

Essential Dwelling: The Archon Prize

Architecture 571

Fall 2025

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The Archon Prize is a design competition for a 1,000 square foot "Essential Dwelling," with site, interior, and exterior program spaces determined by each designer. The site selected should be a place that is memorable and personally significant; the place can be rural, suburban, or urban; likely a place experienced first-hand and of personal value to the designer.

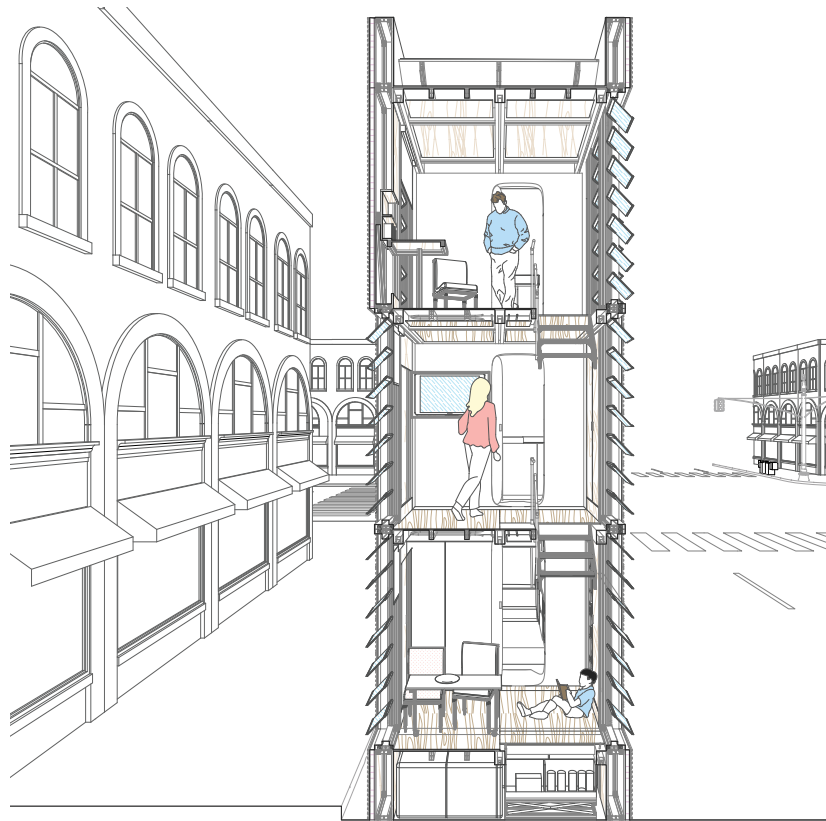


Although each project is small in scale, the process of exploration and development will be rigorous. Each designer will be working at multiple scales: region, surrounding context, defined site, physical building, defined and implied space, and critical details. Prototypes, both virtual and physical, will be developed at a range of scales, from small site models up to full-scale (1:1) details.

The semester will be divided into three parts:

**PART ONE:
DESIGN PROPOSITION FOR AN
ESSENTIAL DWELLING - A MINI-THESIS
(METHIS)**

For the first seven weeks, each designer will determine the thesis, resulting site and program, and the schematic design of their project.



**PART TWO:
DETAIL DEVELOPMENT OF METHIS**

For the next six weeks, designers will develop the systems, furniture, details, and landscaping for their project.

PRIZE COMPETITION PROCEDURE: Each competitor will prepare detailed drawings and models of the building and the site for presentation during a Final Review before an invited jury, which will select the prizewinners. First, second, and third place monetary awards will be given.

PART THREE:

COMPLETION OF PUBLICATION IMAGES

Following the Final Review, each designer will have time to develop their images for the publication of a book that illustrates all of the projects.



FIELD COMPONENT: Throughout the semester, we will use some of the studio time to explore Essential Contemporary Residences. We will also explore local construction sites of works in development by the Critic

PREVIOUS ARCHON STUDIO BOOKS: You can view the "layout preview" of previous Archon Studio Books at Presto Photo by clicking on the following links:

[THE ESSENTIAL DWELLING: The 2017 Archon Prize Studio](#)

[THE ESSENTIAL DWELLING: The 2016 Archon Prize Studio](#)

[THE ESSENTIAL DWELLING: The 2014 Archon Prize](#)

[ARCHON Book Final](#)

Hard copies of these books and other Archon Studios will be available to review in the studio. Illustrations shown here are the work of previous Poss Archon Studio participants

STUDIO ONLINE REFERENCES:

[Website of Jeffery Poss Architect, PLLC](#)

Students enrolled in the studio will have the opportunity to visit projects in the community completed and currently under construction.

[Tea Ceremony at Japan House](#)

As a way of experiencing ritual within a specifically designed setting, we will plan to participate in the Urasenke Tea Ceremony during Part One