

Filmic Commoning: Exposing Infra and Intra-stial Urban Conditions

SARAH MILLS
The Leeds School of Architecture

SESSION I

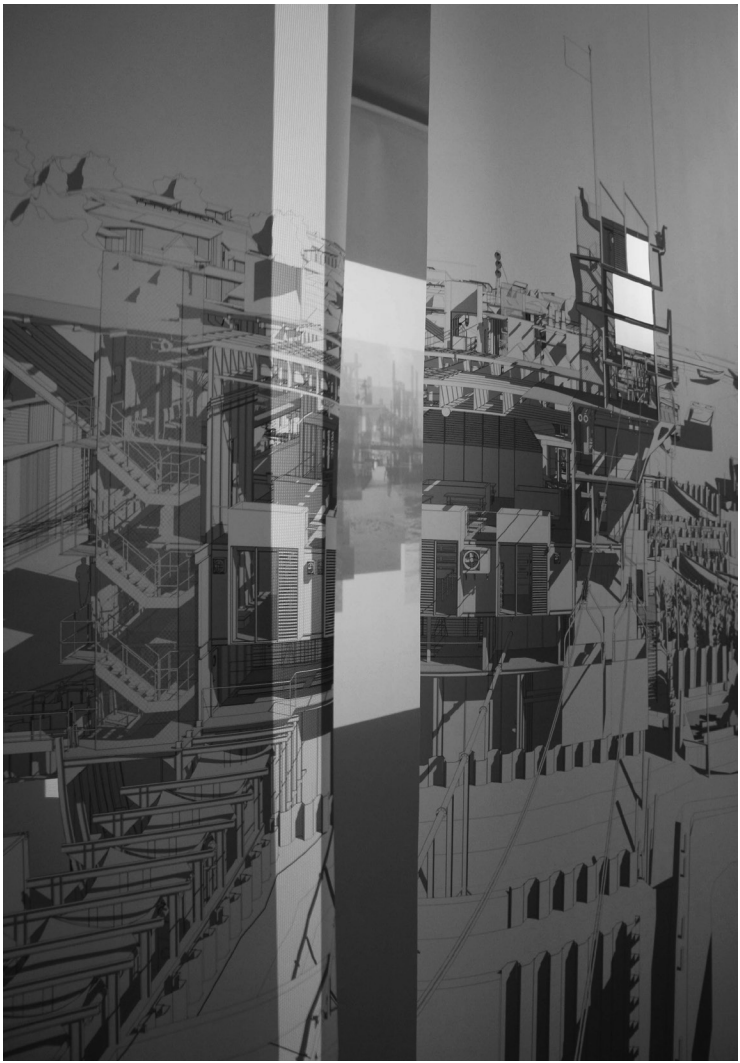
KEYWORDS
trans-disciplinary, 'essayistic' narratives, process,
School of Art, Architecture and Design

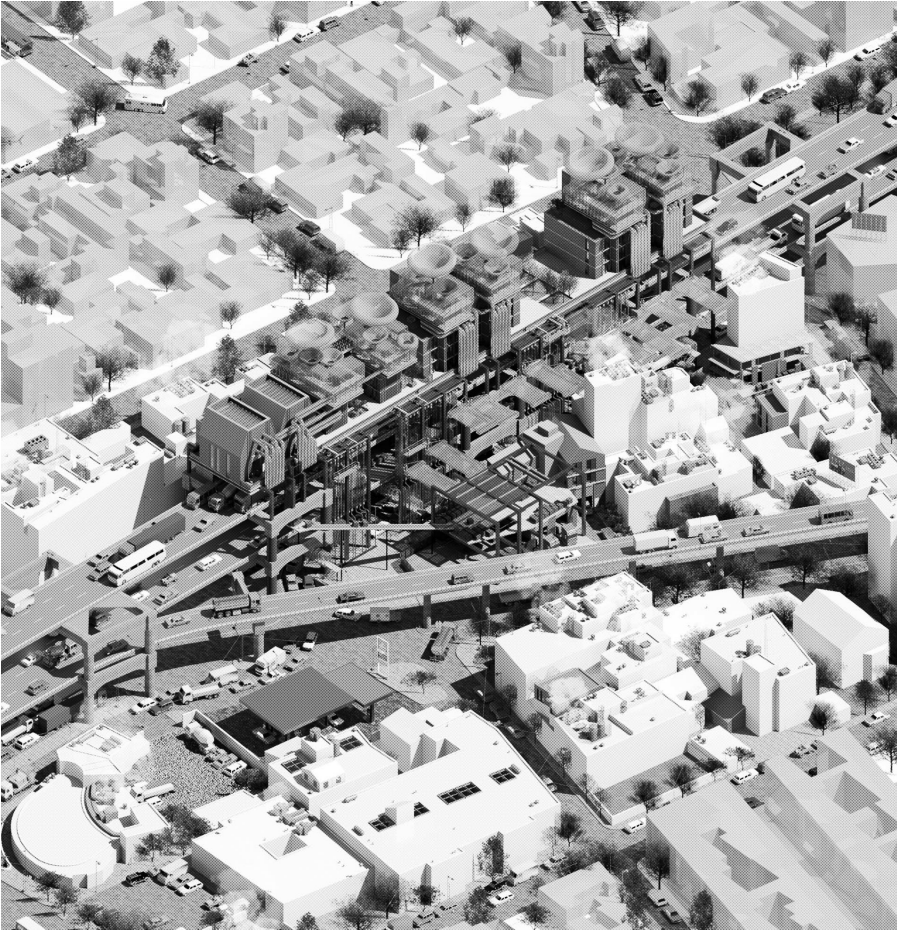
EXPLORATIVE STRATEGIES

'The user of cinematic architecture, at its most extreme, will lose any consciousness of being housed or, the opposite, have the somewhat disappointing experience of there not being more than a house. In this way, cinematic architecture is a form of physical dialogue.' — Pascal Shoning

Cinematic Commons' research and practice explores active relationships between film, architecture and city through 'essayistic gaze', 'journeying long take' and 'filmic commoning'. It weaves together filmic techniques, an essayist approach, scenographic constructs, architectural intervention and issues of public space, or 'commons', as a way to restore cities as sites for productive dreaming. From strategies of recursive narrative to manipulations of cuts and takes, the process of essayistic film-making traverses from the personal to the collective and articulates a complex range of 'commonness' in face of disparities and boundaries. The gaze and the take lay bare not only inter- and infra-stial urban conditions, but also manifest transient and qualitative factors of urban life from social behaviours, political actions to psychology of identity. This recognition of film as a medium and an instrument of architectural knowledge provides new system to comprehend particular conditions in Asian, African and South American cities expanding or transforming in ways beyond the rational and normative control found in European or American cities. By analysing and contrasting particular examples of film-making and architecture-making in cities such as Mumbai, collaborating with Cinema City Group; Tokyo, collaborating with Cinematic Architecture Tokyo; and Yame City, collaborating with Kyushu University Design students — our research reveals a new paradigm of the urban filmic construct probing new possibilities in creating cohesive and engaging public spaces from within a School of Art, Architecture and Design. Working between practices this paper exposes particular 'essayistic' narratives and how they may 'translate' to methods of working to make space and forms of activism driven from within the Architecture subject area. Viewed collectively on site, in the architecture studio, or shared with collaborators, film making and viewing becomes a critical and reflective tool within an architecture school context.

We actively pursue interdisciplinary collaboration, being keenly aware of the necessity to learn and borrow from, as well as the need to instigate exchange, with other disciplines. The studio group takes into account the ever more diverse and dynamic landscapes of architectural production, culture and politics, and addresses the wide range of tasks and modes of operation that architectural practitioners engage with and in





Architectural rendering
The image is a black and white architectural rendering of a futuristic interior space. It features a large, dark, rounded object in the foreground, possibly a piece of machinery or a container, and a large, glowing, abstract structure in the background. The scene is dimly lit, with strong highlights and deep shadows, creating a dramatic and futuristic atmosphere.



