This interdisciplinary research studio takes a materials-based design approach to architecture and combines computation, engineering, and science with projects developed by collaborative teams of architects, and digital media designers. Students will design and build lightweight pavilions with interactive displays on the site of the Lynching Memorial (The National Memorial for Peace and Justice) in Montgomery, Alabama. These pavilions will serve as extensions of the memorial, our sensory experience, and an understanding of these events through architecture and augmented reality. Pavilions shall be transportable - educating different publics on America’s past, its present, and the future. What would you have done if you were there? How do we prevent this from happening today? The aim of this project is not to reinforce these acts of violence, but instead to transform it, and highlight the contributions, meanings, lives, and stories of those silenced.

Textiles will serve as our conceptual and material medium for design, construction, and creative dialogue between the ‘heaviness’ of steel and lynching in America, and the physical and metaphorical ‘lightness’ of textiles. Just like histories and culture are embedded in architecture, so too are histories and stories woven into fabrics and textile practices. Architecture and Digital Media students will build an interactive lightweight pavilion that brings together elements of architecture and meaning. Architects will develop conceptual and material connections, transform and enrich architecture through hands-on experimentation and physical making, and a close study of the memorial’s purpose, people, and the public. Media designers will create augmented reality interactions that connect architecture with the memorial, the stories, and the human experience.

How might we transform textiles to materialize concepts and experiences, cement memories, and change how we interact with space in architecture? How might architecture and digital media make meaning, educate, and advocate for social justice? How might architecture link and circulate social, technical, and ecological values? How might we physically engage with architecture? By mid-semester, all teams will have mock-ups and prototypes of their physical and digital artifacts. Final submissions include a scaled model of the entire pavilion and a full-scale section model (3’ – 4’ wide) of the pavilion with functioning augmented reality displays.