Real to Reel: A Center for Inter-Related Media, Boston

by Michael Joseph Joyce

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Signature of the Author

Michael Joseph Joyce
May 10, 1991

Certified by

Wellington Reiter
Lecturer, Thesis Advisor

Accepted by

Jan Wampler
Associate Professor
Chairman Department
Committees on Graduate Students

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ABSTRACT

In our ever changing understandment of city form, the interpretation and realization of space sometimes transcend the notion of time and the physicality of given boundaries. In the city of pastiche, a post-industrial condition has revealed a reading of the city that begins to question our temporal existence... that we attempt to make a place of discourse, a place to create, contemplate and learn. This thesis proposes that this place be an extension of ourselves, of our city and beyond... an urban oasis for the freedom of expression. In the advent of the intelligent age the place of pilgrimage becomes the shrine of information. The interface of information and knowledge to the civic arena anticipates a place for equity... a collective intelligence. It is my intention to explore this dialectic condition in the context of a Center for Inter-Related Media for the city of Boston. The purpose of the Center will be to act as civic informant in the research and discernment of media upon our society. As such the protagonist roles of the artist, the educator, and the correspondent will provide the instituion from which such an effort can exist.

Thesis Advisor: Wellington Reiter, Lecturer
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Introduction

The primary focus of this thesis will be on the design of a new center for inter-related media: its' role within an information society and the process of its design. With the model being Boston, it will first be important to research and discern the social conditions of such an environment, what role the center will play in such a society, and finally how a place for the expression and analysis of media is architecturally provided.

The thesis is essentially presented in two parts; a premise that establishes three pre-eminent positions for the inter-relations of media, and a proposal/design that embodies these positions as the programmatic diagram from which the center is resolved. The juxtaposition of these conditions will initiate an investigation of the site/program and it's projected influence(s) upon the city and community. It is my intention throughout this thesis to establish a dialogue between urban form and architectural form. In my design exploration the two are autonomous yet inseparable, each influencing the other. The following presents a general outline of the premise section in more 'architectural' terms than the actual discussion. From there a dialectic is established and whenceforth an architectural proposal is presented.
Freedom of Expression

In this section a series of thoughts are brought forth that pertain to the freedoms of expression and its relationship to the perceptions of our cities. As our cities begin to look more and more alike, an identity factor towards defining who we are is less recognizable. Our society, engulfed in mass consumerism and homogeneous development, is becoming more complacent and less autonomous each passing year. The technologies we have developed to free us from time seem instead to hold us prisoner to time. The development of information and freedom of its exchange have been guised to develop productivity not as promised a new ‘intelligent age’. As a result, a slow depreciation of our need to express and the space required for this activity seems to continue. Artists and innovators, once the vanguards of our culture, are now under increasing pressure to validate their right to express. Now more than ever a heightened awareness is needed towards the freedoms of expression and the freedoms of information. The will of the artist to express must be allowed to thrive in our cities as they are often the catalyst for establishing a city’s identity and a conduit for community involvement. It is this realization of the ‘self’, and the artist’s integral awareness of cultural change that signal the highest of freedoms in the human condition.
The Access to Information

This section will address the widening gap between those who are privileged and those who are deprived of the access to knowledge and suggest that through inter-related education systems, a new civic arena may be formed in order to address such disparity.

According to the early theories of the Bauhaus in Germany, there needs to be a mutual integration of artist and practitioner. Today these roles have been transformed and although a sense of 'overlap' occurs, the advent of the information age has seen little progress in amalgamating these roles. Rather it seems that a parallel route has evolved where art and information continue to serve as commodities in the productions of industry and business. It would seem that the very nature of information technology with all its speed and flexibility would suggest a more opportune cross-over to such 'useful knowledge'. Yet the access to knowledge, like that of art is dominated through easily available commercially viable devices, thus creating a supermarket/museum of a diluted, less useful appropriation of knowledge. In cities such as Paris, Cologne, Osaka and Tokyo, the notion of an 'information city' and the reinvestigation of these conditions have already been introduced. Thus it is natural that Boston, also with its high concentration of information rich institutions, should developed a place for such public access and exchange. As happened at the Bauhaus more than seventy years ago, the integration of disciplines needs to be addressed once again.
Media and Democracy

The final section investigates the paradoxes found in the use of new media and the notion of information systems becoming an "extension of ourselves" in the democratic forum of the city. The paradox of a civic controlled 'media', that of electronic voting, interactive televised debate and video conferencing demonstrates on one hand unprecedented opportunities for broad civic involvement, whereas on the other hand it creates an unwanted plebiscitary democracy that possibly bypasses the dynamic environment of a public forum, a definitive 'place' for democratic debate. For now we are subjugated to the one directional media democracy of television talk shows, a commercialized press and sensitized media that besiege our discussions, and in a sense become the unfortunate positions from which democracy is established. In the city, the shrines of democracy have become the media itself, a commodity of freedom. If in our progression towards an 'informatized society' our cities have lost a sense of place that will generate democratic debate, then we should not suppress the advancement of such technologies... but rather we should investigate new environments from which new media and democracy can coexist.
The Freedom of Expression

“You have understood nothing about our movement if you do not see this: what swept across France - to the point of creating a power vacuum - was not the point of professional demands, nor the wish for political change, but for the desire for other relations among men. The force of this desire has shaken the edifice of exploitation, oppression and alienation; it has frightened all men, organizations, and parties directly or indirectly interested in the exercise of power, and they are attempting by all means to suppress it. They will never have done with doing so.”

Raport Interdisciplinaire

Nanterre 1968
The issues of expression, and the inevitable argument of its freedoms have always been at the center of discourse on cultural representation and the domain of the public sphere. Whether it be the arts, print media or simply speaking in the street, the issues of freedom of expression have generated much debate over the years.

Throughout history, the debate over expression loomed largely over the work of artists. As art was the most effective way of communicating ideas to the masses, the plastic arts were generally subjugated to a pragmatic role in society. The artist found favor and position with the patrons of the arts as long as the dissemination of the patron's views were carried out through the medium of their craft. Until the time of the Renaissance, the church sought to establish its sole position as distributor of knowledge through the patronizing of the arts, in order to reaffirm its position of power in the community and bring forth its teachings. As a result church authorities had strict control over the freedoms of artists, assuming the roles of both patron and censor. As most of the population was illiterate the artistic expression was effectively the expression of the church.

In other examples artists were mobilized for political reasons, often compelled to express through their paintings and sculptures the ideals of political movements in totalitarian societies. The Commune in France was the reason many artists rejected the revolution, not because they disagreed with the cause of the revolution but because they believed in the rights of the artist to have complete freedom of expression. For others political expression was inherently part of this freedom. French painters such as Jacques Louis David elected to stay to fight for artistic as well as political freedom. Although David became instrumental in the formation of a 'national culture' for France by establishing the Musee National des arts (later to become the Louvre), he and others had great difficulty in solving the dilemma of 'freedom of art' and the contradiction
Oil on canvas, approx. 14' x 11'. Louvre, Paris.
Abb. 13 Kat.-Nr. 136 Daumier Ventre legislatif 1834
of their own political convictions.

For many artists it was the tension of this freedom to express and the inner knowledge of what the message of their media could do that prompted direct engagement through their work. Paintings by the likes of Goya, Courbet, Delecroix, Millet and especially the political cartoons of Daumier began to cross the line of social commentary, often depicting the ills of social injustice. For Goya, the notion of depicting a false Spain and its masking of social problems especially that of the poor was of special interest:

"The world is a masquerade. Face, clothing, voice, all are put on. All wish to appear what they are not, all deceive and not one recognizes his fellow." 

Daumier's approach was less subtle, as they were direct criticism of the French aristocracy often depicting political and religious leaders in satirical drawings. Unlike the effect of viewing a painting at a museum, Daumier's drawings and social message were seen by many more people since many were produced for the publication La Caricature. Hence it becomes not the original that is seen but a representation thereof. It was this early marriage of print media and art and the ability to 'reproduce' that allowed artists the role of public critique. Daumier and others like him caused enough problems for the ruling class that in 1835 the government initiated the September Laws, a censorship of any form of criticism of the government or the king.

The importance of publication should be noted here, as the numerous artist journals in the late 19th and early 20th century essentially became the forum for the freedoms of expression. With the ability to assemble ideas and distribute knowledge through publication, all levels of society could become informed on an equitable platform. Now, not only were the censors themselves being scrutinized, but the styles that represented them were also to be challenged. This was an age of change, as the artists were now influenced by
other disciplines... science, philosophy, etc. Thus, new aesthetic movements such as the impressionists, expressionism, fauvism, cubism, futurism and dadaism would have as their primary objectives the ability to influence and even transform society through their collective energy and creativity.

Some of these groups’ intentions were to confront the political atmosphere at the times through their work while others sought a more loosely defined personal arena. The secession groups of the early 1900’s were organized around the idea of commenting on political thought as well as on artistic motivation. This enabled the groups to synthesize the ideas of different disciplines such as art, architecture, literature and philosophy. It was the inexplicable freedom of the self, the essence of expression, however, that spurred such groups as Der Blaue Reiter in Germany, Les Vingt in Belgium and De Stijl in the Netherlands. The Secessionists in Vienna were especially important. Much of their work, especially that of Gustav Klimt, embodied this ‘breaking away’ from the service of art to a more investigative aproach of the self and the redemptive powers of art.4

The Two Modernities

It can be seen from the examples discussed so far that a constant irreconcilable difference occurs between expression towards the measurable ‘worth’ of society and the existence of expression towards a complete and utter freedom to create or comment. This difference is,in a sense, the basis for modern culture as we know it. This constant confrontation between two positions is nearly always transitory and accounts for the ‘need’ to be set apart, to reject tradition so as to continue on to some unchartered territory. Thus freedom of expression might have only to account for its autonomy... the loosely defined l’art pour l’art of the dadaists (Duchamp), the personal self of the abstract expressionists (Pollack), or the physical polemic of contemporary art (Serra). In Five Faces of Modernity, Matei Calinescu expounds
upon this idea of confrontation by asserting that there are two modernities. The first is the "objectified, socially measurable time of capitalist civilization" and the second is the "personal, subjective imaginative duree", the private time created by the unfolding of the self. It is this position on the identity of ‘time’ and ‘self’ that constitutes the foundation of modern culture.

This analysis of a 'time/space' ambivalence can also be deciphered in a physical/metaphysical analogy, one being tangible, tactile, immutable and pragmatic... the other consisting of the transitory, ephemeral, contingent and elusive. As related to the freedom of expression it can thus be inferred that expression occurs within this disjuncture of culture and social structure, that invariably we are always within the influence of both. In Postmodernism and Consumer Society, Fredric Jameson indicates that ‘expression’ in the arts, sciences, literature and philosophy now blurs the line between these two modernities. An effacement of key boundaries takes place: "...the erosion
of the older distinction between high culture and so-called mass or popular culture." Thus it is as difficult to categorize the work of composer Philip Glass as it is to 'position' the writings of Michael Foucault (philosophy, history or social science?). Jameson correctly indicates that much of this erosion was initially a reaction against the notion of high modernism, especially that of the monumental International Style in architecture, but what has evolved is a post-modernism that does not express the inner truth of our self or culture, but rather that of the emergent social order of late capitalism, a pastiche of consumerist style. This recent phenomenon that becomes the quiet censor to the freedoms of expression. Like the examples of the church and the early patrons of the arts, we see a post-industrial society feeding off itself, compelling a suppression of the 'self', and ultimately a return to homogeneous apathy within our social environment.
Consumer Aesthetic

In this light, it can be seen that this post-industrial condition has not only affected the freedoms of expression, but has begun to shape and form the physical environment, most notably the identity of cities. As our cities have become engulfed in the network of modern technology, a dilemma has occurred for the practice of the arts. The simulacrum of the city takes hold of the artist displacing the 'self' with the consumerist object, the 'measurable worth'. Jean Baudrillard in his article *The Ecstasy of Communication*, states that in this age of instantaneous communication, the omnipresent advertisement invades everything... that the public space of street, monument, and scene are disappearing under the exhibition of its' material weight. The architecture of the city thus becomes a literal frame from which to hang, like posters, the pastiche of ideas and more importantly a set of conventions from which society emerges. Whether or not these conventions preclude the freedom of expression is a difficult question, as there are many other factors that
determine suppression, that we perhaps live in a sort of inevitable social determinism. For the artists and craftmen, the writers and dancers such city form, what Charles Jenks calls a weak determinism, becomes an impediment of innovation and the unfolding of the self. The innovator thus becomes involved in the 'feeding of the flame'... s/he is inevitably a pawn towards the consumerist culture of the replicant city. And it is with Baudrillard's example of the omnipresence of communication that this flame not only continues, but grows in remarkable apathy.

Thus if the artist is invariably connected to the electronic consumerism of a simulated society, where is the arena for true expression, for genuine perception?

As was the case in the time of Daumier, the modern artist has often worked within the freedom of the press to make comment through the media. It becomes the fleeting arena, a transitory place from where expression and democracy can co-exist. In recent years many artists and writers have attributed their work to the subject of the media and the questions of a consciousness in a consumerist society. In the work of Dennis Adams an inversion of roles often occurs. Often through the use of ironic public displays, Adams judiciously disconnects the 'public' fragments of modern conditions in order to raise questions about information and the media. Antonio Muntadas explores the notions of meaning in media systems with provocative video art that often find the artist 'reporting' the reporter. (Between the Lines 1979) In the photography of William Eggleston, the ordinary becomes the extraordinary where everyday objects are turned into metaphorical images. And in the writings of Barbara Kruger a discourse revolves around the issues of doubt and belief on the terrain of media and democracy.

It can be seen then that the artists work, and in general the freedom to express, have become an important aspect to our modern culture. The ability to transcend the sometimes homogeneous state of
an information world, or what Calinescu referred to as the objective ‘measurable time’ might be the remedial response to a better environment.
The Access to Information

"Let us create a new guild of craftsmen, without the class distinctions which raise an arrogant barrier between craftsman and artist. Together let us conceive and create the new building of the future, which will embrace architecture and sculpture and painting in one unity and which will rise one day toward heaven from the hands of a million workers like the crystal symbol of a new faith."

Proclamation of the Weimar Bauhaus, 1919
As is put forward in the preceding examples of freedom of expression, access to information and knowledge is pertinent to the advancement of our social condition. The innovations/availability of modern day communications have allowed unprecedented accumulations of historic events, prodigious memories, and annal upon annal of just about everything noteworthy that was ever said. We have in a sense become hunters and collectors of a 'curio' information, able to select at will a time, date or place for the appropriate 'event'. Thus the freedom to exchange an unlimited resource at breakneck speed becomes the predominate event in an information age. Yet for all the availability of information and the knowledge that it can provide, our society seems to associate such technological innovations with the expression of a social progress without demonstrating that social progress has taken place.

An information revolution that purports an end to the deprivation of knowledge and the dawning of an 'intelligent age', rules out the notion of a technological innovation that is subordinate to social understanding, as put forth as early as Thomas Jefferson. Unfortunately this utopian declaration of an information system inherently connected to knowledge has yet to surface. Instead a parallel route has evolved where information continues to service the production of industry and business, and knowledge continues to be fostered through archaic principles, i.e. the school-as-factory model. This is not to say that technology has not entered the classroom, as computer assisted instruction can attest to, but that the roles of information and education need to be addressed.

The Gap in Education

Like the examples of the two modernities, a duality occurs between information and knowledge... a 'time/measurable worth' value, that of information systems, and the achievement of the 'self', as attributed to the access to knowledge. Thus the inevitable conclusion is a 'weak determinism' of
education in the workplace, an 'IBM/MIT/128 sponsored' access to knowledge. In developed information rich places such as the city of Boston, this disparity can sometimes seem especially amplified, where the access to public knowledge is more privatized than civic.

The traditional role of public education has not caught up yet with the advanced information systems of the corporate society. Instead, the access to an educative knowledge are replaced by a 'sound-bite' learning, an incestuous appropriation of televised scenarios that mimic life, or what we are led to believe life. Much like the recent replicant architecture in which cities exist, education is accepted as a reproduction of knowledge and inevitably is produced as a presentation of assimilated parts. In a recent competition for the city of Kawasaki, Japan, a team of MIT architects, planners and environmental designers including Peter Droege, Leo Marx and Otto Piene proposed an information network that was designed not to dismiss the notion of assimilation but to accept the modern challenge of 'assimilated knowledge' so as to embrace the technologies of information. In the proposal, the notion of an inter-related learning process is investigated where a 'Campus City' is arranged through the public access of an advanced learning network. The city thus becomes a transparency of public and private facilities and networks of information are distilled and decentralized to the needs of its citizens.

Perhaps the answer to balancing the role of public education with the available systems of information lies in the results of an intergrated system of information and knowledge: Not along the old lines of didactic computer assisted instruction, but rather in a more inter-related means of exploration. That is to say, to allow the student a more empowering role in the assimilation of his or her own respective education by allowing communication through writing or music or graphic and trade arts... or even to explore the planet through computer simulation, surrogate travel or interac-
tive television. In *Learning with Interactive Multimedia*, Monica Bradsher argues that through propigating the new technologies for learning, flexibility is allowed the teacher in providing a more tailored discovery-based environment in which the student may flourish. In addition, the notion of using a multimedia database in the role of the audio/visual aid to teaching does not inhibit the teacher from using a more traditional approach to teaching. In its most minimal ‘presentation’ role, multimedia aids become a more appealing replacement to the old film strips on which instructors have traditionally relied on. Of course the biggest advantage is in the provision of a learning environment in which young students can get involved; “There’s nothing new about the idea that kids learn best when there’s more than one modality.” adds Bradsher.

**The Lessons of the Bauhaus**
The concept of inter-related education through multi-discipline curriculums is not a new one and can be best seen in the early plans of Germany’s
Bauhaus nearly seventy years ago. Although formulated to the teaching of design, the Bauhaus based its theories of design education on the attempts to relate creativity and changing concepts of craftsmanship to the demands of industrial production. The early ideals of the school were utopian and ambiguous in certain respects, yet they were essentially developed to broaden the sphere of knowledge through access to many disciplines. In breaking down the hierarchies of academic standards in the education of the arts, a student could reinterpret such traditions by integrating various concepts including literature, philosophy, musical analogies, new spatial concepts in architecture and design, the theater and dance. The convictions were grounded in the notion that art and design were inseparable and that within this context a social value that explored the individual, the realization of the self could be found.

The initial curriculum was established by Walter Gropius in 1919, advocating a workshop-based
design education facility that inspired such crossover between fine and applied arts... or what Bruno Paul called an *Einheitskunstschule*[^1]. Paul and Gropius both doubted the notion of defined schools of training art, architecture and applied arts but rather believed in the rational of a sense of discovery, that the student could amalgamate all these disciplines together by participating in basic courses as well as in specialization courses. In the same spirit teaching would be shared between specialists and artists. Their ideals were that through a flexible but rigorous system of training artists, the Bauhaus would produce ‘artists’ capable of improving the environment through their abilities of understanding multiple disciplines. Although the Bauhaus transformed many times and essentially became more objective in its connections to production than its earlier subjective ideologies, it nonetheless had an important influence in the history of design and most notably design education through an interactive agenda.

As the Bauhaus found itself within the changing social landscape of an increasingly industrialized world, so has today the role of education and the access to information in an increasingly ‘informatized’ world. As the Bauhaus became a sort of microcosm of the ebb and flow of developments in the Modern Movement of the 1920’s and 1930’s, the access to information for all walks of life can be found at the center of debate to a new modernity. With the given examples of today’s technological advancements in interactive education, it will be important to remember the equitable position of access to knowledge put forth by Gropius and the Bauhaus.
Media and Democracy

"The breakdown of bargaining, the decision crunch, the worsening paralysis of representative institutions mean, over the long term, that many of the decisions now made by small numbers of pseudo-representatives may have to be shifted back gradually to the electorate itself. If our elected brokers can't make deals for us, we have to do it ourselves. If the laws they make are increasingly remote from or unresponsive to our needs, we shall have to make our own. For this, however, we shall need new institutions and new technologies as well."

Alvin Toffler, The Third Wave
The technologies to better communicate, to further our endeavor in the freedoms of expression, and to better educate future generations are with us now. The introduction of personal computers, satellite transmission, electronic mail and other communication networks have enabled society to be a more autonomous and individual conscience than ever before. Ironically the pluralistic means of such technologies sometimes allows a politics of individualism that undermines a sense of place or collective allegiance. In terms of an electronic democracy, new media technologies promise a return to participatory democracy and greater access to the relevant data that is germane to civic involvement. In theory this access empowers the people their right to choose either individually or in collective form. Yet it is in practice that such technologies are increasingly only accessible through the enormous commercial markets of electronic information services that generally service to the “objective time measured worth”, to quote from Calinescu again, of a market based economy. Thus non-profit civic uses of information systems and media are dwarfed by commercial uses. An example can be seen in our aging and little funded libraries use of new electronic media as compared to the same usage by CNN. The difference to the public of course is that in a library you can investigate as an individual any topic that you like, whereas on CNN you are the “mass consumer” and the information becomes one directional. As for the candidate, the use of the new media, for all practical purposes, has also become one directional. Citizens are at the receiving end of direct mail campaigns, disallowing a viewer response.

The problems that we may encounter in media and democracy will most likely take form within the hypothetical gap between civic and commercial access to the new media. Coexistence between media technology and democracy will be hard to achieve as there are many hard questions to be answered. A paradox develops when the argument of an updated democracy via new technologies
produces more equitable civic involvement but also produces the possibilities of invasion to privacy, lack of collective discourse and 'worship of speed'. Conversely the status quo continues to keep media in its place, aware of the possibilities of a civic controlled media and the amplification given to previously voiceless constituents. Thus if media, as previously associated with the freedom of expression and the access to information, is to become an "extension of ourselves" to quote Marshall McLuhan, how can it exist and participate in a more democratic solution?

Alvin Toffler in his book *The Third Wave* asserts that a semi-direct democracy will take place, that is a shift from depending on representatives to representing ourselves while still allowing some form of collective representation to take place. As representation by elected official becomes more outdated by the means of faster media technology, the notion of the media becoming analogous to the New England town meeting or the open forum of Boston's Old South Meeting House becomes an
interesting debate. Toffler argues that along with the new technologies that may generate a new form of self-representation, civic forums may need to be built in order to head off a plebiscitary democracy that may characteristically speed public opinion to the government without the debate and discourse attributed to a town meeting or public hearing. Thus the idea of electronic voting from home or opinion by poll reduces public participation to a sometimes preconceived opinion. The civic forum could thus be the 'heart' of the community or the electronic meeting hall in which participation is increased via interactive television, etc. as well as acknowledging the need for the allegiance to a community, a place to interact and possibly even change ones opinion on community or even world matters.

The world's first "electronic town hall", over the Qube cable system in Columbus, Ohio used interactive communications systems to establish such an "electronic forum" allowing residents to actually take part in a political meeting of their
local planning commission. Issues relating to highway construction, housing codes and local zoning could be voted on instantly by pushing a button installed in their living room. Although interactivity was experimental at best here, progress has been seen in similar associations, most notably interactive television that is now in experimental implementation in Springfield, Massachusetts and in Montreal, Canada. The availability of C-SPAN to much of the nation, while only allowing one-way communication has taken the veils off the public forum in which elected officials participate.

Although the new media and democracy can seemingly gain from each side’s position, the difficulties of progress will be most amplified here. Toffler calls this the “Super-Struggle”, between those who “try to prop up and preserve industrial society and those who are ready to advance beyond it.” It becomes apparent that as the need for civic forums will arise and as media technologies become part of our democratic participation, this struggle will continue. The coexistence of media and democracy and the previous institutions of freedom of expression and the access to education are all part of this struggle in which new relationships may come forward through interactive activity.
Process and Design

"The man is always greater than his works because he can never fully express his aspirations. For to express oneself in music or in architecture is by the measurable means of composition or design. The first line on paper is already a measure of what cannot be expressed fully. The first line on paper is less."

Louis Kahn
The following section will propose to culminate the previous investigated ‘foundations’ as the text from which the process and final design of the Center for Inter-Related Media is evolved. The process of the building then is essentially diagrammed from the three arguments put forth on expression, information and democracy. But before this diagrammatic ‘reading’ was established, an analysis of the chosen site in Boston and its’ own conditions as related to these arguments was first attempted.

Throughout the process of this thesis, models were produced as the primary tool from which the complexities of this project could be resolved. By analysis through modeling, a great deal of information could be synthesized in the continuing process of the thesis. Many of the process models are presented here to clarify this integration of complexities.

The presentation will first discuss the site and context for the Center, followed by a program frame that clarifies the transformation of premise to program. Finally, the design process is presented through four model generations that establish a continuity in the process of the design. The fifth generation, presented in model and drawings, is resolved as the final design.

Site Analysis

The site for the project is located at the now dilapidated Boston incinerator which is still largely intact. The incinerator, built in 1961 to burn most of Boston’s trash, had a relatively short life, closed in the early 1980’s due to emissions controls legislation. Positioned adjacent to the Southeast Expressway viaduct, the site is found in the marginal area between the South End, Roxbury, Dorchester and South Boston. The incinerator is built on former mud flats that bordered the old Roxbury Creek and part of the original Boston Neck. During the second expansion of Boston’s South End, fill was created for the addition of Albany Street parallel to the existing grid of Harrison Avenue and Washington Street. Later the end of
the Fort Point Channel which connected to the Roxbury Creek was again further cut back as the area east of the highway was also filled to make room for a burgeoning industrial South Boston.

The short lived social prestige of the South End, due to the filling of the Back Bay and the ensuing popularity, halted any further eastward progressing of the South End grid. In 1855 the 'Gold Coasters', as the early South End inhabitants were called, opted for the French styled layout of the new Back Bay. At this Mayor Jerome Smith proposed that the South End be opened to "a mechanics of limited means." an invitation to industry to fill part of the void left over by the demise of the South End. As industry and manufacturing became the primary function to this part of the city, it became apparent that the proximity to the central city allowed for an excellent point from which to distribute goods. Later, as much of Boston's meats and produce was distributed here, it became more commonly known as the New Market district, with the boundaries extending
from Mass. Ave. in Dorchester to as far north as the Fort Point Channel area. Although today the New Market still thrives on, much of the older manufacturing buildings and warehouses are left abandoned or in re-use as artist studios, graphic design and print shops, or as welding and steel making shops.

Although the site context has a definitive ‘use factor’ attached to its appearance as a ‘manufacturing’ zone, it also possesses an ethereal quility in its juxtaposition to the city skyline and adjacent highway. No other structure emphasizes this more than the existing frame of the south bay incinerator. Through a great rusted frame that peers between three tall smokestacks, the sentinal like structure creates a fractal image of a city construct.

The structure seems to be more than just a physical dimension to its surroundings. Because of it’s position at the beginning of a marginal zone that separates the city from the suburb, it becomes a marker... a place that is a trigger among many such ‘triggers’... to a collective memory of the city beyond. The site gives an opportunity to create an institution, a gate like object that acts as a healer to a city scar.
The existing Incinerator ruin poses as many opportunities as well as problems for the design. With its framework open to the elements, it towers above a filter of air, light, and space. Within its great steel enclosure, light and wind pass in a gentle wash as large shadows construct exterior profiles on plate steel walls. Here, a sense of being inbetween exists. A quiet endurance of memory and solitude. Rusted engines and blasters remain as echoes of activity...the sounds of the 'work' have long ago ceased.

Like the findings of some archeological dig, the incinerator ruin is a symbol to an industrial language, an allegorical inversion of the city of pastiche; of the city that it frames. Thus, as a symbol toward modernity, it is discovered in a state of revealing. An opportunity to continue as the transformed 'function' of urban artifact rather than pursue its course in a state of decay.
trigger-filter
analogue model
Program Frame

In the premise of this thesis, three positions were put forth that discussed pertinent issues related to designing a program for an inter-related media center. The purpose then of the program frame is to assimilate these issues into a diagram that does not necessarily give form to the building, but gives an conceptual existance to the building. In a sense the placement of a conceptual existance is already achieved in the clear pragmatic arrangements of the three boxes of the existing incinerator. A survey of the incinerator functions of the boxes give clues for new uses of the existing shell. To the south front of the building, the lower 40 foot high box is the 'receiver', where trash was unloaded to a clear-spanned on grade deck that is adjacent to a trash pit that straddles the plane of reference between the front box and the middle box. The large 75 foot high middle box is the center of activity, the 'collector' where compressed trash is 'scooped' up by operatable cranes above and diposited on stoking floors for burning.

The north side box at 45 feet high is the 'transmitter', containing the furnaces and flue space that is connected to three exterior smokestacks that face the city.
Working within these existing conditions and with the given issues of expression, information and democracy, a program frame was thus developed from which to balance a design from. A chart that establishes this balance presents us not only with a clear autonomous relationship between the program items, but is indicative of how these paradigms can also inter-relate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freedom of Expression</th>
<th>Media Arts and Sciences</th>
<th>Art</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to Knowledge</td>
<td>Media Research/Education</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media and Democracy</td>
<td>Media Forum</td>
<td>Democracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The program frame of Media Arts and Science, Media Research and Education and the Media Forum are thus presented as the loosely defined existence of the project from which to design. As all of three of these paradigms are rather ambiguous in their actual real functions architecturally, it was decided that like the 'frame' of the existing structure, a certain indeterminacy of space, a frame from which inter-related space can be established should be pursued. As artists, teachers and inventors will provoke spontaneous inter-related forums/discussions, a sense of flexibility of space requirements seems in order. Throughout the process generations of drawings and models, this search for an indeterminant space set up by determinant forms is followed.
Proposal

The functions of the institute of the Center for Inter-Related Media will be to make critical analysis on the way we live in a continually informatized society and to keep a vigil on the freedoms of expression allowed through the inclusion of in-residence media artists and on-site performance and exhibition. Debate and discussion, presented within the Media Forum on the issues that pertain to art, education and democracy will tap into the available on site resources as well as to the city of Boston and other sources.

If the mechanisms of the information society may progress the idea of the city, these same mechanisms might slowly erode such freedoms. Like the concept of Tatlin’s tower, the institute will exhibit the free will and the need to express... it will be the tower of communication that all such information is on an equitable basis to everyone. The actual programmatic functions of the center will be the ideas of a collaborative effort on the parts of media artists, educators and media correspondents who act as delegates to the Media Forum. The Forum will be open to the public for various sized meetings or discussions, with the unique ability to interact with other such forums on a worldwide basis via interactive television and satellite transmission. Together through interactive engagement of practitioners and artists and laymen alike, a dialogue can develop on the new physical, mental, cultural, geographic and of coarse political forums that will relate to an information society. An updating of two earlier mentioned examples are given:

‘New’ Old South Meeting House

The notion of a center to make commentary on society is of course not the first of such places built. Places like the Old South Meeting House in Boston and the adjacent Old Corner Book Store tell an original story on the freedom of information. Here, as in the Media Center, it will be important to understand the freedom of expression as the
vessel that transcends such freedoms.

The Meeting House, built in 1729, saw the first town meetings that allowed for public discourse on important factors effectively becoming the media of the day. It was here that some of the town meetings that led to the Boston Tea Party and eventually the Revolution occurred. But of course as time went on the Meeting House became engulfed by a growing Boston.

As steel and glass towers now gather around this institution to freedom, so will someday the Media Center find itself in a similar environment. Thus the Inter-Related Media Center becomes the 21st Century version of the Old South Meeting House; a public forum for the freedom of discourse and the environment of expression.

The Electronic Bauhaus

As the Inter-Related Media Center will need to explore the important issues that relate to a vastly changing society through research as well as through intervening art, it will be necessary to include the program of the center within the context of an institution; a school for ‘Understanding Media’ to quote from the title of the famous novel by Marshall McLuhan. The Media Center will research through the use of interactive studies, a long yet not completely set of ideas put forth by the Bauhaus in the 1920’s. In the age of information the computer has replaced the brush and the builders or practitioners are replaced by ‘image informants’. The students are asked to respond in the laboratory of the information city, constructed before them as the city skyline. To further the goals never really realized at the Bauhaus, the need will arise to make commentary on social, cultural and political issues. In order to continue the ideas of social equity, researchers and participants will be expected to spend a certain amount of time with the less fortunate who have limited access to knowledge and information systems.
Process Generation

The actualization of the program frame was explored in four model generations that ranged in size from an urban context model of 1" = 200' to the final size of 1" = 20'. It was imperative that in the process of investigating the physical site conditions as well as the programmatic conditions that a dialogue be established between architectural form, that of the program, and urban form. It was essentially a paragon of 'looking out' and 'looking in'. From city to site, site to program, and program to city. Plans and sketches also accommodated investigation of this process. The following pages are thus presented as a document to the progressive order of this process and give a journal accounting to the making of the Center for Inter-Related Media.
Urban Context

In the early progressions of the site analysis, a visual construct was decided upon between the site and the city. As has already been mentioned, the site and artifact of the incinerator act as a sort of ‘trigger’ alongside the highway to the wall like pastiche of the central city. Like many older American cities, such relationships of metaphorical objects can be found at the edge of a city; be they industrial, sign or symbol. The object of this model then was to capture the essence of this existing juxtaposition between city and site, a delineation of mental connections made by ‘passing’ the building upon the highway on one end, or always viewing the symbolic three stacks through the city corridors of Chinatown, the leather district, South End or Fort Point from the other end. The mapping of the model base was thus crucial in its placement in order to allow for such a ‘reading’. Scale: 1"=200' 16"x51"; basswood
The urban context model was then used as a working model in which a series of 1"=200" 'drop-in' models were produced. The aim here was to investigate intuitive decisions as to the urban relay constructed between the site as 'trigger' and the city as 'wall'. The drop-in models presented here represent certain characteristics of this construct mostly in the range of looking out and back to the city. Continued iterations lead to a final 'intuitive' decision that would inform the next model generation. Scale 1"=200", mixed materials.
Urban Syntax

Although this model still represents a position of looking out and back to the city, a more local context is examined most notably the syntax of the highway overpasses and the field space found at the center of the triangle of ramps. Also the program relationships are ‘lightly’ introduced although in rudimentary form. In this model it would seem that the existing structure and the new forms are not in harmony with each other yet, each represented in singular form:

ie. the program elements are seen as literal parts indispersed around an independant frame. But an articulation has developed in response to the local syntax; a gesture is seen under the highway protruding to the field, an excavation beneath the surface of the incinerator revealing its innards...

two explorations that would take the process to the next analysis. Scale: 1"=100'; 9"x14" chipboard, mixed-media.
Inter-Related Forms

In this series, the investigation is proceeded toward the more programatic requirements of the project; the first gestures of 'looking in'. As is included from the last model, an excavation of the grade datum is performed revealing possibilities for the program in a vertical dimension not yet explored in the process. This vertical integration of programmatic space now could engage the existing frame in a more coordinated dispersal of old and new. Although the program items of art, education and forum begin to be seen as part of the architectural positioning, the open frame of the model/object itself is allowed an autonomy of its own. A series of shape and form operations joust back and forth upon a gameboard like grid of the existing frame. The 'object' in itself becomes something else...allowing the purity of design composition devoid of a programmatic/functional suppression. The only requirement becomes the crucial balance of the abstract forms around the central volumetric box. Two precedents, Louis
Kahn's Unitarian Church and Le Corbusier's La Tourette were examined to understand this arrangement of forms around similar central 'courts'.
As the model became a valuable working model in which to explore the programmatic arrangements of rather abstract forms, a series of ideas and innovations evolved toward the inter-relationship of these forms. In the forum hall, the center box of the existing frame, the notion of an operatable media wall is established. According to a fictional media/political intensity wave chart, the position of the wall could change in accordance to the degree of media hyperbole in the city, or in the nation, creating various sized forums in accordance to a media forecast. Thus planning for use of the facility by various groups would need to address a seasonal media intensity chart, according to the size of discourse they plan. The movement of the wall on a thermometer like setting would create an indeterminacy to the central space and the peripheral program around the space. Scale: 1"=40'; 10"x 26", plywood, chipboard, mixed media
Independant Form

In this series, the model addresses the independant forms of the program through a more articulate registration of the architectural relationships. The Media Research and education facility, poised outward toward the community, becomes the most independant of the program forms. The Media Forum, essentially unchanged, is further resolved by including an interactive correspondent press room atop of the wall. The mobile systems of the Forum now include an operatable wall, and a mobile roboter camera crane that can deliver multiple choice 'angles' for at home interactive television users. At the 'front' of the center, the Media Arts and Sciences includes an experimental theatre and personal workstations that open out to various leveled worktrays for collaborative projects amongst the artists. The base of the model is a continued 'excavation' modeled to represent the archeological presence of the site. The overall result of the model, except for the educational facility, is that of still 'looking in'; programmatic 'answers' surrounding the 'question' of the Media Forum. Scale: 1"=20'; 16"x20" plaster, wood, railroad board

66
The Media forum in two positions:
Open for large forums,
closed for smaller discussions.
Media Arts and Sciences:

Process drawings and design progressions.
"... if it is agreed that architecture ought to possess greater autonomy—that is, even if the separation of the external mechanism of transmission from the internal functional mechanism of a building, the existence of a new aesthetic sensibility, and the new relationship that exists between the city and architecture are recognized—there will still remain the compositional principles of architecture."

Fumihiko Maki
Final Design

In the final realization of the Inter-Related Media Center, this model presents the project in a return to 'looking back, looking out' to the city. The Media Arts and Science facility is now transformed to create the internal edge between the city and the forum. The artist in residence units, now reduced to three units for six to nine artists, are located individually on the north face of the existing frame. The units hang from the superstructure peering in to the Media Forum where a long and narrow work tray hangs over the proceedings. In essence they become the voyeurs to the inside world and the outside world. Between the units and the smokestacks, the space has been left open to the outside creating an external workspace and performance space for warmer weather. Sitting atop an eight foot high concrete embankment, a retractable set of bleachers can be propped into position. The experimental theatre now exposes its west wall, allowing for an interactive video screen that confronts the outside space. Most importantly of the final decisions, the smokestacks are allowed a clearer identity; a profiled filter from which the Media Center lurks behind. The stacks, accessible from a floor below the outside performance center, are left as hollowed ruins in which the artists can produce performance installations or use as experimental holography and laser art workstations. The proceeding images are of the final design in model, followed by presentation drawings. Scale: 1"=20'; 33"x 60" plywood and bass wood base, plaster, wood, railroad board
Access to the Site

The site plan developed for access to the media center shows two main entry points. To the northwest, a connector road is placed at the end of Brookline Ave. and Albany St. The road first takes vehicular traffic to an existing parking lot that is adjacent to the south bound off ramp of the highway. From here an entry road proceeds under the ramps, past a 'media art park', and continues on to the west side of the building as a drop-off/pick-up area. Pedestrian traffic follow moveable sidewalks that commence at the gate of the entry road at the parking lot. Access from the South Bay Ave. side of the building, the front side, follows the original street pattern and is set up primarily for access to the community learning center of the Media Research and Education facility.

1 Albany St. Entry
2 Parking
3 Entry Gate
4 Media Art Park
5 Drop-off/Pick-up
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ground Floor Plan</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Concourse</td>
<td>17 Experimental Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Administration</td>
<td>18 Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Administration Offices</td>
<td>19 Conveyor Belt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Exhibition Entry</td>
<td>20 Ramp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Lower Exhibition</td>
<td>21 Exterior Performance Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Connecting Bridge</td>
<td>22 Bleachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Gallery</td>
<td>23 Loading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Office</td>
<td>24 Holography/laser work tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Services</td>
<td>25 Light Monitors (archives)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Exhibit Elevator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Machine Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Forum Storage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Forum Display Wall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Cafeteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Exterior seating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Light Tower (mobile)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Third floor Plan

1 Lecture
2 Electronic Classrooms
3 Open to Below
4 Artists' Workstations
5 Exterior Workstations
6 Live-In Workstations
7 Work Tray
8 Main Frame Computer Sleeve
9 Forum Display Wall (mobile)
10 Roboter Cameras
11 Offices
12 Video Editing
13 Exterior Video Display Wall
14 Ramp
Section AA

Outside Performance and Experimental Theatre
Section 8B

Media Forum Hall and exterior workstation
Section CC

Exterior Performance Space, Media Forum Hall, Concourse and Media Research and Education.
Perspective

Media Forum in open configuration
Credits

Page:

1,2,3,11,32: still from motion picture Capricorn One
4: Office in a Small City 1953, Edward Hopper
10,24,26: Im Rahmen des internationalen Brucknerfestes Linz 1982
14: The Demolition of the Column in Place Vendome; Fear of Art, Weinberger
15: Oath of Horatii 1784, Jacques Louis David
16: Ventre Legislatif 1834, Honore Daumier
17: still, Capricorn One
18: Philosophy 1894, Gustav Klimt
19: To Be Looked at with One Eye, Close to, for Almost One Hour 1918, Marcel Duchamp
20: Tilted Arc, Richard Serra
22: Perfect, Barbara Kruger
23: Winston from the Democratic Forest, William Eggleston
29: Intelligent City Map 1987, Peter Droege; Technology for People/Kawasaki Competition
30: Bauhaus Student Identification Card, Dessau 1926; Bauhaus and Bauhaus People, Neumann
31: Ibid: Bauhaus weaving plant, Dessau 1926
35: Video Maneuvers 1982, James Edwards
36: Old South Meeting House, Boston; A Topographical History, Muir Whitehill

37: Sign on a Truck New York City 1985, Jenny Holzer

38: still, Capricorn One

52: Elevation of the Monument to the Third International 1919-20, Vladimir Tatlin

63: Unitarian Church, Louis Kahn (top) La Tourette, Le Corbusier (bottom)
Notes

1 Fear of Art; Moshe Carmily Weinberger
2 Ibid, p.62
3 Ibid, p.72 quote from Goya
4 Vienna, p.72
5 Architecture 2000; Charles Jencks p.21
6 Artforum; Summer Issue 1988
7 An Information City; Boston; Peter Droege Places vol.5 #3, p.52
8 "Does Improved Technology Mean Progress"; Leo Marx Technology Review Jan. 1987
10 The Bauhaus Reassessed; Gillian Naylor p.14
11 Ibid., p.24
12 The Electronic Commonwealth; Jeffrey B. Abramson
13 Ibid., introduction
14 The Third Wave; Alvin Toffler p.424
15 Ibid., p.429
16 Ibid., p.436
17 Common Ground; J. Anthony Lukas p.165
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Technology for People, Kawasaki Competition; Peter Droege and team 1987

The Third Wave; Alvin Toffler Bantam Books NY 1980

Understanding Media; Marshall McLuhan
Center for Inter-Related Media, Boston

Program Components:

1.0 Media Research and Education

1.1 electronic classrooms  6 seminar rooms  3456 sf
                  2 lecture rooms  1140

1.2 research offices  6 x240  1440

1.3 conference room  1200

1.4 computer resource room  1200

1.5 screening room  1680

1.6 interactive press room  504

1.7 media representatives  6 x288  1728

1.8 control room  576

1.9 pantry/ cafe bar  4x80  320

1.10 research lab  1152

1.10 total  14396

2.0 Media Arts and Sciences

2.1 work trays  2 x1736  3472

2.2 live-in work stations  3 x 1000  3000
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.3 media pavilion + bar</th>
<th>1500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.4 holography labs</td>
<td>2 x1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 meeting rooms</td>
<td>2 x288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 support area</td>
<td>2 x480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 interactive tv labs</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10 video editing</td>
<td>1400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.0 Media Forum</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 forum hall</td>
<td>13500 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 assembly concourse:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upper concourse</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lower assembly</td>
<td>3375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 administration</td>
<td>2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 cafeteria</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 large kitchen</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.0 Exhibition</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 exhibition hall A</td>
<td>2000 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 exhibition storage</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 exhibition office</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.0 Library/ Archives</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1 main hall</td>
<td>2400 sf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 electronic stacks</td>
<td>4 x3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 film room (360dg)</td>
<td>12000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 administration</td>
<td>2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5 archives</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>12100</td>
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</table>
Acknowledgements

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