

past portfolio

ARCH-GRAMS

Despite the fact that you've found your way onto my website, there is something to be said about having a hard copy tangible portfolio in hand that has project graphics and descriptions. It helps tell a more complete story about what's going on architecturally.

This rudimentary portfolio, which was the foundation for this website, was kept in an 18"x24" paper format with various representative projects from 1984 to 2009. It describes the streamline architectural process I call **ARCH-GRAMS** (acronym for **ARCH**itectural - dia**GRAMS**). Condensed to just the essentials, **ARCH-GRAMS** are an abbreviated freehand drawn service offered for small projects such as light frame new structures, alterations and additions.

Perception is reality. Although the end result of my services is a built project; the product of my services is design and drawings. Instead of focusing just on the final built project photos which are in the 'projects' section of this site, this portfolio focused on the primary product of the relationship between the client and the architect; design and drawings. I design. I draw.

I DESIGN

The design process is not a method. Method implies that results can be predicted to a certain degree of accuracy. Instead, the design process is an exploration. As this exploration proceeds, drawings give material existence to the conceptions so that they can be seen, assessed and acted upon. In the generative and developmental stages of the design process, the drawing out of these ideas, whether executed quickly or slowly, roughly or carefully, are distinctly speculative in nature.

Visual thought is the essential compliment to verbal thought in cultivating insights, seeing possibilities, and making discoveries. Sketching enables the mind to work in graphic form, as thinking on paper. Just as thought can be put into words, ideas can take on visual form to be studied, analyzed and refined.

As a design progresses, the process of layering sketches is used as a graphic mode for both analysis and synthesis. Layering allows a quick and flexible way to see patterns and study relationships. Just as the refinements of written thoughts are edited and rewritten, a design is edited and redrawn through built up layers. Tracing over a previous layer allows visual judgements on shape, proportion and composition, as an emerging image develops in a number of discrete steps.

The process may include both sketchy and detailed work as the mind focuses in on some areas for closer inspection while keeping an eye on the whole. Revisions are then made by tracing over a previous drawing, retaining certain elements, and refining others. This process continues through recombining, transforming, and diagraming until the programmatic, contextual and aesthetic solution has been graphically resolved. Even in the digital and artificial intelligence age, the design process still relies on manual effort to evaluate, modify and improve; inherently a human endeavor. I still design.

I DRAW

When it comes to architectural illustration, clients and the public are ever more demanding in their requests for photo-realistic computer generated images. Today more architects work in 3D to generate images and supposedly coordinate design in Building Information Modelling, an intricate cyber-centric data base format. It's a dependency on constantly evolving digital tools that are becoming ever more cumbersome. It's the use of computational design to produce multiple prototypes for client consumption.

However, sketching and hand drawing are still a valid procedure for producing architectural graphics. Drawing is a way of thinking through and working out problems. It too allows for rapid prototyping, and it's a clear communication tool: demonstrating a thought process, the evolution of an idea and a solution.

The purpose of a drawing is to represent the essence of something. The best drawings can be the most simple, a few lines which allow the viewer to interpret, to form the image. Computer generated images in all their accuracy and finesse can dull a subject down: too much information and the mind doesn't need to work.

In a world of cyber simulacra, the signs scratched on paper with a pen or pencil do have a way of restoring the authenticity of representation, as well as the nature-centric validity, socially relevant value and symbolic content in the object or place being described. The illusions created by digital media tend to remove people from the organic and tactile world around them. Retaining this connection between mind and hand seems just as valid now as it was for the cave artists who immortalized the hunt.

Drawing is the ultimate communication tool. Since the time of the caveman, drawing has been used for thinking, recording, explaining, imagining, questioning, recollecting and expressing. It makes humans inherently human. I still draw.

I SOMETIMES FILE

I draw, talk, email, doodle, diagram, render, print, print, draw, model, receive, distribute, call, approve, confirm, reject, plead, deny, laugh, present, listen, order, zoom, pan, copy, paste, scale, collate, staple, eat, list, drink, walk, draw, chat, meet, photograph, crop, calculate, draw, adjust, sip, solve, stack, note, organize, scan, edit, review, print, question, comment, make, sketch...

and occasionally I store them in a flat file.

paper portfolio

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DAVID STRABEL R.A.

Brockport, New York 14420
585-637-5346
dave@davidstrabel.com

architect