



# Liquid Pedagogy

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## **Liquid Pedagogy**

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Architecture  
Harvard University Graduate School of Design, by

**Aryan Khalighy**

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
[Master of Architecture]

**May 13, 2021**

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Aryan Khalighy



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Mohsen Mostafavi

# Liquid Pedagogy

Towards a contemporary, de-centralized, contingent, and  
inclusive school of architecture

**Aryan Khalighy**

Independent Design Thesis • ADV-9301  
Harvard GSD • Spring 2021

“The work of an intellectual is not to form the political will of others; it is, through the analyses he does in his own domains, to bring assumptions and things taken for granted again into question, to shake habits, ways of acting and thinking, to dispel the familiarity of the accepted, to take the measure of rules and institutions and, starting from that re-problemitisation (where he plays his specific role as intellectual) to take part in the formation of a political will (where he has his role to play as citizen).”

- Michel Foucault, Power

“The notion of school began with a man under a tree, who did not know he was a teacher, sharing his realization with a few, who did not know they were students.”

-Louis Kahn

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# Liquid Pedagogy

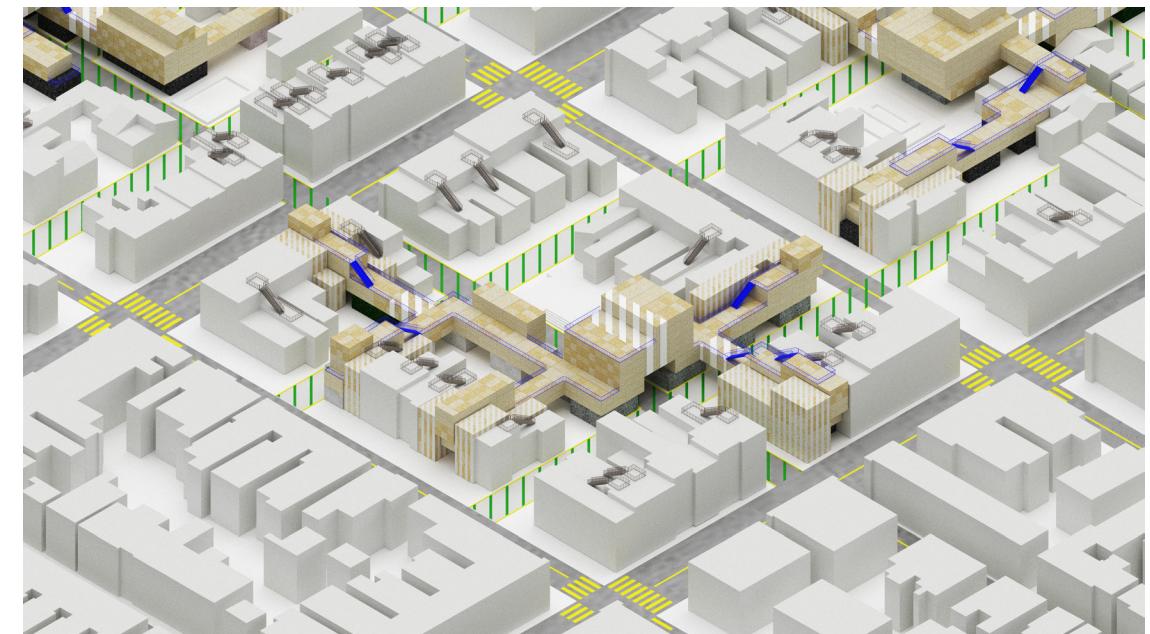
“Thesis Abstract”

Liquid Pedagogy is a critical reflection on pedagogy and the discipline of architecture which historically is shaped by but also has shaped the learning spaces in architecture schools. The thesis is materialized in a design project: a new graduate school of architecture in a dense urban fabric in Baltimore, Maryland.

Zygmunt Bauman in “Liquid modernity” characterizes the transformations of today’s global societies from hard modernity to liquid modernity, where we believe there is no certainty and stability in the world, and everything is in constant flux. Consequently, the discipline of architecture is in turmoil. On the one hand, the sheer plurality of design trends fueled by technological developments has contributed to what we call today “disciplinary dilemma.” On the other hand, design pedagogy as an institutional affair is resistant to rapid transformations, and it has lost control. In such circumstances, and in order to gain their agency back, architecture schools need to de-institutionalize pedagogy.

The thesis proposes a decentralized curriculum reflected in an open and adaptive architecture. As a critique of the contemporary model of architecture schools, the school becomes more amalgamated and connected to the city, offering public resources to Baltimore residents as a part of its deinstitutionalization.

Liquid Pedagogy is exploring a new model that sponsors the transformation of social relations, where the environment is constantly re-invented through community engagement and the potentials of architectural imagination.



Design Project,  
Axonometric View

# Liquid Modernity

“Theory”

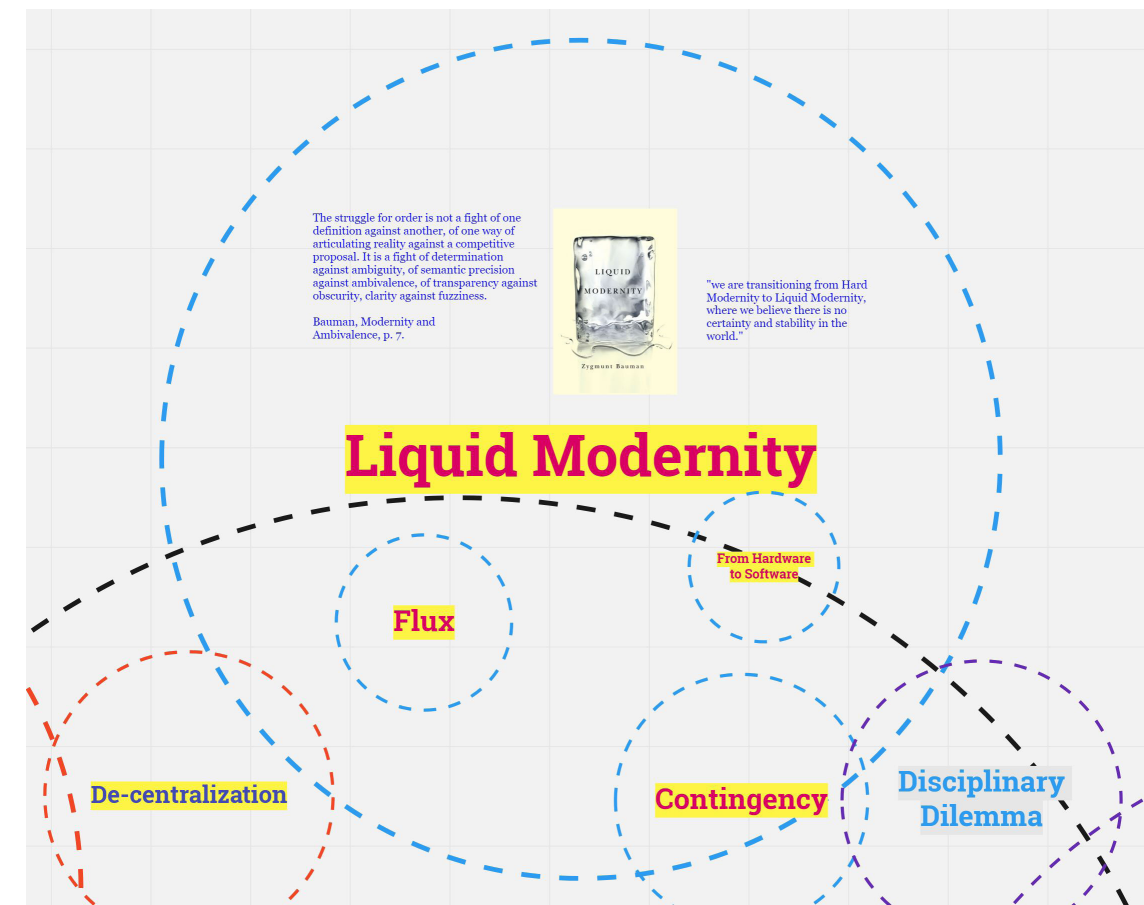
Bauman in his book, liquid modernity, examines how we have moved away from a ‘heavy’ and ‘solid’, hardware-focused modernity to a ‘light’ and ‘liquid’, software-based modernity.

This passage, he argues, has brought profound change to all aspects of the human condition. The new remoteness and un-reachability of global systemic structure coupled with the unstructured and under-defined, fluid state of the immediate setting of life-politics and human togetherness, call for the rethinking of the concepts and cognitive frames used to narrate human individual experience and their joint history.

Bauman selects five of the basic concepts which have served to make sense of shared human life - emancipation, individuality, time/space, work and community - and traces their successive incarnations and changes of meaning. Liquid Modernity concludes the analysis undertaken in Bauman’s two previous books Globalization: The Human Consequences and In Search of Politics. Together these volumes form a brilliant analysis of the changing conditions of social and political life.<sup>[1]</sup>

In other words, we are transitioning from Hard Modernity to Liquid Modernity, where we believe there is no certainty and stability in the world. From nature (think about climate change and global pandemic) to the block-chain and cryptocurrencies. Economy is decentralized, everything is in constant flux, and no one is in control.

1- “Liquid Modernity”, Polity Books, <https://politybooks.com/>



Idea Board Diagram

# Re-thinking Institutions

“Theory”

Architecture’s discipline is in turmoil. The sheer plurality and the rapid transformation of contemporary design sponsored by digital tools and social media have contributed to what we call today a “disciplinary dilemma.”

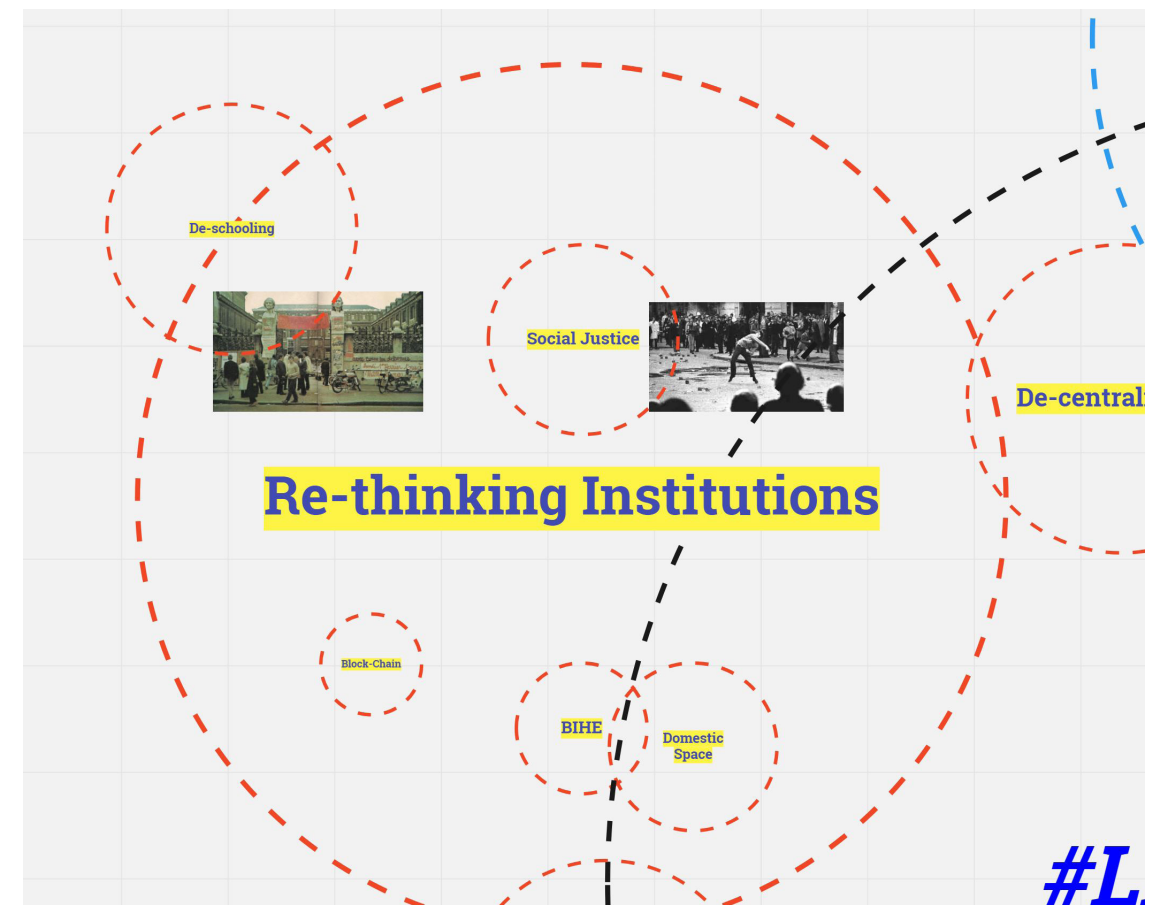
Perhaps this means the design discipline is decentralized, and the traditional institutions of architectural education have lost control. “Pedagogy is fundamentally an institutional affair, defined as much by faculty, as by the structures of accreditation and academic administration.” [2]

Global issues such as environmental emergencies, public health crises, social justice, and racial equity concerns have caused a public distrust in institutions.

So, how—in an era of unprecedented divides—can we improve trust between people and institutions? This thesis is testing a strategy to find out.

Reflecting on the relation of institutions and the pedagogy took me back to my background experience when I studied architecture at the Baha’i Institute for Higher Education, a unique university in Iran, which has been portrayed as an underground university.

2- Berry, Rob, Dietz, Andrea, “Are we having fun yet?”, L.A. Forum for Architecture and Urban Design, Re: Learning, Summer 2018





# An Underground University

“Premise”

The Baha’i Institute for Higher Education (BIHE), is a unique open university in Iran, which has been portrayed as an underground university, established by the Baha’i Community of Iran in 1987 to meet the educational needs of young people who have been systematically denied access to higher education by the Iranian government. <sup>[1]</sup>

The university does not have a physical campus. In lack of proper space for meetings, classes, studios, and laboratories, they are held at the homes of students and other members of the community.

The hosts voluntarily offer their homes for in-person classes despite the threats and risks involved. Many security measures are taken to avoid attracting attention. Despite all the endeavor for security, these locations have been raided numerous times by the government. Each time they have been reinstated at a different location after some time has passed.

BIHE has a decentralized and fluid structure and uses a hybrid approach of offline and online delivery methods which has enabled it to grow under unusual sociopolitical circumstances.



Graduates from the Baha'i Institute of Higher Education (Photo courtesy of Education is Not a Crime) <http://www.notacrime.me/resistance/>

1- The Baha'i Institute Of Higher Education: A Creative And Peaceful Response To Religious Persecution In Iran. (2012). Www.bic.org, Www.bic.org , 2012.

## A Brief History of BIHE:

After failed attempts to persuade the government of Iran to admit qualified Bahá'í students to universities, the Bahá'í community of Iran rallied its limited resources to make higher education available to its youth and young adults. In a collective effort, a small core of professors, lecturers and researchers who had been discharged from their jobs because of membership in the religion worked on developing an informal network of higher education. These efforts culminated in the establishment of the BIHE- initially known as the “scientific program” in 1987.<sup>[1]</sup>

Gradually, the program expanded and took on a more formal character. By the mid-1990s, it had turned into an extensive institute which became to be known as the “open university” or Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE).<sup>[1]</sup> With the advent of the internet and increasing assistance from collaborators abroad, BIHE's curricular standards were bolstered and a wider range of majors and concentrations was introduced.

Despite tremendous logistical constraints and the Iranian authorities' attempts to shut BIHE down through raids, arrests and imprisonment of key faculty and staff, the university has been producing impressive results, with many of its students continuing to Master and Doctoral programs in universities in other countries.

<sup>[2]</sup> Today, through the work of approximately 955 faculty and administrative staff, BIHE offers 18 undergraduate, 15 graduate and 5 associate degree programs in sciences, engineering, business and management, humanities, and social sciences. <sup>[3]</sup>

BIHE “an elaborate act of communal self-preservation.” <sup>[4]</sup> The BIHE has received praise as one of the few examples of community-sponsored higher education service in a closed society,<sup>[5]</sup> a non-violent, adaptive and constructive form of resistance against oppression<sup>[6]</sup> and an example of empowerment through education.<sup>[7]</sup> It is believed that the BIHE can offer many lessons to organizations and activists tackling similar types of exclusion in closed societies across the world. The effectiveness of BIHE to deliver curricula has been studied, finding it to be a “social space” that enables Bahá'í students and staff to remain academically and socially engaged; to bond and share with peers and colleagues equally suffering from religious persecution; and to live up to principles such as learning, community service, and

resistance in times of socio-political marginalization<sup>[8]</sup> as well surviving because of international support, community sacrifices, and individual resiliency. <sup>[9]</sup>

Although BIHE degrees are not certified by the Iranian regime, since 1998 more than 80 universities in the North America, Europe, Australia and Asia have accepted BIHE qualifications and have admitted its graduates directly into programs of study at the masters and doctoral levels.

8- Saeedi, Nika (2006). “Resisting Educational Exclusion: The Bahá'í Institute of Higher Education”. Social Sciences & Methodology of Social Sciences Papers. Mendeley Ltd. Retrieved February 8, 2012.  
9- Ghadirian, Nayyer (2009). An exploratory study examining the factors associated with the survival of underground education in an oppressive environment (Thesis). Concordia University. p. 86. Retrieved February 8, 2012

## The New York Times

# Iran Closes 'University' Run Covertly By the Bahais



By **Ethan Bronner**

Oct. 29, 1998

One day late last month, Iranian security officials fanned out across their country and raided some 500 homes and several office buildings owned or rented by members of the Bahai faith, confiscating material and arresting dozens of people.

This was hardly the first time that Bahais, Iran's largest religious minority, felt the sting of attention from the Shiite Muslim Government. As in the past, the White House condemned the action.

Image:  
Article about BIHE in New York Times, October 1998

1- Yazdani, Mina (2015). “Higher Education under the Islamic Republic: the Case of the Baha'is”. Journal of Educational Controversy. 10 (1): 222–257. ISSN 1935-7699.

2- Sohrab Ahmari (2012). “The Epic, Secret Struggle to Educate Iran's Bahais” (PDF). The Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved December 24, 2016

3- BIHE.org. Retrieved December 24, 2016.

4- Bronner, Ethan (October 29, 1998). “Iran Closes 'University' Run Covertly By the Bahais”. The New York Times. Retrieved December 9, 2011

5- Affolter, Friedrich W. (2007). “Resisting Educational Exclusion: The Bahai Institute of Higher Education in Iran”. International Journal of Diaspora,

6- Karlberg, Michael (2010). “Constructive Resilience: The Baha'í Response to Oppression”. Peace & Change. 35 (2): 222–257. doi:10.1111/j.1468-

7- “Knowledge as Resistance: the Baha'í Institute for Higher Education” (PDF). Small Media. 2013. Retrieved December 24, 2016.

# Cross-Programming

“Program”

Having the experience of studying at the BIHE during my undergraduate education, my thesis project investigates the possibility of architectural responses to a similar unusual socio-political circumstance, but in a different context, and as an adaptive and constructive form of resistance against the social marginalization of a minority community.

Since this institution is housed in the existing residential buildings, there is a need for cross-programming and organizational rethinking, where there is an institutional interior inside a residential type. Here the disciplinary question is how these two distinct programs coexist within the same skin?

To respond to this unusual socio-political circumstance, BIHE has a decentralized and fluid-structure and uses a hybrid approach of offline and online delivery methods, which has enabled it to sustain and grow.

I summoned my memories of our learning spaces by drawing plans of mid-size apartments in Tehran, where we used domestic space for education. A dining table used to host group desk-crits, and sometimes it became a shared desk for 12-hour beaux-arts esquisse assignments.

Or when a living room with a whiteboard became a classroom for the history and theory lectures, or a family room turned into a small pin-up lounge.

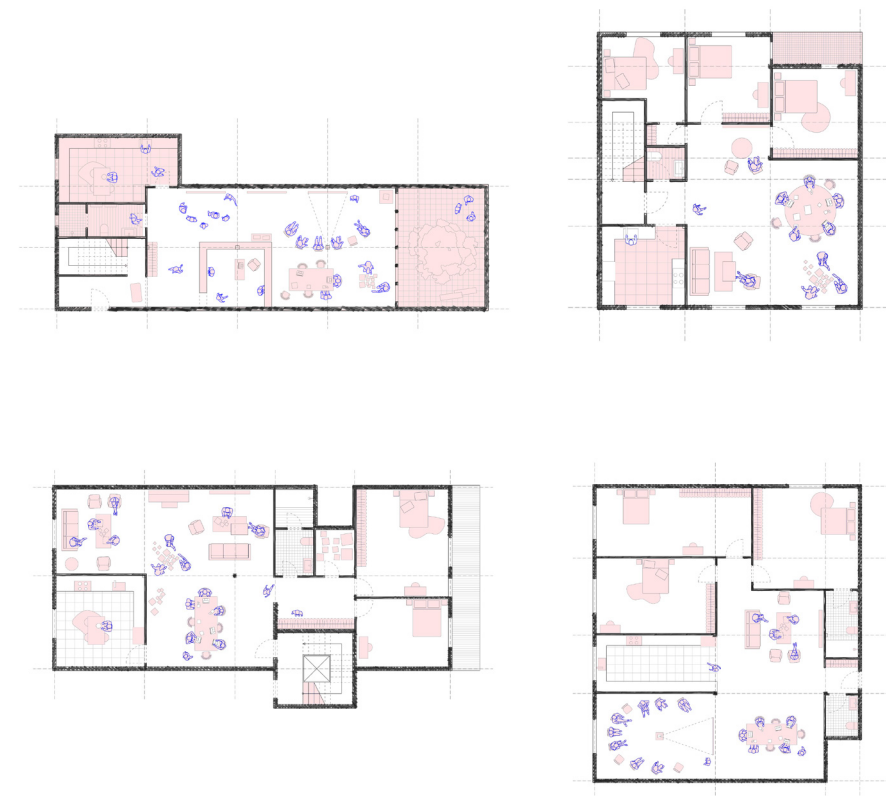


Image:  
BIHE Architecture - Education in Domestic Spaces

## Urban Engagement and Pedagogy

We used a series of interior spaces located in different parts of Tehran; however, our school was not limited to the interiors.

Field trips to different cities to perform a roleve, which in beaux-arts tradition is an act of surveying significant historical buildings was an important part of our education. In other words, the boundary of our campus was as large as the Persian architectural heritage.

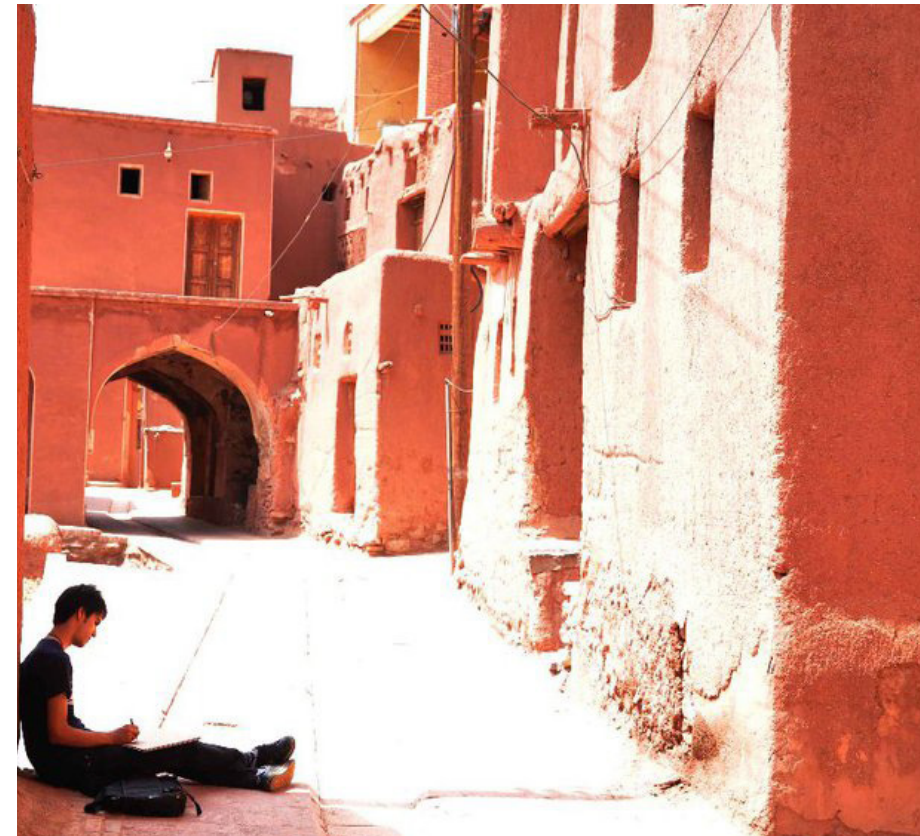


Image:  
BIHE Architecture students  
performing "Roleve", Abyaneh,  
Kashan, Iran

# Re-purposed Architecture School

“Genealogy”

These are some examples of “school of architecture” that have occupied an existing building that were designed for a different purpose and program.

AA School of Architecture in London is occupying a series of previously residential apartment buildings in Bedford Sq. As the school gradually expanded they connected the interiors, while the exterior remains neutral and doesn’t express the internal continuity of the space.

The other example is the Pratt institute, which despite its original institutional purpose has been re-purposed, expanded, and connected several times during its history.

SCI-Arc is another renown architecture school which is occupying a gigantic former industrial Freight Depot building and despite the conversion it has kept some of the industrial expression of the original building.

Finally, MIT’s department of architecture has announced plans to relocate to a famous historical building in Cambridge MA, the metropolitan storage warehouse.

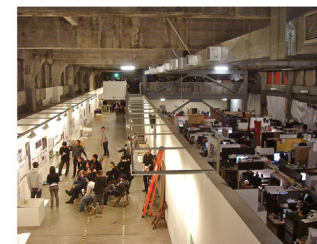


**AA School of Architecture**  
Former Program: Residential  
Bedford Sq, London  
1917



**Pratt Institute**  
Former Program: Institutional (1868)  
Conversion: 2005

**SCI Arc**  
Former Program: Santa Fe Freight Depot  
1907  
Conversion: 2000

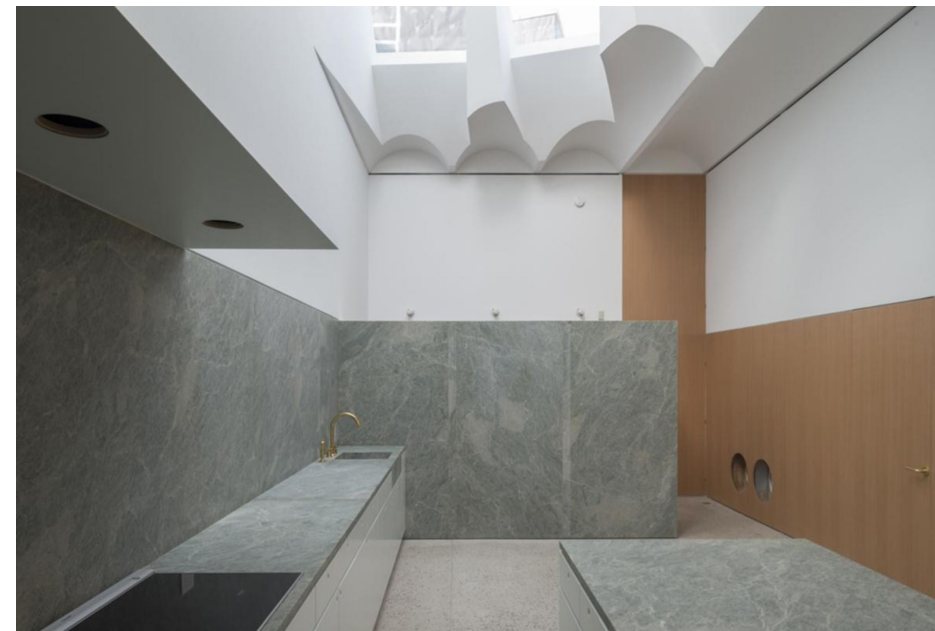
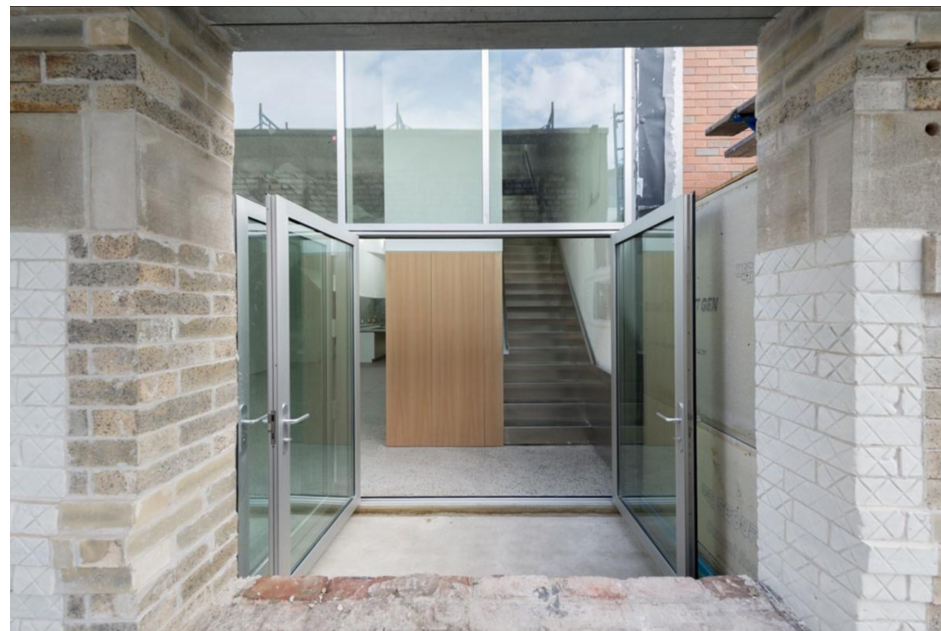
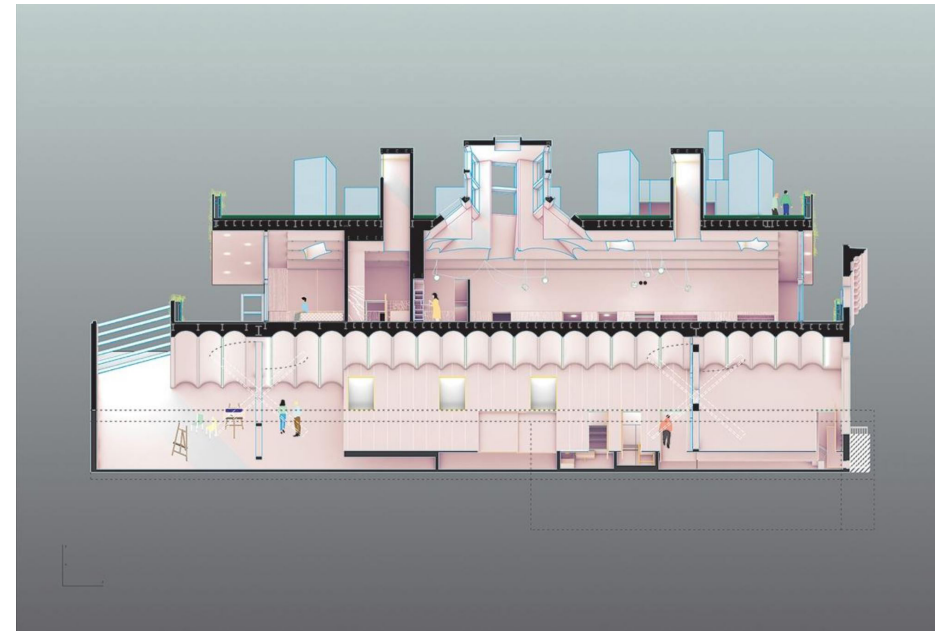


**MIT (SA+P)**  
Former: Metropolitan Storage Warehouse (1895)  
Conversion: Ongoing



Case study: MOS, Mixed Use 2, Studio and Apartment

This is the picture of a project by MOS, called mixed use 2.0, where they are asked to integrate an artist studio with a residential apartment and they have double-coded the spaces, using a hybrid set of institutional and residential materials.



## Source study: Notes on the Adaptive Re-use of Program

McMorrough in “Notes on the adaptive Re-Use of Program” is regarding the notion of “program” and its agency in architecture in a historical context and as a metaphorical physical structure that has to deal with an adaptive re-use process.

The author argues the notion of program in between social meaning and form and provides examples from a wide range of attitudes towards architecture: from the avant-garde anti-program architects to the architects who used the program, as a point of departure, to produce diagrams.

PRAXIS 6

McMorrough: Notes on the Adaptive Re-use of Program 103

# Notes on the Adaptive Re-use of Program

## John McMorrough

“From the antique (a world of form) to the program (a local fragment of a social pattern): this suggests a swing in the architect’s psychological orientation almost too violent to be creditable. —John Summerson, “The Case for a Theory of Modern Architecture” (1957)

You begin with a program. It is the first thing you are given to start a project in school and the thing you wait on from a client in practice. Program gives license to action: to realize and to organize. In all its definitions the agency of program is implied, from radio or television programming, to program as a series of social services, to program as the coded instructions that enable a machine to function. For architecture, the program is the “brief,” the designation of that which is to be designed, and the tabulation of quantities constituting the project, the descriptive capacity of which ranges from the terse “build me a house” to the expansive multivolume specifications of a complex institution. In this sense program initiates the project’s beginning (in time) and initial identity (in character). However, there is a downside to the agency of program: it defines, but it also limits. This limitation is registered not only in the nominalism of the brief—house, museum, hospital—but also, within the very action, program implies to arrange, and at times, in excess. Consider, for example, the difference between a program of music and programmatic music, one is an arrangement of pieces, the other an over-arrangement of parts. Program is therefore, constitution and over-proscription; it alternates between an evocation of arrangement and a surplus of such arrangements.

Source:  
McMorrough, John. “Notes on the Adaptive Re-Use of Program.” PRAXIS: Journal of Writing + Building, no. 8 (2006): 102–110.

PRAXIS 6

McMorrough: Notes on the Adaptive Re-use of Program 105

If program initiates the individual architectural project, what is the influence of program on the project of architecture? If we take program not as a generic designation of use, but as a specific concept within architecture’s development, a useful framework is John Summerson’s 1957 “The Case for a Theory of Modern Architecture,” in which he distinguished program as the novel innovation of modernism. After rejecting a series of plausible but insufficient coherencies to explain the emergence of modern architecture, such as geometry and biological metaphors, he came to the conclusion that such architecture is based not on a figurative idea but on a social one, and therein established program as that which was truly distinct in the modern. Drawing on the proliferation of arrangements and ambitions which characterized the period, Summerson concluded: “It is only in the last century or so that program has ceased to be evaluated merely quantitatively and has come to be

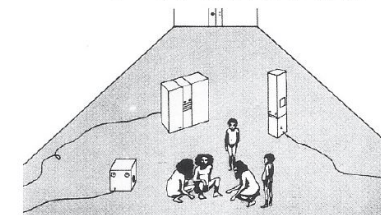
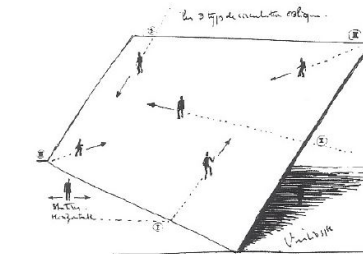
evaluated qualitatively. This to do with the fact that program has become more complex, more challenging, and therefore more susceptible to qualitative generalizations and evaluations.”<sup>1</sup> This complexity, it should be stressed, is not an individual instance of intricate form or arrangement, and more one of an increasingly dense network of social, urban, and institutional configurations.<sup>2</sup> What this means for the project of architecture is quite particular; namely, that modern architecture is based on a nonformal principle, and insofar as the embodiment is nonformal, modernism is “missing an architectural language,” and furthermore, Summerson posits “that it is quite possible that the missing language will remain missing.” In this sense program provides definition, not only at the level of building, but also at the level of the discourse of modern architecture.<sup>3</sup> Program, and with it modern architecture, is uncodable, resistant to specific correspondences to form, and it is not unlikely, Summerson concludes, that it will continue as such. Although Summerson later drops this position in favor of more traditional definitions, the argument here offers an intriguing premise, that program is the model of coherence and the underpinning referent for the development of architecture in the last century.



So then let us set aside for the moment those factors that seem to have more credibility in the definition of architecture’s disciplinary competencies, such as space, form, geometry or construction, and accept program as the primary instigator of the project of architecture, not as a stable edifice but one constantly undergoing a kind of adaptive re-use. Already an architectural and programmatic term, adaptive re-use describes the alteration of a given structure from one use to accommodate another for which it was not originally designed, such as the rehabilitation of the industrial loft to residential purposes or conversion of the warehouse to the museum. Program here should be understood as a conceptual structure, inhabited and renovated by numerous architectures and their attendant ideologies. What follows is a set of notes on what a history of the adaptive re-uses of program might entail: how the notion of program’s instrumentality is used and re-used, affirmed and rejected; through a series of containment strategies by which architecture delineates itself—how the promise and absence of a programmatic core asserted itself as motivator of architectural development throughout the twentieth century.

### The Function of Program

“Form Follows Function” is clearly the best known equation of use and accommodation. That the program, labeled “function,” was an important consideration in the formulations of modern architecture is clear, even if the actual commitment to the concept is not always an actual concern of the period,<sup>4</sup> and while it is virtually axiomatic that program/function influences the organization of building, the attempts to render that relation explicit have for the most part been mixed. In searching the archives of modern architecture, one could scarcely do better to illustrate the correspondence between function and its formal evidence than Melnikov’s Rusakov Club of 1927. As the rake of the auditorium penetrates the primary enclosing volume of the building envelope, one sees the irrepressibility of the programmatic figure. In such a clear-cut relationship is the dual embodiment of program, in which the integration of programmatic source is directly and legibly made manifest on the form of the building. Though other examples of such



# Secret Spaces in the History

“Genealogy”

Looking at the prohibition spaces throughout the history, I am going to study the categories of urban buildings that their exterior style is decoupled from their interior functions.

There are a wide range of examples from underground institutions in Soviet Union to the prohibition bars in the U.S.

In such circumstances the architecture has to be invisible, while at the same time the spaces need to covertly advertise what they are. Hence, in terms of the urban signification, I am going to find solutions for when an exterior sign is not possible, how a subtler form of signification can come into play. Or how it can be double coded as both residential and institutional.



Interior of an unidentified tavern, circa 1912, during the saloon era in Moorhead. Bars flourished in Moorhead from 1890 to 1915, because North Dakota banned alcohol, and during Prohibition from 1915 to 1937. Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County photo



## History of Secret School:

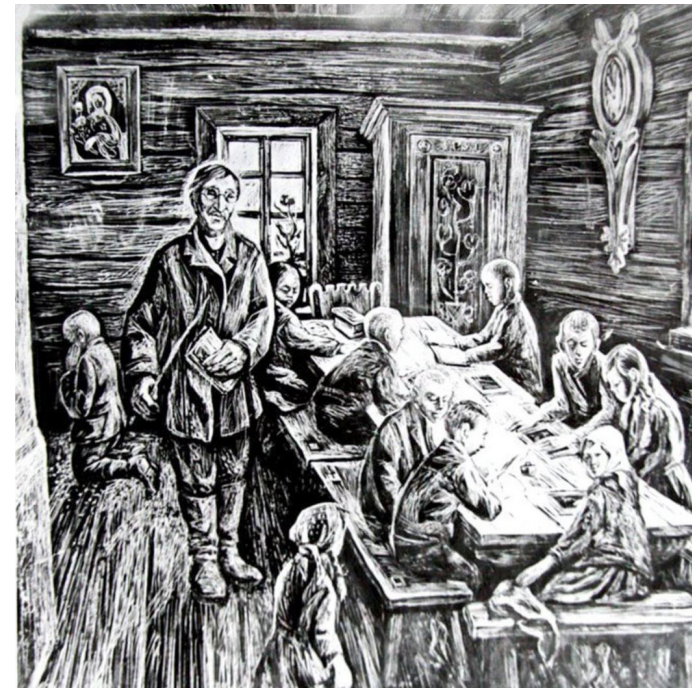
In Greek history, a *krifó scholió* (κρυφό σχολειό or κρυφό σχολείο, lit. 'secret school') was a supposed underground school for teaching the Greek language and Christian doctrine, provided by the Greek Orthodox Church under Ottoman rule in Greece between the 15th and 19th centuries.<sup>[1]</sup> Many historians agree that there is no evidence that such schools ever existed.<sup>[2]</sup> Other historians accept that secret schools only existed during periods of intense Islamization,<sup>[3]</sup> while other see it as a possible "myth"<sup>[4]</sup> and others believe that the *Krifo Scholio* was a reality.<sup>[5]</sup> Professor of philology Alkes Angelou (1917–2001), in one of his last publications on the subject, finds that the *krifó scholió* persisted as a national myth.<sup>[1]</sup> Other Greek scholars criticize Angelou's work as politically motivated and biased.<sup>[6]</sup>



- 1- Alkis Angelou, *Κρυφό Σχολείο: το χρονικό ενός μύθου* (Secret school: the chronicle of a myth), Athens: Estia, 1997. Angelou's work was first published in 1977.
- 2- Christos G. Patrinelis: "Η διδασκαλία της γλώσσας στα σχολεία της Τουρκοκρατίας" ("Language [i.e. Greek] teaching in schools of the Turkish period"). In: M. Z. Koidakis (ed.), *Ιστορία της Ελληνικής Γλώσσας* (History of the Greek Language) Athens: Elliniko Logotechniko kai Istoriko Archeio. 216-217.
- 3- Veremis Thanos, interview, "Sky" TV Channel, Greece, Feb. 28, 2011, in Greek. [1]
- 4- Meselidis Stylianos, Teachers, History Wars and Teaching History Grade 6 in Greece, in Joseph Zajda, *Globalization, Ideology and Education Policy Reforms*, Springer, 2010, p. 47. Quotation marks as in the source.
- 5- Diamantis Apostolos, "The meaning of Krifo Scholio in the Turcocracy era" (Η έννοια του Κρυφού Σχολείου στην περίοδο της Τουρκοκρατίας), *Journal "Neos Hermes ho Logios"* (Νέος Ερμής ο Λόγιος), 4 (2012), pp. 143-146. In Greek language.
- 6- a) Apostolos Diamantis (2012), "The meaning of the Secret School during Turcocratia", *Neos Hermes ho Logios*, v. 4, p 148, footn. 37. In Greek language. b) Chronopoulos B. Nikolaos, "The truth about Secret School", Athens, 2002, pp 58, 71. In Greek language

Image:  
Nikolaos Gyzis, *Kryfo Scholio* - oil on canvas

According to certain sources, secret schools for Albanians operated in late 19th century by Albanian-speaking communities and Bektashi priests or nationalists under Ottoman rule.<sup>[1]</sup> "Slaptoji Mokykla" (Secret school) - is an unofficial educational institution in Lithuania in 1864 - 1904 . Secret schools were developed in response to the educational policy of the Russian Empire, which after 1863. The uprising sought to teach only in Russian and thus bring the Lithuanian population closer to the Russian state and distract from Polish influence. The parish schools that had been operating until then were closed, they had to be replaced by public schools, whose teachers had to be Orthodox.<sup>[2]</sup>



- 1- Clayer, Natalie (1995). "Bektachisme et nationalisme albanais". In Popovic, Alexandre; Veinstein, Gilles (eds.). *Bektachiyya: Études sur l'ordre mystique des Bektachis et les groupes relevant de Hadji Bektach*. Istanbul: Isis. p. 281.
- 2- [https://smp2014is.ugdome.lt/mo/12kl/IS\\_DE\\_37/teorine\\_medziaga\\_3\\_3.html](https://smp2014is.ugdome.lt/mo/12kl/IS_DE_37/teorine_medziaga_3_3.html)

Image:  
Illustration of Slaptoji Mokykla, <https://www.infokupiskis.lt/edukacija/id-165/>

Secret schooling was organized in Jewish Ghettos during the Nazi regime and the German occupation in Europe.

During the Taliban rule in various parts of Afghanistan (late 20th, early 21st c.), secret schools operated, mostly for women and girls. [1]

In the 1930s and 1940s, the authoritarian nationalistic regime of Brazil took anti-immigrant measures, especially against the Japanese. Japanese and other foreign schools, languages and printed material were restricted, and a compulsory assimilation program was instituted. Japanese schools became illegal in 1938. During that period, Japanese immigrants established secret schools and a newspaper in Japanese was printed. [2]

Secret Teaching Organization (Polish: Tajna Organizacja Nauczycielska, TON also translated as the Secret Teaching Society or Clandestine Teaching Organization) was an underground Polish educational organization created in 1939 after the German invasion of Poland to provide underground education in occupied Poland. [3]



1- Afghan girls risk their lives to go to secret school. The Guardian, Sep. 30, 2006. Angelou's work was first published in 1977.

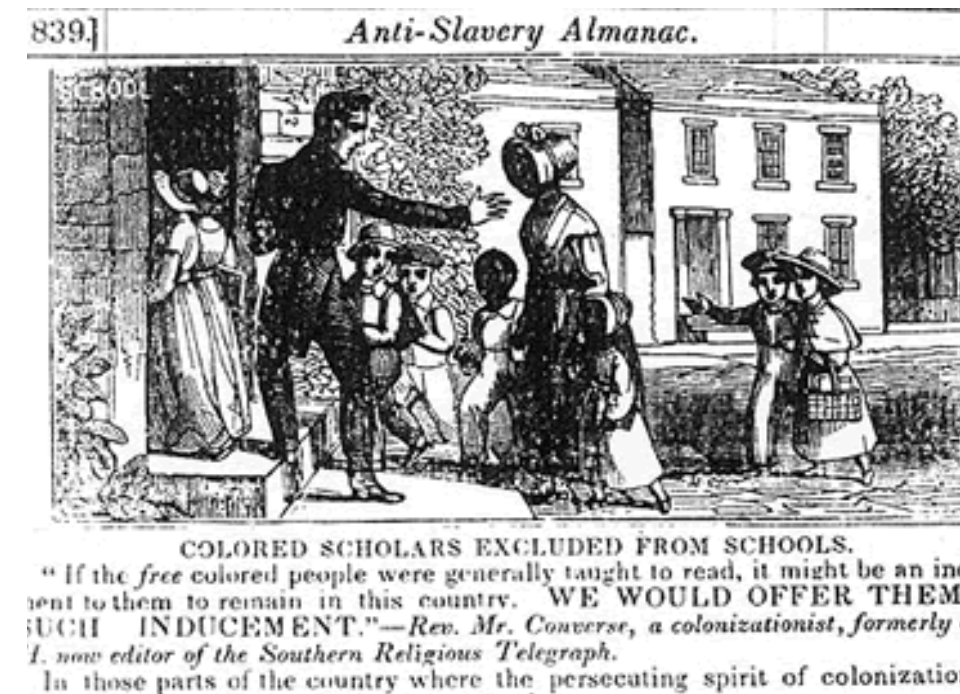
2- Daniela de Carvalho, Migrants and Identity in Japan and Brazil: The Nikkeijin. Routledge, 2003. Chapter "From 1930 to 1954".

3- Josef Krauski, Education as Resistance: The Polish Experience of Schooling During the War, in Roy Lowe, Education and the Second World War: studies in schooling and social change, Falmer Press, 1992, ISBN 0-7507-0054-8, [1], M1 Google Print, p.128-138

Image:  
[http://www.sww.w.szu.pl/index.php?id=polska\\_szkolnictwo\\_podziemne](http://www.sww.w.szu.pl/index.php?id=polska_szkolnictwo_podziemne)

During the era of slavery in the United States, the education of African Americans, enslaved and free, was often discouraged, except for religious instruction, and eventually made illegal in many of the Southern states.

The United States is unique in that it is the only country known to have prohibited the education of slaves. Nonetheless, both free and enslaved African Americans continued to learn to read and write as a result of the sometimes clandestine efforts of African Americans themselves, as well as schools and informal education that operated during this period. In addition, slaves used storytelling, music, and crafts to pass along cultural traditions and other information. [1]



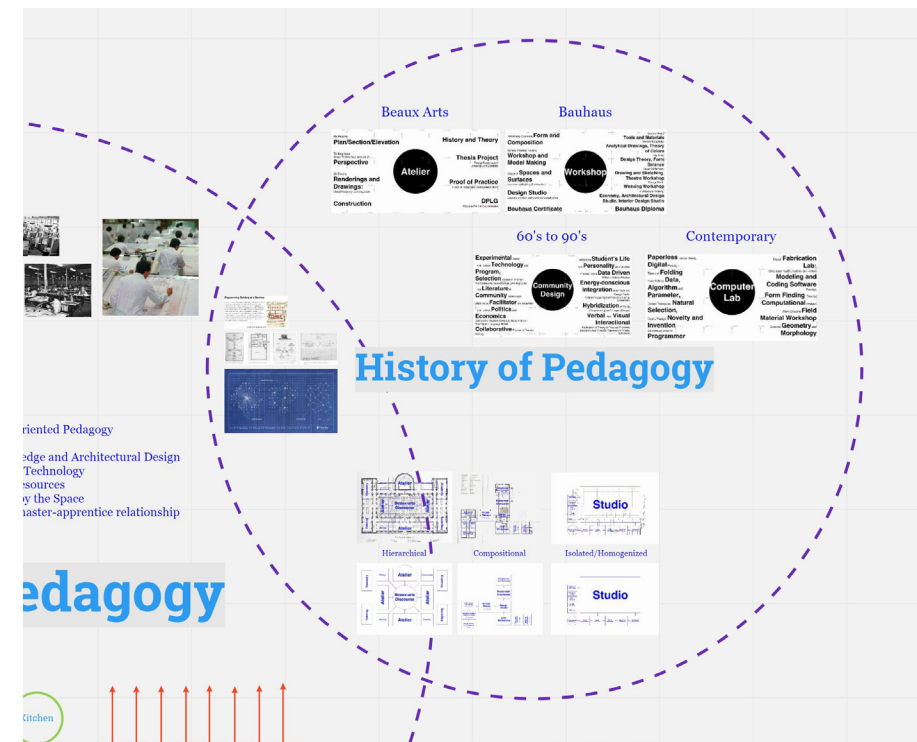
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Image:  
Black Students excluded

# History of Design Pedagogy

“Content”

In order to find a possible reciprocal relationship between the architecture of design school and the pedagogical ideologies, in this section I studied a number of important episodes in the history of architectural education.



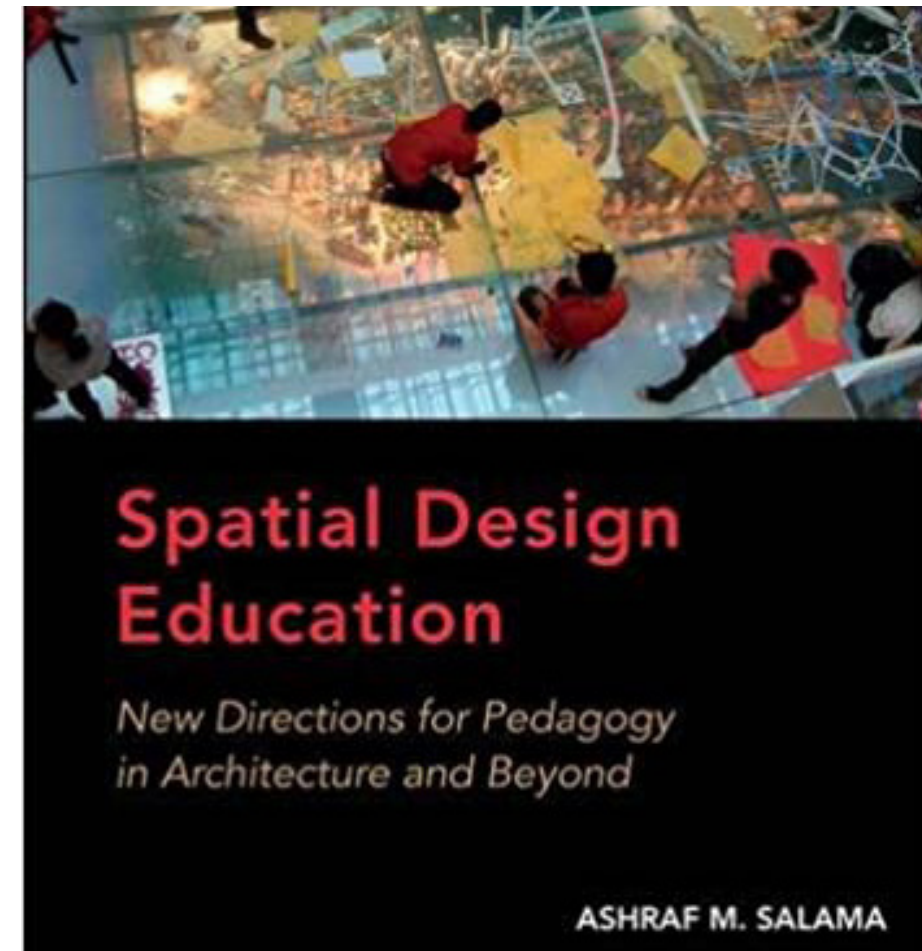
Idea Board Diagram

# History of Design Pedagogy

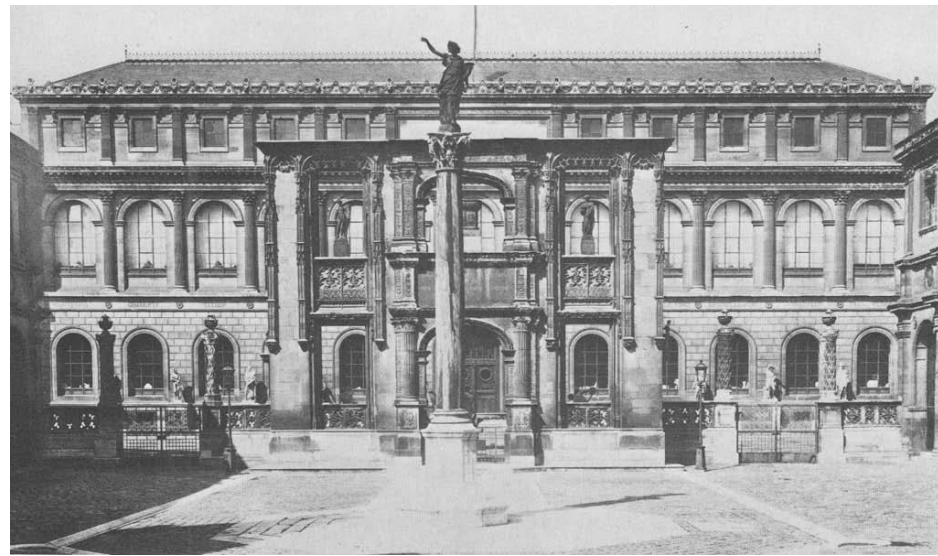
“Content”

Design education in architecture and allied disciplines is the cornerstone of design professions that contribute to shaping the built environment of the future. In this book, design education is dealt with as a paradigm whose evolutionary processes, underpinning theories, contents, methods, tools, are questioned and critically examined. It features a comprehensive discussion on design education with a focus on the design studio as the backbone of that education and the main forum for creative exploration and interaction, and for knowledge acquisition, assimilation, and reproduction. Through international and regional surveys, the striking qualities of design pedagogy, contemporary professional challenges and the associated sociocultural and environmental needs are identified. Innovative teaching practices in lecture-based and introductory design courses are identified and characterized including inquiry-based, active and experiential learning. <sup>[1]</sup>

1- Salama, Ashraf. "Spatial Design Education: New Directions for Pedagogy in Architecture and Beyond", Routledge, 2017.

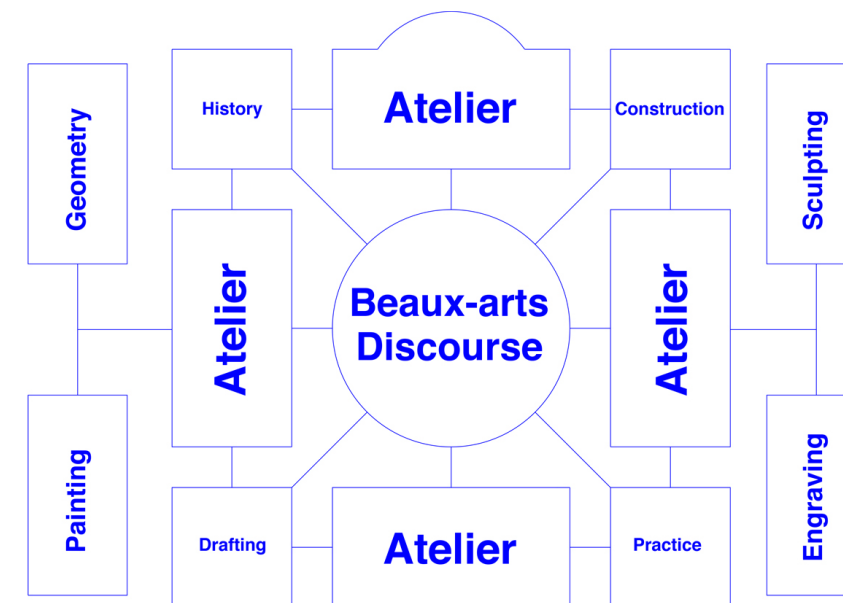
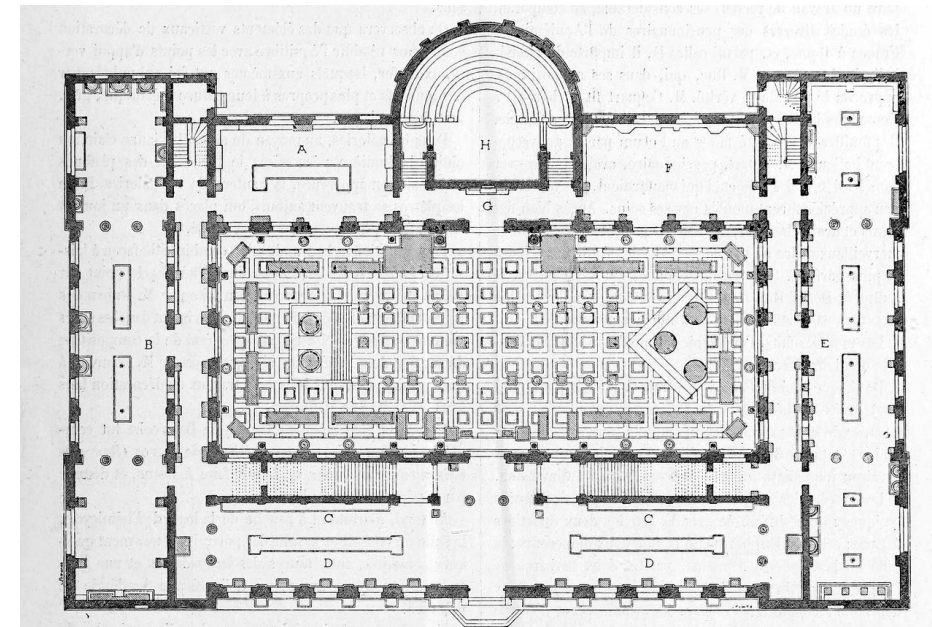


Ecole de Beaux Arts:



First, I looked at Ecole des beaux-arts, established in France at the turn of 17th century and sponsored by the French government. The curriculum was based on a studio system, or Atelier, as a home base for the duration of the student's life at the school. The plan of the main building of Ecole is a strong centripetal and hierarchical parti. This is not a programmatic but a systemic diagram of the beaux-arts curriculum, where the students used to participate in preliminary art classes before joining an atelier. Each Atelier was directed in a hierarchical organization from the master architect to the group of assistants, while ideologically they were all controlled by the dominant Beaux-arts discourse of the time. It may be fair to state that the hierarchical top-down beaux-art curriculum was reflected and supported by the classical typology of beaux-arts buildings.

Top: Beaux-arts main building



Top: Beaux-arts main building plan

Bottom: Beaux-arts pedagogy Curricular Diagram

Bauhaus:



Looking at Bauhaus and their second building in Dessau, we see a pragmatic, rational, and asymmetrical plan organized in a linear composition with sequential spaces.

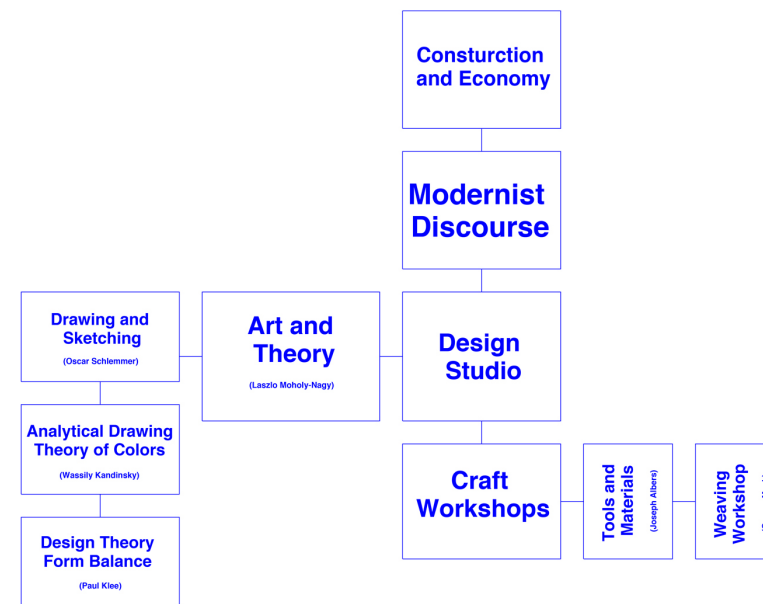
Two fundamental wings of the curriculum were, on one hand, multidisciplinary art and theory classes, coordinated by Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, and on the other hand, craft and material workshops led by Joseph Albers. Together, these two wings were sponsoring the modernist discourse when architecture was understood as a synthesis of modern art practice and rational industrialization.

The cross-disciplinary approach of the school is still impressive and inspiring, however, The Bauhaus discourse was affected by the institutional character of the modernist architecture, an autonomous isolated object, detached from the city and its cultural realities.

Top: Bauhaus Dessau Building

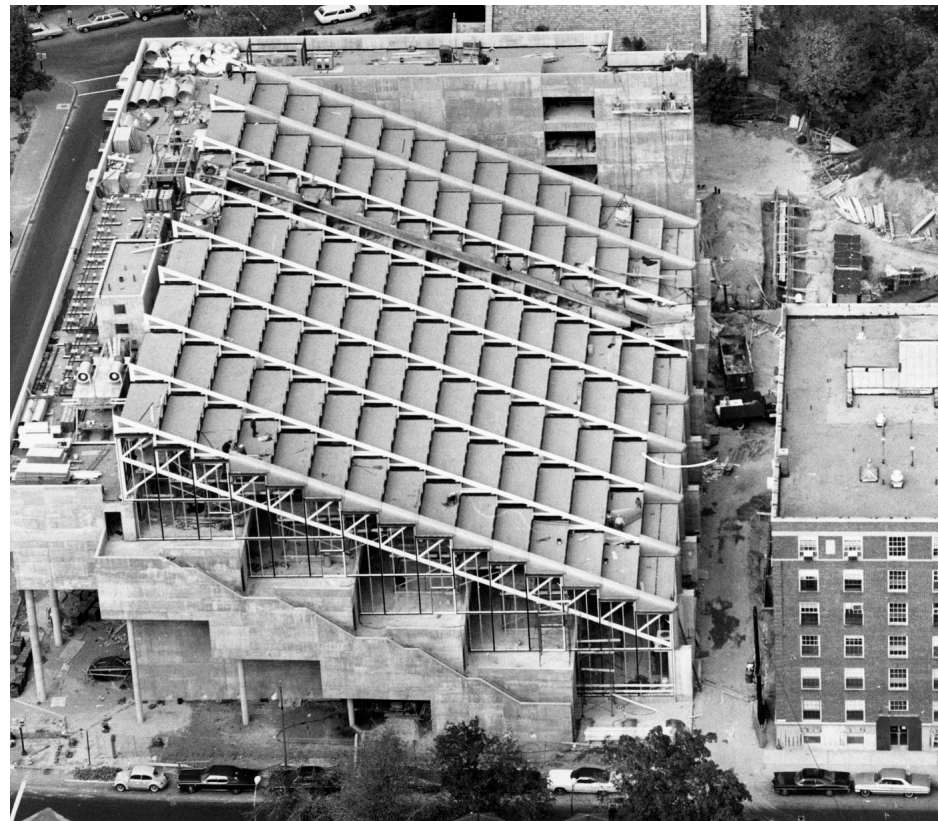


Top: Bauhaus building plan



Bottom: Bauhaus pedagogy Curricular Diagram

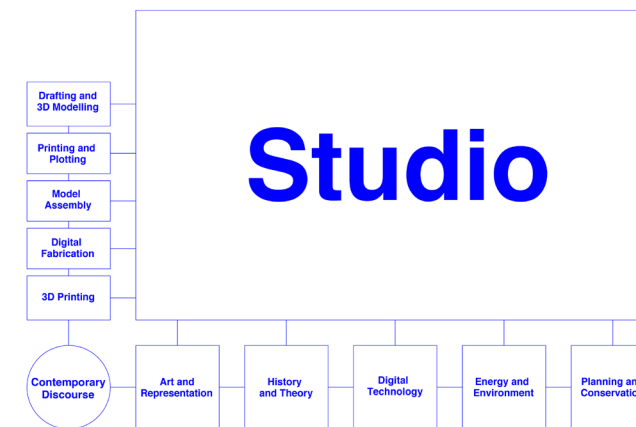
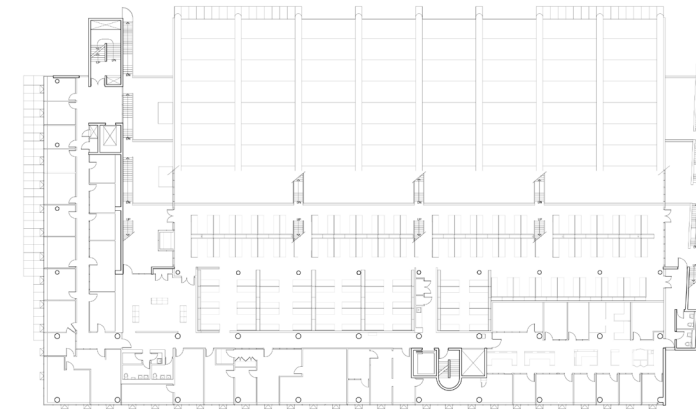
Gund Hall:



Back to Gund hall, the school consists of one main big space: a totalizing big-box studio space with a sea of tables, that is supported by different hardware and software resources. Despite the plurality of the contemporary discourses and the diversity of the themes and trends portrayed in different design studios every year, the building looks like a big factory with standardized spaces, suppressing the diverse reality within the building.

Perhaps this model is an extension of traditional large drafting floors, a homogeneous space that looks like a production line of a factory, suppressing all the variety and heterogeneity required for a space that is hosting the creative act of design.

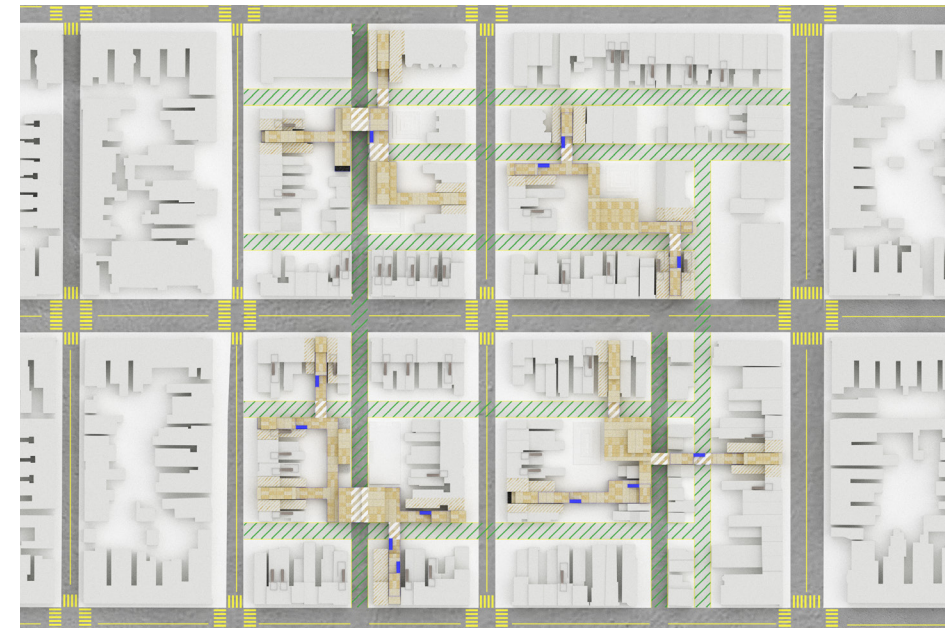
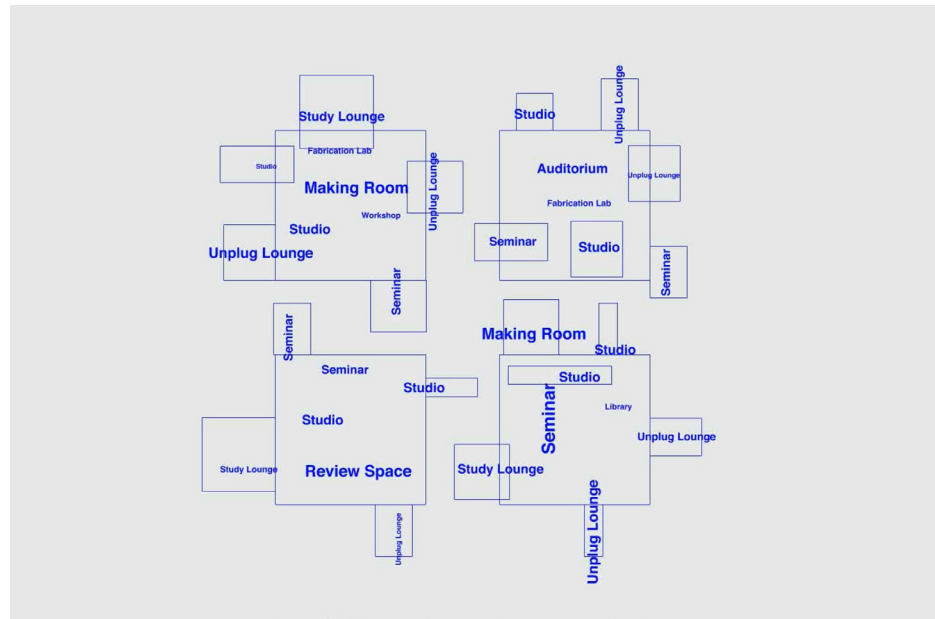
Top: Gund Hall, Cambridge



Top: Gund Hall building plan

Bottom: Harvard GSD pedagogy Curricular Diagram

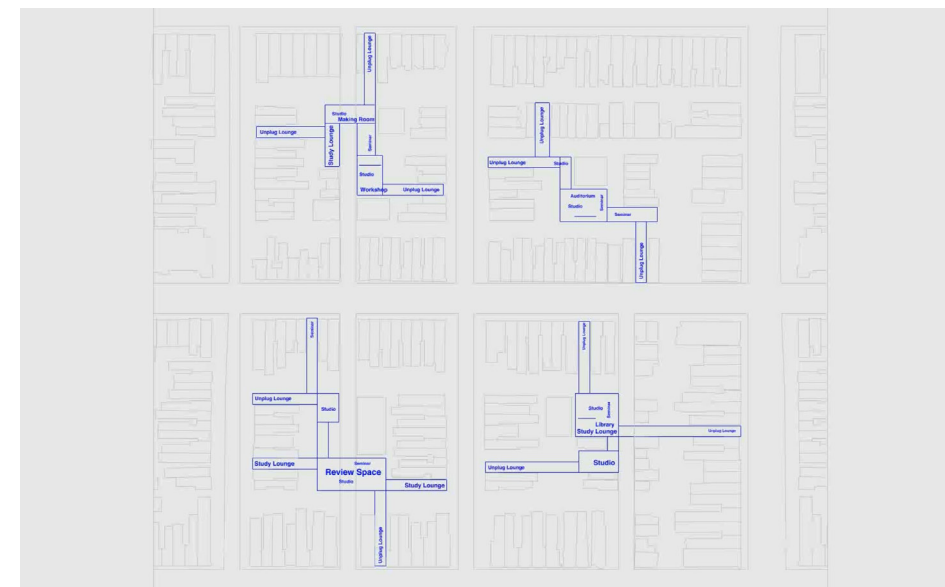
Liquid Pedagogy:



Regarding the experience of using residential buildings as dynamic spaces for education in my undergrad,

I investigated the possibility of a new architecture school: a decentralized and a nondeterministic model where the constantly evolving events are supported by a set of dispersed but linked spaces with various scales. A liquid curriculum with blurry boundaries between the overlapping programs that are not anchored to the fixed spaces.

On the site plan we see the school fragments that are woven to the residential fabric, and by dispersal of its functions, the school is merging into the city.



Top: Proposed Site Plan

Bottom: Curricular Diagram "on site"



# Baltimore Rowhouses

“Site”

The project’s site is in Baltimore, Maryland. “Fells point” is a dense urban neighborhood with 19th-century brick rowhouses. With hundreds of identified districts, Baltimore has been dubbed a “city of neighborhoods” with rich histories. Nearly one-third of the city’s buildings are designated as historic in the National Register, which is more than any other U.S. city. With the 64% of African American population, Baltimore has a rich African American history that has translated into an influential Black culture today. So, the robust physical fabric of the city, as well as the social diversity and cultural richness of Baltimore makes it a great place to establish a new school of architecture.

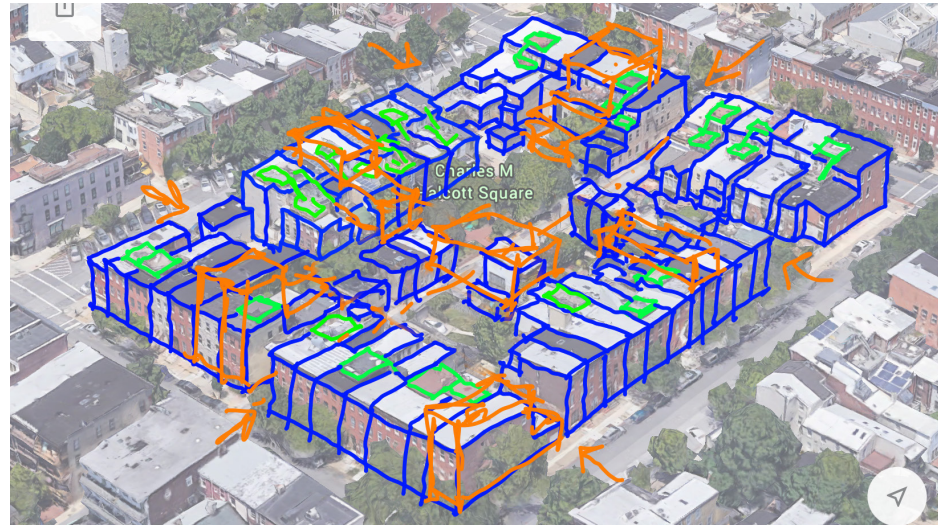
Row houses have been a feature of Baltimore architecture since the 18th century, with early examples of the style still standing in the Fells Point neighborhood.



Image source: Anatomy of the Baltimore Rowhouse  
<http://archplanbaltimore.blogspot.com/2012/08/anatomy-of-baltimore-rowhouse.html>

Typology:

Each urban block is composed of perimeter blocks and an urban void in the center, accessed by narrow alleyways.

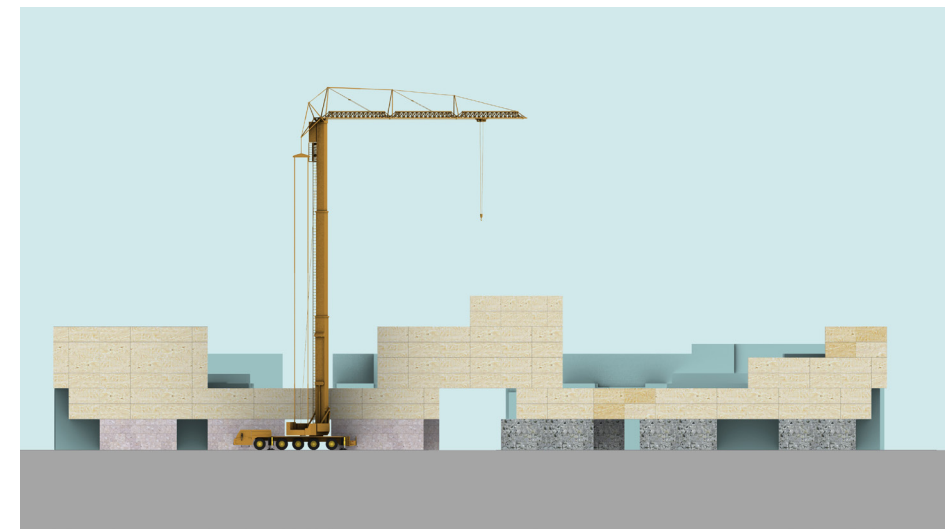


The common architectural type is a stepped brick block, with a three-story facade on the street edge, stepping down towards inside of the block.



Adopting this typology and its formal syntax, I started to develop stepped blocks consist of timber boxes stacked on top of a masonry podium.

On the cross section of an urban block, where we see a series of masonry podiums being placed on the ground to support both small urban infill fragments on the periphery, as well as larger masses in the middle of the block. These podiums are open spaces and they work as portals to lead people to the center of the block. The stacked timber boxes house different programs of architecture school with different scales, from single height to double and triple height. They also work as bridges to connect different parts of the school when needed.



Resources and Contingency:

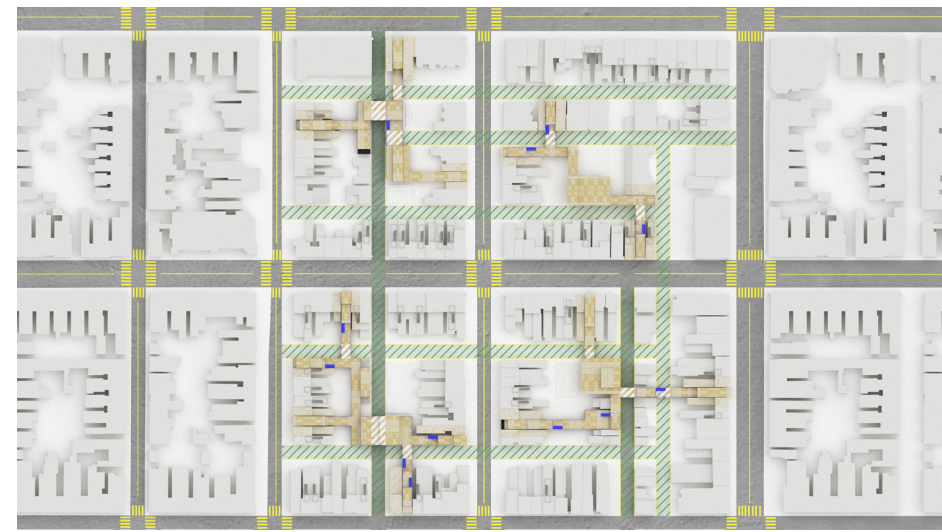
The neighborhood is rich with resources and small local businesses: from restaurants and cafes to bookstore, hardware store, local workshops and photography studio.

This provides a great potential site for a school of architecture that is relational to the city and contingent on the local resources.



Top: Site Resources Map  
Bottom: Fragments Alt 1

Depending on the proximity to the resources we could decide where to occupy the vacant lots and increase the density. The school programs could be located a few blocks apart or they can be together to form a small campus, intertwined with the urban fabric of the rowhouses.

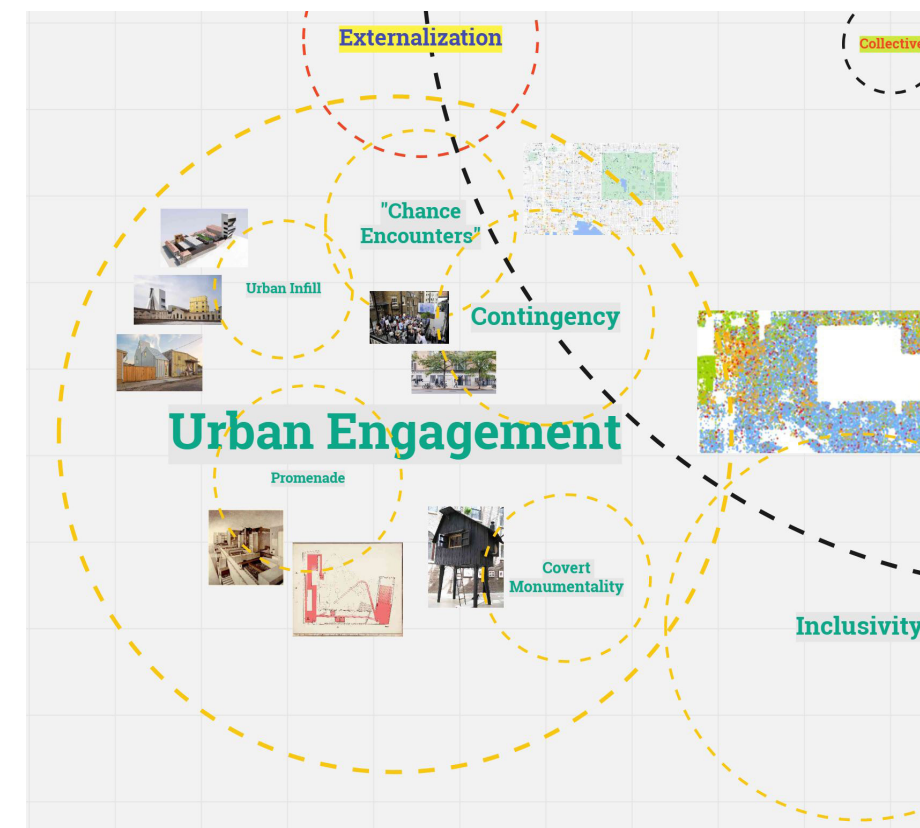


Top: Fragments Alt 2  
Bottom: Site Plan

# Urban Engagement

“Social Agenda”

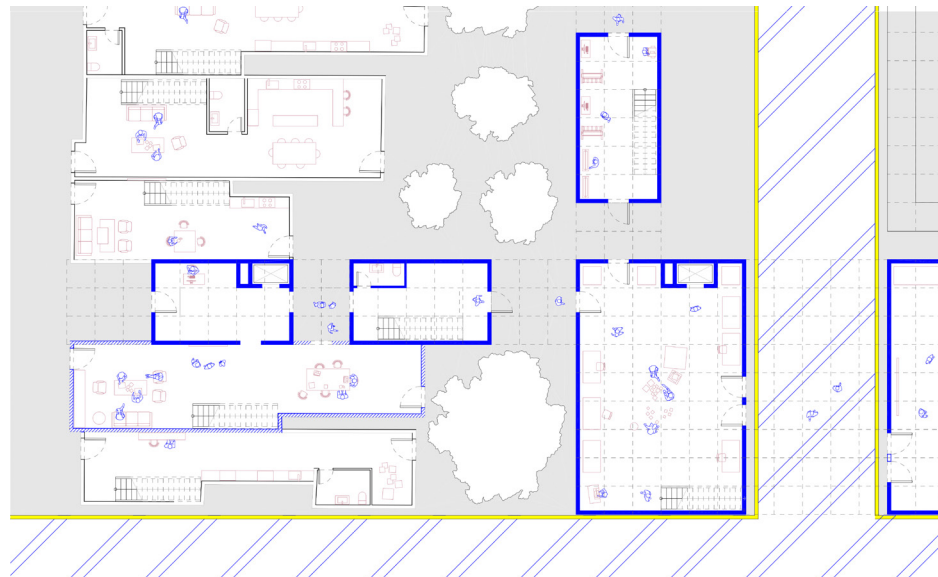
Going back to the earlier question of thesis: how can we improve trust between people and architecture school as an institution? A possible answer could be to transcend the school’s boundaries to connect with the broader region, to amalgamate with the existing fabric and to adaptive reuse the existing buildings; binding the life of the school to the local community and everyday life activities in the neighborhood.



Idea Board Diagram

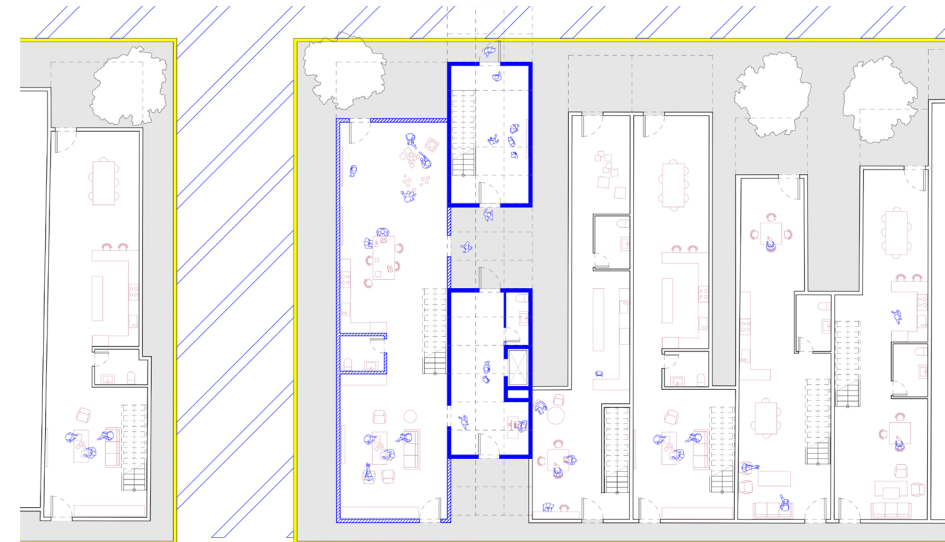
Urban Infill:

As it was mentioned earlier, the new architecture is intertwined with the existing urban fabric and creates new urban conditions within each block.



Top: Urban Courtyard  
Bottom: Rowhouses Plan (new and old)

The plans show the infill fragments and the porosity that they bring to the urban fabric. The solid blue hatch shows the new infills and the diagonal hatch shows the existing buildings that are laterally connected to the school buildings.



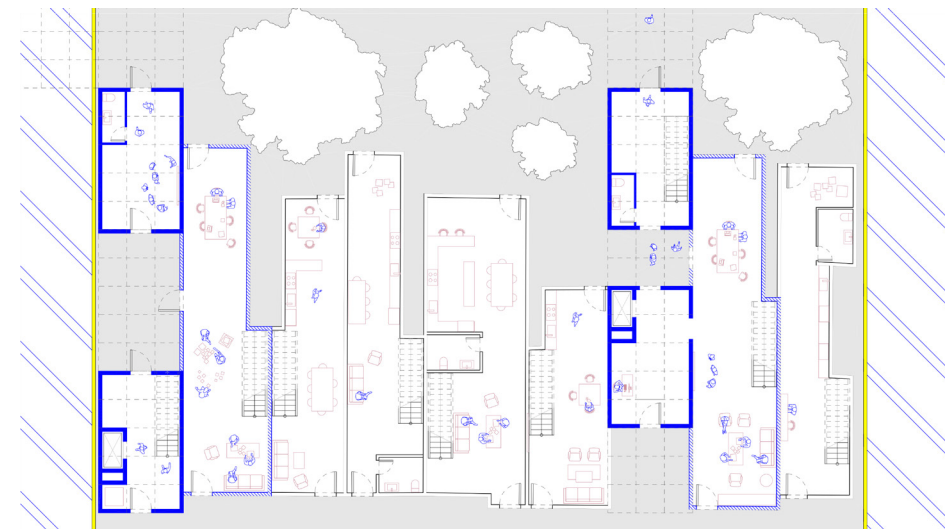
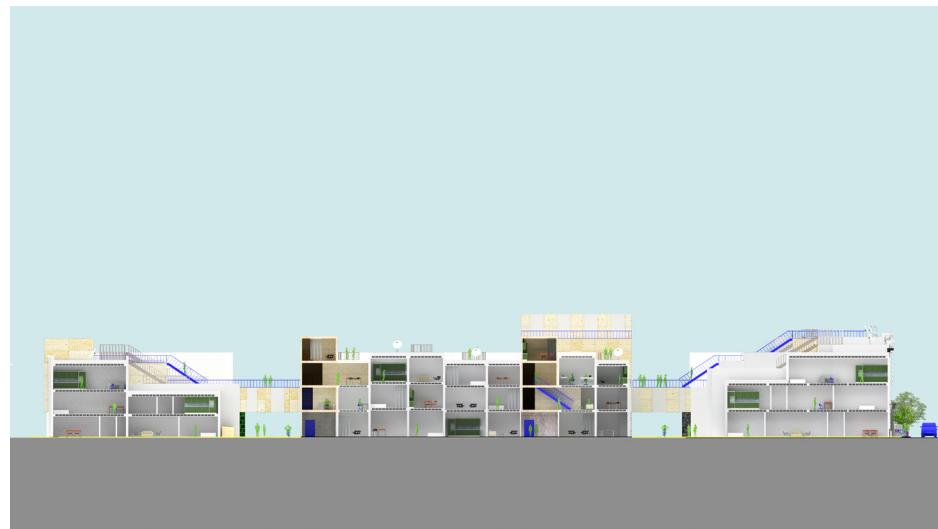
Top: Rowhouses front  
Bottom: Rowhouses (infill) plan

Urban Block Infill:

Below is the western façade of one of the urban blocks, where we see the row housing and the infill blocks; also a glimpse of the larger blocks inside the urban void and the bridges that connect them to the periphery blocks.



The cross section shows how the infill fragments bleed into the existing buildings that are occupied by the new program.



Top: Western Facade  
Bottom: Western Section

Top: Western Section  
Bottom: Western Edge Plan

Urban Block Infill:

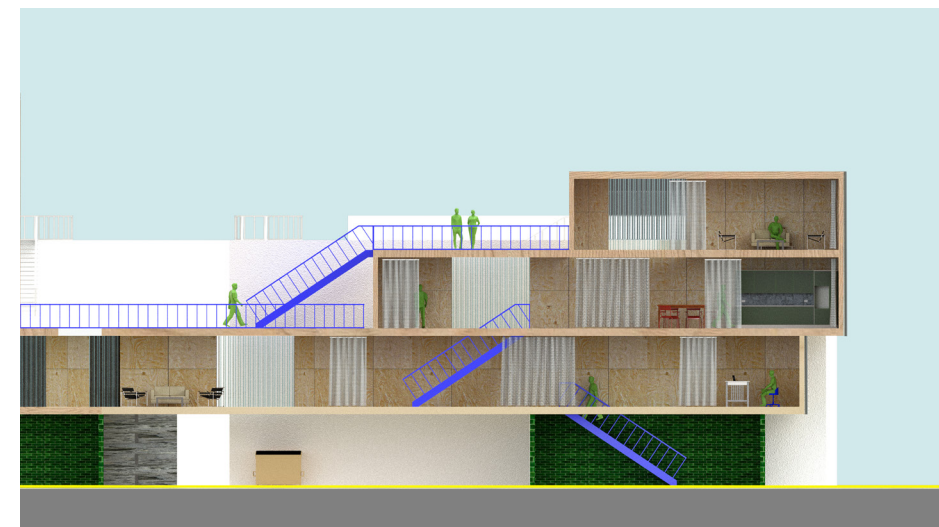
And this is the southern façade of the same block, where a coffee shop next to the school's block supports the students in need of caffeine.



Top: Southern Facade  
Bottom: Southern Section

A deeper cross section of the block reveals the inside of the school spaces, where we see the roofscape of the connected terraces and the blue steel staircases (as a common typological element in the site) are extended to the interior.

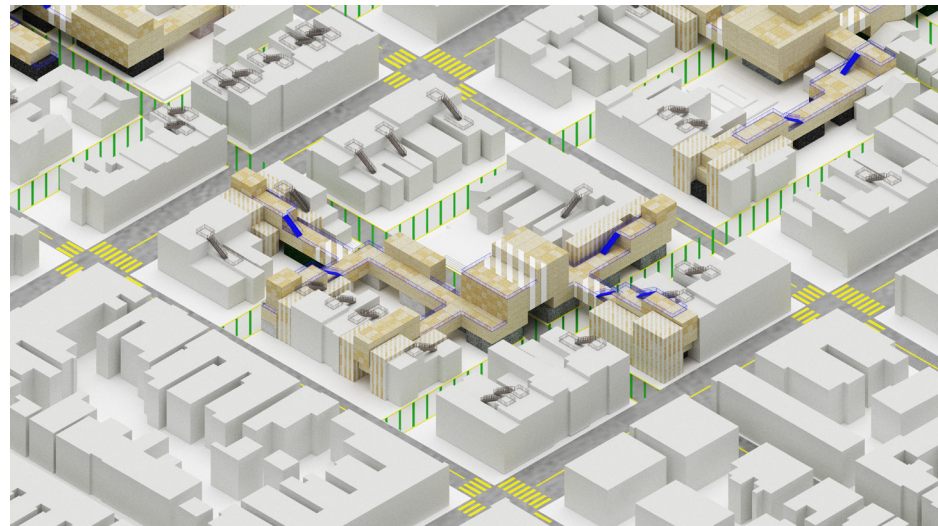
A closer look to the inside of this block shows the liquid program and the domestic-like interior spaces of the school, where it houses a small kitchen and dining, a workstation, lounges or the unplug spaces , a place to unplug from everything... allowing the participants to momentarily escape the never-ending flow of sensory inputs in order to “reset” themselves mentally and physiologically.



Top: Southern Section

Urban Adaptive Reuse:

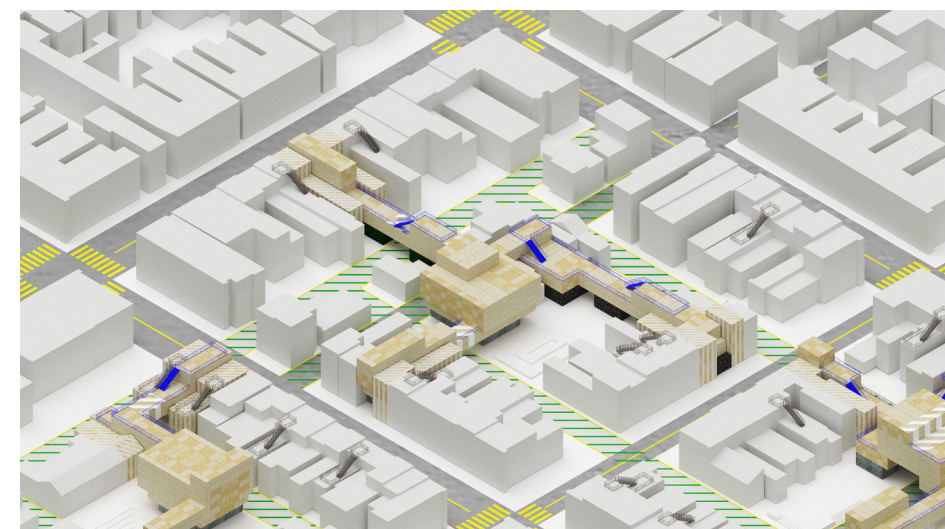
In the axonometric views we see the green diagonal stripes that show a new pedestrian and bike only path projected on the ground to reinforce the local access by increasing the connectivity and creating a small scale urbanity within each block.



While the wood texture shows the new additions, the thin white stripes are projected on the existing buildings that could potentially be added to the school spaces. Just like BIHE, this school too, could potentially be owned and supported by the community.



Top: Block 1 Axon  
Bottom: Block 2 Axon



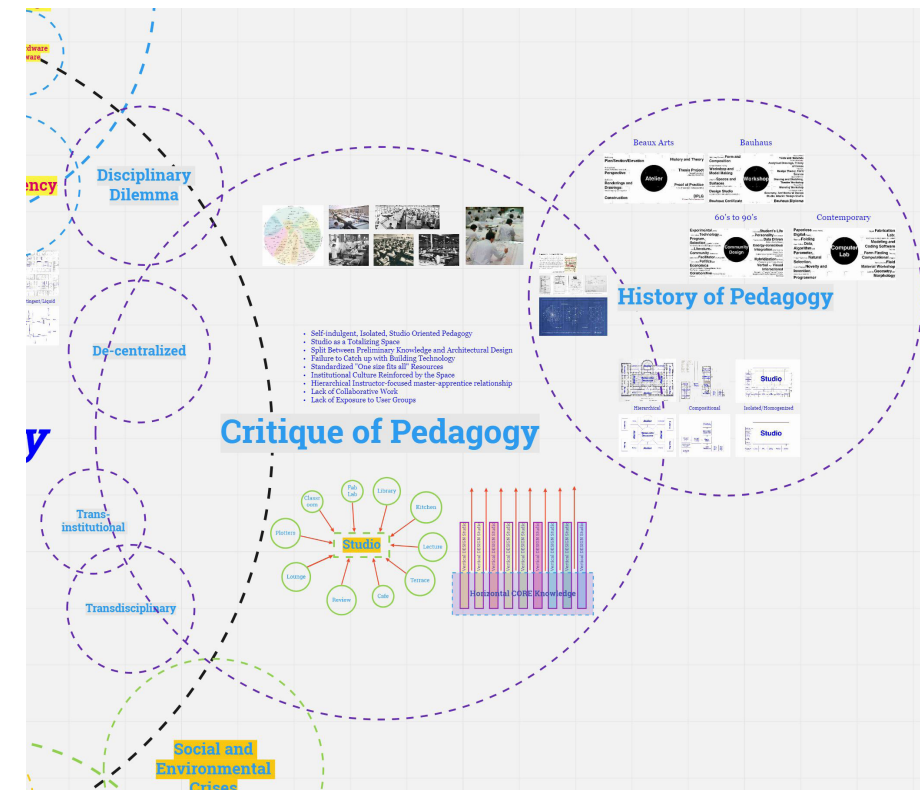
Top: Block 3 Axon  
Bottom: Block 4 Axon



# New Curricular Spaces

“Disciplinarity”

In this section the thesis gets more specific about the liquidity of curricular spaces as a response to the critique of today’s pedagogy, and attempts to propose an alternative to the traditional studio as a homogeneous space with individual standardized resources.



Idea Board Diagram

Hybrid and collaborative studio space:

In an interior setting for small hybrid and collaborative studio space, the facility is equipped with video projection that is live streaming the design events in different parts of the world. This connects the local studio to a global network virtually and keeps them up to date with the live feed, just like real-time stock market screens.



Top: Hybrid Studio (Scenario 1)  
Bottom: Hybrid Studio (Scenario 2)

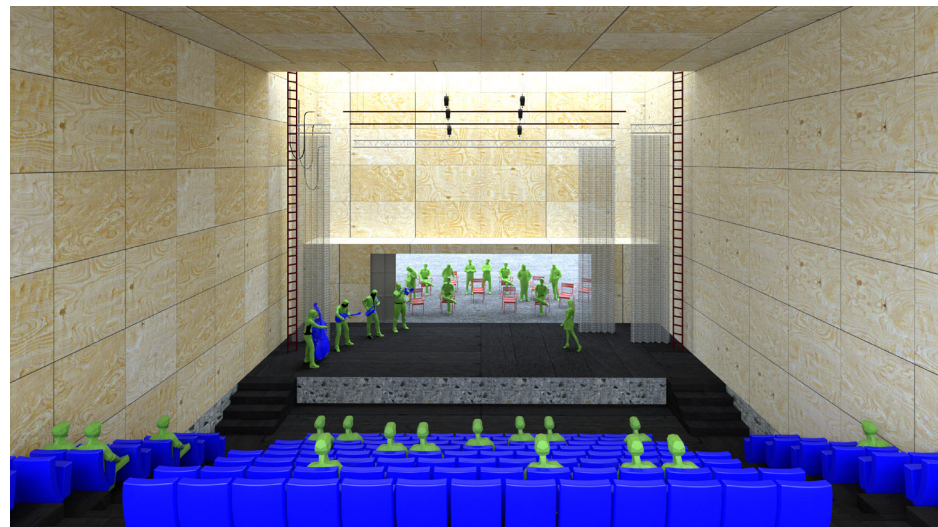
But it is not limited to the interior: The space opens up to a small plaza or the adjacent urban courtyard to engage with the local community and the public events like a parade or family activities, like a bbq picnic.



Top: Picnic Courtyard

Auditorium Space:

The school has a small auditorium either for student presentations, or for a public film screening event, but to socialize the experience it opens up to the outside space and becomes a double stage auditorium, then it extends the space to host outdoor performance events, maybe a jazz street festival.



Top: Auditorium (Scenario 1)  
Bottom: Auditorium (Scenario 2)



Top: Performance Courtyard

Public Makerspace:

The school could offer resources like an open craft space, shared by the students and the local community. This could be either a low-tech fabrication workshop or equipped with the 3D-printers which have become mainstream and extends the experience of model making to the larger public with less advanced craft skills.



Top: Southern Facade  
Bottom: Southern Section

The craft activities, too, can be extended to the urban courtyard and mixed with outdoor games and sports.



Top: Picnic Courtyard

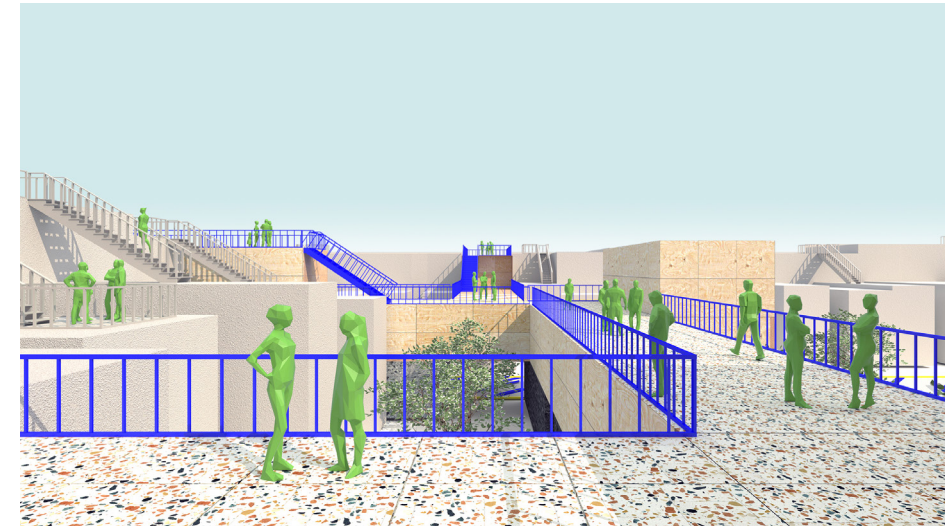
Public Ballroom:

The large double height reviews spaces of the school could possibly transform to a public ballroom, a space for the theatrical event of dance as a transcendent escape. The curtains as dividers of the space are presents in most of the spaces to support the liquidity needed in an interior setting.



Top: Southern Facade  
Bottom: Southern Section

The gatherings also could extend to the exterior roofscape where a network of elevated terraces are connected through the bridges and staircases, matching the local typology.

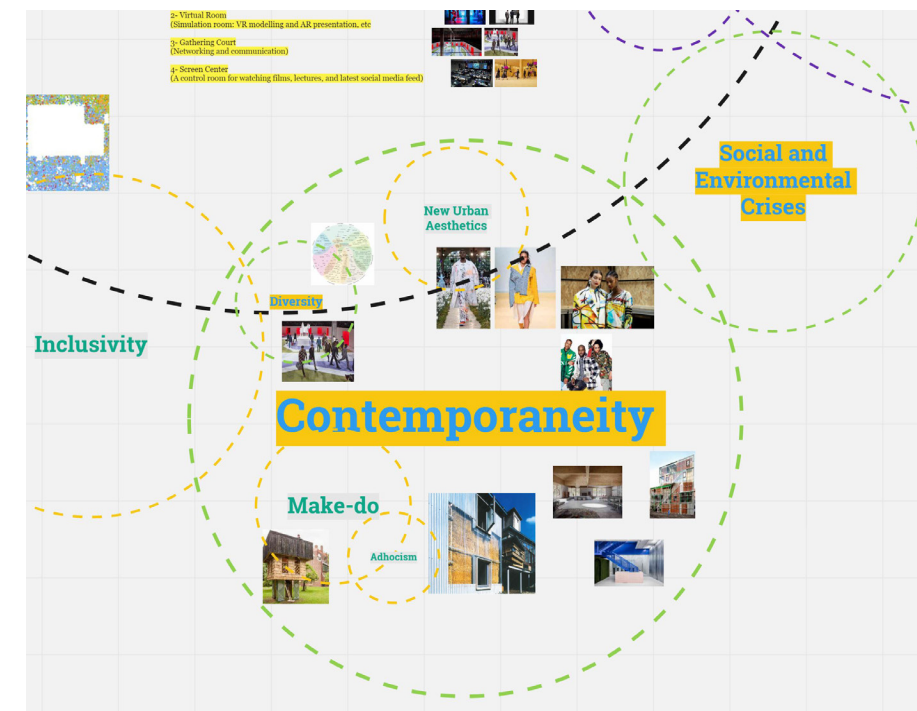


Top: Picnic Courtyard

# Contemporary Culture

“Style”

In this section I focused on the contemporary culture of Baltimore as well as the tectonic culture of American construction and the intersection in between these two.



Idea Board Diagram

The Fire Flies:

The Fire Flies, a collection by the Parisian fashion photographer Frederic Nauczyciel shines a light on the voguing communities of Baltimore ghettos.



The dance's electrified glamour contrasts starkly with a backdrop of graffitied brick walls and cement lots, revealing how the theatrical dance offers a transcendent escape

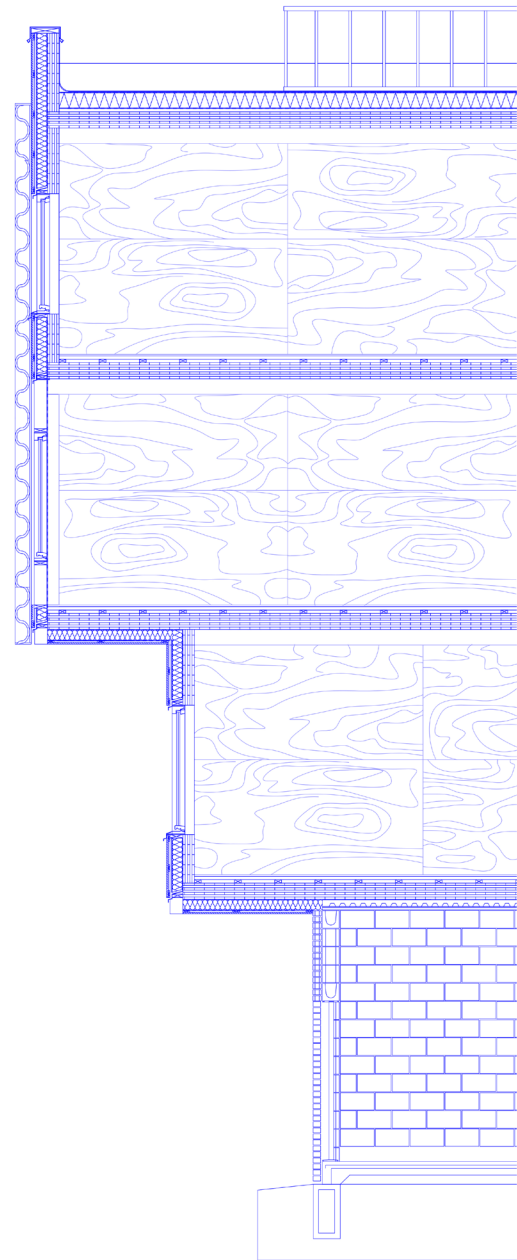


Top and Bottom: Baltimore's Voguers, The Fireflies by Frederic Nauczyciel

Top and Bottom: Baltimore's Voguers, The Fireflies by Frederic Nauczyciel

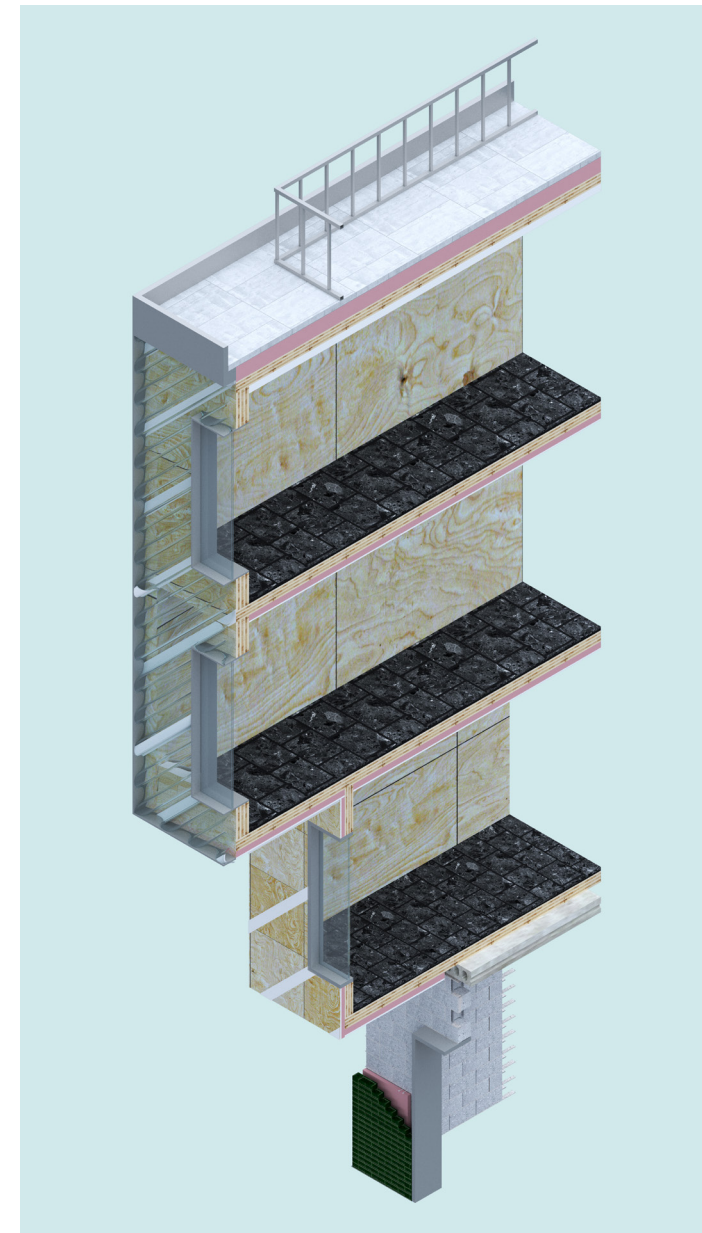
Tectonic Layering:

This is a wall section of an infill fragment, based on the American construction culture of masonry podium and stacked timber boxes on top.



Wall Section

The tectonic language of the project is my interpretation of adhocism or the notion of make-do: Using multiple layers of materials, from solid to light and transparent, shown in this detail of an infill fragment.



3D Axonometric Wall Section



Facade Design:

the diagonal stripes on the façade are indexing an architectural drawing convention, projected to mark the school spaces and to unify the old and new.



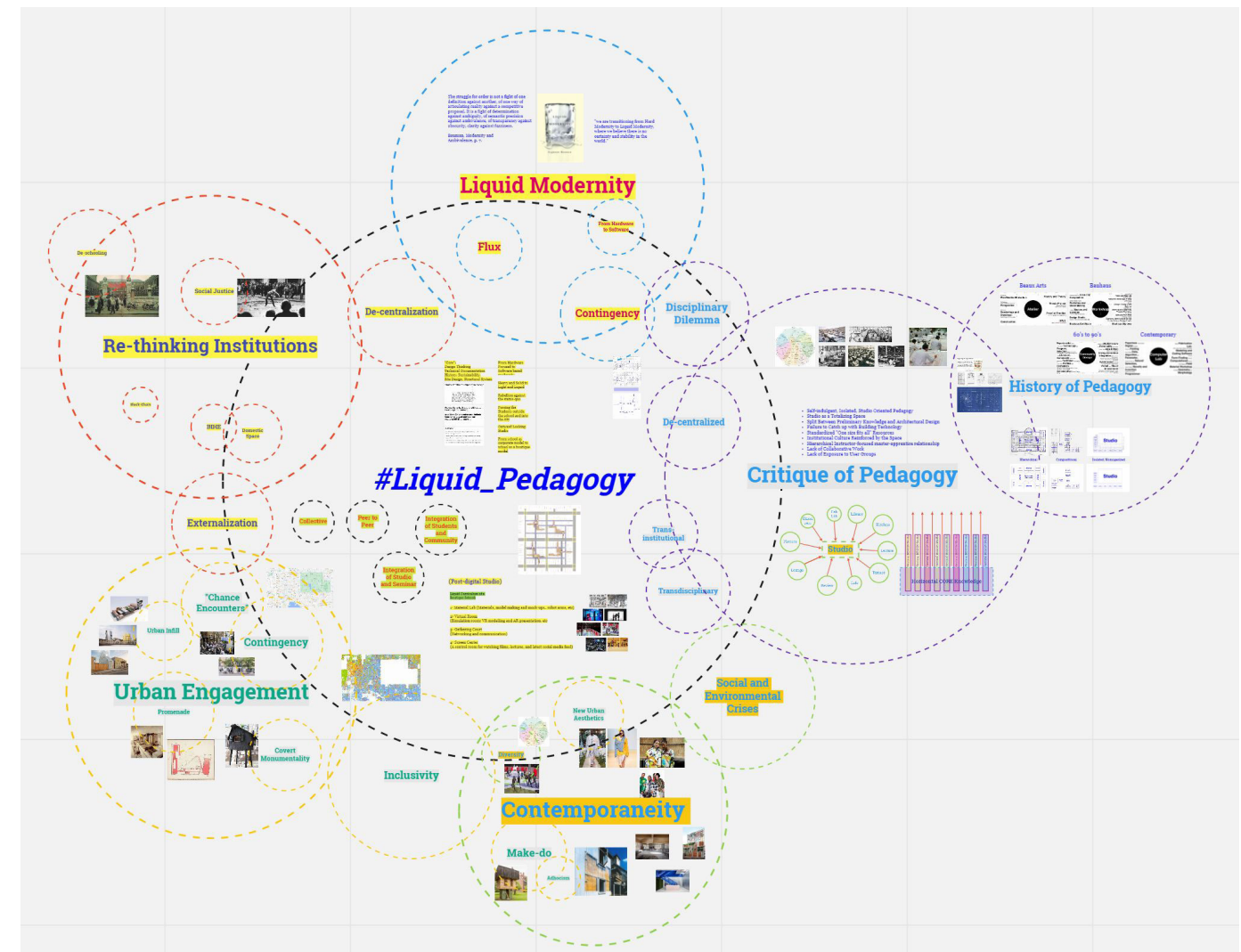
The new additions are trying to fit in on the array of rowhouses by following the common proportions, height, and aperture on the street front, while offering a new approach to materiality and contemporary tectonic culture.



Last words:

While there is no easy fix to repairing decades of institutional distrust and harm, my goal is to shed light on some strategies that I can test to get us there. I hope to show the role that inclusive spaces can play in easing socioeconomic divides, connecting communities, and spreading prosperity to more people and places.

A new school rooted in trust and community benefit, where the environment is constantly re-invented through the potentials of the architectural imagination.



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