ABSURD MACHINE
PROJECT ON THE NATIONAL MALL

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ABSURD MACHINE:

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Submitted to the Department of Architecture on May 24, 2012 in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Architecture Studies.

ABSTRACT

America’s symbols of governance, such as the ubiquitous state capitols and state capitol malls, are classically inspired European architecture and planning of reason and nature, adopted in America by Jefferson in 18th century as symbols of democratic institutions. These symbols are in contradiction to our evolving dialogue with democracy that are subject to laws of ‘proper’ use and extreme security. The National Mall as a symbol of democratic values, has been reduced to a synthetic image of stability built upon a preserved image that masks the underlying issues of a compromised territory of, unstable boundaries governed by ad-hoc laws, and privatized overtones that distort the otherwise democratic message embodied by these symbols of governance. Throughout American cities these same conditions are stifling otherwise democratic public spaces.

This thesis articulates the representation of the last democratic space in America, post 9-11, as a critique based proposal that challenges our current and future negotiations with power in the built environment. Recognizing the challenge of a formal intervention upon a contradictory site, the National Mall will serve as the stage for testing a democratic space that communicates the asymmetrical relationships of public’s dialogue with governance in ‘public’ spaces.

While the Mall cannot be upheld as an egalitarian field, objects however can substantiate or infuse a democratic field within. This thesis justifies a form necessary to represent such a space, investigating compromised symbols that can be appropriated and redefined to provide functions and representation of conditions the National Mall distorts. The proposal infuses within the program responses to all major impositions of public spaces as a method of exposing the unstable conditions of democratic values residing on comprised fields. The purpose is not to render an ideal democratic space, but an independently operating machinelike space that highlights the context’s incongruous relationships.
ABSURD MACHINE
PROJECT ON THE NATIONAL MALL

AMNA ANSARI
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CHAPTER 1 NOTES

Changing conditions of democracy to changing conditions of the ownership of public spaces show the direct impact on democratic public spaces. The conditions perpetuate rising restrictions within these spaces that infringe public’s right for free speech assembly. This indicates, especially with recent events, that a recalibration of the role of public’s dialogue with power and governance is necessary.

Section ‘Stifling Public Spaces’ documents and brings forth the ever increasing restrictions on public spaces in American cities, which this thesis responds to as a critique based proposal in Chapter 3.
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National Mall, a carrier for the symbols of democracy, will serve as the site for testing a proposition. Through the lens of the National Mall, from its history to its current use, the chapter will show the contradictory democratic and planning conditions held even at a site symbolic of democratic values.

Section 'Democratic Conditions Compromised' shows that the National Mall has been reduced to a synthetic image of stability built upon a preserved image that masks the underlying issues of a compromised territory of, unstable boundaries governed by ad-hoc laws, and privatized overtones that distort the otherwise democratic message embodied by its symbols of governance.

‘A.0’ NOTES - A SHORT BREAK FOR ENCLOSURE ARGUMENT

States the need for an enclosed public space, a speculative critique based representation of a space that questions our current and future negotiations with power and use of space, appropriating and redefining functions and representation of conditions that not only does the National Mall distorts, but also many American democratic spaces.
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INTRODUCTION
ROLE OF DESIGN IN POLITICS

INTENT

Unforeseen events of modern politics, such as terrorist threats, evolving codes, regulations, and tighter surveillance, are pushing the limits of government’s role with preemptive measures that are concerns for liberty. It is precisely at this pressure point in America’s history, revealed by the Occupy Movement and its battle with public space, combined with issues of permits, codes, and regulations, that ideologies can be revisited with form that operates with the city. Through the act of ‘separation’ and ‘enclosure’, creatively subverting codes that defy democratic values, the form’s dialogue within the modern city can be regained to reveal the inconsistencies that reside currently in open democratic spaces.

The proposed apparatus creates a dialogue within a compromised field on a site symbolic of democratic values, revealing asymmetrical relationships of democracy and governance. The intent of the proposal is not to render an ideal democratic space, but an independently operating machinelike space that questions public’s evolving dialogue with governance and power, especially in American public spaces.

The machine provides functions and a monumental inhabitable interior protected space, ironically privatized, for public’s use and occupation to create a critical discourse with its context. However the public’s presence within the machine is not necessary for the message of the machine to be communicated, of the rising restrictions of public spaces in America caused by increasing strict concepts of governance. The appropriation and redefinition of democratic symbols that no longer serve their original intent, communicate that message to the larger context. The treatment of the space as critique through circulation, materials, details, and construction communicate that message to the compromised field and the individuals, independent of public’s occupation within it.

The larger intent of the proposal is to test a theory in engaging the field of Architecture and Urbanism within politics. To offer an alternate, or rather reinvigorate, role of design in politics as a critical dialogue that emerges in the physical treatment of space and form. Thus proposing a counter investigation using the language of the discipline as method of exposing incongruous relationships.
FIG 1.1
SOURCE: Time Magazine Online:
Chapter One Outline

Changing conditions of democracy to changing conditions of the ownership of public spaces show the direct impact on democratic public spaces. The conditions perpetuate rising restrictions within these spaces that infringe public’s right for free speech assembly. This indicates, especially with recent events, that a recalibration of the role of public’s dialogue with power and governance is necessary.

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1.5 Revisit Representation of Public Space
1.1 CHANGING CONDITIONS OF DEMOCRATIC PUBLIC SPACES

Over the years American cities are experiencing a decline in true democratic public spaces. In the wake of recent events, such as the Occupy Wall Street Movement, it has been brought to attention the necessity of public spaces within democracy and the legal limitations of public spaces for democracy as these spaces since the 1960s have transitioned into private ownership. These conditions exist throughout the American democratic landscape, exacerbated by extreme surveillance, policing methods, ad-hoc laws, with intricate permitting and codes, that are applied towards the little amount of city-owned public space that does exist. Throughout American cities these same conditions are stifling otherwise democratic public spaces that have potential for spontaneous speech and assembly, characteristics that are crucial for a democratic system.

However, the system of executing democracy itself is fluid and changing as conditions change. As democracy has evolved over centuries from direct democracy to representative democracy with increasing population and advances in technology, governance and method of governance of the population has increased exponentially, and this has had a direct impact on democratic public spaces.

1.2 DEMOCRACY AND PUBLIC ASSEMBLY PRECEDENT

1.2.1 ATHENIAN CITY STATE DEMOCRACY
From European Monarchy in the Renaissance to start of American Democracy in the Colonial times, Classical Antiquity became a period revered by many leaders as a model for democratic spaces and symbols of governance. Rightfully so as the first place of democracy occurred in classical Athens, Greece. The Athenian city-state political system, adopted and modified by the Republic of Rome, set the stage for modern Western political practice and thought. This is still reflected in the many classically inspired government buildings that serve as a symbol and reminder of the ‘classical origins of parliamentary democracy’. 1
The form of direct democracy in which citizens rule themselves began in ancient Athens, known as demokratia (demos – the people, or the citizenry, and kratos – rule). This is different from modern representative democracy where publicly elected representatives rule for the people, such as the case with UK and Germany. The United States is a complex system of representative democracy, better stated as a constitutional republic in which elected representatives govern for the citizens through existing constitutional laws, in an attempt to limit government’s power over the citizens.

1.2.2 ROLE OF PNYX AND AGORA

During 8th century B.C. Athens, center of intellectual and cultural development, emerged as the polis, or city-state, that set the example for urban growth in surrounding city-states of ancient Greece. It was required of all citizens, which was restricted to only Athenian born males, to participate and contribute to the activities of the polis. The citizens took part in a public forum to vote on topics brought forth by themselves. By 4th century B.C., the public assembly took place outdoors in the open arena called the Pnyx, carved within the natural setting of the hillside west of the city’s Acropolis, it created a semi-circular outdoor assembly hall, which later was built with a theatre-like structure to support several thousand people. Here the sovereign assembly of the people, called the Ekklesia, met every nine days for legislative and judicial matters requiring the attendance of at least 6,000 citizens. For centuries the Pnyx served as the location for the Athenian political assembly.

FIG 1.2 PNYX, OUTDOOR PLACE OF ASSEMBLY

Phase I: approx 500 B.C., uses natural slope of the hillside to build seating. Phase II: approx 400 B.C., arena flipped for either political or environmental concerns. Phase III: approx 300 B.C., arena was enlarged.
The Athenian city-state center was the Agora, an outdoor marketplace which was surrounded by a stoa housing law courts, administration, worship and trade. During the late 5th and 4th centuries BC, town planning always considered the Agora surrounded by a stoa, as was the case with regular grided towns of Paestum and Priene. Richard Sennett’s ‘spaces of democracy’ even argues that the Stoa’s location, unlike the Pynx, as a peripheral condition is what can produce forms of politics driven by ‘difference rather than by indifference and submission’. The border condition intensifies public’s exchange with politics, and allows for changes to occur within the city.

This shows that even in Ancient Athens, the site of first democracy, there are two types of public forums. One that is a formal assembly where the elite male born Athenians with great orator skills can be heard and fully participate within, and the other is the informal marketplace that serves as a forum for the other non-citizens of Athens, allowing political exchange to occur through the everyday business of the polis.

Now, centuries into the present, methods of public participation for speech and assembly have transformed. Current relationship of democracy with
public architecture and symbolic space have evolved as power relations between governance and public have renegotiated with evolving conditions. These conditions have had a direct impact on democratic public spaces, especially for American public spaces that were based on the classical foundations of democratic participation.

1.3 CHANGING PUBLIC AND ITS SPACES

From the first concept of democracy, to the evolved modern versions, the relationship of democracy to public space is a complex system that feeds from one another. Democracy depends on true public space for citizens to voice their opinions and address current concerns, concept of free speech and assembly which America was founded upon. The United States history of planning considered such spaces for civic interaction. ‘Public space was intended to galvanize democratic activities—especially the informal meetings that could produce discussion and deliberation.’  

However, the need for public space, enclosed or open, has disappeared.

1.3.1 PRIVATE REALM ICONIC FORMS

During ancient Greece the urban fabric, the city and architecture, presented a balance that negotiated with the public realm. During the eighteenth century, as public life declined with increased focus towards the private life, the public realm dissipated leaving a scar on the urban fabric. Public buildings and architecture gradually stood independent of the urban fabric, eliminating enclosed public spaces with privately owned

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**FIG 1.4 CHANGES IN DEMOCRACY / ASSEMBLY**

As democracy has evolved over centuries from direct democracy to representative democracy with increasing population and advances in technology, governance and method of governance of the population has increased exponentially, and this has had a direct impact on democratic public spaces.
program. This transition was completed in early twentieth century. With fall of the public realm and with no dire need for public forum space, urban design and architecture became invested in exploring and providing for the architectural form in the private realm, from iconic office buildings to developer driven residential blocks.\(^7\) The balance of architecture and city that existed in classical antiquity up until the Enlightenment was never fully regained.

1.3.2 THE CONTROLLED PUBLIC REALM

Richard Sennett in the ‘Fall of Public Man’ claims that to formally explore the balance of public architecture and city, the public realm must first be revived.\(^8\) Present questions are concerned with whether public space of commons within the city is even necessary for the public sphere, as public forums can now be accessed from home, and the spaces that do exist are rewired for entertainment and consumerism rather than for free speech and assembly. However, these public forums that are accessed by home, whether online or through televised debates, do not always allow for the public to receive feedback, resulting in one-way dialogues which can hardly be considered a public assembly debating on current issues, thus creating the image of a false public sphere.

Michael Sorkin’s ‘Variation on a theme park, the new American City and the End of Public Space,’ in which a compilation of essays argue that ‘a new kind of urbanism-manipulative, dispersed, and hostile to traditional public space—is emerging both at the heart and at the edge of town in megamalls, corporate enclaves, gentrified zones, and pseudo-historic marketplaces.’ \(^9\) In these cases the spontaneous public interaction is
sacrificed for a highly controlled and structured environment. Mike Davis illustrates through a study of Los Angeles that security or ‘policing of social boundaries’ is really used for keeping out unwanted interactions and for creating acceptable behavior patterns in the public realm, rather than as surveillance for personal safety. This public favors the controlled environment and is cautious of true democratic spaces that come with ‘risks and undeodorized odors’.

This condition of increased interest in leisure spaces of consumerism combined with expectations of a controlled environment have resulted in abandoning publicly maintained spaces in exchange for ones that are well maintained and owned by private organizations. These ownership models are occurring with little public input. Citizens are not fully aware of the consequences of privately owned public space until there is a need for free speech and assembly, which can be noted under recent events of protest movements in America starting in September of 2011 and to current events of the Occupy Wall Street protests.

1.4 STIFLING PUBLIC SPACES

1.4.1 PRIVATIZATION AND PARTNERSHIPS OF PUBLIC SPACES

PRIVATELY OWNED PLAZAS

Forced by monetary needs and a decline of the public realm, public space planned and owned by cities in the United States transitioned into privately owned plazas (POPS) and open spaces beginning around the 1960s. POPS are an amenity that developers provide to the public in exchange for incentives such as additional square footage or higher air rights. This type of corporate sponsorship of controlled public spaces is ubiquitous in America, usually found in outdoor spaces of office plazas, residential plazas and urban plazas. Since 1961, provisions for POPS have been modified in favor of public design and its amenities, but not necessarily regarding its access as true democratic space.
PRIVATE-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP PARKS

Private-public partnerships have also taken control over public parks and playgrounds as they question the speed and authority with which public agencies respond to requests. These partnerships, that operate more like private organizations, can tax local businesses for providing services such as policing and surveillance or trash removal and street renovations, all of which once fell under the control of public funds. These private-public partnerships also enforce spaces to be governed by implicit and explicit rules, about who uses the space regarding class and income, to when it is used, including increase in surveillance and providing a controlled environment.

PRIVATE-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS

MAINLY FOR LARGE SCALE PARKS AND CIVIC SPACES

These partnerships, that operate more like private organizations, can tax local businesses for providing services such as policing and surveillance, trash removal or street renovations, all of which once fell under the control of public funds.

OWNERSHIP MODELS WITHIN CITY

The city becomes saturated with privately owned public spaces that impose restrictions for free speech and assembly.

These private-public partnership have also resulted in contemporary city park designs that present a false sense of democratic public space with tendencies to over-program and control public’s interactions. Projects such as the Millennium Park in Chicago, and Discovery Green in Houston, are divided into various areas and programmed with various activities,
such as water parks and restaurants and cafes for entertainment, leaving little room for assembly of any other kind than entertaining. The Chicago's Park Law for Millennium Park (section d) states that ‘the commissioner is authorized to enter into use agreements for the temporary use of space and facilities in the Park. The commissioner shall only enter into use agreements that the commissioner determines enhance and are consistent with the unique nature of the Park.’ \(^{14}\) This allows authorities to limit free speech assembly space on the sidewalks surrounding the perimeter of the park, on which protestors can only occupy half the width of the sidewalk to allow for everyday circulation, leaving the city park untouched from true democratic participation.

The other extreme in public space design is to refurbish open spaces with designed amenities that fulfill an appearance of public spaces. Veteran’s plaza in downtown Silver Spring, MD, originally a popular spot for the public known as ‘the turf’ scaped with fake plastic grass, brought many citizens of the city together to simply lounge about. In 2008 the fake grass was ripped out for a plaza to serve the community hall and town square, a project executed by Machado Silvetti, with benches and nice hard scaped space, with part of the program serving as an ice skating rink that is boarded up during the summer. Silver Spring’s Montgomery County Planning Directory Robert Stalin’s reaction to the new space says it all: “The new space will, by virtue of its location and the attraction of the shops on Ellsworth, be successful. Already, crowds are gathering to see the programmed events. All that’s missing is the spontaneity, the creative interpretation of the space that the turf generated. Frankly put, it is over designed.” \(^{15}\)

1.4.2 INCREASE IN SECURITY AND SURVEILLANCE

Not only are public plazas becoming less about public participation, they are allowing public spaces to be designed with controlled amenities that dictate who uses the space. Details for street furniture are gravitating towards privacy and security. Public benches are designed with midbars to prevent homeless from sleeping which in turn is compartmentalizing how the public engages with one another. Majority of the public sidewalk
space is given to bollards, bike racks and planters, in an attempt to create a barrier between the public street and pedestrian path. Extreme security bollards are cluttering and controlling circulation while serving as an eyesore. Public design is becoming more about privatization of public space and less about the role of an individual within it.

The undetected measures of networked surveillance, closed circuit televisions with facial recognition capabilities, and justified surveillance laws are all reinforcing a type of governmentality that speaks less in favor of public safety, and more about the control of the public within public spaces.

Mike Davis sums up the issue of the destruction of the public space, by stating that ‘the architectural privatization of the physical public sphere, more-over is complimented by a parallel restructuring of electronic space, as heavily guarded, pay access databases and subscription cable services expropriate the invisible agora.’ One could argue that for public architecture to occur the public sphere must first be accepting of it, but
EVENTS

1978 Public Key Encryption
Invention allowed to encrypt messages.

1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act
An act of Congress, which prescribes procedures for the physical and electronic surveillance and collection of “foreign intelligence information” between “foreign powers” and “agents of foreign powers.”

1989 World Wide Web
A system of interlinked hypertext documents accessed via the internet. With a web browser, one can view web pages that may contain text, images, videos, and other multimedia, and navigate between them via hyperlinks.

2001 September 11th Attacks
Series of four coordinated suicide attacks of terrorism upon the United States in New York City and the Washington, D.C. areas on September 11, 2001.

2001 USA Patriot Act
Uniting (and) strengthening America (by) providing appropriate tools required (to) intercept (and) obstruct terrorism act of 2001. Congress’s passage of the Patriot Act after 9/11 expanded the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (FBI) information-gathering authority to issue National Security Letters (NSL).

2002 CCTV on the National Mall
CCTV cameras installed and constantly monitored at all major monuments on the Washington D.C. National Mall.

2007 Protect America Act of 2007
A controversial amendment to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) that was signed into law on August 5, 2007. It removed the warrant requirement for government surveillance of foreign intelligence targets “reasonably believed” to be outside of the United States.

2008 Amendment to 1978 Surveillance Act
Repealed the Protect America Act, but replaced it with similar provisions in Title VII of FISA; expanding power of government surveillance with National Security Directive for full surveillance of internet by government.

March 2012 Strip Search
“The Supreme Court ruled this week that the Constitution does not prohibit the government from strip-searching people charged with even minor offenses. The court’s 5-4 ruling turns a deeply humiliating procedure — one most Americans would very much like to avoid — into a routine law-enforcement tactic.” - TIME

LAWS/ACTS

1978 FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SURVEILLANCE ACT
AN ACT OF CONGRESS, WHICH PRESCRIBES PROCEDURES FOR THE PHYSICAL AND ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE AND COLLECTION OF “FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION” BETWEEN “FOREIGN POWERS” AND “AGENTS OF FOREIGN POWERS”

2008 AMENDMENT TO 1978 SURVEILLANCE ACT
REPEALED THE PROTECT AMERICA ACT, BUT REPLACED IT WITH SIMILAR PROVISIONS IN TITLE VII OF FISA; EXPANDING POWER OF GOVERNMENT SURVEILLANCE WITH NATIONAL SECURITY DIRECTIVE FOR FULL SURVEILLANCE OF INTERNET BY GOVERNMENT

GOVERNANCE ASSOCIATED LAWS
Timeline of rising major laws and acts in recent decades that impose restrictions on individual’s freedom and have a direct impact on public spaces.
as recent events have shown that the public sphere is here with full force and are finding limitations in use of spaces for democratic participation.

1.4.3 PERMITTING FOR LIMITED SPACE
True and readily available public space for speech and protest is limited to 1/2 the sidewalk and occasionally a street lane only when not disrupting everyday circulation. However even these terms require permits and are usually monitored by the police. Many permit ordinances allow police and city officials to impose rules, especially for protest and demonstration events, regarding location, route, and allowable equipment. These impositions are usually disguised under reasons for ‘public safety’, allowing law enforcement to have independent policing standards. This combined with varying permitting requirements, depending on location, eventually results in eviction or termination of demonstrations.

With many plazas, parks and open spaces being privately owned or sponsored, this leaves city sidewalks and certain parts of streets that are generally allowed, but this is limited as one cannot obstruct everyday traffic, limiting rallies to small strips on portion of the pavement. Recently when Occupy Wall Street protesters encountered resistance from police at Wall Street, they moved their encampment nearby to Zuccotti Park, but they quickly learned that this is a privately owned public space with limited first amendment protection.

1.4.4 AD HOC RULES AND POLICING
Brookfield Properties, the developer that owns Zuccotti Park in exchange for zoning incentives, attempted to redefine the rules during the protestors encampment in hopes of ending their stay. However, because of lack of clarity in the rules, the assembly occupied the plaza until winter. This instance shows the ambiguous nature of how public spaces currently operate in the U.S., with ad hoc rules and struggles to provide use of space for free speech and assembly.

Also, under recent events it can be noted that regardless of ownership, whether publicly or privately owned; the police and government act independently of rights allowed to citizens in use of public space, with
ad hoc rules and reinterpretation of laws under the guise of ‘public safety’.

1.4.5 CURRENT AFFAIRS: REVIVED PUBLIC REALM

Richard Sennett made it clear that prior to formal investigations of public spaces, there must first be a need for a public realm. Now, at this point in history, there is and was a public realm, and the lack of public space for free speech was outrageously recognized. In the light of recent events reinforced by Occupy Wall Street protests, the problem of lack of true public space for free speech and assembly has been put forward. In the United States, people have the right to engage in public speech and assembly in open public spaces without unreasonable restrictions by the federal or state government. However, because of privately owned public spaces, and private-public partnerships, many of the public spaces have limitations on how and what the spaces can be used for.

1.5 REVISIT REPRESENTATION OF PUBLIC SPACE

From issues of lack of public space, to increasingly controlled and surveillance spaces, it becomes apparent that a new representation of public space and architecture must be approached within the discipline, in an effort to mend the city planning and role of architecture for democratic space. A space that questions the existing conditions and leverages certain asymmetrical relationships that have evolved with negotiated power relations of governance and the public.

A city emerges from a complex group of negotiations with tactile and abstract systems created and propelled by individual’s immersion within the grounds they occupy. City framework should allow for dynamic systems to evolve and in some way appropriate spaces for the unpredictable occurrences that could drastically change public’s habits and their dialogue with power. Public space and public architecture should act as an enabler for awareness of the city’s surroundings and operations.

INDEPENDENT POLICING STANDARDS

Whether request is placed by private or government groups, policing standards have their own independent methods to take care of situations that they consider a threat to public safety. Such as the case at UC Berkley in 2011 where police attacked a non-violent protest on campus, and now the university is responsible for the outcome, not the police.
The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 have resulted in rising securitized public spaces. Fears of future attacks have resulted in increased surveillance in spaces that were founded for America's democratic values such as the National Mall. These trends are bound to continue and increase in suffocating democratic spaces, unless the role of public architecture and its potentials are fully examined through the lens of built and symbolic architecture as political syntax on public form and governance. The National Mall, emblematic of democratic values, resonates with all the problems of evolved American democratic public space conditions and serves as an ideal site to test a public space that questions the existing balance between public architecture and the city.
CHAPTER TWO OUTLINE

From Tafuri’s Architecture and Utopia to Foucault’s Governmentality, the National Mall is an astounding representation of America’s evolving dialogue with planning and power all compounded into 324 acres of open space. From its arrival, at the turning point in history of American planning with separation of architecture from the city to its extreme measures of security that resonate issues of expanding biopolitics, the Mall speaks of the failures and success of capitalism and democracy. By examining the National Mall through its asymmetrical relationships it could reveal the possibilities of architecture discipline’s role in operating within sites based on contradictory values.

2.1 NATIONAL MALL INTRODUCTION

2.2 PLANNING CONDITIONS: THE HISTORICAL LENS
   2.2.1 CONTRADICTIONS IN SYMBOLS
   2.2.2 CONTRADICTIONS IN SYMBOLIC FORM
   2.2.3 CONTRADICTIONS IN PLANNING
   2.2.4 MALL’S GRID AND IMPACT ON FORM
   2.2.5 FLEXIBLE IDEALS

2.3 DEMOCRACY CONDITIONS COMPROMISED
   2.3.1 MALL TECHNOLOGY
   2.3.2 PROTEST VS. PERMITTING USE OF SPACE
   2.3.3 INCREASE IN SECURITY AND AD HOC LAWS
   2.3.4 BOUNDARY CONFUSION
   2.3.5 ISSUES OF PRIVATIZATION

2.4 MATTER OF CONTRADICTIONS
2.1 NATIONAL MALL INTRODUCTION

The National Mall is an astounding representation of America’s evolving dialogue with planning and power all compounded into 324 acres of open space. From its arrival, at the turning point in history of American planning in 1790s with rising concerns of separation of the role of architecture from the city to its extreme measures of security that resonate issues of expanding biopolitics, the Mall speaks of the failures and successes of democracy. By examining the National Mall through concerns of its planning, architecture and democratic conditions, it could reveal the possibilities of the architecture discipline’s role in operating within sites based on contradictory values, to render a space that responds to certain spatial oppositions.

2.2 PLANNING CONDITIONS: THE HISTORICAL LENS

2.2.1 CONTRADICTIONS IN SYMBOLS

Tafuri observes that the National Mall and Washington, DC, represent a ‘deliberately abstract collective symbol’ with stable and conventional principles, that are in contradiction to developing and industrial cities such as New York and Chicago. These symbols of governance, such as the ubiquitous state capitols and state capitol malls, are from classically inspired European architecture and planning of reason and nature, that were adopted by Jefferson for America in late 18th and early 19th century to serve as symbols of democratic institutions, offering an artificial visual stability in contrast to the uncertainty of America’s industrial nature. As Tafuri mentions ‘they are symbols of the American longing for something other than itself, terms of reference for a society continually terrified by the process it has itself set in motion and indeed considers irreversible.’ Thus the Mall and the city of Washington reside on contradictions from their initial conception, using classicism to situate itself as a preserved image of reason and democracy, in an attempt to separate itself from industrial development emblematic of America.
REDEFINED IDEOLOGIES
Over the course of the 20th century, alongside the rise of Modernism, America began to reevaluate its sense of history, from issues on slavery, women’s rights, to reasons for war. Classically inspired architecture could no longer represent America’s redefined ideologies.

2.2.2 CONTRADICTIONS IN SYMBOLIC FORM
Over the course of the 20th century, alongside the rise of Modernism, America began to reevaluate its sense of history, from issues on slavery, women’s rights, to reasons for war. Classically inspired architecture could no longer represent America’s redefined ideologies. The desire for a new representation was highlighted in the controversy of Jefferson’s Memorial. In the 1930s architect John Russell Pope was commissioned for the design, who presented yet another classically inspired building. Modernist architects and critics vehemently opposed such a proposal, and claimed this was not representative of Jefferson’s democratic values and was inappropriate for 1930s to memorialize him with a style that was not associated with current ideologies. Jefferson Memorial was thus the last classical building to reside on the Mall, followed by more modern buildings such as the flat-roofed Museum of American History and National Air and Space Museum.

With modernist ideals and social movements, many monuments, memorials and museums were proposed and built in the 20th century Mall, so many that the public and privately funded organizations for the National Mall became concerned about its potential cluttering. Series of agencies were established over the years by Congress, a discussion
for later, to undertake these numerous concerns. In response to the overcrowding of museums and memorials, in 2003 Congress declared the Mall ‘a substantially completed work of civic art’ and imposed a moratorium on the reserve portion of the mall. However with approval of congress many privately sponsored memorials and services have been accepted since then, and the controversy of overcrowding with narrow-interest museums continues to today.

As Tafuri points out, utopia of form is where all ideologies were and are invested, form is the only remaining utopia, ‘as a way of recovering the human totality through an ideal synthesis, as a way of embracing disorder through order’. The gridded plan of DC, which continues into the National Mall after the McMillian plan was adopted in 1901, has resulted in buildings with various types of forms. These are representative of America’s struggle with planning and architecture that commits to form and iconic buildings independent of program, as the only space for critical dialogue.

2.2.3 CONTRADICTIONS IN PLANNING

Manfredo Tafuri, an Italian architect and historian, published Architecture and Utopia in the mid 1970s at a time when Italy was suffering from great political turmoil and a declining economy. Tafuri was concerned with understanding the disappearance of ideological agendas, that of the dialectics of order and chaos and of the individual and collective that were explored in the art and Enlightenment. The 18th century Enlightenment architecture was ideological as it looked to reconstruct itself for the bourgeois city through reason, providing a balance between architecture and the city. However, with a fast growing population and a robust industry, new city planning resorted to the gridded network that kept pace with growing cities. This forced utopian ideals to insert its agendas in the architectural form, relying on an autonomous field of architecture which began an ongoing struggle between architecture and the city.

This struggle is highlighted in American democratic spaces of governance and most apparent in Washington DC, the center of America’s image of political exchange. Beginning in 1800, French Engineer Pierre Charles
L’Enfant’s plan for Washington, the first adopted plan by the government, laid out a gridded network of streets 10 miles square, centering the Nation’s Capitol as a physical embodiment of the newly ratified U.S. Constitution. The gridded plan is Tafuri’s contested example of America’s urgency. A network perpetuated by mode of production including, among many other drivers, production cycles, division of land, and land ownership. The use of a regular network of arteries was America’s response to providing a simple flexible support for an urban structure that allowed for continual transformation. This set the stage for the future of architectural form and its separation from urban planning.

To further elaborate on the struggle of representation, it is important to understand that Thomas Jefferson’s visions in the beginning of 19th century were of an agrarian decentralized democracy. Jefferson was specifically looking to classically inspired European planning and architecture of reason and nature, to be adopted as symbols of democratic institutions. His own sketch for the capital city was more akin to a Roman forum, and is reflected in his plan for University of Virginia. However he accepted L’Enfant’s artistic yet grandiose plan of radial boulevards on a gridded network, which invested in staggering assumptions about the future wealth and power of a new nation. Although the Constitution called for a Federal District “not exceeding ten miles square”, the city was laid out ten miles square on both sides, assuming a future population of 1 million, double L’Enfant’s hometown of Paris at 547,000, at a time when New York’s population was about 30,000. Thus, Washington DC became a city that embodied Jefferson’s agrarian ideals and L’Enfant’s artistic and French grand ideas. The Mall on the other hand, presented itself as the preserved ‘public void’ that resided in a city symbolic of democratic governance, surrounded by America’s industrious nature.

2.2.4 MALL’S GRID AND IMPACT ON FORM

The National Mall, emblematic of contradictory values in planning and form in a country that began its roots in industry, also highlights the country’s failures and successes in a democratic belief system, representative of events that incite conflict with evolving democratic values. The struggle
for architecture and planning with political ideals alongside social movements that are in stark contrast to the Mall’s preserved image, speak of the country’s struggle for roots, while the comprehension of its foundation is in constant flux.

After the conception of the L’Enfant classically inspired plan in 1791, 110 years later in 1901, post second industrial age during a sudden increase in the city’s population, Senator James McMillian organized the Senate Park Commission to undertake a new layout that proposed a radical open space, eradicating the designed botanic gardens from 1850s and other industrial facilities. The McMillian plan, based on the City Beautiful Movement, extended the Mall southward and westward over the former river beds for the future Lincoln Memorial and Jefferson Memorial. The plan also extended the highly efficient network of city streets into the National Mall, creating compartments (unknowingly) for future memorial and museum locations. Such a formulaic disruption highlights a pivotal point indicating that ideology in planning, even at a site symbolic of Nation’s democracy, has surrendered to ideologies of form.7

1801 McMillian Plan
The McMillian plan, based on the City Beautiful Movement, extended the Mall southward and westward over the former river beds for the future Lincoln Memorial and Jefferson Memorial. The plan also extended the highly efficient network of city streets into the National Mall, creating compartments (unknowingly) for future memorial and museum locations.
2.2.5 FLEXIBLE IDEALS

It's important to note that the National Mall's symbolic space resonates a constant flux of ideals. As the McMillian plan was near completion, with the arrival of two world wars followed by a cold war, the space of the National Mall depicted America's interests that resided in wartime. From 1915 the Mall was a vision of neglect with unkept gardens and landscape, and in 1918 the US Navy flanked both sides of the reflecting pool with 'temporary' concrete quarters for the US military. The quarters remained in place until the 1970s, after which the McMillian plan was completed in 1976. These episodes are characteristic of a Nation that desires to place symbolic ideals in architecture and planning, but is in conflict with ideals that reside in its industrial nature. These peripheral ideals are strong enough to disrupt a symbolic space with concrete quarters. However
disruptive, they show the flexible principles held by the Nation, and its desire to continuously revisit representation of symbolic spaces.

Another 110 years later, currently in 2011, the Trust for the National Mall, a non-profit organization, is privately funding the National Park Services government agency for requesting proposals to restore and improve the Mall at three dedicated locations, the Constitution Gardens, the Washington Monument Grounds, and Union Square. Congress cannot pay for the upkeep of the Mall because ‘The National Park Service is facing a $9 billion repair and maintenance backlog for all national parks and an estimated $450 million for the National Mall’ and the Trust for National Mall ‘cannot wait for Congress to restore America’s Front Yard.’ The shortlist that was recently announced in October of 2011 comprises contemporary architecture and landscape firms such as Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Weiss/Manfredi, and the international firm Ten Arquitectos. The final designs are due May 2012. Interestingly, because of the 2003 controversial moratorium on memorials, the Request For Proposal meeting asked designers to not use the word ‘memorial’ or ‘monuments’ but gave them the freedom to propose what they saw fit within their agenda.

The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), unlike the Trust for the National Mall, is a federal government planning agency for the National Capital Region. In 1997 it drafted a vision called ‘Extending the Legacy: Planning America’s Capital for the 21st Century’ in response to the concerns of overcrowding on the Mall. ‘A long-range vision to drive federal investment in memorials, museums, and public buildings into all quarters of the city’. This will allow new museums and memorials to be built outward in the city along the extended corridors radiating from the Capitol. The vision reinforces Congress’ 2003 Reserve rule, and identifies 100 potential sites beyond the Mall for future memorials and museums.

The two current proposals show the agency of a private company that is able to provide funds for improvements on the Mall within a tight schedule, while NCPC, a government agency, has been planning its vision since 1997. However regardless of the scope, renewal of the Mall, now
occurring every 110 years, speaks of America’s ongoing dialogue of the need for representation within modern politics, with some naivete about requesting propositions fitted for the next 100 years.

2.3 DEMOCRATIC CONDITIONS COMPROMISED

2.3.1 MALL TECHNOLOGY

Not only does the Mall express contradictory values through form and planning, its artificial visual stability of an adopted yet preserved image masks the underlying issue of an un-democratic territory comprised of unstable boundaries, ad-hoc laws, and privatized like spaces that distort the otherwise democratic message embodied by the symbols of governance. The Mall is representative of America’s technology of governmentality with rising and evolving intricate laws, codes, and committees created in an attempt to keep an industrial based democratic machine running. As Foucault mentions ‘liberalism resonates with the principle: “One always governs too much”-or, at any rate, one always must suspect that one governs too much.’

PROTEST ON THE MALL

The long history of protests show a stark contrast of free speech and democracy with the government and its confrontational policing standards.
2.3.2 PROTEST VS PERMITTING USE OF SPACE

With the rise of social movements in the 20th century the Mall served as the highly visible iconic open space for civil protests. However, the long history of protests show a stark contrast of free speech and democracy with the government and its confrontational policing standards. The combination of both have resulted in newly adjusted laws post disputes, such as protests of 25 people or more on the National Mall require a permit, as does any ‘event’ that requires streets to be closed. The Metropolitan Police also lost an important court case in 2003 in which they acted inappropriately against the IMF protestors in 2000, by infiltrating group meetings in private quarters and preemptively arresting protestors.14

The police are now required to allow permit-less marches in the street as long as they stay within a single lane. Sidewalks are public property in which protestors can picket without disturbing everyday circulation, but some activists have experienced severe police harassment for protesting outside of private businesses. An entire 12 page section of the Code of Federal Regulations for the National Park, regulates the ‘location of protests and the kinds of allowable actions such as standing or moving’,15 with a recent addition on June 2011 that does not allow dancing near the National Monuments, ruled by the U.S. Appeals Court. As more lawsuits are filed and more concerns are expressed by citizens, the Code of Federal Regulations chapter grows to express the convoluted technology of governmentality.

With rising intricacy of codes what is further intriguing is how the complexity of regulation has resulted in the professionalization of protest organizing. ‘Like wedding or convention coordinators, professional consultants are now often employed to negotiate the permit process, meet with police forces, arrange for stages, sound systems, preparation and clean up,...protest appears fully regularized, fully incorporated into the businesses of the nation-state.’16

2.3.3 INCREASE IN SECURITY AND AD HOC LAWS

Security measures drastically changed on the National Mall post 9-11, with extreme protection of monuments with use of bollards and barriers,
concerning many citizens about the Mall’s appearance and access. In March 2002 round-the-clock video surveillance was installed at all the major monuments by The National Park Service without any input from public.\(^{17}\) Many civil libertarian groups objected to the method and the ambiguity of the duration the surveillance was installed, arguing that it was not representative of democratic values of free speech and has the potential to discourage demonstrations that have occurred for decades on the Mall. With concerns that resonate Bentham’s panopticism, which allows the government to operate efficiently, and Foucault’s observations of the current disciplinary society, which question the extent of governmentality’s control and observation over the citizen, the Mall is representative of a complicated balancing act of liberty and protection for and against the citizens.

2.3.4 BOUNDARY CONFUSION

The National Mall is maintained by numerous governmental agencies, including many subcommittees and other additional committees under House and Senate. This complicated string of committees is reflected in the unclear definition of the boundaries of the National Mall, with four different definitions by the National Park Services alone. In 2003, a Congressional Research Service report concluded that in fact there is no statutory definition or map of the National Mall.\(^{18}\) Currently there exists five citizens organizations that advocate their own values over the Mall. Much of the frustration upheld by these organizations is that Congress is not reacting fast enough to restore maintenance problems and/or to reconsider new representation. This reflects the Nation’s operations to continuously set-up committees and sub-committees to regulate popular opinion. Over the course of this regulation it becomes difficult to pinpoint the reasons and control authored to each committee, which is echoed in government’s lack of maintenance of the Mall, that has resulted in the need for public to implement additional organizations.
2.3.5 ISSUES OF PRIVATIZATION

The obscurity of the boundaries has allowed for governmental loopholes and flexibility for privately funded buildings to occur, making it difficult to define true public space and the ownership of immediately adjacent open spaces. For example, the Smithsonian recently submitted a statement to the National Park Services that it was concerned about the current design efforts funded by The Trust for National Mall and their intrusion on its open space, which hosts various types of festivals.19 During the construction and restoration efforts by L’Enfant and McMillian, all memorials and monuments were sponsored by Congress. However, from the late 1970s Congress authored private memorials on the empty space adjacent to the Lincoln Memorial, such as, but not limited to, the Vietnam Veterans
Memorial and the soon to be built Museum of African American History and Culture, which was approved after the 2003 ‘moratorium’. Interestingly, the flexible legislation, driven by certain motives of monetary needs and of democratic representation, with desires to be diplomatic and inclusive, has allowed the epidemic of privatized public space to creep into the symbolic public space of democracy.

2.4 MATTER OF CONTRADICTIONS

The National Mall is a machine of incongruity that performs as a symbolic civic space, representative of multiple American spaces of governance. The conditions of Washington, DC and the National Mall, from its artificial stability through its image of classicism to its gridded network of streets resulting in separation of architecture from the city, show the contradictory and fluctuating ideals held by the Nation. These are further articulated in inconsistent democratic values expressed through a technology of governmentality comprised of intricate laws, codes and committees that regulate and run the complicated apparatus representative of democracy. At the time Tafuri wrote Architecture and Utopia, he argues that architecture no longer has a place in salvaging ideologies, but perhaps ideology can reside within a form that recognizes surrounding contradictions accumulated from unforeseen events. These events of modern politics, such as terrorist threats and evolving codes, are pushing the limits of government’s role with preemptive measures that are concerns for liberty. It is precisely at this pressure point in America’s history, revealed by the Occupy Movement and its battle with public space, combined with issues of permits, codes, and regulations, that ideologies can be revisited with form that operate with the city. It becomes a matter of accepting the current embellishments and potential failures, and actively dealing with it directly and productively. Through the act of ‘separation’ and ‘enclosure’, creatively subverting codes that defy democratic values, the form’s dialogue within the modern city can be regained to reveal the inconsistencies that reside currently in open democratic spaces.
OWNERSHIP: PRIVATIZED MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS FROM 1970s

NATIONAL MALL

LATE 1970s: CONGRESS AUTHORIZED PRIVATE SPONSORS TO CONSTRUCT NEW MEMORIALS / MUSEUMS
LOCATIONS ARE PRIVATELY SELECTED AND PROPOSED TO CONGRESS

PRIVATELY FUNDED PROJECTS 2012
TRUST FOR THE NATIONAL MALL IS PRIVATELY FUNDING THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICES
GOVERNMENT AGENCY FOR REQUESTING PROPOSALS TO RESTORE AND IMPROVE THE MALL AT THREE DEDICATED LOCATIONS, THE CONSTITUTION GARDENS, THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT GROUNDS, AND UNION SQUARE. CONGRESS CANNOT PAY FOR THE UPKEEP OF THE MALL BECAUSE "THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IS FACING A $9 BILLION REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE BACKLOG FOR ALL NATIONAL PARKS AND AN ESTIMATED $450 MILLION FOR THE NATIONAL MALL." AND THE TRUST FOR NATIONAL MALL "CANNOT WAIT FOR CONGRESS TO RESTORE AMERICA'S FRONT YARD."10

BUILT:
1. VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL 1982
2. KOREAN WAR VETERAN'S MEMORIAL 1992
3. UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM - PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP 1993
4. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL 1997
5. GEORGE MASON MEMORIAL 2000
6. WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL 2004
7. NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN - PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP 2004
8. MLK JR MEMORIAL 2011

TO BE BUILT:
A. NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE
B. VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL VISITORS CENTER

PROPOSED:
THE NATIONAL WOMEN’S HISTORY MUSEUM
NATIONAL LATINO MUSEUM
CASE STUDY: IMPROMPTU PROTEST COMMUNITIES
FORM OF PROTEST THAT HAS OCCURRED THROUGHOUT AMERICAN HISTORY OF PROTEST

RESILIENT PROGRAM
Certain types of program among these types of impromptu protest communities have reoccurred over history and are types of program that show their resilience over time in favor of democratic and public participation.

BRIEF TIMELINE OF SIGNIFICANT DEMONSTRATIONS ON THE NATIONAL MALL

1894
COXE’S ARMY MARCH
MARCH BY UNEMPLOYED AMERICAN WORKERS

1913
WOMEN’S SUFFRAGE MARCH

1925
KU KLUX KLAN MARCH

1932
BONUS ARMY MARCH
NATIONAL MALL
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
TENTS
SPECIALIZED GROUPS
MANAGEMENT AND USE
(LAUNDRY, COOKING, READING, NEWSPAPER, POST OFFICE)

20,000 PPL
US ARMY ATTACKS ITS OWN ARMY PROTESTORS
1963
MARCH ON WASHINGTON

1968
RESURRECTION CITY
NATIONAL MALL (POOR PEOPLE’S CAMPAIGN)
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
TENTS
SPECIALIZED GROUPS
MANAGEMENT AND USE
(MAYOR, LAUNDRY, SCHOOLS, COOKING, DAYCARE, ETC)
3,000–4,000 PPL (ENTIRE MVMT 7,000 AT PEAK)
EVICTED BY NATIONAL PARK SERVICES
IN DC PUBLIC SPACES

1971
1995
1996
2000
2010

1996
IMMIGRANT RIGHTS MARCH

2000
MILLENIUM MARCH

2010
GLEN BECK RALLY

300–400 PPL
EVICTED BY NATIONAL PARK SERVICES
IN DC PUBLIC SPACES

2011
OWS
NATIONAL MALL
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
TENTS
SPECIALIZED GROUPS
MANAGEMENT AND USE
(NEWSPAPER, COOKING, COMPUTER HUB, POLICING ETC)

300–400 PPL
EVICTED BY NATIONAL PARK SERVICES
IN DC PUBLIC SPACES
ACT OF SEPARATION FROM THE CITY CAN SERVE AS LIBERATION FROM POWER FOR THE PUBLIC
Rising restrictions of public spaces has robbed the balance that once existed within the city’s democratic spaces with use of program, form and symbolism. Unforeseen events of modern politics, such as terrorist threats and evolving codes, are pushing the limits of government’s role with preemptive measures that are concerns for liberty with direct impact on democratic spaces. It is precisely at this pressure point in America’s history, revealed by the Occupy Movement and its battle with public space, combined with issues of permits, codes, and regulations, that ideologies can be revisited within form that operates for the city.

These concerns are amplified on the National Mall, a machine of incongruity that performs as a symbolic civic space, representative of multiple American spaces of governance. These spaces are further articulated with inconsistent democratic values expressed through a technology of governmentality comprised of intricate laws, codes and committees that regulate and run the complicated apparatus representative of democracy.

While the Mall cannot be upheld as an egalitarian field, objects however can substantiate or infuse a democratic field within. **Through the act of ‘separation’ and ‘enclosure’ the form’s dialogue within the modern city can be regained to reveal the inconsistencies that reside currently in open democratic spaces.**

This thesis proposes an ironically privatized protected space that infuses within the program a response to all major impositions of public spaces as a method of exposing unstable conditions.

The role of form has the potential to communicate undetected differences, that of rising restrictions that stifle use of public spaces versus use of space as true open democratic spaces.
3 ABSURD MACHINE COMMUNICATES

CHAPTER THREE OUTLINE

3.1 ABSURD MACHINE INTRODUCTION

3.2 EXISTING SYMBOLIC FORMS AND MEANING
   3.2.1 CLASSICAL FORMS ADOPTED IN AMERICA FOR DEMOCRACY
   3.2.2 CLASSICAL ORDER: COMMON TYPES TO METHODS
   3.2.3 CLASSICAL ORDER: COMMON ELEMENTS

3.3 REDEFINITION OF SYMBOLS
   3.3.1 LOCATION FOR A VIEWING MACHINE
   3.3.2 APPROPRIATING AND REDEFINING SYMBOLS: FORMAL MOVES AS CRITIQUE
   3.3.3 COMMUNICATION OF ABSTRACTED SYMBOLS: AT SCALE OF THE NATIONAL MALL
   3.3.4 COMMUNICATION OF ABSTRACTED SYMBOLS: CONTEXT DIAGRAMS

3.4 RESPONSE TO COMPROMISED CONTEXT
   3.4.1 MANAGEMENT AND USE AS A DIALOGUE
   3.4.2 SITE MANIPULATIONS FOR COMPROMISED FIELD: SITE PLAN
   3.4.3 COMMUNICATION OF MACHINE TO THE MALL: REVERSE SURVEILLANCE
   3.4.4 COMMUNICATION OF MACHINE TO THE CITY

3.5 DIALOGUE CONSTRUCTED THROUGH SPACE
   3.5.1 FUNCTIONS OF THE SPACE: PLANS
   3.5.2 COMMUNICATION OF ABSTRACTED SYMBOLS: THROUGH MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION
   3.5.3 PUBLIC’S VOICE WITHOUT THE PUBLIC
       OPERATIONS OF THE MACHINE THROUGH MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION: SECTION + SECTION PERSPECTIVE
   3.5.4 PUBLIC’S CAPACITY WITHIN THE MACHINE
   3.5.5 MACHINE: OCCUPIED / UN-OCCUPIED
       - SCENARIO 1: CROWD OF DISSENT
       - SCENARIO 2: IMPROMPTU COMMUNITY
       - SCENARIO 3: OPPOSING INTEREST GROUPS
       - SCENARIO 4: VIGIL / MEDITATION
       - SCENARIO 5: SUBVERTING RESTRICTIONS
3.1 ABSURD MACHINE INTRODUCTION

This proposal investigates compromised symbols that can be appropriated and redefined to provide functions and representation of conditions the National Mall distorts. The proposal infuses within the program responses to all major impositions of public spaces as a method of exposing the unstable conditions of democratic values residing on comprised fields.

The National Mall and other American places of governances are carrier of symbolic architectural references from Classical Antiquity. This is no coincidence as this period formed the beginnings of democracy, free speech and assembly, and exhibited a balance between conditions of democratic program, form, and symbolism. These adopted symbolic architectural elements preserve an image of stability for America that mask compromised territories with underlying issues that infringe public's democratic participation in public spaces.

To propose a form that resides on the Mall, classical elements symbolic of democratic governance referenced on the Mall are examined to create a machine that embodies meaning for future and current forces.

The purpose is not to render an ideal democratic space, but an independently operating machinelike space that highlights the context’s incongruous relationships.

The form and use of space, from materials, structure, and program, are redefined to communicate the asymmetrical relationships of public’s dialogue with governance in open democratic spaces.
3.2 EXISTING SYMBOLIC FORMS AND MEANING

3.2.1 CLASSICAL FORMS ADOPTED IN AMERICA FOR DEMOCRACY

These symbols of governance, such as the ubiquitous state capitols and state capitol malls, are from classically inspired European architecture and planning of reason and nature, that were adopted by Jefferson for America in late 18th and early 19th century to serve as symbols of democratic institutions. As these symbols now reside on a compromise field with conditions that speak of undemocratic values, their role and intent is questioned.
CHAPTER 3: ABSURD MACHINE | Communicating Relationships

Fig 3.1

Salem, OR
Albany, NY
Sacramento, CA
Nashville, TN
3.2.2 CLASSICAL ORDER: COMMON TYPES TO METHODS

Classical order referenced are examined to better understand their original methods and meaning.

PROPORTIONS + SITE LINES
DORIC ORDER IN CLASSICAL GREECE

GOLDEN MEAN AND ENTAISIS
- CALCULATED FOR PERSPECTIVE (ACROPOLIS)
- FOR OPTICAL ILLUSION (ENTASIS) - ON COLUMNS AND PLAN

CONSTRUCTION ORDER
DORIC ORDER TRANSITIONS FROM WOOD TO STONE

FIG 3.2
COMMON TYPES
DORIC ORDER IN RELIGIOUS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN CLASSICAL GREECE

THOLOS

HEXASTYLE PERipteral

STOA

GYMNASiUM

THEATER, MEGALOPOLIS

FIG 33 PNYX ASSEMBLY

ASSEMBLY
3.2.3 CLASSICAL ORDER: COMMON ELEMENTS

Classical order referenced are examined to better understand their original methods and meaning.
**COLONNADE**
Sequence of columns supporting the entablature and roof. Classical columns are built according to the Classical Orders of Architecture.

**PLINTH (STYLOBATE)**
Is the top step of the crepidoma, the stepped platform on which colonnades of temple columns are placed (it is the floor of the temple).

**CELLA**
A room at the centre of the building, usually containing a cult image or statue representing the particular deity honored in the temple.

**PEDIMENT**
Triangular section found above the horizontal structure (entablature), typically supported by columns. The gable end of the pediment is surrounded by the cornice moulding. The tympanum, or triangular area within the pediment, was often decorated with sculptures and reliefs demonstrating scenes of Greek mythology or allegorical figures.

**FRIEZE**
Member of an entablature between the architrave and the cornice or any horizontal band used for decorative purposes.

**COLUMN**
Classical columns are built according to the Classical Orders of Architecture. 1. The base: most columns rest on a round or square base. 2. The shaft: the main part of the column, the shaft, may be smooth, fluted (grooved), or carved with designs. 3. The capital: the top of the column may be simple or elaborately decorated. The capital of the column supports the upper portion of a building, called the entablature.

**ENTABLATURE**
The entablature is the upper portion of a building, above the columns and below the roof. The entablature has three main parts: Architrave, Frieze, and Cornice.

**ARCHITRAVE**
The architrave is lowest part of an entablature. Resting directly on the capitals (tops) of the columns, the architrave supports Frieze and the Cornice.
3.3 REDEFINITION OF SYMBOLS

3.3.1 LOCATION FOR A
VIEWING MACHINE

BEAUX ARTS AXIS TWIST

The proposed space is located in a prominent place, anchoring itself through framed views to powerful symbols of governance on the Mall. An extension of the beaux arts axis and classical attention to views and site lines.
3.3.2 APPROPRIATING AND REDEFINING SYMBOLS: FORMAL MOVES AS CRITIQUE

Recognizable Classical Symbols and Orders are appropriated and redefined as they no longer represent their original intent as democratic institutions. These formal moves then offer a new meaning, to provide functions and representation of conditions the National Mall distorts. A major component in redefining these symbols is taking the most recognizable and repeated facade of governance, and having each abstraction, with classical order and its meaning in mind, serving as a critique of current power relations.
TAKING MOST OBVIOUS/APPARENT FACADE THAT WAS RE-ADOPTED THROUGHOUT AMERICA TO SERVE AS SYMBOLS OF DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE.

REDEFINED SYMBOL: FROM SYMBOL OF GOVERNANCE TO SYMBOL FOR POWER OF PUBLIC, CO-OPTED FOR NEW MEANING OF EVOLVING DEMOCRACY. IMPLYING THAT THE ORIGINAL SYMBOL IS UNSTABLE.

BALANCING POINT: THE PUBLIC SPACE, BASED OFF THE REDEFINED SYMBOL, IS A ‘WELL BALANCED MACHINE’ THAT RENEGOTIATES POWER RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND GOVERNANCE.

HUMAN SCALE: ON MALL THE APPROACH IS FROM THE FRONT TO A SOLID STRUCTURE OF GOVERNANCE ON A BASE, HERE THE NEW SYMBOL APPROACH IS FROM BELOW TO ASCEND TO TOP FOR PLACE OF DEMOCRACY; THE DEMOCRATIC SPACE HOVERS OVER COMPROMISED FIELD, AS PUBLIC ASCENDS WITHIN THEY BECOME A POWERFUL VOICE OF THE COLLECTIVE PUBLIC.

EXTRUDING CELLA FROM DIETY TO PUBLIC: EXTRUDING THE NEW SYMBOL OF DEMOCRACY – ORIGINALLY A PLACE TO HOLD DIETY IN A CELLA IS NOW A HOLDER FOR DEMOCRATIC PUBLIC VALUES.

LOFTING THE SYMBOLS: THE ENCLOSURE, THE SPACE IN BETWEEN, REPRESENTS THE EVOLVING RELATIONSHIP OF PUBLIC’S ROLE WITH GOVERNANCE.


FRIEZE: ORIGINALLY A PLACE FOR MYTHOLOGICAL STORIES, AMPLIFIES THE PUBLIC’S AND SPACE’S MESSAGE WITH USE OF PROJECTION.
3.3.2 APPROPRIATING AND REDEFINING SYMBOLS: 
FORMAL MOVES AS CRITIQUE

Recognizable Classical Symbols and Orders are appropriated and redefined as they no longer represent their original intent as democratic institutions. These formal moves then offer a new meaning, to provide functions and representation of conditions the National Mall distorts. A major component in redefining these symbols is taking the most recognizable and repeated facade of governance, and having each abstraction, with classical order and its meaning in mind, serving as a critique of current power relations.
COLONNADE
ORIGINALLY TO SCREEN THE PLACE OF SANCTUARY, HERE SCREENS THE PUBLIC’S PLACE FROM EXTREME GOVERNANCE

COLONNADE AND LOFT TRANSPARENCY:
THE COLONNADE AND LOFT AS ONE FORM OPERATE AS A PHYSICAL MATERIAL SCREEN TO REPRESENT THE INSTABILITY OF THE SYMBOLS OF GOVERNANCE; ALLOWING THE PUBLIC TO SEE FUNCTIONS OF PUBLIC SPACE FROM OUTSIDE AND BELOW

FRAMING EXPLICIT VIEWS:
USING THE UPSIDE DOWN FACADE PROFILE TO CUT FRAMED VIEWS TO POWERFUL SYMBOLS OF GOVERNANCE ON THE MALL, CREATING THE INHABITABLE PUBLIC SPACE WITH EXPLICIT VIEWS THAT IMPLY A ‘REVERSE SURVEILLANCE’.

EXPOSING INSTABILITY VIA CONSTRUCTION METHOD:
EXPOSING THE INSTABILITY OF CURRENT SYMBOLS BY MAKING THE ABSTRACTED SYMBOLS OF GOVERNANCE AS SCREEN MATERIALS AND THE INHABITABLE PUBLIC VIEW BARS STRUCTURAL. (THE SCREEN SKIN BECOMES A DIGITAL BOARD TO PROJECT MESSAGES TO ACT AS THE NEW FRIEZE.)
3.3.3 Communication of Abstracted Symbols: At Scale of the National Mall

A critique of what existing Classical Symbols represent on the Mall is reinforced by abstracted symbols that communicate at the scale of the large field of the Mall, residing in opposition to the undemocratic conditions that currently reside on the Mall.
CHAPTER 3: ABSURD MACHINE | COMMUNICATING RELATIONSHIPS

SYMBOLS ABSTRACTED

COMMUNICATES

PLINTH

PROFILE FRAMES VIEW

CELLA

COLONNADE 4 : 9

EXTERIOR FORM SCREENS

INTERIOR FORM IS INHABITABLE

PUBLIC SPACE (FROM CUT VIEWS)

PLINTH

FACADE AS CRITIQUE

ENCLOSED VIEW BARS

PROFILE FRAMES VIEW

FACADE AS CRITIQUE

VIEW BAR CIRCULATION AS INHABITABLE SPACE: FOR SPECIFIC EVENT AND EXPLICIT VIEW FOR PUBLIC WITHIN

BODY COMMUNICATES TO FIELD OF THE NATIONAL MALL: THE INSTABILITY OF GOVERNANCE THROUGH REDEFINED SYMBOLS

BODY COMMUNICATES TO FIELD OF THE NATIONAL MALL
3.3.4 Communication of Abstracted Symbols: At Scale of the National Mall: Context Diagrams

The body of the machine from a distance communicates a formal critique residing on a filed that leverages monumental forms and long distances as a display of power. The large field is expansive but the form operates within that field, residing in opposition to the undemocratic conditions, offering just enough abstraction appropriate for the scale of the field and its monuments. A closer view reveals of its difference through use of materials, details and construction.
MACHINE AS TRUE SCALE WITH MONUMENTS
3.4 RESPONSE TO COMPROMISED CONTEXT

3.4.1 MANAGEMENT AND USE AS A DIALOGUE

The intent of the proposal is not focused on rendering an ideal democratic space, but one that questions public’s evolving dialogue with governance and power in open spaces while exposing their asymmetrical relationships, looking at all types of impositions with critique. The management and use of the building is focused on responding to those conditions, while creatively subverting and leveraging restrictions imposed by codes and regulations that defy democratic values.
1. RESPONSE TO OWNERSHIP/PRIVATIZATION

The building is privatized, therefore requiring NPS to consult them first regarding any program introduction near the site, as they do with current privately funded museums and monuments on the mall. And like other privately owned public spaces in America, the building’s operations are private, setting its own rules and codes, making it difficult for NPS to intervene with its operations.

Building Boundary
Marks the boundary to enter into the ‘protected’ (privatized) public space.

Privatized
The building is privatized, therefore requiring NPS to consult them first regarding any program introduction near the site, as they do with current privately funded museums and monuments on the mall. And like other privately owned public spaces in America, the building’s operations are private, setting its own rules and codes, making it difficult for NPS to intervene with its operations.

2. RESPONSE TO SURVEILLANCE

Off Grid
When within the ‘public space’ the public is free of surveillance.

Data / Information
Data and information access will be available - but no information will be stored - and no browsing cache created. Public will have access to current topics and issues including internationally.

Broadcast
Public can only broadcast live from within the space.

3. RESPONSE TO LAWS AND BOUNDARIES

Use of space by public (critique proposal)
- The proposal invest in power of a good public and is managed and controlled by the public.
- There will be no advance booking.
- Protest and dissent will have unlimited time set as situations progress.
- Gatherings can occur for 24 hours and continue unless another group needs the space after 24 hour mark.
- No policing and no security.

Boundary/Entrance
Sloped entrance marks the boundary of the enclosed public space.

No private funding
After it is built, no private entity can ever control it.

Laws
No laws can be imposed; management and use by the public.

4. GENERAL OPERATIONS

Audible to the mall
A tracking device will set to broadcast or ‘bullhorn’ the public’s voice when a certain decibel of unison is reached.

24 hour use of space
Managed and maintained by public.

Special interest groups
Each bar can operate separately to allow meetings and gatherings of various interest groups simultaneously, but can only broadcast when in unison.
3.42 SITE MANIPULATIONS FOR COMPROMISED FIELD:
SITE PLAN

The intent of the proposal is not focused on rendering an ideal democratic space, but one that questions public’s evolving dialogue with governance and power in open spaces while exposing their asymmetrical relationships. The management and use of the building is focused on responding to those conditions, while creatively subverting and leveraging restrictions imposed by codes and regulations that defy democratic values.

**RESPONSE TO PERMITTING**

**GROUND CIRCULATION**

**THE COMPROMISED FIELD AT GROUND**
THE BLOCK IS ERODED TO CRITIQUE THE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE YET LIMITED USE OF HALF A PUBLIC SIDEWALK AND ONE ROAD LANE AS AN ‘ALLOWED’ PUBLIC SPACE FOR FREE SPEECH AND ASSEMBLY (STILL REQUIRING A PERMIT IN MOST CASES)

**BUILDING DISENGAGES GROUND**

CRITIQUE OF EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS:
ON MALL THE APPROACH FOR ALL MONUMENTS IS FROM THE FRONT TO A SOLID STRUCTURE OF GOVERNANCE ON A BASE; HERE THE NEW SYMBOL APPROACH IS FROM BELOW TO ASCEND TO TOP FOR PLACE OF DEMOCRACY, THE DEMOCRATIC SPACE HOVERS OVER THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE COMPROMISED FIELD AND AS PUBLIC ASCENDS WITHIN, THEY BECOME A POWERFUL VOICE OF THE COLLECTIVE PUBLIC
3.4.3 COMMUNICATION OF MACHINE TO THE MALL: REVERSE SURVEILLANCE

The view bars that operate as the habitable interior open public space, use the profile of the new symbol to frame views to major monuments on the Mall, creating a constant dialogue with relationships that this machine is in response to and in conflict with.
EXPLICIT VIEWS: BEAUX ARTS TWIST
FOUR VIEW BARS TO MAJOR MONUMENTS AND SYMBOLS USING PROFILE OF THE NEW SYMBOL
3.4.4 COMMUNICATION OF MACHINE TO THE CITY

The new space resides at the intersection of two major streets on the Mall that continue deeper into L'Enfant’s planned city. This location allows for any functions this space offers to be highly visible and accessible, while creating opportunities for unexpected disturbances with everyday drivers and pedestrians. The building is visible not just from the Mall but also from the city as a 24 hour operating machine that could allow for a dialogue with the city’s inhabitants.
FIG 3.3

AT INTERSECTION OF MAJOR STREETS

W. CITY AVE (MAJOR ST)

16TH ST NW

INDEPENDENCE AVE SW (MAJOR ST)

FIG 3.3
3.5 DIALOGUE CONSTRUCTED THROUGH SPACE

3.5.1 FUNCTIONS OF THE SPACE: PLANS

The machine includes certain functions that are resilient overtime and necessary for various uses of the space, such as assembly halls and open meeting spaces. The building is also equipped with programs and functions such as plumbing for restrooms and kitchen, storage, structure to pitch cover and elevators.

SPATIAL IMPLICATIONS
CREATED BY THE FOUR VIEW BARS AND COLONNADE
CHAPTER 3: ABSURD MACHINE | COMMUNICATING RELATIONSHIPS
3.5 DIALOGUE CONSTRUCTED THROUGH SPACE

3.5.1 FUNCTIONS OF THE SPACE: PLANS

The machine includes certain functions that are resilient overtime and necessary for various uses of the space, such as assembly halls and open meeting spaces. The building is also equipped with programs and functions such as plumbing for restrooms and kitchen, storage, structure to pitch cover and elevators.

As a diagram, it also highlights the recalibration of the classical temple plan and order, from the colonnade that originally screened the cella that housed a deity, to now the colonnade and cella as one component that screen the inhabitable public space.
CHAPTER 3: ABSURD MACHINE | COMMUNICATING RELATIONSHIPS
3.5.2 COMMUNICATION OF ABSTRACTED SYMBOLS: THROUGH MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION

A critique of what existing Classical Symbols represent on the Mall is further communicated through the use of materials and construction as a response to the compromised democratic conditions that currently reside on the Mall.

The form and use of space, from materials, structure, and program, are redefined to communicate the asymmetrical relationships of public’s dialogue with governance in open democratic spaces.
MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION

COLONNADE AND CELLA SCREEN: is constructed of steel structure carrying perforated metal panels. Up close it appears as a transparent structure to highlight the symbols' compromised image of stability and at a distance it appears solid to fit with its context. It does not however serve as the supporting structure for the public space.

INHABITABLE PUBLIC SPACE STRUCTURAL AS ANCHORED PLATE GIRDER: the inhabitable public space is independently structural, relying on part of one view bar as a massive plate girder that carries the load of all other bars, conveying the strength of public's power.
3.5.3 PUBLIC’S VOICE WITHOUT THE PUBLIC: OPERATIONS OF THE MACHINE THROUGH MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION

The Machine’s operations through materials and construction constantly communicate the public’s voice without necessarily being occupied with the public. Retractable stairs, assembly space platforms, panels shaped the profile of the opposing view (such as white house panels), all offer control and communication for the public. Also recapturing the field’s original intent within the view bar as a wall paper concept through use of graphic concrete, and offering public a redefined concept of the Frieze with spaces to project messages or current news, all communicate to the level of the Mall.
3.5.3 Public’s voice
Without the public: operations of the machine through materials and construction
Storage is embedded between plate girder and wall.
3.5.3 Public's Voice
Without the Public: Operations of the Machine through Materials and Construction
3.5.3 Public's voice without the public:

Operations of the Machine through materials and construction

The Machine’s operations through materials and construction constantly communicate the public’s voice without necessarily being occupied with the public. Retractable stairs, assembly space platforms, panels shaped the profile of the opposing view (such as white house panels), all offer control and communication for the public. Also recapturing the field’s original intent within the view bar as a wall paper concept through use of graphic concrete, and offering public a redefined concept of the Frieze with spaces to project messages or current news, all communicate to the level of the Mall.
PLATE GIRDER anchored to GROUND

THE PUBLIC VIEW
BAR ITSELF - A major structure for all inhabitable public view bars / SPACE

COLOUNADE AND CELIA
CONSTRUCTED OF METAL SCREEN PANELS-
REALIZING THE INSTABILITY OF THE SYMBOLS OF GOVERNANCE AND ITS OPERATION

SUPPORTED BEYOND
PITCHCOVER SUPPORTS EMBEDDED FOR PITCHING LIGHT CANVAS, TO PROTECT FROM THE ELEMENTS
3.5.4 Public’s Capacity Within the Machine

The space holds a large and monumental interior for various types of use in creating a dialogue with the exterior, inhabitable spaces of about 55,000 SF within and above the view bars alone.

The following scenarios only exhibit the endless possibilities with the provided functions. However the machine itself is always communicating only one precise message of its dispute with compromised relationships.
TYPES OF USE TO VOICE

CEREMONY / VIGIL
INSTALLATION / EXHIBITION
demonstration
RALLY
MARCH
STRIKE
PICKET
SIT-IN
CAMP-IN
BOYCOTT
CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE
RIOT

DENSITY CALCULATIONS

MAX DENSITY FOR STANDING AND MOVING
10 PEOPLE / 18.75 SQ FEET

AVAILABLE SPACE: VIEW BARS (29,333 PEOPLE)

GROUND FLOOR (WITHIN THE APPARATUS BOUNDARY)
(16,800 PEOPLE)

TOTAL 46,133 PEOPLE

LOOSER DENSITY FOR STANDING AND MOVING
10 PEOPLE / 25 SQ FEET

TOTAL 22,000 PEOPLE

DENSITY FOR CAMPING
5 PEOPLE / 25 SQ FEET

TOTAL 11,458 PEOPLE
The scenarios are only to exhibit the endless possibilities with the provided functions. However, the machine itself is always communicating only one precise message of its dispute with compromised relationships, revealing these asymmetrical relationships of democracy and governance in public spaces, through form, structure, and use of space.

**SCENARIO 1: CROWD OF DISSENT TOWARDS THE CAPITOL**

The location, views and program create opportunities for visible and audible dissent on the Mall but not directly on the field of the Mall.
DATA ACCESS TO INFORMATION BUT DATA VIEWED OR ACCESSED WILL NOT BE STORED / NO CACHE / NO DATA WILL BE SENT OUT / RESTRICTING SURVEILLANCE

SCENARIO 01
'DISSENT'

134 FT

METERED UNION
SOUND IS AMPLIFIED TO THE MALL
WHEN A UNION OF VOICES REACHES
A MARKED DEBIL
SCENARIO 01: DIVERSITY OF DISSENT

The scenarios are only to exhibit the endless possibilities with the provided functions. **However the machine itself is always communicating only one precise message** of its dispute with compromised relationships, revealing these asymmetrical relationships of democracy and governance in public spaces, through form, structure, and use of space.

**SCENARIO 2: IMPROMPTU COMMUNITY CAMPED FOR DAYS UNTIL BILL PASSES**

A form of dissent that has occurred throughout American history of protest is able to occupy the machine with programmed functions.
3.5.5 MACHINE:  
OCCUPIED AND UN-OCCUPIED

The scenarios are only to exhibit the endless possibilities with the provided functions. However the machine itself is always communicating only one precise message of its dispute with compromised relationships, revealing these asymmetrical relationships of democracy and governance in public spaces, through form, structure, and use of space.

SCENARIO 3: VARIOUS INTEREST GROUPS

Different and opposing interest groups can use the space simultaneously.
US HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

SCENARIO 03 ‘OPPOSING GROUPS’

1. BROADCAST LINE
2. PUBLIC CANDIDATE
3. EXERCISE TEAM
4. ISRAELI ASSEMBLY
5. PALESTINIAN TEAM

VIEW TO JEFFERSON 2,600 FT

VIEW TO WHITE HOUSE 3,250 FT

SCENARIO 03
‘OPPOSING GROUPS’

1. BROADCAST LINE
2. PUBLIC CANDIDATE
3. EXERCISE TEAM
4. ISRAELI ASSEMBLY
5. PALESTINIAN TEAM

STORAGE AMONGST BETWEEN PLATE GIRDERS AND WALL

VIEW TO JEFFERSON 2,600 FT

VIEW TO WHITE HOUSE 3,250 FT
SCENARIO 01
'dissent'
storage imbedded between plate girder and wall

SCENARIO 02
‘impromptu community’

SCENARIO 03
‘opposing groups’

3.5.5 MACHINE: OCCUPIED AND UN-OCCUPIED
The scenarios are only to exhibit the endless possibilities with the provided functions. However the machine itself is always communicating only one precise message of its dispute with compromised relationships, revealing these asymmetrical relationships of democracy and governance in public spaces, through form, structure, and use of space.

SCENARIO 4: SERENITY AND VIGIL
Use of space for meditative interests. Creating an alternate dialogue.
SCENARIO 04
‘VIGIL / SILENCE’

View to Lincoln 4,700 ft
View to Jefferson 2,600 ft

134 ft
Lights embedded with metal screen structure

Colonnade and cella constructed of metal screen panels, highlighting the instability of the symbols of governance and its operation

Structural bar plate girder - major structure for all inhabitable public view bars

To WM 4,700 ft
SCENARIO 5: SUBVERTING RESTRICTIONS

Capacity of the machine cannot be measured by numbers alone, it can host a dialogue with visitors on the Mall or nearby city streets without having to file for permits. From within the public space a speaker is free of the tight permitting restrictions and is able to project to the national mall, thus holding an assembly with national mall ‘visitors’ who are not required to have a permit on the National Mall.
EXCHANGE OF IDEAS IN PERSON
FREE FROM RESTRICTIONS

CHAPTER 3: ABSURD MACHINE | COMMUNICATING RELATIONSHIPS

PUBLIC SPACE SPEAKER
FROM WITHIN THE PUBLIC SPACE A SPEAKER FREE OF TIGHT PERMITTING RESTRICTIONS CAN PROJECT TO THE NATIONAL MALL AND HOLD AN IMPROMPTU ASSEMBLY WITH NATIONAL MALL 'VISITORS' AS LISTENERS

NATIONAL MALL VISITORS
VISITORS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO HAVE A PERMIT ON THE MALL; BUT A PERMIT IS REQUIRED FOR AN ASSEMBLY
view to white house 3,250 ft
view to jefferson 2,600 ft
view to lincoln 4,700 ft
view to wm 690 ft
1:12 SLOPE
us holocaust museum
(beyond)
CONCLUSION
ROLE OF DESIGN

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Urban Design has a large role in politics making the separation of the two difficult to determine. The message of politics in design can be embedded in the paint used to mark segregated housing to architectural elements that convey certain meanings to programmatic hierarchy of spaces that distinguish class or gender.

Political agendas and built form have a long history, varying from extreme agendas of Hitler’s desires to India’s investment in a new capital in New Delhi. Through the lens of symbolic architecture as political syntax for architecture of public and governance, built form within politics has strength and power to articulate a precise message. The discipline’s role at the intersection of governance and built form now, and again, has the potential to intervene with a new understanding of evolved conditions.

Currently In America, and other parts of the world, the role of urban design is being forced to conform within the set standard rules and regulations, robbing the discipline’s investment in public architecture and planning. Over the years American cities are experiencing a decline in true democratic public spaces with rising restrictions from extreme surveillance and private ownership, what are the hidden politics of public spaces. In the wake of recent events, such as the Occupy Movement, it has been brought to attention the necessity of public spaces for democratic participation and the legal limitations of privatized public spaces that deter democratic participation. These conditions exist throughout the American democratic landscape.
At the time Tafuri wrote *Architecture and Utopia*, he argued that architecture no longer has a place in salvaging ideologies, but perhaps ideology can reside within a form that recognizes surrounding contradictions accumulated from unforeseen events. These events of modern politics, such as terrorist threats and evolving codes, that are pushing the limits of government’s role with preemptive measures that are concerns for liberty. It is precisely at this pressure point in America’s history, revealed by the Occupy Movement and its battle with public space, combined with issues of permits, codes, and regulations, that ideologies can be revisited with form that operates with the city.

However, rather than investing ideologies in form to render an ideal proposition, this thesis tests the potentials of infusing a political critique within an appropriated and redefined form, to reveal the asymmetrical relationships that reside in compromised democratic public spaces. The proposed apparatus creates a dialogue within a compromised field on a site symbolic of democratic values, revealing asymmetrical relationships of democracy and governance. The machine provides functions and inhabitable space for public’s use and occupation to create a critical discourse with its context. However the public’s presence within the machine is not necessary for the message of the machine to be communicated, of the rising restrictions of public spaces in America caused by increasing strict concepts of governance. The appropriation and redefinition of democratic symbols, that no longer serve their original role, communicate that message to the larger context. The treatment of the space through circulation, materials, details, and construction communicate that message to the field and the individuals.

The proposition uses the discipline’s set language and method of articulation to communicate intangible compromised democratic conditions that have direct impact on public spaces. As this proposition evolved it became apparent that public’s occupation within the designed space is not necessary, or perhaps even desired, for the message of the ‘absurd machine’ to be communicated.
The larger intent of the proposal is to test a theory in engaging the field of Architecture and Urbanism within politics. Not to offer precise solutions to a problem but rather counter investigations that can trigger alternate methods of approach to design and representation. A method to engage politics in design as a critical dialogue that emerges in the physical treatment of space, form, and structure, as a way to reveal certain undetected oppositions that have spatial impacts.
CHAPTER 1 BIBLIOGRAPHY


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CHAPTER 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY


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Trust for National Mall: http://www.nationalmall.org/
CHAPTER 2 NOTES


9. Trust for National Mall Q&A: http://www.nationalmall.org/design-competition/faq


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CHAPTER 3 BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER 1 LIST OF FIGURES AND CREDITS

FIGURE 1.1:
2011 Person of the Year: The Protester - TIME Magazine Cover Image
Source: Time Magazine Online:
http://www.time.com/time/covers/0,16641,20111226,00.html

FIGURE 1.2
Models by Homer A Thompson
Thompson, Homer A. ‘The Pnyx in Models’ in Hesperia Supplements, Volume 19, Studies in Attic

FIGURE 1.3
Map by John Travlos
Travlos, John and Homer A. Thompson. ‘The West Side of the Athenian Agora Restored’ in Hesperia
Supplements, Volume 8, Comemorative Studies in Honor of Theodore Leslie Shear, 1949, pg. 386.

FIGURE 1.4
Pnyx Axo Drawing by John Travlos.
Source: The American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

FIGURE 1.5
Argument and Reference for Taylorizing Form Architecture and Utopia by Manfredo Tafuri.
Left Image: Louis H. Sullivan, theoretical design for a city with tiered skyscrapers, from The
Graphic, V, Dec. 19, 1891. This image is taken from Architecture and Utopia Pg. 47.

FIGURE 1.6
Right Image: Ludwig Karl Hilberseimer – Highrise City (hochhausstadt) 1924.
From: http://newsocialresearch.wordpress.com/2012/02/25/cityscape/

FIGURE 1.7
Image of Zucotti Park in New York City by flickr author Jagz Mario.
Allowed under Creative Commons License.

FIGURE 1.8
Image of Millennium Park by flickr author Andvaranaut.
Allowed under Creative Commons License.

FIGURE 1.9
Image of surveillance by use of CCTVs in public spaces.
Image from short video ‘In the Event of Amnesia the City Will Recall’ by Denis Beaubois.

FIGURE 1.10
Photo of concrete barriers in New York since 9-11 by Jeff Zupan.
Permission granted from Benjamin Fried of Streetblogs.org and Openplans.org.

FIGURE 1.11
Image of crash rated street furniture, protection against terrorism.

FIGURE 1.12
Aerial of Zuccotti Park.
Courtesy of Bing Maps.

FIGURE 1.13
Image of Zuccotti Park Rules before Occupy Wall Street Occupation by flickr author TNLNYC.
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CHAPTER 1 LIST OF FIGURES AND CREDITS CONT’D

FIGURE 1.14
Image of Zuccotti Park Rules changed during Occupy Wall Street Occupation by flickr author TNLNYC. Allowed under Creative Commons License.

FIGURE 1.15
Aerial of Freedom Plaza and MchPherson Square near National Mall in DC. Courtesy of Bing Maps.

FIGURE 1.16
Image of Freedom Plaza Eviction by flickr author JBrazito. Allowed under Creative Commons License.

CHAPTER 2 LIST OF FIGURES AND CREDITS

FIGURE 2.1
Aerial of National Mall
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/dc0787.photos.042661p/
Photo from Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA.
http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print
(No known restrictions on images made by the U.S. Government)

FIGURE 2.2
Aerial of Washington, D.C.
Source: National Aerial Photography Program of USGS

FIGURE 2.3
Pennsylvania Capitol Building
By flickr author jasonb42882
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Georgia Capitol Building

Massachusetts Capitol Building
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massachusetts_State_House
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Illinois Capitol Building
By flickr author Sid Webb.
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Aerial of Oregon State Capitol Mall, 1961
Oregon State Archives from http://www.museumofthecity.org/

Aerial of California State Capitol Mall
Image courtesy of Bing Maps

FIGURE 2.4

FIGURE 2.5
"Votes for Women" Suffrage Pictures, 1850-1920
Source: Library of Congress American History
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/aug28.html
FIGURE 2.6
Image Vietnam War Protest by flickr author pingnews.com
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FIGURE 2.7
North Elevation, Jefferson Memorial
By John Russell Pope, Otto R. Eggers, and Daniel P. Higgins, ca. 1939
Watercolor and pencil on illustration board 18” x 24”. Source:
National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the National Park Service.

FIGURE 2.8
Author: Andrew Ellicott, revised from Pierre (Peter) Charles L’Enfant 1791; Thackara & Vallance sc.,
Philadelphia 1792

FIGURE 2.9

FIGURE 2.11
Washington from Smithsonian Institute (Institution) castle, Washington, D.C.
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/det1994016616/PP/
Photo from Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA.
http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print
(No known restrictions on images made by the U.S. Government)

FIGURE 2.12
View looking west from the Washington Monument, 1 November 1943.
Source: Department Of The Navy -- Naval Historical Center, Online Library of Selected Images:
http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/images/h92000/h92386c.htm

FIGURE 2.13
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. waves to the throngs of people gathered in August 1963 during the

FIGURE 2.14
Bonus Army March
Source: http://learner-centeredhistory.wikispaces.com/ licensed under a Creative Commons
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FIGURE 2.15
Image Vietnam War Protest by flickr author pingnews.com
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FIGURE 2.16
Capitol Police on the Mall. Protest Against the War in Iraq on the National Mall

FIGURE 2.17
Gutamano Bay Protest on the National Mall February 2010.

FIGURE 2.18
Document: National Mall And Memorial Parks Superintendent Compendium
www.nps.gov/nama/parkmgmt/upload/compendium.pdf
Source: National Park Service. www.nps.gov

FIGURE 2.19
Committees maintaining The National Mall.
www.savethemall.org
CHAPTER 3 LIST OF FIGURES AND CREDITS

FIGURE 3.1
Aerial of Oregon State Capitol Mall, 1961
Oregon State Archives from http://www.museumofthecity.org/

Aerial of California State Capitol Mall
Image courtesy of Bing Maps

Image of New York State Capitol Mall
Courtesy of Bluffton University. http://www.bluffton.edu/.

Image of Nashville State Capitol Mall
Photo by Tricia W, Oct 2011.

FIGURE 3.2
Greek Wood Construction Image.

FIGURE 3.3
Pnyx Axo Drawings by John Travlos.
Source: The American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

FIGURE 3.4
Background Modified: Aerial of National Mall.