



Young & Ayata, *Debased Flowers, Lignum Agri*, 2015  
© Young & Ayata

# DRAWBOT #2

POST-DIGITAL DRAWING IN  
ARCHITECTURE AND ART

09/02 - 24/02/2018

Opening February 8 2018, 6 - 9 pm



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## DRAWBOT #2

In 2017-2018, AREA Institute presents a program that explores the nature of drawing in the post-digital era. A traditional architectural medium, drawing is being radically redefined by the computational turn through the use of digital design, visualization and fabrication techniques. **DRAWBOT** presents projects by architects, artists and computation scientists through a series of 4 exhibitions, workshops and talks. It explores the mutations of contemporary drawing, produced or influenced by robotic technologies, artificial intelligence, simulation procedures and genetic algorithms, and its reconnection to abstraction, imagination and materiality.

**Exhibited architects** : Andrew Lucia; Young & Ayata

**Curators** : Emmanuelle Chiappone-Piriou & Leslie Ware

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At first glance, the artifacts assembled for the second edition of Drawbot can leave you to wonder.

From what appears to be mineral aggregates to alien flowers, and from 3D printed plaster prototypes to glossy photo-real renders, the traditional understanding of architectural drawing is certainly challenged. That is because, by focusing on the modalities of production of digital images, the exhibited projects by American architects Andrew Lucia and Young & Ayata reveal the mutations of the architectural representational paradigm and the redistribution of sensible information that comes as a corollary. *Drawbot #2* opens to a materiality that challenges both the conventions and the forms of the architecture drawing and the traditional conceptualization of the relationship the drawing establishes with the real.

A technical, aesthetic and conceptual apparatus, the architecture drawing has historically been associated with a set of conventions that have regulated the manner in which reality is captured, perceived, rendered, and therefore, projected. A tool of regulated creativity, it has been – since the Renaissance – the medium by means of which constructive thought has been manifested in codified and quantified forms: sections, plans, elevations all flatten the tridimensional world upon the drawing table, in order to master, transmit and reconstitute its complexity at different scales. Having become naturalized, these representational modes have articulated specific scopic regimes, articulating sensible apprehension, knowledge and conceptualization of the visible. Perspective, more than any other, has founded modern occidental architecture upon the presuppositions of Euclidian space and on a radiant, fixed model of perception.

Architects Andrew Lucia and Young & Ayata bring the potential of modeling software and algorithmic programming into play and, in doing so, reveal the spatial, aesthetic and epistemic conventions and preconceptions attached to traditional, as much as to digital, representation. Inducing a diffraction of our perception, their explorations into the mechanisms and limits of the digital tool open architecture to a certain of strangeness.

The project *Debased Flowers* by Young & Ayata consists in a series of images of artificial flower species, pictured at different levels of zoom. The plausibility of this alien herbarium is funded upon the capacity of the digital to make apparent material characteristic emerge: each species possesses its own brightness, a smooth or rough surface, a specific pigmentation... all generated by the resolution of the model. By altering it, the architects produce a form of strange realism, revealing the illusion of the zoom by reversing its principle, and the fragmentary nature of the digital materiality.

Andrew Lucia develops “catalogs of differences”, that depict rates of change in ambient light or curvature in given environments. Exploring the capacity of the digital tools to describe objects through their local variations, he breaks with the fixed and centered apprehension of the world, and the general description of objects through their extrinsic qualities, imposed by perspective. In the form of images or 3D printed volumes, Lucia’s “catalogues” consists of spatialized data visualizations that capture the intrinsic capacities of energetic phenomena. Their familiarity with the mathematical objects photographed by Man Ray in 1936 open architecture to a close relationship between “surrationalism” (Gaston Bachelard) and surrealism.

“To me, abstract art is a fragment, like the magnification of a detail of nature or of an art work”<sup>1</sup> wrote Man Ray. It is the very possibility of abstraction that *Drawbot #2* interrogates, its evocative power in a time when the encryption of reality by code allows capturing the world in a renewed manner. Today, data can rematerialize to meet all graphic and visual conventions; the discrete elements that are bits and pixels can equally coalesce in the continuity of the line or the glossiness of the photographic rendering. It may be in the light of these new aesthetic and conceptual regimes that architecture can redefine itself, and become projective again.

<sup>1</sup> Ray M., *Self-portrait*, 1963, cited by Guigon E., «Polyèdres banquises» in *Objets Mathématiques*, Milan, Silvana Editoriale, 2014



Andrew Lucia,  
*Study #5 from Five Studies on a Series of Conoids;*  
*Original Surfaces and Derivatives, 2016*

## ANDREW LUCIA

Andrew Lucia is a designer, artist and academic working predominantly in the domain of architecture. Therein, his works and research interrogate issues of representation, information theory, geometry, perception, and aesthetics.

Lucia held the Cass Gilbert Visiting Assistant Professorship in the School of Architecture at the University of Minnesota (2015-17), during which he realized the project *A Catalog of Difference*. His collaborative and independent works have been exhibited (UsagiNY, 2017) and widely published (*The Cornell Journal of Architecture*, *World Architecture*, *Leonardo Music Journal*, *Science*, etc.)

From 2008 to 2015, Lucia was a founding member and Senior Researcher within LabStudio, a laboratory operating at the crossroad of architecture and biology, within the universities UPENN and Cornell, where Lucia has also been teaching. Prior to starting his own independent practice, Lucia worked as a designer in the offices of Ruy Klein Architects, su11 architecture+design, Keller Easterling, Barkow Leibinger Architects, Yunker+Asmus Architects, and M+A Architecture.

Lucia received his Master of Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania and his B.A. in Architecture from the University of Minnesota.

## YOUNG & AYATA

### Michael Young and Kutan Ayata

Young & Ayata is a New York City based architectural design practice formed in 2008. Through built projects, objects and exhibitions, they explore the potential of the digital, both as tools for fabrication and as a system opening a higher degree of aesthetical and epistemic complexity. They are the recipients of the 2016 Design Vanguard Award from Architectural Record and the 2014 Young Architects Prize from the Architecture League of New York. In 2015 their scheme for the Bauhaus Museum Dessau competition received one of two first place prizes.

Michael Young is an Assistant Professor at The Cooper Union. Previously he was a Visiting Lecturer at Princeton University, Visiting Instructor at SCI-Arc, and the Louis I. Kahn Visiting Assistant Professor at Yale University. He holds a Bachelor degree from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and a Masters degree from Princeton University. Michael is a registered architect in the State of New York.

Kutan Ayata is a Lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania and Adjunct Assistant Professor at Pratt Institute GAUD. He holds a Bachelor degree from Mass Arts and a Masters degree from Princeton University. Kutan is a registered architect in the Chamber of Architects in Turkey.