

**Watery Visions: Building on the Continental Edge**  
**Mitchell/Moses Studio: Segment 2, Core 2**  
**Fall 2000**  
**5 September 2000**

As we enter the new century, it appears the rhetorical dream of the early Modernists has been fulfilled. A global economy, with its proliferation of all manner of media imagery, the mass production of 'designed' consumer goods, and a construction industry that is standardized to the point of rigid conformity, has produced the much anticipated international style. Do the shelves of Target and K Mart contain the pinnacle of contemporary design? Is there opportunity at the local level to transcend the limits of the global economy?

The scene in Boston has shifted. With the Big Dig near completion, and the conservationist whip cracking, downtown expansion may have reached maturity. The reluctance of neighborhoods to allow new development and an absence of political will may cripple the speculator's lust for the next big deal, a lust that has built the cities of the New World. What is Boston's future if on the one hand there is little undeveloped land remaining, and on the other all existing fabric is considered sacred? Is Boston destined to become the next Venice, frozen in the twentieth century?

We propose a studio that speculates upon the nature and potential of urban expansion, takes a cue from the ambitions of the Big Dig, and harkens back to an earlier form of development. In Boston's early years, when the settlement occupied a peninsula, growth was contained by the Charles River on one side and the harbor on the other. The current waterfront and the Back Bay are no more than the location of the last infill project by the last daring speculators: marsh and harbor were filled in to create more land. The boundary of city and harbor has become arbitrarily fixed. The next frontier may not be the air rights over the Mass Pike, but rather water rights adjacent to the New England Aquarium.

The studio then will consider a version of the strategy of 'infill'. The current city/harbor boundary will be examined with the anticipation of developing alternative relationships. Does private development always preclude the public good? Will a clean harbor require rope swings at every pier for lunchtime swimmers? Participants may propose new forms of occupation along the waterfront that question current conceptions of use. Engineered lumber will be the material of choice in all proposals.

A series of exercises aimed at uncovering students' preoccupations through discreet, precise observations of our locale will culminate in a project, the scale and complexity of which will relate to each participant's ambitions and abilities. As in past studios, we will place high priority on each student's willingness to define his or her own interests and trajectory under the aegis of our common theme.

*Preliminary Schedule*

Week one	Drawing/writing exercises
Weeks two-six	'Short' project related to week one exercises
Weeks seven-eight	Case study
Weeks nine-sixteen	'Long' project speculating on the nature/character of 'infill'

**PLEASE BRING A VESSEL TO THE FIRST MEETING.**