ABSTRACT: Pragmatist-Relational Perspectives in Architectural and Urban Studies

This seminar will study how pragmatist-relational perspectives can be made useful for architectural and urban research. Drawing from science and technology studies, actor network theory, material ontologies, and pragmatist philosophies proclaiming relational, situated, and embodied accounts, the seminar will show how such approaches inform different, complex, and therefore, more realistic accounts of architecture and the city. Such accounts are considered relevant both methodologically and ethically. Namely, apart from offering novel modes of inquiry, embodied-relational understandings of the city also evoke ethical reflections that are important in transdisciplinary settings such as architecture and urbanism - where (analytical) research is tied to a (productive) profession. Through relational-situated accounts of radial architectural and urban actions (and tools) as found in Brussels after 1968, the seminar will therefore ask: How do such approaches not just allow for different accounts of the city, but also inform possible ‘other’ futures?

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