Education, Design and Practice – Understanding skills in a Complex World

• Paper / Proposal Title:

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• Abstract (300 words):
The growing presence of research agendas in architecture education is a consequence of the increasing implementation of a polytechnic academic agenda in the schools of architecture in the United States. This process altogether, has been received with skepticism by historians and the professional realm alike. Nevertheless, over the past two decades new research programs have been initiated at Harvard, Columbia, Yale and other universities.

The presentation and consequent paper will address the history of architectural education focusing on the integration of research in the context of architecture schools in North America, specifically during the retrospectively known as the “theory moment” corresponding with the history and theory academic turn of the 1960s and 1970s; An emerging dynamic that became evident in 1967, when the results of the AIA Educational Research Project known as the “Princeton Report” were published. In 1976, a cultural direction was clearly institutionalized with the initiation of a Ph.D. program in
History, Theory and criticism of Art and Architecture at M.I.T., epitomizing the rise of critical theory and history within architectural schools and emphasizing architecture's embeddedness in society.

To trace this history, the proposal considers two overlapping perspectives. First, it concentrates on design as the core of the discipline and second, reflects on the field's porosity towards a wide range of environmental forces, opening it to multidisciplinary horizons. In this regard, the text analyzes architectural education's practice of absorbing and "importing" methods, theories and discourses from its exterior. Thus, the paper aims to decipher the flows of knowledge in architecture not only as a receptor discipline, but most importantly those occurring from our discipline outwards. And via these flows try to answer, is there an exported project?

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Severino Alfonso and Loukia Tsafoulia are registered architects, educators and researchers. Both graduated in 2011 from the Post-Professional MS in Advanced Architectural Design at Columbia University, when they also founded PLB studio, an architecture practice based in NYC. They teach and coordinate courses as adjunct Assistant Professors at Barnard + Columbia Architecture, Pratt Institute, at Parsons, at CUNY, the Spitzer School of Architecture, at NYCCT and NYIT. Their design work has been exhibited in international design venues, such as the London 3d print show and ICFF in New York and they have lectured in academic institutions in New York, Madrid, Athens, and various cities in China. Their research is positioned in the intersection of responsive environments, digital technologies and the computational theory of design in the 1950s-1970s in Europe and North America.

Severino also holds two MS in Urban Design and Advanced Architecture from the school of architecture in Madrid (ETSAM) where he is currently a PhD candidate. He has worked with international architectural studios such as Carme Pinos, Angel Fernandez Alba and Federico Soriano in Spain, Lomar Arkitekter in Sweden and Per-forma Studio, KDF Architecture and Natalie Jeremijenko in the United States.

Loukia received her professional degree and 1st Masters in Architecture from the National Polytechnic School of Athens where she is a PhD candidate. She is currently working on the book publication titled Transient Spaces, exploring the concept of impermanence in its various social and formal manifestations and focusing on questions of belonging and displacement. She has worked with Studio Dror, LEESER Architecture, Solid Objectives and Jorge Otero Pailos in New York and with K+T Architecture as well as the NTUUrban Environment Lab in Athens.