

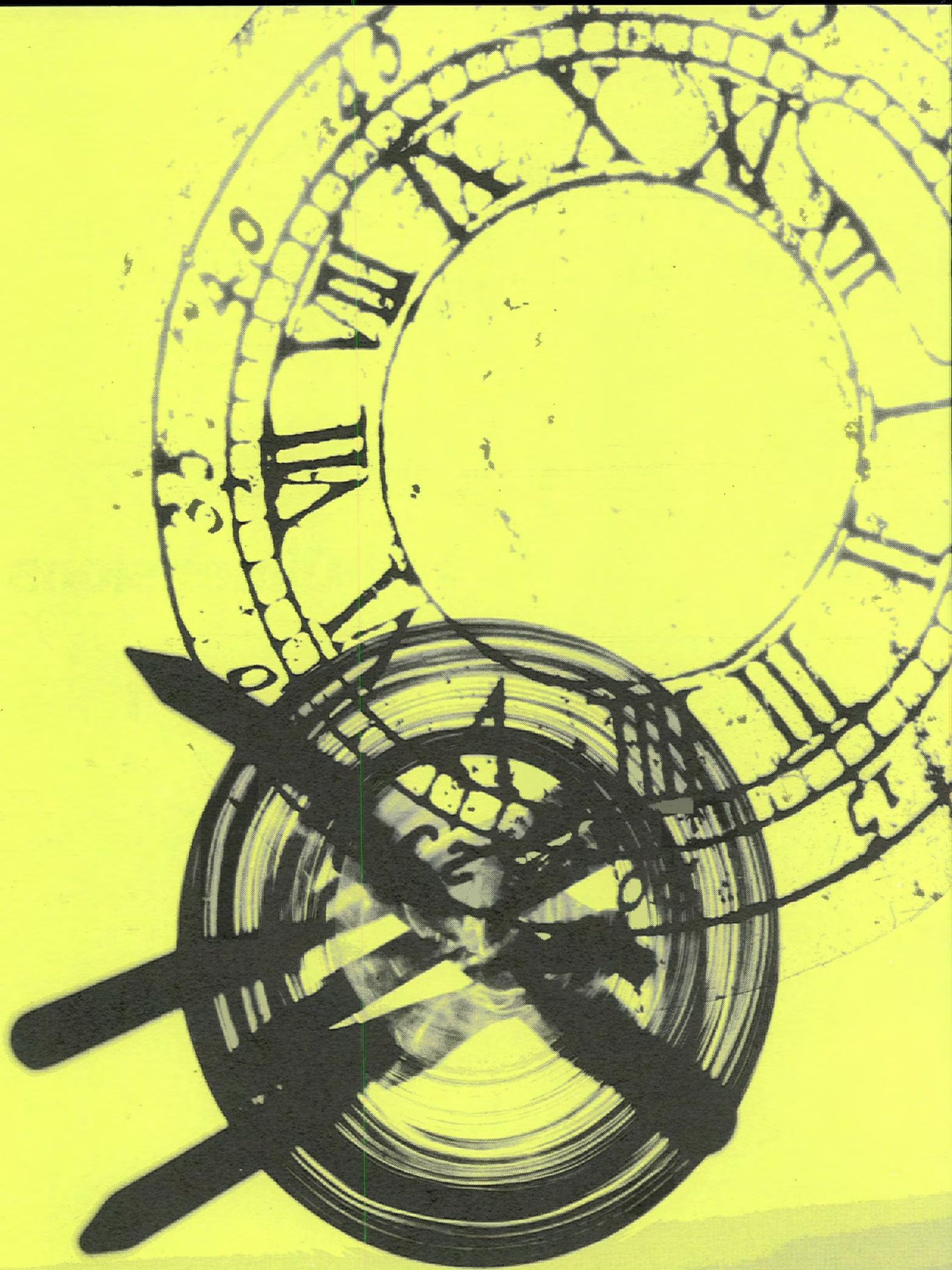
DIMENSIONS



Vol. 6

Dimensions

1992




Dimensions the Journal of the University of Michigan College of Architecture & Urban Planning

Thoughts *and* **Executions**

Volume 6

A Student Publication

Image: Sujin Osatarayakul



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Letter from the

[Editors]

With this year's journal we have attempted to document the creative passage realizing ideas, from their conception to their completion. During this Process of giving shape to a Treatise, we often wondered the nature of our Dimension(s).

And so, we ask, What is Dimensions?

Di-mensions: Is it the great divide, the tigerous Debate, between Thought & Execution; where, one informs the other - or is it Vice Versa? Which is first? The first or the second, the second or the third ... **Dimension;** do our thoughts inform our creations, or do our creations inform our thoughts? Or is **Dime-nsions** the art of semantics to the Tenth degree, where intellectual flights of fancy shed majestic Light on a moment, an experience in time where Dichotomies are a dime-a-dozen? But what about **Di-men-sions**. Yes, ah and meh . . . men too. Or, would one rather say momento. We do! For this is the only Meaning of "men" in Dimensions; it is a reminder of the past and a beacon for the future Post-History.

Dimensions:

With Volume 6, we have brought into view the Symbiotic relationship between architecture and Urbanism, theory and Execution, singular discourse and collective Dialogue. With the thoughts and objects of few we have represented the Energy of many, such is the Diametric opposition in Dimensions.

The Editors

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Technical Support provided by
Desktop Technologies, Ann Arbor, MI
Flatwork prepared by Precision
Graphics, Ann Arbor, MI

Dimensions, Volume 6, is a student
publication of the University of
Michigan's College of Architecture and
Urban Planning.

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Address all inquiries to:

Dimensions
College of Architecture & Urban Planning
The University of Michigan
2000 Bonisteel Boulevard
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-2069
(313) 764-1300

Acknowledgements

The editors of *Dimensions* would like to thank Dean Robert Beckley for his continued support and Mary Anne Drew for her time and patience with the editors and staff. Additionally, we would like to thank Cynthia Davidson, editor of the journal *Anyone* and former editor of *Inland Architect*, for meeting with the *Dimensions* editors during a November visit to the College.

In addition to acknowledging our active helpers and supporters, *Dimensions* would like to thank the patrons and sponsors who have given generously.

Thank You.

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From the [Dean]

Dimensions is a critical journal published by students of the College of Architecture and Urban Planning. Each volume has its own character depending upon the concerns of its editors. Although a careful reading of this journal exposes many themes, in my mind, however, there is one theme this volume has in common. That is **reSEARCH**.

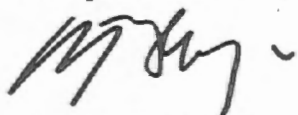
Is *Dimensions* a research publication?

There is continuing debate about the role of research in architecture and urban planning. Research has been imbued with a certain mystical quality by our society. We imagine people in white smocks and thick glasses working in spaces with strange contraptions searching for the unknown. Yet research in the professions of architecture and urban planning is a part of everyday life. Students quickly become a part of the tradition of **reSEARCHing**.

The formal definition of research is much broader than the rather restrictive definitions we associate with it today? My edition of Webster's Dictionary says research is: "to investigate thoroughly, to search, 1. careful or diligent search, 2. studious inquiry or examination: esp : investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws."

The sub themes in this journal are familiar. They are the problems of the world; the real world, the professional world or the academic world. It is, nonetheless, important for us to **reSEARCH** these issues and their possible resolution. *Dimensions*, Volume 6, is about **reSEARCHing**; looking again, investigating thoroughly, discovering and interpreting facts, revising accepted theories, examining new facts and applying the new to the old.

It is a quest for discovery!



Robert M. Beckley, Dean

College of Architecture and Urban Planning

From the
[Chairman]
of the Urban Planning Program

Once again this year's *Dimensions* brings to the readers an enjoyable mix of articles—from philosophical questions of design to compelling discussions on urban social issues. Only in the College of Architecture and Urban Planning can one get the variety of topics that one sees in a publication such as *Dimensions*; congratulations for a job a well done by the editors and contributors.

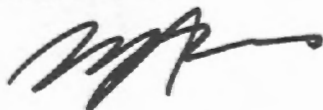
Volume 6 clearly demonstrates the commitment of architects and planners to learn how our professions can make life better for all segments of society, knowing that we are not capable of doing it alone. We are keenly aware that other professionals have equal responsibility to address these issues. Nevertheless, we are at the boundary of those other professions and need to take a greater leadership role in seeing that today's urban problems are kept at the forefront of the social-political agenda.

It is journals, such as *Dimensions*, that allow architects and planners to have a forum for presenting their work to their peers, whether beautiful or ugly. Unfortunately, the overwhelming and grotesque urban problems such as racism, sexism, homelessness, infrastructure decay, unemployment and underemployment, drugs and crime are still with us, and show no sign of getting better. I was particularly impressed with the insights shown by the five panelists in the OAP symposium, "The Urban Environment," and depressed by its lack of hope for a better social climate towards African-American professionals. But, it is issues such as these that tend to dominate the planners' work, and substantially influence the architects' practice.

Moreover, architecture and planning education would be woefully inadequate if we did not put these issues in the classroom and the studio, and try to address these seemingly insolvable problems. One goal of our professions is to identify and resolve problems, through design and analysis. Therefore, it is appropriate for our students, faculty and visiting scholars to communicate the societal usefulness of their efforts.

This issue of *Dimensions* is more thought provoking than recent issues, but no less enjoyable. Read the articles and let the authors know what you thought about their contributions, and you might want to give serious consideration to being a contributor next year.

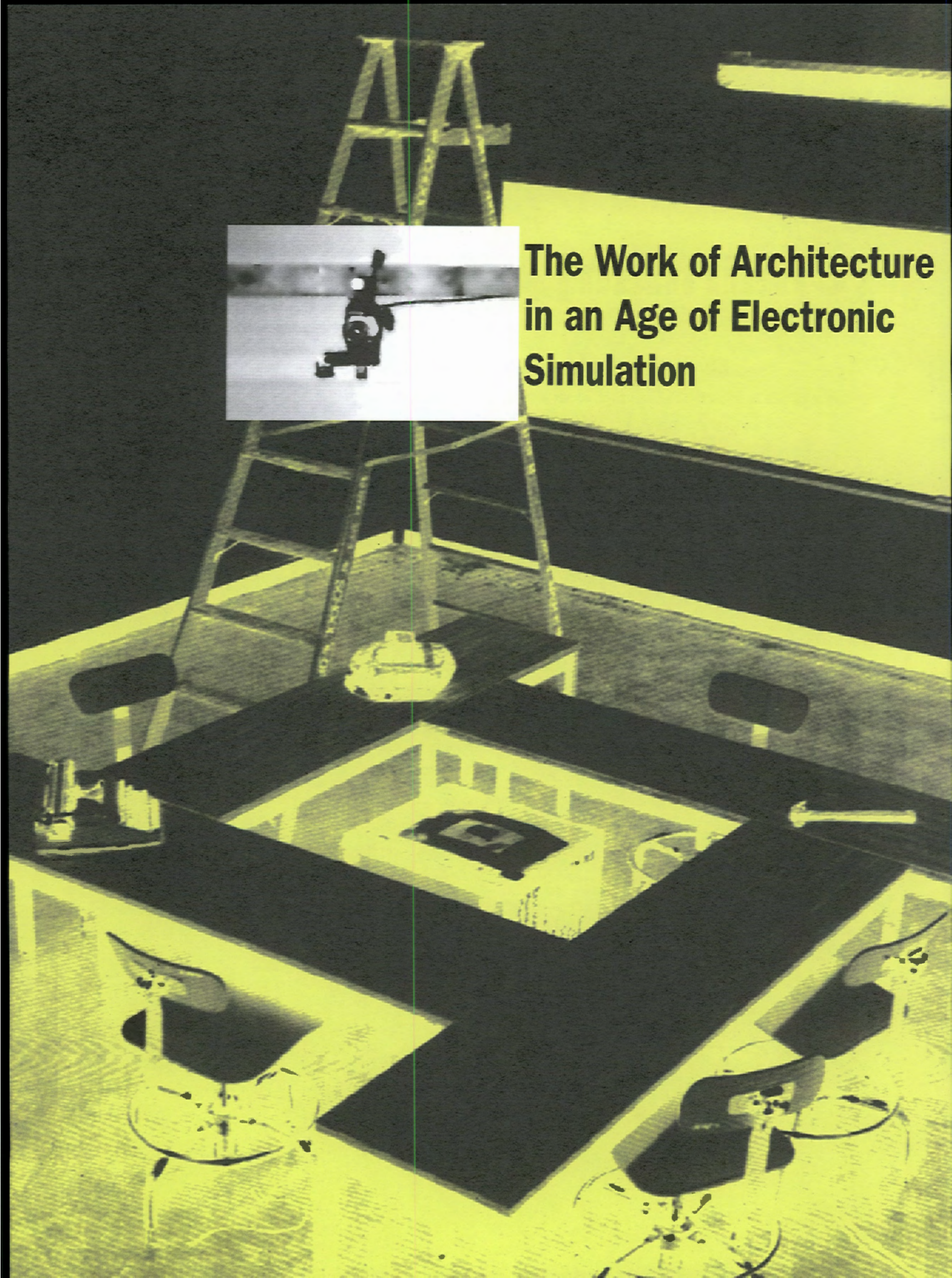
Mitchell J. Rycus



Urban Planning Program Chair



The Work of Architecture in an Age of Electronic Simulation



Conditions:

You are asked to study the materials enclosed in this package and then to attend a closed-session review of four found artifacts. The session will be video-recorded; your comments and the ensuing discourse will be transcribed for publication in Dimensions.

Praxis:

1. Where does the work of the camera reside with respect to the realm of Architecture? What are the new relations between the (instant and moving) camera and narrative, text, bodily experience, cultural memory?
2. What are the relations between the process of Architecture and theatrical or cinematic direction? Between the terms of architectural theory and drama and film theory?
3. Is the act of making related to linguistic thought? How does this relation affect architectural discourse and theory? To what extent is architectural knowledge transmissible to other visual disciplines? To linguistic frames of knowledge?
4. What effect might the very possibility of this dialogue have on our perception of the discipline of Architecture, on the necessity of framing discourse, and on the extant academic structures which contain our cultural understandings. Is *gestaltung* in the absence of genre typing possible?

Texts:

1. *Cities and Eyes, I* by Italo Calvino from *Invisible Cities*.
2. *Rear Window*, directed by Alfred Hitchcock.
3. *In the Penal Colony*, by Franz Kafka.
4. *The Age of the World Picture*, by Martin Heidegger.

Plates:

1. *Drawings of The Triadic Ballet*, by Oskar Schlemmer.
2. *Proun (Projects to Affirm the New)*, by El Lissitzky.
3. *Fresnes Prison*, Illustration from Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*.
4. *The Four Texts, The Surd of Architecture, The AB of Writing*, by Daniel Libeskind.

Artifacts:

(To be presented on the occasion of the conference.)

1. Ladder.
2. Mask.
3. Typewriter.
4. Hammer.

Discussants:

1. T. Bahti, Comparative Literature and Germanic Languages.
2. M. Baratloo, Architecture.
3. D. Hoffman, Architecture.
4. J. Porter, Comparative Literature and Classical Studies.
5. A. Sood. Moderator

The Work of Architecture in an Age of Electronic Simulation

(The following transcription has been edited for clarity, space, and form, and represents a third of the full exchange).

Sood: I'd like to begin this Dimensions conference by formally introducing the discussants: Professor Timothy Bahti, of the Departments of Comparative Literature and Germanic Languages, Professor Mojdeh Baratloo, visiting the College of Architecture from her practice in New York, Dan Hoffman, Architect-in-Residence at Cranbrook, and Professor James Porter, of the Departments of Comparative Literature and Classical Studies. Our intention was that these presented artifacts and the architecture of this room be fore-grounded for discussion and that perhaps a rereading of the texts and images would then be possible. I see this as a review of presented work, which is also intended to serve as a forum for an exchange between Architects and Comparative Litterateurs. This very framing itself, however, is also open to critique.

Bahti: When I received the one page statement of conditions, I noticed the line-up of the fours: four questions which I read as being quite specifically related in sequence to four texts which were probably matched in sequence again. We come in here, and Aditya says, "I'd like you to discuss texts, images, and artifacts in relation to the architecture of the room," which is again four-sided, has three spatial dimensions and a technical dimension which is this video camera and television in the middle. Therefore, one could say that these four people, four texts, four artifacts, four images, and four sides have something in common which is real, or there might be only a semblance or a contrivance. This has to do with the over-determined points of this agenda.

Hoffman: Within this room certainly the structure that we see, including the television set here, is very consciously developed. You mentioned the four-square structure, 1-2-3-4, and the



reflective symmetrical nature of this. I think it's a very important observation...I would add that this so-called symmetrical structure begins to determine spatially, possibly as well as textually, the nature of the events which follow. As a participant I am certainly aware of this.

Porter: I think that the Calvino text speaks to this very question. He writes, "At times the mirror increases a thing's value, at times denies it." Why is there this sort of arbitrary relation, both affirming and denying the value of symmetry? The question is whether the symmetry here is real or unreal, and whether this symmetry enhances our relations or not.

Saratillo: We're going back to "The Given Structure." This is very interesting, the way we all have given in to this structure. The reality of this moment, is a product of this structure and the body of the given materials and artifacts. The fact that we've all come here in itself seems to say it all.

Hoffman: Well, the denial comes from denial of all that is outside the structure. As in the Calvino text, this structure preys upon difference. The inhabitants of Calvino's city realize that there are repercussions to their own actions. Because of the mirror, they become conscious of their own acts. All of our comments recognize the structure of the given, of which the television and camera are a part. We are now trying to think through these texts with regard to the spatial structure that's set up in this room. As soon as this symmetrical structure is established, which is somewhat reflected in the Calvino text, it begins to set up possible readings of interiors and exteriors thereby playing upon the spatial readings of an architectural plan. The implied physical structure of the story plays between the structure of a city with its streets, rooms, and furniture and the flattening of these structures in a mirror, which is the lake below. The friction between the physical idea of the city and its inversion in the mirror is the idea here...

Saratillo: What does Calvino's text have anything to do with a structure as we know it or constructing a possibility of it? In other words, at what point does one give up trying to construct this possibility according to our physical laws?

Hoffman: Again in the Calvino story, the first thing that comes to my mind are spatial constructions. I measure the text against

such spatial constructions and devices. And certainly they change as they go through the story. It's remarkable in writing how mutable spatial ideas can be in language. I think Calvino is aware of this power in his writing. This reminds me of a point that Wittgenstein makes in *Philosophical Investigations* when he talks about seeing. One sees with one's eye, certainly, but one also sees with one's mind. Sight wavers between the interior and exterior. In a way there's a constant discussion, a traffic between the two. So, when I read the stories, I'm making projected constructions with my eyes, but at the same time weighing them against the logic in my mind. What's remarkable about *Invisible Cities* is that it becomes a discussion between these two aspects, a history of their relationship. Much of Calvino's discussion has to do with Leonardo's investigations of the eye, sections through the eye and speculation as to how vision worked. This autopsy becomes built and is manifested in terms of these visual constructions. I would like to credit Manuel Baez of the Cranbrook Architecture Studio for this observation.

Bakti: I read it as the intra-verbal reader that I am, and therefore I had very little in the way of spatial structures or devices which I had imagined from it or used to test it, or to work those devices or structures. Reading within my more limited or discursive way, I see that there are some repeating verbal structures and devices by which it proceeds. It would be interesting if were to compare and get very different answers by means of a visual-spatial-projecting method of reading and a more intra-verbal, logical method.

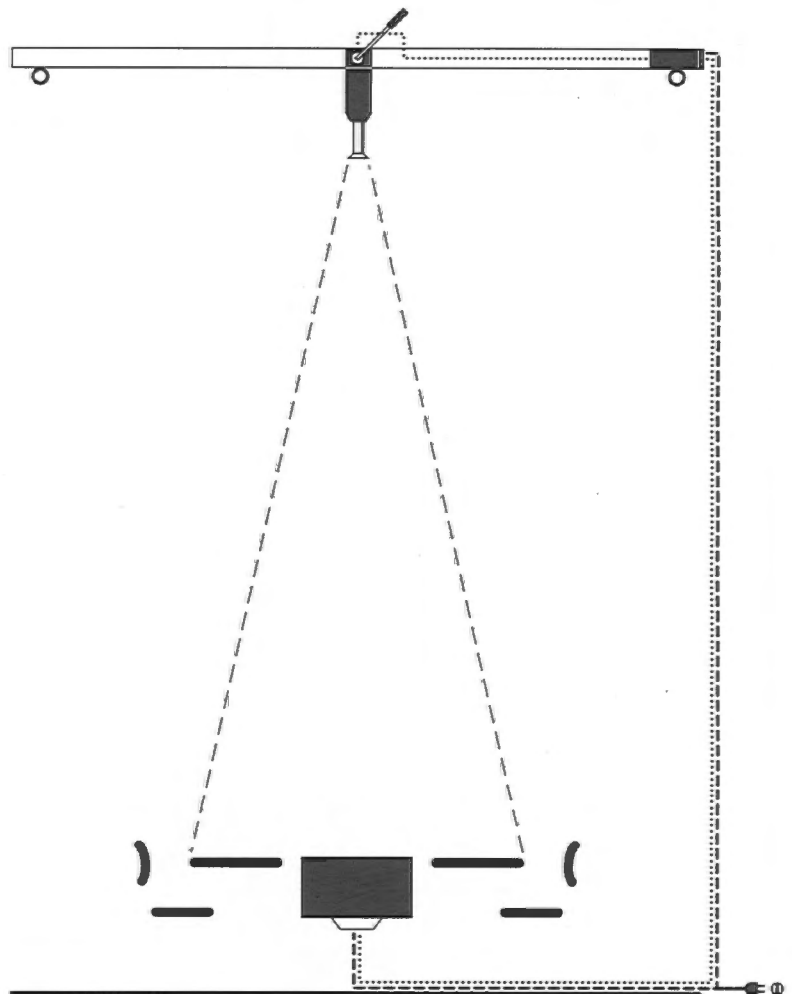
Hoffman: I think what you're addressing is what Wittgenstein is pointing out. There is a vibration between our different ways of thinking and perceiving, and I think there are certain forms or structures that traffic between the different modes of thinking. For example, the strength of perspective as a structure is that it can be read, not only in architecture, but in literature and in many other forms. We ask why architects are turning to other forms. In part they're doing it to confirm in other disciplines the essential aspects of certain structures which are transmissible, that communicate. If, as an architect, one understands this, then in limited ways one can be more certain of one's work.

Baratloo: My reading of Calvino's text is that in the process of this impossible mirroring, one quickly gives up thinking of the physical reality, which I deliberately did, in order to reach other possible realms. It is in the narrative that I read and synthesize diverse raw material. Also I see in Calvino a methodology very similar to Heidegger's way of discussing things as a means to something else, and this something-else is what interests me. I'm interested in Heidegger's work, because I seek an analogue in terms of methodology to what I am trying to do in teaching studio, in research and even in built projects.

Hoffman: In the Heidegger essay, there is a strong statement about the rule and the law all being part of science. They require research as a projected plan of a given order. The constancy of their change forces the necessity of the law. But Heidegger's essay begins to question this in a very profound way, and I think he's trying to find a way out of that system, in part by exposing, by deconstructing its very nature.

Porter: That's interesting. Is that really the case that Heidegger is trying to get outside the inexorable logic of the world picture? I've always assumed that Heidegger is underwriting it, and that somehow he'd formulated a problem with a kind of ironclad logic, which makes criticism of the issue difficult. It's a kind of Cartesian proof of Descartes' world vision: he begins with the assumption that that structure is there, and I think that one could doubt it on many grounds. I'm not sure that one should grant this inexorable status to the subject, and make it coincide with Descartes in the history of philosophy, because in a sense, that's giving a lot of credit to Descartes that he doesn't deserve. My problem with Heidegger is the pinpointing of this historically fixed moment at which the world picture is so framed that there is absolutely no escape from it.

Hoffman: In *The Question Concerning Technology* Heidegger makes a similar kind of argument about the total embrace of science. There is a way out, and the way out is a complete immersion into it. There is almost an anarchy to the embrace of science and technology in that our 'way out' can only come from such an embrace. The immersion does not predict what's going to happen; there's a kind of a historical dimension of fate in that kind of immersion. So I think that the so-called ironclad structure that he



sets up is not a completely determined condition, for one exists in that structure, engages it, employs it not knowing, in the end, where it will lead, knowing only that this is the only way to effect a transformation. I'd say that in many ways he was prescient of the dilemmas that we find ourselves in today in discussing the place of technology and science in our culture.

Baratloo: All that is said, this is where we are now, and it's a troubled moment. As it is, architecture stands at a very difficult and interesting juncture. Can we make a parallel to the time when *The Question Concerning Technology* was produced, seeking out relations between the social elements and forces of the time and contemporaneous philosophical writings, architectural work, painting and literature? This goes back to why we're reading Heidegger again, because what is happening in architecture now coincides, for example, with our understanding of film as a visual memory, which can be recalled at will.

Porter: Although we may say that you can get effortlessly from Heidegger here to Calvino, and though Calvino's text does resemble a little bit more Baudrillard's panic of simulacra, for we have complete immersion in the representational apparatus; difference is completely effaced and we have pure simulacra circulating. Part of the terror in this room is that it's never entirely clear which side of the technological mirror we stand on, whether we're above, looking down or below looking up. At some point the difference of the real begins to fade out and we could be on either of those planes and not even know where to ground the subject of the gaze. This move is a radical step and is completely opposed to what Heidegger describes: grounded perspectival vision which does control the field. I'm not sure if that's a consequence of Heideggerian logic or a completely qualitatively different thing.

Bakht: So do you think if you were to put a few mirrors in Heidegger's world image and made him dizzy we would wind up with something very close to Baudrillard or Calvino? It might undermine some of the oracular authority with which he's pronouncing this, but I think the vocabulary and the terms would stay much the same. Instead of subjectivity, we get inter-subjectivity, eventually we get a simulacrum subjectivity. But the basic building blocks of argument would stay much the

same, it would just become topsy-turvy and dizzy.

Porter: That's like saying it would be the same, but different. One could deform Heidegger, but one could be sure that this would be to the detriment of his own writings. The way Dan was describing vision in Calvino is absolutely right; but for Heidegger, the subject controls the field of the gaze. Throw a mirror in, and the subject becomes absorbed into the gaze. I think that Heidegger's analysis no longer functions the way he would like it to. This would now be far closer to where Baudrillard is; when you can't have a distinction between original and reproduction, you can only have copies of copies which have no originals. Whether Heidegger was prophetic or not, I think is open.

Baratloo: I'm wondering if a revelation is happening in architecture in the United States now, especially in its relation with other art forms. Yet, somehow, the profession and architects themselves have not been involved in addressing this challenge and placing it in the society. Is it because of the new world picture, perhaps, that architects are so interested in Heidegger again?

Porter: That's part of the reason I came here actually, to find out. There's a passage from Heidegger which really puzzles me. It's where he describes the utility or the logic of enterprise. "The more exclusively science individualizes itself . . ." or, the increase of specialization within a field. When any kind of monocular, uni-logical, one-eyed view is used widely, to carry on the mastering of the work process, ongoing activities are shifted into separate research institutes and professional schools. Is this really an illusion-free process that he's describing, or is it precisely the structure and meaning of a certain kind of illusion that allows this process to go on? ". . . the more irresistibly do the sciences achieve the consummation of their modern essence." Heidegger goes on with these sort of gradations toward the superlative. ". . . the more unequivocally and the more immediately will they be able to offer themselves for the common good, and the more unreservedly too will they have to return to the public . . ." It's a very loaded statement, self-congratulatory. It's written all over his face: self-justification. And anyone who knows anything about the way institutional things work knows that nothing necessarily follows from the investigation. The investigation doesn't determine the useful application of its product.

Bakht: I thought that this was all under the tone of ridicule. I thought that Heidegger was ridiculing this series of developments...

Hoffman: Heidegger is cautioning us that we've got to be careful of what we mean by research. He essentially restates the Cartesian argument where you have an idea that presupposes a given structure against which the phenomenon of the world can be measured. What he's saying, is that the subjective condition is not something that comes from here rather than there. And that we're imposing what we're inscribing the world with. In historical time the world has become that. Now that's the landscape, that's the given. The world is again all that is available for our use in the implementation of our vision. Research requires a setting up of the ground, a plan, and it is then an extension of the plan. Research demands prior thought, and then is a manifestation of that prior thought in the world.

Baratloo: If one wants to research and investigate in architecture, one has to eliminate a number of other elements not intrinsic to that particular project, such as the client or its actual construction. And so you deal perhaps with pieces of the construction, or alternatively with a representation of a larger scale project. Going back to methodology, Heidegger challenges the problems of communication and representation. This is specifically applicable to our design studios, if they are viewed as laboratories. In the studio, we rarely produce the object itself, in most cases we deal with a representation of it. There are enormous gaps and assumptions in the discussion of the work, which need to be threshed out before the processes can also be educational and informative.

Good: So, should we be positing a rupture where philosophical texts do exist in language and architectural discourse can exist in language to a limited extent, and architectural thinking perhaps cannot?

Hoffman: What is remarkable to me, is how certain ideas traffic to different forms. The architect reads literature and philosophy, and then turns to an artifact and there are ideas that enable you to make these relationships between them.



Porter: I'd like to point out that reading itself is a kind of ocular process, that the convergence of image and text comes occurs in the very active process of reading. The Calvino story seems to be an allegory for that convergence itself, and the mirror is the reader.

Hoffman: What we are getting at is that there isn't necessarily a visual world as opposed to a logical world or at least I see them all as one although there are different aspects to them. When one studies a physical phenomenon, an object, an artifact one begins to realize that it is imbued with contradictions and subtleties that one finds in the object itself. Duchamp's analysis of the mirror demonstrates its subtleties and contradictions. I am often amazed and secretly pleased that these physical objects can produce subtleties and relations that we would expect from a verbal system. I go back to architecture because it can sustain the same intensity of discourse as these other forms, and the ability of architecture to absorb these other forms, including text, is a conformation of its vitality as a discipline.

Porter: The paradox seems to be that in order for architecture to yield some of its richness, the discourse of architecture needs to be developed. So you are thrown back to text in order to enrich the atmosphere of the physical object.

Hoffman: I find that the engagement with the physical phenomena is something more and more lacking in architecture. I think that there is a strain of work out there which reflects a fascination with the ease of delivery of text, and yet another which deals with the rediscovered physical phenomenon. The role of the architect has changed historically in that the physical and ritual aspect of the act of building has been separated from the architect. It's all delivered in the form of documents. As Heidegger points out, architecture is broken up into various specializations, so that the claim of the discipline to issues of movement and temporality in the experience of the work is now always referred to representationally. The architect does not have a direct experience with the making of the work. At best it happens in an analogous fashion. Here, for example, in the drawings of Oskar Schlemmer in the isolated figure in space, movement and choreography itself is significant. This is an indication of the loss of movement as a part of architectural

thinking. This work is an attempt to recover in some new way the idea of movement in space, and this is why architects would be interested in it. Maybe it is the movement of the bricklayer's hand as he or she lays the brick, an incident in which the architect is not engaged palpably. So I think that architects are interested in various forms which attempt to recover the wholeness of the art. Architecture being the whole art of building. *Architekton*: the head of the whole art of building.

Baratloo: A work itself can be a critical piece. In literature, the work can challenge the methodology in the way it deals with structure, for example, which is incredibly important for the medium. But it doesn't happen in a corresponding manner in architecture. It doesn't happen in the studios. It doesn't happen with built work. It just doesn't happen.

Bakht: I attended a crit at the Yale architecture school in 1974, where a student had designed a "Post-Modern building". It was in the shape of an enormous automobile, and the practicing architects on the crit were very antipathetic. It could be presented as a series of images, two- and three-dimensional, which were made with a great deal of craft, and detail, and they worked. The student could also present his drawings and models as a text, it made a good discourse, and in discourse there is a place for the comic mode. But then when it moved into architecture, these professional architects, you could see them breaking out into a rash in response to it. I'm interested in how architecture can be made out of the layers of these different planes or aspects of other arts like discourse, and two- and three-dimensional imagery, and then there's a certain point where it becomes *Architecture*. And at least in certain instances, it is not as inclusive of its parts as it has been up to that moment.

Hoffman: The difference now is that we're entering a cultural environment where that turn doesn't happen. The perception of architecture is so mediated by everything else that it becomes very difficult to isolate one's presence before the building as a significant architectural fact. Even if one is standing in front of a building, one reads it as a part of a whole set of cultural images and this leads one away from the tangible concerns of architecture towards discourse. It becomes problematic because how then does one do architecture in a way that refers to the

discipline? That's the question every architect sort of deals with. Either you deal with it from a position of resistance or you deal with it or from a point of acceleration. Take the plunge, as Heidegger advises you to do.

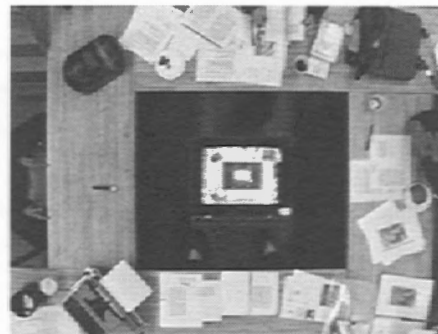
Bakht: Nietzsche would say that the architects still need to learn how to laugh.

Hoffman: This architect is still trying to laugh.

Bakht: To return to the automobile which could be a building in a different way, I wonder if there are now very different notions of what constitutes architectural space, with respect to the home, the work place and the getting from the one to the other?

Hoffman: I would account for the change through the technology that's involved in making an automobile. The autonomous aspect of the making of the automobile has become ingrained in architectural production. Architecture, until fairly recently was a non-industrialized profession. In the past fifteen or twenty years, the technological aspects of construction have really accelerated. It used to be that the structure of the building was within the responsibility of the architect, and now that's not so much the case. It is really part of a system of panels and panelization and structure that is now built into that prefabricated system. Now one no longer finds necessity to express the structure of the building, because it is all part of the technological infrastructure. I think that much of the so-called Deconstructivist work today, is an attempt to find where the space is in this technological matrix of a building. This space exists in the joint. You don't question the panel, you don't question the structure; you separate them and find the work in the rhetoric of joining. So again Heidegger's words are somewhat prophetic in that one cannot question the framing aspect of technology, one simply begins to play within it.

Porter: I take it that any architectural experience like any reading experience requires mediation. There has been a revolution in the quantity of mediation that is required when one enters a Post-Modern building, but maybe it's the case that the constituents which are mediated have changed and the assumed autonomy of construction and so on was also formerly mediat-



ed. Now in their absence, they become visible as a loss and something else has taken its place. So if you were to subject these to a historical critique or social critique, today we've merely reached a new set of social relations, but mediation was always there.

Hoffman: Yes, architecture is part and parcel of many discourses and is a substitute media for these discourses, however, and this is where I return to building. There was always in architecture a sense of the struggle and tragedy in the work. The making of architecture involves some aspect of sacrifice and tragedy because it is in debt to physical endeavor and required the greatest expenditure and the greatest systems of domination. Now it no longer has that sense of preeminence. So the new authority of its discourse is symptomatic of other things we've been talking about.

Porter: Has anyone ever carried out a kind of ideological critique of *homo faber* or man as builder? Based on what you're describing seems similar to other critiques of bourgeois individualistic perspectives: the tragedy of the self, the objectification of the self; but this seems to me to be an ideologically superimposed notion, not something intrinsic to some logic internal to architecture.

Hoffman: I would resist going in that direction because I think the work of the architect demands an understanding of the means of making. This is by the recognition that architecture's necessity lies within the condition of *building*, of manifesting ideas through physical constructions. To pursue architecture as an art, one must have the same sure faith in the possibility and character of building. I think that when one loses that, one sets the discipline adrift.

Sood: May I ask the two architects present a question about the geometries of this room? Is the architecture of power and visibility which this room embodies within or without your interests in architecture? This room arguably has two geometries, one spatial and the other somehow electronic, or perceptual. Is there the possibility of incorporating the video camera above into the concerns of architecture?

Baratloo: How different is that to, say, incorporating a window?

Sood: Well, there's this dissociation between the eye and the body possible through electronic simulation. I'd like to reference these two images from the package, the one by Schlemmer and the image of the prison that accompanies Foucault. In the second image we see an architecture of vision, relationships between bodies, and their respective possibilities of seeing one another; and in the first there is the solitary body in space. Now since the last century, we've known alternative ordering systems and structures which aren't necessarily spatial. To what extent are decisions made about those relationships, those architectures, within the realm of architecture? To what extent can we lay claim to them?

Hoffman: That's a very complex question and the short answer is "No." What's significant about this media here (*points to television*), is that it is temporal and its eye is always open. It is plugged into an electrical system which can move at virtually any speed. We now find that time can occur within our representational medium. This should be understood with reference to a drawing, or a piece of wood, which always remain still for the time we're not working or reading them.

Porter: Is it a temporality that is projected through the media in the sense that it constitutes it or is it actually a perfect simultaneity of the medium with time?

Hoffman: I disagree with Baudrillard's notion of similitude in that I don't think there ever is a perfect symmetry. I think that media has its own time, its own space. And I think that the structure of this camera, and its positioning, and its lens, is the order of architecture within that device. To say that this video-recording is exactly similar to what's going on here is to give over to the structure of that (*points to camera*). There is always a difference. That is what this discussion is about.

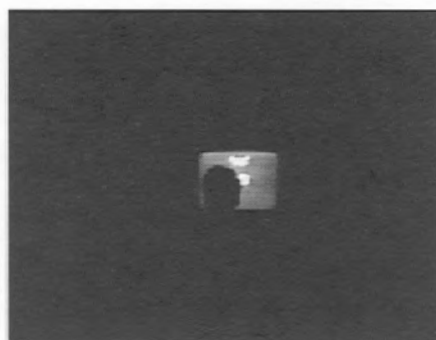
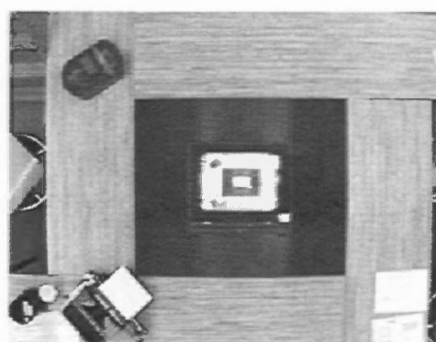
Porter: Not similar, but glued, actually inseparable from real time. Here you have a kind of virtual time and real time which are sort of Lacan's real and imaginary and which somehow preclude each other.

Hoffman: What you're saying means to me that the medium is so powerful that it can determine space and time in all of its aspects. We use and are used by media. It works two ways. A good example for me is terrorism. The phenomena of terrorism is an intersection between the portability of media and the global political stage that it permits. The nature of the event is structured around what is possible to transmit via the camera. The Structuralists were really important in exposing the manner in which the nature of the structure of the mechanism projects itself. The media as a delivery system and it has a particular trajectory.

Porter: I wasn't saying that the real which is glued to this image is produced by the image. It's just that it might be an oversimplification to say that images produce reality in a straightforward way. There are multiple determinations and they are so complex that it would be almost by formalistic ruse that we could allow ourselves to be subject to the image rather its just that there is a confluence of forces which produce a situation whereby an image can glue itself to the real. And that might then by its own sources of attraction produce other effects and maybe another sense of time.

Hoffman: Let me turn to Kafka. The prisoner's relationship to the apparatus really intrigues me in that the apparatus writes upon the prisoner's back and yet the prisoner learns language through the functioning of the apparatus. Curiously, though the apparatus kills the prisoner, it is still that which enlightens him. I wanted to end with *The Penal Colony* because I think that it is an appropriate analogue to the structure of this space. This framing (points all round the room) is our apparatus. It informs the nature of that very discourse that allows one to consider Kafka's apparatus in the first place. Just as the apparatus in *The Penal Colony* teaches the prisoner by writing on his back, and gives the prisoner access to that realization which kills him, so it is with media. Our only hope is to realize the structure as a construction. It gives the necessary distance from which to understand.

Good: On behalf of Dimensions, I'd like to thank all of you for your attendance and for your discourse. 📖



This paper will attempt to summarize the relationship between Alfred Schutz's theory of meaning and architecture. In order to maintain the accuracy and exactness of Schutz's phenomenological method of expression, his terminology will be employed. The various terms, however, will be clarified through either definitions or explanatory comments, in addition to introducing ideas about the theory's relevance to architecture.

Alfred Schutz's Phenomenological Theory of Meaning:

With Some Comments on the Meaning of Space

[Vassiliki Mangana]

The question of meaning of architectural space constitutes one of the serious preoccupations of architectural theorists, historians and practitioners. Though deriving their views from various philosophies and theoretical schemes, researchers tend to deal with meaning as a notion only implicitly defined. In, *Meaning in Western Architecture*, Christian Norberg-Schulz writes:

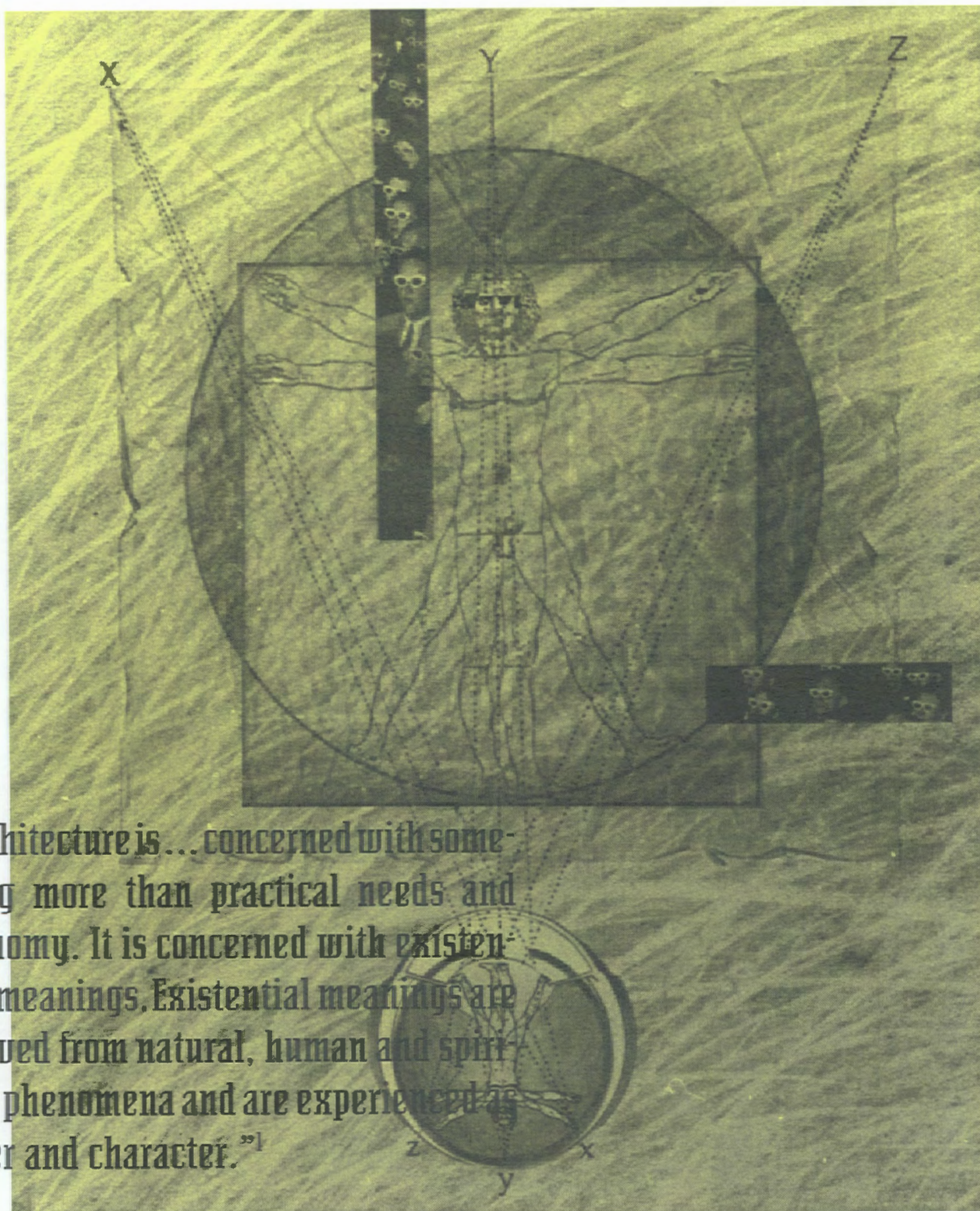
*"Architecture is . . . concerned with something more than practical needs and economy. It is concerned with existential meanings. Existential meanings are derived from natural, human and spiritual phenomena and are experienced as order and character."*¹

Jencks, on the other hand, offers two theories of meaning:

*"The intrinsic theory of meaning . . . posits a direct connection between ourselves and the universe. For instance the Gestalt psychologist Arnheim contends that because we are part of the world it is conceivable that our nervous system shares a similar structure to forms. Thus a jagged line intrinsically means activity, whereas a flat line means inactivity or repose. . . . The extrinsic theory contends that it is stimuli from the environment that form meaning—the primary stimuli being language."*²

It is apparent from the above quotations that in architectural discourse meaning remains an undefined notion characterized by such obscure terms as existential. It is sometimes derived from the characteristics of specific forms, or even from the environment.

Alfred Schutz's phenomenological theory of meaning seems to offer some answers to the above problems.



"Architecture is... concerned with something more than practical needs and economy. It is concerned with existential meanings. Existential meanings are derived from natural, human and spiritual phenomena and are experienced as order and character."¹

Image: Dallas Felder

Although not referring directly to architecture, Schutz's systematic and comprehensive analysis provides a definition as well as a method according to which meaning can be discerned. The most fundamental aspect of this theory is its focus on human experience and the necessity of the presence of this experience in the process of constituting meaning. Thus such expressions as meaning of architectural space must be modified to meaning of the experience of architectural space. Yet, Schutz's theory also attempts to answer the question of how one can interpret the experiences of another person, approaching a definition of meaning in this manner. This approach occurs through the interpretation of the signs one receives from one's lived experience of the *other*. The notion of sign, a subset of which is the architectural sign, is introduced and analyzed in terms of: its subjective meaning, which is the meaning that the producer (in the case of architectural sign the architect) intended to convey; and its objective meaning which is the meaning of the perceiver. Finally, this theory reaches the notion of intersubjective meaning which is the common meaning that a group or a society associates with a specific sign. As we will see, this notion can be of great importance in the attempt to discern meanings associated with urban spaces.

A. The Theory of Meaning

Schutz's investigation of the essence of meaning starts by introducing two notions about time which radically influence our way of thinking about experience. The first is the notion of duration which is a continuous *coming-to-be* and *passing-away* of heterogeneous qualities.³ We say that we live in duration when we accept that our experiences

reach our consciousness as a continuous, undifferentiated flow or stream of distinct qualities. The second is the notion of Positivistic time which is homogeneous time that has been spatialized, quantified and rendered discontinuous.⁴ While in duration we have experiences of something, in Positivistic time we have experiences of unities that are intentionally perceived as homogeneous.⁵

Another concept that becomes important for this theory is that of memory or remembrance. According to Husserl, there are two types of memory: the first is *retention* by virtue of which the multiplicity of the running off of duration is constituted.⁶ This type of memory retains a certain amount of experiences which reaches human consciousness. The second is *recollection*, or *representation*, which allows the identity of the object to be constituted.⁷ Retention, then, refers to the pre-empirical being or the raw form of experience, while representation refers to the experience as a phenomenon. Now what changes the pre-empirical being of experience, which is preserved through retention, to a differentiated phenomenon is *attention*. This transformation constitutes an *act of comprehension*.⁸

Duration becomes a flow of such acts which, through attention, becomes differentiated. In Husserl's words, "I live in my Acts, whose living intentionality carries over from one Now to the next."⁹ Schutz, however, argues that there is a tension between duration, which is a quality of life, and thought, and that this tension points to the essence of meaning. He writes:

"Let us recall the tension we have pointed out between thought and life. Thought is focused on the objects of the spatiotemporal world; life pertains to duration. The tension between the two is of the essence of the "meaningfulness" of experience."¹⁰

According to Schutz, then, meaning, which can only belong to experience, is constituted when a specific attribute of the experienced object or a specific quality of that experience attracts our attention, thus requiring further reflection. Due to the tendency of duration to continuously pass from one Now to the next, this reflection, which is a return to a previous Now, constitutes an opposing act; therefore the tension, identified by Schutz, appears.

Attention, however, also has the ability to compose individual meanings into new ones. We will say that our lived experiences stand in a meaning context, or configuration of meaning, if and only if they have been lived through in separate steps. They are then constituted into a synthesis of a higher order, becoming thereby unified objects of monothetic attention.¹¹ This constitution of meaning, through contexts, is explained by Schutz in the idea of sedimentation.¹² He writes,

*"The total context of all my experience or of all my perceptions of the world in the broadest sense, is brought together and coordinated in the total context of my experience. This total context grows larger with every new lived experience. This growing core consists of both real and ideal objects which of course had once been produced in polysynthetic intentional acts."*¹³

*"To the natural man all his past experiences are present as ordered, as knowledge or as awareness of what to expect, just as the whole external world is present to him as ordered."*¹⁴

Man, however, also faces problems which force him to order his experience. This process of ordering lived experience under schemes by means of synthetic recognition, Schutz calls interpretation, including under this term the connection of the sign¹⁵ and its signifier.¹⁶ Interpretation,

then, seems to be the process by which we can discover meaning. Schutz's description of it, however, takes into consideration the complex conditions under which it occurs. Therefore, the discernment of the meaning of a specific experience is conditioned by previous ones; at the same time, the new meaning also conditions previous configurations of meaning.

Relevance to Architecture

As already mentioned, Schutz, focusing on human consciousness as the source of any kind of meaning, points to a new direction that opposes that of various other theories. If we follow this direction in examining architecture, we will see that rather than attempting to discover the meaning of architectural space by analyzing such qualities as geometric composition, style and color, we should concentrate on the experience of that space. According to this theory, the raw form of our experience should consist of qualities such as warmth, fear, happiness and stability. This initial continuous flow of experience is ordered through representation into schemes that refer to the material characteristics of the specific space. The meaning of this experience, however, is constituted only when specific characteristics stand out calling our attention, and subsequently require further reflection. It is then, only when a specific element(s) distinguishes itself from the rest, obliging our thought to go against the flow of duration, thus creating a tension, that the initial quality experience becomes meaningful.

Yet Schutz does not view meaning as static; rather he argues that meaning gets transformed as life progresses. In his discussion of the issue of interpretation, it becomes apparent

that the meaning a specific spatial experience acquires will be influenced by previous architectural, personal and social experiences that have already been lived through and reflected upon to constitute a complex configuration of meaning. At the same time, however, this configuration of meaning will also be influenced and transformed by the new meaning. It is then, through this dialectic relationship, between new and pre-existing meaning, that this theory can accommodate differences such as society, culture and age, concerning itself with them in a consistent way.

B. The Theory of the Meaning of the Thou

To this point, I have discussed meaning deriving through a purely subjective process, where one human being and his experiences are ordered into schemes which acquire meaning. The next step of the theory of meaning should therefore consist of an examination of meaning from a sociological point of view; that is, an examination of the meaning of the Thou, the other, our fellow men is necessary. Schutz starts with the assumption that the duration of our fellow men and its resemblance to ours is taken for granted. He writes:

*"Born into a social world, he comes upon his fellow men and takes their existence for granted without question, just as he takes for granted the existence of the natural objects he encounters. The essence of this assumption about his fellow men may be put in this short formula: The Thou or other person is conscious, and his stream of consciousness is temporal in character, exhibiting the same basic form as mine."*¹⁷

Therefore, the meaning of the other has the same structure as mine.

Another idea that seems to reinforce this assumption is

the idea of *simultaneity*. Schutz defines simultaneity as "the phenomenon or growing older together."¹⁸ This idea becomes important because, as we will see later, it allows for insight into the experience of the other.

One of the problems that this theory faces is that, in being constituted within the unique stream of consciousness of each individual, it treats meaning as essentially subjective.¹⁹ Therefore, "the meaning one gives to the other's experiences cannot be precisely the same as the meaning he gives to them when he proceeds to interpret them."²⁰ But actually through one's interaction and especially through one's lived experience of the other's body, behavior, course of actions, or the artifacts he produced one can approach the lived experience of the other.²¹ Therefore the experience of the other can be interpreted through signs. Schutz writes:

*"I apprehend the lived experiences of another only through signitive-symbolic representation, regarding either his body or some cultural artifact he produced as a 'field of expression' for those experiences."*²²

As previously mentioned, simultaneity is another aspect that allows one to approach the experience of the other. Yet a third point that should be made here is that while interpreting the other's experience, we are based on the knowledge resulting from our own accumulated experiences. "Everything I know about your conscious life [writes Schutz] is really based on my knowledge of my own experience."²³ This seems to mean that various expressions of the other's conscious life become quality experiences which are then interpreted according to the process already described (Section A). However, the attention of the observer is not focused on the indications but on what lies behind them (their meaning). This, according to Schutz, is a genuine understanding of the other person.²⁴

At this point, we need to return to the idea that our understanding of the other's experiences derives from signitive-symbolic representation;²⁵ therefore, it is necessary to elaborate on the issue of sign. Schutz defines signs as

*"artifacts or act objects which are interpreted not according to those interpretive schemes which are adequate to them as objects of the external world but according to schemes not adequate to them and belonging rather to other objects."*²⁶

Signs, then, are artifacts or art objects which are used or produced by a person to express a specific subjective experience. Therefore their meaning or that which they signify cannot be discerned by the viewer simply through the interpretation of his (the viewer's) subjective experience of that sign. Instead the viewer must be familiar with the producer's subjective experience and its context in order to be able to interpret a specific sign.

Through the interpretation of a sign under these conditions, when the viewer is aware of the producer's subjective experience and its context, we reach what Schutz calls the *subjective meaning* of the sign.

*"We speak, then, of subjective meaning if we have in view the meaning-context within which the product stands or stood in the mind of the producer. To know the subjective meaning of the product means that we are able to run over in our minds in simultaneity or quasi-simultaneity the polythetic Acts which constituted the experience of the producer."*²⁷

Schutz, however, also recognizes the possibility of an independent or quasi-independent life for the sign, in which its original subjective meaning is transformed to a different one. Thus, he introduces the notion of the *objective meaning* of which he writes:

*"Objective meaning . . . we can predicate only of the products as such, that is, of the already constituted meaning-context of the thing produced, whose actual production we meanwhile disregard."*²⁸

It is important to note that although Schutz through his notion of objective meaning argues for the possibility of multiple interpretations and meanings of a sign, he also remains consistent with his fundamental assumption that meanings can only derive from human consciousness. He writes:

*"Objective meaning therefore consists only in a meaning-context within the mind of the interpreter, whereas subjective meaning refers beyond it to the meaning-context in the mind of the producer."*²⁹

Relevance to Architecture

Through this second part of his theory Schutz provides a systematic explanation as well as a proof of the possibility for someone to approach and understand the meaning of the other. Here, Schutz seems to offer an answer to the problem that various architectural practitioners seem to face: how can they approach and understand the users' experience so that their designs can serve the users' needs in the best way. According to Schutz, through genuine understanding of the users, derived from focusing on the meanings lying behind their course of action or their behavior, architects can provide spaces that will elicit meaningful experiences from the users.³⁰

Yet, Schutz also deals with the issue of sign. His discussion becomes particularly relevant to architecture since he includes artifacts as a sub-set in the category of signs. According to this theory, an architectural sign is an artifact

used or produced as an expression of a specific meaning. The meaning of the producer, the subjective meaning of the sign, influenced by his previous experiences and meaning-contexts does not need to be understandable by the viewer in order for the sign to be constituted. At the same time an architectural sign through the experience of a viewer can acquire a new meaning, what Schutz calls the objective sign, which can be different from its initial subjective one. The introduction of the two types of meaning, besides providing a theoretical clarification,³¹ is also able to address the issue of change in meaning through time. By focusing on human experience, this theory can easily explain why for instance the Parthenon constituted a sign of religious faith for the Athenians of the fifth century B.C; while today, it has become simply a sign of harmonious architecture.

C. Society as a Configuration of Intersubjective Meaning

What still remains to be examined is the meaning of the They, or society as a whole. The concept of simultaneity in relation to the they is where one should start. The assumption is that since the they, as individuals, live in the same social world as I do, there is a common way in which experiences acquire meaning. However, one cannot talk about the experience of the they, since the they is not a human being. The way one gains access to the they is through one's experiences of the they actions. That means that

*"we make the transition from direct (face to face) to indirect social experience simply by following a spectrum of decreasing vividness. The first steps beyond the realm of immediacy are marked by a decrease in the number of perceptions."*³²

In his attempt to classify the they according to the vividness of our experience, Schutz divides the social world into four domains: the realm of directly experienced social reality; the social world of contemporaries; the social world of predecessors and; the social world of successors. All of those domains influence the understanding of one's social world, but with different degrees of clarity.

*"All experience of contemporaries . . . is formed by means of interpretive judgements involving all my knowledge of the social world, although with varying degrees of explicitness."*³³

It should be added that the world of successors and predecessors are experienced through a similar process. The world of predecessors specifically belonging to the past is viewed by Schutz, as static in terms of its meaning. The world of contemporaries is, on the other hand, accessed through the construction of ideal types, an idea borrowed from Weber but transformed by Schutz. He writes:

*"To a certain extent the other has now become anonymous; we may even say that he has been replaced by an ideal type that has been constructed out of previously given experiences of certain courses of action."*³⁴

We have addressed the issues of how the social world becomes a meaningful entity for one human being. Now, we need to go back once again to the idea of simultaneity. The other members of society live in the same reality. Their experience of this reality becomes meaningful through the same process by which my experience becomes meaningful. There are, then, certain meanings that are commonly accepted by the members of a society. We reach this commonality through an intersubjective meaning. One point that should be made here is that, like the meaning of the Thou, this intersubjective meaning is not static. Rather, there is a dialectic process that is involved. The social

reality provides uniform experiences for all its members from which an intersubjective meaning will arise. This same social reality, however, can be also transformed by human action and subsequently the initial meaning will also be transformed.

Relevance to Architecture


The last part of Schutz's theory inquires into the way in which social reality is experienced. In this part, Schutz, facing the problem that society is not a human being able to constitute meaning, avoids using such terms as social meaning, or meaning of social reality. This treatment of terminology should also remind architectural historians and theorists that convenient expressions such as the meaning of public squares or streets may actually be devoid of content.

We attempted, however, to reason about the term intersubjective meaning³⁵ as an extension of Schutz's intersubjective understanding. This notion, which signifies the common meaning that certain experiences acquire for the member of a society, becomes a particularly important methodological tool for the interpretation of the experience of urban spaces. It allows one to approach an understanding of urban space, through a gradual process, as neither the product of social structures or as the result of distinct acts of design and building. One can understand it as a fragmented architectural setting, the embodiment of the collective experiences of a specific society. Only few architectural settings have been treated this way³⁶ until today. Schutz, however, through his theory points to the need for a generalization of analysis that is theoretically justified and provides a more profound understanding of the space in question.

Schutz's division of society into four domains according to the clarity of experience, although not immediately applicable to architectural analysis, could still be helpful. Through his first category, for instance, he points to the immediate users and their experiences as the most valid sources of data for the analysis and discernment of meaning of an urban setting. The world of predecessors, on the other hand, is also treated as a source of influence of the experience of public spaces. This way the abstract notion of tradition becomes a concrete category. Schutz's views about the static and finalized state of the meaning of this world lead to some kind of confidence for the validity of consistent and comprehensive historical research. His earlier notion of objective meaning, at the same time, provides an analytical tool for the examination of the process and the consequences of the projection of the architectural world of the predecessors into the present. This becomes especially useful for the analysis of cities or urban spaces with a prevailing historical aspect.

Yet another analytical tool which allows for a classification of societies according to their specific characteristics is Schutz's notion of ideal types. Through this notion, as it is used by Schutz, such categories as social classes, defined according to average income or age groups, are put into question and the need for them to be rethought is indicated. This way cultural characteristics become part of the discourse as concrete "experienced" evidence. Urban spaces are analyzed as signs through which the specific attitude toward life of a cultural group is expressed and a richer, more pragmatic, understanding of their constituted meaning is gained.

A Final Comment

In this paper, those issues of Schutz's phenomenological theory of meaning which seemed to be related to architectural analysis were summarized. Additionally, some comments on the way in which Schutz's ideas could be applied to architectural discourse were presented. However, those comments should not be viewed as attempting to introduce a new theory of architectural analysis and criticism; rather, they should be considered as indicating a direction in which our discipline could develop. It should be noted that the possible problems that could naturally appear from the transition from a Sociological to an Architectural theory were not dealt with here. Schutz's profoundly systematic and comprehensive examination of his subject matter rendered criticism at this preliminary stage an extremely difficult task. 

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Notes

¹ Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Meaning in Western Architecture* (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1976), 6.

² Charles Jencks, "Semiology and Architecture." In *Meaning in Architecture*, Geoffrey Broadbent, Richard Bunt, and Charles Jencks, eds. (New York: Braziller, 1970), 17-18.

³ Which Schutz borrows from Henri Bergson

⁴ Alfred Schutz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World*, trans. George Walsh and Frederick Lehnert (Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1967), 45.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 69.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 75.

¹² A term often used by the phenomenologists to indicate the process by which experiences are not accumulated simply in an additive way but they are composed to constitute a complex system.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 81.

¹⁵ The idea of sign will be dealt with later; at this point it should be noted that Schutz identifies sign or symbol with a meaning image.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 84.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 98.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 103.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 99.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, 101.

²² *Ibid.*, 100.

²³ *Ibid.*, 106.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 111.

²⁵ The term signitive-symbolic representation is considered here to be synonymous to the term sign.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 120.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 133.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 133-4.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 134 In his earlier investigations of the issue of meaning, published in his *Life Forms and Meaning Structure*, trans. Helmut R. Wagner (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), Schutz elaborates on the relation between sign and that which it signifies. This theory is considered to go beyond the scope of this paper, and therefore, it will not be included here.

³⁰ It is important to note here that Schutz's theory does not provide a design method, but it simply points to the possibility that such design can be achieved. His theory of social action, however, could probably offer a further insight into this issue.

³¹ We saw in the introduction that two of the leading historians of our time tend to offer only confused and obscure explanations of meaning.

³² Schutz, *Phenomenology*, 177.

³³ *Ibid.*, 183.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 219.

³⁵ This term has not been used by Schutz.

³⁶ Vincent Scully's analysis of ancient Greek sites is one example. See Scully, *The Earth, the Temple, and the Gods: Greek Sacred Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979)

Etienne-Louis



Eero

[Wes Janz]

"Overpowered by an excessive love for my art, I have surrendered myself to it entirely."

ETIENNE-LOUIS BOULLEE

"I like the story of the boy on the Yale team who said when he looked at the concrete arch, it made him feel, 'Go, Go, Go!'"

EERO SAARINEN

"The famous Trans World Airlines terminal, on the other hand, had to suggest flight and did so in its soaring cross-vault roof, spectacularly constructed out of a reinforced concrete shell. Moving through it, the architecture was supposed to conjure up the experience of this glamorous new mode of public transportation. The analogy now might be with the eighteenth century—the building as poetic metaphor. Only, unlike the projects of Boullee, say, which were never meant to be built, for technical reasons if for no other, the versatility of modern structures could now keep up with the architect's fancy."

SPIRO KOSTOF

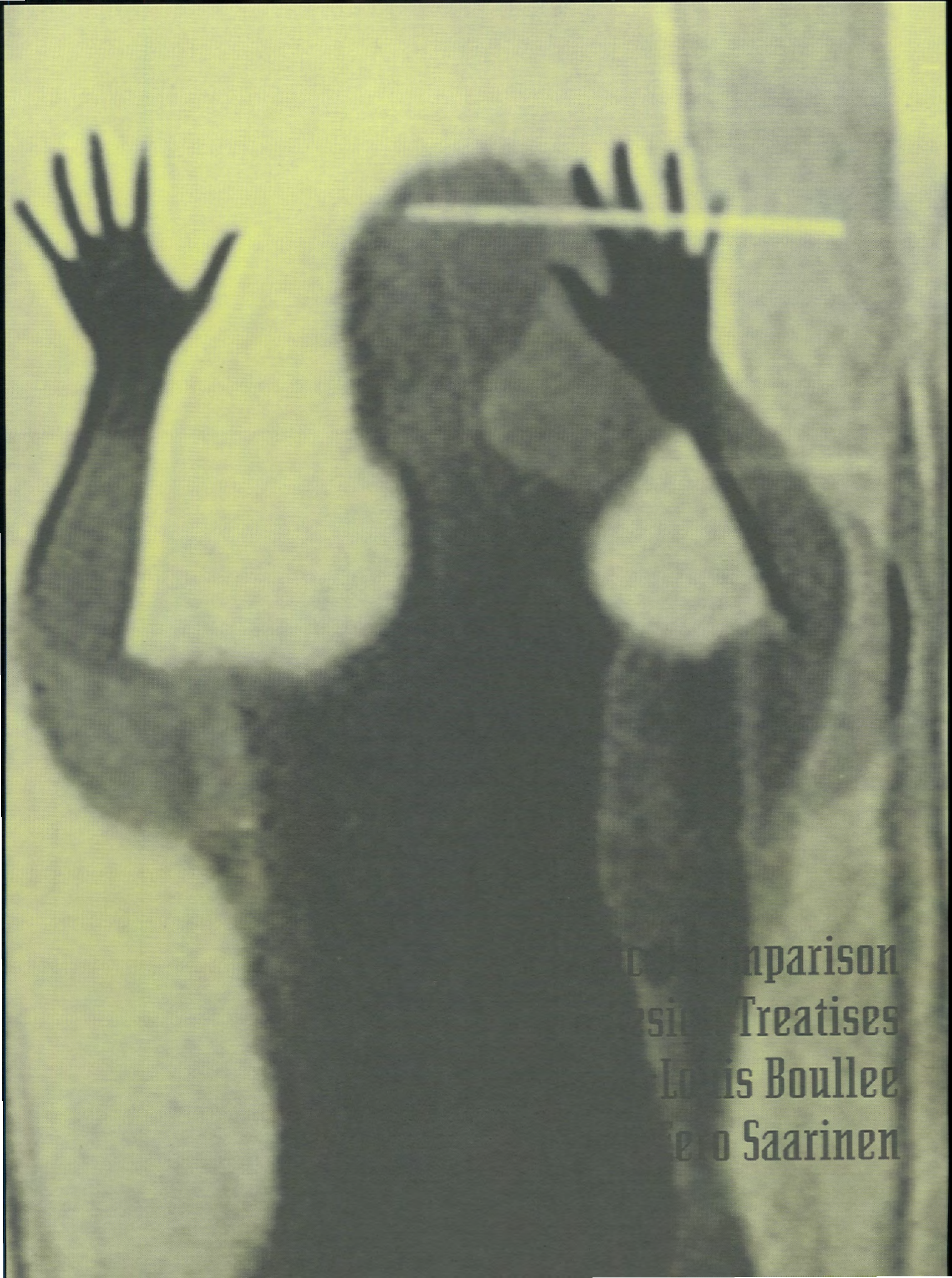
A HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE

This paper will explore the design treatises and work of two impressive and expressive architects: Etienne-Louis Boullee (1728-1799) and Eero Saarinen (1910-1961) ¹.

The architectural historian Spiro Kostof presents us with a paradoxical point from which to begin. While mentioning Boullee and Saarinen in the same paragraph and thus joining them, he also changes this relationship—without separating them completely—by stating, "unlike the projects of Boullee."

Both Boullee and Saarinen believed in the grandeur of the idea. Of challenging materials. Both had architect fathers. Both listened, first, to the spirit of their design problem. Both believed that architecture could lead the way to a new and better world. Both were alive at one of civilizations' greatest moments. Both designed many 'object' (not 'objective') projects.

There are also significant dichotomies. One was once a painter, the other a sculptor. One worked in reaction against the Baroque; the other compared his work to the Baroque. One celebrated the theory of gravity:



in Comparison
of Treatises
by Louis Boullee
and Alvaro Saarinen

"Sublime mind! Vast and profound genius! Divine being! Newton! Accept the homage of my weak talents ... O Newton!"

ETIENNE-LOUIS BOULLEE

The other fought it:

"Esthetically, we have an urge to soar great distances with our new materials and to reach upward and outward. In a way, this is man's desire to conquer gravity. All the time one works, one concerns oneself with the fight against gravity. Everything tends to be too heavy and downward pressing unless one really works at it." (June 3, 1953)

ALVARO SAAFINEN

One was concerned with the viewing experience, the other with the kinesthetic experience. One appropriated old forms and their meaning, the other searched for new 'forms' of expression. One attempted to capture a cosmology, the other an experience. Both are worthy of further study².

THE TREATISES

To develop a critical discourse on the philosophy of these two architects, I will utilize the treatise statements, the very words, of Boullée and Saarinen. "Boullée's Treatise" is an edited version of Helen Rosenau's translation of *Boullée's treatise on architecture; a complete presentation of the "Architecture, essai sur l'art"* from the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, France. "Saarinen's Treatise" is an edited version of his December 1, 1959 address given to Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Themes from the two treatises have been identified and introduced as the framework within which the discourse will be structured.

Definition(s) of "Architecture"

BOULLEE:

"Architecture (is) ... the art of designing and bringing to perfection any building whatsoever."

SAAFINEN:

"When I speak of 'architecture' I am speaking of architecture as an art. I think of architecture as the total of man's man-made physical surroundings."

Since both of these architects come from fine arts backgrounds, it is not surprising that each first speaks of architecture as art.

For Boullée 'art' means 'perfection.' From Webster's Dictionary, this definition of 'art' has to do with 'the creative work,' or 'the joining or fitting together of design in a perfect way.' As we shall see in upcoming themes, Boullée's search for perfection through the process of 'fitting together' creates a wholeness in his approach that has ramifications throughout his work.

For Saarinen, I believe 'art' is a reference to 'making or doing things that have form or beauty.' These 'things' are artificial, synthetic buildings. This definition leads to a separation from nature, to an apparent dichotomy of nature vs. human-made. We see here, in contrast to Boullée, a stated preference for separation – architecture is one thing.

NATURE as "Source" vs. Nature as "Resource"

BOULLEE:

"Nature ... is the source of all true beauty."

"It is beyond all question that no idea exists that does not derive from nature ... It is impossible to create architectural imagery without a profound knowledge of nature: the Poetry of architecture lies in natural effects."

"Everything in nature is striving towards the goal of perfection."

SAARINEN:

"The only thing I leave out (of my definition of architecture) is nature. You might say it (architecture) is the man-made nature."

"I see architecture not as the building alone but the building in relation to its surroundings...a way must be found for uniting the whole, because the total environment is more important than the single building."

For *Boullee*, architecture leads to art which connects to perfection which inevitably means Nature. Nature (note the upper case 'N') is the sum total of all things in time and space; the entire physical universe. Nature is everything; it provides both the philosophical and physical environment in which the architect does creative work. Boullee places his work first in the landscape, then in our mind, and ultimately in our heart.

For *Saarinen*, nature (note lower case 'n') is 'the natural scenery, including the plants and animals.' Saarinen's nature is where he places his art.

This is consistent with my interviews of Saarinen's landscape architects – Dan Kiley and Stewart Dawson. On the Saarinen projects I have researched in some detail to date – the Dulles International Airport Terminal and Mobile Lounges in Chantilly, Virginia; and the Deere & Company Administrative Center in Moline, Illinois – both Kiley and Dawson served basically to verify and hard-line Eero's design ideas of the human-made site.

Saarinen manipulated and controlled the immediate site to fit his design for the building. It was after 'nature' had served his purposes that Saarinen turned the design over to

landscape architects. Nature, which is the main organizational element for Boullee is not mentioned in the Saarinen treatise. Boullee's Nature organizes all.

Boullee and Saarinen practiced an "object in nature" approach, as can be seen in their projects. This is what Boullee refers to as "the architect's mission ... to orchestrate nature" and what Saarinen defines as "man-made nature."

The Four Order(er)s

Boullee:

"Symmetry is pleasing because it is the image of clarity and because the mind, which is always seeking understanding, easily accepts and grasps all that is symmetrical."

"I have established a method for discerning the basic principles of an art and finally I have proved that in architecture these derive from Regularity. It is easy for the reader to surmise that the basic rule and the one that governs the principles of architecture, originates in regularity."

"(Architecture's) basic principles, as I have shown, derive from Order, the symbol of wisdom. It is through Order that the fine arts and especially painting and sculpture become beautiful and acquire brilliance."

"The art of giving character to a project lies in the effect of the Masses. But what causes the effects of volumes? It is their mass. And so it is the mass of these volumes that gives rise to our sensations ... Smooth masses produce virile effects ... The shape of the sphere ... offers the largest surface to the eye, and this lends it majesty."

Four of Boullee's treatise elements further define his concept of Nature: Symmetry, Regularity, Order, and Mass. The Boullee site plans, building plans, sections and eleva-

tions all contain these four features which are found in the 'true beauty' and 'perfection' of Nature.

The Saarinen projects, when considered singularly, are consistently symmetrical, regular and ordered. The lone exception appears to be the site plan of the Concordia Senior College in Fort Wayne, Indiana. At no time does the Saarinen treatise specifically mention symmetry, regularity or order. And certainly no critical review of his work investigates any sort of consistency or regularity in Saarinen's work. Yet these concerns are obviously elemental parts of his approach.

Impressions of Expressions

BOULLEE:

"The purpose of architecture is to produce an 'expressive picture.'

"At this season nature's work is done; everything is the image of perfection; everything has acquired a clearly defined form that is full-blown, accurate and pure. Outlines are clear and distinct; their maturity gives them noble, majestic proportions; their bright, vivid colours have acquired all their brilliance. The earth is decked out with all its riches and lavishes them on our gaze. The depth of the light enhances our impressions; its effects are both vivid and dazzling. All is radiant!

"I tried to find a composition made up of the effect of Shadows."

"And finally there was a ray of hope when I recalled the sombre or mysterious effects that I had observed in the forest and the various impressions they had made on me. I perceived that if any means existed of putting the ideas that preoccupied me into effect, it must lie in the way light was filtered into the Temple."

SAAVINEN:

Honest expression of structure:

"The principle of structure has moved in a curious way over this century from being "structural honesty" to "expression of structure" and finally to "structural expressionism." To express structure is not an end in itself, it is only when structure can contribute to the total and to the other principles that it becomes important. The Yale Hockey Rink and the TWA terminal are examples of this."

The expression of the building:

"When I approach an architectural problem, I try to think out the real significance of the problem. What is the essence of the problem and how can the total structure capture that essence? How can the whole building convey emotionally the purpose and meaning of the building? ... The conveying in architecture of significant meaning is part of the inspirational purpose of architecture."

For Boulee, I believe "expressive" means to 'serve as a sign' and to 'be full of expression; forcible, significant.' (Webster's Dictionary) "Architecture" was ultimately about two-dimensional, pictorial evocations, not three-dimensional structures. He abstracted Nature and architecture, and then, through the manipulation of perfect scale, form, surface, and light, attempted to evoke emotion and awe.

His "architecture parlant" was a language which became a narrative. Boulee's "architecture" was the first to understand that architecture could function like the other arts – as an expressive medium (Senkevitch). It "speaks" through the appropriation and development of signs – signs of perfection (sphere), signs of death (pyramid), etc. We are awed both by the medium and the message.

This narrative was further enriched by Boullée's painterly technique of applied shadow across immense surface planes – "the architecture of shadows." These sublime emotions are expressed by the often-abrupt placement of pure objects in isolation. The cloud-swept skies of the "heavens" leave the lonely figures to be dwarfed by the architecture and the cosmos.

Boullée attempted to create a 'felt,' not a 'reasoned' architecture (Pevsner.) At Newton's Cenotaph, the form evokes function – a tomb for the demystifier of the Heavens – and emotion – through the use of shadow and large blank surfaces, and the sheer size of the perfect sphere.

For *Saarinen*, 'expression' carries different meanings. In its simplest sense, the 'expression' of the glowing red, orange, yellow, tangerine, deep red, light blue and dark blue, gray and black brick walls of the General Motors Technical Center creates an emotional power in the otherwise neutral corporate campus. The 'expression of structure' begins at the Berkshire Music Center and continues in Irwin Miller's Columbus, Indiana residence.

This develops into 'structural expression,' defined as 'showing the character or feeling of structure.' For example, at Yale University's Ingalls Ice Arena, the swooping shape of the tremendous parabolic arch structure suggests to the hockey player that he, "Go, Go, Go!" And at the TWA Flight Center at the John F. Kennedy Airport in New York, the concrete vaults attempt to convey the feeling of flight, of uplift, or in Saarinen's own words, "to counteract the earthbound feeling."

And at times, this becomes 'structural exaggeration.' Where the structural considerations, while being a key component of the initial concept, soon become dominated by aesthetic concerns, forcing structural considerations to

respond. The Jefferson National Expansion Memorial started as a pure catenary curve. An additional forty feet of height was added when Saarinen became concerned with the Arch's reflection in the Mississippi River. So the pure catenary curve became a weighted catenary curve (Campbell).

MIT's Kresge Auditorium was inspired by thin-shell concrete work being done by Felix Candela and others. However, as the building's perimeter was being designed, the edge conditions created the need for the addition of supporting edge beams. Technically speaking, the dome is no longer a pure thin-shell concrete structure (Tripeny). And finally, at the Dulles International Airport outside Washington, D.C.:

"This roof ... is like a huge, continuous hammock suspended between concrete trees. It is made of light suspension-bridge cables between which concrete panels of the roof deck fit. The concrete piers are sloped outward to counteract the pull of the cables. But we exaggerated and dramatized this outward slope as well as the wide compressive flange at the rear of the columns to give the colonnade a dynamic and soaring look as well as a stately and dignified one." (author's emphasis)

EERO SAARINEN

The structural reasoning behind the columns is altered by "exaggerated" aesthetic concerns.

Architectural historians provide us with another view of the expressionistic tendencies of Saarinen. Fletcher maintains that Eero "never ceased to seek new avenues of expression, structural techniques, and materials." Fleming, Honour and Pevsner state that the Saarinen works are "admirable for their variety and their sense of visual and structural experiment."

Kostof believes that "Saarinen's approach was to isolate an idiom or a shape that would be symbolic of the program at hand." *Stern* calls Saarinen, "always the intuitive artist, much to the shock of his more conservative contemporaries." And Richards states that, "his buildings exhibit a range of attitudes from the most severely classical to a very personal romantic expressionism."

While these statements are based in some kind of expressionistic explanation of Saarinen's approach and work, their inconsistencies provide a divergence of opinion that we do not see in similar summary statements regarding Boullee. For example, while Kostof, Trachtenberg, Richards, and Senkevitch describe Boullee's achieving 'powerful emotional effects through its use of pure geometric forms, endless repetition of similar elements, and dramatic lighting' (Trachtenberg), we see for Saarinen some divergence of opinion. This includes issues of endless searches, variety, experiment, symbolism, intuition, and the 'agenda' of the historian reviewing Saarinen's career.

Time[lessness]

SAARINEN:

Awareness of our time

"The awareness of the thinking and the technology of our time – is for me an ever-present challenge."

For Boullee, I believe the concern is for timelessness – time immemorial; infinite, cosmic time. For the viewer, time stands still, and in that moment, we are connected to the power of birth and death, of the finite and the infinite.

For Saarinen, 'Awareness of our time' refers to thinking and technology. It is absolutely about time NOW – of our time this moment – and the need of our architecture to reflect its time. This is a key treatise element for Saarinen, one we can

see practiced in his material and technology investigations on the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, the TWA Flight Center, the Dulles International Airport Mobile Lounges, and the breakthrough reflective glass of Holmdel, New Jersey's Bell Telephone Research Laboratories.

About Functionalism

BOULLEE:

"A building can be considered perfect when its decoration corresponds to the kind of building to which it is applied and when its layout corresponds to its function."

SAARINEN:

Functional integrity

"A new architecture could be created just by following the needs – the program."

I believe many individuals will be surprised at the concern for 'function' expressed in the treatises of both architects. Underlying the expressive nature of their work, both Boullee and Saarinen strive to create functional buildings. I do believe, however, that this notion of 'function' has, once again, different meanings for the two architects.

For Boullee, this concern has to do with a 'Natural' function, a specific order and relationship specified by Nature, by the cosmos. As defined by Webster's Dictionary, this has to do with "the normal or characteristic action of anything; especially, any of the natural, specialized actions of an organ or part of an animal or plant."

When Boullee discusses some overriding relationship between 'layout' and 'function' he is not referring to the relationship between the public bathrooms and the main entrance at Newton's Cenotaph.

Again, he is concerned with the connection of the building to the whole – the whole of the cosmos, the whole of human experience. This is the 'function' of the 'layout' – to reinforce and expand our self-perceived connection to Nature and the universe. His is a very expressive definition of 'function,' one more in keeping with the expanded 'functionalism' of Louis Sullivan.

For Saarinen, on the other hand, 'function' has to do with "a special duty or performance required of a person or thing in the course of work or activity" (Webster's). This, I believe, is an unfortunate version of the misused Louis Sullivan quote, "Form follows Function." Saarinen believes that a 'new architecture' can be created by following the building program. This definition has to do with efficiency, functionality, and building plan. Saarinen starts with a highly efficient plan, and his expressiveness springs forward from this base.

We can see here a very basic and powerful difference between Boullée and Saarinen. Boullée has created an all-encompassing world-view, one in which architecture is but a part of a general philosophy through which the architect understands and interprets culture and the cosmos. Saarinen, on the other hand, is limited by his lack of a general philosophy. He has his 'architecture,' which he practices in every waking moment. He is so competitive with the work, the particular project, and his fellow practitioners, that he is ultimately consumed by his work. This may one of the core reasons as to the apparent divergence in his projects – there may be no underlying philosophy upon which he could build a vision of the world and the place of his architecture within it.

A Sense of Essence

BOULLEE:

"Architectural imagery is created when a project has a Specific Character which generates the required impact.

"When an Architect intends to begin work on a project, he should first of all concentrate on understanding its every essential aspect. Once he has fully grasped such aspects, then he will perhaps succeed in giving the appropriate character to his subject."

SAARINEN:

Carrying a concept to its ultimate conclusion

"Once one embarks on a concept for a building, this concept has to be exaggerated and overstated and repeated in every part of its interior, so that wherever you are, inside or outside, the building sings with the same message. That is why, for instance, the interior of the TWA terminal had to be the way it is ... the principle of the total unity of a building."

Both architects search for the 'essence of the problem; the essential aspect.' They strive to identify and develop the specific character of a project. This is done through concerns for the real significance of the problem, understanding every aspect of the problem, and defining the purpose and meaning of the building. What is the ultimate cathedral, ultimate chapel, essential commemorative memorial, essential jet airport, the maximum palace, the maximum chancellor? They are searching for ultimate truths regarding specific design problems.

(Re:)Models

BOULLEE:

"The Egyptians have left us some famous models ... We have observed that the ancients used surrounding walls as a device to add dignity to their monuments."

Boullee also discusses 'famous models' and refers to the Egyptian pyramids as a reference for his own pyramidal cenotaphs.

In a purely speculative mode, it is possible to hypothesize several Saarinen 'models.' At General Motors, it was Mies' IIT scheme; at TWA it may have been Utzon's Sydney Opera House (Saarinen led the competition jury); for the initial Deere scheme (an inverted concrete pyramid), which was quickly rejected, it may have been Niemeyer's design for a Venezuelan art museum; and at the University of Chicago Woodward Dining Hall, it was definitely his own Milwaukee County War Memorial. I have been told that Eero "loved every building; every building" (Jacob). It is conceivable, and almost inevitable, that he would have used some of these as models for his own projects.


Most of these 'models' are 'reference types' in that they 'refer' to particular buildings, or particular kinds of buildings. As a rule, such references function as specific guides to designing. They are used to generate or justify a 'leading idea' that 'triggers' a sequence of design moves (Schon).

Observations

This comparative analysis of the treatises of Etienne-Louis Boullee and Eero Saarinen has provided a very good basis for a better understanding of the work of both architects. I started this project based primarily on Kostof's

introductory quote, with some sense that the particular projects of these architects (Newtons' Cenotaph and Saarinen's TWA Flight Center) would make interesting comparative study subjects.

As I began to seek out the meaning behind the treatise words, however, I began to see great differences in the words and the intentions of the two architects. In fact, beyond the shared sheer physicality of some of their projects, we see not only different degrees of philosophical commitment to their vision, but different visions as well. While these visions share a certain basic vocabulary, in point, these shared words reflect very different notions regarding their architecture. 'Nature' or 'nature,' 'expressive' or 'expressionism,' 'timelessness' or 'time,' 'function' or 'program,' it obviously matters, and it is now obviously different.

For there to be any great consistencies between the works and words of the two architects was an early mistaken assumption of mine. Upon greater detailed study, inconsistencies were found between the theoretical statements of Boullee and Saarinen – naturally so. My desire to find the 'patterns within the inconsistencies' is a concept central to my continued research into the design methodology of Eero Saarinen. 

Notes

¹ The pairing of these two architects was attempted to begin research into my doctoral studies on the design methodology of Eero Saarinen. Research completed since 1989 was funded by a grant awarded by the Chicago-based Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts.

² The Work of Eliel Saarinen, Eero's father, has also been compared to Boulees:

"During the same decade, (Eliel) Saarinen devoted a considerable amount of his energies to urban design projects. One of his most impressive plans was for Canberra (1912), for which he won second prize. The early schemes, in particular, with their formal waterways, axes, and grandiose neoclassical buildings approach the monumentality of Etienne-Louis Boulees."

Adolf K. Placzek ed., *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects* (New York: The Free Press, 1972), 627.

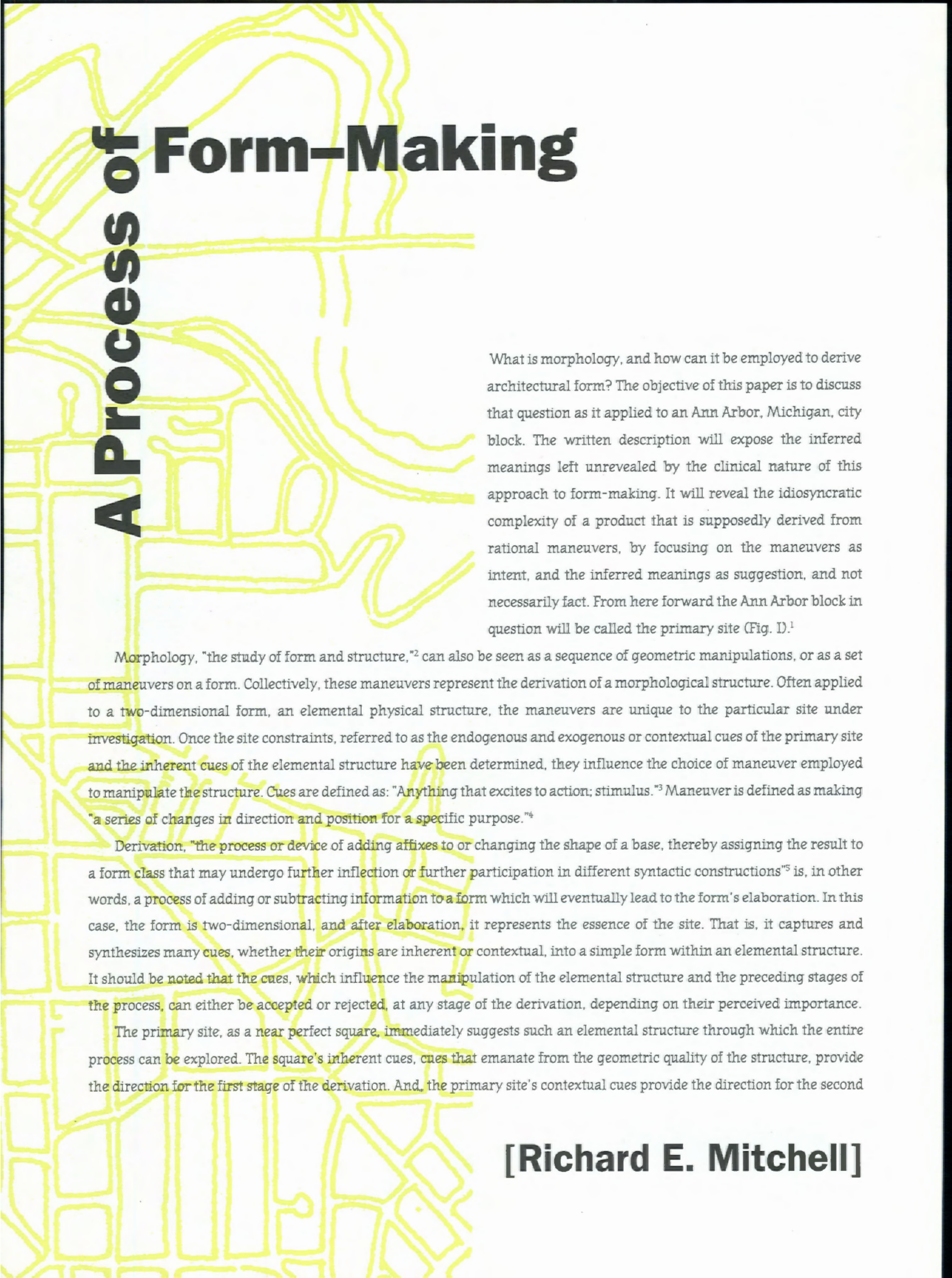
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Fig. I
The project site. Refer to Fig. II to locate the primary site within the larger context

Fig. II
The larger context I. Area enclosed by the dashed line see Fig. II 2. Reduced context to fit within the primary site is noted by the single-hatched line 3. The primary site is noted by the double-hatched line



A Process of Form-Making

What is morphology, and how can it be employed to derive architectural form? The objective of this paper is to discuss that question as it applied to an Ann Arbor, Michigan, city block. The written description will expose the inferred meanings left unrevealed by the clinical nature of this approach to form-making. It will reveal the idiosyncratic complexity of a product that is supposedly derived from rational maneuvers, by focusing on the maneuvers as intent, and the inferred meanings as suggestion, and not necessarily fact. From here forward the Ann Arbor block in question will be called the primary site (Fig. 1).¹

Morphology, "the study of form and structure,"² can also be seen as a sequence of geometric manipulations, or as a set of maneuvers on a form. Collectively, these maneuvers represent the derivation of a morphological structure. Often applied to a two-dimensional form, an elemental physical structure, the maneuvers are unique to the particular site under investigation. Once the site constraints, referred to as the endogenous and exogenous or contextual cues of the primary site and the inherent cues of the elemental structure have been determined, they influence the choice of maneuver employed to manipulate the structure. Cues are defined as: "Anything that excites to action; stimulus."³ Maneuver is defined as making "a series of changes in direction and position for a specific purpose."⁴

Derivation, "the process or device of adding affixes to or changing the shape of a base, thereby assigning the result to a form class that may undergo further inflection or further participation in different syntactic constructions"⁵ is, in other words, a process of adding or subtracting information to a form which will eventually lead to the form's elaboration. In this case, the form is two-dimensional, and after elaboration, it represents the essence of the site. That is, it captures and synthesizes many cues, whether their origins are inherent or contextual, into a simple form within an elemental structure. It should be noted that the cues, which influence the manipulation of the elemental structure and the preceding stages of the process, can either be accepted or rejected, at any stage of the derivation, depending on their perceived importance.

The primary site, as a near perfect square, immediately suggests such an elemental structure through which the entire process can be explored. The square's inherent cues, cues that emanate from the geometric quality of the structure, provide the direction for the first stage of the derivation. And, the primary site's contextual cues provide the direction for the second

[Richard E. Mitchell]

stage of the derivation. The result of these first two stages, when combined, captures the essence of all the selected cues on to the smallest unit of the derivation, the elemental structure. This essence, referred to as the initial stimulus, once overlaid onto the site plan, is evaluated and reevaluated in terms of cues, minimizing some maneuvers and accentuating others, preceding through additional stages of the derivation until a final form, whether three or two-dimensional, emerges (Fig. III). However, these steps alone do not summarize the process as it exists within this derivation.

The process transformed three-dimensional ideas into two-dimensional forms, ideas which stimulated by cues and initially seen as potential incongruities within the site required resolution. Their resolution corresponded to an assigned meaning based on hierarchical relationships between the cues to the primary site, which were consciously assigned to each individual element, operation, and stage of the derivation. The process precluded the enforcement of any architectural or urbanistic ideology prior to the discovery of the site's intrinsic morphological and programmatic structure; that is, the process presumed the existence of an ideal form unique to each derivation. A form, therefore, unique to each derivation, for the site which could only be discovered through a morphological investigation, results in a unique program. This process, in fact, attempts to demonstrate the reversal of most methodologies of design,

which begin with a specific programmatic structure dictating the project's final form.

Here, morphology is seen as the application of a sequence of maneuvers contingent on cues, a process of elaboration, which resulted in a physical product that suggests a design program. Like most artistic endeavors, it is a process which allows for self-expression. It is not, however, a process whose maneuvers, though interchangeable, are unchangeable. The maneuvers develop and are subject to acceptance or rejection, as the process is followed. While, one may argue, such an evolution could lead toward subjectivity, the process appears "objective" due to the specificity of each maneuver.

This "objective" subjectivity is represented through the ability to control the overall direction of the derivation, through will. It is evident in the graphically recorded decision-making process which establishes the selection of one particular maneuver, within each stage of the process, over another. It is also evident in the choice of cues allowed to influence the selection of the maneuvers. Will, the ability to control the derivation, is in its idiosyncratic nature an integral part of self-expression and therefore of this process of form-making.

As the product is ultimately judged by its form, the physical product, control and guidance of the process through will justifies the means as a viable approach to

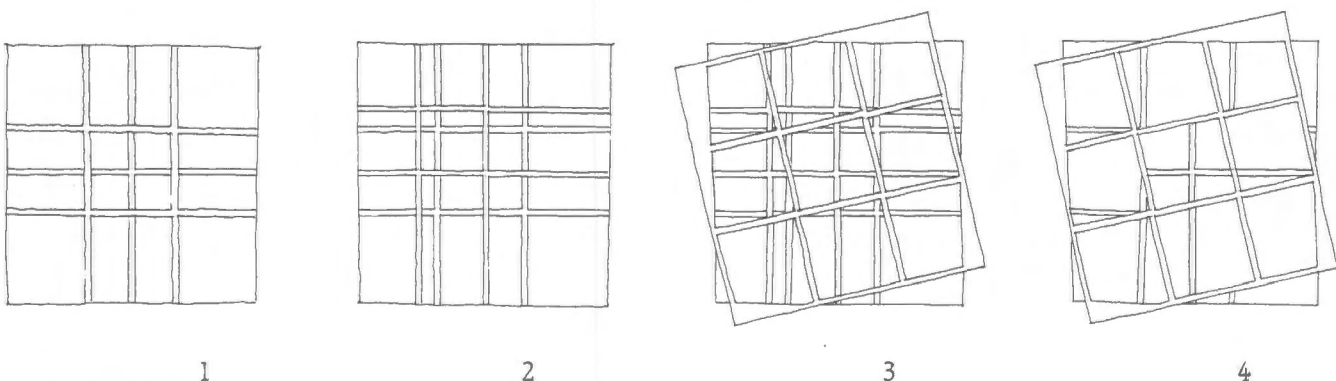


Fig. III
The derivation of the initial stimulus 1. The inherent cues of the elemental structure. 2. The overlay of the reduced context. Refer to Fig. II. 3. The overlay of the university grid 4. The initial stimulus

form-making. The ability to guide the development of the process, through the selection of maneuvers, is then of paramount importance. It is the foundation of the process. Without the discerning selection and application of maneuvers, there cannot be a process or a product; consequently, there could not be a morphological program to critique. By this, I mean an architectural or urbanistic program that results from the consideration of contextual cues and not from a pre-determined program provided by a client.

Furthermore, it is exactly this aspect of the process which allows each designer to formulate and employ different maneuvers, which in turn precludes the cataloging of all possible maneuvers. Morphology is a design methodology which can result in an infinite number of three-dimensional forms; and necessarily, in order to guide a derivation, a method of differentiation between the relative hierarchies of cues evolves, similar to the "objective" subjective development of maneuvers. This method of differentiation includes line thickness, grid size and location on a vertical overlay scale. With this development, the derivation can be explored thoroughly in an "objective" fashion.

Stage One: Inherent and Endogenous Cues

Before the contextual cues can influence the elemental structure, the cues within the structure itself must be explored. What are the cues inherent in the square, the elemental structure? A square, as a non-directional form, possesses an absolute center, and can be divided into two, four, or more equal parts, with each division suggesting a different hierarchical structure. This structure lies within the square's four axes, two orthogonal and two triangular. The process of derivation, however, as it exists within this investigation, relies on rectangularity and not triangulation, which

results in two and not four axes. For example, with two equal orthogonal divisions, the square possesses two rectangles each with a long axis and a short axis. With four equal divisions, the square possesses four smaller squares each with two undifferentiated axes. With nine equal divisions, the square possesses nine squares each with two undifferentiated axes; however, the difference here is the uniqueness of the center square. It is "squarely" centered, and the only square that does not touch a border of the initial square. Its location, may therefore, suggest a greater hierarchical importance than the surrounding squares, a fact quite enigmatic in its simplicity.⁶

And, what are the endogenous cues of the primary site? As mentioned before, the primary site is centrally located along the East Liberty commercial spine, between the University of Michigan and Main street. The result is, East Liberty, a major east-west pedestrian and vehicular thoroughfare which connects these two areas, takes on the character of a spine or datum to which all the contextual cues relate (Fig. IV). The endogenous cues within the primary site are: an outdoor plaza, parking lots, a public library, the Kempf House, several apartment buildings and several small houses, a few of which have been converted into small business offices, the Community News Center which houses a book and magazine shop, offices, and an educational center. These inherent and endogenous cues stimulated the first stage of the derivation.

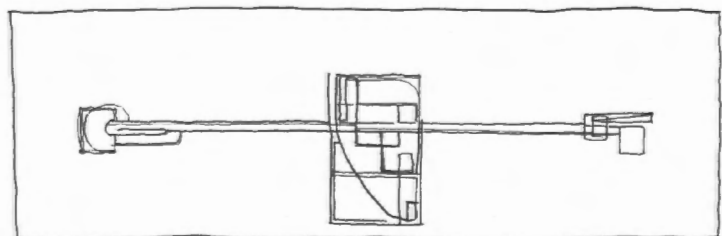


Fig. IV
The relationship of the three potential sites to the datum.

Stage Two: Exogenous Cues

At this point, the inherent and endogenous cues of the primary site, that have been accepted, have been exhausted. Attention is therefore turned toward the exogenous cues. For example, the site surrounding the primary site, which in addition to the primary site, forms a square, was reduced to dimensionally fit within the elemental structure (Fig. II). The selection of the area to be reduced to fit within the elemental structure was determined simply by my awareness of its existence. The idea here, and in fact throughout, was to allow the primary site to characterize the plan organization of the surrounding context. This maneuver of reducing the surrounding site to fit within the primary site is termed reflection: through reflecting the plan organization of the context, the primary site becomes inextricably and uniquely, though tenuously, related to a portion of the whole context. This particular maneuver can be referred to as a form of contextualism. In fact, this entire process can be referred to as a form of contextualism. "Narrowly described Contextualism is the derivation of form from its context. It depends upon and extends a preexisting form order."⁷ It is, in effect, a method of grounding the ensuing derivation to a series of maneuvers whose cues undeniably exist within the surrounding context.

The following groupings of exogenous cues, and the actions that each of them stimulate, will be discussed in greater detail later in the paper. First, the most immediate exogenous cues to the primary site are its relationship to: East William street, Division street, Fifth Avenue, East Liberty, the central business district, historic buildings, the University of Michigan, and Main Street. Second, the primary site's location suggests a point of transition between two areas, the university and the town, middle ground

where both can be unified symbolically. It is a site where neither area completely dominates the other, where one is equally aware of both. Which, if so, in responding to the contextual cues, produces a form which unifies both areas within the primary site, the elemental structure. Perhaps, one could even say that the primary site appears to exist between two diametrically opposed entities. The University, where the pursuit of theoretical understanding takes precedence over practice, and the town where practice subordinates theory. However, in short, the primary site exists prominently along a spine, the East Liberty commercial datum, between two polar opposites. Third, it exists within a system of geographical mapping which somewhat ruthlessly demarcates along a one square mile grid, a realization which, perhaps, serves to reinforce the choice of the square as the appropriate geometric structure for the derivation. Finally, there appears to be no other site immediately adjacent to the primary site with equal dimension; so relatively speaking, the primary site stands alone. These were the exogenous observations which stimulated the second stage of the process. Without the recognition and selection of these cues, in addition to deciding on their relative importance to each other, the morphological form-making process, of considering and executing maneuvers, could not have begun.

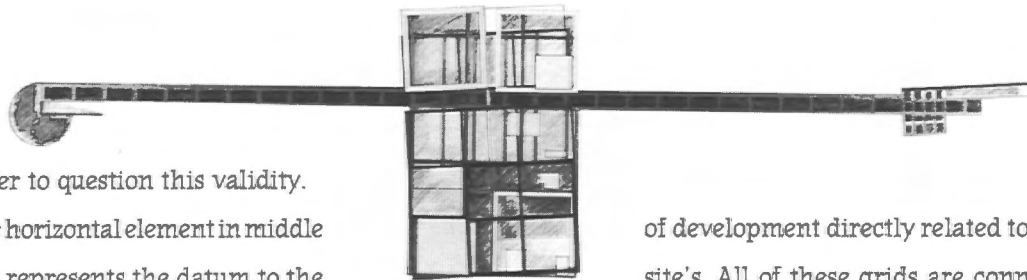
Drawing One

After analyzing the site for one month, a parti was prepared to represent the three-dimensional ideas that would subsequently guide the derivation of the proposal. Drawing One depicts this parti while underscoring the primary site's relationship to its context. In effect, it questions the validity of the given primary site as the most appropriate site to be concerned with. Other sites appear

equally valid and are therefore recognized in the composition in order to question this validity.

East Liberty, the horizontal element in middle of the composition, represents the datum to the primary site. It connects the primary site to the university and to the town. First Street, noted by the circle on the left side of drawing one, is the end of the datum; with the University's Burton Tower, a small square on the far right side of the drawing, at the other end of the datum. Main Street, noted between the two squares to the right of First Street, constitutes a cross axis to the datum. As the composition developed it became apparent that there existed not one but three separate areas, each of which could benefit from the concentrated application of the process. These areas, the downtown circle, the University's Burton Tower, and the primary site, all related strongly to the datum. So much so, that the datum's prominence and commonality with the other areas defined its relative importance. It, therefore, became the true primary site, the focus of the derivation.

The initial stimulus, overlaid onto the primary site, shows three grid structures: the nine square grid represents the reduction of Michigan's one square mile divisions; the four square grid which is skewed to the west by approximately 3.5 degrees relative to the organization of the town, represents the plan organization of the university. The influence of the university on the site supersedes all other influences, and therefore its grid, as the most important, is graphically placed on top of the others. Another four square grid, which is contained within the skewed grid, represents the inherent cues of the elemental structure and is extended



toward the north to suggest a pattern

of development directly related to the primary site's. All of these grids are connected by the datum, the true primary site, the cohesive element of the composition. Three polygonal areas, which will be referred to as influence zones, act as the background to the composition and are allowed to intersect the primary site. They represent areas of the context which will in some way be affected by the derivation within the primary site, and the site immediately north of East Liberty, several existing buildings of either historical or utilitarian merit were retained in the drawing, leading to the removal of grid lines that overlapped retained buildings. The objective was to locate the areas with the least site interference, by determining where the least grid removal had occurred. Finally, a process of determining relative hierarchies between the grids led to their varied line thickness, width, size and location on a vertical scale, which was explored during the production of the drawing.

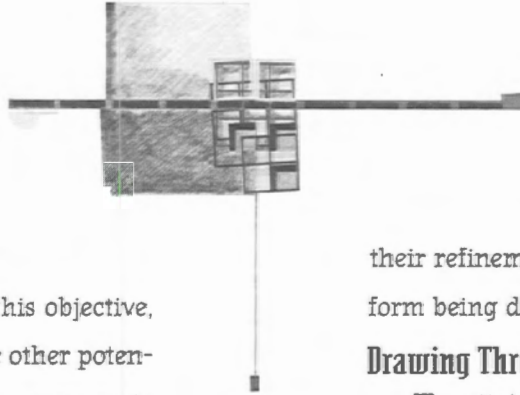
There was one major observation at this stage of the derivation which informed the next stage, which was recognizing that the size of the conceptualized grids would have to be reduced to achieve a manageable architectural scale. To achieve this end, the concept of reflection came to mind again, where grid structures exist within each other, suggesting a visual depth in the composition.

Drawing Two

The concern here was to soften the visual impact of the first drawing, to move the viewer's eye slowly in a sideways motion. The spacing between the vertical elements of the East Liberty datum was increased to achieve this objective, facilitating a closer examination of the other potential sites of concern. The concern was in response to an intuitive feeling that too many cues had been utilized discordantly. If compositional harmony could be achieved, then the resulting form would also be harmonious. The influence of certain cues would have to be reduced, while other cues may have to be reinforced. The response to this concern is most recognizable in the reduction of the grid area around Burton Tower, and in the change of spacing between the vertical elements of the East Liberty datum. The zones of influence have also been given a greater importance by allowing them to affect the primary and northern sites, in order to further contextualize the derivation.

The initial stimulus was reduced from 1/16" scale to 1/32" scale, and overlaid onto the primary site as a way of reducing the scale of the entire composition while remaining true to the initial stimulus. The separation between the East Liberty datum from Michigan's one square mile grid was reevaluated, since the actual grid continues uninterrupted except in the case of geographical formations. The University grid is deformed on its lower southwest corner, due to the presence of the existing library.

The reductive quality of this drawing was necessary to control the direction of the derivation. Without it, the objective of the investigation may have been confused, through the discordant use of cues. The drawing captures



the essence of the initial cues, demonstrating how compositional control influences the direction of maneuvers and allows for

their refinement, which should in turn refine the form being derived.

Drawing Three

The attainment of visual balance and depth is attempted here by extending the reflective process to the northern site. The datum is shortened, becoming more prominent within the composition, due to the need to maintain thru traffic at both the Main Street and State Street intersection. The vertical rhythm of the datum is further refined to an interval comparable to Michigan's one square mile grid to add a visual feeling of coherence. Note how in order to achieve hierarchy within the reflective maneuvers, they are organized on a vertical scale analogous to the overlaying of grids. The datum prevails in this stage of the composition as the true site. And the derivation begins to resemble an arcade. The university remains dominant in the composition, reflecting higher on the scale, growing on itself; while, the town remains subservient, reflecting lower on the scale, growing within itself.

The completion of this drawing coincides with the studio's first major "working" review with outside critics. The critics included Professor Emmanuel-George Vakalo, Professor Kent Hubbell, and Professor Erhard Göll, a visiting critic from Vienna, Austria.

Some of the comments were as follows:

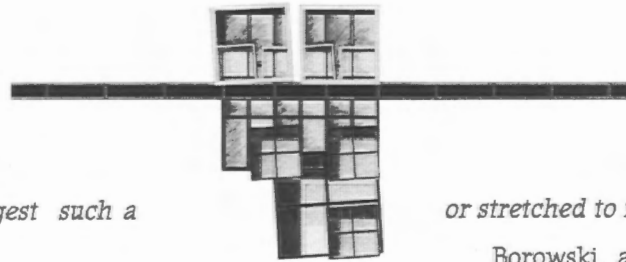
Professor Göll: The drawings seem to suggest housing as the central device in an urban composition. Can housing, in such a location, as opposed to commercial business

structures, serve as the generator of the scheme? Does housing adequately stabilize the core of the composition? Does the derivation necessarily have to suggest such a conclusion?

What was most interesting about Göll's comments were that he immediately perceived how the derivation began. That is, accepting one takes into consideration the "objective" subjective nature of maneuver selection, cue recognition, and hierarchy, the entire process began with the intent of working toward a morphological process that would eventually result in a mixed use scheme with housing as the central element. If this process "objectively" reveals the morphological structure of a particular site, how does it do so when its first step was to consider housing for retired faculty members? The project was introduced to the studio as a mixed use program with housing for retired faculty members as the central element! How does one look for a preexisting morphological structure while creating one? What in fact occurred in this derivation was the determination of the relative areas of a predetermined program, which is quite different from what was intended. The process was seemingly introduced as a way of discovering the appropriate program for a given site in its totality, and not simply as a way of determining the relative programmatic areas of a predetermined program for a given site.

Carol Borowski: *How do you justify the curved areas in your scheme when all else is treated orthogonally? What rules determined their presence? What determines the curve's arc?*

Professor Vakalo: *Curves are more than simply rejecting an established rule, they also respond to external and*



internal influences. One can think of curves by considering them in the folds of skin in the hand; that is, it is curled to grasp or stretched to receive.

Borowski, a participant in the studio, commented on an area of the composition, the nature of curves, which reflected cultural concerns. A great deal of time was spent considering the role of the circle, and by extension curves, as the primary element of a derivation. Any maneuver that pertained to a square could conceivably be transposed to pertain to a circle. The reason for considering this dual development was to allow for the discussion of the cultural role of the square and the circle in a derivation which, in its initial stages, lead toward representing the non-existence of cultural bias in architecture. Some of the ideas that led to the synthesis of the circle and square as one elemental form were derivatives from a project I prepared while at Cornell University, where the intersection and disruption of the "line of civilization" or orthogonal shape represented the intrusion of Western culture into Eastern and Southern cultural traditions. Other elements for example, the university in its pursuit of scientific and academic truths could have been represented by the circle; while the town, for obvious reasons, could be represented by the square. All of these ideas are encompassed by Leonardo Da Vinci's depiction of the perfect man, drawn in a circle which is enclosed by a square, a Western notion of perfect order. This drawing was often referred to during this stage of the derivation.

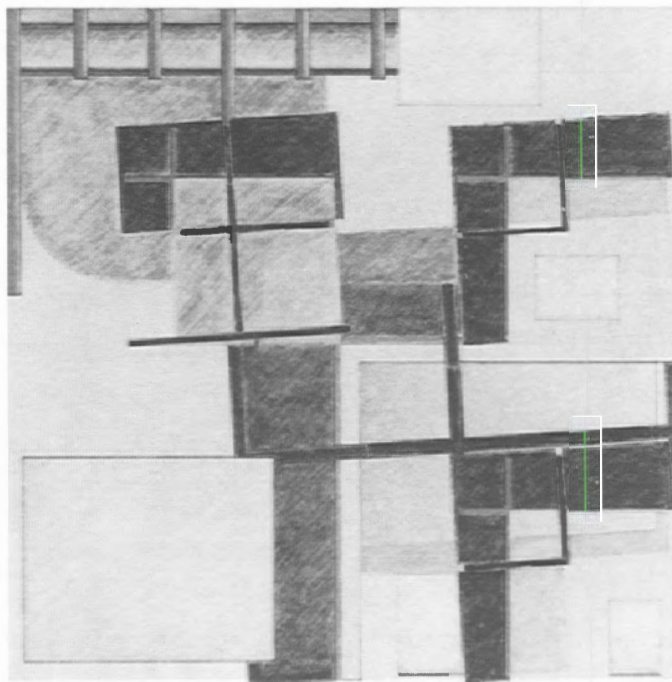
Professor Hubbell: *In my estimation, an additional level of validity is required to convince the critics that the derivation is firmly grounded in the Ann Arbor context.*

Somehow, you must show how the initial stimulus of the composition was influenced by, say, historical buildings, or other buildings of importance. The derivation must somehow be rooted in the history of Ann Arbor, a good example of what I am talking about is the Wexner Center, by Eisenman, where existing buildings are consumed and integrated into the new composition.

In order for this method of form-making to be successful the external influences had to be easily recognizable. They, the cues, had to be an integral part of the entire process, and readily accessible to the basic concerns of those with an interest in the project.

Drawing Four

An interesting change occurred in my thinking here, which was directly attributable to the studio dynamics. In an attempt to present a product comparable in scope to the rest of the studio participants, concern with the datum as the primary site was abandoned to develop a composition



similar in scope to those of my colleagues. Drawing Four speaks to this abandonment. It represents solely the given primary site, while including fragments of the larger, now abandoned, site.

At this point of the process, all external cues that were of importance are presumably within the composition through the initial, stimulus which has been the foundation of the derivation. Representing recognizable architectural form became the chief concern. Previously, the derivation focused on representing the progress of the form-making process, with particular attention to notions of compositional balance, visual depth, and motion. While, throughout the process, I maintained that architectural form was evident in each of the previous drawings, it was not until this drawing was made that a more recognizable sense of scale and form developed. The selective subtraction of grids, which was once in response to buildings retained on the site, is now in response to guiding the derivation toward recognizable architectural forms. Extraneous grids were reconceptualized, as in the case of the datum, or removed all together, as in the one square mile grid.

This project presents itself in an unconventional way, one which requires the viewer to consider different evaluation criteria. In essence, one is being asked to comment on the morphological structure of this derivation, on the plausibility of abstract manipulations resulting in meaningful architectural form, and not on the specifics of architectural space and language. One is being asked to comment on how a concept eventually reveals itself and how these drawings, when presented as a whole, unequivocally discussed a continuum of change, evolution, morphology.

Concluding Remarks

I would compare morphology to playing a guitar, where striking one string is often insufficient to produce a harmonious melody, several strings must be played; likewise, when deriving a morphological structure, one cue is often insufficient to contextualize the derivation. In order for the derivation to harmoniously relate to the context one must, like the strings of a guitar, discriminantly play as many cues as possible to produce a harmonious sound. The power to conceptualize cues into maneuvers, producing a product, is therefore the power to manipulate the form-making process. Conversely, the use of too many cues, that is the absence of the designers will, leads to a discordant product. Cues require careful selection and employment.

If the initial stimulus had been a circle or triangle the eventual derivation, not to mention the meanings associated with each stage of the derivation, could have been completely different in character. For example, one may have indulged in Wrightian explorations of circles and triangles.⁸ Whatever the case, the characterization of the context into the primary site need not result only in plan relationships, and the cues mentioned throughout this process do not preclude the existence of others. If the derivation goes beyond a two dimensional investigation, if it goes beyond plan conceptualization, it can be extended to sectional, axonometric, and detail developments. Eventually, it could develop into an architectural vocabulary unique to the particular derivation process.

These drawings, produced through a heightened sensory and intellectual awareness, are evidence of a process, of inherent and contextual cues, of architectural and urbanistic ideas, of compositional relationships, of my will, and lastly of how an icon or symbol can be completely

unrelated to its meaning. They suggest the complexity of form-making, where maneuvers evolve idiosyncratically and simultaneously with the derivation. They represent a cathartic process, where colliding grids represent the changing nature of personality, mood, discipline and imagination. They represent the creative environment in which they were conceived, where both informed and uninformed criticism influenced the derivation. The drawings rest perilously close to representing this and little more, while purporting to represent a process of form-making called morphology.

Notes

¹ To locate primary site within the larger context refer to Fig. II

² *Webster's English Dictionary*.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ I should note that the division of the elemental structure into nine units was based on my impression of the primary site as being "centrally" located between the university and the town; therefore, I utilized only those inherent cues which immediately resulted in a "centrally" located square within the elemental structure in order to reflect this impression. Refer to step one of Fig. III.

⁷ Steven Hurtt, "The Cornell Urban Design Studio 1963-1982." *Cornell Journal of Architecture: Conjectures on Urban Form*, Vol. 2, (Rizzoli, New York, 1982), 67.

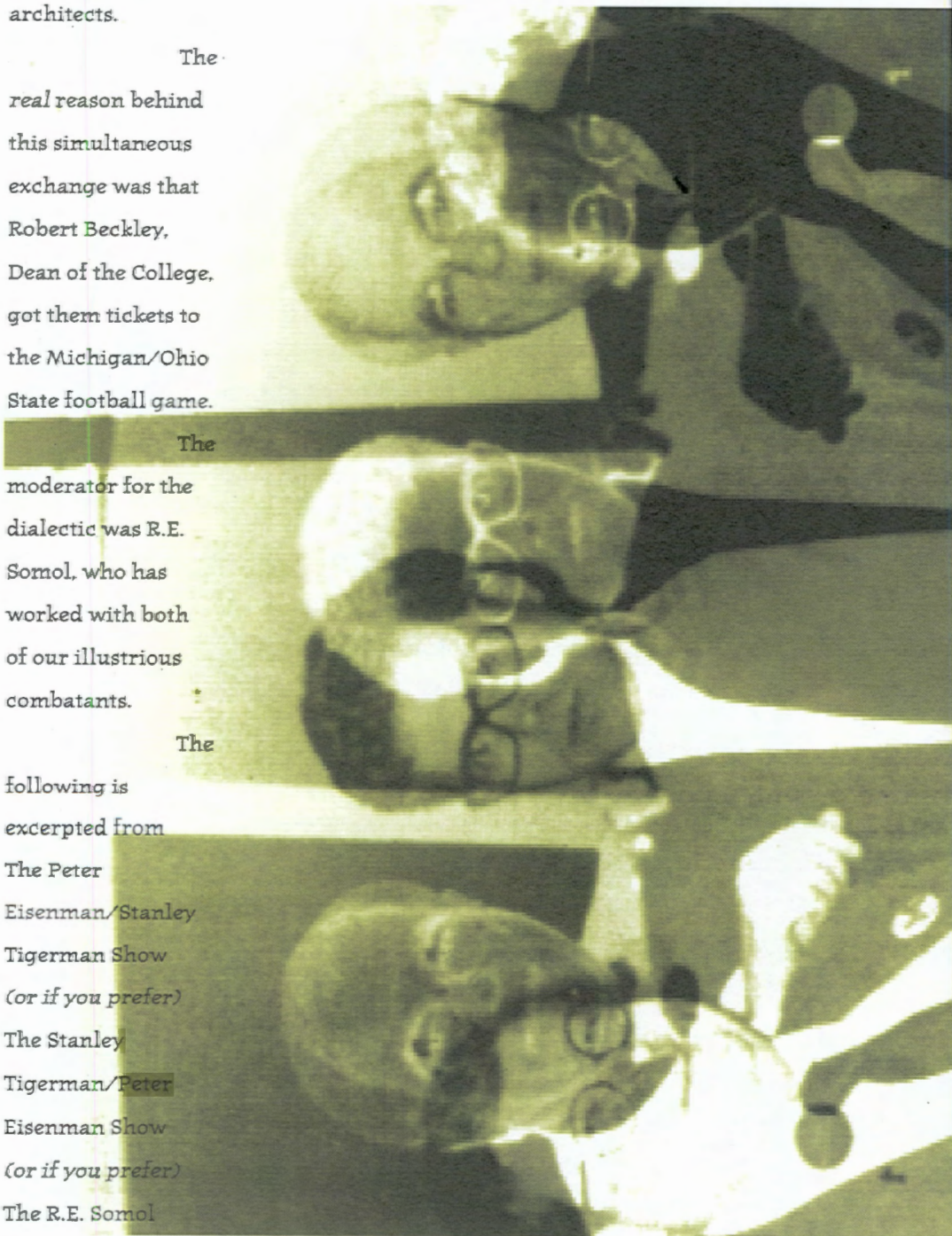
⁸ I am referring to the San-Marcos-In-The-Desert project, New Chandler, Arizona, 1927, and the Ralph Jester House, Palos Verdes, California, 1938.

On
22 November 1991
the College of
Architecture &
Urban Planning
played host to a
debate/discussion
between two very
well known
architects.

The
real reason behind
this simultaneous
exchange was that
Robert Beckley,
Dean of the College,
got them tickets to
the Michigan/Ohio
State football game.

The
moderator for the
dialectic was R.E.
Somol, who has
worked with both
of our illustrious
combatants.

The
following is
excerpted from
The Peter
Eisenman/Stanley
Tigerman Show
(or if you prefer)
The Stanley
Tigerman/Peter
Eisenman Show
(or if you prefer)
The R.E. Somol
Show
(or)...



Vices Versus Verses

(or Vice Versa)

abstraction
and
conceptual
architectural
notation

Eisenman

Tigerman

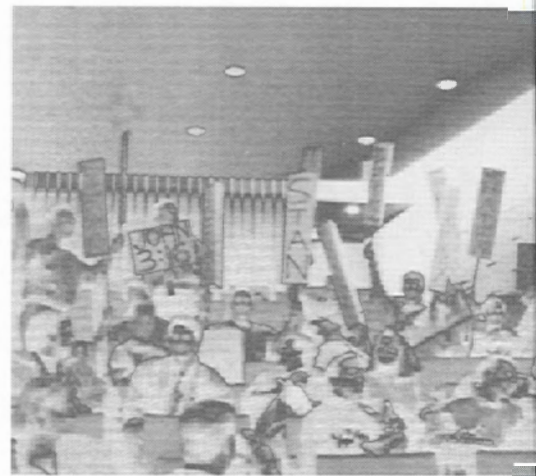
history,
narrative,
and
representation

R.E. Somol

{RE}: I was a little bit hesitant to accept this honor given that both of these are my *padrones* so no matter what happens between them in the debate there's going to be one loser and that's the moderator (me). I am indebted to both of


What I'd like to begin with, besides their friendship and affinities, is to get to what the differences might be. Despite their various evolutions over the last 20 years, it seems that what is hard for me to believe is that they were friends given their work and different affiliations. On the one hand there seemed to be an interest in history, narrative, and representation [Tigerman], and on the other hand an interest in abstraction and conceptual architectural notation [Eisenman]. Stanley likes to pose it as optimism and innocence and Peter has been characterized as the pessimistic one. So I'd like to see what kinds of trajectories they see from that fairly radical difference; also the kind of politics of social responsibility or social form that Stanley's

articulating more so now vs. the politics of form. And finally, the issues of passion or the self on the one hand and process and the object on the other; or between a kind of pluralism on one side vs. weakness on the other. I'll open with their responses to what I would characterize on the one hand as textual healing vs. a practice of the unsafe text.



Stanley Tigerman

{ST}: I was writing down some things as you were talking, trying to ferret out differences between Peter and I and so I wrote down words like "distance vs. the collapse of distance," or "healing vs. pain." You could induce a lot of words but then I realized that the key word was "versus." In other words, the key is the "rift" between our positions which establishes poles, or setting up a dialectic; an opposition in a certain way. In other words, seeking out the difference between us for the purpose one assumes of elucidating or illuminating certain characteristics, let's say, which we both perceive things differently. I'm surprised you asked the question already, because the idea of setting up the thing as a dialectic, a rift, a cleave between this or that is kind of an old fashioned way of beginning the discussion.



RE: This is good because Stanley actually set up this arrangement so I get to be accused of setting up the dialectic.

RE: That's the food chain of architecture.

ST: Ah, what I like is the beginning of paranoia.

ST: Stanley set it up because Peter called him and said, "Wouldn't it be great if Somol was the moderator?" So, of course, Stanley set it up. And then Peter said, "And you call Beckley." That's the set-up, right?

Peter Eisenman (PE): Let me just say something so that it's not a debate between you two.

PE: My sense is that it could easily be a debate of Stanley and Peter vs. Robert, because there's more distance between where Stanley and I stand together opposed to Robert than one might expect. Because first of all, it's a generational thing, and secondly because Robert is not an architect and he's had no architectural training. One tends to realize that architecture has changed enormously. In other words the leading practitioners in terms of critical thought in architecture today probably could be said to be

non-architects and that's a very interesting change. This could not have happened as late as ten years ago, I would say this happened during the 80s and one doesn't know what significance this has for the 90s. But certainly I think one of the dominant issues is that professional practicing architects no longer are seen to control their own discourse. I think that there's more that Stanley and I have in common, and that's why we happen to be here, and to try and set up false oppositions between us might not be a useful proposition. The real issue, in architectural thought, and I think all three of us deal with architectural thought, is the fact that Robert Somol could be at either one of these chairs. The thought would be that practicing architects may be farther from the possibility of critical thought and understanding their discipline than others.

I got into a debate with Mark Wigley the other night, another one of these young theoretical people who in fact, although trained as an architect, is not what I would call an architect. And I think what's interesting is that there is a turf fight right now between those people who believe themselves to be practicing architects, that is in whatever form that may be, who believe they understand what architecture is and the culture of architecture; and those people from the 'outside' who assume that architecture is like any other discourse, and therefore can involve other critical theories and discursive thought; and import them into architecture. I think that is the thing for me that crystallizes the three of us here, I think we represent an ideological difference as to what the value of built work is vs. critical work.

...architecture
is about
discourse—it
always has
been. And I
think that the
great
architecture
that we
remember
points to that.

Eisenman

PE: Yeah, I think that the generation, Stanley, that follows us in architecture would not think we were very generous either. I have to be frank. I don't think any generation is ever very generous. I don't see that as a requirement of generations. In fact, it's a requirement of children to try and find the way to finish their parents and it's a requirement of the parents to find a way to stay alive.

► ST: But I think you can also take that line a bit further based on my question involving setting up a sort of false dialectic; not to diminish the differences that Peter and I have because we have, plenty of them. What is interesting is that there is a kind of traditional architect, an architect that builds, which we both are; who has been actually on a kind of cutting edge of encouraging people who are not trained within the context of architecture to teach architecture. Peter and I have spent a lot of time encouraging people to be engaged with architecture, not just to breakdown the barriers between theory and practice, but to actually engage practice in the studio as a vehicle. And I think that's very interesting and at some point I'm hoping that people here may want to challenge that. Peter and I come from a generation, and if you make certain exceptions on certain names (which there is no point in mentioning) that the generation that preceded us was frankly not very generous to us. And I think that in some ways its the reason that the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies was founded in New York—and it's certainly the reason we did the Chicago Architects Show in 1976, was frankly to make a place for ourselves because none was really offered to us. I think that's a fair representation of what transpired at that time in the middle 70s. And like it is with every generation, they're a sort of polar opposite of the one that precedes them generally or simplistically. So we appear to be generous but the fact is that we have encouraged people who are not trained in conventional ways to actually enter the 'academy', and enter the sort of discourse about architecture, and I think that brings up a lot of interesting questions and breaks down the sort of polar position taking.

ST: It's difficult not to engage in a debate. I don't believe that for a minute—I believe it is the obligation of every generation to, as I've always said, pass the baton. I honestly believe that.

ST: I've always believed that if it is a knife, you always hand it by the handle to the next generation.

ST: No, you want to wait to see if they got the *cojones* to do it.

ST: Well, hey, that's what I'm saying.

PE: But passing the baton, it could have a knife edge at one end.

PE: That's fair, I've always done that. But you're not going to let them then turn around and stab you in the back!

PE: Yeah.

PE: I would like to say one thing about the generations: Building architects always wrote and theorized from the time of Alberti, Palladio, Ledoux (who didn't build all that much), but Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, Robert Venturi on into this decade. And I think what's interesting about this generation, Somol's generation, is in fact they would like to argue that things have changed: that in the 80s there's no longer any need for architects to think about writing or theorizing. Because, since the early 1980s, for the first time America has had a theoretical practice. I think prior to that time certainly in both the United States and Britain, the notion of theory was certainly absent from the discourse.

When I went to Cambridge in 1960, theory was not a big issue as it was at the time in Italy, let's say, or at the time in France. But certainly things have changed in this country: I would argue that the mark of an architect is the fact that he or she conceptualizes, theorizes, and in fact creates a discourse in his or her work. And that is to me what architecture has always been about. Therefore architecture is about discourse—it always has been. And I think that the great architecture that we remember points to that. So I think to say that architects no longer need to write or to think, but that they can merely indulge in their practice is a wrong-headed assumption. So I . . .

RE: But that was the message that was sent out under your authorization and whom ever else's from the Deconstructivist show; that somehow architecture had achieved a level such that theoretical discourse was in the object itself.

ST: That brings out the question of the object. Maybe a more interesting way of going about it is the way in which architects systematically over the years have encouraged people other than architects to engage architecture in the studio. This fabrication of people who have philosophic, linguistic, and comparative literature training is just the latest of the series of people. In the 60s architects encouraged all the sociologists to come into the studio, right? In the 70s, with the advent of Post-Modernism they encouraged all of the historians to actually penetrate the studio. So in the 80s they then invent this other type and one begins to get

PE: I would like to add something to suspicious about this sort of absence of architecture other than as its defined by that. I think the danger in opening up its constituencies outside of itself.

architecture to outside discourse is the fact that we are to likely to throw away our own history. I think the culture of architecture is very rich and deep, number one, and I think it takes a long time to understand what it is. It isn't for no reason that most architects don't really build until their late forties or early fifties or...or build something that you might call mature work. And the notion that a philosopher, a person trained in comparative literature, a psychoanalyst, a...a theologian can come into architecture and understand the architectural discourse is really very problematic. I believe despite the fact that I would argue that architects cannot write or theorize; I believe more architects know more about philosophy than philosophers do about architecture.

ST: I think that occurs, Peter, as a product of an architects' general unwillingness to penetrate architecture itself. In other words, they find it more convenient over the years to engage these other issues, because these are the things that define architecture when you start talking about firmness, commodity, and delight. You start talking about functionalism in this sort of modern age in this century and so forth. So it has been convenient to measure, to define things—which are not architectural. Many things are defined by things outside of themselves and architects found it convenient to do that because it's more complex to penetrate architecture to see, first of all, if it exists. I was saying in the talk last night that the studios that I do are done that way to sort of ferret these things out; as if to dispense with them and see if there's anything left. As time goes on, I become less certain about the existence of architecture except as its defined by other things. But mostly architects have just accepted that without trying really scrutinize it in a deeper way.

RE: Basically, this whole discussion has been a reaffirmation of the thing that you were criticizing in the beginning; which is if this is a point in time where we've displaced a certain kind of dialectics of opposi- PE: I want to go on record as saying I never sitions of insides said there was no inside and outside to and outsides. What architecture or that there was no dialectic. I'm the past 15 minutes convinced there's an inside to architecture and has been all about an outside...

is that there's an inside to architecture and there's an outside to architecture. Now the question is, "Is there a nature to architecture?" And secondly, "Is generosity in fact a necessity if there's nothing there?" Is it the onion where there are just layers with no core...or is that architecture?

RE: So is that the point of the debate? ST: You see that's what I can't figure out; you ask "What is the nature of architecture?" Why don't you try to

expound upon that a little bit: Is there RE: I mean, that's my question

a nature to architecture? followed up from the courses that you've taught--the way in which the curriculum at the UIC divides the discipline up into its constituent elements; there's craft, there's theory, there's housing, there's morphology, there's typology. The question is what then is left for design? What is left of architecture once you take out--what are still interdisciplinary constituencies--whether

ST: Yeah, but the further you penetrate those things and, not even by they're the historians that constitute typology or dispensing with them, other things pop up. OK? And they continue to the philosophy...

interest me, that all these other things--these contaminants that I was talking a bit about last night, that I've talked about in Chicago--are those things really intrinsically architecture? Every time I use the word "intrinsic" somebody like Catherine Ingraham comes up and whacks me across the chops and says that well there's really nothing intrinsic, right?

RE: Well, Peter
suggested that maybe
there is, so...

ST: Well, she'd whack him, too.

RE: But not because of
that.

ST: But it would be one of the reasons.
Is there something intrinsically
architectural? Because the more these
things pop up and you define them,
they become extrinsic when you start
to embellish them.

PE: The more that architecture resists the "D" word, the more you realize
that there is something there. Because the "D" word would—and Catherine
Ingraham is a great preponderator of the "D" word—suggest that there was
nothing intrinsic in anything. I would argue that the great resistance that
architecture shows to the "D" word is in fact precisely that it identifies
that there is something in the nature of architecture which differentiates
it from other discourses.

ST: Aura...Isn't that word that got you
in a lot of trouble with Derrida?

PE: Yes, well, that's exactly the word that I want to get in trouble with. The
aura that you and I or Hejduk talk about is still the aura of metaphysics, the
aura of the Gothic Cathedral. I don't think Jacques would have any trouble with
aura as long as it was not the auratic condition that precipitates such kind of
spaces as Garches or Ronchamp. The aura he is talking about, even up through
Le Corbusier, is still a classical/metaphysical aura and that there is another
aura, a post-metaphysical aura.

ST: Hejduk said that if an architect has
not produced a work that has aura, it
is not architecture.

PE: Yeah, but that doesn't mean it isn't a

metaphysical aura. ST: No, that's right. I still think he's still looking at
it in that way.

PE: So, I think that there might be a way in
defining an aura outside of metaphysics. I

think that's the issue. RE: Rather than characterize it

as a resistance or a critical vs.
an affirmative Postmodernism? Is
there a resistant aura vs. an
affirmative or metaphysical one,
or an aura of fullness as opposed
to an aura at absence or trace?

ST: That's very interesting.

PE: An aura of plenitude as opposed to one of absence. I would think then, Robert, that there are big areas of disagreement when we get into this. No question that I believe that Stanley's work is about plenitude and meaning. I believe that the plenitude that exists in Stanley's work has to do with a kind of relationship of sign to signifier which has to do with this issue of plenitude. And I think that in my work there is another thing; and I think the difference is subtle. I do not want to go off into Never-Never Land, between Bataille's use of excess and Blanchot's use of excess; and that excess meaning a certain plenitude more than function. I think that difference to me is really quite important in terms of making architecture. In other words, if we are now moving from theory, you have to get into the issue of plenitude and you have to get into the issue of meaning. And Stanley's work, I don't want to call it Post-Modernism and it is not whether we are both Post-Modernists or not because there was always meaning in Modernism. I think Stanley's architecture is about inscribing meaning in form—in its fullest possible sense of the word and its richest possible sense of the word. And I think that is what gives his work its aura. And I think my work is about another kind of inscription which may not be about meaning in the sense of plenitude.

PE: Stanley, I just want to make one note because I really do agree with your notion that there is a change between buildings being nouns and verbs; buildings which deal with becoming and this notion of the possibility of event. What I want to correct—because you always try to load it up when you say that you want to embellish—and I say it is not embellish but embody. We are both interested in embodiment because architecture ultimately is about the four walls; that is what, I believe, makes architecture different from any of the other discourses; that its presence in its pure metaphysical sense is that inscription in space that never goes away. You can use split-faced concrete block, you can use precast concrete, you can do anything you want, but still that embodiment is there and it is a question of how one deals with embodiment.

ST: I think you can take the plenitude thing and carry it further; when the character helps to characterize it. On the occasion of the opening of the Wexner Center there was an interesting occurrence where a number of us were on stage and Peter was in the audience. People kept referring to the Wexner Center as a building in the way that you understand a building as a noun, and I kept insisting that it was a verb. That is without any pejorative implication at all: it is just that there is another potential within architecture other than the traditional one which I call a noun, let's say; that a building can be "on the move" so to speak, even though it may appear to be static. It is on the move in many, many ways. And I spoke of buildings as verbs and adjectives, buildings that are not about plenitude that day and people had lots of problems with it. But the fact is that I think there is a way buildings can be perceived that way. It is an important way to understand architecture.

I keep having this jagged line that runs through everything I write down of optimism and plenitude vs. skepticism and absence. I really think all of these are ways to embellish and I would insist that it is generous to embellish the way architecture can be perceived, conceived, et cetera, and not to close things out. Now I am not talking of the sort of pluralism of the late 70s and 80s at all. The benefit of people engaged in the "D" word as it has affected architecture is to cause architects to open up and to see what other considerations there are; and I see lots of evidence of that in the built form and in people at the academy and so forth. That to me is really interesting because it opens up new ways to work, and I think that is an obligation of the discipline, not the profession, but the discipline.

ST: When you say "the four walls", it is interesting because if it is in fact four walls, if I am understanding it in a certain way, it requires embellishment. But there are plenty of examples of other kinds of walls that came about in the early part of the century that did not need embellishment; but were embodied in a different way, and much in the way that I saw the Wexner that day.

PE: I used "four walls" metaphorically. I am saying that whether it is you or Bob Stern, or Frank Gehry or Michael Graves, whoever it is, we all deal with materialization. And I think the difficulty that people outside of architecture have is the real distinction between drawing and architecture and building. Because if you analyze drawing in let's say painting or sculpture, I mean it is very close. You can make all the kinds of transparencies, overlays, inscriptions, and dislocations in a drawing a fantastic thing. The minute you extrude that drawing into a three dimensional thing, somebody can look at it and say, "it doesn't look disembodying", "it doesn't look like any of those kinds of things". Whereas a drawing may look "super wowwy" in terms of its relationship to subject-object. What you can do in painting, you can do in drawing, you can do in graphics. I maintain that most work that we see in school, we'll see it today, is graphics: architecture as graphics, because the subject is still trying to determine three dimensional space in two. I think that drawing the kind of space that I am interested in today is almost impossible. The kind of embodiment that I am interested in you cannot draw a priori, the subject has very little control in two dimensional drawing. I think that is the big difference today—in the difference of built work vs. student work or, let's say, avant-garde projects et cetera. I say there is an enormous difference between graphism and graphics and building architecture.

ST: The distinction is there, Peter, but at the same time, regardless of that obligation to actualize, which is embodied in everyone in this room, one has to think . . .

PE: Not necessarily.

ST: Not worrying less about embodiment, but actually being open to other potentialities. Which is why I keep driving back to the Wexner Center or to the Barcelona Pavilion, something that is embodiment in another way. Before either of those cases, just to cite two, architecture's four walls could be accused of embellishing just as equally as it is an embellishment. And what is interesting, as I am aware of all the work in schools and, frankly, in offices, things that do not get built is not the embodiment that you are alluding to. No, the commitment that drives one to leave open to potentiality the stuff that doesn't look as if it can be built still has great potentiality. We just had a big debate at the school in Chicago the other day about the word hegemony. People were beginning to be concerned that things were beginning to look alike at UNC; and that I am not encouraging building.

The fact of the matter is I am encouraging lots of things to see what possibilities there are. I think part of the excitement of a school is, frankly, as a laboratory to set out to find what the possibilities there are. PE: Stanley, I would like to always are without the a priori commitment alone applaud you not only as a friend, to embody.

architect and head of a school, but most of all because I think there is too much hegemony in the 98% of the other schools that are teaching. And I do not think you should worry about the little hegemony in your own school.

ST: I gotta tell you—I'm not worried.

PE: Well, you sounded worried ...

ST: Well, I wanted to bring it up to them. I like putting things on the table. I am not worried at all.

PE: Well, because. . .

ST: You don't need to worry about me.

You've got lots else to worry about!

PE: Not me!

RE: That is actually the sort of question that I want to get to, because Peter wouldn't worry in the least if ever school in the PE: Nooo, Nooo, Nooo, No, No. You country had the hegemony know damn well that if every which I think . . .

school were doing what you and Stanley and I thought was the right thing to do we would no longer be doing it, for sure. If everybody were into building Wexner Centers I would be into building Greek revival. Absolutely.

RE: So much for strong felt thought.

ST: (addressing the audience) You don't want to hold your breath on that, but you get the point.

RE: I want to turn this thing over to the audience because I think that would be the most interesting thing: sort of Phil Donahue-like. But I wanted to end on a note of dialectics. Stanley has done a book called Verses—one of his first—and so the dialectic idea is already in there. And I think what you both share is the idea that there is no singular truth either architectural or as a singular cultural moment. I think that Stanley's response to that which you are characterizing as plenitude, I would characterize as having a kind of dialectic. When you look at the forms of Stanley's work, they tend toward a work that would be more "representational" or more "abstract" and the work tends to oscillate between those two poles in a way. And I think that is the way Stanley runs the school and the faculty in terms of a lot of different people. You have Thomas Gordon Smith and you have Catherine Ingraham and you have Coke and you have Pepsi... (as this is ST: Hey, Thomas said Peter offers Stanley a sip of Gordon Smith is gone, his cola). what are you talking about...

RE: Yeah, well, we are all going to be gone soon, in fact my time may be up by the time we get back. But I think that the way Stanley operates is in a kind of a dialectical way which is basically if anybody has there pure identity there is a kind of still faith in representation to the extent that it is a kind of pluralism. Everyone sort of fights it out. Whereas I am wondering if Peter's third term or the weakness or a sort of non-dialectical third is a way to blur decision frames within objects themselves as opposed to producing the kind of objects that are kind of dialectical between themselves, whether that is a kind of point of difference. And that sounded like an accusation of you, so I have to accuse my other padrone so that I can alienate everybody—which is this issue of politics.

And Stanley is much more interested in architecture's responsibility to the social. Homelessness comes out as a strong concern in your resistant architecture. And I think Peter's letters to Derrida, where Derrida accused him of not being interested in (that)... or what do you do about that. Peter said this is not particularly an architectural issue. And I would sort of like to get at that. If we are blurring decision frames do we also blur the social-political into architecture?

PE: Well first of all, just because I am working on a non-dialectical architecture today does not mean that we disagree, by the way. Number two, just because Stanley sets up conferences—and I don't know which ones they are—on social form as you called it before: to think that Stanley is more interested in ideology or the politics of architecture than I am, I think is also to set up a false characterization. There is no question that both of us are very much interested in certain political realms. Stanley may be much more active in Chicago.

I was saying today on the drive up to Cynthia (Davidson) how active the Chicago architects always seem to be in their city and how inactive New York Architects seem to be in their city. And I think it is a question, one of size and of scale. I mean Mayor Dinkins in New York couldn't give a damn who I am or what the hell I thought about anything. Don't forget we did build low-rise high-density housing for the Urban Development Corporation. We were interested in the thing called low-rise high-density housing at a huge exhibition. Stanley was also interested in a thing called low-income housing.

So, first of all, I would never say that I am interested in the problem of the homeless. There is no question, I do not believe it is an issue for architecture. Yes, I am interested as a human being, but my architecture, I don't think, can deal with it. In so far as Stanley and I, initiated by Stanley, are involved in a low-income housing project in Florida, and admittedly, he is the one who initiated this and we are participating together; I don't think that is dealing with the question of the homeless at all. And I am not convinced that what separates Stanley and

ST: It is interesting that you brought up the Orlando project. I will just talk of Peter myself is necessarily a political or social agenda. I think both of us are certain and I as I do not want to bring into the discussion others. On a very, very low-cost/aimly separated from people like Chris Alexander or Sim Van Der Ryn or peo-housing project, which I hope goes ahead, there is no difference at all in the way we people who pretend to be more socially and politically active. This sort of understand what has to be done. And no difference at all in the understanding of sociologist-cum-architect. I don't think Stanley and I are anywhere near that. production and cost and being able to effectuate it. A no-difference in the strategy to accomplish it, by the way, which is interesting. In other words, we have both played

enough ball to understand the situation of absolute need. And PE: Not to mention other names, but we are also characterized as being the strategies we're going to put in place to accomplish this idealists in our attitude and unrealistic about the possibilities of us doing is something that we tend to agree on. Very definitely and this project for the money we are given. Don't forget that our colleagues very quickly arrived at . . . think of us as the weak fringe. That we're not facing reality very easily and that this has got to be a money making proposition and all those kinds of things.

ST: I have a very deep feeling about the entire homeless issue. There is a moral-ethical duty for everyone to get involved including architects. I am encouraging a "Pro-Activist" position. There is enough work to be done that someone, of one capability or another, should face up to certain issues of the day.

PE: Yes . . .

ST: Certainly at a degree of difficulty that you may say we are characterized as being idealistic about it. You are quite prepared to sort of engage it at that level.

PE: Not because it has anything to do about homelessness.

ST: No, they are separate issues. I understand, but the fact is that I think they both have to be addressed and I think homelessness has to be addressed as well. I don't think architects can back away from it any easier than anyone else. I think everyone has to face up to these things. Many of the issues of the day help to characterize your work as facing up to the degrees of difficulties of the day. So that Wexner and other buildings in Japan may not deal directly with the homeless question, but they bring up issues that are not addressed by way of the conventional tradition of resolving them. But simply, that is what I meant by a building as a verb. Just

simply expressing that thing with trying to bring the thing to closure is another RE: But I bring it up only as an idea of the strategy which is in our time which has a certain correspondence with other issues discipline has an outside and inside and it seems which are not issues that need to be brought to closure, particularly, but need to be that references to the homeless might be a way to addressed. appropriate a different kind of discourse either as a morality or as a functional device whereas the speculation of the homelessness already at work in architecture, already in the way one would design architecture for anyone. So it was only to bring back...

**Every time I
use the
word
"intrinsic"
somebody
like Catherine
Ingraham comes
up and whacks
me across the
chops and says
that well there's
really nothing
intrinsic, right?**

Tigerman

PE: Let me say this. We did low-income housing, as you did in Berlin. The frustration of doing low-income housing, as you know, is that the standards are set by bureaucrats who say that in order to even get a building permit, you will have a living room that is 'X' size and a bedroom that is 'Y' size and a kitchen that is 'Z' size. And despite the fact that you may have 10 kids in your household the living room is still the same size, because living rooms don't change their size if you have no kids or ten kids. Now we were just in a hotel room last night with two kids and I tell you the room should change its size if you have two adults or two kids and two adults—there is no question about it. Some of you have yet to experience that.

So you say to the German bureaucrats or the German developers, "This is wrong," and they smile and they look at you and say "Mr. Eisenman, do you want to build this project or not, because Mr. X is perfectly willing to build this project if you don't." And that is when you say, "Well, I am going to do a better job than Mr. X." So I step in despite the fact that I really believe I am hurting people. In other words, I am keeping people in this lower-middle-class state. In other words, the housing I am building confirms their status in the lower-middle-class because it offers them no possibility of escape. I can do all the drawings I want on the side that say here is the way lower middle income housing should be. But to have someone build it is another issue.

We are doing a huge housing project for refugees and all kinds of people in Frankfurt, Germany. It is tied to the production of office buildings and you can't build an office building unless you build as many square feet of low income social housing. So I look at this low income housing and I say I want to do something radical and dislocating. I want to dislocate the dislocated and all of those kind of things. And the German authorities say, "We have zoning and densities and height restrictions", and "The kindergartens have to be . . ." whatever. And you say to yourself what an awful thing to think about these kindergartens the same way they were thought about 200 years ago. And you don't get a chance to change anything.

Say you do a project as an architect, and you think that you really need to change social discourse; basically the only way you change social discourse is within the four walls that you had, because no one is going to let you have those four walls within certain proximity's as long as there are these bureaucracies. And it is not architecture that votes in those politicians.

So, I think that we have to be very careful as to what is the limit. It is like saying, "Are you concerned with AIDS?" Yes, we are concerned with AIDS. What should architects do about AIDS? Well, I am not going to tell you what architects are going to do about AIDS. I worry about what Peter Eisenman is going to do about AIDS, personally, but not about architects. Because I can't worry about what these kids are going to do about AIDS. It is not my problem. And I think we have got to be careful about that.

RE: Certainly one of the reasons Stanley may be interested in contaminants is precisely that type of cultural tone out there. Whether it is AIDS or that we are all connected via AT&T. There's some sense of personalities and subjects in society...

PE: You ask people all the time to do that, Stanley.

PE: You know that if I got up in Frankfurt and said that our project is useless ...

PE: ...I would be in the Main River in concrete. The things I can say to an audience like this, I can not say outside of this room...

ST: I disagree with you a little bit on this because you can't separate your architect persona from the Peter Eisenman persona. You can't do it.

ST: No, but what I am saying is that the idea of contaminating something, you are very interested in. So am I. And here is a real set of contaminants. Face it. And engage it architecturally. I am not saying that you are going to solve any of those problems, but you like to do that anyway, we all do. There is a certain kind of architecture that looks to the contaminant. I was trained in a wholly different way than you as you know, Peter, in the Mies age in Chicago where nothing contaminated anything.

ST: I am not saying that...

ST: That is totally untrue. We just sat in on a meeting in New York where you went exactly against the regulations of low-cost housing. And it is going to happen in reality, because that is going to be the thing to break it, to change it if it can be changed.



PE: You say that, but I say that I am a little more skeptical than you are...

ST: I am very optimistic about that.

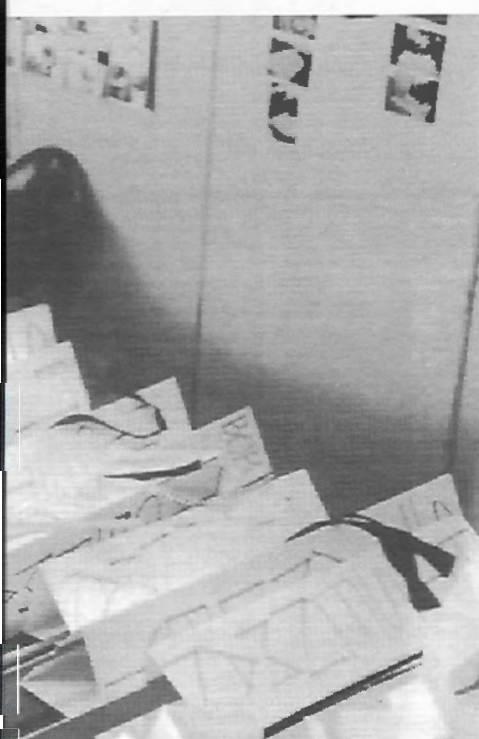
RE: I knew we would get a debate.

ST: As long as I am going to be an architect, and I don't know how long that is going to be, but as long as I am going to inhabit this role, I got to be optimistic.

PE: See, a lot of people would think that you and I are not architects, by the way. There are a lot of our friends out there who think that a debate between the two of us is not a debate between architects. Where are Helmut Jahn,

RE: Which is to say that the Cesar Pelli and all those reason you bring people like me *gays*? Those are real in, is to prove that you are architects. architects by difference.

ST: That is true: If there is one way to legitimate ourselves is to bring someone like Somol out here.

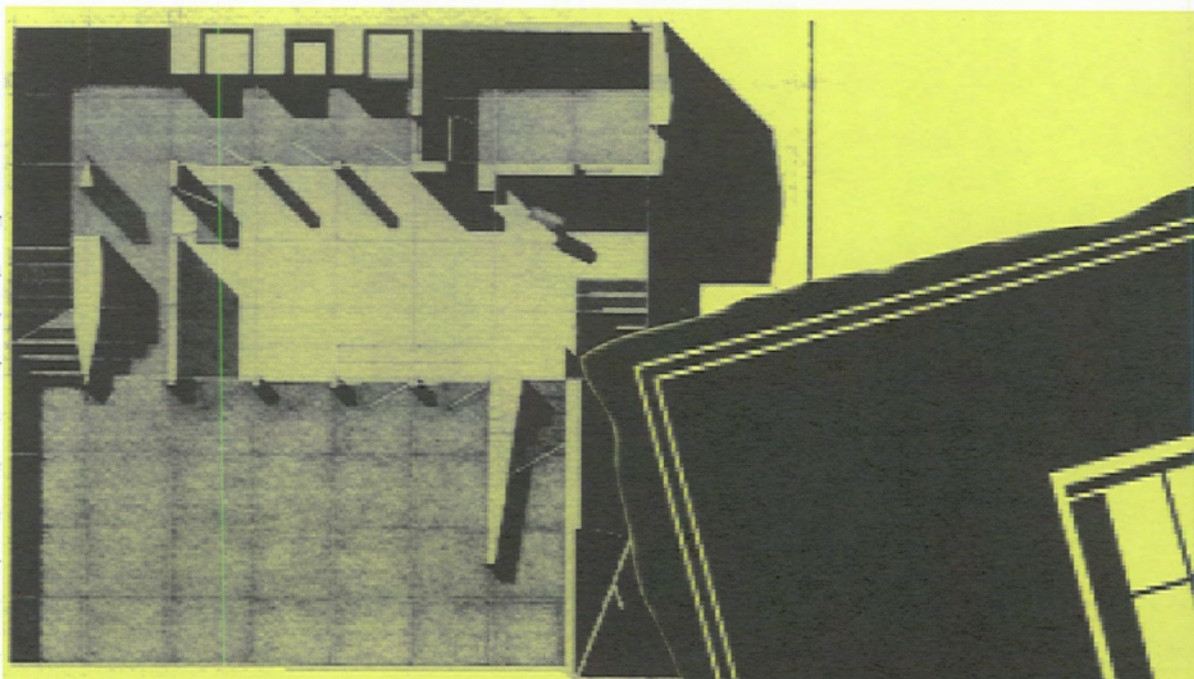


Dimensions would like to thank
(in order of appearance) R.E. Somol, Stanley Tigerman, and Peter Eisenman for their
enthusiasm. Incidentally the Wolverines trounced upon those
Buckeyes from Columbus.

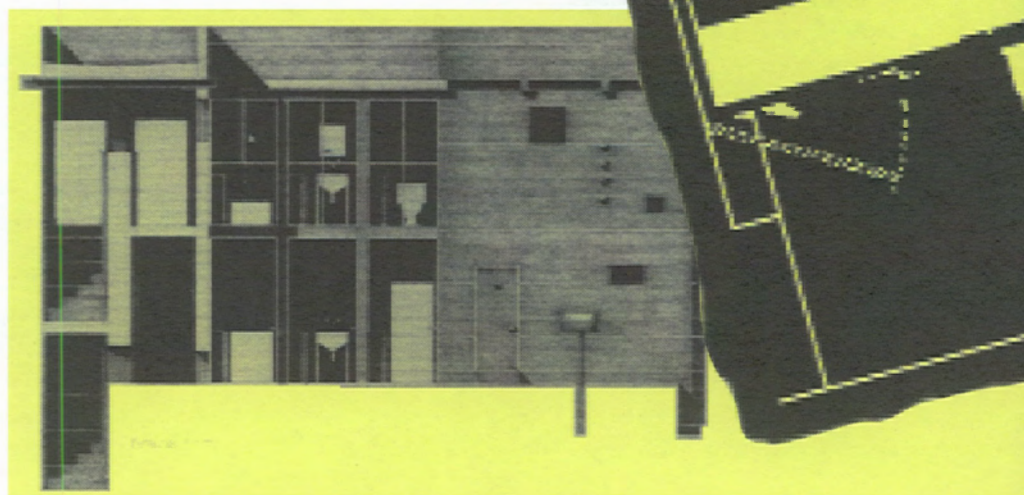
-John Abela 📖

The three projects shown below are all sited upon the terra firma of the single family house. This ground is deeply etched with the familiar marks of domesticity, bounded by the plot of the family narrative and not-to resist the metaphor-fertilizer, by a pattern of consumption which effectively fences off contaminating influences.

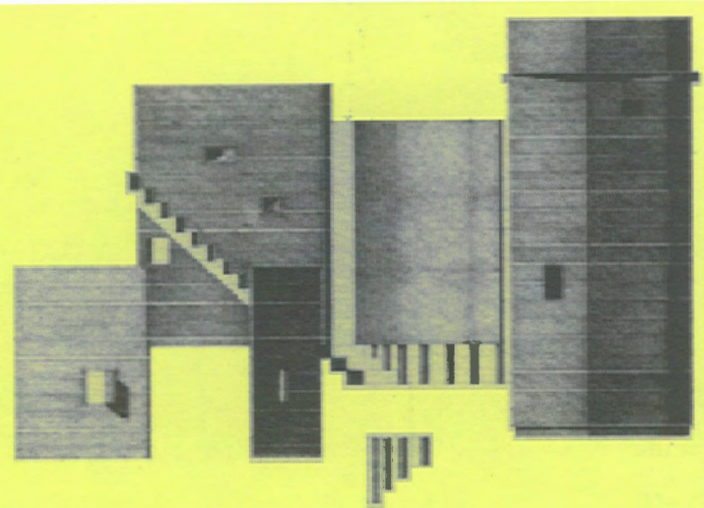
These familiar traces effect an experiential atrophy, to the extent that there is, perhaps, no longer a discernable, dwelling subject. Thus, the resistance of the dwelling to permutation is not the result of inertia but is the effect of the subject's disavowal of his own displacement. The conventionalized configuration of the dwelling has, in effect, exiled the dweller from the experience of dwelling. In his essay "Experience and Poverty," Walter Benjamin observes that "in the bourgeois home... the *interieur* forces its inhabitants to take up the greatest possible number of habits, habits that correspond more to the *interieur* in which he lives than to himself."¹ The end of experience coincides with a complete impoverishment of the built artifact, when there is "nothing to



[Kent Kleinman]



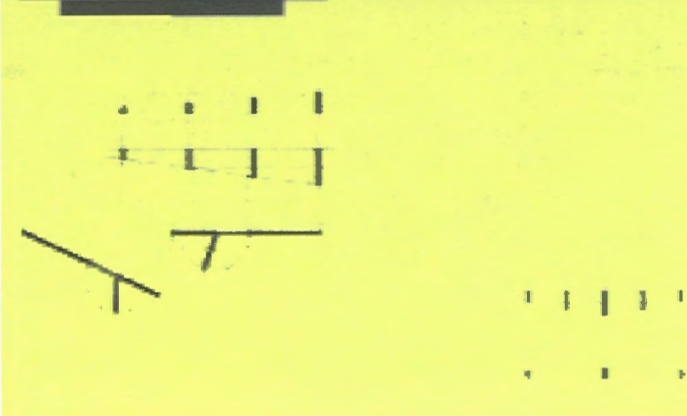
Clearing House



look for because there is no place where the dweller has not already left his traces."² Paradoxically, in the single family house, these "traces" are given not after but in advance of the act of dwelling; the house is "pre-lived."

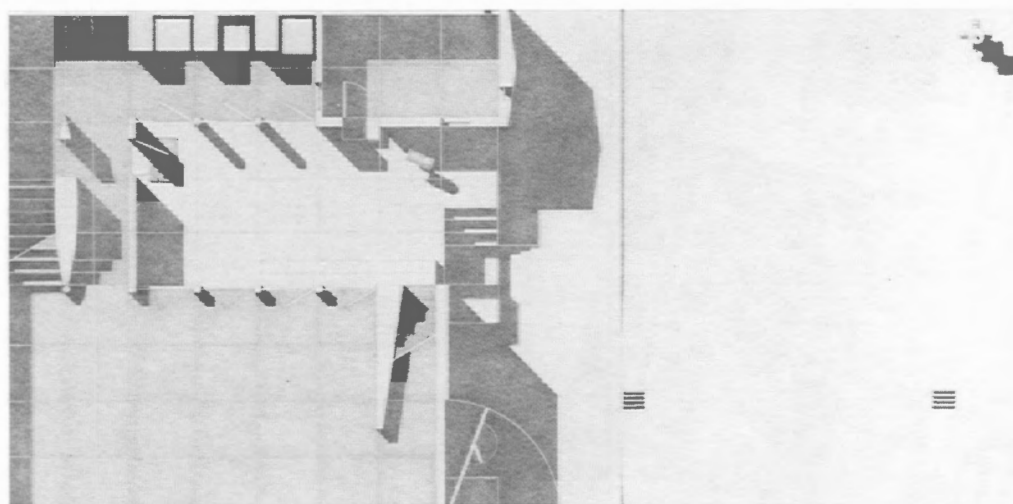
To reinstate the subject is to involve the artifact of dwelling with the act of dwelling. For this purpose, the conventionalized plan is both too tight—its traces

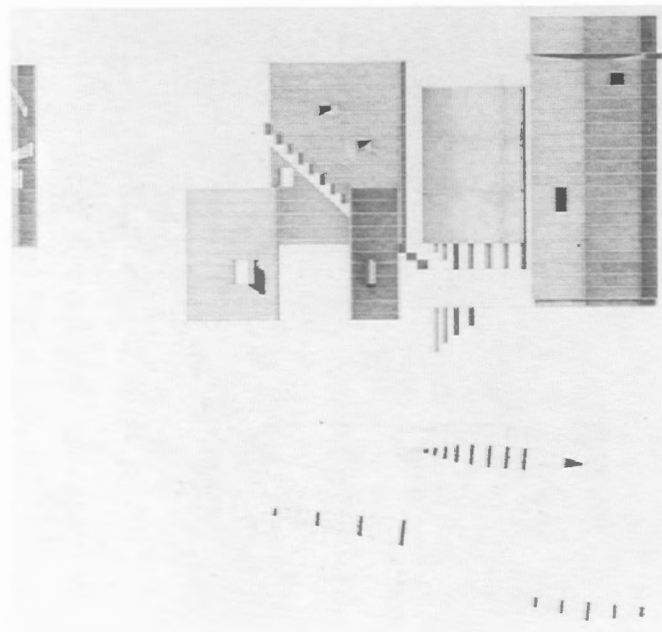
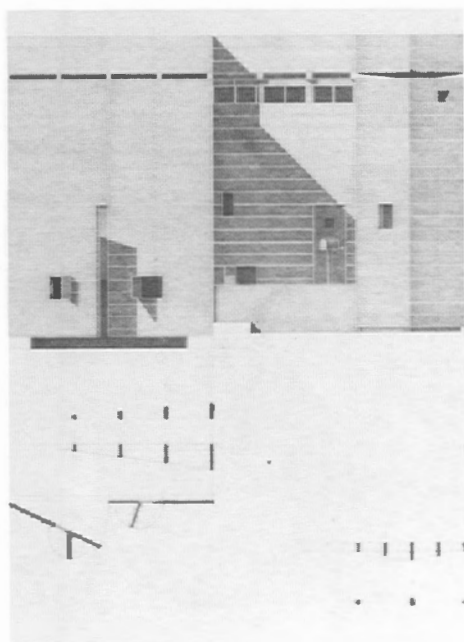
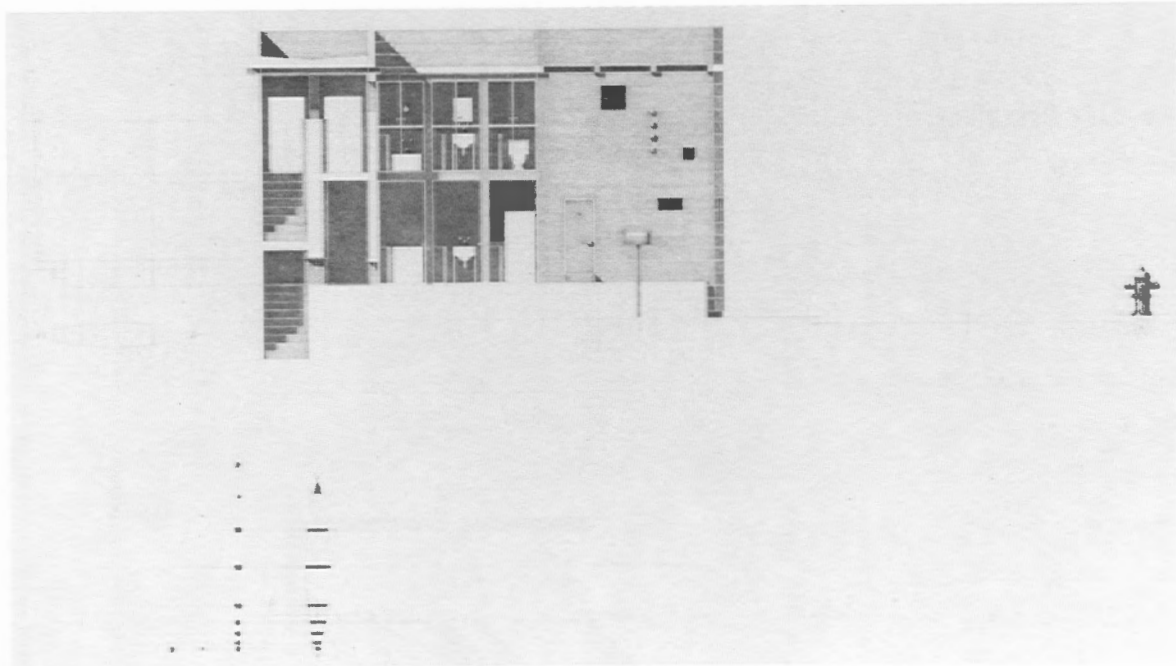
and marks are too entrenched—and too loose—its traces are by and large irrelevant to habitation. Thus, if we take Benjamin's use of the term "to look for" to stand for a more general sensual perception, then a double affirmative formulation can be deduced: first, the house requires "*something* to look for because there is *someplace* where the dweller *cannot* leave his traces", and, second, that there is "*something* to look for because there is *some trace* upon which one must dwell."



I Sight Work: The Analogous House

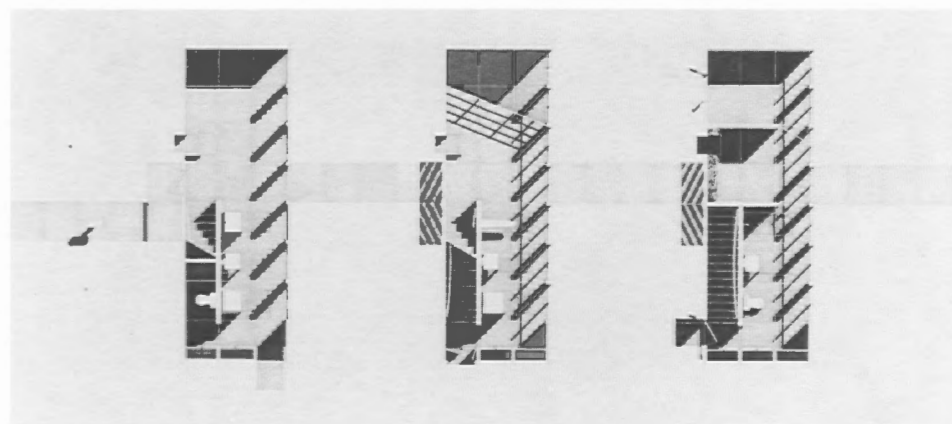
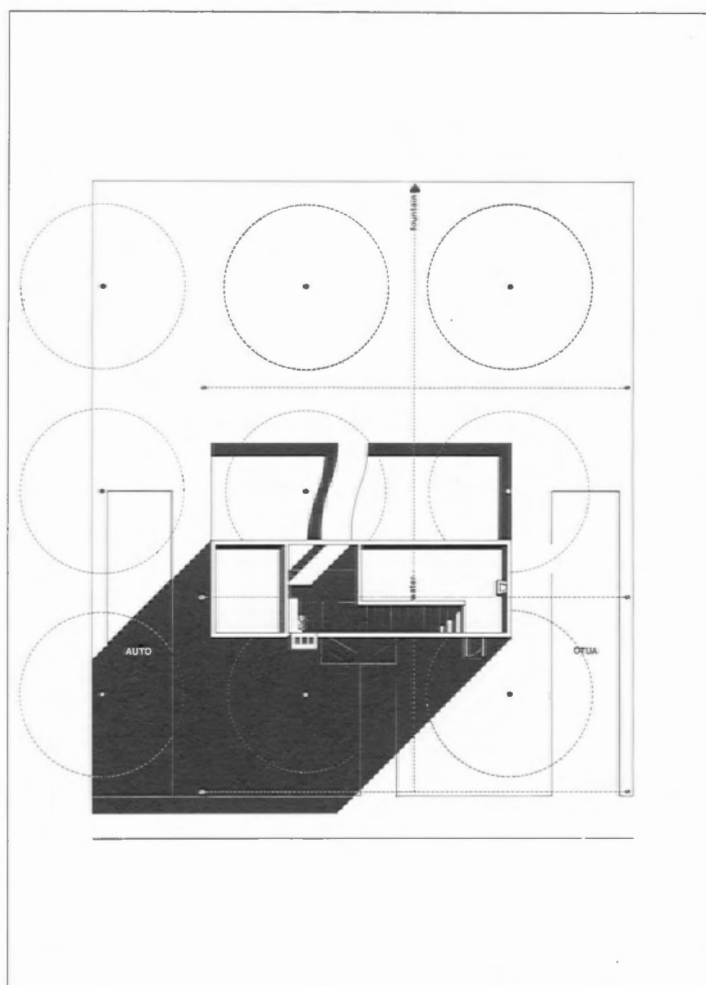
Among the first score marks one encounters at the site of the single family house are those invisible ones: the dashes of the zoning set-backs. Through a simple act of inversion—setting out from the center rather than setting in from the edges—a new zone of prohibition is demarcated. The object becomes a void; front lawn becomes wall; an analogous house is outlined. Most importantly, the subject is turned out from the center. The dweller become the object of his own peripheral inspections as the house spies not only out from itself but also out onto itself and in onto itself. The street facades are overtly voyeuristic, magnets to the subjects gaze. The court walls are transparent (akin to Lacan's "mirror"?) The autonomous enclosed cell and the equipped wing are linked only by lines of sight. The thickness of the masking walls results from rearranged 2-by-lumber: analogous stud walls.

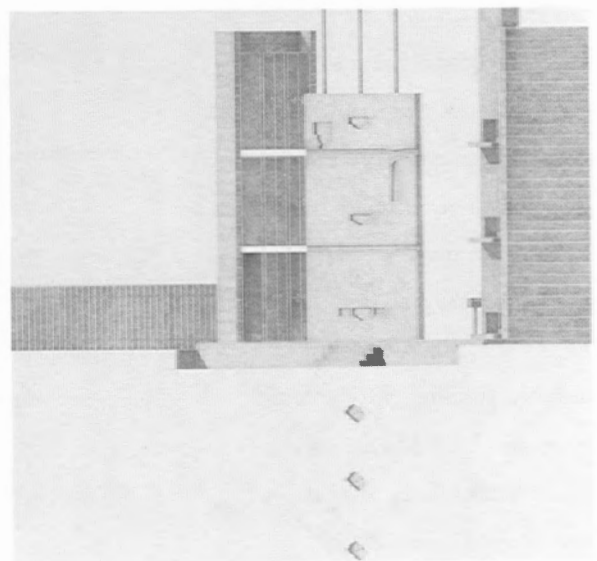
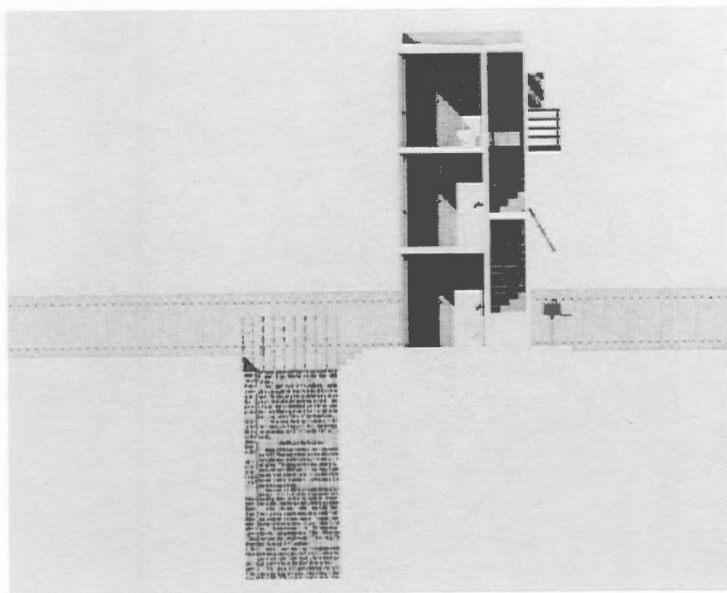
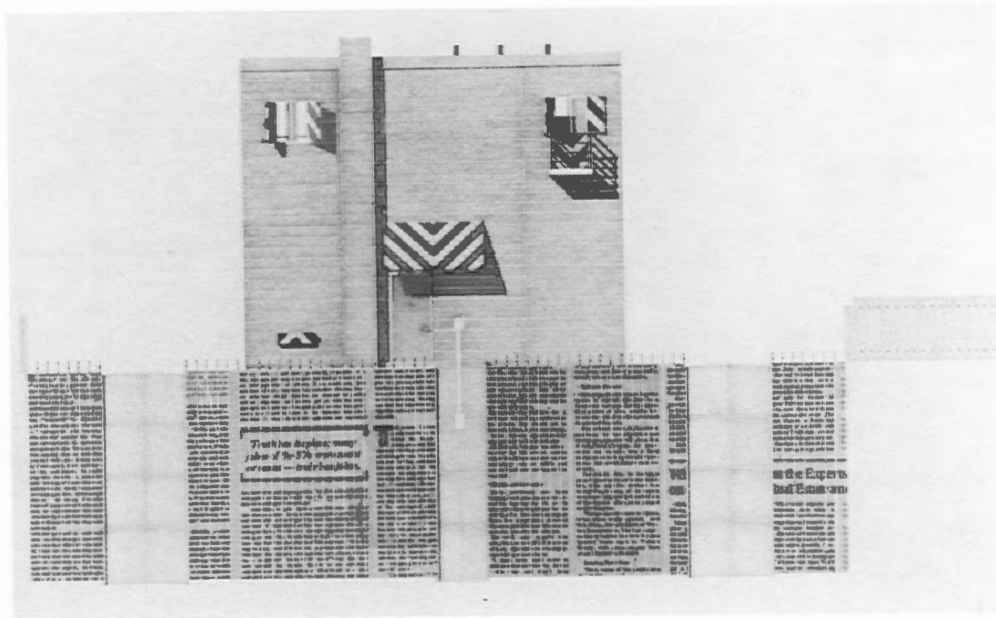





2 The Promenade Mécanique: Room for a House

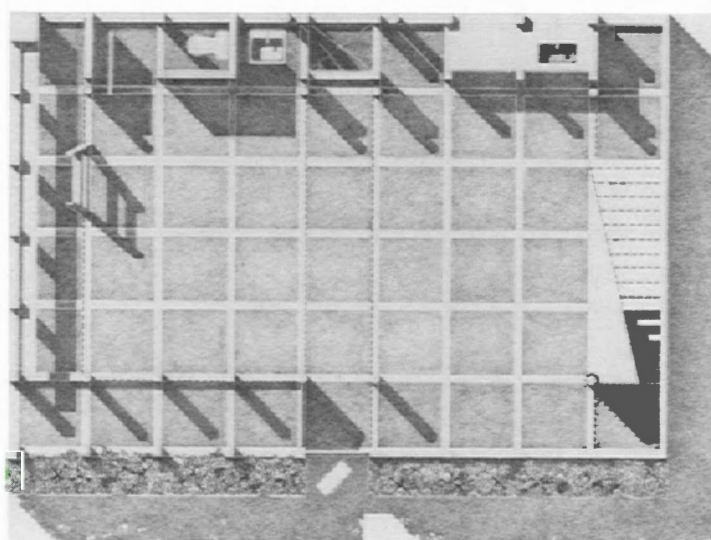
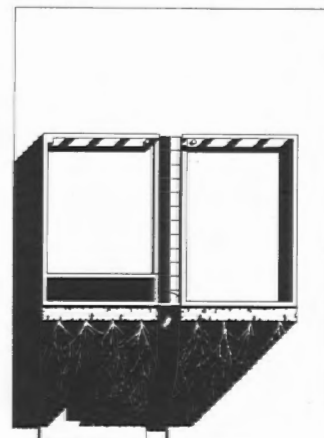
The project occupies 1/2 of the footprint of its suburban *Vorbild*. This slenderness squeezes the occupant into an unusual intimacy with the mechanics of dwelling, which become familiar *Mitmenschen*. It is the spiraling path of the occupant that activates the dwelling, literally in the serial use of the equipment, and figuratively in lacing together the occupied zone of appliances and the zone of empty space. Concealed inside the cabinet wall at the three landings is a doorway, a small window and a sky-lit shaft. The earth, the horizon and the heavens are thus revealed as precise experiences only through intentional exposure.





3 Clearing House: The House for an Unsettled Couple

The utter legibility of the single family house is due to the figures that consume the plan. The social function of these configurations, much like their rhetorical counterparts, is to "establish certain ideas in the mind of the spectator (subject) and, ultimately, to reinforce and preserve an ideology...."³ This project attempts to scrub away at precisely this figurative level of the dwelling. Not erasure but rather displacement of the bits and pieces of a spent icon is the technique employed for clearing the plan. The material (and spatial) elements are swept to the perimeter. Walls become repositories for the uprooted elements. The "unsettled couple" of the title has both a social and an architectural referent: first, the occupants whose lives are in a state of prolonged indeterminacy, second, the disrupted link that "couples" meaning to configuration. Within the ensuing gap between content and form lies a habitable vantage point, where there is "something to look for." 

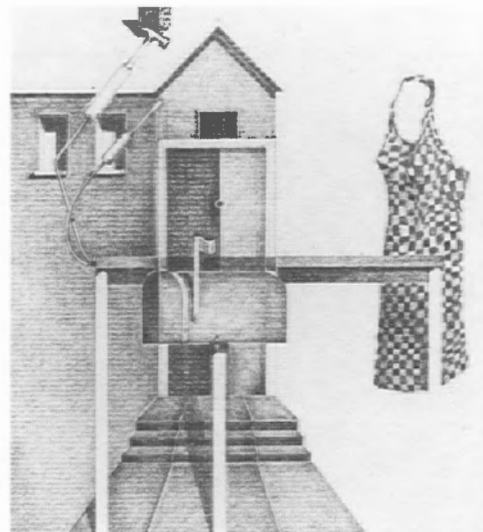


Notes

¹ Walter Benjamin, "Erfahrung und Armut." In *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1977).

² Ibid.

³ Alan Colquhoun, "Figure and Form." In *Essays in Architectural Criticism* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981).



[Aditya D. Sood]

Lessons from the Site of Post-History

And in the spirit he carried me away to a great,
high mountain, and showed me the holy city
Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God,
it's radiance like a most rare jewel...the city was
pure gold, transparent as glass.

Revelation 20: 10-11, 21



The final book of the Christian Bible, revelation, records a fantastic vision of the city of New Jerusalem, which is proclaimed the

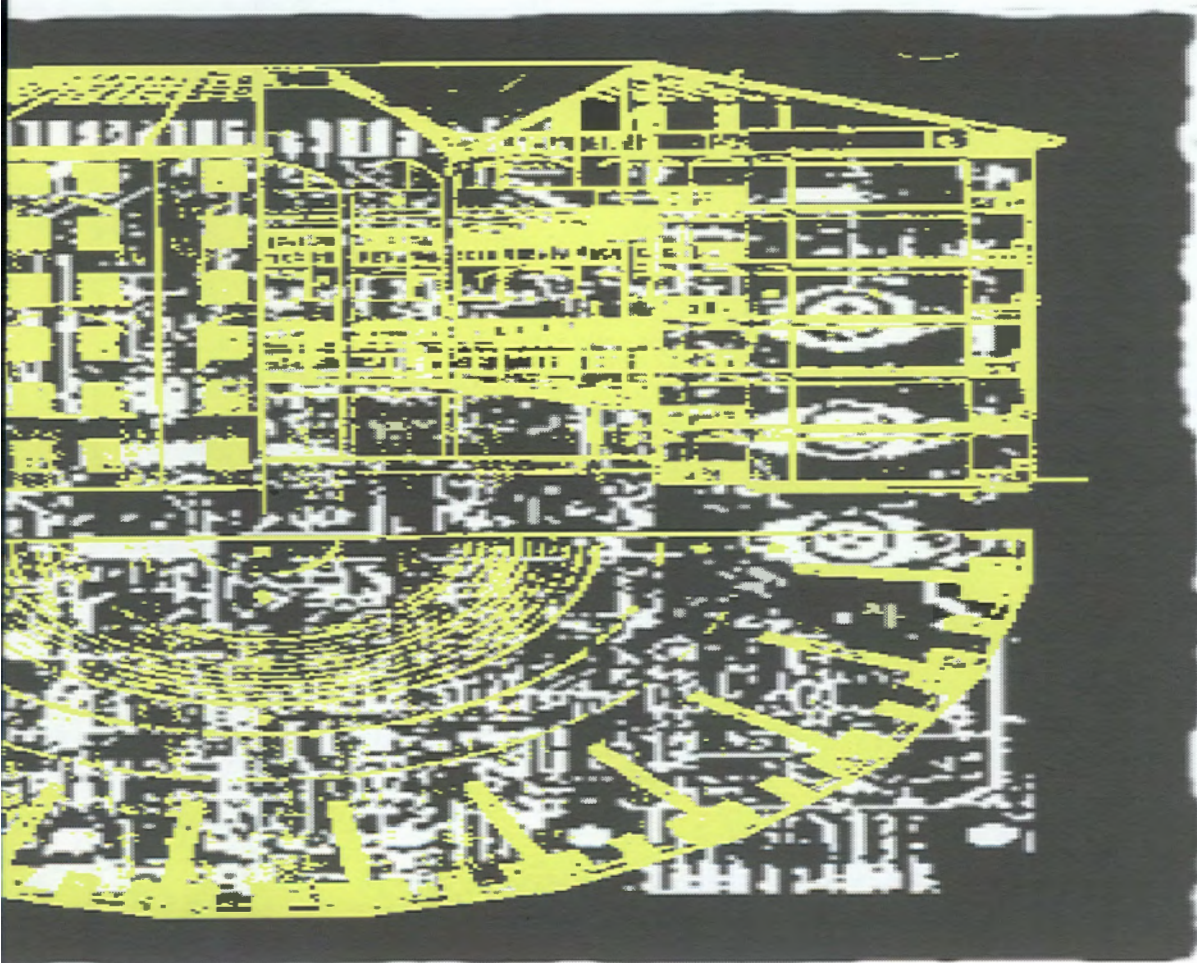
dwelling-place of those saved from the apocalypse.

Post-historic New Jerusalem finds its place among other utopias in the thread of

Western cultural memory as a model of the ideal city. However this

textually constructed city is beyond history and beyond time,

space, and beyond any human relations among its inhabitants.



John, the writer of *Revelation*, recounts his vision of the city of New Jerusalem "coming down from heaven," instead of being constructed by humans¹. This immaculate city is described as being co-axially symmetrical with three gates in each cardinal direction. John carefully maps out the city's dimensions, showing its length, breadth and height to be equal. The city, whose "radiance is like a most rare jewel" is bedecked with explicitly enumerated precious stones and (proverbially) paved with a gold which is "transparent as glass." These degrees of 'perfection' in the city are in denial of the physical laws which governed John's experience, and may be intended to transport the city into a transcendent or post-apocalyptic state. The chaos and dust of the street is denied, for "nothing unclean or accursed" is to enter the city, "nor anyone who practices abominations or falsehood but only those written in the Lamb's Book of Life." Similar restrictions thus are being made on persons as on objects, through the control of citizenship.

the social striations of tribes of Israel through sub-division and certifies the political authority of the "Lord and the Lamb" through their centrality and their position at the source of the river of life. Such a power relationship is also evident in John's notation that the servants of the Lord and the Lamb "will see him, and his name shall be on their foreheads." This panoptic relation between the inhabitants of the transcendent city and their Lord is embodied in, and reinforced through the symmetrical order of the city².

The city has been described in superlative terms, with sweeping descriptions which are postcard understandings of the city rather than intimate accounts. And even though the ecstasy of each inhabitant is insisted upon, there is no personal account of contentment, nor any reference to, nor possibility of the daily interactions between the citizens of New Jerusalem. John's text is silent about any public forum whatsoever, observing even the absence of a temple; a silence which corroborates the understanding offered by



Jesus of Nazareth elsewhere in the Bible, regarding the nature of human relationships in the afterlife: there are none, for the state of humans is akin to that of angels³.

"The city has no need for sun and moon ... and there shall be no night there." The post-apocalyptic (a)temporality of the city calls for an absence of time, which is accomplished through a denial of the sun and the moon and of night, all markers of the passage of time. Further, the absence of night negates the many possibilities of sexual liaison, illicit assignations and crime which have been repeatedly explored elsewhere in the Bible⁴. The city maintains its stasis through the cessation of time.

This atemporal, slow and perpetual state of grace between the human inhabitant and the institution of the Lord and the Lamb makes any communication or relation between humans unnecessary as well as impossible. John speaks instead of a relationship between the lord and the saved, of the marriage between the lamb and the city. The authority of 'the Lord and Lamb,' who alone have the power of expression, is emphasized by the implicit silence of the inhabitants of the city: a delicate equation for stasis.

Does our conception of the essence of the city reside along its broad streets, in the trees lining its processional axes, astride its boundary walls or within its centers of authority? For these are the only features of New Jerusalem which John has explicitly described. Or rather, should one seek out market places and amusement parks, universities and libraries, theaters and temples, as places of community and daily ritual, where the lives of citizens and the architecture of the city intertwine into patterns of meaning and memory. Our perception of the city encompasses even its ugliness: its sewage disposal plants and prisons, factories, bordellos, grey streets which turn into dark alleys, the civic

problems of sanitation, neighborly strife, even the fear of crime and tyranny. None of the civic functions that Lewis Mumford defines as generating the city are to be found in New Jerusalem⁵.

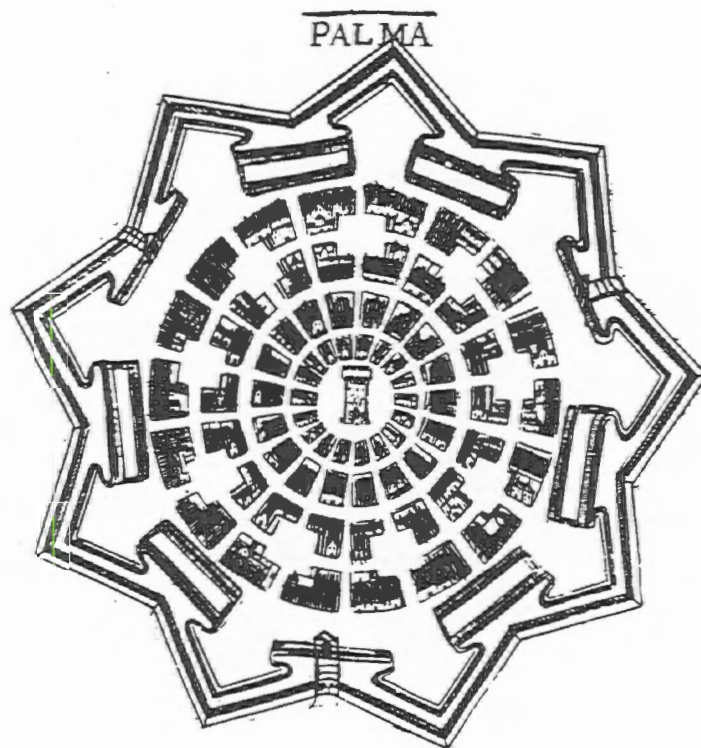
And further, as has been argued by Aldo Rossi, the city must be understood as architecture, as construction, as the ultimate humanly constructed artifact⁶. As explicitly noted by John, the new city sweeps down from heaven untouched by a human maker. In the absence of this crucial condition, and the general absence of any reference to communal civic life in the city, one is forced to reassess John's assertion that his Utopia has anything in common with what we know to be a city. One must protest: we have not been presented with a city in *Revelation*, but instead a shell which goes by the name of New Jerusalem.

John's insistence that the survivors of the apocalypse will be housed in a city is better appreciated against the background of his cultural memory. John understood history to have begun and been recorded in the book of Genesis. The Jewish and Christian God's idyllic paradise was tainted by the bitterness of pain, toil and death because of the disobedience of the first human couple. Humankind's alienation from nature and from ourselves and the agony of our existence is understood to be a result of this parable of the fall of man. John's text takes it upon itself to prophesy the reverse process: the restitution of humanity to a state of grace, ultimate deliverance from this tortuous existence. John envisions a permanent resolution to the yearnings and conflicts of human existence through a final day of judgement and which would deny the possibility of further failure and pain.

However, the problem which John faces in this eschatological enterprise is to lead humanity back into its

former paradisiac state without making the events of the world, the striving of his peoples and their histories not seem superfluous within the framework of such circular time. John thus seeks, simultaneously, a satisfactory resolution to the process of history and a return to the original paradise. His solution is to distinguish clearly between the the paradise before and the paradise to come: the former existed in nature, the later will be the reconciliation of human achievement – the city with God. The site of John's post-historic paradise will be a city, for if his narrative were to return to the woods of Eden, he would risk undermining the importance of those historic upheavals which primarily took place in the city and which he must reconcile through this creative eschatology. And this is the irony of his apocalypse: history ends where it is daily enacted, recorded and remembered, in the city of Jerusalem.

John insightfully recognizes that in its essence, the city is a human construction in defiance of nature⁷, and we must agree with him. However, we must break with him when he attempts to force the ultimate human artifact back into harmony with the rest of nature. His contrived description of the grove of the trees of life in New Jerusalem only emphasizes the traditional opposition between the natural wilderness and human artifice of the city. John's textual construction of a 'heavenly city' is cleaved by an inner tension between the slow ecstasy of the mythical woods of Eden and the frenzy of urban activity for which all cities are intended. The mental construct which is New Jerusalem



kept is not from being torn asunder only through the negation of time.

John constructs a vision of utopia by first examining the register of human experiences and then denying all that has traditionally been associated with the agony of human life: The alienation of the human soul from its body, the toil of humanity, despair at the certainty of death, and the mourning of loss. Because these facets are relationally opposed to those experiences understood to be the joys of life, John's vision is frozen through the absence of time, in the post-apocalypse. The strategy for the reconciliations of interpersonal conflict have become the denial of the interpersonal interactions which are their context.

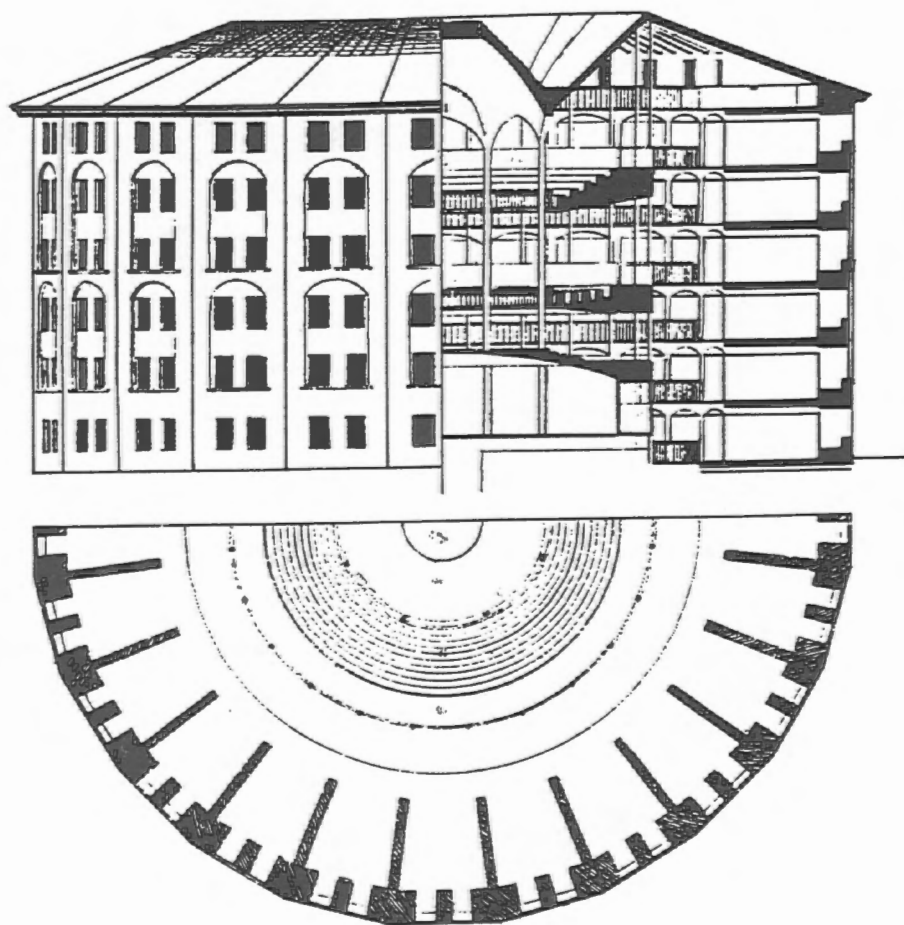
The very development of civilization and the endurance of cultural memory are bound up with the human experience of the transience of time, which understanding, along with the cognition of death, may be regarded as the price of consciousness. This self-conscious experience, the transience of time, is also an alienation from it, for to experience

it, to be conscious of it, we must be other from it. And the desire within humans to give meaning to their experience, to determine necessary original causes and final effects, may also be the result of this special appreciation for and alienation from time. Consciousness and the experience of time may then be the root of the rift between humans and other forms of nature. Language, indistinguishable from consciousness, which resides in time is perhaps that essential agency for this alienation. And history, the recordings of the struggles of a people through time, emerging through the layered understandings of fragmentary, contradictory human narratives, either forgotten or patched together into a text of communal memory, is one of the principle products of this alienation.

In addition to language, there is yet another way in which humans are alienated from nature: through their critique of the environment in which they find themselves. This critique of the natural habitat, the city, divorces man from nature, marking the antithesis of an accord with the creator of nature, God. John attempts to bridge this divorce between humans and their deity by bringing down a city created not by his people, but by their God. However, John fails to convince us that New Jerusalem is really a city, for it is not constructed so as to facilitate the machinery of civic society, but it is simply a receptacle for the souls of the saved. It is necessarily devoid of the rich layers of human meaning which

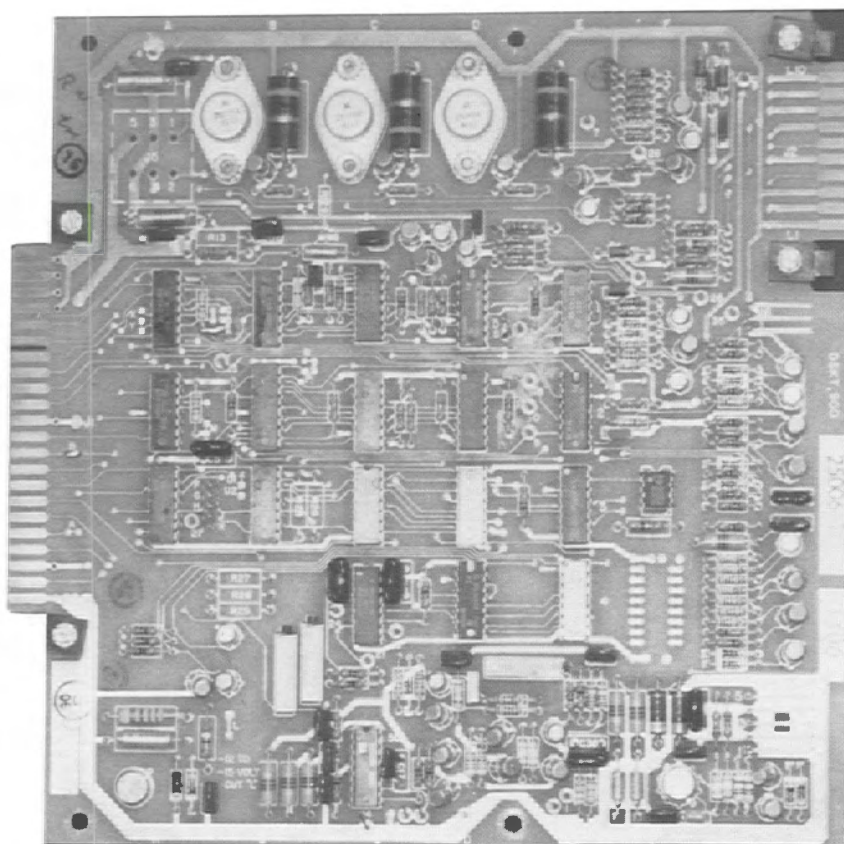
generate and maintain earthly cities. While earthly cities are topographical records in three dimensions of the exertions of a community bound together through historical time, New Jerusalem has neither interactions to record nor time in which to record them. It describes a state of social harmony and geometrical symmetry which precludes all change; a stasis of heavy equilibrium. And this stasis, according to Colin Rowe, is the very essence of an image of utopia: *changelessness* which transcends our experience⁸.

And by transcending the temporal limits of our reality, John's city attains a state of permanent temporal arrival which parallels our own experience of Modernity⁹. Thanks to a new



faith in the works of Man, sustained through the convulsions of Modernity, utopia is no longer transcendent and unattainable, but understood as social prescription. Coincident to this sense of arrival is the faith that prior utopian aspirations can now be fulfilled. Modern perceptions seek the attainment of that perfection which was once understood to be possible only in a transcendent frame: perfections in degrees of abstraction, cleanliness, symmetry and social harmony, in manners analogous to those recounted in Revelation and other models. Modern images recording the "progress" of civilization, which deny both social strife and tangible disorder in totalitarian utopias recall this ancient Christian model. The ultimate achievement of urbanism, then, is the design of grids of streets and sidewalks which serve as a veneer of order only to deny the sewers which flow below the soil of the city. Urbanism is an agent for the imposition of an order upon the turbulent will of the inhabitants of the city, whose simple geometries reinforce the authority of law.

From the reification of the diverse concerns of the city into the single discipline of urbanism, stems the malaise: the city has become a problem whose solution is now in sight. Urban architecture is now that system of coercion and discipline which orders through imposition those relations which might be better determined through the communal will of the city. Urban architecture understands itself as



tending towards closure and completion oblivious to the pumping, heaving machinery of a *real* city, which is embroiled in a constant process of conflict and compromise. Intrinsic to the urban processes of the city are toil, oppression and inequality, which we have been successful in disguising, dissimulating or hiding, but not in ending.

The urban planner uses tools of signification such as maps, which freeze the hectic activity of the city by losing the human inhabitant of the city, thus achieving an ab-

straction of a city. Attempts are made to 'solve' the problems of the city through methods of geometric analysis conducted over abstract pochéed massings which only distantly signify a city. Urbanism is born at the very instant of abstraction, as the process of signification begins, and it continues to exist in the space between the map and the city. The ultimate accomplishment of urbanism will be the ultimate abstraction of the city, and this has already been achieved in the suburb.

In the swift superposition of simple grids over topographic maps and in the contracted hammering of stakes into the earth lies the paradox of Urbanism: Cities truly emerge only through the *repeated destruction of their own urbanism*. Cities thus grow in a manner analogous to human histories, emerging through the layered understandings of fragmentary, contradictory human constructions, which are either forgotten or patched together into an urban text. Cities and human histories are the dual processes of hammering onto the inert and void contexts of human existence, those meanings which are absent in themselves. They are patterns which weave topographic space and narrative time in different ways. They remain mechanisms to appropriate, own and order this alien context of our existence. We enact but never witness the process of these two performative ontologies, where the repeated reconfiguration of the mold, the die, cities or histories, cause a reconfiguration of the cast, the pattern, humankind ourselves.

Notes

1 The city of New Jerusalem is described in chapters 21 & 22 of the Book of Revelation. The excerpts quoted through my text are in the English given them by the New Oxford Annotated English Bible, Revised Standard Version.

2 Michel Foucault's excellent analysis of the Panopticon prison and its analogs to social relations is to be found in the chapter *Panopticism* in his book *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Pantheon, 1977).

3 As found in Mark 12:24.

4 As in the accounts of perfidy in Sodom and Gomorrah, Genesis 19:1, and the crime of Gibeah, Judges 19:1.

5 Lewis Mumford, *The City in History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961).

6 Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982).

7 The story of the Tower of Babel, Genesis 11:1, begins a tradition of distrust against cities because they embody humanity's pride in its own works.

8 Colin Rowe, "The Architecture of Utopia." In *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1976).

9 Is this experience of the sense of arrival not intrinsic to Modernity?

Why

"Do It for Van Gogh"

are you here?

**[Patrick Cooleybeck]
[John Abela]**

To kill time?

To get "cultured"?

To widen your world?

To think good thoughts?

To improve your social life?

Conversation about architecture soon leads to controversy about a work and the author of the work.

Can built architecture be whatever it is without the discovery of its underlying meaning or must it be analyzed and dissected in order to interpret what is believed to be the "truth" of its existence? Can the work of a known architect be viewed objectively without the generation of preconceived ideas of what the work must really be all about? Conversation about architecture soon leads to controversy about a work and the author of the work.

The work of Peter Eisenman seems to encourage controversy, as does the architect himself. During a 1989 conference at the University of California-Irvine, Eisenman announced, "Never believe what architects tell you about their work."¹ Given this statement, a cautious analysis of Eisenman's work is required.

Over the course of his career, the architectural development of Peter Eisenman has loosely paralleled developments in recent literary theory, sliding from Structuralism to Post-Structuralism to Deconstruction and beyond. Over time, his interests have moved from the structuralist texts of Noam Chomsky and Claude Levi-Strauss, to Michel Foucault and the Deconstructive texts of Jacques Derrida; to John

Hawkes and John Barth; to the texts of Jean Baudrillard, Maurice Blanchot, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, and Jacques Lacan; and now presumably to current writings in the field of art criticism, including Martin Jay and Norman Bryson. He has set the rules for his game(s) of architecture; however, the game constantly changes. The goal then becomes: to beat Eisenman to the punch by identifying the rules for his next game.

I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, Schlemiel . . .

Eisenman's houses are explorations of the interplay and intraplay of solids, voids, lines, volumes, and the reorganization of these conventional elements to reconstruct the fundamental idea of House. His houses are exercises in the self-referential, where the poised modernist cube is extracted and dissected; every move made within the design occurs due to a previous condition. The houses are derived from Eisenman's interests in the formal conventions of Le Corbusier, Giuseppe Terragni, and other adherents of the Modern Movement. Horizontal and vertical planes are no longer floor, ceiling, and wall; but rather interpretations of

floor, ceiling and wall. As the houses progress in series, experiments continue with the stretching, rotating, concealing, and volumetric distribution of areas throughout the interiors and exteriors.

Eisenman's assumptions in the designs of Houses I-IV could be characterized as a Structuralist search for the basis of "objecthood". The houses were concerned entirely with processes of formal transformation. He insisted on introducing a Chomskian linguistic model into his work and criticism to logically connect it with formalism. The building envelopes are stripped of any functional and semantic associations. The client/user is ignored in favor of pure structure.

His Post-Structuralist phase of Houses V-VIII shifts from the process of making form to the cultural implication of form. (House VII "takes the form of a text, a program"²) Eisenman views House VI (the only built realization of Houses V-VIII) as a turning point, because it illustrates a synthesis of the isolation of architectural signs and the generation of the autonomous object.³ These houses are more concerned with the cultural implications of person object than Houses I-IV, which represent nothing but the process of transformation.

The (Un)Written Architecture: Text

Eisenman's theoretical works have been accompanied by both a series of transformational drawings as well as analytical texts. The texts are as much part of the design process as the design activity itself. The series of drawings usually start with a simple geometric hypothesis which is transformed through a formal matrix into a complex object, the finished project. The final product represents nothing but its finished structure. The architectural work stands as an autonomous object.

I used to write a text every time I designed a house, probably in the hope that the text would describe the process of contemplating the work and thus explain where the house fit into my theoretical work . . .

This is not necessarily true for the accompanying analytical texts. Eisenman writes:

I used to write a text every time I designed a house, probably in the hope that the text would describe the process of contemplating the work and thus explain where the house fit into my theoretical work . . . rather than describing what had happened, these texts actually seeded what was about to happen.⁴

The texts are tools of invention as well as explanation—they are views of what might happen as well as what had happened. Eisenman views his houses as being more analytical than the texts; the texts exist not as theoretical explanations, but rather as transitional steps towards, and thus part of, the next project.

Eisenman has always written texts in order to maintain control over his work. Tafuri writes of Eisenman's need to direct the readings of his work (by text)

. . . down to the smallest detail: It is a need that induces us to attempt a comparative analysis of the literary text and the work, assuming as an hypothesis their irreconcilability.⁵

Diana Periton reinforces this notion in writing:

(Eisenman's) abstract transformational systems could be said to demonstrate a pathological fear of things getting out of control. Everything in his work must be ordered, as if in flight from the unthinkable suggestion that our late 20th-century loss of values could lead to anarchy and chaos.⁶

X-treme X-sion

House X marks Eisenman's shift within Post-Structuralism to Deconstruction, by attempting a comprehensive writing of an architectural text through what Eisenman calls "de-composition", as contrasted to a rational transformational process. Decomposition is a set of tactics for the manipulation and transformation of form, intended to produce a self-contained discourse of readable relations in an object, the house.

In House X the "el", a fragmentary reduction of the cube, is introduced. The el can be viewed as expanding towards the cube, simultaneously moving toward completion and incompleteness.

The building was designed by the subtracting of elements, a series of de-centering mechanical processes which destroyed the center of the house. Customary usages as well as anthropomorphic scale are challenged (Eisenman uses glass as floor) or, in the case of function, ignored. Eisenman equates all directions of the grid, and destroys the human coordinate system. The spaces of House X are a result of form-making process and not function. House X is about the idea of challenging the traditional means of architecture and representation.

Eisenman's works before House X were more concerned with the fundamental process by which architectural forms are created, rather than with the function, the production, the result of the process. Houses I-VIII are what Mario Gandelsonas describes as syntactic, syntactics being the study of the relation of signs to one another in abstraction. The work is entirely self-referential.⁷ Gandelsonas implies that the separation of the architect from the architectural system (as a system of notions or a set of rules) allows one

to view aspects of a work more objectively. Architecture loses its objectivity when it becomes a building subject to use and interpretation. This explains the apparent lack of function in House X.

Eisenman may have known of Derrida's work during the design of House X. Jeffrey Kipnis points to a possible double meaning of the X of "House X". Kipnis quotes from an interview Derrida gave in 1971. Derrida says:

Taking into account the fact that a name does not name the punctual simplicity of a concept, but rather a system of predicates defining a concept, a conceptual structure centered on a given predicate, we proceed: (1) to the extraction of a reduced predicative trait that is held in reserve, limited in a given conceptual structure . . . named X; (2) to the delimitation, the grafting and regulated extension of the extracted predicate, the name X being maintained as a kind of lever of intervention, in order to maintain a grasp on the previous organization, which is to be transformed effectively. Therefore, extraction, graft, extension . . . this is what I call . . . writing.⁸

Kipnis then writes:

So remarkably close in spirit and detail is this passage to the procedure of Eisenman's decomposition that I have long felt that House X was named in direct reference to it ("the name X being maintained as a kind of lever of intervention . . ."), a fact that Eisenman will neither confirm or deny. "X" would have been a splendid lever of intervention for decomposition from the lineage of his other houses, which had been named with Roman numerals.⁹

There are reasons to believe and disbelieve Kipnis. In Eisenman's text for House X, the "Voice" repeatedly refers to Houses I-VIII. There is no House IX¹⁰, and this implies that House X (Ten) is really the House "X", influenced by the

Derrida quote. However, Eisenman's next project was House 11a, continuing the interrupted numerical series, and was to be the first of a series of eleven House Elevens. The sequence of numbering ends with his next project, House El Even Odd, apparently the second House Eleven. Eisenman's vocabulary in the text for House X (decomposition as a synonym for deconstruction, presence and absence, etc.) suggests that he was at least familiar with the work of Derrida, if not the specific quote which may or may not assign a multiple meaning to the name "House X".

It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's . . . Decon Man

Eisenman definitely knows about deconstruction; however, he would probably admit that when an idea goes from one discipline to another some degree of distortion is inevitable and probably necessary. Briefly put, Deconstruction addresses notions in thinking to show how these rest on deeply-entrenched binary oppositions and it operates by suspending the correspondence between the two. It analyzes and compares conceptual pairs which are currently accepted as self-evident and natural. Diane Ghirardo provides a plausible summary:

*Derridean Deconstruction claims to open up a new way of thinking about language. The traditional Western view of language, Derrida argues, has promised a kind of transparency of meaning, while for him both meaning and the impossibility of meaning are inherent in language. With the method he calls "Deconstruction", Derrida proposes to reveal the impossibility of a unified meaning in a given text, and indeed, opens up the text to reveal its basic incoherence. By difference, Derrida indicates the endless possibility of the play of different meanings, so that a definitive interpretation of a text is never possible . . .*¹¹

An architecture of Deconstruction would be one which not only challenges the traditional notion and metaphysics of architecture, but is also familiar with the Deconstructionist texts. It is not a style of architecture, but a way of thinking about architecture. Derrida says in a 1986 interview:

*When I discovered what we now call "Deconstructive Architecture" I was interested in the fact that these architects were in fact deconstructing the essentials of tradition, and were criticizing everything that subordinated architecture to something else—the value of . . . usefulness or beauty or living—not in order to build something else that would be ugly or uninhabitable but to free architecture from all those external finalities, extraneous goals.*¹²

Eisenman has said that Derrida's writing "is a way of analogizing and getting to my architecture and finding out things that I previously was not able to do."¹³

*Derrida says to me that my work is always within Western metaphysics. That it still has the aura of physics. I believe that he can try to deconstruct the aura of Western metaphysics in language, because it is a dialectical system. But it is not possible to do the same thing in architecture. Because something between being and sign will resist this kind of deconstruction. Deconstruction in architecture must take another form. My work is trying to understand what is analogous in architecture to what Derrida is doing in language.*¹⁴

Deconstruction in architecture must take another form. My work is trying to understand what is analogous in architecture to what Derrida is doing in language.

In architecture existing forms and relationships persist largely unquestioned, free from critical scrutiny. The classical ideas that architecture must be in the tradition of truth, must represent its sheltering function, and must represent the good and the beautiful persist today. Eisenman sees a changing architecture which responds to knowledge, not nature.

PsychoKiller: You're Grounded

Eisenman views House X as the end of a phase in his life. After completion of the project, he went to Venice to compete in the Biennale/Cannaregio project. At this time he is said to have begun psychoanalysis. Eisenman says, "My analysis was about trying to get back into the ground, and then into the ground, into my own vacuum."¹⁵ After the onset of analysis, Eisenman's projects begin to enter the ground for the first time: Cannaregio, House IIa, House El Even Odd, Fin d'Ou T Hou S. Eisenman considers them to be no less "rational", but they are definitely less Structuralist in their design method. In 1987, Eisenman writes about Houses I-VI (1968-1973), "(I) no longer intimately know the author of any of the essays in this book . . . nor the designer of any of the projects."¹⁶

As his mind was probed and his subconscious excavated bringing forth things that have been and things that were yet to be; his built design for housing at the Checkpoint Charlie block does likewise. "The City of Artificial Excavation", as Eisenman puts it, overlays the city grid, the Mercator (North-South) grid, and by "digging" down below the site the artificial reconstruction of the Nineteenth-century foundation walls. An excerpt from Eisenman's original design statement clearly summarizes the intention:

Working downward; the grid discovers at the lowest level of excavation, the trace of the absent wall of the eighteenth century. This invisible wall is plotted on the lowest ground plane as a shadow. Next comes the excavation of the foundation walls of nineteenth century Berlin—not the actual foundation walls which once existed, but an artificial reconstruction, a hypothetical rationalization of what they might have been.¹⁷

Eisenman's use and fragmentation of the modernist cube as well as the notion of the "History of the Site" occur again in the Wexner Center for the Visual Arts. The scheme recalls his earlier work at Checkpoint Charlie.¹⁸ The primary university grid is shifted by 12.25 degrees from the Mercator grid which is the system utilized for the layout of the entire city of Columbus. The grids collide in front of the Wexner Center. It is this shift that was the point of departure for the design of the Wexner. This fact is further emphasized in an excerpt from the original design statement.

Our solution for the Center for the Visual Arts integrates the geometries of both the Columbus grid and the Oval within a new center on the campus. In this way, the building projects an image of belonging both to the campus and to the larger context of Ohio.¹⁹

In addition, Eisenman resurrects the form of an armory once located on the site. This resurrection reinforces Eisenman's fascination with site excavation and in this case implied history. The actual armory was demolished after fire damage left the building unsalvageable in May 1958. The history of the site (sight) is further confounded by the fact that the original armory foundation is located where Wegel Hall now stands. Eisenman dragged and fragmented the structure to relocate the pieces as an entry portal and surrounding obelisks to his new building. Eisenman says that the Wexner Center:

... marks a movement from a geometric formalism, a certain uncompromising avant-gardism in the houses, to something other. But in that something other, there is another level of displacement. It engages context, history, and figuration as a displacing force.²⁰

The Wexner is more of an addition (a non-building) than an independent structure, and subsequently is read more as an assemblage of parts than a whole. On an object level the facade, landscaping plinths, and orienting gridded skeletal structure are difficult, but not impossible, to read as a cohesive unit. Christian Norberg-Schulz summarizes this point clearly:

*Works of art are generally very complex objects and therefore not easily accessible. Thus we generally do not advance beyond the perceiving of secondary properties. It is a fundamental misunderstanding to believe that a "good" work of art is characterized by being easily perceived. We see the tendency to abstract single properties and regard them as if they were the whole object.*²¹

(dis)Order in the Court: The Violation of the Cartesian Grid

The three-dimensional structural grid by its very nature is typically encased within the building skin; much like human bone within human skin. When the flesh, muscles, and viscera are removed what remains is the white skeletal system.

Eisenman uses the iconography of the skeleton as the principal ordering device of his later works. Not only is the gridded structure a three-dimensional creature but an ordering two-dimensional pattern throughout the immediate landscape and site. The idea of a skeleton conjures up many connotations: a remnant of a once living creature; the idea of something from the past; an element of decay; a

The grid is a symbol. A memory: actual, artificial, selective. An architectural memory, an artifact; an imposition on a present state of consciousness. A ghost image that allows the "perceiver" to interpret meaning(s) as he or she sees fit. A symbol of something past; something present; something future; something that may never be.

notion of history; a building block of the things to come; and the spine-like vertebrae.

The skeletal grid serves as both sign and window; memory and fiction; present and future; product and process. Eisenman describes the skeleton in his introduction to Aldo Rossi's *The Architecture of the City*.

*Thus, the skeleton, which may on one level be compared to the urban plan, while a general structure of parts, is also a material artifact in itself: a collective artifact. The skeleton's nature as a collective artifact allows us to understand Rossi's metaphor of the city as a giant man-made house, a macrocosm of the individual house of man. Here the dissolution of scale becomes central to the argument, as will be seen. This giant house comes into being through a double process. One process is that of production, in the sense of the city as a work of manufatto (manufacture), an object literally made by the hands of men; the second process is that of time, which ultimately produces an autonomous artifact. ... Thus it can be said that the process by which the city is imprinted with form is urban history. ... The new time of architecture is thus that of memory, which replaces history.*²²

The grid not only orders the structural system of Eisenman's projects, but also hints at the notion of infinite space within a defined space. In its most static sense, the grid is an assemblage of demarcations. Imposed upon this

system is the building, consisting of the resurrected fragments, the internalized function of the center, and the three-dimensional interpretation of the grid. The described stasis is a point of departure for the vitality of the interweavings of both the philosophy and physiology of the structure(s).

The grid is a symbol. A memory: actual, artificial, selective. An architectural memory, an artifact; an imposition on a present state of consciousness. A ghost image that allows the "perceiver" to interpret meaning(s) as he or she sees fit. A symbol of something past; something present; something future; something that may never be.

The mode of interpretation will not be the same for every individual, and therefore the discourse will vary. Some may indeed not grasp the aforementioned "deeper" meaning. This is perfectly satisfactory as one cannot avoid the realization that both the two- and three-dimensional grids serve as transitory structures: passageways. Places of "in-between": in between classes; in between buildings; in between the city and campus; in between past, present and future; in between possibility. Geert Bekaert summarizes this multiplicity:

*Architecture is an "in-between", an adaptation of nature, its completion, in and through which man can develop and experience his individuality, his humanity. Not strictly nature and not strictly absorbed in the precariousness of the human experience, but as a condition of this experience . . .*²³

Eisenman utilizes the grid and manipulations thereof in the strictest sense to create an ordering system for his architectural games being played. More subtle and more intriguing however are the evocations of the grid in two and three dimensions, thereby allowing for personal interpretation to flourish within the mind of the beholder.

Architecture is in an extremely oblique way a system. A system which is perceived of as both light and shadow. The play of the real and the implied. The juxtaposition of the (f)actual and the abstract. The meaning and intention are not ambiguous, on the contrary they are quite clear: they describe architecture.

The Wexner Center appears to have been designed primarily in plan. By its very nature a plan is two-dimensional; and therefore it must be translated and accentuated into three dimensions. The scaffold that runs through the Wexner begins to violate the third dimension by slowly rising through the architecture: this violation of the third dimension is extremely evident in the Guardiola House. He says:

*In the Guardiola House for the first time I was working with both traces and imprints. I took what were for me signature forms, that is the EI form, and deployed them no longer as merely something from the outside, in other words as a passive supplement, (that is the signature of the author as a passive supplement) but instead to create an active supplement with in the signature form and not imposed from the outside. The idea was to activate the EI form so that it was no longer a passive signature supplement, but an active condition of the space, something that activates itself in its own way.*²⁴

Weak Form: Weak Thought?

Eisenman has journeyed away from the grid in his pursuits which he refers to as "Weak Form" or more proudly "Evil Architecture." His designs again utilized the notions of history, sight (site) lines, terrain, existing conditions, and literal description. He uses Gianni Vattimo's "weak thought" much as he appeared to be using the theory of Derrida on deconstruction to legitimize his endless games with an

intellectual gloss, and to foil criticism.²⁵ Vattimo writes:

*Rationality must de-potentiate itself, give way; it should not be afraid to draw back toward the supposed area of shadow, it should not let itself be paralyzed by the loss of the luminous, stable, Cartesian point of reference. "Weak thought: is thus certainly a metaphor and, to some extent a paradox. . . ."*²⁶

Compare Eisenman's thoughts in a 1990 interview:

Context is a very interesting issue, and context usually means what exists on a given site. Its usefulness to a project clearly depends on the site, and on the context. But what I'm doing is moving away from those archaeological projects and more into geological projects. I'm working with more scientific concepts like plate tectonics. There are all sorts of ideas that are bubbling into my work now which have nothing to do with urban archaeology. Instead of going deep, I'm moving back to a very thin surface and looking at scientific structures that deal with weak surfaces and weak bonding. We're building a new school of architecture at the University of Cincinnati, which is a completely different building altogether, and which takes some of these new ideas into account.²⁷ (interviewer's emphasis)

What Is a Peter Eisenman?

Eisenman has again changed his ways. As far as can be determined, Eisenman is now concerned with issues currently being discussed in the field of art criticism. He has taken up the question "What is an Architect?" *Passion and Aura; The Eye and the Body, Visuality and the Gaze*: all these are titles of subsections in Eisenman's latest published text.²⁸ It is not clear whether this interest in the Origins of the


Architect carries over into his built work.

His latest works, the Alteka Office Building in Tokyo and Rebstockpark Housing in Frankfurt, deal with infolding, and unfolding, and envelope. As disorderly as these works may appear at first glance, the control over the work is still there:

Is it possible, ask the architects, to maintain "an appearance of essence and of imposing a law of constancy," when our "actual situation" is one of "fluctuation" and where every "object takes place in a continuum?"²⁹

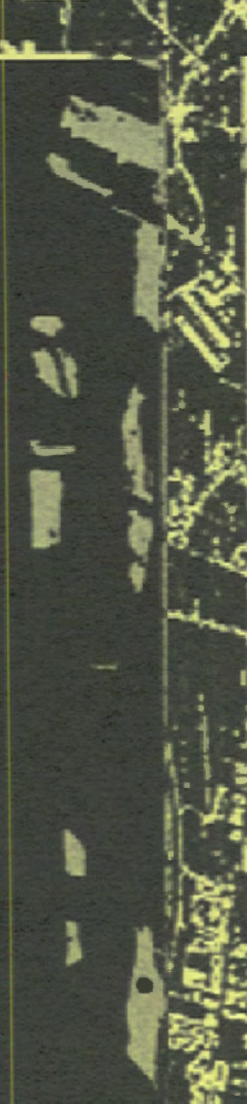
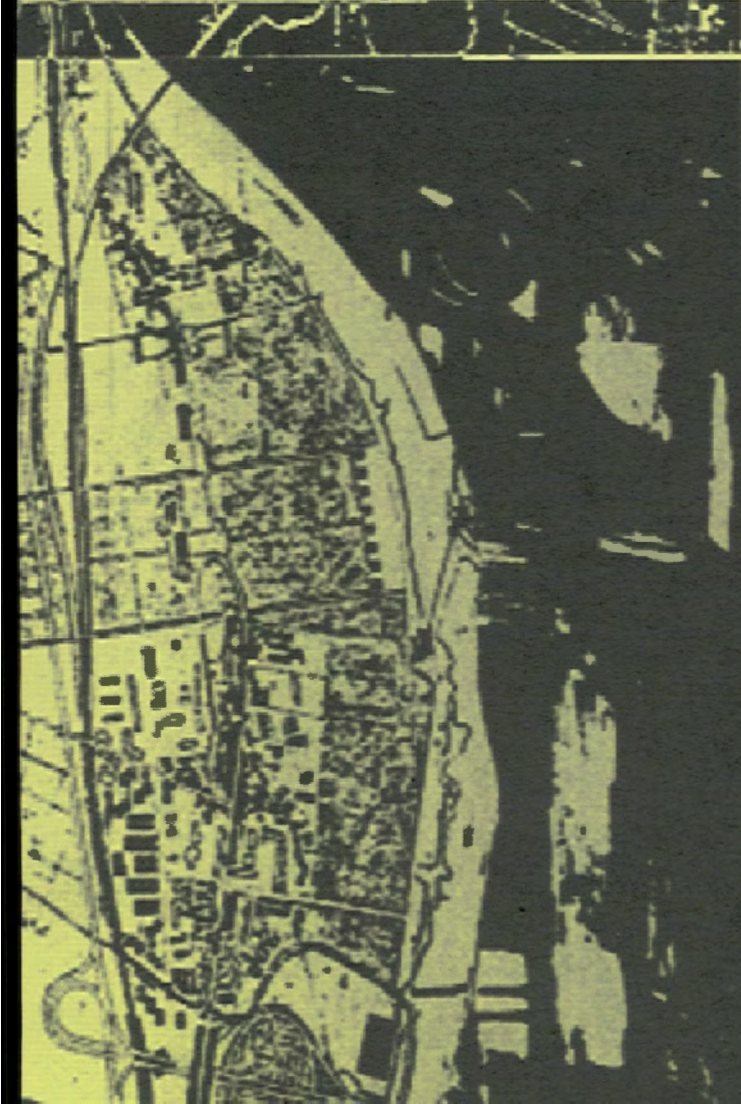
The Tail Continues

The chameleon has transmuted into a sneak (sic)—one that not only sheds its skin but possesses nine lives. He has shown a remarkable means of staying out of reach of involvement to the unwary: The text for *Fin D'ou T Hou S*, "written" by two assistants; the Deconstructivist Architecture show, the bastard child of his acquaintance Phillip Johnson; the journal *Anyone*, published by his wife, Cynthia Davidson. Eisenman seems to have done all that is apparently possible to violate the grid: to "advance" his work in this sense, he will have to either defeat time or gravity, neither of which is likely to happen anytime in the near future.³⁰

Therefore, we await—like the mongoose—to read his next move. 

Notes

- ¹ Diane Ghirardo, "Extension to University, Columbus, Ohio: Criticism." *Architectural Review*, June 1990, 81.
- ² Eisenman, "Transformations, Decompositions, and Critiques." *Artforum*, March 1981, 50.
- ³ Eisenman, "Misreadings." In *Houses of Cards* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 181.
- ⁴ Eisenman, Preface to *Houses of Cards*.
- ⁵ Manfredo Tafuri, "Peter Eisenman: The Meditations of Icarus." In Eisenman, *Houses of Cards*, 178.
- ⁶ Diana Periton, "Tracing Eisenman." *The Architect's Journal*, 17 May 1989, 29.
- ⁷ Mario Gandelonas, "On Reading Architecture." *Progressive Architecture*, March 1981, 71.
- ⁸ Jacques Derrida, *Positions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 71.
- ⁹ Jeffrey Kipnis, "Architecture Unbound." In Eisenman, *Fin d'Ou T Hou S* (London: Architectural Association, 1985), 18.
- ¹⁰ Eisenman, "Transformations." 50.
- ¹¹ Ghirardo, "Desperately Seeking Decentering." *Architectural Review*, June 1988, 7.
- ¹² Derrida, "In Discussion with Christopher Norris." In *Deconstruction: The Omnibus Volume*, Andreas Papadakis, Catherine Cooke, and Andrew Benjamin, eds., (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), 72.
- ¹³ Eisenman, "Interview: Peter Eisenman X Lynne Breslin." *Space Design*, March 1986, 64.
- ¹⁴ Eisenman, "Chora and Weak Form: Interview with Hajime Yatsuka." *Japan Architect*, November/December 1990, 48.
- ¹⁵ Eisenman, Interview with Jeff Kipnis. *Architecture + Urbanism*, January 1990, 177.
- ¹⁶ Eisenman, Preface to *Houses of Cards*.
- ¹⁷ Eisenman and Jaquelin Robertson, "Koch/Friedrichstrasse, Block 5: Summary of Design Intentions." *Architectural Design*, January/February 1983, 92.
- ¹⁸ It is well known that among the competition team of Trott and Bean Architects and Eisenman/Robertson Architects, Peter Eisenman is the designer, and the work will be referred to as his.
- ¹⁹ Trott and Bean, Architects and Eisenman/Robertson Architects, "Winning Entry." *A Center for the Visual Arts: The Ohio State University Competition*, Peter Arnell and Ted Bickford, eds. (New York: Rizzoli, 1984), 110.
- ²⁰ Eisenman, Interview with Kipnis, 181.
- ²¹ Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Intentions in Architecture* (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1974), 29.
- ²² Eisenman, "Editor's Introduction." In Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982), 5.
- ²³ Geert Bekaert, *Architectuur Zonder Schaduw: Architecture Devoid of Shadow* (Rotterdam: Uitgeverij, 1988), 29-31.
- ²⁴ Eisenman, "Chora and Weak Form", 47.
- ²⁵ Ghirardo, "Extension to University", 84.
- ²⁶ Gianni Vattimo and Pier Aldo Rovatti, Foreword to *Il pensiero debole* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1983.), 10. Quoted in Giovanna Borradori, "'Weak Thought' and Postmodernism: The Italian Departure from Deconstruction." *Social Text* 18, Winter 1987-88, 39.
- ²⁷ Eisenman, "Interview with Philip Jodidio." *Connaissance Des Arts*, November 1990. (English text, unpaginated)
- ²⁸ Eisenman, "The Author's Affect: Passion and the Moment of Architecture." In *Anyone*, Cynthia Davidson, ed., (New York: Rizzoli, 1991), 200-209.
- ²⁹ "Award: Alteka Office Building." *Progressive Architecture*, January 1992, 63.
- ³⁰ That is, the likelihood of these occurrences and not Eisenman's ability to change them.



[The Urban Environment]

The Role of African-Americans in the Social and Built Environment

Statement of Intent

There can be no doubt of the seriousness of decay in cities across the nation—cities which are, for the most part, inhabited by ethnic minorities. Just as a musician plays more than one string to create a harmonious sound, those who seek to address a city's complex physical and social redevelopment problems must draw on more than a single discipline in order to create a viable environment. Yet as a multidisciplinary organization of African-American students, we find that our understanding of—and training to work cooperatively with—other disciplines is quite limited.

Through this one-day conference, we are seeking to expand our disciplinary focus and to gain a holistic understanding of the dynamics of urban decay and growth. We have chosen five distinguished speakers who all play an instrumental role in urban development whether through practice or education. Each speaker brings to the conference differing viewpoints and professional expertise. However, they share a deep personal commitment to social responsiveness in improving the urban environment.

It is our hope that the attendees will leave the conference enlightened, motivated, and informed about the issues raised; and that this energy and knowledge will affect their academic work, personal lives and professional careers.

Kenneth E. Faulkner

Chairperson

Organization of African-Americans
in Art, Architecture and Urban Planning
October 1991

Dr. Sharon E. Sutton

Associate Professor of Architecture
The University of Michigan
Opening Comments

A look at last week's news provides a clue to the types of environmental decisions that leaders in cities across the nation are called to make. Just to name a few, officials in Los Angeles announced that ecological considerations will become a critical part of future decision making, therefore reversing traditional pro-growth policies in California. In Seattle, Washington, officials heard a debate over whether to locate a 931-bed jail and courthouse in an area where business interests claim that it will revitalize the economy while citizen's groups protest that it will endanger homes, schools, and other public activity areas. In Detroit, Michigan, developer Alfred Taubman is discussing a possible cut in the state budget that will close the Detroit Institute of Art, except on weekends, thus eliminating all of its educational programs, one-quarter of the staff, and the possibility for mounting major exhibitions.

This past week was in no way unusual. Rather, it was a typical one in which vital environmental decisions are made which affect the quality of life of the mostly minority citizenship of urban America. The student organizers of today's conference want to assure that, upon graduation, they are well-prepared to accept the mantle of leadership within urban America, where resources are increasingly scarce and residents are increasingly poor and minority. To bring about enlightened progress within the complexities of a multicultural society, it will be necessary to bring together broadly-based expertise and to confront our fundamental moral commitments to society. Yet most of higher education initiates students into the rights and rituals of a single field while discouraging them from looking at larger ethical issues or from problem-solving across disciplines.

The Organization of African-Americans in Art, Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Michigan have taken advantage of their shared accommodations in the Art and Architecture building to bridge the iron boundaries of their respective disciplines. In bringing together this distinguished panel of speakers, they hope to gain a multidisciplinary understanding of the historical and current role of African-Americans in urban life in the US.

Renee Kemp-Rotan

Director of Programs (AIA)
American Institute of Architects, Washington, D.C.
"A History of African-American Land
Development and Ownership"

What are going to be the terms of African-American empowerment in the professions of architecture and urban planning? As we begin to explore this question, we need to consider the impact we can have on the world at large within the limits and boundaries of our professions. To this end, I have chosen to look at the history of African-Americans in the urban environment from the very beginning.

According to anthropologists, the earliest remnants of human skeleton were found in Tanzania, Africa, by the Leakeys. From this center, this Nile, this Lake Victoria, this Nubia, this Kemet, this Egypt, this Ethiopia, Ethiopia meaning land of people with sun burnt skin, significant civilizations sprung. Greeks, did not invent civilization. They were, in fact, the students of great African civilizations. So, the notion of African-Americans in urban environments is hardly a new one.

Take for example, Cheops, a African pharaoh built the great pyramid in 3730 B.C.. It is now one of the seven ancient wonders of the world. Or take, Piankhy, the Ethiopian pharaoh, who was one of the eighteen Ethiopians that conquered Egypt all the way to the mouth of the Nile in 750 B.C.

The point is, we must have vision and organize our labor, information, and knowledge into power. When one looks at the birth of mankind, and the route of our species, it should come as no surprise that the notion of Africans in the creation of urban environments is not a novel idea, nor is there anything peculiar about the notion of African-Americans and cities. We should also recognize that there is nothing peculiar about the contributions Africans have made to civilized settlements.

To resolve the dilemma of this topic, I have chosen to speak about the history and the myths of African-Americans in urban environments. First, for some, cities bring forth images of *l'enfant sauvage*, high homicide rates, "other" people, welfare mothers and many other negative connotations that exist with the boundaries of race. To dispel this myth, we must look at several issues.

Before slavery, we were conquerors. Take the Rock of Gibraltar, for example, for all of Western Europe it is considered to be a symbol of stability. The Rock of Gibraltar is named after Gibril Tarik, a Moor who conquered all of Southern Spain in 711 A.D.. And, how about the great civilizations that we, as Africans, built in the past in Songhay, Mali, and Ghana, West Africa?

The notion of city is as natural to the African mind as is breathing. In the Ghanaian language of Adansi, a man's city is a man's town. A man's town is a man's village, his kingdom; the very word Adansi means man, town, village and kingdom. To many African minds, one's village is the same as one's mother. It is the entity that nurtures, provides and suckles one.

So, I ask you, what happens when you take people, whose cultural concept is "my village is my kingdom," enslave them and place them on a plantation where their village becomes their prison? According to Dr. Naim Akbar, the plantation experience for Africans completely jaded their attitudes toward work. Today, the concept of our job

being our slave, the house nigger versus the yard nigger, the Uncle Tom versus the Nat Turner, still prevails. Of those enslaved, some broke the chains while others could not.

The beauty of this entire message, however, is that African-Americans were not totally annihilated. People who were enslaved and not totally bereft of spirit rose like a Phoenix to create, to innovate and to invent. Take, for example, Baptist Point duSable, he founded the city of Chicago in 1779. Nicodemus, Kansas, is also another excellent example of a very particular type of African-American settlement created by freed men, chartered by freed men, for freed men.

Do we realize the magnitude of contributions made not only to world civilization, but to the building of key works in the United States? The highly organized skills of the slave was the very basis of the U.S. economy in the 19th century. African-Americans in the 1900s owned more than nineteen million acres of land in this country versus the four million acres they own today. What happened? Those who were escaping slavery during reconstruction, the late 18th century and early 19th century, found that they were also trying to escape the increasing trend of national racism. Through the use of restrictive land deeds, segregation statutes, they were forced into what was known as colored towns, colored towns that formed boundaries west over the railroad and near the city limits!

By being relegated to colored towns or colored townships, we were forced as an entity to establish our own institutions: schools, newspapers, entertainment districts—as in Harlem, NY—and our own funeral parlors, to name a few. In addition, during this time, when we voted, we were considered to be three-fifths of a man.

As irony would have it, not only did we build cities, like Miami, across the country as carpenters, common laborers, builders, but we also invented very distinct housing types derived from styles in West

Africa. The shotgun house and the Bahamian Wrap-Around house, single family dwellings, are direct derivatives of prototypes created in West Africa. Why should it not make sense? The climates are very much the same. So, too, the architectural solutions, were imported.

Why now, then, when we discuss African-Americans and the urban environment, do we think of a disenfranchised people? Glean Chase, a professor at Howard University, calls this condition the disease of urban schizophrenia. Urban schizophrenia is a disease, he explains, that affects persons whose history is rooted in agriculture but who have for economic reasons left the country for the city. There is a psychological confusion that takes place when one does not fully know one's place in the cosmic scheme of life. The cause of all schizophrenia comes from an imbalanced environment; likewise, the cities we create do not have a balance between myth and history, time and place, concrete and greenery. The notion of creating a victory garden, urban farming, which is so prevalent in African-American neighborhoods and communities, is an avid attempt to make that reconnection. That is what Glean Chase would say!

Or take Dr. Douglas Glasgow, the author of the "Black Underclass," who would say African-Americans who now live in cities are not supported through their social, economic and political systems, nor are the needs of the underprivileged supported. Secret cities within cities have been and are being created. If we were to look behind the postcard images of once great American cities, cities built on junk bonds, we would find despair, unemployment and empty megabuildings. African-Americans in Washington, D.C., even with a history of having African-American mayors, are taxed without representation in Congress. The political reality has an environmental consequence: the secret city where the natives live. Any psychologist can tell you there are health consequences for not belonging to or inside a political circle.

In order to come inside the circle, we must become interdisciplinary thinkers, actors and doers. We must become interdependent. As we gain hard won educations, we must educate ourselves of some very basic connections. Connect history to economics, to politics, to culture, to purpose, to goal, to intent and to work. In cities without proper political and social networks, it is possible to live out one's entire life as an anonymous person, a mere face in the crowd. Formal associations, therefore, become important and very necessary for business survival. According to Alvin Toffler, the author of "Future Shock," "Third Wave," and "Power Shift," one's survival in the 21st century is going to be dependent not upon race and sex, but upon information and one's ability to share, consume, translate, interpret, collaborate and also barter it. Information will become the new currency of the future. It is power. What kind of information? Hot information. Hot information that sells in the marketplace, here and abroad.

So you say you want to be an architect? So you say you want to make an impact? Well, let's take another historic look. Let's trace their connections. I. M. Pei, signature architect, studied for years under the great developer Zeckendorf and learned all of the economic tricks of the trade as his training ground. Kevin Roche and John Dinkerloo, one is the great designer, the other is the great money counter. Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, the business of family and the family of business. Whitney, Whitney, and Whitney, two African-American brothers and their sister. The bottom line is you cannot make it until one hand begins to feed the other.

Though frequently in the studio it seems as though you can solve problems in a vacuum, with your walkman on totally removed from the world, in real life you can only be as effective as the human negotiations and connections that you make. Decisions are not made behind the drawing board. Will you become a technician or will

you become a decision maker? If you pick technician, then there are certain processes and techniques that you must master. If you become a decision maker, you must become a master of negotiation. Take Harvey Gantt, for example, former African-American mayor of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, ran for governor and just recently ran against Jesse Helms for a Senate seat. He didn't win. It doesn't matter. Harvey is African-American, an architect, a consummate politician and FAIA. Somewhere along the line it became apparent to him that business and politics were warmly related. Once the wake-up call begins, well, you're on your way towards enlightenment.

The time is now to get to know your neighbors, world history and the contribution of cultures. Just as Adams named the world, the village, and the man all the same word, we must now become one with world history, knowledge, and respect. I predict the true new world order will be predicated on just ideas. Those of like minds will come together and relationships will be based not on race and gender, but on levels of consciousness, justice and political awareness.

Robert T. Coles, FAIA

President: Robert Traynham Coles, Architects, P.C.,
Buffalo, NY

Associate Professor of Architecture, Carnegie Mellon
"African-American Architects:
An Endangered Species"

I had a professor (Eduardo Catalano) at M.I.T. in Cambridge, Massachusetts who said, "...A lot of architects do many buildings and never become famous. I did one building, a house in Raleigh, that was a hyperbolic parabola, and became famous." In 1989, at the University of Kansas, as the Langston Hughes Professor of architecture, I gave a paper to the student body entitled "Black Architects, An Endangered Species," and all of the sudden I became an overnight wonder. John Morris Dickson at Progressive

Architecture, inserted the paper into the journal as a guest editorial. My life changed.

In my speech at Kansas, I quoted the words of Whitney M. Young, Jr., who spoke to the architects present at the 1968 convention of the American Institute of Architects, in Portland, Oregon. He said: "You are not a profession that has distinguished itself by your social and civic contributions to the cause of civil rights, and I'm sure that this does not come as any shock. You are most distinguished by your thunderous silence and your complete irrelevance. You are employers, you are key people in the planning of our cities today. You share the responsibility for the mess we are in, in terms of the white noose around the central city. We just didn't suddenly get this situation. It was carefully planned." A month after that address in June of 1968, the report of the Kerner Commission said, and I think this is very important, "We are moving towards two societies, one black, one white, separate and unequal." And that was in 1968. We are really moving towards two societies; one separate and unequal in spite of all of the civil rights legislation and rhetoric to the contrary.

Minority enrollment in schools of architecture, which increased to almost ten percent in the late 1970s, has fallen under five percent, even though female enrollment has increased from ten to twenty-five to thirty-three percent of most entering classes. The decrease in African-American enrollment is in evidence everywhere, and is of major concern.

I said in my address at Kansas that Black architects are an endangered species because those who are practicing are cut off from the mainstream of society that controls the resources that are necessary for architecture, just as the black community is isolated from those resources. Their clients are not the IBM's, the GM's, the GE's or the Fords. Those who are in practice flourished briefly during the 1970s and early 1980s when African-Americans

obtained political power in urban centers, mandating that an increased percentage of public contracts should go to African-American entrepreneurs. However, as public spending shrinks and as affirmative action programs are struck down, and as African-American political power diminishes, African-Americans are even more severely threatened. Take for example the concentration of African-Americans in urban public schools that have low standards of excellence: those who might be expected to go into the profession are crippled before they reach the collegiate level.

The crisis is of historic proportions because it threatens the profession. In order to survive, it must begin to look like the society that it must serve, and that society is becoming increasingly minority. I think the census statistics from 1990 attest to this. It is expected that Dallas, Houston and Los Angeles will all have majority, minority populations by the year 2000. This threatens our nation as well, for we can ill afford not to maximize the human resources that we have. We need the best and the brightest to compete, regardless of race."

Now, in June of 1989, the AIA Convention met in St. Louis, Missouri. There, I addressed the College of Fellows luncheon describing my observations at Kansas and about the address I had given. Out of that, a Task Force was appointed by the College of Fellows to explore how the American Institute of Architects could begin to attack the problem and to suggest solutions. We developed a list of initiatives that we felt the profession and the Institute should undertake. With the help of Wilbert LeMelle, newly elected president of the Phelps Stokes Fund in New York, the AIA and the College of Fellows committed itself to a major effort to raise \$400,000, over a three-year period, to essentially identify African-Americans who could become educators, becoming marquee in a sense, so that they can attract more African-Americans into the schools.

Wilbert LeMelle's philosophy is a

very interesting one. He says that a significant problem in major universities is the lack of blacks in administrative positions contributing in the many different levels of policy making. Without African-Americans in teaching and administrative positions, policies will remain bias and enrollment will not increase. Therefore, LeMelle and the Phelps Stokes Fund are working on a long-range project. It is a very significant project in order for people like me, for instance, to become faculty at Carnegie Mellon. I am the only African-American of the twenty-five faculty members. When in a faculty meeting, I can listen and point out issues and concerns that other faculty members might not notice.

At Carnegie Mellon we're working on an initiative to see how we can take the approach that Dr. LeMelle has structured and put it into practice. We have developed a pilot project with Hampton University. John Eberhard, who is the dean at Carnegie Mellon, and John Spencer, who heads up the Department at Hampton University, have agreed to work on a project where two graduating students from Hampton's School of Architecture, would be admitted to Carnegie Mellon's Ph.D. program. Carnegie Mellon has agreed to waive the tuition for these students.

Another initiative that resulted from the paper I gave at Kansas is being developed at the University of Cincinnati, by Professors Bradford Grant and Dennis Man, who are completing a study of African-American Architects. They are trying to find out how many really exist. In their introductory report, they say: "When we began this project to develop a roster of African-American architects, we set as our first goal the documentation of all those who were professionally registered. We aimed at using this document as a base for further research intended at profiling more closely the different roles that African-Americans play and practice in education, including those who are owners of their firms, those who

are partners in firms, those who are employees in both the public and private sector, and those who are educators." Dr. Mann is reporting his statistics now. He's been able to document less than a thousand African-American architects during this study. Well, even if his statistics are off by a hundred percent, that means that there are still less than two thousand African-Americans that are practicing. He's going to answer the questions I think in the near future and I'm looking forward to the results.

In conclusion, I would like to say that there are many things that have to be done. The talk that I gave at Kansas, the reaction that I've had from many people, has been gratifying, but all of us are going to have to do much more if we're going to do something to make this profession look like the society that it has to serve. Because unless it does, I don't think that we're going to survive as architects.

Thomas Fowler, IV

Principal Architectural Associate

Planning, Design & Construction

Visiting Lecturer in Architectural Design

University of California, Berkeley, California

"The Context"

I've decided to give the broad title of "The Context" for this talk, with the subtitle being "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly." The Ugly, relates to the non-responsiveness to the context. The Bad, looks at problems that I see in schools and in the profession of architecture. So, I'll be high on highlighting the problems and low on proposing solutions. And the Good, is the potential for re-evaluating the values that we use for judging architecture.

By the year 2000, one of the three people living in this country will be a person of color. Schools of architecture need to address this social reality somehow in their curriculums. The year 2000 has already arrived at the University of California at Berkeley. With a total student population of

21,000, approximately 28% are Asian, 16% are Hispanic, 9% are African-American, 2% are Native American, and 39% are White (1990 statistic). These are statistics that other parts of the country will be confronted with shortly. Even though UC Berkeley is a model University, with regard to the diversity of students, it appears that the curriculum development has not kept up with the rapidly changing values of the student population.

The schools and the profession of architecture are not reflective of these rapidly changing demographics. The way in which this is being dealt with is equivalent to the way issues of diversity are being handled in the rapidly emerging "PC" (politically correct) environment. Diversity is addressed only with tiresome terminology, which seems to imply that if you know the correct words to use then you must be sensitive to the important issues. Addressing diversity needs to go beyond the use of only the correct phrases.

Future architects need to understand the value and relationship of architecture to culture. Even as architecture in the US emerges from decades of introspection during the social conscious and humanist attitudes of the late 1960s and early 1970s, "it has essentially abandoned its previous values in favor of a search for the ultimate pastiche" (Henry Robinson, Dean of Howard University's School of Architecture: "We've Been Paid For"). The profession has definitely focused more on pastiche than on issues of culture. More analysis of various types of cultural precedents would provide a better foundation for instilling an appropriate set of values for judging architecture.

Changing architectural programs to represent the needs and values of our rapidly changing society must start with first obtaining, and then maintaining, a diverse student population. Successful recruitment and retention are based on making an environment sympathetic to addressing the needs and concerns of the less advantaged: role models are only a

piece of the puzzle. Values for judging architecture should start to reflect a society where there is no real majority.

How many wealthy client houses, or similar valueless projects, can we design in school to become totally screwed up in our value system in understanding changing societal needs? We need to instill the values of critical thinking in the education of future architects. The days of the gentleman architect are over. Until we all take responsibility for enabling the less advantaged to become more visible physically and less visible statistically, nothing we plan to do will have a lasting effect.

The problems of non-responsiveness to issues of diversity do not stop at the academic environment. After I left Cornell as a graduate student in 1989, I decided to do my own research while seeking employment. I sent out 150 letters, to what I considered to be the top architectural firms in the country, and went on over 50 interviews in four cities: New York City, Washington, DC, Los Angeles and San Francisco. My observations from these interviews shed additional light on how various problems get perpetuated from the academic environment to the professional environment. Most firms had little interest in issues of diversity and seemed more concerned with hiring a body and not a mind. Some were even interested in who you were interviewing with rather than with your talents and abilities.

There were three firm typologies that emerged out of this informal research. First, there was the one school firm. That was really scary, the cult office. They all dressed alike, looked alike and spoke alike. I had to get out of there quickly. The second typology was "drop your portfolio off, we will review it and get back to you." My thought about that was if my portfolio gets a job then maybe I can get a second job elsewhere. Fortunately, I didn't drop my portfolio off because I needed it to go on other interviews. The third was the preference for models versus rendering firms. My thoughts were: "well, I don't know, do you

mean I'm a model for the firm or what? I mean, I would like to be involved with the project, with architecture." I went to work for one of these typologies, but I won't tell you which one. Architecture is not the narrowly focused field as it's perceived to be. It's really so wide open it's overwhelming. If you think that we're still living in the ages of the Renaissance person, you really have a rude awakening coming, because it's not like that.

To go further, you might ask how do African-American firms fit into "The Context." The downturn in the construction industry caused by the deep recession has a particularly devastating effect on the ranks of established, black architectural firms, few in comparison with their earlier years." That sounds like it was written today. It was written in 1976 and published in, "Black Enterprise." I could probably send this to "Black Enterprise" today, or in three years, and nothing will have changed. I wonder if there are ways of learning from recessions and downturns in the economy?

Looking at values and how they are translated into architecture can be called the potential side of what we need to do. We need to spend more time discussing architecture so that we can get closer to understanding the diversity of values.

I want to read you a quote from Frederick Douglas when he speaks of conscience and its role in society. "Conscience is to the individual soul and to society what the law of gravitation is to the universe. It holds society together. It is the base of all trust and confidence. It is the pillar of all mortal recessitude." To me having a good conscience is the whole point of having a good revelation regarding who you are and what you can do.

I'll end with what I call a framework for critical thinking. I've worked a great deal on the issue of juries and what I call learning from design criticism. I'll go through them quickly. The first category is what you do with it, and under that is collect great questions—How to take it; uncover

the premise—How to get the work done; look at your lifestyle, and kill no scheme before its time—How to prepare; anticipate the questions, prepare to be probed, walk in every critic's shoes, walk in every person's shoes—How can others help; shop for support—What to look for; design your perspective, look for breadth and depth, seek reasonings behind answers, learn from a rock, (meaning learn from yourself)—Extract from yourself what you need to apply—How to affect it; notice what makes you tick, limit your objectives, be wary of your mind being read—How to improve yourself; admit your own biases, choose your fanatics, appreciate what you're learning—And finally, be weird for a change. I mean it. Don't conform because it's the thing to do.

I would like to end with a quote by Voltaire, "Where is the life we lost in living and where is the knowledge we lost in information." I think it's crucial that we become more in tune to extracting the essence of knowledge through information because that's the beginning of trying to instill the correct values.

Taylor R. Culver, AIA

Attorney-at-Law: The Culver Law Firm, Oakland, CA

"A Position of Power"

First of all, I was trained as an architect at Howard University. I made a decision to change to law for reasons I'll get into later. I went to Berkeley for law school in 1972. I've been a lawyer since 1975 to this day.

I was disappointed in architecture because it didn't seem to wield much power. I changed to some degree from architecture to law to acquire what I perceived to be power.

There are one hundred and ten thousand lawyers in the State of California. I believe that is more than all the architects in the country. Nobody moves without a lawyer. If you want to change the color of your building, the owner gets to decide the color. He checks with me, the lawyer, before

he tells you what he's going to do. He wants to know what's legal?

Now, it's true that I feel good when the design team comes together and makes a decision. It makes you feel good inside, your heart is warm, but the bottom line still gets decided by someone else. In the law, I do just the opposite, I make the decisions. However, there is no more a noble profession than the one that you have chosen in architecture, and there is no more powerful profession than the one I have chosen in the law. If I had the capacity, I would bestow upon you the power that I possess as a lawyer so that you could make a difference in a way that's important.

So, in my view one of the things that you have to do, and you had to do it in 1969 when I used to preach about it, is to become important. Make sure the absence of the architect makes a difference. Right now, the architect's position is not on the top of anyone's mind. As I sit in meetings, where everyone is a power player, no one ever says, "My God, where's the architect, we can't move on without the architect." You have got to make a difference. You have got to stand up and say that what you do matters. To that degree, I do not encourage all of you to become lawyers. That is not my solution. I encourage you to make known what you do, make that important. Make sure people miss what you do if you don't deliver it.

One of the things that has been pointed out today, is that there are many more African-American politicians. But, I think that if you further studied the phenomenon you would get the idea, at least I do without a statistical study, that the cities that we now tend to control are those that are going broke. That is a real big problem. I think that one of them, Oakland, CA, is one of the few African-American controlled cities that has not gone broke. That is an important issue, because I do not think you want to be king of a kingdom that has no money. Be in power in a way that makes a difference to the people that need your services.

One of the things that used to frustrate me when I gave lectures, as the national AIA student president, was that the audiences were only other architects. I hesitate to criticize this coming together, but it is important to give more, if you're going to use influence as compared with power and money. If your going to affect what happens. You have to make your audience much broader.

Regardless of what you might think the motives are of the lawyers, the bottom line is lawyers have power. Doctors have it too. To many, you must create need, the same need that the lawyers have created, the same need that doctors have created, and this is the time for you to do it.

This is the time when people are concerned about a particular guppy or some particular ocean or something like that, not that it is not important. As an African-American lawyer, I really can not worry about how many fish are in a particular river if I'm thinking about how many African-Americans are without homes: I'm African-American. It seems to me that there are enough white people working on the birds and the bees. I'm working on African-American issues. That is what I'm about. I do not want to tell you something that is not true. The bottom line is you have to insert yourself into this debate in such a way that you will make a difference and that you will be missed if you are not there.

Deciding what is wrong or having the power to decide in my view is most important. Here on the platform are an esteemed collection of individuals with more degrees than those on a thermometer; they know what the answers will be. Yet, can I get them in the meeting room where the decisions are made? No! The bottom line is they should be in there and I should not. I'm the guy that gets to power play, and these are the people with the knowledge. They know what should happen. These are the people that we need. Yet, until they are missed little will change.

William M Harris, Ph.D., A.I.C.P.

Director: Center for Housing and the Environment
"African-American Design Professionals:
21st Century Challenges"

Historically, African Americans in the design professions have not been radically different than their white cohorts. The black architects have designed churches, residences, and organizational buildings. Black landscape architects have contended with shaping the land around office buildings, street-scapes, residential dwellings, and public facilities. Black architectural historians have been very few in number, but have made important contributions to the research and reporting of the work of African Americans in the various design professions, especially architecture. Finally, black urban planners have increased significantly in number (Ritzdorf, 1990) in the last two decades and have argued unsuccessfully for change in the profession. The African American presence has been important and productive in the design professions in this nation for nearly two centuries.

Historically, black design professionals have come from a variety of backgrounds in preparation for work. The architects mostly were educated at the Historical Black Colleges and Universities with Howard University, Hampton [Institute] University, and Tuskegee [Institute] University providing leadership in the area. The landscape architects in the black community have been as often self-made as college-trained. The historians generally have been educated at majority white institutions of higher education. The planners have been trained at majority institutions also, primarily since the 1960s. These men and women of color have yet to become significant in number in their various professions within the design fields (Engle, 1991).

While others in this symposium may speak to the leading lights within the community of African American design

professionals, it is the case that important contributions have been made by black design professionals (Whittingham-Barnes, 1991). Particularly, they have given their signatures to buildings and policies that relate directly to the uplifting of our people. Contributing to these activities have been two factors.

The primary factor influencing the work of African Americans in the design professions has been the legacy of white racism that constrained blacks to work only for other blacks. Even today does the profession bare the ugly scare of such racism in the private architect's office, in the public and private museums, and in public planning departments. These limitations are endemic to a profession characterized by slow change in both its state of the art of techniques and management practices. Similarly, these limitations have been encouraged and preserved by archaic public officials and private developers who refuse to hire, promote, and allow full self expression of the black design professionals.

The other influential factor has been the commitment of African American design professionals to improving the quality of life for black people. As the black church has been important in the community, so has the African American architect been in the forefront of designing structures for these institutions. Landscape architects have contributed by working under contract for black homeowners and businesses. Historians have attempted to correct long-standing inaccuracies in scholarship and restore stolen or lost achievements of black design professionals. The African American planner has often been the only advocate for public policy that benefits the black community and, specifically, low income blacks. These actions are indicators of the zealous commitment and sense of respect black design professionals have for those who have been oppressed by a racist, capitalist system of private enterprise and government.

As we approach the twenty-first century, it is critically important for us to consider the implications of design decisions upon the African American community. The intent of this presentation is to analyze the role of the design professionals in the social, economic, and political life of African Americans. These comments pertain to projections based upon the best information available, in order to develop strategies that will meet the needs of a black people struggling for liberation of both the mind and body. It is the obligation of design professionals to pursue these liberation efforts as enablers and advocates.

Before engaging a discussion of roles for design professionals, let us define two terms. First, future is that time which is coming (Jantsch, 1968). It is that which is envisioned, based upon the experiences of the past. The future is the frame of reference for the design professions. Second, while it is not likely that we all would agree upon a definition more specific as to the content and functions of the design professionals, perhaps we can allow the definition to be limited to the identification of the areas. Obviously, these areas are closely interrelated. Each is concerned with public policy, and each has an appreciation for history. Simply, the four areas form a family, where members are distinct in some respects and similar in others. The future requires an interdisciplinary approach to problem solving, and the design professions fulfill that requirement.

Socially, the United States of America will be radically different in the next century. The majority of the population will be made up of people of color (O'Hare, 1991). Nearly one in four citizens will be elderly. Youths will be highly valued because they will make up only slightly more than twenty percent of the population. These population trends will have a profound impact economically and politically.

Formal education will become a lifelong process. The majority of jobs in the

next century will require a two-year college equivalent education. The focus in health treatment care will shift to the elderly and those with rare diseases. The state of the environment will continue to degenerate and force shifts in population centers and expanded costs for maintenance and cleanups. Social service delivery will become increasingly the domain of volunteers, private service organizations, and local governments. Because the world will shrink politically and economically, Americans will become more cohesive among themselves. Yet the underclass will continue to grow and there will be more "expendable" (Littman, 1991) among the urban city dwellers. The American family will be characterized by more single heads of household, fewer children, and several employed members. In this dynamic context, Americans will have less materially, but will seek greater "high touch" in a world of "high tech" (Naisbitt, 1982).

Economically, the United States will be, as it is rapidly becoming even now, a second-tier nation in the global community. Most of the next century will continue to be a showcase of Pacific Rim dominance. Our capitalist system will have fewer developing nations to exploit and less opportunity to abuse labor at home. While our standard of living, those items we can afford beyond necessities, will decline, the nation will still be relatively rich by world standards. The United States will maintain this stature through its primary export, military weaponry.

More local governments will operate near the margin of solvency. As a result, there will be more regional cooperation among the states and the cities in order to increase efficiency of effort and resources. State governments will enable the localities with appropriation of resources to meet the increasing demands of citizens; and in return will monitor their actions more closely to the extent possible.

Three workers will be required to support the benefits of each retiree. Health

care costs, though more governmentally controlled, will drain life savings of the elderly and deny services to the poor and inner city young. Employment taxes will be significantly higher than they are today. Public services, including all levels of education, will decrease, while becoming more expensive, thus creating elitism in some areas.

Racism, sexism, and place-of-origin will determine job opportunities to a significant degree (Jaynes and Williams, 1989). This will not entail a major change in national behavior. For the first part of the next century, African Americans and other people of color will be engaged in a war for jobs and status. The expendable underclass will grow and be excluded to "out of sight, out of mind" conclaves.

Democracy will be a farce; patriotism will be a matter of single-minded adherence to exclusionary policies. There will be an obsession with security for those who can afford it. Politically, the nation will be one of masses of those "benignly neglected" and an elite operating out of self-interest and self preservation. There is every indication that ethical issues related to the treatment of the "have-not" will be the real test of the American Dream.

Poor people will not be elected to office at any level of government. The economic elite will make public policy and set the standards for sharing very limited resources. Institutions of higher education will continue to justify and defend these oppressive public policies and practices.

While racism and sexism will continue to be driving political forces; increasingly socioeconomic class will determine the political as well as economic station in life for most. On a global scale, the United States will use its military strength to force others to concede all possible resources. Wars will result when developing nations refuse to acquiesce to these threats. The world will demand that this nation show greater maturity and cooperation within this global community. As race and

gender become less of a factor in decision making, the world will call upon people of color and women to be leaders in movements of liberation no matter their historical statuses.

Within this context, the roles of the African American design professionals will be critical. They must become agents for social change, seeking liberation of the mind, body, and environment if they are to be useful citizen-professionals in a global community. There are several routes by which this can be achieved.

First, the teaching programs, faculties, educational institutions, and work products must reflect a true picture of society (Hill, 1990). No longer will the European world-view suffice as adequate models of what people should be everywhere. Less societal value must be placed upon what we have come to know as important, to be replaced by attention to the real needs of those who may be of different cultures, languages, and lifestyles.

Special challenges are to be faced by institutions of higher education if greater relevance were to be realized in the future. In schools of design in this country, the absence of racial diversity is impressive. Currently, no African American is dean of a school of architecture in a majority white university. Without blacks at the leadership, policy making levels, there is very modest opportunity to significantly change the patterns of past institutional racism and ineffective production of black design professionals. Few African Americans and other people of color are faculty members in these institutions. As a reality, the Historical Black Colleges and Universities are much better racially diversified than the majority white institutions. There must be major attention given the current curricula in schools of design and planning in this nation. Most architecture curricula give uneven attention to European artifacts and structures while nearly ignoring the built environments of Africa, especially black Africa, Asia, and even native cultures in

America. The literature is dominated by white scholars who have nearly no contact with blacks in the real world. Books, visuals, and models serve to embellish the points of view of white society while denying the legitimacy of subcultures and minority lifestyles. The curriculum is dependent upon the faculty; therefore, the curriculum will not change significantly until the faculty is changed to accommodate African Americans, others of color, and different cultural groups.

The institutions of higher education having the greatest resources must devote more time and energy to providing services to the community outside their walls. For schools of design and planning, this means attention must be given to the congestion of inner city neighborhoods, inadequate housing for the poor and homeless, siting of environmental waste facilities, poor or non-existing transportation for low income workers in cities, and many more of the truly pressing problems that test the survivability of this nation.

Second, practitioners must have greater competence, enabling them to solve demanding problems. It will not be enough to excuse as deserving but unreachable, blaming the victims, those whom we lack the ability to serve adequately. Design professionals must be able to effectively address increased densities, decreased resources, and economic, social, and political inequality on both domestic and international scales.

The challenge to the design practicing professional is not to maintain the status quo; it is to bring about fairness through redistribution of resources. To achieve this end, practicing design professionals as well as academics, must become advocates for African-Americans, the poor, and others who have been shut out of the American equation for equal opportunity. Such a role as advocacy will prove trying for most design professionals. Being a successful advocate means breaking the unfair rules, even if they have served one's inter-

ests well. It means learning to take risks before decision makers who refuse to consider policy making based upon historical inequities. For those in the academy, advocacy requires working, perhaps in the structure of community practicums, to educate the people in the difficult to reach communities to become self sufficient. New teaching methods, modified research techniques, and certainly, different reporting styles need to be designed and implemented in concert with the people who will be most affected by the intervention.

Third, the policy makers who are influenced by members of the design professions, and especially by architects and city planners, must be persuaded to give priority in a world of limited resources, to those having the greatest need. Obviously, this runs completely counter to our current exclusionary attitudes and practices. Yet this is the only possible outlook for productive professionals in a world in dire need of adjustments that benefit humankind.

Historically, design professionals, both in practice and the academy, have felt privileged to be providers of information and justification to decision makers. In this role, the design professionals have done little to change the conditions of life for those who are oppressed. A signature building downtown that is home for those companies that hire few African Americans and low income people is not an impressive monument to social change for architecture. An exclusionary zoning ordinance in the urban fringe that does nothing to bring about equality of residential location for all people is a sad indictment upon city planning. Design professionals must move with dispatch to present information and justifications to policy makers in such a fashion as to constrain only fair outcomes.

Providing information and justifications to decision makers such that fair policies have a better chance of being realized is not sufficient. Design professionals must move into the sphere of program

implementation to assure that activities are not racist, sexist, culturally biased, or disability specific. The clean hands of those historically who refused to become involved in the daily action of management left social, economic, and political tragedy for the powerless in our cities. Design professionals must write themselves into the implementation phase of proposals such that when funding is received, there will be resources for involvement. Particularly must architects and planners engage themselves in the operations of projects and programs that they have nurtured from infancy. To do this effectively, design professionals must acquire new skills of management, negotiation, and community organizing.

With the proper presentation of information and justification for fair policies, involvement in implementation to enhance the quality of projects and programs, still design professionals must be partners in the evaluation of projects and programs. When the elected officials and bureaucrats seek to assess the degree of achievement in activities, design professionals need to be involved in the evaluations. Of course, this is a reasonable expectation if design professionals were engaged in the information and justification and implementation phases. Currently, only the planners are equipped to effectively perform program evaluation. For the designers and historians, there is much to be done to come to an acceptable level of competence to effectively participate in complex policy and program evaluation.

Finally, we in the design professions must provide leadership to other professionals and decision makers. It will not be possible for us to take liberating actions unless we believe in and support actions for fairness, justice, and peace. Let there be no mistake, it must be clear that peace cannot be realized without justice. The best test of fairness is whether governmental, personal and professional behaviors assure no greater disadvantage to the poor and oppressed than to the affluent (Harris, 1990).

The academic community has a special role in leadership development. Increasingly, the demand is for more qualified, socially and politically sensitive men and women of color to take leadership positions in our profession as well as the decision making public and private sectors. It requires more courage of faculty members than they have demonstrated to date in order to produce African American and other people of color leaders from the design professions. It requires an aggressive dedication by black students and faculty for excellence to assure such leadership.

This brief presentation has enumerated some of the problems and estimated projections for the future in the American system. The particular roles of those in the design professions have been shown as important, even critical. Clearly, major changes in the manner in which we currently teach, conduct research, serve the community, and practice are in order. While the scenario presented is challenging, assuredly the design professions are capable of meeting the projected needs.

In a context at once domestic and global, the recommended actions for us as designers of the future are attainable with dedicated hard work and substantial attitudinal changes. Race, gender, and culture are critical elements for consideration in the examination of these issues. The problems will not disappear; in fact, they will intensify, as suggested in this presentation. Let's get on with meeting the challenging tasks at hand!

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Concluding Comments

The Audience: Once people are sensitized and aware, how do they attain the power as architects and planners to resolve problems?

Dr. Harris: All of us in the design professions have to respond to the real needs that would improve the quality of life in the environment. It is not the case that people don't appreciate what architects, planners and historians do, it is just that we, the professionals, have not been working on the problem sets that respond to the dire needs in society. We resolve problems ourselves by simply changing our priorities.

Ms. Kemp-Rotan: Architects can become valuable players to the extent that they can put their hands on information. The problem is we actually have access to information but we are not great managers of information. We do not have a systemized way of collecting information, cataloging, disseminating, and packaging information in competitive ways to evaluating it. As an example of empowerment through information, one of the projects that the AIA is completing is the American Disabilities Act (ADA). Our building regulations and performance committee was responsible for drafting and lobbying on behalf of the legislation as it made its way through Congress. We are saying that we are the subject matter experts in this particular field. Because we helped to write the legislation, we have empowered ourselves to be the consultants as to how to translate, design, [and] accommodate the legislation.

Mr. Coles: Students have very little knowledge about the real world that they will shortly emerge in. You do not simply develop architecture in a vacuum. You are not simply dealing with producing objects of art, but with producing something that has to solve the needs of a community. So, the schools need to begin to address how we can connect you students with that world that you are going to enter into. The future is not so far off. You should be involved in it

right now. I think the people who are in this room are obviously interested in how they can become involved.

Mr. Fowler: I have a very simple way of dealing with the issue of being more responsible as an architect when you get out. The simple thing of listening, public listening is a real trait we need to develop as opposed to talking. It is not an issue of public speaking to razzle and dazzle your client. You really need to listen more, which is the exact opposite in some ways when you are in school. You, as students present your work sometimes being overly defensive. When you get out, you should be listening so you can interpret, translate and transform something into what the client wants.


Mr. Coles: The profession has to look more like the society that it has to serve if it is going to survive and that society is going to become a majority minority society in the near future.

Mr. Culver: I honestly feel that architects will need to become more political in the sense of actually occupying political positions to empower the profession with ideas that will effect change. The challenge is to work for people who do not have money. The truth of the matter is you are going to have to have a political structure that allows payment to you not from the client, but rather payment to you while you service those who need it most.

The Audience: What kind of efforts are being expended to study cities and architects in other parts of the world to devise ways to solve our problems?

Mr. Coles: At Carnegie Mellon, the question has come up as to what kind of summer travel programs the school should have and, of course, the focus is always towards Western Europe. It has been suggested that we should start looking toward third world countries. I think that the suggestion of looking at all cities, all cultures would be very helpful.

Ms. Kemp-Rotan: In 1993, in Chicago, the AIA and the International Union of Architects are going to have a joint interna-

tional conference. Some of the issues and some of the solutions are going to be for the first time in quite a while shared—institution to institution. Another thing that the women might particularly want to look at is the Union International de femme Architects, which is an international union of female architects that is comprised of three hundred women who practice architecture throughout the world. It is interesting how myopic we can become in thinking that as women there is very little that we do. There are other countries in which women are chief designers and architects who are doing major kinds of construction projects on behalf of their governments. 


Letter from the
[Chairman]
of the Architecture Program

The projects on the following pages represent only a sampling of the collective creative work our students have undertaken during the past academic year. A broader look at our studio output would reveal the true extent of talent of those in our studio program.

The Professional Program with its tradition of pluralism has sought to encourage a diversity of stylistic perspectives in the studio. The many new faculty who have joined the Professional Program over the past five years have brought with them pedagogical techniques from numerous other professional schools. These diverse approaches to studio teaching coupled with a willingness to undertake lively debate will, in time, yield a distinctive new approach to studio teaching. Future editions of Dimensions will document these changes. In the meantime, I congratulate faculty and students for the wonderful studio work executed over the past academic year.

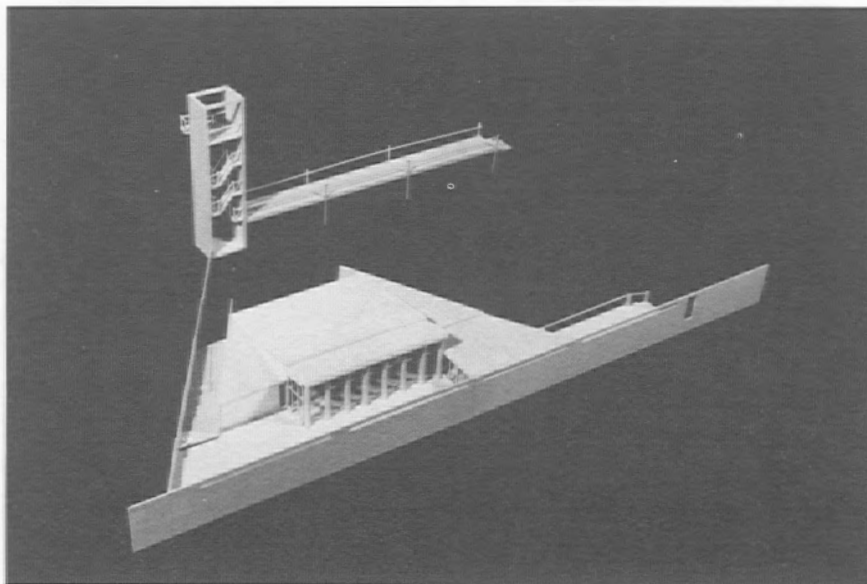
Thanks to all those faculty and students who generously contributed their time to collecting and hanging the work: without you it would not have been possible.

Kent L. Hubbell AIA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kent L. Hubbell', with a stylized, flowing script.

Architecture Program Chair

Professional Year I



Carrie Yoon

River Theatre

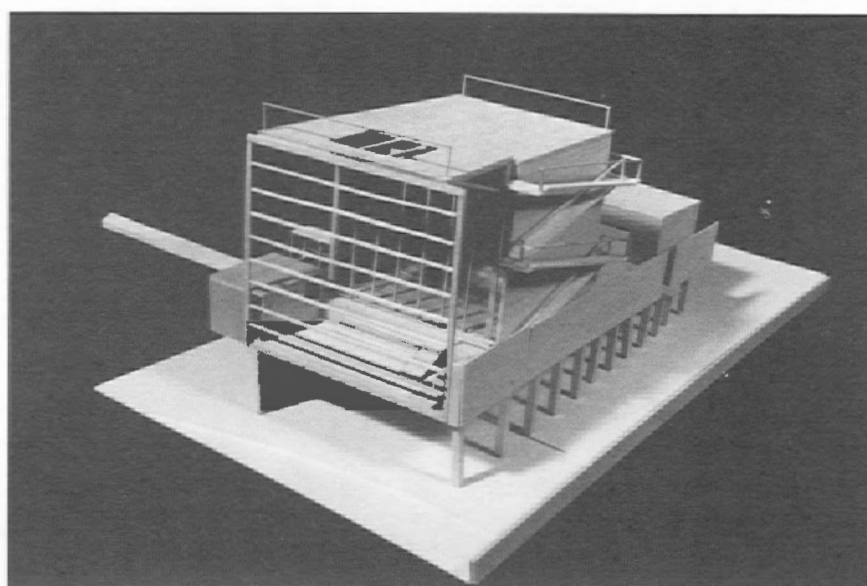
Laura Briggs, Studio Critic

In order to explore viewing in architecture—analytical perspective drawings and constructions were used in the development of a theatre.

Ana Henton

River Theatre

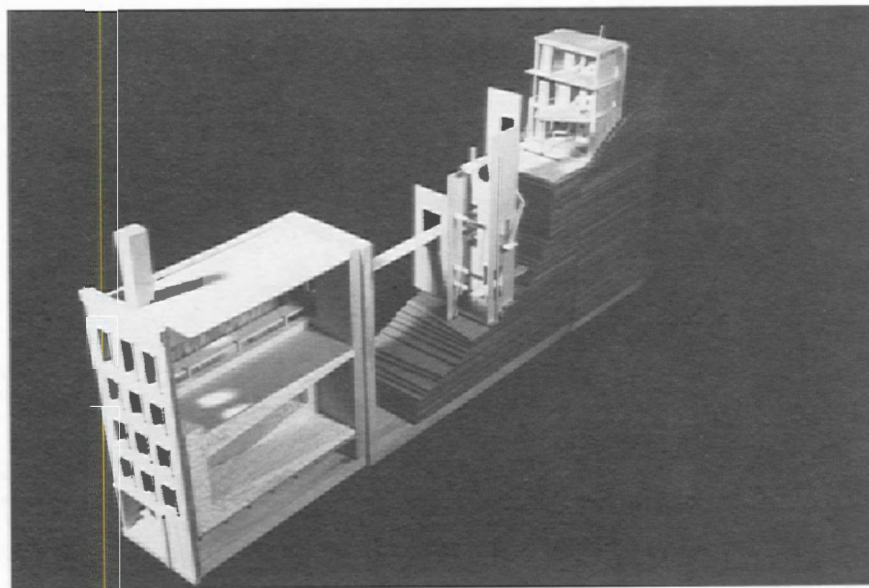
Laura Briggs, Studio Critic
In order to explore viewing in architecture—analytical perspective drawings and constructions were used in the development of a theatre.



Jason Tranchida

Bridge/Archive/Studio

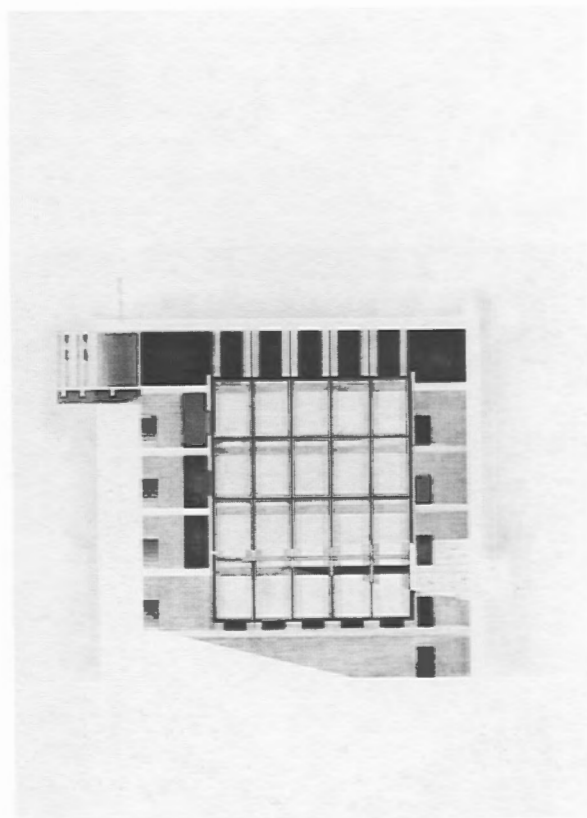
Rob Carpenter, Studio Critic
object/volume/place
span/envelope/site

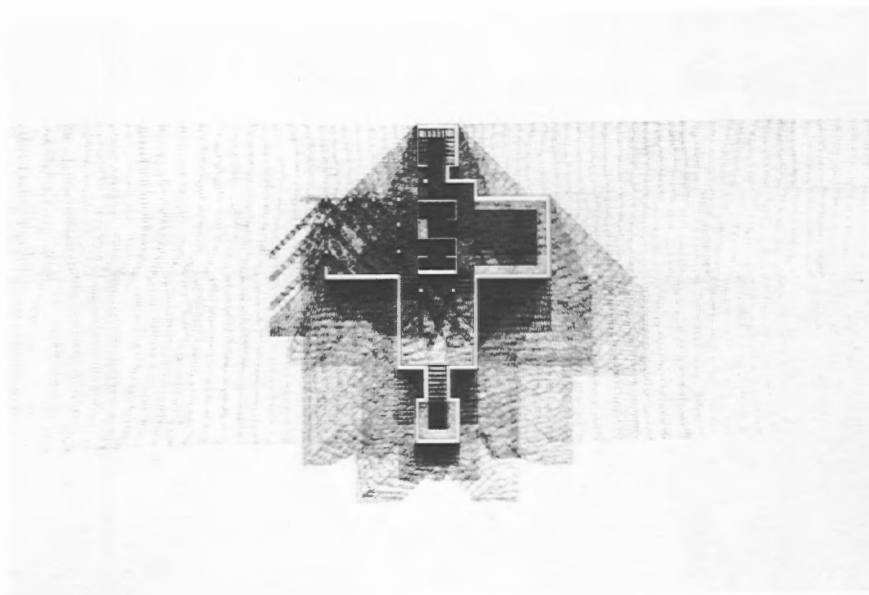


Tim Pettigrew

Archive

Rob Carpenter, Studio Critic
Archive for housing rare films.





Laura Y. King

Egyptian Dig House

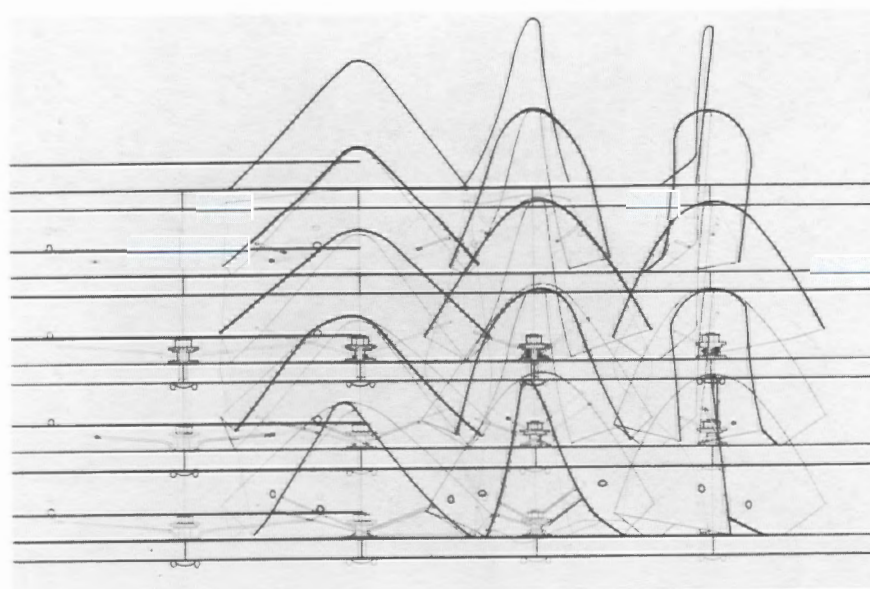
Melissa Harris, Studio Critic

A study of shadow movement from sunrise to sunset.

Stephen P. Fridsma

Record of the Application of a Force

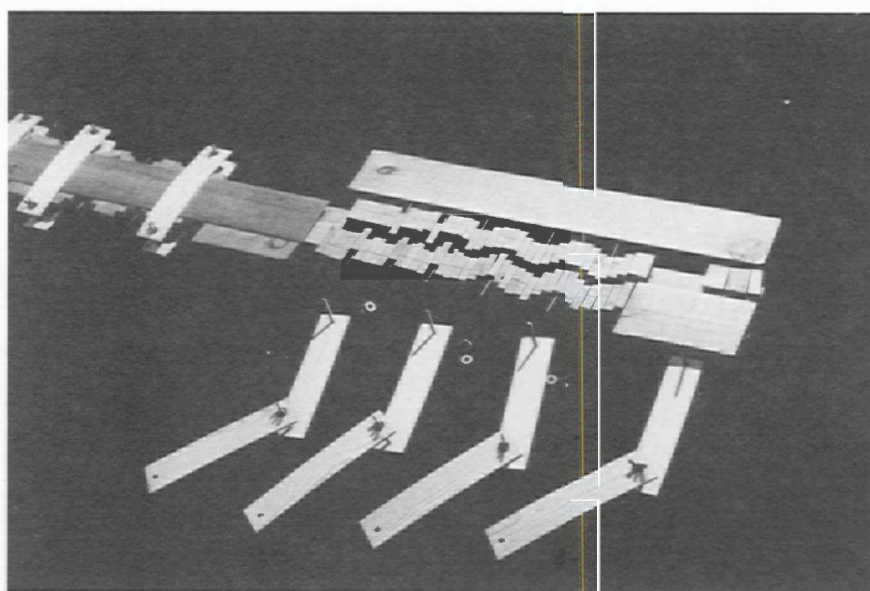
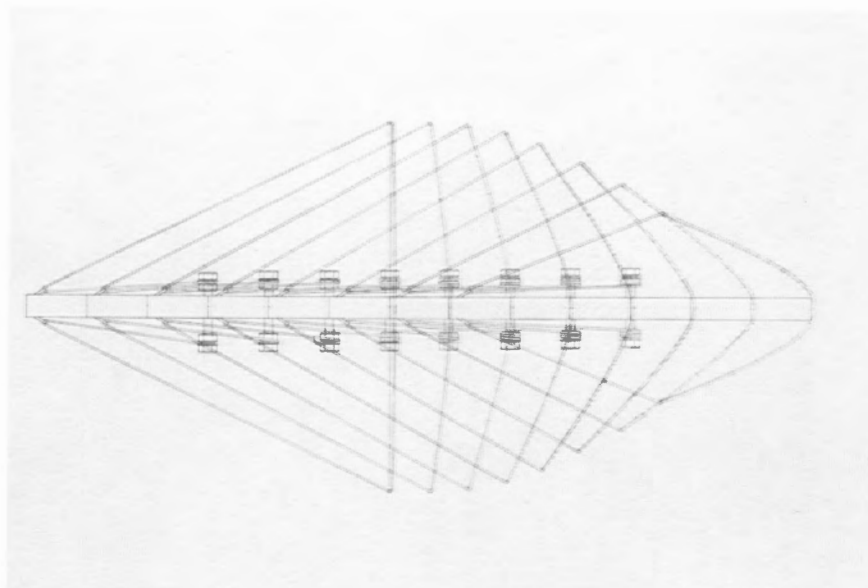
Kent Kleinman, Studio Critic
Sectional views through a square
foot of sheet metal wound about a
central post.



Howard Leung

Record of the Application of a Force

Kent Kleinman, Studio Critic
Given one foot square pieces of plywood and sheet metal, connect the pieces and record the deformation of materials.



Leslie Stein

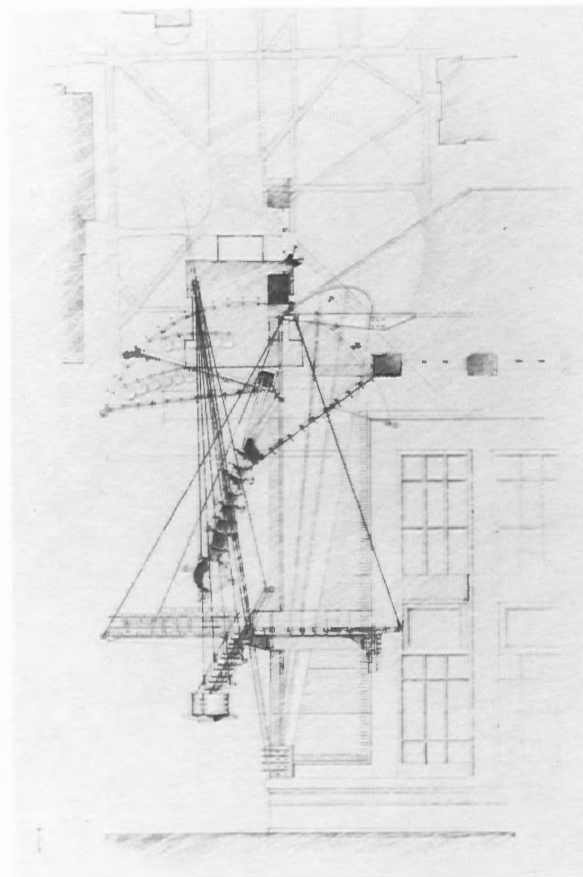
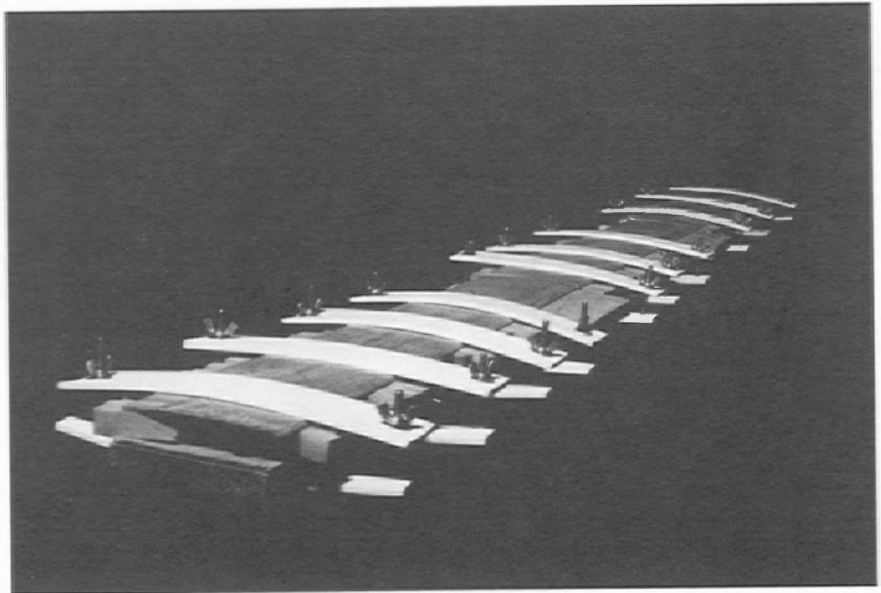
Sitting

Kent Kleinman, Studio Critic
The focus is the relationship between excavated and assembled material.

Leslie Stein

Siting

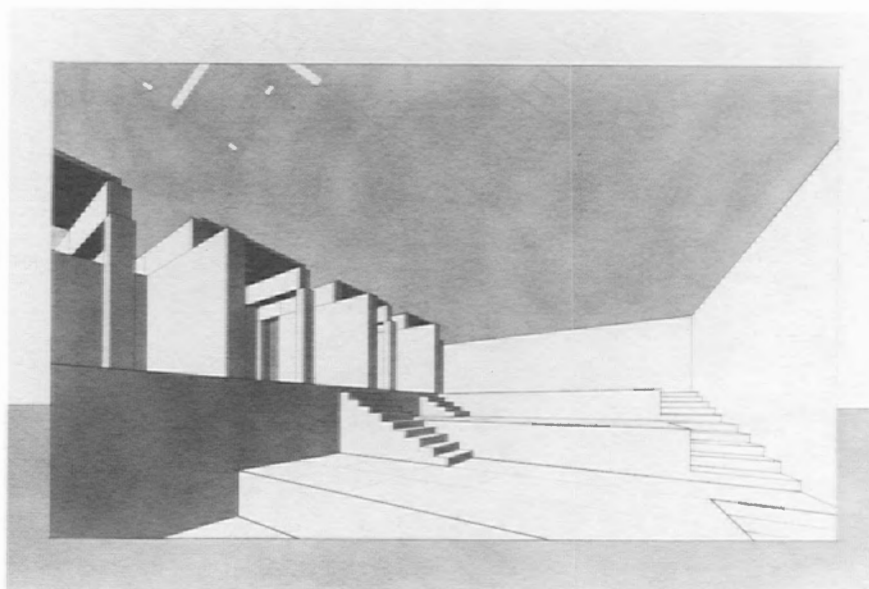
Kent Kleinman, Studio Critic
The focus is the relationship
between excavated and
assembled material.



Dallas E. Felder

Diag Podium

Peter Osler, Studio Critic
The essence of the podium is
ephemeral, its morphology is
tensional, and its symbolism
is raw.

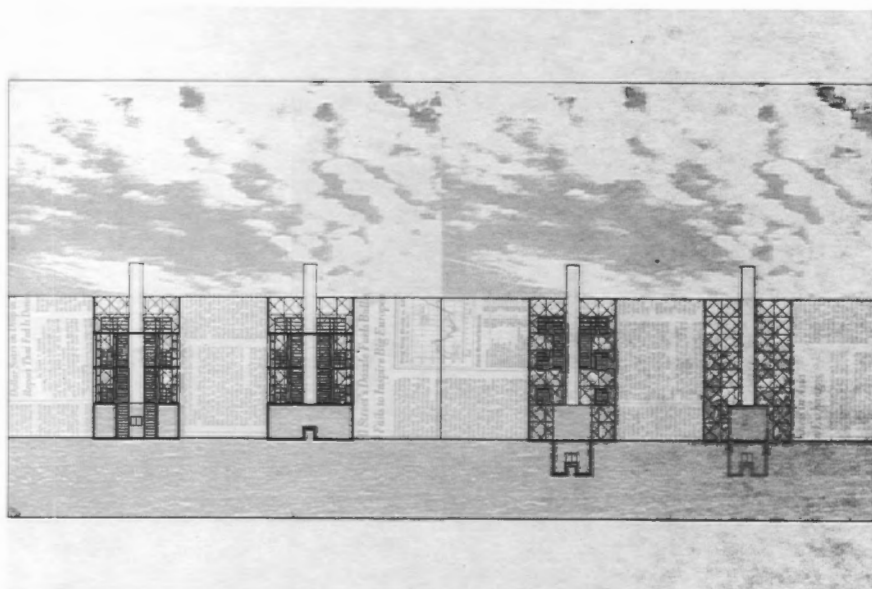


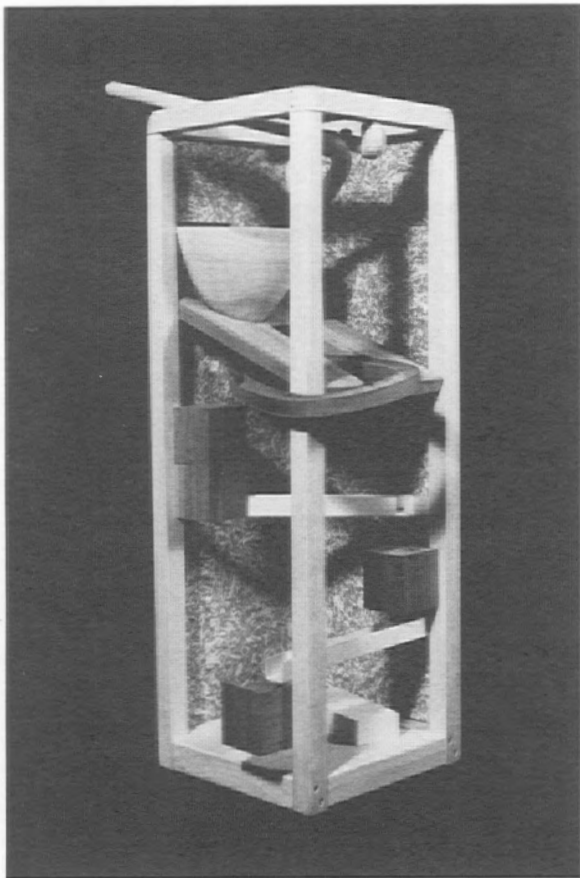
Jeremy Slavkin
Structure

Tim Stenson, Studio Critic
A choreographed sequence which connects a courtyard and a pavilion.

Robert Kraska
Urban Crematorium

Tim Stenson, Studio Critic
Death is the only escape from the confusion of a mass information society. This building celebrates our release.



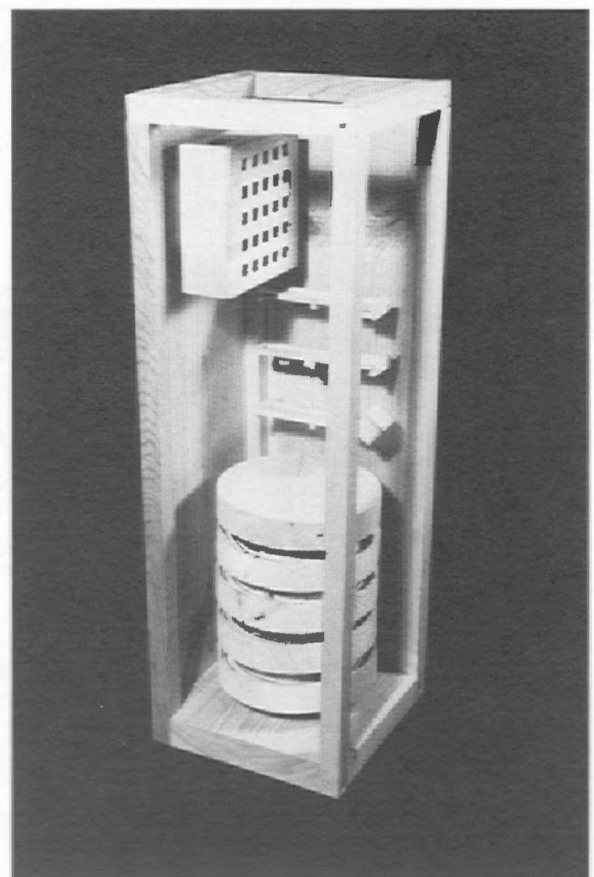


Jennifer Deronne

Exploring Gravity

Elizabeth Williams, Studio Critic

In a three-foot structure, a path is created for a steel ball to travel for exactly fifteen seconds.

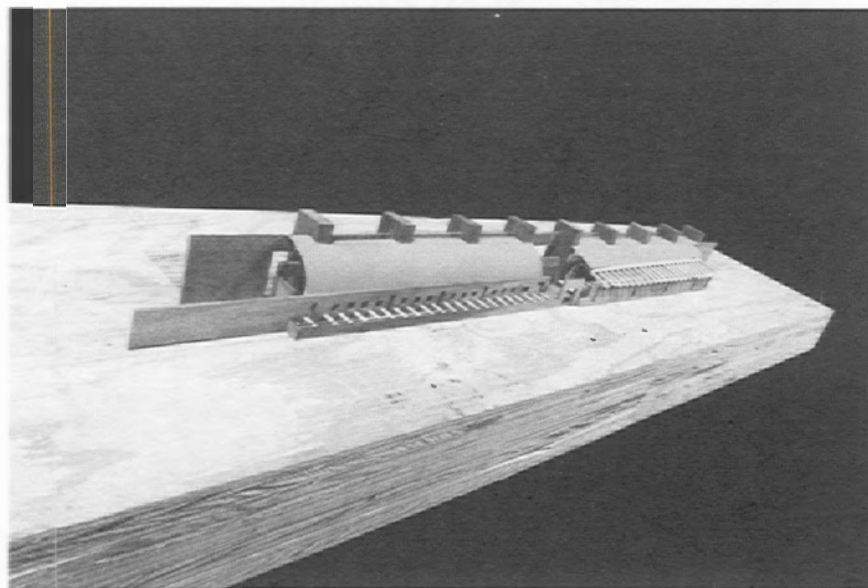


Erik Schultz

Gravity Path

Elizabeth Williams, Studio Critic
Articulation of the movement of a
steel ball over a fifteen
second period.

Professional Year 2

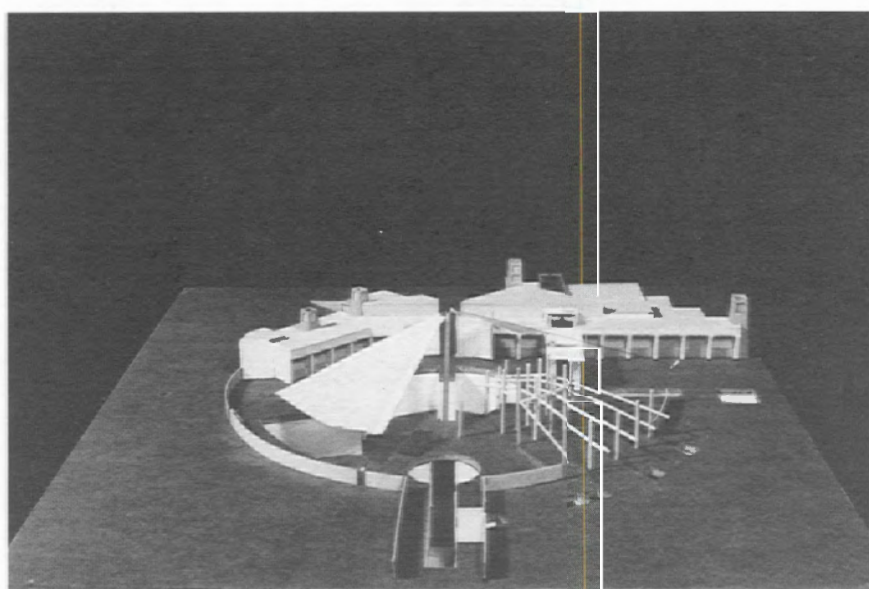


Jason Longo

Navajo Indian Cultural Center

Jong-Jin Kim, Studio Critic

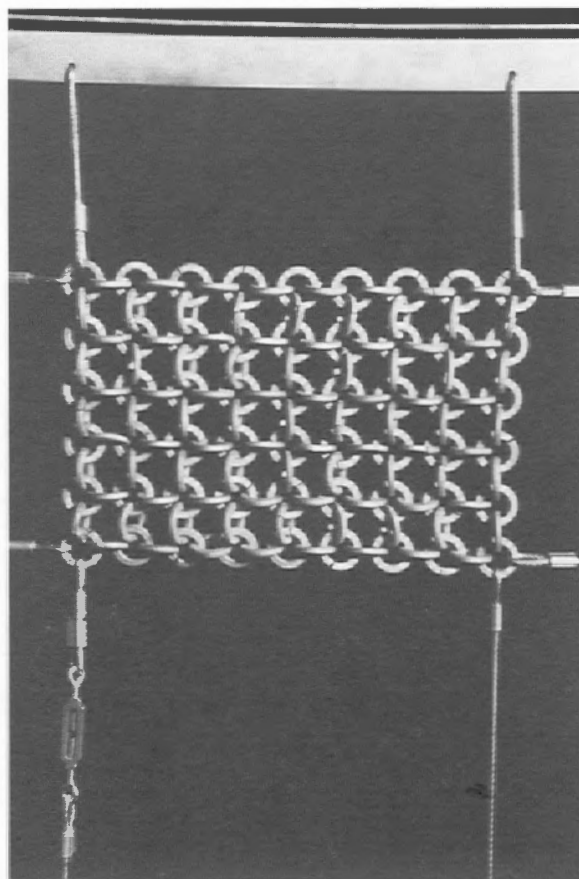
This cultural center is a product of the material record of both the cliff dwellings and Native American market places which are found on this site in Arizona. Project chosen as the undergraduate Alumni award winner.



Mark McPartlin

Navajo Indian Interpretive Center

Jong-Jin Kim, Studio Critic
Orientation and Cultural Center
for a reservation in
Northern Arizona.



Thomas Hendricks

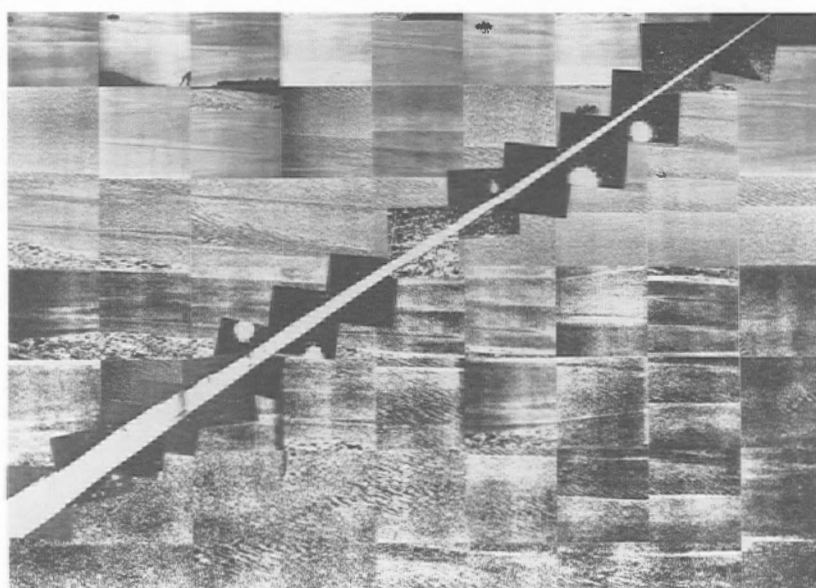
Sculpture

Keiichi Miyashita, Studio Critic
A full size detail which investi-
gates the idea of wall as "window".

Robert Kraska

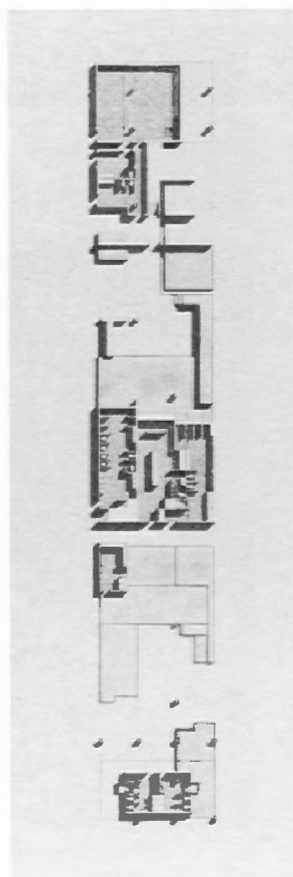
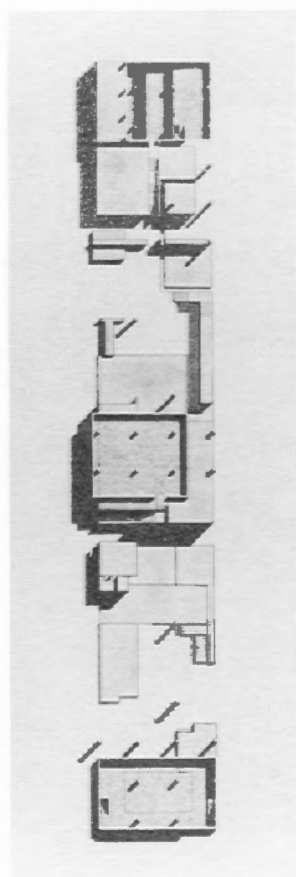
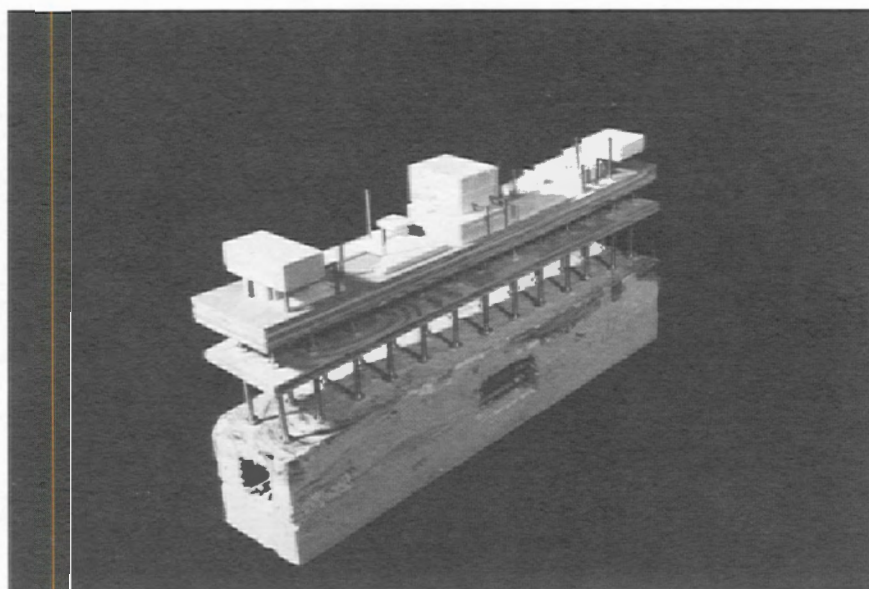
Mile Long Shower in Death Valley

Martin Schwartz, Studio Critic
The fragility of the water reminds
the bather of the power
of the desert.



Richard Kasemsarn
Chicago Bath House

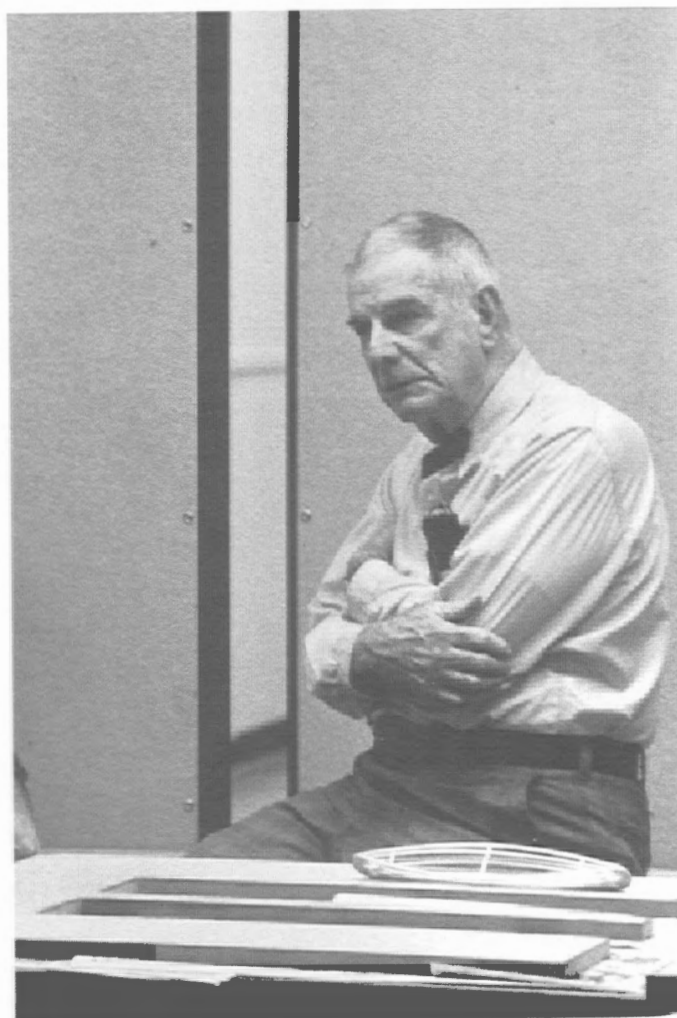
Charles Waldheim, Studio Critic
Addressing the need for public
bathrooms in Chicago.



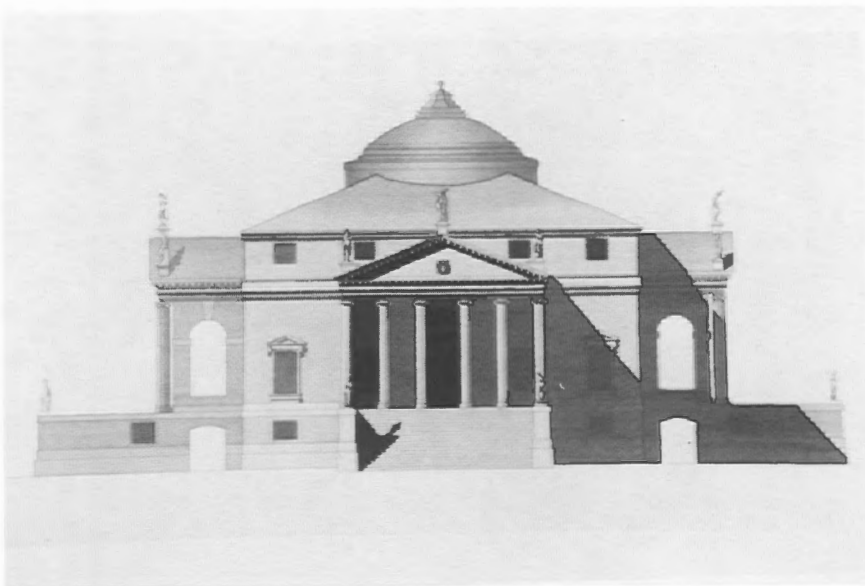
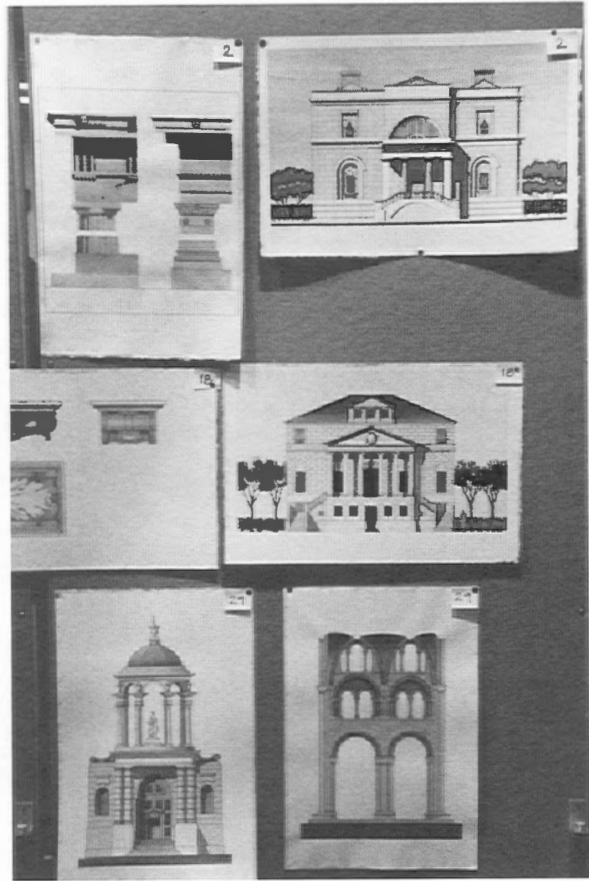
Johe

The images presented are from the Architectural Motif Water Color Competition held at the college in the Fall of 1991.

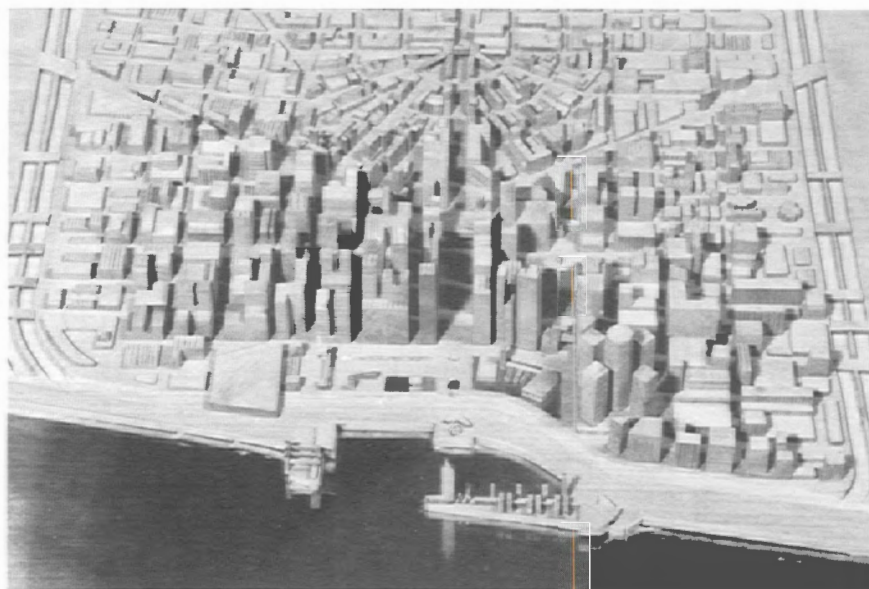
Professor Emeritus Herbert W. Johe encourages the exploration of both the technical and artistic nuances of the medium.







Graduate Studies



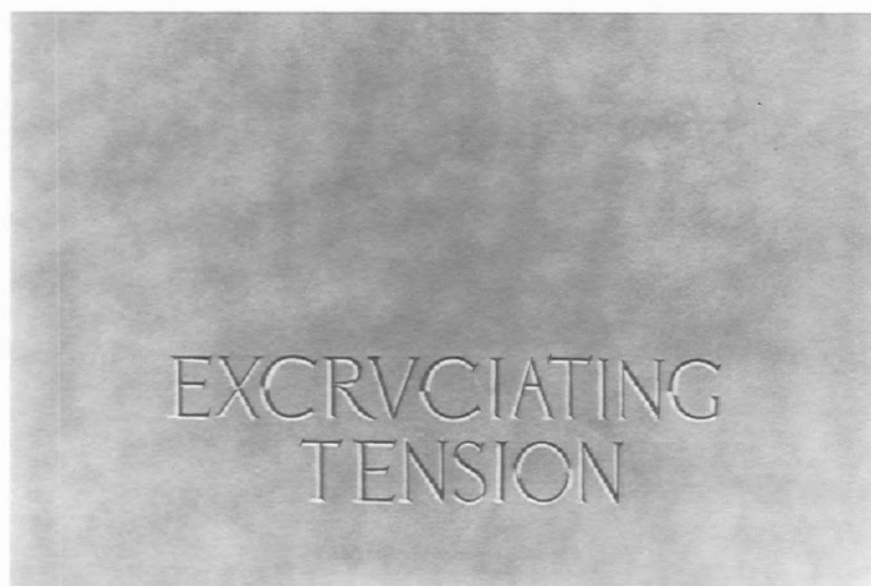
Lisa L. Raskin

Detroit: City of the Future

Brad Angelini, Studio Critic

In the Detroit of tomorrow a dense urban fabric is sculpted. A programmed park and science center vitalize the central urban space while initiating an extensive green strip along the riverfront.

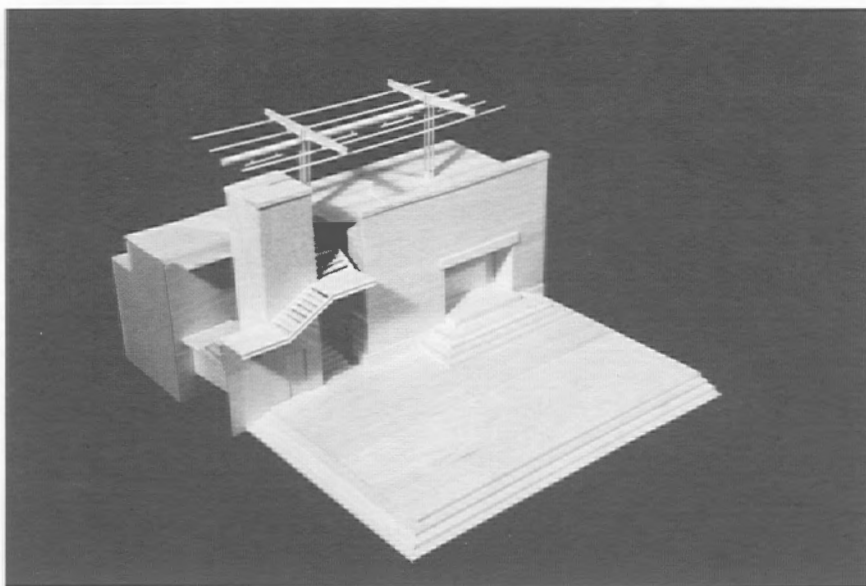
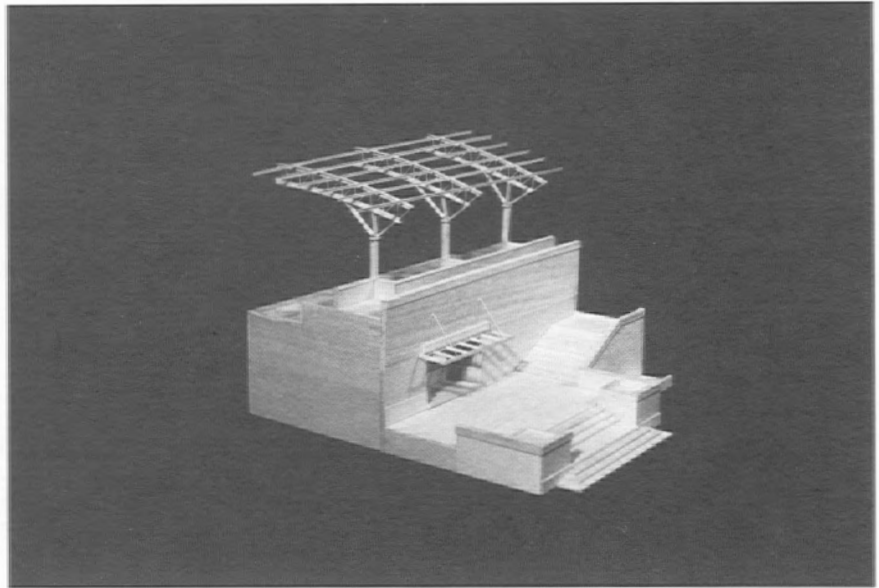
Craig Hoernschemeyer



Casey Jones

Forest Hills Train Station

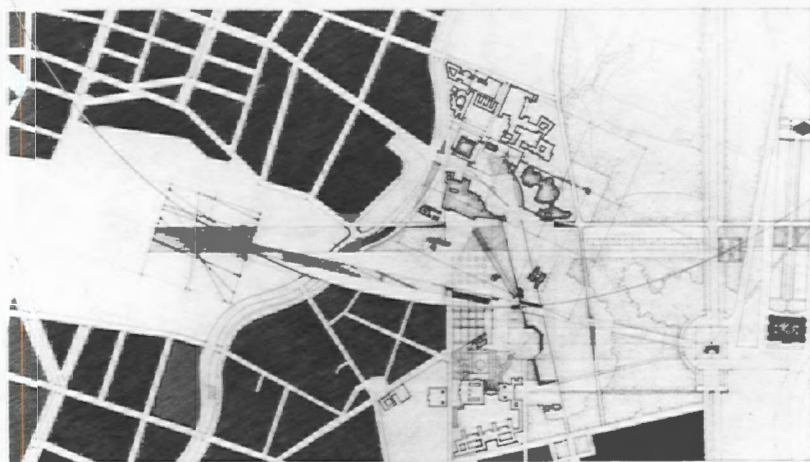
William Bricken, Studio Critic
The solution attempts to unify two
disparate communities which
have grown up around an el-
evated train. The central canopy
unites the two halves of the
station while also creating a single
arrival space.



Lyle Beecher

Forest Hills Train Station

William Bricken, Studio Critic
The train station with its public
plaza creates a gathering place
which serves two diverse neigh-
borhoods.

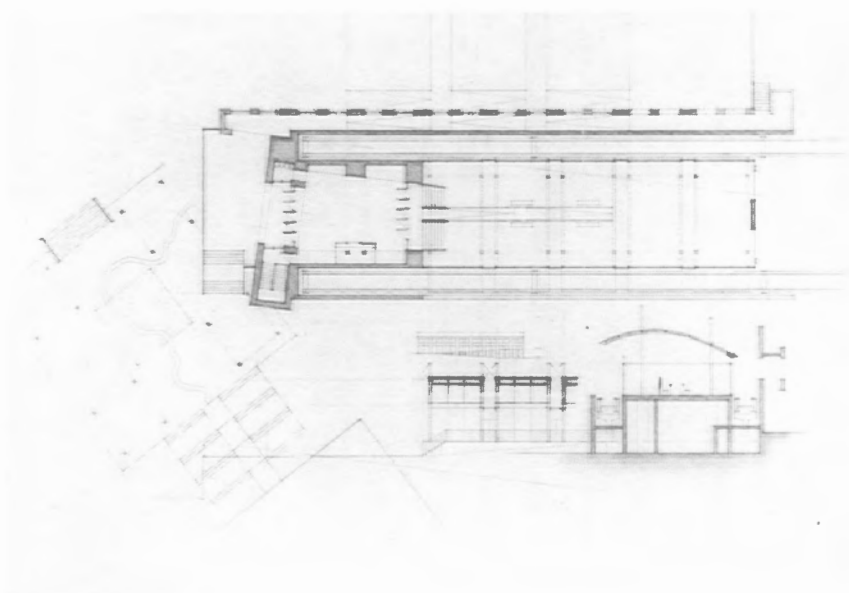


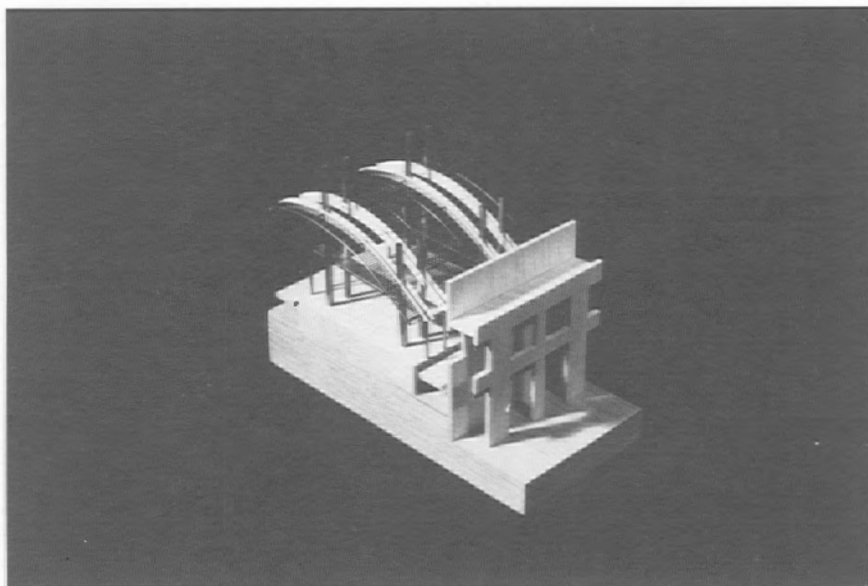
Bonnie Greenspoon

Kulturforum, Berlin.

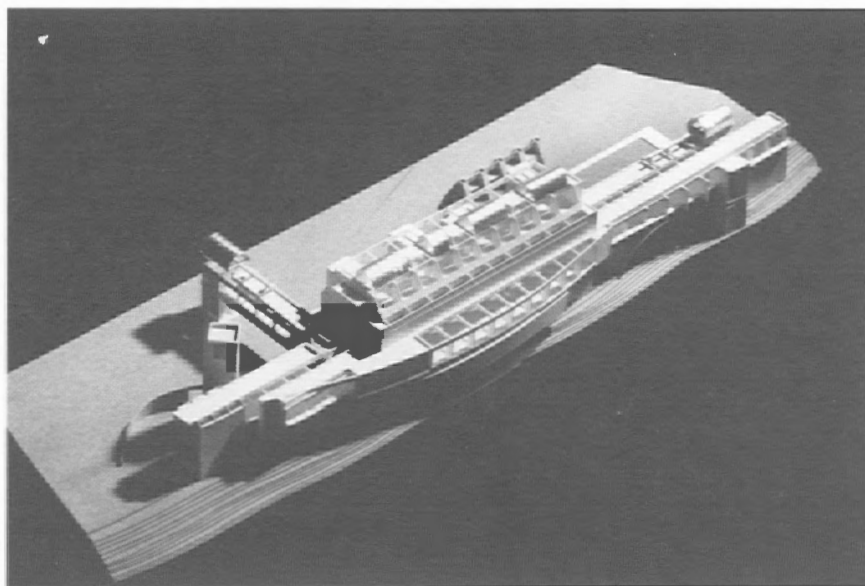
William Bricken, Studio Critic

A rehabilitation of the zone of the wall is suggested by a series of layered tracings which organize the disparate objects and historical facts.





Bonnie Greenspoon
Kulturforum, Berlin.



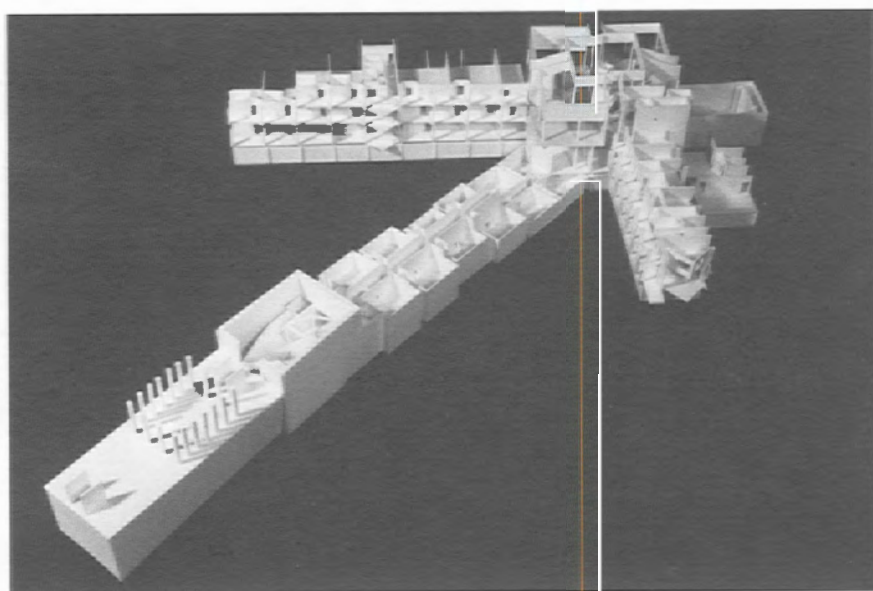
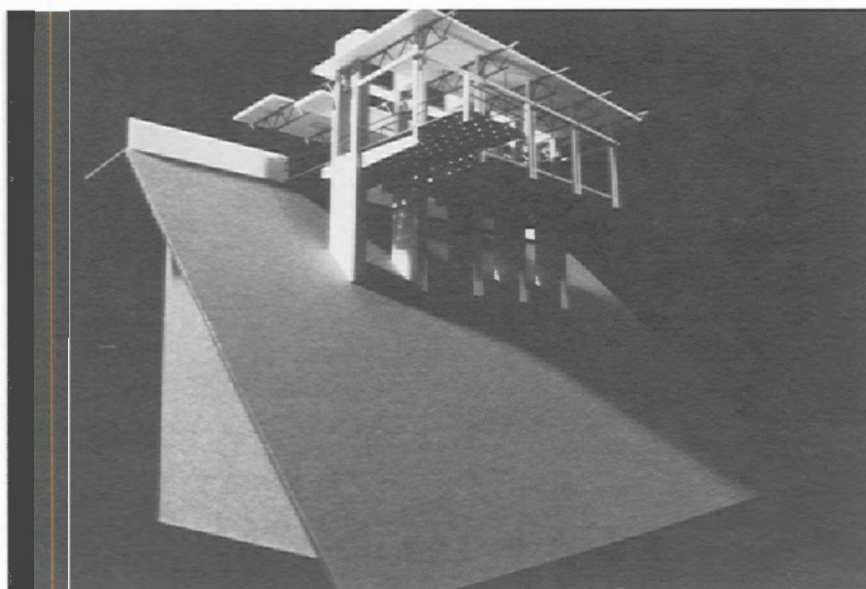
Thomas M. Gormley
Mediums for Awareness

James Chaffers, Studio Critic
The Ohio River History Museum and Resource Center is dedicated to
rediscovering qualities of the Ohio River, and its significance to the
people who inhabit its watershed.

Robert Wm. M. King

The Large Small House

Thomas Hille, Studio Critic
Given basic human needs, physical and/or metaphysical, the luxury of frugality in space places an emphasis within the context of efficiency of tractability, spatial organization and technique.



Sung Hyuk Lee

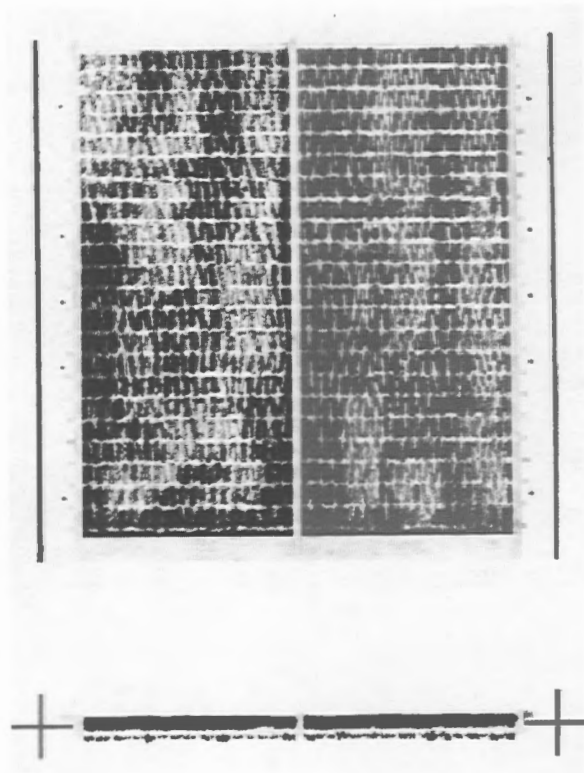
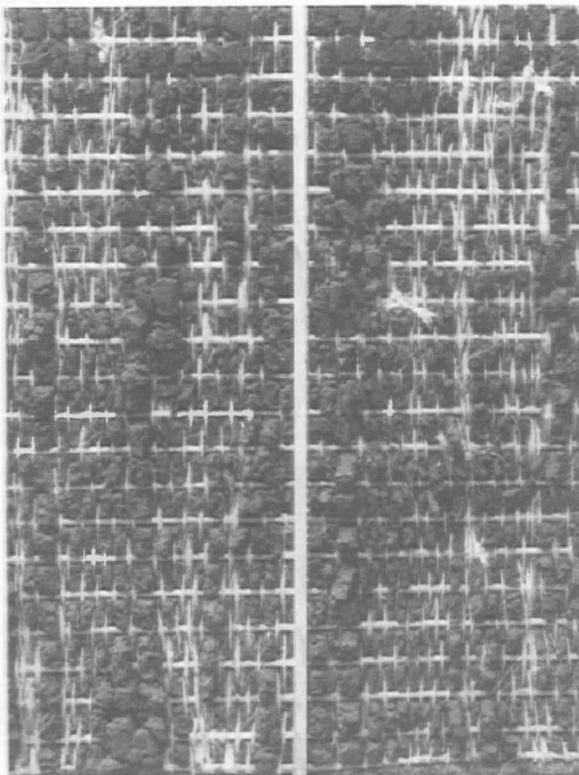
Museum of Archaeology

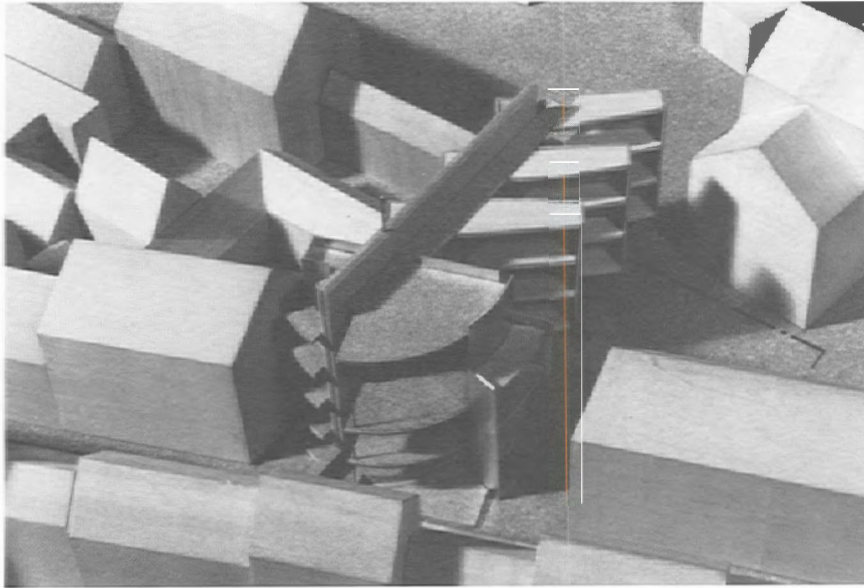
Henry Kowalewski, Studio Critic
Entrance—South Temple of
Karanis, Egypt.
Underground
exhibition/excavation.
Exhibition with
skylights - "anti"-excavation.

Donna Sink

A Wall between Dark Earth and Hot Air

Dan Hoffman and David Resnick, Studio Critics
A study in the characteristics of materials employing
adobe clay, wood, and twine.





Brian Edward Howard

International Youth Hostel, Copenhagen, Denmark

Karin Skousball, Studio Critic
Architecture; an instrument
(machine) that
explores change.

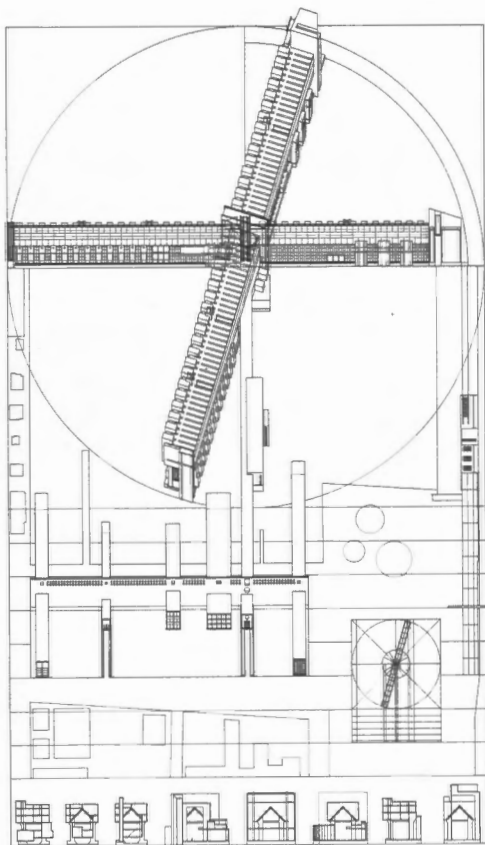
- transforming society
- evolution of thought
- individuality (youth)
- a new language...



Susan Neumann

International Youth Hostel, Copenhagen, Denmark

Karin Skousball, Studio Critic
Infill living units raised to reveal
interior garden hinged by core,
yet reinforcing adjacent facades
and roofscape.



Soogun Park

Cartesian Monastery, Marquette, Michigan

Emmanuel-George Vakalo, Studio
Critic

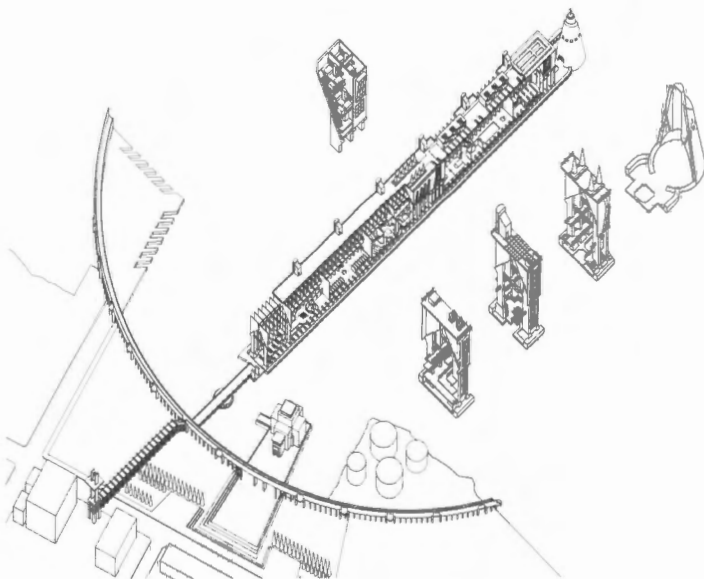
- transformation of abandoned ore dock into a monastery.
- linear extension of city movement.

Frank Carenza

Cartesian Monastery, Marquette, Michigan

Emmanuel-George Vakalo, Studio
Critic

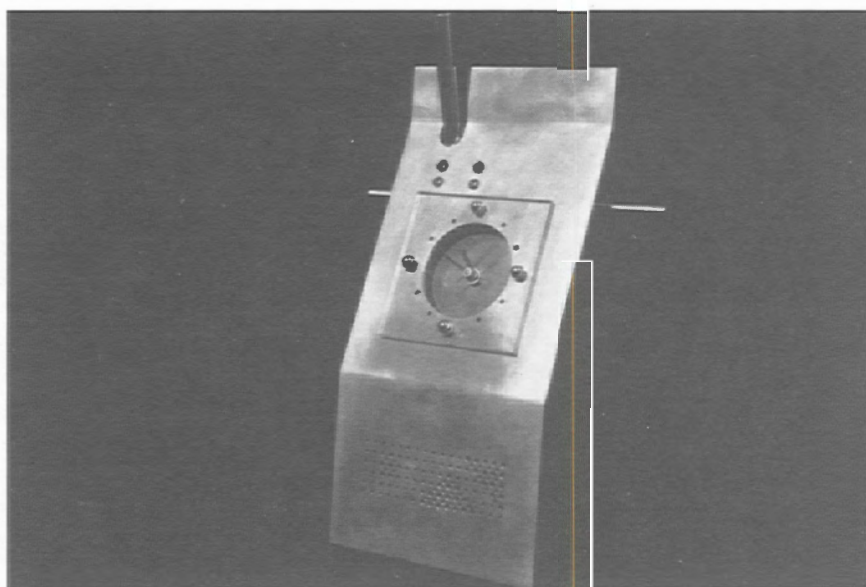
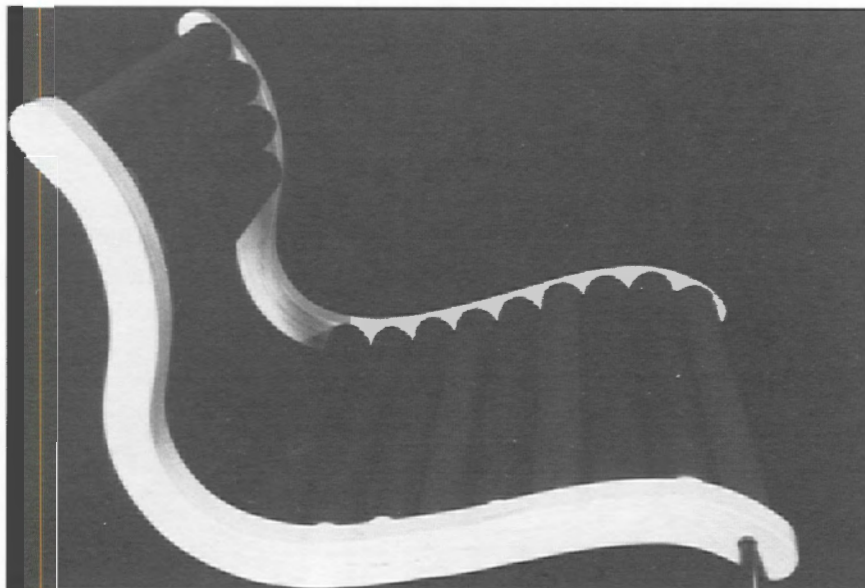
The curved breakwater serves a dual purpose. Not only is it the separator between the 'sacred' and 'profane', but also the location where the two are joined for worship.



Other Work

Michael R. Gibson

Furniture Design and Construction
Gerhard Olving, Instructor

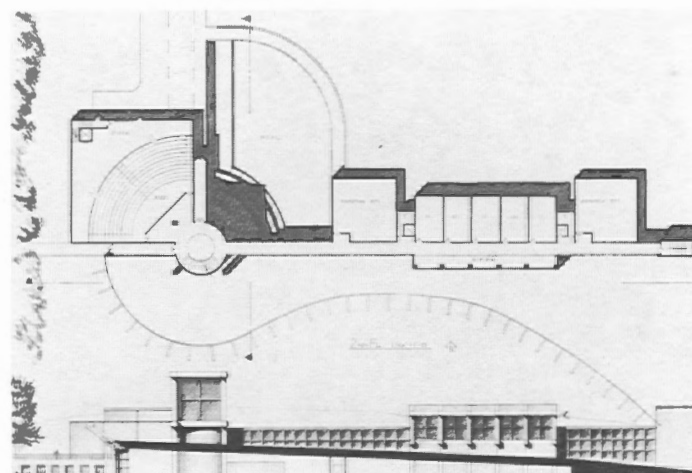
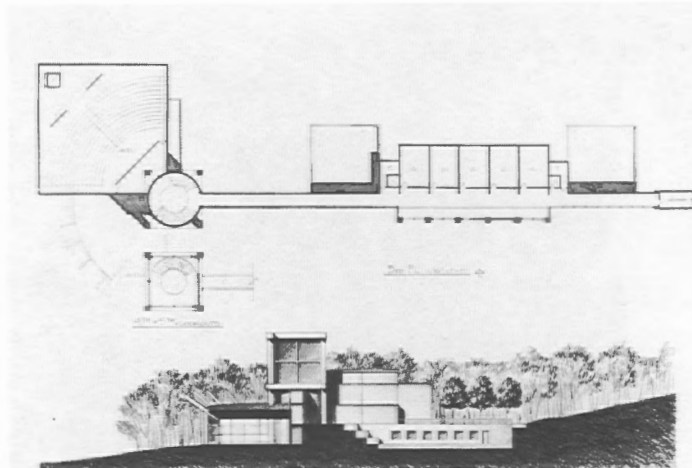


Chan Lee

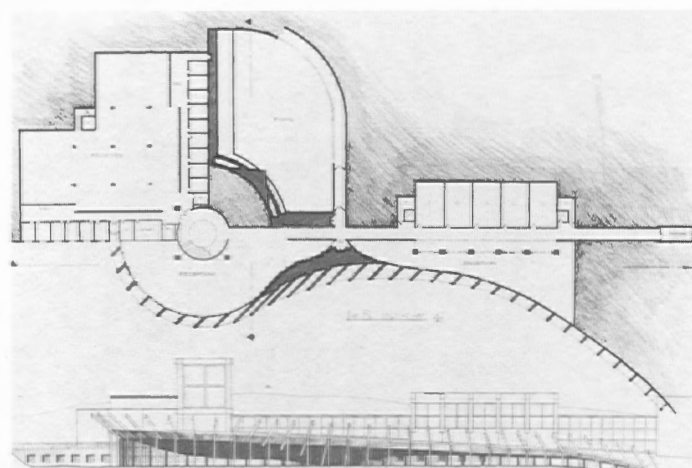
The Architecture of Objects
Shaun Jackson, Instructor

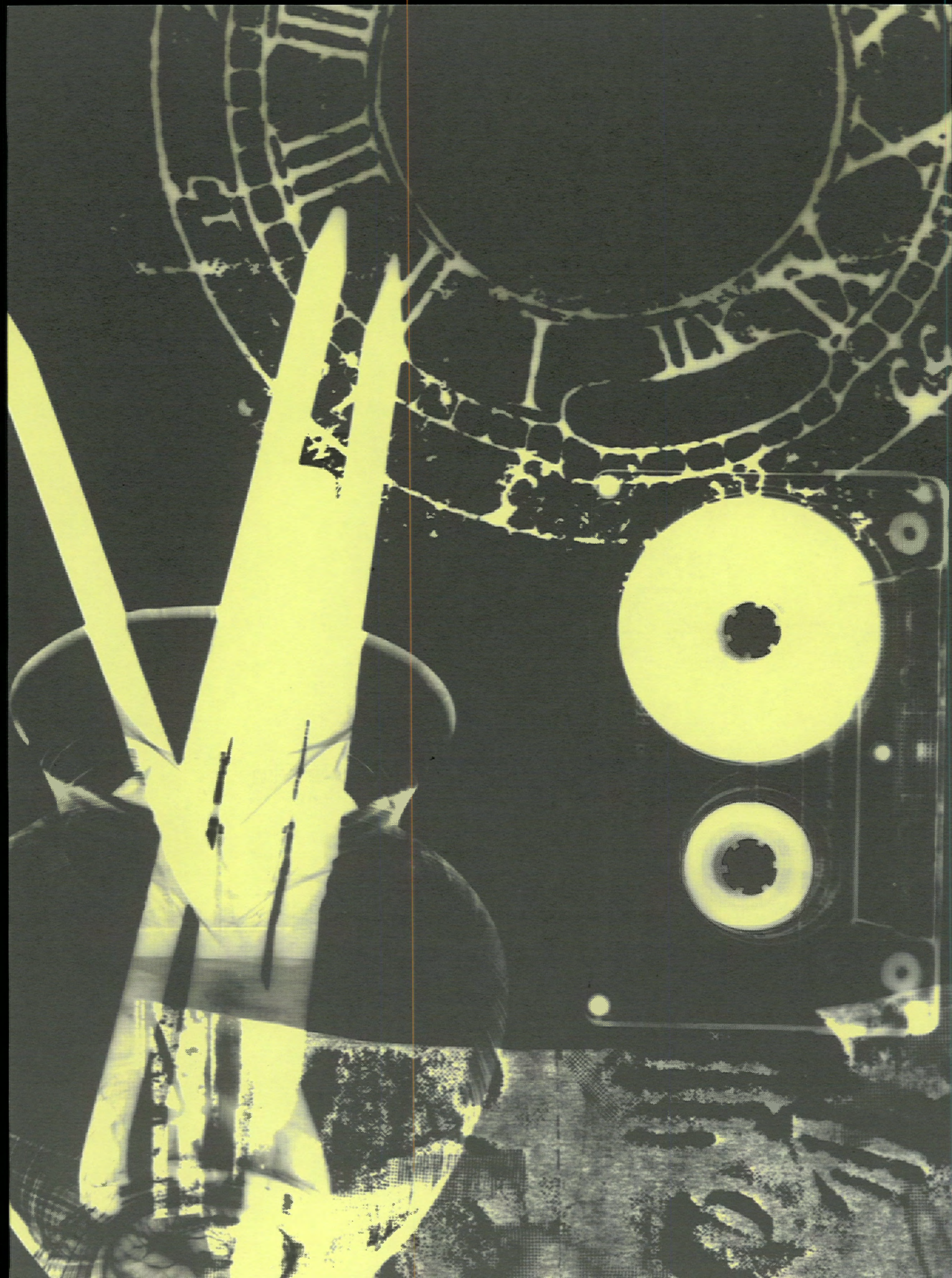
Kiefer Competition

An Institute for
Midwestern Studies.



Drew Nelson
First Prize





Notes on **Papers and Projects:**

Vassiliki Mangana is a student in the Doctoral Program in Architecture.

Wes Janz is a student in the Doctoral Program in Architecture.

Richard E. Mitchell is a Graduate student studying Urban Planning.

Rent Kleinman is an Assistant Professor of Architecture. He is presently spending a semester teaching at the Technical University in Vienna, Austria.

Aditya D. Sood is an Undergraduate student studying Architecture and Comparative Literature.

Patrick Cooleybeck is a Graduate student studying Architecture.

John Abela is a Graduate student studying Architecture.

The Work of Architecture in an Age of Electronic Simulation Authored by Aditya D. Sood with Patrick Cooleybeck.

Mise-en-scène: Greg Marinelli, John Abela, Troy Ostrander, Eric Schultz, Robin Ford, Jimmy Hill, Anderson Lee, Donna Sink.

The Eisenman/Tigerman Debate Thank you to Alpha Rho Chi for making Stanley Tigerman's visit possible.

The Organization of African-American Students in Art, Architecture and Urban Planning (OAP) Symposium

Thank you to OAP for making the excerpts to *The Urban Environment: The Role of African-Americans in the Social and Built Environment* available for *Dimensions*. A video tape of the proceedings is available from the Dean's office. The symposium was held on October 5, 1991, at the University of Michigan. With the exception of Dr. Harris' paper, which was prepared specifically for publication, the papers were derived from excerpts from the proceedings.

The 1991 Symposium Planning Committee: Kenneth Faulkner, Richard E. Mitchell, Karen Davis, Russell Baltimore, Chisara Scott and Roderick Moore.

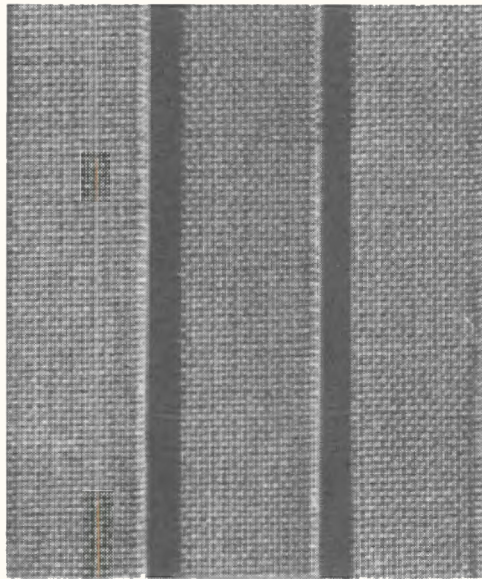
"Do It for Van Gogh" The photograph of Barbara Kruger's work exhibited at Eisenman's Wexner Center, Columbus, Ohio, was supplied by Frank Muehlenbein

Contributions to *Dimensions*

Patron	\$1000 or more
Corporate Benefactor	500
Firm Sponsor	250
Individual Sponsor	100

Corrections to *Dimensions* Volume 5

The editors would like to apologize for the omission of Jon Maass from the list of staff, and for omitting the names of Patrick Saavedra and Susan E. Neumann from the project *Detroit: an Ideal City*, from the Urban Design Studio facilitated by Dean Robert Beckley and Professor Brad Angelini.



THE JOURNAL OF THE COLLEGE OF
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2000 Bonisteel Avenue
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