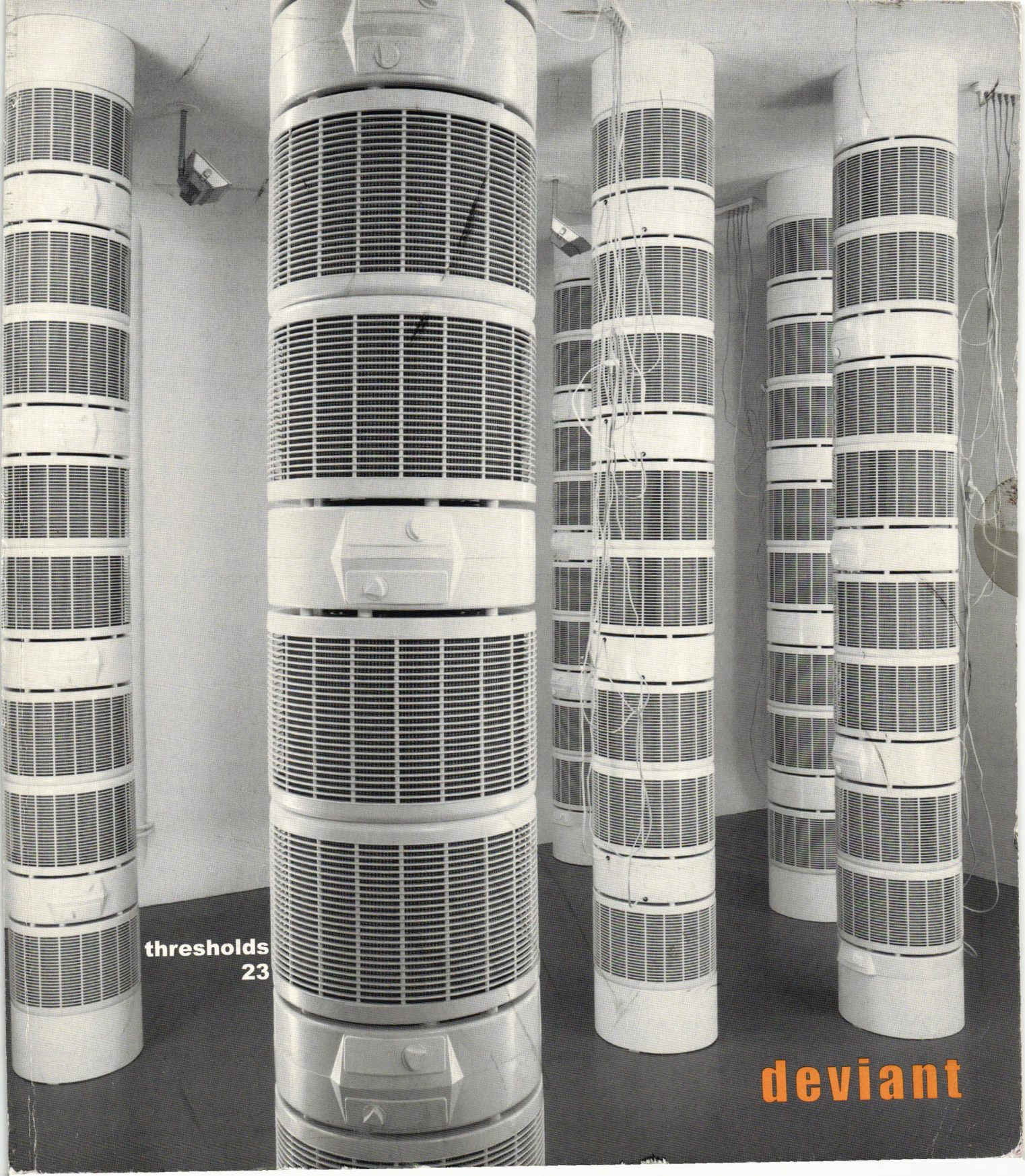
thresholds
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deviant

Cover Image
An Te Liu, *Exchange*, from an exhibition titled "Condition" at the Henry Urbach Architecture Gallery, 2001.

thresholds 23

deviant

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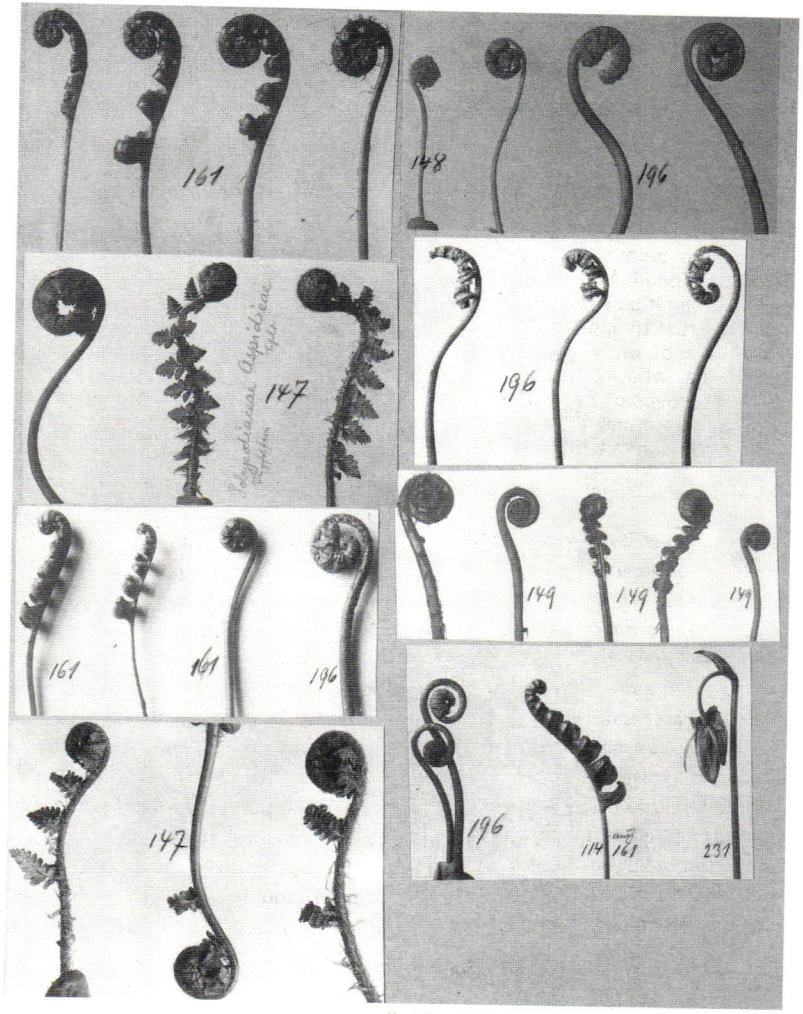

Karl Blossfeldt, *Ferns III*, working collage in preparation for the composition of the final photograph, 1920s.

ZEYNEP E. ÇELIK

INTRODUCTION

> It never occurs to us to permit the criminal by organic disposition to "expand" his individuality in crime, and just as little can it be expected of us to permit the degenerate artist to expand his individuality in immoral works of art. The artist who complacently represents what is reprehensible, vicious, and criminal approves of it, perhaps glorifies it, differs not in kind, but only in degree, from the criminal who actually commits it.
>
> Max Nordau, *Degeneration*, 1895.

Attempts to identify, analyze, and classify criminal types by measuring their deviation from a norm certainly existed prior to Max Nordau's writings.[1] However, Nordau's widely read book *Entartung* (1892; trans. *Degeneration*) was crucial in popularizing the view that the modernist artist was a socially deviant type produced by the same conditions that brought into being sadism, anarchism, and hysteria.[2] Nordau's vitriolic attack on modernist art and literature thus inextricably weaved together modernism and deviance. As such, it can be said to have prefigured one of the dilemmas of avant-gardist modernism in the twentieth century: on the one hand, modernism's need to formulate itself as a deviant act upon what it conceived as the norm; on the other hand, its disgust with deviance and a concomitant desire to order, regulate, and clean.

Over a century later, it is not sufficient to dismiss Nordau's late nineteenth-century response as being simply anti-modernist. At a time when modernity is being subjected to rigorous critiques both in architecture and in other fields, it is important to remember that a fascination with deviance has always been inseparable from a desire to eliminate it. Today there seems to exist more willingness to attend to the deviant instance as an opportunity to challenge the generality of norms. But the uncritical celebration of deviance does not guarantee freedom from the norms from which the deviant is imagined to have escaped.

Hence, despite the titillating ring of the word "deviant," this issue of *Thresholds* is equally concerned with those forms that present themselves as normal. Many articles published here focus their critical energies on extreme cases in which the most normal instance is found to have transformed itself into the most deviant. Rodolphe el-Khoury, for example, takes cues from the work of the young artist An Te Liu to investigate the perverse extremes of the hygienic mandate of modern urbanism. Sheila Kennedy experiments with the most generic of building materials, drywall, to produce unexpected architectural conditions. In his analysis of a twentieth-century re-publishing of a nineteenth-century text, Sunil Bald illustrates how narratives of deviance can be utilized by the institutions of a modern state to promote a nationalist rewriting of history. Adnan Morshed reminds us of the potential for inversion latent in modernist icons. In each instance, the deviant is not that which simply departs from the norm—a different species, so to speak—but has the intriguing quality of always carrying within itself that which appears to be its opposite.

Notes

[1] For example, Cesare Lombroso at the University of Turin.had attempted to link criminal psychopathology to the physical defects of criminals. Nordau acknowledges his indebtedness to Lombroso on several occasions.

[2] Max Nordau, *Degeneration* (New York: D. Appleton, 1895). Originally published as *Entartung* in German in 1892.

1

ADNAN MORSHED

A TALE OF TWO SYMBOLS

2

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good and evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 1859.

From an urban historian's viewpoint, September 11's lethal combination of jumbo airplanes and skyscrapers calls into question the meaning of these symbols. When the airplane and the skyscraper were turned into killing machines, what happened to their ascensional functions masquerading as nothing less than twentieth-century modernity itself? Did the collision of these two symbols hint at the collapse of their idealized meanings? Or did nostalgia and patriotism in fact reinforce the ideologies of progress formerly embodied in the airplane and the skyscraper? Was the terrorists' attack predicated on their belief that these were symbols of domination that could be put on a fatal collision course transforming them into the conveyors of a subversive political statement? I pose these questions as an operating framework primarily to look at two compelling urban images with a view to understanding the semantic zigzag of these two potent symbols (Figs. 1, 2).

During the 1920s, the juxtaposition of these two soaring icons of the modern world—the airplane and the skyscraper—almost literally marked the ascendancy of New York, to paraphrase John Dos Passos, as the "capital" of the world.[1] It was the so-called "golden age" of aviation and skyscrapers, both technologies striking a chord with the popular imagination, as well as changing the ways people experienced and viewed the physical world. In its own right, each symbol reinforced the American belief in technological advancement. But it was their synthesis—an airplane flying over Manhattan's vertical urban form—that became the trope *par excellence* for the gospel of progress. Witness the caption to such an image: "Almost a symbol of civilization is this picture—the fantastic towers of a great city rearing from the earth, and above them a machine that flies—new ways of living and traveling."[2] The image on the back cover of Le Corbusier's book *Aircraft* (1935)—an airplane flying over Manhattan—retained this doubly operative modernist myth, as Le Corbusier's gaze simultaneously focused on the two quintessentially modern phenomena: the airplane (new forms of mobility) and the vertical city (new forms of living). Such a double vision revealed not only the consistency of a dialogue between these two phenomena but also the synergic functioning of their symbolism in instilling the notion of progress into modern life (Fig. 3).[3]

The combination of the airplane and skyscraper provided a cultural telescope for multifaceted utopian imaginings and, eventually, for focusing on the very ideologies of progress. Avant-garde urbanists, architects, science-fiction illustrators, film directors, and novelists flitted around this idea to sing their panegyric to progress. The architect/delineator Hugh Ferriss narrated his *Metropolis* of the 1920s as nocturnal airplane journeys between and above the great canyons of the vertical city (Fig. 4). Although pessimistic in its depiction of the modern world, the German silent film *Metropolis* (1926), reportedly inspired by its director Fritz Lang's visit to New York in 1924, employed futuristic urban images in which airplanes navigated skyscraper cities. The first science-fiction magazine, *Amazing Stories* (1926), transformed Manhattan into a utopian vertical city swarming with aerial vessels. And when in *King Kong* (1933), the giant gorilla (depicted as a sign of barbarism) attempted to tear apart the Empire State Building, the symbolic citadel of capitalism, it was airplanes that flew in as the building's guardian angels (Fig. 5).

Since the end of World War II, much criticism has been directed at the semiology of modern icons, including the airplane and the skyscraper. Such criticism has often been based on suspicions of modernity's promises of progress and emancipation. Nonetheless, these two ubiquitous phenomena of modernity have not ceased to offer a symbolic pair, enabling ever-newer modes of moving and living in a capitalist world. In fact, the recent phenomenon of so-called space tourism and the obsessed global competition to build the "world's tallest building" form a twenty-first-century analogue of the earlier pair that animated the modernists of the 1920s.

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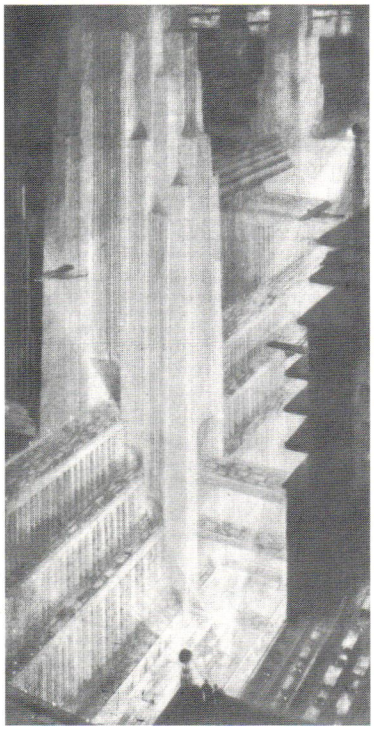
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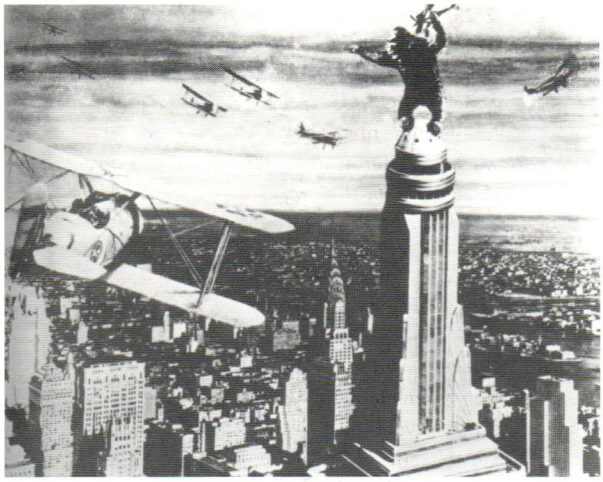

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But, as Charles Jencks famously suggested, ideologies can die an abrupt death: "Modern Architecture died in St Louis, Missouri on July 15, 1972 at 3.32 pm when the infamous Pruitt-Igoe scheme [was] given the final *coup de grace* by dynamite."[4] Is the world as black and white as Jencks wants us to believe? Did the symbolism of the airplane/skyscraper coupling die a violent death at 8.45 a.m. on September 11, 2001? Did the silhouetted United Airlines Flight 175 speeding ominously toward the South Tower of the World Trade Center subvert the idealized meanings of the two most powerful symbols of the twentieth century? The demolition of Pruitt-Igoe was more or less a socially sanctioned choice, compelled by aesthetic views on inner-city spatial pathologies, whereas the violent collisions of airplanes and the twin towers were intended—following the twisted inner logic of terrorism—as much to stab the heart of their symbolism as to inflict pain on American consciousness.

Hinged on an imagined "death" of the twin towers, the post-attack media have spun September 11 for various eschatological prophecies, such as "the world has forever changed," "the end of civil liberties," and "the defining moment." But can it be that simple? Alongside the immense sense of tragedy, the question that also haunts us now is how the discourse of symbolism straddles the cultural meanings of death and resurrection. (Many have demanded that the twin towers be rebuilt exactly the way they were.)[5] Having ironed out symbolism's discursive contours, we are precariously left with stark binary choices: it is either a lamented "death" of the towers or their triumphal rebuilding. The response of artists Paul Myoda and Julian LaVerdiere—two light beams rising from Ground Zero refilling the void with incandescent "towers [that] are like ghost limbs, we can feel them even though they're not there anymore"—cogently articulated the nebulous correspondence between the towers' death and their anticipated rebuilding.[6] The title of my essay consciously conjures up Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859). In the opening sentence of the novel, Dickens presents the idea of liminality, in which the simultaneity of "the best of times" and "the worst of times" defines the sublime sentimentality of the French Revolution. Preposterous as it may sound, the post-September 11 culture resonated with similar binary sentimentality that has blurred our view of the complex links between death and resurrection and of the fact that symbolism cannot die a simple Jenckian death. We will probably know the matrix of the airplane, the skyscraper, and September 11 only retrospectively when we reposition ourselves outside of a Dickensian liminal time.

Notes

I would like to thank Mark Jarzombek, John Christ, Jorge Otero-Pailos, Kirsten Weiss, and Zeynep E. Çelik for engaging discussion on the theme of this paper.

1 John Dos Passos, *The Big Money: USA*, vol. 3 (New York: Random House, Modern Library, 1937): 63-65.

2 Harry Guggenheim, *The Seven Skies* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1930): 36.

3 Not all were as sanguine as Le Corbusier and other modernists, though. H. G. Wells's *The War in the Air* (1908), for example, centered on the aerial bombardment of New York City by German zeppelins.

4 Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, [1977] 1991): 23.

5 Robert Stern, for instance, has demanded: "We must rebuild the towers. They are a symbol of our achievement as New Yorkers and as Americans, and to put them back says that we cannot be defeated. The skyscraper is our greatest achievement architecturally speaking, and we must have a new, skyscraping World Trade Center." See *The New York Times Magazine* (September 23, 2001): 81.

6 "Filling the Void, A Memorial by Paul Myoda and Julian LaVerdiere," *The New York Times Magazine* (September 23, 2001): 80.

Illustrations

Fig. 1: United Airlines Flight 175 speeding towards the South Tower of the Word Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

Fig. 2: Airplane/Manhattan. Published in Harry F. Guggenheim, *The Seven Skies* (New York, London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1930): 36.

Fig. 3: Airplane/Manhattan. Published on the back cover of Le Corbusier, *Aircraft* (New York: Universe Books, [1935] 1988).

Fig. 4: Hugh Ferriss, *Overhead Traffic-Ways*, 1929.

Fig. 5: Film still from *King Kong*, 1933.

ARINDAM DUTTA

NORMING PEDAGOGY

> Because he has no respect for the material he teaches, he makes no impression on his students. They look through him when he speaks, forget his name. Their indifference galls him more than he will admit. Nevertheless, he fulfils to the letter his obligations towards them, their parents, and the state. Month after month he sets, collects, reads, and annotates their assignments, correcting lapses in punctuation, spelling and usage, interrogating weak arguments, appending to each paper a brief, considered critique.
>
> He continues to teach because it provides him with a livelihood; also because it teaches him humility, brings it home to him who he is in the world. The irony does not escape him: that the one who comes to teach learns the keenest of lessons, while those who come to learn learn nothing. It is a feature of his profession on which he does not remark to Soraya [the prostitute he frequents]. He doubts there is an irony to match it in hers.
>
> J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrace*, 1999.

In *Disgrace*, an allegory of the fate of the white man in the modern South Africa, David Lurie, an erstwhile Professor of Modern Languages, is thrown out of the university owing to a sexual scandal. Lurie's private disgrace, Coetzee suggests, is prefigured in the public fall of his university discipline, Classics and Modern Languages, into the non-discipline of "Communications" under "the great rationalization" effected in the last decade. Language, born in Lurie's view out of the emptiness of the soul, suffused thereby with desire and risk, is now defined by university administrators by an anodyne platitude: "Human society has created language in order that we may communicate our thoughts, feelings, and intentions to each other." Lurie finds this definition preposterous; hence his disaffection with teaching. *Disgrace* is also an allegory of the fate of the humanities in the era of late capital. In the frenzy of political correctness and the vengeance of affirmative action roused in the wake of his act, he is asked to own up to his moral turpitude in seducing a young female graduate student, followed by the equally anodyne retributions: "Sensitivity training," "Community service," "Counseling." Refusing to "repent"—an act commensurate not with the secular world of crimes and law but markedly religious in its associations—Lurie resigns. Lurie's resignation is also an assertion of his singularity against generalities. He emphasizes: "There are no overtones in this case." A "dirty old man" who finds himself cast as deviant in the city, seeking to satisfy desires outside the proper behavioral norms assigned to his age, he leaves.[1]

If architectural historiography bears within itself an equally preposterous set of anodyne platitudes, its fate is surely a different one, since "the great rationalization," the servitude of theoretical constructs to the caprices of professional practice, can be placed right at the *origin* of its development rather than its end. Architectural historiography, forever consigned to its charge of explicating *what architects do*, finds itself perpetually obsessed with providing various accounts of *space* while the principal task of any history is to provide an account of *time*. Let me clarify this: architectural historians, consciously or unconsciously, do see their work as narratives of time. However, working within professional schools rather than as part of the humanities, their status within the pedagogical field is largely contingent upon providing accounts—indeed case studies—of space. The place of theory remains a conversational (or "communicative" in the above sense) gloss on the extra-theoretical brilliance of the masters.

In its provenance, the status or place of theory and history in architecture can be defined by its origins in the "survey" course. The survey of the practice of the ancients had always been the principal device through which architecture defined itself as an intellectual pursuit and a high art as opposed to a lowly trade. If one reviews the history of history teaching in the nineteenth-centuryarchitectural academy, then the professionalization of the architect in legal terms as an adjunct of the industrial revolution is marked by a commensurate professionalization of the architectural historian. The locus of the architect in the age of capital is principally characterized not so much as a codification of responsibilities but an increased definition of entitlements. While these entitlements (notions of originality and genius, for example) remain affiliative and associative, in the field of culture rather than particularly legal in character, these privileges are garnered only at the price of self-imposed constraints. Thus, as architecture moves from an apprentice-based pedagogy into the university as an adjunct of the humanities, accepting norms of academia such as examinations and certifications, this formalization by assimilation ironically secures the secession of architectural historiography from professional practice. The transition from the dilettantist historiography of John Soane to the periodized formalism of Heinrich Wölfflin is a shift marked not only by different degrees of methodological scrutiny but also the function and status of architectural historiography in the academy.

The legitimization of architectural history as a semi-disciplinary field is, therefore, the Faustian bargain adopted by the architectural field to bring itself within the embrace of the university, even as the nineteenth-century academy makes a transition from a classicist to a humanist arena. This bargain also marks the beginnings of a fundamental rift within architecture. To the extent that architectural practice remained outside the university, theory and history could be molded to the situational demands of the practice. The entry into the academy opens up a chasm between the conventionalities of humanities-type theory and the professional demands of craft-based (even vanguardist theoretical) practice. Thus, as methodologies within the historical field acquired new modalities of achieving rigour through the twentieth century, often borrowed from other fields in the humanities and social sciences—such as history, philosophy, sociology, economics, literature, and anthropology—rather than the demands of architectural practice, one can begin to discern a non-correspondence with the design professional's brief to negotiate the vagaries of production and taste. The Modernist invocation of the *Zeitgeist* as a bridge between historiographic and professional practice, epitomized in the relationship between Siegfried Giedion and Le Corbusier, is precisely an attempt to cover over this chasm.

Within the contemporary academy, the "survey course" is precisely a continued attempt to negotiate this originary abyss; at the same time it is also an indicator of *its persistence*. The excellent book edited by Gwendolyn Wright and Janet Parks, *The History of History in American Schools of Architecture*, gives us an account of the principal figures and transformations of curricula that characterize the history of the survey course in the past century.[2] On the other hand, even as it scrupulously attends to the details of the changing themes of architectural history, the historical *function of historians* and their professional status within architectural schools seems to elude the book's grasp.

While this article is not the place to recount the details of such a history, it might be illuminating to sketch out the limits of practice within which architectural historians operate in the contemporary academy. If one looks at the notices in academic magazines pertaining to the recruitment of historians for architectural schools, most positions require some form of studio teaching. Thus, the methodological techniques acquired by humanities-based research in the interest of knowledge production within the academy is still perceived by architects (who make most of the hiring decisions within schools—historians or otherwise) to be relevant only in an "applied" frame. Theory in the service of practice, historiography in the service of professional vanguardism.

I have suggested earlier that the survey course represents the archetype for the role historians play within schools. In the following sections, I would like to suggest that the principal demand that this archetype places on the role of historiography is the *erasure of historicity itself*. Let me give an example. In the past two years I have been trying to revise M.I.T.'s required M.Arch. survey course 4.645, "Selected Topics in Architecture: 1750 to the Present." Although M.I.T.'s History, Theory, and Criticism Section is one of the few programs that has a certain degree of autonomy from the rest of the architectural department, this autonomy is secured only on the basis that we fulfill a certain service end of the design degrees, and this service end is epitomized by the survey course. In the new 4.645, the effort has been to reconstruct the survey with a persistent attention towards issues of marginality in architectural history

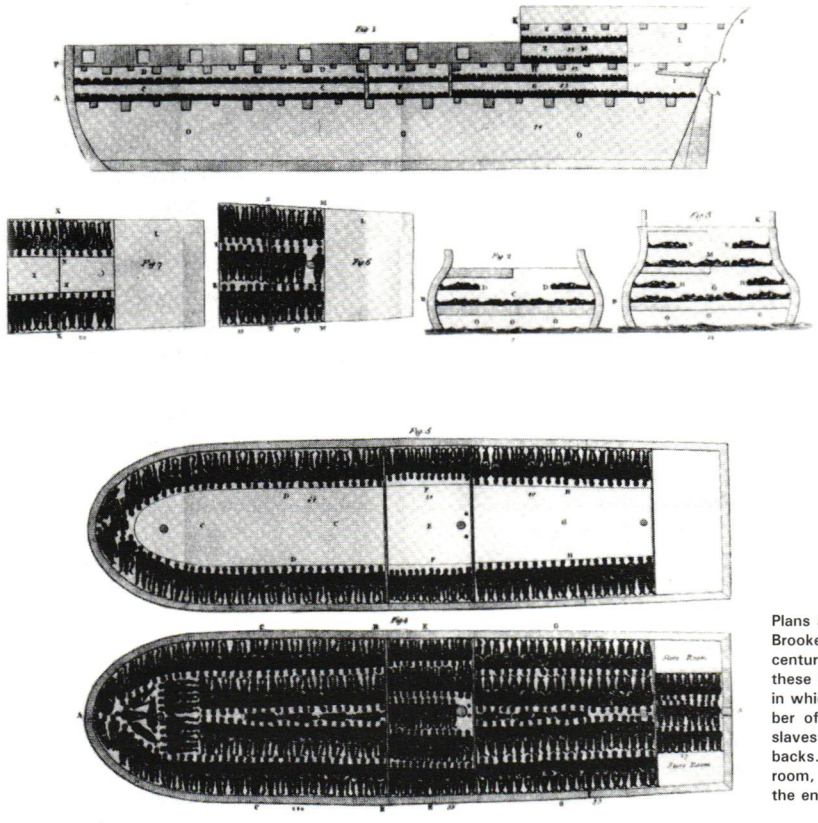
and theory. Part of the reason that narratives of marginality are unable to enter into critical discourse within architectural historiography is because "other" populations—be these women, ethnic or cultural groupings, or even examinations of spatial politics outside of canonical buildings—are deemed to lack stylistic parity with the formal terms established by the Modern Movement. The dominance of formalist historiography in architectural schools until very recently only meant that the preponderance of the Modern Movement in pedagogy had become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

In light of new theories from the field of cultural, gender, and globalization studies, the updating of the survey course has become a necessity in the context of their critiques of the terms on which modernity is constructed. This is hardly a radical or novel gesture; to the contrary, it is complicit in the fetishization of theoretical vanguardism practiced by the Anglo-American academy. At the same time, scholarship that examines themes of power in the transnational frame and that ignores stylistic connoisseurship as its major brief is hard to come by. The pathetic (or "tragic," in Charles Jencks's language) parochialism of the Modern Movement does not offer a model for the study of the global. Much of the work of the "survey" depends on the dynamics of the classroom. The survey is never a static history of edifices; rather it reflects the shifting historiography of events—there is no sixties' idealism here in doing away with textbooks. In 4.645, I instigated classroom dynamics by introducing the marginal through the rubric of the broadly comparative: thus, Le Corbusier's status as a modern master is squared off against his gender-nuanced relationship with Eileen Gray or his colonialist complicities in the "Poem on Algiers." Mies is introduced as a brilliant ornamentist in the tradition of Christopher Dresser and William Morris rather than as synthesist of technological paradigms. The Jeffersonian grid in the United States is compared with the English picturesque, Permanent Settlement in India, and the neo-traditionalism of late colonialism in Africa. Frank Lloyd Wright becomes important in terms of an examination of domestic politics of suburban America that is then compared against feminist and socialist ideals of domesticity both in the United States and elsewhere. CIAM becomes important not so much in its ineffective prewar manifestoes as in its immense influence in specifying the norms of postwar "development" in the Third World: Le Corbusier in Chandigarh and ATBAT-Afrique in North Africa. More predictably, Haussmann is taught in the same session as Robert Moses and the recent destruction of Sarajevo and Beirut. The "oceanic" spatial interregnum of the slave ships in the Middle Passage is shown to be as much a receptacle of modernity as the Bauhaus notion of the *Existenzminimum* (Fig. 1).

In terms of the different agendas that determine the survey course, two are worth noting. For professional schools, the architectural survey is the key conduit through which the student acquires conversability with a putative canon. Willy-nilly, this has largely meant the student's acquisition of a sensibility affecting stylistic parity with the Modern Movement. This, I would submit, is the old boondoggle: knowledge is power, and through this knowledge the student negotiates the social field of the profession. Other than this conservative task of inculcating students into a "tradition," the survey course is also deemed to have a "pragmatic," vanguardist function. I like to think of this as the imprint of Hegel over historiography in general, not just in architectural thinking *per se*: the commandment to learn history with a view to making its "lessons" relevant for "our times." I would suggest here that this apparent pragmatism covers over the repetitively self-arrogating authority of the sovereign subject of the West.

Let me be very clear: students in the United States academy, diverse in background, not necessarily of ethnically "Western" origin, and often working within paradigms that have international provenances, seem to have no problem in assuming postures of different degrees of moral rectitude. "Politically correct" to a fault, they seem not to have problems persuading or apprising themselves of the various thematics that link architecture with culture. They assume these tremendous cultural politics as symptoms of their own vanguardism, as issues impending upon "their time." History as a mental aide in consolidation of the self: it is here that one can begin to see a dissonance of interest developing between historical pedagogy and historiography itself.

Perhaps with some degree of irony, an irony not unlike that of David Lurie's in *Disgrace*, historians have come to realize that the principal obstacle in pedagogy stems from attempting to transmit the methodological problems of historiography itself—how to create a responsible account of the subject's insertion into time. To approximate a narrative of this insertion is "to write a history"—the violence and incommensurability of this originary moment is at the core of the reason why histories are written and rewritten. It is because the past cannot be fixed that the future is open to all realms



Plans and sections of the slave ship Brooke of Liverpool, early nineteenth century. Captains used drawings like these to determine the best manner in which to pack the maximum number of slaves into ships. Note that slaves are drawn as lying on their backs. With only a few feet of headroom, slaves could not sit up during the entire trans-Atlantic voyage.

1

of possibility. The past cannot be instrumentalized into an alibi for action. There is an unbridgeable difference, an asymptotism, in the historian's interest in history and the architect's. Reflecting upon this problem further, I could only come up with a simplistic formulation: the modernist architect is conventionally bound to give an account of *space*; the historian's brief is to give an account of *time*. *History is deviant upon the architect's imagination*. For the architect, to learn history is to fix the problem of history; underlying this presumption is an unexamined notion of the centrality of the subject that I would describe as approximating the privileged subject position of the West. Of course, historiography too is susceptible to this position, *but not in the same way*. (Again, this is not the most nuanced separation, but for reasons of space, it will do for now.)

I would contend that this simplistic formulation has profound consequences when viewed in professional terms. Methodological asymptotism becomes a full-fledged institutional asymmetry when cast into the power relationships of the academy. Traditionally, the survey course has been framed as the site where the professional neophyte comes into contact with its own conventions. While one cannot have a problem with this framing, I would argue that the survey course is also the pedagogical site where, through a regurgitation of its past history, the profession comes into a realization of its own status as the value-creator of new cultural capital. Thus, even while it appears as the arena where the profession creates its most conservative core (e.g., survey teachers have to teach their Le Corbusier and their Mies), it has also been the potential site where radical ideas could be smuggled in as a counter-canonical history

(e.g., Eileen Gray). The status of theory, in this sense—and this is the problem that I identify—is not contingent on whether you teach Le Corbusier or Eileen Gray but on the fact that architectural students imbibe both conservative and radical historiographies *inspirationally* rather than disciplinarily.

In other words, architectural history/theory is even more necessary to the architectural practitioner than it is to the historian or theorist of architecture. The profession needs a sense of its own narrative much more than the historian is interested in providing it. While the profession has benefited much from this association, this asymmetry has had significant implications for the status of the architectural historian, given that their employment locus tends to exist mostly within professional schools. Perhaps nothing epitomizes this schism more than the drastically changed preoccupations of the history/theory professional when they move from their doctoral careers to their first teaching job. If one wishes to corroborate this demographically, I am sure that a survey of adjunct doctoral or pre-doctoral types teaching history/theory courses in grossly underpaid and often non-compensated capacities might be illuminating. On the other hand, there is every sign that with the global expansion of architectural practice, one sees a corresponding burgeoning of recruitment within Ph.D. programs as well as the creation of new ones. On the same note, many papers are given at conferences and many articles and books are published in the field with no hope, or even expectation, of recompense. To their own detriment, research scholars ritually perceive—and I am not claiming that this is entirely incorrect or even non-admirable—the exponentially expanding culture of forums, conferences, publications, and now e-publications as expansion into new "radical" directions rather than a slide into generally quietist, albeit many-pronged little corners of particularist discourse. Scholars traditionally are much more preoccupied with what they write and the problems therein; the question of *who reads them* remains an uncomfortable, if not inscrutable, issue for them.

From the standpoint of the university, however, architectural history/theory is not even in the picture. For instance, the U.S. Government's "Survey of Earned Doctorates" given to successful Ph.D. students at the time of their defense, does not even list "Architectural History" as an option. I would argue that this double marginality, both within the university (most humanities scholars to whom I have spoken do not have a very good idea of what we do) and within the profession (architects do not know this either) manifests itself in a slew of financial problems and generally moribund infrastructural arrangements, whether it be arguing for graduate student stipends or research fellowships and grants. Very few grants cater exclusively to architectural research. Typically, doctoral candidates in architectural history are forced to write their research proposals keeping in mind the norms of other disciplines. Similarly, when Ph.D. graduates get teaching jobs, they find that while their tenure decisions are largely weighted on endless numbers of publications, publication is something they are expected to do in their free time—as a Marxist, I am tempted to say, labor after 5 o'clock—within the super-exploited invisibility of domestic homework rather than the simple exploitation of factory-based visibility (studio charretting?).

In the modern era, the shift in the status of the architectural profession from a trade or craft-based profession into a field purporting an intellectual focus within the humanities-based university (rather than polytechnic or technological school) rode, and still rides, precisely on the back of history/theory and not practice. Inserting the survey course within the required curriculum is the devil's contract of the profession for being accorded the status of an intellectual field. But to accord history/theory of architecture a disciplinary status is definitely not part of this menu; as far as architectural design faculty are concerned, the doctoral degree brandished by historians are like wallpaper; they could do the survey themselves, but it does not really help with the required academic accreditation. In some senses, then, to introduce a critique based on marginality within the survey course today faces very little opposition from *design* faculty, since to talk about "others" fits perfectly with the profession's own vanguardist aspiration to a certain radicality. On the other hand, as I see it, for the designers, these disciplinary rantings and botherations remain for them *marginal within the marginalia of historiography itself*.

In this sense, it must be pointed out that methodologies invoking cultural marginalities attempt to do so by deconstructing—unraveling and therefore enabling—the conventional scholarly practice of demonstrating norms by way of exceptions. Cultural marginalities do not present impeccable maps of epistemic marginalities, but there is a relationship between the two. My theoretical interests continue to be absorbed in the relationship between epistemic and cultural marginality, but I have learnt to be careful about being oppositional when there is no opposition. Theory is nothing

else but the expression of a series of relationships; it is essential therefore to push the envelope from a sham oppositionality of theory as a radical practice as such in order to figure out where we face our institutional limits. To speak about marginality at a time when the profession is devouring notions of cultural difference in order to acquire projects abroad is a bit like critiquing the state's affirmative action guarantees at a time when the state itself is being undone by privatization. In the long term, we do ourselves in.

Notwithstanding all calls for interdisciplinarity, marginality can only be theorized through *increased* and not lessened rigor in scholarship. I have concentrated here on the concept-metaphor of the "marginal," because at different levels, all forms of vanguardist theory see themselves as practices of and negotiations with the marginal. In scholarship, it is the exception to the norm, rather than its restatement, that invites notice. In architectural theory, it is about time that we begin some kind of discussion about the norm, about, if I dare say, the "discipline" as such. When I say "discipline," I must clarify that I do not mean any internally consistent core of reasoning or objecthood, but an externally sanctioned institutional space where such a core can either be endlessly debated or entirely ignored.

I would like to conclude by posing a bit of *reductio ad absurdum* logic. To be mindful of history is a deviant practice in the architectural imagination. Clearly, if the entire field of architectural practice suddenly acquired a hole at the bottom of its boat and sank to the bottom of the ocean, architectural theorists would still have much to write about: how the hole developed, how it all sank, and so on. Conversely, architectural practice, as I see it, can carry on perfectly well in a non-traumatized way if the entire cohort of historians and theorists were to disappear entirely. (What would be at stake would be its validation as an adjunct of the humanities, not its status within relationships of production.) The relationship between history and practice is a matter of historical conjecture that will reveal much of the status of architectural theory today, but today it is as much incumbent on the historian to pursue *the separation between the two* than to repetitively be called upon to offer the terms that will bridge the two.

In *Disgrace*, David Lurie refuses to see himself as an example or model of anything. Retorting against his colleagues' suggestion that the academic's role is to set an example, he says, "There are no overtones in this case." It is Lurie's refusal to subscribe to the norm that enables him later in the novel to come to terms with his daughter's decision to live with the consequences of her rape by a black youth without approaching the authorities. The margins come back to write the center in brutal fashion, but only those who disengage themselves from the vanguardist norm are in a position to understand this rewriting. Inventing pat formulae, politically correct or not, for the past cannot address the ethical challenges of the future. My invocation of a literary tract to set the frame for an essay addressing itself to readers within the architectural field does injustice to both disciplines. And yet, the artwork as a mode of unverifiable representation, the novel as fiction, architecture as the coding of space as value, can address what is unspeakable within disciplines. The academy and the classroom also contain within them unspeakable ethical disciplinary demands and challenges whose dimensions are at a slight distance from issues of "policy" or "methodology." It is these unspeakable, abnormal, and even deviant undercurrents, which are testimony to the relationship between the academy and the outside world and hold portents for the future. These ahistorical lessons are the principal lessons that the historian learns from the writing of history. To learn or to write a history, however methodologically innovative, is not enough to fix the problem of history.

Illustrations

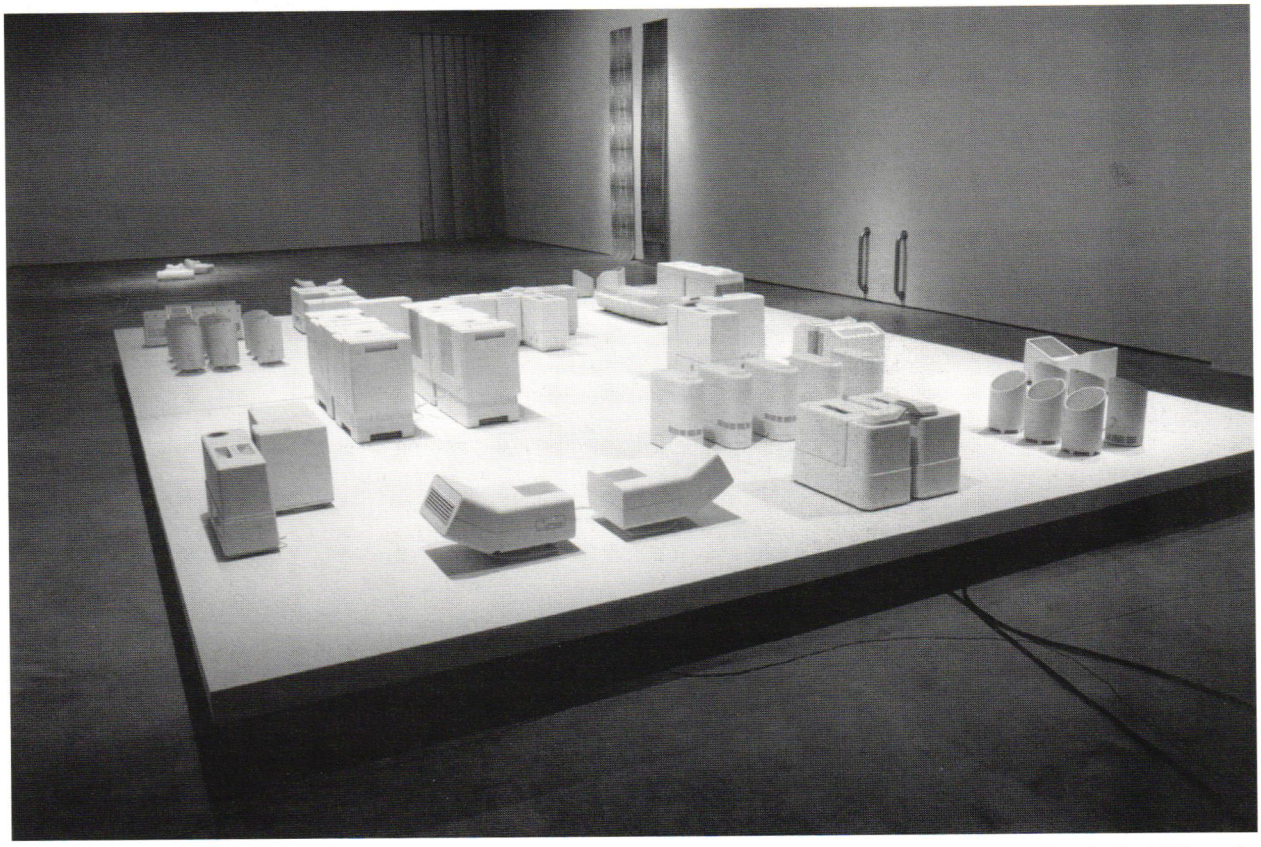
Fig. 1: Plans and sections of the slave ship Brooke of Liverpool presented to the British parliament in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Notes

An earlier version of this paper, "Marginal within Marginalia," was presented at a conference entitled *Hypothesis* 4 at Princeton University's School of Architecture in the spring of 2001.

1 J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrace* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999).

2 Gwendolyn Wright and Janet Parks, *The History of History in American Schools of Architecture 1865-1975* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1990).

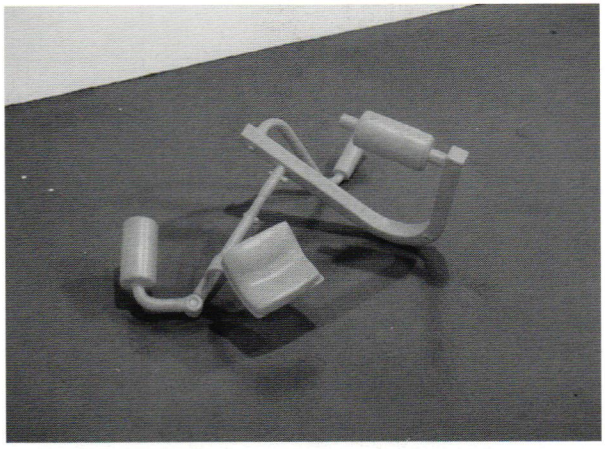


1

An Te Liu, *Airborne*, at the "Pathology" exhibition at the Contemporary Art Gallery in Vancouver, 2000.

RODOLPHE EL-KHOURY

BETWEEN AIR AND SPACE:
PROLOGUE TO AN TE LIU'S *EXCHANGE*



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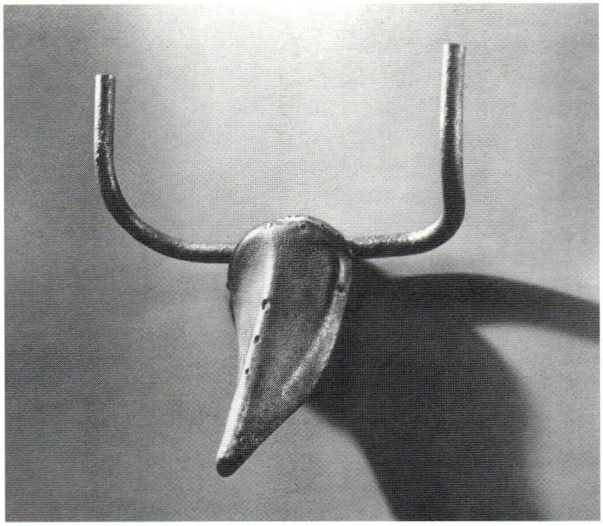

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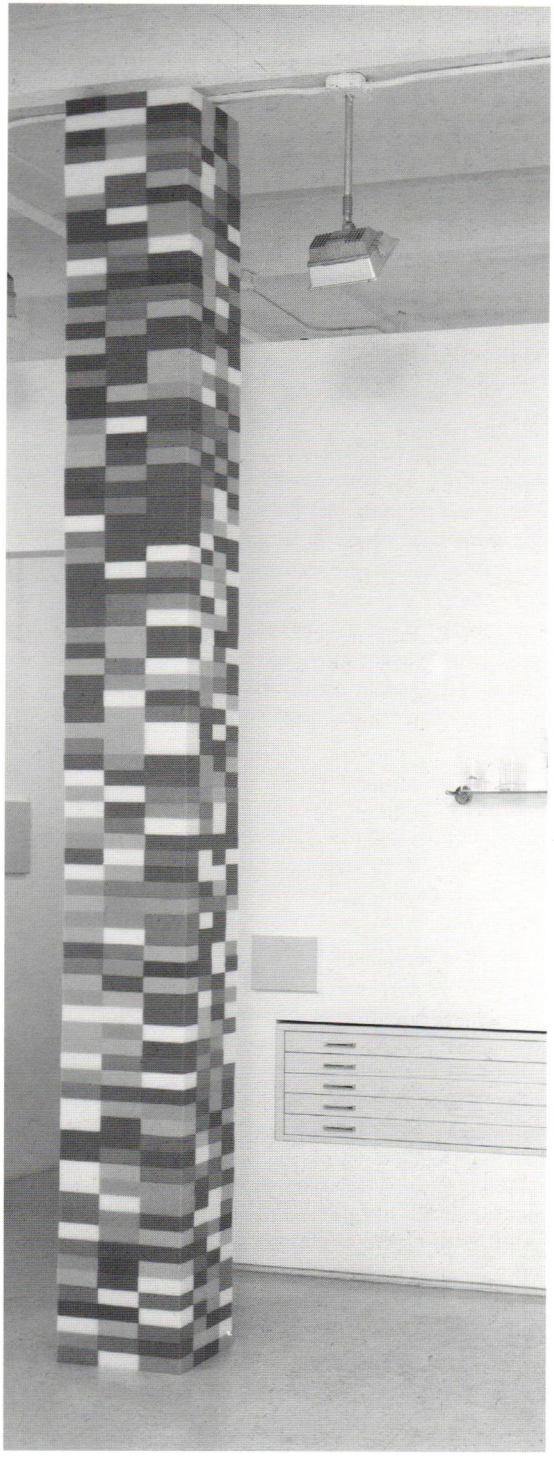
The work of An Te Liu is strategically situated between architecture and art. Unlike other works of architectural means and proportions that we are now accustomed to find comfortably installed in art galleries, some of Liu's more unsettling pieces are nowhere quite at home. They are designed for the gallery, yet they perform as architecture: "machines for living" seemingly designed to correct behavioral and environmental deviance. The fact that they perversely succeed in being totally useless does not detract from their pragmatic—architectural—logic.

"Condition," Liu's recent show at the Henry Urbach Gallery, featured *Type/Need* and *Exchange*, two new works elaborating themes initially tackled in the *Sclerotic* (1998) and *Soft Load* (1999) series.[1] Much like its precursor *Sclerotic* III—a pair of safety grab-bars flanking an electric outlet—*Type/Need* contrives strange but uncannily plausible artifacts from a dystopian universe where a hygienic re-construction of the body is played out to perverse extremes (Fig. 2).[2] Flesh-colored contraptions are assembled from salvaged exercise equipment in unlikely yet seamless configurations. The purpose and origin of the machine parts are still legible in the new assemblage, much like the latent bicycle in Picasso's *Bull's Head* (Fig. 3). The fragments here are not reconstituted into an organic figure; they are merely reshuffled to produce a different machine. A deviant machine. The perversion is latent: *Type/Need* is not so much an iconic conflation of the mechanical and the organic—the familiar topos of the historical avant-garde—but more of a catalytic platform for potentially grotesque rituals and obscene hybridizations.

Exchange, the *pièce de résistance* of the "Condition" show, aligns with the *Soft Load* series—household sponges



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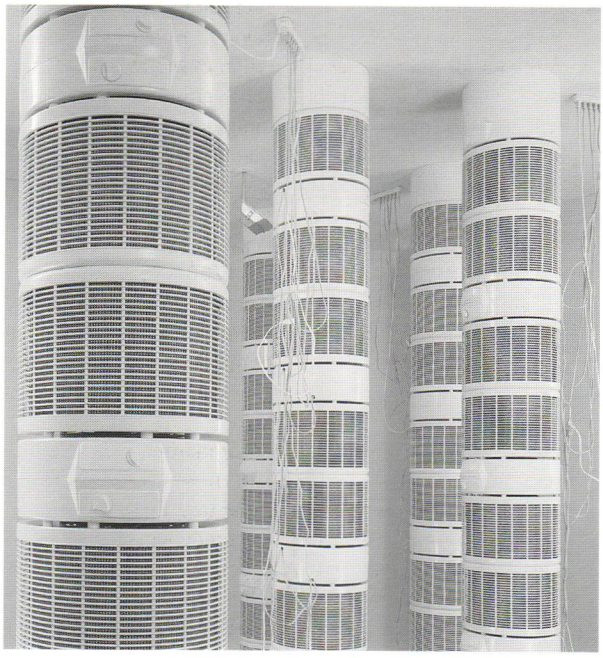

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arranged into architectural and artistic parodies (Fig. 4)—in staging the uneasy convergence of the aesthetic and the hygienic. *Exchange* presents fifty-six *HEPA* air cleaners in seven column-like stacks (Fig. 5). Together they are claimed to recycle the air of the gallery every twenty-one seconds. They also generate a considerably high level of white noise and a distinct odor akin to that of freshly opened plastic packages. The installation mobilizes all the senses to dramatize the discourse of hygiene in an assault on imperceptible air pollutants.

Exchange is consistent with Liu's earlier parodies of hygienic practice, contriving a "pathological" performance from "normal" domestic rituals. What is unusual here—and certainly not typical of contemporary art practice—is the empirical preoccupation with air, the air of the gallery. *Exchange* operates *on* the *air* of the gallery as much as *in* the *space* of the gallery. Ostensibly because of its hygienic mandate, modern architecture is known in particular to have occasionally equated air with space. Liu's work overlays a haptic experience of air on the abstract intuition of space—the ubiquitous medium of art.

Although equally fixated on space, architecture has had a more sustained dialogue with air. The notion that air has a critical role to play in the precarious equilibrium of health

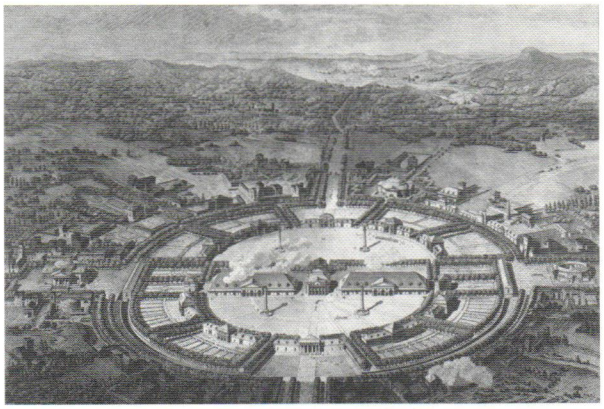
and is therefore subject to architectural speculation has been a commonplace since antiquity. Hence Vitruvius's instructions for the optimal orientation of the streets: "They will be properly laid out if foresight is employed to exclude the winds from the alleys. Cold winds are disagreeable, hot winds enervating, moist winds unhealthy."[3] The mechanical and physiological intricacies of pneumatic processes remained confused and controversial until the dissemination of Antoine-Laurent Lavoisier's (1743-1794) research on respiration and Jan Ingenhousz's (1730-1799) on photosynthesis. Still, the beneficial effects of "fresh air"—i.e., freely circulating air—and the hazards of stagnation were never in doubt. The sight of laboratory animals promptly dying in hermetically sealed vessels was ample proof.

Air became a focus of scientific research after 1750, thanks mainly to Stephen Hales (1677-1761), whose work turned air, hitherto understood as an elementary fluid, into a heterogeneous mixture of chemical components.[4] Research into its unknown and threatening composition was followed with particular urgency in the second half of the eighteenth century, when it was obsessively fueled by the anxieties of pre-Pasteurian mythologies.

The interest in air pathology was not limited to the scientific academies. By the end of the century, the trend spread toward the bottom of the social pyramid to become a staple of popular culture. Public opinion was repeatedly mobilized to protest the degradation of the urban atmosphere. The writer Louis-Sébastien Mercier's (1740-1814) invective is characteristic of the collective hyper-sensitivity to aerial pollution in eighteenth-century Paris:

> The moment that air ceases to contribute to the preservation of good health, it becomes lethal. But health is that attribute which man treats with utmost indifference. Streets that are narrow and poorly accessed, houses that are too small and that impede the free circulation of air, butcher shops, fish stalls, sewers, cemeteries—all these corrupt the atmosphere. And the enclosed air becomes laden with impure particles, heavy and malignant.[5]

The city is consistently incriminated in this discourse: by virtue of its sheer mass, it is an obstacle to the movement of the air. Hence, a general tendency toward looser and more permeable urban fabrics, advocated in many treatises and partially tested in the "openness" of the Place Louis XV.



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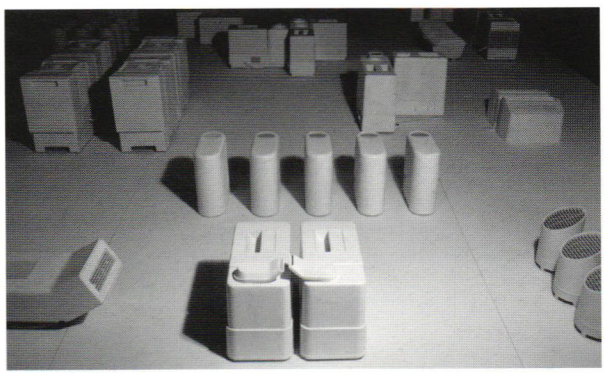
Nicolas Ledoux's (1736-1806) ideal city of Chaux is a radical departure from the norm and yet is entirely consistent with the "decongestive" trend (Fig. 6). The traditional—and pathological—urban fabric is here entirely relinquished in favor of an open and expanded field where detached and individuated structures are bathed in unhindered airflow.

For Emil Kaufmann, whose formalist reading was largely responsible for the postwar revival of Ledoux as a "visionary architect," the *jeu de masses* of detached pavilions anticipates the freestanding blocks of Le Corbusier and Gropius's combinatory of discrete spatial units. The freestanding structures, Kaufmann claims, are the concrete manifestation of the principle of autonomy in which the architectural object is released from all external contingencies to realize its own material, formal, and tectonic volition.[6]

For Kaufmann, architectural autonomy is indicative of a paradigm shift that is registered in other spheres of cultural production. It is recognized in the emphasis on line and contour leading to the formal detachment of the figure in late-



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eighteenth-century painting. It is also relevant to the formal structure of the political order theorized by Rousseau: "a form... by which each may be united to all but nonetheless retains command over himself and remains as free as he had been beforehand. Such is the fundamental problem that is resolved by the social contract."[7]

That the ideal city of Chaux should reflect the political philosophy of *The Social Contract* comes as no surprise, considering Ledoux's explicit allegiance to Rousseau. Still, beyond denoted affinities, the freestanding building represents the confluence of deeper structures converging on the transformation of the environment since the late-eighteenth century. From Ledoux to Le Corbusier, efforts at hygienic ventilation by means of decongestion and separation resonate with aspirations for a society of individuated and emancipated subjects, merging with longings for an unobstructed view in open space.

Hygienic arguments for thoroughly ventilated and separated dwellings may have driven the discourse of "decongestive" urbanism. Yet, the longing and struggle for open space is largely visual: an aesthetic impulse that was enacted and legitimized in various ideological registers—political, economical, and social.

The hygienic/aesthetic impulse is manifested in the great optical utopias of Fourier, Bentham, and Rousseau: imaginary worlds built on varying measures of transparency and visibility. While some strove primarily toward the transparency of the subject in a naturally crystalline nature, others had less faith in the purity of human nature; they sought the transparency of the environment only to precipitate the hopelessly opaque subject into greater visibility.

Hence the contradictions of the modernist city. The city mass is reorganized to benefit from greater exposure and permeability to its natural *milieu*: air—an empirical medium. The city is also reconstituted rationally in space—a theoret-

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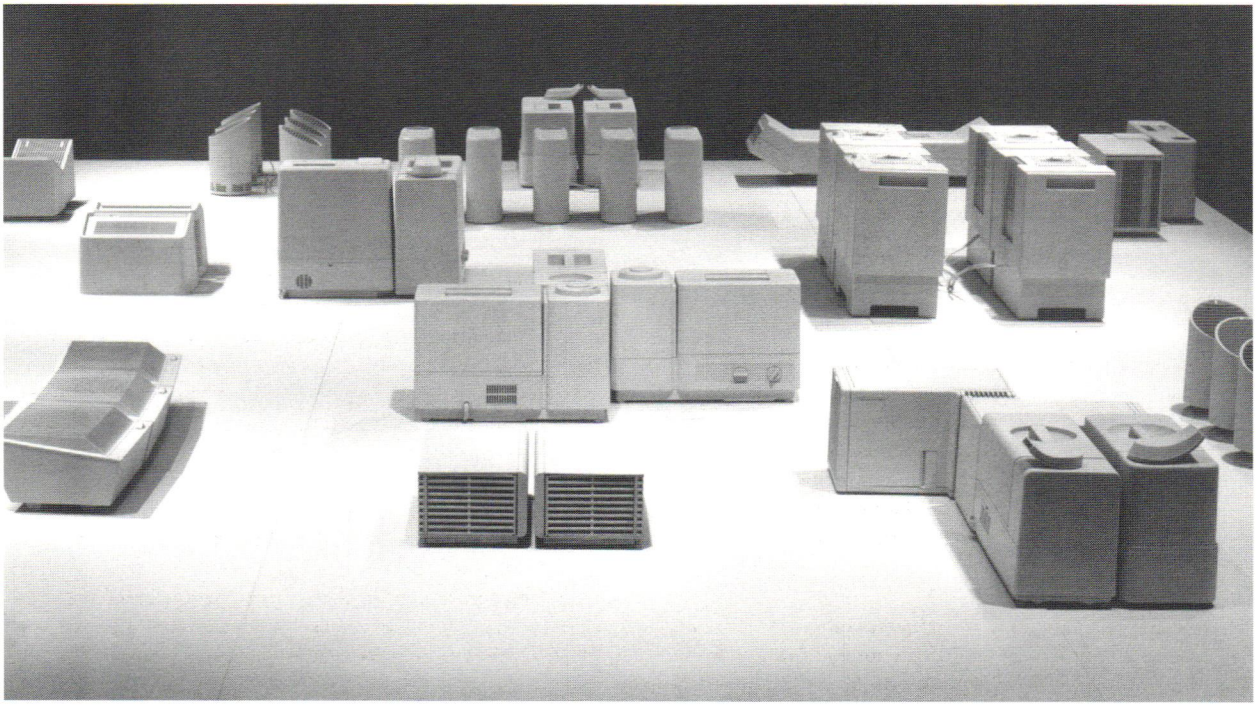

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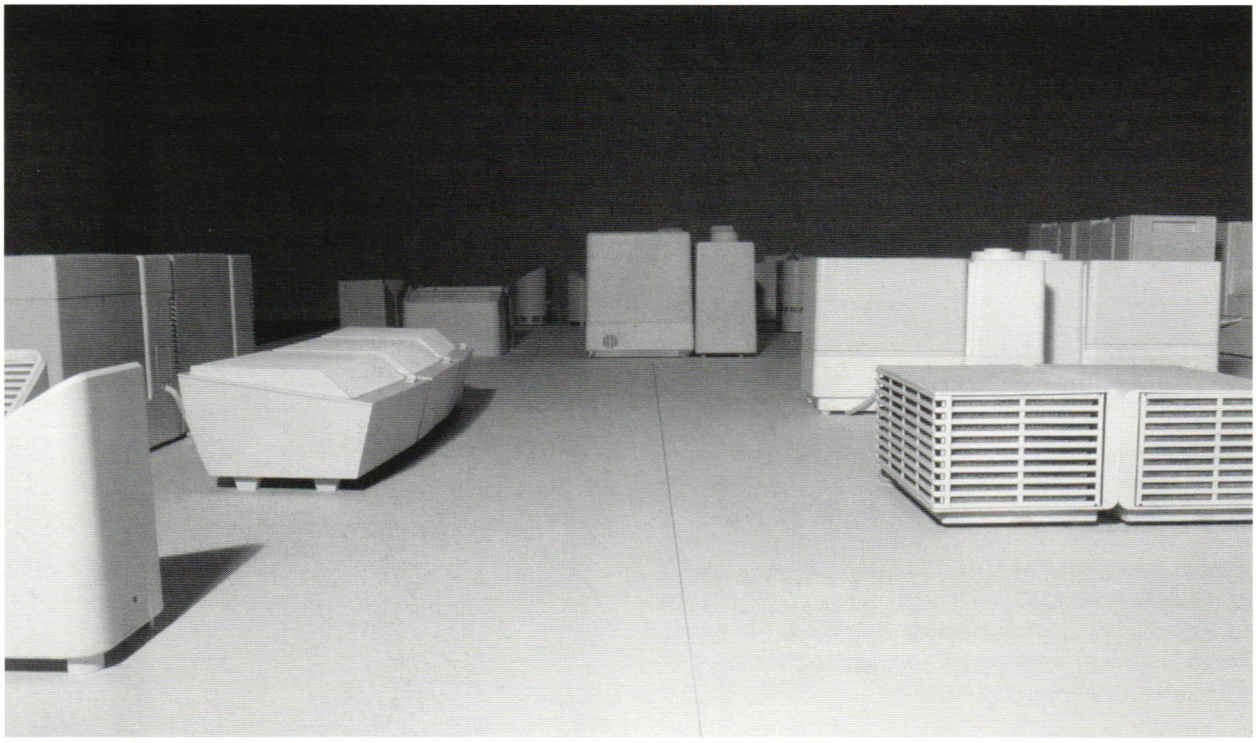

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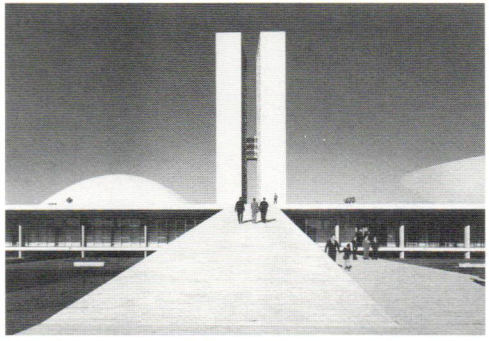

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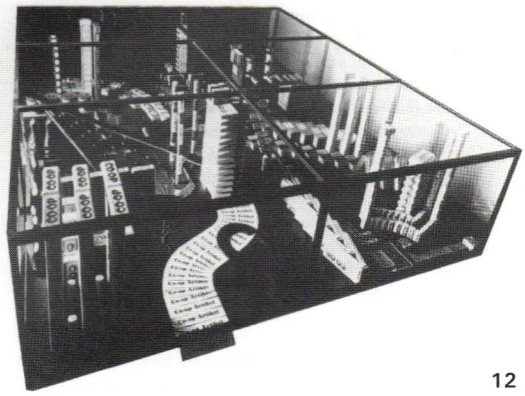
ical abstraction. The hygienic building is subject to external processes; it must be permeable to clean *air*. While the rational building is to be an object developed plastically in absolute space, it must simultaneously be made to go away, because it is an obstacle to the epiphany of transparency in open *space*: "Great blocks of dwellings run through the town. What does it matter they are behind the screen of trees."[8]

Similar contradictions are effectively rehearsed in Liu's *Airborne* exhibited at the Contemporary Art Gallery in Vancouver in 2000 (Figs. 1, 7, 9, 10). In this direct precursor to *Exchange*, sixty household humidifiers, air purifiers, and negative-air ionizers are painted a uniform gray and distributed on a white platform in a composition strangely reminiscent of a modernist city. A scale-model of a modernist city, to be more precise, the kind we are accustomed to see photographed along with the disembodied hand of the architect ominously hovering above (Fig. 8).

The modernist city is most promising—and convincing—in model form, ideally photographed from above as a rational and total artifact. Ironically, the realized version is typically found lacking in the bird's-eye view: it looks too much like a model—the cliché reaction to aerial photographs of Brasília! (Fig. 11) The model satisfies the demand for the rational materialization of the object; the bird's-eye view frustrates the concomitant fantasy of its dematerialization in space.[9]

Airborne operates on several levels and scales, equally gratifying and frustrating in its oscillation between model and machine, between symbolic representation and indexical process, and between a position in space and a situation in air. It is at once a scale-model for an imaginary modernist



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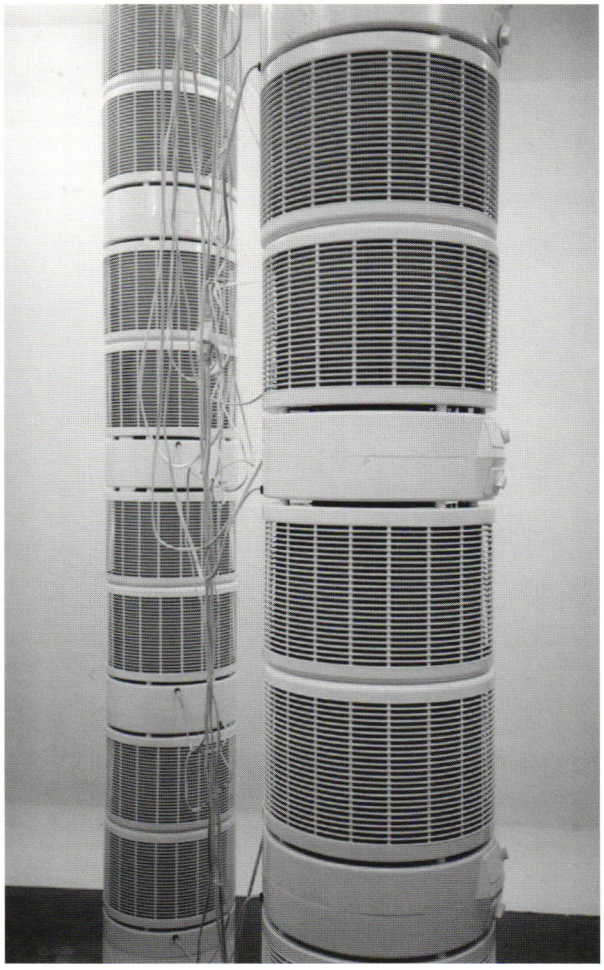
city; a dizzying *mise en abîme* of the *Ville Radieuse*—imagine the same appliances plausibly deployed in Corbusian housing blocks, stubbornly filtering the air that was supposed to ventilate the same building; a Van Doesburg-inspired composition of solids in space; a sardonic display of mass-produced consumer goods—Hannes Meyer comes to mind (Fig. 12); a show room for *Honeywell*; a dystopian domestic setting; a minimalist sculpture; a new-age wellness center in downtown Vancouver.

The multiple readings and registers capture the predicament of the modernist city—and that of its legacy in today's urbanized world. Just like the air-cleaning appliance, which is promoted against all sorts of domestic pathologies from allergy to furniture damage, modern urbanism requires a leap of faith in its hygienic claims. Its short-lived success may have been due to the "placebo" effect rather than the "science" of the *Unité d'habitation*.[10] It delivered the promise of a liberated and lucid environment as an aesthetic experience rather than a material and social fact.[11]

The placebo appliance is most effective in its conspicuousness, as a physical presence in domestic space—the only tangible evidence of its remedial but imperceptible operation. As demonstrated in *Exchange* and *Airborne*, the cumulative effect of the residual but critical physicality—the noise-polluting, energy-consuming object—is psychologically counterproductive. An isolated *HEPA* machine may suggest the possibility of healthier air, but its relentless deployment is indeed more alarming than therapeutic. The air may be actually cleaner in the Henry Urbach Gallery—it is recycled and filtered every twenty-one seconds! Its hygienic virtues are hardly more credible.



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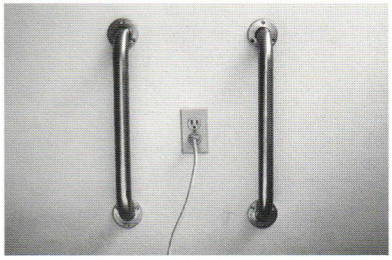
In Liu's installations, the effect of the placebo—dare we say "the aesthetic"—falters against the overpowering effect of the real. And vice versa. May we say the same of the *Ville Radieuse*?

The pragmatic and aesthetic agendas of modern urbanism are ostensibly consistent. Yet, they may not completely overlap: there is a gap between space and air in the world they project. This is where Liu's work is uncomfortably at home.

Notes

[1] An Te Liu's *Exchange* and *Type/Need* are part of the "Condition" show at the Henry Urbach Architecture Gallery, New York, 2001. Other works mentioned in this article were displayed at the following: *Airborne* and *Sclerotic*, "Pathology" at the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, 2000. *Soft Load*, "Luster" at the Henry Urbach Architecture Gallery, New York, 1999.

[2] An Te Liu, *Sclerotic* III, 2000 (Fig. 14).



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[3] Vitruvius, *The Ten Books of Architecture* (New York: Dover Publications, 1960): 24-31.

[4] Air, formerly an elementary medium of generation and vitality, was hence recast as a suspicious brew: "...a frightening mixture of the smoke, sulfurs and aqueous, volatile explosive, oily and saline vapors that the earth gave off, and occasionally, the explosive material that it emitted, the stinking exhalations that emerged from swamps, minute insects and their eggs, spermatic animalcules and far worse, the contagious miasma that rose from decomposed bodies." Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986): 13.

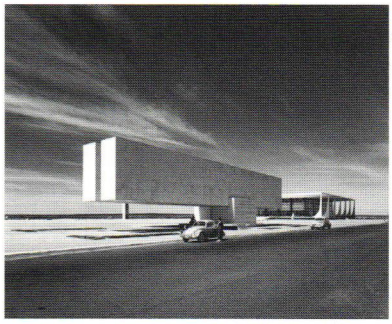
[5] Louis-Sébastien Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, vol. 1 (Paris: Mercure de France, [1782-88] 1994): 114.

[6] In Kaufmann's words: "The new combination of parts is the free assembly of individual elements that do not have to sacrifice their particular existence and whose form is subordinated only to their own finality. It is their particular laws that determine their form." Emil Kaufmann, *De Ledoux à Le Corbusier* (Paris: Livre et Communication, 1990): 79.

[7] Ibid., 77.

[8] Le Corbusier, *The Home of Man* (London: Architectural Press, [1942] 1948): 91.

[9] Brasília and Chandigarh are most photogenic in wide-angle shots at eye level when the dwarfed monumental architecture defines—negatively—the far more sublime immensity of open space (Fig. 15).



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[10] An Te Liu speaks of the appliance's placebo effect in an interview with Aaron Betsky: "My college roommate and I had two *Bionaire* purifiers/ionizers in our apartment. We would sit around drinking scotch in a smoky haze with the machines running full blast in case our parents showed up unexpectedly. After a few hours, the air seemed to tingle with clean, negatively charged ions, and we were sure we could feel it. Or was it the single malt? In any case, the indicator light was on, and we were assured that something good was happening, even if we didn't understand the mysteries of negative-air ionization. 'Placebo' comes from the Latin 'to please,' and we were damn happy with our new devices." Aaron Betsky, "Safe Haven," interview with An Te Liu, *Surface* 25 (Fall 2000): 155.

[11] The social and political critique of the modernist city that fueled the post-modern return to a traditional configuration of block, street, and public space is beyond the scope of this essay but not foreign to Liu's work: that a display of consumer goods should so readily evoke a modernist cityscape is a striking but familiar demonstration of the affinities between capitalist and utopian logic.

Illustrations

Fig. 1: An Te Liu, *Airborne*, installation view, 2000. Exhibited at the "Pathology" show at the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, 2000.

Fig. 2: An Te Liu, *Type/Need*, 2001. Exhibited at the "Condition" show at the Henry Urbach Architecture Gallery, New York, 2001.

Fig. 3: Pablo Picasso, *Bull's Head*, 1943.

Fig. 4: An Te Liu, *Soft Load*, 1999. Exhibited at the "Luster" show at the Henry Urbach Architecture Gallery, New York, 1999.

Fig. 5: An Te Liu, *Exchange*, 2001. Exhibited at the "Condition" show at the Henry Urbach Architecture Gallery, New York, 2001.

Fig. 6: Nicolas Ledoux, ideal city of Chaux, bird's-eye view, 1804.

Fig. 7: An Te Liu, *Airborne*, 2000.

Fig. 8: Le Corbusier and Jeanneret, *Plan Voisin* proposal for Paris, 1925. The hand points out the business center of the proposed city.

Fig. 9: An Te Liu, *Airborne*, 2000.

Fig. 10: An Te Liu, *Airborne*, 2000.

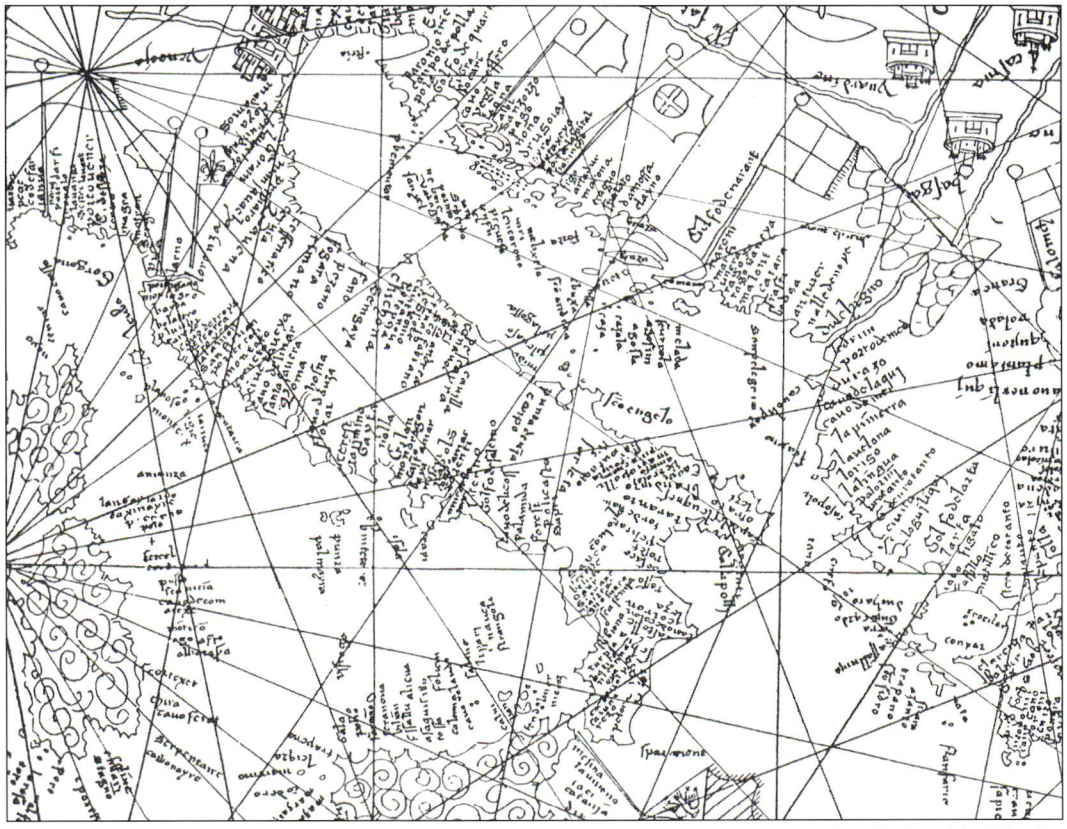
Fig. 11: National Congress Complex in Brasília, view of ramp leading to the complex, 1958-60. Oscar Niemeyer, architect.

Fig. 12: Hannes Meyer, Co-op Vitrine with Co-op standard products, exhibited in Basel, 1925.

Fig. 13: An Te Liu, *Exchange*, detail, 2001.

Fig. 14: An Te Liu, *Sclerotic* III, 2000. Exhibited at the "Pathology" show at the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, 2000.

Fig. 15: Museum of the City of Brasília, 1958-60. Oscar Niemeyer, architect.



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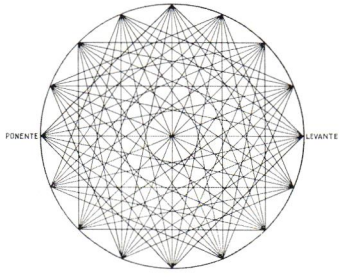
Map of Italy and the Dalmatian Coast, 14th century.



MINE ÖZKAR

ANARCHIC UNCERTAINTY:
THE CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE OF THE DEVIANT IN CREATIVITY

Creativity, as the means to conceptualization, is of concern in many philosophical matters. Space and representations of space comprise one such matter in disciplines as disparate as physics and architecture. Acts of reading, interpreting, and shaping space and its properties all involve creativity. It is disconcerting, however, that especially in the context of architecture, when discussed as the means, creativity is usually treated as a mysterious ingredient of the individual's thought process. Diverging from this understanding of creativity as an internal heuristic act, one can look at it as a phenomenon outside of the individual, a phenomenon which is to be understood only within the plurality of works created by many individuals. Creativity remains to be the means but with regard to the larger context. Describing creativity as such—almost as a social enterprise—is not to promote any general consensus on judging what is creative. Rather, creativity emerges from the differences between the individual's will and those of others. Following this understanding, this essay proposes a constructive description of creativity through the notion of anarchic uncertainty that rises out of such differences.

Anarchic uncertainty is a phrase with two parts. Uncertainty is the core of the phrase; anarchy merely suggests an extreme condition of it.

The first step is to acknowledge uncertainty as a positive and constructive matter of fact. Trying do away with uncertainty is the common tendency, especially in the sciences. This is an old tradition dating back to Socrates, who put ambiguity aside either as an accident or as the spoken word of a "freak." Scientists have been working to diminish uncertainties for centuries and have claimed to make progress through such work. This methodology for progress has been subject to major criticism over the centuries; yet, there is always more to say.

Hilary Putnam, professor of philosophy and mathematical logic at Harvard, illustrates this common methodological problem with a simple example.[1] He puts his friend to the test by asking, "How many objects are there in this room?" The answer is not as obvious as his friend initially thinks. The question rather turns out to be, "What is an object?" There are five objects if the friend only counts the distinguishable but non-living items: chair, table, pen, book, cup, etc. There are seven if he includes Putnam and himself. There are indefinitely more if he identifies and includes parts of what he has initially called objects. The key to the question is the definition of what an object is. And that is where the uncertainty is. William James writes:

> *There is no property ABSOLUTELY essential to any one thing*.... Mediately or immediately, that one thing is related to everything else; and to know all about it, all its relations need to be known. But each relation forms one of its attributes, one angle by which someone may conceive it, and while so conceiving it may ignore the rest of it.[2]

Depending on how one defines an object—e.g., anything to which I can refer with a pronoun, anything that is not physically attached to some other thing, etc.—the conception of how many objects there are in the room changes.

Putnam's question is an example of an uncertainty that has to do with the representation of phenomena.[3] A second account of uncertainty is in the process, in the direction of the next step. If we think of the present moment as a deci-

KENNEDY & VIOLICH ARCHITECTS
DRYWALL:
A/MATERIAL SURFACE

Drywall—gypsum wallboard cladding—is America's most ubiquitous, standardized building product. Yet, the commercial success of drywall has also limited the perception of this material's palette of architectural applications and its permanence and value in relation to "natural" materials. Neither minimalism nor *Arte Povera* engaged this inexpensive, industrially mass-manufactured material. The development of drywall represents the creation of an unprecedented new "norm" for the wall and the enduring impact of an aesthetic hegemony that continues to influence the production of architecture today.

The fire resistance of gypsum wallboard and its capacity to be quarried and manufactured at extremely low initial costs made drywall the perfect cladding companion for the emerging consolidation of the cavity wall building industry. The development of a gypsum cladding system for the cavity wall required the unprecedented intersection and affiliation of separate industries and products, labor organizations, methods of production, and the innovative use of mass media and television for marketing.

The postwar marketing campaign to "own the wall" represents not only the branding of an extremely affordable and versatile product system but also the institutionalization of its material character and cultural reception. By emphasizing only a selected set of material characteristics and ignoring others, the market positions the ways in which gypsum is understood and used. The "resistant" nature of drywall extends beyond the practical realm of maintenance and life safety to the cultural perception of the material itself—or rather its invisibility as material. Drywall is a product system designed to conceal its materiality by covering its modularity, its joints, and the local circumstances of its installation. Whiteness and impermeability—and, by extension, hygiene and class security—flatness, uniformity, and the ideal of a standardized norm for the wall were key messages in the emerging modern aesthetic of drywall and skim plaster veneer as the paradigmatic a/material surface.

The discovery of what could be termed a "catacrestic" use of post-industrial materials involves a careful account of the specific physical properties of the material, combined with an amnesia towards the standardized applications of the product and a willingness to imagine new uses for it. Such new uses are, in fact, both a "mis-use" of the material and a radical demonstration of its fullest use.

To deviate by design from the standardized uses of this material is not a matter of turning away from the norm but of *turning into* the material more deeply to explore the full palette of its properties—such as colors that range from rose to brown in gypsum's crystal forms and gypsum's ambiguous physical state that is both wet and dry by virtue of its unique chemistry. Material strategies for gypsum wallboard do not abandon the efficiencies of drywall cladding, but seek to create added value through the invention of ways to intervene in the manufacturing process, to elaborate the transformative and changeable character of the surface, to re-appropriate the transmissive properties of the mix, and to embed the infrastructure of pressure touch, sensor, and flat membrane technologies into the cladding surface. When the material character of drywall is reconsidered—when programs get into the surface—the wall can play between the categories of furniture, appliance, and architectural cladding.

Markets

Bring together products from both plaster and drywall industries. Hybridize the resources of these competing construction markets. Use existing tools and techniques to create new material effects. Develop these effects to work against the scripted uses of the product. The wall becomes affective.

Thick Surfaces

Create changeable conditions of thickness within the contemporary architectural culture of thin skins. Engage natural and synthetic coatings that change according to light levels and viewer positions. Deploy light-emitting pigments and ultra reflective surfaces that suggest an impossible depth of surface. The principles of camouflage suggest the possibility of mimetic behavior in materials and the appropriation of properties associated with other materials. The question is not how to make plaster more like plaster, but how to make plaster can become like mirror, lace, or LCD.

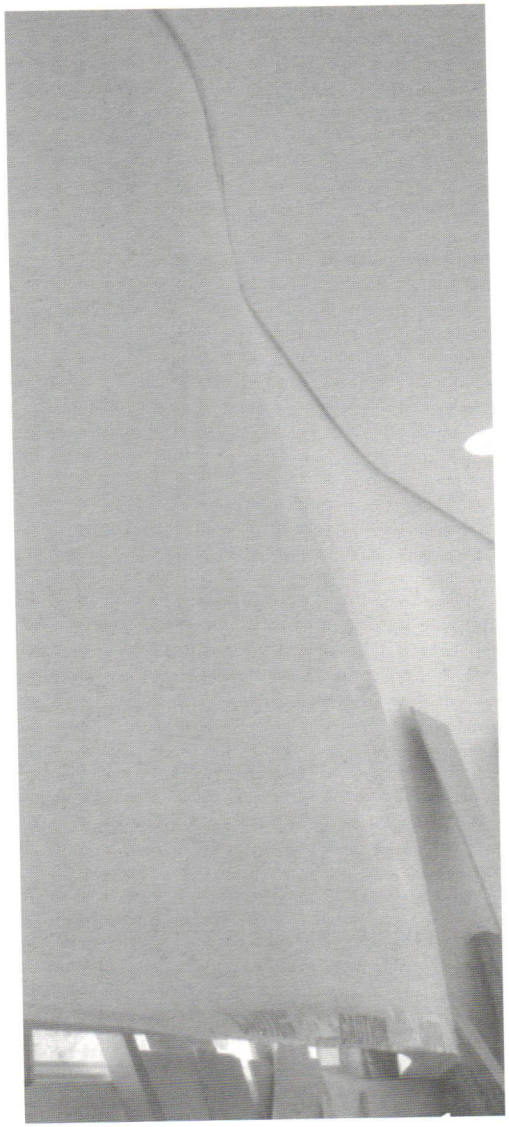
Performative Papers

Look for areas to intervene into conventional manufacturing processes. Identify strategic partnerships for collaboration. Suspend the differences between "new" and "old" technologies. Change the wrapper—take advantage of the roll-to-roll manufacturing process to integrate flat membrane technologies. Infrastructure migrates out of the cavity wall and into the cladding.

Mixing

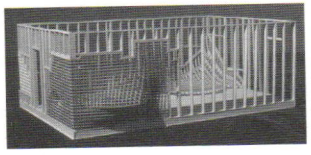
Engage the trade worker as a collaborator in the process of construction. Design with plaster, and drywall becomes more like cooking. Details are recipes that affect the mix and can be adjusted, combined or altered to taste. It is the recipe—the choice and mix of ingredients that determines the materials' properties, programs, and forms.

KVA, "Fabrications" installation, SF MOMA



INFLECTED

Fireplace Cavity Wall



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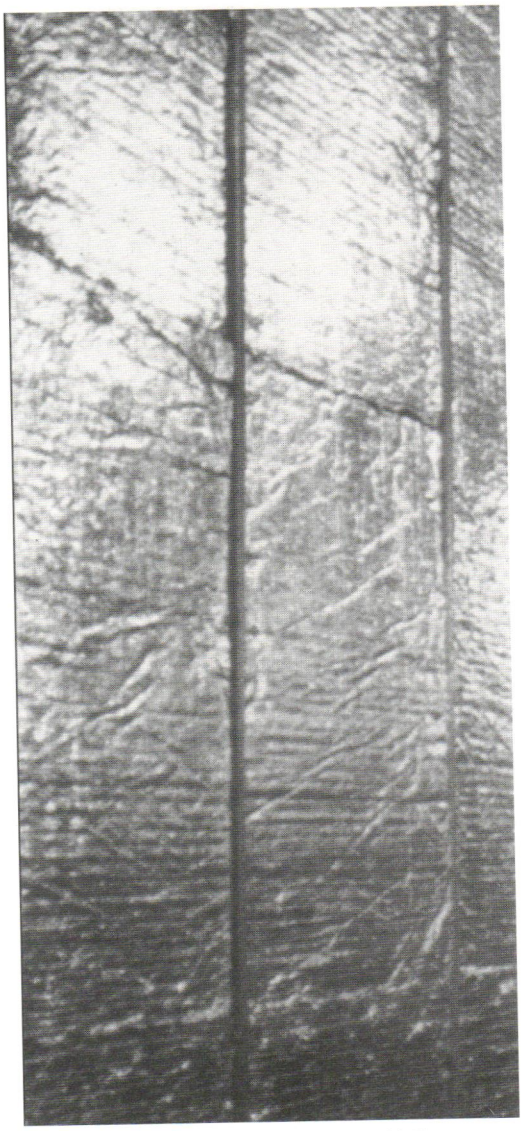
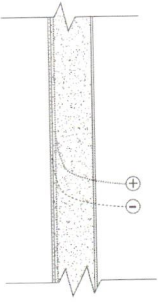


ELECTRO-CONDUCTIVE

Electro-Conductive Drywall Prototype



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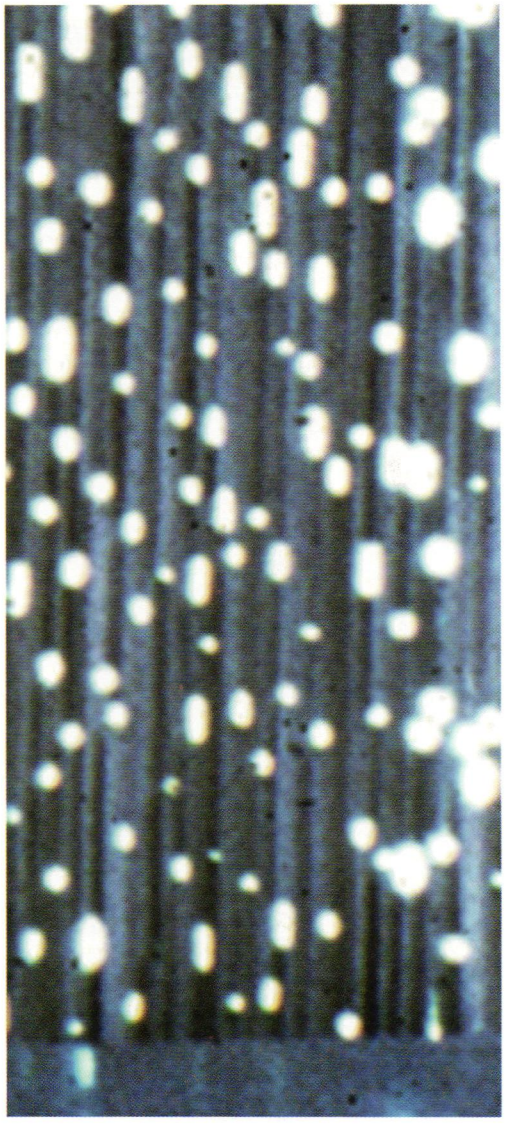
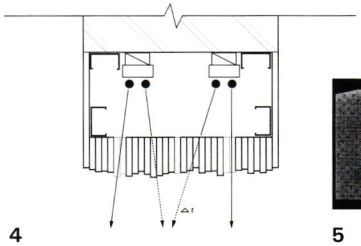
1. Prosthetic wall project by Eric Olsen
2. Model of prosthetic wall
3. Diagram of electro-conductive drywall



THERMAL

Thermal Drywall,
SF MOMA



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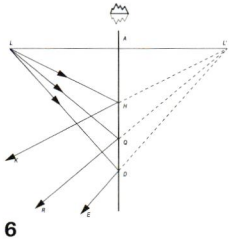
REFLECTIVE

Reflective Drywall,
Wall International Headquarters



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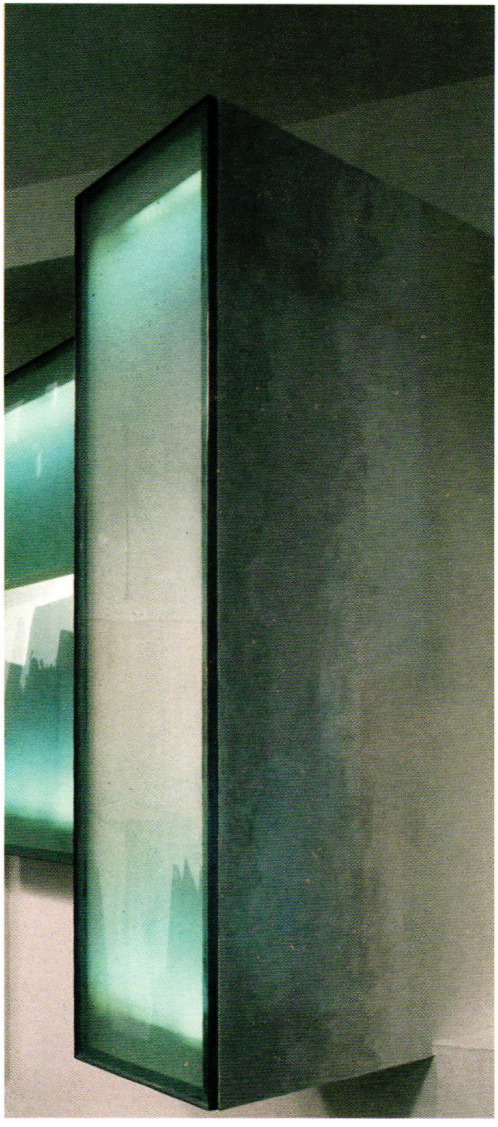
4. Plan detail of stacked, illuminated, thermal drywall
5. Pyrobar, USGC product
6. Production of image in plane mirror



CHAMELEON

Storage Wall,
Printmaker's Studio

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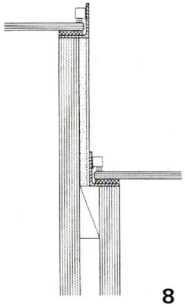

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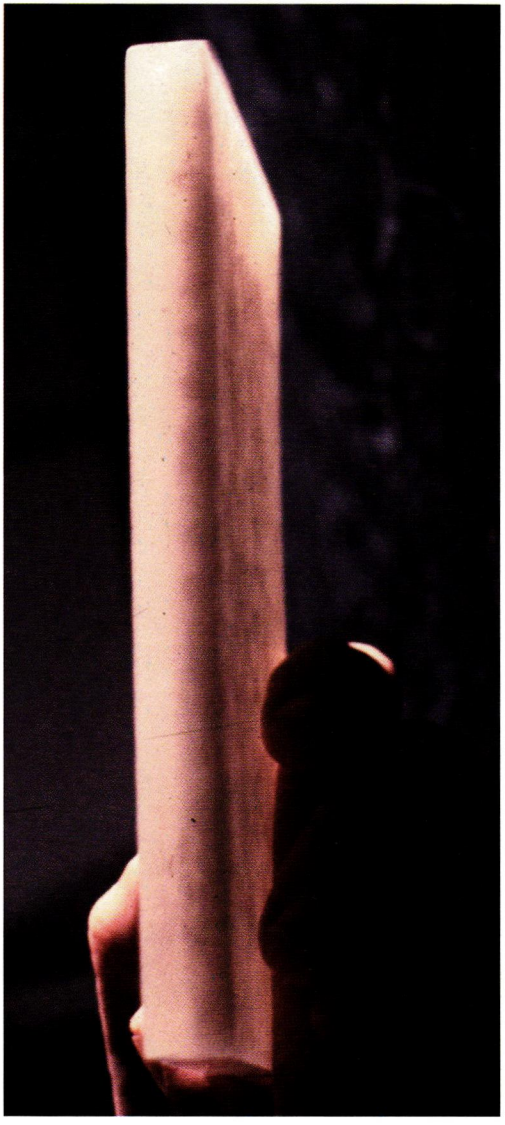
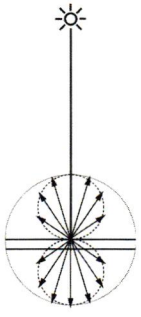


TRANSLUCENT

Translucent Window Treatment,
Boote Mills Studios



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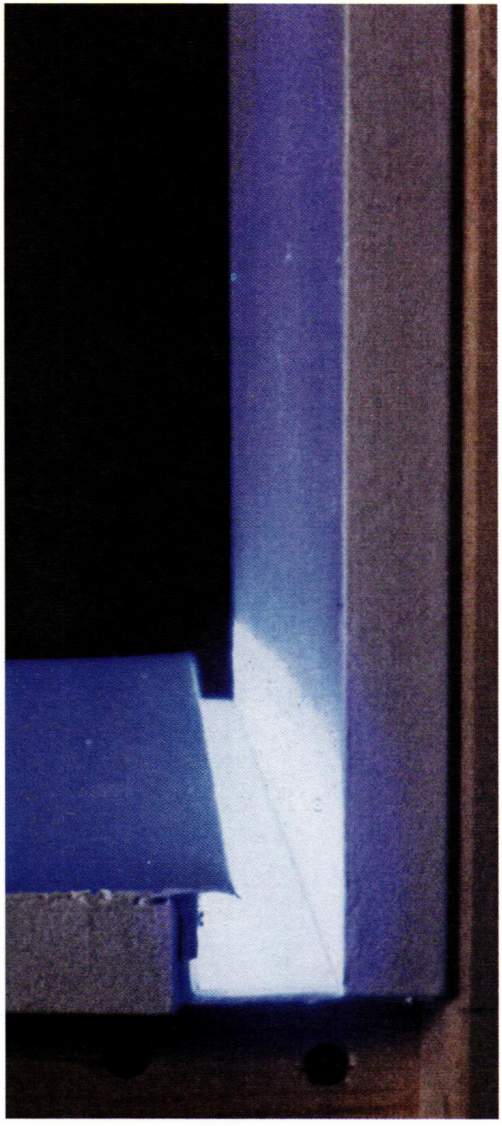
7. Samples of iridescent finishes
8. Plan detail of storage wall
9. Diagram of light dispersion



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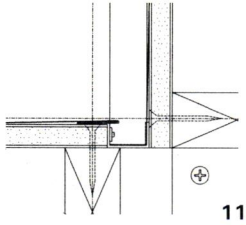
LUMINOUS

Solid State Drywall Prototype



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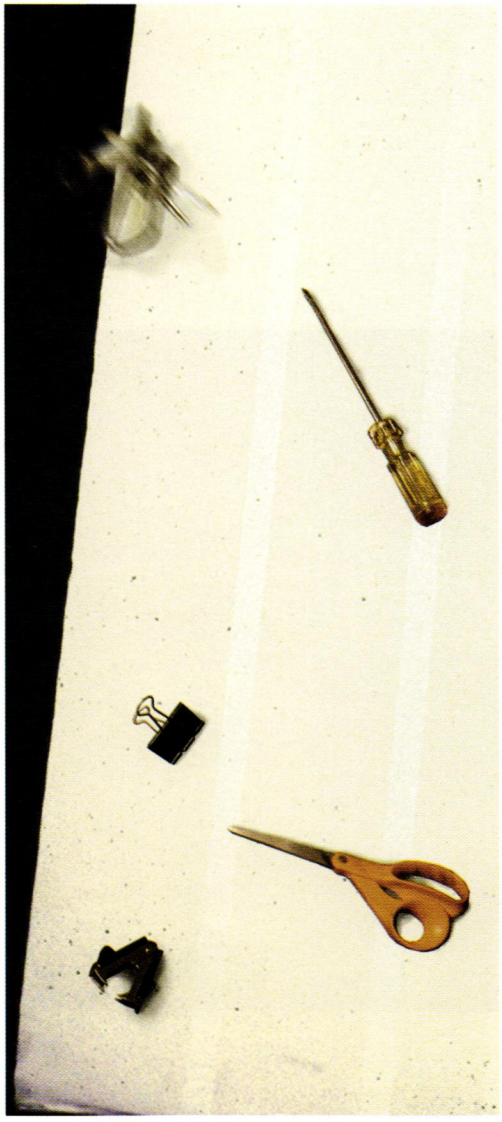

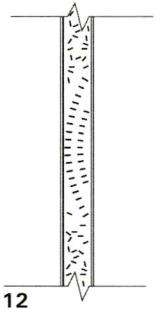

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MAGNETIC

Magnetic Drywall Prototype

10. Solid state reveal light
11. Section of solid state reveal light
12. Diagram of magnetic drywall

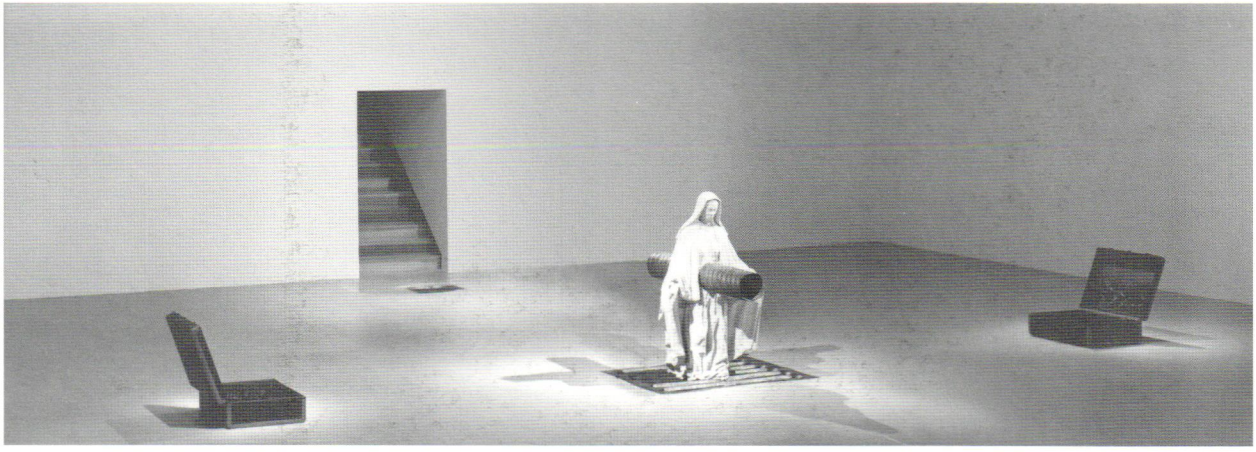
Robert Gober, *Untitled* (*Virgin*), detail of the underworld, 1997. 1

ROBERT HAYWOOD

ROBERT GOBER'S VIRGIN AND DRAIN

Is the Virgin Mary a drain? She is if we consider Robert Gober's life-size Virgin of 1997 whose womb is pierced by a giant industrial culvert pipe (Fig. 2)[1]. She is if we turn to early Catholic conceptions of the Virgin, formulated by theologians Tertullian and St. Augustine, whose discomfort with and fear of the female body and human sexuality are manifest in patently absurd statements: "Woman," Tertullian wrote, "is a temple built over a sewer." Horrified by the organs of the female body that commingle sexual and excretory functions and produce the human race, St. Augustine exhorted: "We are born between feces and urine."[2]

Both Robert Gober, a disaffected Catholic, and early church "fathers" invoke the Virgin and the drain although their purposes are radically different.[3] This difference is not merely the historical time that separates them, but also, and more importantly, their view of sexuality and the body. St. Augustine and other male theologians' repulsion toward the body of women, specifically the birthing body from which blood, fluids, and baby are flushed, laid the ground for the Catholic invention of the modern Virgin, who in the mid-nineteenth century was officially declared as immaculately conceived.[4] Revered by Catholic doctrine for her "spotless virginity," the modern Virgin, draped in a figureless gown, is an absolutely closed form. In contradiction to the Virgin's downward gaze and sculptural realism, her virtual and metaphysical power derives, I will argue, from her configuration as a woman *without an anus*. The woman without an anus is a way of stating that her body has been purged of interior canals and orifices that open and close, inhale and expel. In this way, the Roman Catholic conception of the Virgin embodies what Sigmund Freud described as anal-retentive character, manifested through compulsive ordering, cleaning, and purifying.[5]



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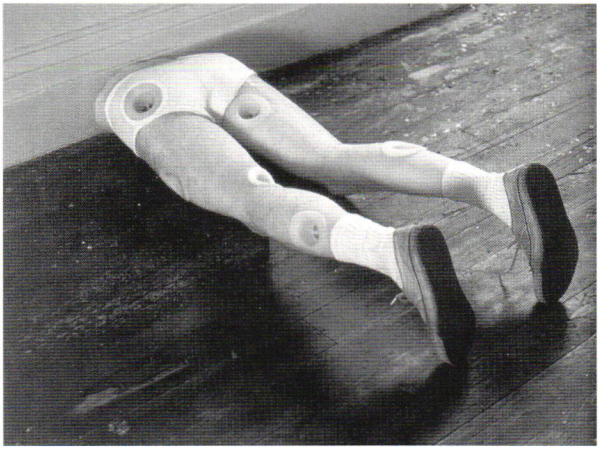
Critics often refer to Dada and Surrealism when analyzing Gober's sculptures and installations. My analysis departs from these studies, first of all by exploring the radical theological implications of Gober's Virgin, and secondly by arguing that his reconfiguration of the Virgin evokes Surrealism most forcefully not as a style, an iconographic motif, or an avenue to the unconscious but as a mode of *anal attack*.[6] Failing to grasp this critical orientation may well explain why many critics are mystified by Gober's adoption of the Virgin motif, apparently fearing that the project marks the artist's uncritical return to a pious investment in Catholicism.

In considering Gober's Virgin within the history of Dada and Surrealism, two works need to be explored that exemplify different aspects of what I am calling anal attack. The first of these works is Marcel Duchamp's *Elle a chaud au cul*. Salvador Dali's largely forgotten essay, "Why they Attack the Mona Lisa," clarifies most fully the critical force of Duchamp's assisted readymade. Dali explained that the picture, consisting of a reproduction of Mona Lisa to which Duchamp added a hand-drawn mustache and goatee, is a "case of aggression by an artist against a masterpiece that embodies the maximum artistic idealization." This act of aggression, Dali argued, differs from Freud's "sublime definition of the Hero [as] the man who revolts against the authority of the father and finally overcomes it." Freud's sublime hero, Dali continued, "is the antithesis of Dada which represented a culmination of the anti-heroic, anti-Nietzchean attitude to life." Instead, Dada seeks "the anal, erogenous zone of the *Mona Lisa*." While accepting the "thermic agitation of the Mother as a Work-of-Art," Dada, Dali continued, rebels against the idealization of Mother-as-Art by masculinizing it.[7] This gesture epitomizes the anti-glorification and anti-sublime aspects of Duchamp's work, which erodes dreamy and angelic conceptions of art by turning attention to Mona Lisa's non-depicted anal zone.

In a different manner, Max Ernst's *The Virgin Chastising the Infant Jesus in Front of Three Witnesses* of 1926 unleashes and exposes another form of anal attack (Fig. 3). As Ernst's scholars have noted, the painting was partly inspired by Sigmund Freud's 1919 essay titled "A Child is Being Beaten."[8] The fantasy of a child being beaten produces what Freud calls onanistic gratification or "gratification in the genitals." This form of gratification taps into the sadistic, anal organization of sexuality. From this point of view, we can imagine that the Virgin's forceful swap on the infant's bottom provokes not only a great cry but also stimulates the baby's bottom, and through the buttocks, the genitals. The infant Jesus, it has been shown, is a displaced representation of baby Max Ernst himself, with the adult Ernst among the three voyeurs pressing against the window to witness the violent scene. The presentation of the baby's backside reinforces the anal orientation of the figure so that his buttocks function as the equivalent of what we identify as the face in traditional figurative representations.

3

This orientation is deployed in Gober's untitled floor sculpture of 1991, in which Gober casts the buttocks and legs of a male figure out of wax (Fig. 4). In male homosexual culture, the anal zone is a privileged site of sexuality, although the buttocks and the anus as an erogenous zone are in no way exclusive to homosexuality. A man's sexual identity, pleasure, and position are partly defined in relation to the anus: top, bottom, versatile, or neither. It is not important whether Gober's figure is displayed as a top or



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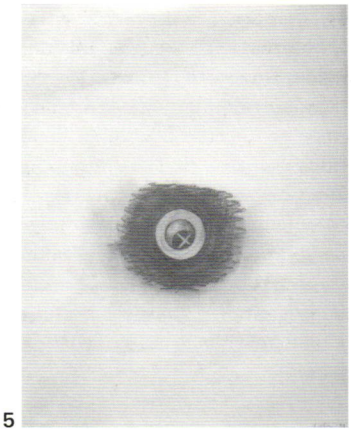
bottom, since the figure's bottom-up position could indicate either. What is significant is that the anal zone and its supporting armature, the legs, are marked as a site on which the viewer is called upon to focus his or her attention. With great precision, Gober has inserted into the legs pieces of dark hair, along with several plastic drains that bore deep holes into the buttocks and legs. The drain's interior bottom contains a crucifix form, which Gober purposely adopted from an outmoded drain design, as evident in a series of drawings he produced prior to and following the floor sculpture (Fig. 5). The lower half the body is cut off at the waist and pressed into the siding that runs along the lowest portion of the wall. From the buttocks, the legs extend horizontally and parallel to the floor. The pointed feet lift the legs slightly off the ground, while at the same time they appear to press the waist more forcefully into the wall.

Especially forceful in this piece is Gober's achievement in producing an effect of absolute vulnerability and exposure. This effect is partly achieved by the modest underclothing that adorns the figure. The worn tennis shoes, the generic white socks, and the plain white briefs, unmarked by a designer's label, renders a faceless half-figure into one that is less anonymous than utterly ordinary. The effect of exposure is further defined by the special design of the brief, which contains a circular cut, bordered by a white band that generously accommodates and echoes the circular drain that punctures the left cheek. In contrast to the horizontal position of the sculpture, the viewer approaches it in a vertical, upright position, while lowering the head to direct his or her sight toward the object on the ground. This structural opposition places the viewer in a superior and dominating position in relation to the object. Yet, strangely, the sculpture fails to reinforce or reflect back to the viewer his or her superior position and detached gaze.

On this point, the drains are crucial. The drains are most commonly interpreted as wounds and sores that have eaten away at the body. While acknowledging the importance of this analogy, particularly given Gober's concern with the effects of HIV and AIDS, I wish to point out that the drains also function simply as openings into the sculpture's interior form. The viewer is compelled not only to look down but also *into* the drains, placed both on the top and on the side of the figure. Peering in, even if only to confirm that nothing is in there, has the effect of sucking the eyes into the drain. Because of this effect, the viewer is stripped of the God-like, all-prevailing detached eye. The viewer's eye, in other words, is seductively lured into the interior cavity of



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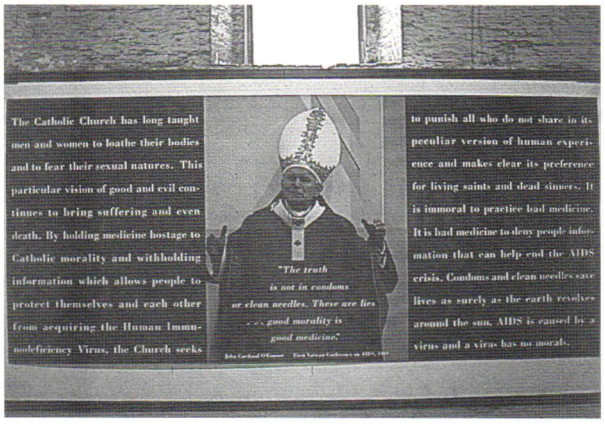
the anal-drain. In Gober's work, the drain serves as a form that opens the body and invests it with corporeality and temporality in direct opposition to the closed form of the immaculate body.

In considering Gober's Virgin, another aspect of Ernst's painting deserves to be noted. Ernst's picture dramatizes the Virgin's function as a harsh and disciplinary instrument in regulating sex, or more precisely, in draining the body of brute matter, fluid, and sexuality itself. In turn, the bloodless Virgin is the most complete embodiment of what the Church calls the "virtue of chastity." Why would a Catholic gay man such as Gober possess a vested interest in the Virgin? Catholic dogma demands that "Homosexual persons are called to chastity." As stated in recent Catholic documents, homosexuality is a "selfish vision of sexuality," "a serious disorder," and is "contrary to Natural Law."[9] Natural Law, as propagandized by Catholicism, is a straightforward concept; in strict accord with God's will—and God's will, it should be noted, is also nature's law—a true man is a man and only a man. Likewise, a true woman is a woman and only a woman. This is why contemporary Catholicism deplores what it calls the masculinization of the feminine and likewise the feminization of the masculine.

The Catholic mandate that anyone outside of marriage must live in a state of perpetual virginity—with the reward of this act of self-sacrifice reaped upon entry into heaven's kingdom—was put to test with the crisis incited by the spread of HIV infection and AIDS. To reduce the risk of HIV infection, health experts recommend the use of condoms. Obsessed with the theological implications of the tiny latex socks, the Catholic Church rejects this policy on "moral" grounds. The Church claims that "the promotion of so-

called 'safe-sex,' or 'safer sex practices' is a dangerous and immoral policy based on the deluded theory that the condom can provide adequate protection against AIDS." Perpetual chastity outside marriage and fidelity in marriage are "the only true and secure education for the perversion of this contagious disease."[10] The Catholic Church, along with other institutions hostile to homosexuality, does not simply promote chastity for the devotee but for everyone. This is why the Church has continued to actively campaign against safe-sex programs. The Church's message, although indirectly stated, is that it is better to risk suffering and death than to engage in sex safely, shamelessly, and with pleasure.

It is instructive to consider Gober's work in the context of activist groups that staged, in the name of self-preservation and life, bold counter-attacks against propaganda and policies that would exterminate homosexuals. Among such exemplary projects is Gran Fury's billboard triptych, *The Pope and the Penis* (1990) (Fig. 6). The billboard was displayed at the Venice Biennale in 1990, but only after Gran Fury protested against Italian Customs, which strove to block the billboard from entering the country. This and related projects, which Richard Meyer and Douglas Crimp have valuably documented and analyzed, both condemn the Catholic Church for its long history of teaching "men and women to loathe their bodies and to fear their sexual natures" and for "holding effective treatment of AIDS hostage to Catholic morality."[11] Although the billboard appears initially to be inflammatory, its claims are level-headed and reasoned. Stripping the Church of its lofty and patronizing position in regulating the body with its moralizing rhetoric, the billboard states directly and clearly: "AIDS is caused by a virus and a virus has no morals."



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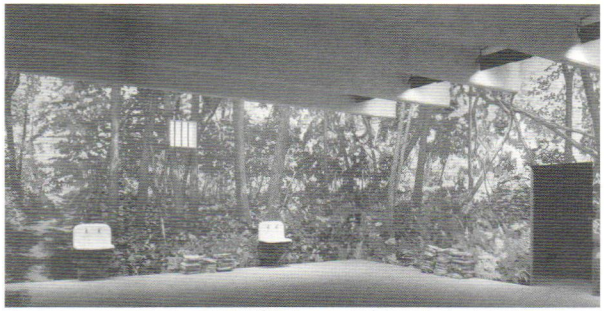
Given the Church's extraordinary effort to maintain distinctions between the two sexes as fixed, morally correct, and pure, it is queer indeed that non-married men, whether heterosexual or homosexual, are called upon to emulate the Virgin. Although other religions repudiate homosexuality with equal force, the Catholic Church is unique in calling on men, in addition to women, to emulate the Virgin. This directive is evident in a recent Catholic publication that advises parents to foster extra "devotion to the Immaculate Mother of God," if they detect "deviant tendencies and attitudes" in their young boys or girls.[12] Therefore, while all men, both homosexual and heterosexual, are charged with preserving masculinity as an identity absolutely distinct from femininity, non-married men are simultaneously called upon to model their identity on the Church's supreme model of Catholic femininity—the Virgin.

A pure and everlasting symbol of virginity, the Virgin is also upheld as the supreme model of the Bride. She is the Bride of the Church. Clothed in a white gown, the earthly bride who emulates the Virgin participates in a marriage ceremony that both announces her virginity and, with the Church's blessing, inaugurates its end.



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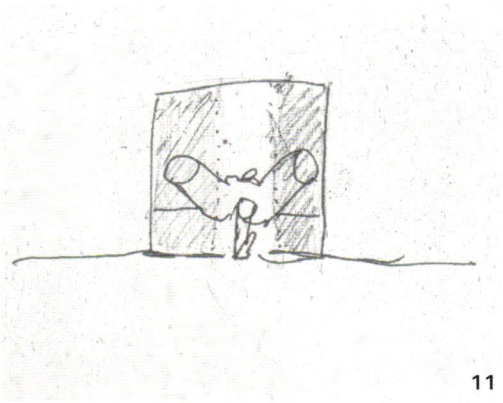
In an installation project of 1989, Gober paid homage to the Bride by designing and sewing himself a silk wedding gown and then propping it up on the floor of the Paula Cooper Gallery (Fig. 7). The wedding dress, a shell waiting to be embodied and performed, is set up as both a lure and a trap. Pasted on the gallery walls is Gober's wallpaper design consisting of alternating images of a lynched black man and a white glamour-boy in a state of luxurious sleep. Standing along the edge of the wall are handcrafted bags of cat litter.

In this project, Gober fashions the Bride as a hollow form that, even preexisting its embodiment, is implicated in violent, oppressive forms of subjugation. Two years later, Gober himself enters more fully the structure and discourse of the Bride, as if he were following through on the Catholic demand that he, as a gay man, foster devotion and identification with the Virgin Bride. In a project exhibited at the Dia Center for the Arts in New York in 1992-93, Gober transforms the gallery's interior architecture by painting on the walls a landscape scene of thick bushes and trees (Fig. 8). His pallet consists of army greens that heighten the artificiality of the landscape, infusing it with slight military connotations. Gober allows the gallery's white columns, which stand stiffly vertical, to further accentuate that "nature" is an artificial construct, a delimiting structure always imprisoning to someone. Carved into the walls are prison windows, suggesting that nature, like the Bride, is a lure and a trap. The prison windows open onto an artificial sky, closing off the possibility that there is a transcendent truth or natural order outside. Attached to the walls are white sinks containing faucets from which recycled water pours. Placed against the wall are red boxes of rat bait, further suggesting that for pure natural beauty and Natural Law to exist, something in nature has been poisoned and purged (Fig. 9). Stacks of newspaper fabricated by Gober are piled against the walls and the columns.

10

On the front page of the newspapers is an advertisement for Saks Fifth Avenue bridalwear. The hefty, voluptuous bride, dressed in a strapless gown that accents her breasts and then tightens around her waist, is none other than Gober himself (Fig. 10). The gown appearing in the newspaper advertisement is the same dress Gober had earlier designed for the installation at the Paula Copper Gallery. Above the advertisement is a *New York Times* report stating that the Vatican has urged Roman Catholic bishops to oppose laws that promote the public acceptance of homosexual conduct. Labeled an "objective disorder," homosexuality, if elevated as a legally protected civil right, would threaten the holy institution of marriage, which, in accordance with the doctrine of Natural Law, is reserved solely for a man and a woman. In the Dia installation, the Rat Bait disturbs the logic of Natural Law. As a law that proclaims that its structuring mechanics are both naturally and divinely authored, natural law is based on a conception of nature



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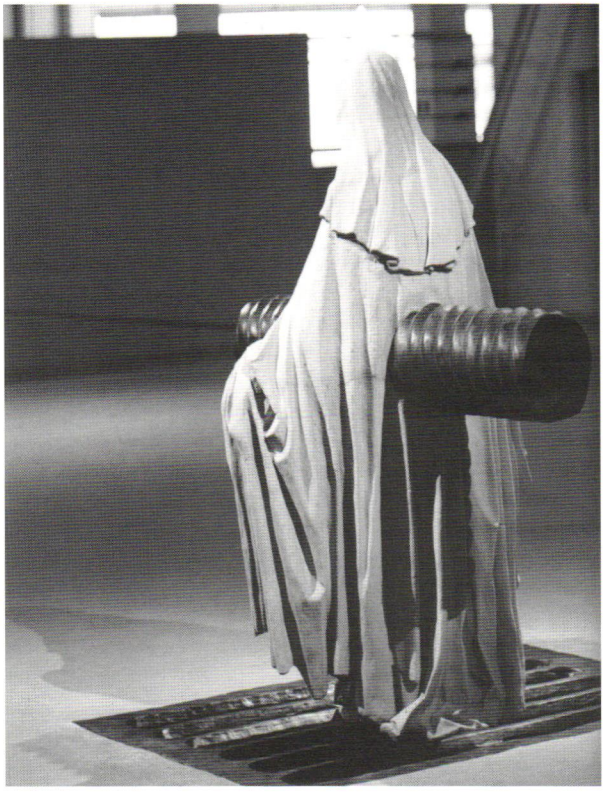
that cannot exist unless there is a rat to poison and purge. Without a rat, natural law would lose the object that marks the inside as nature's glory and the outside as its flaw. As a living, dynamic structure, Natural Law requires an invader that crosses the boundaries, revealing the boundaries to itself. In the Saks advertisement, Gober performs the role of the rat that escapes the poison and invades the inside but only to announce that rat is always both inside and outside.[13] The rat, one might say, announces: I am your Virgin and bride. And you who invented the spotless bride, you, holy one, also invented the rat.



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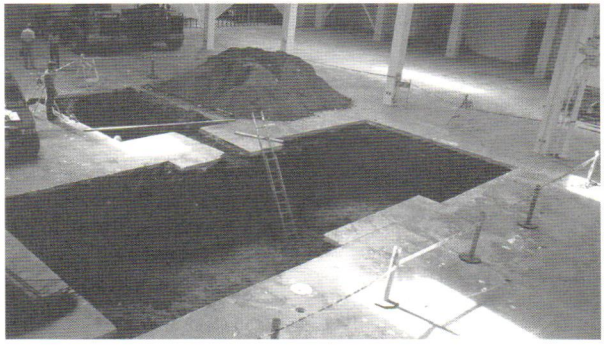
In occupying the shell of the bride, Gober could more fully imagine that a man possesses a womb. The home, Freud argued, is a (poor) substitute for the mother's womb, the first lodging, for which men and women still long. For men, dreaming about the womb extends into another fantasy, which is to birth a child. This fantasy results in the imaginary possibility of what Jacques Lacan has described as anal pregnancy.[14] In puncturing the Virgin and Bride with a drainpipe, Gober opens the womb, which is also to say, he reinvests the Virgin with an anus. In Gober's drawing of an anus giving birth to a foot, he graphically depicts the anus as a substitute vagina and womb (Fig. 11).

Turing once again to Gober's Virgin of 1997, observe how he renders the Virgin respectfully, without satire or mockery (Fig. 12). She is not, however, the Catholic Virgin who is spotless and wrinkle-free. The drain opens up her otherwise closed, bloodless, and colorless body, at the same time the pipe weighs her firmly to the ground. But like Gober's hollow bridal dress, this Virgin is planted as a lure. Yet, unlike the bride, she is not a trap. She stands on a drain, which opens onto a spectacular, exotic, and brightly lit underwater world that is teeming with artificial flora, starfish, pearls, and glistening coins.[15] To fabricate this underworld, Gober and his assistances had to excavate the concrete floor of the Geffen Contemporary, adapted from two adjacent warehouses by Frank Gehry to house temporary exhibitions (Fig. 13). By carving out a vast hole in the earth to host this underworld, Gober was not directing the viewer's vision to the horizontal stretch of the floor as minimalist sculptors had but rather into a cavity below the ordinary floor of culture. For the viewer, however, this underworld could only be accessed visually through openings in



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the drains. Just visible through one of the drains is the lower section of a man who appears to have given birth to a baby. The baby is diapered, Gober explains, to make the man appear nurturing (Fig. 1).

Defending his highly imaginative and thought-provoking conception of the Virgin from the predictable cry of blasphemy by Catholic officials and organizations, Gober remarks that he was not so much attacking the Church as he was attempting to get closer to the Virgin.[16] The Catholic Church's strict guidelines regulating devotion to the Virgin Mary charge bishops to deplore and ban all devotion that deviates from the Vatican's rules. If, in this project, Gober gets closer to the Virgin Mary, she is a virgin whom Catholic officials could recognize only as unnatural and perverse. The only way Gober could truly know the Virgin was to reinvent and dress her with a drain.

Notes

[1] Robert Gober's Virgin Mary is the central figure in a complex project, *Untitled Installation*, 1997. The project was commissioned by the Geffen Contemporary, MOCA, Los Angeles and organized by Paul Schimmel. For details on the installation, as well as essays by Schimmel and Hal Foster, see Paul Schimmel, ed., *Robert Gober* (Los Angeles, CA and Zurich: The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles and Scalo Verlag, 1997).

[2] St. Augustine and Tertullian quoted in Simone De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. H.M. Parshley (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971): 167-68.

[3] In a 1989 interview in which Gober reflected on his Catholic upbringing, he stated: "The Church was a very sick place. The Church that I knew was an extremely hypocritical institution. That might be where I got my initial inspiration of perversity, growing up within the Catholic Church." Robert Gober, interview by Craig Gholson (1989); reprinted in Betsy Sussler, ed., *Speak Art! The Best of Bomb Magazine's Interviews with Artists* (Australia: G+B Arts International, 1997): 88-96.

[4] For one of many historical interpretations of the Virgin Mary, see Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976). I wish to thank theologians Jean Porter and Susan St. Ville for assisting me with research on the Virgin.

[5] See Sigmund Freud, "Character and Anal Eroticism," (1908) *The Standard Editions of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 9, trans. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1974): 167.

[6] In this way, my study is indebted to David Joselit's insightful essay on Robert Gober's *Untitled Installation*, 1997. See David Joselit, "Poetics of the Drain," *Art in* America (December 1997): 65-71. Making an analogy to Gober, Joselit cites novelist Jean Genet who, according to Joselit, imagines "an anality, which might be called a poetics of the drain, 'a sentimental poetics' explicitly laced with references to Catholicism." Joselit sees Gober's Virgin Mary, however, as the element of the installation "most difficult to assimilate."

[7] See Salvador Dali, "Why they attack the Mona Lisa," *Art News* 62.1 (March 1963): 36, 63.

[8] For interpretations of Max Ernst's art, see, for example, Werner Spies, ed., *Max Ernst* (London: Tate Gallery, 1991). Also see, Rosalind Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993).

[9] See "The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality," *Pontifical Council for the Family, Guidelines for Education within the Family* (November 21, 1995). See Chapter VI, "Learning Stages."

[10] Ibid.

[11] See Douglas Crimp and Adam Rolston, eds., *AIDS Demo Graphics* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1990); and Richard Meyer, "This is to Enrage You: Gran Fury and the Graphics of Aids Activism," *But is it Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism,* Nina Felshin, ed. (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995): 51-83.

[12] "The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality."

[13] For an alternative interpretation of the Dia installation, see Hal Foster who, in part, sees it as a "comment on the divides in American ideology—between the transcendalist myths of individual and nature... and the contemporary realities of mass anonymity and urban confinement." See Hal Foster, "The Art of the Missing Part," Schimmel, ed. *Robert Gober*, 57-68; reprinted with revisions in *October* 92 (Spring 2000): 129-56.

[14] In his essay, "Function and Field of Speech and Language," Jacques Lacan states that he was able to "bring to light in a certain male subject phantasies of anal pregnancy as well as the dream of its resolution by Caesarian section." Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997): 100.

[15] Gober's intricate fabrication of this exotic underworld is documented in Harry Philbrick, ed., *Robert Gober: The 1999 Larry Aldrich Foundation Award Exhibition* (Ridgefield, CT: Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, 1998).

[16] On Gober's response to various attacks by Catholic officials and organizations, especially the right-wing, anti-art watchdog group, the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, see the invaluable interview and discussion between Gober and curator Richard Flood in *Robert Gober: Sculpture+Drawing* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1999): 121-43.

Illustrations

Fig. 1: Robert Gober, *Untitled* (*Virgin*), detail of the underworld, 1997. Exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 1997.

Fig. 2: Robert Gober, *Untitled* (*Virgin*), 1997.

Fig. 3: Max Ernst, *The Virgin Chastising the Infant Jesus in front of Three Witnesses*, 1926.

Fig. 4: Robert Gober, *Untitled*, 1991-93. Exhibited at the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, 1998.

Fig. 5: Robert Gober, *Untitled Drawing* (*Drain*), 1992-96.

Fig. 6: Gran Fury, *The Pope and the Penis*, 1990. Exhibited at the Venice Biennale, 1990.

Fig. 7: Robert Gober, *Wedding Gown, Hanging Man/ Sleeping Man, Cat Litter*, 1989-96. Exhibited at the Paula Cooper Gallery, 1989.

Fig 8: Robert Gober, *Untitled*, 1992-93. Installed at the Dia Center for the Arts, New York.

Fig. 9: Robert Gober, *Untitled*, detail of rat bait, 1992-93.

Fig. 10: Robert Gober, *Untitled*, detail of newspaper advertisement with Gober wearing a wedding dress, 1992-93.

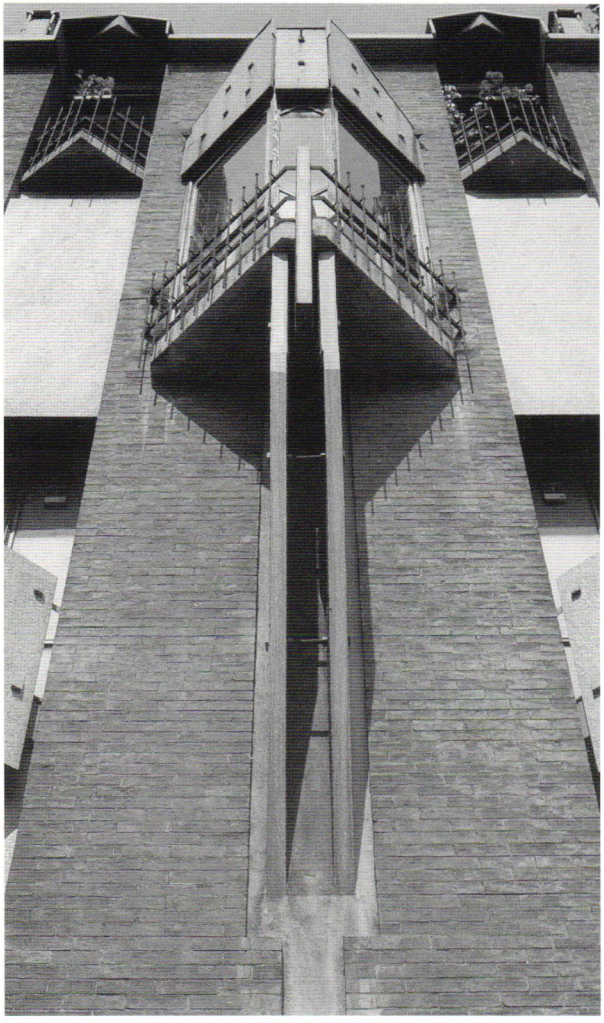
Fig. 11: Robert Gober, *Untitled Drawing*, 1995.

Fig. 12: Robert Gober, *Untitled* (*Virgin*), view of the Virgin figure from the back, 1997.

Fig. 13: Robert Gober, *Untitled* (*Virgin*), excavation of the ground of the museum, 1997.

MARY LOU LOBSINGER

MONSTROUS FRUIT:
THE EXCESS OF ITALIAN NEO-LIBERTY



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> The cult of the new, and thus the idea of modernity, is a rebellion against the fact that there is no longer anything new.
>
> Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia.*

The September 1957 editorial of *Casabella Continuità* took the form of an epistolary exchange between the editor Ernesto N. Rogers and the Milan-based architect Eugenio Gentili, a contributor to the magazine. Decrying the contents of issue 215, Gentili confronted Rogers with the question: if *Casabella* purports to be a review of modern architecture, where are the examples of true, explicit, and virile modernism?[1] Gentili's discontent lay, in part, with the plethora of photographic documentation devoted to the display of Auguste Perret's reconstruction of Le Havre, to Guido Canella's essay on the Amsterdam School, and to the "manifesto" of architectural neorealism, the Tiburtino housing quarter. While the attack was aimed at the publishing policies of the review, Gentili leveled pointed criticism at the architecture of young Torinesi architects Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola (Fig. 1). In contrast to his polite consignment of the illustrations of Tiburtino as a "picturesque" misrepresentation of contemporary Italian society, Gentili summarily dismissed the architecture of Gabetti and Isola as a "breed of monstrous fruit."[2] Furthermore, he predicted that *Casabella* 215 would, unfortunately, come to mark the official birth of neo-liberty, a term cleverly derived from the preponderance of turn-of-the-century *lo stile liberty*, the architecture of the bourgeoisie, in the hometown of the accused.[3] Titled "Ortodossia dell'eterodossia," the Gentili-Rogers exchange was but one episode in a brewing discontent over the contents of the magazine.[4] However, not only did the title of this particular installment serve to focus the terms of the debate, but with the naming of architectural

phenomena as neo-liberty, it put—albeit briefly—a provisional stylistic category of derogatory implications into circulation.

Within a few years, the local tempest over *Casabella*'s support of unorthodox views of modern architecture spilled beyond the Milan and Turin axis and indeed beyond the confines of Italian academic and print culture.[5] In 1959, Reyner Banham added fuel to the controversy when he pejoratively labeled a wide range of expressive experimentation within postwar Italian architecture that did not square with his idea of the true vocation of modernism as "Neoliberty." For Banham, Neoliberty was evidence of architectural revivalism and, as such, a regression from architectural modernism.[6] Thus, while neo-liberty had merely represented the reaction of one critic to one aspect of a heterogeneous and exploratory approach to modern architecture as pursued by two architects, Neoliberty represented *tout court* the Italian retreat from modern architecture.[7]

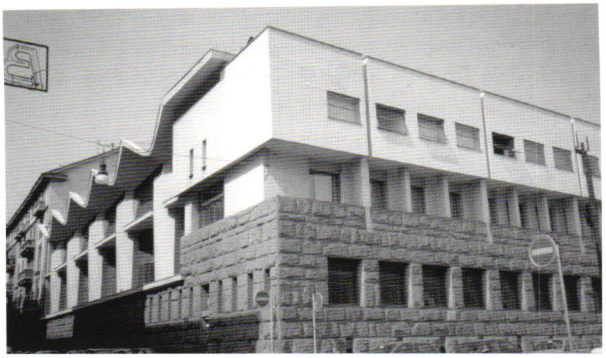
Between the turn of events around the challenges to Rogers's editorial mandate, the coining of the neo-liberty style, Banham's polemic and beyond, there remains as yet unexamined an eclecticism of ideas that nurtured the diversity of architectural forms explored by Italian architects in the late 1950s. The architectures espoused as neo-liberty were authored as conscious deviations from the path of "formalistic modernism."[8] Paradoxically, these formal deviations were launched as critiques of modernism's deviation from its original social and moral imperatives. Architects pursued formal experimentations—deemed as eclectic, revivalist, or historicist—as a critique of the perceived degeneration of modernism into a reductive and abstract style unrelated to contemporary reality. Young Italian architects such as Vittorio Gregotti, Aldo Rossi, Guido Canella, Aimaro Isola, and Roberto Gabetti reconsidered the tradition of modern architecture from a variety of viewpoints, but they all converged upon a shared belief: that in contemporary experience there, in fact, no longer existed anything new.[9]

That the dominant form of early modernism was ideologically bound up with the idea of the new is well established. The call for modern architecture to be of its time was, in part, responsible for the entrenchment of a tradition based on the ever-begetting potential for newness.[10] For some critics, the relentless undialectical pursuit of the new, under the "veil of temporal succession," petrified into a conceptual scheme comprised of a "never-changing core," which despite external appearance was, in fact, ever the same.[11] What offense did neo-liberty perpetrate against the tradition of the new? It questioned the conception of time as the temporal succession of the forever new. Time might be irreversible, but irreversible time was not to be understood in architecture as the linear progression or the advance of technological invention that naturally spawned new forms. The technologically innovative might not be equivalently reflected in formal invention.[12] The subjection of architecture to the antihistorical tradition of the new—that is, to the irreversible time of avant-garde rupture—was here displaced by an idea of architecture as a bearer of history made in the present.

There are two histories inextricably bound in this investigation. The first is that of *Casabella Continuità* and Ernesto N. Rogers's pursuit of the tradition of modern architecture. The second is the naming of neo-liberty, an event that demarcates an increasingly critical attitude toward Rogers's editorial mandate and his emphasis on history, as his detractors put it. When in 1953-54 Rogers re-introduced *Casabella* after a nearly seven-year hiatus, he promised to uphold a publishing policy that presented the work of "major exponents of modern architectural thought" and of "younger and less mature but promising talents" as equally significant contributions.[13] Against exclusivity, Rogers argued for an interpretation of architectural history as an "open horizon," for to dwell on "masterpieces" would be "to arbitrarily falsify the historical process."[14] Central to Rogers's position was the notion of historical continuity grounded on the belief of modern architecture as a tradition. An architecture that was both rooted in tradition and was of its time was poised against architectural formalism—that of traditionalism or idealism—and against the *"a prioristic"* approach to design, that is, an approach that presumed formal or constructional attributes in advance of cultural and social-historical conditions.[15] Rogers wrote:

> But the real problem arises when people persist in recognizing the "style" of the Modern Movement from figurative appearances and not from the expression of a *method* seeking to establish new and clearer relations between content and form within the phenomenology of a pragmatic and open process, a *process* which rejects every kind of *a priori* dogmatism.[16]

Rogers's "phobia of formal codification" guided his pursuit of a method capable of including the diversity that had characterized modern architecture from its inception.[17]



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Rogers's support of architectural diversity was held responsible for influencing the turn of Italian architects toward historical reference and eclectic forms of composition. For example, in *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* of September 1957, the same month as Gentili's letter, a photograph of the Borsa Valori (Stock Exchange) by Gabetti and Isola was accompanied by a comment that claimed the building as representative of a violent reaction against contemporary architecture and as an affirmation of the "extravagant doctrine" supported by the editorial policies of *Casabella* (Fig. 2).[18] In fact, Rogers had twice voiced his lack of appreciation for the work of Gabetti and Isola.[19] He had claimed that, formal appearances aside, Gabetti and Isola's architecture presented a personal position and not a method.[20] Their predilection for historical motifs was driven by taste. The work was autobiographical and literary. Furthermore, it was undialectical and thus could not adequately represent the reality of the times.

Gabetti and Isola's architecture seems to have pushed Rogers's already generous perspective on the relation of history to contemporary architecture to its extreme limit.[21] Today it is ironic to note that two of the most contentious works, the Borsa Valori (1953-56) (Figs. 2, 3) and the Bottega d'Erasmo (1953-56) (Figs. 4, 5), built when the architects had recently graduated from the Polytecnico of Turin, have enjoyed a sustained appreciation for their elegant composition and structural sophistication. Both are located in the center of the industrial city of Turin in northern Italy. The Bottega is a five-storey building sited on a trapeziodal infill lot located in a perimeter block that is unusual in Turin's urban typology. The client's antiquarian bookstore occupies the first and second floors, and the remaining floors contain private apartments. Undoubtedly, the façades were the cause of consternation among architects and critics. The street face is distinguished by bow-

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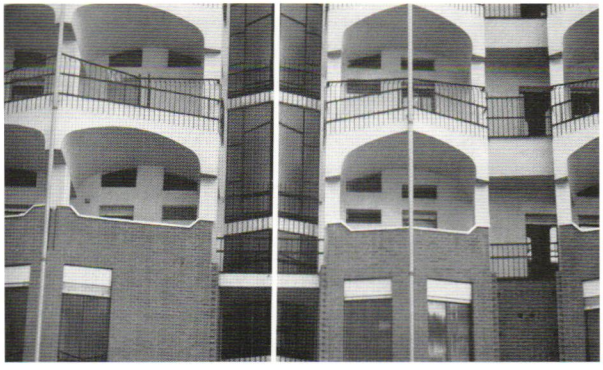
shaped windows and balconies, finished with wrought-iron railings, and crowned with Luserna stone attached by galvanized hinges. The back presents an undulating facade of balconies reminiscent of Gaudí's Casa Milá (Fig. 4). Borsa Valori, on the other hand, is composed of an eclectic selection of architectural references borrowed from the lexicon of modern architecture.[22] While the façade of the Bottega reads as a surface articulated through decorative brickwork and through details that climax in a slate and copper slope-backed roof, the Borsa takes advantage of its freestanding position to explore expressive form (Fig. 2).[23] Dominated by volumetric forms, a white rectangular mass sits on a dark gray rusticated base and is topped off by a curvilinear roof that appears to float effortlessly. It conjures an ambiguous reference to Le Corbusier. The span over the interior floor of the stock exchange was achieved by means of a structural assembly reminiscent of Anatole de Baudot, or Viollet le Duc's proposal for an assembly hall, or Horta at the Maison du Peuple (Fig. 3). The hanging lights and other interior details are reminiscent of Aalto's work or Berlage's Stock Exchange. The Bottega more distinctively owes some

debt to the Amsterdam School or the Wagnerschule and only vaguely recalls Raimondo D'Aronco's Liberty-style pavilion for Turin's International Exhibition of 1902. That these two very different works were designed during a three-year period would be disconcerting for those critics and architects who held an idealized conception of the technical and formal progression of modern architecture.

What reasoning supported this experimentation with architectural form?[24] In a letter published by way of introduction, Gabetti and Isola admitted a keen interest in the works of the pioneers of modern architecture for "the *possibilities* they offered."[25] This interest was not compelled by admiration for the enunciation of the "word" over the "event" but for the realization of "complex achievements."[26] From this letter one knows that behind their architectural reasoning are concepts plucked from readings in existentialism and phenomenology.[27] That concrete acts are the substance of events within architectural history counters the *a priori* designation of style, that is, the "word" over and above the "event."[28] By means of philosophical concepts, they argued that their architecture was not only to be of its time but was also to present "a non-retrievable past" within "a horizon open toward a future yet to be disclosed."[29] Their architectural eclecticism hinged on the existential conception of choice. To choose in the present from the possibilities offered throughout architectural history required the architect to bracket off the past—to suspend all preconceptions of the natural attitude and about received forms or prejudices about reality—for the task of choice.[30] Framed in this way, the highly selective employ of materials, architectural vocabulary, and detail could not be viewed as merely eclectic but as representative of "the present as an isolated occasion within history."[31] A strong identification exists between these statements and the views promulgated by the Italian existentialist philosopher Nicola Abbagnano who stated, for example, that "if an event does not have characteristics which allows it to be recognized as something unique and not repeatable, it belongs to all times and to none; its chronological location is irrelevant."[32]

Here the idea of the unique is not to be conflated with newness or novelty; rather, the unique is the result of individual acts of choice that situate the author and the architecture in the present. Architecture as a non-repeatable event was thought to offer subtle resistance to the universalizing imperative of academic modernism as a movement.[33] It countered the proselytizing "word" with the factual "event," while the employ of unassimilated forms countered the modernist propensity to totalization.[34] The *koiné* of the Bottega or the "kaleidoscopic" references assembled in the voluble Borsa were acts of resistance within a world confirmed through standardization and repetition to being ever the same.[35] Thus, architecture as the ensemble of choices demarcating the event punctuated the ideology of modernity and the anti-historical mandate of the tradition of the new.[36]



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In an unpublished text of 1959, Aldo Rossi examined the problem of "the tradition of the anti-tradition of the new" to argue that the principles of the Modern Movement had been "deformed" during its early evolution.[37] For Rossi, early modern architecture conveniently fell into a misalignment with the idea of modernity. Characteristics associated with modernity as a nineteenth-century phenomena, such as novelty, technological innovation, and progress had become conflated with and reified as the architectural principles of the Modern Movement. These principles, married to the notion of the architect as innovator, were extended systematically to become integral to modern architecture as a style.[38] The idea of tradition in architecture, negatively characterized as building for permanence, was usurped for the ideal of innovation. From this moment stems the modernist aversion for eclecticism and revivalism—that is, for anything that appeared as a repetition of the past.[39] Paradoxically, the tradition of modernism—to be innovative, to be of its time—was now itself not merely outmoded but a sign of regressive thinking, since it presented "modern architecture as a repetition of its original solution."[40]

Rossi's arguments here and in other writings from this time reveal some debt to the thought of Theodor Adorno and Georg Lukács. It is not out of context to cite Rossi's use of Adorno in *Casabella* 219, the issue Banham gratuitiously employed as evidence of the Italian retreat from modernism. In a book review of Hans Sedlmayr's *Verlust der Mitte*, Rossi presented a lengthy citation from *Minima Moralia* to cut through the ideology of decline and fall that marred Sedlmayr's view of modernism.[41]

> Dwelling, in the proper sense, is now impossible.... The functional modern habitations designed from a *tabula rasa* are living-cases manufactured by experts for philistines, or factory sites that have strayed into the consumption sphere, devoid of all relation to the occupant: in them even the nostalgia for independent existence, defunct in any case, is sent packing.... From a distance the difference between the Vienna Workshops and the Bauhaus is no longer so considerable. Purely functional curves, which have broken free of their purpose, are now becoming just as ornamental as the basic structures of Cubism.[42]

The vanguard achievements of the Modern Movement are here cast aside to argue that to proceed as if nothing has changed is to deny the reality of technique that dominated modern culture. Following Adorno, Rossi posits that the conflation of modernity, modern architecture, and technologically deployed rationality was thrown into doubt by the mass destruction and suffering experienced during World War II. The same technological hubris, Rossi points out, was responsible for the vast expanse of housing quarters on the seemingly endless peripheries of Milan and Turin.[43] Postwar mass-produced housing revealed that the distance between factory-like housing and the factory, or between the ideological foothold of functionalist claims and those of ornament-driven architectures was annihilated within the massification of culture. They appeared like the disposability of "old food cans."[44]

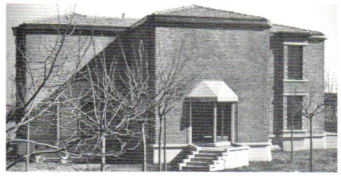
For many of the young Italian architects who grew under the mentorship of Rogers's *Casabella*, the ideology of the new was most evident in the reified and conventionalized forms of academicized modern architecture. That architecture was codified and distributed much like the assembly-line items produced for mass consumption.[45] Against the reduction of architectural possibilities, the Torinesi enlisted existentialist concepts to underwrite a personal architectural *engagé*. The Milanesi, on the other hand, underwrote their readings of existentialism and phenomenology with varying intensities of allegiance to Marxism to mount a stringent critique of the Modern Movement and its collusion with the rise of mass culture. In 1957, Vittorio Gregotti claimed the architecture of Gabetti and Isola to be representative of the intellectual crisis experienced by young architects in confrontation with modernist functionalist doctrine and as an exemplar of a willful resistance to a "corrupt" rationalist tradition.[46] Guido Canella wrote that the collaborative works by Gregotti, Meneghetti, and Stoppino exemplified an ironic gesture, a neo-dada-like response to mass culture.[47] Paolo Portoghesi characterized the Milanese turn to neo-liberty as promoting an Adorno-like aesthetic atonalism against avant-gardist novelty.[48] Still others referred to the eclectic compositions as ambiguous or as the architectural equivalent to aphorism, an incompleteness poised against the presupposition of totality.[49] Detractors claimed it an opportunistic response to a booming consumer market, run rampant by developer speculation. In this case, the reference to architectural forms of the turn of the century was a cynical plundering of the past when an earlier expansion of the Italian economy saw the bourgeoisie transform *lo stile Liberty* into the garish commodity of real estate speculation.[50]

There is not much built evidence to put these interpretations to the test. The projects by Giorgio Raineri, Gae Aulenti, the studio of Gregotti, Meneghetti and Stoppino, as well as Gabetti and Isola as published in *Casabella* 219 all

share some formal traits: decorative brickwork, pitched roofs of varying styles, odd-shaped, punched or bow windows, irregular floor plans, and details more closely aligned with the Amsterdam School or Aalto rather than the decorative flourishes of the Liberty style (Figs. 6, 7).[51] The main sources of evidence for the so-called neo-liberty are the exchanges scripted in response to Banham's attack. In these texts, architects and critics took the opportunity to examine not only neo-liberty but the turn within contemporary Italian architecture toward revivals, spontaneous forms, and the eclectic use of forms and details in general.[52] That architects of the postwar generation turned to formal experimentation as a protest against the Modern Movement and against mass culture was well understood if not always found sympathetic. For example, acknowledged in a critique titled "Trucchi e galateo di un 'aufklärung' milanese" ("Tricks and Good Manners of an Enlightened Milanese") is an adherence to the writings of "... Gramsci, Lukács, Sartre, Argan, and Adorno (the professors they substitute for the fathers of the church or as an infallible Pope in the dispute of the Milanese)" to launch critiques of the "triumph of the machine" and to support "their regression as a critique of interiority."[53] This same review warns that theory-laden architecture may, in fact, be an intellectual alibi that allowed the architects to evade the current social-cultural situation. Three years earlier, Eugenio Gentili had been less understanding of Gabetti and Isola's turn to philosophical concepts to underwrite their architectural experimentation. Gentili denounced their work as "a kind of timid architecture which refuses to look at the possibly unpleasant reality of our times and imagines that it is building something serious while it is merely hiding behind the daisies; it is pure literary snobbery."[54]

By the early sixties all the talk about the odd formal experiments called neo-liberty was well over. The sources of critique had certainly changed, but one aspect took hold and evolved: the quest for a theory of architecture that engaged philosophical concepts to understand the material reality of architectural production and the city became more rigorous and focused. A generation of Italian architects mentored under the auspices of Rogers and *Casabella*, a generation which matured within the dramatic economic and cultural transformations of northern Italian cities, understood that to be of one's time did not entail the mimetic reflection of surface effects of an ideologically suspect modernity. Rather, the conflation of modernity and modern architecture posed a seemingly insurmountable challenge to the realization of a truly contemporary architecture.

6



7

In conclusion, it remains to be asked: what affront did the architecture of Gabetti and Isola pose to the more conservative architects and critics? Gentili's designation of neo-liberty as a monstrous fruit imputes a sense of excess and over-ripeness to this architecture, that is, an architecture "deviated from the assumed natural form or character."[55] It was denounced as an "excessive stylistic and decadent indulgence."[56] However, if neo-liberty was indeed culpable of a formal transgression against modern architecture, it was a violation based on a normative conception of modern architecture. More likely, the formal attributes of neo-liberty, both in their ambiguous reference to recent history and eclectic assemblage, contravened the conception of the progressive unfolding of time as evidenced in the formal and technical innovation of architecture. Neo-liberty put this notion of time and thus architectural progress out of joint. Its confusion of time through ambiguous historical references presented an overabundance of signification. This presentation of heterogeneous and uncontrollable meanings challenged an idealized view of the Modern Movement and of modern architecture as a style transparently related—by means of technique—to its time.

Neo-liberty's deviation, however, is only apparent since such a claim relies on an assumed correctness of a particular normative strain of modernism. It was precisely the false premises of this exclusive view of modernism that Rogers's *Casabella* was poised to amend. The modernist dismissal of tradition and history were for Rogers a falsification of the diversity always already existing within architectural modernism. Likewise, the making of a universal style, a repeatable abstract idea of architecture was, as the young Aldo Rossi argued, the original deformation of the Modern Movement. The continued adherence to this architectural logic was, in the postwar era, evidence of the "exhaustion" and "dissolution of the Modern Movement."[57]

Notes

All translations are by the author unless specified otherwise. Conversations with Vittorio Gregotti (Milan), Professor Carlo Olmo (Polytecnico di Torino), and Professor Marco De Michelis (IUAV) have contributed to my understanding of Italian architecture of the 1950s and 60s.

1 Eugenio Gentili and Ernesto N. Rogers, "Ortodossia dell'eterodossia," *Casabella Continuità* 216 (September 1957): 2. Bruno Zevi calls neo-liberty the "andropause" of Italian modern architecture. Andropause, the male equivalent of menopause, refers to the cessation of reproduction. See Bruno Zevi, "L'Andropausa degli architetti moderni," *L'Architettura Cronache e storia* 46.4 (August 1959): 222-23.

2 Gentili, "Ortodossia dell'eterodossia," 3.

3 The Art Nouveau style of many of the pavilions at the 1902 International Exhibition in Turin and the 1906 exhibition in Milan had great influence on the local architecture. Note that the spelling of neo-liberty transforms to neoliberty in Paolo Portoghesi's article "Dal Neorealismo al Neoliberty," *Comunità* 65 (December 1958): 69-79. I follow Gentili's spelling.

4 See, for example, the dispute between Giancarlo De Carlo and Ernesto N. Rogers, which was resolved by De Carlo's resignation from the *Casabella* editorial board in 1957. De Carlo argued that *Casabella* had become too focused on historical topics and that the editor was avoiding the real problems of architecture and of contemporary reality. See Rogers's announcement of the new advisory board, De Carlo's letter explaining his resignation, and Rogers's response in *Casabella Continuità* 214 (February 1957): unpaginated.

5 The contents of the magazine, particularly the view towards history, had been the subject of debates held by the *Movimento di Studi per l'Architettura* (MSA) and among architecture students and young architects from Rome, Milan, Novara, and Turin. See, for example, the report "Una discussione su Casabella all'M.S.A.," *Casabella Continuità* 215 (1957): 49-50.

6 Reyner Banham, "Neoliberty, The Italian Retreat from Modern Architecture," *The Architectural Review* 125.747 (April 1959): 231-35. It seems that Banham's attack on neo-liberty was initially provoked by the projects of young architects Giorgio Raineri, Gae Aulenti, Vittorio Gregotti, Lodovico Meneghetti, and Giotto Stoppino as well as the introductory article "Il passato e il presente nella nuova architettura," by Aldo Rossi as published in *Casabella Continuità* 219 (1958): 16- 31. Banham's definition expanded this initial set of projects to include the postwar work of architects active since the 1930s, for example, Figini and Pollini, Ignazio Gardella, and Bbpr. Note that this difference in generation in the pre and postwar experience was, in part, responsible for the discord over neo-liberty: Gentili and Rogers on one side and Rogers's students including Canella, Gregotti, Rossi, and Aulenti on the other.

7 Banham, 235.

8 See Guido Canella, "La Prova del Nove," *Nuovi Disegni per il Mobile Italiano* (March 14-27, 1960): 18; Portoghesi, "Dal neorealismo al neoliberty," *Comunità* (December 1958): 78; Carlo Melograni, "Dal Neoliberty al Neopiacentismo," *Il Contemporaneo* 13 (May 1959): 17-28; Annarosa Cotta and Attilio Marcolli, "Ambiguità dell'architettura Milanese," *Superfici* 1 (March 1961): 14-18; Manfredo Tafuri, "Neorealismo, neoeclettismo, revivalismo nella vicenda architettonica romana dal 1945-1961," *Superfici* 5 (April 1962): 34; Portoghesi "L'impegno delle nuove generazioni," *Aspetti dell'arte contemporanea. Omaggio a Quaroni* (Rome: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1963): 262; and Guido Canella, "Processo al Neoliberty," *Fantasia* 9 (September 1963): 36-43. On the more "catholic" Torinesi and the Marxist Milanesi, see Vittorio Gregotti, *New Directions in Italian Architecture* (New York: George Braziller, 1968): 55-56. For Tafuri's hindsight view of neo-liberty, see "Modern Architecture and the Eclipse of History," *Theories and History of Architecture* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, [1967] 1980): 51-52. More recently, see Jorge Silvetti, "On Realism in Architecture," *The Harvard Architectural Review* 1 (Spring 1980): 15, 16-17.

9 Theodor Adorno, "Late Extra," *Minima Moralia. Reflections on a Damaged Life* (New York: Verso, 1994): 235-38. *Minima Moralia* was translated to Italian in 1954 by Giulio Einaudi. Note that many Italian architects of this period read and employed philosophical concepts in a creative manner. For example, they might freely cite Adorno, Sartre, and Husserl, all positively, within the same context. Given Adorno's position on the latter two philosophers, this may seem counter-intuitive.

10 On the tradition of the new, see Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*. Tafuri's conception of the new is adapted, in part, from Harold Rosenberg, *The Tradition of the New* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1959) translated as *La tradizione del nuovo* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1964).

11 Adorno, "Late Extra," 236-37.

12 Despite the formal vocabularies of the Bottega d'Erasmo and the Borsa Valori, for example, aspects of their construction were technologically innovative.

13 Rogers, "Continuità," *Casabella Continuità* 199 (December 1953-January 1954): 2.

14 Rogers, "Continuità, Ortodossia," 3. To focus on polemics or formal criteria meant that in "accepting Gropius one would have to reject Le Corbusier; to accept Aalto, one would exclude Mies van der Rohe, etc."

15 Rogers, "Continuità," 2.

16 Rogers, "Continuità o crisi," *Casabella Continuità* 215 (April-May 1957): 5. Italics mine.

17 Rogers, "Ortodossia," 3. Also see Tafuri, *History of Italian Architecture, 1944-1985* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990): 55.

18 "Jeunes Architectes," *L'architecture d'aujourd'hui* 73 (September 1957): 55.

19 For Rogers's critique of Gabetti and Isola, see the editorials "Continuità o crisi" and "Ortodossia dell'eterodossia," cited above.

20 For a summary of Rogers's concept of "continuità" and its relation to method, see Adrian Forty, *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000): 201. Also see Tafuri, *History of Italian Architecture,* 55.

21 Note that this was not the first publication of architectural projects by Giorgio Raineri and Roberto Gabetti. See *Casabella Continuità* 212 (September-October 1956): 31-57.

22 The architects won the commission through a limited competition sponsored by Turin's Chamber of Commerce in 1952. The project team included architect Giorgio Raineri and structural engineer Giuseppe Raineri. The site for the new stock exchange was a lot in the center of the city made vacant after a WWII bombardment. Manuela Morresi claims that the rusticated base is reminiscent of traditional Italian public *palazzo* types and the interior space is reminiscent of the Maison du Peuple of Victor Horta (1895-98). Andrea Guerra and Manuela Morresi, *Gabetti e Isola. Opere di architettura* (Milan: Electa, 1996): 291.

23 On the use of brick as a local building tradition, see, for example, the Palazzo Carignano begun by Guarino Guarini in 1679. Note that Gabetti and Isola's statement on the building process implies that the choice of brick was based on the presence of local skilled labor power. See "L'impegno della tradizione," *Casabella Continuità* 215 (April-May 1957): 63-64.

24 Carlo Olmo, "Un frammento di ordine tentato," *Parametro* 156 (May 1987): 15.

25 Note that Roberto Gabetti (1925-2000) authored and co-wrote several books on architecture. His interest in constructional techniques is evident in early publications such as "Origini del calcestruzzo armato," *Quaderni dell'Istituto di Storia della Scienza delle Costruizioni,* part I, 5 (1955), part II, 6 (1956). His interest in history is evident through writings that range from Perret to Antonelli to a book co-authored with Carlo Olmo, *Le Corbusier e "L'Esprit Nouveau"* (Turin: Einaudi, 1975). Note his entry "Eclettismo," for the *Dizionario*

Enciclopedico di Architetture e Urbanistica, Paolo Portoghesi, ed. (Rome: Istituto Editoriale Romano, 1968): 211-26.

[26] Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola, "L'impegno della tradizione," 63. It seems that they mean the complex architectural and structural achievements.

[27] See Nicola Abbagnano's discussion of the concepts of possibility and situation presented in popular form in "Existentialism in Italy," *La filosofia contemporanea in Italia* (Rome, 1958); reprinted in *Critical Existentialism* (New York: Anchor Books, 1969): 1-18. Gabetti was familiar with the writings of Abbagnano, Husserl, and Heidegger. Conversation with Professor Carlo Olmo, August 2001, Turin.

[28] The architects describe the design and building process of the Bottega in terms of their choices and of the contributions offered by the craftsmen and engineers who built the project. For example, a suggestion made by stonemasons led to the decision to use Luserna stone. Gabetti and Isola state that in contrast to design processes or constructional production (i.e., the use of universal systems) where all is decided in advance of the process of building on site, many of their decisions took place on site during construction. Their process-oriented mode of decision-making is opposed to that of the Modern Movement's technical rationalization of construction.

[29] Enzo Paci, "La crisi della cultura e la fenomenologia dell'architettura contemporanea," *La Casa* 6 (1959): 356.

[30] The Husserlian notion of bracketing enables the setting aside, or bracketing out, both of "reality as such" and our "natural attitude" toward it. "[W]e are concerned with reality only insofar as it is intended, represented, intuited, or conceptually thought." See David Wood, "Husserl's Phenomenology of Time," *The Deconstruction of Time* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1989): 41-40. See Enzo Paci, "L'architettura e il mondo della vita," *Casabella Continuità* 217 (1957): 53-55.

[31] Gabetti and Isola, 63.

[32] Nicola Abbagnano, "Historiographic Work in Philosophy," *Rivista di Filosofia*, 1 (1955); reprinted in *Critical Existentialism*, 199.

[33] Roberto Gabetti, Aimaro Isola, and Vittorio Gregotti, "L'impegno della tradizione," *Casabella Continuità* 215 (April-May 1957): 63.

[34] Nicola Abbagnano, "Existentialism, Old and New," Address to the Third Program of the Italian Radio (July 1960); reprinted in *Critical Existentialism*, 226.

[35] Carlo Olmo, "La Bottega d'Erasmo. Una architettura, la sua immagine, la sua interpretazione," *Piemonte Vivo* 4 (1987): 23.

[36] Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola, "Mobili Moderni in Antiquariato," Vittorio Gregotti, Aldo Rossi, Roberto Gabetti, Amaro Isola, and Guido Canella, *Nuovi disegni il mobile italiano. Mostra dell'Osservatore delle arti industriali* (Milan: Lerici, 1960): 16-17.

[37] Rossi, "Qualè Tradizione?" unpublished manuscript, accession #880319, Aldo Rossi Archive, Getty Research Institute, Santa Monica, CA. The critique owes something to Rossi's reading of Georg Lukács's *Il Significato attuale del realismo critico,* trans. Renato Solmi (Turin: Einaudi, 1957). Rossi argued for a somewhat different conception of tradition some years earlier. See "Architettura moderna e tradizione nazionale," (1955); reprinted in Matilde Baffa, Corinna Morandi, Sara Protasoni, and Augusto Rossari, *Il Movimento di Studi per l'Architettura, 1945-1961* (Rome: Laterza, 1995): 461.

[38] Rossi, "Qualè Tradizione?" 1.

[39] Ibid., 2.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Rossi, "Una critica che respingiamo," *Casabella Continuità* 219 (1958): 32-35.

[42] Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, 38-39. The Italian version as cited by Rossi is somewhat stronger in its implications.

[43] Rossi, "Qualè Tradizione?" 2.

[44] Adorno, 39.

[45] Portoghesi, "Uno studioso inglese giudica l'architettura italiana," *Comunità* 72 (August-September 1959): 69.

[46] Vittorio Gregotti, "L'impegno della tradizione," 64.

[47] Canella, "Processo al Neoliberty," 36-43.

[48] Portoghesi, "L'impegno delle nuove generazioni," 262.

[49] See various articles in *Superfici* 1 (March 1961).

[50] A thorough examination of the relation of the Liberty style to economic and social transformations in Italy at the turn of the century remains to be written. A good source book is Eleonora Bairati and Daniele Riva, *Il Liberty in Italia* (Rome: Laterza, 1985).

[51] Aldo Rossi, "Il passato e il presente nella nuova architettura: Casa a Superga, di architetto Giorgio Raineri, Abitazione e scuderia a Milano, di architetto Gae Aulenti; Casa in Duplex a Cameri, degli architetti Vittorio Gregotti, Lodovico Meneghetti, Giotto Stoppino," *Casabella Continuità* 219 (1958): 16-32.

[52] It is important to mention that neither the Torre Velasca in Milan by Bbpr nor Casa alle Zattere in Venice by Ignazio Gardella were considered in Italian circles to be examples of neo-liberty. Rather, they were considered contextual responses to the conditions of the historic city.

[53] *Superfici* 1 (March 1960): 42.

[54] Gentili, 3.

[55] *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th ed., s.v. "monstrous."

[56] Banham citing Gillo Dorfles, 235.

[57] Rossi, "Qualè Tradizione?" 3.

Illustrations

Fig. 1: Bottega d`Erasmo, detail of elevation, 1953-56, Turin. Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola, architects.

Fig. 2: Borsa Valori, exterior view from the street,1952-56, Turin. Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola, architects.

Fig. 3: Borsa Valori, interior view, 1952-56, Turin. Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola, architects.

Fig. 4: Bottega d`Erasmo, rear elevation, 1953-56, Turin. Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola, architects.

Fig. 5: Bottega d`Erasmo, exterior view from the street, 1953-56, Turin. Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola, architects.

Fig. 6: House and Horse Stable, 1956, San Siro, Milan. Gae Aulenti, architect.

Fig. 7: Apartment Duplex, 1956, Novara. Vittorio Gregotti, Lodovico Meneghetti, Giotto Stoppino, architects.

NORMAL GROUP FOR ARCHITECTURE
HOTEL NORMAL

The following is an entry for an open competition sponsored by one of the largest former socialist corporations in Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia and the second largest city in the Balkans. The competition brief asked architects to provide the city with an "infrastructure for international exchange, tourism, and business in Belgrade." Despite tight UN sanctions, it seemed that Yugoslavia had not given up its ambition to be part of the global economy but was instead seeking proposals for a large hotel in the center of the city.

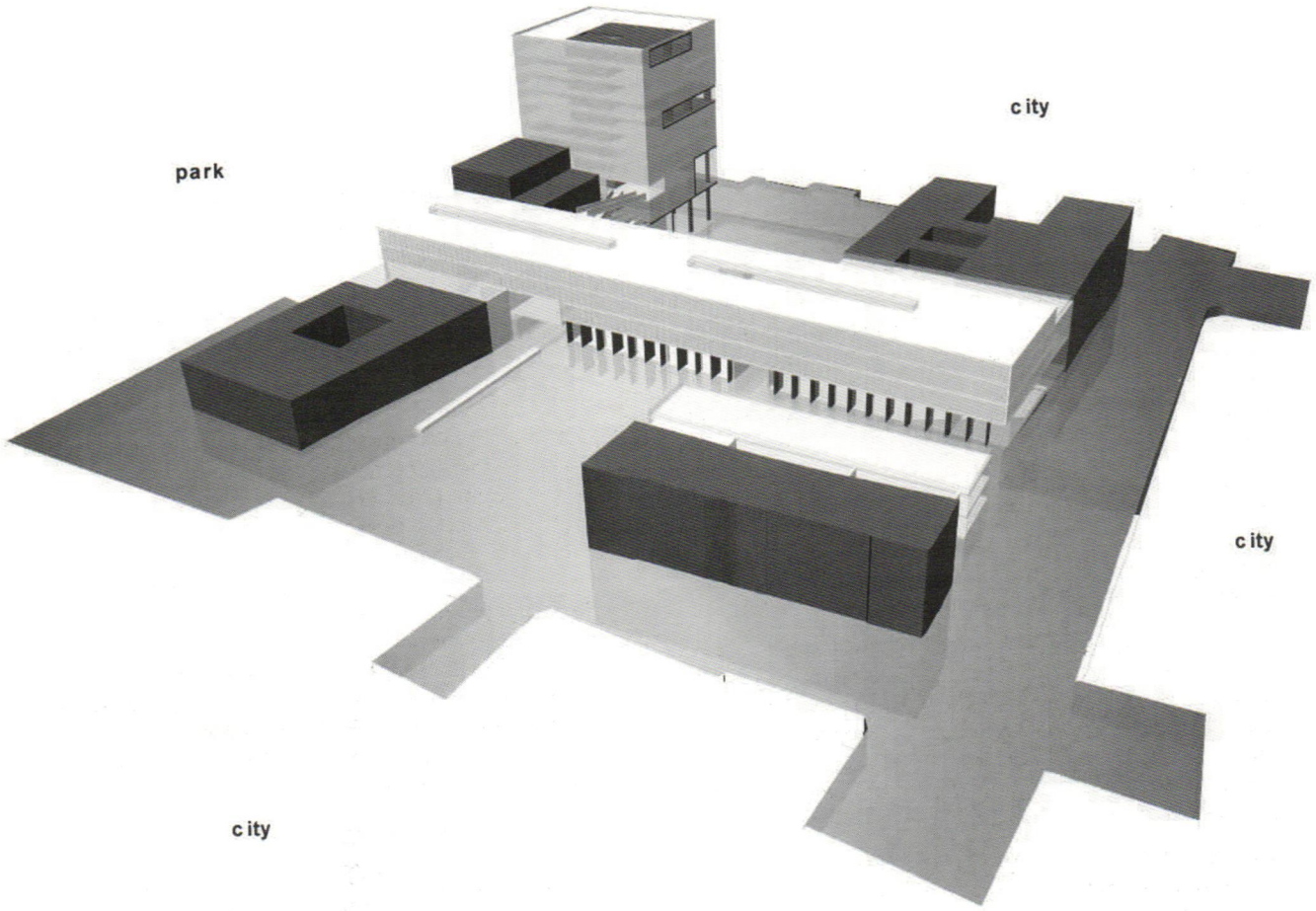
In October 1998, the NATO alliance issued its first threat to bomb Yugoslav cities. With the submission deadline set for that November, we were faced with a new paradox: how and why does one propose a design for a hotel in the middle of a city targeted for destruction?

Furthermore, we received more news from Belgrade about the uncertainty of the site: if the existing buildings were to be selected for bombing, we were informed, then the problem of "context" would be eliminated altogether. On the other hand, if the buildings were to be spared, we would still have to think about how to blend our proposal to the new surroundings.

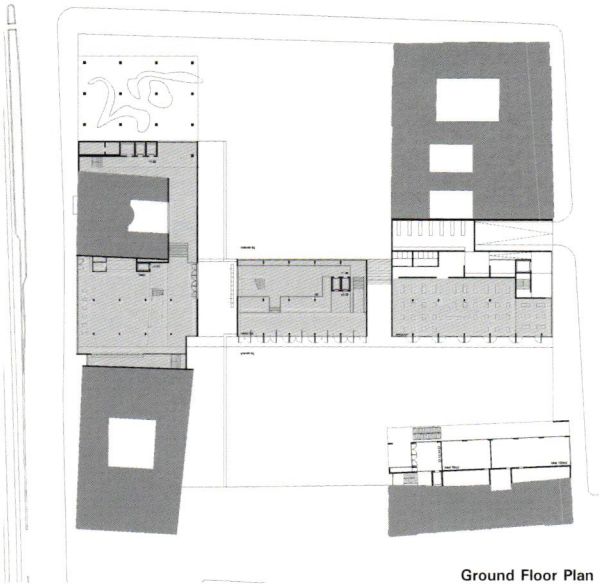
We felt that the most radical answer to match the spectacular brief under the threat of war is a direct response, a proposal that can best be described as normal. Hotel Normal consists of a 100-meter-long bar building dividing an existing urban void into two squares at different levels, visually connected through the main lobby. Building remnants of the city block from the past wars were thus not replicated nor juxtaposed but joined by a new horizontal volume. At the corner of the block facing the park—where a previous hotel was demolished in the 1950s—the new Sport's Hotel overlooks the city. A twelve-story tower, 28x28 meters deep in plan, is an intertwining mix of recreation programs and hotel units. A series of concrete bridges spanning over one of the remaining buildings connect the vertical volume to the horizontally laid-out hotel. Finally, as a response to the between the ambitions of local politics and wartime realism, we decided to avoid photo-realism by not showing any photographs of the site. The competition jury awarded the entry with a prize.

Recently, this project has led us to further research the notion of "normal." This research has been triggered by the need to develop an approach for designing under circumstances when design seems irrelevant and even unnecessary. Under such conditions, "normal" does not prove to be an actual condition; it describes hope for the future, nostalgia for the past, and an illusory judgement for the present, a present full of absurdities. In the case of Belgrade, these absurdities included nationalism, international sanctions, isolation, and a war of ideologies in a city still physically unaffected by the recent wars in the region. Untouched by bombing only until the spring of 1999, Belgrade expected that the future would become normal again.

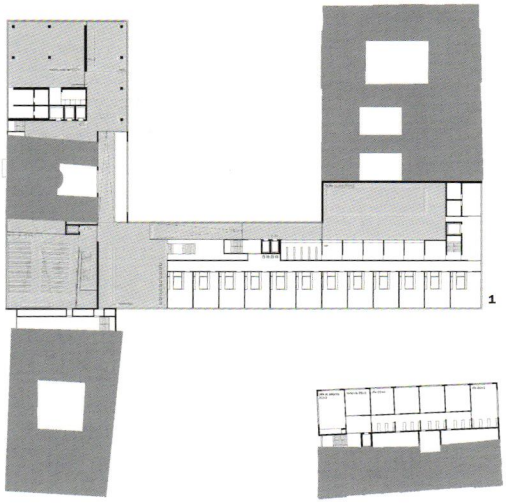
Hotel Normal is a place for a city where the absurd had lasted long enough to momentarily appear normal. It is a place without a representative image but offering a sequence of spaces. The sequence leads through wide corridors with hotel rooms occupied by an uncertain type of visitor to this isolated city. It continues along the large halls for concerts and speeches, and the intertwining spaces of the Sports Tower. While moving under the spell of uncertainty, we will have to accept that the normal can only exist in our minds. This may be because—curiously analogous to the agenda of modernism—being normal implies changing the world in order to accommodate ourselves as opposed to changing ourselves to find a place in the world.



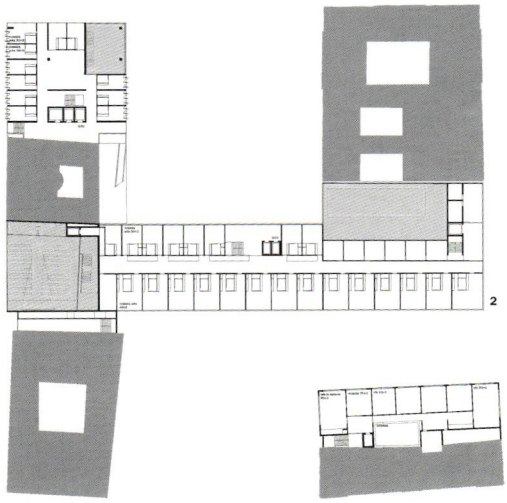
Hotel Normal, aerial view of the complex.



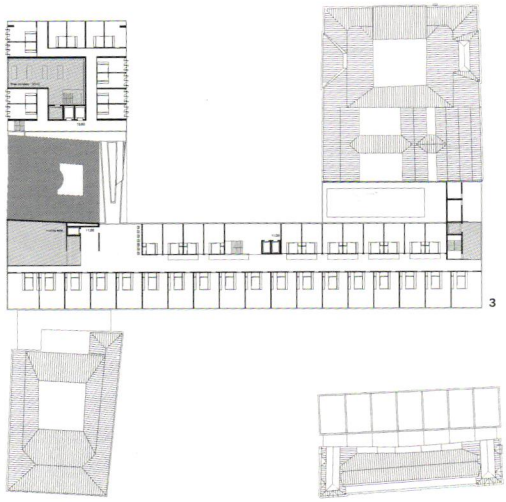
Ground Floor Plan
Level of the Street



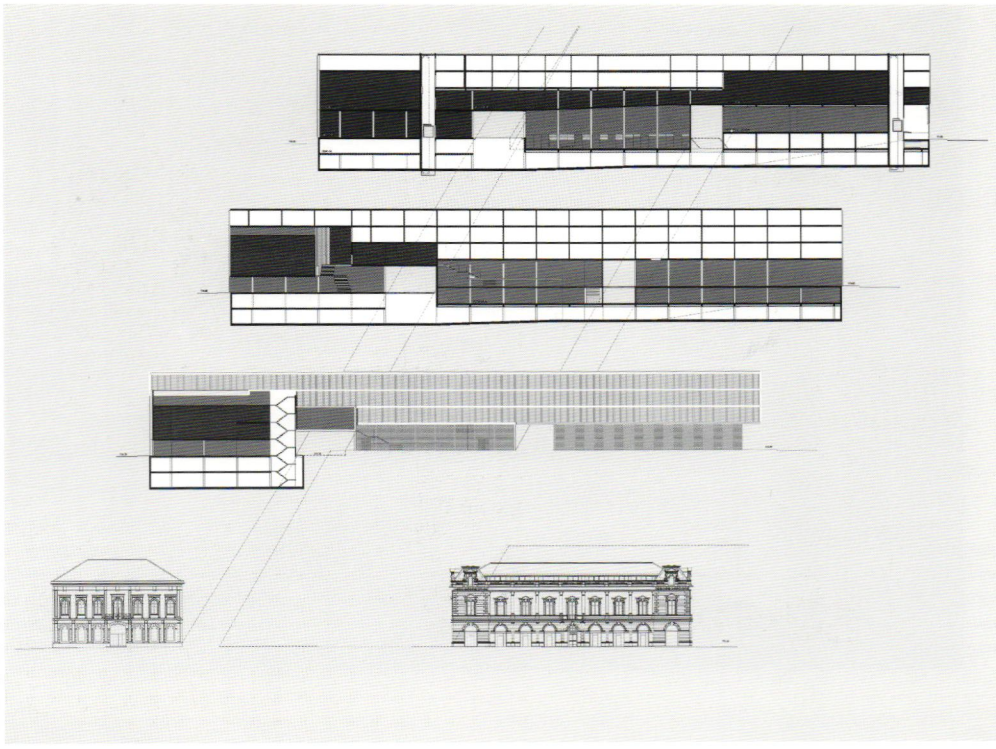
First Floor Plan
Level of the Main Hotel Lobby



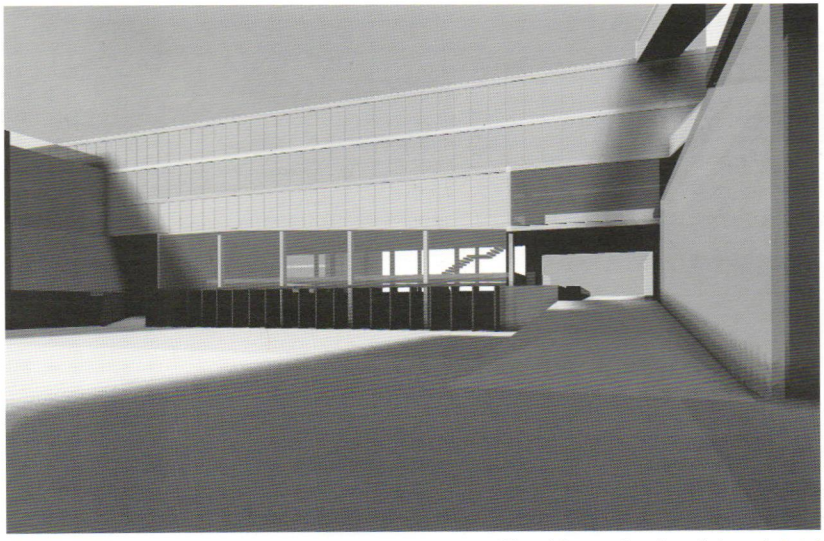
Second Floor Plan
Level of the Hotel Rooms

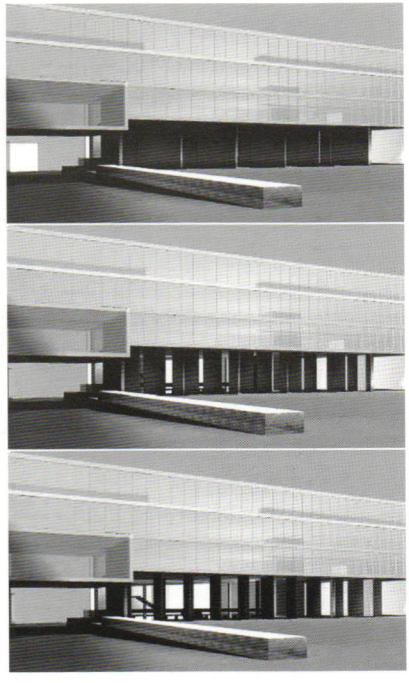


Third Floor Plan
Level of the Hotel Rooms

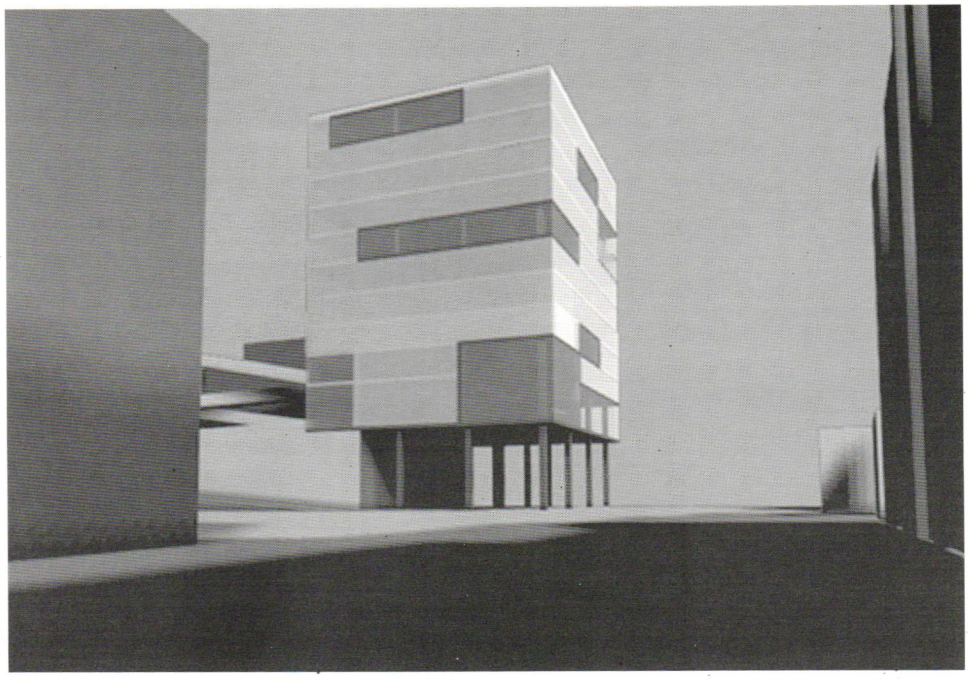


(*Left*) Sequence of Sections and Elevation Facing the Upper Square.

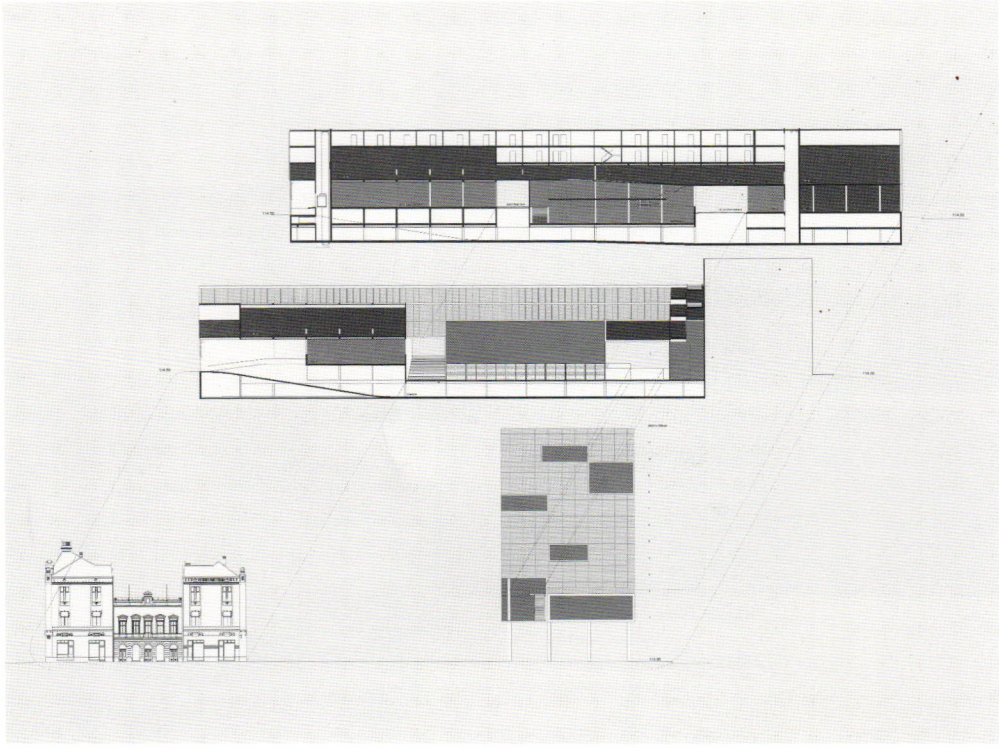


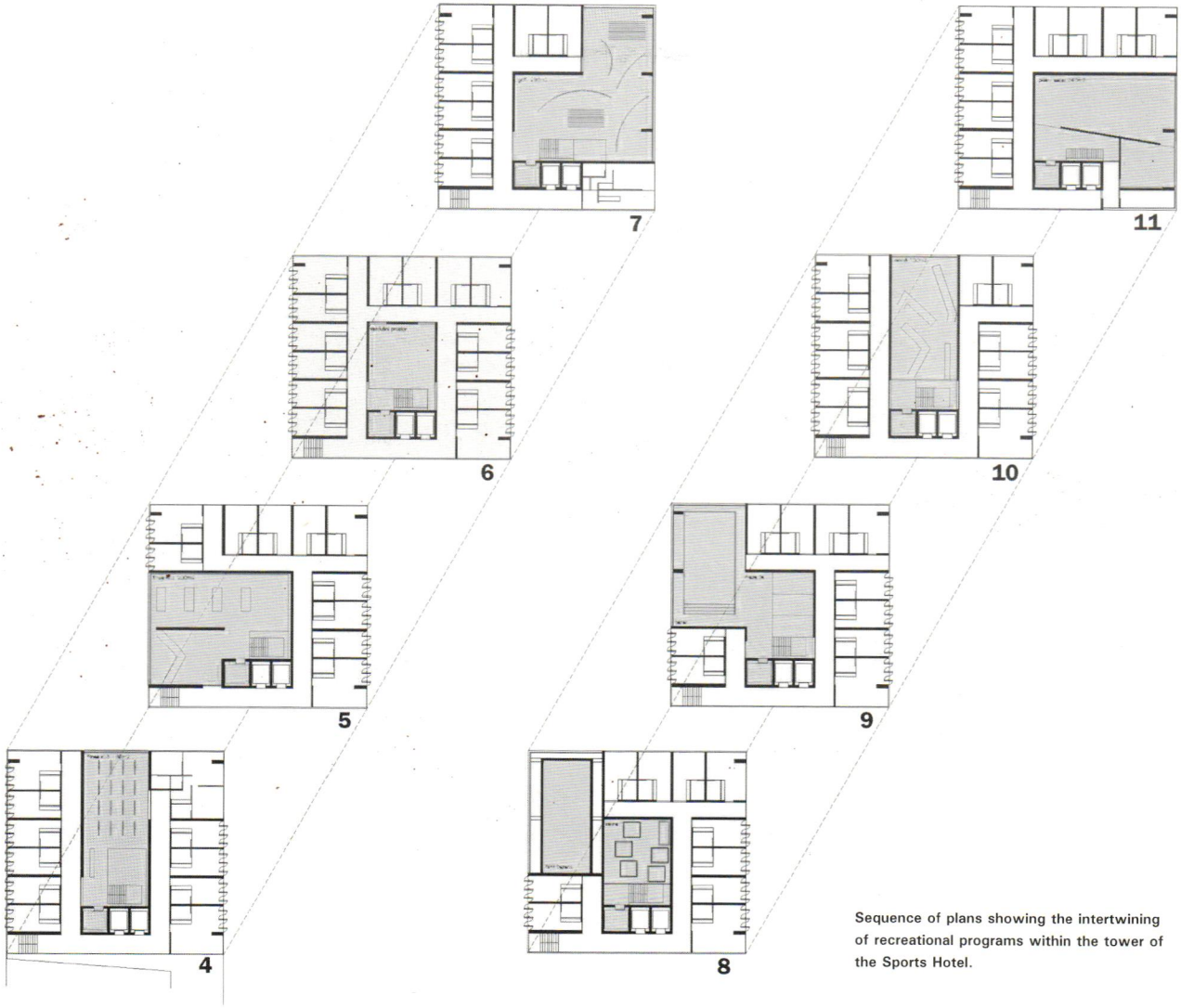


(*Above*) Perspective view of the main hotel volume and the lower square.
(*Right*) Views of the upper square showing the transformation of the façade.



(*Right*) View of the Sports Hotel from the street with interwining programs articulated on the façade. (*Below*) Sequence of sections and elevation facing the lower square.





Sequence of plans showing the intertwining of recreational programs within the tower of the Sports Hotel.

1

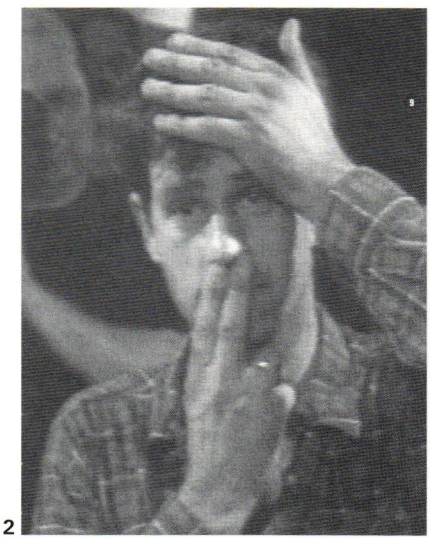
Christoph Schlingensief, The *"Ausländer raus!"* container set up in Herbert-von-Karajan Platz in Vienna, 2000.

KIRSTEN WEISS

RECYCLING THE IMAGE OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE IN ART

The term "public art" does not exist as such in the German language. The literal translation of the term *öffentliche Kunst* would seem like a tautology, as art is usually accessible through public museums in Germany. Unlike in the United States, private collections are rarely on view, and, if they are, they are usually considered public. More importantly, though, *öffentlich* is a term that is met with ambivalence by Germans. Although the problem of defining the public is not limited to Germany, Germans cannot help but be paranoid about the combined concepts of national identity and public art as the 55-year-long absence of a public Holocaust memorial proves.[1] Still, there is little Germans are more intent on achieving than reconstructing a tarnished public identity in the prestigious field of culture. Many contemporary German artists succeed in the global art industry, a realm that is detached from national problematics as well as the direct involvement of a greater public. In the past, public involvement—or the image thereof—has been thematized by German artists repeatedly, most notably by Joseph Beuys, Hans Haacke, Klaus Staeck, and Ernst Volland in the 1960s and 70s. The problem remains: what might constitute public involvement in art and how can the public legitimately be represented, if at all?[2] Can art exemplify the difficulty of locating and discerning public and private spheres statically, especially in a public sphere defined supposedly by itself?

Examples of the possibility of staging images of a representative public can be seen in the work of the contemporary German artist, Christoph Schlingensief (b. 1960), who facilitates a reenacting of a simulation of public sphere. After studying philosophy, philology, and art history, Schlingensief started his career in filmmaking and theater.[3] He soon moved on to television, talk shows, and live performances (Fig. 2). One example of his performances was "48 Hours Survival for Germany—My Felt, My Lard, My Hare," or "What Are 700 Oaks in Light of 6 Million Unemployed," which was staged in 1997 at the Documenta, a prestigious show of contemporary art that takes place every five years.[4] At the event, invited artists and actors slept at the Documenta for forty-eight hours and participated in events such as viewing childhood films of Schlingensief. The subtitle "My Felt, My Lard, My Hare" was a reference to Beuys, the authoritarian social-sculpture hero and his favored materials. When Schlingensief started proclaiming "Kill Helmut Kohl" ("*Tötet Helmut Kohl*") around the thirty-sixth hour of his performance, he was arrested by the German police. Another version of the events was that Schlingensief was arrested because he had started singing about the death of Lady Diana to the melody of "Staying



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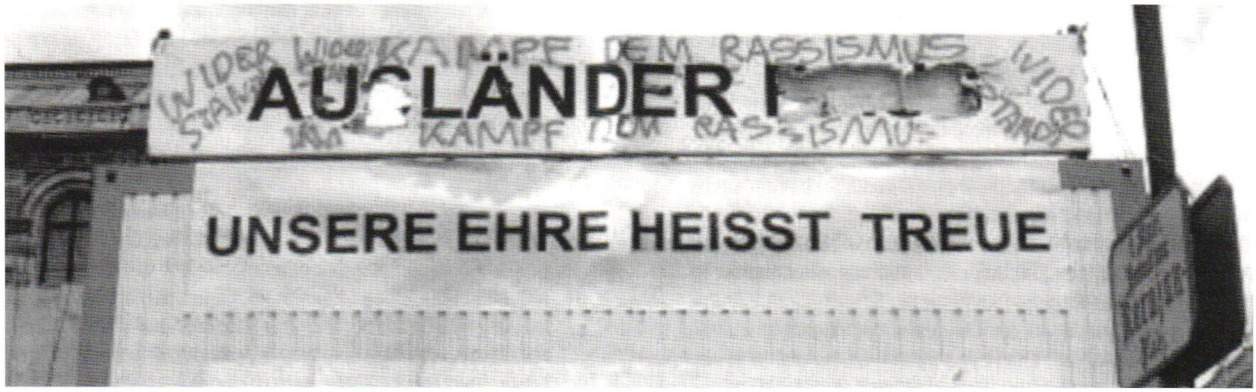
Alive."[5] Schlingensief published his own account: suspecting that the police were called by the owner of a café next door, he had used the speaker-system to warn the visitors of the café. He had announced: "I'm urging all guests of the café next door, to leave this ugliest café in Kassel; the waitress has AIDS and only a few more days to live."[6]

Schlingensief increasingly created events and campaigns that would reference and manipulate media representations not only of his own work but also of the constantly reconfigured image of public culture, which he continues to use as his raw material. His activities are by now certain to be widely distributed by means of extensive media coverage and thus can take place in spaces (private or public in basic economic terms) that may retroactively be defined as "public spaces."[7] Using campaign slogans such as "Failure as Chance" or "Prove Your Existence" for his political party "Chance 2000," he made a point of promoting unemployed and disabled people as candidates for party offices, alluding to concepts of affirmative action in democracies.[8]

Because it apparently qualified as beneficial to public welfare, Schlingensief recently managed to have the German government subsidize the production of his version of *Hamlet,* performed in Switzerland. Neo-Nazis, who supposedly wanted to quit being Neo-Nazis, participated in the play so as to facilitate their re-socialization. The former Neo-Nazis were described by Schlingensief's press speaker as "Pop-nazis" as they were primarily utilizing their Neo-Naziness—clearly communicated by their stereotypical looks—as an asset for media distribution.[9]

One of the most complex projects of Schlingensief was "*Wien-Aktion,*" also called "Please Love Austria—First European Coalition Week," or "Foreigners Out—Artists against Human Rights."[10] Within the scope of the annual *Wiener Festwochen*, director Luc Bondy had commissioned Schlingensief to stage a performance in Vienna. From June 11 until June 17, 2000, a container was set up on the centrally located Herbert-von-Karajan-Platz adjacent to the opera (Fig. 1). Just like in the Dutch TV-show "Big Brother" that had been immensely popular in Germany and Austria, twelve persons, who were identified as refugees that had applied for political asylum in Austria, were asked to live in the container for a week. What happened inside of the container was aired around the clock on an Internet TV channel. As in the television show "Big Brother," the audience could call in daily and place their votes for the two candidates they would most like to see deported from the country. The last refugee to stay in the container was promised a prize of 30,000 Austrian Schillings and marriage to an Austrian citizen through which the refugee would attain the status of a legal resident.

Biographies of the participants were posted on Schlingensief's website containing tabloid-style characterizations of each individual's views on sex, money, and family values. One refugee, for instance, Teresa Beqiri, was the "party girl" who would not mind having sex in front of the container cameras—a topic heavily debated in popular media—as opposed to the "family man," Wole Osifo from Nigeria.[11] A large banner with the inscription "*Ausländer Raus!*" ("Foreigners Out!") was attached to the container from the beginning and a few days later was supplemented by another banner reading "*Unsere Ehre heisst Treue*"("Our Honor is Called Loyalty"), an SS-motto forbidden in Germany (Fig. 3). The motto had been purportedly used by a member of the Austrian right-wing party FPÖ.[12] Interestingly, members of the FPÖ whose successful campaign during the previous year had been based on anti-for-



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eign sentiment reported both signs to the police with the claim that these signs were publicly encouraging violence against foreigners. While trying to make an official statement against discrimination against foreigners, they needed to avoid making a statement against art. So, Heidemarie Unterreiner, the FPÖ's cultural attaché, accused Schlingensief of "not even [being] a real director."[13] On June 15, about 600 protestors attacked the container and tried to demolish the *"Ausländer raus!"* sign (Fig. 4). A spectator asked: "Is this real?" (*"Ist das jetzt echt?"*)[14]

The extent of the emotions raised by the event can be seen in the weeklong public debates in Austria about the container, Austrians, Germans, Luc Bondy, and art in general (Fig. 5). A documentary about *"Ausländer raus!"* is reported to contain a clip of a woman getting so upset about Schlingensief's *Aktion* that she ends up shrieking: "Foreigners in, *Piefkes* Out" (*"Ausländer rein, Piefkes raus!"*), the latter being a derogatory Austrian term for Germans. In addition, the Viennese were worried about the effect that the odd spectacle might have on tourists. With regards to reception in Germany and Austria, the performance relied heavily on superficial but common place and deeply rooted "knowledge" on the Austrian as well as the German side. While in Austria, the term *Anschluss* was coined for the collaboration of Austria with Nazi-Germany, implying that Austrians were not *really* responsible for their endorsement of National Socialism, it is a well-known fact in Germany that Hitler was, after all, not German but Austrian. The fact that details such as these are so widely circulated makes apparent the degree of unresolved anti-sentiments between Germans and Austrians, sentiments that viciously erupt on the occasion of *"Ausländer raus!"* Ever since the Waldheim-affair, Germans, who prefer to think of themselves as Europeans, have felt the need to be especially watchful of right-wing politics in Austria and elsewhere. Thus, the widespread support of Jörg Haider's FPÖ in Austria has been received with much concern by German liberals.[15] According to Schlingensief, he was satisfied to have shown the potential extent of Haider's xenophobia by facilitating the production of "dirty images from Austria," an aim that could have hardly been achieved in a more perfidiuos manner with regards to the extent of the individuals and the official Austrian institutions lastly involved.[16] Ultimately though, the piece was just as much about Germans as it was about Austrians as the displacement allows for an open, international rotation of German problematics.

In this and most other pieces, Schlingensief's dramaturgy relies on common place types as a starting point. My use of the term "common place" here is similar to that used by Svetlana Boym, who defines cultural common places as "recurrent narratives that are perceived as natural in a given culture but in fact were naturalized and their historical, political, or literary origins forgotten or disguised."[17] In such a construction, internationally renowned artists such as Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Josef Beuys, and Luc Bondy symbolize the bourgeois circles that still have an elitist contempt for low-brow culture found in television shows such as "Big Brother." In Schlingensief's pieces, such heroic intellectual figures are almost always paired with lower-class common place types, such as "The Unemployed" (*"Der Arbeitslose"*) used in the television talk shows, "48 Hours Survival for Germany" and "Chance 2000." The Unemployed is the epitome of fascist potential in Germany, because the unfortunate situation of the unemployed in Weimar Germany was one of the main causes of Hitler's rise to power according to contemporary popular German mythology. "The Refugee" (*"Der Asylan"*) is an ambivalent type, who is let into the country as an exception only under constantly changing and formally restrictive immigration

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policies. With regards to the underprivileged, Germans are torn between a sense of what they view as their responsibility and what they fear—a mixture that accounts for their permanent unease, to say the least. According to Jürgen Habermas, the resulting yearning for relief from this dilemma is illustrated by the creation of "life lies" (*Lebenslüge*), the German post-reunification version being: "We Are Normal Again."[18] At first glance, Schlingensief violently questions this "life lie" as he obviously does not behave in normal terms according to supposed bourgeois notions of normalcy. At the same time, trying to behave in a normal way is not possible for an artist in post-Nazi Germany.[19] In addition, it is commonly known that trying to look normal can hardly ever result in one actually being—or even less looking—normal. Therefore, although the lie undoubtedly exists, there can only be evidences of its futility in the public sphere.

And, how can deviance be defined in the absence of normalcy? The art press in particular is placed in a difficult situation by Schlingensief who potentially impersonates an avant-garde desire for "deviance."[20] Deviance from what? In fact, Schlingensief receives far more coverage from general news and popular tabloid media. Some of this coverage is negative; some explicitly admire his "craziness" evidencing the involvement of the mass media geared towards—but certainly not representative of—a contemporary form of the German proletariat.[21] Within the bourgeois realm of art production and reception, conventional artistic trash-appeal is often validated by an ironic distance to an origin other than itself, but Schlingensief renders this assumption of distance absurd by re-importing popular material to its supposed origin, i.e., the tabloid press. The absurd and the surreal derived from and redistributed in public space reference the potential existence of a heterogeneous public.

Are Schlingensief's spectacular activities public, or are they "private activities displayed in the open"?[22] They are probably neither; rather, his work—and more importantly, what becomes of it—is a simulation of different possibilities of action in the public sphere. It could be argued that by using any available "public space" for his work, especially daily news media space, Schlingensief reclaims public audience not as an idealized object of enlightenment through art but as momentary reference points in an otherwise indefinable mass of characterizations of the public. Polemics are thus not directed against a specific imagined group within the public sphere. Rather, common place types found anywhere are thematized with reference to different public realms. But without an introduction, Schlingensief is probably hardly comprehensible or even interesting to anyone outside of Germany.[23]

As Negt and Kluge have stated, language is one of the most important mechanisms for exclusion from the bourgeois public sphere.[24] This is especially true for the sphere that pertains to anything clearly demarcated as "art." It seems that this barrier is less inhibiting in Schlingensief's case, possibly because he uses the assumed language of what Negt and Kluge term the "proletarian sphere" as represented in mass media. It is not necessarily relevant whether this is the "real" language of a proletariat, or who this might actually be—it would be naive and pretentious to try locate "the proletarian" in a static manner: identities in public are in constant circulation and can only be defined tentatively in relation to the conditions that necessitate the act of identification. Accordingly, "the bourgeois" is not a clearly defined entity but rather—in Negt and Kluge's sense—a signifier for the provenance of a specific hegemony of definitions of publicness.[25]

Although Schlingensief's own role as an artist and producer would need to be further examined, the detached position of the artist as well as the actual production of the work are already dissolved in the process of distribution in *"Ausländer raus!"*[26] At best, Schlingensief's projects facilitate the appearance of a great range of effects and products. And if an "authentic political language" is defined as continuously emerging from conflicts and use as well abuse of rhetoric by various subjects, those effects and products are, at the least, an interesting example of such a contemporary (and perishable) language that offers itself for further examination and reuse.[27]

Notes

[1] Hans Magnus Enzensberger talks about his strategy to alternately accept or refuse German identity in Hans Magnus Enzensberger, "Bin ich ein Deutscher?" *Die Zeit* 23.5 (June 1964). Theodor Adorno addresses the problem of being German in his "Auf die Frage: Was ist deutsch," *Stichworte. Kritische Modelle* 2 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1969): 102-12. One of the most comprehensive accounts of the debate about the Holocaust memorial with regards to the problem of a public identity is given by James Young. James E. Young, *At Memory's Edge: After-images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

[2] I am drawing on the question of the representation of bourgeois and proletarian public spheres as it is addressed by Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge in *Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972). Translated into English under the title *Public Sphere and Experience, Toward an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1993). Negt and Kluge later further illustrate

their concept of the public as "public spheres of production" (*Produktionsöffentlichkeiten*) in *Geschichte und Eigensinn* (Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1981). Also Negt and Kluge, *Geschichte und Eigensinn*, (Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1981): 388.

3 Among Schlingensief's first films are *100 Jahre Adolf Hitler,* 1989 (One Hundred Years Adolf Hitler); *Das deutsche Kettensägen Massaker*, 1990 (The German Chainsaw Massacre); *TERROR 2000 Deutschland ausser Kontrolle,* 1992 (TERROR 2000 Germany Out of Control); and *Die 120 Tage von Bottrop*, 1996 (The Hundred and Twenty Days of Bottrop). In *120 Tage von Bottrop*, residents from the "Rainer Werner Fassbinder Home of Aging Actors" are asked to come to Berlin to star in a remake of Pasolini's *The 120 Days of Sodom*, but end up climbing over the construction site at the Postdamer Platz in Berlin (*"Europas grösste Baustelle"*) wearing construction helmets emblazoned with the word "SODOM." The actors, such as Irm Herman, are original actors from Rainer Werner Fassbinder's films.

4 The original German title of the performance was *"48 Stunden Überleben für Deutschland—Mein Filz, mein Fett, mein Hase"* or *"Was sind schon 700 [sic!] Eichen gegenüber 6 Millionen Arbeitslosen."* The title is a reference to the project that Joseph Beuys initiated on the occasion of Documenta 7 in 1981. The project entailed the planting of 7,000 oak trees next to 7,000 basalt monoliths throughout the town of Kassel over the course of five years until 1987.

5 Georg Seesslen, "Vom barbarischen Film zur nomadischen Politik," Julia Lochte, Julia and Wilfried Schulz, eds., *Schlingensief! Notruf für Deutschland* (Hamburg: Rotbuch, 1998): 48.

6 Christoph Schlingensief, "Wir sind zwar nicht gut, aber wir sind da," *Schlingensief!* 31. The slogans in the original were *"Scheitern als Chance,"* and *"Beweise, dass es Dich gibt,"* respectively.

7 His television talk shows, for example, take place in the mess hall of an avant-gardist theater in Berlin, the *Volksbühne*, and are aired via national private TV stations. The performance *"48 Stunden Überleben für Deutschland"* took place in an inconspicuous room at the art exhibit Documenta 10 in the small German town of Kassel.

8 "Chance 2000" was documented by an editorial crew of the public TV station ZDF (*Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen*).
One German equivalent of the American concept of "affirmative action" is the concept of the "quota" (*Quote*), which entails the mandatory (or voluntary) inclusion of certain minorities into various bodies according to specific quota. The idea is met with great suspicion, so that, for instance, women who are promoted in politics are often still suspected of being a "quota women" (*Quotenfrauen*).

9 Ulrich Seidler, "Echtes Wasser. Schlingensiefs sechs neue Freunde dürfen in Zürich *Hamlet* mitspielen," *Berliner Zeitung*, 12 May 2001. Joachim Güntner, "Was zu Schlingensiefs *Hamlet* noch zu sagen bleibt," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 26 May 2001.

10 The original title was *Bitte liebt Österreich—erste europäische Koalitionswoche* or *Ausländer Raus—Künstler gegen Menschenrechte*. Many aspects of the event were soon documented in a publication. See Matthias Lilienthal and Claus Philipp, *Schlingensiefs Ausländer raus* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000).

11 All biographies can be viewed at http://www.schlingensief.com/auslaenderraus/html/auslaenderliste.html, November 6, 2001.

12 FPÖ is the acronym for *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, the right-wing party led by Jörg Haider.

13 Heidemarie Unterreiner on a television show on the Austrian television channel ORF as cited in *Spiegel Online*, http://www.spiegel.de/kultur/gesellschaft/0,1518,80991,00.html, July 7, 2000.

14 Claus Philipp, "Schlingensiefs Container gestürmt; Ist das jetzt echt?" *taz, die tageszeitung* (June 17, 2000): 14.

15 Shortly after the former UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim was elected as the president of Austria in 1986, reports surfaced about his participation as an officer in the German *Wehrmacht* during the period between 1942-45, when his battalion committed atrocities in Yugoslavia. Waldheim denied any knowledge of the crimes.

16 Schlingensief in an interview in *Spiegel Online*, http://www.spiegel.de/kultur/gesellschaft/0,1518,80502,00.html, June 11, 2000.

17 Svetlana Boym, *Common Places* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1994): 4. Boym herself follows Claude Lévi-Strauss's and Roland Barthes's definition of myths as formed by cultural common places.

18 Jürgen Habermas, "Die zweite Lebenslüge der Bundesrepublik: Wir sind wieder 'normal' geworden," *Die Zeit* (December 11, 1992): 48.

19 Thomas Elsässer describes this problematic of the obligation of German artists. Thomas Elsässer, *Fassbinder's Germany: History, Identity, Subject* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996): 13.

20 In an article about Schlingensief in *Kunstforum International,* Marion Löhndorf claims that Schlingensief makes popular media uncomfortable. Marion Löhndorf, "Christoph Schlingensief, Lieblingsziel Totalirritation," *Kunstforum International* 10-12 (1998): 192.

21 A German starlet proclaims in the daily tabloid *Bild*: "I am voting for Christoph Schlingensief. He thinks as 'queer' as I do, and the country needs new people." *Bild Online*, http://www.bild.de/service/suche/archiv/suche.html September 20, 1998.

22 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition: A Study of the Central Dilemmas Facing Modern Man* (Garden City: Anchor Press, 1959): 101-102.

23 Christopher Phillips, "Art for an Unfinished City," *Art in America* (January 1999): 67.

24 Negt and Kluge, *Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung*, 87-93.

25 Ibid., 8. Long before Foucault, Durkheim had described society as defined by social facts that included "every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint; or again, every way of acting which is general throughout a given society, while at the same time existing in its own right independent of its individual manifestations." Emile Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, [1895] 1938): 13.

Later, Gramsci uses the term "hegemony" to elaborate on the process of the transformation of (initially) economic interests into the social sphere, creating an apparently "universal plane." Antonio Gramsci, "The Modern Prince," *The Modern Prince and Other Writings* (New York: International Publishers, 1957): 169-70.

26 Negt and Kluge, *Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung*, 104-105.

27 Negt and Kluge, *Massverhältnisse des Politischen* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1992): 58.

Illustrations

Fig. 1: Christoph Schlingensief, *"Ausländer raus!"* Container in Herbert-von- Karajan Platz, Vienna, 2000.

Fig. 2: Schlingensief, *Talk 2000*, 2000. Schlingensief is here imitating the Hitler hairdo and moustache.

Fig. 3: SS-motto on the *"Ausländer raus!"* container.

Figs. 4, 5: Protesters and spectators of the *"Ausländer raus!"* container.

JASMINE BENYAMIN

"STUFF":
GREGORY CREWDSON'S GAZE UPON THE DOMESTIC SUBLIME

A critical inquiry into the photographs of Gregory Crewdson begins with problems of how to make liminality visible and how to question the means by which the discarded and the accidental register their effects. Throughout Crewdson's work, nature engages with the iconography of the American landscape to produce effects of fear and desire, repulsion and beauty. Mystery—the strange coupled with the recognizable—resides in both the making and the reading of these photographs. In Crewdson's most recent work, a series entitled *Twilight* (1998-1999), domestic space appears as a space of beauty, hyper-reality, and violence. At the moment when the grown intervenes with the made, the viewer is made keenly aware of the artifice of both.

Crewdson's superimposition of everyday domestic equipment with theatrical lighting and lush, nuanced color creates an image of suburban life gone awry, where the site of leisure has become one of fear, loss, and nostalgia. Nothing is removed; discarded objects of daily consumption are brought back to the scene of the crime as if to remind us of the project of domesticity where order is often employed to conceal. Crewdson parodies this tradition of covering up by exerting explicit control over the staging and the crafting of his "scenes." The irony of the resulting disarray is that it is born out of a need to control with precision but nonetheless fails to order nature. Crewdson's self-proclaimed "realist vision" provokes spaces where neither reality nor fiction is suppressed.[1] Instead, both are depicted with equal rigor.[2]

Crewdson challenges home's power of enclosure as a weapon *against* concealment and elimination. Tactility, impoverished by the postwar advocacy of streamlining, has given way to a quasi-Victorian return to shag and chintz, where trash, wood paneling, and "Laz-I-Boy" recliners maintain their structural and material integrity. Crewdson displays the anxieties of modernism in full view by reinforcing the false transparency of the glass box and by choosing to preserve the banished and the outmoded instead. He revels in the toxicity of ordering and the symbiosis between progress and pollution.

As the title of the series implies, the spaces of Crewdson's photographs exist in the luminescent interval between the natural and the artificial. The dioramic quality of Crewdson's models is achieved by the use of both natural and artificial light and the construction of stage sets. Context is crucial for Crewdson: space is not made but taken as a precondition for the scenes that are created. "Stuff" has a paradoxical double meaning: as taxidermy, it fixes, limits, and freezes moments, but in the colloquial sense, "stuff" refers to the nameless, de-sublimated refuse of the everyday that accumulates to visual excess. Crewdson directs, arranges, orders, and fixes to make the traces of domestic life visible. Ironically, this process-driven work cares little for process: all models and sets, which take months to complete, are dismantled once an acceptable photograph has been taken. As such, the photograph becomes the sole survivor of a laborious and largely undocumented process of model making and stage setting.

In architecture, "stuff" is often perceived both as a threat and as a containment of infinity. Crewdson stuffs his images with details that hoard memory and shared cultural experience. His images deviate to a pathology that their architectural referents do not. They provoke discomfort by pointing to the complicity of architects in promoting a culture that has long equated cleanliness and order with normalcy. The sublimity of these photographs rests not in the mysterious but rather in the obsessive inscription of overabundant details within an atmosphere of invisible traces and unspeakable remainders.

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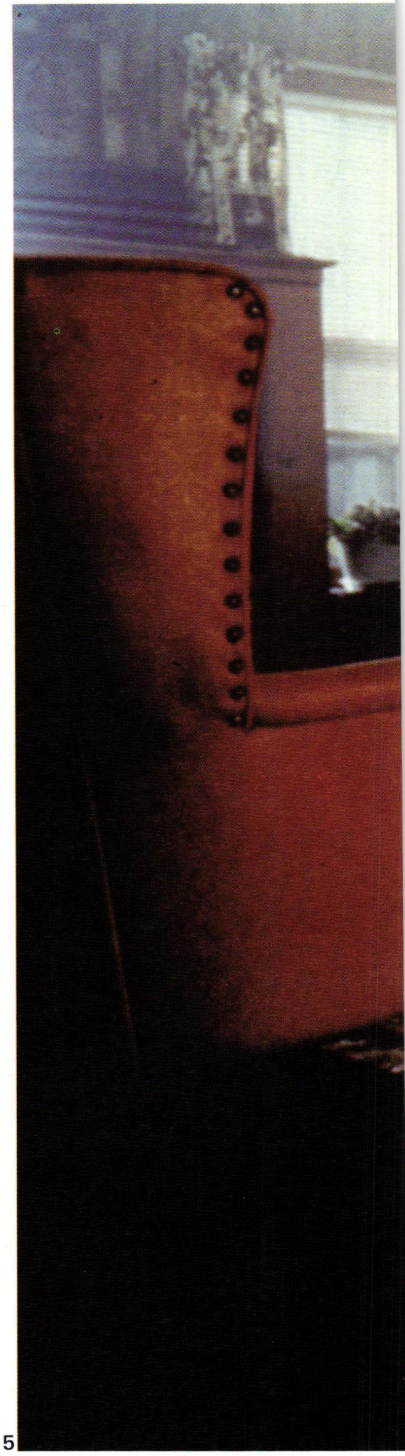

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Notes

[1] Gregory Crewdson, interview by Bradford Morrow, *Gregory Crewdson—Dream of Life* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1999): 19.

[2] James Casebere and Gregory Crewdson, "The Jim and Greg Show," *Blind Spot* 2 (1993): unpaginated.

Illustrations

Fig. 1: Gregory Crewdson, *Untitled*, from the *Twilight* series, 1998.

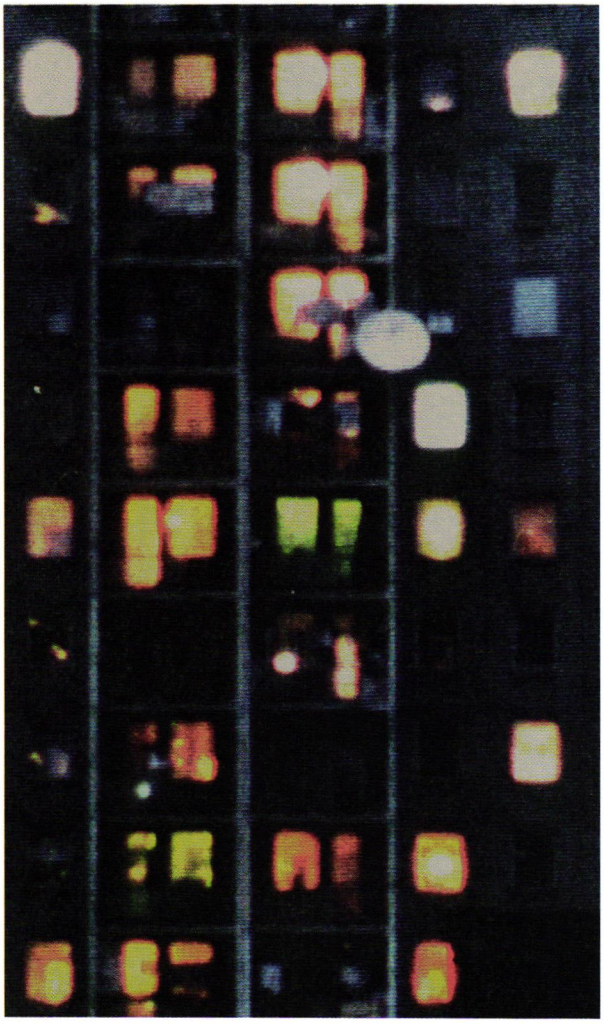
Fig. 2: Gregory Crewdson, *Untitled*, from the *Twilight* series,1998.

Fig. 3: Gregory Crewdson, *Untitled* (*Flower Mound*), from the *Twilight* series,1999.

Fig. 4: Gregory Crewdson, Production Shots for *Twilight* Series, 1999.

Fig. 5: Gregory Crewdson, *Untitled* (*Rug Lady Formation*), from the *Twilight* series,1999.

SCOTT DUNCAN
PANELÁK



panelák (Czech)
1. prefab 2. (derogatory) a type of multi-unit apartment building constructed using a system of prefabricated concrete panels configured to define a highly-regularized series of unit types. The buildings were built in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s in vast quantities primarily in the periphery of many European cities and were intended to alleviate housing shortages and inadequacies.

The promise held forth by a clear and absolute ideology is often compromised when that ideology is tested in its implementation. The massive public building campaigns undertaken in countries under the control of the former Soviet Union illustrate how architecture can be enmeshed in this problematic. In the Czech Republic, a communist political agenda has ostensibly been abandoned in favor of a social democracy. Capitalist development has ensued, but the architecture remains.

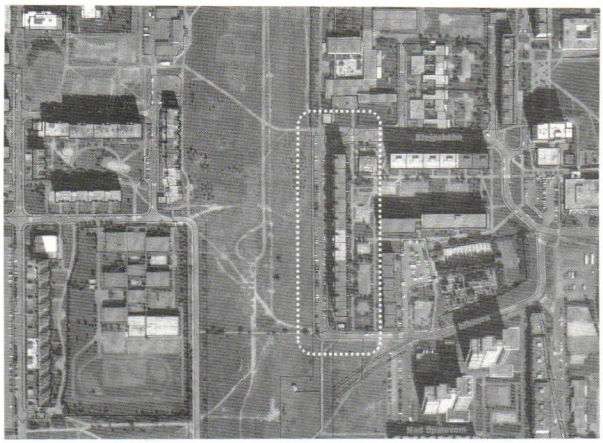
The collapse of the Soviet Union has put into question those programs, which were provided for a communist society by a strong, centralized government through massive public initiatives. Prague and other cities in the Czech Republic have inherited colossal urban infrastructural projects that continue to encourage growth today. Transportation networks, for example, were thoroughly integrated with urban development projects. Master plans always included public transportation—typically metro or tram networks—in addition to parking lots and highways planned for automobiles. If there was an underlying agenda at work, it had to do with creating a sense of collective use and public life.

For many living in Prague today, the most immediate results of this urbanism are housing estates in which roughly 420,000 people—one-third of Prague's population—live.

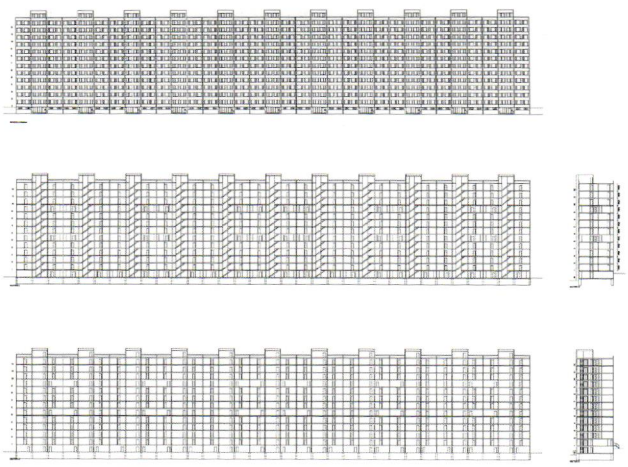
Panelák is the Czech name for a type of multi-unit apartment building commonly found in Prague. The *paneláky* are constructed using a system of prefabricated concrete panels configured to create a highly regularized series of unit types. Often reaching over 300 meters in length, these buildings exist along the city's periphery in formal and informal groupings called *sidliste*. Uniformity manifests itself at different levels: within the buildings themselves, which are typically the accumulation of four to thirteen stories of six-meter-wide flats; from one building to the next; and often from one community to the next. The layout of access roads, parking lots, bus stop sheds, and other urban elements in one *paneláky* village is often identical to others. Repetition and uniformity are also part of the construction: *paneláky* have come to be known as "crane urbanism" because of the construction process which entails cranes set on rails to produce buildings in a serial array. By contrast, the current population of the *paneláky* is heterogeneous. This is due largely to a pro-rated rent subsidy program, which tied rent to individual income during the communist regime.[1] Overall, however, *paneláky* urbanism is remarkably undifferentiated—obsessively so—and amidst this uniformity aberrations glare.

The *paneláky* should be seen as part of a relatively well-established tradition of modern social housing existing in Czechoslovakia following WWI. The Czech Functionalist housing projects of the 1930s often employed a modernist formal language, new construction techniques using materials such as steel, glass, and concrete as well a "tower-in-the-park" approach to site planning. The pre-1989 text, *Modern Architecture in Czechoslovakia,* published under the Communist regime made the connection clear:

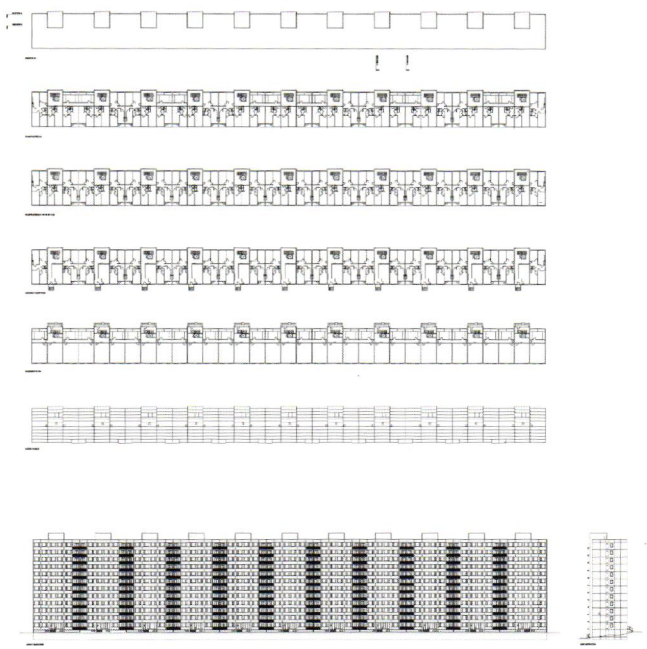
> After the Second World War, Czechoslovakia was the only European country with a highly developed tradition of modern architecture in which the mature principles and theories of functionalism continued to be applied in the changed social conditions. The reforming endeavors of the period between the two wars developed, after 1945, into the requirements of a uniform organization of designing and industrialization of construction, which were gradually brought into being. In 1948, the Socialist Design Organization was founded, at that time the biggest organization of its type in Europe, and a year later, the Study and Typification Institute originated to prepare the first typified (standard) designs valid for the whole territory of the country.[2]



Paneláky fell short, however, of the "open plan" aspirations of modernism. Formal variation was limited by the modular system. Since *paneláky* were not constructed of plastered brick or reinforced concrete but were instead assembled from prefabricated flat concrete panels, the system allowed rapid and extensive construction, providing much-needed housing throughout the 1950s and 60s into the 80s. In the 1950s, there were 4,500 apartment flats constructed per year using the panel system; in the 1960s and 70s the figure rose to 10,000 per year; and by the end of the 1980s there were approximately 70,000 *paneláky* flats completed annually in the country.[3]



The *radova sekce*, or "typical section," of *panelák* typology exhibits two lateral and two longitudinal section configurations.



EXISTING PLANS AND SECTIONS

The selected building incorporates four plan types. Floors 8 and 13 link adjacent stair towers for fire egress purposes. Floors 2 through 7, and 9 through 12 are typical one-bedroom and two-bedroom residential floors. The ground floor and the basement provide an entry foyer and storage, respectively.

Prague's "Building Project Institute" was responsible for developing prototypical designs with the goal of minimizing the number of panels required per dwelling unit. State-owned contracting monopolies executed the designs, striving to perfect the system of construction and to produce a "high-quality product."[4] Because of its formulaic approach, the design of the *paneláky* has been described as a purely economical exercise. When viewed from a post-communist standpoint, the question then becomes: if the communist economy has spawned the *paneláky,* what becomes of it in the new capitalist economy?

Furthermore, since *paneláky* were intended at the time of their construction as a temporary solution to housing needs with an expected life span of 20 to 30 years, they have begun to deteriorate. Demolition is not only too costly but would also introduce the problem of re-locating 30% of Prague's population. Recognizing that the *paneláky* are exceeding their intended life span, a group of engineers responsible for the original planning of the *panelàky* developed a study for the rehabilitation of the buildings that were identified to have technical problems—panel deterioration, acoustic bridging, heat loss/heat gain inefficiency, roof leaks, and spatial inefficiencies.

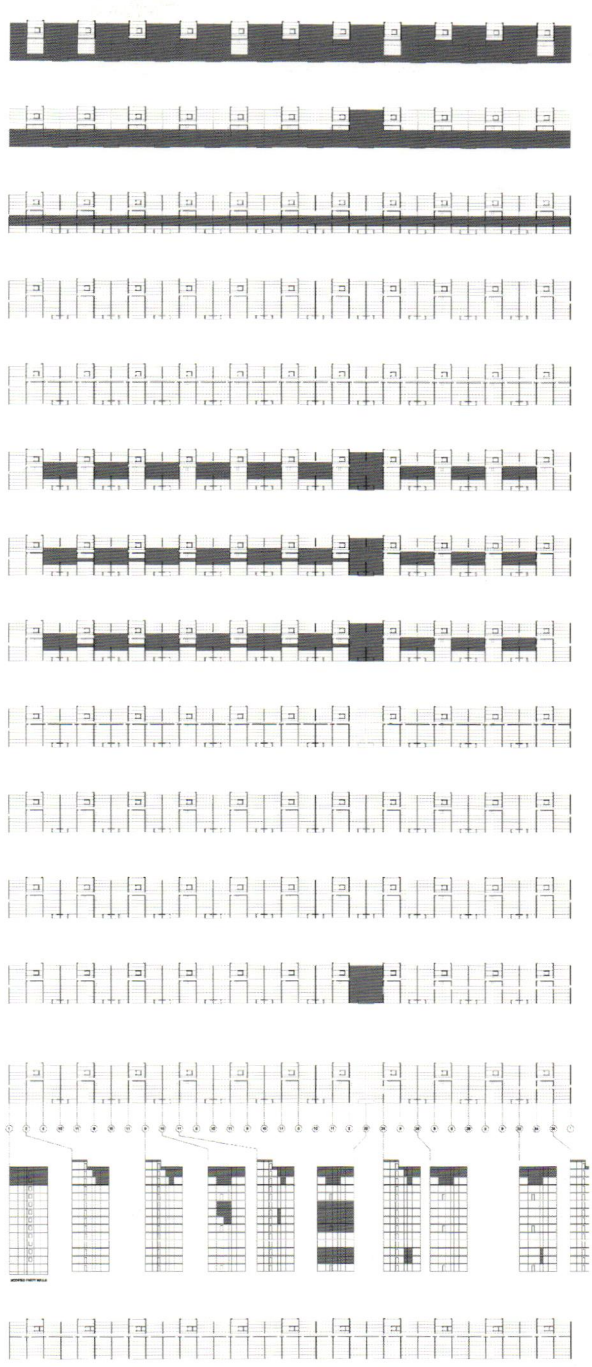
Taking the engineers' study as a starting point, this project utilizes existing paradoxes of *panelák* to intervene in a site that presents a typical *panelák* condition. Situated between a pastoral landscape and *panelák* urbanism, the sparseness of the site offers an uninterrupted carpet of landscape. In this landscape, there exists an emphatic separation: the ground plane represents the public whereas the individual living units represent the private. The tower-in-the-park strategy has created an abundance of open space whose vastness and impersonality contribute to this divorce. This was a deliberate strategy of the original *panelák* scheme: by means of this strategy, social interaction would concentrate elsewhere, in separate buildings such as clubs, schools, and government buildings. The strategy of dispersal relied on a fairly elaborate landscape scheme that was foregone for economic reasons.

The existing urban diagram segregating zones for working and zones for living is subverted through a reintroduction of non-residential programs to the *panelák.* This, however, is not a "clean" reintroduction. Responding to the emergent demand for office space, existing storage and shared spaces throughout the building are reprogrammed as work-space. These range from large, single-tenant, and open

offices to workshops for artisans and light industrial uses. The proposed scheme thereby blurs living and working conditions. The new—or perhaps the *first*—site plan proposed here attempts to integrate the needs of the workplace, such as additional parking, access, and services, *within* the building volume and its precinct. The internal logic of the building generates an apron of precincts of varying degrees of propriety at its base.

The proposal also disrupts the even texture of the *sidliste* produced by the regularity of the panels that make up its surfaces, a composition of identical gray units. At the time of the buildings' construction, great effort was dispensed to ensure uniformity in the aggregates used in the panels. Frequently, aggregate stones that deviated from the even gray of the control samples were discarded in large quantities. This proposal disrupts the undifferentiated masonry box by overlaying a strong color on the one side and smoothness on the other, giving the building a "front" and a "back."

In *panelák* buildings, the height of all interior spaces is governed by the dimension of a single panel, 3100 mm. A "house of cards" condition is created as the panels are mortared in place and arrayed into crate-like grids that are extruded to generate the building form. Ironically, the desire to regularize the panel type resulted in structural redundancy: the dimensions of the panels on the top floor are identical to those in the basement although the former support only a fraction of the weight. Such over-sizing permits the removal of panels from the top floors without compromising the building structurally. The resulting voids open up the building for re-habitation and add a larger volumetric "grain" to uniform surface of the *panelák*.



DEMOLITION PLAN

Selective demolition and removal of overstructured panels (shaded areas) create 10 unique sectional conditions and 13 unique plans. In this manner, both the plan and the section of the existing building are de-serialized.

Notes

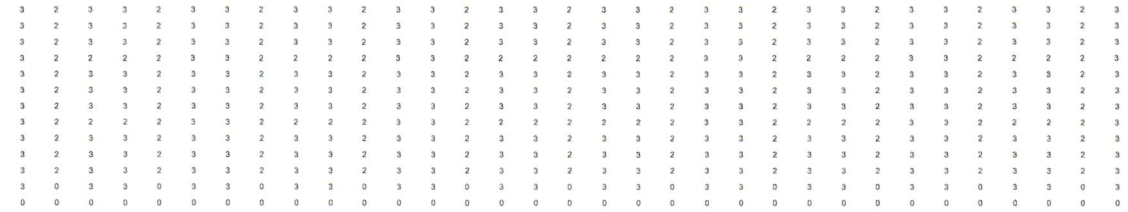
[1] Currently, the *panelák* flat is by far the least expensive and the most "liquid" housing option in the city. The figures at the time of this study (1997) were as follows: the average subsidized rent was about 1200 crowns ($40) per month, and the average non-subsidized rent was about 4000 crowns ($144) per month.

[2] Dost'al Oldrich, *Modern Architecture in Czechoslovakia* (Prague, 1967): 239.

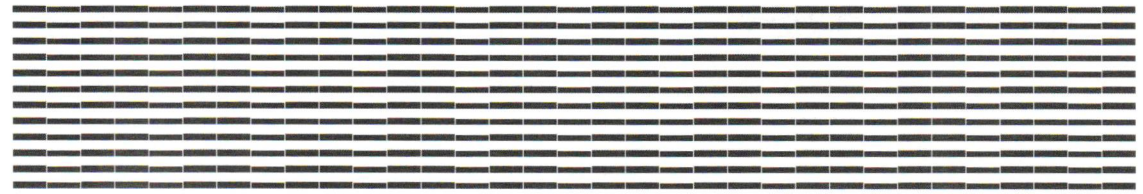
[3] Interview with Karel Soun, February 1997. Soun was an original planning engineer for Jizni Mesto.

[4] Ibid.

The existing north elevation is comprised of 1,452 concrete panels, 2,821 windows, and 11 stair towers. The panel surface is embedded with a small "washout aggregate that gives the panels a uniform appearance. A thin insulation interlayer is sandwiched beween the inner and outer concrete surfaces.

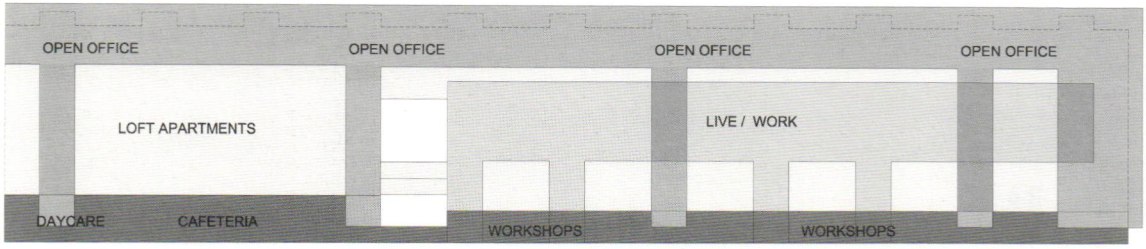


The existing occupancy is prescribed by the arrangement of two unit types: one for a family of two and another for a family of three. The relative inflexibility of unit types limits further the affordable housing options.



Rents for individual *panelák* units were tied to the income levels of households during the former regime and have often remained unchanged. In 2005, the rents will be aligned with market rates, which is expected to result in a threefold increase on average as represented by the black areas above.

The existing south elevation utilizes an additional panel type that incorporates a door opening providing access from the kitchen to the balcony, except at the two ends of the building where balconies are omitted.



REZONING DIAGRAM

The existing residential block is rezoned to incorporate a range of commercial uses, drawing non-residents to the building and providing amenities to both residents and non-residents. This inverts the original diagram of the building, which segregated public from residential functions.

0	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	0	5
12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	20
12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	12	4	12	20
2	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	20
2	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
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2	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2			1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	20
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2	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	1-6	1-6	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	20
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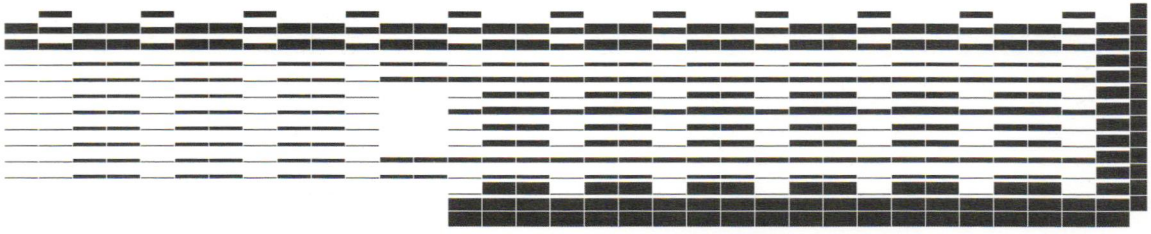
2	2	15	15	10	15	15	10	15	15	2			2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	20
2	2	20	20	4	20	20	4	20	20	2			2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	20
2	8	15	15	4	15	15	4	12	12	2	0	0	1	5	5	1	5	5	1	5	5	1	5	5	1	5	5	1	5	5	1	5	5

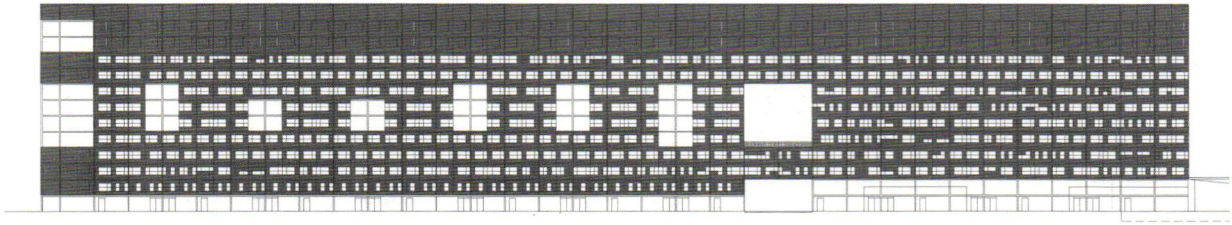
PROPOSED OCCUPANCY

The new range of unit types afforded by combining units and further partitioning others creates the potential for a heterogeneously distributed building population, which will be in a perpetual state of flux over the course of a day. Building use density is varied over the building length.



PROPOSED RENT INCREASES

The anticipated 2005 rent increase may be mediated by tying rent adjustments to use, creating the potential for one part of the building to subsidize the other.



PROPOSED SOUTH ELEVATION

Replacing the deteriorating and inefficient panels on the south elevation with a new series of panels and window types will allow a calibration of unit function and façade articulation. The elevation will thus respond to the specific conditions of the context.

SUNIL BALD

IN ALEIJADINHO'S SHADOW:
WRITING NATIONAL ORIGINS IN BRAZILIAN ARCHITECTURE

1

One of the more pervasive assumptions in architectural discourse is the mythical stature of the hero-architect. Despite the influence of societal, technological, and cultural forces and the collaborative nature of architectural production, notions of individual genius have situated the origins of movements and styles within specific personalities. The architect is often portrayed as a savior and proponent of societal and cultural progress and is consequently seen in alignment with the rhetoric of nations formulating their goals, purposes, and identities. In the United States, for example, the myth of the figure of Frank Lloyd Wright has been imbued with the spatial aspirations of an anti-urban and anti-European America. Wright's architecture has become associated with the individualism and expansionism that have helped structure an American national imagination.[1]

The case of the Brazilian architect and sculptor Antonio Francisco Lisboa (1738-1814)—better known as Aleijadinho or "the Little Cripple"—is particularly interesting as an example of how the mythical figure of an architect can be assimilated into national narratives (Fig. 1). This essay will discuss the mechanisms and motivations behind the mythology of Aleijadinho by focusing on a specific document: the 1949 re-publishing of a nineteenth-century text on Aleijadinho and his architecture.[2] The original text, written in 1840 by a government official called Rodrigo Bretas, was republished in 1949. The re-publication was introduced by Lúcio Costa (1902-1998), an architect who had an active role in shaping the cultural policies of the new republic. The republished text became important in fixing Aleijadinho's myth and in connecting it to the modern context.

Aleijadinho's particular story is especially intriguing as it proposes a figure who—due to the deformities of his body—is seemingly more grotesque than heroic. However, within the larger narratives of Brazilian architectural, cultural, and national development, this figure's grotesque nature can be more accurately considered as a deviation from a colonial status quo—a deviation that not only distinguishes Aleijadinho individually but also separates his architecture from its colonial precedents. Consequently, an alternative trajectory of history results, along which subsequent forms of cultural production can be aligned, and a new system of identification is instituted, a system that is not colonially but rather nationally hegemonic.

Although Aleijadinho worked in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, it is crucial to understand him in the context of Brazilian modernism in the twentieth century. After Brazil's independence from Portugal in 1822 and the foundation of the republic in 1891, the country began its quest towards industrialization under the populist dictator Getulio Vargas who came to power in a 1930 coup. While modern architecture in Brazil is frequently characterized by the construction of Brasília in the late fifties and early sixties, Vargas formed the alliance between nationalist politics and architectural culture twenty-five years earlier with the design of the Ministry of Culture, Education, and Health (1937-43) in Rio de Janeiro.[3] The building was the first large-scale project to incorporate Le Corbusier's five points of architecture, and the team of architects—including Oscar Niemeyer (b.1907) and Lúcio Costa—who constructed it went on to dominate one of the century's most vibrant architectural milieus.[4]

In addition to its architectural importance, the Ministry of Culture, Education, and Health was the most important new administrative branch of the Vargas government. As an agent of dissemination, it articulated a nationalism that overwhelmingly equated Brazil's progress with rapid industrialization and modernization. Modeled after strategies of indoctrination that Brazilian government officials observed in Fascist Italy, its goal was to create new strategies that actively employed culture, education, and health to formulate a new state, *O Estado Nôvo*.

The Ministry became the guiding hand in the production and distribution of all nationalist cultural transactions including music, cinema, radio, and physical education. Led by Gustav Capanema and the rallying cry "To Civilize from Above," the office completely dedicated itself to "the construction and eugenic formation of the Brazilian people."[5] The Ministry positioned itself as the paternalistic guide of the population with the stated objective to "centralize, coordinate, orient, and guide the national image internally and externally" through the creation of an intellectual elite to supply "points of view and constructive criticism."[6] This "constructed culture" was vigorously presented in the classroom as the springboard to a shared national future. Health and education were combined with an intense government involvement in physical education, blurring the boundaries between the mind and the body and between individual conditioning and national strength. The concept of the *Estado Nôvo* was thus complimented by *O Homen nôvo Brasileiro*, the new Brazilian Man, which emphasized that the machine of the state was only as strong as its individual human parts.

While the ministry positioned itself as the steward for the nation's social and cultural future, an important part of it was deeply involved in the nation's past. This branch, the National Institute for Historical and Artistic Patrimony in Rio de Janeiro, enlisted many of Brazil's intellectual elite to assist in the national endeavor of building a cultural legacy through the rediscovery of national treasures. Prominent in the organization were the architect Lúcio Costa, who headed the Patrimony for many years, the poet Carlos Drummond de Andrade, and the writer Mario de Andrade. The Patrimony's methods were simultaneously revisionist and preservationist. As most of Brazil's past was as a colony, it became important to frame cultural products so as to identify their qualities as specifically Brazilian.[7] By claiming artifacts and histories as their own rather than refuting them as foreign remnants of Portuguese colonial power, the state could claim a cultural foundation and avoid having to formulate the premises of a new nation.

The 1949 re-publishing of the Bretas text was an endeavor of the Patrimony of History. While Aleijadinho's work was already well known in Brazil, Bretas's piece, as the first written text about the architect and his architecture, became the work that informed most subsequent studies. The short piece is based on observations of the writer on Aleijadinho's architecture, some research of municipal records, and interviews with descendents and acquaintances. The most remarkable aspect of Bretas's text is its focus upon Aleijadinho's mythical stature; it is through this lens that his architecture is described, and his architecture describes him.

2

Aleijadinho's mythology begins at birth as the illegitimate child of a slave and a Portuguese architect. The nickname "Aleijadinho" describes his condition that was originally believed to have resulted from an advanced form of syphilis (Fig. 2).[8] Bretas's text graphically describes the grotesque corporeal manifestations of this illness that was a consequence of his earthly indulgences:

> Antonio Francisco came to lose all of his toes. Consequently, he atrophied and curved, and even some of his fingers fell off leaving him with only the thumbs and forefingers and practically devoid of movement. The excruciating pains he frequently felt in his fingers and the sourness of his choleric temper led him to the paroxysm of cutting off his fingers using the chisel he worked with.[9]

As Bretas details Aleijadinho's misery, he creates a suffering character that transcends his physical state to recreate himself through his work. According to Bretas, Aleijadinho's best-known work, which was completed at the end of his life when Aleijadinho discovered religion, is Congonhas do Campo (1796-1808) consisting of seven Stations of the Cross and a chapel (Fig. 3). One reaches the pilgrimage church only after moving through the statues of the twelve prophets (Fig. 4). These statues are corporeal representations which describe the religious narrative and give meaning to the ascent of the devoted: "It is said that some women, having gone to Congonhas do Campo and passing by the Last Supper Station, greeted the figures depicting Christ and his Apostles solely due to the perfection of the work."[10] The sculpted bodies are in contrast to their creator whom Bretas describes as "a priceless treasure lying in a disease-ridden body that must be carried everywhere with tools fastened to him; though having unquestionable talent, one cannot fail to acknowledge also that he was better inspired than taught."[11]

Although Aleijadinho was removed in time from the *Estado Nôvo*, and his architecture, with its connection to the Baroque, was formally antithetical to the Ministry's own modernist monumentality, Costa's introduction to the 1949 publication gives authority and relevance to the architecture, emboldening the stature of its maker. Costa credits Aleijadinho with transforming the Portuguese Baroque into an architecture "truly Brazilian."[12] However, in this case, Brazilianness was a result of this particular Brazilian's individual creativity rather than a consequence of indigenous influences. Costa's introduction chronicles Aleijadinho's stylistic development within the Portuguese Baroque style and identifies his Igreja de São Francisco in Ouro Prêto (1766-94) as a turning point: "This Franciscan chapel, an unparalleled work, acquired his definitive character where the energy, force, and elegance conferred upon it gives the

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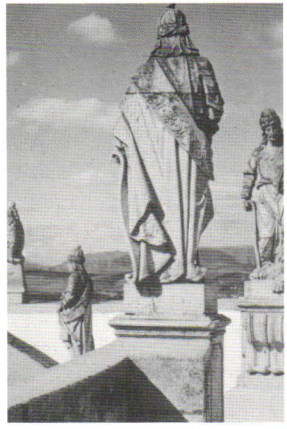

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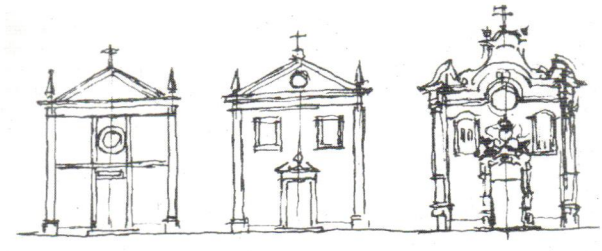
architectural creation the pulse of a living thing.... This Brazilian from Minas gave the highest individual expression of his time to the Portuguese art form."[13] It is interesting to note that this was also the period when Aleijadinho's illness became manifest.

At first glance, the later publication's edification of the grotesque figure of Aleijadinho is seemingly at odds with the heroically classical *homen nôvo Brasileiro*.[14] Many of the *Estado Nôvo*'s propaganda photographs emphasized healthy and sculpted representations of active Brazilians, not unlike images similarly propagated by many European countries of the same period (Fig. 5). In this case, however, the narrative of the grotesque recreating itself into a classical ideal through religion actually allied itself with the transformational and devotional nationalist rhetoric of the *homen nôvo Brasileiro*. The emphasis on Aleijadinho's body addressed the extreme conditions of human existence. On the one hand, Aleijadinho was a larger-than-life figure—to the extent of being almost monstrous—with mythical value attributed to him. On the other hand, he was an example of how any man could go from ultimate corporeal misery to glory through devotion and hard work. The myth of Aleijadinho served as an example of transcendence by which paradigms constructed by the post-colonial state could be directly consolidated in the physical body by means of narratives both religious and nationalist in nature. Like the majority of the population, Aleijadinho was of mixed race and poor, but he possessed the inspiration to transcend his own existence and create for a higher cause. In the context of a new republic striving for economic independence and national identity, this allegory offered a role model to a new multi-racial industrial working class. A poor, uneducated, and heterogeneous Brazilian population could empathize with Aleijadinho and his architecture. Consider this excerpt of Carlos Drummond de Andrade's poem of the Igreja de São Francisco:

> Give me Lord, only the beauty
> of these ornaments. And not the soul.
> One Foresees the pain of a man,
> Parallel to the five wounds.[15]

By assuming the format of biographical narrative, Aleijadinho's work was able to distinguish itself from a string of cultural products defined within the incremental development of Iberian Baroque architecture. Once architecture becomes imbedded with biography, its position can be defined outside the model of linear stylistic development and can assume specificity. The individuation that accompanies the biography distinguishes the architecture by giving it value and meaning beyond its immediate presence. As a result of this distinct break from stylistic development, Brazilian cultural production was able to assert its singularity while still being legitimized in relation to that development.[16] Furthermore, Aleijadinho's architecture was highly valued not only as an important point in the development of Baroque but also as a *point of origin* in the national cultural development. In building a post-colonial nationalism, it was important to reference the colonizer, against whom the new nation would position and measure itself, within the internationalism of modernity. Mario de Andrade wrote in early years of the Patrimony about Aleijadinho: "Brazil had in him its greatest artistic genius, a grand human manifestation. Of anyone from the colonial period, only he could be called national because of the originality of his solutions. He was already a product of this land, of his suffering, and a psychological extension of his time."[17]

Furthermore, Costa's narrative infused value into the architecture that was inextricably tied to it. While Aleijadinho's work was classified as Baroque, Costa claimed that Aleijadinho was able to transform the Portuguese style into something identifiably Brazilian through stylistic innovation. Indeed, if one examines Aleijadinho's work in relation to its immediate Portuguese predecessors, there are discernible differences (Fig. 6). Typically, the smaller eighteenth-century Portuguese churches had tri-partite façades with pilasters



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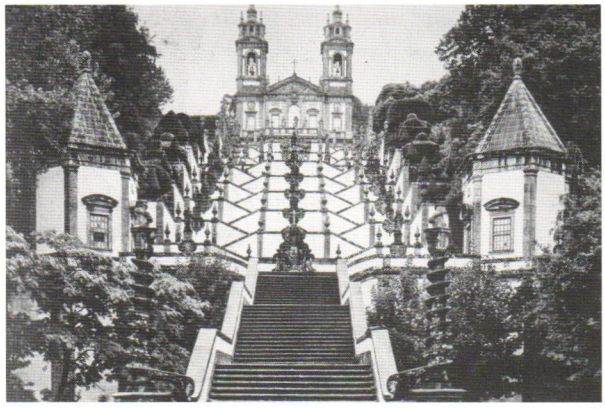

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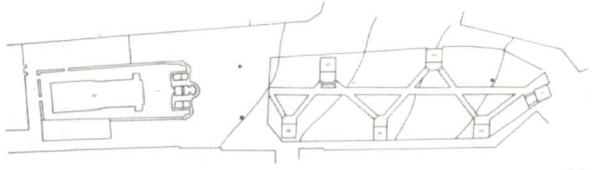

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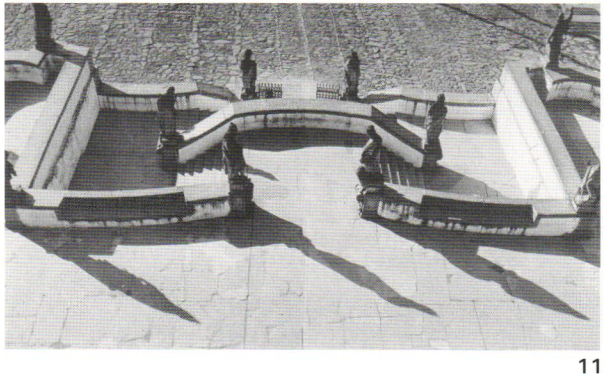

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and beams articulated on a flat surface (Fig. 7).[18] In his Igreja de São Francisco, Aleijadinho began to slightly curve the front façade of the building to give complexity to the composition (Fig. 8). In addition, while the Stations of the Cross in Braga, Portugal, designed by Andres Soares in 1858 (Fig. 9) seemed more elaborate in detail than its Brazilian counterpart, it lacked the complexity of oblique axial crossing one undertakes in ascending Congonhas (Fig. 10). On the other hand, when one arrives at the church at Congonhas, one is met with a façade designed by Aleijadinho twenty years after São Francisco, one that is actually much closer to the Portuguese examples. The façade is flattened and its axial relationship is directional rather than encompassing (Figs. 11, 12).[19]

Although it was important to legitimize Aleijadinho's "Brazilianness," doing the same with the Baroque became equally significant in writing an indigenous history of Brazilian modernism. In his short Ministry of Culture book *Arquitetura Brasileira* (*Brazilian Architecture*), Costa connected Brazil's most famous and prolific modern architect Oscar Niemeyer to a Brazilian lineage: "Aleijadinho is both the key and the enigma that intrigues and wins the utmost admiration of our modern architects, especially the personality of Oscar Niemeyer, an architect whose background and mentality are genuinely Carioca."[20]

Niemeyer is an especially interesting case in point. He was one of the architects who worked with Le Corbusier on the Ministry of Education as well as on a joint submission for the United Nations. Niemeyer's first major work after the ministry was a complex of buildings at Pampulhua designed in 1942. One building in the complex, the casino, was a

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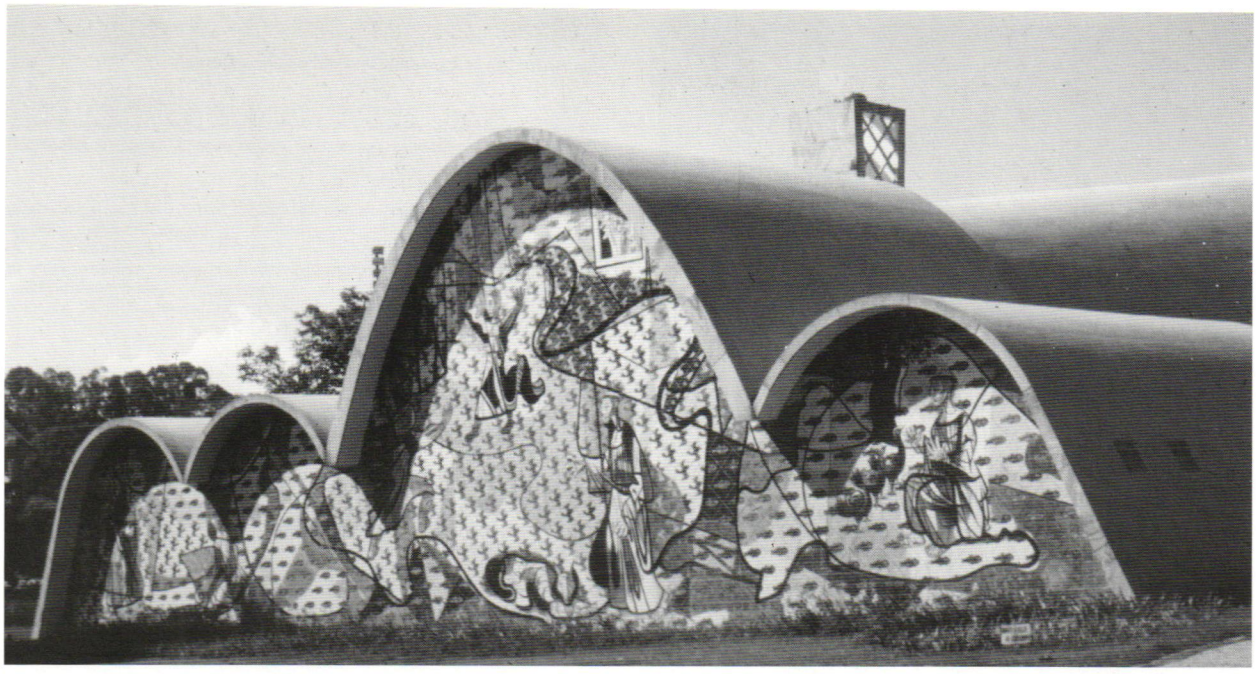


13

very skillful manipulation of Le Corbusier's five points, as has been praised by Kenneth Frampton.[21] In *Arquitetura Brasileira,* however, Costa focused his attention on Niemeyer's small Igreja de São Francisco de for Pampulha Assis with the purpose of relating Niemeyer to Aleijadinho (Fig. 13). The building, which is situated only fifty miles away from Aleijadinho's Igreja de São Francisco de Assis, broke out of the Corbusian free plan into a series of curved roof surfaces that referenced Aleijadinho's innovative curved façade. The connection to Aleijadinho thus served to distinguish Brazilian architecture from the hegemonic genealogical narrative of modernism.

In this context, it is also important to note that Baroque was not the only European stylistic precedent in Brazil. Rio itself had been planned by a French planner from the Beaux-Arts, and there were numerous important buildings designed by immigrant French architects in the academic tradition.[22] While the dominant form of European modernism has been inextricably tied to the nineteenth-century tectonic, programmatic, and formal investigations of the Beaux-Arts by historians including Banham and Pevsner, in Brazil the Beaux-Arts tradition—unlike the Baroque—was characterized as being "imported."[23] From the outside, Brazilian architecture was seen as derivative of the hegemonic lineage of European modernism that drew from nineteenth-century academicism and developed into the "international style." For Costa, however, it was important to establish a national narrative in order to assert that modernism was neither imported nor regionalized but rather endemic to Brazil.

Furthermore, aligning Brazilian modernism with Aleijadinho and the Baroque brought multiple associative meanings to its abstract formal expression. For example, in Erwin Panofsky's essay "What is Baroque," there exists an ambiguity in distinguishing an identifiable style from mannerist forays.[24] This inherent ambiguity allows the expressionistic tendencies of the architect to exist within the larger framework of style. Not unlike Aleijadinho, Niemeyer, whose work was criticized for being indulgently mannerist and self-referential by critics such as Max Bill and Walter Gropius, could therefore be legitimized within a genealogy while at the same time being nationally claimed because of personal creativity and formal deviation[25] (Fig. 14). In fact, it was not the referencing of indigenous precedents, but the creative deviations of the architecture and the deviant character of the architect that identified the architecture as uniquely "Brazilian." While academicism might deny the gestural or the intuitive, the Baroque model accommodated and empowered it.

14

Finally, it is interesting to consider the possibility of the Baroque heritage as a tool to re-characterize the modern. While Heinrich Wölfflin, Erwin Panofsky, and Gilles Deleuze are separated by decades, there is a consensus among them regarding Baroque's resistance to containment. Wölfflin looks at architecture's continual movement from a corporeal perspective positing relationships established by how we judge our body in relation to the relative stability of the architectural body. [26] Panofsky, on the other hand examines psychological projections that question both the subject's stasis in relation to time and space and the frame's role as boundary.[27] Much later, Deleuze completely disintegrates the boundary by acknowledging a multiplicity of systems that exist in a dynamic and heterogeneous field.[28]

The implied fluidity and heterogeneity in these analyses, which question the centrality of the Enlightenment body, congeal in the Baroque and the grotesque narrative of Aleijadinho. To then frame Brazilian modern architecture in such terms is to open it to another set of possibilities which emphasize national specificity rather than formal abstraction. Both the narrative of Aleijadinho and the spatial characterizations of the Baroque suggest the connection of modern Brazilian architecture to a larger spatial and social field. The implied heterogeneity and fluidity are not only found formally in Brazilian modernism but are fundamental in national paradigms, such *as homen nôvo Brasileiro*, which is foregrounded in the hybridity and the multi-racial identity of the population. Therefore, the heterogeneous field is relevant not only to Brazilian architecture but also to the Brazilian national subject. While architecture and the narratives of its makers are clearly intertwined, it is interesting to consider how architectural narratives position us as subjects as clearly as architectural space positions us as bodies.

Notes

All translations by the author unless indicated otherwise.

[1] For an example of this connection, one need not look further than Wright's lecture to the Royal Institute of British Architects on organic architecture. Frank Lloyd Wright, *An Organic Architecture*: *Architecture of Democracy* (London: Lund and Humphries, 1939): 1-8.

[2] The publication *O Aleijadinho* (Rio de Janeiro: Ministry of Education, 1949) includes Costa's introduction "A Arquitetura de Antonio Francisco Lisboa," which is a formal and historical outline of the Igreja de São Francisco in São Joao del Rei. The main text by Rodrigo Bretas has recently been republished in Rodrigo Bretas, *Passos da Paixo* (Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Alumbramento, 1989). Costa's introduction can now be found in Lúcio Costa, *Registro de uma Vivencia* (São Paulo: Empresa da Artes): 521-33.

[3] Concurrent with Vargas's rise to power in a 1930 coup was the appointment of Lúcio Costa to direct the state-supported Escola das Belas Artes in Rio de Janeiro, which was previously run following the Beaux-Arts curriculum. Costa was at the center of the modern movement in Brazil. He brought in the Russia-born émigré Gregori Warchavchick as well as Affonso Reidy. Both had recently completed unabashedly modernist projects. When the competition for the Ministry Building was held, a Beaux-Arts scheme was selected. However, the minister, Gustav Capanema, with Vargas's blessing, paid off the winner, and hired Costa to organize a team. Costa would later collaborate with Oscar Niemeyer for the design of Brasília.

[4] Other members of the team were Affonso Reidy and Jorge Moreira. In addition, Le Corbusier came for a month to help guide the team.

[5] Pregrino Junior, Ministry of Education official, "O Papel da Educacao Fisica na Formacao do Homem Moderno," *Educacao Fisica*, 62-63 (Rio de Janeiro, 1942): 32.

[6] Lippi et al., *O Estado Nôvo* (Zahar: Rio, 1982): 72, 73.

[7] Lúcio Costa, *Registro de uma Vivencia*, 437.

[8] There are a number of Brazilian texts that try to decipher the mystery of Aleijadinho's affliction. It is now thought to be a variant of leprosy. Among them are *A Doença do Aleijadinho* (Rio de Janeiro: Ministry of Education, 1961) and Rene Laclette, *O Aleijadinho e Suas Doenças* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Editora Catedra, 1976).

[9] Bretas, 53.

[10] Ibid., 58.

[11] Ibid., 57.

[12] Lúcio Costa, *Registro de uma Vivencia*, 524.

[13] Ibid., 527.

[14] Bakhtin formulates the grotesque as that which "ignores the closed, smooth, and impenetrable surface of the body and retains only its excrescencies (sprouts, buds) and orifices." Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1968): 310.

[15] Carlos Drummonde de Andrade, "Postcards from Vila Rica-São Francisco de Asis," *The Minus Sign*, trans. Virginia de Araujo (Redding Ridge, CT: Black Swan Books, 1967): 85.

[16] For a clarification of this use of biography, see Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process," in Arjun Appadurai ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

[17] Mario de Andrade, "Aleijadinho: Funcao Historica," Carlos Drummond de Andrade ed., *Brasil, Terra, e Alma* (Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Do Autor, [1935] 1967).

[18] The Portuguese Baroque examples that most closely relate to the Brazilian examples are somewhat restrained compositionally while effusive on the interiors. This is of the highest period of colonization from the late seventeenth century into the eighteenth as Portugal was re-discovering Classicism. A good example is the Church of São Francisco in Braga. See Carlos de Azevedo, *Churches of Portugal* (New York: Scala, 1985): 34-40.

[19] For an excellent comparison between these two Stations of the Cross, see Germain Bazin, *Aleijadinho et la Sculpture Baroque au Bresil* (Paris: Panoramique, 1963): 200-219.

[20] Lúcio Costa, *Arquitetura Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Ministry of Culture, 1952): 34.

[21] Kenneth Frampton highlights this building in his *Modern Architecture: a Critical History* applauding its "reinterpretation of the Corbusian notion of a *promenade architecturale* in a spatial composition of remarkable balance and vivacity." Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: a Critical History* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1992): 255.

[22] See Norma Evenson, *Two Brazilian Capitals* (New Haven: Yale, 1973).

[23] See Nikolaus Pevsner, *Sources of Modern Architecture and Design* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968) and Reyner Banham, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (New York: Praeger, 1960).

[24] Erwin Panofsky, "What is Baroque," *Three Essays on Style* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, [1934] 1995): 38-45.

[25] Max Bill, "Report on Brazil," *Architectural Review* (Oct. 1954): 238-9.

[26] Heinrich Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque* (Ithaca: Cornell, [1888] 1966): 77.

[27] Panofsky, 61-75.

[28] Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993): 27-36.

Illustrations

Fig. 1: Portrait of Aleijadinho with hands hidden, mid-18th century.

Fig. 2: Plate from *The Sickness of Aleijadinho,* published by the Ministry of Education, 1959. This was an example of a government-sponsored study that set out to pinpoint Aleijadinho's illness.

Fig. 3: Congonhas do Campo, 1800-1808. Aleijadinho, sculptor and architect.

Fig. 4: Statues of the twelve Prophets, Congonhas do Campo, 1800-1808. Aleijadinho, sculptor and architect.

Fig. 5: Propaganda shot from the ministry of Education, circa 1938, showing public physical education program.

Fig. 6: Sketch by Lúcio Costa showing the development of the Brazilian Baroque. It begins with the Portuguese settlement in the region of Minas Gerais and ends with the date of Aleijadinho's first chapel in the city of Ouro Prêto, Minas Gerais, Brazil.

Fig. 7: Small Chapel, Braga, Portugal, mid-18th century.

Fig. 8: Church of São Francisco de Assis, Ouro Prêto, Brazil 1778. Aleijadinho, architect and sculptor.

Fig. 9: Stations of the Cross, Braga, Portugal, 1858. Andres Soares, architect.

Fig. 10: Congonhas do Campo showing six stations of the Cross leading to the pilgrimage chapel.

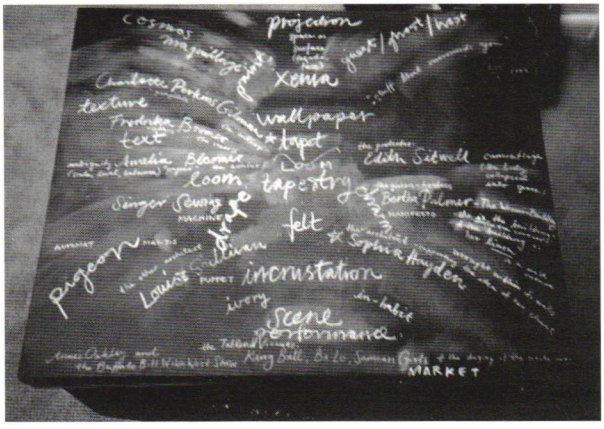
Fig. 11: Congonhas do Campo, view of exterior stair leading to the plinth that foregrounds the pilgrimage chapel at Congonhas do Campo.

Fig. 12: Stations of the Cross, Congonhas do Campo, 1800-08. View of station with pilgrimage chapel in background.

Fig. 13: Chapel of São Francisco de Assis, Pampulhua, Minas Gerais, 1940. Oscar Niemeyer, architect.

Fig. 14: National Cathedral with statues of the Prophets, Brasilia, 1960. Oscar Niemeyer, architect.

KATARINA BONNEVIER
THEATRICAL DEVICES



This project is not simply the images or simply the text, *A Pidgin Play*; not simply the masks, models, and furniture nor the staging and the animations. All the parts are entangled into an architectonic *skein*. It plays with the appearance of architecture to reveal patterns that are hidden in the surface.

'Cause isn't there a strange provoking, formless figure crawling within that conspicuous front design?

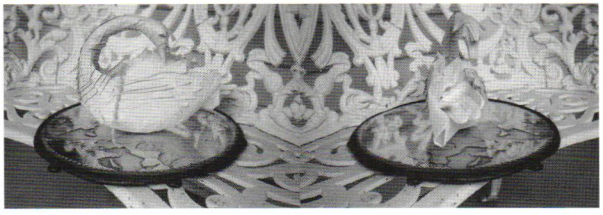
Stage

The theater emphasizes the appearance: the story is told through stage sets, costumes, masks, and body languages in addition to the spoken word. It is the surface of the theater that evokes narratives. In this project, theatrical devices have been borrowed to play with an architecture that exhibits itself. This project began with a Cast of Characters and a specific site, the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago.

Mask

The mask is the *sur-face* of acting. The essential characteristic of the mask is that it hides and reveals at the same time. The audience is the mirror: the actor can tell how the mask is played by the response of the audience. The mask changes the relation between the self and the other.

Jacques Lecoq taught us how to create a character.[1] You do not have to be a swan to play a swan. Study the body language of the bird, the look in its eyes, the color of its feather dress, the rhythm of its movements, and then replay it. The psychology of the bird is irrelevant. If you can mask yourself as a swan, you can play a swan. The character is within the mask, not behind. There is no inner truth to be found by unveiling her. The disguise is what enables us to act.

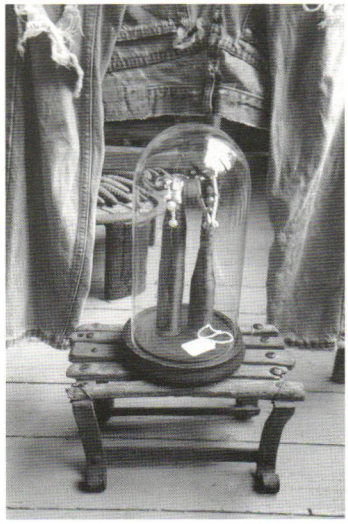


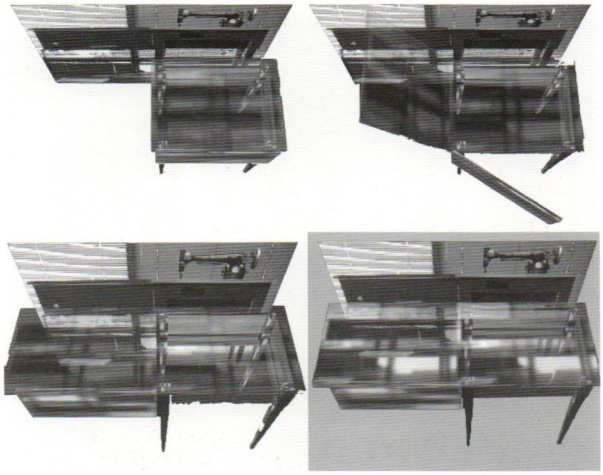
Decor, Costumes and Props

I inherited elements for this project from Jennifer Bloomer's *Abodes of Theory and Flesh: Tabbles of Bower*, a collaborative project staged in the early 1990s.[2] The target of Bloomer's project is the Ornament/Structure dichotomy, in which the former is historically burdened with the negative connotations of the feminine, the superficial, and the impure. The battle is fought with the Amulets. These stones or mosaic tiles of *Tabbles of Bower* are both decorative and monstrous. The Amulets also behave like masks, as they

are generative models infested with life. As I inherited the Amulets from this work, I was confronted by the tricky question of how to construct their home.

The answer came analogically: they would get accessories, for example, gloves. The gloves dressed the Amulets as the research and the construction of the project went hand in hand. Excacating nine pairs of fine leather gloves in the 99¢-bin at the Goodwill Thrift Store in West Ames triggered a thinking about the sequence of accessories: amulet, glove, mannequin, *tableau* (scene), stage, department store, world's fair. Every step in the series served as a model for the next step, while each had its independence.





Table

The architectonic construction of *The 1893 Faire of Masks* is a sliding scale of things and scenes. A scene is both a vertical background and a stage, the floor where the action takes place. The Table of Contents, a blackboard *Singer* sewing-machine table with the map of the project, is one of the stages for this project.

But what drama was to be staged here? The Cast of Characters makes their entry again. I let them interact with the rest of the borrowed, found, and fabricated collection of things. I constructed a dramatic text, *A Pidgin Play*, a history of associative details. The text is a program for yet another architecture. An architecture which is animated, which allows one stage to unfold into another. And, lucky for me, when the *skein* got too tight I could just let the goddess—in this case the performer Lady Sitwell—enter as a *deus ex machina* to comb out the entanglements of the plot. And the play disappears into a tapestry leaving the empty stage behind.[3]

CAST OF CHARACTERS

2. Sophia Hayden Architect	1. Amelia Bloomer Editor of The Lily	2. Louis Henri Sullivan The Other Architect
5. King Bull, Bhilo and others. Sami people on display	4. Fredrika Bremer Swedish Author	6. Annie Oakley/Little Sure Shot Performer
8. Lady Edith Sitwell English Poetess	7. Bertha M. Honoré Potter Palmer Head of the Lady Managers	9. Charlotte Perkins Gilman Author

A PIDGIN PLAY

SCENE 7: WROUGHT WITHIN ITS WALLS

(*Charlotte and Sophia move along the mezzanine that is lined by the audience. They turn around a corner through a passage to a parallel gallery with golden walls. Bertha comes pottering with a feather duster*)

SOPHIA: Charlotte, look there is Mrs. Potter Palmer. Let's hide in the wall.

(*They slide into a pocket in the wall*)

MANAGER BERTHA: (*rehearsing her speech for the Farewell Reception on October 28, 1893*) When our palace in the White City shall have vanished like a dream...

CHARLOTTE: She will discover that there is a woman stooping down and creeping behind the front pattern.

SOPHIA: Ssh! Sshewillseeuss.

(*Manager Bertha stops as she has heard something. She decides that it is just her imagination and continues rehearsing*)

MANAGER BERTHA: When our palace in the White City shall have vanished like a dream; when grass and flowers cover the spot where it now stands; may its... may itssssss... Darn that pesky fly!

(*She has stopped again right in front of where Charlotte and Sophia are hiding. She is whisking her feather duster like a fly swatter to remember the next line. Charlotte and Sophia try to suppress their giggle*)

CHARLOTTE: (*whispering*) The faint figure behind seems to shake the pattern, as if she wants to get out.

SOPHIA: Ssh! Keep quiet please!

(*Manager Bertha has not heard or seen them. She stands in the pose of a praying mantis*)

MANAGER BERTHA: When our palace in the White City shall have vanished like a dream; when grass and flowers cover the spot where it now stands; may its memory and influence still remain as a benediction of those who have wrought within its walls.

TABELLE (narrator): Sophia Hayden produced all the drawings in three months. And she was paid less than a third of her male colleagues. The building was constructed out of plaster and wood. She was exhausted and taken in to a rest home. The vultures were thrilled to have proof of women's weakness.

(*Manager Bertha starts to dust while humming the last line over and over again*)

MANAGER BERTHA: ...who have wrought within its walls... who have wrought within its walls...

TABELLE: The Columbian Exposition ran for six months. The Woman's Building caught fire like many of the buildings in the fair and was demolished. The Fine Arts Building was

redressed in a more weather-resistant costume of limestone and marble and is today the Museum of Science and Industry. The Swedish building was dismantled and put together again in Norway, Wisconsin.[4]

MANAGER BERTHA: There is gold dust everywhere. These walls stain everything they touch.

CHARLOTTE: Aaatjhoo!

(*Manager Bertha bounces* [Swedish "studsar till"]. *Sophia and Charlotte start to titter* [Swedish "fnittra"])

MANAGER BERTHA: Iss thiss a surprise, ett skämt?

CHARLOTTE: (*as she starts to creep*[5]) The front pattern does move, because the women behind it crawl around and shake it.

(*Sophia follows her example and also starts to creep. The whole wall is trembling*)

MANAGER BERTHA: T'is a joke, no?

CHARLOTTE: Let's creep out of the wall, most women don't creep by daylight. And so they do. It is very humiliating to be caught creeping by daylight.

MANAGER BERTHA: Sssoffia!?

(*Manager Bertha turns jaundice and faints. Sophia and Charlotte have to creep over her*)

TABELLE: Hayden made drawings for a memorial building that was to be erected after the fair to commemorate the Woman's Building. She sent her plans to Palmer, who intended to make it into a woman's shelter. There was a site for the project in the garden of The Art Institute of Chicago on Michigan Avenue, but the project was never realized. Hayden wanted to charm the world through her building, and she did, but the world still didn't want Sophia Hayden, a woman without charm. They wanted a role model.

CHARLOTTE: (*from the floor*) Oh, my eyes flood with tears... Will you never stop lecturing?

TABELLE: Anyway, Sophia Hayden disappeared from the scene and is not known to have practiced architecture again.

Notes

This exposé is extracted from a thesis project entitled "The 1893 Faire of Masks: A Play on Ephemeral Architecture," completed at Iowa State University, 2001. Professor Jennifer Bloomer advised the project.

1 For further reading, see Jacques Lecoq with Jean-Gabriel Carasso and Jean-Claude Lallias, *Le Corps Poétique. Un enseignement de la création théâtrale* (Paris, Actes Sud, 1997).

2 See Jennifer Bloomer, "Abodes of Theory and Flesh: Tabbles of Bower," *Assemblage* 17 (April 1992): 7-29.

3 The scene that follows relies heavily on Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper and Other Stories* (New York: Dover, 1997). Originally published in *The New England Magazine* in May 1892.

4 Norway was part of a union with Sweden until 1905.

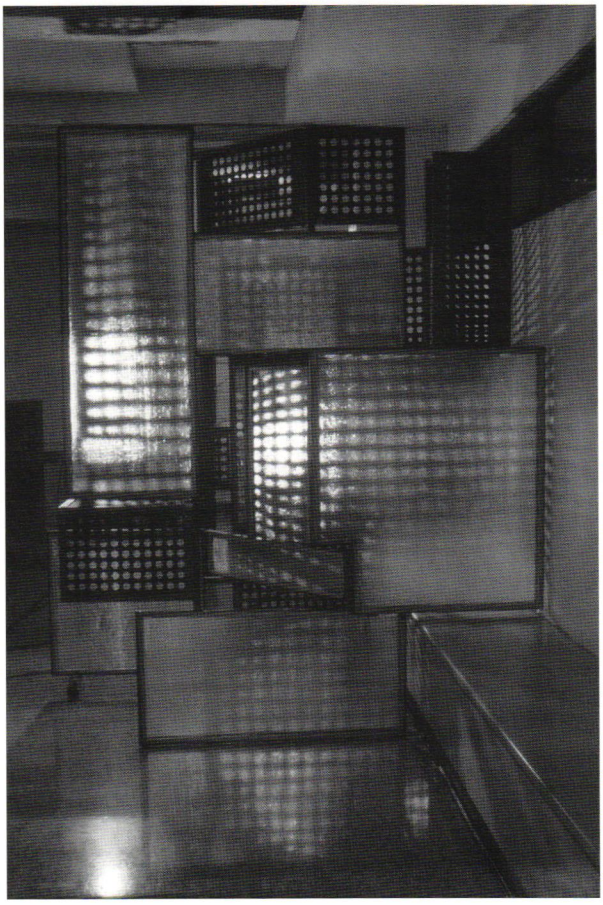
5 English owes the following words, among others, to Scandinavian languages: skulk, crawl, scream, gape, titter, sky, die, they, them, their.

J. MEEJIN YOON
BETWEEN BODIES AND WALLS
MIT LEVEL II STUDIO, FALL 2001

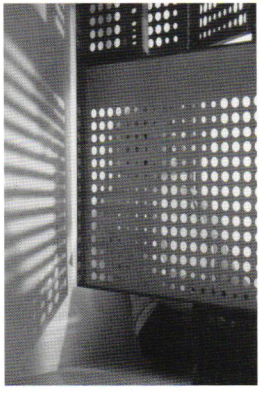
This studio explores the mutability of material concepts as a means to inscribe, contain, and extend the body in space. Beginning with the body's own living container and largest organ, the skin, students were asked to analyze and excavate a selection of second skins worn to clothe, protect, obscure, extend, enable, reveal, constrict, constrain, or enclose the body. Students were then asked to conceptualize, design, and fabricate at one-to-one scale a third skin—the *WALL* as a tectonic and occupiable body.

Overlaps in architectural and clothing terminology—such as curtain wall, skirt board, trim, flute, dress, fabric, pin, and pattern—reveal a continued semantic and tropic association between second and third skins—between clothing and architecture. The relationship between the German words *Wand* (wall) and *Gewand* (garment) have been drawn by Gottfried Semper. While walls can exist as barriers, dividers, seams, fragments, filters, and gaps, they too can be worn—deployed to challenge territory and force new ways of occupation. Walls can be used to define space while also containing space within them.

It is this "thickness" of the wall—its ability to define space and inscribe occupation—which generated the tectonic speculation for the studio. Tectonics, while denoting a preoccupation with materiality and craft, and connoting the expression or representation of those material properties, has become a mutable and unstable term. The recent evolution of mutant materials and their technologies has created a material culture pregnant with possibilities while simultaneously challenging our inherited notions of material significance and signification. Material instability challenges tectonics itself, placing the architect in a role of invention and intervention in both the construction and the manufacturing process. Students in this studio were asked to take on this challenge by exploring tectonics as an inquiry as opposed to a given. Through their tectonic investigations, they were required to employ their wall to both define and inscribe space externally and internally, allowing the walls to be occupiable in some manner. Clothed in architecture, the body was infinitely extended.

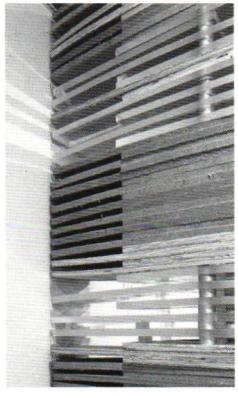


The tectonic interweaving of two semi-transparent surfaces creates a self-supporting container/wall/screen which pulls apart to allow one to occupy its thickness. The body's presence in the wall is registered as a deflection map on one surface and a transparency map on the opposite surface.



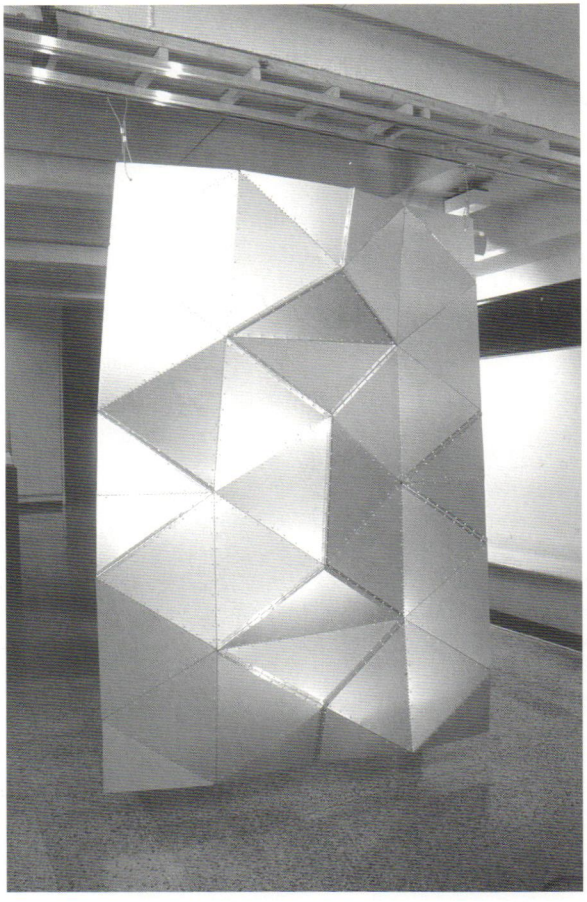
MEREDITH ATKINSON + TIM MORSHEAD
SHEER WALL

This "intelligent" mass structure explores and inscribes the body's trace and activity into a stratified mass. Its varied materials and degrees of transparency mark the "imprint" of the body's moments of flexibility and range of vision. As a result of this response to the human condition, the mass deteriorates in particular moments, revealing its internal structure, while simultaneously remaining a formidable solid edge.



AARON GREENE + KRISTINE GOLDRICK

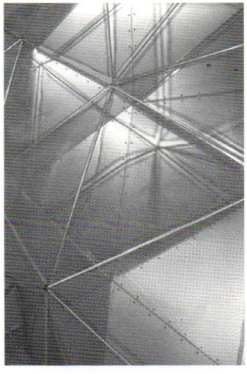
STRATA WALL



Aluminum Construction: anondized sheets, hollow tubes, wire mesh, piano hinges, rivets

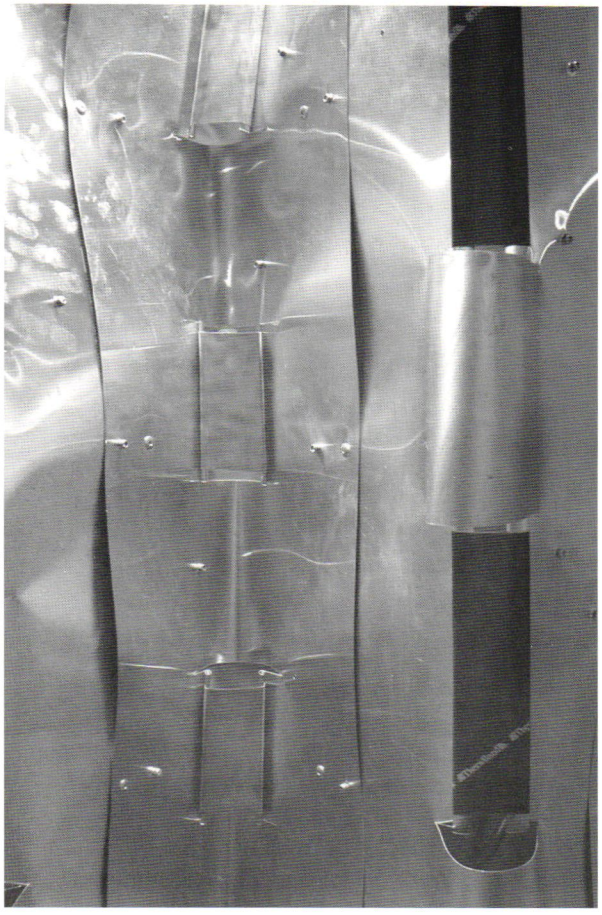
Hinging Motion: dialogue between varying ranges of motion of two systems

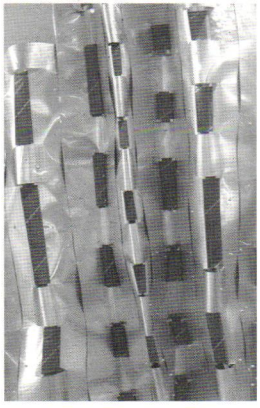
Contorted Body: result of interaction between the body and its armors



REBECCA LUTHER + TRACY TAYLOR

FULL CONTACT ORIGAMI

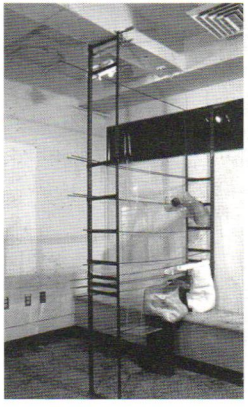




The interdependency of the aluminum and rubber create a self-supporting, perforated, rigid surface. The wall uniquely defines space in response to the body and acts as a delivery system using the vinyl tubing as infrastructure and activator of surface contour. Different materialities specifically condition the experience on each side affecting sound quality, varying tactility, and filtering light.

MICHAEL LEHNER + KARL MUNKELWITZ

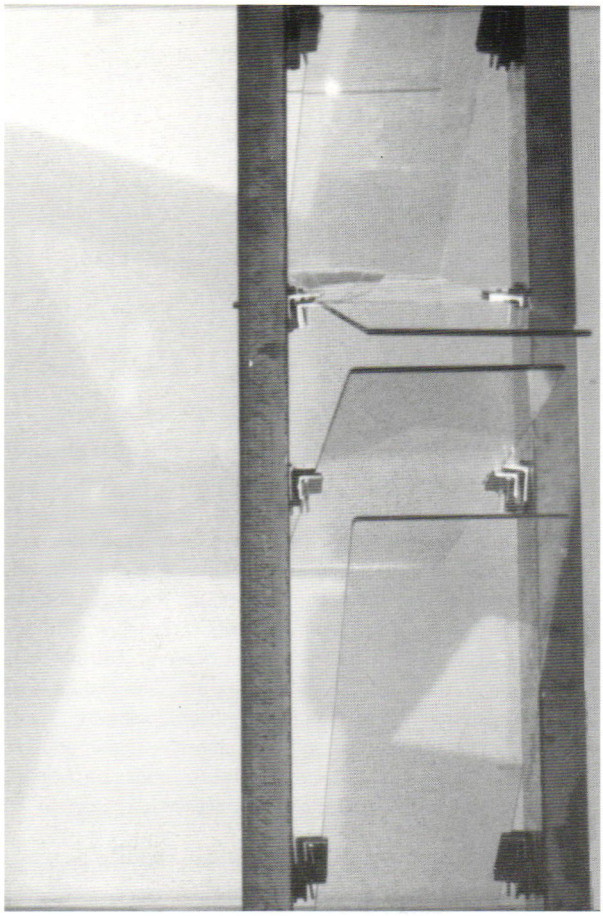
INTENSION



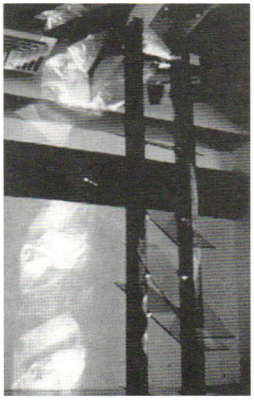
Begin with an empty space, X. Divide X into smaller units of varying dimensions. Fill part of each acrylic unit of X with rubber. Each of these rubber units should contain a void and be open toward the top. Remove the acrylic units from volume X. Fill each rubber unit of X with plaster. The rubber units will distort as they are filled and will need to be supported by hand. As each plaster unit is formed within volume X, it will be distorted according to the relative position of the maker's body within and around volume X. Remove the rubber units from volume X.

KYLE STEINFELD + AMY YANG

WALL-MAKING-WALL



This wall was designed to refer to the physical proportions of the body: glass panels are suspended at critical heights indicating knees, pelvis, waist, chest, shoulders, and head. An image projected onto the glass reflects and extends to the the walls, floors and ceilings of the surrounding space and abstractly defines those surfaces in relation to the measurements of the body. Glass is both active and passive: visually, it dematerializes yet its reflectivity activates a comparison of body, image, and space.



ALIKI HASIOTIS

MEASURE

The wall is inhabited between layers of a single composite membrane folded upon itself in the form of a labyrinth. One facing surface of the membrane is pleated latex, accumulating at 1.5x the length of the muslin fabric that makes up the other facing surface. Cones of vision are extruded through the layered construct, allowing a choreographed visual permeability through the accumulated membrane. When unwrapped, the membrane extends to forty-eight feet in length and the extruded cones are seen as a composition of openings in a cinematic, frame-by-frame movement across the membrane's elevation.

ANNA GALLAGHER + BRIAN ALEX MILLER

SURFACE SURPLUS

DAVID GISSEN

IS THERE A JEWISH SPACE?

JEWISH IDENTITY BEYOND THE NEO-AVANT-GARDE

In recent years, architects have explored their diverse identities in ways that would seem inconceivable thirty years ago. The 1990s saw the emergence of African-American, queer, and feminist perspectives in architecture. These architects used their "deviant" positions to critique modern architecture and popular culture while affirming their roles as cultural producers. The identity movement is an aesthetic discourse that has enjoyed palpable results: more artists and designers were able to represent their cultures, religions, nationalities, and sexualities in their writings and projects. Nevertheless, these identities often emerged in architecture in problematic ways. Among the myriad representations of particular identities, I wish to examine how the architectural neo-avant-garde explored Jewish identity in the 1980s and 90s. This essay examines some of the problems that exist in representations of this identity within the writings and works of architects who claimed ownership to its exploration. In particular, I will examine how Peter Eisenman and his critics (and here we must also mention related explorations by Daniel Libeskind and Stanley Tigerman) re-examined "Jewishness" in architectural discourse and how they enhanced certain essentialist positions that were introduced much earlier.[1] In many ways, I will argue, these explorations worked against the identity discourses developed from African-American, queer, and feminist perspectives.

Identity discourse in the nineties, especially in architecture, was fueled by a replacement of essentialism with an approach that examines social constructions instead. In an essentialist position, "objective" labels are developed for groups through presumably scientific means. Biology and, in part, psychology are seen as the determinants of—in the case of our analysis—a "Jewish" mindset, a "Jewish" sense of spatial experience that emerges from the physical and psychological state of "Jewishness." A social constructionist model, on the other hand, might examine the context under which such terms are presented and see them as relative to the way groups are portrayed in a particular time, place, and culture. Social constructionists might examine the way groups portray themselves and are portrayed in the variety of arenas that make up culture—television, radio, film, journalism, design, etc. The distinctions between essentialism and social constructionism are significant; the practitioners of various identity movements in architecture have proved how different groups are framed by socially constructed spatial and material practices.[2]

Until quite recently, the identification of groups from within and without was primarily based on the essentialist model. Essentialist descriptions of a Jewish architecture and a Jewish space—in what we know as the history of architecture—emerged *outside* of Jewish self-identification, often to the detriment of Jews. Margaret Olin describes the nineteenth-century French architectural historian George Perrot's discovery of the "rootless" and "empty" qualities of Jewish architecture in Solomon's Temple.[3] More notorious are the writings of Paul Schultze-Naumburg and the statements of Paul Bonatz who attempted to align interwar modernism—exemplified by the Weissenhof Siedlung—as having its roots in Palestine. Bonatz claimed that the Werkbund exhibition of Weissenhof was like "the suburb of Jerusalem."[4] In his later writings, Schultze-Naumburg resorted to the "rootlessness" and "Jewish" nature of modernist space and form.[5]

In the 1980s, Peter Eisenman engaged this early discourse on Jewish architecture to control it from within as a form

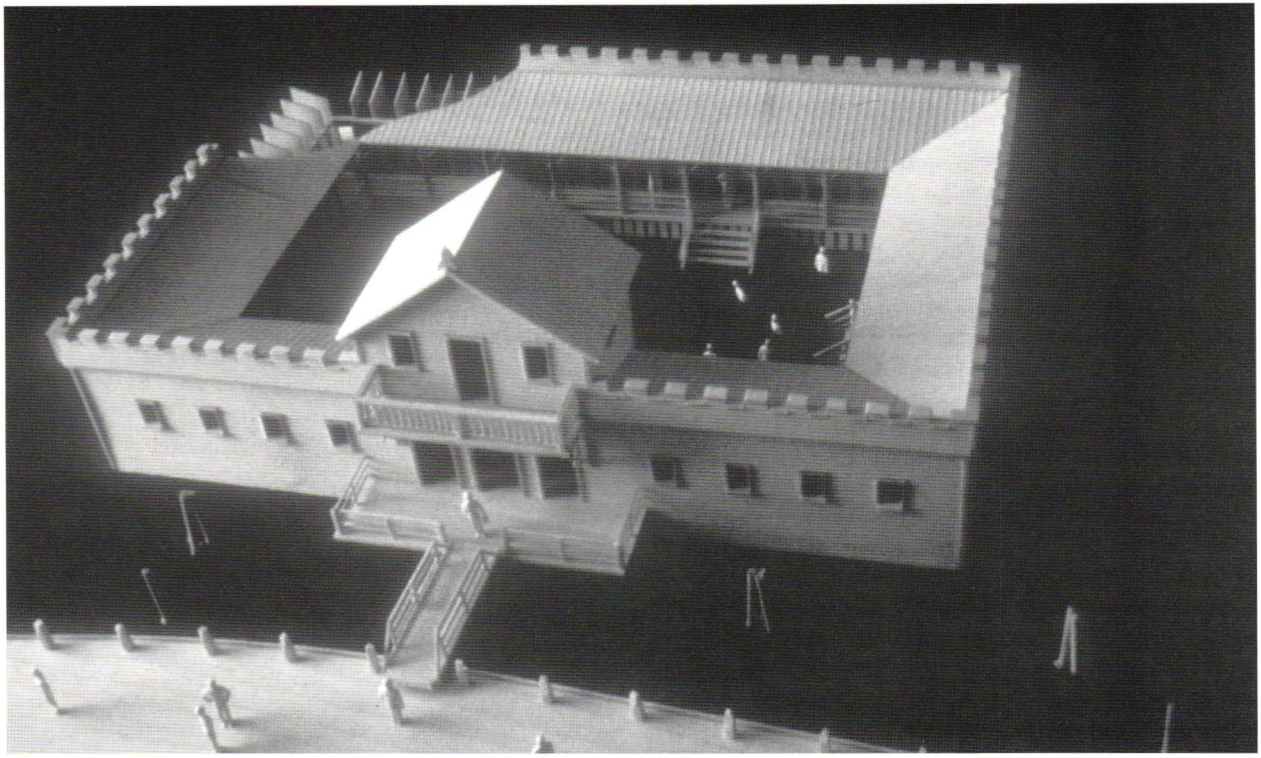
of self-identification in architecture, in a way similar to other identity movements in art and literature. In numerous works, writings, and interviews, Eisenman attempted to align a state of "Jewishness" with the formal qualities of deconstructivist and post-structuralist architecture. Taking cues from Eisenman's own descriptions, the critic and historian Richard Joncas sums up Eisenman's project: "He speaks of 'deconstruction,' 'repression,' 'texts,' and 'between,' and his architecture epitomizes 'fragmentation,' 'incompleteness,' and, most disturbing, 'loss of center.' He draws on psychoanalysis and literary theory to explain his designs and ascribes his own experience as a Jew living in New York to the ever-present sense of 'dislocation' in his work. Like many twentieth-century architects, Eisenman has invented a language which captures the angst of contemporary societies."[6] The qualities described by Joncas became dominant in the construction of a Jewish identity in architecture in the 1990s, particularly in the practice of Eisenman and, in part, that of Libeskind, Tigerman, and Gehry. Both Eisenman and Libeskind relied on notions of Jewishness—associated with chaos, absence, wandering, and un-homely domestic lives—to fuel formal explorations that grappled with historical stereotypes.[7]

Eisenman's "public" (sic. "published") exploration of his Jewish identity began in interviews, during which he began to introduce his architectural theories as emerging from his past as a Jew. In an interview with Leon Krier, Eisenman claimed that his aversion to classicism was a result of the fact that "as a Jew and an outsider I have never felt part of the classical world."[8] While Eisenman had been exploring the theme of architectural otherness much earlier—claiming that it was present in architecture from Palladio to Terragni—suddenly he was making an organic claim to its origins as an essential aspect of his identity. Charles Jencks probed the limits of Eisenman's thinking on the subject of Jewishness:

> Jencks: It seems to me that you are trying all the time to reconcile people to alienation and to present being a Jewish outsider as a universal state. You're trying to take the homeless Jewish intellectual as Kant's imperative and say that everybody should be, or is, a homeless Jewish intellectual, either openly admitting it like yourself, or inadvertently.
>
> Eisenman: I do not think it is inadvertent, but rather subconscious. I do not think you have to be a Jewish intellectual to be desperately lonely, an island of the unconscious. Architecture has repressed the individual unconscious by dealing only with consciousness in the physical environment that is the supposedly happy home. I think it is exactly in the home where the unhomely is, where the terror is alive—in the repression of the unconscious. What I am trying to suggest is that the alienated house makes us realize that we cannot be only conscious of the physical world but rather of our own unconscious. Psychoanalysis is talking about this. Psychoanalysis is partly a Jewish phenomenon, understandably for a people who need to be in touch with their own psychological being. I would argue that we all have a bit of Jew in us; that the Jew is our unconscious; that's why there is anti-Semitism, because we do not want to face our unconscious; we do not want to face our shadow; the Jew stands for that shadow. We do not want to face the issue of rootlessness. I am from New York, but I do not necessarily feel more at home here than in many other places.... But this is not necessarily a Jewish problem, but rather one of modern man in general.
>
> Jencks: Well, I would agree that to be in New York is to feel alienated and alone, and at the same time to be a Jew in New York is to feel everybody is alienated and alone, so that it's a kind of universal New York experience. I think a certain amount of irony should creep into your view of yourself in that light. I mean you get a lot of Woody Allen films made on precisely that subject.[9]

The comparison between Allen and Eisenman is a surprisingly powerful one for examining the problems of essentialist thinking. Sander Gilman has often described how stereotypes are reinforced from within by members of a "labeled" group as a way to understand the geographic and cultural situation of that group. Yet, as Gilman points out, because the label itself is not critically examined—in this case, within Eisenman's work or by Jencks, for that matter—other problems quickly ensue.[10]

For many contemporary thinkers that explore Jewish identity, the images of an "unhomely" Jewish domestic experience that permeates the films of Allen as well as many television dramas are deeply problematic.[11] *Annie Hall*, *Manhattan*, and other works by Allen present paradigms that many Jewish thinkers grapple with and overcome. Yes, some homes are alienated, but Allen—and also Eisenman—describe this unhomeliness as a universal experience that gets at "the Jew in all of us." Eisenman makes homes that are uprooted and chaotic because he is a Jew; Woody Allen shows domestic spaces in similar ways for autobiographical reasons. In the end, does Jewish identity benefit from this essentialist discourse?



1

The problems are more exaggerated in a review published in *The New York Times* ten years after the Jencks and Eisenman interview. In "Architecture of Light and Remembrance," the critic Herbert Muschamp analyzes the nature of Jewish space in the buildings designed by several progressive Jewish-American architects. Examining the work of such prominent Jewish-American architects as Moshe Safdie, Richard Meier, Peter Eisenman, and Frank Gehry, the article praises the "blazing talent of twentieth-century Jews," while exploring how Jewish architects—from Louis Kahn to a list of contemporary architects—"lead the field."[12]

Muschamp thus attempts to arrive at the essence of a Jewish space by examining the work of Jewish-American architects. He speculates about whether there is a Jewish style in architecture: "I asked Moshe Safdie if there was anything explicitly Jewish about the [Skirball Center's] design." Drawing on the work of Norris Kelly Smith, Muschamp concludes that Jewish thought should be seen as "dynamic, vigorous, passionate," as opposed to "classical" thought which is "static, moderate, and harmonious." At the end of this investigation, Muschamp claims that the open-floor plan, the "pinwheeling" house, and the impulse to flee the city, evident in Frank Lloyd Wright's work, are the modern master's own explorations of the Jewish mind![13]

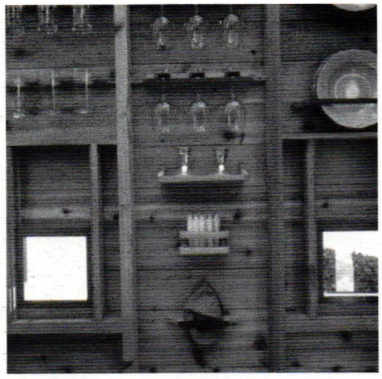
Perhaps most troubling is that this article associates emerging technologies with the Jewish experience and in this way contributes to the establisment of new stereotypes. In reference to the electronic façade of Eisenman's aborted Jewish Museum project in San Francisco (a commission now being developed by Daniel Libeskind), Muschamp claims: "Layers of meaning overlap here. One is the juxtaposition of two kinds of power: the industrial model, represented by the power station, and its displacement by the information economy. Another reflects San Francisco's leadership in communications technology. Finally, the screen reflects the degree to which members of the information society have become electronic nomads, not unlike 'wandering Jews,' surfing the net for fragments of meaning and place."[14]

Articles, such as the one by Herbert Muschamp, inhibit the critical aspects of identity politics while claiming to repre-

sent and support identity issues. It is the notion of the Jew as wanderer, as the other, and as an alien in his own domestic surroundings—introduced to the architectural context earlier—that must be countered. Architects who are interested in exploring their spatial identities—or architects interested in complicating the old stereotypes—must reinvest in the emerging identity practices that are based on the social constructionist model.

What is most missing from explorations into Jewish space by American architects are the actual experiences within spaces created by and for Jewish-Americans. This may include examinations of synagogues, but also neighborhoods, painful and complicated spaces where Jews experienced feelings of both oppression and of cultural re-birth. The bathhouse that emerged in the nineteenth-century sanitation movement is one such space (Fig. 1). What is absent is an examination of Jewish experience that exists in specific times, spaces, and ecologies. I would argue that if one were to look at the actual spaces of Jewish cultural production that continue to exist, one could see their relationship to a myriad of contemporary issues such as feminist or ecological explorations and other forms of material activism.

I would not want to end this essay without pointing to some possible new perspective for examining Jewish identity and identity in general in architecture. In recent years, Jewish artists and architects—including Allen Wexler, Alexander Gorlin, and Amy Landesberg—have produced promising work that challenges the spatial tropes and essentialism of earlier work (Figs. 2, 3). Coming primarily from feminist and ecological critiques (drawn from the work of the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan and post-structuralist thinkers), several artists, architects, and historians have explored their identities in complex ways that question some of the old stereotypes.



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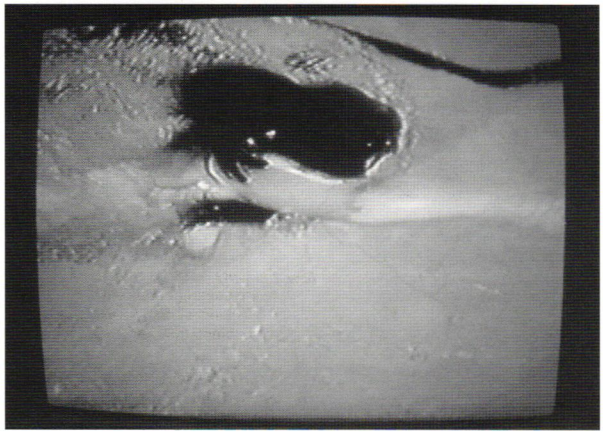

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Among those invested in this exploration, the work of the artist Rachel Schreiber has examined the production of Jewish meaning specifically in socially constructed Jewish spaces since the mid-1990s. While one project cannot sum up the entirety of these ideas, it is worth examining one of her works in order to demonstrate its critical potentials for architecture.

In her project *Life Blood*, exhibited in 1994 at the Judah L. Magnus Museum in Berkeley, California, Rachel Schreiber explores the numerous roles that the *mikvah* (the ceremonial bath) and the *sukkah* (the space of the tent) may take in a new era of Jewish-American representation (Figs. 4, 5). The project includes a series of videos and images installed in a red *sukkah*-like space. *Life Blood* explores the ritualistic purpose of the *mikvah* through Schreiber's personal history—her sexuality, Judaism, and her decision to have an abortion. The project plays off the original meaning of the *mikvah*, particularly its use as a place for washing after menstruation, with the meaning Schreiber instills in the space. Critical of the orthodoxy that the space represents for many Jewish-Americans, Schreiber recites a chapter from the Torah that describes the *mikvah*. An image of a woman swimming—it could be anywhere—fills another video screen while the biblical text is read. As Schreiber discusses the original text, which has an excruciatingly sexist tone, she begins to realize that this space is open to interpretation. Through her experience of the *mikvah*, she claims a new significance for the space relating to her control over her body in secular American culture.

Actual historical spaces such as the *mikvah* may serve as sites where architects re-examine Jewish spatial identity. The *mikvah* is a fascinating space in this era of ecological awareness. It is predicated on the use of ground water in order to "purify" men and women alike. (Contrary to common assumptions, *mikvahs* are also used by men.) The *mikvah* is also a fascinating space for discussion in an age of feminist activism. It is a space simultaneously associated with freedom and oppression—women congregate in them, however, as some believe, women are also unduly pressured to use the space to "purify" themselves after each menstrual cycle.

It is in such an imagined, historical, and "live" place that Jewish identity in architecture can re-ground itself. It is in such a space that identity may produce the complexity that it initially instigated as a subject in architecture. In such a space, one may build an identity that enables debates about the future of Jewish and non-Jewish spatial experiences alike.

Notes

I wish to thank Sander Gilman, Miriam Gusevich, and Christian Zapatka for reviewing this essay and providing helpful comments.

[1] I do not want to suggest in this essay that the formulations of Eisenman and his critics were completely flawed. Any discussion of Judaism and architecture within academic architectural culture in the late 1970s and early 1980s was extremely brave. As has been noted many times, architecture is a profession that has been dominated by white Anglo-Saxon Protestants—to the point of exclusivity at times. Eisenman's writings and projects represented a significant leap in introducing Jewish identity into architecture. For Jewish architects of my generation (I am 31 years old), the writings and statements of architects such as Eisenman, Tigerman, and Gehry, were important affirmations of American-Jewry. Through such efforts, we were coming out of our own, unique Jewish closet. Nevertheless, I believe that thinking about Jewish identity in architecture has ceased to evolve, becoming incomplete and stifling.

[2] The architects Mark Robbins, Joel Sanders, and Mabel Wilson as well as historians, such as Dolores Hayden, have examined the "social construction" of architectural spaces. For a good introduction to the role that identity politics may play in architecture, see Joel Sanders, ed., *Stud: Architectures of Masculinity* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996); and Deborah Berke and Steven Harris, eds., *The Architecture of the Everyday* (New York, Princeton Architectural Press, 1997).

[3] Margaret Olin, "C[lement] Hardesh [Greenberg] and Company: Formal Criticism and Jewish Identity," *Too Jewish? Challenging Traditional Identities*, Norman L. Kleeblatt, ed. (New York and New Brunswick, NJ: Jewish Museum and Rutgers University Press, 1996): 42.

[4] Paul Bonatz, "Noch einmal die Werkbundsiedlung," *Schwäbischer Merkur Abendblatt* 206 (5 May 1926). Also see Richard Pommer and Christian F. Otto, *Weissenhof 1927 and the Modern Movement in Architecture* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1991).

[5] See, for example, Paul Schultze-Naumburg, *Kunst und Rasse* (Munich: J. F. Lehmanns, 1928).

[6] Richard Joncas, "Fixing a Hole: A Commentary on the Architecture of Peter Eisenman," http://prelectur.stanford.edu/lecturers/eisenman/joncas.html, 1998.

[7] These architects were not alone in claiming the stereotype as a tool to examine their identities. The queer movement and the "Grrl" movement also claimed labels such as "dyke," "butch," and "sissy." Eisenman, Libeskind, and Tigerman may not have been directly invoking these movements, but considering that the journal *October* published the work of these groups, they may have been aware of such emerging discourses.

[8] Leon Krier as quoted by Charles Jencks, "Peter Eisenman: an Architectural Design Interview by Charles Jencks," Andreas C. Papadakis ed., *Architectural Design, Deconstruction in Architecture*. (London: Academy Editions, 1988): 52. The original Krier/Eisenman interview was published in *Skyline* (February, 1983): 12-16.

[9] Jencks, 52-53.

[10] Sander Gilman, *Jewish Self-Hatred: Anti-Semitism and the Hidden Language of the Jews* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

[11] See *Too Jewish? Challenging Traditional Identities*. In particular, see the article by Maurice Berger, "The Mouse that Never Roars: Jewish Masculinity in American Television," 93-107.

[12] Herbert Muschamp, "Architecture of Light and Remembrance," *The New York Times, Arts and Leisure Section* (December 15, 1996): 1.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid. With a series of projects beginning with his Jewish Museum extension in Berlin, Libeskind was, in some ways, able to move a discussion of Jewishness away from the Jewish-American clichés of Eisenman and his critics. Yet, Libeskind's ideology was still close to Eisenman: he claimed that it was the "void" in his Jewish Museum in Berlin that could best represent the Jewish experience.

Illustrations

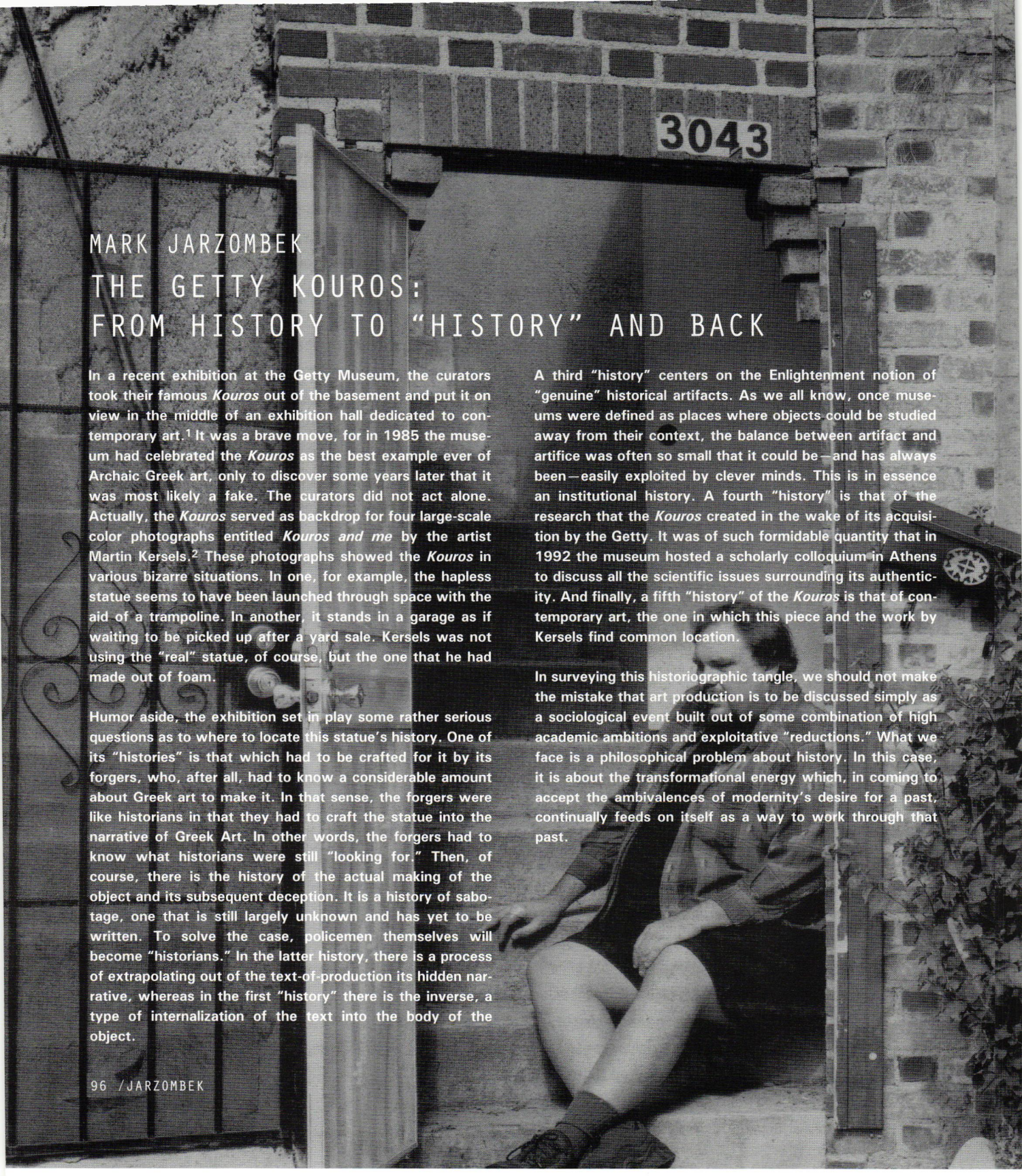
Fig. 1: Reconstruction of the Lower East Side Floating Bath of 1870. Model by David Gissen and David Pascu, 1999. Exhibited at the "Floating Bathhouses Exhibition" at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, New York in 1999.

Fig. 2: Allan Wexler, *Gardening Sukkah*, 2000. Installed at the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Fairfield, CT.

Fig. 3: Allan Wexler, detail from the interior of *Gardening Sukkah,* 2000.

Fig. 4: Rachel Schreiber, *Life Blood*. Installed at the Judah Magnes Museum, Berkeley, CA, 1994.

Fig. 5: Rachel Schreiber, Image from video, *Life Blood*, 1994.



MARK JARZOMBEK

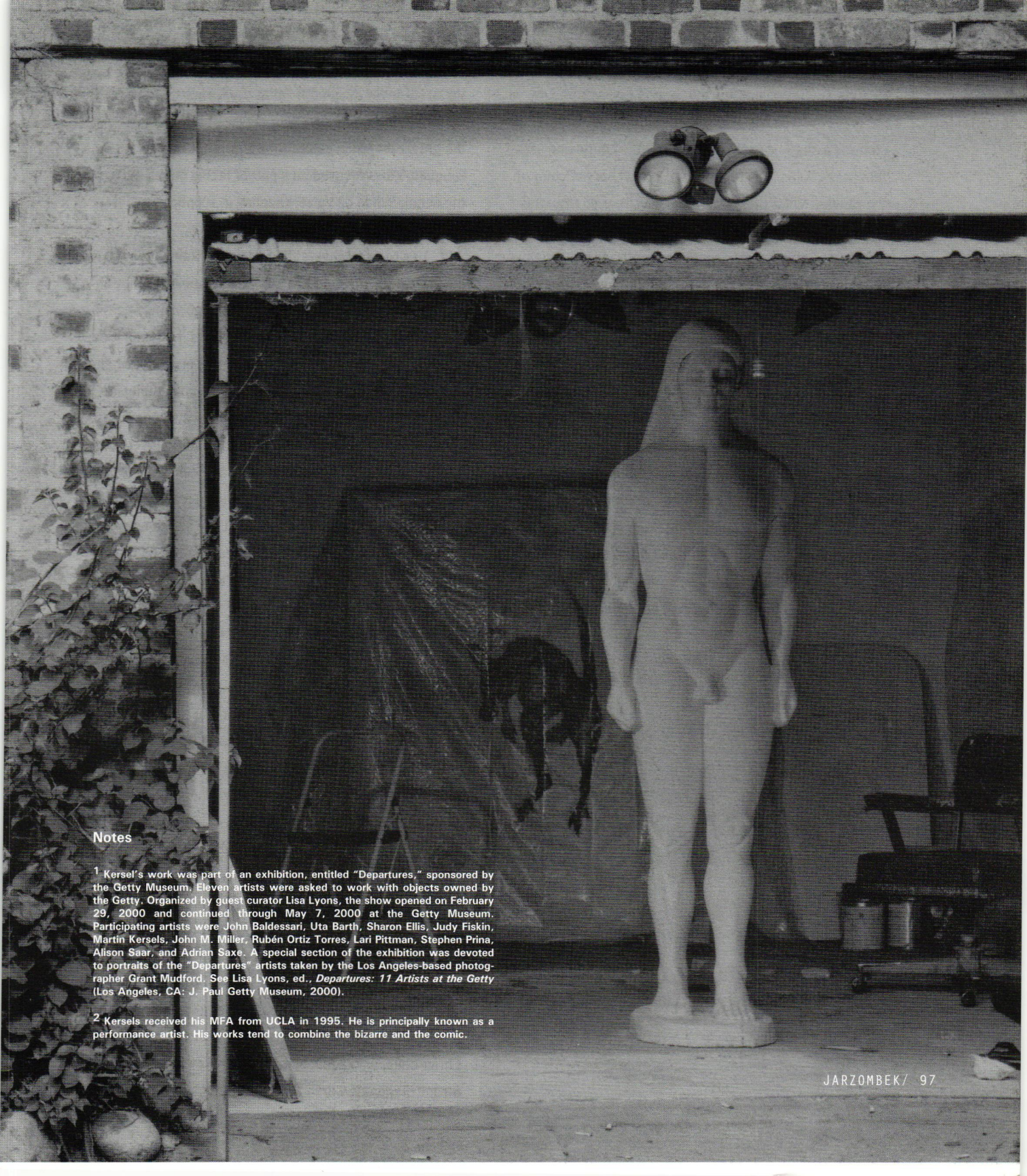
THE GETTY KOUROS: FROM HISTORY TO "HISTORY" AND BACK

In a recent exhibition at the Getty Museum, the curators took their famous *Kouros* out of the basement and put it on view in the middle of an exhibition hall dedicated to contemporary art.[1] It was a brave move, for in 1985 the museum had celebrated the *Kouros* as the best example ever of Archaic Greek art, only to discover some years later that it was most likely a fake. The curators did not act alone. Actually, the *Kouros* served as backdrop for four large-scale color photographs entitled *Kouros and me* by the artist Martin Kersels.[2] These photographs showed the *Kouros* in various bizarre situations. In one, for example, the hapless statue seems to have been launched through space with the aid of a trampoline. In another, it stands in a garage as if waiting to be picked up after a yard sale. Kersels was not using the "real" statue, of course, but the one that he had made out of foam.

Humor aside, the exhibition set in play some rather serious questions as to where to locate this statue's history. One of its "histories" is that which had to be crafted for it by its forgers, who, after all, had to know a considerable amount about Greek art to make it. In that sense, the forgers were like historians in that they had to craft the statue into the narrative of Greek Art. In other words, the forgers had to know what historians were still "looking for." Then, of course, there is the history of the actual making of the object and its subsequent deception. It is a history of sabotage, one that is still largely unknown and has yet to be written. To solve the case, policemen themselves will become "historians." In the latter history, there is a process of extrapolating out of the text-of-production its hidden narrative, whereas in the first "history" there is the inverse, a type of internalization of the text into the body of the object.

A third "history" centers on the Enlightenment notion of "genuine" historical artifacts. As we all know, once museums were defined as places where objects could be studied away from their context, the balance between artifact and artifice was often so small that it could be—and has always been—easily exploited by clever minds. This is in essence an institutional history. A fourth "history" is that of the research that the *Kouros* created in the wake of its acquisition by the Getty. It was of such formidable quantity that in 1992 the museum hosted a scholarly colloquium in Athens to discuss all the scientific issues surrounding its authenticity. And finally, a fifth "history" of the *Kouros* is that of contemporary art, the one in which this piece and the work by Kersels find common location.

In surveying this historiographic tangle, we should not make the mistake that art production is to be discussed simply as a sociological event built out of some combination of high academic ambitions and exploitative "reductions." What we face is a philosophical problem about history. In this case, it is about the transformational energy which, in coming to accept the ambivalences of modernity's desire for a past, continually feeds on itself as a way to work through that past.



Notes

[1] Kersel's work was part of an exhibition, entitled "Departures," sponsored by the Getty Museum. Eleven artists were asked to work with objects owned by the Getty. Organized by guest curator Lisa Lyons, the show opened on February 29, 2000 and continued through May 7, 2000 at the Getty Museum. Participating artists were John Baldessari, Uta Barth, Sharon Ellis, Judy Fiskin, Martin Kersels, John M. Miller, Rubén Ortiz Torres, Lari Pittman, Stephen Prina, Alison Saar, and Adrian Saxe. A special section of the exhibition was devoted to portraits of the "Departures" artists taken by the Los Angeles-based photographer Grant Mudford. See Lisa Lyons, ed., *Departures: 11 Artists at the Getty* (Los Angeles, CA: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2000).

[2] Kersels received his MFA from UCLA in 1995. He is principally known as a performance artist. His works tend to combine the bizarre and the comic.

ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

Çelik (4-5) Fig. 1 reprinted from Ann and Jürgen Wilde, eds., *Karl Blossfeldt, Working Collages* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001): plate 16.

Morshed (6-9): Fig. 1 reprinted from *Newsweek*, Extra Edition, *America under Attack* (September 2001): unpaginated. Fig. 2 from Harry F. Guggenheim, *The Seven Skies*, 36. Fig. 3 from Le Corbusier, *Aircraft*, back cover. Fig. 4 from Hugh Ferriss, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow*, 65. Fig. 5 from Robert A. M. Stern et al., *New York 1930, Architecture and Urbanism between the Two World Wars,* 85.

Dutta (10-15): Fig. 1 reprinted from James A. Rawley, *The Transatlantic Slave Trade*, 214.

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Kennedy & Violich Architects (30-35): All images by Kennedy & Violich Architecture except "Storage Wall, Printmakers Studio 1999," on page 34 by Bruce T. Martin.

Haywood (36-43): Figs. 1, 2, 12, and 13 reprinted from the exhibition publication *Robert Gober* published by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles in 1997, pages 23, 31, 82, 90, and 91. Fig. 4 from the exhibition publication *Robert* Gober published by the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art in 1998, page 22. Fig. 5 and 11 from *Robert Gober: Sculpture + Drawing*, 98 and 112. Fig. 6 from *But is it Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism*, 75. Fig. 7 from the publication of the Hamburg *Kunsthalle Family Values: American Art in the Eighties and Nineties*, 24-25. Figs. 8, 9, and 10 from the exhibition publication *Robert Gober* published by the Dia Center for the Arts in 1992.

Lobsinger (44-51): All photographs by the author except Fig. 1 reprinted *from Storia dell'architettura italiana. Il secondo novecento*, 108; Figs. 3 and 4 from *Casabella Continuità* 215 (April-May 1957): 72 and 69; Fig. 6 from *Casabella Continuità* 219 (1958): 25; and Fig. 7. from *Casabella Continuità* 219 (1958): 27.

Normal Group for Architecture (52-57): All images are by the authors of the article.

Weiss (58-63): All images reprinted from Matthias Lilienthal and Claus Philipp, eds., *Schlingensiefs Ausländer Raus: Bitte liebt Österreich* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000) except Fig. 2 from *Christoph Schlingensief, Talk 2000* (Vienna: Deuticke Verlag, 1998).

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Jarzombek (96-97): Image reprinted from Lisa Lyons ed., *Departures: 11 Artists at the Getty* (Los Angeles, CA: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2000).

Errata

The following image credit information has been unintentionally omitted from Lydia M. Soo, "Fashion and the Idea of National Style in Restoration England," *Thresholds* 22 (Spring 2001): 64-71.

Fig. 1 (Christopher Wren, Pre-Fire Design for Old St. Paul's, London, 1666, elevation and section through nave). All Souls, II. 6. All Souls College, Oxford. The Warden and Fellows of All Souls College, Oxford. Fig. 2. (Christopher Wren, Pre-Fire Design for Old St. Paul's, London, 1666, longitudinal section). All Souls, II. 7. All Souls College, Oxford. The Warden and Fellows of All Souls College, Oxford. Fig. 3 (Old St. Paul's, London, from the north, drawn by Wenceslas Hollar, 1656). From William Dugdale, *History of St. Paul's Cathedral*, London, 1658, pl. 163. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Rare Book Room and Special Collections Library. Fig. 4 (Jacques Lemercier, Church of the Sorbonne, Paris, section). From Jean and Daniel Marot, *L'Architecture françoise*, Paris, Jean Mariette, 1727, pl. 134. Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture/ Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal. Fig. 5 (Gerard Soest, portrait of John Hay, Second Marquis of Tweeddale, c. 1665). From Glasgow Museums: Art Gallery & Museum, Kelvingrove. Fig. 6 (Gerard Soest, portrait of Cecil Calvert, 2nd Baron Baltimore and his grandson). Photograph Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore. Fig. 7. (Claude Perrault, design for a Gallic order, 1673). From *Dix livres d'architecture de Vitruve*, trans. Claude Perrault, 2nd ed., Paris, 1684, detail of frontispiece. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Ricker Library of Architecture and Art.

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Kennedy & Violich Architecture is an interdisciplinary design practice co-founded by Sheila Kennedy and Frano Violich. KVA works collaboratively with industrial manufacturers, scientists, business leaders, educators, and public agencies on projects that integrate architecture, technology, and contemporary culture. KVA has received national recognition for research and built work, including grants from the N.E.A., an Interdisciplinary Award from *Progressive Architecture*, and six National Honor Awards for Design Excellence from the A.I.A.

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Normal Group for Architecture was founded in 1998 by Srdjan Jovanovic Weiss and Sabine von Fischer after they won second prize in the competition for the Foundation Mies van der Rohe in Barcelona (BLUR). Weiss has degrees from the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade and from Harvard University. Von Fischer graduated from E.T.H. Zurich in 1997. Projects by Normal Group include *Kollektiv*, a competition for a school in Liechtenstein and *Thread Waxing Space*, a non-profit art organization in New York.

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In an age of digital and bio-technological reproduction, the distinction between the produced and the reproduced has become increasingly unclear, calling into question what constitutes an "original". Innovations in science, art, architecture and industry have developed amidst a preference for the particular, at a time of actual de-particularization in the form of globalization, media saturation and rapid population growth.

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What are the cultural, artistic, social and ethical implications of such reproductions? What are the implications for production?

This issue of *Thresholds* seeks to include critical perspectives that address and cross diverse disciplines including architecture, art, science, ethics and beyond.

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