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INTRODUCTION

We have four high-level educational objectives:

1. Access the masterworks of art and architecture across a wide breadth of Western history
2. Experience the masterworks as fully as possible, through the eyes of an architect
3. Comprehend the meaning of the masterworks
4. Clarify one's architectural convictions and the meaning of one's own design work

Accessing an environment rich in masterworks is the first step in our effort – a prerequisite of the other objectives. We share this goal with the tourist, who also focuses his effort on getting there and seeing things. However, the second goal separates us from the tourist. As architects we must see beyond the surface effect that is appreciated by a layperson. A tourist can appreciate the beauty of a Renaissance façade, for instance, but his appreciation begins and ends with, "Wow, that's beautiful." We might say this too, but for an architect this statement summarizes a large body of further observations, which a tourist misses. An architect appreciates the crisp lines of the pilasters, as well as their accentuated flatness. He appreciates the size and spacing of the mortar joints and the smooth alignment of the stone blocks that compose the wall. He sees the sinuous shadow of each capital and the balanced proportions of capital to entablature. He notices how the windows align at the center of each structural bay, with plenty of neutral wall surface between window and pilaster.

An architect observes these things, and many more, in part by using an ancient technique, venerated in every age: sketching. While it is satisfying and desirable to produce a handsome drawing, this is not the primary purpose of sketching. Most students who fail to produce a handsome drawing do so because they miss the deeper purpose: Sketching is a way to see *more*. The process of sketching requires you to explore the shape, position and lighting of each element and each aspect of a scene. Whereas a tourist gains a vague impression from his unstudied glance, an architect gathers a comprehensive understanding by studying each part and group of parts. Sketching a building is like sipping a glass of wine. By extending the experience and concentrating on it, a world of nuances is revealed.

A tourist discounts the nuance, believing it is irrelevant to the general impact of a place. But, in fact, it is often the nuance that separates a masterwork from an everyday building – just as the subtle flavors of a great wine separate it from a common bottle. Sketching is one important means by which you become a connoisseur of architecture.

Our third objective, to unravel the meaning of the masterworks, is what we must do to take the first step toward designing masterworks ourselves. If it is our grasp of the nuance that elevates us from tourist to architect, then it is our grasp of the *meaning* that elevates us from an average architect to a master. A masterwork actually does two things differently from an ordinary building. First, it expresses a view of the world. Second, it expresses this view consistently in every nuance.

The concept of a *view of the world* is central in art theory, but due to the pragmatism of Modern Functionalism, architects have shunned it over the past century. Post-Modern thinkers, rather

than revive the concept, claimed that all meaning is merely one of many subjective “readings,” each ultimately arbitrary. As a result, most students today get little, if any, exposure to this crucial idea, which is essential to understanding the meaning of architecture. The recent popularity of phenomenology has reignited interest in the existential meaning of architecture, and interest in the concept of a view of the world is now being revived.

A *view of the world* is the sum of a person's basic beliefs about reality, mankind, and the relationship between them. If, for example, you believe that man possesses free will – and therefore, that he ultimately controls the events in his life – then this is part of your view of the world. Likewise, if you believe the opposite: that man's actions are determined by outside forces (society, parenting, environment, genetics, instinct, etc.) – and therefore, that choice is an illusion – then this is also part of your view of the world. Your belief on this issue (free will versus determinism) will profoundly impact the way you think about and live your life. The issue of free will versus determinism is one of many such issues. *Philosophy* is the field of study that uncovers these issues and defines alternative viewpoints.

Every adult has a view of the world, whether he knows it or not. Certainly, there are people who have never heard of the idea, and they have never studied philosophy. Even so, their actions imply a view of the world. For instance, a person might never consider the issue of free will versus determinism, and he might claim to hold no opinion on the matter. Yet, if he lives a strictly conventional life, carefully modeling himself after his family and neighbors, and never considering any other possible life, then his actions imply some variant of social determinism. Even if he has never heard the term “social determinism,” he lives life in a manner prescribed by this belief. Whether we know it or not – whether explicit in our convictions or implicit in our actions – we each hold a view of the world. The philosopher Ayn Rand explains the futility of denying this:

You might claim – as most people do – that you have never been influenced by philosophy. I will ask you to check that claim. Have you ever thought or said the following? ‘Don't be so sure – nobody can be certain of anything.’ You got that notion from David Hume, even though you might never have heard of him. Or: ‘This may be good in theory, but it doesn't work in practice.’ You got that from Plato. Or: ‘That was a rotten thing to do, but it's only human, nobody is perfect in this world.’ You got it from Augustine. Or: ‘It may be true for you, but it's not true for me.’ You got it from William James. Or: ‘I couldn't help it! Nobody can help anything he does.’ You got it from Hegel. Or: ‘I can't prove it, but I *feel* that it's true.’ You got it from Kant. ...

Some people might answer: ‘Sure, I've said those things at different times, but I don't have to believe that stuff all of the time. It may have been true yesterday, but it's not true today.’ They got it from Hegel. They might say: ‘Consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.’ They got it from ... Emerson. They might say: ‘But can't one compromise and borrow different ideas from different philosophies according to the expediency of the moment?’ They got it from Richard Nixon – who got from William James.

A person's view of the world affects everything he thinks and everything he does. It provides a basic orientation toward life, and it provides a frame of reference for judging everything that happens to him.

Just as a view of the world can take different forms – explicit in one's convictions or implicit in one's actions – it can also be clear or vague, consistent or contradictory. Some people possess a consistent view of the world, which underlies all their actions and gives their life a clear, unified direction. On the other hand, some people are conflicted – sometimes acting as if they believe X, sometimes as if they believe Y. Consequently, they do not exhibit a clear direction. They meander through life, never believing too strongly in anything – never deciding too firmly what they want to achieve – and consequently, never putting too much effort into anything in particular.

The great masters of architecture are individuals who possessed a clear and consistent view of the world, and their distinctive talent was to allow this outlook to drive every aspect of their creations. What we see in an architectural masterwork is a rare instance where a cogent view of the world is manifested in every detail of a building.

Ultimately, the reason a student of architecture needs to understand the meaning of buildings is so he can then understand the meaning of his own work, take control of that meaning, and shape it into a consistent and potent expression of his view of the world. It takes considerable study to understand the relationship between a view of the world and a building. How are your deeper beliefs manifested in the things you design? The answer is not self-evident. Understanding how to do this in one's own work requires first that one understand how this happens in general.

HISTORY/THEORY COURSE - Instructor: Prof. Kyle Talbott, 3 credits, U/G

This course provides a daily and weekly structure for the program. The content is delivered through lectures conveyed on-site, and this content is integral to the design studio course as well. There are three formats for the site visits that form the backbone of this course: 1) site visits in town, 2) regional day-trips and 3) extended excursions.

Site Visit in Town

While living in Paris and Florence we will see many of the local masterworks. A typical day will involve 1) meeting early at a designated location in the city, 2) visiting a building or museum and hearing an on-site lecture, and 3) free time to explore and sketch the site. Our meeting will then convene at lunchtime, and the rest of the day is free. This format will be used approximately three days per week.

Regional Day-Trip

While living in Paris and Florence we will also occasionally travel in the surrounding region, visiting sites of importance in nearby cities. A typical day-trip unfolds as follows: 1) meet early at the train station or bus pick-up location, 2) travel to the regional site, 3) see the site and hear an on-site lecture, 4) lunch on your own, 5) free time to explore the city and sketch in the afternoon, 6) meet at a designated time and place so we can return home together. This format will be used approximately once per week.

Extended Excursion

At four times during the program we will go on a multi-day trip to a destination further from our home-base. These destinations include Lyon/Ronchamp, London, Venice and Rome. Each trip will be about one week in duration, except for the Lyon/Ronchamp trip, which is a little shorter. The format for these trips consists of the following: 1) travel together to a city, 2) stay at a hotel as a group, 2) Meet early and see important sites together in the morning (including on-site lectures), with afternoons free to explore, and 3) have a day or two entirely free for individual exploration.

The history/theory course begins on the first day of regularly scheduled Milwaukee classes, and it meets every day during the first two weeks of the semester, before we depart for Paris. This is a crucial introductory period of the course, in which a conceptual framework will be established for the rest of the semester.

Site Visits and Participation

34% of your grade in this course is participation in group site visits and group discussions.

1. *Your attendance at all group events is mandatory.* This is essential to the educational purpose of the trip. Please work hard to keep your priorities in order. It is appropriate to enjoy yourself on the trip by participating in the local nightlife, for instance, but not to an extent that you miss the train the next morning, or go through the day like a zombie. You will not gain much from a site visit when in this state of mind.
2. *We will depart for each day's site visits at a set time and place.* In order to respect everyone's time, we will leave at the designated time each day regardless of whether

the entire group is present. If you are late, it will be extremely difficult for you to find the group, and you will likely be unable to participate in the events on that day. If you are not an "early riser" or if you are chronically late, work out a system to get yourself to each designated meeting place on time.

3. *Be prepared for on-site lectures.* The content of the course is delivered on-site in conjunction with each site visit. There is no conventional classroom meeting place. On some days the weather will be beautiful, on other days, not so much. We will conduct each site visit and lecture regardless of the weather conditions, so be prepared to participate in the process even when the conditions are not optimally comfortable.

Sketch Journal

33% of your grade in the history/theory course is the *Sketch Journal*. At the end of the semester, each student shall submit digital reproductions of his best 30 pages (see Final Documentation for more details).

1. *At least 15 of the pages document sites we visit as a group (in original drawings produced by the student from field observation).*
2. *The remaining pages document any sites visited by the student – group sites or independent travel sites. These drawings shall also be original drawings produced by the student from field observation.*
3. *A Page is defined as one full page in your sketchbook. Each submitted page must be a complete composition, incorporating the whole page. A page may be filled with a single image, or a collection of images.*
4. *Pages will be evaluated for representational content, page composition, and graphic quality.*
 - A. *Representational Content*
Pages should incorporate a variety of architectural representations, such as: orthographic views (plan, section, elevation), comprehensive three dimensional views such as axonometrics and isometrics, experiential views such as perspectives, and analytical diagrams.
 - B. *Page Composition*
Pages should incorporate: the layering of information, the framing of content, and the ordering of content with such devices as repetition, balance and alignment. Drawings should be related to other drawings. Students should explore figure/ground relationships. Explore the possibility of incorporating more than one type of drawing into a single page layout.
 - C. *Graphic Quality*
Pages should incorporate: good light/dark contrast, correct use of perspective, effective line weights, areas of emphasis/focus, effective use of line, shade and shadow, and effective use of the chosen medium (i.e., graphite, ink, colored wash, etc.).

Digital Photography

33% of your grade in the history/theory course is a compilation of original photography. At the end of the semester, each student shall submit a compendium of his best 40 digital photographs (see Final Documentation for more details).

1. *At least 25 of the photographs shall be of significant architectural content (not pictures of friends). These images should be artistically and thoughtfully composed regarding framing, point of view and lighting. They should make appropriate use of focus and color. They should be your best shots, suitable for inclusion in a photographic exhibition of work.*

2. Up to 15 of the photographs may document aspects of the “trip experience”, including activities you participated in and friends with which you associated. Additionally, you may include photographs of cultural events, locals, and interesting aspects of French and Italian culture. You may include no more than 2 “group photos” taken of the whole study abroad group.
3. The minimum number of photos is 40, however, you may submit up to 70 photos.
4. Each photo file shall be named in this format: “[student’s name]_[city of photo]_[description of photo].jpg”. So for example: “JohnDoe_Florence_FromTheDomeOfTheCathedral.jpg” or: “JaneSmith_Paris_JennyDanAndMeAtTheLouvre.jpg”.

DESIGN STUDIO - Instructor: Prof. Kyle Talbott, 6 credits, U/G

The design studio portion of the program provides an opportunity for more intense study of particular buildings, places and design ideas studied in the history/theory course. It is a project-based course that includes two analytical projects and two creative projects. The analytical projects have an open-ended duration; students manage the development of these projects individually, and can work on them throughout the semester. The creative projects have a set duration of one – two weeks each with an imposed deadline.

Studio in the context of study abroad unfolds very differently than in Milwaukee. Students will work primarily in their sketchbook, supplemented by other media, hand and digital, as desired. They will work nomadically, without studio space. Students also work without iterative critiques and pin-ups, but instead, through occasional seminar and individual discussion. There is much more individual freedom in the creative projects. They are intended to act as a medium of contemplation and self-reflection on one’s personal convictions. Through the creative projects you get a rare opportunity to confront the challenge of creating a meaningful design that expresses your view of the world.

Analysis Projects

Analysis projects allow a student to study a small number of architectural conditions in greater depth and detail, dissecting them, documenting them, and becoming intimately familiar with them in the process. Individual buildings and places studied in this way become the most fully known to a student, the most vividly remembered, and therefore, they often become the most influential in later design work. For this reason it is important to select buildings and places you find personally compelling. The analysis projects, rather than being a dry matter of disinterested documentation, should be approached in a personal, inquisitive way, which allows you to generate some of your most cherished memories of the trip.

50% of your grade in the studio course is analysis work. You shall produce two comparative analyses, each incorporating two buildings/places from the following categories: 1) **Piazza/Public Square**, 2) **Street**, 3) **Park**, 4) **Building**, or 5) **Building Interior**.

1. Each analysis shall compare or contrast two examples from the same category, for example, two streets, two parks, or two buildings. Since you only need to produce two analyses, you may select any two categories from those listed above. Each analysis you produce must be in a different category. So for example, you could do a street analysis and a park analysis, or a piazza analysis and a building analysis.
2. For each analysis, consider the buildings and places suggested on the provided list (See **List of Places**, below).
3. The format for each comparative analysis is a portfolio layout consisting of as many pages as needed (this will vary depending on the size and proportions of your page). You can approach it in different ways. You could, for example, create sketches and diagrams for the analysis in your sketch journal, producing each image as a discrete

drawing. Then scan the images and compile them into a complete portfolio layout using InDesign. Or, you could purchase some larger format media during the trip, such as 11 x 17 Bristol vellum, and develop the format for the analysis directly as you make the images and diagrams. In this case, the entire layout would be hand-drawn. Or, you could do preliminary drawings and diagrams in your sketch journal, and then use them as a basis for the production of final digital versions of the images. In this approach, the entire portfolio layout would be composed of digitally-produced images, rather than hand drawings. It is important to choose a production method before you depart for the trip. The method you choose will effect the equipment needed and the way you manage your time.

4. The analysis projects will be graded according to the categories previously identified for the Sketch Journal (Representational Content, Page Composition and Graphic Quality). Additionally, analysis projects will be evaluated as follows.
 - A. *Quality of Comparison*
First, choose a layout that allows important features of the buildings to be seen together easily and cross-compared. With a portfolio page format (small in size), you might have a tendency to encapsulate images. Resist this tendency and produce page compositions with interrelated drawings and diagrams. Second, each analysis project should emphasize what is shared between the two places (making them similar) or what is not shared (making them different). In other words, the presentation should make a visual argument emphasizing the kindred or opposed natures of the two places.
 - B. *Revealing Analysis*
First, capture (in drawings) the important features of each place. The **List of Issues** that follows gives you suggestions about what features might be important. The importance of each item on the list varies by site, of course, and according to your interests. Second, include diagrams. Diagrams should explain how the selected issues are present in each of the two places. Think creatively about the design of the diagrams. (Sometimes diagrams do not need to be separate drawings, for instance.)
5. Each analysis should show *three* or *four* significant points of similarity or difference in order to make a persuasive argument. This means for each analysis, you should pick three or four issues from the appropriate list below and build your analysis around these issues.
6. You should spend approximately 30 hours total on the analysis projects across the semester. That means about 15 hours each. Remember that you want to design the analysis to focus on issues important to you. In other words, try to use the analysis projects as a way to look closer at issues you are already thinking about, rather than as a separate, tacked-on exercise done merely to fulfill a course requirement. The goal of the analysis projects is to give you a lens through which to study something in greater depth and detail that is important to you.

List of Places

Piazzas (Florence)

Piazza del Duomo
Piazza della Signoria
Piazzale degli Uffizi
Piazza Santissima Annuziata
Piazza Santa Croce
Piazza Antinori
Piazza Lorenzo Ghiberti
Piazza San Felice
Piazza de Mozzi
Piazza Ognissanti

Places (Paris)

Place de la Concorde
Place Charles de Gaulle
Place Vendome
Place Dauphine
Place Georges Pompidou
Place des Vosges
Place de la Bastille
Place de Opera
Place de la Bourse
Place des Invalides

Streets (Florence)

Via Porta Rossa
Via de Tornabuoni
Via de Ginori
Via San Gallo
Via de Servi
Via Gino Capponi
Via Dante Alighieri
Borgo degli Albizzi
Via de Benci
Borgo Pinti
Via del Trebbio
Via della Vigna Nuova
Lungarno Corsini
Borgo Ognissanti
Borgo San Jacopo
Via de Guicciardini
Via Maggio
Via di Santo Spirito
Lungarno Guicciardini
Via de Serragli
Via de Bardi

Parks (Paris)

Parc de la Villette
Parc Citroen
Versailles (gardens)
Jardin des Tuileries
Jardin Luxembourg
Parc des Buttes Chaumont
Parc du Champ de Mars
Parc Monceau

Buildings (Florence)

Il Duomo
Santa Croce
San Miniato al Monte
Santa Maria Novella
Santo Spirito
San Lorenzo
Ponte Vecchio
Mercato Centrale
Museo Uffizi
Palazzo Davanzati
Palazzo Strozzi
Palazzo Medici
Palazzo Rucellai

Streets (Paris)

Ave des Champs-Elysees
Quai Anatole France
Rue Royale
Rue Dauphine
Rue Harpe
Rue du Four
Rue de Rivoli
Rue des Rosiers
Rue St Martin
Rue Montorgueil
Rue St Honore
Rue de Valois
Quai aux Fleurs
Quai du Marche Neuf
Rue de Buci
Bd St Germain
Passage Choiseul & Ste Anne
Passage Galeries Vivienne & Colbert
Passage Galerie Vero-Dodat
Passage Passage des Princes
Passage Jouffroy

Parks (Florence)

Boboli Gardens

Buildings (Paris)

Notre Dame
Chartes Cathedral
Tour Eiffel
Musee D'Orsay
Villa Savoye
Centre Pompidou
Foundation Cartier
Institut du Monde Arabe
La Tourette
Le Louvre
Versailles (palace)

List of Issues

Physical Properties of Piazzas, Streets and Parks

1. Elements of containment/boundary (or lack of)
2. Thick or layered edges
3. Procession to and through the space
4. Ordering devices (such as axes, grids, rhythms or alignments)
5. Relationship to other important places in the city
6. Experiential Focus or Foci (What draws people's attention? To where do they gravitate?)
7. Experiential Theme (What is the overriding experience produced by the place?)
8. Surface Treatment (ground and wall)
9. Views to and from the place
10. Significant thresholds/transitions
11. Locations and types of human activity
12. Other

Physical Properties of Buildings and Interiors

1. Part to whole relationship
 - A. Unified or Aggregate (i.e., one or many)?
 - B. Subdivided or continuous?
 - C. Blended or contrasted?
2. Inside to outside relationship
 - A. Detached or related?
 - B. Extended or compact?
 - C. Gradual or abrupt transition?
3. Reality or appearance
 - A. Authentic or illusionary/distorted?
 - B. Orthogonal or skewed?
 - C. Anthropomorphic or colossal?
4. Corporeal or immaterial
 - A. Massive (wall) or skeletal (frame)?
 - B. Horizontal or vertical?
 - C. Tactical or visual?
5. Planar or spatial
 - A. Deep or flat/shallow?
 - B. Straight or curvilinear?
 - C. Layered or recessional?
6. Fixed or indeterminate
 - A. Calm or agitated?
 - B. Exact or approximate?
 - C. Repetitious or rhythmic?
7. Other

Evidence of Meaning – Expression of Larger Architectural Themes

1. Change versus Stasis
2. Contemplation versus Action-in-the-World
3. Reason versus Skepticism
4. The Natural versus The Supernatural
5. The Natural versus The Subjective
6. Freedom versus Authoritarian Control
7. Freedom versus Determinism
8. Perfection versus Evolution (or: Serenity versus Tension/Struggle)
9. Chaos versus Order
10. Individuality versus Collectivity
11. Appearance versus Reality

Design Projects

The design projects are short-duration creative investigations that provide an opportunity for students to grapple with the wider questions of architectural meaning presented in the history/theory course. These projects are an opportunity for each student to reflect on his view of the world – that is, his wider beliefs about life – and to explore how these beliefs can inform his designs. The central goal of these projects is to make something meaningful, that is, something that deliberately expresses some aspect of a student's view of the world. This work provides an important opportunity to compare and contrast one's own design convictions to those of great architects of the past, and in so doing, clarify and strengthen one's convictions.

50% of your grade in design studio is creative design work. We will have two design charettes in which you are given a site, a program, and an objective. The time duration of each charette is one – two weeks each. The site, program and objective will be disclosed at the start of each charette. They will be produced using your sketch journal and/or any other desired media.

INDEPENDENT STUDY - Instructor: Prof. Kyle Talbott, 3 credits, U/G

Each student is required to submit an independent study proposal no later than September 10, 2008. The proposal must be approved by the instructor prior to our departure for Paris. More details about the format and content of the proposal will be distributed during the Spring preparation semester.

FINAL DOCUMENTATION

You are required to submit Final Documentation of your work in all courses: History/Theory, Design Studio and Independent Study no later than December 20, 2008 at 4:00PM. This Documentation shall consist of high resolution digital scans of all work turned in for a grade, and any relevant additional information. This Documentation shall include quality photographic and scanned images suitable for use in a professional architectural publication. Each student shall submit Final Documentation as follows: 1) One copy of a CD-ROM(s)/DVD containing all images in TIFF or JPEG file format at sufficient resolution for high quality printing, and 2) any vector page layout or drawing files (InDesign) and any digital model files (MicroStation/Rhino) used to produce images. The CD(s)/DVD will not be returned to the student. If this Documentation is not received by the deadline, the instructor may submit a grade of "Incomplete" for the student until Final Documentation is received.