The Research

There is an increasing, almost prolific, engagement with social notions of media, advertising and new technological mechanisms for the dissemination of product and celebrity. There are clues and trajectories that have spatial implications and resonances and these can be connected to aspects of the urban landscape through movement and infrastructure. This studio seeks out precedent projects and urban occurrences that use aspects of celebrity, aestheticism and popular culture to comment on the contemporary urban condition. It asks: in advertising terms- What is the material organisation of advertising and architecture? And what is permissible in the City?

The Project

Using the urban ‘strip’ as a catalyst we will explore the intersection between advertising culture and urbanity. We will look at the overlapping and ambiguous boundaries that pervade urban environments and examine the forging of image and reality- and the strange plasticity between them. POP explores these themes at the intersection of large media advertising, road way and other urban infrastructures (like trams, trains, their shelters etc) that exist in the city. The site, however, is a flexible thing. The studio will initially examine the city and arterial roads for the existing conditions and then opportunistic moments where projects may be sited.

What kinds of content will be provided/researched/explored?

The media, advertising landscape (as well as the textual landscape of signs, signals etc) is a large part of the infrastructural landscape. The ‘graphic’ landscape (seen beautifully in, for example, the freeway sound wall as well as large arterial design of pedestrian, road, bike ways) is increasingly a moment where advertising and infrastructure connect. It is also a moment where designers can engage in critique and extension of these urban landscapes. Students learn about the manufacturing of identity, place and culture when exploring such thematic.

The initial investigations will be intensive investigations where students will consider definitions of media culture and therefore, expand the themes/limits of the studio. This will occur in tandem with urban investigations of specific precincts and a range of advertising styles. A library of international precedents and projects will be collated by the studio group. These initial exercises act as guidelines for the discovery of each student’s own agendas and strategies for dealing with the studio thematic.

Learning from Las Vegas will be a key text and instructional precedent. This will guide many early learner experiences and techniques- including categorisation and mapping/text analysis. Other devices will be model making and the dissection of the product/package as a method for testing the nature of language and semiotics.