



Yoshiro Ikehara: Tokorozawa Seichi Cemetery Chapel

ARCH 408 / 508 **Poetics of Construction** Mark Mulligan, Instructor

Spring 2019 workshop, 2.00 credits, CRN 36484 / 36755 markmulligan66@gmail.com

278 LA: TuTh 9:00-11:50 (April 2, 4, 9, 11) + Sa 10:00-16:50 (April 6) / projects due April 26

Architecture may be distinguished from mere building construction by embodying ideas, values, meanings, and emotions that transcend the pragmatics of construction. But what does it mean to build in a *meaningful* way? What kinds of ideas are communicated through the architect's imagining and developing new ways of putting materials together?

We will study these questions through the lens of construction "poetics". If we think of *poetry* as a literary genre characterized by compactness, intensity, and beauty – with words chosen and arranged just so – then applying the term *poetics* to the genre of construction will call to mind some of the most beautifully imagined and executed artifacts of architectural history and present-day. The unique, indelible voices of great 20th-century architects such as Wright, Kahn, Aalto, Lewerentz, and Scarpa remain with us precisely because of their consistent attention to developing powerful architectural expression in the resolution of construction systems and details; the depth of those constructive investigations is not incidental to their legacy. Today, practitioners such as Herzog & deMeuron, OMA, Ito, SANAA, and Adjaye extend the exploration of modernism's poetic potential while responding to ever-more-complex demands of sustainable building technique.

This design-intensive workshop is limited to final-year undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in any of the Terminal Studios. In dialogue with the instructor – and informed by readings, case studies, and structured exercises – students will develop one or more aspects of their Terminal Studio project into a set of thought-provoking constructive details. The course follows an irregular schedule, with 20 classroom hours condensed into the first two weeks of spring term and final projects due in the fourth week; projects may serve as a catalyst for further design development phases required in the Terminal Studio.

Mark Mulligan is an architect and educator based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Prior to establishing his own design office in 1998, he was a project architect at Maki & Associates in Tokyo. He has taught design studios, construction and history courses at the Harvard GSD. In addition to practicing and teaching, he has written extensively about modern Japanese architecture and construction technique. His most recent essay, "Craftsmanship For Our Time", appears in the February 2019 issue of *a+u* magazine.