

[April 27, 2018 | Raleigh, NC] In May, 11 NC State University College of Design architecture students will embark on a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and travel to Italy for the 2018 Venice Biennale of Architecture. The students are all taking Advanced Architectural Design (ARC 503), an airport design studio taught by Alumni Distinguished Professor of Architecture Wayne Place, Ph.D. Place's students have been invited by the European Cultural Center to showcase their designs for airports of the future in the "Time Space Existence" exhibit at Palazzo Bembo.

Airport design parallels the 2018 Biennale theme of "Freespace," a word that describes a generosity of spirit and sense of humanity at the core of architecture's agenda. Over the last 100 years, airports have been among the fastest growing building types in the world. Airports are possibly the single most important representation of the cities and people that they serve, challenging designers to create poetic ideas of space that will leave positive, lasting impressions on the public. Stretching the imagination, these soaring ports-of-call feature lofty, long-span spaces that help visitors "breathe"; promote ease of use and way-finding; and connect travelers to their destinations, other people, and the environment. Air travel is the ultimate symbol of human aspiration and optimism, and the buildings that support that enterprise should reflect and augment that sense of confidence.

The invitation was extended to the College of Design after Fentress Architects sponsored a symposium on airport design as part of the 2016 Biennale, which featured Place as a speaker. Fentress Architects President, CEO, and Principal in Charge of Design Curt Fentress, FAIA, RIBA, is an influential alumnus, valued supporter of the College of Design, and an integral part of the airport studio for the past five years. "Fentress has presented an invaluable educational opportunity for the students and the success of the airport studio. His staff—including alumni Joshua Stephens, AIA, [M.Arch '13] and Ana-Maria Drughi, AIA, [M.Arch '13]—were deeply involved in the initial conceptualization and creation of the studio. We would not have this airport studio if key personnel at Fentress Architects had not taken the initiative," says Place.

Since its inception in 2013, the airport studio has been popular among students for its global relevancy, real-world applications, and the scale of the design challenge. The students engage with Fentress and other key members of his staff, all of whom are focused on airport design. This provides students with profoundly rich learning experiences and opportunities to make connections with professional mentors. Furthermore, the scale of the airport typology and the myriad of environmental, structural, logistical, and technological issues and constraints that must be poetically balanced contribute to the studio's uniqueness in the university setting. Graduate student Cameron Westbrook, who is currently participating in the studio, says, "It's been a good experience to work with Fentress Architects. It's been eye-opening because there's so much technology and so much planning to incorporate within the early stages of designing an airport. It can be overwhelming, but it also puts us in a position to want to know more. They [Fentress] are also very encouraging."

Place tailored this year's studio to the international venue by challenging student teams to design their airports for different locations around the world. As a generative part of this process, the design teams researched the culture, climate, and terrain of their chosen location. In addition to the themes of "Time Space Existence" and globalism, the students also considered future evolutions in air travel.

Participating Students

Arpitha Belur

Emily Doyle

Ingrid Fullerton

Parisa Javani

Michael Juriga

Sheyda Livingston

Rosa McDonald

Thanh Nguyen

Daoru Wang

Cameron Westbrook

Baxter Wilson

About the Biennale

The Venice Biennale is one of the most prestigious international cultural events. By inviting the world's leading design thinkers, visionaries, and makers, the Biennale consistently cultivates a progressive voice that inspires, advocates, and connects a global audience. The Biennale and associated exhibitions are hosted throughout the island of Venice, imbuing the city's historic past as an international center for arts and culture with modern significance and maintaining Venice's status as a premier destination. All told, over a quarter million people visited the last Architecture Biennale, with millions more accessing the exhibition via press and other media forms.

About Palazzo Bembo

The College of Design exhibition will be featured on the first floor of the historic [Palazzo Bembo](#), overlooking the Grand Canal just a few steps from the centrally-located Rialto Bridge. The Palazzo was built by the noble Bembo family in the 15th century, and its architectural style reflects the Venetian influences of its original period and those from subsequent restorations. Among the ancient families of Venetian aristocracy, the Bembo lineage includes saints, leaders, heroes, and writers. The Bembo font, a popular serif typeface, traces its origins to the family.

About the NC State College of Design

The [NC State College of Design](#) prepares students for a career in design through interdisciplinary engagement, innovative exploration of technologies, and a core foundation of design thinking and practice. The College of Design offers undergraduate, graduate, Doctor of Design [DDes], and Ph.D. in design degrees and currently has 850 enrolled students. [NC State University](#) is a leading public research university located in Raleigh, North Carolina. In response to an ever-expanding global interest in all disciplines of design, the College's curriculum incorporates relevant practices reflecting both the University's research No. 1 status and its land-grant mission. Effective design requires attention and sensitivity to the social, economic, political, cultural, and behavioral understanding of the environment and people. Our graduate and undergraduate programs in Architecture, Art + Design, Design Studies, Graphic Design, Industrial Design, and Landscape Architecture are intended to develop a designer's perception, knowledge, skills, and problem-solving abilities to develop design solutions for public interest, to serve the needs of all users, and to impact the myriad of sustainability and life-quality problems across the globe.

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Exhibition Info

Exhibitions open May 26 and run through November 25, 2018.
Open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Closed Tuesdays.
Entry is free.

College of Design Contact

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