



dimensions 9 | *body, thought, place*

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iv

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letter from the editor

At the inception of *Dimensions 9*, our staff set some goals that guided the journal through to completion: Explore and broaden the field of architecture through the publication. Do not re-invent the wheel, but set a standard for future *Dimensions* to build upon. Provide a forum for the publication of complete academic works in or associated with architecture in order to stimulate multidisciplinary discourse to further the field of architecture. Increase the scope of *Dimensions*, and provoke authors to critically examine their work through the inseparable study of art and writing. "Body, Thought, Place," a center ground to discuss issues common to many discourses, has provided a quantity of work on a variety of topics. Our authors are students and instructors, professors, doctoral candidates, and professionals. Their thoughts are far-reaching, insightful and interesting. *Dimensions 9* promises to provoke thought, and we hope, more work to widen the field.

A mind that is stretched to a new idea never returns to its original dimension.

— Oliver Wendell Holmes



David M. Sisson

B **body, thought, place**



*T*emporal spatiality

jenifer burke

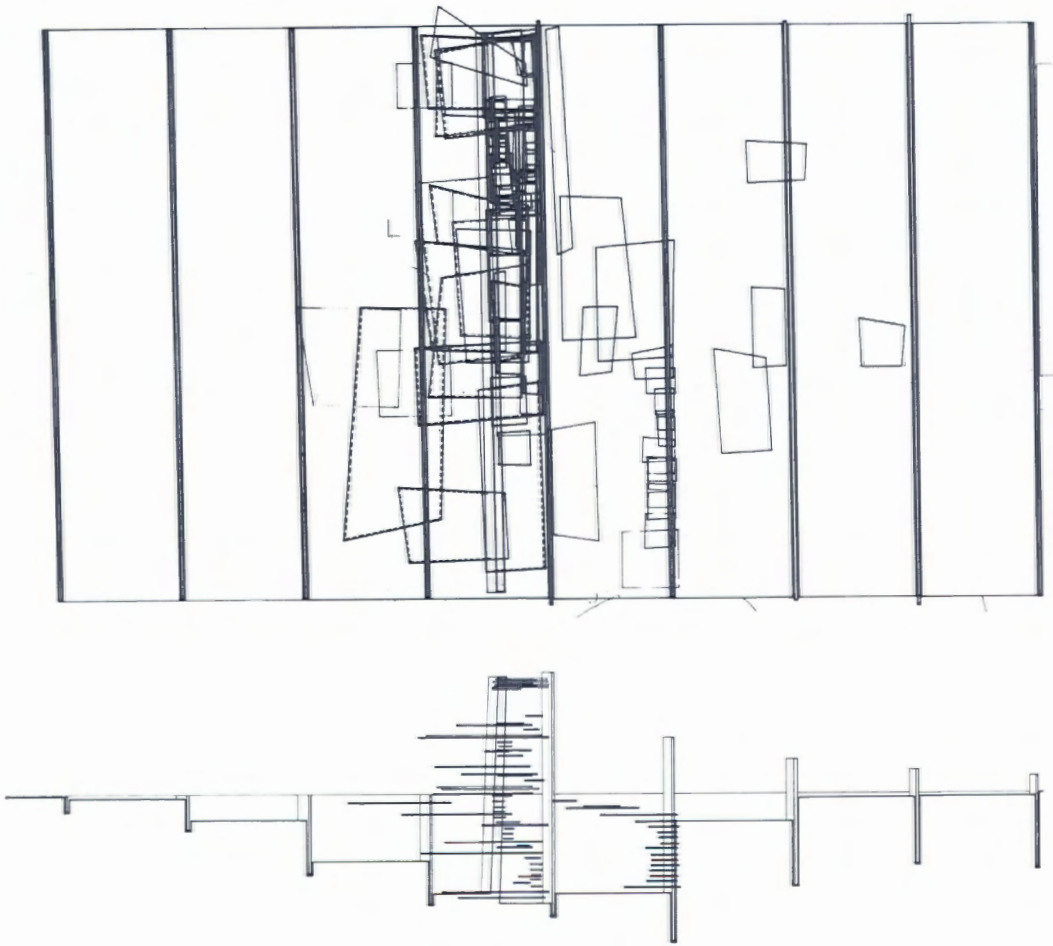
The time line dividing Eastern Standard Time from Central Time is a highly abstract and intangible reality. As such, it exists without physical dimension or measurable reality. The basis for the time line is the $87^{\circ} 30' 00''$ W meridian, a line based on a highly idealized geometric approximation of the earth's shape. In theory, this line should be precisely aligned with the planet's magnetic pole; however, the exact location of the magnetic pole is in constant flux. This constantly altering force is very real and is a direct derivative of the earth.

The approach to this project is through a physical articulation of the time line. This articulation is constructed of rotating rods that pivot to facilitate passage. The main point of entry lies at the intersection of $87^{\circ} 30' 00''$ W and $40^{\circ} 00' 00''$ N, a point which occurs in the midst of an agricultural field just south of Chicago. The movement of the magnetic field is charted over a number of years and demarcated by steel panels that cut into the earth.

The core of the living space is grounded at the present. Here the ground is eroded to reveal the steel panel in its entirety. From this line, the enclosed living spaces are allowed to expand and contract with time. At its minimum, the dwelling is entirely contained behind the massive concrete wall with access to the eastern terraces from each interior platform. The maximum level of enclosure extends to include all of these terraces with a system of panels, this uniform system being the only means of enclosure throughout the dwelling. The terraces to the west cannot be enclosed, but become remnants attesting to the perpetual movement through time.

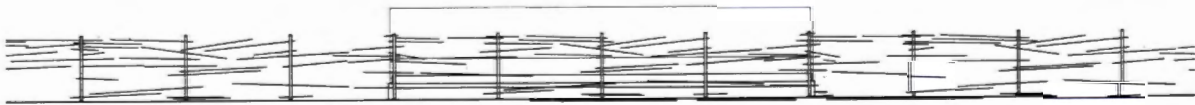


site plan



collapsed plan

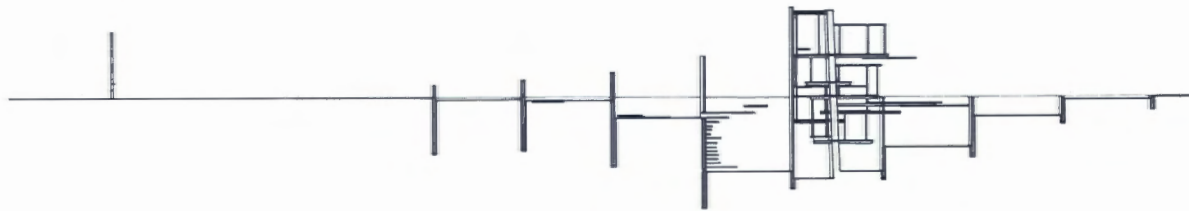
collapsed section looking south



west elevation



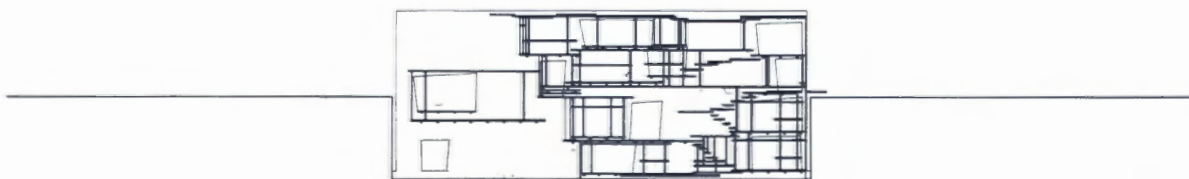
south elevation



section looking north



east elevation



section looking north



imaging our selves in the 90's

loralei r. byatt

I have been making self-portraits for years. I usually photograph myself by holding the camera and pointing it at my face. I use a cheap plastic camera because I like the abstraction caused by the plastic lens.

The first series of five images was made between 1988 and 1992. In this group I have made a double-exposed images of my face with other objects, either in the camera or on the enlarger. The series began when I realized that most of the images I had made earlier were actually metaphors for myself.

The next series of five pieces, *Communication Skills*, was completed in 1993. This step was natural; rather than sandwiching objects with my face on film, I have applied actual objects over 4' x 4' photographs of my face. Here the objects are metaphors for the difficulties which arise in communication. The viewer must try to get past the objects to see the photograph (the same photograph is used in all pieces) behind it. Only parts of it can be seen, and even after seeing all five, the whole image can only be imagined. The face-to-face communication is obstructed.

During 1992 and 1993, I began to photograph other people. These images (*Torso Series*) were quite different from those of myself: usually the faces were eliminated, and only fragments of the body, most often torsos, were framed.

This year I have been working on a series called *Faces of Woman*, in which I have suggested role playing and raised gender issues by adding various props to my face.

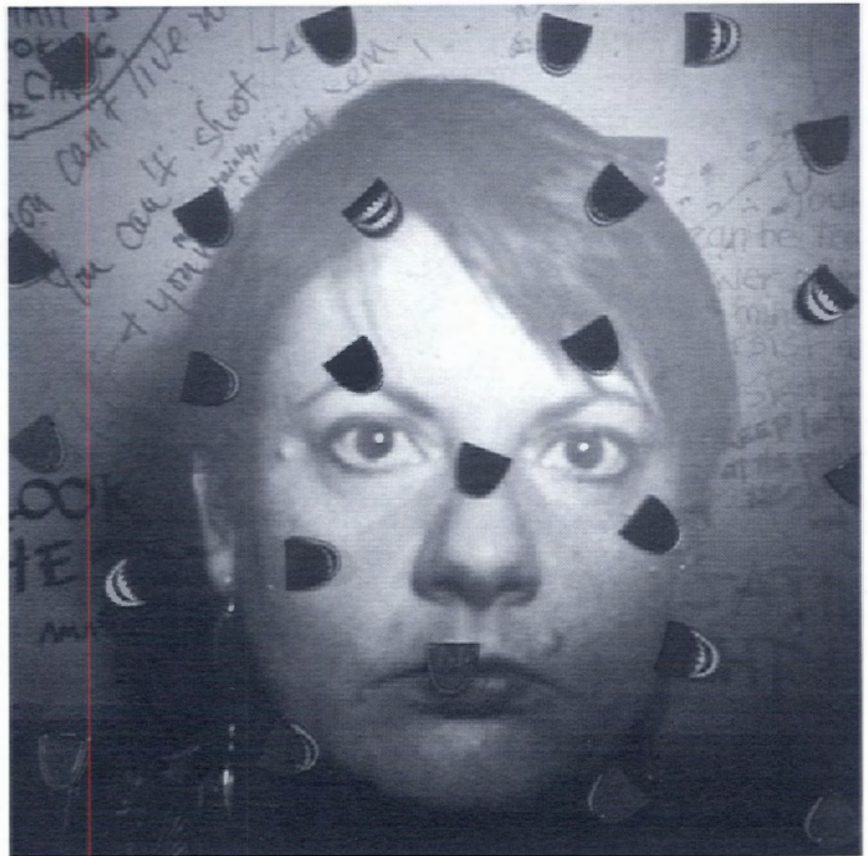
When I began making photographic art, I rarely photographed myself. My chosen subjects were usually the landscape or found objects in the landscape. I began the integration of self with subject matter by making the double-exposed images. This year's work has almost exclusively been self-portraits.



clockwise from left:

- obeah*
- obsession*
- obsequious*
- obfuscation*
- oblation*





communication skills
clockwise from top left:
sentence fragments,
closed circuits, yackity-yack, typo



tarsos series
all three untitled

Why this turn inward? What is this need and fascination with seeing the self? Why have the self-portraits increased so dramatically, to the exclusion of other subjects? This is not only a personal quest, but something that is happening on a much larger scale. It seems to me that artists everywhere are increasingly making self-portraits or other body images. These often depict faceless or fragmented bodies — limbs, internal organs, and bodily fluids. Surrogate figures, such as dolls and other toy figures, cartoons, and images from television and other media, are often used. Exhibits such as *de-Persona* at The Oakland Museum in 1991, *Corporal Politics* at the MIT List Visual Arts Center in 1992, and *Corpus Mutilatio* at Urban Park in Detroit in 1993 are addressing this type of imaging.

What is happening on a world, or at least on a Western, scale to cause this evident shift in the subject matter of art? Helaine Posner feels that it is “difficult for the individual to maintain a coherent identity and integrated sense of self while under attack,”¹ these attacks being contemporary concerns of “sexism, sexual identity, reproductive rights, homophobia, social inequity, brutality, disease, and death.”

Paul Tomidy suggests television’s “instant communication and dizzying plenitude of choice” as a cause for our “fractured realities.”² But television would be just one contributing factor in a whole society that has become increasingly segmented; as illustrated by Yi-Fu Tuan. “When turned inward, the self loses its unreflexive integrity, becomes fragmented and self-conscious.”³ As the West became more civilized, a separation occurred between humans and the world in which they lived in. The world became something “out there” which could now be viewed subjectively, and the self

¹ Donald Hall, Thomas Laquer, and Helaine Posner, *Corporal Politics* (Cambridge: MIT List Visual Arts Center, 1992).

² Ronald Jones, et al., *de-Persona* (Oakland: The Oakland Museum, 1991).

³ Yi-Fu Tuan, *Segmented Worlds and Self: Group Life and Individual Consciousness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982).



faces of woman
top to bottom:
hot Lips, eve, fishwife



faces of woman series cont.

virgin

became something internal which could be analyzed and supposedly changed. Self-analysis became a valued avocation even though it could cause further segmentation.

And the world was becoming a sum of its parts. Countries were broken into cities, cities into blocks; even homes were becoming a collection of many small rooms. Mobility increased and families were broken up. Communal cohesion weakened and isolation occurred. Individuals play many roles which seem to have no connection even though one body performs them.

Re-examining my self-portraits, I realize that I am attempting reintegration, and with the double-exposures, actual fusion. I am not trying to find what is inside, as I thought, but rather trying to figure out how I relate to what is outside — the world, family, the opposite sex.

Art expresses the world to which it belongs. The cave man drew the hunt on his wall, artists of the Middle Ages painted for the church, and artists in the 90's show very modern concerns. Self-images reflect the Western belief in the power and value of the individual; body fragments are metaphors for fractured selves and a segmented society.

The story of the parc

anselmo canfora

The story of the parc began within the context of an architectural studio but would not end there. Unlike more traditional architectural problems, this story of the parc intentionally proceeded in a myriad of directions, directions that continuously changed course, frequency, and magnitude; a determinate end would have undermined its success. As the story continuously evolved within a metamorphological process, glimpses of solutions would appear and then disappear. Finding a singular and final response was not important, and was emphatically avoided. Instead, a set of metamorphosing solutions were recorded and developed.

"Due to the accumulation of means, one is placed before a result which takes shape and appears as an end even if it was not intended as such. If our means do not announce even our remote ends, at least by some quality which distinguishes them, they change the direction of history. The ends then pass into the means and the means pass into the ends. In practical life as in the historical movement, the end and the means constantly change places. Between them there is a dialectical interdependence."¹

The means through which a process was constructed encompassed paint, wax, and digital information studies.

The paint information study, when analyzed as a single brush stroke, conveyed a great deal of qualitative information. It began to imply a speed of workmanship, a severity of impression and angulation. In turn, this mark established width, depth, and length.

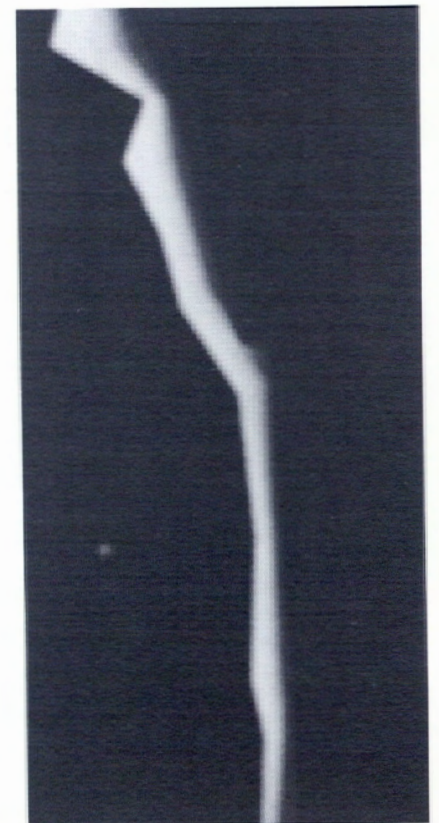
¹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Les Aventures de la Dialectique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1955), 75–76.



The wax information study attempted to duplicate qualities found within the paint information study. The inherent fluidity and plasticity of wax only imitated some characteristics of the paint study, while revealing other qualities. Qualities that were made more apparent within wax, as a medium, dealt with transparency. The wax information study subsequently became a vehicle of movement, able to record a series of latent images.

The digital information study in turn, began to map sets of information found within latent factuality. A dialectic between information found within the wax study and the digital information exposed a relationship between arbitrary fluidity and precise transmission. This interaction produced a series of permutations influenced by a superimposition of two distinct information types. The transition from wax molecule to pixel digitization emphasized a layering of information.

The story of this parc was and is also comprised of experiences, scenarios, encounters and transformations. Momentary situations reveal temporary activities, only to be upstaged and masked by other experiences. Each chapter of this story overlaps the other, obscuring and revealing simultaneously. It is a story without ending; its plot unravels and unfolds only to collapse onto itself once again, concealing its own direction.



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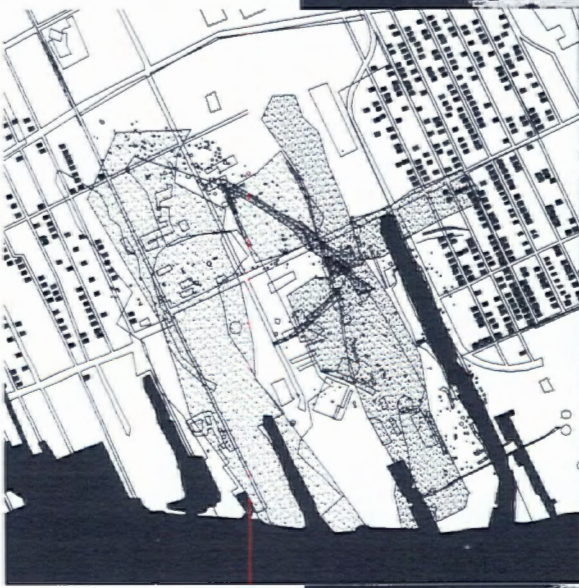
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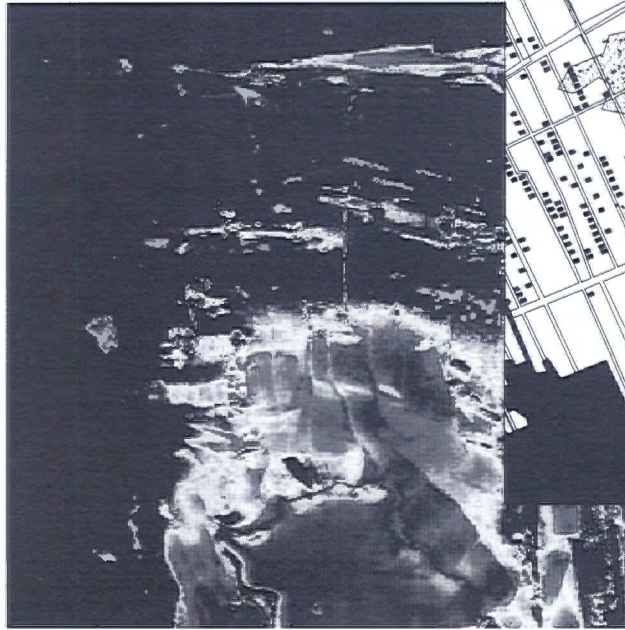
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The resurrection of harley-davidson and the death of deconstruction

jason hall

"Harley-Davidsons are motorbikes with balls..."

— Jane and Michael Stern's *Encyclopedia of Pop Culture*

Dissent is a phenomenon with great cultural importance in America. The United States, from its inception, has been highly charged with the idea of rebellion. The image of the righteous loner standing against the wrongful mass has a certain romantic quality which often edits actual situations; the cultural image of rebellion is often stronger than actual events. America's fascination with rebels also extends from social culture to material culture, in which the consumption of certain products carries very strong ideological connotations. Two specific examples of the infusion of a material object with the ephemeral idea of "rebel" are the Harley-Davidson motorcycle and Deconstructivist architecture.

Harley-Davidson has always been a maverick. From humble beginnings resulting from experiments with bicycles and tomato-can carburetors in a garage in Milwaukee, Wisconsin¹, the company has emerged as the lone American survivor in a fiercely competitive market. In an era when corporations are largely faceless to the market they seek to supply, Harley-Davidson has nurtured an extremely loyal following, based on upper management's willingness to "know" the buyers. While the majority of international companies are based in cosmopolitan areas like New York, London, and Tokyo, Harley-Davidson remains based in Milwaukee, a town associated with a working-class, unionized, patriotic culture. In addition, when business declined sharply in the 1970's, the company surprised many of its followers by taking uncharacteristically innovative steps to survive bankruptcy.

¹ Jane Stern and Michael Stern, *Jane and Michael Stern's Encyclopedia of Pop Culture* (New York: Harper Perennial Publishing, 1992), 206.



Similarly, Deconstructivism is a maverick movement in architecture. Arising as a reaction to the excesses of Post-Modernism, it questions the habitable world to such a degree that nothing, seemingly, is to be accepted as fact. It stresses the present,² doubting any theoretical link to past models or to a future vision.

While it would seem that a recent architectural movement and an American motorcycle company have very little in common, the reliance of both on image has caused their respective demise. Both were appropriated into a mainstream style, thus becoming obsolete as symbols. The difference, though, is how each has dealt with becoming irrelevant.

"...Nothing like America, on an American motorcycle..."

— Harley-Davidson advertisement

The first Harley-Davidson was nothing more than a bicycle with a crude motor clipped to it, assembled in 1901 by William Harley and William, Walter, and Arthur Davidson. Stern asserts that experimentation with machines was common to the era, and the development of the motorcycle was, in many ways, similar to the work of the Wright Brothers in North Carolina.³ This new development was intended to take the effort out of riding a bicycle, and could reach a top speed of twenty-five miles per hour on a level surface. Going uphill, however, required pedaling.

By 1903, the "Silent Gray Fellow" had been developed, with a bigger frame and engine. It was considerably faster and quieter than earlier designs. The name was chosen to reflect the design intention of the motorcycle as a "nice...companion...on the long, lonesome road..."⁴ This model, with subsequent improvements, became an American standard. Its first widespread use was by police departments,⁵ phone companies, and the postal service. It served also in both World War I and II.

Following World War II, however, the heavyweight motorcycle moved from a utilitarian machine to a full-blown symbol of working class rebellion. Even though the United States government tried to ensure standardization and conformity during the post-war economic boom, many veterans found it difficult to return to their humdrum lives⁶ and created a counterculture known as the Hipsters. The rootlessness, individualism, and danger of the motorcycle appealed to this group, allowing them the opportunity to be unencumbered by established norms. This disregard of organized society erupted in 1947, when thousands of leather-clad Harley riders invaded Hollister, California, and wreaked havoc for several days and nights. The institutionalization of the Harley-Davidson as a symbol of rebellion was a direct result of the Hollister event and the ensuing media coverage. Harry V. Sucher, biographer of the Harley-Davidson Company, states, "the incident unfortunately labeled the H-D [sic] as the outlaw motorcycle of choice...."⁷

2
Elias Zenghelis, "The Aesthetics of the Present." *Deconstruction in Architecture* (London: Academy Editions, 1988), 32.

3
Stern, 206.

4
Ibid.

5
Many police departments are still equipped with Harleys, which is directly at odds with the Harley-Davidson image of rebellion, to be discussed later.

6
Mick Farren, *The Black Leather Jacket* (New York: Abbeville Publishers, 1985), 38.

7
Stern, 206.

That image was further disseminated by the release of *The Wild One* in 1954 starring Marlon Brando. While the movie lagged behind the actual event in Hollister by seven years, it carried a powerful message even further into the American psyche, that authority could be challenged by dropping out, donning black leather, and acquiring a Harley. **The image of the brooding, misunderstood rebel was born.**

"It's the independence, the satisfaction you receive when something works. And if it doesn't work, you have no one to blame but yourself."

— Vaughn Beals, Chairman of the Board of Harley-Davidson

In *Culture and Consumption*, Grant McCracken states that the significance of consumer goods "goes beyond their utilitarian character and commercial value to carry and communicate cultural meaning."⁸ He goes on to say that cultural definitions are often the result of a transfer of meaning from one aspect of culture to another, through the objects' proximity to one another.⁹ In the eyes of America, the Harley-Davidson motorcycle was invested with the attributes of the people who rode them into Hollister, California, in 1947, simply by its contiguity with these people. Even though this transfer of meaning was perceived largely as negative by the majority of Americans, it served to supply Harley-Davidson with a large, virtually untapped market of disillusioned young thugs, who caused a cyclic embodiment of image: young rebels rode Harleys, people on Harleys were young rebels. This image, the bad-ass on a big bike, was exploited by the company, and very little changed until 1975. Even today, after a major revamping of the company and its image, the faint shadow of the past still remains: big, loud, fiercely patriotic, a "self-proclaimed free-spirit."¹⁰

In many ways, the unspoken language of this image is more telling than the actual words used by the company or its customers. McCracken states that "material culture [is] a cunning and oblique device for the representation of cultural truths."¹¹ In this case, bikers expressed their latent dissatisfaction with bourgeois culture by opting for an inherently dangerous mode of transport which was not accepted by the bourgeoisie. They wore their misfit status as a badge to distance themselves from the mainstream. This purposeful alienation happened physically by their separation from society, and symbolically by their appropriation of material goods, namely, a large, loud motorcycle. Because of the large-scale conformity which occurred following World War II, any-thing which deviated from the norm received instant attention. Bikers stood outside society, thereby insuring their cultural recognition. This recognizability, once transferred to the Harley-Davidson, supplied the company with business; thus, much of Harley's later financial success had little to do with the manufactured quality of the product. The appeal of the ideas

⁸ Grant McCracken, *Culture and Consumption* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 73.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 106.

¹⁰ Stern, 207.

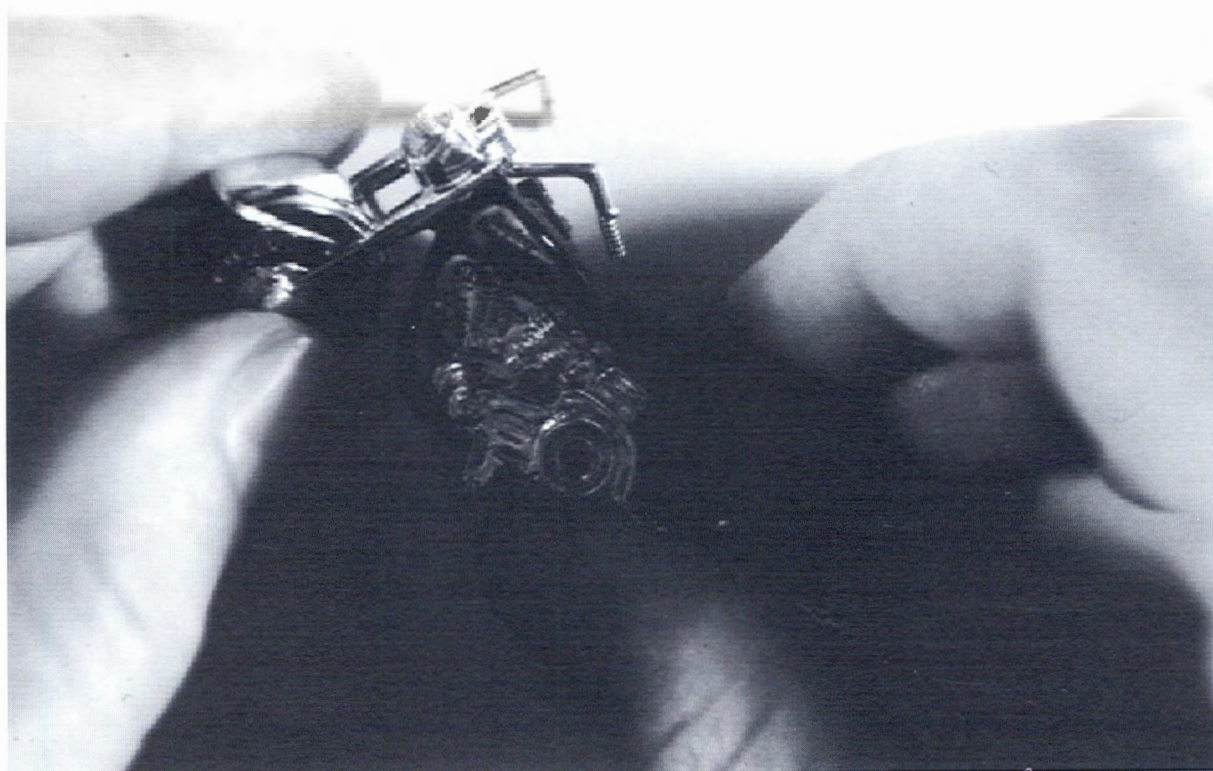
¹¹ McCracken, 67.

which accompanied the product, its cultural baggage — associations with freedom, individuality, machismo — became more important. These images of Harley-Davidson permeated American culture by the early 1960's, when the visceral reality of riding a Harley became incidental to the ephemeral image of owning one.

In 1965, Harley-Davidson enjoyed a 90% market share and was not threatened by companies like Honda, because those companies were "busy in non-Harley markets...college kids and other nice people who would have been too afraid or thought it was too scandalous to ride a Harley."¹² Even when Honda directly challenged Harley in 1975 with the Gold Wing, whose resemblance to the Harley-Davidson was hardly coincidental, Harley relied on its image to sell its product; however, innovations and lower prices of the new Japanese heavyweight bikes nearly caused the lone American survivor to shut down. Because of Honda's "modern goodies,"¹³ which Harley did not offer, the market for super-heavyweight bikes changed. Honda was more "in touch" with the desires of the market — the image of rebellion, but with modern amenities — and, consequently, far outdistanced Harley-Davidson in a very short time.

¹² Steve Kichen, "Thunder Road," *Forbes*, 18 July 1983, 92.

¹³ *Ibid.*



Stuart Ewen states that “the ability to appropriate and commodify meaning is a continual feature in the style market,”¹⁴ and that this “appropriation signals [an] eventual disposal.”¹⁵ For nearly three decades, Harley-Davidson had exploited the image of the rebel for financial gain. This monetary dependence on image as a consumptive device allowed for the emergence of Japanese competitors, and did very little to fend off the advances of this competition. As image became style in the 1970’s, much of the cultural meaning was lost, because image had become merely a marketing tool. **The image of the rebel was dead.**

“...I’m a rebel, Dotty, a loner...you don’t wanna get mixed up with a guy like me...”

— PeeWee Herman in “PeeWee’s Big Adventure”

With only a 14.3% market share in 1982, in a market it had clearly dominated just a decade before, Harley-Davidson went through an unexpected metamorphosis. The company streamlined its manufacturing process to improve efficiency, introduced new designs with technical innovations, and instituted rigorous research and quality control departments. Dealers were encouraged to redecorate their showrooms into “‘designer’ showrooms, with motorcycle fashion clothing on mannequins, [and] neon lights.”¹⁶ The company also began an active merchandising campaign, printing the company logo on everything from beach towels to leather bras. Much of the new merchandise was sold through a glossy catalog with a nationwide circulation. More recently, Harley-Davidson merchandise has been sold in department stores and specialty shops in malls all over America. In short, the company shifted its target audience from marginalized groups to mainstream America. The original market, however, wasn’t totally disregarded, because the company established organizations such as H.O.G. (Harley Owner’s Group), which stressed the lifestyle of the loyal rebels. These organizations also served as another form of advertising for the company, one of personality and group dynamics. While at odds with the original lone rebel image, these moves successfully pulled Harley-Davidson back from the brink of bankruptcy, giving the company a 67% market share in 1991, a 468% increase in just nine years.

The shift in emphasis would seem to suggest that Harley-Davidson’s “super-heavyweight bikes [are] turning from symbols of working class rebellion and virility into fashion accessories,”¹⁷ an idea which is validated when Willie G. Davidson, Vice President of Styling and grandson of original designer William Davidson, describes making motorcycles as “‘almost like being in the fashion business.’”¹⁸ While business is booming, one needs only to look at the facts that a third of all Harley owners are white-collar, that 60% have attended college, and that many current movie idols and rock stars own

14

Stuart Ewen, *All-Consuming Images* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), 251.

15

Ibid., 253.

16

Stern, 207.

17

Ibid., 208.

18

Ibid.

at least one Harley, to know that **the rebel in all of this is long gone**, leaving only a ghost of the free-spirit, impolite misfit the new generation of Harley riders tries so desperately to personify. While the company's image was resurrected, its essence became mainstream, divesting rebellion from the image of the rebel. The institutionalization of the symbol led rebels to new modes of dissenting expression, from skateboards, to punk rock, to body piercing. Presently, there is no clearly indicative sign of rebellion as widely understood as the Harley-Davidson in the 1950's. The pervasiveness of the image, though, because of Harley, allows for a myriad of embodiments of the idea of "rebel."

"...[Deconstructivism is] turning architecture into anti-architecture..."

— Leon Krier

Deconstructivist architecture has been dynamically and vociferously debated in the last decade. It has been described by Mark Wigley, in its earliest inception, to be a movement based loosely on the writings of Jacques Derrida, which "disturb[s] conservative architectural thought, challeng[es] harmony, and draw[s] out repressed impurities and internal violence."¹⁹ Like the bikers who rode into Hollister, California in 1947, Deconstructivist architects are part of a cultural movement which had grown frustrated with the excesses and artifice of the recent past, and is restless to manifest its reaction to this excess in an extreme manner. Like the bikers, Deconstruction is "informal,... discordant and ephemeral, unpretentious and tough."²⁰ Theoretically, it is unconcerned with issues such as client and user groups, timelessness, and context, opting instead for expressions of the alienation of the present world and the individual as a tenuous fragment within a disenfranchising whole. It thumbs its proverbial nose at established norms, preferring to define itself by itself. In short, as a movement, **it is a lone, brooding rebel.**

One of the most visible rebels within the larger rebellion of Deconstructivism is Peter Eisenman, who describes himself and his work in terms of Nietzsche: "what Nietzsche says is that the creator is a lonely person and must always stand apart from and perhaps against the mass, and will always be, in a sense, outside and alien to the existing order."²¹ He intentionally removes all preconceived notions, including the user, from design consideration, "perform[ing] a sacrifice, a ritualized burial of humanistic architecture allowing for an unidentified other to emerge."²²

Again, as with the Harley-Davidson, several transfers of meaning take place in Deconstructivist work. McCracken states that our cultural principles and categories, the devices by which we define the external world, are "substantiated by material objects," which, in turn, "make intangible cultural meaning visible."²³ Deconstructivists are seen by American intelligentsia as avant-garde theorists. They are invested with a certain meaning because of

19
Dr. Andreas C. Papadakis, ed., "Deconstruction at the Tate Gallery," *Deconstruction in Architecture* (London: Academy Editions, 1989), 7.

20
Charles Jencks, "Deconstruction: The Pleasures of Absence," *Deconstruction in Architecture* (London: Academy Editions, 1989), 18. Jencks' description of Deconstructivism as "unpretentious" is an interesting one. On one hand, it becomes a direct visual symbol of the violent rending of the modern world; however, its smugness and inaccessibility could be considered pretext.

21
Peter Eisenman and Leon Krier, "My Ideology is Better than Yours," *Reconstruction Deconstruction* (London: Academy Editions, 1989), 18.

22
Aaron Betsky, *Violated Perfection* (New York: Rizzoli International, 1990), 41.

23
McCracken, 68.

their work; no one timid or conservative could produce the work that they produce. Therefore, by commissioning their services, consumers, too, have the ability to distance themselves intellectually from those around them, to become fashionable loners, modern rebels who are concerned with challenging convention to attain ephemeral "otherness." While this meaning is not explicitly stated by the client, his or her motives are clear. The architect's own intentions bring into the visual world both Western culture's periodic flirtation with "decline, breakdown, and the conscious creation of unease,"²⁴ and his or her own desire to "confront the sensibility in which we live."²⁵ As with Harley-Davidson, these unstated messages based on material consumption are indicative of unspoken cultural truths: both the Harley and Deconstructivism visually remove a certain group from the bourgeoisie. While these two groups are divergent, they both appropriate articles of material culture for the ideas which accompany them, and both use this appropriation as a device of separation.

The transfer of meaning, then, from the architect, to his/her work, to the client, and back again, is what allows the image of "Decon" to exist. If the link between any of these aspects were weakened, the image would be lost.²⁶ Because of the fluidity of the transfer, the image, not the architecture, is the consumptive device: the reality of experiencing a Deconstructed space becomes incidental to the image of owning one. This point is illustrated by the commissioning of Eisenman to design the Columbus Convention Center, a building whose economic survival is predicated by its ability to attract large crowds of conventioners. Officials at the Convention Center "relentlessly promote the center's unique appearance as a marketing tool,"²⁷ and readily admit that the image that pervades Eisenman's body of work was a key consideration in awarding him the commission. An interesting aspect of Eisenman, though, is that he does not deny the importance of his image; in fact, he flaunts it: "That is why my clients hire me. They wouldn't hire me if they didn't want a problem."²⁸ Like the Harley, Deconstruction's image is consumed to such an extent that it becomes more important than the actual product, transforming it into commodity²⁹ and allowing for further appropriation by others.

24
Papadakis, 7.

25
Eisenman and Krier, 9.

26
Diane Ghirardo, "Eisenman's Bogus Avant-Garde," *Progressive Architecture*, November 1994, 70.

27
Mark Alden Branch, "Critique: Queasy in Columbus? — The Greater Columbus Convention Center," *Progressive Architecture*, February 1994, 81.

28
Peter Eisenman, cited in Tyra Sorensen, "The Little Red Car: A Boy's Curiosity, an Architect's Responsibility," *Dimensions 8* (Spring 1994): 5.

29
Again illustrated by Eisenman's Columbus Convention Center.

Similarly, the image of rebellion, as a marketing tool, is divested of its symbolic and cultural importance because of its entry into the "market place of style,"³⁰ this a situation which leading to "eventual disposal."³¹ This disposal becomes apparent as more and more designers and products take up the yoke of Decon, from architect-designed retail shops and private homes to product packaging and non-usable furniture, all designed by people who were seemingly influenced by some aspect of Deconstructivism. As this image is appropriated, it becomes an increasingly visible feature within the mass to which Deconstructivists report to be alien. In a sea of disengaged individual fragments, the novelty of "authentic" Deconstructivism is no longer readily discernible.

Recently, the capricious taste market has taken a turn from Deconstructivist architects. Several speculations could be offered for this falling from grace: the links between architects, their work, and the client, which nurture image, have become unstable; the image has been appropriated beyond its limit and is now obsolete as a vehicle of the avant-garde; or the explanation could simply be that the periodic flirtation with the decline and ruin of Western civilization is over, a shift which would seem to call for a new expression of excess, making obsolete not only Deconstructivism, but also the theoretical basis which supports it. While this obsolescence is necessarily damaging to Deconstructivism, it seems to be consistent with its philosophy. Decon isn't about the past or future; it is about the present. When that present passes into history, Deconstructivist buildings lose their "presentness" and become, in a sense, passé. Because they are indicative, however, only of the time in which they were made, they have to become obsolete to retain their symbolic properties, and remain obsolete for subsequent avant-garde movements to emerge and gain their own symbolism. This dynamic obsolescence is, in many ways, the essence of the movement, and lies at the heart of the work of each of its proponents. Deconstructivism works best theoretically and physically as an exception within a strong rule; it has to become irrelevant to keep its meaning.

A certain measure of the success of any avant-garde movement is its degree of obsolescence: it has achieved its objective of shaking up bourgeois complacency when it is appropriated by bourgeois culture. The real test,

30
Ewen, 251.

31
Ibid., 253.

however, is in its ability to continue to pursue higher goals even after this appropriation takes place, to reinvent the movement so as to stay ahead of the appropriation, to change the image of the rebel in order to remain rebellious. Just as rebels rode Harley-Davidsons until they became mainstream, Eisenman and other Deconstructivists have “ridden” Deconstructivism. Eisenman’s finesse at reinventing and remarketing himself is prodigious, so there is little doubt that he will emerge as a leader in the next architectural avant-garde, regardless of what that movement entails.

Decon has proven itself to be a successful transporter of cultural meaning on many levels. As a mode of artistic expression, it has allowed new designers to emerge and challenge conventional notions of space. It has also become an effective device of expression for its consumers, as a strategy of intellectual and visual separation. This audience is poised, waiting for the next movement to emerge, in order to continue to distance itself from others: it, too, has “ridden” Deconstructivism. Avant-garde architecture, as a whole, is an overwhelmingly effective vehicle for this group to display itself; what could be more effective than an entire spatial experience?

“Traditional cultures are concerned with the production of objects for long-term use...Modernist cultures, by contrast, are mainly occupied with producing objects for short-term consumption...In Traditional cultures, invention, innovation, and discovery are means to improve handed-down systems of communication, representation, thinking, and building...they are means to an end...Industrial rationale and methods are subordinate to larger themes, to larger concerns. In Modernist cultures, by contrast, invention, innovation, and discovery are ends in themselves...industrial rationale and methods dominate...”

— Leon Krier, in “My Ideology Is Better than Yours”

Recent fluctuations in the architectural market have led the avant-garde into disorganized, localized movements, which presents the question: is it possible, or even desirable, to have an organized, far-reaching movement anymore? The constant flux of the Modern world seems to preclude any specific architectural agenda, and since architecture often acts as a current “world-lens” or existential microcosm of culture, a desire for a unified movement would seem pretentious. A reading of a disjointed world would, logically, be disjointed.

So where does this leave us? We've been "de stabiliz[ed], de center[ed], de-construct[ed],... dis plac[ed]": we also have a new, critical conception of space, material, context, and the politics of architecture which will continue to influence and inform those who have been influenced and informed by Decon. While spatial and material innovations are not new to architectural movements, each push is a step in the right direction: continuing to push limits and challenge conventions is the basis of rebellion. While these aspects certainly describe Decon, they are hardly exclusive to it. The next architectural avant-garde will, at least, have these aspects in common with Deconstructivism, but may also join them with issues of sustainability, client and user groups, public space, and new markets for architecture; perhaps the future of the avant-garde lies not in purposely ignoring these issues in favor of pursuing poetic integrity, but in rendering them fully while still retaining this integrity. This point is critical to a literal argument for a disjointed architecture based on a disjointed world.

Just as music soothes the savage beast, architecture could begin to define a more stable society. To make this happen, architecture must become more perceptive in anticipating future societal trends, and less complacent about its larger defining role in the world. Complacency cripples any essential relation between architecture and critique... to resurrect architecture, this relation must also be resurrected. More broadly, it is clear that, in order to remain relevant, architecture must consistently challenge itself, and **rebels are usually the instigators of this challenge.**

Reactionary architecture is necessary to the profession, but must be like the original Harley-Davidson market: a marginalized group of young thugs who agitate the culture of the bourgeoisie and slowly change the perceptions of the middle class. The intention of Deconstructivism was to do just that; however, like Harley-Davidson, it waited too long to reinvent itself and became mainstream. Once this happened, it lost the ability of commentary. More specifically, once it transformed into image instead of substance, designer and designee instead of the designed, the architecture lost its essence. **Architecture without essence is dead.**

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the urban institute

a center for transmutation

matt macdonagh-dumler

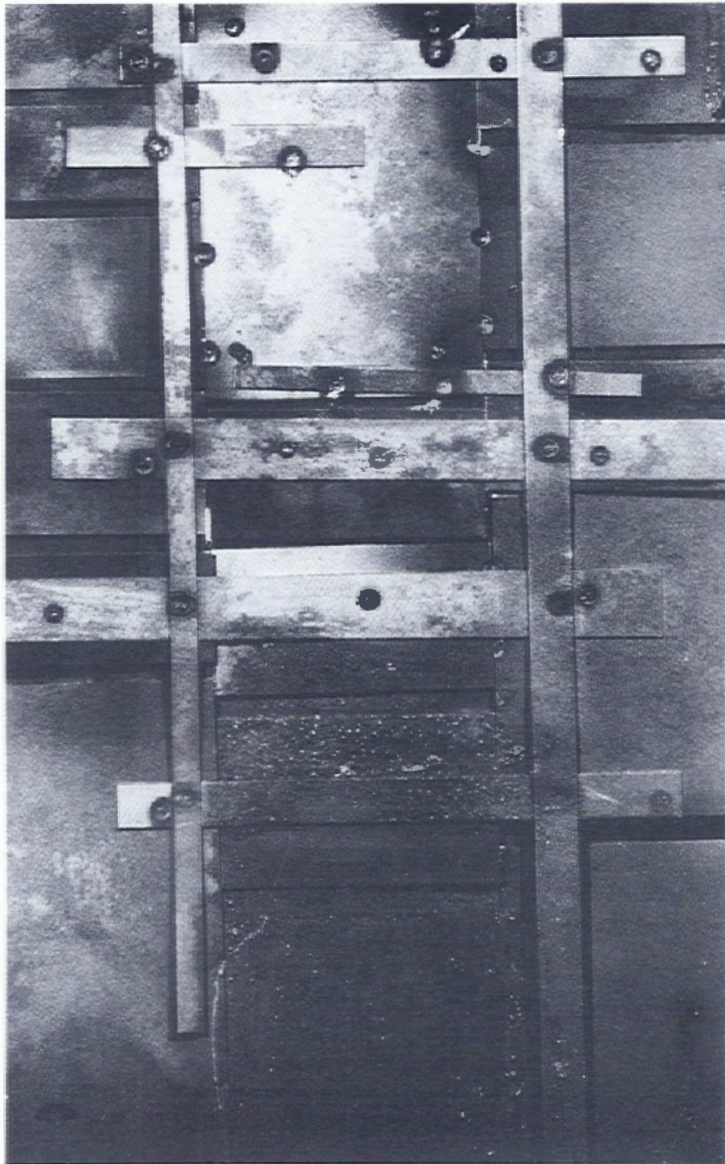
The exploration began with a suspension of conscious notions of architecture.
Can a written text inform a material construction?

“Hour Seven” from *Polyphilo: An Erotic Epiphany of Architecture* by Alberto Perez-Gomez was the stage from which a discussion of this issue began. One potential validation for this inquiry would be their overlap in vocabulary such as: line, plot, structure or grammar. In addition, both writing and architecture necessitate both a rigorous attention to structure but also an intuitive response. Consequently, through an examination of vocabulary, an interpretation and materialization of the text can occur. Taking this into consideration, I began to dissect and suture the text within the rigors of a process:

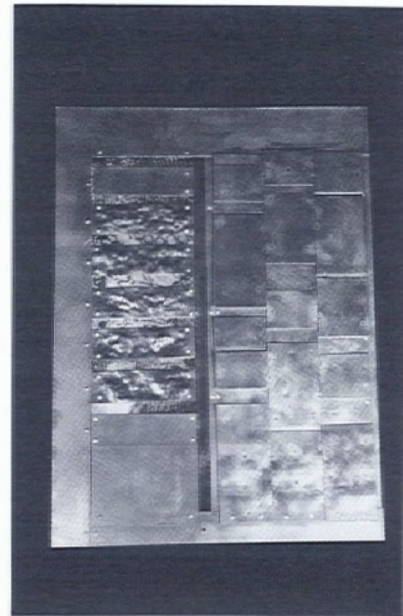
Examine critically how to gather and record information.
Understand and interpret the gaps between the sentences.
Formulate a position in respect of the sentences.
Question the position relative to the parcel in an illumination of the whole.

Engaged in a framework and searching for a deeper erudition of the text, I discovered a vast reservoir of spatial, tactile, and material qualities rooted in each recess (paragraph) of “Hour Seven.” An interpretation of these latent potentials within the gaps and readings of the text began to suggest physical conditions to which I could respond. The steel and plexiglass construction is an epiphany of the text and consequently an epiphany of the potentials for architecture:

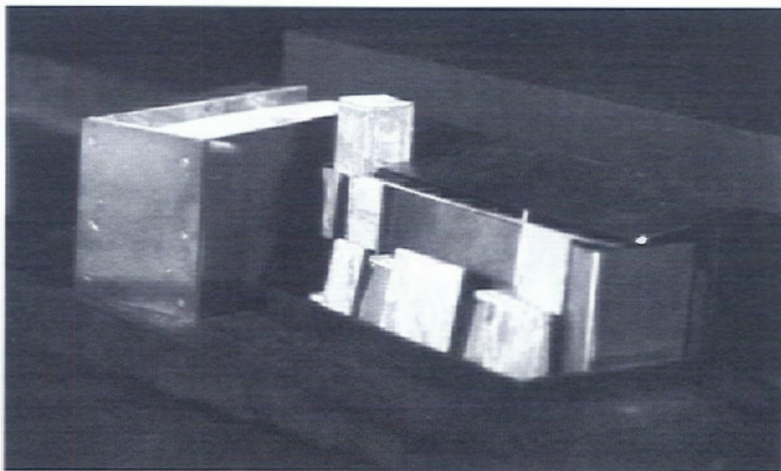
The potential of the material sensibility and constructional logic.
The potential of illumination.
The potential of the formal qualities.
The potential of incidental subtleties.
The necessity of all of the qualities to inflect and deflect each other.



steel construction back (detail)

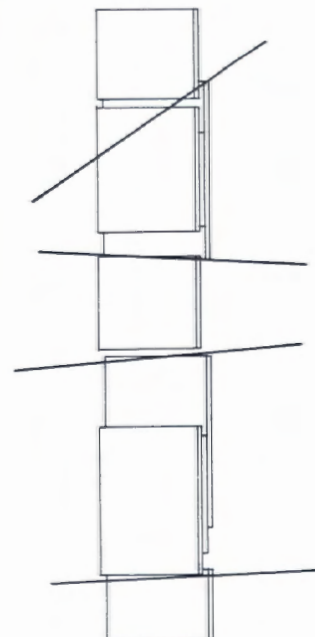


steel construction



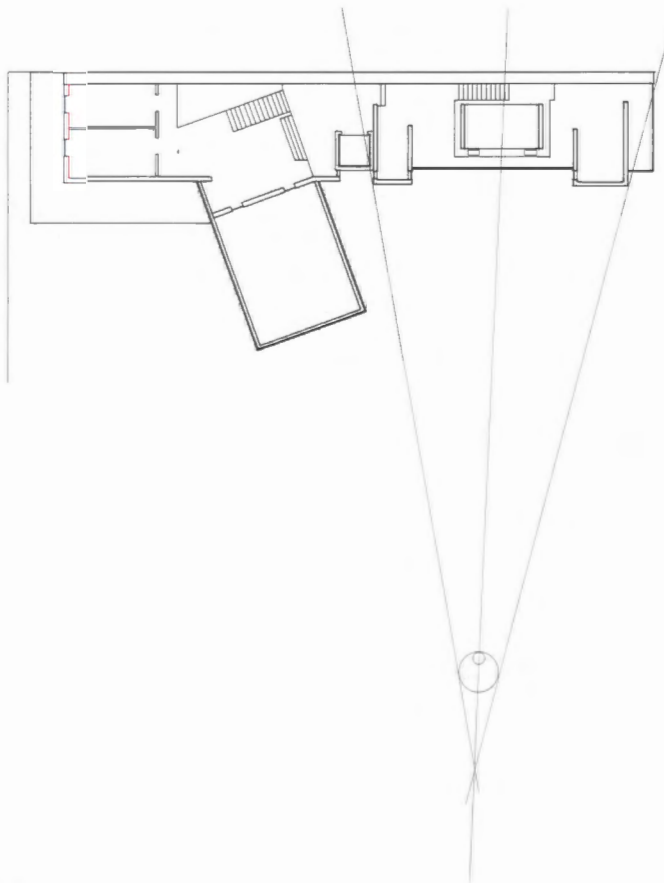
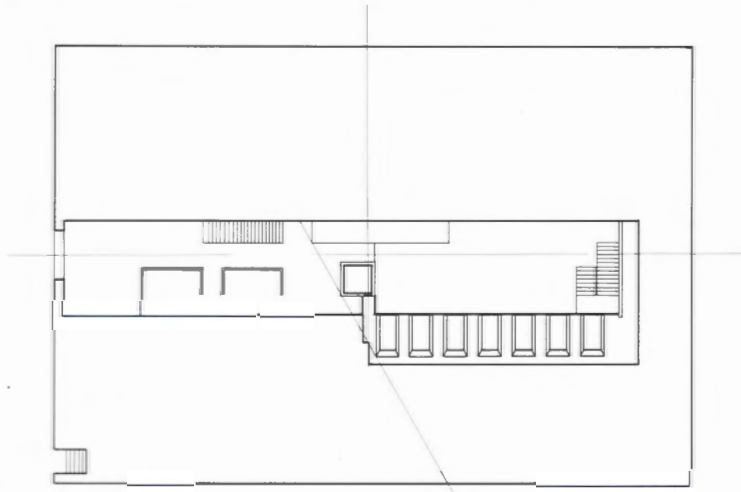
model

slippage

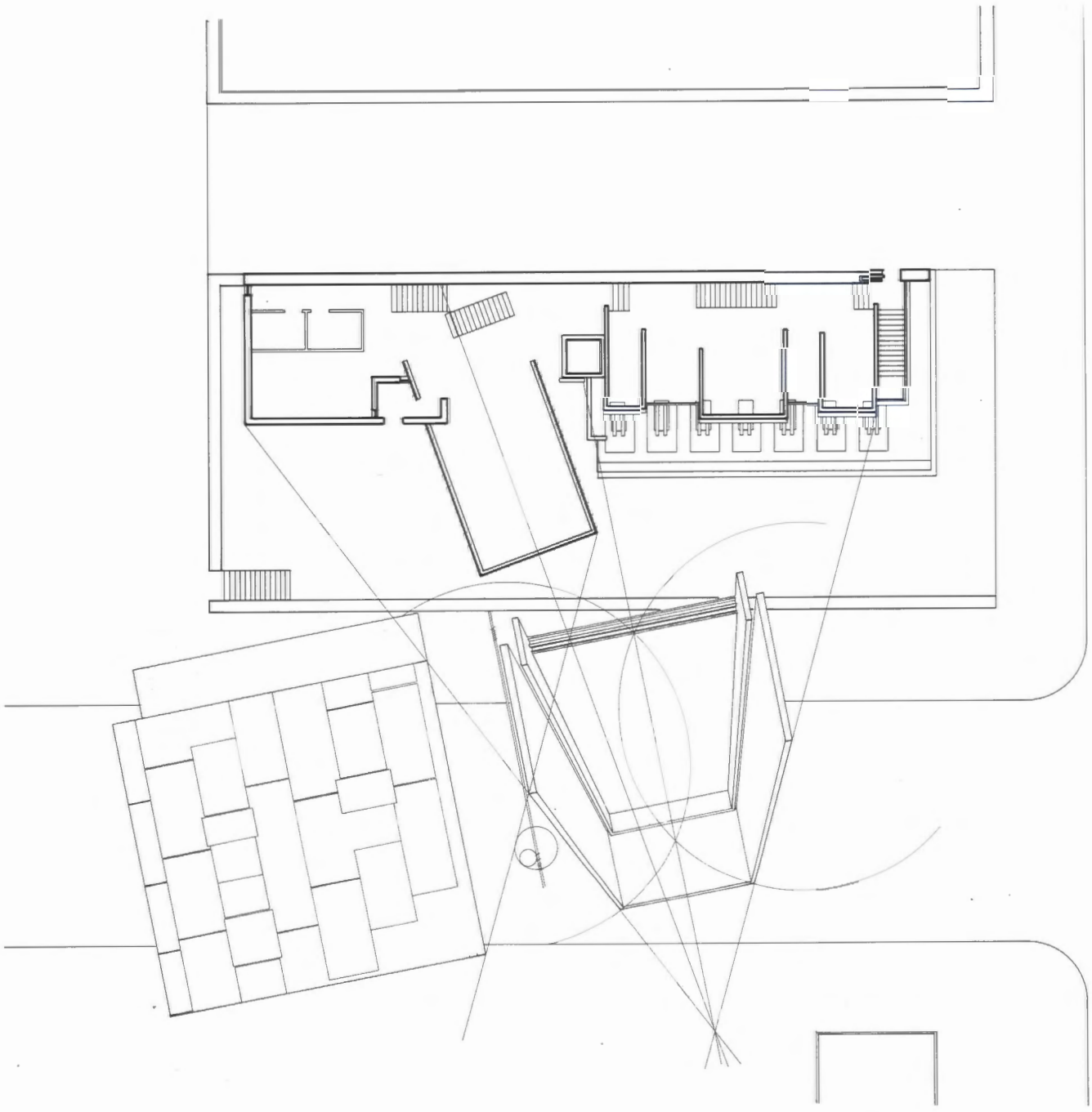


An analogous construction fosters an architectural investigation of joinery, luminescence and materials through its physicality. These explorations begin to inform and are informed by notions about the qualities of a space. Through the transmutation of a text into something physical, the construction achieves a degree of autonomy from the written word. It becomes what it is at a scale of 1 "equaling 1". With this separation, the physical thing can be interpreted and read in a new attempt for illumination. As a material form, it reveals clues about innovative methods of approaching a project. A weaving of the construction through the site and program suggests an understanding of an intervention for a built form, the urban institute.

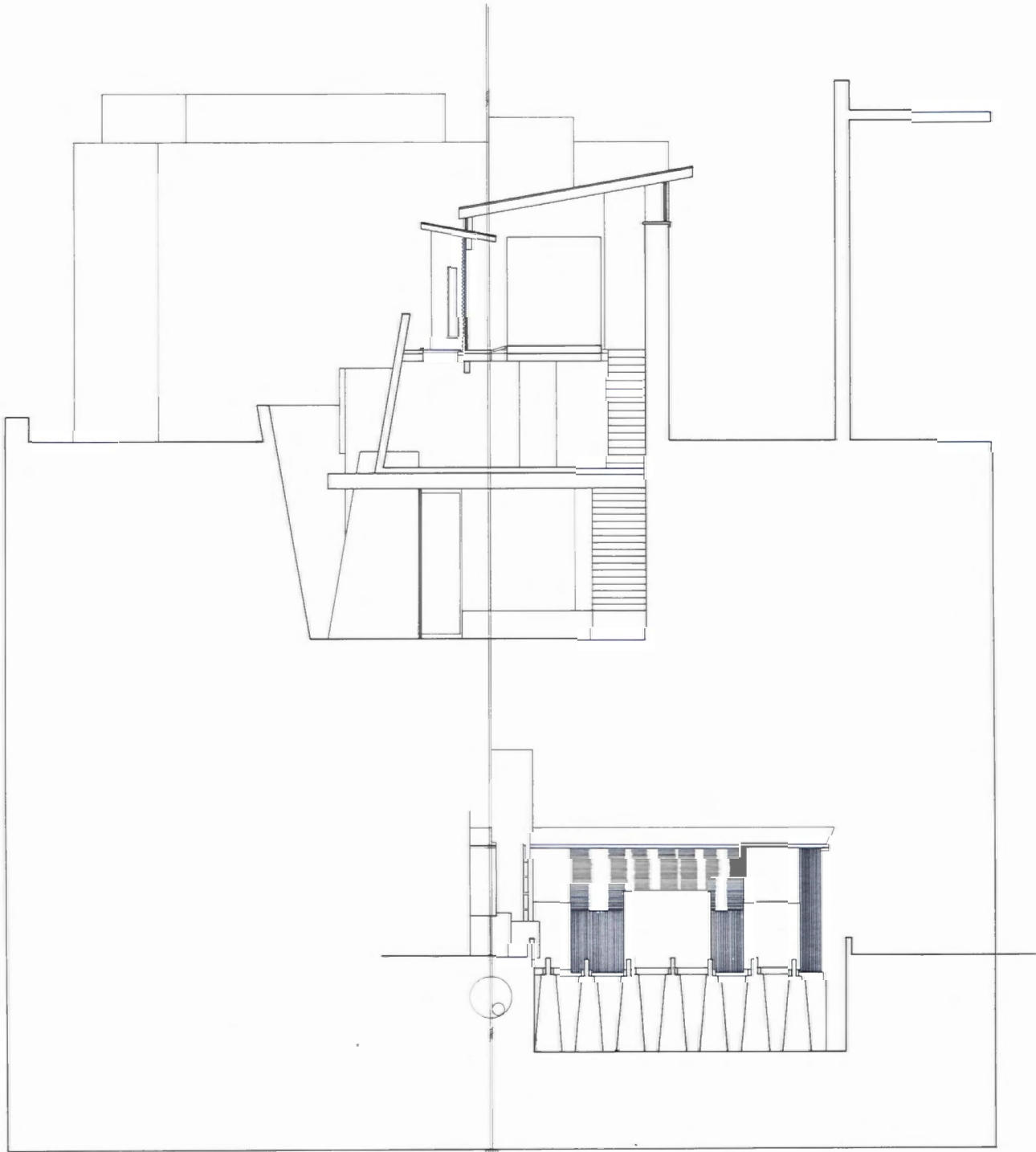
basement plan



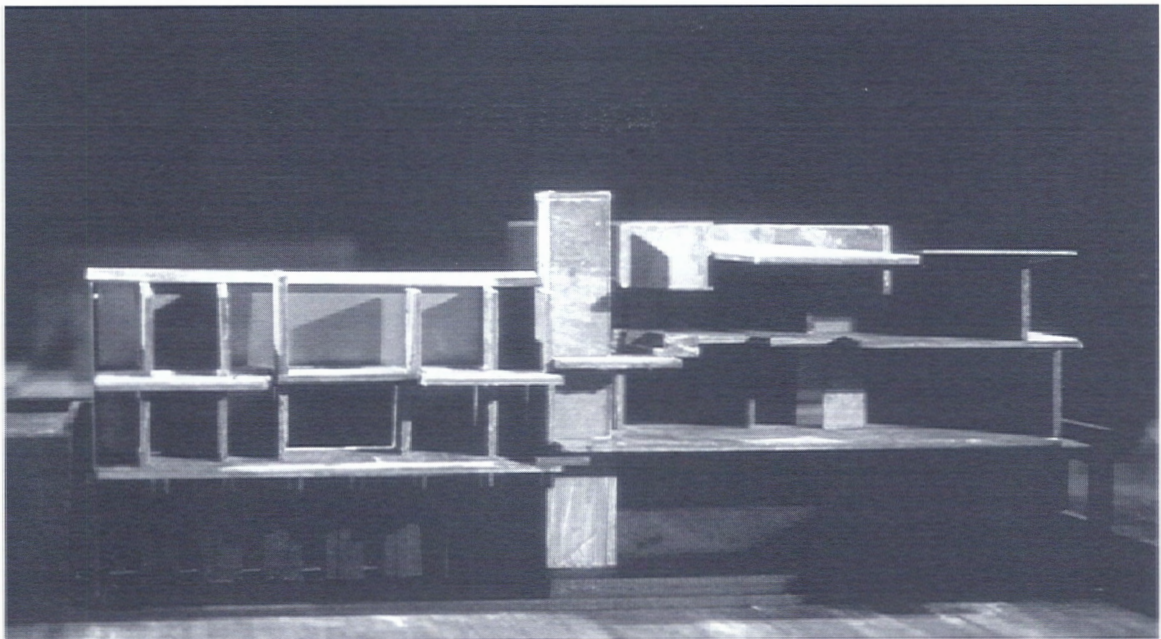
first floor plan



ground floor plan, gallery perspective and exterior elevation



section/elevation



longitudinal section model

Clay and the body politic

ceramic vessels and corporeal origins

susan e. crowell

Practitioners, historians, and critics have often described the ceramic vessel as a metaphor for the human body, a container for the soul. This metaphor derives its potency from a variety of sources — the volumetric nature of pottery (its ideal often expressed as being like the air contained within a pair of lungs at the point of greatest expansion), the skinlike texture of freshly formed clay, and the anthropomorphology of the vessel, parts of which are typically described as lip, neck, shoulder, belly, and foot. We critique forms in terms of how much “life” they contain, using vitality as a yardstick for content, as well as form.

The vessel-as-body metaphor has a gendered history, probably rooted in its containment function, associations with food, and allusions to vitality. In viewing ceramics made by contemporary women through the lens of this metaphor, it is important to keep in mind that the artists have witnessed and participated in an era of sweeping social change. For many, their expectations have shifted radically, often many times; and with those shifts in expectations have come shifts in how they see themselves, physically as well as socially. Just as women have taken on a greater variety of social roles, becoming stronger, more active and effective in public life, the vessel metaphor has evolved to accommodate these changes. For the female clay artist, the vessel, especially the figurative vessel, no longer serves as a mere receptacle for the gaze, but as an expression of her own agency.

According to Elaine Morgan¹ and others, women developed the vessel to aid in their gathering, cooking, and storage tasks, and the origins of the ceramic vessel are located in that utility. In so-called “primitive” cultures today, women are still the producers of utilitarian pottery, although exceptions arise in instances of mechanization (e.g., potters’ wheels in West Africa). Even in industrial societies, repetitive methods of production (such as slipcasting in

¹ Elaine Morgan, *The Descent of Woman*, (New York: Bantam Books, 1973), 127.

China and the Czech Republic, or majolica painting in Italy) depend upon large numbers of women in the workforce. The connections to utility are hard-won and enduring, and are especially evident within the field of ceramics. The utilitarian origins — to gather fruit and hold seed, to transform crops into food, to preserve and insure bounty for the future — bear parallels to the ways in which Nature uses women — as containers, sites, and sources of fertility, gestation, reproduction, and continuity.

This utility translates beautifully into simile and metaphor: to say that a pot is like a womb or that the body is a vessel is a poetic extension of pottery's function of containment. We can trace the more metaphorical connection between vessel and femaleness to the very beginning of pottery. In her book, *The Civilization of the Goddess: the World of Old Europe*, the late Marija Gimbutas examines the origins of Western decorative motifs in Neolithic pottery forms and symbols. Gimbutas hypothesizes that not only were these forms representative of fertility goddesses, but so were their decorative markings. Such designs as chevrons, zigzags, circles, and parallel lines were symbols of female attributes: vulvas, water or amniotic fluid, hips, and breasts. Whereas earlier clay figures and Paleolithic fertility goddesses, such as the Venus of Willendorf, served as solid representations of the goddess, Neolithic pots were symbolically associated with the generation of life, and functionally associated with sustaining it.²

During the last ten years, many clay artists have revisited these forms and motifs. Among them, both Donna Polseno and Indira Freitas Johnson have incorporated them into developing themes in their work. Polseno, after surviving a serious automobile accident, began to move away from making abstract sculptural vessels toward creating full-bodied figurative forms. This change in her work was informed, she says, "both subtly and directly, by emotional and spiritual passages of my own life. The pieces are (now) archetypal in nature, referring to historical goddesses. Yet they are very personal because the transformation to figures from vessels was completely unconscious, resulting from my own healing process. They are meant to be voluptuous, full of life, and containers of a strong spirit. For me, they are a celebration."³

Indira Freitas Johnson also works from archetype — but in motif, rather than form. Unlike Polseno, for whom the figurative vessel represents full-blown, gestural, and lyrical grace; Johnson works more with the same kind of decorative markings that Gimbutas cites, but uses them to explore contradiction and transcultural tension by inscribing the markings, contrasts, and contradictions of the female experience upon her forms. In reflecting upon her work she writes, "My intention is to present attributes of strength and tenderness, power and compassion, thus evoking memories of female potency and energy that can be traced into the far reaches of history.

2
Marija Alseikaite Gimbutas, *The Civilization of the Goddess: the World of Old Europe* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1991), Chapter 7.

3
Donna Polseno. Artist's statement, issued Summer, 1993.

The hand traces life's patterns; assuming responsibilities, taking action. The foot moves step by step on a journey towards spiritual growth. The eye focuses deep, on the past, present, and future. These are the primary symbols I use in my art. They record my journey from a family of six daughters in India to my life as an artist, wife, and mother in the United States. Their use has helped me order, understand, and integrate my experience as a woman, influenced by two vastly different cultures — one that is rooted in a historical past, and the other that is shaped by a technological future.⁴ In Johnson's work, we see utilitarian concerns for containment give way to the representation of more contextual, material, and global issues by symbolic language. Sometimes such symbolism results in a spiritual quest through form and the ritual of creating form.

The very act of making vessels — for example, the repetitive rolling, attachment, and smoothing of clay coils — and the devotional relationship between artist and material can infuse the vessel with intensity, passion, and ritualistic density. One artist working in this manner is Amara Geffen. Her vessels, perhaps the most abstract of the group under consideration here, reduce the figure to its sexual, primal, and poetic essentials, eliciting a response from the gut rather than the intellect. In the fall of 1993, she stated, “recently, I have begun to explore an interest in ritual and forms that evoke a sense of the ancient and the sacred. Issues that surround various concepts of the body (male/female, inside/outside) continue to be of importance to me, but in this new series I have focused more generally upon the ideal of duality...hence all the doubled forms and the use of symmetry...there is some quality inherent in the medium of clay itself that also contributes to the direction of my work (i.e., a concern for internal volume and the relationship of interior to the external form; an interest in the organic qualities of form which grow very naturally out of the coiling process; an interest in symmetry and balance). For me, the clay itself plays a central role in the choices I make. These choices in form eventually come to suggest metaphors for meaning (i.e., my interest in ritual as a reflection not only of my involvement with the ceramic process and the spiritual nature of fire, but also as it reflects the cyclical quality of being a woman; my interest in duality and “doubled” forms as a response to my basic experience of the polarities that permeate life).”⁵

Because vessels are no longer merely utilitarian, we observe the same variety of purposes that accompany works of art or craft in other media — creative investigation and expression, celebration, ritual, portraiture, storytelling, social mobilization, and reproduction. But because the vessel implies some actual or symbolic representation of the female body, it takes on additional content — that of self-representation — when it is made by a woman.

⁴ Imdira Freitas Johnson. Artist's statement, issued Summer, 1993.

⁵ Amara Geffen. Artist's statement, issued Fall 1993.

We can assume that when men make vessels about women, they are informed by what they perceive. We can also assume that when women make vessels, they are informed by what they are, by what makes them. This information includes perceptions from inside the female experience. To differentiate between the vessel-as-Self and the vessel-as-Other — a major difference between being the perceived and the perceiver — plays an important part in the way we read the metaphor, and in what it says to us.

Much has been written about the objectification of women on the part of men, and the part that it has played in the reproduction of power within our culture. In an earlier piece titled "Reflections on the Feminist Aesthetic," I discussed the ways in which conventional aesthetics had evolved to reflect, reinforce, and reproduce male privilege. As a response to this relationship between aesthetics and power, there developed a collective feminist critique of conventional masculinist aesthetics — one which saw the female form as "Other" and used it, assuming ownership through the grasp of vision, to create an effective commodity through representations of women. The images of women which "art history" presented reinforced a sense of "Otherness," and, in ironic ways, instigated a conscious pursuit of the Self. For women artists to see themselves as doers, as makers, as agents, and as participants in the art world was not at all compatible with the art that had survived as "history." Female students were subject to "history," but their status as outsiders determined an inevitable transformation in aesthetics and practice.⁶

Concurrent with the evolution of this critique of the masculine gaze was the development of strategies for correcting historically reinforced inequalities. In the process of disputing traditional notions of representation through protest and intervention in "art business as usual," feminist artists have challenged the terms of aesthetic consensus by examining the ways vision has been employed in the service of such "history." Such activity has formed the core of my own ceramic involvement, fueled by this desire to re-appropriate the gaze, to confront our conventional notions of beauty, and to ask questions about the nature of visual perception. Is the eye a tool of penetration, or a point of access, a receptacle? In recent years I have produced a series of illustrated vessels which explore the way exhibitionists use the feminine gaze. On these vessels I have narrated stories from my personal experience as well as those I have collected from others; I seek to examine the roles of women who, through the appropriation of their vision, become unwilling participants in acts of indecent exposure. A text on each vessel tells the story, while drawings and surface treatments illustrate and expose the flasher: the forms seek, through their tension, to capture how it feels to be penetrated visually, and, at

6

Susan Crowell, "Reflections on the Feminine Aesthetic," *Studio Potter* 20 (December 1991).

susan e. crowell
gyrator
porcelain 25"x13"x8"
1992

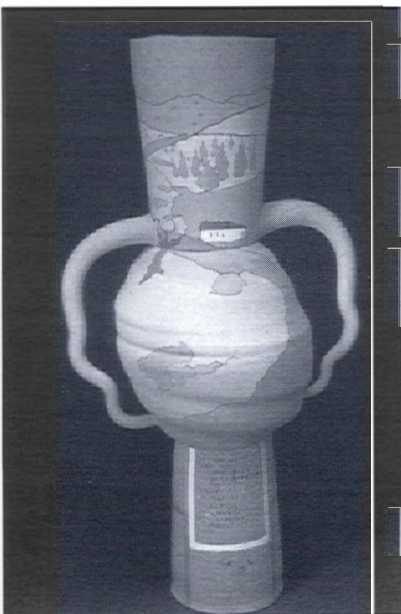


the same time, to resist. The vessels themselves, while formed from porcelain on a traditional potter's wheel, are not poised in still-time as in a photograph, but are distorted and in motion. Their formal intent is beyond the function of vessel or visual receptacle: they express a determination to move, to act, to do — not merely to be viewed or acted upon. By exploring the visual pull between classical forms of pottery, on which more well known stories have been documented, and the content of bizarre behavior in contemporary society, where unexpected aggression in the form of “flashing” continually intrudes, disturbs, and attempts to intimidate, the series addresses the contradictions women face in public spaces — as objects to be seen, appreciated aesthetically, and “done to” versus people who have agency and rights.

Having successfully disengaged art from other meanings and purposes, the marketplace has participated in its own interest, employing a variety of mechanisms, including commodity fetishism, to move capital. The concept of commodity fetishism — the way objects for purchase take on special meanings through their symbolism (buy the car, get the pretty girl; buy the book, have the time to read it) — clarifies the disproportionate commercial value inherent in the commodification of women's bodies over their self-perceptions. The relationship between objectification of women and commodity fetishism is at the heart of Katherine Blacklock's work. She combines two primary sources of imagery: decorative architectural fragments cast from salvage materials, and European decorative porcelain of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. For their original owners and patrons, these “objects of desire” were signifiers of wealth and power, and Blacklock appropriates and assembles them to attract the viewer through form and surface decoration. Once engaged, the viewer confronts the very process of objectification and its consequences. By manipulating what might be conventional vessel openings into architectural and/or anatomical entrances to the forms, Blacklock graphically reminds the viewer of what objectification is all about. She reverses the usual balance between objectifier and objectified, making the viewer a bit uneasy in the process.

It is illuminating to view the dialectics which Blacklock and I address in our work through the lens of a concept borrowed from feminist theory, which challenges the conventional borders between the Self and the Other. In “Jurisprudence and Gender,” Robin West suggests that women and men view the Other in entirely different ways, that the very notion of the Other is masculinist, and that women do not always perceive themselves as physically separate: “Women are not essentially, necessarily, inevitably, invariably, always, and forever separate from other human beings: women, distinctively, are quite clearly ‘connected’ to other human life when pregnant...indeed, perhaps the central insight of feminist theory of the last decade has been that women are ‘essentially connected,’ not essentially ‘separate,’ from the rest of human life,

susan e. crowell
sesto III (back)
porcelain 26"x13"x8"
1992



both materially, through pregnancy, intercourse, and breast feeding, and, existentially, through their moral and practical life.⁷

In describing this relational quality, West challenges and refutes the rational, autonomous ideal of Western Man. In suggesting that the definition of the Self may extend its borders beyond the skin, one can describe the female experience (as expressed aesthetically) to include what it is responding to as well as what its response is. Linda Gunn-Russell works in such parameters. While her vessels are highly gestural and figurative, they describe in visual terms the impulses for the gestures and their very sources. In a statement sent to this author in 1992 she said, "The sculptures that I make are in the main autobiographical. They may evolve from a major and generally negative experience... [or] they might start from a small action that I've seen or felt, a movement in dance, a position in qi kung, which creates a tension or action momentarily suspended that I would like to emulate in clay. But all this is only a trigger and the final piece is a distillation of the emotion, and instinct for the form I want, a visual rightness where there is balance, a flow to the lines and curves..."⁸

To propose that these works originate in the body, not the eye of the artist, is to challenge the framework of Western art. In *Homo Aestheticus*, Ellen Dissanayake points out that the traditions of "art" in the West descend from Classical and Judeo-Christian tradition, philosophy, and aesthetics, which place a high value upon non-tactile, abstract, incorporeal, and intellectual experience — the mind over the body and the intellect as master of experience.⁹ The problem with embracing this hierarchy of values is that it conspires against the many realms of experience and varieties of intelligence outside those defined values, including those corporeal experiences specific to women. To suggest that we make our work out of some corporeal impulse involves a direct challenge to traditional ideas about what art is, and about what art should do, but it also has long-standing precedents in other cultures and other times. For contemporary clay artists and their audiences, to perceive the vessel as the Self, rather than the Other, offers a remedy for objectification and commodification, a chance to re-appropriate physical experience and communicate with one another about it. To address those areas in which the Self intersects with its context allows an arena in which to form a more useful basis for critique, analysis, and strategy.

7

Robin West, "Jurisprudence and Gender," *University of Chicago Law Review*, 55 (1988): 17.

8

Linda Gunn-Russell. Artist's statement, issued 1992.

9

Ellen Dissanayake, *Homo Aestheticus: Where Art Comes From and Why* (New York: Free Press, 1992), 1–23.

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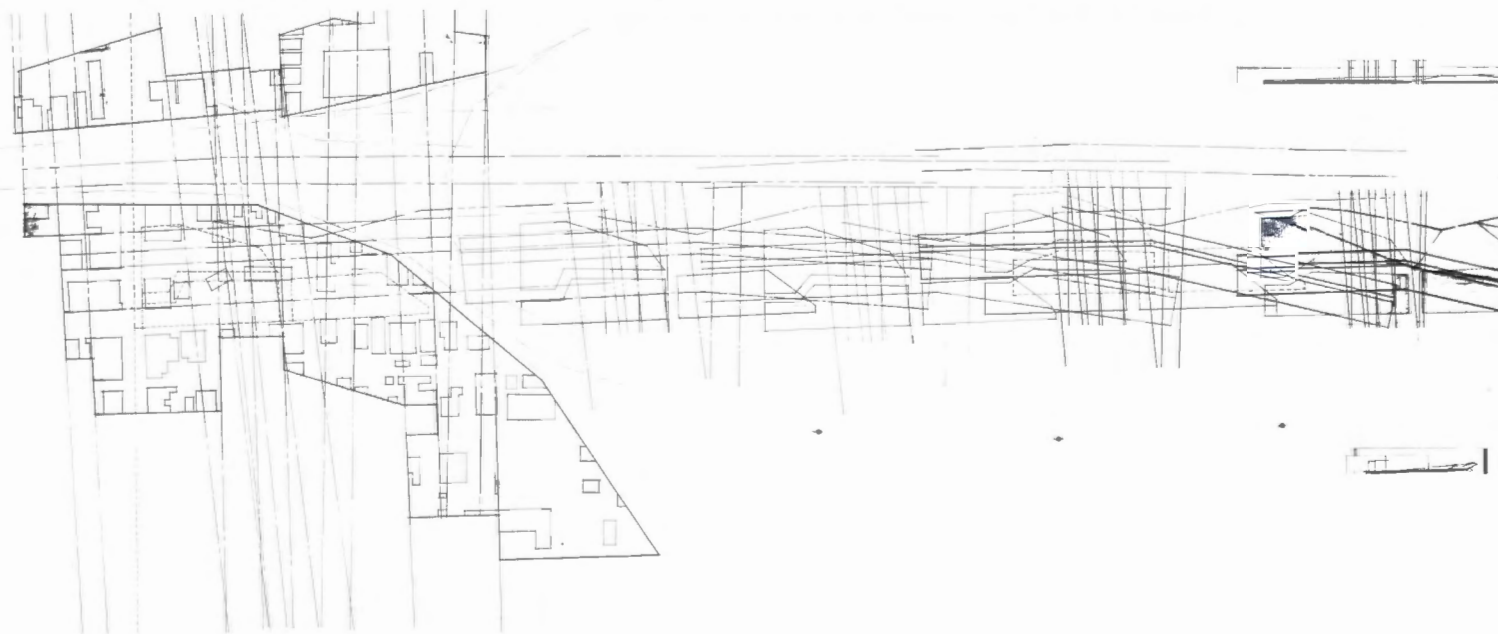
E fabricating representation a broadcast center for Detroit

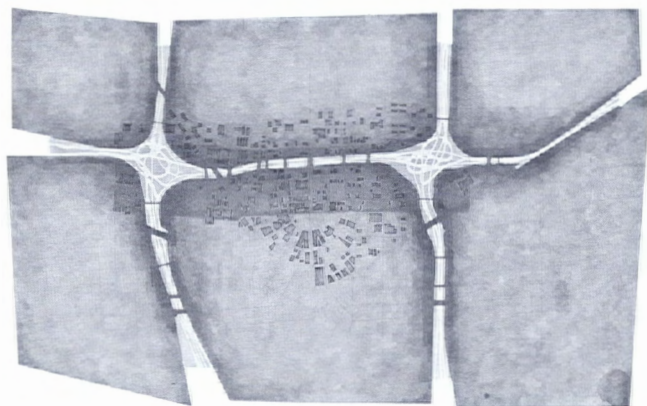
matt johnson

To consider television as merely a screen onto which transmitted visual images are superimposed, we then must believe that the images have no greater integrity than those of a shadow play. When we consider television as a window to the world, we elevate the role of the image to that of the actual object seen. We have then shifted importance from the thing to its image, and have allowed it to share with actuality in the shaping of our perceptions.

The tele-visual has subversively affected how we see and has alienated our understanding of the world around us. CNN brings the world to our living rooms, and as a consequence we need not venture out into the realm of

process drawing: site extraction

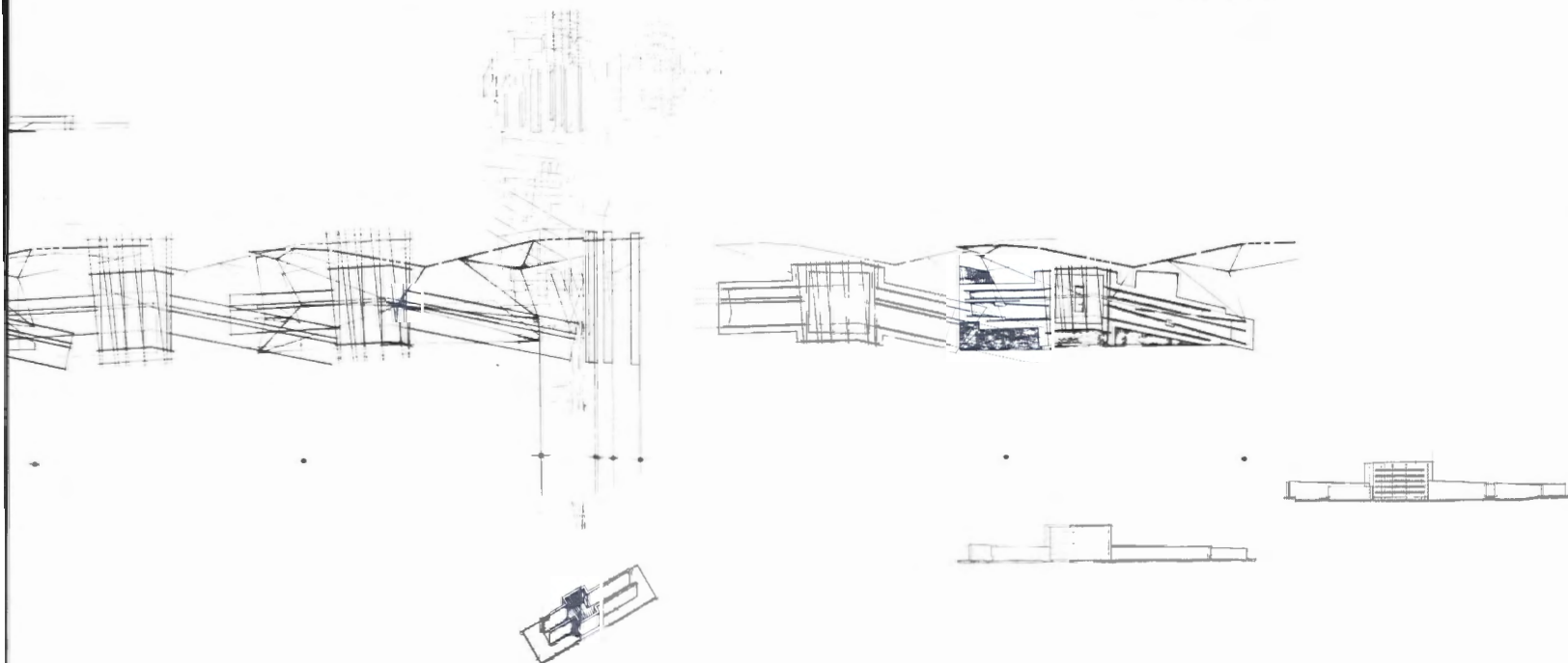


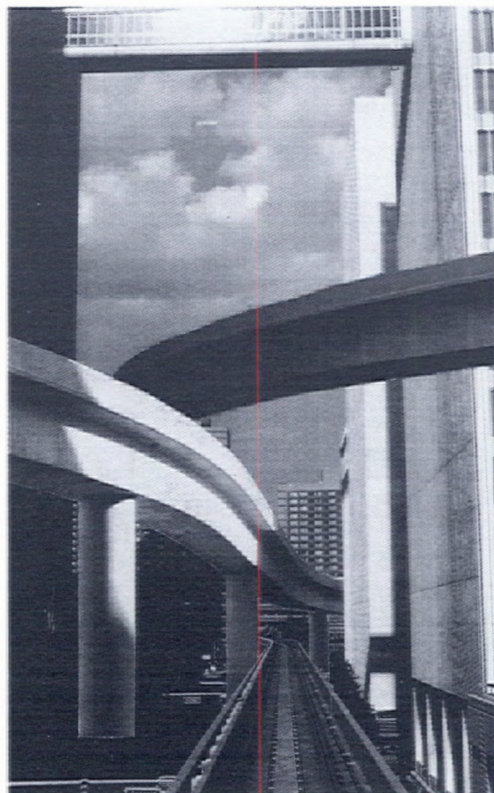
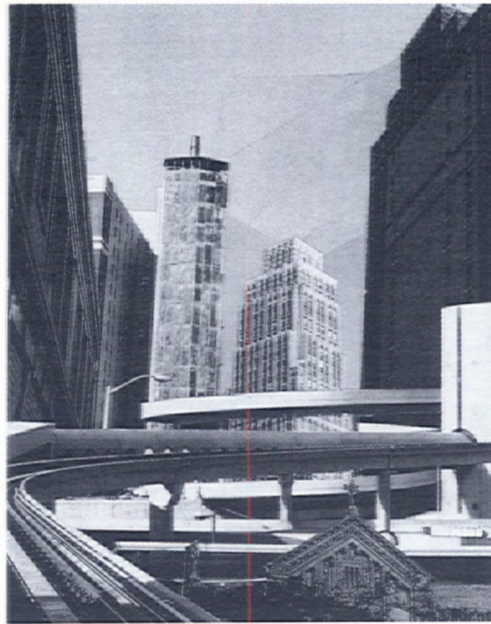


detroit: stakeout zone

actuality to experience "life." The vitality of the traditional city has been displaced to the privacy of isolated suburban homes where it can be readily experienced within the clean, cropped frame of our television sets, therefore eliminating the necessity for physical interaction in our cities. Paul Virilio writes in *The Vision Machine* that "paradoxical logic emerges when the real-time image dominates the thing represented, real-time subsequently prevailing over real space, virtuality dominating actuality and turning the very concept of reality on its head."¹

¹ Paul Virilio, *The Vision Machine* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1994), 63.





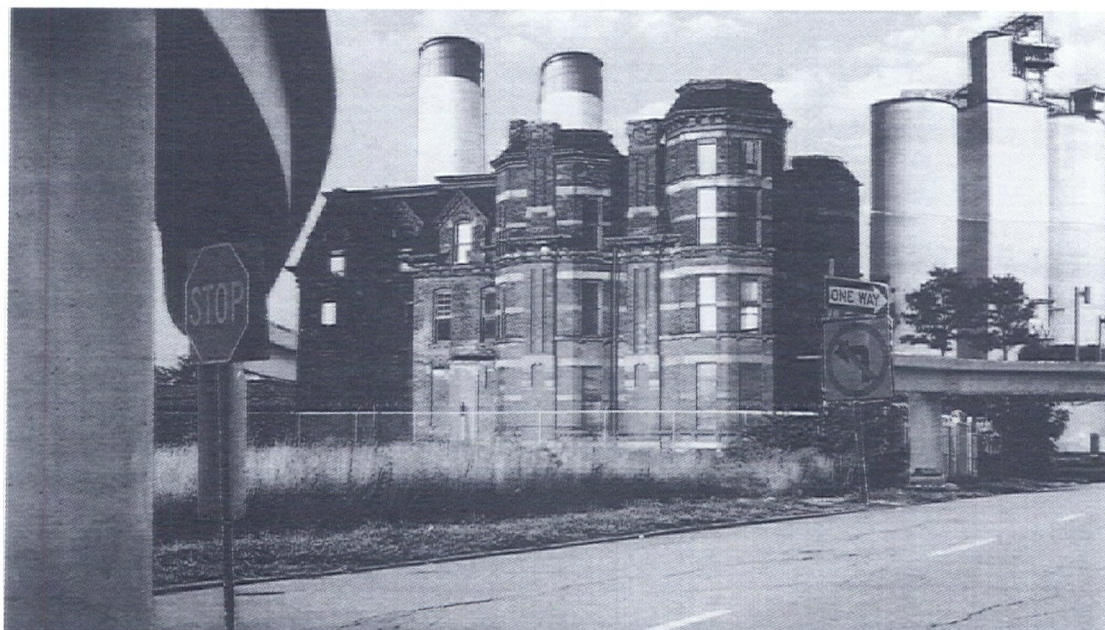
The design of this project was nurtured on two levels: through an experiential understanding of the city at both urban and intimate scales and, later, through an investigation of the tele-visual phenomenon of coverage. Designing a building for Detroit as a reaction to Detroit, a city whose energy seems perpetually dormant, is not an ill-fated endeavor, though it is indeed an elusive one. I mean to say that any solution extracted from an understanding of the city should never be fundamentally alien or lacking in an involved correspondence with some underlying subtext to the city. In short, the research for this project is, for the most part, substantially engendered from an experiential qualification of evasive, unforeseeable attributes reflective of Detroit. These insights were collected and investigated through a number of means including photography, written research, material constructions and finally an architectural translation. Joseph Cornell's art and his interactions in the city (in general) presupposes that, "the commonplace is miraculous if rightly seen, if recognized."² This is the way in which I sought out Detroit's urban subtext.

Detroit's existing urban fabric, if the term is in fact applicable in this context, is only a trace of what the city was. There seems to be no definable edges within Detroit, the buildings hardly solidify spatial boundaries of any kind; rather, vacancy wraps its exposed buildings, isolating objects scattered across an enormous spatial field. Therefore, the physical "stuff" of a dense urban fabric, as we traditionally conceive of them, offers little significance for the modeling of a new material presence because it simply is not

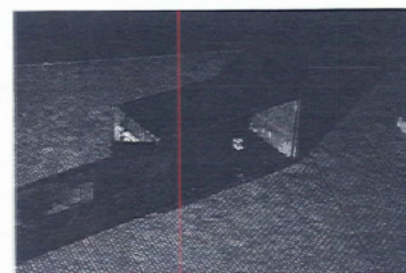
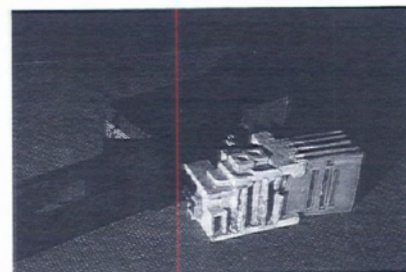
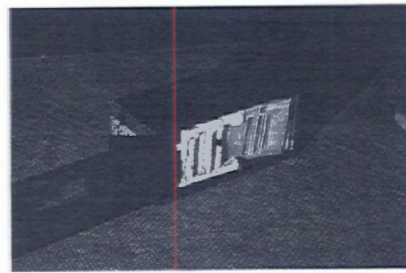
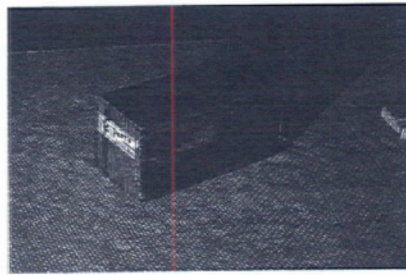
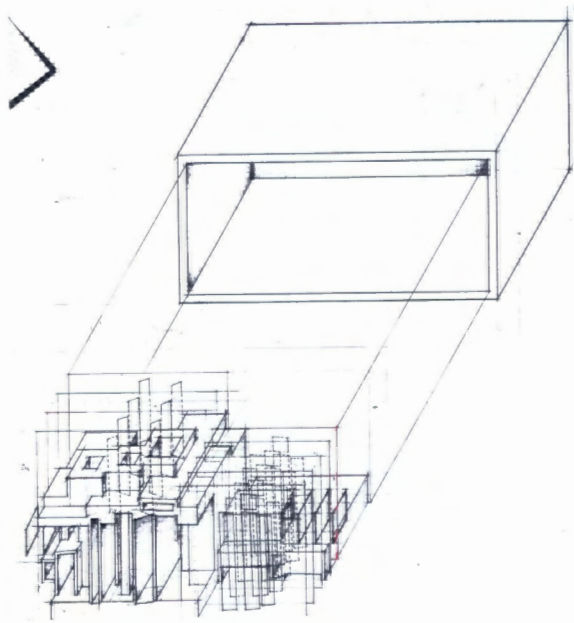
there. Detroit's urban fabric, or lack thereof, which I will call a density of space, provides a void, invisible yet with the indeterminate weight of emptiness within which I have drawn substance to build an architecture. This was my subtext.

I must also note that the acknowledgment of such a subtext is not evident in a limited representation of the city such as the city map (here figure and ground, black and white are synonymous and intangible). Direct interaction and experiential inquisition can only touch the weight of emptiness; when I look at my maps of Detroit this phenomenon is invisible, yet when I walk down its streets it is all around me.

Emptiness is Detroit's reality, though it is remarkably difficult to capture in an architectural drawing or mapping exercise. Photographs of the urban environment break some of the shortcomings of the representational map. Film, further yet, introduces the elements of time and movement which have the propensity for creating a fictitious reality unobtainable in other mediums; time is inextricably linked to space and distance (we most likely can all agree that the relative space of the world has shrunk by virtue of the advent of high speed transportation and instantaneous global communications).

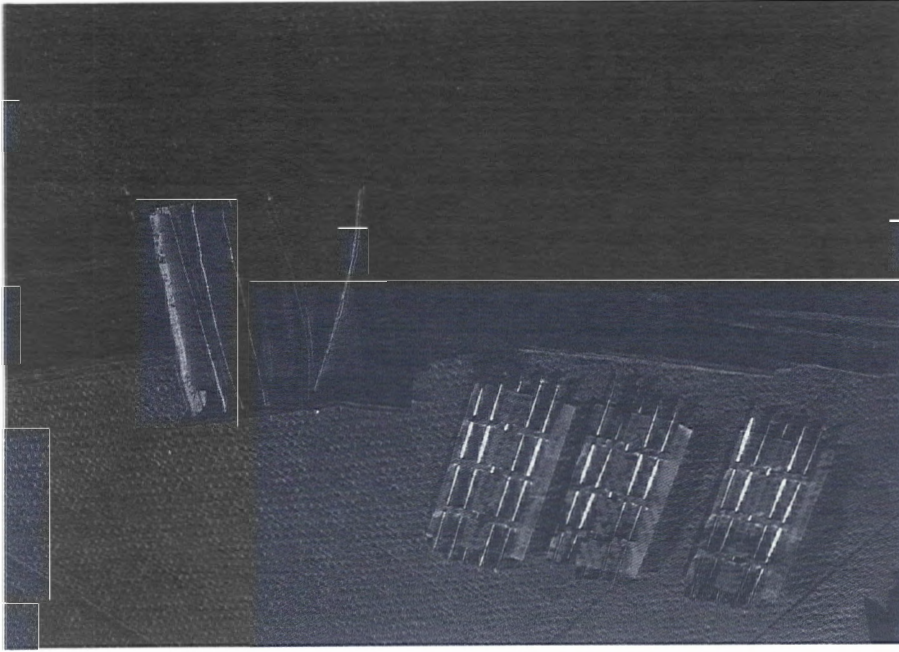


Through time and movement, film is able to collect a contiguous array of visual, as well as audio, information lending it useful for de-mystifying subtext. I mention these things only to digress and point out that I, unfortunately, did not use film during my initial observations of the city; I used photography. However, even the best of my photographs could not relay the sensory perceptions of each of these locations frozen in my memory. Like film, my memory could not discount the effect of time and movement in the collection of visual information; my mental images did not portray Detroit as completely barren or stagnant. The visual moments scattered and occasionally clustered in this spatial field were, rather, collectively apparent in one mental frame. My reaction to this was to produce a series of photo collages that could reinterpret a more true image of what I saw. These collages allowed me to collapse mental objects within the space of the frame of a surrogate photograph, replacing its suggestive space, (literal emptiness), with a spatial density woven between

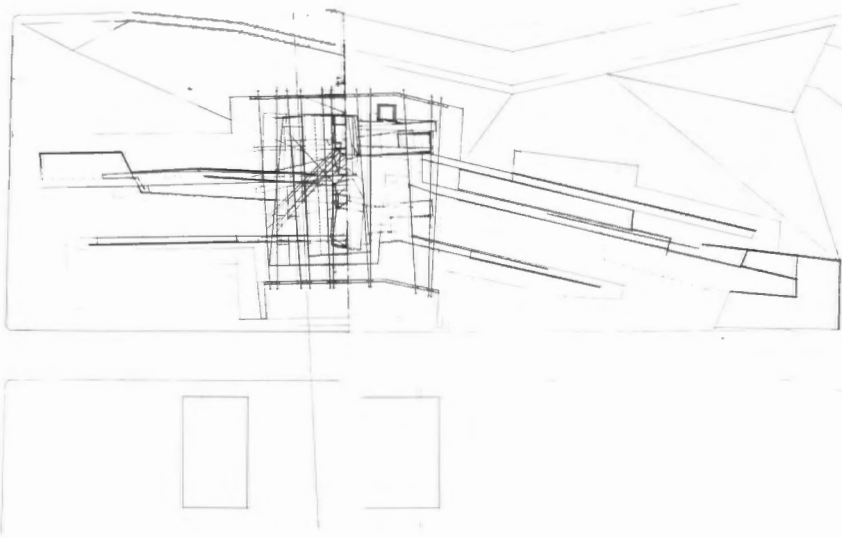


dislocated bites of memory. In this way, Detroit is accurately represented according to my capacity and propensity to correlate memorial perception with actual vision in a single holistic take.

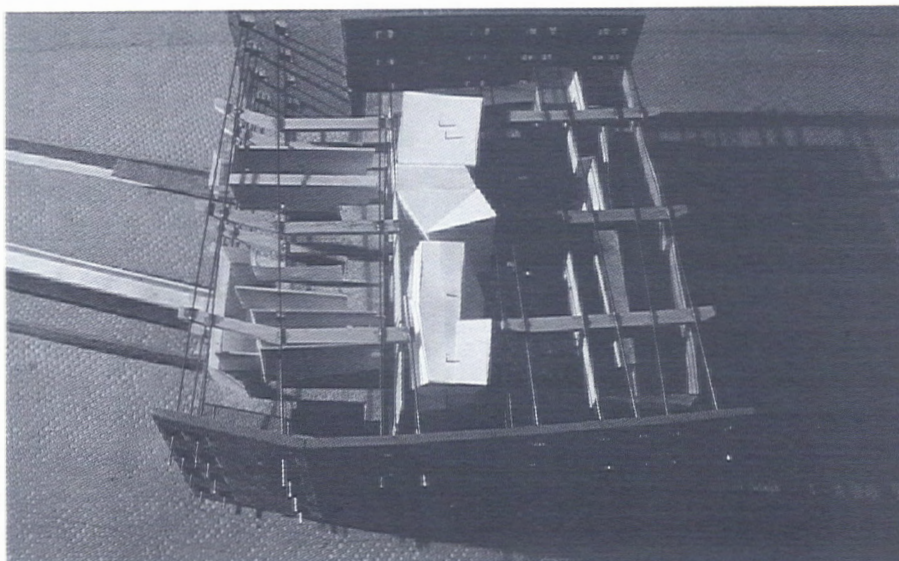
The photo collage studies nurtured the construction of the "Box," the site for an extraction and construction of information, tangible yet, at times, invisible in the space of the photograph. The Box three-dimensionally mimics the frame of the photograph or a mental frame of perception, housing a material manifestation of the space between image-objects in this montage, thus becoming the mold by which the non-tangible could obtain tangibility and the solid would become void. It housed a material presence of the substance of one collage, one that expressed most accurately the relationship of images for my investigation of Detroit. The volumetric form in the construction associates with the resident images of the surrogate photo, the temporal planes embedded in this form are engendered from an abstraction of the imported images within the collage. The Box is thus a synthetic artifact of Detroit mediated through the perceptual collage in an effort to qualify a subtext, or simply to make apparent the essence of one unique take on some "thing" of the city. It presents itself to me from several angles; as a solid closed container, first as a holistic object surrounded by a spatial emptiness likened to the remnants of built Detroit. As an opened container or filled container with the material construction inside creating a relative density of space as the collage does with its image-objects; as an empty container showing an entirely different quality of spatial

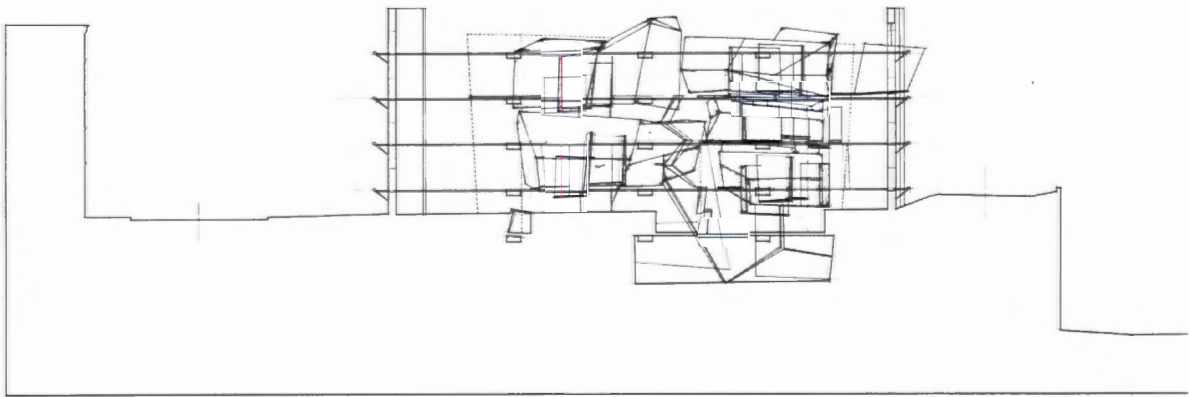


study model



site plan

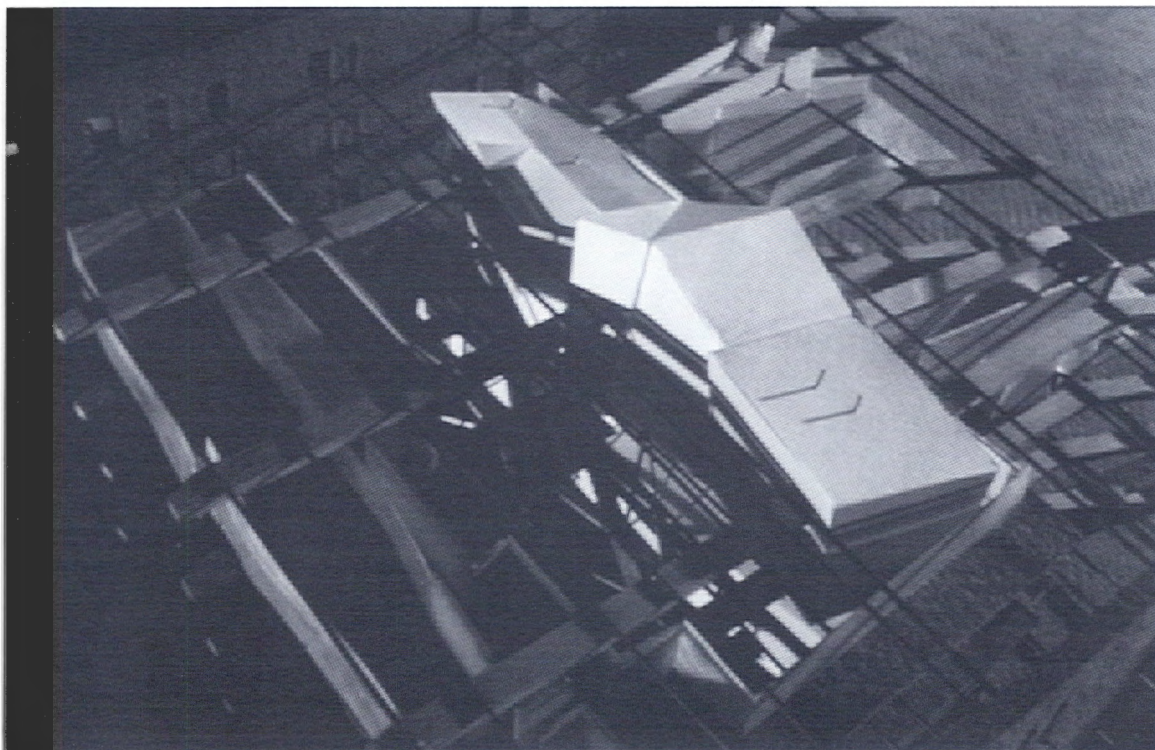


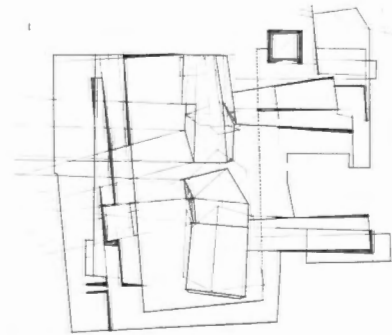


section

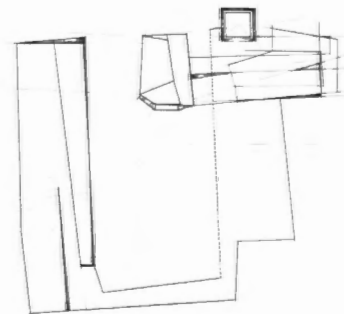
density or, perhaps, spatial emptiness. These may seem as trivial aspects of a complex urban environment, yet they enable me to touch upon the overwhelming weight of emptiness in Detroit; they provide me with a substantial basis to reflect upon, and furthermore, to promote a specificity to any architectural endeavor for this urban site.

Essentially two methodologies are at work in the architecture that followed, and two realms of development are represented in its scheme. One is founded on an intensive study of the city as described thus far; the other owing its existence entirely to an understanding of a matter that thrives regardless of location in actuality, that is, the matter of television. The selection of a site and the design of an architecture for this project was, in fact, predicated by a commitment to emptiness. The Fisher Freeway has a powerful spatial presence as a canyon-like form that all but erases the memory of a location once densely populated by built form. The site that I committed myself to flanks the Fisher Freeway, drawing off of the magnitude of the void it has since created. Converging on the site are the projected lines of surrounding structures, (though not immediate to it), creating the trace of a framework within which the material reality of an actual architecture could be shaped. The external form is simplistic with sweeping gestures embedded in the site; it is a part of the site. It is solid and relatively holistic; the internal production center, on the





fourth floor plan



third floor plan

other hand, is fractured and active. The external form is low to the ground allowing an intimate relationship to the spatial emptiness of the city striving not to counter this attribute. The tele-visual production center rises above the site creating a stark contrast to the horizontality of the void surrounding it. One must move along the horizon line of the site when entering and occupying the external wings of the building, while the internal infrastructure keeps its inhabitants isolated from the site with no reference to external conditions. The basic shell and ground hugging gestures are, then, dedicated to the city and its emptiness while the events cupped within it transcend the site. These react exclusively to the significance of the program or the design of a television broadcast center and the phenomenon of tele-visual coverage.

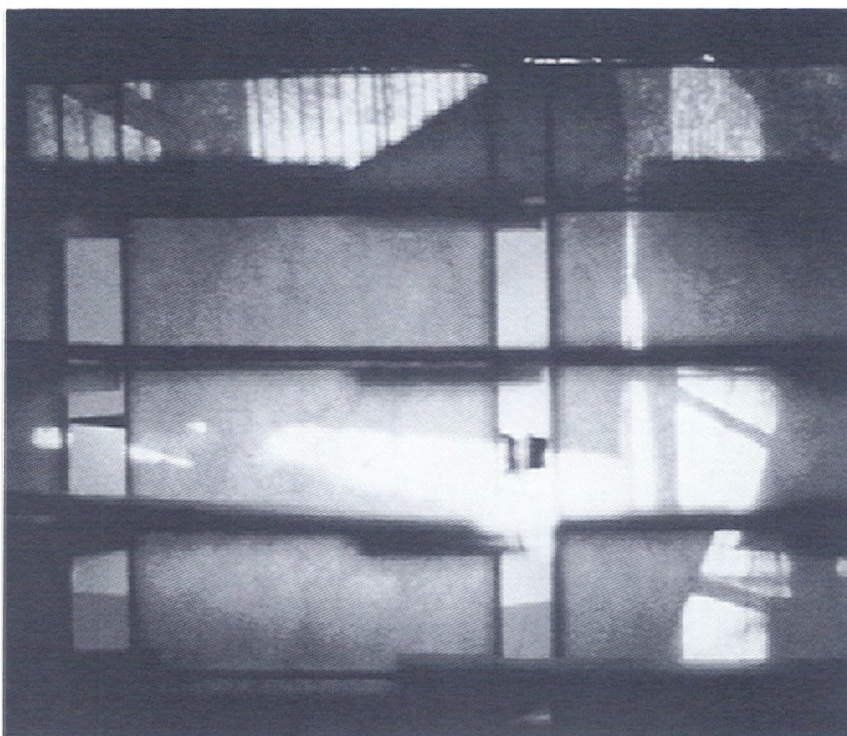
The design of the interior infrastructure of the production center is complex. It does not depend on any exterior conditions foreign to its own specificity in a sub-world of tele-visual communication. Its geometries are not based on a tangible urban condition; rather they are generated from an internal moment. They grow from what I shall call an area for transmutation, where real space becomes real time and the "real-time image dominates the thing represented." I am, in fact, referring to five suspended tele-visual studios framed in by the surrounding production center whose folded volumes and multi-faceted surfaces together with an intricate scaffolding form a mechanistic presence that is visually event-like. In a preliminary study model, the production space between the bogus facades was sectioned off by a series of scrims embedded with text and images. All but two scrims were removed; these defined a central space in which the textual content was to be subverted to image and form, articulated according to each dialectic significance. Their content was sifted through the interstitial space where the transformation produced five volumetric forms to be re-signified as production studios. Their presence serves as a point of departure for an extractive architecture that imbues a sense of otherness to a selectively "Detroit" locale. All other

programmatic elements associated with tele-visual production (i.e. control rooms, editing rooms, offices, etc.) occupy space defined by projected geometries from these five volumes and are likewise suspended within the framework. The expansion or contraction of the built form is autonomous to the structure of the containing walls; the building's external irregularities owe themselves to the internal geometries of this mechanism for transmutation.

One might consider the relationships of these decisions with note to the subversive workings of tele-visual coverage. In Jerry Herron's *After Culture*, he writes that, "coverage stages, moment to moment, the exhaustion of representation: it introduces time-generated representations into a non-narrative space only to demonstrate their informational inadequacy, their need for perpetual supplementation. Coverage, then, is always parasitic on representation. But this parasitism is itself always being covered — like a vampire's fangs — so that the evolution of news appears seamless, and that, as Watt said, 'would seem to be the price it must pay for realism'.³ Coverage is inextricably bound to the someone behind the curtain whose presence inherently disallows an acute and immediate representation of actuality. The television screen seems forever immersed in a translucent reality where the object is only vaguely anticipated by its faded image. The object is always between its images, in this case, hidden from direct observation. Transparencies and opacities are, likewise, interwoven throughout the buildings enclosure that wraps the production center as well as its subparts within as an attempt to manifest an ongoing awareness of the relationship of the object and its image in a dynamic architectural space. In this case, one's position relative to an external reality, (Detroit), is always elusive and intangible when occupying this form. An external condition can, at all times, be anticipated yet it is never completely presented to the occupant. Light and shadow play against the internal transparencies of this architecture, though the intention here is to create an atmosphere shared by both image and object, an appropriate space for the manufacturing of representation.

3

Jerry Herron, *After Culture* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993), 58.



Miscarriage/ms. carnage and other stories: a visual essay

joanne leonard

"Poems are like dreams. In them you put what you don't know."¹

The tensions between inner and outer worlds are represented as acted out on the body. The work engages "private spaces" of traditionally hidden body parts and intimate acts and moments. By association, the subjects of these works are also the interior spaces of the built environment and the closed doors which cloister, shelter, and make invisible aspects of our ordinary sexual and reproductive lives.

In many of the works gathered here, which were originally part of three separate collage series, there are resting and dreaming figures. These dreamers know things I had yet to acknowledge. From the vantage of 1991, I look at these older works, which date from the early 1970's, and see in them concerns that I did not recognize when the images were made. Arising from particular moments in my own life story and bound by the common thread of autobiography, the collages here are linked, as I now see it, by a set of themes acted out on the body: struggle and violence, victimization and power, conjunctions and severances, and the tensions between inner and outer worlds.

Rupture and Miscarriage/Ms. Carnage

I had begun a journal in collage during the early weeks of pregnancy. Then the bleeding began, and I put the blood on the journal's pages. After the miscarriage, I made one image representing the frightening, damaging bleeding. In the next image, the blood was associated with the loss of a baby, shown as destroyed. My dreams of having a baby had ruptured, but the shock and loss empowered me to represent my experience and to make images of subjects deemed taboo.

¹ Adrienne Rich, *Lies, Secrets and Silences: Selected Prose, 1967-1978* (New York: Norton, 1979), 40.

Dimensions 9 would like to thank the University of Michigan Press for the permission to reprint this article.

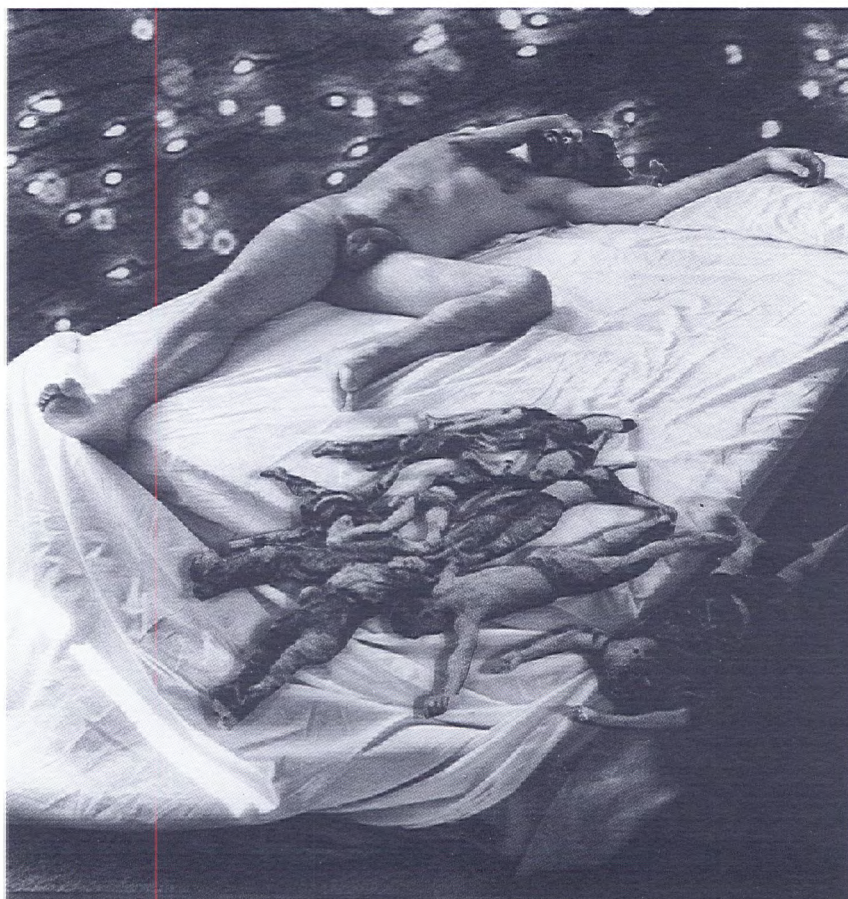
James Dickey's comment on Anne Sexton's work in 1963 represents a typical response to the breaking of taboos by women: "It would be hard to find a writer who dwells more insistently on the pathetic and disgusting aspects of bodily experience."² With the first showing of *The Journal of a Miscarriage* (thirty works created in fifty-three days during 1973 and shown later that year at the San Francisco Art Institute), my work began to find a distinct female audience, and I began to understand the difference having such an audience made. With few exceptions, men found the specifics of this female experience disgusting. Women, however, seemed to see their own experiences validated and, like the critic Lucy Lippard, viewed the work with enthusiasm.

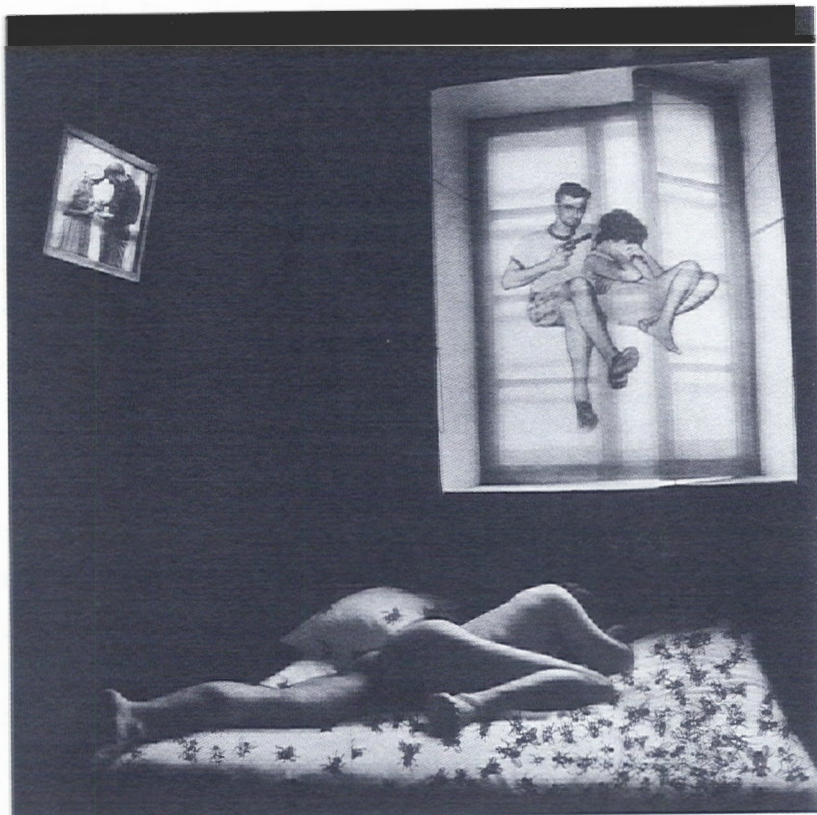
²
Diane Middlebrook. *Anne Sexton, A Biography* (Houghton, Michigan: Mifflin, 1991), 173.



Of Things Masculine

Above my photograph of the nude, sleeping figure of my husband, I placed a starry sky and below, war-wounded bodies. I understood that I was contrasting an intimate view in our bedroom with forces of life and death in the world beyond but only later realized the extent to which I had tried to describe my relation to power and vulnerability.





Death for a Wife

Here I sought to express the painful story of my husband's departure and my marriage's end by looking at the violent destruction of my romantic dream. I had believed in the myth that our lives had become one through marriage, and the separation was akin to physical annihilation. At that time, I did not ask where the myth of romantic union had come from. I had not yet adopted Carolyn Heilbrun's view that "if marriage is seen without its romantic aspects, it ceases to be attractive to its female half and, hence, is no longer useful to its patriarchal supporters."³

3
Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *Writing a Woman's Life* (New York: Norton 1988) 87.

Bridging phenomenological passages

hina jamelle

To be sure, people think of a bridge as primarily and really merely a bridge; after that, and occasionally, it might possibly express much else besides; and as such an expression it would then become a symbol... But the bridge, if it is a true bridge, is never first of all a mere bridge and then afterward a symbol.¹

This paper depicts a phenomenological journey across a bridge, a crossing which generated ideas that emerged from a personal memory. Later readings of Heidegger's notions of a bridge and anxiety struck a direct correlation. In finding connections between my personal journey across the bridge and Heidegger's notions of a bridge, this paper attempts to study how observations, memories, and feelings from one's everyday life can be 'built' upon. I view this paper as an intermediary step toward architectural design that can reflect personal observations and ideas.

Literally, a bridge is defined by *Webster's* as, "a structure created over a depression or an obstacle to travel." Other meanings include a "time, place or means of abstract connection or figurative means of crossing" and finally, "a passage, section or scene between two significant passages." For Heidegger, in his essay titled *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, a bridge has two purposes. First, it "...always and ever-differently escorts the lingering and the hastening ways of men to and from, so that they may get to other banks and in the end, as mortals, to the other side."² On a second level, Heidegger draws connections between the bridge and a change that occurs while crossing the bridge. This change, for Heidegger, has references to a divine spiritual state:

the bridge vaults over glen and stream — whether mortals keep in mind this vaulting of the bridge's course or forget that they, always themselves on their way to the last bridge, are actually striving to surmount all that is common and the undivinity in them in order to bring themselves passage that crosses, before the divinities.³

¹ Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 153.

² *Ibid.*, 152.

³ *Ibid.*, 153.

These two aspects provide the groundwork for further analysis. On one hand, Heidegger's notions deal with no one particular kind of bridge, nor does he deal with aspects of the bridge itself that can cause one to move into a spiritual state of mind. Architecturally, however, these aspects become important. Clearly, not all architecture possesses the ability to cause such a change of state. The questions which arise at this point become part of a phenomenological investigation. What physical aspects of the bridge in particular cause this change in state of mind? Phenomenologically speaking, what drives this change?

Even though a bridge is a physical space, it is transitional in that while on a bridge, one does not have the feeling of having reached one's destination. This feeling of transition is also reflected in one's movement across a bridge. A bridge shares similarities with a floor in that, like a floor, the bridge delimits space from its surroundings, while supporting one by providing firm footing. According to Thomas Thiis-Evensen, it is the mass below the floor that has a far more permanent meaning, "but as an existential reality it has meaning because it is firm and solid. This firmness is a precondition of our existence on the earth embedded within us, a fundamental background for our entire feeling of security."⁴ He states that if our actions take place below the ground, we become dependent on the ground's characteristics, a lower region which is unknown and confining. If, on the other hand our actions are above the mass, one's spontaneous reaction is one of independence. We are in control of the ground, liberated from the depths beneath and independent of what is below.

It is at this point that the physical aspects of a bridge are different from a floor. A bridge can be seen as an elevated floor, but the fundamental difference lies in the fact that (aside from the bridges beginning and end) a bridge is independent of the ground itself and leaves the ground level behind. The area being bridged does not provide support or a feeling of a firm and secure foothold beneath, as the ground does beneath a floor.

As I think about the footbridges that have influenced me, my mind goes to a footbridge in northern Pakistan. The physical aspects of bridges just discussed become vivid in this particular bridge. As far as bridges go, it is extremely simple in design. Constructed out of wood with rope handrails, it stretches between two banks of a river. The wood on the bridge sometimes becomes damp from the turbulent water, especially during the monsoon season. I was there during this particular season and remember how I almost automatically reached for the handrail on leaving the ground onto the first plank or footing. Why so? The wood seemed stable enough. There was, for me, a definite sensation of breaking away, and a certain intimidation on

⁴ Thomas Thiis-Evensen, *Archetypes in Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1989), 37.

leaving the ground and its inherent stability. As I progressed across the bridge, with the river flowing below, I felt a distinct sense of having left the familiar behind. There was a definite difference between watching the flowing water from the safety of the bank and now actually being above it. I was not sure whether this was a comfortable feeling, but I felt that the difference between the two was important. Throughout my progress there was the feeling that I had to go on. This feeling existed despite the fact that the water below had become increasingly turbulent and noisy. It was interesting to note that one's senses were not as tuned to the noise of the water until one was directly above it. Why was there this feeling of having to go on? One aspect struck a chord for me. I can view the bridge as a metaphor for my life. I have already left the familiarity of the bank behind. This bank represents tradition and the familiar. I can remember vividly the amount of hesitation before stepping on the bridge. It was the time I had to decide whether or not to leave my country for higher education. The feeling was similar to the act of reaching automatically for the handrail.... I, on the other hand, was attempting to reach for answers which I knew could not be found or challenged in my own country.

I think I am now heading toward the middle on my bridge. There is, like the memory of the noise of the river below, the constant reminder in the back of my head that I can make a mistake or may have already done so by heading out on this bridge; however, more keen than any other feeling is the sense that I cannot go back the way I came. To do so would be failure, and there is the fear that the bank that was once so familiar and accepted without question would no longer be acceptable to me. Ahead there are decisions and indecision. Do I now have to find another bridge back to the bank? Will it be the same bank? What have I left behind and at what cost?

These are perhaps my darkest and most anxious thoughts; however, the journey on the bridge has meant opportunity and challenge. I am learning about myself through my chosen career, as well as about people and the world around me. This journey across the bridge has definitely changed me. Each time I return to my country for visits, it is as if I have inched back on the bridge a little to let in memories and past places. These two aspects oscillate back and forth; not unlike a rope bridge that oscillates during harsh winds, I change from one way of thinking to another. I continue the journey, since I will not allow myself to retrace my steps all the way to the beginning, since that would be admitting failure or unwillingness to take a chance. In moving forward, there are moments of indecision and feelings of intimidation from being responsible for my own actions rather than letting society and family watch over me.

This is a critical juncture, not only in thinking through analogies of my personal life, but in that it is the form of the bridge that is so compelling in symbolizing these aspects. The key issues which arise from the journey across

the bridge are the moments of indecision and anxiety in the face of options of moving forward into the unknown and challenging myself, or moving back to the familiar that I have already left behind. The juncture also reflects the point of connection between a memory of indecisiveness and the need for grounding this thought within a framework for further understanding.

Heidegger's *Dasein* develops the idea of what it means for a human to be feel anxiety, and how that anxiety becomes manifest in life. For Heidegger, this anxiety has its roots in society, and *Dasein*'s background is directly linked to feeling 'groundless' or 'unsettled' in one's life:⁵

In anxiety one feels 'unsettled.' Here the peculiar indefiniteness of that amidst which *Dasein* finds itself in anxiety comes primarily to expression: the 'nothing and nowhere.' But here 'unsettledness' also means not being at home.⁶

Through the discussion of Heidegger's notion of anxiety, I can make an important observation. The feelings of unsettledness and anxiety as Heidegger describes, are like those I feel as I stand in a state of transition on the middle of the footbridge. These feelings of anxiety begin to relate back to both my physical and metaphoric experience on the footbridge.

How is it that the structure of the bridge causes such a heightened awareness of feelings of anxiety? Anxiety, for Heidegger, refers to a total disturbance which "reveals the groundlessness of the world and of *Dasein*'s being-in-the-world as such...the world collapses away from the anxious *Dasein*; it withdraws."⁷ One can see a direct relationship between groundlessness and the physical aspects of the bridge discussed earlier; that is, the manner in which one is 'groundless' after having left solid ground behind on the bank. The feelings of unsettledness and anxiety can find physical analogy in the instability of the footbridge, with the hidden threat of falling into the turbulent water below if one were to make a hasty move.

Metaphorically, I can take Heidegger's definitions of anxiety to the middle of the bridge where I can imagine myself in the position of the *Dasein*. I feel aspects of anxiety both here in the United States, thinking about the virtues of home which I never realized while I was there, and, while in Pakistan, thinking about my freedom in the United States.

Identifying these feelings of anxiety has proved to be a first and major step as there is a great deal of personal value in looking at the issues head on, part of which, for me, results in the responsibility of making decisions without the guidance of my tradition and society. The question now arises, although every individual may have a different experience on a bridge, to what extent are some of the experiences the same? In what ways does an individual have the same experience as others but ultimately take a different direction? In finally making the decision, can one ever change one's mind?

5

According to Hubert Dreyfus, Heidegger describes *Dasein* as understanding itself as having some specific essential nature. *Dasein* grounds its action in its understanding of human nature, and feels at home in belonging to a certain nation or certain race. A culture always takes its interpretation to be human nature. A particular *Dasein* can take a stand on itself by relating to this public understanding of human nature and its possibilities in three ways: "*Dasein* has either chosen these possibilities itself, or got itself into them, or grown up in them already" (Heidegger, *Being in the World*, 26). That is, *Dasein* can "own up," "disown" or "fail to take a stand on" its unsettling way of being.

Dreyfus explains each of these aspects. A *Dasein* as an infant is socialized and has not focused on any kind of anxiety. As an adolescent, the anxiety comes forth as a question of "who am I?" and in order to flee this sense of unsettledness the *Dasein* can get itself into the public identities that are offered by society. In the third aspect, for Heidegger, the *Dasein* finally achieves individuality by realizing it cannot find meaning by identifying with a role. *Dasein* then "chooses" the social possibilities available to it in such a way as to manifest in the style of its activity its understanding of the groundlessness of its own existence. Dreyfus concludes that to reveal *Dasein*, simple and whole, Heidegger chooses the term anxiety: "Just as the breakdown of a piece of equipment reveals the nature both of equipmentality and of the referential whole, so anxiety serves as a breakdown that reveals the nature of *Dasein* and its world."

Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time*, (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991), 179.

6

Ibid., 179.

7

Ibid.

Dreyfus briefly summarizes the effect when an anxiety attack subsides for an inauthentic *Dasein* who becomes absorbed back in the familiar world as if the anxiety had not occurred.⁸ The authentic *Dasein*, on the other hand, in accepting anxiety, becomes resolute, and liberated from fear. Decisions can then be made, responding to the situation. Hence, the bridge, through its physical characteristics, in fact allows me to acknowledge where I am existentially. The bridge proves to be conducive for allowing feelings of anxiety from within myself to evolve through my physical experience of the bridge itself. For example, I see reflections and manifestations of this anxiety vividly in the turbulence and noise of the water below. My heightened awareness as I continued to walk across the bridge moved me to a state of mind which caused me to think about the aspects that caused it. One is now reminded of the quote:

To be sure, people think of the bridge primarily and really merely a bridge; after that, and occasionally, it might possibly express much else besides; as such an expression it would then become a symbol...But the bridge, if it is a true bridge is never first of all a mere bridge and then afterward a symbol.⁹

Could the insight gained from understanding the phenomenon of anxiety while on the bridge be used to create an environment which could have the same effect upon someone else? In this paper, the bridge, through physical means, symbolized aspects of transition and change in my life. A created environment would depend on the insight of people through memories, observations and life experiences. Architectural form using these insights as design tools would do more than reflect ideas, rather, it would bring forth a space where there is a fusion of past experiences and fundamental feelings. A space where one can really begin to understand oneself.

8

Dreyfus, 181

9

Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, 153

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*K*athmandu

i don't know the name of the river...

peggy page

The family brought the old woman to the river to die.

It was better to die at the river than at home, the guide said.
In his village, they burned the bodies on a hill. Here, it was
on concrete slabs by the water.

Two men stacked wood on a slab.
Then they prepared the woman. They held her and gently wrapped
a simple cloth around her.
She was so feeble,
she hardly moved.
One man kept sliding his hand under the neck of her gown to see if
her heart was still beating.
Three times.
Four times.
Then all was still.

They laid her on the pyre and lit the fire.
It burned fiercely at first, all that fresh wood.
Along the riverside the other fires burned.
Hers was the newest.
Someones ashes were being swept into the river, then floated away.

I wondered if we drank that water at the hotel.

Tea and thee.



T television's impact on domestic space

matt ketchum

Premise:

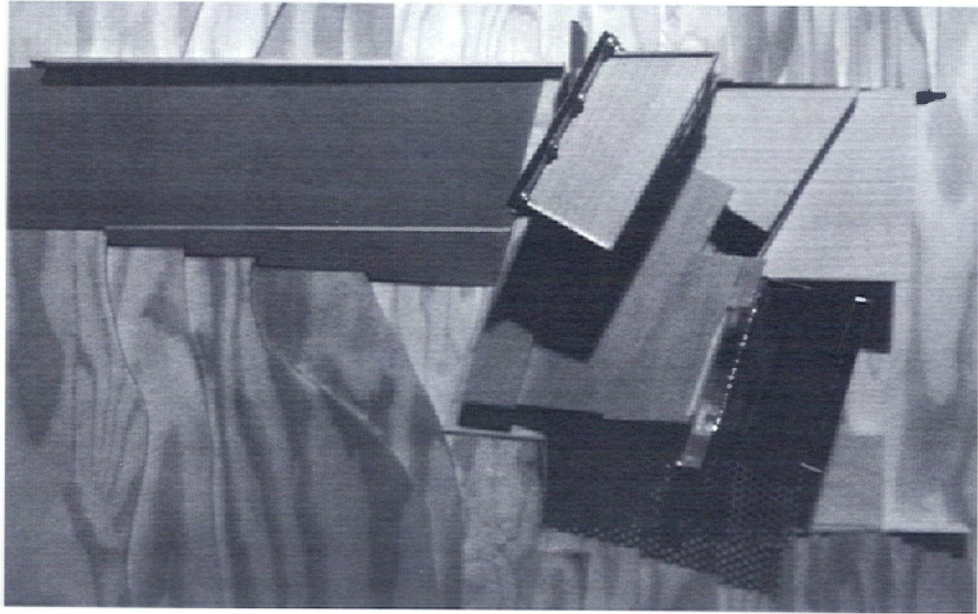
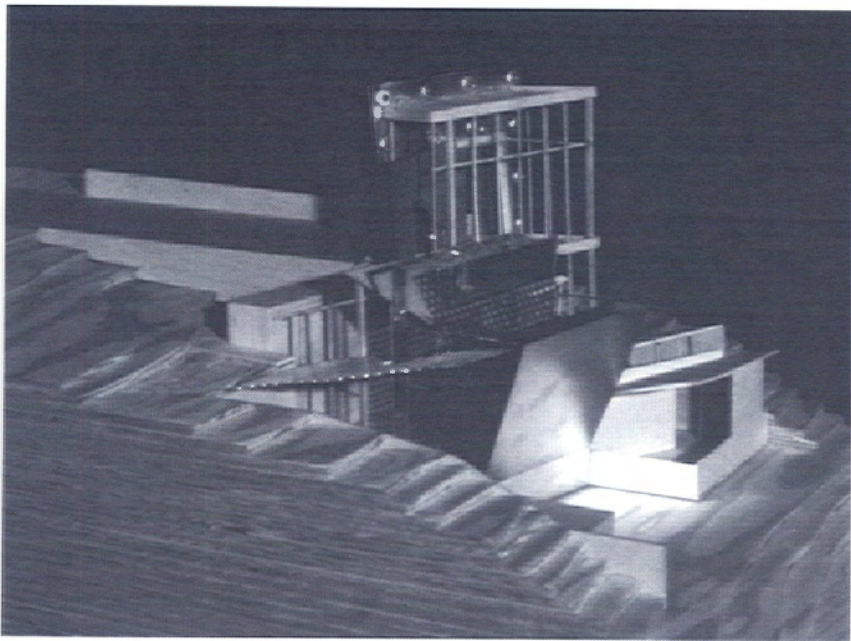
This project is an analysis of the impact of television as a phenomenon affecting domestic space.

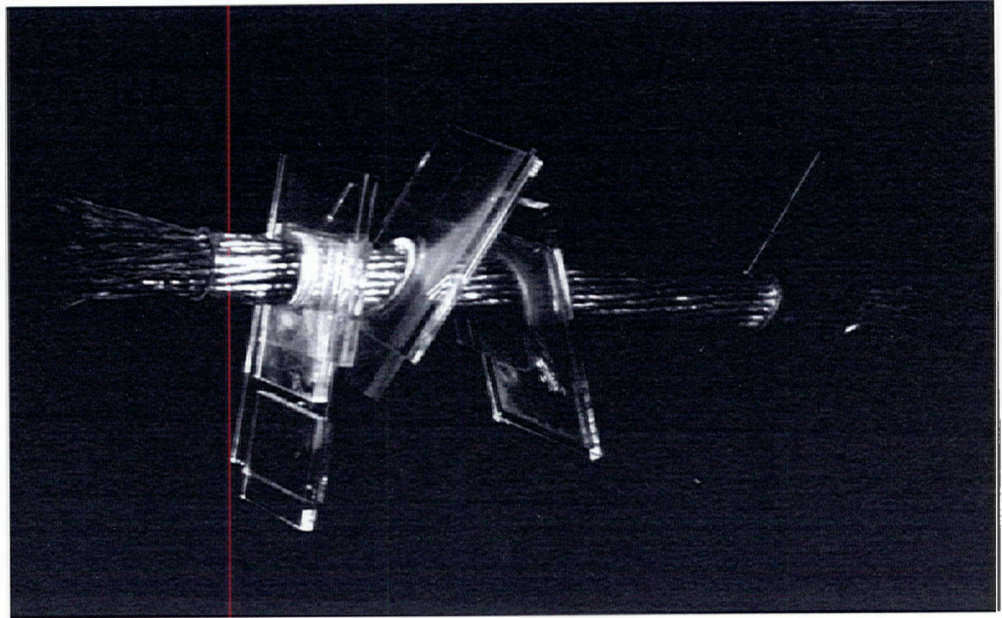
The thesis is that a condition of connective isolation exists which occurs as a result of the exposure to tele-visual phenomena. The build-up of isolation, the callousness one develops, is linked to the non-critical level of acceptance of this broadcasted phenomenon.

The meaning of the term "connective isolation" can be illuminated by examining current events in the news. We may know more about celebrities' personal lives, or about places we have never visited than we do about our own neighbors or neighborhood. Through the phenomenon of television we are connected to the world while at the same time isolated in our homes, where we wave or nod to neighbors whose names we do not know.

Design:

1. Breakthrough the isolation and connect with the neighbors living there,
2. Contrast the unoccupiable space of television with the loss of space resulting from the accumulation of domestic entertainment equipment,
3. Express the competition for mental space due to the influx of the broadcasted electronic phenomenon.





Process:

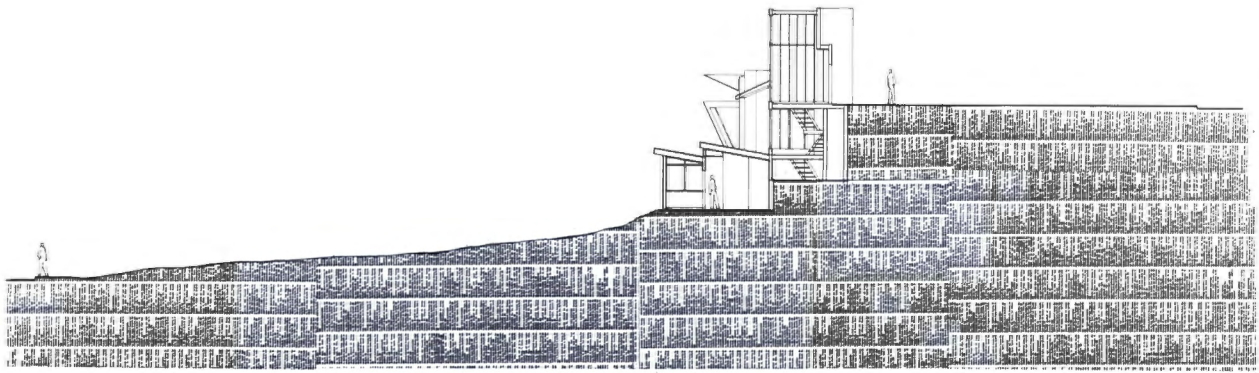
The initial step in this design process was to establish a position regarding the impact of television on domestic space, which was defined as a condition of connective isolation. Defining this position led to a specific point of departure toward embodying the premise in material form.

The idea that the state of connective isolation occurs over a period of exposure to tele-visual phenomena led to the making of the first model. The representation of the first model, made of acrylic and copper, was an interpretation of the “buying into” the idea of tract housing in post World War II America (the explosion of television on the American landscape).

Using the first model as a instrument to inform/record the filtering effect of television on a receiver, I used a light source directed onto the model and projected onto a piece of blueprint paper, thus recording the filtering effect of the instrument.

The documentation of the model was then used in conjunction with projected sight lines from the neighboring homes as a way of mapping significant areas of overlap. The blueprinted image of the first model and the projected sight lines from the neighboring homes led to the placement of entry, public, and private elements of the plan. Subsequent development resulted from layering this mapping exercise with the three goals which were defined at the outset for the problem/project. Continuing to “retouch” these goals throughout the project made it possible to remain true to the initial point of departure, while continuing to learn from, and be influenced by, the information emerging from the experiment with mapping.





section

The confluence of communication and domestic space

christopher townsend

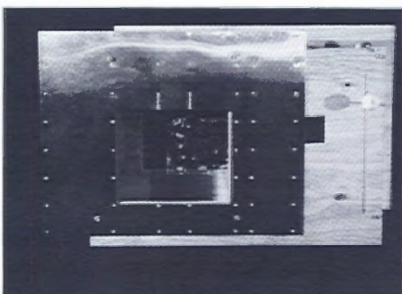
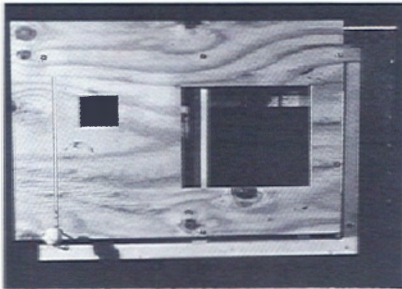
Before the invention of the television, radio and print brought the outside world into the home. Once in the home, the newspaper could be moved about at will, and even though the radio was stationary, it was unnecessary to be in the same room to hear it. When watching the television, however, a fixed confrontation between viewer and box was brought into the home. It was no longer possible to carry the news from one room to another, reading at random, nor was it possible to leave a room in which the form of communication resided and still receive the intended effect. With the television came the necessary space which occurs between the television set and the La-Z-Boy recliner from which the owner watches.

In the early years of television, stations and programming were limited. For many hours of the day there was nothing to watch, which rendered the television useless, and the space its presence created as insignificant. Over the past decades, however, the television has become a device that never needs to be turned off because there is always something to watch. With the vast expanse of cable stations, people often occupy their time by continuously changing stations without ever watching a complete segment of a program. If they do decide to stay on one channel and watch a program for a duration of time, there is the possibility that at some point during that show, they will begin to stare at the screen. At this point the viewer slips out of one form of consciousness and into another. The result of this is a person in front of the television staring, but not seeing, because his mind is occupied with images and thoughts of something else. It is within the viewing distance that the slippage between conscious states occurs.

My initial constructional essay dealt with inhabiting this space with a device that would theoretically disrupt the slipping of the viewer's consciousness away from the television. This device contains a warped clear

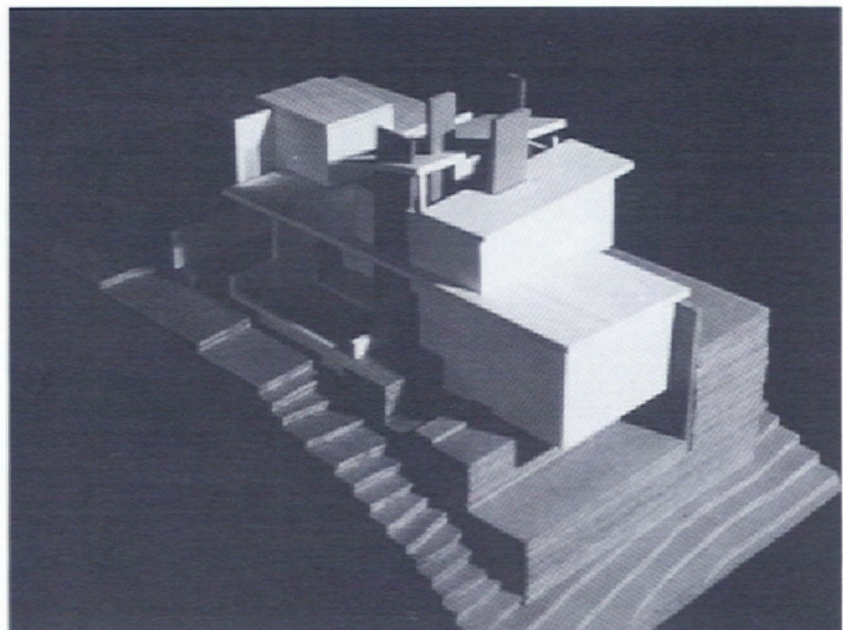
plane that would re-engage the viewer's attention by sliding across a viewing portal and into the line of sight of the television. It is intended that the motion of the plane into and out of the viewer's gaze will snap the viewer out of his daydreaming state thus attracting attention back towards the box. As an object of construction, it inhabits the space between La-Z-Boy and television set, and is therefore influenced by the nature of each of these as well as the space within which it resides.

After the initial essay, a second investigation was begun which dealt with inscribing a domestic space based on site, program, and theoretical aspects taken from the initial construction. Two builders, starting from opposite ends of a street, built towards each other until they reached the given site, which was too narrow to build a full-size home on and was thus left vacant. I assumed that if either of the two builders had not built from one end, the given site would have been measured to be large enough to contain a builder's home on it. The site, therefore, became an overlapping of two series of

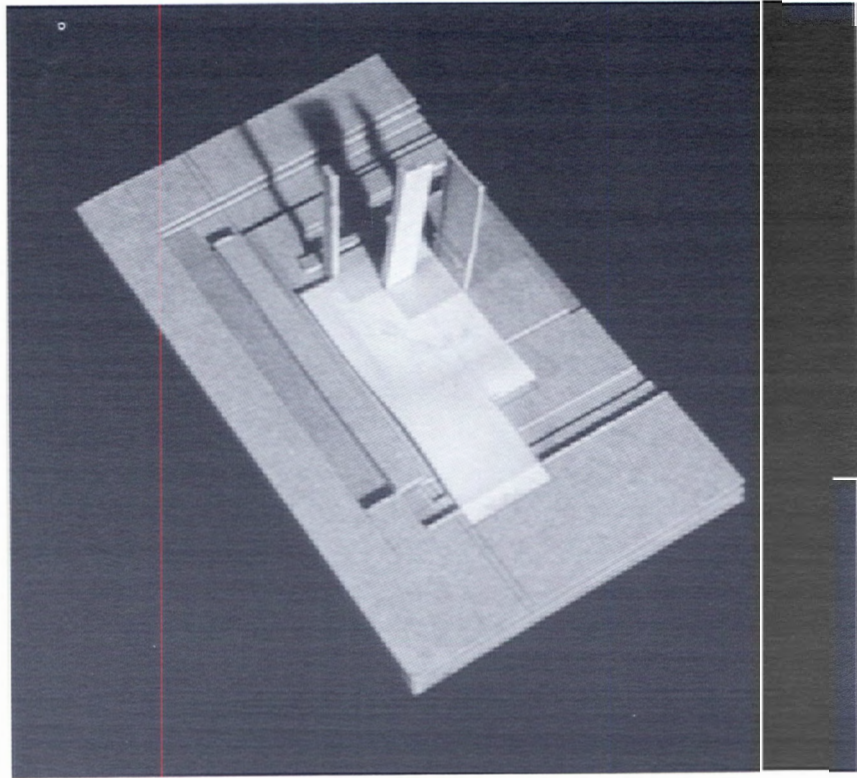


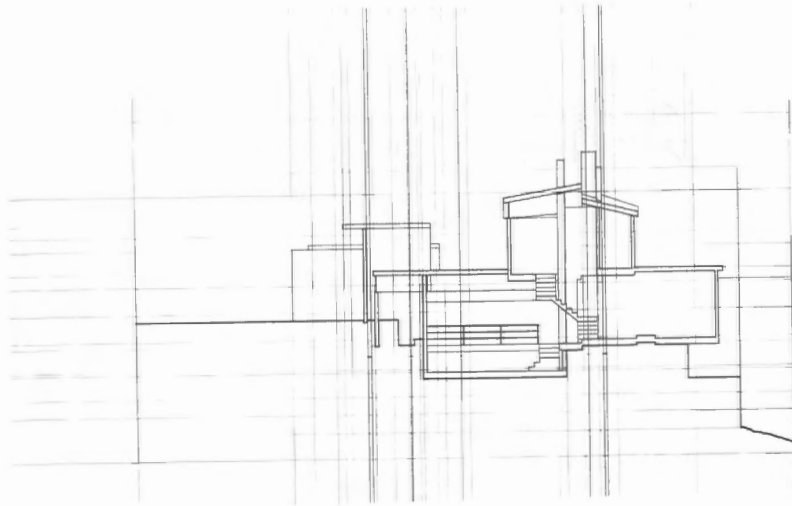
counterclockwise from the left

**warped clear plane
side facing La-Z-Boy
side facing t.v.
domestic space constructed**

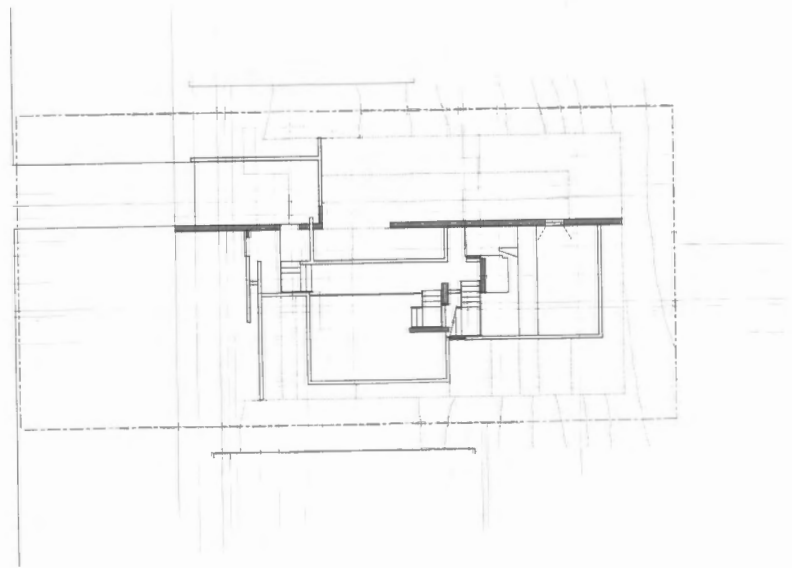


potential spaces. Using the given plot of land as space between two influences, as well as incorporating the given program of one television, two phones, one automobile, and three people, a strategy was developed for recreating the site and what was to be placed on it. By overlaying these different influences onto the site, a series of trajectories and intensities were established that began to ground the program to the site. When locating the program, it was required that the television, viewed as an entity which is always present and affecting the space around it, be sited first. The core of the house is the four vertical shafts which anchor the building and extend through it and beyond it (see below). These four shafts contain a multitude of television monitors. The monitors, all displaying different information (including images from within the building) would all turn on when a person enters the house. The building is laid out in such a way that once beyond the entrance, portions of the shafts can be seen from all spaces within it. There are no livable spaces within the building that the television does not affect (infect). These shafts then attempt to reconfirm the unavoidable nature of the television in today's household.

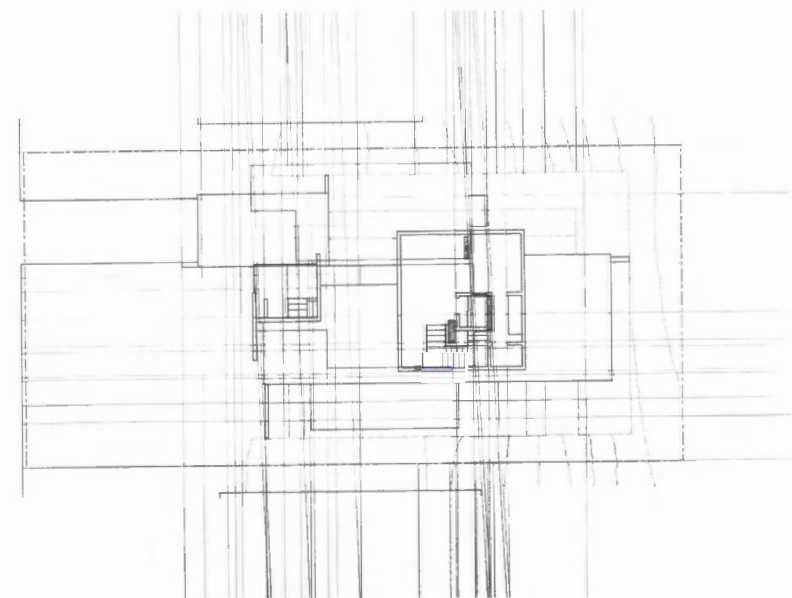




section through domestic construction



horizontal section



plan

C

onstricting silence

raymond marter

A mirror suffices the painter, whose sole concern is just the look of things. But sound, and crucially the sound of speech, is the novelist's most precious order of experience. And when the busy sounding world has passed through the novel's kind of mirror into a book, its sounds lie hushed in the mimicry of silent type. So it's right to find a screen of silence at the center. Any book is eerily silent. Even if you're reading aloud, the sole voice you'll hear is your own.¹

— Hugh Kenner

The silence that Hugh Kenner refers to is a threshold — an edge where, as with a mirror, spatial perception is extended to where it collides with the imagination. The imagination invents using that which is perceived as a catalyst. Space is expanded into the imaginary depths of a mirror, and similar expansions occur within the thresholds of other creative texts. The extensions of perception and the inventions of imagination leave residual evidence of their collisions, tracings of events experienced outside of “real” space.

Michel Foucault describes a table where knowledge is kept and arranged, “a tabula that enables thought to operate upon the entities of our world.”² On this table, we name, classify, label, denominate, analyze, and codify — using it to order our knowledge of the world. It is the seat of understanding, that is never fully realized, never really finished.

We are continuously growing and expanding our knowledge, thus adding to and rearranging the table.

This tabula is itself the worldly context of a collective history, and the separateness of its components allows it to be read as a text. The structure that contains the component syntax that articulates collective understanding also provides for its escape from us. Arrival and escape of truth are simultaneously paired. There is a duality in the direction in which understanding travels, for the gaps which allow access to it double as its escape routes. Entry into a text here is an elusive game where there is an ever-present hazard of passing right through the text as much as there is in occupying it.

¹ Hugh Kenner, Introduction. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, James Joyce* (New York: Signet Classic, 1916, 1991), 13.

² Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), xvii.

The presence of an articulated distance between the components of a text, and its polarizing effects on the direction in which understanding travels through it, defines localized gaps between constituent components of the tabula. This distancing potentially charges the text with dichotomous relationships that, when the gaps are crossed and the differences reversed, reveal an intimate understanding of the text. Aristotle declared peripeteia necessary, as the turn or shift in a story that makes the narrative work well.³ The audience or readers experiencing a text must be able to identify with the actors of the narrative, because their personal recognition allows them to participate in the bridging of the text's gaps; and therefore learn in the experiential process of the reading.

Heidegger's concept of negative truth, where we know ourselves in knowing what we aren't, is evident with this kind of reversal. An extreme pole is completely understood only when the distance between it and its opposing component within the text is traversed and the other extreme experienced. Paul de Man finds that negative truth is sought through the valorization of the reader: "Reversal enables the reader to conceive of properties that would normally be incompatible (such as inside/outside, before/after, death/life, fiction/reality, silence/sound) as complementary."⁴ Learning comes as we cross the differential gap of the polarities and purge our emotions, so knowledge becomes the result of the catharsis. In order to be insightful, one has to be blind in certain ways, and this blindness is necessarily painful.

The emotional presence within the cathartic process suggests sublime motives within the learning process. Fear is a possible consequence of some forms of knowledge. Perhaps one of our largest fears is that our own soul will be realized in some way. In Robert Rosenblum's book, *The Origin of Painting* (1771), as noted by Derrida, he explains the myth: "Butades, the young Corinthian woman who bore her father's name and who, 'facing a separation from her lover for some time, noticed on a wall the shadow of this young man sketched by the light of a lamp. Love inspired in her the idea of keeping for herself this cherished image by tracing over the shadow a line that followed and precisely marked its outline.'⁵

A person's shadow could reveal some hidden clues to the mysteries of their soul, or perhaps actually house the elusive spirit. The curiosity that motivates the woman's search is based on a balance of two fears. One is the fear of the unknown, for she wants to erase any mysteries surrounding her lover in order to be close to him. The other fear is that of the known. Somehow, if the truth is realized then she will also be exposed to its consequences. Any anticipated joy associated with the truth is balanced by the fear that some form of darkness must accompany it to equilibrate things. These fears are embodied in the shadow, its blinding potential magnifying them within our imaginations to a level that could never really exist.

³ D. A. Russell and M. Winterbottom, ed., *Aristotle, Poetics*, reprinted in *Classical Literary Criticism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 64.

⁴ Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 40.

⁵ Jacques Derrida, *Memoirs of the Blind* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 49.

Jacques Derrida infers from the myth that “a shadow is a simultaneous memory, and Butade’s stick is a staff of the blind.”⁶ Because of her blindness, the tangible prop, the stick, becomes an extension of Butade’s perceptions as well as the implement used to articulate the forms being sought. This simultaneous exchange between person and thing suggests the capabilities we have in finding and granting meaning through material things when they are used during actions of simultaneous perception/expression. These props not only exchange our worldly experiences, but also balance them between their emotional and physical constituents.

An artist relying on his or her memory and imagination sacrifices harmony and any hope of obtaining a total understanding of the subject. The composition of the artist’s expression can achieve only futile forms of unity because the enclosed truth that this implies is impossible to articulate. Charles Baudelaire explains, “In this way a duel is established between the will to see everything and forget nothing and the faculty of memory...An artist with a perfect sense of form but accustomed to relying above all on his memory and his imagination will find himself at the mercy of a riot of details all clamoring for justice with the fury of a mob in love with absolute equality. All justice is trampled under foot; all harmony sacrificed and destroyed; many a trifle assumes vast proportions; many a triviality usurps the attention. The more our artist turns an impartial eye on detail, the greater the state of anarchy. Whether he be near-sighted or far-sighted, all hierarchy and all subordination vanishes.”⁷

The artist’s anarchy is a sort of energetic release of the consciousness to an accelerated level. Omniscient vision is sacrificed for the sake of an accelerated intimate perception, which takes place within an instantaneous rage. An artist’s blindness enrages him, releasing his genius and channeling it into a chiasmus. His blindness forces him into the gap, the suspension of the conscious and unconscious, where there is a potential for knowledge to be realized. The canvas becomes a palimpsest, his rage a catharsis. Within this rage, the world’s polarities are reversed, and the differential gap between them is experienced. Here, an act of expression attempts to unify these extremes, bridging the gap with a meaningful articulation. This is apparent only to the artist, however, and only while he is expressing — the act is temporal and so is the unity. Upon leaving the gap, the artist re-enters the polarized dichotomy of the world with only mnemonic traces from his cathartic experience within the gap.

As an instantaneous blindness channels an artist’s focus into a gap where knowledge can be experienced, his hands act/react with(in) this reversal to simultaneously purge the emotions and intellect. The work performed by the hands is evidence — tangible residue — of the cathartic rage. Construction is a register of active human thought enraged by the emotions. As we build, we

6

Derrida, 50.

7

Ibid., 48.

record (encode) that which we think and feel. "Instead of being opaque and full, things are hollow and contain, as in a box, the dark mass of sentiments and of history...whatever pathos is mentioned refers to the suffering of others."⁸ Energies (thoughts, feelings) are sacrificed within a construction, enriching it with their increased magnitude.

De Man speaks of the expressive act with the negativity of sacrifice and blindness, "This subjective experience is said to be dark to the extent that it is unable, by itself, to find expression; it exists in a condition of error and of blindness." Sacrifice, in its own moment, makes one go blind. The sacrificial act is an act of blindness as it involves blind faith through belief in that being sacrificed. Because belief and recognition are necessary for catharsis, they are therefore also requisite for sacrifice. These two experiences are therefore comparable, as both purge the emotions and leave behind them some form of residual memory. Sacrificial labor produces tangible evidence of the purging act, with the construction, as well as mnemonic evidence with the artist's experience.⁹

Constructing a brick wall, the mason imagines the wall's final complete form, but its material components (bricks, mortar, ties, etc.) exist only individually, as fragments of a potential wall. The wall does not exist yet, save for these fragments and an image in his mind (or that on a drawing). Using physical human energy, the image and the materials are synthesized into a real wall. Within the act of labor, the image and materials are transformed into the new construction, which may be composed of the components' characteristics, but has its own image and materiality. The individualities of the components have been sacrificed for the sake of creating a unified whole. Not only has human labor been sacrificed, but so too have the other components of the construction. All things involved in the act, tangible and otherwise, are purged in the process of transformation.

When Butades traced her lover's shadow, the eclipsing of light generated a reversal that left evidence in the form of a tracing on the wall. The difference between darkness and light was recorded and labor transformed into a physical encoding. The expressive act, therefore, unifies differences of understanding (in this case the polarity of light and darkness) with a meaningful articulated expression. The unity found within the expression is only temporary, however, because thereafter the drawing and encoded information are subject to the allegorical nature of reading. The residue of sacrificial labor, the constructed artifact, becomes a fragmented memory. Outside of the expressive act, there isn't a unified understanding of the subject, so its representation's meaning is limited to the confines of the unstable memory of the sacrificial event.

Unity may exist only in temporal flashes — within the heat of the artist's rage, the duration of the expressive act, the laying of bricks on mortar.

8
De Man, 36.

9
Ibid.

Thereafter the disorder of allegory infects the newly-articulated tracing and reinserts a gap between the construct/text and its intended meaning, multiplying its potential interpretations. Order decays as allegory obliterates the coherent meaning and the encodings of sacrificial labor are mis-interpreted or simply forgotten outside the moment within the gap. "What remains from the past is a trace or impression of an event, not the thing itself as it existed when present. Likewise, mnemonic experience in architecture is not of the present but of the past. The past in this sense is not a specific and limited period or time over and done with, rather it can be seen as 'what has come to be'.¹⁰

Successive acts of expression surface successive coherent meanings, but only temporarily, after which the perception of things returns to its former polarized state. The frustration of attempts, the compounding of this express/fail cycle, deepens the emotional involvement in this cycle. The play of emotions, in fact, perpetuates the cycle for their accumulation generates the need for sacrifice and catharsis.

The frustrative cycle reinstates desires for understanding through failed attempts at articulating past knowledge. Individually, each articulation fails, but successive attempts narrow the "holes" through which true understanding escapes. These frustrations condition the body of knowledge by becoming increasingly more articulate. This cycle is evidence for Rousseau's concept of perfectibility, where man's will to change motivates him to continuously learn and consequently evolve intelligibly.¹¹ If language is that tool which is used to describe and understand the elements on the table of collective knowledge, then it must adapt as its capabilities are challenged. This is why Rousseau says that perfectibility, which is an essential and primitive property of man, is not the result of language but rather the cause of it.¹²

De Man also describes the allegorical performance of languages using Rousseau's notion of perfectibility: "The potential transgression that occurs whenever the concepts of nature and man are associated...transforms all human attributes from definite, self-enclosed, and self-totalizing actions into open structures."¹³ Here an endless quest for knowledge motivates the individual to find and articulate new forms of understanding, but the limits and deficiencies of the language also become apparent. These deficiencies open the language allegorically, revealing gaps between the strained limits of the language's articulation and the knowledge being sought. The reader must use an interpretation to enclose or bridge this absence with a personal, and consequently unique, meaning. The deficiencies intrinsic to the language are revealed only when it is stressed by challenging its ability to articulate and assimilate some form of understanding or meaning.

Cathartic rage is motivated by a quest for meaning. It catalyzes learning, but also the exposure of language's deficiencies — another kind of negative

10
Mohsen Mostafavi and David Leatherbarrow,
On Weathering: The Life of Buildings in Time
(Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press,
1993), 116.

11
De Man, 140.

12
Ibid., 143.

13
Ibid., 140.

understanding. The revelation of linguistic deficiencies constricts the magnitude of those gaps, making the language more articulate of the truths that are escaping through those gaps. Absolute closure of these distances is not possible — only temporal, relative crossings are, because of the allegorical nature of languages. Idealized extensions toward closure on meaning allow for the gaps to be crossed. These appear in the artist's rage and demand his passion to ignite the dichotomy's latent potentialities. Languages are inherently solipsistic, but this is observed most easily when their deficiencies are conflated with a prescribed meaning.

Martin Heidegger believed that, "Language beckons us, at first and then again at the end, toward a thing's nature."¹⁴ Man's freedom and his will to change may therefore be affected by the language he uses, whose deficiencies also limit this freedom. "But this is not to say, however, that in any word-meaning picked up at will language supplies us, straight and definitively, with the transparent nature of the matter as if it were an object ready for use."¹⁵

The "holes" through which understanding and meaning escape are the voids created by the presence of language — the spaces between a language's syntax as well as the differences between its successive attempts at articulation. Meaning may not be in what is said, written, or constructed, but rather in what is not said, not written, or not constructed. Clues to its existence may be in the silence, however brief, that always accompanies a spoken word. We cannot perceive these gaps without the positive constructions that delineate them and act as spatial referents.

Umberto Eco suggests that language's deficiency in completely grasping meaning holds potential richness for the reader.

(Its) duty is to show that what we can speak of is only the coincidence of the opposites...To salvage the text — that is, to transform it from an illusion of meaning to the awareness that meaning is infinite — the reader must suspect that every line of it conceals another secret meaning; words, instead of saying, hide the untold; the glory of the reader is to discover that texts can say everything...The Real Reader is the one who understands that the secret of a text is its emptiness.¹⁶

None of our languages can ever completely articulate understanding because their solipsistic tendencies focus their concerns onto themselves and can therefore never arrive at negative truth. The allegorical nature of language and its cycle of mis-interpretation eventually leads language to consume itself. Mis-interpretations flood the table of collective knowledge, disturbing the order of its contents' relationships with one another, piling and burying some on top of one another, as well as knocking some of the contents off altogether. The table overflows because of its excessive contents — infinite meaning results in no meaning.

14
Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 216.

15
Ibid.

16
Umberto Eco, *Interpretation and Over-interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 39–40.

What are we to do, then, if all our attempts at comprehending knowledge are doomed to futility — if the languages that we use can never really mean anything? This question itself may be futile, for language's ultimate self-destruction is a limit that may never be more than only slightly approached. Until this limit is experienced, however, the "near-miss-ability" of language and creative expression provides the nearest articulation of true knowledge possible. The near-misses of our frustrated attempts reveal voids where potentials for truth exist, bringing negative truth closer with each successive attempt.

The allegory of languages thus transplants textual truth and any of its meaning from a universal to a very intimate kind of understanding. It is seen not with an omniscient field of vision but with blindness, a tunneled vision that must blur its surroundings so as to focus on its own fragmented instance. To find meaning, now we must become enveloped within the material significance of our immediate surroundings — immediate because any notion of its cohesive, total understanding is no longer possible. Our focus must be blinded as such, to perceive an architectural meaning's isolated locus.

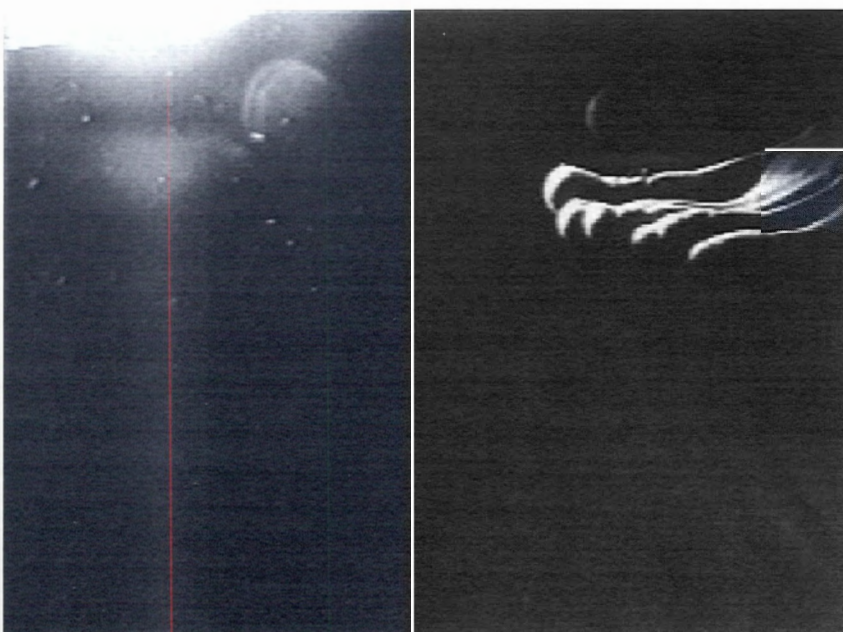
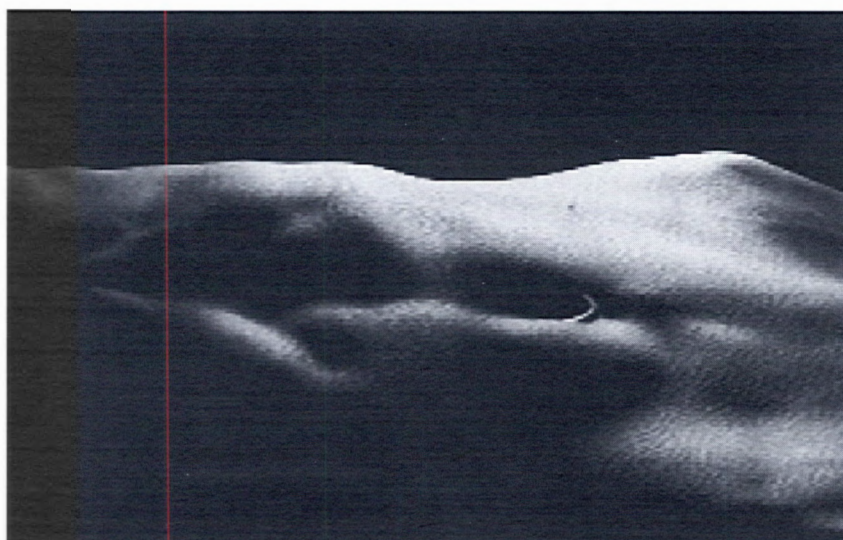
This place is within the voids where our languages cannot speak. Most attempts at articulation into these silences result in passionate, reactionary screams. Emotions are purged here as the expressive act momentarily bridges the silent gap and finds understanding in the realization of this negative space. The scream does not resonate for long, except as a residual form of memory, but it does constrict the gap of silence slightly as it adds another form of learned knowledge to the table.

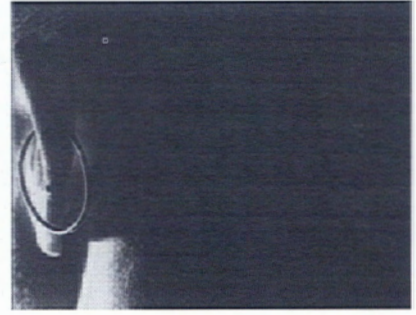
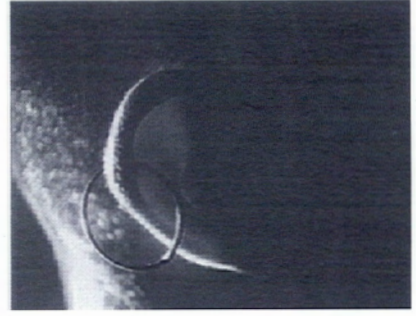
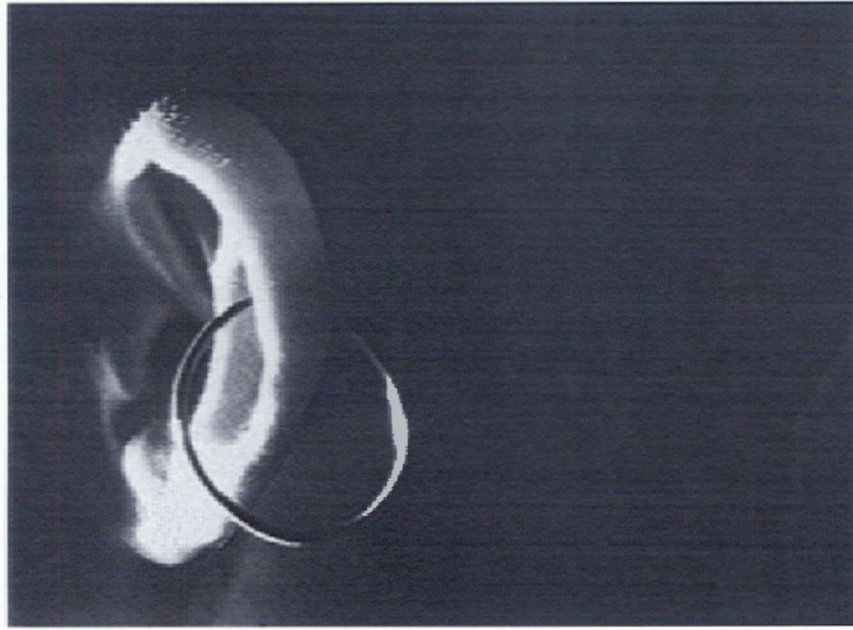
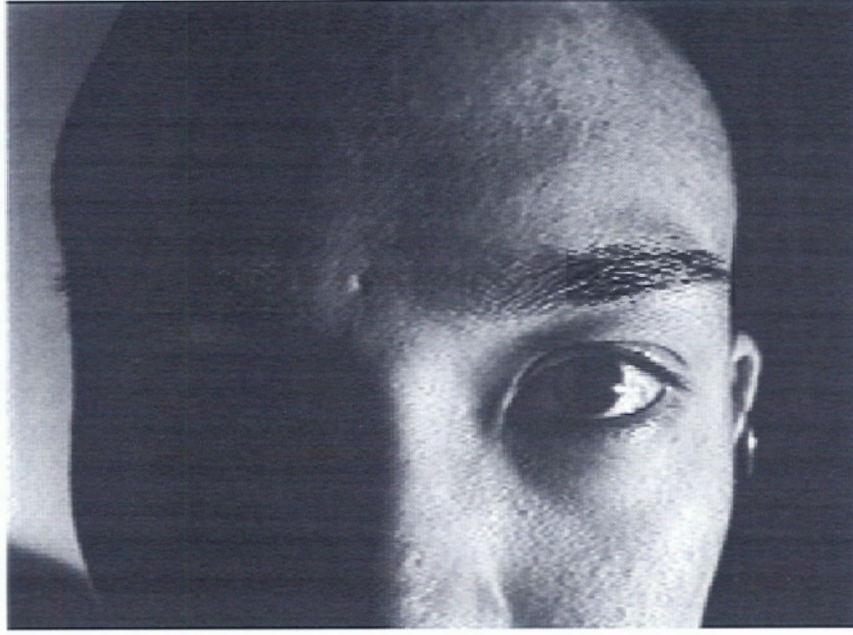
*U***ntitled**
figure study on video

catherine chang
with kostas stratigos and ryan wolfe



This work is a figurative study of a single model, utilizing movement and lighting experimentation in a linear-time visual and aural medium. Emphasis is given to extreme and abstracting close-ups of the composite forms of the figure, volumetric representation of the figure in space through the carefully controlled use of light, and movement and manipulation of the figure. This emphasizes and redefines the machinations and movements available to the human frame. The piece is shot in color, has a soundtrack, and relies on figurative movement, as well as the real-time interplay of light and shadow to induce movement within the frame. The camera is purposely kept stationary at all times.





Q on building and city

brendon ouzoonian

The ability to preserve itself pathologically in the “new” is a defining characteristic of the “old.” The “old”, so wantonly put, was once — in the fashion of its time — quite new, and yet through the passage of time, has become an emblem of time gone by, though not an emblem that sits in a cesspool of symbolism; rather, it is one that deals directly with manifesting itself in the present. This emblem wants not to die nor to rest in a state of limbo, where it exists in the present but is seen in the past. It desires a way of breaking out of this place where the memories have left it. However, its essence, its very life, is so ingrained in the fading memories of the viewers who remember it in the past while seeing it in the present, that for it to transcend this limbo would never be tolerated by the children who once were and now exist in the minds of the viewers. Where, then, is the escape for this emblem? The wrecker’s ball and the engineer’s explosives carry a seeming doom to places of a viewer’s life that lie in the past, but this simple act that destroys the place of memories brings the freedom from the place where memories left it. **The escape is established.**

With the physicality of the “old” demolished, the developer wields his thoughts to make “new” again, but while the architect works, and the developer plans, something begins to happen: the physicality that was destroyed has allowed the essence to escape, which is now able to begin dictating the desires of the developer and the pen strokes of the architect in secret ways only memories can unlock. Then, while the “new” is being built and the memories of children are again allowed a place, the “old” has done its work and is allowed to live in the present while the “new” slowly becomes “old.” **The progression is established.**

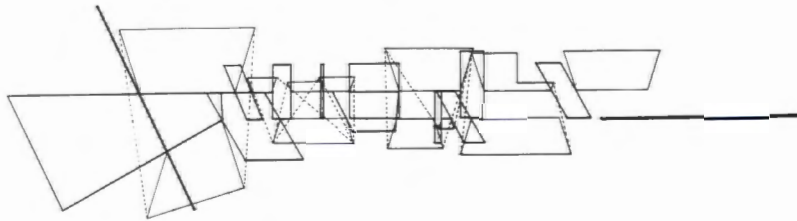
But what remains of the “old,” demolished and forgotten, and likewise the “old” that was begun, but never completed? Demolished and forgotten, in a limbo of its own, it has no “new” in which to preserve itself. The destruction of the “old” place complete, but with no “new” place to affect, it becomes a fading memory; for without a place to keep it alive, the memory quickly and becomes distorted. Likewise, the incomplete is a memory of a dream, very real and intense at one point, but when the light of reality dawns on the eyes of dreams, its reality fades and what was so real and so powerful eludes the mind and wisps away, allowing only glimpses of the imaginary whole. **The exception is established.**

The question I raise then becomes: is the “old’s” ability to pathologically preserve itself in the “new” restricted only to the immediate site on which the now “old” was located, or does the possibility exist to effectively preserve itself under a broader scope of understanding not withholding the possibility for the breaking out of this site of the “old,” into the unexpectant surrounding “new?” In other words, can an “old” master plan, incomplete as it is, begin to affect other local areas of the city not included in its own memory, but excluded by the mere existence of a completion in and of itself?

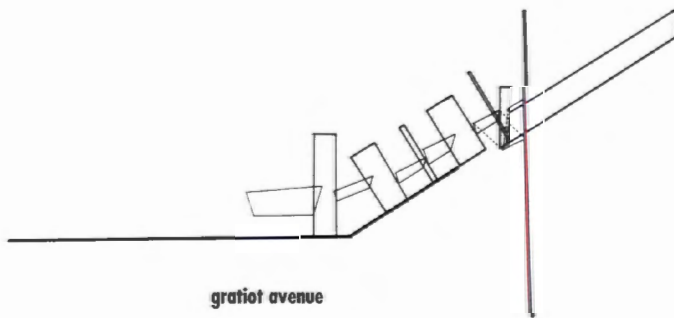


detroit: 1807 woodward plan

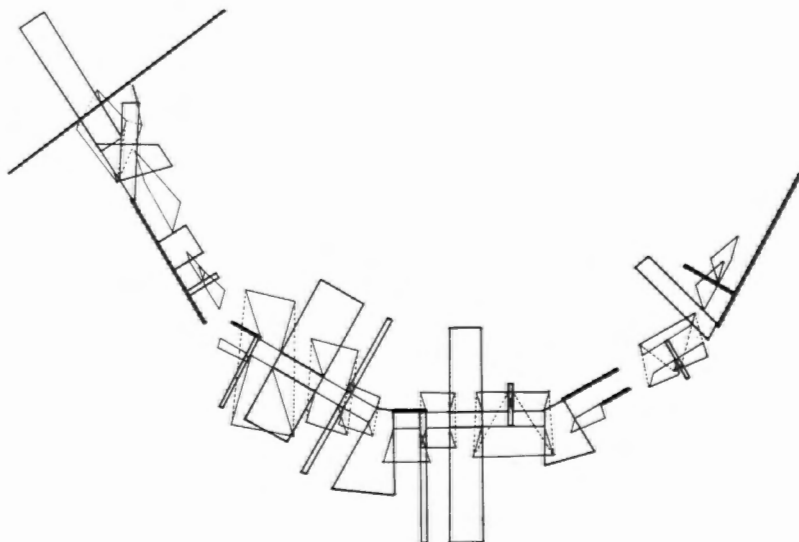
permeations in the plan:



michigan avenue



gratiot avenue



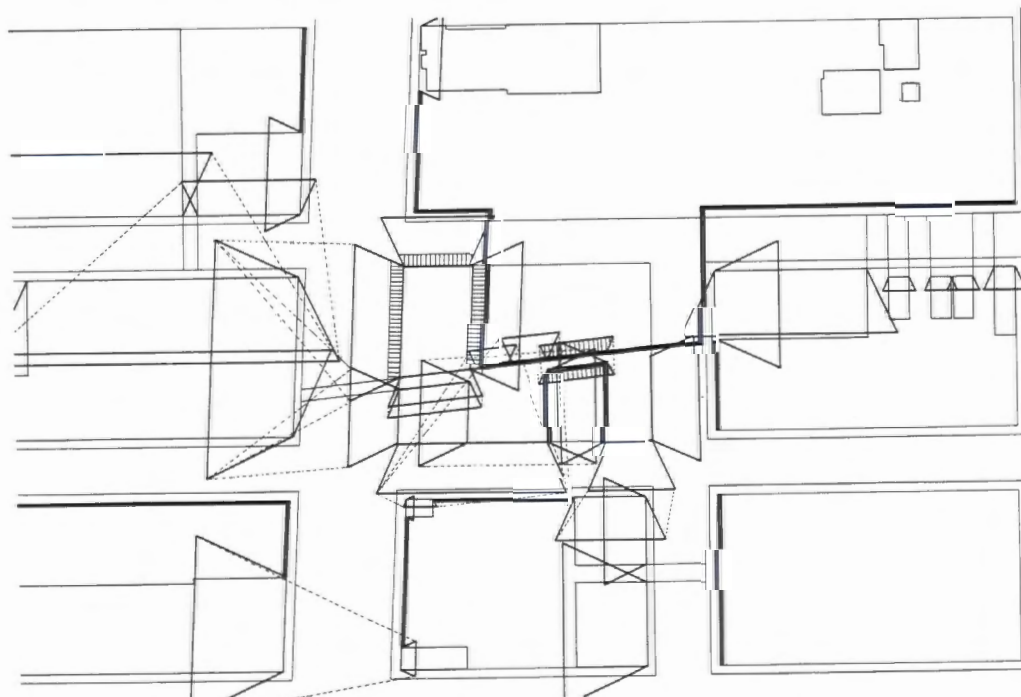
grand river boulevard

The 1807 plan for Detroit devised by Judge Augustus Woodward was never completed beyond a slight hint of its whole. This master plan, which offered repetitive elements promising the possibility of endless growth, in reality became the mastered, beaten into the submission of developers' desires. The plan ended, however, not as the developers imagined, but on the contrary: as an oasis of vertical order in the midst of a desert of chaotic horizontal fields. These fields, which are a series of volumes containing built, not-built, and was-built, largely define the spatial order, or better yet, the lack thereof, in Detroit. Paradoxically, upon approaching the threshold of this submissive master plan, the unexpected begins to occur, where the transition between the horizontal fields and the vertical volumes begins. This transition, experienced by the unlearned and the developers alike, gives the sense of inclusion without being included, enclosure without being enclosed, containment without a container. This sense, which begins at a distinctive point along a given path, ends upon entering the threshold of the volume of vertical space. This volume of space, contained by a master plan stripped of its ability to master, is defined by the vertical planar forces the developers deemed too difficult to make possible. Yet there they are, containing, enclosing, re-containing, inter-enclosing, releasing. However, the unexpected has again occurred,

for in this avenue of interacting forces, a gap has been found...the face of a dream that stands guard on the line of the developer's reality...a bastion that marks the edge of this partially-realized plan and the endless fields beyond. In this one instant, the vertical volumes exist no more than the wisp of the fading dream, while the field crashes down upon the weathered face of this solitary vertical force. Then, at the same moment, the waves of the field are rolling out, threatening to destroy the power of this broken plan, and another transition begins — a lifeline of hope to the system of order already begun — pulling the endless field back into its vertical order of space so as to continue its own flow of uninterrupted/interrupted spaces.

The idea is established.

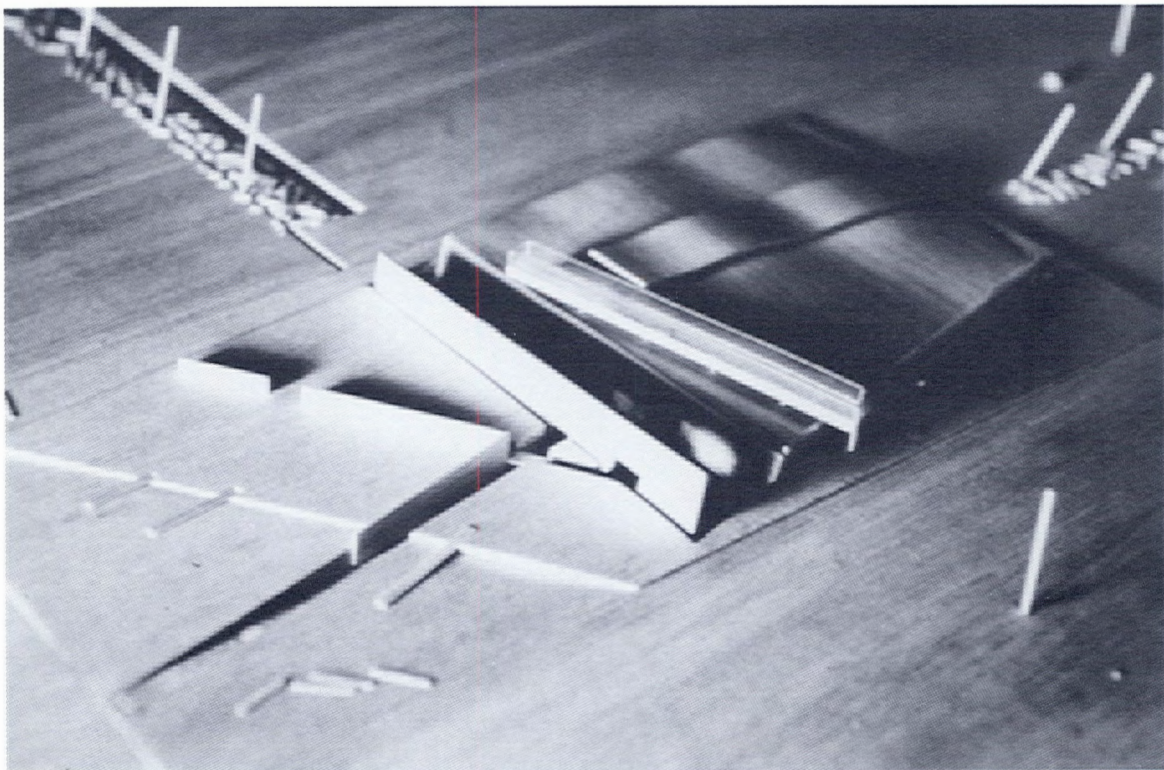
The flow of spaces that permeate the plan is the distortion caused by the cold and indifferent light of reality upon the memory left from the dream of the plan. But if the ability is only to affect the immediate site, then the search is over and the memory is no more powerful than the "old" trapped in the memory of viewers. However, the beauty lies in the fact that the memory of a dream can and will manifest itself whenever and wherever the right chord is struck, thereby projecting itself totally and forcefully into unfamiliar terrain that contains merely a thread of likeness to the faded memory. This memory, playing like a brook over the established terrain, layers itself upon any "new" and "old" alike, allowing this memory of a master plan not to master, but to offer subtle, reminiscent whispers of influence in the midst of a city of brash, offensive cursing. **The mean is established.**

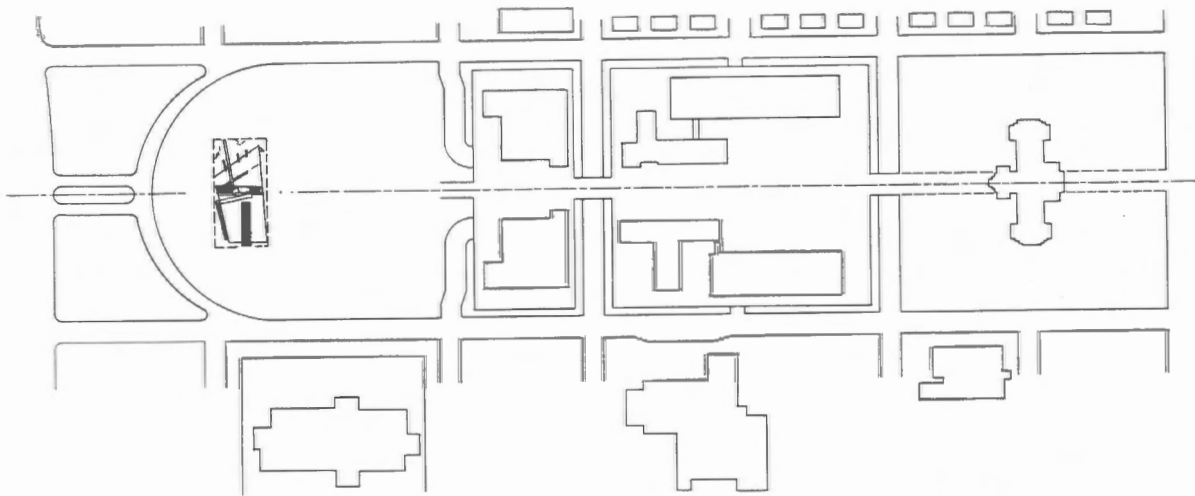


permeations in the site

*M*ichigan vietnam memorial

omar perez and gia daskalakis

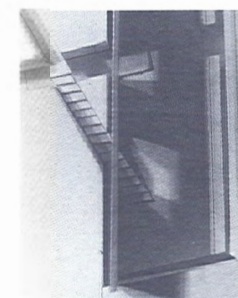
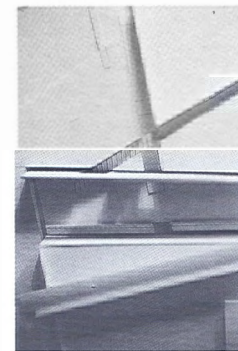


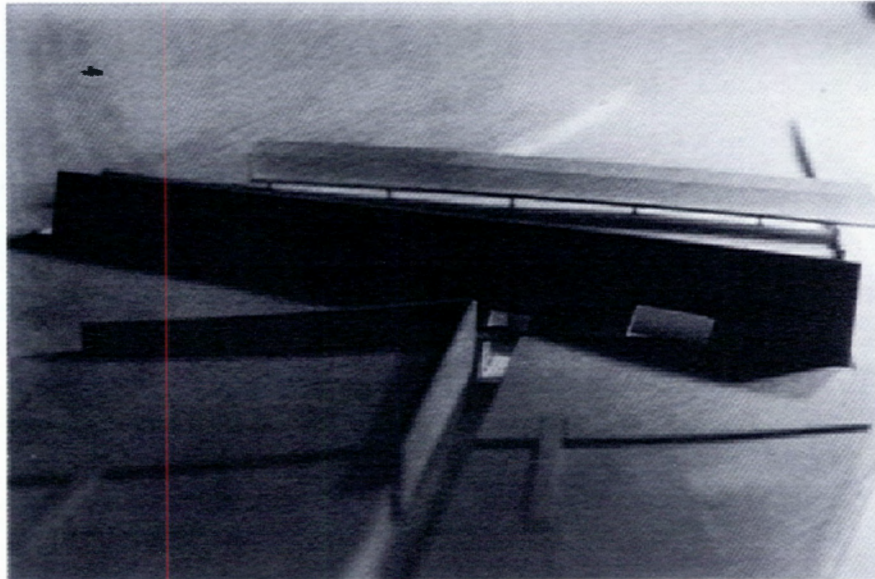


context plan

I

...from a distance, the relative flatness of the midwest landscape dominates. There is no object form; rather, there is the line: the line of the section, of the horizon, and the multiple boundaries of ground. Slipping between states of drawing and landscape, these lines give indication of an extraordinary mirror of relations. The line in the sections, strung taught between the dipping and rising of platforms and walls, is the same ground that forms the sharp edge with the sky. Diminished by distance, the lines of perspective condense the memorial into a narrow haze, which, as one moves closer, are pulled apart into multiple outlines of the constitutive elements. The necessary emptiness breathes. The flatness of the land distorts, floats, breaks and is materially altered. At moments, the land and eye move slightly upward and off level causing the shifting planes of the memorial, the ground and horizon to realign. The gaze and the landscape are held together, quivering. But there is yet another field. The existing wide roads and their weak intersections are not concealed or corrected, but accepted with the addition of tense articulations placed nearby. Wood planks, sand, concrete cubes and concrete are repeated and dispersed throughout, creating a range of differences for the comparative ground. This diffused context sets up the profound relativity of the contemplating subject. The many approaches occur abstracted (apart, removed or separated from something), the threshold of entering now slightly, then strongly marked.





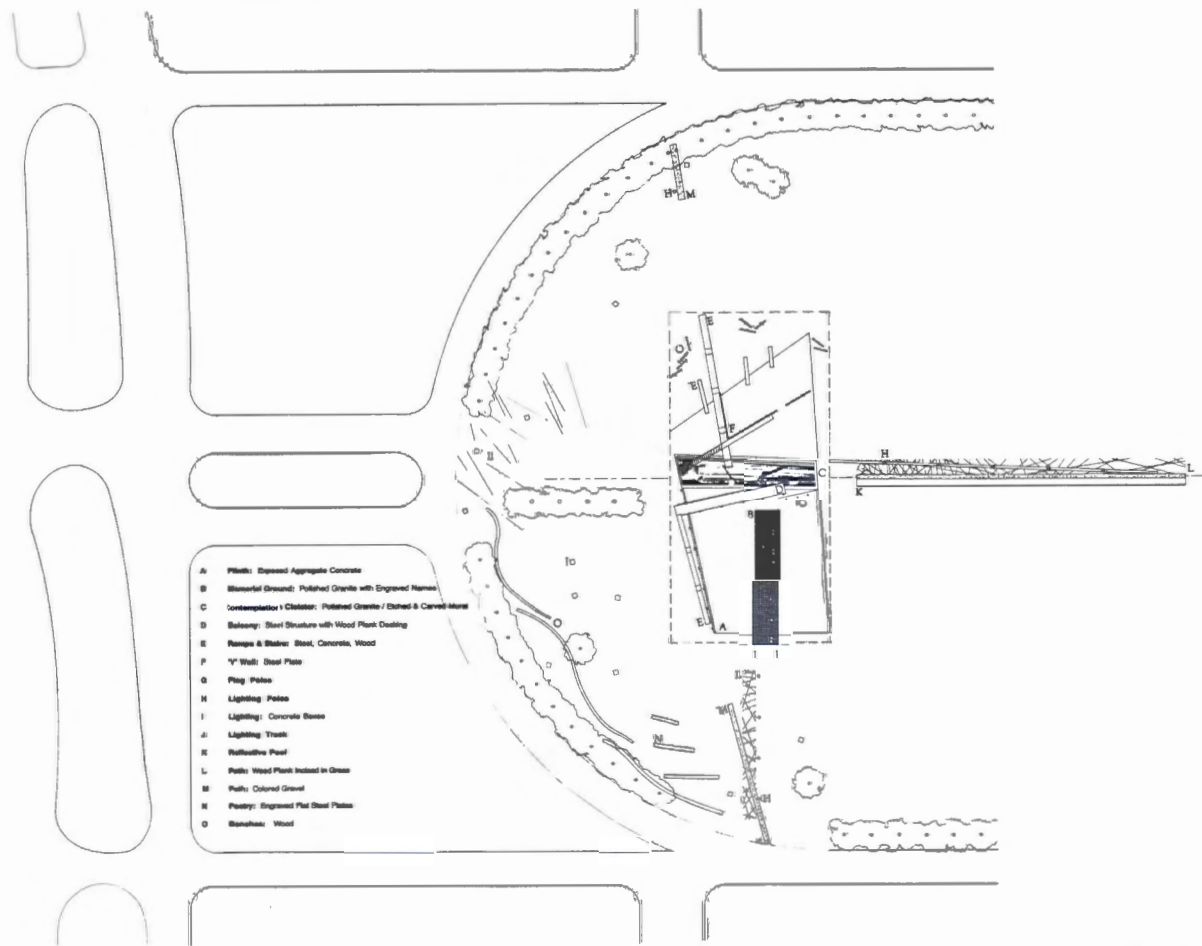
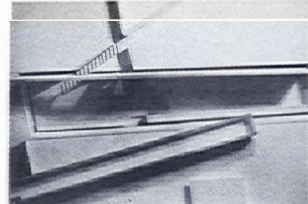
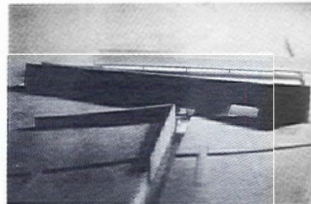
2

The most continuous definition along an axis (the way from the capital) is built up as if shaded, erased, and redrawn. It is marked by wood planks and is slowly crossed by light poles that continue from the direction of the end wall to the cloister. It is reiterated and further bent with a reflecting pool. The length is accelerated by the changing movement of the planks underfoot and the abruptness of the thin edges. The distance, no longer spread, is used simultaneously as significant ground and staging.

Ahead a gap is created that frames the two opposing sides. Other approaching visitors are seen, caught by the pull of the apparent void which holds them apart.

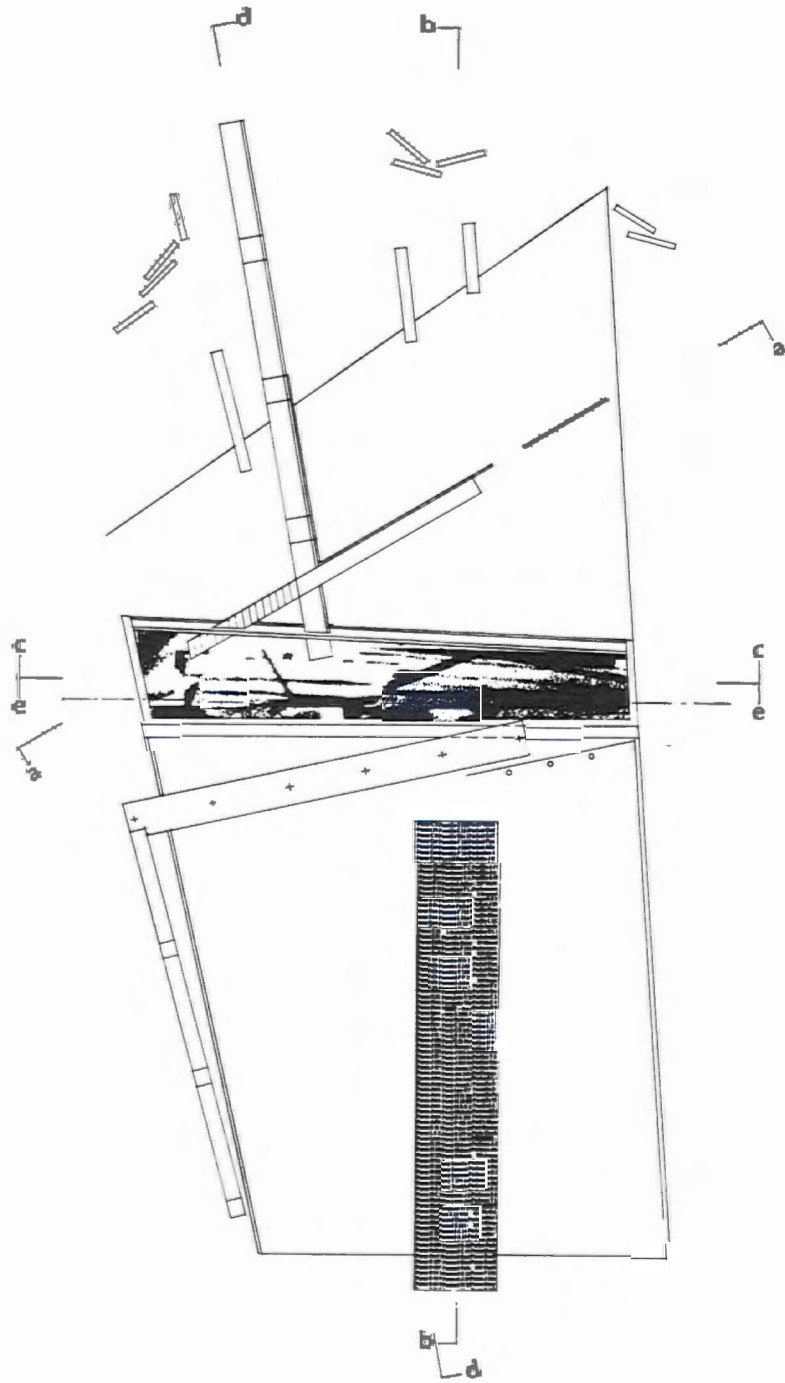
At the cloister's edge, the means becomes inverted and exposed. The ripples of the multiple horizons are seen from inside the ground which now hovers right and left at eye level, held back (right) and nearly provoked (left) by granite.

From the balcony at another short distance, other visitors look down, balancing the ambiguous correspondence of fleeting moments of alignment. The cloister's folded wall is drawn out below.

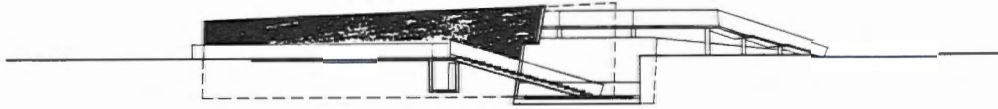


memorial park plan

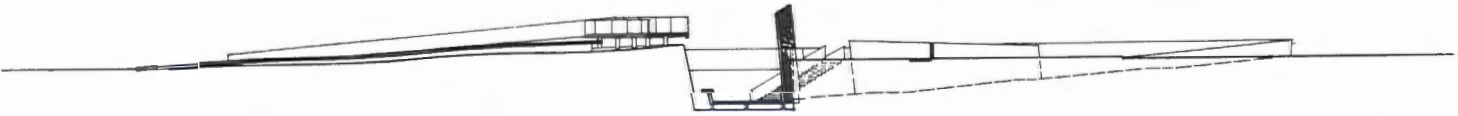
3
Eight times thin paths cut across bodies causing collapsed views of discrete moments: down a long step and beside a steel wall, up a ramp and crossing a sheared lawn...again...again...down a long step and under a bridge, over a gap and down stairs, turn and cross the plinth, turn around and hover, black and white moments of shadow crossing the face, wind lifting up then blocked.



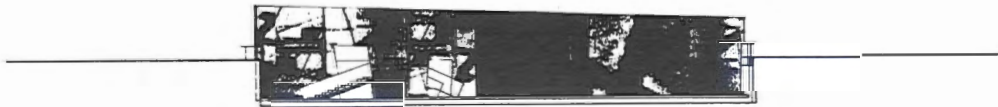
roof plan



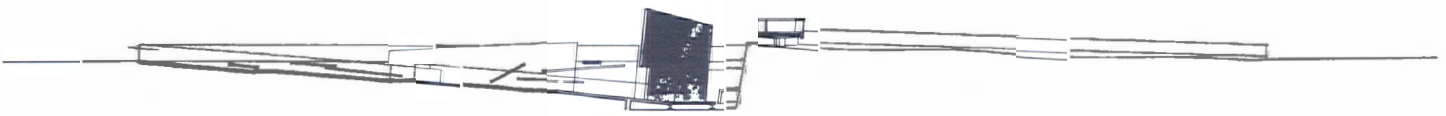
section a-a



section b-b



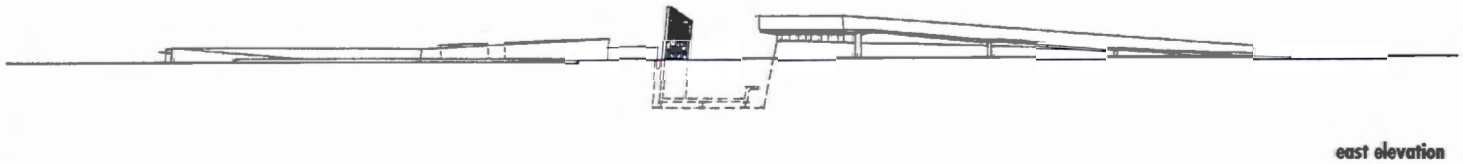
section c-c



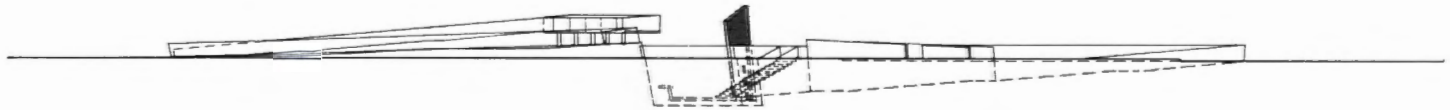
section d-d



section e-e



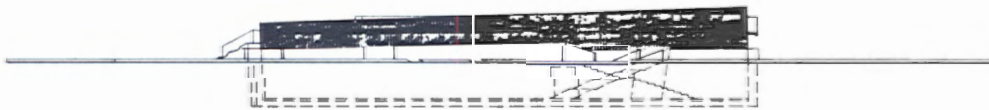
east elevation



west elevation



north elevation



south elevation

4

The approach accepts the existence of consciousness activated at the edges of attention and not in possession of fully determined fact. Objects motivate consciousness with their illusionary and transient nature. Merleau Ponty explains in *Phenomenology of Perception*,

The miracle of consciousness consists in its bringing to light, through attention, phenomena which reestablish the unity of the object in a new dimension at the very moment when they destroy it. Thus attention is neither an association of images, nor the return to itself of thought already in control of its objects, but the active constitution of a new object which makes explicit and articulate what was until then presented as no more than an indeterminate horizon.¹

¹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 1962. *Phenomenology of Perception*. translated from French by Colin Smith (London: Routledge & K. Paul; New York, Humanities Press).

This conception displaces the location of meaning and allows the work to substantiate and value doubt. The negation of objective or mythic culture is

replaced by the intimacy of being. It is a logic lived through. The approach is more silent, and more immediate.

The series of shifting relations of similarities and differences empathize with sadness in the land as it pushes, is held back, or rises. Across the spaces (contemplation cloister, memorial ground) opposing elements meet in both sympathy and antipathy. Without the known and doubted sign, there is expression. The etched mural stands enigmatic and the named are carefully positioned in the second utterance of the ground. Instead of outer resemblance, there is a system remarked and remade.

By moving between the properties of oblique projection, section and plan, by employing the distortions of perception and the ambivalence of the gesture, the architects alter the quality of point of view between a being and knowing. The mourner moves through the overlaps, into the fault of a bigger landscape.

Text by Laura Briggs and Johnathan Knowles, practicing architects and faculty members at City College University of New York.

S self-replicating bench

dennis b. smith

The Self-replicating Bench was inspired by theoretical findings in the field of Artificial Life. In the 1950's, the mathematician John von Neuman developed a formal description of self-reproduction¹. In so doing, he made a distinction between true self-reproduction, as manifest in existing natural organisms, and trivial self-reproduction (or self-replication), the distinction being that true self-reproduction involves a genetic description of the organism, whereas self-replication does not.

The initial conception of the Bench began as a notion about the possible existence of a geometric solid that defines an open, negative volume that is equivalent to the solid itself; the consequence of such a volume being that if the negative were filled with a casting medium, the resulting casting would be identical to (a replica of) the original solid. Such a solid, I quickly determined, was impossible. However, by creating a *set* of solids whose members each *almost*

¹ Langton, Christopher G., ed., "Artificial Life," *Artificial Life* (1989): 1-47.

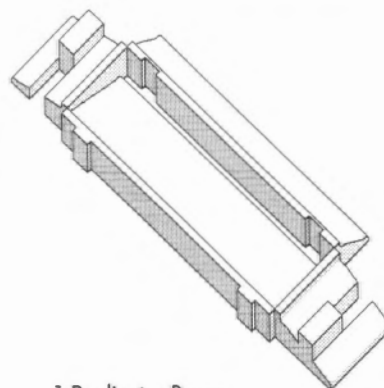


meet this condition, and then “borrowing” surfaces from members of the set to cast a single member, it is possible, in a number of steps, to replicate the set of solids.

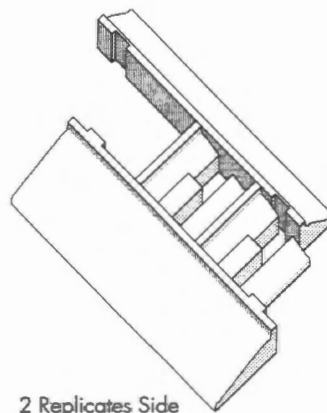
Replication of the Bench is achieved by arranging its components (seat, two sides, and brace) variously on a horizontal surface such that a void is described that is identical in volume and geometry to the component to be replicated. Concrete is then poured into the void and allowed to set. The resulting casting is an identical copy of the component directly beneath it. Subsequent iterations, then, replicate all components.

Technically, self-replication requires the transfer of information from the parent to the progeny only within an arbitrarily defined environment; just as the human organism is autonomous only within an environment meeting certain conditions (i.e., the presence of air, proper temperatures, etc.) the Bench requires a specific environment to put the *self* in self-replicating. Many possible environments within which the necessary processes occur can be imagined; however, most surely include such unlikely things as *a guy with a wheelbarrow full of concrete and a guy who likes to slide heavy things around on the floor*. Nevertheless, the critical function is performed: form-defining information is transferred from the parent to the progeny through the casting process in such a way that the offspring is identical to the parent.

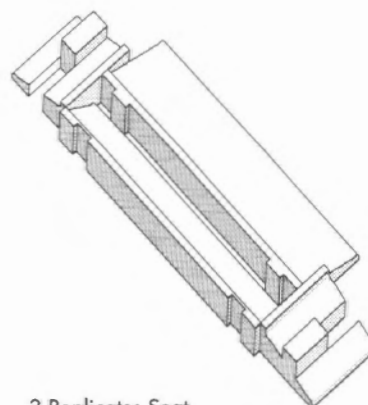
Replication configurations of the bench components:



1 Replicates Brace



2 Replicates Side



3 Replicates Seat

Nine walls to keep out nothing

joe underhill-cady

One of the basic characteristics of any structure is its stability: it remains a structure as long as its parts are ordered in a particular way. Structure thus stands separate from the flux of time and entropy. Though the structures of buildings, and of the bodies that occupy them, are characterized by a degrees of permanence, none of them escapes entirely from the passage of time. Perhaps the most troubling and consequential manifestation of this transience is the mortality of the body. Using mortality and fear of death as a starting point, this essay explores how, in contemporary America, we build walls to keep death out of our daily lives, and as a consequence often fail to develop successful ways of facing our mortality. It also examines the political implications of the boundaries we construct between what might be called the places of life and death.

In developing these ideas I briefly explore the life of one politician, Theodore Roosevelt, whose home illustrates several elements of the modern American approach to death. The essay is the view of an observer of politics and a carpenter with no training in architecture or urban planning; however, in conclusion I offer some general suggestions for how these ideas might apply to problems of design. We need to be conscious of how attempts at excluding death from our daily experience, when taken to the extreme, can have destructive consequences. The blurring of boundaries and symbolic introduction of death into our constructed environments is one way to facilitate finding some peace with our mortality.

As Pierre Bourdieu argues, our living spaces structure and are structured by the consciousness of those who move within them. Bourdieu argues that one way these spaces are ordered is through the use of homologies — the parallel symbolic structures found in the different realms of body, house, city, and so on. These homologies manifest themselves in what he calls the

“habitus — “the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations” within which we live.¹ The particular form of the habitus can differ quite markedly in different societies or cultures, but within each culture a particular conception of space may be said to dominate (despite the fact that in most locations there is great variety found in the ways people structure their lives). For instance, Bourdieu writes of how, in the houses of one group of Algerians, the Kabyles, there is a “dialectical relationship between the body and a space structured according to the mythico-ritual oppositions” between left and right, good and bad, up and down, wet and dry, etc.

The lower, dark, nocturnal part of the house, the space of damp, green, or raw objects...the place too of natural beings...and natural activities — sleep, sex, birth — and also of death, is opposed to the high, light-filled, noble place of humans and in particular of the guest, fire and fire-made objects...The washing of the dead takes place at the entrance to the stable. The low dark part is opposed to the upper part as the female to the male: it is the most intimate place within the world of intimacy...²

This dichotomous (and stereotypically gendered) structuring divides the house into spaces of life and death, and we can examine other constructed environments to see how spaces, bodies, and thoughts can be divided into areas of life, vitality, and order on the one hand and death, chaos, and decay on the other.³ This division, I argue, is motivated in part by our attachment to life, anxiety about mortality, and fear of death; these lead to the project which aims at avoiding the painful sorrow of loss and powerlessness experienced in the face of death.⁴

As thoughts: we are water contained—temporarily ordered chaos. We are contained within vessels which form the boundary between inside and outside, and we are shaped by those vessels just as water fills the space that contains it—as the volume of water that is the ocean perfectly mirrors the topography of the ocean floor, and the surface of that water reflects the tension between wind, gravity, and shoreline. We are temporarily ordered mechanisms existing within shifting boundaries. In death the boundary breaks down—not all at once but gradually and steadily.

1
Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 78; *idem*, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1984), Ch. 3; For discussions of the social construction of reality see Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), and Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984).

2
Bourdieu, 90.

3
See Peter Metcalf, *Celebrations of Death: The Anthropology of Mortuary Ritual*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

4
See Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death* (New York: Free Press, 1973); Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (London: SCM Press, 1962).

Death is included in the Kabyle house, but relegated to the realm of the lower, the inner, the moist. In contemporary American culture, the dominant style of relating to death is to exclude it altogether from our daily lived experience, isolating it in hospitals and churches.⁵ As Philippe Aries has pointed out, death in the modern era has become privatized and excluded from the public realm and discourse. Our relationship to death has become more individual than collective, more technical than spiritual.⁶ In industrialized capitalist societies, Bourdieu argues that, unlike the case of the Kabyles, one of the principal bases for the structuring of the habitus is the division between rich and poor. The rich constitute the class which has risen above the dictates of necessity, and the structuring of their lives reflects this sense of distance from necessity, fate — and mortality. The spaces in societies in late capitalism thus are said to reflect one's place in the class structure. To this, we can add the observation that in modern capitalist societies, the habitus of the wealthy and powerful is one in which death is not simply relegated to the lower half of the house, but is excluded in all but its safely sanitized forms. This exclusion involves the construction and maintenance of boundaries between in and out, life and death.

Death is never completely excluded even from the lives of the most powerful, but instead is controlled. Since we cannot separate ourselves from our bodies which die, we are forced to deal with the body and death in some way; thus the project for the powerful becomes one not of making the body disappear but of removing from it all signs of mortality — freezing it in a state of perpetual youth. Christopher Lasch has noted the modern infatuation with the healthy and young-looking body, a characteristic which can be seen as reflecting this bourgeois inclination to deny mortality.⁷ Death may be allowed in as the death “of someone else” — the tamed death as experienced in its safely mediated form on television or observed from the safety and insulation of a speeding automobile.⁸

5

I focus on the sensibilities and aesthetics of mainstream America, and these observations do not apply to the realities of life for the poor or those living in the inner city, for whom death is often all too present and real. In either case, my focus is on how the symbols of death, rather than actual death, are excluded from our daily experiences.

6

Philippe Aries, *The Hour of Our Death* (New York: Vintage Books, 1982); Philip Mellor and Chris Schilling, “Modernity, Self-identity and the Sequestration of Death,” *Sociology* 27: 3 August 1993, 411–431.

7

Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism* (New York: Norton and Co. 1991).

8

It is estimated that by the age of eighteen, the average American child has witnessed around 18,000 deaths on television. See M. Kears, *Endings: A Sociology of Death and Dying* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989). For discussions of contemporary relationship to death, see Sherwin B. Nuland, *How we Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1994), and David Stannard, ed., *Death in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975).

the house lives when
it keeps out nature
fungus, free-flowing water,
ice breaking mortar
the house is made of
that which is dead—
the skeletons of trees,
ashes + dust of earth

Noting a similar dynamic of isolation, Richard Sennett argues that the modern urban experience is often characterized by an insulation from direct experience, an aversion to touching.⁹ The problem is one of losing touch with important direct experiences, of being separated from aspects of the human condition such as sex and death, which are now experienced more often than not voyeuristically on the TV or movie screen. In distancing ourselves from direct experience, we become a nation of spectators. It is a stance which involves what Tobias Wolff has called "becoming predatory about reality"¹⁰ — that is, remaining distant from one's experiences, observing them, putting them in one's sights. Thus we become more comfortable dealing with human creations than with humans themselves. The result is that we are often left unprepared to face death; we live in denial of the paramount fact of our existence — its finite duration. And in ways, our architecture and urban planning contribute to this separation from the body that dies.

There are a variety of projects — social and individual, cultural and psychological — undertaken in response to the facts of human mortality, which erect boundaries in different ways. Some of these projects are healthy and successful, while others may have destructive implications or use destructive means to build these barriers. One source of such destructiveness is our discomfort with death and the resultant extremities to which we go to keep death out.

One way in which boundaries are formed is in the maintenance of a coherent identity, a process which involves the formation of boundaries between "self" and "not-self." In being able to answer the question of identity — "Who am I?" — we make a differentiation from what is "not I." Another project involves maintaining control over the material world, of having power and keeping out "fate" and "chaos." We try to come to terms with the limits of power inherent in the human condition by creating symbolic orders in which we can maintain a sense of power.

lying in the dark
in my grandmother's house
after she had died
her absence palpable in the house
(a distinct moment, a dark epiphany)
realizing in some sense
what infinity meant,
how time stretched out forever
from this point in the present
into the past and future
and feeling myself explode out into
that infinity
in that loss of self
from which I have since recoiled
and built up walls against.
This cliché from which we flee —
this fear that motivates the
building of brick walls.

9

Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1994).

10

Tobias Wolff, *In Pharaoh's Army: Memories of a Lost War* (New York: Knopf, 1994). A similar discussion of the distancing of the observer from the experience in the use of media such as photography is found in Geoffrey Makstutis, "Notes on the Disappearing Experience," *Dimensions* 7 (1993): 157-164.

A third form of boundary formation, related to this last and which addresses concerns about mortality, is that of differentiating oneself from the body and nature, and thus generating a sense of control over the fate to which bodies are subject (injury, sickness, aging, death). This can be accomplished by employing boundaries to distance ourselves from death, shutting it off, experiencing it only as something which happens to someone else, making it disappear from the screen; or it can be done by symbolically turning death into something manageable and then seeking to control that thing which has come to stand for death. We can symbolically equate some suitable entity — such as a dangerous animal, enemy soldier, person who believes in a different god — with death and in doing battle with that entity gain some sense of power over death. This was, for instance, the strategy employed by Theodore Roosevelt, the man whose greatest passions (besides his family) were hunting and fighting in battle. Through this activity of “doing battle with death,” the greatest of mysteries was, for Roosevelt, transformed into a bear or lion or enemy soldier which could be seen and shot, thus giving the hunter the (albeit temporary) sense of satisfaction of having conquered death.

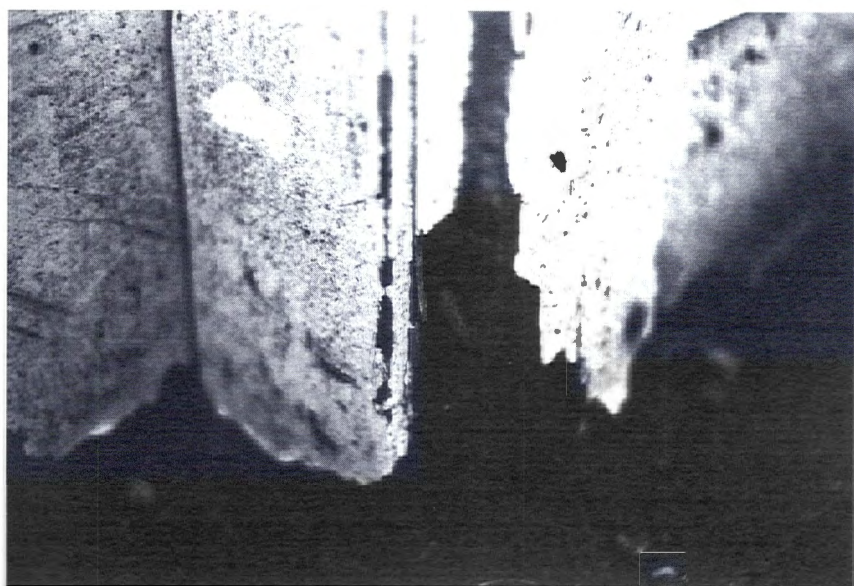
The problem may arise that, instead of an acceptance of death, an unconscious fear and denial of death will lead to violence in the form of the hunt for that which represents the body and death. Death can be directly faced and accepted as an aspect of our existence as humans; we can mourn that fact, attempt to come to some understanding of it, or develop rituals that place it in a context of meaning; but these rituals or psychological mechanisms may become destructive when they take the fear of death, the frustration

with mortality, and project it out onto the social landscape, such that certain people become associated with death and are thereby transformed into the “other.” The psychological discomfort with death can be assuaged by the mental trick of believing for a little while that death is not really part of one’s inherent condition, but instead something which can be attributed to an external entity that can be controlled and excluded from one’s life. This control and exclusion often, if not always, does violence to those on the outside.

My great Aunt Betty was dying
while I worked on this, and
Now she's dead.
Dying in a hospital in San Francisco
Very far away.
I know there is ~~that~~ sorrow
that must come out
but I resist,
using the writing as a wall,
a way of escaping from my loss
from the reminder of this common fate
I tried to talk to her on the phone
but she didn't recognize who I was,
asked me questions that didn't make sense.
She is on morphine, her heart is failing
living in a world of tubes + sterlone
Very far away.

For some reason, as a teen I began to feel guilty about my body and sexual desires and ~~started~~ began this futile project of attempting to transcend my base desires. I think it was a simplistic attempt at being more than mortal.

I remember as a child picking up these little religious comics at the county fair - about what would happen to me if I died a sinner. Grim little scenarios about burning in hell that were oddly fascinating to my ten year-old mind. So, though ~~my~~ we never went to church, I still got the idea that you had to try to overcome the body. The asceticism would be a sign of the existence of some higher power, of a soul that would live on.



Ontological walls

The wall, boundary, and border are fundamental aspects of a variety of spheres of existence.¹¹ The notion of space which is dominant in political discourse — a particularly restrictive and mechanistic one — is that spaces are formed by the delineation of boundaries. These boundaries delineate difference, ownership, and power differentials: a country is formed by its borders, which are real to the extent that they are defended and regulated and that people residing within those boundaries see significant differences (differences which they are willing to die to maintain) between themselves and those on the outside. In architecture, though spaces can be formed in much more subtle ways, this mechanistic delineation can involve the use of walls, ceilings, floors that separate rooms, houses, subdivisions from the larger whole.

The wall can be seen as serving the physical-biological function of maintaining the proper temperature and moisture of the air inside the house, the psychological-cultural function of providing privacy and screening out the outsiders' views, but also as serving the metaphorical function of separating inside and outside, dividing self from other, order from chaos. Similarly — using clothing, cosmetics, plastic surgery, exercise — we build walls around the body, creating the body itself as a work of art and architecture, into something other than the complicated organism with all its physical functions and fallibilities, which all signal its mortality.

Where these boundaries between life and death will be located depends on where one locates death to begin with. For instance, as a young man I came to feel that death would come for me from the government, which might force me into service in some seemingly insane venture of killing, or might loose the weapons of Armageddon; the youthful illusion of immortality for me was pierced by nightmares of intercontinental ballistic missiles. My project became one of separating myself from the source of that death, attempting to control it. This project still haunts my work, making my instinctual response to the government one of criticism and suspicion. The simple logic imbedded in this project takes the form of a major premise that death was frightening and to be avoided, a minor premise that the government was the source of death for young males, and the conclusion that government was bad and must be criticized.

So there is a persistent hope that in “deconstructing” the lives, words, houses of the government elite I will unmask the rottenness that dwells within them — show them to be the agents of death that I imagine them to be. I have to find the evil I know must be found in places of power; yet at the same time realize the need to resist this “temptation.” This inclination to judge these men, to view them in moral terms, stems from a deep-rooted association between death and evil — that Christian notion that humans were immortal at first but became mortal because they succumbed to the temptations and sins of

11

Lewis Mumford, in his *The City in History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961), lists the wall as one of the four basic elements of urban space.

Eden, which spurred the quest for that moral purity which offers the hope of immortality. Since I have located death in the places of power, I must find the powerful people as an "other" — something evil from which I must distance myself. By thus distancing myself, I separate myself from the death which I fear. This makes the fear that much more manageable, something I can fight against in little ways (writing critical essays about them, for example). Any understanding or compassion for the political elite on my part then involves some acceptance of death. My brief examination of Theodore Roosevelt can be seen in this light — as motivated both by a desire to distance myself from him and by a realization that in doing so I am in part resisting the idea of my own mortality. In my own attempt at trying to break down boundaries between life and death, I attempt to understand Roosevelt as a human rather than a demon.

I begin to experience the writing of this essay (and my general research into responses to mortality) as ~~not~~ circular. My interpretation of how people come to terms with death both reflects my own response to mortality and in turn shapes ~~my~~ ^{that} response. The structure of the essay mirrors the structure of my life. In similar ways the structure of the lives of people living in cities and buildings mirrors the structures of those environments.



Theodore Roosevelt and Sagamore Hill

One way to examine the politics of spaces is to look at politicians' conceptions of space. In the space Theodore Roosevelt structured for himself we see examples of the various ways in which boundaries are erected to keep out or control death. There are both admirable and unpleasant aspects to the house that Roosevelt built. He did not shy from life or death and appears to have succeeded in personally confronting his own mortality. His home is full of reminders of death, but death in a form completely controlled and dominated by him. The archetype of the soldier, which Roosevelt used as a model for his life, has the virtue of facing death and life very directly, though of course it has the problem of dealing with death by participating in the most destructive of human activities. Sagamore Hill, Roosevelt's home on Long Island, was in part a monument to his control over the animals which he saw as representing death; the house was a manifestation of his determination not to let death get him, and one of the tools he used to keep death out was the gun.

Roosevelt symbolically located death in the natural world with its Darwinian struggle for survival; thus to control death he needed to control nature. In his writings he associated animals and nature with death and flux; as he would put it, the "fecund stream of life, especially life on the lower levels flows like an immense torrent out of non-existence for but the briefest moment before the enormous majority of the beings composing it are engulfed in the jaws of death, and again go out into the shadow."¹² In an attempt to control this torrent of mortality, he would remove these mysterious, mortal animals from the flux of nature and place them in the stasis of his house. He had a life-long passion for shooting animals, skinning them, stuffing them, and adding them to his collection — in short, possessing them.¹³ He would take a living animal, preferably one that was genetically similar to humans (therefore his focus on large mammals) and dangerous (a source of death) and kill it. This symbolic representation of the mortal human body would then be preserved. The animal's body would be frozen in an appearance of vitality (for though the animals were dead, the taxidermist's art was to make them look alive). The acts of hunting and taxidermy became a way for Roosevelt to assert his difference from and superiority over the natural world.¹⁴

Let us then imagine the following scene at the Roosevelt residence at Sagamore Hill: Theodore Roosevelt sits in his study on the third floor.¹⁵ The frail and sickly body of his youth (wracked with asthma and diarrhea) has been transformed — through years of concerted body-building, boxing, and ranching — into the robust, unflinching machine of his adulthood. He is, of course, dressed (nakedness is unthinkable). He is writing one of his many books about war or hunting or conquering territory (the house is also full of books, Roosevelt being a voracious reader). Within the house he is supported by a network of people — wife, five or six servants, a stenographer, an African-American butler. It is, according to his daughter Alice, a place oppressive in its insistent good humor. Everyone has fun there because they are supposed to have fun.

The room he sits in is called the "Gun Room," which houses Roosevelt's extensive collection of firearms. He has the revolver salvaged from the sunken

12

Theodore Roosevelt, *The Deer Family* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1902).

13

Theodore Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt, An Autobiography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946); *idem*, *Theodore Roosevelt's Diaries of Boyhood and Youth* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), 21 and 163.

14

See Donna Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy" in Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease's *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993).

15

The details of Roosevelt's life are drawn from David Wallace, "Sagamore Hill: An Interior History" in Natalie A. Naylor, ed., *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-sided American* (Interlaken, N.Y.: Heart of the Lakes Pub., 1992); Roosevelt's *Autobiography*, and Nathan Miller, *Theodore Roosevelt, a Life* (New York: Morrow, 1992).



ship *U.S.S. Maine*, which he then used to shoot a Spaniard in Cuba while fighting there with the Rough Riders. He has his shotguns and rifles used for his frequent hunting trips. They stand neatly in a row in their case, somehow reassuring to the man as he writes (no one dare break into *his* house). The room is the highest in the house, which itself stands on a hilltop. It expresses the value of height, of rising to the top, of occupying the paramount position in the hierarchy, of commanding the view. It is the realm of mastery and privacy — one moves from the outside world onto the property and then into the increasingly private spaces of the house, the second floor (where the bedrooms were), to the gun room (Roosevelt's alone). From the gun room, Roosevelt has a view of Long Island Sound, and expanding our view as well, we can locate Sagamore Hill in the United States of America, a place delineated by a border. Outside the border is danger, other states threatening to encroach upon the U.S..

Reminders of death — in the form of the preserved remains of large mammals — are everywhere in the house. Everywhere one goes there is some bit of an animal's remains to sit on or stand on — a bench made out of horns and hide, a leopard skin thrown over a divan. In front of the numerous fireplaces are the skins of the fiercest animals — lion, grizzly bear, mountain lion — with their heads intact, jaws open in fierce snarls, frozen in the moment of death. Living in that house, one might experience the superiority and difference of humans over animals, of culture over nature. The trophies, immobile forms, monuments to stasis, adorned the house, which was itself ideally a place of timelessness.¹⁶

sagamore hill

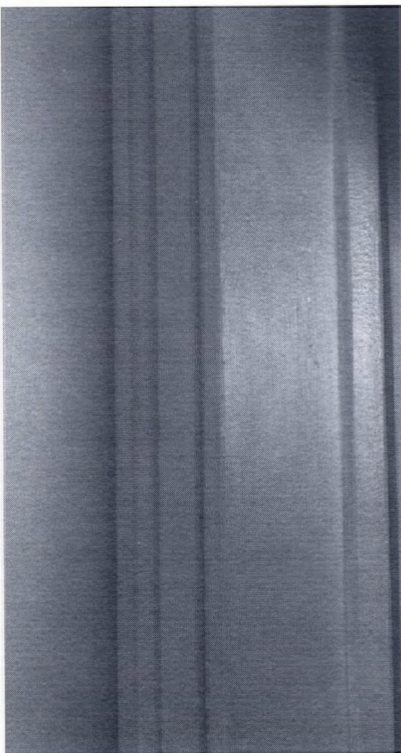
Theodore Roosevelt Collection
Harvard College Library
reproduced with permission

16

Now it is a national landmark, maintained by the state for perpetuity, one step closer to timelessness. The staff there attempt to recreate as closely as possible the state of the house as it was when the Roosevelts lived there, to stop the flow of time, to turn the house into a photograph, to remove all flux or life from it. See David Wallace, "Sagamore Hill: an Interior History."

Moving from the center of privacy outward into greater and greater publicity we find a number of walls — physical, metaphorical, psychological — in Roosevelt's world between himself and his death. At the center is the socially constructed self, consciousness, memory, desire. The body is shaped and strengthened to keep out death, the mind is sharpened and employed to control the body, to assert one's superiority over the natural; the body is clothed; the room is elevated and enclosed; it contains its guns (technology used to do battle with death); the house is walled and solid and stable. Nature and death are brought into the house only as possessions, as immobile symbols of the stopping of time and of human domination of nature. The house sits on the hill, in the tamed woods, outside the city, in the powerful nation, on the bountiful planet, in the mysterious cosmos, outside of which there is nothing, there is darkness.

the existence of the body
within the space
of city or building is transient—
moving and passing through,
entering and exiting.
The eye,
a fleeting presence on the page
scans the words,
moves on.
the paper and ink remain
still and quiet.
the body is a fleeting spirit
within the room
the walls, the chairs
all background, static frame
for the flesh which flees
and then vanishes.



The politics and aesthetics of boundaries

Roosevelt's home can be seen as an example of how the modern project of building walls is guided by an aesthetic of deathlessness and stasis. Besides the somewhat unusual use of taxidermy in Sagamore Hill, there are a variety of other ways in which this aesthetic is expressed, some more problematic than others. This exclusionary sensibility often embraces the notion of progress — of newness, of the sense that at least as a species, we are progressing toward some higher end (if there is movement, it must at least be movement toward more order, longer life, greater power, and not the reverse). This gives some hope and a sense of order in history. One form this progress takes is new technologies, and one standard of beauty — of pleasing fascination — is the house that contains all the latest technologies. The more complex and responsive the house becomes, the more like our own bodies and selves it is (we can talk to it, it talks back, it senses our needs). The house then more successfully fulfills the role of surrogate and immortal body. Technology provides the powerful with greater ability to separate themselves from that which they find distasteful or unpleasant; with it, they control more, have at their disposal more drugs or activities to distance themselves from death. The technology can be used to make the house antiseptic — a place of painted walls, air fresheners, garbage disposals, dishwashers, weed-free lawns. But this can come back to haunt us, leave us empty when death finally emerges — when we hear about the plane crash, see the complete stasis of the dead body, receive the diagnosis of cancer. As Heidegger has argued, we can again claim to have become victims of our own technology — in this case being too successful in keeping out death.¹⁷

Creating this kind of beauty in a house — the stasis of the structure, the homeostasis of its processes, its eternal youth — requires money and power. The longevity is bought at a price. It is an aesthetic achieved by and through power that is used conservatively — both to conserve the position of the powerful (maintaining the wall between rich and poor) and to conserve the edifices that the rich live in and the monuments erected to memorialize them. The pyramids, Versailles, the Gothic cathedrals are all icons of stasis achieved at the expense of those who labored and died in building the structures. attempts at removing oneself from the flux of nature take work, power. The greater the stasis achieved, the greater the concentration of power necessary, and thus the unfortunate and common coincidence between "great" monuments and exploitation.

17

Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology, and Other Essays* (New York: Garland Pub., 1977).

*I want a house that will last forever
made of steel + concrete,
not the house of my youth -
a very old farmhouse that
was steadily sinking and sagging
and being worked on
where my sister ran away
my father had his breakdown
my parents divorced.
My dream house is a place of
stability - a monument for messages
to the family I could imagine
might inherit that place for
some time to come.
(I dream to be rich)*

18

Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 15 and 98.

the house lives
in its stillness
as long as it remains
unchanged,
the place we come home to
the family/house
the space of memories
(like a wooden brain)

the body lives
as it moves
depending on movement
(blood, bile, oxygen)
and the movement
of the body signifies
its vitality
while the change in
physical structure
signifies decay
we are passing away,
passing through.
only in the comforting
stillness of the house
is some permanence found.

The question then is how our cities and buildings can meet the mythic needs of the people living in them while avoiding these destructive consequences: what sort of posture or stance toward death we should have, how open we can or should be toward death. If we are to be able to face and work through the fact of our mortality, death must be integrated into our homes, work places, and cities to a greater degree than it is now. It must become part of the community, and the rituals of mourning and reconciliation given some space within our lives.

This is not to say that all insulation from death is bad. I do not advocate living like the Capuchin monks in the church of *Santa Maria della Concezione* in Rome, who have literally built their home out of the bones of their dead brethren. In that environment in which there are no boundaries between the living and dead bodies, the monks appear, at least to the casual visitor, to have already removed themselves from life — their faces as blank and unresponsive as those of the thousands of skulls that surround them.

The symbolism of death, when used properly, should serve to make us live all the more, and so we do need to maintain some boundaries between life and death. We often need the reassurance and protection of walls. The ordering and the boundaries are not problematic per se, but can be constructed in various ways that are. We need boundaries to keep out those who would oppress us. They are a necessity for those who are weak or threatened and can be a means of empowerment. As Roland Barthes puts it, "The 'private life' is nothing but that zone of space, of time, where I am not an image, an object. It is my *political* right to be a subject which I must protect." The private, for Barthes, is a realm of a certain freedom, "the absolutely precious, inalienable site where my image is free (free to abolish itself)."¹⁸ Part of the standards used in the building of walls must include the ability of the weak to keep out the powerful, to use walls as a form of resistance.

We could not exist without boundaries, yet we can form and maintain those boundaries in vastly different ways. The boundaries can help us to come to terms with our mortality — they are one of the primary means by which we are able to do so — but can also isolate us from experiences and emotions that may be necessary for a full acceptance of mortality which would allow us to be at peace with death. This is then an argument against the extremes, at which the exclusion of death entails excluding people, experience, and maintaining the divide between powerful and weak.

There are a variety of ways in which death can be made part of our lives. They include the use of *memento mori* — reminders of death — and a blurring of boundaries between in and out, of nature and culture, self and other. Some of these forms are found in the Middle Ages, when, by necessity, death was an integral part of existence; some are found in cultures of places like Mexico, where death is celebrated and embraced; some draw on natural forms and

partake of the cycles of life and death found there. Drawing lessons from these cultures, we should not try too hard to stabilize our boundaries or homes. What is called for then is a construction of reality/body/building that does not preclude death or sorrow, that welcomes these as part of life and attempts to accept them into our daily rhythms. We need to create spaces that facilitate the state of creative tension, calling our attention to the borders, the surfaces. Such structures would blur the lines between nature and culture, partaking of the porch and the arbor. The Pantheon in Rome, with its dome's oculus open to the sky, is one example of a structure that marvelously blurs the divisions between inside and outside.

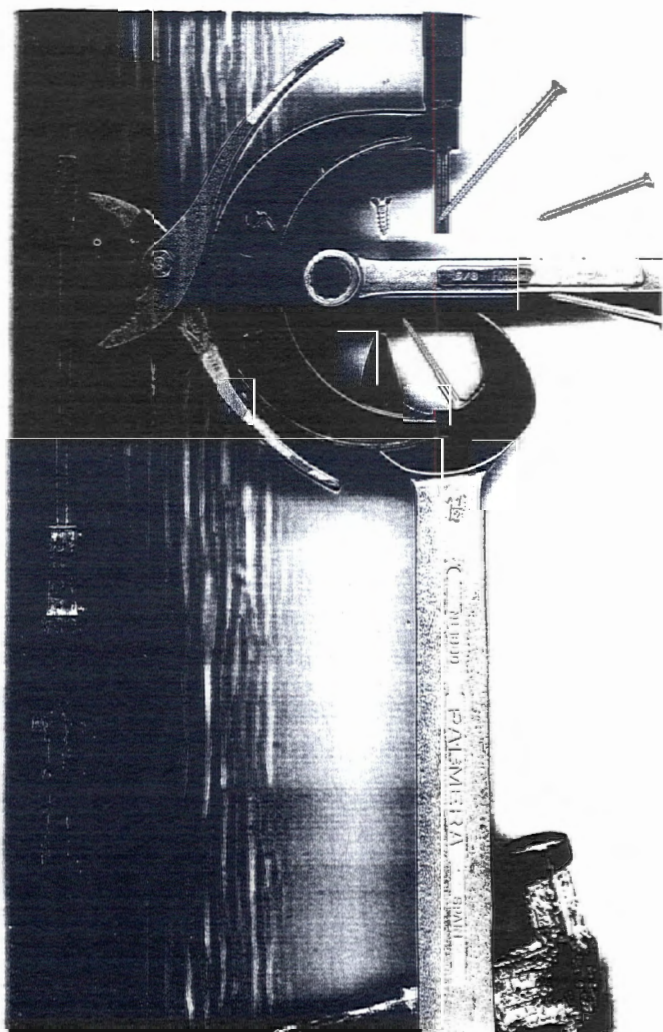
Another way to blur these lines is the incorporation of sacred places within the home — shrines to the family deities, places of memorialization. One possibility for a sacred space within the home is to create a place of immersion and darkness. I have this notion of an underwater room — a round windowless space with a thick glass ceiling which would hold a thin layer of water. It would be a place of quiet and solitude, dark and liquid, which would receive light only from the sun or moon passing through the water. In that room, one would be under water, immersed in tears. In our public spaces, the Vietnam Memorial in Washington provides us with another experience of submersion or burial — as one walks along the wall and slowly sinks down one becomes, like a corpse, below the ground. Likewise, in our cities, cemeteries could be planned as integral aspects of the communities they serve. Instead of in funeral homes, corpses could reside for a short period (as they once did) within the homes in which they lived.

By including death as part of our lives, we will become better at coming to terms with our mortality, at facing our deaths. And such preparation as well should better equip us to live, to appreciate the moment. And if we are better able to face our deaths there will be less need to try so hard to keep it out, to build these walls. The more walls we build, the less ready we are to face death, and this in turn can lead to a greater need to keep death out. So perhaps it is time to start tearing down some of these walls, however painful or unpleasant that prospect may seem. There is, after all, (only) nothing to fear.

the body gives up its cries
the heaving sea / chest
the great cries
of that wonderful, terrible sorrow
(a great gift to the mortals)
the waters flow from
eye and nose and open mouth
the cries
rising, falling, flowing
with soothing painfulness
out into the emptiness

Sports medicine clinic

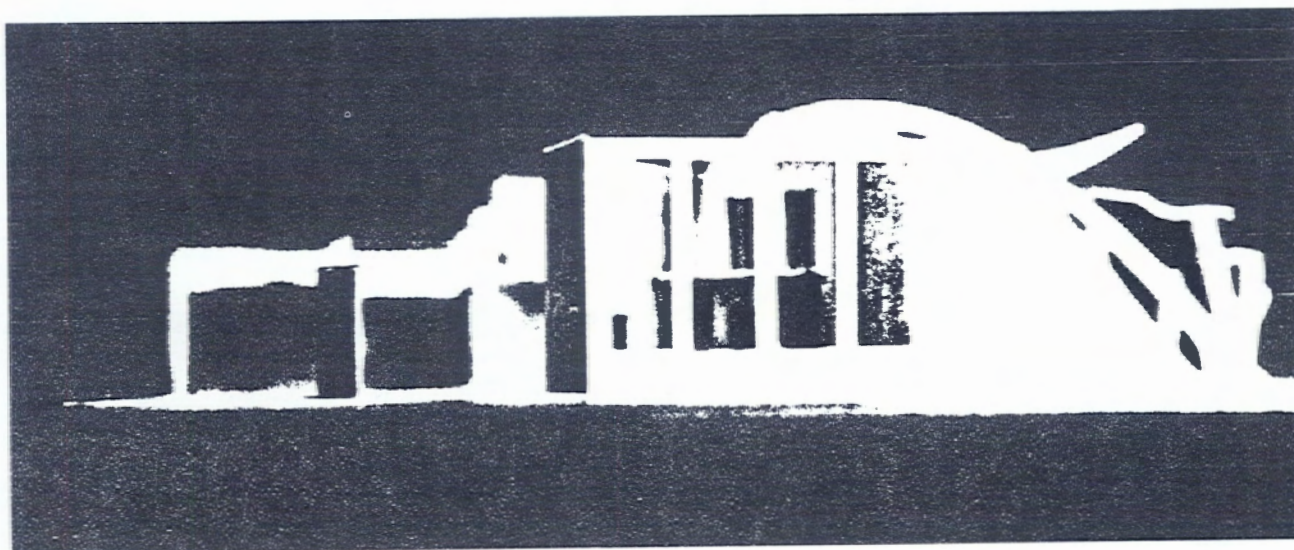
scott vyn



The design process used to create this sports medicine clinic was centered around the art of healing, the goal being to create a place where physical and mental rejuvenation could transpire. My motivation for this project came from my father, who was engaged in a healing process of his own body and subsequently, his own mind. The healing path along which he was moving was at the front of my thoughts at all times and significantly influenced most design decisions.

This frame of mind influenced the creation of the overall building form as it originated from a collage of tools. I strongly relate these tools to my father, an engineer and mechanic, as we have spent years working with them. This equipment is used for an inherent additive process, similar to that of architecture, which links to the additive healing process engaged in by my family.

The orientation, rhythm, and expression of the building are

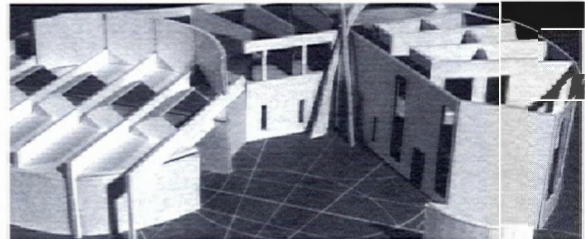
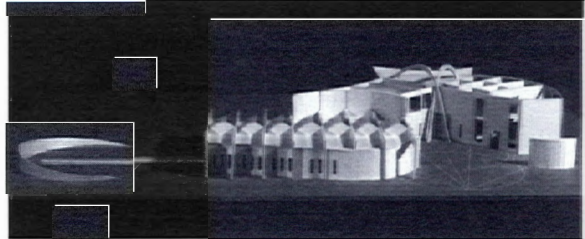
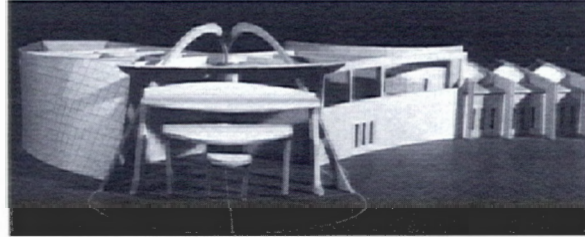


completely motivated by place. This place is Lake Michigan, where I spent much time with my family. An awareness of the extreme energy and the relationship one can feel with this body of water, while inhabiting the place it creates as it connects to the land, is a goal of the clinic. If realized, this awareness will allow for a patient to tap into the natural energy of the Lake and use it to recover.

With my father in mind, I designed for the patient's fears, aspirations, and comfort. The first section of the building houses the diagnostic spaces of the clinic, including six examining rooms. This area mimics the rhythmic waves of Lake Michigan and sets the stage for the repetitive healing process one is about to undertake upon admission to the clinic. Repetitive use of structure and light send the patient's view out of the building over a pool of water to a single focal point. A calmed, focused attention is needed at this stage of recovery. The second area of the building deals with the therapeutic aspect of the clinic. A large physical therapy room expresses a new structural form as it shoots the attention of the patient directly at the vital Lake. It is this place where the patient will find health.

We live in succession,
in division, in parts, in particles.
Meantime within man is the soul of the whole;
the wise silence; the universal beauty,
to which every part and particle
is equally related; the eternal ONE.
And this deep power in which we exist
and whose beatitude is all accessible to us,
is not only self-sufficing and perfect in every hour,
but the act of seeing and the thing seen,
the seer and the spectacle,
the subject and the object,
are one.

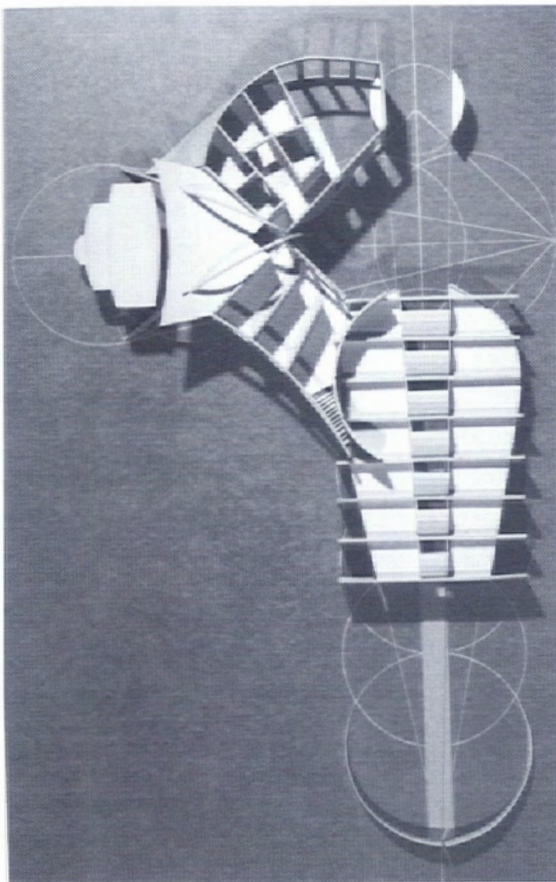
Ralph Waldo Emerson,
"The Over-Soul," *Selected Essays*
(New York: Viking Penguin, 1985).



The voice of the sea is seductive; never ceasing, whispering, clamoring, murmuring; inviting the soul to wander for a spell in abysses of solitude; to lose itself in mazes of inward contemplation.

The voice of the sea speaks to the soul. The touch of the sea is sensuous, enfolding the body in soft, close embrace.

Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*
(Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1993).

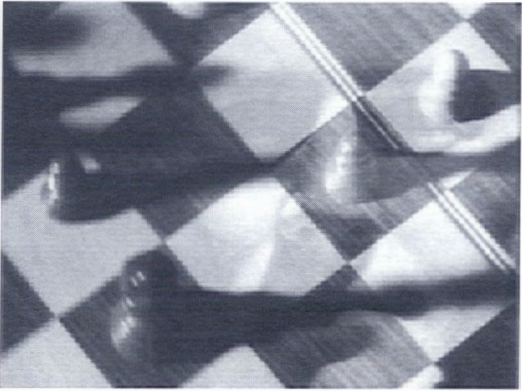
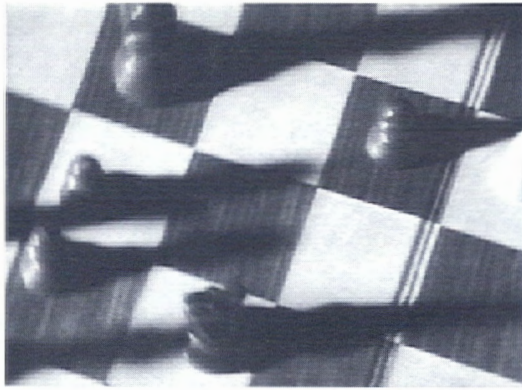


Narcissus Embrace

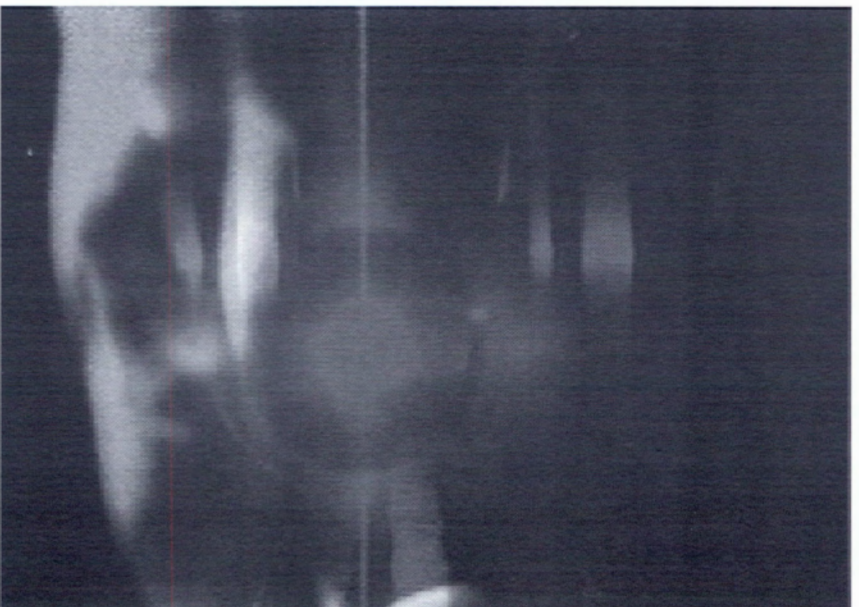
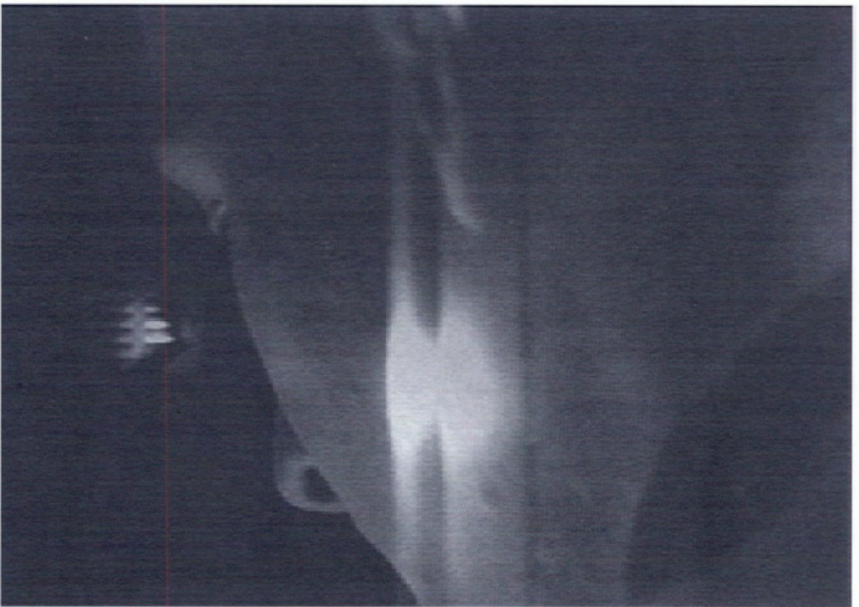
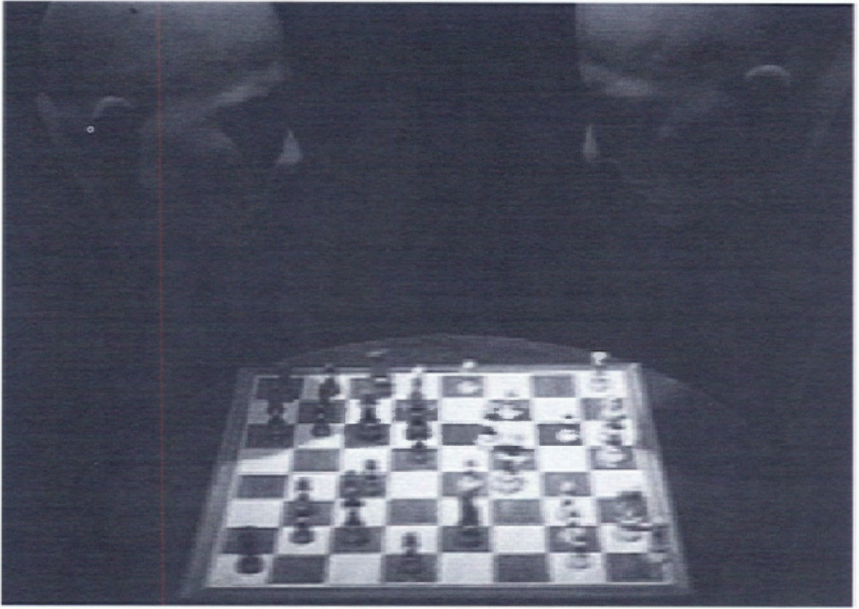
ryan wolfe

with catherine chang and kostas stratigos

The Narcissus Embrace creates an image of an individual's duality in relation to himself, and describes how oftentimes we can find ourselves locked in a contest of will and desire with our own personality. An individual's personal attributes — those defining and verbally tangible aspects of his own personality — are utilized as a symbolic language of the self with which each person constructs and codifies his own notion of identity. Sometimes, however, the various identifying attributes produce a discordance within the behavior, or the discrepancy between desired attributes and perceived ones. Either way, the result is the same — intellectual cacophony and conflicting thoughts, the experience of disharmony due to this inherent dichotomy of the personality. In the piece there is great emphasis on the figure in space, the body as the vessel through which our thoughts and emotions become kinetically transformed into actions and reactions, the will of the mind concretized in the substantive world around us.



Shot and edited in SVHS video format.
Total running time: 5 minutes.





interactive architecture

theodore touloukian

"Muscle City"

Site

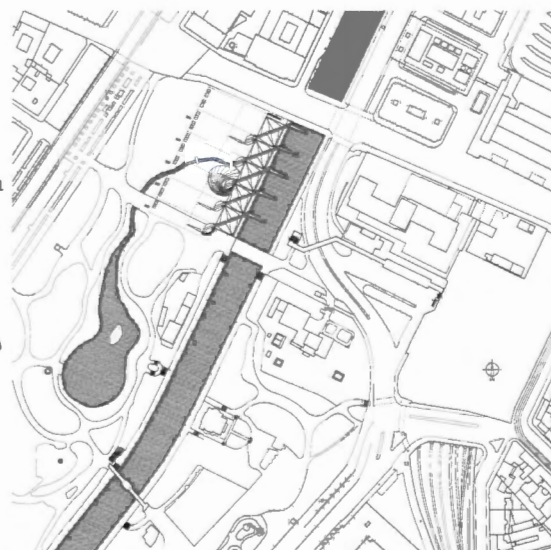
The area bordering the Stadtpark and the Vienna River in Vienna, Austria.

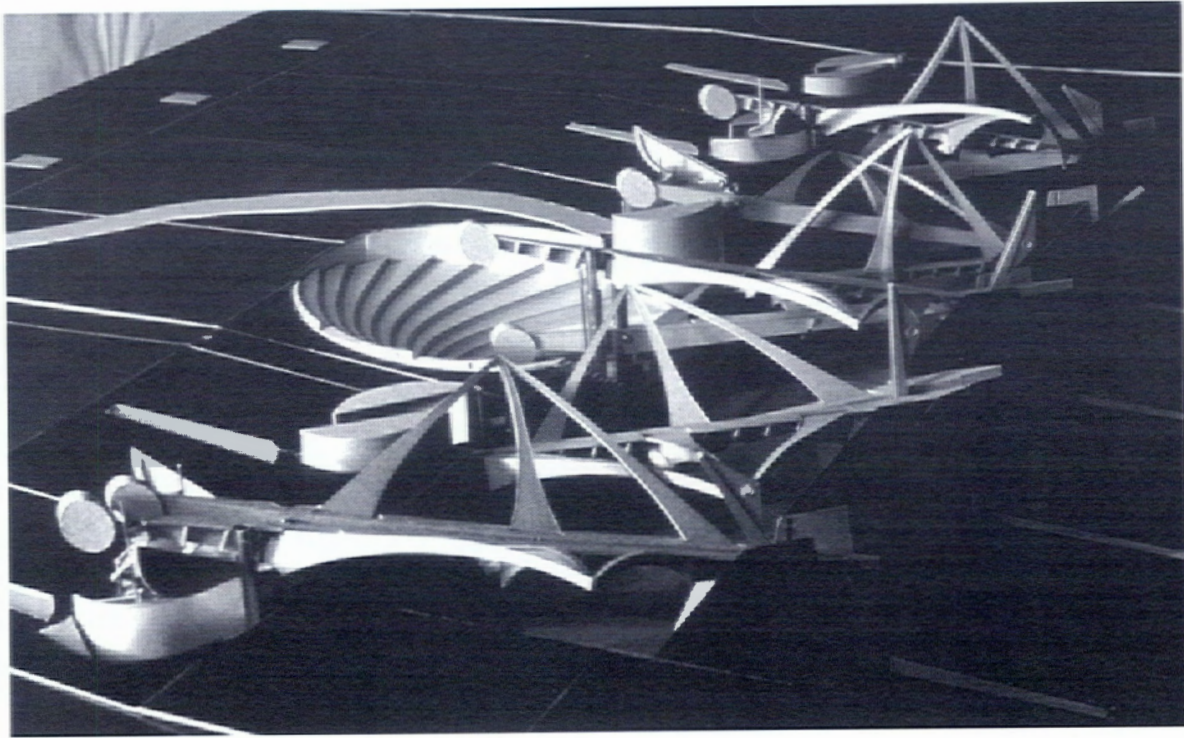
Program

An alternative dance club and athletic facility.

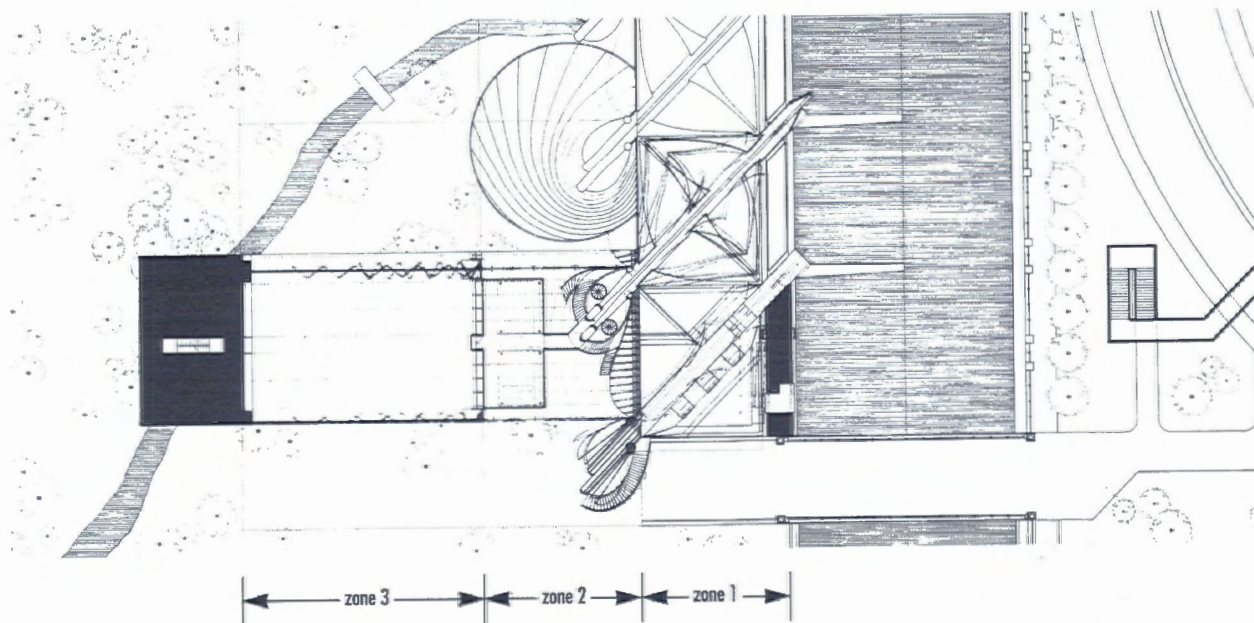
Solution

Situated on the Ringstrasse, the Stadtpark lies within an active section of the city — filled with banks, schools, hotels and apartment flats; automobile and pedestrian roads, underground trains and their respective stations. Bisecting all of this with a discrete void is the Vienna River. An alternative dance club and athletic facility was designed to house a sub-culture to its surroundings and therefore be provocative to the park's original aristocratic Viennese standards.

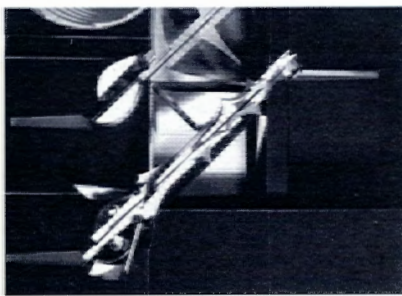
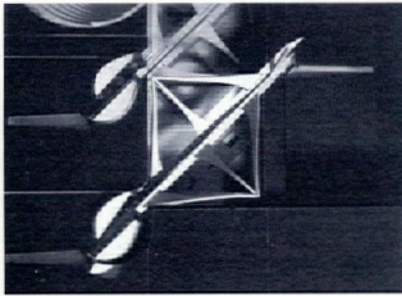
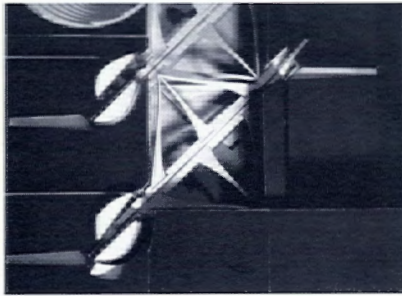
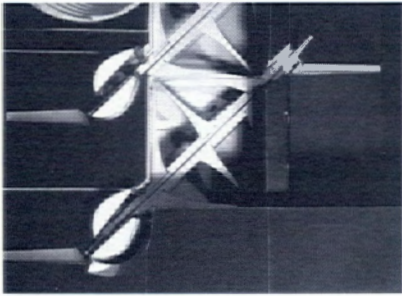




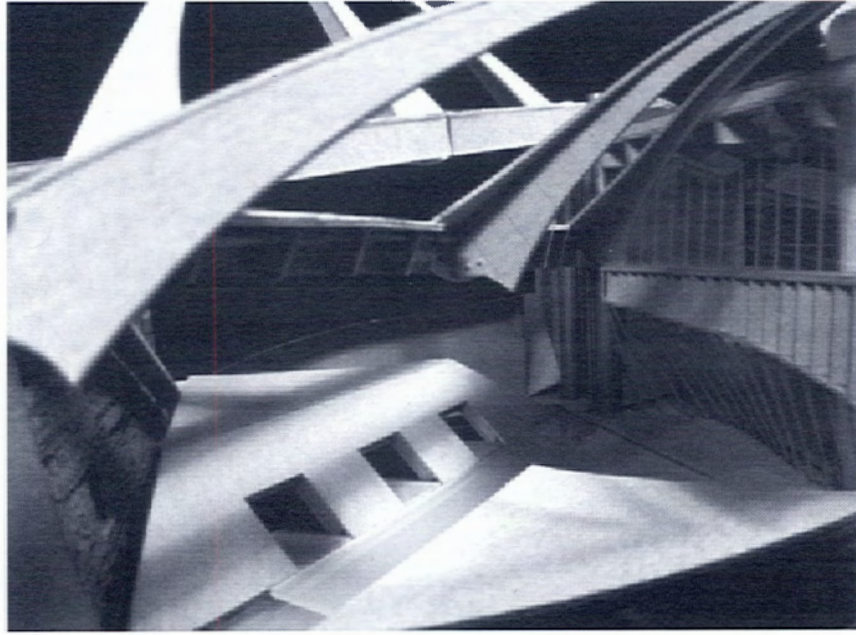
The facility is organized around five independently operating linear bays running perpendicular to the river and three zones running parallel to it. Throughout the facility a floor mechanism receives pressure from the direct impact of dancing or “clubbing,” aerobics, basketball and other active events. Within each bay, these activities generate energy to transform the architecture in direct proportion to their intensity. The facility is an interactive device and heuristic gauge measuring the participants’ energy output and continuously designs architecture which is kinetic and varying. A general description of the architectural movement of a typical bay is as follows:



plan of theatre and typical bay

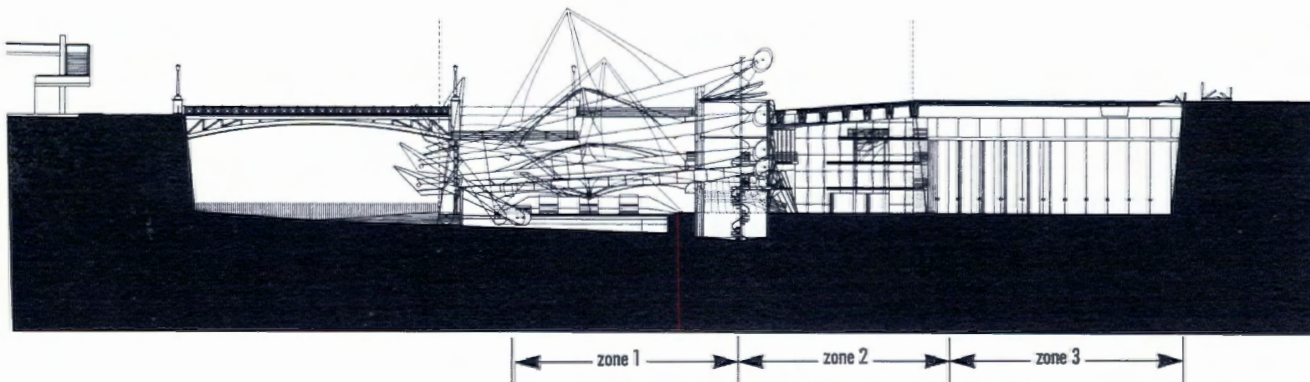


plan of typical bay

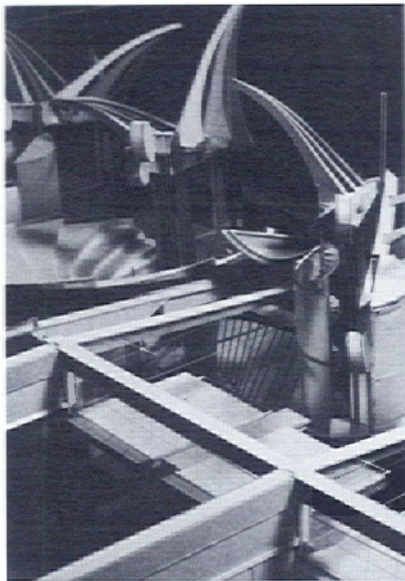


The first zone, carved out behind the river's west retaining wall between two bridges over the Vienna River, is architecturally the most "hyper" expression of the participants' activities. These bridges act as bookends embracing the five pairs of moveable triangular roofs, or structural "wings." As the activities and subsequent energy levels increase, the roof structures hydraulically elevate into an assortment of extensions that deconstruct the ground plane they contextually resembled when closed. However, the facility's response is not limited to sculptural enhancement, it also catalyzes a functional response: energy levels increase because there are more people and therefore the subsequent need for more space. This engages new spaces, places, and events previously inaccessible at lower output levels.

Responding to the moving roof system, floors open and unfold new spaces, walkways ascend the river's retaining wall to engage new openings, and at maximum extension a ramp connects to the top platform of the retaining wall. As these structures and their secondary elements activate, a gate connected to the roof's central support post opens between retaining walls to circulate water and produce hydroelectric energy. At full river and participant intensity, the roof structures' movements are slow and controlled and reach full extension in a two to three hour duration.



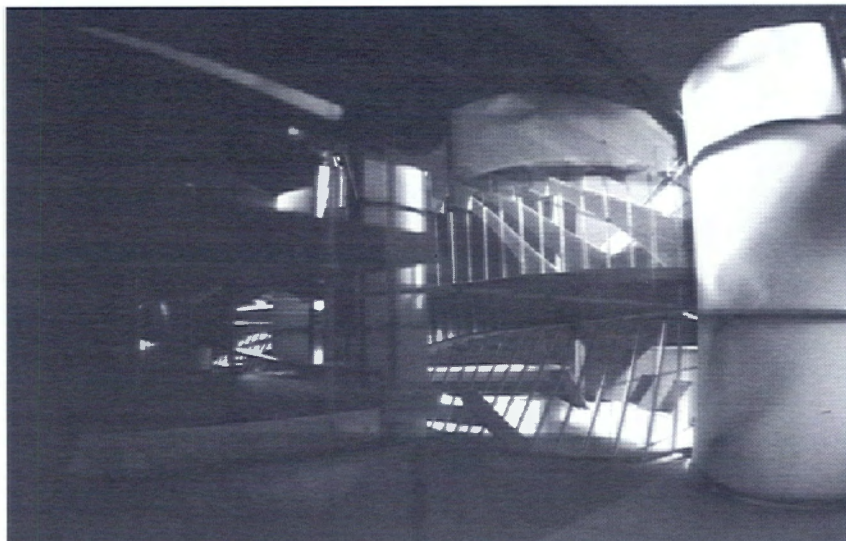
section of theatre and typical bay



bay with roof removed



zone 1:
structures, platforms, and retaining wall with video screen.



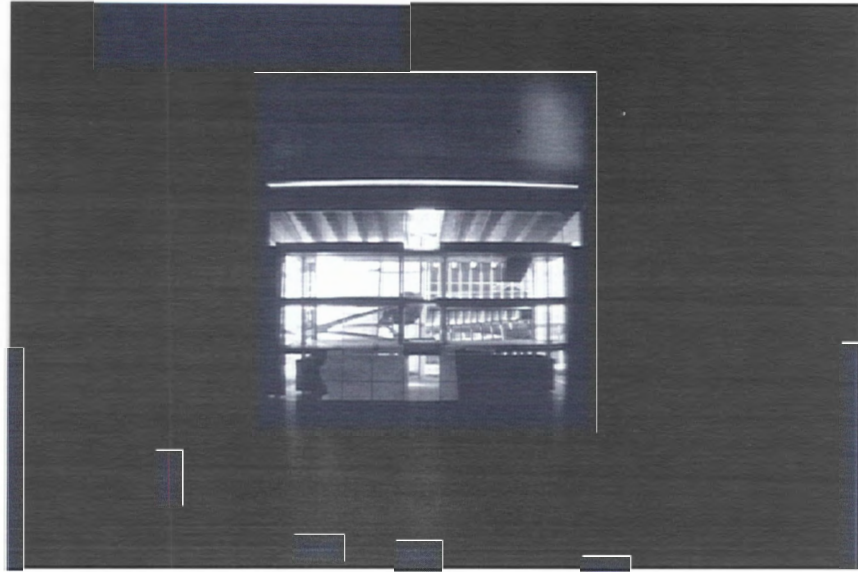
zone 2: interior



section of typical bay

The second zone is architecturally less hyper than the first zone. As the roof structures change their position, their counterweights equally rise and descend into a silo which is essentially the core of each bay. As this movement occurs, the silo's semitranslucent sheathing is stretched to signify the stages of the interactive process and the energy level exerted in the facility. An interactive material as well, the sheathing absorbs ultraviolet rays and glows at night with the same intensity as the preceding daylight.

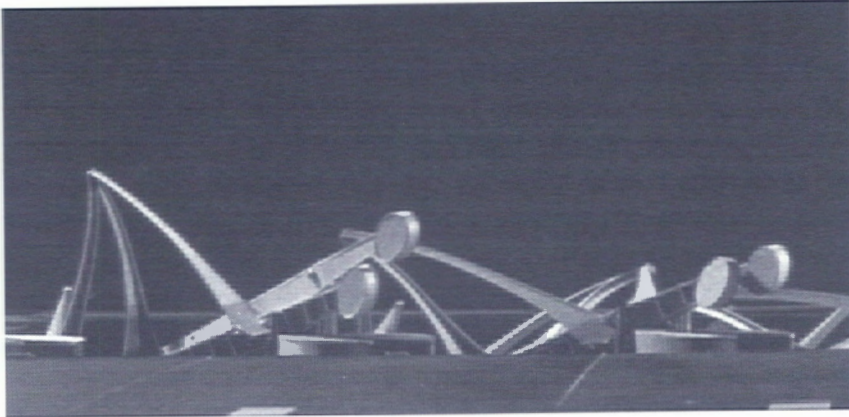
Inside the silo a circular stairway hydraulically rises with the roof structures to allow access to the respective interior levels. At peak output, the stair and counterweight push and open the silo's roof to allow access to and from the park. Ascending and descending through it, participants move between the mechanical equipment which converts and stores energy to exemplify how and where the energy is created and to signify the equality between the power in people and the power in machinery. Behind the silo and bordering the third zone are four floors: on the first level are lockers, bathrooms, and a reception area; the top three levels are flexible open space platforms where direct impact events "stage" the production of energy and the transformation of the facility.



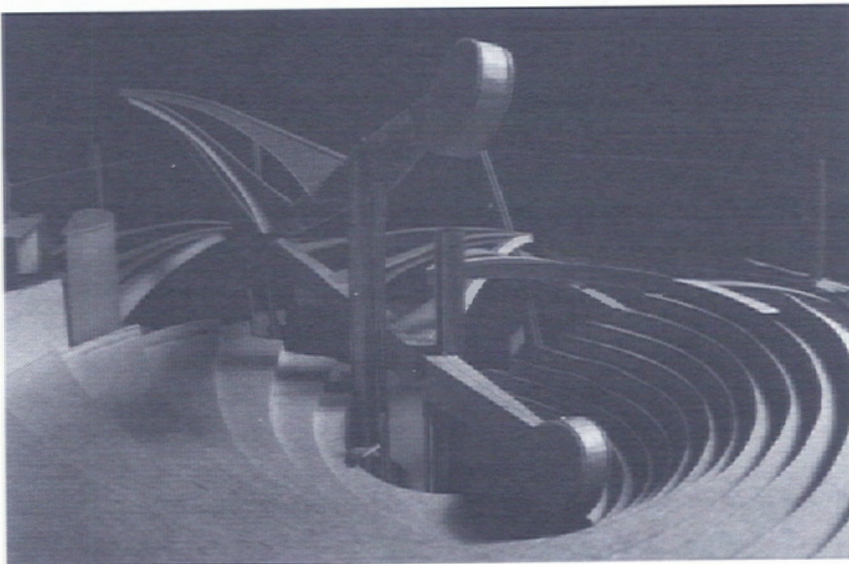
zone 3: gymnasium interior, looking through facility

The third zone is the least architecturally active and is essentially a gymnasium that can support many different events. Its spatial quality is a void that in plan and section balances the void made by the river cutting through the city. A retractable wall partition can be opened to allow access across all five bays for the cross programming of larger events. Skylights above and along the far west wall open and close in relation to the activity and energy levels in the gymnasium to produce a varied light effect reflecting off the back wall. Visible to those traversing the park, the skylights' small movements signify a larger one to come.

Superimposed on these five bays is an outdoor theater allowing access to and from the facility and park. The theater allows participants to watch the transforming facility as the event itself. A node interacting with the dynamic functions it contains; the project is also complimentary to the stoic, complacent physical context of the park. The graceful extension of roof structures mimic the gentle swaying and placement of trees in the park as they call attention to the building underneath. The architecture of the dance club and athletic facility is something to be experienced both actively through participation, and passively through observation. Constantly in motion and never the same, it ephemerally exists on a multiple of levels succeeding to represent each moment in time.



view from the park



theater

Interactive Theater

Site

The area adjacent to the Broadway Park, Broadway Bridge, and Huron River in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

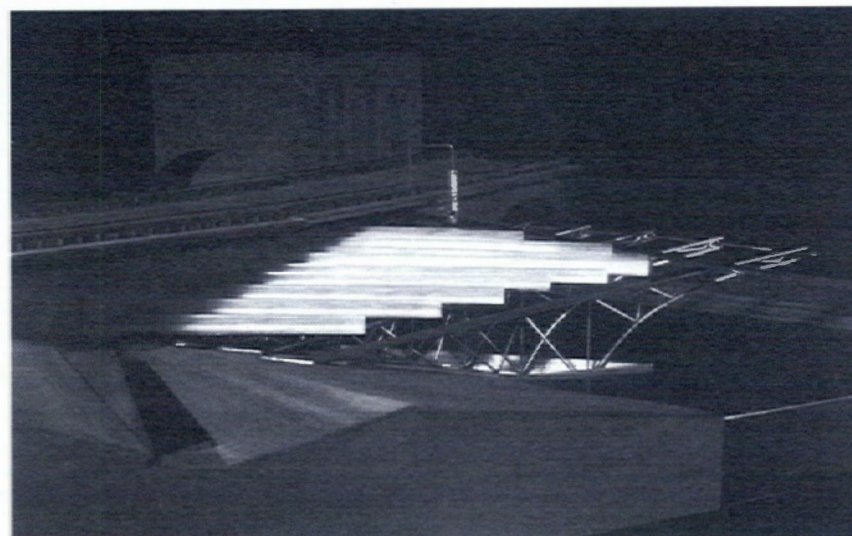
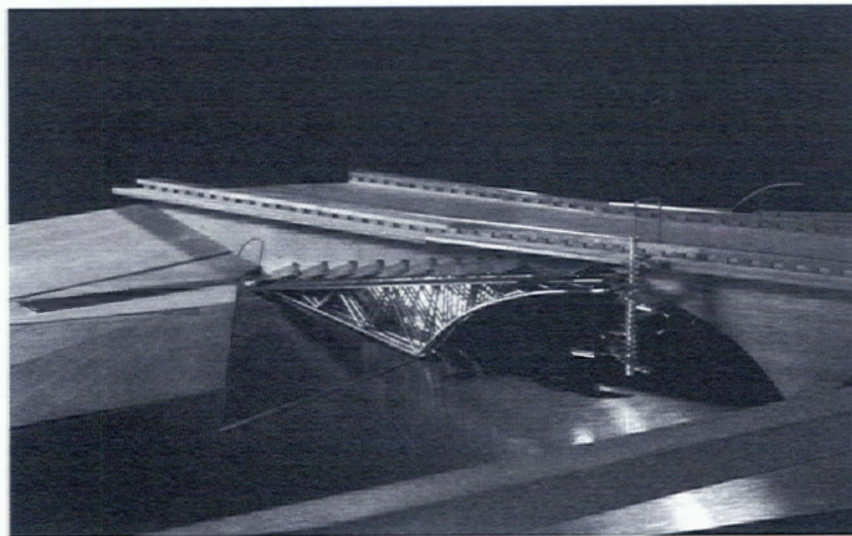
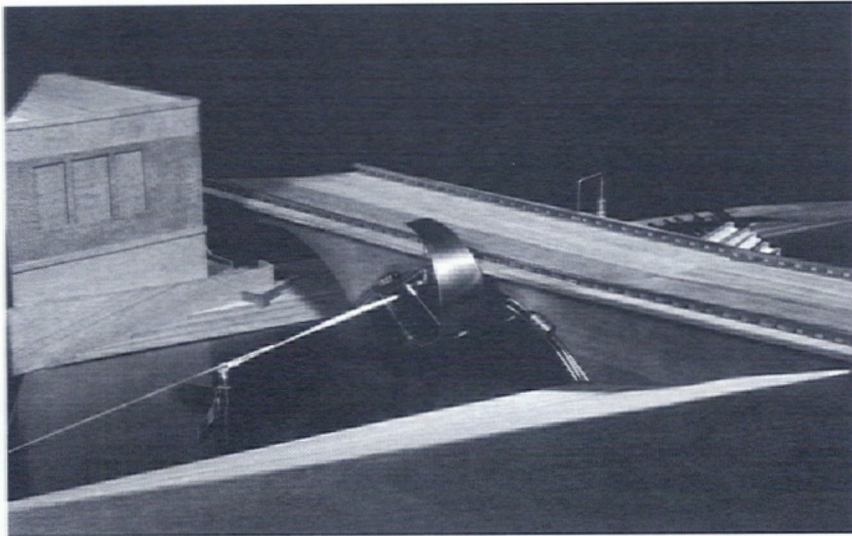
Program

An outdoor audio and visual theater, a safe walkway across the highway, and direct access to and from the park and the bridge's pedestrian walkway.

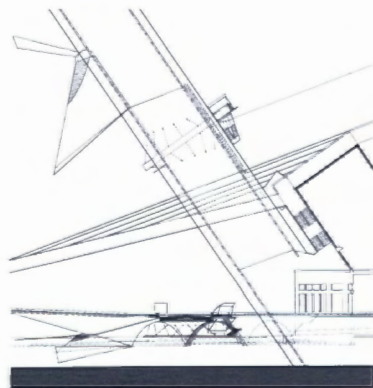
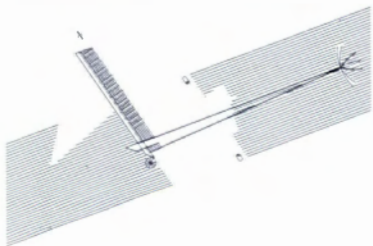
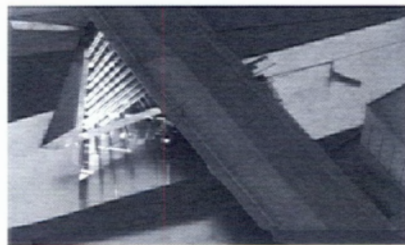
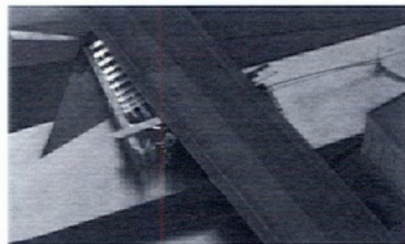
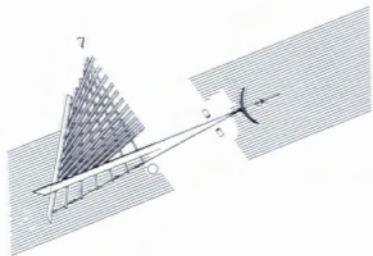
Solution

The site contains overlapping artificial and natural axes. The traffic flow on the bridge's four-lane, east-west highway varies during the day with an assortment of automobiles, trucks and buses moving freely and at a standstill. Below the bridge, the river's north-south flow fluctuates daily in response to the water released from a dam upstream, whose output is dependent upon seasonal and climatic changes. The theater interacts with and measures the two axes' fluctuating forces to create architecture that is kinetic and varying in its presentation.





juxtaposition



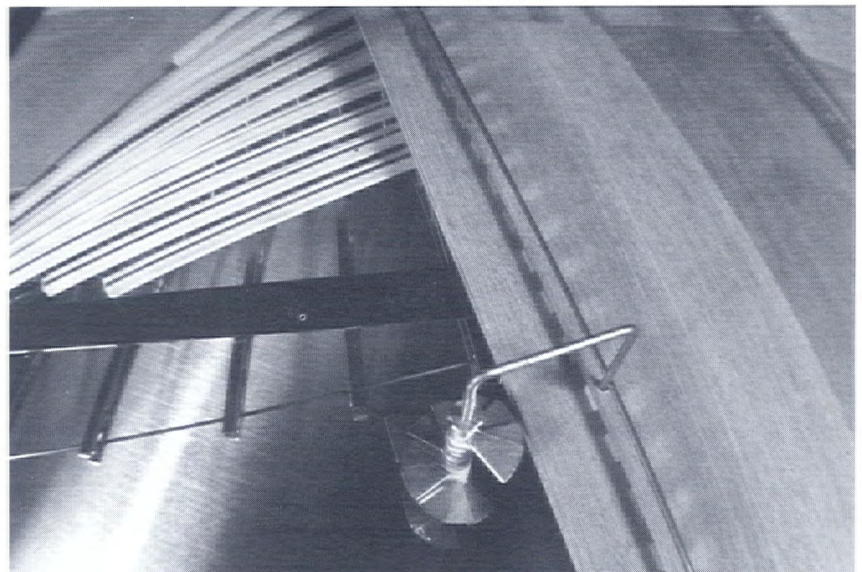
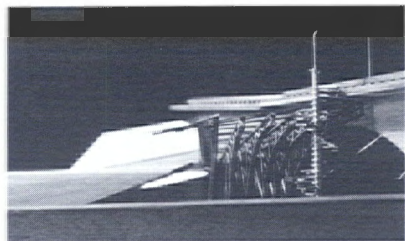
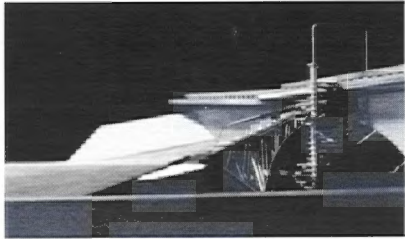
plan and section

plan

The mechanism or gage that drives the theater is a water plow located upstream and on the northern side of the bridge. As the river's lateral force increases, the plow is forced downstream and rises along an inclined cable to directly and proportionally open the theater's seven structural trusses, ten rows of platform seating, and a retractable walkway.

As the theater opens, the lead truss and walkway, which are both directly connected to the water plow, continuously align and link the seating platforms to be pulled away from compartments under the road. As the river's force decreases, the gravity from the plow's weight and a counterweight lower and pull the plow back into the water to directly and proportionally close the theater. The theater is mechanically balanced, timed, and moves along tracks in a controlled manner.

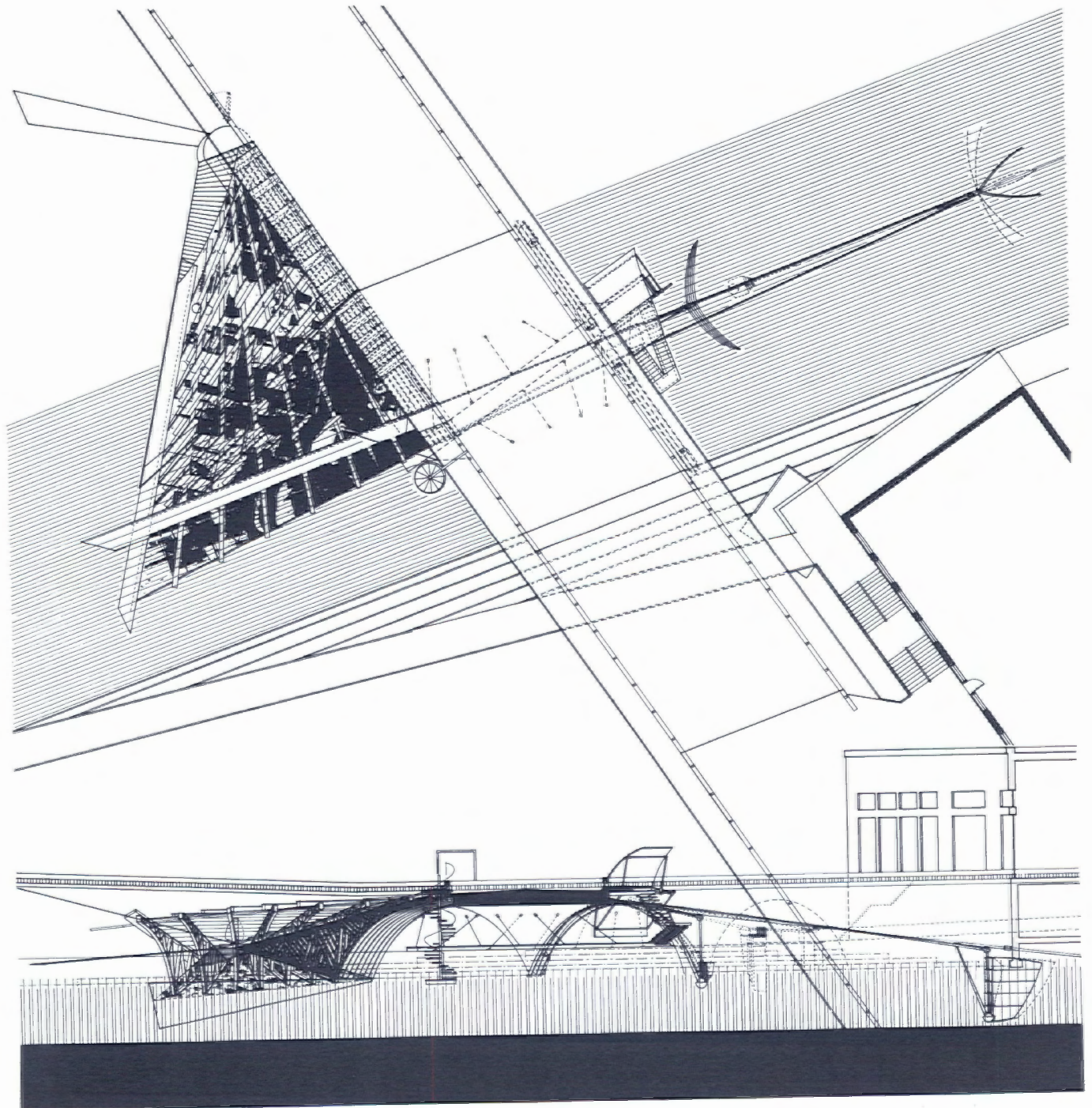
This interactive process is also functional in its specific use as an outdoor theater appropriate for seasonal and climatic conditions. Consistently, the river's force is most intense in the spring when people begin venturing into the park, least intense in the winter when the park is less populated, and irregular during the summer and fall. The theater's size can also be adjusted by opening and closing the water plow to resist more or less river flow, or raising the plow completely out of the water to immobilize the theater.

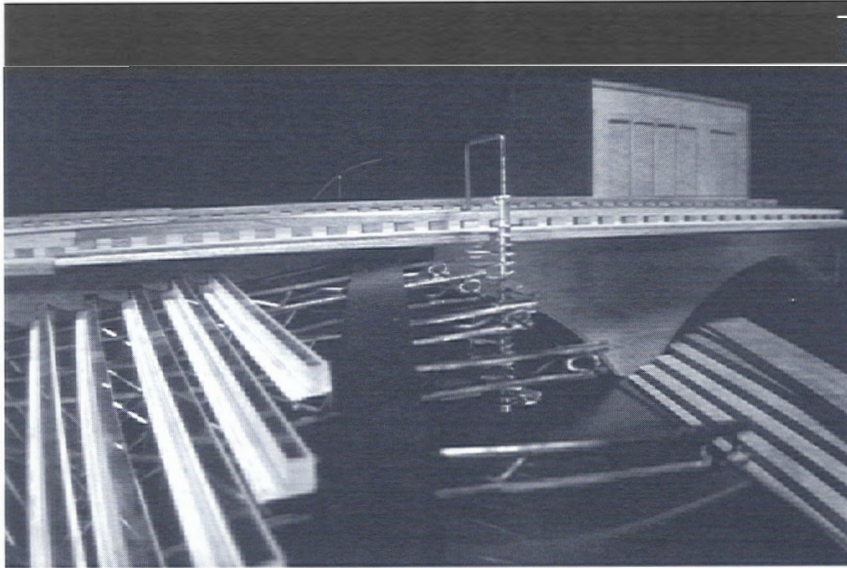


Throughout this process the trusses and the seating create an overlapping grid nestled in the southwest quadrant of the two axes. As the trusses fan open, they deny the axis of the arch and align perpendicularly to the axis of the bridge and parallel to the suspended walkway. Mimicking the arch of the bridge, the trusses create a rhythm deconstructing the context. Similarly, the seating platforms glide level along the top chord of the six inner trusses as they change their angles like a fan gradually opening and closing to face the park. As these two systems fan and overlay they stray from a pivot marking the process and its initial point of rest. As the lateral force of the river fluctuates, its vertical force fluctuates as well to rotate a circular stair up and down along a threaded post suspended from the bridge. The stair connects two platforms which allow access underneath the highway.

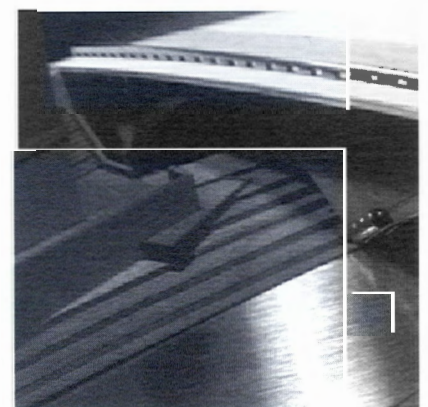
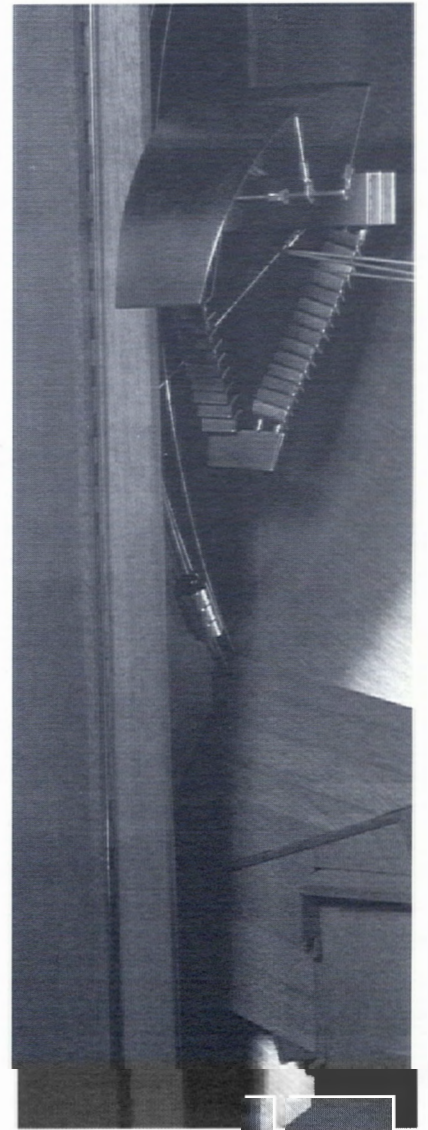
At the same time that the theater expresses a force through physical movement it also expresses a force through image and sound. As the theater's size vacillates, the fanning action of the individual seating platforms space wide enough to allow viewing below where a video of selected images of Ann Arbor project onto the multiple textures of the river and the pristine characteristics of the platform. Interacting with the fluctuating force of the highway, computer sensors and receptive lasers digitally encode the weight, speed and size of the vehicles and convert this data into computer processed sound. Like a player piano translates a key punch code, the theater's computer model translates the highway data. In essence, the traffic composes and produces a constantly changing and unpredictable score of music.

composite of four drawings





Situated along the east side of the river, immobile concrete tiers sit in juxtaposition to the main theater which dynamically interacts with the fluctuating forces of the river and the highway. As an adjustable theater and modern media communicator, the theater captures each moment in time as the event in itself worthy of participation and witness. By interfacing the dynamic and fluctuating forces of our natural and artificial environs, the architecture no longer resists but cooperates with its surroundings: a soft machine coupling with elements often ignored and unrepresented in the design process. As our natural resources deplete, it is increasingly important to recycle passive and varying energy sources, and as our culture becomes more computerized, interactively and visually ephemeral, it is not only interesting, but also necessary to invent new design alternatives that express these qualities in our architecture.



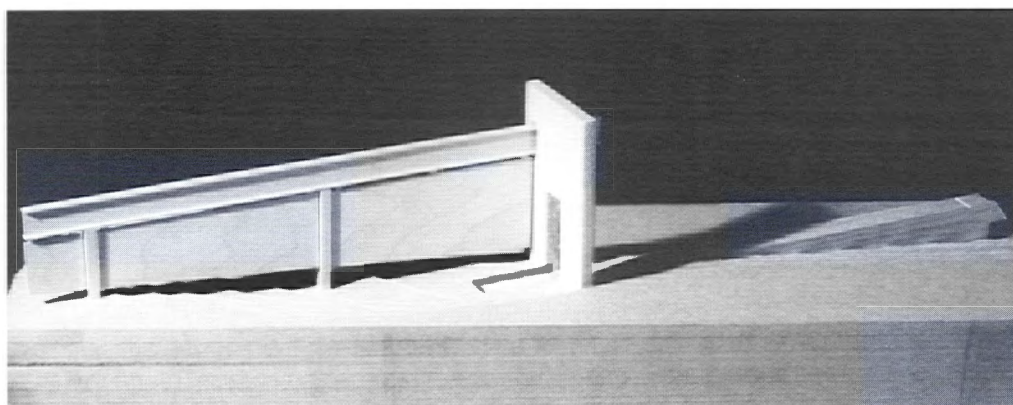
The logo consists of a large, stylized, grey letter 'S' that is partially enclosed by a thin, grey, curved line that loops around its left and bottom sides.

site wall

william trustow

This project is about a wall as a transition between environments. This wall is a barrier between the pressures of an urban condition one leaves behind and a natural landscape that lies ahead down a hillside. To accomplish this, the wall is divided into three sections, each section adopting the characteristic of the role it plays in the entire experience: protection, threshold, and a source of contemplation. The first and third sections form an axis running across the slope of the hill, while the center section forms a threshold that lies perpendicular to the others.

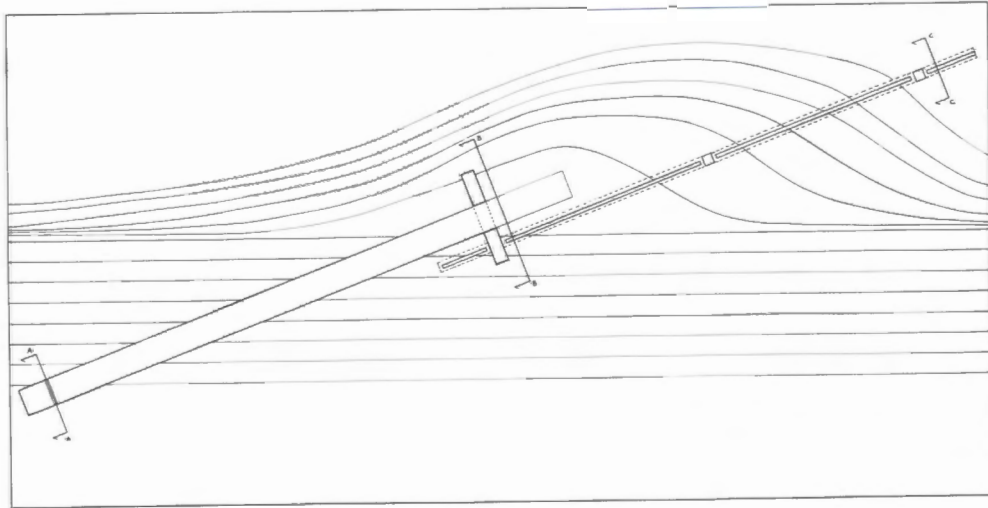
As the site is approached from the urban condition, the first two sections of the wall are visible. The first is recognized through its reflection of the urban form. A steel I-beam is supported by two square steel columns. From this beam, thin stone panels hang down, held up slightly from the ground and away from the columns next to them. As one reaches the upper end of the wall, they are given a view down its entire length to the third section reaching through an opening in the cross-axis section as it disappears into the ground.



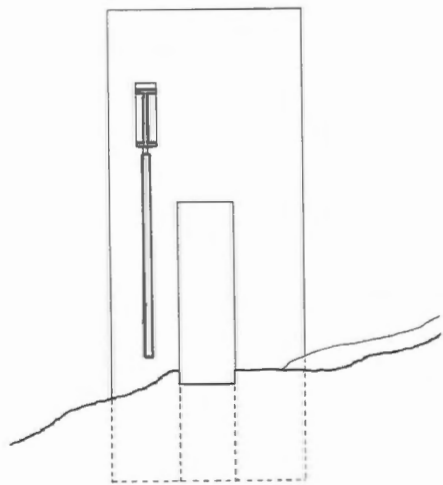
The sloped ground encourages one to walk alongside the wall as they move towards the opening. Beginning at shoulder height, the I-beam remains parallel to the horizon, providing a reference line for one to measure their descent, while the light around each panel reassures them of the space on the other side.

The threshold itself is a large block of dark stone lying perpendicular to the main direction of the wall. This otherwise unbroken form is pierced only by the other two wall segments. The I-beam continues through the block overhead and supports one last panel on the other side. The opening allowing the visitor to move through to the third section is narrow, compressing the visitor as they pass through the thickness of the stone.

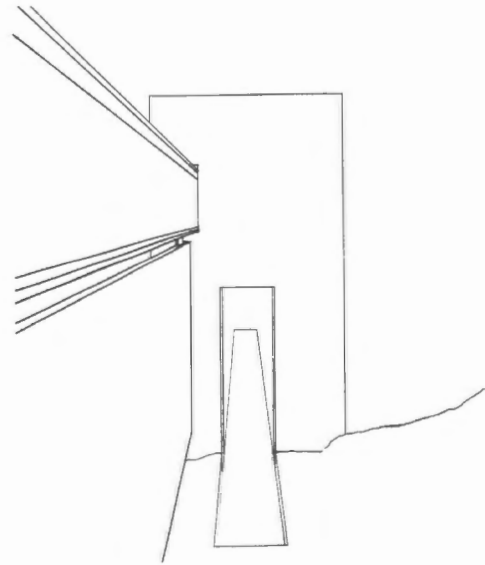
To pass through the opening, one must step down and walk on top of the wall. This section is built from field stone, laid without mortar. It is from the natural environment and extends out towards the horizons as it grows up out of the ground. Continuing out on the top of the wall, one discovers a small gap in the top layer of stones near the very end of the wall. These remaining stones in the top layer form a small square, standing on this square one is held above the ground, overlooking their surroundings with the entire wall behind them.



site plan



section

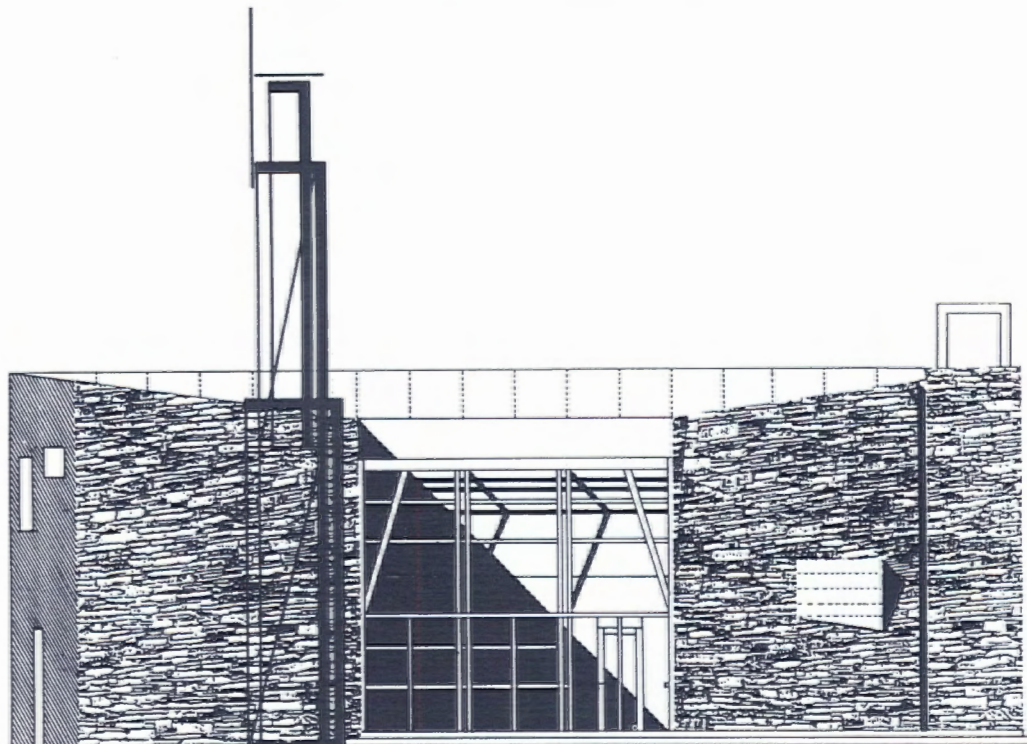


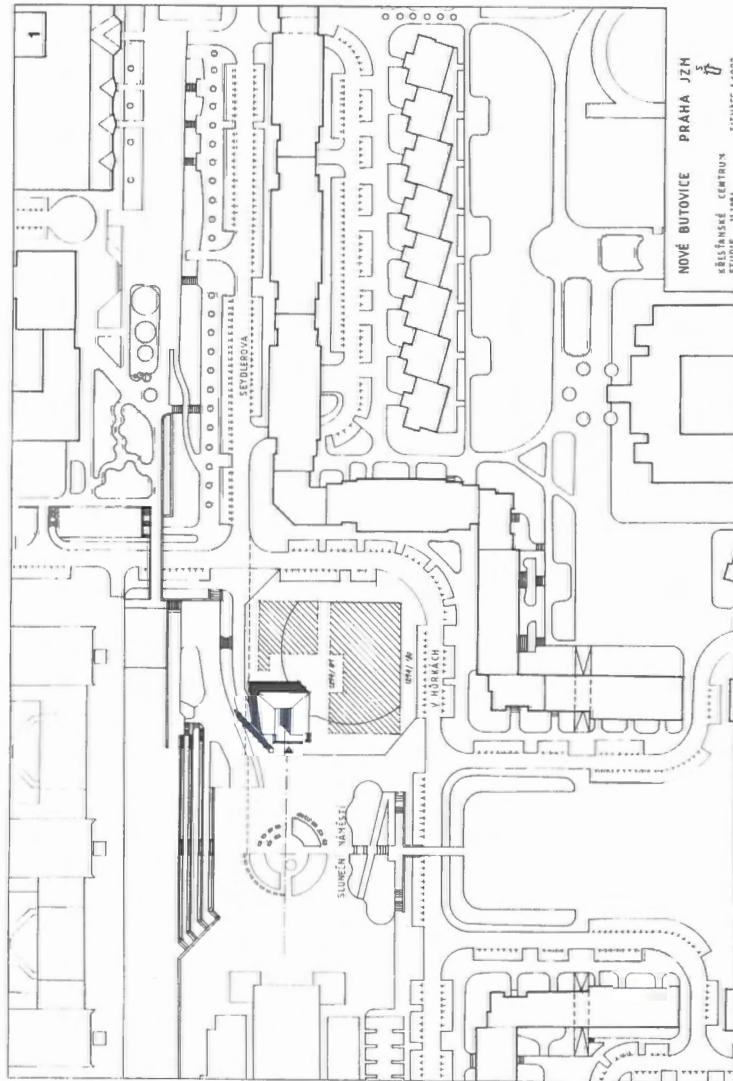
perspective

A small chapel in prague

vladimir kratky

This small chapel and community center is a modest, yet powerful effort to build a shared sense of place among the residents of a housing complex in Butovice, Prague. The minimalist forms and simple geometries combined with the use of unrefined stone as a construction material, give the chapel a personal feeling. It seems to be a hand-crafted object in the space between the mass-produced apartment buildings typical of Prague.

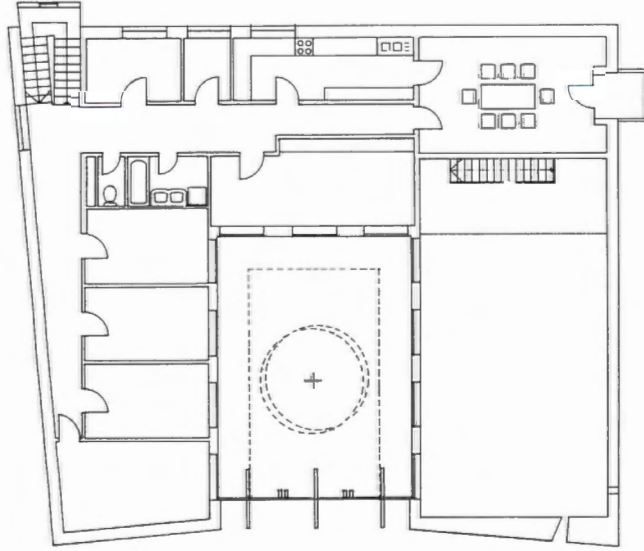




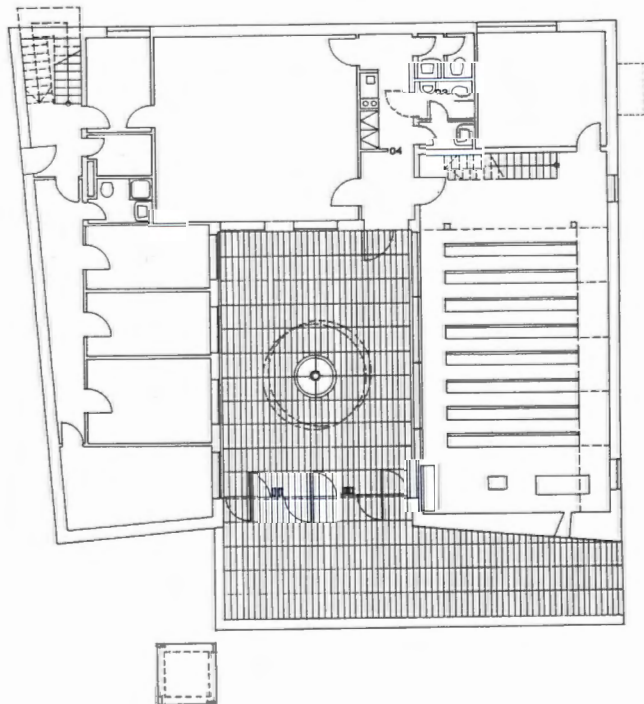
site plan



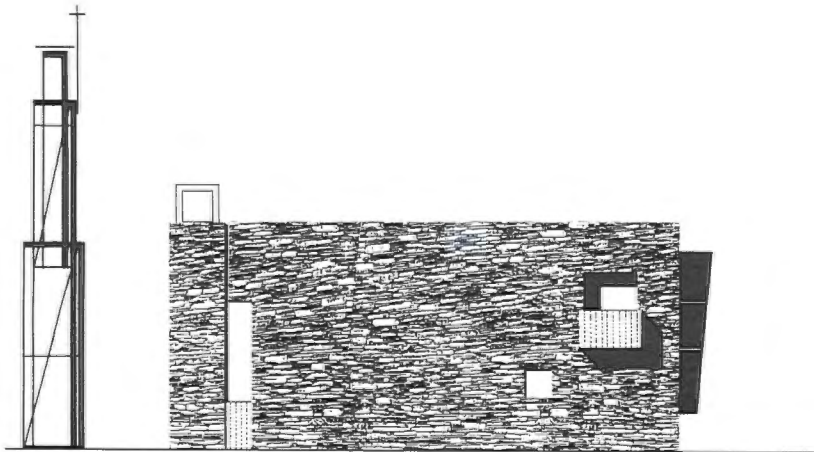
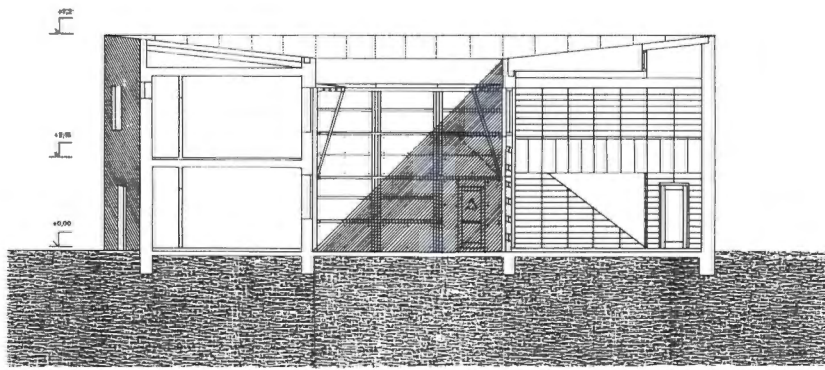
site



first floor



ground floor



House 18 '94

frank yang

Agenda

Create a response to television as an agent of culture and how its social and cultural impact can be manifested in a habitable dwelling.

Discourse 1

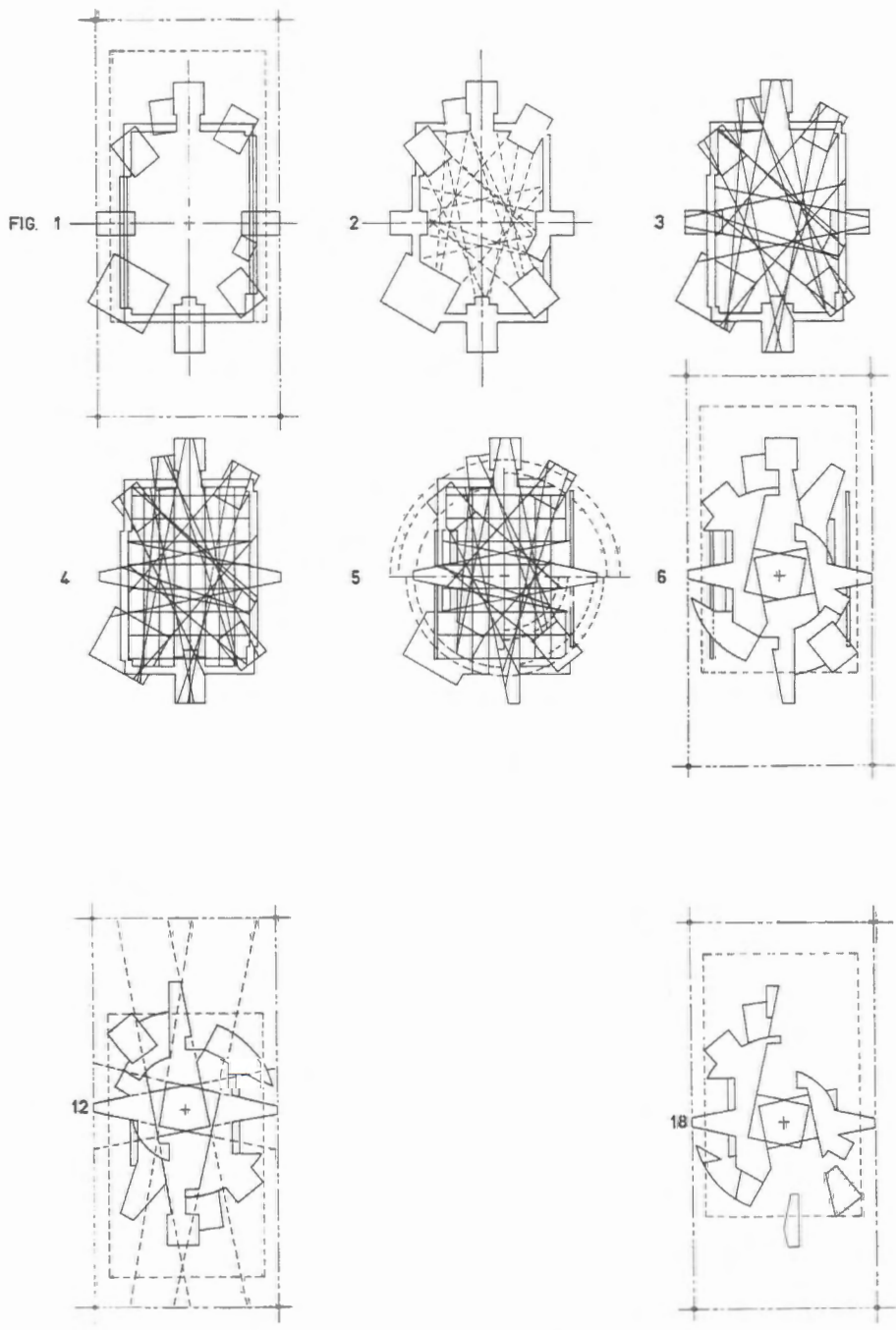
A series of discourses emerges to grasp the symbolic and literal implications of television and a step beyond telecommunication that can bring an understanding of our post-industrial age. The emerging society of the coming century no longer depends on the manufacturing capacity traditionally required to achieve domination. We are no longer living in the Machine Age. We are in the Age of Information, the so-called "New World Order," where the "old rules" no longer apply and power is not based on who "controls the spice" but "who controls communication." We have transcended materiality.

Discourse 2

Television saturates our lives and reflects a vision of fragmentation on a global scale. "Individuality" is now our cultural identity, where the self-ego has prevailed over the collective consciousness. This is evident in the decentralization of our societies, from the collapse of the Soviet Union to the breakdown of the nuclear family. Television is only a reflection of its creator: ourselves.

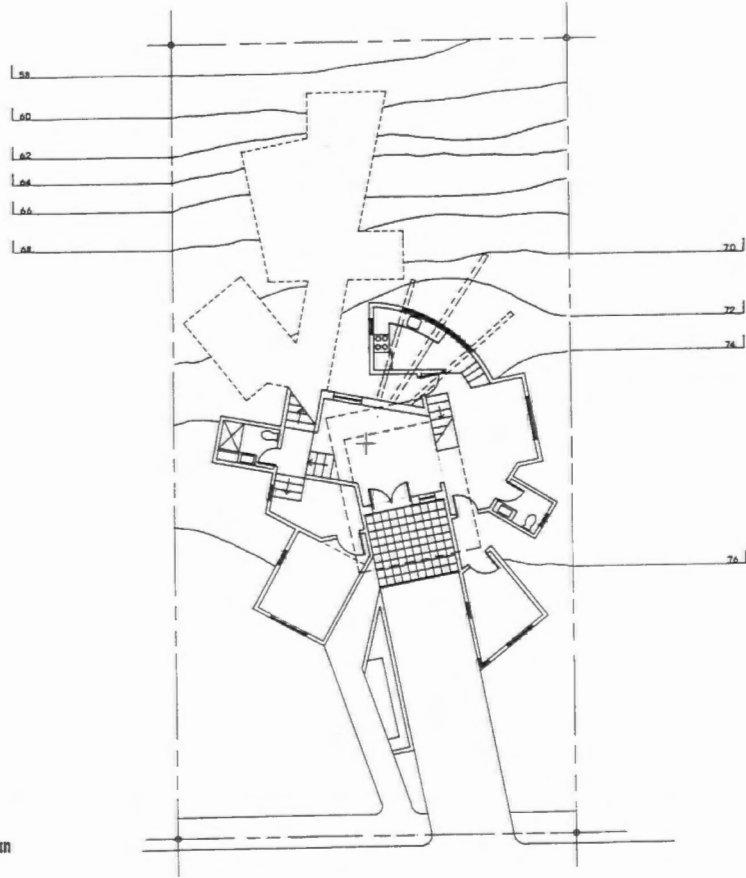
Process

The analysis in diagrammatic form investigates the potential of viewers to transform their fantasies from a two-dimensional screen to a three-dimensional stage set. The process explores the different elements of a typical television studio. The elements include the 4' x 6' stage platform, the camera's location and arc of view, the lens angle, and the various lighting components, which all contribute to the metamorphosis of the fantasy.

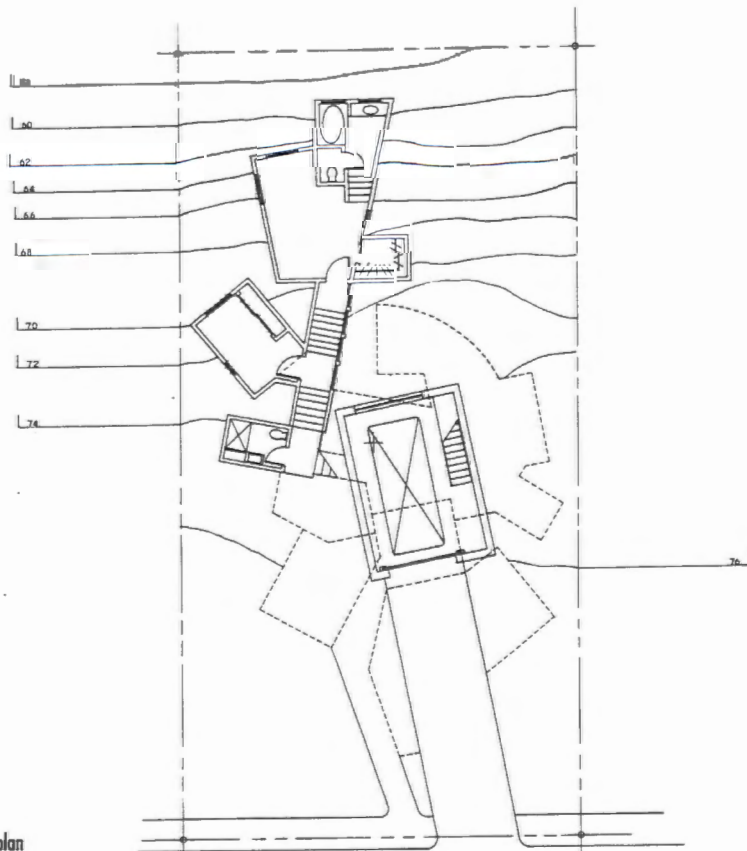


Figures 1–6 incorporate the studio elements within a sequence of accumulation, where figure 6 digests and abstracts the elements. Figure 18 is where fantasy stops and reality, in the form of architecture, is materialized: Televisional dwelling.

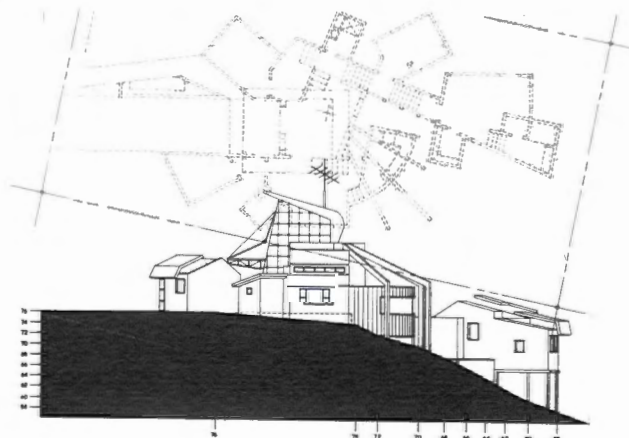
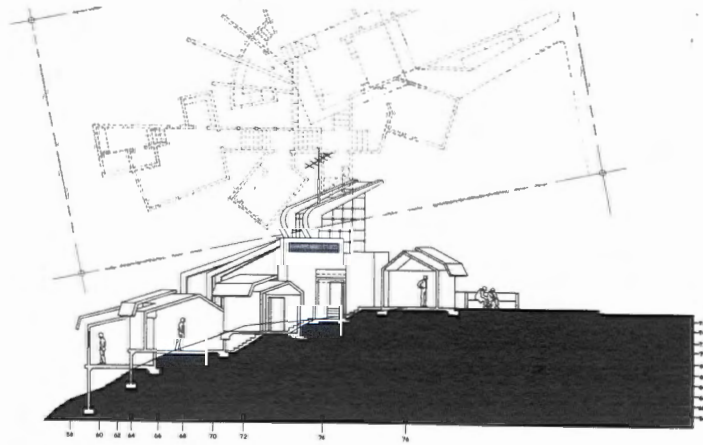
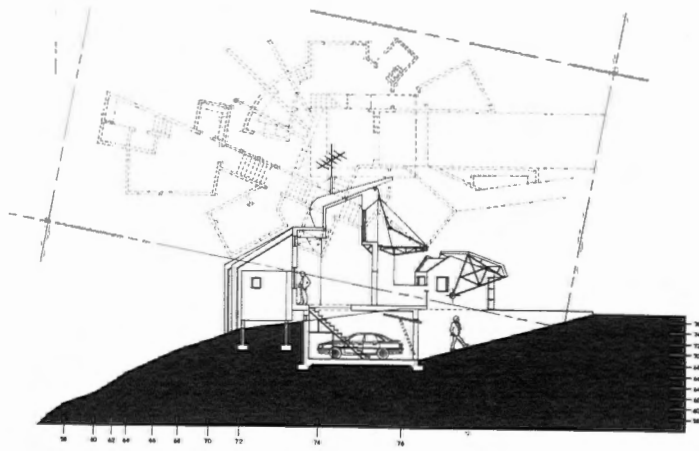
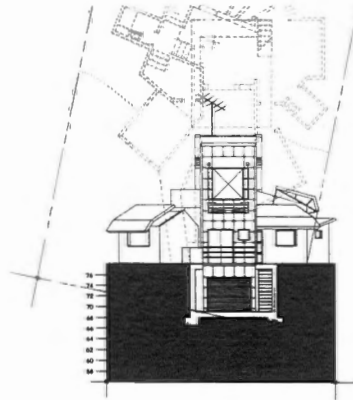
Television epitomize our post-industrial culture. Each viewer is confronted by the “mirror play” between reality (the present) and fantasy (virtual reality), where television is the repository for the viewer’s fantasies. The screen becomes the stage upon which the viewers express their individuality.



ground floor plan



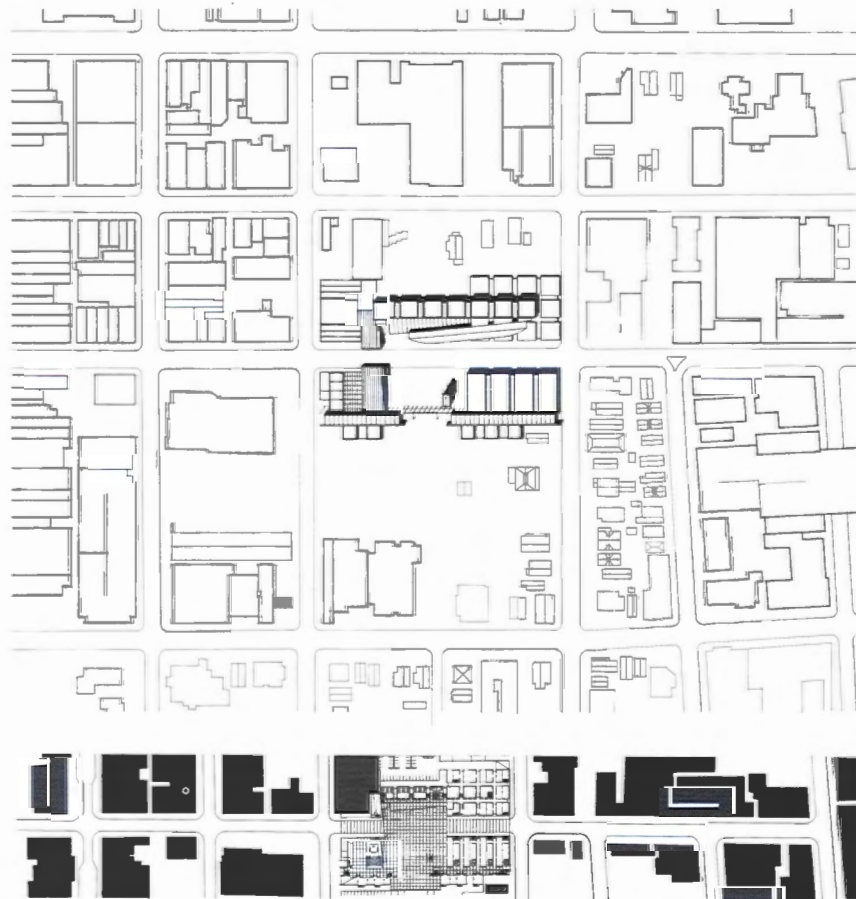
second floor plan



sections

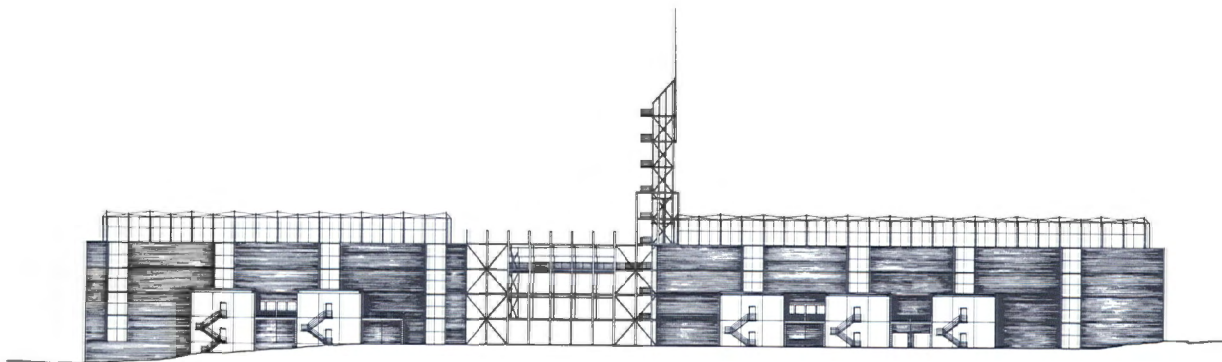
*A*nn arbor town hall and library

joe lear



site plan

The design of two major civic buildings, a town hall and library, and of a public space in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The main objectives were to design public buildings and spaces which improve the civic and urban character of Ann Arbor by developing an understanding of the ideals and realities which have shaped Ann Arbor politically, socially, and economically. These factors would in turn express and strengthen physical and symbolic relationships between the University of Michigan campus and the town through an architectural response.



south town hall elevation



south library elevation

Blocks

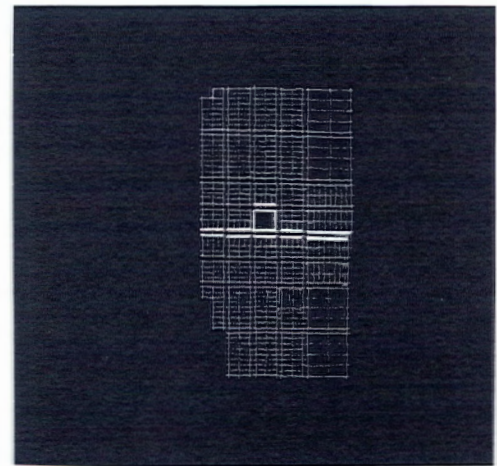
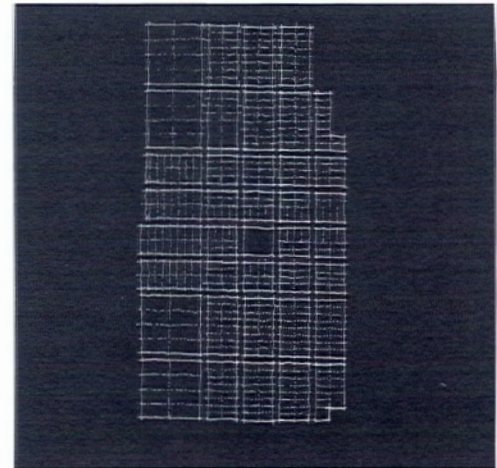
An investigation of the original layout of Ann Arbor reveals the original 16 blocks defining the center with a singular block being designated as the “town square” containing the court house. This block containing the court house acted as the central civic space for the community of Ann Arbor and embodied the principles of its residents and government system.

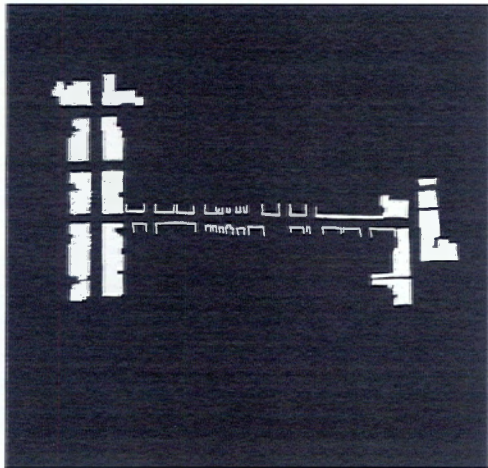
Frontage

Further investigation of the division of these blocks begins to reveal the developers intentions as to the orientation of a central business district, housing development, transportation and the movement of goods in and through the young town. Of particular interest is the single delineation of an east-west frontage corridor that runs adjacent to the south edge of the court house block, distinguishing itself from the other frontage corridors.

City Grids

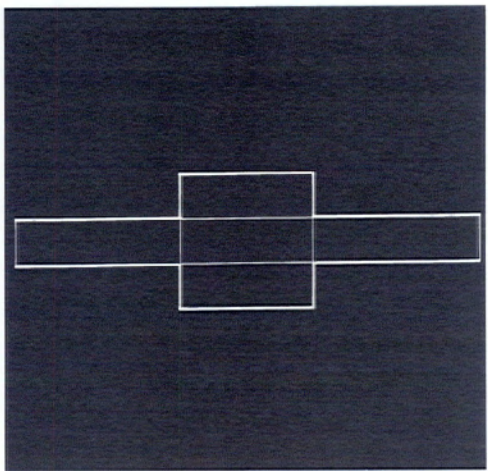
Comparing the original layout of Ann Arbor to the current conditions of the city shows the role of the University and its resultant influences upon the city. The development of the University to the southeast of the original city center creates several interesting physical conditions within the city’s fabric. A grid shift of approximately five degrees occurs at the edge of the original city edge as a result of the University’s different orientation. Perhaps most dramatic is the shifting of the original east-west frontage corridor two blocks to the south along Liberty Street and away from the central civic space. This shift results in the effective loss of Ann Arbor’s civic center, thus leaving the city to struggle with two strong individual identities and essentially creating a perceptible physical and psychological rift within the fabric of the city.





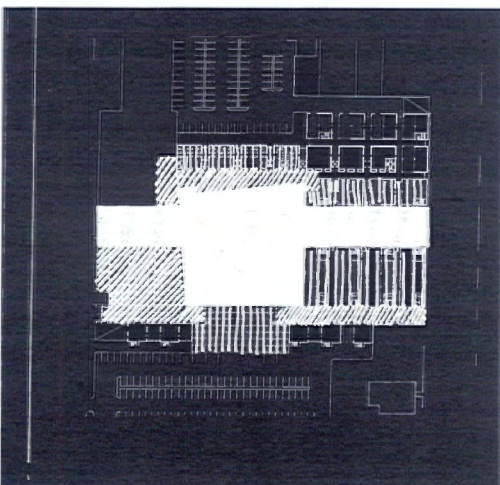
Existing Conditions

The previously mentioned “rift” within the city becomes readily apparent through an investigation of current conditions along Liberty Street. A strong business center has developed along the north–south corridor of Main Street and acts as an anchor at the west end of Liberty Street. Accordingly, a strong business district associated with the campus has developed along the north–south corridor of State Street and acts as an anchor for the east end of Liberty Street. While the intended connection of these two strong business centers lies along Liberty Street, current street edge conditions reveal a disintegrated and fractured environment lacking the essential pedestrian environments, vehicular accommodation and overall continuity critical to the success of a strong connection.



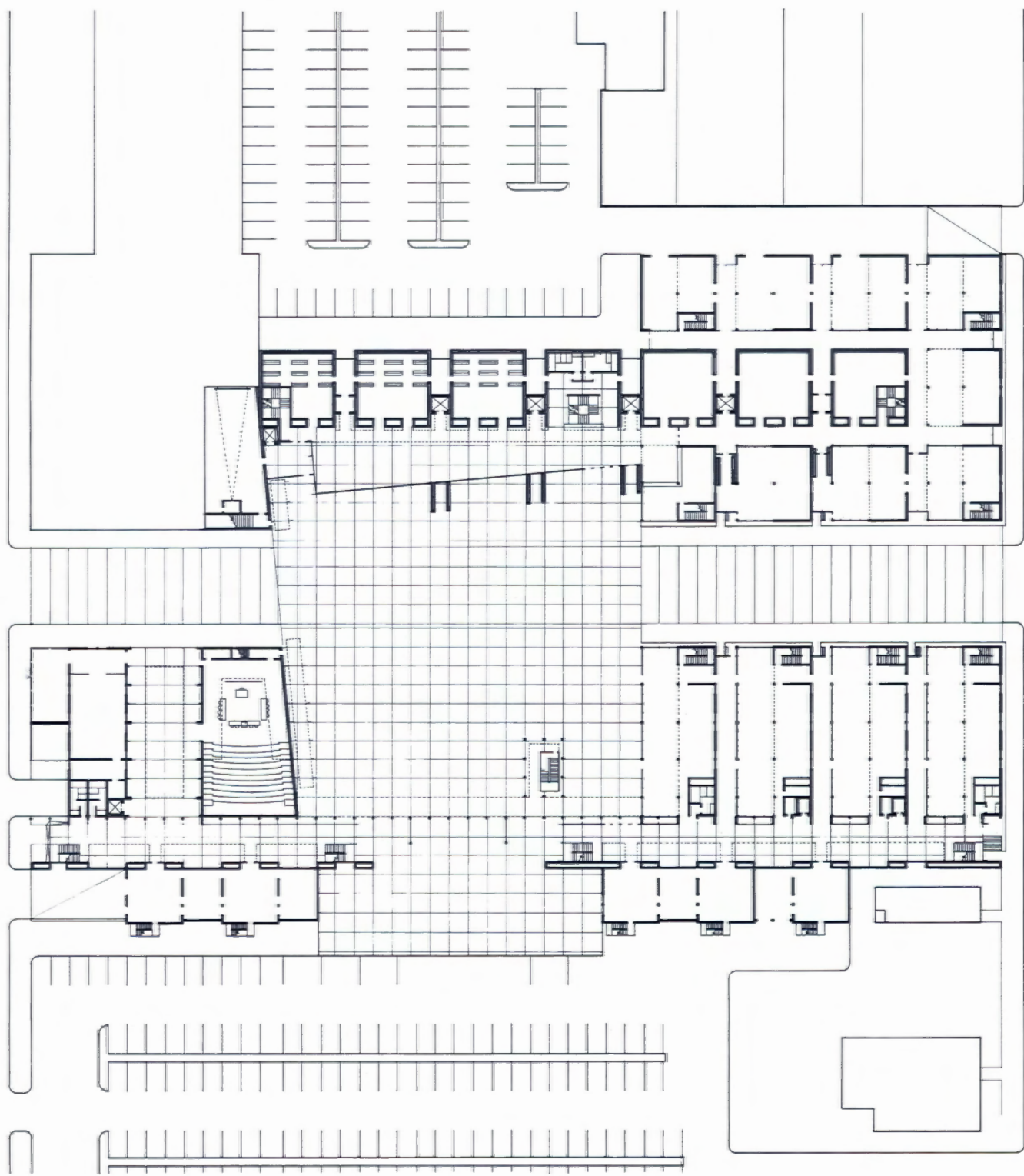
Concept

The meaning of the street as a connection device and the square as a means to define civic identity becomes the fundamental concept. By positioning these two major civic buildings on both sides of Liberty Street both objectives can be achieved. The Liberty Street edge is strengthened and the critical connection between Main and State is concretely established. Simultaneously, the two buildings also delineate and cradle a large central plaza that is hierarchically the most significant public space in the city and provides Ann Arbor with the strong civic center it has unfortunately lost through time and development.

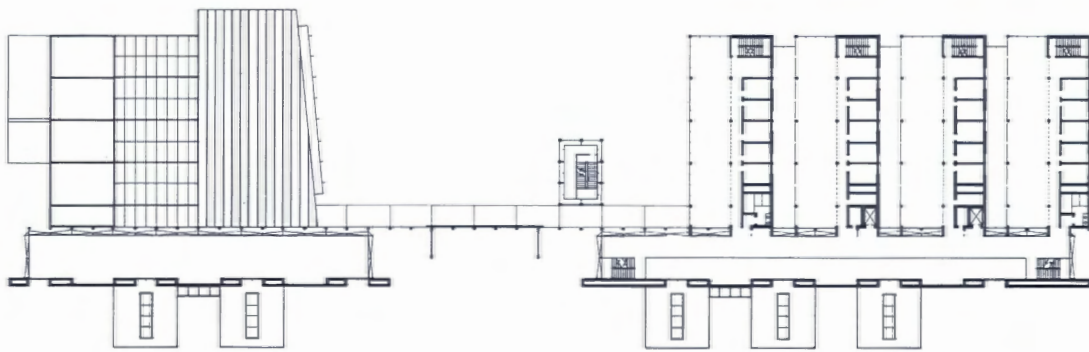
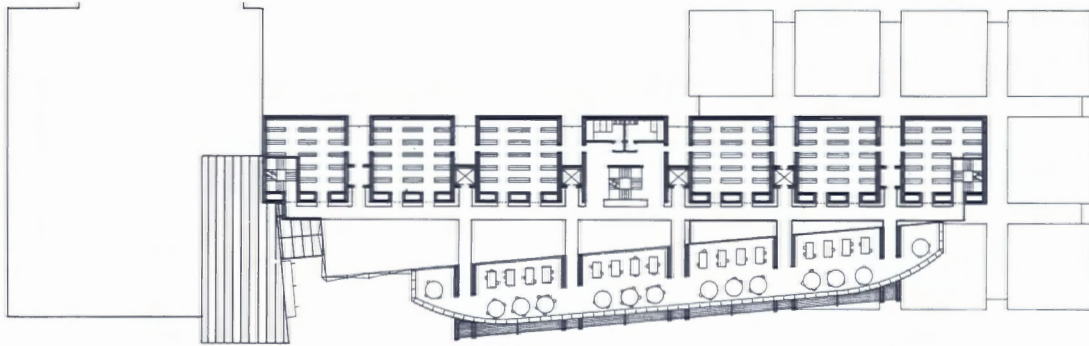


Layers

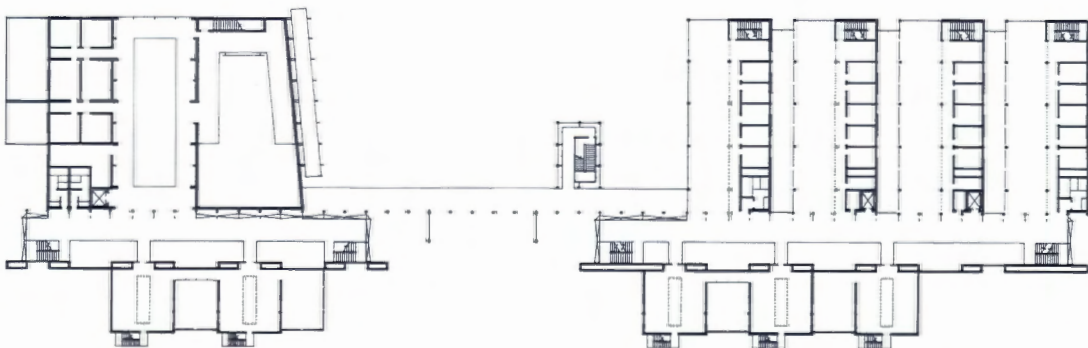
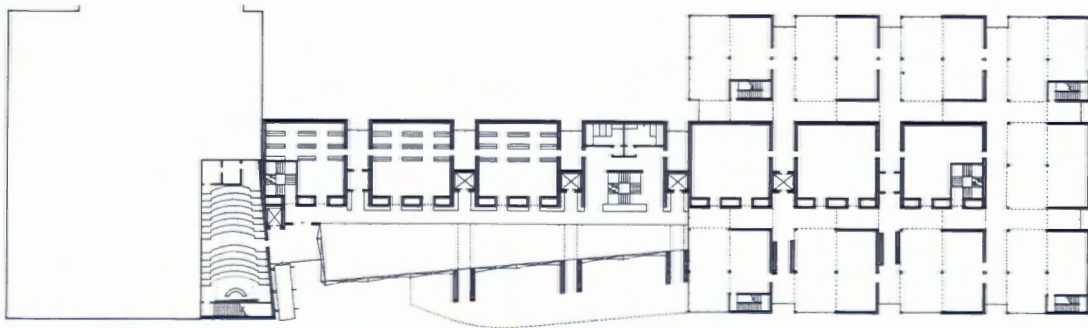
As a means for delineating the functions contained within both the Library and the Town Hall, and the degree of “publicness or privateness” for which each function represents, the idea of layering is employed. Layering, through the expression of materials and light, is intended to define circulation, function and spatial cognition.



ground floor plan



third floor plan



second floor plan

Suturing boston's north end

an episode of expansive urbanism

christian zapatka

with r. kevin forrester, benjamin williams, and chris lanzisera

This project is a response to the imminent lowering of Interstate 93, the Central Artery, in Boston. It suggests that the city should re-densify itself in this area rather than introducing a parkway, which is currently being called for, that would just be a softer version of the highway still marking the division between Government Center and the North End. Figure-ground diagrams show a clear case of an empty city in the making if the current highway is simply removed and replaced with a beautified highway. I believe that the city needs to pay less attention to traffic patterns and more to its own building density, the situation of Detroit, for example, has proven that a city perishes when it becomes more concerned with traffic flow and parking than its own physicality. Detroit has literally paved its blocks with asphalt for automobiles that no longer have any reason to be driven there.

The proposal of *Expansive Urbanism for Boston* is based on the assumption that the urban amenities of neighborhood are reinforced with building density rather than open space. The vast plaza around the City Hall can only be used as desirable open space when it is completely surrounded by building fabric and thus made an oasis rather than a desert. *Expansive Urbanism* calls for building over land which already has a history of building activity and then pushing its limits. In this design a tight curvilinearity recalls and expands upon the Boston of the nineteenth century. The design proposes a number of mixed-use buildings that would include a continuous wall of office and loft-type spaces facing Government Center and a belt of residential blocks lining the North End. In this scheme, relatively narrow streets are considered positive rather than negative aspects of city life, for they promote pedestrian traffic, which is fundamental to a successful urbanism. In addition to these



figure-ground diagram showing Boston's north end with proposal in place

urban fabric buildings, object-like structures are meant to address the monolithic monuments of the previous few decades. These include an oval arena for the farmers' market currently served by unbounded asphalt, a truncated half cone over the site of the original haymarket to serve as a public forum and three cylinders on a base to serve as a museum of maritime industry.

This proposal suggests that an increase in intensity of building can be accomplished with a stretching of existing conditions over indeterminate areas so that there is a blurring between old and new, between object and fabric. It is in the realm of the formally plastic and potentially infinite that the vagaries of the Post-modern city can be exposed in order to turn them upon themselves and generate the unknown from the obvious or the known from the unseen. When the forms of the city become interchangeable, the new grows out of the old without distinction between monument and background and sets up the vision of a physical environment that grows expansively, filling the blank residues of the Modern and the crevices of the Pre-modern.

In the contemporary city, initial intentions for specified zones have gradually been surpassed by an urban growth that no longer allows for distinctions between public and private, commercial and residential, city and suburb. Finally, it also appears that the polemic is set up between infrastructure as built form and a generalized occupiable environment rather than among programmatic/typological entities. It is within such a framework that Expansive Urbanism responds, not to nature within urbanism, but the nature of urbanism. This project proposes that there is no longer a sharp division between object and fabric in the city but that rather there is continuity to be found in an attitude that weaves the two together in a tight, dense environment that is the hallmark of a successful urbanism.



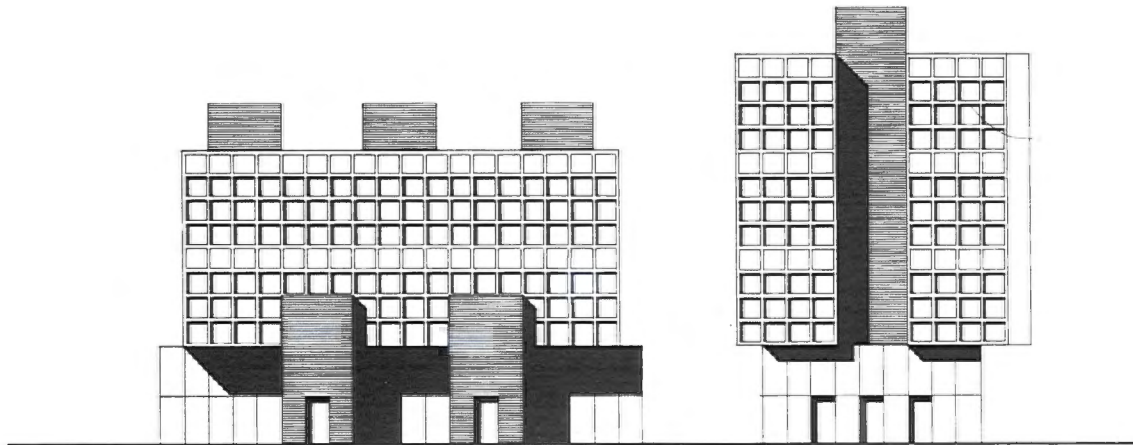
elevation showing the loft buildings of the northern part of the site, the public forum building and the commercial blocks of the southern end of the site



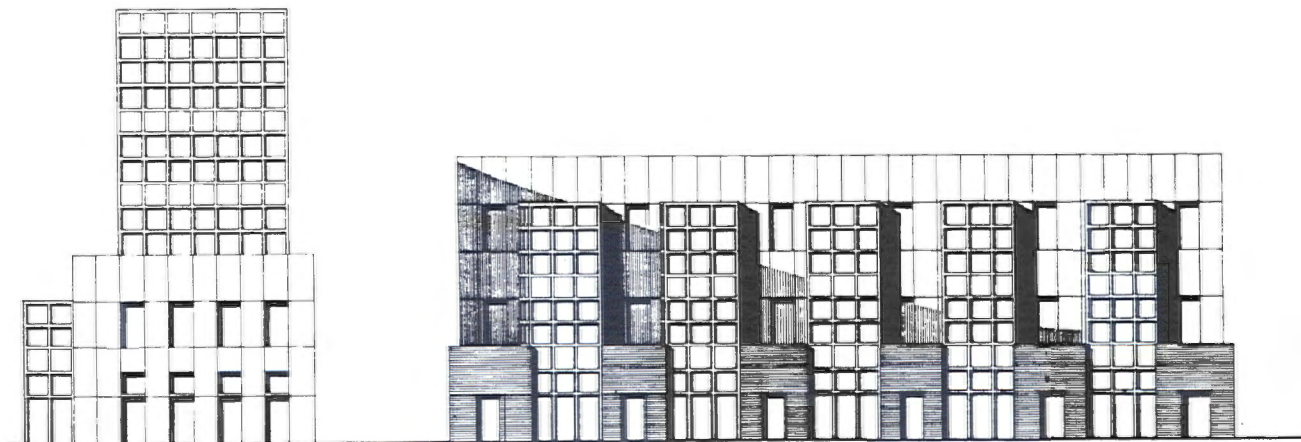
axonometric of the city of Boston showing proposal in place



axonometric projection of proposal showing a suturing between the large shapes of the monumental buildings of the mid-twentieth century forming the government center and the small fabric-like pattern of blocks comprising the north end of the eighteenth century still intact.



elevation of loft building and residential tower



elevation of commercial tower and residential block

The timekeeper

dennis b. smith

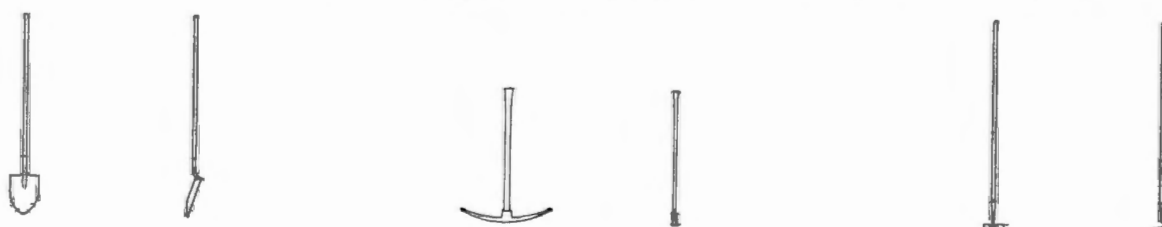
The shovel is a traditional hand-tool formed by two forces: the exertion of the body that manipulates it and the resistance of the earth it carves. The point at which these two forces converge is somewhere within the shovel itself; a man's hands grip and twist the shovel at one end, while the soil pushes and grinds at the other, and in-between the traces of this confrontation remain.

The wooden handle becomes soiled with the earth it disturbs, it becomes polished to a glossy luster through the working of the palms, and the wood splinters in response to heavy prying. The blade, likewise, expresses its history. The cool gray of a newly manufactured blade soon becomes dark brown with oxidation. The leading edge, however, never acquires a patina, as it is abraded quickly by the earth.

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the timekeeper project consists of a booklet of graphite drawings entitled the manual. the illustrations for this essay were selected from this booklet and are reproduced here at their original size.



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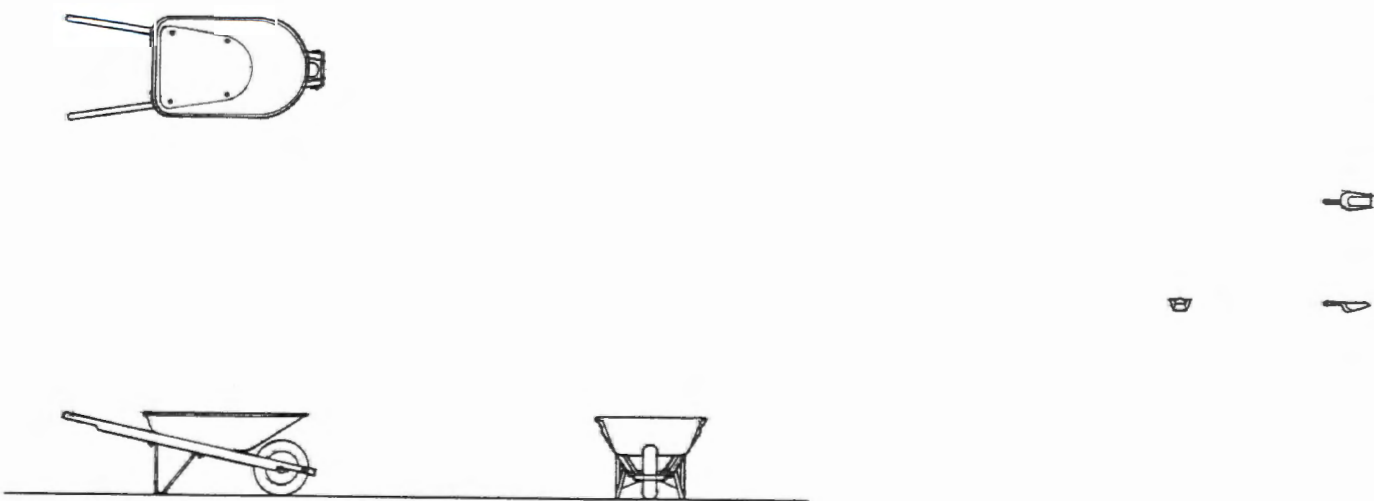
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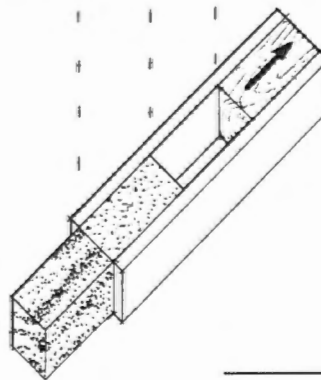
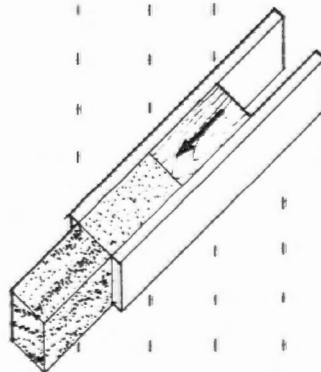
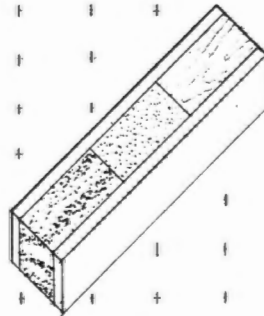
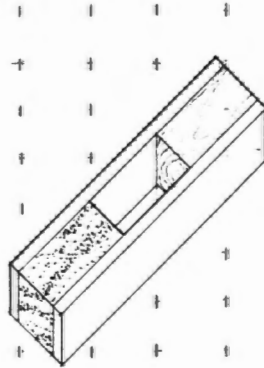
The wooden handle is soiled, it is polished through the working of the palms, and the wood splinters. The blade expresses its history, the gray of a new blade soon is dark brown. The leading edge, however, never acquires a patina.

The shovel digs, and in-between the traces of this confrontation remain.



casting process

the past
the present
the future



the routine

the apple trees

the apple trees on the lot are to be cut down.

the apple trees are to be burned in the stove during winter months.

the hedge

the hedge surrounds the site.

the hedge is to be replaced by a wall.

the hedge is to be transplanted onto the lot as the wall is constructed.

the wall

the wall is to be constructed of concrete blocks.

the wall is to be constructed clockwise around the site.

the wall is to be constructed beginning fifteen feet south of the lot.

the blocks

the present block is to be cast between the future and the past block.

the present is to become the past and the future is to become the present.

the blocks are to be cast at a rate of one every twelve hours.

the earth

the earth displaced by the footings of the wall is to be transferred to the lot.

the earth is to be distributed level with the highest point on the lot.

the house

the house is to be used for storing the raw materials for the blocks.

the house is to be used to protect the blocks from freezing during winter months.

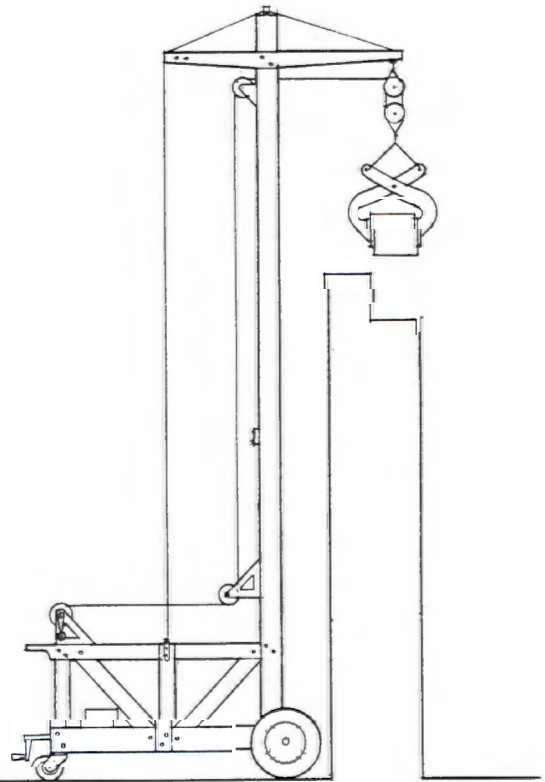
the house is to be moved clockwise around the site as the wall is completed.

the house is to be moved by disassembling the trailing bay and reassembling it ahead of the remaining bay.

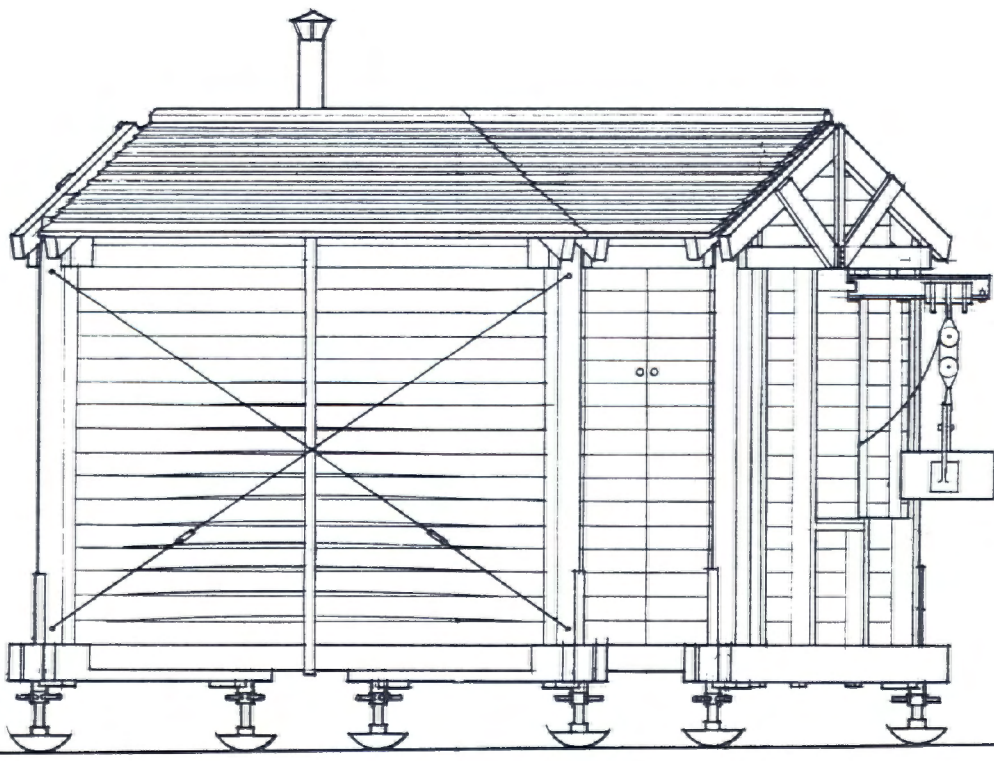
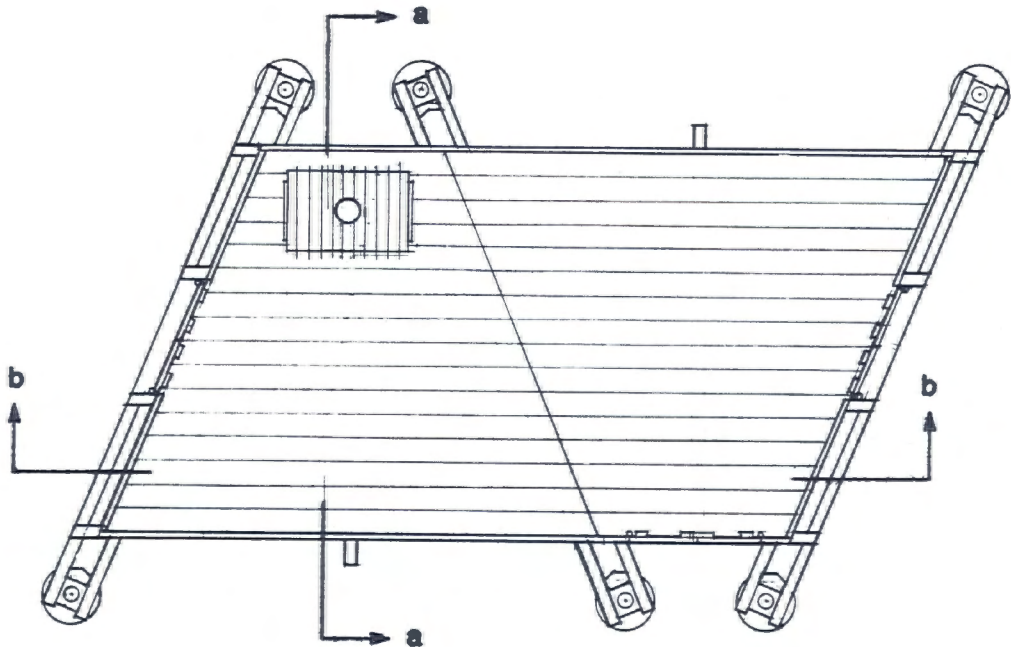
the cards

the cards are to be used to record events that are observed during the construction of the wall.

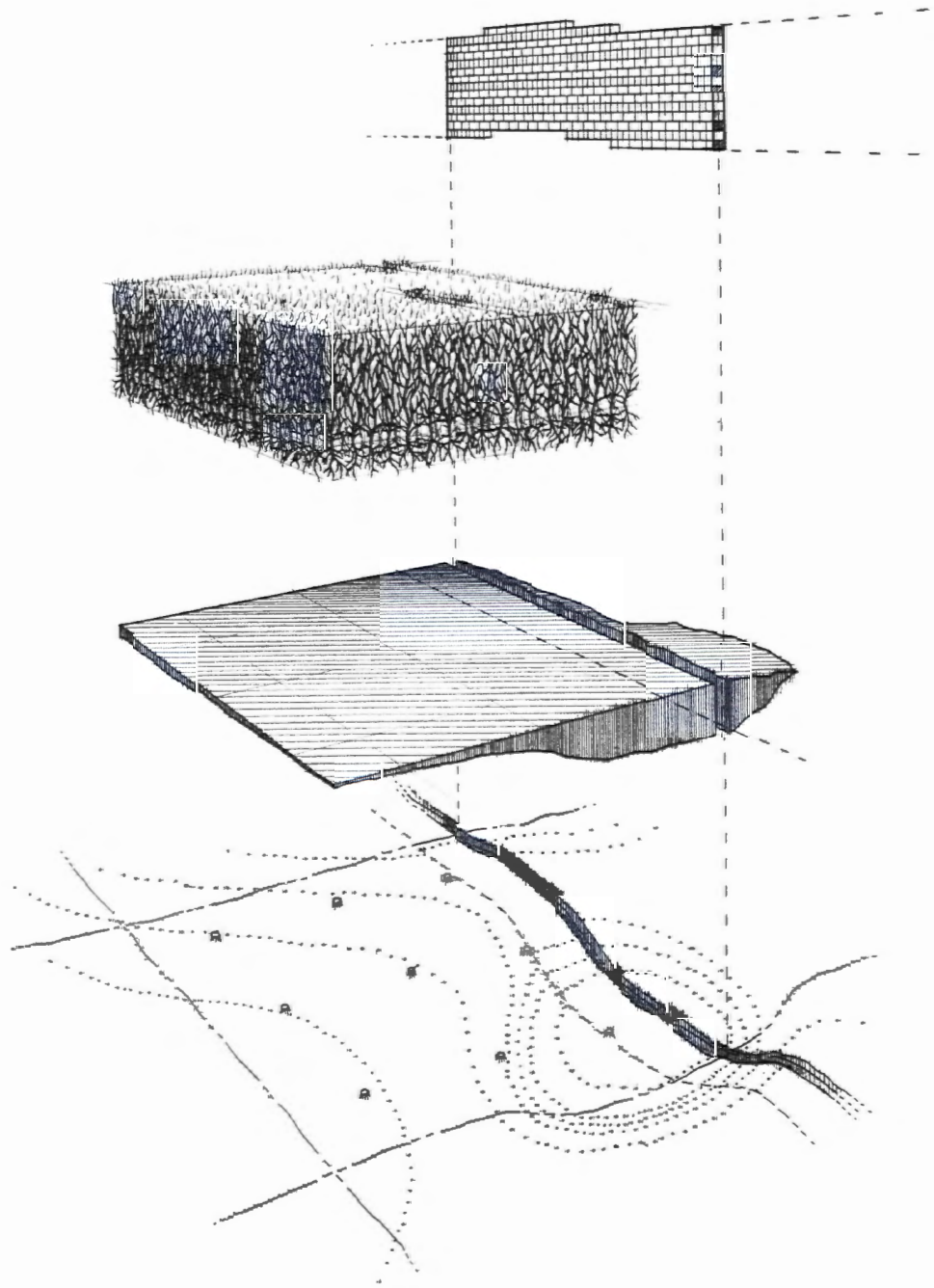
the events are to be recorded as each block is cast.



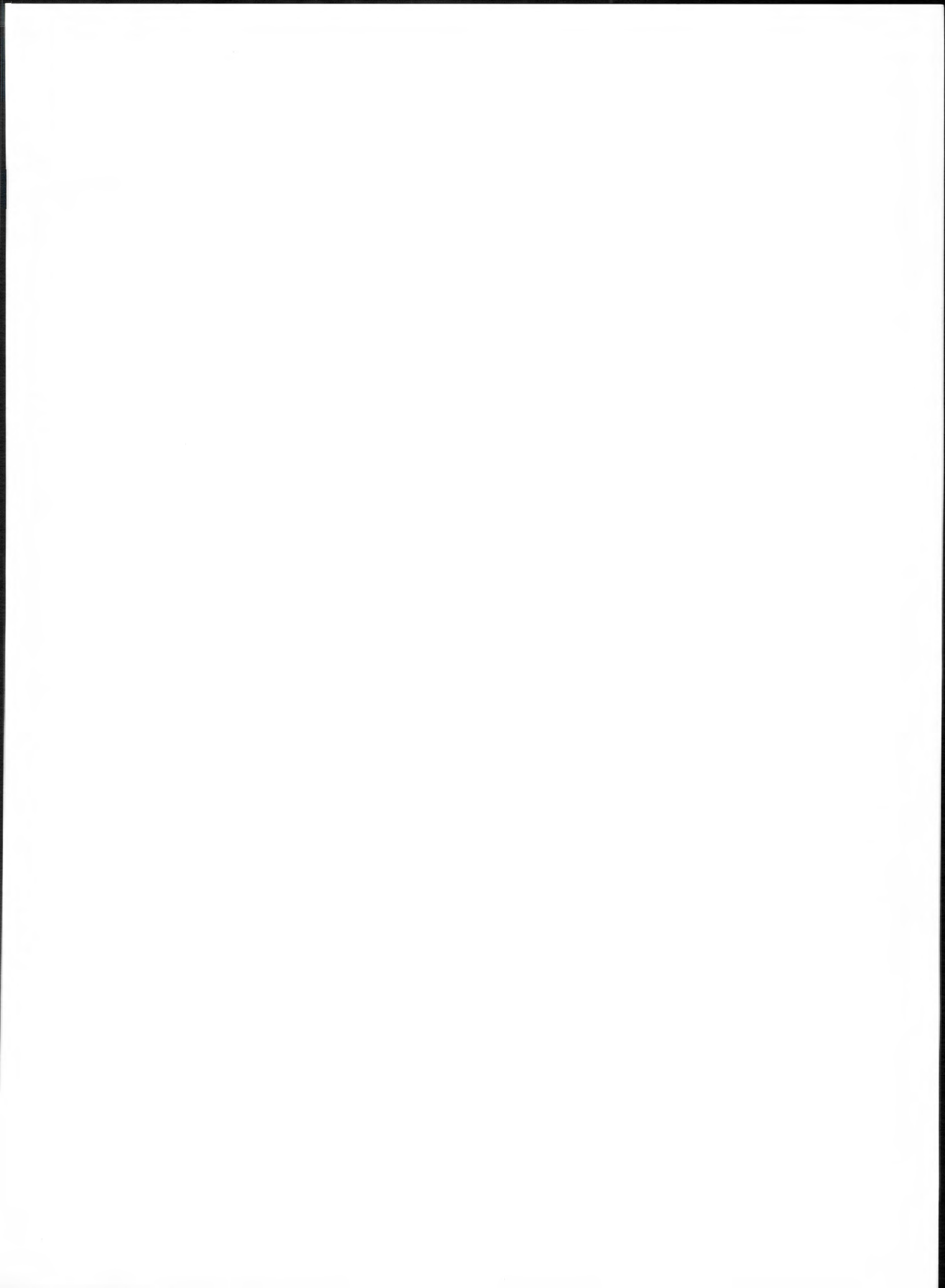
hoist



timekeeper's house



site



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dimensions 9 staff

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