

CALL FOR PAPERS

Hybrid Symposium **Remote Practices: Architecture in Proximity** 8-9 October 2020



Photo: Lilian Chee, 2020

Earlier this year we proposed a CFP entitled "remote practices" to explore how architecture's complex and distant interfaces are being intensified through a mass globalisation of the discipline. In it we sought to explore how the remote practice of architecture has become inherent in the way phases of early ideation to late production could take on surprising transformations as architects and critics use different tools to manifest ideas and imaginations to the otherwise distant and invisible; to design, describe and critique future and past constructions in absentia.

As people retreated to their homes in the recent pandemic, the business of doing architecture in schools and offices also shifted into their temporary holding spaces. It made many of the issues we wished to discuss in the original CFP more timely. Architecture, a discipline which thrives on expression and imagination, and which had already been remotely practised by way of translation across different media and sites, now takes on a further dimension of distancing; this time in the absence of a physical community of architects, designers, teachers and students.

The distances between these different modes of doing architecture—drawings, diagrams and models, manifestos and critiques in the printed form; augmented reality walkthroughs and digital films; digital prefabrication technologies, and the built form—create several thresholds by which architecture may

already be understood as a remote practice. In the past few months the practice and education of architecture has faced a temporary cessation of travel, closure of many construction sites and an absence of office environments where ideas can be openly discussed and materialised through conversation. What are the local and global implications which the remote practice of architecture entails, for the pedagogy, practice and critique of architecture?

We invite papers and creative work to participate in a hybrid symposium of virtual presentations to local participants focusing on the following areas:

1. **Pedagogy:** Rather than a session of innovative online teaching modalities, we seek papers that explore what it means to teach architecture at a distance. Contrary to the remote practices already operating in global architectural production, architectural education has been slow in its uptake, and at odds with recognising the full potentials of an online learning environment.¹ Yet with the pandemic, virtual studios were quickly enforced. What does it mean to teach design face-to-face, and what is lost in translation? What values might there still be for the haptic and analog modes of learning-through-making, in a shift from physical to virtual? What opportunities and new knowledges do remote practices offer for testing and running experimental ways of learning?

2. **Practice:** If anything, a pandemic has made the remote practice of architecture a global reality.² Already some main challenges are apparent in the rapid technological transformation of design practices. Virtual teams experience communication gaps; virtual architects are disconnected from the material environment which their designs aim to intervene with.³ Yet in these new norms, what might remote field-working methods offer as discoveries in lieu of access to real/physical sites?⁴ New trends might see mono-disciplinary architectural offices replaced by flexible networks of collaborative design practices; each working on parts of a larger project.⁵ How would authorship in architecture be redefined? Are there precedents for new forms of collaborative authorship to emerge?

3. **Critique:** Before the pandemic, questions about place were disrupted by social media. However, shelter-in-place forced us to rethink home as a physical place. The architectural community has begun to critically reflect on the shifting spatial paradigms of inside-outside, private-public, and home-workplace that remote practices have emphasised.⁶ Yet, creativity and criticality may be risked in the distancing and fragmentation of education and practice.⁷ There is thus a need for increased open-access to collective knowledge, digital archives and resources in order for remote research/education/working methods to reach their fullest potentials.⁸ What alternative modes of creative energy and critical discourse might be borne from architecture's contingent and emergent remote practices?

Abstracts of no more than 350 words, accompanied by an 80-word biographical profile, and 1 image (JPG, 300dpi) should be submitted to remotepractices@gmail.com by **20 July 2020**. A publication of selected papers is planned. For further details, please see <https://remote-practices.com/>

KEY DATES

20 July 2020:	Submission of abstracts
7 August 2020:	Notification of acceptance
25 September 2020:	Submission of draft papers
8-9 October 2020:	Symposium

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¹ Sharon Haar, 'The "Pivot",' in David Smiley, Alison Hirsch, Iñaki Alday, Kim Anno, Greg Lindquist, Keith Eggner, Linda C. Samuels, Arda İnceoğlu, Lori Brown, Marc J. Neveu, Kristi Chermie, Sharon Haar, 'Field Notes on Pandemic Teaching: 4,' *Places Journal*, April 2020. Accessed 05 May 2020. <<https://placesjournal.org/article/field-notes-on-pandemic-teaching-4/>>

² Experts speculate that the 'faster technological revolution' spurred by the pandemic will continue into the future, with the heightened adoption of remote practices reorganising how design work is produced and communicated across distances to stakeholders. See: Zaheer Allam, Gaetan Siew and Felix Fokoua, 'The Cause of Wonder and Worry Over Digital Cities Post Virus,' *ArchDaily*, April 28, 2020. Accessed 5 May 2020. <<https://www.archdaily.com/938484/the-cause-of-wonder-and-worry-over-digital-cities-post-virus/>>

³ Questions have been posed of the virtual site visit and fieldwork in which grounded encounters still seem irreplaceable. See: Pola Mora, 'Trends Report: How Architects are working from Home,' *ArchDaily*, March 31, 2020. Accessed 5 May 2020. <<https://www.archdaily.com/936691/trends-report-how-architects-are-working-from-home/>>

⁴ Alison B. Hirsch, untitled notes, in David Smiley, Alison Hirsch, Iñaki Alday, Kim Anno, Greg Lindquist, Keith Eggner, Linda C. Samuels, Arda İnceoğlu, Lori Brown, Marc J. Neveu, Kristi Chermie, Sharon Haar, 'Field Notes on Pandemic Teaching: 4,' *Places Journal*, April 2020. Accessed 04 May 2020. <<https://placesjournal.org/article/field-notes-on-pandemic-teaching-4/>>

⁵ Phil Bernstein, 'Phil Bernstein Shares Ten Thoughts on the Future of Practice,' *Architectural Record*, April 24, 2020. Accessed 3 May 2020. <<https://www.architecturalrecord.com/articles/14585-phil-bernstein-shares-ten-thoughts-on-the-future-of-practice>>

⁶ Reinhold Martin, Susan Piedmont-Palladino, Brent Sturlaugson, Barbara Penner, Harriet Harriss, Judith Rodenbeck, Sandy Isenstadt, Anna Livia Brand, Iman Ansari, Hélène Frichot, Brett Milligan, 'Field Notes on Pandemic Teaching: 1,' *Places Journal*, April 2020. Accessed 04 May 2020. <<https://placesjournal.org/article/field-notes-on-pandemic-teaching-1/>>

⁷ Philip Ursprung, 'Common (Back)ground,' in Johan Pries, Andrew Herscher, Hugh Campbell, Shannon Mattern, Erin Moore, Rasmus Hansen, Frederick Steiner, Mireille Roddier, Mira Schor, Shelly Silver, Charles Davis, Philip Ursprung, 'Field Notes on Pandemic Teaching: 3,' *Places Journal*, April 2020. Accessed 04 May 2020. <<https://placesjournal.org/article/field-notes-on-pandemic-teaching-3/>>

⁸ Barbara Penner, untitled notes, in Martin, et. al.