

Lincoln, February, 2009

Vertical Studio Proposal

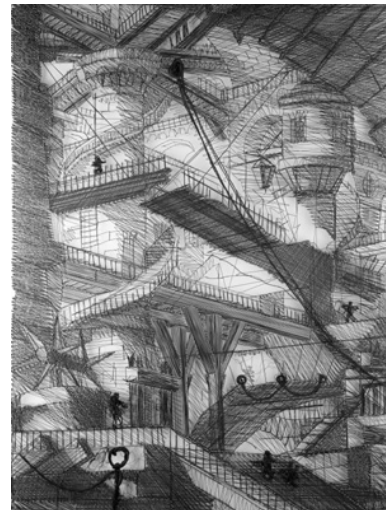
Spring 2010

Studio title:

correct - tecture

Instructor:

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Imaginary Prisons: G.B. Piranesi and Vik Muniz



www.oscoconstructiongroup.com/prisonstech H. Weese / Chicago

Proposed studio:

2009 - 2010
ARCH graduate vertical studio

Studio topic:

This studio will participate in a critical typological investigation. Assuming that the term “typology” is defined as specific human activity that defines shape, which then directly affects form, the question is: how can an activity, which by the conventions of society is not considered “normal,” be enclosed, and thus form itself?

Whereas society defines different levels of none-normative human behavior (which it decides to treat architecturally-specific in order to eventually adjust to the norm, for example mentally and physically disabilities), criminal activities and events are considered the most extreme, and are therefore both equivalently and radically manifested through their architectural embodiment.

Description and Purpose:

The studio will explore the architectural typology of “correctional facilities” as being of immense societal relevance.

First and most important, in no other typology does a society define and globally communicate its humanitarian value system, for example, the values expressed by the recent closing of the Guantanamo Bay facility by the US government.

The effort of building and maintaining correctional facilities is a tremendous budgetary burden for a society. In the western hemisphere, this means that society “bails out” and delegates the role of the building, ownership, and responsibility as the client to the private development world. With the nature of private development being profit driven, the power of society to secure the “bettering / pedagogical functionalism” of the times is questionable.

We as architects, trained in both poetic/humanitarian and pragmatic skills, should stay involved in this typological realm, like we have in the past, as proven by many valid examples.

The studio will take advantage of the typological expertise in the area, and involve the local architectural community of Clark Enersen Partnership as the local execution architects of the new prison on O-Street in Lincoln.

The studio will approach the typological investigation in a comprehensive way, from the conceptual / macro to the materialized micro. It will therefore include a strong physical component of material investigation. The vehicle for exploration will be concrete, which is the predominant “monomaterial” in this building type. The designer’s role is to take advantage of “academic freedom,” and to push the comprehensive potential of this material to its full potential: in terms of economic, architectural, and environmental performance. The studio will update itself with the most cutting edge technologies, such as insulating “Ultra Light Concrete,” “Transparent Concrete” (such as Litracon), “High Stress Concrete” etc. Materiality should therefore be explored in a “post-fossil” manner in at least one of the three design projects, leaving the other two up for possible further typological innovation. Investigations in traditional Lincoln concrete expertise, through consultation of Davis Design (as the local collaboration architect of the NBC/Wells Fargo bank and a lab like / mock up component with Reimers Kaufman as the local manufacturer) will equip us with the necessary craft skills to become concrete experts.

The instructor will bring in both his building expertise with concrete, and his typological experience with correctional types [in need].

Studio structure:

The syllabus is organized systematically.

The studio will begin with a typological and a material research phase, and then progress into three projects of facilities in different “cultural and environmental sites.”

The first site, being in Lincoln, will focus on strong cooperation with the local concrete manufacturing company, as well as the typological architectural community. There will be a potential to participate in the ACSA concrete competition.

Evaluation criteria:

The studio is intended to be an applied research laboratory to enhance the metamorphic understanding of materiality in an oscillating process between the acts of “thinking” and “making.”

Due to this, a priority lies on the development and documentation of this research-based process, and the steady / constant individual student contribution to this collective work.

The proactive and self responsible collaboration with the manufacturing world is a crucial and fundamental goal of the studio.

This engagement, in addition to on-site presentations and critiques with verbal feedback at periodic times during the semester will be the basis for grading.

NAAB criteria:

All NAAB criteria relevant to the studio will be explored, especially 1, 2,3,4,5,13,15,16, 36 and others as deemed relevant (see current NAAB criteria in the Architecture department office).