



Diesbach, autumn 2024

Un-city

For a long time, the city has been a magnet for money, for jobs, for culture and for learning. This concentration of everything leads to an inexhaustible demand for resources. There will never be enough land to exploit for profit or adequate housing for the population, a condition of scarcity that is fundamental to late capitalism. This semester we will work in places away from the city where the space exists for more balanced ideas of society to bloom.

With the coming of the snow, we descend from the Klausen pass, from 2000 to 600 metres. Linthal, Rüti and Diesbach are villages at the head of the valley, each has clusters of houses and outbuildings, substantial mill complexes with their own hydro power station on the river Linth and abundant agricultural lands. Many of these structures are underused, but in their rich spatial diversity they are a fertile ground waiting for new social programmes. The history of the Glarus Valley is one of invention, industry and agriculture. The human and material resources of the valley obviously still exist, and if the already existing

cooperatives and associations could become more interconnected, new energies would emerge from these new networks.

This semester we will engage with the contemporary life of Glarus. Observing and recording the social and physical fabric of the villages we will meet as many people as we can, to benefit from their knowledge and to share some of their ambitions. Following themes that will include hydro power, food, industry, health and learning, we will deploy strategies of adaptation and improvisation, in the short and the long term, to develop new kinds of incomplete utopias. Existing and new construction, landscapes and buildings, will transform and consolidate the qualities and constellations that we have found and begin to reveal what the future life of the un-city could be.

Diploma, FS 2025, ETH Zürich
Chair Caruso
Emilie Appercé Adam Caruso
Chair of Being Alive
Stefan Breit, Teresa Galí-Izard

Core Program Master-Thesis FS 2025: Topic description

Cooperation Partner 1: Prof. Adam Caruso

Cooperation Partner 2: Chair of Being Alive, Stefan Breit, Teresa Galí-Izard

Un-city

For a long time, the city has been a magnet for money, for jobs, for culture and for learning. This concentration of everything leads to an inexhaustible demand for resources. There will never be enough land to exploit for profit or adequate housing for the population, a condition of scarcity that is fundamental to late capitalism. This semester we will work in places away from the city where the space exists for more balanced ideas of society to bloom.

With the coming of the snow, we descend from the Klausen pass, from 2000 to 600 metres. Linthal, Rüti and Diesbach are villages at the head of the valley, each has clusters of houses and outbuildings, substantial mill complexes with their own hydro power station on the river Linth and abundant agricultural lands. Many of these structures are underused, but in their rich spatial diversity they are a fertile ground waiting for new social programmes. The history of the Glarus Valley is one of invention, industry and agriculture. The human and material resources of the valley obviously still exist, and if the already existing cooperatives and associations could become more interconnected, new energies would emerge from these new networks.

This semester we will engage with the contemporary life of Glarus. Observing and recording the social and physical fabric of the villages we will meet as many people as we can, to benefit from their knowledge and to share some of their ambitions. Following themes that will include hydro power, food, industry, health and learning, we will deploy strategies of adaptation and improvisation, in the short and the long term, to develop new kinds of incomplete utopias. Existing and new construction, landscapes and buildings, will transform and consolidate the qualities and constellations that we have found and begin to reveal what the future life of the un-city could be.

Preparation phase (40%):

- learn how to do field work and to work effectively on site using a journal, making annotations, observing and drawing.
- production of surveys, studies, drawings, and maps that describe the geological, vegetal and social conditions and history of the Linthal Valley

Percentage designer(s): 50

Percentage non-designer: 50

Elaboration phase (60%):

- development of new social and built constellations in the three villages based on the site, material and social knowledge of the research phase.

Percentage designer(s): 50

Percentage non-designer: 50