

Studio Damiani
CMU, Arch #48-205
Spring 2006, M/W/F 1:30-4:20 Office Hours: By appointment

Instructor: G. Damiani

***“Her green plastic watering can
for her fake chinese rubber plant
in fake plastic earth.
That she bought from a rubber man
in a town full of rubber plants
Just to get rid of itself.”***

Fake Plastic Trees from The Bends
Radiohead

Architecture finds its expression as it moderates between the ideal and the real. The materials that constitute a building are as vital to the final form as is the client, design concept(s), site and region.

The idea of material tectonics is nothing new to architecture; it has been the subject of discussion since Vitruvius. The debate continued with such architects as Vignola, Alberti, Semper, Wagner, Loos, Wright and others throughout time.

The digital revolution has quickened the pace of technological invention bringing with it new materials as well as new construction and fabrication methods to time-tested materials. This new material gestalt potentially broadens the tectonic discourse beyond the ordinary traditions.

Today, the architecture of a select few question orthogonality with exotic materials and unique fabrication methods while others question the arcane construction methods of our time in the search for new intentions for the materials. This studio will look at materials, technology, fabrication, site, region and the client as the source of its form.

Premise

This studio will focus on how building materials and construction methods can aid in the conceptual, experiential, and poetic aspects of architecture.

Projects:

1. Project One will be a temporary library made of dimensional concrete block (CMU), precast concrete plank and a secondary infill system of your choice. (Competition Studio)

Students will be asked to research CMU, precast concrete plank and a secondary infill material of your choice and present their properties, qualities, conventional uses, and possible advantages and limitations. Students will be encouraged to look inside and outside the standard uses of these materials to find new forms of expression for these materials.

2. Research and Re-representation (concurrent to Projects 1 & 3)

Through drawings and models, each student will prepare a critical study of an assigned building. This study will focus on how building materials influence the spatial, experiential, and environmental aspects of architecture and will conclude in a special presentation and review with outside architects and scholars.

3. Project Three will be a neighborhood library and is common to each of the individual studios.

Required Purchase
Purchase before 01.31.07

The Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment
by Reyner Banham



Maison de Verre, designed by
Pierre Chareau, Paris, 1930.