



## Architecture & Construction Summer Studio, 2022



### The Program

As a Boston-based non-profit, Digital Ready activates the creative potential of high school students, especially underrepresented young people, to build pathways to economic opportunities in Boston's innovation economy. Our 5-week *Architecture & Construction* Summer Studio ran from July 6th - August 5th and served 22 tech apprentices. Almost all participants identify as Black or Latino. Students practiced creative problem solving and gained new technical skills through theoretical and real-world projects. At the end of the summer, each student emerged with three no-cost college credits, almost \$2,000 in wages, and started a portfolio that can be used to apply for college and career opportunities. The culminating project of the summer studio was an 'inhabitable sculpture' called *BeND* which will be installed for public enjoyment at 55 Northern Avenue in the Seaport from late August through October.

### BeND

Digital Ready partnered with Beyond Walls, with support from the architecture firm Payette, to reinforce the studio curriculum with a large public installation. The piece is 8' wide and 40' long and allowed students hands-on experience with the design/build process. While immersed in their first architecture studio, apprentices developed their carpentry skills building the undulating wooden deck on a bent tube steel structure and tagged the piece using stencils they designed. Playfully 'misbehaving', the project invites occupation and prompts conversation about how architecture predisposes behavior in our shared public spaces.

### Architecture & Construction Summer Studio Staff

#### Pathway Director:

Parke MacDowell, AIA (Payette)

#### Studio Managers:

Killion Mokwete, RIBA (Social Impact Collective)  
Sophie McKenzie (Wentworth '22)

#### Fabrication Instructor:

Patrick Kana (Northeastern CAMD)

#### Lab Leaders:

Allise Matsuno (Harvard GSD '24)  
Aidan Mayer (Northeastern '24)  
Ian Setzer (BAC '25)

#### Studio Coordinators:

Jadie Huynh, Justin Ezekwelu, Z Alves

*Top:* Exploring structures with a team-build challenge

*Middle:* Pin-ups with guest critics and mentors develop our presentation skills and hone graphic sensibilities.

*Bottom:* A moment of well-earned respite on BeND

**Firms that sponsored students** - The 'learn + earn' apprenticeship experiences were provided by the following sponsors: **AW-Arch**, **Boston Private Industry Council**, **Bruner/Cott**, **Cambridge Seven**, **EYP**, **Runcible Studios**, and **Safdie Architects**.

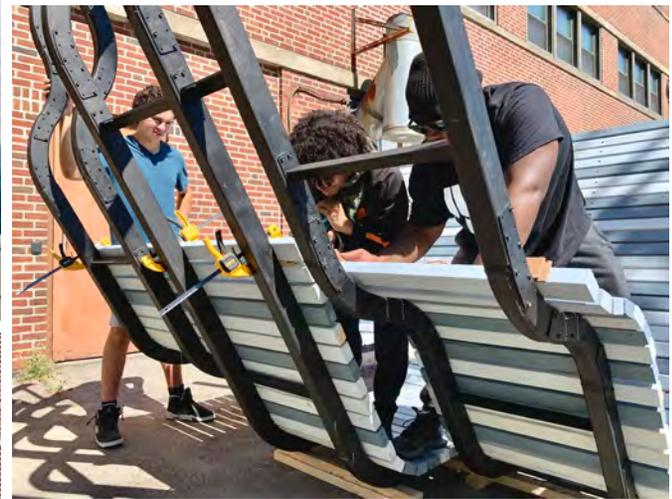
**Firms that provided mentors, guest critics, career chats, and tours** - The studio benefited enormously from the energy and expertise of volunteers from **Autodesk**, **AW-Arch**, **BosNOMA**, **Bruner/Cott**, **Cambridge Seven**, **Elkus Manfredi**, **Ellenzweig**, **Finegold Alexander**, **Goody Clancy**, **Leers Weinzapfel**, **Miller Dyer Spears**, **Payette**, **Runcible Studios**, **Safdie Architects**, and **Utile**.

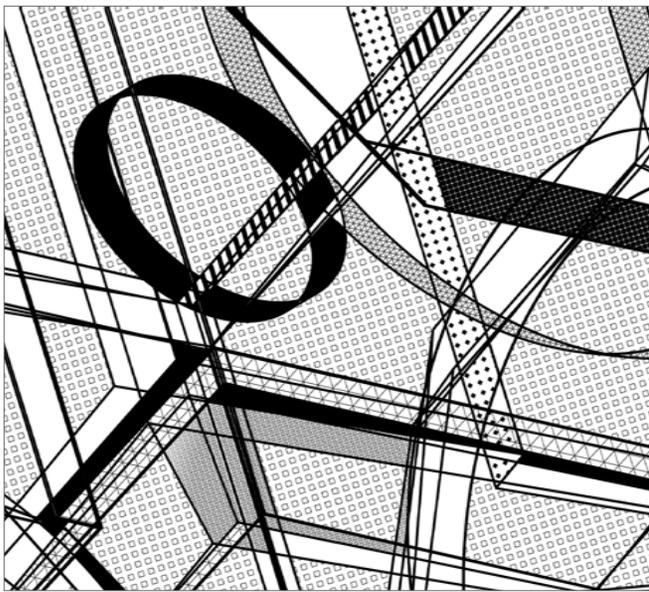
**Facilities Support** - The Summer Session was hosted for no-cost at 22 Drydock Avenue by the **BPDA/EDIC**.

**BeND Supporters** - Developed by **Beyond Walls** with pro-bono design and fabrication support from **Payette**, BeND was additionally supported by in-kind labor donations from **Goody Clancy**, **Elkus Manfredi**, **BosNOMA**, and **MKR|MGR. WS Development** will provide the Seaport installation site and supplemental funding through their Community Grant Program.

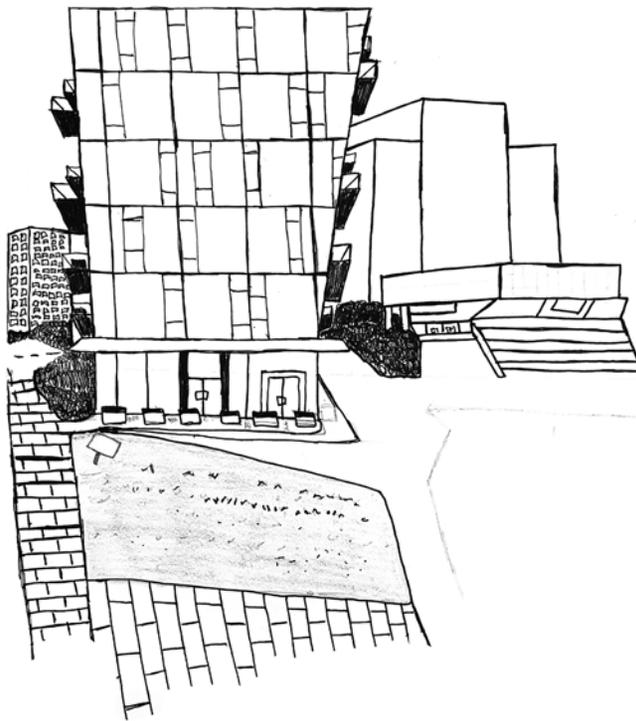


The 5-week summer program provided 22 Boston youth with stipends and college credits while they developed their design skills through sketching, lectures, digital modeling, and hands-on fabrication. Each student leaves the program with a portfolio documenting their efforts including our large public inhabitable sculpture, **BeND**.





Graphic Vignette: *Combine. Abstract. Compose.* - Kobe

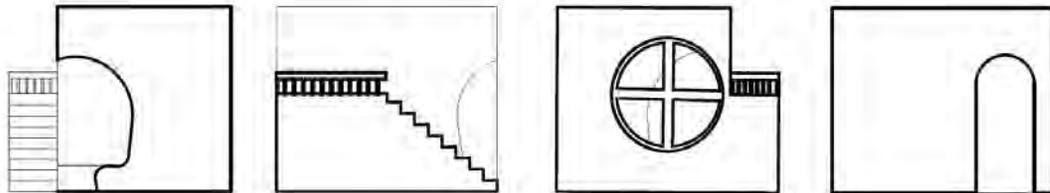


*...I thought about how to shade and fill the shapes to better portray the perspective.* - Geo

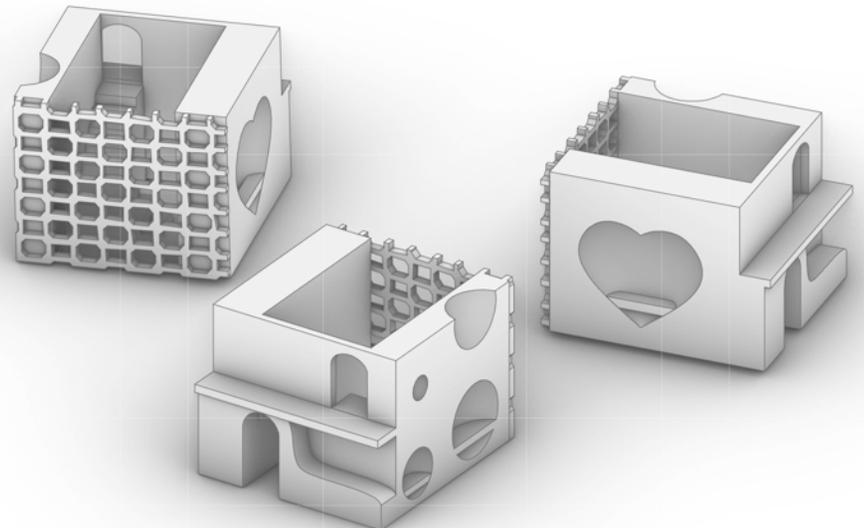


Sketching Site Map: *This is a space to write and relax. A place to lose track of time.* - Jaysslin

Prototype, Elevations: *An exposed viewing platform, sheltered sitting area, a passage and a chamber.* - Nourardine



3D-printed 1/4" = 1'-0" model - Navi



## Curriculum

Our apprentices used the city of Boston, specifically the Seaport District, as their classroom. Public spaces were considered from the vantage of historical land use, current occupations, and future development opportunities. Students were challenged to 'read' their physical environments thoughtfully and critically: What power dynamics and ownership structures are legible in public spaces? How do spatial arrangements invite or discourage engagement and use?

Critical thinking was underpinned by the cultivation of new skills to document observations and communicate design ideas. Sketching exercises, lessons in digital modeling and presentation in Rhino, 3D printing, and hands-on construction supported the aims of the studio and laid the groundwork for subsequent curricula in the year-long *Architecture & Construction Pathway*. At the end of the summer session, each student had four curated, annotated and formatted portfolio spreads documenting their development plus a collection of sketches and photography.

*...The experience is different from every side. Maybe you sit, maybe look, maybe move from outside to inside.* - Brithanny