



*Diagram of The Stretto House
John Ross*

Design Project

Meridian Museum and School of Music

Concept / Schematic Design

ARC 4546 02 | Architectural Design IVB

Spring 2026

The analogies made between music and architecture have historically generated an overwrought territory of comparisons along narrow channels of interaction: number, rhythm, notation, and proportion. A transference of essential properties or ideas from one art to another could occur through channels not primary to either. In order to look further into transposition along other lines, we could think of architecture and music as unknowns and solve an equation for two unknowns. Where music has materiality in instrumentation and sound, architecture attempts an analogue in space and light. The question would not simply be “how to compare?” but what unmarked routes to investigate and what experiments to perform.

Architecture as a Translation of Music
Steven Holl

Through the use of a series of independent layers, superimposed together to create a coherent, more comprehensive whole, the architecture is able to communicate a multiplicity of information addressing movement, language, proportion, and spatial arrangement. This process also reiterates the inherent nature of architecture as a multilayered discipline that “combines the constituent elements of separate material into a single unified entity.” The overlapping of ideas through layering, superimposition, and juxtapositions results in a “blurred” relationship between conventions of building as elevation, section, and plan and their constructed “meaning” in the built realm.

From Bartok to the Stretto House
John Ross

Learning Outcomes

- Analyze, and diagram, issues related to site and program
- Generate design in response to contemporary issues and practices
- Evaluate contemporary architectural investigations
- Implement innovative spatial and formal responses to a design problem

Working Method

- Individual or in pairs.

The Design Project

- Meridian Museum and School of Music

Project Schedule (Subject to change)

- 02/02 – Site Visit
- 02/04 – Project Discussion
- 02/06 – Desk Crits: Site Concept Models + Plan & Section Diagrams (2 schemes per person @ 1/32” scale)
- 02/09 – Desk Crits: Site Concept Models + Plan & Section Diagrams (1 scheme per person @ 1/16” scale)
- 02/11 – Desk Crits + MSU Music Building Visit
- 02/13 – Desk Crits + Faculty Candidate Visit / Lecture
- 02/16 – Acoustics Workshop
- 02/18 – Desk Crits
- 02/20 – Desk Crits
- 02/23 – Desk Crits
- 02/25 – Desk Crits
- 02/27 – Desk Crits
- 03/02 – Desk Crits + Harrison Lecture
- 03/04 – Desk Crits
- **03/06 – Mid Review**

Deliverables

- Site plan (scale TBD)
- Site axonometric (scale TBD)
- All floor plans (scale TBD)
- At least 2 Sections (scale TBD)
- At least 1 elevation
- At least 3 interior perspective views
- At least 2 exterior perspective views
- Diagrams (as needed per project)
- Process work (models and sketches)

Evaluation/Assessment:

- Ability to conceptualize design as spatial organizations responding to site, program, and landscape.
- Ability to implement innovative spatial and formal responses to a design problem
- Ability to demonstrate a high level of craftsmanship for all artifacts created.

Resources/References (See course website for links)

- Concepts
 - Aesthetics of Total Serialism: Contemporary Research from Music to Architecture
 - Architecture as a Translation of Music: Pamphlet Architecture 16)
 - Xenakis Creates in Architecture and Music
- Technical
 - Architects' Data
 - Architectural Acoustics: Principles and Design
 - Architectural Graphic Standards
 - Architectural Graphic Standards (Online)
 - Mechanical and Electrical Equipment for Buildings
 - Plumbing, Electricity, Acoustics: Sustainable Design Methods for Architecture (Chapter 5 – Architectural Acoustics)