How Soon Is Now? or, Intuition and Ideas

Shelley F. Martin

School of Architecture + Design, College of Architecture and Urban Studies, Virginia Polytechnic and State University

This paper presents a proposition about architectural education in the form of a cross section of a first semester studio working through material means in order to situate ideas and problems within an evolving conception of intuitive works in professional practices. Architectural productions and the acquisition of technical skills emerge through direct demands of modes of thought resulting in material practices situated within a developing professional discourse.

Word and Line: An initial project of drawing where relationships in a body of text describe relative position within a field. A resultant force brought by the line to the page is critical in the essential understanding of line as a result of an architect speculating.

The Figure and the Phenomenon: The intangible quality of light as phenomena present in photographic practices provide the fertile possibility of knowledge produced through inhabiting light. The specificity of graphic description operates to advance the appearance and apprehension of the emerging drawing as a record of the ephemeral.

The Place and the Model: Landscape is considered as theoretical and operating in reference to a zone of influence found within a given condition. Understood as an examination of density and experience, the model exists as a study of a particular experience which could open up questions about ways of seeing, ways of coming to know a place, and as a model for inductive practices of complex architectural speculation.
The resultant works are ambiguous in nature, emergent in condition, deeply complex in both situation and alternative. As products of intuitive actions, these works are simultaneously reflective and projective, and the result can critique the assumption. Here, for each student, the work made and considered as contemporary directly advances a stance toward an emerging theory of architectural practice.

- **Author(s) Biography:**
  Shelley F. Martin is an Associate Professor in the School of Architecture + Design at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VT). She teaches architecture studios at the graduate, undergraduate, and thesis levels, and theory seminars relating photography, film, and drawing. She has won numerous department, college, and university level teaching awards, is a Presidential Global Scholar in the VT Honors College program in Switzerland, teaches Executive Education design courses for the US Department of State Legacy International Program, as well as interdisciplinary introductory architecture courses for non-majors framed as fundamental lessons in form and culture. Martin’s research focuses on design pedagogy and material culture, material research in form construction and casting at multiple scales, and the correspondences between the means of production found in photographic images and the qualities of material practice revealed through drawing. Grounded in both the experimental and documentary natures of photography and film, she writes on the practices of image making in architecture, and produces photographic studies and 16mm films investigating material properties and sectional dimensions of landscapes as propositions of form and shape. Her work has been presented at numerous scholarly conferences and is published internationally.