Mad Libs

“We ought in some sort to imitate the bees; and just as they in their wanderings to and fro, sip the flowers, then arrange their spoil and distribute it among the combs, and transform the juices into a single flavor...”

- Macrobius c. 400 (from the Latin in “Saturnalia”)

Consider the medieval practice of re-employing the shattered pieces of ancient Roman buildings in Christian churches: what is on the surface a practical act of recycling inevitably raises interesting questions about the nature of the result. The medieval churches of Rome are enigmatic and complex due to their mismatched columns and imperfect masonry. At an experiential level, the churches hover between the immaculate portrait of space and form they imply and the disheveled reality of their physical make-up and all the mixed symbolism it contains. In this way, these churches are similar to music genres like Hip-hop that borrow samples from other music; while the buildings can be decoded on a piecemeal basis, they are also rich compositions, cosmopolitan and unique in their own right.

This studio aims to experiment with sampling as a means for organizing a building project. The means by which the concept of ‘sampling’ or material reuse will be a major arena of exploration, providing a lens for thinking critically about contemporary building practices, sustainability and the development of our urban environments today.
**Part I:** The first portion of the term will be spent researching sources for a curated collection of ‘spolia’ components. The components will be extracted and thoroughly documented in orthographic drawing and 3D output, and the ensuing collection will be displayed alongside preliminary drawings exploring the potential in these artifacts to drive a tectonic and experiential concept.

**Part II:** The second portion of the term will be dedicated to utilizing this library of ideas or a kit-of-parts (drawings/models) to organize a building of public import for downtown Portland. The site(s) will be finalized by the outcome of the outcome of Part I, but will leverage underutilized spaces that deviate from the 200’ x 200’ foundational grid. Students will be asked to manipulate (copy, boolean, cast, delete, stretch, dice, weld, slice, contour, etc) the component library to bring new utility, identity, and tactility into their proposal.

**Some precedents:** Tara Donovan, Anni Albers, El Anatsui, Elias Sime, Theaster Gates, Gordon Matta-Clark, Samuel Mockbee, Testbeds, Frank Gehry (early work), Enric Miralles (EMBT), Skålsö Arkitekter

**Annie Kwon** is an architect based in Portland and New York and is a director at SHoP Architects. Her practice lives at the intersection of art and architecture, brand space and technology, at the scale of the individual to the civic realm. Annie has led project teams for the Andy Warhol Museum at Essex Crossing in the Lower East Side and Hudson’s Site in Detroit, integrating architecture, conceptual narrative and visual asset design with community and audience outreach and engagement. Her experience also includes high-concept projects for the executive teams at Prada and New York Fashion Week. Before joining SHoP, Annie’s notable clients included the Giorgio Armani Corporation, James Turrell and the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. She has taught at Columbia University, Parsons New School for Design, Pratt Institute and currently at the University of Oregon and is committed to increasing next-generation opportunities for exposure, equity and agency in our environments.

**John Szot** is an architect based in Portland and Brooklyn. His work related to building design has been exhibited widely, including at the Shenzhen Architecture Biennial, SIGGRAPH, the WNDX Festival of the Moving Image, the Pinkcomma Gallery, and the Art Institute of Chicago. He is a principal at Lyon/Szot Architects, a creative director at the Brooklyn Digital Foundry, and has held teaching positions at the Pratt Institute, Columbia University, University of Texas at Austin, and Parsons New School for Design. He currently teaches architectural design at the University of Oregon in Portland, Oregon. His forthcoming book Buildingness will be an independently-published volume of drawings, images, and writings related to the work of his studio, slated for release in 2024.