

An Alternative Future for
Digital Fabrication
SPACE10

AN ALTERNATIVE FUTURE FOR DIGITAL FABRICATION: CLASSICAL THROUGH DIGITAL

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An Alternative Future for Digital Fabrication: Classical Through

Digital

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From architects going beyond blueprints to explore buildings in virtual reality, to the rise of the design-build studio, to the emergence of advanced digital software and production techniques, the influence of digital on the field of architecture seems to grow larger every day.

But as welcome as digital empowerment is, does it come at a cost? For many, the adoption of digital tools — especially in the design-build movement — has fuelled fears about the demise of traditional architectural techniques and a depreciation of interest in its classical virtues. A plywood building made with a CNC machine still looks — and feels — digitally fabricated.



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Digital artisans

Instead of accelerating the demise of traditional craftsmanship, what if digital tools enhanced it and expanded the possibilities of what we can make? What if an architect could use a digital tool — a CNC machine, say — to create something with a distinctly human quality? How might the machine be applied to skills such as woodwork and metalwork? Could it be used to make objects with the aesthetic appeal, including the touch and feel, of a handmade object? Could it also make objects that can be scaled — objects with applicability to architecture?

These were the timely questions that three architects recently explored as residents at [SPACE10](#) — IKEA'S external future-living lab. With a shared interest in exploring how digital tools can be applied to traditional techniques — and the potential of a CNC milling machine in particular — Yuan Chieh Yang, Benas Burdulis, and Emil Froege together found answers in three very different but eye-opening ways.

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