Tangible memories;
Appropriating and Interpreting Emirati Architectural Modern Heritage by integrating design making at the design studio and art History classroom in the United Arab Emirates

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Present in person (with/without a written paper)

How do you highlight the importance of architecture as a measure of modernity in nation building? How can reinterpretation of Modern heritage be a conduit for learning a technical skill and history of a nation by using 21st century fabrication techniques. The proposal is for a paper highlighting case studies introducing design research methods and fabrication technical skills, linking traditional art History classes and design studios in a federal University in the UAE where the demographic is specific to one gender and majority are local Emirati nationals. The methods were primarily designed to learn technical computational and fabrication skills and at the same time, to increase
awareness and instill more intuitive approaches better suited to artists and designers by using methods of observation, fabrication, interviewing, drawing, sketching, photographing; therefore creating better understanding of research by artists and designers. The case studies show the introduction of explorative methods in art history courses normally reserved to include only traditional academic research methods hence changing the culture at College level, culminating with the introduction of a design and build experimental studio which encourages “learn by design by making”. The processes describes, not just publications or designs produced in the studio, but also the journey from conception to final design for creating a series of interactive exhibits to represent findings in the Art History classroom or CAD technical studio environment. The case studies explore the success and shortcomings of the collaboration.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

**Lina Ahmad** is currently employed as an Assistant Professor at Zayed University, Abu Dhabi holding a Master Degree (MArch) from the Architectural Association, in London. She has over 10 years of professional experience working as an architect; Ahmad’s work has been extensively exhibited, including at UAE’s National Pavilion at the 14th International Architecture Exhibition, Venice Biennale. She is also the recipient of the Architecture + Cityscape Awards 2003, “Designing for a new world”, under the category of ‘Aspiring Architect’. In 2015, Ahmad published a book titled; Cellular ‘Network’ City, presenting an investigation into the realm of algorithmic architectural design. Ahmad is interested in computational design, digital fabrication techniques and the introduction of the concept of “design by making” in the design studio.

**Marco Sosa** is an Architect and Associate Professor teaching at the College of Arts and Creative Enterprises, Zayed University, Abu Dhabi. He holds a BA (Hons) and a postgraduate diploma in Architecture, and a MA in Architecture of Rapid Change and Scarce Resources from the London Metropolitan University. In 2012, Sosa published a photography book about the oldest functional mosque in the UAE. Sosa has also designed, participated and curated exhibitions, nationally and internationally. In 2014, Marco was appointed part of the curatorial team as Head of Design, for the First National Pavilion for the UAE at the 14th Venice Architecture Biennale curated by Rem Koolhaas. The exhibition and catalog featured many of Sosa’s photographs. Sosa is interested in materials, their presence as space forming medium adding materiality to a ‘place’ and how to integrate digital fabrication techniques in the studio for Interior design learning.