

# Salon Ottawa & the Diagram

Explorations of Participation Generated, Generation Participated

*by*

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# Abstract

Our contemporary condition is characterised by a shopping pathology, limiting the possibilities for life through a nihilistic triumph of No. If the essence of humankind is to self-determine through thinking and making, how may this happen without succumbing to the No within the practise and discourse of architecture? The Doppler Effect enables emergence of new possibilities, as it equilibrates projective tendencies with those critical, the balance of which requires participatory thinking and making. Participation, in the sense of the architectural form, is evident in the historical lineage of the library until the past century and in the Seattle Central Library. In the sense of architectural process, it is evident in the heurism of the abstract conversation. These two understandings culminate in the use of the diagram in generation, which necessitates participation; and the development of a generated work of architecture for Ottawa that too is participatory, as Salon Ottawa.

*method itself is revelation. output is the result of input. what comes out of it simply arises, it is not looked for.*

—OTL AICHER

To every choice, for better or for worse.  
To moments of serendipity, circumstance, and regret.  
To those who I have loved, and to those who I have not.  
To all of my family, especially to my mother, father, and brother.

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# Preface

*It seems to me that the political alignments and theoretical complexities that this interesting divergence of opinions has brought to the surface to date do not so much constitute the conclusion of a story, but rather only the beginning.*

—GEORGE BAIRD

## Motivations and Intentions

A common dictum holds that architecture cannot solve the world's problems, and given the contemporary disciplinarian autonomy of architecture, this is probably now true. After all, architecture is but a single discipline amongst many, a chosen profession regulated from education to practise. What then is the point of architecture if its realm of efficacy is limited to its own domain?

Rather let us consider, then, what it is that contemporary architecture can affect, if not the world at large. Is it politics, economics, optimised pedestrian flows? "Mankind is always going on about architecture," writes Rem Koolhaas in *Junkspace*. "What if space started looking at mankind?"<sup>1</sup> Prominent

German graphic designer and typographer Otl Aicher opts to keep the relationship simple and tangible in his text *Analogous and Digital*.<sup>2</sup> He aligns the architect to the chef, and writes:

it has never been possible to convince good cooks that there is anything other than the ingredients themselves, the material, that makes for very special cooking. one should forget recipes and sense how one can release the unique qualities, the character, the charm of what one has bought fresh at the market.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, there is no grand agenda on part of the chef to influence the world. The chef's concern is immediate, and a dish emerges from a careful execution with what is given. Moreover, Aicher notes, "a good cook merges with his food."<sup>4</sup> The melding between the processes of cooking, the ingredients, the dish, and its cook cannot be overstated. That the cook prepares a fine and appropriate dish is the prime objective, but that a good meal may solidify a business deal or buffer the break of a romance is secondary. In that same light, architecture does not and cannot directly affect the multitude of world calamities, despite that it may be part to a revolution.

Aicher writes at length in a similar tone about Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein, philosopher-cum-primary school teacher-cum-architect. After completing his seminal text *Tractatus* in 1918, he departed from traditional philosophy and built but a single structure, Haus Wittgenstein, for his sister during, completed in 1928. Aicher recalls that:

he later said: “work on philosophy is—perhaps like work in architecture—actually more like work on oneself. on one’s own view. on the way one sees things (and what one demands of them).”<sup>5</sup>

For Wittgenstein, architecture provided a material embodiment essential for resolving his lifelong explorations of the foundations of logic and language.<sup>6</sup> Work on architecture was “work on himself.”<sup>7</sup> Likewise, the following exploration of *Salon Ottawa & the Diagram* is not specifically about the delineation of space, time, and movement, or even of optimising budgets, project timelines, and slick presentations. It is, quite simply, about the architect—me—and the way I engage my chosen profession, and the modes in which I engage the mediated spatiotemporal context that I am given.

The exploration, thus, is an unfolding heuristic process, in which are revealed the fundamental precepts by which I engage the World through architecture. There are no preconditions, external metrics, or benchmarks aside from its own introspective impetus. There is but two questions—albeit vague—to address. What am I doing in this World? and how is it that I do so? To provide a rigour, the essay develops the theme of *participation* as a primary lens with which to engage the act of design and building, with the understanding that, like Wittgenstein, work on architecture is tantamount to work on myself. Granted, this could be considered an unorthodox

approach to a traditional graduate thesis, but the expectations and requirements of such an endeavour remain the same.

As much as this exploration is close and personal, it remains of prime importance to maintain a communicable language with which others can resonate, and the *participatory* lens affords that ability. All observations in this unfolding discovery are as applicable to the macro-general discourse and practise of architecture—especially as a polemic to contemporary issues of architectural disciplinarity, autonomy, and criticality—as they are to the micro-specifics of my own daily life.

## Objectives and Structure

While the *participatory* lens is fully developed within the text, its basic premise is to maintain an engagement of the World that is active in what it projects, in opening new possibilities of life, and secondarily reactive, in its critical embodiment of those possibilities in the World. The exploration maintains this lens through both the architecture's generative development and its realisation as programmatic embodiment in the architecture generated therein. *Salon Ottawa & the Diagram* thus attempts to:

- Cultivate a heuristic approach to generating architecture, which is both projective and critical as it mindfully embraces a *participatory* engagement of the World.

- Explore, develop, and resolve methods of communication and representation that are not a part of the traditional architectural toolkit, though without necessarily precluding them.
- Maturate an acute ability, using these methods, to parse a complex mass of urban and programmatic requirements both quantitative and qualitative in nature, as is required by large-scale urban projects.
- Establish a thorough understanding of an established building type through its historical lineage, its current presence, and relevance to contemporary urban centres.
- Discern this understanding within a local and tangible context in Ottawa, Canada, cognisant of its significant particularities as the nation's political and technological capital, while allowing the type to mutate *in situ*.
- Generate architecture which is programmatically and formally applicable to the concerns of the chosen site, the spatiotemporal context, and the discourse of architecture;
- Ultimately, engage architecture's present autonomy and disciplinarity, and the "divergence of opinions," in contemporary discourse.

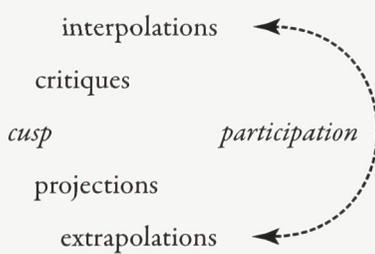
PARTICIPATION



Our exploration of *participation* evolves through two intertwined components, as stipulated by the degree requirements: this written text and a parallel execution

through a design project. Both components are the result of much iteration and development, through theory, historical research, and collateral explorations. The architecture that results is an embodiment of the *participatory* lens, both in the generated architecture—*id est*, as *Salon Ottawa*—and its process of generation through *diagram*.

The text primarily explores the contextual domain in which this exploration operates, best engaged as an index to the exploration’s procession and a by-product of research and design. Furthermore, it also provides a medium to document the results of design development, presented as figures interpolated within. Together, the text and design components serve as a demonstrative basis for continuing a *participatory* engagement of architecture—and for that matter, of life. That the text unfolds linearly is not because the exploration did so in tandem, but rather because the limitations of the textual medium demand it to be so.



Out of its own evolved character, the text tends to move from general to specific considerations, and then back to the general considerations again. It divides the exploration into five components that are generally consumable on their own, but provide the greatest richness when read from beginning to end:

- Chapter I: *Interpolations* ascertains the basis of the exploration primarily through the works Aicher, Deleuze, and Koolhaas, establishing the operative language and

contextual framework. Its position is that of a heuristic discoverer exploring the relationship of thinking, making, and self-determination, while noting instances of common themes and contemporary conditions. A culture of shopping and its persistent nihilistic triumph of *No*, which either takes the mediation of World as its modality or attempts to deny it altogether, are illustrated within these themes and considered against contemporary architectural discourse and practise. In contrast, the Doppler Effect characterised by Somol and Whiting enables the emergence of *Yes*, and forms an understanding of *participation* that acts as the exploration's primary lens therein.

- Chapter II: *Critiques* utilises the work of Koolhaas and his former partner Prince-Ramus in OMA to consider the library as a final refuge of *participatory* space, exploring the fundamental social roles that the library has served throughout history. It traces the library's lineage from the ancients through to present day, highlighting the Mechanics' Institutes and Carnegie libraries. Their roles within a Canadian context become evident, isolating the relationships between the library and the urban fabric, and revealing a suppression in the social roles of the library since the Carnegie era that coincided with the library's degeneration as a formal typology and the infiltration of the shopping pathology. The OMA's Seattle Central library serves as an example that differs from the contemporary

paradigm, embracing participation both in its generation by the diagram and as the atypical architecture generated.

- Chapter III: *Cusp* begins by engaging the diagram through two intertwined threads. The first is characterised by Deleuze's writing on Foucault, identifying the diagram as an abstract machine between material and functional form, and shopping identifies itself as an extension of the panoptic diagram. The second uses the work of OMA and UN Studio in contrast with that of Eisenman to illustrate how the diagram may be instrumental as a device during architecture's generation, as its immanence and indeterminacy provide a heuristic workbench that necessitates *participation*. Taken to the extent that the diagram itself is *participatory*, the diagram is an abstract conversation and the exploration attempts to formally concretise this within the context of Ottawa, Canada, the capital of a nation which is itself an embodiment of the participatory diagram. This emerges as a conversational programme responding to Ottawa's timely need for a new central library, best exemplified by the French Salon subsequently explored and interwoven into the exploration.
- Chapter IV: *Projections* is primarily graphical, documenting the unfolding of the architecture in which *participation* is generated through Salon Ottawa, and its realisation through generation *participated* with the use of the diagram. It identifies general strategies, parameters,

- and toolsets, as well as the collaborative interactions that contributed to the project, culminating in a series of graphical representations and a formal narrative.
- Chapter v: *Extrapolations* provides the opportunity to evaluate the preceding exploration through general observations of the entire exploration.

## Other Considerations

A remark about Aicher's *Analogous and Digital* is required, a text that proves crucial in the formative stages of the exploration. Aicher, in his modern rejection of the hegemonies of antiquity, intentionally omits the uppercase character set in all of his texts. Referring to the adoption of the accentuating Roman character set, he writes that, "everything that protected and sustained this state had to be favoured and enhanced [...]. their names were decorated with the capital letters of a script steeped in culture [...]."8 In homage to Aicher and accordance with Modern Language Association standards, all citations of his text preserve his original (de)casing of sentences and nouns. As an aside, Aicher suggests that if anything, the verb should be capitalised, in praise of "what is happening, what is emerging, flowing, active, effective. verbs represent the world as a dynamic sequence."<sup>9</sup>

It is also necessary to note that a portion of the exploration evolved within a collaborative context with Damien

Jdanoff, a graduate student of architecture at Technische Universität Dresden. The joint endeavour proposed to extend the exploration of *participation* to a collaborative dimension, both as collaborative generation afforded by contemporary communications technologies, and as an embodied collaboration explored in a Trans-National Salon network generated therein. The intent was not to develop a joint thesis, but rather a discourse that informed two separate and discrete theses. Jdanoff's explorations of ubiquitous computing technologies formed his primary lens, of which the Trans-National Salon provided an appropriately fit vehicle for exploration. A portion of Chapter IV: *Projections* and Appendix B: *Collaboration Proposal* elaborates the Trans-National Salon including its parameters.

Finally, inspirational credit is due to Edward Tufte and Howard Gralla, for their simple, elegant compositional design of Tufte's texts on the history of statistical representation, including *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information* that text cites. Additional credit must be given to renaissance-era French type founder Claude Garamond, for his timelessly practical roman typeface; and to Robert Granjon for his graceful sixteenth century italics; both of in which this text is set.<sup>10</sup>

## Notes

- 1 Koolhaas, Rem, “Junkspace,” *October* 100 (2002): 189.
- 2 Aicher was responsible for the innovative design program of the 1972 Munich Olympics, which introduced the bubble stick-figure pictograms now ubiquitous in all forms of graphic iconography. He also established the brand identities of Braun and Lufthansa still known today.
- 3 Aicher, Otl, *Analogous and Digital: Writings on the Philosophy of Making*, trans. Michael Robinson (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1994) 99.
- 4 Aicher 99.
- 5 Aicher 124.
- 6 Aicher 125.
- 7 Aicher 124.
- 8 Aicher 54.
- 9 Aicher 54.
- 10 Robert Slimbach of Adobe Systems Incorporated adapted the typefaces to the digital age.

# I Interpolations

*man [...] is not an isolated body. he is not contained in his biological physicality. he is the total of his device, his work, his culture, his organization-form. he does not exist, he sets himself up. work is his purpose. and this not as a fate, but as a prerequisite of himself, as a realization of himself.*

—OTL AICHER

## Experience is Cumulative?

*life* {  
 grow up;  
 get a job;  
 marry;  
 buy house;  
 have children;  
 retire;  
 die; }

Often we speak of experience at the scale of the individual, from the zero point of birth and limited by the corporeal boundaries of the body and the life. To say that *all experience is cumulative* is, in our post-modern times, however, quite trite. If our engagement of individual life is, as Rem Koolhaas suggests in *Junkspace* and throughout the *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping*, now veritably characterised by a culture of shopping and consumption, then humankind finds itself in a precarious state of affairs:

Not only is shopping melting into everything, but everything is melting into shopping. Through successive waves of expansion—each more extensive and pervasive

than the previous—shopping has methodically encroached on a widening spectrum of territories so that it is now, arguably, the defining activity of public life.<sup>1</sup>

A mere acquisition or appropriation is what creates a life: pick it from a catalogue, use the automated function, and just press play. Now, it seems, cumulative experience is a long tail of amassed personal history and acquired goods, as though each of us wanders through happenstance, making choices as required when presented with options for life. The individual chooses his or her own adventure, as it were, from an enumeration based on prescribed sets of types, its exaltation based on a complex game of combinatorics and probabilities.

*representations* {  
 plan;  
 section;  
 axonometric;  
 perspective;  
 ...; }

*buildings* {  
 hospital;  
 apartment block;  
 hog farm;  
 ...; }

*tools* {  
 ruler;  
 pen;  
 cad;  
 isomorphic polysurfaces;  
 ...; }

The indoctrination of this axiom—that *all experience is cumulative*—into a growing body of canned phrases and clichés indicates a divorce of individual experience from its existential poignancy: cumulative experience is now but a travel bag, filled with essential knowledge, best practises, technologies, acquired goods, *et cetera*. What choice do we speak of when retail shopping aisles and television program schedules delimit the possibilities of life; when embedded in the belief that our modern capacities actually provide us the ability to determine our own lives? Koolhaas continues: “Shopping is the medium by which the market has solidified its grip on our spaces, buildings, cities, activities, and lives.”<sup>2</sup> Shopping is far more than an activity; it is the contemporary

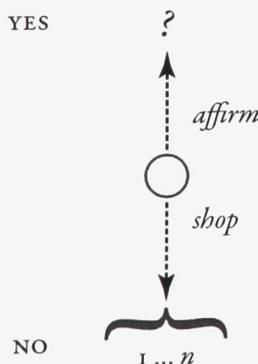
pathology. Aicher expresses his wary unease with the ready-made world in which he finds himself engulfed:

what does there remain for me to do when my house, my food, my clothes are delivered as ready-made products, and so are news, contracts, and party-political programmes? who is so privileged as to be able to set up his own life?<sup>3</sup>

Writing on Friedrich Nietzsche in *Pure Immanence*, Gilles Deleuze argues that the peril of this way of engaging life is that it masquerades itself under the guise of having creative force. In actuality though, “all that remains then is an illusion of critique and a phantom of creation, for nothing is more opposed to the creator than the carrier.”<sup>4</sup> Be it embodied by the professional, the labourer, or the neighbourhood adolescent, the behaviour is first reactionary, in that its force negates the World by taking from it:

The will to power is the differential element from which derive the forces at work [...]. [There] correspond two faces, two qualia, of the will to power, which makes it that active forces *affirm*, and affirm is their difference: in them affirmation is first, and negation is never but a consequence, a sort of surplus of pleasure. What characterizes reactive forces, on the other hand, is their opposition to what they are not, their tendency to limit the other: in them, *negation* comes first; through negation, they arrive at a semblance of affirmation.<sup>5</sup>

The essence of the shopping pathology is that it limits possibilities for life by choosing from commoditised types, a burden taken up by the nihilist’s degenerative



fetish.<sup>6</sup> Coining the residual spatial waste of contemporary humankind as *junkspace*, Koolhaas writes, “It preempts [sic] people’s sensations. It comes with a soundtrack, smell, captions: it blatantly proclaims how it wants to be read [...]. It sponsors a collective of brooding consumers in surly anticipation of their next spend [...]”<sup>7</sup> As an act of negation, the shopping pathology suppresses the project of the World while subduing its possibilities where, contrarily, creative force is active. “To create is to lighten, to unburden life, to invent new possibilities of life.”<sup>8</sup>

that funny memory  
           ikea furniture  
 { ME } family pride  
           modern kitchen  
 tv at 21:00 ...  
       \$80k per annum  
       ...

One need only browse the countless home & garden television programmes available to the common Western subscriber in the “kindergarten grotesque”<sup>9</sup> to get a sense of how our situation is awry. Often displaying nil more than glorified shopping expeditions set in generic suburban strip malls and homes; they are mobilised by product promotions and the bastardisation of once-meaningful language, such as *creative*, *open concept* and *minimal*.<sup>10</sup> This is what now purports as design, what we now call living:

Yet history presents us with a most peculiar phenomenon: the reactive forces triumph; negation wins in the will to power! [...] Everywhere we see the victory of No over Yes, of reaction over action. Life becomes adaptive and regulative, reduced to secondary forms; we no longer understand what it means to act.<sup>11</sup>

Certainly though, as Deleuze alludes, this condition is not new or unique to our time. One can find the same conditions throughout history “from the Socratics to the Hegelians,” forming a “long history of man’s submissions and the reason he gives himself for legitimizing them.”<sup>12</sup> Though shopping serves as a contemporary case in point, there are many other modern citations of the same nihilistic burden. Consider the techno-utopian expectations of transhuman faith in technology, or the Enlightenment’s faithful search for the theory of everything through reductive Cartesian logic. Indeed these are not different from the ascetic ideals, transcendent values, and absolute truth put forth by organised Western religion:<sup>13</sup>

The only change is this: instead of being burdened from the outside, man takes the weights and places them on his own back. [...] We are always asked to submit ourselves, to burden ourselves, to recognize only the reactive forms of life [...].<sup>14</sup>

Now, wherefrom this condition originates is not of present concern. No amount of historical excavation could be fruitful within the parameters of this exploration; the pragmatics simply does not afford it. Moreover, in trying to assess or diagnose the condition through its historicisation, excavation itself is a reaction sickened by the condition that it attempts to address while shrouded, still, in the illusion of critique. Such an approach bears significant risk of succumbing to the very condition that it seeks to overcome in the first place.



Our exploration instead seeks an approach that is first affirmative, and takes upon itself not the burdens of yesteryears but an optimism of discovering possibilities of life. The concern is not so much why *No* historically maintains an insidious presence and continues to triumph over *Yes*, as much as how life may be able to overcome the condition in the present moment, how *Yes* may emerge from the contemporary rubble of junkspace. In that regard, Deleuze's writings on Nietzsche sufficiently illuminate the present state, providing a heuristic for this exploration's purposes. Aicher's writings, though, provide a resonant language with which the former can engage.

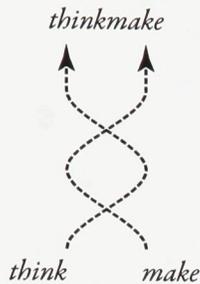
## Self-Determinative Thinkmake



Aicher posits that the central essence of humankind is to be self-determinative,<sup>15</sup> though to say *self-determinative* is not to say *determinate*. Rather self-determination is fundamentally *indeterminate*, insofar as it is up to humankind and the individual to determine its own self through a continual process of becoming. Self-determination happens; and it happens by and through *thinking* and *making*. There is no distinction between the two, as thinking and making unify in the same thrust of action:

the relationship between thinking and body is so close that what happens in the mind is often described in the language of the hands. mind is often seated less in transcendence than in the hand. because the hand can

grasp, thought can also grasp. because our hand can take hold of something our heads can take hold of it as well.<sup>16</sup>

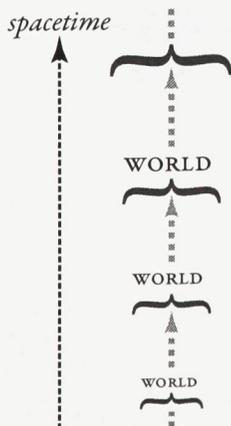
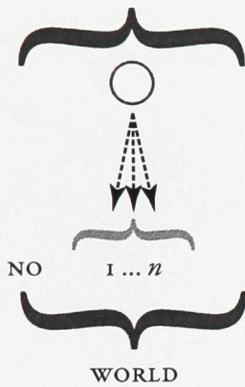
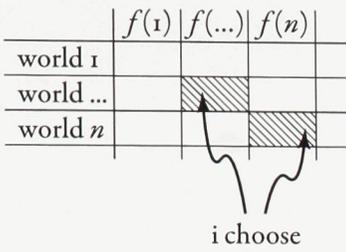


Thinking and making—or, more appropriately, *thinkmake*—is immediate and in the moment. It is not, say, best practises, a knowledge base, or protocol, to use contemporary parlance, nor is it found on the shelf of a local retailer. Nor does *thinkmake* operate from transcendent values stressed by contemporary Western thought, which inexorably divide mind and body. Aicher writes, “the mind is not in the intellect, but in physicality, in its realization as acting and making. the mind is not in the general, but in what is concrete and made.”<sup>17</sup>



The similarity to Deleuze is apparent: *thinkmake* is immanent and inherently active, affirmatively opening new possibilities of life. “we do not just set things firmly in mind, we set things up [...]. we do not just grasp, do not just take hold, we take a view of things, twist them and turn them and finally arrive at a point of view.”<sup>18</sup> Not only does the existential unification of thinking and making stress the immediacy of the spatiotemporal moment, but it anchors the body as the corporeality of *thinkmake* and posits the World as its domain. Humankind is a potential agency that seizes the moment, mobilised by the will to power to self-determinative effect:

man is in the process of becoming. he is a state, a case, a situation. we recognize his open bounds. man has no final being. he is a current organization-form, a current life-state.<sup>19</sup>

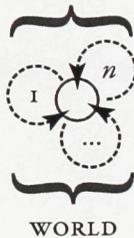


This is not to suggest that *thinkmake* occurs in a vacuum removed from any pragmatics or irrespectively of the given context. To suggest that it is even possible to step outside of oneself into a wholly different other state is symptomatic of the triumphant *No*. The fallacy of considering that there are *other* worlds, removed from the present World in alterity, is its negation and denial of the World that exists in the moment. This shopping of worlds, as it were, assumes that *another* exists alongside *what is*. It is naïve to the implicit consequence of a superimposed taxonomy of types, which is necessarily predicated in our present state; and naïve to the resultant triumph of the *No*, denying anything not within that taxonomy and the World in which it is predicated.

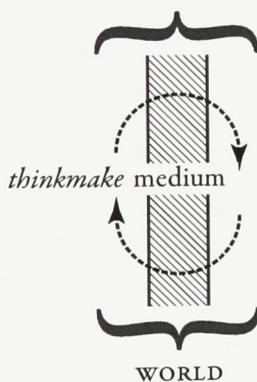
Our project of the World is the *World as Design*;<sup>20</sup> it is not pre-existent or transcendent. World is not chosen from ulterior lists of what could possibly be. The World is instead the construction site and humankind not only works *from* the project, but *on* it. Aicher writes: “[...] our world is in a condition of manufacturing itself,”<sup>21</sup> and in that, the World is its own catalyst, its own springboard of affirmation. The World, as a World generating itself, is *autopoietic*; experience is cumulative, indeed. The spatiotemporal moment is thus that *generated*, insofar as much as it is the locus of the *generation* itself. That the World is an *a priori* condition of itself reveals far more to this exploration than the tautological rhetoric of the *Ouroboros*. Its value is in establishing an intrinsic relationship

between the spatiotemporal moment of the World and the conditions in which *thinkmake* acts. Aicher considers:

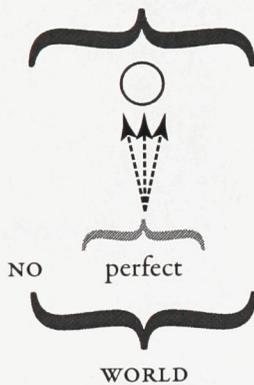
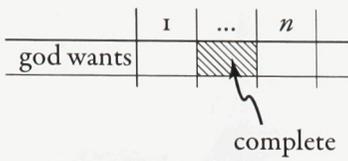
[...] what is a spider? is it a living creature or is it a living creature plus catching device? is it singular, or the centre of a system that is only capable of survival as a whole? we can only see the spider in association with the web that it produces, as a life system, not a living creature. the spider is an organizational form. it is only itself with the assistance of a kind of extended, web-like arm. web and spider belong together.<sup>22</sup>



Equally, humankind and the project of the World are implicit in each other. This observation acknowledges the self-reflexivity of the World and dissolves the limits of the physical body to include the full spectrum of devices available in the World.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, we “[...] live from our artefacts, and from what we do with them. we are part of the artefacts to the extent that they are part of us.”<sup>24</sup> Literacy, ISO 9000, the consistency of watercolour paints, and the way the bedroom doorway permits a sliver of light to pass through in the late autumn: these are but a fraction of the innumerable variables that form the particularities of the moment within which *thinkmake* acts, constitutive of and constituted by the World. The World gives itself *as is*, as the medium.

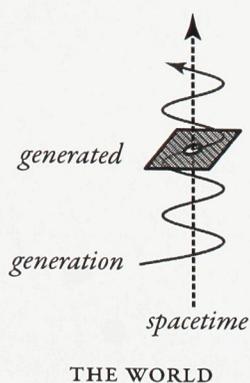


Yet there is an unsettling ease with which we may mistake the mediated World given *as is* with a World *merely* given. The latter engages the World at a distance, destined to the burden of causal-and-effectual analyses. For if the World is

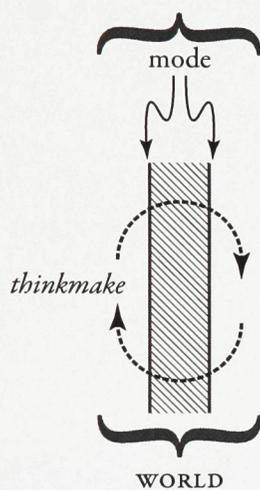


given, is it not given for or by some reason? Succumbing to this debilitating rule of engagement assumes, to whatever extent, a level of teleological determinism—that all-to-familiar void of destiny and grand design. A world that has yet to happen, like a manufacturing line yet to turnover or an algorithm yet to compute, resigns itself to the ranks of an underdeveloped ancestry in a linear and logical evolution. By effectively relegating possibility to the level of the gods, it transcends the spatiotemporal moment and again establishes taxonomy of types—grandiose classes of things that will be, but are as of yet missing—necessarily predicated in our present state. It is again naïve to the triumph of the *No*; again denying anything not with that taxonomy and the World in which it is predicated. If such were the case, we are not the creators of our own fulfilled destiny, but rather carriers of ulterior tasks, burdened by superstructures created by none other than ourselves. When *thinkmake* unburdens itself from these transcendent values and releases itself into the moment unshackled, however, we can affirmatively engage the World *as is*. “[...] the world is everything that is the case,”<sup>25</sup> writes Aicher;

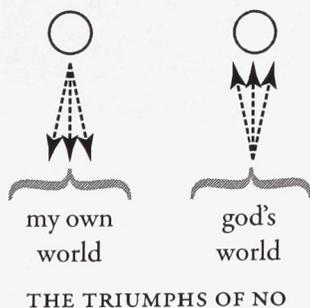
it is what evolved and is evolving according to the rules of probability and chance. it is a game, and its rules are the rules of the game. according to this the world would not be determined by timeless laws, but it would be constant variation, constant invention, constant design.<sup>26</sup>



The medium of World is both a perpetual starting block for the moment, and is the domain within which the moment itself *is*; the *generated* and its *generation* are coextensive. How may we approach one World with such radical variation? Aicher writes: “[...] we exist in situations, that we are a condition, not beings, not existences [...]”.<sup>27</sup> This suggests that *thinkmake* is not singular but instead multiplicity: if our experiences are to some degree discrete, then there are potentially infinite ways in which one may view the World. Aicher opts to appropriate the Kantian notion of *anschauung*—literally *looking at*, in German—in an attempt to distinguish these modalities from interpretations that are otherwise rooted in cerebral cognitive processes based on empirical data. *Anschauung* is an issue of view; and view is not static, but always a relational apprehension of perspective, frame, and context. Hence, *thinkmake* reconciles the World multimodally.

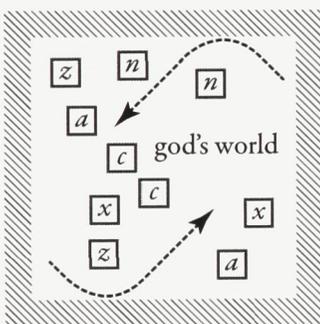


Acknowledging that multiple modalities of *thinkmake* engage the medium of the World sheds light on the two aforementioned triumphs of the *No*: first, that *No* of solipsistic vacuum removed from the consideration of context—*id est, my own world*; and second, that *No* of teleological determinism waiting for a world that has yet to happen—*id est, god’s world*.<sup>28</sup> Distinguishing these triumphs and their conditions proves crucial as a conduit to the nexus of this exploration.



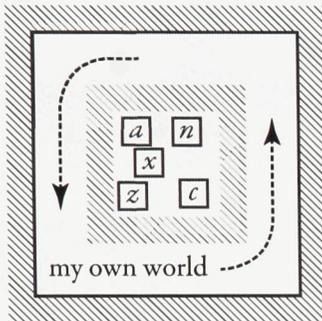
## Participation: Just Say Yes

It is perhaps best to first elucidate the latter condition of *god's world*, given that its schematic simplicity facilitates an elaboration of the former *my own world*. As described, *god's world* is a world merely given, by and for some ulterior reason so transcendent that it is inaccessible to us. *Thinkmake* here gives into the mediation of the World, permitting a full circumvention of its modality by the said mediation. In other words, the medium of *god's world* prescribes the mode in which *thinkmake* engages it. Such a construct is not alien, as it is the framework allowing the predictable repetition of mechanical production: the machine does what it was designed to do, and nothing more. Its most obvious characteristic is that of being *automatic*, and thus predictable through some measure of analysis. By definition, automation is “not characterized by active intelligence,” and is self-acting only insofar as it acts “under conditions fixed for it, [...] which simulate human or animal action.”<sup>29</sup> By simulating action, automatic *thinkmake* is effectively the proverbial cog in the world-machine given to us by the gods, be they of the divine or the earthly sort—corporate business, aristocracy, the proverbially oppressive ‘system,’ *et cetera*.



AUTOMATIC NO

Whereas the automatic condition of *god's world* is evident throughout humankind's history, *my own world* is particularly modern in its structure. In its irrespective removal from



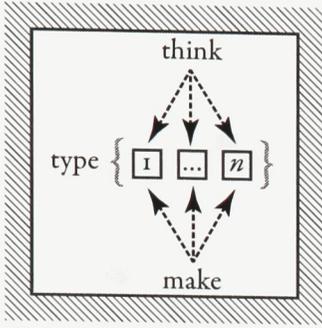
AUTONOMIC NO

the given context, *my own world* is a vacuous otherworld accessible only to one self. The death of God brings forth this autonomic condition, which at first glance removes the modality of *thinkmake* from any mediation whatsoever. The presumption that no rules can govern the autonomy of such an engagement, however, is misleading: this is a product of its times, itself a result of the modern state of mediation. By shedding itself of contextual consideration—that is, in denying its state of mediation—the autonomic *thinkmake* masquerades as freedom of choice, as action, but in effect still gives into its mediation by automatic proxy. Aicher argues that this autonomy results from a Cartesian duality separating thinking and making into irreconcilable domains:

craftsmen were replaced by engineers. design became a procedure in its own right as a specific profession. the designer was neither a maker nor a consumer. the criteria of his design work now came from abstract knowledge [...]. appraisal was no longer the criterion of his work, not finding and intuiting but measuring and counting. he was not guided by *anschauung*, but by knowledge and calculation.<sup>30</sup>

It is pertinent then that an autonomic condition is, by definition, simultaneously “self-governing, independent,” as in the autonomy of art, and “functioning independently of the will,” as in one’s autonomic nervous system.<sup>31</sup>

The overarching similitude of the automatic condition of *god’s world* and its post-mortem in the autonomic

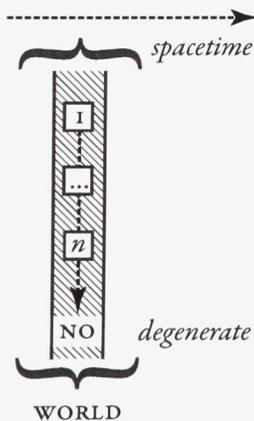


MODE IS MEDIATED

condition of *my own world*—is that both are first reactive. Whether one shops for virtues or for escapes, the problem remains the same: in choosing one of a type and not the rest, these modalities negate possibilities of life by their established—albeit obscured—taxonomic filters of the mediating World. Koolhaas similarly notes the similitude of these two polarised engagements of type:

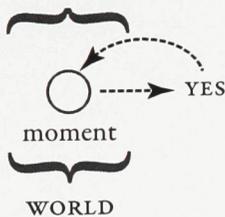
Traditionally, typology implies demarcation, the definition of a singular model that excludes other arrangements. Junkspace represents a reverse typology of cumulative, approximate identity, less about the kind than about quantity. But formlessness is still form, the formless also a typology...<sup>32</sup>

However, it is not so much the type that presents the problem: the *No* resides within the type no more or less than the *Yes*. Type is essentially inert, and at its base is nil more than a language of the current case-state, of the moment, of that generated through generation, and thus given by the World *as is*. Typology is an alphabet of the general de-scriptor: fluid, shifting, and mutable. The automatic and autonomic conditions opt to engage type, instead, as a specific pre-scriptor of possibility. In doing so—in fetishising the type—their state of mediation subsequently determines these modes of these conditions, not *anschauung*. They allow the type to delimit the World and let things be as they were. Any change that occurs in such a state is not the result of creative act, but rather that of haphazard, random mutations



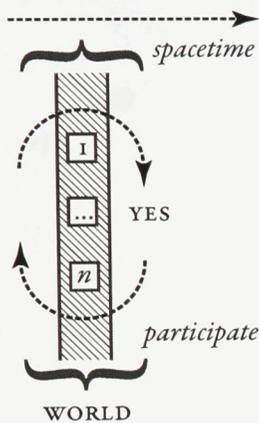
resulting through a neo-vernacular repetition of the type. “There is no form, only proliferation... Regurgitation is the new creativity; instead of creation, we honor, cherish, and embrace manipulation...,”<sup>33</sup> writes Koolhaas. The effect is always degenerative. “Change has been divorced from the idea of improvement. There is no progress; like a crab on LSD, culture wobbles endlessly sideways [...]”<sup>34</sup>

The negativity and apparent apathy of these modalities that epitomise our contemporary shopping pathology form the antithesis of this exploration’s primary intent: to permit an unburdened self-determination. Our predicament is in ceasing to engage the type as an archetype by dissolving the Platonic suppositions engrained in these conditions. We seek a modality that is the triumph of *Yes*, and as Deleuze recognised, is one which is first affirmative in its field of action.<sup>35</sup> How are we to engage our superstructures of type, then, understanding that the automatic and autonomic conditions posit them as prescriptions for life—that is, restrictions of life?



We cannot force an alternate modality, as it cannot be one of resistance to the World. Such an approach is prone to grasp at what is easily available, quickly succumbing to the rigid existent typologies, swallowed up completely by the taxonomies that it seeks to overcome. Our exploration aspires to be not prescribed by that given *as is*, nor flee from it in vain. Instead, it is to the exploration’s advantage

to keep matters simple: fundamentally, we wish to engage our own self-determination in the project of the World. Moreover, we wish to do so in such a manner that embraces a dynamism which does not result from typologies, but instead effects typologies—new possibilities of life—through a modality that reconciles *god's world* and *my own world*.



This mode of engagement we may call the *participatory* condition. The etymology of *participation* is acute for our purposes, implying a mutual exchange of effect, with the “action or fact having or forming part *of* something; the sharing *of* something,” the *participant* being an accomplice in the World neither absolute nor relative, but partaking with “active involvement in a matter or event.”<sup>36</sup>

That matter, of course, is affirmatively a *participatory thinkmake*: the project of the World, *Our World*.

## Architecture and the Doppler Effect

The recognition of *participatory thinkmake* provides a suitable critique of contemporary architectural discourse, perhaps best characterised by Robert Somol and Sarah Whiting in *Notes Around the Doppler Effect and Other Moods of Modernism*.

Their assessment of the contemporary situation is clear:

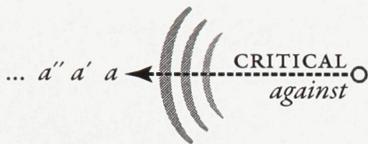
[...] One can discern two orientations toward disciplinarity: that is, disciplinarity as autonomy and process, as in the case of Eisenman’s reading of the

Domino, and disciplinarity as force and effect, as in Koolhaas' staging of the Downtown Athletics Club.<sup>37</sup>

Somol and Whiting, both Eisenmanian protégés, grapple with developing an “alternative genealogy”<sup>38</sup> to a disciplinarity they deem to have been “absorbed and exhausted by the project of criticality.”<sup>39</sup> The tone of their critique is similar to our present exploration, responding to the critical project taken up by the likes of their mentor, Peter Eisenman, and K. Michael Hays. They write that the “criticality of Hays and Eisenman maintains the oppositional or dialectical framework in the work of their mentors and predecessors,” while misreading Colin Rowe and Manfredo Tafuri, respectively.<sup>40</sup> The problem with such an approach, say Somol and Whiting, is that:

[...] Disciplinarity is understood as autonomy (enabling critique, representation, and signification), but not as instrumentality (projection, performativity, and pragmatics). One could say that their definition of disciplinarity is directed against reification rather than toward the possibility of emergence.<sup>41</sup>

Eisenman and Hays's misinterpretation of Rowe and Tafuri results in an autonomous criticality of “infinite regress” through suppressing the production of new possibilities and qualities.<sup>42</sup> The concordance with our exploration hereto is apparent: the critical project is victim to its own mediation, dwelling within the realm of the existent typological alphabet.

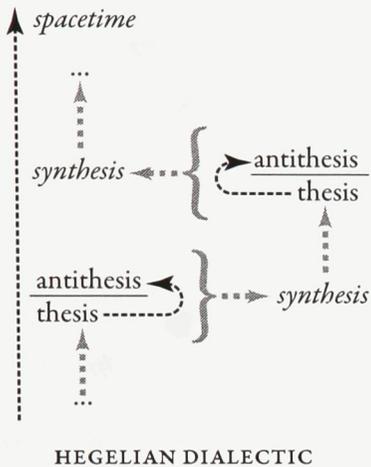


Somol and Whiting struggle to move beyond their mentor's negative condition with one that is affirmative, and rebuke by proposing "an alternative to the now dominant paradigm of criticality, an alternative that will be characterized here as projective."<sup>43</sup> To illustrate, they conceptually adapt the Doppler Effect to acknowledge the "adaptive synthesis of architecture's many contingencies," their contention being that:

Rather than isolating a singular autonomy, the Doppler focuses upon the effects and exchange of architecture's inherent multiplicities: material, program, writing, atmosphere, form, technologies, economics, etc.<sup>44</sup>

The analogy has its merits: Somol and Whiting are keen to note its relative and ephemeral basis. The Doppler Effect manifests itself differently based on the spatiotemporal relationship between source, viewer, and context: as *anschauung*. Thus the Doppler engages type to some degree of *participation*, moving away from "shared norms, principles, and traditions," and towards "a more Foucaultian notion of disciplinarity [...] in which the discipline is not a fixed datum or entity, but rather an active organism or discursive practice, unplanned and ungovernable [...]."<sup>45</sup> There is a crisp distinction between critical and projective forces: "Rather than looking back or criticizing the status quo, the Doppler projects forward alternative (not necessarily oppositional) arrangements and scenarios."<sup>46</sup> Somol and Whiting opt for the latter.





The relationship of projection and criticality may be mistaken with that of the Hegelian triad's relationship of thesis and antithesis, but differences remain that stay off such a misinterpretation. The primary motivations of the critical dialectic as embraced by Eisenman and Hays are always a response to what is given *as is*, and thus maintains some level of logical-rational linearity. Its objective is one of resolving abstraction to an acceptable concrete synthesis, creating architecture through iterative refinement. As such, the dialectic always moves from existent types, resolving them with the assumption that each has some worth in and of itself. Such a recursion is ultimately degenerative, despite that—or because—the critical eye attempts to map the taxonomy of available types to their teleological archetypes.

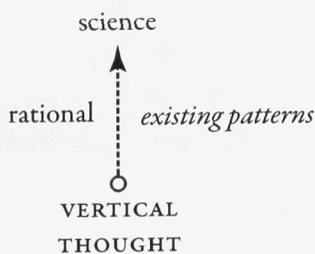
Contrarily, the primary motivations of projective instrumentality as embraced by Koolhaas are not a *response* to that given *as is*, but instead *move from it*. Its objective is in opening possibilities and encouraging emergence, creating architecture not “for paying attention to; they are not for reading, but for seducing, becoming, instigating new events and behaviours,”<sup>47</sup> It is resonant with the likes of surrealist thought, described by Mel Gooding in the introduction to *Surrealist Games*:

The Surrealists initiated the most radically liberating critique of reason of the century. [...] They subverted modes academic modes of enquiry, and undermined the

complacent certainties of the reasonable and respectable. Playful procedures and systematic stratagems provided keys to unlock the door to the unconscious and to realise the visual and verbal poetry of collective creativity.<sup>48</sup>

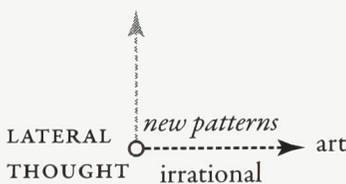
The use of language parallel to that of Koolhaas is not by coincidence. In responding to Somol and Whiting with “*Criticality*” and *Its Discontents*, Baird notes that, “Koolhaas performs a crucial bridging role [...], enabling them to shift from a ‘critical’ stance to a ‘projective’ one.”<sup>49</sup> Koolhaas, the “ambitious *real-politiker*,” is indeed the perfect segue given his “intense belief in the necessity of a professional, architectural efficacy;” and the critical project constrains and limits that efficacy to the point of suffocation.<sup>50</sup>

To emphasise the distinction further, we may borrow from Edward de Bono, whose extensive corpus is implicitly a lifetime of developing an unofficial critique of the Hegelian dialectic. De Bono if nothing else is a master of thought, its exercise, and its application, especially to fields of design that demand innovation. As a critique of linear rational thought—which he terms *vertical thinking* and we in our exploration *criticality*—he writes, “Insight is the only effective way of changing ideas in a myth situation—when information cannot be evaluated objectively.”<sup>51</sup> Critical/vertical thought is, by definition, embedded within a subject and incapable of full objectivity. “Insight, creativity and humour are so elusive because the mind is so efficient.”<sup>52</sup>



The mind, by default, reverts to a critical/vertical modality as its primal function is to form coherence of its surroundings. Once such patterns are established, their expedience facilitates their recognition and utility:<sup>53</sup> the mind tends toward criticality/verticality because it is easier, because it comes *automatically*. Such efficiency is not without cost or limitation, though as our exploration has hereto demonstrated. “It is easy to combine patterns or to add to them,” De Bono writes, but “[...] it is [also] extremely difficult to restructure them for the patterns control attention. Creativity also involves restructuring but with more emphasis on the escape from restricting patterns.”<sup>54</sup>

*Lateral thinking*—what our exploration refers to as *projective*—temporarily removes itself from its surroundings to afford a certain level of suspended judgement. Because it is much easier to say *No* than to attempt *Yes*, though, the task is not without effort: “Lateral thinking involves restructuring, escape and the provocation of new patterns.”<sup>55</sup> Its freedom from constraint enables projective/lateral modality to generate new ideas as it breaks from the prisons of old. “This leads to a change in attitude and approach; to looking in a different way at things which have always been looked at in the same way.”<sup>56</sup> Ultimately, writes De Bono, the concern of the projective/lateral engagement is twofold, as “Liberation from old ideas and the stimulation of new ones are twin aspects of lateral thinking.”<sup>57</sup>



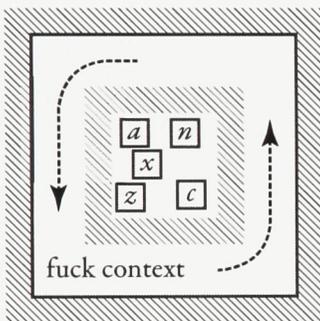
The two approaches remain characteristically distinct as well. When operating with a critical/vertical eye, “one moves forward by sequential steps each of which must be justified,” as each step of the process is guided by its own criticality/verticality. Through a projective/lateral eye, “One uses information not for its own sake but for its effect. [...] One may have to be wrong at some stage in order to achieve a correct solution,” indeed a quality that is impossible within the linear constructs of criticality/verticality, such as logic, mathematics, and the Eisenmanian approach. Where with projective/lateral engagement “one may deliberately seek out irrelevant information,” De Bono concludes, with a critical/vertical engagement, “one selects out only what is relevant.”<sup>58</sup>

## Our Participatory Matrix

In resisting criticality that comes *automatically* and in deliberately seeking things that may eventually be discarded, projection maintains of risk of relevance and applicability while carrying on its *autonomic* processes. For the same reasons that disengage *my own world* from the World, a purely projective architecture is no better than one purely critical. The headlong rejection of the critical project and its complete replacement with one of absolute projection is ultimately critical in nature and, quite ironically, Somol and Whiting do so by adopting the same approach of their mentor that they seek to subvert in the first place. In seeking a heterogenous

practise with objectives of efficacy and “performativity,” ultimately the only applicable metrics available are derived from the autonomous body on which such an endeavour is predicated. Baird is distrustful of the obstinacy with which Somol and Whiting drive this projective pretence forward:

[...] It is clear that a new projective architecture will not be able to be developed in the absence of a supporting body of projective theory. Without it, [...] this new architecture will devolve to the “merely” pragmatic, and to the “merely” decorative, with astonishing speed.<sup>59</sup>



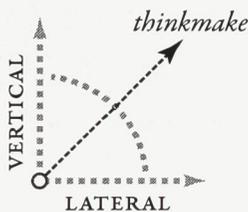
When speaking at the reception of the Mies van der Rohe prize in 2005 in Barcelona for the OMA’s Netherlands Embassy in Berlin—awarded as recognition of “the development of new ideas and technologies”<sup>60</sup>—Koolhaas epitomised the matter by loudly exclaiming the OMA adage: “Fuck context.”<sup>61</sup> Not in decades, perhaps since Mies’ proverbial “less is more,” have so few words meant so much and at once so little to the discourse and practise of architecture. Koolhaas may persist to his—and our—advantage and peril, the heart of the fallacy the utter disregard for applicable and relational consideration.

While Somol and Whiting use the Doppler Effect to illustrate relativity, they effectively dwell within the abstraction of its concept while precluding the concrete considerations of its application required to render it useful. The Doppler Effect does not exist in and unto itself: it results from the direct relationship of the source emitting

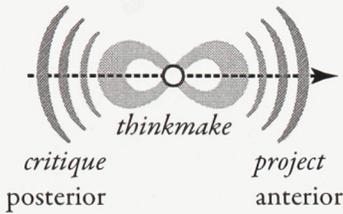
the sound—*id est*, the projection—and the innumerable contextual considerations, including the density of medium, the parameters of spatiotemporal context, *et cetera*—*id est*, the critique. Baird's response is acute:

I am very curious to see to what extent the putatively “projective” forms of practice being advocated by the new critics of criticality will develop parallel modes of critical assessment with which to be able to measure the ambition and the capacity for significant social transformation of such forms.<sup>62</sup>

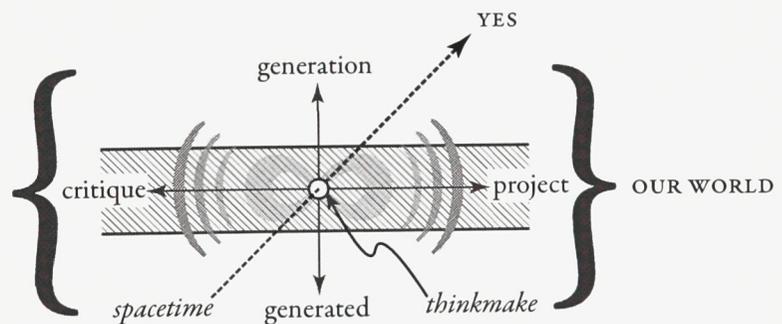
A purely critical architecture, *sans* projective aspiration, dwells in *god's world* and fails to open new possibilities for life; a purely projective architecture, *sans* critical application, dwells in *my own world* and fails to share in the collective project. Both thus ultimately fail to *participate* in *Our World*. De Bono's work provides a simple solution. He does not at any moment suggest that lateral thinking should subvert and replace vertical thinking—that is, that at any point the critical project should make way for one purely projective. It is “not a substitute for vertical thinking. Both are required. They are complementary.”<sup>63</sup> By placing a projective orientation to architecture vis-à-vis one which maintains its criticality, we are able to move past the *merely* projective put forth by Somol and Whiting, past the recursive disciplinarian autonomy put forth by Eisenmanian criticality, unto an architecture that fully realises the Doppler Effect in its *relational*—not *relative*—capacity.



While the parallels are myriad, Deleuze provides the simplest in stating that the Will to Power always first affirms.<sup>64</sup> A *participatory* modality maintains a reciprocal relationship between the affirmative potential of projection and the successive negative agenda of dialectical critique, in a two-step dance of sorts, providing itself a check-and-balance predicated by its own governance insofar as much as it is cognisant of its mediated state. To one edge of the Doppler—the anterior—we may ascribe the generative nature of projective architecture, and to the other—the posterior—we may ascribe the selective filter of criticality.<sup>65</sup> Hence, *thinkmake* engages *Our World* with a *participatory* lens. The modality may be visualised within a simple two-by-two matrix of the mediated World, in effect mimicking the structure of our exploration. Along one axis, we may plot the generation and generated language of type and along the other the projection and critique by *participation*; at its centre, unburdened *thinkmake* is manifest.



THE DOPPLER EFFECT



THE PARTICIPATORY MATRIX

While Koolhaas's disregard for contextual consideration isolates an opportunity for critique, he does not dwell purely in projective practise. To Koolhaas's credit, Baird notes

the he, “notwithstanding his interests in ‘creative means of implementation,’ and in other key parts of the post-critical agenda, has nonetheless participated in more than a few recent episodes of vigorous critical engagement.”<sup>66</sup> He cites two examples in which Koolhaas publicly manifest his critical wrath: first, in chastising Andres Duany for failing to speak out against the “sweeping Disneyfication” of Manhattan’s 42nd Street; the second, Koolhaas’ attacks on Chinese authorities for their “lamentable and all-too-pragmatic” approval to destroy historic residential portions of Beijing.<sup>67</sup> Another we may add to the inventory is the entire contents of *Junkspace*, though a certain poetic cynicism masks the critical tone, making the text seem more like a stream-of-consciousness than a well-formed position. When Koolhaas “fucks context,” the OMA’s projective tendencies are much more evident in the formal resolution of a programme than in the programme itself, a programme as projective as it is critical in its propositions.

One demonstrative case in point of Koolhaas’ struggle is the OMA’s Seattle Central Library, opened to the public in 2004, exemplifying an equilibratory balance of projective and critical objectives. In an article within *Content*, a recent OMA publication resembling a magazine much more than a book, Koolhaas’s former partner Joshua Prince-Ramus describes our institution of the library as one of the “last uncontested moral universes,” sharing the title, perhaps, only with the prison.<sup>68</sup>

## Notes

- 1 Koolhaas, Rem, et al, eds., *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping* (Köln: Taschen, 2001) 129.
- 2 Koolhaas, *Shopping* 129.
- 3 Aicher 32.
- 4 Deleuze, Gilles, "Nietzsche," *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*, trans. Anne Boyman (New York: Zone Books, 2005) 69.
- 5 Deleuze, *Nietzsche* 73-74.
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- 16 Aicher 20.
- 17 Aicher 31.
- 18 Aicher 20.
- 19 Aicher 30.
- 20 This is also the title of another of Aicher's texts.
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- 23 Aicher 27-28.
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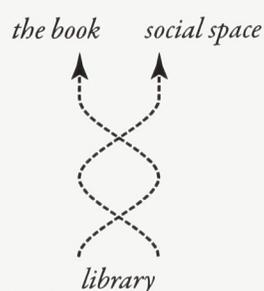
## II Critiques

*What we are witnessing in the remaking of the library at the end of the twentieth century is not so much a technological revolution (which has already occurred) but the public reinvention of intellectual community in its wake. [...] By what rules, under what conditions, and in what forms will knowledge circulate and be exchanged in the modern world?*

—HOWARD BLOCH AND CARLA HESSE

### A Last Refuge of Participatory Space

Prince-Ramus elaborated the fundamental premises in the generation of Seattle Central while speaking at a TED conference in early 2006. The core position in engaging the program was simple. While the library centres on the book, the book is itself a technology and must share its space with other potent forms of technology in its mission of archiving knowledge.<sup>1</sup> By equating the importance of the book with other technologies—placing it within the same field as a technology itself—Prince-Ramus allows us to focus not so much on the book itself, but rather upon the essential roles of the library.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, it is not within the scope or concern of this exploration to pursue discussions of the future of the book,



nor the role of emerging technologies and new media in the library, and further, such work is almost entirely speculative.

Prince-Ramus continues: “Since the inception of the Carnegie library tradition in America, had a second responsibility, and that was for social roles.”<sup>3</sup> The library as a social space is contemporarily set in an urban fabric that, over the last decade, “has revealed an accelerated erosion of the public domain—replaced by increasingly sophisticated and entertaining forms of the Private.”<sup>4</sup> While “the essence of the Public is that it is free,” contemporary public space is only pseudo-public, conversely, and “while suggesting an open invite, actually makes you pay [...]”<sup>5</sup> Contemporary urban space is the owned and planned typological playground of the shopper, in which the library stands as a vessel of the free and the public.

Considering that the “library seems threatened” and “ready to be taken by a marauding hoard of technologies,”<sup>6</sup> which is to say that the book and its counterpart technologies threaten the sociability of the library, noting the civic responsibilities of the library is particularly crucial. While Prince-Ramus and the OMA contend that such as the case, it is possible to consider the situation far grimmer. The library lingers over the precipice of becoming an exclusive media warehouse, its inhabitants consuming—shopping—its contents in solitude, breaking only to wander the shops and Starbucks<sup>7</sup> which seem to infiltrate most libraries constructed in the past decade.<sup>8</sup>

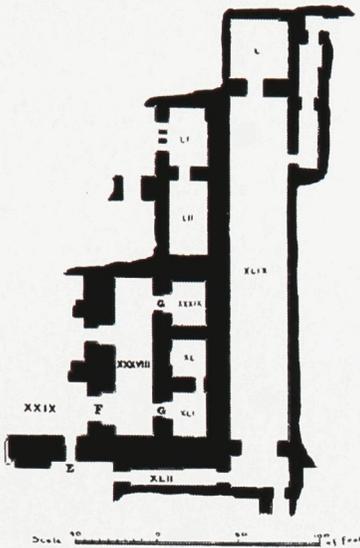


Fig. 1. Plan of the Record-Rooms in the Palace of Assur-bani-pal, King of Nineveh, from John Willis Clark, *The Care of Books* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1975) 2.

These stark contrasts divorce the library from what it once was, or rather, fundamentally is: an existentially essential programmatic component of *participatory* urban space. This is evident in John Willis Clark's *The Care of Books*, a text surveying humankind's history of storing, arranging, and accessing collections of knowledge. His early evaluation of ancient libraries reveals quite quickly that all of the earliest repositories, from the Assyrian record-rooms on,<sup>9</sup> connected with temples, palaces, or both, "either because priests under all civilisations have been par excellence the learned class [...]; or because such a portion was thought to offer greater security."<sup>10</sup>

Perhaps the most infamous of all libraries, if indicated by its legendary status alone still two millennia later, is the Library of Alexandria in the city established by a Macedonian dynasty—the Ptolemies—after the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE. It was actually two libraries combined. Ptolemy I had built the first library at Alexandria in a temple dedicated to the Muses—the Musæum—and connected to the palaces.<sup>11</sup> Shortly after, Ptolemy II founded the library to which we commonly refer today, around 285 BCE, by extending the library:

[...] a second, called the daughter of the first, [...] established in connexion with the Temple of Serapis, a magnificent structure in the quarter of Rhacôtis, adorned so lavishly with colonnades, statuary, and other architectural enrichments, that the historian Ammianus Marcellinus declares that nothing in the world could equate it, except the Roman Capitol.<sup>12</sup>

A rival city to Alexandria was Pergamon, a genuine Greek dynasty also established after the death of Alexander the Great. “Both were distinguished [...] for the splendour and the culture of their courts [...]”<sup>13</sup> Pergamon did not begin its library until the reign of Eumenes the Second, sometime from 197 to 159 BCE.<sup>14</sup> Its library was a central component of the city agora, associated with the Temple of Athena and in direct proximity to the Altar of Zeus, palaces, and the theatre, connected by a colonnade surrounding the central court.<sup>15</sup>

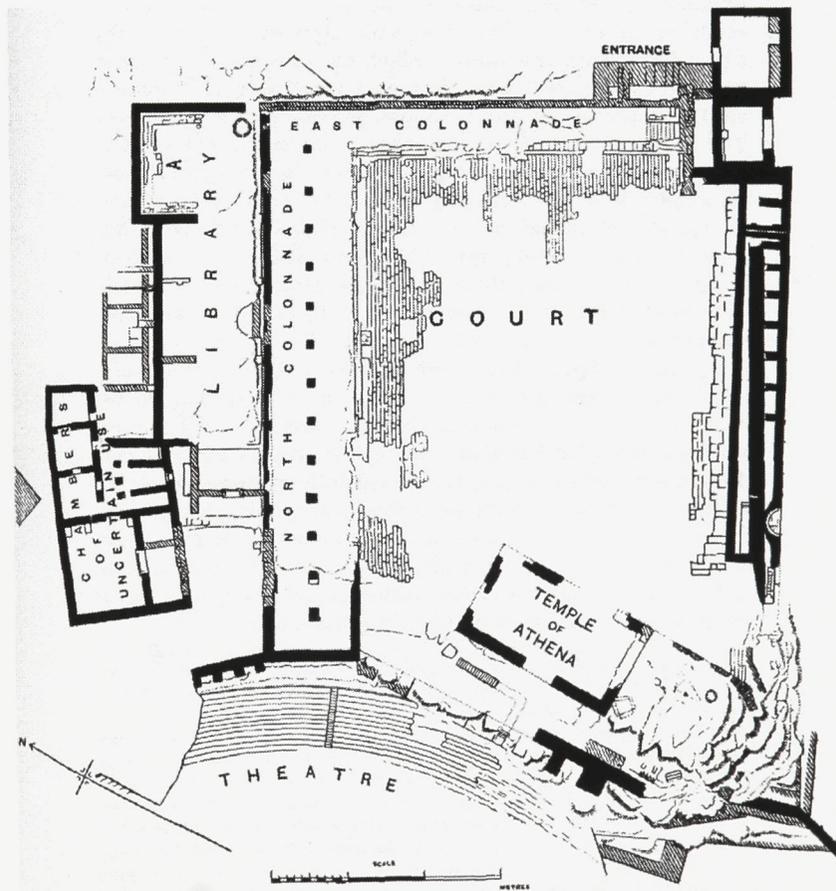


Fig. 2. Plan of the temple and precinct of Athena, Pergamon, from Clark 9.

So too in Rome was the library of such urban prominence, if not at a larger scale, as Rome had a total sum of twenty-six libraries within its borders,<sup>16</sup> despite that its first was not constructed until the reign of Augustus from 44 BCE through 14 CE. One library of significance was part of the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine Hill, the site where Romulus decided to build Rome according to Roman mythology. It consisted of two sections, one Greek and the other Latin, and connected to the rest of the temple by means of a *curia* or hall.

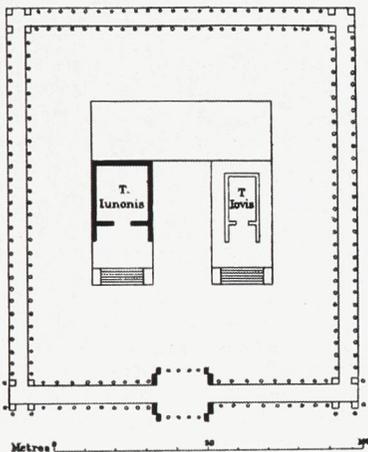


Fig. 3. Plan of the Porticus Octaviæ, Rome from *Formæ Urbis Romæ Antiquæ* (Berlin, 1896) rpt. in Clark 13.

Perhaps the greatest of Rome’s libraries was its first, in the Porticus Octaviæ, a structure built by Augustus for his sister, which “must have been one of the most magnificent structures in Rome,”<sup>17</sup> although Gaius Asinius Pollio, Roman general, lawyer, orator, and poet, added the library at later date.<sup>18</sup> The Porticus Octaviæ provided the ideal site for the first of Rome’s collections, as it housed it housed two temples, one to Jupiter, and another to Juno; a *schola* or conversation hall; and a *curia* in which the senate frequently met. Asinius Pollio extended the original structure by adding an *Atrium Vestæ*—a consecrated atrium home to the Vestal Virgins<sup>19</sup>—into which he placed two libraries, one Greek and the other Latin, collected since the reign of Julius Caesar.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, “The area and buildings were crowded with masterpieces in bronze and marble.”<sup>21</sup>

Another library at the Forum of Trajan is known only with approximate accuracy, Clark writes, also to have the two

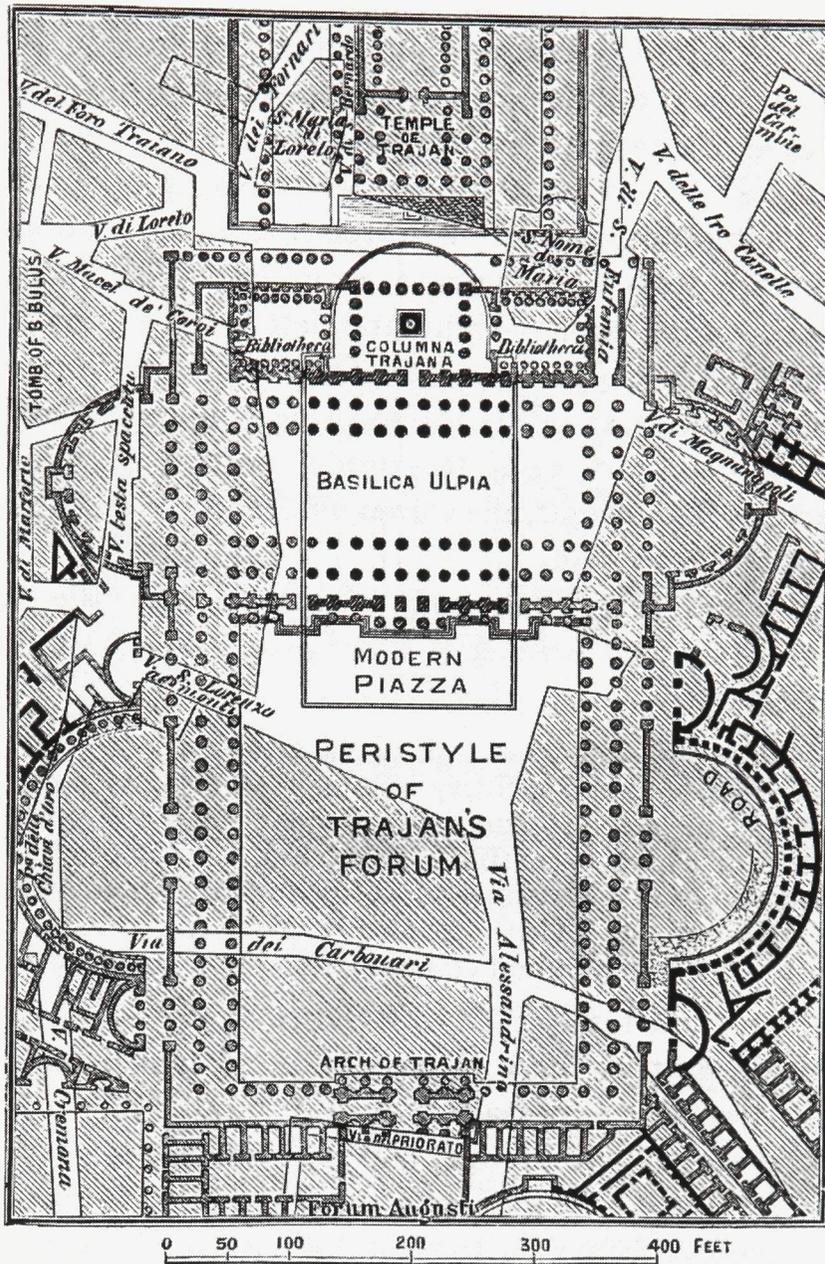
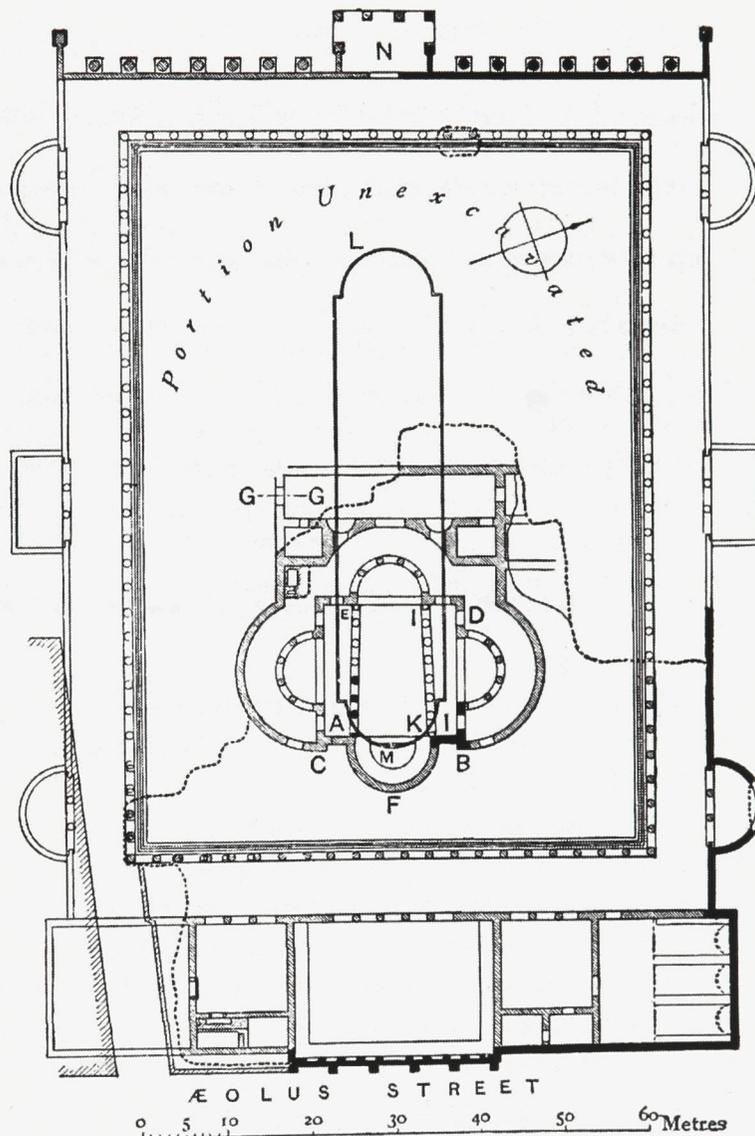


Fig. 4. Plan of the Forum of Trajan, from Middleton, *Remains of Ancient Rome*, II, 25, rpt. in Clark 15.

languages and a connection to the small court between *Basilica Ulpia* and the *Templum Divi Trajani*.<sup>22</sup> He is also convinced of the existence of a library built by Hadrian at Athens, contained by a building within the cloistered area of the Stoa of Hadrian, though at the time of his writing in 1901, the excavation of the

ruinous site was incomplete. If such were the case, it would have been in direct proximity to a temple of Hear and Zeus, a sanctuary common to all gods, a gymnasium, and a series of courts and colonnades.<sup>23</sup> It is also worth noting that during the Christian era, cloister life took up the archival task by



- AE, KI. Pier-arcade of the medieval church of the Panagia.  
 B. North-east angle of this church, of Roman work.  
 B, C, D, F. Portions of the Roman building which preceded the church.  
 L, M. Reservoirs.  
 N. Propylæa through which the court was entered.

Fig.5. Plan of the Stoa of Hadrian, at Athens, from Harrison, *Mythology and Monuments of Ancient Athens* rpt. in Clark 17.

including libraries with churches and monasteries as a *de facto* standard. After the dissolution of monastic life, universities then came to hold vast archives, all the while keeping the library close to those that would consume its contents near a forum that provided a place for its subsequent discourse.

It is possible to draw from Clark’s studies a crucial conclusion: that the library, from its impetus, never existed as a formal institution in solitude. Rather, libraries were fundamental programmatic elements interwoven with the core elements of its site, the city, and the state, and these programmatic relationships underscore the prominence of the library program to the ancients. Moreover, Clark cites Pliny writing on Asinius Pollio, “[...] He was the first to make men’s talents public property.”<sup>24</sup> What worth have these records if they keep in private isolation and their contents cannot be disseminated, cannot be discussed?



It is not surprising, then, that humankind’s implicit temple to itself was so heavily integrated with the social fabric of the city, hence the proximity to the palaces of Assyria, Alexandria, and Pergamon, and hence the proximity of the *schola* and *curia* of Rome. “[...] The public libraries of Rome [...] were used not merely for reading and reference, but as meeting-places of for literary men.”<sup>25</sup> More, it is not that the library is social *per se*. It is the ancient library’s relationship and proximity to other constituent components of the city



centre that, together, comprise a *participatory* space that was social. To place a library amongst the houses of the greatest gods transforms the library from a *mere* storage of papyrus and parchment scrolls into a temple of humankind's record of itself, an essential element of the larger house of the people—the city.

Therefore, Prince-Ramus errs when citing that the social roles of the library commenced with the Carnegie era, as Clark's work demonstrates. Carnegie's libraries were a direct response to social need. "In the mid to late 19th century, Canada's eastern cities experienced a growth spurt. They put on some weight and developed an upper middle class who were anxious to mimic the finer points of the European societies from which they or their parents had sailed,"<sup>26</sup> writes Phil Jenkins in *The Library Book: An Overdue History of the Ottawa Public Library 1906-2001*, a book commissioned by the Ottawa Public Library highlighting the city's library history. The difficulty, of course, was the lack of the financial resource to accomplish many of such endeavours, and that so many cities were reliant upon one man's financial endowments and generosity suffices to explicate this. Jenkins writes that in response to the situation:

[...] Young cities experienced an outbreak of somewhat patronizing associations, set up with the bet of intentions and seeking to raise the educational level of the working classes. Or, to put it another way, they sought, via a sense of old-fashioned noblesse oblige, to trickle down knowledge.<sup>27</sup>

While *noblesse oblige*—literally that *nobility obligates*, in French—was a spirit of the times in Carnegie’s era, our post-Carnegie era is drastically different. Beneficiaries are contemporarily rare. Instead, as a solution to the social need and meagre financial resources identical to Carnegie’s time, our climate is characterised by corporate partnership,<sup>28</sup> seeking not to aid the social ailments of the modern city by virtue of *noblesse oblige*, but to instead make profit through financial investments in them through private ownership.

What the Carnegie era *does* mark, if anything, is the last libraries before a fundamental departure in our engagement of the library the last breaths of free and public injection of social lifeblood into the modern city. The post-Carnegie era saw the gradual development of the North American libraries with which we are familiar today: isolated and removed warehouses of media, built on affordable land and on meagre budgets, driven by parameters not of social space, but of economic optimisation, functional efficiency, and a preoccupation with new technologies. By internalising the remains of free public space in the city, it was the death of the library as a constituent of *participatory* urban space.

## The Mechanics' Institutes

The departure is demonstrable within our exploration's given locale, that of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, at both the scale of the city and the nation. To understand how the movement affects the way much of the nation continues to engage its libraries today, it is necessary to illustrate the context in which Carnegie and other benefactors operated, specifically with the emergence and death of the Mechanics' Institutes. As Jim Blanchard indicates while introducing a bibliography on Mechanics' Institutes:

The institutes are very important in understanding the historical development of Canadian libraries, because they formed the nucleus of public library development in Ontario and to a lesser extent in other English-speaking parts of the country.<sup>29</sup>

At their base, the institutes were a voluntary association of the working class men, developed “for the instruction in the elementary and scientific principles underlying their work.”<sup>30</sup> *An Essay on the History and Management of Literary, Scientific, and Mechanic's Institutions* by James Hole published in 1853 thoroughly engages the European movement and adult instruction in general, including its development, successes, and its subsequent demise.

A catalyst to the entire movement, Hole notes, occurred in 1796 when the council of Glasgow elected to incorporate

a university of four colleges, named Anderson's University<sup>31</sup> after its benefactor Dr. John Anderson. While furnishing the school, the man appointed as the professor of natural philosophy, Dr. George Birkbeck, came into contact with many artisans of the working class, and "perceived their deficiency in scientific information; he learnt their wish to remedy this want, and resolved to supply them with the means."<sup>32</sup>

At the time, Birkbeck, today regarded as a pioneer in adult education, was criticised for the proposal's absurdity. Hole cites that Birkbeck recalled the criticisms during his opening address of the London Mechanics' Institute, predicting "that if invited, the mechanics would not come; that if they did come, they would not listen; and if they did listen, they would not comprehend."<sup>33</sup> In fact, when the offer was made to the working class, "they came, they listened, and conquered, —conquered the prejudice that would have consigned them to the dominion of interminable ignorance."<sup>34</sup>

While Hole cites that other voluntary organisations had existed prior to the Mechanics' Institutes, the Mechanics' Institutes perpetuated beyond their first formation, and the creation of the London Mechanics' Institute in 1823 five months after the Glasgow Mechanics' Institute is the generally agreed-upon date of the movement's inception.<sup>35</sup> It set up a regular system of lectures in four themes, being natural philosophy, chemistry and mineralogy, architecture, and mechanics;<sup>36</sup> and

used three primary methods for the diffusion of this knowledge, being small classes, large lectures, and a library for private study.<sup>37</sup> By 1824, the institutes had grown to total eight, and by 1825 more than twenty-three across Great Britain. These other locations extended the programme by including other sorts of facilities such as experimental workshops and laboratories; and collections of models, instruments, and specimen samples.<sup>38</sup>

At that same time, some Canadian cities had small quasi-public libraries run by social, parish, and commercial groups.<sup>39</sup> Regardless of the public library movements occurring in Great Britain and United States, as David R. Conn and Barry McCallum note in their essay *Heritage to Hi Tech: Evolution of Image and Function of Canadian Public Library Buildings*, Canada's growth was only very modest. Thus, when Mechanic's Institute movement pervaded Canada, their libraries addressed a common need.<sup>40</sup> Canada gained its first institute in Montreal in 1828,<sup>41</sup> Toronto following in 1830,<sup>42</sup> and Ottawa not establishing one until 1847.<sup>43</sup> By the middle of the century, at the time when Hole wrote his essay and when London had the Great Exhibition transforming the industrialised world, the institutes spread across Canada. By the twentieth century, Ontario was home to the most—over three hundred—hosting a combined membership of 31 000.<sup>44</sup>

Hole writes that the founders of the Mechanics' Institutes pronounced the working class was "destined to be a rational

agent and that his nature was ‘sinned against’ when, for any cause, his mental powers were suppressed.”<sup>45</sup> Hence, the ultimate objectives of the movement were much more than the *mere* adult education of a middle class. Their intent was not to teach skills, trades, or any particular business, but rather to teach their underlying scientific principles and their practical applications.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, the primary aims to teach “the reason of the thing, the why and the wherefore the act should be performed in a certain way and in no other,”<sup>47</sup> avoided attempts at imbuing encyclopaedic knowledge within the individuals, instead attempting to imbue an appreciative understanding of the act itself:

[...] Much pleasure would be communicated to the mechanic in the exercise of his art, and that the mental vacancy which follows a cessation from bodily toil would often be agreeably occupied by a few systematic philosophical ideas, upon which, at his leisure, he might meditate. [...] Greater satisfaction in the execution of machinery must be experienced, when the uses to which it may be applied, and the principles on which it operates, are well understood, than where the manual part alone is known, the artist remaining entirely ignorant of everything besides [...].<sup>48</sup>

Both the British and Canadian institutes were funded in three ways: through the donations of the wealthy, through funding from the state, and through collecting membership dues from the working class itself<sup>49</sup>—usually a dollar a year in Ottawa.<sup>50</sup> Finances were difficult, so the

Ottawa location closed down after two years of operation, to reopen not without the funding of local industrialists in 1853 as the Ottawa Mechanic's Institute & Athenæum. Although it received provincial funding along with most institutes in the province, it could never afford to stop charging fees, a situation common to others in the province.

At the same time, the public library movement continued to grow, and in 1895, the provincial government made it possible for regional municipalities to impose a levy as part of its tax structures to fund a free public library system.<sup>51</sup> Resultantly, “by the mid-1890s, the number of Institutes in the province had dropped from almost 300 to near 200, and Ottawa’s was all but moribund, with the books in storage at the local YMCA,” writes Jenkins in an Ottawa Citizen article part of series called *Library Renaissance: Thinking Outside the Book*.<sup>52</sup>

Our post-industrial era owes much to the Mechanics’ Institutes. If not for establishing an opinion as to the necessity of continued adult education,<sup>53</sup> then at least for increasing “the taste for reading and thus the demand for books, and a popular taste for good music.”<sup>54</sup> If not for promoting class-equity as a tenet of the modern age, then at least for a part in the rapid material progress of their nations<sup>55</sup> and their immeasurable effect on the people of the time or their generations thereafter.<sup>56</sup> In our exploration’s terms, the aim

of the Mechanic's Institute was to enable the working artisan to *participate*; and this they did in a manner twofold.

First, and quite simply as Hole explains, the institutes armed the artisans with an understanding and appreciation for their craft in a manner not thereto possible. If their role as cogs in the industrial machine was such that much of their work was automated or blind to them, the institutes provided a place that the men could come together and integrate their work into something far more than an act, but a way of life. They ceased to be mediated by their world, and instead embraced an understanding of the modality by which they operate—and thus a *participatory* modality. The effect of these institutes on its members cannot be overstated, for, as we have earlier elaborated, humankind would be otherwise doomed to degenerative recursion. The institutes enabled the artisans to *participate* in their work, not as mechanisms, but as free agents of a Doppler-ised *thinkmake*. To illustrate the second manner in which the Mechanics' Institutes enabled the working artisan to *participate*, it may help to illustrate the libraries that emerged in their demise.



## The Regress of Canadian Libraries

Many Canadian cities went on to convert the defunct institute's buildings into public libraries.<sup>57</sup> Carnegie entered into Ottawa's history in 1901, when he first committed \$100 000 to building

the city a public library if it could commit a fitting site and \$7500 in annual maintenance fees. The site at the corner of Metcalfe Street and Laurier Avenue<sup>58</sup>—where the city’s central library still stands today—was approved in 1903.<sup>59</sup> Completing the project in 1905, the stocked library opened to the public 30 April 1906 by Carnegie himself, his first visit to Canada as Jenkins writes, “declaring the library free to all, and said he hoped it would ‘prove a blessed fountain from which only healing waters flow.’ [...] This was ‘the library of the people.’”<sup>60</sup> By that point, the self-made steel-millionaire-cum-philanthropist had already founded sixty libraries elsewhere in the Dominion. Ottawa’s was long overdue:

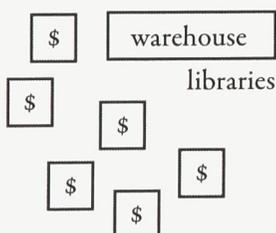
The structures that cater to the health of the mindset of the town are usually slower to manifest. In Ottawa, already incorporated as a city and made capital of the Canadas by 1855, the public library arrived well past its due date [...].<sup>61</sup>

Despite Carnegie’s significant financial contribution, during the two years after 1901 the city’s council deliberated the value of the institution, writes Shirley Woods in her book *Ottawa: The Capital of Canada*, “based on the fact that it would cost money, and such an expenditure would be frivolous.”<sup>62</sup> Conn and McCallum write that Carnegies libraries were “normal civic buildings, clad in appropriate historical style,”<sup>63</sup> and though they were “not necessarily non-functional for their times,” the short-term functional expectations were all that were feasible, “so reorganization was not provided for. The

libraries remained as monuments to the practices of their times, because there was little capital available to renovate or build for a generation after Carnegie's grants ceased."<sup>64</sup>

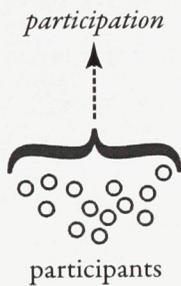
In the fluctuation of economic busts and booms that followed the Carnegie era, cessations and growth of the library network occurred accordingly. By the 1940s, libraries used generic modular systems to reduce their building costs, and by the 1950s, new Canadian libraries had completely embraced the modern box, especially given the difficulty meeting increased suburban demand.<sup>65</sup> The biggest building boom since the Carnegie era happened in the 1960s, the libraries compensating by using affordable curtain walls. The library became a repeatable type, one for every suburban park, an effect that compounded during the scarcity of affordable land in the 1970s.<sup>66</sup> It was in this climate that something crucial happened: they encountered—and became preoccupied, as Prince-Ramus notes—by one single question: the future of the book.<sup>67</sup> At the TED lecture, Prince-Ramus noted:

[...] Not only did we see buildings that were very generic, so, not only was the reading room look like the copy room [sic] look like the magazine area, but it meant that whatever issue was troubling the library at that moment, was starting to engulf every other activity that was happening in it. And in this case, what was getting engulfed was [sic] these social responsibilities, by the expansion of the book.<sup>68</sup>



The role of the library-type pigeonholed into a single task: it evolved into a media warehouse, built when

*civic structures* {  
 school;  
 library;  
 community centre;  
 college;  
 ...; }



feasible and tailored primarily around the base unit of the book including the fathom of what could replace it at some day if anything. Hence the rendering many of them as museums of failed technologies,<sup>69</sup> as coined by Walt Crawford and Michael Gorman in *Future Libraries: Dreams, Madness, and Reality*. Further, its economisation meant that the optimised and functionalised library became a commoditised type—not significant to its place in the city, not an integrated element of an interwoven programme. Never before had the library been so completely removed from its original impetus, in such stark contrast to even the Mechanics’ Institutes which preceded just decades before.

This serves to illustrate the second manner in which the Mechanics’ Institutes enabled the working artisan to *participate*. Coextensive with the effects the institutes had on the artisan were the *means* by which they were finally affected, accomplished by enrolling the members as actual constituents of the institute. Granted, while some of the programme was dependent upon sitting in silence while absorbing the contents of a lecture, Hole notes of the periodicals in the library, that:

Newspapers of both sides are admitted: people get to see both sides of a question; partisanship is diminished; honesty and ability are found not to be the exclusive property of one side, and stupidity and villany [sic] of the other.<sup>70</sup>

Members were not there to memorise their dictations ad infinitum, to regurgitate the factual encyclopaedic they had

access to. They came to learn and to discover, and such is only possible through a heuristic approach. Certainly, they read, they listened, and applied; but fundamentally, they engaged, discussed, and tried. As Louis Kahn said while speaking to a group of Students at Rice University in 1968, “The gallery is really the classroom of the students, where the boy who didn’t quite get what the teacher said could talk to another boy, a boy who seems to have a different kind of ear, and they both could understand.”<sup>71</sup> So was too with every element of the Mechanics’ Institute’s programme. Hole writes:

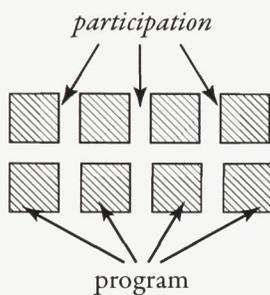
Occasional lectures, though good as a makeshift, cannot convey much accurate or positive information. The books in the library, though most invaluable to those who know how to read with judgment, too often add little to the real culture of the readers.<sup>72</sup>

Likewise, librarianship itself and the contents of the library within the programme have too followed automatically in accord, common practise segregating and compartmentalising the archival contents. The practise goes against the grain of “the development of contemporary research,” write Gerald Grunberg and Alan Gifford in *New Orders of Knowledge, New Technologies of Reading*, discussing the unique organisation principles of Bibliothèque nationale de France. This development “shows a growing interdisciplinary trend,” where “the most promising contemporary work seems to emanate from the assumption of the connectedness of disciplines and procedures once taken to

be quite separate.”<sup>73</sup> As they aimed for a general encyclopaedism for the library programme and its spatial configuration, the status quo of compartmentalising discrete functional elements into their own programmatic forms proved inadequate:

The current system—separated into a department of printed books and a periodicals department—of the Bibliothèque nationale responds inefficiently to this need: it does not facilitate the development of the heuristic practices specific to each discipline and encourages the hegemony of certain disciplines over others, all to the detriment of encyclopedism.<sup>74</sup>

It is not the mere accessibility of a library’s books, lectures, or workshops that is engaging of a people, but unplanned discourse that occurs at its thresholds and strings the experiences together. The subtext, of course, is that such is only possible by a spatiotemporal instance that affords such a possibility even to occur: not the temples and libraries of ancient cities, not the garden and nave of a monastery; it was their courts, halls, and their cloisters ultimately unified the programme as *participatory*.



The Mechanics’ Institutes emerged out of an existential necessity of its times, much like, as Hole writes, is true for the printing press. They were a fundamental response to a period, “when the labourer was considered simply as a superior sort of cattle grown for the behoof of his master, imbued with no higher qualities than strength and obedience [...]”<sup>75</sup> How applicable Hole’s words are to our own time, when our shopping

pathology compromises our *participation* as individuals, a new form of herding cattle. *Who is*—to repeat Aicher—so privileged as to be able to set up his or her own life? That Koolhaas, Prince-Ramus and the OMA “had to convince the librarians that social roles was [sic] equally important to media”<sup>76</sup> indicates that, post-Carnegie, the necessity of our times is shifted to create libraries that are generated purely as franchised and typified vaults of media—effectively disenfranchising the people from *participatory* space as shoppers.

In *Foucault*, Deleuze discusses Michel Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish*, writes that there are two meanings of form: in one sense that “organizes matter,” such as “the prison [...], the hospital, the school, the barracks and the workshop;” and in another sense that “finalizes functions and gives them aims,” such as, respectively, “punishment[...], care, education, training, or enforced work.” Deleuze continues: “The fact is that there is a kind of correspondence between them, even though the two forms are irreducible [...].”<sup>77</sup>

To the correspondence in between, we shall return later; but we have hereto discovered the manners in which the libraries of the ancient formed in matter and function. The library was self-contained, yet attached to a significant urban programme; and its proximity and connection to this programme rendered the library as much more than a warehouse of knowledge, but an essential function of

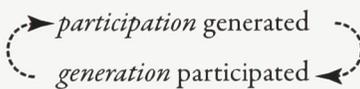
social space. We have also discovered the manner in which the Mechanics' Institutes did the same: connecting the material component to related programmatic elements, while functionally maintaining a reciprocal relationship between the keeping of knowledge and its discourse. Finally, we have discovered how the recent post-Carnegie libraries differ from these two. First, the material separates from the free elements of the city, through spatiotemporal disconnection, either by building on cheap land, or by integrating it within privately owned contexts. Second, the material became homogenised in a response to strict economic parameters, or in anticipation of the death of the book. Third, and finally, the function of the library has consequently become homogenised, suppressing social programme out of economic constraint.

## Generation, Generated

It is useful to provide a processional narrative by which this occurred: the library ceased to be an existential requisite programme of *participatory* space, only insofar as it died alongside the free and public space in the city, coinciding with the infeasibility of the Mechanics' Institutes. Second, the city's public space became internalised within the library, either as reactionary compensation, as refuge, or as both, as is evident in the Carnegie era. This institutionalised the library as a building type. The slow dismantling of the institution, "with governments no longer able or willing to support these

institutions,” which includes, as Koolhaas writes, the likes of museums, schools, and the city itself, “financial support has shifted from a public to a private responsibility.”<sup>78</sup> The shift means that the library, “left to its own resources, has confronted the same conditions as shopping: the instabilities of the market, the loss of consumer interest, the threat of obsolescence,”<sup>79</sup> as with all institutions. As such, any changes the library does undergo are either the result of critical economic excision, as is the case in the supposed superfluity of social program or homogenised functional elements; or random and haphazard mutation, as is the case in accommodating the onslaught of new technologies.

If we recall that if at any moment what is *generated* is the locus of *generation* itself, and thus that what is *generated* and its *generation* are coextensive, then it suggests that the suppression of *participatory* space evidenced by our narrative can too be found in its generative processes. That is, it is in a parallel suppression of a *participatory* modality in design. Both are symptomatic of our shopping pathology. The availability of guides such as *Planning and Design of Libraries* by Godfrey Thompson epitomises this and our contemporary shopping pathology so succinctly—as it applies to architectural generation and its generated form—that it can be considered the antithesis of our exploration in its complete triumph of the *No*. Thompson provides reams of charts, tables, optimisation schemes, and vague descriptions of the functional elements that



comprise the contemporary library. The text virtually renders the architect as post-modern organiser and decorator, to which the whim of style and taste can be applied to formal elements otherwise determined by their functional parameters. The architect reduces to a shopper of functions and images. In his introduction, Thompson writes that, “Discussions about the inter-relations of function and form have been avoided, as has reference to the element of form which is purely aesthetic and is, to a large extent, the exclusive concern of the architect.”<sup>80</sup>

At times the text seems to be more of a retail shopping catalogue hybridised with children’s Lego blocks than it does a serious guide to engage the design of one of humankind’s most fundamental programmatic elements. It lacks any projection, and lacks any criticality, arming the “designer” a kit of parts to be automatically arranged. For all intents and purposes, to Thompson, the library is effectively a finished project; done, in its own regard, to which all further efforts are regurgitations of the same, with a minor critical eye in their arrangement, and the ever-present question of accommodating new technologies. What is most tragic is that he recommends that the text to be for “beginners,” including students and those who are approaching the library for the first time.<sup>81</sup> Should texts like these ever be used in practise—and they must, for there is a market to publish them—then it only perpetuates, if not accelerates,

the continual removal of the library from *participatory* urban space and the complete negation of any projective force.

The preceding explication of automatic and autonomic modalities, of the death of *participation*, and the transformation of the library come at risk of seeming cynical or hyperbole. Not all is lost, however, as maintaining an initially projective stance is necessarily optimistic, and the contemporary context reveals many transformations in even the last decade alone. The library, though still at risk of private ownership, continues to undergo a renaissance of sorts, with new central libraries recently being built in Vancouver, Montreal, Phoenix, San Francisco, and Salt Lake City.<sup>82</sup> Perhaps given that it is one of the “last uncontested moral universes,” the last free and public places in the city—where paying for anything remains an option, and staying for extended periods is not considered loitering—that it has been the subject of much recent attention, in the city of Ottawa, within Canada, and throughout the New World.

Hence why the OMA’s Seattle Central Library remains so refreshing, where they, writes Lawrence Cheek of *Architecture Magazine*, have managed to do “nothing less than reinvent the public library.”<sup>83</sup> It is a prime example of how the library is proving itself a fit vehicle for a *participatory* awakening or revival, not just in its material form, nor just in its functional form; but also in the manner which OMA engaged the project to begin with. It is no typical library of our times, first indicated

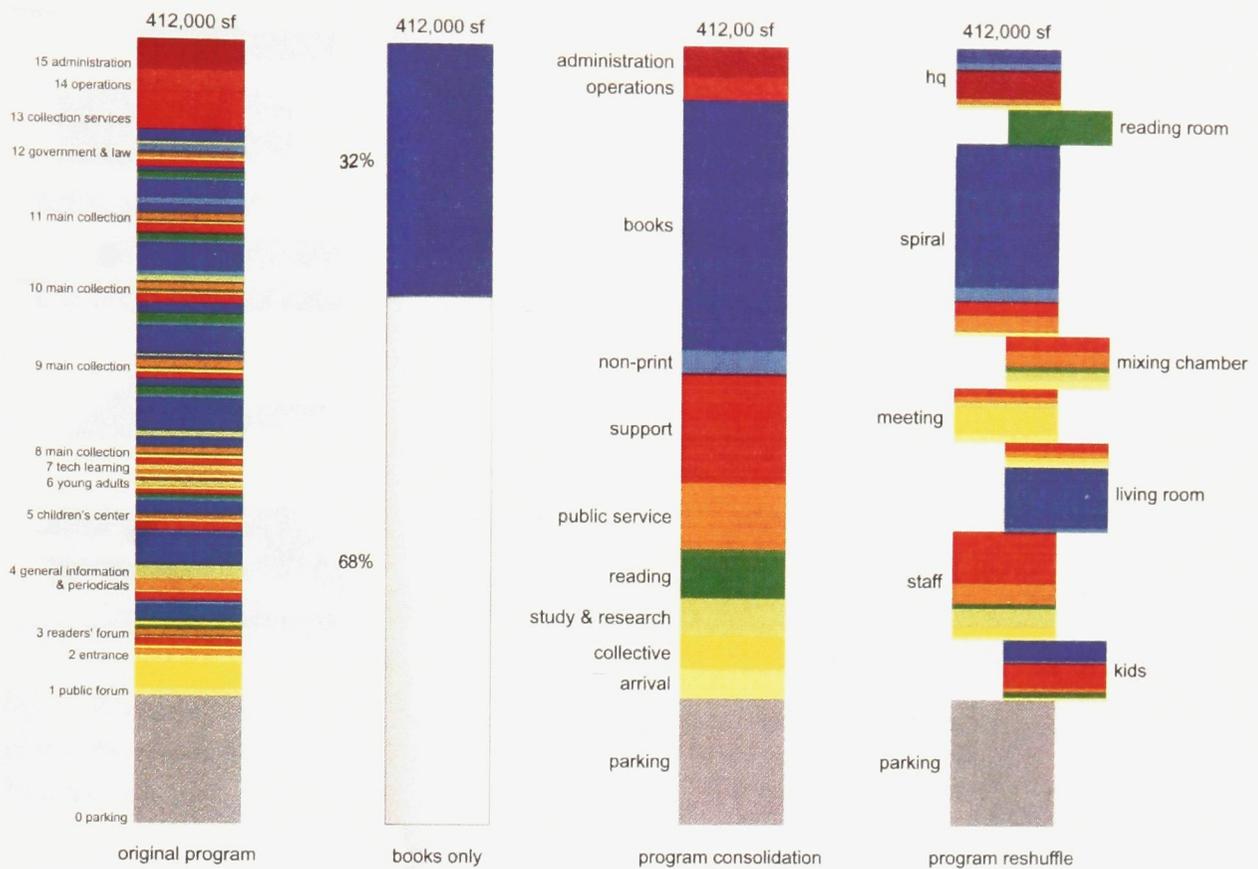


Fig. 6. Seattle Central Library program “combing” and organisation, from Joshua Prince-Ramus, “Seattle Public,” *Content*, ed. Rem Koolhaas (Köln: Taschen, 2004) 140-141.

by the complete absence of private interest or ownership in any of its \$155 million construction costs: beneficiaries and the public purse funded it. Yet its difference is indicated more so by the fact that of the nearly 34 000 m<sup>2</sup> available, the book stacks comprise only 32% of the space in the building.<sup>84</sup>

To call Seattle Central programmatically intense would be an understatement. Prince-Ramus and Koolhaas, using a “hyper-rational” approach<sup>85</sup> first sifted through the individual constituent programs brought forth by committees and grouped them into related clusters, “five of stability, and four of instability,” writes former Seattleite Prince-Ramus in

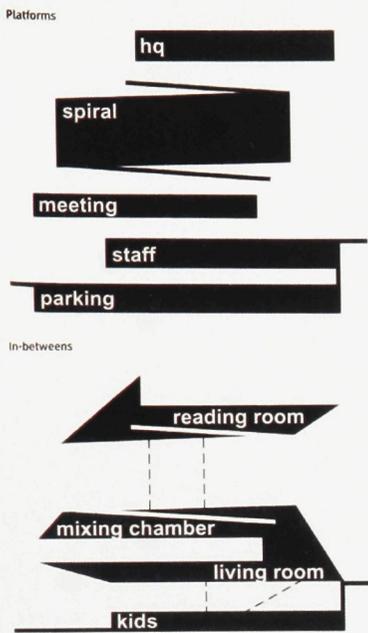


Fig. 7. Programmatic platforms, from Prince-Ramus 140.

*Content*.<sup>86</sup> The five stable clusters include functional elements to support the library and stacks, such as administration, parking, meeting spaces, and the administrative headquarters, and it also includes the stack itself, called the ‘book spiral’ for its acclaimed approach to addressing the typical problems with growing collections in pancake-stack libraries. By inclining and adjoining the floors into a “continuous ribbon, running from ‘000’ to ‘999’” the book spiral “implies a reclamation of the much-compromised Dewey Decimal System,” writes Prince-Ramus. As such, “the subjects form a coexistence that approaches the organic; each evolves relative to the others, occupying more or less space on the ribbon, but never forcing a rupture.”<sup>87</sup>

The book spiral is a revolutionary, pragmatic, all-to-Koolhaasian way of using architecture as an instrument in addressing a contemporary spatial problem. Yet, while it “liberates the librarians from the burden of managing ever-increasing masses of material” to instead “reunite in a circle of concentrated expertise,”<sup>88</sup> the book spiral is arguably not

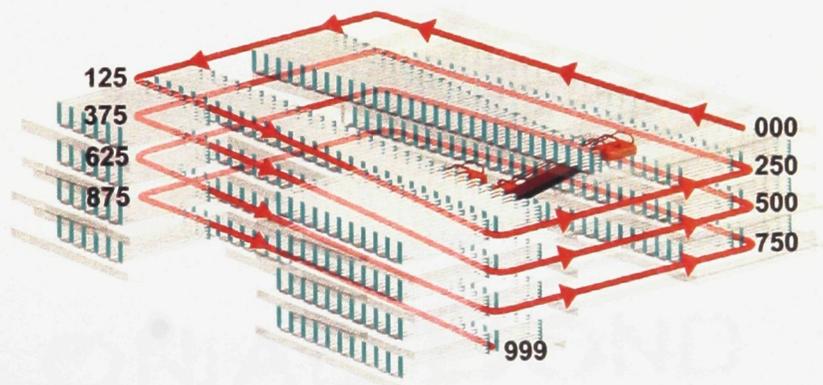


Fig. 8. Book spiral, from Prince-Ramus 142.

the library's major contribution to Seattle, librarians, or architecture. What distinguishes Seattle Central from its contemporaries are the programmes of instability, which comprise nearly half of the programmatic density and are exclusively dedicated towards social programme. These include the children's area and a reading room, which, granted, are not particularly new for the library; but also what the OMA call the 'living room', an idea championed by Umberto Eco,<sup>89</sup> and the 'mixing chamber', two equally social yet distinct space:

The mixing chamber is an area of maximum librarian-patron interaction, a trading floor for information

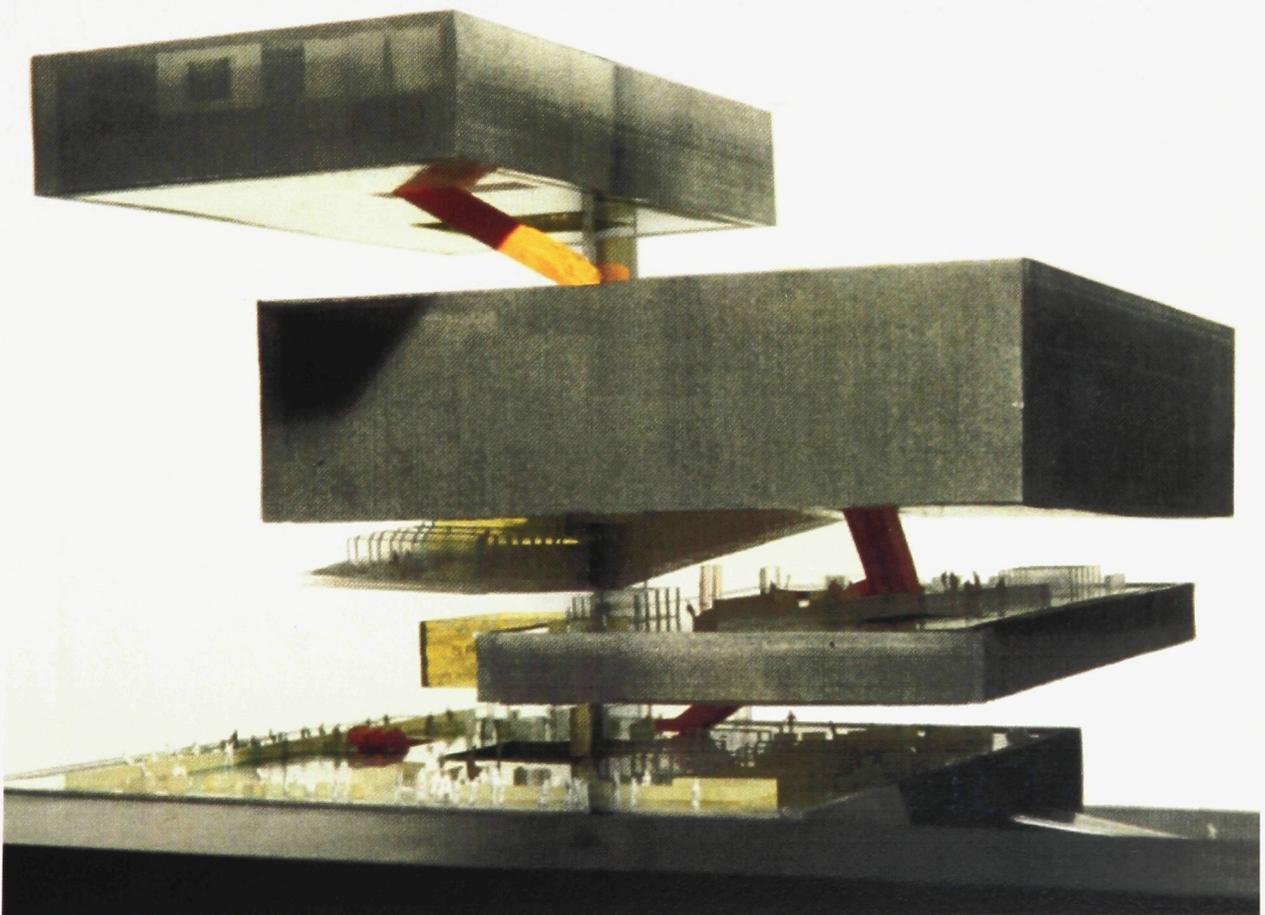


Fig. 9. Seattle Central Library formal skeleton, from Prince-Ramus 144-145.

orchestrated to fulfill an essential (now neglected) need for expert interdisciplinary help. [It] consolidates the library's cumulative human and technological intelligence: the visitor is surrounded by information sources.<sup>90</sup>

Where the mixing chamber allows patrons access to resident experts, the living room is exclusively for the patron, to do—*whatever* they please; and for free. It is “a large unprogrammed space that offers Seattleites an alternative to brand-name coffee shops as a place to relax, socialize, read, and connect wireless to the Internet,”<sup>91</sup> writes Robert Such of *Architecture Week*. It is also a space to think, to discuss a recent bestseller or periodical, to meet a stranger or a friend; it is a place to *participate*. These social spaces string the static, stable programmes together, functioning “as trading floors where librarians inform and stimulate, where the interface between different platforms is organized—spaces for work, interaction and play,”<sup>92</sup> writes Prince-Ramus; Cheek calls the place a “treehouse.”<sup>93</sup>

The success of Seattle Central is measurable by many criteria. It turned public sceptics—those rejecting its newspaper published renditions—into lovers;<sup>94</sup> the project completed within budget; it is pending qualification for LEED silver certification;<sup>95</sup> and it is a new landmark of downtown Seattle, both a destination and a reference point. Where many critics slated the building as another instance of uncontrolled architectural ego, Prince-Ramus contends that it is but the result of their hyper-rational process.<sup>96</sup> The proof is its use:

[On] the library's first day of normal business, crowds dispersed into its nine public levels, applying for borrower's cards [...], staking out computers, staggering through electronic checkout under tottering mountains of books, registering to vote, sipping mochas in the cavernous third-floor 'Living Room', animatedly debating design features—doing everything but slinking about in reverential awe. The building was literally abuzz with human energy.<sup>97</sup>

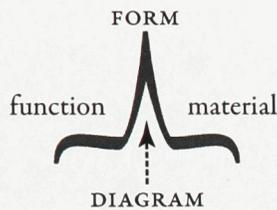
In the end, Seattle Central brings the OMA attention not through its controversy, but through its unparalleled successes. Despite requiring some post-occupancy tweaks, such as improved signage and way finding, Cheek asks, "Has a creation with such high aspirations ever turned itself over, so quickly and thoroughly, to the public?"<sup>98</sup> Perhaps the reason lies in Seattle Central Library not being a library by contemporary standards at all. It is far more evocative of spatiotemporal embodiment of the Mechanics' Institutes and the libraries of the ancients, than of the generic and optimised media-warehouses that dot much of the urban Canadian landscape. It is not an instantiation of the library-type as we know it, in any regard, for it is arguably the best contemporary example of a Doppler architecture that embodies *participation* modality simultaneously in its *generation* and what is *generated*.

The Seattle Central Library *generated* is undeniably projective: it responds not as iteration of typical convention, but to its own parameters of requisite, its own programmatic aspiration. It does not answer to questions of material taste,

organisation, or classical doctrine; nor does it answer to functional economisation. Hence, the library dissolves equally and at once high-modernist generic space<sup>99</sup> and the traditional Carnegie library;<sup>100</sup> the critical eye alone would try to deconstruct and resolve these forms. Yet so too is it undeniably critical. It does not materially dance around relishing the techno-utopian dream of the book's death and obfuscation; nor functionally does it permit the intrusion of the domain of the shopper, through either ownership or increased segregation. The projective eye alone would constantly seek the library of the future, ignoring the complications of the day. Seattle Public is much more than a library; it is a new paradigm.

Thus through its *generated* criticality, Seattle Central Library is projective of whence it came, only insofar as it remains, reciprocally in the two-step dance, critical of its mediation through its projection. To which the obvious question is but how this maintained? Our exploration returns to Deleuze, in emphasising that by saying *Seattle Central Library*, we do not solely speak of the library form itself—its material organisation or its finalised function—the library *generated*—but too of the “correspondence between them”—its *generation*. “What,” Deleuze asks, “can we call such a new informal dimension?” Referring again to Foucault's panopticism, Deleuze continues:

On one occasion Foucault gives it its most precise name: it is a 'diagram', that is to say 'functioning, abstracted from any obstacle [...] or friction [and which] must be detached from any specific use'.<sup>101</sup> The *diagram* is no longer an auditory or visual archive but a map, a cartography that is coextensive with the whole social field. It is an abstract machine.<sup>102</sup>



The OMA let neither the material form of the library determine or result from its functional form, nor vice versa, embracing the diagram during its generative processes and using its representative visualisation to engage architecture. The generation situates directly within this informal dimension, and it is evident when analysing the development of Seattle Public Library. Speaking at TED, Prince-Ramus literally “[builds] up the Seattle Central Library in this way, before your eyes, in about five or six diagrams; and I truly mean this is the design process that you’ll see.”<sup>103</sup>

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### III Cusp

*The man working without any knowledge of the laws whereby the result is achieved, is like a machine, moving as he is moved; or his mind resembles the instinct of the bee and the beaver, which never improves. If fashion, accident, or improvement requires changes in the process, the ignorant workman finds the greatest difficulty in accommodating himself to the new plan, and is the most doggedly obstinate in resisting its introduction.*

—JAMES HOLE

### The Diagram

Kahn, again speaking at Rice University, said, “One of the great lacks of architecture today is that these institutions are not being defined, that they are being taken as given by the programmer, and made into a building.”<sup>1</sup> Ben van Berkel and Caroline Bos of UN Studio practise in opposition to these automatic tendencies. They write in their three-volume series *Move* that, over the past two centuries, “traditional techniques have been transformed into machines and have thus lost their impact” in the generation of new architecture, placing the discipline at risk of losing “its own envisioning practices.”<sup>2</sup> Implicit in their observations is the inextricable unison of *generated*

forms—material and function—and the means of *generation* by which they become, the domain of the diagram. To combine their observations, the contemporary architectural machine permits a triumph of the *No* by and through giving itself over to the mediation of the World, either with the blind repetition of established formal typologies in what is *generated*, or with typical traditional techniques or the emergence of the computer in its *generation*. “[...] The technology of mediation needs to be more deeply incorporated within the practise of architecture and to be more widely understood and supported before it can be fully exploited as a tool,” for “as architects we are obliged to look for relevance in contemporary practices, events and technologies—or disappear,”<sup>3</sup> and this is the role of the diagram.

It is necessary to distinguish between two understandings of the diagram, although for our exploration we may eventually address both equally as the same, as both are persistently the diagram in between the two meanings of form. The first, which we may loosely call *diagram-noun*, is characterised by Deleuze and his reading of Foucault’s writing on Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon. Foucault is not concerned with the prison and penal system *per se*, and nor are we, likewise, concerned with the library and the archive of media and knowledge. Rather he concerned with the relationship between the two forms, the essence of which is identifiable in numerous other examples as a general Panopticism. Deleuze summarises:

When Foucault defines Panopticism, either he specifically sees it as an optical or luminous arrangement that characterizes prison, or he views it abstractly as a machine that not only affects visible matter in general (a workshop, barracks, school or hospital as much as a prison) but also in general passes through every articulable function.<sup>4</sup>

When abstracted from the materials and functions that it formalises, the “abstract formula of Panopticism is no longer ‘to see without being seen’ but to *impose a particular conduct on a particular human multiplicity.*” The manners in which this can manifest are endless, as listed, but at its base Panopticism is an abstract machine, “always concerned with unformed and unorganized matter and unformalized, unfinalized functions, the two variables being indissolubly linked.”<sup>5</sup> We may conclude that this abstract formula applies, as well, to shopping; and that its insidious presence is but another hegemonic manifestation of panopticism. Foucault continues to abstract the space in between, as we have written, arriving at the diagram; and as part of everything, the diagram itself is almost nothing:

It is defined by its informal functions and matter and in terms of form makes no distinction between content and expression, a discursive formation and a non-discursive formation. It is a machine that is almost blind and mute, even though it makes others see and speak.<sup>6</sup>

That the diagram is indeterminate is essential, for it has nothing to do with ideology, economy, or the like, as these are already qualified by their substance and defined by their forms.<sup>7</sup> As such it is highly unstable and fluid as

a catalyst of change. Deleuze describes another diagram, that of ancient sovereign societies who would expunge as a force characterised by the model of leprosy, in contrast to the panoptic tendency to isolate and contain, characterised by the model of the plague; each relating to different sets of form. As an aside, Deleuze calls the former more a theatre than a factory as exemplified by the latter. Perhaps one might call the diagram in such an instance the abstract *choreography* instead of *machine*.<sup>8</sup> Regardless, Deleuze writes:

[It is] constantly evolving. It never functions in order to represent a persisting world but produces a new kind of reality, a new model of truth. It is neither the subject of history, nor does it survey history. It makes history by unmaking preceding realities and significations, constituting hundreds of points of emergence or creativity, unexpected conjunctions or improbable continuums. It doubles history with a sense of continual evolution.<sup>9</sup>

Yet the diagram does not exist separate and apart from form, dually irreconcilable with it. Our exploration of *thinkmake* has already illuminated that the *generated* form and its *generation* are coextensive, as so too “the abstract machine is like the cause of the concrete assemblages that execute its relations; and these relations between forces take place ‘not above’ but within the very tissue of the assemblages they produce.”<sup>10</sup> Deleuze calls this position the *immanent cause*, “a cause which is realized, integrated and distinguished in its effect. Or rather the immanent cause is

realized, integrated and distinguished by its effect. In this way there is a correlation or mutual presupposition between cause and effect, between abstract machine and concrete assemblages [...].”<sup>11</sup> We can recall that our exploration concluded the same mutual presupposition of the World and of *thinkmake*, but Deleuze continues to explain that it is at the immanent cause where the two forms are differentiated:

It is precisely because the immanent cause, in both its matter and its functions, disregards form that it is realized on the basis of a central differentiation which, on the one hand, will form visible matter, and on the other will formalize articulable functions. Between the visible and the articulable a gap or disjunction opens up, but this disjunction of forms is the place—or ‘non-place’, as Foucault puts it—where the informal diagram is swallowed up and becomes embodied instead in two different directions that are necessarily divergent and irreducible.<sup>12</sup>

Now, while Deleuze notes “there are as many diagrams as there are social fields in history,” as “if there are many diagrammatic functions and even matters, it is because every diagram is a spatio-temporal multiplicity,”<sup>13</sup> what is particularly perilous about the panoptic diagram is that it, itself, suppresses these multiplicities by imposing a particular conduct. Panopticism—and by extension, our shopping pathology—is the ultimate triumph of the *No*, for it robs humankind of even the capacity to say *Yes*; that is, of the immanence of *Our World*; that is again, to evolve other diagrams; that is, finally, to *participate*. Perhaps Deleuze would relate the

shopping pathology to that of cancer: not of exclusion or containment, but utter self-annihilation. It is the self-preserving authoritative stasis of panopticism that translates into shopping by supplanting evolution with fashionability and fetish.

The non-place of the immanent cause is the domain in which *participation* must take action—within the diagram—by harnessing it within the scope of architectural generation to “allow the architectural imagination to find relevance in contemporary circumstances—and to communicate its policy,”<sup>14</sup> which leads us to the second understanding of diagram, which we may call *diagram-verb*. It is characterised by UN Studio and OMA, evidenced by Seattle Central Library, instrumentalising the diagram as a device in architecture’s *generation*. UN Studio’s adoption of the diagram comes in response to questions of how to instrumentalise the “global imagination into contemporary structures” and the “new public, mediated space.”<sup>15</sup> UN Studio engages their toolset with the conscious effort stay off automatic tendencies of repetition: “Instead of trying to impose a simplistic standard pattern on an unpredictable and constantly changing world, we identify meaningful parameters within contemporary conditions.”<sup>16</sup> As such, their work is “more experimental than conceptual” because it “engenders specific and concrete research techniques and transformative design processes.”<sup>17</sup>

Because it is removed from functional or material form, diagramming is not contingent upon any set of conventions, ascribing to no particular media nor mode, thus providing a meta-medium and meta-mode. Its indeterminacy affords a ‘suspended cognition’,<sup>18</sup> as termed by Keith Albarn and Jenny Miall Smith in their text *Diagram: The Instrument of Thought*. Likewise, Van Berkel and Bos write that diagramming suspends the automatic tendency of typological fixation or “spiralling into cliché,”<sup>19</sup> such that “the meaninglessness that repetition and mediation create is overcome by diagrams which generate new, instrumental meanings [...]”<sup>20</sup> That is, it holds the immanent cause and delays its concretisation as the tissues of form, thereby permitting the mutation of the type from within itself.<sup>21</sup> Albarn and Smith similarly note, “the diagram is evidence of an idea being structured” and “not *the idea* but a model of it,”<sup>22</sup> in a perpetual process of becoming.

Albarn and Smith argue that this suspension of the non-place, a fundamental characteristic of diagramming, allows a particular synchronicity that otherwise collapses with traditional means such as orthographic projections that automatically imply a particular formal manifestation in concretised tissues.<sup>23</sup> It can be described as an “interdependence of objective events as much among themselves as with the subjective states of the observer,”<sup>24</sup> enabling a short-circuitry of the processes of thought, much like the attempts of De Bono’s lateral thinking strategies. Dwelling in this non-

place subsequently affords an approach that UN Studio calls *inclusive*, absorbing the fragmentation and difference of traditional strategies and types into a coherent continuous approach,<sup>25</sup> resonant with the inclusiveness hereto identified, in the Mechanics' Institutes programmes and the need to support inter-disciplinarian connections within the library programme. It enables the architect to “[take] on board all aspects of architecture” that “exist concurrently in one project” so that “we are now able to see all these layers of existence together,”<sup>26</sup> thus “putting pragmatic parameters such as economic value and differential densities on an equal footing with factors such as geometry and policy.”<sup>27</sup>

The inclusive capacity is especially crucial for UN Studio projects, characterised by large urban infrastructures combining an intense variety of programme and function. With the diagram, “large public projects in which infrastructure and programmes come together to form a new kind of urban node” that would otherwise be impossible with “the traditional method of urban planning that consisted of shifting about disjointed units. The inclusive approach entails the comprehensive and seamless assemblage of construction, programme and circulation.”<sup>28</sup>

An example of UN Studio's efficacy with the diagram is the Arnhem Central Station, a project responding to numerous practical requirements while mandated with significance

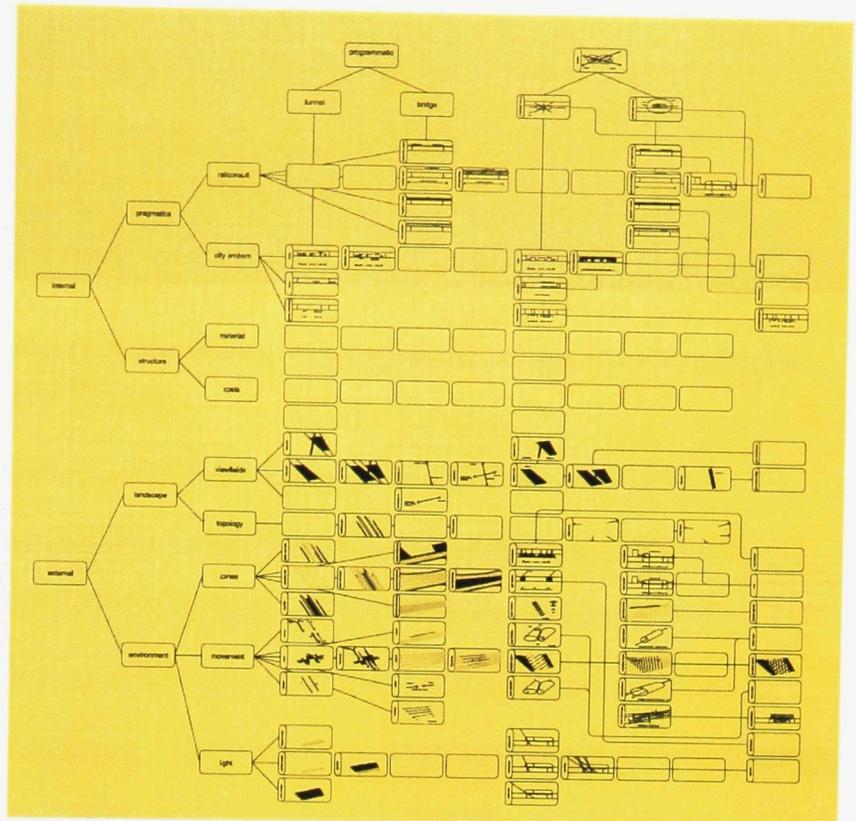


Fig. 10. Schematic matrix of Arnhem Central, from Ben van Berkel and Caroline Bos, *UN Studio: Design Models* (New York: Rizzoli, 2006) 275.

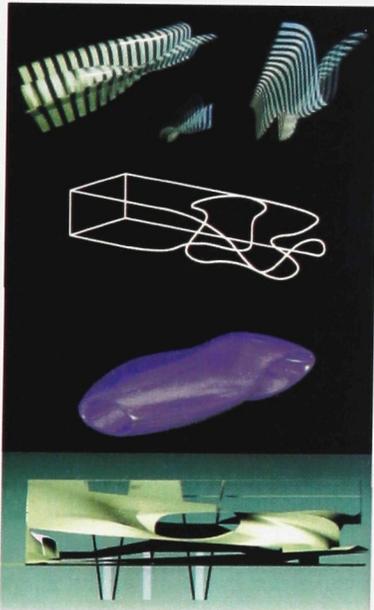


Fig. 11. Prototype derived from three design models, from Van Berkel and Bos 274.

as a gateway to the city and region. Accommodating office space; retail shops; housing units; bus and train stations; a large railway platform and railway underpass; a car tunnel; bicycle parking and storage; and a car garage; the project was complicated beyond conventional rational means by requiring the involvement of municipal officials; railway officials; several developers; several national ministries; and the European Union.<sup>29</sup> While such intense projects typically result in failed design-by-committee projects, UN Studio initiated the project by isolating overlapping and common elements, both by the criterion of programme and related

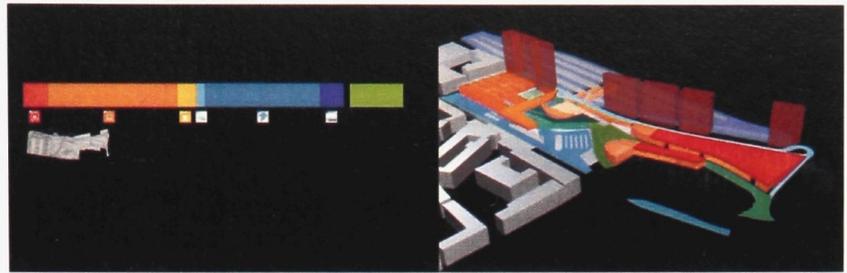


Fig. 12. Visualisation of programme on site, from Van Berkel and Bos 275.

parties, and then mapped these to a series of movement studies that formed the project's cornerstone: trajectories, meeting places, time-of-day behaviours, and so forth.<sup>30</sup>

What emerged was a landscape of interrelated movements, suggesting a Klein bottle encapsulating a full day's loop feeding back onto itself. The success of the project could have been realised only through the instrumentality of the diagram.<sup>31</sup>

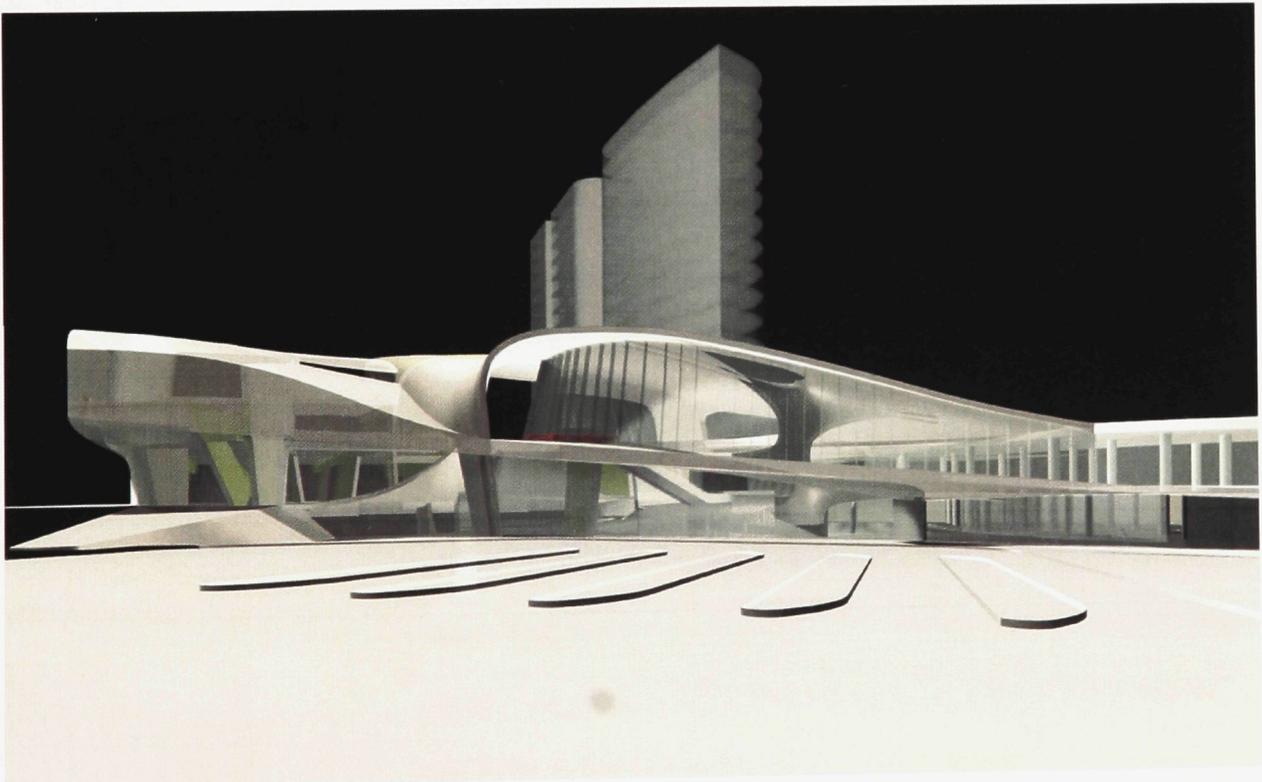


Fig. 13. Rendered model, Arnhem Central, from Van Berkel and Bos 276-277.

OMA and UN Studio are not alone in their efforts. Robert Somol, in the introduction to Peter Eisenman's *Diagram Diaries*, notes that, "In general, the fundamental technique and procedure of architectural knowledge has seemingly shifted, over the second half of the twentieth century, from the drawing to the diagram."<sup>32</sup> Comparing the writing and documented work of UN Studio's *Move* with Eisenman's *Diagram Diaries* reveals, however, that "not all recent uses of the diagram are equally diagrammatic," as Somol ironically writes while trying to distinguish Eisenman's work from the emergence of neo-avant-garde "information architects" after 1960.<sup>33</sup> This, of course, was written before Somol had abandoned the Eisenmanian camp.

Much of Eisenman's representations can be quite graphically appealing, responding to all of what Edward Tufte, an authority on statistical representation, posits as criterion for good diagrams in *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information*. They are generally quite simple, and thus maintain their communicative efficacy:<sup>34</sup> the young Eisenman avoids distortion of the 'data'; makes large operational procedures quite coherent, encourages the eye to compare adjacent diagrams; are clear, precise, and efficient; densely presents much content in a small space; and serves a reasonably clear purpose.<sup>35</sup> Arguably, the maturing Eisenman starts to "seek credit merely for possessing a new technology, rather than using it to make better designs,"<sup>36</sup> as Tufte writes, for some of his initial computer-generated representations induce the viewer to think more about the

methodology and technologies than the substance—arguable only because this was very well Eisenman’s intent.<sup>37</sup>

The difference in Eisenman’s ‘diagrammatic’ investigations from the likes of OMA and UN Studio is that he persistently works with *form*; Eisenman’s explorations always deal with the concrete assemblages, be it material or functional. Somol writes that, “Eisenman would subject “form” itself to perpetual revision through an exhaustive sequence of operations: transformations, decomposition, grafting, scaling, rotation, inversion, superimposition, shifting, folding;”<sup>38</sup> all of which are abstracted geometric operations. These, peculiarly writes Somol, form a “catalogue” of procedures “that becomes the subject matter of architecture, a disciplinary precondition to a diagrammatic approach.”<sup>39</sup> The use of *catalogue* to describe Eisenman’s engagement is similar to our earlier exploration of the type: How am I to live my life? With which item am I to alter this form? Ultimately, the transformations have little to do with the architectural programme insofar as these

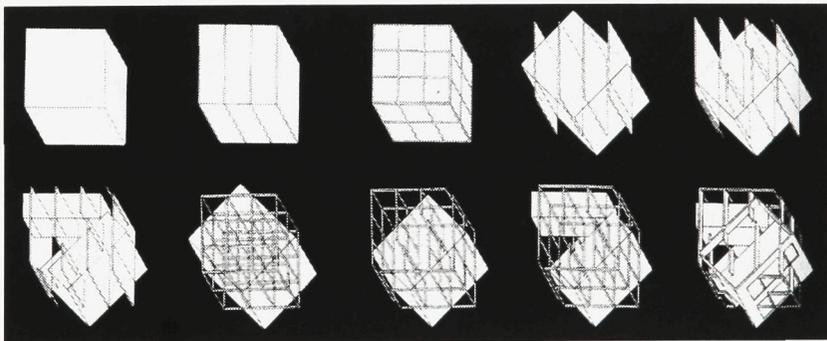


Fig. 14. House III, from Peter Eisenman, *Diagram Diaries* (New York: Universe Publishing, 1999) 100.

transformations—Eisenman’s critical eye—can be applied only to these material and functional forms, and are thus removed from the diagram, the immanent cause, that lay between them. While, as Albarn and Smith write, it “effectively demonstrates and supports cause and effect,” Eisenman’s linearity dissolves the mutual presupposition between cause and effect as noted by Deleuze and, by inhibiting “the use of additional coordinates to cross-refer spatially outside of the linear time-tense,” it “fails to evoke the important counter-model of wholeness which allows for synchronicity.”<sup>40</sup> In contrast to Eisenman, Van Berkel and Bos writes that diagram “introduces into a work qualities that are unspoken, disconnected from an ideal or an ideology, random, intuitive, subjective, not bound to a linear logic—qualities that can be physical, structural, spatial, or technical.”<sup>41</sup> These qualities are not in a catalogue.

No place is this more evident than in Eisenman’s serially number House project, suggesting that “the ‘final’ built structures are merely indexical signs”—*merely*—“that point to a larger process of which they are only a part.”<sup>42</sup> Somol continues, “[...] Across the entire set of projects, [...] Eisenman works with the strictures of the high modern diagram only to undo its fundamental principles and values, subverting the classical-humanist logic of the nine-square.”<sup>43</sup> Despite his concordance with Tufte’s principles, Eisenman’s House series never left the concrete assemblages to go to the non-place where the diagram resides; his work remains within

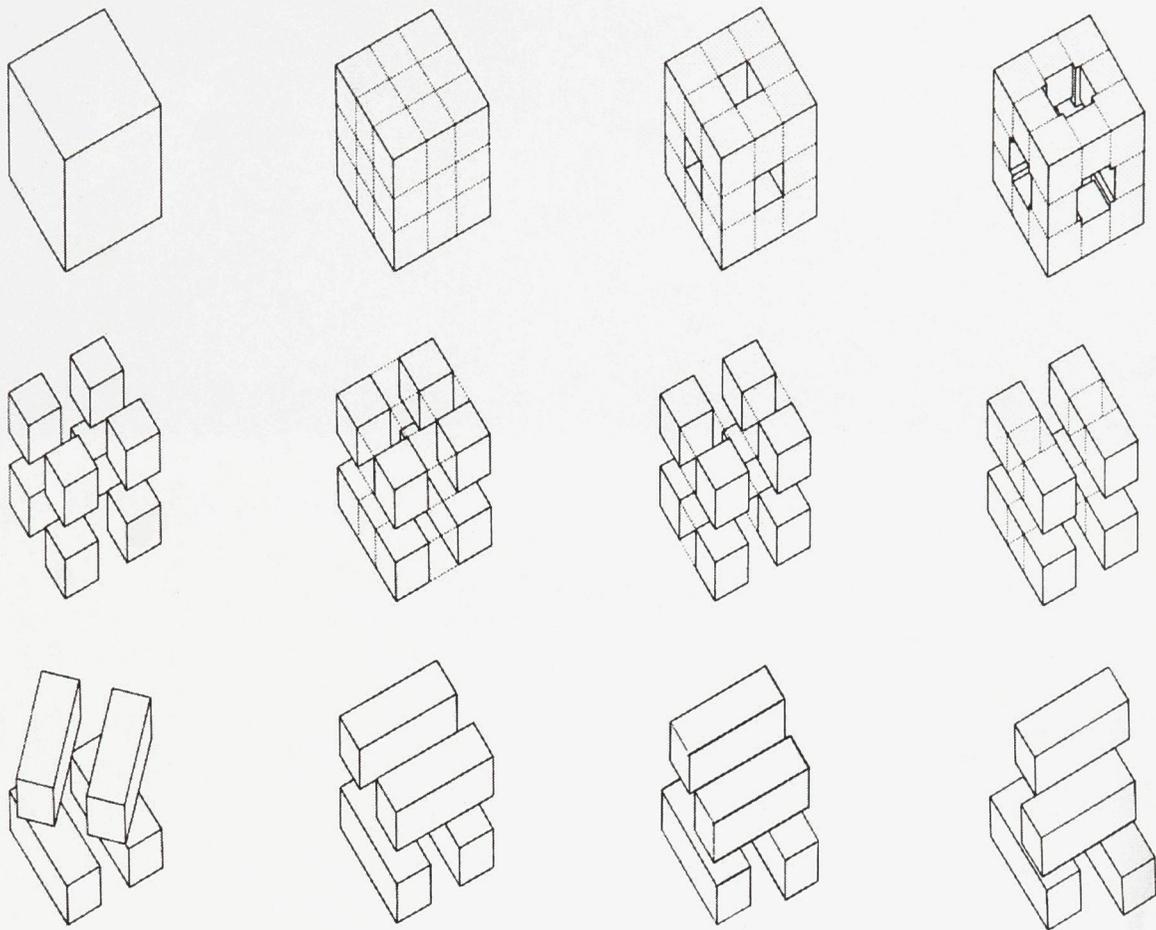


Fig. 15. House IV, from Eisenman, 64.

the domain of representation. No amount of play with the nine-square and the box could ever readdress the modern project's fundamental precepts, and where Somol says that Eisenman's work subverts "dominant oppositions and hierarchies currently constitutive of the discourse,"<sup>44</sup> the contrast of contemporary work by that of UN Studio or OMA indicates that the House series was anything but subversive. It did anything but liberate the architecture from "language, interpretation and signification," as Van Berkel and Bos write.<sup>45</sup>

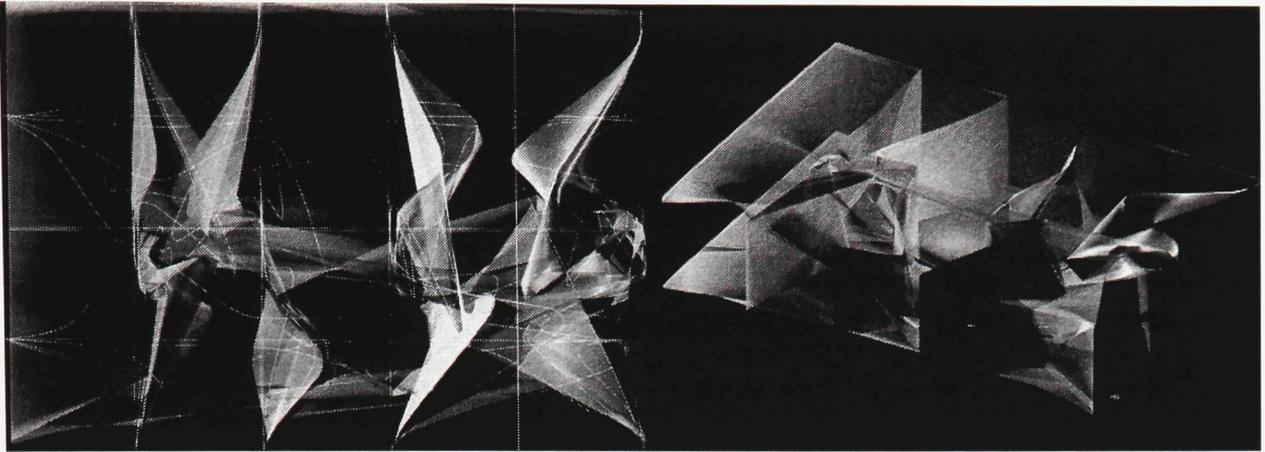


Fig. 16. Virtual House, from Eisenman, 58-59.

Though Somol writes that Eisenman's diagrammatic approach is projective—which, to reiterate, he retracts only three years later—“in that it opens new (or more accurately, ‘virtual’) territories for practice [...],”<sup>46</sup> his efforts oscillate between autonomous engagements, by considering each house as part of a larger process without regard to the actual parameters of programme, site, *et cetera*; and automatic engagements, with a black-box approach of injecting force vectors—almost randomly—into the same series, obfuscating his role as the architect. These, by any measure, suppress any *participatory* modality, for fundamentally they do not address the nine-square as a diagram, but only the concrete assemblages that arise from it. They only contribute to the failure of the modern project by its formal preoccupations and obsession with process and formal abilities, be it the within the mediation of the axonometric or the computer's Cartesian space, no different from Greg Lynn's work with the Blob. To contrast, Van Berkel and Bos write:

Blob or box—it doesn't matter anymore. To redefine organisational structures in an inclusive way means to proportion all information at the basis of the project in one, comprehensive system. Time and construction are compressed into one organisational structure. Rationality and fantasy coincide. The inclusive organisation absorbs all aspects of a project; its material and virtual systems and its underlying values are all taken into the equation.<sup>47</sup>

The diagram is not a blueprint or a scaled working drawing of a construction. It is not a metaphor or a concept, not an icon or an index.<sup>48</sup> “The diagram operates like a black hole, which radically changes the course of the project, transforming and liberating architecture,”<sup>49</sup> write Van Berkel and Bos. Because it is immanent, it is never finished, nor is it ever unfinished. It causes “ambiguities, paradoxes, and the like, which with proper control can increase the number of possible readings during [its] formative stage[s],”<sup>50</sup> as Albarn and Smith write. Because it is indeterminate, diagram is “anti-process”<sup>51</sup> and prevents either material or function to drive the other, and thus prevents any one parameter from automatically determining or succumbing to others, generating “potentials that no single, individual interest could have engendered,”<sup>52</sup> as Van Berkel and Bos write. Somol, quoting Deleuze, writes, “the ‘emergence of another world’ is precisely what the diagram diagrams,”<sup>53</sup> which could be reinterpreted as saying that *the diagram diagrams itself* because the *generated* and its *generation* are coextensive. While Deleuze writes that the diagram makes “no distinction between content and expression” of form, it “makes others see and

speak”<sup>54</sup> only because, as Van Berkel and Bos note, it is “both content and expression.”<sup>55</sup> Albeit not of form, but of itself:

It does not represent an existing object or situation, but it is instrumental in the production of new ones. The forward-looking tendency of diagrammatic practice is an indispensable ingredient for understanding its functioning.<sup>56</sup>

*Diagram* etymologically conjoins the thing and the act. With the Latin prefix *dia-*, literally meaning *by, through, across*,<sup>57</sup> and *twice*,<sup>58</sup> joining with the Latin suffix *-gram*, literally meaning *something written* and “expressing the result of the action,”<sup>59</sup> we can understand diagram to be the embodiment of its own activity. *Diagram* provides an unmediated mediator that does not represent nor signify, inasmuch as it only represents and signifies the non-place of that it itself is. Joining the *diagram-noun* with the *diagram-verb*, we are able to understand diagram as a heuristic workbench, the place equally of discovery and resolution. Albarn and Smith write that “we learn by receiving back the reflection of our projection off others and the environment, both of which, on reflecting it, modify it,”<sup>60</sup> forming a conversation that, as Van Berkel and Bos write, is “crucially an interactive, operational utility.”<sup>61</sup>

As its own precedent, diagram is characterised by the Doppler, coextensively the projection of its own critique and the critique of its own projection. Unconnected to anything but itself and representing nothing but itself, diagram stays

off tautological self-referentiality with dependence on only one single parameter: the *participation* of the architect. The diagram *necessitates* the active role of the *participant*; requiring “the imagination to extend to subjects outside it and draw them inside, changing itself in the process,”<sup>62</sup> write Van Berkel and Bos. This “puts the architect once more at the centre of his own world.”<sup>63</sup> Else, the diagram is not—for it is form—and so too *participation* dissolves.

In the way that the prison, the factory, the school, *et cetera* are related by the panoptic diagram, the ancient libraries, the Mechanics’ Institutes, the Seattle Central Library, and even the Doppler Effect are too related by a diagram, one which overcomes the panoptic imposition of a particular conduct on a particular human multiplicity through *participation*. Their diagram enables multiplicity in a triumph of *Yes*, and furthermore, we have seen that diagramming itself is also based on just such an abstract machine, that of *participation*. Perhaps we may call it the abstract conversation, less a factory than a constantly fleeting, mutating emergence of becoming.

## — Context

One might consider our exploration’s context of Canada amongst the most plural and multicultural countries on the planet. Its federalist project is an attempt to balance homogenous, collective values with extreme cultural

heterogeneity and the individual libertarian rights that accompany it, arguably to varying degrees of success. Gary Brent Madison *et al* write, in *Is There a Canadian Philosophy: Reflections on the Canadian Identity*, that, “At once liberal and communitarian, individualistic and collectivist, Canadian human rights provisions attempt to reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable.”<sup>64</sup> Perhaps the struggle is why, as Daniel Francis writes in *The Oxford Companion to Canadian History* that the Canadian national identity is “an elusive concept that Canadians have debated for generations,” and have done so since Confederation in 1867.<sup>65</sup> Francis writes that the Canadian identity exists at two levels: one at the individual and one collectively. Only when taken together do “these characteristics, which have emerged from our historical experience, give Canada a unique character in the world of nations and may constitute a national identity.”<sup>66</sup>

Whether considering the proverbial ‘two solitudes’ or the proverbial ‘mosaic’ created by the influx of immigration there is no singular identity, no average everyday Canadian citizen, and it is this absence of the concrete—of typological form—that makes Canada what it is. “Paradoxically, while cultural diversity provided Canadians with a new way of describing their society, it also made a single national identity increasingly problematic,” and for this reason, “perhaps more than many other nationalities, Canadians have learned to live with a comparatively loose definition of themselves.”

The Canadian identity is perpetually shifting, continually emerging anew, and its immanence suggests that the Canadian condition is a manifestation of the *participatory* diagram, the abstract conversation. As such, it provides an ideal Petri dish for our exploration; and not in the sense of sterility, but rather the rich fertility of *participation*. It is also quite timely for our exploration, moreover, that the city of Ottawa, the nation's capital and seat of government, should be in the process of seeking a new solution to its over-capacitated central library. The current library replaced the Carnegie library in 1974 on the same site as its predecessor. Spanning three stories, it provides the city with 8 400 m<sup>2</sup> of space to accommodate the nearly half-million holdings of books and multimedia materials, the 200 seat auditorium in the basement, one tutoring room, four meeting rooms, and the city archives in the Ottawa Room.<sup>67</sup> The overcapacity of the facility is obvious without even considering that it was designed to service only a population of 330 000 people,<sup>68</sup> with the city now home to an estimated 832 550 in 2005.<sup>69</sup>

The issues of our times are radically different from those of even the Carnegie era. There are 33 branches in the entire Ottawa Public Library system holding a collection over 2.2 million items, in addition to the 3 million in holdings at the Carleton University library; 4½ million at the University of Ottawa library; 20 million at the National Library and Archives Canada; and 2 million at the Canada Institute for Scientific

and Technical Information.<sup>70</sup> These media collections are in addition to the resources available at not less than fifteen national museums. With the greatest number of university degrees per capita in the entire nation,<sup>71</sup> Ottawa is amongst the most educated cities in the nation having not less than eight post-secondary institutions, home to the National Research Council of Canada, Communications Research Centre Canada, and is coined as the 'Silicon Valley of the North' for its burgeoning high-technology and knowledge-based economy. Not surprisingly, 69.9% of Ottawa homes have internet connectivity, 15.4% higher than the national average.<sup>72</sup> Ottawa's predicament is not one of shortage or scarcity: the city's citizens have access to a wealth of excellent knowledge and resources. Rather a primary challenge is to develop sufficient archival space in which to store most of the materials, quite contrary to the difficulties of the Carnegie era, but still this remains of only secondary concern to our exploration.

What we are most concerned with is that space for community programs languishes, the product of the library history we recounted earlier. There were 1481 community programs utilising the Ottawa Public Library system facilities in 2001,<sup>73</sup> and if the system is even but half as equipped as its flagship branch, then the city's situation is quite dire. Worse yet, former Ottawa mayor Bob Chiarelli said, in 2002, that the city is completely unable to fund its library project on its own, a situation so grim that the new central library project

does not, in any intention, have urban renewal as one of its primary aims; not in choosing a site, not in programme.<sup>74</sup> To some of the council, the library has little to do with the city, and some members of the city's council do not think that a library is even required at all. While no budget has been set, the council is adamant that it requires private investment to fund the project, and not in the Carnegie-esque beneficiary spirit of *noblesse oblige*, but in terms of ownership in the form of public-private partnerships.<sup>75</sup> Likely, considering that no money has yet been set aside to date.<sup>76</sup>

It is a worthy digression to note that the city has received a number of unsolicited library proposals from local developers, one of which would cost the city \$150 million for just over 25 000 m<sup>2</sup> to meet the requirements set out by the city.<sup>77</sup> The proposal was analysed, and although the city rejected the offer—it could build the same for equal price—the proposal's consideration indicates that the budgeted price was reasonable. At risk of seemingly equating design success to budget, a comparison with Seattle Central Library should follow. The project cost Seattle \$155 million USD for a city of nearly 574 000 citizens<sup>78</sup>—not counting the outlying metropolitan area—that, as noted earlier, was entirely funded by beneficiaries and the public purse. Should we assume that the funds for the library, opened in 2004, finalised on average by the middle of the five-year project in 2001, we can adjust for inflation to mark it at approximately \$172 million USD in present day.<sup>79</sup>

Using the current exchange rate,<sup>80</sup> it is equivalent to \$197.5 million CAD. In summary, the developer's proposal—nothing beyond an unspectacular developer project—would have cost the city of Ottawa \$6000 per square metre, funded in part through private ownership; Seattle Central was built for \$5800 per square metre, all by and for its citizens. This is notwithstanding the initial requirements of the council of Ottawa estimating 37 000 m<sup>2</sup> of programme for the project's success, almost 4.5 times the size of the current library.<sup>81</sup>

Ottawa, as our exploration has hereto demonstrated, does not need a library *per se*: knowledge, literacy, and the book are not at risk; its citizens are a highly capable and adept people; and its economy is robust. What Ottawa greatly requires—and is even more at risk of losing, giving its budgetary constraints and shallow public opinion—is *participatory* space that formally embodies the diagram that is Canada. Ottawa lacks a place in which the disparate components of the city, including its libraries and civil resources, come together and share in that shifting Canadian identity. Further, this place must remain, like the nation, that of the people.

The city council of Ottawa has hereto identified numerous strategies in approaching the new central library, also identifying numerous potential sites throughout the city. These include behind Friday's Roast Beef House on Elgin; a parking lot on the southeast corner of Nepean

Avenue and Metcalfe Street; the football field on Albert Street across from the defunct Ottawa Technical High School; the former City Hall on Sussex Drive; even the prominent former Union Station. The city also considered any available and affordable properties on Sparks Street, hoping to come in line with the federal government's intent to develop Wellington Street and Sparks Street. Though the site would have many advantages, particularly the proximity to the new Portrait Gallery of Canada and CBC building, in addition to plans for a national history museum, a sports hall of fame, and a renovated and expanded home for the national Library and Archives Canada, the changeover in government at all levels has all but eliminated the possibility.<sup>82</sup>

The selected site of our discovery is one favoured by the city at the Bayview Yards, an awkward and relatively barren site that is laden with oppositions. To the far north runs the Ottawa River Parkway, a riverside thoroughway on land owned by the National Capital Commission, and just beyond it the Ottawa River, which bisects Ontario and Quebec and eventually drains into the Saint Lawrence River. To the immediate south are the Transitway, Ottawa's high-speed rapid transit route for busses and emergency vehicles, and Scott Street, connecting Hintonburg to the greater downtown area. Directly beyond them is the decrepit City Centre offices and warehouse, an ironic landmark given that it is recognised by as many as those who wish to have it effaced. To the east is

LeBreton Flats, slated for extensive growth over the next two decades with significant mixed-use development, including the completed War Museum of Canada; and just beyond it is the Ottawa skyline, the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill plainly visible, and especially after the sun has fallen. Here in the river east from Chaudière Falls is the future site of an indigenous centre by Douglas Cardinal on Victoria Island; and the former Domtar paper plant on Chaudière Island—which, timely to our exploration, permanently closed in 2005 because of a downturn in the pulp and paper industry.<sup>83</sup> To the west, pinning the site is Hintonburg, once its own incorporated city. It still holds its working class character, and with the city snow dump in foreground, it is separated from the site by torn-up parcels of Canadian Pacific railway that once served the city's industry, connecting to city to Gatineau across the river. The site itself is generally a nondescript mound currently used as informal green space and dog run, connected by pathways along the Ottawa River. Its west edge terminates at the sight of the rusty rails for all but those who seek more canvas space on the overpass foundations, and its south edge meets an imposing wall incised by the elevated bridges and retaining walls of Scott Street and the Transitway.

Bayview Yards is but uncultivated: it has transportation and infrastructure advantages not available elsewhere in the city. Bayview is a crucial component of the city's light-rail transit expansion plan, providing a significant interchange

for those using busses east-to-west needing to transfer to the train going north-to-south; the O-Train pilot project currently terminates there. Long-term plans have the north-south line crook to the east and run parallel to the Transitway, connecting it with the downtown core and beyond; while longer-term plans eventually run an entire east-west line through the site. No immediate development plans exist, but the city's master plan zones the site for cultural, institutional, or mixed-use, and continues to undergo study.<sup>84</sup>

The Bayview Yard's seemingly *junkspace* nature, a residue torn between multiple oppositions in heart of the nation's capital, is itself a microcosm of the larger nation. It continues to emerge through every surrounding force, evading summary and crisp identification. Our exploration aims at an urban renewal of this site insofar as it emerges from existing narrative threads, and weaves them into something that does not let them lie in waste, to facilitate a conversation, out of necessity in an urban landscape otherwise infiltrated by our shopping pathology. One final *participatory* embodiment is evident in history that accords to these same sorts of conditions, which had conversation as the most primary and specific of its features: the French Salon. They embraced conversation and dialogue as a means of projecting new possibilities of life and liberty not possible in a time of critical oppression. They were not set out with a mission other than for conversation itself, unlike the a library or the Mechanics' institutes, despite that they were

part to a revolution. “From the inception of the salon perfect intellectual liberty, liberty of thought and liberty of discussion, was the very basis of the intercourse of which it was the centre [...],”<sup>85</sup> writes Helen Clergue in *The Salon: A Study of French Society and Personalities in the Eighteenth Century*. It was the French Salons which contributed to a social transformation and eventually upheaval, in their times against the regiment of the royal absolutism and the dogma of the Catholic church, amongst others, leading to the French Revolution; and they did so in little more than the spirit of Socratic dialogue.

## The Salon

The essence of salons is in their Parisian inception during the early part of the seventeenth century. With “the exuberance of the early Renaissance” fading, the “period of anxious questioning, exciting discovery, and bold opposition to established ideas had passed,” writes Clark Keating in the text *Studies on the Literary Salon in France: 1550-1615*. The Renaissance came into “the hands of a second generation, and the change was reflected in the tone of French society.”<sup>86</sup> The French and others were “beset on all sides by new and astonishing ideas, and without communication they could neither give expression to their own concepts, nor benefit by the ideas of others.”<sup>87</sup> The times were characterised less by impulse and more by thoughtful discourse, and it was in this context in which the salon emerged, in tandem with similar establishments

throughout Europe. “The ferment of the Renaissance,” writes Gary Kamiya, in an essay entitled *A Brief History of Salons*, “produced an upsurge of gatherings devoted to the life of the mind, including the Florentine Platonic Academy [...]; numerous German literary clubs; Dutch chambers of rhetoric; and covert organizations devoted to occult and magical pursuits.”<sup>88</sup> Kamiya writes the behaviour of the times reflected the masculine virtues of conquest, in which, “around 1610, a young noblewoman, fed up with the prevailing loutishness, did something unprecedented: she abandoned Louis VIII’s court and set up her own ‘alternative space.’”<sup>89</sup> The Marquise de Rambouillet proceeded to remodel her mansion near the Louvre with a series of adjoining reception rooms “culminating in her sanctum sanctorum, the so-called *chambre-bleu*,” known also as the “sanctuary of the Temple of Athene.”<sup>90</sup> The greatest writers and thinkers of its day attended it, the first in a long history of influence in the letters, philosophy, and politics.

Keating writes that the programme of the salon was as varied and loose as a conversation itself. At times there were balls and galas; sometimes entertainers with dancing and song; other times there were country excursions.<sup>91</sup> Yet consistently through all of its activities, “the power and the usefulness of salons were due to one particular cause: they were intellectual exchanges,”<sup>92</sup> as Clergue writes. Free conversation engaged those within as essential *participants*, discussing the issue that was of matter at the time, its freedom resonant with the liberties that

Canada touts and so cherishes. Likewise, and so too with the Mechanics' Institutes, rank and social stature did not preclude anyone's admittance into the salon, nor was it a guarantee; not unless, as Clergue writes, it was "combined engaging qualities of mind and manner." The effect was to place every *participant* on common ground with a sense of comradeship and fraternity as equal partners in discourse, a precursor to the *liberté, égalité, fraternité* slogan of the French Revolution, and there "we find in active movement the ideas which were, when applied to existing political and social facts, to overthrow the old regime."<sup>93</sup>

Much like the ancient libraries, the Mechanics' Institutes, and the Carnegie libraries, the salon was an existential necessity of its time. Before the French Revolution, Clergue writes, "there were no journals to propagate ideas and spread the news," from which the salon emerged as the "principal means for opinion to circulate."<sup>94</sup> As such, it can be natural to argue that an instantiation of the salon in the present day is a misreading of historical context, a naïve nostalgia inherently running counter to any projective force. The argument is valid, especially considering that, even though "there have been imitations in later times," Clergue writes, "the historical salon, which was the instigator of original thought and the arbiter of taste and manners, was sacrificed by its own creation; it evoked a destroying spirit." Indeed, "the salon came to an end with that society in which alone it could reach preeminence, and it can no more be rehabilitated than can the structure

with which it fell.”<sup>95</sup> However, such an argument remains misguided by the aims of instantiating a salon in present day, confusing the cause with its effect. Kamiya writes of Socrates:

His vocation was conversation, and in pursuit of it he talked endlessly to people of all stations, drawing them out, patiently leading them to discover the blind spots and unexplored contradictions in their beliefs. [...] The groups that gathered around Socrates—under trees, at dinner parties, in the streets, in prison—cannot exactly be called salons, yet they embody their noblest essence: the search for knowledge through conversation with others.<sup>96</sup>

Likewise, it is not by any means that we wish to reproduce the phenomena of the salon in present times as an instantiation of a type, but instead to harness the conversational diagram exemplified by the French salon, insofar as the salon—the place of conversation—transcends our spatiotemporal bounds as the essential tissue of the *participatory* diagram. Peter Quennell notes, in an essay entitled *The Salon*, that “every human culture, the historian would surely agree, has had a solid conversational basis and has depended on the lively exchange of ideas, and of the thoughts and feelings whence ideas spring.”<sup>97</sup> It is on this premise that the use of the *salon* comes at a loss of any other signifier so closely suggesting the act of conversation and discourse. Kamiya writes:

The glory, and pathos, of salons consists in the ephemerality. [...] Their history is a secret one. But it is renewed every time people gather together to engage in that simplest, most difficult, most human of rituals: good conversation.<sup>98</sup>

Moreover, there are already many examples of contemporary instances of what we may term *salon*, albeit their forms varied from their French ancestry. One such an example is TED, an annual event in Monterey, California, which emerged in 1984 under the founder Richard Saul Wurman, geared towards the subjects of technology, entertainment, and design, from which its name derives.<sup>99</sup> It is an exclusive event—termed as a *conference*—attended by great thinkers and makers and by invitation only. While the brief lectures conducted by its interdisciplinary attendees constitute a significant component of the programme, many of which become accessible for public consumption, much of the proceedings are not made public only because they cannot be. They are the fleeting fragments of conversation between these individuals. Another example is ideaCity, a similar event held annually in Toronto, initiated in 2000 by Moses Znaimer, co-founder of Canada's CHUM media network. It too features a lecture series interspersed with socials and breaks for conversation, though its exclusivity is determined by the price of its admission and not by invite. There are also countless other examples within each city, although generally exclusive, which exist solely for the purposes of conversation, sometimes called an *athenaeum*, *lyceum*, or even *salon*; and *salon* is also commonly used to describe anything from contemporary artist guilds to hair boutiques. While these examples do not formalise in nearly the same fashion as the French salons, they still relate in their *raison d'être*, for “it was conversation which

was the fundamental, and which was uniformly maintained as the chief, feature of the salon,” writes Clergue:<sup>100</sup>

Here that which was best in thought and expression flourished, here all that was exalted in sentiment was applauded; and here, if an original idea were introduced, the divine spark was not permitted to expire for want of fanning.<sup>101</sup>

Where the seventeenth century salon “reformed manners, raised the status of men of letters, and gave its precise and lucid style to French literature;” and the salon of the eighteenth century “converted society to the new ideas which had been there evolved,”<sup>102</sup> writes Clergue, Kamiya notes that in the eighteenth century, “many salons had become morally dubious, or worse.”<sup>103</sup> As a victim of its own success, “the watchword of intellectual freedom was made to cover universal license, and clever sophists constructed theories to justify the mad carnival of vice and frivolity,” as Amelia Gere Mason writes in *The Women of French Salons*.<sup>104</sup> As a result, the nineteenth century gave rise to the Bohemian Salon, “one characterized by lack of money (or at least employment), long hair, loud ranting against the bourgeoisie, unruly sexual behavior, and copious consumption of [...] *substances d’abus*.”<sup>105</sup> One might continue the narrative, such that the end of the twentieth century and the age of shopping detached much of our contemporary conversation from our urban space, privatised the common salon, and called it Starbucks.

Kamiya notes: “That the Internet has become an instrument of disembodied seduction is strictly in the finest Salon tradition,”<sup>106</sup> and is perhaps the best example of the essence of the *participatory* diagram, albeit nearly entirely virtual.

Peter Quennell writes that “the salon was the product of a leisured society; and the twentieth century allows us so little leisure that we have begun to forget the art of using it,” perhaps squandering it on shopping. “How agreeably and profitably it was once used, by cultivated people who valued ideas, admired eloquence and delighted in one another’s company [...]”<sup>107</sup> Ultimately, writes Keating, those who formed the original French salons were not attempting to develop a social institution, and nor does this exploration, for once it is institutionalised, conversation becomes an artefact to behold and not an activity in which to *participate*. It attempts to embody, instead, that which is essential to the diagram of *participation*. “They were content to meet, to converse, and to part,” programme for which Ottawa lacks place, and it is “in this informality lies the charm of their gatherings.”<sup>108</sup> The salon’s informality, like that of the diagram, is essential for *participation* for it necessitates *participation*; else, the salon is not.

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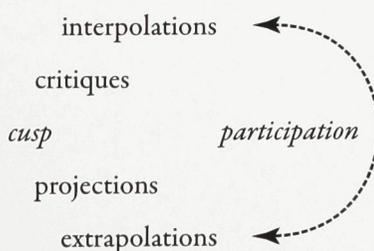
## IV Projections

*A special, serious kind of fun, is what salons are finally all about—which is why it is so hard to capture their spirit. For unlike literature, fun leaves no traces. There is no archaeology of camaraderie. No detective can exhume the great line, delivered offhand over the remains of a meal, that suddenly unites a group of men and women in liberating laughter, laughter at once self-conscious and free, laughter that contains something of the profound. The traces of successful conversation are fragile; they do not outlive the shining moment when thought finds its perfect expression in language.*

—GARY KAMIYA

### Strategy and Toolset

This exploration did not set out with a specific plan of approach. These emerged alongside the entire process: sometimes through force, sometimes by accidental discovery, and admittedly, sometimes through neglect. Should it be required, it may be possible to section the process into five distinctly characterised phases, corresponding to the five chapters of the exploration's text. What is difficult to explicate,



however, is how these five phases occur in parallel and not sequentially, all the while maintaining a deliberate focus upon the theme of *participation* while using mnemonics or other devices to maintain the direction. The media through which the exploration set out was not predetermined, but resultantly varied in utilising two- and three-dimensional computer space, traditional media, and text. The project was manifest at various points as everything from a table, to a typical flow-chart, to things not quite typical and lacking all but one descriptor: diagrammatic. In short, the exploration let its own aims, objectives, and meanings emerge through *participation*.

A portion of the project unfolded collaboratively with Damien Jdanoff, a graduate student of architecture at Technische Universität Dresden, with the attempt to extend *participation* into a collaborative dimension both as collaborative generation afforded by contemporary communications technologies, and as an embodied collaboration explored in a Trans-National Salon network generated therein. Hole notes that some Mechanics' Institutes attempted something in a similar tone, a Union of Institutes, for "the collective action of a number of Institutes may be made conducive to the same end,"<sup>1</sup> as a larger organisation would give the power to provide greater advantages to the union's respective institutes. There were obvious benefits general to all of the *participating* institutes,<sup>2</sup> such as sharing administrative knowledge and practises of the various establishments to

attain operational efficacy across the board in addition to other joint logistical and fiscal efforts, as is common with many large organisations such as the library system. More important, though, were the benefits specific to an individual institute,<sup>3</sup> for a union of institutes establishes a mass that would enable the acquisition and security of resources and assets that would be otherwise unattainable by one particular establishment alone, such as lecturers or exhibits, such that they could be shared and disseminated.<sup>4</sup> The ultimate aim of the union, however, was the general prosperity and mutual advantage for each of its constituents' members, but its effects proved short lived.<sup>5</sup> Hole argues that despite the success of the American lyceum structure and the systematic interchange of its collections,<sup>6</sup> the Union of Institutes failed to accomplish more not because of impractical or invalid aspirations, but because of a lack of financial means to complete them.<sup>7</sup> Hole writes:

If we regard the individual societies as the arteries which carry the stream of intellectual life to the farthest verge of our land, the central body that connects them into one vast system may be likened to the heart, which receives the vitalised blood only to propel it round with freshened force and benefit. Nor, were the organisation perfect, should there be the smallest village, or most insignificant hamlet, in our island, with its little library or humble mutual improvement society, that would fail to enjoy the benefits of such a central body, just as in a healthy body the smallest capillaries share the heart's force as well as the largest arteries.<sup>8</sup>

We may consider the internet a response to the same desire to share, learn, and discuss across the urban bounds imposed by our spatiotemporal limits. It is in this sense, of combining the telecommunication infrastructures available to our contemporary selves with an embodied place of conversation, that the *Trans-National Salon* found its impetus. Its effect would have been to establish an even larger, more dynamic conversation, extending the discourse beyond the bounds of the nation to enlist all of those interested in cosmopolitan *participation*. The initial objective strove to develop a prototype network initially predicated on two built environs, one located in Ottawa and the other in Dresden, with the expectation that other nodes could join from around the world. The nodes were developed coextensively with the network itself, such that the two built forms were an embodiment of one work of architecture, despite becoming manifest within the respective domain of each *participant*. The engagement of new media to realise such an objective brought the theme of generated *participation* to the forefront, but the very act of collaborating with the said media to realise these themes was itself generation *participated*.

The collaborative endeavour was entirely reliant upon a variety of contemporary communicative and representational paradigms. Parties never met in person nor exchanged voices, as all communication occurred textually with instant messaging or via a shared wiki environment—a

completely *participatory* textual construct where authorship dissolves—or were visual representations, including schematic diagrams and sketches. However, the objectives were ultimately beyond the scope of this exploration, despite that the results of the collaborative endeavour proved to be invaluable in resolving Salon Ottawa thereafter.

## Generation Participated

It is worth noting that some of the unfolding process described herein entirely predates the emergence of *salon* as the key programmatic signifier. It is also worth noting that, while presented here as a linear narrative in an attempt to rationalise the process, it unfolded as anything but. The project in its impetus responded to Ottawa's need for a new central library, especially because the library is the subject of contemporary discourse and the opportunity seemed poignant with the downturn of the paper mill industry. The Bayview Yards sight emerged early as victor, given the site's inherent contradictions in addition to the district's future development and transit node; and despite popular opposition to a site so barren and removed from the core. It is all a matter of time, however, as the site has great potential to extend the core through the creation of a unique district.

Initial explorations centred on the excavation of the library and its lineage through history, though this was not performed

with a guide or standard. Rather, it unfolded *in situ* amongst the available research, which abstracted the library, first as a series of programmatic elements, or generally closed-system components available by signification through nouns. These then abstracted to their respective associative activities, formed sequential and narrative groupings of verbs describing the actions that occur as time passes within a contemporary library. Finally, the nouns and verbs extrapolated to loose set of adverbs and adjectives, encapsulating some of the essential qualia of the contemporary library experience as general descriptors. Afterwards, three further comparison of the library shed light on the aforementioned enquiry: a figure/ground analysis of the library in the city; an analysis of emergent or changing patterns; and an analysis of conventions outmoded since the libraries of the ancients. These revealed a library torn between social roles and the archive of knowledge, to the latter of which contemporary libraries gave priority. From this preliminary research emerged five major interrelated programmatic essences, embodied by:

- The *atheneum*, dedicated to the dissemination of knowledge and wisdom through discourse amongst contemporaries.
- The *museum*, dedicated to discovery and interaction with artifice, memory, and culture.
- The *forum*, dedicated to the exchange amongst people, for necessity or for pleasure.

- The *gymnasium*, dedicated to the education of the body through training, competition, and sport.
- The *nymphaeum*, dedicated to the sensual pleasures of the body by and through a connection to the natural earth.

A collection of imagery for each programme established that which was essential in terms of form, colour, texture, and light; and these formed the preliminary indices for future reference and consultation. Each of these elements does in some varying degree overlap, conducive to the same general ends as the others, being that each begins to give tissue to the abstract conversation. Yet each in themselves lack what another provides, and only together do they map out a complete integrative programme that involves the self and the World through the body, the earth, the city, and the other. Indeed, a superset of these programmes was required, implying an entire large-scale urban intervention that proved to be unfeasible within the limitations of this exploration. The primary programme thus became one not that encompassed each of these elements in their entirety, but rather embodied their overlap of *participation* through conversation, and the exploration sought to resolve this component while integrating within a larger urban direction. Yet it lacked a tangible linguistic signifier, and after an evaluation of various terms and their connotative associations, including *lyceum* and *library*, *salon* emerged as that most succinct and tangible, especially

considering that the word's appropriation from French acknowledges the bilingual nature of the nation's capital. *Salon* thus became the central component of the urban initiative, acting as an anchor point for other future programmes and creating a conversation over the urban area that notices the site's inherent oppositions. Interpolated back within the programmes that suggested it, it became possible to explore the inhabitants and users—*participants*, rather—of Salon Ottawa:

- The *expert*, relative to a particular field, relishes the serendipitous moments when insight comes from the strangest of places.
- The *old widow*, an expert on life, is alone and yet never before so part of the World.
- The *technocrat*, loaded with current and precise information, always wants more and is always prepared to engage.
- The *graduate student*, either lost or pigeonholed, is desperate for random interjection or a game of go.
- The *civil servant* has an hour to spare, here and there, and often.
- The *single mom* seeks refuge and social freedom while she can, but without the funds to do so.
- The *traveller*, needing to take pause and escape the elements and to see what has happened in the time between spaces.

- The *inventive entrepreneur*, for whom mastering a trade in the garage has reached a ceiling, and requires more in that regard that the spouse or colleagues can provide.
- The *youth trio*, seeking relief from exhausting mundanity of cruising the strip and the local 7-11, are otherwise oblivious to that not broadcast by MTV.
- The *numerous accidentals* that were going one place but then, from the transit network or the car, took a wrong turn and found themselves drawn by curiosity.

Identifying these inhabitants suggested certain qualities that the salon should maintain in its anchorage. At which point the previous method tended to reverse, from adjective and adverb to verb to noun, moving from a vacuum of signification by establishing a programmatic composition in the process. This was developed and represented in tandem between a schematic flow chart, indicating programmatic clusters and spatiotemporal linkages, and a spreadsheet that tabulated the programmatic volumes and logical groupings, culminating as the result of projecting Ottawa's needs and opportunities into a coherent solution. The basis for these volumes responded to the needs established by the city for a new central library, despite the lack of budget, estimating a required 23 000 m<sup>2</sup> for the library stacks and 14 000 m<sup>2</sup> of additional programme,<sup>9</sup> totalling approximately 37 000 m<sup>2</sup>. Given its abstraction, the projection sufficed as programmatic

maxims and extents, and therein required a critical application to Canada, Ottawa, and the Bayview site in our present day. Thus in the end no element ever resolved precisely in the ways that the preliminary explorations quantitatively projected.

Geospatial data provided a skeleton with which to virtually engage the site, updated to reflect changes since the data's collection, and augmented with the considerations of future developments on LeBreton flats and light-rail transit. Therein, a primary topological analysis revealed that the site itself required interjections as it was, primarily to reduce its scale to something tangible to the pedestrian and physically extend the city core to the area, especially for those travelling along its automobile routes. These urban interjections, when taken as a whole with the existing site, formed a new site. They formed a first derivative, responding primarily to urban and contextual spatiotemporal factors that demanded attention, although they modified and perfected alongside the project's development. A secondary analysis followed, not topological but material, that took the original collection of imagery for each programme—which had, by this point, ceased to be effective in their abstraction—and collaged them onto the first derivative of the site. Their representations, though not formal, provided a necessary sounding board and index by relating their form, colour, texture, and light through orthographic projections of the site.

The topological and material analyses resolved little, but the urban alterations forming the first derivative of the site did collapse many possibilities for the site, implying few possible solutions to specific design problems in the programme. Three, in particular, became evident alongside the urban alterations: vehicle parking; shipping, receiving, and access; and the conglomerated transit station serving both the bus and the train. The explicit requisites so characteristic of these elements in part determined many of their formal realisations, for they cannot be arranged or located in any other way than the infrastructure provides. While infinite possibilities always exist, granted, any element that does not respond to the pragmatic needs from whence it originated does not apply these projections with a critical eye by any standard. Nevertheless, their integration with the aforementioned urban alterations formed the site's second derivative, emerging simultaneously with three circulation tracks outlining pedestrian movements by and through this second derivative:

- The *alpha* track, used by those moving past the site and through urban space, either as pedestrians, in vehicles, or via the transit network, and for whom the salon is an element in the unfolding urban fabric. The first derivative of the site determines much of this track.
- The *beta* track, used by those moving through the site for purposes of connection, either programme or transportation or between *alpha* tracks, for whom the

salon is a conduit or wormhole within the urban fabric.

The second derivative determines much of this track.

- The *omega* track, used by those moving within the site itself by *participants* that decided to stay and inhabit the salon, for whom the salon is a pause, either as a destination or by discovery. This track is the most indeterminate of the set, simultaneously resulting from and imposing upon the formal realisation of the salon.

Coincidentally with the movement conditions of circulation emerged the rest conditions of programme, organised by three clusters or tiers based on their relationship with the movement conditions. Where the previous explorations of programmatic linkages and volumetric requirements were projective and engaged the programme in a vacuum, these tiers begin to critically relate the same programme to an experience within the Bayview site:

- The *outer* tier, geared entirely to the public and the passer-by, thus coextensive with the *alpha* and *beta* tracks and framing the threshold of within and without the salon. The *outer* tier is not necessarily external, however, as the transit station within the central core of the site is itself part of the *outer* tier, but functions by osmotically whisking pedestrian traffic from the *alpha* or *beta* track to the *omega* track. Its greatest challenge is its interface with a world of shopping.

- The *inner* tier, coextensive with the *omega* track, relates to raw urban space through the *outer* tier. As the bulk of the programme, it is populated either by or through the other tiers, and consequently relies upon the *outer* tier as both a wick and a buffer.
- The *lateral* tier, which foundationally supports and augments the entire program, does so through administrative capacity, resident expertise, technical and mechanical service, and other reservoirs.

Further, the site revealed three axial pulls or grids: the fanned-out alignment to the Peace Tower, distant enough that its lines of sight are almost parallel; the asymmetrical curvilinear boundaries delimited by the railway line; and that created by vehicular throughways, including the parallel members of Scott Street and the Transitway, and the intersecting Wellington Avenue that is slightly askew. These grids separate the varied grades surrounding and within the site, following a slow descent from the Scott Street bridge, to the new Wellington Avenue and Scott Street intersection, and then ascending to the commons at the new intersection of Wellington Avenue and the Ottawa River Parkway. The incision of the transit infrastructure in the first and second derivatives removes much of the steep mound of earth presently on the site, severing Bayview into distinct north and south sections, but it remains steep on the west where the mound lowers quickly to meet the flat plain required

for the railway. Finally, alongside these formed a narrative that straddled all parameters and relationships identified in the programme, the city, the nation, or the site thereto, resulting in three primary salon regions or clusters—avoiding the connotation of *room* so as not to preclude any formal possibilities. These were to the earth, to the sky, and to the people; and their explication proved to act as a pivot point for all other considerations. If anything, these formed a new *central* tier within the *inner*, to which everything responded.

Now, while these aforementioned phases of projection and critique—programmatic volumes and linkages, the first and second site derivatives, collages, circulatory tracks, programmatic tiers, site grids and axes, and grading—were already quite suggestive of formal realisations, any tendency to immediately collapse their forms would succumb to existing typological applications. Thus, the diagram remained instrumental in integrating these considerations into an inclusive whole, placing neither material nor functional form as a precedent, but instead allowing them to evolve simultaneously by tracing each consideration on equal terms. Van Berkel and Bos similarly write:

The bottom-up thinking of material organisation is combined with the top-down thinking of virtual organisation to achieve an architecture that is both topologically and materially rooted.<sup>10</sup>

One parameter in particular, the issue of scale, proved to shift from form to diagram and then back again, providing a vehicle to resolve the salon spaces themselves. Conversation itself has a certain scalar limit. The discourse between two parties has but one focus, and as the quantity of parties increases, so too do the number of potential foci. With the understanding that a conversation may be more than the spoken word—such as glances, gestures, spatiotemporal positioning, *et cetera*—a party of three maintains one central focus of discussion, but introduces three small foci between the individual constituents. A party of four still maintains a single central focus, but has six small foci between two constituents and four small foci between three constituents. Moreover, a scale of four or more parties introduces the potential for the primary focus to split, fragmenting the group into six potential combinations of two parties, where a group of three is not valid, for it leaves one party in solitary exclusion.

Continuing, a group of five has the potential for one single focus with ten small foci between two parties, ten between three parties, and five between four parties; and with ten combinations in which the group could potentially fragment into groups of two and three. An enumeration beyond this is moot; they only serve to demonstrate that, while large conversations do transpire, they predicate upon the building blocks of two and three party units, as they always have the potential to reduce to these scales. Moreover,

as larger scales approach a fuzzy critical mass, conversation may entirely shift into a relationship of dictation, yet still with the possibility of fragmenting into smaller components. These inherent dimensional relationships form the basis of scale for the salon component of the programme.

The actual formalisation of the diagram followed an ebb-and-flow between diagram and form, a process resistant to documentation and description. Primarily responding to locus of the site, including climate, light, material, sightlines, *et cetera*, the spatiotemporal embodiment reflects the integrative diagram described hitherto, resulting from a consideration of architecture's phenomenal experience combined with, of course, a bit of playful fun. While the salon form did not derive from any particular component of the diagram *per se*—that is, they are not above the form—their integrative presence together proved paramount to any individual consideration. Each medium of diagram in itself revealed its own inherent traps, at which point reciprocation between various media established, with each being meaningful only insofar as it related to and informed the other. While traditional media sufficed where quality and fluidity was required, and digital media sufficed where quantity and precision prevailed, ultimately the digital environment emerged as the nexus of the design process, itself a workbench of sorts that could hold, record, and alter the design process in a way no whiteboard or stack of Bristol could.

## Participation Generated

Various urban interjections attempted to straddle the barren and opposing nature inherent within the Bayview site:

- Lower and straighten Scott Street and the bridge. This reduces the perception of a divisive wall that, along with the current Transitway, separates the site from the south and its extension into Hintonburg; facilitates development along Scott Street; and makes the street more conducive to the pedestrian.
- Split and extend the north-south railway. The proposed rails coincide with the city's light-rail transit expansion plans. The rails run through a channel cut into the bedrock, extending through the LeBreton Flats development, eventually covered in as a subway.
- Reroute the Transitway. To the west of the rails, the Transitway pulls away from the Scott Street bridge and lowers into a channel cut within the bedrock from Bayview Road, passing under the rails, and then aligning between the north- and south- lines. On the site itself, there is a 4½ m grade separation between the Transitway and the rails, which then gradually meet at the same grade in LeBreton Flats to the east.
- Secure space for long-term transit growth. This accommodates the eventual conversion of the Transitway

to simultaneously support an east-west light-rail route and a vehicular route for busses and emergency vehicles, as well as extending the north-south line to connect with the bridge and extend into Gatineau. The proposed solution provides sufficient space for interchanges and switches, as well as provisions for a transit control station, buffering the region and separating it from the Bayview mound with a retaining wall.

- Reconnect the historic Wellington Avenue. The divide of land that separates the two Wellington Avenues connect from the west, over the railway, and along the City Centre parallel to its ramp, finally to reach the north. It interchanges with the current Wellington Avenue and Ottawa River Parkway transition, forming a triangular commons approximately two-thirds the size of the National War Memorial on Elgin Street. The impending development on LeBreton Flats will partially obscure the view to Parliament Hill, providing an opportunity for a dramatic revealing of the nation's seat of government along the connected Wellington Avenue.
- Extend Confederation Boulevard. The grand promenade of the nation's capital is extended past the Canadian War Museum to the new commons and along the new Wellington Avenue connection. The streets transform appropriately, with a large tree-lined median

running through Wellington Street that extends the commons down the middle of the avenue.

The result of these improvements tends to develop the region as a whole, encouraging the gentrification of neighbourhoods directly adjacent.

Program lays out across the major site axes, distributing the outer tier of program along the street-level alpha track of circulation, consisting primarily of specialty retail commercial space that acts as a trojan horse in the city. Towards the east along Wellington Street are a variety of restaurants and other food services, forming an inner court geared to both draw in a dining crowd, and to serve the patrons of the salon. To the south along Scott Street, the structure buffers a generous forecourt for public gatherings and a bazaar.

Two levels of transit platform spring up to Wellington Street through a series of stair and escalators, at its edge connecting with the central lobbies of the structure by the restaurant court and forecourt. A series of large steel trusses support a skin above the platforms, glazed and oriented to the south, and running the length of the structure. At Wellington Street, a large 350-person theatre springs above the grade, oriented towards the city skyline with a view of Parliament Hill cresting the new LeBreton Flats developments. The lateral tiers bridge across the gap there created, and within the interstitial spaces form the salons.

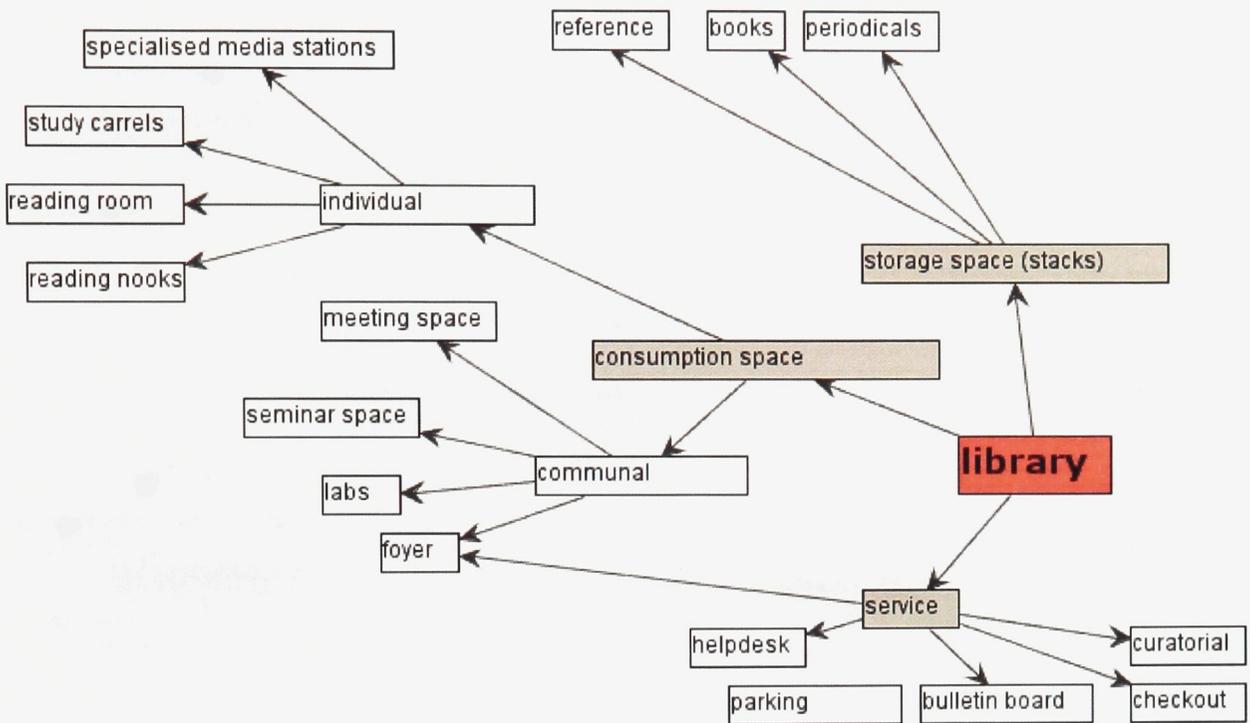


Fig. 17. Elements of the library given as is.

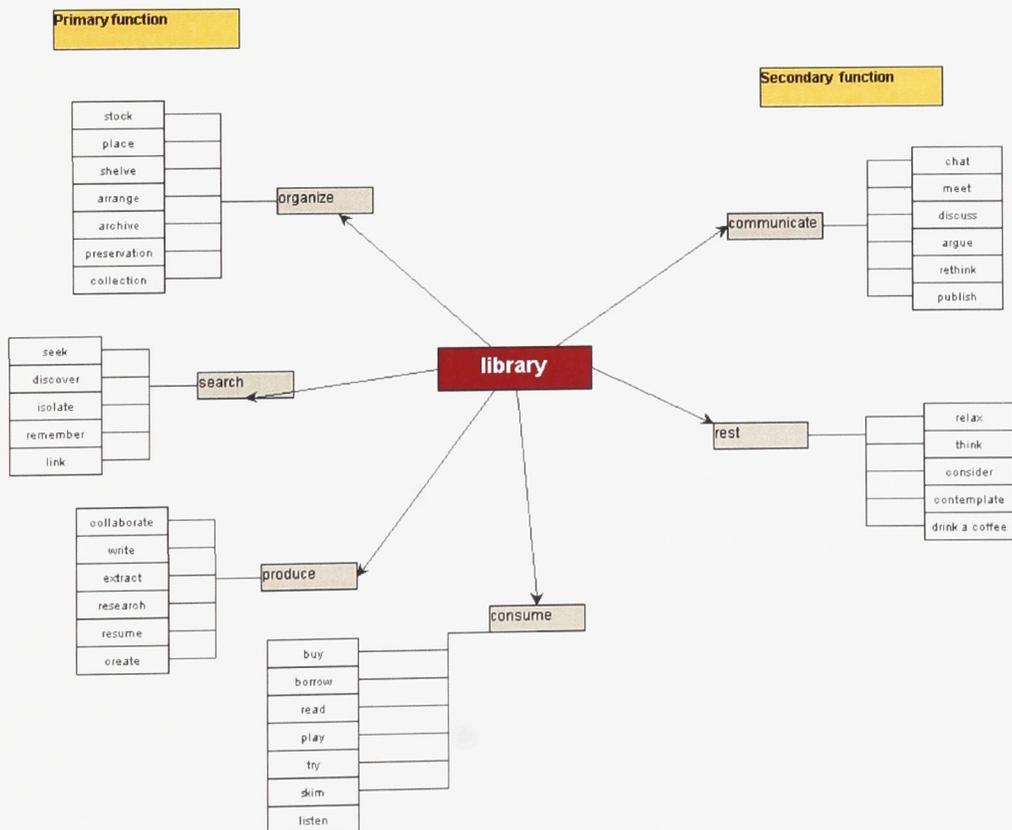


Fig. 18. Activities of the library given as is.

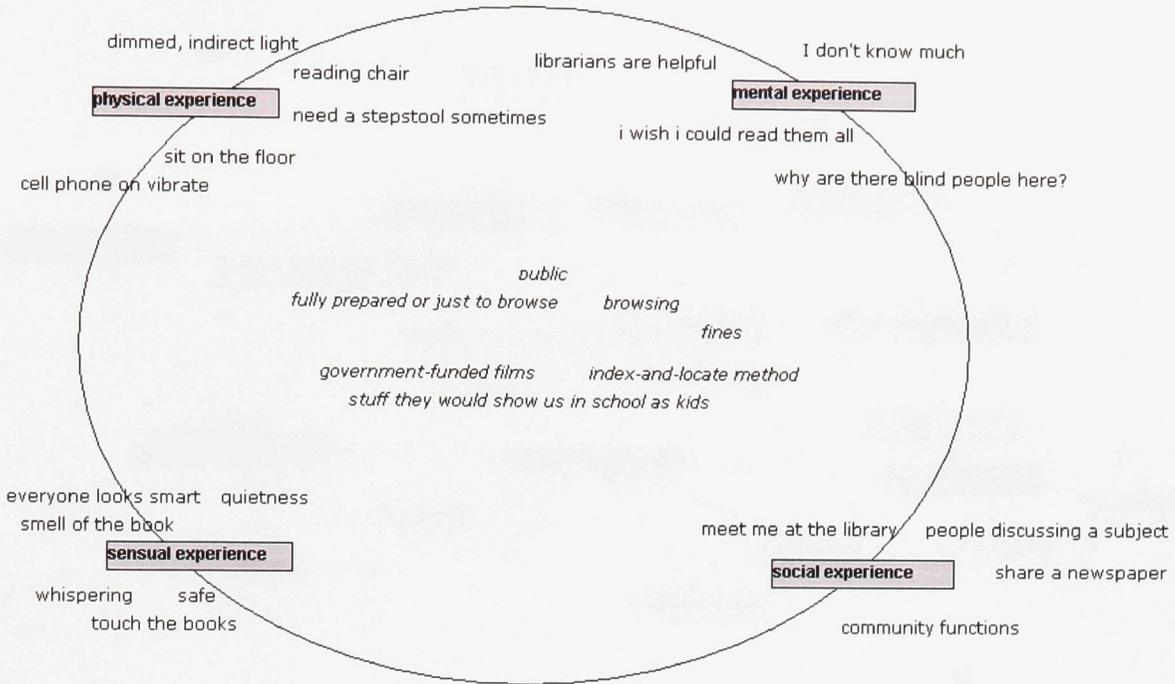


Fig. 19. Qualia of the library given as is.

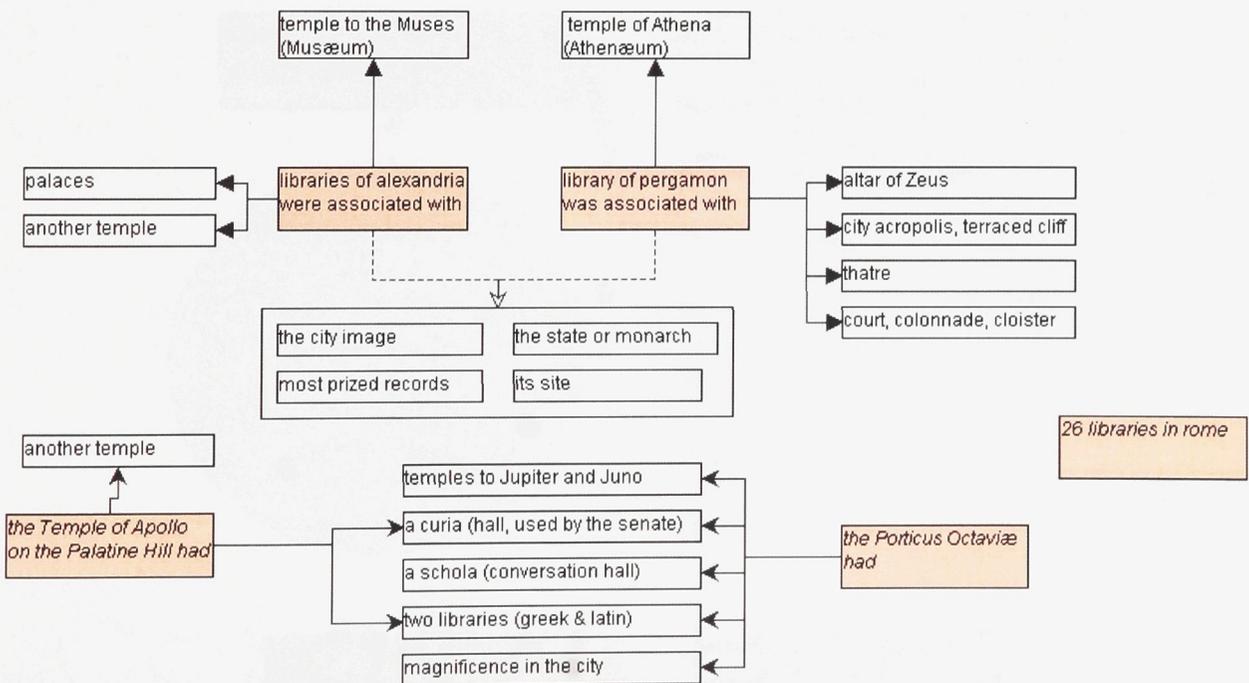


Fig. 20. Lost library conventions.

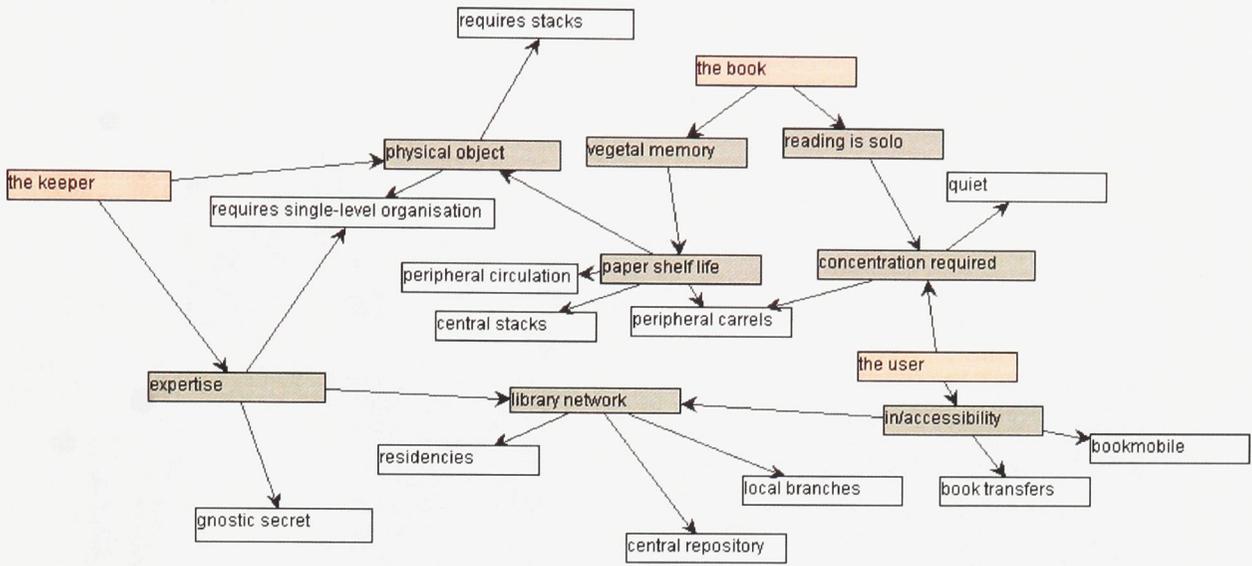


Fig. 21. Outmoded library conventions.

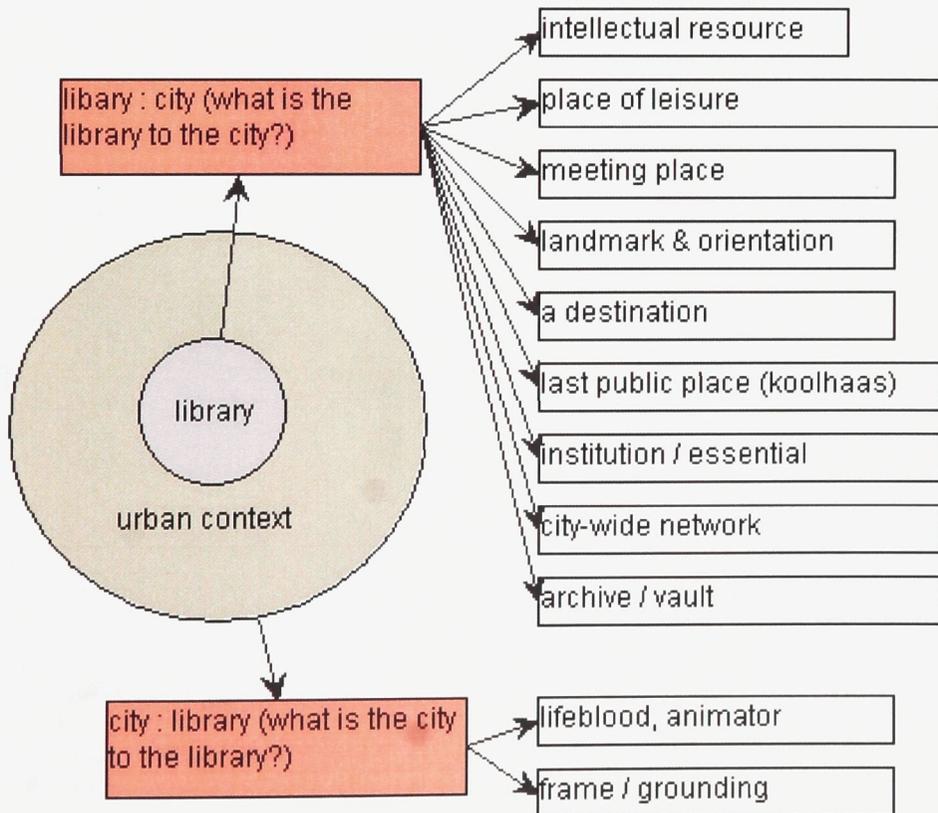


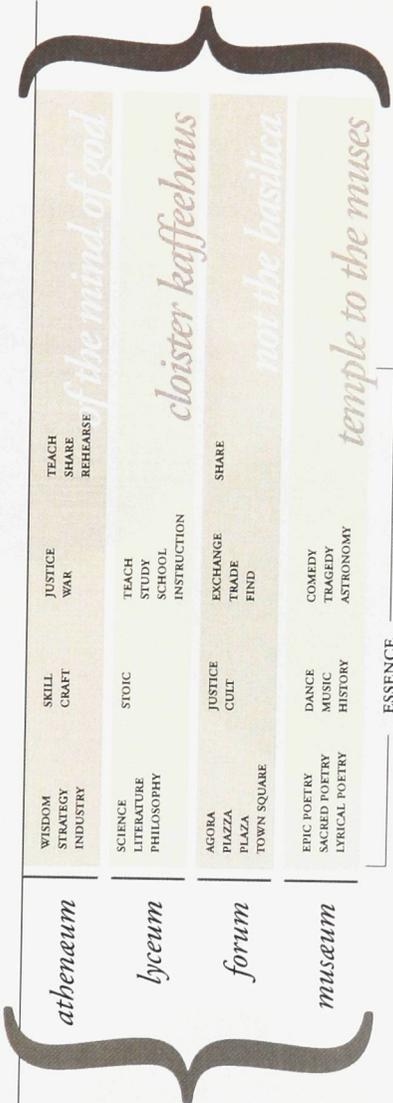
Fig. 22. Figure/ground of the library in the city.



share show library find test discover rest continue  
 meet for the purpose of mutual improvement scientific & literary pursuits club-room, reading-room  
 tell archive  
 make start  
 organise change finish  
 noblesse oblige publicity

# SALON OTTAWA

- [a. F. *salon* (= Sp. *salon*, Pg. *salão*), ad. It. *salone*, augm. of *sala* hall]
- 1. a. A large and lofty apartment serving as one of the principal reception rooms in a palace or other great house. b. A room, more or less elegantly furnished, used for the reception of guests; a drawing-room.
- 2. *spec.* The reception-room of a Parisian lady of fashion; hence, a reunion of notabilities at the house of such a lady; also, a similar gathering in other capitals.
- 3. a. *the Salon*: the annual exhibition at Paris of painting, sculpture, etc. by living artists. b. *salon des refusés*. [Fr., exhibition of rejected work], an exhibition ordered by Napoleon III in 1863 to display pictures rejected by the official Salon; also fig. specialist or hairdresser is conducted.
- 5. a. *attrib.*, as (sense 2) *salon philosopher*, *science volume*, *writer*; (sense 3) *salon furniture*, *norm*, *-piece*, *vocabulary*; (sense 4) *salon facial*, *service*, *treatment*. b. *attrib.* (passing into *adj.*) and *Comb.* with (occas. derogatory) reference to light music played as in a fashionable salon.



TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
 UBIQUITOUS COMPUTING  
 ...  
 GLOBAL CONDITIONS  
 LOCAL CONDITIONS

(moment - )

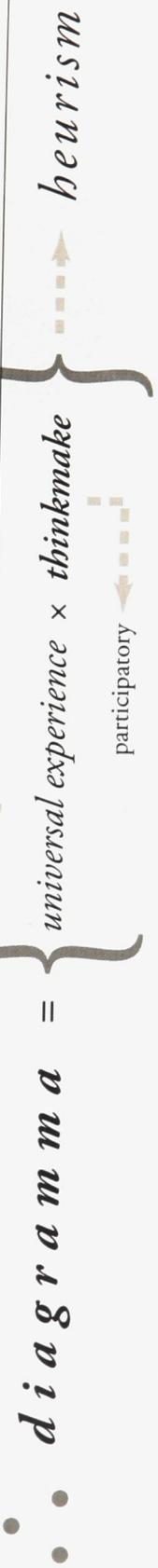


Fig. 2.4. Salon resolution and focus.

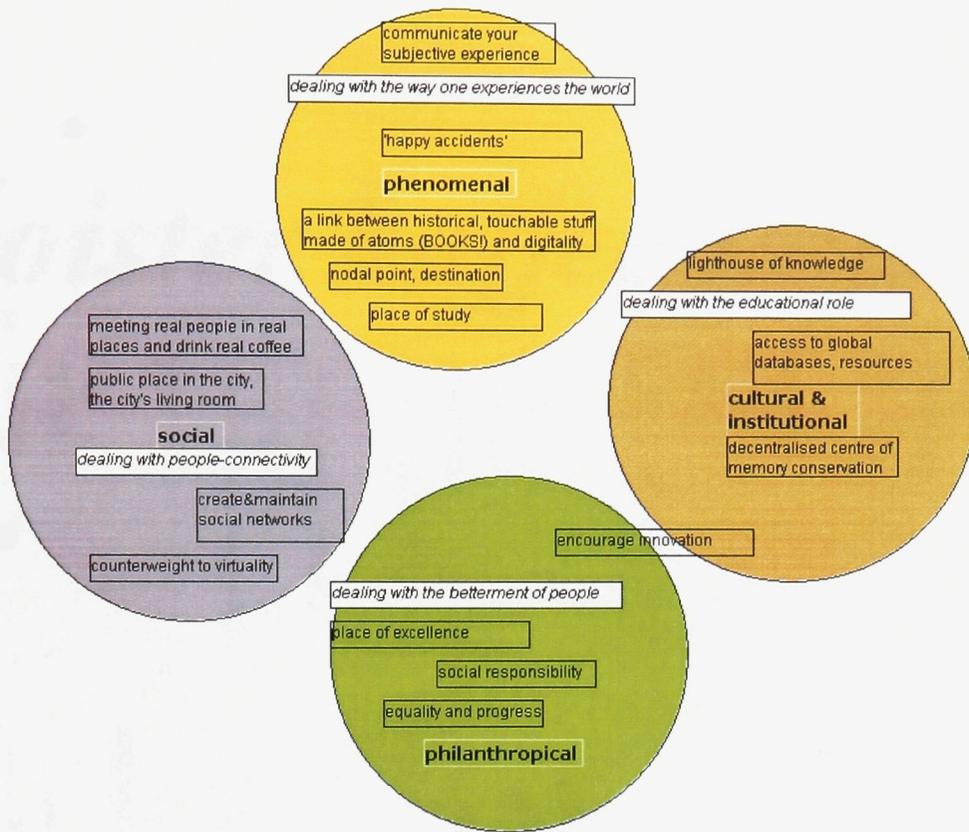


Fig. 25. Projected qualia.

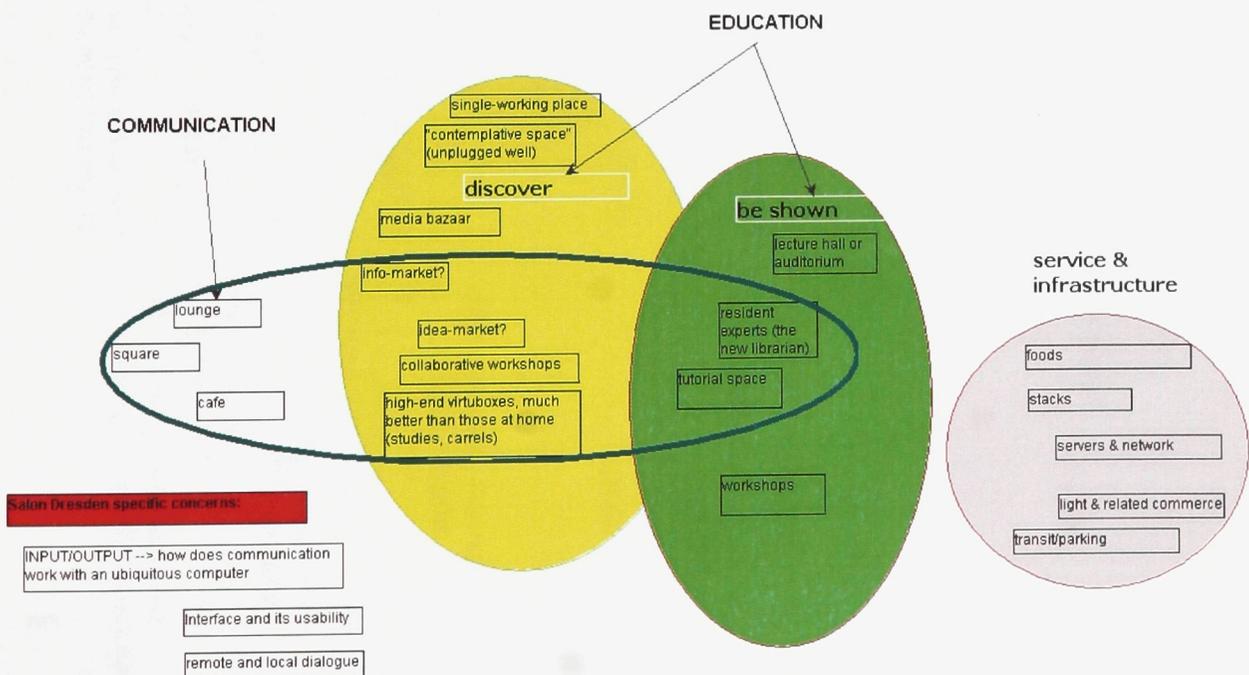


Fig. 26. Projected activities.

# cloister kaffeehaus

gymnasæum

condition  
finesse  
whole

nymphæum

remember, reconnect  
foundation  
from and towards

musæum

discover  
wander  
browse

athenæum

share  
discuss  
debate

forum

exchange  
meet  
move

3

cloister / garden / baths  
a place to unplug and cleanse

cafe / bar / eatery  
a place to eat and drink

market / bazaar  
a place to trade and exchange

transit / parking  
a place to move

auditorium  
a place for many to gather around one

archives / stacks  
a place to store and house

infrastructure  
a place to house equipment

lounge  
a place to chill

labs / carrels / virtuboxes  
a place to work and study

square / court residences  
a place to meet and focal point a place to move

archives  
a place to store and house

2

teach

give

show

share

trade

concentrate

meet

discover

meet

organise figure

browse

find

study

orient

social

phenomenal

philanthropical

institutional

I

Fig. 27. Projected elements.

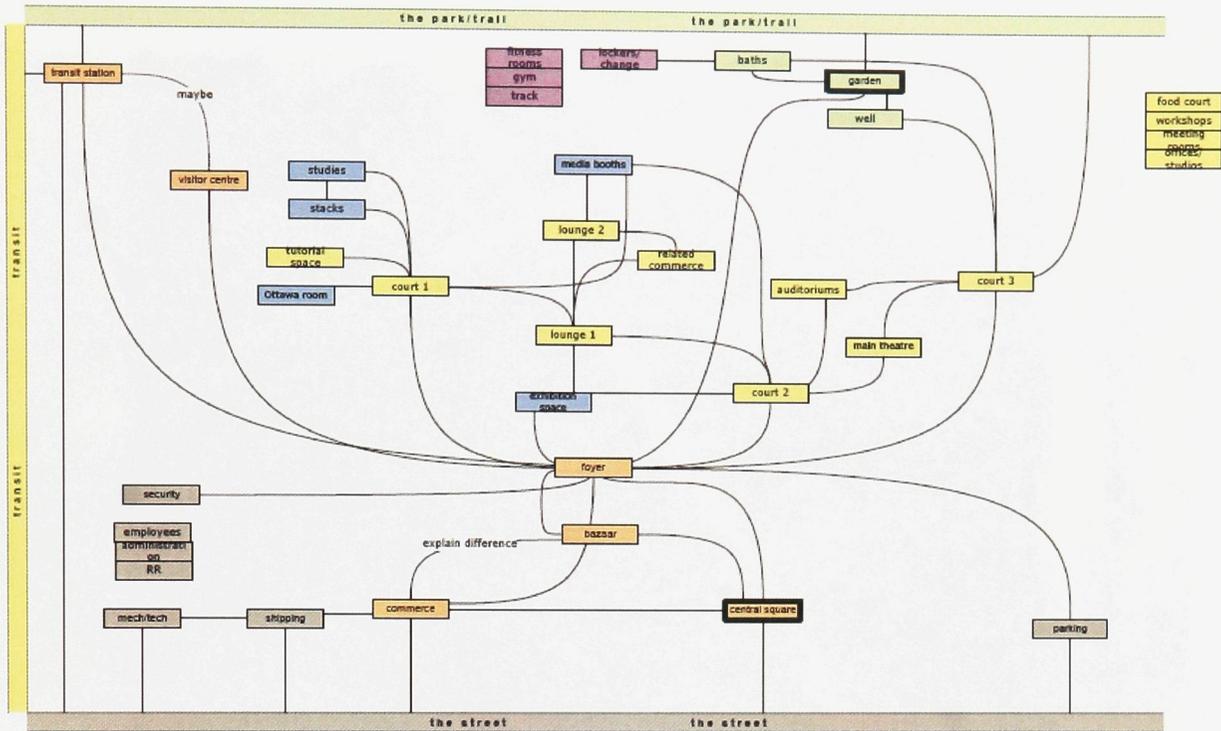


Fig. 28. Programmatic relationships and clustering.

element	qty	area (m2)	total (m2)	out	notes
<b>forum</b>		total area:	6 250		
commerce/retail	1	4 000	4 000		
food court	1	800	800		
foyer	1	500	500		
central square & bazaar	1	750	750	x	
visitor centre	1	200	200		
<b>musaeum</b>		total area:	19 750		
stacks	1	15 000	15 000		
ottawa room	1	1 000	1 000		
exhibition space	1	2 000	2 000		
media booths	1	750	750		
studies	1	1 000	1 000		
<b>athenaeum</b>		total area:	4 890		
lounge clusters	3	400	1 200		
large auditorium	1	1 400	1 400		1200 people each
small auditorium	2	425	850		340 people each
general purpose workshops	5	80	400		
meeting rooms	3	80	240		
resident offices	1	800	800		
<b>service</b>		total area:	5 400		<b>10000 ish?</b>
mech	1	2000	2 000		1/8 to 1/10 of total
tech	1	1000	1 000		
administration	1	600	600		
employee area	1	500	500		
restrooms	1	500	500		
shipping & receiving	1	500	500		
security	1	300	300		
<b>nymphaeum</b>		total area:	2 850		<b>10000 ish?</b>
gardens	1	2 000	2 000		
well	1	250	250		
courts	3	200	600	x	

Fig. 29. Base programmatic volumes.



Fig. 30. Topological analysis of Bayview Yards.



Fig. 31. Collaged generant, plan.

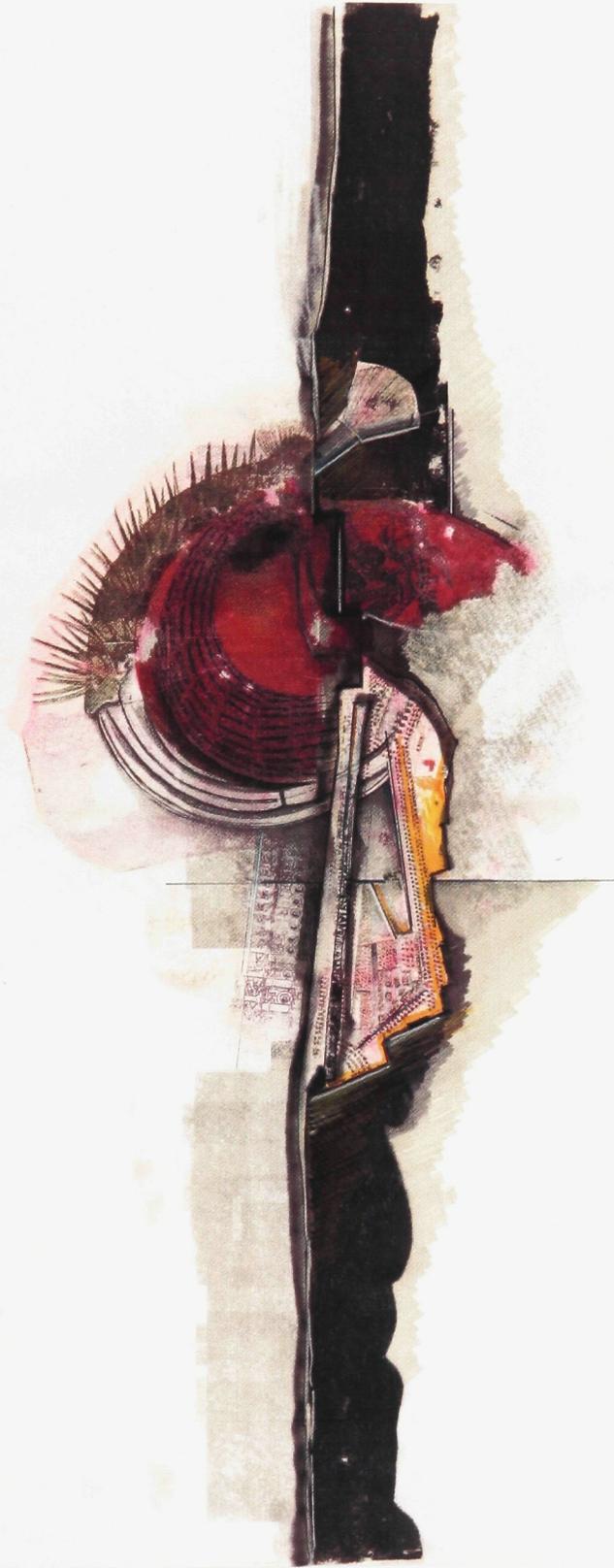


Fig. 32. Collaged generant, section.



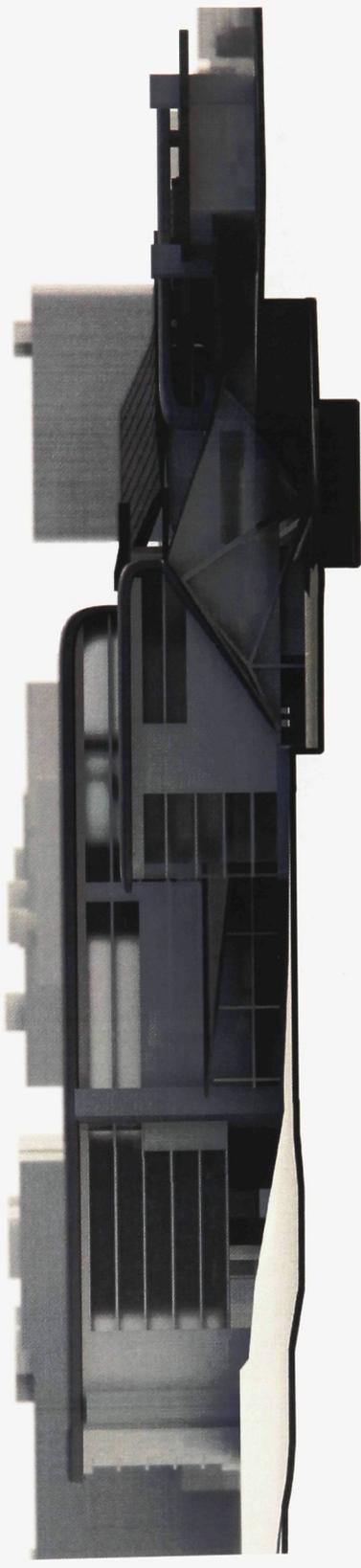
Fig. 33. Collaged generant, section.



Fig. 34. Site plan.



EAST ELEVATION  
SALON OTTAWA | 2006



WEST ELEVATION  
SALON OTTAWA | 2006

Fig. 35. East and west elevations.

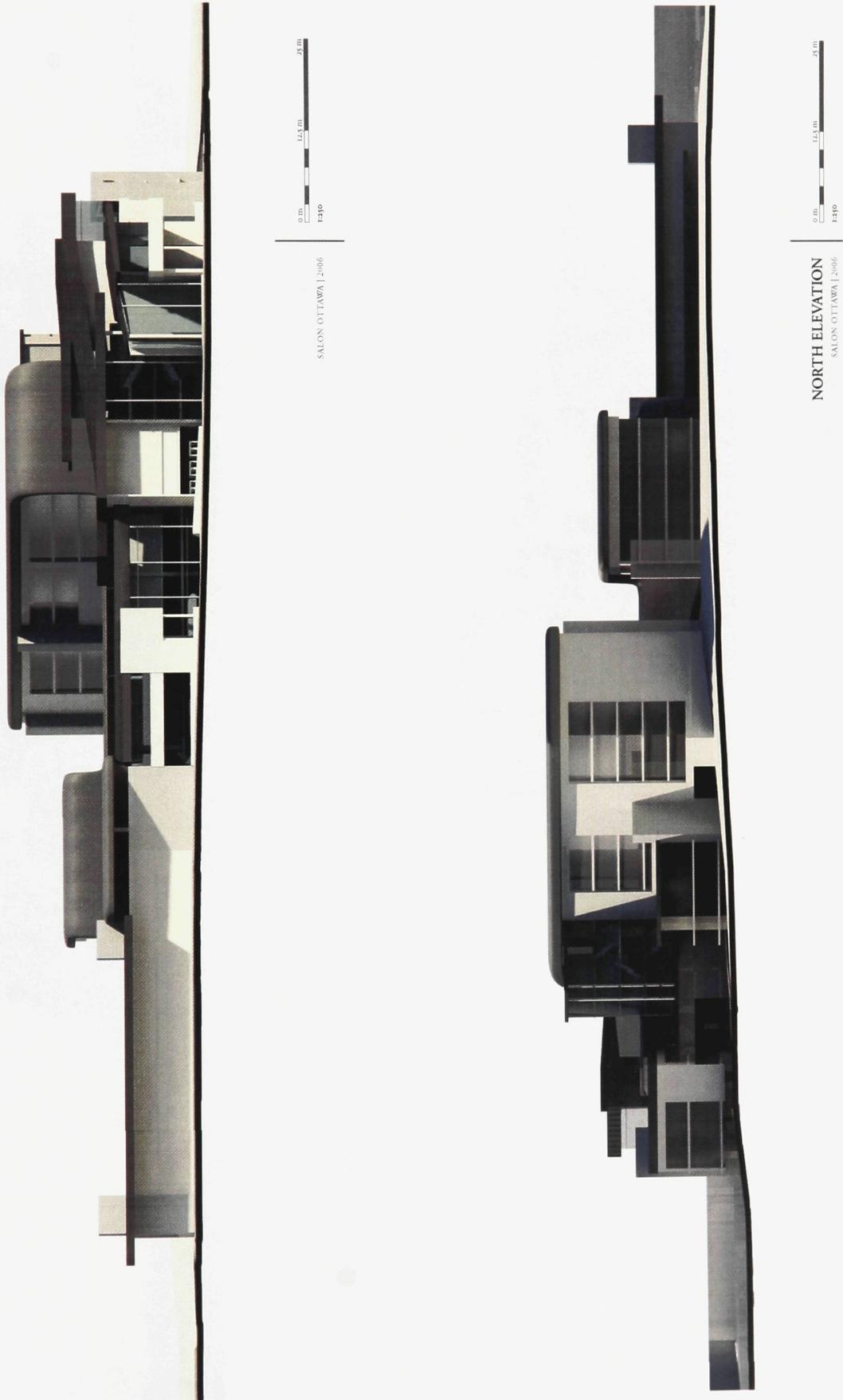
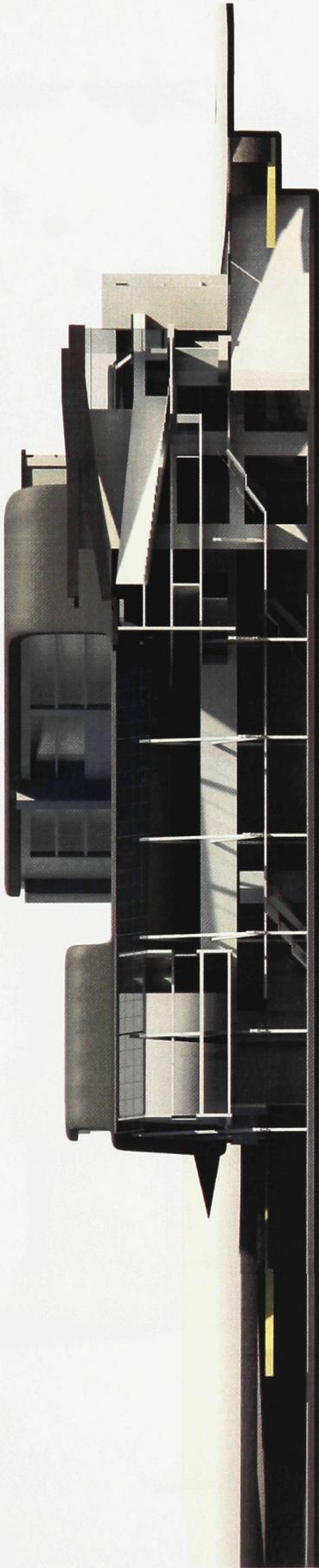


Fig. 36. North and south elevations.



SECTION THROUGH TRANSITWAY  
SALON OTTAWA | 2006



SECTION THROUGH LOBBIES



Fig. 37. Sections.



Fig. 38. Plan detail of salon space.

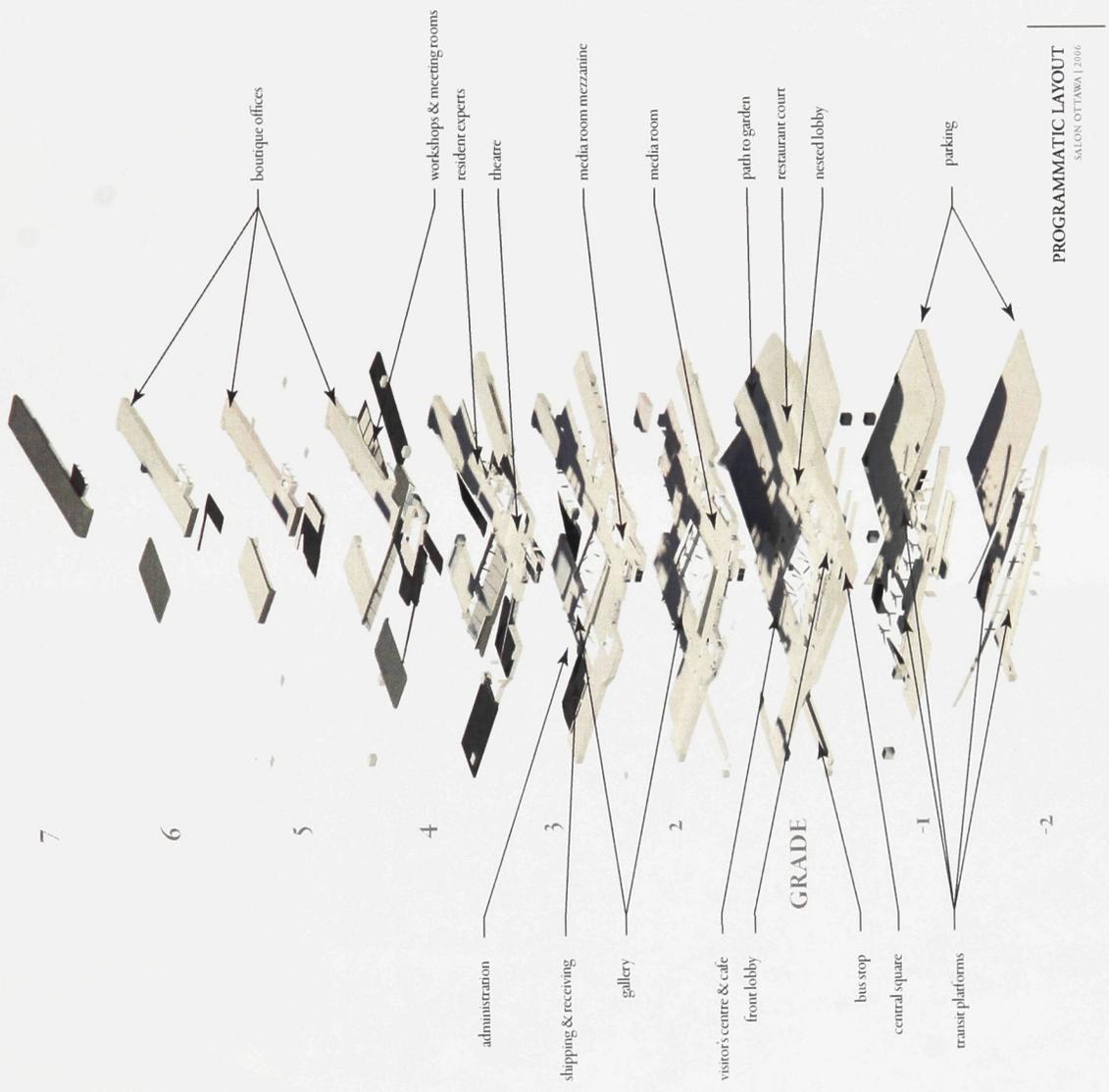


Fig. 39. Exploded plan diagram.



Fig. 40. Perspective from south-west.



Fig. 41. Perspective from south-east.

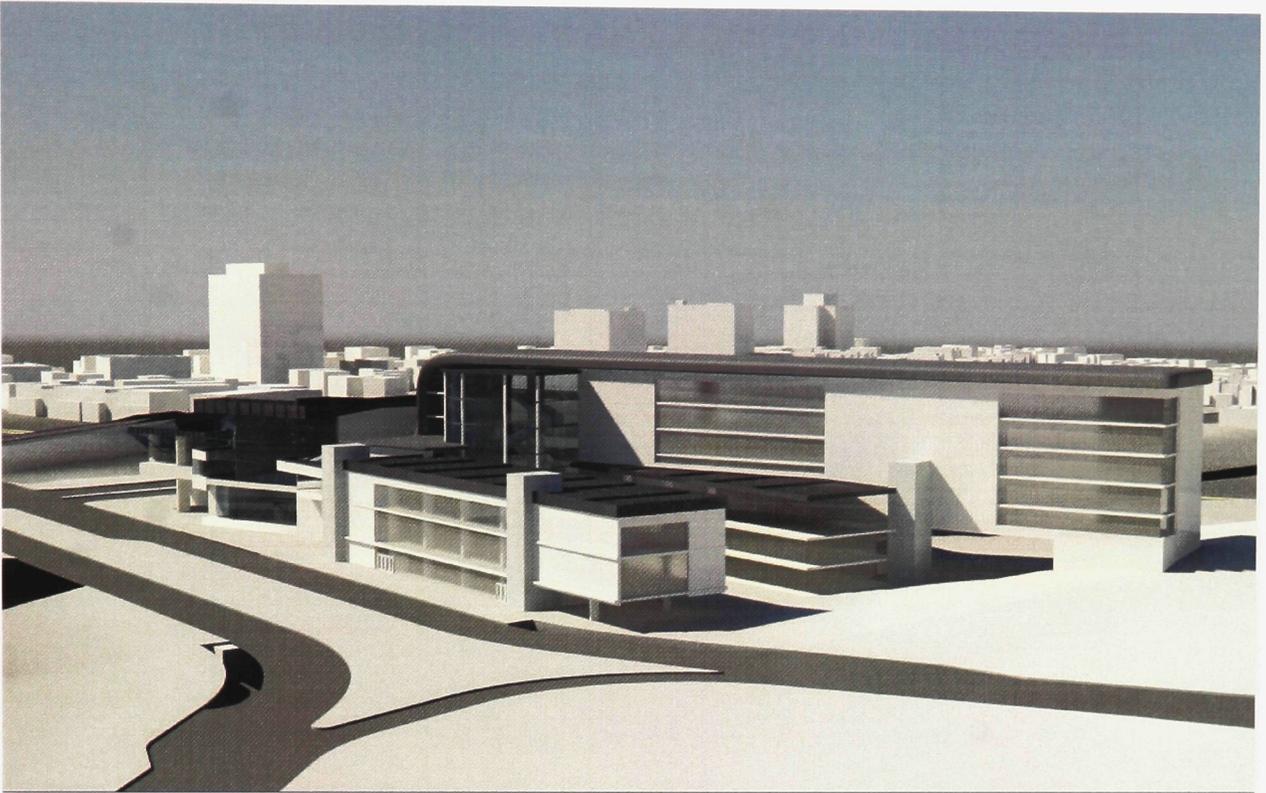


Fig. 42. Perspective from north-east.

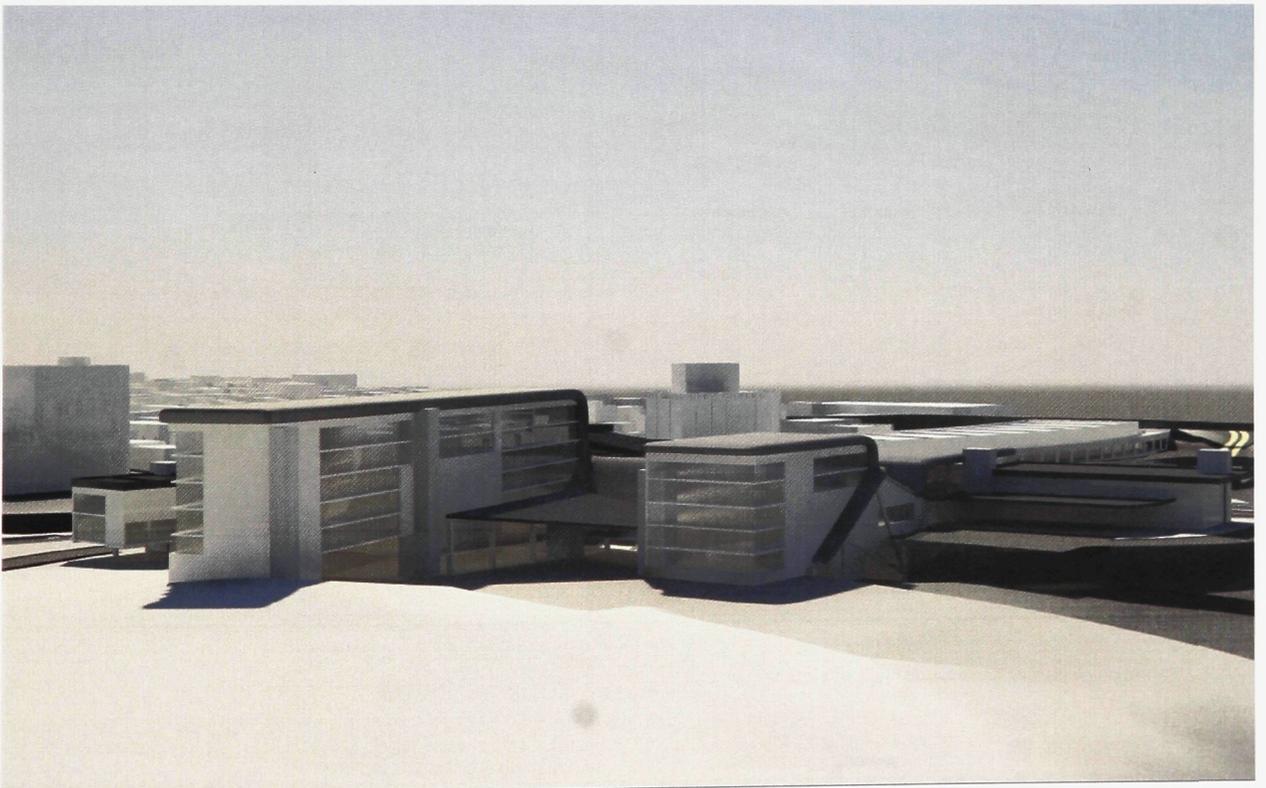


Fig. 43. Perspective from north-west.



Fig. 44. Perspective of skin and seam over transit platforms, looking east.



Fig. 45. Perspective of restaurant court.

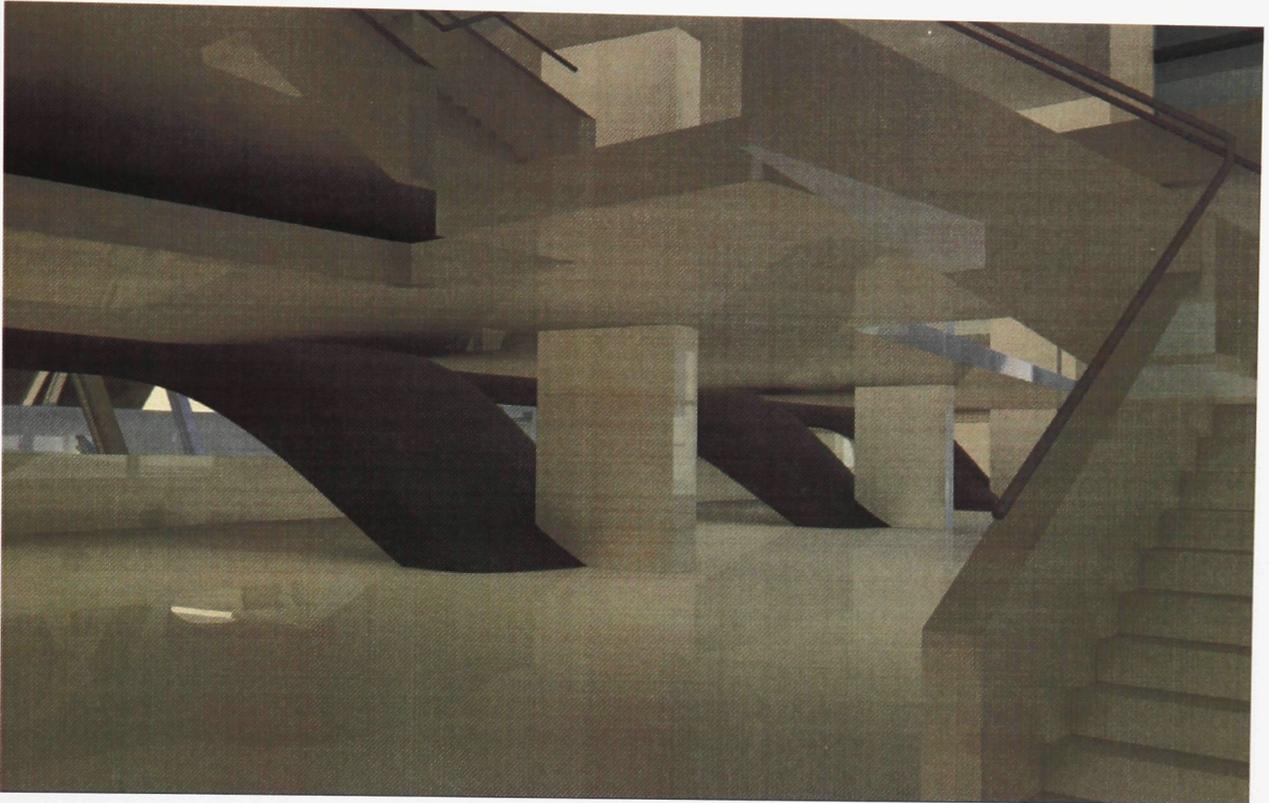


Fig. 46. Interior perspective of skin meeting ground.

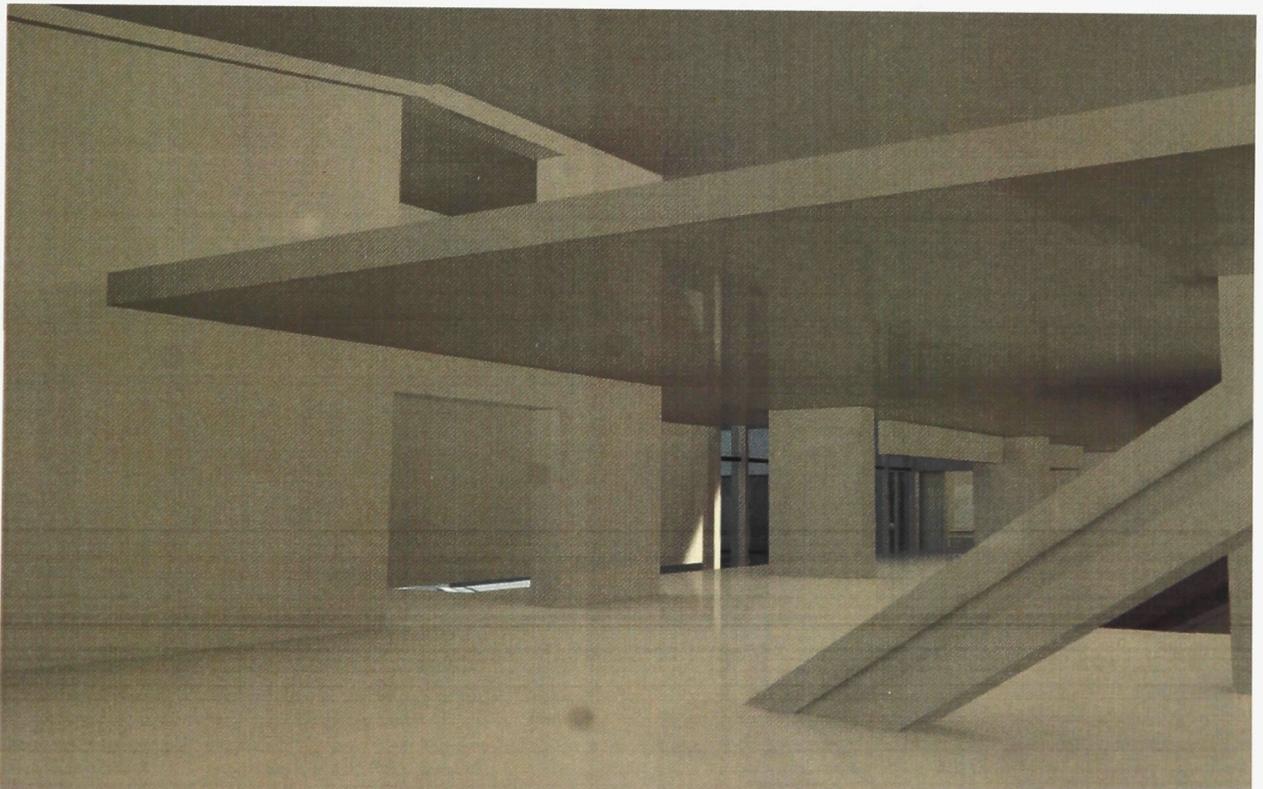


Fig. 47. Interior perspective leading into salon space.

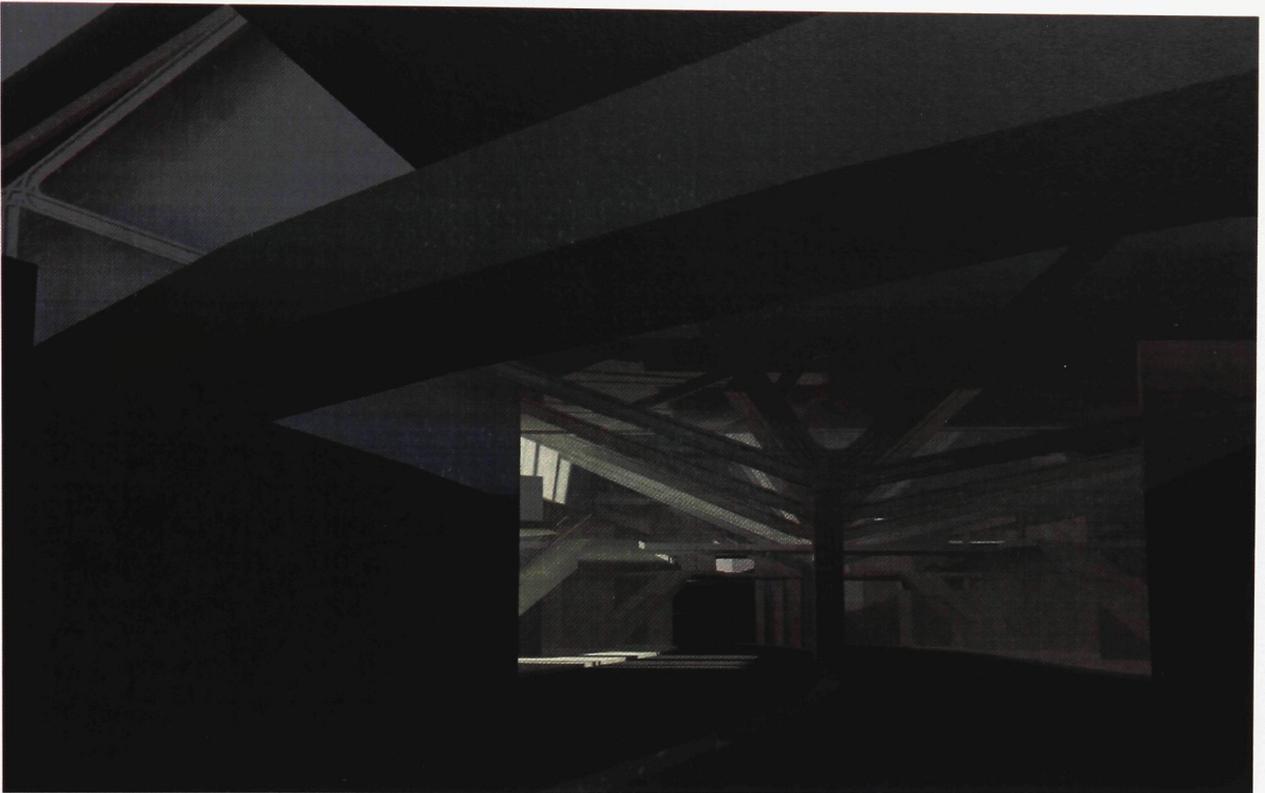


Fig. 48. Interior perspective of transit platform.



Fig. 49. Interior perspective of transit platform.

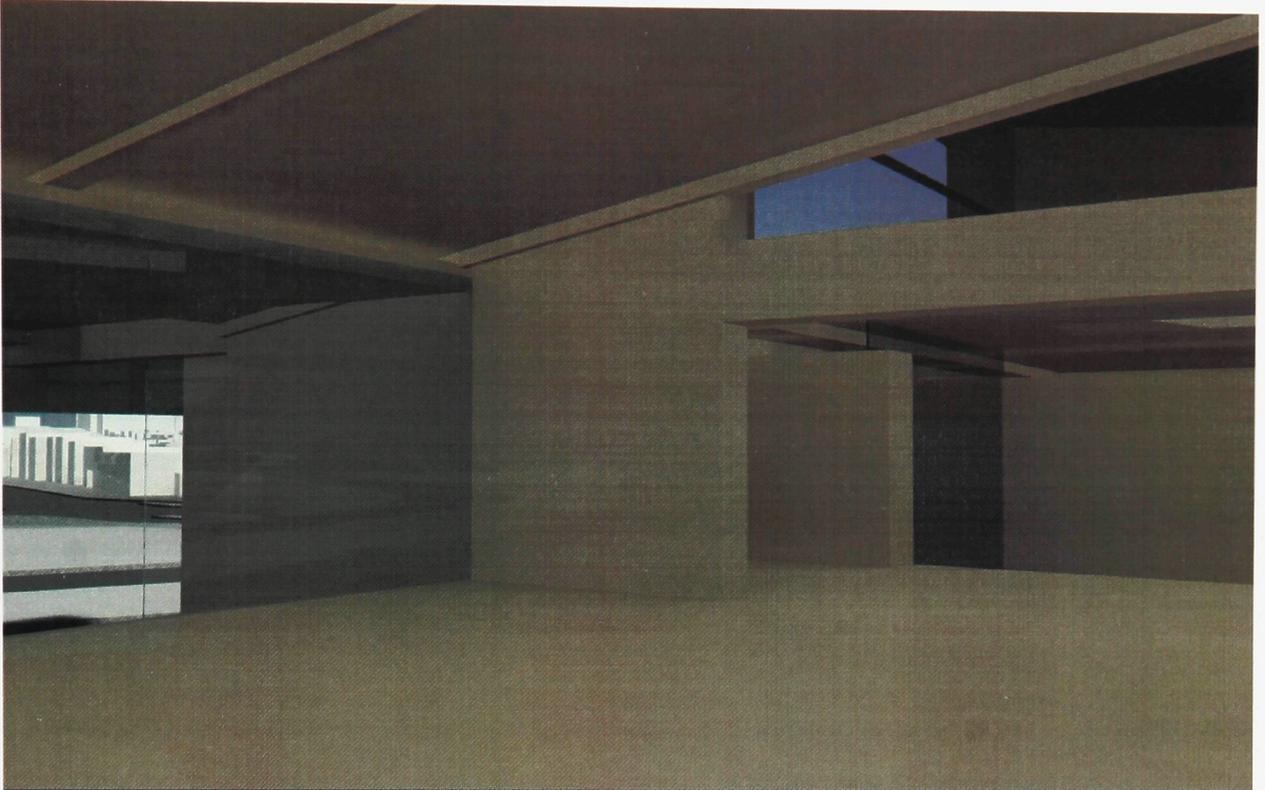


Fig. 50. Interior perspective of reading room.

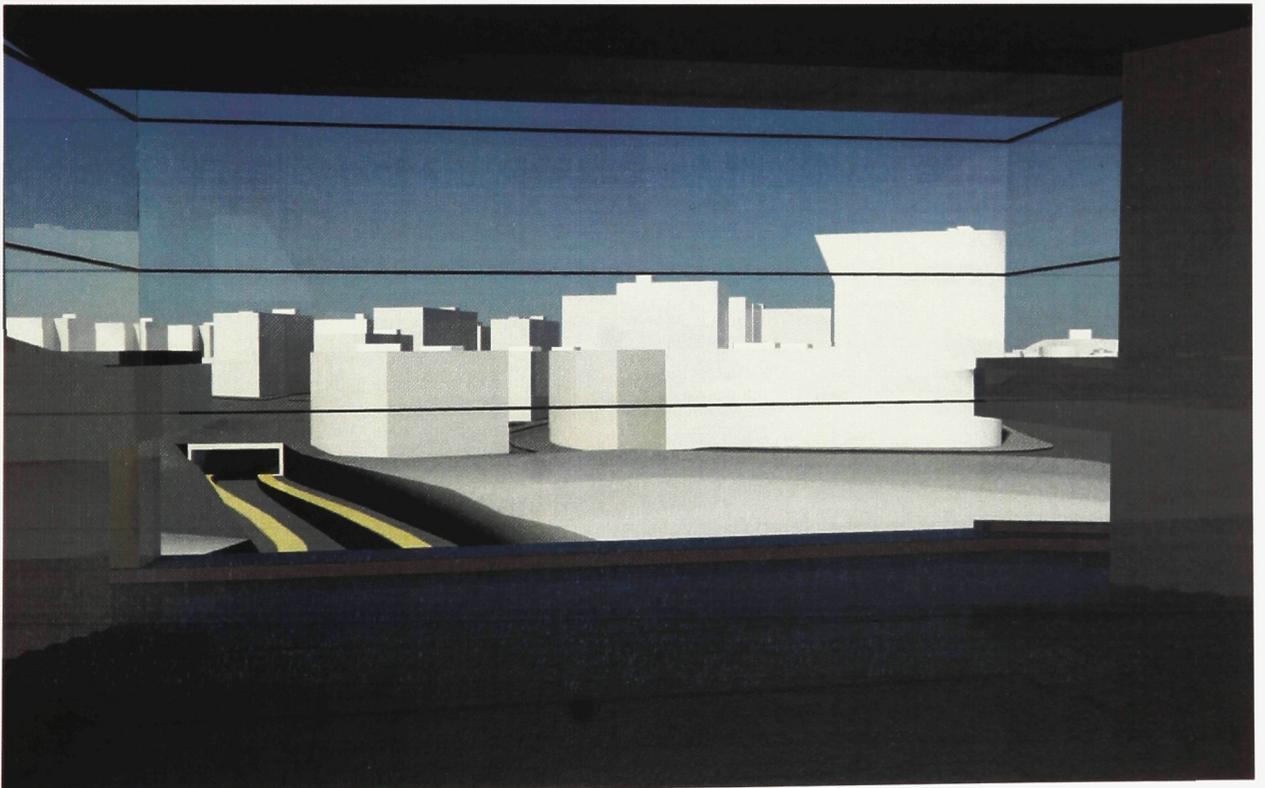


Fig. 51. Interior perspective of theatre looking towards downtown.

## Notes

- 1 Hole 120.
- 2 Hole 128.
- 3 Hole 128.
- 4 Hole 124-125.
- 5 Hole 121.
- 6 Hole 155.
- 7 Hole 127.
- 8 Hole 120-121.
- 9 Cook, *Love*.
- 10 Van Berkel and Bos, *Move 1* 159.

## V Extrapolations

*The abstract machine of the diagram needs triggering. It has to be set in motion so that the transformative process can begin, but where does this motion originate? How is the machine triggered? What exactly is the principle that effectuates change and transformation? Furthermore, how can we isolate this principle and give it the dimensions that make it possible to grasp and use it at will?*

—BEN VAN BERKEL AND CAROLINE BOS

### New Problems, New Questions

In the end, our exportation reveals very little that is new in itself or completely foreign to us, although it seems to lucidly reveal some of that which has been obscured, forgotten, or disconnected. It is possible to cite numerous instances where a *participatory* engagement is readily evident, but these examples are secondary to our difficulty in maintaining that engagement persistently throughout all of life. For a young student, the teacher maintains an environment that places that student as a central discoverer in a heuristic process of discovery, and this choreography rewards the strength of

will with learning and understanding. However, such is not possible when the student ages, as eventually every teacher recedes until, in maturity, the student stands alone. It is in this regard that the discourse of architecture is crucial to the survival and legitimacy of the practise. When a firm documents and publishes its works from their conception to their completion, the effect is equivalent to the students, working class citizens, salon attendees, *et cetera*, gathering, sharing, and disseminating their expertise to the full and equal benefit of each *participant*. *Our World* is dependent upon this discourse.

As has already been illuminated, diagram provides an inclusiveness and *participatory* capacity that is beyond many typical forms of investigation and representation. The ability to consider not only a large series of variables that would otherwise prove unwieldy, but to allow these parameters to interact and inform each other is possibly the most powerful aspect of diagramming. Likewise, the inclusiveness of establishments such as the salons or the Mechanics' Institutes is also integrative, their existence predicted upon the active *participation* of its constituents. This is not surprising, though, as the practise of architecture *participates* with the same inclusion, a "synthetic mastery of a vast range of theoretical and practical knowledge,"<sup>1</sup> as Vitruvius writes. Architecture is not a particular practise, but instead contingent upon the incorporation and integration of a full interdisciplinary spectrum of aptitudes and considerations. A significant observation of

this condition's effects is that *participation* contrasts much of our contemporary engagements in a manner that is quite clear: *participation* seems to cause, inherently, the blurring of authorship and ownership. For when there is no typological stasis, there is no repetition, and this is demonstrable in two ways through *Salon Ottawa & the Diagram*.

First, the salon involves its *participants* without formality. Case-states of associative parameters, circumstances, characters, stories, and the like: each *participant* is a life. Be they a resident expert or a casual visitor, whatever occurs within the salon is projected coextensively by its *participants*, each mediators in themselves. It is nonsensical to mark any portion of the salon's unfolding programme as one's own property or genius, for every moment is contingent upon the *participation* of the other within the condition of *Our World*. Second, the diagram and its heuristic nature provide the capacity to integrate the work of many constituents, and not just design parameters, but also *participants*. Prince-Ramus at TED notes that:

This process does not have a signature: there is no authorship—architects are obsessed with authorship. This [instead] is something that has editing and it has teams; and in fact we no longer see, within this process, the tradition of master architect creating a sketch which his minions carry out.<sup>2</sup>

Diagram is a device incredibly conducive to atelier environments and working groups, emerging out of a design

conversation that necessarily aligns from its very inception prior to any formal concretisation. This is unlike design-by-committee endeavours that are prone to failure by their preoccupation with form, inevitably torn between material and functional objectives that fail to concord in the first place. With the inclusion of all considerations, the instrumentality of the diagram dissolves any traces of the individual hand. Parameters and considerations are able to speak for themselves as delegates before the architects, insofar as the parameters do not come from the architects but from the considerations themselves: the site, the needs, the means, the context.

This is not to say that diagram is by any means an algorithmic design process, though this serves as warning of the potentiality for *participation* to dissolve as quickly as it is manifest. An automatic tendency might be to develop a set of benchmarks, rules, and metrics to measure a diagram's diagrammatic-ness and efficacy, but the diagram resists these from its beginnings. We may recall Aicher's example from the beginning of our exploration, that of a chef who merges with a dish through its inception, preparation, and completion. The chef does not follow recipes, yet nor can he or she lay entire claim to the way a dish tastes, for everything that composes the dish is readily available within the World. The act of *participation* lay within the formalisation of the dish from its diagrammatic immanence there prior; and that is the role of the chef, the *participant* embodying the agency of *thinkmake*.

It is as though *participation* in *Our World* dissolves the understanding of authorship and ownership through dissolving, in parallel, concepts of genius, ideology, and even the concept itself, which accompany the taxonomic structures imposed by *god's* and *my own world*. *Our World* shares itself with itself.

Automatic or autonomic tendencies, failure to equilibrate projection with criticality, typological fetish and fashion: any shopping during the generation of architecture is readily evident in its documentation and the architecture generated therein. It may be initially daunting that the diagram comes with no rules, no conception of totality, truth, or fact. The rules and metrics that judge the efficacy of a diagram come from that diagram itself, concordant to its own standards of fidelity. These are for the *participants* to embrace and govern *in situ*, and by removing all of these other considerations, it requires but one single simple element for its success: the will to *participate*, the will to say *Yes*.

## Afterthoughts and Heuristics





## Notes

- 1 Vitruvius, *Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. Ingrid D. Rowland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 13.
- 2 Prince-Ramus, *TED*.

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## APPENDIX B Collaboration Proposal

### Premise

This document proposes the format and structure of a collaborative research endeavour with Damien Jdanoff of Technische Universität Dresden. This proposed structure allows for each student to proceed with his dissertation pursuant to his own aims and objectives, while providing an opportunity to extend that work into a unique collaborative realm. The desired result is a delivery of two distinct yet interwoven dissertations, which, when considered together as a whole, afford an understanding of the endeavour that is far richer than considering either dissertation in isolation.

The primary theme of this collaborative endeavour is the recursive investigation of the “collaborative spirit” through the exploratory vehicle of the library typology, specifically its relationship to the emergent ubiquitous computing which makes it possible. In this regard, two perpendicular axes of engagement must be considered. The first is the axis of *generation* by which the endeavour is realised, much of which in this particular situation is contingent upon the use of telecommunication technologies available to either party.

The second axis of consideration is that of the *generated* actualisation as architectural artifice in the built environment.

## Aims & Objectives

This proposal thus seeks a direct embodiment of the “collaborative spirit” throughout its generative engagement: the precedent of a mutated building typology predicated upon this collaborative premise. This implicitly presupposes a mutated library typology of which ubiquitous computing is the catalyst: the *trans-national salon* is programmatically characterised by its unique place for the networked and collective consumption and generation of media artifice.

This precedent is a single extensible work of architecture that is constituted by two distinct yet interdependent built environments, which, in resonance with the structure of the respective dissertations, necessitate, justify, and make possible each other. Each built environment is a local embodiment of *the trans-national salon*, a node of a collaborative network, as it were. The expected artifices to be produced from this endeavour are thus based upon one dissertation per each student, each constituted by:

- A written component elucidating the respective student’s project’s underpinnings, contextual positioning, and project development, in addition to documentation of the collaborative generative process.

- A built environment situated within a local site that acts as a node for the trans-national salon, mapping the general aims of the collaborative network to specific local concerns.
- A repertoire of representations conducive to that student's mode of operation, as are required to resolve the design issues at hand and as are required to effectively communicate the resultants.
- A collection of work that is common to both dissertations, developed in tandem between the dissertations, forming the central shared component to which local embodiment responds.

Given the framework for operation [A | B | A and B | A or B], a portion of work is expected to be common to both dissertations, developed in tandem between the dissertations, and forming the central shared component to which local embodiment and the rest of each dissertation responds.

It is best to then anticipate that presentation of the dissertations be done in tandem, in order to communicate the collaborative endeavour's full richness. Such an approach to collaboration provides both dissertations the framework to:

- Foster a remote collaborative process that is emerging in the contemporary technological climate, especially by a developing an acute understanding for mapping general universal concerns to specific local considerations.

- Engage conventional understandings of building typology, by setting precedent in engaging this *trans-national salon* as a mutated building typology, negotiating the conventional understandings of library and emergent ubiquitous computing.

This collaborative endeavour has the potential to provide a robust forum for the critique generative and consumptive processes in the Western world, especially those of architecture-artifice and media-artifice. This proposed structure of collaborative work ensures that the “collaborative spirit” is engaged in both what is done and how it is done; indeed, it posits architecture as embodied collaboration.

## Concerns of Alternate Approaches

An alternate proposal is to engage this collaborative endeavour as a single exquisite corpse on one site, using the available communicative technologies to enable remote communications and exchange of work. In addition to this structure engaging the “collaborative spirit” primarily through the *generation* of the project, relegating that which is *generated* to afterthought, it also poses several other avoidable risks:

- *Technological Transparency.* Given that the communicative toolsets to accomplish this sort of work is still in its infancy, the dissertations are at risk of digressing from the architectural artifice, consumed

by trying perfect to collaborative protocol. The dissertations must avoid becoming an exclusive study of computer-mediated group decision making.

- *Collaborative Overhead.* Many actual collaborative initiatives are structured upon existent contacts; design co-operatives tend to form out of established working relationships. As such, the dissertations are at risk of being subverted by a lack of experience between the two parties, not only with collaborative work in general, but also of working with each other. Much time and effort would need to be dedicated to get a sense of the other party.
- *Lack of Added Value.* A concentration on the generative process relegates the dissertations to be little more than a proof-of-concept for the available communicative technologies, adding little more value than is readily available to real-spatiotemporal collaborative engagements. A dissertation in this light hedges on little more than a demonstration of emerging global practice, and lacks criticality.
- *Suppression of Opportunity.* Most significantly, the alternate proposal denies a significant opportunity to explore the “collaborative spirit” through architectural embodiment. The alternate proposal neglects the full resolution of its own initiative by using a rich plural process of generation to generate (yet another) library.

The proposed endeavour seeks to avoid these perils, allowing for the “collaborative spirit” to be explored both in generation and the generated, a fully resonant architectural embodiment of the collaborative process.

## Methodology

The collaborative endeavour is sectioned into four primary phases. Refer to the project schedule for estimated start times and durations.

- Phase I: *Lead-in*. An ad-hoc foundational exploration into the possibilities and parameters of the endeavour. Stakeholders and interested parties resolve the final project proposal.
- Phase II: *Intensive*. The majority of each stakeholder’s time is, in this phase, dedicated to the collaborative development. The tempo is structured by one-week intervals, defining a total of six stage-gates; each gate includes a specified set of goals and deliverables (to be determined), and each gate is an opportunity to critique and redefine the project’s parameters.
- Phase III: *Lead-out*. An analysis of the intensive collaborative development ensues. While stakeholders dedicate more time to individual efforts, the opportunity to resolve and refine the collaborative work remains.

- Phase IV: *Maintenance*. The on-going maintenance of the collaborative work ensures its accessibility and utility to the stakeholders. While minimal amounts of work continue, the body of collaborative work does not substantially change.

While this collaborative endeavour provides an opportunity to explore the technological environment in which it unfolds, it is crucial to reiterate that its objective is not a proof-of-concept for remote collaborative technologies. As such, it is imperative to utilise technologies which do not require substantial customisation or modification; while it may be optimal for a virtual workbench to occur in synchronous real-time with heterogeneous toolsets and media artifice, such a solution is unfortunately not currently available. This limitation implies that the primary temporal experience of this endeavour is characterised by asynchronicity and deposition.

Inherent to this are thus issues of content and rights management in the interest of preventing data loss. It is likely that a working ad-hoc solution will emerge as the project progresses, but it is possible to speculate that the most effective solution resonates with the framework hereto provided for the collaborative endeavour. Within the collaborative realm – that is, on the virtual workbench – the stakeholders are permitted the reuse of another stakeholder's content so long as it does not overwrite or

threaten the security of that content. In other words, the virtual workbench is split by the number of stakeholders,

This effectively provides fluid content creation and exchange without the need for content management systems, bypasses the need for operating metaphors (such as the conch or newsroom systems, for example), and avoids digression into technological mediations.

## Tools and Media

Much of the collaborative work is centred on a “virtual workbench,” which is not constituted by any one particular medium; a diverse toolset forms this workbench.

- *Project Wiki.* A project wiki provides the primary textual record of the project’s development. The Wiki, an open and malleable forum, also provides feedback mechanisms for those other than the stakeholders, and dissolves authorship as all content in the Wiki is developed in tandem. Moreover, given a Wiki’s versioning ability and virtual self-documentation, it is an ideal format for recording the progress of the collaborative endeavour.
- *Stakeholder Blogs.* A blog provides individual stakeholders an effective channel to document observations of the project as it unfolds, and is secondary to the content being produced.

- *Instant Messaging.* As a primary means of synchronous communication, the logging of all instant messaging conversations is essential. It provides an accessible channel for stakeholders to resolve issues that cannot be effectively addressed through asynchronous email and do not require the robustness of a teleconference.
- *Teleconference.* A channel which provides a full spectrum of synchronous telecommunication in the closest simulation to real-space communication. These must be scheduled and planned, as one would any other meeting, in order to derive the most value.
- *Email.* The use of a mailing list is likely best for communications which can not be achieved through the other channels,

An FTP site with a simple directory structure provides a place for stakeholders to deposit digital assets. While this repository is a place to hold the content, it is not the primary place to interact with it; it is constantly cross-referenced by the project Wiki. The FTP ensures the accessibility and security of the content, in addition to expedient transfers of the anticipated large datasets. The FTP is divided into two sections: the first is private to the stakeholders, holding the digital assets being manipulated by the stakeholders, and the other is public, holding communicative content that is accessible to the internet community. A web host (potentially <http://thesis>.

legomski.com) can host the non-bandwidth-intensive assets, while cross-referencing to the content on the FTP server.

Much of the non-textual generative content is produced in digital creative tools, and its source assets are not available to those other than the stakeholders. This list can be appended should there be the need for other types of digital assets.

- *Autodesk 3ds Max 8* [\*.max]. Given the stakeholders' familiarity with this product, it is the primary tool for three-dimensional digital content creation.
- *AutoDesk AutoCAD 2006* [\*.dwg]. A supplementary tool for the manipulation of data prior to or after its entry in 3ds Max 8, if required.
- *Adobe Illustrator CS2* [\*.ai]. Vector-based graphics for illustrative purposes; this content is accessible to Acrobat (see below) and vice versa.
- *Adobe Photoshop CS2* [\*.psd]. For the purposes of image manipulation and content creation, used especially in tandem with Illustrator and 3ds Max (see above).
- *Adobe Acrobat 7* [\*.pdf]. A viewer and creator of the Portable Document Format, which includes annotative abilities and can also view Illustrator documents.
- *Microsoft Excel* [\*.xls]. While no immediate requirement is apparent, this tool may be needed to parse large datasets should they come within the scope of the project.

## Display Formats

All content that is non-textual and inaccessible to the aforementioned tools can be displayed in one of two formats. These formats are especially crucial when communicating with stakeholders not fluent with a particular tool.

- *Portable Document Format* [\*.pdf]. All content, whether originally digital or not, is presented through the Portable Document Format. This is especially crucial for communicating content to other stakeholders not familiar with a particular toolset.
- *Portable Network Graphics* [\*.png]. For communicative and archival purposes, this lossless graphics format is easily viewable by a large number of third-party applications. It should be noted that images which require a linear-temporal sequence of arrangement would best be included in Portable Document Format as a “slideshow.” Further, images should be used for reference to content contained within a digital asset format, saving a stakeholder from having to open a much larger application.
- *Audio Video Interleave* [\*.avi]. The use of video is likely to be rare, but if needed for demonstrative purposes, it should not require any special codecs.

## Resources

- *Rendering FARM.* Carleton Immersive Media Studio (CIMS) retains a capable rendering cluster, though it must be modified to accommodate 3ds Max file formats. Intensive rendering exercises are not the primary objective of the project, however, the farm's resources may be required to parse large data sets.
- *Videoconferencing.* CIMS and Technische Universität Dresden have adequate equipment to facilitate videoconferencing.
- *Legomski.com.* My own domain can host the required textual frameworks which are not dependent upon storage space and bandwidth.
- *Workstations.* Each stakeholder is already equipped with an adequate workstation, though there are some concerns regarding computational capabilities required to handle large datasets.
- *Community.* Carleton University, CIMS, and Technische Universität Dresden have large student populations and interested parties which may be enlisted for contribution and observation, either for the benefit for the collaborative endeavour or for the interest of the academic community.

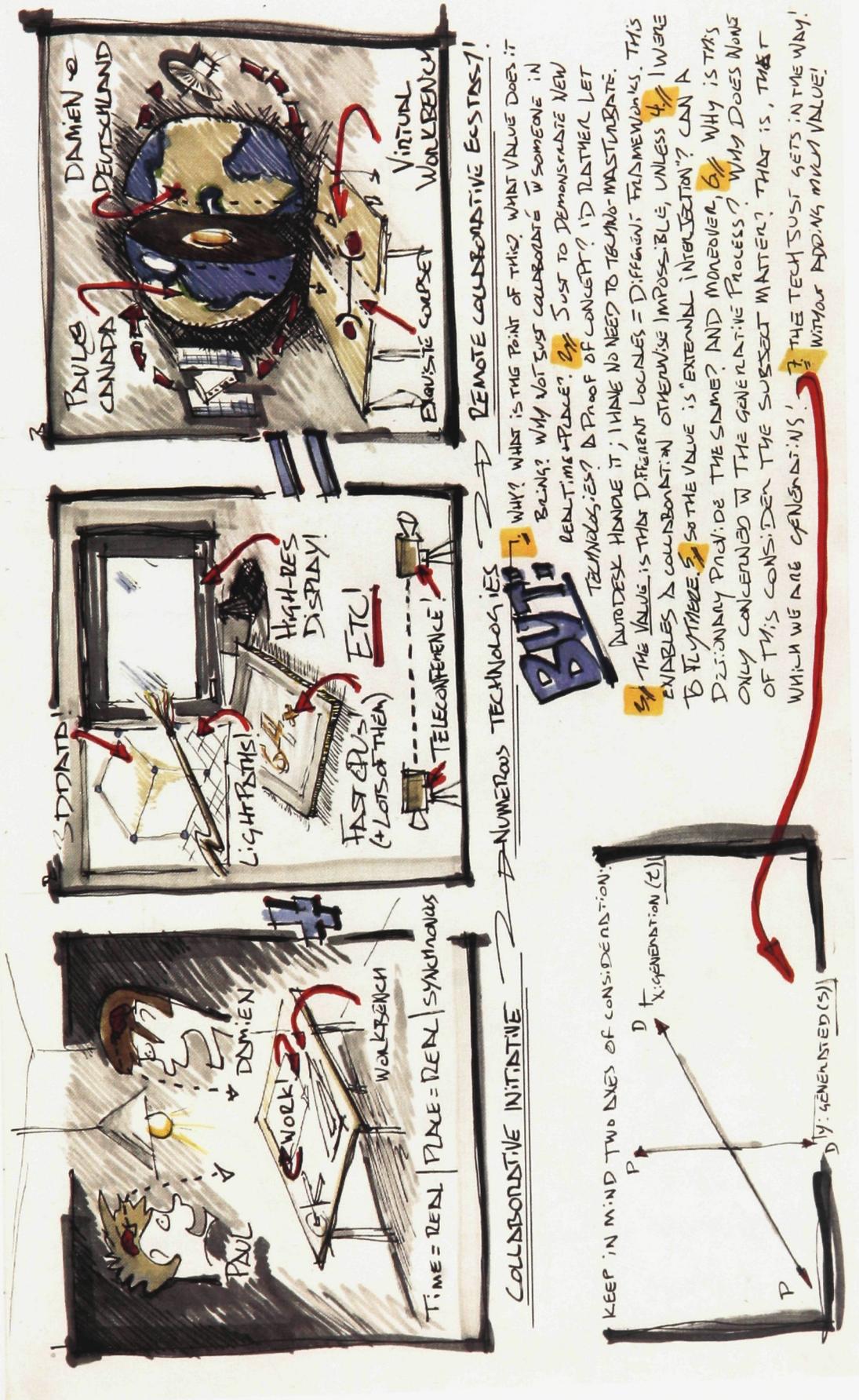


Fig. 52. Collaboration storyboard.