WINTER SEMESTER 2026: DESIGN STUDIO 1
Institute of Urban Design, Univ.- Prof. Dr. Peter Trummer, M.Sc

superfluous studio:

THE WESTLAKE JUMBLE

MACARTHUR PARK, LOS ANGELES

Instructors: Simeon Brugger & Zeynep Brugger
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www.formerlynotknown.com/fnk-teaching (previous studios)

Meetings: Wednesdays & some Thursdays
@9:00-18:00



Mike Kelley (2003) *Memory Ware #41*

1: STUDIO DESCRIPTION

This semester, superfluous studio will investigate **the relationship between architecture, landscape, and urban constituents** through a hybrid drawing-driven design approach. Students will develop **a new urban layout strategy for MacArthur Park in Los Angeles,** introducing a collection of smaller enclosed and open pavilion-like structures that respond to the everyday needs of the surrounding neighborhood.

Rather than designing a single architectural building, students will work **with a heterogeneous field of buildings, objects, paths, gardens and an overall plaza that includes open spaces**. The proposal will combine public amenities, spaces for recreation and play, cultural and commercial uses, shaded gathering areas, and facilities that support the park's day-to-day operations. These programs will be distributed across the landscape to serve different generations and forms of public life while creating new relationships between architecture, movement, vegetation, and open space.

The studio will draw inspiration from **architectural follies, pavilions, and composed landscapes** in which distinct structures form a larger spatial ensemble. Through a process of collecting, drawing, extracting, and transforming architectural references, students will develop a family of individual yet related figures. These elements will be brought together through paths, promenades, vegetation, views, thresholds, and shared outdoor spaces.

Ultimately, **the studio aims to restructure MacArthur Park as a more accessible, inclusive, and active public landscape**. The project will explore how a seemingly loose collection of architectural interventions can establish a coherent identity **while supporting the park's diverse communities and evolving forms of collective use.**





2: COURSE ORGANIZATION & DESIGN PROCESS

This studio will be conducted in **English**, and all projects will be developed in **teams of two students** to encourage collaboration and exchange. **Regular attendance is mandatory**, as active participation in discussions, critiques, and iterative design development is essential to the learning process. The course will be structured around lectures, site analysis, precedent studies, drawing exercises, and physical and digital modelling, culminating in a final proposal that brings together the architectural, landscape, programmatic, and formal aspects of the project.

A central focus of the studio will be **the relationship between individual architectural figures and the larger landscape**. Students will consider how p**avilions, follies, open structures, and landscape elements can define different levels of public use** without fragmenting the park. Particular attention will be given to **pedestrian circulation, accessibility, safety, visibility, shade, vegetation,** and the **redefinition of entrances** and **connections to the surrounding neighborhood**.

Hybrid drawings will serve as the primary design methodology. Students will combine site conditions, architectural references, found objects, programmatic requirements, and landscape elements within layered drawings. Through an iterative **2D-to-3D transformation process**, selected fragments will be extracted and developed into a family of architectural structures with different scales, forms, and degrees of enclosure.

Physical and digital models will be used to test the composition of the park as a whole, as well as the spatial qualities of individual interventions. Rather than treating the remaining space between buildings as undefined landscape, students will design the ground, vegetation, paths, clearings, and open-air rooms with the same precision as the architectural objects. **The final proposals should demonstrate how heterogeneous elements can work together to form an ordered, recognizable, and collectively accessible public environment.**


1786 – LAKE AT WESTLAKE PARK, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.





3: PROJECT SITE

Located in the dense and diverse **Westlake neighborhood** of **Los Angeles**, **MacArthur Park is an important public landscape surrounded by residential development, commercial activity, and cultural institutions**. Established as Westlake Park in the late nineteenth century, it was designed around a recreational lake and renamed MacArthur Park in 1942. **The construction of Wilshire Boulevard through the park in 1934 divided the landscape into two distinct areas, significantly changing its original spatial organization**.

Today, the park supports many forms of everyday public life, yet **it faces challenges related to accessibility, safety, maintenance, and insufficient public amenities. The studio challenges students to approach the park as both a landscape and a piece of urban infrastructure.** Through new pavilions, paths, planted areas, and gathering spaces, students will explore how smaller architectural interventions can strengthen connections across the park and potentially create a more accessible, coherent, and inclusive public landscape.



LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
Wilshire Boulevard at MacArthur Park
Color photo by Carl Junghans

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