

Critical Topics in Belgian Architecture (E084532)

Course size (nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)

Credits 6.0 Study time 180 h Contact hrs 55.5 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2018-2019

A (semester 1)	English	lecture	12.5 h
		guided self-study	17.5 h
		seminar: coached	12.5 h
		exercises	
		excursion	7.5 h

Lecturers in academic year 2018-2019

Liefooghe, Maarten	TW01	lecturer-in-charge
Lagae, Johan	TW01	co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2018-2019

	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Engineering: Architecture (main subject Architectural Design and Construction Techniques)	6	A
Master of Science in Engineering: Architecture (main subject Urban Design and Architecture)	6	A
Exchange Programme Architecture	6	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Belgian architecture, architectural culture, publication culture, 20th and 21st centuries

Position of the course

The elective course addresses a number of current tendencies, prominent figures and remarkable projects from contemporary architectural practice in Belgium and situates these in a broader context by analyzing them from a historical perspective or within a wider geographical scope. A particular attention is given to the related publication culture.

Contents

In recent years, the architectural scene in Belgium has witnessed a growing international attention. Publications in the field of architectural criticism are more and more highlighting the work of (young) Belgian offices as well as projects of different scale, and the recent architectural production has become the subject of exhibitions with a monographic or regional/national focus, held in prestigious venues. During the last editions of the Venice Biennale, the Belgian pavilion regularly ranked among one of the highlights. This international attention is doubled by a growing awareness of the importance of the contemporary architectural scene both in Flanders and Belgium, not only in cultural circles but also among a wider audience.

This growing (international) attention forms the starting point of the course. It is structured around a number of thematic lectures in which the emergence of this recent interest is discussed in the wider cultural and publication context of which it is part. A series of recurrent notions within the debate on Belgian architecture are addressed (craftsmanship, the commonplace,...). To this is added an in-depth discussion of a series of case-studies of both projects and practices. Beyond a pure architecture critical analysis of contemporary Belgian architecture, this course also aims at providing insight in the *longue durée* of Belgian architecture (via a historical perspective on evolutions in the 20th and 21st centuries), via a discussion of the underlying theoretical concepts and by addressing this production as situated in a region that since long has been a

crossroads of cultures and as such relates to and dialogues with practices in a broader geographical context.

Guest lectures, visits to exhibitions and reading assignments are an important part of this course.

Initial competences

- Have a basic training at bachelor level in history of architecture and urban planning.
- Have notions of architectural theory and criticism acquired at bachelor level.
- Or have acquired the necessary skills by other means.

Final competences

- 1 To have insights and be able to situate the important themes, figures, projects and tendencies in the architectural production in Belgium in the last decades.
- 2 To be able to analyze and articulate these themes, figures, projects and tendencies in a wider geographical and broader historical context.
- 3 To be able to develop a personal, critical reflection on a figure, project or publication from the recent Belgian architectural production, and report, in English, on this according to the specific rules of particular genres of text (a review, a research article, an essay,...) or via another medium (photography, exhibition scenario,...).
- 4 To be able to actively participate in group conversations and discussions, in English, including chairing a debate with external speakers.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Guided self-study, excursion, lecture, seminar: coached exercises

Extra information on the teaching methods

Guided self-study, lecture, seminar: coached exercises & interactive discussion sessions, guided visits with preparation by students.

Learning materials and price

Powerpoint slides for the different lectures will be available via Minerva. For the general introduction and each thematic module, a reader will be available (max. 20 euros). Additional costs for transport and access to projects/exhibitions will depend on the specific programme.

References

A bibliography will be made available related to the specific case-studies and themes. Additionally the following references will be used: A+ tijdschrift voor architectuur; yearly surveys of Flemish Architecture (Vlaams Architectuur Instituut), J. D. Bergilez (ed.), Dithyrambes. [Re]Nouveaux Plaisirs d'Architecture, CIVA, Bruxelles, 2013; series monographies of (young) Belgian architects, edited by A16 ; OASE, tijdschrift voor architectuur (); catalogues of Belgian contributions to the Venice Biennale; Christophe Van Gerrewey, *Architectuur België. 25 jaar in 75 projecten*, Lannoo, Tielt 2014; Christophe Van Gerrewey, *Rooted in the Real*, vzw Editions, Ghent, 2011; Mil De Kooning (ed.), *Horta and After. 25 Masters of Modern Architecture in Belgium*, Ghent, 1999.

Course content-related study coaching

The lecturer is available before or after the classes.

Evaluation methods

end-of-term evaluation and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the first examination period

Oral examination, assignment

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the second examination period

Oral examination, assignment

Examination methods in case of permanent evaluation

Participation, assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

- The periodic evaluation consists of the evaluation of a submitted final report and an oral discussion.
- During the semester students receive a series of smaller assignments (presentation of reading assignments, preparation/report on a visited project/exhibition) which are also evaluated.

Calculation of the examination mark

- Small assignments and participation in discussions: 30 %
- Final paper: 50 %
- Oral evaluation of final paper: 20 %