

University of Southern California
School of Architecture
ARCH 202b
Spring 2017
Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays
2 - 6 pm
Instructors:
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James Diewald
Eric Nulman
Scott Uriu
Lauren Lynn (coordinator)

Arch 202b

Of Matter, Material, & Musings

MATERIAL

As a second year design student, you began by seeing Los Angeles and notions of *site* anew. In the second semester of your second year you will continue to embark on re-reading conventional notions of architecture - this time by re-imagining *materiality*. Rather than working in the linear sequence of designing first, selecting material second, we will ask: how can the process of making and experimentation in the studio setting directly inform new and unexpected notions of materiality? By studying materiality in the nascent stages of design, the process of making can begin to inform new perceptions of space, time, and effect.

This semester we will challenge Robin Evan's repeated claim that "architects make drawings, not buildings." We will work from the position that architects engage directly with the *matter* of construction. The process of building physical models will not be merely a representation of an a priori idea but instead will be seen as a search for material understanding. Material behavior and interaction cannot be predicted or determined through static representation alone. Your process for design will be akin to the scientific method, in which empirical models and a set of hypotheses, tests, and conclusions will be the basis for analysis and guide work flow.

Given the established divide between traditional building materials, i.e brick, steel, or glass, and unconventional materials, typically thought of as those not traditionally used in building trades, we will interrogate this dichotomy in order to rethink both sides of the equation. We will explore how to use conventional materials in unconventional ways and unconventional materials in newfound architectural ways. With this exploration, the use of both analog and digital tools and a deliberate understanding of the appropriateness of when to employ each, will be crucial. Lastly, we will carefully consider the consequences, aesthetically and culturally, that come from our experiments and newfound notions of materiality.

In Project One, *As a Matter of Fact & Fiction*, we will re-imagine the material framework of existing (factual) houses, chosen for their neutral relationship to materiality. By investigating these buildings through new (fictional) model-building techniques - the stereotomic, the tectonic, and the monocoque - the process of experimentation to understand material behavior at the scale of the model will begin. In Project Two, *Material Musings*, these novel notions will be scaled to the size of a small chamber, exposing the often deceptive discontinuities in shifts that come from moving between the scale of the architectural model and full-scale fabrication. In Project Three, *Material Mash-Up*, materiality will drive the design of a small library building, paired with a wild-card program to encourage cross-materiality.

REPRESENTATION

Models

In order to work toward inventive uses of materiality, the use of traditional materials, i.e. chipboard, paper, museum board, etc. typically found in representational models will not be permitted. Each assignment encourages the use and fabrication of durable materials: either conventional building materials used in novel ways, or unconventional materials used in architectural ways.

Drawings

Each semester you are presented with a set of rules to follow that require a mastery of a specific mode of representation. This semester is no different as you will be producing a series of diptych drawings. Each drawing will have two parts: the *quantitative drawing* of black and white linework only and a corresponding *qualitative drawing* of layers of colored fill-work only. The qualitative drawing is intended not to copy, but to *translate* the material effects from one medium (the model) to another (the drawing). The axonometric drawing, as well as the plan and section will be our primary drawing types; no renderings of any kind will be allowed.

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EVALUATION

Studio Culture + Tidiness

It is in the best interest of students to work in studio (and the two-week-long Verle Annis Casting Lab) to the best of their abilities. Historically, the studio is where ideas, strategies, and interest in the work are shared and discussed. Any music or video should only be played on individual headphones and played only outside of studio hours.

Tidiness will be very important to pay attention in this making-oriented and fabrication-heavy studio. Periodic mandatory studio cleanup dates have been scheduled throughout the semester. Students should keep their individual and communal studio spaces clean and organized. Failure to keep a clean studio and/or fully participate in mandatory cleanup days will result in severe consequences to a student's or group of students' grades. If remnants of student work is found elsewhere in the school, this will also result in a grade reduction. Verle Annis has been reserved for your use for the first two weeks of school for casting your Project One Part One models. No casting will be allowed in the studio space.

No toxic resins or other voc-based products are permitted. No plaster-based products are permitted.

Individual desk crits and pinups will be paired with the studio instructor will occur regularly throughout the semester. The success and quality of these one-on-one dialogues is contingent upon the student's preparation and timely production. Students who are not properly prepared or prepared at the beginning of class will be graded accordingly and assignments that do not reflect adequate progress or completion will not be discussed during desk crits, pinups and reviews.

Readings + Discussions

Readings have been paired with both the premise of the studio, as well as individual projects, and will be assigned throughout the semester and discussions sessions will be held within each studio session for each project. Students should print hard copies of the readings, take copious amounts of notes as to how they relate to the studio at large, and be prepared for group discussions.

Written Project Descriptions

Each student will be required to write a 250-word description of each project's conceptual framework, to be submitted to their instructor's at least one studio day prior to final project reviews. Written descriptions should be used to frame and outline each student's verbal presentation during final project reviews.

No Screen Lecture Policy

We will continue the No Screen Lecture Policy this semester. Students will need to put away all electronic devices during project launch presentation, house and guest lectures, and section meetings. Notes should be taken with pen or pencil in notebooks or sketchbooks.

Grading

Each studio instructor will monitor and evaluate the progress and performance of their students throughout the semester. The criteria for evaluation and grading will be outlined in each assignment and evaluation form. Students will receive a mid-term conference to provide an overview of their progress and to evaluate the quality of the work. Upon completion of the semester, all second-year instructors will review together the final performance and evaluation of each student to assure evaluation standards are consistent throughout the studio-at-large. A minimum semester grade of a C is required to continue to the next studio sequence. Students performing at or below this minimum standard will be notified in writing. Students should consult the University polices for the Incomplete (IN) grade and should be keenly aware of the semester schedule for key withdrawal dates as established by the University. The final semester grade will be determined by the following requirements and their respective percentages:

Project One	20%
Project Two	30%
Project Three	40%
Readings/ Participation/ Tidiness/ Portfolio	10%

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Attendance + Participation

Studio meets every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 2 pm to 6 pm. Students are required to attend and participate in each class period. It is crucial that students remain engaged throughout each class period. The School of Architecture's attendance policy is the following: Students are allowed to miss the equivalent of one week of class sessions (three classes if the course meets three times/week, etc) without directly affecting the student's grade and ability to complete the course. If additional absences are required for a personal illness/ family emergency, preapproved academic reason/religious observance, the situation should be discussed and evaluated with the faculty member and appropriate Chair on a case-by-case basis. For each absence over that allowed number, the student's evaluation can be lowered up to one full letter grade. **Please take note of and make arrangements for attendance to the required 2nd Year USC School of Architecture lecture on March 29th at 6 pm.**

Any student not in class within the first 10 minutes will be considered tardy, and any student absent (in any form including sleep, technological distraction, or leaving mid class for a long break) for than 1/3 of the class time can be considered fully absent. If arriving late, a student must be respectful of a class in session and do everything possibly to minimize disruption caused by a late arrival. It is always the student's responsibility to seek means (if possible) to make up work missed due to absences, not the instructor's, although such recourse is not always an option due to the nature of the material covered. A mid-term or final review is to be treated the same as a final exam as outlined and expected by the University. Students must understand that days allocated for their studio final in the syllabus are considered an examination period. If they are absent or tardy on any review day and miss their opportunity to present, this is considered equal to missing an exam.

Portfolio + Project Archiving

Each student will be required to submit a grading portfolio at the end of the semester. The content should be thoughtfully presented in an 8-1/2" x 11" maximum-size portfolio. Since all assignments must be included in the portfolio, regular documentation throughout the semester is highly recommended. Portfolio guidelines will be distributed. Digital copies of project documentation will be required for the School of Architecture archiving purposes.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>. Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage [sarc@usc.edu](http://sarc.usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

Academic Accommodations

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

NAAB Criteria

The USC School of Architecture's five year BARCH degree and the two year M.ARCH degree are accredited professional architectural degree programs. All students can access and review the NAAB Conditions of Accreditation (including the Student Performance Criteria) on the NAAB Website, http://www.naab.org/accreditation/2004_Conditions.aspx.