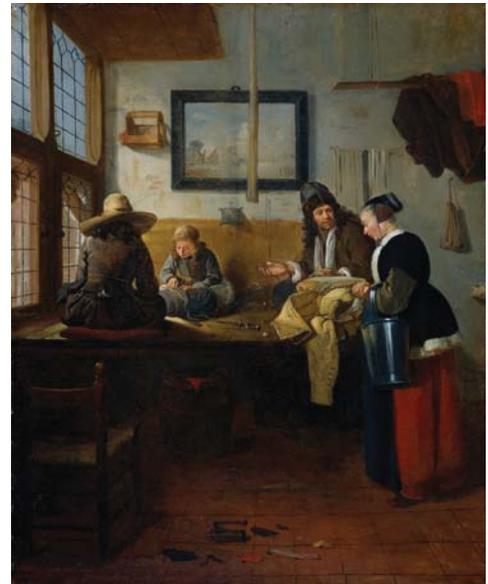


The evolution of technology, economy and culture have been changing the way in which we buy things. More deeply, they are changing the way in which we share cultural knowledge about what is available to be bought. This has implications for the architectural, urban and spatial typologies of retail.

At one end some shops embrace more spectacular displays or stage a richer overall visitor experience. At the other end markets look for leaner models that allow clients to access a great variety of affordable merchandise in one place, sometimes blurring the distinction between storage and display. With the growth of internet buying, large scale storage and distribution centers work to support home delivery, thus further eroding the traditional relationship between location, street-life and retail activity already challenged, in many places, by the advent of freeway-accessible large shopping malls. While many of us still enjoy physically searching through streets, shops and shelves to find what is available, how it works, and how it may serve our purposes or enrich our lives, the internet provides new ways to search for what is out there with speed and at a scale that would not be unimaginable in the past.

This course will examine the future of retail, whether on streets, in malls, in stores, or on the internet, from a variety of perspectives, including:

1. Experience
2. Search
3. Information, display, dissemination
3. Circulation
4. Storage, classification and retrieval
5. Interface between buildings, places and web-pages
6. Front stage and back stage organization and infrastructure



The aim is to identify alternative models of retail and their architectural corollaries. Also, to imagine how the data that is increasingly available or can become available might help architects to develop new programs and new models for retail environments. We will approach the future of retail in the context of a larger appreciation of the fact that markets of things and of the ideas embedded in things, are fundamental to the continuous definition of our culture.

The course is open to undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students. Assessment will be based on an assignment developed in stages over the course of the semester. Both individual and group work towards the assignment will be encouraged. The final deliverable will take the form of a short essay, of the order of 2000 words, complemented by rich graphics and diagrams used to communicate insights, present analysis and project desirable programs and typologies.