Precedent 2.0
Expanding our understanding of precedents

Instructor: Lars Uwe Bleher, lub@uoregon.edu
Meets Thursdays from 4:00 - 6:50, UO PDX Seminar Space
UO Spring 2009; 3 Credit Hours, 24 students max., CRN
Prerequisites: Minimum of 4 design studios completed

Objectives:
_to understand how we can work with building precedents better and do them more justice
_to go beyond style and more towards quality
_to become familiar with more architects and to understand architects’ design motivation
_to expand one’s design vocabulary
_to become aware of one’s own implied or open preferences in design
_to train diagramming and visual analysis
_to become a better architectural designer

We will investigate architects of different schools of thought (mostly but not limited to modern and contemporaries) to understand their design approach and architectural language.

In an office like Norman Foster Architects there is a series of open and implied „rules“ (any color is possible as long as it’s grey, systems are integrated, seams are minimized and flush, structure and facade are synced,...). We will look into these kinds of preferences and their architectural expression in the media, in their writing and in the building itself.

First we will thoroughly analyze and reflect on these offices and their „rules“ and philosophy. We will then embark on a series of assignments and design tasks to first „mimick“ the approach in order to deepen the understanding and to subsequently alter, mix, morph, manipulate, expand, step beyond,... their way of designing.

How could we outfoster Norman Foster?
What would a Frank Gehry building be like without the signature shapes?
What happens when we de- / in-crease the complexity level of a Morphosis project?
What if Richard Meier would use color?
...

We will try to find out what it is that transcends fashion and style to reach the quality of a lasting contribution to our field. Students get to understand their own conditioned design tendencies and defaults and will be challenged to rethink their design preferences.

Class Format:
Lecture, discussion and workshop
Case study presentation, short paper and bi-weekly design assignments.
Final portfolio presentation

*: Quote of an anonymous student in a past 484/584 studio