

BASIC ARCHITECTURAL LITERACY

A course in four lectures

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Course Outline

Lecture I: Introduction to the Classical Language of Architecture

The course begins with an overview Roman classicism, the foundation of the architecture of western civilization. The lecture examines the origins of the five orders of Roman architecture as well as their individual characteristics and components. It also illustrates variations in the orders and their application on numerous examples of America and European buildings. The etymology of architectural terms is emphasized.

Lecture II: Greek Classicism

Using a variety of examples, Lecture II describes the differences between the Roman and Greek architectural vocabulary. It also discusses the rediscovery of Greek classicism and the development of the Greek Revival movement both in Europe and America.

Lecture III: Motifs and Details

Lecture III discusses familiar classical architectural motifs and details and their origins, serving to illustrate that details we see every day can be traced to specific ancient sources. Among the motifs and details explored are the aedicule, serliana, patera, taenia with guttae, consoles, brackets, balusters, and clarithi, .

Lecture IV: American Traditional

Lecture IV includes a discussion of Palladio's and James Gibbs's influence on the American architectural image and examination of additional architectural details. The lecture also focuses on connoisseurship by using contrasting images of literate and illiterate architecture.

Each lecture lasts approximately one hour. Handouts include an architectural glossary, illustrations of Roman and Greek orders, and a reading list.