



Riverbed, by Olafur Eliason, 2014 installed in Louisiana Museum, by J. Bo & W. Wohlert, Humlebæk, Denmark.

48-554/48-701: Making up Nature- from the Picturesque to the Hyper-Natural

Units: 9

Instructor: Laura Garófalo

This seminar questions how we perceive, represent, and reconstruct our world in relation to evolving concepts of “nature” and their manifestation in architecture, art, and landscape. It is focused on the intellectual trajectories that define ecology and environment to arrive at the paradigm shift theoretician Donna Haraway has termed natureculture. We will first familiarize ourselves with historical ways of seeing “nature” and how this has formed the landscapes of the Anthropocene. This will help us put a critical lens on land, environmental and ecological art, ecoventions, architectural living systems, biomimicry, biophilia, and projective ecologies while we consider the influence of gardens, responsive landscapes, hyper-natures, and artificial ecologies in changing the way we design and build. We look for not only relevance but joy and beauty in practices that highlight the relation between desire, responsibility, more-than-human wellbeing, and ecological justice. This may help us build notions of care and stewardship and an understanding of traditional and emergent cultural constructs that can define an eco-centric practice which shapes building futures.

The course surveys texts from a range of topics including ecological aesthetics, architecture, art, landscape urbanism, and ecologically focused philosophy and theory. It includes weekly readings, discussions, presentations, and visual or written deliverables.

The class is open to graduate and undergraduate students in all majors.