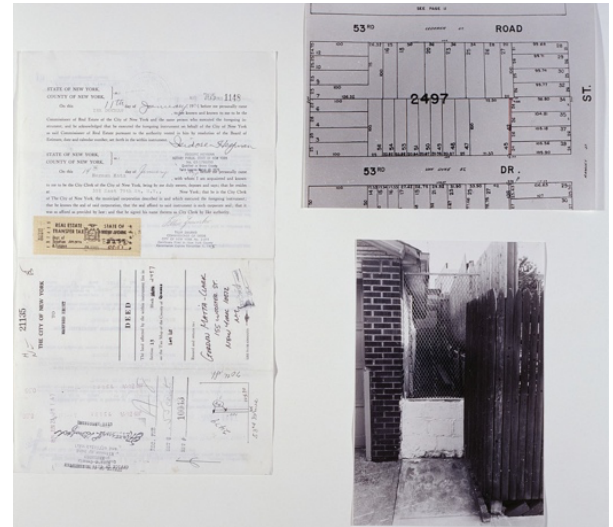


## VACANT\_CLT : ARCHITECTURE, COMMUNITY, PRESERVATION



Left: *Sea of Vacancy*. RAAAF Rietveld Architecture-Art-Affordances (Dutch Pavilion, Venice Biennale 2010)  
Right: *Reality Properties: Fake Estates, Little Alley Block 2497, Lot 42*. Gordon Matta-Clark, 1974 (Guggenheim)

### Course Description

VACANT\_CLT is an intensive diploma research studio to create experimental urban building, on vacant and under-utilized lots in inner Charlotte with complex social and architectural histories. The goal is to investigate the questions of utilizing built form and urban fabric for different purposes to benefit "community."

The course calls for the innovative and socially relevant use of public assets. The identification and analysis of how and by whom the public(s) of Charlotte are constructed will inform a programme and a project for public infrastructural systems and civic constructs. Research on issues, societies, regulatory systems and contemporary forms of work and industry will examine both engagement and resistance to the logic and metrics of economic value and performance. Projects will explore properties that are vacant for a period of longer than one week as unregulated zones in order to reveal the enormous potential of temporarily unoccupied space and form.

The studio will be organized and operate as a think tank for architectural urbanism focused on inventing the futures of Charlotte. Areas of investigation may include but are not limited to: Creative Industry, Advanced Manufacturing, Logistics and Distribution, Health Care, Pandemic Culture, Food, and Flora and Fauna.

**Course Themes** include public-scale buildings, architectural programming, architecture as an urban cultural product, the future of work, civic and infrastructural systems, and the nexus of architecture, urbanism and political economies in the public domain.

### Method and Procedure

The course will emphasize iterative design processes that intertwine advanced design technology and analogue design technique with the goal to empower individuals and communities through the invention of systems providing access to design through a combination of digital technologies and activism.

Readings will establish the theoretical framework and ambitions of the studio. The Atlas of VACANT\_CLT will document the research phase in which students find and represent their investigations with evidence on vacancies. The project will conclude with the elaboration of an urban architectural assembly of the ideas discovered during the semester with possible partial implementation and public viewing (to be confirmed).

### Pedagogical Objectives

The course views design as the combination of visionary ideas with real world issues. It aims to address persisting social and environmental difficulties frequently disregarded or overlooked by normative specialized design practices. It will:

- Expose students to Research, Argument Development, City Research and Analysis, Urban Building.
- Emphasize the Complex and Layered Systems of the City, its Formal Ordering Logics (Morphologies) and Spatial Qualities.
- Promote Critical Thinking, Negotiation, Synthesis, Systems Thinking, Strategic Design Thinking, Group Discussion, Public Speaking (Oral Presentation of Design Intentions).
- Expand Skills in Reading Comprehension, Critical Data Interpretation, Developing a Thesis Argument, Formal Design Construction, Architectural Programming, Building Design.