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## CMU Studio 48-105 in Spring 2017: Assignment

1 message

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**Kai Gutschow** <gutschow@andrew.cmu.edu>

Fri, Dec 16, 2016 at 10:42 AM

To: class-of21@lists.andrew.cmu.edu

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Greetings 1st years. This is Kai Gutschow writing, the coordinator of your S'17 studio. I hope everyone is finishing up a great first semester of college, and making their way home. I wanted to congratulate you on finishing your first semester of architecture school, a big accomplishment. I was at your final reviews, I saw much of the excellent work you did, and I look forward to working together in the spring.

I was not able to attend the final discussion of the studio on Monday, so I thought I would send along a small bit of advice. I think the most important thing you can do to keep learning is to **keep looking at, keep sketching, and keep reading about good architecture**. As you look at buildings around you, compare them to the spatial ideas and buildings you studied in 48-100 and 48-120. Think about the design process, sketch, and be critical about everything you see! You are a beginner, but now have many of the tools to evaluate everything you see.

Here are two concrete things you can do before the next studio begins on Wed. Jan. 18, 2017:

1) In order to keep you thinking about architecture, expose you to a wider range of ideas, and more examples of great architecture, as well as to get ready for some more readings and discussions about architecture next semester, **I would like every student to read two books over the next four weeks:**

- Woods, Lebbeus, Slow Manifesto. Lebbeus Woods Blog (2015)

Slow Manifesto is an edited version of a blog, a personal response to the world of contemporary architecture by one of the great architectural thinkers and professors of our times: Lebbeus Woods (1940-2012). He writes well, fairly easy to read, though some of the references may be obscure. He feels that our time lacks a sophisticated discourse on architecture: too much of what we read about is just if it is effective, the pragmatics of how it works. He is critical of the world around him, and writes on WHY things are good/bad, and what SHOULD happen in the future. Don't read every line equally: slow down on the parts that capture your imagination! If you want to see a cube house assignment Lebbeus assigned to his 1st years, see <https://lebbeuswoods.wordpress.com/2012/05/14/four-ideal-houses-first-year-studio-2012/>

- Cook, Peter, Drawing. The Motive Force of Architecture 2nd ed (2013)

Drawing is a personal investigation of how and why architects draw. It builds on the old premise once formulated by Robin Evans as: “architects don’t make buildings, they make drawings.” Woods’ book looks at some of the world’s most amazing drawings, and he pleads for us all to make and use drawing as a primary motivating force in architecture. Drawings should be more than, or different than, mere “representations” of your ideas or building facts. Drawings inspire, invent, and challenge in ways that are very different than buildings. Next semester, we will challenge you to draw in new ways, and to use drawings in different ways in your design process. This book can help open your eyes to possibilities.

Another excellent book is:

- Simitch & Warke, The Language of Architecture: 26 Principles Every Architect Should Know (2014)

The Language of Architecture is a great resource to understand 26 of the most important principles of good architecture. You should begin to familiarize yourself with each of the chapter headings and its relevance to architecture and then dig into ones that interest you. The book has tons of illustrations of great architecture, including some buildings you will see in your survey of architectural history next semester, and my course on “Modern Architecture” in the subsequent semester. This reading may be difficult for some, it gets technical in some places, but I feel it is a great beginner book for architecture.

If possible, purchase the books via Amazon or similar. Another good site for used books is [www.bookfinder.com](http://www.bookfinder.com). I have also put PDF files of the books on the 48-105 Blackboard site, in a folder called “Readings.” It may be useful to download the large files onto your computer now, especially if you are going to a place where access might not be easy. If you have NOT yet registered for the studio, you will need to register to gain access to Blackboard, OR you can ask a friend to help get you the material, OR you can email me.

If you are looking for more readings (a few of you have already asked me for more), feel free to read anything else on the Blackboard site in the “Readings” folder, or go to the “Readings” page of the 48-105 website (<http://www.andrew.cmu.edu/course/48-105/>).

2) As you know, we will keep working in Rhino (Rhinoceros) next semester for 3D modeling. It’s a very powerful surface-modeling program used by leading designers all over the world—and studies show greater employment opportunities and higher salaries for graduates with superlative digital modeling skills. If you want to get some more practice in, or want to increase your productivity in Rhino (and reduce your frustration), do yourself a favor over break and **work through the Rhino Level 1 Training Manual**.

Links to the files at:

<http://www.rhino3d.com/download/rhino/5.0/rhino5level1training>

<https://www.rhino3d.com/download/rhino/5.0/Rhino5Level2Training/>

It is written for Windows, but the same instructions (mostly) apply in OSX (the interface will be a bit different). You’ll be glad you did when the semester starts!

Enjoy the break. Rest up. But keep thinking about architecture!

If you have questions about this email, the assignment, or anything else about the upcoming semester, feel free to email me with questions or concerns.

All the best,

Kai Gutschow

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