

[3] Exercise 4 : Application

Self-directed study, analysis, and introspection of own design process and methods

Issued: Mon. 10 October
Interviews Mon. 29 and Wed. 31 October
Interim Mon. 12 and Wed. 14 November
Review (jury): Mon. 3 December (10:00am-12:30pm)
Upload: Mon. 10 December by 10:00am

Modality: Individual work

Grading: 40% of course grade

1. Challenge

Arguably, the most important thing you will take out of your school education will be a toolbox of methods and processes for responding to architectural challenges. Yet, it is very common for students to have little conscious awareness of what such skill set and knowledge base are and, much more troubling, as to how they pertain to their own way of conducting design inquiry.

It is self evident that each individual has their own way to approach problems, certain ways of applying design techniques and strategies, special strengths and weaknesses in making decisions, an affinity to some methods as well as an aversion to others, a personal set of communication tactics and media preferences, a particular pattern in their time and resource management, an unique schedule of actions, an attitude and way to collaborate or go about research, etc. You may say that all these characteristics combined constitute a decision-making style that may tend to lean towards the rational, controlling, articulate, and precise or perhaps towards other directions.

The obvious purpose of this project is to allow you to examine and then define (as much as you can) your own personal way of conducting design decision making. This would not only permit you to improve your skills for being a better architect but, more importantly, turn the design process on itself: it would become a magic mirror on which you may begin to know yourself!

2. Procedure

Step 1: Selection (Due: Mon. 5 November)

You will critically but quickly revisit your past design record(s) in search for three or more projects that allows you to peek into your own design method and process.

Eligibility criteria and considerations: All design studio projects are eligible, including in progress work. However, you should be ready to articulate the

reasons for your choice(s): What is your intention? Do you have enough of a physical/digital record to reconstruct and critique the design process of this or that project? Why is this or that project relevant? How does a project work in relation to another one? How do they allow you to cast light in your decision-making method? What roles do feeling-intellect, intuition-knowledge, planning-improvisation, and ego-object play during your design process? Can you see one of the methods that you just finished studying embedded in it/them? If so, which one(s), and how close or apart are you from the 'norm'? Can you see your own way of adapting a given method (by a faculty)? Is there a pattern in the way you deal with the research phase, the white canvas phase, the design development phase, etc.? How did your attitude unfold? Was it stressful, when, how? Was there teamwork and if so, how did you operate in it? Consider that the ultimate product will be a reflective visualization of your decision-making process and methodology and NOT the design quality of the chosen project(s). You are interested in learning who you are as a designer and not impressing our class with your design quality output.

Be aware why we are asking you to select several projects and not just one. Having only one project would be a bigger burden as it would challenge your ability to dissect it for all it is worth. On the other hand, 3 projects would allow you to compare, contrast, find patterns, etc. In all cases, your final choice(s) will be done in consultation with the instructor.

Step II: Development/Interim Review (Due: Mon. 12 & Wed 14 November)

Collect all the information available about the selected project(s). Proceed to organize them visually in ways that allow you to graphically observe the evolution of the work. Remember that paths not chosen or poor decision are as important as those chosen or successful because they reveal your way of thinking through the complexity of design. After objectifying the design process/method, proceed to step back and reflect and analyze your decision-making process. Take notes and include text and diagrams as necessary to complete the critical process. Make the necessary adjustments to communicate the whole project from beginning to end (include final communication phase). Please, refer back to the lectures on design process as a guide to organize the different stages in your own cases.

Step III: Refinement & Criticism & Communication (Due: Mon. 26 or Wed. 28 Nov.)

After the interim review and its critique, proceed to refine your critical inquiry further paying particular attention to how your insights are communicated graphically. It is very important that you visually express your reflective discernment so others could see clearly. This graphic clarity shows your own mental clarity. Be prepared to have a juried review that includes a 5 minute oral presentation.

3. Media and Format

- (1) *Graphic media, amount, and format are all up to you.* However, we are providing some examples of successful formats used in the past (see attached).
- (2) *Document* your work and upload the files to the class GOOGLE DRIVE site using a coherent labeling system.

(2) *Written summary of your inquiry* – in addition to what you include in your boards (500 word max). In this summary, please include:

- a Venn diagram describing how the three projects/methodologies connect
- Consider your evolutionary path in terms of how you have developed as a designer
- 5 concrete learning outcomes that you are taking away for thesis
- If possible, state your future semester/ideal methodology (this may not be one we studied in the third assignment)

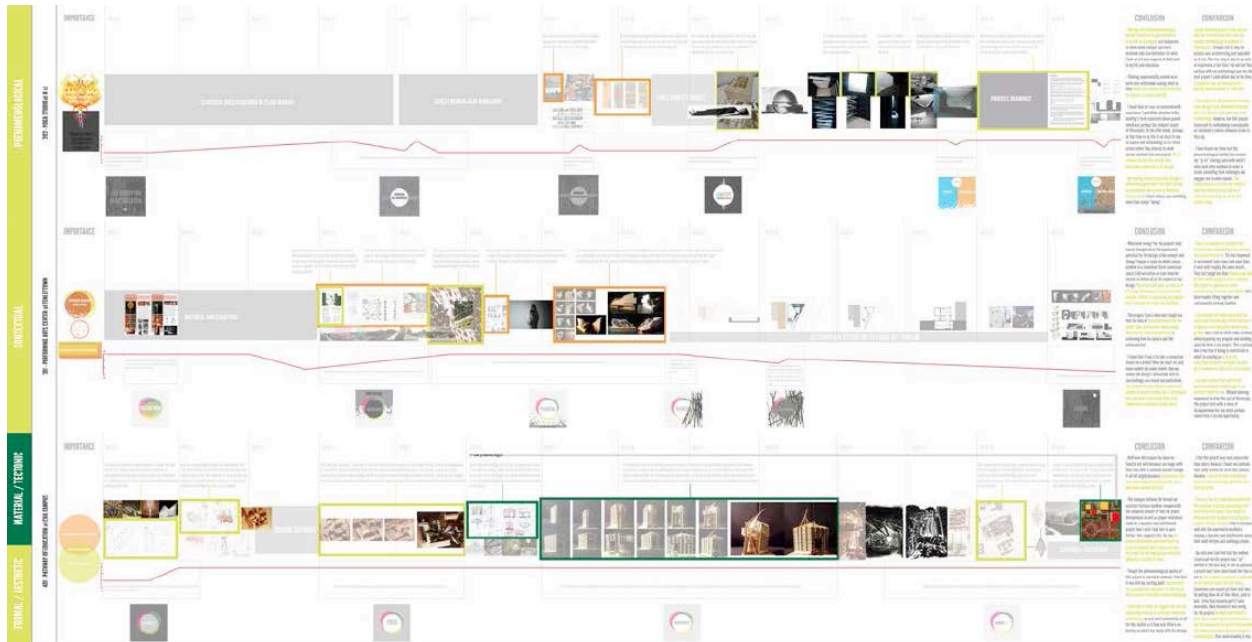
Feel free to include this information in your oral/graphic presentation in a way that you consider fit.

4. Evaluation

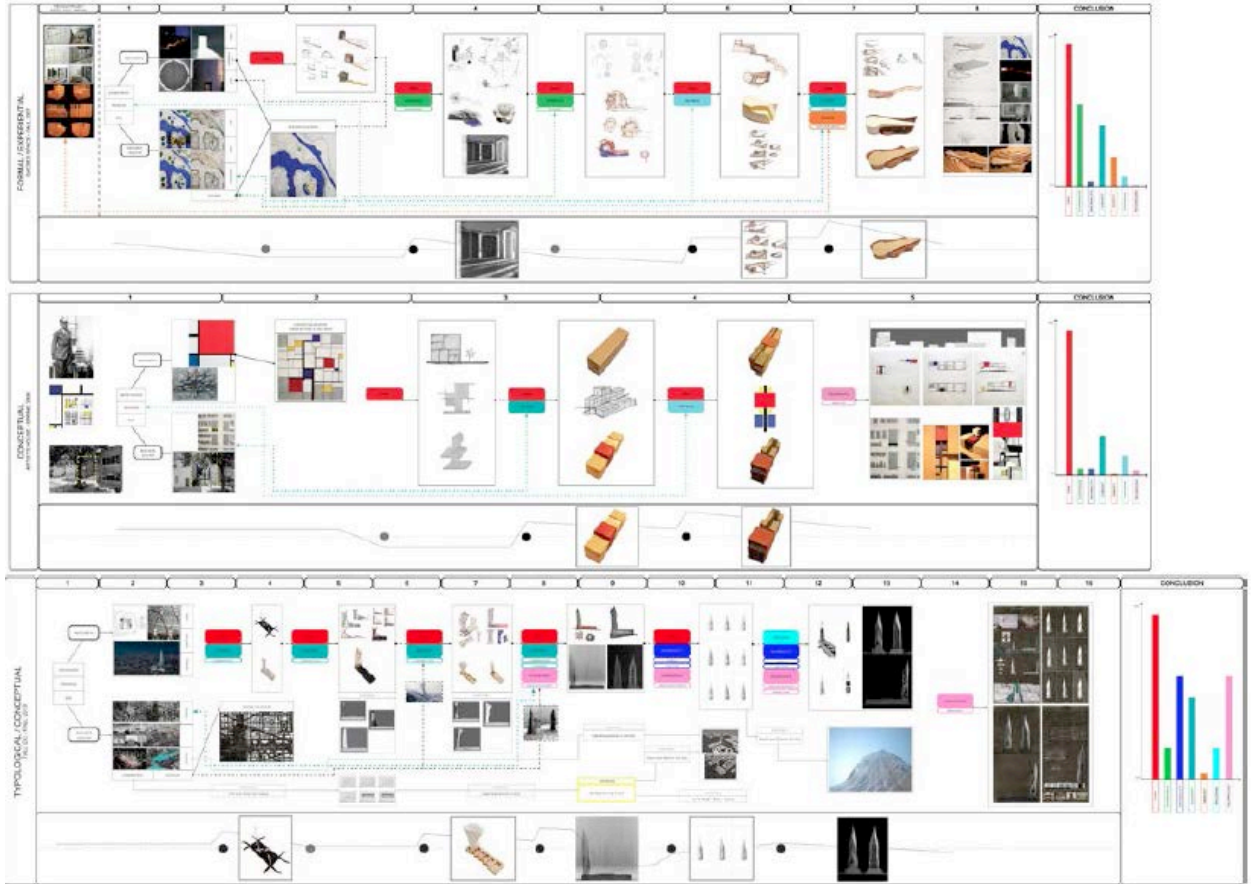
Evaluation using the following criteria:

- *Appropriateness of selected project(s);*
- *Depth, breadth, and clarity of the reflective process;*
- *Organizational discipline, eloquence, honesty, openness, and completeness of the critical process;*
- *Critical understanding of design as a process of inquiry (style, methods, attitude, action, perception, self, etc.);*
- *Consistency in the analytical study in relation to the reality and power of the conclusions arrived;*
- *Utilization of the insights/knowledge collected throughout the semester;*
- *Communication craftsmanship and design as further enlightening the reflective process.*

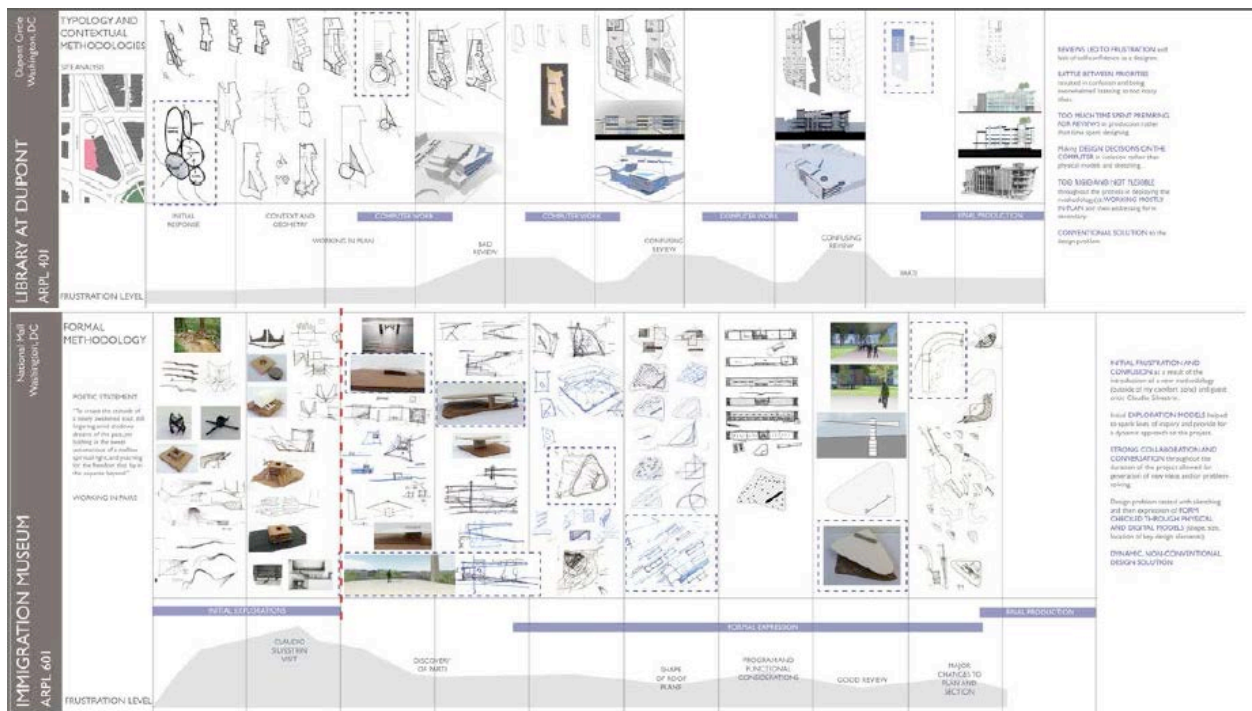
4. Samples



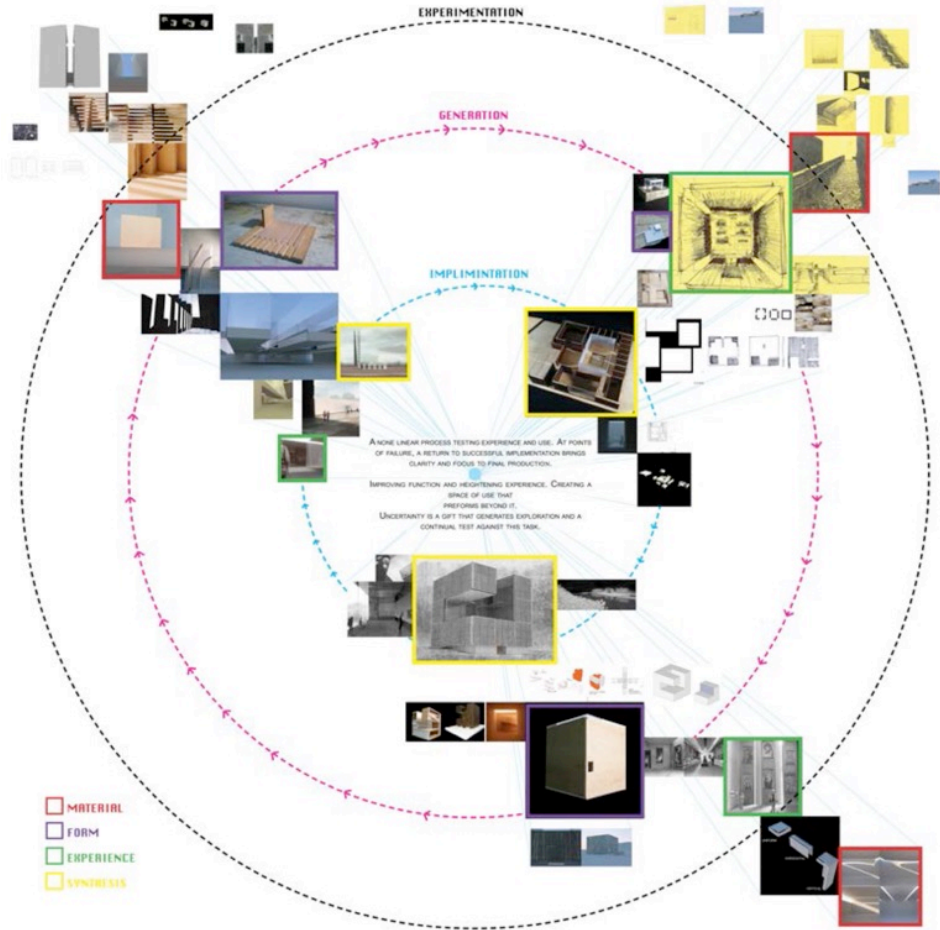
Student: John Allen



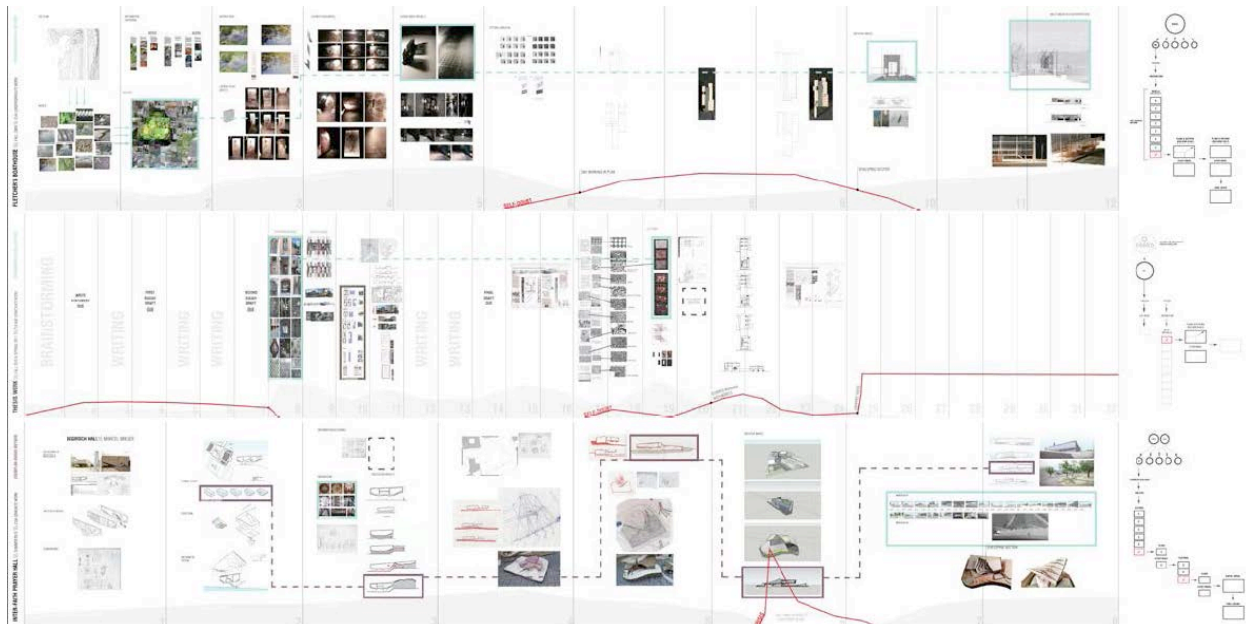
Student: Mani Kordestani



Student Lillian Heryak (only 2 projects shown)



Student: Chris Motley



Student Sarah Rinehart