

## Politics of the Neoliberal block in Santiago de Chile Colonial Grid

'Architecture is the language of substantial immobility.' • Juan Borchers

Intermediate 8 continues exploring the political implications of large urban blocks in ever-expanding Latin American metropolises by way of their characteristic city grid. This year the unit moves to Santiago de Chile. As the first city to suffer the socio-political consequences of the Chicago School's economic ideas, it serves as a prototypical reference to neoliberal urban development. Despite shifting towards a more socially committed urban agenda, Santiago relies on independent private entities. The result is a continuous disconnect between public and private interests within the regular colonial grid. From this paradoxical separation, the unit will explore the potential of large urban buildings as 'substantial immobilities', as defined by Borchers, within the continuous system of capitalist reproduction performed by the gridded city.

The unit will undertake individual design proposals for a 120x120m urban block within Santiago's regular grid to be publically and privately shared, and the course's structure will revolve around formal research of this urban block. Spatial, organisation, material and contextual aspects will be interrogated in three interrelated phases:

**Material:** Inspired by the richness of Chilean material culture, studies of rough material possibilities will be conducted to understand the expression of its natural state, structural logic and organic morphology at multiples scales.

**Form:** Critical studies of Latin American and European urban blocks will be examined and used to understand formal and spatial organisation, and extrapolated as preliminary systems of spatial relations. Diagrams will articulate and structure the programmatic content of the block through successive iterations.

**Field:** Research on socio-cultural and economic aspects will inform the block programmatic brief and be accompanied by a reading of the city through a collection of maps, photographs and video fragments that fill the block with content.

### Unit Staff

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Francisco González de Canales studied architecture at ETSA Seville, ETSA Barcelona and Harvard University, and worked for Foster+Partners and Rafael Moneo. He is co-director of Canales & Lombardero and has lectured in England, Chile, Mexico, Spain

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Associates in Boston. Since 2003 she has co-directed Canales & Lombardero. She has previously taught in the University of Cambridge, TEC Monterrey and University of Seville. She finalised her PhD on the dissolution of boundaries traced by modern urban planning. She writes for *La Ciudad Viva* magazine and is editing the book *Arquitectas: Redefining the Practice*.

**Shereen Doumark, Intermediate Unit 8 (2013-14) - the block as a condenser of unexpected events in Sao Paulo city centre**

