Drafting the Representation

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Architecture is experiential, allowing human interaction within the inhabitable space between materials. The sensory qualities of space and materials are intrinsically linked to the medium of representation during design phases. Selection of pen, pencil, layering, color, contrast, and texture are the result of design concepts manifest into physical and tangible decisions which influence aesthetics, acoustics, and haptic qualities of the built environment. Millennial students can be challenged to expand the experience beyond the computer screen with physical materials, manipulate those materials, and synthesize physical constructs into digital variations and iterations. Simple exercises like smearing graphite on various types of paper, altering contrast of black and white photography, manipulating translucency of colors, juxtaposing grids to discover hierarchy, or flipping between plan and section can quickly help students see immediate results from intentional interaction. Continued experimentation with physical materials such as mixing various sizes

of aggregate, adhesive, and water to visualize and graphically represent erosion; experimentation with wood species and trace paper to develop lighting and acoustical diffusion; or pouring Plaster of Paris into forms vs. coating materials with joint compound to create surface texture exposes students to the sometimes messy yet creatively productive process of physically working through material selections. Drafting is merely the draft; it takes physical built constructs to convey the full vision of the concept. As Marshall McLuhan popularized, "the medium is the message."

This presentation celebrates various methods of crafting and developing both graphical and physical materials into ceremonial contributors to defining spatial relationships and inhabitants' emotions through writing, sketching, physical models, and digital models.

