

CAPLA in PARIS

summer 2026 | online information session
Monday 13 October 2025 @ 12pm

zoom registration



image: Place de la République, TVK Architects

CAPLA Abroad – France/Paris

summer 2026 : May 18 – June 30 (May 24-June 30 in Paris)

This 6.5-week course in Paris, with the first week's seminars held online, is open to **all CAPLA undergraduate and graduate students** (BArch, BLA, SBE, BRE, MLA, M.Arch, MS Arch...), as well as students in the School of Art (**BA.DAP+**) and Public & Applied Humanities (**PAH**) who have completed their third year of study. **Graduate Students (CAPLA, CFA, SCCT...)** are encouraged to apply! Students earn 6cu upper division graduate electives.

The program is constituted of two 3 credit courses:

ARC4/571k Paris: spaces of empire, colony + civic agency

This course examines Paris' urban transformation and the architecture of institutions and civic spaces through the lenses of empire, [post]colony and civic agency to imagine resilient futures.

ARC4/597b Detail

This course examines the making of designed things within a particular culture in terms of materials, artisanal/industrial modes of production, and their geo-political entanglements.

Budget, itinerary and other details will be available in October and discussed at the online info session.

contact: Professor Beth Weinstein: bmw99@arizona.edu



CAPLA Paris

French creative culture—from art, architecture and urban spaces to cuisine and couture—has long been studied and celebrated. The city of Paris, with its vibrancy and diversity, can be understood as a microcosm of France, one that reflects its historic colonies and its present-day extension overseas, beyond the continent. The contemporary city and design culture understood in relation to empire and de/post-colony reveal complexities to what constitute France and French culture today. This program dives deeply into these burning and timely questions.

The two 3 cu courses in this summer program examine the provenance, production, and performances of designed spaces, places, and things at two scales—the city and the detail—from not only aesthetic and technical but also historical, theoretical, social, political, ecological and ethical perspectives—particularly vis-à-vis colony.

The CAPLA abroad – France/Paris program is centered around 5.5 weeks of on-site study in Paris, and includes excursions to nearby French cities (Lyon, Bordeaux, Nantes, Nancy, Orleans). Time in France is preceded by one week of live-online seminars. The program concludes with the students' presentations of their studies, at the scales of materials/details and the city, with one another and local design professionals. Courses are described on the following pages.



Fresco depicting colonial powers, Pinnault Collection, Former Corn Exchange, renovated by Tadao Ando. Photo: B Weinstein



Place de la République, TVK Architects

ARC4/571k Paris: spaces of empire, colony + civic agency

Architecture History + Theory Stream.

Meeting times: 2.5 days/wk.

Week 1: seminar

Weeks 2-6: weekly seminars and workshop time
walking tours, site and office visits

Week 7: review

This course examines Paris' urban transformation and the architecture of institutions and civic spaces through the lenses of empire, colony and civic agency. The growth of cities such as Paris are contingent upon surplus capital. As a city whose urban and architectural development is physically evident through the remains of former walls, Haussmannian cuts, its extant and defunct infrastructures, institutions and public spaces, Paris offers a palimpsest and on-going work in progress to observe how a diverse society spatializes and materializes its living, working and playing together. Our goal is to understand Paris' cultural wealth as dependent upon a colonial continuum and to situate this in relation to contemporary debates and imagination of post-colonial and resilient futures. During the course we will read and discuss pertinent theoretical texts about the city, its architecture, public and institutional spaces as well as (post)colony and spatial agency. Through walking tours and site visits that introduce students to locals—commissioners, practitioners, and thinkers—students will gain embodied understanding of the urbanisms and architectures of past regimes in dialogue with the contemporary city and its contested spaces. Students will also reflect upon and explore relations between space, place, (post/colonial) power and peoples through written and graphic media.

Objectives:

- Read pertinent histories/theories about the city, its architecture, public and institutional spaces as well as (post)colony and spatial agency.
- Gain embodied understanding of the urbanism and architectures of past regimes in dialogue with city's contemporary spaces.
- Convey relations between space, place, (post/colonial) power and peoples through written and graphic media.

Outcomes:

- Understand urban and architectural transformations of Paris.
- Ability to relate these urban and architectural histories to socio-political, cultural and (post)colonial theories.
- Ability to conduct field research on and analyze specific spaces and places through architectural and other methods.

La Samaritaine (2021): SANAA + Lagneau Architectes+
Francois Brugel Architectes Associes + SRA Architectes.
Photo: B Weinstein

ARC4/597b Detail

Architecture Technology Stream.

Meeting times: 2.5 days/wk

Week 1: seminar

Weeks 2-6: weekly seminars and workshop time
visits to collections and studios/site of production

Week 7: presentations.

This course examines the production of designed things: from fabric and furniture to garments and building components. Where do the materials, tools, technologies, and techniques come from? How are these linked to former colonies and at the same time integral to French cultural identity. A week of preparatory seminars set the stage. In Paris, each week will include a seminar session (generally on Mondays) during which we will discuss assigned readings related to the week's topic(s). These seminars prepare our field research—trips to collections, sites of production, and/or design firms to explore in detail the details of their craft. Each week includes a workshop session, for students to develop and receive regular feedback on assignments, such as visual essays on curated details. Students will also have time for independent work. Weekly assignments will inform the final project which creatively and critically reflects upon the materials and the artisanally / industrially crafted details observed and documented during the course.

Objectives

- Read about traditions and innovations in French architectural and design material production in relation to local regions and distant colonies.
- Document and curate documentation of materials and practices observed.
- Critically reflect through writing/Creatively reflect through 2D and 3D media on materials/processes/details observed.

Outcomes

- Gain understanding of traditional and contemporary modes of production and detailed material assemblies.
- Develop awareness of materials and modes of production in relation to socio-political and particularly post-colonial contexts.
- Ability to apply techniques observed to a creative project/as the topic of a written or hybrid essay.



CAPLA Abroad France-Paris

Ask your peers in the B.Arch, M.Arch, BLA, SBE
and PAH programs about their experience.

or reach out to Prof. Weinstein
bmw99@arizona.edu

CAPLA-Paris 2024 students in the Place du Panthéon
(in front of the Bibliotheque Sainte Geneviève)

Photo: B Weinstein