

Space and Digital Reality - Ideas, Representations/Applications and Fabrication, within the framework of Tallinn Architecture Biennale TAB 2019.

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Atoms and Bits: Taking Seriously their Hybridization

The rise of big data and algorithms is not the most salient aspect of the new reality, which we are gradually entering because of the development of digital tools. The hybridization between physical and electronic contents, an hybridization often characterized as “augmented reality” represents an even more fundamental shift. The lecture will discuss this phenomenon and its consequences, beginning with the “spatial turn” that has marked digital culture in the past decades. Urban maps are of special interest when one tries to assess some of these consequences. The lecture will also envisage issues such as the emergence of a new form of materiality. It will conclude by raising the question of computability. Are we entering a new world in which everything, or almost, will be computable?

Antoine Picon is the G. Ware Travelstead Professor of the History of Architecture and Technology and Director of Research at the GSD. He teaches courses in the history and theory of architecture and technology. He is also Director of Research at the Ecole Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées in Paris. Trained as an engineer, architect, and historian, Picon works on the history of architectural and urban technologies from the eighteenth century to the present. He has published extensively on this subject.