

Constructing the Sublime

ETH Zurich
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Seminar Week
Autumn 2020

Second Modernity

Seminar Week

Monday 19.10.2020 to
Friday 23.10.2020
Number of Participants 12
Category of Costs D
*Prices based on Halbtax

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Introduction
Wednesday, 23.9.2020, 13:15
HIL F 57.1

The Alpine region is the territory of the sublime. A place of contradictory readings and a site for scientific discovery, mastery of nature and Romanticism. During our seminar week, we will traverse the region from the Jungfrau to the Furkapass to uncover its complex constructions. On thematically focused days we will be accompanied by experts from various disciplines, engaging in conversation and debate on highly specialist topics, reading key texts and recording interviews with them along the way.

We will begin at 3650m, examining the Alps as a laboratory for measuring climate change. With researchers, we will explore the Jungfrauoch Radio Relay and High-Altitude Research Stations and undertake a summit-trek to Walcherhorn. Continuing our journey along the Grimselpass, we will encounter the dams at Gelmersee, Räterichsbodensee, Grimsensee and Oberaarsee, where nature meets technological sublime. Studying their inner workings with engineers, we will confront large-scale artefacts of infrastructure, energy production and heritage. With glaciologists on the Rhône Glacier, we will discover protection systems, confronting anthropocentric landscapes and geological time. Finally, with a curator, we will conclude our journey on the high mountain Furkapass, where art practice meets biodiversity (ALPFOR) and the remnants of military infrastructure. Here we will witness the Alps as a territory of flora and fauna as well as cultural production. We will pause for rest, good food and thoughts in mountain huts (SAC Mönchsjoehütte) and Grand Hotels (Hotel Giessbach/Grimsel Hospiz).

We will travel by car, mountain rail, gondola and funicular, crossing valleys, ravines, suspension bridges and tunnels. Our route includes high mountain passes, high altitude and glacier walks. A good level of fitness and basic equipment including hiking boots, a sleeping bag and warm clothing suitable for snow conditions are required. The price includes all transport and passes*, accommodation, all visits and the majority of meals. As the seminar week includes two mountain pass routes and a visit to the Jungfrauoch, the feasibility of the trip is dependent on the weather conditions.