

McGill University School of Architecture

Architectural Sketching ARCH 325 – August 2020

Instructors: Professors Ricardo L. Castro and David Covo
Gonzalo Muñoz-Vera, Juan Fernández-González

Course description: Seven days of supervised field sketching in selected locations outside Montreal. The course develops traditional skills in architectural sketching in pencil, ink and watercolor. Sketching is explored as a process that frames the student's encounter with the environment and as a strategy for acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world.

Objectives: The course develops and reinforces traditional skills in observation, notebook recording and sketching in a variety of media, and explores the kind of sketching that architects and artists do when they travel. The emphasis is on sketching and painting 'on location' as opposed to in a studio, so students draw outside every day, working individually and in small groups, and under the supervision of the course instructors. Rainy days provide convincing demonstrations of the importance of public interiors (like churches), porches, arcades and roof overhangs in an urban context.

The act of sketching is explored as a process of inquiry and searching. The sketch is revealed as evidence of curiosity and the result of our attempts to understand the world by observing and drawing what is seen and experienced.

Requirements: The course requirements are based on the development of a portfolio of work, at least 20 developed pieces completed in the field. Students are also expected to curate the annual exhibition of work produced in the 7-day field exercise, and may be asked to participate in the production of a document that serves as both a catalogue of the exhibition and an anthology of their reflections on the process and the sites visited.

Schedule: The course will run from 9 am ET, Saturday, August 22 to 5 pm ET, Friday, August 28, inclusive.

We will meet as a group 8 times, in 4 2-hour morning workshops (in-person or online for students in Montreal and online for all others) and 4 evening group discussions (online for all). Please note that participation in person, even for residents of Montreal, is **OPTIONAL**. The first three workshops will be themed; the fourth will be open and is intended to address topics of interest and concern identified by students and instructors. All workshops will be webcast and recorded. The first workshop will be held at 9 am on Saturday morning, August 22, on the main campus in front of the School of Architecture:

Workshop 1: Saturday, August 22 – School of Architecture, McGill campus

Workshop 2: Sunday, August 23 – Mount Royal

Workshop 3: Monday, August 24 – Lachine Canal / Bassin Louise, foot of Peel Street

Workshop 4: Tuesday, August 25 – Vieux Montréal

Following the morning workshops, and on free days, students will work independently. The course instructors will be available for both in-person and online consultations at specified times during the day. **Please note that students will be required to 'upload' their work on a daily basis according to instructions that will be circulated.**

The evening meetings are designed as opportunities for an open discussion and review of the work produced to date, with the participation of selected guest critics. These sessions will take place online, via Zoom, between 5 pm and 7 pm ET, and will also be recorded:

- Meeting 1: Saturday, August 22
- Meeting 2: Sunday, August 23
- Meeting 3: Tuesday, August 25
- Meeting 4: Thursday, August 27

Media/materials: The following media and materials will be necessary for the course:

Watercolours, watercolour paper, brushes, pencils, pen and ink, conté crayon, sketchbooks (including the standard 13 x 21cm Moleskine with heavy-weight paper) and drawing paper of varying size and type. Sketch pads, sheet material and watercolour blocks should range from 9" x 12" to 18" x 24".

If you need to buy a set of watercolours, you could consider a set with 'cakes', or you could purchase separate tubes of pigment. If you decide to buy separate tubes, you will need to develop a versatile palette. Below is one suggestion for a 12-colour palette – please note that the palette does NOT include black or white, which are unnecessary.

- Reds: Alizarin Crimson, Indian Red
- Blues: French Ultramarine, Cobalt Blue
- Yellows (difficult): Cadmium Yellow Pale, Yellow Ochre
- Greens: Hooker's Green, Olive Green
- Browns: Burnt Umber, Burnt Sienna, Raw Umber
- Other: Payne's Grey

NOTE: our first experiments in watercolour (Workshop 2) will be based only on French Ultramarine and Burnt Umber, which produce a surprising range of values and colours.

As for sketchbooks and pads, we recommend, in addition to the list above, a small pocket notebook or sketchpad for thumbnail sketches and experiments with wash and watercolour. A few good sable or synthetic brushes will also be required: a small and medium round, with a medium to large (1/2 inch or 3/4 inch) flat are always useful.

Bicycles have always been valuable additions to the standard "kit" and are highly recommended. We have also found that a folding camp stool or small foam pad can make 2 to 3 hours on the ground much more endurable.

Please refer to the attachment **ARCH 325/680 – notes on media and equipment.**

Evaluation: Final evaluation will be based on the portfolio of work produced.

Other matters:

1. Student Performance Criteria (CACB)

The following Student Performance Criteria, as defined by the CACB, are addressed in this course:

A3, A5, A8

A. Design

A3. Design Tools

The student must demonstrate an ability to use the broad range of design tools available to the architectural discipline, including a range of techniques for two-dimensional and three-dimensional representation, computational design, modeling, simulation, and fabrication.

A5. Site Context and Design

The student must demonstrate an ability to analyze and respond to local site characteristics, including urban, non-urban, and regulatory contexts; topography; ecological systems; climate; and building orientation in the development of an architectural design project.

A8. Design Documentation

The student must demonstrate an ability to document and present the outcome of a design project using the broad range of architectural media, including documentation for the purposes of construction, drawings, and specifications.

2. Right to submit in English or French written work that is to be graded [approved by Senate, 21-01-2009]:

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

3. Academic Integrity statement [approved by Senate, 29-01-2003]:

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/).