Storytelling [in] Architecture:

Approaching Relational Architecture

By

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ABSTRACT

What is the importance of and meaning of storytelling in architecture? Can an architecture tell its own story? Can the role of narrator be fulfilled by an architecture? Oral histories are passed down, generation by generation, and the words spoken take on new meaning with each retelling. Extrapolating from this idea of original meaning and subsequent change, is it possible to research how architecture narrates a story about growth and change and how reinterpretations occur? Is it possible to accumulate understanding of an architecture in the diverse ways that meaning is achieved through storytelling? By reading, experiencing, and reinterpreting the space and built form? This thesis explores these processes and suggest how architecture naturally privileges the ‘reader’ as participant by ‘hiding’ and embedding its experiential, sensorial, and phenomenal qualities within. The chosen site for this exploration is Building 22; the school of architecture at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work grew out of my passion for telling stories, as well as my deep-seated curiosity of architecture and its potential. In full seriousness, I would like to thank some of you before you stop reading.

My parents and siblings, for their unwavering love and support. Your devotion has carried me through.

My advisors Roger Connah and Yvan Cazabon, for their diligent commitment to my research, their uncompromising expectations, and their idealistic vision of what my thesis could be.

Carleton University, the Azrieli School of Architecture, and so many past professors, too numerous to list by name.

My friends, without whose not-so-gentle encouragement I would not be here.

I am indebted to you all.

And I would like to thank Zabdi.

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FOREWORD

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Thesis deck 'title card'.

I would like to thank you, the participant. Without you, these words would simply be pigmented petroleum distillate on plastic coated cotton-blend. These words would have no meaning and impact no one. However, having come this far, you bring life to the ideas written herein. It is thus within your power to agree with or dispute these postulations; to reread these cards, to distribute them on their merit or to put them aside and let the ideas fade once more. Through your investigation of this deck, you bring meaning to the work that constitutes the completion of this thesis. It is my greatest pleasure to present this opportunity to you, and my greatest hope that the significance of your participation is understood by the end.

RULES OF READING

This document is an adaptation of the original thesis deck. As a series of cards, upon shuffling of the deck readers were presented with the opportunity to read the thesis out of sequence. Thus allowing for thoughtful consideration on the part of the reader as they drew connections between ideas and sequenced the cards as they saw fit.

Readers are offered to select a randomized sequence of page numbers from the list on the following page and read the document accordingly in order to emulate the experience of reading the thesis deck.

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16	54	38	10	93	37	12	21	90	50	54	55	31	72	6	89	89	38	18	37
37	30	52	84	16	31	5	26	63	26	59	1	8	43	3	14	43	7	70	46
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47	89	8	8	92	61	82	64	11	31	3	40	24	20	30	2	55	93	62	58
80	55	28	61	30	56	81	49	26	23	24	25	94	3	5	66	92	76	86	57
19	34	86	26	3	10	24	11	72	68	69	54	15	69	79	13	33	36	21	19
11	57	17	81	72	72	22	90	36	85	73	85	12	42	84	65	4	90	58	45
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67	90	94	52	84	43	70	39	78	55	5	46	69	21	41	5	36	37	9	10
81	49	45	72	63	58	67	55	50	94	65	79	52	49	29	37	78	5	43	72
10	16	37	17	56	12	17													

[Re]INTRODUCTION

A rectangular warning sign with rounded corners and a thin black border. The sign is white and contains the Italian text "Questo non è per te." in a black, serif font, centered horizontally and vertically.

Questo non è per te.

Figure 0.1
A warning.

Stories have been told since time immemorial, before the first humans gathered around the fire. Stories are lessons, learned by one and passed to another in hopes of educating and protecting. Stories are history, preserving and recounting heritage, conveying wisdom to young minds. Verbal, oral histories are prevalent to this day. Stories are colloquial accounts of complicated issues. Stories are lies, stories are truths. Each story is subject to time; through re-telling, re-remembering, re-visiting, and re-starting, the story changes in composition as well as meaning. Stories by virtue are also subject to interpretation; audience, tone, medium, place, urgency, narrator, engagement and memory all play into the accurate and inaccurate

Figure 1.0
Oral storytelling around a fire.¹

recounting of a story. Most importantly, architecture and storytelling are inseparable.

It is the postulation of this thesis that each and every architecture, grand and benign alike, has its own story to tell. Much like humanity, not all architecture is created equally. Sometimes due to incompetence, underqualification, inconsideration, selfishness or another unfairness architecture suffers, and theirs is a tale to lament over. Regrettably, more often than not, the story of an architecture goes untold. Can we assert for each story that goes untold there is an architecture whose story is told incorrectly? Whether through misrepresentation, misconstrued narrative, or overbearing architectural intent any available narratives can become vague,

Figure 1.1
M.C. Escher's *Relativity*, 1953.²

incomprehensible, or lost. But what if there are ways architecture can take greater control over its own story? What if it offers ways of becoming its own narrator? How could or does architecture achieve that? Would architecture take on a more human quality in this way?

As a person lives, they gather experience. They learn, adapt, and evolve. Every person is the main character in their own story. The narrative of their life unfolds as they react to changes and respond, defining themselves as a person. They demonstrate their character with their reactions to failure, success, hardship, boredom, and all other manner of influences. A person's story demonstrates dynamic growth and progression at all times. Conventional architecture demonstrates a longevity and immutability that does not

always lend itself to growth and development afforded by humanity. If an architecture responded to external stimuli in the way that people did, then by changing, it would or could alter its storytelling potential. Would this then not necessitate or invite a reinterpretation on the part of the participant?

Let us call the participant the reader. Each reader's proprioception of the space would be different and open opportunities for discourse, exploration, and the joy of rediscovery. Undeniably though, not every participant-reader would engage with a revaluation of an architecture. This introduces the idea of the 'Inquisitive Observer', the curious participant, intent on discovering and re-discovering an architecture. Through their own volition, such readers try to determine an architecture's changing story. The motives for such thorough re-examination vary greatly; an obnoxious desire to know, an indescribable affinity to an architecture, for cathartic release, for personal gain and growth, because of a deep-seated love of puzzles... Regardless of the compulsion to understand, all Inquisitive Observers share the central characteristic of curiosity, humanity's greatest defining trait, and all Inquisitive Observers are rewarded for their efforts with elucidation.

Most Inquisitive Observers comprehend an impending instance of hidden understanding based on a telling moment.

What is a ‘telling’ moment? How does it ‘tell’? Some consider that architecture can best express its responsive changes through experiential and sensorial phenomena which is not to say that an architecture cannot change physically to reflect external stimulation. Should architecture ‘naturally’ [inherently?] provide opportunities for the participant to interact and affect space? Or, does all space invite meaning? Does this depend on the theatrical moment which is when a participant - spectator in this context - invests time and effort and inevitably finds greater understanding from it?

When viewed through the research lenses of perception, semiotics, and relational art, these questions have different answers. It is the due responsibility of the author, and the reader, to compare and contrast the answers - to determine their truth based on reinterpretations of the same material.

Citations

1 “Visual Storytelling and why you Should Consider Podcasts.” Digital image. Six & Flow October 15, 2015. Accessed March 22, 2019, <https://www.sixandflow.com/marketing-blog/digital-marketing/visual-storytelling-and-why-you-should-consider-podcasts>

2 Escher, M. C. “Relativity” Digital Image. M. C. Escher - The Official Website. 1953. Accessed March 22, 2019, <https://www.mcescher.com/gallery/back-in-holland/relativity/>

DOCUMENTATION

What is the importance of and meaning of storytelling in architecture? Through the composition of ever-changing phenomena, narratives can continually evolve, altering the story an architecture tells. Oral histories are passed down, generation by generation, and the words spoken take on new meaning with each retelling. Extrapolating from this idea of original meaning and subsequent change, it should be possible to research how architecture – space, form, agency - narrates a story about growth and change and how reinterpretations occur. Reinterpretations can only be observed, however, by a curious participant; the ‘inquisitive observer’. It is possible to accumulate understanding of architecture in the diverse ways that meaning is achieved through storytelling; by reading, experiencing and reinterpreting the space and built form. This document explores these processes and suggests how architecture naturally privileges the ‘reader’ as participant by ‘hiding’ and embedding its experiential, sensorial, and phenomenal qualities within.

Through literary method alone, a fantastical architecture as explored in Mark Z. Danielewski’s *House of Leaves* does precisely this. The *house*, home to the Navidson family is a

malignant entity that reacts to the psychology of the participants and changes accordingly. It functions by unknown means to seemingly indeterminate conditions. Each member of the family, and the additional ‘readers’ they invite into the [house](#) has multiple reinterpretations of the space as the story progresses and they explore the [house](#) further. The novel functions as vehicle for reinterpretation on a meta level as well; the story is presented by several unreliable narrators, and always from a ‘second-hand’ perspective. This level of removal necessitates the reader to interpret what is discernably factual and what is narrative panache. Additionally, the story presents itself in a non-linear fashion typical of print media. It is at the discretion of the reader whether to brutally follow the doctrine of reading linearly, or to ‘hop’^a between narratives, footnotes, and extra materials throughout the book. The final method of change presented in the novel is how the architecture of the page reflects the architecture of the [house](#) within the book. In many instances, the text can be found upside-down, mirrored, squashed, disjointed, tilted, re-written, struck-through, redacted or written in different prose, to name a few.

These methods for change presented by Danielewski correspond to; three types of narrative, as described by architect Nigel Coates in *Narrative Architecture*, as metonym; four types of theatre, as described by theatre director Peter Brook in *The*

Figure 2.0
Building 22. North corner.

Empty Space, as metaphor; and the ephemeral qualities of reading [architecture] presented by Italian semiotician, Umberto Eco in *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*. Coates' and Brook's methods represent reading architecture literally, understanding the relations the built form can have on the phenomena. Colloquially, they try to explain what is beautiful about poetry. Contrastingly, Eco explores the ineffable qualities presented by reading, and the role of the reader to decipher value on their own. He, instead, advises the audience to simply read the poem. [Or in the case of this thesis, to read the building.]

The three types of narrative Nigel Coates postulates are

Binary Narrative, Sequence Narrative, and Biopic Narrative.

These narrations all apply to *House of Leaves*, as well as Building

22. A Binary Narrative is,

“investing the object or ‘situation’ with a parallel identity - not one derived from function but trans-function - that is a function of the mind, a transgression, a sublimation, a presence from the imagination that can ‘heat up’ the otherwise banal object.”¹

This narrative applies to *House of Leaves* and Building 22 in the most obvious ways, as it should be. The Binary Narrative is the initial embedded theme that becomes apparent to the ‘reader’ at the first opportunity. It provides the earliest, easiest understanding of a story, often not requiring further investigation to understand. Coates articulates that pavilions and exhibitions benefit most from this type of narrative, as they have limited spatial and temporal capacity to impart their narrative on an audience. The *house* in Danielewski’s novel is embedded with the role of the antagonist, with the mystical ability to transfigure its shape and spatial boundaries.ⁱ This is the method of storytelling that one might equate to a ‘one-liner-hook’. However, this reading of the architecture in itself is banal, because once one understands the binary, the full potential is reached, not to be further questioned or investigated.^b

More interestingly is the Sequence Narrative, which Coates describes as the articulation of sequence wherein an architecture

“lays out spaces along a predetermined route tying together several ‘situations’, each of which has its own spatial coherence.”² He goes on further to say,

“Visitors queue up to be fed into the experience machine and are led blindly along rails or canals which focus their attention on contrasting scenes that, when assembled in the mind, add up to an entertaining experience.”³

This narrative method applies most significantly to works of literature, film, theatre, and landscape architecture. [If you walk The Street in a straight line from start to finish you approximate Coates’ Sequence Narrative.] The organization of events, as well as their spatial/relational proximity to one another is the work of the ‘author’ and is thus the greater secret to understand.^c In *House of Leaves* Danielewski carefully organizes his narrators, in such a way that they constantly interfere with each other’s story. It is the responsibility of the reader to decide how they will read these conflicting stories. One could argue that Danielewski laid these conflicts very purposefully on each spread of the novel and should thus be read linearly like any novel. However, one could also argue that because these two narrators exist in separate times from each other, they should be read completely separately. Therein lies the complexity and the beauty of a Sequence Narrative, there is no ‘right’ way of experiencing it, and it is up to the ‘reader’ to determine what the ‘author’ wanted the experience to be. If that wasn’t already complex enough,

Figure 2.1
The theatre of building 22 unfolding.

Danielewski uses his narrators to cast doubt upon each other, leaving it for the audience to determine who is telling the real story.

The archetype of the Sequence Narrative is explored not only by the physical properties of the book, but by the [house](#) itself in the novel, which forever distorts the sequence for participants, never providing a reliable telling despite being a physical thing.ⁱⁱ Sometimes, the best stories are told incongruously, beginning at the end, delving in the middle, or disjointedly hopping from seemingly unrelated plot points to the next, all orchestrated purposefully in the sequence they appear upon ‘reading’ [Building 22].

Figure 2.2
The architecture building. Building 22. Northwest face.

Finally, Coates introduces the Biotopic Narrative;

“...an urban field that includes a variety of functions and storylines that are mutually supporting yet independent, as on a university campus or in an urban village^d... a biotopic narrative helps create a homogenous condition of equal opportunities; it simultaneously exhibits functional clarity and stimulating incongruity, form and fiction.”⁵

Upon reading this description, it should become immediately apparent that *House of Leaves* is a literal representation of this narrative type in literary form. From the inharmonious presentation of the narrators’ respective stories, to the fictional and non-fictional citations, to the architecture of the novel itself, every aspect provides an opportunity for collision and coherence through incongruity. ⁱⁱⁱ

In all three metonymies of narrative for storytelling, examining under Coates' lens provides only a literal understanding of the novel. They cannot capture the terror or unease felt by the 'reader' as they proceed through the book. These phenomenal understandings will be addressed later.

Comparatively, Peter Brook, in his book *The Empty Space*, proposes four types of theatres. They can be read as metaphorical readings of architecture. They are the Deadly Theatre, the Holy Theatre, the Rough Theatre, and the Immediate Theatre. Each respectively analyzes what it is that makes their performances different from one another. The inquisitive observer would certainly read an architecture's potential as a 'performance' and understand their role as an 'audience'.

Brook identifies the first theatre type, the Deadly, as one that is intrinsically predictable. Because of this, audiences immediately identify what they are seeing for what is boring them. Boredom, thus, generates contempt. Due largely to the 'directors', 'actors', or 'audience' (architects, architecture, participants, respectively) the message goes untold, and the meaning remains unfound. Brook writes, "There is meaning that is communicated - and meaning never belongs to the past. It can be checked in each man's own present experience."⁶ He suggests that eventually every theatre will

become a Deadly Theatre simply because their meaning will become pre-known or banal to appease an apathetic audience.^{iv} Oppositely, Building 22 inherently resists the trap of the Deadly Theatre. While home to a university faculty, wherein one might find conventional university activities occurring, Building 22 surmounts these expectations by relentlessly exhibiting atypical activity. [Fashion shows, meet-and-greets, open mic nights, etc.]

Upon understanding *House of Leaves* and Building 22 as oppositions to the Deadly Theatre (see Appendix A), the understanding of the two as the Holy Theatre comes naturally. Brook writes of the relationship between audience and architecture in the Holy Theatre;

“It is hard to understand the true notion of spectator, there and not there, ignored yet needed. The actor’s work is never for an audience, yet is always for one. The onlooker is a partner who must be forgotten and still constantly kept in mind.”⁷

This relationship resonates with ‘Relational Architecture’, the likes of which are poorly represented within architectural academia, but more acutely understood within the fine arts as relational art, and which this thesis intends to articulate. Relational Architecture is architecture which does not exist unless interacted with by participants. The *house* in the novel is precisely this. Without participants, the fantastical, malicious architecture would not exist;

its ability to torment only available when participants submit their psyche to its grasp.^v Exhibited several times throughout the novel, the [house](#) actively changes according to who is inside it, and how they feel about being there. For example, when Navidson is helping

Figure 2.2
The five and a half minute hallway.

The [house](#), whose role as antagonist is to extinguish all that enters it, would have no cause to change its architecture without a participant - without a proverbial fly in its web. As concerning the novel, itself, it too represents the Holy Theatre; a book, written as an author's debut work, garnering a significant cult following, but despite winning the New York Public Library's Young Lions Fiction Award failing to gain pop-culture traction, remains in obscurity to this day.

Figure 0.2
The five and a half minute hallway.

rescue the initial search team;

“At first everything seems to be proceeding smoothly. Slowly but surely, Navidson draws more and more slack rope down onto the floor, steadily lifting Reston up through the bore of those stairs. Then about half way up, something strange happens: the excess rope at Navidson’s feet starts to vanish while the rope he holds begins to slip across his fingers and palms with enough speed to leave a burning gash. Navidson finally has to let go. Reston, however, does not fall. In fact, Reston’s ascent only accelerates, marked by the burning green light he still holds in his hand. But if Navidson is no longer holding onto the rope, what could possible be pulling Reston to the top? Then as the stairway starts getting darker and darker and as that faintly illuminated circle above -- the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel -- starts getting smaller and smaller, the answer becomes clear: Navidson is sinking.. [sic] Or the stairway is stretching...”⁸

The [house](#), whose role as antagonist is to extinguish all that enters it, would have no cause to change its architecture without a participant - without a proverbial fly in its web. As concerning the novel, itself, it too represents the Holy Theatre; a book, written as an author’s debut work, garnering a significant cult following, but despite winning the New York Public Library’s Young Lions Fiction Award failing to gain pop-culture traction, remains in obscurity to this day. The care with which Danielewski writes his novel is described almost perfectly by Brook when speaking of the Holy Theatre

as, "...small means, intense work, rigorous discipline, absolute precision."⁹ The Holy Theatre is "the last forum where idealism is still an open question..."¹⁰

Brook's third theatre archetype is the Rough Theatre. It is equitable to 'popular theatre', wherein it is easily understood and appreciated, but more accurately it is equivalent to the first stages of improvisation theatre. The driving idea behind this theatre is that it may only be as good as the audience is willing to let it be, only as good as the audience can make it by participating. Brook writes, "If the actors are interested, this is what they will bring out. If we are interested, that is what we will find... The meaning will be for the moment of performance."¹¹ Relational architecture advocates the same virtue. For when architecture can be discovered, interacted with, or otherwise laid claim to, participants embed their own value because they affected the architecture so. In doing so, participants shift from being 'audience' to being 'actors'. The importance of what they do in a space is exemplified, and participants make their first steps as semioticians. However, this does not guarantee participants a good space.

Brook writes;

"a beautiful place may never bring about explosions of life; while a haphazard hall may be a tremendous meeting place: this is the mystery of the theatre, but in the understanding of this mystery lies the only

possibility of ordering it into a science.”¹²

House of Leaves is fastidiously resistant to this characterisation. The architecture of the novel, as well as the architecture of the [house](#) itself, refrain from being ordered, organized, or otherwise controlled by the audience. Without a clear understanding of the spaces the [house](#) creates, the Navidsons are left with confusion and unease, further invoking the [house](#) into disorder.

All three of Brook’s theatre types build up to his apotheosis of narrative, the Immediate Theatre. In this theatre, the architect, the architecture, and the participants, all react to each other synergistically. What is more exciting is that these harmonious interactions happen *through* time and are subject to continual evolution. “In other words,” Brook writes of the architect, “unlike the easel painter, in two dimensions, or the sculptor in three, the designer thinks in terms of the fourth dimension, the passage of time.”¹³ A relational architecture too evolves through time.^e As participants approach, engage, and leave, the architecture lives and develops. Each hand that passes over it leaving their mark, and the tapestry of palimpsests unfolds. In this way, Relational Architecture takes on a much more human characteristic, that of growth. Conventional architecture resists growth in the human understanding because of the immutability and longevity of its form. An architect approaching Relational Architecture understands

Figure 2.3
Welcoming Relational Architecture.

that for all the knowledge they possess, and all the ability they can muster to develop an exciting, intriguing and otherwise ‘good’ space, they cannot compare to the multitudinous input that participants can offer given the opportunity to engage with the architecture. Brook writes of his directorial debut, and the effect of this phenomena when he engaged with his actors. Should he alter them:

“...so that they conformed to my notes? One inner voice prompted me to do so, but another pointed out that my pattern was much less interesting than this new pattern that was unfold in front of me - rich in energy full of personal variations, shaped by individual enthusiasms and lazinesses [sic], promising such different rhythms, opening so many unexpected possibilities.”¹⁴

Relational Architecture can be described as ‘open’ as opposed to ‘shut’.¹⁵ Thoughtful framework built by the architect to [house](#) the ‘life’ that participants will breathe into a space. Critics of Relational Architecture would argue that it is incomplete, and cavalier of any architect to leave a work unfinished. However, many great works are left unfinished, and through their eventual completion by another party, take on new, greater meaning.^a That is, momentarily, until the work is appropriated again and ‘completed’ once more to take on new, greater meaning.^v Mark Danielewski’s *House of Leaves* is Relational Architecture and is the Immediate Theatre. The only shortcoming that can be said for the [house](#) is that it is fictional, and functions fantastically as opposed to realistically. The development of an architecture that lives and grows as the [house](#) does by ‘real’ means is the goal of the thesis project.

Relational Architecture is essentially an exercise in semiotics. The architect must set up rules, moments, experiences, and options, all with the keen intent that only the curious will see the apparent clues. The architect embraces the contrast between script and improvisation, as does the theatre director. Additionally, the architect recognizes that their work will go unrecognized by most, appreciated by few, and understood by less still. Theirs is esoteric architecture.

Figure 2.4
The faculty of Architecture.

[An oxymoron if you've ever read one.] The opportunity for interpretation and reinterpretation is the goal of the Relational Architect, and the sacrificial lamb required for this to occur is the popularity of their architecture, for it is arduous to be an inquisitive observer, despite the reward. In spite of this, many participants will find, for instance, meaning even where the architect gave none, and therein is the beauty of Relational Architecture:

"It is possible for many things to be true at the same time, even if they contradict each other... They are saying something other than what they appear to be saying. Each one of them contains a message that none of them will ever be able to reveal alone." ¹⁶

Umberto Eco writes of the relationship between author and reader in *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*. Insistent that one cannot exist without the other, he postulates that “the interpreter has the right and the duty to suspect that what one believed to be the meaning of a sign is in fact the sign for a further meaning.”¹⁷ Much like *House of Leaves* there is no discovery of a singular truth; there is only the next question, the next answer, and the next hypothesis. The evocate nature this presents cannot be quantified with narrative or instruction - it can only be experienced.

In architectural theory - and education - the experience of a space is the most important virtue an architect can attempt to make. There is great hubris, however, in assuming that an architect can account for all the unknown forces and phenomena their design will encounter throughout its life. Relational Architecture embraces this unknown, and willingly accepts the consequences and rewards that conventional architecture would otherwise resist. An architecture, inspired by *House of Leaves*, tempered by the realities of the world, capable of telling its own story again and again until new meaning is developed would be a fantastic architecture indeed.

See Notes A

See Notes B

- 1 Coates, 83.
- 2 Coates, 92.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Danielewski, 101.
- 5 Coates, 100.
- 6 Brook, 11.
- 7 Brook, 51.
- 8 Danielewski, 285-289.
- 9 Brook, 40.
- 10 Brook, 42.
- 11 Brook, 64.
- 12 Brook, 65.
- 13 Brook, 102.
- 14 Brook, 107.
- 15 Brook, 101-102.
- 16 Eco, 30.
- 17 Eco, 47.

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Brook, Peter. 1968. "The Empty Space." New York: Atheneum.
Coates, Nigel. 2012. "Narrative Architecture." Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
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[Re]Telling Architecture
An examination of the role of storytelling
in Mark Danielewski's *House of Leaves*,
analyzed with Nigel Coates's *Narrative
Architecture*, Peter Brook's *The Empty
Space*, and Umberto Eco's *Interpretation and
Overinterpretation*, approaching a Relational
Architecture.

21-1

Figure 0.3
Citations card.

NOTES A

i) Since the means by which its architecture changes are left a secret - one that the audience does not feel compelled to find out either - it belongs to the domain of imagination, and the banal object that would be a [house](#) is thus made significantly more interesting.

ii) A perfect example comes on page one-hundred-one, when the search team, comprised of Holloway, Hook, and Leeder, have been in the depths of the [house](#) for seven days, without contact, and yet, from the bowels of the expedition, an SOS signal can be heard knocking in the '[house](#)'. Navidson's brother Tom comments "Bro', don't ask me how, but it's coming from in there. In fact, for a second it sounded like it was right on the other side."⁴ This spatial incongruity leads the reader to question if time and space can be considered a concrete indicator of the progression of narrative.

iii) Take for example Appendix E; the letters from Johnny's mother. These are a series of self-contained stories revealing more about Johnny's character, that also depict a tragic decline into mental unwellness. This appendix serves a dual-function. They are in themselves a supportive and independent narrative. They can be read and understood on their own, and yet contribute to the understanding of the narrator's story when read in conjunction with the rest of the novel. At the same time, they reinforce the idea that Johnny as a narrator is unreliable because he too may have a disposition to mental degradation. This hypothesis is further supported by Johnny's increasing irrational behavior in the novel, the change in his diction and prose, as well as the fever-dream state the audience finds him in closer to the end of the novel. However, this appendix is not an essential read. *House of Leaves* can be read and completely understood without these letters, and the audience that does not read them will be left with a completely different understanding of Johnny, and his narrative.

iv) As this relates to architecture and *House of Leaves* one would argue that the events experienced by Navidson, his family and friends, recorded through different media not always

of quality or virtue, viewed by female students, and verbally described to Zampano, the gramophone, who then wrote bits and pieces incessantly and erratically, to be found by Johnny Truant and interpreted and organized in *House of Leaves* First Edition, eventually becoming *House of Leaves* Second Edition - with the help of unnamed editors and [presumably] Mark Danielewski, to only then be viewed and interpreted by readers suggests that through interpretation and reinterpretation, the original feelings experienced by Navidson and company are unlike anything the audience is led to feel. This is the trap of the Deadly Theatre.

v) Consider Will Navidson, who abandoned his documentation of the *house* to his wife Karen; or Zampano, who left his notes on the Navidson record incomplete (due to his untimely death), to be finished by Johnny Truant; or the reader, whom without due incentive sets down the book in frustration, to pick it back up when the mood suits them better, or curiosity prevails.

NOTES B

a) Building 22 demonstrates remarkable ambiguity in its reading, its interpretation, as well as its appropriation. This is likely because Building 22 was developed as a self-contained city, or neighbourhood. It is defined as the sum of its parts, which are aptly named; The Street, The Corner Store, The Morgue, and so on. These parts are perpetually in motion, as a function of their ability to be 'completed' by the participants who require a space capable of fulfilling their purpose. Thus, all spaces in the building exist in a state of relative incompleteness. This state between competition and not approaches Relational Architecture.

b) The binary exists in Building 22 as if pulled from Coates' very pages. The galleries, studios, and exhibition spaces are self contained theatres available for appropriation. As a whole, the building reads as a metonym for the city, and the casual observer can determine why from their first visit. The arterial corridors through the building meet at perpendicular intersections; there are seemingly endless routes to take to the same location; destinations are named for their functional similarities to cities; and rush hour traffic can be witnessed on a micro scale.

c) Sequence Narrative is significantly more difficult to formulate in Building 22. The nonconformity to singular paths through the building, (opposite of the Mackenzie building, for instance), protests the architecture's ability to be ordered into a linear experience. However, it should be argued that every path through the building is its own Sequence Narrative. By Coates' definition, the amalgamation of contrasting events sums up to the whole of the experience. With Building 22 being home to some of Carleton's most eccentric individuals, the probability of stumbling upon one nonconventional scene after another is high.

d) Building 22, for example, is a biotopic narrative within a biotopic narrative.

e) The concept of Building 22 was the urban fabric we see around us every day, open to both the "planned" and "unplanned" of everyday life. The classrooms, shops, and offices are metaphors for the planned, while studios, streets, sidewalks, and landings represent the unplanned - the great white canvas for participants to engage with. These moments add up to serendipitous understanding of Relational Architecture. It is also important to note that Relational Architecture and Brook's Immediate Theatre are ambiguous, and the Immediate Theatre is placed at the opposite side of Brook's spectrum.

COMPENDIUM

Figure 0.4
Remembering Snippets. Watercolour on collage. 18 x 18 in.

Early explorations of the role of memory in understanding and perception. How does your mind fill in the gaps between what you experience with your senses? Can the generated sensations of your memory be better and/or worse than the real thing? At what point should you stop relying on your past experiences as a reliable and objective lens through which to view the world? When do your experiences ‘expire’? Can you replace your experience with another one as simply as changing batteries in your remote? For how long will affected memories dictate your experience, even after having another, alternate version of the same experience? To what extent does the narrative ‘of you’ affect your outlook on future experiences?

Figure 3.0
Remembering Snippets. Watercolor on collage. 18 x 18 in.

Figure 0.5
Stream of consciousness drawings. Ink on 20lb stock. 8.5 x 11 in.

A series of stream of consciousness drawings performed during differing levels of duress under mildly controlled variables. Can the results of sleep deprivation, light deprivation, or time deprivation be discernible? What kind of physical or psychological trauma must be experienced to alter your perception / reception abilities? Does afflicting conditions distort one's ability to articulate their thoughts clearly?

At what point can our own understanding of oneself no longer be trusted? When must subjective viewing be replaced by objective viewing, and how can this be enacted? Does object viewing rob participants of the nuances inherent in subjective viewing?

Figure 0.6
Linograph: Ink on 50lb stock. 15 x 60 in.

Visually representing and understanding changing memory and memory degradation over time. As one recalls a memory, one actively changes it. [This is a well known fact.] How many times must a memory be recalled before the memory is no longer reminiscent of the experience? Purportedly, a single recollection changes the memory, thus differentiating it from the original. How reliable are our memories after a certain point? At which point should experiences be renewed?

The changing memory grows in value; it becomes more meaning full. Each remembrance indites more connotation, and more complexity. Thus leading to greater understanding.

Figure 3.1
 Linograph: Ink on 50lb stock. First press. 5.5 x 4 in.

Figure 3.2
 Linograph: Ink on 50lb stock. Second press. 5.5 x 4 in.

Figure 3.3
Linograph: Ink on 50lb stock. Third press. 5.5 x 4 in.

Figure 3.4
Linograph: Ink on 50lb stock. Fourth press. 5.5 x 4 in.

Figure 3.5
Linograph: Ink on 50lb stock. Fifth press. 5.5 x 4 in.

Figure 3.6
Linograph: Ink on 50lb stock. Sixth press. 5.5 x 4 in.

Figure 3.7
Linograph: Ink on 50lb stock. Seventh press. 5.5 x 4 in.

Figure 0.7
Squids and Sunsets. Digital collage. 20 x 20 in.

What were the Surrealists' approach to perception and reception?
 How did their view of art and architecture shape modern thinking?
 Can the perception of space be made surreal in the context of your own mind? Can the subconscious' desire to express itself manifest in one's perception of the world? Can the element of surprise, intrinsic to relational architecture, be considered related to surrealist practices? Can the perversion of expectation subvert the ability of serendipity to bring joy to mundane experience?

Figure 3.8
Squids and Sunsets. Digital collage. 20 x 20 in.

Figure 0.8
Colloquium 2 Mind Map. Digital mapping and collage. 32 x 24 in.

Development of a ‘mind-map’ was used as a means of communicating the interwoven and reliant ideas. The ideas’ locations appear arbitrary upon first glance, but a closer reading reveals the plan of Building 22. The ideas’ proximity to the pit reveal their approximate relevance to the thesis. The paths connecting them secretly reveal the infrastructure of the building, while directing participants to related ideas. Interspersed between it all are codes, puzzles, games, and ‘hidden’ text, all of which are designed to draw a participant in and use their accompanying pamphlet to decode the information therein and decide for themselves the topics of understanding that interest them most. Received with mixed reviews, only one Inquisitive Observer managed to solve more than two codes.

Figure 0.9
Colloquium 2 Mind Map Pamphlet. Print reading tool. 8.5 x 11 in.

Accompanying documentation for the mind map; the pamphlet was designed to give the simplest, most straightforward understanding of the thesis topic. Self contained cyphers permeate into the pamphlet as well. The Inquisitive Observer will notice that all of the cypher keys can be found within the pamphlet.

This was an attempt to engage the participant; to encourage them to take greater control of their experience, while at the same time, to derail them from the conventional critique experience; to blur the lines between critic and presenter. Upon taking greater ownership of their experience, critics reacted in one of two ways. Either, one, with great enthusiasm and a desire to continue deciphering secrets. Or, two, with great contempt, feelings of being led astray, or made fun of. Either and both are desirable results.

Figure 3.10 Colloquium 2 Mind Map Pamphlet. Print reading tool. Front. 8.5 x 11 in.

Figure 0.10
2.5[D]econstruction Section. Collage and mapping. 22.5 x 30 in.

This is a deconstructionist exercise in sectional understanding of Building 22. What would Building 22 look like if all that remained of it was traces? What if its life cycle reached a point of degradation such that only the most recently reinterpreted version of the school remained?

What value can be found in exploring traces left in and around an architecture? Can the value of traces be stated to be as valuable as the architecture itself? Is there great hubris in assuming that all observers have equal right to make a trace, and that observers in general want to see evidence of traces?

If you travelled to Pisa, to see the Tower of Pisa, would you care to see who had been there before you? Would that devalue your own experience? Or enrich it?

Figure 3.12
2.5[D]econstruction Section. Collage and mapping, 22.5 x 30 in.

Figure 0.11
The Inquisitive Observer. Ink on 50lb stock. 12 x 12 in.

Can you explain the multitudinous nature of storytelling explored through visual representation? Often, especially in oral recounts, stories veer off topic; tangential anecdotes and personal digressions throw the narrative this way and that, as if caught in a great storm. Is it the responsibility of the Inquisitive Observer to explore every avenue and pursue complete understanding? Or rather, is it the responsibility of the Inquisitive Observer to find the 'singular truth'. Quite unlike a joke, or a riddle, but more similar to poetry, stories cannot be delegated to a single meaning or understanding. Are stories the most powerful medium?

Figure 3.13
The Inquisitive Observer. Ink on 50lb stock. 12 x 12 in.

EXECUTIONS

The Machines of Architectural Reading are the vehicle by which to approach relational architecture. These must be thought of as architectural storytelling tools - used to exemplify, amplify, or nullify the phenomena being used by the architecture as a conveyance method for its story.

The unorthodox quality of their construction lends itself to the illusion of myself as an unreliable narrator; the audience layperson will observe the haphazard machines and misinterpret their 'bad' construction with a 'bad' thesis. Through association, the perceived low quality inherently subverts the expectation that I know what I'm talking about as the author of this thesis. Instead, observers may or may not feel inclined to "check for themselves" and thus take greater ownership over their experience and understanding.

Thus, their experience becomes dependent on their participation. Those who participate help generate relational architecture. The Machines of Architectural Reading on their own do not create relational architecture, instead they should be viewed as setups for relational architecture to occur. Even if a participant

attempts to use the machine, they may use it incorrectly, at a time when the phenomena will not occur, revealing the temporal nature of storytelling, or in another manner that otherwise does not fulfill the criteria. All these instances are still relational architecture, and the variances in their use will encourage revisiting and reuse in an attempt to 'achieve the right result'. When in fact the right result is using the machine to understand that the architecture is trying to tell you something. However, this pursuit of the 'right result' is itself autotelic and demonstrative of the thesis topic.

Figure 0.12
Machine of Architectural Reading 01. Development sketch and details.

The H.V.A.C. system in the location cycles approximately every five minutes between ‘on’ and ‘off’. Typically, these changes go largely unnoticed. However, in this location, the absence of a vent grille greatly amplifies the auditory contrast. When the H.V.A.C. is ‘on’ the system makes a pulsing sound that increases as time progresses. The rhythmic increase in pulsing is very much like a human heartbeat, quickening as work is continually done. Though this is not the only auditory experience in the location.

Despite being an interstitial space in the building, used for travelling between classrooms, offices, studios, and other

Figure 4.0
Photograph of location 01.

destinations, the location demonstrates surprising acoustic capacity. From the location one can hear; lectures and presentations in The Pit; discussions in the two adjacent offices, as well as the men's washroom at the end of the hall; the second year studio, regardless of whether the door is open or closed; footfalls in the stairwell; the electrical drone of the overhead fluorescent lights; and below it all, the low hum of the vending machine. This cacophony of sound reminds the participant of the complexity of the structure, as well as the complexity and variance in program within the building; ranging from leisure, to academic discourse, personal reflection, meeting basic human needs, and so on. An architecture can [house](#) any

number of programs, both planned and not.

The intended strategy is to amplify the phenomena. The parabolic mirror is placed as to collect the greatest amount of directional sound and reflect it back at the participant. The mirror serves the dual-function of also restricting movement through the otherwise often ignored space, drawing attention that it too, is a space worthy of stopping in.

Figure 4.2
Machine of Architectural Reading 01. Ink on 20lb stock. 24 x 18 in.

Figure 4.1
Machine of Architectural Reading 01. Ink on 20lb stock. 24 x 18 in.

Figure 4.3
Machine of Architectural Reading 01. Photograph.

Figure 4.4
Machine of Architectural Reading 01. Photograph.

Figure 0.13
Machine of Architectural Reading 02. Development sketch and details.

The phenomena of this location is exceptionally well-hidden-in-plain-sight. It affords the occupant the ability to overhear private conversations at an exceptional rate; a great majority of students, faculty, and family members all enter Building 22 from this location, as the construction in front of the school has blocked immediate and easy access to the University Centre. Even students not of the faculty of architecture use the path through the building to get to University Centre. This phenomenon exists as a function of the construction and will likely not be 'as good' once construction is finished, as the volume of people travelling through this space will significantly decrease. This perfectly exemplifies the long-

Figure 4.5
Photograph of location 02.

term effects of changing phenomena on the building's storytelling capacity.

The route to University Centre can be completely monitored from this location. One can watch an individual from the moment

they step off a bus, almost until they enter University Centre. After extended viewing, the prevailing feeling is one of voyeurism and quickly becomes too much to bear.

The phenomena's power is in the hidden nature of the spot. Unlike anywhere else in the school, where one can see and be seen, on the stairwell mezzanine one is thoroughly obstructed. The Machine of Architectural Reading is two parts; a viewing helmet helps direct the participant's gaze to the bus station outside, and along the building's internal path towards the University Centre; and a mechanism placed in the stairwell at the University Centre side of the building so as to direct passerbys' attention to something unseen - the surveyor on the mezzanine.

Figure 4.6
Machine of Architectural Reading 02. Ink on 20lb stock. 24 x 18 in.

Figure 4.7
Machine of Architectural Reading 02. Ink on 20lb stock. 24 x 18 in.

Figure 4.8
Machine of Architectural Reading 02. Photograph.

Figure 0.14
Machine of Architectural Reading 03. Development sketch and details.

In the second-year studio, dangerously close to encroaching onto thesis student territory there exists a ladder. Up this ladder is an apparent dead end. Upon standing at the dead end, wondering where to go, one feels the phenomena in action. The powerful suction of the vents send vibrations all through the adjacent structure. These vibrations can be felt in your feet, your hands, and even your stomach if you sit on the platform. The location's strength of phenomena comes from the fact that far too often an architecture cannot be 'felt'. The stoic, monolithic forms cannot assist in storytelling the way humans would use their limbs, body movement and even facial gestures. The exceptional power of physically

Figure 4.9
Photograph of location 03.

feeling the building projecting movement onto you as the participant cannot be overlooked.

The vibrations will be exemplified; from the ground one would not be able to feel the building moving as if alive. Long tendrils will descend from the machine, located at the top of the ladder, and hidden from sight. These tendrils will be delicate and visually unobtrusive. Connected to the tendrils will be an eclectic selection of ‘noise-makers’ to generate varying sounds in response to the physical attributes of the space.

The recruitment of another sense to articulate that which cannot be felt without climbing the ladder misdirects the

Figure 4.11
Machine of Architectural Reading 03. Ink on 20lb stock. 24 x 18 in.

Figure 4.10
Machine of Architectural Reading 03. Ink on 20lb stock. 24 x 18 in.

Figure 4.12
Machine of Architectural Reading 03. Photograph.

participant's expectations and understanding of the phenomena.

Without climbing the ladder the participant will not have achieved a full sensorial understanding of the architecture. This is an example of a false lead in storytelling, similar to how the Inquisitive Observer figures will function.

The average participant may also notice a series of figures examining architectural deconstruction traces throughout the building. However, the Inquisitive Observer will notice something more about the figures. Not all of them are situated at traces. Worse than those figures are those purposefully looking at the wrong things. These figures provide false leads to the viewer, and it is at their discretion to decide the figures' reliability in telling the story. Through the multiplicity this evokes, it is illustrated to the viewer that there is no 'correct' way of viewing the narrative, the same way there is not 'correct' way of engaging relational architecture.

The figures have no accompanying material or dialogue. Instead, their story can be discerned by their viewing; what they are looking at, and where they are is just as important as the trace itself. An undisclosed number of these figures will be placed in the school. Their presence will cue the populace as to something new happening in the school, albeit those not attending the thesis defence may never know what it is they demonstrate. Additionally, these marking figures add visual unity to otherwise ununitable traces.

There secret locations are documented as thus;

Figure 5.0
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 01.

Figure 5.1
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 02.

Figure 5.2
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 03.

Figure 5.3
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 04.

Figure 5.4
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 05.

Figure 5.5
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 06.

Figure 5.6
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 07.

Figure 5.7
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 08.

Figure 5.8
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 09.

Figure 5.9
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 10.

Figure 5.10
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 11.

Figure 5.11
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 12.

Figure 5.12
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 13.

Figure 5.13
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 14.

Figure 5.14
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 15.

Figure 5.15
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 16..

Figure 5.16
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 17.

Figure 5.17
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 18.

Figure 5.18
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 19.

Figure 5.19
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 20.

Figure 5.20
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 21.

Figure 5.21
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 22.

Figure 5.22
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 23.

Figure 5.23
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 24.

Figure 5.24
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 25.

Figure 5.25
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 26.

Figure 5.26
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 27.

Figure 5.27
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 28.

Figure 5.28
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 29.

Figure 5.29
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 30.

Figure 5.30
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 31.

Figure 5.31
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 32.

Figure 5.32
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 33.

Figure 5.33
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 34.

Figure 5.34
Hidden Inquisitive Observer figure 35.

LEXICON

Autotelic - *adjective*

Having a self-contained goal or purpose.

Autotelic people participate in activities because they enjoy the process not because they anticipate the reward.
(Sunday Herald, (Glasgow) 2003)

Doing something not because you are told to, but because you want to, because the value comes from the experience of doing it.

Inquisitiveness - *noun*

The quality or character of being inquisitive; disposition to inquire; curiosity to obtain information. Now mostly in unfavourable sense: Excessive, impertinent, or prying curiosity.

Childhood and genius have the same master-organ in common—inquisitiveness.
(E. BULWER-LYTTON Caxtons I. I. Iv. 23, 1849)

The most human experience. The desire to know the unknown; that which propels us to explore and discover and reveal. The main proponent of this thesis.

Reinhabit - *verb*

Intransitive. To dwell again. Obsolete.

Among the ancient Egyptians, the opinion was entertained that after the lapse of several thousand years, their souls would come to reinhabit their bodies.

(Trans. Royal Hist. Soc. 4 397, 1876)

To inhabit an architecture again. To take ownership of and to experience again and again until understanding is achieved.

a

Figure 6.0
Lexicon part 01.

Slow - *adjective*

That takes a long time, and related uses.

Intellectual illumination is sudden, but intellectual education is always slow.
(J. PARKER Paraclete I. X. 154, 1874)

The speed at which you should experience this thesis; Pensive, deliberate, concerned.

Metaphor - *noun*

A figure of speech in which a name or descriptive word or phrase is transferred to an object or action different from, but analogous to, that to which it is literally applicable; an instance of this, a metaphorical expression.

Those beautiful Metaphors in Scripture, where Life is termed a Pilgrimage.
(J. Addison Spectator No 289, 1712)

When using a literary device in architecture the principle remains the same; describing something under the guise of something else to use the attributes of the disguise to convey the message of the disguised.

Coincidence - *noun*

The fact or condition of being coincident; the occupation of the same pace or part of space.

These two ends of action are sometimes found in conflict, but more frequently in coincidence.
(G. Grote Fragm. Ethical Subj. Iii. 58, 1876)

A moment that occurs because of the correspondence between viewer and subject and the nature of that correspondence in time. Required as part of the Immediate Theatre.

b

Figure 6.1
Lexicon part 02.

Surreal - adjective

Having the qualities of surrealist art; bizarre, dreamlike.

I'll agree with that; however [sic] I didn't select the surrealism, the distortion, the intensity, as an experimental technique but because reality is surreal.

(N.Y. Times Bk. Rev. 4 May 26/5, 1952)

Having the quality of seemingly unreal-ness. A pleasant interruption of your reality or understanding of it. Also, an attempt to interrupt the status quo.

Proprioception - noun

The activity of proprioceptors; the perception of the position and movements of the body, esp. as derived from proprioceptors.

Kinesthesia and the vestibular sense have been called proprioception, since they have something to do with end results originated by the activity of the body itself.

(S. H. Bartley Princ. Perception xiv. 315, 1958)

The body's immediate innate and uncompromising understanding of a space. The non-negotiable moment of discovery when a position is formed, and the body reacts. Similar to the colloquial 'gut-reaction'.

Revisit - verb

Transitive. To visit again; to return or come back to (a place, person, etc.).

I began to recall what I had heard of dead men .revisiting the earth. (C. BRONTË Jane eyrei. li. 20, 1847)

The act that enables reinhabitation. The conscious desire to experience something again enacted.

C

Figure 6.2
Lexicon part 03.

Maze - noun

In extended use: a complex network of paths or streets; a bewildering mass of things (material or immaterial), in which the individual components are difficult to separate or make out.

The endless trap lay everywhere, And all the roads ran in a maze Hither and thither, like a web.

(E. MUIR Voyage 9, 1946)

A difficult manner, material, or condition to traverse because of its depth and complexity.

Sequence - verb

Transitive. To arrange in a definite sequence or order.

We closed our eyes to the pedagogic problem of how to represent knowledge, how to sequence it in a form appropriate to young learners.

(J. S. Bruner Beyond Information Given (1974) xxv. 442, 1965)

The order in which events or conditions appear. A dedicated path through an experience. An intended way of viewing. Sequence breaking results in the most interesting experiences.

Labyrinth - noun

A complex or confusing situation; an intricate system; a situation or condition from which it is difficult to extricate oneself; an entanglement.

We shall run our selves into a Labyrinth of words, and lose the matter.

(E. Dering Coll. Speeches on Relig. Xvi. 74, 1642)

A metonym for life itself. Not Daedalus' labyrinth, home of the Minotaur and trial of Theseus.

e

Figure 6.3
Lexicon part 04.

Esoteric - *adjective and noun*

Of philosophical doctrines, treatises, modes of speech, etc.: Designed for, or appropriate to, an inner circle of advanced or privileged disciples; communicated to, or intelligible by, the initiated exclusively. Hence of disciples: Belonging to the inner circle, admitted to the esoteric teaching.

A hidden stream of esoteric truth was supposed to flow beneath all the surface of Scripture.

(H. HALLAM *Introd. Lit. Europe* I. lii. 278, 1837)

An understanding that comes from the acute awareness of a subject and is spoken of or by an exclusive group whom possess this understanding. A secret knowledge. Architecture is, by nature, esoteric and at the same time obvious.

Expect - *verb*

Sense relating to anticipating.

You seem surprised. I am not what you expected? Tell me frankly, what did you expect?

(J. Morris *Last Lett. From Hav* vii. 61, 1985)

That which you think will happen, by all accounts and experiences. The foundation of the Deadly Theatre.

Fragment - *noun*

A detached, isolated, or incomplete part; a (comparatively) small portion of anything.

However irregular and desultory his talk, there is method in the fragments.

(S. T. Coleridge *Friend* (ed. 3) III. 109, 1809-1810)

A piece of a puzzle; on its own, potentially very little can be gleaned about its meaning.

But when accompanied by more and more pieces the picture it presents becomes more and more clear. A synecdoche.

f

Figure 6.4
Lexicon part 05.

Epistemology - *noun*

The theory of knowledge and understanding, esp. With regard to its methods, validity, and scope, and the distinction between justified belief and opinion; (as a count noun) a particular theory of knowledge and understanding.

This section of the science is properly termed the Epistemology... It answers the general question, 'What is Knowing and the Known?'—or more shortly, 'What is Knowledge?'

(J. F. FERRIER *Inst. Metaphysic* 46, 1854)

The concern of knowledge, its validity, its rationality and its justification. The power of belief and opinion and their affect on understanding. Antithetical to blind faith and uninformed opinion.

Semiotics - *adjective and noun*

Symbolic, serving to convey meaning.

That the Egyptians were not acquainted with the alphabet, till the time of Psammetichus, and that commerce alone gave birth to semiotic signs.

(*Monthly Mag.* 3 269/1, 1797)

Meaning discernible by the keen understanding of symbols and symbolic structures.

Viewer - *noun*

A person who sees, beholds, or catches sight of something; a casual observer, a spectator.

All these phenomena would be virtually imperceptible to the chance viewer.

(W. Treat et al. *Weird Arizona* 43/2, 2007)

The person who beholds the subject. You, reading this right now.

g

Figure 6.5
Lexicon part 06.

Narrative - noun

An account of a series of events, facts, etc., given in order and with the establishing of connections between them; a narration, a story, an account.

It was the wildest sort of narrative, but I had heard in my time many steep tales.

(J. Buchan Thirty-nine Steps i. 27, 1915)

A story told in an order that fulfills the narrator's purpose. It does not necessitate linearity.

Anachronism - noun

Anything done or existing out of date; hence, anything which was proper to a former age, but is, or, if it existed, would be, out of harmony with the present; also called a practical anachronism.

She herself was a smoldering anachronism, a throwback to one of those ardent young women of the Sixties, Turgenev's heroines.

(M. MCCARTHY Groves of Academe iii. 37, 1952)

The reason there is a need for reinhabitation of buildings...

Superannuate - verb

To make (something) antiquated or obsolete, esp. Through age or new developments. Also: to dismiss or discard as antiquated or out of date.

The drama of those blustery nights.

(Rotarian Apr. 60/2, 1965)

To supplant something with a new development.

Figure 6.6
Lexicon part 07.

Participant - adjective and noun

A person who participates in something; a person who experiences something in common with others; a partaker, a sharer; a participator.

His interest in radiology has made him an energetic participant in local and national radiologic organizations.

(Radiology 44 82/2, 1945)

A person who is part of an experience, there willingly and of their own volition. They contribute in whichever way to the development and understanding of the moment.

Opportunity - noun

As a mass noun: a time, condition, or set of circumstances permitting or favourable to a particular action or reaction. [Improvisation]

Opportunity makes a Thief.

(N. R. PROVERBS 84/1, 1659)

An instance where something previously unavailable, undiscoverable, or indiscernible becomes apparent, through no effort of the viewer. Required as part of the Immediate Theatre.

Deconstruction - noun

The action undoing the construction of a thing.

We are not in favour of the current fashion for the 'deconstruction' of literary texts, for the elimination of the author from his work.

(London Rev. Bks. 25 Oct 2/4, 1979)

To take apart something that has been done piece by piece, leaving behind only irremovable changes or traces of what once was.

Figure 6.7
Lexicon part 08.

Objectivism - *noun*

The quality or character of being objective; the tendency to lay stress on what is external to or independent of the mind; (also, Philosophy) the belief that certain things (esp. moral truths) exist independently of human knowledge or perception of them.

It is a favourite argument of Mr. Mill's, that objectivism keeps moral science in a stationary state.
(W. G. Ward in *Dublin Rev.* Jan. 71, 1872)

Robbe-Grillet used objectivism to allow for subjective interpretation of objective conditions.

Unexpected - *adjective*

Not to expect.

See expect.

Observer - *noun*

A person who observes objects or phenomena scientifically; a person who makes scientific observations; such a person (real or hypothetical) regarded as having a particular viewpoint or effect.

Hubble is the kind of robot observer that scientists like to claim is the real way to explore space.
(*Time* 20 Dec. 76/1, 1993)

Different from a viewer. A person utilizing all of their faculties when experiencing an architecture. Someone with a vested interest and appreciation for understanding.

Figure 6.8
Lexicon part 09.

POST SCRIPT

What might a continuation of this thesis look like? There are many leading questions to further the explorations: Where can an architecture that tells its own story take us as participants? What is the benefit of being an Inquisitive Observer? If capable of imparting its own story, as it was experienced by the architecture instead of by a participant, what other storytelling potential emerges as a result? Can the physical and metaphysical traces left upon an architecture by virtue of its spaces be read and reinterpreted in a way that the architecture develops its own voice? What differentiates a trace from vandalism, and how do these scars each add to the story told? Are all stories worth hearing? At what point does the Inquisitive Observer 'run out of steam'?

The subject matter is vast and complicated and invigorating. Architects should strive to develop architecture which engages the population and encourages participation. An architecture that could tell its own story would invite reinterpretation and promote longevity. Through reinterpretation, understanding would grow, and the traces one could leave upon an architecture could contribute to future understandings of the architecture in a compounding way.

Architecture always has a story, and will always continue to grow. Architectures are telling their stories, as well, but presently, it takes a skillful eye and trained ears to hear them. It is up to architects to imbue them with the capability to tell their stories, through accessible media in an effort to reach a greater populace. In this way, architectures might one day tell stories of us, they way we tell stories of them.

-L

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