

Interdisciplinary Doctoral Symposium: Traffic (Princeton, 4-6 Apr 25)

Princeton University School of Architecture, Apr 4–06, 2025

Deadline: Jan 27, 2025

Foivos Geralis

Mobilizing the suggestive vocabulary of capitalism, traffic implies economies of trade and profit, usually at a distance. The word derives from the 14th-century French *trafic*, which once connoted nefarious or illicit intrigues, schemes, side-deals, and negotiations. While these meanings are now rare in modern usage, they indicate a history of tenuous moves across borders and bounds. If “traffic” finds its origins in commerce, how can the crossings it describes offer new sites and subjects of analysis? Traffic speaks to the vulnerabilities of communication as well as humanistic questions about the transmissions and transformations of meaning and matter. Necessarily, these are questions about multiple and uneven scales, temporalities, and geographies, as much as the persistent legacies of development, fugitivity, and organized abandonment.

This symposium probes historical and theoretical conceptions of mobility, movement, and migration to contend with and challenge expectations of architectural form and material exchange. Between signal and noise, metaphor and matter, person and thing, movement and stasis, traffic entails a dialectic between things that move and the systems that move them; the immaterial contingencies of the carrier and the material realities of the carried. It inheres in bottlenecks, encroachments, collisions, dependencies, contact zones, checkpoints, entropies, refusals, and more. We ask, how do differential loss and care undergird these varied movements through time and space? In other words, what if “you’re not stuck in traffic, but you are traffic”?

Traffic will take place in-person between April 4–6, 2025 at Princeton University’s School of Architecture. Funding for travel and lodging may be available. International applicants are particularly encouraged to apply.

Submissions are due by January 27th. They should consist of a title, an abstract (around 300 words), and an optional image. Include your full name, program of study, institutional affiliation, and a brief bio (up to 100 words). Please submit your document as a single PDF titled `lastname_title` to greenroom@princeton.edu. Selected contributors will be notified in the following weeks. We look forward to receiving, reviewing, and reading your submissions.

Reference:

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