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AGAINST THE APPARATUS OF LEACRY

10 CHAPTERS FOR OTTAWA'S ARCHITECTURE

by

OLGA KALOSHA

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Post Doctoral Affairs
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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M.ARCH (PROFESSIONAL)

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ABSTRACT

Being a formal articulation of cultural ideology and social relations, architecture constitutes a complex power apparatus. What exactly is the apparatus of architecture in Ottawa? What role does it play in local sociocultural development? What role does the sociocultural development play in it? By interrogating the contemporary logic and the technology of power relations, this thesis investigates the local architectural apparatus, with the intent to scrutinize alternatives for existing processes prevailing within the Capital. This investigation does not focus on policy adjustment, but rather on finding ways to reestablish the presence of the very practice of architecture in the city of Ottawa. The proposed research includes a comprehensive study of institutions that influence Ottawa's built environment. The intent of the investigation may be formulated in a fundamental question: might collaboration between various aspects of the architectural apparatus be beneficial to the quality of the built environment and, simultaneously, encourage social engagement?

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Introduction

Against: in a direction opposite to the motion or course of: counter to ¹

Apparatus: 1. the functional processes by means of which a systematized activity is carried out;

2. the machinery of government ²

Legacy: something transmitted by or received from an ancestor or predecessor or from the past ³

We are all schooled to think of ourselves as contributors to critical thought, urban fabric, and physical reality in general, but most importantly, as agents who form the cultural and civic identity of a place. We are taught to be Architects, designers of the built environment, influential players in the way cities work. But let's face it: within the technology of power relations, our influence is unsubstantial, and Ottawa, sadly, is a living proof. Let us immediately abandon the deceptive idea of the one-man architecture and begin with the beginning. Let us understand the apparatuses of governance, and accept their power over, amongst others, the profession – and the very practice – of architecture.

The objective of this thesis is to recognize and question the dependencies Ottawa's architects find themselves subjected to. With this objective, the text begins with a contextual analysis of the *apparatus*, introduces a terminological quest for the *genealogy* of the term, addresses its current position within a capitalist society, and the processes inherent to it. Once defined, the argument proceeds with identifying the tools that the apparatuses use to influence sociocultural development.

Within such an approach, it is argued that architecture constitutes a complex apparatus of its own. What role does it play in local sociocultural development? What role does the sociocultural development play in it? What are the ideological machines influencing its course of action? These are the questions addressed concurrently with the general objective of constructing a framework for an architectural proposal. Consequently, an attempt to scrutinize and dismember the apparatus of Ottawa's architecture is made. The selected elements of the apparatus of architecture are analysed using the following criteria: activities, developments and actions; benefit to the profession and influence of the urban environment; communication of the intents to the general public.

¹ "Against - Definition and More from the Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary." *Dictionary and Thesaurus - Merriam-Webster Online*. Web. 27 Feb. 2011. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/against>>.

² "Apparatus - Definition and More from the Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary." *Dictionary and Thesaurus - Merriam-Webster Online*. Web. 27 Feb. 2011. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/apparatus>>.

³ "Legacy - Definition and More from the Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary." *Dictionary and Thesaurus - Merriam-Webster Online*. Web. 27 Feb. 2011. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/legacy>>.

The comprehensive overview of the selected institutions reveals a *missing link* in the local apparatus of architecture, namely a space *dedicated* to architecture, where exhibition, discussion and public display of the built environment take place. Ultimately, it is argued that Ottawa's apparatus of architecture is in need of an independent agent, an institution that would administer interdisciplinary exchange, inspire collaboration, create a locus for critical discussion, and a space for a unique open display of planned developments; a centre for perpetual architectural activity, discourse, and action, open to policy makers and professionals in various fields, such as architecture, environmentalism, arts, business, media, education, construction and social activism.

The text proceeds with an argument that active collaboration between various architectural and planning departments would be indisputably beneficial to the quality of built environment; most importantly, it could encourage social engagement that is crucial to the promotion of the highest quality architecture and urban design.

A comprehensive precedent study overview provides facts, critical findings and the analysis of selected independent centres of architecture, with an objective to conceive and comprehend the potential agenda, role, and speculative activities of the proposed Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment. These precedent studies provide a factual frame of reference for the programmatic outline of the proposed Centre. Finally, it is argued that the proposed project of architecture offers to generate an opposition platform to what is defined as Ottawa's *apparatus of legacy*.

In a capitalist setting, architectural practice is principally determined by the economic base; it also contributes to the cultural superstructure. Any economic instability has immediate effects on the profession – but so does cultural and social decadence. In fact, this relationship is reciprocal – architecture, cultural factors and social conditions are directly interrelated to contribute to each other's advance, or decline. In order to discern and examine the processes prevailing in the built environment of Ottawa, a political and institutional centre of Canada, it is necessary to comprehend both economic and sociocultural mechanisms and general tendencies existing in the society at large. Socioeconomic and sociocultural processes are controlled by multiple apparatuses, and are deeply imbedded in every contemporary capitalist society by means of ideology. Ideology presents itself as an indispensable tool for someone seeking to comprehend the complex ways in which people learn, identify, and learn to identify their place in society, and how they relate to their identities, roles or subjectivities. Ideology acts also as a means by which various apparatuses of governance – including the apparatus of architecture – control, command and orient people. To begin the methodological investigation and examine the abovementioned processes further, we shall first ask: what *is* an apparatus, and what is its relation to ideology?

Michel Foucault identified the 'apparatus' back in 1977 as a "thoroughly heterogeneous set consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic propositions...The apparatus itself is the network that can be established between these elements..."⁴. In fact, the term comes to occupy a central place in Foucault's strategy and thought, as suggested by Giorgio Agamben in his essay entitled *What is an Apparatus?*⁵. Agamben considers the "genealogy" of the term, tracing it through: Hegel's "*positivity*" (from German *die Positivität* (1795-96); historical element – loaded as it is with rules, rites, and institutions that are imposed on the individual by an external power, but that become, so to speak, internalized in the systems of beliefs and feelings)⁶, theological "*oikonomia*" (a Greek term (100 C.E. – 600 C.E.); an apparatus through which the Trinitarian dogma and the idea of a divine providential governance of the world were introduced into the Christian Faith)⁷, and Foucault's own "*dispositif*" (a French term derived from Latin *dispositio*; takes on the complex semantic sphere of *oikonomia*).⁸ Building and expanding upon Foucault's definition of 'apparatus', Agamben situates the 'apparatus' in the context of 'now':

4 Foucault, Michel. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. Ed. Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon, 1980. 194-96. Print, in Agamben, Giorgio. *What Is an Apparatus?: and Other Essays*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2009. 2. Print

5 Agamben, Giorgio. *What Is an Apparatus?: and Other Essays*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2009. 6-7. Print

6 Agamben, 6.

7 Agamben, 10.

8 Agamben, 11.

"... I shall call an apparatus literally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviours, opinions, or discourses of living beings. Not only, therefore, prisons, madhouses, the panopticon, schools, confession, factories, disciplines, juridical measures, and so forth (whose connection with the power is in a certain sense evident), but also the pen, writing, literature, agriculture, cigarettes, navigation, computers, cellular telephones and – why not – language itself, which is perhaps the most ancient of apparatuses..."⁹

Consumerism, social networking, military conflicts, design culture, the sustainability movement, etc. – can all be quickly added to this list. The accumulation of apparatuses is a natural part of the process of humanisation, the process of civilization. The invention of gadgets, objects, instruments and technologies for everyday are the attributes of an apparatus by means of which man "attempts to nullify the animalistic behaviours that are now separated from him," escape boredom and simply gain happiness.¹⁰ While apparatus as described by Foucault was first of all a machine of governance that produces subjectifications, Agamben suggests that Western societies evolved to "no longer act as much through the production of a subject,"¹¹ the process that he calls "desubjectification". Yet the paradox is in the following: both processes, one of subjectification, and one of desubjectification, are now "reciprocally indifferent"¹², meaning that they fail to reconstitute a new subject, nor do they give the subjects any real identities. Agamben observes that the social body of the post-industrial capitalist democracies of today is incredibly "docile" and "cowardly"¹³, and therefore inert, hence easily moulded and influenced. Here we arrive at a very important thought drawn from the terminological connection to *oikonomia*. The inertness of contemporary Western societies is explained by the massive processes of desubjectification that the subjects go through without acknowledging any real subjectification: "Hence the eclipse of politics, which used to presuppose the existence of subjects and real identities (the workers' movement, the bourgeoisie, etc.), and the triumph of the *oikonomia*, that is to say, of a pure activity of government that aims at nothing other than its own replication."¹⁴

Agamben draws a rather disturbing conclusion. He defines the current extreme phase of capitalist development as "a massive accumulation and proliferation of apparatuses."¹⁵ Everything and everyone is controlled, modelled, and contaminated by some kind of an apparatus. Moreover, it is "naïve" to think that we can use them in the "correct way"; confronted with this situation on everyday basis, we must respond strategically and critically, for battle with the apparatuses "cannot be a simple one."¹⁶

⁹ Agamben, 14.

¹⁰ Agamben, 16-17.

¹¹ Agamben, 20.

¹² Agamben, 21.

¹³ Agamben, 22.

¹⁴ Agamben, 22.

¹⁵ Agamben, 15.

¹⁶ Agamben, 17.

The further argument of this thesis is built upon something other than merely understanding the apparatuses and accepting their power over, amongst others, the profession of architecture – but also recognizing the aimless motion of this power machine, namely the constant process of its own replication. Before any further scrutiny of Ottawa's architectural apparatus, now is the time to ask – how do we allow ourselves to be caught up in the apparatuses, what shapes our imaginative need to obey (read: participate, buy, believe, trust) and involve ourselves in this network? In other words, how do the apparatuses get to us?

Six years before Foucault identified the "apparatus" – in 1971 – Louis Althusser, in his book entitled *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, established a clear connection between the apparatus and ideology. Although Althusser's 'apparatus' refers primarily to the State power, the role of ideology within it can be analyzed to comprehend its role in a broader context of power (consisting of and controlled by various apparatuses). "Each apparatus is a realization of an ideology," – explains Althusser – or, more precisely, a unity of different ideologies, be it "religious, ethical, legal, political, aesthetic, etc."¹⁷ The relation between the two notions therefore becomes clear: "an ideology always exists in an apparatus, and its practice, or practices. This existence is material."¹⁸ In other words, not only it is impossible to disassociate it from the practicing power, it also affirms and stretches the existing power. Althusser further identifies ideology as the "imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence."¹⁹ He elaborates on this definition, explaining that "what is represented in ideology is therefore not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live."²⁰ Ideology is, however, material – and has a material existence, though it is not limited to an apparatus or its practice, but also exists in a subject, in a person who is, by definition, material. In the process of justifying the political order, ideology uses a "peculiar" naturalization strategy that Althusser refers to as "recognition"²¹ – a function inherent to the consciousness of subjects. Specifically, the ultimate weapon of ideology is adaptation through openly presenting things the way they are. Hence, the transparency in ideological language, and "obviousness"²² in ideological reality and presentation of truth are common. Ideology is an effective mechanism for an apparatus, by means of which it propagates, realizes and even advertises itself.

Being a formal articulation of a cultural ideology and social relations, architecture constitutes a complex apparatus of its own. So what is the apparatus of architecture in Ottawa? What role does it play in local sociocultural development? What role does the sociocultural development play in it? What are the ideological machines influencing its course of action? These are the questions addressed concurrently in the next two chapters, with the general objective of constructing a framework for an architectural proposal.

¹⁷ Althusser, Louis. "On Ideology." *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Trans. Ben Brewster. London: Monthly Review, 1971. 166. Print.

¹⁸ Althusser, 166.

¹⁹ Althusser, 162.

²⁰ Althusser, 164.

²¹ Althusser, 172.

²² Althusser, 171-172.

A missing link

We have now arrived at the definition of the local apparatus of architecture. As observed by Agamben, the apparatus of architecture, too, appears at the "intersection of power relations and relations of knowledge."²³ It can be defined as a network established between various players in the architectural market; a network consisting of a set of institutions, power relations, planning policies, educational facilities, practicing architects, architecture students, consulting firms, City authorities, developers, academic discourses, zoning regulations, construction contractors, clients and final users, councils and design committees, all of whom shape, control and govern the built environment, contributing jointly to the complex process of making architecture. The apparatus of architecture in Ottawa is one of the apparatuses through which the local government, be it federal, provincial or municipal, communicates its idea of 'providential governance' to the outside world. Architecture plays a formative role in shaping of Ottawa, and in doing so it participates in the articulation of sociocultural ideology.

As denoted in the previous chapter, one of Agamben's peculiar conclusions is that modern apparatuses are aimed at nothing but reproducing themselves. Is that the path the apparatus of Ottawa's architecture has failed to avoid? The intention of the following analysis is to discern and further dismember the local apparatus of architecture, assess the objectives of the selected institutions and attempt to comprehend their influence on Ottawa's built environment. What are their activities, developments and actions, and how do they benefit the profession and influence the urban environment? How do they communicate their intentions to the general public? While a larger multiplicity of contributors affects every aspect of the built environment in Ottawa, in an attempt to formulate and identify the further argument, two architectural institutions and two governmental departments that play a major role in the apparatus were selected during the research process and carefully scrutinized.

The following is a list of selected elements of the local apparatus of architecture. General information and facts are followed by brief mission statements, description of activities, and concluded with critical analysis essential for the further argument.

↳ **Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC)** The RAIC is an Ottawa-based voluntary national association established in 1907. The RAIC is Canada's only National body representing the architectural profession; it represents circa 4,200 architects, graduate students and faculty members of Accredited Schools of Architecture from every region of the country. The institution claims to be "the leading voice of architecture in Canada."²⁴ Its vision is "to build awareness and appreciation of the contribution of architecture to the physical well-being and

²³ Agamben, Giorgio. *What Is an Apparatus?: and Other Essays*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2009. 7. Print

²⁴ "About Us Vision, Mission and Values." *Architecture Canada*. Web. 12 Feb. 2011.

<http://www.raic.org/raic/about_us/mission_e.htm>.

cultural development of Canada."²⁵ Its mission aspires to affirm that architecture matters, to celebrate the richness and diversity of architecture in Canada, and to support architects achieving excellence.²⁶ Amongst its values are integrity (all activities are conducted with the highest ethical and professional standards), environmental responsibility (active promotion of sustainable design), inclusiveness (programs that create and maintain a common ground for architecture students, intern architects, architects in practice, retired architects and professional organisations in Canada), and effectiveness (programs with clear and fathomable objectives that benefit the members, enhance the profession of architecture, and improve the quality of the built environment in Canada).²⁷ The RAIC issues a biannual periodical entitled *Architecture*, both in printed and in digital version. The magazine is issued for public and institutional administrators and contains various updates on the Institute's activities, accomplishments and agendas. RAIC have 10 people on staff, their office is located at 330-55 Murray street in ByWard Market in Ottawa. No information desk or exhibition space is adjacent to it.

The Institute's website provides support to architectural practices in the form of materials such as the Canadian Hand Book of Practice, fee information, contract documents, and information on various national standards. The members can get involved in continuing education courses. Annually, RAIC issues a number of awards and honours to practices, individuals and students, who show excellence in the field of architecture. Some nomination ceremonies take place in Ottawa; the winning architecture, however, is never displayed in local venues.

How does the Institute build 'awareness' and 'appreciation' for architecture amongst the general public? The Institute's website offers a Calendar of Events, all of which are professional conferences and symposiums organized by RAIC and its affiliates. Amongst the other four calendars referenced on the website is a calendar of public and educational programs at the Centre for Canadian Architecture (CCA), a museum and international research centre based in Montreal. No information about any public events concerning the discussion on architecture is found of the RAIC website.

As students of architecture, we are introduced only peripherally to the Institute; its physical location within the city is largely unknown to the majority of students. The space occupied by the Institute's headquarters and its location in Ottawa do not benefit those involved in the profession nor the general public interested in architecture in the Capital: architecture-related events or exhibitions stimulated or supported by RAIC are uncommon. The lack of prominent location and events that are largely focused on the professionals and members only thereby depreciate and minimize the visible presence of the Architectural Institute in the public arena; the Institute therefore fails to raise awareness and appreciation of architecture in Ottawa.

25 "About Us Vision, Mission and Values." *Architecture Canada*. Web. 12 Feb. 2011.

<http://www.raic.org/raic/about_us/mission_e.htm>.

26 *Architecture Canada* / RAIC - the Leading Voice of Architecture in Canada. Winter/Spring 2011. Web. 14 Feb.

2011. <<http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/naylor/RAIB0210/#/8>>.

27 "About Us Vision, Mission and Values." *Architecture Canada*. Web. 12 Feb. 2011.

<http://www.raic.org/raic/about_us/mission_e.htm>.

↳ Ottawa Regional Society of Architects (ORSA) ORSA is an Ottawa-based non-profit volunteer organisation and one of the fourteen regional societies of the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA, a Toronto-based non-share, non-profit corporation and a self-regulating organisation governed by the *Architects Act*, which is a statute of the Government of Ontario). Together with the OAA, ORSA partakes in examining matters of interest to the profession of architecture in Ontario. ORSA claims to provide a "forum for free discussion of professional matters, a locus for activities involving architects, and a centre for educational, community, and social activities of its members."²⁸ The Society sees itself as a "point of contact between the general public and the architectural profession," and is "actively involved in programs which enhance the general level of understanding of architecture and the architectural profession."²⁹ ORSA declares a commitment to "presenting informed opinion on issues affecting architecture in the National Capital Region, as well as to increasing public awareness of the social importance of architectural design."³⁰ A peculiar aspect of Society's membership policy is that it is "open to anyone with an interest in architecture."³¹ The ORSA website's 'contact us' section provides an email option and a mailing address only (ORSA P.O. Box 56117 Ottawa, Ontario K1R 7Z1); the office is located in a commercial high-rise building on Laurier Street and is not open to public. No information desk or exhibition space is adjacent to it.

ORSA organizes and participates in events ranging from various seminars, golf games, lectures, art shows, holiday parties for members, Ottawa Intensification Plan discussion forums, museum tours, graduate symposiums, T-shirt design competitions, to *Architecture of Persia* and *Demystifying Interior Design* lectures, all of which happen outside of the society's premises.³² Ottawa's largest and most significant architectural event, entitled *Architecture Week*, is also initiated by ORSA. The Architecture Week is organized and held annually in October. Exhibitions of local architectural practices, lectures, seminars, building tours and film screenings are amongst the activities of the Week, many of which are open to the general public and are free of charge. Major exhibitions take place at the National Capital Commission Info Centre, centrally located at 90 Wellington Street. The Architecture Week is a unique opportunity for the local practices to demonstrate recent work, for students to interact with the practicing architects and for the profession at large to communicate its agenda, developments and achievements to the general public.

While ORSA's claim to be a "point of contact between the general public and the architectural profession is questionable (for instance, a quick search in *Ottawa Citizen* online shows only one search result containing "Ottawa Regional Society of Architects" – an article discussing 2010's best and worst buildings and urban spaces of Ottawa), it is indeed, by far, the most

28 Ottawa Regional Society of Architects - Ottawa Regional Society of Architects. Web. 20 Feb. 2011.
<<http://www.orsa.ca/>>.

29 Ibid

30 Ibid

31 "Membership - Ottawa Regional Society of Architects." *Ottawa Regional Society of Architects*. Web. 16 Mar. 2011. <<http://www.orsa.ca/membership/>>.

32 Archives / Links - Ottawa Regional Society of Architects. Web. 20 Feb. 2011.
<<http://www.orsa.ca/resources/archiveslinks/>>.

active agent for architectural activity in the city. For instance, ORSA – unlike RAIC – does support, sponsor and interact with student activities, such as Forum Lecture Series, graduate symposiums, and Building 22 (an annual student publication highlighting the best work from Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism).

↳ **City Of Ottawa** A corporate entity of municipal government; responsible for provision of services to the public and the enforcement of municipal by-laws. The City of Ottawa is overseen by the City Manager, and is responsible to the Mayor of Ottawa (currently Jim Watson) and City Council.³³ City Council is the governing body of the City of Ottawa; it consists of 23 city councillors, each representing wards throughout the city and surrounding suburbs. The City creates and implements the determinative programs affecting the built environment of the National Capital Region; the major Growth Management Strategy plan adopted by the City of Ottawa is entitled *Ottawa 20/20*. The City of Ottawa, with a current population of 895,000, projects a significant growth of 200,000 people by 2020 (see Figure 1).

	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
City of Ottawa							
Population	806,600	870,800	923,000	976,800	1,031,300	1,085,300	1,135,800
Households	319,400	351,200	381,800	413,000	443,600	471,700	497,400
Jobs	480,000	529,800	580,200	617,000	648,400	676,300	703,100

Figure 01. Growth projections for Ottawa 2006-2031

The Official Plan, a component of Ottawa 20/20 adopted by the City Council in May, 2003, suggests that "downtown Ottawa will be a vibrant mix of thriving economic and cultural activities within a setting that celebrates the unique qualities of both the city and the National Capital. Attention to design will help create attractive communities where buildings, open space and transportation work well together."³⁴ The key principles adopted for Ottawa's future growth are:³⁵

- ↳ A caring and inclusive city
- ↳ A creative city rich in heritage, unique in identity
- ↳ A green and environmentally sensitive city
- ↳ A city of distinct, liveable communities
- ↳ An innovative city where prosperity is shared among all
- ↳ A responsible and responsive city
- ↳ A healthy and active city

³³ "City of Ottawa." *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Web. 15 Mar. 2011.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_of_ottawa>.

³⁴ "Ottawa 20/20 - Official Plan - Section 2 - Strategic Directions." *City of Ottawa*. Web. 07 Oct. 2010.

<http://www.ottawa.ca/city_hall/ottawa2020/official_plan/vol_1/02_strategic_directions/index_en-01.html>.

³⁵ "Ottawa 20/20." *City of Ottawa*. Web. 2 Mar. 2011.

<http://ottawa.ca/city_services/planningzoning/2020/window/wrapup1a_en.shtml>.

One of the main directives of the 2003 City of Ottawa Official Plan is to "grow in, not out."³⁶ The directive reinstated the official intention to keep a firm urban boundary within the Greenbelt – a broad swath of mostly rural lands that separates the centrally located portions of the City of Ottawa from the three suburban communities established in the early 1970s (Kanata, Orléans and Riverside South / Barrhaven) – created, owned and managed by the federal NCC.³⁷ Thus, in addition to the Ottawa 20/20 Plan, the City of Ottawa adopted the *Intensification* approach to Ottawa's urban core – a way to "direct more new development to key areas in the city that are served with existing infrastructure, and prescribe higher densities and transit-supportive design for suburban development."³⁸ A municipality is able to "promote, encourage or provide incentives to intensification in cases where it wishes to jump start, facilitate or accelerate the process at selected locations or, more generally, as part of an overall growth management strategy that seeks to maximize the use of public investment in infrastructure and people services."³⁹

The following is information provided in official City of Ottawa's Light Rail Transit and Intensification video, where Ottawa is defined as "a typical North American city – car oriented, suburbanized and spread out."⁴⁰ Intensification means bringing people and buildings closer together, increasing the number of people and jobs in a given area of land. Intensification is a controversial concept for various neighbourhoods; depending on location and scale, it varies from adding a basement apartment to a single detached house, to new building on underused lands (parking lots, old gas stations, single-storey retail shops with big parking areas) to converting an older non-residential building for residential use. Ultimately, intensification means there is no need to expand the infrastructure, which consequently leads to a decrease in municipal property taxes. Additionally, it is stated that the Intensification Plan in Ottawa has "raised the bar in the dialogue about topics like architecture and urban design."⁴¹

Whenever the City presents a new development plan, the ensuing discourse serves a purpose – to ensure that the plan serves the public good. Locally, all owners who want to introduce minor changes to the use of their property that differ even slightly from Zoning By-law provisions must apply to the City of Ottawa Committee of Adjustment ("a quasi-judicial tribunal appointed by City Council, independent and autonomous from the City Administration")⁴² for what is known as a "minor variance"⁴³ – a major change in local Zoning Law brought by the Intensification Plan. The Intensification Plan is often in conflict with the established Zoning regulations. These variances are due-diligence exercises on behalf of the City, meant to ensure that the public

36 "Statistics - Intensification." *City of Ottawa*. Web. 17 Mar. 2011.

<http://ottawa.ca/city_services/statistics/counts/intensification/index_en.html>.

37 "Development in the Greenbelt." *City of Ottawa*. Web. 17 Mar. 2011.

<http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/public_consult/beyond_2020/papers/white/development2_en.html>.

38 "Statistics - Intensification." *City of Ottawa*. Web. 17 Mar. 2011.

<http://ottawa.ca/city_services/statistics/counts/intensification/index_en.html>.

39 *Ibid*

40 "Intensification: A Sound Investment." *City of Ottawa*. Web. 17 Mar. 2011.

<http://ottawa.ca/residents/planning/intensivideo_en.html>.

41 *Ibid*

42 "Committee of Adjustment." *City of Ottawa*. Web. 14 Mar. 2011.

<http://ottawa.ca/city_hall/adjustment_committee/index_en.html>.

43 "Zoning By-law Amendment." *City of Ottawa*. Web. 14 Mar. 2011.

<http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/planning/dev_review_process/dev_application/17_3_4_en.html>.

good as a whole is not compromised by the actions of a few. What happens when the City chooses to create a joint venture with a profit-oriented organisation? Commercial aspects of the project become undoubtedly over-emphasized, resulting in reconsideration of the Zoning to fit the development's expectations.⁴⁴ The City and their developers are able to manipulate the Zoning process to allow for virtually anything, often against the public's will, and therefore the public good.

The official video provides these statistics: between 2001 and 2006, 5000 dwelling units were built in downtown Ottawa, and 8500 new residents have moved in ("there is a lot to feel good about"); however, 40,000 people moved to the outside of the Greenbelt in the same period of time. In the past 10 years, Ottawa has extended the suburbs by about 200 football fields of land per year. This is an indication of aggressive and, according to the official Intensification Plan, inappropriate development realizations. The numbers show that the developers "stand ready to build what people want," and that the "there will always be a demand for low density, single family homes and there will always be people willing to commute from these homes."⁴⁵ City of Ottawa's Planning Act stipulates a review of the Official Plan every five years. The accepted expansion of the urban boundary is now set for 850 hectares over the next 20 years, while developers had been pushing for 2,000 hectares.⁴⁶ A recent – and first since the Official Plan commencement – review in June, 2009 already witnessed an immediate approval of 222 hectares connecting the suburban Kanata and Stittsville (located even further away from Ottawa) for new residential construction: full Council, by a vote of 12 to 11, supported and approved the decision.⁴⁷

The abovementioned examples demonstrate that the City of Ottawa is often simply dishonest about its intentions. In general, little effort is put into communicating its strategies of urban improvement to the general public; most importantly, no effort to physically displaying current and future developments is being made. The City Hall Art Gallery, located at the City Hall, hosts, on average, three to seven art exhibitions per year (statistics taken from 2006-2011), presenting different national and international artists. Some exhibitions are compiled by the City of Ottawa Archives, such as *Ottawa's Quest for the Capital* (an exhibition celebrating the 150th anniversary of choosing a capital for the United Province of Canada) (2007), *Years of Hockey in Ottawa* (2008-2009), and *From Streetcars to the O-Train: A Century of Rail Transportation in*

44 Recently, contradictory zoning variance allowances were found in the Lansdowne Redevelopment Plan, a large public property in Ottawa. In September 2009 the City had presented a Partnership Plan with developers that effectively offered privatization of most of the public property. Strong opposition was expressed to the city's planning committee, with a request to reject zoning changes that would allow for proposed tall buildings that critics say are out of character with the low-rise residential neighbourhood of the Glebe. After a long public debate and countless consultations, City Council has approved a drastically different zoning plan for a redeveloped Lansdowne Park that will permit a mix of urban, residential, public and commercial spaces, allowing two residential towers — 17 and 20 storeys high — on Bank Street, as well as a row of four-storey condos, with 30-metre buildings set right behind them, along Holmwood Avenue.

45 "Does Money Get Votes? A City of Ottawa Example." *Plausibility.net*. 27 May 2009. Web. 14 Mar. 2011.

<<http://plausibility.net/does-money-get-votes-a-city-of-ottawa-example-part-i/>>.

46 "Ottawa City Council Debates Urban Sprawl." *Plausibility.net*. 11 June 2009. Web. 15 Mar. 2011.

<<http://plausibility.net/ottawa-city-council-debates-urban-sprawl/>>.

47 Ibid

Ottawa (2009-2010).⁴⁸ Since 2006, a total of 33 exhibitions were curated at the City Hall; none concerned architecture of Ottawa's past, present or future. Governmental and mayoral policies on planning, design and development strategies for the Capital, urban proposals, public spaces and landscape architecture are amongst the topics never covered by the City Hall exhibitions.

The adopted growth principles attempt to follow and comply with the international trends of sustainability and 'healthy' urban growth, but seem to be nothing but a narrow political rhetoric – an ungraspable urban reality masterfully summarized and heavily contaminated by cliché trends. My argument here is not against the validity of the City's intentions, and not at all against the officially adopted trajectories of envisioned future development. Instead, what I mean to point out is the divergence between the verbosity of the official documentation, overwhelming mastery of its content – and reticence in action. In order for Ottawa to become 'creative', 'innovative' and 'responsible', the City of Ottawa must begin with becoming more transparent about their intentions and planning proposals, and follow through with the implementations.

⁴⁸ National Capital Commission (NCC). A federal planning agency responsible for ownership, administration, conservation, use and development of federal lands located in Ottawa region. The NCC is an executive extension of the governmental vision for the Capital – an ideological machine and a central producer of ideological principles prevailing in strategic city planning. The NCC acts simultaneously as a planning agency, a construction firm, a landscape design company, a festival coordinator, and an information service for tourists.⁴⁹ Its mandate and mission are to "prepare plans for and assist in the development, conservation and improvement of the National Capital Region in order that the nature and character of the seat of the Government of Canada may be in accordance with its national significance," and to "organize, sponsor or promote such public activities and events in the National Capital Region as will enrich the cultural and social fabric of Canada."⁵⁰ NCC's goal is to make Ottawa an "expression of Canadian identity," and a source of "pride and unity for Canadians." Additionally, the mandate embraces "approving the design of buildings and land use, as well as any changes in use relating to federal lands in the National Capital Region."⁵¹ The NCC employs around 500 people.

The Commission is centrally located in Ottawa's downtown; one can't get inside the NCC headquarters, located in the Central Chambers Building on Elgin Street. The NCC did, however, invite the general public to discover its headquarters on one occasion, during Doors Open Ottawa 2010, which the City of Ottawa claims to be Ottawa's most prestigious architectural event.⁵² The visitors had an opportunity to "learn about the NCC's latest projects that aim at

⁴⁸ "City Hall Art Gallery." *City of Ottawa*. Web. 14 Mar. 2011.

<http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/arts/galleries_exhibit/city_hall/index_en.html>.

⁴⁹ "Business Lines." *National Capital Commission*. Web. 20 Mar. 2011.

<[http://www.canadacapital.gc.ca/bins/ncc_web_content_page.asp?cid=16302-22554-22565\(=1&bhcp=1>](http://www.canadacapital.gc.ca/bins/ncc_web_content_page.asp?cid=16302-22554-22565(=1&bhcp=1>)>.

⁵⁰ "Mandate and Mission." *National Capital Commission*. Web. 20 Mar. 2011.

<[http://www.canadacapital.gc.ca/bins/ncc_web_content_page.asp?cid=16302-22554-22561\(=1>](http://www.canadacapital.gc.ca/bins/ncc_web_content_page.asp?cid=16302-22554-22561(=1>)>.

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² "Doors Open Ottawa." *City of Ottawa*. Web. 16 Mar. 2011.

<http://ottawa.ca/residents/heritage/doorsopen/index_en.html>.

conserving, improving, planning and enriching Canada's Capital Region."⁵³ Residents and visitors are offered a visit to the touristic Info Centre, located right across from the Parliament buildings (soon to be transferred to World Exchange Plaza building). The Centre exhibits a scale model of Ottawa, and provides general information brochures on various topics, including Ottawa's history, activities, places of interest, national museums, parks and festivals. Every year, the Info Centre becomes a venue for ORSA's Architecture Week events and exhibitions.

The NCC takes advice from a number of Corporate, Advisory and Special Committees. Its Advisory Committee on Planning, Design and Realty (ACPDR) was established to provide "objective, professional advice for decisions by the Commission or its Executive Committee on long-range plans and policies for the use of public lands in the National Capital Region, on design proposals affecting these federal lands and on real property issues."⁵⁴ ACPDR consists of "experts in real estate development, environmental, urban and regional planning, urban design, architecture and landscape architecture with a broad range of experience with different types of projects and in different environmental and socio-economic contexts;"⁵⁵ 14 members in total. Eight architects, two urban planners, an environmental planner, and an engineer are amongst the members. Ironically, only two of the members actually reside in Ottawa – Russell Andrew Mills, a former Ottawa Citizen reporter and editor, and Adel A. Ayad, a nuclear physicist and a 'highly regarded restaurateur'.

The Commission has developed a thorough planning hierarchy, outlining Policy-, Master-, Sector- and Area Planning. The NCC's Plan for Ottawa's future development, entitled *Horizon 2067: Charting the Future of Canada's Capital in the 21st Century*, exists autonomously from the City of Ottawa Official Plan. The NCC does, however, claim that the purpose of Horizon 2067 is to work closely with provincial and municipal governments. An abundance of sensible critique can be found on a website entitled *NCC Watch* (www.nccwatch.org), a collective that exists to 'consign the NCC to oblivion'. The NCC Watch webpage is structured around "Biggest Blunders," "Horror Stories," and "Tombstones of Waste," – describing results and products of NCC's activity. The NCC Watch suggests that the Commission's activities mean "decades of bad urban planning and shady land development schemes, undertaken in a shroud of secrecy and with total disregard for Ottawa's residents."⁵⁶ The critics argue that the NCC is redundant; its function could be successfully (and more appropriately) fulfilled by a number of specialized federal and municipal planning departments. Nonetheless, the NCC does have a "great deal of influence over Ottawa's built environment,"⁵⁷ for the Government of Canada is the largest property owner in the National Capital Region.

⁵³ "2010 Buildings." *City of Ottawa*. Web. 16 Mar. 2011.

<http://ottawa.ca/residents/heritage/doorsopen/buildings/index_en.html>.

⁵⁴ "Advisory Committee on Planning, Design and Realty (ACPDR)" *National Capital Commission*. Web. 5 Mar. 2011.

<http://www.canadacapital.gc.ca/bins/ncc_web_content_page.asp?cid=16302-22555-22568&lang=1>.

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ "About NCC." *NCC Watch - Watching the National Capital Commission*. Web. 17 Mar. 2011.

<<http://www.nccwatch.org/about.htm>>.

⁵⁷ "National Capital Commission." *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Web. 16 Mar. 2011.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Capital_Commission>.

The political influence on the profession of architecture in Ottawa is inevitably overpowering. Moreover, the apparatus of architecture is largely governed and influenced by authorities, developers and bureaucrats with no professional (urban design, planning, or architectural) training, no vision and no interest in making the city outstanding. A general perceptible lack of social need for architectural services is the evidence of an apparatus that fails to promote itself; architects fail to dominate their own milieu. Severe lack of interaction and collaboration between various institutions involved in the apparatus of architecture worsens the situation; small effort is made promoting high quality design and architecture. The academic sphere, represented by Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism is separated and removed from the practicing and governing realm; the City takes no interest in student initiatives and proposals, does not issue competitions for students, and never displays student work that concerns itself with current Ottawa issues in its facilities. Likewise, the academic isolationism and autonomous existence of the School of Architecture was amplified after the Azrieli Gallery, an exhibition space dedicated to architecture, was closed in 2008.

A successful urban environment where experimentation, innovation and improvement might occur only where a proactive participation between professionals, authorities, and academics is achieved, and conceptual exploration is encouraged. Active collaboration between various architectural and planning departments could indisputably be beneficial to the quality of the built environment, as, it might encourage a social engagement which is crucial to the promotion of high-quality architecture and urban design. Currently disparate elements of Ottawa's architectural apparatus must act together in order to reach the envisioned planning goals. Indeed, the missing link in the local apparatus of architecture is a space dedicated to architecture, where exhibition, discussion and public display of the built environment take place. Ottawa is in need of an independent agency, an agency that will inspire collaboration, create a locus for critical discussion, and a space for a unique public display of planned developments; a centre for perpetual architectural activity, discourse, action and collaboration, open to policy makers and professionals in various fields, such as architecture, environmentalism, arts, business, media, education, construction and social activism. Until then, architecture remains just a 'topic' for establishments such as the City of Ottawa.

Now that we have identified some key elements in the apparatus of local architecture, it is necessary to recognize the ideology that is inherent to it. The official ideology intrinsic to the apparatus that reads: improvement of Ottawa's built environment, promotion of the profession, importance of architecture, attention to design and, more importantly to quality, easily-accessible public discussions, – is nothing but an institutional and political rhetoric, an idealistic viewpoint, and a desirable projected perspective of city planners, architects and politicians. The official ideological machines influencing the apparatus's course of action often interfere with the ability to judge and critically assess the state of affairs of architecture of Ottawa. Often, the projected vision is nothing but a masterfully compiled document; it is necessary to attempt to look past the official rhetoric and face the real condition of the profession of architecture, along with the reality of Ottawa's built environment, a reality where inveterate ideologies had already

turned themselves into a severe legacy, a legacy that is everything but beneficial to the city. This is a legacy that suppresses architecture's true potential of contributing to sociocultural development. The ideological legacy central to the architectural and sociocultural decadence in Ottawa is identified and discussed comprehensively in the next chapter, along with the conditions and issues of the Capital.

The Apparatus of Legacy

Legacy: something transmitted by or received from an ancestor or predecessor or from the past.⁶⁰

60 "Legacy - Definition and More from the Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary." *Dictionary and Thesaurus - Merriam-Webster Online*. Web. 27 Feb. 2011. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/legacy>>.

Ottawa," a phrase commonly used to excuse most of the events in the city clearly presents itself as an echo / eructation of the complete pliability to the common ideology, and a confirmation of Althusser's ideological adaptation strategy of 'recognition'. It's Ottawa – it is what it is. The ideology central to the sociocultural decadence is a firm belief in Ottawa's stability and righteousness, goodness, exemplary quality of life, conventionality, appropriateness – a vision that goes no further, full of satisfaction with what is. It is precisely this ideologically strong projected vision of a powerful stable and secure capital city which often overshadows its role as a setting for everyday inhabitation, and consequently, has an immense impact on the apparatus of architecture.

Yet what are the local sociocultural tendencies and how do they affect the apparatus of architecture? Andrew Cohen, a distinguished Canadian journalist and the author of *The Unfinished Canadian: The People We Are* (2007), offers a rationale for the inert condition of Ottawa's built environment, referring to it as an issue of social 'complacency'. In a chapter entitled *The Capital Canadian*, Cohen argues that complacency is the principal cause of the "lethargy of a municipal government that has allowed the city core to rot,"⁶¹ and of the "somnolence of a federal government that permits self-interested developers to build on choice property and cannot itself find the ambition to build institutions worthy of a country of this size and stature."⁶² Cohen describes Ottawa as an 'apathetic', 'dismal', 'provincial', 'soulless' city, a 'tracker's paradise' of sorts. He claims the city suffers from 'malaise'; sees the downtown as an 'aesthetic calamity' with a 'shapeless, featureless skyline', and suggests that "the federal government is largely responsible."⁶³

"At a public forum in Ottawa in 2005, a senior official of the Department of Public Works allowed that one of the reasons federal buildings are so uninspired in the capital is that taxpayers in New Brunswick don't want their tax dollars to be used to build monuments in Ottawa. That may well be the reason that governments won't imagine a grander capital."⁶⁴

Cohen's explication of Ottawa's "indifference to the aesthetic," "mediocrity in architecture" and "the failure of planning"⁶⁵ is quite reasonable: "...it may be this bounty – the affluence enjoyed by the unionized public servant, the fatted diplomat, and the prosperous technocrats of Kanata [...] that explains the inertia here."⁶⁶

It is then common knowledge that the apparatus of architecture is severely suppressed by an ideology prevailing in the society of the 'Capital Canadian', be it an architect, a politician or an average citizen. Ottawa's impartiality to contemporary design is an artefact of streams and tendencies in sociocultural development, which by turn are influenced by political ideology.

61 Cohen, Andrew. "The Capital Canadian." *The Unfinished Canadian: the People We Are*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2007. 188. Print.

62 Cohen, 188.

63 Cohen, 180.

64 Cohen, 188-189.

65 Cohen, 186.

66 Cohen, 186-187.

Cohen unintentionally discloses nothing but an ideological legacy that paralyses, amongst others, the apparatus of architecture. Thus there is a lack of professional up-to-date literature on Ottawa's architecture, town planning, urban strategies and perspectives. The ideological stance of complacency blinds, preventing the public and the officials from openly acknowledging the real problems. One of the outcomes is that no critical literature is being published. Only a few contemporary authors speak up about the stagnant urban condition; the only up-to-date literature available on Ottawa's built environment is conventional touristic guides and report articles in local newspapers, both printed and digital. Additionally, many online blogs contain endless rants bemoaning the hopeless situation the architecture of Ottawa is in. Ottawa's architecture very well fits Quatremère de Quincy's eighteenth century realistic definition of architecture: "...from the point of usefulness... it sees to the salubrity of cities, guards the well-being of men, protects their properties, and works only for the safety, repose and orderliness of civic life."⁶⁷ Indeed, the architectural proposals for Ottawa contain nothing that cannot be built: experimentation and innovation are alien to steadiness and stupor.

What is exceptionally peculiar and revealing is the unequivocal lack of interest amongst young architects in living, practicing and investing their professional future into the Capital, - another sign of the apparatus's failure. As a matter of fact, when a class of thirty Master of Architecture students in Ottawa was asked about their future plans, only two hands came up expressing an interest in staying in Ottawa. Indeed, Ottawa is an arid milieu for a young architect - the least stimulating urban environment built from a mixture of governmental power propaganda and cheap solutions for the remaining city fabric. Lack of award-winning architecture and a small number of highly-acclaimed practices are both an explanation, and ultimately, an outcome of a deficiency of young professionals.

Finally, Cohen talks about the former original vision of the Capital with a capital C: "Canada's founders and builders had ambition and taste"⁶⁸ but now, the government fails to act boldly⁶⁹. *Urban Renewal: Ottawa, Canada*, a 186-page documentation report, published in 1967, is a bright example of a time when the city planners were actively ambitious and public with their planning strategies. Published by the City of Ottawa in collaboration with the Department of Planning and Works, this analytical report critically assesses the condition of the city in general, outlining the federal and municipal planning strategies, survey analysis, recommendations for developments, priorities and general conclusions for the prospective growth of the city. Such a publication serves as an indicator of the amount of attention once paid to the publicity and the transparency of the City's planning intentions, community education, and raising awareness about the upcoming changes. In the end, "the physical condition and visual appearance of Ottawa, like any other city, is a reflection of the activities, recourses, and attitudes of its

⁶⁷ M. Quatremère de Quincy, "Architecture entry" in *Encyclopédie méthodique*, vol. I, p. 109, in Tafuri, Manfredo. "Toward a Critique of Architectural Ideology" *Architecture Theory since 1968*. By K. Michael Hays. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT, 2000. 9-10. Print.

⁶⁸ Cohen, Andrew. "The Capital Canadian." *The Unfinished Canadian: the People We Are*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2007. 179. Print.

⁶⁹ Cohen, 183.

people.⁷⁰ It still is. Today, the government does not hide its attitude to architecture. It sees it as a 'topic' almost exterior to the built environment, as an expensive excessive product, influencing the distorted civic perception of the practice itself.

The apparatus of architecture is too weak to respond; in its current state it does not possess the alternative means to further sustain itself. It is here that we can conclude that the outreach and the potential sociocultural contribution of the apparatus of architecture are severely suppressed. The legacy of complacency, a direct product of prevalent political ideology itself forms a powerful apparatus that influences the sociocultural tendencies and concerns. If the apparatus of architecture could find the ways to merely function within the strictly controlled political boundaries, it would certainly fail miserably without a reciprocal response from the society. The apparatus of Ottawa's architecture is highly ineffective, dormant and thus flawed for it does not promote its potential advantages to the public and the built environment, and does not vindicate its vision and potential for contribution.

BARRY J. HOBIN
ARCHITECTURE

On Selling Architecture

Façade for Awareness

A lack of presence in the political and public arenas, failure to sustain its vision, and domination in its own milieu: this is where the apparatus of architecture in Ottawa finds itself today. Yet what we see is little acknowledgement of existing problems, a lack of initiative, no critical literature, and no proposition for a way out. Besides the legacy of complacency innate to the Capital realm, this is, unfortunately, a manifestation of a kind of pedigree inherent to our practice, present internationally, but reflecting badly on Ottawa specifically. We are all schooled to think of ourselves as contributors to critical thought, urban fabric, and physical reality in general, but most importantly, as agents who form the cultural and civic identity of a place. But let us for a minute imagine a situation where the need for architectural services simply diminishes. It is not as tragic as it seems at first – look around: how many edifices in Ottawa have been designed by an architect anyway? The marginalized stance architects find themselves in inevitably becomes the normative condition; there is no denying that we are faced with the suppression of the apparatus of architecture, as shown in previous chapters. We're already there: it is happening. What's more, it is mostly the apparatus's own fault. Architects do not have sufficient presence in the political and public arena, thus have little to no influence on the planning and direction of Ottawa's built environment. Part of the reason, perhaps, is that the local professional architectural institutions operate on a voluntary basis. Yet ultimately, the apparatus of architecture fails to promote the very practice of architecture, thus reinforcing the marginalized condition of the profession, and maintaining its separation from the public realm.

What can be done to raise awareness for architecture in Ottawa? How can architecture be effectively promoted, or, using Aaron Betsky's terminology, "sold"? Betsky, a former director of the Netherlands Architecture Institute – a powerful platform for promotion of architecture – suggests that that we re-familiarize ourselves with what is it that architects actually have to offer, and to whom. In *Selling Architecture* (2005), Betsky points out that architecture is an expensive and thus limited *product*: "The middle class is your audience but they don't need it anymore because it now turns out that there are people who can represent middle-class values much more easily and quickly than architects can."⁷¹ However, the architects are most capable of selling something unique, and that is the image:

"What we are engaging is the production of representation of an ideal that we believe to be right but that somehow we cannot quite build. So we can only build the stepping-stone towards it, or some derivative of it. You don't have the real thing, the builders have that; all you have is the image, the mirage, the dream of a perfect architecture of which your proposal is a small part. And so architects engage in this great middle-class activity of selling."⁷²

⁷¹ Betsky, Aaron. "Selling Architecture." *Hunch No. 10: Mediators: The Berlage Institute Report*. Vol. 10. Rotterdam: Berlage Institute, 2006. 64. Print.

⁷² Betsky, 64.

We are the working image-makers, introverted and secularized. Image makers, who, perhaps ironically, fail phenomenally at promoting themselves. As a standard practice, little effort is put into marketing architectural practices. The question is then: is it beneath us to market architecture? Considering that there is a fair amount of pretension and grandeur inherent to the practice, it seems that the perceptual answer is most commonly an affirmative one. Design and architecture magazines, online blogs, exhibitions and events play their fair share in promoting the practice. How many actually reach the common burgher? Why is it bizarre and almost absurd to imagine architects advertising themselves, say, on local buses? Developers do. Construction companies do, too.

In order to be able to involve ourselves in promoting the practice of architecture, the priorities of the profession must be somewhat shifted. The practice of architecture has to reconsider itself as a business, since ultimately that's what it is: a service delivered for monetary remuneration. This service is exceptionally valuable and thus should be marketed appropriately. Guy Horton, an architectural writer and a frequent contributor to *ArchDaily* and *Architectural Record*, argues similarly for this reconstitution, suggesting that the recent global financial recession is the right time to do so: "Architecture must move beyond the project-shop mentality and evolve using viable, practical business knowledge. This is the only way to secure the long-term health of the profession as well as the position of high design. In other words, high design can thrive only when protected by an economics of value and fiscal sustainability."⁷³ Indeed, although unusual for any other commercial business, the architectural practices are generally set up and run by architects alone. Management, human resources, finance, marketing, business planning are all performed by employees who were originally trained as architects. Surely, architecture is a multi-dimensional practice, interdisciplinary exchange plays a central role in it; architects are therefore schooled to do many things simultaneously. Betsky's observation is that here lies our main business strength, and a way to market architecture to other disciplines. We now come back to the initial question: what is it that architects actually have to offer?

"There are many specific skills and there are ways to sell those skills in planning, image-making, and coordination. Because it turns out those unique selling points and their audience might still work in other fields. Specifically, I would say that where they are more successful is in the making of a coherent image of a certain world-view that can stand against the disillusion of the traditional socio-economic status quo."⁷⁴

And finally, Betsky sends a message on how architecture could be sold and what it means to sell architecture by introducing a brief narrative borrowed from a book called *Hip: The History*, written by a music critic in New York, John Leland. The message is built upon what Betsky calls

⁷³ Horton, Guy. "The Indicator: The Next Architecture, Part 1." *ArchDaily*. 03 Mar. 2011. Web. 04 Mar. 2011. <<http://www.archdaily.com/116844/the-indicator-the-next-architecture-part-1/>>.

⁷⁴ Betsky, Aaron. "Selling Architecture." *Hunch No. 10: Mediators: The Berlage Institute Report* Vol. 10. Rotterdam: Berlage Institute, 2006. 65. Print.

"a very counterintuitive hunch" and reads: "Architecture could be "hip."⁷⁵ Although Leland's *hip* refers exclusively to music and language, there is nonetheless a lesson to be learned from it. Hip originated in the slave states in the United States as a "private language shaped by the circumstances of a new land and it produced a reversal."⁷⁶ "The definition of hip is a trickster's art,"⁷⁷ explains Betsky, and it represents "a way of being cool, a light world, a way of belonging, and a way to distinguish yourself that makes whatever it is you and the others who are hip to it do, more valuable."⁷⁸

"I still do believe that there is something that we have to sell", writes Betsky, "and that is the potential of space."⁷⁹ "Space", he elucidates, "is that distance that creates autonomy and aura. Like architecture, hip is about reinvention."⁸⁰ Making architecture *hip* can therefore set off the mechanism of awareness that could go on without continual intervention; ultimately, this will mean success, for this is the eventual goal of promotion: "Advertising produces the hip and the hip produces advertising or is used by advertising."⁸¹

I shall now pause and make an important remark: in Ottawa's context, when I say 'selling', 'advertising' or 'marketing', I first and foremost mean *educating*. Architecture's capacity to produce change is theoretically intact, yet without educating the public, without generating public interest in most common issues so apparent to architects themselves, local practitioners will remain impotent and unable to contribute to the sociocultural realm. Architects must engage themselves keenly in educating the widest possible audience about the benefits to the environment, overall energy consumption, creative potential of public spaces, probable scenarios for the future growth of the city, improved workplace productivity, healthier indoor habitation, etc. – all the various factors that the architectural practice is capable of improving significantly. Series of campaigns for awareness and generation of public interest will give renewed impetus to a practice's regeneration; however, they have to happen in close cooperation with and assistance from local authorities, key industry organisations, and developers. Once, and only once an adequate valuation of the practice of architecture has been established, Ottawa's practitioners can become influential political agents driving radical change while engaging in the manipulation of sociocultural development and transformation. It is only through raising awareness that the apparatus of architecture can begin progressing towards the advancement of a highly effective, extremely valuable design culture.

In order to observe how the apparatuses of architecture elsewhere administer *selling* and promotion of architecture to general public and instigate collaboration between various

⁷⁵ "The word derives from West African language Wolof where the word *hipi* originally meant a "form of awareness" or paradoxically, also a "form of a secret." Betsky, Aaron. "Selling Architecture." *Hunch No. 10: Mediators: The Berlage Institute Report*. Vol. 10. Rotterdam: Berlage Institute, 2006. 66. Print.

⁷⁶ Betsky, Aaron. "Selling Architecture." *Hunch No. 10: Mediators: The Berlage Institute Report*. Vol. 10. Rotterdam: Berlage Institute, 2006. 66. Print.

⁷⁷ Betsky, 67.

⁷⁸ Betsky, 66.

⁷⁹ Betsky, 67.

⁸⁰ Betsky, 67.

⁸¹ Betsky, 66.

departments, a number of precedent studies were performed during a thesis research trip accomplished in January-February 2011. The following three chapters provide facts, critical findings and the analysis of selected independent centres of architecture in London, England and Amsterdam, the Netherlands, with an objective to conceive and comprehend the potential agenda, role, and speculative activities of the proposed Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment. The precedent studies are used to outline activities, methods and principles used by the selected independent institutions (New London Architecture at the Building Centre, the Architecture Foundation London, and Architectuurcentrum Amsterdam) to raise awareness for architecture, promote and facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration within the field of architecture and the broader industry, and stimulate critical engagement amid policy makers and the general public.

Facts provided by the institution / general information⁸²

Address: The Building Centre / 26 Store Street / London / WC1E 7BT / UK

The Building Centre is an independent and established forum dedicated to providing information and inspiration across all sectors of the built environment. The establishment was founded in 1931; it is now located in Central London. The Building Centre operates as the commercial arm of The Building Centre Trust which is an educational charity. It is a recognised impartial source of information for construction, design and architecture that combines a showcase of innovative products with an information resource, bookshop on-line product directory and market research division. The Building Centre claims to bring together best practice in design and technology through a programme of themed exhibitions, events and seminars and by providing a home for key industry organisations. The Centre is open to all involved in architecture and construction as well as to the general public; it is a place where one can learn and develop knowledge and join the ongoing debate about London's built environment. The Centre is visited by an estimate of 100,000 people each year.

New London Architecture, located at The Building Centre, is a unique initiative that seeks to highlight the unprecedented level of development either planned or currently underway in London. Managed and curated by a highly dedicated and experienced team, its aim is to communicate the changing face of the capital – and those involved – to the immediate industry and the public alike. Working closely with government, developers and other key organisations, NLA aims to communicate with and to engage the widest possible audience in what is going on in terms of planning, design and development in the capital.

The Showcase Galleries, located on the ground level, are occupied by New London Architecture. Originally conceived in collaboration with the Architectural Association School of Architecture, they now offer topical architectural and design exhibitions. Topics covered include London's strategies for energy; public realm, housing; conservation; workplace; education; infrastructure; healthcare; water; environment; hotels & retail. The exhibitions vary throughout the year, constantly offering new subject matters. The Main Gallery, visible from the street level, embraces over 111m² on the ground floor and showcases a giant 1:1500 scale model of central London highlighting all the recent planning proposals, including the Olympic Park. The Product Galleries are located in the basement level and present products by a wide variety of manufacturers. A special Eco Zone is a gallery dedicated to showcasing a range of products

⁸² Information and facts acquired and conceived through organisation's online resources and various brochures. The original terminology used by the institution is retained in order to convey their intent accurately. *The Building Centre*. Web. 10 Nov. 2010. <http://www.buildingcentre.co.uk/home.asp> and *NLA - New London Architecture*. Web. 08 Nov. 2010. <http://www.newlondonarchitecture.org/>.

suitable for sustainable design within the built environment. The Launch Pad Gallery, with 108m² of floor space, is dedicated to short-term, themed exhibitions where manufacturers can be associated directly with the joint programme of events arranged by The Building Centre and New London Architecture.

Conference facilities provide for a range of different requirements from small informal meetings through to full day conferences for up to 190 people. Other facilities include a café and a bookshop on the ground level. The café is a vibrant area available for short-term, themed exhibitions often supported by the seminar programme. The bookshop, formerly operated by Pipers Books, is now managed by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). With over 1500 titles in stock, it is considered to be one of UK's leading built environment bookshop and a key resource for the latest books on architecture, sustainability, design and construction, engineering, surveying, pricing and regulations.

Observations / findings

└ The Building Centre provides a unique link between professionals, product manufacturers and public. The physical nature of the installations and the clarity of presentation are appealing; its openness and accessibility are conspicuous.

└ It feels as though one can indeed explore the diverse range of showcased products without commercial pressure, simply because there are no sales representatives around.

└ The Building Centre has about 25 people on staff; their offices are located on the upper floors.

└ The Building Centre and the NLA publish various information booklets, brochures, books, exhibition catalogues, programme reports and Essential Product Guides. The bookshop keeper estimated an average issue of 10 publications per year; most of the exhibition catalogues were given out for free, but after last year's recession they now cost 3£ each, he added.

└ Although the Centre is not focused on attracting tourists, it has been brought to my attention that the NLA has an agreement with certain touristic bureaus that often include the Centre in their daily tours. Though the exhibitions are traditionally aimed at a professional visitor, they effectively pull a tourist away from often perfunctory sightseeing and introduce an opportunity for a meaningful present-day exploration of the city's present and future development strategies.

└ *Major London Issues*, one of the permanent exhibitions on display at the NLA, demonstrates a direct involvement of the local authorities and is a very public attempt at assessing the impact of government and mayoral policies on the development of the city. Monthly seminars, briefings and talks that relate to each topic track the major drivers within each sector and assess the impact of the planning policies.

└ *Who Runs London*, a new permanent display announced to open in October 2011, will expose the roles, links and funding dependencies of the key government departments, appointed agencies, quangos and councils that shape London's built environment.

Figure 02. Product Galleries Information Centre

Figure 03. Conference facilities in the basement

Figure 04. Product Galleries in the basement

Figure 05. Manufacturer's catalogues and brochures for building products

Figure 06. New London Architecture, Jan 26, 2011. The Main Gallery, visible from the street level, embraces over 111m2 on the ground floor and showcases a 1:1500 scale model of central London highlighting all the recent planning proposals.

Figure 07. Information Resources Guideline Brochure, Jan / Feb 2011. The Building Centre. Ground Floor Plan.

Figure 08. Information Resources Guideline Brochure, Jan / Feb 2011. The Building Centre. Lower Ground Floor Plan.

Conclusions / lessons learned

The NLA, in combination with the Product Galleries, generate a successful business model. The professional training seminars held continually at the conference facility are costly (£200-£300) yet highly attended by various professionals in the field. Furthermore, the concept of combining reference information for all sectors of the construction industry, including architects, designers, building professionals and product manufacturers, constitutes an excellent education centre. As a result of the immediate vicinity, a stronger cooperative dynamic is nurtured. An educational centre that simultaneously offers reference material to architects, various trades, developers, authorities and builders instils a notion of wholeness.

Installations such as *Major London Issues* are essential to the transparency of communication between the planning authorities and the general public. Ultimately, all the improvements made are for the inhabitants of the city; one has a right to find out what is about to happen to one's neighbourhood. No such exhibition exists in Ottawa. The City of Ottawa's website contains numerous eloquent descriptions for the proposed strategies (Ottawa 20/20 Plan is a bright example), yet no physical display of the urban issues has ever been showcased.

What the Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment would have to offer is:

- └ Openly public display of City Council's and NCC's urban planning strategies, along with a physical platform for open debate and discussion;
- └ An education centre for various professionals within all sectors of the built environment;
- └ Space for collaboration, exchange of ideas between various elements of the apparatus of architecture and the broader industry.

The Architecture Foundation London

Precedent Study II

Facts provided by the institution / general information⁸³

Address: Ground Floor East /136 – 148 Tooley Street / London / SE1 2TU / UK

Interior fit-out architect: Carmody Groarke

Client: The Architecture Foundation

Area: 45m²

Year of completion: 2009

The Architecture Foundation is a non-profit agency for contemporary architecture, urbanism and culture. Established in 1991 as Britain's first independent architecture centre, the Architecture Foundation has organised hundreds of public exhibitions, design initiatives, competitions and debates in venues across Britain and internationally. The Architecture Foundation is a registered charity; its board of trustees is composed of individuals from a wide cross-section of interests and professions including architecture, the arts, media, education, social activism and business. The Foundation is now located in London's Southwark, in close proximity to the City Hall and the Tower Bridge. Before moving to its current Carmody Groarke-designed headquarters, the Architecture Foundation occupied various high-profile and publicly-accessible venues across London including the Yard Gallery in Clerkenwell, and its initial office in the Economist Building, St James's.

The Architecture Foundation claims to be independent, agile, inclusive and influential. Central to its activities is the cultivation of new talent and ideas, and the belief that architecture enriches lives. Its diverse programmes shape the quality of the built environment by stimulating critical engagement amongst professionals, policy makers and a broad public, and facilitating international and interdisciplinary exchange.

The Architecture Foundation's cross-disciplinary programme includes events from film screenings to lectures and debates; exhibitions that experiment with representations of architecture; local and international competitions for buildings and public spaces; awards that celebrate excellence in contemporary architecture and urbanism; educational projects, focusing on young people considering further built environment study and a wide range of other initiatives including the well-known London Festival of Architecture and the London Architecture Diary.

⁸³ Information and facts acquired and conceived through organisation's online resources and various brochures. The original terminology used by the institution is retained in order to convey their intent accurately. *Home / Architecture Foundation*. Web. 08 Nov. 2010. <<http://www.architecturefoundation.org.uk/>>.

Figure 09. The Architecture Foundation London, Project Space, Feb 27, 2011. The only objects found there are a discussion table with twelve chairs and a small shelf stand showcasing the current publications.

Figure 10. The Architecture Foundation London, Feb 27, 2011. The headquarters occupies the shop-fronted ground floor space within an Edwardian warehouse.

Observations / findings

└ The Architecture Foundation's headquarters, located at 136 - 148 Tooley Street, is not continuously used as an exhibition space. From a brief conversation with Justin Jaeckle, the current curator of the Public Programme, it became evident that the 45m² headquarters serve mostly as a hub for organisational activity, small talks and events. On the day of my visit, I had to ring a bell to come in.

└ The headquarters occupies the shop-fronted ground floor space within an Edwardian warehouse. The back room is divided in two spaces; one half provides the office space for five full-time employees (a number reduced by almost a half during last year's recession – the original office is designed for twelve), the other half is used mainly for storage. The main hall, called Project Space, occupies the other 17m² and has a straightforward rectangular shape; its walls are finished with unpainted plywood panels and the only objects found there are a discussion table with twelve chairs and a small shelf stand showcasing the current publications. The retention of the open plan aspires to "strong connectivity between the exhibition and workspace areas"⁸⁴, and the robust yet provisional character is meant to "encourage unselfconscious use and adaptation for future project programming."⁸⁵

NC [...] The Architecture Foundation was going to move down to a site, just down here (Southwark – authors note), that is a triangular site. They had Zaha Hadid design a building for them, um, and they were nervous about Zaha working with it, 'cause we build a lot of buildings around here, I think it was the cost overrun aspect, of Zaha's work - that was the slight concern, but I think what happened is that they changed director, and then suddenly this new director came in and said: - 'well actually we are spending a hell lot of money building self-advertising monument for the Architecture Foundation, is this the right thing to do? Shouldn't we be out there in the network supporting people, writing competitions, and actually being much more community-led?' There is a point where the Architecture Foundation seems to be more explicitly London-based than perhaps it used to be. It feels a bit London-centric at the moment. And there is a certain peak of people who were always associated with those types of organisations. There are people who, there is a little peak of people who do work with them or seem to gain an awful lot of publicity from that...⁸⁶

└ Being reliant on donations, sponsorships and grants to support its activities, the Architecture Foundation receives regular funding from the Arts Council of England and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. It is further patronized and supported by a number of local architectural practices, developers, building engineers, structural engineers and consultants, and real estate companies.

⁸⁴ "Public Buildings - The Architecture Foundation." Carmody Groarke. Web. 04 Feb. 2011. <<http://www.carmodygroarke.com/projects/public/084.html>>.

⁸⁵ Ibid

⁸⁶ Nicholas Champkins, Allies and Morrison Architects, London. Interview by author, January 29, 2011.

└ In addition to supporting young practices via recommendations and referrals, the Architecture Foundation also acts as a platform and a hosting space for showcasing the UK and Ireland's most promising emerging practices during the Young Architect of the Year Award (YAYA). AF's Project Space was used for various presentations by the shortlisted nominees in both 2009 and 2010 Awards. The event was accessible to the general public, with ticket prices ranging from £4-£6.

NC [...] I mean, we are obviously a member of the Architecture Foundation. I think we support it without being explicit about it. It is probably similar to the way... if we have a project of a certain scale, and we don't have the right people to do it, we don't have the capacity, or it actually doesn't feel like the right kind of project for us to do, quite often those projects are given to other smaller practices... I can't list any. But I know that we do pass on work and we do recommend other people a lot, but that's not something that we talk about. [...] And it is supporting practices in that sense. If the Architecture Foundation want to publicise young practices, they will come and talk to us about who we'd like to put forward. It is not a sort of nepotism or anything like that, it's feeling that we have an opportunity to support younger architects or smaller practices.⁸⁷

└ The Architecture Foundation publishes various information booklets, pamphlets, books, exhibition catalogues and programme reports. They currently offer 7 publications for sale.

└ One of the bright examples of fruitful collaboration initiated by the Architecture Foundation is the International Architecture Student Festival, a part of the London Festival of Architecture. Initiated by the Architecture Foundation, organised by London Metropolitan University in cooperation with the New London Architecture (see page 24) and Institute of British Architects (RIBA), and sponsored by London Development Agency, Arts Council England and Land Securities⁸⁸, it brings together UK and international design students with local residents to create a series of various site-specific interventions.⁸⁹ As a result, students get introduced to the realities of design-built projects while introducing local people to architecture and design.

Conclusions / lessons learned

The Architecture Foundation's existence and recognition owes to and is deeply rooted in the urban context of London. It is a product of its environment and time, where the general public has a keen interest in design, and is certainly influential in the process of shaping that interest. While it is undoubtedly irrelevant to compare Ottawa with a city like London, there are still lessons to be learned from the Architecture Foundation's far-reaching influences in the machine of promotion and awareness. Fundamental one being an exemplary powerful network

⁸⁷ Nicholas Champkins, Allies and Morrison Architects, London. Interview by author, January 29, 2011.

⁸⁸ "LFA2010 - International Architecture Student Festival Events." LFA2010 - What's on. Web. 11 Feb. 2011. <http://www.lfa2010.org/event_types.php?t=6>.

⁸⁹ "International Architecture Student Festival." London Metropolitan University, Department of Architecture and Spatial Design. Web. 11 Feb. 2011. <<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/architecture/asd-projects/international-architecture-student-festival.cfm>>.

of support for younger practices, established amongst various architecture / design firms and prospective clients throughout the city by means of independent competitions and independent awards. Independent design and ideas competitions organized by the Architecture Foundation are widely employed by influential clients, including property developers, regeneration agencies, local authorities and cultural organisations. Such awards and competitions play an important role in raising the profile of emerging architectural practices. Ottawa does not have an independent agent that could initiate and co-ordinate open and anonymous design and ideas competitions. Furthermore, no independent awards are held in Ottawa – the design excellence is only awarded by the official institutions.

What the Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment would have to offer is:

- ↳ A newly established agency responsible for promotion of young talent;
- ↳ A platform for independent design awards and competitions;
- ↳ Most importantly, a gallery space permanently dedicated to exhibiting the existing design awards and running urban design / architecture / student competitions.

Facts provided by the institution / general information⁹⁰

Address: Prins Hendrikkade 600 / Amsterdam / 1011 VX / The Netherlands

Architect: René van Zuuk Architekten

Floor area: 477m²

Client: ARCAM

Cost: €1,6 million

Amsterdam Centre for Architecture was set up as a foundation in 1986; the Centre concentrates its activities in Amsterdam and the surrounding area. ARCAM aims to reach the largest public in order to broaden architecture's appeal and zeros in on topical issues and developments in Amsterdam, keeping the discussion about the future of the city constantly fuelled. ARCAM contains an information point where the public can go for information and where architectural critique and aficionados can be directed to interesting buildings and sites throughout the city. The public is given an opportunity to consult a large number of architecture and design-related books, magazines, folders, sites, maps and a collection of newspaper cuttings. These provide a wealth of information for those who are interested in architecture and urban planning and can help them find interesting buildings and sites in Amsterdam. Part of the information point is a current affairs bulletin board, with a selection on topical news and developments in the fields of architecture, urbanism and landscape. ARCAM also functions as coordination centre and works together with a large number of institutions in order to support and manage existing programmes and to initiate new activities.

ARCAM is located in the heart of the city, at the Oosterdok on Prins Hendrikkade Street. The building has been designed by René van Zuuk and is a compact, sculptural three storey structure. The offices are located on the top level; the exhibition space and an information desk are placed at the street level. The lowermost storey at the water level is used for small-scale discussions, large meetings and seminars for school groups. Inside, each part of the interior volume is connected to the others by voids, making all spaces "perceptible parts of the whole"⁹¹.

⁹⁰ Information and facts acquired and conceived through organisation's online resources and various brochures. The original terminology used by the institution is retained in order to convey their intent accurately. ARCAM / Architectuurcentrum Amsterdam. Web. 08 Nov. 2010. <http://www.arcam.nl/index_uk.html>.

⁹¹ Jodidio, Philip. "ARCAM Architectuurcentrum 2002-03." NL: *Architecture in the Netherlands*. Köln: Taschen, 2006. 180. Print.

Figure 11. Architectuurcentrum Amsterdam, Jan 29, 2011. Exterior.

Figure 12. Architectuurcentrum Amsterdam, Jan 29, 2011. The current exhibition occupies the entire ground level and is entitled *Swimming to Manhattan*. It showcases projects prepared by the students of the Academy of Architecture in Amsterdam.

Figure 13. A collage of a historical timeline that traces local architectural styles through the centuries

Figure 14. ARCAM office space upstairs

Figure 15. A floating platform is used as an exterior exhibition space

Figure 16. Volunteers operate the info point on the weekends

Figure 17. Architectuurcentrum Amsterdam, Jan 29, 2011. The informality and simplicity of the space downstairs is remarkable: the only objects found there are discussion tables and a number of chairs

Observations / findings

└ Due to its strategically picturesque location, ARCAM appears to be a thriving hybrid of an architecture centre and a busy touristic hub.

└ Most of activities and events initiated by ARCAM are hosted internally.

└ Like the Architecture Foundation London, ARCAM relies on donations, sponsorships and grants to facilitate its activities. ARCAM receives regular funding from the Amsterdam City Council, the Development Corporation of Amsterdam and the Netherlands Architecture Fund. It is further financed and supported by a number of local architectural practices, developers, building engineers, structural engineers and consultants, and real estate companies. It has recently received financial support from several housing associations.⁹² €1,6 million for the construction of the new building was also raised through contributions.

└ Exhibition pamphlets, thematic city maps, and bike tours are among the publications issued by ARCAM yearly. One of the most popular pocket books issued by ARCAM thoroughly documents selected new buildings and developments in Amsterdam and is published every 1-2 years.

└ The exhibition program consists on average of five shows per year. Topics vary from showcasing selected architects, buildings or complete urban developments to architecture abroad and student works.

└ The current exhibition occupies the entire ground level and is entitled *Swimming to Manhattan*. It showcases projects prepared by the students of the Academy of Architecture in Amsterdam: "This year's winter term has been organised as a competition with competing teams, a critical jury and an actual prize. In two intensive weeks, interdisciplinary (architecture, urbanism and landscape) teams (which students had to assemble themselves), consisting of at least three and a maximum of four participants, were to work on intelligent and imaginative perspectives on a given design assignment. The participating teams were supported by various consultants and experts in the field, who offered their expertise during the course of the project."⁹³

└ The water level storey contains a collage of a historical timeline that traces local architectural styles through the centuries. The informality and simplicity of the space downstairs is remarkable: the only objects found there are discussion tables and a number of chairs.

└ Volunteers operate the info point on the weekends.

└ A unique Amsterdam version of a free mobile architecture application, entitled *Urban Augmented Reality (UAR)*, issued in collaboration with the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAI), was launched in November 2010. UAR provides information, by means of 3D models, texts, images, archive material and films, about Amsterdam's built environment on your mobile phone. By means of 'augmented reality', this application "enables one to see in 3D what the city will look like in the future, what it used to look like and what it might have looked like. Due to the addition of advanced 3D models, made by DPI Animation House, it is possible to see 'what is not there yet'."⁹⁴

⁹² ARCAM / *Architectuurcentrum Amsterdam*. Web. 16 Feb. 2011.
<http://www.arcam.nl/organisatie/financiering_uk.html>.

⁹³ ARCAM / *Architectuurcentrum Amsterdam*. Web. 16 Feb. 2011.
<http://www.arcam.nl/exposities/programma_uk.html>.

⁹⁴ Ibid

Conclusions / lessons learned

Architecture Centre Amsterdam is an exemplary hybrid of a touristic info centre and a centre for architecture. In comparison, NCC's Info Point – Ottawa's only somewhat comparable establishment – operates as a very conservative touristic point, merely offering its visitors the history of the Capital, along with the standard 'places to visit' – museums, parks and monuments. The Info Point does not host nor initiate any seminars or discussions on current urban issues (one week per year is the exception); it is certainly not a mid-week destination for an architecture student, practicing architect or an average citizen. Moreover, while centrally located on Confederation Boulevard, the Info Point is meant for tourists only, thus remaining removed from the city fabric. ARCAM, while successfully fulfilling its functions as a centre for architecture, offers additionally an unorthodox approach to a touristic info centre, engaging (and almost imposing, rightfully) many topical issues of the city's built environment into what should interest tourists and visitors to Amsterdam.

Simplicity of space, relatively low cost of the project, and small footprint demonstrate that a destination of this sort does not have to occupy a large excessive edifice to successfully attract visitors; location, exhibition content and an engaging event program are, however, essential. Exhibiting student projects in the main gallery space gives a substantial amount of credit to local student work, and shows an exemplary level of interaction and collaboration between the educational institutions and the independent Centre for Architecture.

What the Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment would have to offer is:

- └ An ultimate touristic destination with an unorthodox approach, alternatively focusing on the city's development strategies, contemporary architecture and future vision, rather than its historic attractions and sights
- └ A diverse exhibition program offering, amongst others, a student perspective on current urban issues.

Project Proposal

Intent Overview

As suggested previously, currently disparate elements of Ottawa's architectural apparatus must act together to reach the envisioned planning goals. Active collaboration between various architectural and planning departments could be indisputably beneficial to the quality of built environment; most importantly, it could encourage social engagement which is crucial to the promotion of high-quality architecture and urban design. It is hereby suggested that the City of Ottawa, with financial support from the federal government, institutes a Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment – a space permanently *dedicated* to architecture, where exhibition, discussion and public display of the built environment shall take place. Architecture Ottawa (ARCO), a new independent agency set up within the proposed Centre, is to be a mediator responsible for coordination of collaboration, events and new initiatives within the Centre.

The proposed project shall thus reconstitute the *missing link*, and aim at giving the apparatus of architecture a tangible identity, simultaneously establishing – almost literally – a *façade for awareness* of architecture in Ottawa. As a result, the apparatus of architecture shall acquire a greater opportunity to mould and influence the city fabric and public opinion on architecture, instead of being moulded and influenced by prevailing ideologies, political powers, and the apparatus of legacy. The proposed Centre shall administer and organise the conversation between the various city planners and the public, and maintain the conversation amongst professionals within the field. The Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment shall become a locus for critical discussion, a space for a unique public display of planned developments. Architecture Ottawa (ARCO) shall instigate perpetual architectural activity, discourse, and action, - all open to policy makers and professionals in various fields, such as architecture, environmentalism, arts, business, media, education, construction and social activism.

A close scrutiny of previously discussed precedent studies allowed for an adoption of a number of general guidelines specific to the envisioned Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment, as follows:

- ↳ Openly public display of City Council's and NCC's urban planning strategies, along with a physical platform for open debate and discussion;
- ↳ An education centre for various professionals within all sectors of the built environment;
- ↳ Space for collaboration, exchange of ideas between various elements of the apparatus of architecture and the broader industry;
- ↳ A gallery space permanently dedicated to exhibiting the existing design awards and running urban design / architecture / student competitions;
- ↳ A platform for independent design awards and competitions;

- ↳ A newly established agency responsible for the promotion of young talent;
- ↳ An ultimate touristic destination with an unorthodox approach, alternatively focusing on the city's development strategies, contemporary architecture and future vision, rather than its historic attractions and sights;
- ↳ A diverse exhibition program offering, amongst others, a student perspective on current urban issues.

Existing site conditions

The selected project site is situated at the northern end of Elgin Street, and occupies a full city block between Laurier Avenue West to the North and Gloucester Street to the south. The site is at present a public parking lot. The plot has already been considered as a candidate for increased density in accordance with Ottawa Intensification Plan. Prior to 2004, the site belonged to the City of Ottawa; it was then sold to the Mississauga-based real estate company entitled *Morguard Investments Ltd.*⁹⁵ The proposal for a mixed-use commercial plaza, with planned retail spaces, class A office space, a concert hall, condominiums and a 26 storey rental apartment tower, was developed by DCYSA Architecture.⁹⁶ The future of the project is unclear due to funding issues.

Immediately adjacent to the site are the First Baptist Church – a designated heritage building dating back to 1877, the Allstream office building, a residential apartment block to the west, and an abandoned Victorian house, which until 2009 was the address for Friday's Roast Beef House restaurant. Place Bell, one of the tallest buildings in Ottawa (98m), is located directly across Gloucester Street. Situated diagonally across the site is the NCC-maintained Confederation Park, a somewhat vibrant ground of annual events and celebrations such as Ottawa International Jazz Festival, Winterlude, and Canada Day festivities. Elgin Street is one of the busiest entertainment / night life streets in Ottawa; a variety of small business are located south of the site, including a number of restaurants, bars, pubs, coffee shops, small retail spaces, book shops, etc. The street, however, becomes largely institutional and ceremonial north of the site, ending at the intersection with Wellington Street, just east of the Parliament Buildings. Amongst the institutions surrounding Elgin Street North are the National Capital Commission headquarters, the National Arts Centre and the City Hall, which is located directly across the site to the east. Prominence of location and proximity to the abovementioned institutions and governmental establishments was considered the principal site selection criteria (see Urban Network Plan, page 41).

⁹⁵ Eade, Ron. "Friday's Roast Beef House Closes." *Ottawa Citizen*. 28 Sept. 2009. Web. 01 Nov. 2011.

<<http://communities.canada.com/ottawacitizen/blogs/omnivore/archive/2009/09/28/friday-s-roast-beef-house-closes.aspx>>.

⁹⁶ "Downtown Ottawa Construction 2003 - 2008." *City of Ottawa*. Web. 07 Feb. 2011.

<http://ottawa.ca/residents/planning/downtown/construction_en.html>.

Figure 18. Site panorama, October 04, 2011. The site is at present a public parking lot.

URBAN NETWORK PLAN

1 Capital Info Centre (NCC)	6 First Baptist Church
2 National Capital Commission (NCC)	7 Former Friday's Roastbeef house (currently abandoned)
3 World Exchange Plaza (soon-to-be Capital Info Centre location)	8 Place Bell
4 National Arts Centre (NAC)	9 Ontario Court of Justice
5 Ottawa Public Library	10 City of Ottawa / City Hall

Programmatic outline

The Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment is to be subdivided into four major zones: three segments are to be the office space for the major stakeholders in the apparatus of architecture; the fourth one is to accommodate larger distinctive functions such as conference meetings, lectures, and movie screenings. Both RAIC and ORSA are to relocate their offices to one of the Centre's segments; the second segment is to be occupied and shared by the relevant City of Ottawa and the National Capital Commission employees; the third is to provide office space for the newly established Architecture Ottawa (ARCO); the fourth one is to contain a large auditorium shared among various tenants. The general objective of the Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment lies in the derivation of a collaborative architectural space, defined through the multiple opportunities of professional exchange, commingling and interconnection. Conceptually, the intent is to express the collaborative nature of the proposed facility and translate architectural emphasis to the overlapping and public areas.

The following are the lists of suggested tenants and main participating players, potential contributors to Centre's programs and activities, and major programmatic elements.

Suggested tenants:

- └ Architecture Ottawa (ARCO)
- └ RAIC
- └ ORSA / OAA
- └ NCC
- └ Ottawa 20/20
- └ Urban research lab (ARCO)
- └ Planning and Environment Committee
- └ Committee of Adjustment

Suggested players:

- └ Department of Public Works
- └ Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism
- └ Algonquin College Architectural Technology Program
- └ Canadian Centre for Architecture (Montreal)
- └ Ottawa Built Heritage Advisory Committee (OBHAC)
- └ Canadian Home Builders' Association (located in the Allstream Building on site)
- └ Parks Canada

Major programmatic elements include:

- └ Office space
- └ Gallery / exhibition space
- └ Product gallery / material library / info point
- └ Seminar / professional training facility
- └ City Hall / conference facilities
- └ Ottawa Info Point (NCC)
- └ Cinema facility
- └ Workshop space for school groups
- └ Restaurant / cafe / coffee shop
- └ Retail space (furniture / lighting store)
- └ Specialized bookshop

The Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment is envisioned here as an educational centre that simultaneously offers reference material to architects, various trades, developers, authorities and builders, thus instilling a notion of wholeness amongst those who shape Ottawa's identity. As a result of the immediate vicinity and perpetual interaction within the same space, a stronger cooperative dynamic is to be nurtured. The street-level gallery space shall be provided for institution's communication to professionals in the field and the general public. Subdivided accordingly, it shall provide each tenant institution with space to address various issues and topics, such as future developments, planning, infrastructure, touristic destinations, awards for excellence in the field of architecture, etc.

Programs, activities and events

Amongst the suggested activities hosted by the Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment and developed by ARCO are: development and production of various topical publications, initiation of awareness campaigns, series of events generating professional and public interest, film screenings, and thematic exhibitions (both permanent and temporary). Hosting a new touristic destination, ARCO is to work closely with the NCC to create a graphically strong, contemporary and recognisable signature style for touristic publications. In addition, it is suggested that the Centre should become a host for various existing activities, such as:

- └ Architecture Week (ORSA)
- └ Conferences and seminars (RAIC, OAA, etc.)
- └ Forum Lectures (Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism)
- └ Building 22 launch (Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism)

While it certainly is a great challenge for the proposed initiative to sustain itself and to communicate its values and goals, it is the right mixture of tenants that could develop itself into a remarkable destination attracting various visitors. Within the proposed scheme, architects shall no longer be impotent; they shall appear at the busy central location, work closely with the authorities, and be central to the activities administering the built environment of the city. The Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment shall thus become an opposition platform to the apparatus of legacy.

One could argue that it is naïve to suggest that an independent influence on the apparatus of architecture within the existing capitalist setting could possibly evolve. But let us just imagine the effect it could have! Imagine increased communal vigilance, new patterns – and even categories – of critical thinking, the collective self-insight and the shake-up of the indifference planted by the legacy of complacency! Let us imagine the openly acknowledged planning corruption and the elimination of inactivity! Most importantly, let us imagine the full stop – even for a short moment – of the aimless replication of planning patterns that has led the city to an all-embracing inertia.

"THE LIBERTY OF MEN IS NEVER ASSURED BY THE INSTITUTIONS AND LAWS THAT WE INTENDED TO GUARANTEE THEM. THIS IS WHY ALMOST ALL OF THESE LAWS AND INSTITUTIONS ARE QUITE CAPABLE OF BEING TURNED AROUND. NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE AMBIGUOUS, BUT SIMPLY BECAUSE "LIBERTY" IS WHAT MUST BE EXERCISED." ⁹⁷

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Project Proposal

Figure 19. Site Plan. Existing site conditions: the selected site is currently a public parking lot.

Figure 20. Site Plan. Proposed scheme.

CENTRE FOR OTTAWA'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT | GROUND FLOOR PLAN | SCALE 1:400

CENTRE FOR OTTAWA'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT | FLOOR 2 PLAN | SCALE 1:400

CENTRE FOR OTTAWA'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT | FLOOR 3 PLAN | SCALE 1:400

CENTRE FOR OTTAWA'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT | ELGIN STREET FACADE | SCALE 1:400

CENTRE FOR OTTAWA'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT | SECTION B-B | SCALE 1:400

CENTRE FOR OTTAWA'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT | GLOUCESTER STREET FACADE | SCALE 1:400

CENTRE FOR OTTAWA'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT | SECTION A-A | SCALE 1:400

CENTRE FOR OTTAWA'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT | LAURIER STREET FACADE | SCALE 1:400

Presentation Panels

INTRODUCTION

CURRENTLY DISPARATE ELEMENTS OF OTTAWA'S ARCHITECTURAL APPARATUS MUST ACT TOGETHER TO REACH THE ENVIROINED PLANNING GOALS. ACTIVE COOPERATION BETWEEN VARIOUS ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING DEPARTMENTS COULD BE INSTANTLY BENEFICIAL TO THE QUALITY OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT. MOST IMPORTANTLY, IT COULD ENCOURAGE SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT WHICH IS CRUCIAL TO THE PROMOTION OF HIGH-QUALITY ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN. IT IS HEREBY SUGGESTED THAT THE CITY OF OTTAWA, WITH FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, INSTITUTES A CENTRE FOR OTTAWA'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT – A SPACE PERMANENTLY DEDICATED TO ARCHITECTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES. THE CITY OF OTTAWA'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT SHALL BE THE PLACE ARCHITECTURE OTTAWA (AEC), A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION SET UP WITHIN THE PROPOSED CENTRE, IS TO BE A MEDIATOR RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATION, EVENTS AND INITIATIVES WITHIN THE CENTRE.

THE PROPOSED PROJECT SHALL THIS RECONSTITUTE THE MISSING LINK, AND AS A RESULT, THE APPARATUS OF ARCHITECTURE A HANGING, ISOLATED, SIMULTANEOUSLY ESTABLISHING – ALMOST LITERALLY – A FACADE FOR ARCHITECTURE AND ENVIRONMENT. AS A RESULT, THE APPARATUS OF ARCHITECTURE SHALL ACQUIRE A COHERENT OPPORTUNITY TO WORK AND INFLUENCE THE CITY-FABRIC AND PUBLIC OPINION ON ARCHITECTURE, INSTEAD OF BEING ISOLATED AND INFLUENCED BY PHYSICAL AND ECOLOGICAL, POLITICAL, FINANCIAL, AND THE APPARATUS OF LEGACY. THE PROPOSED CENTRE SHALL ADMINISTER AND ORGANIZE THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE VARIOUS CITY PLANNERS AND THE PUBLIC, AND MAINTAIN THE CONVERSATION AMONGST PROFESSIONALS WITHIN THE FIELD. THE CENTRE FOR OTTAWA'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT SHALL BECOME A SPACE FOR CRITICAL DISCUSSION, A SPACE FOR A LINGUISTIC PUBLIC DISPLAY OF PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE, A SPACE FOR EDUCATION, A SPACE FOR INVESTIGATING POTENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL ACTIVITY, DISCOURSE AND ACTION – ALL OPEN TO POLICY MAKERS AND PROFESSIONALS IN VARIOUS FIELDS, SUCH AS ARCHITECTURE, ENVIRONMENTALISM, ARTS, BUSINESS, MEDIA, EDUCATION, CONSTRUCTION AND SOCIAL ACTIVITY.

The Centre for Ottawa's Built Environment is to be a building and a place where these elements are to be the office space for the major stakeholders in the architecture, environment and education sectors. The building and the office space are to be a place where these elements are to be the office space for the major stakeholders in the architecture, environment and education sectors. The building and the office space are to be a place where these elements are to be the office space for the major stakeholders in the architecture, environment and education sectors.

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STAKEHOLDERS

- 1. Architecture Ottawa (AEC)
- 2. AEC
- 3. Ottawa City
- 4. AEC
- 5. Ottawa City
- 6. Ottawa City
- 7. Ottawa City
- 8. Ottawa City

STAKEHOLDERS

- 1. Department of Public Works
- 2. Department of Public Works
- 3. Department of Public Works
- 4. Department of Public Works
- 5. Department of Public Works
- 6. Department of Public Works
- 7. Department of Public Works
- 8. Department of Public Works

STAKEHOLDERS

- 1. Office space
- 2. Office space
- 3. Office space
- 4. Office space
- 5. Office space
- 6. Office space
- 7. Office space
- 8. Office space

STAKEHOLDERS

- 1. Department of Public Works
- 2. Department of Public Works
- 3. Department of Public Works
- 4. Department of Public Works
- 5. Department of Public Works
- 6. Department of Public Works
- 7. Department of Public Works
- 8. Department of Public Works

STAKEHOLDERS

- 1. Department of Public Works
- 2. Department of Public Works
- 3. Department of Public Works
- 4. Department of Public Works
- 5. Department of Public Works
- 6. Department of Public Works
- 7. Department of Public Works
- 8. Department of Public Works

STAKEHOLDERS

ELEVATION A-A SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

SECTION A-A SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

PLAN DE LA FACADE NORD

PLAN DE LA FACADE SUD

PLAN DE LA FACADE EST

SECTION A-A

SECTION B-B

INTERIEUR