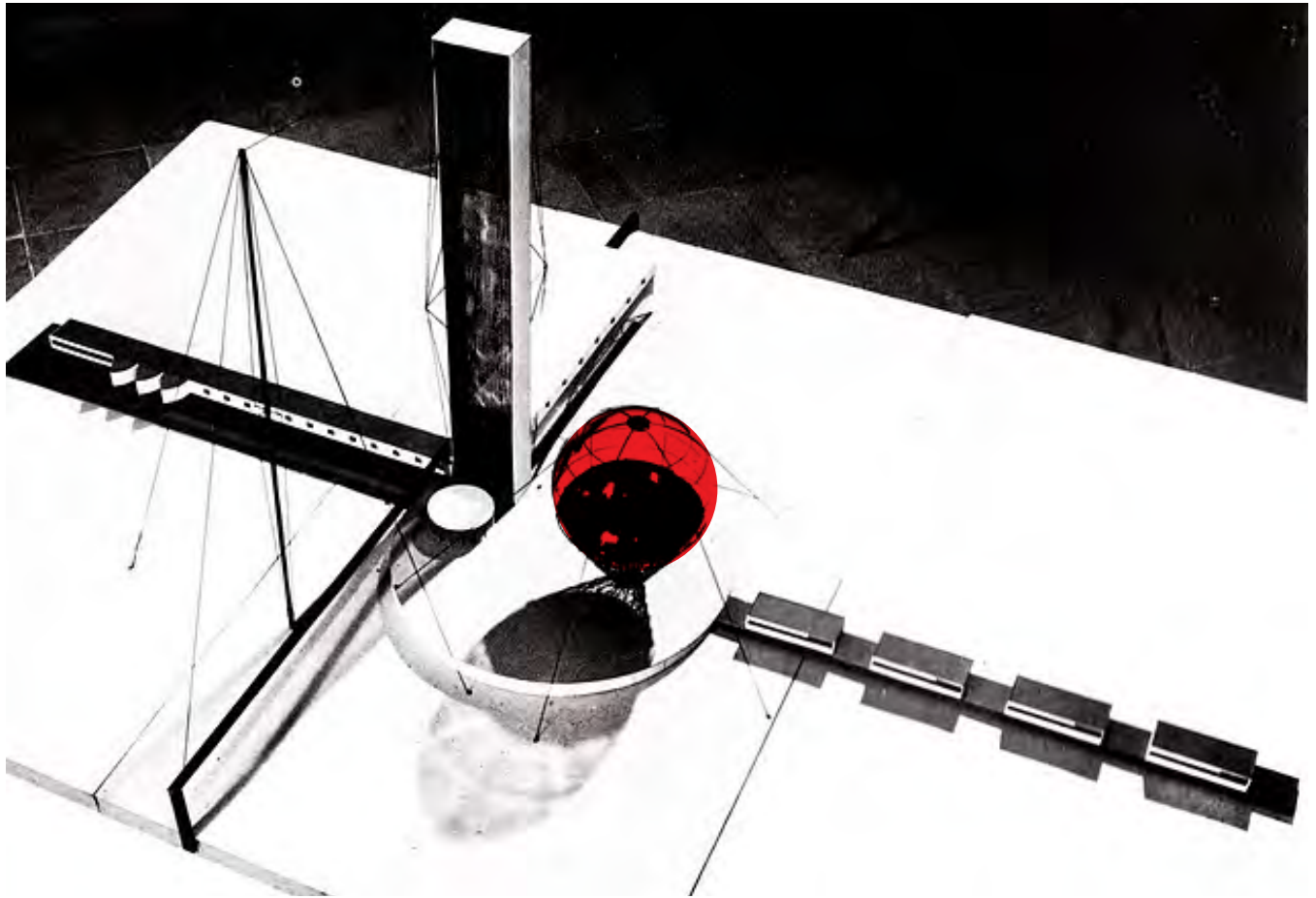# E A S T E R N   H O R I Z O N S

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Russian revolution of 1917 and the architecture that embraced its revolutionary spirit profoundly influenced the development of western modern architecture. Its effect on the subsequent 70 years of Soviet architecture and on the post Soviet developments, determined by constantly opposing forces, will shape the content and geographical trajectory of the program.

The fundamentally international nature of this revolutionary architecture requires that we examine a parallel manifestation of modern architecture as it played out across the territories affected by the world's largest socialist experiment. This will bring us to the consideration of both post-imperial and post-soviet spaces. Starting with Moscow – the capital of USSR since 1918, the former principal city of Muscovy and the present capital of the Russian Federation, continuing on to St. Petersburg – the capital of the Russian Empire since 1703, we will make our way into the Baltic States – the former western-most republics of the USSR and only independent since the late 1980's, and eventually on to Finland – the former Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire until its secession in 1918.

Traversing this huge territory – spatial, temporal, cultural and phenomenological – is essential for the examination of this paradigm of "revolutionary architecture".

E A S T E R N   H O R I Z O N S

ITINERARY

We will spend roughly half of the program in Moscow – the starting point of the Russian state 9 centuries back, and a place that to this day resides on a cultural fault line – that between the West and the East. St. Petersburg – the new capital willed by Peter the Great and designed by the Dutch, French and Italian architects – is the veritable Russian window into Europe; and through this window the exchange with the contemporary western world took place until the iron curtain was closed shut. Riga, Vilnius and Tallinn – all relatively small towns, each with its own character (Tallinn – mediaeval, Vilnius – baroque, Riga – neoclassical) – had the status of a "capital" stamped onto them by historical circumstances, not design. And finally, Helsinki – once a provincial Russian backwater, challenged and upheld its independence from its former sovereign in the beginning of the 20th century has subsequently developed into a unique design capital.
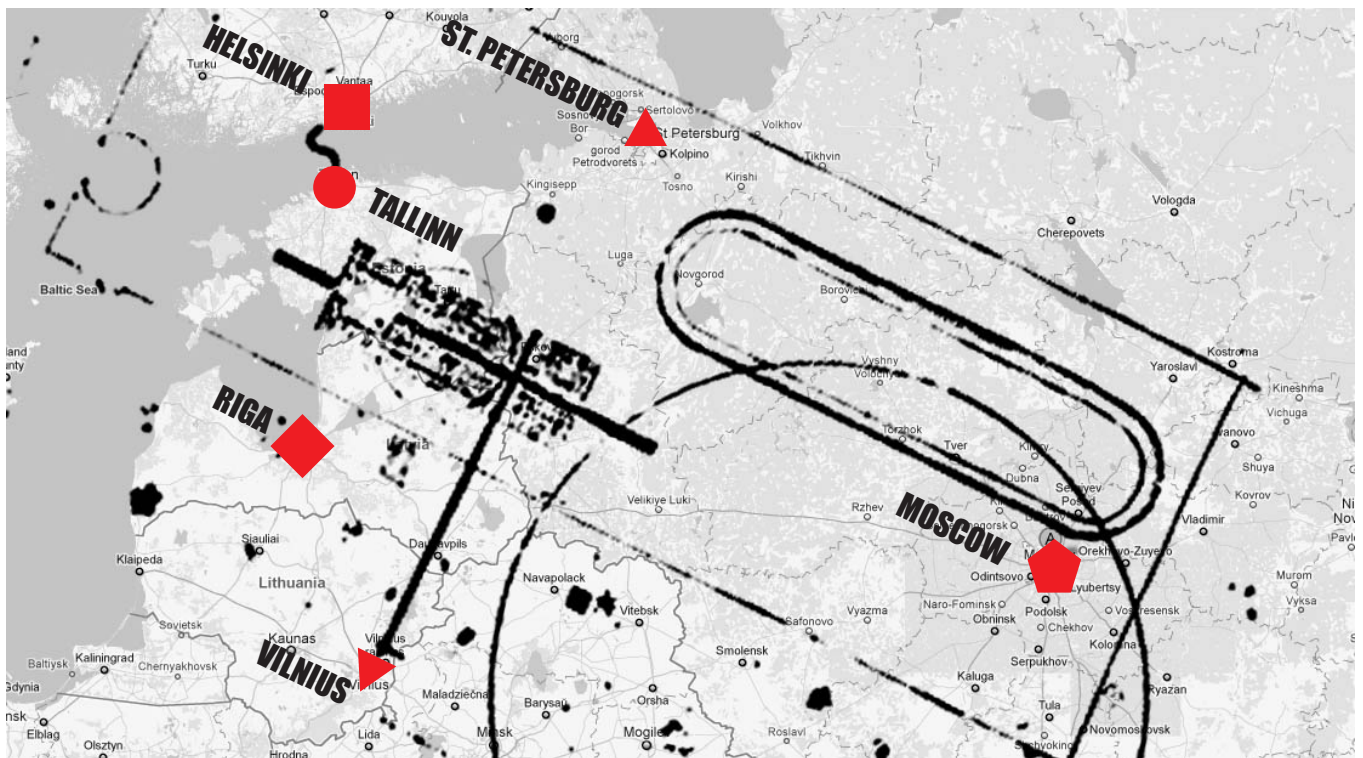
Moscow (and environs) (3.5 weeks) - studio base at Moscow Architecture Institute

Transfer to St.Petersburg

St. Petersburg (and environs) (1 week)

Vilnius (2 days)

Riga (2 days)

Tallinn (2 days)

Helsinki & beyond (10 days) - studio base at Aalto University

E A S T E R N   H O R I Z O N S

COURSES

ARCH 3109: Elective Design
ARCH 4101/Arch 4102: Design VII & Design VIII
ARCH 5101: Design IX
6 credits / Zissovici / Mergold
The Moscow studio will focus on urbanism and its possible contemporary manifestations in and around the city of Moscow in its current entropical state. We will be building links between the competing ideas of the non-hierarchical decentralized city of the revolutionary architects and its concentric, scenic counterpart focused on the historic city, propagated by the socialist realists.

ARCH 3307: Special Investigation in the Theory of Architecture I
(independent study)
3 credits / Mergold
In concert with the studio, we will consider the underlying political, social, cultural and intellectual climate that shaped the architecture of the revolution and of the socialist realism. We will be working with primary sources in the archives of the Moscow Museum of Architecture. Students will be asked to reflect on the subject in relationship to contemporary culture and produce a publication.

**ARCH 4605: Special Topic in Construction**
3 credits / Mergold
The tecnology behind Soviet architecture is a curious phenomenon. In the architecture of the revolution, the traditional building techniques were camouflaged to look like ultra-modern construction. The Soviet baroque of Socialist Realism was held up by steel and concrete structure that rivaled the skyscrapers of New York in its daring innovation. And the awesomely bizarre architecture of the late Soviet period (1960's -1980's) developed in stark isolation behind the iron curtain, with very little influence from the rise and fall of Modernism in the West. Form followed ideology and took function along for a wild ride. We will closely study several buildings in order to reveal the dichotomies between their innards and their appearance through the prism of building technology. Students will be required to keep detailed documentation of their analysis and produce a final project.

ARCH 4509: Special Topic in Visual Representation I
3 credits / Zissovici
The Russian revolution was accompanied by radical changes in graphic representation and the still young medium of cinema, which became its primary propaganda tools. Students will develop hybrid methods of documentation that will echo the energy, speed and mobility of the revolution and of the travel portion of the studio.

ARCH4508: Special Investigation in Visual Representation I (independent study)
3 credits / Zissovici
Topic proposed by students /
approved by instructor
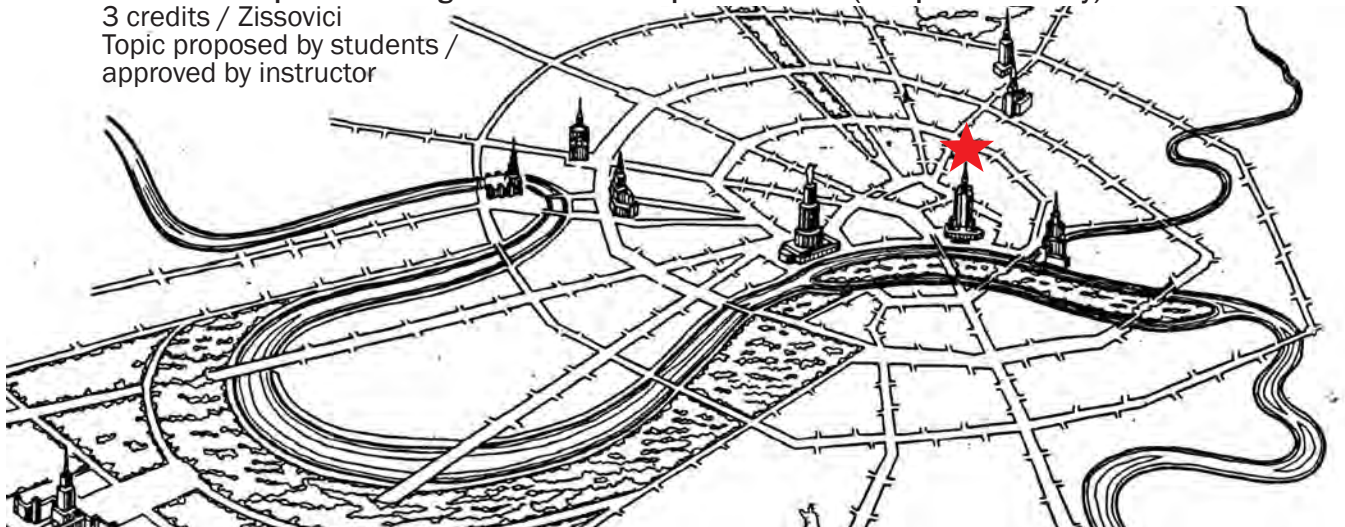
NOTE

Summer non-Ithaca-based programs are offered for advanced studios (ARCH 4101, 4102, 5101). No more than one such summer non-Ithaca-based design studio can count for design sequence credit. Any design credits earned at a subsequent summer non-Ithaca-based design studio will be applied to free departmental elective credit. Third-year students in good-standing and with an average design studio grade of at least 3.0 may petition to take a non-Ithaca-based summer studio, enrolling in ARCH 3109 and getting sequence credit for ARCH 4101 after completing their third-year core design studio requirements. Students with a non-advancing grade in their prior studio cannot take an off-campus summer studio for sequence credit (only for departmental elective credit).

All student participants are expected to take no less than 12 credit hours worth of courses; petition is required to take more than 12 credits, up to a maximum of 15. Three credit hours are recommended for variable-credit-hour courses.

For rules and regulations concerning non-Ithaca-based summer programs refer to Courses of Study at the following link
http://courses.cornell.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=12&poid=3229