

# Walls of Air



Brazilian Pavilion at the 16<sup>th</sup> Venice Architecture Biennale 2018

## Curatorial Statement:

**Walls of Air** explores the ways in which to read, challenge and transgress the material and immaterial boundaries of Brazil and its architecture.

It embraces Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara's proposal FREESPACE as a provocation both to question the different forms of walls that build, at multiple scales, the Brazilian territory and to rethink architecture's own disciplinary boundaries and its relation to other fields of knowledge.

Through a collaborative research, **Walls of Air** proposes to make visible the forms of spatial and conceptual separations that have resulted from Brazil's urbanization processes. Additionally, the pavilion seeks to present projects and initiatives that already work in this sense, reflecting on the possibility of conceiving architecture as a means to re-conceptualize such barriers.

The theme places the wall as an element of Brazilian identity, culture and architecture but sees in the act of breaching it an invitation to build a richer form of public sphere. In this way, it opposes the homogenization, intolerance and extremism generated out of isolation and exclusion. The proposal celebrates the richness of cohabitation instead of the indifference of coexistence.

**Walls of Air** is curated by Gabriel Kozlowski, Laura González Fierro, Marcelo Maia Rosa and Sol Camacho. Formed exclusively to conceive Brazil's contribution to the 16th Venice Architecture Biennale, the young architects' collective comes to represent the presence of Brazil in the world and the world in Brazil. This choice reflects, from its conception, a first approach to the theme as it breaks with the country's traditional practice of appointing a single curator, while reinforcing Fundação Bienal's vision for its future in Venice: to build a more open, plural and participatory exhibit.

## IAP Architecture Workshop 4.185

### **Instructor:**

Gabriel Kozlowski  
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### **Credits:** 6

**Enrolment:** Limited to 10

**Meetings:** MTWR 9-11

The meeting schedule is flexible and will be agreed with students during the first meeting on Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Period of classes:** January 8<sup>th</sup> to January 28<sup>th</sup>

**First Meeting:** December 14th

The first meeting is a brief introductory conversation to get to know the group, talk about the subject and explain all the details of the event, including the Brazilian pavilion, the curatorial decisions taken so far and the future contribution from the MIT students. If a student cannot be present in this day, please contact the instructor in advance.

### **Overview:**

The workshop has two goals. First, to discuss the process of curating a national pavilion at the Venice Biennale through the case study of the Brazilian contribution for this upcoming edition of the event. Second, to engage students in the production of part of the content that will be exhibited at the Brazilian Pavilion in Venice 2018. This content will take the form of cartographic exercises to generate the maps that can potentially be displayed in the exhibit. During IAP, students will choose to collaborate in the following tasks based on their skills and interest:

- 1) *Conceptualization*: Elaborate on the arguments and content of the exhibition. Refine and/or challenge the curators' initial assumptions regarding the content of the maps and the way information and data should be represented. The group will work in close collaboration with Brazilian teams based in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.
- 2) *Research*: Idealize and generate the information that can be displayed on each map;
- 3) *Mapping*: Design the actual maps by drawing, coding and visually treating the content gathered in the previous steps;
- 4) *Fabrication*: Prototype and envision the potential techniques to materially produce these maps. Among them: large-sized prints, laser engraving in wood + milling, acid etching/engraving in steel and silk screen/printing in concrete.

**Eligibility:**

Graduate students in the Architecture Dept. and the Dept. of Urban Planning.  
Preference to students with mapping skills and knowledge in GIS and/or programming.

**Participation and Attendance:**

Students are expected to attend at least 90% of the classes.

**Structure of Work:**

Students will form groups to engage in the tasks described in the “overview” based on the areas they are more interested to learn about and to further develop their skills. Work will be carried simultaneously between Boston (MIT), Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio) and São Paulo (curators’ headquarters) and will demand a continuous exchange between the three groups. There might be skype sessions with the other teams outside the US.

**Academic objectives:**

The goals of this discipline are to: 1) involve students in the process of curating an international architecture exhibition, including them in every step of the process; 2) discuss research methods and the ways to find information that can be later transferred into visual material such as cartographic drawings and diagrams; 3) teach how to organize files to be translated into drawings through programming; 4) teach skills on designing maps and visually organizing complex information.

**Final Submission:**

There is a final submission in which teams or individual students will compile the material produced and print the resulting maps to be discussed in class. The final compilation – including drawings and their editable files – should be send to the instructor no later than January 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Travel:**

Travel to Italy in May is NOT included but possible to be individually organized by each student through MISTI-Italy and MISTI-Brazil. The instructor will try to facilitate this process since conversation with MISTI is already underway.

**Post-IAP:**

A continuous involvement with the pavilion after IAP is over until the inauguration of the event in May is a possibility. However, this is NOT included in the scope of the IAP workshop that is being offered through the Department of Architecture and will be discussed case-by-case directly with the instructor.

**Credits and display of work produced:**

Students that successfully complete the class will be properly credited in the exhibition, book and all other public media where “Walls of Air” appear. The work produced, however, will be later edited by the instructor and take part in the exhibition if the instructor finds suitable.

### **Grading:**

Students will be graded according to their presence, participation, interest, production and final submission. Their grades will follow the definitions below:

A. Exceptionally good performance demonstrating a superior understanding of the subject matter, an engagement with the topic, and a skillful use of research and drawing techniques for the elaboration of maps.

B. Good performance demonstrating capacity to engage in research appropriately, a good understanding of the subject matter, and an ability to handle the challenges of translating data and information into visual materials.

C. Adequate performance demonstrating an adequate understanding of the subject matter, a simple ability to handle research problems, and adequate preparation for expressing ideas into visual forms.

D. Minimally acceptable performance demonstrating at least partial familiarity with the subject matter and some capacity to deal with relatively simple problems, but also demonstrating deficiencies serious enough to make it inadvisable to proceed further in the field without additional work.

F. Failed. This grade also signifies that the student must repeat the subject to receive credit.

### **Academic Integrity + Honesty:**

MIT's expectations and policies regarding academic integrity should be read carefully and adhered to diligently: <http://integrity.mit.edu>