

Ted Landrum

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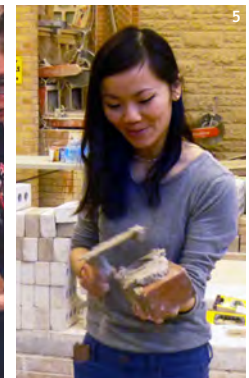
HANDS ON MASONRY

You say to brick, 'What do you want, brick?' And brick says to you, 'I like an arch.'
 And you say to brick, 'Look, I want one too, but arches are expensive... What do you think of that, brick?'
 Brick says, 'I like an arch.'
 - Louis Kahn
 Lecture at Pratt (1973)

The history of architecture is virtually synonymous with the history of masonry. For this reason, a course on masonry cannot avoid a long span of exemplary projects and methods. In Hands on Masonry students cover—and therefore discover—how the continual mixing of innovation and tradition is the essence and strength of any living tradition. This is true of architecture in general, but is perhaps especially true of masonry.

As the name suggests, students in this course gain a mix of direct experiences. They get their hands on physical samples and installations. They participate in a brick-laying, arch-building workshop, where they also learn – from inspecting full size mock-ups – the difference between load-bearing masonry and insulated cavity wall construction. They take photos and charcoal rubbings of intricate masonry details on campus. They take a mind-blowing, ear-shattering, eye-popping tour of the local Tyndall Stone quarry, where they get close (but not too close) to monstrous diamond-toothed, water-splashing, stone-cutting devices, and visit the relatively calm drafting office—where meticulous shop drawings are made. Students meet with diverse experts. They also get their hands on intense reading material, covering the inspiring history and potential future of masonry. Students conduct research on exemplary masonry precedents, and a plethora of techniques and concepts. They craft and share detailed presentations, and they assemble a final masonry booklet, gathering highlights of all they've learned about masonry into a single well made artifact.

This course benefits from support from the Manitoba Masonry Institute and Red River College.



1) Cyclopean Masonry, Sanctuary of Delphi, Greece 6th c. BCE; 2) Undulating Brick, UTC-3, Sidney Australia, Frank Gehry 2015; 3) 3D Hex Panel, Brian Peters, Design Lab Workshop, Kent State 2013-2017; 4) Ningbo History Museum, Amateur Architecture Studio, Ningbo China 2012; 5) Hands on Masonry Workshop at Red River College.

... you can make a joint that's so magnificent that joint-making (and the joint) is the beginning of ornament...What you can lift as one thing should be something that motivates the whole idea of making a single thing which comes together with another single thing.
 — Louis Kahn, *Silence and Light* (1969)