

OPPORTUNITIES

The e-Newsletter of the Design Communication Association

Spring 2016

DCA Fall 2016 Conference

By Zuzanna Karczewska, Montana State University

We are busy getting ready for the 2016 semi-annual conference, scheduled for September 7-10 in both Bozeman and Chico Hot Springs Resort. The early fall is clearly one of the best time to visit our region and we are looking forward to hosting the conference for both your intellectual development and Montana enjoyment. We are also planning a couple of excursions in the Yellowstone area.

We have selected an impressive set of papers, drawn from nearly one hundred abstracts that explore the conference theme "Communicating speculative & creative thinking." The conference will also include Keynote speakers and three workshops. The workshop leaders and topics are:

Bill Hook - Watercolor

Moh'd Bilbeisi - Pen Sketching

Henry Sorenson - I-pad drawing / Painting

The registration website is open and available at https://tofu.msu.montana.edu/cs/dca_2016/registration

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Chico Hot Springs

Teaching charrette style graphics and techniques for a new generation

By Lohren Deeg, Ball State University

Architects, Planners, Landscape Architects, Urban Designers, and Preservationists have a common need to communicate information and ideas to others. The ability to plan requires creative, analytic thinking, but such skills alone are irrelevant if one cannot communicate his or her creativity or analysis to others. Some contemporary theorists of urban planning have suggested that it is really nothing more than effective communication (i.e. communicative planning theory).

The term "charrette" (from the French for "little cart") has been adopted by many design professionals in the last fifty years as a way to bridge gaps of communication in the course of planning a community's future, growing from the R/UDAT program launched by the AIA in 1967 (<http://www.aia.org/about/initiatives/AIAS075375>). Most charrettes last from three to ten days, and have the ability to create dialogue between community leaders, public officials, design students and professionals, and the general public. The short and intensive timeline of a charrette generates ideas, concerns, and solutions that stakeholders and the public can react to. At Ball State University, our long tradition of using the charrette process as a public service and embedding our students in communities since 1969 has been crucial to the formation of our pedagogical values at the Ball State University College of Architecture and Planning.



Figure 1. Students from multiple environmental design disciplines learn charrette style graphics in a series of three-hour workshops with a live demonstration on one projection and an example in the other. This step-by-step demonstration builds pace and confidence in students' graphic abilities.

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The Importance of Play

By Amy Huber, Florida State University

The importance of play is often cited in child development circles. Research suggests that play contributes to “cognitive, physical, social, and emotional wellbeing” (Ginsberg, 2007; p. 182). Yet, college students who might be anxious, hurried, and overscheduled, may devote little time to exploration (Heinström, 2005). This issue, coupled with rapidly changing technologies can be daunting for those teaching in areas of digital media. Seeking remedy without reducing rigor, I have incorporated elements of play in our undergraduate Advanced Computer Aided Design course. These playful gestures are aimed at encouraging student exploration and experimentation.

For some background, the class itself is focused on leveraging BIM software for client communications. The students come to the class with a basic understanding of the software as they have already taken an introductory course. The learning objectives for the course include: the production of custom components, parametric families, and the creation of photorealistic renderings. During the course, students work through two major projects and several smaller skill-building exercises. Play is incorporated through the introduction of sandbox time, a technology bar, and multiple opportunities for sharing and socialization.

Sandbox time

Many companies have come to value some degree of free time for their employees to tinker; and such efforts have resulted in unforeseen innovations (Grant, 2016). In this context, sandbox time is dedicated to the exploration of emerging digital media through low stakes exercises. The focus is on process over final product, and the students are encouraged to explore but to also document their steps. Such exercises include the production of short animations, implementation of virtual reality and/or augmented reality, and hybrid rendering.

Technology Bar

As part of the technology sandbox, students have the opportunity to “hang out” at the technology bar. At this bar, students can utilize a variety of equipment including: digitizer screens and tablets, touch screen enabled software, and tablet applications. The students are encouraged to stylize their renderings with the aid of the equipment.

Socialization and Sharing

The class also emphasizes social learning. In terms of peer-to-peer sharing, students discuss their process through end of project sessions, entitled “How’d you do that?”

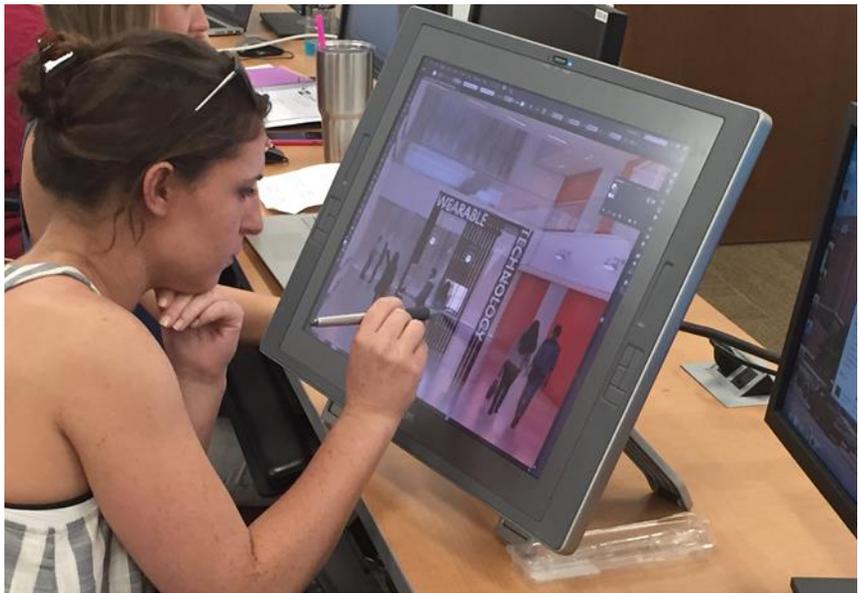


Figure 1. Student Sarah Kost, working on her project at the technology bar.



Figure 2. Student Karyn Israel (at right) sharing virtual reality goggles with exhibit visitor.



Figure 3. Student Coral Nolan, enjoying viewing her design on virtual reality goggles.

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The Importance of Play

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During these sessions students share their methods of translating their sketch ideas into photorealistic renderings. During the subsequent project, the exercise then shifts to “How’d **they** do that?” During these sessions students dissect the work of others, suggesting ways in which they may have generated the illustrations. The producers of the work then either confirm or correct the presenter’s assumptions.

Community engagement

Additionally, sharing with outside parties helps to build student confidence while reinforcing their learning. We are fortunate in that our university has a technology exposition where students are able to share their work outcomes with the community-at-large. Anecdotally, the students are not predisposed to being excited about the proposition of such an event—citing workload, timing, and fearfulness among a myriad of reasons. However, their written reflections after their involvement reveal a new sense of confidence, pride, and an unexpected appreciation for teaching others about what they do.

Tech Talks

In a recent survey conducted by a colleague and I, 84 design software packages were listed as being used by design practitioners. Admittedly, it would be impossible and inadvisable to teach a multitude of programs to undergraduate students. Yet, it is important for students to recognize that what we teach today, may not be what they use tomorrow. In an effort to help them foreshadow this changing technological landscape, students are asked to find innovative software programs or peripheral devices, then to share their findings with their peers during Tech Talks. This helps to build their vocabulary, at the same time, encourages them to discuss the advantages of certain approaches.

Summary

By incorporating playful gestures, educators may foster a sense of curiosity and exploration—traits that can be in short supply. While we do not have a playground in our computer lab (nor should we), these simple exercises may help students to more readily adapt to the many changes that lie ahead. Moreover, their implementation may provide students and educator alike, a more dynamic environment in which to explore.



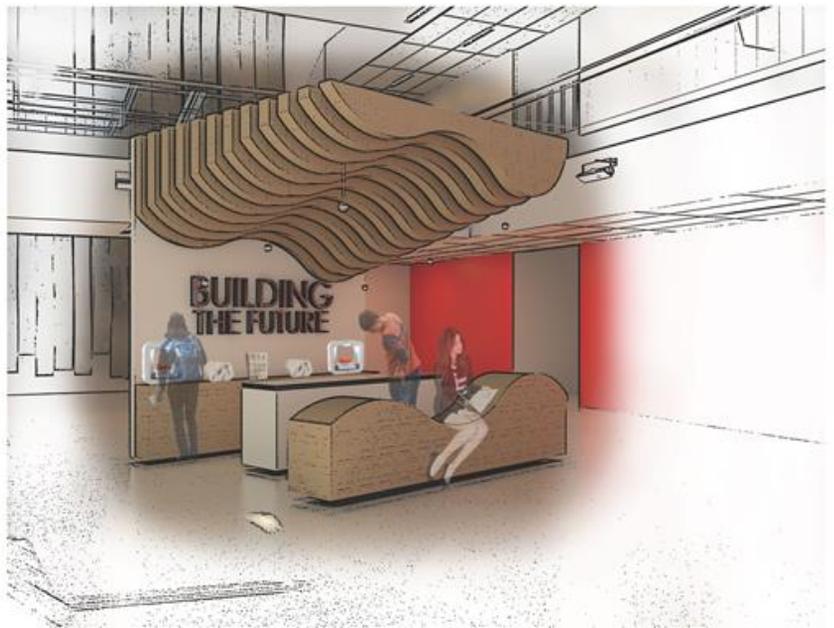
VERSION 1: PHOTOSHOP

1. Duplicate original kiosk rendering
2. Filter gallery - Poster Edges
3. Duplicate Poster Edges layer & turn down opacity
4. Erase edges with lower opacity



VERSION 2: SKETCH HYBRID

1. Import hidden lines view of kiosk into Illustrator
2. Use image trace -> artistic lines -> charcoal feather
3. Layer artistic lines on original kiosk rendering in Photoshop



VERSION 3: STUDENT CHOICE

1. Duplicate original kiosk rendering in Photoshop
2. Filter gallery - Poster Edges
3. Select a black line on my rendering -> select similar -> select inverse -> delete all that's selected (will leave all the black lines)
4. Use soft eraser for the border edges on my original kiosk drawing

Figure 4. Exploration exercises by student Karyn Israel.

References

- Ginsberg, K. (2007). The importance of play in promoting healthy child development and maintain strong parent-child bonds. *Pediatrics*, 119(1), 182-191.
- Grant, A. (2016). *Originals: How non-conformist move the world*. New York, NY: Viking.
- Heinström, J. (2005). Fast surfing, broad scanning and deep diving: the influence of personality and study approach on students' information-seeking behaviour. *Journal of Documentation*, 61(2), 228-247.

Teaching charrette style graphics

Continued from page 1

However, as traditional media techniques slowly became less mainstream in the required studio and communications courses, it became desirable to re-visit sketching and rendering techniques that generations of students and faculty typically used in mobile charrette workshops that could generate ideation quickly. Students involved in field-based and immersive learning activities, typically taking studio / project-based learning into communities are drawn to the course. Students interested in improving their skills in sketching and traditional media are also attracted to the course. Felt-tip markers, pens, colored pencils, as well as Adobe Photoshop and Trimble SketchUp are investigated for the development of visual acuity, rapid communication of a student's design ideas, abilities to be deployed in an office, and abilities to be shared in projects generated in the public interest in a workshop-based classroom setting.

Students are strongly encouraged to participate in at least one to two charrettes in the course of the semester as a practicum for this course. Annual departmental activities, such as a one week internal charrette held by Ball State's Department of Landscape Architecture, and regular outreach activities, such as those led by Ball State's Community Based Projects Program (www.bsu.edu/cbp), lead charrette workshops throughout the state and region. Studios in Urban Planning and Urban Design programs use the charrette process as part of their semester projects, and other studios across the College conduct internal charrettes to generate and discuss design ideas.

Students are also asked to reflect in an argumentative essay format their learning experiences and methodology found on across a discussion of case studies on public participation, coverage on charrettes, and discussions of graphic techniques. Depending on the student's interests, their term paper challenges the critical thinking skills and research skills in the practice and application of graphic techniques as they relate to design in the public realm.

The course is structured around sixteen graphic exercise modules, meeting once a week for three hours per meeting. The three-hour evening class length allows live demonstration from the instructor in a step-by-step demonstration of specific graphic techniques, followed by a full class pin-up. Following the completion of several graphic modules, and work produced in charrettes, students are required to document this work in a course portfolio.

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Figure 3. Example of a charrette style sketch, as demonstrated live via presentation camera by Instructor Lohren Deeg during one of the class sessions. .



Figure 4. A pin-up at the end of each class session mimics the public's feedback process during a community charrette workshop and allows for the immediate comparison and critique of student work.

Teaching charrette style graphics

Continued from page 4

The course makes reference to several books, techniques, and other resources by noted authors and friends of the DCA, including Jim Leggitt, Paul Laseau, Frank Ching, James Richards, Michael Doyle, and Ray Gindroz.

The continued popularity of the course, now in its tenth offering since 2007, speaks well to the continued value of traditional graphics and rapid sketching skills in the rounding of student portfolios and the applicability and versatility of rapid ideation and visualization in design communication.



Figure 5. Students apply rapid traditional techniques in community workshops and immersive learning activities, such as this student-led charrette held at the Muncie Makes Lab, an urban gallery and outreach center in downtown Muncie, Indiana. Students studied options for historically compatible maker housing development, integrating live-work typologies and artisan studios in Muncie's Goldsmith C. Gilbert Historic District.



Figure 4. Several charrette style graphics that originate in field-based studies follow the overlay steps outlined in Jim Leggitt's *Drawing Shortcuts: Developing Quick Drawing Skills Using Today's Technology*. The book is used as a reference for the course.

Denver “Midtown” Brownfield Revitalization

By Dustin Headley, Kansas State University

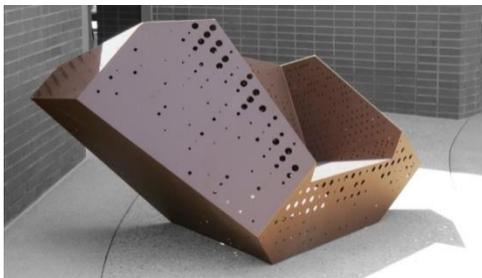
Students from the Kansas State University College of Architecture, Planning and Design collaborated with Norris Design and Brookfield Residential to design and fabricate custom site furnishings for the Denver “Midtown” Brownfield Revitalization. The two year project involved students working with the design team to develop designs for site furnishings that would foster the lively character and authenticity that would support Midtown’s vision. Ultimately, the furniture will be installed at the development’s community center and park.



Garden Shed Community Center



Fabrication of site furniture



Perforated metal bench



Bench at the Garden Shed Community Center.



Multifunctional, steel, powder-coated “flip” site amenity at the Garden Shed Community Center. The bench is designed to flip and become a bike rack.

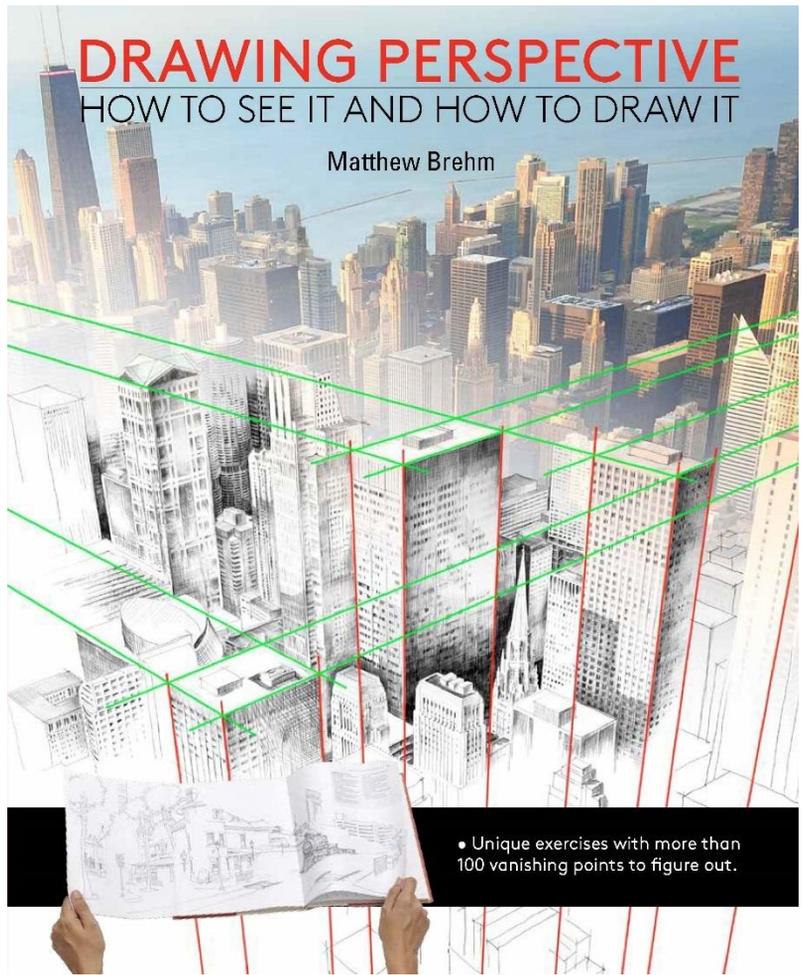
New Book: Drawing Perspective

Matthew Brehm, University of Idaho

“This book will help you develop a working knowledge of how perspective appears in the world around you, why it appears the way it does, and how to apply these understandings in your sketching work.”

Too often, it’s assumed that a thorough knowledge of perspective is required before someone can incorporate perspective techniques into their drawings. In my experience, a little knowledge goes a very long way – some understanding of the basics of perspective, and the ability to see the effects of perspective in your daily life – this is all that’s really needed to have a truly positive effect on your drawing ability.

We should always remember that perspective drawings are only an approximation of what we see, and we should always retain some degree of freedom from the constraints of being overly “correct” in the construction of a perspective drawing. In fact, I often draw without thinking much about perspective at all. But understanding the basics of perspective frequently gets me out of a jam – it helps me greatly to solve visual problems as I encounter them. And that’s the primary goal of this book, to provide easy access to an understanding of perspective that will actually help you see the world around you and record it more accurately through drawing.”



• Unique exercises with more than 100 vanishing points to figure out.

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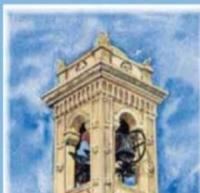
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CURVILINEAR

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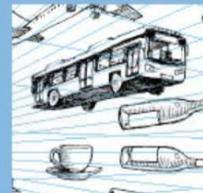
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DRAWING PERSPECTIVE
 A QUARTO BOOK

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First edition for North America published in 2015 by Barron's Educational Series, Inc.

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All inquiries should be addressed to:
 Barron's Educational Series, Inc.
 250 Wireless Boulevard
 Hauppauge, New York 11788
 www.barronseduc.com

ISBN-13: 978-1-4380-0659-8

Library of Congress Control No.: 2014945494

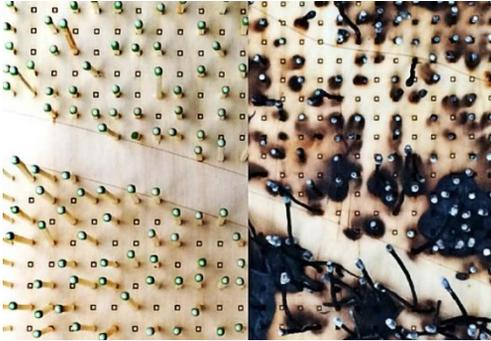
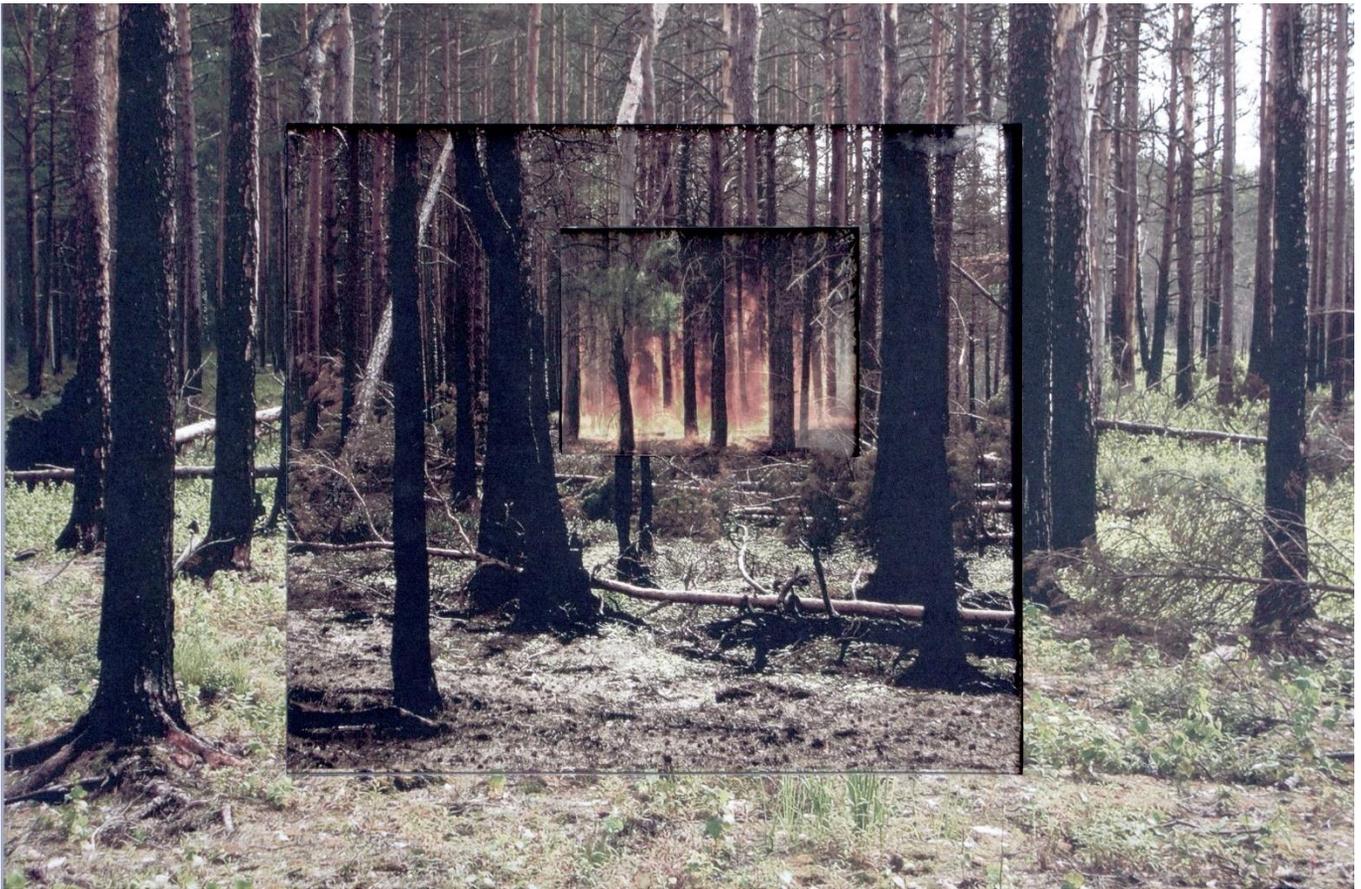
QUARTO PE

Conceived, designed, and produced by
 Quarto Publishing plc
 The Old Brewery, 6 Blundell Street
 London N7 9BH

Senior editor: Chelisea Edwards
 Designer: Nick Clark
 Copy editor: Sarah Hoggatt
 Picture research: Sarah Ball
 Proof reader: Emma Hill
 Indexer: Helen Smith
 Creative director: Moira Clinch
 Publisher: Paul Carlsdale

Color separation by PICA Digital Pte Ltd,
 Singapore
 Printed by Toppan Leafung Printing Ltd,
 China

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



Think Fast

Simon Bussiere, Ball State University

Quilian Riano, The New School. Parsons School of Design Strategies

Dustin Headley, Kansas State University. Interior Architecture and Product Design

The spark of an idea is often uniquely captured in initial conceptual studies. A sketch for example does not only hint at an idea in the making, but inspires the maker and viewer alike to take imagined artistic liberties. In this moment of conceptual realization, the designer connects a concatenation of dots by filling in the representative voids with their own creative visions. However, some contemporary visualization techniques have resulted in a proliferation of hyper-real, super polished renderings that, at times, distract viewers from the design's conceptual void. This collection explores that dilemma through a traveling design exhibition – Thinkfast – that deconstructs the process of argumentative visual communication in order to reignite pedagogical discussions about design fundamentals.

The interdisciplinary collection will be exhibited at three academic venues (Ball State University in Indiana, Kansas State University, and the School of Design Strategies at Parsons in New York City) in the 2015-2016 academic year. The exhibition showcases and collectively deconstructs all stages of the conceptual design process, with sketches and built works by students, early-career practitioners and such well-established designers as James Corner, Chris Reed and Michael Van Valkenburgh. From rough to more resolved, the show traces layers of the designer's investment as an idea first becomes visible both through traditional as well as more contemporary imaging methods. Through a careful arrangement that integrates analog, digital and mixed media works, the exhibition highlights differences between diverse techniques and triggers debate between design, representation and technology. Taken together, the exhibition's visual investigation of the conceptual design process serves as a pedagogical tool of experiential learning for aspiring designers and seasoned professionals alike. By bridging creative disciplines, including art, architecture, landscape architecture and product design, the exhibition reveals meaning in the seemingly effortless and often-accidental discoveries that grow out of conceptual visual thinking.



Fire Grounds

Weaam Al Abdullah, Rachel Bedet, Alexander Cassini.

Finding Beauty in the Ordinary

Randy Seitsinger, Oklahoma State University

Painting and architecture enjoy a close and intertwined relationship. At their core, they both involve the investigation of cultural values, they both rely on basic principles of design, and they both are the product of inspiration and expression inspired by curiosity. Painting and architecture are two linked ways of seeing and understanding the world. While the exploration of the symbiotic relationship between drawing, painting, and architecture has taken me down multiple avenues of exploration utilizing both objective and non-objective approaches. Over the last 5 years I have focused solely on drawing and painting from a perceptual point of view.

I am very interested in discovering and revealing the essence of place. This involves an understanding of the cultural and physical aspects of an environment and involves direct observation and communicating these observations honestly and without sentimentality. Some of my drawings and paintings reveal and celebrate the beauty of the place directly. Most recently, I have focused on the everyday condition in Oklahoma. These are places that we would not naturally see as interesting, and certainly not beautiful. In these paintings of mundane and even conventionally ugly places, I am challenged to reveal innate qualities that might be considered in a positive light. These qualities might include the patina of age, the juxtaposition of new and old, interesting combinations of form, the layering of space, the layering of cultural history, or even formal patterns like the laciness of overhead wires which mitigate between solid form and open space. I have learned a lot from these paintings and hope others can find interest and beauty in these unconventionally showcased places.

To see more paintings, please visit my website at:
www.rseitsingerstudio.com



Near Downtown OKC, OK, 24" x 36", oil on canvas



Cushing, OK, 24" x 24", oil on canvas



Cushing, OK, 24" x 36", oil on canvas



Guthrie, OK, 16" x 36", oil on canvas

Finding Beauty in the Ordinary

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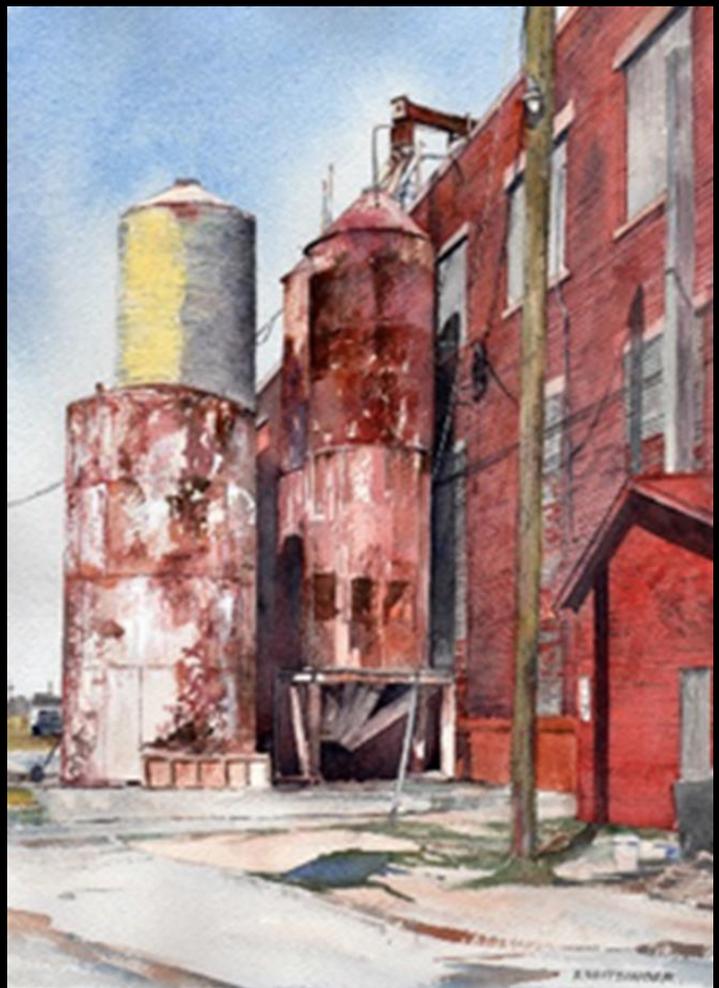
Downtown Tulsa, 16" x 36", oil on canvas



Tulsa, OK, 20" x 24", oil on canvas



Perkins, OK, 24" x 36", oil on canvas



Shawnee, OK, 10" x 14", watercolor on paper

Finding Beauty in the Ordinary

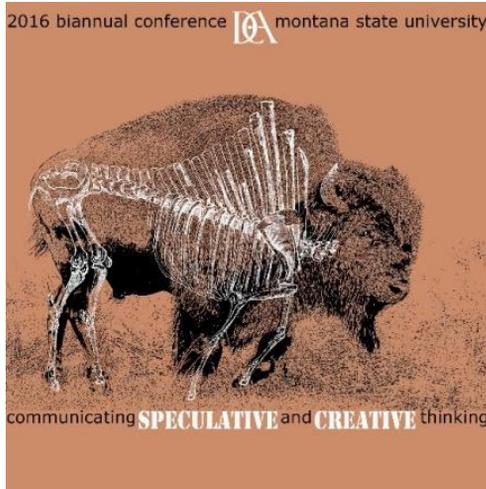
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Shawnee, OK, 10" x 14", watercolor on paper



Near Cushing, OK, 24" x 36", oil on canvas



Liberty Cap, a dormant 37' high hot spring cone in that marks the northern end of Mammoth Hot Springs

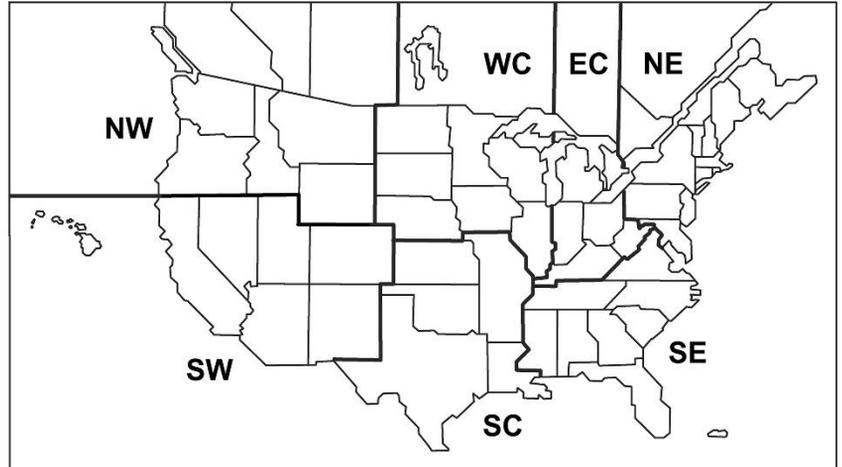


Mammoth Hot Springs

The Newsletter of the Design Communication Association Spring 2016

OPPORTUNITIES is electronically published bi-annually by the Design Communication Association

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