CAPRICIOUS FIELD
PEZO VON ELLRICHSHAUSEN

Giovanni Paolo Pannini, Capriccio of Classical Ruins, 1725 (edited detail)

IIT COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE
CHICAGO, SS16
CENOTAPH
The megalomaniac drives of powerful personalities, those who have guided the destinies of so many peoples in vast and extended territories, perhaps by a mere reciprocal act of compensation, seem to deserve an equivalent monumental construction; a final building overloaded with such presence, character and ideological value that it is not only expected to become a capricious sign of itself but a bold statement about the figure’s afterlife ambitions. This irrevocable house might be read as a heroic proclamation of authority, even when the contained room is empty, with the remains either forgotten or posthumously celebrated elsewhere. In these terms, the mysterious yet bizarre form of the cenotaph is rooted in a rather basic contradiction: it is a device filled with memories, images and myths while simultaneously appealing to a sublime presence and a sensitive experience.

CAPRICCIO
This semester’s naïve intention is rooted in the possibility of inventing a new idealized landscape for the Chicago waterfront. Recovering the romantic attempts explored by many neo-classical painters, these urban scenes will be equivalent to those recollections of archaeological ruins, mythological statuaries, exotic gardens and, of course, colossal buildings. Within the accepted failures and irrationalities of the funerary monument, the proposed infrastructure should be understood as a fantastic construction with a unique prominence, mood and temperament. This construction (a plinth with its plateau) will be informed by a self-regulated motive: the subjective and fairly whimsical repetition of a limited set of singular figures.

INVENTORY
The initial research subject will be the very content of this empty tomb: the selected neo-Palladian work of the American past president Thomas Jefferson. We will operate under the innocent but invented belief that there will be an inevitable transference of knowledge from this prominent non-trained architect who was openly translating (and recasting with
delight) foreign formal lessons and their old ideologies. Singular fragments selected from a wide range of historical drawings (plan, section or elevation) must then be re-traced as autonomous geometrical figures. This inventory of plates will be the formal foundation for the different scales of the proposed square and building. Each student should produce 12 cases (drawings in A4 horizontal format, line drawing according to given format).

PRODUCTION
Inventory models (individual, 12 plates, 15x15cm, mdf, black)
Inventory drawings A4, 12 figures, line layout)
1:50 Building Model (mdf, black, no base)
1:500 Site Model (100x100cm, mdf, black)
1:5000 Location Plan (A1, 40x40cm, aerial photo, collage)
1:50 Floorplan, 2 Sections, Elevation (A1, drawing collage, b/w)
Aerial Perspective (A1, 40x40cm, photo collage, b/w)
Interior/Exterior Perspectives (A1, 40x40cm, photo collage, b/w)

Text (A4, 300 words, description of proposal)

CALENDAR
Week 01 (11.01-15.01): Intro
PvE introduction, case selection
Week 02 (18.01-22.01): Inventory
Drawing and models
Week 03 (25.01-29.01): Inventory
Friday 05th: Submission
Week 04 (01.02-05.02): Object
Drawings, 1:100 model
Week 05 (08.02-12.02): Object
Drawings, 1:100 model
Week 06 (15.02-19.02): Object
Friday 19th: Submission, 1:100 model
Week 07 (22.02-26.02): Context
Line drawing, site model
Week 08 (29.02-04.03): Context
Line drawing, site model
Week 09 (07.03-11.03): Context
Wednesday 9th: Mid Term Submission
Line drawings, site model, 1:100 model
Week 10 (14.03-18.03): Spring Break
Complementary reading, text
Week 11 (21.03-25.03): Construction
Perspectives, 1:50 Model
Week 12 (28.03-01.04): Construction
Friday 1st: Submission, Perspectives
Week 13 (04.04-08.04): Construction
PvE in UK, 1:50 Model
Drawings, models, images
Week 15 (18.04-22.04): Edition
Drawings, models, images
Week 16 (25.04-29.04): Final Review
PvE and Guest Critics

METHOD. The studio is based on a sequence of precise but seemingly arbitrary instructions. By following these given facts, each student is asked to make personal (and common) sense to those initial parameters. The resulting formal structures should be based on deduction and logic. Each proposal must be developed from its location to the details of construction and inhabitation, from the presence of the object in the landscape to the everyday elements. Due to this wide process, students are expected to produce simple but clear ideas.

FORMAT. While the inventory will be developed individually, projects are going to be developed in groups. Since no other material will be requested, students are encouraged to spend their time on the listed items. The requested list of production is the only mandatory material for the Final Review and further edition. As a general format, the studio will work with the metric system. Floorplans, sections, elevations and axonometry will be black/color line drawings made in CAD according to a given graphic reference. Final scale models will be made out of painted mdf (with polished plaster corners). This produced material should be both physical (printed on high-resolution paper) and digital (uploaded into a Dropbox account). The final material must be delivered in A1 and A3 pages together with an edited A4 portfolio. Drawings should be submitted in DWG and PDF formats and images in JPG at 300 dpi. The files must be labeled (in capital) according to the following detail: PVE_IIT_16_SS_STUDENT_CONTENT_00

NOTE. Please see more conditions in the introduction to the Naive Intention program.
Satyros and Pythus of Priene, Tomb of Mausolus, Halicarnasus, 350 BC
Tomb of Lars Porsena, Clusium, c500 BC. Drawing by Quatremere de Quincy
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