

Studio Professor

Henri T. de HAHN

Studio: Cowgill Hall 4th Floor
MWF 1:25 – 5:15pm

Seminars: TBD

Office hours: MWF 11:00 – 12:00 or by appointment

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Shaker Village, Pleasant Hill

“I became even more site specific and looked at the site or other circumstances for inspiration of the form. The form itself is not guided anymore by an underlying principle but rather is the outcome of a situation derived from the site... the site and the program determine the architectural form more than any preconceived notion or idea about what MACK architecture is.”

MARK MACK, Architect

“For if the intervention is to find its place, it must make us see what already exists in a new light.”

PETER ZUMTHOR, Architect

PROJECT 2: Wall House
Assignment given: Wednesday, September 27, 2021
Assignment due: Friday, December 08, 2021, 1:25pm

Introduction:

Congratulations, clients have identified each of you as their architect for a project in the Kentucky landscape. The Lüthi family -Agnes, Roger, and their twin sixteen-year-old sons Tristan and Vincent have recently moved to Kentucky. While renting a house on Gratz Park in downtown Lexington, they would like you to assist them in creating a summer home, modest in scale and in function, but something very special for them and their two sons who will be soon attending the University of Kentucky.

Agnes, is a former Swiss detective with the Lausanne police and Roger an architect by education. He has never practiced; instead, he formed an NGO two decades ago to assist [Doctors Without Borders](#). He organizes relief efforts for countries in crisis (currently assisting with the influx of Syrian and Kurd refugees) and uses his architectural education to be a leader in providing temporary shelter and food distribution around the world.

In practical terms this means that he has some strong ideas –which are not always well thought out - but he has made the commitment to hire you as the architect, based on the strong recommendation of your former professor. Most importantly, Roger has three guiding principles

that he learned as a student and that he has used in each of his everyday life situations. He invites you to incorporate them within your overall attitude towards this project:

- Search for an *economy of means*
- Define a *principle of settlement*
- Create a *model of life* that you structure and give form

Project:

The basis of this project is that the Lüthis fell in love with a piece of property outside of Pleasant Hill, the site of the Shaker religious community, and believe that their property was settled by members of the Shaker community. Being European, the Lüthis love history and particularly are fond of living in renovated spaces, thus their interest in this site and the interest in the Shakers and their important contributions to a way of living.

The story about the ruins on the Lüthi's property is uncertain, but what is known through research is that they date back to the American Civil War, around 1862-63. A Shaker family was to build several structures and only the ruins are visible today -a robust stone retaining wall with a set of stairs and a built-up basement on the lower portion of the site, and a 2-foot-high foundation for possibly a barn, storage or a house on the upper portion of the site.

There is not much more known about the site to the exception that one majestic tree has survived. Roger has drafted a site plan which includes all the basic elements that will give you a sense of the place (to be distributed on Monday, October 26, 2020).

Your clients invite you to develop three functions (**1.** an entrance sequence from the lower part of the site to upper level of the site; **2.** a MODEST summer home that should accommodate their family; necessary public spaces to cook, dine and entertain, spaces for nocturnal rejuvenation (two bedrooms and two bathrooms), ample basic storage as furniture, and **3.** a swimming pool.

Of course, the design should also make a statement about contemporary integration within the beautiful landscape, something that Roger believes the [Shakers](#) (please get familiar with the Shaker philosophy by clicking on the link) accomplished in such a beautiful and subtle manner. Roger believes the calling of a site, a place and invites you to think about what this site tells you, inspires you to make a beautiful design. It is a balance between the authors' wishes and those read in a site. Please read the following blog (we will discuss them in class):

<https://atelierdehahn.com/architectural-education-the-nature-of-being-shaker-architecture-rainer-maria-rilke-and-louis-i-kahn/>

To assist you in your task, Roger provides the following suggestive prompts but insists that you should foremost rely on your creativity:

Sequence of spaces is key to any architectural design. Be it as how one approaches a site, a building or how the interior functions are distributed within a building. Giving hierarchy and order is key for a successful spatial experience. Most often architects use a primary and secondary circulation path to celebrate spaces and places. Please refer to the previous Case Study projects to assist you in understanding the term *sequence of spaces*.

Building/Pavilion should be understood like a summer home, and should reflect the character of being on vacation to enjoy long weekends away from the city life. While the required functions are important (inside and outside activities), you should think about every aspect of a program regarding domesticity and living. In fact, why not think of a model of life for this family and what it means to own, inhabitant, and entertain. Think of the differences between a house, a home and a dwelling and what qualifies each of them.

Swimming pool is a dream for the Lüthi family and while modest in scale (they absolutely do not want either an Olympic pool or some kind of ostentatious Las Vegas pool) they expect something elegant and functional that provides a wonderful summer activity.

Landscape: There is in fact only one tree on the site and Agnes (who is an avid gardener and loves landscaped sites) requested to think about how to landscape their site. This means that anything that you do regarding all outside interventions should be integral to the project and that design strategies about how the house is seen as an extension of the landscape and the landscape an extension of the house, be carefully considered, explored and forcefully expressed in your final proposal.

One more important feature. While an architectural structure is like the skeleton for humans, you should not only think of a structural principle to bring down loads, but consider your structure as being able to DEFINE space. To assist in this endeavor, think of the three vertical structural types that we have been discussing since the case study project.

Columnar structure
Wall structure
Column and wall structure

Also, a simple research project (charette) on the three vertical structural systems will accompany this requirement and will be conducted by student throughout the remainder of the project.

Schedule:

You have a total of eight (10) weeks (with intermitted charettes) to accomplish this task minus a full week spent with family during Thanksgiving. Currently, I would like to maintain the schedule rather open because the dynamic of learning should respond to the students' progress, yet I will always give you important milestones as we proceed through the end of the semester.

Note:

To start with good design habits, and as discussed in our Friday, September 24 session, your instructor wishes to impart you with a strong and fundamental design process, one that will assist you in developing your first architectural project. As you become more seasoned, you may wish to divert from this process by adding personal interests and topics, but at least you will have learned one way to achieve design excellence. I will on a regular basis refer to our design process and ask students to present the content of what is a design process.

Note that there is much requested in the upcoming week, this will ease as you get into the design process, but it is imperative that all requested items and readings be done in a timely manner. Thank you.

Monday, September 27

Presentation/discussion

1. Rapid review of the case study exercise, what has been learned and what can this new architecture knowledge assist you in your first design
2. Introduction of Project 2 (Wall House): questions and answers
3. Research and project iterations by students **will be conducted individually.**
4. Presentation by faculty about the project site drawing, the notion of a site strategy (read for next week below blog), and how to build a site model
5. Presentation of how to think about a creating a sketch model in plasticine

6. **I ask that for this session, a student representative is chosen among the group and will be responsible to scan the site document (handed out during class) and forward the scanned document to each student. This will be done during the remaining studio time.**
7. Thereafter, each student is responsible to print out the drawing at original scale of 1/16" = 1'-0" as well as print out a drawing at scale 1/8" = 1'-0". Both documents should not be drawn on and be available ASAP.
8. The rest of the studio will be dedicated in starting the project

Wednesday, September 29

Task

1. Have completed your individual site model at scale 1/8" = 1'-0". The handed-out site drawing is at scale 1/4" = 1'-0", thus you will need to scale it 50% down digitally)
2. Material allowed for this site model is only to be done in 1/16 thickness chipboard of the color of your choice, but not white.
3. To assist you in your first foray into making a sketch model, please read: <https://atelierdehahn.com/architecture-education-model-sketching/> We will discuss the content of this blog on Monday and be ready with your questions regarding the content of the blog. This blog IS critical in suggesting how to developed your three sketch models in plasticine. Please record your thoughts in your sketchbook as they will be graded.
4. To assist you in your first foray into a design process, please read: <https://atelierdehahn.com/design-process-architecture/> We will discuss the content of this blog during this session, thus be ready with your questions regarding the content of the blog. This blog IS critical in suggesting how to developed start a design process.
5. The rest of the studio time will be dedicated in developing three (3) different schemes (principle of settlement) based on the above required functions described in the brief.
6. The models will be volumetric (no drawings as this time) and indicate how you see the building within the site by responding to functions, site, orientations, context, and programs
7. To assist you in your first foray into a design process, please read: <https://atelierdehahn.com/architecture-education-context-settlement-botta-switzerland/> We will discuss the content of this blog during NEXT session, thus be ready with your questions regarding the content of the blog. This blog IS critical in suggesting how to developed start a design process. Please record your thoughts in your sketchbook as they will be graded.
8. In your sketchbook start recording in drawing and in written words, your overall design process, impressions, questions, challenges and successes. These can be in light of

questions you wish to ask during desk crits or during class discussions.

Friday, October 1

No Class, Fall break

- No deliverables

Monday, October 4

Task

1. Presentation and discussion of your three conceptual schemes (site strategies) by each student in plasticine on their individual chipboard model.
2. Discussion of the blog on a principle of settlement (see above assignment)
3. Conceptual diagrams will accompany your thought process. To understand what this means, please read blog: <https://atelierdehahn.com/architectural-education-about-conceptual-diagraming/> We will discuss the content of this blog, thus please be ready with your questions regarding the content of the blog. Please record your thoughts in your sketchbook as they will be graded.
4. Remaining studio time is dedicated in designing through plans and sections to give spatial meaning to your volumetric sketch models
5. All initial plans will be **sketches** (not hard-lined or drafted) at scale $\frac{1}{4}" = 1'-0"$

Other milestones are to be announced accordingly.
Looking forward seeing great projects