

DISCOURSE

02

SISYPHUS
THE
ARCHITECT:
METAPHOR IN THE
DESIGN STUDIO

RMIT Architecture & Urban Design values ideas-led venturous design experimentation and exploration. To be venturous is to be brave and take risks. At RMIT students are asked to articulate the positions contained in their projects, to be critical and assert their interests and future directions. It is important that architectural projects and ideas are situated within wider discussions in the discipline and that propositions are formed that suggest how a contribution can be made to disciplinary, as well as to wider contexts and ideas in the world.

The Architecture & Urban Design Discourse Series will use three themes as catalysts to initiate conversations amongst design studio leaders and reveal their positions, attitudes and propositions. There is a long standing tradition of discourse at RMIT and this series aspires to reveal our collective and diverse concerns and facilitate speculation on how these might contribute to advancing the discipline and the wider terrains that they engage in. If we drill down and look behind the statements made at design studio presentations, what do they explicitly refer to, what do they suggest and what do they lead to? Vivian Mitsogianni - Deputy Dean Architecture & Urban Design

Friday 18
August 6:00pm

Swanston
Academic
Building (SAB)

Building 80,
Level 2,
Room 07

Convenors
Christine Phillips &
Jan van Schaik

Moderator
Jan van Schaik

Panel
Isabella Cohen
Gwyllim Jahn
Anna Jankovic
Julien Leyre
Stasinos Mantzis
Christine Phillips
Tim Pyke
Jan van Schaik

The raw materials of the built environment are mundane and inanimate. They comprise such things as steel, concrete, brick, aluminium and glass - and are physically brought together by via the prosaic processes of a highly corporatised construction industry.

There is a long history of the use of visual metaphor within architecture that reverses this banality that is often adopted within Design Studio Teaching by implicitly asking questions such as:

How then does architecture become the semiotics of the built environment?

How are architecture's inanimate raw materials imbued with narrative and meaning and what design processes are used to create these narratives?

If Victorian era buildings are just piles of bricks and wood why is so much public emotion aroused each time one is demolished?

How does the history of the use of metaphor in architecture inform generative design processes and advanced manufacturing techniques?

What kinds of semiotics are drawn upon to create these architectural metaphors? Do we generally rely on architectural references alone or do other cultural references also play a part?