



The Act of Building: Act 1 Prototyping Vienna

BC architects &
studies & materials

Thomas Amann

Integratives Entwerfen Master/ Bachelor
● 253.N12/253.N11 ● 15 ECTS ● Ss2025
Kick-Off ● Thu 6.3. 14:00-16:00
Regular meetings ● Thu 10:00-18:00
Workshop 1 ● Wed 12.- Fri 14.3. 10.00-18:00
Workshop 2 ● Wed 9.- Fri 11.4. 10.00-18:00
Workshop 3 ● Wed 21.- Fri 23.5. 10.00-18:00
Final presentation ● Thu 26.6. 10:00-18:00 (tbc)

The design studio marks the first phase of a two-year research and development project at the Institute of Architectural Design, TU Wien, in partnership with Wienerberger and Wiener Linien, led by BC architects & studies & materials from Brussels.

„The Act of Building: Act 1 Prototyping Vienna“ will explore the bioregional resource clay and its potential use as a building material in the context of Vienna. The design studio marks the first phase of a two-year research and development project at the Institute of Architectural Design, TU Wien, in partnership with Wienerberger and Wiener Linien, led by BC architects & studies & materials from Brussels.

BC is a hybrid practice, designing and undertaking „acts of building“ towards systemic change in the construction sector. We act for bioregional, regenerative, low-tech, circular, beautiful and inclusive design and materials. We work with our minds and our hands, undertaking activities such as community organization, architectural practice, material production, contracting, teaching, prototyping. We aim to impact positively on people’s ideas and planet. We aim to act on behalf of the generations after us. We aim to give back to society. We aim to change our building culture towards inclusiveness, sustainability.

Approximately 3,000 tons of clay are excavated daily at subway construction sites in Vienna. According to current construction standards and regulations, almost all of it must be transported to landfills outside the city and classified as waste. Meanwhile, the majority of new construction in Vienna is built using concrete, steel, and styrofoam. In an era of growing awareness that the building industry accounts for nearly 40% of all CO₂ emissions, this practice is not only difficult to accept but must be seen as a call to act. To act means engaging in a process where academia, industry and public stakeholders join forces to develop new ways of doing things together.

Through excursions to Wiener Linien construction sites, the Wienerberger brick factory and the Brick Museum Vienna, we aim to gain a comprehensive understanding of the ecosystem surrounding clay and brick production in Vienna. We will test and analyze the physical properties and logistical implications of existing resources while also reflecting on their social, cultural, and political significance. By engaging in 1:1 research and prototyping and exchanging knowledge with various local and international experts, we aim to explore and propose an alternative material narrative—one that is deeply connected to and embedded in Vienna’s resources, history, culture and identity. Using hands-on techniques and tools, we will experimentally develop material recipes and prototypes, ultimately producing 1:1 building components that point toward concrete architectural applications and contribute to a new building culture in Vienna.

As with any truly experimental process, we will embrace uncertainty and remain open to failure, understanding „The Act of Building“ as a collective maker space—one that fosters exchange, agency and responsibility for everyone and everything involved.

Partner: