

Robert Craycroft

First Year Final
Design Project

Architecture
Mississippi State Univ
Mississippi State, MS
93762

This project has been given several times at Auburn and in a modified form here at Mississippi State. It was designed as the culmination of a traditional visual design oriented first year program and as a transition to physical design issues.

The success of the problem lies in part with the careful structuring of the issues which the student must address (most of which are stated in the program) building on expertise already attained while avoiding (though addressing) areas yet covered. Familiarity with the generic activity of habitation was similarly relied upon while the overwhelming preconceptions of the single-family house were avoided as being too complex. Finally, the users were described as real people with specific requirements, attitudes, and values; most students became "personally" involved in designing for these people.

After several discussions concerning the spirit of the place, the life style of the users, and the many ways in which space and spaces can be defined, the students were asked to design in model. They began by constructing the givens (two scale figures, the pre-fab units, 600 square feet, and ten thousand cubic feet) of cardboard as reference points. The area and volume were also paced off in the studio. The project was two weeks in duration.

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FIRST YEAR FINAL DESIGN PROJECT
SUMMER OPTION 1977

OBJECTIVES:

To reinforce the many aspects of visual design and visual communication presented during the quarter and to bring them together in one cohesive process and product.

To demonstrate the relationships between the principles of abstract visual design and the realities of environmental design.

To introduce the process of designing man's environment which will be explored more methodically and in greater detail during the second year.

To allow the student to demonstrate sufficient capability for pursuing the increasingly complex demands of the curriculum.

INTRODUCTION:

Some aspects of the project have intentionally been kept quite simple to allow and encourage more rigorous development of other aspects. Areas which have not yet been addressed - programmatic (or functional) requirements, site constraints, and structural development - have been minimized. Formal, spatial, mass/void, and compositional issues should be maximized. Above all, a clear conceptual approach should predominate.

In many respects this project may be thought about in much the same manner as the abstract visual design problems preceding it. The principles of composition, the manipulation of space, and the articulation of forms will be just as important to the success of this design as they were to the relief problem, the additive cube and the penetrated mass. The primary difference being that these principles will now help define spaces for human activities, organize openings in a facade, create an atmosphere, etc.

This specific focus and the constraints which will subsequently be established should not be interpreted as being either simplistic or stifling. This project contains enough challenges for the most sophisticated designer and will allow any conceivable theoretical and stylistic approach.

THE PROJECT:

John and Mary Clarke are both members of the Auburn University faculty. He is a professor in the History Department and she is the head of the Art Department. They are both from the South although their graduate work was done elsewhere. They are widely traveled and well read. Their interests are many and varied. They are in their late thirties and plan no children.

In addition to their large, antebellum home which they have lovingly restored, the Clarkes own several acres of land at Lake Martin (see site plan). They wish to build a small place to which they can retreat and relax. They will frequently go there for weekends and twice a year they will spend a week or more at a time. Although the place is to be primarily for their personal (and private) use, they will, on occasion, invite overnight guests or host "a day at the lake" for larger groups.

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The purpose of this place is to act as a retreat from the demands of university life. They would like to relax without interruption. They both read a great deal, he writes, she throws pots. They often go fishing or sailing and they enjoy long, leisurely strolls through the forest. They will live simply and informally here.

The building site is a level clearing surrounded on three sides by mature pines and oaks. The clearing extends northward to the shore of the lake. Automobiles will be kept in a separate clearing to the south, a short walk from the building site.

Because they are planning to do all the construction themselves and because the budget is limited, the structure will be relatively small. They estimate that they can afford enough materials to enclose no more than ten thousand cubic feet and they require approximately six hundred square feet of floor area. They would also like to build an outdoor deck area of several hundred square feet. The Clarkes have discovered that in addition to the view of the lake to the north of the site, there is a beautiful view to the east above treetop level (about twenty feet). They feel that some exposure to that view would be wonderful although they have not made it a requirement because of the potential difficulties involved in gaining access to such a view.

The casual manner in which they intend to use the place negates the necessity for specific rooms (other than the toilet facility) and, in fact, they have expressly stated that they don't want the already small structure divided up into small rooms. Specific areas and volumes may or may not be created for specific functions depending upon the design. If significant changes in level occur, access should be by ship's ladder - a stair would be too expensive and too space consuming. Most of the area can be used interchangeably for various activities. The exception is their sleeping area; they would prefer a specific place designated and designed for their full size bed. Guests will sleep on air mattresses which can be stored out-of-sight.

In preparation for this project, the Clarkes have been stockpiling building materials as they come across bargains. They have purchased enough 2 x 4's and 2 x 10's for the walls, floors, and roofs along with enough 1 x 8 rough-sawn cedar siding to enclose the structure inside and out. The walls will be six inches thick and the floors and roofs will total a foot. The walls will be filled with 4" batt insulation with the floor and roof areas receiving 8". The siding may be installed horizontally, vertically, diagonally, or any combination thereof.

They have also picked up a self-contained prefabricated toilet unit (see sketch). It measures six feet by eight feet by eight feet high. They also bought a complete kitchen unit which measures two feet by eight feet by eight feet high. (Note - while some economies may be obtained by locating these facilities back-to-back, it is not necessary to do so in a structure this small). Finally, they bought two prefabricated metal fireplaces (they were really cheap).

John and Mary also have a friend at South Central Bell who can get them twelve inch diameter telephone poles at cost for foundations or what ever other use they might be put to. Any doors, windows, etc. should be standard items that can be cheaply purchased.

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They have no preconceived notion of what the place should "look like". They are open to a full range of design approaches and feel that because of the isolated setting that any could be appropriate.

REQUIREMENTS:

Study model of corrugated cardboard @ 1/4" = 1'- 0"

(1) 20" x 30" board with plans, elevations and sections at 1/4" = 1'-0" as required to explain the design and an exterior perspective conveying both the structure and the spirit of the design.

DUE:

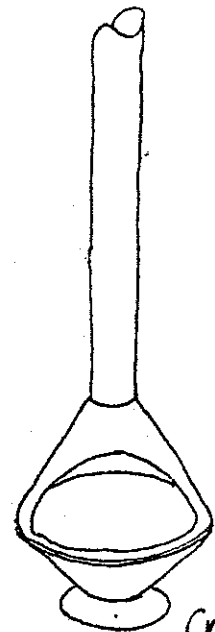
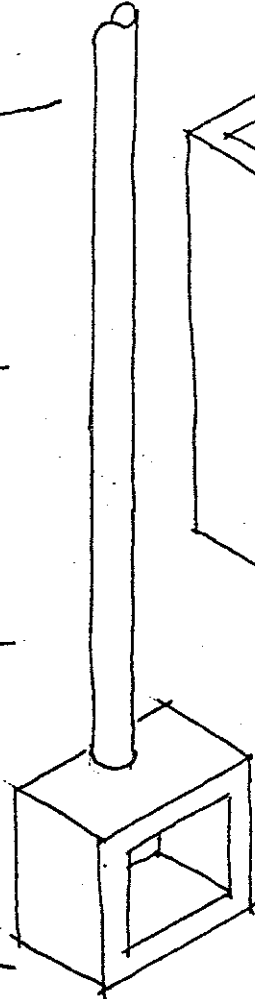
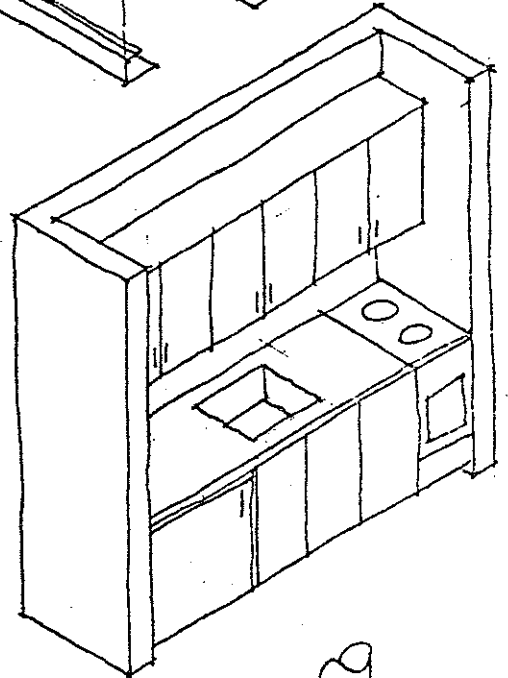
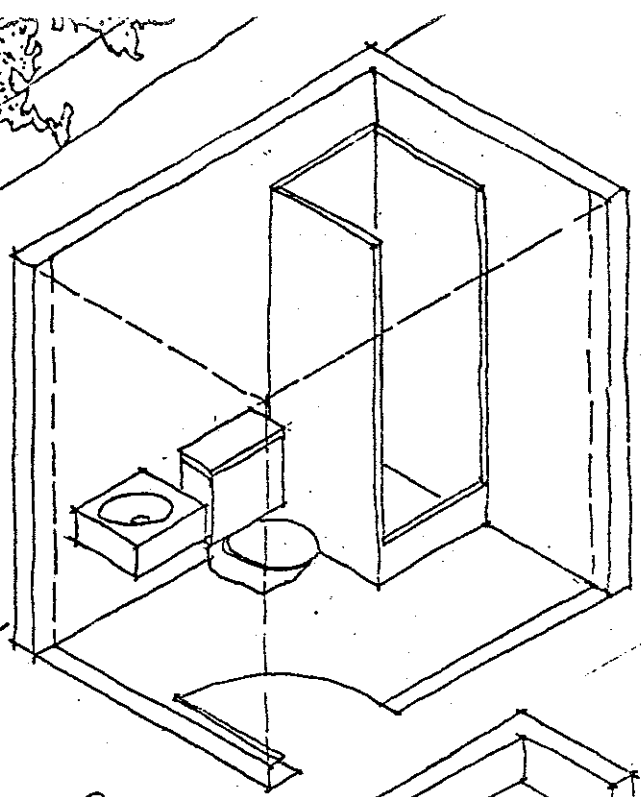
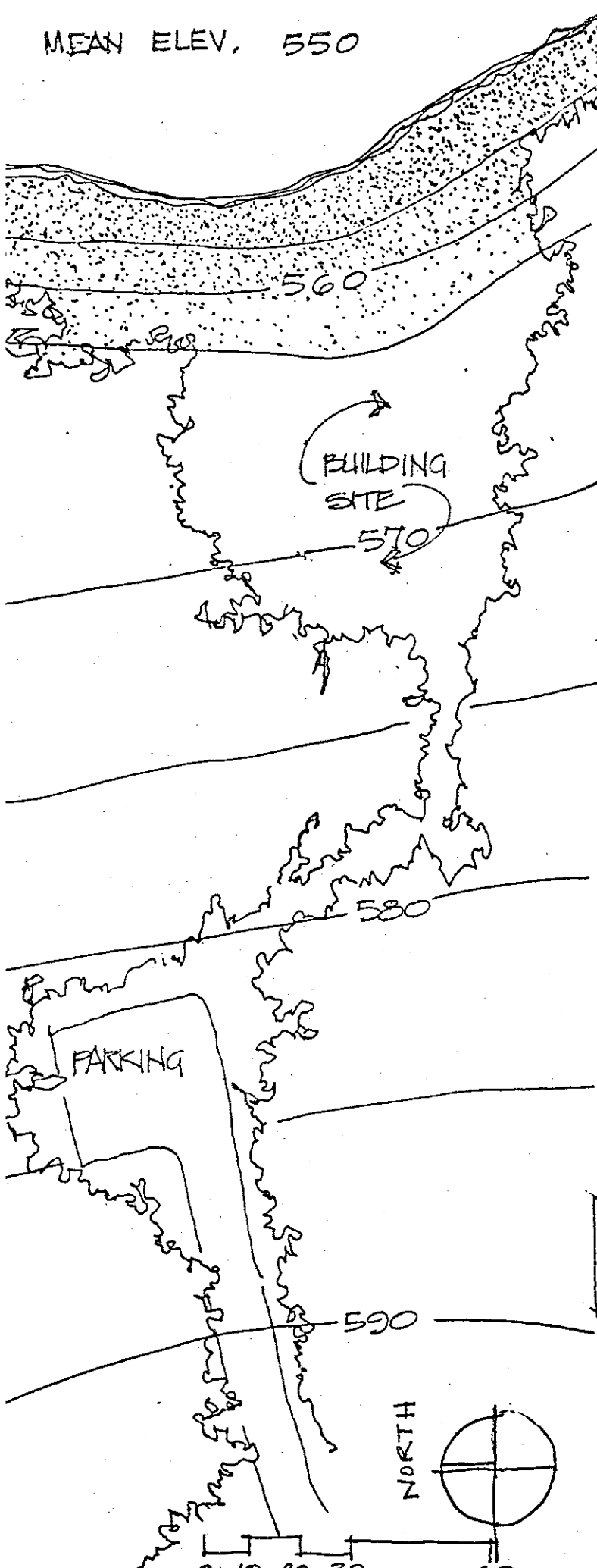
Thursday, August 18, 1977

REVIEW:

Friday, August 19, 1977

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