

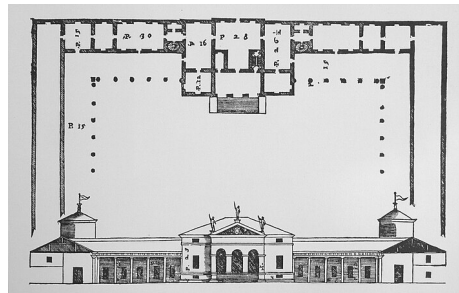


INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL
ARCHITECTURE & ART

International Drawing Tour 2025

VILLA SARACENO, ANDREA PALLADIO

Syllabus



**DRAWING THE CLASSICAL:
ANALYTICAL and MEASURED FIELD DRAWING
at PALLADIO'S VILLA SARACENO**

Course Instructor: Stephen Chrisman
Fellow of the ICAA; Partner, Ferguson & Shamamian Architects, New York

Location Villa Saraceno, Finale, Italy

Course Dates: May 27 – 30, 2025

COURSE OVERVIEW

The Villa Saraceno was one of Palladio's earliest villas, constructed in 1540's, and located near the small town of Finale di Agugliaro, about 15 miles South of Vicenza. The Villa was built for Biagio Saraceno, who held office in Vicenza beginning in 1548. Here is Palladio's description from *The Four Books*.

At a place in the Vicentine, called Finale, is the following building belonging to Signor Biagio Saraceno. The floor of the rooms is raised five foot above the grounds; the larger rooms are one square and five eighths in length, and in height equal to their breadth, and with flat ceilings. This height also continues to the hall. The small rooms, near the loggia, are vaulted; the heights of the vaults is equal to that of the rooms. The cellars are underneath, and the granaries above, which take up the whole body of the house. The kitchens are without the house, but so joined that they are convenient. On each side there are all the necessary places for the use of a villa.

Today, the Villa Saraceno is an UNESCO World Heritage Site, following an extensive restoration by The Landmark Trust, which purchased the Villa in 1989 after many years of neglect. (See links to detailed descriptions of the villa in the Selected Bibliography below.)

This course provides a unique opportunity to live in and intensely study one of Palladio's early villas at great detail over several days. We will have access to measuring and drawing all aspects of the Villa. Suggestions for independent study include:

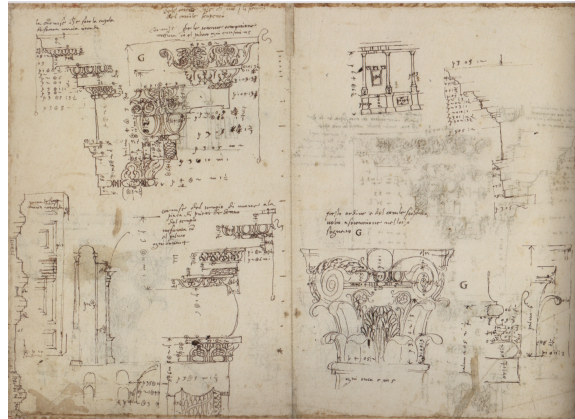
- Comparison of detailed villa design as described in *The Four Books* with the Villa Saraceno.
- Comparison of the actual room dimensions (length, width and height) with descriptions from *The Four Books*.
- Detailed building sections and exterior elevation bay studies.
- Drawing interior details including door and window surrounds, fireplaces, interior doors, moulding profiles, etc.

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

STEPHEN CHRISMAN

Stephen Chrisman is a Partner at Ferguson & Shamamian Architects in New York City. He holds a Master of Architecture from the University of Notre Dame, and Bachelor of Architecture from the Oregon School of Design. His courses have included Classical Architectural Design and Composition, The Art of The Measured Sketchbook, How to Study Buildings: An Analysis of Architectural Composition and Precedent. The Art of Field Drawing; Gothic Architectural Details at Princeton University, and forthcoming Drawing the Classical Garden: Field Drawing at Untermyer Gardens. He has developed and led the ICAA Domestic Drawing Tours of Williamsburg, VA, Charleston, Washington DC, Newport RI, and New Orleans. Stephen is a long-standing Fellow of the ICAA and serves on its National Education Committee, and the Curriculum Committee.

COURSE DESCRIPTION



Measured drawing by Palladio

“I set myself the task of investigating the remains of the ancient buildings...and finding them much worthier of study than I had first thought, I began to measure all their parts minutely and with the greatest care. I became so assiduous an investigator of such things that, being unable to find anything that was not made with fine judgement and beautiful proportions, I repeatedly visited various parts of Italy and abroad in order to understand the totality of buildings from their parts and commit them to drawings”

A Palladio, (1508-1580) Forward to Book I, The Four Books on Architecture

History provides a wealth of material that the architect can draw upon to inform the design for any new building. In the classical tradition new buildings draw on a legacy of work which in turn they enrich and transmit to successors. In this role, the study of history for the architect is the study of precedents, with the practical aim of building a compendium of successful solutions for ready reference when addressing similar problems of composition in contemporary design. The more extensive an array of precedents an architect has in their toolbox, the better equipped to design a sound and enduring solution.

Two ever present challenges the architect wrestles with are the composition of a design and the calibration of the appropriate scale and dimension of the elements that make up the composition as they relate to the human scale. This is true at all scales - whether the architect is determining an appropriate composition and scale for a neighborhood block, a town square, a street, the height of a building, the size of a room, the dimension of a door, or the mouldings that hold together its panels. When working within the classical language this extends to investigating how the elements have been inventively adapted for a myriad of related considerations - climate, regional character, function, technology, building type, economy, craftsmanship, tectonics and suitability of material.

One of the best ways to study precedents - to become better acquainted with composition, scale and dimension - is through observation and drawing in the field, in direct contact with original models. Two time- tested field techniques for studying architectural precedents are analytical and measured drawing in sketchbook. These are principal means through which architects have historically advanced their skills and knowledge. Studying details, buildings and places analytically, reveals ways in which precedents are continuously adapted through time to new programmatic and regional

conditions.

This course will present a method of sketchbook drawing that is focused on accurately measured and analytical drawings of accessible architectural details, drawn-to-scale in a sketchbook. This course will emphasize orthographic drawings of plan, section, elevation and profile.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn about the use of measured, analytical and perspective sketchbook drawing as a design tool and resource from the Renaissance to the present day.
2. Learn techniques for architectural measured drawings, accurately drawing them to scale in a sketchbook.
3. Expand architectural design skills through familiarity with architectural precedents that can inform future architectural design endeavors.
4. Develop a sensibility for size, scale, proportion and composition through measuring and documentation.
6. Inspire a lifelong passion for sketchbook drawing.

COURSE PRE-REQUISITES

1. Completion of an ICAA class in Field Drawing, including International or Domestic Drawing Tour, Summer Studio in Classical Architecture, or a CE course in Measured and Analytical Field Drawing
2. A passion for Classical Architecture and a love of drawing.

MATERIALS

Required

1. Sketchbook; hardbound (+/-) 8" x 10", stitched binding so the book can open flat, (*recommended; Moleskine Art Collection A4 Sketchbook, 8.25" x 11.75" or Sennelier A2 Sketchbook 27 x 21 or 32 x 24cm, portrait, from L. Cornelissen & Son, London*).
2. 12" triangular architects scale, with 1/8", 1/4", 3/4", 1 1/2" and 3" scales.
3. Tape Measures; (*recommended, 25' Stanley Powerlock, and Lufkin 6' folding wood rule, 6' x 5/8" in. Wood Rule Red End with 6 in. Slide Rule Extension*)
4. Mechanical pencil with 0.5 HB lead. (*Alvin Draft/Matic or similar*)
5. Wooden drawing pencils, H, HB and 2B leads. (*recommended; Tombow Mono*)
6. Pencil Sharpener; (*recommended, Blackwing Longpoint or similar*)
7. Eraser; (*recommended Factic BM-2 Mechanical Eraser, Tuff Stuff Eraser Stick, Alvin Vinyl Eraser, or similar*)

Recommended

8. Drawing Stool, foldable
9. Foot-inch calculator app, (*recommended, Measure Master Pro, or similar*)
10. Laser Measurement, (*recommended, Bosch GLM Professional 35 or sim*).

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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SCHEDULE

This is a draft overview schedule, and is subject to changes.

Tuesday, May 27

Arrivals after 4:00 PM

- 6:00 PM: Welcome Reception
- 7:00 PM: Lecture; *Palladio and Measured Drawing*, Stephen Chrisman
- 8:00 PM: Dinner
- Late Evening: Tour of Villa

Wednesday, May 28

- 8:00 AM: Breakfast
- 9:00 AM: Morning Drawing
- 12:30 PM: Lunch
- 1:30 PM: Afternoon Drawing
- 7:00 PM: Dinner
- 8:00 PM: Lecture

Thursday, May 29

- 8:00 AM: Breakfast
- 9:00 AM: Morning Drawing
- 12:30 PM: Lunch
- 1:30 PM: Afternoon Drawing
- 7:00 PM: Dinner and Closing Remarks

Friday, May 30 (Departures before 10am)

- 8:00 AM: Breakfast

Departures before 10:00 AM