

Studio Professor

Henri T. de HAHN

Studio: Cowgill Hall 3rd Floor Plaza side
MWF 1:00 – 4:50pm

Seminars: TBD

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

Contact: Office: 540-231-2680
Email: hdehahn@vt.edu



Francois Boucher, *Madame Boucher* (1734) detail
Norman Rockwell, untitled (1946) detail
Loft detail:

<http://www.home-designing.com/2015/12/a-kid-friendly-apartment-renovation-by-ruetemple-architects>

“The house is perhaps the single most important design problem for an architect. It is the one building type that inspires the greatest variety of expressions responding to one of the most basic human needs: home. In the house, the architect expresses his or her idea of how we should live. From Palladio’s ideal villas to Frank Lloyd Wright’s prairie houses and Le Corbusier’s machines for living, the house, more than any other building type, has been an important repository of our traditional way of life and the primary conveyer of new ideas in architecture.”

ROBERTO DE ALBA, Architectural journalist and designer

INTRODUCTION:

This semester’s (SPRING 2017) projects will be split into two research agendas following the FALL 2016 topic surrounding the idea of outdoor domesticity. Project 1 – **urban loft** in Lexington, KY – speaks about a way of living. Project 2 – **courtyard house** in Christiansburg, VA – is a proposal for a new suburban typology between work and living. These projects reflect the inherent need for humans to call a house/apartment a *home*. Between visionary speculation and a desire for healthy pragmatism, these two research projects emphasize the faculty’s interest expressed in the following paragraph drawn from The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies (I.A.U.S) – founded by Peter Eisenman in 1967, closed 1984:

“The Institute [for Architecture and Urban Studies] believes that there is a critical link between architecture as a humanist discipline and professional practice. In all of its activities, the Institute tries to relate its research and educational role to its involvement in practice an in this respect it seeks to sustain both education and practice as a nature continuity.”

Open Plan brochure, I.A.U.S., p.8, 1977

While architecture and the *Education of an Architect* (title of the seminal 1985 Cooper Union publication), reflect both teaching and learning, a balanced approach to design issues will remain key to the rest of this year's studio preoccupations. There is great need to speculate, and indeed great beauty in this, however, without grounding those ideals within the measures of our profession, any architectural gesture, regardless of its richness, will fail to provide a model of life that legitimizes the achievements and responsibilities of each new generation.

PROJECT 1:

Issues of historic preservation are perhaps more than ever an important topic for the built environment. Many of today's star architects launched their careers with architecture centered around issues of renovation and adaptive re-use (i.e., Frank Gehry's Rebecca's restaurant (1985) and Morphosis' (Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi) 72nd Street restaurant (1983), both located in Venice Beach, CA; or Steven Holl and Vito Acconci's Storefront for Art and Architecture (1993) in New York City). These projects demonstrate that issues of scale, functional constraint, and the establishment of an intellectual position between the old and the new deserve as much attention and ingenuity as those projects that set in place something new. Given the growing interest in issues of sustainability, it seems appropriate that the idea of *the new* focuses on reinvesting within *the old* (*renovation, restoration, rehabilitation, and adaptive re-use*). As such, the *tradition* of tackling a renovation project within an urban context will be the focus of our first project.

The prompt is self-evident: create within an existing building confine (apartment located on the top floor of a former industrial building) living quarters for a couple that encompasses the following functions (alphabetically and not sequentially!). These functional requirements are those that are currently included in the apartment of Dr. Dan and Wendy Rowland:

- Bathroom –bathtub, shower, commode and two sinks (master)
- Bathroom – bathtub, commode and one sink (guest room)
- Bathroom – shower, commode and sink (public)
- Bedroom (master) with walk-in closet
- Bedroom (guest) with built-in closet space
- Dining room/area
- Entrance foyer
- Kitchen
- Library that provides a TV and study/work area
- Living room
- Storage area(s)
- Washer and dryer area

It should be self evident, that for an architect what is at stake is not simply the appropriate location of functions within an existing space, but to create an idea – a model of life – for how this couple will live within your design. For example, a living room is not simply a place to set a sofa and a couple of well-designed nestling tables. It is a place where social interaction unfolds and where the representational identity of the owners is typically showcased. A kitchen is not simply a place to cook. It was initially the place solely for cooks and servants, before becoming a space utilized by the owner, and eventually a multifunctional room that may serve as a dedicated area within other room(s). A foyer is not simply an entrance. It is a zone that negotiates an appropriate transition/threshold/limit from public to the first semi-public areas. In short, while functions are important, there remains always and univocally the need to provide a thesis, a program for your design. Your apprenticeship in this matter – through last semester's project – should allow you to provide a thoughtful and inspirational program for your design strategy. The final presentation will require similar final presentation drawings of the highest quality (more digital than analog this time), along with suggested furnishings, all presented in a unified composition based on 24x36 panels.

SITE: Lexington Kentucky



APARTMENT SITE: 38°02'43. 80"N, 84°29'40. 98"W, elev. 966



Located at 121 North Martin Luther King Boulevard, the site of your intervention is in downtown Lexington, Kentucky. In short walking distance from the historic Gratz Park district and a vibrant downtown city life (yes, Lexington does have one now!), the apartment could not be better situated to be considered urban. As with the fall project, there is a little twist. It is real, will be visited AND the loft was completed in 2008. Your task is to design an apartment in that same space! So how shall we proceed to launch this fascinating topic?

The shell of the apartment will be provided to you on the first day of class –after the one-week second year student competition (Wednesday, January 25) and group discussions will take place each studio session prior to our departure to Lexington on Thursday, February 2. Per the schedule of our field trip (see Canvas site and new uploaded version 4), we will discover the actual apartment project as built. At this time, you MUST have your ideas in place, but the site visit can provide you with some slight adjustments. This might seem tricky, as you are to design an apartment knowing now how it looks, feels and after hearing comments from the current owners Dr. Dan and Wendy Rowland during our field trip visit! This is the twist to the project, but given your ideas, creativity and maturity, I can see many projects outperforming what was built, and solutions that will be fascinating to see. Finally, your site is restricted in its volumetric dimension. This is both a constraint and richness for you, and no intervention outside the existing shell will be allowed, which includes removing and/or changing the existing window configurations.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

In opposition to last semester's single project – where the faculty's intention was to have students be introduced to fundamental architectural themes (site, program, function, circulation, structure, light, construction and detailing to name a few) through a simple prompt that included a complex series of functions, this semester will be different. Two (2) projects (16 and 23 sessions each, will run respectively six (6) and eight (8) weeks per project with a week allocated for Spring Break).

The desire to accelerate the pace of the studio will require students to conceptualize their ideas quickly, get a programmatic strategy in place (the big idea behind the project), find the stability of the project (functional, formal and tectonic), and refine its spatial qualities within the allotted time. A perk will be introduced mid-point of the project to focus on the kitchen, where more refinement will be required from each of you, thus touching upon issues of interior design and ergonomics. To this effect, the usage of IKEA kitchens will be the focus and the following web page will serve as a guide to create a successful kitchen (work triangle, work zones - cooking, washing and storage zones), space, areas, layout (single-line, single-line with island, L-shaped, and parallel): http://www.ikea.com/ms/en_CA/rooms_ideas/kitchen_howto/NA/plan_your_kitchen_in_3d.html. Please familiarize yourselves thoroughly with this web site and all other IKEA related kitchen sites. It's fun!

Dates	Suggested tasks
01.25.17	Project starts with research into the layout of apartments and what functions and programs may inspire your design strategy. Provided studio literature (see bibliography).
01.27.17 – 02.02.17	Work iteratively and diagrammatically at min ¼=1'-0" scale (plan provided) by using bubble diagrams and adjacency matrix –primary and secondary adjacencies (space planning strategies) to clarify your parti as it relates to possible floor plan organizations and sectional intentions. Group discussion sessions.
02.02.17 – 02.04.17	Field trip to Lexington, KY (Proposal uploaded on Canvas site)
02.06.17. – 03.01.17	Maturation of the project with intermediate mid review on Friday, February 17. Introduction of kitchen focus after review.
03.01.17	Final review of urban loft project.
03.03.17	No class: Henri en route to Hong Kong for Spring Break off-campus program
03.04.17- 03.19.17	Well deserved Spring Break

MINIMUM REQUIRED STUDIO MATERIALS:

For an appropriate studio culture, please have the following materials assigned to you:

- Drafting board
- Computer
- Sketch paper (white or yellow –preferably large)
- Appropriate pencils or lead holders with various lead (2H, F, and HB)
- Pencil and led sharpener
- Masking tape
- Set of color pencils and/or prismacolor/sharpies
- Architectural scale
- Basic compass set
- 45 degree and 30/60 degree triangles
- Cutting map (12x18 min) and appropriate tools to make models (X-Acto and Retractable Utility knives, blades, and glue)
- Sketch book (preferably large)
- Measuring tape (25 foot)
- Anything else that will enhance your design process –watercolors, etc.

REQUIRED READINGS: for the entire semester (book to be purchased: \$0.01 used!)

Rybczynski, Witold. Home: A short History of an Idea. New York, Penguin Books, 1987.

SUGGESTED READINGS: that will be available in the studio during the entire semester. Henri's collection of books.

Alpern, Andrew. New York's Fabulous Luxury Apartments. New York, Dover Publications, Inc., 1975.

- Conran, Terence. The Essential House Book: Getting Back to Basics. New York, Crown Publishers, Inc., 1994.
- Lynch, Geoffrey. Manhattan Classic: New York's Finest Prewar Apartments. New York, Princeton Architectural Press, 2014.
- Nielson, Karla J., David A. Taylor. Interiors: An Introduction. New York, McGraw Hill, 2011.
- Ojeda, Oscar, Riera. The New American Apartment: Innovations in Residential Design and Construction, 30 Case Studies. New York, Whitney Library of Design, 1997.
- Ojeda, Oscar, Riera. The New American House 1: Innovations in Residential Design and Construction, 30 Case Studies. New York, Whitney Library of Design, 1995.
- Ojeda, Oscar, Riera. The New American House 2: Innovations in Residential Design and Construction, 30 Case Studies. New York, Whitney Library of Design, 1997.
- Riley, Terence. The Un-Private House. New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1999.
- Trulove, James, Grayson: Il Kim. The New American Cottage: Innovations in Small-Scale Residential Architecture. New York, Whitney Library of Design, 1999.
- Trulove, James, Grayson: Il Kim. The New American House 3: Innovations in Residential Design and Construction, 30 Case Studies. New York, Whitney Library of Design, 2001.
- Trulove, James, Grayson: Il Kim. The New American House 4: Innovations in Residential Design and Construction, 30 Case Studies. New York, Whitney Library of Design, 2003.