The Interface of Architecture and Urban Artifact  
Portland, Oregon

Adjunct Associate Professors:  
Amy Miller Dowell, AIA  
Kelcey Beardsley, IDEC

MWF 1:00 to 5:00  
March 31 through June 6th

Background:

The Eric Ladd Cast Iron Collection consists of approximately 7 cast iron building facades, over 600 lineal feet, which is owned and stored by Portland Development Commission (PDC). Many of these buildings originally stood in Portland's Yamhill and Skidmore/Old Town Historic Districts. With this collection, Portland's number of cast iron buildings is second only to those in New York City.

PDC and the City of Portland have recently completed the Ankeny-Burnside Development Framework Plan adopted by the PDC Board on December 13, 2006. The Plan identifies the reuse of the collection as one of the objectives to implement the Plan's guiding vision: "Create a vital and vibrant district that retains and reinforces the history and character of the Ankeny-Burnside area." Developing specific strategies for the reuse of the collection is now a priority in implementing the Plan and a Federal Save America's Treasures Grant.

Project Description:

Students will schematically design a mixed-use building at a site located in Portland's Old Town/China Town neighborhood immediately south of the Burnside Bridge. A key component in this studio design project will be assessment of available cast iron artifacts and exploration of how these historic building elements can maintain authentic relationship to contemporary architecture and urbanism.

Students will explore and develop case studies focusing on interpretations and reuse of historic fragments to help frame their specific response to this site. Students will explore and propose how to integrate the Eric Ladd Cast Iron collection as a programmatic response within their immediate building design and within the wider urban context. Students will design and develop parts of their specific building and nearby context in a more detailed way - focusing on architectural expression and the perception of light, materials and structure in both a tactile and tectonic sense.

Studio Objectives:

Using the real test case of the Eric Ladd Cast Iron Collection, students will explore the interpretation and reuse alternatives for a collection of urban artifacts. The studio will analyze cultural memory, definitions of urban space, architectural and landscape responses, and technological issues related to the reuse of these artifacts in a modern context. Students will have the opportunity to interact with architects, urban designers, landscape architects, historians, property owners, developers, and City staff who are engaged in dialogue on this complex issue.
Amy Miller Dowell AIA
Amy Miller Dowell is an architect and educator who works in Portland, and previously San Francisco and New York. Currently the PDC Development Manager for the Lents Town Center Urban Renewal District, she previously led the agency’s redevelopment initiative at Portland’s Waterfront/Ankeny/Burnside area that resulted in the new U of O Portland Campus and numerous other redevelopment projects. Prior to working at PDC, Miller Dowell was Director of Architecture at Portland Community Design, a non-profit design center. She was President of Portland’s American Institute of Architects in 2003, has received three Graham Foundation for the Arts grants, and was recipient of the 2000 Governor’s Livability Award for Cooper Street Bungalow Courts.

Kelcey Beardsley, IDEC
Kelcey Beardsley is an architect, artist, and educator with twenty-three years in professional practice in Eugene, Portland and Seattle. The most well known project on which she served as Project Designer at SRG Partnership, PC, is the Oregon Coast Aquarium in Newport. The series of watercolor perspective renderings which served the Aquarium’s fundraising for expansion of the deep water exhibits were created as a consultant for SRG Partnership.

Kelcey has extensive teaching experience at University of Oregon in Eugene and Portland Center, Texas A&M University, and Marylhurst University. Under her five year tenure as Department Head at Marylhurst, the Interior Design Program achieved professional accreditation through Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA, formerly FIDER). The Fourth Year Design Studio, (final year independent studio) continues to be her primary focus at Marylhurst as well as Freehand Drawing.