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Tracing, Mapping and Plotting and its Trajectory

by
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Submitted to the Department of Architecture
on May 20, 1999 in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Architecture Studies

ABSTRACT:

The Universidad Catolica de Valparaiso and its annex the Open City is a school of architecture that for 46 years has been developing a unique approach to architectural education founded in the relationship between architecture and poetry. This thesis project is not a research paper in the senso estricto nor is it meant to fully explain the school's unique pedagogy. Instead, it is an attempt to offer an alternative response to two basic questions: How does one measure inspiration?, and How can we quantify poetics?

Faced with the reality of this place and the deep and involved philosophical underpinnings that ground the school, I searched for a way to describe the meaning and value that this school holds. Words were not enough and photographs and video were not enough either. So as words and photos failed me to capture the poetic meaning that this place holds, I began to draw and cut and glue desperately before it all slipped away. In the process, I constructed a collage; a 'tapestry' that attempts to hold the intangible of this tangible place and group of people.

The 'tapestry' I constructed is 'weaved' with three stories: first- my personal journey through this place, second- some factual moments of the history of the school and third- my constructed metaphor that bridges my personal experience with that of this tangible metaphor (the Open City School of Architecture).

I believe this school holds through its teaching methodology and architectural production things that are not of the countenance but of the essence of architecture. I hope that as each of you unfold the fragments of these parallel histories contained in my 'tapestry' of images and words, you will discover through its loose fragments some of the poetic essence that this place holds.

Ann Pendleton-Jullian
Associate Professor of Architecture
Thesis Supervisor
I want to thank:

God and my Parents, for giving me life and together with my Family for filling it with good and beautiful moments.

My companion, my friend, ‘Mi Amor’ Alison for her constant and unconditional love, support, inspiration and patience over the last two years.

My friends and peers, for sharing their knowledge and inspiration and giving the me their most invaluable treasure: great memories together.

My Professors for showing me the way to new ideas.

Dennis Adams and Manjari Mehta for encouraging me to insert myself into my thesis and assuring me that it would work.

Ann Pendleton-Jullian for her book (The Road That Is Not A Road) that inspired me to embark on this journey and for her skepticism that ‘forced’ me to stand firm on my believes and faith in the poetic.

Felipe Raby for his invaluable guidance and introduction to Ciudad Abierta.

La Familia Vives and Andres Torres for their hospitality and generosity making me feel as family.

Fernando Perez-Oyarzun and Rodrigo Perez de Arce for their insights, thoughtful guidance and for allowing me to make use of their University’s Library (PUC) in Santiago.

Mi mas sincero agradecimiento a los Profesores, Fudadores y Alumnos de la Univerdad Catolica de Valparaiso y Ciudad Abierta por su amabilidad, hopitalidad y generosa disposicion para compartir conmigo un poco de lo que son, piensan y hacen.
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INTRODUCTION

Among the many schools of architecture in Latin-America there is one that for 46 years has been developing a valuable and unique approach to architectural education; The Universidad Catolica de Valparaiso in Chile with its annex Ciudad Abierta / Open City. From its beginning the school was founded under the premise and complete acceptance of the poetic condition of Mankind and “from this poetic condition, man is responsible to construct their individual life in a poetic manner” 1 Felipe Raby. The school translates this condition of man into a potential relation to architecture; by attempting to fuse (or fuse oneself) with poetry in order to make and reside. It is through this line of thinking that the school establishes the relationship between architecture and poetry which has always been the founding principle of the school.

As a logical derivation from the school’s aim to explore the relation between architecture and poetry, the school considers Architecture to be an Art (not a mere profession that responds only to the needs of the market) and as such it is a creative act; poiesis- a Greek root of the word poetry, which denotes the most basic forms of artistic production. Architecture is distinct from all other art forms in that its main concern is to give shelter to the human being. The school believes that as an art, “architecture has the capacity to embrace the indications of function, constructive methods, material, economy and social or ecological factors but never should these become its foundations” 2 Alberto Cruz.

1 Conversations with Felipe Raby, 1999
2 lommi and Cruz: Amereida Poesia y Arquitectura, 1992
As the school attempts to re-create rather than copy as most schools in our continent do, architectural education is explored as the most comprehensive general education possible. Life, School and Work become inseparable and this quest for wholeness blurs the boundaries between learning, teaching and building. This school’s pedagogical orientation was conceived as a Modern ideal of a particular way of understanding the world. Modernity was conceived as a new state of consciousness, originating in the work of Baudelaire and the poets maudits; it was therefore rather independent of the functional and technical determinism of mainstream Modernism as it manifested in the architectural doctrine of that time. As a result of this ongoing experiment in architectural education, this school has developed a pedagogical system that extends its influence beyond architecture and fosters in its student a sense of unity between life, work and school. Another aspect of the school’s pedagogy that grounds their philosophy and work to the American continent is the concept of Travesia; poetic journey or crossing. Once a year the students and professors plan and execute a trip together to a remote place within the continent. These travesias become the vehicle through which the school attempts to reveal the poetic meaning of a place through the building of a work or installation. “The trip itself is not considered an instrumental means to arrive at another place, but rather an experience that changes the meanings of things and makes one more acutely aware of the world’s reality.” 3 F. Perez-Oyarzun

I have found the school of architecture at Open City to be an exceptional source of inspiration. It is a place where the personal and subjective is connected to the collective and through this individual contributions a strong culture is shaped.

The school promotes a very close relationship between professors and students. The professors play a unique role by “provide[ing] the student with a situation that invites the student to critically observe, act and give form to the specific human activity that emerges from each observed situation” 4 A. Cruz. Throughout this process, the professor acts as both a guide and companion that inspires, challenges and ultimately becomes an accomplice with the student in their search to find meaning and give form to that which they produce. As most people, I have many interests outside architecture which hold an important place in my life. Through a closer examination of the relationship between architecture and poetry advocated by the Open City school, I have reinvigorated my faith of linking these ‘other affinities’ to the way I conceive architecture. Finally, the School’s commitment to integrating life, school and work is embodied by the Open City itself. Professors and Students live in the structures (Hospederias) that they make. They study and learn from the process of conception and construction of these works as it is they (students and professors) who are responsible for the labor to make these ideas a tangible built experience. A natural outcome of this philosophy is a holistic view of life beyond architecture as it promotes a constant search for beauty and meaning in the quotidian experiences of life.

4 Conversations with Alberto Cruz, 1999
As I search for words and concrete examples to explain that which inspires me about the Open City School, I ask myself two simple questions: how can we measure inspiration in a tangible way? and how can we quantify poetics?

These two questions led me to define this project not as a research paper in the 'senso estricto' but instead as a poetic response to a poetic place and group of people. When words and photographs failed me in describing the meaning and value this place holds for me, I drew and cut and glued desperately before it all slipped away. It is for this reason that I do not attempt to prove through a written argument the value that I have found in this school's pedagogical practices and production. Instead, I will use my collages to present these observations as a tapestry of images and words.

Through this collage work I will attempt to weave three stories: the first is my text and collaged quotidian experiences as I journeyed through Chile and the Open City School, the second is made of pure text narrating pivotal historical facts of the school's trajectory, pedagogy and philosophy and the third story is made of collaged images of crystallized moments that bridge the parallels of the tangible experience with the poetic (my personal interpretation of the school and the ideas behind their work.)

This work is not meant to fully explain, re-present or summarize the entire work and philosophy of Open City and its Founders. Instead, the words and images that I collected and made assign loose points in space and time through my exploration of this school. They remain my subjective interpretations of what I observed, read and gathered from conversations with the founders, professors and students and their work produced collectively.
Hector’s Journey

METAPHORIC IMAGES

Fragments of the History of the Open City School
“at the end of creation, God’s angels came back with ‘leftovers’ of forests, deserts, valleys, lakes, rivers, hills, etc. and they asked the Creator what they should do with all of this unused fragments of earth. God responded: scatter them between the mountains and the see. That is how this long strip of land (Chile) came to be.”

Guillermo Vives

In September of 1536, after a hostile e, a bright and beautiful bay, and named VALPARAISO.

The first European to see Chile was the Portuguese explorer, Ferdinand Magellan, who sailed through the straits which took his name on November 1, 1519.
ORIGEN DE CHILE

“...at the end of creation, God’s angels came back with ‘leftovers’ of forests, deserts, valleys, lakes, rivers, hills, etc. and they asked the Creator what they should do with all of this unused fragments of the world. God responded; scatter them between the mountains and the see. That is how this long strip of land (Chile) came to be.”

Conversations with Guillermo Vives, Valparaiso, March 12, 1999

The first European to see Chile was the Portuguese explorer, Ferdinand Magellan, who sailed through the straits which took his name on November 1, 1519.

In September of 1536, after a hostile expedition from Peru, Juan de Saavedra saw a bright and beautiful bay, and with nostalgia for his homeland named the bay VALPARAISO,

(the first city the Spanish founded when they reached Chile)

CHILE- 2,700 miles Long x 110 wide
Jai de Saavedra saw Valparaiso 1536.

Magalhães in 1519 (Loanda 1525 / Acapulco 1526) and Magellan's passage between the Atlantic and the Pacific in 1526.

This land of Chile with its climate and terrain offered possibilities for settlement that it seems as if God had planned everything so that it would be at peace de Valdivia, 1541.

Pedro de Valdivia, 1541.
Important points of my journey through life...

VIAJES de EUROPA a AMERICA- descubrimiento / conquista / comerciales:
Magallanes 1519 / Loaiza 1525 / Alcazaba 1534 / Ladrillero 1537
Rivera 1539 / Pastene 1544 / Aldrete-Ulloa 1557 / de Gamboa 1578 / de Vea 1675

CHILE- is between the Andes and the Pacific

“This land (Chile)is such that life here cannot be equaled. There is soil to sow, materials for building and water and grass for animals, so that it seems as if God had created everything so that it would be at hand.”
Pedro de Valdivia, 1541
A European expedition set out to find a western route to Asia. In 1492, the expedition under the command of Christopher Columbus arrived in the Western Hemisphere. Columbus landed on the island of San Salvador, which he named 'La Isla de las Adoratas' or 'Island of the Admirables.' Columbus claimed the land as part of the Spanish Empire and named it 'La Tierra Firme,' or 'The Firm Land.' His arrival marked the beginning of the European colonization of the Americas.

The goal of Columbus's journey was to find a direct route to Asia, which was believed to be only a few days away by ship. Instead, he discovered a new world, which he believed to be a part of Asia. This discovery led to the exploration and colonization of the Americas by European powers. The arrival of Columbus and subsequent expeditions had a profound impact on the indigenous populations of the Americas, leading to the displacement and degradation of many cultures.
Cruz Origen

Diagram of my journey

Between simulations and phantoms (we) the people of America only imitate
does our origin have a sign? what is origin?

Columbus
never came to America
he was looking for the Indies

amidst his task
this land
burst forth as a gift...

America as gift
has it accepted itself?

... they (the stars) open in their cross
all the cardinal points

the north designates it south
but she is not the south

because in this American sky
also its lights mistaken the expectation

-to ignite again the new map

AMEREIDA, G. Iommi, '67
Alberto Cruz was born in Santiago, Chile, in 1917. He studied architecture at the Catholic University of Santiago, traveled to Europe upon graduation, and later returned to Chile to begin a professional practice and teaching.

1946-49 Alberto Cruz began his career as a docent at the Universidad Catolica in Santiago. His unorthodox teaching methodologies immediately gave him notoriety for their radically different approach to architectural learning and overthrow, which was the cause for his expulsion from that school in 1949.

The Pre-Architectural Composition Class that Cruz taught began with the assumption that in order to create architecture one needs to have a nature "plastic property" and that this plasticity is only acquired through the making-practice complemented by readings and lectures on advanced architectural theory. 

- [Drawing diagrams made relatively by planes, lines, circles, materials, and textures that approximate spatial relationships. The content and focus of the exercises that Cruz gave his students were considered unusual and radical for that period (1947), especially in the context of the orders of architecture by Vitruvius to some first year students in Alberto's class. Information is found in an article published in the magazine PUMA on Oct. 1949.]

Colofraco Bonnet was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, also in 1917, and studied architecture for two years before deciding himself entirely to poetry.
Alberto Cruz was born in Santiago, Chile in 1917. He studied architecture at the Catholic University of Santiago, traveled to Europe upon graduation, and later returned to Chile to begin a professional practice and teaching.

Godofredo Iommi was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, also in 1917, and studied economics for two years before dedicating himself entirely to poetry.

1946-49 Alberto Cruz begun his career as a docent at the Universidad Catolica de Santiago. His unorthodox teaching methodologies immediately gave him notoriety for their radically different approach to architectural training and eventually were the cause for his expulsion from that school in 1949.

The Pre-Architectural Composition Class that Cruz taught at UCS began with the assumption that in order to make architecture one needs to have a mature 'plastic capacity' and this maturity is only acquired through the making (practice) complemented by readings and lectures on modern art. The nature of the exercises assigned in this class by Cruz, were intended to be analogous to architecture through their nature and process. He also claimed that the most effective exercises for this class and also the most analogous to architecture were through the making of abstract drawings made intuitively by planes, lines, colors, materials and textures that approximate spatial relationships. The content and format of the exercises that Cruz gave his students were considerably unusual and radical for that period (1947), specially in the context of a school that required the instruction of the ‘5 orders of architecture’ by Vignola to same first year students in Alberto’s class.
Architecture and poetry

[conversations with Fernando Perey-Oyarzun]

Walking between the University and the main Magazines there was a point, a moment where knowledge would be left behind, and reality had not fully set in. It was perhaps in the mind point where human and I first met and began planning together: converging architecture and poetry...

A. Cruz, 69
Iommi and Cruz met in 1950,
“walking between the University and the river Mapocho, there was a point, a moment where knowledge would be left behind, and reverie had not fully set in, it was perhaps in this neutral point where Iommi and I first met and began planning together, convening architecture and poetry...”

A. Cruz, ’89

1950 Alberto Cruz (an architect) and Godofredo Iommi (a poet) met in Santiago and immediately became good friends. “Their friendship was bound by an intellectual affinity that has lasted for 59 years and one can assume that from this meeting the school of Open City was a resultant and perhaps this was not the casual meeting of two people but the beginning of a shared vision that has attempted to fuse architecture and poetry through their teachings and artistic production.”

[conversations with Fernando Perez-Oyarzun]
1982

Alberto Cruz was offered a teaching position at the newly founded University of Valparaíso, which he accepted under two conditions. First, that he be hired together with his close friend, the poet Federico Landa, and others he knew professionally from the University of Santiago (Olga Reina, Fabio Cruz, Miguel Eyzen, Arturo Baera, Francisco Miranda, José Viña), and second, that they be given full control and freedom to make changes in the curriculum. This act of faith by the dean of the school gave Cruz and Landa the opportunity to implement their farfetched and radical idea to create a school of architecture that would explore the relationships between poetry and architecture. "The relationship between architecture and poetry that the school attempts to establish is manifested as the architectural response to the poet's words developing from a shared vision about human life and inhabitation rather than from a set of external requirements."

[Information found in an article published in the magazine Diámetro, 1982]

In 1982 the professors of the school... lived in a commune near the school and at Coya Catty with the intention of forming a stronger bond among themselves, sharing ideas and inspiration and thereby, as it was their purpose, the boundaries between life, school, and work.
1952 Alberto Cruz was offered a teaching position at the newly founded Universidad Catolica de Valparaiso which he accepted under two conditions: the he be hired together with his dear friend Jommi and other six young professors from the University of Santiago (Jaime Bellata, Fabio Cruz, Miguel Eyquem, Arturo Baeza, Francisco Mendez, Jose Vial), and second that they be given full control and freedom to make changes in the curriculum. This act of faith by the Dean of the school gave Cruz and Jommi the opportunity to implement their farfetched and radical idea to create a school of architecture that would explore the relationships between poetry and architecture. “The relationship between architecture and poetry that the school attempts to establish is manifested in the architectural response to the poet’s words developing from a shared vision about human life and inhibition rather than from a set of external requirements.”

Perez-Oyarzun, 1993
The first Travels (poetic journey) took place from Punta Arenas in the extreme south of Chile to Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia. The creation of the myths: America as found not discovered is gilt; the new north to the south and the interior sea of the American continent.

In October 1969 they purchased a strip of land (280 hectares of dunes and coast) some 30 km north from Valparaíso with the intention to use this property as a canvas for their architectural investigations and of course to live together. The following year, 1970, a ritualistic ceremony took place and thru this poetic act the Open City was founded.

[pg. 76, Amerada: Una experiencia arquitectónica]
PROYECTOS EN SANTIAGO

Tour of projects by Graduates of the Universidad Catolica de Valparaiso with Felipe Raby.

"In 1965 the book Amereida was written by Iommi as an articulation of intentions and approach (this was a byproduct of the first travesia / poetic journey). As a poem that poses a critical set of questions about the Latin American heritage, it introduces to the work of the Catholic University’s faculty of architecture a representation of the historical and cultural context of the New World."

Ann Pendleton-Jullian
"The city that does not recount its past, contains it as in the lines of the hand."

Pablo Neruda, Invisible Crew

"The stated relationship between architecture and poetry that the school attempts to establish is translated to "the architect's response to the poet's work" developing from a shared vision about human life and inhibition rather than from a set of external requirements."

Perez-Oyarzun

The school considers architecture to be an art (the needs of the market), as such it is a new production that is distinct from all other art ('shelter' to the human being.)

From its beginning the school was founded under the premise of complete acceptance of the poetic condition of mankind and from this poetic condition architecture is responsible to construct their individual life in a poetic manner" (Perez-Oyarzun). The school translates this condition of man into a potential relation in architecture, by attempting to free him from the conceptual quandary of poetry in order to make it possible to be lived, practiced by the student. This poetic poetic work should be completed by actions. Throughout the years the school has "discovered that what is permanent, formulations and systems through this writing, but it is inseparable from poetry."

"That which holds a production of poetry". A quote by Hélderbrandt found in Arquitectura, a literary work, a poem that since 1967 has served as "fundamental" to lead them into the exploration of the poetic condition and produce a way (a language) to conceive and produce..."
From its beginning the school was founded under the premise and complete acceptance of the poetic condition of Mankind and “from this poetic condition, man is responsible to construct their individual life in a poetic manner” [conversations with Felipe Raby]. The school translates this condition of man into a potential relation to architecture; by attempting to fuse (or fuse oneself) with poetry in order to make and reside.

School considers Arch. to be an Art and as such is a creative act (poiesis; the most basic forms of artistic production). Architecture is distinct from all other art forms in that its main concern is to give 'shelter' to the human being.
the school is and has always been apolitical

- the right wing parties consider us REVOLUTIONARIES
- the leftists call us REACTIONARIES
- the center party label us TRAITORS

conversations with David Jolly
Reading and Observing the Political discourse about Pinochet’s accusations in Spain...

the school is and has always been Apolitical
- the right wing parties consider us REVOLUTIONARIES
- the leftists call us REACTIONARIES
- and the center party label us TRAITORS

conversations with David Jolly
"The network of routes is not arranged on one level, but follows instead an up-and-down course of steps, landings, ramps, bridges and hanging streets..."

Rafael Dieste, Invisible Cities

"...the city of Valparaiso and the Open City serve as our laboratories to study and develop architectural projects."

A. Cruz

As an art, architecture has the capacity to embrace the indications of emotion, constructive methods, materials, economy and social or ecological factors but never these become its foundation.

A. Cruz
VALPARAISO

“The network of routes is not arranged on one level, but follows instead an up-and-down course of steps, landings, ramps, bridges and hanging streets”
Italo Calvino, 1974

Corriendo de Placeres a Vina

“The city of Valparaiso and the Open City serve as our laboratories to study and develop architectural projects.”
A. Cruz

As an art, architecture has the capacity to embrace the indications of function, constructive methods, materials, economy and social or ecological factors but never these become its foundations.
A. Cruz
“To know and understand life and built environment, students experience the city not learn about it in a classroom.” — A. Cruz

pedagogy:

Architectural education is explored as the most comprehensive general education possible. Life, School and Work become inseparable that blurs the boundaries between Learning, Teaching and Living.

Curriculum: 6 years: 2 sem. (introduction), 6 sem. (upper courses) & 2 sem. (thesis)
LOS NINOS EN LA CIUDAD

Welcoming party at Tia Marcela’s House
the kids
the food
the music
the wine
Uncle Guillermo
Mauricio, Milton, Carolina
the wooden house
Andres’ Childhood memories

design studios: observation - action - form

Project assignments are not given in the form pre-selected programs / commissions (as in most schools) but instead these emerge from the students observations of the city and the activities of the citizens in space...

ARCHITECTURAL WORKSHOPS (design studios)

Taller 1 & 2 (introduction to architectural design)

goal: to introduce and instruct the student on how to access the field of observation.
methodology: observation and practice of process- from conception to realization of a project.
act and form: study and practice of relationships between physical tangible dimensions of a project and the initial conception of a determined space.
  a. Observation or study of act and form.
  b. Urbanism or study of the city.
  c. Space or study of “la plastica” plastic arts.
  d. Construction or study of the techniques.
  e. Form (elaboration of individual projects)
Project assignments are not given in the form pre-selected programs / commissions (as in most schools) but instead these emerge from the students' observations of the city and the activities of the citizens in space...

design studios: observation - action - form

Outline Introduction to Architectural Design

- To introduce and instruct the student on how to access the field of architectural observation.
- Methodology: design process from the initial conception to realization of a space.
- Observation of the processes of transformation between physical dimensions of a space and the initial conception of a determined space.

Textbook: Architectural Workshops (design studies)

a. Observation and study of actual cities.

b. Observation and study of the city.

c. Observation and study of urbanism or of the processes of transformation.

d. Observation and study of the techniques.

e. Form (elaboration of individual projects)
EL MERCADO

“the city of Valparaiso and the Open City serve as our laboratories to study and develop architectural projects.”  A. Cruz

pedagogy:

Architectural education is explored as the most comprehensive general education possible. Life, School and Work become an inseparable quest that blurs the boundaries between Learning, Teaching and Living

curriculum:

6 years: 2 sem. (introduction), 8 sem. (upper courses) & 2 sem. (thesis)
content:

Through readings and exercises, students study, understand and practice the relationships between mathematics, geometry, physics and the physical dimensions of the human body and architectural form. Concepts of proportions, equilibrium, symmetry/asymmetry, static and kinetics are instrumental to the projects' conception and elaboration.

Exercise:

Through observations and measurements of the habitable urban open, students study and produce projects that explore the particular relationships of architecture to issues of size (scale) and distance (near/far) as they pertain to: city, architectural project & human body.
Walking through Valparaíso

Taller Arquitectonico 3 & 4

content:
through readings and exercises, students study, understand and practice the relationships between mathematics / geometry / physics and the physical dimensions of the human body and architectural form. Concepts of proportions, equilibrium, symmetry / asymmetry, static and kinetics are fundamental to the projects’ conception and elaboration.

Taller Arquitectonico 5 & 6

content:
through observations and measurements of the habitable urban space, students study and produce projects that explore the particular relationships of architecture to issues of size (scale) and distance (near / far) as they pertain to: city, architectural project & human body
through graphic exercises students search "introspectively" at what they have studied and are studying, the goal is to formulate a more complex and holistic understanding of the work they have produced and the relationships of the various classes they have completed.

In these workshops students also produce drawings and graphics to measure the "traversals" (poetic journeys / crossings) documenting specific relationships: the extension journey with relation to the continent, the duration with relation to the length of a day, the acts and projects with relation to their placements, the relation of these to the urban and geographic landscapes.
through graphic exercises students search “introspectively” at what they have studied and are studying. the goal is to formulate a more complex and holistic understanding of the work they have produced and the relationships of the various classes they have completed.

in these workshops students also produce drawings and graphics to measure the “travesias” (poetic journeys / crossings) documenting specific relationships:

- the extension journey with relation to the continent.
- the duration with relation to the length of a day.
- the acts and projects with relation to their placement.
- the relation of these to the urban and geographic landscapes.
architecture as scientific research

"Scientific research two alternating processes:
1st: "diurnal science," is science that follows linear processes
connecting established principles with observable phenomena
(uncommon in real world).
2nd: "nocturnal science," complements the orderly steps
of logic by overlapping the verifiable with the intuitive principles
of the mysterious and confused zones of our reality"

Francois Jacob (as quoted by Perez-Gyarcia)

Taller Arquitectonico 9 & 10

content:
through the close study of an important "landmark" building in Valparaiso, the
students develop a project that responds to questions raised about single tasks,
orientation, program and location,
other exercises during these workshops include:
- lecture / presentation of a large project by a "great architect",
- observation of other school projects from 1st to 6th year students,
- performance or declamation of a poem and drawings of the body postures.
Taller Arquitectonico 9 & 10

content: through the close study of an important ‘landmark’ building in Valparaiso, the students develop a project that responds to questions raised about scale (size), orientation, program and location.

other exercises during these workshops include:
- lecture / presentation of a large project by a ‘great architect’.
- observation of other school projects from 1st to 6th year students.
- performance or recitation of a poem and drawings of the body postures.

architecture as scientific research

“scientific research two alternating processes:
1st- ‘diurnal science,” is science that follows linear process connecting established principles with observable phenomena (uncommon in real world).
2nd- ‘nocturnal science,’ complements the orderly steps of logic by overlapping the verifiable with the intuitive principles of the mysterious and confused zones of our reality”

Francois Jacob (as quoted by Perez-Oyarzun)
A group project is developed during these last two semesters of school. The project is presented through drawings and text. Through the creation of this project, the students are supposed to formulate a theory for citing (locating) a building.

"Locating a reality of citing is the preliminary act of an Architect." - Bernardt Breuer

Open City is a center for "factual-theoretical" experiments, it is a laboratory where new architectural elements are explored.

Hospederia del Errante is an ongoing project of investigation (construction) through which five points are under study:

1. The gradation of light through a lattice as a technical-architectural element.
2. The influence of aerodynamic wind currents which are quite prevalent in this location. These wind forces are used in form generation, through wind tunnel testing and cooling system.
3. The plastic performance of the interior of the structure through color filters which qualify each individual interior facade.
4. The conception of an architecture of parts and elements, each with a certain level of autonomy. These elements constitute the architectural envelope and support formally their role.
5. The concept of "Open City" with program responds to an activity of encounter and contemplative leisure. It is not a terrace nor is it a socialistic space.

Information from grant application to FONDECYT-science, a Chilean Federal Agency for the development of...
Taller Arquitectonico 11 & 12

content:
A group project is developed during these last two semesters of school. The project is presented through drawings and text. Through the creation of this project the students are supposed to formulate a theory for citing (locating) a building.

"formulating a theory of citing is the primordial act of an Architect."
Dean Salvador Saar, 1999

Hospederia del Errante is an ongoing project of investigation (construction) through which five points are under study:

1. the gradation of light through a lattice as a technical-architectural element.
2. the influence of aerodynamic wind currents which are quite prevalent in this location. These wind forces are used as form generators (though wind tunnel testing) and cooling system.
3. the ‘chromatic temperatures’ of the interior of the structure through color filters which qualify each individual interior facade.
4. the conception of an architecture of parts and elements, each with a certain lever of autonomy. These elements constitute the architectural envelope and express formally their role.
5. the concept of “Hospederia” which program responds to an activity of encounter and contemplative leisure. It is not a house nor is it a ecclesiastic space.

(grant application to FONDECYT- a Chilean Agency for the Development of Science, 1999)
"to provoke beauty through the use of material is to take them to the limits of their physical condition, and only from there can they express their full magnitude: i.e. the wood that bends, the stone that is suspended to generate a sense of levity."

Cazu Zegers Garcia

"It is understood that architecture does not reach its true meaning until it is constructed... through material means and departing from an idea, architecture can only be verified in space."

Zegers Garcia

"Architects are those that can 'read' from life and know how to construct the face (skin) that place has" A. G. C.
Tomb stones of two of the Founders (Vial and Baeza) at Open City

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“materials serve to humanize life through their beauty”

Cazu Zegers Garcia
CONSTRUCCION ARQUITECTURA (construction, materials and structures)

- measurements of figures and bodies on land:
  - parameters, areas, volumes, densities and weights
  - description of concepts and analysis of materials used:
    - compression, tension, traction, deflection: shear, buckling and torsion
  - study of a historically important work of architecture from a structural perspective
  - processes of impression of form onto materials and constructive elements
  - construction as coordinated process from initial intention to realization and final montage
  - study of traditional construction methods from bibliographic material and direct observation of projects damaged by earthquakes
  - construction and energy demands (natural and artificial systems)

In preparation for (and during) the tour, students are required (in groups) to:
- manage the flow of money, the intake of food, manage a balanced nutritional value, study and monitor the general health and conditioning of participants,
- study and implement the appropriate wear for the hikes, and study the physical geography and climatic conditions of their trajectory.

(economist, nutrition experts, epidemiologists, professional elites and geographers are consulted)
ARCHITECTURAL CONSTRUCTION

Silence

CONSTRUCCION ARQUITECTURA (construction, materials and structures)

- measurements of figures and bodies on land: perimeters, areas, volumes, densities and weights
- description of concepts and analysis through material tests) of: compression, tension, traction, deflection: shear, buckling and torsion
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CULTURA DEL CUERPO (the culture of the body)

This course is founded under the premise and assertion that the body's vitality and disposition play an important role in the process of direct and sustained observation of the city, as demanded by the practice of the design workshops in this school. At the same time the physical activity practices (individually or collectively) allow each and everyone to experience a special way of occupying space.

3 distinct practices:
- conventional practices of sports
- creation of new games or performances that force an unconventional way of using the body
- participation in inter-mural competitions.
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3 distinct practices:

- conventional practice of sports.
- creation of ‘new games’ or performances that force an unconventional way of using the body.
- participation in inter-mural competitions.
the entire student body and faculty participate in this uninterrupted and evolving class every semester through which the School elaborates a unique point of view about the American continent. This point of view is constantly revised as it accepts indications from various fields: history, human geography, etc.

"To invent the individual and the collective as a condition is to invent the origin of the light of custom and happening" A. Cruz

"The class is an act of inventory, these are workshops of that study and take inventory of the school, we 'invent' that we do inventory." A. Cruz (Introduction to Taller America + Ameridea)

"History proposes a discourse, perhaps not the real one, the Taller America asks how are we to interpret the geographic extension of our continent."

Major themes of this workshop are:
- The origin of America as a finding, not as a discovery.
- The Hispanic and the American legacies: the "Latinity of America".
- The American Epic: Conquers of the Discovery and Colonization.
TALLER AMEREIDA

Second visit to Universidad Catolica de Santiago
Second meeting with Dean Perez-Oyarzun
Second day researching at Library

TALLER AMEREIDA:
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Architectural Presentation (History)

I. The study of the great Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio through the 'reviving' of the drawings made by the professor during a year-long study in Italy of Palladio's work. These drawings and observations contained in the 're-collected' by the students of each class.

II. The systematic understanding of form in architecture through the direct study of 30 works by great 20th-century architects. Models and schematic drawings are made of these works in various stages of their development.

III. The study of extensive pre-Columbian architecture, art and socio-political history in the American continent.

IV. The study of historical urban and rural constructions in relationship to the colonization and development of the Latin-American Cities (from colonization to the present).

V. The study of other forms of art in which architecture is present as art:

- Study of medieval Europe from evangelical codices and contemporary road systems.
- Study of world cinema (German expressionism).

All these specific studies are presented as integral artistic manifestations simultaneously developed during social, political, economic and technological revolutions in history.
PRESENTACION ARQUITECTURA (HISTORY)

National Museum of Arts
Amereida Paladio Installation

Presentacion Arquitectura /Architectural Presentation (History)

I- the study of the great renaissance architect Andrea Palladio through the 'revisiting' of the drawings made by the professor during a year long study (in Italy) of Palladio's work: these drawings and observations contained in the 're-collections' of the professor are redrawn and reinterpreted by the students of each class.
II- the systematic understanding of form in architecture through the direct study of 30 works by great 20th century architect (models and schematic drawings are made of these works in various stages of their development.
III- extensive pre-Columbian architecture, art and socio-political history in the American continent.
IV- the study of historical urban and rural constructions in relationship to the colonization and development of the Latin-American Cities (from colonization to the present)

all these specific studies are presented as integral artistic manifestations simultaneously developed during social, political, economic and technological developments in history.
Ciudad Abierta / Open City (Cooperative) - the school does not attempt to change life itself (to construct a utopia) but to change our (individual) lives by consciously searching for the poetic in the quotidian; that which we do every day.*

- 200 hectares (hectareas) of sandy dunes and cost in Ritoque, Chile - 30km north of Valparaíso. Founded in 1969 as a city ruled by poetry.
- place where the school learns, constructs and resides.
- 25-30 ephemeral constructions (Hospederías) made of brick, wood, concrete and refugee materials.

Open City is a center for "lactual-theoretical" experiments, it is a laboratory where new architectural elements are explored.

"the labor that gives form to desire takes from desire its form"
Italo Calvino, Invisible Cities
CIUDAD ABIERTA / OPEN CITY

Lunch at Open City with Professors and Founders
bread - wine - food - conversation

Ciudad Abierta / Open City  (a Cooperative)
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Iommi
Hospederias / Guest-Lodge

These constructions are "responses to the basic principle of existence: to reside to be in the world, to be one with the world, it is not property (does not belong) but is free and opens itself, it receives and gives lodging."

There is no (one) client, no conventional program and the commissions are formulated through the intervention of the students and professors guided by poets that make the 'readings' of the specific site and from there 'interpret' the activities that will transpire on each specific construction.

Conversations with Ricardo Landa...
Third visit to Ciudad Abierta
coffee - bread - conversation with Ricardo Lange
at Hospederia de los Disenos

Hospederias / Guest-Lodge
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conversations with Ricardo Lange, 1999

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activities that will transpire on each specific construction.
Travesias are intended as journeys in search for the poetic within our American Landscape.

Travesias, as a process of discovery, have been a part of the teaching and learning experience at the Open City School since 1994. Each year, the school organizes two annual Travesias (journeys) for students, teachers, and the broader community. These journeys are characterized by a deep exploration of the American landscape, focusing on the rich and diverse conditions found throughout the continent. The poetic act of creating a physical space through direct participation and collaboration is then realized as a construction, a poetic exploration of the potential found in the richness of the American condition.

The poetic act emerges from a combination of planning, collaboration, traveling, and preparing a way of living together. Each Travesia culminates in a constructed gift, a physical expression of the ongoing research of the Open City School and its commitment to the poetic exploration of the American landscape.
TRAVESIAS

Facultad de Arquitectura visit and lunch with Professors;
David Jolly
Ricardo Lange
Mauricio Puentes
Rodrigo Saavedra

Travesias 1984-'99 Since 1984 the school has incorporated an annual Travesia (poetic journey) where the whole school participates for planning, preparing, traveling and constructing a structure (a gift) which is how every single Travesia culminates. This direct and poetic exploration of the potential found in the rich and diverse condition of the American continent, serves as basis for the ongoing research of the Open City School.

"Travesias are intended as journeys in "search for the poetic with in our American Landscape." G. Iommi, 1991

- Travesia '65 Amereida journey-crossing = exploration of the interior of America myth (found not discovered) process, voyage, experience, poetic act, site specific installation projects, gift <learning through the making and experiencing a way of living life> all Travesia culminates in a construction / a poetic act emerges
HOSPEDERIA DE LA ENTRADA
EL CAMINO SE HACE AL ANDAR
The images and words contained in these collages have been my tools to understand and process those things that I have found while ‘re-searching’ this poetic place. I hope that the work that emerged from my experience will serve as ‘material proof’ of the inspirational potential that this place holds and through the ideas and philosophy that inspired them, each one of us will pause and reconsider how we see, conceptualize and construct as architects.
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Note: All Drawings / Collages were made by the Author