

# Rural Studio

## An Architecture of Decency

with Professor Jason Coomes



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A Lecture, Q & A Experience **Saturday, June 7, 2008, 2-4 p.m.**

MINERAL POINT OPERA HOUSE 139 HIGH ST., MINERAL POINT, WI

**\$10 Advance (\$12 at door)** To order call Berget's Jewelry 608.987.3218, Mon-Fri 9-5

Visit Mineral Point's Visitor's Guide at [www.mineralpoint.com](http://www.mineralpoint.com) for dining & accommodations

All proceeds go towards the Mineral Point Opera House Restoration Fund

Opera House seating is limited to 350, please order early

presented by



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[www.ruralstudio.com](http://www.ruralstudio.com)

**"PROCEED AND BE BOLD"**

—Samuel Mockbee, Founder of Rural Studio

# About Rural Studio

Samuel Mockbee, an AIA Gold Medalist and MacArthur Foundation "Genius", established Rural Studio in 1993 and directed it for eight years until his death from leukemia, in 2001, at age of 57. Based in Hale County, Newbern, Alabama, his students and associates have created some of the most interesting and innovative architecture in the United States by serving the humblest needs of some of the poorest people in the most neglected counties of Alabama and Mississippi.

Mockbee recruited architecture students to design and build free homes, churches, chapels, playgrounds, pavilions, cook/smoke houses, farmers market, and community centers, telling them, "It's got to be warm, dry, and noble." Their structures often incorporate recycled and natural materials like hay bales, tires, concrete rubble, salvaged lumber and bricks, colored bottles, license plates and even on one occasion eighty Chevy Caprice windshields purchased for \$120.

Since 1993 Rural Studio has built more than 175 community projects and charity homes in west Alabama and is recognized as one of the most celebrated architectural studios in America. Rural Studio has garnered national and international recognition, and its projects have been recognized and published in more than 300 books, magazines and newspapers world-wide. Additionally, the work of Rural Studio has been featured on ABC's Nightline, CNN's Future Watch, Oprah, CBS Sunday Morning, and National Public Radio.

In recognition of his legacy to architecture, and most famously for his work at Rural Studio, Samuel Mockbee, in 2004, was selected as the 60th AIA Gold Medalist, joining the ranks of such visionaries as Thomas Jefferson, Louis Henri Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Louis I. Kahn. The Gold Medal is the highest honor the American Institute of Architecture bestows.

## Guest Lecturer: Rural Studio Professor, Jason Coomes

Since 2006 Jason Coomes has served as a Visiting Associate Professor at Auburn University's Rural Studio where he has taught *Design Studio I*, and *Materials and Methods of Construction*, where students are instructed how to design and build charity homes; plan, design and build community projects, and utilize the properties and potential design function of materials used in contemporary construction, with an emphasis on foundation systems, and masonry.

Holding undergraduate degrees in both Architecture and Art Studio, Jason earned his Master of Architecture at the University of Kentucky. With over 10 years in professional practice, Jason has worked with Bennett Architects and Barnette Bagley Architects in Lexington, Kentucky. A native Kentuckian, his projects include a tasting room for a bourbon distillery, an outdoor dance arena for clogging, and in collaboration with William McDonough + Partners, the Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest Visitor's Center, the first Platinum LEED rated building in Kentucky. His work has received awards from both the Kentucky Society of Architects and the American Institute of Architects.

In addition to Rural Studio, Jason has taught at the University of Kentucky, the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts in Deer Isle, Maine, Auburn University, and the Kentucky Governor's Scholars Program. He has collaborated on teaching projects with Michael Rotondi, FAIA, and has taught architectural design, painting, storytelling courses, and lectured extensively on the subjects of Rural Studio, Samuel Mockbee, Contemporary Architecture, and the Black Belt of the Southern Architecture Initiatives.

Jason's current project with Rural Studio is St. Luke's Episcopal Church, a 160-year-old wooden wonder being disassembled from its current location of Martin's Station, where it will then be reassembled and restored to its original location 15 miles down road in Old Cahawba "Alabama's most famous Ghost Town."

In fall of 2008 Jason will also begin serving at Berea College, in Berea, Kentucky as the Compton Chair in Ecological Design in the SENS (Sustainability and Environmental Studies) program.

## Welcome to Mineral Point

In 2007 Mineral Point was honored as one of America's Dozen Distinctive Destinations and is home to one of the finest inventories of 19th century architecture to be found anywhere in the Midwest, with over 500 contributing structures. In 1971, the entire community was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, making it the first city in Wisconsin to receive that designation.

The **Mineral Point Opera House**, venue for *Rural Studio, An Architecture of Decency* lecture, was built in 1914 and dedicated as a "Theatre for All the People." Designed by Claude and Starck, the Madison architectural firm that designed the Orpheum Theatre, its beauty rivaled that of theatres in New York and Chicago. During its early days it was a vaudeville and performing arts house that attracted some of the country's outstanding artists and productions of live drama, grand opera, and symphonic music. All proceeds from this lecture will go towards the Mineral Point Opera House Restoration Fund.

### *Mineral Point's Culture and Culinary Arts, Before & After Rural Studio!*

#### Gallery Night

Also on June 7, Mineral Point celebrates Gallery Night, a community-wide art festival. Gallery Night is the result of a grassroots collaboration among the artists and galleries in town to highlight the ongoing creative production of established local artists as well as to promote the changing exhibitions that bring in art from elsewhere.

#### Restaurants, Cafés & Pubs

Brewery Creek 23 Commerce St. 987.3298  
Cafe Four 20 Commerce St. 987.2030  
Gundry & Gray 215 High St. 987.3636  
Old Royal Inn 41 High St. 987.4530  
Midway Bar & Grill 140 High St. 987.4309  
Red Rooster Cafe 158 High St. 987.9936  
The Spotted Dog 148 High St. 987.2855  
Tony's Tap 10A Commerce St. 987.2211

#### B&Bs, Hotels & Inns

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Cothren House 320 Tower St. 987.1520  
Maple Wood Lodge 2950 Hwy 39 987.2324  
Mineral Point Hotel 121 Commerce St. 987.3889  
Old Lumberyard Inn Commerce St. 987.3896  
Shake Rag Alley 18 Shake Rag St. 987.3292  
Comfort Inn Exit 40 off 151 987.4747