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Animate tracings in Michelangelo's paper modani at San Lorenzo

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Submission by: Jonathan Foote, Ph.D.

Panel: *Building with Paper: rethinking the materiality of Renaissance architectural drawings*

Organizers: Dario Donetti (Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa & Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut) / Morgan Ng (Harvard University & Bibliotheca Hertziana - Max-Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte)

## Animate tracings in Michelangelo's paper *modani* at San Lorenzo

This paper opens an inquiry into Michelangelo's unusual, yet highly ordered, exercise of the classical vocabulary through a close examination of his 1:1 scaled paper *modani*. Unlike *modani* from his contemporaries such as Antonio da Sangallo il Giovane and Bartolomeo Ammannati, Michelangelo's *modani* exhibit no evidence of the use of compass or rule, a realization that has led scholars to conclude that he drew them free-hand. However, new observations reveal that his *modani* were constructed by means of a deliberate and highly ordered working method linked through cutting and tracing. Although Michelangelo did not rely on instruments of geometry or mathematics, manipulative tracing nevertheless generated a sequential order of guide marks, ticks, and smears. While tracing, he would freely shift, rotate, or flip the template, trace only part of it, or combine it with other sketches or tracings. Far from capricious inventions, his extraordinary implementation of paper *modani* provides a wealth of clues as to how Michelangelo conceived of the elasticity and anatomical potential of the classical vocabulary.

## \_\_\_\_\_ EDUCATION

**Ph.D. / Architecture and Design Research** :: 2007-2013

Virginia Polytechnic Institute

Alexandria, VA

Dissertation title: *Well-Tempered Building:*

*Michelangelo's full-size template drawings at San Lorenzo*

**Master of Architecture** :: 1998-2001

Virginia Polytechnic Institute

Blacksburg, VA

Thesis title: *On Making*

**Bachelor of Arts / History** :: 1994-1998

Indiana University

Bloomington, IN

## \_\_\_\_\_ ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

**Director of Graduate Programs** :: 2013 - 2014

Boston, MA

Department of Architecture

Wentworth Institute of Technology

Coordinator of Study Abroad Programs

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**Lecturer** :: 2014 - present

San Luis Obispo, CA

California Polytechnic State University

Fifth Year UG Thesis; Theory Seminar; Digital Fabrication

**Associate Professor** :: 2013 - 2014

Boston, MA

Wentworth Institute of Technology

Graduate Studio; History Survey; Thesis Studio; Design/Build

**Visiting Docent** :: 2011 (Sommersemester)

Weimar, Germany

Bauhaus-Universität Weimar

International Advanced Design Studio (Grad)

**Visiting Lecturer** :: AY 2004-06; AY 2010 - 2013

Alexandria, VA (WAAC)

California Polytechnic State University

Grad/UG Design; Theory Seminar; Design/Build; Furniture Design

**Adjunct Faculty** :: AY 2007 - AY 2009

Alexandria, VA (WAAC)

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Grad/UG Design; Theory Seminar; Design/Build; Furniture Design

## \_\_\_\_\_ PRACTICE

**Atelier U:W, LLC** :: 2006-present

Special projects in Design and Fabrication

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**Director of Workshops** :: Fall 2004-2013

Alexandria, VA (WAAC)

Wood, Metal, Concrete, Glass, and Digital Fabrication

**Studio 3 Architects, P.C.** :: 2001-2005

McLean, VA

Intern Architect, IDP Certificate 2005

## BOOKS

- ☞ (2015) *Michelangelo, Architecture and the On-Site Imagination*, (Ashgate), forthcoming.

## ARTICLES and BOOK CHAPTERS

- ☞ (2015) "Tales from the Scaffold: Michelangelo's Wall Drawings at San Lorenzo", book chapter in *Confabulations: Storytelling in Architecture*, Paul Emmons, Marcia Feuerstein, and Carolina Dayer, eds. (Ashgate), forthcoming
- ☞ (2014) "Extracting Desire: Michelangelo and the *forza di levare* as an Architectural Premise", book chapter in *The Material Imagination : Reveries on Architecture and Matter*, Matthew Mindrup, ed. (Ashgate)
- ☞ (2013) "The On-Site Architect: Millimetric Translations in Construction" in *Wentworth Architecture Review*, Volume 4 (Boston)
- ☞ (2012) "Design\_Build : Build\_Design" in the *Journal of Architectural Education*, May 2012
- ☞ (2012) "Making Plans: Ichnographia as a cultural artefact", book chapter co-written with Paul Emmons for *Architecture and Culture*, Adam Sharr, ed. (Routledge)
- ☞ (2011) "Ethos Logos Pathos: Architects and their Chairs" in *Scale: Perception, Imagination and Practice in Architecture*, edited by Gerald Adler, Brittain-Catlin & Fontana-Giusti (Routledge)
- ☞ (2011) "Proximate distance : Tactile musings on digital production" in *Horizonte: Zeitschrift für Architekturdiskurs*, No. 4 [Building Matters]
- ☞ (2008) "L.B. Alberti's ad ungeum: Longing for unhindered productions," Ann Katrine Gelting and Ebbe Herder, eds., *Eaae / Arcc Conference, Copenhagen, 2008 : Changes of paradigms in the basic understanding of architectural research. Architectural research and the digital world*, Copenhagen (2008)