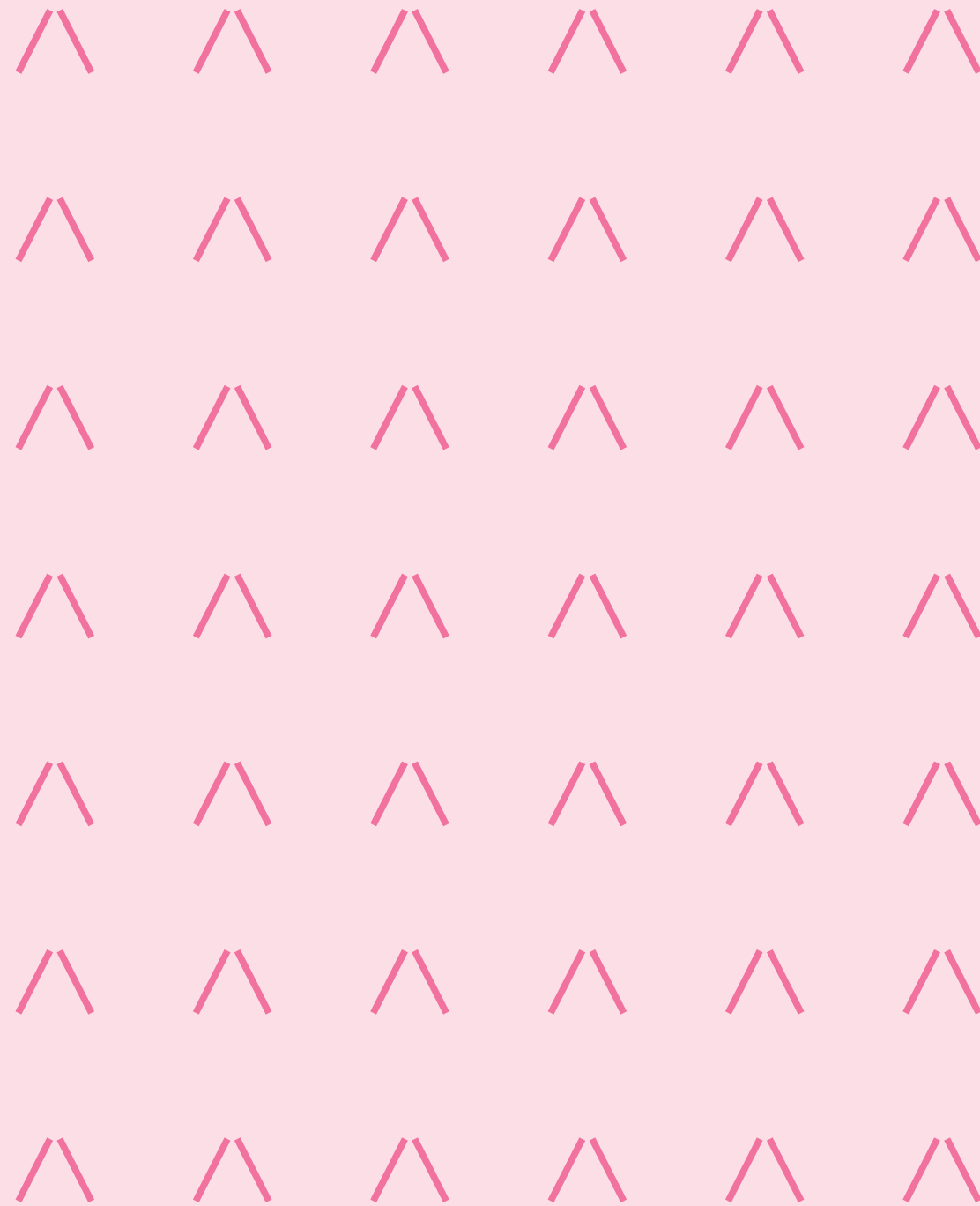So you want to be
an architect
an interior designer
a community organizer
an urbanist
a research historian
a project manager
an entrepreneur
a material scientist
a product designer
a californian
a world builder
a pain in the butt
a brand ambassador
a captain of industry
a fun uncle
a concerned citizen
a space cowboy
a party starter
an activist investor
a celebrity chef

You want CCA Architecture

Context 5

Community 12

Curriculum

Play 55

Connection

Join Us

When visionary Austrian architect Hans Hollein argued in 1968 that "everything is architecture," he could not have foreseen the many challenges we face in the 2020s—climate change, housing shortages, social and racial equity, wealth concentration, environmental depletion, and political polarization. Yet, by making that bold claim, Hollein urged us to shift our perspective from what architecture looks like to what it does in the world. "Architecture has an effect," he reminds us, and that expansive vision of design—cultivating real-world change in unexpected settings and attending to the complex outcomes of making buildings—speaks to the forms of agency that architects, artists, and makers must embrace today.

Perhaps everything isn't architecture, but architecture is entangled in everything. Here in the Architecture division at California College of the Arts, we approach these entanglements with seriousness, rigor, imagination, and even joy. Across our graduate and undergraduate programs, we think deeply about the world we work within and how we can positively transform it through our actions as creative cultural agents.

"Make Art That Matters" has long been the motto of California College of the Arts (CCA). In the Architecture division, we take that to heart. We believe that architecture and interior design are critical cultural practices that can and should serve the common good. Our program is a platform for the free and open exchange of ideas about the future—of our buildings, cities, and planet—and a laboratory where these ideas are tested through speculative design research. Across four academic programs and four research and teaching labs, our faculty and students challenge conventional ideas at every turn, fostering an innovative culture of making that blends discipline-specific skills with cutting-edge technical and conceptual methods.

Our curricula equip students to confront complex challenges with innovative, impactful solutions. We cultivate a culture of critical thinking and creativity, encouraging bold ideas and practical applications. Our faculty, composed of leading practitioners and scholars, bring diverse perspectives and expertise to their teaching in our studios, shops, and classrooms. They guide students to develop their unique voices and empower them to become the industry leaders of tomorrow.

Our commitment to sustainability, social justice, and community engagement is woven into the fabric of our programs. We push students to challenge conventional boundaries and see architecture and design as tools for catalyzing positive change. We are excited to be part of a dynamic and diverse community, collaborating with artists and designers from a wide range of disciplines, and we look forward to expanding our practices and finding new ways to create meaningful and impactful work together on our newly unified San Francisco campus.

Join us in the Architecture division of California College of the Arts, where you'll be part of a vibrant community dedicated to creating a more equitable, resilient, and inspiring built environment. Together, we can build a better future.

⊙ Keith Krumwiede, Dean

Our Context

Land

The California College of the Arts campus is located in Yelamu, also known as San Francisco, on the unceded territories of Ramaytush Ohlone people, who have continuously lived upon this land since time immemorial. We recognize the historic discrimination and violence inflicted upon Indigenous peoples in California and the Americas, including their forced removal from ancestral lands, and the deliberate and systematic destruction of their communities and culture. CCA honors Indigenous peoples—past, present, and future—here and around the world, and we wish to pay respect to local elders.

As shapers of the built environment, the Architecture division faculty and students understand the practice of land acknowledgment as a crucial first step in building a more just future. Reckoning fully with the difficult histories of the places we work on—as well the ways that architecture has historically participated in forms of displacement—can galvanize architects to use their tools to help transform things for the better.

History

Since 1907, California College of the Arts has connected modern design with a sensibility for social engagement. Founded at the height of the Arts and Crafts movement, CCA has produced generations of artists, designers, and craftspeople who see their work as a way of engaging with the most pressing matters of their day with creativity and passion. Across CCA's many disciplines, students and professors expand the possibilities of their respective mediums.

The Architecture division moved into its current home, a renovated Greyhound Bus bus station near Potrero Hill and Mission Bay in San Francisco's Design District, in 1996. The building is an energizing laboratory of experiment, one that brings together a wide array of design fields under one dramatic roof. Art and architecture may have changed quite a bit since 1907, but CCA's longstanding emphasis on design with a sense of purpose continues to resonate in the present.

An Art and Design College

CCA's Architecture and Interior Design programs are enriched by our context within a spirited community of makers, creators, tinkerers, and thinkers. Students in Architecture and Interior Design are encouraged to take courses in the college's other programs, including fine arts, fashion design, furniture, interaction design, ceramics, visual and critical studies, and more. The porousness of programs and proximity of shops, studios, and makerspaces foster an atmosphere of curiosity, exploration, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

City

San Francisco is widely known as one of the most beautiful cities in the world … and also as an energizing site of transformative change. It has been the hotbed of many activist social movements in the United States, whether in terms of accessibility and disability rights, LGBTQ rights, environmental protection, racial equity, or Indigenous landback movements. This is a city and region that has always questioned the status quo, with an eye toward justice (with the built environment often taking center stage in these movements). The Architecture division at CCA proudly learns from and carries on this legacy of cultural change.

San Francisco has a thriving architecture scene, and is at the heart of Silicon Valley's tech industries as well. This is the place where our design tools and software get made, putting CCA at the leading edge of conversations around emerging design technologies. Grappling critically with the implications of tech—its potentials and its pitfalls—is an important part of what we do.

Expansion

With the addition of our new Studio Gang–designed building, our programs in art, architecture, and design are united on one campus. CCA has a culture of cross-pollination across fields, combining deep research with an art-school sensibility for experimentation. From green spaces to gallery spaces and classrooms to art studios, our freshly expanded campus provides yet more opportunities for exchange and collaboration between the incredible minds and makers at the college.
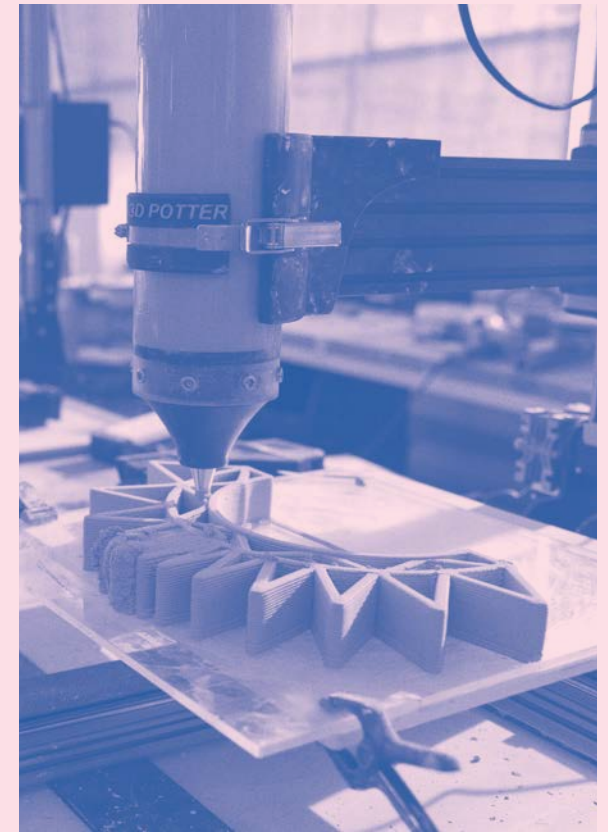
Building on CCA's long legacy of craft and fabrication, the college's innovative new building includes spacious and state-of-the-art fabrication facilities. These new shops also contain a dedicated space for our world-renowned Digital Craft Lab (see p. 23) which pursues advanced research in digital fabrication, material science, data visualization, and robotics.
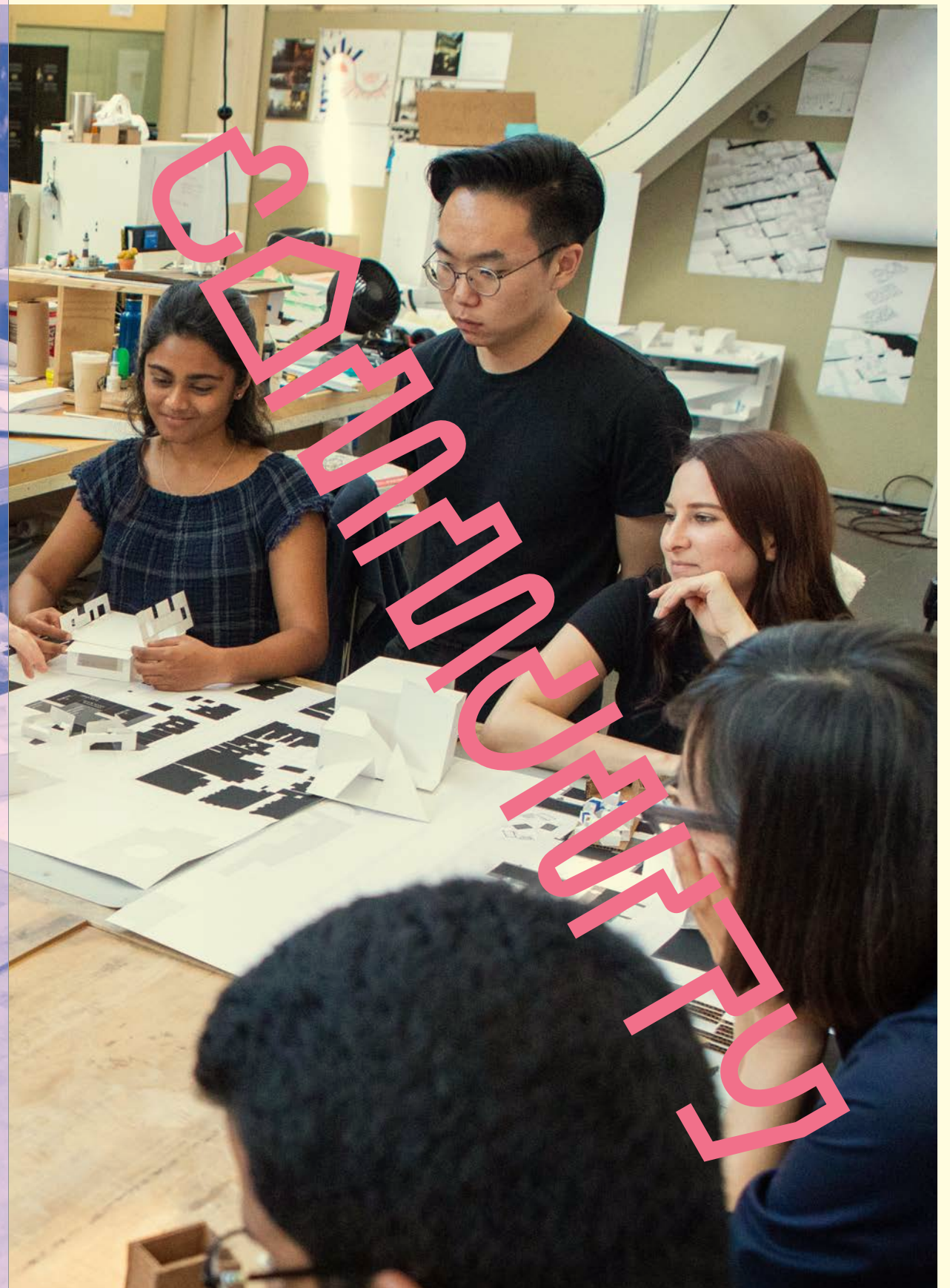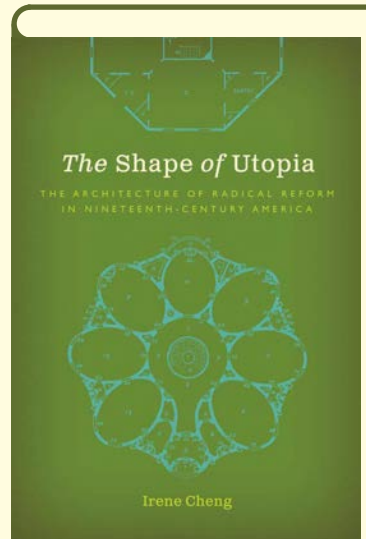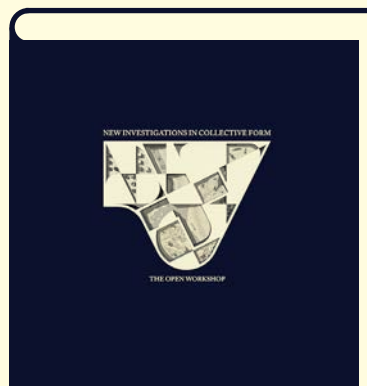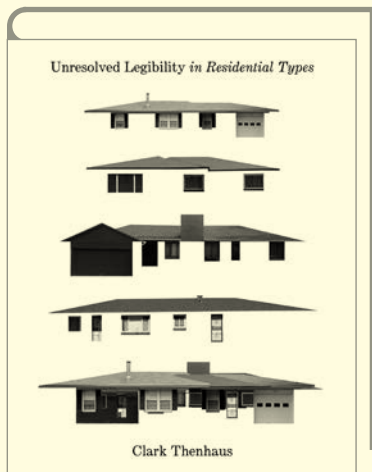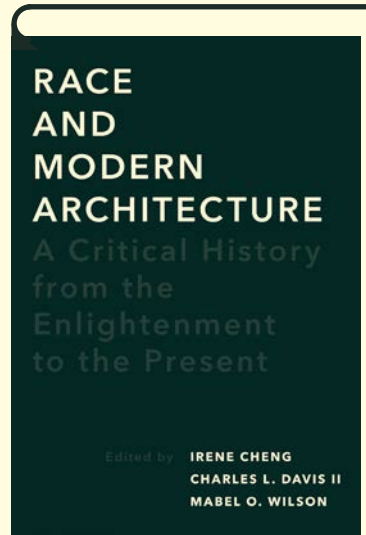
COMMUNITY

Our Community

At California College of the Arts, you will work with award-winning faculty who maintain global research profiles and alongside diverse and talented student colleagues. As teachers, writers, practitioners, public intellectuals, and learners, we are actively shaping the most important conversations around architecture and interior design. Together, we harness technological innovation for positive change, deepen our understanding of architecture's impacts and capacities for action, and envision a more just and sustainable built environment. Combining rigorous research and pedagogy with the intimacy of an art school context, CCA is a place to forge enduring relationships with faculty and fellow students as you build the foundations for your career in architecture, interior design, and beyond.

Our faculty writes…

The State of Architecture at the Beginning of the 21st Century
Edited by Bernard Tschumi + Irene Cheng

ATLAS OF ANOTHER AMERICA
KEITH KRUMWIEDE

The Avery Review
Climates: Architecture and the Planetary Imaginary
Columbia Books on Architecture and the City
Lars Müller Publishers

THE UNDERDOME GUIDE TO ENERGY REFORM
Janette Kim and Erik Carver

INTERIORS BEYOND ARCHITECTURE
Edited by Deborah Schneiderman & Amy Campos

RACE AND MODERN ARCHITECTURE
A Critical History from the Enlightenment to the Present
Edited by IRENE CHENG, CHARLES L. DAVIS II, MABEL O. WILSON

Unresolved Legibility in Residential Types
Clark Thenhaus

NEW INVESTIGATIONS IN COLLECTIVE FORM
THE OPEN WORKSHOP

The Shape of Utopia
THE ARCHITECTURE OF RADICAL REFORM IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA
Irene Cheng

exhibits…

Top to bottom: Neeraj Bhatia with Antje Steinmuller, "Commoning Domestic Space," Venice Archtitecture Biennale ⊘ Neeraj Bhatia, "Aging Against the Machine," Center for Architecture, New York ⊘ Clark Thenhaus, "Project Four Domes," Architectural League Prize exhibition, New York ⊘ Keith Krumwiede, "Visions of Another America," Chicago Architecture Biennial ⊘ Janette Kim, "After Money," Housing the Human Festival, Berlin (photo Camille Blake, Forecast Berlin)

builds…
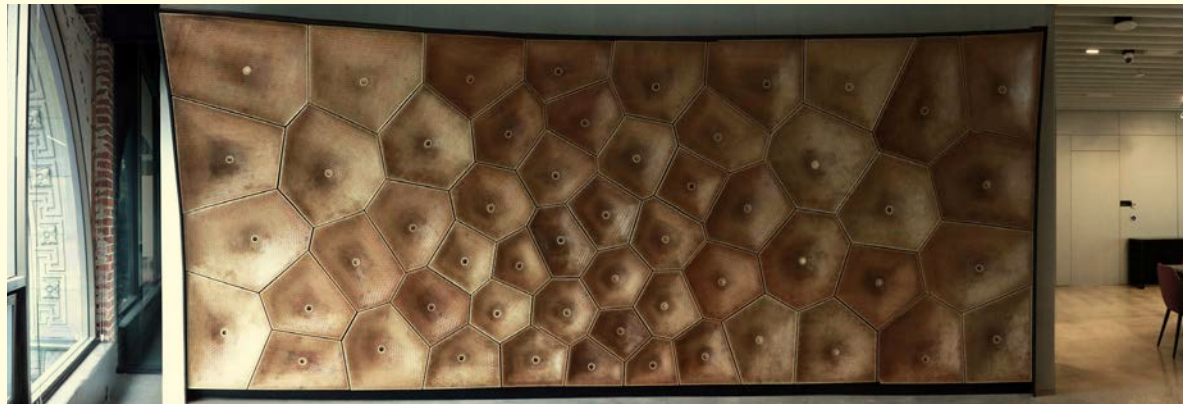
and researches.

At CCA, research and experimentation are a core part of how we imagine new futures for architectural practice. Our faculty undertakes collaborative and groundbreaking research on urgent questions of contemporary architecture, whether as scholars or engaged practitioners.

This work is advanced by CCA's research labs, which pursue work in four areas: Architectural Ecologies, Digital Craft, History Theory, and Urban Works. Each lab sponsors courses, events, workshops, and research initiatives. Students have multiple opportunities to participate in the labs, by attending events, working as research assistants, or taking lab-affiliated courses.

Top row: IwamotoScott, "Goto House," Napa (photo Bruce Damonte) ⊘ Clark Thenhaus, "Confetti Courtyard" for HEM, Los Angeles (photo David Salpeter)
Row 2: Future Forms, "Cosmos," Sunnyvale ⊘ Thom Faulders, Mount Sinai Medical Center facade, Miami
Row 3: Negar Kalantar and Al Borhani, "Kerfonic Wall," Autodesk Gallery, San Francisco ⊘ Amy Campos and Brian Price, "Hidden House," Berkeley ⊘ Neal Schwartz, Mourning Dovecote, Sonoma (Douglas Sterling Photography)
Row 4: Neeraj Bhatia, "The Center Won't Hold" Pavilion at the Chicago Architecture Biennial ⊘ Mark Donohue, "Aortic Arc" ⊘ IwamotoScott, Santa Monica Boulevard Housing, Los Angeles

Architectural Ecologies Lab

The Architectural Ecologies Lab brings together designers, artists, scientists, and manufacturers. Operating at the intersection of architecture, fabrication, and ecology, the lab merges spatial practice with innovative techniques of material production, rigorous ecological research, and public engagement. The lab's work leverages interdisciplinary expertise and meaningful collaborations with science and industry to develop compelling architectural strategies to address ecological challenges like sea level rise, habitat restoration, and climate adaptation. Central to the lab's work is a commitment to engaging diverse publics and design processes that extend ideas beyond the academic studio and into the real world.

Floating just off the Port of Oakland, the Buoyant Ecologies Float Lab is a prototype for a new kind of resilient coastal infrastructure. Creating "fish apartments" below and watershed pools for intertidal invertebrates above, the Float Lab remains a research platform for developing ecological substrates for wave attenuation.

Directors: Margaret Ikeda, Evan Jones, and Alex Schofield

⊛ architecturalecologies.cca.edu

Urban Works Agency

The Urban Works Agency (UWA) is a research lab in the Architecture division at the California College of the Arts in San Francisco that leverages architectural design to affect social justice, ecological vitality, and economic resilience. UWA works with interdisciplinary partners to produce original research and design projects at architectural and urban scales. They also lead curriculum and a post-professional degree program at CCA, where UWA hosts symposia, design studios, and seminars that engage students as active agents in dialogue with the entrepreneurial and countercultural legacies of the Bay Area.

For an exhibit at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the Urban Works Agency played on the figure of the "table" to exhibit recent work related to urban justice, ecological resilience, housing, the commons, and collective decision-making.

Directors: Neeraj Bhatia and Janette Kim
Associate Director: Julia Grinkrug
Director-at-Large: Christopher Roach

⊛ urbanworks.cca.edu

History Theory Experiments
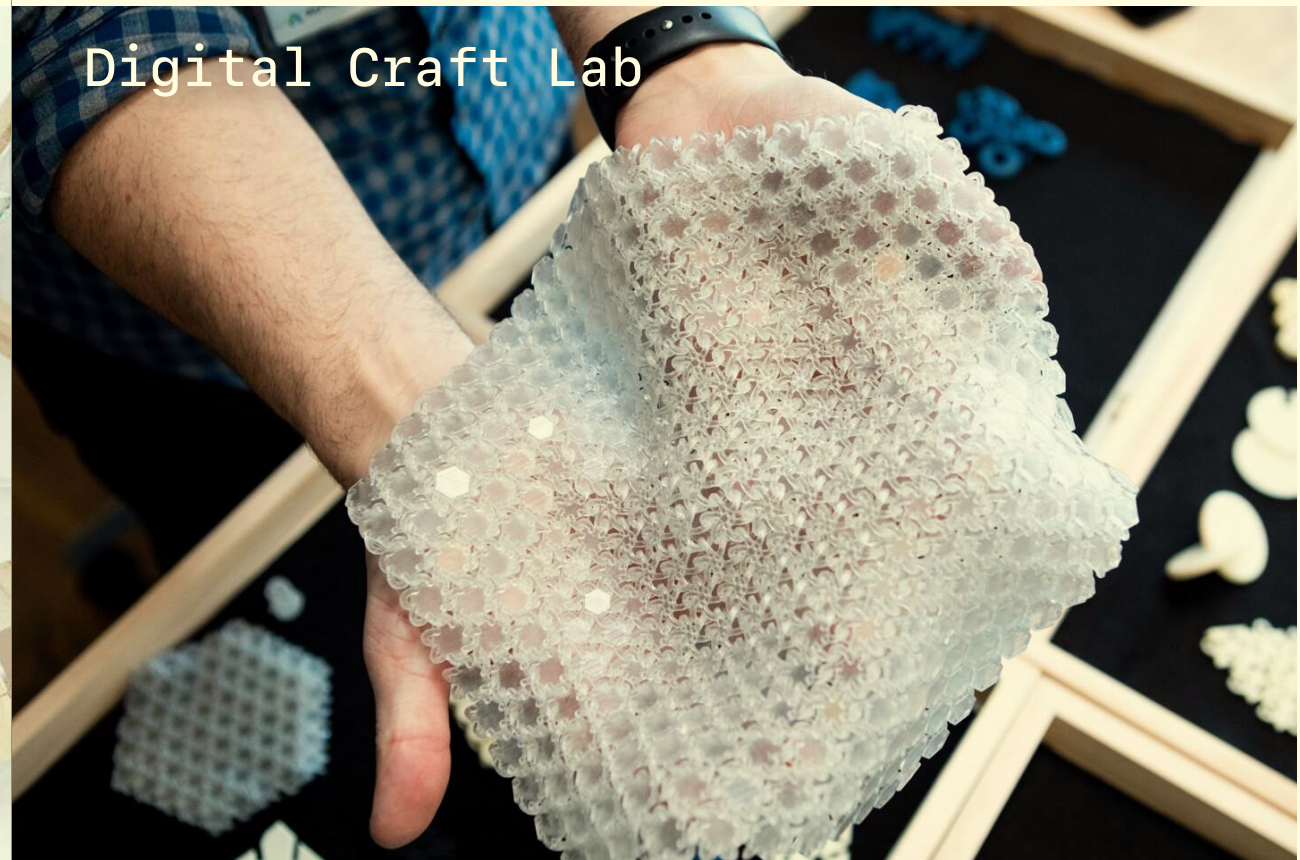
Digital Craft Lab

History Theory Experiments (HTX) is a platform for advanced interdisciplinary research and critical engagement in architecture. HTX is dedicated to expanding and intensifying the ways we think about buildings and landscapes, with a particular interest in alternative and experimental modes of historical practice, including spatial activism, counter-histories, reconstructions, exhibitions, and new materialities of discourse. HTX has sponsored conferences, exhibitions, workshops, and seminars on monuments and racial history, past and future utopian visions, digital reconstructions of historical environments, the economies and ecologies of extraction, augmented reality platforms for urban history, and more.

HTX and its affiliated curriculum support curricular areas such as MArch Thesis, encouraging students to tackle complex, critical and timely topics in an experimental way. Shown here are miniatures created by Thesis students as they incubate their topics.

The CCA Digital Craft Lab (DCL) supports and promotes advanced research in architectural design, digital fabrication, material science, data visualization, and robotics. The work of the lab sits at the intersection of the arts and sciences and is committed to engaging the pressing issues of our time through experimentation, pedagogy, and outreach. The lab routinely collaborates with engineers, scientists, artists, architects, and designers to develop innovative frameworks and prototypes for engaging important issues related to sustainable building practices, ecology, material innovation, and entrepreneurship. The DCL has a new state-of-the-art home (equipped with a large KUKA robot) in our expanded campus.

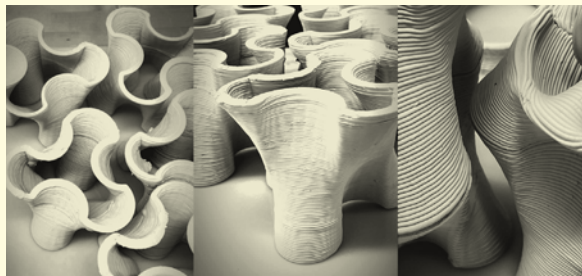DCL co-director Negar Kalantar works with her students to explore how material properties can change through geometric manipulation.

Directors: Irene Cheng and James Graham

⊛ htx.cca.edu

Directors: Jason Kelly Johnson and Negar Kalantar

⊛ digitalcraft.cca.edu

Our students excel…

CCA Architecture and Interior Design students have developed a reputation among peer institutions and employers for being some of the most talented and thoughtful young designers and thinkers in the field. This is evidenced by the many accolades and awards that our students and alumni have received over the years, including:
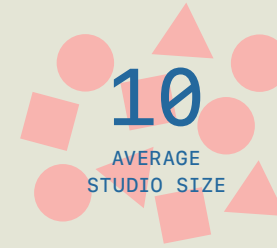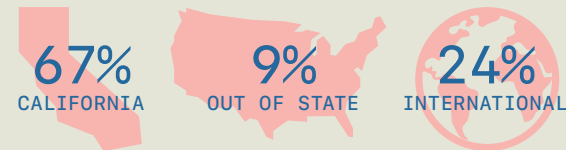
- ⊖ Nineteen Metropolis Future100 (a list of the top 100 architecture and interior designs students graduating in North America each year) awardees in four years
- ⊖ Two consecutive Outstanding Science Awards at the annual BioDesign Challenge
- ⊖ An AIA California Urban Design Student Merit Award
- ⊖ Donghia Foundation Senior Student Scholarship Awards
- ⊖ International Interior Design Association Northern California Student Honor Awards
- ⊖ NEWH Student Scholarships
- ⊖ LIV Hospitality Design Awards
- ⊖ LIT Lighting Design Awards
- ⊖ ACSA/AIA COTE Top Ten Awards
- ⊖ 2x8 AIA LA Awards
- ⊖ and a Rome Prize, among others…

Top to bottom: Vishesh Naresh Khetwani and Daisy Porras, AIA California Urban Design Student Merit Award winners ⊘ Electra White, Metropolis Future 100 Awardee ⊘ BacTerra team, BioDesign Outstanding Science Award

Student Facts and Figures

BARCH

79 STUDENTS

- 67% CALIFORNIA
- 9% OUT OF STATE
- 24% INTERNATIONAL

- 10 AVERAGE STUDIO SIZE
- 89% STUDENTS RECEIVE FINANCIAL AID OR SCHOLARSHIPS

INTERIOR

35 STUDENTS

- 34% CALIFORNIA
- 6% OUT OF STATE
- 60% INTERNATIONAL

- 11 AVERAGE STUDIO SIZE
- 74% STUDENTS RECEIVE FINANCIAL AID OR SCHOLARSHIPS

MARCH

43 STUDENTS

- 45% CALIFORNIA
- 26% OUT OF STATE
- 29% INTERNATIONAL

- 9 AVERAGE STUDIO SIZE
- 100% STUDENTS RECEIVE FINANCIAL AID OR SCHOLARSHIPS

CCA

- 1,063 UNDERGRADS
- 327 GRAD STUDENTS

- 95% OF ARCHITECTURE DIVISION ALUMNI GET JOBS WITHIN 1 YEAR OF GRADUATING

curriculum

"Chrysalis," Vanessa Davidenko's project for the Elemental Advanced Studio, utilizes a frame and suspension construction system in the design of a flexible art school.

Mark Donohue is a licensed practicing architect and educator. Alongside his teaching, Mark contributes to the discourse on representation and digital technology within the field of architecture through his writing and lectures. In addition, he is principal and co-founder of Visible Research Office (VRO), a San Francisco–based multidisciplinary firm. At VRO, Mark leads research initiatives exploring cutting-edge fabrication techniques and innovative materials for application in construction. These research efforts inform a diverse portfolio of commissions at a variety of scales. Mark is a member of the AIA, ACADIA, and is NCARB certified.
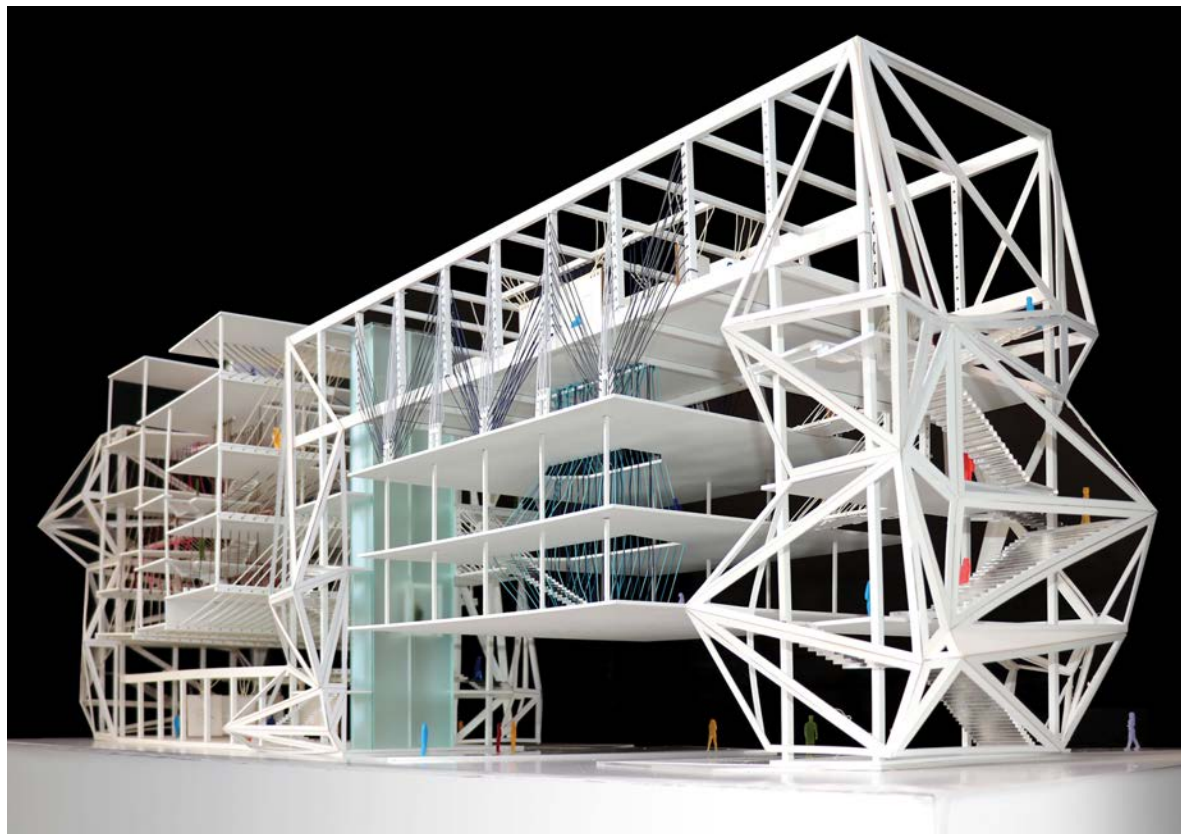
Undergraduate Architecture

At CCA, our Undergraduate Architecture program is about tackling the biggest social and environmental issues head-on. We believe that architecture is a social art and problems of today are best solved by bringing a diversity of voices to the table. We're a community of creators who are passionate about making a difference in the world. Our curriculum is geared toward people who love to learn by making things. In our dynamic and collaborative environment, we challenge the status quo, blend fields of study, embrace the latest tech trends, and work on projects spanning from local neighborhoods to global scales.

Based in the heart of San Francisco, a hub of activism and innovation, we're shaping architects, urban planners, and designers who aren't afraid to disrupt and innovate. Whether you're dreaming of designing sustainable cities, pioneering digital craftsmanship, or diving deep into architectural theory, our five-year, STEM-designated Bachelor of Architecture program, accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), sets you up for success.

Choose from concentrations like Digital Craft, Urbanism, or History/Theory/Experiments to specialize in what excites you most. At CCA, we're not just preparing architects; we're empowering the next generation of change-makers who will redefine what's possible in architecture and beyond.

If you love to make things and want to be a part of a diverse community of people who are equally obsessed with building a better future, join us at CCA.

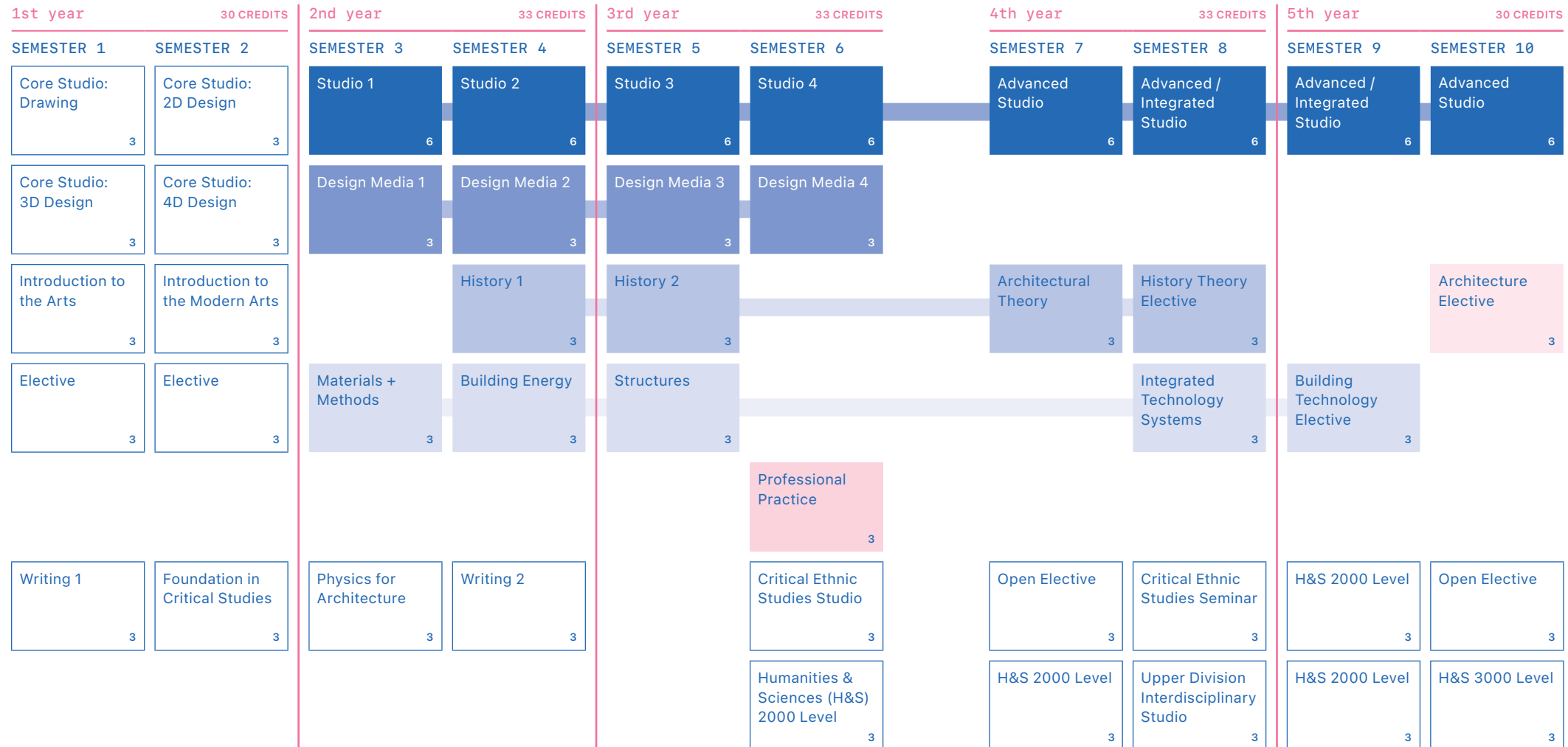⊙ Mark Donohue, Chair of Undergraduate Architecture (BArch)

Bachelor of Architecture

The Bachelor of Architecture program is a NAAB-accredited, STEM-designated professional degree. With a focus on critical thinking and creative making, our students learn to leverage their skills to become agents of change. Our pedagogy encourages conceptual rigor, engaged research, and experimentation, setting our students up to be able to think broadly across scales and rise to the challenges of architectural practice.

The BArch is a five-year program, including a First Year Core Curriculum that unites all students across the various programs at CCA. The interdisciplinary First Year courses explore different approaches to creative practice through a combination of studio work and courses in visual studies, critical studies, and writing.

In the United States, architecture, like law and medicine, is regulated at the state level. A NAAB-accredited degree meets the education requirement for registration in all 55 U.S. jurisdictions.

F-1 international students who earn a STEM-designated CCA Bachelor of Architecture degree may apply for a 24-month OPT extension beyond the initial year of OPT, allowing them to work in the U.S. for up to three years after degree completion. OPT applications and extensions require US DHS/USCIS approval.

1st year — 30 CREDITS		2nd year — 33 CREDITS		3rd year — 33 CREDITS		4th year — 33 CREDITS		5th year — 30 CREDITS	
SEMESTER 1	SEMESTER 2	SEMESTER 3	SEMESTER 4	SEMESTER 5	SEMESTER 6	SEMESTER 7	SEMESTER 8	SEMESTER 9	SEMESTER 10
Core Studio: Drawing — 3	Core Studio: 2D Design — 3	Studio 1 — 6	Studio 2 — 6	Studio 3 — 6	Studio 4 — 6	Advanced Studio — 6	Advanced / Integrated Studio — 6	Advanced / Integrated Studio — 6	Advanced Studio — 6
Core Studio: 3D Design — 3	Core Studio: 4D Design — 3	Design Media 1 — 3	Design Media 2 — 3	Design Media 3 — 3	Design Media 4 — 3				
Introduction to the Arts — 3	Introduction to the Modern Arts — 3		History 1 — 3	History 2 — 3		Architectural Theory — 3	History Theory Elective — 3		Architecture Elective — 3
Elective — 3	Elective — 3	Materials + Methods — 3	Building Energy — 3	Structures — 3			Integrated Technology Systems — 3	Building Technology Elective — 3	
					Professional Practice — 3				
Writing 1 — 3	Foundation in Critical Studies — 3	Physics for Architecture — 3	Writing 2 — 3	Critical Ethnic Studies Studio — 3		Open Elective — 3	Critical Ethnic Studies Seminar — 3	H&S 2000 Level — 3	Open Elective — 3
				Humanities & Sciences (H&S) 2000 Level — 3		H&S 2000 Level — 3	Upper Division Interdisciplinary Studio — 3	H&S 2000 Level — 3	H&S 3000 Level — 3

An internship Is required to complete the BArch degree. This requirement provides students with a grounded, real-world experience in a professional design environment. CCA requires that all student interns and employees be compensated for their work, except in instances where a student volunteers for an approved nonprofit organization.
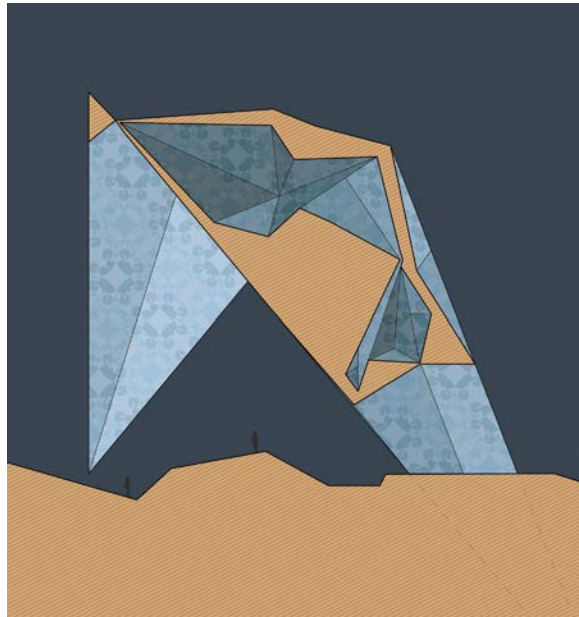
Studios

STUDIO 1

This first semester of the BArch studio sequence introduces the formal, spatial and tectonic characteristics of architectural design. Supported by analyses of precedents, the studio develops a design process built on the coherent correlation among spatial, structural, and organizational systems. Design projects explore how basic programs can generate form, and how spatial constraints can create design opportunities.

STUDIO 2

BArch Studio 2 introduces students to an understanding of the relationships between architectural form, space, and the many meanings of "context" and "environment." Context does not simply mean the physical features of a site, but rather entails social, political, and environmental phenomena. Studio 2 explores architecture's interactions with these phenomena, and contemporary conceptions of environment and ecology, as subjects of architectural discourse, cultural reflection, and experimentation.

STUDIO 3

This third studio in the BArch studio sequence undertakes the design of a complex urban building. The studio explores architectural program and the constituent aspects of an urban context as generative forces for novel and compelling architectural proposals. Exploring public institutions as a rich territory for architectural speculation, students are challenged to develop synthetic proposals that inventively interpret internal programmatic constraints and critically respond to their urban environment.

STUDIO 4

BArch Studio 4 teaches students how to leverage design techniques at an architectural scale to influence social and economic life at an urban scale. Students critique and reimagine the formal and spatial conditions of cities and buildings in relationship to social structures, market forces, and infrastructures. Students are challenged to work simultaneously at the scale of a residential building, and at the scale of the urban context surrounding it, synthesizing formal, historical, sociocultural, and economic factors into an architectural proposal and cohesive narrative.

Design Media & Core Sequences

DESIGN MEDIA (DM)

Studios 1–4 are all accompanied by parallel courses in Design Media.

DM1, Drawing Cultures, introduces the fundamentals of digital drawing and representation techniques, building familiarity with drawing types within established canons of technique. DM1 emphasizes that representation is a reciprocal part of design processes, and that establishing critically informed positions toward media and methods supports strong design intent.

DM2, Image Cultures, positions the architectural image as a form of data processing, distinct from photography or drawing. Building knowledge in image manipulation and digital techniques, DM2 explores contemporary visual culture—its references, aesthetics, and possibilities for architectural use.

DM3, Material Cultures, develops skills and techniques for contemporary fabrication methods. DM3 is particularly concerned with iterative, parametric, and projective design methods, using Grasshopper in tandem with 3D printing, laser-cutting, and CNC milling, while also thinking critically about these technologies through pertinent histories and theories of digital production in architecture.

DM4, Urban Cultures, investigates the sociopolitical, cultural/aesthetic, and material/technological underpinnings of exemplary architectural and urban case studies. It uses descriptive, analytical and theoretical precedents to expand students' knowledge of the architectural discipline. The course exposes students to the tools to extract concepts, methods and tools integral to these architectural works and to generate operative strategies for design.

## BUILDING TECHNOLOGY (BT) CORE SEQUENCE

Building Technology—the practical know-how of making architecture—is a crucial way that designers engage with questions around climate, energy, labor, materiality, and human experience. Our building technology sequence aims to help students be deliberate about our potential agencies as designers of the built environment.

Materials and Methods introduces the primary materials of architecture, exploring the relationship of building details to their material capacities as well as broader ecologies.

Structures explores continuity and stability—helping students understand how loads flow and how structural systems support buildings using model-making (in particular, creating and testing paper trusses) as well as paper-based calculations (drawing forces with graphical analysis).

Building Energy studies how the spaces enclosed by architecture are experienced, whether visually and thermally, and how the materials of architecture participate in energy flow and climate.

Integrated Technological Systems builds on and synthesizes the earlier courses in the BT sequence to think about the interconnectedness of systems, and how to evaluate the overall performance of buildings.
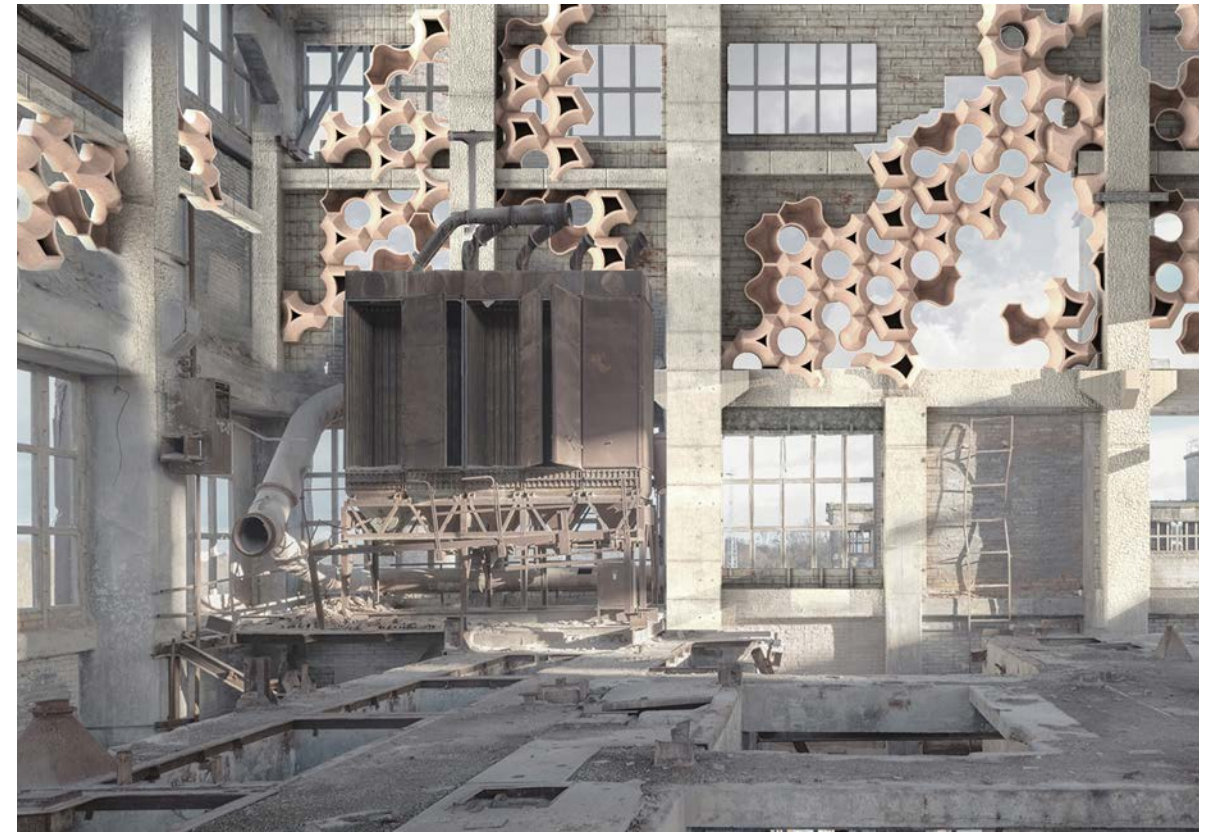
HISTORY / THEORY (HT) CORE SEQUENCE

In the architectural history sequence, courses explore architecture, cultural landscapes, and urban forms around the world. We focus on the ways that architecture manifests is sociopolitical context—how inequalities, working-class life, colonization, gender, and slavery are entwined in the built world. From antiquity to the present, these courses offer a broad foundation in architectural thought.

History of Architecture 1 (antiquity–1750) spans from the earliest forms of settlement to the early modern period—looking at the relationship between buildings, landscapes, and forms of society.

History of Architecture 2 (1750–present) interrogates the idea of "modernity" across a range of contexts—understanding it to be contested, uncertain, and uneven. This class explores the relation of form to world historical forces like racial capitalism, imperialism, and industrialization, as well as more localized practices of gender, domesticity, and community.

Architectural Theory explores key concepts (architectural and non-architectural) that have driven critical, reflective, and innovative design practices from roughly 1968 to the present. Interdisciplinary in nature and thematic in organization, this course aims to offer tools for thinking about the most pressing challenges facing architects today.

After completing the core sequence, students expand on particular areas of interest through advanced electives (see "Electives," p. 39).

Left to right:
Rizwana Lubis, "The Situation," Design Media 2
Anhelina Rozum, "Dune House," Materials and Methods
Vicky Cheung, "Industrial Ruin," Design Media 3

Advanced Studios

In their fourth and fifth years, BArch students have their choice of an array of advanced studios (which also include "integrated studios" that undertake the in-depth development and coordination of architectural systems). In these studios, the BArch and MArch programs come together, and many of the studios operate collaboratively to encourage depth and breadth of research, design development, and representation. Recent studio offerings have included the following:

Recentering Education in Greenville's Rebuild (integrated studio), taught by Peter Anderson, addressed the recovery of Greenville, CA after the devastating Dixie Fire of 2022. Focusing on supporting educational and civic infrastructure, this studio took mass timber as its primary material for tectonic exploration.

Embedded Intelligence (integrated studio), taught by Negar Kalantar, asked students to think innovatively about building material life cycles and waste. As digital fabrication processes narrow the gap between design concepts and their physical realization, architects have new methodologies and new forms of agency in designing these material processes. This studio worked across scales, from the "element" to a "city tree" to a pavilion for Expo 2026 in Barcelona.

Known Unknowns (advanced studio), taught by Janette Kim, examined architecture's role in addressing the unique challenges posed by the unintended side effects, or risks, of modernization. The studio argued that in an era defined by climate change, designers must work across multiple scales and engage diverse publics to create collective solutions that not only meet our immediate needs but also prepare us for the challenges of an uncertain future.

"Dead Ends Aren't Dead," a project for Known Unknowns by Wilson Fung, Bianca Lin, and Joshua Park, transforms cul-de-sacs in East Palo Alto into a network of interconnected structures that promote collaboration among residents and build resilience against sea level rise.

Possible Futures (advanced studio), taught by Thom Faulders, developed tower proposals for the former site of the Nagakin Capsule Tower. Drawing on the heritage of Metabolism, this studio sought "next gen" possibilities for the adaptive qualities that Nagakin sought to embody. Working in digital drawing as well as large-scale physical models, each student developed a porous "architecture of atmosphere."

Cloud City: Bay Bridge 2.0 (advanced studio), taught by Jason Kelly Johnson, is set in the not-so-distant future—around 100 years from now—and looks at the ways collective forms of architecture, cities, and landscapes are informed by emerging technologies, robotic automation, artificial intelligence, and other disruptive forces in ecology and climate, to name just a few. Taking the reused Bay Bridge as its site and making use of advanced computational design methods, these "clouds" are sites for radical architectural and ecological experiment.
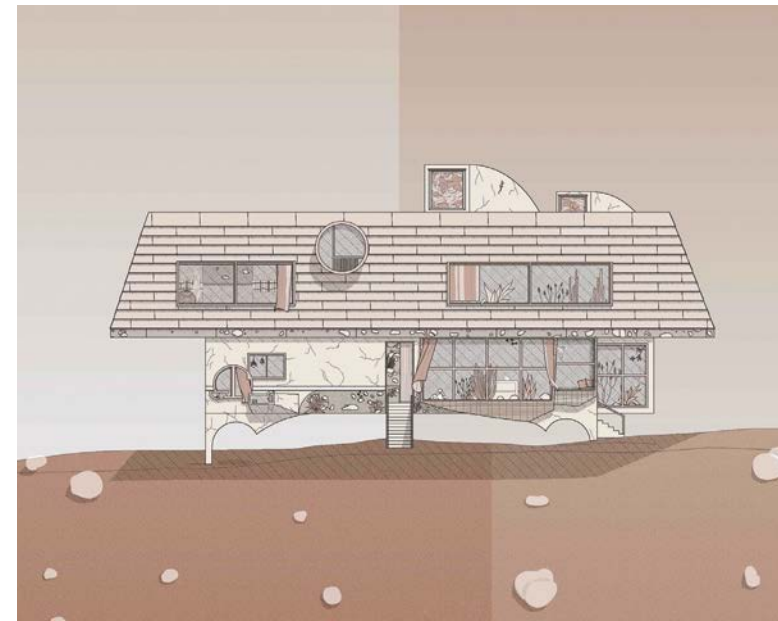
Top to bottom: Alma Davila's project "Desert House" from the Typical Types studio unpacks the conventions associated with familiar house types to expose other possible domestic architectural expressions. ⊘ In the Local Futures integrated studio, Hai Pham and Chong Leng explored the use of local materials and building typologies in the design of an event space for a winery in California's Sonoma County.

In the Ecological Tectonics seminar, Claire Leffler, Ahmad Alajmi, and Colin Murdock developed digitally fabricated modular ceramic shingles that can serve as an ecological habitat for oysters.

Electives

After completing their core requirements, undergraduate students have a number of architecture elective offerings available, whether focusing on building technology (BT), history and theory (HT), design media and digital craft (DM), urban research (UR), or advanced interdisciplinary studios. These are accompanied by a range of seminar-based and workshop-based electives across the college, connecting students with artists and designers in other fields and opening up further possibilities for using creative media to explore architectural questions.

Recent elective offerings have included the following:

Constructed Ecologies (BT), taught by Margaret Ikeda and Evan Jones, considers biomaterials and their embodied carbon in the design of prototype facades and collaborates with the Autodesk Technology Center as well as the annual Biomaterials in Architecture and Design symposium.

Thinness: Eco-Ethical Fabrication Systems (BT), taught by Al Borhani, imagines an architecture of minimal means in terms of material expenditure, developing fabrication systems that explore thinness as both a pragmatic and a conceptual device in rethinking architectural enclosure.

Spaces of Extraction (HT), taught by James Graham, maps the resource landscapes of California as a settler colonial project of modern statehood—one in which architecture and infrastructure participate in the dispossession of native land, extractive material usage, and the reshaping of geographies and geologies.

Tasting Visual Culture (HT), taught by William Littmann, studies historical and contemporary intersections of food and visual culture through the themes of farming, restaurant cultures, family meals, global colonization, food insecurity, and body image.

Radically Local (HT), taught by Lisa Findley, investigates architects who work within a critique of globalization as well as a disdain for the impacts of "flat world" labor, material supply, and environmental impacts—offering instead an architecture that is profoundly local in material, construction craft and technique, capacity building, and sustainability.

(Im)Practical Representation in an Age of Nothingness, Otherness, Whateverness, and I care a lotness (DM), taught by Clark Thenhaus, looks at the notion of "legibility" within architectural history, theory, and contemporary representation practices.

Material Matters (DM), taught by Alex Schofield, works with Potterbot 3D printing to explore new materialities based in waste streams, biological material, and other alternative possibilities for digital craft—harnessing technology and computation as a way of thinking about the roughness of stubborn matter.

Phenomenology of Digital Perception (DM), taught by Jason Anderson, uses video game engines (Unreal and Unity) to explore both physical and digital environments and their interactivity, alongside critical readings related to the history of gamespaces, digital workflows, and extended reality hardware.

Framing the Commons (UR), taught by Antje Steinmuller, investigates practices of "commoning" at a range of scales and registers (natural, cultural, spatial, material, immaterial). In the context of climate change, widespread inequality, pandemic, and urban extractivism, commoning has become a project of renewed political urgency.

Homemade (Advanced Interdisciplinary Studio), taught by Randy Ruiz, imagines new domestic environments by first excavating a broad range of past "houses of the future." Bringing together architecture, interior design, industrial design, and fine arts, this interdisciplinary studio focuses on prototype residential interiors.

tranStudio: Adaptive Thought, Design, and Fabrication (Advanced Interdisciplinary Studio), taught by Negar Kalantar, argues that architecture must embrace adaptability and flexibility to sustain the discipline under increasing demand for change and cooperation.
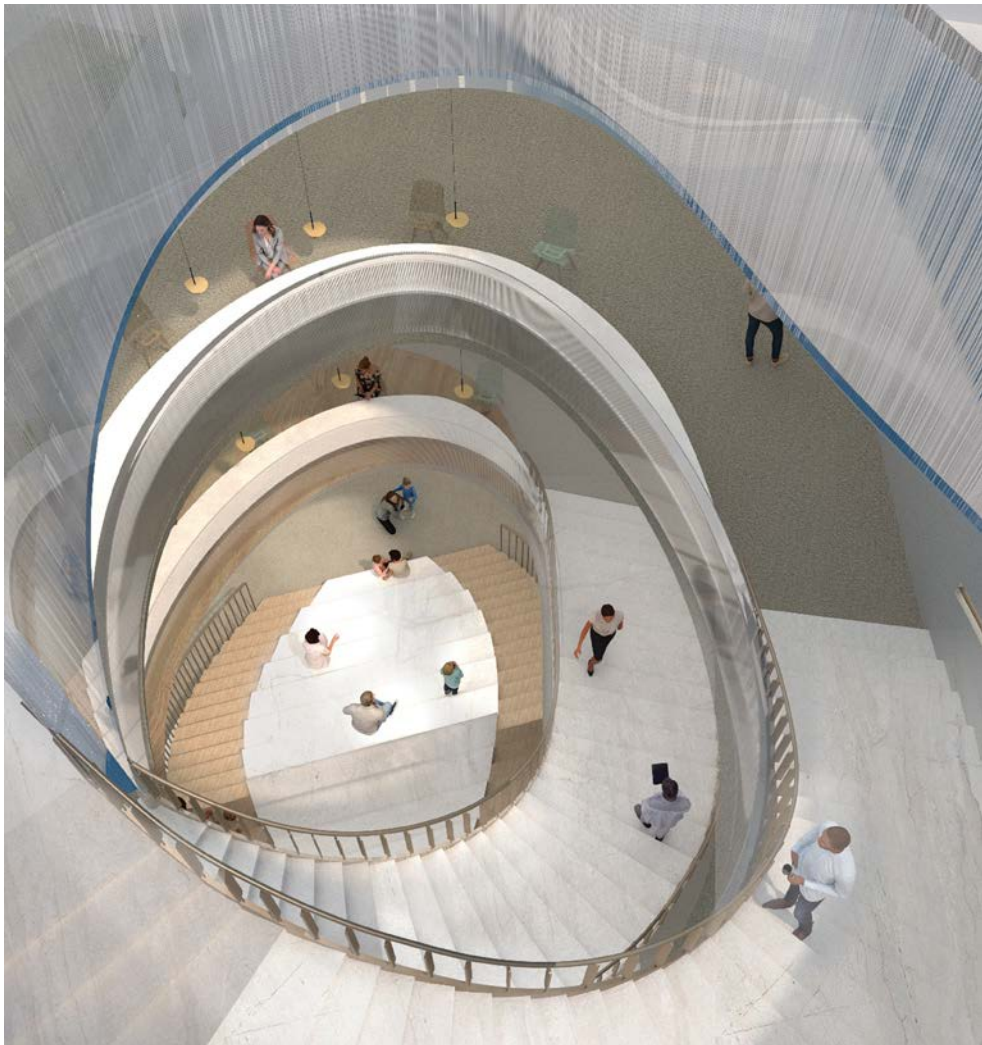
Jun Hee Koh, Suyang Yao, and Tatiana Watkins's 1135 Library for the Interior Design Advanced Interdisciplinary Studio is located within one of the most heavily used branch libraries in San Francisco. This project preserves the existing facade and reading room of the Chinatown Branch Public Library while reimagining the space for the twenty-first century. An active open staircase connects the various programs, extending from a new accessible entry at the sidewalk level to an open-air roof terrace with views across the city and the bay.

Margaux Schindler is a designer, researcher, and educator whose work focuses on flexible modular building systems, sustainable practices, and innovation in material fabrication. Margaux is a founding partner of SIZL Studio, an interdisciplinary practice specializing in spatial explorations in architecture, landscape, interior design, and objects.

Interior Design

The Interior Design program at CCA inspires students to envision and create spaces that prioritize social impact and environmental responsibility. We explore ideas through innovative design, material research, advanced technology, digital fabrication, and the adaptive reuse and transformation of existing buildings in the vibrant San Francisco Bay Area. Our curriculum emphasizes conservation, universal design principles, spatial perception, interaction, and movement. With a dedicated commitment to ecologically responsible design, we empower future designers to craft transformative and impactful spaces.

Interior Design at CCA offers a robust four-year, National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) accredited and STEM-designated professional BFA program totaling 120 credit hours. Students engage in coursework spanning Core Studios, Interior Design Studios, Building Technology, History & Theory, Upper Division Interdisciplinary Studios, Studio Electives, and Humanities & Sciences. The program also provides optional minors in Ecological Practices, Computational Practices, History of Art and Visual Culture, and Writing and Literature. Situated in the dynamic San Francisco Bay Area, students gain valuable professional experience and internships at the nearby SF Design Center and through collaborations with local community partners and design professionals.

⊘ Margaux Schindler, Chair of Interior Design (BFA)

Interior Design (BFA)

Interior Design at CCA is a four-year, accredited professional degree program. Our position within the Architecture division at one of the top art colleges in the country makes us highly interdisciplinary. We have a particular focus on sustainable material practices and spatial innovation. Our students collaborate with interaction designers, industrial designers, ceramicists, textile designers, furniture makers, fashion designers, and architects. They approach the design of built environments with equal emphasis on spatial and technical conditions.

The program includes a First Year Core Curriculum that unites all students across the various programs at CCA. The interdisciplinary First Year courses explore different approaches to creative practice through a combination of studio work and courses in visual studies, critical studies, and writing.

Earning a NASAD-accredited degree ensures that students receive a strong foundation for future success.

As of summer 2025, F-1 international students who earn a STEM-designated CCA BFA in Interior Design degree may apply for a 24-month OPT extension beyond the initial year of OPT, allowing them to work in the U.S. for up to three years after degree completion. OPT applications and extensions require US DHS/USCIS approval.

1st year — 30 CREDITS

SEMESTER 1

Course	Credits
Core Studio: Drawing	3
Core Studio: 3D Design	3
Introduction to the Arts	3
Elective	3
Writing 1	3

SEMESTER 2

Course	Credits
Core Studio: 2D Design	3
Core Studio: 4D Design	3
Introduction to the Modern Arts	3
Elective	3
Foundation in Critical Studies	3

2nd year — 30 CREDITS

SEMESTER 3

Course	Credits
Studio 1	3
Materiality & Space 1	3
Design Media 1	3
Humanities & Sciences (H&S) 2000 Level	3
Writing 2	3

SEMESTER 4

Course	Credits
Studio 2	3
Materiality & Space 2	3
Design Media 2	3
Lighting Design	3
H&S 2000 Level	3

3rd year — 30 CREDITS

SEMESTER 5

Course	Credits
Studio 3	3
Materiality & Space 3	3
Design Media 3	3
Building Systems	3
History of Interior Design 1	3
H&S 2000 Level	3
Critical Ethnic Studies Studio 2000 Level	3

SEMESTER 6

Course	Credits
Studio 4	3
Materiality & Space 4	3
History of Interior Design 2	3
H&S 2000 Level	3
H&S 2000 Level	3

4th year — 30 CREDITS

SEMESTER 7

Course	Credits
Advanced Studio	3
Professional Practice	3
H&S 2000 Level	3
Upper Division Interdisciplinary Studio	3
H&S 2000 Level	3

SEMESTER 8

Course	Credits
Advanced Interdisciplinary Studio	3
Theory of Interior Design	3
Upper Division Interdisciplinary Studio	3
H&S Elective	3
H&S Elective	3

An internship Is required to complete the BFA Interior Design degree. This requirement provides students with a grounded, real-world experience in a professional design environment. CCA requires that all student interns and employees be compensated for their work, except in instances where a student volunteers for an approved nonprofit organization.

Studios

STUDIO 1

This studio course introduces students to the principles and strategies essential to the creation and development of 3D built and virtual spaces, interior systems, and spatial concepts. Particular emphasis is given to the development of robust conceptual ideas and how they further develop into 3D design and establish spatial relations within the built environment.
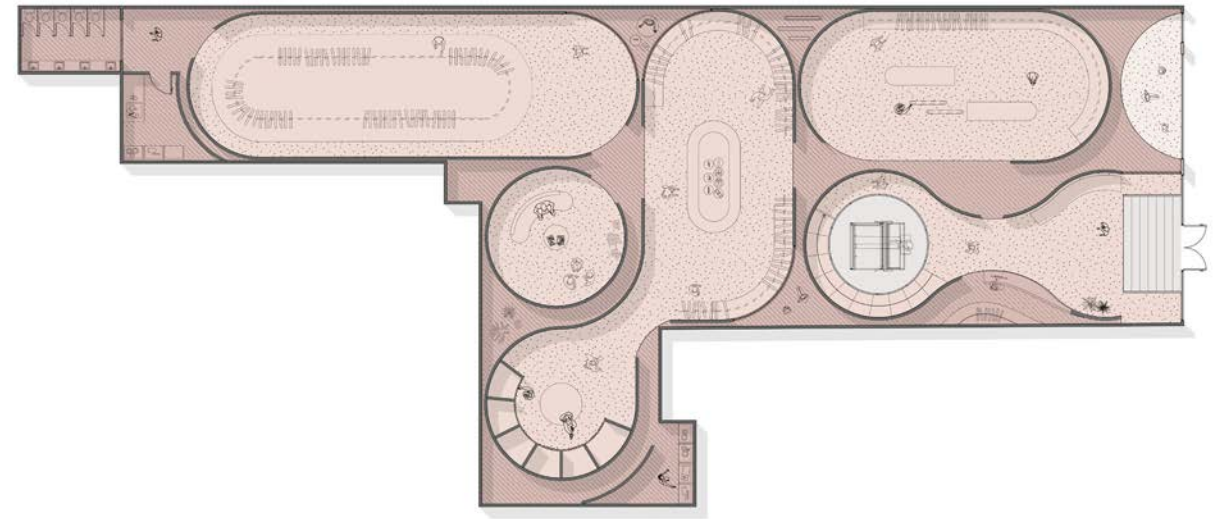
STUDIO 2

The common thread that weaves through the interior design education at CCA is an emphasis on a human centered approach to design, steering students away from style and trend towards the thoughtful making of places and objects that derive from purpose and meaning. Studio 2 builds upon the foundation started in Studio 1 by continuing to explore aspects of the human body in space through a series of exercises using a common set of process tools to develop unique design responses.

STUDIO 3

This studio focuses upon the experiential forces of cultural diversity, histories, and rituals which inform and influence spatial relations and design processes. A series of exercises and class projects exemplify the complex issues that contribute to the construction of significant typologies which resonate within global design practices. The course researches the intersecting nature of cultural histories, building types, unique rituals, and events which create unique opportunities that are realized through the class projects.

STUDIO 4

This junior-level studio requires students to take analytical and critical stances before making formal design moves. A series of graphic and diagrammatic exercises precede a larger project that challenges the students' sense of scale and complexity while maintaining principles of design for the human body as learned in earlier studios. Students at this level will be asked to envelop interpersonal activities and exchange in more civic settings than in previous studios.

Left to right:
Natalie Mulyawan, "Transformative Set," Studio 2
Nitya Sanjana Reddy Cheruku, "Woven Studio," Studio 4
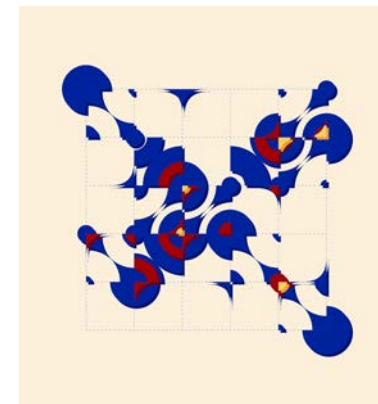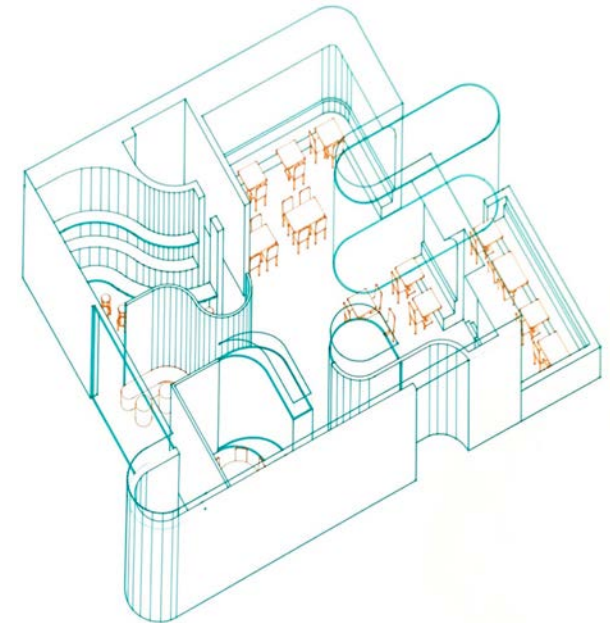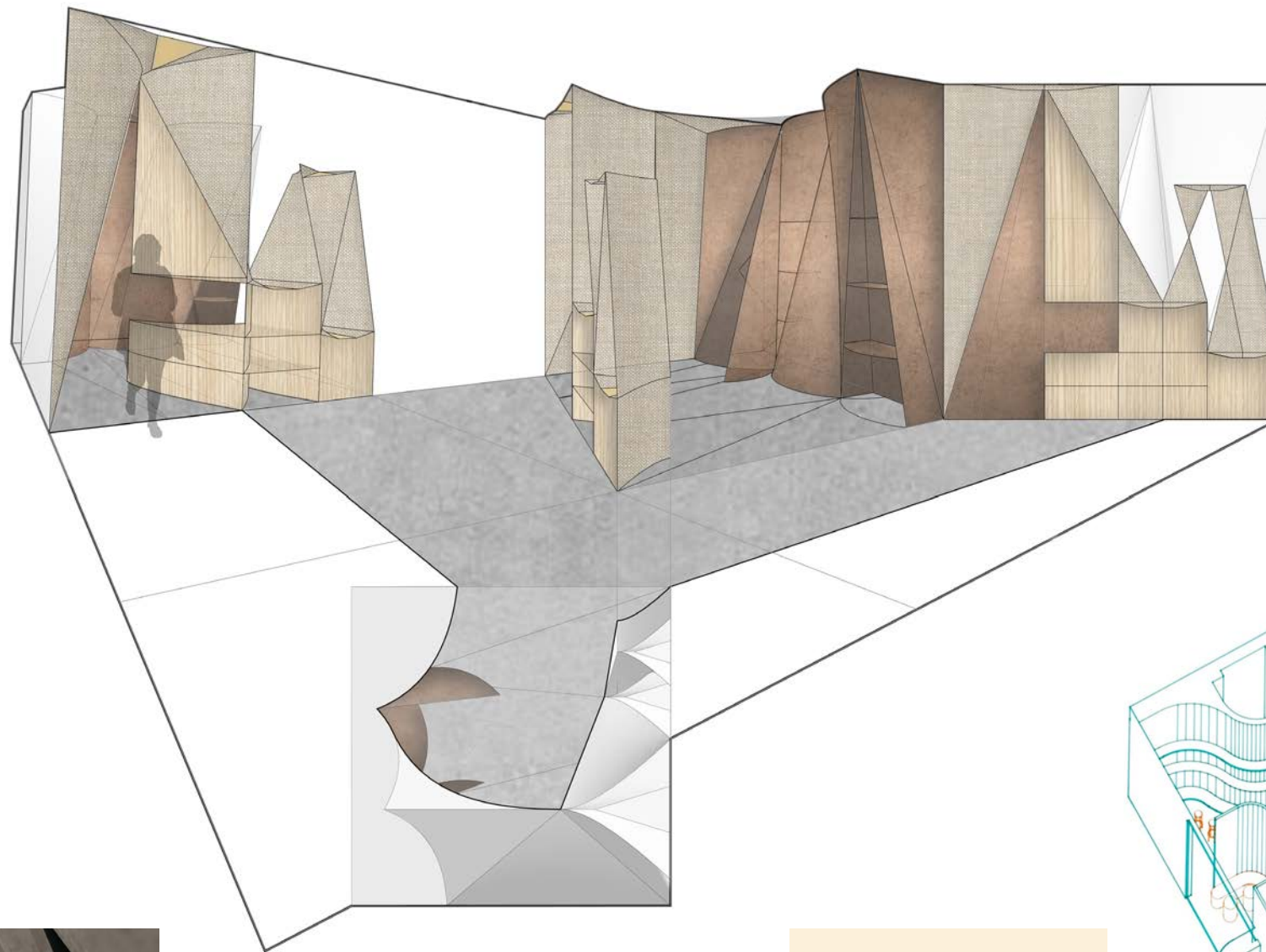Sandra Yang, "Microfarm," Studio 3

Design Media

Studios 1–3 are all accompanied by parallel
courses in Design Media (DM).

DM1, Drawing Cultures, introduces the fundamentals of
digital drawing and representation techniques, building
familiarity with drawing types within established canons
of technique. DM1 emphasizes that representation is a
reciprocal part of design processes, and that establishing
critically informed positions toward media and methods
supports strong design intent.

DM2, Image Cultures, positions the architectural image
as a form of data processing, distinct from photography
or drawing. Building knowledge in image manipulation and
digital techniques, DM2 explores contemporary visual
culture—its references, aesthetics, and possibilities for
architectural use.

DM3, Material Cultures, develops skills and techniques
for contemporary fabrication methods. DM3 is particularly
concerned with iterative, parametric, and projective design
methods, using Grasshopper in tandem with 3D printing,
laser-cutting, and CNC milling, while also thinking critically
about these technologies through pertinent histories and
theories of digital production in architecture.

Left to right:
Scarlett Zhang, "Radiant Sphere," DM3
Esther Yu, "Narrate," DM2
Xinye Ju, "Pattern," DM3
Soojee Choi, "Narrate," DM3

Materiality and Space

Studios 1–4 are all accompanied by parallel courses in Materiality and Space.

MS 1 offers an introduction to the essential properties of a wide range of materials and their dynamic engagement with the material, corporeal, and non-physical qualities of space.

MS 2 focuses on color theory and the understanding, use, and specification of materials for interior environments. This course counts toward an Ecological Practices minor.

MS 3 focuses on processes suggested by the distinct intention, application, and detailing of materials themselves, as well as experienced effects of material detailing and application, including sound, light, and atmosphere, as well as ecological impact. This course is currently part of the Ecological Practices minor.

MS 4 students develop full-scale material prototypes, using hybrid processes, manual shop work and digital fabrication to structure interaction, perception, and performance.
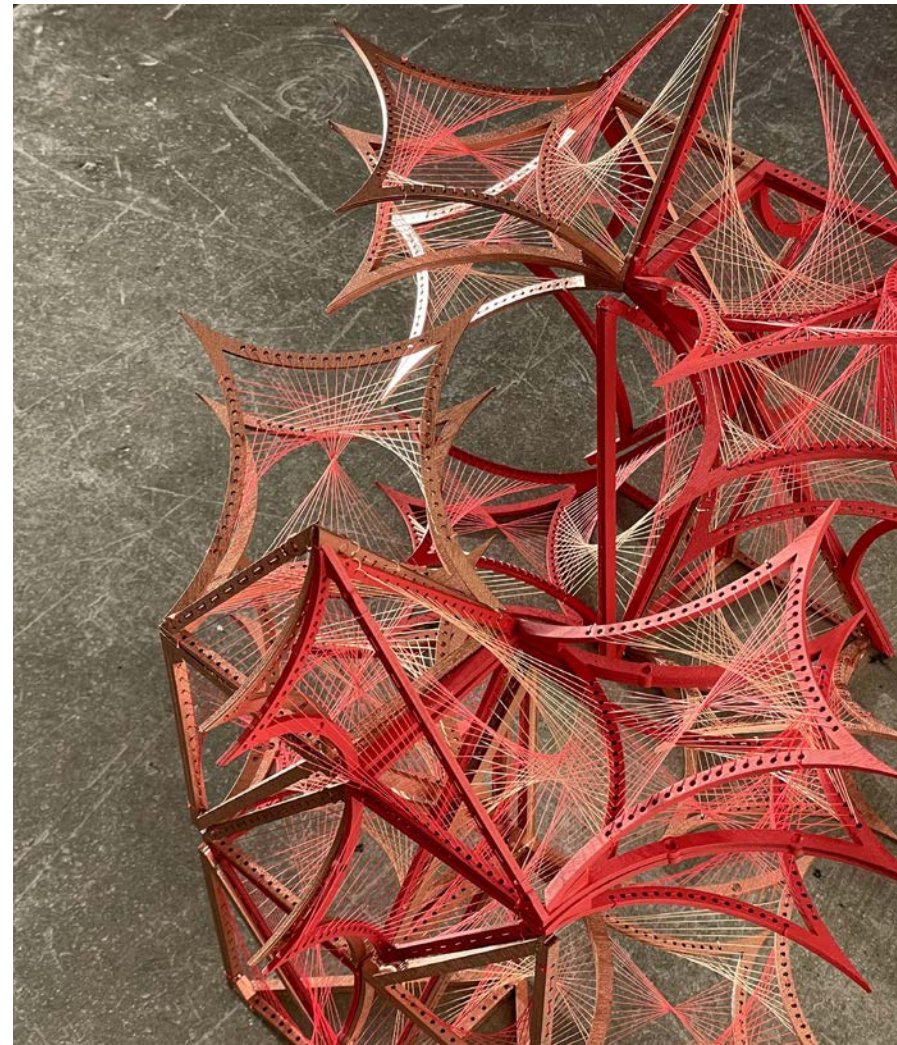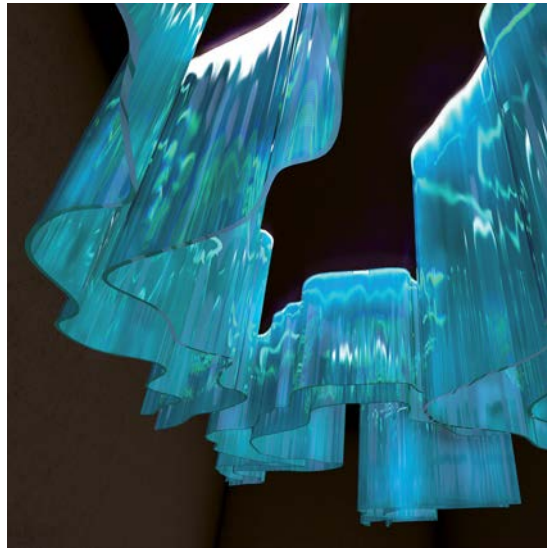

Left to right:
Soojee Choi, Owen Patia, Electra White, "Cupola," MS4
Claudia Nunez, "Woven Projection," MS3
Soojee Choi, "Chromatic Compositions," MS2
Ziang Zhang, "Reveal," MS4

Core Sequences

BUILDING TECHNOLOGY (BT) CORE SEQUENCE

Lighting Design examines strategies associated with lighting design, its impact upon a diverse set of interior systems, and the construction of spatial relations. Students study the broad spectrum of lighting sources and a variety of lighting techniques. This course covers the fundamentals of lighting design, including the physics of light, the color of light, luminaire sources and types, regulations, technical terminology, and issues pertaining to energy conservation and the impact of light on an environment and human behavior.

Building Systems introduces students to building systems and structures. Students gain exposure to a wide variety of topics, including building structures, in addition to mechanical, electrical, fire, acoustical, and security systems. Students also learn about LEED certification for interior design projects. Additional topics including indoor air quality, passive solar heating, and sustainable design principles are also addressed.


HISTORY / THEORY (HT) CORE SEQUENCE

History of Interior Design 1 examines interiors, planning, spatial relationships, decoration, and furniture from the ancient world through Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque periods up to and including the eighteenth century. The course emphasizes the formation of architecture and interiors throughout history, focusing on the ways in which material and social culture have influenced its developments and stylistic characteristics over time. The work of important designers, furniture makers, and artists are studied along with their design philosophies.

History of Interior Design 2 examines the history of interiors from the late eighteenth century to the present. The course also helps students develop the tools to formulate questions about the social meaning of interior spaces and understand how designers' decisions are shaped by larger political, social, and economic forces. This course takes an expansive approach to the study of interiors. Thus we will consider not only the design and decoration of the interior architectural envelope but also the material objects found inside rooms, including carpets, drapery, woodwork, machinery, and decorative objects. We also consider how there can be multiple interpretations of interior space based on gender, sexual identity, class, ethnicity, and race.

The **History / Theory elective** delves into specific paths within the history and theory of interior design, highlighting how these have shaped contemporary thought and practice. These electives explore the intersection of multiple disciplines, covering diverse topics such as globalization, nature and ecology, race and ethnicity, film and architecture, urban theory, and more.
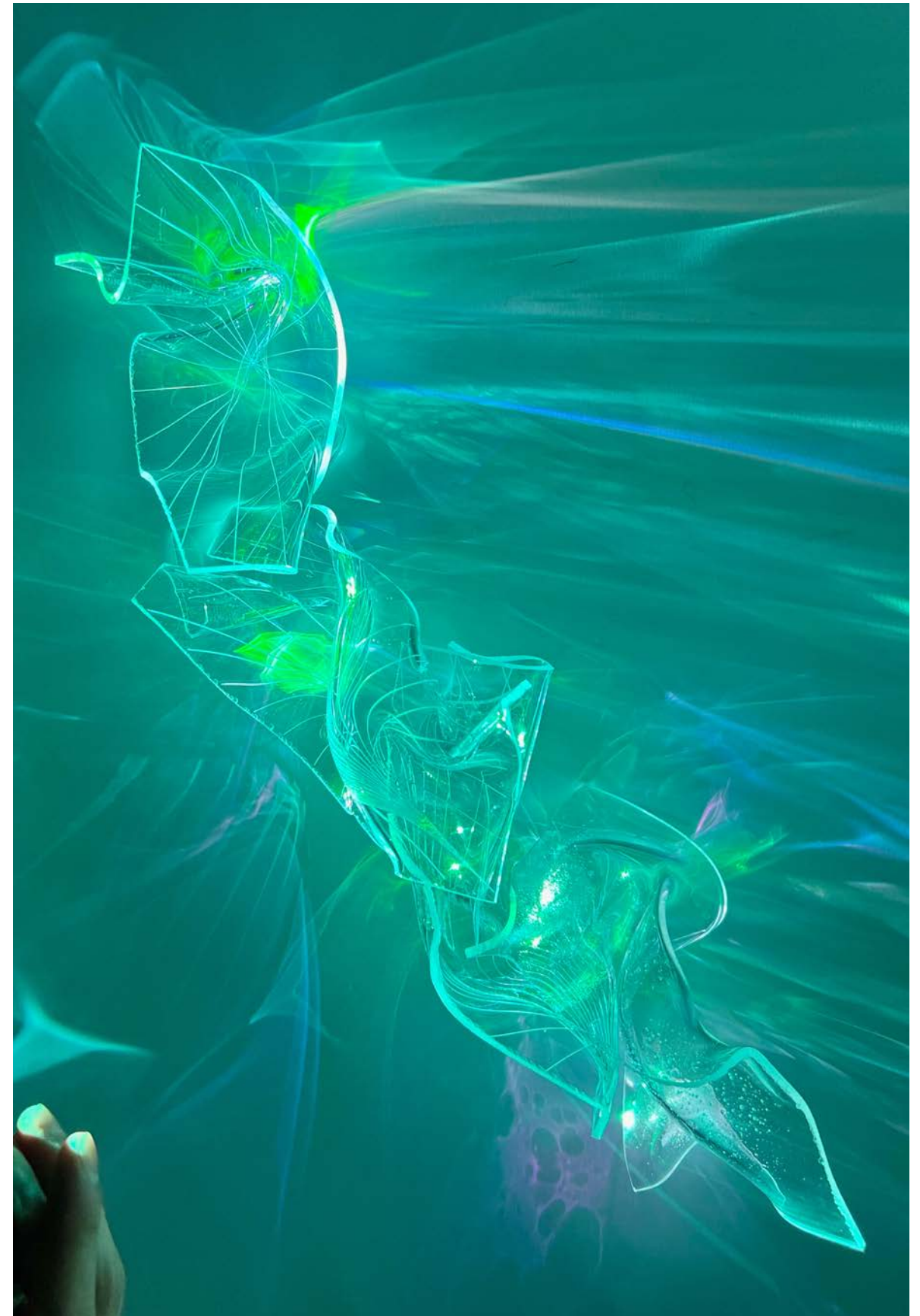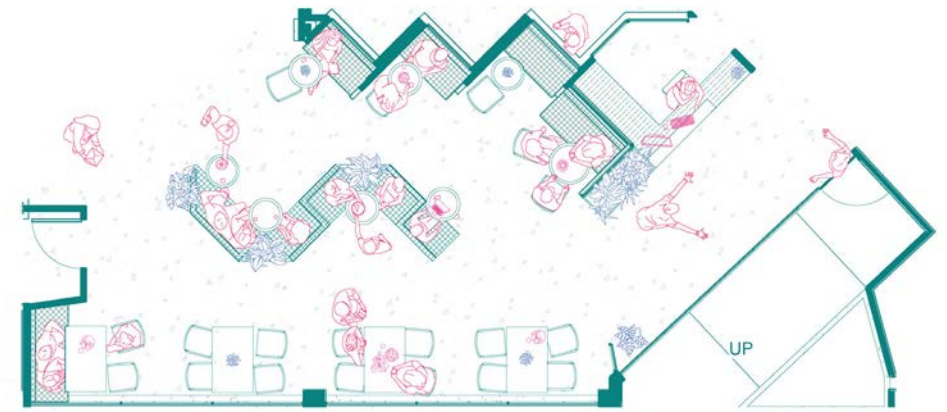
Advanced Studios

In their seven and eighth semesters, Interior Design students take Advanced Studios and have their choice of an array of Upper Division Interdisciplinary Studios (UDIST). Recent Advanced Studio offerings have included the following:
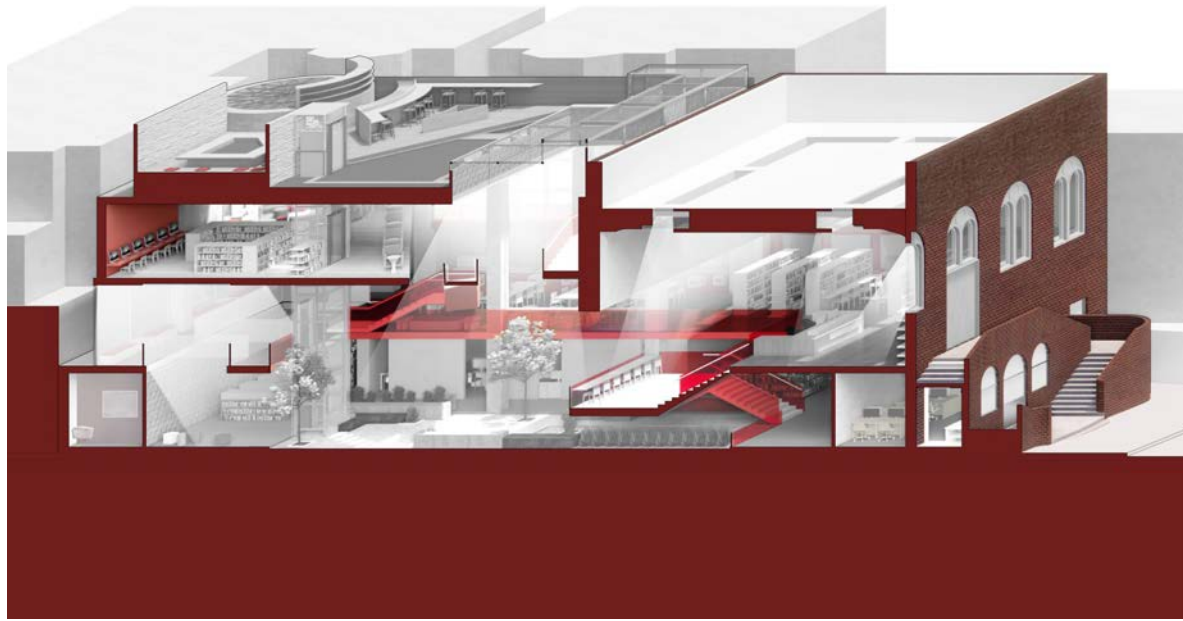
Interior Design Advanced Studio
Working within the parameters of the 2023–24 NEWH Green Voice Design Competition and within the context of the current day challenges and opportunities in downtown San Francisco, students created proposals to transform underutilized commercial office buildings into hotel properties specifically aligned with a transforming post-pandemic downtown. Rooted in adaptive reuse, these hotel proposals were sited and designed to both attract a defined audience to San Francisco as well as nurture residents living and working in the city. Specific focus was given to the use of healthy materials.

Interior Design Advanced Interdisciplinary Studio: Embodiments of Experiential Spatial Design
From the disability rights movement's inception in 1960s Berkeley to futuristic models by Silicon Valley and MIT, this course explores universal design and human-centered inclusive design. Through trans-disciplinary research, student-led projects, and insightful articles, we aim to create inclusive, safe, and accepting spaces for all.

Left to right:
Guiteau Jingtong Yu, "More Care More Love," Interior Design Advanced Studio
Electra White, "Craft Social Club," Interior Design Advanced Interdisciplinary Studio

Top to bottom: Natalie Mulyawan, Yuanyin Tang, and Xiyue Zhang's "ARCADIA Library," designed for the Interior Design Advanced Interdisciplinary Studio, is more than just a place to hold books. It embodies a vision of harmony and idyllic innocence, offering peace and contentment. Serving as both an educational institute and a gathering point for the San Francisco Chinatown community, it is a place where people come together to learn and connect. ⊘ In the Interior Design Advanced Interdisciplinary Studio Anna Danilova, Anna Qian, and Daniel Ramirez created composite material models to study the use of materials that are versatile, inclusive, and would appeal to a diverse range of preferences and identities.

PLAY portfolio by Jared Elizares, MArch 2024

Studying Architecture and Interior Design at CCA means joining a tight-knit community. Outside of studio, students find time to hike, travel, explore, wander, jam, debate, celebrate milestones, and more.

Recent alum Jared Elizares documented his and fellow students' extracurricular pursuits during his three years at CCA. Jared is an avid photographer who enjoys working primarily with vintage medium- and large-format film cameras, as well as alternative digital processes.

Martin Hitch's Advanced Studio project imagines a new kind of post-religious spiritual space, inspired by the appropriation and reuse of Cold War missile silos.

Irene Cheng is an architectural historian, critic, and educator. In addition to chairing the graduate Architecture program at CCA, she codirects History Theory Experiments (HTX), a platform for advanced interdisciplinary research and critical engagement in architecture. Irene is author and co-editor of several books, including *The Shape of Utopia: The Architecture of Radical Reform in Nineteenth-Century America*, *Race and Modern Architecture: A Critical History from the Enlightenment to the Present* (with Mabel O. Wilson and Charles L. Davis III), and *The State of Architecture at the Beginning of the 21st Century* (with Bernard Tschumi).

Graduate Architecture

What is it like to study in the CCA's Graduate Architecture program?

At CCA you will learn from brilliant faculty that include active designers and professionals, as well as researchers breaking ground in the fields of architectural technology, design justice, ecology, and critical history and theory.

You will have intimate access and work closely alongside your teachers and peers on collective projects and research initiatives.

You will spend your days (and nights) exploring how architecture shapes the world—its ecologies, housing crises, urban and rural conditions, infrastructure, digital futures, material assemblages, aesthetic effects, and more—equipping you for a lifetime of sustained critical engagement and practice.

You will be part of a cohort—which you will come to think of as your "school family"—composed of mad geniuses, quiet personalities, loud characters, design geeks, engineers, sculptors, digital whizzes, history nerds, and more, all of whom share your obsession with architecture, and who are there to support you through the joys and trials of architecture school.

You will be inspired by the outsize ambition and achievement circulating in small classes in which every voice is valued.

You will join a community of people who are committed to their craft, who stay curious, who are simultaneously critical and kind, and whose enthusiasms are contagious.

If this sounds appealing, we invite you to reach out for a tour, a visit, or a chat over coffee. We can't wait to meet you!

⊙ Irene Cheng, Chair of Graduate Architecture (MArch and MAAD)

Master of Architecture

The Master of Architecture program is a NAAB-accredited, STEM-designated professional degree. With particular strengths in ecological engagement, urban research, and digital fabrication, the MArch program puts theory into practice—connecting critical thinking and experimental designs with on-the-ground concerns. The MArch is a three-year program, although students with previous degrees in architecture may qualify for advanced standing and enter in the second year.

In the United States, architecture, like law and medicine, is regulated at the state level. A NAAB-accredited degree meets the education requirement for registration in all 55 U.S. jurisdictions.

F-1 international students who earn a STEM-designated CCA Master of Architecture degree may apply for a 24-month OPT extension beyond the initial year of OPT, allowing them to work in the U.S. for up to three years after degree completion. OPT applications and extensions require US DHS/USCIS approval.

| 1st year	30 CREDITS	2nd year	30 CREDITS	3rd year	30 CREDITS
SEMESTER 1	SEMESTER 2	SEMESTER 3	SEMESTER 4	SEMESTER 5	SEMESTER 6
Studio 1 A | B 6	Studio 2 A | B 6	Studio 3 6	Advanced / Integrated Studio 6	Advanced / Integrated Studio 6	Thesis Studio 6
Materials + Methods 3	Structures 3	Building Energy 3	Integrated Technology Systems 3		Building Technology Elective 3
History 1 3	History 2 3	Architectural Theory 3		Thesis Seminar 3	
Design Media 1 3	Design Media 2 3	Architectural Analysis 3			
			Graduate Elective 3	Architecture Elective 3	
			Architecture Elective 3	Open Elective 3	Architecture Elective 3
					Professional Practice 3

ADVANCED STANDING 2-YEAR CURRICULUM

An internship Is required to complete the MArch degree. This requirement provides students with a grounded, real-world experience in a professional design environment. CCA requires that all student interns and employees be compensated for their work, except in instances where a student volunteers for an approved nonprofit organization.

Core Studios

STUDIO 1

Studio 1 is split into two seven-week modules. The first, Order, explores the basics of distributing things in space—positing that composition is inseparable from the imposition of power and exploring techniques for making and unmaking order. The second, Scenarios, relates form to programmatic intent and social conditions and focuses on everyday living and interactions.
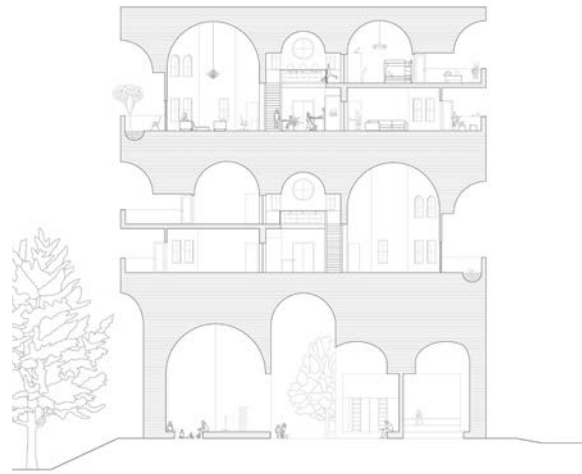
Daisy Downs' project for Studio 1 imagines an architecture of laundry—remaking the social relations of dormitory living by thinking about how practices of housekeeping shape daily movements.

STUDIO 2

Studio 2 is split into two seven-week modules. The first, Systems, focuses on organizational relationships, whether conceptual, tectonic, or ecological. The second, Environments, extends even further outward, situating buildings within expanded landscapes and asking how architecture relates to specific sites as well as planetary concerns.
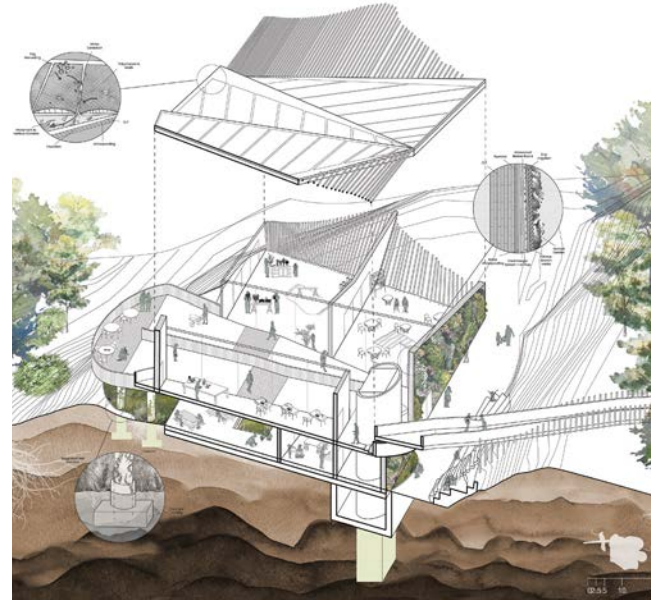
Kira Finigan's Studio 2 project "Canopy" proposes a Center for Ecological Stewardship that responds to the surrounding environment.

STUDIO 3

Studio 3—which is also the entry point for students undertaking the two-year advanced standing MArch—turns its focus to the city, beginning with rigorous research and analysis. Situated in the historically Black neighborhood of West Oakland and working at the institutional scale, this studio works through experiment and iteration in an ongoing feedback loop between design and research. The program for these students was to design a library with an added program of their own choosing.

Alia Brookshire's "(Coop)erative" for Studio 3 reimagines the library as an urban commons shared by human and non-human species (chickens).

Design Media & Core Sequences

DESIGN MEDIA (DM)

For three-year MArch students, the first year includes two semesters of Design Media, which introduces students to the conventions of architectural representation.

DM1 builds facility with using architectural tools, and also builds a critical, cultural, and historical perspective around the ways that architecture gets drawn.

DM2 moves from 2D to 3D, exploring computational methods of design, representation, and fabrication.

BUILDING TECHNOLOGIES (BT) CORE SEQUENCE

Building Technology—the technical know-how of making architecture—is a crucial way that designers engage with questions around climate, energy, labor, materiality, and human experience. Our building technology sequence aims to help students be deliberate about our potential agencies as designers of the built environment.

Materials and Methods introduces the primary materials of architecture, exploring the relationship of building details to their material capacities as well as broader ecologies.

Structures unites design and physics in a laboratory environment that understands structural systems as potential creative drivers of buildings—blending technical knowledge with a sense of hands-on invention.

Building Energy studies how the spaces enclosed by architecture are experienced, visually and thermally, and how the materiality of architecture modifies climate.

Integrated Technological Systems builds on and synthesizes the earlier courses in the BT sequence to think about the interconnectedness of systems, and how to evaluate the overall performance of buildings.

After completing the core sequence, students expand on particular areas of interest through advanced electives (see "Electives," pp. 72–73).

HISTORY / THEORY (HT) CORE SEQUENCE

Architectural History is not a list of important buildings, but a way of thinking about how buildings are shaped by (and shape in turn) the worlds they exist in. Spanning from the "early modern" to the present, and from the monumental to the everyday, our history / theory sequence takes a global view onto changes in economics, culture, politics, technologies, or aesthetic theories that offer us prehistories of the present.

History of Architecture 1 (1400–1875) spans from the age of colonialism to the rise of industrialized society, with a particular focus on how architectural ideas, drawn and written, have been transmitted through contact and conflict between nations and empires.

History of Architecture 2 (1875–present) interrogates the idea of "modernity" across a range of contexts—understanding it to be contested, uncertain, and uneven. This class explores the relation of form to world historical forces like racial capitalism, imperialism, and industrialization, as well as more localized practices of gender, domesticity, and community.

Architectural Theory explores key concepts (architectural and non-architectural) that have driven critical, reflective, and innovative design practices from roughly 1968 to the present. Interdisciplinary in nature and thematic in organization, this course aims to offer tools for thinking about the most pressing challenges facing architects today.
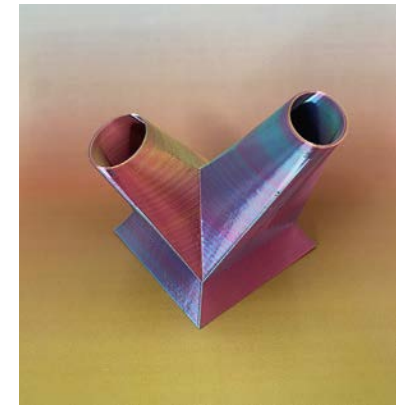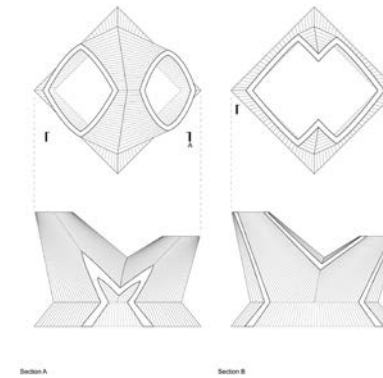
Top to bottom: Students in DM1 and DM2 develop fluency in geometry, digital modeling, and representation. ⊘ Learning in the field: Students in History of Architecture 2 visit a building by Frank Lloyd Wright in San Francisco. ⊘ Students draw on their learning in the BT core sequence to propose solutions in their Integrated Studio projects, as shown here in Mona Carinugan, Zion Lewis, and Vishesh Naresh Khetwani's building section for a Japanese American meeting hall.

Advanced Studios

In their fourth and fifth semesters, MArch students have their choice of an array of advanced studios (which also include "integrated studios" that undertake the in-depth development and coordination of architectural systems). Recent studio offerings have included the following:

Regeneration: Grounding Culture (integrated studio), taught by Margaret Ikeda and Evan Jones, brought together living systems (of soil and water) with the cultural history of California's Central Valley. Known as the "salad bowl" of the United States, the area around Arroyo Grande was also home to a unique communal settlement of Japanese immigrants in the 1920s who were then displaced by through incarceration during the Second World War. The program for this studio was a community center that brings out the site's past in imagining a more regenerative future.

Greenville: An Architectural Case Study in Rethinking Repair (integrated studio), taught by Lisa Findley and Mark Donohue, imagined a phased architecture of regeneration, one in which the aftermath of the Dixie Fire is but one recent example of what it means to rethink the wildland-urban interfaces where the effects of climate change are acutely felt. Using wood (particularly reclaimed trees burnt by fire) as a primary building material, this studio proposed mixed-use buildings that could be reworked to fit changing needs over time.

Missile Silos: Military Infrastructure and the American West (advanced studio), taught by Clark Thenhaus, explored strategies for the critical reuse, appropriation, and adaptation of a geopolitically freighted building type.

The Territorial City (advanced studio), taught by Neeraj Bhatia, examined the resource landscapes of California's Central Valley, which is now being stitched together into a megaregion by the California High Speed Rail project. How might this new high speed rail diversify economies and ecologies while creating new relationships between once-distant cities and their associated politics and culture?

Material Streaming (advanced studio), taught by Arthur Harsuvanakit and Gil Sunshine, investigated possibilities in working with non-standard materials, rather than the industrialized supply of building materials familiar to architectural practice today. Gleaning material from local waste streams—and using new techniques associated with the emerging field of digital craft—this studio developed a novel material library through the fabrication of chairs.
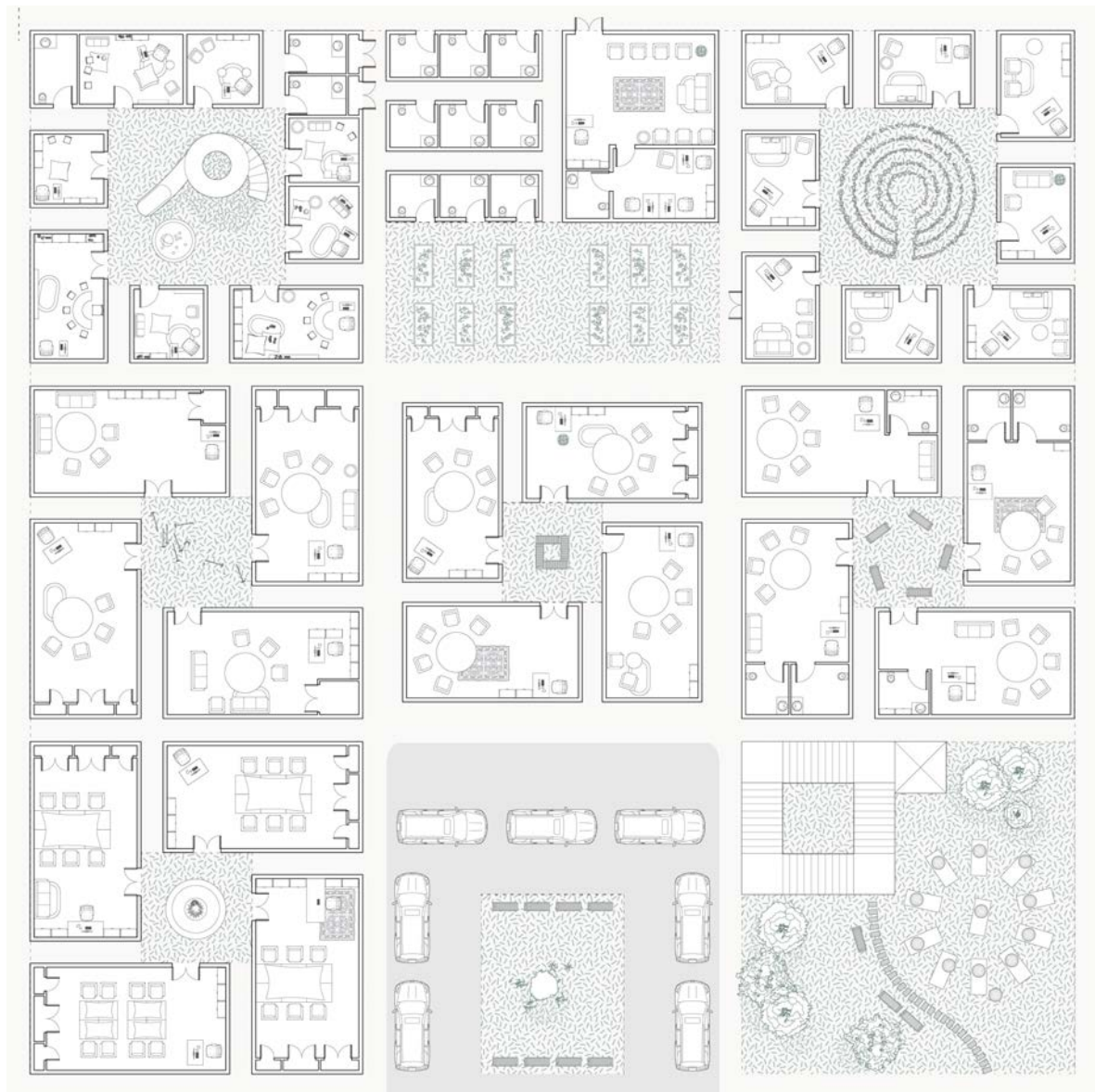
Left to right: In their project "A New Landscape of Care" for The Territorial City, Alia Brookshire and Hannah Leathers developed a new architecture of healthcare using the high-speed rail as a connective spine that distributes, rather than centralizes, specialized care across the corridor from Stockton to Bakersfield, creating a porous network of sites for wellness. ⊘ Negar Hosseni proposes a self-supporting structure, made of bamboo, as part of a Synthetic Tectonics course.

LED Lights

Bamboo Structure

Above and Underground Foundation

Electives

After completing their core requirements, graduate students have a number of architecture elective offerings available, whether focusing on building technology (BT), history and theory (HT), design media and digital craft (DM), or urban research (UR). Graduate students also have access to CCA's unique "grad-wide electives" (GE), which bring together students from across the college's many programs and divisions. Some of these grad-wide electives are taught by professors from the Architecture division, while others are an invitation to learn from and experiment within other fields of creative action. Recent elective offerings have included the following:

Extreme Structures (BT), taught by Brendan Beazley, considers resilience in the face of disaster. If architecture is meant to shelter and protect, how might we design structures that not only survive but surpass (or bypass) extreme natural events?

Future Timber (BT), taught by Peter Anderson, surveys the state of mass timber construction in the name of developing new timber-related building products and systems, blending architectural research with an entrepreneurial ethos of imagining new possibilities for construction and building supply methods.

Material Histories (HT), taught by Irene Cheng, asks what, exactly, is architecture made of? It is a simple question with complex answers—introducing students to a range of histories and theories that connect buildings to broader landscapes and ecologies.

Architecture or Revolution? (HT), taught by Ecem Saricayir, begins with Le Corbusier's famous dictum that the answer to social unrest would either be architecture or revolution. But what of architecture during, or as, revolution? This seminar looks at the ways architecture has been put in the service of radical politics across the twentieth-century.

Awkward Architecture (DM), taught by Thom Faulders, explores the untapped potentials found in architecture that is lacking (whether of grace, proportion, or material attributes). Part think-tank and part investigative seminar, this workshop aims to document certain margins of the field where design opportunity lurks.

Synthetic Tectonics (DM), taught by Jason Kelly Johnson, explores the conceptual and technical implications of computational design, digital fabrication, and other emerging methodologies that stem from new techniques such as parametric and generative design software along with digital and material representation systems.

Urban Imaginaries (UR), taught by Janette Kim, offers a critical introduction to major theories of urbanism. It explores how architects can engage with the social movements and political forces that shape contemporary cities, including social inequity, climate change, and neoliberalism.

Forming Life in Common (UR), taught by Neeraj Bhatia, asks how we live collectively—historical proposals of communal living alongside emerging forms of commoning, sharing, caring, and maintaining spaces for alternative domestic modes of residence.

Pieces of Nature (GE), taught by Chris Falliers, brings together environmental theory and creative practice in asking how nature is encapsulated, bounded, and experienced by human design—looking at historical positions on how we relate to the environment as well as contemporary media practices.

Air Conditions (GE), taught by James Graham, contemplates the possibility that our atmosphere is a "medium," one that is read (and written) daily. As a reading group the seminar thinks together about theories of air, while staging a final exhibition in which a particular "air condition" is represented through artistic or architectural means.
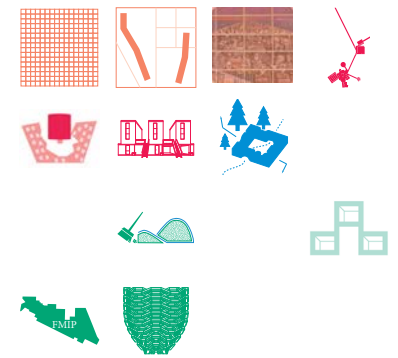
This book was edited by Janette Kim and created by students at the California College of Arts Architecture Division: Alhakam Alaedh, James Ayling, Pietro Carini, Celdin Fajardo, Shih Ting Huang, Jennifer Jimenez, Thomas Krulevitch, Lori Martinez, Donna Mena, Kurt Pelzer, Sharan Saboji, Sayer Al Sayer, Jose Trujillo, and Elmer Wang.

CCA ARCHITECTURE / URBAN WORKS AGENCY

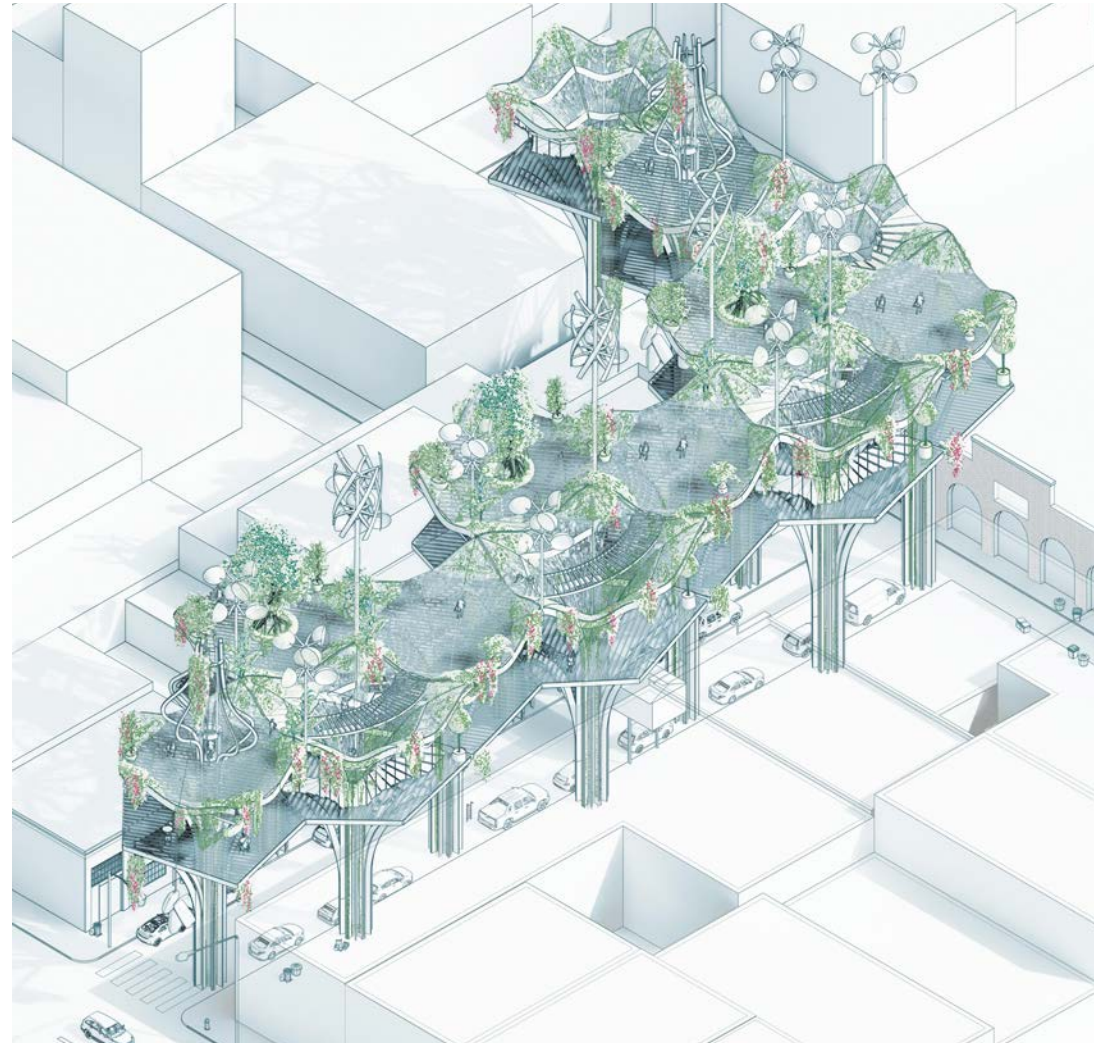**Designing a Just City: How architecture reshapes property, equity, ecology and economy.**
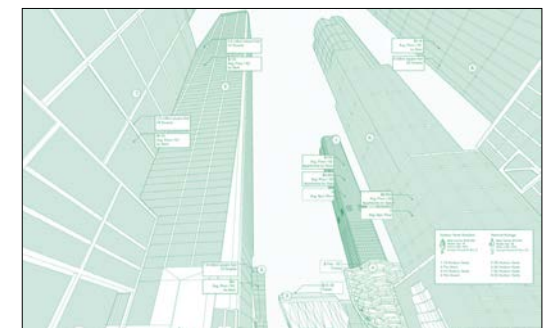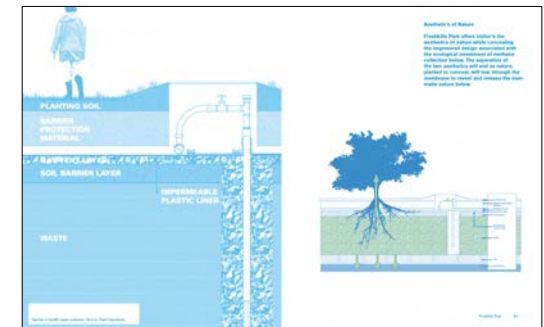
Students in Urban Imaginaries created a book compiling their research entitled *Designing a Just City: How Architecture Reshapes Property, Equity, Ecology, and Economy.*

MArch Thesis

Thesis is the capstone of the MArch curriculum, and offers graduate students the opportunity to develop bold, self-defined agendas that test the limits of architecture's capacity to engage the world.

In the fall, students work with an advisor to develop a topic, carry out research, and write a brief for the spring design project. In spring, students develop a design proposition that can culminate in any number of forms—a building, urban design, prototype, installation, and more. Experimentation, ambition, criticality, play, timeliness, and provocation are the hallmarks of a CCA Architecture thesis, and many students have gone on to exhibit, publish, and develop their projects, as a way of launching their careers.

Martin Hitch's thesis "Slump House" proposes a post-concrete architecture that elevates the qualities of informality, unpredictability, and an anti-heroic aesthetic.

Javier Breceda's thesis "Placebo Architecture" proposes an elevated urban refuge that tests the potential for environmental design to improve human health through means other than the functional, extending to atmosphere and affect.

MArch Thesis

Left to right: Wan Yan's thesis "Storage as Frictional Act" explores an overlooked spatial type, the self-storage facility, in order to interrogate humans' relationship to things and to a materialistic culture of surplus. ⊘ Roxana Breceda's thesis "Living Capriccio" proposes an immersive, experiential environment that responds to the fast pace and disposability of fashion culture.


Storage as a Frictional Act

MArch Thesis

Left to right: Lizzy Wilson's thesis "Bodies, Sovereignty, Hysteria" explores the legal loophole offered by foreign consulates to propose an abortion clinic concealed within a hyper-transparent modernist container. ⊘ Clare Hacko's thesis "Other Resolutions" re-curates the National Mall in Washington, DC, into a series of rooms that complicate the singular national narrative that the capital is typically taken to signify. ⊘ Elif Aydlini's thesis "Reimagining E-Wasteland" offers a new re- and up-cycling center for e-waste on the site of an existing Apple store, challenging the culture of planned obsolescence within the tech industry by giving visibility to the infrastructure of post-consumer waste processing.
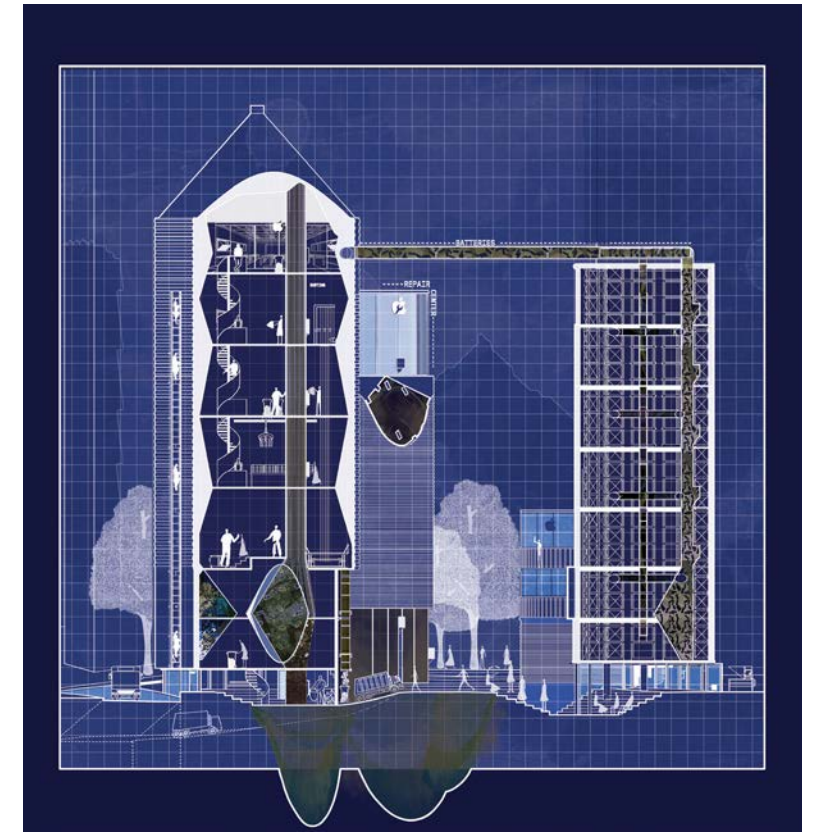
Master of Advanced Architectural Design (MAAD)
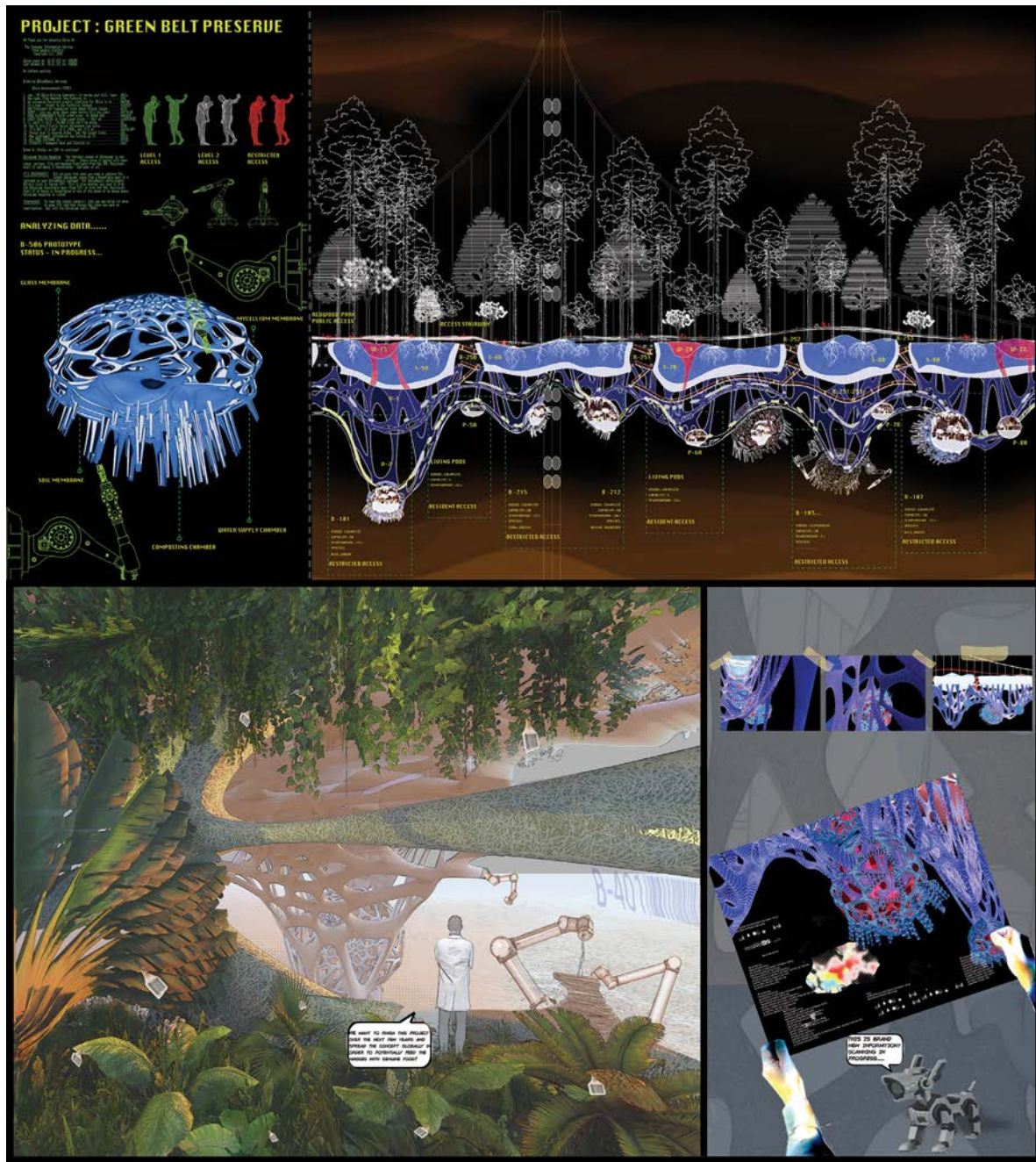
The Master of Advanced Architectural Design (MAAD) is a one-year, STEM-designated post-professional degree that offers advanced students and mid-career professionals the space and support to develop specialized expertise through mentored study and elective course offerings.

MAAD students select one of three areas of concentration (Digital Craft, Urban Works, or History Theory Experiments) that links them to one of the Architecture division's research labs. MAAD students work closely with faculty mentors to craft a rigorous individualized course of study.

DIGITAL CRAFT (DC)
Directors: Jason Kelly Johnson and Negar Kalantar

The MAAD Digital Craft concentration focuses on contemporary digital design technologies and digital craft. You'll get both broad and in-depth exposure to contemporary topics such as parametric design, advanced computation, digital fabrication, robotic techniques, and building information modeling. During your first semester, you'll develop a specific research trajectory. You'll integrate digital design concepts with fabrication and prototyping tools in your second semester to realize a full-scale project.

URBAN WORKS (UW)
Directors: Neeraj Bhatia, Janette Kim, and Julia Grinkrug

The MAAD Urban Works concentration focuses on architecture and urbanism. You'll learn how to leverage architectural design and form to impact social justice, ecological vitality, and economic resilience within communities. You'll advance novel strategies of research, design, and scholarship to model new forms of practice and develop innovative solutions to urban challenges.

HISTORY THEORY EXPERIMENTS (HTX)
Directors: Irene Cheng and James Graham

The MAAD History Theory Experiments concentration offers an intense year of advanced study in architectural and urban history, theory, and criticism, culminating in an independent research project. You'll explore politically engaged forms of spatial activism, historical research methods, architectural writing, and more. During your first semester, you'll take a required course in architectural theory, advanced seminars in research and interpretation, along with an open elective. You'll complete an independent thesis project in your second semester, guided by a faculty mentor and an optional external advisor.

F-1 international students who earn a STEM-designated CCA Master of Advanced Architectural Design degree may apply for a 24-month OPT extension beyond the initial year of OPT, allowing them to work in the U.S. for up to three years after degree completion. OPT applications and extensions require US DHS/USCIS approval.

MAAD Courses
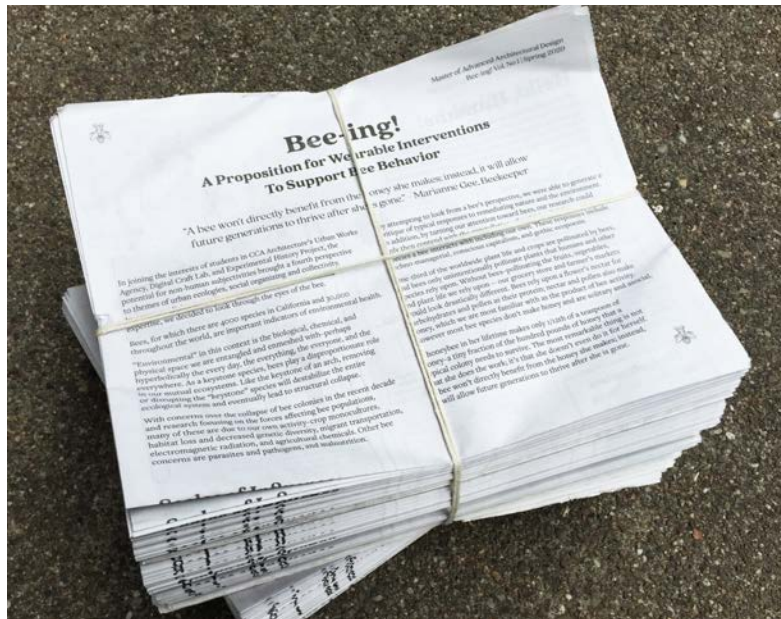
MAAD Proseminar
The MAAD proseminar is a seminar/workshop that explores the network of influences, connections, and tangents that influence contemporary design practice. The course culminates in the creation of an artifact, research paper, installation, or public document to communicate or demonstrate students' emerging expertise.

⊙ Students in the MAAD Proseminar work on disseminating their research through a range of media, including newspapers, exhibits, and publications.

⊕ MAAD students have the opportunity to pursue advanced research in digital fabrication at the Autodesk Technology Center.

Robotic Craft: Exploring Innovation in Robotics and Materiality
Students in this year-long course participate in a residency at the Autodesk Technology Center in San Francisco, and work under the guidance of a professor to engage in hands-on exploration with digital fabrication and robotic 3D printing technologies.
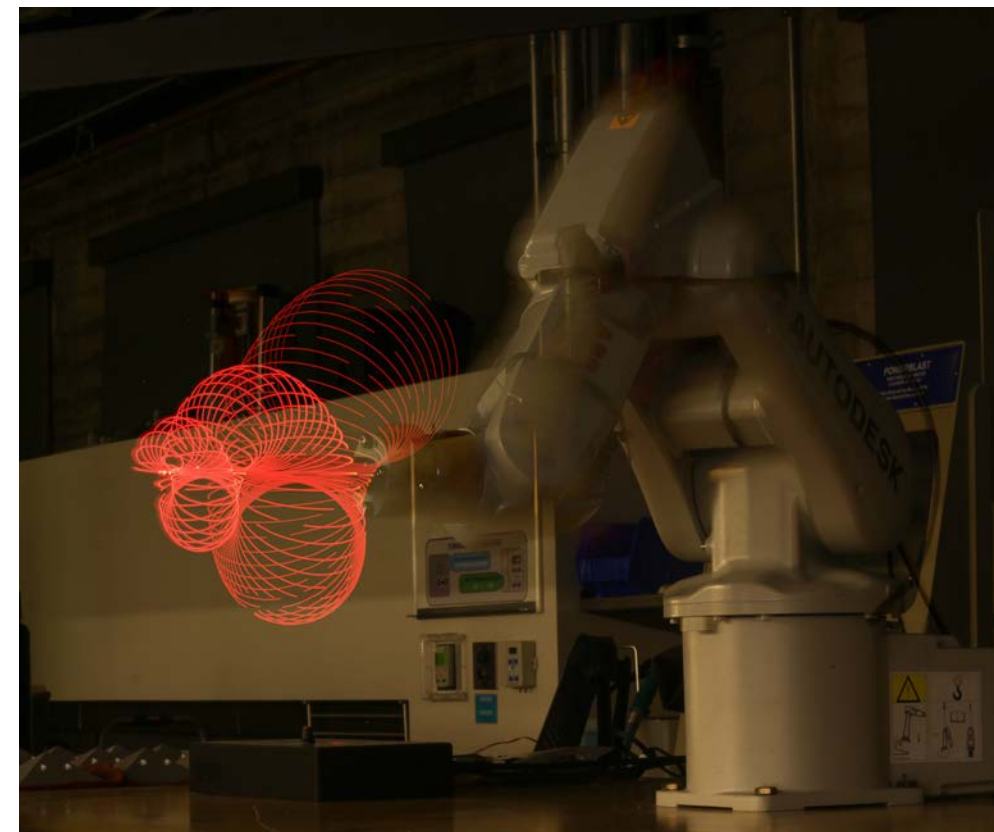
Student Research

Sanyukta Bhagwat's MAAD UW project investigated how the typical accessory dwelling unit (ADU) typology could be modified to produce and redesigned to generate community hubs, provide affordable housing, and prevent gentrification and displacement.

Ali Farajmandi's MAAD DCL independent research project "Robotic Luminous Seashells" used robotic tools to create illuminated patterns inspired by the layered growth of seashells, blending natural forms with advanced technology.

Student Research

Fangying Zhu's MAAD HTX research project "Terra Waste" explored the aesthetics of wastelands—places abandoned by urban sprawl and industrial development. The final project is an intimate exploration through maps, photography, collected artifacts, and writing of the Albany Bulb and its history and the roles that nature and humans have both played in shaping the aura of the site.
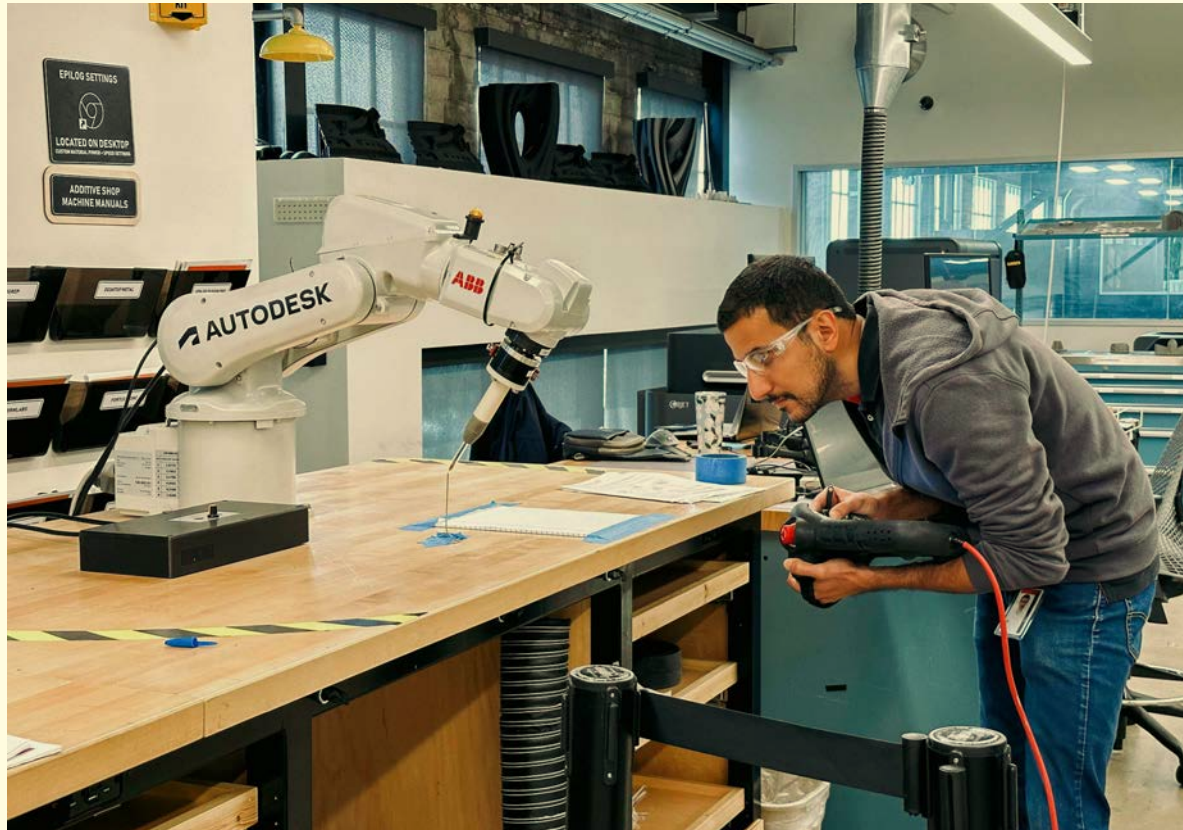
Top to bottom: CCA Architecture and MFA Writing students participate in "Ecopoesis," an interdisciplinary workshop on ecological storytelling. ⊘ CCA's Academic Alliance with Autodesk enables students to work with cutting-edge fabrication technologies.

At CCA, we see the work that happens inside the academic context as fully enmeshed with the world outside. While studying at CCA, students have the opportunity to take part in research initiatives and projects in partnership with a wide range of experts, firms, institutions, communities, and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The annual lecture series brings renowned architects, interior designers, and historians and thinkers to campus, connecting students with the latest developments in design.

Travel abroad studios enable students to gain global perspectives on design, infrastructure, and planetary phenomena such as climate change.

We also recognize that an important part of a design education is preparing students for, and opening doors to, post-graduation professional opportunities. A robust and active set of student organizations, many affiliated with national and international groups, helps students gain professional contacts and networks while still in school. Through our internship programs, office visits, career development resources, and portfolio workshops, CCA ensures that graduates leave school with local and international connections and versatile skills that enable them to make an immediate impact in the world.

Building Networks: Student Organizations

CCA students have many opportunities to build their professional networks and to develop their leadership and collaboration skills.

The Student Council is an elected group that advocates for the student body and organizes activities and events to support the divisional community.

Additionally, the Architecture division has active chapters of several national organizations:

- ⊕ National Organization of Minority Architects student chapter (NOMAS)
- ⊕ Alpha Rho Chi (a professional co-ed fraternity for architecture students)
- ⊕ American Institute of Architects student chapter (AIAS)
- ⊕ The International Interior Design Association (IIDA)
- ⊕ Women in Lighting + Design (WILD)

Students from CCA's NOMAS chapter organized a Black Lives Matter teach-in that brought together all students and faculty from across the division for a moment of collective learning about racial equity and justice.

Each semester, the Architecture Student Council organizes "Show and Tell," an event in which students and faculty bring a drawing, model, or artifact they are working on at the moment, and share with each other. The event contributes to the strong sense of a community of learning that is a defining feature of CCA's Architecture division.

Global Perspectives: Study Abroad

Project Tokyo students visit the Kanagawa Institute of Technology, designed by Junya Ishigami.

Undergraduate and graduate students can choose from a range of for-credit travel studios each summer, allowing them to gain insight into the relationship of local to global dynamics in a range of architectural and urban settings. Recent study-abroad courses have included:

Material Cultures in Mexico City & Oaxaca
The studio weaves together cultural research, material exploration, and design innovation to explore resonances between traditional craft practices and contemporary techniques of architectural design and production.

Project Tokyo
Students in this travel studio meet with leading architectural designers in Japan and visit some of the most experimental and innovative buildings in the world while learning about the dense urban conditions of Tokyo. In addition to the capital, the studio stops in Kyoto, Ise, and the art islands of Naoshima, Teshima, and Inujima.

The Silk Road Studio
Beginning in Madrid and moving across the Iberian Peninsula to Toledo, Segovia, Bilbao, San Sebastian, Merida, and Seville, the studio traces the paths of the Silk Road across Spain. Students learn about the diverse global influences on Spanish architecture and design over the course of nine centuries.

Students on the Mexico City and Oaxaca travel studio explore how traditional craft practices can be integrated with contemporary techniques.

Partnerships and Community Engagement

Students in Professor Negar Kalantar's tranSTUDIO gained hands-on support from Autodesk experts in rapid prototyping, laser-cutting and waterjet fabrication, as part of their research exploring digital fabrication of flexible textile prototypes.

Autodesk Academic Alliance

Since 2021, CCA Architecture has had an Academic Alliance with the Autodesk Technology Center, one of the most state-of-the-art architectural technology and fabrication research facilities in the world. The Academic Alliance enables CCA students to gain access to Autodesk's cutting-edge technology and world-class experts through a range of curricular and extracurricular initiatives. Each year, several CCA students are awarded residencies that enable them to pursue advanced design work using Autodesk's facilities.

CCA students led community workshops that helped the residents of Greenville establish their values and priorities for rebuilding after disaster.

Collaborating with Community: The Greenville Initiative

For this two-year initiative, CCA faculty and students worked in close partnership with residents of Greenville, a California community destroyed by wildfire, to explore strategies for rebuilding more resiliently in the face of climate change.

As part of an integrated studio affiliated with the Greenville initiative, CCA students Ahmad Alajmi, Jacky Huang, and Vishakh Hiren Surti designed a new commercial hub with workshop spaces to help revive the region's resource-based economy.

Partnerships and Community Engagement

CCA students collaborated with six other schools from around the world on a concept for Future Mobility, using AI as a tool for creativity. Sponsored and conducted with Honda R&D Co., Ltd. Honda Design, in partnership with Pratt Institute and media partner Core77.

CCA Architecture students presenting their Outstanding Science Award-winning project "BacTerra: Designing Across Scales" at the Biodesign Challenge in New York City.

The International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF) Wanted Schools Workshop

CCA Interior Design and Industrial Design students have participated in the Wanted Design Schools Workshop at The International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF) in New York.

Intersect Art and Design Fair

Students in CCA's Interior Design program traveled to Palm Springs to present "Woven Projections" at the Intersect Art and Design Fair in an exhibition titled East x West, curated by CCA Professor Margaux Schindler and Pratt Professor Deborah Schneiderman. The show presented the students' collaborative work exploring how soft and hard materials can be combined to create interactive and flexible environments.

Biodesign Challenge

CCA Architecture students collaborate with scientific researchers at the University of California San Francisco on the creation of new biomaterials that can reduce the carbon emissions associated with traditional construction. Their research has won repeated recognition at the annual Biodesign Challenge in New York for its innovative merger of science and design.

Lecture Series and Gensler Center

The Architecture Lecture Series

Each year, the Architecture Lecture Series brings renowned local, national, and international designers and thinkers to campus to present their work and ideas. Through the lecture series, students are connected to the leading edge of design, research, teaching, and learning.

Recent lecturers include: David Baker and Caroline Souza, Marshall Brown, Daniel Aldana Cohen, Chris Cornelius, Keller Easterling, Billie Faircloth, Ana Teresa Fernández, David Fortin, Ana Paula Ruiz Galindo, Jeanne Gang, David Gissen, Rossana Hu, Ana-Maria Leon, Mae-ling Lokko, Markus Miessen, Liz Ogbu, Kate Orff, Boonserm Premthada, Nader Tehrani, Mason White, and Mabel O. Wilson.

Kate Orff gives a keynote talk as part of "Climate as Praxis" symposium to mark the launch of the Gensler Center.

The M. Arthur Gensler Jr. Center for Design Excellence at CCA

Created in 2023 through the generous funding of the Gensler family and the Gensler firm, the M. Arthur Gensler Jr. Center for Design Excellence supports a range of initiatives at CCA, with a special focus on the development and dissemination of innovative design methods and practices; the facilitation of collaboration across professional and academic communities; and the support and advocacy of diversity, social justice, and environmental sustainability.

Recent efforts of the Gensler Center have included:

- ⊕ Funding symposia and exhibitions
- ⊕ Supporting annual scholarships for Interior Design and Architecture students
- ⊕ Providing summer research fellowships for students to work with faculty
- ⊕ Funding Pre-College scholarships for students from diverse backgrounds
- ⊕ Enabling CCA students to attend conferences and workshops
- ⊕ Supporting initiatives such as the Greenville partnership and research labs
- ⊕ Offering internships to selected CCA students each summer

Paths to Practice

The Architecture division offers students a wide range of programs and opportunities to facilitate students' paths to the profession. While the majority of our students go on to work at prominent architecture and interior design firms, many also find success in affiliated fields such as digital fabrication, product design, data visualization, design strategy, construction administration, and academia.

A number of undergraduates each year choose to pursue post-graduate degrees. CCA has a successful track record of assisting alumni to gain admission at some of the top design programs in the world.

These are some of the ways we assist students in making the transition from school to successful careers:
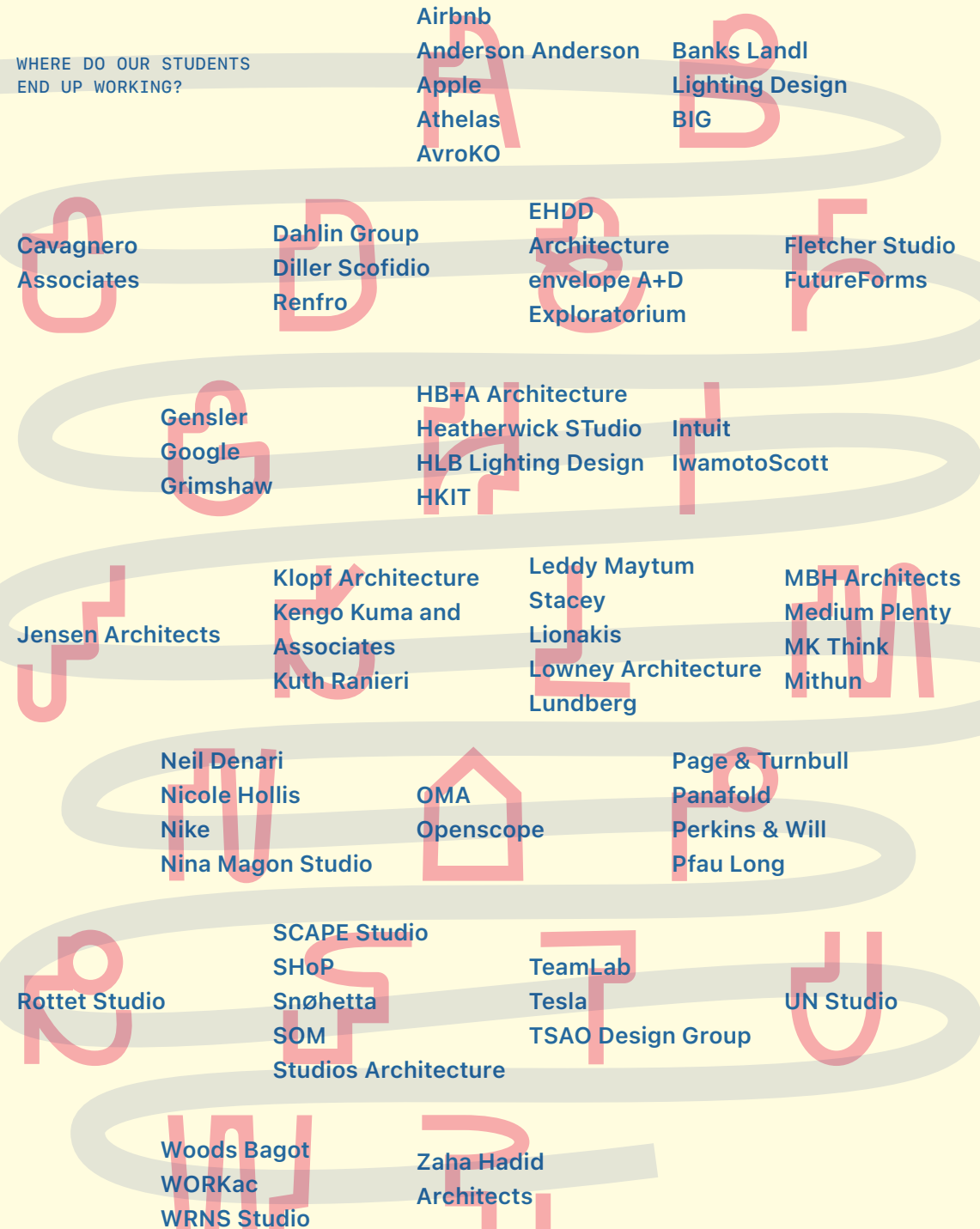
- ⊛ Internship requirement
- ⊛ Portfolio, resume, and interview workshops
- ⊛ Office visits to local firms
- ⊛ CCA internship program at Gensler
- ⊛ Twice-per-year career expos featuring architecture and design firms
- ⊛ Access to the CCA Career Center
- ⊛ Workshops in Revit and other professional software and skills
- ⊛ Alumni networking opportunities

CCA Interior Design students visit Gensler's San Francisco offices.

Internships

All CCA BArch, MArch, and Interior Design students are required to do an internship as part of their degree. This experience provides students with a grounded, real-world experience in a professional work environment. Most students complete their internship during the summer.

WHERE DO OUR STUDENTS END UP WORKING?

Airbnb
Anderson Anderson
Apple
Athelas
AvroKO
Banks Landl Lighting Design
BIG

Cavagnero Associates
Dahlin Group
Diller Scofidio Renfro
EHDD Architecture
envelope A+D
Exploratorium
Fletcher Studio
FutureForms

Gensler
Google
Grimshaw
HB+A Architecture
Heatherwick STudio
HLB Lighting Design
HKIT
Intuit
IwamotoScott

Jensen Architects
Klopf Architecture
Kengo Kuma and Associates
Kuth Ranieri
Leddy Maytum Stacey
Lionakis
Lowney Architecture
Lundberg
MBH Architects
Medium Plenty
MK Think
Mithun

Neil Denari
Nicole Hollis
Nike
Nina Magon Studio
OMA
Openscope
Page & Turnbull
Panafold
Perkins & Will
Pfau Long

Rottet Studio
SCAPE Studio
SHoP
Snøhetta
SOM
Studios Architecture
TeamLab
Tesla
TSAO Design Group
UN Studio

Woods Bagot
WORKac
WRNS Studio
Zaha Hadid Architects

JOIN US

Undergraduate Application Process

Key Dates

NOVEMBER 15 – First-year early action deadline

FEBRUARY 1 – Undergraduate fall priority deadline: First-year applicants must submit an application by this deadline to be considered for all undergraduate institutional scholarships.

MARCH 1 – Transfer fall priority deadline

OCTOBER 1 – Undergraduate spring priority deadline for first-year and transfer students

Application Requirements

① Online application + fee*
② Personal essay
③ High school and/or university transcripts
④ One letter of recommendation
⑤ Portfolio
⑥ Proof of English proficiency (international applicants only)

*Application fee waivers are accepted for domestic students with limited financial resources who meet any of the NACAC application fee waiver guidelines.

CCA does not require SAT or ACT as part of the application review process.

Scholarships

CCA is committed to helping students make the best use of all available financial aid resources. The average amount of combined scholarships and grants a CCA undergraduate receives is $29,175. All undergraduates who apply by the priority deadline are considered for merit, Visionary Practice, need-based, and other CCA scholarships. We encourage you to contact us if you have any questions or concerns regarding scholarships or additional financial aid resources.

Types of scholarships include:

⊕ Merit scholarships
⊕ Visionary Practice scholarship
⊕ Need-based scholarships
⊕ Named and emeritus scholarships
⊕ All-college honors

Additional Financial Aid Resources

⊕ Federal Pell Grants
⊕ Cal Grants
⊕ US Department of Education grants
⊕ Federal loans
⊕ On-campus work-study opportunities

Transfer Application Process

A quarter of our undergraduates transfer from a community college or other accredited four-year institution. CCA admissions counselors work individually with incoming Architecture and Interior Design students to maximize their college credit transfers. For more information on transfers, visit:

⊛ cca.edu/admissions/transfer

Articulation Agreements

An articulation agreement is a partnership between two educational institutions that creates a pathway for credits to transfer directly from one institution to the other. These agreements can help prospective students choose courses at a given institution that will automatically count for credit toward their CCA degree. CCA has over 60 articulation agreements with colleges across the country.

Find Out More

Explore our undergraduate programs and admissions process by scheduling an appointment with a counselor.

⊛ cca.edu/admissions/undergraduate

Email: admissions@cca.edu

Phone: +1 415-610-7004

Visit Us

Take an in-person or virtual tour of our San Francisco campus.

⊛ cca.edu/visit

Graduate Application Process

Key Dates

JANUARY 15 – Priority application deadline for all graduate programs and to be considered for institutional graduate scholarships (applications received after January 15 will be reviewed individually on a rolling basis)

MARCH 15 – Notification of graduate admissions decisions and scholarships begins

MAY 1 – Admitted graduate students must confirm attendance and submit the $500 enrollment deposit for the fall semester by this date.

Application Requirements

① Online application + fee
② Résumé or CV
③ Two letters of recommendation
④ Unofficial transcripts
⑤ Proof of English proficiency (international applicants only)
⑥ Personal essay
⑦ Portfolio

Educational Requirements for Graduate Admission

Applicants to the MArch program must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university.

Applicants to the MAAD program must hold a professional degree in architecture (BArch, MArch, or equivalent).

Advanced Standing

Applicants with undergraduate architecture degrees may request advanced standing, allowing them to complete the MArch program in as little as two years. Advanced standing status is granted at the discretion of the admissions committee, following a review of the applicant's transcript and portfolio. Partial advanced standing may also be granted. Admission and placement decisions are based on the strength of your overall application, portfolio, and transcripts.

Scholarships

CCA awards more than $25 million in scholarships annually. Nearly all graduate students receive financial aid grants.

Types of scholarships include:

⊕ Merit scholarships
⊕ Visionary Practice scholarship
⊕ Need-based scholarships
⊕ Named and emeritus scholarships, including the Carrasco and Gensler scholarships
⊕ All-college honors

Additional Financial Aid Resources

⊕ Federal Pell Grants
⊕ Cal Grants
⊕ US Department of Education grants
⊕ Federal loans
⊕ On-campus work-study opportunities

Find Out More

Explore our graduate programs and the admissions process.

⊛ cca.edu/admissions/graduate

Email: graduateprograms@cca.edu

Phone: +1 415-548-2271

Visit Us

Take an in-person or virtual tour of our San Francisco campus.

⊛ cca.edu/visit

Alumni

Joaquín (BArch 2018) went on to receive a Master of Advanced Studies in Architecture and Digital Fabrication at ETH–Zurich and now manages the Keeland Design Lab at the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture and Design at the University of Houston.

CCA is a special place where I transitioned from my life as an Olympic hopeful in El Salvador and launched my life as a full-time architect. I found role models and mentors in my peers and professors. With their guidance, I was well-prepared to tackle a masters in robotic fabrication and embark on my own academic career.

JOAQUÍN TOBAR MARTÍNEZ
design lab manager
and world-class fencer

CCA prepared me to think of my design work as a vessel that could shape lives and define experiences. Every class placed me in a tight-knit community, where I was able to engage with many different disciplines and learn from other backgrounds and cultures.

NASTARAN MOUSAVI
architecture firm founder and educator

Nastaran (MArch 2013, adjunct faculty) is co-founder and Design Director of Studio BANAA, which designed this award winning first responders resiliency center.

As the associate curator of architecture and design at SFMoMA, Joseph (BArch 2007, MAAD / HTX 2014) has worked with a wide range of artists and architects, including Barbara Stauffacher Solomon.

CCA's architecture curriculum centered critical research and rigorous conceptual development, which are core elements of my curatorial practice.

JOSEPH BECKER
curator

I am surprised how much I refer back to skills that I learned in CCA's BArch program, even though I've since switched fields into bioengineering and global health. Besides learning about architecture, I also acquired essential skills such as critical thinking, the ability to see the full picture, and how to communicate through graphics, verbal presentations, and other media.

Anesta (BArch 2013) is a researcher in the Prakash Lab at Stanford University's Bioengineering Department.

ANESTA KOTHARI
bioengineering researcher

Alumni

Graduating from CCA's Interior Design program opened up a world where I could turn my passion, creativity, and love of service into the career of my dreams. It not only shaped my professional life but also guided my personal growth, fostering lifelong friendships, confidence, and skills.

BETH BLOOM
interior designer

Beth (BFA Interior Design 2011) is owner and creative director at Beth Bloom Designs in Los Angeles.

CCA Architecture's program encouraged me to embrace my identity, helping me become a strong thinker, designer, and teacher. CCA was more than just an education; it was a life-changing experience.

CESAR A. LOPEZ
rome prize winner and professor

Cesar (MArch 2013) is co-director, FRONTERA-NATION; assistant professor, University of Virginia School of Architecture; and fellow, American Academy in Rome, 2024.

Among other projects, Rosannah (BArch 2007) spent five years working on Diller Scofidio + Renfro's "The Shed" in New York City, and is now a co-founding partner of HardingOstrow, based in Brooklyn.

I received my professional degree from CCA at 18 years old. This extraordinary education launched me to become the youngest licensed architect in the AIA.

ROSANNAH HARDING
architectural prodigy

Sam (MArch 2021) is founder, Let's Design Studios, and senior architectural visualizer, Tesla.

The Architecture program encouraged me to push the boundaries of traditional architecture, questioning and redefining what architecture meant to me. CCA's environment was not just about learning the fundamentals but about breaking free from them.

SAM DATUBO HIGGWE
visualizer at tesla

Donna (MAAD–Urban Works 2020) is lead designer at Urban Field Studio, a freelance illustrator and designer, and author and illustrator, SCARF-SCARF.

I loved learning in an art school. I was encouraged to test different mediums, to explore my artistic side with confidence, and to fearlessly find my creative voice in an environment surrounded by makers working in a range of disciplines

DONNA MENA
urbanist and scarf designer

Faculty

Jason Anderson, Associate Professor
Peter Anderson, Professor
Joe Bailey, Adjunct Professor
Brendan Beazley, Senior Adjunct Professor
Neeraj Bhatia, Associate Professor
Al Borhani, Adjunct Professor
Amy Campos, Professor
Irene Cheng, Associate Professor
Morgane Copp, Adjunct Professor
Mark Donohue, Associate Professor
Christopher Falliers, Associate Professor
Thom Faulders, Professor
Lisa Findley, Professor
Nataly Gattegno, Professor
James Graham, Assistant Professor
Julia Grinkrug, Adjunct Professor
Hugh Hynes, Senior Adjunct Professor
Margeret Ikeda, Associate Professor
Jason Kelly Johnson, Professor
Evan Jones, Senior Adjunct Professor
Negar Kalantar, Associate Professor
Matt Kendall, Adjunct Professor
Janette Kim, Associate Professor
Keith Krumwiede, Professor
Katherine Lambert, Professor
Matt Lasner, Adjunct Professor
Brendon Levitt, Associate Professor
Jacqueline Lin, Adjunct Professor
William Littmann, Senior Adjunct Professor
Margo Majewska, Senior Adjunct Professor
Dave Maynard, Senior Adjunct Professor
Alicia Moreira, Adjunct Professor
Eric Morrill, Adjunct Professor
Nastaran Mousavi, Adjunct Professor
Brian Price, Associate Professor
Dominique Price, Adjunct Professor
Olivia Ramos, Adjunct Professor
Randy Ruiz, Senior Adjunct Professor
Margaux Schindler, Assistant Professor
Alex Schofield, Assistant Professor
Neal Schwartz, Professor
Craig Scott, Professor
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Bryan Sloan, Adjunct Professor
Kristen Smith, Senior Adjunct Professor
Clark Thenhaus, Associate Professor
Cathrine Veikos, Professor