LIFE  I
EDUC   II
ATION  III
CERE   IV
MONY   V
LOVE   IV
DEATH  V
The **Fundamental Acts** propose a collective reformulation of five great themes of human existence — *Life, Education, Ceremony, Love and Death* — based on a palimpsest provided by Superstudio in 1972.

The **Fundamental Acts** were conceived as a series of films centered on the relationship between architecture and the acts of human life.

The films were sketched out in storyboard format and later published as a series of documents in the magazine *Casabella*. The first — *Life: Super-surface* — was shown at MoMA in the exhibition *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape*.

The **Fundamental Acts** contain the possibility of re-introducing a discourse on the relationship between architecture and ritual. They explore the spatiality of rituals and their structure, focusing on architecture as technology at the service of memory. They fight against the impossibility of producing a truly monumental contemporary architecture. They imagine an architecture that is capable of expressing complexity that goes beyond — and is inaccessible to — ingenuous functionalism. They consider architecture not so much the activity of providing shelter, as the act of constructing something that will oblige us, our sons, the sons of our sons, to remember. They recognize the sweet and enigmatic beauty of many architectures for unknown ceremonies.

The **Fundamental Acts** have been (re)produced by a group of international contributors. Each contributor submitted a document that investigates a specific act.

Every document contains material produced in different formats. It can include text, drawings, a catalogue of images, an architectural project, a storyboard, photos of models, photos documenting a performance... The number of pages in the document is open. The documents have been collected in the five chapters of this book.

The book has been edited in Milan, designed in Venice and exhibited in Mexico City.
Incantation to the Omnipotence of the Scrollbar

In the Afternet, the moment content becomes endless, it is no longer content; rather, I must imagine that were I to spend the rest of my life scrolling down on www.facebook.com, that in my final instant I might arrive at a newsfeed post describing the Big Bang.

Second Hypothesis: On Pedagogy

In 1967, Guy Debord published *The Society of the Spectacle*, a work that pointed out how society needed the industrial production of spectacle in order to instill in its consumers the fantasy of a fulfilling life outside of their jobs. Taking for granted that nobody is interested in consuming the same thing they did yesterday, spectacle required a permanent flow of fresh product. The object of consumption needed to be new and it needed to be original. As time demonstrated, this principle would eventually come to guide both architectural education and architectural production.

Only a few years later, in 1971, Alvin Boyarsky was appointed chairman of the Architectural Association (AA) in London. Once there, following the model tested in the Summer Sessions of the International Institute of Design, he reorganized AA's pedagogical structure, initiating a highly competitive system of studio units. Tutors, whose one-year
contract renewal was linked to the popularity of their studios, pitched their strong agendas to the student body.

Students were free to choose who they considered to possess the most attractive studio unit. This operation established a Darwinian system of survival and elimination. Originality, yet again, was a must for the successful studio in this scenario. Newness established difference, which became the key to effectively marketing the studio unit to an audience of student-consumers. Pedagogically speaking, these studios shifted the model of master-to-apprentice knowledge transfer that had historically defined architectural education. While the students were conceptualized as consumers, their studio tutors took on the role of editors, browsing among the class's abundant production for those works that strengthened their own personal projects. Yet the students' works not only reinforced the tutor's agenda, they also intensified the differences between studio units, fortifying the overall pedagogical structure.

This model, disruptive in its origins, rapidly expanded to other architecture schools.
and transformed architectural pedagogy around the world, en route to becoming the current hegemonic global model of architectural education. But more importantly, this model also migrated to professional practice — starting with the architectural offices founded by those same AA studio tutors, who first implemented this system.

From the global market of architectural education, a new kind of office emerged, perpetually fed by a stream of recently graduated interns continuously renewing the office’s work force. In this context, the role of the office director shifted from master to editor, as he/she became a figure that wandered through the excess of production, selecting rather than producing. Similar to the way the Surrealists transformed flea-market shopping into a voyage of discovery, the architectural director now found and conceptualized the work produced in his/her office.

As a consequence, what was once a transformative pedagogical system became a well-established modus operandi, both in academia and professional practice, which now appeared to mimic each other. In fact,
the architecture offices emerging from different schools start to function more and more similarly.

Students are often trained by their studio tutors to become a potential labor force for the tutor’s offices. The bigger the reputation of the tutor’s firm, the more popular his/her studio, since it increases the chance to be hired on the spot to reproduce the strategies and techniques tested in the studio environment. At the same time, the student’s interests in specific practices tend to define the architecture school’s curriculum, which brings the topics and interest of the offices back into the space of academia.

The lack of differentiation between the knowledge produced in the profession and the university — a model opposed to the Enlightenment idea of education — eventually plays against architecture schools. The assessment models used in professional practices — clients, budget, regulations, production costs, structural models, etc. — cannot be reproduced in the academic environment. Competing with architectural offices along these lines weakens the architecture schools’
reason for existing. It also misses the point. The autonomy of the academic environment permits the production of specific knowledge that is — by definition — different, due to the very fact that it cannot be produced in a professional environment. That is its value. In this context, replicas become instrumental for architectural pedagogy since they free architectural education from the slavery of originality as an essential interest and support a market-driven professional model of practice as a modus operandi.

They undermine novelty as a measurement of architectural quality, shifting efforts from formal decisions to the discovery of architectural knowledge yet to be discovered. Such tutors imagine architectural education as a critical pedagogy that, instead of assuring jobs for their graduates, uses competition as a driving force to reinforce the students' critical and representational skills.
The Replica Studio explores the potential of replicas to open unexpected paths for the identification, confrontation, and dissemination of current polemics in architecture, situating replicas—or agonistic copies, as we like to call them—both as literal reproductions of architectural works and, in a sense denoted by the Romance languages, as responses to previous statements.

Students are asked to design existing projects of architecture again, and in doing so they use the work of others to construct an argument that responds to the one raised by the original work. On the one hand, as mentioned in the text, to intentionally copy entails a reformulation of the architectural imagination: it allows for a radical renunciation of form making—since form is defined a priori—to focus on architectural knowledge yet-to-be discovered. On the other hand, often the responses are not only controversial, but also able to maintain a certain level of this conflict over time, by taking disensus and friction as constructive tools of operation.

The Replica Studio was taught in the Masters of Advanced Architectural Design Pro-
gram (AAD) at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation (GSAPP) at Columbia University in the summers of 2011, 2012, and 2013.

The Urban Imaginary Project is a studio that explores the potential of agonism to open unexpected paths for the identification, confrontation, and discussion of current polemics in architecture. It investigates the construction of urban imaginaries through the vindication of the role of the architect as a public intellectual— that is, a designer who participates in public debates about the state of cities, risking his or her own position by questioning institutions, received ideas, and the general status quo.

The notion of the imaginary has long been explored by writers and thinkers—such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Michel Foucault, Cornelius Castoriadis or Charles Taylor—who define modern social imaginaries as, in Taylor’s words, “the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with each other, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions
and images that underline these expectations. " In the studio, the Urban Imaginary refers to the construction of the desired idea of cities that their inhabitants consciously produce; this system is confirmed by social relations, architectural operations, urban policies, and the ideology behind them.

The Urban Imaginary Project's methodology is based on critical pedagogy. The students are trained to develop their independent critical skills and apply them agonistically, that is, by taking radical positions and learning to defend them graphically, orally, and through the construction of strong arguments. Once a week, the class has pedagogical sessions with invited lecturers, debates, acting workshops, and a wide-range of time constrained games/exercises in order to advance in the students' skills, analyses, and proposals. The Urban Imaginary Project has been taught at the Masters of Advanced Architectural Design Program (AAD) at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation (GSAPP) at Columbia University since the Fall 2013.
Uncreative Architecture had a simple goal: not to produce any original architecture for the entire semester. The students spent three months copying a range of architectures, from a public toilet to the Princeton campus, and in the process, discovered un-tapped architectural knowledge.

Uncreative Architecture was an undergraduate independent studio taught at Princeton University’s School of Architecture in Spring 2012.

The jargon of programmers, stretching out the radius of the inhabitant by expanded alliances and opportunities for agency
*Fundamental Acts* was originally commissioned for the exhibition *Archivo/Italia*, curated by Mario Ballesteros at Archivo Diseño y Arquitectura in Mexico City, from October 2015 to January 2016.

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