

# Sensory Architectures

BA2 Humanities Electives 2013 | Dr Victoria Henshaw | [Victoria.henshaw@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Victoria.henshaw@manchester.ac.uk)

***"When I first began to explore sensory deprivation in space, the problem seemed a professional failure - modern architects and urbanists having somehow lost an active connection to the human body in their designs. In time I came to see that the problem of sensory deprivation in space has larger causes and deeper historical origins."*** Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone –*

*The Body and the City in Western Civilization (1994, p16)*



## Course Outline

Cities and the streets, squares, public areas and buildings within them are experienced by human beings using all of their different senses; architecture is looked upon, heard, felt, breathed and tasted. The senses are increasingly considered in the design of services and products, so why is it that architectural practice and representation focuses primarily upon visual factors and how might we go about incorporating a more full-bodied approach into our designs? What factors might we consider as part of the process, what additional skills do we need to learn and how might we illustrate the invisible? This elective will introduce you to different aspects and techniques in sensory architectural design and management, and will include 'in person' and 'skyped-in' presentations from specialist experts from different sensory fields and including those with many decades of experience in designing particular aspects of the sensory environment. Sessions will draw from across psychology, geography, anthropology, engineering and the arts and consider factors ranging from acoustics to mapping, perfuming to experiential marketing, ventilation to heat. In doing so, this elective will provide you with the knowledge to participate in, and respond to, the emerging field of sensory studies and design.

In undertaking this course, you will gain an appreciation of the different opportunities and characteristics that are presented by each of the senses and how these inform place and space perception. You will learn about different means of assessing sensory aspects of space and the various tools that you might drawn upon in creating enjoyable and memorable buildings and areas in the city.

Representing Smell Workshop & Manchester Smellmap (May 2012) | See <http://smellandthecity.wordpress.com/>



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**Session topics:** Thursday mornings 10am–12noon (31<sup>st</sup> Jan – 21<sup>st</sup> March 2013)



## **SOUND ARCHITECTURES**

Knowledge and understanding regarding the role of sound in our experiences, memories and expectations of architectural spaces has progressed significantly since the World Soundscapes Project of the 1970s. This session will explore soundscape design with reference to a specific project carried out in English cities.



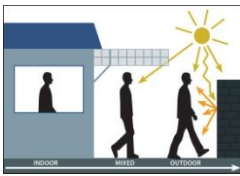
## **EXPERIENTIAL ARCHITECTURES**

Commercial environments are today hiring specialists to assist them in creating full-sensory embodied experiences. This session will outline some such campaigns and techniques and will contrast these in exploring 'felt' experiences of urban architectures in the form of 'vibration' in residential environments.



## **OLFACTORY ARCHITECTURES**

The sense of smell is one of most under-valued senses and has a special relationship with memory, contributing significantly with our place expectation and identity. This session will explore different design tools and equipment available when considering odour, including scratch and sniff books and smell samples.



## **THERMAL ARCHITECTURES**

The thermal comfort of indoor and ambient environments has arisen as a topic of increasing concern in recent years, having relevance to climate change and global warming, the use of air conditioning and air quality. This session will highlight some of these factors and explore different architectural responses.



## **EDIBLE ARCHITECTURES**

Cities by necessity have a complex relationship with food, whether relating to the supply of good into the city, the development and management of international food or cultural quarters, or spaces that cater for traditional street, international or festive markets. This session will examine these referencing UK and overseas projects.



## **REPRESENTING INVISIBLE ARCHITECTURES**

New technologies and techniques such as crowd sourcing provide opportunities to map different aspects of the built environment including factors such as heat, odour, sound and emotions. This session will explore these and other creative techniques used in representing the invisible.



## **DISGUSTING ARCHITECTURES**

Theories of aesthetics and design have in general excluded 'disgust' yet this emotion plays an important role in our experiences of other people, things and the environment around us. This session will outline different types of disgust and explore how these are manifested in environmental experience and perception.



## **URBAN & ARCHITECTURAL AMBIANCE**

Urban ambiance theory has emerged recently from the French speaking world, providing opportunity to consider in tandem different sensory information gained from urban spaces. This session will talk through some of its key features and explore the potential usefulness and applicability of this theory to architectural design.