

# Studio Anne Holtrop

## ETH Zürich

design studio, seminar week

HS19

MATERIAL GESTURE:

SITE

introduction:

Tue, Sep 17, 9-12 am

HIRC 11





**MATERIAL GESTURE:  
SITE**

**“I think American landscape art is one thing, but my work doesn’t have anything to do with that, it has to do with material. When I bought property in Nevada, I bought it because I had done studies and found sands and gravels that could make concrete, and clay soils that could be used for soil cements, and running water. These were all raw materials. [...] If you bought an acre of land in that part of the world you were buying all the material you could use in a lifetime.”  
—Michael Heizer in *Sculpture in Reverse* (1984)**

**For this second semester, HS19, we will focus on SITE, as part of our six-year MATERIAL GESTURE research and design. In accordance with the approach of the studio we believe that when we take all the material aspects of a SITE in consideration: the geology, mining, different physical properties, craftsmanship, the specialized techniques and cultural understanding, we can deploy the full potential of the inherent material qualities of a SITE and our way of working it, in what we call MATERIAL GESTURE.**

**The SITE we will study and travel to is Japan’s Southern volcanic island of Kyushu. You will explore the area from a geological, material and cultural perspective. The project that will be developed in this studio will be based on this research and exploration. You will be required to work with the materials and the volcanic processes that are present on the island, and use or transform them to design a space located there: a space that is born from the site in its material consistence and that is constructed on that site, built, in harmony or contrast, to the previous gestures that have formed the geology of the place.**

**In this studio you will work in a workshop and laboratory-like setting where you will research, design and experiment with the actual materials of your project. The material and the ways of making are not a representative outcome of the design studio, but an integral part of a process of working, researching and designing.**

**Assistants: Yuiko Shigeta, Cecilia Marzullo, Stephan Lando**

**Students choosing design class Holtrop in priority 1 during internal enrollment do not choose a seminar week in HS 2019. Trip to Japan during seminar week is highly recommended and will be credited as seminar week by Chair Holtrop.**

**MATERIAL GESTURE:  
SITE**

**October 19–27, 2019**

**Mount Aso, Mount Kuju, Beppu and Kunisaki Peninsula on Kyushu island  
(JAPAN)**

**For the studio's field trip, we will travel to Kyushu, the Southern island of Japan. Our trip is related to our design studio that focuses on MATERIAL GESTURE, and this semester specifically on SITE. Not site in the context we usually consider – as in the view, the vegetation or the relationship to a build environment but rather, site from a geological perspective, how the landscape is formed, what the ground consists of, and how it is changing. During the field trip, artist Carlos Irijalba and Japanese volcanologists will join to explore the geology of Kyushu: the soil, sand, stone, minerals, lava and ash; the crust, faults, cracks, hills, and craters. We will study the processes (the gestures of the volcano so to say) that have shaped the landscape as it is and that will continue to change it in the future.**

**As part of the field trip we will hike to the active hot crater lake of Mount Aso, the oldest and still active volcano in Japan. We will engage in the local culture from sake making, to spring water pilgrimage, to ancient worshipping and iron oxide pigment making. We continue the trip to Mount Kuju to visit a geothermal power plant, and visit Beppu, one of the largest spa resorts, fed by hydrothermal fluids beneath the volcanic centers. We end our trip at Kunisaki Peninsula, where we will stay in a temple, and experience part of the training of mountain worshipping.**

**Our interest in this trip is to gain a fundamental understanding of a territory by exploring its geological formations and material consistence, and engaging in human practices that have build specific relationships with a specific place. Our field trip is to strengthen our own research and gestures of specific ways of making and engaging within this landscape of Kyushu, in order to produce an architecture that is solely focused on the relationship between gesture and material.**

**Guest: visual artist Carlos Irijalba**

**Expense category C including transport, accommodation, guided visits, workshop and a dinner.**

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