



Gramsci Monument, Thomas Hirschhorn 2013

Zurich Monuments

I try to make a new kind of monument. A precarious monument. A monument for a limited time. I make monuments for philosophers because they have something to say today. Philosophers can give the courage to think, the pleasure to reflect. I like the strong sense in philosophical writings, the questions about human existence and how humans can think. I like full-time thinking.

MONUMENTS, Thomas Hirschhorn 2003

While rooted in the ideas of Deleuze, Spinoza, Bataille and Gramsci, Thomas Hirschhorn's Monuments are not didactic or elitist. Through an extensive and complex process of 'fieldwork' the artist searches out fertile situations and willing accomplices that enable his Monuments to profoundly take root, becoming places of care, exchange and learning. The process of their planning, construction, and activation transforms all who encounter them, most of all the artist himself.

This semester we will use the example of Hirschhorn alongside the similarly rich and engaged practices of Group Material, who were active in the United States between 1979 and 1996, and ruangrupa, who have been working as artists, curators and activists in Indonesia since 2000. We will develop architectures

that engage contemporary Zurich and its people, bringing a broad idea of learning into direct contact with people's everyday lives. On sites already occupied by living and working we will design small and precise new buildings that add to and disrupt existing spaces and uses. A kind of schoolhouse, that despite its small scale and a certain precarity, through its formal precision and ability to connect and communicate, has the quality of being a new kind of monument in the city.

The semester will be arranged as a clear and continuous process where research is seamless with design, where individual work runs parallel to group work, where the urban is considered alongside the full scale. Our journey will be accompanied by friends and guests who will become part of the journey. We hope you will join us.

Construction and writing as integrated disciplines are included in this course.

Introduction: 17 February 2026, 10:00 am, ONA E30

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