

School of Architecture | Georgia Tech | Fall 2026

ARCH 4833 + ARCH 8833: Making Marks, Marking Space (3 credits)

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Making Marks, Marking Space (3 credits)

Fall 2026

Instructor Information

Instructor: Michael Stradley, Ventulett NEXT Fellow

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Office Location: Arch East Building, Room 110

Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Information

Course Description

MAKING MARKS, MARKING SPACE is a design seminar exploring expanded practices of drawing as a form of architectural research and production. Student drawings and course inquiry will move between analog and digital, natural and artificial, representational and non-representational. Students will be asked to follow the protagonist of our seminar – a single mark, produced through specific means or technique – into a vast sea of process, procedure, craft, production, and reproduction.

MAKING MARKS, MARKING SPACE will be organized into three parallel streams of production for each student: (1) the invention or adaptation of a drawing tool or apparatus, (2) production of an operating manual and documentation of the drawing apparatus, and (3) the production of a series of stand-alone drawn works, produced by the drawing apparatus in question.

References, readings, and discussion will explore architects undertaking experimental drawing practices (Lebbeus Woods... MOS Architects... Pier Vittorio Aureli...etc...), contemporary art and painting practices which deeply interrogate method and technique (Wade Guyton... Anoka Faruque... Tauba Auerbach...etc...), the relationship between non-representational making and architectural practice, the status of abstraction in fine-art and architecture, apparatus and tool theory, theories of sensory perception and visual studies, and others.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Develop and sustain an independent drawing practice organized around a consistent set of constraints, decisions, and material commitments.

- Understand abstraction as a form of inquiry and as a primary mode through which thought and process become visible in a made object.
- Cultivate a critical relationship to material and technique: understanding how materials hold ideas in their form, how tools shape outcomes, and how thoughtful constraints generate possibilities.
- Situate their own work within a broader historical and contemporary discourse across art, architecture, and design, and articulate what distinguishes one creative practice from another.
- Read and analyze a work of visual art through close reading, identifying the rules, procedures, and spatial logics embedded in its surface and structure.
- Engage productively in collective critique by offering readings of work that are specific, constructive, and grounded in close, formal reading rather than preference or taste.

Course Principles

Physical media should not be treated as the output format of digital ideas, but as a primary site of thought, testing, and design.

This course values translation over invention. Ideas are expected to move between tools, media, and procedures, building up through iteration and seriality.

Process must remain visible. Drawings, tools, and failures are treated as evidence of thought, not as preliminary steps to be erased.

Critique is collective. Discussion will be used to clarify intent, offer alternative readings and openings, and to sharpen judgment, not to converge on a single solution.

Making is thinking.

Required Course Materials

Course readings and reference materials will be provided via Teams and through physical print-outs in class. Students will be responsible for purchasing a modest quantity of drawing/painting materials throughout the semester, in order to produce creative work for the seminar.

Possible Topics of Discussion/Inquiry

Current status of drawing

Markmaking

The hand, the digital hand, the body, the gesture

Materiality of drawing

The drawn artifact vs. its image

Allographic vs. autographic drawing

Representation vs. non-representation (vs. abstraction?)

Labor and making
Process and technique
Authorship
Paper as material
Drawing : wall :: building : ground?
Methods of display
Editions and multiples
Repetition and seriality
The tool/apparatus
Practice
Craft
Translation
Destruction
Relationship between design and art
Time/duration
Abstraction

Possible Artists + Theorists of Interest

MOS Architects
Tauba Auerbach
Young & Ayata
Walead Beshty
Yve-Alain Bois
Ian Davenport
Neil Denari
Liz Deschenes
Anoka Faruquee
Lucio Fontana
Cai Guo-Qiang
Wade Guyton
Perry Hall
John Hilliard
On Kawara
Willem de Kooning
Emily Kraus
Perry Kulper
Aranda/Lasch

Ufan Lee
Brice Marden
Agnes Martin
Florian Pumhosl
Robert Rauschenberg
Gerhard Richter
Robert Ryman
Lucien Smith
Do Ho Suh
Barry Le Va
Jack Whitten
Lebbeus Woods
Christopher Wool

Grading Policy

Grading Breakdown:

- 25% - engagement in seminar discussions
- 20% - documentation of work-in-progress + midreview
- 15% - presentation of artist/designer to seminar
- 30% - final creative work + presentation
- 10% - final documentation + EoY show prep

Grading Rubric

- A grade of "F" indicates failure to meet seminar requirements, including attendance and minimum presentation requirements.
- A grade of "D" means significant attendance problems and failure to meet basic seminar requirements.
- A grade of "C" means the basic requirements of the seminar have just been met, with a plausible but substantially undeveloped body of work and minimal participation.
- A grade of "B" means basic requirements are met and the seminar work is developed enough for evaluation against the seminar's themes and criteria.
- A grade of "A" means the project clearly demonstrates understanding of the seminar themes, criteria, and self-motivated exploration far beyond basic requirements.

Grading Scale

- A 90–100%
- B 80–89%
- C 70–79%
- D 60–69%
- F Below 60%

Course Schedule

MAKING MARKS, MARKING SPACE will meet weekly in ARCH WEST 249, Thursday evenings from 5:00PM-7:45PM. Course communication outside of this Thursday evening class period will take place on a dedicated Microsoft Teams channel.

Document uploads and course bookkeeping will take place on Teams, as well as periodic announcements, changes to the course schedule, and day-to-day messages. Each student will maintain an individual folder on the Teams channel, uploading sketches, process images, experiments, and new works. An assigned reading or two will be distributed each week. Students should closely read the texts and are expected to participate in periodic reading discussions.

Typical course meetings will follow this rough agenda:

- Housekeeping/announcements. [15 mins]
- Presentation of an artist/designer, by the week's selected student(s). [30 mins]
- (Occasional) discussion of the week's assigned reading(s). [45 mins]
- Workshop and/or Presentation/Discussion of new work + progress. [120 mins]

Week-by-Week Schedule

Week 1 - Thursday 8/27

Introductions, Warm-Up Exercise

Week 2 - Thursday 9/3

Artist/Designer Presentations, Launch Making Marks pt.1

Week 3 - Thursday 9/10

Artist/Designer Presentations, Reading Discussion, Workshop + Progress

Week 4 - Thursday 9/17

Artist/Designer Presentations, Workshop + Progress

Week 5 - Thursday 9/24

Artist/Designer Presentations, Workshop + Progress

Week 6 - Thursday 10/1

Artist/Designer Presentations, Reading Discussion, Workshop + Progress

Week 7 - Thursday 10/8

Mid-Review (review space TBD) - Launch Making Marks pt.2

Week 8 - Thursday 10/15

Artist/Designer Presentations, Workshop + Progress

Week 9 - Thursday 10/22

Artist/Designer Presentations, Workshop + Progress

Week 10 - Thursday 10/29

Artist/Designer Presentations, Reading Discussion, Workshop + Progress

Week 11 - Thursday 11/5

Artist/Designer Presentations, Workshop + Progress

Week 12 - Thursday 11/12

Artist/Designer Presentations, Workshop + Progress

Week 13 - Thursday 11/19

Artist/Designer Presentations, Workshop + Progress

Week 14 - Thursday 11/26

THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS

Week 15 - Thursday 12/3

Final Review (review space TBD) – Discuss Archiving

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation

Due to the limited number of class meetings, attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to have completed readings, participate freely in seminar discussion, and made progress on their creative work each week. Exceptions or absences should be cleared with faculty prior to class meeting or deadline in question. Failure to meet these requirements may be grounds for a grade deduction or course failure.

SoA Attendance Policy

Active participation at all class meetings is mandatory. Absences will be excused only for medical or family emergencies, Institute-approved events, and religious holidays documented in writing. (Notify your instructor in writing during the first two weeks of the semester about any anticipated religious holiday absences.) Late arrivals will be counted as absences.

Students are highly encouraged to submit absence verification for documented illness, hospitalization, accidents, family emergencies, or lengthy illnesses to the Dean of Students:

<https://studentlife.gatech.edu/request-assistance>

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards.

Review [Georgia Tech's Honor Code](#) and the student [Code of Conduct](#). Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity.

For expectations of student and instructor conduct, consult [Code of Conduct \(rules/19\)](#) and [Student-Faculty Expectations \(rules/22\)](#).

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body.

The Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement articulates some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. Simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment, obtain an accommodations letter, and discuss your special needs. Please also schedule an appointment with your instructor to discuss your learning needs.

Use of Generative AI

In this course, the use of Generative AI tools (insert appropriate AI tool(s) here) is encouraged as part of your learning and creative process. Responsible use is expected. All submitted work must include a brief AI Usage Statement outlining: which tools were used, when they were used, what prompts or questions were given, and how the AI output informed or shaped your final submission. Use of Generative AI must comply with Georgia Tech's Honor Code and academic integrity guidelines.

CIOS — Course Evaluations

At the end of the term, students are asked to complete the online course evaluation for all courses at Georgia Tech (<https://gatech.smartevals.com>). CIOS scores and comments have different degrees of visibility based on roles:

Reporting access by role	CIOS Scaled Results	CIOS Comments	TA's Scaled Results	TA's Comments
Instructor	Their Own	Their Own	All within their own course	All within their own course
TA Supervisor	N/A	N/A	All within their own course	All within their own course
Teaching Assistant	None	None	Their Own	Their Own
School Administration	All within their own unit	None	All within their own unit	All within their own unit
Students	All – Summary only	None	None	None

More information: [CIOS Student FAQ](#)

Campus Resources for Students

Undergraduate Student Academic Success Resources

A list of resources for undergraduate students' academic success and advising can be found at [Success at Tech](#). Academic Support (a unit in the Office of Undergraduate Education & Student Success) provides free tutoring: success.gatech.edu/tutoring.

Graduate Student Academic and Professional Success Resources

A list of resources for graduate students is available on the [Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Education](#) website.

Student Well-Being

At Georgia Tech, we are concerned about your overall physical, social, and mental well-being. A [comprehensive list of wellness-related resources](#) has been compiled by the Office of the Vice President for Student Engagement and Well-being.

Library & Archives

Contact your Architecture Library subject specialist, Catherine Manci (catherine.manci@library.gatech.edu), for research help and information on available resources.

Contact your Architecture Archives liaison, Jody Thompson (jody.thompson@library.gatech.edu), for assistance with archival research and collections.

Georgia Tech Library: <https://library.gatech.edu/> Georgia Tech Archives: <http://library.gatech.edu/archives>

Approved Communication Platforms

[Georgia Tech Approved Communication Platforms](#)

Georgia Tech Values Statement

At Georgia Tech, we see different backgrounds and perspectives as essential to learning, discovery, and creation. We strive to remove barriers to student success and to build a welcoming community where everyone has the opportunity to contribute to our mission. As outlined in our [strategic plan](#), we want to create an environment of holistic learning where all individuals can grow and learn to lead healthy, purposeful, impactful lives.

SoA & College of Design Policies

Archiving

At the end of the semester, all students are required to submit physical and/or digital examples of their work to their instructors or administration for archiving no later than one week after the end of term. By enrolling, each student grants a license to reproduce and display their work online, in forthcoming print publications, and in public exhibitions.

Ownership

For the purposes of continuous improvement efforts, such as accreditations and periodic program reviews, the School will select samples of student work submitted to satisfy course requirements. This includes digital files, papers, drawings, models, etc. Collected samples may be returned to students upon request.

College of Design Facility Rules and Guidelines

Please consult the [Georgia Tech Student Handbook](#) regarding the use of facilities and all Institute policies. Aerosol sprays of any kind are strictly banned from the studio and surrounding areas. A spray painting booth is available in the College of Design shop on the ground floor of the East Architecture Building.

Course Expectations & Guidelines

Per the [GT Catalog](#), all work produced in the College of Design as part of a degree program becomes the property of the College; it may be retained or returned at the discretion of the faculty. The faculty of the School of Architecture reserves the right to refuse credit for any project executed outside the precincts of the College or produced without proper coordination with the faculty.

Emergencies

In case of emergency (e.g., fire, accident, or criminal act), please call the Georgia Tech Police at 404-894-2500. Perry Minyard, IT Support Administrator for the College of Design, is also a firefighter and EMT certified in performing CPR.