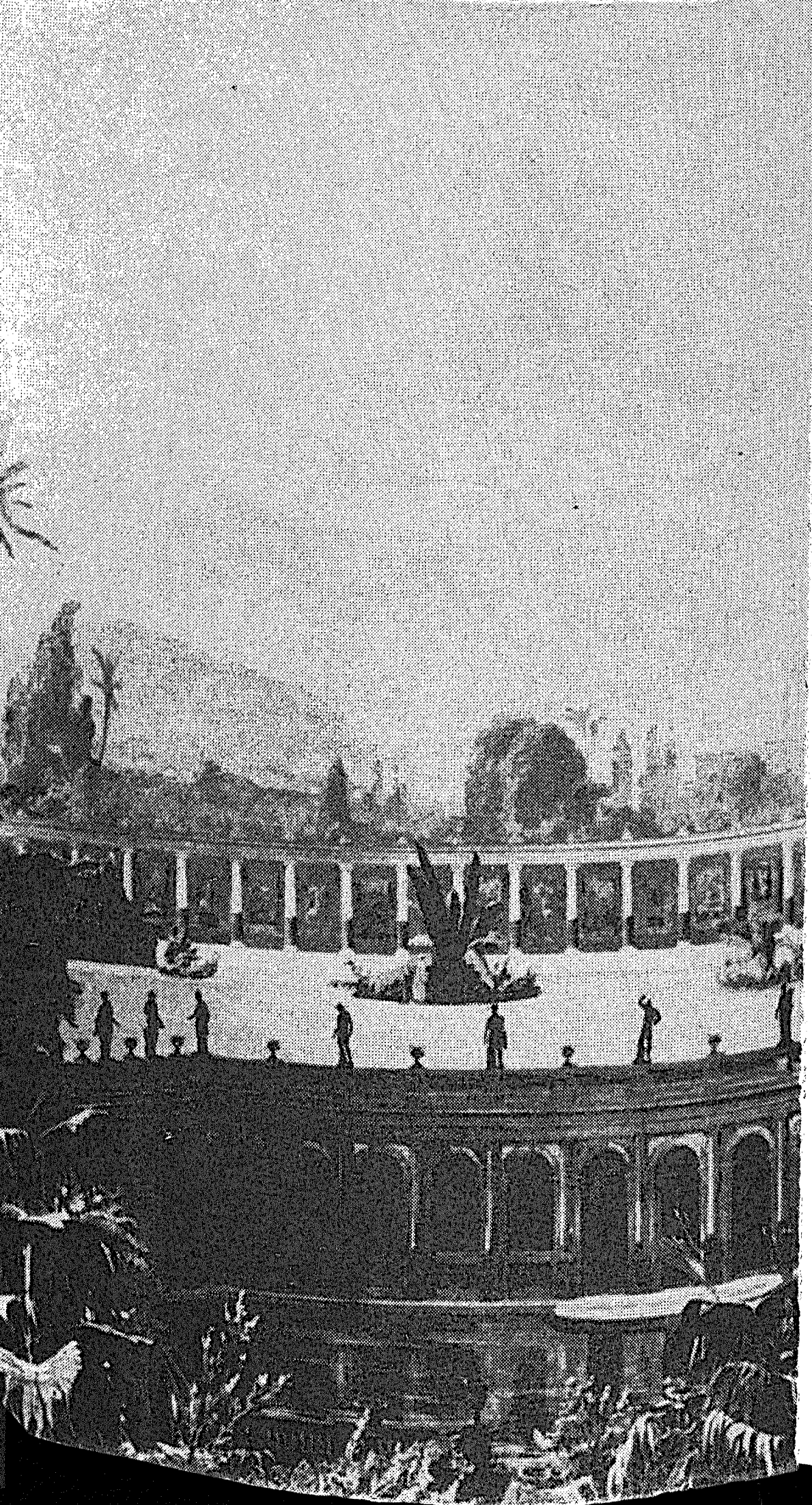

SOMETHING FANTASTIC

A
MANIFESTO
BY THREE YOUNG
ARCHITECTS
ON WORLDS,
PEOPLE,
CITIES,
AND HOUSES.



JULIAN SCHUBERT ELENA SCHÜTZ LEONARD STREICH

RUBY PRESS



PE 1115

HD 3244

Everything is linked

SOMETHING FANTASTIC
IS ROOTED IN FOUR BELIEFS:

1. WE KNOW OUR EARTH NOW:
THERE IS NO OUTSIDE.

NEW TERRITORIES

ARE TO BE DISCOVERED

WITHIN THE EXISTING

AND ACROSS PROFESSIONS.

↳ THE POSITION THIS STATEMENT IS DEDUCED FROM: ON WORLDS → P. 6

2. AWARENESS IS

THE PREMISE FOR CHANGE.

↳ WHY BELIEVE IN THE IMPACT OF AWARENESS ON MINDS → P. 10

THE IDEAS OF TOMORROW

NEED TO INSPIRE THOSE

WHO CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

EVERYBODY.

3. NATURE AND CITY

ARE NO LONGER OPPOSITES.

↳OUR POSITION ON THE RELATIONSHIP OF URBAN AND RURAL: ON CITIES ↳P. 16

WE NEED FEWER RULES
AND MORE IDEAS, FREEDOM
AND PARTICIPATION
TO MAKE OUR CITIES
WHOLESOME HABITATS.

4. ARCHITECTURE

IS EVERYTHING.

↳WHY WE THINK THIS HAS TO BE STATED AT ALL: ON HOUSES ↳P. 24

NO BUILDING ACTION
CAN STAY BEHIND
OUR AMBITION TO EMBRACE
THE CULTURALLY FELT
AND RESPECT THE
ECONOMICALLY NEEDED.



LET'S GET
INVOLVED.

↳ ONE WAY OF GETTING INVOLVED: THE WOOD → P. 30

↳ ABOUT THE OBLIGATION TO INTERFERE: ROUSSEAU → P. 163.1

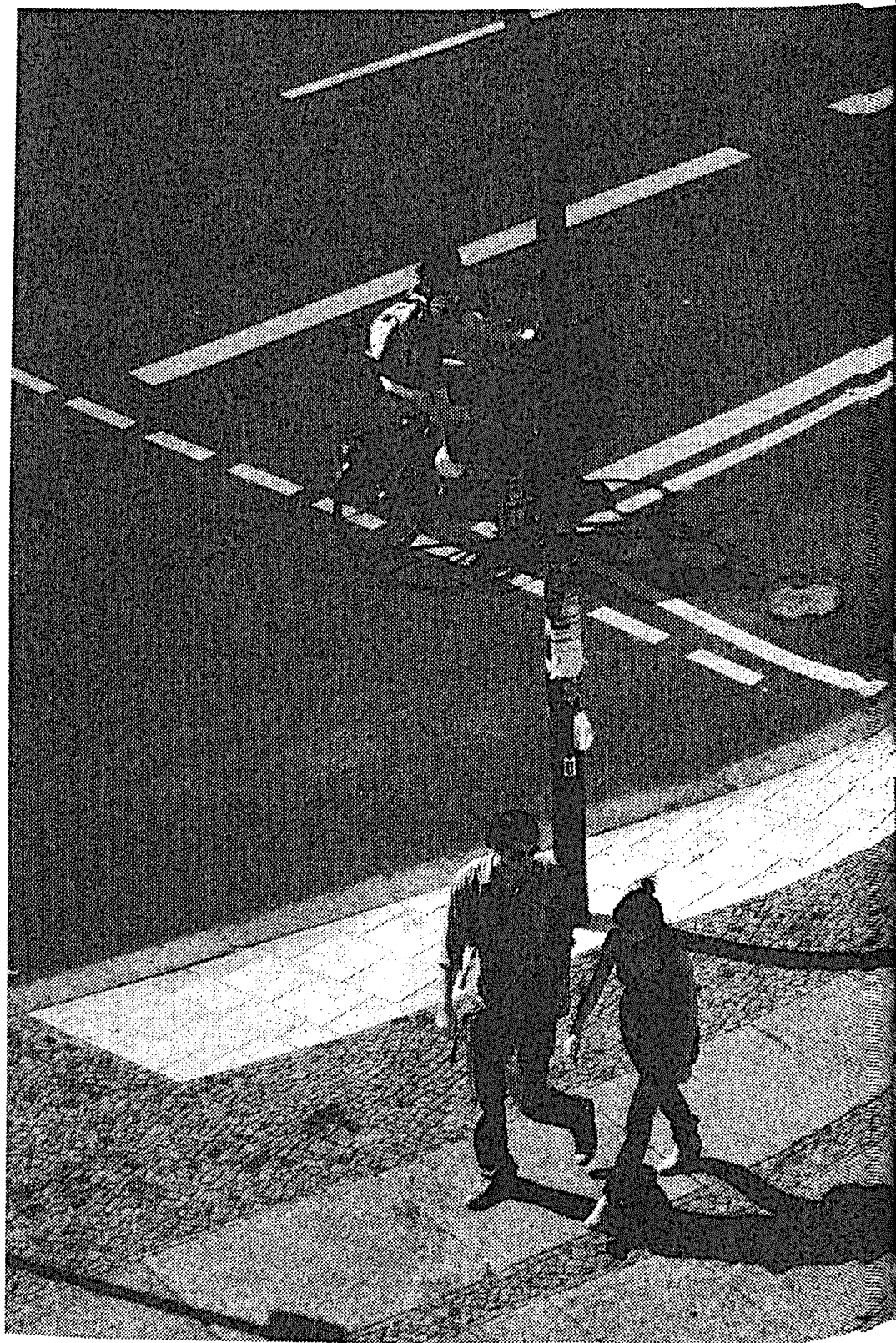
BECAUSE
THE WORLD
CHANGES.

AND
BECAUSE IT IS
CHANGEABLE.

↳ RESEARCHING ON CHANGE LEADERSHIP: OTTO SCHARMER → P. 98.1

↳ WHO COULD INITIATE CHANGE?: MARKUS MIESSEN → P. 81.1

↳ WHAT WE THINK IS THE PREMISE FOR CHANGE: ON MINDS → P. 11.1



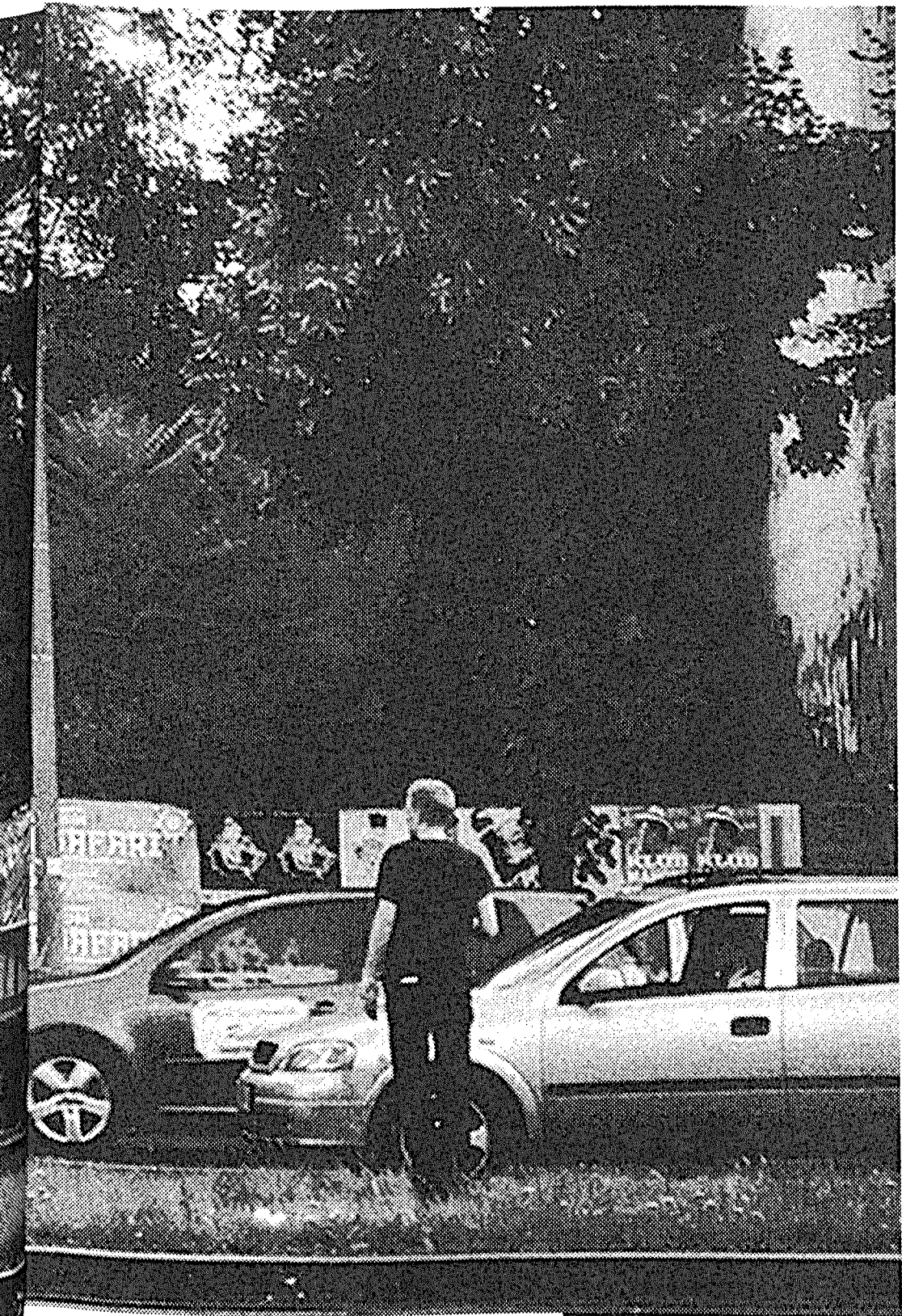
Travelling the streets with 'The Dumpling Express' in Charlottenburg on August 24th, 2009.



→THE PLAN BEHIND THIS: THE DUMPLING EXPRESS →P. 48



Setting up 'The Wood' in front of a 'markitecture' advert on Torstrasse in the early hours of July 5th, 2009.



→THE PLAN BEHIND THIS: THE WOOD →P. 30

Something Fantastic is a book, but it is also a young architectural practice committed to smart, touching, simple architecture.

How to use Something Fantastic:

This is an outgoing link: The detour-arrow takes you to related content. **→THE GENERAL PROBLEM OF DEFINING BEAUTY: ELIASSON →P. 176.1**

This is an incoming link: **12.1: ↘** The downward-pointing arrow is your starting point if you are on a detour.

SOMETHING FANTASTIC

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JULIAN SCHUBERT ELENA SCHÜTZ LEONARD STREICH
UNIVERSITÄT DER KÜNSTE BERLIN

RUBY PRESS

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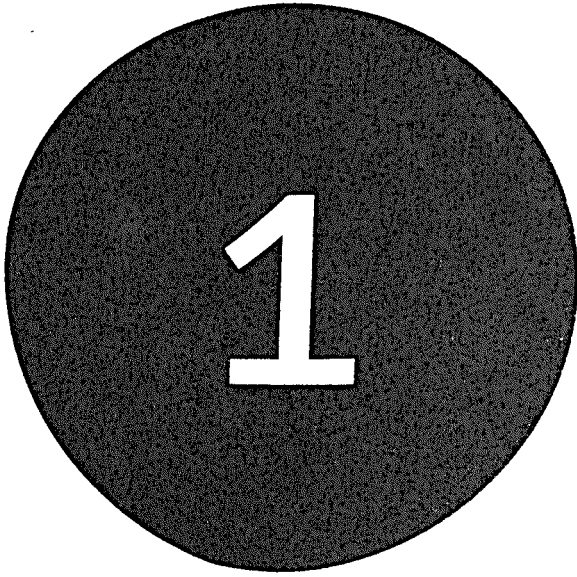
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ON WORLDS

Something Fantastic is about changing the world.

Our world is the earth; the earth is a globe. It has neither beginning nor end and yet has clear boundaries:

We've measured it thoroughly and know its wealth: How many animal species and how much water it holds, in all kinds of aggregate states, and how long we can go on hoisting raw materials from its depths.

→INFACT WE PASSED THE PEAK OF OIL PRODUCTION ALREADY. STATISTICS →P. 150.1

Our world grows with our increasing knowledge –unlike the earth. The more we know about its wealth, the better we know the limits of its exploitation.

The wealth of the earth and that of our civilization, which sees growth as a given, are worlds apart. Worlds, we never had a larger notion of, nor a

smaller certainty about:

Only a click away from every place and life on earth, via our networks.

The earth can't continuously provide man with what we need for a 'good life': salmon, untouched nature, cheap building lots, steel, secluded islands, starry skies.

For our own sake we need to embrace the ability to fit ourselves into the given system of the earth. That means, on the one hand, that the 'new frontiers' of our future lie within what exists: although we know what is available, we most likely don't know the multitude of things we can do with it yet.

On the other hand, it means that smartness, economy, and adequacy will become the key words of our future.

9.1. N

What makes sense is: what uses instead of consumes, what is driven by the initial source of energy – the sun, what is simple, what can be done.

→ EMBODYING THE IDEA OF SIMPLICITY: THE DUMPLING EXPRESS → P. 48

9.2. N

So we will have to become more familiar with our world within common boundaries, learn about its coherences, and how to take better care of it. We will have to stop considering the earth as something to be potentially conquered, waiting for our invasion. We do not want to force, or to capture nature.

→ REDISCOVERING THE EXISTING: EIKE ROSWAG → P. 115.1

Only a prosperous earth can provide worlds that are worth living in.

ON PEOPLE

Something Fantastic is about changing the world.

11.1: N

If you want to change the world, you need to start small. A very small, though very effective change, is a change in outlook.

Because those who have reached awareness about something might develop, propagate, and finally implement it.

11.2: N

None of our actions are without consequences. This we regard as a positive thing. If I walk the streets of Berlin with a small, solar-powered dumpling pushcart, I leave an impression.

→SEE FOR YOURSELF: PHOTOGRAPH →P. VI/VII

This impression can be so strong that somebody decides to replace his coal

grill with a solar one, or at least asks himself why not every pushcart works with solar power.

→THE REALIZATION OF THIS THOUGHT: THE DUMPLING EXPRESS →P. 48

The law of cause and effect is especially interesting, as nobody argues against it. Nevertheless, most of the time we don't think of the consequences of our actions even if we know them very well.

→STUDYING THIS "GAP" OF CONSCIOUSNESS: OTTO SCHARMER

"I am aware that I should stop at red lights and that strawberries in January are insane."

Although when I am in a hurry, or I am longing for strawberries very much, I run the light and buy strawberries. Why? Because although I can't get rid of my consciousness, I can switch it off at times. Consciousness is shaped by all kinds of impressions.

It changes with age, experience, the information we expose ourselves to, the answers we get, and the people we communicate and surround ourselves with.

Consciousness is the beginning and the end of our action. The will to consciousness is in all of us, that's why kids react to a restraint with "why not?".

Considering the increase of decisions, and decrease of restraints that life presents us with, to a certain degree we start conceiving of consciousness as a burden. Especially if there's a way to do without it.

Our world seems to function so smoothly today, that one might think of oneself as an unconscious dot on the outside, without any influence.

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Our world seems to function so smoothly today, that one might think of oneself as an unconscious dot on the outside, without any influence.

But no matter if we act unconsciously or consciously, we make realities. No action is without effect.

14.1.1 It is a fact that an increase in consciousness – at this point one could look back at the learning mechanism of children – is stimulated by the experience of consequences. As our world is interlinked on more and more levels, the experience of consequences is made distant and therefore consciousness must, in many regards, be based on pure, abstract knowledge.

We progressively have to fight for our consciousness and mustn't take it for granted.

At the same time, consciousness mustn't become the privilege of the affluent and

educated, but the self-evident implication of experiences. For everyone.

15.1

To actually initiate change, ideas must be clear and straightforward.

→AN IDEA VALIDATING THIS THESIS: GLOBAL COOLING, AKBARI ET AL →P. 156.1

Starting small and making tangible examples is the first step to consciousness, and consciousness is the prerequisite for change.

Today's big ideas can be small and the way to world making is paved by consciousness.

→EMBRACING THE IMPACT OF CONSCIOUSNESS: CAFE DEUTSCHLAND →P. 34

ON CITIES

Something Fantastic is about changing the world.

The majority of the world population now lives in cities. →SEE THE PRECISE NUMBERS FROM THE UN. STATISTICS →P. 150.2 If you want to change the world, you need to change our cities, and our understanding of them.

The city is people's living space: the place made by people to live together with other people. For cities, swamps were drained, woods were felled, and the sea was tamed.

The city is an ark and a capsule at the same time; it suggests that people will be given →THE IDEA OF THE ARCH DESCRIBED BY A PHILOSOPHER: SLOTERDIJK →P. 154.1 everything they need.

It has its own rhythm, its own regularity, its own dynamics. Cities –especially big cities– are the place people –mostly th

young—haunt to study or to work, to find friends, see the strange, try the exciting, dare the risky, to find wealth and fortune.

Because in the city, in interconnection with others, we find ourselves. Only this makes evolution possible.

The city answers to the adolescent ideal with its Dionysian character. It is the search for youthfulness that makes the city an attractive destination.

→EXPLANATION OF THIS TERM COINED BY NIETZSCHE: SENNETT→

At a certain point many biographies resemble each other: at the point when people leave the city or think about leaving it. This happens at the birth of a child.

When having a child, people start

avoiding the city because its dangers and its temptations don't do justice to a child. To insure that the child grows up peacefully and healthily, people move outside of the city again.

Why do we not want our kids to grow up in the city? Why do we keep expanding the fat urban-rural carpet of single-family houses outside of our cities?

Because we want to give our children the naturalness that we don't seem to find in the city. Because until now we've seen urban life as an alternative to rural life, and the city in opposition to nature.

→AN INTERESTING PROPOSITION TO OVERCOME THIS CONFLICT: HOWARD →P. 181.1

But considering the earth as natural space, a space in which people build their cities as opposing organisms to nature is passé.

The reality is that we are dealing with a hybrid. A hybrid, which in reality is a human *Lebensraum*, with only small islands of naturalness: conservation areas, nature reserves, national parks.

A rephrasing of the sociologists' notion of the 1980s, that periphery is everywhere, we could now say: periphery is nowhere.

→AN EXPERT ON PERIPHERIES EXPLAINING EXACTLY THIS SHIFT: WALTER PRIGGE →P. 106.2

One man's periphery is another's center ... What seems to be unimportant to one, is the other's centre of life.

What one sees as an abstract ornament from the window of an airplane, is another's wheat field.

If this only affected psychological or digital space it wouldn't cause a

collision of interests, but it is becoming a problem on the earth's limited surface.

Within a limited area, a certain number of people can live peacefully, only as long as their active and passive spatial uses don't conflict.

Actively used space is where we spend our time, live, work, recreate, shop or meet.

Passively used space is where vital goods are produced, sewage is treated, food is grown, resources are won.

→EXAMPLE OF A BEAUTIFUL BUT PASSIVELY USED SPACE: PHOTOGRAPH MOTRIL →P. 146.1

The latter spaces are not situated within the city, even if they are tightly bound to it. This is because they don't seem to be pleasant aesthetically, nor olfactorily, nor acoustically.

We've pushed them to the edge of our living space, and consciousness.

2.2.1

Eventually we will have to take account of the fact that active and passive spatial use, designed and undesigned, intersect due to the limited availability of space.

We will have to start conceiving of them as a whole.

This leads to a new understanding of our cities: They need to become places that incorporate production and consumption, the familiar and the strange, production and disposal, the native and the cultivated, the young and the old.

→ A VERY DIRECT UNDERSTANDING OF THIS CLAIM: URBAN BEEHIVE AND WHEATFIELD → P. 157

2.2.2 They furthermore need to embrace the wind as one of their defining streams,

the thermal current as one of their underlying laws, and the cycle of the sun as one of their dominating rhythms.

→ TAKING THESE CONDITIONS SERIOUSLY IN HIS ARCHITECTURE: WERNER SOBEK → P. 92.1

Only then will we have a chance to establish a lifestyle that, enabling us to experience the preconditions and consequences of life, is forward-looking and worth copying.

ON HOUSES

Something Fantastic is about changing the world.

25.1: N

Architecture is building: Building changes the world by consuming material, space, energy and manpower. Its power to constitute realities is crucial to all worlds.

→ BREAKING DOWN THIS FACT GRAPHICALLY: GERHARD MATZIG → P. 131.1

Being conscious about this fact entails a task that could already be a first step towards quality in architecture. Because not only galleries and houses for art collectors have to be designed, but everything that surrounds us, and thus makes our reality. Architects make realities, regardless of whether consciously or not.

Therefore subjects of architecture can no longer be discussed only among architects, and only with reference to

pieces of architecture. The audience of architecture is everyone. Only architecture that can be understood and appreciated without explanation, that makes sense in itself, can open the discussion. And an open discussion is vital for architects, to not lose track of what is going on and what is needed, but also to become part of a team, to share knowledge and cooperate.

Being educated architects, we can only do justice to the universality of architecture if we understand it as our responsibility to contribute to finding solutions for the problems of our societies and economies. To sensitively and openly experience our environment and to cultivate interests in everything beyond our profession we have to understand ourselves as curious amateurs.

27.1.1

Let's be more naive. The evident is beautiful, the beautiful is simple.

→ EXPLAINING THE POTENTIAL OF NAIVETY: GERD GERKEN → P. 123.1

It might sound obvious but the most important qualities in architecture today are the artless ones. Where is the

→ A BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE OF ARTLESS BUILDING: MOABIT COAL GRINDER → P. 198.1

building situated geographically?

How is it oriented? What is the best building technique for the predominant conditions? What utilization is it

27.2.1

dedicated to? The beauty of our future buildings will be rooted in the poetry of their simplicity, the sustainability of technology liberated from technology

→ WHY NO TECHNOLOGY CAN BE BEST TECHNOLOGY: EIKE ROSWAG → P. 114.1

and the charm of the elaborate, appropriate and well-tuned.

→ THE GENERAL PROBLEM OF DEFINING BEAUTY: ELIASSON → P. 176.1

→ EMBRACING THIS IDEA OF BEAUTY: JET-SET HOUSES → P. 52

We will be touched by architecture which speaks to us of conscious acts of building and dialogue. It will be appreciated, simple and fantastic.



PLA



NS:



THE WOOD

→ADVOCATING THE CITY: FELIX ZWOCH →P. 186.1

→WHY TO GET INVOLVED: CLAIM →P. V

→THE REALIZATION OF THIS PLAN: PHOTOGRAPH →P. VIII/IX

Matériau: Billboard, 720cm × 280cm, Paper on cardboard

Place: Torstrasse, 10115 Berlin.

Idea: In the early hours of Thursday, July 5th, 2009, the image of the wood was placed on top of an investor billboard advertising 'Luxury Apartments'

The wood ...

You can read it any way you like.

You can see it as a proposal.

You can read it as an exaggerated image of what will happen if nothing is done with the lot.

You can read it as symbolic of all the great things that could happen there.

If it had one fixed meaning

I guess it would be meant as a reminder that things don't have to be the way they seem.

You can change things if you take the initiative.

2

PLANS

3.

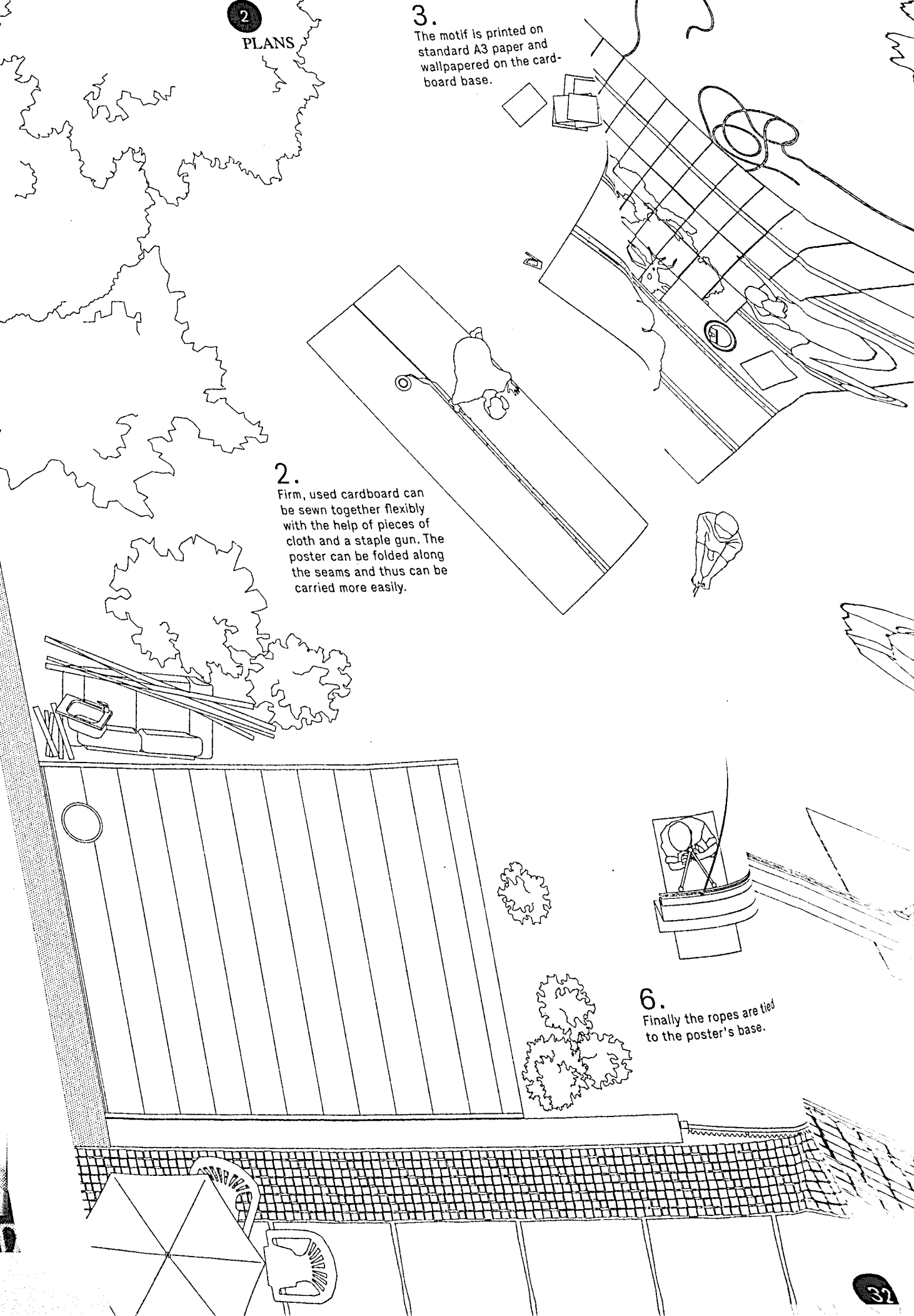
The motif is printed on standard A3 paper and wallpapered on the cardboard base.

2.

Firm, used cardboard can be sewn together flexibly with the help of pieces of cloth and a staple gun. The poster can be folded along the seams and thus can be carried more easily.

6.

Finally the ropes are tied to the poster's base.

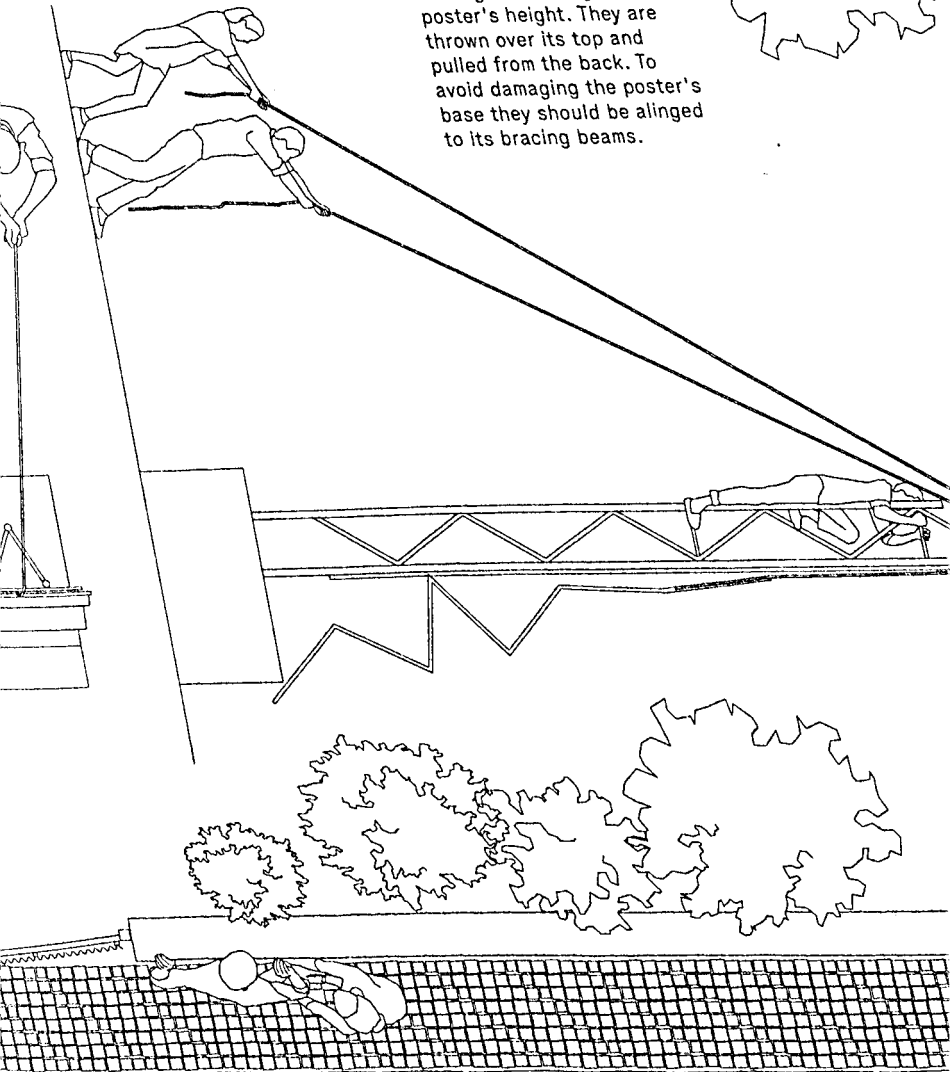


4.

The holding ropes are attached to the back of the poster lengthwise to distribute its weight evenly and to keep them from pulling out.

5.

The holding ropes are twice as long as the original poster's height. They are thrown over its top and pulled from the back. To avoid damaging the poster's base they should be aligned to its bracing beams.



1.

For temporary use of an advertising sign you need some helping hands and a sufficiently large, even surface.

CAFÉ DEUTSCHLAND

↳ WHY CONSCIOUSNESS IS KEY: ON PEOPLE → P. 11.1

↳ ABOUT THE OBLIGATION TO INTERFERE: ROUSSEAU → P. 163.1

↳ UNDERLYING CLAIM FOR DEMOCRACY: CELINE CONDORELLI → P. 154

Material: Shotcrete, glass, cable, tables and chairs, newspaper readers, waiters, 2000 m².

Place: Dorotheenstr. 85, 10115 Berlin.

Idea: A café that allows the people to check and participate in the intelligence gathering of its elected representatives.

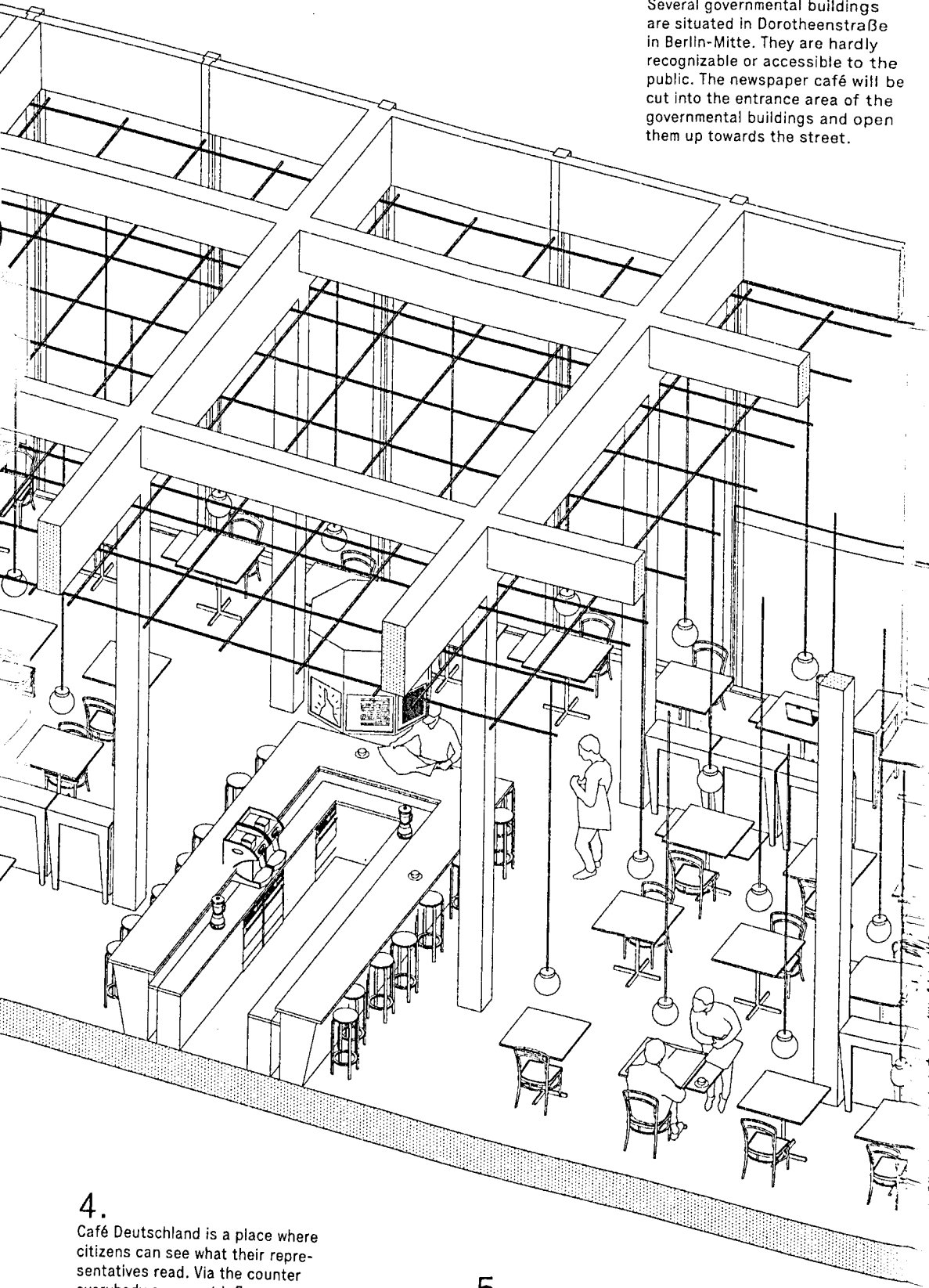
Consciousness is the premise for change. You can only change things if you are *in the know*.

This is a proposal for a governmental building, which instead of offering the citizens a moment of seeming participation, frozen in a spectator's perch, lets the citizens become a part of an existential precondition of democracy: the forming of opinion. The proposed new type of government building is the workplace of the official "newspaper readers", who each morning prepare the up to date "state of the world" for the politicians.

Café Deutschland is a place of transparency, where citizens can see, check, and suggest what their representatives are or should be reading.

2
PLANS

1.
Several governmental buildings are situated in Dorotheenstraße in Berlin-Mitte. They are hardly recognizable or accessible to the public. The newspaper café will be cut into the entrance area of the governmental buildings and open them up towards the street.



4.
Café Deutschland is a place where citizens can see what their representatives read. Via the counter everybody can exert influence on the politicians' newspaper readers by giving reading suggestions.

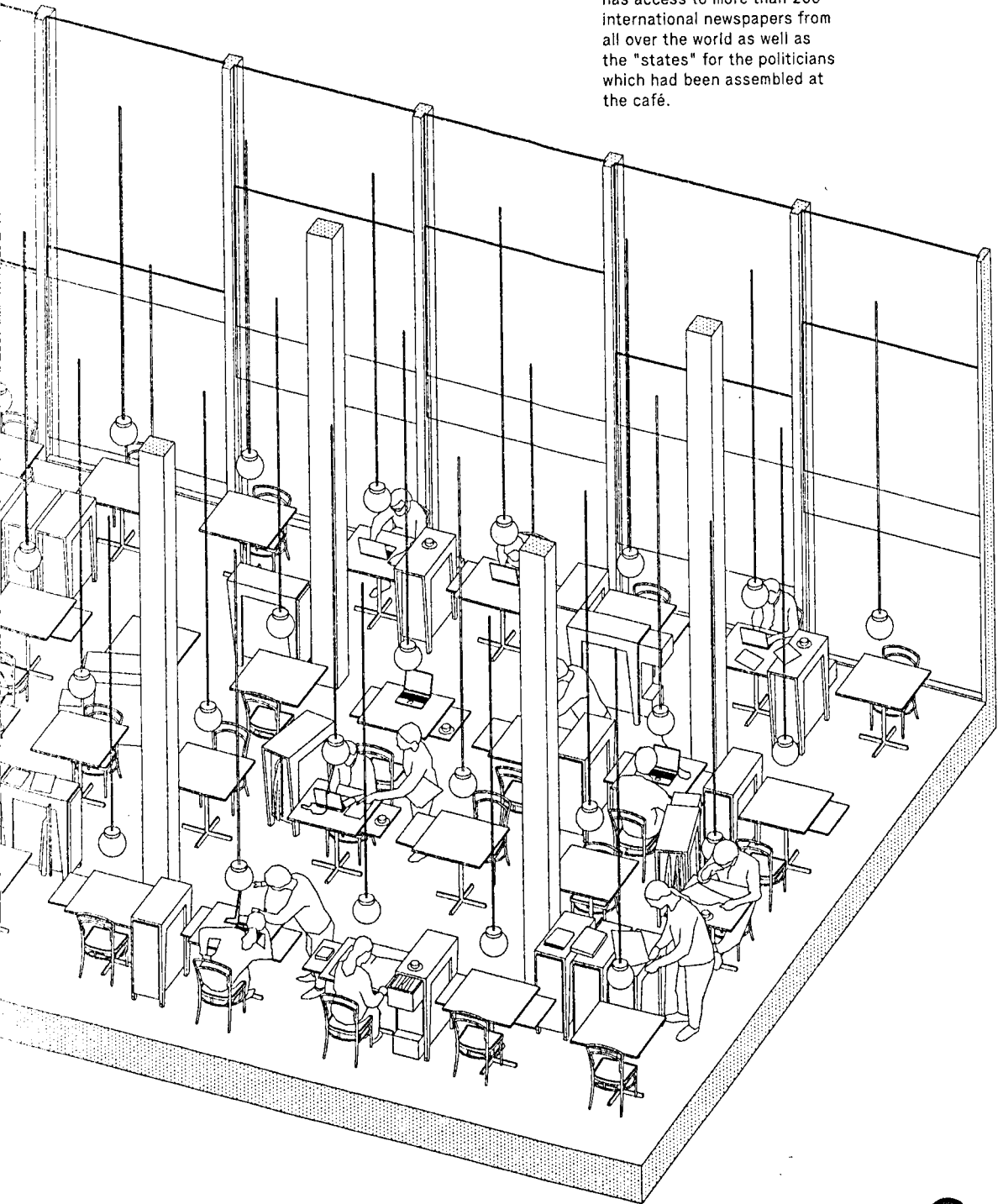
5.
Professional newspaper readers and visitors sit at the same tables. But every governmental newspaper reader has a small locker that can be moved to his table. The lamps over each table offer electricity and connection to the network.

2.

Newspaper readers of delegates and committees work at the newspaper café. They put together the up to date "state" which includes all press information that is significant for a special person or group and their decisions.

3.

At the same time the newspaper café is a public café, where one has access to more than 200 international newspapers from all over the world as well as the "states" for the politicians which had been assembled at the café.



PET SPACE

↳ INITIATING CHANGE UNREQUESTEDLY: BETTINA KRAUS → P. 84.1

↳ THE COMPLEXITY OF PLANNING WITHIN THE CITY: OTTO SCHARMER → P. 103.1

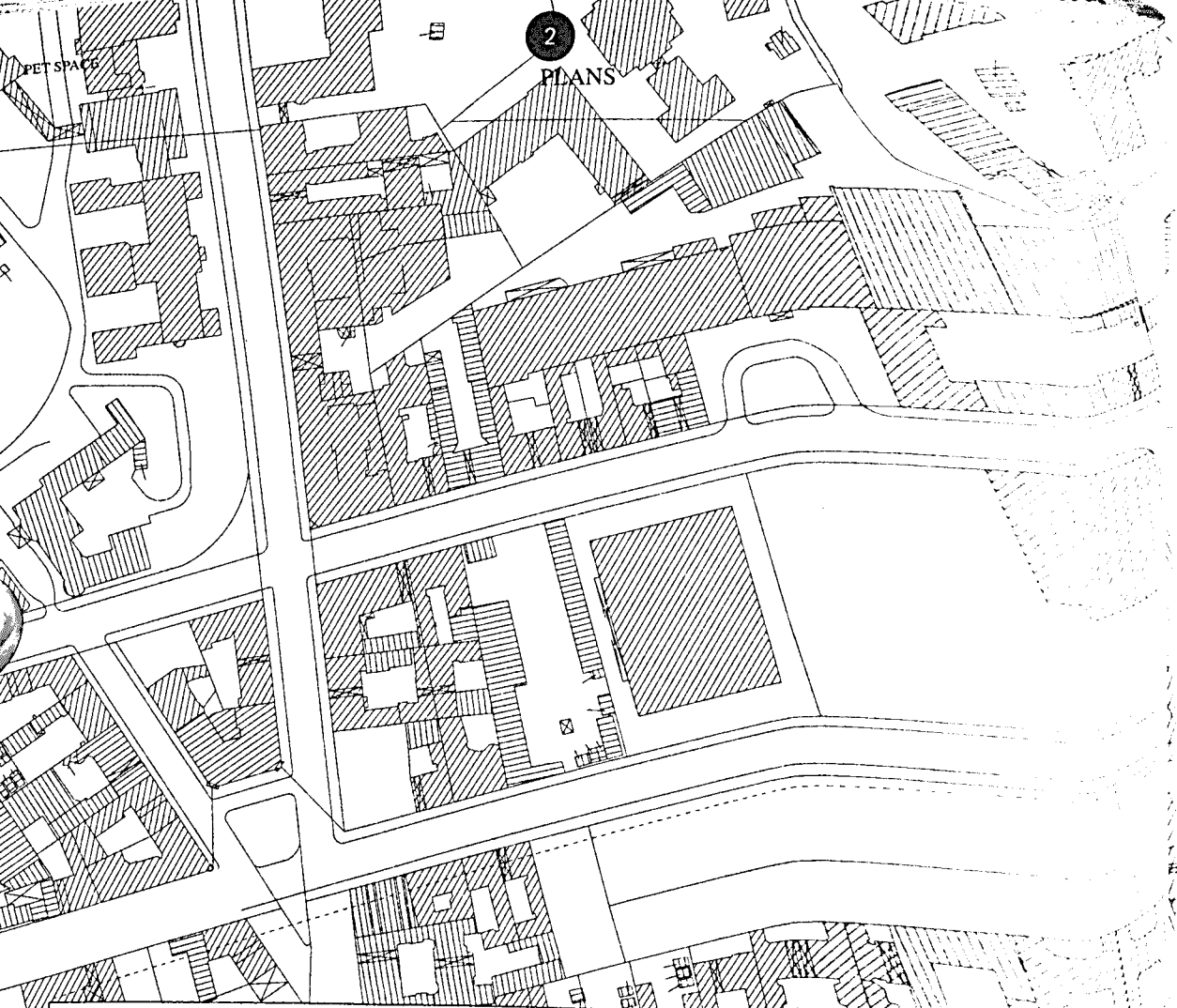
Material: A city map, building regulations and information on empty lots, patience.

Place: Unmarketable left-over spaces throughout Berlin.

Idea: The beginning of a deeper investigation into the possibilities of city space currently believed to be unusable.

There is still virgin soil to be discovered within the city!

Pet-Architecture is a discipline dealing with construction on beach-towel-sized gaps between inner-city buildings. Until now this discipline has been neglected in Berlin, because of building regulations, missing ideas, a lack of courage, and the existing abundance of vacant lots, which are missing in Tokyo, for example. Finding Pet-space is easy, finding out more about it is hard, buying it is even harder, and gaining permission to build on it is almost impossible. That's why we first start with mapping Pet-spaces and collecting information, and evaluating their problems and potentials. Maybe an interested builder will turn up, then an idea, a design, an owner, and finally the necessary loophole in the building regulations.



Pet-Space No. 13
 Reinhardtstrasse, Mitte
 Plot 172/182

Situation:

The lot is outside of the building line of the responsible development plan I-39 of Bezirksamt Mitte. Due to the current legal situation, building on it is not allowed, as it is not designated as building ground.

Area:

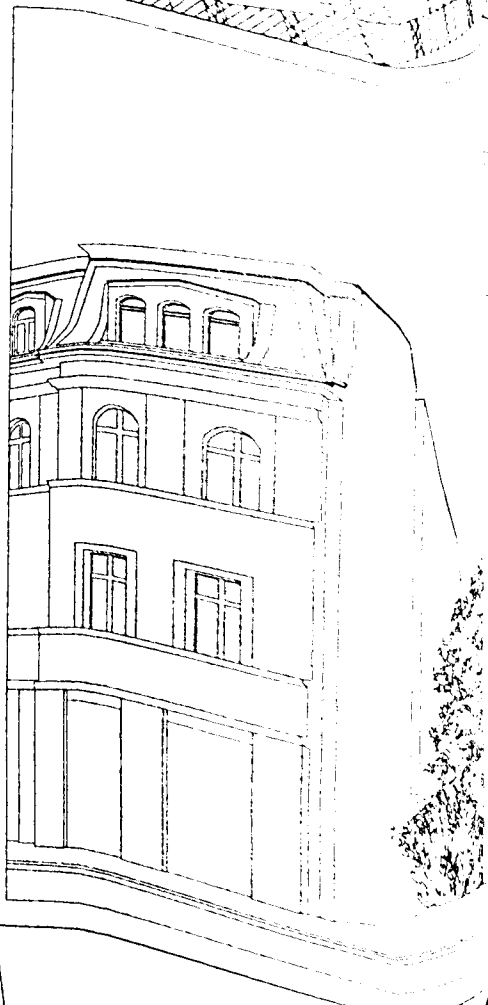
65m², wedge-shaped

Price:

unknown

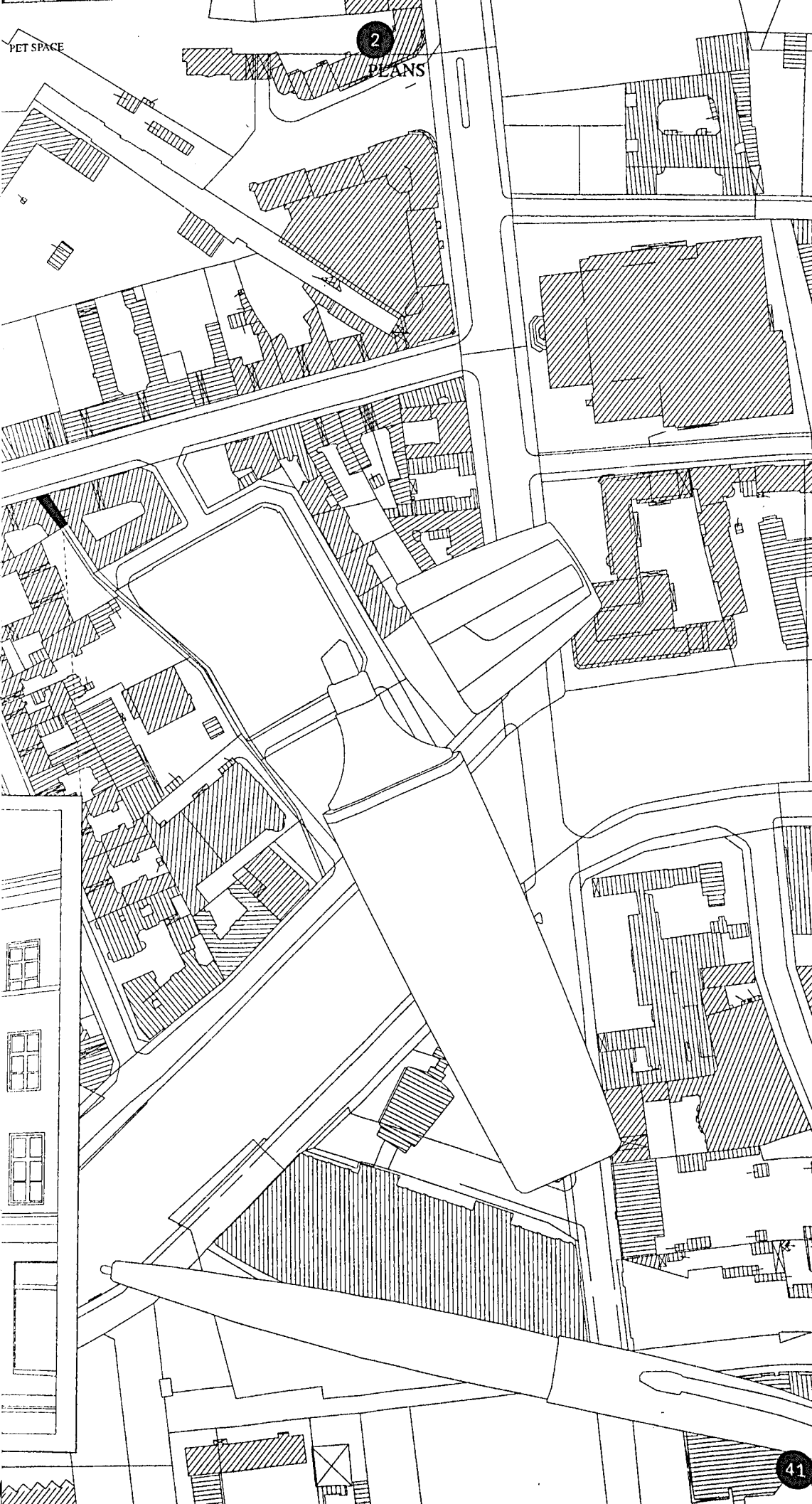
Description:

The lot is centrally located right next to Friedrichstraße in Mitte. A problem is the width of only 5 meters and the walls of the neighbouring buildings that are not formed as fire-walls and, in case of the right neighbouring building, have windows. Alongside the lot the river Panke used to run, which is now led underground and might be uncovered in the future. A construction therefore has to be either temporary or above ground level. Furthermore, the city senate would have to issue special approval, as the current planning scheme is not allowing for a building on this lot.



PET SPACE

2
PLANS



A LUXURY HOUSE

↳PUBLIC+PRIVATE=URBAN: WALTER PRIGGE →P. 107.1

↳EXPLAINING THE MECHANISM OF GENTRIFICATION: WALTER PRIGGE

↳THE COMPLEXITY PLANNING WITHIN THE CITY: OTTO SCHARNER →P.

Material: Concrete skeleton, ferns and hydroponic plants, a liberal patron, 600m².
Place: Torstr. 216, 10115 Berlin.

Idea: A model luxury home which does not kill off the bohemian culture surrounding it but encourages and fosters it.

"Don't kill what you love!" is what you think when hearing of new "Loft-style condos featuring upscale amenities in the hip, young Berlin Neukoelln neighborhood!".

When neighborhoods start to become accessible only for people with a certain income, gentrification turns heterogeneity into monotony. But not everyone who can afford to own an apartment in an interesting neighborhood is stupid and bad, and not all of them deserve to live in a dead, snobbish place.

Fighting rising rents and gentrification is a comprehensible concern and objective of the original inhabitants. It should be as well for the people who have moved in, since one imagines they moved there for the same reasons their

neighbors want to stay. Is there a way to keep a neighborhood stable in its state of vitality and heterogeneity?

If so, it can only be made possible with the help of the people who usually kill its vitality and heterogeneity.

The luxury house gives an impression of how a wealthy patron, interested in living in a neighborhood prime for gentrification, can live there without killing what he loves about it.

He shares his luxury with the neighborhood, offering space for little stores or workshops. He could, for example, host the endangered but thoroughly viable branch of "a baker who still bakes". Or –in his backyard– accommodate a small, highly specialized, extremely

customer-friendly business, like the screw-and hardware trader C. Adolph.

Not only does the neighborhood benefit from this symbiosis: the patron does as well, because traditionally specialized stores are more competent and customer-friendly than large suburban building centres and anonymous chain bakeries.

These small shops and enterprises are part of the actual luxury of a neighborhood, one where you want to live, shop, go out, and take part in cultural life.

1.

The owner of the luxury house also accommodates small stores and even a bakery next to his private apartment and a large Salon he uses for gatherings and exhibitions. He thus makes sure he maintains the neighborhood's mixed-use structure.

5.

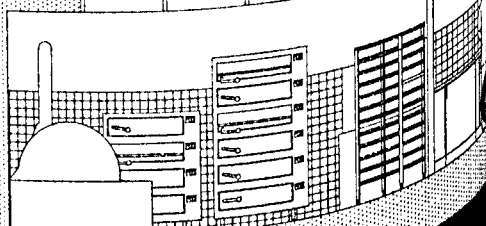
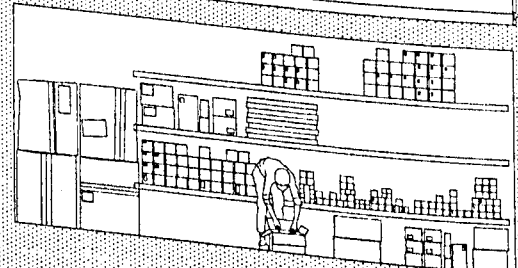
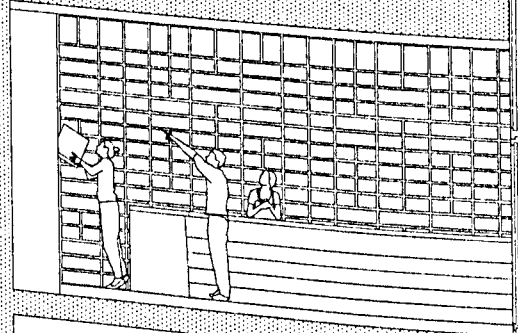
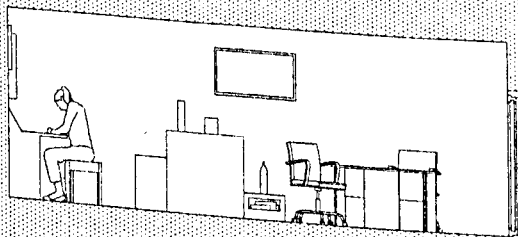
The luxury house moves typical functions of a private place into the public in order to increase comfort by turning storage space into living space and to thus fighting encapsulation, a typical symptom of gentrified areas. Imagine a collection of screws is not kept in a closet in the kitchen but is instead nicely ordered and professionally presented in a store close by. This is why it is so important to maintain specialized neighbourhood shops: They improve our living quality not only by providing great service but also as a meeting-place or just as a reason to leave your home.

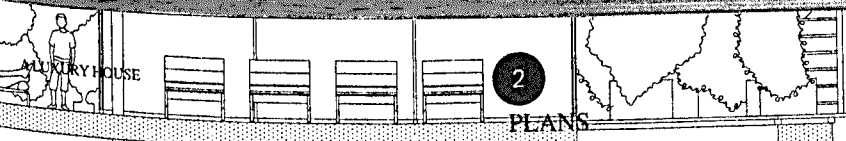
4.

Opening itself southward to the yard the house profits from the shadowy, soothing climate caused by all kinds of different potted and hydroponic plants and vines on balconies and walls. The facade facing the street to the north is less open, only allowing certain directed views inside. The thickness of the wall increases the storage mass which helps to balance climatic fluctuation naturally.

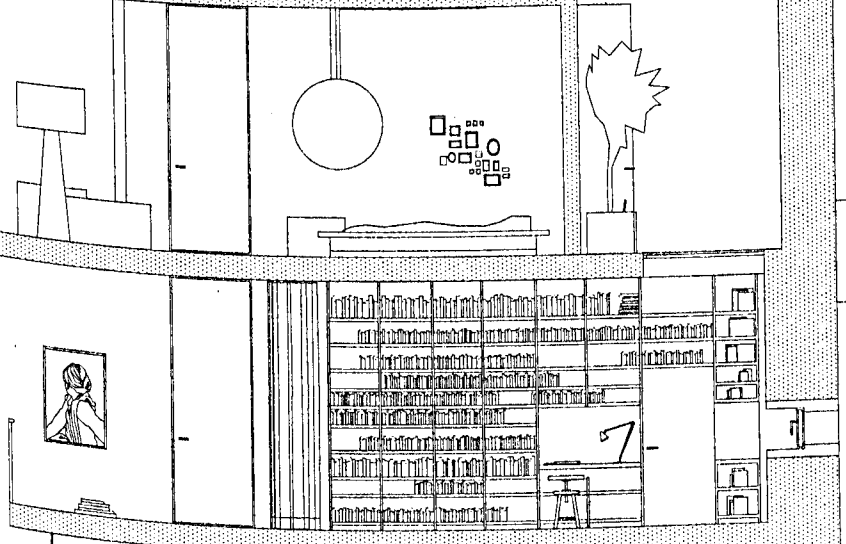
2.

The luxury house is inspired by the way Kurt Tucholsky describes the luxury of Berlin living: "Having the Ku'damm in the front and the Baltic Sea in the backyard. That's the way you want it."

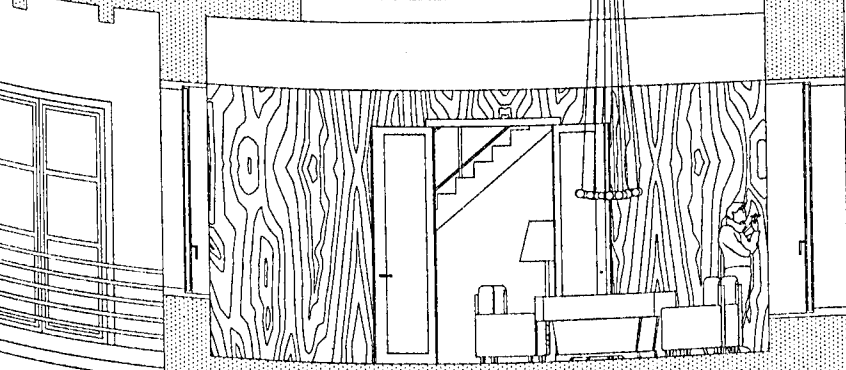




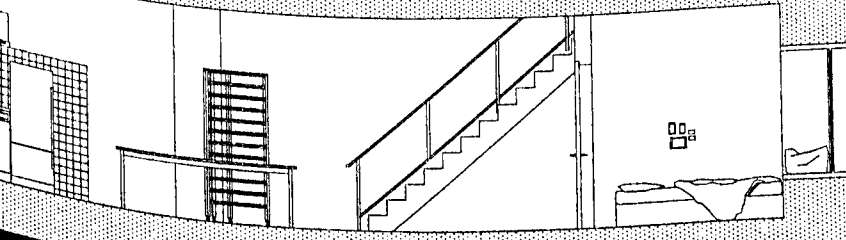
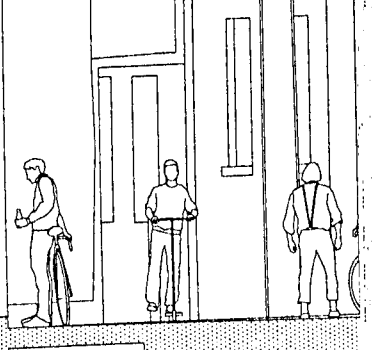
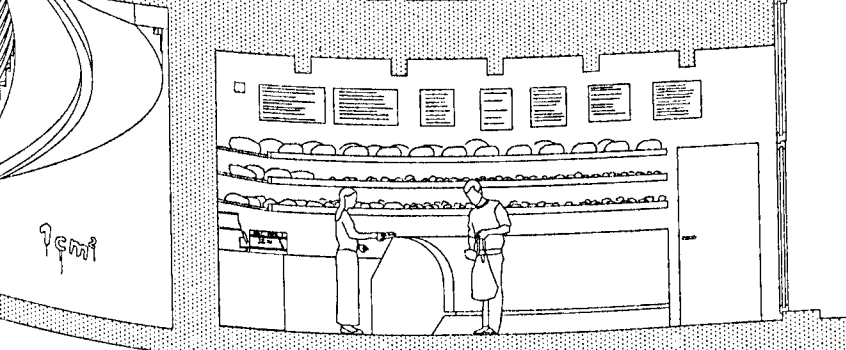
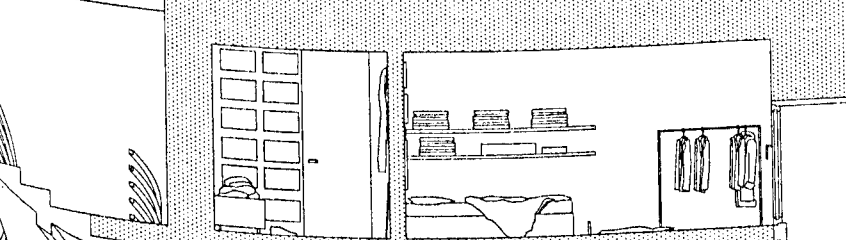
7.
The luxury house combines private and public functions, guarding the private parts by a series of shells around its core.



6.
Various views and paths are connecting and criss-crossing the different elements of the luxury house, creating an impression of spatial depth.



3.
Right under the Salon you find a small studio for a student to live in for little money.



THE DUMPLING EXPRESS

→THE UNDERLYING IDEA: ON PEOPLE →P. 11.2

→WHY SIMPLICITY IS GREAT: ON WORLDS →P. 9.1

→ITS REALIZATION: PHOTOGRAPH →P. VI/VII

Material: Three-wheeled bicycle with plywood box and solar cooker, 173cm × 69cm × 178cm.

Place: Mobile, best used in busy city areas or city parks.

Idea: A cheap, immediate tool for the enrichment of Berlin's city culture, offering the possibility of boiling and selling chinese dumplings in the public sphere.

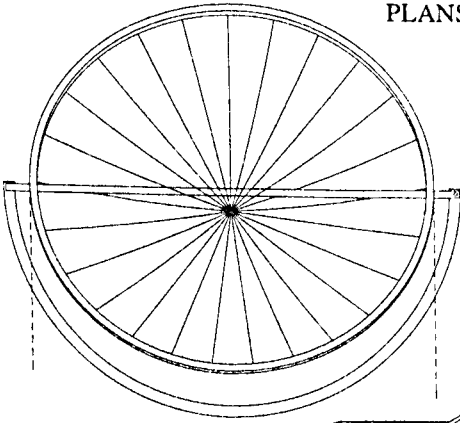
The Dumpling-Express
is the 1:1 Manifestation of how we think
future architecture should be.

It is high-tech and low-tech
at the same time.

It uses the existing,
it creates a space to interact,
it is flexible.

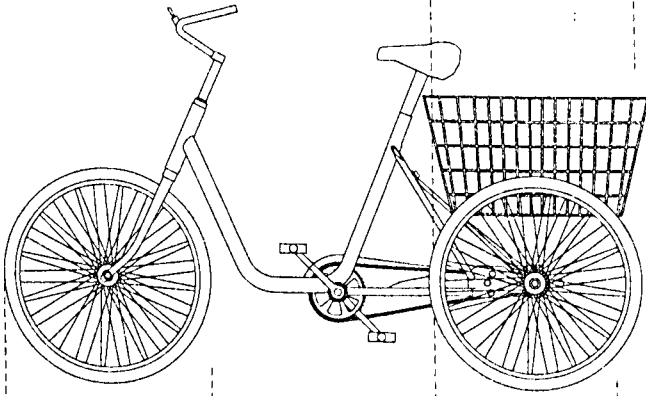
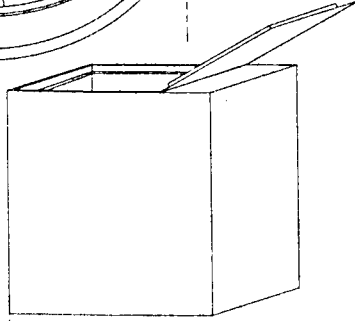
It enables you to cook food
without using fossil fuels, coal or even
electricity.

It is cheap, simple, mobile and white.



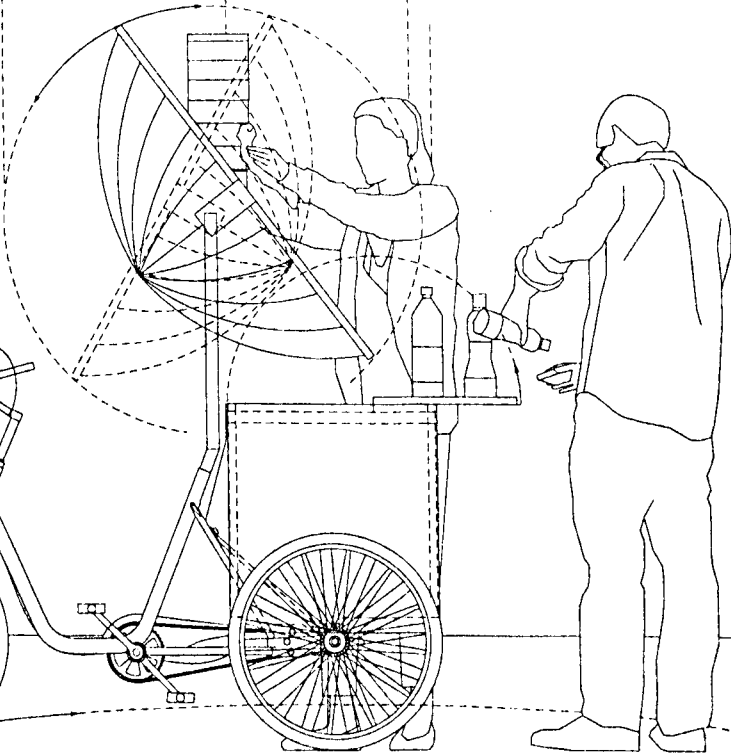
1.
The Dumpling Express push cart consists of a parabolic reflector with a diameter of one meter ...

2.
... a timber frame container that is planked with plywood and steel, with a lid that can be turned into a small bar to offer sauces ...



3.
... and a second-hand tricycle.

4.
The takeaway is immediately operable. Fresh dumplings can be customized with Chinese dips and sauces.



2
PLANS

A.

The parabolic reflector concentrates the sunlight underneath the cooking pot. Steam arises from the pot, soaks the cooking sieves and refines the dumplings.

B.

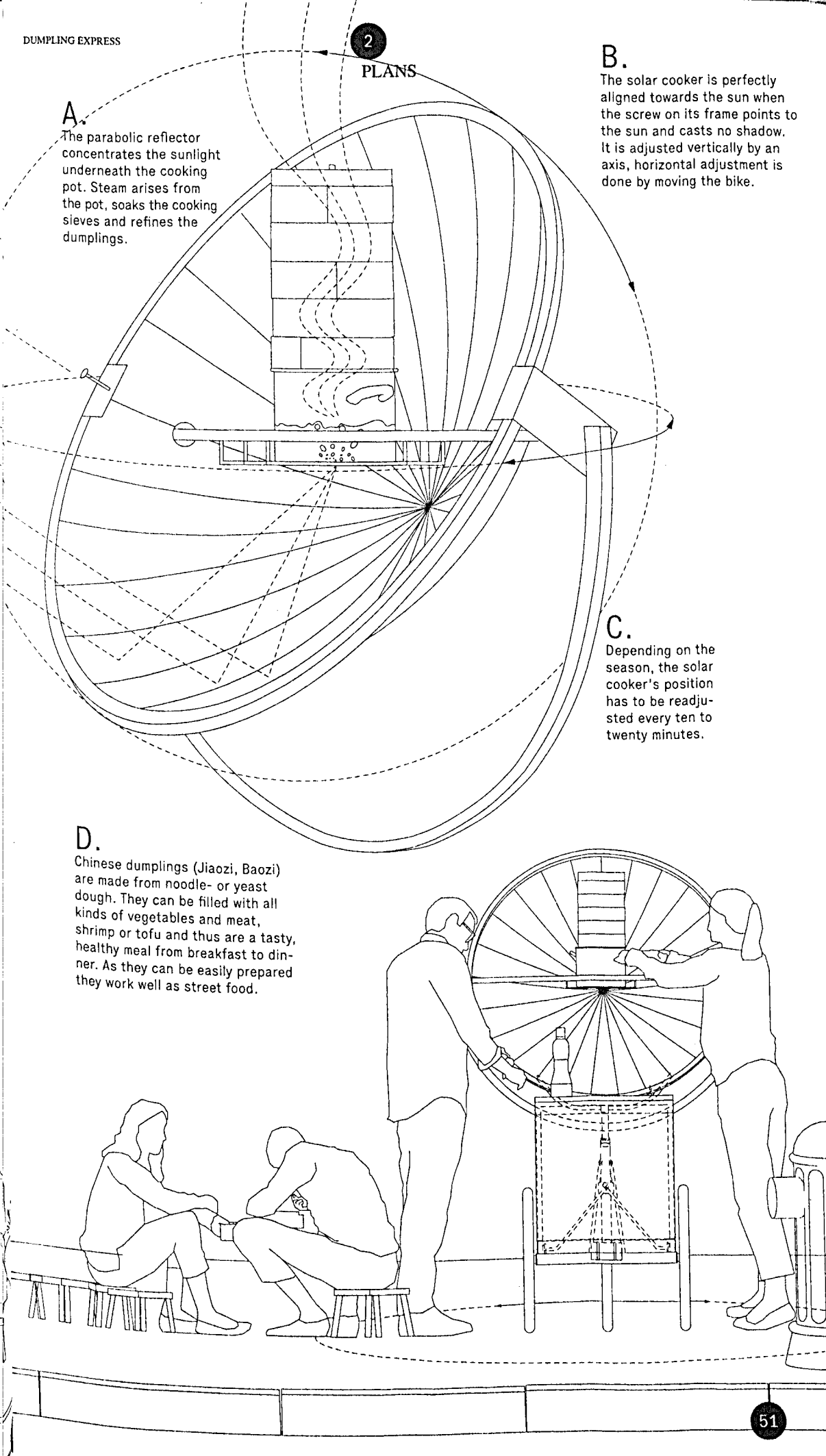
The solar cooker is perfectly aligned towards the sun when the screw on its frame points to the sun and casts no shadow. It is adjusted vertically by an axis, horizontal adjustment is done by moving the bike.

C.

Depending on the season, the solar cooker's position has to be readjusted every ten to twenty minutes.

D.

Chinese dumplings (Jiaozi, Baozi) are made from noodle- or yeast dough. They can be filled with all kinds of vegetables and meat, shrimp or tofu and thus are a tasty, healthy meal from breakfast to dinner. As they can be easily prepared they work well as street food.



JET-SET HOUSES

↳ WHY THIS HOUSE IS BEAUTIFUL: ON HOUSES → P. 27.2

↳ THE REASON FOR BUILDING LOW-TECH: EIKE ROSWAG → P. 114.2

Material: Double-layered, self-bearing metal skin, 9m chimney, 35-55m².

Place: Rooftops throughout Berlin.

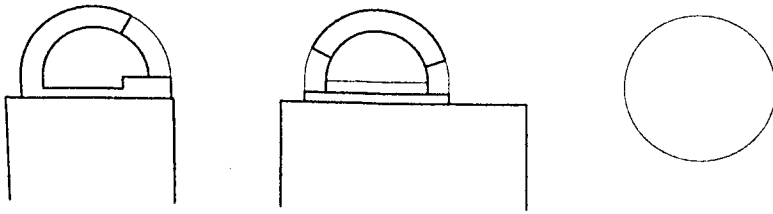
Idea: A House similar to a bird's nest, only inhabitable in the summer,
for people who only need a seasonal house in Berlin.

The jet-set house is the attempt to infer an adequate, simple housing type from a lifestyle that is largely seen as extravagant. Isn't it so, that people spend their lives moving around between multiple places, resembling migratory birds, a lifestyle arising out of elementary economic reasons? Isn't it possible to design a house, one that is only used during summer, in a different way than one that has to function year-round? Isn't it possible to turn restraint into enrichment when answering individual needs?

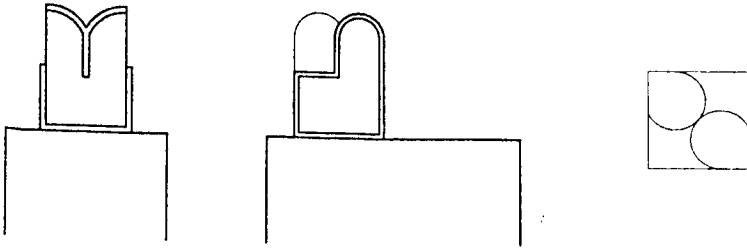
What do you need, in summer, in Berlin, but a bed, a shower, and a place in the sun? Maybe good architecture is simpler than we think.

And maybe everything it consists of was, or is already there.

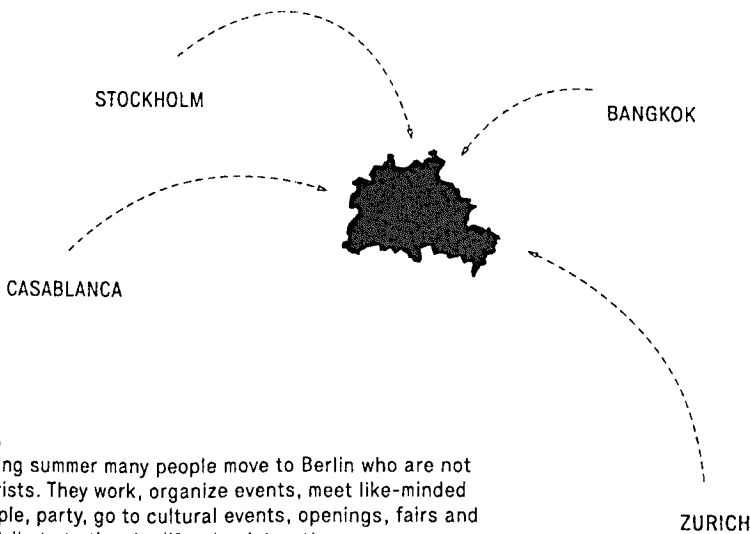
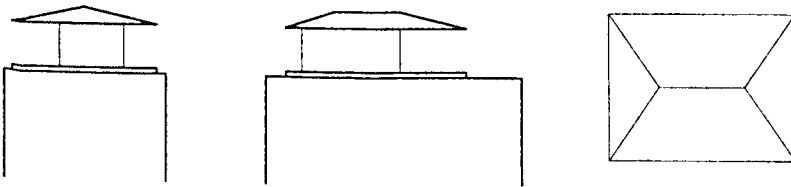
PLANS



6. Alternative possibilities for a seasonally useable lightweight structure penthouse inspired by vernacular typologies, like the igloo or the oriental wind tower.



5. Air can circulate freely between the two shells of the self-supporting, clam-shell structure. An airflow comes from the cold staircase, cools the jet-set house's interior and strengthens the thermal suction flowing through the house. When it is very hot outside, evaporation chill can be produced by sprinkling water between the two shells.



1. During summer many people move to Berlin who are not tourists. They work, organize events, meet like-minded people, party, go to cultural events, openings, fairs and contribute to the city life: the Jet-setter.

2
PLANS

2.

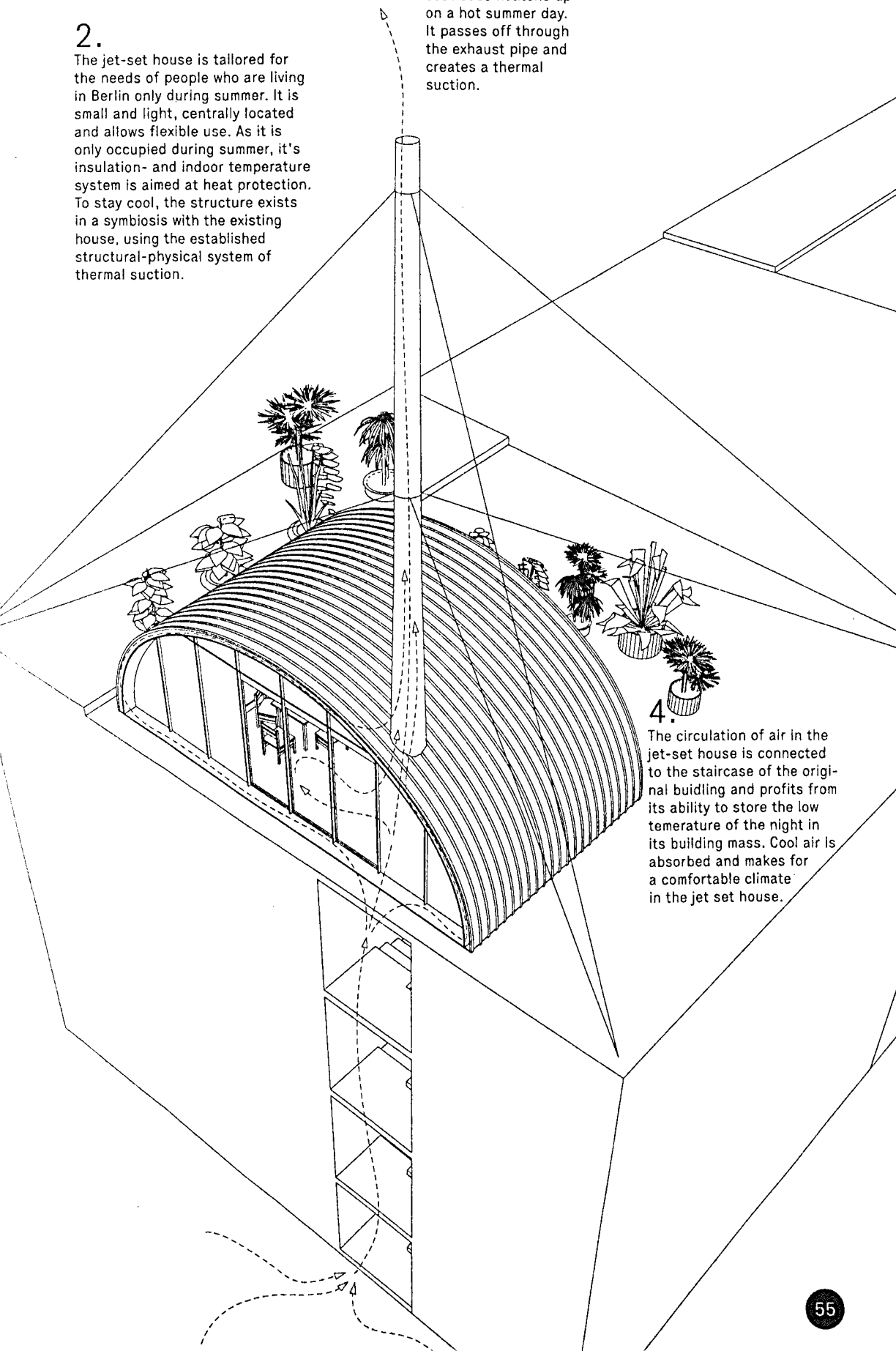
The jet-set house is tailored for the needs of people who are living in Berlin only during summer. It is small and light, centrally located and allows flexible use. As it is only occupied during summer, it's insulation- and indoor temperature system is aimed at heat protection. To stay cool, the structure exists in a symbiosis with the existing house, using the established structural-physical system of thermal suction.

3.

The air between the two shells of the jet-set house heats up on a hot summer day. It passes off through the exhaust pipe and creates a thermal suction.

4.

The circulation of air in the jet-set house is connected to the staircase of the original building and profits from its ability to store the low temperature of the night in its building mass. Cool air is absorbed and makes for a comfortable climate in the jet set house.



PLATTENBAU ALGORITHM

↳ WHY PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES NEED RULES: MARKUS MIESSEN → P. 79-1
↳ THE CHARM OF COMPLEXITY AND CONTRADICTION: ROBERT VENTURI → P. 204

Material: A group of potential dwellers, a line of action in the form of an algorithm, a mathematician and a real estate asset manager.

Place: Any abandoned prefabricated or standardized building structure.

Idea: A tool for a group of people to distribute the rooms of an old prefab building, fulfilling each participant's individual housing wishes.

The Plattenbau Algorithm is an experiment that tries to divide the existing, empty space of a Plattenbau, thus making the Plattenbau structure –which is very economic, but at the same time not very individual– an exciting place to live, for a new group of dwellers with their different needs.

What makes the Plattenbau interesting to experiment with is its changeability:

With the help of a concrete saw, all kinds of openings can be cut out, rooms and flats can be connected vertically and horizontally; provided that one finds a way to agree upon the distribution and price of each flat.

The algorithm consists of a regulated, repeatable process, which enables a

group of interested future dwellers to systematically reach an agreement that offers everybody the preferred amount of rooms, in an individual configuration, at an acceptable price.

To economically optimize the outcome it would also ensure that all existing space is efficiently used and would avoid having rooms remain empty.

Therefore, it evaluates possible configurations, regulates demands by dynamically adjusting prices, and induces a just agreement.

The outcome is economically optimized and at the same time is a highly individual solution.

We optimized the Plattenbau Algorithm,

discussing its strengths and weaknesses with a mathematician and a real estate asset manager.

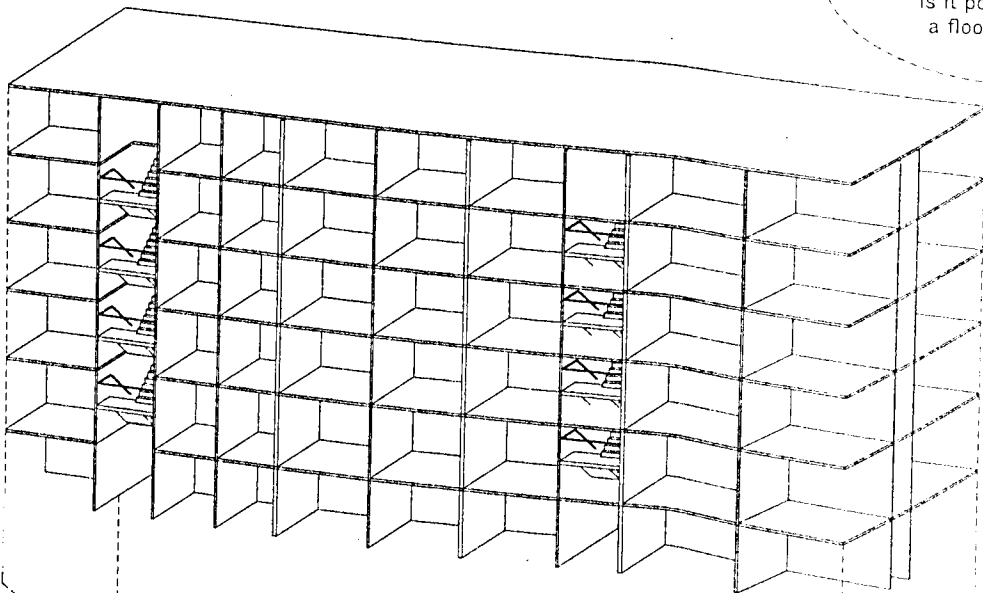
The actual experiment is still to be realized.

PLANS

1.

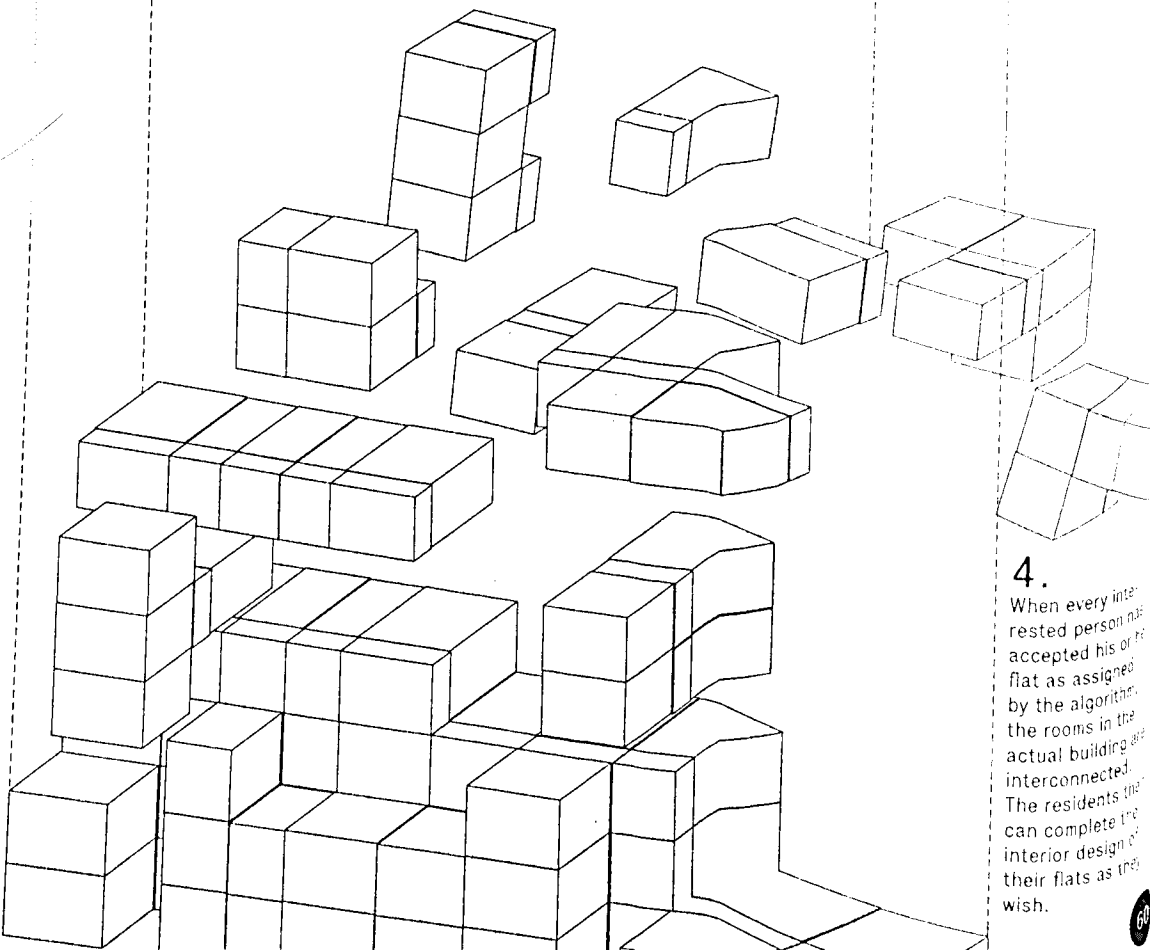
Prefab housing is very efficient. Renovating old buildings and bringing in natural materials like clay for example can improve their physical living conditions. As the structure is repeated in a stereotypical way, flats are non-individual and in little demand on the residential market.

Money doesn't matter, as long as it fits the furniture ... and there's enough light. Is it possible to have a floor of our own?



3.

Prefab buildings in the former GDR are generally statically overdesigned and can thereby be modified to a high degree. With a concrete saw one can make cuts fairly easily and reconfigure rooms to create new apartments.



4.

When every interested person has accepted his or her flat as assigned by the algorithm, the rooms in the actual building are interconnected. The residents can complete the interior design of their flats as they wish.

PLANS

A commune? –not really.
We need multiple entrances,
bathrooms ... two kitchens or one
that's really big ... and no
walk-through rooms, please!

It has to be cheap!
... and not too many stairs.
I would like to have a view over
the street and maybe, for the future,
it should be handicapped
accessible.

We are going out a lot anyways.
... But all rooms should be about the
same size, otherwise there's beef.
And a small bathroom!
-Has to be cleaned, right?



One gigantic, high room
facing north ...
everything else can be tiny ...
And high up please!

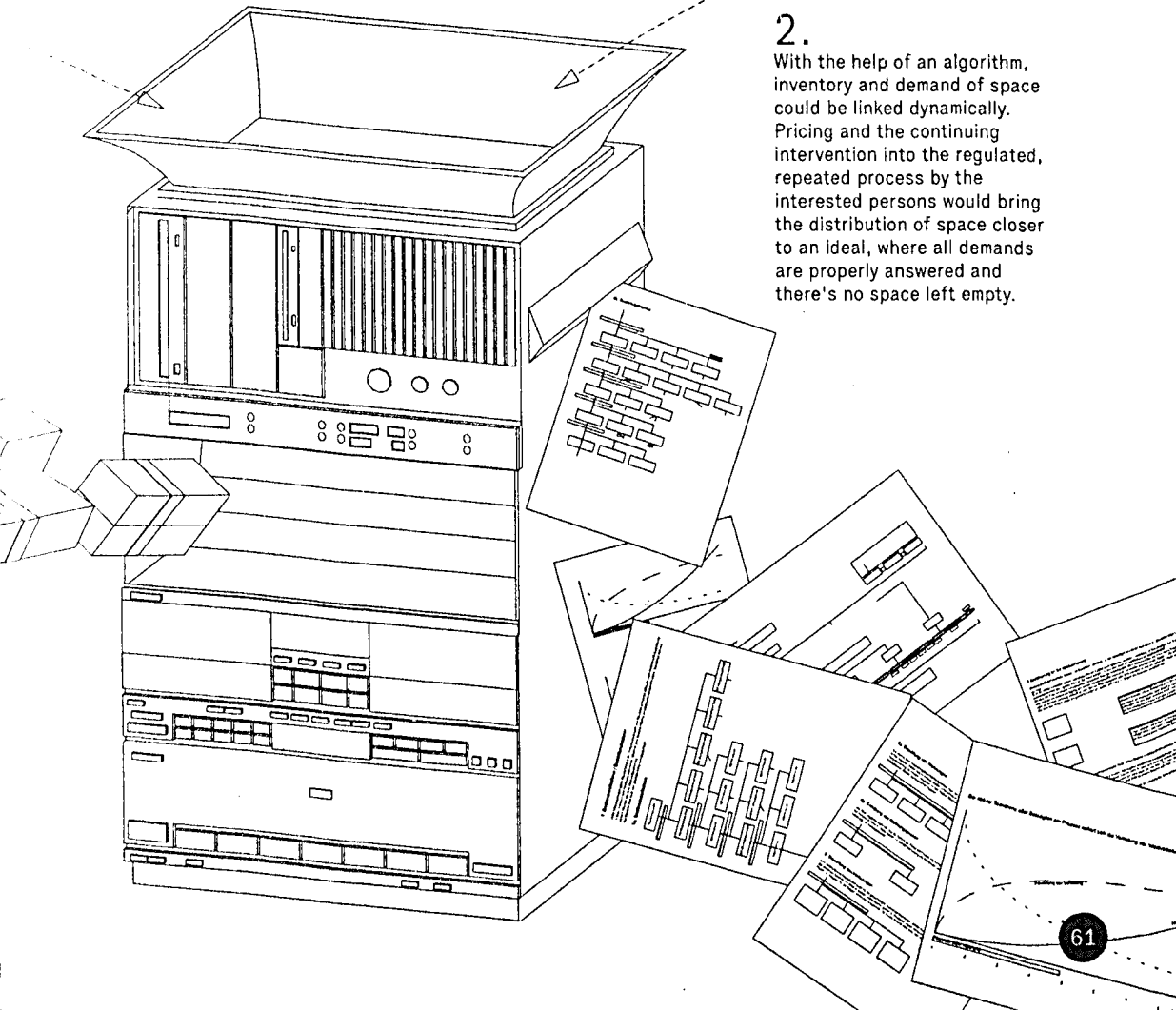
We need a large space
for little money. Maybe our family will
grow ... and a second bathroom!
A large kitchen would
be great as well ...

A small workshop
on the ground floor
... and our two flats above.
We could share a kitchen,
actually.

Nothing
but a working space ...
and maybe a small bathroom.

2.

With the help of an algorithm,
inventory and demand of space
could be linked dynamically.
Pricing and the continuing
intervention into the regulated,
repeated process by the
interested persons would bring
the distribution of space closer
to an ideal, where all demands
are properly answered and
there's no space left empty.



THE WHITE CITY

→WHAT A WHITE CITY COULD LOOK LIKE: POSTCARD →P. 64
→UNDERLYING SCIENTIFIC STUDY: AKBARI ET AL →P. 156-1
→WHY TODAYS BIG IDEAS ARE SMALL: ON PEOPLE →P. 16-1

Material: 1,5 millions of 5-litre-buckets of white paint.

Place: All of Berlin's roofs and pavements.

Idea: A striking image, the Idea of "The White City" is a thrilling example of how low-tech big innovation can be; spread the word!

“Now you smile, but if you look at all the buildings, if you make all the roofs white, and if you make the pavement a more concrete-type of color than a black-type of color, and you do this uniformly ... It’s the equivalent of reducing the carbon emissions from all the cars in the world by eleven years.”

How would our world look if we went ahead with the proposal Stephen Chu, the United States Secretary of Energy, made, and painted all roofs white?

We think the next step towards its realization is the visualization of this idea. Because it is the choice of every single homeowner to decide if Chus' idea becomes reality or not.

1.

The short-wave radiation of the sunlight is hitting the earth and its atmosphere.

2.

Part of the radiation is reflected directly by the atmosphere.

3.

Part of the radiation is absorbed by the atmosphere and is brought back to space in the form of long-wave radiation.

4.

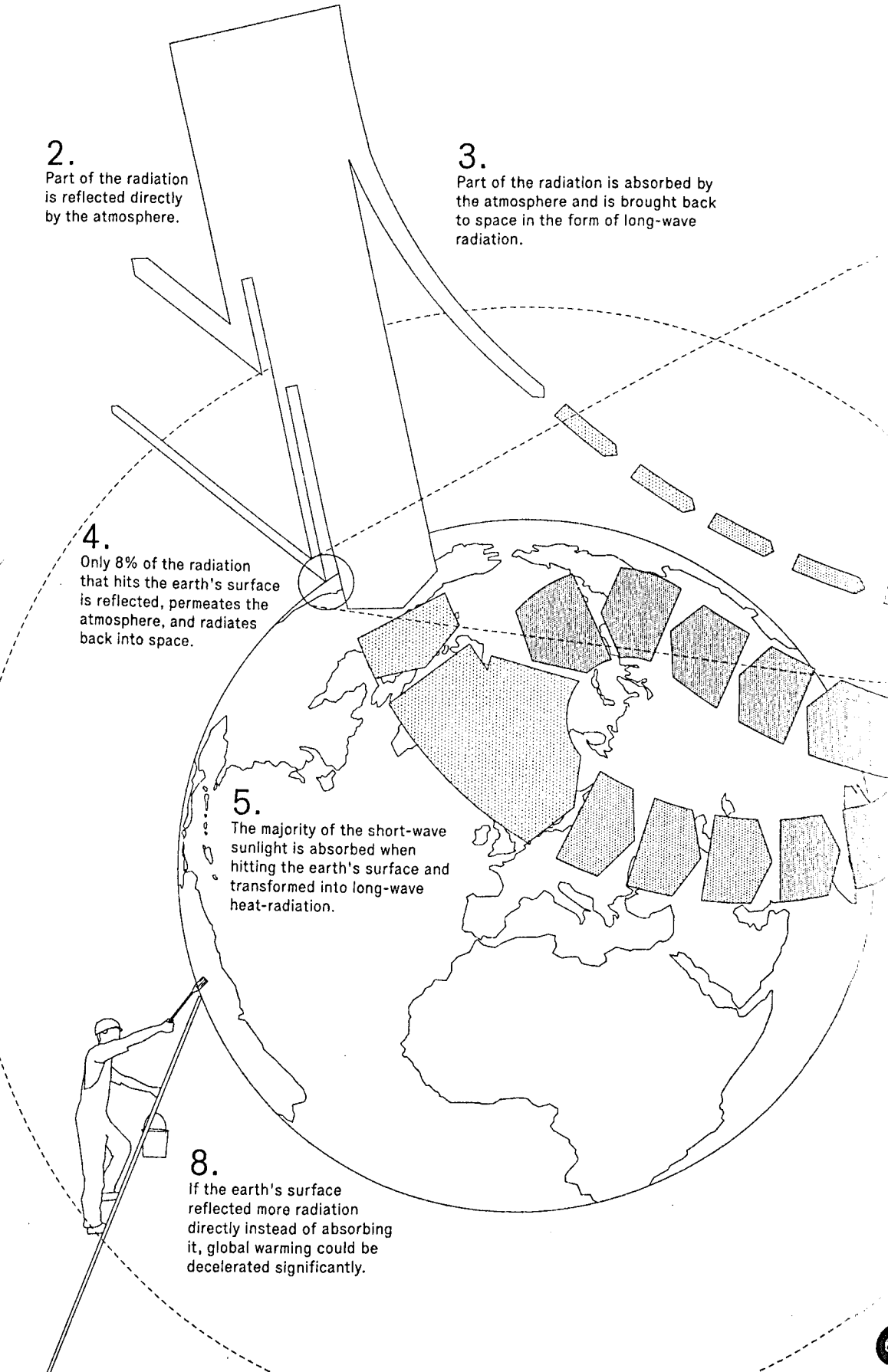
Only 8% of the radiation that hits the earth's surface is reflected, permeates the atmosphere, and radiates back into space.

5.

The majority of the short-wave sunlight is absorbed when hitting the earth's surface and transformed into long-wave heat-radiation.

8.

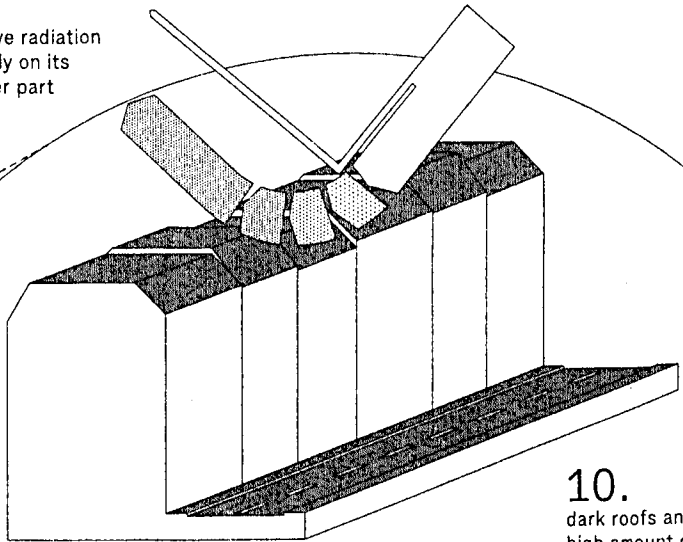
If the earth's surface reflected more radiation directly instead of absorbing it, global warming could be decelerated significantly.



PLANS

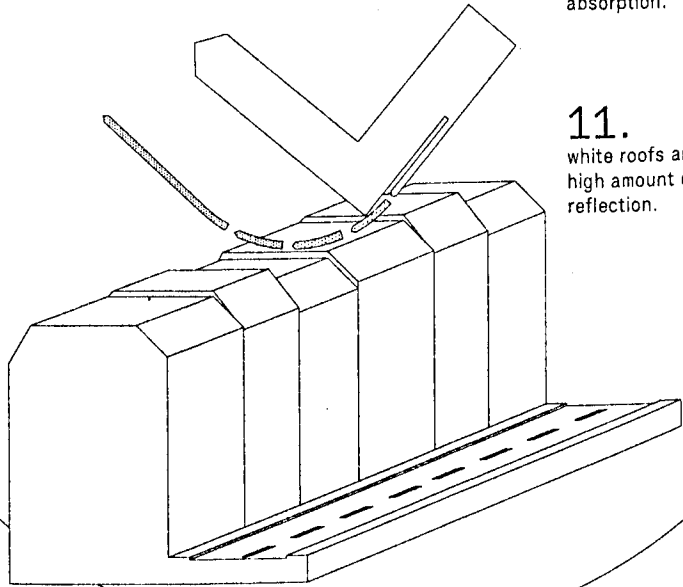
9.

The amount of reflection of short-wave radiation on the earth's surface depends mostly on its colour. White surfaces reflect a better part of the impact light and absorb less, therefore they heat up less and introduce less heat into the atmosphere.



10.

dark roofs and streets:
high amount of
absorption.



11.

white roofs and streets:
high amount of
reflection.

6.

Only a small amount of the long-wave radiation can permeate the atmosphere and radiate out into space. The majority of it is reflected back to the earth.

7.

The atmosphere is permeable to the short-waved radiation of light. Long-wave heat radiation is largely reflected.

12.

If surfaces like roofs and streets in urban regions turned white, the degree of deceleration of global warming would equal the negative effect of the emission of 44 Giga tons of CO₂. This equals the emission of all cars on earth during 11 years.

This calculation doesn't include the positive effects of decreased cooling loads in the buildings.

THE NIGHTTRAIN STATION

→REDISCOVERING THE EXISTING: EIKE ROSWAG →P. 115.1, ON WORLDS →P. 116.1
→ON THE NECESSITY TO RETHINK MOBILITY: GERHARD MATZIG →P. 130.1

Material: Two additional tracks and a 6km long train platform along the Berlin Stadtbahn.
Place: All the way between Berlin-Zoologischer Garten and Berlin-Alexanderplatz stations.

Idea: A night train system which could replace all inner-European air traffic.

3000 people fly from Berlin to Munich every day. 25 minutes after having reached cruising altitude, the 'buckle up' sign flashes up again, and the crew prepares for final approach and landing.

Is this the way flying was meant to be? Wasn't it supposed to be the means of transport that spares us arduous ocean crossings? How much time do we actually save, taking into account the hours we spend on our way to and from the airport, and the time we have to kill after check-in?

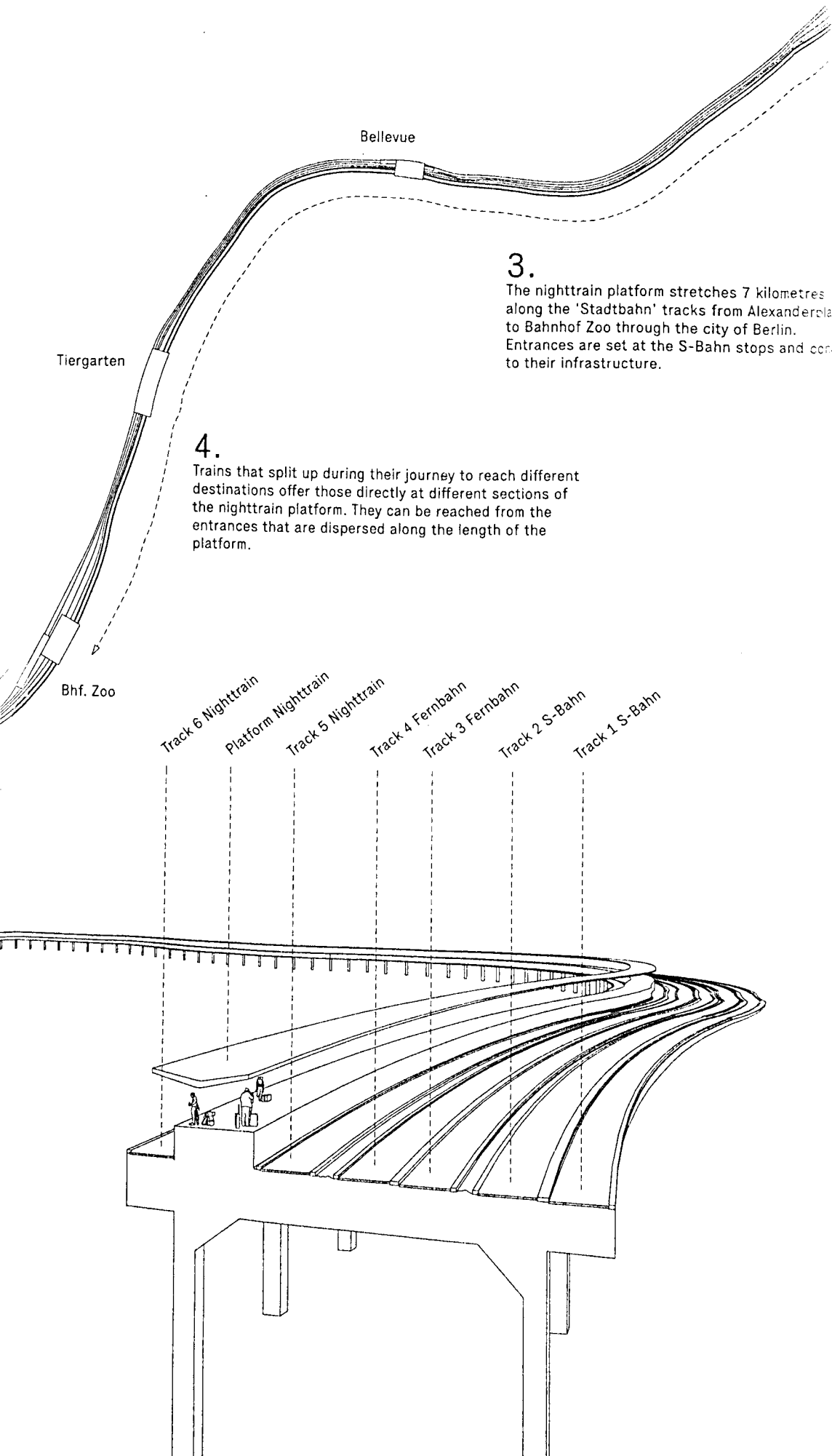
The principle of the nighttrain is based on the simple finding that the best state for traveling is while one is asleep. Because even the most important person, with the fullest schedule, sleeps

at night. Even if it is only for a few hours. If you have ever arrived at Roma Termini after a good night's sleep and a cold shower, holding a cup of coffee, and a sweet brioche in your hand, you understand.

Night trains can improve travel: better coverage, direct connections, comfortable beds, uninterrupted internet connection, adequate working amenities, and more enjoyable train stations.

... and they eventually will, not only because the era of cheap flying is ending, but also because we will no longer have the time and nerves to fly. The Berlin nighttrain station is ready for an increasing frequency of trains. It is interwoven with the city and its public transport network.

By turning the old into a new element, you make it fit into the city. You'll find it synchronizes itself to the city's rhythm instead of disrupting it, like airports do. Living near the railway, you will not only hear the screech of the S-Bahn in the evening, but also distant chatter. *German, Italian, Russian, Spanish, Dutch, French, Norwegian, Portuguese ...*



3.

The nighttrain platform stretches 7 kilometres along the 'Stadtbahn' tracks from Alexanderplatz to Bahnhof Zoo through the city of Berlin. Entrances are set at the S-Bahn stops and connect to their infrastructure.

4.

Trains that split up during their journey to reach different destinations offer those directly at different sections of the nighttrain platform. They can be reached from the entrances that are dispersed along the length of the platform.

Track 6 Nighttrain

Platform Nighttrain

Track 5 Nighttrain

Track 4 Fernbahn

Track 3 Fernbahn

Track 2 S-Bahn

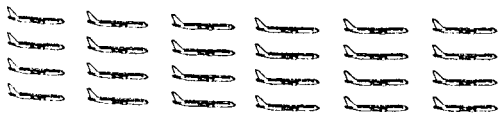
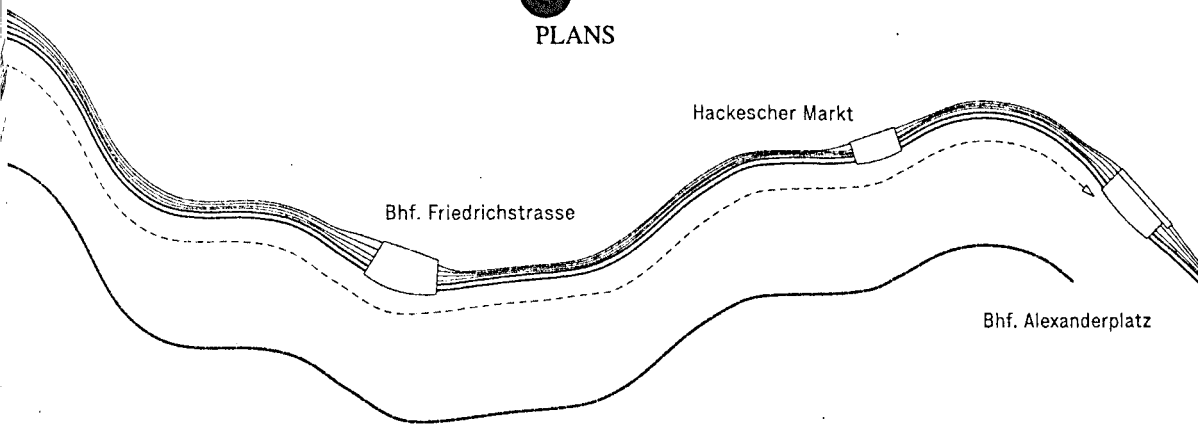
Track 1 S-Bahn

Tiergarten

Bellevue

Bhf. Zoo

PLANS

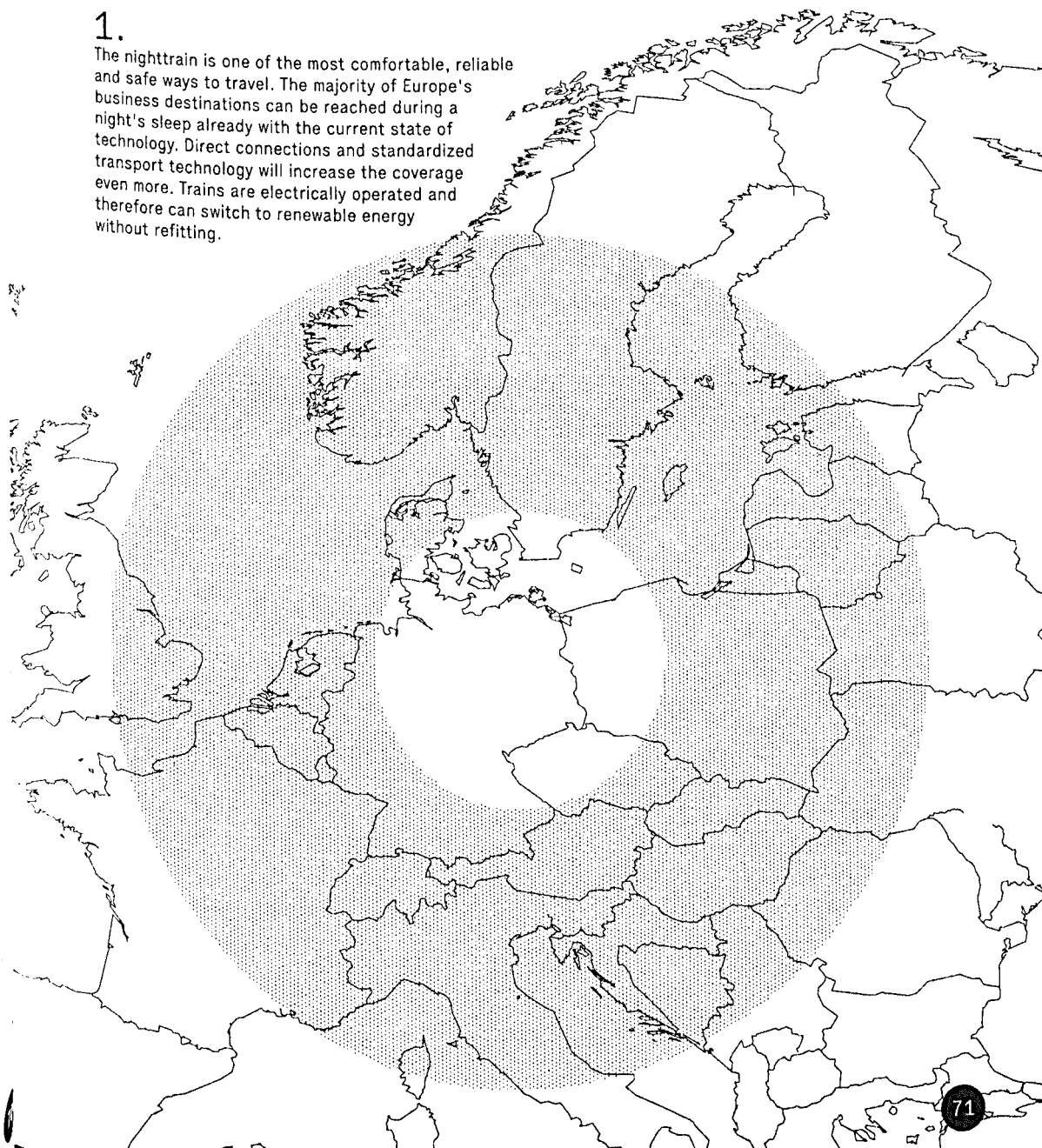


2.

The train that carries all passengers flying from Berlin to Munich every day is 4 kilometres long and could stop between Alexanderplatz and Hauptbahnhof.

1.

The nighttrain is one of the most comfortable, reliable and safe ways to travel. The majority of Europe's business destinations can be reached during a night's sleep already with the current state of technology. Direct connections and standardized transport technology will increase the coverage even more. Trains are electrically operated and therefore can switch to renewable energy without refitting.



CONVER



3

SATIONS:

WIEL ARETS: WAYS OF WORLD MAKING

Wiel Arets is principal of **Wiel Arets Architects** ~~→ VISIT THEIR WEBSITE: WWW.WIELARETSARCHITECTS~~ and has taught at the Architectural Association in London and the Berlage Institute. We were his students at the University of Arts in Berlin, where he has been a professor since 2004. We enjoyed his understanding of learning and teaching, which is affected by mutual communication and his fascination with every kind of autodidactic approach. Without neglecting his position as an architect and designer, he encouraged his architecture students to follow their fascination in whatever direction, as long as they did so passionately and presented it intensely. Wiel Arets began his career writing about architecture, for example his text 'An Alabaster Skin', and can now also look back on a design oeuvre which goes from large scale architectural highlights such as the University Library in Utrecht (2004) or the Academy of Arts and Architecture in Maastricht (1993), to small scale industrial design, as he does in his cooperation with Alessi. We talked to Wiel Arets in his Amsterdam office.

September 10th, 2009, Lairessestraat 41, Amsterdam:

In 1960 Mies van der Rohe said that the highest goal for an architect to achieve was to reflect society in his buildings. Can you think of a building or a building type that stands for the present society?

**→ ROOT OF THIS QUESTION:
MIES → P. 201.1**

It is a quite obvious statement to say that architecture should show society in it – nearly all buildings that are produced do so. There's no building that doesn't reflect society. The question is: Which society? Whose society? How society?

I would say every building in China, in South America, in Holland, in Germany does reflect society. We are living in an extremely exciting time frame: Everything is possible. Luckily enough we are having a crisis, which is the best thing

CONVERSATIONS

that can happen to everyone, once in a while. On the other hand, there are millions of societies. There is not one society, there is not one world, and there is not one truth. Everything we do now is gone in one second. What we did one second ago is gone now; we live in an extremely fluid world.

75.1. I believe very strongly that every architect creates his own theory and definition, with his client or without his client, of what society is at that moment. And since we all do that, and we talk to each other all the time we probably create 'a society' to a certain degree. There are a few directions. **→TALKING ABOUT BUILDING SOCIETY, EIKE ROSWAG →P. 111.1**

Keeping that in mind, I believe it is extremely important that as an architect you write your thoughts down. When I wrote articles like "Virological Architecture" I did that to make myself clear on what for me at this very moment society is. "Virological Architecture" deals with the fact that when you do something, it should have an impact on your neighbor and your environment. When the building you do has an impact on the way people live, you have an influence. I think there is not a big difference between a film director who makes a movie that reflects society and someone who does furniture or some other kind of design. When someone writes a book, it is at that very moment his definition of what society is. It is important that, although everything is fluid and everything changes, the moment you make a building, a book, a fashion design you have to make a decision.

In that sense, I believe very strongly that as an architect you have to write. Writing is so difficult. Write an article with a title and write an article with an impact. That is extremely difficult. It is the same with a building. Society sometimes changes within minutes. At 9/11, society changed within 30 seconds, or was it 180 seconds ... When I look at your book, and I see that you think of remodeling a building with a group of people, I think it is fantastic. It is extremely ambitious, that is probably your society. But I have great doubts about your remodeling because I do believe that architecture is more complex; it is an extremely difficult discipline. I think it is the most difficult discipline in the world. I like to talk with every layman, every man on the street, and every client. But I believe that we have to make the decisions and that's the same as a film director. At a certain moment someone has to take the camera and say, "This is how we do it. This is the way we shoot it, he is wearing that haircut, it is raining, the sun is shining" and so on. I believe very strongly that the buildings done by architects that have a very strong, conceptual thought, a very strong opinion, are the ones that will be recognized in the future. These will be concepts and opinions based on technology and knowledge, not based on fashion, not based on what everybody thinks at that moment works.

"Ways of world making", as you say. The "making" in the end is the most important word. It is how you make a building or a neighborhood or a city. And that has to do with knowledge. That is also why Mies said: "We are only 25 or 30 generations away from the Romans." Only 30 generations – that is nothing! Only 30 generations!

I believe that we are living, at this moment, in a world where every moment everything is different. When you build a house in Tokyo, after three years it will be taken down. Architecture there is like a product, like your I-Phone, you buy it and after one year, there is already a next generation or two that can do way more. For me, there

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are two ways to go. I am now building a house in Tokyo. We finish on the 15th of June 2011. I know the house will be taken down within 20 years. I know this house belongs to society. Maybe it will be there for 30, 40, or 50 years. I also have to take into account the fact that it might be taken down in 5 years. That knowledge brings a responsibility with it. I have to take responsibility and when I make a project – sustainability is a very fashionable word – I have to take responsibility for our environment, whatever that means in each particular case. I am living in a society in which we think it is important to talk about sustainability, ecology, energy; we talk about a better world. We talk about a better world, although our politicians don't. I think that every building we do reflects what our society is. When we now build a house for a client with seven Aston Martins, who wants a house for his cars and a place to eat with his friends, because he is a very good chef; that is part of our society. I want to make a sustainable building for him that will stay there for the next 50 years, knowing that he might leave the building one day and maybe someone else wants to live with 12 students in it and so on. I think an orphanage with 20 children should also be able to exist in that house, and that's my way of dealing with the world and the society.

We have our responsibility to make buildings not too specific to allow different kinds of use. That would be my answer to ways of world making. If you did ten interviews in a row, on ten days and always ask me the same question, you would get 10 different answers. Because I just had a meeting, or I read a book yesterday, or I'll see a movie tomorrow.

The general answer is: I want to learn from history, I want to learn from tribes in Africa and so on, to understand our constant issues, but I don't want to make overly specific buildings with only one quality. That is why I don't like fashionable, blobby architecture. Since I was a student I was never interested in postmodernism and deconstructivism because I do not think that that is what our society is. Mies is one of these architects who was always on the sideline, never part of the mainstream debates. That is why from his first, to his last project there is a very constant development in his architecture. Everything he did was a house. Either it was big, then it was the Neue Nationalgalerie, or it was small, then it was the Farnsworth House.

What do you want to give to your students, what are the most important skills you want to get across?

I started studying physics. After three weeks I started studying architecture. After three weeks of architecture I decided to not only listen to my professors, but also to go to the library and do a lot of self-education. I always did a lot next to my studies.

Then I started to become a teacher at the AA. Some students were older than me and I always wanted to be friends with my students and tried to simply learn a lot from and through them. That is a very egoistic approach. A student who is clever can learn from me or we can learn together. If you are less clever you will learn less. I believe in self-education. And those students who are interesting for me to talk to, I talk to. I am very selfish in that sense. I think it should be a situation where student and professor are

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friends, maybe the professor has a little more knowledge or experience, but that is the situation I think of. When I give a lecture, I always give it for myself. I hope that when a student is there he learns from it, he comes to me and we become partners. I don't believe in scholastic things. There is a certain level of knowledge I can give, and I can say, "do this and do that", and I believe that I should stimulate the student to self-educate himself. An architect – Look at Mies who did not have an academic education – develops through self education. That's the best situation for everyone.

The only thing I want to teach students when they make drawings, build models, write texts, work in offices, design furniture, is that whatever you do you have to be very practical on the one hand. You have to learn your discipline, like computer programs and everything, but the students should also try to understand that you have to find your own niche. I had brilliant students, Victor Wong for example, Chris Evans, they were great students, they became graphic designers and fashion designers and are successful in Paris, Tokyo and New York. Victor is not a classical architect in that sense but he does great things. That is what I really enjoy seeing.

What is your position towards
avant-garde architecture?
Do you see any at all?

We definitely need an avant-garde,
and we need stars and all of that, but
what our discipline is very bad at is

presenting itself to the world. So if we, as architects, talk about avant-garde in architecture, the world still has no clue. Maybe they think it is architects from the twenties. We are the worst in the world to promote ourselves.

→ SHARING THIS OPINION ON ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION: MARKUS MIESSEN → P. 80.1

That's the one answer. The other one is: Is there an avant-garde at all? Is there a bunch of architects who do new things? I say: Yes. But: I can tell you that the number of architects who do something that people will still talk about in thirty years is extremely small. I think that the amount of buildings done by avant-garde architects that people will recognize is even smaller.

At this moment they seem to be very important. Most architects, when their names remain in the future will probably only be recognized for a single book they made, or one or two buildings.

The third answer to your question would be the question for whom you are an avant-garde. For students? For architects? For clients? For the public? This is about niches again. Who is interested in you when you do what? Who is considering what as "avant-garde"? But let me answer in a fourth way: I try to be an architect who takes the word avant-garde seriously, in the way that I try to make something that in the next 10, 20 or 50 years is still relevant, and thereby is more forward looking than what we consider avant-garde architecture now. I think that some of our buildings will probably still be relevant in the future.

I hope that I did write, or will write, a text that makes sense for people who want to take more interest in architecture, one which is relevant into the future.←1

MARKUS MIESSEN: OUTSIDERS CHANGE THE WORLD

Markus Miessen was trained as an architect and started his office, Studio Miessen, out of his interest for topics outside and at the edge of architecture. What we find especially interesting about his work are his case studies on how to interfere with and change established processes. In this context, he coined the term 'uninvited outsider' to describe a person who is situated outside the actual circle of decision makers, and therefore more independent and arguably powerful to generate change. In that way, Markus Miessen, like us, is looking for ways to change the world. His project 'substitute', which he explains briefly in this interview, is a perfect hands-on example of how architects could act to achieve stronger influence in the actual use of their buildings. What he calls 'architectural thinking' not only enables architects to achieve this, but also to apply their knowledge in fields outside building and planning. Understanding everyone who uses his or her expertise outside the limits of profession and in collaboration with others as a world maker, opens a whole new perspective on who will actually shape our future cities.

June 2nd, 2009, Strassburger Strasse, Berlin:

Does 'critical participation' go beyond the scope of objection?
Can you define it?

It depends on the context: concerning architecture I am skeptical about whether participation actually works.

When thinking democratically you basically have to reach consensus, be considerate of things like the old woman who needs a handrail. There's virtually no way to outvote things like that.

It is different in regard to the scale of the city, where everybody takes part, because that is how the interesting spots within the city are produced. Architects tend to theorize about such things ...

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Do you think architects should become entrepreneurs instead of theorists? Could that be a way of getting out of the dilemma?

Either that or a way to get in. You need to state your attitude when doing a project like that. Do you want to be a service-provider?

79.1.3

You need to decide which role you want to play. For participatory projects I think it is about building a frame, a structure that different people can contribute to.

Eventually every collaborative project is based on a participatory structure. What I think is crucial, and what makes a lot of participation experts criticize me, is to call for someone who takes the ultimate responsibility. Otherwise things tend to get stuck and there are no decisions made. I can see the same problem in politics.

I am writing a book on it right now, called *The Nightmare of Participation*. It is neither possible to please, nor to include, absolutely everybody if you want to make progress in a specific structure. After all, you can't assume that everybody has the same expertise. For me, when working on an architectural project, it is important to first establish a certain framework, then leave and therefore not necessarily participate in the physical phase of the project. An issue I am interested in, for example, is how to create a stable situation that rules out rack rents and expropriation for a period of 20 years.

→ DEVELOPING SUCH A FRAMEWORK: PLATTENBAU ALGORITHM → P. 56

What does such a framework look like? Is it a contract, a timeline, an organization chart?

It is actually all that together. All aspects have to be addressed adequately.

My thesis 'Substitute' dealt with these kinds of questions, creating a framework to develop a linear service structure for methadone patients close to King's Cross in London. The structure of England's medical system causes major difficulties, dividing the King's Cross neighborhood into different areas of responsibility. The organization of methadone dispensation thus became more and more complicated. The core of the project is a Private-Public-Partnership (PPP), which makes an appearance on urban scale, as well as architecturally in shape of a small hospital with a docking station at Houston Underground Station.

The main work was to define policies on funding and general organization which could survive the next 20 years and even gradually develop from the PPP to a public institution. That, in my opinion, is the point where things become interesting: When the architect acts beyond his or her assumed role.

I'm interested in developing processes that give the architect the possibility to exert long-term influence. Usually as an architect you lose all say on a building's use when you hand it over to the user.

Of course this also comes with a large amount of responsibility. You can not exceed the budget by three times, leaving for example the museum you've just built without any money to finance an exhibition. This is happening all the time.

The MoMA has to turn down their heating every winter to save costs since they did their 800 Million Dollar renovation in 2004.

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Do these kind of issues actually have anything to do with the profession of the architect?

80.1
'Profession' is something that is often seen as something with an extra value.

The problem is that as an architect, for people not involved with architecture, you are simply seen as a service provider. That it is a 'hard skill' you can learn, but it is not a profession. **→ SEEING VIRTUE IN BEING A SERVICE PROVIDER: GERD GERKEN → P. 121**

What is interesting about architecture, in the bigger sense, is to question existing models and foster change. The capacity of architecture to do that usually goes unnoticed by people outside of "the profession". I am interested in schemes and frameworks, because it seems to me the only position from which you can actually influence social processes, behaviors, and policies. Besides the financial aspects, it is also unbelievably hard to gain this influence only with architecture. You need to find your niche. I am working in this field as Studio Miessen, while doing architectural work with nOffice. **→ SEE THEIR RECENT PROJECTS: WWW.NOFFICE.EU** What's interesting about this is the fact that Studio Miessen's work is usually worse paid but addresses a larger scale; it is a typical case of cross-financing. It is important to act multi-pronged and establish structures at an early stage. Once you've started working in an office, it becomes harder and harder to imagine anything else. **→ SHARING THIS OPINION ON ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION: WIEL ARETS → P. 774**

Do you think this only applies to architects?

No, but I think in case of architecture it is super difficult. If you started a poll

on the prestige of professions I am sure architects would be among the top five. **→ INDEED THEY ARE STATISTICS → P. 150.3** But of course this doesn't reflect reality. Architecture presumably is the most exploited academic job of all. People find it hard to sense the added value represented by architects.

Let's talk about the city.

What do you think of the city as a habitat and how would you rate its sustainability?

In terms of sustainability the city is a sound place. Berlin for sure is interesting, but it can hardly be compared with a city like London. Both models are

sustainable in their own way. They are both going to change radically within the next 20 years but that will be far less extreme than cities in northern Africa or China. The question is if there's a flash point at which it becomes impossible for a city to change. For example, for infrastructural reasons: if a city like Mumbai grows and grows, but the infrastructure has missed the chance to adapt itself, that cannot be touched up.

What makes London and Berlin nonetheless sustainable?

They are each sustainable for their own reasons. Berlin doesn't have strong

migratory pressure for the reason that there are virtually no available jobs. It is extremely dispersed and therefore offers a fairly high quality of life. On the other hand London has put up such rigorous regulations that it will always be able to retain control and do things like cut migration. I believe that economic parameters like this do have a great impact on the quality of everyday life. They are connected directly via

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rent indices, travel distances and so on. I think that everybody creates his or her own space, and therefore his or her own city, hence everybody has an individual reception. This means that there is "my Berlin" and "your Berlin". We all walk our individual, itinerant routes through the city, that lead us to our favored places. If you sketched a map of Berlin, it would list totally different spots than mine, as well as locate them differently in space. I think this is a key to quality in a city.

What I am asking myself is whether the increasing size of a city has negative influences on these kinds of things. Apart from that, questions like this always have to be understood and can only be answered individually. What the qualities of city life are and what restrictions you are willing to accept is a very personal, subjective question.

What is the nightmare of participation?

The nightmare is not being able to make decisions, and at the same

time seeing other people using participation to legitimize themselves politically. Right now I am working on two case studies, one about New Labour in Great Britain and another about the so-called Polder Modell in the Netherlands. Both are dealing with internal democratic transparency in conjunction with total closure toward the outside. There are some interesting statistics indicating that in Great Britain, in 2003, there was sort of a peak concerning newly developed participatory structures, going along with a historic low in willingness among citizens to participate. They were nevertheless developed further, but most obviously only for the reason of gaining political legitimization. The consequential question for me is how to pointedly intervene and unite forces to act in coordination.

... This refers more to a political context?

I'd say it actually is similar to what you are trying to do with your theoretical

work and your collection of excerpts, the 'Index of Now'. Why are certain things relevant? I am asking myself how to achieve some acknowledgement for the quality of the profession of architecture, and I think that this quality is outside architecture itself. Let's call it 'Architectural Thinking'. It can be effectively transferred to other fields, but within the building industry itself it has worn off, because today there are so many stakeholders within the business who are absolutely capable of taking over the traditional tasks of the architect. Whether we like it or not, the customers who finish a project with a developer often don't understand what we as architects can do for them. Right now I am interested in two concepts of alternative entry: the 'Uninvited Outsider' and the 'Cross-bench Practitioner'. The latter stems from the House of Lords, where independent cross-bench politicians eventually are the only ones who can initiate change beyond consensus. All others within the two respective blocks and parties are so much involved with each other that they can no longer drive forth anything. As an outsider, I am excluded from all these political games. Finally, it is all about finding a balance between the Uninvited Outsider and the insider, who is effectively at the controls. And that balance in position has an incredible amount of potential. ←

→ EMBRACING THIS ROLE IN HER WORK: BETTINA KRAUS → P. 84.1

BETTINA KRAUS: ARCHITECTURE SHOULD BE ABOUT ARCHITECTURE

Bettina Kraus is a partner at **Wiel Arets Architects**. Since 2004 she has taught at the University of Arts in Berlin. We studied with her in her studio class, joined her on field trips to Moscow and Tel Aviv, and co-conceived Protocol Magazine with her. Bettina Kraus is a dedicated architect, a rebel, and a controlled troublemaker with a sparkle in her eye. Despite working on a wide range of large-scale projects, she has never lost her enthusiasm for architecture in all its aspects. Interested in all kinds of cultural phenomena, she lives in two cities – Berlin and Amsterdam – and her perspective reaches beyond the architectural profession. At the same time, she knows more about plans, grids and layouts than most other people. We met Bettina Kraus at her office at the University of Arts in order to talk to her about ... well ... architecture.

26. June, 2009, Hardenbergstr. 33, Berlin:

Mies van der Rohe once said the highest goal for an architect is to reflect in his or her buildings the civilization of the present, how do you react to that?

→ ROOT OF THIS QUESTION:
MIES → P. 201.1

An even higher goal in my opinion would be to civilize civilization. Albeit over-civilization ...

I tend to think that architecture always mirrors society. This obviously implies that – if society is in a bad state –

a bad architectural image is drawn. I therefore don't completely agree with the statement, but I think he is right in the way that architecture always reacts to realities.

Art, for example, can go a step further. Art can pass criticism, whereas architecture, in my opinion, shouldn't act too socio-critically.

Whilst art may and must criticize, architecture is a process of reacting to, and acting in reality, moved by the ambition to improve society's conditions, not to moralize. Architecture is always about people.

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Can you think of buildings that symptomatically stand for today's society respectively its Zeitgeist? First of all, a lot of bad examples come to my mind: Event architecture, shopping malls and so on. Altogether things that defy the naturally given. The climate denied by an artificial skiing hall, or the zero level or whatever ...

This is probably the current reflection of civilization. Buildings are always bound to the time they emerge from. Yet I think there are things and places that make me feel they reflect our time in a positive way and even go further. They do have a present significance, but beyond that they refer to something else. Adolf Loos' American Bar in Vienna might be one of them.

Can you describe what distinguishes the American Bar from other places? If you don't feel the need to change a thing for a long time, that is a very good sign, I think. Places which don't accomplish that, sooner or later, will be altered.

Is there a type of architecture that in your opinion constitutes an antithesis to these grotesque buildings, for example the skiing hall? Yes, and I think it is constituted in to two different scales: On the one hand in the scale of architecture, and on the other in that of the city. The more complex a city is, the less important the object becomes ...

On our field trips to in Tokyo or Tel Aviv we saw streets of houses that are simply good.

Maybe this is not about an immediate architectural achievement. Perhaps I am interested in buildings which are able to make 'city' without being iconic. This seems to be a contradiction these days. What is increasingly in demand is buildings which iconographically represent something. Whether or not they work in the context of the city is another story. This is usually achieved better by less 'remarkable' structures. There are some offices who are doing basic research about this; SANAA for example.

My office is doing fundamental research in that sense; it questions, reinterprets, and reassembles programs. The layouts that are the outcome of this could be put directly into a lexicon. Its significance goes beyond designing.

In a symposium in Zürich on 'shaping of future power plants' Harry Guggler stated that it was the architect's task to give shape to future ideas in order to put them up for negotiation, first. I am not quite sure on which level the architect is supposed to act. For this task I would start very pragmatically. I would follow the function, and that, in my opinion, is rather like the job description of an engineer. This is also

↳EXAMPLE OF SUCH VISUALIZATION: POSTCARD ↳P. 64
why engineering structures often comprise universal aspects. Because the aspiration of the design is inferior. Is Harry Guggler referring to shape or subject?

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I think he is interested in how the architect can intervene in a complex group of themes or in a process, and what he or she can contribute to society.

The term 'intervening' is important. It is important for an architect to act and think on all levels, instead of just receiving any kind of program and implementing it.

To actually understand a certain program, at a certain place, you need to ask questions and make suggestions. You need to go 'beyond'.

84.1.1

What else can architects do to increase their influence?

I think with architects it is the same as with any other profession: there is a large mass of them and only a few who actually make a difference. To achieve that, no matter if you are an architect or not, you need to intervene.

It's not enough just to be a good designer, that's just a qualification. You need to face up to things, find and put forward possibilities; you need to investigate the city to be able to say "here this or that could take place."

→ EMBRACING THE IDEA OF UNREQUESTED INTERVENTION: PET SPACES → P. 38
You just need to intervene, on all levels! Carefully dosed trouble making is more fun to do anyway.

→ SEEING A GREAT POTENTIAL IN THIS WAY OF ACTING: MARKUS MIESSEN → P. 81

Do you think architects should be entrepreneurs as well?

There are a few architects who are successful with it. It could work well as a tandem pursuit, I think. What I'd like to see more often is architects who initiate projects and acquire allies or clients themselves. I think it is possible, there are certainly examples where entrepreneur and architect come together.

Our office is maybe too idealistic to go into entrepreneurship, but I think the relationship is definitely closer than that between a judge and an advocate, for example. To me that seems much harder to combine.

It is interesting that you consider yourselves too idealistic to be entrepreneurs. Idealism could act as a motivation to go into entrepreneurship; entrepreneurship in the sense of starting something spontaneously and of one's own accord. Just like Bjarke Ingels, who tried to push the development of a housing area around a large agglomeration of football fields in Copenhagen, because he felt it was the best way to solve the city's housing shortage.

Every sort of project – be it a product, a magazine or architecture – has to be initiated. Right now we are planning a city in Ghana. We are considering how to realize it, how to fund it, who to ask for initial investment and so on. You have to come up with something. A certain amount of 'hyperactivity' can be of help here.

I don't want to judge the motivation for a project like the one in Copenhagen, but I think you need to look more closely. What is the idea behind it? Some ideas are 'good sellers' but you need to pull them off

all the way. A lot of architecture I see at the moment is only based

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on being ironic or provocative. It's okay, as long as there is a second layer to it. Eventually it is that very second layer that constitutes the quality of a project in the long run. There are so many one-liner ideas right now.

Maybe this is a general problem of architecture, which is increasingly image-oriented. People no longer seem to ask themselves what kind of spaces are created by that. It becomes obvious when you look at contemporary publications: they hardly show plans and sections anymore. There are images that look good, but they don't give you the chance to see if the building is actually good or not. Things that function as a trademark or an image have to be questioned according to their architectural, e.g. their spatial, value.

...that means, in the end, it is all about good architecture.

Everything else is obligatory anyway, – whereas I am not very much interested in such things. I would like to concentrate on creating specific qualities, sketching a vibrant part of a city, and not reduce myself to the creation of an image. I catch myself being too lazy to look closely and focus on plans and sections when I look at portfolios. Drawings don't allow a lot of cheating. On the other hand, they have a totally different meaning when communicating with clients.

It's a question of the audience: The reason why many buildings are only designed with regard to their image is most likely the fact that the majority of people are only going to perceive them in the form of images, via the media. The actual user in that case is in the back seat.

Right. If something is hyped so much, we should have a closer look: Is the owner using the house or is the house using the owner?

At that point, the building becomes an end in itself. A bigger part of current architecture is taken over by developers but on the other hand, I can only repeat myself, there are a number

of projects, no matter which scale, that show the effort that was made trying to create an icon.

Undoubtedly, there are specific architectural assignments that demand a certain symbolism. The desire for this kind of architecture is big. Maybe bigger than it should be.

Do you think that concentrating on the material substance, the fashion and technique of building could form a logical counterpart to this reality?

Yes, but the way of building, the way of making things isn't really to the contrary.

All kinds of buildings finally have to be realized somehow. I think it

starts with an attitude, what kind of building one wants to do, which presence it should have, what associations it is supposed to generate. Should it stand the test of time and still reflect the actual moment?

There we go ... Needless to say, things have to be materialized, but I don't know if you can make a statement concentrating only on materials.

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It is a fact that as an architect you work on so many things that are never going to be accomplished. This is okay. If one or two in ten things become reality it is fine, otherwise we would be spoiled. Selection processes, if they are in regard to quality, are good.

Architecture somehow stands between tradition and innovation, and in that regard is similar to fashion. Do you think that fashion is better at combining the two – innovation and tradition – than architecture is? I think that fashion treats its own past with more relish ...

First of all, fashion is less bound to constraints, but architecture is always bound to a certain situation: I cannot change the climate and so on. Fashion is based on a faster process, the 'playground' is much larger and it comparatively is not that big of a problem if something fails also because it is a different scale.

I think that the difference is rooted in functional constraints and temporal circumstances. In architecture, the risk is just higher.

David Ogilvy, founder of a well-known advertising agency, once said that good advertisement is about a good position, a promise, and an idea. What are the three components that make good architecture? Or could we use Ogilvy's for architecture as well?

I completely agree with two points: the position and the idea. The promise for me doesn't work with architecture. Unlike advertisements, buildings have to keep their promises. Eventually the product has to perform and as an advertiser it is not your job to verify the product. Making a promise is

enough in that field. Not in architecture.

Also, there are certain products that reach a cult status by means of advertisement. In the case of architecture, you just have the one single building. Advertisement is about increasing sales, therefore advertisement can, and must, go beyond the product itself. It has to put something on the map, and that is not what architecture is about. For the occupants it doesn't matter if a house is published one or ten times. That is a point from which I see a lot of imbalance in architecture is coming from at the moment ...

I mean: there has to be a promise, but you should actually keep it in the end. Interesting enough, sometimes, when something is promised to a client, things develop in the process and in the end there is so much more to the project than one could have initially imagined to promise. If this is published in a magazine afterwards, who cares? ←

MIKE SCHLAICH: LIGHTWEIGHT CONSTRUCTION

Mike Schlaich, engineer and architect, is a principal of the engineering office Schlaich, Bergemann and Partner. He holds the Chair of Conceptual and Structural Design at the Technical University Berlin. Together with his colleagues there he recently received attention for inventing and using – at Schlaich's own house in Berlin – Infra-Lightweight Concrete. We also know him for his design of a solar updraft tower, which seems to be, due to his expertise, a possibility for the next generation of power plants, and not a futuristic dream. But we wanted to talk to him as a leading practitioner in that field about something else: lightweight construction. We visited him at his TU Berlin office, situated in Peter Behrens' AEG-buildings in Berlin Wedding, to ask him, why so few – at least in Berlin – seem to embrace the material-saving beauty of lightweight construction in favor of yet another heavy cast concrete structure.

September 14th, 2009, TU Berlin:

We are very interested in lightweight construction. When do you call a construction lightweight? Where can we apply it? And why don't we see it more often in our buildings?

Let's start with the definition of lightweight. We have developed Infra-Lightweight Concrete here at the university. This material is extremely light, only 700 kg per m³, because it contains a lot of air. It doesn't need

further insulation, the architects can build monolithic fair-faced concrete walls. That can be called lightweight construction. It may look heavy, but it is in fact light.

On the other hand, there are things that look light but are extremely heavy: all kinds of glass buildings, which seem to float. We don't necessarily consider that lightweight construction. To me, lightweight construction is everything that minimizes construction material, doesn't weigh much and, therefore, has special properties. Lightweight construction is easily defined as what makes a building light. Lightweight construction depends on five or six principles, one

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Let's start with the definition of lightweight. We have developed Infra-Lightweight Concrete here at the university. This material is extremely light, only 700 kg per m³, because it contains a lot of air. It doesn't need

further insulation, the architects can build monolithic fair-faced concrete walls. That can be called lightweight construction. It may look heavy, but it is in fact light.

On the other hand, there are things that look light but are extremely heavy: all kinds of glass buildings, which seem to float. We don't necessarily consider that lightweight construction. To me, lightweight construction is everything that minimizes construction material, doesn't weigh much and, therefore, has special properties. Lightweight construction is easily defined as what makes a building light. Lightweight construction depends on five or six principles, one

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of which is small spans. Long spans cause high weights because the bending moments in the beams increase the square in relation to their length. It makes more sense to have more support points, to decrease spans and thus beam height. Or, you eliminate bending from the beginning by dividing the forces into compression and tension. This can be done with truss structures for example. Another possibility is to use double curved shapes. Shell structures are truly light-weight. And working with pretensioning makes light membrane structures possible. These are the most important principles of lightweight construction.

We also try to work with light, high-strength construction materials. These are materials other than concrete, since it is relatively heavy and not very strong. A modern and very promising material for lightweight construction is carbon-fiber. But it doesn't always make sense to use lightweight construction, for example if we need to meet stringent sound insulation and fire protection standards. I think that lightweight construction is worthwhile for material-saving and thus sustainability reasons. The criteria I mentioned lead to relatively complex buildings and therefore add a social component to the production of lightweight structures: it requires well educated, competent manpower and eventually produces jobs. The first modern lightweight structures were made of steel, like the Crystal Palace and other large-scale projects using prefabricated elements. When concrete used in combination with shell structures came about things really got going: suddenly it was possible to span over 30 meters with a structure of two or three centimeters thickness. Think of the famous Spanish shell structures since the twenties by Candela and Torroja or in Switzerland and Germany by Maillard, Isler and Muether. There was a whole generation of engineers who built spectacularly light for 50 years, from say 1925 to 1975. Everything from cafés over airplane hangars to family homes. Double curved shells under compressive stress were a great breakthrough that eventually died out like dinosaurs. Having been highly popular in the sixties, they soon vanished as fashion changed and higher wages made the complex formwork for the shells too expensive. Calculating their load bearing characteristics precisely was always a problem. Also thin concrete shells have poor thermal protection. Adding a thick layer of Styrofoam insulation simply kills their light appearance.

Then another young designer, Frei Otto, appeared and asked: "Why not invert everything and build tensioned structures?". He built the tensioned cable net by the 1967 German Pavilion in Montreal and was admired by Candela. Then Behnisch and his team built the roof of the Olympia Stadium in Munich using a gigantic steel net and it was spectacular. But eventually also the nets vanished. They had to be very solidly anchored in the ground, like a tent with pegs, and they also had to be tiled, which altogether was very expensive. Yet it was an exciting period for lightweight engineering. Since the '80s there have been some interesting new developments again in the field of structures under compression. Glass grid shells, for example, which consist of a very light steel structure tiled with flat glass panels. This principle was used for Berlin Central Station, but it is also suitable for small projects. In the field of tensioned structures membrane structures – look at the stadium roof we have designed – have completely replaced the cable nets. Compared to the '70s, '80s and '90s we now have a much greater spectrum of materials and structural solutions,

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and we are much better at calculating, visualizing and optimizing structures. Therefore I am optimistic. I believe lightweight construction has a great future.

Looking at what has been built in Berlin recently we find a lot of monolithic cast concrete structures. How come all these lightweight innovations are not put into practice? Is it true that one of the reasons is the cost for their static calculation?

I believe that this also has to do with a certain laziness, and not only with cost. Static calculation usually constitutes between one and ten percent of the building cost. If you spend 50% more for calculation and save cost for material later, it amounts to the same thing. I just think that often people are

too easy on themselves. I can very well imagine for urban housing to build frameworks and structures and cover them with insulation. However, energy consumption and insulation are a central topic currently and to that end it often seems easiest to make thick walls and to add a thick layer of Styrofoam to fulfill low-energy standards. Even if it looks like a bunker in the end. There are alternatives that are developing quickly at the moment, for example vacuum-insulation. However, if you are interested in how to build a single family home, and would like to know how to build it light and low-energy, that is different. I am convinced that soon enough cheap, clean and renewable energy will be available that we will not need the large amount of energy consuming insulation that we use today anymore! But to make change happen, teamwork is crucial. Only if architects, structural and installation engineers work together we can achieve good results.

Society seems to be skeptical towards the increasing application of technology. Is it right to say that 'good technology is canceling itself out' or do you think we actually need new technologies?

That is hard to say. Our world is very complex, and we have to be careful with excessive technology. There is technology that becomes outdated too fast to be incorporated into buildings.

High-tech buildings packed with

gimmicks are going to be laughed at in five years. On the other hand something like Werner Sobek's house won't, because in this case a careful study of the demands of the future has been undertaken and utilized. The structure is not the central topic of a single family house. **→ LEARN MORE ABOUT R128: WERNER SOBEK → P. 94.1** It is the intelligent facade, intelligent insulation and heating systems, and so on. Technological progress in lightweight construction happens also in the field of bridges, towers and long-span roofs for hangars and stadia. There we are dealing with movable structures, intelligent attenuation, artificial muscles, pneumatically convertible roofs and multi-functional frames. Technologically there is a great amount of potential in this. If you look at other disciplines you will find that they are absolutely dependent on technology. An Airbus airplane is packed with technology and high-tech elements and nobody minds. In my opinion this will reach building sooner or later. Good technology does not cancel itself out. There are many areas in architecture and structural engineering that can profit from technology, I am positive about that. I believe in progress. ←

WERNER SOBEK: THE NEW LESS IS MORE

Werner Sobek is researching, teaching and building at the forefront of sustainable design, engineering and technology at his Institute for Lightweight Structures and Conceptual Design (ILEK), Stuttgart, and in his consultancy with branches in Cairo, Dubai, Frankfurt, Moscow, New York and Stuttgart. His statement that future buildings will have to take in account the different lifespans of their individual parts and are to be disassembled easily is much discussed. It is one of the reasons why we wanted to talk to him about the future of technology and architecture. What is extremely interesting about his work, and possibly this might be connected to the fact that he is an engineer as well as an architect, is that despite his belief that technology can solve most of our future problems, he practices a sensual architecture he calls 'non-visual'. We find his way of combining the two disciplines inspiring. At the same time we believe it is necessary, as we think that central tasks of the future can only be resolved when different professions share their knowledge and learn to work together more productively. We met with Werner Sobek in the Lobby of the Grand Hyatt in Berlin.

September 30th, 2009, Marlene-Dietrich-Platz 2, Berlin:

You advocate ephemeral building, which is based on the recognition that different parts of a building rely on different innovations and life cycles, and that they should be exchanged or replaced independently of one another. Why hasn't the construction industry as a whole adopted this obvious insight yet? What is in the way?

Ephemeral building is an attitude. It isn't just about knowing how long individual components will last. It's also about the fact that we don't know today what will be right tomorrow. It takes a certain attitude to be able to accept this: a certain humility regarding the extent to which one's predictions are circumscribed.

It is also a complex technological

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problem, which has a lot to do with recycling – a word we still hear far too seldom in the building sector. Construction is responsible for 50% of the raw material flows in our country. Every ton of a German office building contains as much copper as 500 kg of Chilean copper ore. That's why one should think carefully about whether you can really afford to tear down a building and dispose of the rubble.

Because of the large volumes involved in the construction industry, getting to grips with lightweight design, to which I have devoted myself at my institute, makes more than just sense. It's not only about using our resources in a sustainable way, it's equally important to aim for a reduction in bulk of around 20 or 30% compared with today's average figures, even at the planning stage.

We recently conducted an interview with a futurologist, Gerd Gerken. He believes architects can only maintain their position if they focus on the technological aspects of their profession. They will only be able to assert their power and freedom in the building process if they can do things that nobody else can. Personifying the sort of architect who is at the forefront of technological development, do you feel powerful and free?

It's not about personal power; it's about the power of ideas. And as for freedom: Yes, I feel free. Architecture has changed dramatically in recent decades: with the emergence of the Ecole des Beaux Arts and the Ecole Polytechnique at the beginning of the 19th Century, it split into design-oriented architecture and technology-oriented architecture. Since then, the two aspects have moved progressively further apart. With the passage of time, the architect has become increasingly reliant on specialist planners, because

construction has become more and more complex and developed new aspects. That means architects have lost a lot of authority in recent years. For example, since the 1970s, they have lost control of project management, which means they have also lost control of the financial aspects of projects. They had to yield responsibility for structural design even before that. Just as, for the last 15-20 years, facade planners have planned facades in detail. Architects also lost control of heating and ventilation design several decades ago – and energy conception is now developing into a distinct expert planning field.

Sustainable building, the question of how to shape our constructed world so that it does not harm future generations, a central issue of our time, is another challenge facing architects. This immediately raises the question of how the different parts of a building can be connected without making it more difficult to dismantle or recycle them – should they be glued, welded or bolted? Should labels be put on the various building materials to ensure they can be identified again? And what about the maintenance, repair and cleaning of the building? These questions have made the role of the architect significantly more complicated.

We usually plan sequentially, and we know a bit about the construction process and a bit about running it, but that isn't so important. The whole plan and design of the building is condensed down into a thick wedge of paper – called a tender – that goes to the construction company. The construction company has the production know-how, but typically doesn't always build what's in the plans.

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Then the building, for example an office building, is frequently sold. The actual operator won't know the architect and vice versa. The operator then runs the building, perhaps for 30 years, heating it, cleaning it, maintaining it and repairing it. These management costs make up about 80% of the total cost of office buildings in Germany. So, if you reduce management costs by a quarter, you save the equivalent of the construction cost. Such a reduction should be quite possible with an appropriate planning approach.

Currently you notice how positive impulses toward more sustainable practices are derived from the utilization phase; impulses that have a strong impact on the planning phase. The big question now is: can the architect deal with yet another increase in the complexity of construction – or will a new type of planning team appear, in which the architect plays a somewhat different role than before? I have no answer to this question. But I think that, were the architect to play a different role, there would be no loss of authority. Perhaps if you are *primus inter pares* in a restructured planning team, you'll be able to do a lot more than you could before. I always see myself as *primus inter*

^{pares}
92.1

When we get a commission, we look first at the site and speak with the client. We also examine the meteorological and geological data, for example the sun's path, winds, and precipitation. That's when things you've never noticed before suddenly become relevant. We shape buildings so that they take advantage of seasonal or daily winds or radiation reflected from neighboring buildings and so on.

→ TRANSFERRING THIS PRINCIPLE TO THE CONTEXT OF THE CITY. ON CITIES → P. 22

The profession of the architect has a wonderful, incredibly exciting future. But you have to change the image of the work itself, its main focus. You have to have the will to do this and the establishments of higher education have to help. If training remains anchored to traditional images, then the generation leaving our schools now will sooner or later have a big problem. That is why the focus of our program at the ILEK is also to introduce these ideas into academic teaching and give students a feel for what really matters.

What core competencies are important? Which ones should be learned and taught?

Very important for us is the insight into other disciplines. The students – engineers and architects, should get

insight into other areas of design and production, such as car-making, the construction of space stations, textile technology or aircraft manufacture. You don't necessarily have to be able to design an actual airplane or a space station, but you should be familiar with the thinking that underpins those disciplines, with the discourse, and the planning methods they use in these fields. In automotive technology, for example, planning is not done independently of the production process; rather, production is integrated into the process a priori.

That means the production of an object is part of the discussion during the design stage. At some point there is a "design freeze", after which the designer can no longer make any changes.

That's something we don't have in architecture. Although there is such a thing as in-process planning, it only leads to soaring costs and inferior quality. You need that as much as you need a hole in the head. This occurs because architects can seldom summon up the discipline

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to make precise plans, involving the building contractors the way it has long been done in other industries.

We would like to make a quick detour to touch on something Ludwig Mies van der Rohe said: "The ultimate goal of the architect is to reflect the society in which he lives in his architecture." Can you give an example of a building that is a particularly good representation of our society, or important individual aspects of it, and is therefore more in tune with the modern world than others?

Our society is still scarred by widespread aesthetic neglect. I wouldn't even like to try and think of a building like that. The individualization taking place in our society right now preaches that each is his own "self-designer," which not only applies to his thinking, morals and values, but also to his appearance. And in many areas that just leads to absurdity. I would like to formulate this with the utmost clarity: As an architect, there is no way I

would ever wish to reflect this aesthetic neglect in a building. You can count yourself lucky if you, as an architect, get the opportunity to design buildings in a way that expresses an attitude that seems desirable. And that is also what Mies van der Rohe actually did – he expressed his attitude. Through his attitude he formulated ways of living and working: fluid space, light-filled living areas, and so on. This should be a fundamental part of the artist's and architect's work: formulating and establishing an attitude. I think the task of a university lecturer is just as much to impart knowledge as it is to impart an attitude. Anyone who doesn't do that could be replaced by a video cassette.

So, as an architect, you see yourself as a visionary whose job is to show people a future that would be worth fighting for, by pointing out to them how they should, or at least could live?

No, I am very cautious in that respect and have no intention of telling anyone how they should live.

I put my own attitude into my building. Clients come to me because they are in tune with my attitude and

would like to live in a house that is based on my attitude. Apart from that, I see myself more as a *couturier* who tailors a building to fit a person or a group of people – one who knows their daily needs and wishes and can answer to them, bringing joy and well-being.

For example, a working environment where workers can leave the office in the evening whistling merrily; this is dependent upon lighting, the oxygen supply, reverberation times, smells; and all these things must be designed with such loving care as to be noticeable without being intrusive. I call this "non-visual planning."

When we speak of design in architecture, we are often referring to the geometry of the design. We talk less about color, surfaces or tactile qualities. Smells are never really addressed, nor are humidity or temperature stratification. But these things allow you to create buildings; spaces for temporary or permanent habitation. Designing with light in mind is somewhat familiar to us, but it works just as well with odors or with the speed of air currents. I'm not talking about odorizing like you have in the supermarket, where a scent makes the customer head towards the sausage counter. I'm talking about the smell of wood, for

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instance, or natural materials and fibers. I use them quite consciously. When a blind man realizes that I was the one who planned a house, then I'm satisfied.

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How would you react if I called the house where you live a machine for living, following the definition of Le Corbusier?

No problem. You're welcome to say that, since you've never been there.

It's my personal manifesto, at least my first. If we keep on developing the

German *Passivhaus* model like we do today, one day we'll all end up living in houses made out of polystyrene with very small windows and we'll probably die from our own exhalations. I simply don't want to live that way. When I was a student and the weather was good, I always took my bed outside and slept there. Nowadays, whenever I have time, I ride a motorcycle through Patagonia and sleep under the open sky, lie down somewhere and look at the stars. That is simply a quality that I would like to give to other people, insofar as they also value it.

Now, we derive too much energy from non-renewable resources. That means we can wrap up, and insulate more, in order to reduce consumption further and further. That is the idea behind the passive house. But the other possibility is to use the available energy more intensively. The Earth gets some 10,000 times more energy from the sun's rays than mankind needs for all its activities. If we were able to capture even a fraction of that solar energy and temporarily store it, our problems would be solved. R128 is an active house and does exactly that. Its glazing, for example, is highly efficient without drifting into 30 cm thick insulation packages, multi-layered systems and so on. At the same time the house derives energy from solar radiation, which is then stored for later usage. We can afford to be relatively relaxed about the amount of energy we use because the sun is always there. That means we could all drive fast cars and be liberal with energy use if we just used the existing resources more efficiently. I am systematic in my implementation of active technology in my houses, so you can afford to keep as many windows as possible open from early May to mid-October. Then you can smell when it's raining.

I see the active house approach also as the only possibility for historical buildings; it's the only way to meet the challenge of transforming these buildings into energy-efficient systems. After all, we can't wrap our half-timbered houses and castles in Styrofoam – not even inside, otherwise we wouldn't be able to get into the rooms at all. This is the technological component.

R128 is a fully recyclable active house. But even this isn't the most important thing for me: I consider recyclability and energy neutrality obvious preconditions for truly sustainable building. What was important to me was to enable life to take place in a three-dimensional space. As fully glazed buildings, the 'Farnsworth House' by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Philip Johnson's 'New Canaan House' both go into this direction, but they're still 'sandwich' buildings. I just lifted the lid by three levels to create diametric visual perspectives, and I can lie in bed and watch the birds circling the house. Even I hadn't expected this quality to be so intense. Man's fascination with his relationship with the nature around him still amazes me. After six months, I noticed I didn't need a clock any more because I'd learned

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to read the time of day from the intensity and color of the light. You've probably never experienced this quality because there are too few houses of this sort. On Earth, there's just a handful of people who have tried this experiment with total transparency. A psychotherapist who heard one of my lectures called this way of living, which brings with it a wide angle, an opening of the soul, an "antidepressant." R128 has everything I expect from a building: fresh air, a great view, light; breathe deeply, let the soul expand.

Of course, my clients always visit me, and in recent years we have had many guests. The acquisition process is always the same: they come, are pleased to have been invited, admire all the technology with the contact-free taps etc. At about 11pm they say, "This is really cozy here." And at about 1am they say, "I want a house like this too!"

If you shut your eyes – earlier I talked about non-visual architecture – it doesn't matter whether the house is transparent or not. You are still aware of temperature fields and air currents, reverberation times and so on. If this is all wonderful, you really do feel pretty good. When you then open your eyes and are surrounded by carefully designed decor and have a panoramic view outside, then you are totally happy. And then it's easier to shake off a traditional attitude to living, simply because you have experienced something you could never have experienced before. People are completely open in this respect – but if you always offer them the same nonsense, they don't have any choice.

Where can you get the inspiration for such non-visual architecture that feels pleasant at every level of perception?

I developed this attitude because I've had entirely different experiences in my life. I know, for example, people who do end-of-life care for

people in their last days. They tell me how people die and what is really important in the final minutes and days of their lives. Things such as peace, a smell and someone who holds their hand. They don't want a million, no fast cars, no fancy stuff, just someone to hold their hand. You just have to think about it yourself. If you're having a bad time, you need warmth. You close your eyes because you are exhausted. What sort of space do you want to fall asleep in, what do you want to hear?

You can combine all these things in a way that reflects your client's attitude, their personal intention, and that's your job as a young architect. You have to draw yourself a picture of how you want to design your houses. The possibilities are far from exhausted. Whether you use technology or not is irrelevant to me. You won't be able to build sustainable and energy-efficient houses without a certain amount of technology. All the time, people cling to their multifunctional devices and accept them as a normal part of their lives – but not when this technology is a part of their living environment. Several people in contemporary architecture advocate that kind of dichotomy. But why should we go back to mud huts? By the first weekend of December at the latest, they all rush outside and sue the architects: "Too cold in the bathroom." "Water frozen."

First of all, there's nothing negative about covering a wall with an aluminum sheet. Of course, aluminum needs a lot of energy to manufacture in the first place, and it's infernal stuff if you just throw

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it away. But if you sort it properly and recycle it, there's no problem. Things like the 'throwaway society' should simply be seen as morally questionable.

I grew up in a very poor area that is now among the richest in the world: Swabia. No resources, no energy, no fertile soil, no connecting infrastructure. What counted (and fortunately still does), was thorough, careful, perfect work. And if you work like that in architecture, people in the resulting buildings will feel good, too. I see it as an important part of my work to serve people in this way. The fact that many describe it as visionary or revolutionary irritates me. I have always taken it for granted. But in the first semesters at university, you can't avoid noticing that this is not at all self-evident. At many universities, students present their master's dissertation and no one asks what the things are actually built from. The issue of building materials is seen as intellectually inferior, let alone the question as to where the air comes from and goes to, though these are issues which are extremely important for the welfare of the people in the building.

You are both an architect and a civil engineer. Do you sometimes hear yourself speaking as an architect, and sometimes as an engineer or are the two completely united? Shouldn't every architect also be an engineer and vice versa?

This balancing act is quite difficult. Civil engineering is increasingly becoming a science that has to take complex mathematical processes into consideration. At the same time, the typical civil engineer has virtually no training in design, hasn't even been made aware of it. In essence, it's a

separate profession. Things aren't quite so bad for architects but in the end, apart from structural design, no engineering instruction is involved in the training of architects and this leads to an inability to communicate, on both sides.

Once I started to study civil engineering, I immediately realized: this is a completely distorted picture of the way the environment is created. As early as the third day of my studies, I went to the architects, listened to what was said there and thought again: This is somehow wrong, they don't have any technological competence at all. They always claim they have it, but in reality they don't. So, I just studied both.

At once I noticed that as an architect you were supposed to work with a very peculiar range of materials: concrete, wood and steel. The idea of using fabric, aluminum or chewing gum only caused irritation. So I decided to find out for myself: Why can't you make buildings out of rubber-like substances? From that time on, I organized my studies myself. Do not allow yourself to be pushed around by any proscribed periods of study. That's the biggest mistake you can make! We will all live to be 80 to 100 years old, so at the end of your life, it's irrelevant whether you studied for 12 semesters or 13. But as far as your professional influence is concerned, the fact that you once attended a series of lectures on philosophical problems or aircraft interiors or fabric design is of great interest. It's called university, not monoversity – and with good reason.

You mentioned Mies: he grew up in a family of stonemasons and knew what you could do with a single stone. And if you do not have

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the good fortune to grow up in a mason's family, you as a student should still try to acquire such things, to get a feel for areas that would give you extra skills you could imagine might be important at some point. There is a Latin proverb that says, "No book is so bad that you could learn nothing from it."

I haven't yet designed an airplane. But I got an incredible amount out of the fact that I spent almost four semesters working on aircraft construction. I would answer the question as to whether an architect should study civil engineering and an engineer should study architecture on a case-to-case basis. Many students won't manage to juggle it because it's very difficult, and many colleges won't support them. I would still call on them to look at as broad a spectrum as possible. Take the idea of university seriously and study things that are to the left and right of your own field of study. You can attend four or five courses outside your field to learn different ways of thinking, values and languages. You will always benefit from it, maybe only in 20 years' time, but you will benefit from it. That I can guarantee. At first you might not know what you're doing there but you'll always get something out of it.

You spoke before about individualization. The philosopher Peter Sloterdijk has introduced the spatial concept of the capsule into this discussion. On the occasion of the exhibition 'interior / exterior' at the Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg you discussed this concept with Peter Sloterdijk. What interests you about that?

Peter Sloterdijk is a very sharp thinker who presents a huge amount of knowledge in his books in such a well-structured manner that it is an intellectual joy to read them. His views are that of a most highly qualified person, and you can adapt your own views to fit, you can absorb them or disagree with them. This makes books like his incredibly important. In fact, he has differentiated, for example,

between micro- and macro-phenomena. Interdisciplinary exchange is always good and useful, but I would be careful about applying terms such as bubbles or foams, which Peter Sloterdijk uses within the framework of his philosophical reflections, directly to architecture.

For instance, take my old friend Finn Geipel, who teaches and works in Berlin: When we work together a philosopher is included in our planning team to contribute his perspective to the process of reformulating an architectural expression. Of course, these are not always quantum leaps; mostly it's an evolution but sometimes it's something revolutionary. ←

CLAUS OTTO SCHARMER

FROM EGOSYSTEM TO ECOSYSTEM

98.1: **98.1:** Otto Scharmer is a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge. He teaches and researches at the MIT Sloan School of Management on one essential question that was also posed at the beginning of this book: How does change come into the world? Otto co-created the MIT Green Hub, ELIAS (Emerging Leaders Innovate Across Sectors), the Transforming Capitalism Initiative, and the Presencing Institute, all of which are experiments with ways of shifting our perspective ahead to get a deeper understanding of the present and make better decisions. A central part of this proposition is the 'U-process', as he explains in our interview. He advises companies, institutions and governments around the globe on their way into the future. Why are we interested in talking to someone who is dealing with leadership? Because we, as Otto does, understand leadership as the integral to the capacity of a system to shape its future. We didn't meet Mr. Scharmer in person, but did the interview in a way he also uses when he globally teaches his courses: via Skype.

April 29th, 2010, Bülowstrasse 90, Berlin / MIT, 50 Memorial Drive, Cambridge:

I would like to start with a question that you usually start your interviews with: "What underlying questions does your work address?"

I guess the starting point and therefore the underlying question for me is: "What does it take for a society to learn? What does it take for institutions to learn, and in particular to learn

across professional boundaries?" That is the underlying question. What I have found over the years of practical experimentation is that there are two different sources of learning: One is learning by

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reflecting on the experiences of the past and the other is learning by connecting to an emerging future possibility and operating from there; you could say 'learning from the emerging future'.

I realized all the methodologies we have in the field of the organization of learning and change management are all based on the first way of learning, not on the second one. But in the real world of institutional change, most leaders are dealing with challenges that they cannot address just by reflecting on the past, but that require them to connect with emerging future possibilities in order to make them happen, or become part of their realization process.

That is what my research is about. I have been trying to answer the question: Does the second learning process actually exist? And, if it does, what can I do as an individual or an organization to operate it?

You are mostly experimenting with small groups. Is 'Presencing' a technique that is only valid for small groups of leaders or can it, as a case study, stand for all kinds of organizations and communities?

The main concept here at MIT Sloan that everybody agrees on is called 'distributed leadership'. Distributed leadership is getting rid of the old way of traditional leadership, where the power lies with a single person.

Of course, there is research on what makes great leaders and so on, but that is not only very boring but furthermore is cementing the existing power structures. Leadership is no longer something top-down. Most of our problems today do not have top-down solutions, so we have to come together in a variety of different layers. We need more complicated structures, distributed leadership or ecosystem-like structures, because there is no single person on top who A: has the power and B: the knowledge to know what to do. The way I describe leadership today is not the ability of a person, but rather the capacity of a system to shape its future. It is the capacity of, for example, a community or a city to shape the future into what's in-line with their aspirations. We define leadership as a systemic property, which means that it involves people at the top, people at the frontline, people in-between, the network leaders and so on. That is why leadership today is more systemic and less personal.

As a result we need collective shifts in awareness. But if you study them, you find out that these shifts of awareness happen with individuals. 'Network structure' means that there is no boss above you. You are in a relationship, you state different things, you develop different ideas and in the end of the day you need to decide what is right. It seems as if that means less power to the individual, but it is the opposite. It puts more weight on you as an individual, one who has to come up with your own judgments and you have to balance the tension between the stakeholders that pull you in different directions. You have to do that without the boss, the god, who tells you from above what you need. This is postmodern reality. In some way leadership today is more systemic, distributed, collective, but in another way it puts more emphasis on us as a people and in particular more emphasis on us as good listeners, good relationship builders. In a world where the geometry of power has changed towards a network society, what is the ultimate resource to rely on? The quality of relationships with other people. And how do you nurture that? Through the quality of your

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listening. That is why the deeper shifts of awareness, which, if we are lucky, we can observe in a collective situation, often start with a small group of people. It is both: more systemic and more personal.

How do you, as a researcher in the field of distributed leadership, evaluate a technology like the Internet, where everybody can share information without big prior investments? Could its success be the first sign of a shift away from personal to collective power, from isolated institutions to cross-institutional forms of learning and change?

Let me put it this way: What have people in organizational leadership been talking about the past 15 years? About the network leadership challenge, the network type of organizing. The hierarchical, centralized or decentralized way of organizing is being replaced by the network. It is the same phenomenon Manuel Castells described in *The Network Society*.

There are signs for a fundamental shift in the geometry of power, away from a power web inside an institution, towards the space in-between. It is now the networks of relationships that are used to mobilize actions across boundaries.

This is certainly a fundamental change. If you look at the driver of globalization – the global economy – technology is playing an incredibly large role there, it enfolds massive forces of change.

I see the necessity to go beyond the existing forms of organizing that can be summarized with hierarchy, with markets and with competition. We need to go beyond that and develop a deeper way of connecting with one another at the scale of an entire ecosystem. I think the requirements we have, the challenges that we face in many systems today such as sustainability or education are such that we have to develop a capacity to innovate at the scale of the whole. And this always involves multiple organizations, individuals, consumers, and multiple entities across sectors. This collective innovation capacity does not work if everyone sticks to the old, existing way of operating: to be successful in that aim we have to change the level of awareness. Consciousness, as the three of you state in your essay on people, is key, awareness is key. We are referring to the same fundamental phenomenon, which has to do with the inner state from which we operate.

To me the essence of all deeper change work has to do with shifting the inner place from which the system is operating. I would say the biggest gap I see in the phenomenology of our present time is this: on the one hand we are all connected to the global ecosystem with our collective and individual actions and our relationships to other people, while on the other hand our mind and our consciousness is confined to our personal ecosystem. It is the gap between our ecosystem, that is bounding our consciousness, and the ecosystem, which is the boundary of our actual relationships. In my opinion that gap is the biggest leadership challenge today. We need to find ways to change the level of consciousness from ecosystem to ecosystem.

This is the point where I can come back to your question. Am I excited about technology? Yes and no. There is a 'No', because technology, in spite of all the promises, is increasing the noise more often than not, and also, in spite of all the excitement, it is leading to an impoverishment of our actual relationships: we have many more but they

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are shallow. There is a 'Yes', as I am extremely excited how much is possible in the area of the work that I am doing. You can actually do much more on the web than I had ever thought. For example, an experimental project that I call the 'global classroom' is the attempt to transfer the common learning process of a group of people you usually find in the form of a convention or a workshop into the virtual space. The participants attend lectures on the web and meet in small groups via Skype. This works well. In some funny way it is more liberating than sitting around with other people in person. I do not want to idealize it, but I have done some exciting experimenting with it, and I have a fun time using it. Information technologies are undoubtedly increasing the noise, while moving people to a deeper state of awareness is about reducing the noise.

But those are issues we are all dealing with. The existential challenges that we face as individuals, local communities, and as a global community require us to break through walls and to hopefully reach a deeper level.

Do you think empathy, as our universal ability to understand each other's perspective, gives us the possibility to tackle the gap between ecosystem and egosystem and come to a better understanding of the whole?

Yes, empathy is definitely a mechanism of major importance. I try to conceptualize and investigate the deeper levels of human relationships in three terms: firstly, in terms of the 'open mind', which means to attend towards what is different in the other

person without judging it. Secondly the 'open heart', which means to empathize and begin to sense the place from which the other person is operating from.

It is about seeing through the other person's eyes. This cognitive shift requires you to access the intelligence of your heart or, as you call it, empathy. The third term I refer to is the 'open will', that is the capacity to let go and let come: let go of all identities, things you hold on to, that prevent you from what wants to emerge. These are the three concepts I am working with and I find useful to differentiate. Practically speaking, what is preventing us from using those concepts is the voice of judgment, the voice of criticism, and the voice of fear? So each of the three levels has an inhibiting force, a source of resistance. I, being Americanized, call it 'the Enemy'. Where there is resistance is where the leverage is. You need to notice it and find a way of working against it.

Empathy is also an emergent topic in Neuroscience. Are you interested in neuro-scientific findings; is it something that helps your theory?

Well, I think it is an interesting spot of data, but it is a bit overrated. We, as practitioners of change in the social field, have a much more immediate feedback about whether something is

working or not. In that regard we get a much more immediate validation of than someone who finds out how certain neural patterns change after 60 hours of meditation. I find it interesting, but so what? What is the big deal, didn't we expect that before?

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What we find a major problem is the lack of consciousness for the consequences of our actions, as individuals as well as at a global scale. Do you think the advanced learning processes you are investigating can tackle this 'gap' or is it more a tool for better global cooperation?

I think you are right, the main split we have today is between the individual perception and the realities we produce as a global economy. These results are already our reality but our awareness is not catching up with that reality. We do one thing with our collective action that we, with our individual consciousness, do not really understand. That is

the leverage point. The essence of 'Presencing' is to begin to re-link these two things in order to extend the awareness. Not only to other people, or in a business to the value chain, or within a city to ecology, but we also need to include the outcomes and the practical results that we collectively enact. And it is also to understand the things we do not like as a starting point for change. I refer to exactly this when I talk about the 'egosystem' and the 'ecosystem'.

The question you ask yourself in your research "how does change come into the world" demands for a change in society. Is it possible to reinvent societies?

I often use the term 'regenerating'. It is not just redesigning something. It also includes the material and the holistic side of recreating something.

I think I haven't found the real term

yet, but one I am toying with is a German word that Joseph Beuys used: '*Umstülpung*'. Inversion. What I like about it is the upside-down, inside-out element of it. You have this kind of upside-down that is re-linking to the old western traditions we come from. I understand that you, in your understanding of architecture, distance yourself from the old split of mind over matter, one is more worth, the other less, which is the old western cosmology that puts the god outside of the matter. I also like to develop concepts where these two elements come back together, and that is where the inversion of the field has great power.

As architects we are, and have to be, very much interested in the future. We are spending all of our time and effort planning in future contexts, trying to shape future living environments.

What could 'Presencing' and the 'Theory U' do for practitioners in the field of architecture?

The 'U-process' of 'Theory U' is an analysis of social systems based on four levels of consciousness.

The other aspect of 'Theory U' is the social technology. What is the process we have to go through in a diverse group to make this journey of shifting the level of awareness and starting to operate from that?

I do not have a lot experience in the process of making architecture. But I have witnessed one that worked fairly well: when our farmhouse burned down in the 1970s, an architect rebuilt it. He won the competition because he actually lived with the community of the farm for a couple of weeks. That's the immersion, the first point in the 'U-process'. You become part of the community, get inside, and get a sense of living there.

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The second one would be to retreat, reflect, and connect to the deeper levels of knowing, that's what you might call the 'creative process'. I couldn't watch it directly, but what I could watch was the third step when he came with the sketches – there were many rounds back and forth, evolving and prototyping and changing – and involved my mother and the other people as active practitioners in the project. Then they went to the site together and envisioned the plans, got more ideas and so on and so on. It has a lot to do with the 'U-process'.

103.1.1
What is probably different in the projects that you guys are doing is that you usually don't have a simple case with one client, instead you are dealing with a lot of different people, like in city planning, where you have a bunch of people with different expectations, perspectives, and world views. How to connect them in a unifying process seems to be the most interesting challenge today. In a way, it is like the 'U- process' with the stages: co-initiating, figuring out the common, sensing activities, the deep reflection, prototyping and finally embodying all that into physical structures. There is a great relevance, because that is where things usually go wrong!

The challenge that you are facing is that you are dealing with the gaps within society, the social divides for example within a city, and also the divide between human beings and nature. The presence and the story of the place in the community you have to uncover, allow to reemerge, without getting distracted by the noise that is coming at us from left and right.

If you understand the job of the architect as inclusive of urban planning and creating living city ecologies – yes, you have the whole damn mess there and in fact the more I think about it I realize the applicability of 'Presencing' in the field of architecture. Architecture is an articulation of the creative process, in the context of social complexity, not just a project of individual artistic creativity.←

→EXAMPLES OF PLANNING WITHIN THE CITY: PET SPACES →P. 38
THE LUXURY HOUSE →P. 42

WALTER PRIGGE: THE DEATH OF PERIPHERY

Walter Prigge is a sociologist and vice-president of the Bauhaus Stiftung in Dessau. We first met Walter Prigge at an international forum on sustainable cities held by the Heinrich Böll Stiftung in Berlin in May 2009. As an introductory speaker he addressed a question we also feel very excited about: What is the atmosphere of our future cities? We met Professor Prigge in his office in the classical modern building of the Bauhaus Schule in Dessau, where, with the help of the building, he explained to us the differences between objective and subjective architecture. The topic we originally wanted to discuss with him was the periphery, meaning the correlation between city and landscape, between the manmade environment and the natural one. Walter Prigge has been researching on this topic for two decades and has published several books, one of which is called *Peripherie ist überall*. The fact that today though this periphery seems to vanish, is a central background for our visions of future city economy and ecology and the reason why we asked Professor Prigge: Is Periphery nowhere?

August 4th, 2009, Gropiusallee 38, Dessau:

Professor Prigge, I'd like to talk to you about one of your main themes: the periphery. Why do we have to think about the periphery and why do we have to engage with it?

I have found three points in this respect. Firstly, for two decades we have been dealing with the peripheral because we no longer know what the center is. In other words, a society that has been theoretically analyzing and organizing

itself into network-like structures more and more over the last two decades – not only on the Internet but also in relationships – of course no longer has a center.

Point two, we still haven't realized what Marx says, namely that there is a central contradiction in capitalist society: although the rela-

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relationship between capital and labor may well drive it, it's still not the center. This notion of center and periphery is perhaps a feudal metaphor. It's in the city that we notice that the part we call the center is actually the small museum-like part, where the mainstream organizes itself. When we say "we're going into town" we mean this small center that makes up maybe 3% of the place. The third point is that the main impulses for a different culture in the 20th Century didn't come from the center but from the edge. They were marginal at first, but were then made central. That is clearly discernable in the mechanism of gentrification. You have a peripheral district and then artists move in and this gentrifies it and makes it central. But this also makes it worthless for culture, and the people who lived there have to move on. That clearly shows how culture came from the periphery in the 20th century. That's why the peripheral is so important. If you put it positively, we have enhanced the peripheral because peripheral space is unfinished, because it hasn't yet been modernized. It hasn't become mainstream yet. There is still a chance to do something else other than merely continuing with modernization. Due to this incompleteness, this lack of modernization, you can have different ideas. The peripheral can and must do something different to the center, which is already part of society, so to speak.

One can now say that the avant-garde in Eastern Germany – a shrinking region – has an advantage in that it has to, and is able, to ask different questions. It can skip things that Western Germany already has left behind and so avoid the same contradictions. So the peripheral, the marginalized, has an opportunity to think differently. These are the three points, I think, that have caused us to check out peripheral areas more, and approach them with an open mind and get involved with them. Of course, the refusal to dismiss the peripheral out of hand is a change that has only been occurring in the last 20 years. I believe we are still in the middle of it, that we don't know yet where it will take us.

Do you think that this emerging awareness of the limits of the world – understood materialistically – means that you have to pay more attention to the periphery because one man's periphery is another man's center? In terms of lifestyle, of individual worlds of experience?

Basically, if you look at the whole globe, the Third World syndrome is a thing of the past. We notice it, for example, in the wonderful statistics that show how much water we use – not here, but when we import something from other countries – coffee, for example. It turns out we Germans as a nation use the most. According to our logic,

the only chance peripheral regions that used to depend on the center – or in other words, regions that on the one hand had "not yet" been industrialized but on the other hand industrialized Europe – had, was to become like us. We gradually allowed them to do that, right up to the debate as to whether they should also get the same sort of cars as us – "That won't actually work, that will ruin everything." That's all over now. Looked at globally, the center-periphery metaphor has been ditched because it no longer fits. We've got the periphery in the center as well, because migration flows from those parts of the world come here. We now pay a lot more attention to the

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→ A PROPOSAL TO FIGHT GENTRIFICATION: THE LUXURY HOUSE → P. 42

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dependencies and power structures, ones that we as a western hegemony have over the rest of the world. At the same time, ongoing modernization in India and China is destabilizing all this. So, of necessity, we pay more heed and look at the world as a complete system, where all the parts have to work together if it isn't to break down. The issue of sustainability makes this even more critical, because the end of the fossil fuel world is foreseeable. As far as oil is concerned, attention has always been paid to the periphery, to the Arabian desert. No one was interested in the sand there, but oil was a different matter. Wars were waged.

The peripheral has taken on a huge significance in the actions of social groups. But you can also see here how difficult it is to actually think the metaphor of center and periphery at all now, or to use the concepts in a way that still makes sense. A network would of course be its opposite, an alternative concept that's increasingly making inroads into society and social relations. Everywhere we're talking about networks because the metaphor of a lot of different nodes and parts is closer to the truth than the polarity of center and periphery. One can safely say that this environmental issue has increased the amount of attention paid to apparently still undiscovered regions of the world.

106.1: There is nothing outside; every part of the world belongs to us.

We created the peripheral areas too. In Germany we're only now noticing how, through reunification, we created Eastern Germany as a peripheral space. The way the advance of the market has made previously central areas peripheral used to be known as 'leopard skin' because of its light and dark dots. But of course they can change historically. Places that were once rich have fallen on hard times, or been marginalized.

Today we go to Dubai, which just 30 years ago was still a fishing village with 500 inhabitants. We create this change through our actions and systems. In this respect, there's no space left that is so peripheral that you don't have to take it into account. When you discover that China is buying up half of Africa because it no longer has enough room to grow rice – the country has grown so large that it needs agricultural land in other countries – then you can't fail to notice something is wrong.

→ DEALING WITH THIS DEVELOPMENT: ON CITIES → P. 22.1

106.2: You published a book entitled
Peripherie ist überall
 (*Periphery is everywhere*) ...

That was 15 years ago – this is a polemical response. Back then it was meant as a slogan that calls on you to stop pushing the peripheral away and to say, "We'll take care of the center." That is exactly what it signals.

And there is also a periphery in the center. That's what we realized in the '90s – that we have a fragmented urban structure, no longer a core surrounded by a thinly populated countryside. The image would be that of a fried egg, whereas what we have now is more like scrambled eggs – a structure where fragments of country and city collide. Actually, there's no structure there any more.

Periphery is everywhere, even in the center, which is why you have to pay attention to its principles. I think books still do that. Lampugnani has come up with an atlas of peripheral situations, so some approaches are still taking the idea forward.

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In your book, there was an article on urban sprawl by Thomas Sieverts. Does his description take this network structure into account?

He had the same idea as we did and analyzed it. He noticed which relationships dominated culturally, socially and where town planning was concerned. Then he did the same at

Ladenburg College. For the amount of money that was spent, relatively little came out. I don't know why. The books are quite uninteresting in comparison with the original idea.

You really have to go to Castells, to the origins of the network concept. You can expect a lot more from them than you get from Sieverts. For him, the vision of what happened between the nucleated towns was an eye opener. For example, why do people put detached houses around a motorway intersection? It's ridiculous to build a house in that sort of place. Of course, it's important to have easy access to a motorway from home, but he showed that this sort of neighborhood is ghastly by any normal standards. Important also is Castells' recognition that the furniture warehouse with the snack kiosk in the parking lot, and the gas station have been upgraded to social amenities comparable to a club house or community center.

This work was correct and that's why the book made such an impact. A lot of people apart from him were already looking at the periphery differently because it was out of control. My point was that the peripheral cultural elements – the family house, the car and the shopping mall – which determine the peripheral area – all of them middle class cultural elements – move into the city. At the moment, we can see a resurgence of the middle class. And they are destroying the cities with their culture. They are destroying what we call the European city, by building the sort of houses that you can see a lot in Leipzig, houses built into late 19th century courtyards: shaped like an atrium; introverted and closed off, not urban at all, not with three stories but just one. That means the single-family home model is coming to the heart of the city. And the car, which has again become such a cult object, is back too – shortly before it disappears for good, you might say. Local public transport is being cut back, especially in declining areas. The shopping mall centralizes consumption and culture with it. These three suburban models now dominate the town. In shrinking towns and cities, you can already see quite clearly how the culture of peripheral space is displacing Central European city structures.

Richard Senett uses the term 'Dionysian', a concept that harks back to Nietzsche, to describe the city as a place of confrontation and consideration, a place that both presupposes and promotes these aspects. So this is actually about the city as a place of encounters with strangers.

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Urban is, to start with a very old definition, the relationship between private and public spaces. That relationship has become messed up. For instance, when we make a call on a mobile phone in a public space, we are in private. We are using public space as private space. But, as with Koolhaas, there are also public spaces

in private spaces. That's why we love old apartments. Because they have categories of space that provide a buffer, such as big hallways, which you can also use for something else. By contrast, the hallway in

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a new building is just the quickest way from A to B. The very fact you can open or connect rooms virtually represents public use categories in private space. If we stick to these categories of private and public, then in a one-family house, you fall straight from the public into the private sphere. There is no buffer, just like in American houses, where you enter the living space directly from the elevator. The single-family house is the same. That's why there are no communities in single-family housing estates – because the people there use the hard border of their garden fences to demarcate public from private and private from public. That is why their level of uncertainty and need for security is so great – apart from the fact that the single-family house is actually more likely to be the target of a robbery than a rented apartment is. An atrium house separates the private and the public in an even more extreme fashion. The private part is not visible and there is no communication, not even a place for public communication. An apartment building hallway has a corridor where people argue, pick things up, and even fight. My neighbor smokes in the corridor; apparently he can't smoke in his flat any more. I gave up smoking five years ago, so obviously this is terrible for me, and I could potentially argue with him.

→ MIXING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE: THE LUXURY HOUSE → P. 42-1

Lars Lerup also gives a very nice illustration of this in *Building the Unfinished*, showing the lack of buffer space in an American single-family house and how as a result the subjects do not communicate through the use of space. It is simply missing. Without wanting to hype the fact that communication takes place, the common room is very important as a threshold, and it's no coincidence that the threshold has become an issue in architecture again. I think that's a key feature of peripheral spatial structure as opposed to urban spatial structure. I would now like to think along those lines.

Why is the self-sufficient

single-family house not urban
from a sociological point of view?

Richard Sennett said that the danger lies in privatization. If we privatize everything, it's exactly this point

that will be lost: the encounter. Everyone hides away in their private space and that leads to a segregated spatial structure, where social groups cut themselves off from each other and form ghettos either upwards or downwards. Encounters with strangers no longer take place and there's no more communication or broadening of horizons. How should we assess that: Does the ghetto have positive features? Doesn't it form an identity? Doesn't it also make you strong enough to approach strangers? The problem is, however, that it functions by locking things up. That's been the debate ever since we emerged from modernism. How do we rearrange these relationships? Sennett said this very early on. When it reached us here in Germany, it had a direct effect on the concept of green citizens' initiatives. The idea was to make towns more rural, with small units, instead of going for the bustling, modern pace and culture of the centre. He had already said this much earlier. But you can say that the Dionysian – in other words, the expansive, the sensual – isn't necessarily a bad place to start from, even in the profane structure of a shopping center, in order to create an atmosphere that includes subcultures and pushes them to the fore. That's what Jon Jerde lives on. Critical theory in sociology

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has always maintained that “we have to change mass culture, we have to transform it and turn everything into high culture, or else we will be alienated and manipulated by the mass media.” Today, in the light of television, cinema and jazz, we see things differently to the way we did in the 1950s and '60s. Today – apart from the fact that you can always push the ‘OFF’ button – we take in a lot of things and use them contrary to the production intention. We use things in a way they weren’t intended for, make things subversive when they weren’t originally intended to be that way. Culture also provides us with that possibility. The idea of the audience as the producer is the same as the one where we are the producers of space; it’s not the architects who produce space for me, but rather I who produce space with them.

That’s a postmodern concept: today we’d say that we still probably differentiate between a successful atmosphere and a kitschy one. A kitschy one that only draws on the consumer aspect and remains recognizable when it’s used in a shopping mall, for example, merely to catch the customers’ eyes and make them buy something. This manipulative strategy exists and will continue to exist and yet Jerde still manages to produce an open aesthetic, sensuous abundance – like an iconic building that’s open to interpretation and appropriation. In fact, to go somewhere and do something because you won’t just be manipulated, but you’ll instead remain the subject is a decision that is normally delegated to the city. But it’s also present in Jerde’s shopping centers. The city is the space where we can experience culture, because the city centralizes this culture, assembles it in one place and creates new places, right down to the urban entertainment center. You see it in Potsdamer Platz, where there are cinemas and restaurants and some shops too. Consumption might indeed be its underlying function, but it doesn’t just dissolve into consumerism. The more the structure is augmented by other functions, the less it can be regulated, the more public it becomes. These are the subversive attitudes this structure contains. If it continues to be augmented and thus becomes even more complex, at some point it will actually become the city. Today the shopping mall is the city. ←

EIKE ROSWAG: THE BEST TECHNOLOGY IS NO TECHNOLOGY

Eike Roswag is a young architect who specializes in alternative building and material technologies. He undertakes research projects on organic building materials and he has been building with clay since he was a student at the TU Berlin. In his work, the incredible diversity of applications for natural building materials becomes especially obvious. He has participated in projects using natural building materials around the world.

One of his projects, a single family house largely made of clay is situated in the posh Westend of Berlin and is, against the general expectation of what clay architecture is supposed to look like, a sophisticated white villa. His experiences with traditional building techniques go beyond a purely architectural outcome since they also have a very interesting social component. His goal is to represent natural building materials as a step forward, not backward, and to develop applications that work with different kinds of climates, qualified builders, contexts, price spans and groups of clients.

→ FIND HIS PROJECTS ONLINE: WWW.ZRS-BERLIN.DE

August 17th, 2009, Lehrter Strasse 57, Berlin:

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe said the ultimate goal of an architect is to reflect in his architecture the society in which he lives. Can you name a building that is either positive or negative from your point of view?

→ ROOT OF THIS QUESTION:
MIES → P. 201:1

I see the Sony Center, this steel and glass giant, as a negative example. Energetically it's sheer nonsense, a symbol of the throwaway society. A totally wrong message.

On the other hand, I would say that a project such as our school in Bangladesh represents, or should

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represent, our age.

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When we work on a project, it creates a process that ultimately reflects society. It reflects the ongoing discourse with the client, where you don't know at the start what the outcome will be. So we aren't designing a label, but instead entering into a discourse. This is what interests me, the people, the artisans, everyone involved in it. The more resonance there is in cooperation, the better it gets. For me, it results in a constructed society.

→ A SIMILAR OPINION ABOUT SOCIETY AND ARCHITECTURE: WIEL ARETS → P. 75.1

111.2

You build with loam. Why?

There are a number of reasons for that. Until the Second World War, wattle and daub was normal, especially in rural construction, but also in the cities. Houses built from loam have a healthy living environment and high quality.

We're currently doing a development project in Mozambique. When they asked us there why we were working with loam, we said it was a healthy way of building, foodstuffs keep well, there are no problems with water and people feel comfortable. Loam is not only free of pollutants, but can also absorb pollutants from the air.

Of course, loam has its limits: the houses don't last as long, so people there want to have houses made of concrete. I show people the house we built in Westend – a snow-white villa, partly built out of loam. That surprises them, because the house looks very clean-cut and European.

→ SEE FOR YOURSELF: PHOTOGRAPH WESTEND GRUEN → P. 206.1

We generally use natural materials, which means we avoid all the pollutants from industrial glues, plastic windows, floors and so on, and the loam is a key factor because of its handling characteristics in relation to the indoor environment.

But it's generally about using natural materials as much as possible, which also means cellulose and a lot of wood. For the insulation, we have to fall back on other materials because loam is not a good insulator.

In Abu Dhabi, we converted a historic fort where we collected all the old material, some of it dating from the 19th century, in the courtyard and then watered and re-compacted it. Apart from the last five millimeters, which we wanted to be clean and therefore made from new material, it was all just old loam. Compare that to a concrete building when it's demolished. It takes a lot more energy to shred all the material and make it usable again.

Clearly we cannot build a skyscraper, but there are a large number of applications where we can go a long way with natural materials.

The house Westend Grün is not set in an urban context. What would wattle and daub look like in a city?

Put it this way, we use 80% to 95% natural materials in these houses. The only thing that changes is the proportion. In Berlin Mitte, for example, at least 10 to 15% of the apartments are made with loam plaster. I am talking about apartments where loam plaster was used during their renovation.

The loam plaster's effect starts at a thickness of just two centimeters:

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over this thickness, it starts to regulate the room environment and humidity.

That is the depth that functions throughout the daily cycle. A greater depth will function throughout the seasonal cycle. Loam can moderate the effect of summer heat waves, evaporate moisture, can cool, and so on.

So a 'healthy indoor environment' refers to the build-up of heat and humidity ...

Yes, especially the humidity. We want to do more research into this area in the future. It still isn't really clear what

happens, although of course we have some practical experience.

The loam is simply extremely active as far as moisture is concerned: you can see that as soon as you put adobe in a water bath – it dissolves. But up to that point, it can absorb a great deal of moisture. In a bedroom, for example, it absorbs the moisture that people give off during the night and releases it again during the day, thereby compensating for fluctuations. By discharging moisture through evaporation, it also cools. In Abu Dhabi, we measured the temperature fluctuations over the course of the day. The outside temperature varied between 38 and 48 degrees, whereas the range was only between 39 and 42 degrees inside the building – significantly lower temperatures.

But loam doesn't just cool, as in Abu Dhabi. In Bangladesh, for example, we have a moderate but very humid climate. The concrete houses there have all turned black from the inside. Loam can regulate the moisture that accumulates there and maintain the hygiene of the inner space.

Germans increasingly understand that their health depends on their environment, on their living space. That is why there is a growing number of people who want to work with natural materials. When the clients from Westend, who didn't originally come to us because of the loam, got involved and were convinced, even though it would cost them more, that made us very happy – in other words, we'd managed to build bridges. There are simply lots of building materials that we can supplement with loam: virtually every component can be combined with the advantages of loam. Even in a municipal building.

Our friends in India have shown us rammed earth buildings, which people say don't function properly. They lack the positive qualities of loam. There I saw them mixing a small amount of cement into the loam during the construction. This is done quite frequently. Adding even 5% concrete completely neutralizes the loam's positive qualities. At that very moment, the material dies and cannot be recycled. All the advantages are immediately lost.

This is why we are pretty-hardcore about using only loam. There is no concrete in the loam, and no other additives, just the natural product. There are now some good companies that can use pure loam to make the white loam plaster used, for example, in the house in Westend Green. Any tradesman who wants to use these products can do so. We've already come a long way. Nevertheless, we still want to press ahead with these products and get involved in their development.

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Thinking about a Berlin town-house, are there any simple, attractive ways to use natural products, even in structural components?

Two story loam buildings do quite well in our region, where there aren't many earthquakes, although earthquakes are an issue in Germany too.

Otherwise we're talking about normal structural parameters, so we can use adobe or rammed earth, which is slightly more expensive, for up to two floors without a problem. Otherwise, compound structures have to be used, such as concrete frame structures consisting of up to 20% concrete and then 80% loam.

Loam can be integrated into a building as a load-bearing element. We have already made plans involving partial load situations and are hoping for a contract to build a school or small residential building. The scale would interest us a lot – say, three or four floors.

This sort of solid loam wall with its own storage capacity: how big is the one in Berlin and how much can it store over a year or a day?

In the daily cycle, it stabilizes the humidity and absorbs pollutants – although it's very difficult to assess how much – by storing harmful substances together with the moisture, so when the moisture

escapes again, they remain in the wall.

People who live in mud houses, for example, say that a day after a party where there was a lot of smoking, they have fresh air again. What other sort of room can do that? You only need a bit of plaster to get that effect.

The interiors of most of Berlin's old buildings are made of brick fired at relatively high temperatures, which makes it moisture-active and gives it some of the properties of loam buildings. You see that when you put a bit of brick into water; it soaks it up. It's still a far away from being adobe but, compared to concrete buildings, it's great.

So why is concrete used so much?

Because it was, and is, simple and is considered modern. Rural building methods were abandoned because they didn't mean progress. They were revived again in the '80s but in a 'do-good' context: promoted by environmentally oriented people and ex-hippies. That in itself was fine, of course, but the reasons for building a loam house go beyond the ideological views of any group.

Today it's taken on a completely different dimension I see what's coming from outside, that people are pricking up their ears and that a lot of them also know about the benefits. They want to have a white living room, but they also want a healthy living environment without harmful substances.

The number of people who are interested has become much greater now, simply for health reasons. But as far as we're concerned, there are still too few people who are willing to take the plunge; the more people who get involved, the more companies will emerge and the more people will be able work with loam. Then we'll be able

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to realize even bigger projects. It's all interlinked and we hope that something will come of it. It might be 'green', but it's also white. For all intents and purposes, clay plaster is no longer any more expensive than regular plaster. We simply have less waste in each step. The loam is easier to use, and doesn't harden quickly like cement which turns into garbage if it drips or spills.

We are four generations away from that sort of house. In the context of Africa, 80% of people live in loam buildings, and when you talk about mud houses to those who insist that they are 'middle class', they also realize that their grandparents at the very least lived in them. It's just not considered modern and it's a huge global problem. People who become wealthy in India, for example, think they have to use a lot of energy for building. We can currently see the result in our energy markets.

We are currently working on a report for the DGNB, the German Sustainable Building Council, which is chaired by Werner Sobek. We are starting to look at homes holistically; that is, we are looking at life cycles, so that we can understand our houses better and account for their behavior. If you look at traditional housing, approximately 20% of the total energy goes into the construction, and 80% into operating the building during its lifetime. But for low-energy houses, the ratio is 50-50. That makes it attractive, because that's where we score, even if we haven't scored with any other arguments.

The norms that are now being introduced are quite controversial, and the subject of a lot of debate. You mentioned in an interview with 'Baunetz' magazine that the norms prescribe certain behavior patterns that exclude other approaches – including some aspects of loam construction – or rate them disproportionately ...

We dream of protecting ourselves from the summer heat in the traditional way, with window ventilation, not machines.

But then, of course, we wouldn't be able to build a SONY Center. It gets such a broadside from the sun that no material, no passive system could manage that, you can only ventilate it mechanically. It's not sustainable at all.

We simply won't build things like that. In consequence, there's a lot of work waiting to be done and even

we, as architects, have been asked to play a part. There is just so much you could do. We are on the threshold of a sea change in architecture.

How do you see the further development of loam construction? Will loam develop far enough to allow the building of bold skyscrapers or will architecture follow the materials' lead and concentrate more on the whole issue of sustainability?

I don't think we have any solution at the moment. I don't even think we know a lot of the questions at the moment.

The focus at the moment is very strongly on using less technology. The best engineering is that which abolishes itself. Plump said: "The best technology is no technology."

That way we can already save 50,

60 or 70% of the energy within the processes.

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If you carry out life-cycle inspections for residential buildings or in general, a residential building never has more than four or five stories, because an elevator is bullshit. But I really don't want to climb 5 or 6 floors up with my shopping bags, so that is a scale that is both healthy and in tune with urban development aspects. It's not a little eco-village on the edge of the city, where children grow up healthy, but you can still manage to get good urban neighborhoods there. They can be mixed structures, hybrid structures. I'm not sure whether we need to make loam as stable as concrete.

In my opinion, at the moment it's about creating the broadest possible applications, creating market conditions that allow further development and then we'll be able to build four or five stories like the buildings in Berlin's central districts. There's already a relatively large market.

I aim at changing people's mindset. You can't sell people the idea that there'll soon be modern car technology that will let me keep on racing around in my S-Class, running very organically on electricity; those are wonderful stories that the industry tells us and that are used in election campaigns for instance, German Environmental Minister Sigmar Gabriel promotes electric cars and set up a billion-Euro program. This is important, but we shouldn't sell it to people as the solution.

We have to start thinking differently. We'll learn to love the Müritz National Park and we'll learn to love the Spree River; the bike is the thing that will change us. We will enjoy life in 35 square meters. That could be the solution if we want fair global distribution and to simply solve the problem.

This is the reality: we must do less. Make a lot of modifications, move back to the cities and make use of existing systems. This will bring qualitative changes.

In Germany, our cities probably won't really grow much in the future. There are massive transformation-processes going on here, which maybe mean that when I insulate a 1970s house properly and loam-plaster it inside, I can achieve a very good level of comfort.

We're currently working on a '70s building which used to have a 170 kWh primary energy requirement; now we have it down to 25 kWh but, because it's a concrete building, we have to ventilate it to get the moisture out. That's something we don't really want.

That's why moisture is also a big issue at the moment, because we're noticing that the houses are using too much energy and that we need to increase the insulation. And the more joints we seal, the greater the problem of moisture becomes. You can't get rid of the moisture through the windows.

People who live in passive houses shouldn't keep the windows open all the time otherwise it ruins the effect. That means the next logical step in Germany will be to build ventilation systems to solve this problem, and this is what our new energy conservation regulations stipulate.

In this respect, we're trying to develop the opposite. We build houses with highly effective insulation, with 33 cm of cellulose lagging, which is the norm for passive houses.

A passive house is actually not passive at all, that is a distortion of the term: with its ventilation, a passive house is actually very active and it limits people very much in their behavior. In fact,

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you should call them active houses. Passive houses are the ones that manage to keep indoor temperatures stable without controlled ventilation. We have completely permeable natural materials, which means the building emits a certain amount of moisture, caches it, stores it and lets it in and out.

The wall construction consists of wooden beams and a layer of insulation that keeps the wind out but lets moisture through. The construction is pumped full of cellulose: recycled newspaper, which can easily be reused or replaced at any time. It's the same with loam. That's how we achieve the same level of insulation as in a passive building, which in our climate still uses a lot of fiberglass or polystyrene. But moisture can still pass through our structural components. Of course, there are structural thermal bridges – in the corners of a house, for example. There you get condensation or mould. In loam buildings, we avoid this by compensating and caching.

If you dig out a foundation pit, is there any way of integrating this material into the structure?

That depends on where the pit is. In the city, we usually come across a cellar or some other ruin.

Wastelands were often industrial sites, so there are all sorts of heavy metals and stuff in the soil. I wouldn't want to build wherever you're dreaming of now, because that's the green belt. Untouched land.

This material already exists here in the city but, apart from the fact that it's just a matter of luck, modern low energy buildings don't have cellars anymore anyway. Completely insulating a cellar would be very costly. It would be extremely expensive. You'd have to heat a larger volume, which would make things less efficient.

However, if you were to build a cellar, that would work. When I was a student, I built a bathroom out of rammed earth. I just took excavated material from a big construction site and looked whether it stuck.

Do you think it's more difficult to achieve building techniques that foster a sense of identity in Germany than in other parts of the world, such as in Abu Dhabi?

No, I think it's similar; it's just harder for us to find the setting.

I think this memory of the past exists in all cultures. When I meet someone in Mozambique who sticks to a way of building that has been cultivated

for hundreds of years and who rebuilds his house every seven years because by then it's falling apart, I can use the technical aspect – in other words, my knowledge of how to make the house more durable – to get into a conversation with him.

This takes a different course, simply because our architectural history has seen more refractions.

Of course, it's not easy to go to people who are barely managing to scrape a living and tell them they should invest more in order to increase the lifespan of a house.

My dream would be to make that sort of improvement by providing small loans that the customer pays off over the seven years a



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traditional house would last, and then they can live in it for another 30 years.

I think people in villages in Germany would react in a similar way to city dwellers, but it is more difficult to raise the funds and also more difficult to pick up on archaic images.

You can't simply go ahead and build a brick barn because we just don't need brick barns. Nevertheless, the brick barn is still one of the most beautiful designs ever. ←

GERD GERKEN: ITS ALL ABOUT EVOLUTION

Gerd Gerken advises companies about their future. He has developed methods to predict trends, future preferences of consumers, and common needs of entire societies. Gerd Gerken is extremely intellectually versatile; he has been working on the 'Auto-stadt' in Wolfsburg and is now successful with his cosmetics line NOESA. We wanted to talk to him about the future of architecture, the profession of the architect, and what role they are going to play in our society in the future. What we think is a very interesting point when talking about changing the world is a fact that makes Gerd Gerken's input very influential: it is often the exact firm he is advising who will eventually change the future in its field. This is also why we think that it is important to contemplate future developments if you want to effect change. Gerd Gerken is primarily a very close observer of what is happening around him, and we can learn the value of such close observation from him. In addition, he is able to filter significant information from random information and evaluate its possible meaning for the future.

August 28th, 2009, Friedrichstrasse, Berlin:

Mr. Gerken, as a futurologist you advised large companies such as VW, Kraft and Jil Sander in the 1980s and 1990s. Were there any topics that people always asked about at that time?

The general theme was always the uncertainty inherent in the question "How do we shape the future?" It also depended on the particular industry – companies always have different market conditions they have to respond

to. A food company, for example, asks what we'll be eating. A car company wants to know whether there will be electric motors, or whether self-steering cars are coming, and how much of that is vision or utopia. Clients always ask who is currently most prominent and

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who has most charisma. There are no general themes, the only thing that is general is the question: "What will the future be like?"

Could you identify issues in the field of architecture, for example, that are already of interest for the future?

Remarkably enough, architecture has a lot of short-term fashions. As postmodernism blossomed, there were a lot of workshops on its ephemeral qualities and retrogressive

issues and so on. As a future consultant, one generally talks about the direction people's needs are tending toward and how architecture could react to them. This is always an artificial, slightly sophisticated intellectual pastime whenever things are quiet. But it never produces a result – it's just superior bar-room chatter. This means the sort of pragmatic, linear cooperation you have with companies isn't possible with architects and urban planners. When we did that, the client always said, "But I want to have that instead."

Architects don't want the sort of thing we're talking about here, they just wouldn't think it was relevant. With urban planners, we only have a chance if we focus on a city's image. For example, what experiences should people have, what mythical core should the residents of a city see, regardless of all grievances present in any city? What sort of spiritual form do people affirm within themselves? A city's image is very important in this respect. It was very easy for us here in Berlin because the city thrives on tourism. You can use that to justify anything. But you know who was in charge of the city's development at the time – there was not much we could do when Hans Stimmann was in control. As much as I like his points about the height of the caves and so on, there has been no discussion about which buildings are spiritual incarnations for the external representation of Berlin in recent decades. Which building is owned by the city and could be used for this purpose? The new art gallery envisaged for the Humboldt Harbor perhaps, for one example. Of course, you could plunk a Gehry down there and hope for the Bilbao Effect, but what's the point? The real questions are: what is Berlin and what do tourists want to experience here and what could embody this experience if it were to be built? There is currently no discussion about this at all.

The one aspect of any collaboration between architects and futurologists that really would be fun to consider is visual saturation, the question of why you get sick of seeing something that's actually really well done.

What tools and techniques do you use to answer questions about the future? Can you recommend a tool when we are wondering how we should build in the future?

The most difficult thing is observing the world in the best way possible. Then we ask ourselves what the 'edge' of this world is. This is more difficult, but in fact anyone can do it. It functions through the

reading of magazines and books and also through travelling – although that is overrated. But that's not all. You have to integrate this cultural 'edge' into a rating system that keeps pace with development. And most people cannot do that. I believe that many architects and students perceive the signals about what is happening now with great accuracy.

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Maybe you absorb 80% of these things, which are then objectively lodged in your brain, in your consciousness. But even then you haven't won a lot yet.

As an overall construct you get something out of it, for sure – you certainly get a better feel for development, but you still don't know what comes next. We might know what the 'edge' looks like now, but that will be irrelevant in 10 or 20 years' time. You need an evaluation grid, and few people have that. The grid into which you feed all the information repeatedly changes. Some boxes die out and others are added. You end up with a kind of rosette, in which you can arrange things according to their intensity. The ornament issue for example might reach its absolute ceiling between 2015 and 2025, for example, and then drop again, or it might lie dormant for a while. We don't know what the ornament will look like. It broke down because of industrialization, because it was mundane. Maybe ornament can be devised differently, using computer and laser technology and stronger individuality in detail, for example, and yet we still get this big basic pattern. It may be that we end up with an oriental style of ornamentation, albeit one with an ironic occidental insolence. If that happens, it could well be that it will stay fertile for the next 10 or 20 years. No one can tell. The further we look into the future, the more we make parallel predictions on the basis of this sort of 'landscape', as we call it. That means we could say that right now, we assume that scenario one is more likely than scenario five. Can we guarantee that? No. Anyone who wants to know that is usually also someone who is involved in shaping the reality of the future in the first place, which means that if they listen and take action it will provide a stimulus. Companies in particular have an enormous effect on development.

You spoke of aesthetic needs.

What are they?

We are in a cultural war with Muslim cultures, which is exacerbated by the media and, to some extent, taken to dangerous extremes by politicians, resulting in strange reflective loops in the subconscious of the Western cultures. "Is this really as good as we can do? Is what we are doing fair? Are we jaded?" This isn't discussed publicly, but it is thought about. Culture discusses it with itself. This results in needs, and one of them is certainly a kind of smugness and sweetness and artificial integrity, all woven together out of fear. It might look like a good blueprint for the world, but it is pure fear. This need is coming and I am always appalled when I visit something like the Milan Furniture Fair: what comes out of it is atrocious. It is a faintheartedness that presents itself as witty, innovative and creative. This is already visible on the furniture front and it's spreading to architecture. So we will soon have these sorts of architectural images, assaults against glass, against steel – not everywhere, but in certain sectors. These assaults come from crashes and conflicts and ultimately lead to some very strange expectations. This is actually a very interesting prediction. One forecast, for example, is that this new introspection, marked by fear, will lead to innovation. What effect that will have on architecture will depend on the architects. We had postmodernism, a curious blend of innovation and cowardice characterized by retro-quotation.

One of my predictions is that this cultivated anxious smugness

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will become a distinct form of architecture in its own right – that an initial architectural expectation will come into existence, which will then be pandered to by an architect or group of architects. An architectural trend is taking shape that is ultimately a massive self-recantation by Western culture.

If one assumes that Western culture is currently predominant, and can also see that it currently contains the sort of queuing and self-abnegatory tendencies that are always present where such things are breaking up, and that give rise to desires, one can expect some peculiar aesthetic needs. Predicting this is a great pleasure. I recently tried to discuss these issues at the Designmai festival and that was the biggest flop of all time, no one was the slightest bit interested.

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Do you think that the job of the architect is going to change? Is the architect actually a service provider?

Yes, in my experience, that's exactly what architects are. They are being pushed into becoming almost like a 'sub-contractor', although this is

compensated for subjectively by the posturing, styling and attitude of their performance. I think architects would do themselves a favor if they were to agree on such a concept. What have they got to prove? They understand the technology. They can erect a building. And because they can manage that, we can't do without them. For that reason, I don't think the profession will change much.

It's really just about steering themselves towards a cleavable dignity because the reality, as I have observed, isn't even a service. I know another industry that is similar: advertising. They're also always babbling on about creativity, but in the end they're slaves, paid slaves. At least the architects can also handle the technology.

Service as self-image would certainly be a good harbor into which you could sail. Even the builders themselves, when the architects aren't there, tend to refer to them as their sidekicks.

→ CLAIMING TO BE MORE THAN JUST A SERVICE PROVIDER: MARKUS MIESSEN → P. 80.1

The relationship between architecture and technology fluctuates a lot. A hundred years ago it was relatively new. How do you think the relationship will develop now? With respect to the competence of the architects, your opinion seems to be they're inextricably linked. Will it go on like that?

I think the connection is likely to become stronger. New materials, nano-technology, new formats – the clients can't keep up. What's happening in the field of materials alone, or in the field of complex structural analysis. There are not many people around the world who can manage such things. The "just build me a little house" attitude is a thing of the past, things are too difficult

nowadays. And then the issue of sustainability comes in: What do we have to install now to ensure that the house hasn't become completely environmentally obsolete in 30 years' time?

The builders cannot do that anymore – not even the professionals. Earlier, when I started advising, the job of a builder was almost always to build offices, rabbit hutches with nice siding. There were lighting problems and so on, but there just wasn't as much technology. It all started with air conditioning, when the clients realized they'd

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be better off keeping their mouths shut and letting the experts do the job. For me, technology and the growing aspirations connected with it, as well as the issue of the environment and resources, are really what gives the architects their authority. Because this part of things is very difficult and is getting even more difficult. It's a good thing if as an architect you're well trained in that. Not all are. If you can do it, however, you'll get the power.

It is quite often a matter of who will prevail. If the client prevails, it sometimes results in very strange houses. I've seen that often enough. I think we will have more technology and that will be the profession's lifeline – at least for the next 20, 30 or 40 years. Aesthetics probably less. Certainly not function.

Back to the reflection loops that you have just mentioned. Seen spatially, it's like the ramp in a multi-story car park that you can always look back at, when you're already over it. Where do we stand now, have we just passed over one or are we still in the middle of one?

You mean, when society last reflected itself? It does so all the time and has been doing so for ages. It's going through a period of stress, when conflicts either continually threaten or cannot be solved. When it realizes it cannot find a solution – which is the situation we're in today – then the reflection loops become more urgent.

We had phases in the '60s and '70s when there was a revolutionary urge, whereas the '80s were quieter again. Futurologists used to assume that every 30 years we developed a "this cannot go on" feeling, and then there were more reflective loops. However, this has not emerged as a stable model. We have certain cycles that are also no longer that stable, because the world is increasingly interconnected and in a more complex way.

It used to be that the so-called 'naughties' always produced a weird unhappy void and the 'tens' were the years when people took off the suit of sloppiness, and put on the suit of new beginnings. Whether this will occur between 2010 and 2020 remains to be seen. We now have so many influences coming from outside. As far as the sociology of culture is concerned, in actual fact past centuries always exhibited the same rhythms in their reflection loops, in which there were more fractures. But I'm not sure if everything will go the same way in this century. One can always expect powerful reflections to be violent when unresolved conflicts combine with society. Societies tend not to allow conflicts to penetrate their egos. No society wants to make eternal conflict part of their identity. In such cases, they try to use such loops to invent alternative world models. We'll soon be facing that again. I guess it will go off with a bang again in 10 years' time. We cannot deal with the conflict with Islamic culture, regardless of whether there's an 'Obama Effect' or not. Two cultural spheres that cannot easily give each other the time of day at the UN level meet there. A lot more fractures and conflicts will arise there. Maybe that's a good thing. However, just like streaky bacon, there are still sub-themes in between. Considerations like whether we have a return to religion, and so on.

It may actually look exactly like there is a religious renaissance right now, but from the sociological point of view, that's incorrect.

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On the other hand, we have an uncanny privatization of religion, which means that, regardless of any comparison of the different religions, we have adjustments and new topics within our value systems as well. Taking responsibility for the rest of mankind – that wasn't something we talked about at all in the 1960s. It would have been ridiculous. In each of the balloons of ideologies that are touching, and sometimes fighting each other at the moment, there are always internal wars, disagreements and internal ruptures. Each evolutionary system starts to split a bit at the top, and needs are generated by these mainstreams and by the many internal currents.

I'm curious to see whether you, as architects, can mould this anxious inwardness into a great architectural pattern. I would really like to see that. Anyone can make comical furniture bordering on crochet work and knitting. I want to see buildings that express this fearful attitude of denial. I want to meet the architect who dares to issue a manifesto for that. Bring it on.

Have you got any built or un-built architecture in mind that does that to some extent?

No. The Bauhaus tried it, but we just don't have that sort of *naïveté*. Think of Weimar at that time, Constructivism, the self-ensoulment of "This will save humanity! This is important for the soul of mankind." We can no longer get it right, we laugh even as we say it.

I don't see any group that would be willing and able to make a pitch like that, which is a shame, because it might be high time to rethink cubes and understand our needs in respect of living and working in a new way. Will there be a new Bauhaus in 10 or 20 years? I wish.

So, ideally the architect is still more than a service provider ...

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Yes, the architects at the Bauhaus' weren't service providers, but instead were ideological artists. What I mean by 'ensoulment' was applied world help. There the architect is immediately something else. But I don't even see that in art. Maybe it's just as well that we can no longer get this intelligent naivety right – when, even though you know that it's naive, you create something that causes complications and effects that are then again very pragmatic. "If I didn't apply my creativity, these currents wouldn't occur." At this point, it would be apt to say with a wink: "Okay, this is something very do-gooderish, but in order to create these currents at all, I'll do it." That no longer works in media or Internet culture; it burns out in two weeks, and after six weeks we find it in the Bild newspaper as "nonsense of the century". When you read about the Bauhaus today, you sometimes wonder if they were all there. They can't have been serious, believing that it would heal humanity – the artist thinking he could change mankind with visual effects.

Nowadays, you have to think about what you're doing, and if you can no longer launch yourself to the front, the only thing left is to solve problems. Is a chain of solutions to problems helpful in the long term? No, because that type of problem solving, which just solves a problem, merely generates new problems. We're always chasing after

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our malaise and only ever clear up the malaise of the moment. So again you need to make a bold pitch. On the other hand, we no longer get it right because we feel ridiculous.

Add to that the almost tangible, almost physical obligation to be cynical, especially in the arts. The good, the intact, the beautiful – you can't even pronounce those words any more. This no longer works, it always has to be broken, to speak of suffering. It certainly won't be the Bauhaus in all its naivety, but perhaps something else will come along. Politics won't do it, nor will economics: for a long time I believed they would, now I don't believe that any more. Since the 1960s, the economy has been the leading subsystem, but that's all over. It may be that aesthetic subsystems can't do it either; it may be a different subsystem of society, as Niklas Luhmann describes. Science – I don't see that either. Nor can it be religion. Some sort of subsystem has to appear now. Who's going take over then? I'm not sure I know. If you ask me which subsystem I see replacing the economy, I would very tentatively say that something interesting and new is happening in the field of neuroscience – a subsystem that hasn't yet organized itself properly, which doesn't have any great resources yet. But it is striking that consciousness is so important. The result could be that a cluster comes into existence and is dominant for a while. We have slowly learned that any improvement in regulatory systems always works better if consciousness is also improved in advance. The way some of the Americans like to do things, along the lines of: "consciousness won't take place, first we'll do something and then maybe take another look," just won't work anymore. I believe that we are gradually realizing that consciousness has a high attractor quality that should be fashioned. On that basis, I could imagine getting something like a Bauhaus. In the last phase of this century, maybe.

The neuronal aspect is the biological explanation for psychological processes? Or how do you define it?

Culture is based on millions of brains, right? And brains are based on billions of neurons. So, there is interplay between culture, the brains, and the in-

dividual neurons. Clearly, our society is discovering that the hardware of the brain greatly influences the way we operate our minds, how we take things in and discuss them. So it's high time we constructed the sort of reality that will configure the brain in a particularly positive way. This is not the reality that we have out there now – where the FAZ newspaper writes this, the Bild newspaper that, and we listen to people on evening television saying the other thing. That's just the cacophony of the day. There would have to be another impulse. Who's going to provide it? Your profession, maybe, since beauty is an important factor. But then it'll be a building.

In a couple of hundred years we may realize how much responsibility for our consciousness we have. If we want a better world, it could be accomplished by smartening up consciousness first. I just don't know who'll do it – certainly not media culture. Nor architecture. But I would be happy if an architect were to stand up and say, "We need to build beauty" – if we could use the word "beauty" again at all. I'm seeing this in art. Can't a picture be just plain beautiful? Why is that kitsch nowadays? It isn't kitsch at all!

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Is this the battle that art is fighting at the moment?

Yes, art is currently going downhill fast. I believe that, after the economic system, art will be the next to collapse. I no longer believe that the economy has enough healing power. Of course we'll still have an economy in the future, but no longer in a leadership role.

I believe that this art will also disappear in the future, perhaps 30 or 40 years after the decline of the economic system. It has nothing that people need. They wait in line to stand in front of some painting or other. But there's no mysticism in it, no energy.

Where would you put the rise of the system of art in all of this? In the 1960s, for example?

Art was virtually ensouled during the first 30 or 40 years of the last century. At places like Ascona, all these artists' villages, everything was intensively ensouled. We have reached the climax with the Hirst skull. The system pissed on itself and then gilt-plated it. That was marvelous but, after that, nothing works any more. A collector in New York said: "He has really shown us how infinitely cynical we all are." Okay. You might say it's good when you can observe your own cynicism from the outside. That wasn't that long ago and since then it's started to topple with the usurpation of art by religion.

Do you know the photos by Ryan McGinley? He makes road trips that give rise to beautiful images of young people in natural settings in America.

Yes. I see them as an attempt to do the same thing in a different way. There I'm with Mr. Habermas. I think we need a form of mysticism for our evolution.

I'm not sure if art can provide that. If

you look at the whole last century of art, you realize that it's never done anything else other than destroy content. We've repeatedly had periods that were realistic, but again and again it was ultimately all about the devaluation of the content. Why has the West become acquainted with the instrument of art, since content cannot make us happy? Why does art bring us back to that point again and again? It always ends up with the negation of content in favor of the spirit. And the spiritual has never been sufficient. Always very disappointing, very thin gruel.

Let us say we've tried to separate ourselves from reality and that art has shown us the way. It was an important phase, but the fact that it was possible means we can now go a step further. We have to separate ourselves from reality. Art cannot manage that. It has commendably tried and failed. Now someone else has to have a go. It must be that the constantly evolving human spirit will at some point understand what evolution is.

It's all about evolution. ←

→SEE FOR YOURSELF: PHOTOGRAPH GINLEY →P. 166.1

GERHARD MATZIG: CONGRATULATIONS, ARCHITECTS!

Gerhard Matzig is a German journalist, author of specialized books, trained architect and political scientist. The reviews and essays he writes for *Süddeutsche Zeitung* have been good company to us since our early days of newspaper reading. His critical views on the role of the architects in society, the state of German building culture, and the tendencies of urbanism are always exhilarating and inspiring. We admire his ability to put things into perspective, across professions and nationalities. As a journalist, he is a mediator between the highly professional architects and the interested crowd – or at least the readers of Feuilletons – that architecture should be addressing. We met him at the new *Verlagshaus* of SZ in the periphery of Munich, a location that is economically reasonable, but in the eyes of the newspaper's staff much less appreciated than the former location that was right in the middle of Munich's city center.

May 28th, 2009, Hultschiner Strasse, Munich:

In 1960, Mies van der Rohe said that the goal of the architect should be to reflect the society, in which he lives, in his buildings. Can you think of any buildings that are symptomatic of our society in either the negative or the positive sense?

→ ROOT OF THIS QUESTION:
MIES → P. 201.1

I will cite two buildings in Munich. One is Herzog deMeuron's Allianz Arena, the other is BMW World by Coop Himmelblau. These link different aspects. They show society as it is, or parts that are important and relevant to this society. Whether they did that on purpose is another question.

Let's start with the BMW building, which I like a lot, even though, like everything Coop Himmelblau does, it's very controversial. First of all, it's exciting, because you cannot express the glorification of the car any more forcefully than through this very large space open to the public 365 days a year. It

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is a blend of BMW World, BMW Forum, a technical forum, and a discussion forum. They hold jazz concerts there, you can take children there, get an explanation of the technology, and of course you go there to look at BMWs. But there is also an area for the collection of cars, very cleverly closed off so you don't really notice it.

Once I got them to explain to me how it works. The salespeople, the ones handing over the cars, are like fully-trained actors. And there are certain tricks. Someone comes in from the sticks to collect his incredibly expensive car and brings his whole family along. There is an established script for this moment: the customer has to go down a stairway, while down below their new car is moved into the right position by a revolving platform. That is to say, they have figured out that cars look sharpest when seen in three-quarter view, obliquely from the front, the front left wheel turned in. So, this BMW stands lasciviously on its turntable and is all lit up. This is all done by the actor who, as master of ceremonies, marries the driver and the car. The only thing missing is the sound of the organ. While you think the car has been perfectly polished, up comes the actor, who makes out that there's still a speck of dust on it and flicks it away with a white cloth.

That's a way the world that is fine-tuned to consumption functions. The power of seduction in this building is so openly on display that I wonder whether the architect was conscious of it.

Of course it's symptomatic of our time that a private company can erect a temple at a cost of nearly a billion euros – officially, this building cost 500 million, unofficially it cost 800 million, whereas in reality it probably cost more than a billion euros – just to celebrate the car and therefore the leisure society, the consumption-oriented, mobile society. The fact that companies are so important, that they can afford such corporate identity architecture, is also significant for our era.

Companies, early on, realized that they can embody themselves through architecture – in other words, show how they see themselves: powerful, magnificent, all those things. You even find this phenomenon of 'corporate architecture' repeated in museums and cities. This is expressed very nicely in the BMW building. In the case of that building, I would also say its spectacular appearance in the streetscape is typical of our era.

These aspects shouldn't only be understood positively, they can also be read negatively. I don't know whether the architecture was aiming to express this. Coop Himmelblau became so successful and made a splash with deconstructivist architecture in the '80s. At the time, that architecture was intended as a theoretical expression of the idea that we are a polymorphous society, that there is no order and no stasis and that everything is dynamic. I don't think deconstructivism necessarily succeeded in expressing that view of the world. But, through the phenomena I have been talking about, BMW World demonstrates a lot of what defines our society today.

The second building is Herzog & deMeuron's Allianz Arena. Aspects such as the leisure society also crop up here through the importance of football. But the Allianz Arena is, above all, epic. I perceive such ostentatious display and the positive impression of epic style as something new. You approach the arena by climbing a hill and there is this glowing body towards which people are flocking as if it were a meeting place for the whole of society.

I also believe that it's typical of our era that the arenas and

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superdomes going up all over the world are the new meeting places for society. But they are not necessarily meeting places for democracy, but rather places of confrontation and conflict. That's why they are often spatially planned so as to release emotions instead of inviting rational debate like in the Agora.

Whereas museums were important in society in the 1980s and 1990s, now it's the sports grounds.

And if it were already standing, the Berlin Stadtschloss would also express something of the forces in our society.

Until it was signed and sealed by parliament in 2004, I wrote impassioned appeals against building it. Now I've been overruled, so to speak, by the Bundestag and therefore by Germany, I've accepted the decision. I won't be throwing myself in front of the bulldozers. I find it a sure sign of how much longing there is for the past and how little confidence in the future a lot of people have.

It also includes the bill for a century of modernism. It is a 'no' to its lack of ornament – which is actually a misunderstanding since there's long been a culture of ornamentation. But a whole nation says we want this old castle back, even if it's only a wallpapered one, because it's the only way to fix the place, it's the only thing the tourists will love, and because we all think the idea of having a palace is great even though we aren't a monarchy. That says a lot about our time. It expresses desires and also serious reflections. I think the fact that a certain dogmatism in modernism has been overcome is positive, although in Berlin we're returning to the dogmatism of historicism, and everything now has to have a patina and hark back to times long gone. This gives me food for thought, because we actually have so many problems concerning our future. You should sense that you have the energy for the future, to design the present for the future. That's completely missing in our society, and the Berlin Stadtschloss will highlight this deficit perfectly.

Do you think that architecture fails because of the need for a holistic approach?

Design is the structural element in our traditional system. This is not entirely wrong as long as design isn't just

limited to external appearances. Of course the really good architects don't just think two-dimensionally but right across the board, including materiality – about both what Richard Sennett talks about and about the spiritual aspect. Architecture is the great all-embracing art, it's technology and mathematics, but it's also expression, ideas, and something purely physical. That's what makes it fascinating and I would study it all over again.

But I think study completely skips this holistic approach. Personally, I really only learned to draw beautiful facades. In America, the architect is now only the designer of the facade: the facade planner. He may also be responsible for corporate identity issues, but the actual spaces are already being dealt with by other professions entirely. Now it's all about money and fire escapes and so on. The practical and the ideal are completely separate, which is totally wrong in architecture. The one permeates the other. Only things that are successful in all respects get finished. That is why so few of our houses and cities are actually completed.

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Nothing against the training in Berlin, I don't know anything about it. I take back the remark "You cannot study architecture in Germany." Now I say, "We couldn't do it when I was in Munich." But a lot has changed there too. Architectural training is undergoing major structural changes and there are a lot of good ideas. The Technical University in Darmstadt is currently restructuring itself completely as far as architectural education is concerned. In Munich, HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning) was never an issue, but now it's called 'Living Environment Design' and has taken on a totally different meaning. I hope that the training will be somewhat more strict and that students are more thoroughly educated in these concepts of unity and integrity and that they will be tested on them. There are simply too many students of architecture who can only make things that look pretty but don't function spatially. I'm not blaming the architects – I'd probably have made a lousy architect, but then again I didn't choose to enter that profession.

You've talked about the theme of 'identificatory places'. Many of my contemporaries, especially when they return home from traveling, complain that so many places around the world are confusingly similar, that a museum by Renzo Piano in Washington looks exactly like one in Northern Italy. And that's the case in sophisticated architectural culture as well, with what actually gets built. There's a lack of individuation. Do you believe that there will be a trend towards regional styles of building – buildings characteristic of a particular place – or that the cult of the 'starchitect' – buildings based on personal characteristics – will lead to the kind of recognition that regional building once had?

Yes. Think of signature buildings, which are well-known and have a marked symbolism that is typical of regionalism. So as far as that's concerned, it's simply a transformation.

I also think that 'starchitecture', corporate architecture and signature buildings are all one and the same thing. I don't find that objectionable per se, but it does nothing to solve the problems. Sometimes it's more successful, other times less. But identity is only for the few. Identity for all would be more like what you call regionalism or the typically local. That is disappearing or has already so, simply due to globalization. A house can incorporate natural stone from Brazil, and the architect perhaps got the way the facade was designed from a high-rise in South Korea. In principle, this is about the globalization of ideas,

transposition and, of course, the question of where the cheapest material comes from. You can declare war on globalization, but you can't reverse it. This has naturally led to de-regionalization, which also has its advantages. People in valley A didn't use to know who lived in valley B. Of course, the network is now much bigger and covers the whole globe, so things also look similar as a result.

The pedestrian zone in Vienna looks like the one in Munich. It could now happen – but I'm being very speculative here – that calls for deceleration in the century of speed and acceleration on the issue of climate change and our dwindling resources could be met sooner, because the 20th century is, of course, the century of mobility.

The Brazilian natural stone is here because it costs next to nothing to mine in Brazil, maybe even mined by children, and then is sent here

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130.1: by ship or even by air. Until the hydrogen engine has been invented, which will speed everything up again, things are more likely to decline. In the economic crisis, we can already see that freight forwarders and businesses are finding that transport has become unviable. Proximity has suddenly become a price factor again. Either the cost of mobility – and by that I mean professional mobility, leisure mobility and freight mobility – will climb or we will completely rethink things to be able to maintain our lifestyles.

130.2: → A PROPOSAL RE-INVENTING TRANSPORTATION: THE NIGHT TRAIN STATION

I can well imagine that this will cause a culture of regionalism to develop again. Maybe that's incredibly naive: globalization has always been a one-way street as far as tempo is concerned. It has gotten faster and faster and places have gotten closer to each other. Regionalism also means that there are differences again. Place A isn't Place B after all. Globalization means uniformity, A is B, McDonald's here tastes like McDonald's in Beijing. Maybe that will no longer be possible because their rolls will no longer come from a central supplier.

I could imagine that we will have to locate and identify ourselves by region again due to economic necessity on the one hand, and the environment on the other. The downside of the whole thing, of course,

→ PROPOSING TO FALL IN LOVE WITH THE RIVER SPREE AGAIN: EIKE ROSWAG

is that regionalism means total intolerance. The way countries are interfusing and frontiers are dissolving is really quite pleasant. Globalization is also osmosis, everything flows into everything else, everything is changing. Difference always means laying down borders, and that means either inclusion or exclusion. From the political point of view, this is murderous, because criticism of globalization will end in the reinforcement of national narratives – in other words, we're proud to be this or that. That usually results in looking down on others. So, there are two sides, an interesting return to regionalism and a threat of intolerance. To return to architecture, that would mean building something in the Inn Valley, in the way it's been done for thousands of years, and anything that looks different is considered ugly and rejected. The architecture that reached its peak with the International Style and the migration of the builder were both early forms of globalization and mobility. I think there's these two intertwined aspects, and I don't know what will result.

What do you think are the main topics that will preoccupy architects in the future?

Ecology will certainly be a central issue. I expect that of young architects, and believe that the younger generation

have a very obvious affinity to this obviously great good. Houses always used to be designed with ecology in mind, it just wasn't called organic or ecological. Building economical houses was a plain economic necessity. So a Tyrolean mountain farmhouse is naturally an ecological building for purely economic reasons because even then, people always understood economics to be a branch of ecology.

I've given the older generation of German architects up for lost as far as this idea is concerned. Not all of them – I have mentioned a few names and there are a few dozen interesting architects, some of whom have been doing this for years. That's something, incidentally, that the media caught onto very late.

One very important issue is urbanism; what we used to call urban planning. Ecology has become part of it again. That is the central

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theme of the future, because we will face incredible problems in the urbanized world. You can already sense that in Asian cities and in the Arab world, it's just that they aren't exacerbated by democracy and similar inventions.

Of course, we're also getting urbanized societies here and we've got problems like shrinking cities in both Eastern and Western Germany and not many growth centers. But the surge of urbanization will happen there too. The problems that will lead to are still unclear. The design of open areas, waste and traffic; these are all future issues that need to be thought about. Another one, which you can project back more onto aesthetics, is identity. I think identity is one of the most valuable commodities of the future. I find questions about how to attain or create this identity very important. Those are the three fields: urbanism, ecology and identity.

Another issue, not a major one, but one that is increasing in importance, is that more and more architects are becoming involved in issues like the organization of refugee camps. How can we ensure people a minimum of human dignity? There used to be building for those on the subsistence minimum. Today I'll put my money again on the young architects who are no longer discussing whether postmodernism or dynamism is better, or whether Rem Koolhaas is better than Zaha Hadid, but who are vigorously zeroing in on these issues. I am quite optimistic about that. Architecture will, I think on the whole, become very, very important – not as design, but as a holistic doctrine.

One can also say this: climate change is the world's problem number one. At present it's a bigger problem than wars and regional sectarian conflicts because it threatens everyone. What you sense

less, and are less able to discuss clearly, is the threat to the earth as a resource. Many issues there are linked to architecture: Roughly a third of carbon emissions come from the building of residential and office accommodation alone, a third come from mobility and a third come from industry. If you make architecture and urban planning issues responsible for a third, and then add mobility in the form of settlement areas, you're already at two thirds. So architects, engineers, urban planners and landscape architects could find answers to two-thirds of the world's problems. That just shows how important architecture as a profession is, and that's why its importance is growing substantially. Naturally the other side of it is also nice, that people always like to read interviews with star architects and look at beautiful facades. But that simply isn't relevant. In this respect, I congratulate you on your profession. Now you just have to save the world ←

→ DEDUCING A GENERAL CLAIM FROM THIS STATEMENT: ON HOUSES → P. 25.1

LIVIA CORONA: PROMISES IN BUILDINGS

Livia Corona is a New York / Mexico City based photographer born in Baja California, Mexico. What is extremely interesting about her work is that she combines photography with elements of documentation and research, observing a certain topic over the course of several years if necessary. Her photography and film project 'Two Million Homes for Mexico' explores the surge of mass-scale neighborhood developments in Mexico and their role in the ongoing transformation of the ecological, social, and cultural landscape of the nation and its citizens. The project consists of images, interviews, archival research and texts, and also reveals broader trends in the way we inhabit the world today. Although she is open to all kinds of conclusions, one that can be drawn from her work is that she has a clear standpoint on political and social questions. We met her in Styria, Austria to talk about this standpoint and her artistic and personal view on the architectural phenomenon that is the most widespread and most pushing factor of housing in the world: Suburbia.

→ SEE HER WORK ONLINE: WWW.LIVIACORONA.COM

April 15th, 2009, Wildalpen Highway, Styria:

Let us talk about your work as a photographer. In your photographs you show architecture within the context it is used – what is the inspiration for your work, what are you looking for?

I am drawn to ways in which we as people manage and cope, and through my photography I tend to look for how this part of the human experience reflects upon spatial surroundings. The built environment then is considered as

some kind of intersection between physical and psychological space.

So is it an anthropological approach?

It is, in that I am interested in humanity and that my work involves a lot of field

work. But my approach has no definite system and I am not searching

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for a final conclusion, I am simply presenting tools for understanding. My work is very personal, and yes, one aims for neutral and objective stance. But I am coming into this as a visual artist, so my point of view is intrinsically bound to appear. Perhaps an anthropologist has a more precise system. The results of anthropological research are most often communicated through writing, so let's also consider that a photograph has a wider range for interpretation, something that the written word, doesn't always allow for; except perhaps in poetry. Photography, like poetry, allows one to draw a sketch, or share a hint of something. Whereas unlike some forms of the written word, a photograph never represents a final opinion. The approach could be anthropological, but in my photographs I hope for a looser, more open ground, where the viewer of the photos is also a participant in the act of interpretation.

You are working on a project about 'US - style' gated communities in Mexico. How do the dwellers feel about their homes? Is it the fulfillment they imagine these places to be?

The level of fulfillment varies depending on who is asked. Judging by the interviews I make with the dwellers in these neighborhoods, I find that the general sentiment is a combination of pride in home ownership and frustration with

the living conditions. When young couples with two or three children purchase a 60 square meter living space, this purchase – though small in scale – is a powerful symbol of a dream conquered. The advertising for these neighborhoods caters to this dream precisely. The necessity of home ownership takes over all else. In the 'Two Million Homes' this fulfilled dream is most likely located in a neighborhood of 2000, 3000, or even 20,000 identical homes, in an otherwise non-urbanized area, and employment opportunities only exist a three hour commute away. When a family moves into a home, the definition of family and community is bound to morph in relationship to those factors, and the dwellers' sentiment toward their living condition takes on a less embracing, more frustrated attitude. There is much deception from the developers toward the buyers. The tactic from sales agents sometimes involves taking potential buyers on a complimentary bus tour to see the remote development. The model home that is shown to the buyers is usually located at the corner edge of the development to give a sensation of low density and open space. The bus serpents around the barren, recently cut-out streets, points to where a bank, hospital, childcare center, school, cultural center, market, highway access and so on will be built. However, the developer is not actually responsible for building these, and there is usually no space allotted to build these basics within the acreage of the development. It is easier now in Mexico to qualify for a federal home loan than it is to get a small business loan. Developers then provide a product that has a more immediate profit. What is actually community building is reduced to the mere construction of housing. Most buildings of affordable housing realized in Mexico from the year 2000 onward consist of this type of arrangement.

Do you think something might evolve in these communities? Is there an option for participation?

Yes, and that is where the drive for my project comes from. I am very interested

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in how these evolutions manifest. In my photographs I consider that the Mexican character, without wanting to stereotype, leans naturally toward customization and is inclined to appropriate public space for uses other than those originally intended.

My photographs celebrate these individual triumphs, as much as they frame the unaccounted challenges of providing housing for an ever expanding population.

It is foolish of Mexican developers in the current modality to deliver a home located within a very large group of identical ones and declare to the new owner: "You cannot expand your home, alter the façade, or run a business from it." and so forth. The very nature of the development they've designed and handed over simply can't pay heed to these rules. Thankfully the local municipality often can't afford to enforce them, so there are escape routes toward evolution, but there is limited space for doing so. Families often sacrifice what is already limited living space to allow for needed services. One extreme example from Ixtapaluca, a very high density development in Estado de Mexico, is a couple who is living in one of the homes I describe.

After they noticed signs, in the form of deceased pets piled up at the periphery of the development, indicating that there was no space in the miniscule parking spaces in front of the houses to properly bury a deceased pet, they opened a pet cremating business in what used to be their living room. Another example, from Zumpango, north of Mexico City, is a young couple who opened an ambulance company. They allotted their one parking space to a single ambulance they bought for hire, to drive any urgent case to the nearest hospital, 45 minutes away.

In my work I like to dedicate time to these individual conditions, as each effort makes evident that supply and demand, if given the space and opportunity, can develop into a more a natural, self sustained urban experience. Sadly, developers have dismissed the opportunity to lay out a base for intelligent urban life; instead they pursue single minded goals to mass-produce the exact item, for the priority of maximum profit. The design is almost identical, used by the three major developers who have built neighborhoods in the outskirts of almost every major Mexican city. As children grow up in these neighborhoods, one who lives in the outskirts of Tijuana, in northern Mexico, and one who lives in the outskirts of Queretaro, in the south of Mexico, can grow up in the exact same house and possibly have a similar urban experience within their neighborhoods.

I do not think it is healthy for a country to allow for so many of its young minds to develop within such a confined cultural and economic space, and it's alarming to accept that this is taking place on a national level, through a system subsidized by the Federal housing board.

So this is a very negative scenario about how architecture affects people's lives ...

I don't know if it is even about architecture per se, because the

architect was replaced by the sole act

of construction. I imagine if architects tried to have a say, developers would not be likely to listen. The developments arrive with great force and authority. The negative scenario is that the massive home development has these affects, not architecture as an individual act. The federal provision for low-income housing was restructured in 2000, once

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Vicente Fox Quesada came into the presidency. Part of Fox's campaign platform was the promise to build two million homes during his six year term, and it is estimated that at the end of his term, private developers completed about 2.3 million. During Fox's term, systems for home loans and land grants were restructured, and in the current term with Calderon, it is estimated another 6 million will be built. People just want their house and developers just want to sell. For the most part, anyone with an architectural concern is just as helpless as the dwellers.

Do you have a vision of a positive way of architecture affecting people's lives? Can architecture achieve that at all?

Yes. Architecture definitely has an impact. The house that you grew up in can greatly affect family dynamics.

The location of a home can mark you in society, who your neighbors are, their income level, the exposure to differences, the visual aspect of your neighborhood, the absence of your parents due to proximity of employment, it all adds up ...

Do you have a vision of your ideal living circumstances? Is New York, where you are living right now, the perfect living condition or do you sometimes think there must be a better way?

New York is very efficient. We sacrifice space for proximity to numerous amenities, job opportunities, and civil services. I don't know if there's an ideal place that has developed inorganically. When comparing

developments from my "Two Million Homes" research to informal housing developments in Mexico, the informal ones in my opinion are healthier for society. They may look a little messier but they are more functional, and respectful of human instinct in many ways. Ciudad Nezahualcoyotl in Mexico City is a good example of this. I am inclined to think it may be better to allow families to purchase an affordable plot of land and permit them to do whatever they want with the space, as time and budget allow.

Do you know about the approach by Alejandro Aravena to housing? It seems to be a little more middle of the road between those two extremes?

I think it is great that his architecture acknowledges that people have dreams. By providing a built space, together with a blank space for future construction, a dweller remains

engaged with home and community building. I think that as humans, we arrive with a strong desire and ability to define needs, and architecture that facilitates this, instead of suffocating it, is admirable. The respect for individuality and imagination is inspiring in the buildings by Aravena in Iquique, Chile.

I think what you just said is a very crucial point about living quality. Being aware of that is important for us as architects ...

Yes, and being willing to trust the masses.

There will be conflicts, but

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creative ones. I think it is better to trust than to not let people decide for themselves.

What are architects doing wrong?

The problem in the 'Two Million Homes' formula itself is not architecture, but the political power of massive scale developers. Architects are not welcome to participate in this scale of home design. But how to bridge this disconnect? Who's responsibility is this? If an architect takes upon the profession to designing living space, is it also the job of the architect to fight to protect living space? If the urbanist learns to design a city, should academic courses in urbanism also include guerrilla tactics to intervene in urgent cases of urbanism going wrong? If photographers use a terminally ill panorama as subject, is it our responsibility to try to resuscitate it? Or do we ring the environmentalists? And hope they are not too busy with the rest of our world issues to help deal with this current incubator of problems? Which field will be the one to instigate the marchers?

Although architecture can also bring problems, the bigger issue here is the power of mass developers over individual lives. I think this is why many promising qualities of our society are sadly going to waste. I think that developers take on, as defensive shield, the line of "building affordable low income housing". Yes, this is true, but they are actually building cities to house exclusively low income families, without acknowledging this might be the root of the problem.

Housing development took over city development. Very few people are in command of how a lot of people live, ←

INGEBORG KUHLER: ARCHITECTURE IS ALWAYS MODERN

Ingeborg Kuhler is a friend and a former professor at the University of the Arts, Berlin. She has always been a great defender of modern architecture and its exponents and has embraced her belief in modernity in her work as an architect, as well as in her teaching. Ingeborg Kuhler is an enthusiastic lover of arts and poetry, and spends her free time memorizing poems which she recites for her friends and colleagues on appropriate occasions. And this is one of the qualities we admire most about her: Her ability to interconnect inspiring thoughts and statements of all sorts, combining scientific findings with the message of a painting, an architectural expression with political or social movements, always combined with a sound grasp of contemporary developments and a positive basic attitude.

February 2010, Joachim-Friedrich-Strasse, Berlin:

What was your highest goal as an architect?

For me, my work has always been about fighting the ugly, against the common, the bad abundance, but also against repetitive patterns of behavior that are delivered through building programs.

You could call it 'waste disposal'. It has an educational aspect: The reduction of consumption necessarily leads to a more conscious way of selecting things.

People by birth are not attracted to the ugly. To fight the adaptation to the ugly, and to reveal the natural love for beauty was my social motive to study architecture. Freeing space from the congestively large amount of things, and canceling acoustic and visual anesthesia.

Most naturally I've seen it as a challenge to create an artistic synthesis: To me that means to form a motif for a certain task, its certain place and dimension and then give it a shape, a legible, synaesthetically perceptible form. Not only at large, but also in detail.

Furthermore, I believe that every place defined by architecture has

CONVERSATIONS

to have a free center that forms the spiritual focus within the compressed necessities. Anne Michaels wrote in her book *Fluchtstücke*:

“Find a way, to make beauty necessary,
find a way to make the necessary beautiful.”

What I also think is important is to substantiate the atmospheric and, to do so, search for the traditionally forwarded gestures and atmospheres. Only then we can create space that is sensible, has the quality to evoke impressions, that challenges us, and can become open space to breathe and be creative. It is an important task to deal with the given conditions and not to founder on them.

Rules and restrictions stimulate my creative process. When I work with students, I ask them to understand daily routines; differentiated and divergent, and to consider carefully the balance of stages of life, as part of a group and as individuals, conceding each its own spatial analogy. This is tightly bound to the question of space and energy savings.

Is there a generation of architects, an avant-garde, that has a vision of how to tackle the problems of our world?

How am I supposed to see an avant-garde, if it is not courageous enough to stand up and ask the important questions of their generation?

You have made a first step with what you are working on at the moment. Think of the questions and answers to *Shrinking Cities* by Behles & Joachimsen, Kühn Malevezzi, Philipp Oswalt. Things like that indicate at least an awareness of the problems caused by the current change in structure.

Generally we would be interested in what you think about modernity. Modernity in architecture. Bruno Latour wrote a book in 1991, called *We've Never Been Modern*. Has architecture ever been modern? Is it now? Should it be or should it aim towards a different direction: becoming holistic or equitable, human, natural ...

Modernity today generates itself more in a reflexive way, and works on the basis of its 'stored knowledge': previously achieved architectural abilities next to those of other disciplines. But it also uses the possibilities of the digital, it experiments and produces artificially, pragmatically and self-referentially.

Modern to me still is the search for the essential that makes it possible that a building that was designed for a certain place, a certain function, develops its own force, and does so without any additional artificial ingredient.

I go with Carl Andre and his statement: “Art excludes everything that is not necessary.” Twenty years later he added: “For me this is the only valid meaning of the term ‘minimalism’.” Modernity is the beautiful silence Peter Zumthor mentions in his Text ‘The Hard Core’: “I can sense a beautiful silence in buildings that for me is linked with terms like composure, naturalness, continuity, presence, integrity, but also warmth and sensuality; to be itself, to be a building, not to represent but to be and thereby refer to something, provoking memories

CONVERSATIONS

and being an experience, time and time again." It is the essence of architecture that every element is part of an organism that is defined by the indivisible coherence between the detail and the whole.

Eventually I'd say: Modern is to work with the spirit of the current time to achieve aesthetic virtue that goes beyond that very spirit. Tools and technologies refer to the time at which something was built.

Le Corbusier designed buildings for 'modern people'. What was the vision of the modern human and, measured by Le Corbusier's criterion, how modern are we today?

Le Corbusier's architecture and its aesthetics of precise, brief form, like for example his claim for a large, easy-to-clean living space and 'naked' walls, was based on a precise notion of life.

The modern human of tomorrow lived healthily, needed room to breathe and sunbathe, enjoyed high sanitary standards, reduced the efforts for cleaning, wanted to be mobile, didn't need his own furniture, wanted to experience the relationship between inside and outside, liked clarity and transparency, complexity combined with maximal simplicity.

Today, the dictate of consumption makes us forget about Le Corbusier's claims despite their pragmatic and logical nature. Behind every apartment door starts the chaos of unnecessary things that are said to be necessary.

What adjectives would you use to describe 'modernity'?

What comes to my mind first is a rhyme from a poem written by

Michael Krueger, *The Keys*: "dreams of other doors in another century, ...". Adjectives for modern – let's see ... : clear, inquiring, seeking, simple, minimal, independent, autonomous, untamed, critical, experimental, sensitive, radical, touching, poetic, abstract, significant, archaic, active, creative.

We tend to ask you 'large' questions, ... but can you tell us what the young can learn from the old, the curious from the experienced, the impetuous from the reasonable, and the juvenile from the wise?

Before I answer this question I would like to make clear that one doesn't except the other. The old can be young in yearning and thought, while the young can already be exhausted and tired of life. The

experienced have to be curious, otherwise they couldn't be experienced. I can be impetuous and reasonable in turns, just as I can be juvenile and wise.

After all, I think the young could maybe learn from the old to understand psychological and physical health as a great gift and their surrounding nature as a great home. They can learn to embrace as a lifeblood the community with others, as well as their own openness and curiosity. They can learn about the meaning of forms, of appearance, and forms of life, the knowledge about things, about their content, importance and handling as well as the three valuable words: "I don't know".

CONVERSATIONS

...what about the experienced and the curious? ...

The experienced can only stay experienced when their curiosity incites them to strike out on new paths continuously, and allows them to reveal what was invisible and uncover what was unrealized.

Wislawa Szymborska said that "Any knowledge that doesn't lead to new questions quickly dies out: it fails to maintain the temperature required for sustaining life."

...what can the impetuous learn from the reasonable? ...

Maybe the reasonable can tell the impetuous: Don't overrun yourself or others, follow your idea, do not hand over control, pace yourself carefully, take your time to intensively observe phenomena, and form your own opinion.

...and finally the juvenile form the wise?

The wise can teach the juvenile a reflected and balanced way of thinking and learning, one that is based on experience and knowledge, and has a certain distance from the thinker's self. And they can teach discipline.

The problems we are facing and that are going to challenge us in the beginning of this 21st century have been discussed since the 1970s. How come these problems were not tackled in time and could escalate until today?

I can only answer impetuously here. The precise, careful answer requires thorough historical research taking in account for example the East-West conflict and the North-South divide. Here's my impetuous answer:

I sense the following symptoms: People are spiritually, psychologically, and physically congested from overcoming the occurrences and informations of past and present, that are following in quick succession. They are sated and confined in goods, waste, and media frenzy on the one hand. And on the other they starve, and are used, sick and infected in a destroyed, polluted, exploited terrain. The idea of globalization that came up in the 1970s, led to a sellout of capitalism under the smoke screen of democracy, while the global community missed out on saving cultures that live in tune with the environment. I would like to add a few more key ideas: absolute belief in technology, pragmatism, the delusion of economical constraints lacking context, and the greed and unconsciousness of the individual within the established constellation of power.

Urgently necessary seems to be a praxis of developing a subversive energy of political intervention.

One last question: What are the tasks young architects should direct themselves toward now, and in the near future?

Young architects have to detect and strip down the sins of the previous generation.

CONVERSATIONS

However, like them they have to push for more time to think, to design, to create as well as for the political recognition of their work: to structure and organize space and its character and material, as a body of light and sound in a specific context, climate, place, quantity of resources, and onward.

Decreasing the consumption of natural resources caused by building is going to be a central task for architecture as a discipline that is closely connected to life claims for itself.

Every project will have to contribute to the development of visions and future forms of life closely related to energy-saving concepts and energy production. The cultural artifacts of architectural history have to be identified and preserved as a constant value.

Future tasks also include developing shared space models in urban and in building design, or to continue working on concepts for regions of shrinking and increasing population. ←

EXCE



4

RPTS:

→ WHY WE STARTED THIS COLLECTION OF EXCERPTS: COMMENT → P. 165.1

WORLD RELATED

From Thomas Hobbes, 1651 to Thomas Fischermann, 2009.

*This part is related to our world, the earth and its ecology,
but it is also related to the individual worlds: everybody lives in his or her own world.*

EXCERPTS

The life of the hunter-gatherer is indeed solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

Thomas Hobbes

Leviathan, 1651

The oldest of all societies, and the only natural one, is that of the family. p. 1

Jean-Jaques Rousseau

If I were to consider only force and the effects of force, I should say: So long as a people is constrained to obey, and obeys, it does well; but as soon as it can shake off the yoke, and shakes it off, it does better; for since it regains its freedom by the same right as that which removed it, a people is either justified in taking back its freedom, or there is no justifying those who took it away ...

← man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains. p. 1 f.

Jean-Jaques Rousseau

This quote makes us think of purely profit driven investor architecture. What justifies this certain investor to shape the world but the force of his money?

The strongest man is never strong enough to be master all the time, unless he transforms force into right and obedience into duty ... Force is a physical power; I do not see how its effects could produce morality.

To yield to force is an act of prudence. In what sense can it be a moral duty?

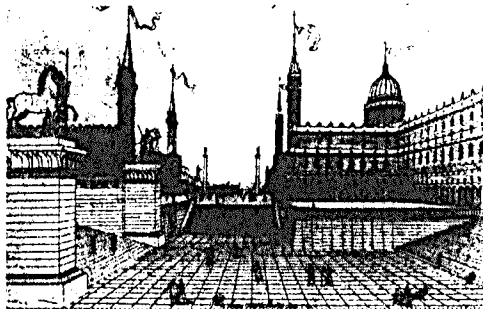
Let us grant, for a moment, that this so-called right exists. I suggest it can only produce a tissue of bewildering nonsense; for once might is made to be right, cause and effect are reversed, and every force which overcomes another force inherits the right which belonged to the vanquished. As soon as a man can disobey with impunity, his disobedience becomes legitimate; and as the strongest is always right, the only problem is how to become the strongest. But what can be the validity of a right which perishes with the force on which it rests? If force compels obedience, there is no need to invoke a duty to obey, and if force ceases to compel obedience, there is no longer any obligation. Thus the word "right" adds nothing to what is said by "force"; it is meaningless.

"Obey those in power." If this means "yield to force" the percept is sound, put superfluous; it will never, I suggest, be violated. All power comes from God, I agree; but so does every disease, and no one forbids us to summon a physician. If I am held up by a robber at

EXCERPTS

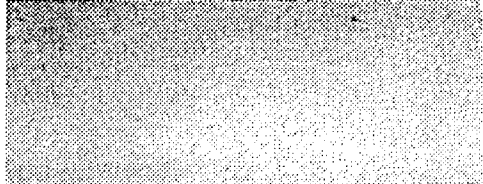
PLATE N° 1: THE SEA

We like the gesture: Schinkel is setting a highly artificial, highly cultural city square against the mightyness of the sea. You can almost feel the sea behind your back.

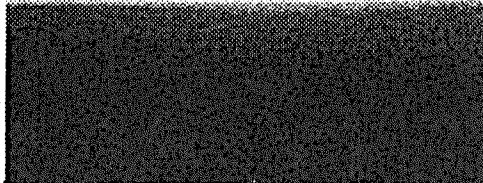


Karl Friedrich Schinkel:
City square close to the sea

A world without architecture.
A world without humans.
A world without time.



Hiroshi Sugimoto:
The Sea
1999



This coastal strip in Spain is part of Europe's largest accumulation of greenhouses. This particular landscape in rural Spain is shaped to serve for food production for people who live somewhere else in Europe or even further away. This is what we mean by the term 'passive land use'.



Reinaldo Loureiro:
Motril
2009

EXCERPTS

the edge of a wood, force compels me to hand over my purse. But if I could somehow contrive to keep the purse from him, would I still be obliged in conscience to surrender it? After all, the pistol in the robber's hand is undoubtedly a power. Surely it must be admitted, then, that might does not make right, and that the duty of obedience is owed only to legitimate powers. p. 5

Again, applied to architecture, should legitimacy here not come from money, but knowledge? And can knowledge succeed without controlling the money?

Jean-Jaques Rousseau

The Social Contract, 1762
here: Great Ideas; Penguin Books, London, 2004

Commodities and Money
Chapter One, Section 1

The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, presents itself as 'an immense accumulation of commodities', its unit being a single commodity. p. 29

Karl Marx was quoted a lot in early 2009, when newspapers were full of nagging questions about the fate of companies that were called 'relevant for the system'.

Karl Marx

Isn't his definition of the wealth of our capitalist society, 'a huge bunch of things', nothing else but a confession of failure?

Commodities and Money
Chapter One, Section 4

The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret thereof

A commodity appears at first sight, a very trivial thing, and easily understood. Its analysis shows that it is, in reality, a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties. So far as it is a value in use, there is nothing mysterious about it, whether we consider it from the point of view that by its properties it is capable of satisfying human wants, or from the point that those properties are the product of human labour. It is clear as noon-day, that man by his industry changes the forms of the materials furnished by nature, in such a way as to make them useful to him. The form of wood, for instance, is altered, by making a table out of it. Yet, for all that the table continues to be that common, every-day thing, wood. But, so soon as it steps forth as a commodity, it has changed into something transcendent. It not only stands with its feet on the ground, but, in relation to all other commodities, it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than 'table-turning'

← ever was. pp. 29

There is something in the field of architecture that is besides its triviality and its one-liner-effect only to be understood in its metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties: We call it 'Icon' or 'Iconic Buildings'.

Karl Marx

Capital – A critical Analysis of Capitalist Production
London 1887
here: Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1990

EXCERPTS

A broad path to a new industrial system, where the wealth is far more just and more equitable distributed. This sounds like a description of the system that some thinkers are envisioning today: A world society, connected by the distributive power of the Internet, powered by the decentralized smart grid of new energies, that Mr. Howard saw but didn't think of.

What clearly marked economic truth is brought into view by the successful issue of such an experiment as we have been advocating? This: that there is a broad path open, through a creation of new wealth forms, to a new industrial system in which the productive forces of society and of nature may be used with far greater effectiveness than at present, and in which the distribution of the wealth forms so created will take place on a far juster and more equitable basis. Society may have more to divide among its members, and at the same time the
← greater dividend may be divided in a juster manner. p. 106

Ebenezer Howard

The land subsists, and the land is almost the only thing that subsists.
p. 108

Ebenezer Howard

He meant the right thing, but much less drastic than we see our reality today: we can no more speak of infinite treasures, nor shall we dare to regard the earth as abiding forever.

The planet on which we live has lasted millions of years, and the race is just emerging from its savagery. Those of us, who believe that there is a grand purpose behind nature, cannot believe that the career of this planet is likely to be speedily cut short, now that better hopes are rising in the hearts of men and that, having learned a few of its less obscure secrets, they are finding their way through much toil and pain to a more noble use of its infinite treasures. The earth for all practical
← purposes may be regarded as abiding forever. p. 113

Ebenezer Howard

Garden Cities of Tomorrow, 1902
S. Sonnenschein & Co. Ltd., London
here: Forgotten Books 2008

148.1

...One can only order what is already ordered in itself. Order is more than organization. Organization is the determination of function. Order, however, imparts meaning. If we would give to each thing what intrinsically belongs to it, then all things would easily fall into their proper place; only there they could really be what they are and there they would fully realize themselves. The chaos in which we live would give way to order and the world would again become meaningful and beautiful.

But that means to let go of the self-will and do the necessary. To articulate and realize the timely and not prevent what wants to and must become. p. 325

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

EXCERPTS

Is the world as it presents itself bearable for man?
 More: Is it worthy of man or too lowly?
 Does it offer room for the highest form of human dignity?
 ← Can it be shaped so as to be worthwhile to live in? p. 325

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Nineteen sheets of an unpublished lecture manuscript, occasion and date unknown, in
 Library of Congress. Heading on cover sheet:
 "Manuscript of one important address Mies gave here in Germany"

here: *The Artless Word - Mies van der Rohe on the Building Art*,
 edited by Fritz Neumeyer. MIT Press, Cambridge, 1991

Mies is talking about a manmade world. What interests him is the question if it can and should be done in a way that makes it worth living. It is more a demand than a question. We think it is actually more interesting to ask ourselves if we can shape our acting in a way that it is worthy of our world's wealth and entropy.

"Naples", I said to him, "is the most mysterious city of Europe, it is the only city of the ancient world that did not perish like Ilia, like Nimive, like Babylon. It is the only city that hasn't experienced the great wrecking of the ancient world.

Naples is a Pompeji that was never buried. It is not a city but a whole world. The ancient world, the pre-Christian world, that lies completely unspoiled on the surface of modernity.

Your tanks run the risk of sinking into the black mud of residue of the antiquity. You couldn't choose a more dangerous place to land in Europe than Naples. If you had landed in Holland, Denmark, or even France, your scientific spirit, your technology, your gigantic wealth of means would have earned you the victory not only over the German host, but even over the European spirit, over this different, hidden Europe, Naples is a mysterious reflection, the naked ghost of.

But here, in Naples, your tanks your guns, your vehicles laugh. Old Iron. Do you remember, Jack, the words of the Neapolitan who saw your convoys pass by on Via Toledo the day you drafted Naples?

'What nice scrap!'

Your specific American mode of being shows off here, defenceless, dangerously vulnerable, you are nothing but big kids, Jack, you can't understand Naples, you will never understand Naples." s.49-50

Curzio Malaparte,

La Pelle, 1949

Aria d'Italia, Rom & Mailand,

This quote by Malaparte makes it strikingly clear for us how crazily irrational our devotion and believe for the technical object, the gadget is. Nothing vanishes quicker than the newest computer or car. And nothing persists like instinct, raw matter and nature. Technical solutions are good, but they usually have a short life span. This we must think of when building our homes of the future.

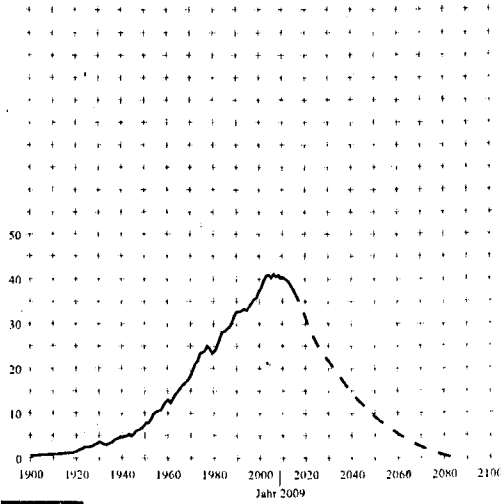
The sky is very dark; the Earth is blueish.
 Everything is seen very clearly.

Juri Gagarin
 1961

EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 2: STATISTICS I

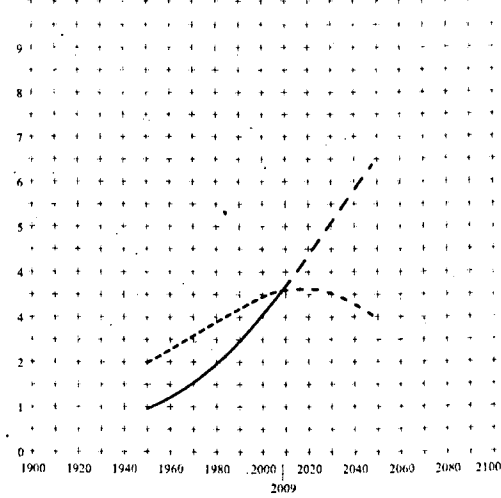
150.1: ↘



Good news:
We've passed the peak
already.

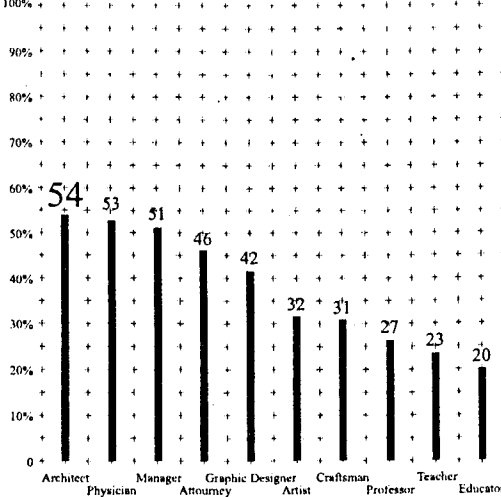
Peak Oil
American Association
of Petroleum Geologists
2009

150.2: ↘



Urban/Rural Population
United Nations/
Population Division:
World Urbanisation Prospect
The 2007 revision

150.3: ↘



Male Attractiveness
by professions

EXCERPTS

1989: The Year of Miracles

[...] By seeking to reorient man's exploitation of man toward an exploitation of nature by man, capitalism magnified both beyond measure. The repressed returns, and with vengeance: the multitudes that were supposed to be saved from death fall back into poverty by the hundreds of millions; nature, over which we were supposed to gain absolute mastery, dominates us in an equally global fashion, and threatens us all. It is a strange dialectic that turns the slave into man's owner and master, and that suddenly informs us that we have invented ecocides as well as large-scale famine.

The perfect symmetry between the dismantling of the wall of shame and the end of limitless Nature is invisible only to the rich Western democracies. The various manifestations of socialism destroyed both their peoples and their ecosystems, whereas the powers of the North and the West have been able to save their peoples and some of their countrysides by destroying the rest of the world and reducing its peoples to abject poverty. pp. 8

Bruno Latour

1.5 What Does it Mean To Be a Modern?

Modernity comes in as many versions as there are thinkers and journalists, yet all its definitions point, in one way or another, to the passage of time. The adjective 'modern' designates a new regime, an acceleration, a rupture, a revolution in time. When the word 'modern', 'modernization', or 'modernity' appears, we are defining, by contrast, an archaic and stable past. Furthermore, the word is always being thrown into the middle of a fight, in a quarrel where there are winners and losers, Ancients and Moderns. 'Modern' is thus doubly asymmetrical: it designates a break in the regular passage of time, and designates a combat in which there are victors and vanquished. If so many of our contemporaries are reluctant to use this adjective today, if we qualify it with prepositions, it is because we feel less confident in our ability to maintain that double asymmetry: we can no longer point to time's irreversible arrow, nor can we award a prize to the winners. In the countless quarrels between Ancients and Moderns, the former come out winners as often as the latter now, and nothing allows us to say whether revolutions finish off the old regimes or bring them to fruition. Hence the scepticism that is oddly called 'post' modern even though it does not know whether or not it is capable of taking over from the Moderns. p. 10

Bruno Latour

We Have Never Been Modern, 1991
 here: Harvester Wheatsheaf for
 Simon & Schuster International Group, Hertfordshire, 1993

EXCERPTS

Globalization:

1. astronomically expands the realm of possibility, for better or worse;
 2. exponentially depletes the architectural imagination;
 3. exponentially enriches the architectural imagination;
 4. scrambles the chronology of individual architects' careers; extends and/or shrinks shelf life;
 5. causes, as in earlier collisions of formerly pure cultures, epidemics;
 6. radically modifies architectural discourse, now an uneasy relationship between regional unknowing and international knowing.
- Globalization destabilizes and redefines both the way architecture is produced and that which architecture produces. Architecture is no longer a patient transaction between known quantities that share cultures, no longer the manipulation of established possibilities, no longer a possible judgement in rational terms of investment and return, no longer something experienced in person – by the public or cities. Globalization lends virtuality to real buildings, keeps them indigestible, forever fresh. p. 367

Rem Koolhaas

Globalization
published in: S, M, L, XL
by O.M.A., Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau.
The Monacelli Press, New York, 1995

The world changes and it's changeable. Phillip Johnson, a testament to this phrase. Sometimes even a small architecture exhibition can radically change the course of the world.

← Alfred Barr was a real preacher at heart, he was a minister's son, very WASP, very convinced that only he had the key to the future. The international style, which he named, was going to take over the world, and he was the leader that would do it. And I was his faithful acolyte. And we damn near did to it! (Laughs) it was very successful.

Philip Johnson in conversation with Rem Koolhaas and Hans Ulrich Obrist

HUO: when did the two of you meet for the first time?

RK: In the 70s.

PJ: In the 70s? You?

RK: Yes. In this building. I was interviewing you about New York. I was working on a book and was using you, or rather, getting some information out of you, or trying to get some information out of you.

← But you never get the information you want.

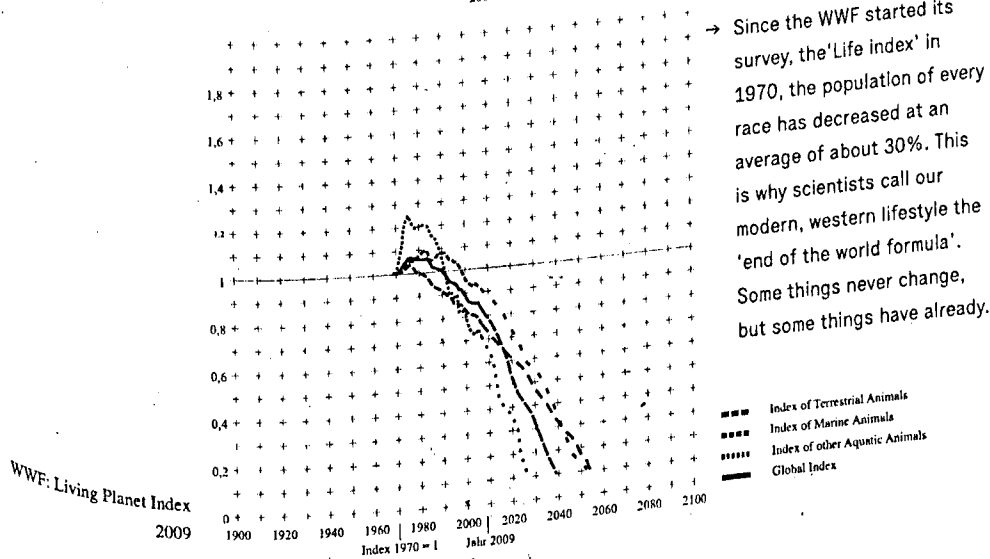
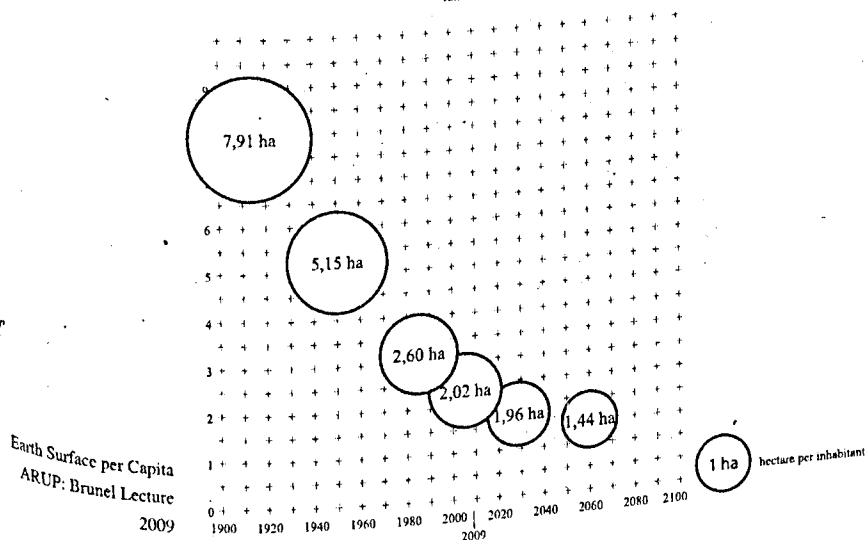
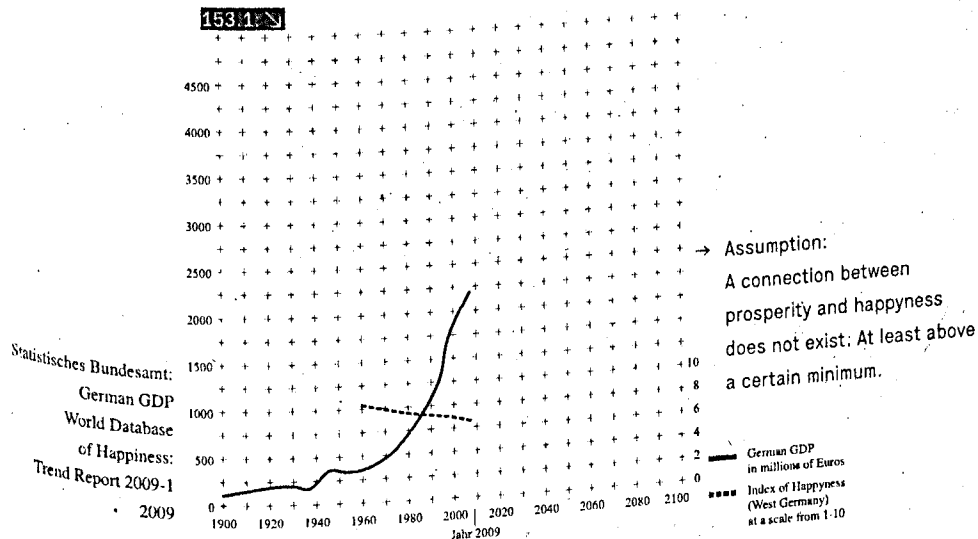
Philip Johnson in conversation with Rem Koolhaas and Hans Ulrich Obrist

This quote is self-referential and points to the interviews conducted for this book. (Sometimes you get better things than you wanted, too.)

Interview, 2003
Layout, Philip Johnson in conversation with Rem Koolhaas and Ulrich Obrist, Verlag Walter König, Köln

EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 3: STATISTICS 2



EXCERPTS

154.1: N

The concept of the ark – from latin ‘arca’, the box, compare: arcanus, locked, secret – uncovers the spherologically most radical imagination of space, mankind at the threshold of a high culture was able to conceptualize: The fact that the artificial, sealed inner world under certain circumstances becomes the only possible environment for its inhabitants to live in. Thereby a completely new project is brought into being: The imagination of the self-recovery and self-enclosure of a group towards an outer world that has become impossible. The arch is the autonomous, absolute, the contextless house, the building without neighborhood, The arch stands for the negation of environment by the help of artificial constructs. It is the first technical realization of the surreal spatial theme of the ‘autogenic container’, even if it only was
← an imaginative technology. p. 251

Peter Sloterdijk

Sphären II, 1999

Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main

It has always been about inside and outside. Who are we protecting the inside against? Where does ‘outside’ begin? Today the boundary between inside and outside is not a physical one. Everybody in some regard externalizes his or her inner and internalizes the outer world. Just think of Facebook and Google Earth.

[We have to] think of technology not as an autonomous force that seeks solutions measured by internal standards of ‘efficiency’ and uniformity, but as an instrument that can secure the benefits of the local – an adjunct to difference.

Michael Sorkin

Supporting contains an offer, an invitation – but first of all it establishes a relationship of interdependency, the entry into which is the opening up of potential communities, associations, active relationships – a taking up on both political and hierarchical responsibility. p. B29

Celine Condorelli

154.2: N

I think that here one has to start from an assumption, and that is that we want or need to activate civil society as multiple political agencies; if this is a starting point, one of the things we need to work on is the place of democracy, through the reinvention, and rethinking, and
← expanding of the spatial context, this being the public sphere. p. B30

Celine Condorelli

We definitely think this is the case. In this crisis of democracy we definitely have to work on the place of democracy. And maybe it is not the public sphere in general, but also actual places of participation or at least exchange and understanding between citizen and legislator. Café Deutschland could help.

→ LEARN MORE ON:

CAFÉ DEUTSCHLAND → P. 34

Superficially, support can be understood as aimed toward the fulfillment of a need or a lack. This relates very clearly to the notion you mentioned, in which I’m very interested, of the flattening of individuals into the generic concept of a subject in need. This is the imagina-

EXCERPTS

This quote wraps up what makes us uneasy at times about the more leftist political parties. Citizens should be on the same eye high with their elected representatives, not children of the state. We think that a simple and profane place such as our Café Deutschland proposal could really have an impact on the way citizens see and interact with politics.

tion of the citizen as a receptacle, a person to whom governmental structures and democratic processes are applied, rather than an active force in him or her self who partakes in the governing of the nation state. p. B31

Celine Condorelli

Foucault in a sense liberated spatial form, and with it the practice of architecture, from being conceived as belonging to inescapable orders of liberation or oppression. An architecture of oppression might be one of the elements which makes resistance and opposition possible but it is not in the architecture itself that liberation from oppression is contained nor embodied: liberty is a practice ... liberty must be exercised. Architecture might be able to support a form of political institution and vice versa, but it cannot control it or determine it. p. B31

Celine Condorelli

To give you an example of one of the greatest challenges for the critical, progressive, emancipated, Western European subject, when of less intellectual caliber than Mouffe, is knowing when to shut up and wait. Not in the name of cultural related relativism or political passivity, but in the hope of an everyday ethics of listening. Countless situations where any attempt at outspoken critic of dialogue have – or would have amounted to waste of time, energy, sweat, and tears for everyone involved. At the risk of sounding like Carl Schmitt, I'll say that every so often, the best thing when it comes to neighborhood racism or religious caricatures or the like is not conflictual true consensus but diplomatic disregard. So I'm not talking about the problematic Europeans – mullahs and the unemployed etc. – but about those who feel they are speaking in the name of a Europluralist consensus, and can thus demand the right to critically receive your opinion. p.B40

Tirdad Zolghadr

The moment we say democracy has being realized, we pretend to be in a situation in which we can say that what exists at the moment is a perfect democracy. Such a democracy would have ceased to be pluralistic because it would no longer be any possibility for discussion or conflict. This is an idea that goes absolutely contrary to my idea of the agnostic democracy. For me, there is democracy as long as there is conflict and as long as existing arrangements can be contested. If we arrived at a point where we say, this is the endpoint, contestation is no longer legitimate, this means the end of democracy. p. B41

Chantal Mouffe

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As the threat of global warming becomes widely recognized, scientists have proposed using geo-engineering (manipulation of the Earth's environment) to quickly respond to this threat. Most proposed geo-engineering techniques are novel and unproven. Two simple technologies that have been around for thousands of years, cool roofs and cool pavements, should be the first geo-engineering techniques used to combat global warming. Increasing the solar reflectance of urban surfaces reduces their solar heat gain, lowers their temperatures, and avoids transferring heat back into the atmosphere. This process of "negative radiative forcing" counters global warming. In a recent study to be published in the journal *Climatic Change*, Akbari, Menon and Rosenfeld have calculated the CO₂ offset, or equivalent reduction in CO₂ emission, achieved by increasing the solar reflectance of urban surfaces.

Most existing flat roofs are dark and reflect only 10 to 20% of sunlight. Resurfacing the roof with a white material that has a long-term solar reflectance of 0.60 or more increases its solar reflectance by at least 0.40. Akbari et al. estimate that so retrofitting 100 m² (1000 ft²) of roof offsets 10 tonnes of CO₂ emission. (For comparison purposes, we point out that a typical US house emits about 10 tonnes of CO₂ per year.) It is fairly easy to persuade (or to require) the owners of buildings to select white materials for flat roofs, and in California this has been required since 2005. However, the demand for white sloped roofs is limited in North America, so California compromises by requiring only "cool colored" surfaces for sloped roofs. (This rule takes effect in July 2009.) Use of cool-colored surfaces increases solar reflectance by about 0.20 and yields a CO₂ offset of about five tonnes per 100 sqm, or about half that achieved with white surfaces. The solar reflectance of pavement can be raised on average by about 0.15, offsetting about four tonnes of CO₂ per 100 sqm.

Over 50% of the world population now lives in urban areas, and by 2040 that fraction is expected to reach 70%. Pavements and roofs comprise over 60% of urban surfaces (roofs 20 to 25%, pavements about 40%). Akbari et al. estimate that permanently retrofitting urban roofs and pavements in the tropical and temperate regions of the world with solar-reflective materials would offset 44 billion tonnes of emitted CO₂, worth \$1.1 trillion at \$25 / tonne.

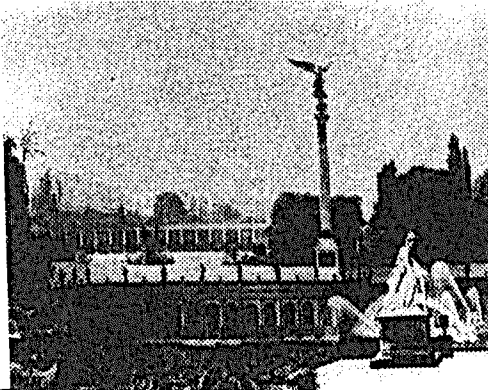
How can the reader visualize this one time offset of 44 billion tonnes of CO₂? The average world car emits about 4 tonnes of CO₂ each year. Permanently increasing the solar reflectance of urban roofs and pavements worldwide would offset 11 billion car-years of emission. This is equivalent to taking the world's approximately 600 million cars off the road for 11 years. The offset provided by cooling urban surfaces affords us a significant delay in climate change during which we can take further measures to improve energy efficiency and sustainability. Akbari et al. propose an international campaign to use solar reflective materials when roofs and pavements are initially built or resurfaced in temperate and tropical regions. They point out that such an international "cool cities" program is a win, win, win proposition. Cool roofs reduce cooling-energy use in air conditioned buildings and increase comfort in unconditioned buildings. Cool roofs and cool pavements mitigate summer urban heat islands, improving

← What is interesting about this study is the fact that the scientists in this case understood the importance of presenting their outcome in a way that anyone could figure out to what extent it concerned them. What is fascinating is how tangibly they visualized their figures. It is an example of how much of an amateur one must be, to be able to communicate across professions and also how simple things need to be to raise people's consciousness.

EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 4: NATURE CITY

Christian Wilberg
wall painting at Cafe Bauer
'Roman Landscapes'
1877



157.1

→ Nature versus City. Either in the Greek dream of Arcadia or the Guerilla Gardening of today, or contemporary political art, the contrast between civilisation and wild nature is an inspiring topic for mankind.

New York Times Article
August 2009



→ First Lady Michelle Obama is setting up a vegetable garden for kids to find their way back to nature and purity. New Yorkers petition to allow poultry keeping on rooftops and in yards. Arts and design bookshops stock publications on 'sustainable living in the city'. This has happened before, after the oil crisis in 1970.

Agnes Denes:
Wheatfield - A Confrontation
1982



→ WHY THIS PROJECT IS PROGRESSIVE:
ON CITIES → P. 22.1

What is it this time around?
– A lasting change of our understanding of cities or just a nostalgic fashion?

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outdoor air quality and comfort. This latest research shows that cool roofs and cool pavements can cool the entire globe. Installing cool roofs and cool pavements in cities worldwide does not require delicate international negotiations about capping CO₂ emission rates.

→SEE THIS IDEA VISUALIZED: POSTCARD →P. 64

Hashem Akbari, Surabi Menon, Arthur Rosenfeld

Global cooling: increasing world-wide urban albedos to offset CO₂
 Springer Science + Business Media, September 2008
 here: Berkeley Research Highlights, November 10, 2008

Julius Posener, the great architecture historian, announced the third precondition as follows: "A society doesn't have to be emancipated, not socially equal, to come up with its own architecture. But it has to be a society, a society, be it anyway, as long as it follows certain rules of civilized behavior and social relation."

Gert Kähler

Heimat, deine Sterne
 Süddeutsche Zeitung, 18.02.2009

Overborrowing always ends badly, whether for an individual, a company, or a country. Sooner or later, credit conditions become tighter and no one will lend you money on anything close to affordable terms.

Simon Johnson

The Quiet Coup
http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200905/imm_advice

Participation is best and most constructive if it has clear aims and targets, a clear audience or remit, and knows exactly on what scale it wants to operate. That's why micro-political struggle is – from my point of view – more effective than macro-political ambition.

Markus Miessen

Interview
<http://www.metahaven.net/mhSRC/CONTENT.php?id=59&pid=21>

Energy will follow collapse as sure as day will follow night. What is uncertain now is not if, but only where it will flourish. Look for it beneath you, in Roman roads, and above you in a solar flare. Look

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to South Beach and Northern Europe, to the female nude and the prophet. Look for energy in a broken pond – in a tapestry or neon, a wall or a fur, and when you find it, drink deep, for behold, friends, the summer has come. p. 81

Jörg Koch

Editorial

032c, 17th Issue, Berlin, 2009

In a little-known 1939 essay entitled “The Dangers and Advantages of Luxury” the critic and historian Sigfried Giedion summarized a growing criticism of modern architecture in its seeming disregard for beauty and emotional expression in the face of an overwhelming need to serve the strictly “functional”. Instead, he called for architecture to once again satisfy our desire for luxury in a legitimate and vital way. p. 21

Johanna Merwood-Salisbury

Luxury is a social signifier with no fixed formal definition. is not an absolute condition (luxurious and not luxurious) but a continuum. Far from being stable and static, every culture and generation redefines luxury for itself. in this sense it is a floating signifier attached to different things in different times and places. p. 21

Johanna Merwood-Salisbury

An account on luxury today illustrated with the help of two luxury resorts: Heiligendamm: The so-called 'pearl necklace of the Baltic sea', the first German seaside resort, harborage for Emperors and Czars, and Epi Plage: 8 cabins, 6 rooms, at the south end of the *Plage de l'ampelonne*, the beach of St. Tropez. Both hotels are situated magnificently, both hotels are expensive and that's where the similarities stop. Heiligendamm tries with outermost rationality to do everything right and is failing miserably. Epi Plage does everything right and seems unconscious in the process, it seems to happen naturally. For that reason – giving an answer straight away – the simple log cabins of the Epi Plage feel much more luxurious than the mimicked solidity of Heiligendamm. The whole architecture of security and properness is sadly about narrow-minded upper-middle class, airport lounges, insurances and corporate hierarchies. That simply can't be luxurious. It would

For Le Corbusier the new interior was not the latest style but an essentially classless form of design answering to the universality of basic human needs. To be luxurious in the 20th century, he argued, was to employ the most progressive industrial design, aimed at health, hygiene and efficiency. Let us put together a museum of our own day with objects of our own day: to begin: a plain jacket, a bowler hat, a well-made shoe. An electric light bulb with bayonet fitting, a radiator, tablecloth of fine white linen. Our everyday drinking glasses, and bottles of various shapes [...] a number of bentwood chairs with caned seats like those invented by Thonet in Vienna, [...] in this way one would come to appreciate a new phenomenon characteristic of this period, namely that the objects of utility used by the rich and the poor were not very different from one another, and varied only in their finish in method of manufacture. p. 21

Johanna Merwood-Salisbury

On Luxury

AA Files, 56th Issue, London, 2009

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have been better if the old buildings had not been so properly restored – both in regards to finance as well as the designated goal of creating a truly luxurious retreat at the sea between Hamburg and Berlin. To live in one of the 8 Log-Cabins of the Epi Plage, with their cool, slightly rough timber plank floors in whose cracks the sand from the beach in front of the door sediments, on the other hand, feels like a real privilege. You are one of twenty people, not one part of an occupancy rate that under all circumstances has to be pushed above 40% in order to fend off the creditors. Luxury at the Epi Plage also occurs out of the host's modesty. If luxury is serving, luxury can not flourish in projects that are motivated by greed. It is an honour, to sit just one table apart from the 90-year-old father of the hotelier while being served coffee out of silver pots and eating a simple baguette with butter and marmalade in the freshness of the early morning hours. It is a genuine partake in the life of the family ... a gift which exceeds the price you pay because it is a gesture that classifies you as a fellow man not as a client, and at the same time saves the host from becoming a mere service provider. Genuine are also the materials found at the Epi Plage. It is not a fantasy world, a pillow in the spirit of the self pampering philosophy. The tables are either made out of wood, old and flawed, or heavy and somewhat chilly and out of cast iron. One part of the veranda is covered with a see-through plastic curtain with a print of white window grids. A material and a stylistic application which makes you think more of camping than of luxury, the previously mentioned cans however are old silver pots, each a little different from the other; an expression of high esteem for the guests manifested in the physical object they touch. A regard for the important details that are actually heightened in the face of the plastic curtain. Unconsciously, but righteously so, the Epi Plage does not pretend that the world outside of its confines is a

“Artists are always employees [...] If you want to know who rules the world take a close look at who is paying the artists. Once it was kings and popes – today it is corporations!

Artists are not allowed to be on the same level as a manager or a political leader –this is why cinema is not able to do its duty. Yes, cinema could be part of the solution of our problems but it is the people controlling it who are part of the problem.

Francis Ford Coppola

Nur als Gewinner wurde Coppola wirklich reich
Welt Online, 2009

The oil rush after the second world war will go down in history as an episode of insanity. p. 11

Hans Joachim Schellnhuber

Based loosely on Kant: Always form your architectural statements in a way that the maxim of your building could act as the basis of a non-self-destructive lifestyle. Such ecological imperative eliminates the outer world. Processes that have been understood as external until now will have to be involved in the system. The moment we intervene in ecosystems as large home economies, the outer does no longer exist. Instead, everything will have to be regarded under the premise of inner world criteria and all human behavior will have to be evaluated according to the rules of home economical manners. p. 37

Peter Sloterdijk

I do not understand how people can praise capitalism without taking in account the capital, the capital of nature.

Prince Charles

Die Zeit, 29 May 2009

We have to overcome the established opposition of subject and object. The dead thing and the isolated spirit – this separation roots back to Descartes, Kant and the sciences, but this is no more appropriate. People and objects have been connected ever since. Today they are outgrowing us in shape of hybrids. [...] The non-human creatures are already represented, especially by the sciences. Concerning man, they are poorly represented by the politically responsible. In both cases representatives speak in the name of those who remain silent. But representative boards are indispensable and always open for debates:

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holistic world of good taste or that the thoroughly designed world of the hotel is a microcosmos unrelated to the world outside. Rather the world as it is, is present. Having the guest pour his coffee out of silver pots becomes an act of care, of high regard, of humanness. So what is luxury today? It is an appeal to the ability of man, it's the optimism of our culture represented in the aspiration for the best possible solution. But it also is composure, consideration and intelligence. Luxury is indispensable.

It is hybrid politics. There is nothing more normal than that. There has never been a civilization where non-human creatures have not spoken. ... Who can still believe that we are going to 'modernize' our planet! You'd need six or seven planets for that – Do we have those? Are we going to leave towards Mars? No, modernity is over. It is about Ecologizing, not modernizing.

Bruno Latour

Interview

Du – das Kulturmagazin, Ausgabe 798, July/August 2009

There is nothing more irritating and imprecise than the common way of measuring the extend of our wealth. Economists and politicians stare at the gross domestic product (GDP) that simply adds up everything that is produced or performed in our country – as long as it has a price. It is an outrageous construct causing a lot of problems.

Child or health care at home? They don't have any effect on the GDP. Environmental damage that can't be undone? Do not lower the GDP at all. [...] Increasing social dispeace and crime? No effect. Or maybe ... Yes! Whenever a hooligan breaks a window, it has to be repaired. Then the GDP even increases. [...]

We need to find better ways of describing growth. Before bad economic news turn into good ones again and no-one cares about alternatives anymore. p. 29

Thomas Fischermann

Besser wachsen
Die Zeit, 23. June 2009

MIND RELATED

From Jean-Jaques Rousseau, 1762 to Harald Welzer, 2009.

This part contains excerpts that deal with perception, with beauty,
and with being modern and with our state of mind.

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163.1.1

I start without seeking to prove the importance of my subject. I may be asked whether I am a prince or a legislator that I should be writing about politics.

I answer no: and indeed that is my reason for doing so. If I were a prince or a legislator I should not waste my time saying what ought to be done;

I should do it or keep silent. p. 1

This is one of the most essential quotes for this book. The question of what can be done by one's self is of utter importance. This project tries to raise awareness for certain issues by proposing them, and it also tries to place itself into the 'real world' by actually realizing projects without a prior brief.

Jean-Jaques Rousseau

The Social Contract, 1762
here: Great Ideas; Penguin Books, London, 2004

Humanity has lost its dignity, but art has rescued it and preserved it in significant stone. Truth lives on in the illusion of art, and it is from this copy, or after-image, that the original image once again will be restored. p. 83

Friedrich Schiller

On the Aesthetic Education of Man, 1794

Let us, therefore, first bend all our energies to the smaller of these tasks, thinking only of the larger tasks which lie beyond as incentives to a determined line of immediate action and as a means of realizing the great value of little things if done in the right manner and in the right spirit. p. 137

Ebenezer Howard

Garden Cities of Tomorrow, 1902
S. Sonnenschein & Co. Ltd., London
here: Forgotten Books, 2008

Traffic increases. The world shrinks more and more. It comes more and more into view right into the remotest recesses. World consciousness and consciousness of mankind are the results. p. 304

Traffic increases – right!

The world shrinks more and more – right!

World consciousness? I wish.

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Our time is not an external course on which we run. It has been given to us as a task that we have to master. p. 301

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

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We do not need less but more technology. We see in technology the possibility of freeing ourselves, the opportunity to help the masses. We do not need less science, but a science that is more spiritual; not less, but a more mature economic energy. All that will only become possible when man asserts himself in objective nature and relates it to himself.

It must be possible to heighten consciousness and yet keep it separate from the purely intellectual. It must be possible to let go of illusions, see our existence sharply defined, and yet gain a new infinity, an infinity that springs from the spirit.

It must be possible to solve the task of controlling nature and yet create simultaneously a new freedom.

It must be possible to see elitism disappear and admit the fact of the masses, the fact that each of the many has a right to life and goods. Mass must not be a cliché for us. It must come to an articulation from within itself, for only that way can the forces residing in it be made serviceable for all. The way leads from the extensive to the intensive. But all that can only happen if we regain our belief in the creative powers, if we trust the power of life. p. 301

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Unpublished manuscript of the lecture
"The Preconditions of Architectural Work",
held at the end of February 1928

at the Staatliche Kunstbibliothek Berlin and other venues in the following months.

here: The Artless Word - Mies van der Rohe on the Building Art,
edited by Fritz Neumeier. MIT Press, Cambridge, 1991

FILLING STATION

[...] Opinions are to the vast apparatus of social existence what oil is to machines: one does not go up to a turbine and pour machine oil over it; one applies a little to hidden spindles and joints that one has to know. p. 45

Walter Benjamin

CHINESE CURIOUS

These are days when no one should rely unduly on his "competence". Strength lies in improvisation. All the decisive blows are struck left-handed. p. 49

Walter Benjamin

(CHINESE CURIOUS)

[...] The power of a country road is different when one is walking along it from when one is flying over it by airplane. In the same way,

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the power of a text is different when it is read from when it is copied out. The airplane passenger sees only how the road pushes through the landscape, how it unfolds according to the same laws as the terrain surrounding it. Only he who walks the road on foot learns of the power it commands, and of how, from the very scenery but for the flyer is only the unfurled plain, it calls forth distances, belvederes, clearings, prospects at each of its turns like a commander deploying soldiers at a front. Only the copied text thus commands the soul of him who is occupied with it, whereas the mere reader never discovers the new aspects of his inner self that are opened by the text, that road cut through the interior jungle forever closing behind it: because the reader follows the movement of his mind in the free flight of day-dreaming, whereas the copier submits it to command. The Chinese practice of copying books was thus an incomparable guarantee of literary culture, and the transcript a key to China's enigmas. p. 49

Walter Benjamin

We started with the Excerpt section of this book primarily as a tool to communicate among ourselves. Of course not everybody read every book. To excerpt parts of the book one was reading and complement it with a comment on the context it came from enabled us to share the arguments of the particular book as well as the arguments of its respective reader. The collection presented in this book is only a small portion of the original collection, which we called: 'An Index of Now'.

ANTIQUES

Medallion. – In everything that is with reason called beautiful, appearance has a paradoxical effect. p. 75

Walter Benjamin

(ANTIQUES)

[...] Relief. – One is with the woman one loves, speaks with her. Then, weeks or months later, separated from her, one thinks again of what was talked of then. And now the motif seems banal, tawdry, shallow, and one realizes that it was she alone, bending low over it with love, who shaded and sheltered it before us, so that the thought was alive in all its folds and crevices like a relief. Alone, as now, we see it lie flat, bereft of comfort and shadow, in the light of our knowledge. pp. 75

Walter Benjamin

One-Way Street
Berlin, 1928

here: Verso Classic, New York, 1997

The new time is a fact; it exists whether we say yes or no to it. [...] All (these) things go their fateful, value-blind way. What is decisive is only how we assert ourselves toward these givens. It is here that the spiritual problems begin. What matters is not the what but only the how. That we produce goods and the means by which we produce them says nothing spiritually. Whether we build high or flat, with steel or with glass, says nothing as to the value of this way of building. Whether one aims for centralization or decentralization in urban planning is a practical question, not one of values. But it is exactly this question of values that is decisive. We must set new values and point

EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 5: PEOPLE

166.1: N

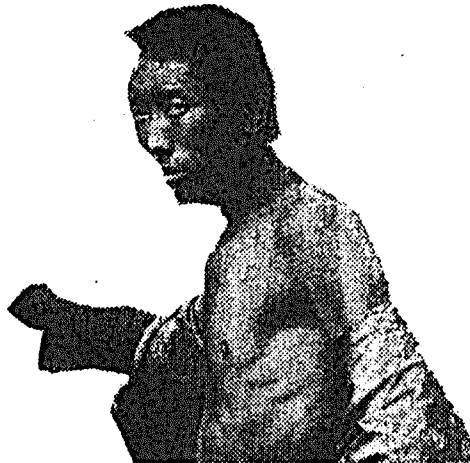


Ryan Mc Ginley
Fireworks
2002

→ WHY WE THINK THERE IS POTENTIAL IN NAIVETY: ON HOUSES → P. 27. 1



Unknown Photographer
Berlin
1952



Chinese coal-miner
newspaper cutout
2009

Portraits

←
A notion of a certain period or place, an atmosphere. Imagine the life of the people from the portrait after the image was taken ...

EXCERPTS

out ultimate goals in order to gain new criteria. For the meaning and justification of each epoch, even the new one, lie only in providing conditions under which the spirit can exist. p. 309

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

"The New Time"

Concluding words of a speech given at the Viennese meeting of the Deutsche Werkbund, June 22-26, 1930. Published in *Die Form*, 5, no. 15 (1930), p. 406; reprinted in *Die Form*, 7, no. 10 (1932), p. 306

here: *The Artless Word - Mies van der Rohe on the Building Art*, 1991
edited by Fritz Neumeyer. MIT Press, Cambridge,

[...] if the only form of tradition, of handing down, consisted in following the ways of the immediate generation before us in a blind or timid adherence to its success, tradition should be positively discouraged. [...] Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be inherited, and if you want it, you must obtain it by great labour. It involves, in the first place, the historical sense, which we may call nearly indispensable to anyone who would continue to be a poet beyond his 25th year; and a historical sense involves perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe [...] has a simultaneous existence and composes simultaneous order. This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as a temporal and of the timeless and temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional, and it is at the same time what makes a writer to most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity. p. 13

Robert Venturi

We could also quote the Director of the Bauhaus Dessau, Phillip Oswald, who emphasized in a discussion on the state of preservation of monuments in Berlin, that it is an essential fact of the modern movement to break with everything old. And as there is nothing more modern than being modern, it's difficult for us today to advance into a future that is learning from the past. Maybe even a past that is situated before modernity. At the same discussion the architect Rem Koolhaas stated that we are nowadays overtaken by our own preservation activity. Meaning that we are discussing the importance, and therefore the justification to be preserved of buildings that are not completed yet.

The excerpts in this book are a result of the attempt to assemble a subjective position on contemporary architecture on the basis of a collection of historic and current perspectives and facts. Doing so is influential in a sense that what is thought about today might be built tomorrow.

I agree with Eliot and reject the obsession of modern architects who, to quote Aldo van Eyck, have been harping continually on what is different in our time to such an extent that they have lost touch with what is not different, what is essentially the same. p. 13

Robert Venturi

This book deals with the present, and with the past in relation to the present. It does not attempt to be visionary except in so far as the future is inherent in the reality of the present. p. 14

Robert Venturi

Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture, 1960
MoMA Department of Publications, New York

EXCERPTS

So why do we want to be original? Because, as the philosopher Peter Sloterdijk argued in his book *The Contempt for the Masses*, we live in a culture of masses and the only way to be perceived is to be different. To be original. How familiar does this sound to 'Starchitecture', where persons become brands?

It's all been there already. Everything returns.

← He, who claims originality, has no memory.

Diana Vreeland
Editor in Chief, Vogue Magazine US, 1963-1971

[...] the architects between their two obligations, "the despotism of science and the tyranny of the majority". p. 6

Colin Rowe

For, if without prophecy there is no hope, then, without memory there can be no communication. p.49

Colin Rowe

The fox knows many things but the hedgehog knows one big thing [...] one is supposed to have here the two types of psychological orientations and temperaments, the one, the hedgehog, concerned with the primacy of the single idea and the other, the fox, preoccupied with multiplicity of stimulus; and the great ones of the earth divide fairly equally: Plato, Dante, Dostoevsky, Proust are, needless to say, ← hedgehogs; Aristotle, Shakespeare, Pushkin, Joyce are foxes. p. 92

Colin Rowe

Foxes seem to be more succesful today than hedgedogs. Look at Rem Koolhaas or almost every politician. We think both ways work; of course being a hedgedog is riskier, being a fox makes you look smart more easily. We try to work like foxes and come to an attackable but simple, hedgedog-like conclusion.

Collage City, 1978
The MIT Press, Cambridge

I understand that this is the aim of all techniques: the identification of the object with the imagination of it. p. 38

Aldo Rossi

A Scientific Autobiography, 1981
The MIT Press, Cambridge

But for the Greeks, to balance oneself one had to act as well as to look. The result of caring about what one sees is the desire to make something. The Greeks called this desire poiesis, from which we derive the English word 'poetry'. But their word was broader than one art in scope. The balanced person wants to make a speech, a battle,

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PLATE N° 6: WORLDS

The Earth



Richard Hamilton:
Just What Is It
That Makes Today's Life
So Different, So Appealing?
1956

→ Juri Gagarin's words when he at first saw the earth from outside
"The sky is very dark; the Earth is blueish. Everything is seen very clearly."

→ What would be in the picture today? An ultrasonic cleaning device for glasses for home use? Or even a laptop?

EXCERPTS

love, as well as a poem with the same qualities of grace and poise. As a result of his or her own engagement in making or doing things carefully, *sophrosyne* and *poiesis* were intimately related. [...] To care about what one sees in the world leads to mobilizing one's creative powers. In the modern city, these creative powers ought to take on a particular and humane form, turning people outward. Our culture is in need of an art of exposure; This art will not make us one another's victims, rather more balanced adults, capable of coping with and learning from complexity. pp. xiii

Richard Sennett

To a friend Stravinsky once remarked that forms are better shared than selves. pp. 239

Richard Sennett

The Conscience of the Eye
– The Design and Social Life of Cities, 1992
W.W. Norton and Company, New York,

I always like to change, don't I? That's why I'm doing to new houses and ones that are quite different. One is based on my late 20th-century buildings. The visitors Pavilion at Cuaso House, Da Monsta (in New Canaan, Connecticut), the other is a \$10 million house in the suburbs. It's in the worst All-American suburb: detached houses along streets, tree designs, front doors ...

Philip Johnson in conversation with Rem Koolhaas
and Hans Ulrich Obrist

Interview, 2003
Layout, Philip Johnson in conversation with Rem Koolhaas
and Ulrich Obrist, Verlag Walter König, Köln

John Ruskin proposed that we seek two things of our buildings. We want them to shelter us. And we want them to speak to us – to speak to us of whatever we find important and need to be reminded of. p. 62

Alain de Botton

It was Stendal who offered the most crystalline expression of the intimate affiliation between visual taste and our values when he wrote 'Beauty is the promise of happiness'. His aphorism has the virtue of differentiating our love of beauty from an academic preoccupation

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with aesthetics, and integrating it instead with the qualities we need to prosper as whole human beings. If the search for happiness is the underlying quest of our lives, it seems only natural that it should simultaneously be the essential theme to which beauty alludes. p. 98

Alain de Botton

There is nothing to lament in the idea that art can direct our actions, provided that the directions it points us in are valuable ones. The theorists of the idealizing tradition were refreshingly frank in their insistence that art should try to make things happen – and, more importantly, that it should try to make us good. p. 146

Alain de Botton

Why do we change our minds about what is beautiful? In 1907 a young German art historian named Wilhelm Worringer published an essay entitled 'Abstraction and Empathy' in which he attempted to explain our shifts from a psychological perspective. He began by suggesting that during the span of human history there had been only two basic types of art, 'abstract' and 'realistic', either one of which might, at any given time in a particular society, be favoured over the other [...] The most compelling aspect of Worringer's theory – a point as readily applicable to architecture as it is to painting – was his explanation of why a society might transfer its loyalty from the one aesthetic mode to the other. The determinant lay, he believed, in those values which the society in question was lacking, for it would love in art whatever it did not possess in sufficient supply within itself. p. 154

Alain de Botton

Beauty can only be seen individually.
A personal list of beautiful things:

The accidental kindness
of casual gestures,
the baroque splendor
of catholic staging,
the alienation of the known à la Brecht,
the white light of calm before the storm,
the condensed power
of slow motion images,
the faded colours of the seventies,
the puritan strictness
of a whitewashed wall,
the ruinous patina of natural materials,
the deep softness of old people's skin,
the unexplicable patterns of feathering,
the soft-solid impression of brick walls,
the comprehensible mechanics
of old instruments.

As Stendhal knew, 'There are as many styles of beauty as there are visions of happiness.' p. 166

Alain de Botton

The Architecture of Happiness, 2006
Hamish Hamilton Ltd., London

Violence in our definition has a very constructive side to it. Here, violence means to enter from the outside into a very confined field of practice, production, or discourse, changing the very notion of it or its own restricted definitions. So there is an advantage to not knowing. What it does is open new possibilities one would not have seen without the violent participator. p. B25

Markus Miessen

EXCERPTS

In the creation of what I call an agnostic public space, there are many different voices and kinds of people that all play a role. For instance, I think that this is definitely an area where artists, architects, and people were engaged in entire field of culture at large play an incredibly important role, because they provide different forms of subjectivities from the ones that exist at the moment.

Chantal Mouffe

The Violence of Participation, 2007
Sternberg Press, Berlin

By its very nature, graphic design is primarily concerned with giving shape to ideas and information provided by others.

But what happens when the designer assumes the role of editor, publisher and distributor outside the constraints of the familiar client /designer relationship? Taking such a position challenges the historically service-based model of graphic design, reliant as it is on supplied content, external requests and the division of work-flow into discrete specializations. p.11

Zak Kyes

Forms of Inquiry: The architecture of critical graphic design.
AA Publications, London, 2007

What would happen if this approach is taken by architects? If they transform from service provider to entrepreneur, truly shaping their own ideas as opposed to fussing over details of aesthetics?

On Luxury: I so totally hate that word. But I don't know if luxury is any different today that it's ever been. What I think happened is that after WWII we entered this era of simply hideous "brave new world"-style engineering, and luxury became synonymous in the public imagination with decadence. But luxury is not the Sapersteins doing Versailles in Los Angeles.

That's Sponge Bob Square Pants – it's a cartoon, a joke. A gold Louis XVI bathroom is not luxury; it's vulgarity. But the truth is, I don't have a problem with modern architecture being luxurious per se. Many modern architects do. A lot of them think your're not really modern unless you build in concrete; no, that just means you're good at parking garages! Just because I like a very bare aesthetic doesn't mean it can't be made out of some absolutely gorgeous material. I think the most luxurious thing in the world was the Barcelona Pavillion. What is more luxurious than perfect proportions, perfect aesthetics, and wide-open spaces punctuated by the most perfectly placed pieces of green marble?

Peter Merino

Interview
Pin-Up Magazine Fall / Winter 08/09

EXCERPTS

A large percentage of our body is water, but a large part of our mind is information. The information comes from the outside, and most of it never asked permission to enter. We all know what a Coca-Cola logo looks like; some can even draw it from memory. But we know the Coke logo, together with a trillion other trivial things that have colonized us. Think of the brain as a piece of land. Every time new information arrives something is added to the land and becomes a physical property of the land. However small or trivial it is, information occupies space and much of it remains as a permanent record in the field of memory. Whatever we see, hear, or learn literally becomes our property. There is no way to undo all of this information. We can try to create order in some way, so that it fits a mental scheme. But even that is not always possible.

Still, one of the most charismatic aspects of contemporary life is that we can easily copy ideas, forms, styles and objects. That ability makes life an open work in progress. And we are free to manipulate anything inside our own brains, and maybe in everyone else's. p. 174

Miltos Manetas

Interview

Purple Fashion Magazine, Spring / Summer 2009

The point of copyright laws was not simply to reward the holders of these rights, they were intended first and foremost to encourage innovation. The transformation of intellectual production into intellectual property through the course of the 20th century skewed this, but we must remember that the entire purpose of copyright was to encourage uploading. We need to reboot this as an argument. An abusive intellectual property rights structure serves to lock down culture, preventing it from behaving according to the dynamism of a system with strange attractors. p. 174

Peter Lunenfeld

Nowcasting: An Environmental

Impact Report On Open Source Culture,

Purple Fashion Magazine, Spring Summer 2009

Lately, in an interview, Patrick Schumacher (Partner at Zaha Hadid's) made this remarkable comment: "You can create a new repertory of forms much faster and more radical as long as the social significance is left aside." This was meant to be positive.

Gert Kähler

Heimat, deine Sterne

published in: Süddeutsche Zeitung, 18.02.2009

EXCERPTS

It is an undeniable fact that modern societies reward a risky habitus, while the anxious and inhibited, who basically have all opportunities, feel as if their only possibility was the illusionary participation in media-apathy à la 'Star Search'.

Hartmut Bohme

Hilft das Lesen in der Not?
Warum unsere Wirtschaftskrise eine Krise der Moderne ist
published in: Zeit Literatur, No. 12, March 2009

Any kind of unforeseen friction, collision of interests that leads to some form of conversation, or meeting of oppositional aims, leads to the production of new knowledge.

This is why I keep on bringing up the example of the Serpentine Gallery Interview Marathon in London, by Hans Ulrich Obrist and Rem Koolhaas.

As much as the event in itself is very commendable, it produced relatively little new knowledge. I would claim that the reason for this is that most of its actors, participants, and invited guests originated from the same cultural milieu. They were mostly leftist thinkers or practitioners and shared a similar belief in cultural production as a driving force for societal change.

The question I posed to them was: what would happen if you invite protagonists from the same fields, such as cultural practitioners, museum directors, curators, artists, architects, politicians and so forth, but also those who do not share any of your ideas, visions or beliefs. Why don't you invite super-conservative practitioners as well? I believe that the collision of the two, or potentially many, streams of opposing thoughts could have generated a conversation that would have taken the event and its results further.

I think we should rid participation of its innocence and romanticized presence. Instead, what needs to be promoted is a conflictual reading of it: participation not as the process by which one invites people in, but rather, as a means of acting without mandate, as an uninvited outsider forcing oneself into discourses, projects or realities of which one thinks that those might benefit from one's participation or involvement.

[...] the facilitator or good-doer is replaced by an 'independent outsider' model, one that strives for pro-active citizenship and challenges given sociopolitical environments, like an independent, crossbench politician that doesn't associate himself with a particular party.

Markus Miessen

Interview
<http://www.metahaven.net/mhSRC/CONTENT.php?id=59&pid=21>

The whole contemporary conception of culture industries and the 'creative city' is based on the continuing development of subjectivity

EXCERPTS

as a source of 'buying power'. There is nothing more welcome to neoliberal politics than being different.

Metahaven

Interview

<http://www.metahaven.net/mhSRC/CONTENT.php?id=59&pid=21>

Man is an animal, who just like a tree, grows toward the sky above. He is a tall statue of the rebellion who has risen from the lowliness of the mundane world toward the beyond. He has been created in the image of imagination and dream to pierce all ceilings. All his organs are swords fighting whatever "is". He fights against whatever holds him, whatever opposes him. He has a rebellious neck to stick out. He has not submitted to corrosive effects of the elements and has not surrendered in weakness; he has not conformed to the bonds of nature. He wishes to break, tear, pierce, clutter, sore, and be liberated. He is the tree of rebellion, the flower of negation. His answer to the eternal "is" is "no". p. 118

Ali Shariati

"Hubut" (The Fall), 1983

here: 032c, 17th Issue, Berlin, 2009

175.1

It's quite true, that modern society – the modern economy – essentially operates without a sense of the past: the standard method of solving problems doesn't consider the past. Yet in terms of human beings and society, the past is not irrelevant. Everybody, in fact, is rooted in the past – in a personal past, in a social past – and knows it, and is interested in it. If you forget what happened in the past, you simply have to repeat the same mistakes over and over again. p. 133

To learn from the past is a task we want to tackle. Especially in architecture. You can learn from the past by reading books and studying. But shouldn't there be a more natural – let's say: inevitable – way of drawing conclusions from the past and creating visions for the future?

Eric Hobsbawm

Interview

032c, 17th Issue, Berlin, 2009

→ LEARN FROM 1410 URBAN PLANNING: DUEPPEL → P. 189.1

As a last resort we are forced to accept the impossibility of reaching the final truth – this situation leads us to Karl Popper, who stated that a theory's significance only lasts until its falsification. (Thus truth becomes a temporary achievement) p. 44

Ilka & Andreas Ruby

J. Mayer H

Hatje Cantz Verlag, Berlin 2009

EXCERPTS

176.1.1

A Van Gogh is said to be beautiful, no matter if the lights are on or off, day or night. I think one can only regard a piece of art only considering its historic, social and geographic context [...] It scares me when someone talks about universal beauty. How can you say: These proportions are a beautiful ideal not just for me but for everybody! Such assumption promotes normative, hierarchical thinking and implies the existence of formulas of what is right or wrong. What is actually problematic is that people say: You can't see the aura – you haven't got a clue. What I am trying to do is to establish a school of questions, not answers. I would like to find out, together with the students, what coins perception. Because I am convinced: Beauty lies in our perception, not in the piece. p. 101

→SEE SOMETHING THAT WE FIND BEAUTIFUL:
MOABIT COAL DUST GRINDER →P. 198.1
Olafur Eliasson

Interview
Mobil, Nr. 05, 2009

The Serbian artist Milica Tomic calls these statues 'a dangerous joke in which history is being erased and replaced by Mickey Mouse'. But the lowest common denominator that this new post-war-generation – relentlessly searching for politically correct role models – comes up with, lies elsewhere: somewhere between Hollywood, MTV and late night soft-porn advertisement via satellite television – identities beyond scale. p. 32

Markus Miessen

ECE, 2009
Sternberg Press, Berlin

The articulation of difference and uniqueness was so crucial to postmodernity – How are you and I different? How are Europe and the US different? Today however we're undergoing a transition from postmodernity to network culture. We increasingly live in an actualized plane of immanence, created not by Communism or neo-Spinozian politics but by the leveling actions of contemporary travel and communication. Our collective drive now is toward sameness, not difference. Under network culture, the individual seeks not so much to individualize but rather to cease to exist, to dissipate within the in-formatic grid. So how then might these places, which so typically seek to maintain their distinctness, be the same? p. 207

Kazys Varnelis

ECE, 2009
Sternberg Press, Berlin

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In the German language there is something unique in comparison to English: making words by composition. Mark Terkessidis is calling the society he is envisioning a *Chancengemeinschaft*, composed of Chance and Community. It is reminiscent of the term *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*, which is negatively connotated, because usually the fate this group is sharing is not a happy one. We agree with Mark and understand ourselves as part of a *Chancengemeinschaft*.

In 2006 a tribe of jungle dwellers showed up at the outskirts of a Columbian city. The reason why they left their reservation is up until the publishing of this book still unknown. But their unbiased view on the benefits of modern society is very refreshing.

In our societies of migration the understanding of a nation state as a community that shares a common past is obsolete. It is more about a common future. I like the idea of a group which defines itself no more by a common past but a common future. p. 47

Mark Terkessidis

Are they sad? "No!" cried a Nukak named Pia-pe, to howls of laughter. In fact, the Nukak said they could not be happier. Used to long marches in search of food, they are amazed that strangers would bring them sustenance — free. [...]

One young Nukak mother, Bachanede, breast-feeding her infant as she talked, said she was happy just to stay still. "When you walk in the jungle," she said, "your feet hurt a lot."

Juan Forero

Amazonian Tribe Suddenly Leaves Jungle Home
<http://www.entheology.org/edoto/anmyiewer.asp?a=244>

The problem of complexity: Everything is linked with everything and that makes it hard – at a certain point impossible – to describe and understand contexts in causal or linear way. – But mind-set is geared to causal and progressively linear thinking. We have difficulties transforming these links – ecology, uncertainty relations, cultural interaction. – in our thinking. We seem to fail at the moment.

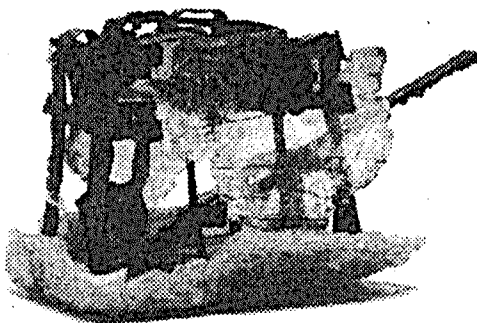
[...] The problem of concurrence: If we want to make change, we need to change a lot of interrelations and ranges of action at the same time. There is no point in changing the politics but leaving economy as it is, or changing the use of resources without changing politics, economy and consumption habits. Changes have to be synchronised, bit by bit over a long period of time – what makes their establishment extremely hard. The problem of velocity. We actually have to act very fast. The extremely dynamic progression of climate change is definitely threatening us within a few years, and after that with even more force. p. 111

Daniel Dahm

The blueprint of a cultural society is based on the analysis of the present. In the industrial nations secure, lifelong employment – across social classes – has become the exception, because globalization has led to a decrease of the formerly prevalent industrial-capitalist production. Put sarcastically, arts and sciences form the 'Avant-garde' of the 'modern way of working' that usually comes with precarious working conditions. So we need to find new economic schemes for the altered

EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 7: MODERN



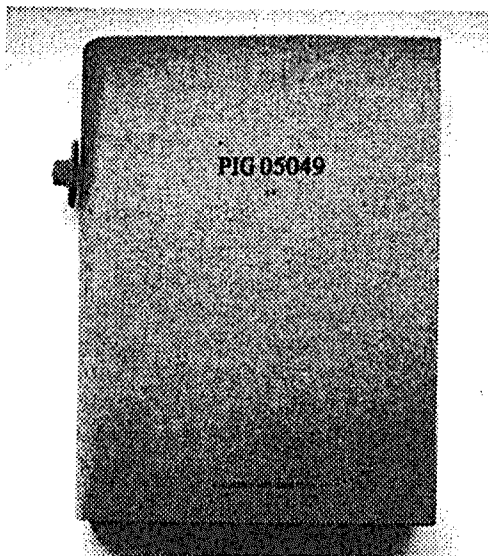
← A student of the Royal College of Arts, London tried to build a toaster of the kind that is sold at stores for 5£. His version cost 1000£ and it took him a year to build it (I mean – look at it!). It was his challenge to build the toaster himself, including all parts, he even extracted and processed metal, forged and welded it. The fear of technology is that of its failure. Do I understand my computer? I don't even know which materials were used to build it. If everyone who knows how to build a computer died, we would have to start from scratch.

Thomas Thwaites:
The Toaster Project
2009



STANLEY KUBRICK'S
2001:
Odyssee im Weltraum
DVD VIDEO

Stanley Kubrick
2001: A Space Odyssey
1968



← This book collects all products that are made of a single pig, called number 05049. There is food with an obvious direct connecting to pigs, for example sausage. But finally there are a lot of things are produced from number 05049 that you'd never think of, like varnish. It is revealing to find out that the products of our modern lifestyle still proceed from such 'rough' ingredients.

Christien Meindertsma:
PIG 05049
2009

EXCERPTS

ways of living and working, or revive existing ones. Swap rates of subsistence and subsidiarity. And this means economies, because uncertain work contexts are spreading into more and more professional groups. p. 120

Adrienne Goehler

both excerpts are taken from interviews in:
Bessere Zukunft? Auf der Suche nach den Räumen von Morgen, 2009
Merve Verlag, Berlin.

TV has made the circle of the family a semicircle. [...] The real taboos of television are called Leninism, print making in Lucas Cranachs times, simple algebra, the Picaro novel et cetera. It is forbidden to talk about it. [...]

Whoever still holds an inner life, who is old, sad, sick, critical, complicated or for any other reason an individual sees the reality of television like that of a remote cultural sphere. The individuals are lacking images and, confronted with television, they can only moan: That's not me. p. 34

Roger Willemsen

Über das Fernsehen
Die Zeit, 29. Juli 2009

We tend to continuously readjust our reality with the changing reality outside. Environmental psychologists call this phenomenon 'shifting baselines'. This means that people take the state of their environment as the natural one, which resembles to that of their lifespan and their array of memories. Therefore changes of the social and physical environment are not received absolutely but in relation to the individual point of view. Our appreciation shifts according to changes in our environment. – It is like two trains running on two parallel tracks, seemingly standing still in relationship to one another. Serious changes that take place over generations thereby are hardly noticed. This also leads to a fatigue towards common discussions on climate and environmental change. And this is the reason why every day chances are forfeit to initialize change.

Harald Welzer

Interview
Du – das Kulturmagazin, Ausgabe 798, Juli/August 2009

CITY RELATED

From Ebenezer Howard, 1902 to Andreas Denk, 2009.

This part not only contains excerpts which directly mention the city but also those which describe interesting aspects of living together in a community.

EXCERPTS

Whatever may have been the causes which have operated in the past, and are operating now, to draw the people into the cities, those causes may all be summed up as 'attractions'; and it is obvious, therefore, that no remedy can possibly be effective which will not present to the people, or at least to considerable portions of them, greater 'attractions' than our cities now possess, so that the force of the old 'attractions' shall be overcome by the force of new 'attractions' which are to be created. Each city may be regarded as a magnet, each person as a needle; and, so viewed, it is at once seen that nothing short of the discovery of a method for constructing magnets of yet greater power than our cities possess can be effective for redistributing the population in the spontaneous and healthy manner. p. 6

Ebenezer Howard

Palatial edifices and fearful slums are the strange, complementary features of modern cities. p. 9

Ebenezer Howard

181.1.1

A town is a symbol of society – of mutual help and friendly cooperation [...] the country is the symbol of God's love and care for man. All that we are and all that we have comes from it. It is the source of all health, all wealth, all knowledge. Town & Country must be married. And out of this joyous union will spring a new hope, a new life, a new civilization. p. 10

Ebenezer Howard

[...] by so laying out a Garden City that, as it grows, the free gifts of nature – fresh air, sunlight, breathing room and playing room – shall be still retained in all needed abundance, and by so employing the resources of modern science that art may supplement nature, and life may become an abiding joy and delight. p. 103

Ebenezer Howard

The question which now interests people is, what are we going to do with democracy now that we have got it? What kind of society are we going to make by its aid? Are we to see nothing but an endless list of Londons and Manchesters, New Yorks and Chicagos, with their noise and ugliness, and money getting, its 'corners' and 'rings', their strikes, their contrasts of luxury and squalor? Or shall we be able to build up a

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society with art and culture for all, and with some great spiritual aim dominating men's lives? (The Daily Chronicle, March 4th, 1891) p. 115

Ebenezer Howard

Garden Cities of Tomorrow, 1902
S. Sonnenschein & Co. Ltd., London
here: Forgotten Books, 2008

The city is an object of nature, subject of culture, individual and group, dream and experience. It is the human per se. p. 82

Claude Levi-Strauss

Tristes Tropiques, 1955
Penguin Books, New York, 1972

[...] Can we always rejuvenate the middle of old cities? No, not always. But first, you can use up all the slums for new development. In all large cities of the world there are large areas of these. Also, you can avoid the spread of these silly suburban houses. Chicago has thousands of them all over the place. Instead of eating up the land they should have been developed as tall and low buildings in a reasonable way. And I don't say this is only work for architects. I think that developers could do it also. After all, most of these houses are made by developers and are made by builders. Very few are by architects. p.14

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Interview in London, 1959
Here: Conversations with Mies van der Rohe, Princeton Architectural Press, 2008

The collective and the private, society and the individual balance and confront one another in the city. The city is composed of many people seeking a general order that is consistent with their own particular environment. p. 22

This is part of our main theses on cities. ←
The city is complex and can't be shaped
from above. The big changes often start
small, rooted 'somewhere in between'.

Aldo Rossi

Destruction and demolition, expropriation and rapid changes in use and as a result of speculation and obsolescence are the most recognizable signs of urban dynamics. But beyond all else, the images suggest the interrupted destiny of the individual, of his often sad and difficult participation in the destiny of the collective. This vision in its entirety seems to be reflected with a quality of permanence in urban

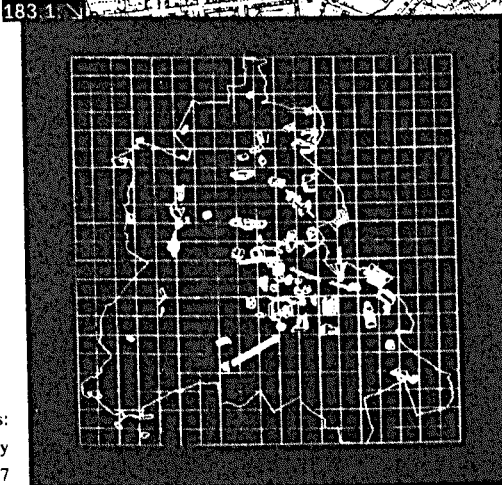
EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 8: BERLIN



Karl Friedrich Schinkel:
Plan for Berlin's Centre

1831



Oswald Mathias Ungers:
City Within a City

1977

→ Taking account of Berlin's shrinkage, Oswald Matthias Ungers and his colleagues Rem Koolhaas and Hans Kollhoff proposed to bury the old city's fragments under a great green sea. The respective archipelagos should be intensified regarding their different characters. "The corridor of nature", according to Ungers, "is supposed to be large enough to house an extensive road network, which connects the archipelagos, next to supermarkets, drive-in cinemas, drive-in banks and similar automobile-related facilities as well as typologies of the 20th century that are not dependant on space but on mobility." Rem Koolhaas added that "the historical fragments are irreconcilable from historic developments. That is why we need to separate them from the emptiness. And eventually I am much more interested in emptiness than in architecture."

EXCERPTS

This is the main theme of Rossi's book: The relationship between everlasting monuments and the city that changes around them. Today's monuments are iconic buildings like for example, the Bilbao Guggenheim or any Gehry building. Do we think these buildings have the power to incorporate our collective will, serve as a point of orientation and pass on our cultural feelings like Rossi said? No. We think the relevance of the body of the city is increasing, creating its own memory that is more diverse and contradictory and can no more solely be carried in our monuments.

monuments. Monuments, signs of the collective will, as expressed through the principles of architecture, offer themselves as primary elements, fixed points in the urban dynamic. p. 22

Aldo Rossi

By architecture I mean not only the visible image of the city and the sum of its different architectures, but architecture as construction, the construction of the city over time. I believe that this point of view, objectively speaking, constitutes the most comprehensive way of analyzing the city; it addresses the ultimate and definitive fact in the life of the collective, the creation of the environment in which it lives. p. 21

Aldo Rossi

The Architecture of the City, 1966
here: Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies at MIT, New York, 1982

Large cities are characterized by an overlapping of many opposite and divergent conceptions. Therein lies the difference between them and villages, rural populated areas, urban districts, and small and medium towns. Here the chief characteristic is expressed in the predominance of a single basic principle or, if there are more than one, these will nevertheless be complementary to each other. The ideal would be to find an order for the city in which there is both a convergence of principles and a climate of functionality. p. 85

→ SEE UNGERS VISION FOR BERLIN: THE GREEN ARCHIPELAGO → P. 183

Oswald Mathias Ungers

Cities Within the City, 1977
with Rem Koolhaas, Peter Riemann, Hans Kolhoff, Arthur Ovasca.
LOTUS international 18/19, Gruppo Editoriale Electa, Milan, 1978

One is confronted with the simultaneous profession of two standards of value whose compatibility is not evident. On the one hand, there is an expression of allegiance to the criteria of what – though disguised as science – is, after all, simply management; on the other side a devotion to the ideals of what was a few years ago often spoken as the counter culture-life, people, community and all the rest; and that this curious dualism causes so little surprise can only be attributed to a determination not to observe the obvious. p. IV

Colin Rowe

Berlin is the perfect example of that dualism: all of its myth, and therefore its capital, is born in the counter culture that settled here while the city was divided and then especially after the reunion. Every attempt from the official side of city planning to manage it, like the MediaSpree project, reveals the desperate fight of merging these two antipodes.

EXCERPTS

Scratch the surface of modern architecture's matter of factness, simply for a moment doubt its ideals of objectivity, and almost invariably, subsumed beneath the veneers of rationalism, there is to be found that highly volcanic species of psychological lava which, in the end, is the substratum of the modern city. p.11

Colin Rowe

Collage City, 1978
The MIT Press, Cambridge

The Waldorf has instigated a paradoxical tradition of the last word (in creating comfort, supportive technologies, décor, entertainments, metropolitan lifestyles, etc.) which, to preserve itself, is forced continuously to self-destruct, eternally to shed its latest incarnation. p.137

Rem Koolhaas

In Manhattan's Culture of Congestion, destruction is another word for preservation. p. 151

Rem Koolhaas

Delirious New York, 1978
here: 010 Publishers, Rotterdam, 1994

A lake, brown as mud
bit by bit filling up the valley,
a nameless lake,
that, as its water level rises,
day to day and also at night,
joins the rising lakes
of other valleys
until the Alps are no more than an archipelago,
a group of islands of rock and glacier,
that dive into the sea,

← is unthinkable. p.30

Max Frisch

Man in the Holocene, 1979
Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main

*A wood, cool and green,
bit by bit filling up the city,
a nameless wood, growing constantly,
its leaves covering every building,
as it grows, day and night,
joining other cities' woods,
until the city is no more
than an archipelago,
a group of houses and places,
that stick out of the woods,
is thinkable.*

I scorned memories, and at the same time, I made use of urban impressions: behind feelings I searched for the fixed laws of a timeless typology. I saw courts and galleries, the elements of urban morphology,

EXCERPTS

distributed in the city with the purity of mineralogy. I read books on urban geography, topography, and history, like a general who wishes to know every possible battlefield – the high grounds, the passages, the woods. I walked the cities of Europe to understand their plans and classify them according to types. Like a lover sustained by my egotism, I often ignored the secret feelings I had for those cities; it was enough to know the system that governed them. Perhaps I simply wanted to free myself of the city. Actually, I was discovering my own architecture. A confusion of courtyards, suburban houses, roofs, gas storage drums, comprised my first exploration of a Milan that seemed fantastic to me. The bourgeois of villas by lakes, the corridors of the boarding school, the huge kitchens in country houses – these were memories of a landscape out of Manzoni which disintegrated in the city. Yet their insistence on things revealed a craft to me. p. 15

Aldo Rossi

[...] Cities, even if they last for centuries, are in reality encampments of the living and the dead where a few elements remain like signals, symbols, warnings. When the holiday is over, the elements of the architecture are in tatters, and the sand again devours the street. There is nothing left to do but to resume, with persistence, the reconstruction of elements and instruments in expectation of another holiday. p. 20

Aldo Rossi

A Scientific Autobiography, 1981
MIT Press, Cambridge / Massachusetts

186.1: ↘

The city has, as long as no one, as there is not a group of people willing to become its advocate, no voice at all. Democracy as a builder is what happens. Nobody wants it otherwise. But it still has not found a way of acting, no separation between common and professional competence, it lives on seduction more than visions, it produces and builds the compromise of compromises, colored like the most recent ← fashion. p. 7

The city hasn't found its way of acting yet. It therefore either destroys itself or the people. Maybe there is a certain type of inhabitant the city is looking for?

Felix Zwoch

Nachdenken über Städtebau, 1991
Vieweg Verlag, Wiesbaden

186.2: ↘

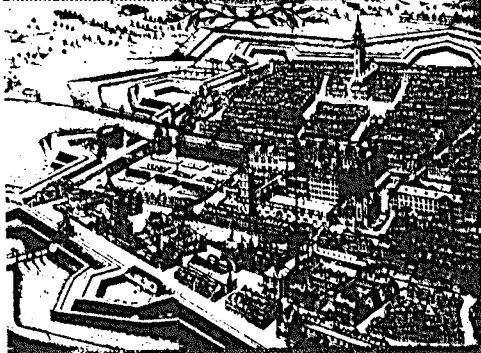
"In song and dance man expresses himself as a member of a higher community; he has forgotten how to walk and speak and is on the way toward flying into the air, dancing. His very gestures express enchantment." This enchantment cannot occur alone. It requires a

EXCERPTS

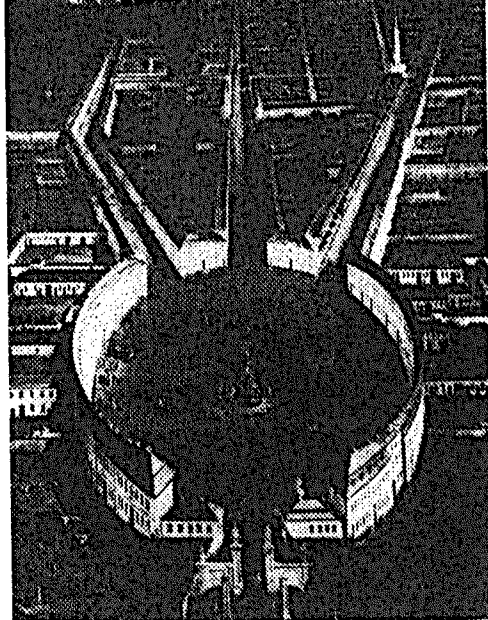
PLATE N° 9: THE ARK



Noah's ark, Miniature
14th century



Johann Bernhard Schultz
View of Berlin (excerpt)
1688



Friedrichstadt with
Rondel and Hallesches Tor
1735

→ See how the two plans cite the image of the ark. Who is protecting whom from what?

EXCERPTS

mass of people who lose themselves, who become a frenzied crowd. The rites of Dionysus, as Nietzsche conceived them, were rites that could be practiced best among strangers: the drinking, dancing, and fucking is more intense if no one knows who you are or where you come from. Dislocation, deconstruction, disorientation: these words can describe a frenzied, Dionysiac city.

[...] Nietzsche imagined wild release, however, as no permanent of life. The exhausted celebrants end, like the ancient Silenus, heavy and disgusted with life. [...] It was in exhaustion Nietzsche believed the knowledge of tragedy to begin; men and women at last empty of desire could look around themselves clear sighted. Though in later years Nietzsche renounced much of the youthful exaggeration in *The Birth of Tragedy*, he never gave up the idea that the revelation of tragic limits comes as a result of the shared, terrible experience of going wild. Those who have passed through the rite wanted nothing anymore – and so they could see. This is Dionysiac exposure. pp. 237.

Ecological building and urban planning are lacking Dionysian aspects: Its colours are soft pastels and everybody is part of a great family. But the city is where you are confronted with the foreign. The scary, unknown, terrific, never-seen-before, the crazy, beloved and the faraway.

Richard Sennett

The Conscience of the Eye:
– The Design and Social Life of Cities, 1992
W.W. Norton and Company, New York.

Lightness and Temporariness

How can we adopt the technique of “change” more literally within the realm of urbanism and architecture? Can we find an environment that can be broken down or cleared more easily, so that we can change our urbanistic goals within a certain time? Can we imagine a lighter urbanism that questions the permanence of the town? Should all existing urban fabric be permanent? Are all our buildings so beautiful or valuable that we have to work with them as though they are all monuments? Can this heavy and fixed approach be replaced by a lighter form of urbanism in which we make space for experiment and imagination?

[...] Enormous parts of our towns could be redesigned in which the monuments appear as Mont St Michel's on a plain of lightness. Existing towns find the opportunity to dissolve themselves into the landscape. Extreme melanges of programs become imaginable: from living on a farm to farming within the town.

An equation of settlements, agriculture, and nature could be proposed again, an echo of Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City. p. 57

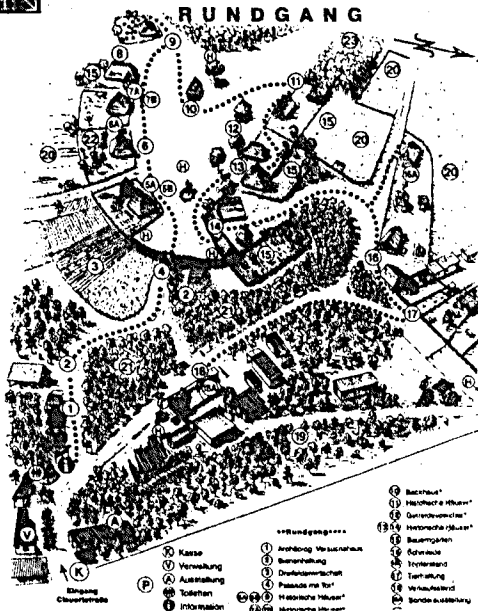
Winy Maas

Beginning,
Anytime, edited by Cynthia C. Davidson, 1999
Anyone Corporation, New York & The MIT Press, Cambridge

EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 10: EXCURSION

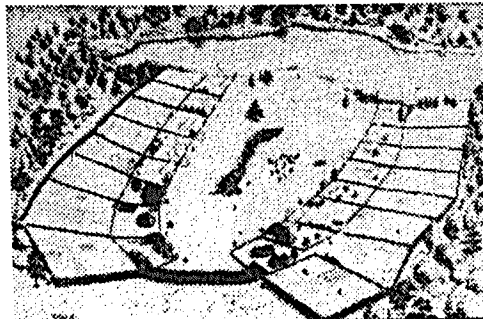
189.1: N



Exposition grounds of the open-air museum Düppel, Berlin 2009

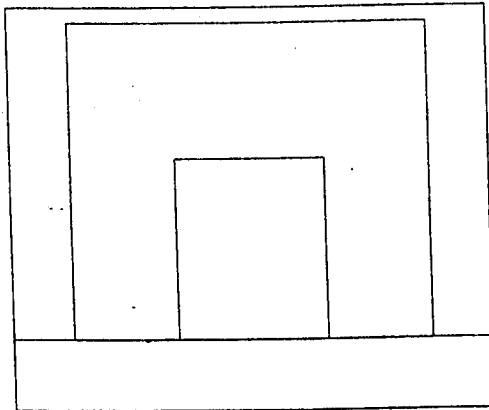
→ Discoveries

1. All buildings' entrances face east.
2. The loose positioning of the buildings on their lots remind of single-family housing estates.
3. The general plan follows a horseshoe-typology. Fruit trees and play equipment are placed on the central green.
4. Every unit has a garden facing the outside of the village that is surrounded by woods.



The Village Düppel, Berlin 1200

→ THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDING THE PAST: HOBBSBAWN → P. 175.1



Layout Study
Altenteilwohnen:
Separation of private and common outdoor space and private and common indoor space.

Explanations:

1. The cold wind comes from the west.
2. Today we are only twenty generations apart.
3. The central yard is the safest part of the village. At night the inhabitants' capital, the livestock, was put here.
4. The woods had a different meaning back then. They were dangerous, not romantic.



EXCERPTS

Constant Nieuwenhuys bases the detachment of the city on the ambition to merge the city with the landscape by interweaving them. He never proclaimed 'New Babylon' as an architectural vision but instead as a social one. Because 'New Babylon' was supposed to be built of already existing materials like steel frames, syntetic insulation and neon light. These elements were to create an atmosphere of change and flexibility, where the inhabitants – not working people but 'homines ludentes' – constantly move around in a nomadic condition. Nieuwenhuys' ambition of ending the separation between city and landscape – and we can easily think: between man and nature – is very contradictory. Concerning their technical aspects Nieuwenhuys' buildings are nothing else but huge arks that create their own ground (steel structure), their own time (neon light) and their own climate (insulation). That isn't the end of separation, it is the clearest separation possible. We love it. Visually.

A city that cannot extend. What happened if we passed a law today that forbid all further horizontal spread of settlements? If construction would only be allowed on ground which is within the city parameter, or where there previously has been a building? We probably would get very dense cities. Cities with clear borders from nature. Maybe the outer city ring would become the new 'center'; super urban, and at the same time right next to super nature. What results is a city that would have to cannibalize itself rather than eating big chunks of the countryside in order to progress. It may sound like an antidote to the wholesome city described in our essay, but maybe its just a different way of reaching the same goal.

The idea of the unobstructed ground has to do with putting an end to the separation between the city and the landscape. The landscape continues and the city is placed on a different level. It is a network, rather than a core. A city is not an area, a section of packed-down earth surrounded by a landscape, but a network that spreads on another level above the landscape. An urbanistic network. p. 171

Constant Nieuwenhuys

The fact that things were cancelled at the last minute was very Situationist. And it was also very Situationist when the Centre Pompidou put on an exhibition of the Internationale Situationniste (1989), and the day after the opening, the museum staff all went on strike, shutting down the Centre Pompidou for the entire duration of the exhibition. People I knew had come all the way from Italy to see the exhibition. Highly Situationist, I find. p. 169

Constant Nieuwenhuys

Interview
„Interviews“, edited by Hans Ulrich Obrist, 2003
Edizioni Charta, Mailand

PJ: Did I do a city?

RK: Yes. And it actually was a very interesting city because it was a city which was, in a way, radical. Because you used modern forms for very unmodern argument.

You basically made a city that could not extend, because it had walls around it and the notion was that it would forever remain the same size and could not go beyond the walls. But all the walls were kind of modern slaps, so it was a kind of very perverse adjustment: where the real modern is endless, you used the same thing to make a kind of closed, limited form.

PJ: Well, I love enclosed forms... But, don't we all?

RK: Yes, but this was the first thing that I saw of yours, when I was a student. I was really struck by it: how can someone use modern forms for such a notion? So that's how I was first alerted to the perversity of your work.

Philip Johnson in conversation with Rem Koolhaas
and Hans Ulrich Obrist

[...] The city has replaced the arch as the epitome of the renunciation from the precedence of nature and [...] the radically artificial box. The city is the arch that has come ashore. – it constitutes a life boat, that no longer finds its salvation drifting around on a sea of catastrophe, but that anchors intractably on the earth's surface.

EXCERPTS

One could define cities as compromises between the surrealism of floating self-reference and the pragmatism of down-to-earthness. p. 251

Peter Sloterdijk

Sphären II, 1999
Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main

Berlin has always been a green metropolis, located in (splendid?) isolation amidst hundreds of square miles of forest. The city consists of many 'urban islands', separated from each other by green spaces and vast infrastructural corridors, thus resulting in a 'green archipelago'. Although some local architects and town planners prefer to see Berlin as a traditional centralist metropolis, where 'good old urbanity' has been saved, in fact, the city functions on many levels as a polycentric agglomeration. In this article, the idea of Berlin as a polycentric 'green archipelago' is discussed and promoted. As will be seen, Oswald Mathias Ungers' article 'Cities within the City' from 1978 (sic) is not the only interpretation of Berlin as green metropolis. It appears that throughout the last few centuries, from the 'cultural landscape' of Friedrich IV, via Schinkel's 'catalytic buildings', to Bruno Taut's 'Stadtkrone' and the Nazi's 'Generalbebauungsplan', down to postwar reconstruction, Berlin has always been considered an urbanized landscape interwoven with verdure, rather than the compact 'Grossstadt' made of stone that some people would like her to be. Now that Berlin is in crisis and shrinking, the concept of the 'green archipelago' is more relevant than ever. It might more or less 'reinstall' itself automatically. p. 21

Kees Christiaanse

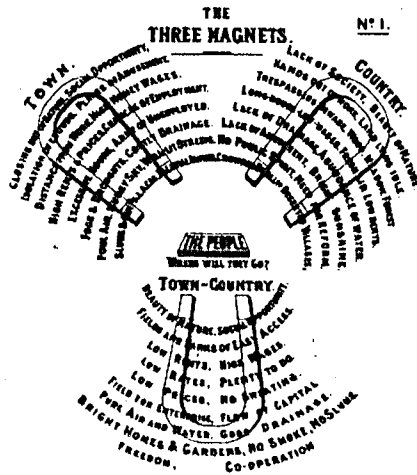
Ein grüner Archipel. Ein Berliner Stadtkonzept 'revisited'
Bauwelt, 3/2004

The only cure for sprawl is to call a halt to it, to build cities with clear boundaries which are able to inventory continuously the means of their own survival, differentiation, hospitality and assets. This will produce a double cycle of growth. The first phase – that of enlargement – will delineate the expanded territorial differentiation in place. The second – characteristic of historic cities – will be an ongoing differentiation in place. As cities mature and become successful, the differentiation will devolve on a set of shrinking physical sites and will result in the continuous growth of complexity, rather than extent. In a democratic city, this will lead to an accumulation of consent that will serve to limit the ease of radical transformation, favoring the most widespread styles of agreement, rather than the autocracy of the top-down.

Michael Sorkin

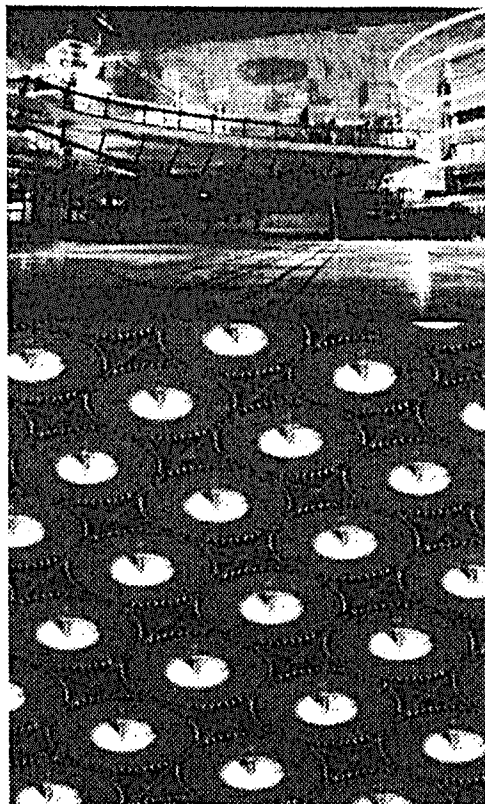
EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 11: CITY LANDSCAPE



Ebenezzer Howard:
The Three Magnets
1902

urban on top, rural underneath. ←



Constant Nieuwenhuys:
New Babylon
1969

City and Countryside thought together. But both on a mediocre level. The world as a allotment colony of self-sufficiency. ←

Oogst:
Community for 1000 people
2009

EXCERPTS

If walking is the alpha means of urban circulation, the basic construct of urban organization – the neighborhood – will be both sized and differenced to accommodate people on foot.

This suggests that neighborhoods be highly mixed in use, supporting the range of daily necessities – employment, education, commerce, conviviality – that are crucial to a full active life.

Michael Sorkin

Given the rapid evisceration of the idea of locality by onslaught of multinational culture, new strategies must emerge for authenticating the individuality of place.

A green and self-sufficient city will be closely attuned to the particulars of its bio-climate, culture and resource-base. By understanding itself as habitat, the city will aim for a style of homeostasis that encloses a description of particulars of place.

Rejecting the paradigm of the continuous sealed environment of the multinational corridor and of the endless city of sprawl, this city will engage both the politics and the forms of its own particularity.

Michael Sorkin

From *New York to Darwinism: Formulary for a Sustainable Urbanism*
 "City Edge", edited by Esther Charlesworth, Elsevier, Oxford, 2005

Is it healthy to live in a city of singles, a city without the memories of elder people, a playground city, seemingly operating according to the principles of a casino? p. 34

Sukhdev Sandhu

Interview
 "Megacities", edited by Alex Ruehle, C.H. Beck, München, 2008

Hierarchy contributes to the comprehensibility of architecture, because it conveys a certain orientation. Comprehensibility in turn gives the citizen the chance to classify news. Comprehensible architecture is not terrifying.

This means: Citizens need to know a city's rules.

Gert Kähler

We finally need to reach consciousness of our city's worth; Therefore that it has a certain price. [...] "City" is not easy. Never was.

EXCERPTS

Our ancestors fought for it. Why should we be satisfied with less?

Gert Kähler

Heimat, deine Sterne
Süddeutsche Zeitung, 18.02.2009

The deliberate act to describe society as one that is characterized by differences is something that, especially in Dubai, is incredibly evident. I just returned from the Emirates, and one could say that, and I think you are right, the creation of all those free zones and particularities such as 'Humanitarian City' and 'Dubailand' point at the fact that there is a lack of what you call 'a common cause'. Dubai has taken this to a new extreme: a city in which the public realm is characterized purely by the emergence of islands. In the context of the monument what I think is crucial to observe is the typology of the 'Labour City', a new, government-operated sub-city that houses construction workers. What is interesting here is that the government thinks of it almost as a monument to the workers, i.e. for the first time in Dubai's *über*-construction phase to build a 'space' for construction workers in which they can live in a different way than they used to when they were purely locked up in the camps outside the periphery of the city. What the government is doing there is a response to the ongoing criticism of Western media. A media they rely on in terms of getting investments and tourism. Whether they are in the end interested in caring for the workers doesn't matter. The government found itself in the situation that there was no other way out than to act. Yet, I would argue that, the actual monument here is not the physicality of 'Labour City', but rather the ongoing writing and observation by journalists and critics. [...] We try to remove the myth that it is the architect who is in charge of space. From human rights abuse, temporary occupation, the issue of scale, architectural interventions, to urban warfare and alternative spatial knowledge production, the publication should be understood as a critical documentation of an emerging movement that renders an optimistic, propositional outlook on future practice. It's time to get involved! [...]

I think we should rid participation of its innocence and romanticized presence. Instead, what needs to be promoted is a conflictual reading of it: participation not as the process by which one invites people in, but rather, as a means of acting without mandate, as an uninvited outsider forcing oneself into discourses, projects or realities of which one thinks that those might benefit from one's participation or involvement.

Markus Miessen

Interview

<http://www.metahaven.net/mhSRC/CONTENT.php?id=59&pid=21>

EXCERPTS

The problem of boundaries versus borders. If the city consists of many different layers, versatile and multicolored, it's necessary to think about the lines that distinguish one area from the other. Maybe these lines don't need to be linear, but could have a spatial quality within themselves, as hinted by Sennett in this quote. Zones of exchange that meander through the city and overlap each other on different layers.

All living things contain two sites of resistance. These are cell walls and cell membranes. Both resist external pressures to keep intact internal elements of the cell, but they do so in different ways. The cell wall is more purely exclusionary; the membrane permits more fluid and solid exchange. [...] A homology between cell walls and cell membrane can be found in natural ecologies. An ecological boundary resembles the cell wall, an ecological border the cell membrane. [...] A boundary can be simply an edge where things end, like the tree line on a mountain that marks the boundary above which trees cannot grow. An ecological border, by contrast, is a site of exchange where organisms become more interactive. The shoreline of a lake is such a border; [...] The problem is that we are better at building boundaries than borders, and this is for a deep reason. p. 227

Richard Sennett

The Craftsmen, 2009
Penguin Books, London

If we transfer Selper's term of the type and his idea of a social coding of rooms, which originally referred to the single architectural object, to the city, what comes out is a direct reference of all possible rooms of the city to each other. Semper's demand for 'Coordination and Subordination' of coded rooms towards a whole in reference to the contemporary city equals the context of room, apartment, house, street, quarter and city. The shape and size, encoding and formal equipment of spatial typologies have to have a relationship to each other to, beyond the satisfaction of individual or common needs, serve a mutual purpose. In their relationship to each other, their mutual appropriateness, they have to work towards the reconciliation of individual and community, towards its association: The 'principle of responsibility' would become the golden rule of the city.

Andreas Denk

Zur Möglichkeit einer neuen architektonischen Ästhetik
der architekt, Juli 2009

HOUSE RELATED

From Karl Ottfried Müller, 1830 to Robert Kaltenbrunner, 2009.

This part contains excerpts related to architecture, its beauty and its duty,
but also to the economic and ecological aspects of building.

EXCERPTS

Tectonics is used for forms of art that shape and develop tools, vessels, flats and places of assembly on the one hand following their function and on the other hand in accordance to their sentiments and artistic ideas.

We call this collection of mixed commissions 'tectonics'; the Ultimate is architectonics, which results from the desire to sway up and can become a powerful display of deeper emotions. p. 285

Karl Otfried Müller

Handbuch der Archäologie der Kunst, 1830
 here: Kenneth Frampton: Grundlagen der Architektur. Studien zur Kultur des Tektonischen; Oktagon, München/Stuttgart, 1993; taken from: architektur_theorie.doc. Texte seit 1960, edited by Gerd de Bruyn & Stephan Trüby, Birkhäuser Verlag, Basel, 2003

It is difficult to name a better security than that offered when money is to be expanded in converting an agricultural estate into an urban, and this of the very best known type. p. 56

Ebenezer Howard

Garden Cities of Tomorrow, 1902
 S. Sonnenschein & Co. Ltd., London
 here:Forgotten Books, 2008

The Engineer's Aesthetic and Architecture – two things that march together and follow one from the other – the one at its full height, the other in an unhappy state of retrogression. .

The Engineer, inspired by the law of economy and governed by mathematical calculation, puts us in accord with universal law. He achieves harmony.

The Architect, by his arrangement of forms, realizes an order which is a pure creation of his spirit; by forms and shapes he affects our senses to an acute degree, and provokes plastic emotions; by the relationships which he creates he wakes in us profound echoes, he gives us the measure of an order which we feel to be in accordance with that of our world, he determines the various movements of our heart and of our understanding;

← it is then that we experience the sense of beauty. p. 11

The law of economy, in Le Corbusier's times, was understood on a basis of social equation, unlike today, where it is based on a global-materialistic perspective. Today the question of social justice still seems to be immanent, but more on a level between societies than between the subjects within.

Le Corbusier

THREE REMINDERS TO ARCHITECTS

I MASS

Our eyes are constructed to enable us to see forms in light.

EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 12: BEAUTY

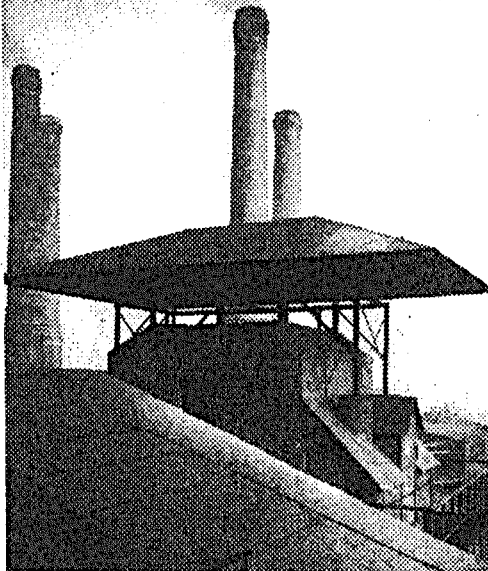
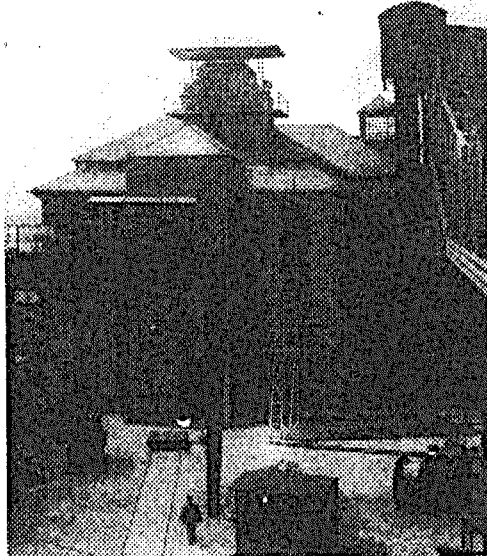
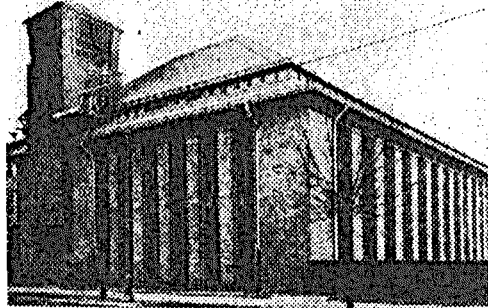
198.1.1

Speculation on beauty in reference to the tin roof of the Moabit coal dust grinder.

The ventilation tower at the representative street facade was covered with a hood that is reminiscent of a church tower.

The ventilation tower of the rear building was protected with a simpler solution: A metal framework was put on cylindrical brick plinths, holding a shallow hip roof made from metal sheets. Both shelters do their job; they protect the suction mouth of the ventilation tower from rain; but not doing anything else other than to function, is the unspectacular one in the yard. And that is where its beauty lies: a beauty that could be called universal.

Assuming that beauty lies in the spectator's eye, we are confronted today with the fact that attention is virtually dispersed over continents and different levels of perception. A consensus on a stylistic form that can be known by every possible audience as 'beautiful' is almost impossible. So, beauty appears in objects that contain the ability to speak to everyone, independent from taste or cultural background. Therefore the beautiful is where beauty lies within itself and in its ability to display its inner purpose and function. Would it not be nice if our future buildings were more like the coal dust grinder in the court than the one to the street?



Heinrich Müller
Kohlestaubmahlwerk Moabit
1924 / 25

EXCERPTS

Primary forms are beautiful forms because they can be clearly appreciated.

Architects to-day no longer achieve these simple forms. Working by calculation, engineers employ geometrical forms, satisfying our eyes by their geometry and our understanding by their mathematics; their work is on the direct line of good art. p. 23

II SURFACE

A mass is enveloped in its surface, a surface which is divided up according to the directing and generating lines of the mass; and this gives the mass its individuality.

Architects to-day are afraid of the geometrical constituents of surfaces.

The great problems of modern construction must have a geometrical solution. Forced to work in accordance with the strict needs of exactly determined conditions, engineers make use of generating and accusing lines in relation to forms. They create limpid and moving plastic facts.

p. 35

III PLAN

The Plan is the generator.

Without a plan, you have lack of order, and wilfulness.

The Plan holds in itself the essence of sensation.

The great problems of to-morrow, dictated by collective necessities, put the question of "plan" in a new form. Modern life demands, and is waiting for, a new kind of plan both for the house and for the city.

p. 45

Le Corbusier

← Architects today no longer achieve simple forms. p. 23

Le Corbusier

So true. Architects today no longer achieve simple forms. Look around at all the bent curved billowy polygonal forms all built to be different. Mannered and complicated shapes result, just because they are possible, thanks to the computer. The fact that Corbusier uses the verb 'achieve' makes clear how naturally he appreciates the simple forms.

Towards a new architecture, 1922
here: Dover Publications, New York, 1986

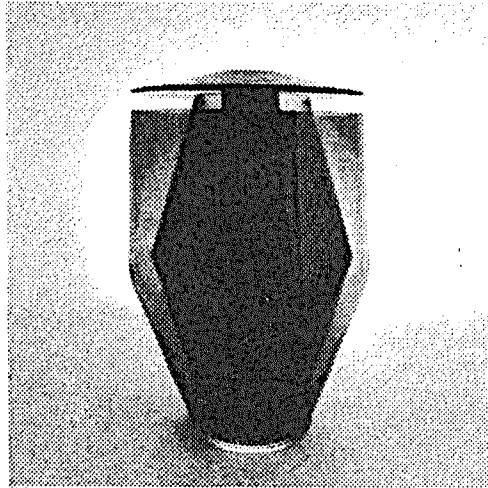
Building art is not the object of clever speculation, it is in reality only understandable as a life process, it is an expression of man's ability to assert himself and master his surroundings. A knowledge of the time, its tasks and means, are necessary prerequisites for the work of the building artist, the building art is always the spatial expression of spiritual decisions.

[...] Economy begins to rule, everything is in its service. Profitability becomes law. Technology brings economical attitudes with it, transforms material into power, quantity into quality. Technology presupposes knowledge of natural laws and works with their forces.

EXCERPTS

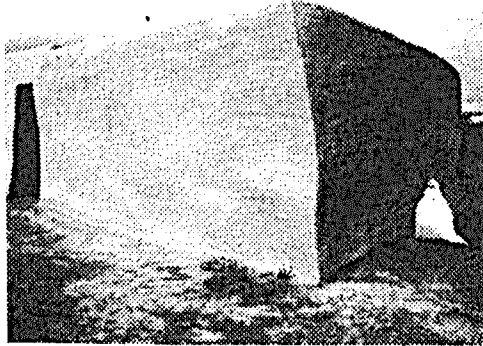
PLATE N° 13: DESCRIPTIVE FORMS

Three bodies.
One holds,
one covers and
one is inside.
Together they form a whole.



Oscar Diaz:
RGB Vase
2009

The emancipation of architecture or: what is architecture telling us? From the spectator's point of view, the walls are neither straight nor smooth, the rectangular cube seems to be heavy and soft. The loam contains traces of the hands that evened it out. On the floor to the right side of the house is a bag. You could overlook it. That is what makes it so exciting. It does not belong to the items we know as part of a construction. A bag is usually where you store something like potatoes. But the fact that this bag not only sits on the ground, but also hangs down from a string that comes out of a hole in the loam wall implies that it serves a different purpose: its weight keeps the roof or something that sits on the roof from taking off. It tells us about the forces that affect the house and its construction – not despite – but because it looks like a regular bag. Maybe it just sits there accidentally?



David Goldblatt:
House near Phuthadijhaba
Qwa Qwa.
May 1989

EXCERPTS

Economy gives meaning. We twist and turn every decision in the bright light of the rate of return. But there are people, for example our interviewee Gerd Gerken, who think that the days of economics and the authoritative value system are over. The question is: on which values will we base our decisions if not the economical?

↳ READ THE ORIGINAL DISCUSSION: GERD GERKEN → P. 124.1

← The most effective use of power is deliberately introduced. We stand at the turning point of time. p. 304

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

"We Stand at the Turning Point of Time: Building Art as the Expression of Spiritual Decisions"
Innendekoration, 39, no. 6 (1928), p.262

here: The Artless Word - Mies van der Rohe on the Building Art, edited by Fritz Neumeier, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1991

What is important, therefore, is not only goal-orientedness but also the mandate and values. In the search for the respective correspondence there opens again a new hierarchy of values determining everything, from the small to the large.

Simplicity is beautiful, not just simple. "The Simple is not always the Best," Heinrich Tessenow stated, "but the Best is always simple."

← Form that has an effect instead of effective form. p. 350

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Miscellaneous notes to lectures around 1930

here: The Artless Word - Mies van der Rohe on the Building Art, edited by Fritz Neumeier, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1991

No matter how much function and economics are preconditions for new building, the ultimate problems are of an artistic nature. No matter how function and economics determine our building, they say very little as to its artistic value.

They do not prevent it. However, the artistic appears in step with the structure of purpose and function, or rather, it realizes itself in that structure. But not in the sense of adding to it; rather, in the sense of giving form to it. The artistic expresses itself in the proportions of things, often even in the proportions between things. Essentially it is something immaterial, something spiritual. And thus independent of the material conditions of a period. It is a wealth that even a materially poor period need not renounce, indeed must not renounce. We do not want to add to the material loss a cultural one.

The need for simplicity need not be equivalent to cultural deprivation as long as we attempt to lock in as much beauty as possible. p. 372

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Radio Address, Manuscript of August 17, 1931

in the collection of Dirk Lohan, Chicago

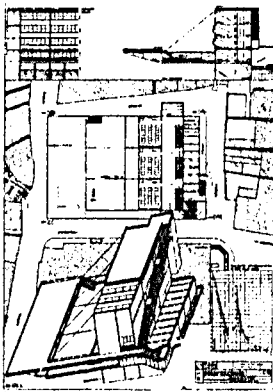
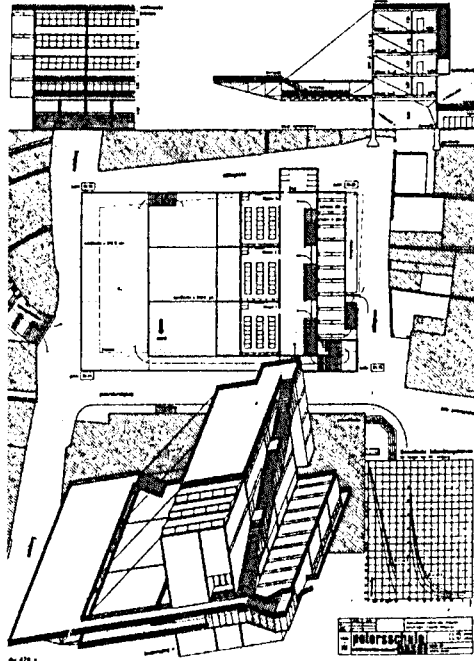
here: The Artless Word - Mies van der Rohe on the Building Art, edited by Fritz Neumeier, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1991

201.1.1

I come more and more to the conviction that architecture has a certain relation to civilization. If somebody says architecture is not related to

EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 14: PETERSSCHULE



Besuchungsstärke aller Schulräume

Die Besuchungsstärke aller Schulräume ist nach dem Durchschnittswert von 1,20 m² pro Schüler bemessen. Die Besuchungsstärke der Klassenräume ist nach dem Durchschnittswert von 1,20 m² pro Schüler bemessen. Die Besuchungsstärke der Schulräume ist nach dem Durchschnittswert von 1,20 m² pro Schüler bemessen.

die Petersschule Basel

Die Petersschule Basel ist ein Schulhaus, das von Hannes Mayer entworfen wurde. Es ist ein Beispiel für die schweizerische Neuhaupteckung.

die Petersschule

Die Petersschule ist ein Schulhaus, das von Hannes Mayer entworfen wurde. Es ist ein Beispiel für die schweizerische Neuhaupteckung.

die Petersschule

Die Petersschule ist ein Schulhaus, das von Hannes Mayer entworfen wurde. Es ist ein Beispiel für die schweizerische Neuhaupteckung.

Hannes Mayer:
Entwurf Petersschule
Basel, 1926

Super cool simplicity. Highly pragmatic coolness. This building to us still feels contemporary, ahead of its time, even now, more than 80 years later. A Kooolhaas in beautiful.

EXCERPTS

civilization, there isn't any use talking about it.

I personally believe that it does, and this seems to me the main task we have: to build an architecture which expresses this kind of civilization we are in. That is the only way I can see to overcome chaos. Our civilization depends largely on science and technology. That is a fact. Everybody should see that. The question is how far we can express that. You know, we architects are in this peculiar position. We should express the time and yet build in it.

But in the end, I really believe that architecture can only be the expression of its civilization. p.35

Architecture is supposed to express the current society. This demand is a central topic of this book as we addressed it in many of our interviews when asking about a particular contemporary building or building type that matches Mies' demand.

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Interview in Chicago, 1960
here: Conversations with Mies van der Rohe, Princeton Architectural Press, 2008

Analysis includes the breaking up of architecture into elements, a technique I frequently use even though it is the opposite of the integration which is the final goal of art. However paradoxical it appears, and despite the suspicions of many modern architects, such disintegration is a process present in all creation, and it is essential to understanding. p. 13

Robert Venturi

When we re-examine – or discover – this or that aspect of earlier building production today, it is with no idea of repeating its forms, but rather in the expectation of feeding more amply new sensibilities that are wholly the product of the present. p. 14

Robert Venturi

In a way we agree with this statement: architects should focus on their job. In another way we don't because we believe that great buildings can only be built if the architect has a broad perspective of what he is building and for whom. In our opinion, it's not the broad perspective that is a fault but rather that the architectural discourse is so self-centered. Architects need to be amateurs, but they should listen and talk to people other than fellow architects.

I tried to talk about architecture rather than around it. Sir John Summerson has referred to the architect's obsession with "the importance, not of architecture, but of the relation of architecture to other things." He has pointed out that in this century architects have substituted this mischievous analogy for the eclectic imitation of the 19th century, and have been staking a claim for architecture rather than producing architecture. The result has been diagrammatic planning. The architect's ever diminishing power and his growing ineffectualness in shaping the whole environment can perhaps be reversed, ironically, by narrowing his concerns and concentrating on his own job. p. 14

Robert Venturi

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Because the arts belong (as the ancients said) to the practical and not to the speculative intelligence, there is no surrogate for being on the job. p. 14

Robert Venturi

I like elements which are hybrid rather than "pure", compromising rather than "clean" distorting rather than "straightforward" and ambiguous rather than "articulated", perverse as well as impersonal, boring as well as "interesting", conventional rather than "designed", accommodating rather than excluding, redundant rather than simple, vestigial as well as innovating, inconsistent and equivocal rather than direct and clear. I'm for messy vitality over obvious unity. I include the non sequitur and proclaim the duality. I am for richness of meaning rather than clarity of meaning; for the implicit function as well as explicit function. I prefer "both-and" to "either-or", black and white and sometimes gray, to black or white. A valid architecture evokes many levels of meaning and combinations of focus: Its space and its elements become readable and workable in several ways at once. But an architecture of complexity and contradiction has a special obligation toward the whole: its truth must be in its totality or its implications of totality. It must embody the difficult unity of an inclusion rather than the easy unity of exclusion. More is not less. p. 16

Robert Venturi

204.1.1

Paul Rudolf has clearly stated the implications of Mies's point of view. "All problems can never be solved [...] Indeed it is a characteristic of the 20th century that architects are highly selective in determining which problems they want to solve. Mies, for instance, makes wonderful buildings only because he ignores many aspects of a building. If he solved more problems, his buildings would be far less potent."

[...] He can exclude important considerations only at the risk of separating architecture from the experience of life and the needs of society. If some problems prove insoluble, he can express this: In an inclusive rather than an exclusive kind of architecture there is room for the fragment, for contradiction, for improvisation, and for the tensions these produce. p. 17

Robert Venturi

Where simplicity cannot work, simpleness results. Blatant simplification means bland architecture. Less is a bore. p. 17

Robert Venturi

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Although the means involved in the program of a rocket to get to the moon, for instance, are almost infinitely complex, the goal is simple and contains few contradictions.

Although the means involved in the program and structure of buildings are far simpler and less sophisticated technologically than almost any engineering project, the purpose is more complex and often inherently ambiguous. p. 19

Robert Venturi

Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture. 1960
MoMA Department of Publications, New York

Architecture, attesting to the tastes and attitudes of generations, to public events and private tragedies, to new and old facts, is the fixed stage for human events. p. 22

Aldo Rossi

The Architecture of the City, 1966
here: Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies at MIT New York, 1982

What can architecture do? Neither is it going to solve our political, nor our social or environmental problems, just as music is not going to solve the problem of noise. The sense of humor needed to understand the architect's changing attempts to interfere or integrate is evolving. Even the progress, architecture incites, is vain.

Today we can buy the exact wall units Muthesius and Le Corbusier preached 50 years ago as the liberation of the culture of living via mail order.

They have become the requisites of lies, the old German sideboard, the *Kredenz*, as much as the terrace-facades of *Glück*-buildings that resemble *Gründerzeit* facades. It is the cliché of the ascender that we mislead and want to be misled with that we have to polemicize
← against.

Hermann Czech

Is Czech demanding more suspicion towards promises of a better future? Maybe. But the essence of his statement is the demand for better, more profound promises, ones that can be thrilling and that do not disappoint our enthusiasm.

Mannerism and participation
Zur Abwechslung. Loewckerverlag, Vienna, 1977

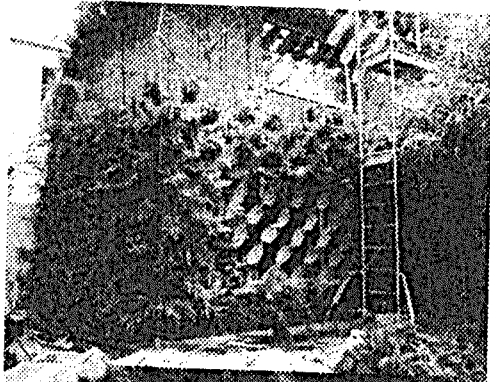
If it is possible to define the existential predicament of the art of architecture,

[...] one might possibly stipulate that architecture is a social institution related to building in much the same way that literature is to speech.

EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 15: HOUSES

In our opinion R&Sie(N) from France is one of the few architecture offices that are actually working on creating an advanced, aesthetic design vocabulary. Not with all their projects, but with some.



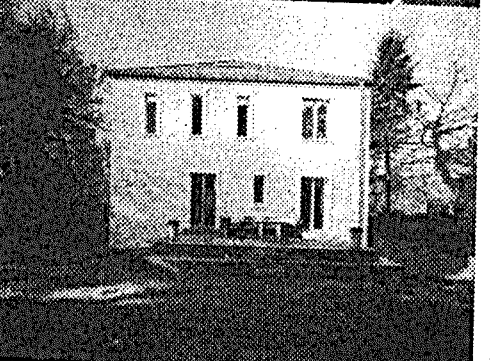
R & Sie(N):
Lost In Paris
2008

If it is not a beautiful house in the architect's eye, it is still responsible for the idea of 'house' (thus of 'architecture') that many people have.



Michael Jackson's
estate in Beverly Hills
2009

The whole upper floor of this building was built with clay. You can have parties there and you won't smell any smoke or odor the next morning.



Eike Roswag:
Westend Grün
2008

→ READ WHY THE ARCHITECT WORKS WITH CLAY: EIKE ROSWAG → P. 111, 2

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[...] Like literature, architecture is a discriminatory concept which can, but need not, enjoy a lively commerce with its vernacular. p. 101

Colin Rowe

Collage City, 1978
The MIT Press, Cambridge

The Osteria della Maddalena no longer exists, nor does the Hotel Sirena, but does this not perhaps constitute part of our architectural education? Green stucco and the memory of the conversation just referred to offer us the only means possible – beyond the yardstick – to
← establish an architectural design. p. 49

Aldo Rossi

Interestingly, when I read the German translation of Rossi's book, I first read and understood sea (german 'Meer') instead of meter (german 'Meter').

I only realized my mistake when I read the English translation, where the two words differ significantly.

I liked 'sea' though. I like the idea of one thing that everybody can put their design in relation to. The sea as the measure of all things, valid for everybody everywhere. Compared to the sea, every design looks small, even the biggest mega-structure and the highest skyscraper. In the face of the sea, size is not a criteria.

The widows' walks on the houses of New England recall the Greek ritual of scanning the sea for what does not return – a substitution of ritual for pain, just as obsession is a substitution for desire. Similarly the repetition of the form of the tympanum on a building does not cause the event itself to recur. The event might not ever happen anyway. I am more interested in the preparations, in what might happen on a midsummer night. In this way, architecture can be beautiful before it is used; there is beauty in the wait, in the room prepared for the wedding, in the flowers and the silver before High Mass. p. 65

Aldo Rossi

As I have said, forgetting Architecture comes to mind as a more appropriate title for this book, since while I may talk about a school, a cemetery, a theatre, it is more correct to say that I talk about life, death, imagination. p. 78

Aldo Rossi

Wissenschaftliche Selbstbiographie, 1981
MIT Press, Cambridge

Architecture may very well possess moral messages, it simply has no power to enforce them. p. 20

Alain de Botton

EXCERPTS

To care deeply about a field that achieves so little, and yet consumes so many of our resources, forces us to admit to a disturbing, even degrading lack of aspiration. In its ineffectiveness, architecture shares in the bathos of gardening: an interest in door handles or ceiling mouldings can seem no less worthy of mockery than a concern for the progress of rose or lavender bushes. It is forgivable to conclude that there must be grander causes to which human beings might devote themselves. p. 20

Alain de Botton

'To turn something useful, practical, functional into something beautiful, that is architecture's duty,' insisted Karl Friedrich Schinkel. 'Architecture, as distinguished from mere building, is the decoration of construction' echoed Sir George Gilbert Scott ... The essence of great architecture was understood to reside in what was functionally unnecessary. p. 47.

Alain de Botton

To describe a building as beautiful therefore suggests more than a mere aesthetic fondness; it implies an attraction to the particular way of life this structure is promoting through its roof, door handles, window frames, staircase and furnishings. A feeling of beauty is a sign that we have come upon a material articulation of certain of our ideas of a good life. p. 72

Alain de Botton

The Architecture of Happiness, 2006
Here: The Architecture of Happiness, Vintage Books, New York, 2008

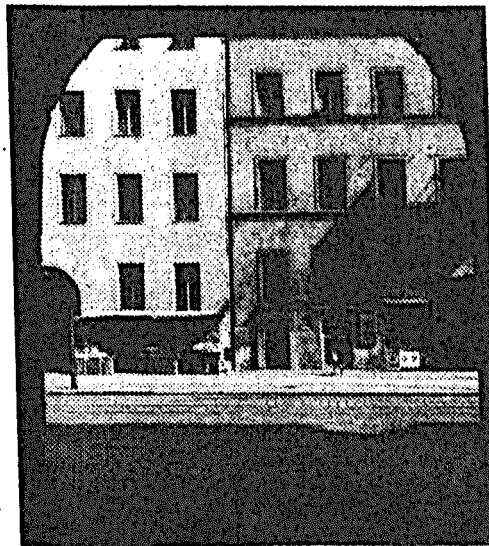
What we constantly need are other institutions to prop up the architectural effect; and the notion of propping up is where a certain mythology about architecture and its making is in contraction to the notion of autonomy. It could install a democracy, or any other form of organization, depending on the kinds of institutions, and military, economic, or social patterns, which support it in the first place. The architecture in turn supports the institution and produces it, it stages the political and with it the inherent ideology of frames. Architecture and any other spatial form therefore come into being through the institutions that support them, rather than embody what institutions are or can imagine. This exposes all of the problems inherent in thinking of art or architecture as applied practices in relationship to need or lack. p.B35

Celine Condorelli

The Violence of Participation, 2007
Sternberg Press

EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 16: HARDWARE



Meyer's yards on Ackerstrasse
Berlin
1958



Staircase in a tenement building
Landsberger Strasse
1872



Meyer's yards on Ackerstrasse
Berlin
1910

→ What is interesting about the built structure of Berlin, what one could call the city's 'hardware' is, that it is very homogenous throughout the city. From the very centre to the Lichtenberger Feld, the hardware basically stays the same. You can drive east for half an hour without realizing significant differences in the built structure. A fascinating conclusion one could draw is that what really counts is the 'software'. According to this thesis, the character of a neighbourhood is determined by what people make out of it; the way they use and inspire the place.

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210:13N

Trust me, architects are forever bending over for the client. But, if anything, for me it really is more about being a black sheep in this profession. Just ask other architects about me. I'm just not "rah-rah" about the profession. As a matter of fact, I'm usually mouthing off about what idiots architects are. I have no sympathy for them. I don't like the way they protect themselves, and I don't like the way they speak. Archi-speak makes me want to vomit. It's retarded. You know, nothing is flush in architecture – it's "co-planar". Clients don't talk like that, so could you please stop it? And I don't let my staff talk archi-speak. When they arrive, they're all excited, with their Yale and Harvard archi-speak, and I go, "Guess what? We just talk normally here."

What else galls you about your calling?

Don't get me started. The profession has all these cultural overlays that are truly repellent, especially the way it exploits the young. And it's annoyingly intellectual. The truth is: I'm just about the way it looks. I don't brand myself as an intellectual architect; I'm a visual architect. I remember reading a review once by a New York Times writer. Herbert Muschamp. He was so great. He was writing about a Rafael Vinoly building in Tokyo and he just came out and said that it's beautiful, that there was nothing else to add. And for me, that was such a valid thing to say, even though, in the world of intellectual architects, you're not allowed to discuss whether something's beautiful. You just have to ask whether it works intellectually. "Do the transparencies, you know, co-align?" They're such insecure mongoloids. Why would anyone talk like that? Architecture is really a sad-sack world. We pay by far the highest insurance premiums in the world. I mean, triple what doctors pay, okay? The AMA is so out there, screaming on behalf of the doctors, but the AIA can't even afford a lobbyist in Washington. And, you know, we are the only people in the world who have lifetime liability. Did you know that you can sue the estate of an architect 50 years after he's dead if you trip on his stoop? Where are all you fucking geniuses who went to Yale and Harvard? Is anyone pushing for legislation that makes any even a little bit of sense? Consequently, the profession has embraced a gallows sense of humor. Everyone talks about being such losers. I don't want any part of it.

Peter Merino

I: How does the quest for perfection affect your work?

PM: It's very painful. It's sort of having like a permanent toothache because, even if you've done a job to perfection, you have to deal with the mongoloids who then have to build it and they're not always on the perfection team. And then you've got to convince the clients that they need to pay for perfection. It's hopeless!

I: You're ridiculous. You must find it tough to let a project go.

PM: Are you kidding? I never let go. Never. The word "retentive" was invented for me.

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I: So you follow up with memos about how they should live in your space?

PM: Nonstop!

I: You do? I was joking ...

OM: Oh, I'm terrible. Lawyers' letters like you wouldn't believe.

You know: "please remove my name from that project, since you just changed that door."

Peter Merino

Interview

Pin-Up Magazine Fall Winter 08/09

95% of german single-family houses are not designed by an architect.

Gerhard Matzig

Der Hauch des Architekten

Süddeutsche Zeitung, 13./14.12.2008

The modus operandi revered by our puritanical profession is to hold fast to one's vision, denying any accommodation of the Owner's realities for fear of compromise. This leads to a lot of unhappy architects, unhappy clients, and unfulfilled desires.

We believe architectural agency can be resurrected if piggybacked upon the Owner's needs. Metaphorically, if the Owner's constraints form a round hole, why not pick an embodiment of your agenda that is a round peg?

Then your vision will slip right through the Owner's needs without either being compromised. Said more provocatively, if you want to get your soldiers into Troy, would you really roll a huge, wooden Greek soldier up to the gate? Museum Plaza is a Trojan horse, but one ← filled with maidens, not soldiers.

Joshua Prince-Ramus

Interview

Perspecta 40 – Monster, 2008

We agree with Ramus in that we think building should be for the people and the clients, not against them. The question is: what is your peg? What is your agenda? A big huge structure (Louisville Museum Plaza) which walks over the rest of the city? Is this enough ambition? Maybe it is. Maybe it can profoundly change things just by being there, and by being strange. Or maybe architects don't need to change anything in the first place? Phillip Johnson would have loved it.

The spine of the story recounted in these pages is thus, in a way, a familiar one: nature versus culture, the naturalness of what craftsmen do – no matter how skilled they become – set against Western culture's long-standing ambivalence about man-made things. Though no philosopher, Isaac Ware wanted to make sense of brick in this way. The contrast between honest brick and artificial stucco, though both are fabricated materials, became contrasting emblems of nature and culture, the first according with a skill developed under modest

EXCERPTS

domestic circumstances, the second a material developed at the behest of social climbers, and yet seductive and beautiful to Ware himself. p. 294

Richard Sennett

The Craftsmen. 2009
Penguin Books, London

Latest developments suggest that people, under the smoke screen of an autohypnotic discourse about sustainability and ecological consciousness, in reality are destroying exactly what they are evoking in the hypnotic sphere of their dialogue. When the destructive aspects of climate change come into being at the scale expected, the law of encapsulation is going to gain power, in fact in a much larger scale.

In the twentieth century we have gotten used to micro-capsules like for example the studio apartment. We have internalized the idea of the studio apartment, the single family house as an anthropology of architectural individualism to a degree that we take it as a natural constant: a man, a room, a central locking. p. 33

Peter Sloterdijk

There are many colleagues that are occupied with architectural style, with formal work, but the architect's principal duty is to ensure people's life on earth.

If we try to think outside the box – or outside our own house with a roof and a water drainage – one of our most important professional duties and a central reason of architecture is to work on a sustainable way of building and energy supply. p. 71

Christoph Ingenhoven

Architects and engineers should consider the limited life-time of buildings in their design concepts – without determining the exact lifespan a priori. Ephemeral building means to make buildings that could be decently taken down already tomorrow – but at the same time could stay for a thousand years. Ephemeral building demands new techniques both in planning and building. Buildings have to be easily converted, extended, adapted, and finally recycled. Entirely. This raises different claims to building parts.

The framing, the load-bearing construction usually lasts fifty to hundred years. This is quite different from the facade where technology progresses way faster. [...] And elements of housing technology like cooling, heating and ventilation follow even faster cycles of innovation. p. 73

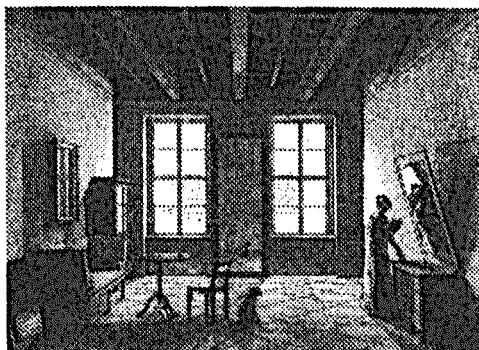
Werner Sobek

EXCERPTS

PLATE N° 17: COMMON

Johann Erdmann Hummel:

Room
1820



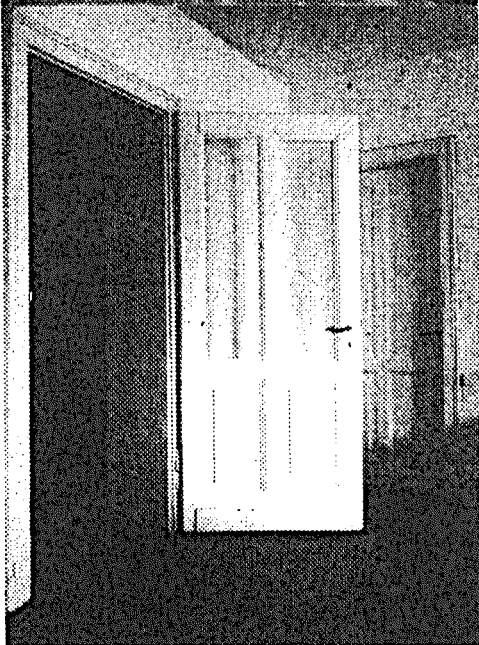
→ Interiors.

The way the light is led, the symmetrical layout, the perfected proportions of the windows, the elegant shape of the doors are not the achievement of a genius. They are not created – they emerged through tradition.

The designer followed a set of rules that only allowed small deviations. This led to a stable and comparatively high aesthetic standard. In a way, this concept appears especially pleasant in the face of the current reality of building, where a large amount of failures are combined with a large mess of extremely 'eccentric, individual, unique' buildings, and a very small number of actually great buildings.

Thomas Ruff:

Interieur 8c
1981



EXCERPTS

Put simply architects should from time to time ask themselves if they should be building at all and if yes, how to do it decently. Architects could offer alternative scenarios and therewith challenge criticism about the normal way of action. [...] Architects shouldn't only concentrate on technical concerns. This is not what architecture is about. Architecture is a cultural process that develops a framework out of the technical act of building, shaping the relationship between us and our environment as well as the relationship between people. Therefore I recommend architects to occupy themselves more with culture and

We agree that architects should spend ← less with computers. p. 95
 more time studying their culture than their computer. Building is not just a technical act but also a material one. And it is a lot of work. It needs human as well as natural resources.

Aaron Betsky

In the long run buildings are going to turn into organic creatures that are equipped with a great variety of abilities. Not only biotechnology but also nanotechnology is going to be of growing importance for architecture. There could be something like 'green bricks' that can do photosynthesis and are integrable to the whole skin of a building. Compared to photovoltaics they possess a much better yield, are recyclable and easier to produce. The bricks do not produce electric energy but molecules of different kinds: sugar molecules or hydrocarbon for the energy supply of the building. And that is no more going to be electric but it works chemically – like in plants. From the leaves, the 'green bricks', nutrients stream into the adjacent rooms or the foundation to be transformed into power. [...]

Windows and shutters would then no more be powered by electricity but chemically; they would open and close in a similar way as the stomata of plants. This perspective makes it possible to think of many new solutions in the field of building technology: Walls could heal themselves after having been damaged, Cilia could help floors to actively collect dust and house mites and transport them to certain spots where they are collected. p. 107

Karlheinz Steinmüller

last five excerpts are taken from interviews in:
 Bessere Zukunft? Auf der Suche nach den Räumen von Morgen. Merve Verlag, Berlin.
 2009

In our contemporary discussion sustainability seems like a woman without an abdomen, cut off from the cultural enzymes and the social catalysts, that are necessary to make use of it as a society. Photovoltaics, the passive house standards, heat recovery: Simply scientific approaches won't do.

[...] It demands to understand architecture more as an organism than a machine: A machine faces its environment with alien independence; It fulfills its performance out of an internal logic. An organism by contrast has a metabolism that connects it with its environment. That is a decisive difference.

EXCERPTS

[...] The progress of air-conditioning in the twentieth century lead to a situation where architecture of all kinds can be built anywhere on earth, independent from climate regions. The architect makes a design and afterwards the domestic engineer installs all technology necessary to create a comfortable climate inside. This is when boon turns into banc, when it becomes obvious that eventually the technology is overchallenged, the operating costs escalate or a new disease pattern ← is discovered, the 'Sick-Building-Syndrom'. p. 37

Stages of progress of indoor climate control in the twentieth century: wood fired oven, coal furnace, oil stove, district heating, thermal power station. Not a linear, but an exponential development whose future progress can hardly be predicted.

Robert Kaltenbrunner

Stairway to Heaven?
der architekt, Ausgabe 798, Juli/August 2009

Concept:
Julian Schubert
Elena Schütz
Leonard Streich

Drawings:
Julian Schubert
Elena Schütz

Design:
Leonard Streich

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Elena Schütz

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