ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN PROJECT:  
ARCHITECTURE AND CINEMA

OBJECTIVES

The project we intend to propose to students is centered on the sites of architecture, as interpreted through cinema. It will be developed through the use of the usual modes of architectural ‘screen-writing’ (urbanistic, morphological, function and social analysis of the targeted site, setting up of a programme?) and will be carried out by a film-making assignment in which the architect’s viewpoint will be revealed through visual sequences (storyboard). This ‘storyboard’ approach to the project assignment is an introduction to the necessarily fragmented perception of any architectural object in the continuum of the city. It is also a way of bringing architectural representation back round to the very subjective scale of the beholder and of developing, at the same time, the personal aesthetics capable of more freely investing in the diverse techniques that shape architecture, no longer considered in their reductionist dimension as an end in itself, but as means to serve the objectives of architecture. Nonetheless, this ‘change of scenery’ in relation to conventional forms of architectural representation is not to be understood, in our opinion, as complete without recourse to cinema. Analysis of the film sequences will show students how the film-maker composes a framework as architect and how cinematic architecture brings out a naturality without problems. It will be up to the students, and form the second exercise of the course, to translate this into plans, cross-sections and side-views, and ‘film spaces’ that are apparently so familiar – after all, what is involved in the images going by will be a kitchen, a bedroom, a flat, etc. – that the actors go back and forth in with no other hindrance than the necessities of the scenario.

On top of this, we intend to carry this exploratory work on to serve as a genuine ‘finished product’ that will stand out from the unfinished taste that a project always tends to leave. The students, as is the tradition in this course, will be encouraged to create a fiction film (lasting one minute) articulated around the conception period (scenario, storyboard, intention text), a filming period (shooting, sound-recording), a post-production period (derushing, image and sound composition edition, final product-shaping). By thus combining the practice of film-making and the practice of architecture, we want not only to bring out the convergences and divergences of these two ways of practicing our creative powers. We also want to note – as Serge Daney said, ‘a film is constructed against pictures’ – that the city is built against architecture.
CONTENT  
This course comprises a theoretical part devoted to analysis of architectural programmation, the founding element in the first sketching out of the project and analysis of film sequences, chosen both from the larger history of the cinema as well as from the smaller history of our school. This space for shared reflection should be a fertile ground for the practical work required. Obviously, theory and practice will occupy all the course.

WORK REQUIRED  
An architectural project according to the modalities defined in 'objective' – retranscription of a filmed space into an architectural assignment; a 1-minute film; writing, in a few pages, of a critical note on the work carried out in the course of the year.

ASSESSMENT  
Continuous assessment: 50%, final exam: 50%