



Gerhard Schmitt, untitled, [Detail], 1997

Veranstaltungen**Focus Lectures**

Mondays, 9:00–11:25

Modulverantwortung: Caroline Ting**Lehrteam:** Caroline Ting, Assistant: João Moreira**On Critiques**

Critiques, or crits, are a central element of architectural education, especially in studios. While institutionalized through set requirements for content, presentations, and schedules, they remain characterized by ambiguities, unpredictability, and emotional dynamics. Crits serve as rituals of architectural education – both highly valued and feared. Nevertheless, and perhaps because of these contradictions, crits also generate lasting anecdotes and myths, becoming legendary aspects of architectural education.

In recent years, critiques have increasingly become objects of critique themselves. They can create unnecessary pressure, involve personal attacks, or serve as displays of power dynamics. Though often justified as a means of building resilience in students, such experiences can foster frustration and demotivation rather than competency development. On the other hand, the high demands can encourage students to collaborate, discover unexpected reserves of energy, creativity, and professionalism, and develop a stronger desire to articulate their thoughts and concepts – marking a milestone on a given day, in a given space.

This semester critically examines the crit format, not by dismissing it but by appreciating its ambiguities. Fundamental questions guide the exploration: What are the outcomes of a critique? What is addressed? Who is heard, and what exactly is criticized? Which actors, objects, settings, spaces, experiences, intentions, and motivations are part of the crit? By addressing these questions, the goal is to establish a contemporary framework for critiques that balances challenge and support, fostering constructive dialogue and professional growth.