



URBAN DESIGN
INTERIOR DESIGN
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN
VIRTUAL DESIGN

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Papers from world

Architecture and Representation

Peter Eisenman

First, I want to thank the Brera Academy. It is a great honor.

As part of that honor I would like to share a few personal thoughts with you.

Many scholars have noted the impossibility of a stable language after the Holocaust, that a poetic language, like German, could never be the same. This is also true of architecture in particular, whose language always had problems in terms of the representation and expression of deep emotions or feelings. This is especially true in the case of a memorial, and more specifically one to the Murdered Jews of Europe. More generally, the problem of an architectural language has to do with the representation of anything in architecture, especially in attempting something which clearly has as its primary goal an emotional narrative.

To understand this problem, it is necessary to paraphrase a debate in the 18th century between two German philosophers, Gottfried Lessing and Johann Winckelmann, about the famous second-century Greek sculpture, Laocoön. The Laocoön is a sculpture of three men – a father and his two sons – being strangled by huge sea serpents twisted around them like giant pythons.

Winckelmann argued that the Greeks could express a confrontation with agony and death in their tragic poetry and dramas, but because they were a heroic people possessing a certain sublime nature, they could not face the horror of portraying such a tragedy in physical form in a sculpture. Hence, the face of Laocoön is not contorted in the throes of the moment before death. Rather, the stoic tranquility of the face represents for Winckelmann a kind of transcendent horror that is abstracted from the real agony of the figure. Thus, for Winckelmann, this sculpture, while it expresses the death throes of Laocoön, cannot express any noble simplicity in accordance with Greek ideals of soul. This, he argued, is beyond the scope of a sculptural form.

Lessing replied to Winckelmann in a famous essay, "The Laocoön" of 1766. Lessing agreed that the Laocoön sculpture shows a man in extremis, under conditions of the most violent suffering, but that the pain is expressed without any sign of rage in either his face or his posture. Lessing proposed that while Laocoön suffers, and this suffering pierces our very soul, Winckelmann attributes this, he said, to the endurance of suffering as a great man, that is, as a Greek would endure. Lessing was critical of Winckelmann and suggested that according to the ancient Greeks, crying aloud when in physical pain is compatible with a nobility of soul. Thus the desire to express such nobility could not have prevented the artist from representing the scream in the sculpture. Lessing's point is crucial. He said that what can be represented in literature, poetry, and even in music is different from what can be represented in figural form – that is, in an object, in the form and space of painting, sculpture, and more importantly architecture. Lessing suggested that the reason Laocoön and his sons do not express agony in its full formation is that the physical form of the human mouth open in a violent scream becomes a caricature, a mawkish representation that lacks any formal quality. Thus any expression of violent agony would overcome the formal quality of the sculpture. And for Lessing, it is the formal quality that also gives both meaning and an internal integrity to the figure.

Lessing argued that the supreme law of difference between sculpture and poetry is that emotion can be expressed in a literal writing – that is, in literature or poetry – because the reader does not directly confront these emotions in that context. This difference articulates what can be called the autonomy of sculpture, an autonomy that is important to this argument when it comes to architecture and the Holocaust. When something is in writing, the reader has to use his or her imagination. When physical or emotional pain, or the reaction to such pain, i.e. to the Holocaust in a memorial, when it needs to be expressed in physical form, it requires a different form of imagination; hence the problem of such a representation for architecture.

This problem certainly pertains to the possibility of expressing emotion and its affect when it comes to the specific case of such an expression in the architecture of a Holocaust memorial.

There is no doubt that the Holocaust and its culture of representation has been considered a singular problem in the discourse of Western thought, at least through the end of the last century. But a monument is a very specific case of such a representation for architecture. Can a monument ever be architecture; and in the very specific case of the Holocaust, can it ever be both a representation of an external political, social narrative, as well as an example of the internal necessities of architecture, its disciplinary being? I am here this evening to argue that such a condition is possible. In order to express what I consider necessary to any architecture, it is necessary to lessen the importance of a representation as stated above in favor of something I will call a "presentation in the present."

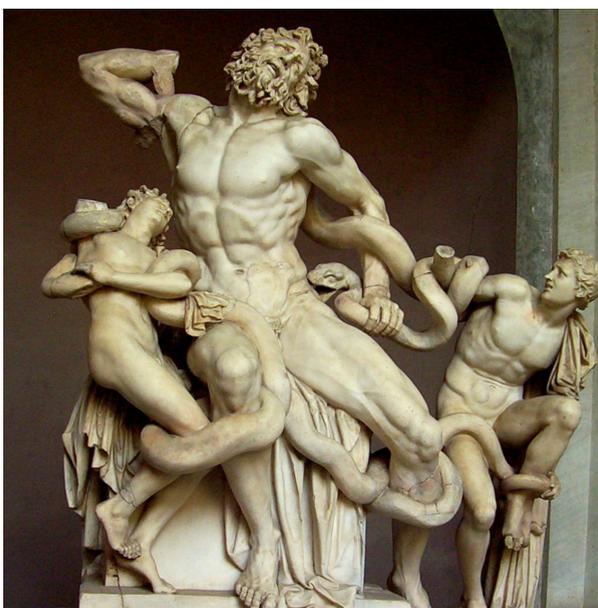
Thus, the aspects of the memorial in Berlin that may make it architecture are twofold. One is the recognition of the paradigm shift that has moved toward the affective experience of objects and away from their critical, linguistic, and textual nature. Whether by accident or by design, our memorial was less about its possibility of its representation of a symbolic text, but rather about the individual subject having a prima facie experience in the present.

This is not about the prima facie of the space of the concentration camps themselves. The camps can be seen and then psychologically assimilated into everyday experience. This is not the case with our memorial site, which allows for the experience of the affect of being alone, of being constricted, of possibly feeling lost in space, if ever such a condition were possible. This is an experience which cannot be easily assimilated in and of itself into everyday experience. It is an out of the ordinary physical experience unlike any other in everyday life. That is what makes it architecture: a physical experience that does not rely on a representation of the Holocaust as its major narrative but rather seeks to present what architecture is and can be.

At the time of the Memorial's opening some seven years ago, the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, writing in the German weekly newspaper *Die Zeit*, suggested that there were two types of memory: one was the immemorable, or that which could not be or was beyond being memorialized; and the other was an archival memory, that which could be recorded and preserved. Agamben suggested that the Memorial in Berlin did both, the field of pillars being the immemorable and the underground chambers being the archival.

Ultimately, as a great painting is always about painting and less about its content, and great literature is ultimately about writing and only secondarily about its narrative, so too is architecture which aspires to be of disciplinary importance always about architecture. It is that aspect of the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin which remains long after any memory has faded.

Lectio Magistralis at the Accademia di Brera, Milan, on the 27th of January 2012. Courtesy of Peter Eisenman.



from Kabul

For who, what. Right to health during war.

Ottavio Tozzo

The theme of this document raises perhaps countless questions. Nonetheless, I'll dwell on the methodological meaning and innovative character of the aid initiative in which I took part.

Please refer to the publications compiled and reviewed herein, for further details and merit of the conceived projects, description of the architectural-building choices and the evidence of the remarkable effort to analyse and study appropriate technologies based on the countless experiences matured and acquired in emerging countries by me and my colleagues, with whom I had the pleasure to work.

This is a support and assistance activity to the healthcare sector in Afghanistan, in the Provinces of Herat and Kabul, carried out with the funds of Italian Aid. In particular, this activity is referred to the Paediatric Hospital of Herat and Esteqlal Hospital of Kabul.

It must be reminded that, for the first time in the healthcare sector in Afghanistan, most of the Italian financing was entrusted directly to the Afghan Government; an important step in order to strengthen the relations and connections between "external and local actors", focusing on going beyond the only idea of donation help, and trying to be part of the growth and development of the Country.

This has meant not only thinking about the requalification and improvement of the healthcare facilities, but mainly supporting the institution, strengthening, service quality and content, aiming especially to the central character of the right.

The conquest of the right to health is intrinsically linked to the improvement of the health conditions of the population.

The conquest of the rights, in this case the right to health, is related to the economic development and strengthening of its representative and democratic institutions that promote the growth of the civil society, of the idea of Government and State, its territory and cities. City intended as territory for human settlement (houses, schools, factories, stores, hospitals, services, etc.).

This leads inevitably to reason upon the concept of growth, investing on planning, programming and envisaging "the present with an eye towards the future".

The architect, the humanitarian operator and anybody who works for the development and humanitarian aid should focus their actions within the boundaries of this principle.

Thinking to act only after having reasoned on "how".

Unfortunately, the significant lack of content is clear, due to the general unconcern of the main International Agencies, which allocate funds that do not take in consideration the need to invest on "how" to do things, and not only on mere actions, due to



FOR WHO, WHAT.

Interview to Marianna Sainati

The idea of this brief article, which tells about a singular Italian experience abroad during the dramatic situation of war in which Italy is involved in Afghanistan, was conceived from the combination of the experience of Marianna Sainati, Milanese architect that cooperates with the magazine and was involved last year, in the mission with the task to publish the results while looking at the problems of the job and art based on contradictions, as in this case between war and rights, death and healthcare. Not as much in the rhetoric of values, but in the daily actions of what can be done and contradictions filling the reality in which people operate. Contradictions that can be seen in that state of war in which civilians and soldiers with different motivations, are wounded and despite this, they equally claim the right of health in the aid with "civil" institutions" that persist in claiming rights.

Therefore, the task of the architects was to bring their contribution for the construction of hospital structures.

In this regards, we thought to interview architect Sainati in order to report this experience to us, who looked after the publication of a book containing the

results and tangible efforts of the Italian Aid's missions in Afghanistan. Q. Let's start from your experience.

A. I was contacted last year to look after the publication of a text commissioned by the Italian Aid in collaboration with the Ministry of Health of Afghanistan, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Italian Embassy in Kabul.

The contents of the publication concerned the activities in the healthcare sector that aim at ensuring, as reported by Alberto Bortolan, Director of the Department for Development Aid, in the introduction to the book, "(...), access to cares and hospital structures, which is one of the main conditions to improve the life conditions of the population. " Initially, the task consisted in a mission in Kabul of approx. one month, in order to access the source and the material easily and directly, and especially to benefit of the collaboration of those who performed the activity object of publication, in first person. Unfortunately, at a later date, due to supervening complications of various nature, and last but not least, due to safety reasons, the mission was

cancelled, therefore it was opted to carry out the work from Italy, creating a sort of direct and permanent "communication bridge" between the Italian Aid's office in Kabul, in particular with the editor of the publication, architect Ottavio Tozzo, and my office.

The disappointment was huge.

But I was wrong.

In reality the experience I lived, even if virtual, was intense and enthralling.

Q. Let's perhaps discuss the topic of the work described in the publication.

A. I can't certainly be exhaustive in listing all the activities promoted, completed or planned and being executed, and even more so, the numerous limits that arise in implementing the latter. Nonetheless, I think it's important as stated by Alberto Bortolan, to understand that all the activities and initiatives are structured according to a sustainability criterion that falls within a context characterised by huge difficulties due to the state of war and with obvious consequences in terms of available resources at structural, bureaucratic, financial level and in relation to the managerial difficulties. The effort made covers all

Review

The theme of legitimacy is faced herein head on. Always under the danger of delegitimation.

It is called aid by those who decide the fate of populations, in the name of democratic values shared by government institutions. But the architects who were involved in the aid, as well as the other civil professionals or more in general "simple aid workers" that made efforts in rendering their work in this action, were not satisfied about this type of legitimation.

For them, legitimation had to be more radical. As claimed by the same people.

Therefore, they provided their action for a more universal purpose, other than aid: right.

Therefore, the hospital, as meeting and organisation place of many synergic skills, professions, and devices for the care of people, is an example of

the urgency to take action.

"Being cooperative" without an actual elaboration and theoretical systematization, based on the same aid experiences aimed at development, often leads to translate the action into chaos and loss of resources.

It is acknowledged that the need to start thinking about development is present since the first planning and implementation phases of humanitarian aids in states of emergency. A concept which is certainly not new, but that has difficulties to spread on large scale.

We thought that right after September 11th and the beginning of the war in Afghanistan, a significant strategic re-thinking of the aid policies would have been considered, especially with regards to emergencies and reconstruction phases, based on the experience gained in the countries of former Yugoslavia. Unfortunately, said assumption was disproved by facts.

What is happening in Afghanistan, in support of the emergencies and post-war reconstruction, follows faithfully the mistakes and strategic choices made in similar contexts in former Yugoslavia, which fully proved their weakness.

Within a similar context, an unbalance of the financial investment was generated, which saw almost the absolute prevailing of funds in favour of "immediate actions", at the disadvantage of medium and long-term programmes and policies.

The approach of the Italian Aid regarding the support of national programmes for providing aid to the Provinces of Herat and Kabul is instead different, which aimed at giving actual and concrete planning and programming tools of the Country's institutions.

Despite the uncertainty due to the annual or half-yearly planning, a development programme was formulated for the Paediatric Hospital of Herat and Esteqlal Hospital of Kabul by working out a "Master Plan" focusing on infrastructural development (civil works) and drawing up Multi-year Strategic Plans. Following a simple and planned approach, contributions were given where the national healthcare programming was scarce, in order to favour implementation with the internal resources of the Afghan state or through projects financed by Italy and other international donors.

Without discussing the actual "architectural projects" and referring to the enclosed images, I wish to point out that this activity saw me involved in a singular experience, despite the many years of aid that I rendered.

The architect, as such, performed his full "intended use". The commitment to the project based on team work with other Italian and Afghan colleagues led to an effective and recognized blend of know-how, applied to the building process and surrounding territory.

The architect involved and at the centre of a difficult and articulated process being transformed, brought his knowledge and experience as necessary know-how that, added to the others, triggered extraordinary development scenarios for the Plan.

When planning and operating in countries that are extremely different from ours in terms of culture and conditions, the design effort must be focused on receiving as well as giving, in equal entity.

Up to date, a hospital in Kabul cannot be the same as one in Milan. Certainly, the right of health of its users, is the same.



its reasons, legitimations, and rights subsequent to the right to health.

In conclusion, I point out this meditation plan that legitimizes the discipline and implementation of skills

aimed at evolving people beyond the excellence of the art masters.

Then, the question of who, what, opens the debate on legitimacy and rights of the same disciplines.

areas of activity; from understanding the priorities, to the supply of government tools, training of staff working in the hospitals, supply of drugs and communication means that allow the population leaving in neighbouring areas to reach the centres.

Therefore, in view of this, the "For who" theme inevitably stood out first during the work, by reading the contents, the contributions of the main actors involved in this project in Afghanistan, and then, during the summary. "For who, what"

Q. Let's talk now about the methods according to which the work was performed.

A. The methods according to which the work was performed, and therefore the relations with the contact people in Kabul, also had a strong impact on the understanding and perception of the activities carried out, for who, how and in what context.

Please don't mind if I wander from the question to tell the reasons for a sequel that took place, through a personal story.

The need to collaborate in real time

with my contact people in Kabul, following their organizational needs to elaborate the texts, sheets, their times, which are also times of war, the communication obstacles in terms of space and time - paradoxically, it was easier to communicate daily between Afghanistan and Italy than between the people that live in the protected area and the Afghan contact people that live outside the gated area in Kabul - evolved my perception of what I was dealing with "superficially", thus totally modifying the space/time element and projecting me into a world that I wasn't seeing, that I wasn't living, in which I was only taking part virtually, thanks indeed to the gradual understanding of a message, for the purpose to conceive a book suitable to communicate important contents.

In conclusion, one afternoon, I received some zipped folders containing images called "People" and from that moment, the virtual relation, mediated by the computer technology of the communications between Kabul and I, reached a turning point.

I opened the image folder and I started to browse all of them, one by one.

I spent the entire night browsing those faces of the elderly, children, the few images of adult men and women wrapped in their burkas, that suddenly projected me into an unknown world, that it's still unknown to me, but that deeply moved me. In that series of images, there was something that I was feeling without being able to understand what: a strange proportion in the photographed subjects that I couldn't make out.

I started to separate the photographs according to subject; children, elderly, children with elderly, women, women with children and adult men.

At dawn, I had a folder full of images of children alone "playing" in the dust or laying in a hospital bed, a few images of women wrapped in their burkas, and three or four photographs of adult men. Suddenly, the simple division according to subjects returned to me a "photographed" reality, a well-defined and at times dramatic social and cultural reality.

The reasons for "FOR WHO" are the drive behind the "WHAT" and represent the reason of the entire path starting from the will to formulate the concept of "Right to health".

Perhaps the "new theme of hospitality in the double sense of host and guests" was expressed by the Italian Ambassador in Kabul "One of the realities that I can witness directly, since I lived it in these three years in which I had the honour to represent Italy in this beautiful and at the same time dramatic Country, is in fact the very close collaboration between the Ministry of Health, its professionals, doctors, nurses and the Italian staff that worked here from time to time".

I concluded by expressing the idea of Alberto Bortolan, Director of the Department for Development Aid, "Aid is mainly in my opinion, focus on the human person, and not on numbers. And among people, first of all, those who are mostly disadvantaged". (...) "The work of the Italian aid for the people, their effort to improve the life conditions - and sometimes just to mitigate their suffering - continues step by step, with the will to transfer the know-how and management of the development activities to the Afghan institutions and civil society.

The right to health. The Italian and Afghan aid in the healthcare sector.

2010-2011 two-year period

● La redazione



from New York

The New City: Architecture and Urban Renewal

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

Cornell ■ Modification of existing grid plan
Columbia ■ Housing without relocation
Princeton ■ Waterfront renewal
MIT ■ New Land



The Institute of Architecture and Urban Design, New York City – 1967.

Michael Schwarthing

The Museum of Modern Art exhibition: *The New City: Architecture and Urban Renewal – 1967*

In 1966, Peter Eisenman proposed an exhibition on urbanism to Arthur Drexler, Director of Architecture and Design department of MoMA that they would organize together. The exhibition was to have professors from four Universities make urban design interventions in Harlem, New York. In 1967, *The New City: Architecture and Urban Renewal* was exhibited at MoMA from January 23rd to March 13th. Professors Peter Eisenman and Michael Graves directed a team from Princeton University; Professors Colin Rowe and Tom Schumacher; Jerry Wells and Fred Koetter and a team from Cornell; Professors Jaqueline Robertson, Richard Weinstein, Giovanni Pasanella; Jonathan Barnett, Myles Weintraub and a team from Columbia, and Professors Stanford Anderson, Robert Goodman and Henry Millon from M.I.T.

Arthur Drexler wrote an introduction *Architecture and Urban Design*. He stated that, “four teams of architects and planners associated with the faculties of four universities, Cornell, Columbia, Princeton and Massachusetts Institute of Technology” were commissioned to study “the blocks between 96th Street at the south to 115th Street to the north: and from the Hudson River at the west to the East River at the east.”

At the time, the term urban renewal was well known as a federal government program that began in 1954, programming blighted areas of the city to be demolished for new urban projects. Also, the Federal Highway Act of 1956 permitted areas to be demolished for highways. By the 1960's these programs, through the efforts of those like Jane Jacobs, were urbanistically destructive as well as racist. Thus it is interesting that this exhibition would employ the term Urban Renewal at this time when that program was generally perceived as having been a failed project.

Also of interest, the site of the project was Harlem and the 60's anti-establishment, cultural revolution that occurred in conjunction with race riots, reached its zenith in 1968 in New York and around the world. During this period the Advocacy Planning movement emerged as an idea about local bottom-up planning and against the master plan. This was organized by Richard Hatch and was strong in the African American neighborhood of Harlem. These MoMA projects were bold and large scale interventions, defined by the proposition to transform the existing city. So these proclaimed urban renewal projects, proposed in

Harlem in 1967, might have seemed like a naïve and probably disastrous idea. However, they essentially went unchallenged by the public. Ada Louis Huxtable reported on it in the *New York Times*-1/24/67, and Richard Hatch wrote a critical review in *Architectural Record* 3/67.

The projects were not reactionary, but based on the prevalent theories such as the Team X projects of this period, whose theories and methods were utilized for much of the Federal urban renewal work. Nor were they very progressive, in relation to the Metabolist, Archigram or Super Studio work of this time. All of these movements argued to replace the existing city with some form of modern urbanism. By contrast, the MoMA projects, to varying degrees, worked with the existing city, particularly the ‘contextualist’ project of Cornell and the Columbia project over the Park Avenue train tracks. Thus the exhibition title, *New City* seems a bit of a misnomer since they worked with the existing old city. It might have best applied to the MIT project that was mostly creating a new town on new land in the East River. This project was largely independent of the City, except in the sense that landfill has been part of Manhattan's growth almost since its inception. The fact that exhibition designs were not part of the Urban Renewal project and did not propose a *New City*, is perhaps why these projects, that might have inflamed the critics and public, made no big news. This did not prevent Peter Eisenman from parlaying this into his next venture.

The Cornell project was sited from 96 Street to 155th Street and between Broadway to the west and Madison Avenue to the east – Figure 1-2. The problem statement was: How can we modify the existing grid plan to improve circulation, encourage the development of parks and new neighborhoods and clarify the order implied by the terrain itself? The Proposal statement was: Implicit in the site is a division into three zones, two of them should be developed as “the city in a park”; the third zone has been interrupted by new housing but still retains the grid plan of the traditional city: its character should be preserved.

The design was in keeping with the urban design program that Colin Rowe began in 1963 and became known as the Cornell School of Contextualism. The early years of this program concentrated on integrating two existing paradigms; the traditional city-a solid mass of building with spaces carved out of it, and the “city in the park”, an early 20th century urban invention, primarily of Le Corbusier. The first did not seem to have enough open space for modern American

needs and the second lacked density and vitality, so the project was designed to “mediate between them”. Thus three north south strips were organized as modern to the west and east, because the historical fabric was gone, and with traditional in the center, because the historical fabric was nearly intact. The western strip extended Central Park and Morningside Park to the Harlem River, introducing a landscape component. The project proposes towers and large scale structures in the modern space strips and transformed the semi-public space in the center of the traditional block center strip. “By the introduction of commercial establishments, academic institutions and recreational facilities, the site could become an uptown magnet displaying urban qualities scarcely attainable in midtown.”

The Columbia project was developed by a number of young professors that were to become the Urban Design Group within the City Planning Commission in the Mayor Lindsey administration of New York City. Their project site was the metro-north rail tracks that are below ground from 96th Street to Grand Central Station, but rise above ground north of 96th Street on Park Avenue. They worked with the existing context of one block to either side of the elevated tracks – Figure 3. The Problem statement was: How can we provide housing and other kinds of renewal without relocating the people for whom such improvements are intended, and at the same time convert neighborhood blights into acceptable components of the visual scene? The proposal statement was: By building over the railroad tracks new housing could accommodate nearby families before the areas they vacate are cleared for redevelopment. Use of air rights over the tracks would convert this major source of blight into a new building stretching from 97th Street to 134th Street. They proposed an elevated pedestrian boulevard over the tracks and commercial and community facilities at the major cross-town intersections. New buildings were graded down to the existing fabric to the east and west beginning with infilling vacant lots or abandoned buildings.

The Princeton project was located at the western edge of Harlem, along the Hudson River and extended east into the existing fabric – Figure 4. They stated the Problem: How can we make the waterfront both visible and useful, giving it an architectural weight that would relate it to major crosstown streets and lead to the development of new kinds of neighborhood and institutional centers? The Proposal statement was: The project calls for the termination of the 125th Street axis by a public plaza opening onto the Hudson River. The plaza provides the connecting link between the adjacent neighborhoods and the other elements for the new project. Largest of these is a two-building structure built over the river and extending thirty blocks north in a straight line. The project could

be seen to relate to the investigations into megastructures of this period. It proposes to cut diagonal streets through the existing fabric north east to the Harlem River and south east to Morningside Park. It probably would require the eminent domain process that was instrumental for the Federal Urban Renewal program to achieve its removal of existing fabric.

The MIT project was on the eastern edge of Harlem involving the edge at the east River and a portion of the South Bronx – Figure 5. It stated the Problem: How can we develop large segments of new land out of relatively under-used, or miss-used, peripheral areas, so that they alter the character of existing neighborhoods by providing important new amenities? Their Proposal: Randall’s and Ward’s Island and the southern tip of he Bronx should be developed. Land fill operations already undertaken by the Triborough Bridge Authority should be part of a consistent plan: the two islands should be connected to each other and to Manhattan This project is unrelated to the geometric grid of Manhattan even though it states a desire to be connected. By creating a completely different kind of urban fabric with water orientations, it becomes a kind of new town, opposite to the attempt to graft Battery Park city onto Manhattan in its 1960’s plan, and to which it could be compared. It might however be seen to presage the ideas of landscape urbanism that try to work with post-industrial sites. The project proposed a significant ecological modification that went undiscussed.

This was the first public presentation of the Cornell School of Contextualism. The Columbia project was a site-specific mega structure and more interesting than similar projects proposed earlier for Battery Park City. It was perhaps the most implementable. The Princeton project was also a mega structure proposal that recognized the potential for New York City to transform the waterfront from a working port to new uses. Its connection into the surrounding fabric, requiring removal of existing fabric, was questionable. The M.I.T. project ventured into the realm of land reclamation, utilizing an often used strategy to transform and develop New York City. However, its relationship to the morphological structure of upper Manhattan and the South Bronx was questionable.

Exhibiting urban designs by academics at the Museum of Modern Art was unprecedented and bold. The four projects were not avant-garde proposals. They were varied formal propositions for a site that, in the late 60’s, was socially charged. However, it perhaps should have been called, “Interventions for transforming the Existing City” rather than the “New City: Architecture and Urban Renewal”.



CORNELL - CONTINUOUS GREEN OPEN SPACE



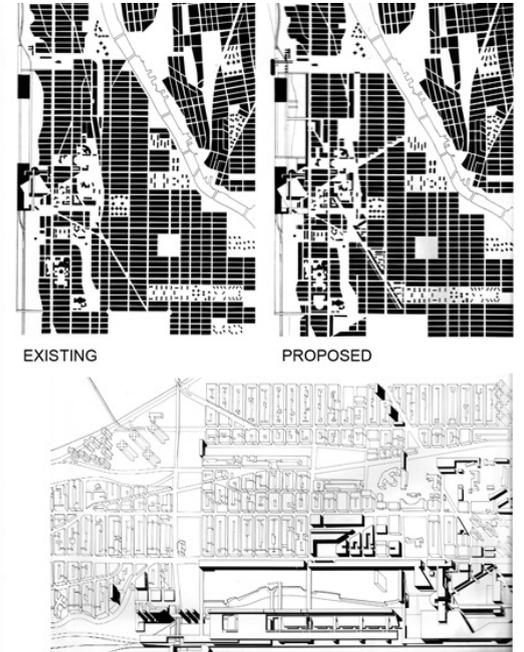
CORNELL - THREE NORTH-SOUTH ZONES



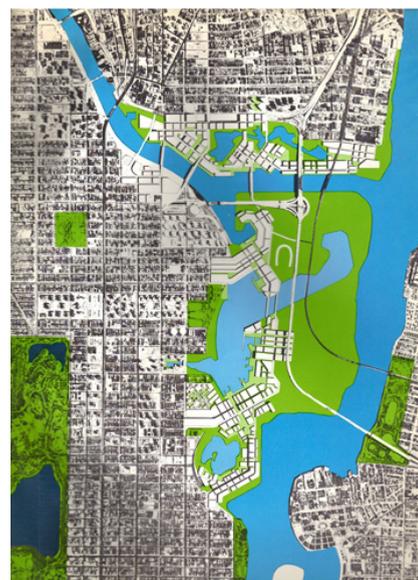
COLUMBIA - MEGASTRUCTURE OVER AMTRAK ELEVATED OVER PARK AVENUE



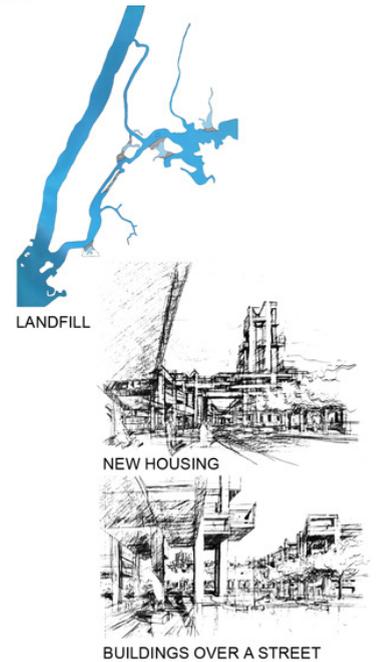
PRINCETON - MEGA STRUCTURE ON THE HUDSON RIVER



- 1 Aquarium
- 2 Stadium
- 3 Lagoon
- 4 Park
- 5 Housing, office, shopping
- 6 Research offices
- 7 Conference and convention
- 8 Hotel
- 9 Public Plaza with outdoor stadium, museum, cafes



M.I.I. - INFILL IN THE EAST RIVER- EAST HARLEM AND SOUTH BRONX



LANDFILL

NEW HOUSING

BUILDINGS OVER A STREET



Urbanus, 2005. Plan, photos and project model showing village research program for Gangxia urban village, in downtown megablock, Shenzhen, China. copyright; Urbanus. Contact; Yan Meng; Partner; Urbanus, Shenzhen, China. ymeng@urbanus.com.cn

Notes on Urban Villages as a global condition.

D.G.Shane

1.Introduction; Urban villages and megacities.

Marshall MacLuhan in the 1960's thought that the media and communications revolution then taking place would bring about a sense of global community that he called "a global village" (MacLuhan, M., 1962). Ten years later in the early 1970's a young PhD researcher from Berkeley, Janice Perlman, combed the unmapped new suburbs of Rio, Brazil, coining in her 1976 thesis the term "megacity" to describe the favelas, the self-built urban villages on the outskirts of the city. Perlman went on to popularize the term to describe the fast expanding, seemingly chaotic Latin American expansions of the oil boom years of the 1970's. The United Nations accepted the term for a city of 8 million in 1986 expanding it to 10 million in 1992, and then to cities of 20 million in 2005, finally settling on megacity regions of 120 million in 2010 at Rio Habitat 4 (Shane, D.G., 2011, 256-57,332.). In the subsequent discussion of megacities after UN Habitat III in Vancouver in 2005 the issue of the urban village as the base of the megacity concept disappeared as the UN Habitat focused on the scale, inequities, lack of service provision and poverty (UN, 2003) of what Mike Davis called "megaslums" in his Planet of Slums (2007). Dharavi became the poster child for megaslums after the success of Slumdog Millionaire (Boyle, D., 2008) even though it is clearly made

up of several different urban villages with very different characteristics and levels of income, density and occupations. One village is occupied by fishermen, for instance, another by an agricultural market, another with recycling and still another with ceramic manufacturing (Shane, 2011, p.294). David Satterthwaite of the International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED) at University College London wrote a critique of the UN figures, pointing out that 92% of the worlds urban population would not live in so-called megacities (Satterthwaite, D, 2005). They would live in cities of 1-2 million, smaller cities where village like structures based on NGO's and municipal administrations might offer a hope of better urban governance for bottom-up, self organizing groups and systems of self improvement. Satterthwaite's critical comments threw back into focus the village-like structures and self-organizing capacity of self built favelacity extensions and their occupants, standing in high contrast to the total design strategies of the well-intentioned, modernist, colonial architectural and town planning traditions. The village basis of the megacity also relates to its current, emerging Asian form where transport and communication revolutions are simultaneously creating the enormous new scale chronicled by the UN figures, but also altering our image of urban form. We have had Green Belts before, but vast agricultural-urban hybrid areas, populated by villages that are far from agricultural, rural roots makes an apparently new urban morphology, sometimes called "rur-urban", the "citta diffusa", diffuse city or landscape urbanism (Vigano, P., 1999). Urban villages lie at the base of all these networked megacities and play a variety of roles in our urban future.

2. Urban villages as human settlements.

Villages have been the basis of human settlements since the neolithic agricultural revolution, forming the basis for the wealth and culture of various urban cultures and empires through human history. Even in 1945 the majority of the European

population still was employed in agriculture in countries like Italy, France, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Portugal and Spain, at the heart of the European empires (Judt, T, 2006 ,p.327). The USSR and China also held enormous populations of ex-serfs and peasants who had been tied to the land in the feudal system, even now the Hukou system in China limits people's movement from villages to cities. In colonial Latin America and Africa plantations stood beside villages that also held the majority of the continent's population. In India and China two thirds of the population still resides in the countryside, as well as in Africa.

Traditional village vernacular forms vary across the globe, but are related in their spacing to the carrying capacity of the land. Paul Oliver in his Dwellings; the Vernacular House Worldwide (1987) described how the landscape capacity, materials, topography, climate and materials all contribute to the vernacular styles of subsistence farming and village formation. Walter Christaller in 1933 mapped the networks of villages around a town as part of his Central Place theory, later transformed into networks of villages proposed for Nazi Germany as a defense against the USSR in land taken from Poland, part of the German city-landscape tradition or *stadtlandschaft* tradition (Rossler, M., 1989). In Britain as elsewhere in Europe there was a long tradition of village analysis, with authors like Thomas Sharp's *The Anatomy of the Village* (1946) or W.G. Hoskins in *The Making of the English Landscapes* (1973) defining a very functional and working, non-picturesque vision of urban villages as the basis of human culture from ancient times of subsistence farming, to the medieval feudal system and then Enlightenment reforms in larger estates and eventually mechanization in the 19th century. The story continues in the twentieth century into the post-colonial cult of villages as the basis of new nations, in Mao's China, Gandhi's India, Nkrumah's Ghana or Sukarno's Indonesia. The "Green Revolution" of bio-tech seeds and petrochemical fertilizers continues this village evolutionary narrative into the present.

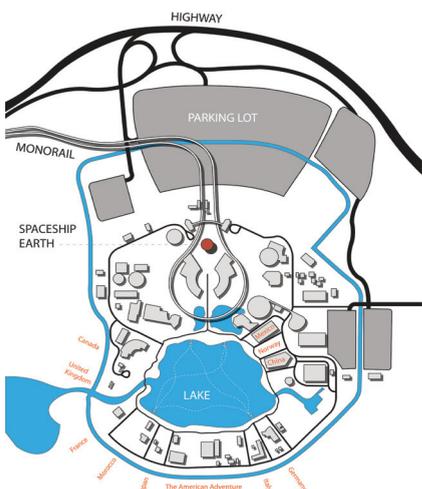
While modern states and emerging nations, and later neo-liberal agribusiness interests, placed an emphasis on village consolidation and collectivization (as in the Soviet block and China or American Mid-West.). The basic morphology of the village remained fixed. Circular, linear and then square gridded village morphologies traveled with human settlers from Africa, through the "fertile crescent" and on into Asia, arriving later in Europe and the Americas with the farming revolution. The dendric, linear, branching tree structures of these villages, related to topology, climate, water, streams and rivers recur in the

favela settlements of the megacities around the world and represent an ancient, group memory pattern of spatial organization. As opposed to Christaller's analysis of a hypothetical flat plane, the biologist Patrick Geddes in his *Cities in Evolution* (1917) had seen the relationship of village placement in relation to water, rivers and streams, valleys and mountains, in his *Valley Section*. Here a hierarchy of towns extracted wealth from villages and sent it from the hinterland to the great port city, the delta city at the river mouth, meeting the sea and oceanic trade, back to the metropolis, heart of the empire. The spacing of villages in the landscape, as in Sharp or Hoskins later, was related to the fertility of the soil growing conditions, hydrology of the region and climate conditions, the entire rural ecological environment. Colonial planners and modernist designers of new towns often ignored these old networks of villages and their environmental register. Le Corbusier, for instance, did not show the 5 pre-existing villages in the site of Chandigarh, India, with the result the plan had to be adapted by his cousin Pierre Jeanneret, with Fry and Drew of London, to accommodate the villages in the 1950's (Illustration 1). Modern states preferred or imagined a "tabula rasa", a blank slate with no village settlements, as in L. Costa's plan for Brasilia (1956).

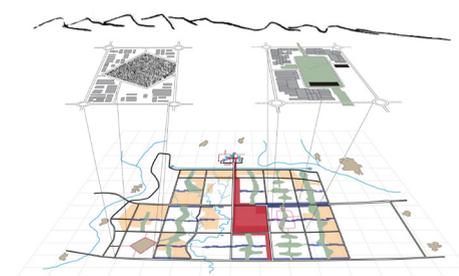
3. Hybridizing urban villages.

Geddes's urban hierarchy in his *Valley Section* reflected a traditional ladder of urbanization and services that is deeply embedded in European languages as a system of human settlement organization. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) for instance starts with the smallest form of human settlement the hamlet, a village without a church, ascends to the village that has a parish and church organization, above which is the town, with several village-like neighborhoods and a larger church, above which is the city with a bishop and cathedral, above which is the metropolis or "mother city". Villages, besides churches and parish organizations, may have a market and other communal facilities, like a parish hall, cemetery and inn for travelers. There also may be a village green, commons or maidan where fairs and collective ceremonies can occur. These symbols of communal life and collectivity

Le Corbusier, P. Jeanneret, Fry and Drew, 1950's, Chandigarh Plan, redrawn by D.G. Shane and U. Wegman to show pre-existing villages not included in the masterplan set within diamonds inside 1 mile square highway megablocks. copyright ; D.G.Shane and U. Wegman, 2011.



Disney's Epcot Plan 1982; Redrawn by D.G. Shane and U. Wegman to show the urban villages representing the old European empires, located around a lake with ferries, approached via the ATT corporate communications pavilion (red dot), sited between the General Electric and General Motors Pavilions. copyright; D.G.Shane and U. Wegman, 2011.





4. Milton Keynes plan, 1968; Redrawn by D.G. Shane and U. Wegman to show the historic villages and stream beds preserved within the one kilometer square highway megablocks. copyright; D.G.Shane and U. Wegman, 2011.

fill the collective modern imagination, although most villagers were little better than agricultural slaves, serfs or peasants tied in ignorance to the land by wealthy landed interests.

With industrialization the allure of the village grew as people left the land, an allure illustrated by A.W. Pugin's "Contrasts" of 1836 (Hill, R, 1999), showing on the one hand the satanic mills and a factory city, versus the paradise of a gothic town filled with steeples on every block. When Jane Jacobs (1961) rose against the highways and mega-scale of Robert Moses grand projects, it was no accident that her home was in the West Village, outside the machine like Manhattan grid, but trapped within it. Nor was it an accident that McLuhan imagined a "global village" intimacy to counter the anonymity of the modern work place and communications systems described by writers like William H Whyte in *The Organization Man* (1956).

Towns and cities had often grown to incorporate villages within their expansion. Indeed Aristotle describes a city as an aggregation of villages (Kostof, 1991, 38-39.). The process of aggregation used to be relatively slow, but with industrialization, the railways and later automobile transportation and modern communication systems urban expansions could literally happen overnight, as in the case of favela cities in Latin America or illegal expansions in Asia or Africa. Villages that once stood outside the city could become engulfed quickly, as new immigrants "back filled" the periphery towards the earlier town. This pattern can be seen even in the European metropolis, where villages like Marylebone or Hampstead became enmeshed within 19th century London, or Paris surrounded Montmartre (Illustration 2).

Analytical drawing by D.G. Shane, 1971; The main village street of Marylebone High Street trapped inside London metropolitan expansion of the surrounding grids and megablocks of the Great Estates. copyright; D.G.Shane 1971.



These villages housed many not welcome in the modern city or outsiders like artists, considered slums by modern planners because of their poverty and insanitary crowding, often associated with agricultural streambed paths, field divisions and once remote hill top situations.

Victorian engineers often sought to obliterate such urban villages, running railways, sewers and water supply systems, as well as modern boulevards along the river valleys and through the villages. St Giles in London is an example of a "rookery", a crowded medieval village obliterated by public works. Surprisingly the romantic image of the village inspired British urban reformers to advocate new towns made of village cottages in Garden Suburbs, like Hampstead Garden Suburb (1907) or Letchworth Garden City (1903). These projects paid scant attention to the surrounding agricultural landscape, like Le Corbusier at Chandigarh, but by the late 1960's designers realized that the new mega-scale of the highway grid 1 km (.62 miles) square allowed them to incorporate villages within their plans, as at Milton Keynes (Llewelyn, Davis Weeks and Bor 1967). Here the planners put historic preservation orders on the villages that were about to become urban, so they remained fixed within the new city expansion, becoming tourist attractions surrounded by the megablock grid of the highways, greenways, parks and acres of suburban housing (illustration 3).

Conclusion; Post-industrial urban villages; the mediated future?

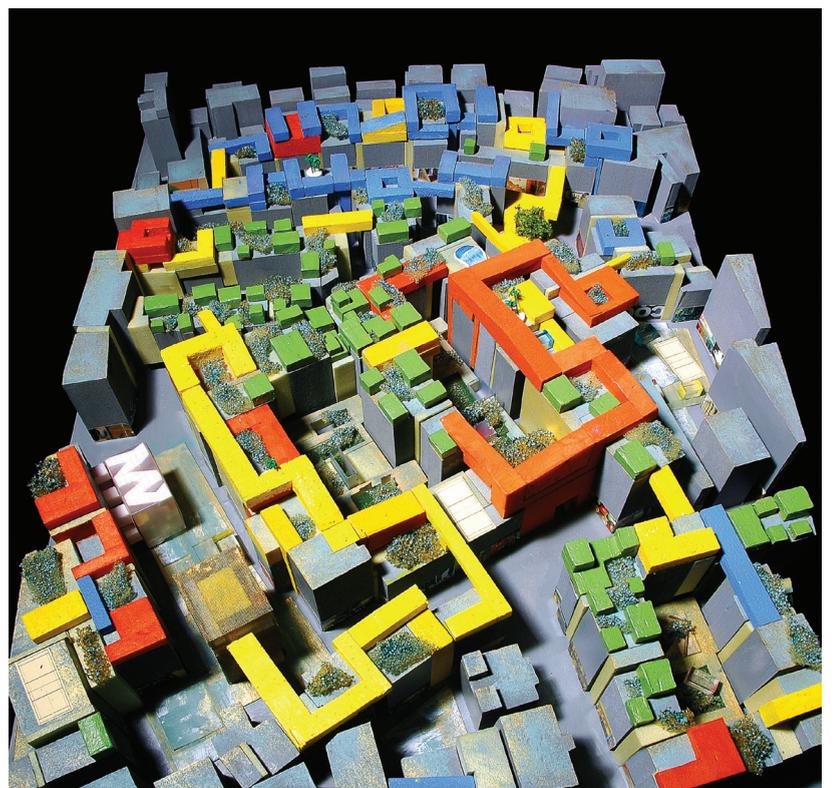
Thanks to the megablock formation of the megacity urban villages often fall within the larger expansion of older cities. Milton Keynes created the gold standard for the historic preservation of urban villages, while Disney's EPCOT Florida (1982) demonstrated their emotive power within the global system of communication and mass suburbanization (Illustration 4). Indeed EPCOT reduced all the previous imperial capitals of the world to small villages, with a single street leading to a single vertical marker or characteristic building, the Eiffel Tower and a sidewalk cafe for Paris, the Doge's Palace and St Mark's Campanile for Venice, London Big Ben and a pub, with many other variations of this simple armature and vertical skyline marker village organization. EPCOT also stood within a huge privately owned highway grid, with Disney's other attractions positioned at intervals in the swampland landscape as described by K.A. Marling in *Designing Disney's Theme Parks; the Architecture of Reassurance* (1998).

Urban villages were not always so tightly managed and controlled, allowing bottom-up initiatives and favela like developments in Latin America, Asia, India and China. When China opened up its first Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Shenzhen, for instance, close to the Hong Kong border after 1980 the local Planning Bureau consulted with the designers of Milton Keynes in creating the new town plan. This included a

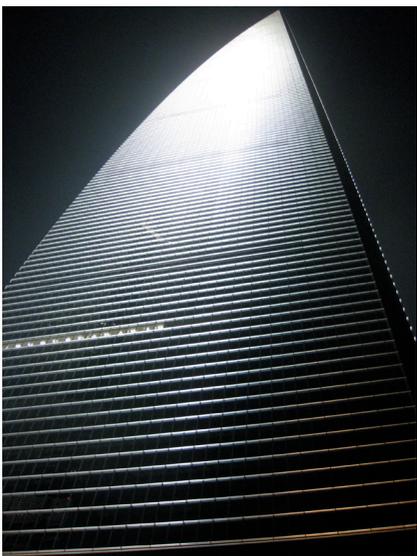
large mega-block grid, with a new civic center and central park. Within this grid stood the earlier, agricultural village communes established by Mao in his collectivization drive that were exempt from the zoning laws of the new town. The urban villages grew into small, informal, mini-skyscraper districts within the city plan, housing up to 60% of the many million of illegal immigrants attracted by the manufacturing jobs of the new city. These mini-towers lacked proper water supplies and sanitary systems, but sprouted a forest of satellite dishes. Urbanus, a local young architects office, proposed a system of El Lissitzky-like Skyhooks to upgrade the urban villages without much demolition (Urbanus, 2007, 212-221). Platforms linking across the roofs of the blocks would contain agricultural roof gardens, parks, public facilities and water and sewage management systems, as well as solar panels, upgrading the urban village (Illustration 5). Urbanus also worked with the urban villagers to create a Dafen Painting Museum where most of the world's cheap masterpiece reproductions are painted by untrained artisans (Urbanus, 2010).

Such small local, bottom-up projects point to the urban village base of Asian mega-cities and their agricultural roots in the Desa-kota pattern (McGee, T., 1971), now scaled up and expanded by high-speed rail and mass, personal communication systems. The 45 minute, 108 mile, high speed train ride from Shanghai to Hangzhou, the ancient Chinese emperor's summer, garden retreat by a lake, reveals the new landscape of fish farms, rice paddies, greenhouses, factories, peasant housing, workers housing, new villas and office complexes scattered through the ancient Yangtze Valley irrigation system grid. This is a

familiar, ancient Asian pattern viewed from high-speed trains in Japan or Taiwan, or slow trains in India around Mumbai, in the Ganges Valley or in Bangalore (Mathur and Da Cunha, 2006), or in Vietnam in the Mekong delta or Vinh as described by ASRO in their *Urban Dialogues* (Loeckx, Shannon et al., 2004, 123-151). Nor is this new city with its urban village base confined to Asia, similar arrays can be found in delta cities around the world, for instance in the River Po and Veneto (Munarini, S. and Tosi, M.C., 2001) or Rhine Delta in Holland or Belgium (De Meulder, B., 2008). In the USA the Hudson River Valley provides another example of an agricultural, industrial and post-industrial mix encompassing an enormous area. (Applebome, P., 2011). In a curious paradox, urban villages, sometimes expanded into vast favela city expansions or suburbs, seem to hold the key to the megacity's future. David Satterthwaite's hard-boiled optimism in the face of the Mike Davis *The Planet of Slums* argument seems well founded and far more persuasive, even in the case of post-industrial cities like Detroit, where small scale actions to consolidate urban village-like clusters, combined with the reintroduction of agriculture and parks (as in Leipzig Germany) hold the promise of managing the shrinking city. Here urban activist and designers might draw from the Disney urban village play book and consider the promotion of urban villages as destinations in our highly mediated age. In one sense the "global village" of McLuhan has already come true, as 60,000 participants assembled for the 7th World Social Forum in 2007, including the Shanty Dwellers International (SDI) network (Satterthwaite, D., 2007). The message is clear, forget about the megacity, concentrate on the urban village to begin finding solutions in the post-2008 world recession and global market crash. States and global corporations are in big trouble, global urban villagers remain as a last resource.



from Shanghai



Skyscrapers in Asia

Neil Leach

On the last day of August 2003 the number of skyscrapers in Asia surpassed that in the United States. A crisis in the Western psyche. The Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur had already stolen the coveted title of world's tallest building from the Sears Building in Chicago. Now the ultimate insult: not only did Asia have taller skyscrapers than the United States, it also had more of them.

The United States has been trapped in a form of collective paranoia since 9/11. But nowhere is this paranoia expressed more clearly than in a form of real estate altophobia – vertigo of the urban imagination. No one is prepared to occupy office space beyond a certain height for fear of being trapped by a terrorist attack. No more clients, no more tall skyscrapers. Little chance, then, of the United States ever regaining the lead.

Rem Koolhaas riles against the repetitive banality of the skyscraper, which 'has become less and less interesting in inverse proportion to its success'. For Koolhaas the world has forgotten the lessons of Manhattanism, 'the organization of excessive difference, the installation of surprise'. Instead real estate development is dominated by middle men, with moustaches, receding hairlines and suspect waistlines', who peddle their 'soulless wares with shameless calculation'. What we need today, Koolhaas argues through his own designs, is an architecture that once more accepts diversity and surprise. Of course, Koolhaas is right. But the world is not interested in architectural theory. It is only interested in pure symbolism.

The symbolic potential of architecture. This is where — in an increasingly disembodied world — architecture still maintains a certain cultural authority. The revenge of the physical. The capacity for buildings to 'symbolise' regimes. Think how cities operate. It is only when cities contain recognisable buildings that they can be 'envisioned'. So it is that the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur or Taipei 101 in Taipei have inscribed those cities on the mental map of the world. Such buildings become icons which serve to 'promote' and 'brand' their city.

Shanghai – the latest site of skyscraper-mania. The Pudong, once a shameful run down area on the wrong side of town, teeming with the flotsam of Chinese society, is now being transformed into a shameless expression of Chinese expansionism. An orgy of construction. Forests of shining new skyscrapers. The Pudong has become the new Manhattan.

At first sight it might seem odd that Shanghai is being developed in this way. Why does Shanghai need so many tall buildings? And are they even appropriate? Aside from the fact that smog and mist seem to envelop Shanghai for much of the year, so that from the ground you can seldom see the top of these buildings, but equally from the top you can seldom see the ground, Shanghai is situated on a river delta, where the soil is alluvial. Unlike Manhattan, which has a rock substratum, the Pudong hardly offers the perfect foundations for tall buildings. As a result, the Pudong is reportedly sinking at an alarming rate. The greater the number of tall buildings, the more it is sinking. And unlike in Manhattan, here there is no pressure from the real estate market to drive these buildings forever upwards.

So why build taller?

The answer perhaps lies in the lobby to

the Jin Mao Tower building. At 421 m and 88 storeys the Jin Mao Tower is China's tallest building and the fourth tallest in the world, although reportedly it is soon to be eclipsed by the World Financial Centre building, also in Shanghai, which is planned to be the tallest skyscraper not only in China, but also in the world.

Around the lobby of the Jin Mao Tower are laid out images of the World's Top Ten tallest buildings. These images clearly set out the challenge. The tallest building in the world is now in Taipei, and the second tallest is in Kuala Lumpur. Asia and the United States battle it out for the rest. New world versus old world.

The battle is on.

Taller, smarter, better. Each city is vying to become the showcase of the world, the city with the tallest building. There is little to justify such extravagance except pure prestige. The actual use of a building is not important. What counts is its ranking in the world list.

1) Source: www.worldskyscrapers.com, as quoted in Rem Koolhaas et al. (eds.), *Content*, Cologne: Taschen, 2004, pp. 470-1.

2) *Content*, p. 473.



from Australia



Italian Modernism in the Australian Outback

Annette Condello - Curtin University

This essay analyses Pier Luigi Nervi's New Norcia Cathedral and Monastery scheme (1957-1961), an unrealized project near Perth, Western Australia. This particular scheme directed Australian attention to the Italian's work, later leading to Nervi's involvement with the design of Australia's first reinforced concrete skyscraper, Australia Square Tower (1967) in Sydney, designed in collaboration with Australian architect Harry Seidler. It argues that Nervi's work introduced Italian modernism to Australia – mediated by his experiences in Latin America.

In the nineteen thirties, Italy and the Americas in particular became loci for strong cultural exchanges. Mass migration of architects and engineers from Italy (and elsewhere) to the United States and Latin America gave rise to a new fervour for inspirational forms. Italian architects, such as Marcello Piacentini, Pier Luigi Nervi and Lina Bo Bardi, would work in or visit this Latin America, merging their ideas with the indigenous forms they encountered there. Others, such as Italian-American-Australian architect Romaldo Giurgola vicariously gained inspiration from their exploratory travels.¹

Around 1937, Pier Luigi Nervi secured a position in working with Italian Rationalist Marcello Piacentini on the E 42 project, specifically the Palazzo dell'acqua e delle luce, Exhibition Halls A and B with Pietro Maria Bardi. After this experience, Nervi next developed the construction method for a Monumental Arch designed by Adalberto Libera, resembling an aircraft hangar.² In effect, Piacentini noted that, "Rationalism coincided not with Fascism but with Internationalism."³ In the nineteen thirties, the Brazilian government invited Piacentini to Brazil as a consultant by the Rio de Janeiro government to consult on their project to construct a Cidade Universita (unrealized). Italian Rationalism would now mingle with Internationalism. By 1933 Internationalism was already part of Pietro Maria Bardi's larger agenda. Bardi departed Italy in the late nineteen forties temporarily to establish a Museum of Modern Art in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Nervi's success in Brazil (and earlier

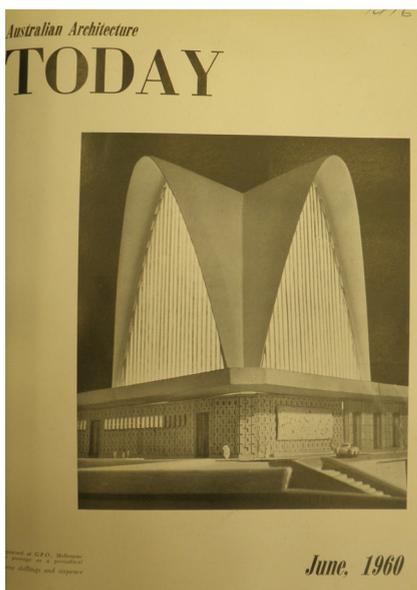
in Argentina) led to commissions in Venezuela, the United States and as far south as Australia.

Latin American architects took the 1939 New York's World Fair as an important opportunity to expose their intercontinental designs. Oscar Niemeyer and Lucio Costa's Brazil Pavilion (1939-40) spell-bounded visitors with its fluid spaces, pool, and Roberto Burle Marx's tropical garden in its internal court. The Brazilian Pavilion impacted the way architects from foreign countries might import Internationalist trends by embodying elements, such as the fluid spaces and elevated platforms, into their designs. Interestingly, "Australia and Brazil converged at the 1939 World's Fair,"⁴ with their pavilions nearby one another. This is the first time we see the ingress of modern Brazilian designs in Australia.

Meanwhile, a decade after the initiation of Bardi's Brazilian museum project, he and his wife left post-war Italy and settled in Rio de Janeiro. In 1951, the Bardis were living in Sao Paulo and they invited Nervi to "spend a few weeks" with them to lecture on his concrete structures at the São Paulo Art Museum (MASP), designed by Lina Bo Bardi.⁵ There, Nervi and his son Antonio collaborated with Bo Bardi on the Tabacaria complex (1954).⁶ Although the multi-storey project was unrealized, it provided Nervi with the opportunity to observe other Latin American structures then under construction (which presumably later inspired the Pirelli Tower design in Milan). Castro Mello's Covered Swimming Pool (1948-52) at São Paulo, for instance, with its parabolic arches is one obvious structure. Parabolic arches

would soon become a kind of trademark throughout central and southern Latin America. Earlier in Mexico, for instance, Enrique de la Mora's Purisima Church (1939-1943) and Felix Candela's Cosmic Ray Pavilion (1951-52) offered inspiration. Presumably Castro Mello's Brazilian pool was of importance to Nervi's career as far as a Latin American source is concerned – his Italian works were informed by his Brazilian experience.⁷ This experience, in turn, impacted his skyscraper designs with Harry Seidler in Sydney in 1967. More importantly shell structures such as Nervi's were popular in the nineteen forties and fifties, especially in Europe and Latin America.

Such Latin American links would surely increase Nervi's aspiration to further disseminate ideas of reinforced concrete parabolas to Australia. Nervi's work prospects veered off in a different direction in the nineteen fifties – to build taller reinforced concrete structures in Australia. Previously, he had spent at least thirty years of his career as a sought-after engineer, then as an architect.



Cover of Australian Architecture Today, June 1960. Photo: A. Condello. National Library of Australia

Three-dimensional animation of Nervi's New Norcia Cathedral project, 2011. Courtesy Rene Van Meeuwen



from II Cairo



Rethinking public space in Cairo

Elisa Ravazzoli

3. Instant city. Protesters' camp in Tahrir Square. Produced by BBC's Yolande Knell. February 2011.

From the launch of Dubai Metro to the recent mass protests in Cairo's Tahrir Square, public space is playing an increasingly important role in the Arab world. We are seeing a diverse use of space, from protest to celebration to public execution. But, what is this public space? Any definition of public space is an idea about the space between people, buildings and society. Depending on what this intermediary space is about, interpretations vary as to the content, characteristics and purpose of public space. The question is even more various when concerns around the definition of the public and the notion of space arise. Given the complexity of defining public space within the length of this article, I avoid any definition and focus on the production of public space instead and the way the 2011 uprising in Cairo has redefined public spaces' meanings, uses and perceptions.

There's been a lot of debate over just how important a role social media like Facebook and Twitter have played in the recent uprisings in Egypt. Whether or not this revolution began on media space, it has flowered on the streets and it was in Cairo's physical spaces that people took action. The city's streets have been the medium that have carried the message of the Egyptian people and it was in Tharir Sq. that citizens voiced their discontent, showed their power and ultimately articulated a new vision for their homeland. It was by bodily occupying neglected privatized spaces, fenced and not planned for congregation that Egyptians reclaimed, and conceived a new form of public space. A more democratic and open one.

Public space cannot be seen as something that people simply use; people make meaning out of space through how they use it and through this meaning they re-think the physicality of space. The Egypt uprising not only created a physical public space but also a new representational space, in reaction to the symbolism of the Regime. Through spatial practices, spaces have become indelibly imprinted into Egypt's collective consciousness and their symbolic meanings remade to operate in other ways. As a result a new imaginary public space, full of new symbolism, appeared.

As Henri Lefebvre has noted in *The Production of Space* (1991) "Space is filled with politics and ideology; it is not simply the stage of social relations and an arena for actions; it is operative in the assembly of these, showing the interconnection between mental and physical space". The Egyptian uprising revolutionized the way people perceived, lived and conceived public spaces in general: "The street became not just a place to park cars, but the gateway to homes in a way that was sacred", "graffiti and public art became a way of literally reclaiming public spaces for freedom of expression" and now, in Cairo, when you walk on the streets, "there is life, there is a sense of shared space that protect neighborhoods. Previously there were a lot of streets and empty spaces that were run by the State". By fighting against the Regime Egyptians activated a process of space production never experienced before: the lived, perceived and conceived space becomes simultaneously real, symbolic and imaginary, enabling "the public" to rethink, redefine, and reinterpret city's public space in democratic ways.

1. Reclaiming public space through Social action. Tahrir Square, in Cairo. 8 July 2011. Photographed by Mohamed Elshahed



2. Freedom of expression in public spaces. Graffiti on Mohamed Mahmoud Street, Cairo. February, 24th, 2012.

Time. It seems the only one issue of today's architecture. It is its only measure. "Zeitgeist", the present time. As space did not have value anymore. As its standing in the time became a wall against the life flowing of societies. As that value could leave just garbage behind itself. Once it is consumed the divorcing act between present and past time, and the hour itself has a lack of soul, bored and imploded, could not

presence at the opening event of the Focillon's "extended present time".

Is it really this what the global age is asking around?

I do not think so.

I believe instead the time's issue, "Zeitgeist", is the one about the style, not pleasing mode but not forgetting taste. Because of that the usefulness, through a pleasure's modality, sharing each other and redeeming what we need – the pure consuming just leave garbage – asks for something remaining as a being which through the time flow has experience of that and has consciousness of that; not as the hour devouring hours or Cronos devouring his sons; but beyond the present time, in the lack of what has been, we use to keep in our mind its having been through signs of "symbolic presence", as a hours' monument which could not be now. The invariance of time in time. The inner space of time. Even philosophy discovered what cannot be renounced, this determination it use to call "spacing" where there are signs of sense and significance, owing to the "immanent and signifying logos" which is the reality show of the world, according to the forebears. What we use to share each other through our somatic existence, before the inter-subjective one. We did not born in a nowhere space or by ourselves, but in "houses" and surrounded by others introducing us towards that somatic logos, in a not-said-yet and aphasic way of co-inhabiting.

I go back to the first question: could the modernity make a real "tabula rasa"?

I will not try to answer in a simplified way. If it is allowed the consuming, and the divorcing between the contemporaneity and the ancient's value (according to Riegl) could not be done a different way, that must have been done, in the cosmopolitan century, in order to put in suspension the local tradition, too much bounded actually to ancestral habits, not sharable and cause of fighting. This does not want to suppress the relationship between the ancient generation and the just passed ones.

History. A new kind of history, generated after the archeological annihilation's processes, has become the universal place of this relationship, needing symbolic presences and amplifying more and more its functions of presentification and symbolization. Creating at the same time the same number of troubles and fighting. It is born a kind of history keeping in the architectural signs – not only monumental – the carefulness about what gives sense to the time's flowing, where "creative events", originals, can find there the tools to become monuments of the immanent logos, of the somatic spacing, sign of their own workshop and picks of men passing time: history of the relationship with archeology. This archeology could not have a lack of intentional teleology – perhaps no more nameable, as it was in the Medieval Dante's period or in the Shakespeare's Renaissance, but always present also in some temporary shapes, at least today. Take a look at the diachrony of MM taking place in two acts and in two different places, with the topic of the changeover among the continent's populations. It is searching for a contemporaneity (otherness from the past), based on the technique and the production in a first moment and on the society and its economy – as part of a political uniting plan, which today is no more sustainable. During this political crisis, or during this condition of political redeeming, it is up again the radical issue of the hospitality, in the double sense of hosting and being host.

In the last leading article we focused on four key words about the issue of the hosting through a city growing by two main point, of which one is more indispensable than desired. It is hidden or excluded.

We are taking back that issue with a question: for whom, what? It concerns the today's heat for the democracy.

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Pujiang

We are inaugurating our magazine's Arcdueworld international section, which focuses on the globalisation of the Italian and Western culture, by reprinting Vittorio Gregotti's comments at the end of his book on China *L'ultimo hutong* (Skira 2009) on the point reached by today's architecture, also with reference to China. The book is based on longstanding personal experience, as demonstrated by the projects listed in the appendix and executed for China over a 20-year period and, in particular, the one currently underway for the new town of Pujiang on the Hungpu river just outside Shanghai.

We are highlighting a strong passage that criticises the renewed interest in the "aura" in architecture as a self-referential exaltation of creative freedom within an allegedly omnipotent communication that lacks content and exists in the global void. This interest, the reverse of that of the 1930s, is seen not only in the conduct of Western societies but Chinese society too, or at least a part of it. (Editorial Team)

Gregotti says:

In a departure from that predicted by Benjamin, some write today that,

over the last 50 years, the issue of the communicating "aura" has become the renewed focus of artistic research. This is no return to the metaphysically complete "aura" advanced in the 1920s and '30s and, architecturally speaking, by the work of Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier's espace indicibile and the projects of Louis Kahn. Over the last 30 years, the shift (not really from the "what" to the "how", which has always been one of the foundations of all art) seems to have been a sacralisation of the concept that, in the global void (packed with market interests), the whole content of an artwork's "aura" lies in communication and creative freedom. "Reproducibility" is no longer the political act of equally distributing assets and services and the aura triumphs once more as a process of derealisation.

This is a shift of meaning towards a reflection (sublimated by a foolish morphology) on the state of things and as a consensus on the standardised values and conducts promoted by the "powers of expediency" that underpin the post-society of our times, and also a part of Chinese society, albeit a minority, for the moment.

Believing, as people today seem to do, that architectural forms have begun to quiver and crack or get bigger and bigger to convey or aesthetically cope with the instability of our times is an insult to the intelligence of the construction processes of the artistic practice of architecture (and, indeed, all the artistic practices), processes that have never been based on deductive reflection.



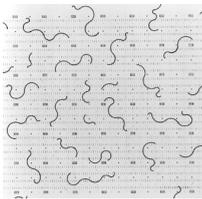
Urban design



Forms for different narrations

Lorenzo Degli Esposti

Superstudio, Continuous Monument (1969)
Ciudad de Dios (2002), dir. Victor González
Archizoom Associati, No Stop City (1969/70)
Favela Raising (2005), dir. J. Zimbalist/M. Mochary
R. Koolhaas, E. Zenghelis et al., Exodus (1972)
Slumdog Millionaire (2008), dir. Danny Boyle



In the face of a city which is growing and transforming into the metropolis, the post-metropolis, the conurbations, the metropolitan region, the megalopolis, under the forces of capital and migrations, architects fly in the face of papers and counts requested by the administrative machine and of pixels and parameters requested by the digital machine.

In the meantime, the city does not stop to grow, managed by developers, economists, politicians, on the shoulders of already urbanized masses or ready to be: all of them, of course, looking for better living conditions and hoping for a better future. Amounts of people and amounts of money which, looking for their collocation in this world, find it more and more in the urban realm. Urbanization and infrastructures, which are among the most powerful tools of the capitalistic accumulation, have gradually shifted the attention from needs, quality and specific objects in the reality to calculations, quantities and extension abstractly spread over the whole earth's surface.

More and more often we consider, and not illegitimately, what is useful to cohabit this world (dwellings, cities) and to move in it (roads, bridges), as a danger for our survival, rather than obvious answers to the people's needs. I must say that, actually, some urbanization and communication projects raise legitimate questions, being tools for economic accumulation rather than answers to comprehensible needs.

How can we operate in the urban realm, given our cultural mood of disengagement and resignation?

I am not surprised that, after years of researches, the Urban Age Project held by the London School of Economic (and financed by the Deutsche Bank) identified in the dense and compact urbanization and in the railway system the recipe to face the problems of the global cities. Omitting any consideration about possible conflicts of interest, I am wondering how such standardized solutions can be proposed, even though a generic opposition to the homogenizing forces of globalization is considered by the people responsible of the research programme.

As an alternative to the superficial technical/administrative recipes of the governance, I believe that the only serious attempt to face contemporary city's problems, in their complexity, is a strategy that is supported both by an appropriate knowledge of the specific reality where to intervene and by an overall idea of the city (not standardizing, but rather based on the concepts of difference, of the part-to-whole relationship and even of abstraction): resistant, resilient cities, against the forces into play.

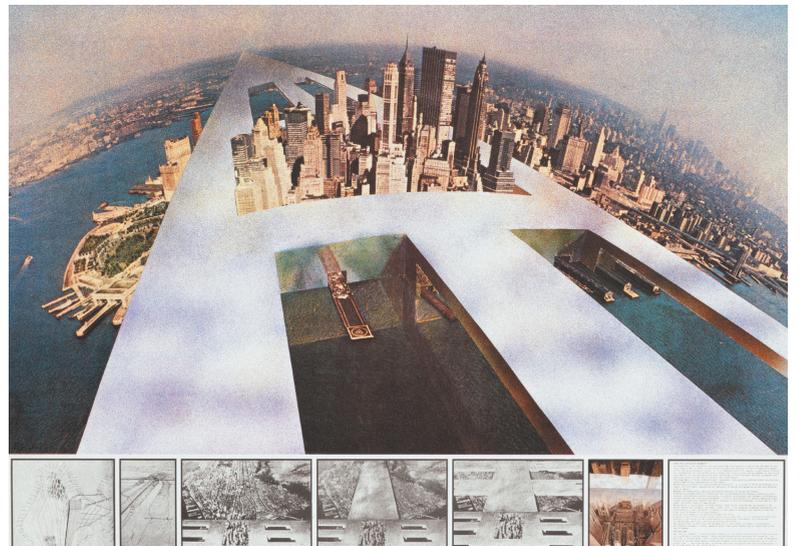
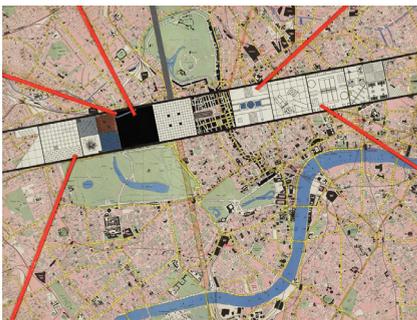
The diversity of each city, so as of each part which constitutes it, must be the starting point and the task of the project, against the homogenizing forces of profit and not-for-profit, of the real estate and indigence. Local specificity, therefore. Cultural, economic, geographic, historic. But not only that, obviously. No nimby (not in my back-yard) or local (naïve or updated) strategy can today face problems which are evidently and necessarily global. The local, by itself, is not sufficient.

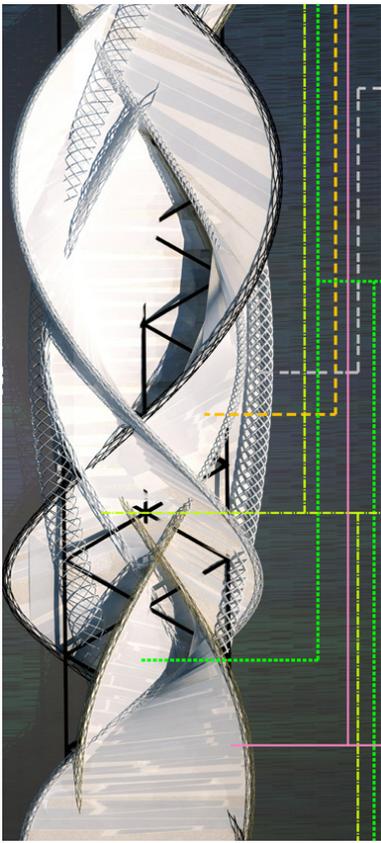
The modern movement saw in cosmopolitanism an unavoidable outcome of history: a system of values and fundamental rights, universal, based on liberty, equality and fraternity. The modern language was, originally, a bearer of those ideas. Then it has been gradually absorbed by other logics, technical and commercial. Today the modern is history itself and, as the local cultures, might assume a resistant role.

I am not so much interested in the local in itself, rather than in its way to look at the universal and at the global. It is evident that the innovatory drive (abstract, autonomous, absolute) which can come from somewhere else (geographically, culturally, technologically) is a resource, not a problem, as long as the destination is able to resist against it, thanks to its specific history and culture, in order to always give birth to something new, something better.

The forms, which the encounter between what there is and what there is not will take place in, will constitute the possibility for the existence of places available for the narrations of the hosts, both hosting and hosted people.

Cities, from expanses of indistinct urbanized places, accessible according to wealth, will be able to guarantee the defence of human universal rights: cities in the form of constitutions of stone.





Open Source City

Alvaro Guinea Martin

Throughout history cities have been the outcome of a complex mixture occurred between very selected politicians' visions and the very productive means and will of the society they command. This quick scheme can explain the character (or the lack of it) of any given town or city up to the present day, from the Rome of the Ceasars to the New York of Giuliani, passing by the cute charming towns far of any ambition in the awesome coast of Oregon... We architects and urban planners tend to think that we have something to do about it, but we don't. We really don't. We are mere utilities; the tools used by those primary forces to shape their context at their own will and pace. We simply legitimate other's visions and plan other's means of production. So yes, each society has the politicians it deserves, and therefore, each society has the city it deserves. There is no coincidence here. There is no fate or unexpected situations. It is a long term construction between all of us. Things can be seen coming if we take the time to watch. But we usually do not.

The sooner we assume this, the closer we will be to the final solution for our profession illness as it can be seen in many architecture schools and competitions all over the world: we cannot save the world with one of our designs. We simply can't. But we can help with it whenever those two primary forces want to (as we did in the past to build the cities we live in). So sit down comfortably and relax, let's simple chat about where all this could end... if we have the time to watch it come.

People in our governments, here and there, no matter sign or color, are still pretty 'old'. They lived the technology revolution (internet, social networks, collective intelligence and emergence patterns) as that; as a revolution. A big change. A dramatic shift they had to assume as the wave became too big to be surfed with dignity or decency. But they didn't grow up with it. They didn't live the implications and the consequences of that connection power in their everyday life, in their whole decision making processes. They haven't understood yet the meaning of being able to have millions of followers giving their comments to the last thought they had in less than a minute. The power of collective thinking, cloud creativity, game-based problem solving strategies... these are effective tools they are not ready to handle and use in their politic realm. Of course they know that political systems need updates, as any other operative system. But they will not take that step as long as that change is unnatural to them.

Yes, democracy needs an update... we all know that. Or a new release, who knows. 30 years ago it was impossible to test public opinion in a community without making a real waste of time out of it. Now you can reach public opinion in a single click. And the generation who is starting to understand that far-beyond-nuclear power is yet to arrive to the decision-making positions that rule the world. They are still in our schools, in our universities and if we let them do so, they will rock our world, our cities, our context. And then, they will face the challenge to re-shape our cities by using architects and urban planners as long as they could be needed. And we, architects and urban planners, we will have the task to legitimate that change by providing the open source design that our society will deserve. And what we are right now, as a collective, is quite the opposite; a highly encoded, so called mysterious and never enough pretentious agent. Let's wake up. People will need us. And they will need to understand why we do one thing and not the other.



Tokyo: small room's big house

Ruy Porto Fernandez

I recently heard in an interview with Sou Fujimoto that, for people living in Tokyo, the city is only a projection of their apartment.

An extension of one's personal and domestic space. I don't think there is a better definition. Tokyo's inhabitants live in the city; working in one place, eating in another, and meeting friends late in the evening elsewhere, before returning home late at night to sleep. It is as if shifting scales to consider the neighborhood as housing and the house as a room of it. The picture becomes more interesting when we realize that this is not for just a small group of people, but for a population of almost thirteen million. The city supports all of their needs, even if they are all different.

Tokyo is not a city, it is a union of cities. A big puzzle made up by different pieces however it keeps its essence, like a living organism. If one took ten random pictures anywhere at the twenty-three Wards that comprise Tokyo as an experiment, I would hypothesize that recognizing the precise place where the picture was taken will be very difficult, almost impossible. On the other hand what it will easy to recognize Tokyo in all ten photos. The constant process of reconstruction of buildings does not change the city's nature. Like the cell's regeneration in an organism, it maintains its composition. It is also a city that must be read from inside out. An aerial picture won't help much in understanding the city because it provides too much information, but by starting at a smaller scale, such as the house, and moving further out and covering the block, the neighborhood, the ward etc. makes everything meaningful. The city grows yet maintains its small scale.

This proves that, in urbanism, Japan is another world. One of the most striking examples regarding the different sense of public space in Japan is that streets don't have names... Only the large axes or main avenues that articulate and link the wards do. The rest of the streets, thousands, possibly millions, are viewed simply as the space left between private properties. This is the reason for its neat matricial numbering and apparent absence of urban regulation.

This assemblage of eclectic elements is articulated due to several transportation

networks. But the train is largely responsible for making this interaction possible. It is the most important means of transport in Japan. It functions as the arteries that transport users into the different areas of the wards, or the different "rooms" of the "house".

Tokyo has no center, it has several, almost as many as it has train stations. Around these high points activity nodes are developed; each with commercial streets, some of them pedestrian, restaurants, karaoke clubs and theaters etc. These programs gradually transition into housing as one moves further from the node's scope, until one arrives at the most residential area never imagined. These areas feature infrequent cars, children playing in the street, and possibly small local shops rather than smaller cities where they had already disappeared. If one keeps walking they would experience the same gradation but in the opposite direction towards the following station.

But not everything is human scale in Tokyo... there are also many areas in which it is very hard to find an identity, it would fit perfectly in Marc Augé's definition of non lieu, (places of transience that do not hold enough significance to be regarded as "places"). One just has to walk along a main axis under a highway to find them. Interchanges of three different heights, where cars are mainly privileged and the pedestrians are forced to walk underneath this mesh. These spaces are more typical of the outskirts industrial sites than of a city center. In these places it is strange to find stationary life, everything is moving, flowing. Curiously these are the places that allow for better pictures. Where the city depths live as if it unaffected by events happening above. This is characteristic of Japanese culture, people apparently live without being affected by the external elements, the rain, the cold, the natural disasters... This brings me to ask myself whether urbanism is responsible for shaping our behavior or do we produce the urban planning that fits our way of being?



Interior design



Habitus in public space: duration / mutation

Andrea Vercellotti

We started our reflection from a key-word, habitus, and from a reference scale, the little one, or human one or 1:1. Even more than the name of the section itself, the “interior design” still waiting for a redefinition thanks to the all the contributions, those are our references. With this number we try to go on in the debate, concentrating on specific topics: the public space in the city of today and the role of history. We want to propose a binomial: duration/mutation. What can turn in the built spaces in which we live and what is unchangeable, essentially because it is still meaning producing in the present? Where the process of adaptation must be concentrated to interpret the way of life corresponding the time in which we live? Our customs in the disposition of spaces still are able on responding to the questions of the present? And if not, what can we do with our built heritage?

Defining with more attention the role of public space is a fundamental step inside the urban condition rethinking, because the appropriation of the city by the people who live in it starts from here. We are talking the reaffirmation of the intimacy of life and of the individual rights, that necessarily must maintain their centrality, also in the complex world in which we live. Mechanization first and digitalization later, have put aside the more convivial aspects of life, bringing to a separation between thought and sentiment which is one of the reason of the crisis of architectural rationalism. Maybe here we can find a first answer to our questions: human experience is always a constant. Life is always based on the same primary actions, binding physically man and its space and men between them, that necessarily must be satisfied. A space is displayed firstable to satisfy elementary and unchangeable instances, the base of the construction of the society itself.

This reduction to elementary might be an effective method to read the styles of space displaying, so as we've observed in Alexander and Lynch researches. In the little scale primary actions are recognizable with more evidence and the role of the individual is essential. The research on elementarism, mainly in the art field, has often gone strictly with the primitivism and the irrational. Also in the field of architecture we are usually interested by anonymous or spontaneous situations (just think about the attention on favelas or auto-construction episodes), where everyday life take shape following more immediate and poetic ways and the congruence between use and set is bigger, also if obtained with more devious paths. A corporality in which we can find a new Humanism, resisting nearly by instinct to an excessive rationalism. Where can we find the public spaces of contemporaneity, where the logos of today is affirmed?

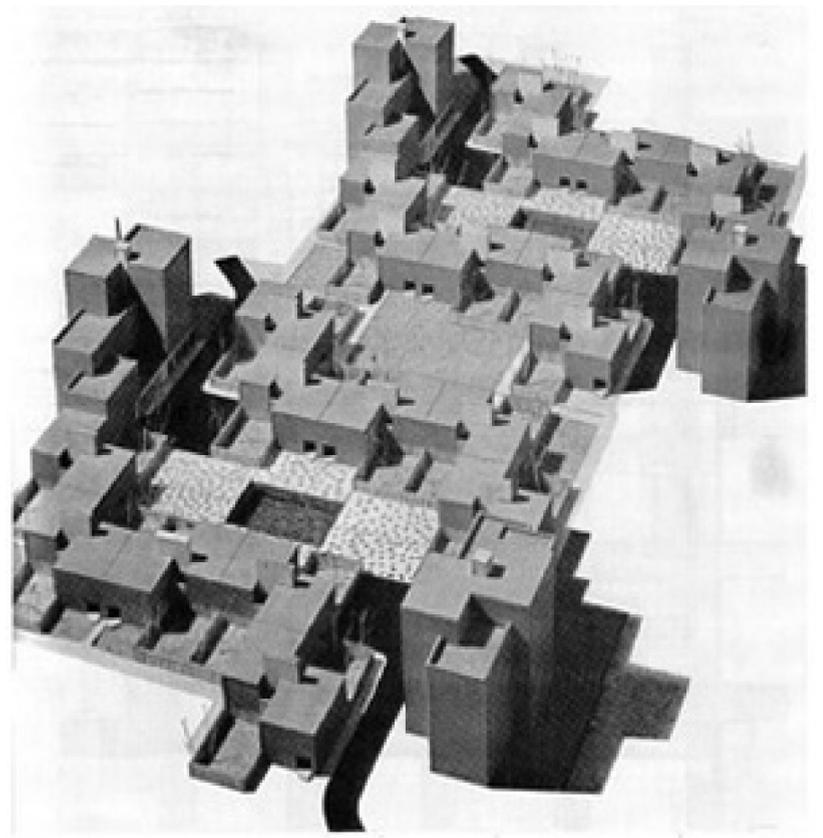
Assimilation (which doesn't mean homologation) is one of the topics of a global society. The construction of space from one side has to continue responding the request of meaning of local communities, but on the other side to arrange an hospitality for the other populations coexisting in the world. Maybe is because of that we better recognize the spirit of our time in the transportation terminals,

where physically happens the meeting between different populations. We catch the mutation and its rising language. But the looking for a universal point of view is more difficult duty of our time. As the primary actions of man are universal, at the same time on something shared we must relate a joining without homologation. And all this must take place in an organic place, without any digital or virtual substitution. How this universal place will be?

This new phase might not start from a tabula rasa, because space contains the signs of history, on which the process of appropriation is based. Monuments of all ages are subsided in the cities, transmitting the duration of our permanence in space. Each time reflects on its relation with the past, in the moment in which it decides to affirm a sign of the present or it asks itself what to do with a building conserved in time. In some cultures the past lives in an “eternal present” (to use a Siegfried Giedion's term): in the Japanese tradition, for example, the same stile was continuously re-proposed, because the assumptions of its reasons were always valid. Western culture looks instead to history with the sight of today and the idea of heritage itself is the result of a progressively selection and adaptation, the answer to this question: what and how we want to hand down? Bergson said: “The past continuously corrodes the future”. And our present is related to the coexistence between a particular past and a common future, according to an habitus who still needs to be codified.

Urban and architectural inners change more quickly, because they react to use and maybe they are the first field in which mutation takes place. The substitution of equipments and languages is continuous and usually becomes a change in fashion, that leaves space without its connoting elements; maybe exactly in this schizophrenia of languages we recognize the indecision of our time. Also for that the little scale is fundamental to understand contemporaneity. The little scale is the one to adapt the existing, the instrument to modify the spaces of life even more in an economic and social circumstances characterized by the lack of resources (at least in the European context). In a constant relation between a stable set, with the role of expressing the duration, and elementary actions changing continuously its image.





Interior/exterior. A “twin-phenomena”

Vincenza Farina

To understand the origin of the unease afflicting contemporary public space, can be useful a look on the project representations for une ville contemporaine by Le Corbusier in 1922. The architectures of the cruciform plan towers, based on the order of a giant orthogonal grid, are definitely in odds with a background represented sometimes as a huge and undefined void and some others as a sort of forest, a nature, through which Le Corbusier maybe tries to retake the lost unity of the classic world. The breaking with the traditional city, made also by streets and squares, seems irremediable. The lack of precise relations, either formal or functional, between public space and modern architecture will produce an increasing arbitrariness of the first, a progressive isolation of the second and consequently an even more wide detachment between the two. “The interior of the city” was lost. But what happened to the domestic interior? In reaction also with the W. Benjamin description of the “bourgeois interior” – as a claustrophobic



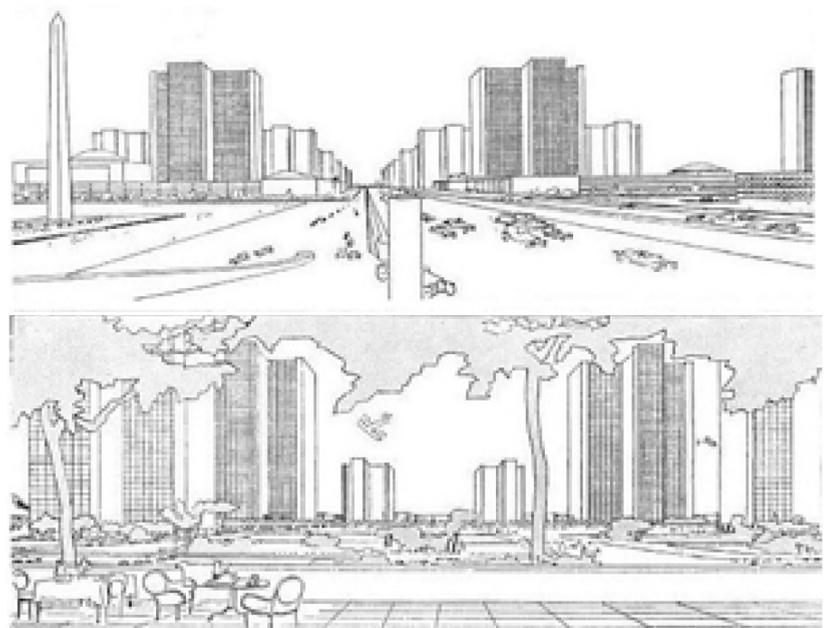
place, opposed to the city liveliness and vitality – modern domestic interior is open to the sun, to light, to air and in contact with the outside, but this outside is not the city, but nature.

Later, around the Fifties, a group of young architects (Team 10) started supporting the need to return considering the built environment as an indivisible unit and to reconsider the relation interior/exterior.

In particular Aldo van Eyck proposed its clearing. He sustained that, similarly to the mental and psychic (in-between) nature of man – fluctuating between the need of protection and the desire of freedom – it was necessary to reach a coherence in the articulation of parts through meaningful and psychologically effective transitions, thresholds, spaces of relation, of meeting, more or less open, more or less private.

So interior and exterior are not polar but ambivalent realities; at the same way house and city are “twin-phenomena”, or rather mutual and reciprocal units. The consequence is that urban space becomes meaningful for man and able on making him “feeling at home” only if he can identifies himself in it, recognizing in the built environment the same liminal condition marking his nature. Today we attend in a rising exteriorization of our intimate or domestic space (suffice it to think about our privacy on the net), against of an unusual interiorization of that space “between” dwellings that we call urban space, that often seems to be alienate and insecure. To bring the “domestic” in an empty space to make it a public and living one and to assume the consciousness about ex-novo design of a “piazza” springs from the articulation of the houses composing it, not subsidiary but constitutive elements of the public space, represents not the solution to the problem but a promising practice.

Sotto: Laurie D. Olin, Bryant Park, NYC, Olin, Placemaking, Monacelli Press, New York, 2008.
A sinistra: Le Corbusier, Une Ville Contemporaine, 1922. Le Corbusier, La mia opera, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino, 2008



Architectural design



Contemporary figures of architectural/urban spaces

Matteo Fraschini

In a metropolitan dimension where its scale has “compromised” the classical figures of public spaces it looks important to take our attention on the landscape theme as a necessary actor of this reality in continuity with the urban fabric. This complex mix of urban system is often described in term of net city, space of flows, rhizomatic structure etc.; even though that essential model is useful to understand the current situation, we feel the need of a particular sight that superimposes to those schemes a more physical dimension made of spatial ideas, urban fabrics, and landscape to underline a new centrality of “ground” (seen as a series of scenes) in a metropolitan region. Built and “unbuilt” are to be seen as elements of a single reality.

One of the bet of the contemporary metropolitan areas is to identify in the (residual) landscape or urban-scape a new glue for the human scale of a system of parts too often kept together only by mechanical/infrastructural means that characterize the new regional scale; classical figures of space such as “plaza” boulevard etc, but also Urban park can hardly play the role of collecting “situations” of a multi-ethnic-purpose. In this sense, we want to emphasize the centrality of the landscape, seen necessarily and deliberately artificial as a “between” and not only as a “buffer” (pillow) or the back of some other weaker centrality.

Specifically, to speak in terms of landscape can mean on one hand an attention to continuity of enjoyment and views but also to reason about a difficult relationship between densification and rarefaction of space and “stimuli” intended both as key elements of the metropolitan dimension.

From a point of view of regional scale becomes important to identify the tools of reading and interpretation of a delicate complexity; from the point of view of the architectural scale becomes fundamental an approach that tends to clarify the complexity and the way in which this continuous surface becomes a three-dimensional node.

the architectural design is confronted with extension and introverts the character of the landscape in its own language being enriched and engaged with the hybridization of the typological space and a structural image that such operation requires.

In this dimension the ground, the horizon, becomes the first term of reference and comparison of design requiring a clear, though complex, choice of what is below and what is above, what is heavy and what is light ... Every formal element continues to have its own ethical code of conduct.

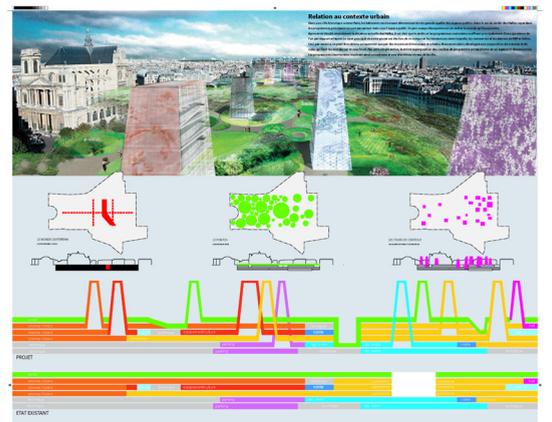
Viable Surfaces become at a time interface (new facade) and envelope of complex organisms, stratified, bind fabrics, networks and landscapes.

what we call layering of practicable soils where the image of the landscape is combined and compared with the urban theme, continues the argument of a broader vision related to the concept of urban morph-type (megastructure / megaform).

In this sense it is possible and reasonable to see and read a continuity between measures proper of the city (blocks, series of blocks, avenues) and landscape as a dense void.

The restatement of figures of space, stratified in our culture, hybridized within urban bodies that re-interprets of articulated composition, is enriched with new types of space that may mediate the relationship between the extended and dense.

For these reasons some interesting contributes are proposed trying to focusing on the simultaneous importance and, for some aspects coincidence, between what “looks” built, dense, and wath appears as a “void”.



Design Brief for City Garden Unveiled

Diller Scofidio - Renfro

The City Garden Project management board and Malcolm Reading Consultants have finalised the design brief for the second stage of the international design competition.

The competition is seeking world-class, innovative but deliverable designs for an urban park and civic space that will successfully sit within Aberdeen's heritage and historic architecture to create a contemporary public place for the 21st century and beyond.

The brief sets out the aims behind the project and draws together technical information from previous studies, incorporating the priorities of the design quality workshops, stakeholder interviews and feedback from the public consultation carried out last year. The design quality workshop has indicated that the gardens should enhance Aberdeen's reputation as an international city, be widely acclaimed for their quality and conveniently accessible.

The brief recognises the policy objectives for public space, well-being and transport endorsed by Aberdeen City and Shire. The brief is structured around three main sections: the wider planning context, the key design principles and criteria; and the ambitions. The successful design teams will need to demonstrate that their proposal satisfies these and the quality standards of distinct identity, creating a safe and pleasant environment, easy to move around, welcoming, adaptable and sustainable.

Malcolm Reading said: "The designs must be based on the principles of effective place-making, respect for the historic environment, use of the topography and landscape, connectivity, accessibility, enhancement of the cultural quarter and social, environmental and economic sustainability.

"Equally, designers need to be conscious of Aberdeen's aim to create a city of vitality and quality, using projects such as City Garden to set a new benchmark of civic vigour. I have complete confidence that the shortlist we choose from the entries to the first stage are capable of meeting these challenges with flair, maturity and creativity."

The feasibility study, completed in 2009, found that accommodation could be provided over four levels on the site with a total area of 56,000 square metres with 29,000 square metres at street level. The design teams should aim to achieve this area or more, but should not be constrained by the layout proposed in the feasibility study.

Gardens must account for a minimum of 11,000 square metres (equivalent to the existing gardens). A contemporary 21st century garden which demonstrates excellence in landscape design is sought.

The cultural centre must have a significant entrance, capable of handling up to 2,000 visitors per day with the ability to form a semi-sheltered space for performances. The aim is to attract a major arts partner to locate to the site and as such the design for a cultural centre will be conceptual at this stage.

The outdoor performance space should be able to cater for a range of events from small scale poetry reading to gatherings for 5,000 people. The space must be able to adapt for concerts for up to 10,000 people.

The scheme should provide access to the rail and bus station, Union Square, Trinity Mall and the Green. Consideration should also be given to the potential of linking the businesses on Union Terrace via the arches under the road. The aspiration is for the gardens to provide a link to buildings at the rear of Belmont Street to enable businesses to expand cafes and restaurants into the scheme.

A flexible area for performing arts, conferences, exhibitions, meetings and other events with back-of-house facilities should be catered for in the concourse area.

Car parking should be sufficient to service the site but not be seen as a new city-wide facility. Delivery and loading bays for His Majesty's Theatre and for the new cultural centre should be provided.

The designs must demonstrate that they will not exceed the budget of £140 million.

Mr Reading added: "The design brief underlines that the site must be primarily a garden, a public space for Aberdeen. There will be no intrusive buildings on the garden to prevent the vistas from Rosemount Viaduct to the south to Union Street and Union Street Bridge to the north. The topography of the site is paramount. The bridges over Rosemount Viaduct and Union Street reveal the historic development of the city and should be embraced. There are many listed structures bordering and close to the site which need to be exploited by a new proposal to give the gardens a distinct character and identity.

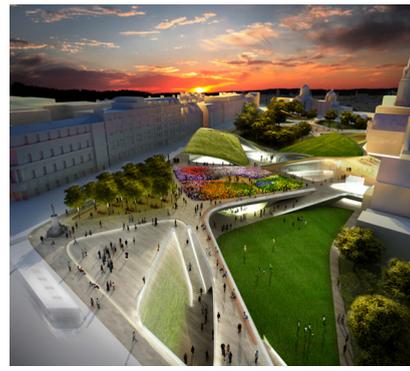
"Designs should celebrate the concept of the Victorian Gardens and include formal gardens but should reinterpret the idea for a 21st century city. The landscape should include distinct areas united through a garden space and consideration must be given to quieter areas for contemplation and relaxation as well as to other more dynamic areas. The scheme will need to be sympathetic to Aberdeen's climate, providing shelter from the wind and using plants which will thrive. We are also seeking mature trees in the proposals with details of how they can be sustained."

The design brief will be issued to the next Aberdeen City Council meeting and then issued to the short-listed design teams on 21st of July 2011 with supporting technical information.

Two Designs for City Garden Project to be Explored Further

The jury of the International Design Competition for the City Garden Project can confirm it has chosen to explore two designs in more detail before selecting a winner.

The designs are Granite Web (number one in the public exhibition) and Winter



Garden (number two in the exhibition).

Malcolm Reading, of Malcolm Reading Consultants, which is the organiser of the international design competition, said: "The jury was faced with six designs of exceptional and consummate design quality. The brief is complex and the site has challenging features so it was especially impressive to see the extent of development of concept design, each very different, in the final submissions.

"All of the design teams were interviewed. Their presentations, technical submissions and the subsequent independent analysis of those as well as the public's preferences were taken into account.

"The jury's unanimous decision at this stage is that further clarification work should be done by two design teams. This clarification is in the spirit of the competitive process and will allow the jury to crystallise their thoughts on each team's respective key features and provide a clearer basis for a final decision on an outright winner.

"This is not an unusual situation for such a complex design challenge. The jury is trying to fully understand all aspects of the two schemes and, in particular, to test the durability of the respective concepts."

Malcolm Reading Consultants will assist the jury in coordinating the work involved which includes each team providing further information on their concept before meeting with the jury in the New Year.

"We are going to help the jury to ensure that each team respects continuing confidentiality through the procurement process. For this reason, we can only identify each team by their competition number, one and two."

John Stewart, chairman of the City Garden Project management board, added: "The complexity of the project and the importance of the development to the people of Aberdeen deserve further consideration. We are confident that either scheme can provide a world-class solution and further exploration of these two designs will enable us to select the right design for Aberdeen.

"It is anticipated that the design teams involved will come back to us in December with those clarifications and that we will make a final decision on the winner in January. The winning design along with the TIF business case will then be submitted to Aberdeen City Council."

The City Garden Project proposes a transformation of the existing gardens, railway line and adjacent dual carriageway to create an iconic garden space that would act as a focal point for the city centre for a range of activities for all to enjoy. The overall aim is revitalise the city centre, making it more attractive, safer and better connected.

A public exhibition of all six finalists' designs attracted about 15,000 visits.



Warsaw airport

Carlos Lamela

In October 2000 the Polish airport authorities called an international competition for the extension and remodelling of the international airport "Fryderyk Chopin" in the capital, Warsaw. Several big international teams specialised in the design of terminal buildings were invited. They were architectural practices like the Spanish Estudio Lamela, the French Paul Andreu (ADP), the German Von Gerkan (GMP), the American HNTB together with construction companies like Ferrovial, Bouygues, Skanska, Hochtief, Strabag, etc. The first part of the competition took place in February 2001. In July 2001 there was a second part. As a result of this, there were a number of teams invited to participate in a second phase of the competition. The groups Strabag, Hochtief and the partnership of Budimex, Ferrovial and Estudio Lamela were classified. This final phase was delivered in April 2002.

In June of the same year the design project submitted by Estudio Lamela won the competition.

During the different stages of the competition and for the definition and carrying out of the architectural concept, Estudio Lamela collaborated among others with Ferrovial (construction and technical office), Budimex (construction), Budimex Prijekt (local engineering), Sener (airport planning and special systems), Buro Happold (façades and roofs), 2^a2 (landscaping).

At the moment, once the development of the Concept Project has been finished, the works of the Projekt Budowlany (project in order to apply for the planning permission) will be carried out in the offices that Lamela Asociados have in Warsaw.

In order to carry out such project, Estudio Lamela has subcontracted a team of Polish architects called Studio Quadra. Other subcontracted collaborators are the following:

Structures:	SDZ Projekt
Mechanic and electrical services:	Pol-Con
Façades:	Biuro Techniczne Tuscher
Roads:	AKA
Urban development and landscaping:	RSArchitektura
Fire Protection:	Protect
Health and Safety at work:	BHP Andrzej Magdziarz
Hygienic conditions:	Sanepid, Halina Nowak-Nejno

Design criteria

The design criteria, which have been considered as the base for the conception of the architectural project, have been the following:

Flexibility, thanks to the creation of a system which allows the modular growth of the homogeneous areas, according to the needs of the growing air traffic. This applies both to the architectural functionality and the structures and services.

The airport due to its typology and structural shape forms a flexible development, which can be easily adjusted. The pier, the check-in and departures/arrivals area have been designed to undergo any type of configuration in the medium-long term (like the increase of Schengen flights due to the joining of Poland into the UE, or the increase of the security measures in air traffic, for example).

Space clarity, using as reference such elements as the opening of penetrations over the big spaces and the entrance of natural light in all the main user areas, including the baggage reclaim hall. The comfort of the passenger is one of the most important aspects when designing an airport. The feeling of security and spaciousness are related to the abundance of ample and transparent spaces. The New Terminal Building in Warsaw will have the main façades glazed, providing views to the exterior from all the areas of the Terminal. In this way, the passengers will always enjoy the natural light and even the interior of the building will be provided with transparency. In the double height of the pier, the airbridges for arrivals and transfers will also be glazed, floating in the space like free pieces providing spectacular views over the interior of the terminal to the passengers.

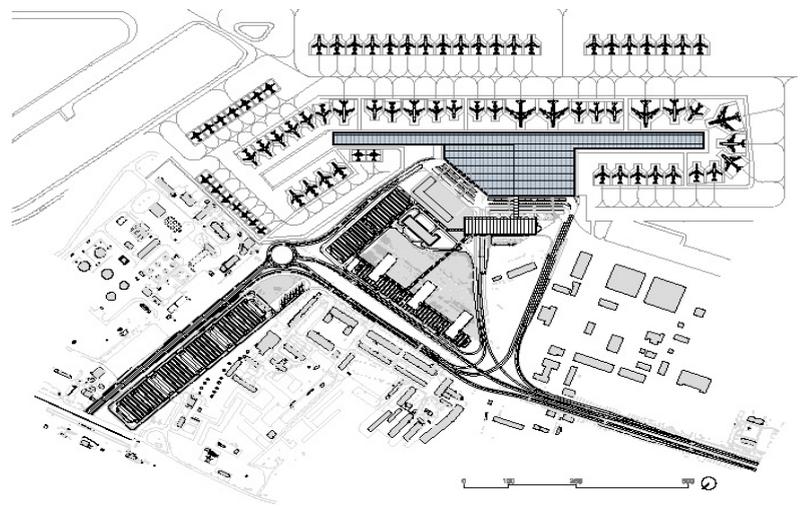
Simplicity of distances and connections for the passenger flows.

The solution proposed wants to be simple, first of all. Simple for the passenger who will be able to orientate himself without any problem. Simple for the airport employees who will see how the surfaces are extended. Simple for the visitors, who will access to the Terminal without any problem through a road system without interferences. Moreover, the proposal has been conceived in order to be functional, without the unnecessary loss of space and to exploit to the full all the available surfaces of the extension.

Functional, architectural and aesthetic considerations

The New Terminal Building will be the gateway to the country and an indispensable piece of infrastructure during the next years. Ample, very high and transparent spaces, which are visually connected to each other, will be shaped, and covered by an inclined roof which will have a dramatic impact. The proposal draws inspiration from XXI century architecture, as it is contemporaneous in the materials and the concepts it uses, of a big visual impact, appropriate to the image of a new Poland in the world.

The proposal backs the future integration of the existing terminal (T1) with the new terminal (T2) of approximately 100,000 m², which together with the new pier of 725 ml and a capacity for 34 assisted stands for aircrafts, will form a unique space conceived for HUB



operations –links for multiple connections- strategic centre of the air traffic in Central and Eastern Europe, with a future total capacity of 12,5 million passengers per year.

The system of the project is based on the concept of maximum flexibility and modularity which give the terminal a powerful image and allows for possible adaptations and extensions without altering significantly its configuration and make easy the adjustment to present and future needs.

The roof and the façade, light and elegant in shape ample in size and with its distinctive high spaces, which give the building a spacious quality.

The floors have been designed to allow very functional passenger flows, creating a sequence of warm, transparent spaces that are connected with each other and with an exterior which allows the entrance and all areas to be flooded with natural light and furthermore the building makes for the simplicity of passenger flows and orientation crucial in a modern airport.

Additionally, the project of Estudio Lamela also takes into account developments on the landside, which include new accesses and car-parks for more than 5500 vehicles, etc.

Scope of the works planned in stage 1

- Carrying out of Terminal 2 and its infrastructure.
- Demolition of existing buildings on the landside and adaptation of the infrastructure networks currently in use.
- Extension and modernisation of the apron (airside).
- Car-parks for passengers in height and surface, bus station and taxis.
- Construction of the VIP sector with two assisted parking spaces.

The New Terminal

Within the arrivals section, the spectacular nature of the space in the check-in spine hall is enhanced by making the passengers pass through the communication corridors adjacent to this space. We have made every effort to enhance the value of the natural lighting in all those public spaces.

The new Terminal 2 will have a capacity for 6,5 million passengers per year and together with Terminal 1, in a second construction phase, the group of terminals will have the capacity for 12,5 million passengers/year. The purpose is to build an airport HUB type according to the standards B of IATA.

All levels of the T2 will be connected with the corresponding levels of the T1, in order to use rationally the available surfaces. On the other hand, the operative effectiveness of the existing Terminal 1 during all the sub-phases of construction of the Terminal 2 will be guaranteed.

The structural system selected is modular and therefore allows simple adaptations and extensions as well as simplifying the construction phase. This concept is essential in the design of the contemporary airports and is connected with its flexibility. The module which has been selected as a base is the structural one located in the T1 (9.60 x 9.60) in order to unify it with the structure of the new terminal. This module is equal to 19,2 x 19,2 in the main public areas for passengers.

The principles of functionality and maximum exploitation are also reflected in the design of the roads system on the landside, which uses many of the existing highway infrastructures. Maximum cost-effectiveness has also been sought. The centre of the New Terminal Building has a large retail area, planned according to the most modern exploitation criteria.





How to assign the void - An alternative to urban sprawl

Clement Blanchet

It would have been too unrealistic to think we can control the perimeter of the land given for the PEX (Parc des Exposition) competition. The site is a large agricultural land at the north edge of Toulouse city. Surrounding this perimeter there is an overall patchwork of urban substances all independent from each other.

The brief calls for a forced and accelerated urbanization around the Exhibition Center. But the site allocated for the PEX is too unsettled and wild to imagine a so called new city to happen, without bad feelings or impunity. The allocated site for the project is defined by a collection of open fields and sporadic patchworks, all driven by their intrinsic features and standing as lonely islands.

I did not want to force the future of all existing urban patchworks around this void, but more let them decide alone their future. Nowadays, it is highly un-responsible and unrealistic to think you can plan the city as we used to do 50 years ago. Too many interests interfere, such as politics, investors, or even due to the unhappy habits of architects to do by default, different from others. The PEX and its stripe is not a master plan but an urban strategy.

Besides the fact the void is becoming very popular and green, we thought to design the un-built would be probably the best take on the site, of course not to be only consensual.

The void is programed as some sort of waiting land, calibrating the potential success of the PEX and as a consequence let architecture eventually to happen in this urban stripe. This PEX band initiates a linear expansion connecting on one hand the "Airbus City" and to the East end the romantic side of the Garonne river. Connecting all the diverse existing urban fragments, the void itself invents a "mega social room", as a patio to all the surrounding existing patchworks or chambers. Eventually only architecture could grow. The void should be charged or assigned as since it remains the only parameter architects may control for real urban developments. The void is responsible to engage the existing patchwork. This void will propose a new utopian and pragmatic container for potential mixity and freedom, both for actual architecture and architects. The PEX is promoting a generated void, where its preservation contributes to engage an actual deliberation to the architectural obsession to build, as the only tool to design.

A machine for a new order

The car is not anymore an excuse to plant trees, but actually to build the PEX. Cars

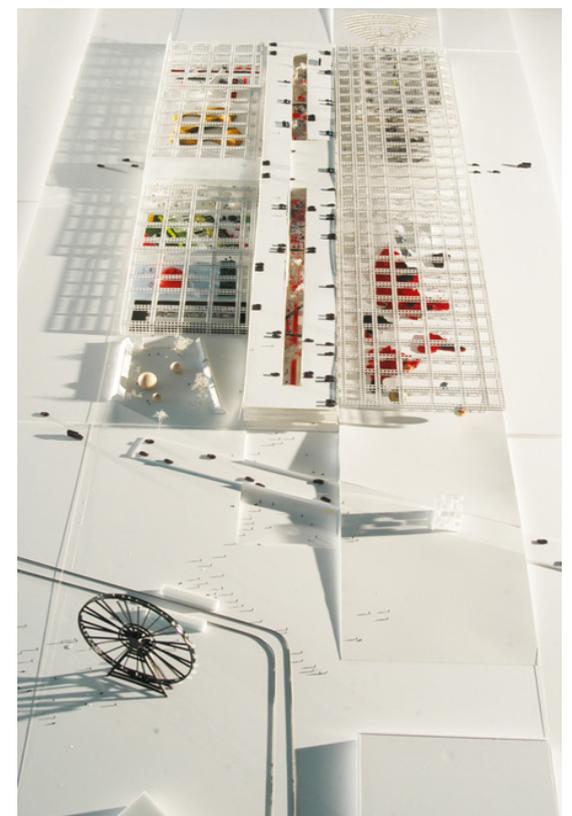
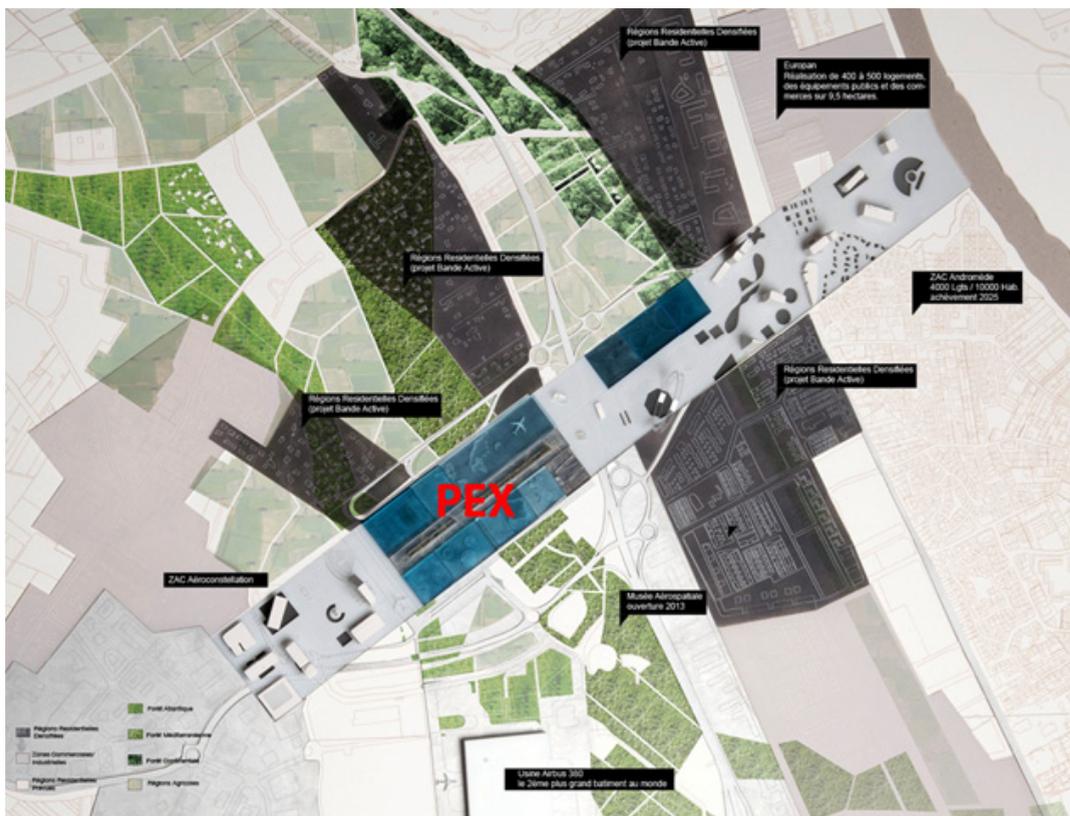


are located in the hearth of the building, which, in fact very similar to an Airport terminal, irrigate the different functions. The PEX is in itself an infrastructural project which dares to become architectural. The limits are blurred between architecture urbanism and infrastructure. The PEX is a container forcing developments and allowing a maximum level of flexibility. The PEX is a machine to see and exchange modalities of commuting.

Three parallel bars of program form the PEX, a direct diagrammatical translation of the brief requirements, a ultra -compact yet huge rectangular block 316m wide, 660m long; parking becoming the main organizational device for PEX, with exhibition halls to the south (integrating the patrimonial "farm") and outdoor exhibition and event halls to the north. PEX is a container for diversity and freeing a new order at the scale of the overall urban stripe. The proximity of the programs is allowing a real diversity, enhancing unusual relationships that can hardly happen while each of them is dispersed and as autonomous objects.

The structure of the PEX is defined by continuous three dimensional framework that extends to absorb all the natural usual hierarchies; façade, roof, columns, do not exist, they interact to create an overall field, highly flexible, a "plug and exhibit" system for services and for exhibitors in the exhibition halls.

We refuse any additional knowledge than its own functions; it is a device allowing maximum diversity to a void for any type of event and actions.



Earth geography vs City Geography

Giuseppe Boi - Roberto Podda

The word *geometria* has always had the meaning that the meter (the measure) is the earth. In the same sense, geography had almost the meaning that the writing (geometric) is the earth, but for *grafia* we can mean writing or image of the world. Beginning from this puntualization we can think to a sinergic contrast between the two aspects of geography:

Speech on the world, conceptualization of the truth

Rappresentation of the world, therefore its modellization.

Geografia_Mappa_Planimetria_Sezione

The problem of the rappresentation of the object earth

The definition of this four words, rich of meanings and different sides, represents the foundation

for the introduction of the theories. The elaboration of such concepts allowed to the construction of alternative practical/aesthetic instrumentations; in particular I will explain the GeoMappa and the PlaniSezione. But before the detailed explanation of over cited techniques is necessary to return to the definition of the concepts from which we have started: geography; map; planimetry; section. The reading keys that we can give to these words, for instance the combinatory possibilities, are multiple, they are tied to many familiar definitions and concepts: we use geographic maps; planimetry is one of the most suitable instruments for the ground rappresentation; planimetry is an horizontal section; planimetry and section are the more effective instruments in cartesian rappresentation of the plan. It is also clearly that, in this order, geography map planimetry section can be seen in scalar relationship among them, from geographic large-scale of the landscape to that of the building that is one to one.

"Models Designs" in the definition given in the homonymous book by Ben Van Berkel. The Models Designs represent a potentiality in the study of the complexity and the development of a disciplined methodology of job, than it can be caught up with the means of computer science; through such methodologies we can acquire forms, in particular those of the ground, and manage the transitions between the maps to the various scales that compose the city. The always increasing complexity of the contemporary city contexts, makes clear the necessity to implement/to experience methodologies and instrumentations of reading/ writing for the disciplines of the planning.

The critical analysis of creative process makes possible to isolate four actions generative of the form that cooperate to define the relation: To think : To see = Rappresent : To form.

It is obvious that the variation of one of the terms generate direct repercussions on the entire equation.

Unstudio

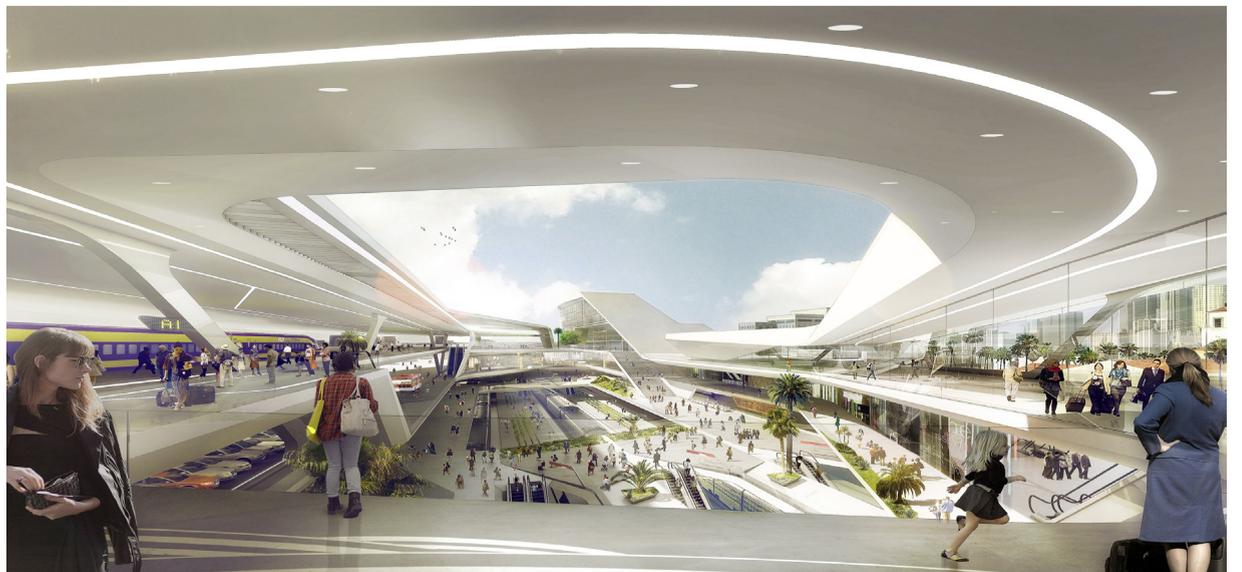
Vision for Master Plan Union Station 2050

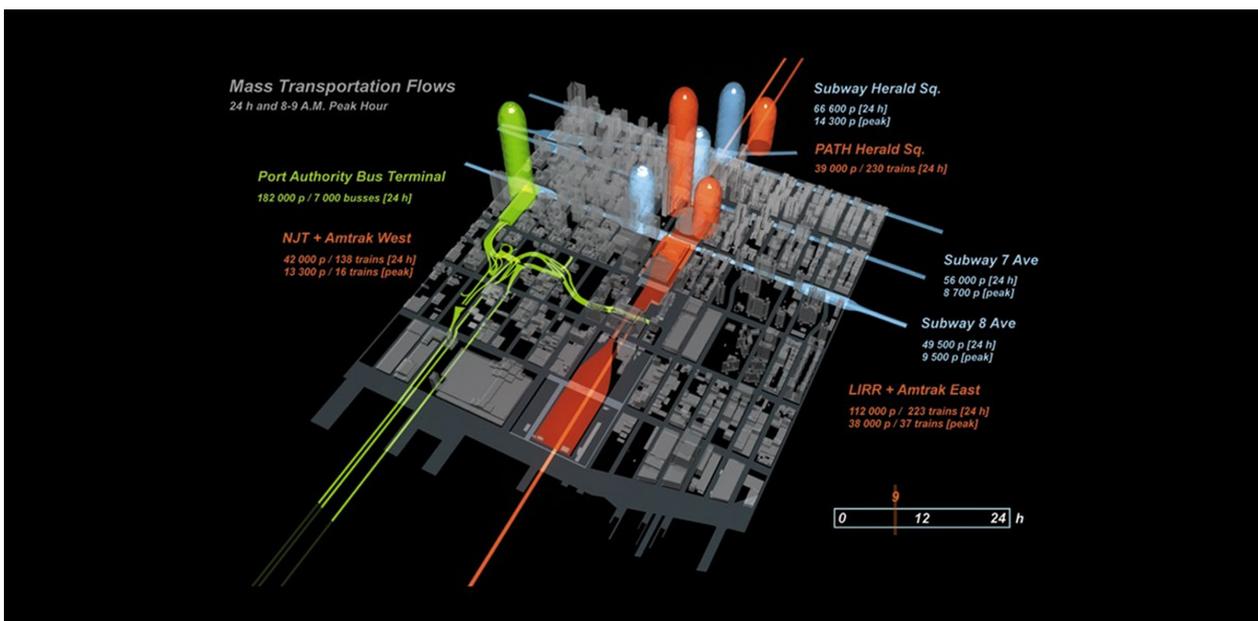
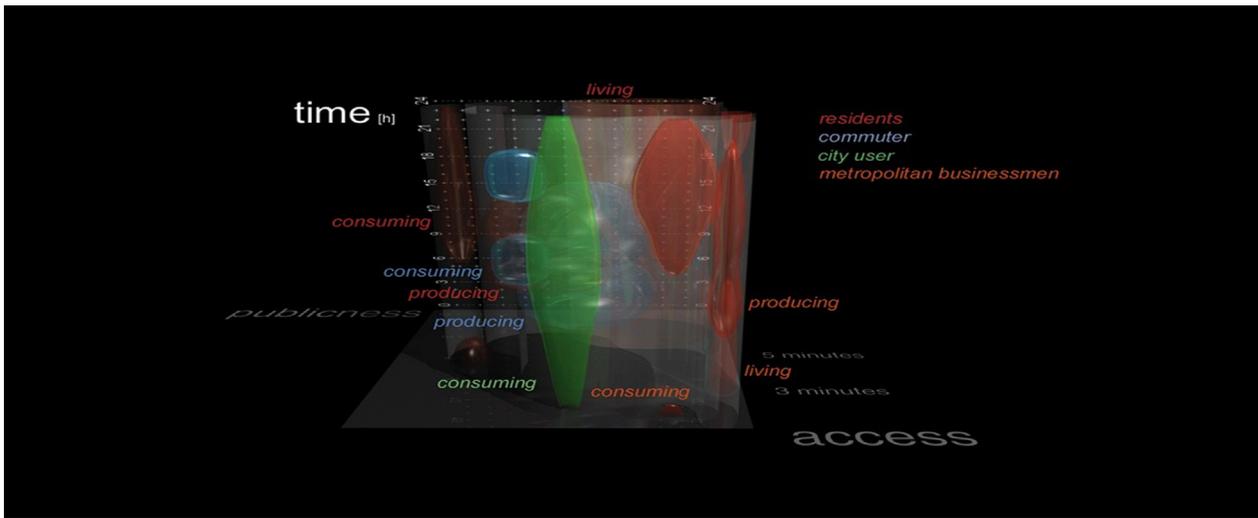
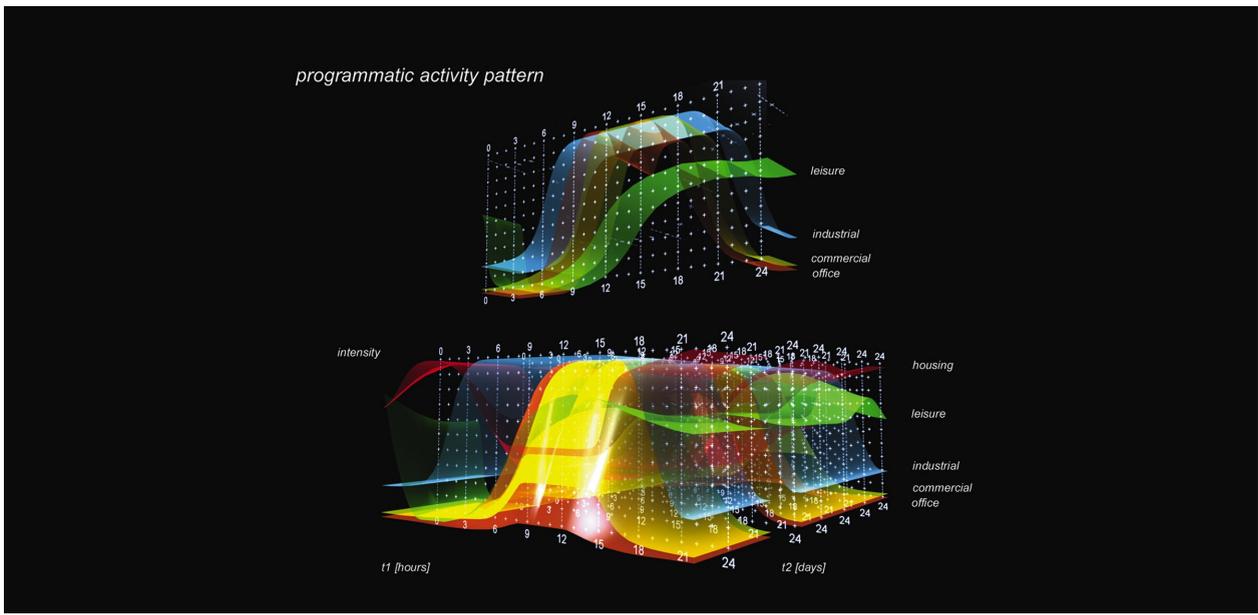
Los Angeles, USA, 2012

The vision for the master plan of Los Angeles' Union Station was designed in collaboration with EE&K a Perkins Eastman company, and Jacobs Engineering. The "Vision Board" - a conceptual rendering in the year 2050 - shows Los Angeles Union Station as a multi-modal transit hub with a mix of uses, new development and outdoor spaces. The intent of the Vision Board was to explore visionary possibilities for Union Station and surrounding areas. The conceptual launch pad for the design of the 'vision' for the L.A. Union Station Master Plan is focused on integrating the transit experience with new outdoor park spaces, providing a much sought after amenity in downtown L.A. At a large scale, the vision creates a 'green loop' that includes plans for the revitalization of the L.A. river and possible park extensions connecting Union Station across the 101.

Key to the future architectural development of the site is the maximum preservation of the historic Union Station building and gardens. City and regional transit will be given the stage, with a focus on increased ridership and transit connections, as well as considerations for the introduction of high-speed rail. A uniquely programmed urban park with large-scale open spaces, extending the ideas of the existing historic courtyards, is envisioned as being integrated into the transit experience. The introduction of a vertical, layered strategy for the transit program show the possibility of an open-air station that takes advantage of city's light and climate, creating a distinctly L.A. response to the future of this important transit hub.

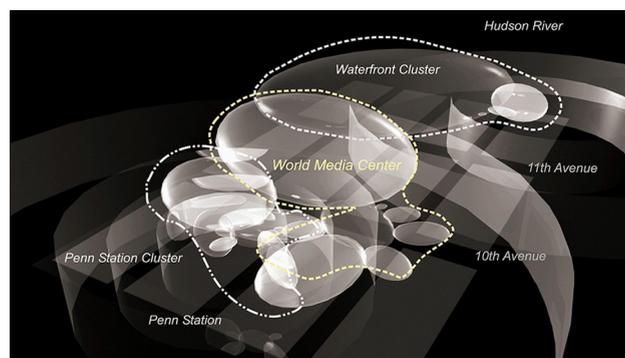
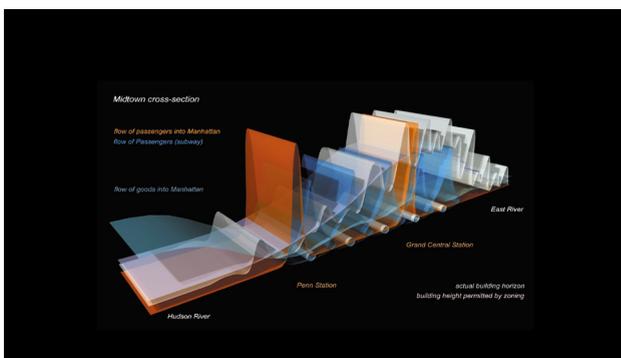
Los Angeles, USA, 2012





Unstudio
IFCCA
New York, USA, 1999

In this competition new features are identified to constitute Manhattan as model for the global city. Extensive surveys generated diagrams visualizing the existing user flows related to program, time and location. The diagrams map the performance of Manhattan in order to extract parameters for the development of the site. The proposal for the researched area between the 23rd and 42nd street, was to relocate facilities and combine them in effective clusters, which results in well-functioning mixed use areas including all parameters – critical packages. A critical package for the global city is the optimal combination of factors for the site to function effectively with respect to programs, construction, economy, political and feasibility.



Il Design e le tecnologie digitali

Anna Maria Loiacono

I MANCA TESTO INGLESE
ogettazione degli oggetti di arredo ci offre sempre più proposte nuove basate sull'uso di forme tratte dalle tecnologie digitali, elaborate attraverso le attuali tecnologie del CAD (Computer aided design) bidimensionale e tridimensionale. Le molteplici spinte propulsive fornite dalla innovazione a livello digitale nelle varie fasi della progettazione dell'arredo, dalla nascita dell'idea fino alla sua definizione formale ed elaborazione grafica, ci indirizzano verso un mondo inconsueto e mutevole fatto di forme, colori, textures, materiche composizioni che si caratterizzano per una particolare innovatività.

Che si tratti delle textures di Karim Rashid, nei tessuti delle poltrone Blobola e Blobina, delle fluide forme delle sedute e degli arredi di Zaha Hadid, con i suoi studi su strutture digitali parametriche bi e tri-dimensionali, delle sedute di Philippe Starck, o di Ron Arad che si incurvano e deformano in superfici variabili, o delle sedute di Brodie Neill e di Yves Behar, cangianti volumi che si incrociano, fino ai nastri intrecciati che compongono arredi come la seduta And per Cappellini di Fabio Novembre, il CAD 2D e soprattutto 3D appare fonte di nuova elaborazione formale, di studio e conoscenza di una poetica basata su una geometria topologica, che rifugge dalle tradizionali figure della geometria euclidea, quadrato, cerchio, rettangolo, linea retta, angolo retto, per sperimentare immagini tridimensionali di grande valenza espressiva, dai paraboloidi agli iperboloidi, alle forme più sinuose ed avvolgenti. Questa tendenza, già presente nelle precedenti figure del design Internazionale come Alvar Aalto ed Arne Jacobsen, nelle loro ondulate ed organiche realizzazioni e più recentemente Eero Aarnio nelle sue forme curve, trova nel digitale la più congeniale delle forme di espressione ed elaborazione formale. In particolare appare interessante la serie di arredi di Zaha Hadid Z-scape furniture del 2000. Negli arredi di Zaha Hadid complesse forme dinamiche fluide si combinano creando incavi e sporgenze e disegnando nello stesso tempo elementi ergonomici. Nel centrotavola modulare Niche disegnato per Alessi nel 2009 in particolare, appare la complessità dell'accostamento dei vari pezzi, frammentato insieme che si deforma e diviene liquido elemento della contemporaneità. Allo stesso modo in cui nella seduta Oxford del 1962 e nella poltrona Egg del 1958 di Arne Jacobsen, si realizzano forme arcuate e sinuose, deformate e tondeggianti riferite ad un mondo di forme naturali ed organiche, e nella poltrona di Eero Aarnio Pastil del 1967 e più recentemente nel tavolo Parabel del 1994, si estrinsecano nei colori più vivi e nelle forme più morbide le nuove tecnologie; nella chaise longue di Ron Harad After spring! before summer del 1992 si concretizza una forma innovativa insolita e complessa. Il digitale appare perciò fonte di nuove forme, deformazione, plastica modellazione, rivisitazione, reinvenzione complessa e mutevole del



Design Ron Arad, seduta Oh Void2, 2004
Design Ron Arad, chaise longue Loop Loom, 1992
Design Zaha Hadid, Zaha Hadid Bow+ Metacrylic, 2007

Fallin' in love

Davide Raponi

F For double the vision my
Eyes do see,
And a double vision is always
with me

With my inward Eye, 'tis an old Man grey,
With my outward, a Thistle across my way.

W. Blake, from Letter to Thomas Butts *

Odd and funny circumstances can be found
amongst the folds of the city.

With no interest for the news and generally
devoid of attentions, they emerge by chance:
they are sometimes unattended superimpositions,
every now and then they are fortuitous interferences,
or simple unforeseen occurrences.
Some open backgrounds can be more occasionally
be observed on these nearly jeopardized outlines,
virgins in their way, seemingly proud as if touched
by that aristocratic taste for not being liked.

The observer disapproves, that is true, but then he
uses, simplifies and out-focuses until everything

gets into the daily mixture of background,
routine and steady images.

HOV like to intervene in these unfortunate but
very sweet areas, independently – and how
could it otherwise be? – from clients engaged in
somewhere else.

Timeless objects suspended in my double vision.

*sentence taken from the short story "Duplice
Visione" by Michele Gabbanelli

