

Topic Studio
Professor Frank Dimster

Fall 2004
Studio meets: 2-6 PM, MWF

VILLA AURORA II

This studio is focused on the questions raised by adding significant spaces and adjusting existing activities in important historic buildings. Issues of aesthetic compatibility and the inclusion of current technologies will have significant influence on the program and the detailed development of the design concepts. It is the intention that the students engage this topic on both the historic and theoretical levels as well as the opportunities current technologies offer.

The site chosen for this project is a significant historic landmark named Villa Aurora, at 520 Paseo Miramar Avenue in Pacific Palisades. Villa Aurora is the former residence of the writer Lionel Feuchtwanger. The large building with 40,000 books is now a foundation initiated some time ago to foster understanding of current European and American developments in the social and visual arts, including architecture. In this role the focus is on the Artists in Residence Program. Next to this building, built in 1926, is a vacant parcel which is the proposed site to accommodate some of the support activities for the current program.

The balance of the program, such as parking and other uses incompatible with the residential character of the area will be located at the base of Paseo Miramar Avenue at a discontinued street, Los Liones Avenue.

Public access by bus, private parking spaces, office and commercial space, lecture and meeting facilities will be provided at this site. It is reasonably clear that all current technical means have to be explored and evaluated to provide maximum integration with the foreign scholars and the local resources of Los Angeles. Both building sites and their programs have the task to inform the public about the status of arts and society, they also have to demonstrate creativity to environment and the responsible use of resources.

