the public space functions as the necessary support of our life in the built environment and which attributes allow it to perform as such. We will analyze design elements, intentional or unintentional, and how humans form and manipulate the space, or adapt to it. We can observe how behaviors are influenced by the spatial features and opportunities and how we form our public space to execute our desires and lifestyles.

As architects, we will understand the symbiotic relationship between building design and its incorporated functions with those of the human dimension of the urban public space. The outcome of this seminar is a detailed and comparative analysis of specific public spaces around the world. Extracted information, elements, and functions are then translated into comprehensive design components in form of a useful compendium.

Readings by Jan Gehl, Herman Herzberger, David Sims and Kongjian Yu serve as point of reference for the observations and analysis.