ANYTHING BUT AVERAGE
CRAFT AS CULTURAL LABOR

The idea for this studio was inspired by *The Craftsman*, a book by Richard Sennett, and based on a traditional south German housing type, the *Gehöft*. Sennett says “Making is Thinking”; the Gehöft could be described as “Making and Living.”

The Gehöft is a centuries-old rural housing type, a farmhouse with an adjoining private outdoor space that was used for agricultural endeavors, for work, and for play. Whole villages were comprised of these building types, which artfully combined the residential, business, and storage needs of the members of these communities. These houses are rooted in a cultural landscape and reflect the lives and customs of generations of farmers and craftsmen. Unfortunately, these houses are now falling into neglect and are in danger of being lost.

Students in this studio will be charged with creating an interior design that would rehabilitate this housing type as a place to both live and work. The design would be for either a bookbinding or a cabinetmaking business. This will require students to learn about these traditional craft professions, and their interior designs will reflect the refinement of these crafts as well as accommodate the necessary technology. At the same time this is also a residence, and so larger questions about the complex relationship between living and working, and about the aesthetics of living and working will be important to this class.

Davis, Howard, *The Culture of Building*, Chapter 10