BUILDING EXCHANGE and MULTIPLICITY
into HOUSING for the ELDERLY:
an exercise in synthesizing associative references

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B.I.D. University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada. 1981

Submitted to the Department of Architecture in partial fulfillment
of the degree Master of Architecture
at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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to Bill
...and Chris

thankyou

Maurice Smith
Tom Chastain
Pierre Leclerc
... and mum.
ABSTRACT

Building Exchange and Multiplicity into Housing for the Elderly: an exercise in synthesizing associative references

by Julia A. Campbell

Submitted to the Department of Architecture on January 15 1988
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The particular subject of this thesis is Housing for the Elderly. The intention is to propose an architecture which springs from an alternative attitude towards housing the elderly... an attitude which purports that multiplicity and exchange are the elements crucial to one's well-being; in contrast to the current paradigm within the world of planning for the elderly... one of segregation, classification and singularity.

With a little license, I call this a research and design thesis, as it has been difficult to define. As a 'research' paper, it entails the use of a particular method of selecting, understanding, and (finally) using a range of references in order to distill from them some underlying principles of form. Yet unlike a true research thesis, it is loosely structured and left open-ended... intentionally so! The 'design' work provides the testing ground for the principles gleaned from those references. It also allows me the opportunity to exercise myself in synthesizing and arranging architecture. Yet as a design thesis, the work is only the start of an architecture process... far from being complete. In essence, the thesis is an endeavour in knowing a little more about the 'dancing' between referencing and designing.

Thesis supervisor: Thomas Chastain
Title: Lecturer
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ........................................... 3
Introduction ...................................... 7
the Method of Working. ......................... 11

Transformation no. 1:
analysis ........................................ 15
intentions ....................................... 17
references ...................................... 19
the transformation .............................. 45
summary ....................................... 53

Transformation no. 2:
analysis .......................................... 55
intentions ....................................... 57
references ...................................... 59
the transformation .............................. 85

Mission Hill Design
introduction ...................................... 95
analysis .......................................... 97
intentions ....................................... 105
references ...................................... 107
the design ...................................... 119

Afterword .................................... 133
Bibliography .................................. 139
PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF STUDY:
Housing to Accommodate Variabilities and Change in the Process of Aging: An Analysis and Recommendations.

Background

Within the last decade, "environments for the elderly" have proliferated across North America in response to a foreseen shortage of housing for the increasing number of elderly in our society. The provision of habitat for the elderly is no longer considered a social problem, but now a social responsibility, an integral component of the community. Many behavioral studies of the elderly in their environments are now giving us information that better enables us, as planners and designers, to conceive of more qualitative and enriching habitat which contribute to their "well-being and life satisfaction".

To date, concepts behind housing for the elderly have been approached in terms of specialization and segregation. Individuals, categorized according to their physical status or their perceived need for social integration, safety, or their economic need, are offered the environment which specifically addresses their defined condition. As their capacity changes throughout the inevitable process of aging, the elderly person is moved to another "more suitable" specialized environment. It becomes evident, in light of emerging research, that housing concepts based on specialization and segregation may be, in fact, inappropriate.

Very briefly, recent studies have concluded:
1) people, especially as they grow older, prefer to remain in their familiar, established, socially integrated environments.
2) As age increases, the need for services increases. The physical attributes of the habitat itself may now render delivery of services difficult, and appropriate activities unavailable or impossible.
3) The standard recommendation of moving the elderly person from one environment to the "next" more service-oriented environment has a deleterious effect on that person: hardships in the severing of established social patterns and the forced development of new contacts, the psychological trauma of this readjustment, and physical deterioration which sometimes occurs as a result of an inability to adjust to the new surroundings. Of major importance too, is the resultant financial cost incurred to all involved in this relocation process.

These facts point to a necessary reevaluation of current concepts in designing housing for aging. It is apparent that elderly people should be allowed the comfort and security of remaining in their chosen and familiar retirement setting throughout their last years. Therefore it is the setting itself which must adapt, change and provide for the evolving needs of each of its inhabitants.

It is my intent to study exactly how a concept of housing design to accommodate change may best be actualized within the contexts of existing and future housing for aging.

Objective

To explore ways in which residential environments might be better conceived and designed to accommodate the process of aging.

Proposed Work Plan

FOCUS: To develop ways of testing the habitability of a range of existing and designed residential settings to meet the challenging needs of aging populations.

METHODOLOGY: Basework: a) Using existing information, determine the variabilities in function and needs relative to housing, across a population of adults.
b) Using existing research, explore the changes in health and capacity that take place over time in the elderly population.

INTRODUCTION

The subject of this thesis began as a studies proposal to CMHC (Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation; the Canadian equivalent to US' HUD)... which resulted in the much appreciated scholarship that I've held throughout my stay at MIT. The proposal was entitled Housing to Accommodate Variability and Change in the Process of Aging ...and sprang from an interest in finding alternative concepts for taking care of the elderly.

I have come to believe more and more strongly (especially since being here at MIT) that "housing for the elderly" should, in fact, be no different than "housing" (for anyone!)... that what makes a good living environment is the accommodation for a range of human experience and expression- - both social and sensory.

If there must be housing for the elderly (the very notion of it! infers separation from the normal full range of living experiences), association and exchange with the larger outside world is more important than ever. The scope of social and sensory experience within that housing environment plays an even larger role in creating a positive living situation. By moving into an age segregated, isolated environment (or from one to another), patterns and continuities that ensure one's sense of place, worth, identity and stability, are immediately and profoundly altered. Especially amongst elderlies, the disorientation that results from this disruption of life-long established continuities can have an extremely debilitating effect on physical and mental health.

Therefore it is crucial to bring a more holistic attitude into housing for the elderly. It is of critical importance to rebuild those continuities into the daily lives and social fabric within an environment of elderlies. This is best done by allowing for a range of associations, and multiple opportunities for exchange; from private individual to the larger community... hence ensuring the full gamut of personal, social, physical and sensory experiences.
All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.

As, first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
And then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then the soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.
(Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, II.viii.)

No one stage in the life cycle is self-sufficient.

People need support and confirmation from people who have reached a different stage in the life cycle, at the same time that they also need support from people who are at the same stage as they are themselves.

However, the needs which generate separation tend to overwhelm the need for mixture. Present housing patterns tend to keep different types of households segregated from each other. There are vast areas of two-bedroom houses, other areas of studio and one-bedroom apartments, other areas of three- and four-bedroom houses. This means that we have corresponding areas of single people, couples, and small families with children, segregated by type.

The effects of household segregation are profound. In the pattern *life cycle* (26), we have suggested that normal growth through the stages of life requires contact, at each stage, with people and institutions from all the other ages of man. Such contact is completely foiled if the housing mix in one's neighborhood is skewed toward one or two stages only. On the other hand, when the balance of life cycles is well related to the kinds of housing that are available in a neighborhood, the possibilities for contact become concrete. Each person can find in the face-to-face life of his neighborhood at least passing contact with people from every stage of life. Teenagers see young couples, old people watch the very young, people living alone draw sustenance from large families, youngsters look to the middle-aged for models, and so on: it is all a medium through which people feel their way through life.

... a real community provides, in full, for the balance of human experience and human life—*community of 7000* (12). To a lesser extent, a good neighborhood will do the same—*identifiable neighborhood* (14). To fulfill this promise, communities and neighborhoods must have the range of things which life can need, so that a person can experience the full breadth and depth of life in his community.

"Life is not a walk across an open field" —
Russian proverb.
What I am advocating is a more inclusive and associative architecture... as distinct from the normal singular, exclusive and segregated elderly paradigm. By 'inclusive' and 'associative', I envision a housing environment that, for example:

> could also house families, other age groups and types...
> is an integral and worthy part of the larger neighbourhood/community...
> is physically integral with the landscape and/or surrounding physical context...
> provides the 'places' for a wide range of types and sizes of social exchange within the complex, both inside and out-of-doors...
> has 'slack' built into it so that as changes in needs or programming occur, they can be physically accommodated with minimal disruption to anyone's living patterns...
> etc. etc.

Consequently, the focus of this work is to know about... and design for...

exchange
multiplicity
and associative continuity.

not much of that here!
a good forest... the edge of the sea... the ascent of a mountain...
all have the range of sizes, creating a multiplicity of territories...
"going into St Mark's Plaza... (in Venice)... is like doing... it's a good thing..."... associations with the full range of sizes from
smallest unit... through to larger and larger...

You can't really learn something until you half-know it.

Then write:

"you are aware of a continuity..."
"...you feel a release from the usual "unpredictable" perceptual response..."
"...that is elicited from the environment here...
"...continuities that make processes understandable..."
"...cues apply to others..."

"...in the release comes out the knowing..."
"...that something are at work...

MKS
The METHOD of WORKING

A personal interest of mine in entering this work has been to explore in a more rigorous and disciplined manner, the way one's mind works in selecting and transforming images and references as an integral part of the design process. One can know about the qualities of the world, (or of architecture), through an understanding of form. We all have our own multitude of experiences in this same world of form... and as architects, (or painters, musicians, or fortune cookie makers!) draw on these experiences as reference in assembling form in new ways. This transformation of form into new arrangements is the creative act.

But what is the nature of this? What can one know about references... and on what basis can one evaluate their relevance to the new task at hand? That postcard of a Vermeer painting at my desk is there because it's inspiring in some way as to the quality of a modern streets' edge that I'm working on... but how to know more about it than just 'qualities'...? Just as, within the music I choose to listen to or the painting I'm doing concurrently, there are patterns of form behavior that may be similarly applicable to architectural form-making. It's this laterally associative way of working with references... in a number of different, yet related modes... that I will explore in a more exacting manner.

For the most part, what has governed the selection of references here were the 'topics': exchange, multiplicity, associative continuity. By looking at places, paintings, music, poetry...even socio-cultural patterns, or games old men play on a summer afternoon!... one finds within, principles of behaviour that transcend the particular form. In fact by looking at such a range of references and describing the behavior of the formal qualities, one can

a) know more about that reference... what it's 'doing'

b) gain a greater understanding of (for example) particular aspects of exchange.

The method in this thesis has been to select and analyze a variety of references; chosen for their relevance to the aforementioned 'topics' (or perhaps on the
basis of more remote or abstract lateral associations ... be it a similarity in form, quality of place, or simple curiosity! In every case though, surprisingly to me, there was always something to be found that had some bearing on the work). Each analysis led to series of diagrams addressing the particular behaviour of the formal attributes of the reference.

The modus operandi has been to work through brief design exercises of elderly housing projects. The first two are transformations of existing schemes (both in Massachussetts: one a semi-rural, the other an urban context.). These transformation exercises allowed the opportunity to analyze the existing attitude and form and then work against it, in order to isolate the problematic aspects and define an alternative (hopefully, more appropriate) attitude and form. The last exercise is a fully new design on a site in Mission Hill (Boston). After each design exercise, I made similar 'form diagrams' of the new design, in an effort to illustrate how exchange and associative continuities are really built into the designs.

In effect, the thesis is serving two agendas:

a) a synthesis and continued exploration of my MIT learnings & workings
b) the proposal of an alternative attitude and form of Housing for the Elderly.

The exchange between these two realms of the work is as a dialogue: one informs the other, and vice versa. Each builds on the other, and at the same time, each is perceived & pursued independently. Exchange is like that.
Current proposal for Dalton:
Axonometric
TRANSFORMATION No. 1  Housing for the Elderly
Dalton, Massachusetts

Existing Analysis

The first transformation is based on a project financed by the Mass. Department of Community Affairs, currently under construction on a semi-rural site in Dalton, Mass. The site is lightly tree'd, and to its south, slopes down gently to a creek and woods. It consists of three strips of rowhouses flanking a restored 19th century farmhouse. The rowhouses each contain a number of self-sufficient units on both upper and lower levels...served by a walkway running the full length of each building. The farmhouse has been modified into the communal centre, housing a dining hall, laundry, games rooms, etc.
walkway in Beynac alongside la Dordogne, France

entrance stoop along any road! in Portugal

"Deserted Salmon", a journey to the Dordogne.

Empathy: after all they had the opportunity to see the country where it was still relatively unspoiled. However, we'll stretch a point for those too old or too sickly to mount a bicycle and let them ride the shuttle buses.

I cannot foresee complaints. The motorized tourist, reluctant to give up the old way, will complain that they can't see enough through the parks. But there is no reason, in fact, to see more on one's own than the motorized tourist can in a hundred miles. Bicycles to ride than the motorized tourist can in two weeks than try to race through in a shuttle trip in two weeks than try to race through in a shuttle trip in two weeks than try to race through a shuttle trip in two weeks than try to race through a shuttle trip in two weeks than try to race through a shuttle trip in two weeks than try to race through a shuttle trip.

Those who are familiar with both modes of travel know that this is true the rest have only to make the experiment to discover the same such for themselves.

They will complain of physical hardships, these sons of the pioneers. Not for long, once they realize that the pleasures of actually operating their own limbs and senses in a natural environment, voluntarily move, will compare comfort of crossing back into a car they may right object to returning to desk and office and that it's all lies on Moby Dick Circles. The lives of mind may be handled—which means hope for us all.

"...at the second stop...

"... no more new roads in national parks."

Deserted salmon, a journey to the Dordogne.
Transformation Intentions

A more integrating attitude in approaching this project begs a real inclusive gesture to be associative with the natural landscape surrounding this site. Also, by providing a greater range of living options (i.e., rowhouses and individual housing arrangements, a congregate house... thus accommodating changes in independent living abilities) the effort is then to focus on the opportunities for exchange within the setting... the 'collective places'.

Therefore, the topics through which the references will be generated are:

1) Landscape Association
2) Associative Public/Private Definitions
Sa Francesco

- emergence of landscape at larger / larger sizes...

- landscape "claimed" at range of sizes within "containment"

- church acts as counterpoint to contain large place

more / more contained landscape.
The References

ASSISI, Italy
Just to get started!...the first place that comes to mind regarding Landscape Association is Assisi. In this town, up in the Umbrian hills, there is a real magic...(perhaps it has something to do with St. Francis having been so tuned-in to nature); one is aware of a sense of 'place'...you are in a town square, or a little stone-stepped streetspace...and at the same time you are aware of this incredible landscape.
The en combines a house with the nature surrounding it. It is a device which links a house with nature. It is often said that a Japanese house forms an integral part of nature; the en is a medium by which a house melts into nature.

In *Fate of Genji* (1001-14 A.D.), Japan’s oldest novel, there are scenes in which court nobles, seated on the en, viewed the harvest moon, or flowers, or snow, or listened to the songs of insects in autumn, and indulged in some rapturous hours of poetical evocation. The fact that such communication with nature took place in the en is symbolic of the role of the en as a link between the house and nature. The court nobles of those days composed poems there and played such stringed instruments as the biwa.

Not only aristocracy and warriors but also commoners lived in houses which had ens. Farmhouses and the houses of merchants also had ens. In an agricultural community, the en was a place where people chatted with their neighbors — and they did so far more often in the en, the border space between the inside and outside of the house, than in the living room.

The average Japanese knows from experience how very much the en contributes to the coziness of a house — and therefore how uncomfortable a house can be without one. The en regulates the take of sunlight to the house. When rain is accompanied by strong winds, the en gets wet but the rain rarely reaches the house. On summer days, you can open the doors and windows. The average Japanese knows how very much the en contributes to the coziness of a house — and therefore how uncomfortable a house can be without one. The en regulates the take of sunlight to the house. When rain is accompanied by strong winds, the en gets wet but the rain rarely reaches the house. On summer days, you can open the doors and windows.
ENGAWA is a Japanese term denoting "the grey zone" between inside and outside...the house and nature. It is a transitional edge zone which integrates building and landscape by making this zone a 'place' (or series of places). There are two forms of Engawa:

1) a layering which is, in effect, a gradual sequential transition from building to nature
2) exchange of architectural and nature's elements, creating a spatial bouncing back & forth in alternation.
Village des Crozes from across le Tam, France
le VILLAGE des CROZES in the Gorge du Tarn, France, is a small gathering of dwellings, the scale of which is pertinent to Dalton. The form of the village is really an intensification of the generous landscape... terracing up the benchland along the river, its back nestled into the wall of the gorge; this aggregation of stone walls, stepped paths and buildings with shale roofs is physically part of, and truly associative with its context.
In looking at the arrangements of its forms, one can know more about the layering and alternation that is building direct exchange with the landscape. In plan, the deployment and displacement of buildings creates containment territories within the architecture; at the same time, reinforcing a connection with the landscape.

![Diagram 1](image)

![Diagram 2](image)

![Diagram 3](image)

- a displaced object makes a “stop” in packed field.
  minimal, landscape exchange.

- b displacement makes the containment at its own scale...
  and alternating exchange with landscape at larger scale.
VILLAGE

CROZES-FRANCE

- open - mood landscape associated
- packed - controlled, formalized landscape, association

CROZES-FRANCE

- direct dimensional exchange of building open = continuity

entire dimension of containment in landscape can be directly experienced - associate with larger landscape.
reciprocal exchange:
- direct dimensional alternation
  between built
  open
  ...one is reverse, of other.

completion of containment:
(a) closed corners = maximum containment;
minimum association with outside world.

(b) open corners = definition of control;
but with max. association with outside world.

continuity of exchange: landscape/built:
- additive layers of non-built
  sequential
  (or vice versa)

- incremental containment:
  (each layer are also
  associative with
  larger ones)
the Tree in the Centre of the Square

le Cafe on the plaza

the secluded corner of the plaza

A range of collective places

Collective Places

A range of sizes & privacy's

From very public to quiet away

Breakdown of distinguishable "Collective Places"
COLLONGES la ROUGE is another French village somewhat larger than le Village des Crozes, and demonstrating a more sophisticated spatial access system. What interests me here is the village plaza: not just any simple little 'square', but in fact an aggregation of places rich in range of sizes and degree of public-ness... from open public centre, to quiet and away. And all these places are part of the same large collective place.

1. **Associative containments:**
   - range of collective within collective places.
   - range of sizes: privacies are within public places part of associative.

2. **(Associative) definitions of containment:**
   - partial definition is most open.
   - complete definition is most private.

3. **Compositional stability of containment:**
   - dimensional displacement makes "stop" defines containment.
   - triangle of dimensions + differential makes balanced & stable containment.
   - central point object is control point of autonomous space (at scale of isolated containment).
4. Major direction sequence

2. Controlling elements of major Place:
   - disused dimensions act as 'stop' in large main colonnade
   - tree at dead centre is major stable element
   - more complete definition leads to more private
   - partial definition = public.

Town square in Colleoni, Le Rose. Oct 9
The system of movement through these places works in a consistent way... establishing a **continuity of access**. Public movement is in the major direction... associative with the direction of the landscape, and village form organization. A territorial place within the access, (a STOP along the GO) is gained by a perpendicular move off of and adjacent to the major direction... akin to the Zen notion of standing aside to let the force flow past.

![Diagram 1](image1)

**Continuity of registrational edge:**

- Continuous edge (continuity) is minimum territorial → mostly direct access
- Displaced peak in continuous edge makes shift in registration → shift in access.
- Displaced edge is spatial shift, setting up a core territorial definition.

![Diagram 2](image2)

**Associative registration edge:**

- Intensification of most dominant registrational edge in containment.

![Diagram 3](image3)

**Continuity of access:**

- Territorial layering
- Private semiprivate entries associative with major direction... with spatial lateral territory
- Major public entries are frontal perpendicular to normal direction... spatial

![Diagram 4](image4)

**Associative containment:**

- Plaza has open corner to landscape... as well as closed corners contained within peaked built world.
- Layering of terraces intensifying transition connection to landscape.
Gyorgy Kepes. Nature Patina

"Each has its own rules: behavior. Continuity.

1) Continuious surface builds the direction.
2) Calligraphy builds the intensification.
3) Colour builds the containment.

Directional alternations of light-dark.

Directional field built by continuous surface stuff.

Look up: The New Landscape"
a KEPES PAINTING is like a real landscape. It contains a whole world of light and shadows... large expanses and intimate niches... active tense packings and serene refuges. If all buildings could be like a Kepes painting...!

This wide range of qualities within a single extraordinary painting is reason enough to incite further looking, however I will emphasize first that (as with any of these references) the intention behind the analysis is to know more about the form of the piece. As to the 'quality' or 'essence' of the painting (or any of these references!) suffice to say that I have not found a way to describe such things.

> If whatever a painting is could be described with words... there wouldn't be a painting, or a need for painting. Susanne Langer

This particular painting is composed of three separate systems...as a collage.

1) continuous surface texture (of sand)
2) colour (as distinct from monochromatic ground)
3) calligraphy

By separating and analyzing the form and behavior of each, one finds: direction, containment, continuities and exchanges...both within each system, and through interaction between the systems. It is this exchange and intensification that gives such range and variety. Just as one finds out in the real landscape.
direct alternative
reciprocal exchanges (see other A's)

extended displacement exchange

smaller definitions within larger ones

KEFES Painting
exchange iterations built thin

K-dimensional system

KEFES Painting
containment, as built by creator

inhomogeneous outside containment is 'in', 'out'

containment

thats with Maurice

1987

that everything reasonable has both 'stop' & 'go' inherent

constraint! direction

... places, paintings, music, poetry
re:

Associated Public Definitions

Dimensional Continuity:

- systems & sizes build a range of definitions by:
  - additive: & direct extension 1:1
  - displaced aggregations
- aggregation of sizes allows for smaller territorial sizes within dimensional larger ones.

Directional Containment:

- displacement At makes 'step' smaller contextual containment.
- intensified registration edge is associative & directional displacement B is 'go'
Aggregation of intensification systems:
- Territorial intensification in itself from space within the periphery vertical.
- Fractal behaviour at range of zones in varying forms.
- Each size system recognizes & builds the directional field.
- Is built out of perpendicular direction, gains smaller territory off major direction.
entrance stoops parallel with major access

alley into collective court and gardens

alternating garden terraces and houses
GORGE du TARN, France

A typical aggregation of dwellings along the gorge is organized as a lineal packing. The major access runs parallel with the terrain and river...often with alternating voids in the packing, affording a view of the river down beyond. All spatial territories (gardens, stoops, collective entrance alleys) are also parallel with this direction; establishing real directional continuity. This adjacent layering of territories provides semi-public/private transition zones that are associative with the public access.
typical continuous row of individual dwellings

layers of screens & edge intensifications

lateral zone of exchange within screen layer

Oak Haven: Matthews' Vineyard
- open scene from a deck... porches are actually:
- acting as observation gallery
- edge intensifications
- such public private territory as collective place.
In looking now at directional access systems...and the associative transition zones that may or may not be gained in moving from public to private, the cottages in Oak Bluffs, Martha's Vineyard (Mass.) provide an example of Discontinuity of access that is relevant to the Dalton transformation. This break in continuity establishes an effect of autonomy. The house, although it is part of a larger field, is also an independent object. This autonomy is an important element in the form of single housing in North America...imparting a particular sense of "one's own private home".

Here though, at least the porch system sets up some associative territory.
territorial continuous wall surface

- Territory claimed at front of house allows for more privacy.
- Houses fully accessible with street; not isolated. Laying out path to street direction allows suitable, but always accessible with street.
- Various configurations of screen additively varying to make territory.
- Extension built out. "L" opening in section: more content.
- "L" containment most enclosed: most private.
- Laying inside for range of privacy.
AYERON, France

In an attempt to understand more about the semi public/private territories claimed at the entrance to a dwelling, this reference is an opposite to Oak Bluffs. Here, layering of zones adjacent to the major access direction assures direct association with the public realm. In fact there is NO demarcation of independant form acting in an isolated manner...no break in a virtually continuous wall surface; so that the street reads almost as a single homogeneous form.
Paul Klee, Elected Place

some thoughts about this whole thing...

"I feel组织领导 that it is all so dull. This really not the 'impressions' that I'd planned it to be. But rather, the work is more on the dramatic side of the brain. I'm learning a lot of what it's going to be like of painting that architecture, music, poetry etc...

But only that...

And of fact, what really interests me about these things, doesn't seem to be that visible at all. Suddenly seem longer words more clear.

You see, there's an essence in a painting, a person of a place...

Just as I know full well that there's an essence in a mind, in what I feel about the 'good' work that I succeed in making...

But pain! That's what I wanted to get at in this work, this time — to get at that essence...

Indeed, I'm just making an impression, and what I can no longer be true of a range of things. But that this isn't good — if it just isn't true. It's forming, that the other (more important) stuff comes if you're sensitive & good & lucky. Special.

And maybe this is why I'm feeling so unmotivated..."

and dried up

Not uninvolved by anything...

"The swoop by yesterday made me realize. There I went to it — being more intensely every minute, the kind of special spirit of this place... also looking up at it all ideally of discovering tangible things about it that I could take... by knowing two things: Real, behavioral & abstract attributes... and separately perhaps this has an immediately present spirit of the place... And it is this second mode that I respond to, or still, immediately I want to engage with it. For a bit: Make a marking or action connecting with it — keep it in my memory..."

It's all this...

...that interests me. Makes one think of keeps one in...

gives me my rites..."To wonder how about...?"

including my special things to dangerous...

But how do you get at those other things I can be?...?"

Under as a start, I should work on other things simultaneously... like sitting...

making music, bag trudging?...?"

just to keep my head up, & all at the same time.

as doing this real work..."

I just keep thinking that it shouldn't be so separate... all this..."
**The Dalton Transformation**

The redesign of the Dalton project introduces a directional access system through the site, incorporating a range of collective places and containments. By responding to the direction and natural features of the site, the architecture is inclusive and associative with the landscape to a much greater degree.

The dwellings themselves are various types: packed densely as rowhouses along the street... opening up and becoming more reciprocal with the exterior as they move off into the landscape. At a smaller scale, exchange within this community of dwellings has been built into the semi-public/private zones: the edges and slack along the access are arranged in a way that will afford maximum association.

A major concern was the orientation of the roofs of the individual houses... presenting the larger question as to the degree of autonomy that the independant house should claim, in relation to another agenda: its degree of affiliation with the larger continuity.

The design work that follows is the result of a process that occurred simultaneously and parallel to the referencing process. The form diagrams then illustrate how the behavior of the topics exchange and association are built into the design. At times, the diagrams generated the design in a very direct way. In other instances, problems encountered in the design workings led to a purposeful exploration of an issue or form (such as mentioned above)... resulting in a more editorial and transformed diagram transfer.
Oct 13, 86
Santel -> Envire
Le Roux Campus
Prague

Three magnificent villas (in the heart of France)
with their own, slowly becoming colors changing
seemly serene in sun, old feels lost picking contrasts
for smooth,
always with their old eyes.
Time seems a dimension removed.

COMME: Whip toward looking out of plaza.

EXCHANGE keeps coming up... is becoming a
theme:
- Isolation
  - in response to ISOLATION
    - Singularity, etc.
  - increasing activities between
different scales
    - emergent:
- Worlds
  - "The edge" topic: is about EXCHANGE:
- outside
  - inside
- not seen as a separate zone
- rather, exchange between 2 zones.
access is built by pairing of directional prominent elements. Either building or landscape matures. Light is small as continuity.

built access continuity

landmark

landscape house & large size

reeds

Guiding: schematic system is route, behaviour of larger (natural) landscape. Small light, built as active continuity

landscape

buildings in reciprocal exchange

reciprocal exchange
Summary

In using the references more and more as a generating tool, a greater confidence is gained in knowing that the behavior of form is common and therefore directly transferrable. I discovered at the end of this first exercise that the patterns of exchange as found in the references in their most diagramatic form, could have been implemented even more expressly... ensuring an even greater degree of exchange and association into the design. (as sketched below!)

One could continue to employ these diagrams in the same way, with the same intentions, at progressively smaller scales; designing a house (for example) down to its smallest considerations. However, as for Dalton, I have stopped here; having established the site organization, and articulated the semi-public/private definitions within the architecture.
TRANSFORMATION No. 2  Housing for the Elderly
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Existing Analysis

This project is sited in a dense urban context. It fronts onto Massachusetts Avenue which is a highly trafficked thoroughfare in an active pedestrian neighbourhood. The existing project is a six storey apartment block with entrance and drive-thru onto Mass. Ave. The ground floor harbours communal spaces serving the residents, and out back is a small garden and the parking lot.

This is probably the worst form of housing (especially) for the elderly. The singularity of each of the many little self-sufficient rooms and disassociative public space within a (practically) hermetically sealed insular building, presents major obstacles to any kind of natural social interaction... between the inhabitants of the larger neighbourhood, or even between the residents themselves.

SITE ORGANIZATION

- Building is self-contained closed.
- Singular.
- Main spatial circulation is where out think to back.
- No spatial connection with street association.
- Backyard (inside) to interior.

BUILDING ORGANIZATION

- Access is isolated from all axes — no sharing of space.
- Singular contained rooms with little outside association.
- a) No association with major direction or orientation.
- Rather, multidirectional.
- Non-assessive.
- Public spaces are singularly closed... no sharing of territory.

LIGHT

- Light works in association with major direction of orientation.
- However... no sharing of light to interior of building.
- Instead... light contained within closed isolated space.
- Little association with...
ATTITUDE towards elderly housing?

...should really accommodate aging!
This means: services should be able to
fit in... accommodations made
for:
- health care
- visitors
- changing public/private functions
- limited mobility

"Formally" design in more "Jack:
- not so much "fit": fit
- but a range of territories...

...allowing for an environment
not in associations,
multiple potential
case
- heterogeneity

Some that's about it...

> "haring for the elderly"... a word concept
- its regular apt... don't see why they
- couldn't be living anywhere else... or
- shouldn't be completely integrated.
- that it shouldn't be a "little trade anyway.
- design into it... then for
- more care to plug into health systems
- so they can stay there... dinner parties
- really "haring for"... crazy...
- "office"... not in force...
- visit's rooms...
- shouldn't be any extreme "time", other than
- and..."care"... "time"... other than... don't dwell any time more...
Transformation Intentions

The motive behind selecting this project was to test out the patterns of exchange and association within an urban context.

The architecture should provide for exchange between the neighbourhood and the residents: the street associative with the building... the indoors associative with the outdoors. And within the complex, there should be, again, a range of territorial definitions from public to private that are associative with the public access system.

The program should be more accommodating to a broader spectrum of residents (considering their changing health and abilities)... and likewise, the building could have slack designed into it so-as-to accommodate programatic changes.

An emphasis on more casual associative places within the residence would undoubtedly create a closer-knit community: the start of the basis for a holistic living system.

The topics, for the purposes of referencing, are:

1) Street/Building/Back Exchange
2) Territorial Sharing and Exchange
3) Structural Exchanges and Variations
Hubertushuis looking into the back

section through back wing

main level plan

ALDO

* MOTHER'S HOUSE

literate in

depth direction

as continuity with main

section steps, to allow

max. light, linear.

access thru site.

literate works.
Aldo van Eyck is one of the leading figures of the humanistic Dutch architecture. The House for Unwed Mothers is probably his best known and loved work. Through it, van Eyck presents an architecture that is both modern and completely human... generous in its associations and multiplicity of experiences... and thoroughly delightful. This project is particularly relevant to the Cambridge transformation in that the similar site, on a major street, necessitates a move back into its depths, perpendicular to the major direction. The question is how association with the street is achieved (as it turns out, formally: yes, but spatially: no!) and once inside the site, how associative continuities are reinforced.
looking up the passthru into the courtyard

arched passthru of lateral extension

ST. ENIMIE, FRANCE

spatial > cross-street system

next street layer

3 steps from patio

patio over盈k

arched passthru

arched passthru.

medieval vaulted street

light

St. Enimie, Gorge de Tarn

streets parallel to river

crosswork, warm up, back

any counterweight to allow passage to communal entrances, light

shaded overhang, terraces, between above five ages = public place

extended footprint area - discussed

displacement

map on contour is reversed to void
SAINTE ENIMIE, France
Looking further for examples of access systems that are perpendicular to, but (somehow) associative with the major direction; a spatial cross-street tucked away in this stone village starts to generate some patterns. Even though the access is obviously a secondary direction...you leave the main street, entering this small dark arched passthru, enticed into a light filled courtyard...weaving your way up, through and out above to the next street... awareness of the larger directional associations is always constant (“the river runs alongside down there, the cliff edge is up along over there”). A number of dwellings share this space as their entrance place, gossip centre, herb garden and laundry room!
ALu L

1. t i

U ~,

JLC

%A

A:

62
ALBI, France

This typical side-street is another study of a secondary access system. I was first interested in this place because of the wonderful qualities and range of collective places to be found in such an unassuming little impasse. Further observation has revealed that these territories are all established by a lateral move, re-establishing the major direction. Consequently, the collective places within the access system are all associative with the street.
Harlemmer Housing: the inner street edge

territorial demarcations along edge

Real street is non-assi re

Recreality with street in section... creates sectional plan zones of association.
HERMAN HERTZBERGER is another major contributor to this humanist architectural movement in Holland. His work merits close study, as he puts considerable emphasis on articulating territorial definitions... providing places for a range of activities, public through private.

(in good architecture) ...

there is no contradiction between formalism and the daily life.

... there is generosity and consideration.
the two schools along the street

Student Centre, Amsterdam

mazén d'étüdants:

building up of ground... continuity of ground plane moves fluid streets back...

...is spatial dawn under up over containment span

côles Apollo

the two schools along the street

territorial entrance

concrete post & beam system
@ concrete block in "ground floor" solid enclosure
@ secondary "hempenen" enclosure system wood panels right
Reciprocal exchange in building sections:
- section edge displacement > territorial exchange of inside/outside.

Continuity of territorial grand zone:
- displaced horizontal planes provide range of containment
- open public continuity from street to back
  a zone provides the range of definitions
  building ceiling is associative registration zone

Reciprocal displacement:
- displacement back into site gives public 'collective place' to street edge
- along direction of access: alternation of public space/ground

Associative facade edge:
- access territory works laterally with edge of building front
- building facade 'claims' territory in open plaza... access into public

site has its own zone of definition

Reciprocal exchange in section massing:
- layers of public space definitions
Pieter de Hoogh

Varying spatial depth and perceptible distance through transparency.

Beyond a space limit close by, one or several further away.

On this side of a space limit which is further away one or several closer by.

Modulation of spatial depth and perceptible distance from place to place as well as from one place, i.e. both consecutive and simultaneous.

Pieter de Hoogh shows us beautifully what enclosure through openness and transparency can bring about, when he paints an open door or window and a doorway, passage or alley on a single line of view, thus allowing one to see right through several interior and exterior spaces. Sometimes even as far as the huts pasting the street or lane — and always there are some people articulating the entire depth once more though in other places. This shows that the kind of openness which brings about the right sense of enclosure, does not depend on dematerialization and a lot of glass. Similar to the Sondbach sculpture pavilion, where a few openings in the walls were enough to ensure considerable lateral openness promoting perception and movement in the space.

Thus could be appropriate to dense urban packed context...

Short street with continuity is desirable... allowing range of territories within.
PIETER de HOOGH was a Dutch painter of daily life and street scenes in Holland in the 17th century. His paintings I have always found to be inspirational... perhaps in the same way van Eyck speaks to his work (facing page). I won't attempt to rephrase what he says so well. But I will add a thought about the subject matter of the paintings. We are witness to a moment in the life of a street; or in the life of Anna inside her house. The description of this moment is rich in its experiential qualities: there are activities busily going-on in one plane, while elsewhere in the same painting, it's a quiet alone moment.

All of these aspects: the transparency, the range of distance, the range of experiential quality... all may be described as exchange within the paintings.

As with Engawa, there are two types of exchange occurring in these two paintings:

1) a layering of transparencies is building territorial definitions, seen one through another. For example... looking into a room, through a door, through a window, through a tree...

2) the reciprocal exchange of pairs of things: light alternating with dark

   open " " closed
   inside " " outside
   sky " " building
   busy " " serene
all squares contain range of open to closed spatial definitions. Also dynamic.

light could read as 'open'?

another de HOOCH painting

spatial variations within stabilites (squares)

always occur in sets of 2 or 3...

forming stable alternation continuities

another de HOOCH painting

dimensional alternations
The Little Street is an example of reciprocal exchange. What intrigued me about this painting in the first place was how the portrayal of a virtually flat urban street edge could be so rich and spatially interesting!...
A Mother's Duties
A Mother's Duties  A dimensional study of this painting has opened up an exploration into the nature of containment forms. The square, a non-directional containment form, signifies a 'stop'... is a stable form. On the right half of the painting, the square dimensions are hierarchal: a square within a square within a square, resulting in a very stable, balanced and self-contained composition. In fact, the eye is eventually led in to the centre and closed in. (This could explain the restive quality of this scene within this painting.)

On the left half of the painting however, the dimensional study reveals that the (partially defined) squares share each other's dimensions in an aggregational pattern; allowing for a range of large and small containments. The result is a more dynamic behavior...the eye moves around the shared, layered territories of the interior and eventually out the window!

To compare the two different diagrams: the left side, where dimensions (or containments) are shared, is considerably more dynamic...and associative.
Die Drie Hoven

1. Greenhouse

2. Public area

3. Private area

4. Entrance

5. Elevator

6. Seating area

Plan: collective space

Plan: individual unit

Detail plan of community room

Gallery around, (36' x 36' square)

6' x 6'

Corner of square to sit & talk over

Access

Containment

Range of sizes within containment

Detailed definition of containment territories allows sharing & association outside of the containment

Partial definition of public & private is adjacent to larger public containment & access.

Asociative spaces along the '60'
DIE DRIE HOVEN (Old Peoples' Home), Amsterdam

The community room within the heart of this building is enough to encourage anyone about the potential of modern architecture to provide for an enhanced quality of life. Within this large room is an amazing panoply of places of various qualities of light, ambience, activities.

Herman Hertzberger works consistently with squares and variations within a grid. (being Dutch?!) Here is a huge square containment form within which are many smaller containments (square); all more or less partially defined and all sharing dimensions in an associative way. So although the square is a restive place or 'stop', by:

1) partial definition / enclosure

2) shared dimension (an exchange with another containment, or with the adjacent access system)

...the square or containment form can also be associative with the world outside.

---

Diagram:

1. **Associative Territorial Sharing**:
   - range of containment sizes within containment sizes...
   - partial definition of containments allows open association with adjacent affiliations.

2. **Associative Containments**:
   - accessible containments are adjacent to major directional access.
   - Partial enclosure allows sharing of territorial exchange...
   - containments are 'stops' along the "go" - associative.
The C. Eldridge House, Hyannis, MA.

"Congregate" Project

Shared territory is semi-public adjacent to access.

Semi-private territory adjacent to semi-public.

Territorial transition continuity.

Upper Plan:

Associate collective place between 2 access.

Double access system: one public, one semi-public.

Grand Plan:

Collective social places are adjacent to major access system.
The ELDRIEHOUSE, Mass. This is an award winning congregate project in Hyannis, Mass. designed by K.J.A. Associates. It is a renovated old farmhouse along a major street in town, and maintains this comfortable neighbourly character from the outside. Yet inside, it has been transformed by way of a sophisticated double access system that now provides a layering of shared semi-public/private territories.

I present this as a 'cameo' reference. The project is a good example of an associative attitude to elderly housing form... as evidenced by its comfortable scale, sensitive integration with the community, and articulate spatial transformations inside.
A. Tapies. Untitled

study

variations on spatial quality within established structure

open + packed

total size of structural containment = skull + territory. But adds up to directional continuity.

continuity alternation up + down

exchange between individual systems = new spatial components, territories.

- If singly built size is simple alternation
  but builds into continuous directional field organization.

This could be a price of music, space.
a TAPIES PIECE (plaster on canvas)

Like candy to a kid, works by Antoni Tapies entice me away from my work! It's the quality of the surface... the texture... the intensifications. Starting as an experiment in the dark, a dimensional analysis of these intensifications revealed a rigorous structure... within which there are multiple variations. In fact there are three separate structural systems here (it could be music, or a weaving, or architecture!). The interchanges between the systems, as well as the variations within each, create the range of forms; all the while maintaining structural continuity.

1) Directional field of screens:
- single directional elements add up to major continuous direction
- within dimensional structured system; variations on patterns of alternations (packed ↔ open)
  (up ↔ down)
  (complete ↔ partial)

2) Stable containment within directional field:
- structural module is self-stable (square) proportion
  adds up to continuous direction (stops in "o")

3) Territorial complexities from systems exchange:
- new spatial complexities
- new dimensions create territorial intensifications on a smaller scale range...
  ...shaping of territories.
J. Campbell. Variations on an Aria

"must find a way to translate
into visual mode"

PAINT

The MUSIC
	notes=colour
		rhythm=punctuation

Isolate systems... then
... overlay.

Paul Klee. Chant de Minos
Bach's GOLDBERG VARIATIONS

Structure in music is its divisibility into successive parts from phrases to long sections. Form is content, the continuity. Method is the means of controlling the continuity, from note to note. The material of music is sound and silence. Integrating these is composing. — John Cage
"To perceive a visual image implies the beholder's participation in a process of organization. The experience of an image is thus a creative act of integration. Its essential characteristic is that by plastic power an experience is formed into an organic whole. Here is a basic discipline of forming, that is, thinking in terms of structure, a discipline of utmost importance in the chaos of our formless world."

---

J. Campbell, la Gymnopedie

Ernst Gombrich
exchange between two systems
creating new spatial compositions
(a third zone of diagonals)
relationships

zone of registration (bars)
is directional continuity from which
2nd system (frede) moves freely in space.

zone of registration (bars)
may reverse or alternations but always
within structural systems so as to
maintain continuity.

after that:

this music is all, in directly controlled
by structural system...to open more
off 1 structural
only transformations within the system.

so fit...fit...fit...
look at jazz...nonvocal (non lag)
Kirtha Barrett.
the new Little Street: Cambridge facade maquette
The Cambridge Transformation

In an attempt to build maximum exchange with the street and neighbourhood, a new access system moves into and through the site (parallel to the access system inside the building). Light and landscape now reach out to the street, and the street life is brought into the complex. Containments...inside and outside are designed as places to stop, but are also associative to varying degrees with the public realm.
The structure of the building provides the territorial definitions, exhibiting a range of sizes and variations, yet always in a consistent and understandable manner.
sharing of territories with other containments... giving range of sizes within sizes: private, within semiprivate, within semipublic, etc.

partial definition of containments complete, subtle boundaries, virtually denied. yet; partially open to shared exchange with another: associative

Massachusetts Avenue

Cambridge

building organization

November 1, 1957

Cambridge

building organization

November 1, 1957

Massachusetts Avenue

88
light is associative with individual entrance zones...some private activities in the light.
sequential light attenuation built along access.
Sectional Study

Light runs continuously along length of block as horizontal continuity.

Covered walkway over the terrace.

Covered pavilion on terrace (rain shield).

Terrace (eg. garden?)

Central space (2-3) for self-containment & its.

Layering of building volume.
- transition from dense street facade to open green backyard.

Reciprocal Exchange:
- building section moves out & in...
- light & envelope get in to building.

Light as Continuity:
- light in direction & association
- light in corners (as intensification)
  as use territories are in corners.
Typical unit pair with shared activity space

Interior unit window elevation

Light openings are flexible according to privacy needs of arrangements interior.
Summary

This transformation stops with the preliminary designs for the individual's private dwelling: places of privacy within a public context. This brings to the forefront the task of creating private places that are associative with the larger continuity...DiScontinuity within a continuity. A 'place' ...(as distinct and understandable)...within a 'place'...(a larger understandable continuity).
The word “dwelling” here means something more than having a roof over our head and a certain number of square meters at our disposal. First, it means to meet others for exchange of products, ideas and feelings, that is, to experience life as a multitude of possibilities. Second, it means to come to an agreement with others, that is, to accept a set of common values. Finally, it means to be oneself, in the sense of having a small chosen world of our own. We may call these modes collective, public and private dwelling.

This environment, however, is always related to what is given, that is, to a landscape with general as well as particular qualities. To dwell, therefore, also means to become friends with a natural place. We may also say that dwelling consists in orientation and identification. We have to know where we are and how we are, to experience existence as meaningful. Orientation and identification are satisfied by organized space and built form, which together constitute the concrete place.

When dwelling is accomplished, our wish for belonging and participation is fulfilled.

— C. Norberg-Schulz

"...one of the marks of maturity is the need for solitude: a city should not merely draw men together in many varied activities, but should permit each person to find, near at hand, moments of seclusion and peace."

— Lewis Mumford
MISSION HILL HOUSING HOUSING (FOR THE ELDERLY)

Introduction

This new design exercise offers the opportunity of working with a real context. Mission Hill is a particular 'place'... it has its own qualities, patterns, idiosyncrasies: a neighbourhood. In an effort to fit a new intervention into this neighbourhood in such a way that it becomes 'part of' and 'belongs', the context must be 'read'. A reading of the patterns and continuities of the forms of the place can inform the design so that it builds on these continuities... intensifying, ignoring or transforming the patterns where appropriate.

Mission Hill is a neighbourhood in Brookline (part of Boston). It is a closely knit, well-established community currently experiencing a rejuvenation. The area is comprised of a mix of rowhouses and single houses (one and two family), interspersed with small open spaces, lightly tree'd. The actual site is on Columbus Avenue, the major street of the neighbourhood which leads onto the main commercial artery. The property slopes down in back to the southeast, overlooking the city from its high viewpoint. Across the street at the bottom of the slope (Terrace Ave.) runs a continuous park belt which acts as a buffer from the transit tracks and busy boulevard beyond.
DIRECTION of Site Context:

- Site: on a south-facing slope
- Lightly wooded
- Park systems adjacent to major road & train tracks
- South slope
- Major roads: all work to establish continuity of direction
The following are diagrams which illustrate the patterns of form behavior within the neighbourhood. Below is an abstraction of the site plan, describing the directional field that is built. Not shown, but very prominent (in situ) is the directional orientation of the topography...reinforcing the major direction.
south facade of Columbus Ave., facing site

typical facades along Columbus Ave.

view south, up Columbus Ave.

view north, down Columbus Ave.

entrance stoops along Columbus Ave.
STREET EDGE

Facade Continuity:

- continuous (virtual) wall surface
- dimensional consistency: heights, floor levels, widths
- alternating light (alleys) & built (including bay windows)

Access Continuity:

- territorial intensification of edge
- layering of screens creating semi-public zone: 1) public, 2) semi-public, 3) private
- dimensional consistency
- access is perpendicular to major direction:
  is a direcd (vertical) private more... minimal transition territory
back view of side street (from middle of site)

space between individual houses
SIDE STREET

**Facade Continuity:**
- Dimensional consistency of alternating light & built.
- Secondary direction: street is more discrete.
- Move through light layers...
- Layers are territorial & large, privacy.

**Elevation:**
- Roof forms create discreet containments.

**Access Continuity:**
- Building in direction of field, within single layer.
- Territorial layering (4 screens) extend out front & back.

**But:** Light within single layer is difficult.
- Private access off secondary street is discreet.
  Maximum territorial transition.
condition A: front... continuous surface

back... screen system

in between... outgrowths to catch light
BUILDING SYSTEMS

Condition 'A'
- structural system runs perpendicular to light direction... allowing maximum light to interior.
- "layering of screen system in light's direction. Backspors to landscape".
- 'outgrowth' in alley to 'catch' available light.

(BUT: no real use territory in 'light' alleys)

Condition 'B'
- structure in direction of light... "minimal light association with interiors.
- 'layering of screens perpendicular to light direction'
- "system working against continuity with light."
**Design Intentions**

As before, the intention in this work is to develop an architecture of association. Exchange, continuity and multiplicity are the behaviors that will guide the arrangements of the forms. Now with a file of diagrams illustrating some of the basic patterns of these behaviors, the design work continues to build on this knowledge.

The Mission Hill site presents a particular array of elements that all demonstrate patterns of continuity. The design will respond to and engage with these elements, thus building association with them.

1) the landscape
2) the street: to build formal exchange and continuity with the street ensures association and integration with the neighbourhood community.

3) behavior of light
4) structural systems: the existing buildings are composed of a family of systems in consistent ways...yet these don't always make sense. The design will make transformations accordingly.

Observation of these elements has inspired a certain 'sense of the place' in my own minds' eye. Consequently, the references that follow are based more on lateral associations, than direct correlations. However, the subsequent diagrams continue to add to an understanding of the general topic.
Here the artist touches upon a concept that underlies much of his work—specifically the ritualistic significance. This idea is reflected in his titles—not only *Glades Ritual Series* but also *Sangram Ritual Glade Series* (1976), which refers to a site in India where a shrine marks the junction of rivers. Beginning with works such as *First Gate Ritual Series* of 1979 and 1980 (see cat. nos. 32,38), Singer saw mythic connotations in the landscape; later, in indoor sculptures of 1982 such as *Cloud Hands Ritual Series 1982 Ritual Series 7/82 and Ritual Series 1982* (cat. nos. 42,43,45) Singer continued to evoke the same sense of ritual in nature. In the new slate and granite pieces, Singer has extended the original concepts without losing sight of nature; now, the magic emanates from the self-contained work itself and does not depend on the environmental context.

M. Singer. *Situation Balance Series Beaver Bog*  
Michael Singer's works are interventions in particular landscape settings. The work demonstrates a certain reading of the qualities and continuities of a place. By introducing an intervention that is a transformation of that continuity... (in fact it starts to read almost as a DIScontinuity within the larger context)... Singer enhances or intensifies that 'sense of place' to a degree that it becomes almost sacred.
typical porch. Oak Bluffs

Hall des Sources. Vichy, France
SCREENS

Like lace floating delicately before the face of a beautiful woman... there is an enticing mystique about the nature of screens. It's there... and it's not.

Screens imply a separation or closure. Yet they also allow (and enhance the quality of) visibility through; establishing a virtual connection with. To analyze screens in an abstracted formal way, one finds that screens can set-up territorial definitions that enhance association with the beyond.

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**Spatial Continuity**

- Adjacent zones of territorial definition: private or public (semi-private, public)
- Screen definitions are partial enclosure - degrees of association between zones across
denser build-up of screens = greater privacy & containment (vice versa)

- Edge bifurcation
  - Screen elements are most dense at edge of forms... becoming associative (semi-public) zone of partial enclosure

  - Internalization of edge gives a territorial “thickness” to that edge...
    - Both transitional continuity

  - Discrete object of defined edge definition
Blackman House (M.K. Smith: arch.)

Interior screens and planes. Blackman House

"A decent work is trees - life - trees - life - trees... a decent building should be the same..."

MKS

Morandi. Natura Morta

Reference:

- Could be seen flat...
- As a screen.
- Alternating light / dark
- Instead of 'boxes'... do the light / shadow
- That make up the space...
- Spatial screen / alternation...
Associative allocations:

- Planes built up of screen systems in 3 dimensions define territorial zones
- Overlapping shading screen planes sets up maximum exchange between zones
- Trees (landscape) are screens too. Continuity & exchange with landscape reciprocal exchange of screens, alternation of trees.
fenestration in Vichy, France

E. Manet, *le Balcon*

Japanese street edge

"shelf" window dressing zone

little iron cages of glass & fancy vin.
Intensification & exchange zone:
- screening intensifies light/ shadow.
- "frames" window: discrete, non-continuity.
  part of ritual of "being seen"

YET
- partial closure: is associative
  sum of private transition territory.

*section*
- territory built into window
  space thru screens.
  Territory is establishing zones
  of public association in wall.
arcade in Antwerpen, Belgium

street corner in Amsterdam, Holland (arch: A. van Eyck)
STREET EDGE

My memories from special places in France, Italy or Holland are filled with images from wanderings through so many different streetscapes; so many qualities of light, space, sound... smell... cool... delight...

As with the study of the de Hoogh painting, a closer examination of the spatial behaviors of some of these streetscapes reveals that within the larger continuity of the street or building structure, there are manipulations that allow for a wonderful range of places and experience.
street edge in Bayeux. Normandie (France)

extraordinary window-places! Antwerpen. Belgium
Territorial sidewalk zone:

- Contains a definition for a section of the public sidewalk zone.
- "In the sidewalk, but also associative with streets."
- "A use is screens to allow light & exchange."
side yard in Oak Bluffs

terrace overlook in Domme, France

...to show this relationship in various works of art; to show how a symphony mingles the voices of a stormy day with the tumult of our blood, how a building owes its character half to us and half to the forest.

—Rainer Maria Rilke
The Design

As in the previous transformations, the program for this design was developed under the premise of a holistic attitude towards elderly housing. As a result, the design offers a range of dwelling accommodations: a high-care congregate complex, a smaller more independent congregate house, a rowhouse of collective efficiency units, and individual housing options. There is a community centre in the public plaza.

A major access system has been introduced into the site; with major public definitions that could become important places in the neighbourhood. The access through is virtually a new 'side-street'... but more spatial... offering a range of places: urban terraces, to natural gardens... large public plazas, to quiet and away spots... high overlooks, to small cozy corners.

The street edge is densely packed to maintain rhythm and continuity. The density opens up in the back, where the individual dwellings are more associative with the exterior and the landscape.
Working model: facade of Columbus Ave., looking down the hill

looking up the hill towards Columbus Ave.
MISSION HILL HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY

Ground Level Plan

1 congregate complex
2 retail Corner Store
3 efficiency units
4 congregate house
5 individual dwelling
6 community centre
7 gazebo
8 vegetable garden
9 parking under
10 park
11 overlook
Elevation of typical Individual dwelling

Section of Community centre

Section/ Elevation through site

congregate complex

community centre

Terrace Avenue
The diagrams that follow point out many of the formal attributes that incorporate exchange and continuity into this design. However they do not describe ALL; this would be redundant and never-ending! So as to a thorough analysis of this design: the diagrams cover the basic moves. I leave much to the reader... to find what one sees.
'Place' off Columbus Ave., demarcating entry to new 'street'
Reciprocal exchange of landscape with built stuff

- landscape direction is same (associative) with major direction

- reciprocal alternation of landscape/built allows for range of territorial containments ('places')

Reciprocal displacements from street edge back into site give public 'collective place' to street edge. a) harder 'urban place' within 'wall' of street.
b) softer landscape place brings park across the street continuity into site

- sequence of 'steps' along access thru site produces a range of public collective places...
  - public access thru site ensures open association with community...
  - becomes a 'street', but is more territorial with multiple range of privacy & places.
Alternative

- layers (in associative direction)
- light, alternate sequentially
- build as one moves through site.
- layers set up alternating territorial definitions
- layers built up out of (smaller) light, alternating in perpendicular direction.

Public Access Continuity:

- spatial access system
- displacements in direction of field create contain...cut territories
- lateral expansions re-establish major directional orientation
- re-establishment of major direction...enables private direction (perpendicular) continuity...and allows for larger transitional territory (public ↔ private).

Private Access Continuity:

- associative private access
- private more (perpendicular to major direction) is associative with light...move into light and its semi-public territory
- new transformation of existing continuum allows greater semi-public, transitional territory (private ↔ private) is more associative.
zones of registration are edges of association... moving in (secondary) direction thru site.

displaced edges (from PZ zones) create the containment territories.

containments are associative with access.

range of containment closure: some very closed → urban (A), open continua → associative with larger landscape (B).
Transformation of 'Conditions A':

- Structural system runs perpendicular to light direction... allowing max. light to enter
- But now zone of light is more territorial & associative.
- Spatial use of 'screen system' allows greater light continuity and greater range of semi-public & semi-private associative places.

Condition 'B':

- Structural system as above... in response to light & view conditions.
- Houses adjacent build the direction... structure affords privacy across.
- Form is open & reciprocal with outside/landscape. Edges create associative zones.
Access continuity is maintained:

- Direction of major movement is associative with direction of movement thru site.
- Confinements adjacent to access: associative "stops" along the "go".

Light as Continuity:

- Major access is associated with light... moving within & towards light.
- Larger "layers" of built light provide alternating territories of light in progressive sequence as one moves thru.
- Useable territory in "light" zones:
It is a particularly modern idea to divide human behavior and thought into many isolated departments; most traditional peoples have an overriding principle of unity, although they call it by many and various names...

— Keith Critchlow
AFTERWORD

At this point, to draw conclusions upon the nature of housing for the elderly would be simply a reiteration of what has been said repeatedly throughout this paper: more thoughts on the value of exchange and association. I sense that enough has been said already. Instead, I present some afterthoughts on a process.

The process of referring to one's own experience in the world, in relation to a new experience, is one we all (especially as designers) share, to some degree. Our minds work associatively. This thesis has taken shape from a desire to explore this associative way of looking at the world. Rather than bury myself away and design old folks' homes, I wanted to spend one last term at M.I.T. playing with a lot of different things... looking at a range of things... knowing something about them... making connections... synthesizing. According to my own attitudes as to the 'non-separateness' of things, housing for the elderly might stand to benefit from such an approach.

To ensure that such a potentially amorphous attitude might actually lead to anything legitimate, it was important to introduce a new (to me) level of rigour and inquiry. Hence the form diagrams. The methodical analysing of the behavior of form has taken this (my) working process a big step closer to understanding the nature of these associations.

The process.. IS .. ways of seeing... and transforming.

My own particular way of seeing is channelled through my sketchbook (as was this thesis work) and painting efforts. This desire to record comes out of a simple love for the qualities of things and places. It's an effort to understand the world
Certainly—but do not let us exaggerate. Construction is a good thing but it is not everything. Questions of form are decisive for artistic clarification, but even they are not everything. If they are worked out purely we are impelled towards the essential, 'towards the functional rather than the impressive. One learns to catch hold of things by their roots, to see what goes on underneath them, and one learns the prehistory of the visible.' Nevertheless even this is not yet art of the highest order. 'In the highest order mystery intervenes. Intuition is not to be supplanted. Genius cannot be trained.' Here everything is at stake, the unity of the four-fold structure—human and material, cosmic and earthly. 'Classes should be held on holidays, away from the school buildings, out-of-doors under trees, with animals, on rivers or on mountains, in the sea.' For when things pass into the pictorial dimension the miracle occurs of discovering a reflection of nature in its entirety. Everything experienced or seen is translated into the language of art, into quite another, quite transformed and yet quite real world.

"The acceptance of technology as a source of rich and exciting forms in scale with the new physical environment is only one side of the story. There is still another important key task to be faced and dealt with if we are to set aright our dangerously eroding social cohesion and our impoverished inner world of thought and feeling. We need to develop equipment that will enable us to sense new connections and thereby revive and strengthen our individual lives. As the urban world grows, so must the increasingly complex task of communication to keep it vital. The interconnection of man and his environment in an embracing dynamic system is the path to a level of existence that makes effective use of new potentialities."
around; to know the essence of a thing, or spirit of a place... be it my mountains... a street in Siena... the Plaza San Marco... or the bog...
The thesis exercise pushed all this into a much more disciplined endeavour. Although reticent at first, I have been truly amazed at how the simplest observations can start to inform one with real information about the behavior of form of the world around. I would never have guessed that those idle sketches of some remote village in France (although a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon!... sitting there in this great place, in the sunshine... sketching!) would or could ever be applicable to anything in any direct way. Yet to know, now, that the form of the village (its access and containment systems) exhibits the exact same behavior as the form of a Kepes painting, as the form of Satie's 'Gymnopedie'... the French village is no longer so remote or isolated an experience. There's a growing awareness of a 'commonality'.

So 'looking' can (also) be a discipline. It's another way of seeing ... another tool to be employed in the knowing about the nature of things.
As for the creative act: making
   partaking
   transforming
... engaging with (a place), creating a dialogue; I suppose the 'engaging' and subsequent 'action' happens according to one's own particular interpretations and ways. But at least having gone through the discipline entailed in a certain kind of looking, one enters into the creative act knowing, perhaps, a little more.

It doesn't spoil it at all.
...you can take the wisdom of the world...

and give it to the ones who think
it all ends here.    

Bruce Cockburn.

Dancing in the Dragon's Jaw
Orion in the sky. Welcome back, old friend.

So special this gliding turquoise barely
hangs on in the moon. So much mind the energy
of awakening ear, birds, colors.

My legs swinging, smooth washtub
in my yellow coat flattening feeling
suitably all around me. Heat stirs
around in the swimming pool.

Warm air
long deep in
not

over me without j’adie

man nom.

Venus is clear across the sky.

sky of Montana.

sky of Maine.

star over the bag.

dawn Oct 23


