

POSITIONS

4.210 | Fall 2026 | SA+P MIT

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Mondays 2-5pm, Room: W41-1101

On Visual Dossiers:

Everything that we interrogate in this course is a possible topic for you. The trick will be to frame it in such a way that you can research fast, and more importantly, in a way that yields the most interesting questions and discoveries. You can work on a topic as broad as 'program' in architecture, or 'scripting,' that is, if you can plot a precise course through it; but you can also dissect a recent architectural competition or exhibition; use the timeline of a firm to talk about historical developments, crunch through a journal archive in search of a specific disposition, make an addendum to historical work based on your contemporary concerns...etc.

Your arguments need to be constructed visually and elaborated in writing.

You will test a hypothesis and derive conclusions. Your dossier is an intervention in the space of architectural discourse, it could also be the beginning of... a test for an even larger research project. It occupies the space between a journal article and a trailer or a title sequence for a movie. You will need to nail your topic quickly so that you can begin collecting material for it throughout the semester. Identifying your "archive" smartly is more than half the task.

"My project is about"...is a wrong way to go about it..."I am interested in axonometric drawing, or grids...sustainability" also too vast, and without a position...this kind of question will set you up for a broadly descriptive project. You will be better served with a narrowly framed "archive," upon which you can speculate, and from which you can draw insights worth sharing.

Dossier specs:

Default format: French folded legal (8.5x14). 1000-2000 words of critical analysis + your argument needs to be made visually as well. You should have a minimum of 10 spreads (maximum of 20 spreads), and you can treat these spreads as single tableaus or as 2 pages. But this is only a default format, useful if your argument is best suited to be read in a journal, if other media will support your work better, by all means, challenge the default.

Here are sample topics for your dossier, mostly in order to help you find a way to frame your own interests, but they are also up for grabs:

Park strategies for abandoned industrial sites - **a historical observation**

Whatever happened to low-cost housing in America? – **a story**

PS1 – several years of finalists. Who won and what did they have to say about the use of computers and software in their work, about fabrication, about drawing, etc. – **a board game**

Future Firm – **a profile**

What is a diagram? – **A debate** ghostwritten for several specific participants in architectural discourse (of your choosing)

A chronogram or a map of philosophical references used by authors we read or by several figures of your choice (including the key word as well as considering interrelationships between various philosophical references).

Take a term like *projective*, or *performative* and collect all of its various uses in the texts we read for this course. Can you use it to describe something about the contemporary state of things? – **a dictionary**

Who cares about Fabrication? – **an illustrated essay**

Old and new discussions on beauty - **a “stereo” comparison**

Recent resurrection of the renaissance precedents in image and writing is a symptom of... - **a scathing op-ed**

Heatherwick Studio in New York - **a scathing op-ed**

The life and death of the single surface project – **an obituary**

A critical guide of the Biennale Circuit

Collectivism in Venice – **a review** of the recent Architecture Biennale

Render Farms – **a critical manual**

Maintenance Protocols – **a revision**

Tools for hearing other languages – **a conversation** with Sumayya Vally

The Right to Rest – an informed (and maybe footnoted) **manifesto**