rePlacing Health

Matthew Littell (Utile) and Amie Shao (MASS Design Group), with the participation of David Saladik (MASS Design Group)

As the recent CVS-Aetna acquisition and Amazon-JPMorgan-Buffett partnership make evident, the American healthcare system has entered into a period of intense experimentation. A vast array of health delivery models, such as in-house insurance and health membership clubs, are beginning to manifest in an increasingly diverse range of service and retail spaces. This inflection point offers a radical opportunity for designers to contribute to the dialogue of where and how care should be delivered.

This studio, led by Matthew Littell of Utile and Amie Shao and David Saladik of MASS Design Group, will investigate current models and trajectories for healthcare delivery, and develop architectural strategies that holistically respond to patient needs, market drivers, and urban policy. Boston, which has historically served as a testing ground for new modes of healthcare delivery, will be used as a lab to explore the future of primary care. Field-based research—including active engagement with healthcare professionals, industry leaders, city officials, and community stakeholders—will be leveraged to uncover opportunities for design to bridge divergent priorities, ultimately leading to architectural strategies that will not only solve for highly specific needs but offer broad appeal and applicability. Through the research and design, students will have the opportunity to operate at a variety of scales, from the broad scale of the city and neighborhood to the more intimate details of a medical exam room. The hybridization of medical uses with other complementary programming is anticipated to be one of the focus areas of final design projects.