

Section 1: Summary of Achievements



Through novel expressions of craft that celebrate the act of making, Jules Dingle explores architecture's lyrical capacity to communicate via its materials and connect people to the experience of place.

Jules is a founding partner at DIGSAU, a Philadelphia design firm with a broad view architecture, how it is made, and who makes it. Since its inception ten years ago the firm has been recognized with thirty-five design awards from the AIA. In 2013 his firm was named one of North America's "Emerging Voices" by the Architectural League of New York, and in 2017 they became the fifth recipient of the AIA Pennsylvania Firm Award. In 2012, he was recognized with The Young Architect Award from the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA for his strong design voice and leadership in a collaborative practice, his contributions to local, state, and neighboring chapters of the AIA, and his mentoring role through teaching and lecturing.

Jules is part of the last generation of architects to experience the transition from analogue to digital technologies as the primary design and documentation tools of their profession. Practicing in a time of significant change, his work influences younger and older architects with a nuanced design sensibility that connects new models of production with more timeless concerns of scale, material, and emotion. In a built environment where authenticity is increasingly scarce, his work focuses on Architecture's capacity to communicate via its materials and innovative ways that human labor can directly connect people to the experience of a place. Jules balances an interest in emerging technologies with a fondness for the expressive potency of low tech solutions. Employing both highly skilled and low skilled labor forces, his projects explore productive notions of chance, improvisation, and imperfection that celebrate the act of making. Award winning projects like Matchbox and TerraCurtain demonstrate attentiveness to the material culture of their settings through experimental expressions of craft, resources, and history. The Veil Garden in Metis Sur Mer, Quebec-an international design competition winning entry-explores the poetic use of common building materials through an art installation that challenges perceptions of what is familiar and the boundaries of architectural practice.

Much of his work engages communities that have historically been the last to benefit from quality design. Despite the challenge of limited financial resources, Jules creates places of hope and dignity through commitment to core values of design, constant experimentation, and innovative project delivery collaborations that find opportunities where none appear to exist. Working with non-profit and neighborhood design groups to explore innovative financing, mobilize the community as a labor source, and build enthusiasm in others for the hard work of design, he develops thoughtful, uplifting places that empower people. Award winning projects such as Bigham Leatherberry Wise Place, The Discovery Center, and Construction Training & Education Center demonstrate how engaging user groups in the act of constructing a project builds a sense of ownership within a stressed community. These projects are guided by a belief that exceptional architecture is possible in any place with any budget.

Throughout his career Jules has remained energetically involved in the academic and mentoring side of the profession. As an intern he helped to initiate, and for several years led, weekly classes in architecture for fifth graders at an underserved Baltimore City public school. As a licensed professional, he has taught design studios at Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Design where he has mentored many students. When the demands of a growing practice limit his capacity to lead an academic studio, he tirelessly participates as a guest critic. In addition, a growing number of design school and conference speaking engagements continue to broaden his impact as a professional and influence the national discourse of design.

Jules's involvement in the AIA spans from serving as AIAS chapter president as a student to leadership roles in his state and local AIA chapters as a professional. In 2012 he joined both the AIA Philadelphia and Pennsylvania boards of directors and he is active in the committees, programs, and events of both chapters. As a member of the Philadelphia Center for Architecture + Design facilities committee he is closely involved in master planning and renovation projects that continue to advance the Center as a physical space dedicated to expanding the influence of design in the public realm. His pro-bono design and fabrication entitled TerraCurtain was conceived for the 2016 AIA National Conference and remains a central feature of the Center.

Through his teaching, lectures, service, and built works, Jules Dingle emboldens the next generation of architects to engage in the more difficult problems of our times in ways that advance the craft of architecture as a form of cultural vitality and give social purpose to the public role of architects.