

Studio Professor

**Henri T. de HAHN**

Studio: Cowgill Hall 3<sup>rd</sup> 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



David Hockney, artist  
Garrowby Hill, detail, Collection of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA

*“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:

Last winter, due to the severe 5-day ice storm in January on Kentucky Lake, the Lüthi family - Roger, Agnes, and their twin sons Tristan (16) and Vincent (16) - lost their boat and saw the destruction of the 1934 dock that was built at the same time as their lake house. As summer is approaching, they have asked you to redesign the dock with two new features –an outside living area that can accommodate a dining and cooking area (for 10 people seated at dinner), and a shelter for the boat that they are about to purchase (motor or sail, the specific type based on your recommendation), and the two windsurfing sailboards of their sons (Tristan and Vincent believe that this is the most important thing that you need to focus on!!!). The shelter should be appropriate for off season storage and protection of the boat.

The caveat is that Roger is an architect by education but 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 refugees on the island of Crete) 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

He invites you to develop the three functions (dock, outside dining area, and boat shelter) in a phased manner, yet insists that all three parts are harmoniously connected to each other, be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and make a statement about a contemporary integration within the beautiful landscape. To assist you in your task, Roger gave you the following suggestive prompts for each phase but insists that your creativity bring the best out of you for each of the three phases:

**Dock** strategy shall be the termination of an appropriate platform that emphasizes a pedestrian transition/entrance between land and water –between dock and boat. Furthermore, Roger seeks a response from you that heightens the beauty of the existing landscape yet provides a subtle and appropriate functional intrusion of the man made structures by creating a new **place** of conviviality; not an object or a building. He is thinking that the entire pathway and extension to the dock from the house could be seen as an architectural landscape that may incorporate a well designed edge between land and water for the entire front of the property. There he goes again, with his preconceptions!

**Outside living** strategy should express programmatically a model of life for how you interpret the closeness of the family's identity and their love for entertaining friends and guests. Dining area should hold seating for ten (10) with adjacent cooking area that shall incorporate an outdoor BBQ grill island with a sink, refrigeration capacity and basic storage area. Ability to shelter from the sun is critical but should not be intrusive. Roger's ambition is that the outside living area remains modest but elegant and he looks forward to an innovative lighting system that will create a wonderful evening ambiance.

**Boat shelter** shall hold their newly purchased boat and the two windsurfing sailboards –of course for Tristan and Vincent, those are the most important pieces to be protected! Roger wants you to research and propose the best way to keep their boat safe during the winter months. Your intervention should allow the boat to be sheltered during the summer months while in use (and therefore be easily accessible for the family and their guests) and provide the additional protection necessary during the off season months.

**Construction** shall be mostly in wood, as Roger believes in the sustainability of timber harvesting and the warmth that wood offers to the eyes and touch. Overall the project shall demonstrate simplicity in its detailing, excellence in craft and overall attitude towards a culture of construction that is a direct response to a multitude of constraints –I know that Roger will share with you his ideas about what he thinks is essential and do not forget that he is Swiss and an utopian realist! But again, you are the architect and should interpret his dreams...

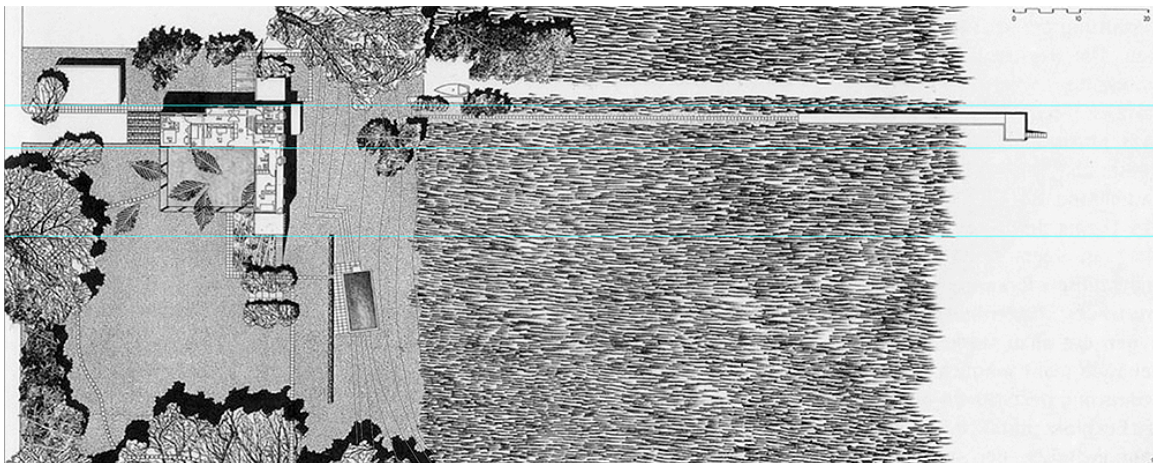
**Site:** 36°57'23.18"N, 88°14'14.12"W, elev. 373



The “fictive” location of the site is situated on Kentucky Lake just south of Rocky Point Park at the eastern side of Pnea Cabins Road, a couple of miles East of US Highway 641 North, and directly opposite the town of Grand Rivers. You may *Google Earth* the site to get more information. The landscape is spectacular with beautiful views of the lake. The plan below shows a close up of the overall property with contour lines leading to the lake. The location of the dock is prior to the ice storm and now there is nothing left. The overall length of the property (land) is square 190' x 190', and extends into the water another 280' from the edge of the water with the former dock being roughly 220' long. The existing contour lines may be changed to accommodate a user-friendlier path for the grandparents who have moved in with Roger, Agnes and their two sons. The existing change in altitude (from the garden edge of the house (west) to the water is roughly 4', thus eight contour lines at each 6 inches that you will need to negotiate (a ratio of 1' per every 5').

The existing vegetation and landscape might seem a little dated, thus Roger invites you to consider making some changes that should complement and enhance your newly created pathway down to the lake. Nothing of the existing house is in need of transformation and you may focus entirely on the functions listed above. Again, Roger insists that a function is not a program! Finally, the water table is rather stable but please be mindful of potential increases, which happened with the severe storms leading to the terrible ice that devastated the entire dock and water's edge. Ironically, Roger does not have any plans beyond the one below and requests that you redraw the overall property and include in it your design proposal for review.

He is anxious to get the project ready and built for the summer of 2017, and cannot wait to see your creativity in action.



### Required readings

Gregotti, Vittorio. *Inside Architecture* trans. Peter Wong and Francesca Zaccheo (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996)

- 'On Precision' pp. 45-50
- 'On Modification' pp. 67-73
- 'On Simplicity' pp. 83-88

Harrison, Robert. *Thirteen Ways* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997)

- Landscape, chapter 4, pp. 63-81

### Suggested readings

Krauss, Rosalind. *Sculpture in the Expanded Field, The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (Port Townsend: Bay Press, 1983), pp. 31-42

Marc Treib. The content of landscape form [The limits of formalism]  
[lj.uwpress.org/content/20/2/119.full.pdf](http://lj.uwpress.org/content/20/2/119.full.pdf)

Bulletin Bois: All issues are excellent and showcase thematically some very nice Swiss wooden buildings. Most issues can be found on [issuu.com](https://issuu.com). I recommend the following for this project: Issue No. 60 on minimal spaces; issue No. 87 of pavilions (<https://issuu.com/lignum/docs/bbu87>); and issue No. 95 on buildings on or next to the water (<https://issuu.com/lignum/docs/bbu95>). Texts are unfortunately in French but the images and plans speak for themselves. Please consult all issues to get inspired –I am at awe seeing such wonderful quality and humble buildings –true architecture! Type <https://issuu.com/lignum/docs/bbu114/61> into your web browser and scroll to see all other available digital issues.