NEW CLASSES

Welcome to the incoming Architecture students! And of course, welcome back to the returning students!
The MArch program is receiving a new group of 9 Path 3 (6000), 11 Path 2 and 2.5 (7000 level) and 1 Path 1 (8000) students, selected after a very competitive admissions process among more than 400 candidates. The School’s common first year will receive a new cohort of 71 1st year students and the BsArch 55 raising 2nd years and 8 new transfer students.

Yes, most of you witnessed the intense process of accreditation of our MArch program with the NAAB team visit and the exhibitions in Campbell Hall for that purpose. The result is... fantastic! A full 8-year term of accreditation, without any intermediate focused evaluation, which means that the next visit will happen in... 2023! This is the moment to thank and congratulate you all again for your work all these years and for the final sprint towards the report and the visit. And to thank specifically those who have been directly in charge: Anselmo Canfora, Schaeffer Somers, Eric Field, Ryan Carbone, Tim Kelley and Adela Su, together with a group of amazing students and everyone in the school involved. But the big congratulations are for our program itself and the work that is being produced by faculty and students. We are in an extraordinary moment and I feel personally grateful for being part of this collective enterprise. It has been a stressful experience, but the school looked great during the visit. The exhibited materials were widely used by students and faculty as a learning/teaching tool (the best possible use of the exhibition).

NEW NEWS!

We are extremely happy to welcome our new Assistant Professor Luis Pancorbo, arriving from Madrid. During his first year, Luis will teach undergraduate 2010 and 2020 studios and the spring graduate Building Integration Workshop. We are fortunate to have a double hire, as his partner, Inés Martin, will also join the department as Lecturer. Inés will engage with the new 1040 Introduction to Design, led by Carmen Trudell. Both have produced amazing work, check it in www.pancorboarquitectos.com (let me recommend a close view to their amazing Vegas Altas Congress Hall... and keep going!). Two brilliant young graduates will join next year as full-time lecturers: Eric Barr and Ryan Carbone, teaching studios and visualization courses, as well as Erin Root in the Spring. Also two prominent practitioners have been appointed as our first Professors of Practice in the history of the School. Margarita Jover and Alex Wall. Both will teach graduate studios in Architecture and Landscape Architecture respectively, and will lead the studios 2010 (Alex) and 2020 (Margarita). They will lead our youngest Architecture students, who just declared their major, into the most amazing profession: ARCHITECT (because “those who love their profession will never ‘work’ in their life”).

NEW FACULTY

This is the second year of our recent programs in the three levels: undergraduate, graduate and doctoral. Our BSArch concentration in Design Thinking (directed by Anselmo Canfora) has gone from 6 students in its first year to 23. Three 3011/4011 DT Research Studios will be available, with some openings for students in the Pre-professional concentration. All the Undergraduate Research Studios, Design Thinking and Pre-Professional will be presented on Monday 24. Be ready to choose! This is also the second year of our multidisciplinary PhD Program in the Constructed Environment, directed by Associate Professor Nana Last. It is an innovative broad proposal that builds on the strengths of the four departments of the School. Welcome to the incoming PhD candidates! And, this is the second year also of our Urban Design Certificate in the graduate program (directed by Associate Professor Manuel Bailo), joining the Preservation Certificate as optional tracks for our graduates.

GROWING YOUNG PROGRAMS

August 25 is the first day of classes, but be here on Monday August 24. For the new MArch students it is the orientation day, but for the returning 3000, 4000, 7000 and 8000 we will have a PICK session with the presentation of the Research Studios in Room 153. The ballots with your preferences should be submitted by 5PM on Monday, in order to start studios on Wednesday. Last year a group of students lead by Ghazal Abassy, the editor, worked on our second book compiling the work of the school, compiled by the students.
**Catalyst.** It will arrive to the libraries and bookstores in September. The first Catalyst was a big success beyond the walls of Campbell Hall. The interviews with each of your faculties of this second book will surely be very exciting. Finally, the **Vortex05** (the week-long interdisciplinary competition for all students at 2000 level or above) will happen during the first week of the spring semester, and the Community History Course will prepare research for it during the Fall. We have almost secured the presence of a ‘super guest’ to play the same role of our past guests Eduardo Arroyo, Adriaan Geuze, Xaveer de Geyter and Sylvia Karres…

**BE AWARE**

The **Undergraduate Independent Thesis** has finally arrived for the 2016 class. The 2016 class will be the first one to complete their degree with a thesis! Class of 2016: we are so confident in your capacity of producing substantial design proposals that set your next step as architects and designers, wonderfully linked to the architectural expertise and areas of work of the school and your advisors (Anselmo Canfora, WG Clark, Robin Dripps, Lucia Phinney and Peter Waldman). Four years ago we stated our ambition of educating independent-creative-critical-confident-fearless-ethical-leading young architects, and the independent design thesis will be your final statement. In the **Fall**, the fourth year students will start working with their spring 4020 thesis advisors, in the **Spring**, the thesis will be developed. Exciting!

**OPPORTUNITIES**

Those graduates that may be interested in pursuing a **graduate independent thesis**, in a semester free of any course load, consider applying for a thesis fellowship to extend your education for a funded semester. Also, Path 2.5 students have the opportunity of submitting a thesis proposal for your final Fall semester. Anyone interested in thesis, or those who are not sure but want to learn research methods, you should enroll in ALAR8100 Design Research: Methods and Strategies. Besides the thesis fellowships, be alert to apply for many other **fellowships** and funding opportunities in the school: research grants, design education and endowed fellowships, travel fellowships… and other opportunities of external funding, conference papers, competitions. Excellence is what you are already focusing on, but information and timing are critical, so be alert!

**FROM THE SUMMER**

Check the exhibition of the Summer Design Institute **SDI**, led by Tat Bonvehi and Shanti Levy. The work of the 1st year Path 3 students is impressive; this group is disciplinary fluid, ready to blur boundaries, to move really fast and to push the rest of us. And check out the **India Program** exhibition in the Elmaleh gallery, led by Peter Waldman, Pankaj Vir Gupta and Margarita Jover, with the participation of Matt Pinyan (March ’13 and former faculty). Just after that, the **China Program**, led by Shiqiao Li and Esther Lorenz, will exhibit the work produced during summer. Both the China and the India programs show powerful design research enriched by their unique cross-cultural environment. The **Vicenza program**, led by Charlie Menefee, went smoothly and successfully. Those who have been lucky to be accepted in any of these programs know that they are powerful experiences. Also, the work of the students granted with travel fellowships, will be exhibited in Campbell Hall this fall.

**BIG AWARDS FOR OUR GRADUATES!**

To end high, you all should know that two recent graduates (March ’15), **Eric Barr** and **Lauren Nelson**, have been among the six finalists of the S.O.M. Fellowship. This is one of the most (if not “The most”) prestigious prizes for recent graduates in the architecture programs across the country. Please, do the math again: **2 of the 6** finalists (33%!!!!) have been UVa grads. The recognition of Eric and Lauren is obviously their personal and professional recognition. But I am sure they are generous enough to share it with all of us: colleagues, teachers, younger students, staff and everyone in the department and in the school who have been part of their education. So we all are incredibly proud of witnessing and sharing the beginning of their successful careers. Now, what's next? We will be watching you… no pressure!!!! **CONGRATULATIONS AND ENJOY THIS WELL DESERVED AWARD!**

Finally, I am sure this is going to be a very intense year (again…). We are committed to our growth as architects and to our role in the architectural discourse of today. Take a breath and be ready. **Welcome (or welcome back) all!**

Iñaki, Esther, Anselmo, Adela and the entire Department

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Department of Architecture  |  School of Architecture  |  University of Virginia