BOTH AND real fantasy

Design is inherently a process of moving a dream into a map for a physical presence. The iterations between the dream world and the real are the stuff of the art of design. The very best designs keep the dream alive while acknowledging the realities.

This studio will be exploring the balance between real and fantasy design parameters for a brownfield building site in the Southeast Industrial District of Portland. The dream will be to create a mixed-use building program and concept that will go beyond sustainably ‘neutral’ to being regenerative for itself and its immediate neighborhood. The realities to acknowledge will include the real site with real zoning issues.

Program: A large mixed-use building with light manufacturing of sustainable textiles for NAU, and welded bike accessories for Burley, food service in a community commercial kitchen setting, open space for urban agriculture/composting and hanging out, offices for small businesses, and live/work units.

Studio Experience: it will be structured and professionally oriented as I am a pragmatic designer. Inspiration is nothing to be waited for, it comes through rigorous and open exploration. Class time will include required short daily and weekly assignments, with one on one and group discussions, as well as formal verbal and graphic presentations.

Exploring the interface between fantasy and reality is a subject that has intrigued me over the course of my practice, having to do with why Portland and the United States has such a generally conservative building design milieu given the creative talent available.

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Thia Bankey, principal of Cynthia Bankey Architect, Inc. focuses on sustainable design in the residential and commercial building market. The past twenty years have brought the firm progressively from conceptual projects to larger built work. The deliberate rate of growth has allowed the firm to pursue design excellence and strive to make every project as green as possible.

Ms. Bankey started the firm in 1991 after moving to Portland in 1989 with her family. She had worked in a number of offices in Knoxville, Tennessee including the Tennessee Valley Authority Solar Design Group during her twelve years after graduation from the University of Cincinnati.