

Studio Professor

Henri T. de HAHN

Studio: Cowgill Hall 4th Floor
MWF 1:10 – 5:00pm

Seminars: TBD

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

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Jacob Wilhelm Mechau, artist
Design for a Monument of Klopstock in an Ideal Landscape (1806)

Project 1: A contemporary courtyard house/home

Assignment given: Wednesday August 25, 2021

Assignment due: Friday, September 10, 2021 1:25 -5:15pm

Review in studio or in assigned review space (TBD)

Introduction:

Painters during the late 19th and early 20th century became the *enfants terribles* of the first generation of avant-garde artists. From fauvism, impressionism, pointillism to cubism, purism and futurism, the artists' major contributions were to violate any imaginable rule in traditional painting by simplifying and contrasting the compositions, by using pure and bright colors in a dissonant way, all the while expressing new gestural brushstroke techniques that ushered abstraction as a new painterly subject matter.

Nature was no longer a model to be copied as in classical iconography, and artist's broke with all realism marking a radical and new turn in art history—from representation of reality to the invention of reality. Traditional naturalistic approaches were decomposed into pure geometrical shapes with a desire to showcase objects in an overlapping and interpenetrating manner. The renunciation to create an illusion of depth were meant to emphasize the new reality of the picture's two-dimensional surface.

When it came to portraits and still life genres, figures were distorted and deformed, perspectives were rejected and forms, geometries, and lines were expressed in abstract ways without any restraint based on the past. Paintings became an expression of an objective content through an autonomous formal analysis. Abstraction was set at center stage, and superficiality was replaced with a desire to look behind the visible surface. The autonomy of painting reigned from thereon.

We all know how these preoccupations translated into architecture—initially through cubist physical space by masters of the 20th century. Modernism in architecture was born. What are the next steps for 2015 onward in this historical lineage between tradition and invention, imagination and originality.

Task:

You are poised as a new generation of architects to think creatively how to build on the past and offer revolutionary strides to create new models of life through the discipline of architecture. For this first and short two-week project, I invite you to re-invent a courtyard house/home. The project shall not be seen as a statement about your stylistic aims (although one cannot exclude

those preoccupations as designers), but you are asked to envision a contemporary project with your understanding of the underlying character of our time; or, to project a vision for the future. In this instance the courtyard house/home shall be seen as a building type, and in accordance to 1996 Pritzker Prize laureate José Rafael Moneo, the creation of a new type should be the ambition of any architect.

Brief:

- Context: to be chosen among an urban, suburban or rural environment
- Climate: tropical, dry, temperate of continental will be explored through the design
- Program: to be invented as a [thesis](#)
- Function: each student will define the nucleus that will inhabit your design and the necessary and appropriate functions
- Value of usage: perhaps the trickiest aspect of the [trilogy](#) that includes program and function. Ideas of domesticity should be at the forefront of your thought process as well as reimagining type spaces such as the meaning of:
 - room versus space
 - free plan versus load bearing plan
 - corridor, enfilade, arcade, door, vestibule, passageway, edge, transition, threshold, patio, courtyard to name a few type spaces that may be themed in your research for a contemporary courtyard house/home.

Deliverables

- All pertinent and fundamental modes of expression that convey your thesis as an idea that enable robust thematic discussions among colleagues and guest reviewers. Your visual presentation shall be accompanied by a clear verbal explanation that complements the visual presentation. I will make available 24"x36" sheets of paper for sketch discussions during presentation.
- Please be mindful that I believe that—regardless of an analog or digital presentation—key elements such as contour lines with height indication, north arrows, sectional cuts, scale (geometrical) and all other “professional” systems of notifications are to be featured in your presentation. Or perhaps, you may wish to surprise me with new and innovative presentation criteria!
- Include important sketches (drawings and/or models, but no final model) pertaining to the project, that support the solution of your design.
- Finally, please be mindful that this is an extremely tight schedule, thus manage your ambitions, ideas and presentations accordingly.

Best of luck

