"Palladio Now"

Preamble
Andrea Palladio is perhaps the most influential architect in the history of Western architecture, influencing architects in France and even England well into the present. The late 20th century critic, Colin Rowe revealed Palladio’s influence in the early Modern work of Le Corbusier. Peter Eisenman had his students study Palladio and published a book of their discoveries. And Alan Greenberg indicates how Classicism and Palladianism influenced the unique Classical architecture in the United States. Currently, Amazon lists 87 pages of books that deal with Palladio and Palladianism. So the question is why was he so influential, and what was it he did or proposed that has entranced so many architects?

Studio Statement
This studio will allow students to practice the craft of designing good buildings using the Classical language in the great tradition of Palladian Architecture in the service of Beauty.

Tradition
Palladio is one of the great participants in what is called the "Classical Tradition." This is a 4,000 year old tradition of thinking and building. It is perhaps the longest and best-known cultural tradition in the Western world. For this reason alone it should be studied and understood. Most cities, small towns and communities in the United States have buildings designed in this tradition. Knowledge of the classical tradition and particularly the Palladian tradition is therefore essential for any student aspiring to be "well educated," and planning to work in any of these contexts.

Good Building
Currently, architecture students are often encouraged to develop "original" metaphors that require extensive explanation as the basis for their designs. This turns architecture into a medium of communication requiring interpretation rather than simple appreciation. This studio will focus instead on architecture as good building and the necessary attention to detail that is part of the tradition. The (good) buildings that result from such practices do not require interpretation. They are immediately recognizable as Beautiful. At this point in our cultural history an extension of (not a return to) such thinking just might be the most important thing we can do.
Practices
Good buildings since the Renaissance are actually composed of hierarchies of practices that are used to make drawings and buildings. These practices all share certain fundamentals:
• They are based on the proportions of the human figure.
• They employ simple rules of composition that emphasize hierarchy.
• They make discrete spaces of careful proportions (rooms).
• They emphasize the idea of rest and repose,
• They aspire to make compositional wholes that are "beautiful."

Craft
Good building practices are rooted in craft. This studio will introduce students to the idea of design as Craft. It should be noted that craft is always particular, requiring familiarity with known techniques, practices and procedures, requiring direct engagement in drawing, making and building. Design as Craft will be taught in terms of understanding, utilizing and practicing well-established patterns for composing and detailing.

Studio Process
The studio will be comprised of three design problems -

1. Analysis of several Palladian Villas and their proportional strategies.
2. Design of a small Classical vacation “Hut.”
3. Design of an individual (relatively small) house in terms of site planning, building plan organization, façade development and three-dimensional order.

Students will gather knowledge of Palladio through a study of his thought and his work, and will develop expertise in using his design strategies while solving design problems. The final review will consist of a presentation of each student's entire body of work for the semester: sketches, design exercises and final project.

Specific Studio Goals
To understand
0) Palladio’s design strategies,
1) the process of identifying, studying and applying precedents,
2) the role of hierarchy in design, both exterior and interior,
3) the role of architectural language in establishing hierarchy, character and reinforcing place,

Seminar
The studio will have a regular seminar time in which to discuss the origins, assumptions, and significant achievements of the Classical Palladian Tradition. This background will be necessary to establish the historical perspectives and intellectual foundations that will allow students to understand and participate in the great "conversations" of the Classical Tradition. We will explore issues such as – proportion, order, repose, and beauty.

Required Readings
Please order these books immediately. Most are available at very reasonable prices as used books.

History –

Influence -

In America –

Design –