Allied Works Architecture (AWA), founded by Brad Cloepfil in 1994, is known for its quiet, crafted buildings that encompass an astute selection of materials, innovative structural solutions, and rudimentary but compelling geometric compositions. Based in New York City and Portland, Oregon, AWA is recognized in Denver for its design of the Clyfford Still Museum, adjacent to the Denver Art Museum.

This exhibition highlights a unique and little-known aspect of AWA’s practice, but one that is foundational to the firm’s process: the role of modeling and drawing. A counterpoint to customary presentation models and computer-aided renderings, these inspirational works are both manifestations of the investigative process and complete works of art in and of themselves. This exhibition also features a display armature designed by AWA that visitors can enter to
discover the small objects on shelves and within boxes and drawers.

Like architecture itself, these objects and drawings bear significant evidence of “process”—the human energy that goes into art-making. The objects, in particular, reveal a fascinating list of rudimentary activities, including burning, cutting, folding, casting, braiding, and so on. These processes divulge a concept that is paramount to AWA’s approach to architecture: that straightforward activity can become the basis for knowledge and understanding.

Organized by the Clyfford Still Museum and the Portland Art Museum in association with Allied Works Architecture, Case Work: Studies in Form, Space & Construction by Allied Works Architecture is curated by Dean Sobel, Director
of the Clyfford Still Museum, and host curated by Brian J. Ferriso, The Marilyn H. and Dr. Robert B. Pamplin, Jr. Director of the Portland Art Museum. The exhibition is supported by The Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts.

The Installation
The installation for Case Work presents an open field of frames and thresholds, spanning the gallery and containing a series of ten different wooden toolboxes. The steel frames provide a bridge between the boxes and the observer and a structure for suspending the cases, which hold the products of our varied investigations—the iterative studies and tools we use to develop our ideas for buildings. The boxes present unique operations such as unfolding, weaving, illuminating, embedding, and framing, inspired by the objects they hold and intended to engage the body and eye.
The Objects

The objects are a material exploration, a search for evocation and provocation. The choice of material and process—fired, carved, laminated, welded, or cast—is determined by the pursuit for a project’s particular potential. As objects, they are potent and evocative, with content that can be expanded into other disciplines and in multiple media. They occupy an unclaimed world of ideas, open to interpretation and development, and this is their fundamental importance for our work.
The Drawings
My drawings for architecture are dreams; speculative marks on a page. They are intended to evoke an experience—of shadow and light, of unity and contrast, of excluding and binding—and to illuminate a new relationship between the architecture and the landscape and institution that it serves. These drawings are made with charcoal, pastel, and pencil. The choice is deliberate, and sets the material and spatial direction of the building design. The process is extremely iterative. Most drawings are done quickly; some are more crafted in an attempt to summarize a longer period of exploration. In any project, hundreds of diagrams and sketches are produced in the course of finding the form.
Toolbox No. 01

001 Studies in Technique Nos. 01–02, 2009
Plaster, wax
National Music Centre of Canada

002 Studies in Technique Nos. 03–04, 2009
Modeling concrete, copper
National Music Centre of Canada

003 Studies in Technique Nos. 05–06, 2009
Resin, copper
National Music Centre of Canada

004 Concept Model No. 01, 2009
Modeling concrete, salvaged brass instruments
National Music Centre of Canada
Toolbox No. 02

005 Concept Model, 2011
Mahogany, copper leaf
Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne

006 Concept Model, 2006
Laminated wood, blackened steel, brass
Dutchess County Estate, Guest House

007 Concept Model, 2010
Nickel silver
Musée National des Beaux-Arts du Québec

008 Concept Model No. 01, 2007
Charcoal, resin, acrylic
Clyfford Still Museum
Toolbox No. 03

009 Concept Model, 2014
Black walnut, brass tubes and rods, acrylic
Metropolitan Museum of Art—Modern and Contemporary Wing

010 Material Studies Nos. 01–04, 2014
Brass, copper
Metropolitan Museum of Art—Modern and Contemporary Wing

011 Material Studies Nos. 05–08, 2014
Wooden dowels, pinecone, brass tubes, resin
Metropolitan Museum of Art—Modern and Contemporary Wing

012 Material Studies Nos. 09–16, 2014
Resin, copper wire, copper pigment, wire mesh, copper leaf
Metropolitan Museum of Art—Modern and Contemporary Wing
013 Material Studies Nos. 17–19, 2014
Glass, resin
Metropolitan Museum of Art—Modern and Contemporary Wing

014 Material Studies Nos. 20–22, 2014
Stone, 3D printed plastic
Metropolitan Museum of Art—Modern and Contemporary Wing

015 Material Studies Nos. 23–26, 2014
Concrete, wax
Metropolitan Museum of Art—Modern and Contemporary Wing

016 Material Studies Nos. 27–30, 2014
Concrete, wax
Metropolitan Museum of Art—Modern and Contemporary Wing
Toolbox No. 04

017 Structure Concept Model, 2014
Acrylic, silk thread, high density foam
Institute of the Arts and Sciences, University of California, Santa Cruz

018 Concept Model, 2012
Cedar shingles, fir beam
Sokol Blosser Winery Tasting Room

Toolbox No. 05

019 Concept Model No. 02, 2011
Hornbeam laminate, rare-earth magnets
National Music Centre of Canada
Toolbox No. 06

020 Site and Massing Concept Model, 2010
Acrylic, resin, brass, charred pine
Dutchess County Estate, Main House

Toolbox No. 07

021 Structure Studies Nos. 01–03, 2014
Porcelain
Ohio Veterans Memorial and Museum

022 Concept Model, 2001
Bent walnut
Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

023 Concept Model, 2014
Wood, 3D printed polymer
Ohio Veterans Memorial and Museum
024 Concept Model, 2002
Fused glass
Museum of Arts and Design

Toolbox No. 08

025 Concept Model, 2010
Wood, prismacolor pencils, plaster, porcelain
Wisconsin Art Preserve

026 Light and Form Studies Nos. 01–10, 2010
Porcelain
Wisconsin Art Preserve

027 Light and Form Studies Nos. 11–18, 2010
Porcelain
Wisconsin Art Preserve
028 Light and Form Studies Nos. 19–26, 2010
Porcelain, paper, copper, aluminum
Wisconsin Art Preserve

029 Material Studies Nos. 01–12, 2010
Wood, wooden dowels, sandpaper, sticks, pencils, plaster
Wisconsin Art Preserve

Toolbox No. 09

030 Space and Structure Studies Nos. 01–24, 2008
Museum board
Clyfford Still Museum
Toolbox No. 10

031 Concept Model No. 02, 2010
Reclaimed Douglas fir beam
Clyfford Still Museum
Drawing Wall

01 From Left to Right

top:

Site Study, 2013
Charcoal on vellum
Sokol Blosser Winery Tasting Room

bottom:

Building and Site Concept, 2010
Pastel and charcoal on vellum
Wisconsin Art Preserve

Site Study: Light and Mass, 2007
Pastel and charcoal on vellum
Clyfford Still Museum
top:

Light Concept No. 01, 2002
Pastel and charcoal on vellum
Museum of Arts and Design

bottom:

Light Concept No. 02, 2002
Pastel and charcoal on vellum
Museum of Arts and Design
top:

Section Concept, 2014
Pastel and charcoal on vellum
Metropolitan Museum of Art—Modern and Contemporary Wing

bottom:

Plan Study No. 01, 2014
Charcoal on vellum
Metropolitan Museum of Art—Modern and Contemporary Wing
Drawing Wall

02 From Left to Right

top:

Site and Structure Study, 2010
Charcoal on vellum
Musée National de Beaux-Arts du Québec

bottom:

Building and Site Study, 2014
Charcoal on vellum
Institute of the Arts and Sciences—University of California, Santa Cruz
Plan and Section Concept, 2009
Pastel and charcoal on vellum
National Music Centre of Canada

Plan Study: Structure and Composition, 2006
Charcoal on vellum
Portland Heights Residence

Structure and Site Study, 2004
Charcoal on vellum
Dutchess County Estate, Guest House
top:

Building and Site Concept, 2011  
Pastel and charcoal on vellum  
Spaulding Paolozzi Center, Clemson University

bottom:

Plan Study: Building and Site, 1999  
Pastel and charcoal on vellum  
Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis
Section Study, 1997
Charcoal on vellum
Maryhill Overlook

Site Studies, 2007
Charcoal on vellum
Clyfford Still Museum
Structure and Light Study, 2010
Charcoal on vellum
Musée National de Beaux-Arts du Québec
top:

Section Concept, 2008
Pastel and charcoal on vellum
Clyfford Still Museum

bottom:

Building Concept, 2010
Charcoal on vellum
National Music Centre of Canada
top:

Structure Study, 2013
Pastel and charcoal on vellum
Ohio Veterans Memorial and Museum

bottom:

Structure Study, 2001
Charcoal on vellum
Contemporary Art Museum St.Louis
Drawing Wall

03 From Left to Right

top:

Plan Study No. 02, 1998
Pen and charcoal on vellum
Wieden+Kennedy Agency Headquarters

bottom:

Plan Study No. 01, 1996
Pastel and charcoal on vellum
Wieden+Kennedy Agency Headquarters
Study, 2010
Charcoal on vellum
Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne
top:

Plan Study No. 01, 2008
Charcoal on vellum
Clyfford Still Museum

bottom:

Plan Study: Light and Volume, 2009
Pastel on vellum
Clyfford Still Museum

Building and Site Concept, 2011
Pastel and charcoal on vellum
Dutchess County Estate, Main House
top:

Plan Concept, 2009
Pastel and charcoal on vellum
National Music Centre of Canada

bottom:

Building and Site Concept, 2005
Pastel and charcoal on vellum
Booker T. Washington High School