We opened this school year with the roar of construction equipment and subtle vibrations shaking MD Anderson Hall, foretelling the completion of a new addition to the building, the William T. Cannady Hall for Architecture. Scheduled to open in fall 2023, this facility, designed by Ünal Karamuk and Jeannette Kuo, will include collaborative spaces for students and faculty, a world-class fabrication shop, and two new public galleries. It is an aspirational space focused on architectural research and public engagement, facilitating both the production and dissemination of new knowledge and situating the work of architects in the larger world.

As we watch Cannady Hall take shape, we are also working to fill our esteemed Wortham Fellowships and conducting searches for four new faculty members in the areas of building technology and design. We seek new ideas and perspectives that will broaden our own, challenging us to take our school in new directions while fostering our sense of a close-knit academic community. New people and buildings will be our “guests from the future,” to paraphrase Soviet poet Anna Akhmatova. She used this phrase to refer to the philosopher Isaiah Berlin, whom she met only once in 1945, a meeting that led to an overnight, twelve-hour-long conversation. Bubbly, free-spirited, and curious, Berlin was the antidote to the grim political reality of Soviet Russia at the time. His curiosity and optimism were an inspiration to her—a true “guest from the future”—beaconing another reality yet to come.

As we anticipate new people and buildings, we are reminded that architecture, too, is a futuristic, optimistic, and propositional discipline. Here at Rice Architecture, we approach it with a great sense of conceptual, practical, and formal rigor, tackling the most pressing issues of today and tomorrow by means of design. From drawings to models, from buildings to books, we see architecture as an elastic, imaginative discipline that encompasses many scales—whether of a house or a city or the entire planet. Rice Architecture, too, is both local and global, both human-scale and planetary—always welcoming new “guests from the future” into our ever-changing community.

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During my first weeks in Houston, I underwent a complete reorientation. I forgot how many times I passed store entrances, circling until I finally spotted hints of the plain buildings through the lushness that hid them so well. This is one of the many ways the city gently resists you. The summer heat and humidity seem to put everything on hold besides the murmuring of AC units. The sudden cloudbursts make you keenly aware of the virtue of foresight. And Houston’s ubiquitous near-identical strip malls frustrate even the most skilled navigators.

Nothing about Houston is quaint. The city forces us to acknowledge the mistakes and hubris of our built environment, whether it’s the tunnels that remove white-collar workers from sweltering downtown streets, the concretized bayous whose waters every so often threaten to disregard their engineered banks, or the absence of zoning, which has led to a cityscape that offers no warning about what is coming on the next block. Living in Houston entails an idea of confrontation that is not always pleasant or avoidable, which is precisely why it is exactly the right place for a school of architecture. Houston makes it impossible to exist in a vacuum and steers the focus of study toward issues that are pressing and present. Houston is real. Though uncomfortable at times, Houston’s need for reaction and resistance makes for unexpected moments of great beauty. Climb a few flights of stairs (topography is a foreign concept here) to any vantage point and you see a very different Houston—one that peeks through a blanket of greenness, not immediately visible, waiting to be uncovered and refusing to be understood at a glance. The fuzziness of this canopy is perhaps the best metaphor for a city of blurred boundaries and expectations. Under these trees, immigrants transformed even the most mundane oil-boom apartment complexes into communal havens. Strip malls, often uninspiring elsewhere, here become an unbiased backdrop for all peoples and activities. The abundance of sun and rain, combined with a relative lack of winter, allows plants and critters to quickly take over any bit of open terrain. Houston has a knack for claiming the mundane for its own interpretation, and this mundanity is exactly what makes the city approachable and comforting.

Houston is impossible to sum up in a few paragraphs. In part, this has to do with its sheer size, formlessness, and countless internal contradictions. But, most important, Houston’s indescribable nature comes from the fact that the city is still working itself out. Yes, it bears the growing pains of flooding, congestion, and pollution, among other challenges, but it triumphs in its resilience, diversity, and willingness to adapt. The city lacks the arrogance to reject anyone who is curious enough to witness its growth and embraces those brave enough to help define it. Houston is at once ugly yet endearing, fantastic yet genuine, passionate yet unprejudiced.

It is easily home, if you allow it to be.
The one-year Rice Architecture Preceptorship program was established in 1968 to provide a practicum between the penultimate and final years of the B.Arch. curriculum. Participating offices are selected by the school from among leading firms in the United States and abroad. Current firms include Adjaye Associates in New York; Kieran Timberlake in Philadelphia; Payette in Boston; Olson Kundig in Seattle; Johnston Marklee in Los Angeles; Diller, Scofidio + Renfro in New York; and Thomas Phifer & Partners in New York, among others.

At the end of their fourth year of study, students prepare a portfolio and apply to be placed with a preceptorship firm. Preceptees intern for a minimum of two academic semesters, participate in a variety of roles to gain a better understanding of the scope of professional practice, and are paid for their work. They submit two analytical progress reports per semester, and upon their return to Rice, they produce a portfolio which documents their practical experience. After successful completion of their preceptorship experience, students complete their final year of study in the B.Arch. program.
Rice Architecture is an intensive, top-ranked graduate program that foregrounds design, discourse, and practice. We equip future architects with critical expertise and optimistic sensibilities that position them to be leaders in a rapidly changing world. The exchange of knowledge and sharing of intellectual culture between faculty, students, and visitors at Rice Architecture (in studios, seminars, lectures, reviews) is essential to the continuous development of collective conversations and to the disciplinary debates that reverberate within the school and expand beyond.

Rice Architecture’s primary graduate program is the Master of Architecture (M.Arch.), a nationally accredited professional degree with two possible tracks of study. Option 1, a seven-semester track, is for applicants with a limited background in architecture. Option 2, a five-semester track, is for those applicants who hold a four-year undergraduate degree in architecture from a national or international school and have been approved for advanced standing. The Option 1 and Option 2 tracks merge in the third semester, generating a dynamic context for design.

The core courses of the program expose students to fundamental disciplinary issues within architecture, while establishing a shared set of historical, contemporary, and emerging references, questions, and speculations. The required core sequence includes design studios and courses in history and theory, technology, and professional practice. These four areas overlap and intersect in a productive feedback loop—demanding that students synthetically engage the world of architecture and all that it implies.

Following the core studios, advanced options take up specialized topics (urban, environmental, political, material) that range in scale and technique. These research-driven design studios situate pressing contemporary questions, asking students to synthesize their expertise through plausible, provocative proposals. One semester of advanced studios includes Totalization, a unique format that inserts nationally-recognized architecture and engineering consultants into the studios, positing that architectural innovation emerges from collaboration and adept anticipation of technical contingencies. In the final semester, M.Arch. students develop an independent thesis project. Thesis enables each student to situate their architectural ambitions in relation to the field, defining and claiming a position about architecture in the world. (See page 21.)

A broad selection of elective courses within the architecture school and across the university provide extended contexts for disciplinary debate, architectural activism, material experimentation, and innovations.
Totalization recognizes that architecture is a generalist, collaborative, and unpredictable enterprise. Totalization argues that architectural innovation happens only when architects are nimble enough to accommodate contingencies in their work. Totalization sees the architect as the negotiator at the center of a diverse team of collaborators. Projects are understood to be contingent and evolving; architecture’s “totaling up” is never fixed or finite.

The Totalization studio semester coordinates all of the advanced fall studios to emphasize design’s intrinsic relationship to fields ranging from finance to fabrication. Nationally-recognized consultants (Robert Heintges, Nat Oppenheimer, Mark Malekshahi, among others) are embedded in each studio’s design process; they advise students on their facades, structural systems, MEP (mechanical, electrical, and plumbing) arrangements, and other factors.

Each studio focuses on a single, fundamental research topic—for example, the structural and symbolic role of the roof today—engaging materials, techniques, technologies, elements, and markets. Exposure to additional critical realms takes place in required seminars and lectures attended by all Totalization studios and addresses further considerations, such as accessibility, fire safety, environmental controls, construction document delivery, and development financing.

The unique organization of Totalization, which coordinates and synthesizes multiple studios and consultants, results in depth and breadth. Each project’s specific research topic opens questions that, through their articulations, explore architecture’s broader agency within society.
Graduate thesis is an opportunity for students to reflect on their education, reconsider their designs, figure out what really interests them in architecture, and begin to explore that interest before they step out of the academy to engage and make decisions in the world.

All Master of Architecture students are required to develop a thesis proposal during their penultimate semester in a one-credit-hour course that is taken alongside the final course in the history and theory sequence, Contemporary Practices. These courses, which consider current and emerging issues in and approaches to architecture and urbanism, encourage students to understand the implications of their interests for architecture and the environment and are designed to assist students to articulate where and to what extent those interests are relevant, preferably pressing, and why. They provide a setting in which students can independently formulate and develop a proposal for a semester of design work that will adequately articulate, situate, and investigate the relevance and limitations of their attitude and approach to architectural and urban design.

Students admitted to thesis further develop and pursue their proposals under the direction of a faculty advisor in a semester of intense creative research. Thesis concludes in a final public review of this work with distinguished guests that engages the entire school. Successful theses and the discussion they foster stimulate future activity at Rice Architecture and beyond.
Made possible by a generous lead gift and matched by other donors, an endowment for Rice Architecture Course Travel was created to honor Harry K. and Albert K. Smith Professor John J. Casbarian, who founded the Paris program and has long championed the importance of travel in the education of architects. Thanks to The Casbarian Fund, the school sends students to locations across the globe with their design studios. Each spring more than one hundred Rice Architecture students travel to locations around the world. Prior destinations have included Barcelona, Paris, Berlin, Lisbon, Mexico City, Los Angeles, Phoenix, and Marfa.

As an example of this experience, during the Spring 2020 semester, the junior studio traveled to Madrid, along with two nearby cities, Córdoba and Segovia. The trip exposed students to a variety of ancient, medieval, and contemporary works of architecture, from Madrid’s Muslim foundations to Segovia’s Roman infrastructure, from Córdoba’s magnificent mosque to the city’s recently completed Center for Contemporary Art. The students also met and interacted with key figures in Spanish architecture, such as Luis Fernández Galiano and Juan Herreros. Other highlights included visits to works of architecture by Herreros, Rafael Moneo, Fernando Higuera, Paredes Pedrosa, Jean Nouvel, and Nieto Sobejano, among others, as well as a detailed tour of the Museo Nacional del Prado, CaixaForum Madrid, and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia. Other visits included guided tours of the IE School of Architecture and Design in Segovia and of Madrid’s renowned ETSAM, Spain’s premier school of architecture.

As the world becomes more connected, architects must address the pressing architectural and urban demands that result from this globalization. The intense course trips made possible by The Casbarian Fund reflect Rice Architecture’s commitment to understanding architecture as a discipline that shapes public space around the world.
With a generous lead gift from Professor Emeritus William T. Cannady, Rice Architecture is planning an extension to MD Anderson Hall, to be named The William T. Cannady Hall for Architecture. The school has always been focused on design and design research, and this new world-class space will complement the school’s existing home as a makerspace for the production of work with accompanying gallery space for its display. The 20,000-square-foot building will accommodate spaces for collaborative research, flexible teaching, exhibitions, public gatherings, and an expanded fabrication lab. Swiss architectural firm Karamuk Kuo has designed the building with Kendall/Heaton Associates in Houston as architect of record.

Established in 2010 by Jeannette Kuo and Ünal Karamuk and based in Switzerland, Karamuk Kuo is an award-winning firm that brings diverse building experience to the design process. Known for creatively working within constraints, and with extensive backgrounds in architectural education and the design of academic buildings, they are especially well situated to consider the spatial concepts and logistical needs of Rice Architecture. The building is expected to be completed in 2023.

The William T. Cannady Hall for Architecture will mark a significant step toward achieving the goals of Rice Architecture and Rice University’s strategic plan, the Vision for the Second Century, Second Decade (v2c2), paving the way for top-tier teaching and learning, preeminent research, and engagement with the city of Houston.
The great patron of the arts, and king of France, François I once said that Paris is not a city, it’s a world. As in no other city, the very foundations of Paris are there to see and touch. From the vestiges of its earliest Roman encampment, to the medieval city, through the nineteenth-century radical, urban fabric created by Baron Haussmann, to the innovations of the twenty-first-century urban center, this world provides one of the greatest opportunities to learn from the past, present, and future. Accordingly, in 2002 Rice Architecture chose Paris as the site of its first foreign study program.

Rice Architecture Paris provides a semester-long opportunity to explore advanced topics in architecture. Located in the 12ème arrondissement, near La Bastille, the program operates in both the fall and spring semesters. Course offerings include a design studio; seminars in history/theory, technology, and representation; and classes in French language and culture. Organized study trips to other cities in France and Europe are a major component of the curriculum.

Taught by faculty drawn from Rice and leading architecture and art-history programs in Europe, Rice Architecture Paris is a nimble think tank, taking advantage of the city’s extraordinary offerings, as well as its role as a cultural nexus for the world.

Rice Architecture Paris is also open, on a limited basis, to qualified students and graduates from other architecture programs who have taken at least seven semesters of undergraduate studios or four graduate studios.
For twenty-five years, Rice Architecture has engaged the world and our Houston community by challenging students to contribute directly to the built environment. Construct students design and build projects that produce lasting effects, working with local community groups to create enduring resources for underserved neighborhoods, while building knowledge through research and experience.

Working at various scales and in diverse situations, students engage all facets of the creative process—from conception through construction. Expanding their knowledge in the pursuit of novel solutions to real-world challenges, students work together to test concepts against the practical realities of budget and schedule, explore innovative means of analysis and fabrication, and translate forward-thinking designs into built works.

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Rice Design Alliance (RDA) is the public programs and outreach arm of Rice Architecture. Based within the school as an advocacy group, RDA believes that multidisciplinary, research-based design can improve our cities and the way we live in them. Our educational mission as part of Rice Architecture is to curate programs and disseminate ideas that are accessible to anybody interested in learning more about architecture, design, and urbanism, regardless of whether they have formal design training. RDA is design for all.

RDA was established within Rice Architecture in 1972 by the school’s first dean, David Crane, together with alumni and other civic-minded community members who believed that quality design thinking should be available to all in our community. We believe that Houston’s citizens—experts and nonexperts alike—should be informed and feel empowered to act and transform our city through design.

Each of our projects takes the complex urban conditions of Houston as a starting point from which to question our relationships with our cities. Our work advances an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach that brings practitioners, researchers, interested citizens, industry leaders, and public officials together to envision inspiring—and sometimes unconventional—solutions to urban problems. For nearly forty years, a major RDA project has been Cite magazine—an annual print publication with an accompanying digital platform, Cite Digital—realized with the belief that strong architecture and design writing can elevate conversations about our built environment.

Throughout the academic year, RDA works closely with students, faculty, and community members, as well as with local, national, and international civic leaders and organizations, to curate a variety of programs that examine how people and cities interact through the lens of design.

Our programs include lectures, civic forums, design competitions, K–12 educational outreach, architecture tours and travel, grant opportunities, awards for emerging architecture practices, and studio visits to some of the key architecture, design, and artist studios in Houston. Our initiatives aim to connect the core research and experimental values of Rice Architecture with the general public and the larger community of architectural and design practitioners in Houston and beyond.

Video features, interviews, and lectures are a central part of our digital offerings. We encourage you to watch the rich selection of material available to all through our website at www.ricedesignalliance.org, where you can also learn more about RDA.
Founded in 2009, PLAT is an independent architecture journal published by the students of Rice Architecture. Through a combination of open submissions and commissioned pieces, the editors seek out contributions from various disciplines to generate vibrant conversation. PLAT offers a place to share work of all varieties and mixes writing from established professionals and emerging voices. A different editorial team is responsible for each issue, which is developed to explore a timely theme. While the .0 issues are presented in a standard print format, the .5 responses to the previous .0 publication take various forms.

PLAT prizes agility and remains committed to advancing a provocative set of ideas that is always in flux. In response to PLAT 9.0 Commit, in the summer of 2021, PLAT published the issue 9.5 Leave Space, which questions who is centered by architectural discourse. The issue, shared online, is composed of a series of interviews with educators and practitioners, covering subjects from community stakeholders to nonhuman agents. Since 2019, PLAT has received three consecutive grants from the Graham Foundation to support its operations.

PLAT celebrated its tenth .0 edition in the autumn of 2021 with PLAT 10.0 Behold, which speculates on the potential of framing architecture as a medium for conveying meaning by suspending the primacy of the spatial experience.

To push its content further, PLAT sometimes hosts roundtable discussions and collaborates with other Rice organizations to bring greater depth and coherence to the conversations that unfold within each issue. Follow the work online at platjournal.com and on Instagram @platjournal. Tête-à-Tête is a student-produced podcast series that highlights architectural discourse both within Rice Architecture and the global architecture community. Each episode is intended to keep architecture enthusiasts, professionals, academics, and students informed of relevant issues. The easily accessible digital format allows conversations to be distilled and circulated quickly. Defined as a private conversation between two people, Tête-à-Tête is an effort to record cutting-edge knowledge about architecture and reveal it to a wide audience.

The podcast team curates exciting conversations with a range of featured guests, including lecturers, faculty members, alumni, students, and professionals. Conversations with notable architects like Deborah Berke, Jack Self, Frida Escobedo, Peggy Deamer, Frank Barkow, and fala atelier have been featured on Tête-à-Tête, in addition to many others.

All episodes are available on the Rice Architecture website, Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Stitcher, and SoundCloud.
Rice Architecture Mentorship
is a program within Rice Architecture’s Society organization. Mentorship empowers students at Rice Architecture to translate their studies into possible future trajectories in architecture or allied practices.

Mentorship connects Rice Architecture alumni and friends with the current student body, providing students with opportunities to build professional relationships and the resources to learn about a broad range of career options.

The Mentorship coordinating team organizes these opportunities through five main avenues: a speed mentorship event; a curated lecture series; external programs, including interviews, externships, Recess (Rice Architecture’s public school outreach program), and a career fair; professionalism and technology workshops; and field trips to cultural, historical, and commercial sites.

Mentorship coordinates its programming with Rice Architecture’s Career and Alumni Specialist.

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Stuti Mehta (B.A. ’25)
Mentorship Coordinators
Rice Architecture teaches architects to be leaders in the conversations and practices that shape our world. We recognize students for outstanding academic achievements that range from inspiring travel proposals to stellar GPAs to projects that fuel extraordinary discussions during our review week. We also recognize our generous alumni and friends who have given these awards to the school. Their generosity provides our students with the time and resources to see the worlds that will shape them and that they, in turn, will shape.

The Margaret Everson-Fossi Traveling Fellowship
Established in memory of Rice Architecture student Margaret Everson-Fossi, this award goes to fifth-year or graduate students with the best design projects developed during the current academic year’s option studios.

The William Ward Watkin Traveling Fellowship
This award for foreign travel honors the memory of the first chairman of the Department of Architecture.

The Rosemary Watkin Barrick Traveling Fellowship
This fellowship is awarded (on the basis of faculty evaluations of student proposals) to talented architecture students for travel while still enrolled at Rice.

The Morris R. Pitman Award in Architecture
Earmarked for travel expenses and based on merit and strength of a proposal, this award goes to returning architecture graduate students who show outstanding potential to the profession.

The H. Russell Pitman Graduate Fellowship in Architecture
This fellowship provides travel assistance to graduate students in architecture and is awarded based on merit and strength of proposal.

The Mary Ellen Hale Lovett Traveling Fellowship
Awarded based on submitted travel proposals and academic performance, these annual fellowships go to talented graduate and undergraduate students in architecture for travel while still enrolled at Rice.

The John Crowder Traveling Fellowship
Established in memory of John Crowder, a 1963 alumnus of Rice Architecture, this fellowship supports the broadening of an individual’s experience through travel and is awarded, based on merit and strength of a proposal, to a returning student or students in the graduate program.

The John T. Mitchell Traveling Fellowship
Established in memory of John T. Mitchell, Jr., a 1972 alumnus of Rice Architecture, this fellowship is awarded, based on merit and strength of a proposal, to returning graduate students for independent study or travel related to the topic of urbanism.
From drawings to models, from buildings to books, we see architecture as an elastic, imaginative discipline that encompasses many scales—whether of a house or a city or the entire planet. Rice Architecture, too, is both local and global, both human-scale and planetary—always welcoming new “guests from the future” into our ever-changing community.