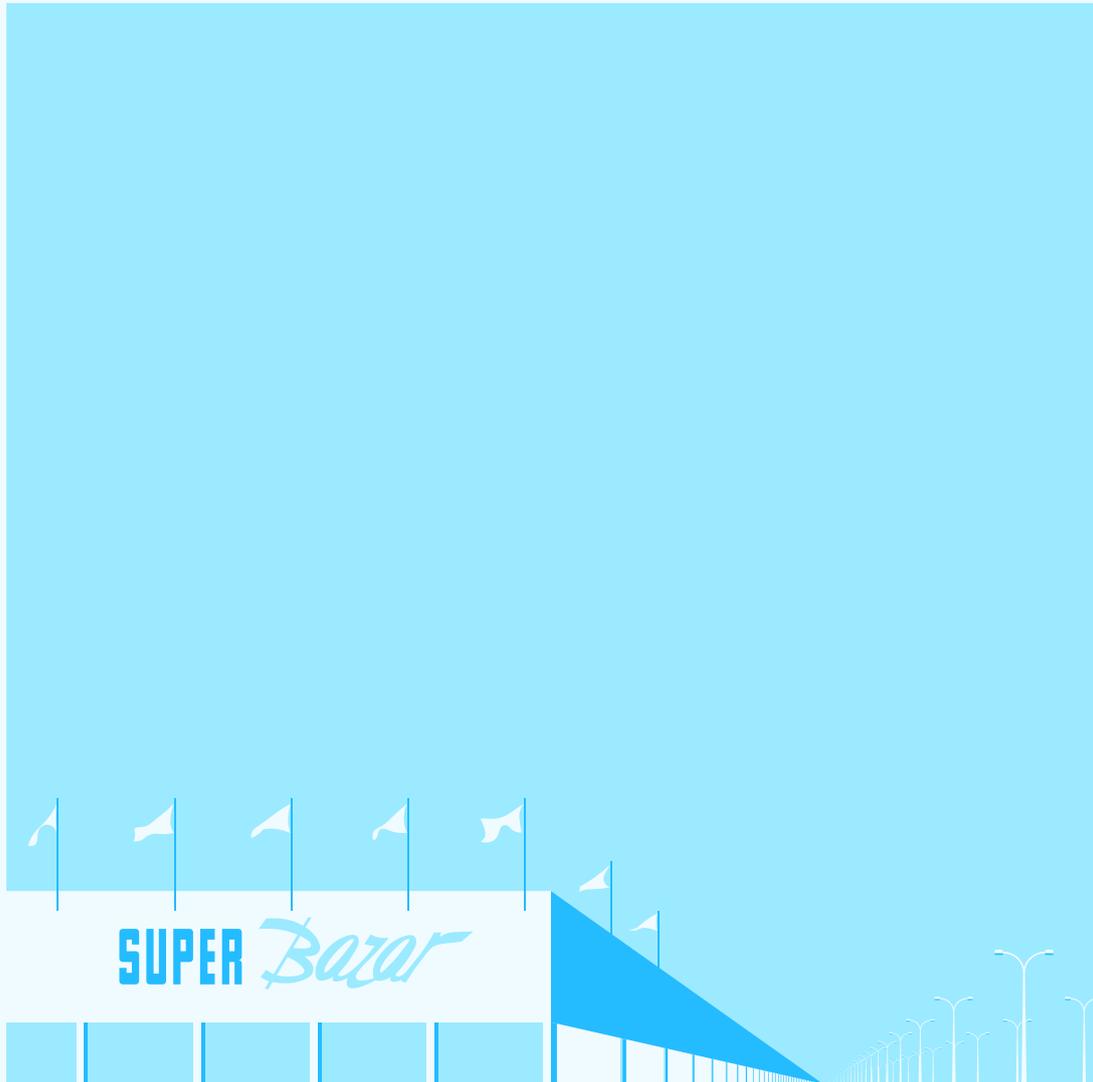


REAL ESTATE ARCHITECTURE #3
THE COMMERCIAL CENTRE



Architecture Summer School
25.08 - 01.09.2018
Ghent, Belgium

tutors

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REAL ESTATE ARCHITECTURE

Real Estate Architecture explores the legacy of architectures built by private developers during the 1960s and 1970s. Through workshops and lectures, publications and exhibitions, it aims at revealing the transformation potentials of these ubiquitous developments. Rooted in the contexts of three different Belgian cities, the research project will reconsider three specific architecture typologies: the apartment building, the office tower and the commercial centre.

THE COMMERCIAL CENTRE

Similarly to other Belgian towns, Ghent has been affected by the shift in the retail industry. From the 1960s onward, the consolidation of the common market, the rise of household purchasing power, the democratization of car mobility and the advance made in logistics led to the emergence of new shopping facilities that radically changed the commercial geography of the city. Historians have often reduced this evolution to the adoption of American 'consumption culture' and the emergence of large shopping complexes along motorways, but actually the emergence of new consumption habits resulted in a very diverse landscape of retail facilities. In Belgium, the shopping center '*à l'américaine*' only encountered a limited success. The mid-size Belgian agglomerations did not match with the regional catchment area needed for large shopping malls. Instead the models that first have made a breakthrough are the supermarkets and hypermarket. The financial success of these retail experiments led to a rapid spread all over the country.

In 1972, the province of Ghent counted 3 hypermarkets, 10 discount stores and more than 70 supermarkets. This diversity of retail typologies also gave rise to a very diverse localization pattern; along the city ring road, along regional roads or on the square of sub-urban municipalities. However, despite these nuances, all these facilities settled outside the city center, where cheap and accessible land could accommodate the vast amount of square meters required for parking and retail boxes. Nowadays, the spatial context in which these facilities first developed has drastically changed. Many of the suburban locations have further urbanized and are now becoming part of the agglomeration. Ghent continues to grow and accommodates every year hundreds of new inhabitants. By 2050, Ghent is expected to house 100.000 additional inhabitants. Such dynamic places these large space consumers in a different land position than the one they held fifty years ago. Yet many retailers keep reproducing the same typology they use to erect in a peri-urban landscape.

The third summer school proposes to explore different scenarios in order to revisit the relationship between these facilities, the plot of land they sit on and their surrounding context. How can architectural interventions provide these buildings with a new meaning, one that embraces its inevitable urban future? How can we transform these spaces in order to host a more diverse set of uses? Can we imagine a model that no longer only consumes land but rather contributes to the production of a piece of city?

SUMMER SCHOOL 2018

The summer school will take place from August 25th to September 1st 2018 in Ghent, Belgium. It consists in an intensive workshop combined with a public evening program: screenings, lectures and debates. About 40 international students and recently graduated architects will work on the future of commercial centres in Ghent. The participants will collaborate in teams of 10 under the supervision of one of the 4 tutors: Buro Kofink Schels, Plan Comun, Conen Sigl Architekten and Jean-Benoît Vétillard. They will investigate how architectural interventions could release potential strategies for the renewal of commercial centres and their link with their urban environment. At the end of the week, the results will be discussed with a panel of architects, urban designers, academics and public authorities. They will later be compiled in a publication and presented in a public exhibition.

APPLICATION

The summer school is open to students in architecture and urban design and recently graduated architects. Up to 40 participants will be selected based on the submission of a succinct portfolio. Application should contain a presentation of your work and a curriculum vitae. Proficiency in English is required. Please send a single pdf file named "name_surname.pdf" to:

application@realestatesummer.net

Application deadline: 10th of June 2018

Tuition fee for the summer school: 250 €

More information and application guidelines on:

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