

# Architecture Studio: 1<sup>st</sup> Year Spring

Spring 2014, CMU, Arch #48-105, M/W 12:30-4:20  
Class Website: [www.andrew.cmu.edu/course/48-105](http://www.andrew.cmu.edu/course/48-105)

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(5/14/14)

## Project 3: Building Transformation

**MINDSET:** For ecological, economic, and ideological reasons, architects of the future will need to engage ever more with *existing buildings*. Ideas of adaptation, preservation, reuse, transformation, re-invention, and recycling that have not been central to the global modernist sensibility of consumption and novelty of the past century, will dominate. This is particularly true in Pittsburgh and other industrialized zones of North America and Europe, areas that do not have pressing population explosions, and in which much of the building stock is solid but increasingly outdated. It may be even more true for a campus, library, or museum, where cutting edge thinking often collides with outdated architecture, and where the student quest for hyper-contemporary experiences demands a constant renewal of spaces and buildings. The only constant is change, permanent change.

**PROJECT:** Your project is to design a small addition, insertion, or installation that will help renew or transform (part of) the large building you are currently analyzing, and with it create new, augmented, and improved experience, understanding, and functional use of (part of) your building. Your big building will serve as the site and context for a new small space, experience, or architectural organism. The project will be done in two closely related phases, beginning with a small scale installation based on your analysis to focus ideas, and culminating in a larger architectural-scaled addition or transformation.

**THEORY:** You are encouraged to explore theories of *symbiosis* to help define your architectural argument about the relation of the original building to the new insertion. Symbiosis, from the Greek meaning "living together," is defined by biologists as the living together of two or more species in one of four prolonged and intimate ecological relationships: 1) Mutualism, an association in which both organisms apparently benefit from their interaction; 2) Parasitism, which includes predation, involves one organism benefitting itself while harming the other; 3) Commensalism is when one organism benefits from the interaction without harming the other; 4) Amensalism is where one organism is harmed while the other is unaffected.

Architects have used the term "parasitic" to subsume all four symbiotic relationships. Architectural parasites are flexible structures that depend on, feed off, transform, and occasionally deform the existing infrastructure, building, or city. Parasites often have special modifications to their body or their life cycle to optimize their association. A symbiotic construction redefines and transforms the host environment and provides new perspectives, orientations, or spaces for the user or public. At their best they can help transform or materialize central features of their host, to give new life into the future.

### Assignment #1: From Analysis To Installation (due Wed. Apr. 2, 12:30pm)

Review the discoveries from your Proj.2 Analysis of campus buildings, particularly the "systematic" qualities related to context/site, spatial definition, light/openings, structure, construction/details, geometry/formal patterns, program/use/function, experience, sequence, promenade, and seven senses. Based on your specific analysis, design a small, symbiotic installation or insertion that will enhance or alter the experience of the building in some meaningful and functionally appropriate way. Feel free to revise the precise nature of your analysis to accommodate the new design goals, but do NOT start over. You will need to move from "analytical" diagrams to "generative" diagrams. Be sure to define carefully the "performance criteria" your project will satisfy. Clearly articulate the spatial definition and tectonic systems of your addition so that the new, distinct organism is legible in the old. Think about the first step as a small scale experiment that can help you understand the core issues in more profound ways, that begins to solidify design ideas, even if they are not yet at the scale, intensity, or functional sensibility that is architecture. Keep in mind the final goal of creating a larger, architectural-scale, and more functional project by the semester end.

Deliverables: a 24"x36 drawing of your installation or insertion, and a model, as well as process work and diagrams that explain your process and results.

