The Laboratory of Urbanism/Habitat Research Center of the Federal Polytechnic School of Lausanne and the Braillard Architectural Foundation, in the framework of The Eco-Century Project®, organise conjunctly the 3rd Working Seminar Bernardo Secchi, under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Program.

At the core of the Seminar lies the role of design, namely the design of cities and territories as an agent in the social construction of hope.

“Our forecasts are extremely limited, as limited are, in a pluralist society, the individual and collective capability to coordinate the actions of the different subjects that contribute to the city construction, transformation and modification. Who builds ‘scenarios’ is a disenchanted person that has no certainty and, for this reason, only proposes possible lines of reasoning.” (B. Secchi, 1996).
A project aims to change the reality. For this reason it explores the frontier of what is concretely possible in its multiple dimensions: institutional, economic, technical and political. Any project is accompanied by an act of hope.

“What may I hope?” The third interrogation of Immanuel Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason admittedly designates a controversial field. This is particularly true in a period, such as the contemporary one, of drastic social, economic and environmental mutations; of deep re-adjustment of values and critiques to simplified ideas of progress. Indeed, those fundamental social long-term aspirations fuelled by modern urbanism, engineering and architecture, in other terms the “great modernization project”, are not widely shared any more.

The disciplines of spatial transformation – or "design disciplines" – have regularly played an active role in defining, interpreting and shaping broader visions and systems of values within the project of modernity and of the social hopes that it embodied. At times marginalized or a-critically absorbed, designed visions opened to both the individual and the community more or less distant perspectives, or "horizons of expectations" according to the famous term of the historian Reinhart Koselleck.

The difficulty today is to compose a convincing collective narrative about the future whereby situating design inside it. Of course, urbanism, architecture, landscape and urban ecology, civil and environmental engineering are always expected to develop strategies based on a long-term global understanding of the human activities and articulate it in specific design solutions according to local needs. But we should bear in mind to what extend have humanities done away with the grands récits. Moreover, the complex management of resources blurs the inherent capacity of the design processes for optimized development beyond merely quantitative preoccupations.

In this context, the Seminar opens the question of design as an interdisciplinary field and as a cultural category. There will be discussed the basis for a hopeful, positive consideration of our capacity to anticipate, organize, design and implement strategies for our built environment seen as a complex large scale entity, though in its specificities and particularities.

The Seminar aims to foster dialogue between scholars, PhD students, professionals and stakeholders on the relations between spatial and environmental design, social hope and ecological crisis, along the three Kantian questions:

• Design and the Knowledge: how is the transformative activity of design to highlight possibilities, reveal dangers and contradictions?
• Design and Action: how is the anticipatory nature of design to construct responsible interrogations on the possible, although not always chosen, future?
• Design and Hope: how could the design culture refresh the collective need to consider positively the 21st century?
The Third Bernardo Secchi Working Seminar will take place on Wednesday September 20th, 2017 at the Rolex Center of the Federal Polytechnic School in Lausanne. Scholars, PhD students, professionals and stakeholders are invited to share their experience in research and practice by submitting their paper proposals (max. 300 words) before Monday, **May 15th 2017, 12 am**, to **JBS_2017@braillard.ch**

Papers may be submitted in English or in French. The selected proposals will be announced before June 1st 2017 and final papers will be subject to publication.

The Scientific Committee:
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