

Architecture, Design & Materials Studio

Spring 2007, CMU, Arch #48-205, M/W/F 1:30-4:20
Class Website: www.andrew.cmu.edu/course/48-205

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

(1/10/07)

S'07 Description

"As architects, we are united in our love of the physical world.
We like to touch and make real things." - B. Tsien

"Material itself is dead and lifeless. It is only given life by form,
breathed into it by the creative will of the artist." - W. Gropius

OVERVIEW:

Building on the fall "Composition" studio, the spring semester is concerned with more in-depth understanding and development of designs for small-scale buildings, now informed by greater knowledge related to materials and the act of construction. We seek to explore the aesthetic and experiential meaning of materials (WHY?), and the technical knowledge related to the use of materials and the processes of construction (HOW?). The creative opportunities and design implications of using varied materials, structural systems, and assembly techniques are elaborated, especially as they determine the *artistic, conceptual, poetic, creative, spatial, and experiential* aspects of architecture. The studio, the lectures, and the required "Building Study" will focus on the application and integration of knowledge acquired in a parallel "Materials & Assembly" course 48-215.

Objectives: To analyze and think critically about the role that materials, assembly methods, and construction play in existing architectures, and applying this with intent as part of a larger, synthetic and creative design process in your own designs. To define strategies for problem solving, conceptual development and poetic expression at all levels of the design process, large and small, conceptual and real. To develop structured arguments about your design intentions and the means to communicate them effectively, especially with regard to materials and construction. As in the fall, the focus of both the teaching and learning must be in 6 areas: 1) Attitude; 2) Verbal Acuity; 3) Drawing Clarity and Power; 4) Robust Models; 5) Conceptual Clarity and Richness of Detail; 6) Theory.

PROJECTS:

The semester will consist of three inter-related projects, the same for all studios, although each studio will explore the themes of materials and assembly with unique accents:

- **Proj. 1 Temporary Library:** design a small, temporary library in a very limited palette of materials. The focus will be on the scale of the human body encountering the materiality of books and architecture in a small-scale design.

- **Proj. 2 Building Study:** analyze a building focusing on how a specific material functions to determine form, space, experience, and meaning. Material to be selected in association with assignments in concurrent M&A class.

- **Proj. 3 Neighborhood Library:** design of a larger, permanent neighborhood library focusing on the role of materials and assembly in reference to context, function, experience, space, and meaning. In order to encourage a robust design process, a "Design Summary" will be due after the first mid-review, a detail of the building will be explored at large scale, and modified structural drawings will be prepared for the design in the concurrent M&A class.

