ONLINE EDUCATION: TEACHING IN A TIME OF CHANGE

• Paper / Proposal Title:

Surrogate Sites: Unorthodox Grounds for Architectural Design Pedagogy in Unpredictable Times

• Authors Name:

Sean Burns, Matt Wilson

• University or Company Affiliation:

Ball State University

• Abstract (300 words):

During this period of uncertainty, architectural design instructors face a multitude of challenges as they present content, critique efforts, and evaluate the creative work of students online within a quarantined setting. One principal message at risk of being overlooked is how to promote agency within the iterative design process in relation to the physical features of a specific site. Governmental restrictions prevent students from physically visiting, analyzing, documenting, and creating representations of the manifold qualities of 'site.' In a traditional setting, 'site' denotes a physical entity. Such limitations jeopardize not only the quantity and quality of site analyses, but to our advantage also undermine notions of 'site' as a sacred environment that is incapable of being manipulated or reshaped by any architectural intervention throughout the design process.

This paper examines a series of architectural design projects that encourage students to envision, design, and fabricate their own 'site' based on hermeneutic approaches to various theoretical and philosophical texts. As such, these projects ask the students to
abandon their preconceived notions about the sequence of observing, documenting, and reacting to a physical site as a formal procedure to creating an architectural intervention. Collectively, the projects exemplified an array of efforts to expand the view of architecture’s role as a mediating article throughout the design process, towards demonstrating a profound relationship between an edifice and its accommodating field. This paper offers examples of this pedagogical approach and argues that when online students are prompted to consider alternatives to 'site', they are presented with new interdisciplinary opportunities that expand their horizons.

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

Sean Burns is an Assistant Professor of Architecture at Ball State University specializing in architectural design and structural principles and analysis. Sean holds a professional Bachelor of Architecture degree from Kent State University and a post-professional Master of Architecture degree, with specialization in Design and Theory, from the University of Pennsylvania. Sean's current research concentrates on how architecture and structural behaviors and performances can inform one another within the design process. This research is grounded in the writings and lessons of architectural theorists and other allied disciplines, and applied through the methodological approaches to design as evident in his courses.

Matthew Wilson is an Assistant Professor of Architecture at Ball State University. He teaches architectural history, social and environmental justice, and cultural theory. Matthew graduated with distinction in Landscape Urbanism from the Architectural Association, School of Architecture in London, and with a Doctorate of Philosophy in History as a Crossland Scholar at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is the author of *Moralising Space* (2018). His current project is *Richard Congreve and the Positivist Movement: A Social Biography*. 