

Architecture, Design & Materials Studio

Spring 2006, CMU, Arch #48-205, M/W/F 1:30-4:20
Class Website: www.andrew.cmu.edu/course/48-205

Coordinator: Kai Gutschow

Email: gutschow@cmu.edu

Off. Hr: M/W 12:30-1:30pm & by appt. in MM307

(2/21/06)

PHASE II: A NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY

MINDSET:

This project should continue your research and creative process from Phase I, the "Mobile Library." We shall deepen our investigations on the role that diverse materials and innovative assembly methods can play in creating a small piece of architecture, with a more complex program and more urban site. We will maintain the focus on the scale of the human body encountering the physical presence of building, and continually explore how we can elevate ordinary construction to poetic expression, how real materials, structure, enclosure, joinery, building and craft techniques can lead to the creation of significant architectural experiences. As a capstone to the 2nd year studio, we will extend the length of the project in order to allow for a more thoroughly detailed exploration of your design, both in how the materials are used, and the power of the final presentation.

PROJECT:

Based on the success of your "Mobile Library" design for the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLP), you are charged with designing a new neighborhood library on Liberty Avenue in the Bloomfield neighborhood of Pittsburgh. The library is intended to serve residents in the overall community, as well as the adjacent West Penn Hospital, with its substantial collection of medical books and research material. As a public building, the architecture should inspire the discovery of knowledge for all users. For the users from the hospital, the library should be both a respite from the sterile halls of the medical institution, as well as a comforting place in which to acquire knowledge as a means of overcoming the unknowns of being a patient, family, or friend: knowledge as power and healer.

PROGRAM:

2500 sf maximum total floor space (+ elevator and enclosed fire stair if nec.)

Primary Functions:

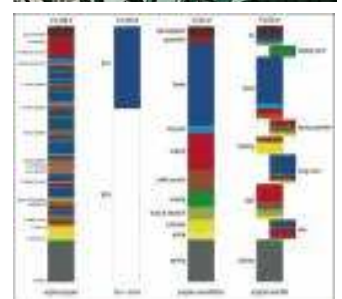
- Circulation Desk
- Computer Terminals for:
 - Public Catalogues
 - Private CD Rom and Internet research
- Medical Collection / stacks
- Reading Areas

Support Spaces:

- Café/counter for 5-10 patrons (no kitchen)
- Men's toilets (1 handicap accessible stall, 1 urinal)
- Women's toilets (2 stalls w/ 1 handicap accessible)
- Staff space (a common workspace)
- Circulation space, including handicap accessibility to all spaces, 2 means of egress from all floors, and "controlled" entry and exit points.

SITE

The site is the 2-parcel property currently occupied by the Sunoco Station at 4779 Liberty Avenue (cross-street Mathilda), in Bloomfield (see site plan, lots #131 & 134). The site is easily accessible from Craig St. with bus route 54C. The building must fit entirely on the site, with all remaining areas landscaped for public use. What is an appropriate use and design for this space? In locating the building on the site, and in designing the facade, students must take a position regarding the building and its relationship to the sidewalk and the larger context in the urban setting and the surrounding landscaping. How and why does your building engage the context? Parking will occur in the neighboring garage and on the street.



PROCESS / REQUIREMENTS

In order to promote a synthetic and integrated design process that constantly works at multiple scales (from the site plan to the construction detail), as well as in multiple modes of representation (model, plan, section, perspective), and strives to integrate conceptual ideas with physical construction, students will be asked to come to an early resolution about their basic library concept, building parti, and detailed materials selection. The building should be designed alongside its presentation to the public!

DESIGN SUMMARY: All students must prepare and submit a "Design Summary" of their designs as part of the first mid-review on **Mon. Mar. 27**. The 2pp. "Design Summary" should be submitted as a printout and a pdf to coordinator & instructor. It should indicate the design of the building, and begin to indicate the most clear and effective means of presenting the idea and details. It must include at least: a) a site plan; b) a 3D massing drawing; c) plan and sections; d) a 3D construction drawing; and e) a 100 word statement about the central concept for the library, especially the use and meaning of the materials and assembly.

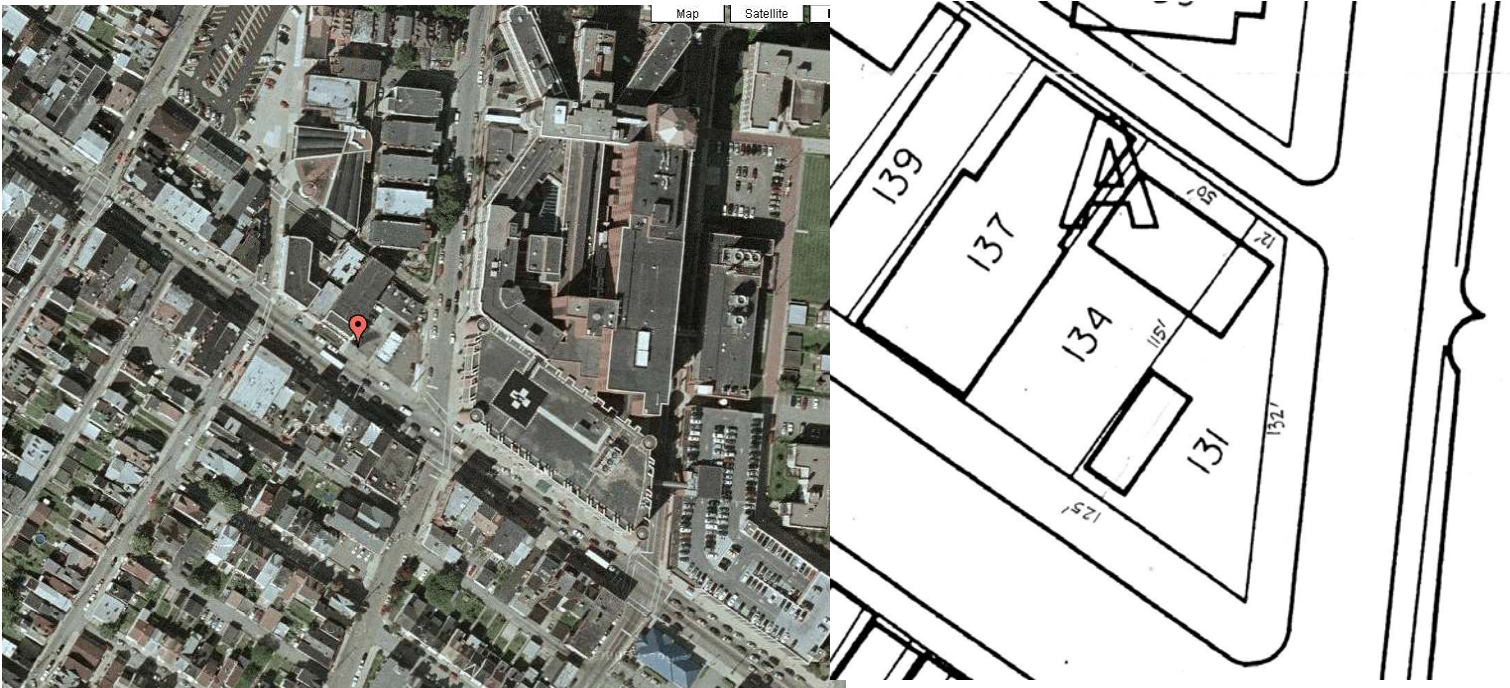
CARTOON: The rest of the semester will be spent flushing out, intensifying, detailing and communicating designs with ever greater clarity, depth and creativity. Substantial deviations from the first "Design Summary" will impact the depth to which you can carry out your design intentions. Since this project represents the culmination of the 2nd year studio experience, you will be expected to consider more independently than before what drawings and models will best represent your idea at all phases of the project. In discussions with your instructor and the coordinator, you should work to determine your own "Final Requirements." Work to create a memorable presentation with respect to effort, composition, knowledge about M&A, creativity, and inspiration of your work. For the 2nd mid-review, on **Mon. Apr. 10**, every student will be required to hand in a detailed "Cartoon" of their final presentation. It must contain miniaturized versions of the actual drawings (NOT just a rectangle indicating drawing size), showing relationship between drawings, and indicate what the particular contribution is of each drawing.

In parallel with this project, all students enrolled in Prof. Steve Lee's "M&A" class will be required to prepare a separate set of mock construction documents of their studio design, including detailed information about the structure and construction process. In addition, all students will be expected to submit a thorough "Project Documentation" for use on the class website and School Archives.

"A man with a book goes to the light. A library begins that way" -- Louis Kahn

"Architecture is the threshold where silence and light meet, Silence with its desire to Be, and light the giver of all presences." -- Louis Kahn

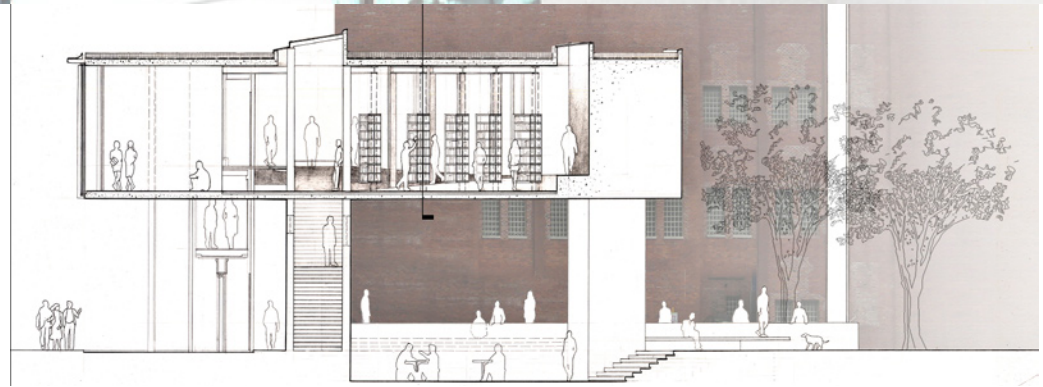
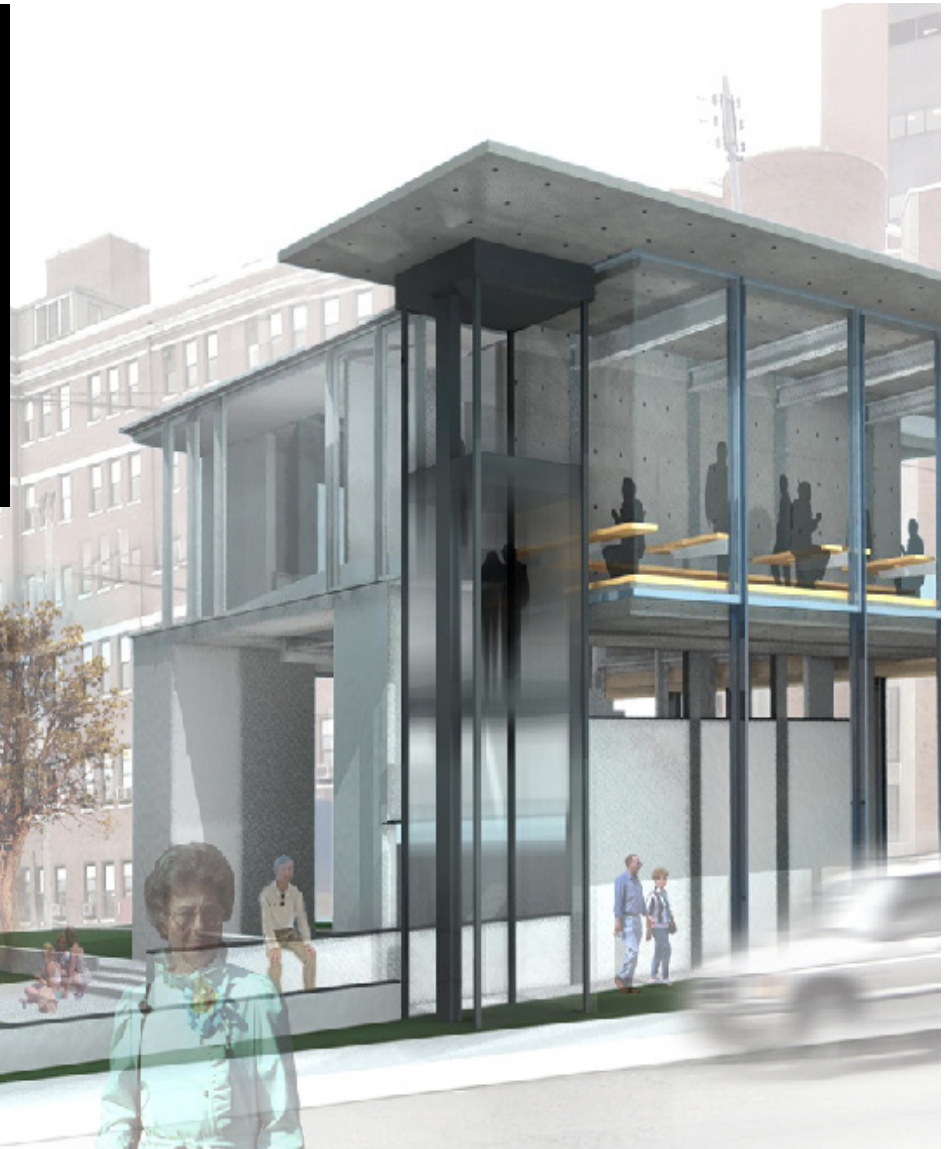
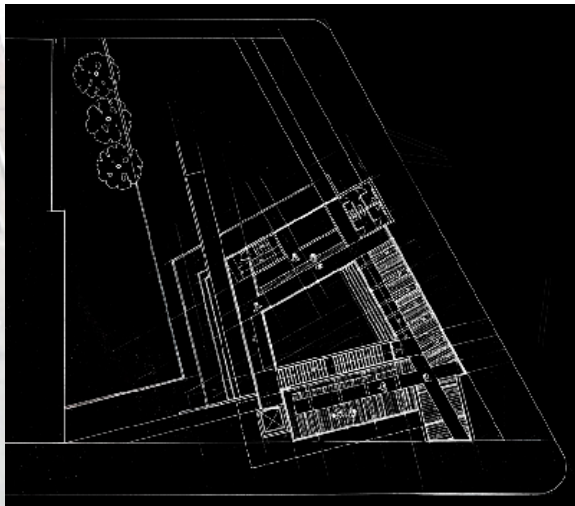
"A great building must, in my opinion, begin with the unmeasurable and go through the measurable in the process of design, but in the end be unmeasurable." -- Louis Kahn

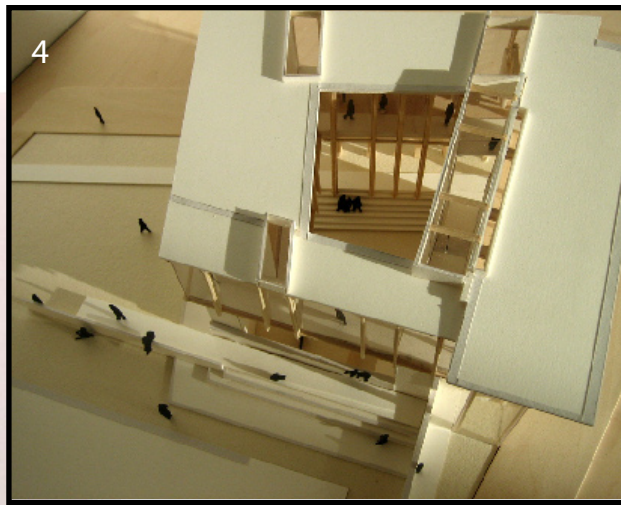


MEDICAL LIBRARY

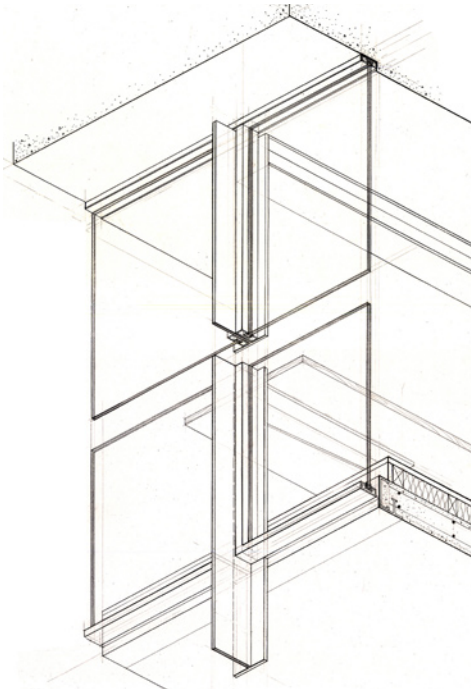
Liberty Ave. in Bloomfield
Pittsburgh, PA

Xianghua Wu
48-205 Materials Studio / S'06 / Lubetz





1. View from reading room
2. View from entrance stairs
3. View of facade at night
4. The building's fifth facade from above



CONCEPT STATEMENT

This project deals with the concept of defamiliarization, that is, the process of removing a common, familiar object and putting it into an unfamiliar context to break the monotony of habit and lead one to notice; to appreciate this object in a new light.

The West Penn hospital adjacent to the site is, like most hospitals, characterized by long sterile corridors. This medical library adopts this language of corridors but renders them in a new context to create a revitalized experience. Corridors are usually experienced through

time. The library alters the perception of time by distorting the rhythm of its structural elements. In addition, view corridors penetrate the building and extend the library beyond its confines into the urban context, also revealing the disjuncture between viewing and experiencing.

The building is composed of concrete planes lifted off the ground by steel columns, as a counterpoint to the heavy massiveness of the hospital. Glass curtain walls are suspended away from the floors, and wooden tables and bookshelves are hung off the columns.