

University of Miami School of Architecture
Faculty Oral Histories

Interview with Germane Barnes
Miami, Florida, September 28, 2016

Interviewed by Gilda Santana
Recorded by Gilda Santana

Summary: Germane Barnes has been teaching as a Part-Time Faculty at the University of Miami School of Architecture since 2013. He received his Master of Architecture Professional degree from the School of Architecture, Woodbury University, Burbank, California.

<http://germanebarnes.com/>

Gilda Santana: What are the challenges you are facing as a researcher and teacher?

Germane Barnes: As a young faculty member, the opportunity to pursue one's own research and teaching agendas is not readily available. Innovation in the curriculum is typically only allowed to happen if you are a coordinator, or, if you are teaching an upper level course. Understandably, it is tough to give unlimited flexibility, but the constraints don't permit for young faculty to gain experience beyond the prescribed curricular agenda. My interests are more geared towards digital rather than analog instruction. In order to showcase my talents in that area there needs to be a courses that are structured to support digital design initiatives.

GS: How is the field changing?

GB: The field of architecture is changing drastically because of the way that architecture is taught. Most millennials aren't interested in becoming licensed architects because of the time and economic commitments and constraints imposed on them by NCARB (National Council of Architectural Registration Boards). In recognition, NCARB only recently reduced the number of tests from 7 or 8 in some states, to 5, and the number of internship hours logged with an architecture firm from 5200 to 5000. Young architects are looking to non-traditional alternatives to showcase their talents in areas such as graphic design and fabrication. In California, where I went to graduate school, architects that don't want to

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September 28, 2016

follow traditional models are creating their own practices, building furniture, and/or pursuing fellowships rather than internships.

Millennials' perceptions of the traditional architect are that it is an "old man's" profession. The incentive is to go off on one's own. We don't practice the same way that we did in the 40s and 50s. Frank Lloyd Wright wasn't a licensed architect. Chances are that if he'd been forced to become a licensed architect by today's standards, we wouldn't know who FLW was!

GS: What are emerging areas of emphasis for the department?

GB: Architecture in general is gearing more towards fabrication and materiality. Researching, discovering, and implementing innovative materials in innovative ways is critical. Emerging fellowship opportunities are trending towards experience in fabrication and/or materiality of structures.

GS: What are your hopes for library support?

GB: I send students to the library all the time. It's important for them to break away from the computer. I encourage them to grab books and especially contemporary journals. The latter are essential. Students respond well to small publications with a lot of graphics. While historic materials are important, *Archizines* are particularly useful and potentially more meaningful vehicles as they reflect what is actually going on in the present day world. Having access to those types of resources makes my job a lot easier.

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END OF INTERVIEW
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