The Assembly

Few design students pass through the University of Tennessee’s Art and Architecture Building without knowing the secret locations that exist within the building. The studio spaces and areas of high social activity are hidden away, giving full-blown seclusion between two concrete walls. Although rarely seen in use, it always seems to require a respectable number of chairs, cigarette butts, empty energy drinks, and the occasional sculpture of grassy slopes and garbage-filled corners of unused space. However, a select few know the truth of how this space comes to life each night.

In 1981, nearing the end of the construction on the new Art and Architecture Building, a junior design student knew his one-pipe energy drinking container was the center of the universe. Reading Room Courtyard, the site of these weekly meetings is clear, rather than hiding the container, he simply built it up. The site is an easy place to find, and an almost impossible place to leave. This small studio eventually grew into a large collection of presses, mugs, and other coffee-related supplies, greatly reducing the number of nightly runs to the Hodges Library Starbucks. The Assembly meets here both to decompress the exposure of the open studio bays and the pressure of the studios, has proved critical in allowing the group to engage in insightful discussions about one another’s projects.

The location of the passage to the container is secret— as underground as the existence of the hipster student and buildings made of fabric. The location of the passage is secret— guarded secret—as underground as the existence of the hipster student and buildings made of fabric. The location of the passage is secret— guarded secret—as underground as the existence of the hipster student and buildings made of fabric. The location of the passage is secret— guarded secret—as underground as the existence of the hipster student and buildings made of fabric.

The Assembly was formed to fulfill a deep need for the discussion of ideas amongst friends and fellow designers outside the studio setting. Meetings vary each year with the needs, interests, and struggles faced by its members. Some come together to discuss their thesis students, has existed unknown and unspoken for nearly 30 years. The group was formed to fulfill a deep need for the discussion of ideas amongst friends and fellow designers outside the studio setting. Meetings vary each year with the needs, interests, and struggles faced by its members. Some come together to discuss their thesis students, has existed unknown and unspoken for nearly 30 years. The group was formed to fulfill a deep need for the discussion of ideas amongst friends and fellow designers outside the studio setting. Meetings vary each year with the needs, interests, and struggles faced by its members. Some come together to discuss their thesis students, has existed unknown and unspoken for nearly 30 years. The group was formed to fulfill a deep need for the discussion of ideas amongst friends and fellow designers outside the studio setting. Meetings vary each year with the needs, interests, and struggles faced by its members. Some come together to discuss their thesis students, has existed unknown and unspoken for nearly 30 years. The group was formed to fulfill a deep need for the discussion of ideas amongst friends and fellow designers outside the studio setting. Meetings vary each year with the needs, interests, and struggles faced by its members.

The last container, turned on its end, holds a series of bunks— a refuge for weary students who may have overslept. The corner of this container has been exposed with the slow erosion of the hill over the years and cut out, allowing the sun to penetrate into the depths of the space and convey morning to the weary student who may have overslept. The corner of this container has been exposed with the slow erosion of the hill over the years and cut out, allowing the sun to penetrate into the depths of the space and convey morning to the weary student who may have overslept. The corner of this container has been exposed with the slow erosion of the hill over the years and cut out, allowing the sun to penetrate into the depths of the space and convey morning to the weary student who may have overslept. The corner of this container has been exposed with the slow erosion of the hill over the years and cut out, allowing the sun to penetrate into the depths of the space and convey morning to the weary student who may have overslept. The corner of this container has been exposed with the slow erosion of the hill over the years and cut out, allowing the sun to penetrate into the depths of the space and convey morning to the weary student who may have overslept.