ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN
Vol 68 No 3/4 March-April 1998

TRACING ARCHITECTURE



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TRACING ARCHITECTURE

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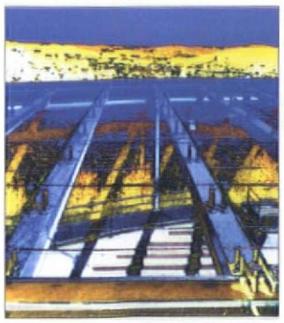


Ian Ritchie Architects, The Greenhouse Fragment, Dordogne

ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION, LONDON: DIPLOMA UNIT 9

UNIT MASTER – MIKE WEINSTOCK

'Ground as Container, Container as Topography': Herbert Lui

Manchester, a quintessential 19th-century industrial city, has been destroyed by the vacuous and banal urbanism of the 20th century. The IRA bomb of 1996 damaged a large part of its fabric, but the energies unleashed by the detonation have opened up a field of enquiry that has inevitably questioned the very idea of centrality in the city.

The Unit's search for a means by which to generate new spatialities for the 21st century began with individual trajectories and experiences in the fabric of the city, both real and imaginary. Urban cartographies were developed that revealed new geometries and orientations, combining historical, perceptual and cultural alignments. These cartographies were used to model spatial constructs, that, in turn, generated ambiguous urban morphologies and deformations. New and highly specific formal tools, capable of exploring emergent topographical relations, were borrowed and adapted from other disciplines.

Some of these encounters gave rise to what may be called 'recombinant' ideas, for example the 'vanishing point and the turbulence of the event horizon' or 'hypertext structures and viral transformations'. These fresh concepts determined conditions that translocated the programmatic and temporal orders of the existing idea of the city.

If everything is translocated, what concepts operate in the centre?

Can an image of a fluid and immaterial 'centre' become a coherent statement of movements, capable of translation into topology and topography? Can the concept of a polycentric, multi-layered city bring together ideas of sectional space and peripheral programmes? What does it mean to describe an 'asynchronous network of flows through a non-hierarchical array of attractors' as an urban concept?

These questions, highly resistant to definitive resolution, destabilise the idea of centrality, suggesting unclosed and dynamic strategies and the development of new instruments of urbanism.

Mike Weinstock

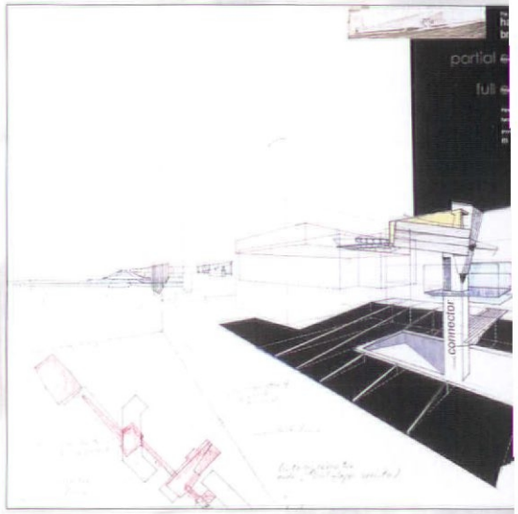
The vision for the heart of the city was to reinstate pedestrian dominance, maximising the perceptual and spatial experience for its users. Four categories of spatial elements or programmes are proposed – derived from a mapping exercise using data collected from the existing fabric to create a new formal and spatial relationship with the existing city. The insertion of these programmes destablises the mundane balance of the urban centre to enable new readings, datums and experiences through the very act of movement.

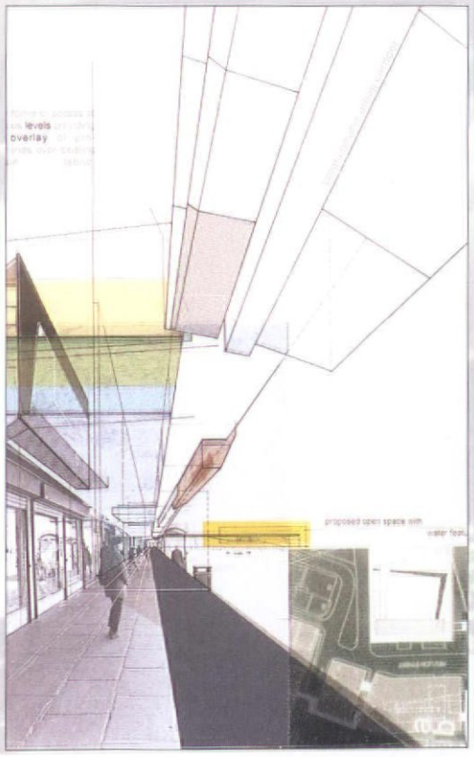
The 'ground' is a suspended translucent container, interweaving four programmatic plates, blurring the edge and boundary conditions between plates and ground and enveloping the user in a continuity of space and plates.

The four programmatic plates are unpredictable, flexible and hybrid spaces that circulate both horizontally and vertically to the structure of a new datum scale. The new ground and the programmatic plates overlay a unique system of layers and levels on to the existing fabric, both above and below ground.

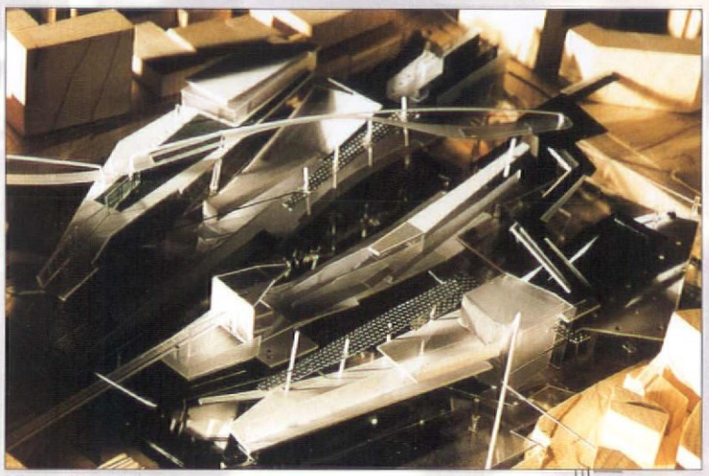
The basin is a water landscape conceived as an urban oasis. The hypnotic swirl of the water adds a tactile quality to the space while it manipulates the rays of the sun, as they filter through the translucent layers above, to create a visual dance of light and shade. The whole project is built on a matrix of pre-installed foundation stumps with spacings of 10 x 10 metres. This matrix will set the guidelines and control for any insertions by limiting the structural loading capacities and height restrictions. The aim is to allow for the form and scale of future developments to be controlled so as to maintain a coherent and yet flexible, evolvable site.

The new urban corridors are habitable linkways and bridges occupied by programmes and events. Parasitical colonisation of existing empty, or decaying, buildings enhance movement through otherwise deserted areas, providing programmatic engagement on the move.

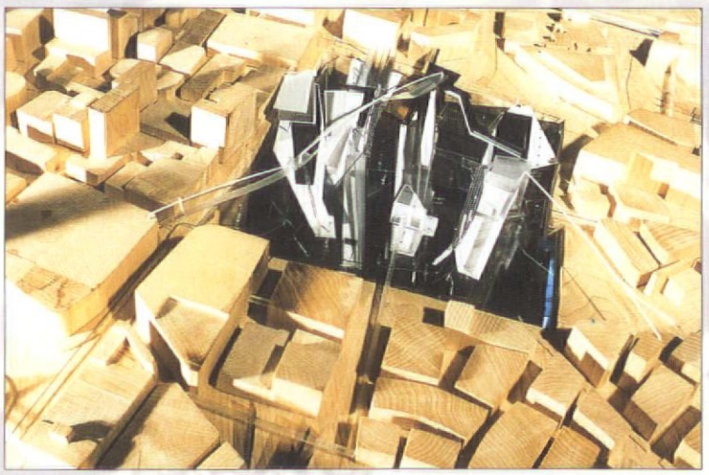




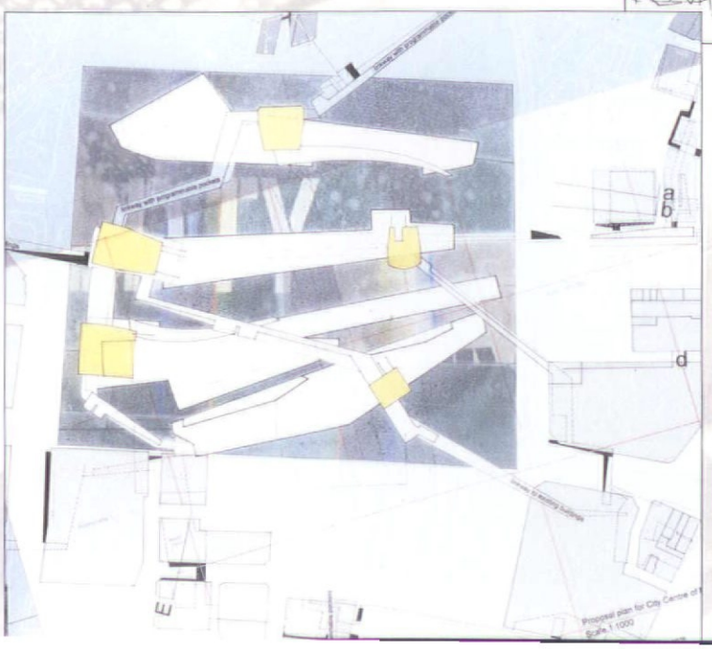
Perspective drawings of Herbert Lui's project for Manchester

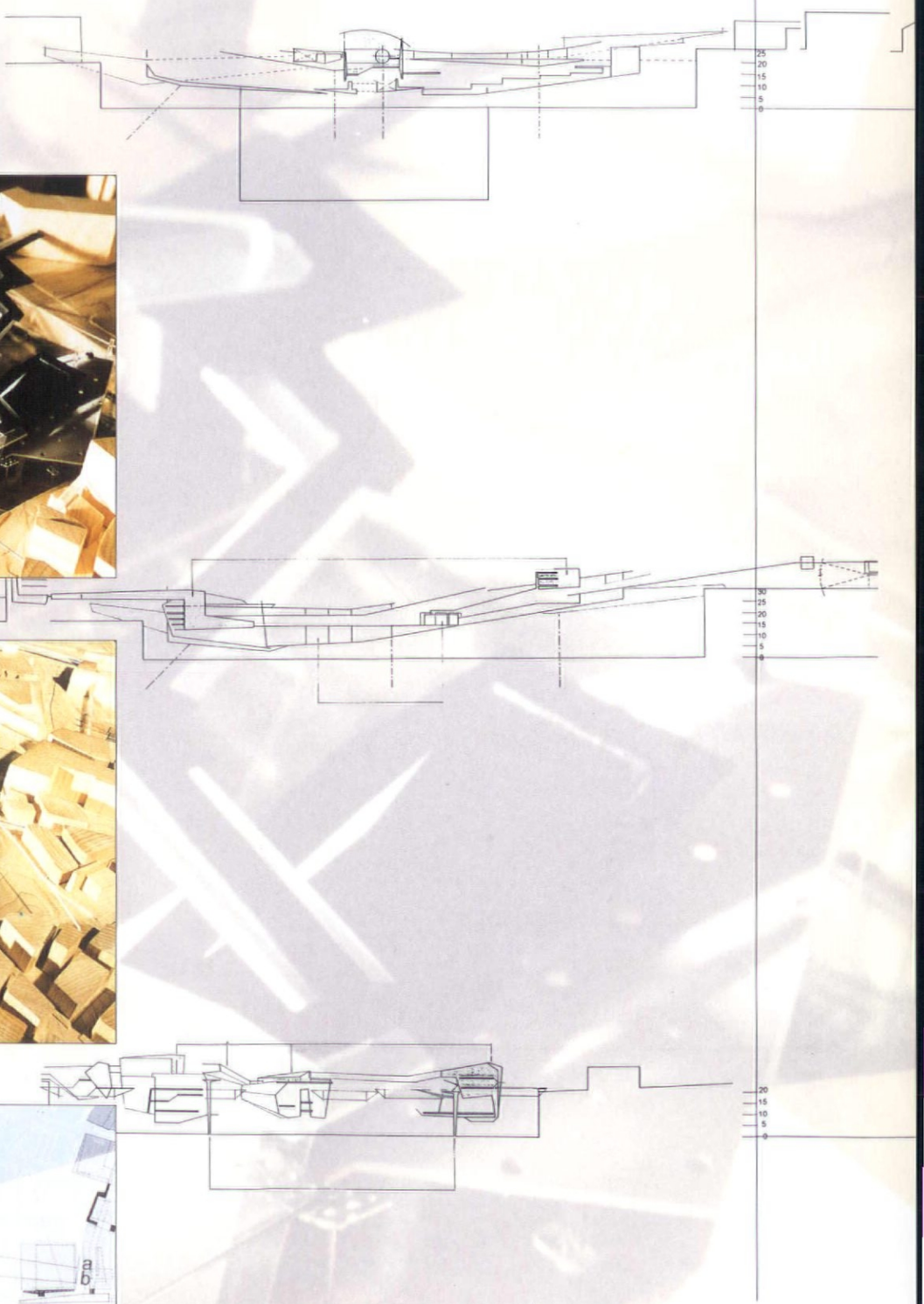


View of model



Model showing intervention in context





LEFT: Plan of proposal; ABOVE: Sections

ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION, LONDON: DIPLOMA UNIT 4

TUTORS – BEN VAN BERKEL, MICHAEL HENSEL

'Woven Organisation': Christopher Lee

Strategy

The project is located on an empty site next to Spitalfields Market in London. As would be expected, on weekends the market is filled with activities that are visually rich and constantly shifting. Surprisingly, this area is also home to the Spitalfields Arts Project. More than 70 artists are housed in the basement of the market. The work and products of these artists are barely known, or seen, by the market users. The intention of this project is to make the art and artists more apparent within the visual field of the urban fabric, and, moreover, to utilise the resultant effects to strengthen the political voice of the artist community against developer driven interests.

Woven Potential I

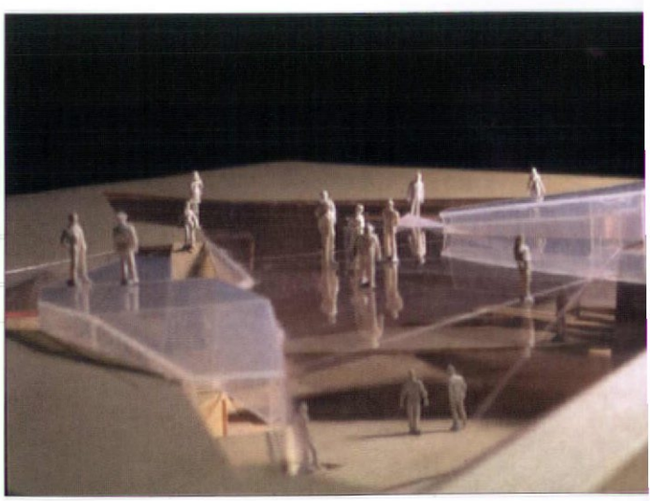
Visual fields were mapped out on the site from key locations, and the ground plane folded to accommodate new visual and physical continuities and connections. These planes form a continuous surface that organises movement and directs visual perception. Three event structures were determined with reference to the users of the market, and the visual field of the existing and the new spaces: living, exhibiting and working. The living structure offers temporary living for the artists working in the studios, while the proposed studios are linked to the existing spaces in the basement. Activities that relate to the three event structures are distributed with reference to their location within the visual field, the angles of inclined surfaces and degree of visibility of the surfaces. These activities weave into one another, as well as combining with surface direction and inclination.

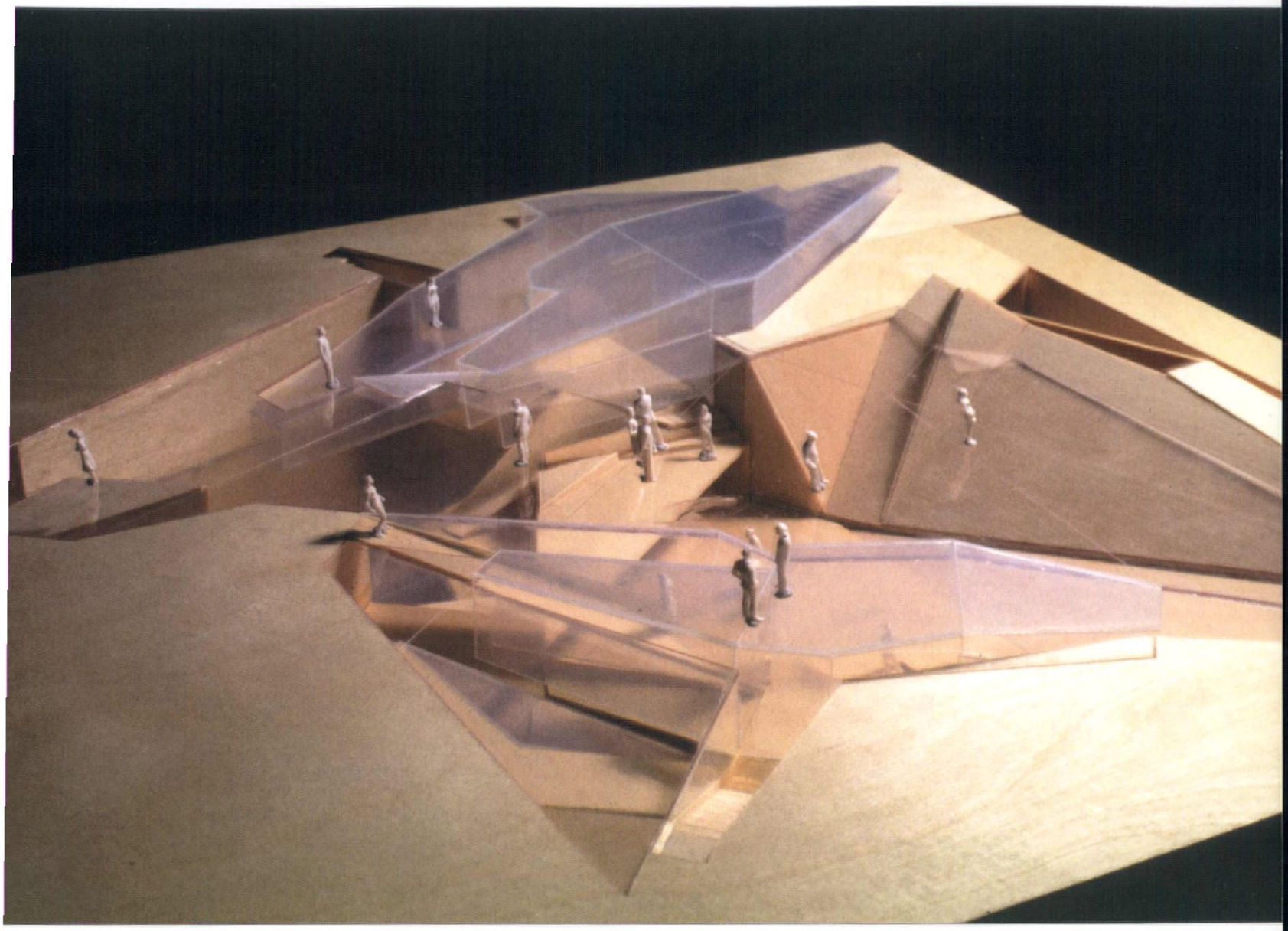
Woven Potential II

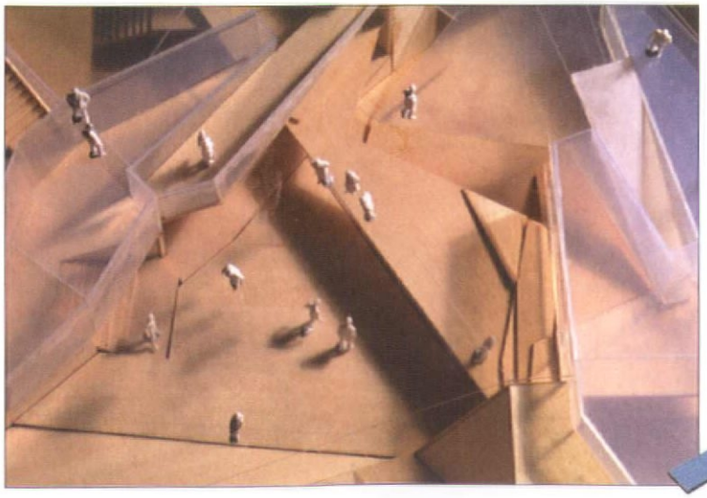
Inclined surfaces weave new visual fields from above the ground plane towards the level of the basement, and allow the observer and market user to encounter art as an event that accompanies occurrences in the market. The art is viewed under one's feet, over one's head, or multiplicitously as one passes through the site, to and from the market. The project employs primarily two materials, concrete and glass. The intention is to have the gallery entry as visually permeable as possible, to enhance the effect of the extended visual field. The field seemingly collapses into the space of the project, drawing movement flow towards the lower spaces.

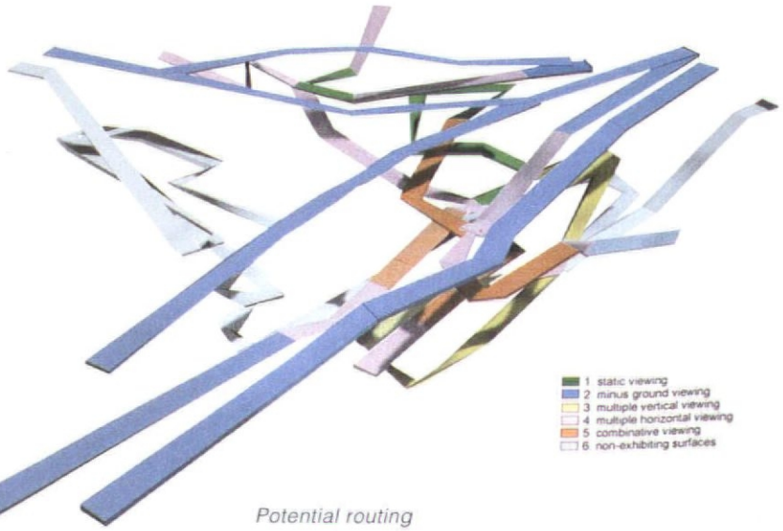


Plan of level 2.5







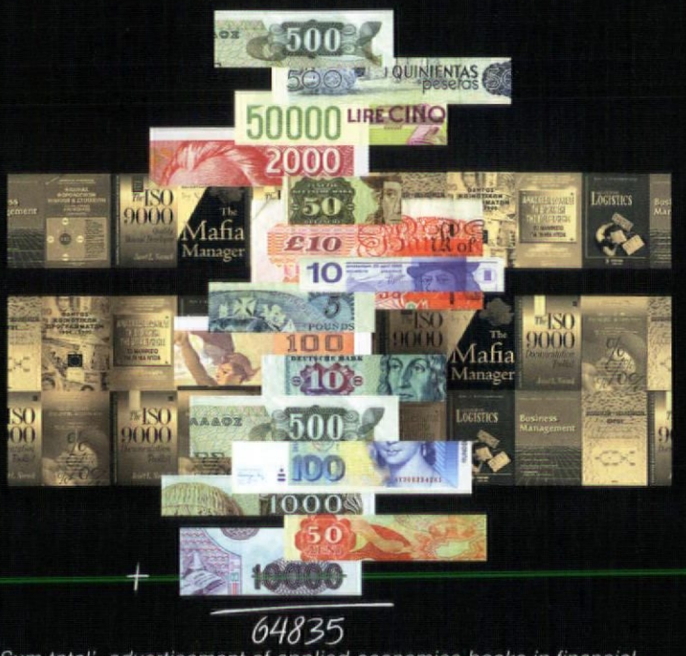


Potential routing

"Αναθεωρούνται οι αντικειμενικές αξίες των ακινήτων"



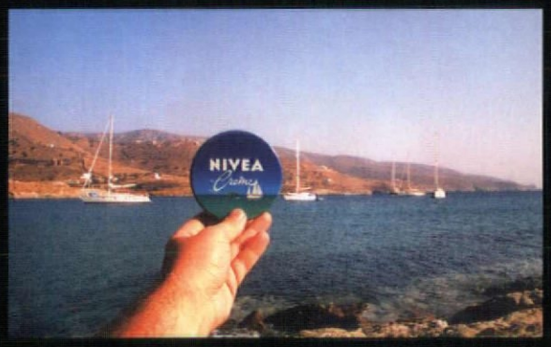
'"Objective value" of real property under review', advertisement of bookstore's economics section in financial magazine, 1997



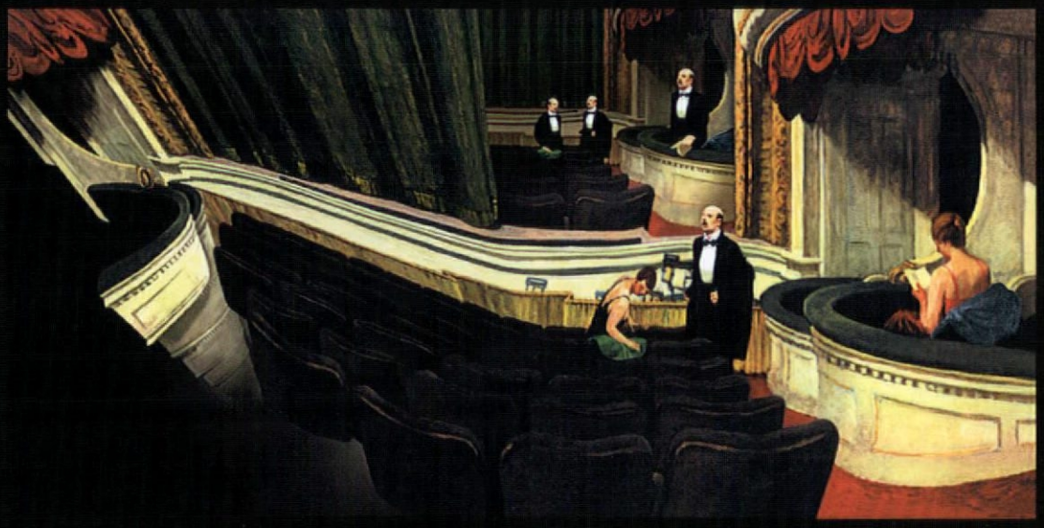
'Sum total', advertisement of applied economics books in financial magazine, 1997

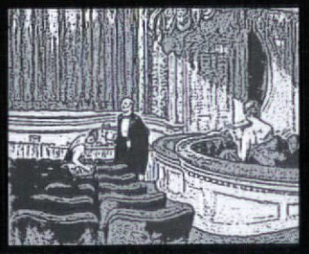


'Form Follows Function', hi-fi speaker advertisement in hi-fi magazine, 1996



'Hand cream', proposal for a Nivea cream advertisement, 1991, photo/concept Nikos Georgiadis





FROM LEFT: 'Maybe she was giving me material for the painting', CD cover for Perikles Koukos' opera 'Conroy and his Copies', 1995; Sketch of Edward Hopper's painting Two on the Aisle

Design team: Anamorphosis Architects – Nikos Georgiadis, Tota Mamalaki, Kostas Kakoyiannis, Vaios Zitonoulis; graphic designer: Katerina Margeti

ANAMORPHOSIS ARCHITECTS

SPATIALITY IN ADVERTISING AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

The Spatial Image

Realising the message is not merely a resistance to the hyper-real 'medium is the message' type of communication that employs the symbolic value of objects; it is mainly a proposition for a method of communicating through the actual quality and use-value of the presented objects (the 'advertised products'). Such a *presentation* addresses communication at a more personal, but also social, level, aiming at a non-symptomatic utilisation of objects.

A *return to the use-value* as a method of presentation (as far as possible within such an aggressive market) means that the presenting image refers to the directness of reality. Reality as image comes to act as an experience-bind of possibilities instead of a false promise; while the symbolic/exchange value reappears as a quest, rather than as a guide or as (symbolic) irrelevance.

Architectural experience provides a spatially dialectic method that can be used to technicalise and make such communication possible. A *spatial image* therefore, can introduce the advertised object not as an object of desire but as a bearer/member of an 'other' mode of representation that operates at the broad level of spatial associations – the world of *associated objects* – which recur as a critique of the symbolic singularity, or finiteness, of an advertised product.

As a presentation technique the *spatial image* resists the ongoing metonymic appropriation of the objectal world (as dictated by the symbolic values of exchangeability). It reverses any metonymic (traditional) or counter-metonymic representations (eg Benetton campaigns). Furthermore, it exposes metonymic intentions by expanding and rendering operational the metaphoric principle of the real object outside the ruling metonymic order of the product. In that context, *graphic design* is proposed not as minimalist reductionism (symbolic singularisation) of real complex imagery but as a process of singling out the major symbolic preoccupation at issue, through the activation of mutually anticipatory spatial features of that imagery.

At a technical level, the *spatial image* over-realises the symbolic preoccupations or metonymic intentions of the viewer, realising them 'literally', by treating them as more 'real' than expected. Often, commonly accepted, or cliched statements, are useful to summarise such preoccupations in order to be reversed. On the other hand, well-established metaphors (having lost their metaphoric power long ago to be metonymically assimilated) can constitute the raw material from which spatial associations can be developed.

Five examples

'"Objective value" of real property under review' advertises the new economics department of a large bookstore. The proposed image spatialises a cliched financial statement. It reveals the spatial/objectal potentials of a 1000 drs banknote by activating the note's stale imagery, including its figure number, emblematic of its symbolic value. 'Sum total' advertises applied economics publications sold in the same store. The old exchange value is treated as use value in the light of the new 'euro' common currency. The new exchange value is applied/realised, rather than mistrusted or doubted. Counting, itself symbolic in origin, is now imposed on symbolic value itself; accounting appears as a non-exchange process, as opposed to the contractuality of currencies.

'Form Follows Function' advertises high-quality, handcrafted speakers. The well-known slogan proclaims, at a general symbolic level, the 'functionality' of the object as a function-minded structure; it also makes a link to the world of forms (the surrounding objects) to condition a spatial synthesis. Here, the slogan is reversed by being actualised in a real, non-homogeneous spatial environment (notably, the environment as a homogeneous whole is connotative of musical experience itself). 'Perfect' sound is presented as a discovery – a worthwhile realisation and experience – rather than an ideal state imperfectly approximated by (any) sound equipment. The speaker is an instrument; it does not reproduce/represent music/sound; it simply realises it in a real environment whose parameters have guided its technical specifications. The surrounding environment realises the sound (ie the function) through the speaker.

'Hand cream' is a concept for advertising a hand cream produced by a worldwide established firm (notably, the actual product is often named after it). The proposed synthesis raises a series of objectal associations by 'foregrounding' what was formerly a mere referent. The real blue jar, and its illustration, are taken a little more literally than originally designed to be, as the stereotypical holiday scene (blue sky and sea, sailing yachts, the human hand . . .) is now introduced in full experiential form 'backgrounding' the trade name, which eventually hangs over as a mere (quested) word.

'Maybe she was giving me material for the painting' is a synthesis for a cover for a contemporary opera CD. Edward Hopper's painting *Two on the Aisle* (1927) is used first at a quasi-representational level (in the tradition of using 'classical' paintings to represent 'classical' scores). However, the synthesis activates the painting's inherent spatial potentials, proposing an extra treatment of Hopper's already rich spatial context. The question here is not to allocate design a given artwork (a CD cover), but to reveal and instrumentalise its spatiality as a critical presentation of the plot. In the opera, Conroy, a composer, lives in a fantasy world he has created for himself from an environment of people – copies of himself – who admire and serve him. Confusion arises when he falls in love with a woman 'from another world' who disturbs his community of replicas. The proposed image collocates the difference (perceptual, locational, metrical) between the space of the 'audience' (female) and that of the 'stage' (male). It highlights the instability and inattentionality of the former, *vis-à-vis* the austerity and spectacularity of the latter. To amplify that point a painterly technique (airbrush), alien to the painting's original *matière*, is also employed.

MARK DURDEN
SCREEN MEMORIES

The Ghost Camera, directed by Bernard Vorhaus, is an old English movie which has a bizarre story to do with photography. Someone finds a camera and develops its film in order to find the owner, but the pictures instead provide clues to a crime. One of the negatives shows a murder, one man stabbing another. (The theme of Antonioni's *Blow-up* is not that far away at this point.) This negative mysteriously goes missing, together with the camera, but Vorhaus' amateur sleuth still has the other four negatives from the camera. When he prints them he finds sufficient clues in the pictures to track down the scene of the crime. It is by finding out where the photos were taken, revisiting their locations, that he is led to the spot where the fifth photo was taken and discovers the body of the murder victim. A series of otherwise banal and nondescript pictures – a woman in a doorway, a train, an inn and ruins in a landscape – becomes important for the clues it offers. The address of a street in London, discernible in the first photo, enables him to track down the woman in the picture. The number of the train leads him to determine the route of the railway line, which leads him to find the inn in the next picture and then the ruins, and, finally, the murder scene.

Film offers a fitting way to begin to consider the work of the Californian artist Cindy Bernard. For four to five years she was working on a project in which she made a series of photographs which stem from popular American movies. For this project, like Vorhaus' amateur detective, she visited places already pictured. She followed in someone else's footsteps. Only she sought out the locations where films had been shot and took a photograph on that exact same site. And, on occasion, this even meant she located and photographed scenes of a crime; crimes, that is, which took place in films.

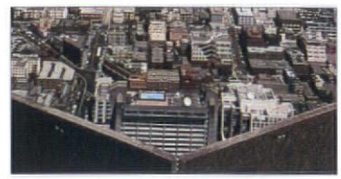
Between 1989 and 1992, Bernard made a series of 21 photographs of film locations, collectively entitled *Ask the Dust*. Each photograph involved careful research: time spent going over production records at the Margaret Herrick Library at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills, letters and phone-calls to directors and production managers. Together these pictures from 'the pictures' span 20 years, 1954 to 1974, beginning with a location shot tracked down from the sci-fi film *Them* and ending with a view from Roman Polanski's *Chinatown*. Each photograph is given the title of the film its location stems from, and two dates: the time of the film and the time Bernard took her picture. There is a desire to match her pictures to the films as closely as possible. The elongated format of each photo exactly duplicates the aspect ratio of the original film. And, in accordance with the movies they are taken from, three of the locations are photographed in black-and-white.

We view Bernard's pictures knowing they are taken from films. These are pictures of empty and emptied out sites which invite us to fill them up with our own imagined scenarios and, or, filmic memories. We bring narratives to these half-familiar scenes. Bernard's view of the Golden Gate Bridge is familiar as Hitchcock's view in *Vertigo*, and as the place where James Stewart, 'Scottie', rescues Kim Novak, 'Madeleine', from the waters. Our relation to Bernard's panoramic rooftop view over streets in San Francisco alters irrevocably once we know it – and remember it – as the same location from which a killer shoots a girl swimming in a rooftop pool in the opening sequence of the film *Dirty Harry*.

Our viewing of these documents of real places at specific moments in time is filtered through more general memories from films. As settings, as backgrounds, her pictures bear certain similarities to Eugene Atget's photographs. As mere documents Atget's photographs were used as reference material; the emptiness of his street scenes is in part accounted for by the fact that they were taken up and used by artists and set designers. As Molly Nesbit points out, his pictures 'asked for a narrative, dramatic action, a relation to a larger whole'.

Bernard's photos invite us to decipher the settings, recalling the dramatic narratives once enacted there – remember the underpass as the lair of the giant ants. But details in Bernard's pictures also mark the differences from the films: the graffiti on the underpass and the tourist advert just legible on the bottom of the rooftop pool in San Francisco. Such contingent details tend to play against the mythic and fantasmic associations these location shots carry, calling attention to the essentially documentary style Bernard is using in *Ask the Dust*.

Ask the Dust's film chronology from 1954 to 1974, makes us think of history. One thinks of











FROM ABOVE: **Dirty Harry** *(1971/1990), colour photograph, 11.5 x 23 inches, 18 of 21 parts;* **Vertigo** *(1957/1990), colour photograph, 12.5 x 23 inches, five of 21 parts;* **Cheyenne Autumn** *(1964/1990), colour photograph, 10.75 x 23 inches, 11 of 21 parts;* **North by Northwest** *(1959/1990), colour photograph, 12.5 x 23 in, six of 21 parts;* **Bonnie and Clyde** *(1967/1991), colour photograph, 12.5 x 23 inches*

the films referenced by Bernard as representing the times in which they were made. Violence runs through many of them. We begin with a film about invasion, *Them*, and end with a film about political corruption, *Chinatown*. With its story about an invasion of giant ants, *Them* might not only be interpreted as reflecting a fear of Communist invasion but a wider fear of the other. *Chinatown* is a film about control over the land; the violence and corruption in the film stemming from crooked political figures starving land of water so that they can buy it up cheaply. It is the location of the dried up riverbed visited in the film by the private detective, Jack Nicholson, which is tracked down by Bernard.

Some locations recur, such as Monument Valley, which is familiar to us because of the Westerns. This area has become almost exclusively identified with the films of John Ford, and Bernard frames the landscape exactly as Ford framed it for *The Searchers* and *Cheyenne Autumn*. Such landscape views have come to typify America. As Edward Buscombe has argued, since 'the celebration of America's natural beauties was held to be an eminently patriotic activity', the desert and canyon landscape became especially important because it was unique to America.

Viewed in terms of appropriation, we think of Bernard's work in relation to the practice of an earlier generation of American artists such as Sherrie Levine, Cindy Sherman and Richard Prince. By appropriating or mimicking other pictures, such artists seemed to set out to expose the second-hand quality of our perceptions, demonstrating how our experience is governed by pictures, in newspapers and magazines, on television and in the cinema. Prince's photos of details of Marlboro men ads, Levine's copies of photographic reproductions of pictures by Walker Evans and Edward Weston, Sherman's impersonations of women in film, have become emblematic of a postmodern climate in which first hand experience begins to retreat, to seem more and more trivial.

But there is a difference with Bernard's *Ask the Dust* series. It begins with representation but returns us to the 'real' of specific locations. Films trigger a quest for, and a return to, an origin on the part of the photographer. Our viewing of these sites may be filtered through filmic memories, but this return to specific locations still gives the work a distinctive effect.

In this respect it is interesting to view Bernard's photos in relation to the re-photography of William Christenberry, who spent time tracking down and photographing views previously photographed by Walker Evans. Christenberry retraced the journeys of his predecessor, taking photographs to match as closely as possible views taken by Evans. The present is viewed and framed according to pictures from the past. Twenty-four years after Evans, and in colour, Christenberry photographed the same warehouse and grocery storefronts in Stewart, Alabama. His re-photography allows us to measure the changes in places over time. The note is elegiac; the storefronts in his photos after Evans are now abandoned. At the same time, Christenberry is recording the places where he spent his childhood; he is revisiting places strongly tied up with personal memory. This is brought out in part by the way in which his pictures are taken with a simple Brownie camera, giving them the feel and intimacy of family photos.

Family photographs are important to Bernard. In *Grandfather Photos* (1989) she made an archaeology of her own family photographs. She selected and printed 20 colour pictures from the 3,500 slides her grandfather used to document family vacations between 1950 and 1979. These were mostly taken in North American, though later travels record Alaska, Hawaii and Haiti.

Spanning a similar time to *Ask The Dust*, the slides also echo the mythic aspect of such images. What recurs in the pictures Bernard has selected is the open road, the power of the perspectival view, the rush of roads into the distance. In some of the pictures from the *Ask The Dust* series, most notably in Bernard's *North by Northwest* (1959/1990) the road disappears into the vanishing point of the blue horizon, a deep spatial recession which evokes temporality: an open expanse of road to be travelled, of journeys and adventures still to come. Bernard is interested in the road as metaphor: 'it symbolises freedom and confinement. Stretching beyond the horizon, it promises infinity yet it is part of a grid defining space.' She has said how each of her grandfather's images "reflects a desire to transcend those boundaries, to discover that point of infinite space."

While *Ask the Dust* was still underway, Bernard made *Two Roads* (1991), which consists of two large-scale colour photographs of a hair-pin bend in Monte Carlo. Unlike the roads in the *Ask the Dust* series and *Grandfather Photos*, these hair-pin bends effect a kind of reverse perspective, roads which don't rush away but come towards us. The Hollywood star, Grace Kelly, is the key to the significance of these sites. One road is the place where she pulls off the road and kisses Cary Grant in Hitchcock's film *To Catch a Thief*, the other, the place where the actress died in a car crash. The landscape becomes a memorial to a star whose death is tied up with the movies.

Ultimately, Bernard's photos remain reflective and evocational. Their emptying out of narrative incident and content leaves us with settings haunted by the ghosts of a succession of movies. While located in specific time and place, they resist fixity. One reading will not do.





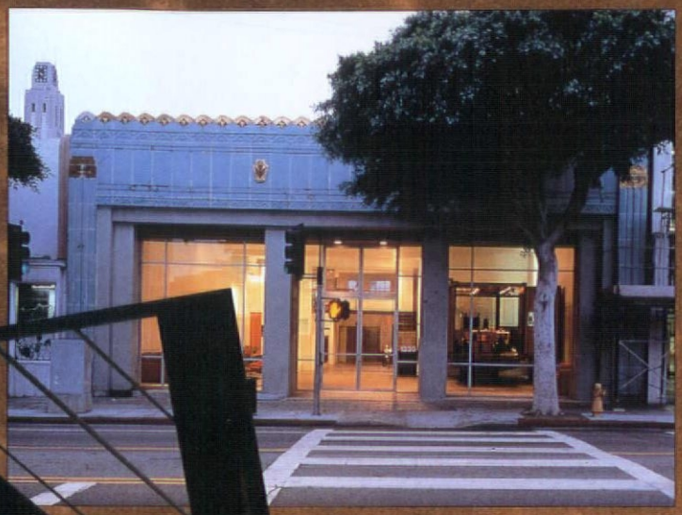






FROM ABOVE: **Them** *(1954/1991), black-and-white photograph, 14.5 x 23 inches, one of 21 parts;* **Oklahoma** *(William Adams1960/1989), cibachrome print, 6 x 9 inches, one of 20 parts;* **Louisiana** *(William Adams1950/1989), cibachrome print, 6 x 9 inches, one of 20 parts;* **Two Roads** *(1991), detail, colour photograph, wood, 46 x 85 x 3 inches, one of two parts;* **Two Roads** *(1991), detail, colour photograph, wood, 46 x 85 x 3 inches, two of two parts; all photographs by Cindy Bernard*

Mark Durden is Senior Lecturer in History and Theory of Photography, University of Derby.









PUGH + SCARPA

REACTOR FILM STUDIO

Santa Monica, California

Unusual circumstances led to the solution of this project to remodel an existing Art Gallery and Photo Studio into office and workspace for the production of TV commercials and music videos. Since the project is located in the Bayside Pedestrian District of Downtown Santa Monica, the first 50 feet of the building, running parallel to 4th Street and where the entrance is located, were required to continue the public street. Coupled with the clients' requirement to occupy the facility in less than 14 weeks, from the start of design to occupation, the project necessitated a team approach with the client, contractor and architect. In fact, construction began during the first week of the design process and permits were issued by the city at the beginning of the second. Similarly, all drawings were used for client presentation and construction, and were completed freehand.

The architect and contractor divided the programme into distinct and separate areas for detailed development, enabling the entire process to be phased. Each zone was developed in detail, presented to the client for approval, dimensioned and issued to the contractor for construction. Drawings were modified, and additional ones created, on site, when required by the contractor to resolve uncovered existing conditions, schedule issues and to address client design concerns. This sequence was repeated throughout the course of the project. Essentially the building became a full-scale drawing.

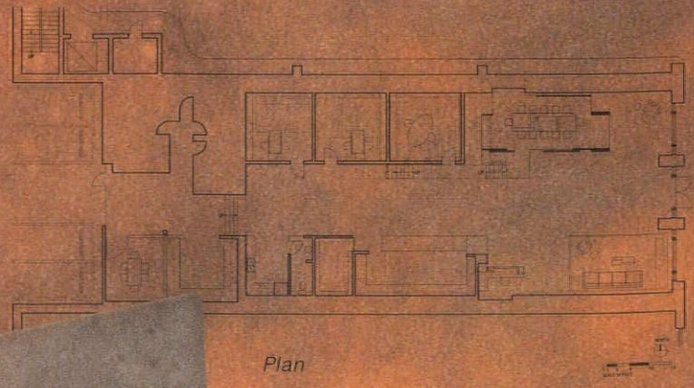
Spatially, the project revolves around a centrally located conference room which engages the public street. This room, located in the main lobby, or street, is a used ocean shipping container, purchased from the Long Beach shipping yard. Because of the trade imbalance with Japan, the container was readily available at an extremely low cost. The container is transformed into a spatial biography, a strong element of time which is recognisable in fragments of memory. 'A familiar thing seen in an unfamiliar context can become perceptually new as well as old', as Robert Venturi stated in his book, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*.

On a Sunday morning at 6.00 am – due to traffic restrictions – the container was delivered to the site on a flatbed truck, the existing storefront removed and the container fork-lifted onto its *in situ* concrete base. The surrounding interior space was conceived as a fluid surface wrapper, rotating asymetrically around the centroid of the container. The walls act as a chain connecting the various spaces, their traditionally flat planar spaces moulded into an extra dimension around the voids – a contemporary dialogue between carving and modelling. Walls, rooms and windows strain alone, yet balance in tension together. The project is an attempt to return to meaning through a process of construction; a question of 'how' rather than 'what'.



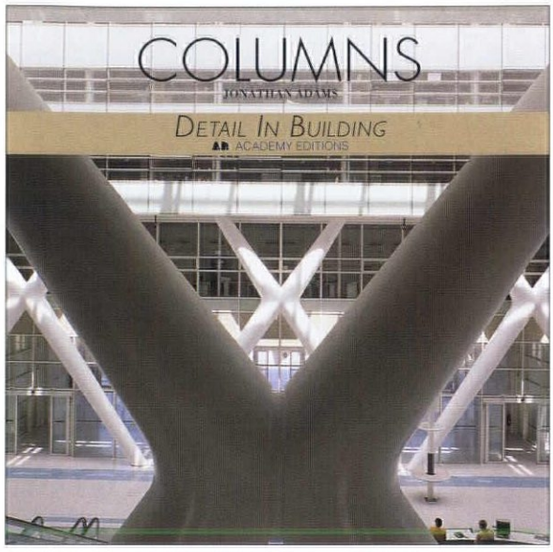






Plan

Highlights from Academy



COLUMNS

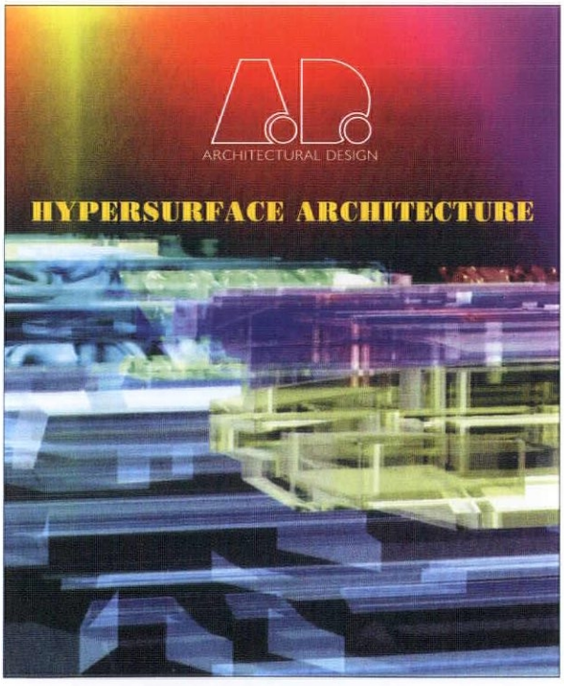
JONATHAN ADAMS

(Alsop & Störmer Architects, London, UK)

Columns presents case studies of modern columns used in buildings today, demonstrating their continued significance within architecture and the way in which historical precedents have been tailored for contemporary needs. The author compares columns built by the ancient Greeks with those characteristic of other recognised important cultures and periods of architecture up to the modern day. The comparisons are technically based: concerned with form and use of materials, structural purpose and execution. The highly informative combination of building context, design aesthetics and technical solution, as revealed in case studies, is unique in a field where specific technical quality in design detailing is often underexposed by the superficial presentation of entire schemes.

- Essential guide to architects and the use of columns within building
- Unusual and innovative case studies
- Part of the Academy *Detail in Building* series

PB 0471 978078, 245 x 245 mm, 96 pages. Illustrated throughout, mainly in colour. Y27.50 $27.50 £14.99: May 1998



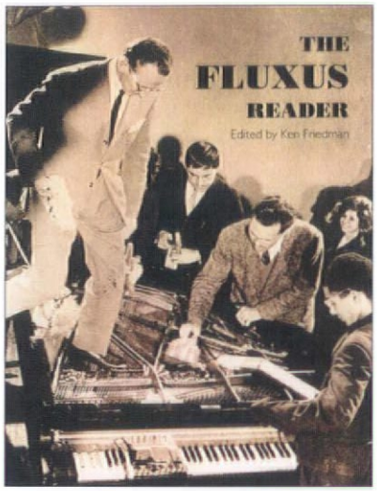
HYPERSURFACE ARCHITECTURE

Guest-edited by Stephen Perrella
(Columbia University, New York, USA)

Architecture is approaching an unprecedented juncture as the complexities of contemporary culture become increasingly saturated with digital technology. This volume of *Architectural Design* brings together a selection of essays and projects by leading thinkers and practitioners in the field of computer-generated architectural design. Hypersurface is an architectural concept that promotes broader integration between 'cyberspace' and the built environment. It promotes increased accessibility to the Internet, initiates new ideas regarding architectural ornament, instigates new explorations of architectural surfaces and materials and examines the integration of architecture and context. This is the first publication to focus on the subject of Hypersurface architecture, providing new conceptual tools to understand new developments in architecture relating to new media.

PB 0471 978094, 305 x 250 mm, 112 pages. Illustrated throughout, mainly in colour. Y32.50 $32.50 £18.99: May 1998

Highlights from Academy



THE FLUXUS READER

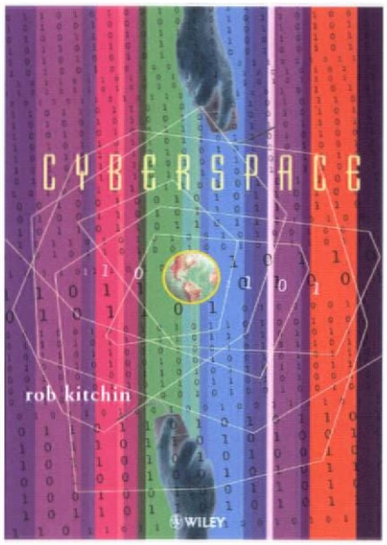
EDITED BY KEN FRIEDMAN

(Norwegian School of Management, Sofienberg, Norway)

This is the first comprehensive source book on the international community of artists, architects, designers and composers described as 'the most radical and experimental art movement of the 1960s'. Fluxus left its mark on our era by incorporating the work and thought of major artists such as Joseph Beuys, Yoko Ono, George Brecht, Nam June Paik, Dick Higgins and Per Kirkeby. Neglected by the market-orientated art world, Fluxus became a source of ideas and practices adopted by fields ranging from architectural and industrial design to cultural theory and psychology.

- Presentation of key source documents by the original artists
- Only book to represent all major figures of Fluxus

PB 0471 978582, 200 x 135mm, approx 288 pages. Y50.00 $50.00 £29.95: June 1998



CYBERSPACE

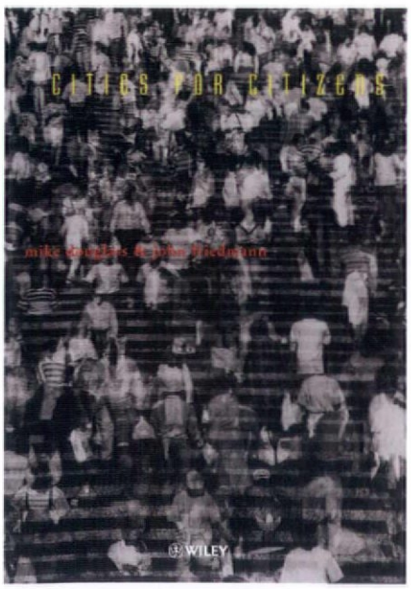
ROB KITCHIN

(Queen's University, Belfast, UK)

Cyberspace is changing the way we work, how we find information and present it, how we do business, how we communicate with each other; even how we see ourselves. This book is a thorough overview of this huge topic, presented in an accessible way.
'The most comprehensive introduction available . . . In clear, jargon-free prose it presents an interdisciplinary synthesis of the most important recent material from social theory, cultural studies, sociology, political science and geography and planning. An excellent teaching text.' Stephen Graham, University of Newcastle.

- First user-friendly and comprehensive textbook on cyberspace (issues around cyberspace cut across a range of courses in a range of disciplines)
- Student-friendly: short; well illustrated; many case studies

HB 0471 97861 2, 240 pages, Y80.00 $80.00 £45.00
PB 0471 97862 0, 240 pages, Y27.50 $27.50 £14.99: January 1998



CITIES FOR CITIZENS

Planning and The Rise of Civil Society in a Global Age

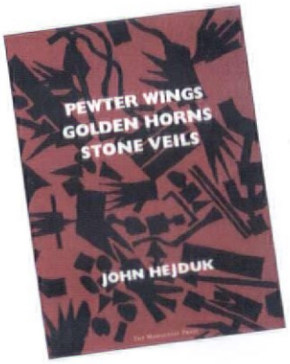
MIKE DOUGLASS AND JOHN FRIEDMANN

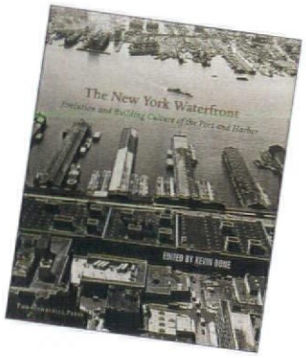
(Honolulu, USA and Victoria, Australia)

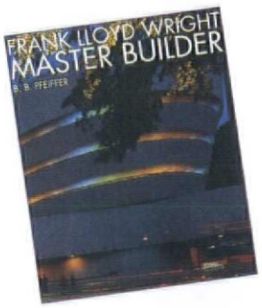
The decision-making process of urban planning is very complex due to the limited amount of land and the greater number of social, technological, legal, environmental and commercial factors involved in changing the use of any part of a town. Decision-making involves three separate groups or forces: the State (legal and social requirements), the Market (commercial requirements) and Civil Society (individuals and grassroots groups). *Cities for Citizens* analyses how these individuals and grassroots groups are increasingly influencing the development of cities. It incorporates chapters on Europe, USA, Asia, Australia, South Africa, and Latin America. The contributors include some of the most influential planners in the world – Friedmann, Sandercock, Forester, Lughod, Storper, Peattie.

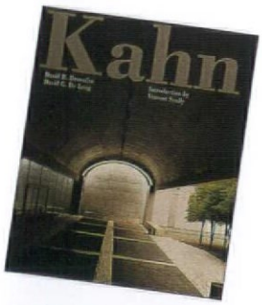
HB 0471 97708 X, 312 pages. Y85.00 $85.00 £50.00
PB 0471 97709 8, 312 pages. Y32.50 $32.50 £17.99: January 1998

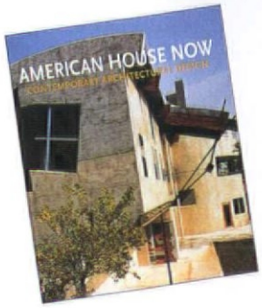
Reviews Books











Pewter Wings, Golden Horns, Stone Veils
John Hejduk, Monacelli Press (New York), 1997, 304pp, colour and b/w ills, PB £27.50

This book is a journey akin to that of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, the 15th-century text published in Venice, whose characters inhabit a surreal narrative imbued with deep symbolism and enigma – its meaning artfully concealed by skilful ambiguity and the mists of time. This journey, however, takes as its theatres, 'Crossings', 'Sites', 'Rituals', 'Sacraments', 'Testaments and A Wedding in a Plum Room', as opposed to the 'Dark Forest'. Hejduk has an instantly recognisable graphic and formal style, in my opinion one of the prerequisites of greatness. This book fully exploits this style as it flits from hairy sketches to bright watercolours, models and photographs of built work. Even the more normative architectural representation of the 'set out drawing' is given exquisite poise at Hejduk's hand. This device tends to be used with the more complex propositions such as the Christ Chapel.

Hejduk's creativity runs to both prose and poetry in the service of his concepts. The book is a casket of jewels that once opened hypnotises with glittering wonders. Its shelf life appears very long; it shows little of the propensity of most books – that of familiarity breeding boredom. It reveals much about its author, with its fevered line and garish colour. Above all, it illustrates a devastating ability to create gorgeous and stark worlds laced with symbolic intensity. These are populated by prisms, cruciforms, crucifixes, stripes, piloti, ratchets and much else. These formal gambits, combined with the written word, evoke worlds that speak of sinister seduction, architectures of loss, of pain and of silent foreboding, of power and control, but equally of vitality, of cultural vivaciousness and fun.

This juxtaposition in Hejduk's work is sweetly, painfully ever present in contemplating any of his output. Vignettes of his personality are threaded through the text. We learn at one point that a piece was developed on November 30 and December 1 1996 ' . . . whilst listening to Bach's B Minor Mass, Gorecki's Symphony No 3 and Bach's Cello Suites'. Here is a book that encourages its victim to scramble across a familiar but unfamiliar landscape, across fluid poetry and across a cornucopia of forms. These projects seem to stir a core of emotions that could stretch back to the pre-biotic soup itself, deep and profound as they are.

I sit writing this in Rome, a city that resonates with Hejduk's world – different as it is. I am attending a computer symposium – corporate executives, huge projects, much capitalist hunger, many words, none about architecture and the sublime. In a world ever more dominated by global marketing, interoperability and enterprise culture, it is soothing to come across this delightful book. Its *prima materia* is a timeless architectural art; it has no truck with 'hardbyten' computer drafting that reduces all surfaces to a ubiquitous sharkskin patina.

The book is an architectural project in itself, with long vistas where all is defined and clear, and dead ends where all suddenly becomes opaque and shadowy. It plays with us: seducing, nurturing and commanding. One of Hejduk's other skills is that he has continued to elude categorisation. Here is not work about Deleuzian rhizomatics, complexity, field theory or the multitude of other passing fancies of the avant-garde's dubious history, but something far, far more primal.

Buy this wonderful book of Hejduk's clustered cacophonies and wild articulations, it is a quiet monument to much that is lost in our day to day architectural practice and how we short change not only others but also ourselves.

Neil Spiller

The New York Waterfront: Evolution and Building Culture of the Port and Harbour
edited by Kevin Bone, Monacelli Press (New York), 1997, 280pp, ills, $60.00

This highly technical and academic study of the development of the New York waterfront by the Cooper Union covers in detail the rise and fall of its international port and harbour. It begins with ideal, virgin territory and its geological foundation, studying the earliest unconscious colonisation, radical masterplanning and construction, commenting upon its social history and future ideal, reclaiming the waterfront for the municipal.

The work originates from the Cooper Union's Infrastructure Department, its aim to bring to public awareness the need for a cohesive vision for the 584-mile edge surrounding New York. It mourns the passing of an era of 'great public works' by the Department of Docks (1870-1930), and dismisses current proposals as either too commercially led or watered down by democratic choice.

The Union's view is that community lobbys, political agendas and restrictive budgets stagnate visionaries, and that constant disputes have meant that projects are heavily debated, spending many years in court and often remaining unrealised. Those with imagination

are beaten back by legislation with titles such as the 'Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act', which broadly means connecting areas with pathways and cycle tracks, dubbed the 'emerald necklace' by conservationists. The current view held *en masse* is that 'parklife' is the only alternative to the decaying teeth of the docks.

So much for democracy! The Union infers that only a totalitarian doctrine will allow any inspirational projects to come to life, citing Donald Trump's $3 billion Trump City as a model. He aspired to build the world's tallest structure with 48 more storeys than the Empire State Building; the highest buildings now proposed after years of public debate being only 49 storeys, and community action groups still suspicious that the existing physical support structures are unable to bear the new loadings.

The civil servants were the mega-builders of their day. Between 1870 and 1970, they created massive tracts of land from landfill, a waste by-product of their huge building projects, mislabelling them as parks monies were appropriated from civic funds. The New York land mass is now some 30 per cent larger than when it was first discovered, with combined new areas created by reclamation equalling the size of Manhattan.

The excavations were required for the creation of basins and anchorage, by blowing up 'rocks', or islands, to create deeper, safe shipping channels, or creating expressways and bridges for their complex infrastructure. There was disregard for the physical environment, and a generally-held belief that supplies were inexhaustible. Major pioneering engineering works were enabled where money was literally poured into schemes due to commercial or civic urgency.

Now searching for a 'vision in a vacuum', there is no public or civic reliance on the waterfront for commerce, therefore no outcry for action and with communities suspicious of government schemes, many of the remaining piers and piersheds are now occupied with the discarded of the city: a car lot for towed cars illegally parked, a sewage plant, or, alongside one of the piers, a floating jail. These were once international landing stages, with liners berthed from all over the world. All that remains of many of these structures are archival photographs, illustrating imitations of civic buildings formed from a thin veneer of steel cladding, long since eroded.

The book serves as a catalogue and review for an earlier exhibition of drawings recovered from the Department of Docks, and the resultant symposium discussing the fissure between building and infrastructure as observed by the Union's academics. There is much repetition, with individual essays covering the same ground, and it is difficult to correlate the descriptive text with accompanying diagrams.

Since, the *primum mobile* for the work is the discovery of a monumental archive of 'rare and beautiful drawings' lost in the Department of Docks, and saved from destruction by the Union, it would benefit from a larger format. The photographs are fantastic, and provide stark reminders for a city that has 'turned its back on its watery edge', much of which it owes its existence to; the success of the docks in its formative years created a cosmopolitan city of the world.

To appreciate much of this book it would have helped to have visited the exhibition, as it is a very dry account of an explosive and expansive architectural endeavour. *Delirious New York* it is not, and maybe we would need someone like Rem Koolhaas to translate this into a more colourful episode in the Manhattan Story, or John Hejduk to give us the poetry. Hejduk's introduction gives more insight into the dilemma that faces future projects and ideas than much of the following printed text.

Kaye Heron

Louis I Kahn *David B Brownlee and David G de Long, Thames & Hudson (London), 1997, 240pp, colour ills, PB, £14.95*

Frank Lloyd Wright: Master Builder *David Larkin & Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer, Thames & Hudson (London), 1997, 240pp, colour ills, PB, £14.95*

American House Now: Contemporary Architectural Design *Susan Doubilet & Daralice Boles, Thames & Hudson (London), 240pp, colour ills, PB, £14.95*

These three titles mark the start of a new series which looks set to make a real contribution to recent architectural publishing. The books themselves are wonderful objects: although not quite pocket books (215 x 172 millimetres in size, with 240 pages) they are easy to handle, readable tomes. Each volume presents the reader with beautiful illustrations and photographs, combined with informative texts. The designer is different in each case, which means that the books are individually designed according to their subject matter while belonging to a coherent series – an extremely clever and successful tactic.

There are few enough books on Louis Kahn – especially when compared to those on Frank Lloyd Wright – but this one serves to redress the balance. The tone is set by Vincent Scully's introduction, which acknowledges the painstaking documentation by the authors and students of all of his most important buildings and projects. The extremely thorough text then takes you on a complete tour of Kahn's life, from his birth in Estonia to Russian parents in 1901, to the heart attack which killed him at about 7.30pm on Sunday 17th March, 1974, in the men's room at Pennsylvania Station, New York.

There are, of course, detailed descriptions and presentations, including diagrams and sketches in glorious technicolour, of all his significant works – as well as some lesser known pieces. I would strongly recommend this title to anyone remotely interested in the development of architecture this century, and for the insight it provides into an architect who did not receive quite as much limelight as some of his contemporaries. The price of this volume I hope will improve the opportunity this book has of increasing the audience of Kahn's work.

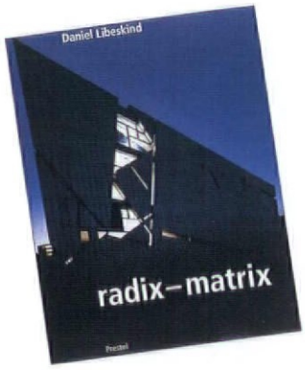
The Frank Lloyd Wright study is a beautifully packaged volume. Personally, I am continuously amazed at how the market can maintain and support an ever-increasing publications list on the work of one architect. Apart from the book's presentation and price so much has already been published on the subject that I cannot see what it adds to the bulk of publications. In fact, there is nothing contained in the content that has not been published before. However, if you do not have a book on Frank Lloyd Wright, this is a perfectly adequate broad overview that will not lighten your pocket as much as many other texts.

It is a dream for most people to own a single family house: the house on its defined piece of land serving as a castle, a place to withdraw from the world. *American House Now* focuses on the American answer to this dream. Unfortunately, there are many occasions where global issues are presented as solely American, but, putting this to one side, the selection of houses in this volume is inspirational, providing a broad-ranging and comprehensive selection of American talent.

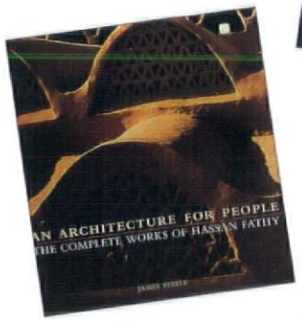
Although one is tempted to nit-pick about the inclusion and exclusion of certain architects, this should not be seen as a criticism of the collection but rather a recognition that the choice and range is hard to fix. All in all, the publishers should be congratulated on a collection of publications that enable a wide range of readers to access the fascinating world of contemporary architecture.

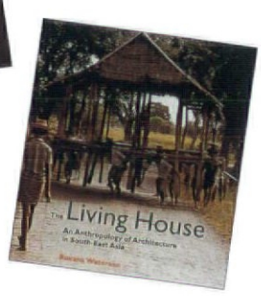
Maggie Toy

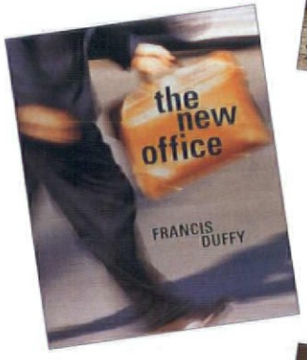
Books

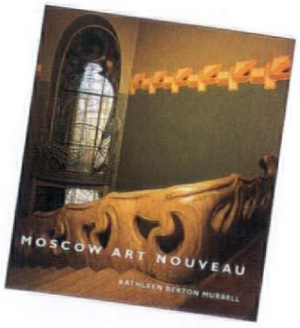


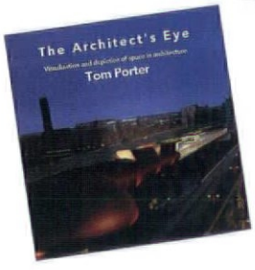












Radix–matrix *Daniel Libeskind, Prestel (Munich), 1997, 168pp, colour and b/w ills, HB, £39.95*

Libeskind serves as the mediator of his own work, exploring various projects through an illuminating juxtaposition of textual commentary with illustrations of competition models, concept drawings, and photos of realised works. Essays by Jacques Derrida and Mark C Taylor, among others, provide a critical analysis of Libeskind's architecture, identifying his place within the context of contemporary architecture and theory. The book concludes with a collection of the architect's most important essays, many of which are published here for the first time in English.

Intertwining *Steven Holl, Princeton Architectural Press (New York), 1997, 176 pp, b/w ills, PB £24.00*

This volume takes up from where *Anchoring*, Steven Holl's first book, left off. It presents long-awaited and comprehensive material on his projects from 1988 to the present. Over 20 projects are featured, including Makuhari Housing; Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki; Cranbrook Institute of Science; the Chapel of St Ignatius, Seattle; and the Amsterdam Mainfold Hybrid Building.

An Architecture for People: the Complete Works of Hassan Fathy *James Steele, Thames & Hudson (London), 1997, 208pp, colour and b/w ills, PB, £19.95*

Hassan Fathy's reputation for a modern and humane architecture has grown to cult status. A growing number of architects worldwide are recognising that his revival of ancient mud-brick building techiniques has begun to revolutionise modern thinking – sustainability, energy conservation and the responsible use of natural resources have become vital concerns worldwide. With a comprehensive illustrated chronology of his work this is a definitive study of the life of a man who has restored compassion and human scale to modern architecture.

The Living House: an Anthropology of Architecture in South East Asia *Roxanna Waterson, Thames & Hudson (London), 1997, 264pp, colour and b/w ills, PB, £19.95*

As the first of its kind to present a detailed picture of the house within the social and symbolic worlds of South East Asia, this book has become a classic. It draws on many sources of information, from both architects and anthropologists, as well as the author's own first-hand research, and is richly illustrated with over 200 photographs, historic and contemporary. The main focus of the book is Indonesia, but the tracing of historical links between architectural forms reveals a much wider field of enquiry, closely related to the distribution of Austronesian languages and cultures, and extending as far as Madagascar, Japan and Oceania. Although intended primarily as an anthropological study, this study has strong appeal for architects.

The New Office *Francis Duffy, Conran Octopus (London), December 1997, 256pp, colour ills, HB, £50*

This volume brings social, cultural, technical and political issues into the equation of the office environment. Sensitive to the effects of architecture and design upon those who occupy office space, as well as to the issues of its design and construction, this book investigates key factors in the changing world of the office. It features chapters on: Principles of Office Design; New Kinds of Office Work; The New Offices; Practical Implications; and Matching Demand and Supply. Twenty international case studies are also included.

Moscow Art Nouveau *Kathleen Burton Murrell, Philip Wilson (London), October 1997, 160pp, colour and b/w ills, HB, £35.00*

Art Nouveau was the dominant style in Moscow for little more than a decade, but even today, despite the destruction and redevelopment that took place in the Soviet era, it does much to give Moscow its individual stamp. The city was fortunate to have not only wealthy merchant patrons but also gifted architects who were able to exploit the possibilities of the new style in a spectacular and original way. Instead of following in the wake of European leaders of the style (Wagner, Olbrich, Horta and Guimard), Russian architects fostered their own distinctive development in parallel. This book illustrates the results of this innovative period.

The Architect's Eye *Tom Porter, E&F Spon (London), 1997, 160pp, colour and b/w ills, PB, £20*

Tom Porter investigates the imagination of the architect and its representation. As he explains, all buildings pass through a phase of visible non-existence, even before plans are submitted or foundations laid. The advent of computers has allowed architects to communicate an understanding of conceptual space and the light and colour concepts that are associated with designing in human terms.

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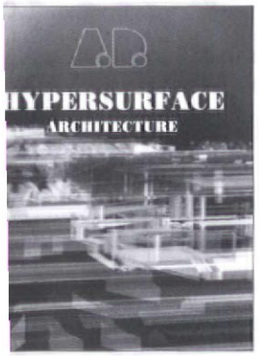

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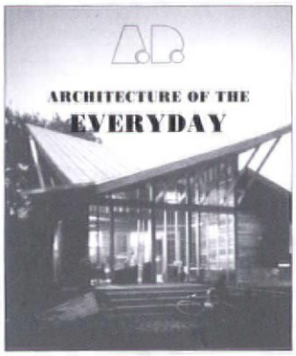

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NIKOS GEORGIADIS

TRACING ARCHITECTURE

'Tracing' in architectural experience has a practical meaning as a design technique transforming ideas to drawings and eventually to real space. In contrast to the metaphoric use of trace (in so-called marginal philosophy) architects' tracing paper engenders a process of controlling opacity, rather than transparency, which strives to bring to the fore what is 'underneath', in its maximum possible formal richness. 'Tracing architecture' focuses on *trace* as a dialectical process as opposed to trace as a metaphor for leftoverness, dismantling or dispersion. 'Unsculpting' architecture, or 'the extended site of architecture', are concepts which also drive the work of this issue in the same direction. The term trace, however, best encapsulates the *foundness* of architectural experience both as analytic and propositional form. The debate this issue hosts constitutes a response to the way the emerging condition of objective realism in the visual arts is often casually imported into the field of architecture. It aims to foreground architecture's spatial identity rather than subordinate it to an object–spectator viewing process, to regard trace as an active, real design procedure and tool.

'Trace', 'texture', 'minimalist forms' – the object in pieces, the bare object, the blurred object, and even the obstructing object – are all leading sculptural metaphors, as witnessed in a series of examples: from various unfortunate translations of Rodin's concepts into contemporary art, to Richard Serra's sculptural propositions, and to schemes of applied negativity in architecture. Even the idea of the 'complexity' (or ontology) of the object seems to relate architecture as subservient to the visual arts and to the latest objective or counterobjective (textual, literary, etc) idealisms. The theoretical back-up to these can be found in the positivisation of psychoanalytic concepts in the context of their straightforward visual application in art and architecture, which celebrates the idea that the Freudian symptom (whether termed 'object', 'real', or 'uncanny') can be inserted as 'disturbance critique' in the course of its mere visual appearance. Deleuze and Guattari's counteroedipal 'spatial' philosophy, Derrida's 'trace', and certain misreadings (mistaking undasein for anti-dasein) of Adorno's critique of Heidegger, seem to hint towards that direction, which not only reinstates the philosophical subject (a philosophical alibi or replica borrowing its imaginary clothes from 'place' or 'object' – counter-Platonic and Kantian in essence) but also seems to produce and actually needs a 'new' morphological style: that of spatial poverty.

In parallel, it appears that the metaphor of archaeology *for* knowledge (the Foucaultian paradigm, combined with Habermasian communicational universal pragmatics) has largely contributed to recent postmodern sculptural-philosophical aesthetics, and now becomes a metaphor for practice, as seen in the production of amorphous, fragmented, deformed (yet nonetheless finite, singular and self-referential) objects in the field of architecture and the visual arts – 'communicational' objects whose function and reason of communication are untraceable and elusive. Architecture thus becomes an area of the bizarre application of naive and crude *anti*-architectural metaphors from which designers are meant to take their references and inspiration. Ruins, remnants, dilapidated and abandoned spaces become leading aesthetic guides in design, in a celebration of 'de-determinist', dysfunctional and unusable spaces. The architectural event, then, has a tendency to be abandoned to the user, whereas the work's real functional course is often shrunk to mere appreciation and non-discourse. But while such a *spatial aporia* (spatial poverty and privation) is easily recycled as a sophisticated concept in contemporary architectural debates, its manifestation in real cases (bombarded cities, under-utilised sites, wastelands, peripheral non-spaces, to name but a few) is never recognised as an architectural problem as such – 'minimalism', 'deconstruction', 'desolation' are in fact real experiences in war zones long before their translation into architectural style. The archaeological metaphor, in keeping with the modernist tradition, appears to exchange, yet again, the real site of architecture with the a priori site of the plastic arts – a (non)site, whose morphological parameters are at best ignored, or at worst taken into negative consideration (with the built work operating as a 'site specific' obstacle or rendering a 'ship in a bottle' effect), in a condition celebrating the morphological autonomy of the built work and the inevitable 'gallerisation' of public space.

The aestheticisation of ruins (already dating back to Piranesi) reappearing in the context of a new romanticism, as well as neofunctional cyber-objective pluralism and the delirious proliferation of singular objects in space, all serve to contextualise architecture in a new frame of ultra-functionalism (and ultra-exhibitionism). Here, spatial relationships simply become the ecstatic witnesses of the vicissitudes of a highly self-referential functionalist condition, which cancels out and optionalises itself at a symbolic level, before function can be tested in real forms. While in archaeological practice, traces, ruins and findings constitute the epistemological material itself, in recent deconstructive design such 'findings' are meant to be constructed anew to suggest forms that already appear antiquated, yet do not inform one another; dismantled or irresistibly swept away in style (with their original meaning designed to be foreclosed and unrecognisable). And while in archaeology, determinist relations between culture and space are actually sought after and seen as important localisations of culture and life, in archaeology's metaphorisation into design, such relations are negated from the outset at a programmatic level.

Nevertheless, at an experiential level, architecture does seem to resist such objective realism, and qualifies a possible field of criteria in relation to which such realism is naive, even primitive. The unequivocal urgency of function in architecture brings to the

Anamorphosis Architects, 'Spatial Cast' – spatial multitude of the New Acropolis Museum project

fore the question of form, but form as a raw, undisputed *realness of a spatially extended – both inwardly and outwardly – condition*; the real site of architecture. Such a site may appear unelaborated when considered through the criteria of sculpture and the visual arts; after all, it is neither objectively autonomous nor blurred. However, such a symptomatic but simultaneously active recurrence of 'function as form' becomes the crucial point of differentiation between sculpture and architecture; indeed, it reflects the problematic way in which the visual arts develop their discursive certainty by dismissing function and instrumentality.

Moreover, it seems that such a resistance today has the political character of a reclaim rather than a mere return. Seen from the spatial (non)point of view, architectural experience recurs today not as a question of objective or discursive identity but as a (personal/public) reclaiming of spatial culture, exceeding the limits of 'physical' or 'livable' space (or its opposites); a *bon symptome*. The main question raised here is about how the real (by returning to itself) is processed as location-specific; about the 'specific-ness' of the real, rather than the 'realness' (or non-realness) of the specific; not about the return of the irrupting real but about *how* the real returns as spatial practice – as a question of the dialecticisation of the historic rather than as a query in the field of visual philosophy (women's traditional domestic space, migration, homelessness, agoraphobia, citizenship, are all problematics which have already raised this point).

Perhaps the above discussion might also be regarded as a response to certain points developed by such theorists as Rosalind Krauss, Anthony Vidler, Hal Foster, Andrew Benjamin and others. In the context of an architectural journal, however, the intention is to open up a *spatial* dialogue of critique both through the concepts elaborated in the essays and the architectural works presented herein.

The dialectics of trace-in-practice specifies a kind of inverted archaeology: a design tool that introduces the discourse of the real as presencing. The 'accomplishedness' and 'pastness' of the trace hints at a way of conceptualising form in a state of irreducibility and plenitude. Trace is therefore to be seen as a critique of the ruling symbolic environment, which can introduce the political value and economy (to paraphrase Henri Lefebvre) of the return of the familiar objectal world in a state of morphological affluence, not in order to disturb but to re-relate to us as users.

A direct environmental problematic is hereby introduced in the context of spatial anticipation and association. Environment does not appear, however, as an externality, liable to 'adjustment', 'protection' etc at a general conceptual level. Instead of being a shapeless ideology, environment is reintroduced in design at the level of the problematic of *form*, involving the specific spatial reality which constitutes the *extended architectural site*. It develops through relations of spatial detachment and immediacy beyond 'micro'–'macro', 'built-space'–'landscape' distinctions and visual/perceptual reductionisms. The question of plasticity reappears in a context other to that of isolated – finite or deformed – 'objects in space'. Furthermore, the realness of the object in the context of architectural experience reopens the question of how form, as a direct environmental concept (and not as a neutral or autonomous objective property), informs design to become a critical instrument. It is also in this context that the long degraded issue of *function* enters the discussion. Far from the paradigm of functionalism (or counter- or neo-functionalism), function is tested as that which substantiates architectural experience in the field of agitated spatiality or extended form. Trace is proposed at the point at which *function* and *environment* in architectural experience converge, to produce dense and uncompromising morphological propositions. Such an engagement of function seems able to activate a psychoanalytic dimension Other to that of subject as individual: the dialectics of the *person* – a so-far repressed subjectivity able to enact rich performative countertransferential processes into the *social*, by proposing localisations of its symbolic images (as opposed to the individual's enreasoning of its most remote symptoms).[1]

Tracing architecture means to *trace architecture* as the missing paradigm of unsymbolic/unvisual conditioning; as a possibility and urge for spatial contextualisations, involving unfashioned and impure morphological propositions for radical reallocations of function. Tracing architecture entails specifying the real architectural site in its full formic dimension as a process which expands the limits of 'physical' space (hence as fantasy), and acknowledges the dialectics of environmental immediacy occurring across 'close' and 'remote' spatial relations. The texts included in this issue from the fields of architecture, archaeology, psychoanalysis, communication, political theory, philosophy and the humanities argue for the necessity of a problematic of location and customised reality seen as a potential field of critique. They all share a political awareness of the limitations (in terms of poverty and expiration rather than 'crisis') of certain ruling symbolic contextualisations of space subject to: the building as representative of the brief; historicalisation of the past; user-friendly discursification (fragmentation) of sensuality and object-relating; spatial retirement (privacy) of the reindividualised 'psychoanalysed subject' and urban living as a-political wandering; after-image mediation of urban communication; visual (and interpretative) discursification of artwork; familiarisation (or defamiliarisation) of domestic space; and architectural authorship and copyrighted design. Respectively, *trace*, in an anti-Derridean manner, appears as spatial engagement rather than abandonment in concepts such as: the unfinished/unbuilt (as opposed to non-built); the historic as a total diachronic spatial experience; sensuality as body-objectal dialectical resistance; the countertransferential public spatial projection of the domestic; unmediated collective communication; spatial figuration of the artwork's allocation; the politics of undasein; and uninflected stubborn architecture.

Tracing architecture also means conceptualising *architecture as a tracing process*; to de-metaphorise *trace* and engineer it as a proper *realising* design method that has the ability to engage with form at an uncompromising operational state of plenitude. In contrast to the sculptural paradigm, form-synthesis is an effect of the way the extended locality/site principles the scheme and opens it up to spatial intelligibility rather than objective finiteness or counterfiniteness. Function, or the brief, is hereby seen not as an imperative to be accurately implemented, but as an 'objective' body of meaning hinted at by the morphology. This allows for the presentation of a diversity of architectural projects which all have the *real* as their starting point. Their concern is to permit the expression of the morphology of the real – both as given and manipulable – rather than the architects' viewpoints. The projects do not aspire to create new environments but instead take on board and respond to existing ones. They consist of small, medium and large (or S, M, L, XL!) morphological engagements of the site concerning landscape features, climatic conditions, monumental integrations in dense urban space, pre-existing structures and locational characteristics, idiosyncratic natural conditioning

at an urban level, strong building tradition, specific materials and construction methods. If the theoretical texts presented in the first part of this issue propose a rethinking of spatiality, these projects propose a *non-ideas* condition which is of practical but also of theoretical importance yet to be developed.

Necdet Teymur's 'unbuilt' environment suggests that unfinished architecture can never be overlooked. The *unfinished building* is neither disrupting nor 'backgrounding' our perceptions but comes as a state of plenitude of form (and educational value) impregnated with possibilities of functions rather than of individual buildings. The unfinished building is not an unfinished object; it is rather a tautology – a condition synonymous with the building-process itself. 'Unfinished Buildings' introduces us to a condition of overstatement of real built form freed from its original symbolic enclosure and associated with the urgency (rather than the establishment) of function – a condition critical of the idea of 'bricolage' or 'collage city'.

Philippos Oreopoulos introduces us to an inverted archaeological context in a fundamentally anti-Derridean reading of the concept of 'trace'. The *labyrinth* indicates what the trace is really capable of. Remaining in the positive, he discusses the specificness of the local, how the 'past' returns as a historic-real and total design tool. Perhaps what is equally important with his approach of this spatial model is its safeguarding from any symbolic remodelling or positivisation. So a distinction between the *spatial* and the *visual* labyrinth has to be drawn here: the former leading to a *total design* experience and practice encompassing a range of objectal processes from garments to urban space, the latter, merely a visual appropriation of the spatiality of the former, leading to disorder.

Richard Sennett's *touch* or *resistance* introduces spatiality as a critical subjectivity occurring on the side of the object. In the audio discourse, the body-microsite is re-organised in a process of the realisation of musical sound; the latter is not a given but a quested sense, occurring at a micro-dialectics between finger and instrument. This is in contrast to dasein-minded space that de-organises the body by individualising it as a comfortable whole, applying the subject's taste catholically to the world and committing itself 'freely' to discourses requiring spatial fragmentation. Resistance seems to be generated in the difference between procedural space and the (ideally expected) dasein place (a user-friendly operation) of a discourse (it is on these grounds that Anamorphosis Architects introduce the concept of inverted narcissism and attempt a visual introduction of Sennett's text).

In Andreas Empirikos/Andrew Samuels' countertransferential paradigm the site/trace acquires a psychoanalytic dimension. Psychoanalysis 'ends' as linguistic practice, but continues through the spatial field, at once social and personal, real/factual and poetic, domestic and public, modern and ancient. Space as both 'here and there' enables and maps the politics of reclaimed subjectivity and a redefinition of the personal in terms of the social. 'Notions of objectivity' or *urban fantasies* (visually developed by Anamorphosis Architects) have nothing in common with the privacy of imagination; they are spatial propositions enabling the politicisation of the Freudian symptom. The person/individual difference recurs here; but this is as old as the difference between spatial and symbolic cultural processes, or between citizenship (polis) and aimless flâneuring (a-polis).

Pavel Büchler's *crowd* affords a *shadow* full of spatial meaning, reminding us of Lyotard's fully spatial absence of truth. In a strong un-wandering manner, the crowd is seeking un-symbolic cohesions (which eventually may radicalise it); making a case for the quest for an internal, un-individuated, human-to-human, body-to-body solidifying 'resistance', rather than for physical expansion to abstract space. A different kind of 'uncanny' appears here: the site appears as an *urban body*; the crowd is the medium of spatial communication – traditionally unsymbolic – an urban fantasy perhaps, reclaiming lost citizenship; it is the collective symptom of private symbolic activity. The Red Flag is an urban-conscious artwork radically realising a symbolic situation of total gravity – 'architecture becomes an active paradox of the show'.

Jean-François Lyotard's extract from *Discours, figure* bridges the gap between visual artwork and spatial experience. Spatiality, rather than entropic (ie accidental, flâneuring) interpretation, brings us closer to Rodin's intentions. The 'visual art object' is never placed at the same place (as the 'real'), but placeness itself becomes a discourse exposing visuality as a whole. The Imaginary activates site-relations beyond the visuality of the Real. Artwork acquires a radically different meaning from some contemporary art critics/historians' interpretations; it is not here to signify the absence of the real object but the absence of truth strictly speaking; more importantly it enfigures the actual *allocation process*, introducing a critical distance between the original symbolic discourse and the spatial environment in which it operates.

In Doreen Massey's reading of the inverted House artwork, spatiality is highlighted as a major political dimension. Unlike some postmodern historical approaches (from architecture or art), her *politics of location* points at neither anti-dasein (uncanny) design strategies, nor entropic interpretations. Massey's House is not that of Whiteread's, but is yet further inverted; it challenges the responsibility of forms – standing there radically bare and empty, but rich enough to *cast* real living. The politics of location specifies an agitated site engaging: *nostos* as a spatial mode of presencing (as opposed to a symbolic nostalgic 'past'), *socialisation of the familiar* (as opposed to privatisation) and the *tradition of locality/history-making* (as opposed to the familiarisation with 'heritage' and tradition). Agitated 'private' space – the space that 'women have lived in' – and to that extent the space of agoraphobia, migration etc, is not a symptom but a problematic of spatial instrumentation for the re-allocation of function.

In Roger Connah's discussion of ARRAK's architecture, the concept of the *uninflected* – an invisible uncanny – addresses the architect's internalisation of the site of architecture. Neither expressionism nor impressionism, a real-space problematic is inscribed in the architect's personal design exploration. Here is a non-attitude, a sought-and-lost style, an honest uncovering of that torturous feeling we practising architects have when, in the middle of nowhere, we are asked to build. A 'nowhere' that can be anywhere; a problematic perhaps more real than a theoretical 'non-place'. For some it is a spatial virus in the healthy body of the expected place (homely or unhomely); for others it is a *spatial alertness*, a spatial montage – a report of somebody's personal engagement with architecture.

In terms of the projects presented in this issue, *territorialising architecture* is a description that best reflects the built work of Ian Ritchie and the conceptual work of François Roche. It signifies a morphological engagement of the site (whether rural or urban) often leading to seemingly 'high-tech' but essentially modest solutions that are based on the engineering of nature itself. The greenhouse microclimate is not 'a building' but a local duplication of nature, operating as a design principle for schemes hosting cultural

activities. *Chameleon architecture* is thus not a metaphor but a working concept based on the deep awareness of the morphological potential of nature and of the spatial economy produced out of the processes of the redirection of nature to itself. Technology – surely 'high' – emerges as an effect of such processes rather than as an imposed model pre-developed elsewhere.

Janek Bielski's *desertscape* and Livady Architects' *nightscape* introduce us to the discourse of *Other* urbanities. Their morphological propositions activate the urban/collective 'natural' a priori, proposing possibilities of spatial cultures in large urban schemes. The desert or nightlight are not discomforting symptoms of the 'green city' or 'daylight city culture'; neither are they settings, neutral conditions or design metaphors. They are instead considered as the *Other* urban site(s) of the town – sites so far repressed by specific urban cultures but highly constitutive of them. What was formerly exurban (desert and night), is now dialecticised as a 'large scale' design problematic. Urban space is called upon to refer to itself – *at the same place* – in an act of spatial engineering and economy, anticipating and doubly realising culture and life.

In Jim Taggart's presentation, Patkau Architects' *particular pragmatism* (or *found potential*) and their general–particular, interior–exterior, spatial dialectics orients design towards the localisation of strong community, educational, etc, values (not surprisingly, their big school buildings lack graffiti). Far from being a style, such a principle appears in a variety of forms according to the specific requirements of the project. The apparent similarities with certain deconstructive styles of our time, whereby a 'freedom of forms' is effected after the imposition of the metaphor of a free play of bodily movements or actions, raise a good critical point. The morphological complexity in their work is indeed manifestly un-sculptural and construction- and site-minded, whereas in deconstructive examples it is a style, a non-tool, a leftover or redundancy of the building process (not surprisingly, often demanding high-tech solutions for its realisation).

Jones Partners and Lapeña–Torres Tur propose a 'surrealist' *excessive use of a singular material or construction method* in an act of over-realisation of function. Here the material recurring to itself *is* the active site. In their cabins Jones Partners incorporate the morphological principle of yet another site quality involving not just natural environment but the very experience of distancing. Their design bears a kind of *spatial awareness of transportation*, offering a structure that is at once stable and firm but also removable. Flâneur-style architecture seems out of question; transportation, including that of the construction material, is, rather, mapped in a reversed way, as a firm anti-metaphorisation/anti-intellectualisation of physical distance, travelling or visiting.

In Clare Design and Antithesis Architecture's projects, *casual* architecture means a spatial incorporation of all site and landscape aspects, reworking spaces on the traces of pre-existing building structures. Cheap and handy materials are used within the logic of quick construction, durability and recycling. In contrast to other work that espouses the 'monumentalisation' of the casual (eg corrugated panel style), and the delirious hijacking of architectural 'scrap parts' used in proposals entertaining unrelatedness and dysfunctionality (in the same breath, amazingly, as 'hypercommunicability'), forms and materials in the work of both teams are functionally busy and destined to realise much more than one purpose in uncompromising compositions. Indicative of this is also their simulatory use of colour which appears to be an integral part of the extended site. In Antithesis' schemes, *modernity* (as *object/site – excess*) is revealed as the underlying architectural principle not only of the traditional settlement of Santorini but also of its figurative, self-referential landscape – a principle apparently inhabiting the island for the last 4,000 years.

Nikos Georgiadis/Anamorphosis Architects propose the concept of *negative space* at the level of technique in analysis and practice. In their museum proposal, *building in process* activates a site consisting of the historic/'past' as exhibited object, pre-Renaissance spatial tradition and the urban quality of the social subject *vis-à-vis* the symbolic load of the Acropolis monument. As a critique of flâneuring and negativist architecture, the project covers a design field ranging from the micro-level of the allocation/exhibition of the sculptures to the urban role of the museum building. Spatial technique is hereby employed as a *total design* approach that encompasses urban space, architecture, art, even graphics – an early modern design concept revitalised via a spatial contextualisation of psychoanalytic principles.

What associates all of these works is not their uniformity of style or their thematic similarities but the fact that they have the potential to anticipate one another at a spatial level, acting as spatial reminders of one another. So, for example, one could associate Patkau Architects' interiors with Jones Partners' overworked staircase; the Acropolis museum with Rodin's statue of Balzac; Sennett's 'resistance' with ARRAK's 'stubborn' architecture. Equally, the 'unfinished' buildings of Teymur and Jones Partners' 'overfinished' buildings afford the same morphological affluence and exaggeration, while they can also meet the unsculptural reading of Massey, and so on and so forth. Indeed, one of the aims of this issue is to enable free spatial associations amongst the contributors' works, rather than to 'style up' a 'trace' discourse. It also aims to challenge the reader to encounter the featured architectural work in terms of its public usability. Far from being a discursive principle, this condition of architecture as a tracing process signifies an open procedure whereby more projects can be invited and presented. For these works allow no space for authorcentricity but belong to a kind of active spatial tradition – an international unconscious architecture, the main characteristic of which is the generosity of space.

Nikos Georgiadis is an independent researcher in psychoanalytic theory and a practising architect, founder member of Anamorphosis Architects.

Note

1 The conceptual framework of this issue is informed by the author's spatial, symptomatic reading of Lacanian psychoanalysis. Moreover, the research of Anamorphosis Architects in the field of what is termed traditional (contemporary and past) architectural experience, as well as work in urban design, architecture and graphics, have greatly contributed to the work presented in this issue.

NECDET TEYMUR

'UNFINISHED BUILDINGS'

An (unfinished) introduction

The unspoken assumption in almost all design and building activity is that it must end up with a 'finished' product. After all, if, as popular wisdom declares, starting a task is one half of finishing it, a finished task must be the two halves of the whole – nothing less, nothing more. But can there ever be such a 'whole' that is 'complete'? And outside the domain of the proverbial generalities is there an end-product in design and building processes that represents a definitive *full-stop* to them? The moment when dignitaries cut the ribbon or when the contractors deliver the keys, the 'construction' phase is assumed to have stopped and 'habitation', criticism and aging phases are assumed to begin. But can any building, or anything for that matter, ever finish in absolute terms? It may of course be asked whether it really matters, especially if the architects' or the builders' ultimate aim appears to be to deliver the keys – real or metaphorical.

The end of which beginning?

Seen from a scientific point of view, there is no *beginning* as such that can be pinpointed and no *end* that we can be certain of. As everything changes all the time, there is never a fixed state. Photographs tell the story only of the state in 1/250th of a second. What may appear to be finished is but one stage in the development of the matter – whether it is Mount Fuji in its perfect proportions, an industrial product that comes off the assembly line, or an architectural or urban product that is designed on drawing board and put together on site. Besides, the chemical, physical and social forces ensure that the lives of cities and buildings go on forever.

Buildings, or all artefacts for that matter, are made up of previously existing or produced 'ingredients' – soil, water, air, timber, metal, glass, plastic, but also human knowledge, skills, culture, social norms and rules, resources and human labour. They include physical and other fragments from *previous* artefacts, including previous buildings. Their built history is nothing if not *intertextual* and uneven.

They even incorporate within themselves organic remains from thousands of years of natural history. There could plausibly be dinosaurs in baked bricks! However, in designing and constructing, we also pass into the building the *genotypes*, the inherited knowledge, the patterns of space, form and behaviour that we, as designers and members of a culture, may have inherited over the years.

Seen in this way, the role of the designers or planners as members of the building team becomes that of a *participant* who contributes in some respects, rather than that of a *master* who conceives the final composition and applies the finishing brushstrokes before declaring it ready for execution and use. But that is another story.

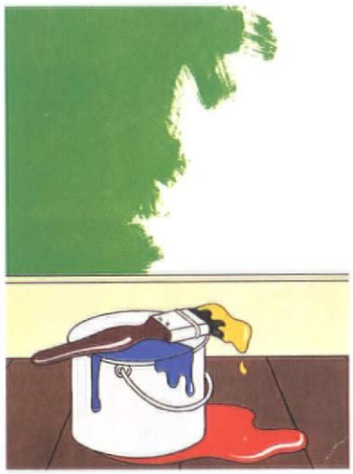
The multi-variant, multi-dimensional, complex and uneven lives of buildings thus continue after they are assumed to have finished. They variously become old, dilapidated, damaged, altered, added to, abandoned, or are worn out, left to the ravages of time, bacteria or climate, burned down, or partly or wholly destroyed by nature or by conscious acts of vandalism, war or 'ethnic cleansing'.

In short, buildings become ruined by use or by intention. Human ingenuity tries to ensure that bombs are created which will kill people without damaging buildings, but often 'precision bombing' misses the target by a few millimetres – with disastrous consequences for the inhabitants and profit for others.

Some ruins are later built upon – the foundations holding up more than one superstructure in their lifetime; others are cleared completely to make way for new buildings, or salvaged only to reincarnate in other places and times. Buildings that have been left to their own fate may become significant ruins of historic interest, often ending up as objects of holiday tourism or as sterile sculptures in museums (such as the Pergamon Altar in the Berlin Museum).

Some buildings, on the other hand, are left unfinished or half unfinished – more by accident than by design. They may be accepted as they are, namely as (un)finished 'normal' buildings. In other words, unfinished buildings can be buildings too – in form or in use.

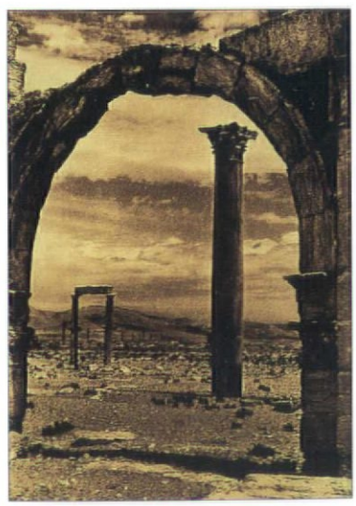
After all, if 'Unfinished Symphonies' count as music, unfinished paintings hang in galleries, unfinished poems cause serious debates among scholars, and unfinished social and political projects produce an unfinished society that fails to dislodge even the most incompetent governments, why



Wet Paint, *Les Coleman*



'Unfinished Building', student work



Ruins, Palmyra

is it that it is not possible to have an 'Unfinished Building' (UB) as the 'final' product? What is 'final' anyway?

It is known that in olden times artists were not supposed to declare their work fully finished as this would be tantamount to competing with God's perfection. In parts of Anatolia, for example, finishing a house would signal the time of completing one's mission in this world and of passing to the 'Other' one.

Of course, some buildings become progressively 'unfinished' due to uncontrollable, unnegotiable, if slowly exercised, forces of nature.

Other UBs may variously become ruins of another type – sources of criticism, ridicule or inspiration, havens for rats and cats or, in societies which appear to have solved all their problems, shelter for the homeless. Or they may be seen as accidental masterpieces or stylistic innovation, hiding their 'finishedness' behind an unfinished surface (a common question to the architects of the Pompidou Centre could easily be, 'When are you going to finish this building?'). 'Deconised' architecture could be described as avoiding the question by designing-in unfinishedness – with an admittedly uneven degree of success!

Some architectural questions

Some theoretical and polemical questions emerge from the above observations:

- can one design or build a 'ruin'?
- can one design an 'unfinished building'?
- can one unfinish a building?
- can an unfinished building be an object of knowledge?

Compared with the theoretical, professional and educational implications of such questions, would it be unfair to suggest that some of the concerns of so-called 'deconstructivist architecture' might look somewhat less than significant?

A serious interrogation of architecture and design along these lines could not only suggest some truly new possibilities, but also new insights into the design process. What is the 'problem' that is to be analysed, studied, designed and evaluated (to refer back to the stages defined by the design methods movement) in a process the result of which is to be necessarily and profoundly unfinished?

Is 'absence' something to be ignored, avoided, filled up, or celebrated (à la Zen)? Isn't space an absence that should necessarily remain unfilled? Is it not the case that a filled-up space can no longer be accessible, hence describable as social or architectural space? Moreover, understanding finished buildings as somewhat unfinished could reveal much that might probably have been hidden from our conditioned eyes.

Finally, in education, can we teach and learn what is not there from what is?

Educational objectives (and possible objections)

In line with the concept of 'educational project', an unfinished building (UB) project could have the explicit aim of provoking thoughts around two seemingly opposite possibilities:

- doing something to finish an UB, or/and
- designing a ruin, completing an UB, or further, unfinishing an UB.

By forcing us to think of the paradoxical or the impossible, it might free ourselves from some of the conventions that organise our responses to given historical, architectural or urban problems.

From an educational point of view, it also aims to test the hypothesis that design projects do not have to be (poor) imitations of what architectural offices do out there, or that they must start with a hypothetical site, brief and client, yet finish up with a 'realistic' and 'complete' project.

Why, for example, can't a seemingly unfinished project be theoretically valid and educationally useful? Isn't the world bound to remain unfinished however many finished buildings we may construct?

Or, if education is supposed to be responsive to the 'real world', why should it be something that finishes at the end of four or five years of schooling? So, what about a truly 'unfinished education'? Can we not therefore imagine a curriculum, a course or a project that is unfinished by design, and not simply by a failure to complete the requirements? Would this not then be another word for 'open-ended learning', 'open(-ended) education', 'open-ended design' or, indeed, an 'open(-ended) society'?

A studio(us) problem

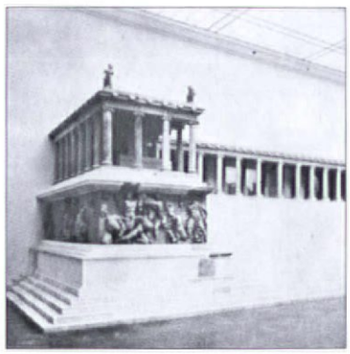
The project is based on a sad little story. There is an 'unfinished building' (really and literally) that lies to the south-east of a university Architecture Building. Those who are old enough to remember its inception might have a faint memory that it was originally designed as an annex to the existing Building. However, as a result of various economic measures, there was never enough money to finish it.

The architect became disillusioned with architectural practice, taught in the school for a few years, but left big city life in favour of a peaceful retreat somewhere in the country, reportedly growing sunflowers, rearing chickens and training horses. He did not leave a forwarding address for his mail, nor is he connected to the rest of the world by telephone, fax or e-mail (he refuses the Internet and the Internet refuses him!).

As if that was not enough, the only remaining set of drawings submitted to the municipality for planning permission was burnt during the civil riots in Gaziosmanpanpafia a few years ago.



Cappadocia, Turkey



Pergamon Altar, Berlin Museum



Finished?



Unfinished?

In short, we have no information as to how the building was intended to be completed. The task therefore is to finish it or/and further unfinish it or/and do something with it.

Methods and possibilities

The starting point is the present state of our UB with its exposed columns, formwork, reinforcement bars, leftover building materials, the water that is creating puddles and the natural growth. However, the material, site, brief, plan, programme, and, by implication, possible range of responses are all there (or, perhaps, to a fresh mind, waiting to be released). One may deduce the type of structure that was intended from what exists, or its latent potential; or, one may ignore its given history or limitations and construct anew.

In tackling this problem, it is possible to be as conventional as one likes just as much as unconventional. A functional solution may be considered as much as one that is not functional!

The imagination may be allowed to run wild in all directions, or the ruins may be placed in a box and sold to architectural tourists (remember the Berlin Wall!).

Or the structure may be thought of as an extension to the present Architecture Building, or as a deconstruction, explosion, baby, clone or clown of this building; perhaps even as its antithesis, full-stop or semi-colon.

One may decide to make the UB a symbol of the end of 'architecture' (or 'Architecture') as we know it, or the beginning of a new architectural movement (especially now that deconstructivism is 'old hat', even in Sarajevo School of Architecture).

The building may become a lasting monument to all unfinished projects, unthought-of projects, projects that were never begun, or those that were killed off before they got off the ground. Indeed, it may become a shrine to the unfulfilled aspirations of all humankind, the clipped wings of beautiful birds, or commemorate broken pediments and promises.

The UB may become a testing ground for the ideas that were not able to be realised in the studio, the building that one always knew one could design, the drawings that one never got round to doing, the painting that one always wanted to hang in a prestigious gallery, the sonata that one always wanted to compose, the poem that one felt was trying to come out, or the story that one wished to tell one day.

It may become the embodiment of one's fantasies that was never manageable on a scale of 1:100.

A haven may be created for oneself, one's friends, profession, culture, hobby, obsessions, concerns, people, language, T-square, paintbrush or computer!

Or, a new construction method could be experimented with, a new settlement plan, a new lifestyle, a new fast-food chain, a new type of bookstore, disco or travel agent, a swimming pool, a tropical jungle, or a cultural, worship or meditation centre, or a zapping centre with 32 channels, a bicycle shed or a cathedral, a decorated or, probably, a 'neo-post-decon-classical' shed.

It is possible that members of the School of Architecture with this particular UB in such proximity may be dying to undertake an *educational* experiment to improve their education (even their teachers'), to prove that there is more to architecture than Architecture, and more to education than schooling. Or, being so close to a School of Architecture that is bursting at its seams, they may decide to do a new and 'real' alternative to their present building.

Or, failing to do all or any of these, one may simply do an 'Unfinished Building'!

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Progressively unfinished – sketch of church in 1750, 1904, 1912, 1919

References

The thoughts expressed in this paper were inspired by a half-finished extension to the Architecture Building (designed by Behruz Çinici and completed in 1963) at METU, Ankara. The project referred to was originally designed in sketch form in 1995. At the time of preparing this article, the building was, finally (and hopefully) being 'finished'!

An earlier and shorter version of the complete programme with instructions to students was published in *Architectural History and the Studio*, Adam Hardy and Necdet Teymur (eds), Question Press (London), 1996. For the concepts of 'educational object' and 'educational project' see the aforementioned book.

For the concepts of 'unevenness', 'uniqueness' and 'complexity', see Necdet Teymur, 'Uneven Development of People and Places: An Outline of a Theory of Built Form', in A Awotona and N Teymur (eds), *Tradition, Location and Community*, Aldershot (Avebury), 1997, pp27-33.

The theme picture *Wet Paint* by Les Coleman is published by Artists' Cards, London. I thank the artist for the inspiration.

PHILIPPOS OREOPOULOS

THE SPATIAL MODEL OF THE LABYRINTH

This paper will address a theme that is both central to my own theoretical research and appears to be part of a more general problematic in the theory of the built environment. I would like to focus on what I term the Spatial Model of the Eastern Greek World,[1] a little known area in the context of architectural theory and urban planning. This brief, rather schematic presentation will develop at both paradigmatic and methodological levels, describing the production process of the built environment in order to see how a conceptual framework might be generated in relation to it.

My research in this area was instigated by a 10th-century legal document by the architect Juliano Askalonites (although recent studies have suggested that Askalonites lived as early as the sixth century AD). This text is itself located on the border of antiquity and the Middle Ages, appearing as it does at the moment when the crucial split between the Greek East and the Latin West began, where two respective, fundamentally different philosophical models originated. A short 'theoretical' text that accompanies the main legal document led my analysis to the uncovering of a cosmological framework, which as well as appearing as an ecological model of the earth, air, fire and water, shapes an anthropological model (concerning human relations at a spatial level), which in turn defines a spatial model 'logicised' by relations of neighbouring, adjacent and communal living.

The main characteristics of this spatial model are abstraction, permanency and universality: the basis of the production of similar permanent structures of settlements during a period that lasted about 10 centuries and extended throughout the Mediterranean, the Balkans and the Near East. The settlements appeared to develop from what I term the principle of the *primary element*. A similar principle can be found in Aristotle's theory of kinesis (*Metaphysics*, 1073a) whereby the original/primary element, even though it does not move, sets in motion the structure of the universe. Excavations have revealed that the creation and reproduction of these settlements were not structured according to a particular urban plan; rather, their development, in both small- and large-scale terms, was based on the principle that each built unit emerges from pre-existing, neighbouring spatial rules. The primary element is that which, through its own function and random character,* defines the way the spatial sequence gives structure to the urban fabric as a whole. Consequently, building blocks are not shaped by predesigned roads; rather, elementary neighbouring structures are shaped by six orientations, together forming a cohesive built environment. The distinction in Western theoretical discourse between 'architecture' and 'urban space' therefore does not apply here – instead, the two are unified in the built environment – and what we have found here is a theoretical and practical tectonic discourse that is shared among various fields of knowledge (including philosophy, law, medicine, combat, farming, music, mathematics and engineering). Indeed, the pattern produced by these settlements defined by the primary element takes on a labyrinthine form. Basic types of the primary element in settlements,[2] including villages, private land, suburbs, towns and cities, identified in Byzantine documentation are:[3] the church (the church itself and the parish), the military (the fortress and the palace), and production (the diocese and the square),[4] which corresponds with the church, military and agriculture: the three typical components of medieval society in the East and the West. They are also quoted in the *Geoponica*, a 10th-century Byzantine text that states 'kind-wise, three are the basic divisions of the state: military, church, agriculture',[5] and can be found in the classic Western medieval social division of *oratores, bellatores, laboratores*.[6] Thus the labyrinthine structure of medieval settlements is related to the deeper organisational structure of medieval Western and Eastern society as a whole; and this is due to a common tradition in Greco-Roman law on the built environment.[7]

In order to have a clearer idea of the elements that constitute this spatial model and that validate its use in contemporary architectural theory, we need to examine where it originated, taking into account that 'origin' is an extended cultural process rather than an absolute attainable point. The moment of origin can be seen as a period of transition in which 'nature' develops into 'culture'; this will also entail an archaeological analysis of prehistoric settlements and an examination of mythology. An archaeological approach necessitates moving back and forth in time and weaving a path through various fields of knowledge in order to pass from the empirical world of history to the transcendental space of theory, and thereby from the specific to the typological, the local to the global, the particular to the general – in sum, to common compositional principles.[8]

For example, the Neolithic tripartite structure of permanent dwelling, agriculture and stock rearing which relates to an elementary social order and introduces nature into the cultural process first appears in Greece in settlements in Thessaly, northern Greece, in the preceramic Neolithic period (around 7,000 BC). (It is also identifiable in other areas of the Mediterranean and the Balkans,[9] and can be traced back to prehistoric Mesopotamian civilisations.) In Thessaly, clearly organised settlements can be found in the middle-Neolithic period in Sesklo (fifth to fourth centuries BC), and in the late Neolithic period in Dhimini. Their layout is almost identical to the form of a labyrinth, consisting of courtyards with entrances/exits, dwellings, and a central square in which is located a 'public house' which appears to be the starting point of the labyrinthine shape. According to recent research by Hourmouziadis, the towns of Sesklo and Dhimini of the middle and late Neolithic period, and the ancient period to some extent, do not constitute citadels (as Theocharis and Tsountas maintain);[10] rather, their world-famous courtyards (three in Sesklo and six in Dhimini, as excavations have shown) are architectural elements that form basic structures (similar to the courtyard walls of the Greek islands), whose function is

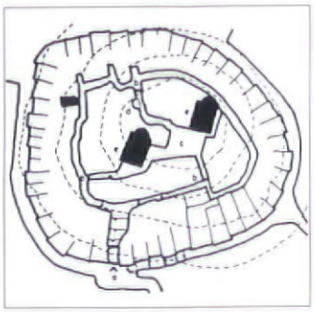
dependent on general planning regulations mediating the overall process of production in society.[11]

A rigorous and cohesive spatial arrangement of the settlements is created by the circular courtyards whose contiguity forms a kind of continuing spiralling wall, either side of which the houses and work places are articulated, and by the fact that all the settlement is organised through one imperfect spiral beginning at the central public house. Indeed, the fact that this public house functions either as a storage space, palace,[12] or shrine (as in the Neolithic building discovered at Nea Nikomedeia),[13] would suggest that the first core feature organising the Neolithic settlements of Thessaly into different phases of their rudimentary transformation follows the tripartite division of daily life of farming, power and the sacred. During the Bronze Age, between 1600 and 1100 BC, these three elements are to be found again in the labyrinthine citadel of Mycenae, comprised of royal tombs (the sacred), a fortification (the palace), and storage space for cultivated produce (farming), and furthermore in mythology.[14] This structure appears to govern all Indo-European societies, as shown by Dumézil's studies on the tripartite belief system of Indo-Europeans, substantiated in the comparative analysis of myths on deities.[15]

Before introducing the aspect of mythical thought in relation to the fundamental aspects of a labyrinthine settlement, it is important to note that even in Dumézil's tripartite ideology, which governs Eastern and Western medieval settlements, we can identify primary aspects that are found in Neolithic settlements (of labyrinthine structure, following the principle of the primary aspect) with basic structural aspects of both Greek (Eastern) and Latin (Western) medieval settlements. Yet by identifying them as such the spatial model of the Greek East begins to take on a more archetypal character, as it is directed into the more primordial and universal aspects of our civilisation, while its features – ecological connection/awareness/concern, labyrinthine structure, courtyard wall function, centrality, principle of the primary aspect, contiguous built mass, free geometry, socio-spatial cohesion – all seem to acquire a continuity and overall compositional character.[16]

In addition to tracing back the Greek spatial model to archetypical structures in Neolithic settlements, a further link with mythical thought might strengthen the possibility of discovery as an even more general compositional principle, which also has an archetypical attribute.

In Indo-European mythology, the labyrinth is identified with birth,[17] and more particularly with the archetypical symbols and functions relating to Mother Earth. Entering a labyrinth, for example, is identified with a return to Mother Earth. The labyrinth also takes on a cave-like function, in that it is a place of initiation and for the burial of the dead (ie a sacred place), a place of divine intercourse (ie the origination of the universe and of life), a place of wielding power (such as the Minoan labyrinth). Therefore the labyrinth in myth appears to follow the tripartite Indo-European belief structure echoed in both medieval and prehistoric spatial



Village of Pyrgos in Thera



Capital settlement of Astypalea



Sesklo



Byzantine city



Western Medieval city



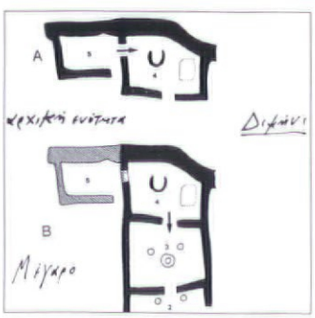
Medieval city of Thebes



Dhimini



Muslim city



Dhimini storage space and palace



Mycenae

models. The labyrinth archetype is directly linked to the archetypical image of the 'tekton' (the artisan, craftsman) Daedalus,[18] and they both seem to form an integral conceptual system. However, the Daedalus archetype reflects its *tectonic*, rather than its *archi*-tectonic abilities (in the etymological sense of 'archi' as 'leading'): so it is related to the craftsman of the Eastern and Western Middle Ages, rather than to the notion of the architect of the Classical period or the Western Renaissance.

Moreover, the myth of the labyrinth reflects aspects of practical Reason, and more specifically, the issue of representation. Indeed, if in the Neolithic ceramics the spiral, the graphic representation of the labyrinth at a social communicational level, reproduces the archetype of the spatial system of the settlements of the time, then the disk of Phaestos, with its spiral-shaped writing, appears to be the first archetype which combines the spatial system (the labyrinth), the system of representation (the spiral) and the system of writing (iconographic spiral). I will refer to a particular application of this combination where the engraved writing refers to the ploughshare that ploughs from right to left and left to right, and to the road – via rupta – of the settlements. We thus have three primary operations with which we pass from Nature to Culture: the ploughshare (farming, a system of production), the road (building, a system of organising space) and writing (representation, a system of communication and aesthetics). Here we have a 'representation' of space as its simple writing/drawing, and not its imitation, and therefore 'inaccurate' representation. It is also important to note the archetypical negative relation within the language–space framework, as witnessed in the Judaic tradition of the Tower of Babel, whose spiralling labyrinthine shape is paralleled with disorder and chaos.**

So far we have introduced the fundamental, constant characteristics of the spatial model (its labyrinthine logic, principle of the primary element, masonry and representation) at the level of the universality of primordial and archetypical structures. But it is also necessary to describe what gives rise to the basic differences between the aspects that constitute the labyrinthine form described above and their transformations in the entire spatial, archetypical model, when this applies in the particular conditions of an era. We will shift emphasis from the description of a still, stable structure to the structure in motion, adding the dimension of time. This foundational archetypical meaning of *difference* will be searched for at the core of the spatial model, in the aspects that constitute the principle of the primary element (which, as we have seen, in every case reflects the Indo-European tripartite arrangement of production/agriculture, power/military, culture/sacred) and its equivalent spatial structure. This difference will be sought for paradigmatically via the appearance of the labyrinth, in the myth of the Minotaur and Theseus.

The Minotaur who inhabits the labyrinth is the result of a teratogenesis, the union of human and bull; his existence is therefore an example of the outcome of production's negative aspect. King Minos uses Daedalus' construction to exercise a vindictive form of power in his war against the Athenians; his abuse of sovereignty is compounded by inhuman consecration in forcing the Athenians to yield a tribute of 14 Athenian youths to be fed to the Minotaur. So in this structure of the myth of the labyrinth, the barbarian aspects of production, military power and culture come to the fore – that is, the three central aspects structuring Indo-European civilisation, which so far we have seen to be defining both the medieval and prehistoric (Neolithic and middle Helladic) spatial models. By enlisting the help of Daedalus, Theseus succeeds in killing the Minotaur, thereby overthrowing the three barbarian aspects that structure the core of social life (production, military power and culture). On his return to Athens from Crete Theseus joins all the dwellings surrounding the city, placing the Agora at their centre. Indeed, Theseus is the first to apply this structure and therefore considered to be the founder of democracy and possibly, even, according to Lévêque and Vidal-Naquet, a rival model for Clisthenes' own political and spatial model[19] – one in which geometry coincides with the political theorisation of the city-state whereby the common hearth ('hestia koine') is the centre of the city, the state and its legislation.[20] This is not a precise geometrical centre, but an arithmetical one which, according to Vernant, Lévêque and Vidal-Naquet,[21] declares an absence of sovereignty and restates the civil equality of citizens. The same applies to the rational, simplified, strict geometrical order that is proposed for the city by the political theorist and astronomer Hippodamos. By contrast, in the Platonic city the centre is not the Agora, but rather a hilltop on which are located temples, military residences, gymnasia and eating places.[22]

As for the public space and time, according to these scholars these are supposed to operate as mirror image of heavenly 'reality'; thus the microcosm of the city, through absolute geometric symmetry and harmony,[23] (following classical aesthetics) can participate in the macrocosm of the universe. This is a typical example of Platonic idealism, which in the Western and Eastern Middle Ages will again be manifested through the category of the *Unbuilt*[24] (reflecting divine religious utopias), but maintaining as we have seen, in the category of the *Built* – that is, the space of mortals – the logic of the labyrinth and its anti-classical aesthetic which, once again, will be destroyed by the neoplatonic Classicism of the Renaissance at both theoretical[25] and practical discourse[26] and continued by neoclassicism.[27]

By shifting from the myth of the labyrinth and the Minotaur to the political and spatial reality of Clisthenes, and then to the Platonic utopia, it can be seen that the genetic difference of the core, or more specifically the *archetypical*, principle of the primary element, which is determined by the triadic categories of the Indo-European peoples, gives rise to the transformations in both the structure of space and social life.

The *labyrinth* is therefore not simply a formalistic shape, but an archetypical compositional and organising principle that deconstructs yet also structures life and space in a generic, comprehensive way. It is an important conceptual key in the criticism of works of architecture and theoretical interpretations as well as in their recomposition. Viewed within this framework, various penetrating contemporary analyses in environmental psychology, such as Moles and Rohmer's *Labyrinthes du vécu* (1982) appear culturally poor; by contrast the labyrinth – as an aspect of spatial culture – provides an insight into a cultural world and can serve as an inspiration to the architect – the poet catharsising our guilty everyday life. Comprehensive notions such as ecological concern, labyrinthine structures, the function of the courtyard wall, centrality, the principle of the primary element, a contiguous building mass, free geometry and socio-spatial cohesion are the origins and the foundations of a continuum which extend through time to provide a conceptual system applicable in architectural practice today.

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Notes

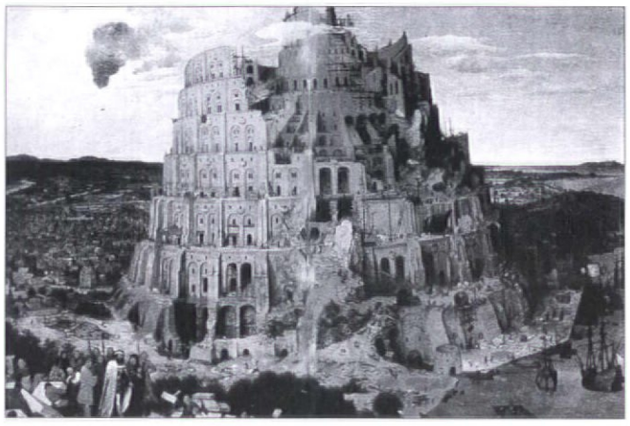
1 P Oreopoulos, 'Histoire de la pensée sur la ville et l'architecture en Grèce du XVe au XIXe siècle', Thèse de Doctorat de l'Université de Paris I, 1990, vol 1, pp 19, 136, 166, 246.
2 W Ashburner, 'A Byzantine Treatise on Taxation', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 35 (1915). See also A Thomadaki, *The Farming Community in the Late Byzantine Age*, MIET (Athens), 1987, p71.
3 See C Bouras, 'Residences and Buildings in Byzantine Greece', in *Shelter in Greece: Architecture in Greece* magazine (Athens), 1979, pp30-52. See also Oreopoulos, op cit, p311 for an analysis of Muslim architectural documentation; and for a 15th-19th century study see A Refik, *Onuncu Asr-i Hicri' de Istanbul Hayati*, 1988, vols I-IV, vol I, pp144-45.
4 See G Ralli and M Potli, *The Gods and Sacred Rules* (G Chartophylacos), Athens, 1852, pp536, 538; R Janin, *Constantinople Byzantine, Archives de l'Orient Chrétien, 4A*, Institut Français d'Etudes Byzantines (Paris), 1964, pp138, 304; Ralli and Potli, op cit, vol B, pp41, 395; W Enselin, 'Government and Administration in the Byzantine Empire' in *Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol IV, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 1966; W Ashburner, 'A Byzantine Treatise on Taxation', op cit, p77.
5 *Geoponica sive Cassiani Basi scholastici de re rustica ecologae*, ed H Beckh, Lipsia (Teubner), 1895, p2.
6 J Le Golf, *La Civilisation de l'Occident Médieval*, Artaut (Paris), 1984.
7 P Oreopoulos, 'The Legal Question of the Built Environment from the Roman to Late Byzantine Periods', in Gerolymbou, Iordanoglou, Lavvas and Oreopoulos, *The Legislation of Greek Town Planning*, unpublished, 1994.
8 Useful references for this method of approach are: J Derrida, *Le Problème de la genèse dans la philosophie de Husserl*, PUF (Paris), 1990; J Derrida, *L'Origine de la géometrie*, PUF (Paris) 1962; and J-F Lyotard, *La Phénoménologie*, PUF (Paris), 1954.
9 K Kotsakis, 'The Use of Habitational Space in Neolithic Sesklo', in *La Théssalie, 15 années de recherches archéologiques, 1975-1990, Bilans et Perspectives*, actes du colloque international de Lyon, 17-22 Avril 1990.
10 See D Theocharis, *Neolithic Civilisation*, MIET (Athens), 1989, pp88-96 and H Tsountas, *Prehistoric Acropoleis of Dhimini and Sesklo*, Archaelogical Society (Athens), 1908, pp27-65, 69-107.
11 G Hourmouziadis, *Neolithic Dhimini*, Vanias (Thessalonika), 1993, pp88, 93-94.
12 Ibid, pp100-102, 104.
13 D Theocharis, op cit, pp58, 62-63, 149.
14 A Kyriakidou-Nestoros, 'The Interpretation of Myths from Ancient Times to the Present', in *Greek Mythology*, Ekdotiki (Athens), 1986, vol I p295.
15 G Dumézil, *Mythes et Dieux des Indo-Européens*, ed H Couteau-Bégarie, Flammarion (Paris), 1992.
16 G Hourmouziadis, op cit, pp123, 128, 163.
17 For a general discussion of the labyrinth, see P Santarcangeli, *Le Livre des labyrinthes*, Gallimard (Paris), 1972. For an analysis of labyrinthine archetypes and symbols see M Eliade, *Mythes, rêves et mystères*, Gallimard (Paris), 1957, pp211, 212.
18 For the origins of the myth of the labyrinth see S Morris, *Daidalos and the Origins of Greek Art*, Princeton University Press (New York), 1992; for a discussion of the myth itself see F Frontisi-Ducroux, *Dédale – Mythology de l'artisan en Grèce ancienne*, Maspero (Paris), 1975; for a contemporary interpretation see J-P Le Dantec, *Dédale le héros*, Balland (Paris), 1992.
19 P Lévêque and P Vidal-Naquet, *Clisthène l'Athénien*, Macula (Paris), 1964, p119.
20 J-P Vernant, *Myth and Thought in Ancient Greece*, Maspero (Paris), 1965.
21 Ibid, and Lévêque and Vidal-Naquet, op cit, pp32, 89.
22 Lévêque and Vidal-Naquet, op cit, pp127, 134.
23 Ibid, p146.
24 N Matsouka, *History of Byzantine Philosophy*, Vanias (Thessalonika), 1994, p195.
25 See Alberti's text: *De Re Aedificatoria*, Rome, 1452.
26 As it appears in the austere geometricity of star-shape cities.
27 The appearance of neoclassicism in modern Greek culture coincided with the constitution of the New Greek State and was widely imposed as a substitute for the aesthetic culture of the Greek middle ages. See P Oreopoulos, 'Histoire de la pensée sur la ville et l'architecture en Grèce du XVe au XIXe siècle', op cit.

***Guest-editor**: * Randomness here appears more as a process of an ongoing spatial self-reference, of technical significance, rather than as randomness of a logical/combinatory character, free choice etc.*

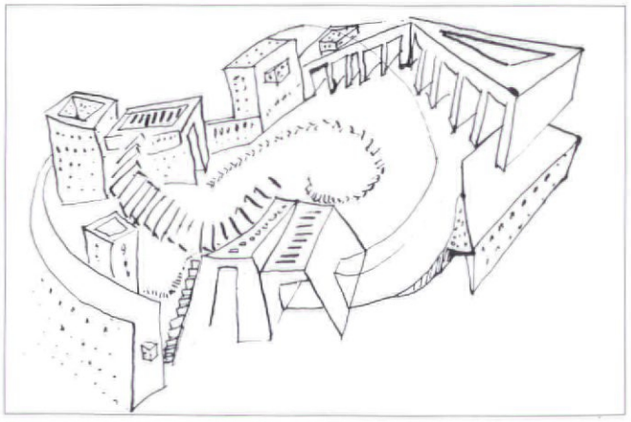
*** An important distinction needs to be made between the Labyrinth operating in the 'positive' and the 'negative' Labyrinth. It might be worth testing the hypothesis that the latter could be seen as the visual appropriation of the spatial principle of the former. Indeed, the Tower of Babel's erection is guided by mortals' need to visualise their access to God and the connection between the earth and heavens.*



Disk of Phaestos



Tower of Babel



Experimental conceptual drawing by the author, employing the leading spatialities of medieval aesthetics: the wall, the labyrinth and the complexity of volumes. Spatial logic is hereby highlighted as a critique vis-à-vis *conventional perspectival laws*



Anamorphosis Architects, 'I am not the man you think I am', spatial multitude

RICHARD SENNETT

THE SENSE OF TOUCH

In memory of Gunther Busch

The sense of the senses is an ancient issue in philosophy, and a frustrating one – at least to me. Discussions of the senses often lack much direct engagement in physical realities. But the physical world contains secrets of its own which cannot be unlocked through dry speculation; this is particularly true of the physical secrets of the body. To try to unlock one of these secrets, the meaning of touch, I am going to write not as a social philosopher but as a musician. I do so because I have had another life as a cellist, mostly performing chamber music. Theodor Adorno once remarked that musicians who become intellectuals are haunted by the fear of abandoning their real selves. Perhaps; but the sensate, bodily experience of making music has something to reveal about the condition of society.

Every cellist learns the sense of touch through mastering movements like vibrato. Vibrato is the rocking motion of the left hand on a string which colours a note around its precise pitch. Vibrato does not start with the contact of the fingertip and the string; it begins further back at the elbow, the impulse to rock starting from that anchor, passing through the forearm into the palm of the hand and then through the finger.

Vibrato is a physical capacity which ripens in the course of a cellist's formation. Freedom to rock requires that a cellist masters the capacity to play perfectly in tune. If a young cellist lacks that mastery, every time he or she vibrates, the note will sound sour, accentuating the inaccuracy of pitch. There are acoustical reasons for this distinction between the sour and the vibrant, relating to the overtones set going by a string. But the need for mastery of pitch in order to vibrate well tells an elementary truth: freedom depends on control, whereas purely impulsive expression produces just mess. This piece of common wisdom is as true of the hand as it is of the heart. But even once this technical mastery is gained, vibrato poses a danger to cellists, especially young ones, when they begin to perform in public. For most of us, adrenalin flows when faced with performing; the stomach tightens; we need to withdraw before the event into a concentrated silence. When we walk on stage, we enter into a peculiar state of relaxation, a trance in which we become hyper-alert. In this trance our bodies can betray us, and no more so than in the work of vibrato. I can describe what happens fairly concretely. The vibrating forearm suddenly promises to release the tensions we have built up in preparing ourselves to perform; energy flows into the forearm and away from the hand. Often the wrist begins to flex, further cutting off the transmission of energy from elbow to finger. The result of this short-circuit is that the weakened hand begins pushing too hard on the string in order to recover strength; the fingers lock on to the fingerboard beneath the string; movement then becomes jerky rather than fluid. These concrete events are what may make a musician sound 'nervous' to you, even in the midst of technical pyrotechnics.

Of course nerves are the culprit – fear – beckoning the body into a false promise of release. But the cellist who loses control of vibrato generates, on stage, a division between conviction and expression. Again there is a physical foundation; the touch of the fingertip to the strings has ceased to be the performer's focus, the contact between flesh, steel and wood has ceased to define a zone of hyper-alert attention. But now the musician's own perceptions of her or himself performing split in two; one is the domain of conviction, of what the music should sound like, the other an inferior domain of achieved expression, the music as it is. Physical fear and the false promise of release generate in this way a divide between subjective and objective expression. Once set going, the divide may last only a few moments, in which the artist is aware that the music does not sound as it should, and then disappears as the body takes over and the artist's inner 'it should be other' fades away. Or, this divided consciousness of oneself making music can last, fatally, all evening.

I describe this danger in order to focus our attention on the phenomenon of resistance. We might say that the nervous musician has encountered physical resistance to his or her desires. But that sort of resistance is something the musician has generated him- or herself; only after losing control does he or she hear in the domain of conviction, of what it should sound like, of desire. Even more important is where resistance originates in a musician good enough to perform in public: in a crisis of vibrato resistance originates in the musician's body rather than in a struggle with the instrument he or she plays.

The paradox of release through encountering resistance can originate when a cellist deals with the E and F notes on the G string. To vibrate under these conditions risks an even worse ugly sound. Yet, when the nervous cellist is faced with this challenge he or she may suddenly connect; the scene of difficulty shifts from the human body to the wood; the body is set free.

For instance, when I first performed the Schubert Cello Quintet with the great cellist Jacqueline du Pré – who was barely adolescent at the time – she was gripped by a crisis of nerves until the famous moment in the first movement when the second cello becomes mired in this danger zone. Her F bleated for a fraction of a second, but then she conquered it: she began making a richly vibrant, generous sound, her body relaxed, and she entered into the music with that wide, ardent smile which came over her whenever she was inside the music.

The sense of touch thus is all about the dialectics of resistance. Contact and resistance are expressively inseparable. The resistance of physical objects can both arouse the body yet relax it as well. The experience of touching, as in a successful vibrato, overcomes the division of conviction and expression. When we are 'in touch', as American slang puts it, we do not dwell in a state of wholeness, conflict and danger free. Difficulties and resistances confront us, but the territory of struggle has shifted from within the human being to the world, to grappling with inert physical

objects. Expression occurs through that physical struggle. When performing well, every musician feels the poet Wallace Steven's famous declaration, 'no truth but in things'.

As a cultural analyst, I have perhaps paid too much attention to 'things' at the expense of theory. I have written about the history of wigs, chairs, bathtubs, street lights, earrings, herbs, condoms, and most of all, buildings. I allude to this musical example, though, not just to stress the importance of grounding cultural theory concretely. The work of making musical vibrato conveys a general truth: expression occurs when human beings address the resistances of material reality; we then make contact with the world, we literally touch it in all its roughness, hardness and difficulty. This rough terrain is the landscape in which expression occurs.

Many modern efforts to shape the physical world seek, however, to flee this landscape. Society aims, in the creation of physical things, to reduce resistance, for example in 'user-friendly' computers or street layouts where traffic flows smoothly. Social and political practices submit to the same principle. We like our identities clear-cut and easy to use: German versus Turk; heterosexual versus homosexual; successful versus failure. It could be said that this is only a matter of functionality and practicality; a computer with a dysfunctional program like Windows 95 is of little value to anyone. More largely, it could be argued that reducing resistance is one way to measure the divide between social life and culture; we cannot use the world in the same spirit we might play the cello, searching out experiences of resistance or ambiguity, dwelling in them in a Heideggerian sense.

This practical argument seems to me, in fact, all wrong. The result of diminishing resistance in the daily environment, I want on the contrary to argue, weakens connection to reality. Ease of use erodes engagement, a yielding physical world diminishes arousal.

Permit me just once more to recur to the cello. One way of teaching beginners to play is to plaster little bands of tape across the fingerboard, so that children know exactly where to put their fingers. This, the foundation of the so-called 'Suzuki' method, seems to make fingering easy. But once the tape is removed, the children are surprised and chagrined. They find they haven't really been making good contact between fingertip, string and wood; the tape weakened solid contact at that crucial intersection. I want to argue that the everyday world is increasingly 'taped over' in a similar manner, with ease of use dulling the sense of material connection.

Weakening the sense of touch in daily life takes two forms: one political, the other cultural. Physical disconnection serves a regime of power and a regime of subjectivity.

To understand the political regime, let us begin with the most solid element of our everyday reality, a building. All buildings have programmes which define the particular uses of space. Modern buildings tend to have particularly definitive programmes. Every square metre has its allotted function, and functions in modern buildings, even in small structures, are tied tightly to physical properties like energy consumption, plumbing, lighting or heating. In the past, a creator of highly integrated structures, such as Palladio, would marvel at this physical coherence; all of which makes buildings easy to use: the programme lays out what you should do, the coordination of function to properties how it should occur. You know the object from the moment the doors of the building open.

However, such highly defined, user-friendly structures tend to be rigid as habitations; the spaces can only be used in one way, unvarying in time. You can made an 18th-century palace into a modern art museum, but it is not so easy to make a museum into a palace, a hospital, or a church. At a more mundane level, Georgian row architecture of two centuries ago adapts fairly easily to the shifting needs of offices, residential housing and commercial stores in the course of time; shopping malls are hard to put to any other use than as theatres of consumption.

These easy-to-use, fixed-function objects ask for submission in use rather than engagement. You are meant to do what the object tells you so clearly to do. That is the obvious disciplinary regime built into user-friendly objects. But what is the actual role of the subject, the user, in this regime? Rather than focus on great architecture, we might reflect for an answer on more mundane structures, like social housing, factories and offices. The discipline of ease induces apathy; the apathy or aversion of residents in regard to the highly formal, well-designed ghettos of social housing is both obvious and profound. The user's response in the sphere of work is more subtle.

The modern workplace may well have flexible inner spaces, but there is usually no provision for spaces where workers might find shelter from the demands made upon them by employers. Of course architects are employed by owners, not workers; they make workplaces of surveillance, of imposed discipline. The result of this functional, disciplinary space has been studied by myself and many other sociologists. Such spaces of power produce a reaction of physical indifference and disconnection among the servants directed and controlled. Dulling your physical awareness in a highly controlled or hostile environment is a natural defence mechanism; you retreat inside yourself, where others can't get at you. But you also suffer due to that defence mechanism; you have no way to concretise your discontent or objectify your anger. Domination succeeds when it produces this kind of material indifference to one's surroundings among the subjects of power.

Modern architects are often blamed for the neutral spaces and dull buildings which populate our environment. But I want to argue against aesthetic blame. The issue is power. A well-ordered regime of power produces dematerialisation; indifference to one's surroundings is one way in which domination is consummated. Architecture becomes complicit in that domination when designs for clarity and ease of use, to recur to the Suzuki analogy, 'tape over' human conflicts rather than open up physical possibilities for visceral resistance, commitment and expression. The dulled 'sense of touch' encodes a regime of power.

Let me emphasise that this weakening of the sense of touch is no mere metaphor. Our streets are infinitely easier to use, safer and cleaner than the streets of the 18th century, while crowd life is infinitely weaker, and the knowledge of other human beings to be gained through street life has radically diminished. The behaviour of modern urban crowds, as Erving Goffman so brilliantly demonstrated, is disciplined so that physical contact is repressed in elaborate ballets of bodily movement. Silence between strangers on the street enforces this discipline, so does avoidance of prolonged eye contact. Actual touching among strangers on the street arouses fear. Modern crowds are organised into shopping crowds, crowds at sports events, or crowds in cars on highways, each a functional density rather than a physical human mass generating dissonance or ambiguity.

In my own studies of street movement I have been struck by the way in which the organisation of motion in the modern city has dulled the sense of touch. The great highway system erected

in New York City by the planner Robert Moses in the 1940s and 1950s sought explicitly to use the automobile as a tool to relieve the pressure of crowding at the city's centre. He imagined people compacted together to resemble a nuclear reaction, sure to explode through its own density. This fear of the undisciplined urban mass has its roots in Baron Haussmann's reconstruction of Paris in the 19th century, when rapid transit movement was first conceived as escape from physical contact with the poor, the enraged, or simply the unknown. And that fear of unregulated physical contact has been carried forward into current urban planning. The redesign of contemporary Berlin is a prime example of a regime of spatial power in which ease of use, definition of function, discipline of crowds, all dull physical arousal, resulting in a neutral city of the known and the safe, which is anything but innocent in its neutrality.

On the cultural side, this repressive regime may seem to have no parallel. Walk into any New York gallery today and you are likely to see plaster vaginas or photographs of cocks; go to a movie and you are likely to watch bodies blasted to bits, blood and gore smearing the screen. Fashion has become an art of striptease. The erotic body, rather than constructs of steel and glass, seems to be the locus of our sense of touch in the realm of culture. But try taking one of those plaster vaginas off the wall to study it better and guards in the gallery will immediately shout at you; try caressing a fashionably exposed crotch on the street and, in America at least, you will be arrested for sexual harassment. You made a mistake in confusing display with touch, you have tried to cross a forbidden barrier between image and object, the barrier between eye and hand.

In America there has been a long and exhausting argument about that barrier, debate about whether the depiction of pornographic scenes in magazines like *Hustler* indeed encourages voyeurs to commit pornographic acts, or whether the pervasive entertainment-culture of violence encourages violence on the streets. This argument, though it has perhaps uniquely American and puritanical overtones, concerns the sheer fear of touching, touch as violation of another human being, and it is important to explore its construction a little more.

Only a very few of the millions who watch bloody war films exit the theatre determined to become killers themselves; but what about the others? The mass of viewers emerges from these orgies of violence or sex to become again law-abiding citizens or mild bed-mates. The fear of touch and the discharge into fantasy seems, therefore, a kind of beneficent discipline and discharge to many psychologists. From a substantive point of view, though, the content of the fantasy remains compelling, even if not expressed. To put the matter a little more strongly, that inner state of arousal has been protected by being organised in such a way that it cannot be challenged by others. Fantasy is sheathed in a condom.

The mass-media-protected fantasy offers a clue to understanding a larger cultural regime which regulates the sense of touch: withdrawal from physical contact occurs for the sake of stimulating inner life. The issue of inner-ness and withdrawal seems to me the crucial element of this regime of protected fantasy.

Ghostly presences lurk in this withdrawal; these presences are desire and longing. And these are subjective formations of a particular kind: longing for what is absent, desire for an ideal which cannot be consummated. The erotic, as Freud himself was the first to argue, concerns a different order of time from immediate sensate pleasure. In his formulation, desire withers in the course of physical consummation; or as Lacan put the matter, desire is the dreaming of absence. Touch is inferior to the imagination. Proust, in *Albertine Disparue*, shows again and again how his narrator's desire for Albertine grows strong when she is absent, and weakens when her own body lies in fact close to his.

So the withdrawal from touch might be seen as an act conserving desire, indeed the imagination itself. But once we step outside the erotic realm, the psychiatric belief that this protected domain is beneficent becomes completely untenable. A privatisation of subjectivity occurs in which individuals lose touch both literally and figuratively with reality.

In a way, this may seem an odd abstraction: what else could subjectivity be other than private? In fact, it could be quite other, quite public. The religious convictions of Christians, Muslims, and Jews can be entirely public forms of subjectivity, nothing hidden in the movements of the heart, longing for the Ideal directly connected to religious ritual and law. In the Enlightenment, what Voltaire, Jefferson, or Adam Smith called 'moral sentiments' were also public forms of subjectivity. They were not puzzles of individuality, and they most certainly were not fantasies. A moral sentiment comes into being only when practised; intentions count for little. The strength of compassion or wit (wit was a moral sentiment for Voltaire) depends upon pressing that impulse hard into the dense, resistant clay of human society.

A privatised subjectivity, however, treats inner life as a transcendent, individual condition, and the contents of that inner life as a secret, hidden from others – and often also, if not a secret, at least a puzzle to the individual. In one of his most moving letters, light in tone but rich in substance, Voltaire wrote to Madame de Pompadour that he was often amazed by his own behaviour but seldom surprised; 'I had a fair conception of who I was when I reached the age of reason, perhaps more talented than other men but like them; I had only to study their characters to know myself and read my own heart to find there the evidences of all humanity.' Which of us today would dare make a similar statement? I know I wouldn't dare. For us – if you permit me that generic liberty – we spend our lives trying to unravel what we desire, what we are longing to be, in this inwardness of becoming.

This regime of subjectivity is just the danger of a society which eschews the embrace of resistance. Difficulties which are 'taped over' hardly disappear; contradiction, ambivalence and confusion are the intractable ingredients of resistance to desire in human affairs. But like a young cellist losing touch, these difficulties can be introjected within, gathered into the self in a time of becoming which promises their transcendence. The domain of the objective world, the world of realisation, will grow ever further apart from this unfolding and ever so promising domain of intention and desire. Psychologically, this sort of subjectivity often disposes people to imagine that reality is failing them, failing to measure up; or again, the actual self with its constraints and limits seems inferior to that idealised being whose existence is a wistful possibility. 'If only', 'I should have', 'I had hoped' are key phrases in this language of privatisation. It is a language which subverts engagement in the world's difficulties, prevents these engagements from doing their work of freeing the self from the self; a door closes on the insistent, dissonant noises outside.

Many modern philosophers and social scientists have written on the perils of subjectivity in this privatised form, from Arendt and Habermas on the philosophical side to Robert Bellah and Anthony Giddens on the social side. And yet I must confess to a

certain discomfort about the conclusions often drawn from these critiques of privatised subjectivity. They are often quite conservative, as in the case of Theodor Adorno; or they contain rather emotionally bloodless ideas about the act of connection and engagement itself, as I think is the case with Jürgen Habermas. Subjectivity is contested; objectivity remains equally disembodied.

We could not, indeed, recover from that privatised subjectivity without re-embedding ourselves in the physical world, and this is where the realm of artistic practice is a helpful guide; it shows something of general value about how embedding occurs. Adorno's fears of the anarchic, naked youth of the 1960s as icons of physical freedom misunderstood, for instance, the discipline required to make any physical gesture expressive. In vibrato, as we have seen, the sense of touch has to be precise in order to be expressive; again, as any good striptease artist will attest, you have to learn the art of taking off your clothes *well*.

One thing that stands in the way of embedding the physical world now is the confusion between erotic desire and physical expression. Take an artist like Cindy Sherman who recalculates sexuality over and over in her work. We respond not only to the symbolism of her masks and body armour, but also to the care with which the masks or armoured suits are made, the use of unlikely materials, and the difficulties she resolves in joining these unlikely materials together. These materials are her labour site, and thanks to these labours with recalcitrant material we become aware not of a feminist act but of a feminist art. Yet most of the critical reception of her work focuses on her intentions, the symbolism of her masks, as if divorcing the meaning from the labour of production.

That divorce of meaning from labour signals a privatised consciousness. To explain this, permit me to recur once more to the peculiar labour involved in performing a piece of music. I have described Jacqueline du Pré suddenly encountering through nerves a block to her formidable technique; she told me some years later about this traumatic concert, relating how she began then to hear two pieces of music: one in her head where everything is beautiful and just right, and the other in her ears, neither right nor beautiful. She had, in the language I have just used, at this moment entered the eroticised world of longing, of desire for what is absent. She said in fact she felt within herself an ideal impossible to realise. But as a working cellist she knew her listeners at the concert were not consoled; they could not hear her inner music. Aroused as she was by desire, at worst she bored them. But that experience of hearing music as it ought to be, an ideal music, later served to warn her, as a working artist, that she wasn't performing well.

All artistic labour encounters barriers, from writer's block to performers suddenly going blank on stage; like all other workers, we are constantly confronted with the frailty of our own powers. It is at these moments of troubled practice that the erotics of longing and inwardness threaten to seduce us. Thanks to a Romantic legacy which continues to colour modern attitudes, however, the gap between conviction and expression appears as a heroic division, with the blocked artist dwelling in a colossal trauma. The paradox of vibrato suggests how relief comes from this trauma through the dialectics of resistance and connection, which have nothing to do with the Romantic taint of heroism in artistic struggle. The real struggle in art is not to generate an inner vision, but to work without one. This happens by displacing energy from self to object.

Much of the art I am now seeing, reading and hearing made by very young people, in their late teens and early 20s, has taken an encouraging direction; it emphasises craft and materials. In America, at least, we are in the midst of a repudiation of theory-driven art, a repudiation which is not conservative, I think, but driven instead by a renewed appreciation of the labour process. In new music, especially, I am hearing work designed to be played, rather than scores to be read. New cross-over music, for instance, demands that jazz musicians revise the way they blow, finger and bow their instruments, and that classical musicians like myself also revise the use of our instruments. What I would like to see is a cultural discourse equally enmeshed in the qualities of things, and further, a politics of objects which opens them up to divergent performances and truly flexible uses. Embedding the senses in a resistant world is a political project, one which, as I have tried to indicate, would have the consequence of challenging the disciplinary regimes of ease and clarity of use. A physical world more available to touch might help lift the cursed regime of inward desire.

It might appear that the regime of power and the regime of subjectivity I have sketched have little in common. One is a domain of the explicit; the other is a domain of the ambiguous. What unites these two domains though, making power and subjectivity two sides of the same whole, is the crisis of expression they engender: both regimes deprive individuals of a medium of expression. The first induces a kind of numb, defensive withdrawal from one's surroundings, the second drives one ever further within, away from others, in order to find oneself. The regime of power deploys neutrality; the regime of subjectivity deploys desire. Neither aspires to action through resistance: both lack the arousal of touch.

I acknowledge that the arguments I have made are biased because mine is an art of performance. The music I make comes from someone else; the cello I play is not my own invention. Were I a composer or an inventor, the erotics of longing might perhaps be a fruitful starting point; I might struggle to translate the desired ideal into something concrete and physical – and that achievement would extinguish my desire, at least for the moment. But the cellist must instead make someone else's world come to life.

The performance problem, however, is much closer to the difficulty people face in the everyday world than is the composer's longing. Like me on stage, people in the street do not create the social roles of family, work and community in which they engage. Those roles are enshrined in social texts which may make vivid performance difficult, powerful texts like those encoded in buildings and urban designs which repress engagement. In *The Paradox of Acting*, Diderot argues that the good performer, on stage or in the street, cannot be the simple servant of these texts; interpretation always entails a process of translating the immaterial into the material. Within the confines of translation, though, enormous freedom is possible. That freedom, ever available in art, remains little explored in society.

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Guest-editor: *'Touch' and 'resistance' could be understood as a process of inverted narcissism: as a dialectical subjectivity, occurring on the side of the object in the course of raw advent of function. Function appears as form, or rather as form plenitude. We could recognise here the production of form – as one binding process – as opposed to (discursively conducted) fragmentation or deformation. Finger–instrument 'become one', in a dialectical instance where the form of the instrument lends its form to that of the finger. At the level of the body, we should make the distinction between* deformation *(object/real metaphorisation of the subject) and* spatial figuration *(subjectification of the real).*

Resistance as joyful persistence of form introduces the latter in its anticipatory critical power; which should not be confused with any deformation and ugliness – ie abandonment of the dialectics of form. If deformation or de-organisation is individualist sublime transcendence, visually discursifying its solitary encounter with death (Real), then spatial figuration produces re-organisations and overrealises symbolic conducts (even death) producing laughter in an (un)visual real condition.

If we extend this argument to a spatial level we could perhaps find similarities with distinct body organ-isations *introduced by comic figures in old slapstick films – characters* spatially figured *with a minimum symbolic identity whose physical attributes often appear as morphological anticipations of objects or specific spatial conditions; fat bodies stuck in doors, objects falling on to bald heads, thin bodies swept by the wind or run over by a car but then standing up and walking off. Fat, thin, hunchbacked bodies, flat feet, long noses, etc, are not signs of individuals' characteristics but signs of re-organisation, constantly in touch with domestic space and surrounding objects; their limbs are not to be looked at but to be touched and in physical touch with objects; furthermore, their role is to domesticise space even if the latter is alien or hostile.*

'I am not the man you think I am' is a spatial multitude designed by Anamorphosis Architects aiming to introduce Sennett's concepts in association with the spatial problematic of inverted narcissism. This synthesis also aims to be a critical response to Dali's The Metamorphosis of Narcissus *(1937). The attempt here is to extend further the surrealist paradigm, beyond the mere employment of dream-work or the paranoiac visual* matière, *and operationalise it in the dimension of function. The advent of function should be understood as a symptomatic operation rather than a symptomatic irruption within the frame of the visual canvas, and be recognised as an objectal overstatement directly involving visual framing – an effect of unity or oneness disappointing the sculptural/visual as the latter becomes open to a broader field of collocations and spatial associations.*

An inverted oedipal relation occurs at the level of the object. A process of spatial repetition is introduced as a critique of symbolic repetition or duplication. It opens a binding process not on the basis of similarity but on that of sameness and oneness doubting the symbolic field altogether, hence including morphological imperfection (rather than replication or distortion) and also performative gestures of completion of meaning (rather than mimetic processes). Here, what becomes critical of the narcissistic instance is neither its repetition nor its deformation. Inverted narcissism does not imply an anti-narcissus (deformed or ugly) but a narcissus 'seen' from the non-point of view of a spatial configuration of symbolic wholes. Such a configuration crosses oppositions, like those between background and foreground, material or metric/scale, elaborate and raw. It also gives emphasis to the heterogeneity between the space of access and the space of visual consciousness. In an advanced Fort-Da context, as it were, the body's re-organisation feels and registers with the 'break' or 'disappearance' of the object with which it comes to terms, by seeing it as formal affluence in the course of realisation of symbolic meaning.

The spatial 'you' (both singular and plural; conveying the spatial intimacy of psychotic dialogue but also being a personal calling to the public) objectifies the 'I am, or I am not, what I think I am' – who cares really! – as a purely verbal, symbolic question. At the level of synthesis though, it introduces form, no longer as a property of humans' objects but as the dialectic through which such familiar 'objects' re-encounter (as an extended spatial site) our symbolic preoccupations – now becoming beautifully naked (empty) discursive fixations; yet enabling and articulating new symbolic and cultural inscriptions through spatial syntheses of the local.

Beyond the Proustian paradigm, the spatial event is here to be challenged out of its solitude as a mere 'unwelcome memory'. Spatial synthesis, instead, welcomes and articulates a plurality of discourses, introducing relations of identification, affiliation and disappointment amongst them, on the basis of the spatial bind. The spatial bind is presented as unfinite (in terms of visual consciousness, formalisation, background-foreground, gravity etc) and also as an associative function-minded (ie welcomed and familiar) processed place, not simply engaged with the mapping of one single symbolic myth, truth or scenario. Resistance here is to be understood precisely in the context of associative ease and comfort which forms have in relating to one another in the course of sameness and placeness, and, simultaneously, in the context of the symbolic difficulty forms go through in this process of anticipation and association. Resistance, therefore, seems to be our own symbolic problem of understanding and making such a spatial condition operational. NG

ANDREW SAMUELS

CITIZENS AS THERAPISTS

I was on the subway. It was crowded and hot. I had a sudden fantasy of staying all day with the people who were in the carriage. We would go to lunch as a group and become friends. I wanted to call out and suggest this plan. I really felt in love! I wanted to embrace everyone. I had an erection. I don't think this was just polymorphous sexuality or a manic response to underground miseries. For, if we take my bodily reactions and my fantasies as a kind of countertransference to the social issue of transport, then perhaps this was one way of embodying my need and desire for movement with my need and desire for stasis and continuity.

Watching the regular TV report of parliament one evening, I screamed at the parliamentarians, 'shut up!'. This total response was concordant with what I now see as their desire that we, who are outside the charmed circles of power, should stay shut up. Certainly, this could be taken as an example of my own authoritarian tendencies. Or I could have been merely expressing a general unease with the nightly spectacle. But my reaction gave some unthought but known specificity to the unease: Parliament as tending to silence and marginalize other fora for debate – for instance, at the workplace or within groups defined by common interests – not to mention other styles of debate, more modular and conversational and less adversarial.[1]

How can we translate our emotional, bodily and imaginative responses to Bosnia, to ecological disaster, to homelessness, to poverty worldwide, into action? How can we begin to make political use of people's private reactions to public events?

There is a sense in which this is the key political issue of our times: how we might translate passionately-held political convictions – shall we call them political dreams? – into practical realities. I think it is possible to take a subjective approach to a political problem, maybe one that has been fashioned out of personal experience, and refashion that response into something that works – actually works – in the corridors of power.

In common with many analysts and therapists, I would like to see politics become more 'psychological', taking on board a deeper understanding of people's emotions and what goes on inside them. In this piece, I would like to make a contribution from the professional world of psychology and therapy towards a strategy for empowering the powerless.

But, before that, there are a couple of important caveats to make, sort of health warnings and dampers on excessive enthusiasm.

First, we must concede and recognise the limitations of a psychological approach to politics. Freud, Jung and the founders of humanistic psychology like Maslow had ambitions to be of use in the political world. But they and their followers have, on occasion, gone in for ridiculous psychological reductionism. Hence, objections to psychological theorising about politics cannot all be put down to resistance. The impression one gets that some analysts think that everything would be OK with the world if only the world would attain 'the depressive position' reveals nothing more than the maddening rectitude and mechanistic, circular thinking of some psychoanalytic critics of culture (myself included, sometimes).

Second, it is equally important to renegotiate what can be meant by 'politics' so we can engage with the issue of empowerment and disempowerment in a more psychological way. In the late modern world (to use Giddens' phrase), politics and questions of psychological identity are linked as never before. This is because of a myriad other interminglings: ethnic, socio-economic, national. The whole mongrel picture is made more dense by the exciting and rapid course of events in the coruscating realms of gender and sexuality.

The emergence of feminism as a political movement introduced us to this new kind of politics. It is sometimes a feeling-level politics, or a politics of subjectivity, that encompasses a nodal interplay between the public and the private dimensions of power. For political power is also manifested in family organisation, gender and race relations, in connections between wealth and health, in control of processes of information and representation, and in religious and artistic assumptions.

Citizens as therapists

I will turn now to my main point which is to suggest a strategy for the empowerment of citizens as therapists of the political world.

It is clear that everyone, and I think I do mean everyone, reacts to either the political issues of the day or to the political dimension of experience in a private and often heartfelt way. But most of us diffidently assume that our cloistered responses are not really of much use in the objective world of 'real' politics. Even though we all know there is no objectivity when it comes to politics, we behave as if there were, in obedience to an ideology of civic virtue that cannot abide passion in the public sphere. For the powerful fear the dissident fantasies of the radical imagination.

Clinical analysis and therapy ponder the same kind of problem: how to translate the practitioner's private and subjective responses to the client (what gets called in jargon the 'countertransference') into something that can, eventually, be fashioned into a useful intervention?

In their widely differing ways, therapists and analysts have managed to do this – and this is my point. Therapists and analysts have already managed to give value to their subjectivity, seeing that its very construction within the therapy relationship can provide a basis for useful intervention.

Analysts and therapists already have texts that teach them how to translate their impressions, intuitions, gut responses, bodily reactions, fantasies and dreams about clients into hard-nosed professional treatment approaches. They already have the idea that their subjective responses are precious, valid, relevant, effective – and there is some knowledge about how to do something with those responses.

So perhaps without realising it, we in the world of psychology and therapy do possibly have something we could share with the disempowered, with political activists – or make use of when we ourselves become politically active. For example, most clinicians know that their bodily reactions to the client's material are a highly important pathway to the client's psychic reality. Similarly, it is possible to honour and deploy the bodily reactions citizens have in response to the political world and the culture's social reality. Just as client and therapist are in it together so, too, do citizen and political problem inhabit – quite literally – the same space.

Citizens could start to function as therapists of the political world, learning to use their bodily and other subjective reactions as organs of political wisdom, helping them to understand the problems of the political more deeply and guiding the course of their actions. It would be another way to speak the political.

The evolution of a kind of political knowledge analogous to the therapeutic encounter would reflect the fact that so many people already possess a therapeutic attitude to the world. Many of us want to participate in nothing less than the resacralisation of our culture by becoming therapists of the world. But it is hard to see how to go about it.

I certainly didn't invent the notion that citizens have bodily and other subjective reactions to the political – we all know of that from our own experience of our own bodies and our own subjectivities in the political world. But it may be a novel contribution to suggest, as I do, that the political, with its problems, its pain, its one-sidedness, may actually be trying to communicate with us, its therapists. Does the political really want therapy? Will it come to its first session? Will the unconscious of the political and the several unconsciousnesses of us, its therapists, get into good enough communication?

So I am trying to do something with what is already known about citizens and the political – but not, as yet, much theorised over. I don't think I am the only one working in this area by any means. I see this 'therapeutic' way of speaking and doing politics, not as something regrettable, an over-personal, hysterical approach to politics; rather, I see it as one path left open to us in our flattened, controlled, cruel and dying world. What official politics rejects as shadow – and what can undoubtedly still function as shadow – turns out to have value. Is that not a typical pattern of discovery in therapy anyway?

Putting the citizen in the therapist's seat is itself a dramatic and radical move. For in many psychoanalytic approaches to politics, the citizen is put firmly in the patient's seat, or on the couch: citizen as infant. Then the citizen has to be regarded as having only an infantile transference to politics! It is not as empowering as having a counter-transference and it is the therapist's right to speak – the therapist's power – that I want to spread around.

The personal is political

This strategy for empowerment is a psychological extension of the feminist insight that the personal realm reflects the political realm, that what we experience in the subjective world can be the basis of progressive action and change in the political world.

I am trying to explore these ideas at public workshops. At a workshop in New York, shortly after the LA riots, I asked a largely non-professional audience to imagine themselves as 'therapists' of a 'client' called 'the LA riots' and to record their physical, bodily and fantasy responses to their client (ie to track the 'counter-transference'). Unexpectedly, just doing the exercise itself created a cathartic effect. Participants eagerly reported how they had often reacted somatically or in other markedly subjective forms to political events. But they feared these responses would not pass muster in everyday political discourse. Their conception of politics was conditioned by the notions of 'objectivity' that I mentioned earlier; they had bought the con trick of the powerful.

A whole range of novel, imaginative and practical ideas about urban and ethnic problems came out of the group process of this audience. Moreover, 'the political' was redefined, reframed, revisioned. Most of those present did not believe that there were avenues available in official political culture for what often gets stigmatised as an irrational approach. I think their assessment is right. Utilising a perspective derived from one hundred years of the practice of therapy, in which so-called irrational responses are honoured and heeded, is a small beginning in creating a new, more psychological approach to the problems of power and politics.

Lest it be thought that only an American audience could manage to do the exercise described just now, let me say that I have found similar reactions in Brazil, working with people in liberation theology, and in Leningrad (as it then was) working with young Russian therapists hungry to marry their inner worlds with what was going on around them.

I feel that this kind of politics, this other way of speaking the political, favours participation by those who are presently on the margins of power: women, gay men and lesbians, members of ethnic minorities, those in transgressive families, the physically challenged, the economically disadvantaged. These are the people with whom psychologists and therapists should stand shoulder to shoulder – in the same ethos of unknowing and humility and respect for the wisdom of the other that characterises all good clinical work.

Those diverse groupings should not be regarded as Marx's hopeless lumpen proletariat; rather, they are the last untapped sources of new energies and ideas in the political and social realms. Disempowered people certainly do need the kind of economic and financial transfusions that only politics of the official kind can presently broker. But they also need validation from the profession that makes its living and derives its authority – its power – out of working with the feelings, fantasies, behaviours and embodiments that are banned and marginalised in life in the late modern world. There is potential in everyone to be a therapist of the world. Throughout our lives, all of us have had private responses to politics. We need to raise to the level of cultural consciousness the kind of politics that people have carried within themselves secretly for so long.

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Note

1 Taken from A ndrew Samuels, *The Political Psyche: Subjectivity and Politics*, Routledge (London), 1993, p38.



Anamorphosis Architects, 'Urban Fantasy', spatial multitude

ANDREAS EMPIRIKOS

IN THE STREET OF THE PHILHELLENES

One day as I was walking down the Street of the Philhellenes, the asphalt softening under my feet, I could hear, from the trees that line Constitution Square, crickets chirping in the very heart of Athens, in the heart of the summer.

Notwithstanding the high temperature, the traffic was brisk. Suddenly a funeral carriage rolled by, followed by five or six cars filled with women dressed in black, and as my ears caught smothered bursts of lamentation, for a moment the traffic was halted. Then a few among us (unknown to one another in the crowd), looked into each other's eyes in anguish, trying to guess each other's thoughts. But all at once, like a charge of dense waves, the traffic continued.

It was July. In the street, buses were lumbering past, crammed with sweating humanity: with people of all sorts – lean adolescents, stocky moustached males, fat or scrawny housewives, and many young ladies and schoolgirls on whose tight buttocks and palpitating breasts many in the jostling crowd, as was natural (all flaming, all as bolt upright as the club-carrying Heracles), were attempting, with mouths half-open and eyes dream-taken, to make those contacts usual in such places, so profound in meaning and in ritual; all pretending that simply by chance, because of the dense crowding and the pressures of the crowd, these frictions, these pressures, these gropings were all simply happening on the spherical attractions of receptive schoolgirls and ladies; these intentional and ecstatic contacts in the vehicles, these pressures, these frictions, these rubbings.

Yes, it was July, and not only the Street of the Philhellenes but the Fortifications of Mesolonghi, Marathon, and the marble phalluses of Delos were all throbbing, vibrating in the light like the upright cactuses of the desert in Mexico's parched expanses, or the mysterious silence that surrounds the pyramids of the Aztecs.

The thermometer had been rising constantly. It was not only warm but unbearably hot – the heat born of the vertical shafts of the sun. And yet, notwithstanding the burning heat and the rapid, gasping breath of all passengers, or the procession of funeral cars a short while before, not a single passer-by felt oppressed; nor did I, although the street was blazing. Something, like a lively cricket in my soul, compelled me to advance with a light step of high frequency. Everything around me was made manifest, tangible even to the sight, and yet, at the same time, everything was almost immaterialised in that great heat – both men and buildings – and to such a degree that even the sorrow of some of the bereaved seemed to evaporate almost completely in the equal light.

Then, with my heart fiercely beating, I stopped for a moment, motionless amid the crowd, like a man who receives a sudden revelation or sees a miracle taking place before his eyes, and I cried out, bathed in sweat: 'Oh God! This searing heat is necessary to produce such light. This light is necessary so that one day it may become a common glory, a universal glory, the glory of the Hellenes, who were the first in this world, I think, to make out of the fear of death an erotic urge for life.'

Andreas Empirikos (1901-1975) was a Greek poet and a practising psychoanalyst, and closely involved with the Parisian surrealists.

Guest-editor: *'Urban Fantasy', spatial multitude by Anamorphosis Architects, attempts to highlight the spatial problematic in Samuels and Empirikos' texts. What activates a spatial statement is the assertive, affirmative positioning of the subject 'before' and as a mirror of the symbolic ordering of space. Its politics lies in acknowledging this* real positioning *as a propositional tool capable of guiding design. This puts in operation an extended urban site beyond 'natural' and visual figurations of space, cutting across domestic-public, inside-outside close-distant polarisations, thus re-employing the objectal world away from discursive enclosures.*

Real positioning specifies a spatial-subjective commitment rather than a mere placement of subjectivity in space; it is not motivated by identificatory and transferential needs, but proceeds from positions of customisation and alreadyness as poles of resistance and politics. Morphological propositions are not applications of ideas but overlocalisations of them; function is the leading discourse of such overstatements and can be recognised as such. The sense of the unreal here is an effect of the overrealisation of symbolic reason rather than an expression of irrationality or sublime imagination. In a 'spatial statement' space is not the background to a human scenario but actually foregrounded through personal real positioning. The latter is not an accidental juxtaposition of image-profiles but proceeds through spatial associations proposing unreasoning syntheses.

*From the transferential individual's point of view real positioning appears as fantasy-imagination; but from the locus of the social countertransferential subject it is a fantasy-reality – a procedural imaginary. The difference between flâneuring and citizenship comes into play again: the former as space-consuming, applying symbolic scenarios, the latter as space-proposing, organising spatial possibilities. The first idealises and disables space (as fragmented and unaccomplished); the second registers with the accomplishedness of positions (as marks of fulfilled desire) shaping the socio-political role of subject-as-person. In this context we could refer to Adorno's critique of Heidegger's dwelling (*Minima Moralia, *Verso, p38). The social uncanny (failure of dasein) must not be confused with the spatial uncanny. Individuality leads to homelessness metaphorically and literally; nevertheless, real homelessness knows more about spatiality. Un-dwelling is not only a cultural reminder of the economically repressed classes but also the spatial means by which personal/social politics can be articulated against private-life ideology.*

The spatial dialecticisation of countertransference enables certain links between psychology and psychoanalysis; while it offers an analytic dimension (of fantasy) at the level of sociality, it also introduces the 'social' on the couch as analysand. The crucial debate is also reopened between individual and person, between a linguistic-transferential and spatial-countertransferential process; between the West European logico-spatial modelling of totality as a catholic application to the local, and the East/Greek European spatio-logical concept of totality as revelation of the local. NG

PAVEL BÜCHLER

A SHADOW OF THE CROWD

On the one hand, it is still possible to speak of the *presence* of sculpture in the contemporary city in the 'objective' terms of time and space; on the other, any discussion on the *role and function* of such material manifestations of creative or artistic interventions in the physical environment must, sooner or later, turn towards the question of the conceptual, technological and logistical conditions which determine their perception. Central to this will be the question of collective public interaction for which public sculpture, in a historical sense, provided both a possible focal point and a means of regulation (as an expression of legislative power or authority, as well as part of an overall spatial or environmental scheme).

It could be argued that with the advent of modern communication media, particularly photographic and digital image technologies, and the consequent necessary changes in the demarcation and self-perception of the 'public domain', the primary role of public sculpture may have become substitutive rather than communicative (it *stands for*, rather than *says*, something). Instead of being a physical 'marker' of collective interaction, it has become the last symbolic reminder of the absence of 'the crowd' from the conceptual 'space' of the contemporary metropolis.

The crowd is both a product and an active agent of the urban milieu. The notion of the crowd is virtually synonymous with the dynamics of the modern city which facilitate circumstantial concentrations of collective activity and which are, in turn, affected by the constant necessity to regulate and absorb such activity. Yet, it is possible that in the contemporary Western city the crowd can no longer be perceived as a distinct formation – that it is no longer distinguishable from the forces it is ruled by – and that it has been diffused or dispersed throughout the demographic and social structures of the city.

The disappearance of the crowd, its dissolution, is a result of changes in communication and perception which parallel the shifts in technology and economy by which the post-industrial urban society sustains itself; from sequential modes of communication and exchange to the mode of instantaneous contamination – or, seen from the perspective of the crowd, from a participation in a process to a random exposure to effects and products. Both the historical and the geographical coordinates of the crowd (its 'time' and its 'space') have been radically affected.

> The early modern city was steeped in an indirect conception of time, where time could only be derived from the experience of succession and simultaneity of phenomena in space. The contemporary metropolis, however, informed as it is by the irradiative model of instantaneous contamination of entire regions or populations, embodies a dramatic alteration in the conditions of perception. Space is now suddenly condensed, and time, rather than passing, exposes itself.[1]

The effect of these changes on the state of the crowd can best be seen if the crowd is considered not as a social configuration, governed by general socio-economical laws, but as a conductive field of interrelationships among individuals – a *medium of communication* – particular to the conditions of the temporal and spatial relationships which occur in the contemporary city.

The most visible feature of the crowd understood as a medium of communication is the ripple effect caused by the spreading of information from individual to individual through direct contact (like a rumour or virus).

The crowd is, undoubtedly, a symptom of activity: a shape of an event. It is formed and held together by a response to external stimuli. Our everyday anthropomorphic vocabulary unites such a response into a single 'body' and one 'voice'. But the seemingly immediate reflexes of this 'body' only trigger off further complex reactions involving large numbers of individual relative operations. A round of applause is a typical example: it erupts (almost) instantaneously as a direct 'corporate' reply to an outside impulse but it develops, breaks up, and eventually comes to an end through mutual interaction among the people in the crowd.

Information spreading throughout the crowd is, as in any system, subject to friction, entropy and absorption. But because it spreads through active contacts among *individuals*, through constant re-coding and re-formulation in a continuum of social exchange, the inevitable modulations and mutations of the initial impulse facilitate an awareness of collective interdependence as they affect the very social bond on which the transmission depends: the flow of information is conditioned by a *mediation of immediacy*.

Thus the internal cohesion of the crowd and its existence as an active agent are determined by the individuals' experience of their participation in a collective transformation of information into knowledge. 'Being there', in a place and at a time, means sharing in the power to transmit; that is to say, the power to *transform*.

The crowd has no centre. There are no firm points (and no fixed hierarchy) in the crowd, only an external shifting focus which becomes internalised and ultimately dissolved in a process of continuous mutation.[2] Information travels throughout the crowd from a more-or-less random point of entry in all directions at once, generating a wave of response and affecting gradually the overall state of the crowd.

However, a mode of transmission which can neither be regulated from a centre (because such a point cannot be isolated within the 'system') nor coordinated externally (because any external focus is always created only by the gaze of the crowd itself) is inevitably unpredictable and uncontrollable – and potentially disruptive to the 'normal' functioning of social mechanisms.

As a controlling measure modern society has therefore introduced a whole array of technologies and standards aimed at

systematising, synchronising and simplifying the functioning of the basic components of the 'system', the relationships among individuals: from legal provisions governing the rights and social obligations of the individual, through health and safety systems, to the system of education and professional qualifications, urban planning and coordinated design, standardisation of working hours and leisure time etc. While these measures do not eliminate the transformative powers of the crowd, they do nevertheless enable external agencies to control the spreading of information, its radius and its influence more efficiently by allowing them to predict and locate with some accuracy the moments and points at which the process of transmission can be interjected, polarised or disrupted. Indeed, these measures can effectively be used to turn the power of the crowd to transmit and to transform into the means of self-control.

Yet controlling the 'system' through selective regulation of the social contact among individuals is not only too slow but, importantly, it requires individual interpersonal links to be maintained. To be effective, regulatory principles must be integrated into the process of transmission itself in such a way that, for example, criteria of interpretation precede information, or ready-made 'facts' strategically coincide with 'common knowledge'.

It is only when an external agency can reach every individual simultaneously, that the active social interrelationships become redundant. The modern mass-communication media provide the necessary conditions: a contraction of distance through ultra-rapid transmission, a massive scale of operations, and the anonymity of de-humanised technology.

A key role in harnessing (and utilising) the transformative power of the crowd is played by the camera technologies, from photography and film to television and video. In particular, the transition from symbolic representation to mechanical recording and to image processing, storage and manipulation (in both analogue and numerical formats) has, since the beginning of the 20th century, produced a new order of information which, being neither true nor false, denies participation, resists transformation and generates instant polarisation of positions. The photographic or photo-based image is not merely an inert trace but an implosion of a 'photographic event'. As with a black hole, metaphorically speaking, nothing can escape from the image. Nothing can therefore be transformed in the process of communication. Instead, communication itself seems to be absorbed by/into the image.

This, however, is not to suggest that these images, moving or still, are in any way immutable. On the contrary, subsequent manipulation with the recorded image is in many respects intrinsic to photo-based media. (Its use dates back to the beginnings of photographic time and is not only standard practice in all movie making, advertising, propaganda, editorial illustration, architectural design and, of course, art, but it is also a necessary condition of the image technology.) The manipulation of the image presents itself as an effect of (technological) reality which cannot be re-absorbed into the immediate reality of direct social contacts. It seems to be precisely technology's power to manipulate time and space, to collapse it into the image, that lays claim to individual perceptions, consciousness and memory while it demobilises the collective powers of the crowd.

It abolishes the connections between space, time and experience by seamlessly fusing the present moment with the past in a perpetual appearance and disappearance of images, which follows its own chronology of broadcast and publication schedules and overthrows the order of geography by uniting all locations into one, on the same 'dimensionless' picture plane or screen.

The confusion that this creates is best illustrated by the example of the everyday diet of the news. In an older model in which the dissemination of information still involves human interaction (and the necessity of active participation), such as the purchase of the newspaper from a street vendor, a certain awareness of a chronology of events is maintained: we know that even the 'latest' news is already old news; or that, metaphorically speaking, there is no such thing as 'today's paper'. With the more technologically advanced media, such as television, which combines 'live' elements with recorded and reconstructed information, it becomes very difficult to maintain a sense of correspondence between space, time and experience.

We are 'bombarded with images', as the old cliché goes, in a kind of perpetual 'precision bombing' campaign (a notion which emerged at the time of the first 'television war', the American intervention in North Vietnam in the mid-60s). The same technology which assists a 'pin-point accuracy' in disseminating death also creates a deadly isolation of each individual when it is aimed at the crowd.[3]

In the near future, the miniaturisation of equipment, electronic super-highways, interactive television etc, will probably shatter even the last remains of collective public interaction by vastly multiplying image-realities and competing for the 'public domain' from a myriad individual and corporate centres of influence.

In the same way as the projected collides with the reflected and 'architecture becomes the paradox of the show' in an open-air cinema at night,[4] the contemporary city is a continuously reorganised image-space. Its walls and boundaries are not merely shifting, contracting and expanding with a flow of images – they are, in fact, only perceptible as 'after-images' (retinal residue) always in the process of disappearing. The street, the agora, the forum, or piazza, have all dissolved in the limitless periphery of global satellite TV transmissions and mail-order shopping. The only space still reserved for 'public gatherings' is the self-defining space of closed-circuit television – a space not of transformation but of passive transit.

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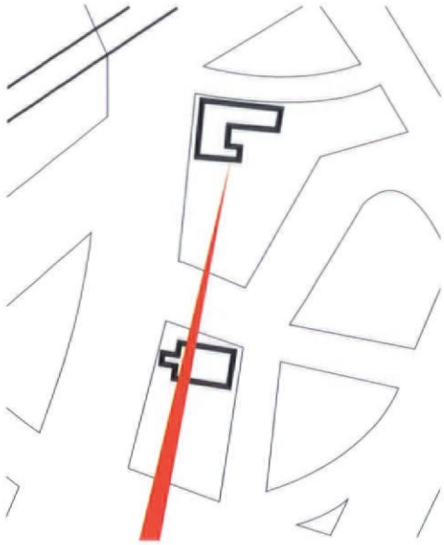
Notes

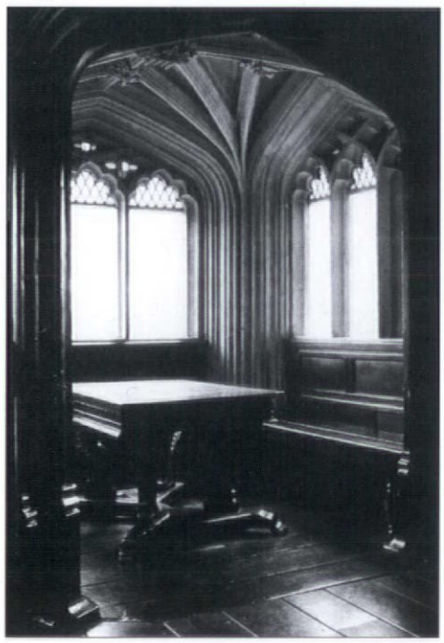
1 Michael Feher and Sanford Kwinter, Foreword, *Zone* 1/2 (New York), 1987, referring to the article 'The Overexposed City' by Paul Virilio in the same publication.

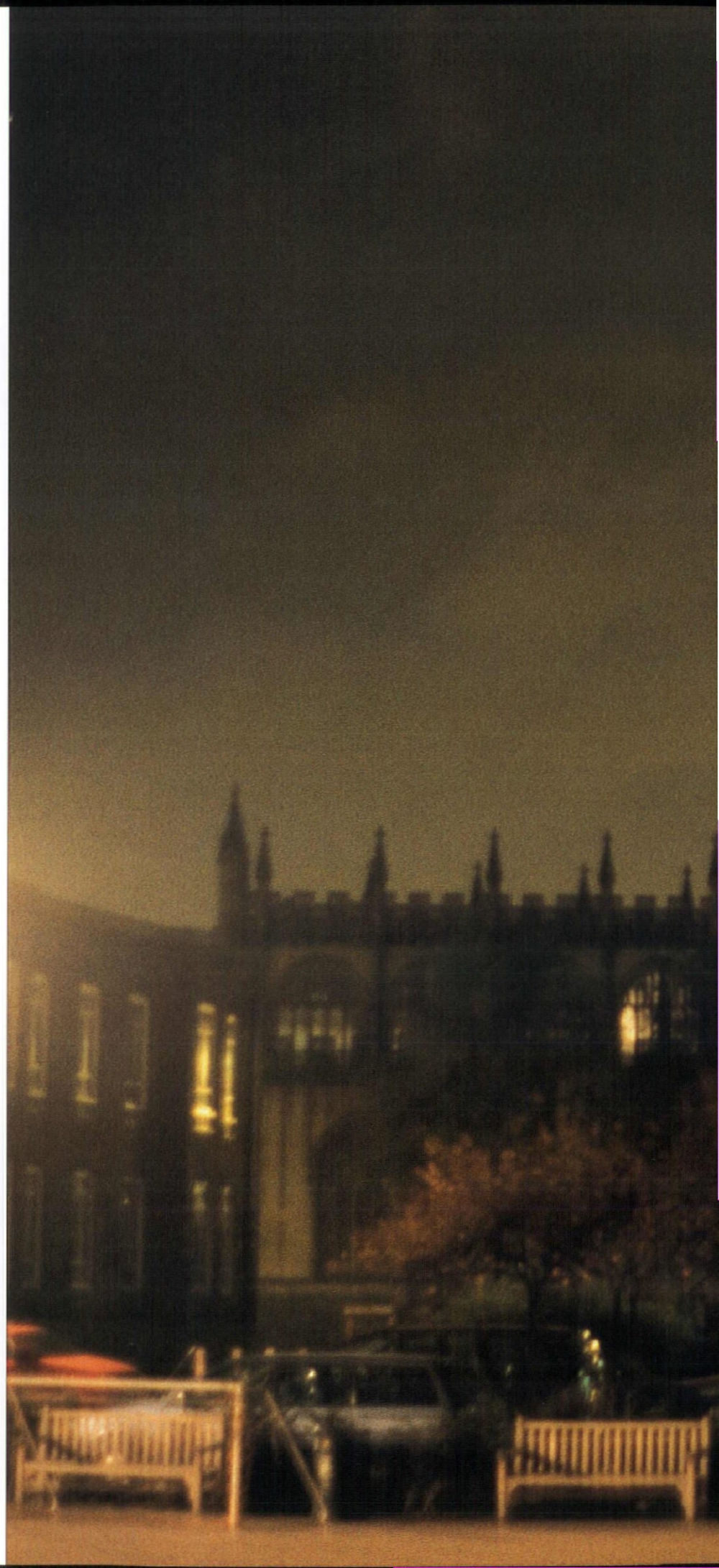
2 Literary expressions such as 'at the centre of the crowd' or 'leading the crowd' really signify outside positions: 'surrounded by', 'followed by' etc.

3 Indeed, one could almost speak of the effects of these technologies in terms of organised violence, even media torture, in so far as torture and organised violence can be defined as 'an assault on the links and connections between people and the patterns of relationships through which [. . .] the individual develops further patterns of interaction and communication'; RD Blackwell, *The Disruption and Reconstitution of Family, Network and Community Systems Following Torture, Organised Violence and Exile*, Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture (London), 1989.

4 For an illuminating discussion of the (con)fusion of urban and cinematic space see Nikos Georgiadis, 'Open Air Cinemas: The Imaginary by Night', *Architectural Design*, vol 64, no 11/12 (London), 1994.







***Pavel Büchler,* Red Flag** – *proposal for a public art project staged in Manchester, 1-7 November 1997, commissioned by Book Works, London. The work is an outcome of research into the circumstances of Karl Marx's frequent visits to the city from 1845 to 1880, drawing on the minimal 'traces of Manchester' scattered through Marx's correspondence.*

FROM ABOVE: Site plan; Reading Room, Chetham's Library; OPPOSITE: St George's flag on the spire of Manchester Cathedral, illuminated at night by a red searchlight from the Reading Room window where Marx and Engels worked in 1845



JEAN-FRANÇOIS LYOTARD

DISCOURSE, FIGURE: DIGRESSION ON THE LACK OF REALITY

Here the reader will feel that we need to make a distinction that has not yet been attempted. We need to distinguish between the real and the imaginary. The position of discourse is different when designating the one or the other. Frege emphasises that the proper aesthetic position is precisely that of the discourse which is indifferent to the existence of its object; as Freud puts it: discourse which does not question its own reality, avoids the test of reality. But what does this test consist in? Words and acts. How can we know that the object about which we are speaking exists? By giving it a name that allows us to recognise it (persistence of perceptions) and by carrying out operations on it that allow us to transform it (gratification of needs). These criteria refer us to problematics different from our own, even though they easily link up with it: the problematics of the praxis which is communication with others and the transformation of the outside world; the problematics of knowledge, which is the constituting of reality and of a coherent discourse. I need only point out that reality is constituted from a starting point in the imaginary. That which is given at the outset is the fantasy object. The formation of a 'real' object is an ordeal that corresponds to the formation in the subject of the reality-ego. Reality is never anything more than a sector of the imaginary field which we have agreed to relinquish and which we have agreed to cease investing with our fantasies of desire. This area is bordered on all sides by the imaginary field, in which wish-fulfilment fantasies go on perpetually.

And this evacuated sector itself bears the trace of the struggle for occupation between the pleasure and reality principles. Reality is not fullness of being standing against the emptiness of the imaginary; it retains lack within it, and the lack is so important that it is precisely within this lack, in the flaw of non-existence borne by existence, that the work of art takes place. The work of art is real, it can be treated as an object of acts of denomination and of manipulation before witnesses to assure them that there is indeed a painting or a statue here and now. And yet it is not real: the expanse of the *Waterlilies* is not placed in the same space as the gallery of the Orangerie; Rodin's statue of Balzac at the Raspail-Montparnasse crossroads is not planted in the same ground as the trees along the boulevards.[1] And reality is so fragile before the powerful consistency of the image, that in the struggle between the work of art and the world in which it is placed, it is the work of art that charms and attracts the world towards it – the basement of the Orangerie allowing itself to be drawn through its own walls into the luminous mist that floats on the painted ponds, and the boulevard Raspail acquiring a certain perspective from Rodin's backward-leaning statue that pulls the street downwards towards Saint Germain.

Not only does the presence of works of art make evident the absence of the object and the lack of reality in the world, but also, the absence that is 'realised' within works of art draws towards it the alleged existence of the given, revealing its very lack. The world is engulfed in works because it has an emptiness within itself and because the artist's critical expression lends a body to our desires questing objects. What matters to us here is that, at the end of the axis of designation, there is an image. We have been supposing that the image cannot be grasped. In that regard, it is not certain that the image differs from the 'real' object: the 'grasp' itself can do no more than give images, and is probably no less fantasmatic than sight, imbued as it is with vision. Only the slightest difference between being *in* the moon [trans: 'being in a daydream', or 'mad'] and being *on* the moon.

The dividing line that is pertinent to our problem does not run between the imaginary and the real, but between the recognisable and the unrecognisable. This introduces a consideration of the third space, as different from the space of language as from that of the world. The difference is literally the unconscious. By penetrating the space of the signifier or the signified, this difference transgresses the system of regulated oppositions; it eclipses the message; it blocks communication; it treats phonemes, letters and words as things; it forbids the eye and the ear to understand the text or speech, to 'hear' it. And when it takes possession of the space of designation, of sight, it undermines the outline that revealed the object and permitted us to recognise it, and undermines the good form which made the multiplicity of given sculptural elements hold together in the field of visibility. That difference leads us to another world – a world without any recognisable face or form. This non-recognition of the respective orders of discourse and the world, which in turn renders the units of the one and the objects of the other unrecognisable, is the sign that desire pursues its accomplishment by taking hold of givens that are organised according to rules which are not its own, in order to subject them to its own law. The figures it gives rise to, as much in language as in the field of vision, have the essential attribute of being able to confound recognition. At most, as we will see, they allow us to recognise them *as* unrecognisable.[2]

Translated by Vivian Constantinopoulos

Notes

1 'The artist is originally a man who turns away from reality because he cannot come to terms with the renunciation of instinctual satisfaction which it at first demands, and who allows his erotic and ambitious wishes full play in the life of fantasy. He finds the way back to reality, however, from this world of fantasy by making use of special gifts to mould his fantasies into truths of a new kind, which are valued by men as precious reflections of reality. Thus in a certain fashion he actually becomes the hero, the king, the creator, or the favourite he desired to be, without following the long roundabout path of making real alterations in the external world. But he can only achieve this because other men feel the same dissatisfaction as he does with the renunciation demanded by reality, and because that *dissatisfaction*, which results from the displacement of the pleasure principle by the reality principle, *is itself a part of reality*.' Freud, 'Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning', (1911); my italics.

2 Translator's note: Lyotard's term 'lack of reality'/'le peu de réalité' is evocative of André Breton's exploration of what constitutes 'surréalité'. This piece is an extract from the book *Discours, figure* (published by Klincksieck, Paris, 1971), a philosophical work on aesthetic experience which makes full use of psychoanalytical theories of artistic works, mostly those found in the writings of Freud. The artistic work in the psychoanalytic topography seems to be the pre-conscious. Lyotard has much to say about the importance of unconscious processes and their irreconcilability with conscious processes. The interface of the unconscious and conscious and its crucial importance for aesthetic experience is for Lyotard the place of 'figure'.

Guest-editor: *Lyotard's text is introduced here as an attempt to break with visuality and reveal the spatiality of* figure. *Although* Discours, figure *reveals a series of spatial insights, these seem to be abandoned in Lyotard's later writing, having strong affiliations with the positivisation of the Freudian/Lacanian 'symptom' and desire, also seen in Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari's work. Various readings have reduced the spatial rigour of* Discours, figure *to the contextual frame of the visual arts, and in many ways it has served to analyse visual/countervisual philosophy and the aesthetics of visual realism. This presentation, however, aims to highlight its spatial principle on one hand, and on the other to show the problematic metaphorisation of such spatial principles in the visual arts.*

Perhaps Lyotard's text should be read in a symptomatic way. Although the text he elaborates is profoundly spatial, what is manifestly missing in this analysis is the spatial paradigm (architectural experience knows very well what is like working 'at the same place', and how built work operates with the specifics of location). But these concepts are symptomatic of Lyotard's work in general, especially in that his reference to architecture in his later The Postmodern Condition *(1979) lacks any spatial conceptualisation and rigour, and treats architecture mainly at the level of symbolic meaning.*

In Lyotard's text the work of art could have a radically spatial meaning. Certainly, Rodin's statue of Balzac in the street and the painting Waterlilies *in the basement signify the absence of the real object. But more importantly, their very allocation process introduces a radical distance between the original symbolic discourse and the spatiality (and objectiveness) in which they operate. The artworks are not in the same 'place' but, equally, the place in which they really are discloses a so-far repressed condition of sameness or, again, sameness takes over as a discourse independent of the original symbolic bind.*

In relation to Rodin, and furthermore, in opposition to Rosalind Krauss' discussion on his work and on Lessing's understanding of Laocoön (see Krauss' introduction in her Passages in Modern Sculpture, 1977*), it seems that the question to address is not that of the static, synchronic mapping of the 'decentering' or 'dismembering' of the body (according to its temporality) in space; instead it is the embedding of the characteristics of the surroundings, as a full irreducible experience (functional spatiality), in the course of the synspatiality of the allocation process itself. What seems to be characteristic in the Laocoön statue and in Rodin's concept of sculpture (in contrast to works by Serra for example) is that in both cases it is the environmental condition which is morphologically inscribed in the artwork, rather than the artwork being expressive of some sort of body-realism (whether temporal, visual, or symbolic) in a 'neutral' space. The dialectics of opacity is not a matter of an intra-body or a bodies-in-space affair but of an awareness of the real opacity of spatial experience which can be found in abundance in urban space. To that extent it could be argued that the snake in Laocoön is the advent of the environment as constraint sent by the gods (in the Trojan myth) to punish Laocoön and his sons for their disloyalty to the gods; the snake therefore is a mark not of any unconscious recurring 'scary' real, but of the mortals' inattentive but customised struggle-cast manifold reality. One could also pursue the hypothesis that the nudity of the statue (or in Rodin's case Balzac's heavy coat) is not expressive of any blind desire, but that desire comes as an operation of registration with the visible/spatial, both in retaining its passionate figuration as an accomplished event and in 'addressing it to the open' – a gesture of morphological incorporation of the open as uncertainty and as (familiarly) unknown. After all, direct registration with the exhibited artwork is a discourse in itself operating in the relation between the art object and the direct spatio-functional environment; and in today's visual arts, more than ever, it seems to operate at a very low level.*

The question is how, in the artwork, the real returns to itself revolving into this sameness as a spatial repetition *rather than a similarity or symbolic repetition. That sameness extends the 'physical' limits of space, both inwards and outwards, introducing the dialectics of the static object rather than of 'drifting'.*

If we miss the anticipatory power of real space, we end up with the 'gallerisation' of urban space and the concomitant singularisation or anti-singularisation of the artwork, as well as an entropic understanding of urban experience. The issue here is not what art does to 'space' but what customised (ie habitual) space – ranging from the actual facial or physical characteristics of a man (Balzac) to the actual flowers and daylight luminosity (Waterlilies) – does to the artwork when it encounters (in an art form) that portion of spatial experience which artistic gesture has borrowed, as in its initial symbolic intentions.

Lyotard's imaginary certainly has a rather propositional and operational form. What seems to matter in such a contextualisation is the fulfilment of desire as accomplishedness; and further, that the encounter with lack (of truth) is processed, paradoxically, via spatial plenitude – after all, the deprivation of function in the visual arts and its concomitant divorce from architectural experience is already a sign of a visual discourse based on unfulfilment and unaccomplishment. Function, then, seems to convey a discourse of objectal accomplishedness (not to be confused with finiteness) and re-encountering (ie the sign of fulfilment), which also points to fields of feminine desire, spatial discourse, domesticity etc.

In pursuing the point further, one can argue that architecture meets the plastic arts in the proceedings of the 'static object' in the un-expressionist and over-impressionist operations of what is termed nature/environment/object/form etc: a state of lost expression *(lost logic/truth) and* false impression *(agitated homogeneity rather than unification or fragmentation) – a false consciousness invigorated in a fully operational form. NG*

DOREEN MASSEY

SPACE-TIME AND THE POLITICS OF LOCATION

The social spaces through which we live do not only consist of physical things; they consist also of those less tangible spaces we construct out of social interaction: the intimate social relations of the kitchen and the interactions from there to the backyard and the living room; the relations with neighbours. These local spaces are set within, and actively link into, the wider networks of social relations which make up the neighbourhood, the borough, the city. Social space is not an empty arena within which we conduct our lives; rather, it is something we construct and which others construct about us. It is this incredible complexity of social interactions and meanings which we constantly build, tear down and negotiate. And it is always mobile, always changing, always open to revision and potentially fragile. We are always creating, in other words, not just a space, a geography of our lives, but a *time*-space for our lives.[1]

Sitting there so solidly, so silently, so implacably, in Grove Road, so physically in just the place it always was, and yet so clearly out of place, House worked as a disruption of such social time-spaces. It jumped into and threw awry the 'normal' time-spaces, and the ideas of time-spaces, which we construct in order to live our lives.

It worked this disruption, first and most obviously, in a predominantly temporal sense. It set a familiar past in the space-time of today; it made present something which was absent; it was the space of a house no longer there. Secondly, however, it worked spatially: it turned the space inside out. The private was opened to public view. The intimate was made monumental and yet retained its intimacy. And this effect of our prying into intimacies was reinforced by the tearing down of the rest of the terrace. For neighbouring houses provide protection, enable you to put on only your best face. With them gone we could see what lay behind that solid public frontage. We could see the back-spaces as they fell away in size and somehow in significance, through back bedroom, back extension, scullery, lean-to shed. From public solidity and the front room to the more precarious, personal and informal spaces where most of daily life was lived. Now we could see all of this too.

Thirdly, House disrupted our accustomed sense of time-space by apparently solidifying the volume that had once been the interior of the house: the living space, the space of life. Its openness had been filled in. All that was air was turned into solid. In House, social time-space was deadened, muted. The movement, the noise, the interchange; these things through which we create the time-spaces of our lives were gone. House was emptied of all that, and such a way of asserting what social time-space really is – precisely by so brilliantly emphasising its absence, its current impossibility – is one of the most provocative things about this work. Through its very negation it brought home the true meaning of social space.

Given all of this, what is crucial to any assessment of House on these dimensions is the way in which the three aspects of space-time disruption work together. Much must turn on the way in which these disruptions functioned in the responses to and interpretations of House, perhaps especially by local people – people in the East End of London.

Nostalgia

Let us begin this inquiry with the fact of reference to the past – or, better, reference to 'a past', since the point is precisely that there are many versions of this history. Much comment on House has focused on memory, on the first – temporal – disruption of space-time which it works, with much reference to nostalgia and to nostalgia for a specific place and time.

Now, that kind of nostalgia has been interpreted by many as being a symptomatic, defining, element of the postmodern condition. This, in turn, has been variously explained. On the one hand commentators such as David Harvey see in a nostalgia for place merely a defensive response to the new burst of the globalisation of capital, the new and accelerated phase of time-space compression.[2] For them, such a response is a negative evasion of 'the real issues', and nostalgia for place is likely to end up in political 'reaction'. Yet there is another way of understanding this nostalgia which again would see it as a product of the present era but would not condemn it out of hand. Thus Angelika Bammer and Wendy Wheeler interpret it as a symptom emerging from the deprivations of modernity, a response to the too-long-maintained repression of affective desire by Modernism in its various forms. Postmodern nostalgia is the return of Modernism repressed.[3]

How then is it to be interpreted? Wendy Wheeler, who links this aspect of affect precisely to notions of the uncanny, stresses the element of sharedness which it entails. Postmodern nostalgia she defines as 'the desire for communal identifications'. 'Nostalgia . . . turns us towards the idea of the individual as non-alienated, as knowing and being known by others in the commonality of the community which is identified as "home".'[4] It is not necessary to accept that this is the only form of postmodern nostalgia in order to agree that it is an important component. Angelika Bammer, too, addressing the specific issue of 'home', writes of 'fictional constructs, mythic narratives, stories the telling of which have the power to create the "we" who are engaged in telling them. This power to create not only an identity for ourselves as members of a community . . . but also the discursive right to a space (a country, a neighbourhood, a place to live) that is due us, is – we then claim, in the name of the we-ness we have just constructed – at the heart of what Anderson describes as "the profound emotional legitimacy" of such concepts as "nation" or "home".'[5]

But if this interpretation, in contrast to that of Harvey, accepts – as it is surely correct to do – the 'emotional legitimacy' of nostalgia for place and home (even if only on grounds of recognising its inevitability) it is nonetheless the case that such nostalgia can be problematical; for memory and the desire for

communal identifications can cut both ways. They can be an aid to reactionary claims for a return (to something which of course never quite was, or which at least is open to dispute). They can erase other memories and other identifications. They can exclude some groups from membership in 'the commonality of the community which is identified as "home"', or they can be a basis for the mobilisation of emancipatory political change. Particular evocations of nostalgia must, for that reason, be evaluated individually, in their specificity. Jeffrey Peck, for instance, concludes that in certain times and places (he is writing of Germany at the end of the 20th century), the particular concept of 'home' is so unavoidably full of references to exclusion, blood and territory that it is virtually unusable for other, more disruptive emancipatory purposes.[6] Another approach, maybe in other contexts, might be to argue the pressing need for its reformulation. The question is how, in any particular circumstance, a specific form of evocation of memories functions? What effects does it produce? What solidarities (what we-nesses) does it conjure in the imagination? Are its workings those of exclusion or of openness?

House clearly aroused memories and provoked thoughts about nostalgia. Moreover it did so, and quite deliberately, at a specific moment in space-time: a late 19th-century house in a once-settled, now partly demolished residential street in the heart of London's East End. How, then, in relation to this question of nostalgia, did House work its effects?

The question can be posed at two spatial scales. First, it can be posed at the scale of house and home. Feminists, for instance, have long argued that the resonances once so usually associated with 'home' must be disrupted: that home is not necessarily a place of rest or of repose, that it can be also a place of work, a place of conflict, a place of entrapment. Bammer suggests that 'home, in a sense, has always been *unheimlich*, unhomely; not just the utopian place of safety and shelter for which we supposedly yearn, but also the place of dark secrets, of fear and danger, that we can sometimes only inhabit furtively'.[7]

Secondly, the question of House's affect/effect can be raised at a broader geographical scale: that of the local area in which it was made. Here what needs to be investigated is its relation to a politics of location. For the sculpture was set in the East End of London and, more specifically, in the borough of Tower Hamlets. And memory and nostalgia are difficult and dangerous things in that area these days. On the one hand is the enormous freight of meaning – and of different meanings – the very words 'the East End of London' bring with them. On the other hand is the wrenching disruption of this space in the recent past. The docks have closed, their use and meaning is being quite consciously re-worked; to the south Canary Wharf rises on the obliteration of a past which is drawn on only to add a touch of local colour to the new, global developments. And in September 1993, at the very time when House was being constructed, the British National Party won a seat on the local borough council.

In this local area, memory and nostalgia are active forces precisely in the constitution of communal identifications and political subjectivities. They are crucial axes around which political constituencies are articulated and individuals interpellated into wider constellations of attitudes. So House is an irruption of a past time-space into a present where references to 'the past', and interpretations of the nature of that past and of the relationship between past and present, are key political stakes.

The issue, therefore, is not to attempt to eradicate memory and nostalgia. It is, on the contrary, to ask: how do those other two aspects of the potentially uncanny spatiality of House work to subvert what *could* be, given its placing in this time and space, an all-too-*comfortable* nostalgia of home and locality.

House and 'home'

What effects, then, do the turning of the space inside out and the solidification of space have when considered at the level of the domestic: at the spatial scale of the home? One thing to say first is that, of course, this sculpture was not called Home; it was called House. Naming immediately distances us, it uses a word somehow from the public sphere to designate a work which is so evidently redolent of what we customarily think of as private, and a word, too, which refers more to the physicality of the walls and roof, which have been removed, which now no longer are, than to the space of social interaction which, in contrast, has now so physically been both exposed and filled in. The very naming, then, gives clues to the spatial disruptions House effected.

The first of these two spatial reversions – the turning of the space 'inside out' – works particularly powerfully at this scale of the individual house/home. It is immediately shocking and disruptive. It exposes the private sphere to public view and thereby to questioning. Most importantly, it defamiliarises house and home. And in achieving that, it challenges us to put our own meanings on them. It exposes the normal, comfortable mythologising of 'home'. Bammer, following up her argument for the intrinsic double nature of home, suggests that 'Perhaps, in this light, the best we can do about home at this point in time is to bring it, in all its complexity, out into the open'.[8] This, surely, House achieves. It is not merely physical space which it turns inside out but the whole burden of meaning and metaphor which this space has so often had to carry (the actual bearing of the burden usually predominantly being done by the women who lived in those spaces). Potentially at least it exposes the complexity of the meaning of 'home'. House emphasises the fact that its meaning always has to be interpreted; that there was never any simple 'authenticity'; that the meaning(s) of home are always open to contestation.

Postmodern nostalgia, it has already been pointed out, has been argued to be the return of the repressed of Modernity. More specifically, it is the return of the repressed in the form of the 'other' sides of all those dualisms which are made to provide the (ultimately oh-so-precarious) foundation for Modernity's assertion of the dominance of unsullied Reason.[9] Among the core set of this bastion of dualisms is that between the famous pair, the private and the public. For Hannah Arendt the distinction between the two is 'between things that should be hidden and things that should be shown'.[10] In House the things which should be shown are removed, leaving only their defining shape; while the things which should be hidden are (almost, potentially, in outline) exposed to view. It is a reversal which, certainly, could bear 'the name for everything that ought to have remained... secret and hidden but has come to light'. Moreover, to take a final step along this particular line of thought, Homi Bhabha, drawing on Carole Pateman's work in *The Disorder of Women*, argues that 'By making visible the forgetting of the "unhomely" moment in civil society, feminism specifies the patriarchal, gendered nature of civil society and disturbs the symmetry of private and public which is now shadowed, or uncannily doubled, by the difference of genders which does not neatly map on to the private and the public, but becomes disturbingly supplementary to them'.[11]

The second spatial reversal worked by House, the solidifying of the once-open space both further complicates this questioning of the public/private divide and produces other, different effects. For the 'private' sphere is of course *not* in fact exposed to view. What used to be a space-time created out of living social relations is by this second reversal made mute and blind and inanimate. On the one hand this forces us, again, to interpret. By defamiliarising, silencing the private world now exposed to public view it compels us to do our own work. Mute it stood there, asking us to remember, to think, to question. On the other hand, by evoking so profoundly the absence of that previous life, those now-stilled social relations, by the fact that the house has gone and that the potential for the reconstruction of that social space has been so finally ended by both aspects of this spatial reversal, House insists on the impossibility of the recovery of that past. This is crucial; it is potentially, and productively, disturbing. It is a positive, dislocating, evocation of memories. It makes clear that, however you interpret the past, you can't have it back.

There does seem to be here a glaring – and fascinating – contrast with the way in which the classic 'heritage site' performs its work. In many heritage sites not only are the buildings retained, but within them and around them a version of the social relations of the chosen moment of the past is acted out. A particular reading (sometimes more than one) of those social relations which constituted that particular space-time is preserved, and re-presented. There is frequently a commentary, maybe a written guide explaining things. Such sites, too, can be provocative of nostalgia. As Wheeler says, 'That these are commodified images in no way lessens their effect'.[12] But the effect of this nostalgia is likely to be different from that of House. While House is a prompt and a disturbance to the memory, the classic heritage site fills in those spaces and restricts the room for interpretation and imagination. Instead of questioning memory and pre-given understandings of the past, the classic heritage site will provide them ready-made. Instead of defamiliarising the supposedly familiar, it is meant as an aid to further familiarisation. It is, by design, an understandable rather than an unsettling space, a comfortable rapprochement with another space-time.

The use of such sites in particular localities can also sometimes have the effect of presenting history as continuity, as tradition in its conventional sense. On this reading, 'tradition' is something which we inevitably lose, as it fades into the past. Such notions of tradition can so easily be congealed into a static essence, as the *real* character of the place: what do we mean when we say 'this is the *real* East End'? And what contexts would provoke us to say it?

It has recently been argued by many writers that white British culture and society are undergoing serious anxiety about the nature of tradition and their relationship to it. Kevin Robins has argued that the burgeoning industry of 'heritage culture' has been in part about attempts to construct, or to respond to the felt need for, 'protective illusions' in the midst of all this anxiety.[13] In one way House clearly disallows such protective illusions; the very vulnerability of its inside-outness, for instance, prevents such easy recourse to tradition in this sense. But there is another aspect to the critique of this concept of local tradition which raises broader issues. In this critique what is called for is a rejection of the all-too-frequently 'internalist', inward-looking, character of tradition and a recognition of the past – and the present – as always having been hybrid and open.[14]

The politics of location

House was conceived and made in the context of the East End of London. And the East End is an area which oozes meaning as a place, both locally and in the national psyche. It is a locality in which notions of community and of constructing that 'we' of which Angelika Bammer writes, and the communal identifications named by Wendy Wheeler, are at the very heart of politics and of daily life. A reference to 'tradition' in the East End can bring to mind radicalism and ethnic diversity or racism and community closure. In such a context it becomes particularly important to ask how the evocation of memory is working and what effects – social and political – it is producing.

The debates which took place over House complicated these issues still further, sometimes productively, at other times troublingly. So-called 'traditionalism' in art crossed swords at times with forms of traditionalism of the locality. The predictable debate as to whether or not this was 'art', although a sterile confrontation in its own terms, threw into relief some other, less expected, alignments. On the one hand, as people from inside and outside the area, indeed from all over the world, flocked to see it, there was an appreciation of the work which was at times undoubtedly elitist.[15] Some highly dubious lines of counterposition were thereby drawn up, between experts and ordinary folk, between I-know-what-I-like traditionalists and an avant-garde which was actually now the establishment, between worthy locals (and local worthies) and elitist outsiders. Thus, one aspect of House's provocation of constituencies looked, at first sight, pretty dismal.

Yet in an interesting way it was also contradictory. Thus in one, and only one sense, it was something of a relief that it was, in this public debate, the traditionalists and those who claimed to speak for 'ordinary local people' who so often disliked the work. Had these defenders of all that was so great in those days really loved House, it might have been necessary to question the manner in which it was evoking memory. Had House stimulated a positive evocation of the East End for these groups it would probably have fitted into images of good old England and cuddly (white and patriarchal) working-class communities. It says a lot for House that it does not seem to have been interpreted in this way directly; that it did not play to that kind of nostalgia, did not stimulate the reinforcement of a backward-looking, reactionary, communal identity. But neither was it rejected by these detractors because it *problematised* that kind of a nostalgia of place. The issue was simply not raised. What these commentators disliked was House's nature as (not) Art, not its representation of the East End.

Matters were equally confusing on the other side of these self-built fences. Although the work was proudly defended by some as modern in artistic terms, some of the evocations of its meaning by the self-consciously artistically adventurous were alarmingly traditional *socially*.

Take the issue of housing, and what it represents socially. John McEwen in *The Daily Telegraph* paraded the classic contrasts: 'grim 1960s high-rises' and 'tarted-up 1980s ones' and 'the twenty-first century megastructure of Canary Wharf'. And, having let us know what he doesn't like, he gives us the alternative: 'the snug 1880s terraced family homes of which House is an example'.[16] McEwen's response to House did not place him within a 'traditionalist' camp. But when it comes to family-values, domestic bliss and housing, what he appreciates is snug families. Non-traditionalism in art combined with an

utterly traditional nostalgia about home. Not only does such a response fail to take on board the potential critique of such forms of domestic organisation, but it harks back uncritically to an age which itself has come to have many dubious and debatable political meanings – the Victorian era.

But housing in this area raises other issues too. The iconography of house and home performs a crucial role in the various imagined pasts of this part of London. The far-right election victory in September 1993 was largely orchestrated around battles over housing (of which there is a grotesque shortage), and over the right of 'the locals' to local housing over the rights of others. Housing was at the centre of the battle over who was, and who was not, part of the local community. It was a crucial organising issue for the increasingly vocal racisms. The British National Party in the East End uses a mythic version of the past of the place as white, as pure English. It refers to a non-existent past 'before immigration'. And Bow, where House stood, is, and is seen as, a relatively white enclave within that East End. It was one of the first places where the housing strategy 'for locals' was tried. The fact of the work being a house, and in this precise location, was therefore potentially highly symbolic. What House did not do, maybe at the wider spatial scale it could not do, was challenge that kind of construction of home as once pure and now corrupted; that notion of tradition, of traditions of place now lost. While it said that no past is recoverable it didn't problematise, *at the level of the locality*, the memory of what that past was. Although its location was important, House did not say much about the East End as a wider area or about Bow within it: as a place of cohabitation of radicalism and racism, as a meeting-place of immigrants from all over the world and over centuries, as a repository of a bit of English identity, as a site of contradiction between a persistent localism and the context of having been for two centuries and more at the hub of a global Empire. It is often argued, as we have seen, that the current intensified phase of globalisation has hybridised all our homes. In fact this is by no means a new phenomenon. Quintessential Englishness is utterly founded and dependent upon relations with elsewhere. And in few places is this clearer than the East End, with its constant flow of new communities and its centuries of contact with the trade routes of the world. The hybridity of a place called home is not new. Could House have set in motion forces towards the construction, the reinforcement or the subversion of communal identifications in this place? And what 'discursive right to a space' (Bammer) does that allow such a community to claim? These issues are central to the politics of location in this area. Might the work provoke longings for an imagined past 'pre-immigration'? Or could it help in the construction of a 'we' which is inclusive, and neither defensive nor essentialist? To me, it seemed that House did not broach these issues substantively.

This is not to suggest that the work could have addressed these issues directly, and certainly not that it need have answered questions rather than merely raising them. For this is the point. At the level of the internal-domestic, House clearly problematised issues. One could not look at it without asking questions. At this level, House worked all three disruptions to time-space. It brought back a previous time-space, but it also inverted and apparently solidified it. It thoroughly de-familiarised it. It is less clear at the level of the locality, however, that House really posed questions, really *unsettled* in any way the terms of the accepted debate. Could it have de-familiarised the locality too? And while, certainly, it was mute, it was not without content. In its specific location and its evocation of house and home, it might have courted the danger of provoking a nostalgia for a white East End.

And yet it seems not to have had that effect, or not among the reactions which found a wider public. The alignments faced the other way. The British National Party, by all accounts, were utterly offended by the work. Maybe, ironically, what was active here was House's glorious combination of the evocation of tradition precisely in a non-traditional form of 'art'. If this meant that the history of the locality was not problematised, at least it meant that the work did not become the focus for the celebration of a mythical white past. Indeed, the first graffiti sprayed on House read: 'HOMES FOR ALL BLACK + WHITE'.

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Notes

1 For a more detailed discussion, see Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, Polity (Cambridge), 1994.
2 David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Basil Blackwell (Oxford), 1989.
3 Wendy Wheeler, 'Nostalgia Isn't Nasty – the Postmodernising of Parliamentary Democracy' in Mark Perryman (ed), *Altered States: Postmodernism, Politics, Culture*, Lawrence and Wishart (London), 1994.
4 Ibid, p99.
5 Angelika Bammer, 'Editorial: The Question of "Home"', *New Formations* (London), no17, pxi, 1992.
6 Jeffrey M Peck, 'Rac(e)ing the Nation: Is There a German "Home"', *New Formations*, no17, pp75–84, UK, 1992.
7 Bammer, op cit, pxi.
8 Bammer, op cit.
9 Wheeler, op cit.
10 Hannah Arendt, 1958, *The Human Condition*, Chicago University Press (Chicago), p72, in Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge (London), p10, 1994.
11 Homi Bhabha, op cit.
12 Wheeler, op cit, p98.
13 Kevin Robins, 'Tradition and Translation: National Culture in its Global Context', in Corner, J and Harvey, S (eds), *Enterprise and Heritage*, pp21–44, Routledge (London), 1991.
14 See also Homi Bhabha, 'Beyond Fundamentalism and Liberalism', *New Statesman and Society* (London), 3 March 1989; Robins, op cit; Hanif Kureishi, 'England, your England', *New Statesman and Society*, 21 July (London), 1989.
15 See for example, Andrew Graham-Dixon, 'I don't know much about art, but I know what I hate . . .', *The Independent* (London), 24 November, 1993; Deyan Sudjic, 'Art attack', *The Guardian* (London), November 25, 1993; *The Independent* (London), January 14, 1994.
16 John McEwen, 'The House that Rachel Unbuilt', *Sunday Telegraph* (London), 24 October, 1993.

Guest-editor: *By reading Massey's reading of Whiteread's House we can pursue an Other dimension of the sculptural: a condition of disappointment of the sculptural (positive or negative) in the course of spatial propositions of function; a condition which stops any further expelling of the utilised by the sculptural and any concomitant conversion of the former to an essentially 'cold', 'entropic' and opaque real that invests in the individual's private 'psychoanalytic' uncanny world – a comfortable womb-alternative fostering yet another foreclosure of space.*[1]

Perceived in these terms, a crucial point that House can make can be seen not in the negativisation of the visible or the banalisation of the usable, but in the radical distinction between the visible and the usable, which occurs at the level of domestic/urban/historic reclaiming.

Massey's House is not a deadly (non-articulable) opaque or imploded antiform – a singular object 'gallerising' public space, 'exciting' and dragging us into short-circuit interpretative operations, taking for granted and neutralising spatial givens. A spatial (as opposed to visual) understanding can introduce the specific artwork not at the level of an (a-political) 'elsewhere' or 'everywhere' or 'inexchangeable real', but as a contextualisation of a radical political no-where – that is, a 'place' whose very presence puts in question its 'yes/no' symbolic convictions. The differences between opaque or cast entropic visuality and dialectical opacity; between a general asymbolic condition and specifically un-symbolic conditioning; between the real as a metaphor for death and the real as a problematic of the specific – all of these converge on the difference between negated space and procedural spatiality.

The problematic of nostalgic space is not concerned with a memory-bound condition but is instead a spatial engagement that seeks to activate repressed subjectivities such as the feminine, sociality, tradition. At a technical level, however, the political recurrence of spatiality seems to operate as a re-encountering of place as we – spatially deprived as we are – gradually become immigrants ourselves within our own 'homely' urban environment. At a spatial level the immigrant returns not as guest or traveller but as pure citizenship, as an Other domesticity – a spatial awareness crossing all 'natural' (ie communicational) distances, involving a total and unlimited reference to space, from domestic utensils to the city itself, to a 'new' country.

'Homes for all black + white' can be read as a spatial hypothesis. Massey's House seeks the spatial precision which would objectify the symbolic at the level of desire – rendering the symbolic articulable rather than merely polarised and ruling. So a politics of location urges a practice of radical de-idealisation and, in turn, a binding of the symbolic. This is perhaps the most important point here: that the supposed entropic condition of the inverted building can actually become focused. From a spatial non-point of view, beyond the visual or sculptural, the graffiti's well-known symbolic polarisation can now be reallocated in a gesture that takes on board the local socio-spatial culture as a critique of any asymbolic (apolitical) interpretation which the artwork as a mere sculpture 'in space' would entail. Of course the graffiti does not demand homes for blacks and whites separately (two different types of dwellings for two distinct categories of people). What it advocates is a spatial (rather than worldly) bind of the two racist categories – the making of a living space out of one undiscriminating solid spatial quality, which would synthesise and potentially erase symbolic differences (as the latter have always been effects of relations of opposition and mutual idealisation).

We cannot help but remember the famous Lacanian anecdote of a boy and girl sitting at opposite seats in a train arriving at a station who start arguing about the ladies' and gentlemen's toilets. From the spatial non-point of view (and contrary to many symbolic interpretations of the Lacanian concept) the issue here is not to see that the opposite 'signifieds' slide or polarise over (caught up in an endless intertransferential discourse) an untouchable and randomly moving 'signifier', in an act of symbolic appropriation or misappropriation; instead the point is to acknowledge the urgency of a practice of affluence of the referent/space and its binding countertransferential allocating principle which can defuse symbolic polarisations. Countertransference is particularly important here, because merely celebrating relations of 'otherness' between the two symbolic poles does not seem adequate. What does seem to be necessary is the collocation and spatial exchange of the actual, 'different', referential conditions at issue. So it seems that 'we' people should know how to dwell in 'two' collocated places: 'one' as blacks or ladies and 'one' as whites or gentlemen. NG

Note

1 For an elaboration of the 'entropic' and 'uncanny' in relation to House, see, respectively, Rosalind Krauss, 'X Marks the Spot', in *Rachel Whiteread: Shedding Life*, exhibition catalogue, Tate Gallery, Liverpool, 1996 , pp 74-81, and Anthony Vidler, 'A Dark Space', in *House: Rachel Whiteread*, Phaidon Press Limited (London), 1995, pp 62-72.



Rachel Whiteread, House, Grove Road, London (October 1993-January 1994)

ROGER CONNAH

UNINFLECTION AND STUBBORN ARCHITECTURE

The Work of ARRAK Architects

The shots have nothing to do with each other. They are not a record of what the protagonist did. They are not a record of how the deer reacted to the bird. They're basically uninflected images. But they give the viewer the idea of 'alertness to danger' when they are juxtaposed. That's good filmmaking. David Mamet

Contextualising uninflection and the obtuse

It may be good architecture too! Much formalism and mannerism abounds in recent contemporary architecture, especially architecture visually exuberant enough to appear endlessly in international magazines. We have seen, in the 1990s, the desire to play up to a neo-modern style. Expressive, somewhat restrained architecture is perpetuated by a shifted, sometimes emptied, deconstructive play. A neo-avant-garde opts for the semiotic spectacle of form and material whilst hopefully hooking on to an authenticity of material and tectonic logic. Very often this reinforces the nostalgia of a supposed brave and coherent radical past that belongs to an earlier part of this century. Domain and identity-giving structures are commonly associated with this stylised, image-made architecture.

Such strict aesthetic classification within contemporary architecture leaves *other* architecture, more obtuse work in whatever form it takes, less able to be promoted and less open to critical analysis. It is then but a short step to see this other work dismissed by loose, pejorative, often misplaced terms, like organic, regional, vernacular, subjective, romantic, idiosyncratic, instinctive, intuitive. At the same time, however, it would be a mistake to reduce all this other architecture to the competent, discrete work of a critical tectonic but ultimately blunt regionalism. Architecture such as this often remains uninflected, outlasting the im*media*cy of architecture as represented through magazines and journals. This is an architecture that is doubtless contemporary yet can appear ageless. It is an architecture that is styleless yet can conform to identifiable signatures. It is an architecture that can be stubbornly cultural and isolated, uninflected, yet must borrow symbolic investment from a variety of traces. It is an architecture that can appear undeveloped in relation to more visual current trends but gains by a slow, even shrewd, juxtapositional grounding in site, material and culture.

The key here is uninflection, and as an initial contextualising clue to such 'procedural' architecture, I propose to take off from David Mamet's notion of juxtaposition in filmmaking. Juxtaposition can be said to aim for – if not necessarily achieve – an *alertness to architecture*. This alertness is neither contained only in the immediate informational level *projected* by the architecture, nor is it merely registered at the second *symbolic* level that an architect may hope will be conveyed by the work. Such alertness in architecture always invites a further level. There is a third, experiential level that so often avoids immediate grasp and timing in architecture. Combined with the previous two levels it can, even, exceed the phenomenological. Through the notion of juxtaposition, as that confluence where *function* and *environment* in architectural experience converge, we might propose a third effect in architecture.

The third effect

This third effect, in architectural terms, is a form of found and lost montage. Created by a critical and experiential architectural montage, a careful refusal to opt for immediate accessible style-defined solutions, this is not a third meaning, the obtuse meaning (Barthes on Eisenstein). It is a stubborn inventive practicality and responsibility, arising only in and out of the architectural process. We can call it an *obtuse architecture* if we consider such work uninflected: uninflected in the sense that the architecture is slow to reveal its subtlety or its totality; uninflected in the sense of an architecture less than immediate and all that that implies in a media age; an architecture that by so lacking the visual props and semiotics of more exuberant work demands more subtle and less accessible symbolic grounding. *Uninflection* is, necessarily, shy of the visually immediate. In architecture any visual instancy invites an increased, even accelerated, expressive grasp.

It is therefore not surprising that in a society like Finland, which is so driven by national signatures, historical anxiety and the need to script coherence of culture through architecture, uninflection struggles to gain critical recognition. Indeed, it must baulk at such access. The more classificatory, visual examples often associated with Finnish architecture, those stylishly polished works that conform to a *semiotic* narrative of identity and culture, invite and ensure continuing promotion. Architecture that might consider the alertness to critical response and cultural innovation to be elsewhere, an architecture undemonstratively exploring the site, the climate and the building techniques of a region using innovative ecological materials, an architecture exploring the third effect, demands a quieter discipline. As in Arctic planning, there is, in such architecture, a slow and gradual logical progression towards an ordered state, however disordered and scattered the departure and initial drama may be. Architecture such as this may only come to rest long after the settlement has been built, long after more immediate function and semantics have been served. Architecture so uninflected, to differentiate it from the more generalised vernacular 'modernism', expresses a commitment first to building, second to culture and third, effectively over time, to stubborn revelation.

Uninflection and stubbornness

To make relevant our idea of uninflection and the third effect, and to locate its links to a stubbornness in architecture, it is worth a brief digression. Finnish architecture is often confused by its promoted 'collective' notion. It is a notion trimmed to a visual style and polish that struggles to avoid including its variants. An ethical trace is seen to be 'read' aesthetically; discipline and detail are equated with style and polish. Not particularly inter-



The Samis as Sheep Herders, *Andreas Alariesto (1900-89)*



Valintatalo Supermarket, Matinkylä

ested in self-promotion, there is a number of small practices in Finland that have, since the late 70s, produced a consistent body of work – uninflected work we are suggesting – which cannot easily be classified as regionalist or vernacular. Sharing responsibility for the architecture achieved, these are collaborative practices where one or other of the partners assumes the lead, guiding and steering the project through the brief, the various stages of the project, confirming and testing at all steps a series of carefully scrutinised guiding principles.

There are clearly risks in such commitment. Often possessing a stubborn stylelessness, this is, in its pace and detail, an architecture that can and must stand detached from more inflected sensuality and poetics. A practice with an apparent lack of a clear 'style', undeveloped or then uneven, is perceived to be inconsistent in terms of conventional critical analysis. Committed smaller practices, such as the Finnish architects ARRAK, suggest that the stubbornness of this architectural variance deserves deeper exploration. ARRAK is an acronym using the first two letters from the Finnish words for architecture (ARkitehtuuri) and the first three letters from the word for building (RAKennus). Held within this is a contract and commitment with architectural responsibility itself. Like a director thinking of the next step, their buildings evolve from a clear *indistinct* sense, a slowness even, if not from stubbornness.

'Get into the scene late, get out of the scene early, tell the story in the cut.' Mamet offers sound advice and avoids easy seduction. Implying a range of careful, at first possibly indistinct departures; from the ecological use of timber, from locations (just as a film might), from regional myth or realism, from tradition and culture, ARRAK proceeds through a dialectics of building methods and architectural expectations. The practice can speak of a styleless architecture grounded in a layered, even local symbolism. Meanings, when they come from their work, are additive and not always secondary, and clearly the results are not always recognisably 'ARRAKIAN' because such departure, such design methodology and cultural symbolism does not predispose consistently identifiable aesthetics. There is, in their layering of the work, in the tectonics and symbolism of the building methods and use, no envisaged 'semiotic' or formal consequence to their work when it begins. This is the obtuseness of their approach; as if there is a hidden hand, as if slowness knows when to accelerate the architectural process and read significance in the insignificant.

The significance of insignificance

The 1980s was a period in which architecture was wedded to a public symbolism. No coherent notion of Finnish architecture survived the treacherous levelling of the 1970s. Postmodernism arrived and confused just about everyone as architecture was tempted by its semantic potential. Suspicious contractors conspired with clients to demand the simplest commercial boxes with or without optionally applied reference. One of ARRAK's first buildings, the Valintatalo Supermarket – a monument to the last suburban 'empire' of Matinkylä – is a decorated shed: metal box frame and timber elements with a Venturian echo. Any slight organic touches, ecological concerns and ironic use of time were lost on the client, however, and drowned in inexperience. Yet, at the same time, the practice's ideas on uninflection were manifested in the two most significant projects of their early work: Espoo Bridge (1982) and the Aleksis Kivi Cottage (1982). Uninflection and a stubbornness to the visual immediacy of the decade needed to take form; applying references to buildings was not the only way to make remarkable the apparently insignificant.

The Espoo Bridge is accretional: the tectonics obey a strict logic of structure and agglutinisation. No inflected structural image or sensuality guides the bridge's form, no grand sweep or expressive sketch, no cultural input familiarises us. No symbolic lift is offered; no sensation or sentimentality sought. The resulting robustness merely – not insignificantly – resonates. ARRAK was clearly confronting a serious problematic in architecture; the inevitable significance of apparent insignificance in architecture. Even clumsiness had to be confronted.

The cottage where the Finnish National Poet Aleksis Kivi died is not a remarkable work in any sense. Over the years, along with Kivi's reputation and existence, the cottage settlement has been ignored, mutilated and altered beyond recognition. In 1952 it was renovated to a former condition by Errki Helamaa (supervised by Lars Pettersson, from the Art History department of Helsinki). In 1982, again after repeated decay, the modest architectural exercise for ARRAK was one of mere subtraction; to strip down even further to the obvious. The obvious in this case was the rather insignificant little cabin. Basic building techniques were used and had to suffice. It would have amounted to an upholsterer's job if not for the research necessary to attain this insignificant character. No trimming, no stylistic emphasis or fidgeting could make the cabin what it was not. No further cultural pointing-up or fakery was felt necessary or attempted. There could be nothing more



Aleksis Kivi Cottage



The Arctic Centre, Rovaniemi, exterior views

site-specific and source-orientated than Aleksis Kivi's dying place; nothing more obtuse, more stubbornly architectural than this unremarkable cottage!

Forced to deal with the apparently insignificant, a disparate, even unprovocative, cultural environment schooled the practice in the obvious. It also contextualised for them a series of guiding principles which we identify as uninflection. Source, trace, points of departure for the work had to be grafted from the modest, the unremarkable, the unnoticed and even the insignificant. Uninflection and detail are inherent in this schooling. Rather than relying on recognised visual forms, a desire to make architecture from such a modest commission demands a methodology and a commitment to serve the client in more innovative ways, even those more waywardly cultural and mythological. There could be no predisposed image for the architecture they wished to build. For this reason, their Arctic Centre (1983-85) has become such an important and pioneering project within Finnish architecture.

Discontinuous planning

The Arctic Centre in Rovaniemi is a series of buildings designed mainly for the purposes of tourism and representation. Progressively 'built up', the series results from an additive approach. The scattered incompleteness of Arctic spacing produces the dynamic and the separate 'settlements' that house the various functions of the Centre. Alluding to but departing from the naive style of the painter Andreas Alariesto, and to flatness and slowness, migrancy and unrest, ARRAK's methodology arises from and responds to the materiality, privacy and grouping of the traditional arctic settlement. Alertness to architecture here is, in filmic terms, 'in the cut', juxtapositional; between landscape and nature, between material and the built form made from it.

(In)significant function, alongside timber detailing and careful tectonics, renders the building a styleless feel which is difficult to date. Clearly the buildings are not old, yet they do not conform to associations that are recognisably *modernist* or identifiably *regionalist*. Initially, the materials of a finished building can possess a robust almost undeveloped look. The uninflected remains uninflected, discontinuous. Over time, the building alters. Using a dispersed but not disconnected spatial structure, we get something akin to those song-lines explored by Bruce Chatwin. We might speak of trace-lines; site and space lines guided by low sun angles, the deep, soft contours of the surrounding environment, mythology, the orientation of dwelling and shelter, material availability and 'buildability'. Such remoteness also necessitates an ecological sensibility. Uninflected individual lines and sites are traces and only actualised by locating the architecture where it is within the forest. It can appear random only to assume significance long after the architects have departed. Timber details can suggest forest mythology, small narratives known only to the few, or then freely associate with more general Arctic morphology. Roofs cascade to take away the heavy falls of snow, wood details are robust, stout and solid. Alertness in the uninflected, eventually an extended form, is created over time as the stubbornness of the architecture comes to rest and a settlement takes shape.

In different environments, and for a variety of functions, this apparent slowness, this apparent desire not to accelerate architectural grasp and symbolic meaning, is what gives ARRAK's work its operational significance and guiding principles. Though we can often return to the Arctic Centre for the *modus operandi* of this procedural approach to architecture, we should not confine ARRAK's work to such formal principles. The success of the Arctic Centre in fact hijacked their own practice. Visitors, so often encouraged to seek the visual in Finnish Architecture, were indirectly responsible for the practice's promotion as the ecological timber-and-organic outfit, with the expectation of similar buildings. Modesty and the lack of serious critical writing rebounded on ARRAK. The steering principles of its uninflected work were lost. Like many victims of the unfortunate cultural industry in Finland during the 1980s, ARRAK could not obtain larger commissions. By the end of the 80s, during the recession, the practice was forced to apply its innovative skills – not insignificantly – to renovations and extensions, the most significant of which has been the Klondyke Development in Kerava (1988-91).

In the cut

Get into the scene late, get out of the scene early, tell the story in the cut. David Mamet

If architecture can depend on the cut and 'in the cut', the uninflected depends on where the architects wish to take their operational significance for each project. The risks are obvious. This can lead to an apparent unevenness and is nowhere more evident than in the material eclecticism and the wilder tectonic logic of two interior projects by ARRAK for Gramex (1987 and 1994). Procedural necessity and a grounded symbolic package might be too grand to define the Gramex projects of ARRAK, yet





ABOVE AND BELOW RIGHT: Customs and Border Station, Vaalimaa – the Finnish side; BELOW LEFT: Gramex 2

the demands for the Music Recording Copyright Offices were more predisposed to a loose, Hawaii-rock Bahama effect than Arctic survival.

The site lines are gossip and hipness. Materials for the first office in 1987, in the form of an innovative rough aesthetic (a rare use of the 'disposable' in such a tightly controlled architectural culture), give way, by 1994, to the cool business interior of the second office; just as business itself took over the music world and mobile phones were no longer considered pretentious but essential devices. To talk of humanising gossip in these palm-beach interiors is a touch rich, but then the rock musicians who visit are.

However, a visual unevenness can also be carefully balanced by the continued desire to explore and convey insignificance in architecture and by the building of sharply regional, uninflected detailing. The uninflected in one part of a project can be complemented and invite totality by inflection with another. This defeats somewhat usual ways of assessing architectural practices. Uninflection can also work intra-culturally where a State brief demands more visually signalled work. Coincidences abound.

For the Customs and Border Station in Vaalimaa (1996), the State clients demanded an instantly classifiable building; one that was instantly aligned to a recognised Finnish modernism. Insignificance takes on ironic echoes. This necessitated a utilitarian if not disposable innovation to meet stringent budget requirements. As the first building to be seen when entering Finland from Russia, the building had to communicate a distinct, national quality. It does so by conforming to the profession's expected and familiar image of modernism. Kiiskilä, as the architect in charge, turned the utilitarian on its side. Discontinuous materials gain their sensuality from detail and siting. White laminated boarding is among the variety of building techniques that suggest innovation from wood technology used in steel. The ambiguity and robustness of timber is transformed by the use of steel, yet the principles remain the same. This is a heterogeneous building, dissolving timber and steel detailing.

One might have imagined the necessary State image of Finland to be associated with wood. On first glimpse however, the formal pragmatic had to purvey 'Finlandia', architecture as a promotable 'semiotic'. The irony here is an accident of culture and promotion. The cool aesthetic suggested by the lightness of steel obviously 'inflects' on the border. To Finns, it is a reminder of an order they might not discover when they leave. To Russians, it is the reminder of an order they rarely experience anyway. Juxtaposing architectural scenes that are discontinuous produces the third idea, that third effect. Cool steel is not merely cool steel; nor is cool or clumsy timber!

Uninflection and cultural unevenness

ARRAK's architecture does not conform with desired images or a predisposed semiotic, nor can it quite be defined as a carrier of national excellence and identity (in the same way as the recognisable work of Juha Leiviskä or the Heikkinen and Komonen practice). Although their architecture clearly does possess a national excellence, something else, something more obtuse, is at work in their commitment. Another enquiry is necessary to chart how critical attention often fails in response to the uninflected.

We know that culture itself can be deflected by its own visual unevenness. ARRAK is not alone as a committed architectural practice that has gone 'against the grain' of the visually expressive. But this should not allow us to be deflected by its use of timber or the 'natural innocence' this recalls. Here there is no literal attempt to apply the metaphors of nature and culture to a free-form rational dialogue. This approach does not evolve from a committed radical stance or a polemical position but a series of careful principles, inevitably styleless because it is close to realism. A consistent, informable but careful consideration of building technology, function and environment can produce a subtle and sometimes memorable morphological density. Uninflected plasticity and sensuality are harder to achieve.

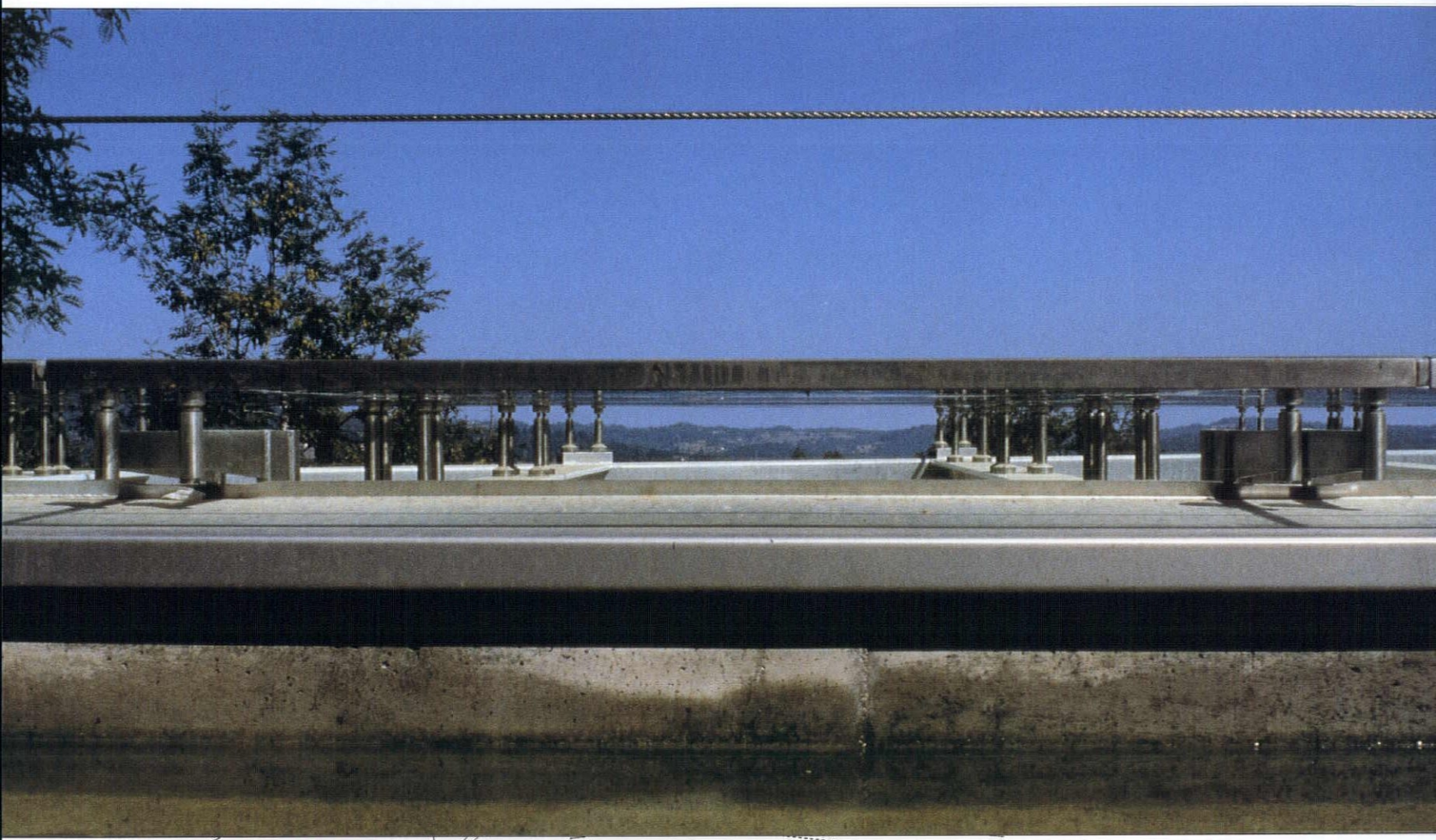
Not all procedures will result in an Arctic Centre, buildings not subject to time, and any resultant sensuality is less contrived as a theoretical dimension. Yet we need not characterise ARRAK's work as essentially intuitive nor as architectural sensation avoided at the expense of structural and louder semiotic concerns. Theirs is a craft applied to the scale of architecture and building, a dimension achieved in their material poetics that – culturally informed – produces an alertness to architecture. As we stated at the outset, this alertness can lose out to more fashionable theories of phenomenological trace and the archetypal response some architects use to 'talk up' the relative and relevant sensuality of their work.

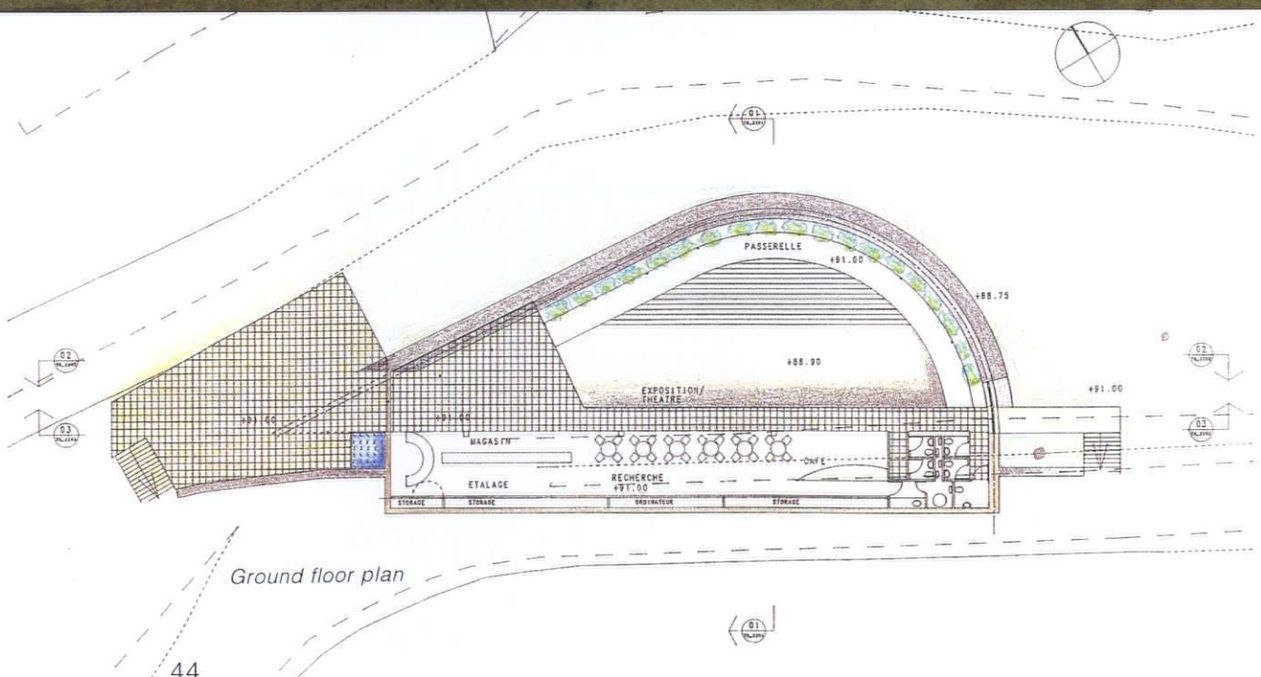
Alertness to architecture

The narrative of ARRAK's development of trace from the late 70s to the present is not really as neat and identifiable as I have described. It probably has even more stubbornness and possibly more subtlety on closer inspection. The obtuseness of such architecture however gains unjust critical ignorance. ARRAK was, for a period, unfairly marginalised by this uninflection, by this stubborn alertness to architecture; that is, until their stubbornness began to *look modern*. Yet the uninflected has no common morphological strain, nor does it refer necessarily to previous project semiotics. And it has a very real effect on the architectural culture, for uninflection in architecture can clearly dissolve the boundaries between the historic and the modern. It can upset the usual frames associated with regional and vernacular tendencies. Not subjected to accepted time frames it can also upset notions of the urban and pastoral, the suburban and the rural. Moreover, it clearly dissolves the myth of the signatorial; the death of the author-architect! In this way, we can speak of uninflection producing this alertness.

Although ARRAK's architecture may not possess familiar totalities and is uneven in a positive sense, it does suggest less objectified work where a stubbornness to the visual invites a spatial, functional and experiential drift. Over time this can be seen to complete their work. If there is a stubborn coincidence in conforming somewhat to the recognisable semiotic, a neo-modernist echo in Vaalimaa, there is also the pull of the more unpredictable, (in)significant architecture of the uninflected in the Arctic Centre. We are, by this, no nearer to knowing what the next ARRAK building will look like, which is a good thing. We do know, however, the principles of uninflection – a third effect – that will be applied, a stubborn thoroughness that can make us alert to a strangely styleless, even timeless architecture.

Roger Connah is a freelance writer and architectural historian currently living in Stockholm.





Ground floor plan



Glass fixing prototype

IAN RITCHIE ARCHITECTS

THE GREENHOUSE FRAGMENT

Terrasson Lavilledieu, Dordogne, France

In 1996 a five-hectare park known as Imaginary Continents was conceived by Paysage Land/Kathryn Gustafson and interpreted in collaboration with Ian Ritchie Architects. The design evolved from historical, landscape and social research of the different intellectual, cultural and spiritual landscape expressions found in selected sites throughout the world.

The Greenhouse Fragment comprises a reference library and research centre on plants, as well as a public space for exhibitions, seminars, film shows and other municipal events.

The structure is set into the hillside on a steep north-facing slope. With its glass-roof surface at ground level on the upper side, it appears as a lake – relating to features elsewhere in the landscape and reflecting the changing sky and foliage of the surrounding trees.

The glass roof consists of two layers of 8-millimetre toughened glass, bonded with a 3-millimetre polyvinylbutyral interlayer. The thickness of the interlayer enables a flange to be accommodated on the head of point fixings, which penetrate the inner layer of glass only, leaving a sheer and unbroken reflective surface to the exterior. The fixing head is articulated on a spherical bearing, close to the plane of the glass. This allows the fixing to rotate with any relative deflections between glass and supporting steelwork, and minimises the transfer of any additional local bending stresses. The method evolves from the 'phantom fixing' developed by the practice in 1987 for the spherical-glass Pearl of the Gulf project in Dubai.

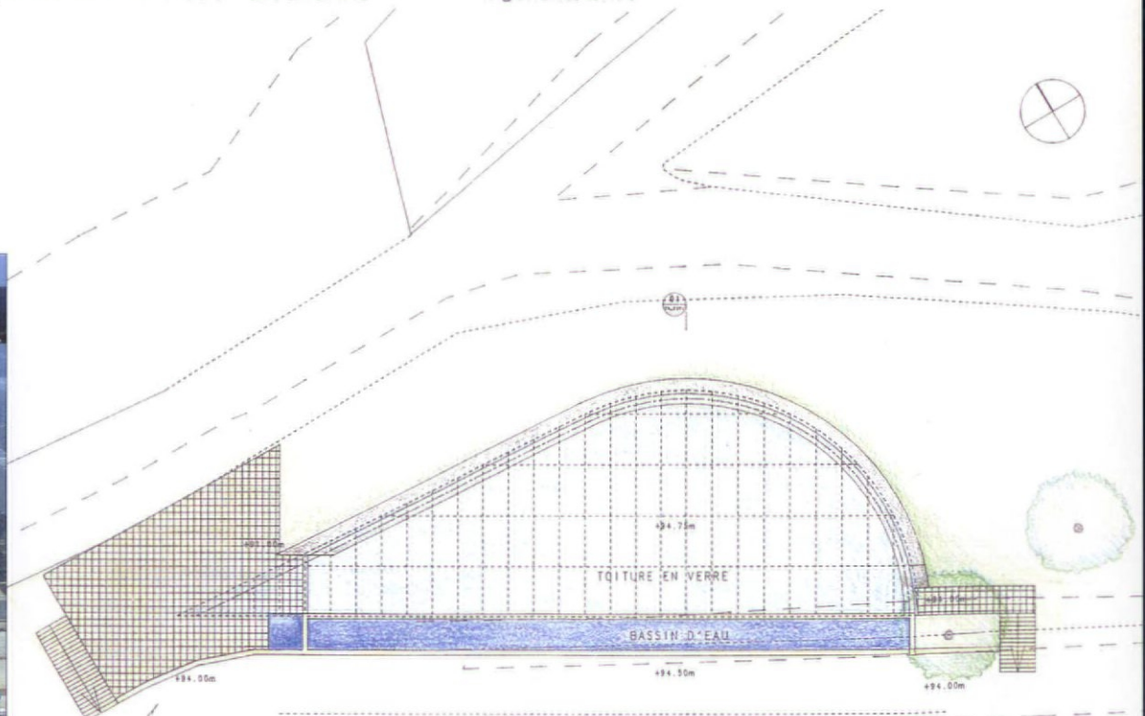
The low-gradient glass roof represents the entire roof to the building, together with a long *bassin d'eau* which forms a safety barrier to the public path at the upper ground level on the south side. The walls are constructed of large local stones held in steel mesh 'cages' (gabions), thus allowing the building to 'breathe' naturally.

The internal space is treated as a tempered external environment, with permanent ventilation around the perimeter of the roof. During the winter, spring and autumn months, the sun will raise the internal temperature, shining on to the gabion stone wall to the north side, which functions as a thermal store. In the summer, provision is made for solar shading between the roof beams to control the temperature, supplemented by evaporative cooling, using the mass of the gabion stone wall to the north. Orange trees planted against the south-facing wall benefit from water which is sprayed on to the stone wall as part of the irrigation system.

In a landscape which otherwise emphasises the open, outward-looking prospect, the greenhouse is a calm, introspective space, illuminated by natural zenithal light.

Project team: landscape architect – Paysage-Land/Kathryn Gustafson; architects – Ian Ritchie Architects: Simon Conolly, Edmund Wan; engineers – Ove Arup and Partners: John Thornton; site engineers – ARC Ingénerie, Brive





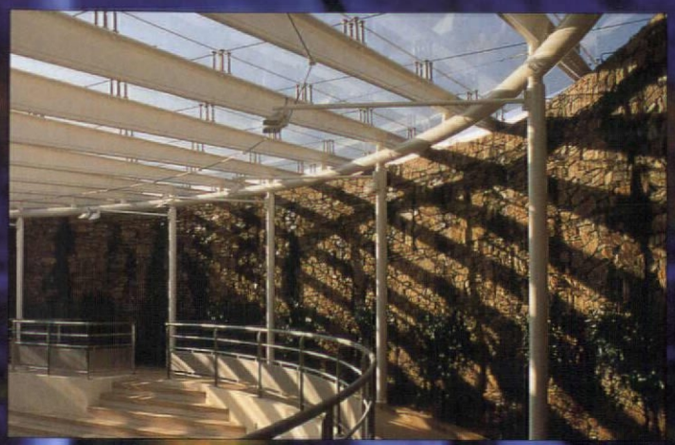
Roof plan





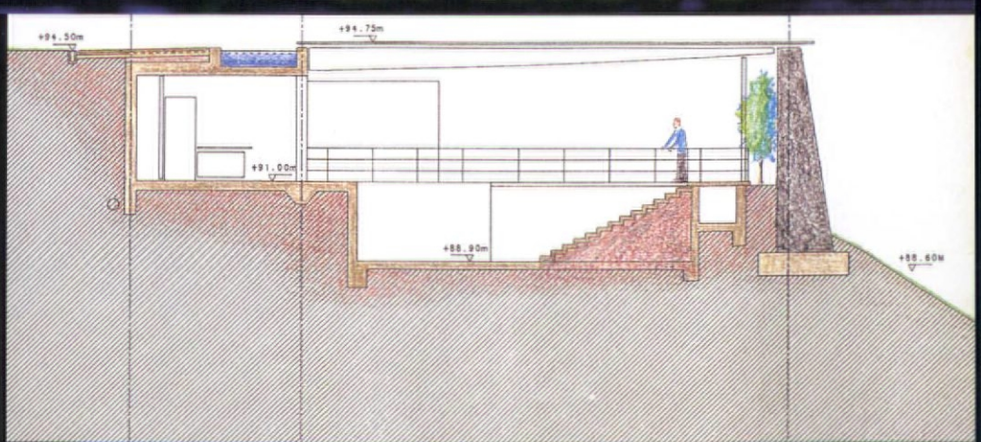












Section

FRANÇOIS ROCHE

VILLA MALRAUX ARTISTS' RESIDENCES AND STUDIOS

Maïdo Road, Reunion Island

Introduction

Sites and territories nurture identities, preconditions and affects that architecture and urbanism have continuously restrained and eradicated. The architectural object, having claimed authority for four centuries,[1] has the power of unparalleled destruction of modernity to maturity. But in so doing it signals its own limits and end.

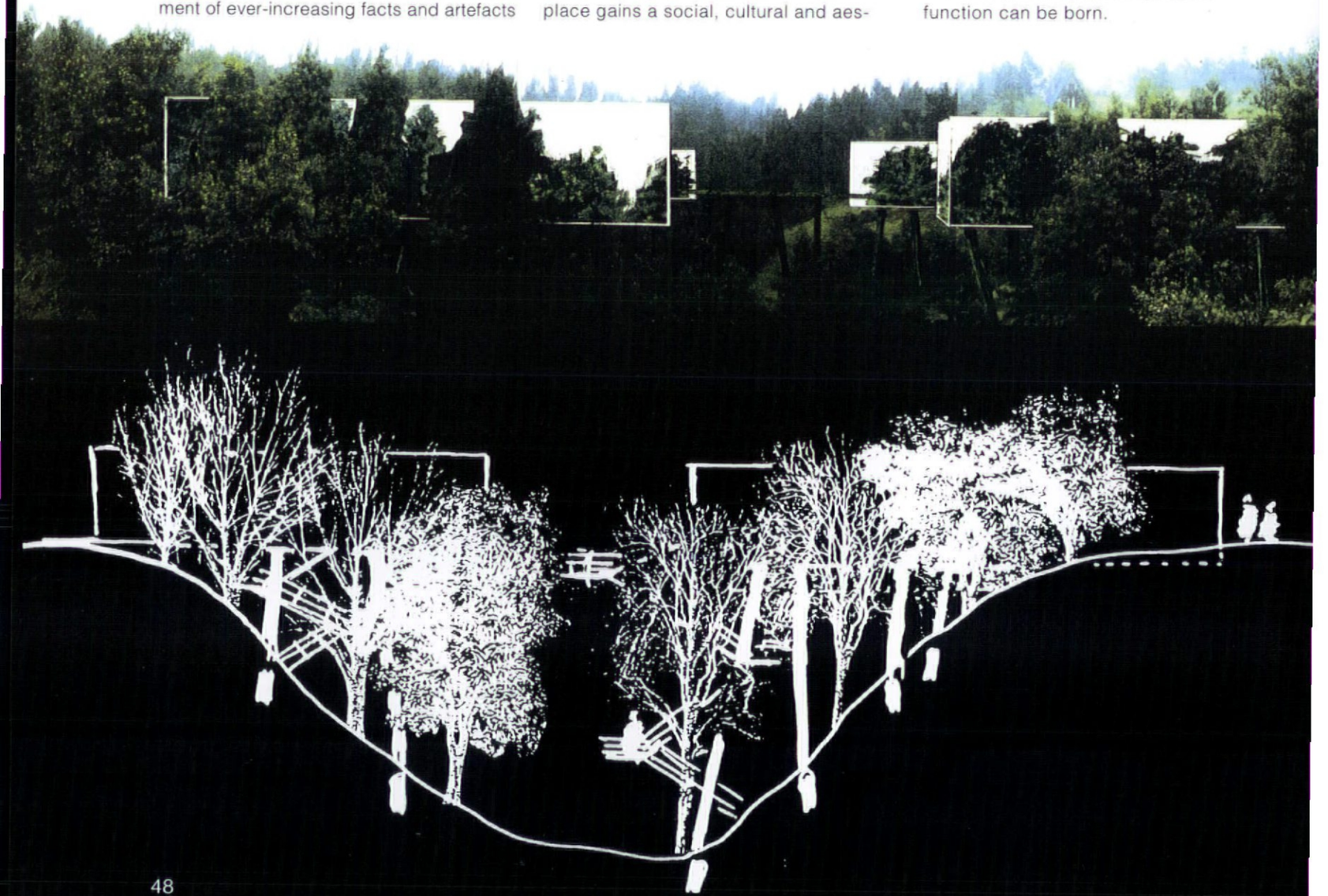
The numerous 'aesthetic orthodoxies' born in the antechamber of reason and the wastedumps of ideology have now not only become unworkable but are also criminal in their discrepancy with society.

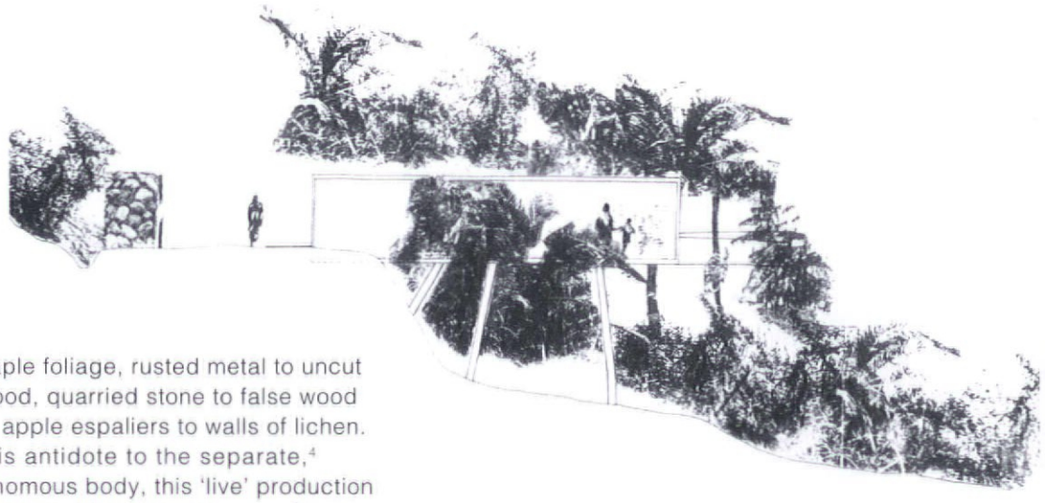
Judging each operation on the validity of hypotheses within an enormous assortment of ever-increasing facts and artefacts is not an easy task. Signs and referents are not pre-given, like a symbolic reference, but have to be discovered in real time, on the 'real site'.

If architecture did not know or could not substitute for the modern culture of breaking-in a culture of place (more attentive to what it was bulldozing), it is because it was already contaminated – a genetic error, in short . . . The horizons of the world of perception, of corporeality and of place have only too rarely been the mediums of production.

Territorialising architecture does not mean cloaking it in the rags of a new fashion or style.[2] Rather, in order that the place gains a social, cultural and aesthetic link,[3] it means inserting it back into what it might have been on the verge of destroying, and extracting the substance of the construction from the landscape (urban or otherwise), whether a physical, corporeal substance within it, or climates, materials, perceptions and affects.

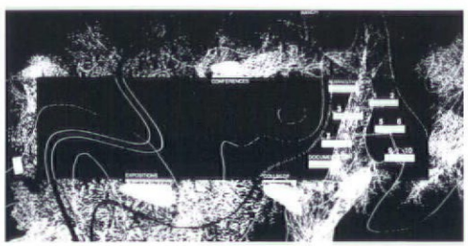
This is not historical regression, nor modern projection, but an attitude that affirms itself by what it doesn't belong to, outlined against a razor's edge, in permanent equilibrium. It is a process that is renewed at each new place, allowing for an *in situ* attitude rather than just another aesthetic code. From that a radical displacement of our function can be born.





To identify that which characterises a place is already to interpret it and to put forward a way of operating on it. But linking a being to its ecosystem can only save linking the body to the body of architecture. This process of reactive mimesis is not a simulation of the 'exquisite corpse' game, a visual avatar, disappearing and camouflaging itself with an ecological alibi. Its ability to take hold of a territory without subjugating it depends on the unclear identity that develops within it, on the transformation it operates, on the gap of its implementation, on the ambiguity of the network of extraction/transformation that the materials have come from: from a gabion of loose stones to maple foliage, rusted metal to uncut plywood, quarried stone to false wood PVC, apple espaliers to walls of lichen.

This antidote to the separate,[4] autonomous body, this 'live' production process could not operate were it not nourished by these active materials: 'there are the images of materials . . . sight names them and the hand knows them'.[5] In order that these 'barren' propositions do not add, subtract but rather extract, and in order that the object of architecture can spur on the real, like a contorted alterity of the territory in abeyance, we should, perhaps, shift the origins of architectural referents into a precondition that states, 'there is'.



Villa Malraux Artists' Residences, Maïdo Road, Reunion Island

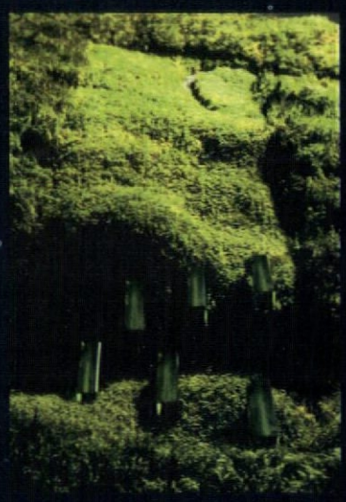












The Maïdo road, from the sea to the peak of the 2,200-metre high Mafate mountain passes an extraordinary sequence of terraces of tropical vegetation: from open dry grassland at 100 metres, sugar cane fields at 300 metres, bamboo ravines at 500 metres, forests of Eucalyptus, cryptomeria plantations, fallow fields of acacia mimosas at 1,000 metres, geraniums and reeds at 1,200 metres, tamarind woods at 1,500 metres, and broom at its peak.

The road offers a perspective of the land, yet at the same time is the agent of its destruction. Halfway up Mafate, at 1,200 metres, lies a clearing. The building is this empty space intensified: an enclosure open to the sky, bordered by cryptomerias, acacia mimosas, the edge of the clearing and a ravine.

The exhibition spaces and public places are developed randomly around the trees, with the clearing's edge bordering them at one side. A large, reflecting clear-plastic wall indicates the building. The cryptomeria trunks perforate the construction, so as not to interrupt the clearing's vegetation. The artists' residences and studios are constructed on stilts, embedded into the trees, their facades of plastic shutters reflecting the tops of the acacias.

The Ti-Jean Garden (landscaped by Gilles Clément) is located at an altitude of 1,500 metres. The entrance is accompanied by micro-facilities on a ravine (eg, cash dispenser services). The design is an extension of the layout of the Villa Malraux.



MUSEUM AND MEMORIAL

Soweto, South Africa

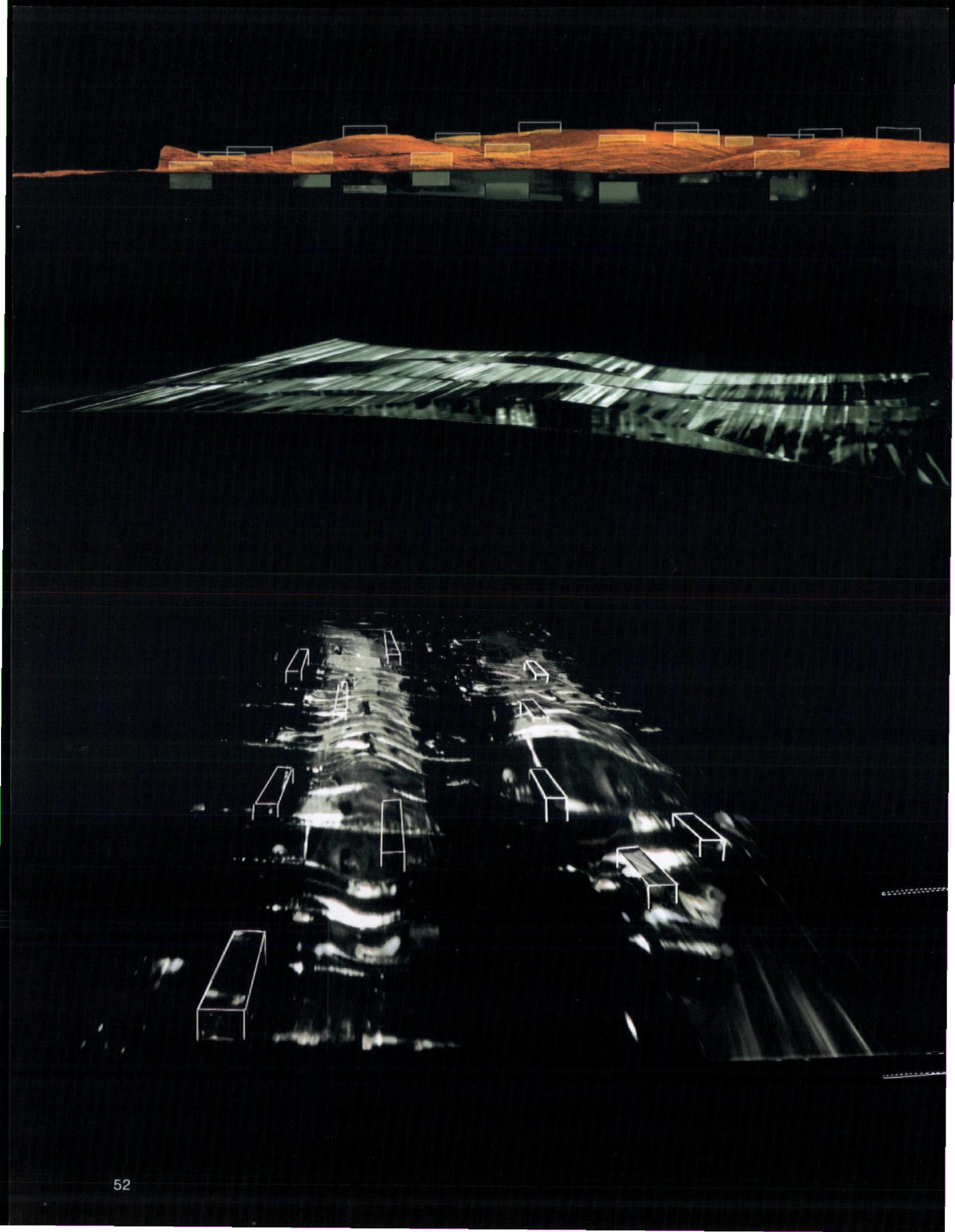
Soweto Road is more than simply an axis running through the township. It was the scene of the children's march of 1976, and the scene of the tragic death of one of the children, Hector Peterson, who is buried here on the site of the memorial.

To avoid fossilising history on the site and maintain a live quality, the ANC archives have been reintegrated into the building programme, rather than being kept in Johannesburg University. This allows for research to take place on site, which seemed to be the first locational necessity. Equally as important was to offer the ground and underground area to the mining population of Soweto, who was previously only responsible for mining gold.

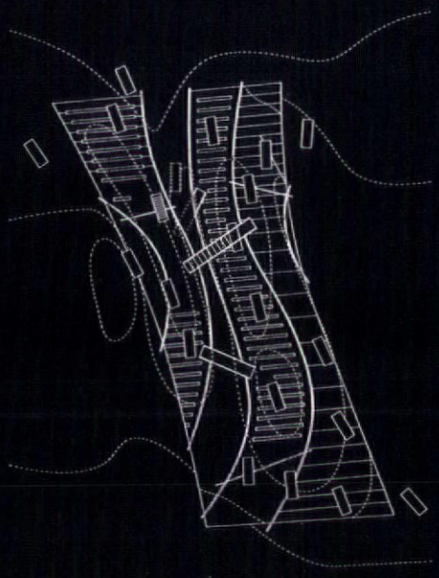












The surface of the project is made of savannah grasses, or 'bush', preserving the bareness of the site in the face of the tombstone, and taking advantage of the site's natural vegetation. Transparent glass volumes, the size of containers, emerge from this layer.

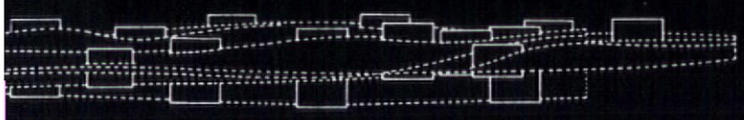
The interior layers of glass manipulate the folding ground to protect the archives and the exhibition and conference spaces on one level. In contrast to the orange-red surface, the depths of the buildings are perforated by 'tubes' of light and glass. The dysfunction between what is indicated (that this is simply a fragment of open grassland) and what is actually perceived (fleeting light), is inevitably ambiguous – itself a reflection of the complex, interwoven, hybrid relationship of the place; both north and south at the same time.

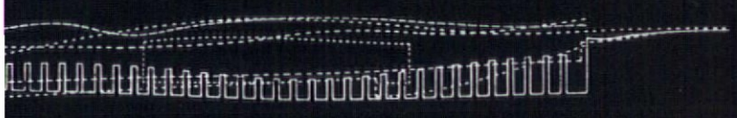
Notes

1 Brunelleschi's perspectival geometry is responsible for this, in the rationalisation of instruments of production and the domination of architecture on the site. The rule of visual representation is thus substituted for corporeal perceptions.
2 See the notion developed by Félix Guattari in his *Schizophrénie Analytique* on ecosophy, that architecture has 'imploded' and is condemned to being pulled and torn in every direction.
3 In a sense attributed to it by M Maffésoli, *Du Temps des tribus*, 1988, 'History can promote a moral doctrine (a politics), in regard to which space will favour an aesthetic and exude an ethics'.
4 See Augustin Berque's *La Théorie du paysage en France*.
5 Gaston Bachelard, *L'Eau et les rêves*, 1942.

Project team: Roche, DSV & Sie.P – François Roche, Gilles Desévèdavy, Stéphanie Lavaux, François Perrin

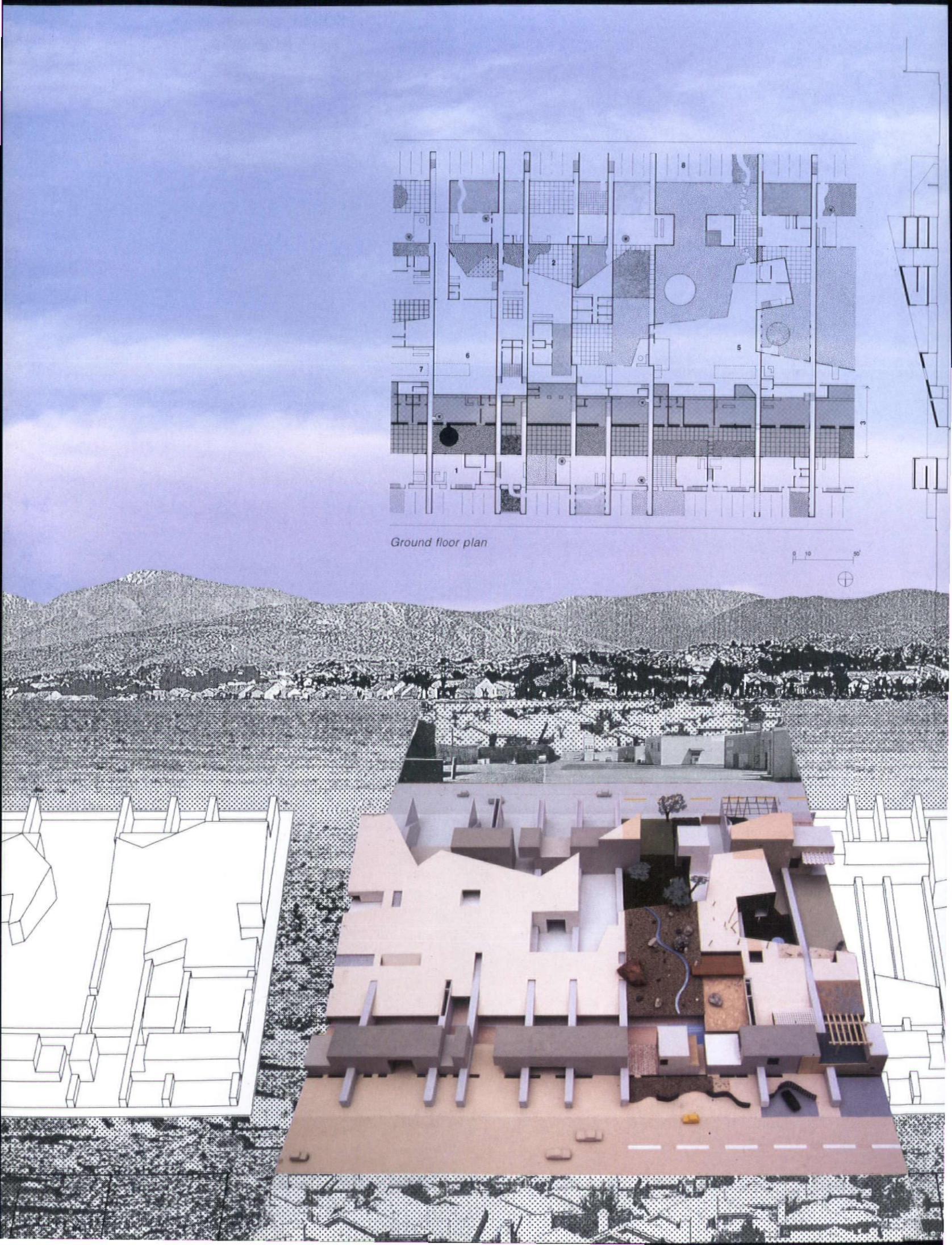








FROM ABOVE L TO R: Level curves; plan; ground movement; section



Ground floor plan

JANEK BIELSKI

HOUSING PROPOSAL

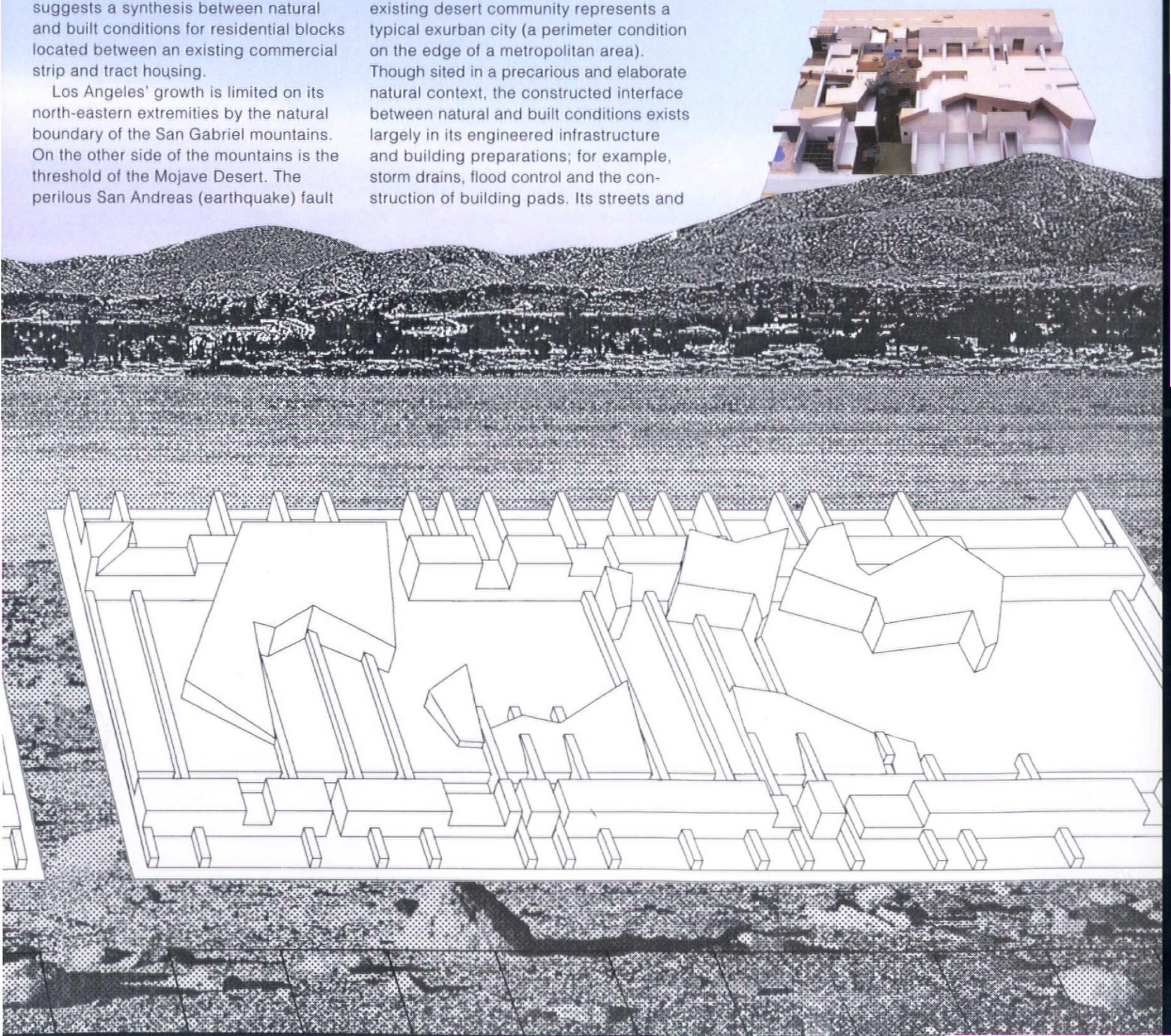
Palmdale, California

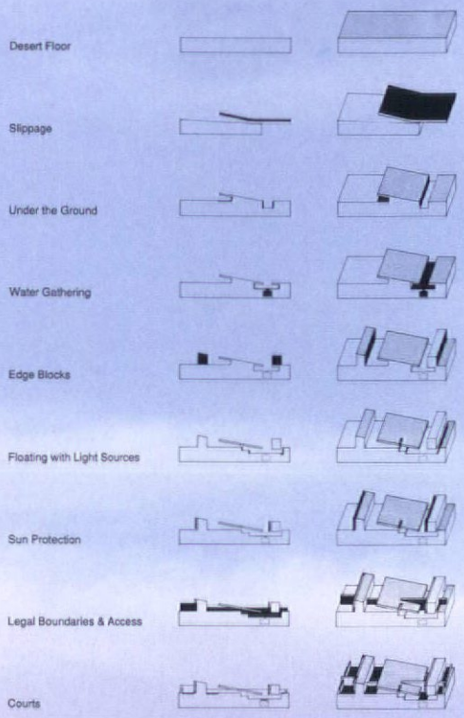
Being Between

The last remaining vast open spaces surrounding the Los Angeles area are in the desert terrains, where housing tracts and commercial strips, which characterise much of the area's current development, continue to spread. This proposal suggests a synthesis between natural and built conditions for residential blocks located between an existing commercial strip and tract housing.

Los Angeles' growth is limited on its north-eastern extremities by the natural boundary of the San Gabriel mountains. On the other side of the mountains is the threshold of the Mojave Desert. The perilous San Andreas (earthquake) fault lies at the seam between the desert and the mountains, closely paralleled by the California aqueduct which supplies water to the desert communities.

The city of Palmdale is located at the intersection of these features, which extend far beyond its city limits. The existing desert community represents a typical exurban city (a perimeter condition on the edge of a metropolitan area). Though sited in a precarious and elaborate natural context, the constructed interface between natural and built conditions exists largely in its engineered infrastructure and building preparations; for example, storm drains, flood control and the construction of building pads. Its streets and avenues are surveyed according to the 1785 National Land Ordinance, which established a uniform matrix transcending all landscape or climatic fluctuations. The severity and complexity of the desert is disguised within this mesh with imported buildings and landscape designs.





The city was built almost entirely through private speculation with minimal planned oversight. The typological significance of its discrete parts becomes mute, being overshadowed by the generic planning regulations of density restrictions, lot lines, setbacks, and zoning ordinances. These 'limited' guidelines shape and sustain a low-density fabric with frequent accidental adjacencies among buildings, infrastructure and landscape.

The Palmdale housing project was conceived following observations of these conditions, with the intention of integrating their actual and potential utilitarian, perceptual and ecological qualities.

The separation of these issues characterises contemporary exurban development: engineered swales maintain water control; imported Mediterranean or New England images create the iconography of 'home', and ecological areas are largely confined to individual private or public lots. This is typical of most exurban developments in Southern California.

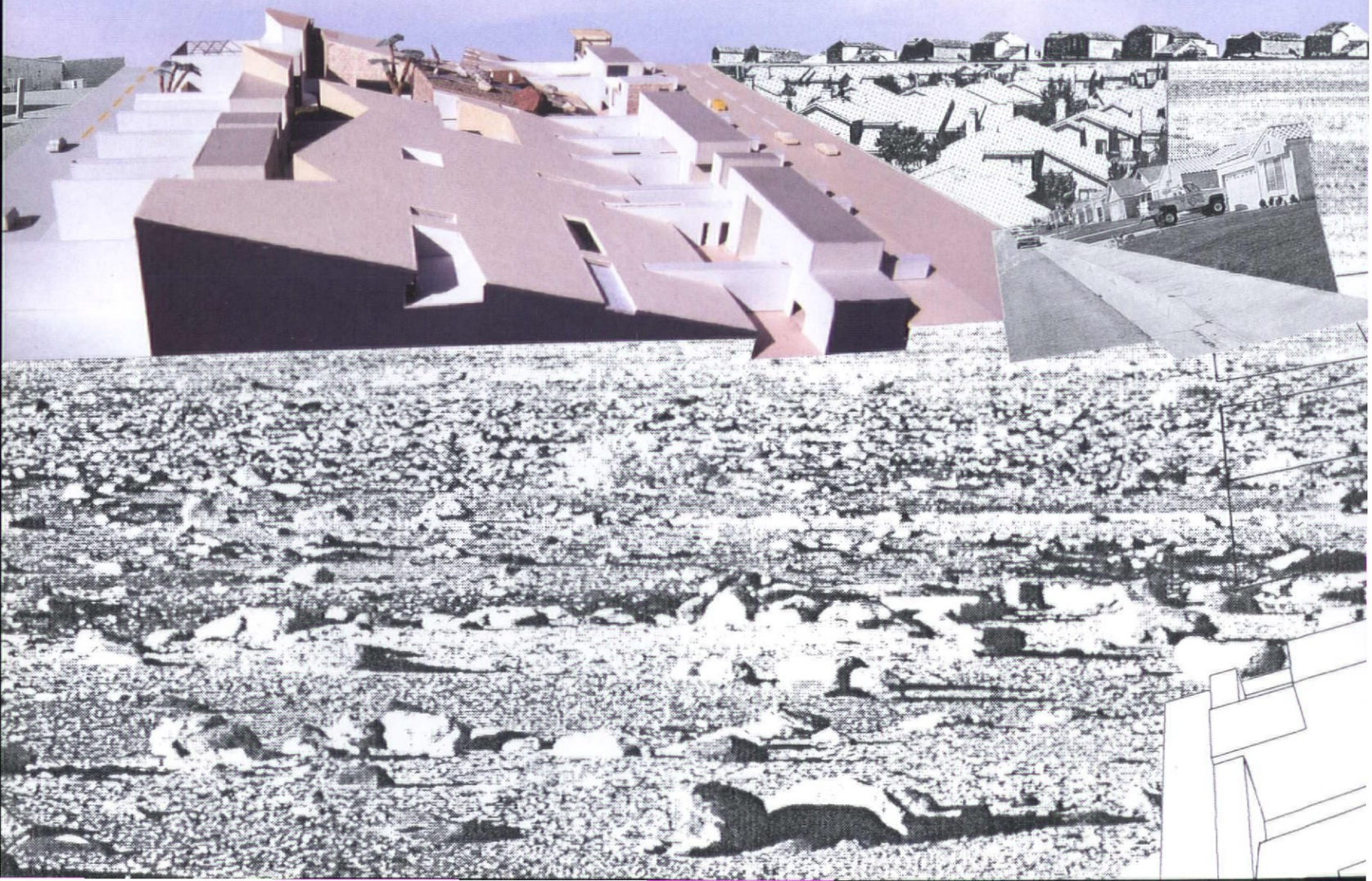
In the process of developing the project, these isolated circumstances were reconfigured and overlapped, blurring their separateness. The resultant hybrid landscape-building reveals, or masks, selected qualities of the context, creating unexpected linkages and associations.

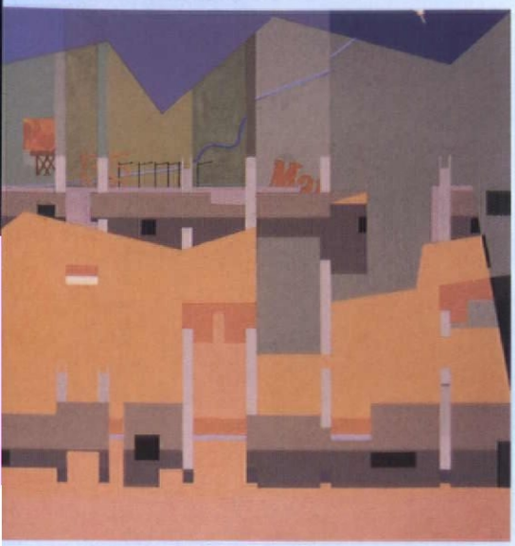
The project is structured as a series of independent operations, each of which derives from or responds to a particular existing condition (built or unbuilt):

Land – Palmdale is located at the seam of the Mojave Desert and the foothills of the San Gabriel mountains. The metaphorical lifted plane simulates the geological shearing of the ground plane which originally gave rise to the mountains. By that means, the existing natural conditions inform a critical component of the project, automatically creating a series of conditions conducive to various interior and exterior spatial types.

Water – During rainfall, this flows naturally down the San Gabriel Mountains on to the desert floor. The aqueduct bisects this natural course, supplying water to the desert communities. The lifted plane collects rainwater and diverts it to subterranean courts, beneath which cisterns are located for collecting and recycling. In these sunken courts, a narrow water channel cools and animates the spaces, simulating the aqueduct in the foothills beyond.

Allotment – Lot lines allocate properties for freestanding houses and commercial buildings. The lot line has been rendered





as a three-dimensional physical presence. These 'thick wall-fences' bridge across the 300-feet-wide block, connecting rooms and open spaces, creating deep garden edges and providing overhead skylight zones as they penetrate interior spaces. Each view between these walls becomes a unique freeze-frame of the project and the context beyond.

House – The 'individual' tract house becomes lost in its repetitive pattern of siting. Two continuous bars, one on either side of the block, challenge the existing *faux* image of tract house individuality, while maintaining their height and set-back. They establish an edge to the street and maintain an individual or shared private realm.

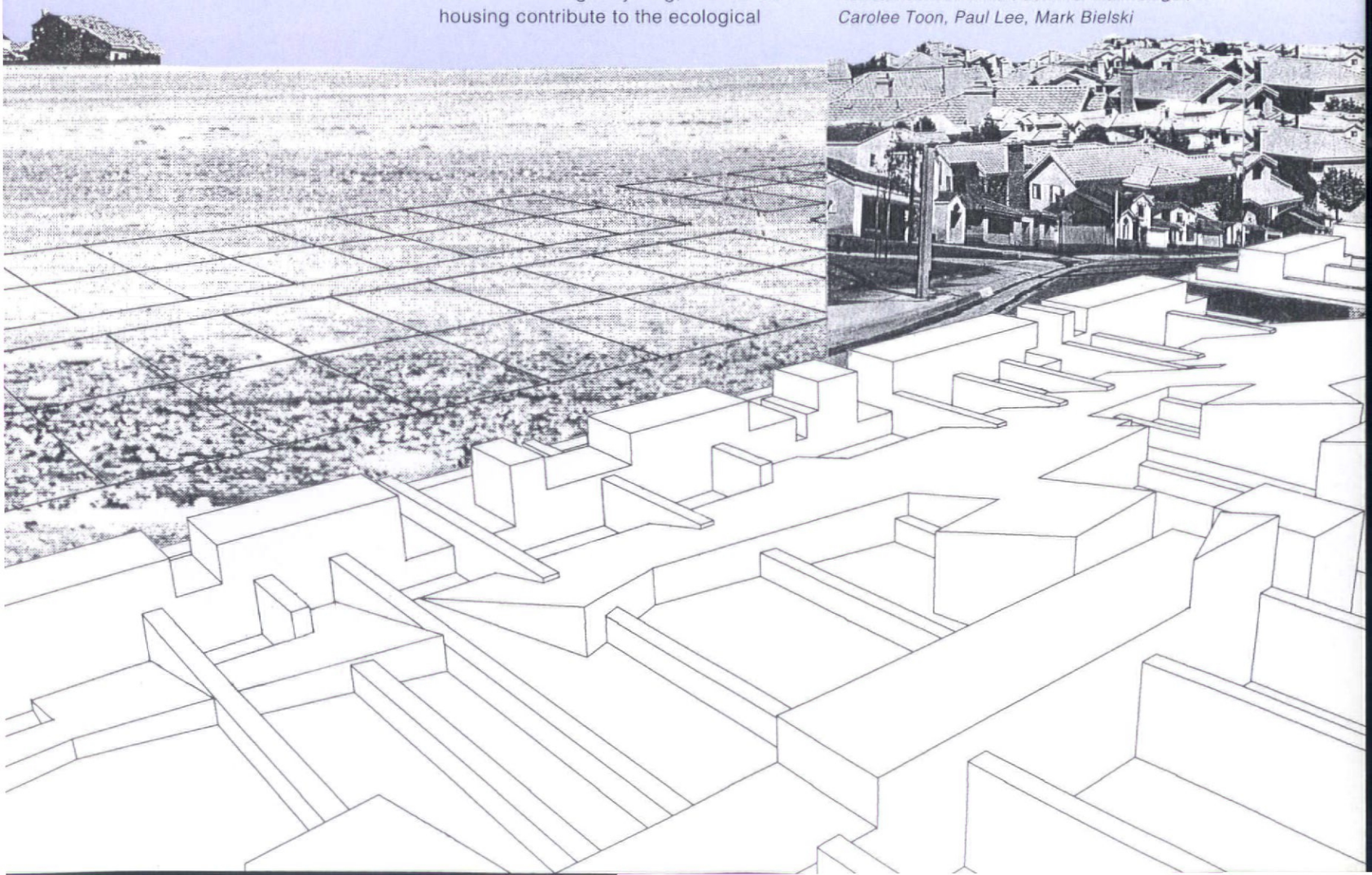
By overlapping these four operations, a range of unit types emerges from various combinations between the lifted plane, subterranean spaces, walls and bar. Community activity spaces are located at strategic points with connections to the commercial strip. The existing commercial buildings and their signs are virtually masked by the lifted plane, which sustains grafted 'hyper-nature' images from the immediate desert or foreign landscapes. Subterranean units, water harvesting/recycling, and denser housing contribute to the ecological issues of resource conservation.

Palmdale epitomises the widespread practices of current exurban development in a location which belies its apparent ordinariness. Formidable natural conditions are at work here, which are easily detected upon the most cursory of investigations. The current interaction between an insidiously benign built fabric and an elaborate natural condition is fertile ground for speculation on the potential workings between the pragmatic and the lyrical.

To ameliorate a condition which characterises the popular Californian disrepute for higher density, compensatory housing qualities are necessary. Maximising choice of unit size and type is perhaps the simplest persuasive tool. Subtler reasons reside in an economy of means, where disparate issues are folded over in the making of a building-landscape component.

A morphology gradually emerges that is simultaneously of the land, of the senses, of pragmatic requirements and of their aggregate experience. In this way, the project is conceived as a place between the built and unbuilt, as well as between stages of ex/urban development.

Assistance: Jeff Miller, Jennifer Ruth Siegal, Carolee Toon, Paul Lee, Mark Bielski



LIVADY ARCHITECTS

URBANITE LIGHT

Helsinki

The 'Good Night' lighting plan was an entry in an invited competition organised by the city of Helsinki. The brief was extended to include the entire public space with a lighting plan that was conceived as a sphere of information, knowledge and interpretation: individual light effects act as the interfaces, or actualisations, of this strata of ideas and complex reality.

A creative leap

Change in urban space is an open process that involves several actors. Actions implemented on the environment, whether planned or unplanned, generate unexpected series of events. Positive intervention in urban life requires a sense of orientation. It makes no sense to provide an open process with a plan which has a definite, final situation; implementation is a creative leap enriching urban life.

Helsinki light

Changing light conditions are an integral part of life in Helsinki, which breathes light. In the dead of winter there is less than eight hours of light, and artificial light is required even in daytime. In midsummer there is plenty of natural light around the clock; it is not dark even during the few hours between sunset and sunrise. The role of public lighting changes in accordance with the seasons. What is an essential prerequisite for everyday life in winter is a stage decoration in the festive summer season in the public city.

In order to accentuate the characteristics of the centre with light, the objective was to create a thorough, extensive analysis of the spaces of central Helsinki. The nature, atmosphere and meaning of these spaces have been charted through various means. The lighting idea for the space evolves from these features. In order to illustrate the various spatial ideas, some places have been provided with a lighting example – a proposition for an actualisation.

Light as a means

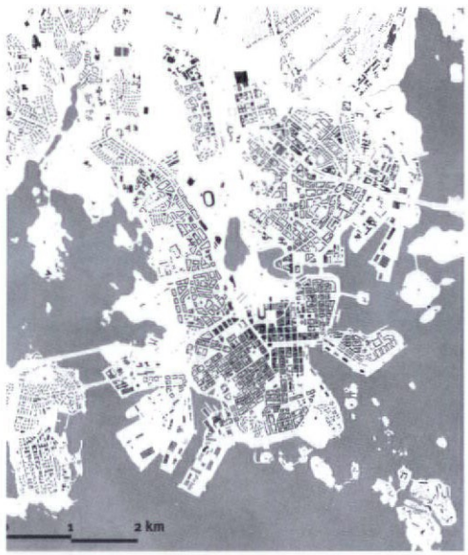
Light can be used for directing attention and creating emphases. Lighting is an act of selection: the city by night is a variation on the city by day. The lighting plan was devised as part of the night-time urban landscape and as part of the residents' experience of their city. As a consequence, analysis and design have a special relationship: the existing lighting can be read as a mirror of the residents' relationship with the city. On the other hand, light can be used for catalysing urban interaction.

Instead of norm-dictated general lighting, a light scheme was created that would: react to places, spaces, and situations – pedestrian and traffic areas, business, romance and monumental spaces; emphasise the characteristic features of the urban landscape and reveal the form of the material environment, perhaps in a way which interestingly differs from the daytime landscape; utilise light tones systematically for different lighting purposes; avoid glare and unnecessarily diffuse light; utilise the dynamic potential of light and dark – lighting and living in the dark are equal means of differentiation.

Sequences as pieces of the urban texture

A city can be interpreted as consisting of somewhat independent (alternative or mutually synchronised) systems. A single place in a city does not fulfil all the requirements of urbanism; it is complemented by the adjacent sets of blocks. The convergence of substructures – sequences of spaces, functions, atmospheres, memories – gives a city its special character.

Time has made sequences unique and autonomous: they are not mere physical sets of spaces ('space series' in architectural jargon); rather, they indicate the gradual transformation of the city and meanings attached to the buildings over the course of time. One sequence reveals a small seaside town run over by an administrative centre, another a whirlwind of surplus goods, time and energy.





ABOVE: Maps of the peninsula and the city centre of Helskinki

Project team: Mikko Bonsdorff, Marko Huttunen, Pekka Lehtinen, Panu Lehtovuori, Mikko Mälkki, Lauri Saarinen

Three urban sequences – the meanings of urban space

The three main streets of the centre of Helsinki (Aleksanterinkatu Street, the Esplanade, and Mannerheimintie Road) seem to attract three sequences which form the central cityscape.

The market place/esplanade system is like Hellas, the archaic Golden Age: lucid and spacious, a democratic arena of individuals. It trusts people, rather than confines them in a blocked order. Aleksanterinkatu street, a direct descendant of the aforementioned, is reminiscent of Imperial Rome: it is a rapidly degenerating stage of conflicting interests and utilisation. Each square inch is strictly controlled, yet is rich in form despite the orderliness.

The Mannerheimintie sequence freely and inconsistently draws from both these sources, in addition to everything else the surroundings provide. It can be compared with pluralist euroculture.

The sequences develop according to their own logic, but not without interaction. The spacious promenade environment of the esplanade and the unrelenting business bazaar of Aleksanterinkatu communicate through numerous small streets and alleys.

Moving from one sequence to another is always surprising. Mannerheimintie is like a jungle of people, cars and meanings, into which everything flows and again moves forward. Around the Stockmann department store and the city business block, the themes and energy of the three sequences unite; what emerges is the liveliest, most urban circle of Helsinki.

Dostoyevskian Helsinki

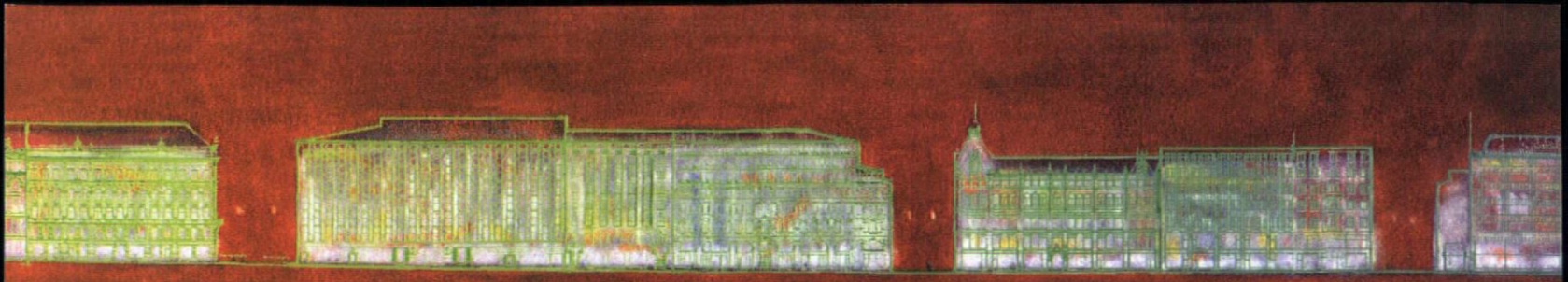
The commercial centre of Helsinki has moved to the west during the last century. Kluuvinlahti Bay, which used to demarcate the border of the town, was filled in the 1840s and replaced by a new commercial centre. Unioninkatu Street, which once was the main street, became more like a museum, a borderline separating the centre of historical monuments and the commercial centre.



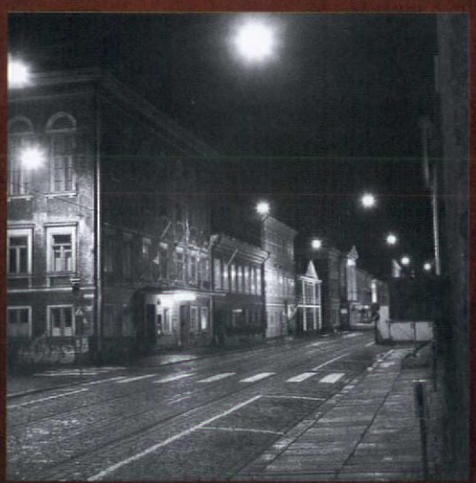




FROM ABOVE: A 110KV cable being installed in Senate Square, 1963; the Esplanade; 'starry-eyed excitement' – lighting design for the Glass Palace







Aleksanterinkatu

Perpendicular to Unioninkatu Street, Aleksanterinkatu Street cuts into the sediment of this development. The eastern end of the street has fallen into a 100-year sleep, which is more Dostoyevskian than fairy-tale in nature; the western end houses Western commercial powers. One experiences a gradual transition from one world to another when walking along Aleksanterinkatu.

The spaces of Dostoyevskian Helsinki, the symbolic centre of the city (Senate Square and Ritaripuisto Park), are clear and uniform. The stone landscape maintains the authority of the social institutions. Institutional ownership also enables uniform lighting solutions.

The western end of the street has an abyss-like character – a verticality. The street wall is a permanent display window. It is built-in completely, but the continuing change of the stage-settings of market economy makes the details – company names, the forest of neon lights and streamers, the windows and the street surface – burst forth in such a way that any change goes unnoticed. The walls abound in messages, but the street between them is a spartan, gloomy, empty space, lacking even cars.

The idea of lighting

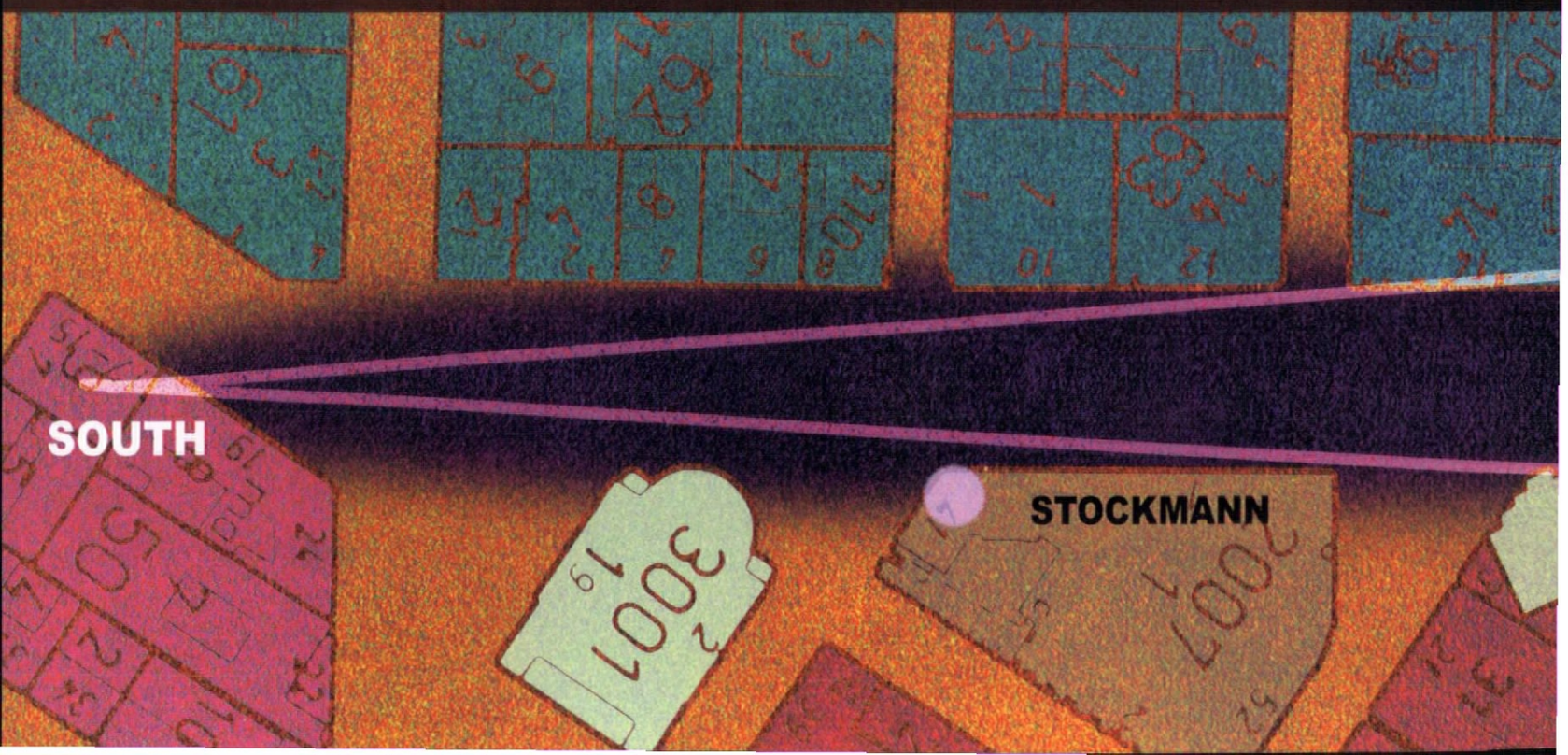
The light scheme has taken into consideration the development of Aleksanterinkatu at its various stages. Plentiful lighting that accentuates detail works best with business signs.

The lighting fixtures will be installed on the facade. Possible objects of lighting include window recesses, pilasters, balconies, sculptures and decorations. Only part of the surface should be lighted, and in order to decrease the amount of diffused light the street lamps should be lowered, which would make the pedestrian space more dense.

Towards the east, the lighting decreases. It is lower and employs simpler means. No facade lights will be installed to the east of Senate Square because the diffused light of the occasional street lamp is sufficient for the quiet neighbourhood at night.

The interior and exterior of the city: the relationship between facade and space

Although Helsinki has no city wall, the borderlines of the solid urban structure are very clear in some places. At certain spots one can also perceive the gate-like corridors guiding the visitor inside; through these, the exterior of the city penetrates the interior with its tentacles.





Mannerheimintie Road

Mannerheimintie Road is one such corridor. Both its facades are fronts, edges of the city. In this light, Mannerheimintie itself is exterior although it is located in the heart of the city. The neigbourhoods have grouped themselves in a row behind the facades of the road. The facades are like display windows of the cities behind them – a promise of what lies ahead.

Around Mannerheimintie, the structure consists of forms of electronic communication and motorised traffic. A modern geography of visibility functions. Its space is advertising space in earnest; the facades are directed out of the city, into the universal, nocturnal blackness.

Mannerheimintie is like a huge mouth, presenting the urban system to the visitor entering the city from the north: car traffic, tram traffic, sidewalks, department stores with their display windows. Towards the south, Mannerheimintie disappears into the cool, stony lap of the metropolis. In the north there is nature: Töölönlahti Bay, Central Park, and the mythical connection to Lapland through snow-white Finland.

The idea of lighting

The buildings which border Mannerheimintie seem to be isolated, grouped like islands in an archipelago. Thus it makes no sense to provide a lighting scheme that is aimed at uniformity. Instead, the objective is diversity – different facades represent the alternative cities behind them.

Both sides of the street are like shores. The wide sidewalks will be transformed into independent macro-elements of the streetscape. Paved with light colours and amply lighted, they view each other across the troubled waters. The roadway lights will be made more dense, thus decreasing their dominating position.

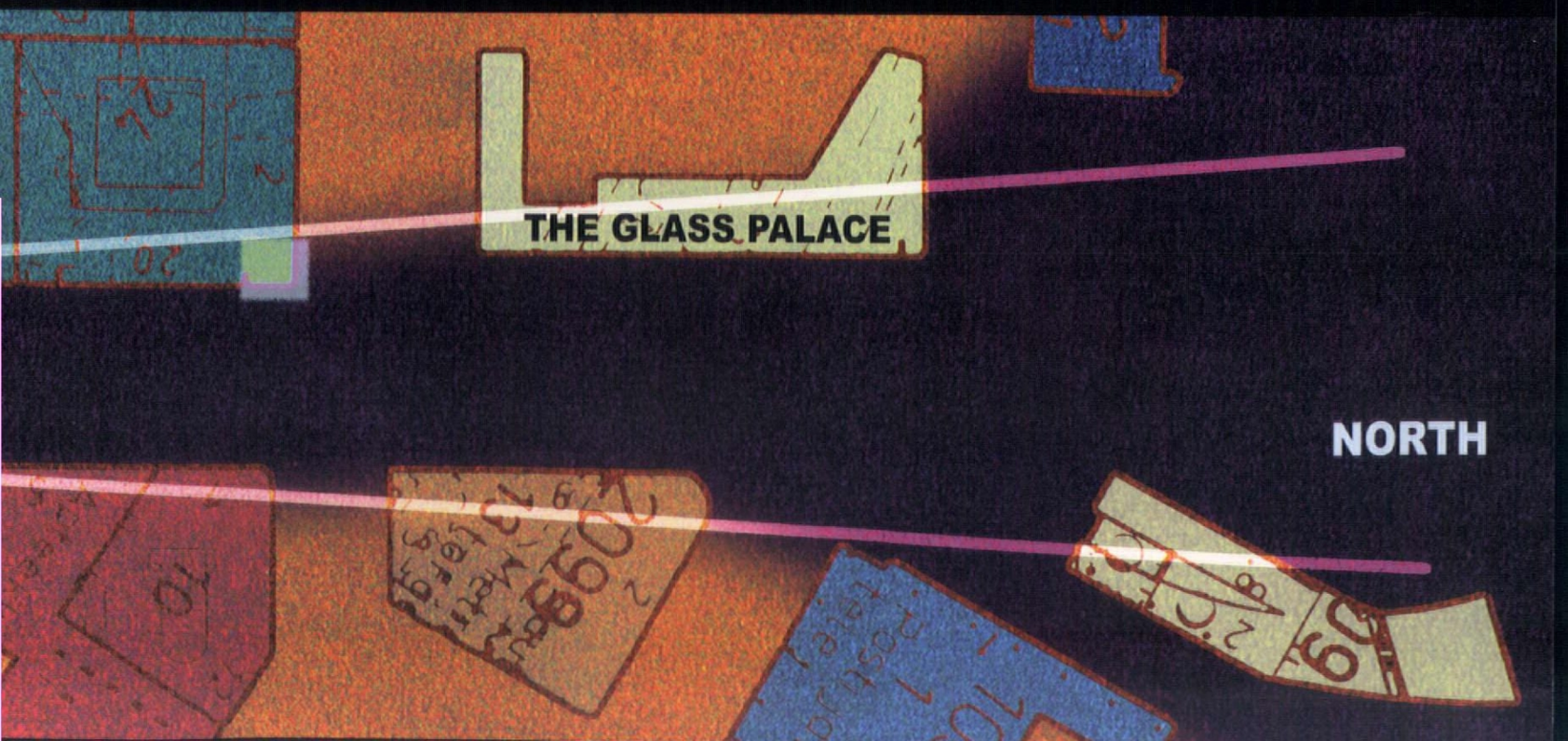
The Glass Palace

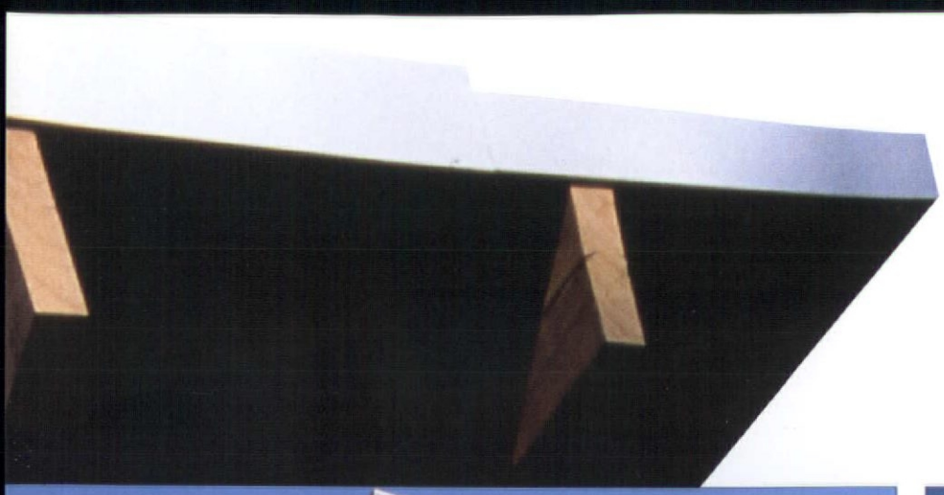
The Glass Palace is in its original 1930s state; its neon lights are like a manifesto of contemporary Mannerheimintie. The 100-metre neon lines and bright display windows, decorated with luxury products, used to declare a new century of motoring, electronic communication, international trade and progress to the people of the old, agrarian Finland. Despite the passing of time, the starry-eyed excitement of the Glass Palace is still appealing.

ABOVE: Aleksanterinkatu Street, a gradual transition from one world to another; OPPOSITE: Aleksanterinkatu Street, the complex and quiet ends; RIGHT: Mannerheimintie Road, winter view and advertisements – the geography of visibility; BELOW: Mannerheimintie Road, penetrated by the tentacles of the city exterior





















Newton Library, Vancouver

PATKAU ARCHITECTS

JIM TAGGART





A chronology of the work of Patkau Architects is characterised by an increasing complexity and richness. Explorations begun in past work are carried forward and intertwined with new investigations in a process John Patkau refers to as 'reflective practice'. Consistent throughout the work is the dialectic between the general and the particular; between the aspects of a culture or place which are shared with others, and those which are unique. In urban and suburban settings this dialectic has been made manifest in a series of highly particularised buildings in opposition to the banality and uniformity of their surroundings.

While many subtexts remain in Patkaus' work, one line of investigation has become more clearly legible in recent projects. In the late 20th century, man's dominance over his environment – symbolically represented in the formal abstraction of the Modern and Classical traditions – is increasingly being challenged as both inappropriate and irrelevant.

Emerging in Patkaus' work is an overtly expressed interest in the vernacular tradition, in which the choice of form, materials, envelope design and orientation are influenced primarily by environmental and micro-climatic considerations.

The first project in which these pragmatic concerns were clearly manifested was the Newton Library (1992), located in suburban Vancouver. To give this modest, single-storey building a presence befitting its public purpose, the north and south walls are exaggerated in height. The north wall is a striking, sloped curtain of glass; the south wall, facing the sun, is more solid with punched openings. The roof planes descend from these edges to a valley, which serves to make the entrance, at the west end, more intimate in scale. It also defines the central circulation spine, around which the library and its service spaces are arranged. Large projecting scuppers drain water from the roof to rock ponds at the east and west ends of the building.

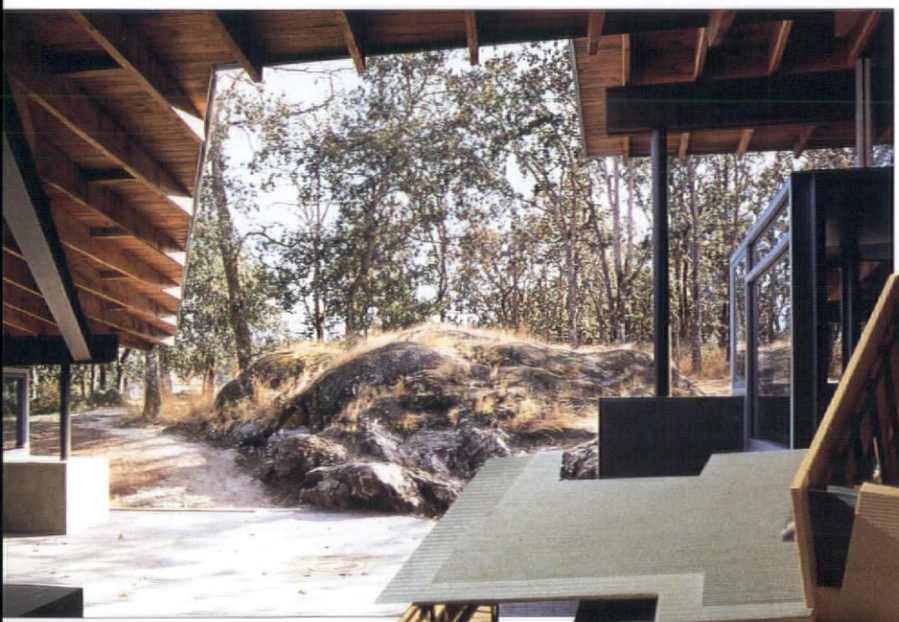
The tectonic expression of the building draws upon and develops themes from previous work. The structure is heavy timber and concrete, symbolic of the naturally occurring sticks and stones of the site, and is exposed around the building in the form of plinths and canopies. These materials are also exposed, where possible, within the library. However, their low reflectance means that where light must penetrate deep into the space, the structure is clad with plasterboard or stucco. The juxtaposition of the clad and unclad, the fine delineation of function, creates a dialectic which enlivens and enriches the building.

The Strawberry Vale Elementary School in Victoria, British Columbia, completed in 1996, is Patkau Architects' latest built work. It occupies an elongated, undulating and partially wooded site, within an outwardly conservative, and homogeneous residential community.

The organisation of the school is similar to that of the earlier Seabird Island School, with a central spine flanked on one side by a classroom, and on the other by administrative, resource and other special areas. Strawberry Vale is more informal in plan, and

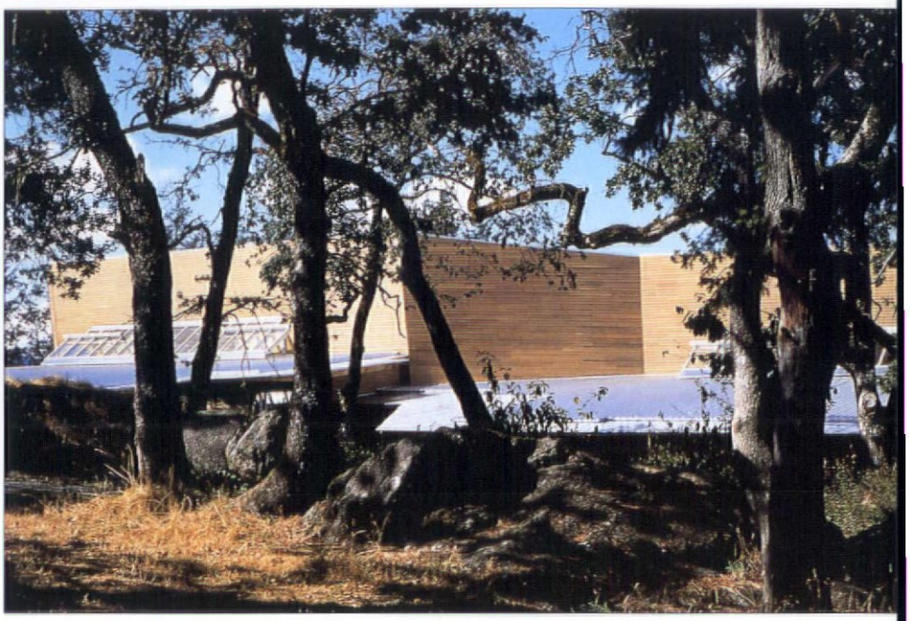




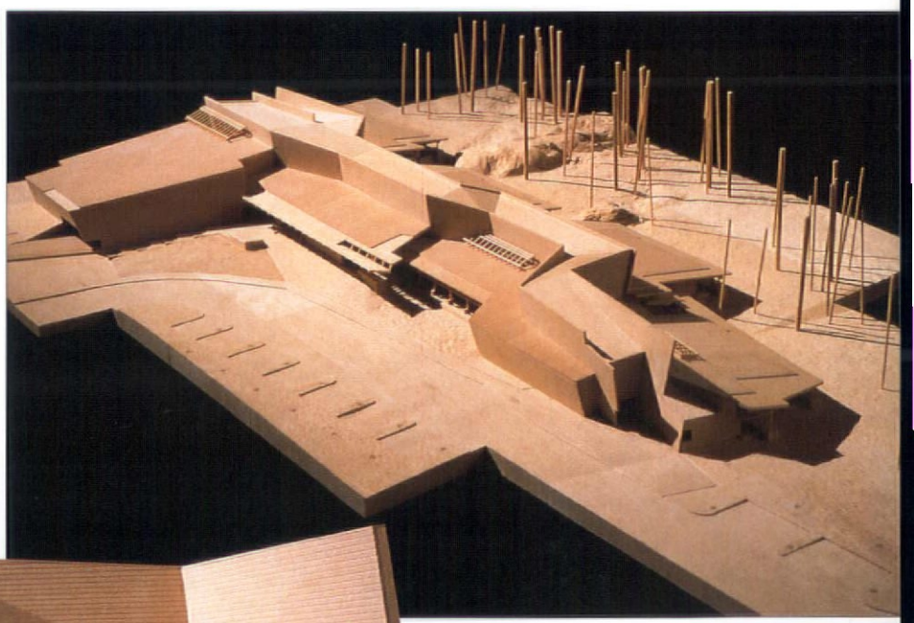


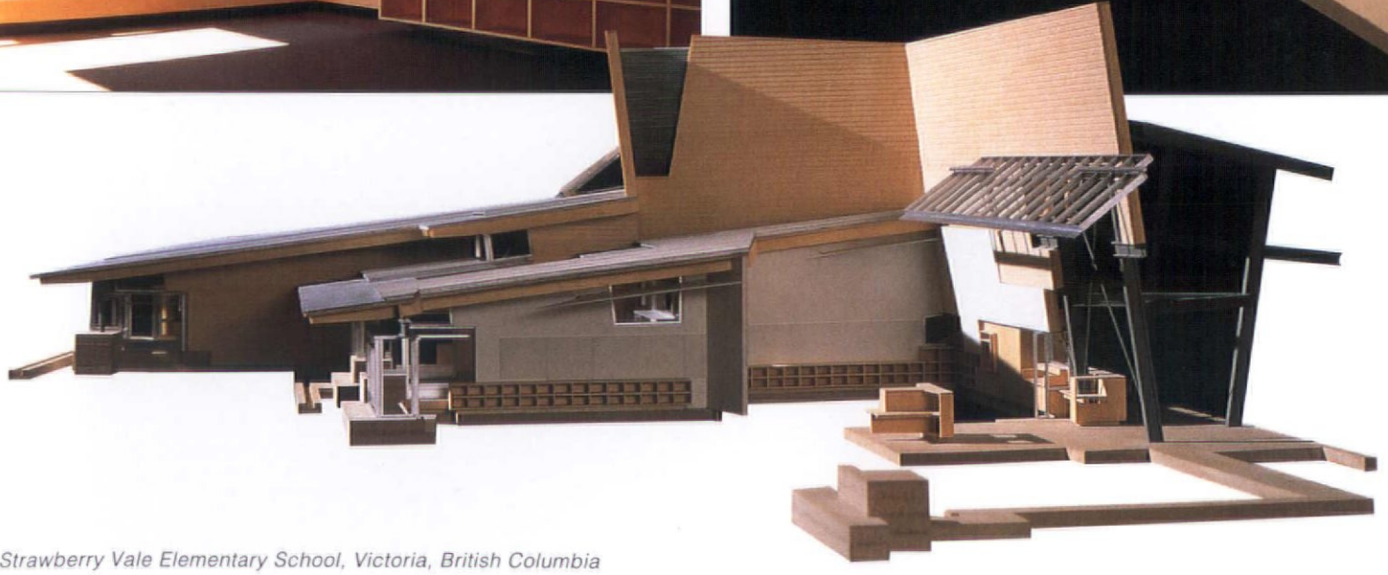




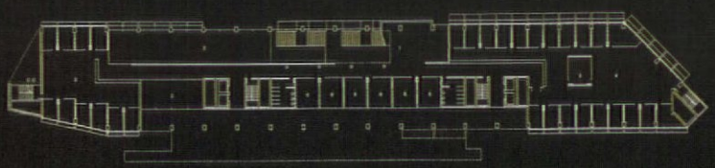


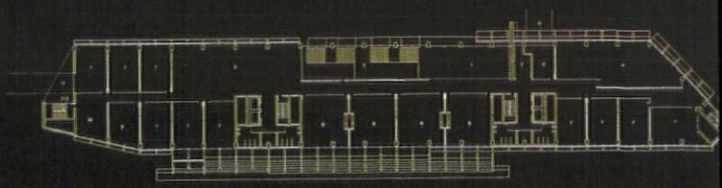


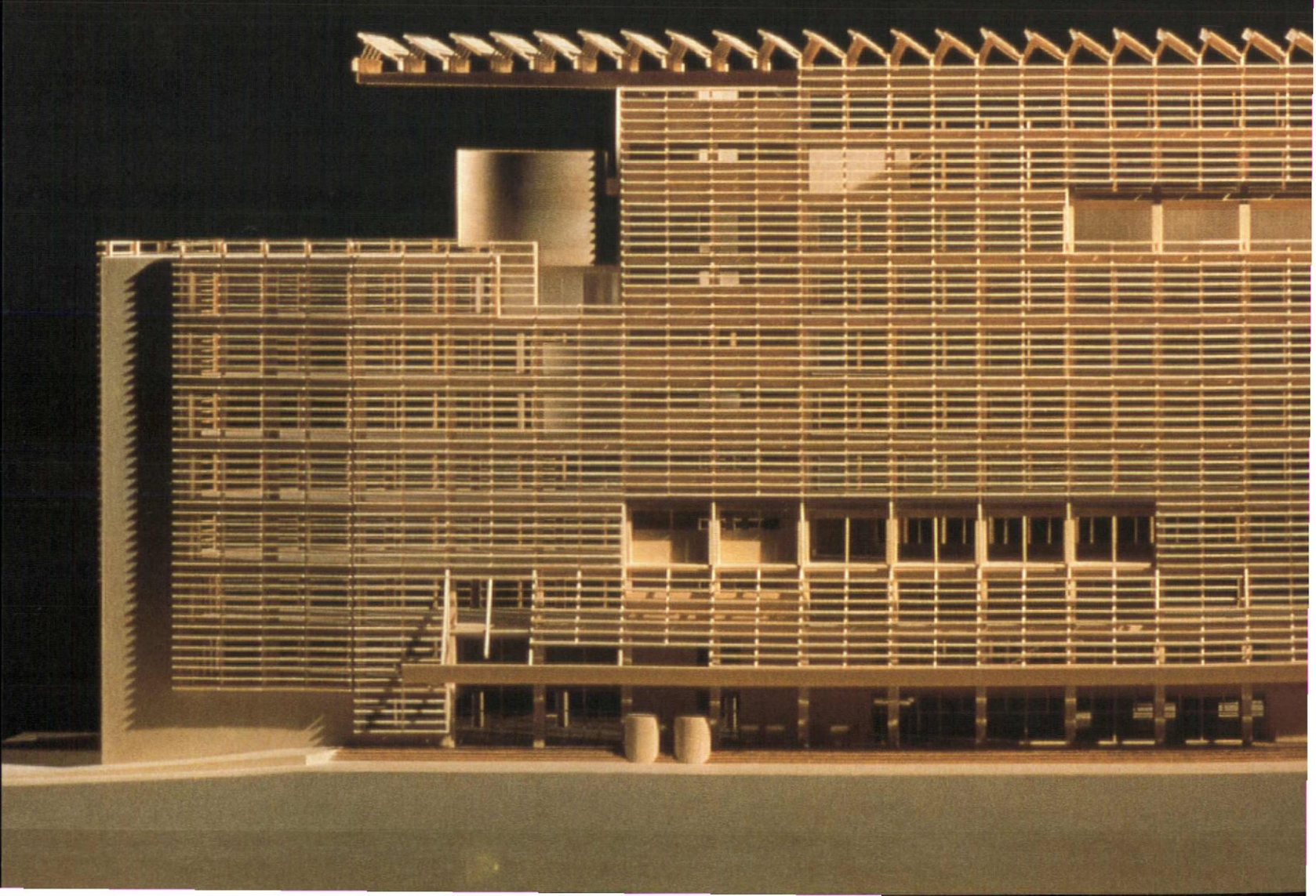




Strawberry Vale Elementary School, Victoria, British Columbia









its geometry more finely articulated. The meandering spine is a figurative extension of the forest paths outside, an image reinforced by the double-height volume of the space, its outwardly flaring structure, and the clerestory windows which connect it to the sky.

Strawberry Vale School is, in many respects, a reinterpretation of the vernacular tradition. Whereas the existing community around the school imposes a Cartesian order on the natural world, creating a place which is 'other'; the school illuminates new possibilities by distilling the essence of place, and the particularity of circumstance – its materials, topography, climate, programme and culture – and encapsulates them.

The School of Nursing at the University of Texas, Houston is currently being designed. Unlike earlier projects, which had clearly defined and finite programmes, this has a 100-year life expectancy, with much of its long term programme indeterminate. Moreover, the building is many times larger than any of Patkaus' previous projects.

Earlier projects engaged in a dialogue between their own particularity, and the generality of their surroundings. In contrast, the Nursing School, which contains both particular, permanent programme elements and generalised flexible spaces, introduces that dialogue within the building. On each of the 12 floors the permanent programme areas, including such functions as library and cafeteria, form a cluster, allowing maximum long-term flexibility in the organisation of the remaining space.

These permanent programme areas are grouped above and below one another into vertically-linked, and in some cases exterior, 'porches'. These create areas for interaction, which are essential in academic life, serving the same purpose as the quadrangles of historic universities. The porches are highly particularised and sculptural in expression.

The building mitigates the effects of the hot and humid Houston climate through a grid of operable exterior louvres on the east and west elevations, and photovoltaic 'parasols' on the roof. In addition to collecting energy, these shade a roof garden. A collection pond – another feature of the rooftop garden – moderates discharge to the storm-water system.

This new application of technology, as a mitigator of environmental influences rather than a barrier against them, has expressive possibilities which are clearly exploited in this building. Despite the sophistication of the technologies, such expression is firmly rooted in the vernacular tradition. Choice of materials and envelope design are the result of the same environmental and regional imperatives that have operated for centuries in vernacular architecture.

However, in the same way as all of Patkaus' projects, the School of Nursing goes beyond the scale of the region to express the particularities of programme and the specifics of site. It represents a further, significant step along a path initiated by the Newton Library and elaborated on at Strawberry Vale. The dialectic of differentiation, with its vernacular subtext, opens a new chapter in the work of Patkaus Architects. One which might be entitled 'Particular Pragmatism'.

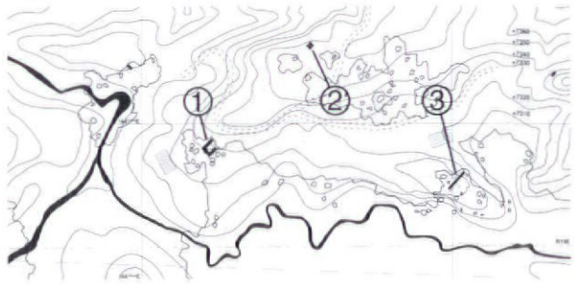
Jim Taggart is a Vancouver architect.

LEFT: School of Nursing, University of Texas, Houston, second, third and tenth floor plans and model

JONES PARTNERS

HIGH SIERRAS CABINS

Hope Valley, California



Site plan: 1 Meadow's Edge cabin; 2 Guest cabin; 3 Coyote Rock cabin

On 360 acres of high Sierra forest and meadow in Hope Valley, California, two Stanford professors will build cabins, outbuildings and assorted guest quarters for themselves, colleagues and students. The site is zoned for two dwellings and accessory structures.

The property includes portions of the largest high Sierra meadow remaining in private hands and is bordered on all sides by federal land that is not able to be developed, either designated National Wilderness or National Forest. The area is bisected by a low ridge running north and south, which divides the meadow on the west from a shallow wooded valley on the east. Across the meadow and beyond another ridge, US88 ascends to Luther Pass, where it can be seen only from the highest point.

Access to the site is from a spur road off US88, several miles to the north. This runs down 'behind' the eastern edge of the property on its way to Blue Lakes, a popular backpacking destination located 12 miles further south. Off this spur runs a barely recognisable dirt track, which only the hardiest four-wheel-drive vehicles can negotiate. The site is thus splendidly isolated and in pristine condition, partly because it is surrounded by much more famous recreational areas that have attracted the backpacking legions away.

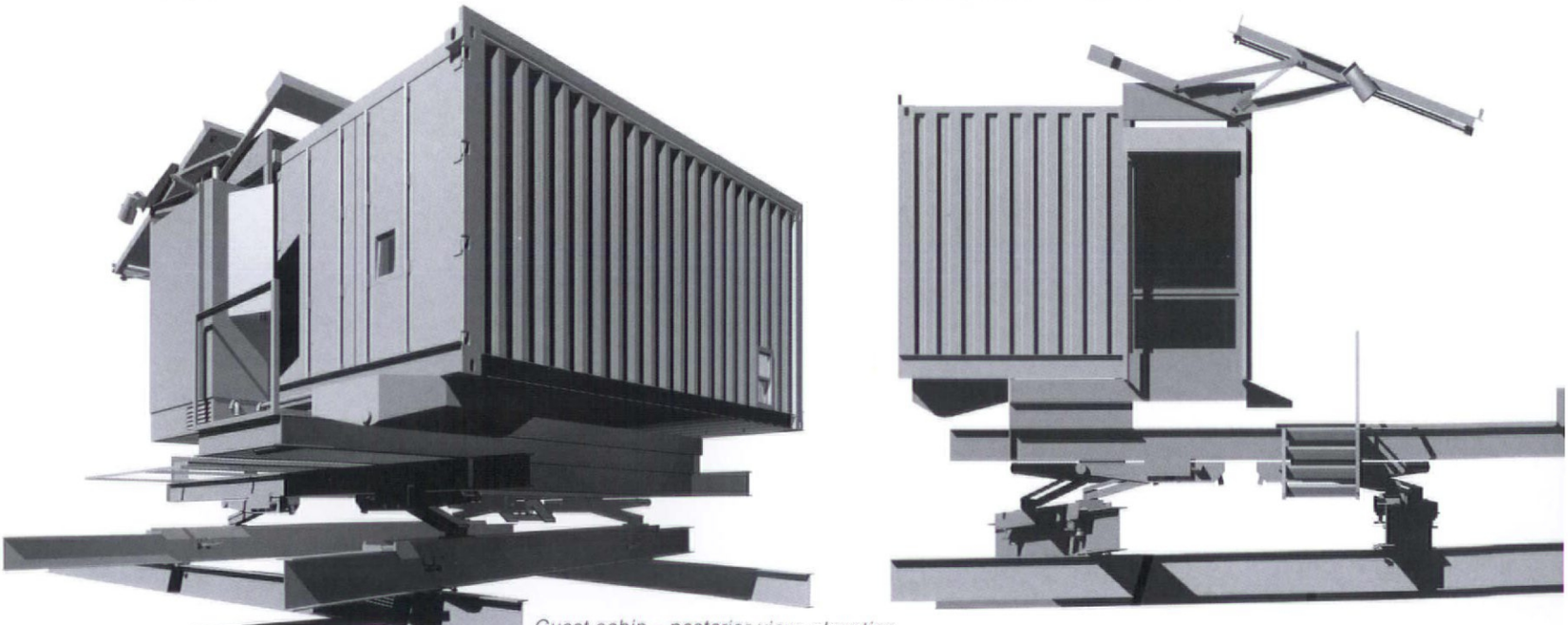
The two building sites are located primarily in relation to the meadow, which is the property's most dramatic feature, but they are not visible to each other. They reflect the professors' different attitudes about the wilderness.

The northern site is situated on the broad, gently sloping flank of the ridge, just inside the tree line. Although its primary orientation is toward the meadow to the south, which can be seen through a screen of pines, it enjoys a sense of security within its forest setting. A magnificent view of the surrounding hills would be afforded from a high enough vantage point on the building. In contrast, the southern site exploits a rock promontory that caps the ridge line, exposing the meadow on one side and forest on the other.

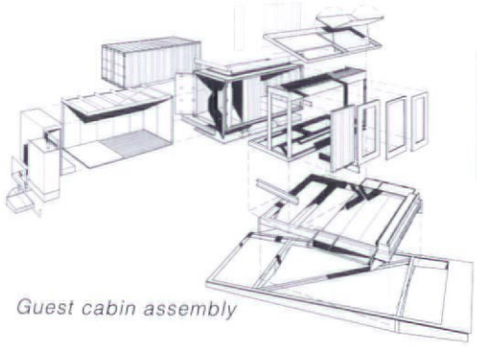
Upon visiting the property there is a strong sense that the first site is where something should be built, and the second is where something really wants to be built. This sums up the difference in the professors' attitudes, and the reason why it is important that the two sites are not visible to each other.

The outbuildings include a well structure and a building to house the generator, located back in the woods, roughly between the two sites. Some preliminary work has been done: each site already has its own leach field and a well has been dug. Buried connections will link the well and generator to the sites. Single-room guest huts will be placed elsewhere on the property, three initially, to take advantage of other interesting features. They will be skid-mounted and fitted with self-contained water and waste systems in order that they can be moved around in response to seasonal or other demands. To preserve the property's isolation, no additional roads or parking facilities will be provided. It is expected that guests will park at the spur road and then hike the rest of the way. The professors will drive in if required by supply or maintenance needs.

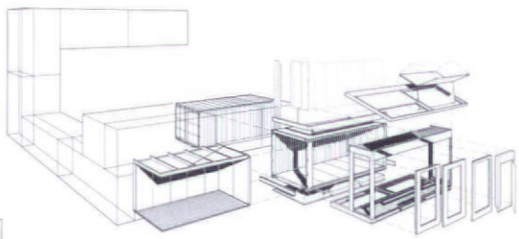
The buildings are designed to respect the isolated situation and are intended to



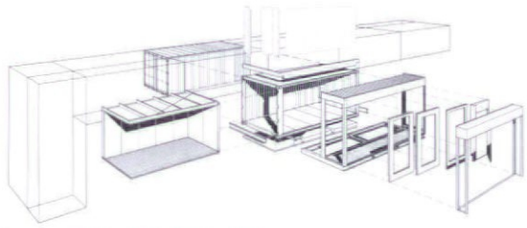
Guest cabin – posterior view; elevation



Guest cabin assembly



Meadow's Edge cabin assembly



Coyote Rock cabin assembly

embody the professors' attitudes in relation to the differences between the two sites. They will be constructed from 20-foot shipping containers, which in industry are used as a basis for temporary shelters all over the world, in addition to the shipping purposes for which they were originally designed.

The containers are extremely hardy, inexpensive, and eminently transportable, which recommends their use for this project. Due to the remoteness and difficult topography of the proposed building sites, they will be delivered to the property by truck and then air-lifted into place by Sky Crane helicopter.

The inexpensiveness of the containers allows the architects to propose extensive modifications, within a general modular approach. Their durability also provides for a measure of security, weather and fire resistance that is not common in vacation homes but is important because of the lack of a constant ownership presence. Moreover, the mobility of the containers allows the construction standards for the units to be raised considerably, since the entire assembly can be shop fabricated. Much of the design effort has, in fact, been spent ensuring the road- and air-worthiness of the module units.

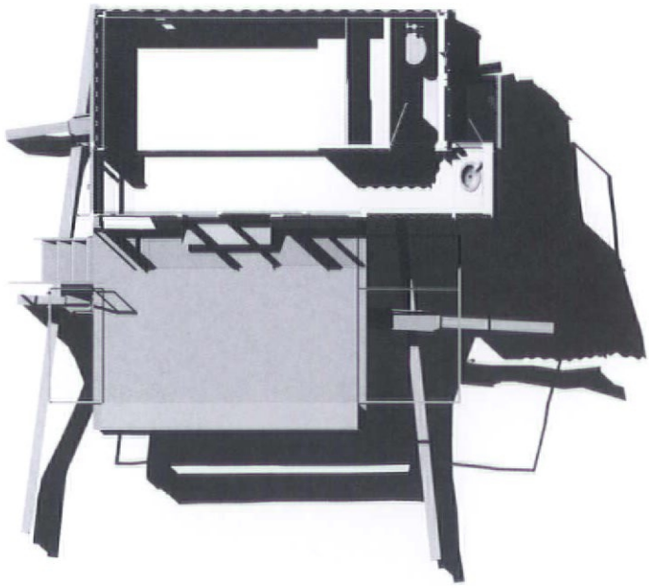
The specific designs for the two cabins evolve from the way in which the construction technology responds to the unique characteristics of each building site and the personality of the particular client. In each case, the essential linearity of the original container module has been maintained (departing from the typical industrial configuration in which the containers are arranged side by side in an attempt to overcome the perceived limitations of their narrowness).

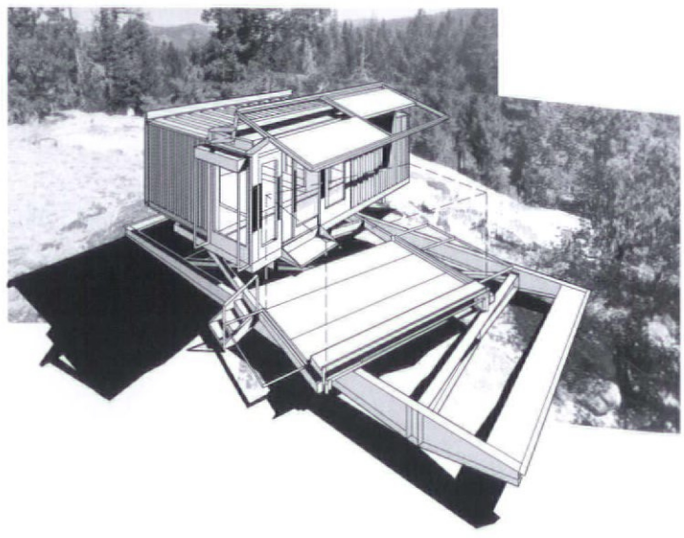
On the northern site the containers are arranged like wagons into an outward facing circle that is not closed in either plan or section. This provides the more retiring client with a discreet sense of security, while acknowledging the different views and places that might be created on the forest's edge.

On the north side of this configuration two containers have been stacked vertically end-to-end, braced by an additional external structure, to create a tower. A library runs alongside the stairs, with desks on the landings. Above the tower, spanning the site at the level of the thinning upper branches of the surrounding trees, is a study/observatory with extensive views and an operable roof that permits stargazing.

On the rock promontory, the more assertive client has dictated an alternative configuration. Here the containers have struck a bold, horizontal line across the rock plateau with commanding views out across the meadow and back into the woods. To the rear, a protected area has been captured between the cabins and the few wind-blasted trees which have managed to prosper up here. However, the face of the cabins is relentlessly exposed to the merciless sun, wind and views. A combination of a sunshade, windscreen, security closure and active solar device has been designed to mitigate these forces without compromising the confidence or openness of the figure.

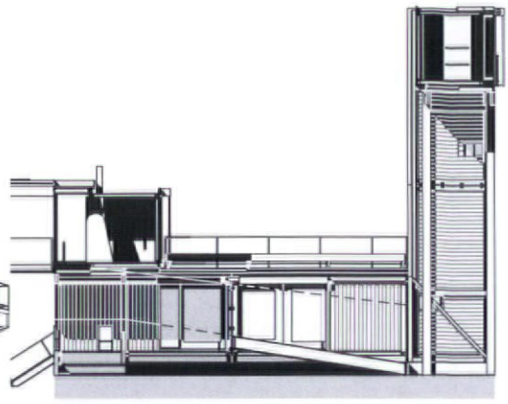
Their provenance in transportation technology ensures that the container-cabins sit lightly on the land. They demonstrate no desire to burrow in to the

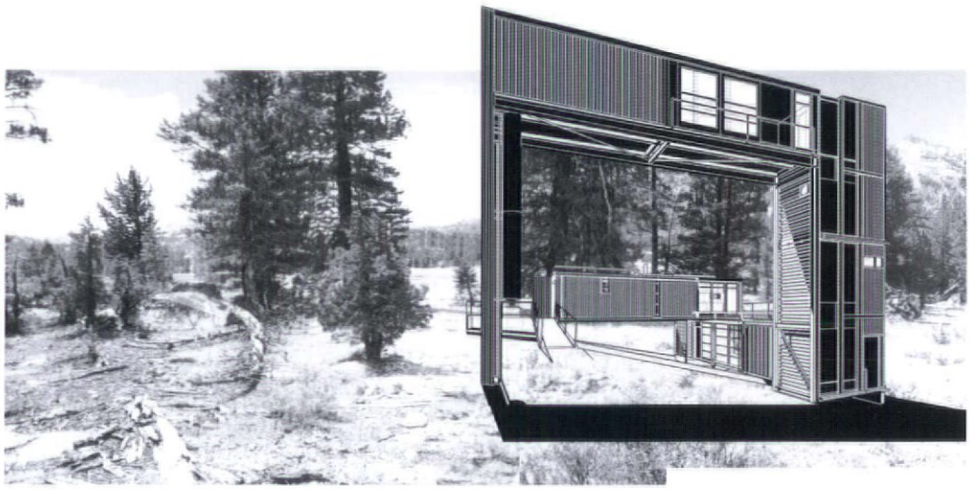


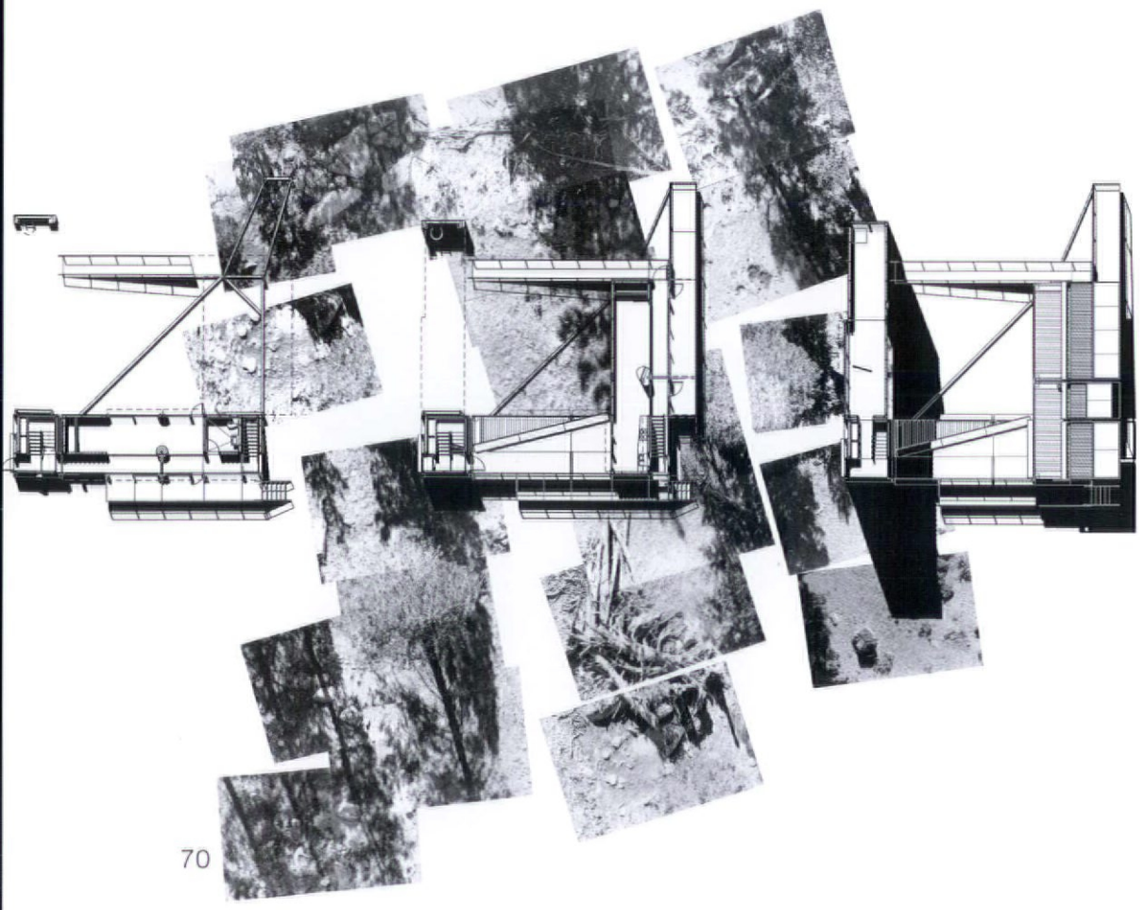


Guest cabin –plan; anterior view







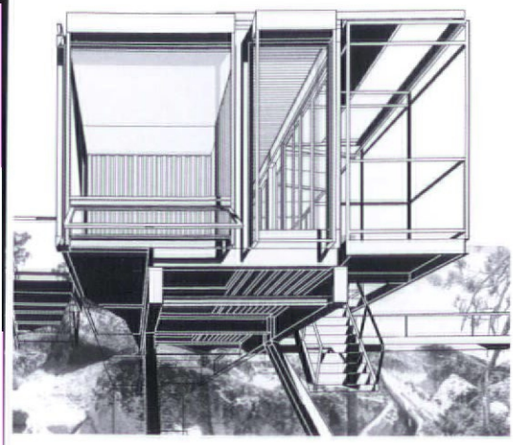


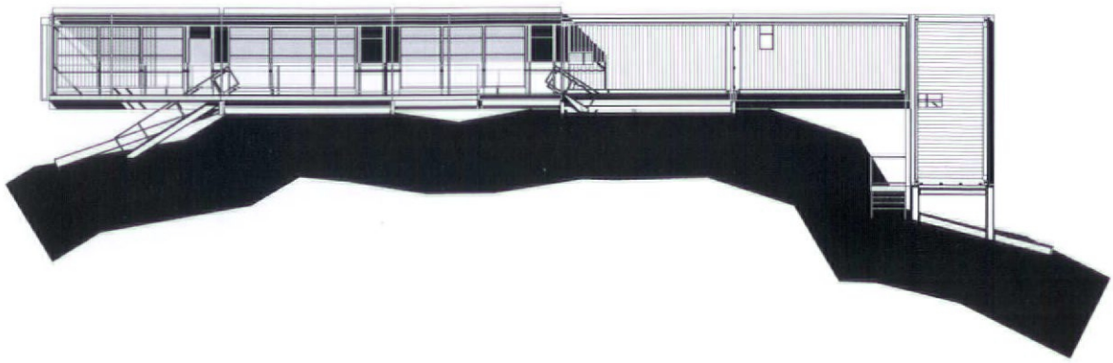
landscape or mimic 'natural' forms, nor do they adopt traditional, picturesque vernacular forms. The structures adapt to the existing conditions according to their own requirements, in the same way as the trees and rocks. Secure in their own internal motive force, the cabins make no absurd claims of ownership or dominion over these rocks and trees.

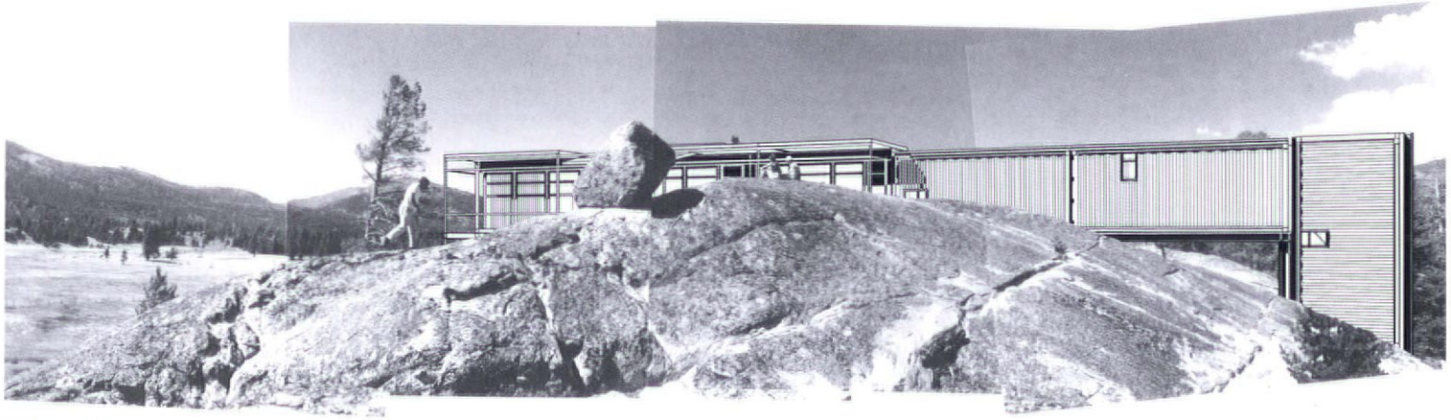
Since everyone, including the owners, is a visitor to the cabin, each of these communities starts out as an outpost. The metaphor of the home is not appropriate; beyond raising the question of whose home, or the assertion of an undesirable sense of dominion over the land (as property), the idea of domesticity seems out of place in the dramatic context of the site. Viewing the community as an outpost casts all the visitors as adventurers, explorers, or at least guests, in this territory; even the owners feel this each time they visit.

The seeds in this project are humble, they have no intention of organising anything beyond their immediate charge. Yet, the responsibility to constitute a civilisation at this outpost bestows upon these humble pieces an exaggerated importance. With limited means at their disposal, the corrugated steel, structural shapes, plywood, glass and paint can accept this attention only by reasserting the traditional vernacular's unconscious goal of suitability. Where efficiency dictates humility, there is no room for flourish or indulgence. There is no ownership here to be flaunted. This humble equipment serves all the visitors equally.

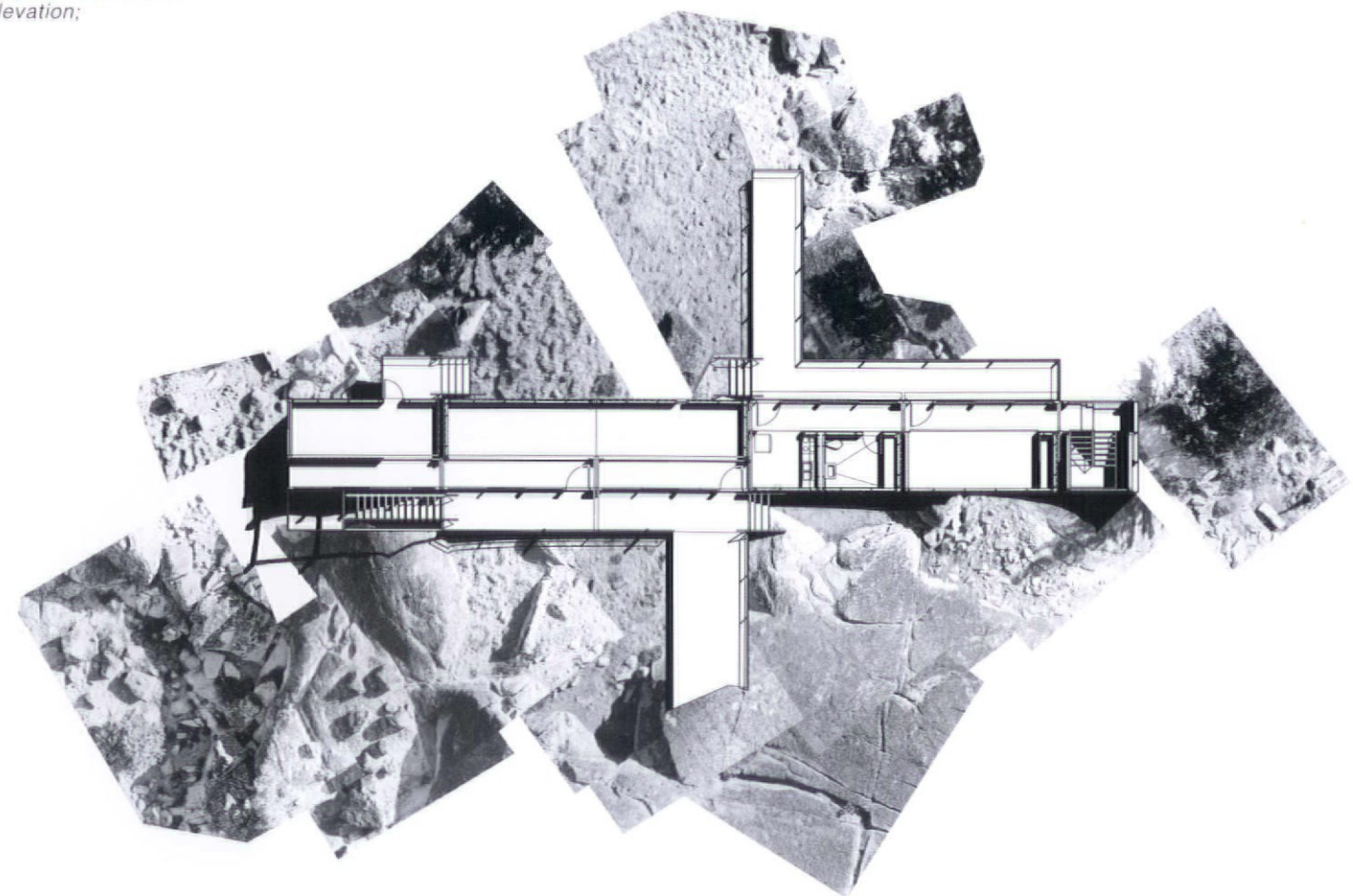
FROM ABOVE, L TO R: Meadow's Edge cabins – view from west; section looking north-west; view from north-east; plans







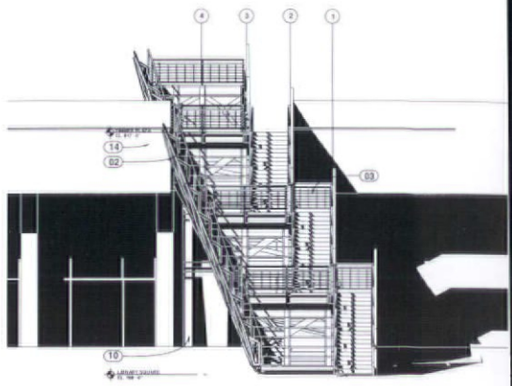
FROM ABOVE L TO R: Coyote Rock cabins – view from west; south elevation; view from south; plan



JONES PARTNERS

ZIMMER STAIR

University of Cincinnati, Ohio



The creation of a new plaza in the midst of an eclectic collection of campus buildings from every period of the University's history provided the opportunity to create a space-defining sculptural object. This stair folly connects the two principal levels of the plaza, conferring a dynamic orientation and focal point to the otherwise amorphous, flowing spaces of the plaza.

Located opposite the engineering school, the stair provides an oversized celebration of structural steel; its wide-flange vent mainframe, trussed tubular subframe, and stick-built angle-and-channel-stringer assembly make legible the classic division of labour between servant and served elements in the design and relates them to the scale of service they provide. Efficiency is not a goal in this; expression is. The sheer visceral appeal of a WF33 can be touched – it's right there!

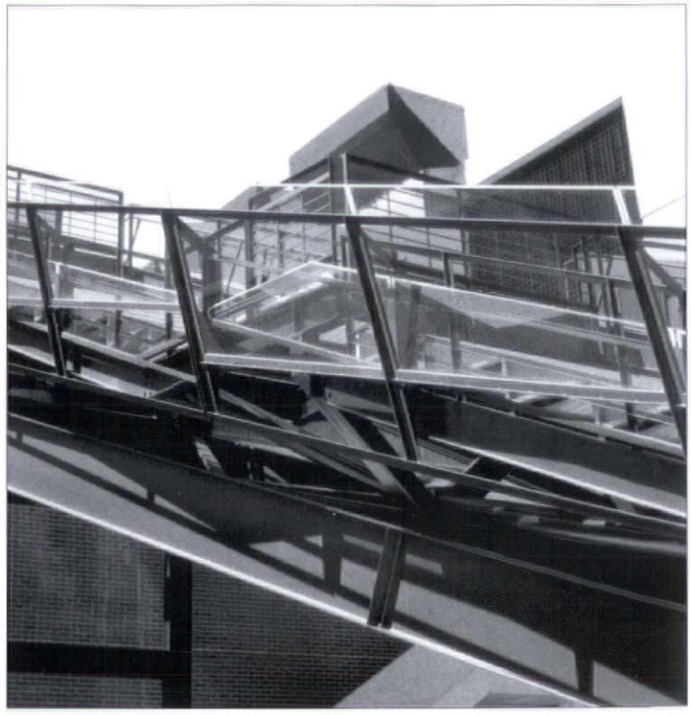
In order to emphasise the capabilities of such a handsome piece of steel, the nose of the structure cantilevers from the elbow of the bent – about 20 feet; its broad- sweeping snout hovers inches above the plaza without touching down. The structure also cantilevers at the opposite, upper end, where it bursts through the parapet guardrail of Zimmer Plaza, enunciating the presence of the stair to visitors approaching from above.

The northern edge of the stair is defined along its entire length by a solid plate guardrail. Along the southern, bleacher edge the guardrail is glass. This reinforces the structure's sense of orientation to the plaza and the sun, providing a solid edge to the space on the north side and an open condition to that on the south.

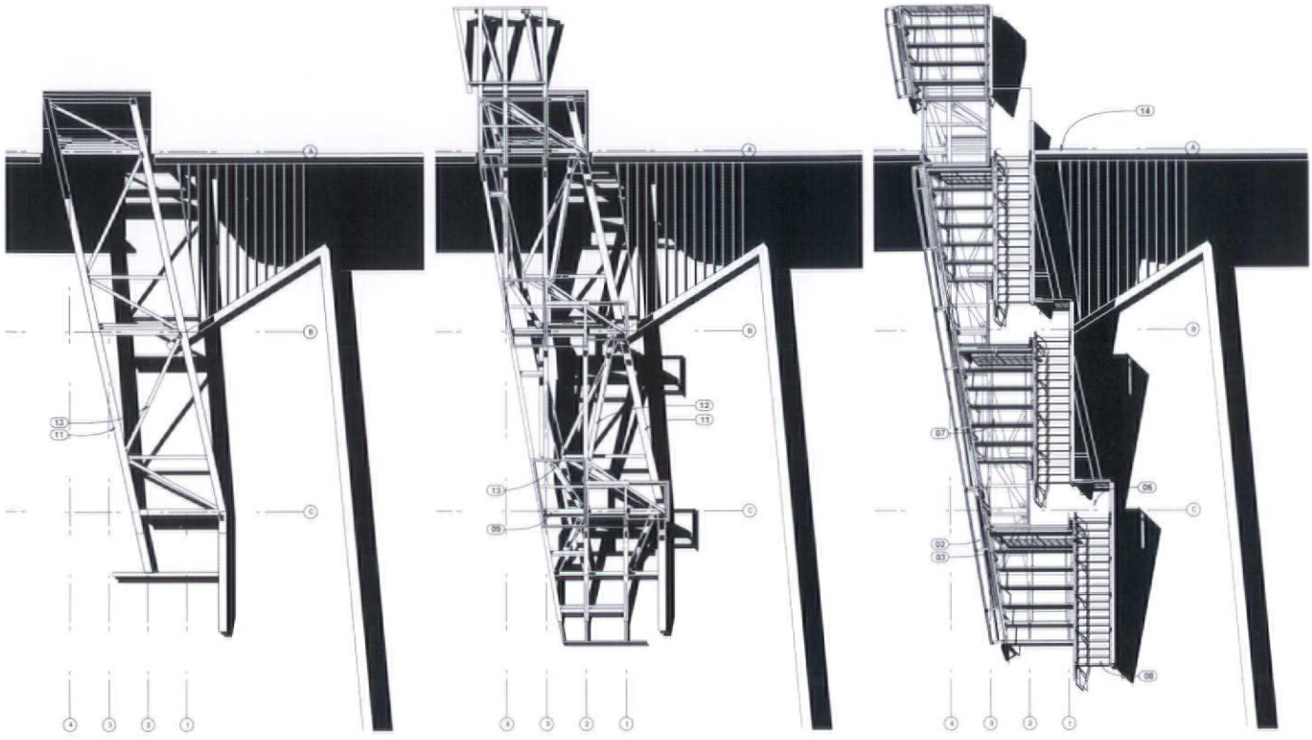
The stair's traditional role as a gathering place is acknowledged by the inclusion of bleachers along its entire length. These also add bulk to the structure, providing it with a scale that is more appropriate to the space it commands, and broaden the structure to correspond more with its length.

The stair was designed to be erected in three major assemblies, facilitating shop fabrication and transportation. Apart from the WF33 subframe, the entire 80-foot structure was fabricated in California and shipped to the site nested onto a single flatbed semi-trailer.





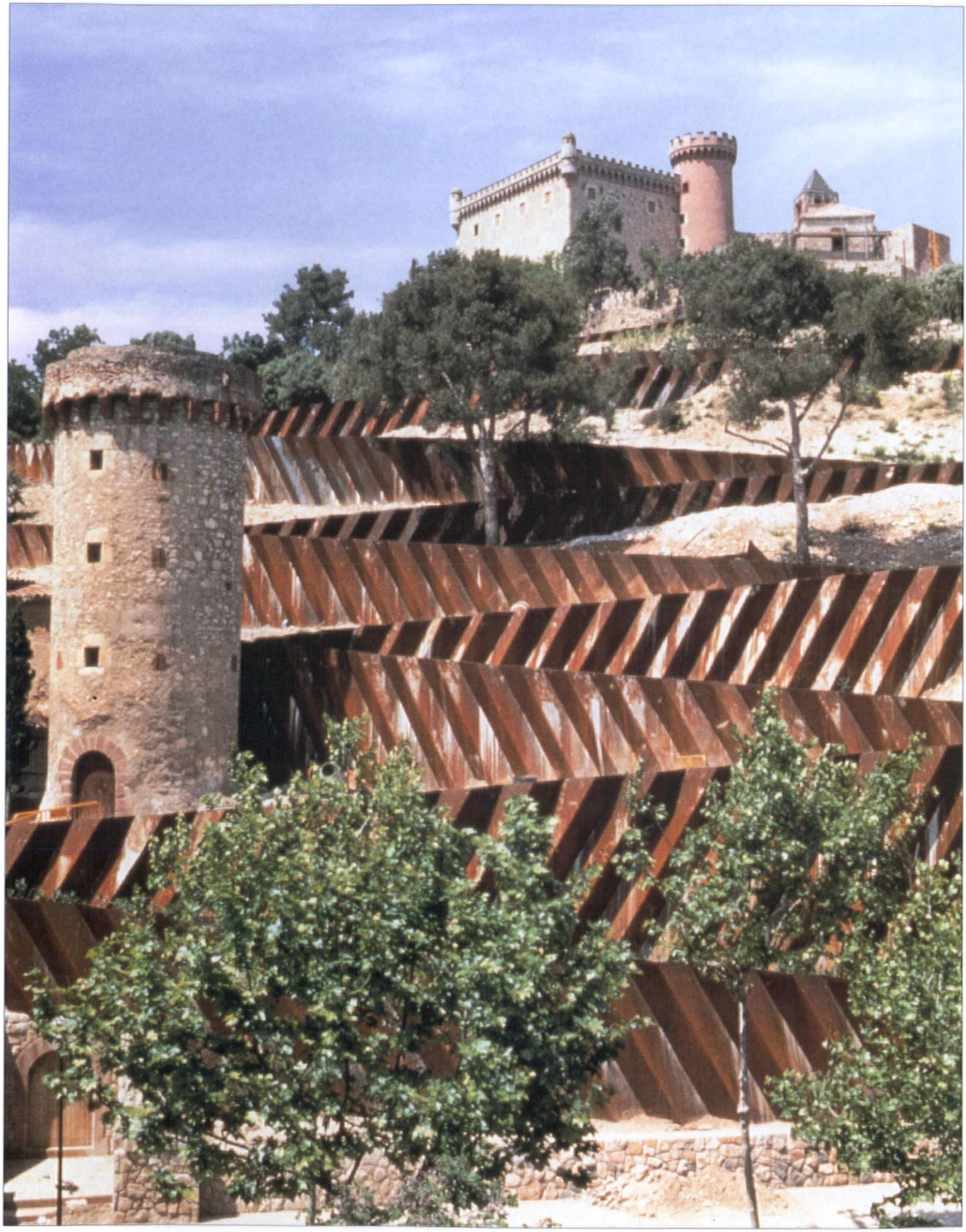
ABOVE: East elevation; BELOW, L TO R: View from north-west; detail looking up







ABOVE: Plans; BELOW, L TO R: View from north-west; detail view from south-west



LAPEÑA–TORRES TUR

CASTLE WALKWAYS

Castelldefels, Barcelona

As the first stage of the development and landscaping of the hill surrounding the castle at Castelldefels, a pedestrian walkway was built to give access to the castle from the city centre. To overcome the difference in levels between the city and the castle, the ramps zig-zag up the hill with supporting walls for the levelled areas.

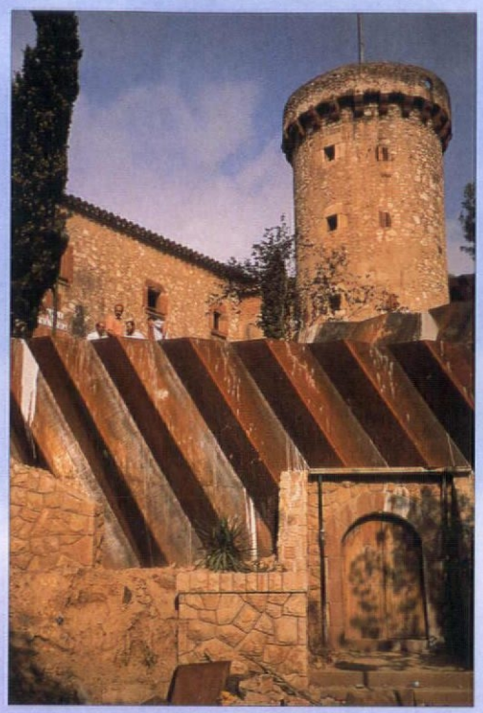
The walls are made of reinforced concrete and Corten steel formwork. They are held in place using inclined struts. The top ends of the steel formwork are extended to form handrails for the walkways.

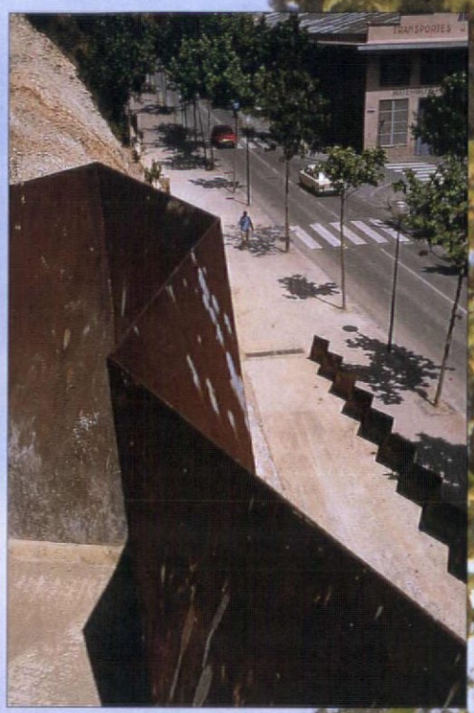
The project was designed to provide a way of access from the city to the castle, making use of one type of material and method of construction. Its appearance – halfway between 'iron papiroflexia' and urban development – evolves from the uniform nature of the design, the way in which the wall is sectioned, and the fact that the walkways form a continuous unit more than a kilometre long.

Project team: José Antonio Martínez Lapeña, Elías Torres Tur, Miguel Usandizaga Calparsoro



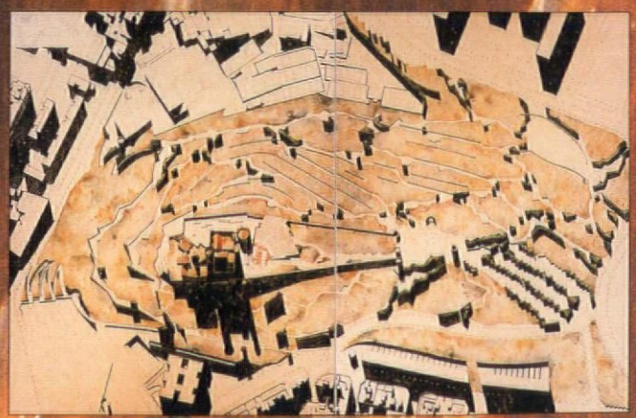
ABOVE: Axonometric and plan of ramps;
OVERLEAF: Aerial view and axonometric of site





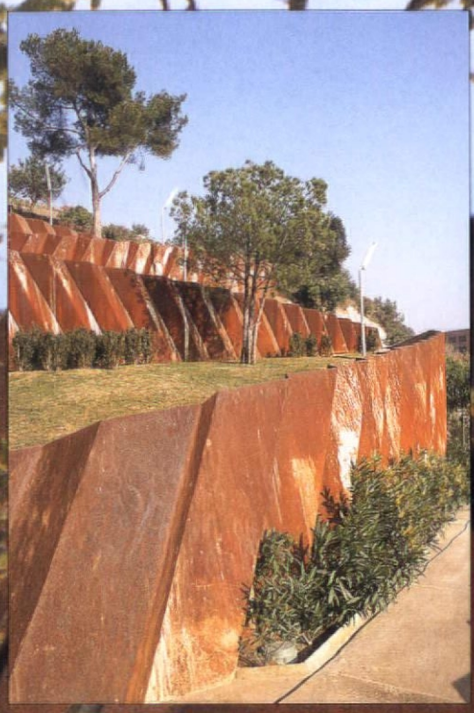


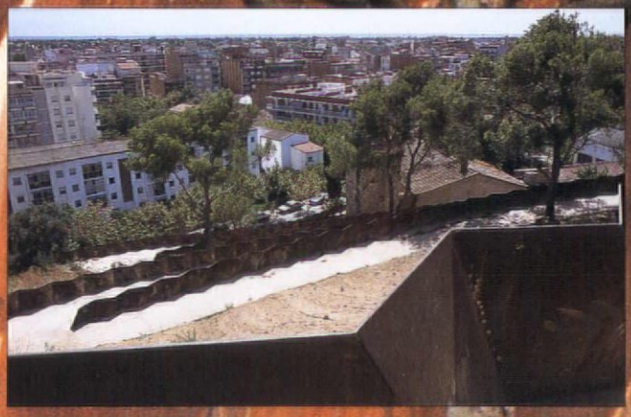




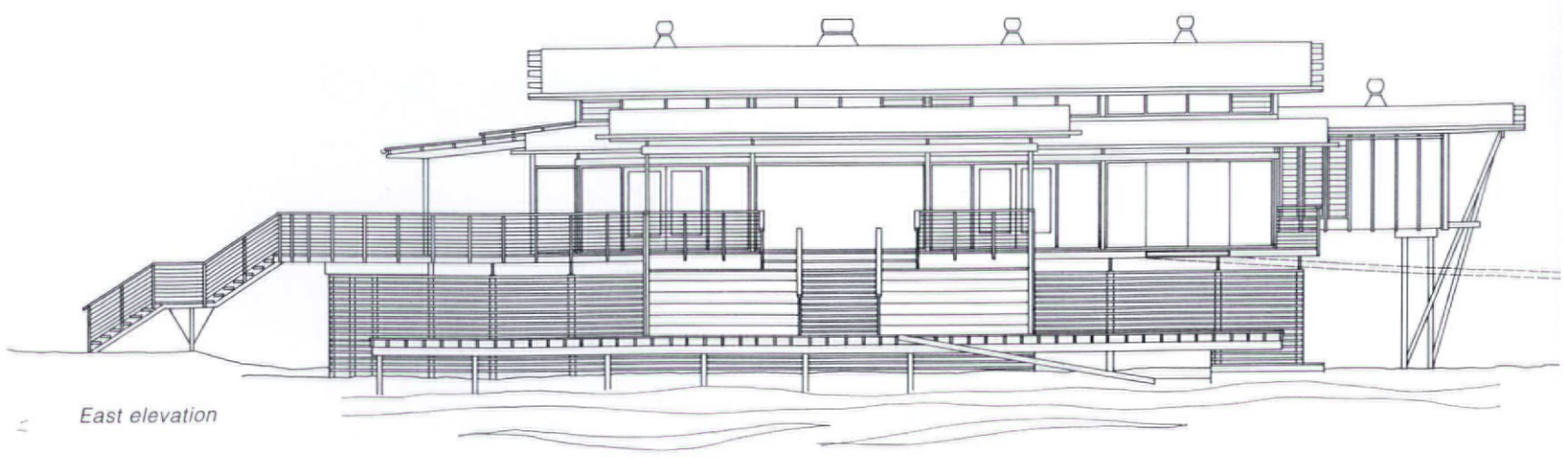












East elevation

CLARE DESIGN

SKI + SKURF CABLE SKI KIOSK

Bli Bli, Australia

Even a remarkably beautiful region such as the Sunshine Coast can be reduced to placelessness and kitsch at the hands of the tourist industry. Many members of the community sense the loss of authenticity that pervades not only tourist attractions but the shopping centres, public places, streets and housing within our region.

The Ski + Skurf tourist park caters for the young 'surfie' set of the Sunshine Coast. Waterskiing can be experienced without the need of a boat. The building serves the surf culture and is enriched rather than reduced by its acknowledgement of water, sun, breeze, youth and sport.

Only five kilometres from the ocean 'as the crow flies' and located close to a slow bend in the Maroochy River, the ski complex relates closely to its low-lying caneland environs. It is hoped that the tourist who visits this complex gains more than a ride on a ski. Instead of the typically superficial or partial experiences of theme parks, the visitor is met with a genuine building that expresses both new content and excitement without losing relation to its place.

The original building was razed by fire in August 1994. A new kiosk/pavilion needed to be fully designed, documented, approved by council and built within 16 weeks to be ready for the Christmas tourist season. The excitement and energy of such a tight programme is reflected in the end product.

The building has been described by others as a culture house – a casual, vibrant and very flexible series of spaces accommodated beneath gentle, undulating roof forms. Many of the groups who frequent the building arrive for breakfast, spend the day and also take advantage of the night skiing and a restaurant and bar that operates in the summer months.

The building is placed on a narrow spit of land between two lakes and was built upon the original timber piles that survived the fire. These ready foundations set the site and building position. Because the new building bears no resemblance to the original kiosk designed by others, some interesting spans and cantilevers can be discovered from below.

For flexibility of use and speed of construction, the building was designed as a simple portal-frame shed structure with surrounding ancillary amenities and verandah spaces. It was required that the administrative office be placed in such a position that would enable the entire complex to be overseen from both within and without. Such a position of surveillance allows the park to operate smoothly in peak tourist times and also to be operated by one person during the off-season period.

Timber posts were bolted on to existing piles, creating a platform over which the main structures were placed. Materials such as plywood, fibre cement, zincalume, custom orb and 'Suntuf' polycarbonate were chosen for their qualities of lightness, durability and cost effectiveness.

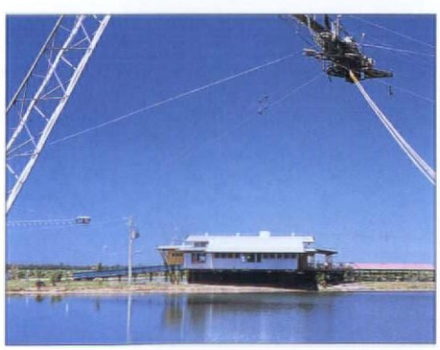
The combination of simple planning and structural expression, robust finishes, lightness, openness and colour creates an appropriate festive coastal mood for the visitors, users and employees.

Project team: Lindsay Clare, Kerry Clare, Jeff Lee, Scott Chaseling, Terry Braddock

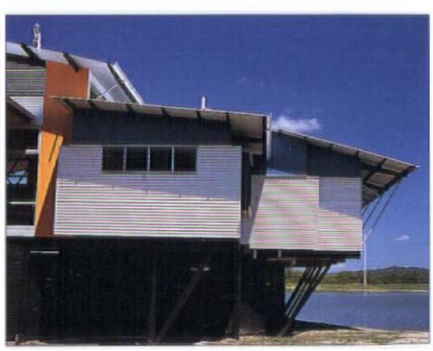




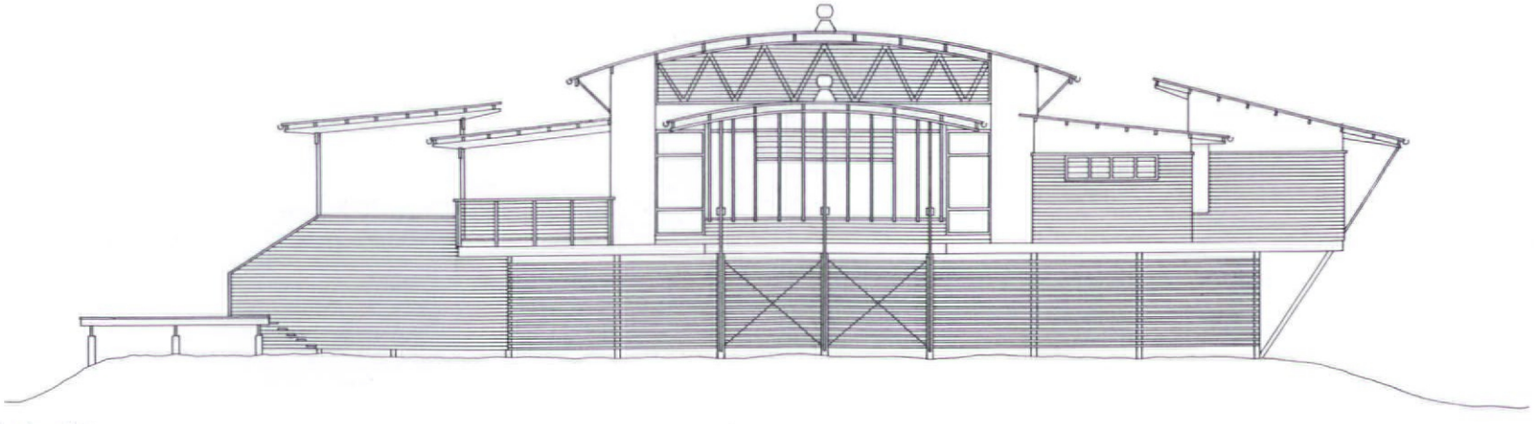
Plan







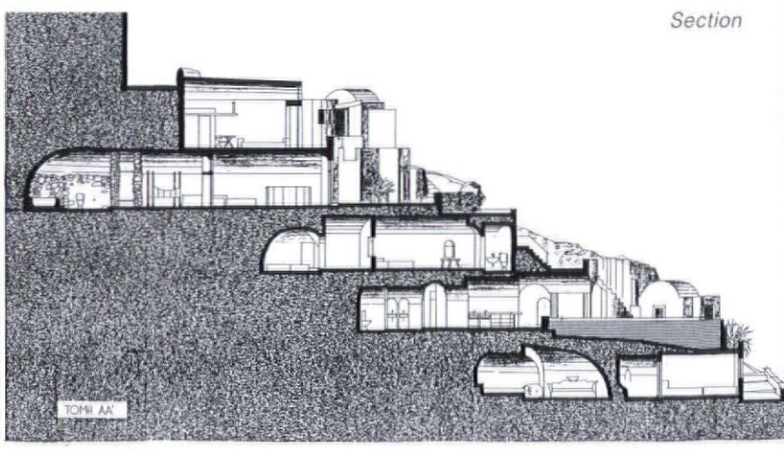




North elevation



Section



ANTITHESIS ARCHITECTURE

CHROMATA

Apartments and Swimming Pool, Imerovigli, Santorini

This complex of 17 holiday apartments, with guest facilities and a swimming pool, was created amongst the existing, mostly subterranean houses of the village of Imerovigli, perched on the edge of 280-metre-high cliffs overlooking the volcanic landscape. Old cave dwellings and some remnants of existing buildings were restored and converted to apartments.

The form of the complex evolves from a rational approach to the guests' needs, in conjunction with maximum use of the existing context and the addition of new, external buildings. Distinguished by the use of colour, the new structures follow the organisation of the existing buildings.

The complex develops organically from the study and analysis of the local, traditional structures and the recomposition of their elements, while simultaneously reworking some fundamental modern principles.

The peculiarities of the environment, the needs of the guests, and modern technology were essential factors of the design. Especially important in achieving the end result was the participation of local, expert builders, thereby combining tradition with technology and modern materials.

The structure is spread over six levels that vary in height and overlap in many places. The second level accommodates the reception area, swimming pool, bar, dining and sitting areas, while the remaining levels are used for the apartments.

Entrance to the complex from the street is above level six, where a central staircase provides access to the four upper levels. This staircase then splinters to serve the pool/reception area and the apartments on the lower levels. Consideration was given to the movement of guests between the spaces to ensure the privacy of each apartment.

In the shaping and arrangement of spaces, solutions were found which respected the lighting, the view and the privacy of all the apartments in the complex, in addition to those of the neighbouring buildings. Bright colours are used for the complex which correspond with the surroundings: earth, sea and sky are represented by ochre and brown, turquoise and azure, white and silver respectively. This gives the buildings a dynamic and harmonious presence in the characteristically harsh landscape.

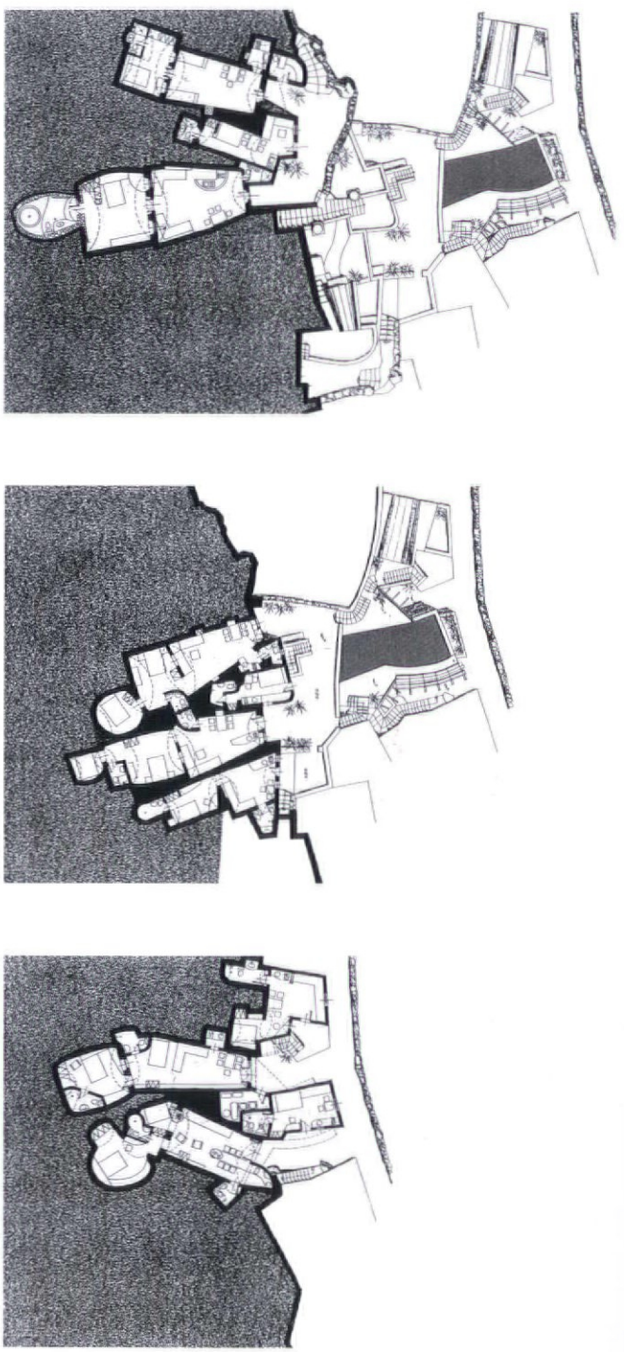
The selected materials are also in keeping with those used previously for the site: the wooden doors and windows follow the same lines as those of the existing houses. The sections were reinforced wherever needed so that double-glazing could be fitted and openings enlarged where necessary.

External floors are made of rough cement render. Different textures were used to differentiate and clearly mark the edge of the pool. All visible timber is Swedish pine, employing a simple scaffold-like construction. Simple lines and light volumes maintain the coherent quality of the architecture.

Of special interest is the roof of level six, which consists of two asymmetrical barrel vaults set perpendicular to each other and connected with a tent-like structure. This 'tent', which is lower than the vaults, permits an unobstructed view of the volcano. It highlights the vaults and at the same time provides a dynamic inner roof. Also of interest is the very simple iron bridge which provides access to the middle apartment on level six – preserving the privacy of the first apartment while allowing light to penetrate the lower one.

The pool penetrates the reception area while giving the impression of being suspended: the overflowing water blending visually with the sea below. Three columns support the vaulted ceiling and define the pool. A simple bench at the edge of the pool serves both as a barrier and seating. It is constructed of timber and pine planks and supported by custom-made stainless steel mounts.

The complex is striking in its use of strong shapes and colours yet integrates harmoniously with the surrounding environment.

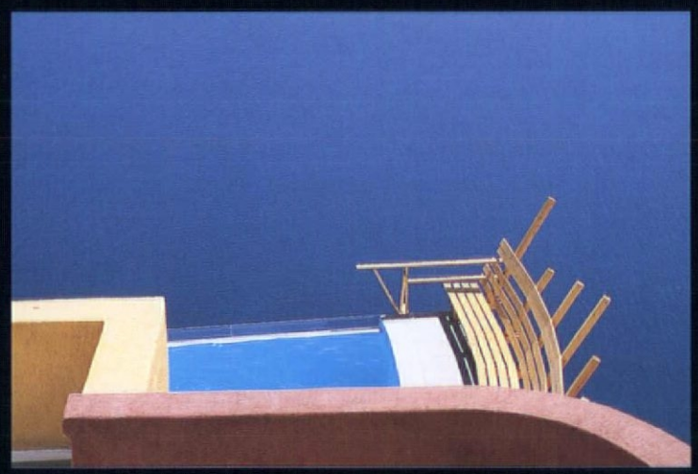


FROM ABOVE: Plans of levels 5, 3 and 1













Chromata, apartments and swimming pool, Imerovigli, Santorini





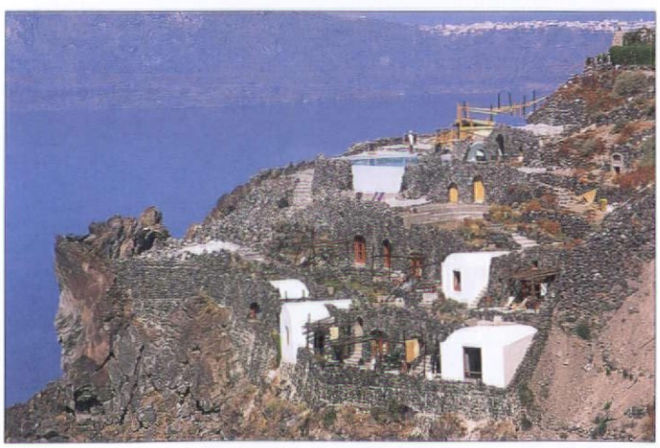


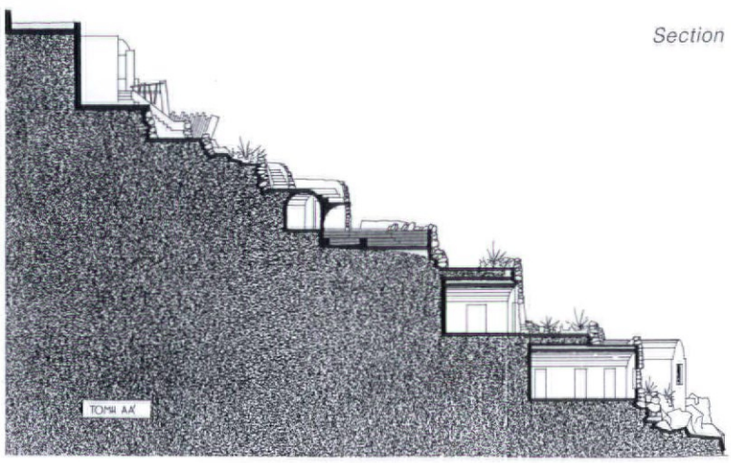






Black Stone Terraces, Imerovigli, Santorini





Section

ANTITHESIS ARCHITECTURE

BLACK STONE TERRACES

Apartments, Swimming Pools and Spa, Imerovigli, Santorini

These 14 holiday apartments are also located on the 280-metre-high cliffs of Imerovigli village. The complex is south-facing and benefits from a panoramic view of the island, from the east to the west.

No buildings existed on the site except for some subterranean structures on the upper level. The site was formed in terraces: the typical system used to organise arable land on the steep dry slopes of the Cycladic Islands. Characteristic of the site is the black volcanic stone that is abundant on the island. This is used for the construction of the terraces.

Their carefully studied reformation provided the opportunity to hide almost all the needs of the complex in underground structures. At selected points, however, the stone walls have been shifted to create more internal space, allowing overall breathability and movement. Here, the inner structures emerge as external buildings. The contrast between the black terraces and the dazzling white vaults which break through them emphasises this dynamic rift.

The complex has two pools with a spa. These are integrated organically with the surroundings without being hidden, so that they diffuse and disappear in the composition. The black stone surrounds the water and penetrates it, creating a variety of spaces and sitting areas. Thus, the water's limit is not perceptible. This feeling of continuity is enhanced by the elements that organise the spaces around the pool – through which one is able to move endlessly – and by the water itself, which overflows from one pool to the other. By successively passing through closed and open passages, going in and coming out of the water, and relaxing in covered and open areas, the visitor experiences a space which flows and dissolves the division between earth and water, between inside and outside, and between the location and the sea, 280 metres below.

On the upper level of the site, the building closest to the village was handled differently in order to mark the entrance to the whole complex. It is the epitome of the complex. Here, the antithesis develops – delicately balanced and with a clear spirit of play – which affects the overall composition: the contrast of the old with the new, the conventionally-restored azure building adjacent to the modern freely-structured one, the defiance of the inclined column beside the vertical walls.

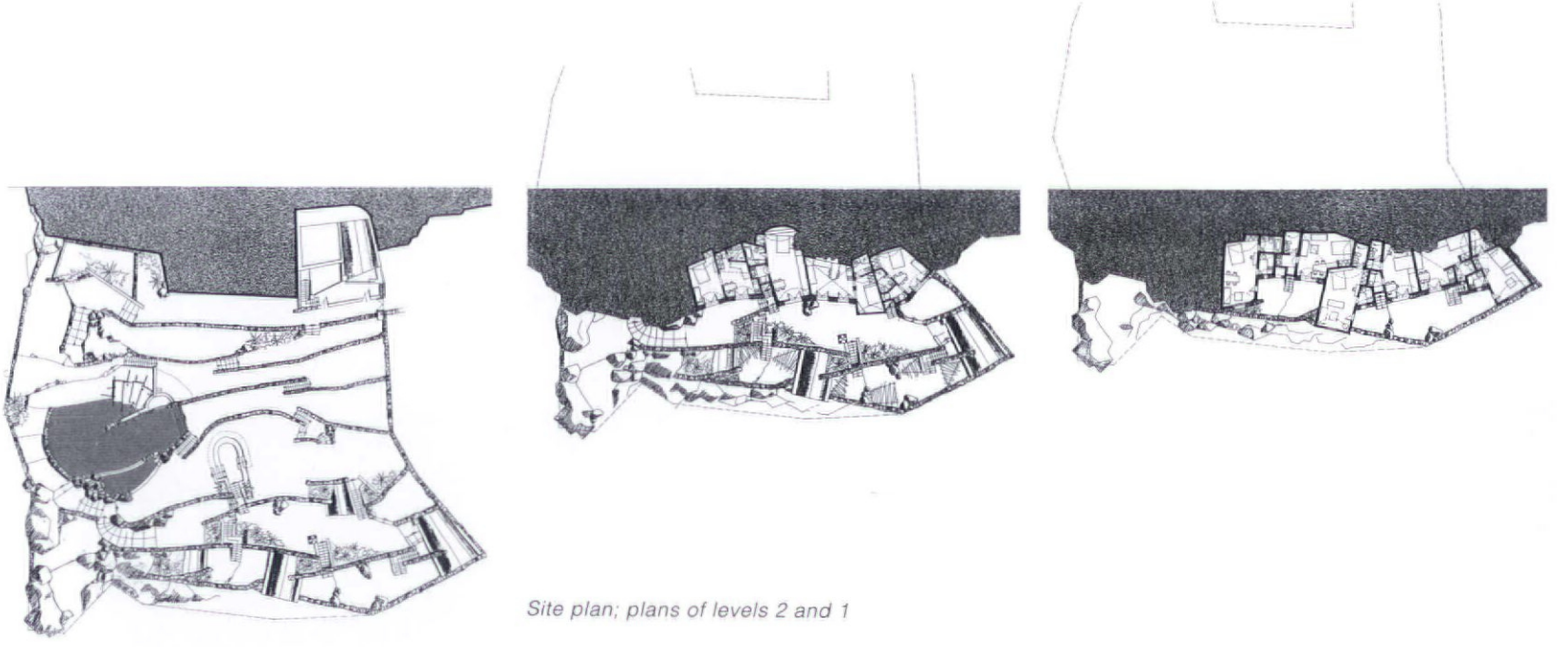
All the materials used for the complex can be found here: the black stone, plastered walls and wood.

Free-form wooden structures are made use of throughout the complex as pergolas, parapets, benches, and for the pool bar. Although simple, these structures are dynamic and unobtrusive, but not neutral. They are the product of a free confrontation of functional problems: a basic concept which permeates the practice's architectural solutions.

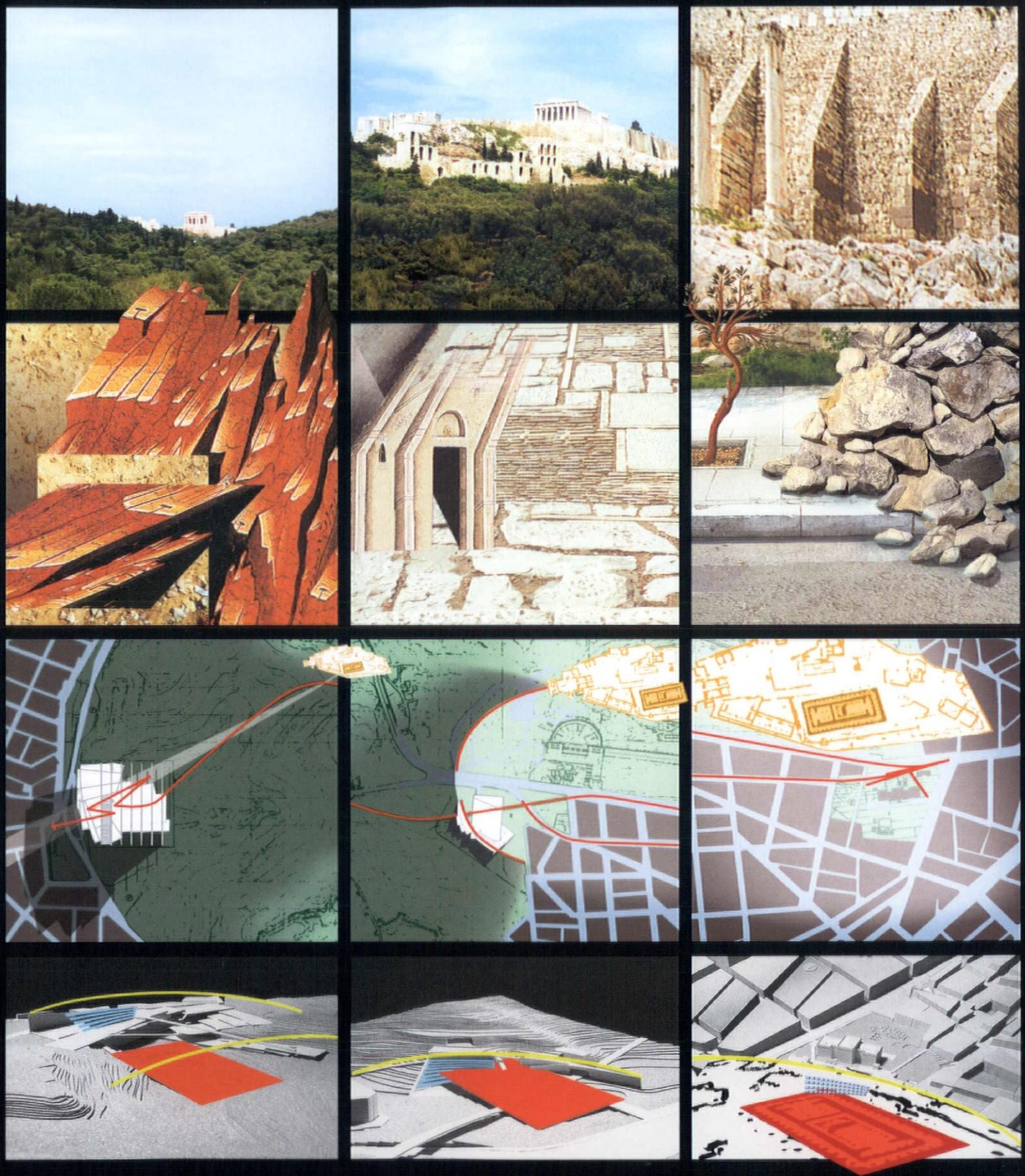
With this in mind, one can appreciate why the buildings do not adopt the dry principles of clear-cut shapes on such a steep slope; also, that the forms of underground structures are prescribed by the needs of the occupants and the qualities of the earth, rather than mere geometry.

The application of this method of architectural intervention to this particular site thus enabled the architects to resolve all the functional problems and to hide most of the structures.

Project team: architects – K Nikolaidis, C Edwards; structural engineering – G Tsopanakis; construction supervision – K Nikolaidis, G Tsopanakis, C Edwards



Site plan; plans of levels 2 and 1


THE CITY
THE BUILDING
THE CITY
THE BUILDING
CITY BORDERS
THE BORDER MIDDLE
EXHIBITION
RECEPTION
ARRIVAL/ENTRANCE
URBAN SPACE:
FROM VISUAL / ENTROPIC REAL TO REAL-SPECIFIC
THE SYMBOLIC AS QUESTED / REVEALED:
FROM THE QUESTION OF THE BUILDING
TO THE QUESTION OF THE CITY

NIKOS GEORGIADIS

'AT THE SAME PLACE': THE NEW ACROPOLIS MUSEUM, ATHENS

The ancient Greeks had a ritual that would take place at an altar situated at the top of the Acropolis. The Diipolia, as it was known, involved the ritual slaughter of an ox, as thanks to Zeus and in celebration of the harvest. The participants of the ritual would scatter seeds in the altar and release the sacrificial ox. The ox would approach the seeds, at which point a priest, known as the ox killer, would slaughter the animal with an axe and disappear from the scene. According to the rules of the ceremony, the participants had to turn away from the priest, so as not to witness the slaughter; after his departure, they would begin accusing one another for murdering the ox, and finally take the axe to trial and charge it guilty of the murder. Yet the atmosphere of the ritual was light-hearted and its outcome always the same: the axe would be sentenced to be carried by the participants outside the city walls and thrown into the sea.

One could perhaps recognise the prophetic significance of this ritual in respect of what would occur many centuries later, with the destruction, removal, and 'universalisation' of the Acropolis treasures – an effect of a broader Western attitude which paradoxically seeks an identity in that same ancient civilisation which it has, in many ways, appropriated yet turned its back on. But the ceremony is more useful for its non-metaphoric potential. For through it, the ancients showed that the only way catharsis could arise is through a purely spatial event, a justice advocated *spatially* progressing away from the place of the drama but continually referring to it. The ancient Athenians seemed to be able to operate within the very metaphor and activate its analytic potential, to offer a 'different', more performative solution – transferring the 'place' of sacrifice (of symbolic and visual integration) onto a spatial process heterogeneous to the symbolic dimension of the ritual. Their long journey through the city, far from being merely 'physical', seems to be expressive of location-making as witnessed in urban experience, as the city itself progresses regressively through gradual transformations of *visuality* into *spatiality*, realising its symbolic rituals at real locations.

The participants *turn a blind eye* to the spectacle. In contrast to Oedipus, they do not negate visuality, but introduce aspects of inattention – by turning away and not seeing – and customisation, by carrying around the axe – an object charged with a symbolic cause (*/chose*). Unconvinced by the visual register or its reversals, they seem to take the Zeuxis/Parrhasios story further, questioning visuality as well as individuality and authorship.

The ritual develops as a spatial awareness of the symbolic convention rather than a symbolic awareness of place or object. It is processed simultaneously as a repetition of a lost encounter with 'place' (the symbolic/visual consciousness) and as an intentionalisation of customary space, through the constant ordinarisation of the functional object across the city. This spatial agency is a *trans-placial* process: a 'place by place' movement progressing in a regressive and anticipatory way – as urban experience ordinarises itself – eventually localising the *transpatiality* of symbolic logic and representation.

The spatial event is not a 'place' (ie an ideal, or non-ideal reference of a given order or discursive signification); it rather actualises a reference both of the ideal (ideal as 'expected', visually integrated), and of the ordinary (practical or functional) aspect of a given signification – in an irreconcilable collocation of the two.

The axe engineers morphological anticipations by lending its physicality to a series of spatial incidents that occur throughout the journey in a spatial manner paradoxical to its original metonymic role as a sacrificial 'tool–agent'. It is not that the axe applies one total symbolic rule to the local level; rather it is engaged with realising as many symbolic completions as possible, at the dimension of the local. Its itinerary is not random but directed by the spatial bind of the city (the 'big' object), and progresses from the symbolic/religious centre (the Acropolis) to the un-symbolic periphery.

If the ox killer incarnates the symbolic cause (*/chose*) of an action, then the axe serves the action as 'good' and 'bad' object, by turns satisfying and disappointing the symbolic/visual ideal, acting as both the reminder of the bad moment and as the means of judging it. The axe's 'distantiation' from the symbolic/visual place (where the ritual acquires its representational value) is a political act of spatial transference of law and reason.

The axe defines the ritual, acquiring the dimension of a self not because it is charged with guilt but because it has the characteristics of an objectal self-referentiality generated around the city. The removal of the axe (as with the Museum) is not symbolic but a real movement, literally a parade of people. Its distantiation from the place of spectacle and symbolic overcharge (the Acropolis) seems to become the one critical position that can stand creatively against and in relation to it. It is the same instrument that integrates visuality and also analyses it by localising it into urban 'pieces'. *Like a museum*, its role in the exhibition process is not denied but, as a tool of procedural space exposing and re-objectifying (rather than reproducing) the symbolic, it is liable to technicalisation and design.

The transference of visual intensity from 'one' place to 'another' defines the critical or *negative* space – a spatio-functional bodily involvement; a technique capable of de-signing and disengaging the subject from its discourses, re-allocating their symbolic values by demonstrating the difference between their real and ideal form. The participants–citizens have already traced an inverted exhibition building by transferring themselves onto the urban process.

Foundness

If we acknowledge that the New Acropolis Museum (NAM) is necessary for the protection of the sculptures, we cannot ignore the fact that their destruction up until today is a result of a general Western attitude which, through the years (centuries,

OPPOSITE: Building-in-process, the three sites

even), has manifested itself in a vulgar way (through theft, destruction, environmental pollution).

It seems that the conflict between the *historical* and the *historic* – history as symbolic and subject to commemoration and history as real – as well as the universal and the local, the sculptural and the spatial (a conflict that invariably works in favour of the former of these pairings) culminates in the case of NAM with the idea of the universalisation of the exhibits' sculptural/aesthetic value (as belonging to everybody) and their concomitant detachment from their original spatio-cultural condition.

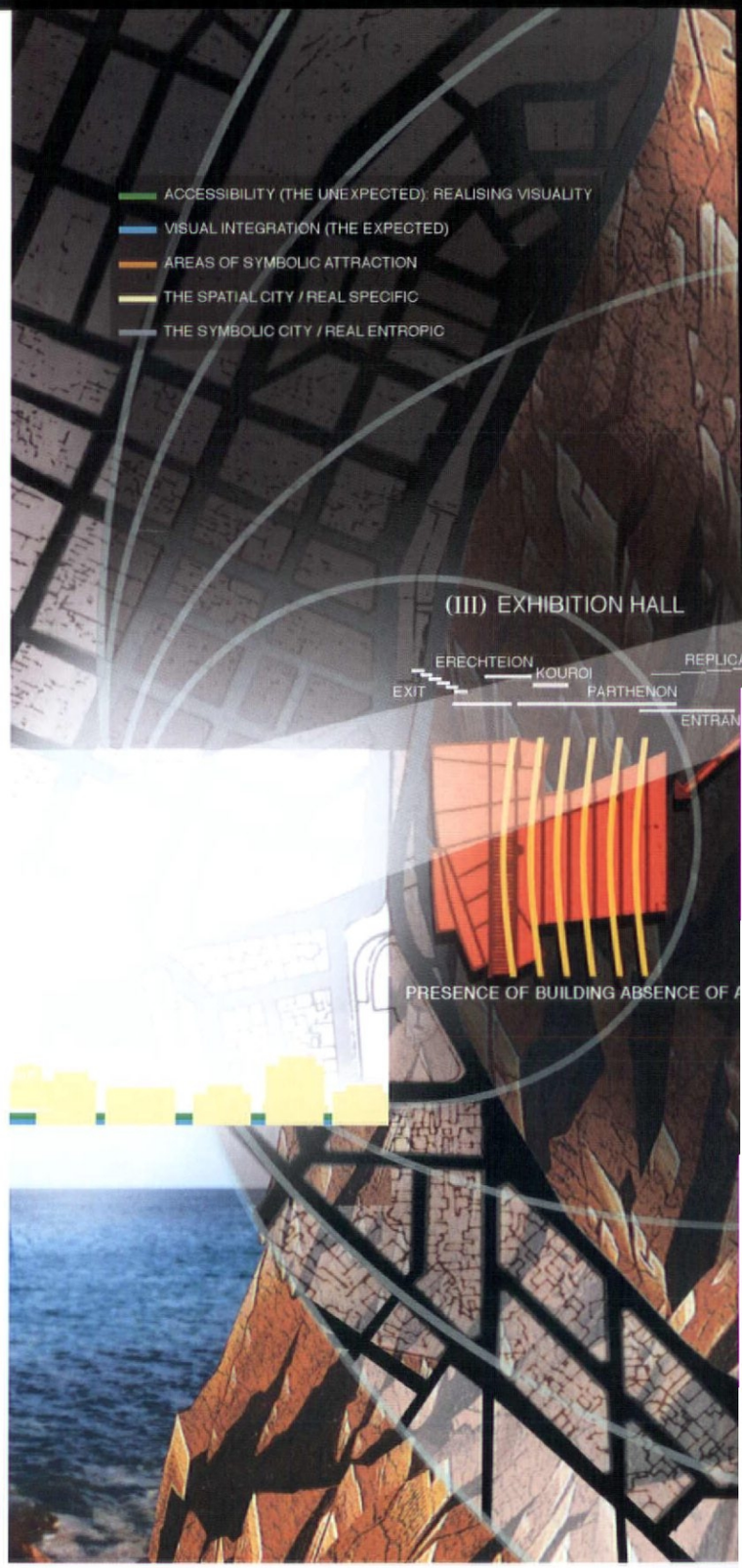
The discourse of appreciation (spectacularisation and communicability) of the exhibits' symbolic value seems to be based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the way ancient civilisations constructed their aesthetic environment: in an all-scale design manner which conducted all artistic, architectural and urban expression. However, the Acropolis 'marbles' recur *at the same place*, despite the 'Anglo-Greek debate', and the catholicisation of the treasures (their so-called symbolic universalisation, limited to the territorial confines of the British Museum). *Being at the same place* is not only a gesture that directs its critique against belonging and ownership but is also a dialecticisation of space breaking beyond a series of apolitical, dasein/anti-dasein theses (from applied negativity to entropic space).

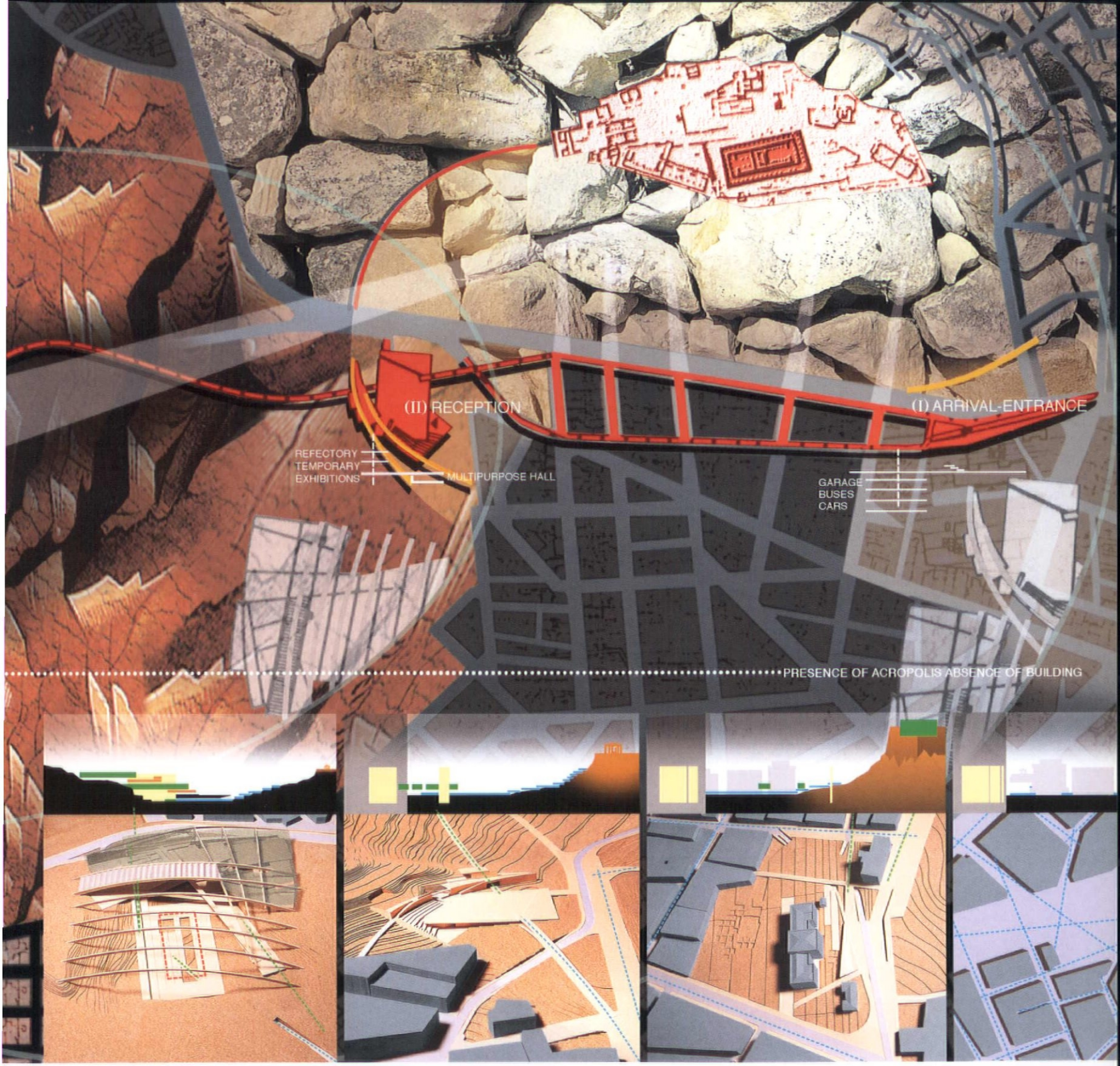
The concept of the 'classical' recurs here, as the necessity of detachment from the symbolic and any idea of consensus, and as a question of the symptomatic reappearance of *history* as objectal contemporaneity and permanence (rather than commemoration) of the 'past'; a discourse to be sought not in the visual arts but in the course of architecture as the art of locality.

The NAM competition introduced a twofold problem. First, how to deal with the *symbolic dimension* appearing as: a) spectacularisation of the Acropolis (amplified by its proximity to two of the optional sites) and of the exhibits (of sculptural, non-spatial value – an aesthetic ideal of Western civilisation), both of which are meant to provide symbolic glamour and an abundance of 'referents' furnishing the new museum and its environment; b) as a misunderstanding of the urban structure of Athens as a mere site provider (at the service of the designers), also organised on the basis of visual synchronicity and finiteness (liable to the ideology of finite buildings and monumental centralisations demanding axial or convex visual integrations).

Second, how to operationalise the *spatiality of the Acropolis* as a real but repressed condition that exceeds the discourse of an isolated 'artwork' and operates as: a) a discourse of *archaeological findings* – appearing as a mixture of statues, walls, garments, raw material, jewellery, city patterns, texts etc; b) real discourse (originating in ancient times) fostering a blend of architectural and sculptural artworks concerning a broad field of objectal dialectics under the context of *total aesthetics* – in contrast to any discursive fragmentation of 'artistic' involvement; c) as an *urban experience* involving real localising processes activating a series of spatial anticipations, relations of exposure, etc, extending from the hilltop centre to the city-borders, running parallel to the symbolic development of the city and its rituals.

Lastly, the quality of the museum seems to be a question of making a *popular* building to be used not 'accidentally' by wanderers but purposefully by citizens of the world (natives or tourists), reintroducing polis citizenship as a leading spatial principle of ancient Greek civilisation (as opposed to the legal structure of the Roman state equivalent). It is also a question of a *positive* building, not commemorative of any guilt or loss, but reminding us of the 'past' as a discourse of presencing – a cultural overstatement of the real objectal world which now recurs as a historical paradox. *Foundness* – the discourse of the exhibits/ruins, total aesthetics and urban process – is a design principle rather than an amorphous collection of objects, traces of past civilisations, or site availability. Surely there is *no place* available for this museum, nor can there be any, not only because the exhibits should return to their original spatial context, but also because the 'museum' belongs to the all-time classic logic of the urban process, to be lost and aligned with it.





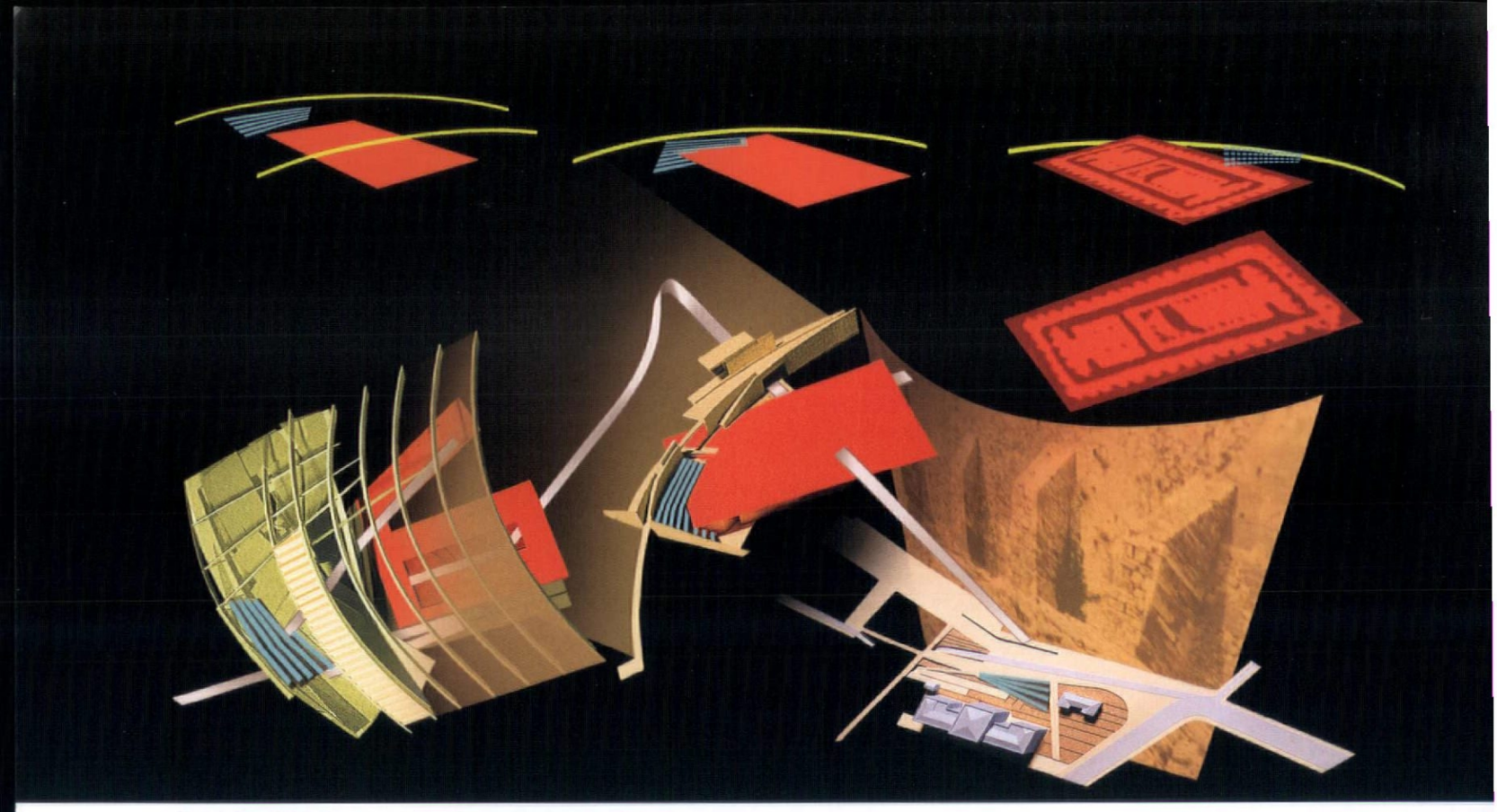
Masterplan and model views – arrrival/entrance (site I), reception (site II), Koile Exhibition Hall (site III)

Negative space as a design principle

Our proposal introduces the design concept of *negative space*. This is space that negates itself offering a condition of spatial affluence, rather than deprivation or dispersion. It makes no morphological distinctions between small and large scale, building and landscape, part and whole, closeness and distance etc, and reintroduces the hypothesis of *total design* (a concept encountered in ancient times but also in early Modern architecture).

The concept of space negating itself in fact opens up the object to a dialectical condition of *oneness* that operates as a critique of any symbolic finiteness or reduction of space as well as of the catholic application of symbolic reason. At a paradigmatic level, such a condition can be found in abundance on an urban level where spatiality progresses via regressions (rather than as feedback to the imposed symbolic order) in the course of spatial anticipations and repetitions.

Negative space is not the spatial correspondence of a negative brief (ie of negated or entropic rationality – producing dark and unlivable or flâneurish and accidental places). It does not serve or deny a given brief; rather it engineers the condition of its double realisation (or spatial hystericisation). It develops initially as an awareness of the spatial quality that a specific symbolic agency appropriates, as 'its own place'; and then as restoration of such a quality from mere presence to a spatial technique that analyses by



Spatial anticipations

allocating the discursive agencies which it is meant to serve. In the course of continual over-realisations, the original symbolic conduct of the brief ('viewing' in the case of the Acropolis Museum) is converted into a symptom, presented as a 'missed' totality whose very quest sustains and binds the proposed scheme.

Negative space is introduced on three indistinguishable levels which merge together in a procedural building as it is related to the Acropolis, the city of Athens and the exhibits. The building, the city, the exhibited objects are conceived as parts of the same spatial technique which can *realise* three visual/symbolic impositions: a) the idea of the exhibition building as representational of the symbolic/historical centrality of the Acropolis; b) the symbolic ideals of an image-conducted synchronised city, and c) the consideration of the exhibits as visual artworks of universal significance. The space of movement as paradigmatic of real urban experience plays an important role here; movement that progresses via spatial anticipations introduces the building as a continual quest (a lost-and-found signification) rather than as an established place. Furthermore, on a local level it demonstrates how the constant ambiguity of the building's boundaries coincides with the question of the limitation and growth of the city as a regressive intraspatial process.

The proposed scheme is not a finite building (a place) but a *building in process*: realised on all three sites as a complex of three distinct urban steps. As a response to the idea of the embodiment of an autonomous museum building into the greater archaeological area, the complex works as a gradual diffusion of the exhibition/visual activities away from the archaeological site and the Acropolis as urban, symbolic centre. Transition from one place of intensity to another is not a linking space but a critique of the place of visual stagnation (and dispersion); it is the Unconscious of any 'here and now' dasein (and anti-dasein). It is a real procedural space at odds with the placial requirements (and prejudices) of a visitor demanding visual/symbolic inclusivity of the archaeological area (thus taking advantage of the proximity of the Acropolis).

Besides, the real 'givenness' of the three sites (and not their optional or indecisive recommendation by the brief) hints that the design of the museum building is actually a question of urban experience. By using all three sites we introduce the problematic of urban experience into the building itself, setting spatial continuity or accessibility (the unexpected) at odds with visual/symbolic integration or fragmentation (the expected). The museum building progresses gradually in a linear arrangement (Makryianni (I) – Dionysos (II) – Koile (III)) but in reverse to the real presence of the Acropolis and the urban density. In the condition of proximity to the Acropolis (site I), no built volume is proposed and the available open space is returned to the city. As the distance from the monument increases, some modest volumes appear (site II), the wide open space around them partly given to the urban fabric ending in the park, and partly to the museum function. In its detachment from the Acropolis and in its green setting (site III), the main exhibition volume is proposed as a building without a reception or marked entrance, amenities or exterior space, but with a rich and elaborate circulation system. The museum's exterior public space is on site I, its semi-public courtyard space on site II, and its main volume and exit on site III.

In the proposed arrangement of the main exhibition hall (site III) the exhibits acquire significance in terms of their accessibility rather than (visual) availability. The space of the exhibits realises (and is introduced as 'Other' to) the place of the viewer. Accessibility and visuality are collocated in a conflictual state. Long routes, having no exhibits and highlighting accessibility are introduced, often pointing at the exterior space as exhibition-significant.

Building in process – the building 'as split'

Building in process is neither a split building nor a negated one (applying a split or negated programme); it is rather a *multiple building* designed to recur and anticipate itself spatially rather than symbolically; it is a search for a building-place always realisable at the 'next location' as a gesture of affluence of space

and presentification rather than a fragmentation or concealment.

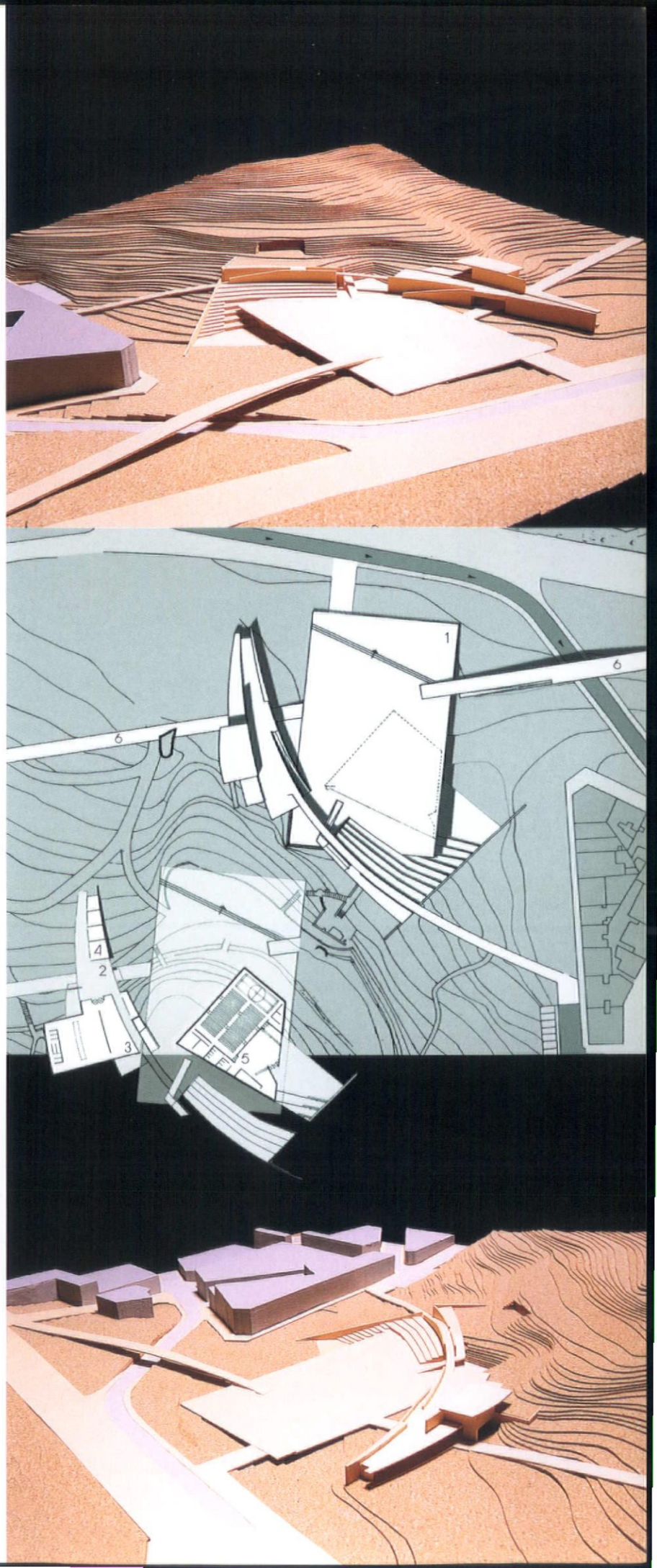
The museum brief is realised in three distinct building-site conditions which spatially depend on one another. These are three instances of localisation of the symbolic/visual epitomisation of the museum as an urban-significant building, namely: *arrival/entrance*, *reception* and *exhibition hall*. These local totalisations of the 'museum' notion can align the building to the urban structure since they refer to building functions related directly to the logic of urban experience and not to any internal brief sub-categorisation; besides, their interdependence is a prerequisite for the operation of a museum building. So here, what is meant to be an automatic transitional non-space connecting 'activities', becomes coincidental with urban space, overlapping the building's spaces of access with the city's equivalent.

In each of the sites an unbindable (un-integrable) couple of two symbolic instances is proposed: one is real (ie the 'arrival/entrance', 'reception', 'exhibition', urban attributions of the museum), the other imaginary (conveying the idea of the museum as an ideal, whole, autonomous building). Each stage works as a specific localisation of the sign of the museum not in fragments but as a quested and missed 'whole' – articulating a *spatial binding of a missed visual or programmatic completion* – the expected 'place' representing the Acropolis and its sculptures. In all three sites the 'one integrated museum' becomes a missing desired singularity which, on reflection, gives the procedural building a sense of inverted continuity, aligning it with the urban spatial structure. But what mainly contributes to such an operational oneness of the three-site buildings is the activation of a series of *spatial anticipations* – relations of morphological sameness and imperfection, rather than similarity.

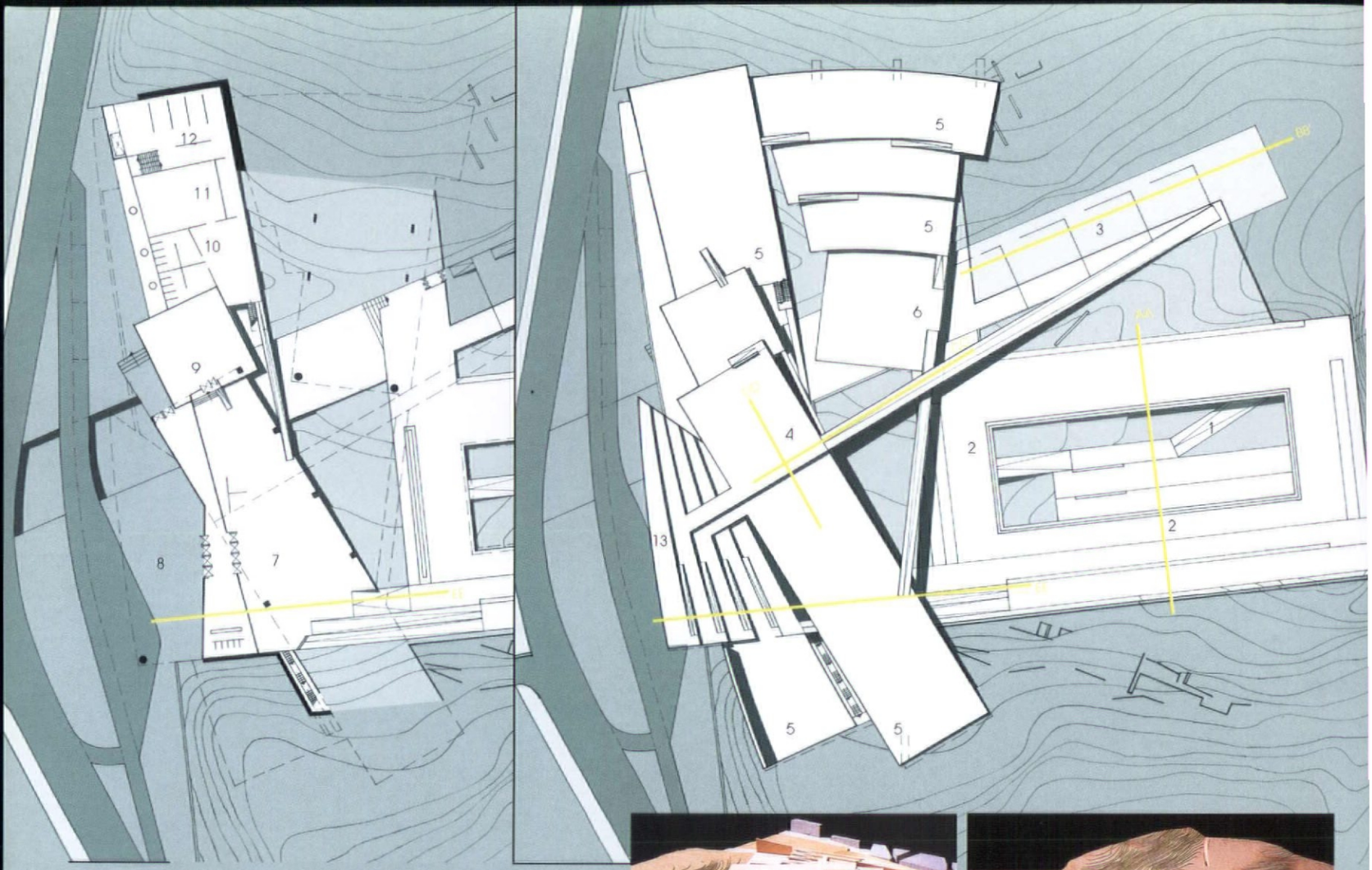
At the level of urban experience the three sites introduce three distinct spatio-symbolic processes in terms of the Acropolis' presence and the existing urban fabric. Site I marks a full presence of the 'old' city and 'its Acropolis' as a strong visual and symbolic integration, amplified by the raw appearance of the monument; site II is a distributional space linking the city with the monument, the interface between the 'old' fabric and the non-designed city (the green); site III (in the green) is a hint of a reclaimed, un-visual, un-symbolic, spatial 'new' city. The building appears respectively as quested/approached in the greater dense urban fabric (I), as accessed and addressed at an intermediate surrounding area (II), as entered and local specific reality (III).

The spatial course of the procedural building entails a reconsideration of the symbolic dimension of the city – the quested symbolic is gradually transferred from the context of a total-ideal museum building to that of a total-ideal new city. Here, spatiality and symbolism seem to be reversely analogous to each other. Space shifts from a state of a visual/symbolically conducted entropic real (I) to the dialectical discourse of the real-specific (III); whereas the symbolic totality 'applicable' to neutral space (I) is transferred to a 'missed object' condition, as totality quested in the context of the realising local (III).

So, in the city/building dialectics there is a series of transferential positions progressing from the city as a spatially amorphous receptacle of general symbolic (international etc) strategies (yet



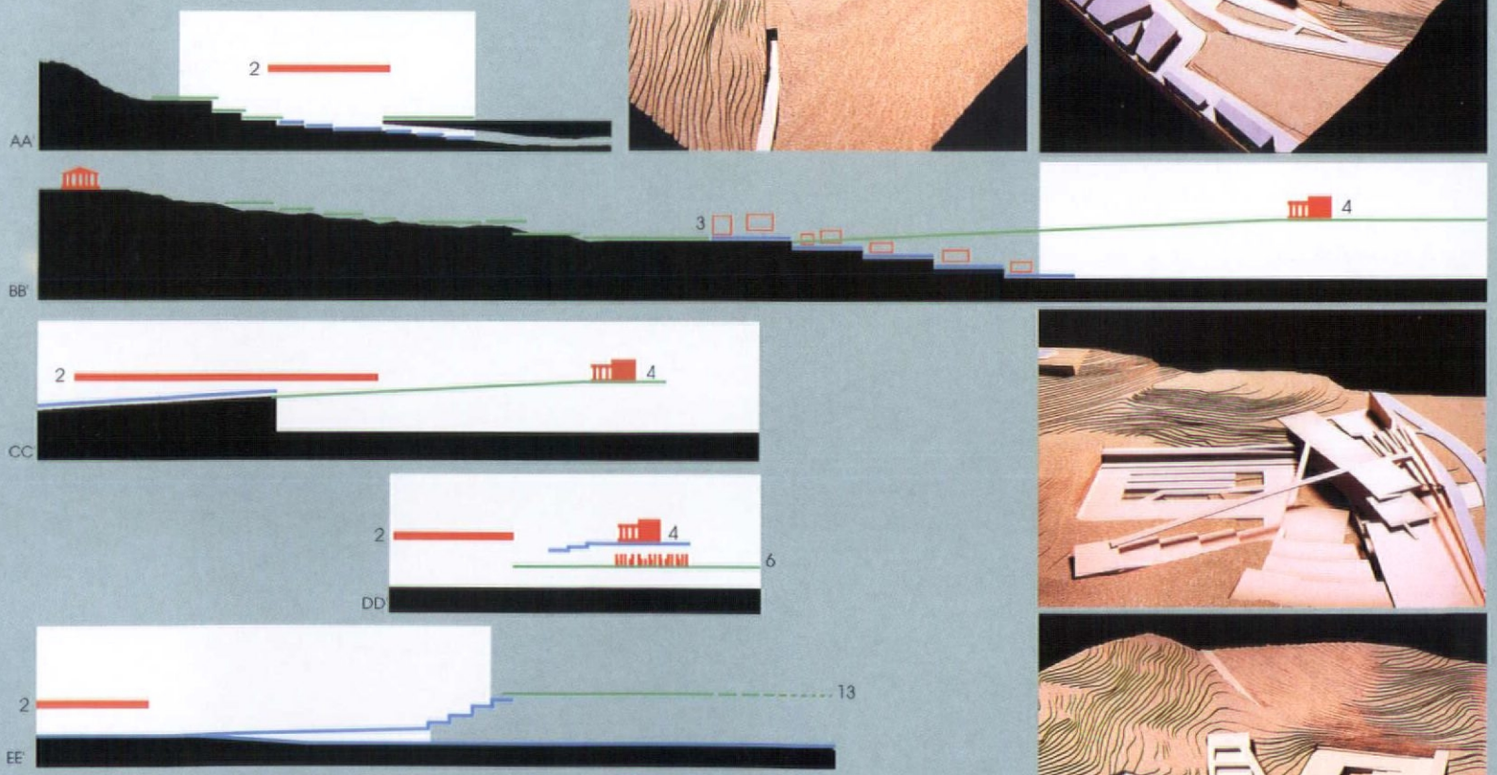
RIGHT: Site II (Dionysos), reception: ground floor plan – 1 the yard, 2 entrance, 3 temporary exhibitions, 4 shops; basement – 5 multipurpose hall, 6 pedestrian path



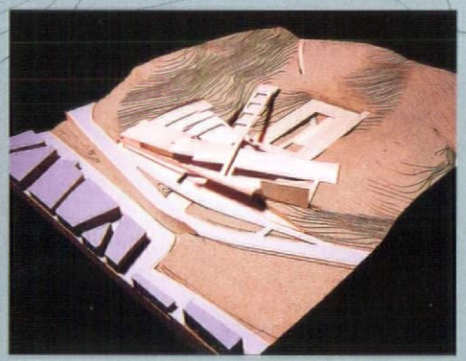
ACCESSIBILITY (THE UNEXPECTED): REALISING VISUALITY

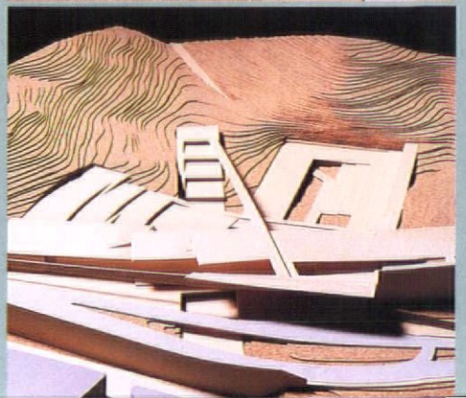
VISUAL INTEGRATION (THE EXPECTED)

AREAS OF SYMBOLIC ATTRACTION









Site III, Koile Exhibition Hall, plans and sections – 1 entrance, 2 Parthenon frieze, 3 replica sculptures (exterior space), 4 Erechtheion, 5 other exhibition areas, 6 Kouroi and Kores, 7/8 exit, 9 administration, 10 smoking area and lavatories, 11 library, 12 storage space, 13 view to the sea and city borders



Site III, Koile Exhibition Hall, model views

bearing in a symptomatic but rich form – the Acropolis – the real tracing process of its own spatial growth) (I), to the city as a possible reworking of spatial distributions (II), to the spatial precision of a function-specific building (III), and further up to the dialectics of the border space; the *local centre at the edge of town; the border middle* (still not 'broken') where the spatiality of the city as simultaneously growing and stopping reveals itself as a dialecticisation of the local specific. Local specific ranges from urban space to architecture to artwork, to garments, to the design power of *the point* – not the point of minimalist or entropic design but the point of richness of space in its regressively realising abilities.

Spatial anticipations – the building 'as one'

The morphological elaboration of the scheme is carried out via the technique of spatial or formal anticipations whereby each building proposes the next, by binding and embedding the form of the previous building in a context of an 'always one more' spatial addition. In each site the same forms are repeated, but serve different purposes. This enables morphologically engineered transferences (of symbolic ideal totalities) rather than transformations of one single symbolic total). Unlike a *folie*, or a *dark space* the morphology of each 'part' of the building does not reflect a variation or negation of an applied formal (Platonic) order but the engagement and activation of the available urban morphology in order to realise, *distinctly* (*un-differently*) in each case, the desire for visual order and reason, as a continually missed encounter. (Such 'available morphology' might even serve as the cast or initial trace of the museum building – and many other buildings – inscribed in the body of the city.) These distinct parts are fundamentally 'unwandering'; they do not produce individual poles of attraction but spatially conducted locations signifying further destinations.

Accordingly, four major gestures are worked throughout the three different building situations: a) accessibility – bodily movement regressively progressing (versus flâneuring and visual realism), realised as: the (existing) network of access routes (I), the directing and directed route (II), the elaborate self-referring circulation system attributing the exhibition building to both inside and outside (III)); b) concentrated areas (versus visual integration), realised as: the (existing) remote Parthenon temple (I), the empty, open, square space of movement distribution and directed destination (II), the indoor, inverted square of the Parthenon exhibits in the exhibition hall (III); c) sheltering (versus sculptural cast formalism) realised as: the (existing) monumental wall as skin/surface and 'possible trace of the new quested building' (I), the modest curved volume of a (plan-conceived) single-storey building (II), the wide-span steel shelter of the exhibition hall (III); d) the ground as 'functional' self-expression (versus the visual metaphor of the fold) – as *amphitheatric* form realised as a public-welcoming outdoor seating area (I), as a 'seating-the-building' binding interface between the inside-outside, or building-landscape (II), as an unseating area directing the spectacle to its end and exit (III).

In the paradigm of Aristotelian performative mimesis (as opposed to Brechtian realism), what is realised in each of the three stages is not a self-critique of a placial or formal consciousness, but a spatial act of completion, a spatial cast whereby each site performs as a spatial – strictly not visual – mould of the next.

Towards the Koile Exhibition Hall

The desire for the museum appears via detachment and anticipation, gradually shaped and transferred from one location to the next, as the visitor moves away from the Acropolis.

Site I is an open space operating as a general entrance to the museum complex, for visitors arriving by car or on foot. The main underground parking space of the museum is allocated here; administration and sculpture-restoration and maintenance workshops are housed in the existing neoclassical building. After leaving the car the visitor can walk to site II, via two pedestrian paths. While walking through the city fabric (which is eventually left behind) the visitor is 'viewed' by the Acropolis above, either continuously or in glimpses. As the path reaches site II, the visitor has a more complete view of the Acropolis and its entrance.

Here the visitor arrives at an empty orthogonal square which is surrounded by a modest building complex (including a multipurpose exhibition hall, cafe and amenities) arranged in a curved volume following the morphology of the landscape. The square, detached from the surrounding functions, operates as a space of distribution of routes and destinations, rather than relief or gathering, reminding the visitor that, after a brief stop, his/her task is to go on to the next location. The scheme orientates a view towards the monument, pointing to its main entrance; thus the visitor can look at it for the last time before leaving it behind and taking the path towards the main exhibition building at Koile. Before the path reaches the main building (at site III), it dives into the ground and reappears in the middle of the exhibition hall containing the Parthenon exhibits.

The route has led the visitor from below, straight into a large exhibition space which has the same dimensions as the Parthenon. S/he is 'within the Parthenon', under the hanging frieze exhibited at its real height; the newly-arrived visitor now becomes part of the spectacle – viewed by other visitors standing on the surrounding platforms looking at the frieze and inevitably at him/her.

The exhibition building highlights its circulation and routing system as characteristic spaces of intensity, proposing an elaborate process of transition from one place to the next, whereby route-directing space is often regressive and self-referential. What matters here is not so much the actual placing of the exhibits as visually significant objects, but the way they are reached. It is in this logic that the areas of entrance and exit (the exterior space) often intervene in the progress of the interior journey (the split-building gesture and the allocation of the replicas outside work in a similar way).

The proposed spaces operate as gradual realisations of the visitor's viewing expectations, finally aiming at the diffusion of visual/symbolic intensity. Negative space (spatial figuration) as design technique is a double realisation of the exhibits' discursive significance; it collocates their accessibility and visual integration in a state of conflict to one another, attempting to expose the visitor's need to see (as visually conscious subjects) the exhibits and the other viewers. Exhibits anticipate their view from afar and two fields of vision are introduced: one distant and one close. The proposed spatial significance is often at odds with the visual significance of the object which it is meant to host (eg the replicas section). The attempt here is to achieve a spatial rather than visual continuity. The proposed gestures, far from introducing accidental or disruptive spaces, operate as reminders of the actual principles of urban experience as it is realised through route-alternatives (quick or slow, regressive or linear etc).

Four exhibition focal points are proposed, perceived as *symbolic peaks* which totalise the museum as a whole in four distinct ways. They serve as a condition in relation to which the spatial proposal progresses critically. The symbolic peaks are: a) the Parthenon sculptures – the temple of the city of Athens (emblematic of classical order and purity); b) the Erechtheion – an 'impure' building, combining three different temples, using sculpture as a structural part and facing the public (non-sacred) place of the Agora; c) the statues of Kores and Kouroi – freestanding statue transferences of bodily discourse onto the objectal order, themselves forming a 'crowd' which in ancient times served functional purposes in the open public space, playing a far more complex role than that of simple artwork; d) the replicas of the removed sculptures (by Lord Elgin), which themselves exhibit the real act of universalisation by appropriation, and de-architecturalisation of sculptures, being separated from their original placement on the Parthenon building and now regarded as mere artworks (in an act of gallerisation/collection as it is known in modern times).

There are two routes: the rapid route, allowing for a quick, overall view; and a further route, allowing for a more detailed visit. The first is the Parthenon–Erechtheion–exit route. On the way, the visitor encounters the exterior space where the replica/cast sculptures are exhibited. Axially orientated towards the Acropolis, it is located at the only point of the site from where the Parthenon is visible from afar, and runs beside the main hall of the original Parthenon sculptures.

To reach the upper level, the visitor has to go outside to see the replicas and the Parthenon over the hill of Philopappos, then re-enter and take the ramp to the Erechtheion at the top. On the way the visitor is exposed to the crowd of Kouroi and Kores located on a lower level. From the Erechtheion area, s/he could proceed along the second circulation system (which also allows an opportunity for a second view of the Parthenon frieze) and see the rest of the exhibition. The visitor finally leaves via an empty amphitheatrical space (leading downwards) from which s/he can re-view the interior museum valley before leaving . From this space, looking in the opposite direction, s/he can also see as far as the sea – the natural limits of the city.

Exit

The route began with a search for a building which appeared gradually; it seemed that the city existed without the building. The quest for the building shaped the route (*a spatial experience*). The urgency was the Acropolis itself, as presentation of a drama rather than of an *ideal symbolic*. The route I-II-III (the very structure of the museum-building) transferred all representation far away, first onto the body of the city, then to its borders – there, where the city stops and grows at the same time. The route is irreversible. The 'old' city and its Acropolis gradually disappeared in the light of the 'new' building; yet they remain as a pure tracing process. Now there is a building, but without a city. Before leaving the museum the visitor turns back and views its interior space. Outside, the city is missing; only the sea can be seen far away. The desire for the building now gives rise to the desire for a new city.

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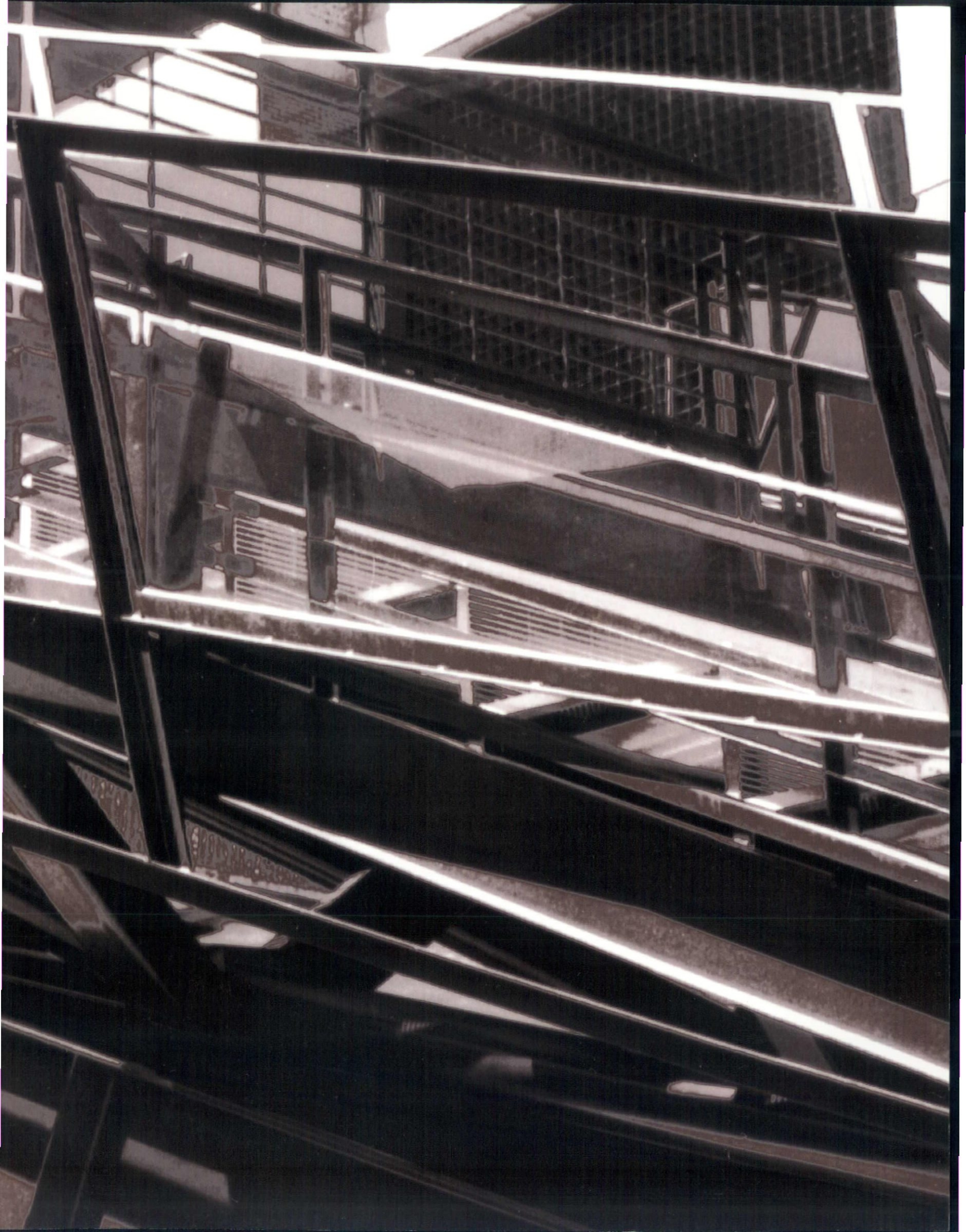

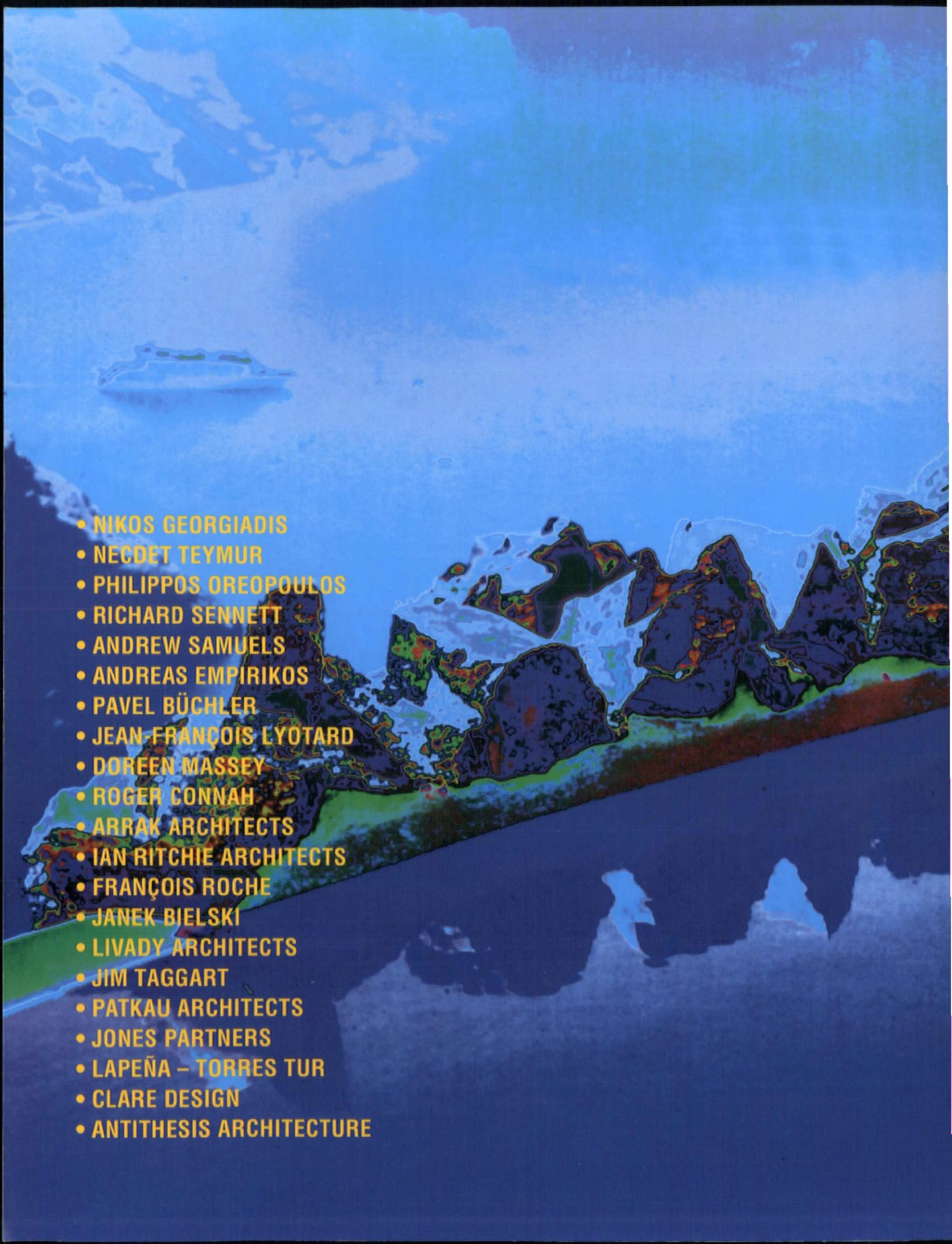
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