



# intern architect update

David Thaddeus speaking to a group of Intern Architects at the Structures Seminar

## Upcoming Courses

Law & the Architect – November 30 (FULL)  
Building Envelope Principles – December 6 (FULL)  
BLDG 1830 – Part 3 of the BC Building Code at BCIT. Monday nights from January 7 to March 31 (12 weeks), \$450. Can be taken in lieu of Building Code I and II.

The 2008 AIBC Course Schedule will be posted in the Professional Development section of the AIBC web site in early December.

## Competitions

### A House for Robert Bresson

Submissions due on December 18 2007. See [deathbyarchitecture.com](http://deathbyarchitecture.com).

### A House for Anubis, God of the Dead

Submissions by January 1, 2008. Read about this at [deathbyarchitecture.com](http://deathbyarchitecture.com).

### A Better Museum for Constantin Brancusi

There seems to be some unhappiness with the museum designed by Renzo Piano in front of the Centre George Pompidou for the works of sculptor Constantin Brancusi. Design an alternative, be part of a gallery show, a publication which will be sent to mayor of Paris, officials, libraries, and to each participant as well. Register by January 1, 2008; entries due March 16, 2008. See 'Paris Redux' at [www.deathbyarchitecture.com](http://www.deathbyarchitecture.com).

## Oral Reviews

Oral reviews, which are a requirement in the Intern Architect Program, are held three times a year: February, June, and October. The next oral reviews are scheduled for February 18 and 20, 2008. Notice will be sent to you by e-mail in early January.

The Oral Review Workshop has been tentatively scheduled for Wednesday January 23. The session will provide insight into the format, types of questions asked, and the kinds of responses that are expected in the oral review. If you are going to sign up for the upcoming February session, make sure to attend the workshop.

If anyone has completed their oral review and would like to volunteer to be part of the mock oral review at the January workshop, please send an e-mail to Roisin O'Neill at [roneill@aibc.ca](mailto:roneill@aibc.ca).

## Blog Plug

Lisa Kwan, IA is your Intern Representative to the AIBC Council and sits on the Intern Architect Committee. Visit her blog for a review of her role as IA Representative at [www.youraicinternrep.blogspot.com](http://www.youraicinternrep.blogspot.com).

## Feedback

This newsletter is formed and compiled by interns for interns. Do you like it? Find it useful? Have comments or suggestions? Send us an e-mail at [iaccommittee@yahoo.com](mailto:iaccommittee@yahoo.com).

Do you have any concerns about the process, structure, fees, or requirements of the Intern Architect Program? If you send us an e-mail we can bring up the issue for discussion at the next Intern Architect Committee meeting. Proposals for change come out of expressions of concern, so please take five minutes to let us know what is on your mind.

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## Structure Happens...

by Sean Ruthen IA.AIBC

With the new Canadian registration exam going live in 2008, along with NCARB's moving towards its new format of seven exams as opposed to nine, it is indeed a very interesting time to begin writing the NCARBs. This was more than evident by the two dozen plus interns who gathered at UBC's Lasserre Building (and home to SALA) for the Remembrance Day long weekend in preparation for writing both the General Structures and Lateral Forces exams. The Intern Architect Committee (IAC) was happy to have Professor David Thaddeus spend three days in Vancouver to impart his tectonic wisdom.

During the course of the long weekend, it became evident that not many participants had success in booking their exam date close to the seminar, the majority having to wait until January or February to write. A notable exception was one individual from Portland who had come up to Vancouver to take the \$350 three-day seminar, and was booked to write both exams at Metrotown the following Wednesday, (the seminar was open to not only BC interns, but ones from Seattle, Portland and Alberta.)

Regardless of what happens to the Architect Registration Examination (ARE), interns across North America will continue to benefit from the likes of Prof. Thaddeus. Traveling across both countries like the late Norman Dorf, Prof. Thaddeus provides more insight than any Kaplan resource or equivalent could offer. Within the first 15 minutes of the three day seminar he had outlined the nine exams, the most effective strategy with which to proceed through them, and the amount of time one should allot to studying for General Structures and Lateral Forces. He also provided a reading list that included many other invaluable sources besides the obvious Kaplan guides.

Prof. Thaddeus' insights, keen wit and unflagging sense of humour helped to untangle the mystery of

the truss and shear wall to name but a few usual suspects, and, of course, axial and perpendicular loads. In most instances he avoided numerical computations entirely, instead (and wisely) choosing to illuminate the concept — literally in some cases, as he used the overhead projector to his advantage by projecting laser cut acrylic beams and trusses to show the distribution of forces by applying point loads, in some instance breaking the small piece of plastic to illustrate shear failure. Most humorous was his small section of a W flange that he admitted was a subject of much curiosity while passing through airline security. But by placing it on the overhead projector, he was able to provide us with a visual reminder of which flange was in tension and which in compression. Besides providing a workbook and collection of mock questions, Prof. Thaddeus' walkthrough exams were most illuminating, as he emphasized the difficulties with some of the language, and gave us tips to overcome them.

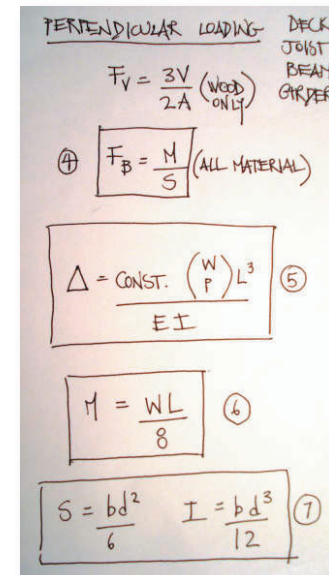
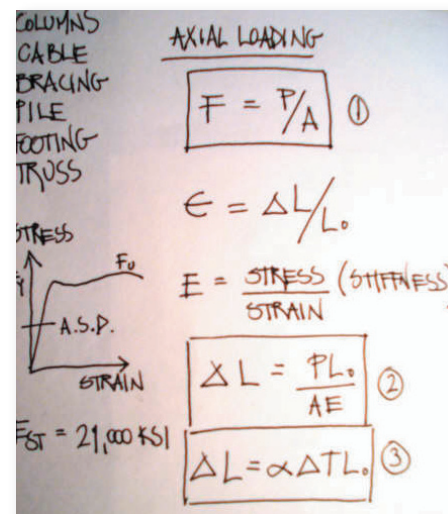
As amazed as I was by Prof. Thaddeus' devotion to the subject, I was equally taken with his ability to effectively communicate it — no small feat given the often intimidating algebra and trigonometry. Once the seminar was over, I had the chance to give him a whirlwind tour of the city's more notable structures, including the Museum of Anthropology, the Forestry Sciences building on campus, the old Macmillan Bloedel building, the now Qube, as well as a quick pass by the towers around False Creek North. Over a pint and a bite to eat on Robson we were able to talk about his background and how he came to be a traveling structures professor. Growing up in Beirut, Prof. Thaddeus came to North America as a young man and got his architecture degree in Houston, Texas before settling in Charlotte, North Carolina. It was in Houston where he began teaching the Materials & Methods division, switching to General Structures and Lateral Forces a little later.

As I could tell from his reaction upon seeing the structural curiosity that is the old West Coast Energy building, that Prof. Thaddeus would like to return to Vancouver. There will certainly be others who can benefit from his erudition. The IAC will keep all posted as to when he might be able to return.

As for my own personal experience of the course in relation to the exam, I would say Prof. Thaddeus' seminar is nothing less than invaluable. After digesting the Kaplan material a week before going, I found his course to be the perfect means to unify the concepts and, more importantly, visualize them given his clever magic with the overhead. Perhaps most invaluable was his 'brain dump' in which he suggested memorizing 10 formulas (below) and writing them on the first sheet of the six pages of scratch paper when you get into the exam. The value of writing them down is not so much that you have them in front of you (and most of them are available on the exam's reference tab), but that you understand the concept behind the equation

as you memorize it. I must admit, it certainly helped order my thoughts going into the exam.

The AIBC Intern Architect Committee would like to thank everyone who made Prof. Thaddeus' visit possible, including: Trish Poehnell and Ray Cole at SALA for their generous donation of Room 202 for the weekend; to Michael Burton-Brown MAIBC and the Architecture Foundation of British Columbia for helping to sponsor the event; intern representative to Council Lisa Kwan IA.AIBC and AIBC Registration Coordinator Róisín O'Neill for finding and booking Prof. Thaddeus; and, of course, David for imparting his lessons with intelligence and wit. Thanks also to those interns who attended and wrote the AIBC to express appreciation — your feedback will surely help to ensure Prof. Thaddeus' return to our fair city.



Professor Thaddeus' suggested technique: The 'Brain Dump'