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Chairs: Wassim Jabi, Peter Anders

Digital Design

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Describing design as a sequence of steps cannot convey the complexity of social interactions that it embodies. Design is not merely a process, but a co-evolution of efforts and events in various places and times—both synchronous and asynchronous. Designers share their values, effort and expertise within design settings via artifacts that further the design process. Increasingly, these design settings in academia, research, and professional practice combine physical and virtual modalities such as immersion, projection, and a range of interaction technologies. Peter Anders has described such spaces as cybrids: hybrids that integrate virtual and physical space. In these settings, designers use overlapping physical and virtual artifacts and tools to arrive at a co-operative design resolution. Within collaborative design, these artifacts take on an additional role. As embodiments of design ideas and actions, they become media for communication. Donald Schon asserts that design should be considered a form of making, rather than primarily a form of problem solving, information processing or research. Indeed the line separating creation from design is becoming increasingly blurred. For the design artifact itself may become a part of the design proposal—its virtual presence incorporated within a cybrid structure or object. We may in the future see a proliferation of cybrid settings that support collaborative, digital design. The technologies for this already exist in collaborative tools, networked computing, scanning and immersive media. However, it will take a creative vision to see how these disparate tools and devices can integrate within the ideal design setting.

Wassim Jabi is an Assistant Professor of Architecture at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Jabi is a Ph.D. candidate and holds an M.Arch with distinction from the University of Michigan. Jabi is currently the coordinator of the third year undergraduate design studios at NJIT and teaches electives on computer-aided design. He has published several articles on computer-supported collaborative design. Jabi is a long-time member of the Association for Computer Aided Design in Architecture (ACADIA). He is also a member of the editorial board of the International Journal of Architectural Computing (IJAC).