How do we design and think about architecture without seeing it? In this workshop, participants will work with the distanced, durational and disquieting qualities of radio to develop new ways to make and understand space. In this moment of estrangement, the workshop proposes the alternative medium of radio as a way to access other senses, other voices, other methods and other places of production.

At MIT we are used to endless corridors, indeterminate boundaries and loose edges: a shifting structure in which a large percentage of our learning is ambient and multi-sensory. The architecture school as a place is a design tool we have lost in our recent virtual turn. Can radio be structured like the Long Lounge, the infinite corridor, or that one classroom on the other side of the naval engineering department? Can radio allow us to anticipate outcomes other than the models and drawings produced in a typical studio?

In the first weeks of the workshop we will experiment with non-visual design, and explore writing and interview methods for making space-on-the-air. Following this period, participants will settle into small working groups, which will record and represent their work through a series of broadcasts, independently or in collaboration; these might be conceived of as vignettes, conversations, or kits of parts. Every Monday, participants will tune into a live-broadcast-lecture around a theme for the week. Many of these will involve guest speakers from outside the field of architecture (e.g., a sound artist, a fragrance maker, a material scientist, a poet, or a chef), or digests from concurrent summer initiatives. On Thursdays the work we produce will be broadcast during an experimental live lab session. The radio will be an alternative place — a side-road, an archipelago, or a parasite — both within the department and beyond its reach.
APPROACHES

Starting from Week 3, participants will develop their weekly broadcasts according to one of the three approaches suggested below.

Durational Writing

How does our thinking change when we expose ourselves to the effects of time? If we generally understand writing as the formation of a finished thought for the purposes of communication, can we instead propose ways of writing that court alteration and ambivalence? What happens when we hear our words in another voice, our voice in another mouth? How is our thinking and our writing challenged and enriched by delayed responses, prolonged caesuras, even radio silence? Is a sentence a pause or a reverberation?

Other People's Voices

Does the ambient sound of a place constitute a character, an identity? What do we hear in a person's recorded, unscripted voice than cannot be communicated in text? How do we broadcast other things happening in the department? What agency is possible in editing and compiling sounds that are not our own? How do we articulate quiet voices?

Non-Visual Design

What does it sound like to run on this floor finish with a specific pair of shoes? Should sounds be accentuated or reduced in certain parts of a building? Can a space be ugly if it offers acoustic bliss? What's the distinctive odor of each space in a building? How would you synthesize the smell of a building? What does an I-beam taste like? Can we make layer cakes using layers of insulation? What kind of stairs would be more pleasant to fall down than walk down?
SCHEDULE

Week 0 / Intro
6/11 TH Syllabus review, class logistics, enrollment

Week 1 / Sound / Experiments
6/15 M Live charrette with Thessia Machado / Sound artist / Chicago, US
6/18 TH Lab: Sound experiments broadcast

Week 2 / Text / Experiments
6/22 M Live charrette with Abraham Adams / Poet and artist / Providence, US
6/25 TH Lab: Writing and interview experiments broadcast

Week 3 / Smell / Working Groups
6/29 M Guest lecture by Joëlle Lerioux / Independent fragrance maker / Grasse, France
7/2 TH Lab: Working Group Broadcasts

Week 4 / Walk / Working Groups
7/6 M Live readings from Nilling and The Office of Soft Architecture
7/9 TH Lab: Working Group Broadcasts

Week 5 / Taste / Working Groups
7/13 M Guest lecture by Ben Zviel + Samina Raza / Chefs, Mrs. Robinson / Berlin, Germany
7/16 TH Lab: Working Group Broadcasts

Week 6 / Field / Working Groups
7/20 M Live readings from John Berger, Field
7/23 TH Lab: Working Group Broadcasts

Week 7 / Touch / Working Groups
7/27 M Guest lecture TBD
7/30 TH Lab: Working Group Broadcasts
PEDAGOGICAL OBJECTIVES

In this workshop, participants will experiment with broadcasting over a radio station by reacting to weekly provocations through durational writing, records of other people’s voices, or non-visual design. This workshop will also explore the role of the radio as an alternative place — a side-road, an archipelago, or a parasite — both within the department and beyond its reach.

We will most likely never see each other over Zoom, but instead hear, and possibly, smell, touch and taste fragments of each other. This will allow for a new kind of teaching and participation than the conventional camera on/microphone muted couple that has been reigning over the past two months. The workshop will be conducted over WAWD?Radio, MIT Architecture student-led radio station.

LOGISTICS

Monday 10am-12pm 2 hours of lecture with a guest speaker followed by a Q&A and a discussion

Thursday 10am-12pm 2 hours of lab to broadcast weekly reactions

Whenever 2 hours of homework (1 for thinking, 1 for making). Assignments will be given on Mondays and will be broadcast with the class on Thursdays, so that there is no homework over the weekend.

Weekly meeting date and time may be updated based on student preference at the first class meeting on 6/11. To accommodate guest speaker schedules, some lectures may happen at a different time that stated above.

Instructor-of-record: Ana Miljački

ENROLLMENT

Student range: anywhere from 3 to 20, ideally 10-12

This class is open to anyone. If more than 20 students register, we will adapt the class accordingly.

Registration: Although the class will be taught in Summer 2020, students should register for Fall 2020 to avoid paying summer tuition fees.
**EVALUATION CRITERIA**

**Completion requirements and grading**

In order to pass the class, student will need to attend the 2-hour lecture session and the 2-hour lab session. Students will also need to prepare questions for guest speakers, and broadcast weekly reactions over the radio.

The class will be graded pass/fail (P/D/F). Students who successfully complete the class will be given 5 credits units (2 hours of lecture - 2 hours of lab - 2 hours of homework, over 3/4 of the length of a semester).

**Attendance policy**

This class relies on student participation to both lecture and lab sessions. Attendance for the full duration of each class is mandatory. Students are allowed four excused absences for the semester. An excused absence is defined as one that was discussed with and approved by the instructor at least 24 hours prior to the date of absence, or a family or medical emergency that is confirmed by a physician or a dean in Student Support Services. Beyond four absences, students will be given a failing grade or will be asked to drop the class.