Étienne-Jules Marey, Walking Man, chronophotography, 1884

On Speed /
Space, Time & Information

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This seminar focuses on relations between architecture, information and computing technologies, and society as they are conditioned by speed: rates of transfer, response, exchange, movement, cognition, and more. Development in the last century has been marked nearly always by new velocities, at times testing or altering human tolerances for construction, for perception, for adaptation, for reliance on shelter and on computational systems. These roles of speed reveal ways that architecture and information systems embody shifts in culture, in technology, and in society - but also shifts in less obvious things like the emergence of global finance and geopolitics. Since late Capitalism and the rise of post/industrial economies, these shifts continue as indicators for unprecedented ecological and economic phenomena. Speed, in short, is not neutral or relative but always a function of its circumstance.

In readings and class discussions, we will consider roles of speed in things like modular construction and shifts to rapid prototyping and fabrication; in the dissemination of Cybernetic thought; in evolving forms of public space with new telecommunications technologies; and in ecologies of material use. Readings in architecture, in media theory, in philosophy and more will explore ways that time is understood, is constructed in different ways, and to different ends. The seminar culminates with the recent movements toward "accelerationism" - rushing modernism and capitalism to some logical conclusions - and an interest in experiences beyond human perception in slowness.