The Exploration of Principles
Historically, architects have frequently used the design of houses as a way to explore and exemplify the principles behind their work—especially if what they are proposing is meant to depart from the way things are currently being done. This studio will do the same. Each student will be expected to clearly identify the design principles by which their decisions are made. Beautiful places come, in part, from an understanding of the archetypal and recurring qualities that underlay the making of any building. In this way we will attempt to exemplify the words of Aldo Van Eyck: “The conscientious architect is freer than the fool who does whatever he likes, or whatever enters his head.”

Garden First, Shaped by the House
Principles of “Site Repair” (don’t build on the most beautiful part of the land), and the idea of making the gardens first, will inform the shape and character of the house. The site will be large enough for three houses with the goal that each student’s design could be placed on the land, in different combinations with other designs, in such a way that they still make a beautiful whole. In this way, we will be attempting to derive strategies and principles that might illuminate flexible, repeatable patterns of organization and use.

Room-making
As with all of my studios, this one will center on the art of room-making and the need to resolve design intentions on an experiential and material level. The use of full scale stake-outs and mock-ups, models at all scales (especially room study models), and evocative perspective drawings (a la Edward Hopper and Hugh Ferris) will be required.