

Learning from Llantrisant Street

Abstract

Some argue that Cardiff is a bad city to learn architecture in, because it doesn't have very much of it. This studio will help refute this assertion by analysing the city's most distinctive and ubiquitous architectural type: the terraced house. The Cardiff terrace offers a charming example of the specific in a seemingly generic context, providing a vital model of sustainable urban density, robust yet generous in the ways it aids and displays individuals' inhabitation. We will explore Cardiff's terraces, record them and celebrate them.

This studio will offer training in close observation. Venturi and Scott Brown's *Learning from Las Vegas* will offer a starting point for our methods. The studio will engage in research through architectural drawing: making measured drawings, analytical diagrams and evocative images. It will investigate themes including: grades and hierarchies; uses and abuses of ornament; shape and form; structure and variation; incentives and inhabitation; ad-hoc alterations; environmental design; and oddities and eccentricities.

Process

The recordings and observations will be used as a primer project and developed into a thesis to guide a small design exercise. Ideas maybe extracted and distilled – analytical drawings offering thought on 'atmosphere' and 'place making', evocative images informing building 'ethics' or constructional strategy. The design outcomes may occur at a very small scale; perhaps a carefully constructed detail of a single room, one wall or a piece of furniture. It may conversely propose ideas on a much larger scale; a series of interventions, an urban strategy perhaps. An idea may also operate both on the very small scale and at the very large. The design element maybe explored in a wide and varied manner; a series of ideograms, alternative urban cartographies, physical models, construction details, evocative images...

Programme

Week ONE_ Mapping / Observing / Recording

Wednesday 29th:

Introduction.

Thursday 30th and Friday 1st:

Conditions: Observation and Recording

Walking tour of Plasnewedd, Cardiff.

Investigating the 'as found', processes and events involved in forming these environments?

Week TWO_ Mapping / Observing / Recording Cont...

Monday 4th:

Presentation and discussion of initial findings

Focus down to more specific areas for investigation

Tuesday 5th and Wednesday 6th:

Back to site

Thursday 7th:

Tutorial day submissions;

Presentation of raw material findings
How to proceed; Representing the 'as-found'
From Primer to Project: Interpreting findings, abstraction, ideograms, evocative images etc to develop a position

Week THREE_ Presentation, Representation and Abstraction

Monday 11th:

Introduction to design portion (MAKE) - Design and presentation of found material to run concurrently
Develop through drawings and model, from parti to construct a response to the conditions, elements, atmospheres and processes. A cupboard? A room? A house? A city?

Thursday 14th:

Design tutorials

Week FOUR_ Make

Monday 18th:

Design tutorials

Thursday 21st May 2009.

Final Crit and Submission of works for document.

Readings

'A walk to work / 'Papers ONE', Sergison Bates,

'Learning from Las Vegas', Venturii & Scott Brown,

'As Found' / 'Architecture is not made with the brain' Thomas Schregenburg,

'In praise of cupboard doors' / 'The house of today and the house of the future' Peter Smithson.

'Invisible Cities', Italo Calvino

'Architecture of the everyday', Berke and Harris

'Geography of Home' Akiko Busch

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