



# architecture anonymous

A documentation that captures Architecture students and their interactions with one another within the studio environment

**To those** who have never meddled with the industry, architecture is just another means of making a building work. Try talking to a layman about spatial colloquial, plot ratio, liquidated ascertained damages or performance bond and you will probably draw a blank. Archiculture, a portal that encourages architects and architecture undergraduates to share their experiences was initiated by Ian Harris and David Krantz.

Archiculture is a documentary that captures five diverse students in a single studio at one university throughout the entirety of their thesis project. The film will convey a mere sliver of time, wholly representative of the experience to create a student's paramount work. The footage will illustrate the range of emotions and process of this extremely intense period at the conclusion of an academic career. It is the directors' goal for the documentary to possess educational, entertaining, realistic and inspiring qualities in response to the dynamic world these students cross.

## What brought you into architecture?

**Ian:** I began in engineering because it was the inevitable path for a kid who was good in science and math coming from a blue-collar family. I quickly realized that I was not like the other engineering students and wanted more creativity in my endeavours. Although I enjoyed the complexity and knowledge learned in my science, math and systems studies, the finite quality of the field was not something I wanted my life to pursue. The grey areas of design, the feel, the touch, the playful qualities of architecture were far more intriguing. You become a life long student, learning daily some new set of needs for your potential user. About this time I had a close friend in the architecture program and when I stepped in one night to visit him in studio, I got a glimpse of the "other side" in my friend's first year design course. A light bulb sort of went off in one of those vividly memorable moments. I made the leap and have been pursuing architecture ever since.



photos by megan roberts

**David:** Ultimately, my love for art and design led me to the profession of landscape architecture. As a child, I was inspired by a friend of the family who practiced architecture and was fascinated by his ability to communicate ideas through illustrations. After speaking with him a number of times throughout high school, I was convinced to enter the field and haven't looked back since.

**Tell us about the birth of Architorture and how Archiculture came about.**

The idea came about early into my fourth year of study as a student of Landscape Architecture. I was on pace for early graduation and had completed all of my required design studios. I opted to take a graduate studio as an elective course. It was my first glance at the studio environment as an "outsider". I instantly realized how amazing the process was and how wonderful of a story it was. My classmates and I had always struggled to convey to others why we dedicated so much time and energy to our creative studies. We were never able to successfully explain how unique the studio setting was. It is here where my interest in documentaries collided with my captivation for the architectural process.



As architects, we are taught to understand a problem, analyse it holistically, and come up with creative solutions. The aspect of forming creative solutions is our real worth to society

Definitely. This is not a call for recognition, but a way to raise awareness as to the potential of our architectural community. We feel the best way to illustrate these experiences is through the highly accessible medium of film, which will provide an honest glimpse into this compelling profession.

**Throughout your research, do you receive more positive or negative responses in regards of architecture? Are they complaining more or are they accepting archiculture as a lifestyle?**

We have seen mostly positive responses. Only those who truly have interest in the profession are still around by the thesis project. The first few years provide enough exposure and hard work to grasp the profession and weed out those who don't want to make the sacrifices. To be an architect requires a lot of internal determination. It can be an extremely political career that requires a lot of hard work. You truly have to love it and want it, to stick with it for life.

**How has the response been so far?**

Astonishing to say the least. The viral qualities of our online social networks have provided a constant injection of energy into the project. MySpace, blogs, etc. have permitted people to access this film at the pre-production stage and has revealed a considerable amount of interest in the subject matter. We intend to have the protagonists of the film, both students and professors blog throughout the semester to provide a preview into the storyline. Many people feel this film is long over due and have comments such as, "finally, someone is doing this!" We feel there is a critical need to reveal the architectural process to the general public in order to mature our built environment. Through the content of the documentary and the power of the medium of film we hope to provide this opportunity.



We began with the working title, Architorture, but have since decided to change the name of the project for a multitude of reasons. We felt the former title left too much room for people to misinterpret the agenda of the film. It didn't reflect our goal of introducing the impact of architecture to society. We hope to engage a broad range of "non-architecture" people with the energy behind this new title and use this project as a means to educate them on the training of our architects. This change has resulted in a rebranding of the project and in a new website, [www.archiculturefilm.com](http://www.archiculturefilm.com).

**People who are not in the industry often do not understand the emotional turmoil that architects or architecture students go through. Where does your project stand in regards of this matter?**

We want to expose the full range of trials and triumphs of the studio, from a 4AM deadline rush, to the victorious moments of a rewarding critique. The film will represent a mere snapshot of what naturally occurs in the studio environment. We hope to open people's eyes to this amazing roller coaster of a process. The film will bridge the gap between society's misconception of the profession and the actual role of an architect, by providing a glimpse the architectural process.

**Do you see Archiculture as a platform for architects/architecture students to share their experiences in a wider scope? i.e. forum based.**



Our online response has reinforced this immensely. On average about a third of our hits are coming from outside the US, and that is not just the predominantly English speaking countries, its everywhere

Given your previous experience with architecture, is going back one of your options? Why?

I think both of us, personally, want to walk away from the film with an even greater sense of our community. And by that, I mean the design community. I think more people should take the skills learned in architecture / design school and learn to apply them in whatever field they end up in. As architects, we are taught to understand a problem, analyse it holistically, and come up with creative solutions. The aspect of forming creative solutions is our real worth to society. Learning whatever the language is to communicate your solutions is the means, but the actual concept is our impact. This can apply to any number of things, whether it is creating our built environment, designing a website, or directing a movie. So for us at the moment it is a film, but down the road it could be a landscape, a commercial, or a skyscraper.

photos by meghan roberts



Archiculture is really a global phenomenon, where is the project headed after this?

Through our network of international friends and our studies abroad, we knew that this subject matter was a global story. Our online response has reinforced this immensely. On average about a third of our hits are coming from outside the US, and that is not just the predominantly English speaking countries, its everywhere. Via the blogosphere and a couple links posted, the website has provided a portal into the project. As for the future direction, we see this film having international theatrical releases around the world. Get a few of the students, the directors, and a professor or two, and have an international tour. The agenda could be an array of issues but would primarily focus on engaging each country's architectural community. It could spark discussion about our potential as leaders in this age of sustainable action and how we educate ourselves to further prepare. The sky is the limit for this project's impact.

What advice would you like to give to those who are considering architecture as their career?

I would say enjoying the process is paramount as well as understanding the preparation and time it takes to gain your own voice in the field. This

profession is one, which requires an amazing amount of knowledge and experience. It takes a long time to gather these skills. Count it up. Here in the states degrees are 5 - 8 years, professional interning is another 3 years minimum, exams require another 3 and by that time you still have to find a client that will trust you with their money and health/safety to construct something. If you get to design something by the time you are 35 or 40, you're a young star. Another large aspect of the profession, which I was ignorant to, was the business side. Its like any other profession, you have to make a profit and consult/manage people efficiently. These skills are not always pushed or learned in the academic setting and are generally gathered from "real world" exposure in the profession. Inevitably the majority of the work is not actually designing, but communicating and collaborating with the many specified disciplines to get something built in today's complex landscape. **SP**

**Co-Director/Producer - David Krantz**

David Krantz recently suspended his job as a Land Planner to become fully dedicated to the production of Archiculture. He spent the past year studying film, working on shorts, and laying the groundwork for the upcoming documentary

**Co-Director/Producer - Ian Harris**

Ian graduated with a Bachelors of Science in Architecture with a focus in Urban Planning from the University of Cincinnati. Since graduating, Ian has been living in the Bay Area pursuing his architectural career.