

# MTCC takes on a whole new look in the virtual world

**Khaleela Zaman**  
DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

Finally, the last semester of a new required sequence of courses, called Design Communications, for architecture majors, has begun. Most second-year architecture students are currently taking Design Communications IV, the last in the sequence that began their first year. Since Dean Wiel Arets took over for Fall 2013, students starting that year and beyond have to take these Design Communications courses in replacement of the old freehand drawing and computer aided design classes. These new Design Communications classes seem to be more experimental and undefined, and current second-year architecture

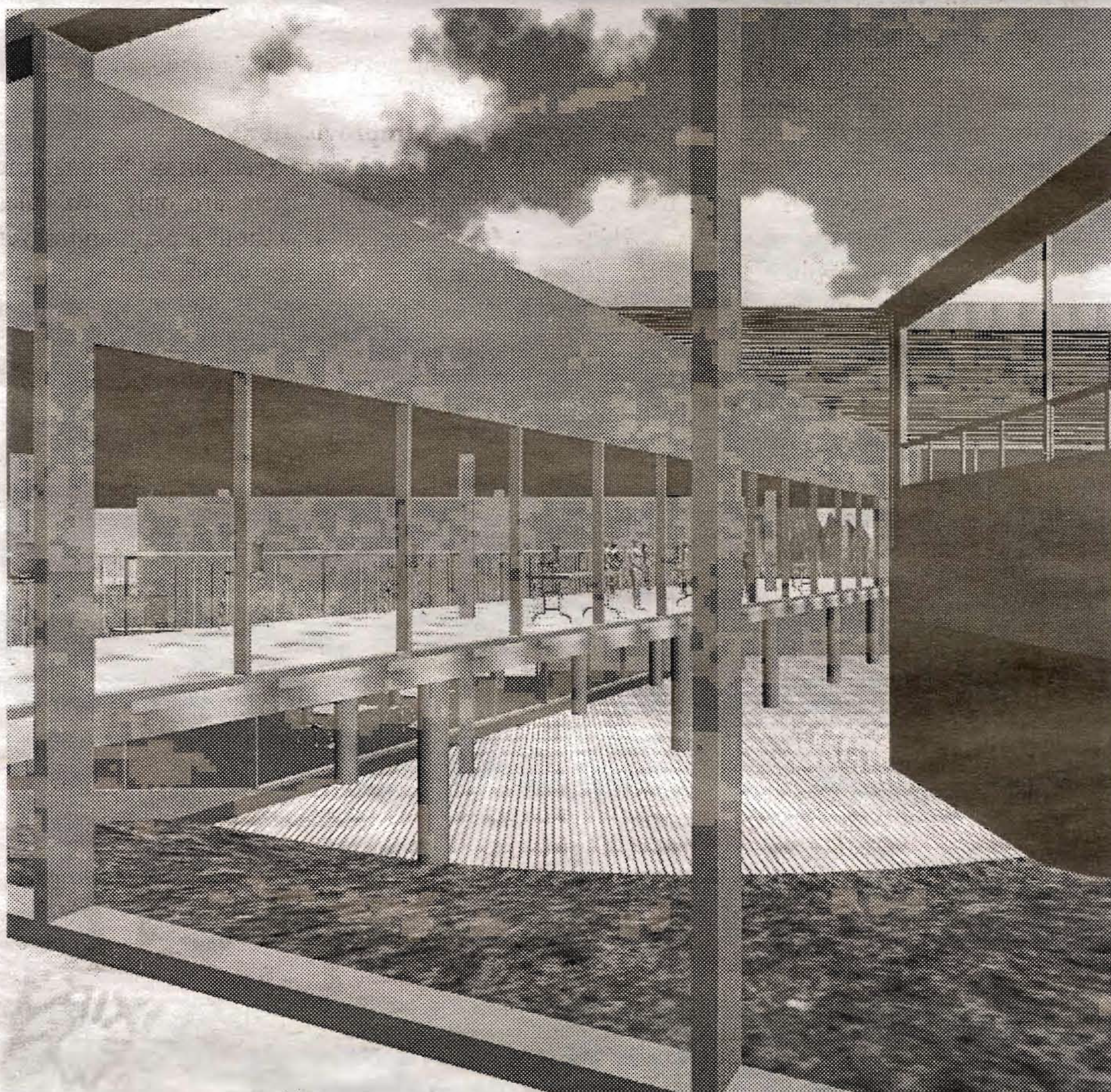
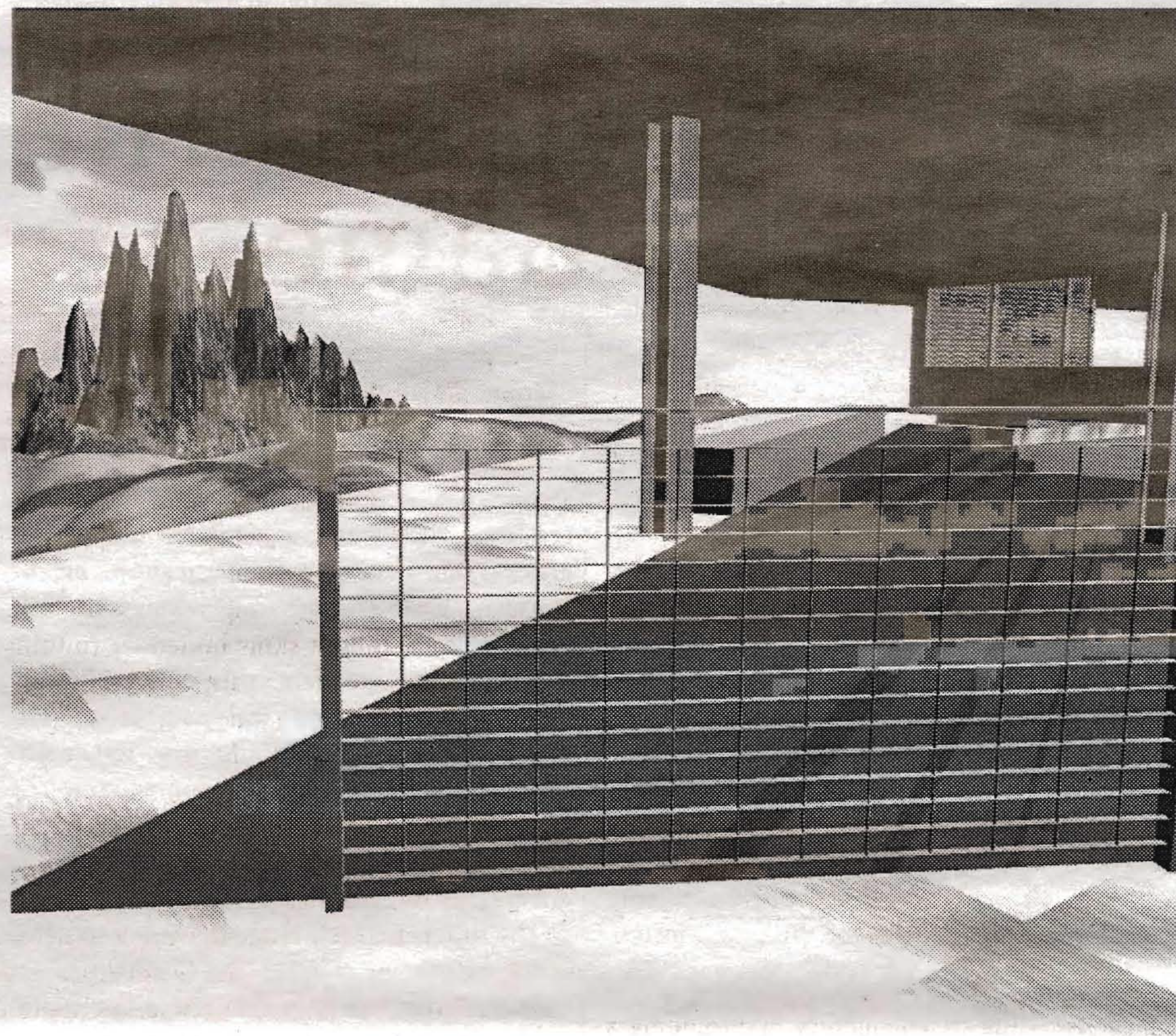
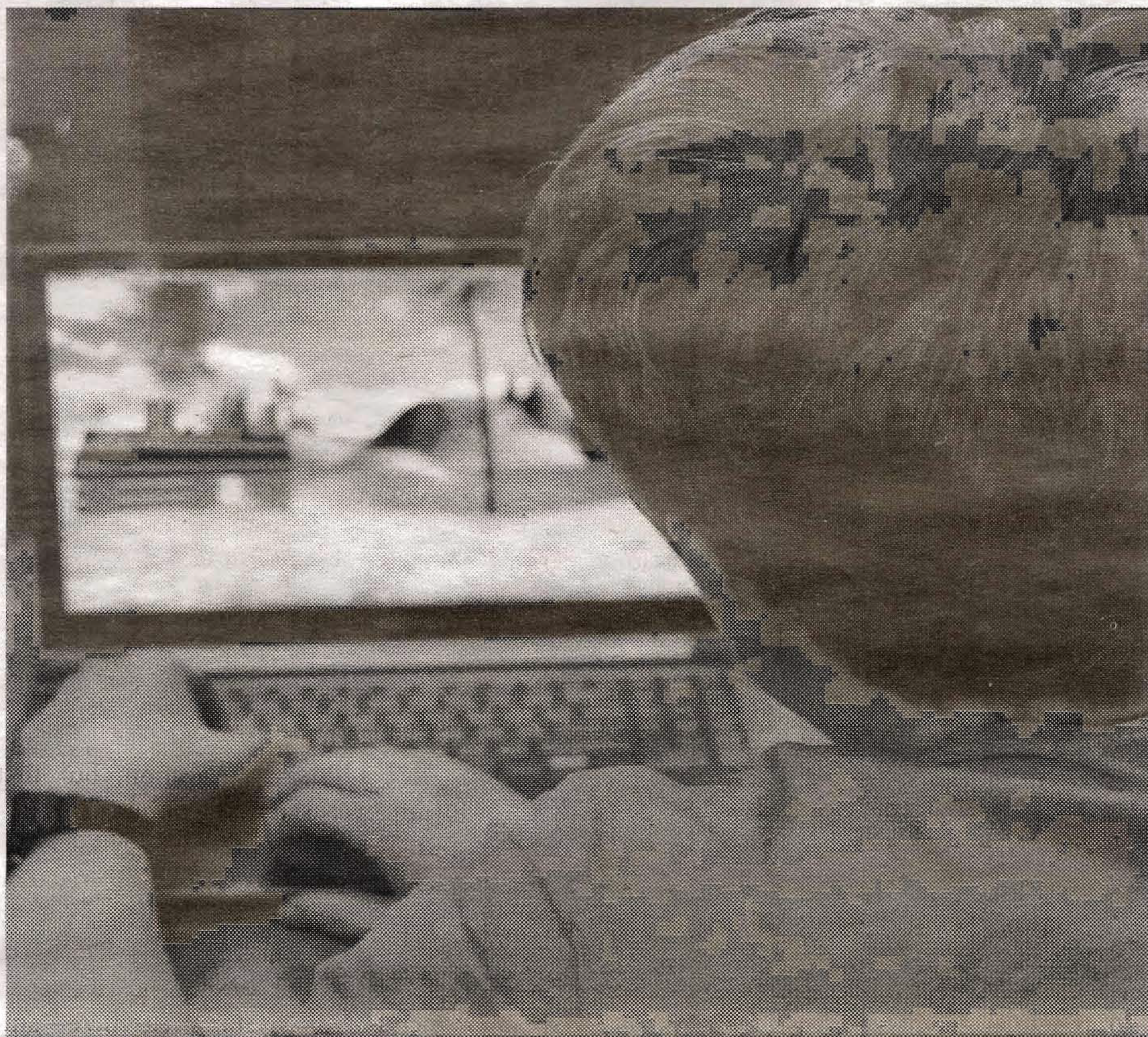
students happen to be the guinea pigs. Having survived three long semesters of extremely demanding coursework for these two and now three-credit classes, they are now in their final course of the sequence.

This semester, Design Communications IV students have been working on a three dimensional model of the MTCC in Rhino modeling software, then exporting their models into a video game engine, called Unity. In this program, students are able to make a video game simulation as a virtual experience of the MTCC. Some students have stuck to creating an architecturally realistic simulation, while other students have expanded their thinking into the fantasy world potential within the software. In certain models, the surroundings

of the building really place the MTCC within a Chicago context, recreating the Chicago skyline in the distance and the CTA train coming out of the tube of the MTCC. However, other models teleport the player from a spot in the building to a place in the middle of a created fantasy land of log cabins, tall mountains, and a strangely out-of-place office building.

Garrett Bernhagen, a second-year architecture student currently taking Design Communications IV, sees "Design Communications as an experiment in visually displaying architecture in a way which often confuses, yet reassures us of a more vibrant future in the career. And while many people are just making digital models on a computer, we are, in essence, really trying to learn how to immerse

our future clients into the designs we create as much as possible" through the integration of Rhino and Unity. While some students are concerned with how the Design Communications sequence of courses will benefit them when they enter the workforce, Bernhagen thinks that these certain ways of communicating through design they have been exploring seem to be where architecture is heading. He says that some skills he has learned in these courses he will certainly keep using, while some others (like programming) he might not necessarily need. In the meantime, Design Communications IV students will continue having fun, playing around with rendering the MTCC in virtual reality.



Images courtesy of Khaleela Zaman

## Indian Student Association plans upcoming events

**Niveta Chandrasekar**  
TECHNEWS WRITER

The Indian Student Association (ISA) launched its first event of the semester in the Hermann Hall Ballroom on Thursday, January 29. For those who were not aware of what or whom ISA represents, the social was a great way to introduce ISA to the new community.

The Indian Student Association is a cultural organization that has been affiliated

with IIT for many years. With much of the school's international population being Indians or those of Indian origins, ISA has had a lot of impact within the community. Although the organization has seen some rocky shores in the past semester, the events planned for this semester seem to redeem what was lost.

Aishvi Desai, an architecture major and one of the Event Programmers for ISA, described ISA as a cultural organization. She said, "The events that we have planned are going to be culturally subjective as we represent a specific ethnic group". However, Achint Ma-

niar, another Event Programmer, had a different take on what ISA was all about. He claimed that it was an organization that did more than just cultural programs. "When I first came here, I did not know many Indian people and I was not able to connect with many. ISA created a platform for me to do that", he said. The President of ISA, Mehal Shah, shared the same sentiments. Shah said, "Many people miss their homes and the cultural environment that they grew up in or around. ISA strives to create that atmosphere here in IIT. We also encourage those who want to learn or be a part of the

Indian culture to join us." Shah led the presentation on the 29th where she introduced the executive board and spoke about a lot of the upcoming events, such as Holi, Culture Night, and Bollywood Night.

ISA will have a general body meeting on Tuesday, February 10, in the Wishnick Hall auditorium to further explain these events. ISA is also in need of volunteers and board members, so those who are interested in applying for either position are encouraged to attend.