

Sacred Space & Cultural Studies

studio

Bermudez / Campo Baeza

VAS

PHASE ONE STUDIO PREPARATION

STARTS Monday 27 August
INTERIM R Friday 7 September @ 2:15 PM
DUE Monday 10 September at 2:15PM (MILLER)

“Architectura sine idea vana Architectura est”
Alberto Campo Baeza **Principia Architectonica** (2012)

CONTEXT In the SSSC concentration, we are particularly interested in how architecture may help human beings enter in a contemplative state conducive to sensing, if not conversing with, the divine. The centuries old tradition of monastic buildings in the West is probably the greatest (cultural and spiritual) story of how we have responded to such immemorial call. And while certain things never change, today’s zeitgeist presents us with challenges never confronted before, particularly in regards with our relation with the transcendental.

The purpose of your first assignment is to get familiar with the monastic typology as well as with the fundamental tenets of Voluntary Simplicity and the work and philosophy of 2012 Walton Critic, architect **Alberto Campo Baeza**. The ultimate goal, however, is to end these first two weeks with many ideas for a small convent as embodiments of the architectural ineffable in the Washington DC area.

TEAM WORK This phase demands students to operate in groups of 2 individuals for specific tasks and teams of 4 (two groups of 2 people) for general tasks.

READINGS The following readings will provide you with the reflective context to contemplate your precedent and project studies. These readings are to be done by each group of 2 students.

First week:

The Built Idea, Alberto Campo Baeza (Philadelphia, PA: Oscar Riera Ojeda Publishers, 2011)

Minimum, John Pawson (London, England: Phaidon Press Ld 1998)

Second week:

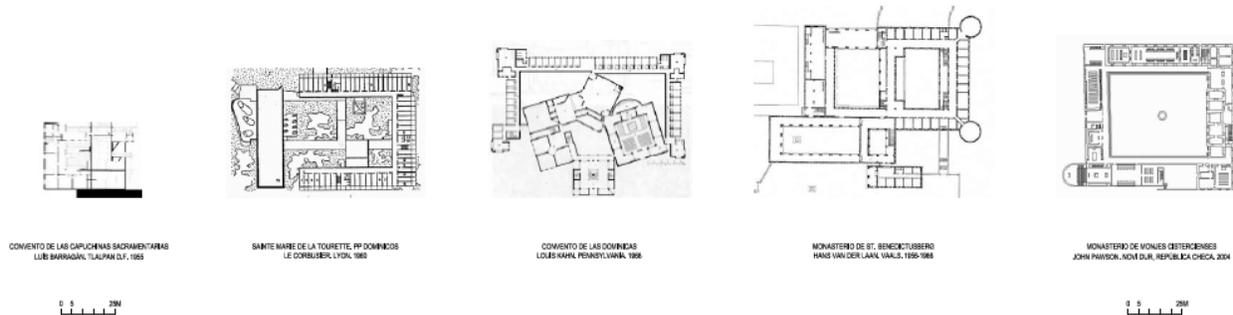
Principia Architectonica, Alberto Campo Baeza (Mairea, 2012)

Voluntary Simplicity, Duane Elgin (New York: William Morrow, 1993)

ANALYSIS

Teams of 4 students will collect the information and then study the general conditions characterizing four of the following seven precedents (assigned by lottery):

1. Convento de las Capuchinas by Luis Barragán, Mexico (1955)
2. La Tourette by Le Corbusier, France (1960)
3. Cistercian Charterhouse of Galluzzo (Carthusian Monastery in the Ema Valley close to Florence), Italy (1341 +)
4. St Benedict's Abbey at Vaals by Dom Hans Van Der Laan, The Netherlands (1956-1986)
5. Dominican Sister Convent by Louis Kahn, Pennsylvania, USA (1968)
6. Monastery of Nový Dvůr by John Pawson, The Czech Republic (2004)
7. Mont Saint Michel Cistercian Convent in France (8th century +)



KEY: A=1, 2, 3, and 4. B= 4, 5, 6 and 7. C= 2, 3, 5 and 6

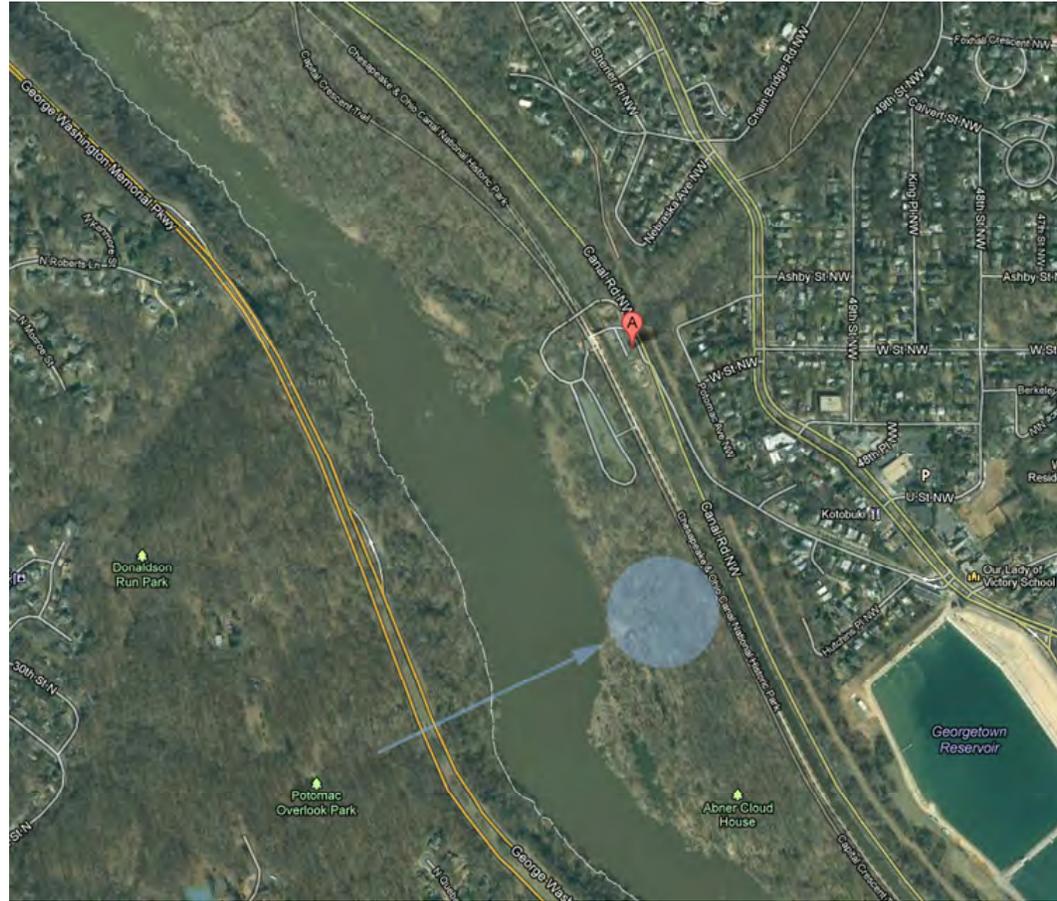
Product: use your ordinary representation toolbox for conducting the precedents analysis. Your work should be formatted to fit in 11”x17” sheets. While digital technology is a logical choice, students are encouraged to employ hand-diagrams over transparency paper to study the given buildings. Consider the short time given, the theoretical underpinnings, the convent site and context to strategize your analytical approach. Remember that the effort of each team of 4 students ends at the general information/study level.

SITE

The location is between Canal Road and the Potomac River (i.e., Maryland side), adjacent to the C&O Canal National Park (<http://www.nps.gov/choh/>) and next to the Fletcher Boathouse (<http://www.fletchersboathouse.com/>). You can google the location as well as directions of how to get there using this address: 4940 Canal Road, N.W.Washington, DC 20007.

There is a **site visit** scheduled for Friday 30 August during studio time. More details will be provided in class.

Product: Topographic, phenomenological, natural, urban, and other data should be obtained and put together (quickly) using various media (photography, diagrams, quick gesture models) with the express goal of arriving at TWO INTERPRETATIONS of the site conditions. The *general documentation will be done by two teams* working together (i.e., 4 students) whereas *the interpretive part by one team* working alone. Please, use 11”x17” sheets.



SKETCHES Students will immediately start to use freehand sketches to consider, study, and speculate possible solutions to the architectural problem at hand: ***a 5,000 sq.ft. monastery in a wooded area next to the Potomac River***. The expected process is to become rapidly familiar with

- (a) the precedents (i.e., study them);
- (b) the site (i.e., visit and study it);
- (c) the theoretical milieu (i.e., readings, lectures, conversations);

and use drawings (orthographic, experiential, conceptual, etc.) to brainstorm possible (general, particular, ideal, tectonic, etc.) design solutions to engage your problem. This means that you must look at the precedents, site, and ideological context of the studio with the eyes of a designer committed to address this particular project.

FINAL Each team will have at least 3 freehand sketches (minimum size 8.5"x11") per precedent, per reading, and per site interpretation. This means that by Friday 7 September, each group will have a minimum of THIRTY (30) drawings. This would be in addition to the precedent analysis and site documentation/interpretation sheets (which you will use to the back up your speculative/study drawings.

GRADE 5 % of the course grade