

SCI-Arc

Media Inquiries:

Stephanie Atlan, news@sciarc.edu, 213-356-5395

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SCI-Arc Launches New Postgraduate Program, Synthetic Landscapes



Los Angeles, CA (December 4, 2019) – SCI-Arc is thrilled to announce a new Master of Science program, entitled Synthetic Landscapes, which will address emerging topics in landscape architecture. The Master of Science in Synthetic Landscapes is a one-year, three-semester program examining how artificial and natural systems can come together to form new synthetic relationships during a difficult era of climate change. The program is now the fifth postgraduate program at SCI-Arc EDGE, Center for Advanced Studies in Architecture and is now accepting applications for fall 2020. “Climate change is an existential drama that is now unfolding at a planetary scale,” says SCI-Arc Postgraduate Programs Chair David Ruy. “It may very well be the single greatest challenge of our time, and for the design of future landscapes,

the importance of this event cannot be understated. Landscape design, the often overlooked counterpart to building design, is increasingly becoming a primary arena for the development of ecological awareness and innovation.”

Joining the program as visiting faculty is one of the most important voices in ecological thought today, Timothy Morton. Currently the Rita Shea Guffey Chair in English at Rice University, Morton is the author of more than twenty-two books and has been translated into ten languages. “Timothy Morton is a well-known collaborator of notable figures such as Björk, Laurie Anderson, Olafur Eliasson, Pharrell Williams, and Jeff Bridges. There’s no one quite like him right now that so magically builds bridges between ecological theory and contemporary culture,” says Ruy. “Besides authoring what have already become seminal books, Timothy has also had a profound influence on cinema, music, fashion, and art. The opportunity to work closely with such an important thinker within the context of an exciting new landscape architecture program is truly unique.”

In addition to a robust theoretical framework, the curriculum will incorporate the development of skills and technical knowledge integral to a landscape architecture practice including botany, horticulture, and how to use information systems to design the landscape. “However,” Ruy adds, “in contrast to traditional landscape design programs that emphasize the stewardship of nature and traditional western cultural values of picturesque or sublime images of nature, this program will challenge the status quo. Instead of being trapped in an environmental melancholy, we would like to see if our design imagination can project an abundant future with new forms of beauty.”

Of the new program, SCI-Arc Director Hernan Diaz Alonso says, “There shouldn’t be a distinction in landscape between the metropolitan and the natural. With Synthetic Landscapes, we’re trying to figure out if there is a SCI-Arc way to conceptualize landscape architecture as a synthetic problem and tackle the largest scales of architectural thinking. I want to see if we can think of new forms of nature as a way to both produce and unsettle our built environments. We have to move beyond the historical traditions of landscape design,” explains Diaz Alonso. “Landscapes are cultural objects as much as anything else we would design.”

The program requires a degree at the bachelor level to apply. Preference will be given to applicants with a background in architecture or landscape architecture, but well-qualified applicants with a background in affiliated fields such as fine arts, ecological studies, urbanism, and public policy will also be considered for acceptance.

Click to [learn more](#) about the Synthetic Landscapes program, as well as how to enroll.

About SCI-Arc

Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) is dedicated to educating architects who will imagine and shape the future. It is an independent, accredited degree-granting institution offering undergraduate and graduate programs in architecture. Located in a quarter-mile-long former freight depot in the Arts District in Downtown Los Angeles, the school is distinguished by its vibrant studio culture and emphasis on process. SCI-Arc’s approximately 500 students and 80 faculty members, most of whom are practicing architects, work together to reexamine assumptions, create, explore, and test the limits of architecture. SCI-Arc faculty and leadership have garnered more than 500 national and international design awards and recognitions, including Progressive Architecture awards, American Institute of Architects (AIA) awards, and the prestigious Jencks and Pritzker architecture prizes. In DesignIntelligence’s 2019 US survey, SCI-Arc ranked #2 in Design

December 4, 2019 – SCI-Arc Launches New Postgraduate Program in Synthetic Landscapes

Technologies, #3 Most Hired From, and was top ten among the nation's Most Admired Undergraduate Programs in Architecture. SCI-Arc is located at 960 E. 3rd Street, Los Angeles, CA 90013. www.sciarc.edu