Universität Innsbruck
Department of Experimental Architecture, Unit BC
Studio Colletti



based on: Vittorio Mazzucconi, 22 Avenue Matignon, Paris, 1972-76

E1 Entwerfen

A House of Books

From Spatial Sequence to Fabricated Detail

Betreuerin: Catalina Tripolt | Platzhalter

The topic of the studio is the design of a House of Books. This building may be understood as a small library, a neighbourhood reading house, a public room for books, a small archive, or a quiet civic interior. It should remain modest in scale and clear in organization, but it should develop a strong architectural idea.

The central question of the studio is how a small library can become a coherent architectural space through spatial sequence, structure, material, use, fabrication, and aesthetic judgement. The studio asks students to think about architecture as the making of relations. A building is not only a shape, and it is not only a function. It is a composed relationship between movement, program, construction, material presence, fabrication processes, and cultural meaning. The House of Books should provide places of reading, browsing, learning, conversation, silence, and withdrawal. It should create a meaningful transition from the outside world into a space of concentration. It should allow books to be stored and found, but it should also give reading a spatial and symbolic value. The design should investigate how books, readers, shelves, walls, thresholds, structural elements, and fabricated details can work together to produce architecture.

The guiding sentence of the studio is that the library is not a container for books, but an order for reading. This sentence should help students understand the project as an architectural task rather than as a functional arrangement alone.

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AIM

The aim of the design studio is to introduce students to architectural design as a process of spatial thinking, making, and revision. Through the project of a small library, students will learn how sequence, structure, material, use, and fabrication come together to form coherent architecture. The studio aims to strengthen the students' ability to think through drawings and physical models, to develop aesthetic judgment, and to make clear architectural decisions over time. Ornament is introduced as a focused side investigation that connects detail, surface, material, and function without becoming the main subject of the studio. A further aim of the studio is to discuss the role of AI in the design process. AI will not be treated as a replacement for architectural thinking, drawing, or making, but as a tool whose value, limits, and possible uses will be tested, discussed, and evaluated during the semester. Students will be encouraged to develop their own standpoint on when AI may support architectural work, when it may weaken it, and how it relates to drawing, model-making, fabrication, and aesthetic judgment.

TASK

Students will design a small public library, a "House of Books" with an approximate size of 250 to 400 m^2. The building should provide spaces for reading, browsing, storing books, studying, gathering, and quiet withdrawal, while developing a clear relationship to its site and public context.

The project should include an entrance and threshold that define the transition from the outside world into the library. It should include a lobby or orientation space, a reception or lending desk, a main reading room, areas for book stacks or book walls, individual reading places, a children's reading area or informal reading niche, a quiet study room, a small seminar or workshop room, an archive or special collection area, toilets, storage, and a service area. It should also include an outdoor reading space, which may take the form of a courtyard, garden room, terrace, loggia, covered threshold, or other spatial extension of the library.

Each project must also include one developed ornamental architectural element that contributes to the building spatially, materially, or functionally. This element should open a discussion about fabrication and may be developed through drawing, model-making, material testing, digital modelling, 3D-printing, laser cutting or another suitable technique. The aim is to understand how fabrication methods influence form, surface, joint, texture, repetition, precision and expression.

METHOD

The studio is based on iterative design work through drawing, making, testing, discussing and revising. Students begin with the observation of existing reading spaces and public interiors, then translate spatial principles such as sequence, threshold, rhythm, structure, material, use and fabrication logic into drawings, models and possible prototypes.

The "House of Books" will be developed through plans, sections, elevations, axonometrics, perspectives, physical models and selected fabrication experiments. Students will work across different scales, from the site to the building, the room, the material fragment and the detail.

Workshops on new fabrication techniques, including 3D-printing, may be introduced during the semester. AI will also be discussed and tested as a tool in relation to analogue work, digital modelling, fabrication, representation, authorship and aesthetic judgement.

The studio includes desk critiques, group discussions, pin-ups, intermediate reviews, short lectures, reading discussions, model reviews, drawing workshops, fabrication workshops and material experiments. Physical model-making and drawing remain central methods of architectural thinking.

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