MICRO-INDUSTRIAL URBANISM
architectural prototypes for
living and making in the city

This studio will involve the design of a prototypical building or building complex that incorporates the following four kinds of components that are connected with a new approach to urban industry:

• dwellings
• workshops and small production facilities connected to the dwellings
• a shared production space that serves all the dwellings and attached workshops
• a related space of the designer's choice that directly serves the community

The site, still to be determined, will be in Portland in a place that is appropriate for both light industrial and residential uses. One of the objectives of the studio is to show the possibilities of such sites and therefore the potential benefits of rezoning that helps create them.

In the contemporary American city, material goods are bought, consumed and disposed of, but no longer made. Although "knowledge work" forms a new information economy, manufacture has moved to places in Asia with low labor costs, using very low-cost container shipping. This studio is based on the premise of an emerging parallel system to the globalized production of goods: we conjecture that contemporary cities might once again be places where material goods are made, and where food is produced.

The emerging economy that includes a range of small-scale industry and craft production has design implications at all scales, from urban form to neighborhoods to individual buildings. In the studio, we will design prototypes for buildings at one particular scale—that of the small craftsperson/ manufacturer whose workshop/small factory is next to his/her own dwelling and who is sharing capital-intensive facilities with other people working in similar ways.

Within the overall framework of a program that includes the four components mentioned above, each student will investigate the production of a particular product (possibilities include but are not restricted to bicycles, furniture, musical instruments, bread...) to develop an understanding of the spaces required to house that process; and also determine a space that directly serves the community. In addition to the design of the entire scheme, there will be emphases on (1) the careful design of dwelling units/individual workshops-production spaces; (2) the design of spaces for particular crafts or industries, based on research into the industrial process itself; and (3) the development of a strong connection between the building and the surrounding community.

The studio will be conducted in an intense and collaborative manner, with weekly pinups and the expectation of a professionally presented project at the end. The project will show the possibility of one new way of seeing urban industry integrated with everyday urban life.