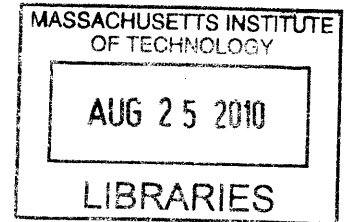


Irrational Rationale – Artistic Tactics and Attitudes for Operations of Architecture in the Expanded Field

by

Yao Zhang

Bachelor of Architecture
Southeast University, 2007



Submitted to Department of Architecture in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Architecture Studies
at the
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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Irrational Rationale

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Irrational Rationale

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Submitted to the Department of Architecture on August 6 2010, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Architecture Studies.

ABSTRACT

Historically the study of architecture has experienced reiterative marriage and divorce with the arts. Some avant-garde architects once tried to flirt with the arts in the late of twentieth century by artwork analysis and philosophical exploration, but the result unwillingly belies the architects' reluctant surrender – artists seem constantly capable of bringing about innovative pieces with sharp insight and inspiration, while architects strive to question the world but only come up with mimicry form. What is more is that the influence of this incompetence has directly or indirectly led to the current common ignorance of art in the architectural world.

My thesis interrogates the traditional perspective considering architecture served as a vehicle of art and proposes a new equality between the identity of art and that of architecture. The thesis argues that the “technical support” coined by Rosalind Krauss in the post-medium condition of art is also a support that confirms or modifies the perceptual and mental process of intellectual creation of architecture. It is not about the “brilliant” idea architecture has to convey but the meditation about the mechanism and “supports” permitting them to act on an idea – the rudiments of a language that express their attitude towards the world. The thesis uses my observations and understandings on diverse examples from contemporary art and architecture practice not as models to imitate but illustrations of what specific “technical support” might signify. Then it employs semiotic square as the generative diagram to compare and distinguish these mechanism and hence to look for a more open, flexible “support” for an architectural practice that is confident in its own modes of operation and intrinsic disciplinary knowledge.

The narrative of this thesis is in a form of but not only limited in ‘know-how’ report for practice but also present a process to communicate my intellectual adventures of what I think of what I have already seen and what I still have not seen, so that the reader can learn by the same process and rely on the explosive power of the semiotic square to search for a continual source of innovation and change.

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CONTENTS I

ABSTRACT	5
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	37
1.1 Overview: Where Art Meets Architecture	39
1.1.1 Reiterative Marriage and Divorce	39
1.1.2 Flirt with Art: Architecture as Vehicle of Art	40
1.1.3 Post-Medium Conditional Art (PMC Art)	42
1.2 Statement of Intent	45
1.2.1 From PMC Art to PMC Architecture	45
1.2.2 Reinvent the “Technical Support” for Architecture	46
1.3 Methodology	47
1.3.1 Analogical Thinking	48
1.3.2 Generative Diagrams	51
1.3.3 Semiotic Square as “Technical Support”	54
1.4 Structure of Thesis	56
CHAPTER 2 Technical Support: Semiotic Square	59
2.1 An Era’s Tool: Semiotic Square	61
2.2 Mechanism of Semiotic Square	61
2.2.1 Terms Explanation	61
2.2.2 Negation of a Negation	63
2.2.3 The Construction of the Square	65
2.3 Reinvention of the Square	68
2.3.1 Meaning Effects	68
2.3.2 Presence of Real Things	68
2.3.3 Nominalization	68
2.3.4 Metaphorically Adjective Prefix	68
CHAPTER 3 Construction of Binary Opposition	71
3.1 What is Object?	73
3.1.1 The Dynamic Object	73

3.1.2 The Immediate Object	73
3.1.3 The Difference Between the Two	74
3.2 What is Sign?	74
3.2.1 Typology of Signs	75
3.2.2 Symbol	75
3.2.3 Icon 76	
3.2.4 Index 78	
3.2.5 Ranking the Three Types	79
3.2.6 The Mutual Inclusion	80
CHAPTER 4 The Expanded Field	83
4.1 Archeological Evidentialization	85
4.1.1 Object/Sign: Mutual Conversion	85
4.1.2 Object=Sign=Object: Two Become One	88
4.1.3 Evidentialization	91
4.1.4 The Paradox of Archeological Indexicalization	98
4.2 Magic Bewilderment	120
4.2.1 Object + Absence of Sign	120
4.2.2 Magic Bewilderment	139
4.3 Fictional Involution	161
4.3.1 Sign + Absence of Object	161
4.3.2 Fictional Involution	174
4.4 Political Reconfiguration	194
4.4.1 Meaning "Absence of Object + Absence of Sign"	194
4.4.2 Producing "Absence of Object + Absence of Sign"	198
CHAPTER 5 The Explosion of the Meaning	237
5.1 The delirious translation	238
5.2 The Endless Inventory	240
APPENDIX	241
LIST OF FIGURES	246
BIBLIOGRAPHY	249

CONTENTS II

Chapter1 Introduction	37
1.1 Overview: Where art meets architecture	39
1.1.1 Reiterative marriage and divorce	39
<p>Whatever operations they use to find form, the art and architecture have persistently shared the same fundamental essence - the psychophysical experience in a real time. Therefore no matter what the medium is, all artistic works including architecture express similar perceptual and mental ideas as well as the process of intellectual creation through their own dialect of form.</p>	
1.1.2 Flirt with Art: Architecture as Vehicle of Art	40
1.1.2.1 Mimic of art	40
1.1.2.2 Paradox desire	41
<p>On one hand, it fantasize to stand on the same stage with the art and serves to be the vehicle of art conveying any big ideas as art does. But on the other, It is difficult to express happiness, sadness, goodness, badness – any emotional or philosophic concept. What art can deal with, architecture cannot.</p>	
1.1.3 Post-Medium Conditional Art (PMC Art)	42
1.1.3.1 Rejection of Conceptualism	42
<p>Reject Conceptualism by shifting our attention from the “Big Idea” to the technological mechanisms as the supports of their own work, and go deeper into the nature of every medium by meditating the mechanism itself as the “technical support” and focus on re-authenticating these “devices” for architecture.</p>	
1.1.3.2 Technical support	43
<p>The term “technical support” has transcend the term “medium” in that “medium” commonly reminds of the specific physical substance (such as contemporary commercial vehicles cars, television or film, screen, the projector’s beam of light etc) for a traditional aesthetic genre (such as oil on canvas, fresco, and many sculptural materials, including cast bronze or welded metal). whereas “technical support” is wider than the physical support of the representation (such as the dramatization techniques in screenplay or film editing technique).</p>	
1.2 Statement of Intent	45
1.2.1 From PMC Art to PMC Architecture	45
1.2.1.1 Post-medium condition of architecture	45
1.2.1.2 Defunctionalization	45

Defunctionalization is not dysfunction but the displacement of higher-order functions. What I propose is that indeed a building has to function, but it does not have to look like it is functioning appropriately. Indeed a building has to stand up. But it does not necessarily mean to look like it is standing up. When it does not look like it stands up, or it does not look like it functions, then it calls for a new “technical support” to make it function and stand meaningfully.

1.2.2 Reinvent the “Technical Support” for Architecture 46

Hence the aim of the research is not based on the supporters' and advocates' interest in conceptual art or some specific problem in certain genre, but rather it deals with the same problem both artists and architects face in their post medium condition: it is not about the “brilliant” idea but meditation about the mechanism and “supports” permitting them to act on an idea – the rudiments of a language that express their attitude towards the world.

1.2.2.1 Re-authenticate the “support” 47

1.3 Methodology 47

1.3.1 Analogical Thinking 49

1.3.1.1 Evans’s geometric analogy

Evans’s program shows the value of being able to change our descriptions until we find ways to describe different things so that they seem more similar. This enables us to our knowledge about one kind of thing to understand some other, different kind of thing.

1.3.2 Generative Diagrams 51

1.3.2.1 Evolutionary tree 51

“Evolutionary Tree” is essentially a timeline, charting decades across its width and thematic variables on its vertical axis. One might imagine locating one’s interests or even inserting one’s work into Jencks’s “tree”, but this remains essentially an exercise in casting.

1.3.2.2 The expanded field 52

She has applied is a serious attempt to reconstrue the foundations of the discipline, not so much in singular terms but in broader concepts that acknowledge an expended field, while seeking to overcome the problematic dualisms that have plagued every single discipline.

1.3.3 Semiotic Square as “Technical Support” 54

1.3.3.1 Why semiotic square 54

The square does offer a kind of “discovery principle,” but of a special type. it involves an inherent critique of the discourse inside

every “technical support” I have observed and attempts to release this “support” imprisoned inside their own discipline by the heuristic capability of the diagram’s structure.

1.3.3.2 How to use semiotic square 55

My constructed semiotic square does not mean to exhaust all the literal and latent meaning in a text, in which way the subjectivity of the interpreter's framework will be highly understated, either is the semiotic square. Instead my narratives will just illuminate as they may sometimes be, and let the semiotic square provoke any inexplicit oppositions that are identified and emerge automatically in the mind of the interpreter rather than contained within the text itself.

1.3.3.3 The limitation and explosion of the square 55

On one hand semiotic square make a clear limitation, on the other hand, it is just this limitation that allow the potential for the interpreters to jump out of this limitation take place. The semiotic square privileges the last, fourth corner of the field as a syntax, a starting point of a new diagram. If the first diagram defines the limitation, there remain a number of alternatives that lies outside the restraint and that can help define the second and the third diagram which allows for an explosion of the meaning.

1.4 Structure of thesis 56

Chapter 2 Technical Support: Semiotic Square 59

2.1 An Era’s Tool: Semiotic Square 61

2.2 Mechanism of Semiotic Square 61

2.2.1 Terms explanation 61

2.2.1.1 Polarities 61

2.2.1.2 Relationships 62

2.2.2 Negation of a negation 63

2.2.2.1 Paradoxical emergence 63

2.2.2.2 The fecund fourth word 63

2.2.2.3 Common ground with the initial 63

2.2.3 The construction of the square 65

2.2.3.1 Finding the generative terms 65

2.2.3.2 The order of the terms 65

2.2.3.3 Polysemic Conception 65

2.2.3.4 One sample 66

2.3 Reinvention of the square 68

2.3.1 Meaning effects 68

2.3.2 Presence of real things 68

2.3.3 Nominalization	68
2.3.4 Metaphorically adjective prefix	68
Chapter 3 Construction of Binary Opposition	71
3.1 What is object?	73
3.1.1 The Dynamic Object	73
3.1.2 The Immediate Object	73
3.1.3 The difference between the two	74
3.2 What is sign?	74
3.2.1 Typology of Signs	75
3.2.2 Symbol	75
3.2.3 Icon	76
3.2.4 Index	78
3.2.5 Ranking three types	79
3.2.5.1 Conventionality	79
3.2.5.2 Motivation	79
3.2.5.3 Natural	79
3.2.6 The mutual inclusion	80
Chapter 4 The Expanded Field	83
4.1 Archeological Evidentialization	85
4.1.1 Object/Sign: Mutual Conversion	85
4.1.1.1 Signifying object	85
Ellsworth Kelly's painting as a whole functions to point to the natural continuum, the way the word "this" accompanied by a pointing gesture isolates a piece of the real world and fills itself with a meaning by transitorily becoming that natural event.	
4.1.1.2 Objectify signs	86
The operations one finds in his work are the operations of the index. Internal division of the drawing is converted from its formal status of encoding reality to one of imprinting it. This operation of indexicalization depends on selection from the natural array by means of cropping and its indifferent etches of its support.	
4.1.1.3 Signify objects / Objectify signs	87
Yet whatever the similarities in format the most obvious difference between the two is whether the work's meaning can be fulfilled by	

detaching from its surroundings, both visually and conceptually, whether it is free from any specific locale.

4.1.2 Object=Sign=Object: Two become one	88
4.1.2.1 Splitting	88

In “With my tongue in my cheek”, Duchamp elaborate splits every identity along the lines of signs and its object with every single word in the caption: in addition to the separation of icon and index; “my” divides empty pronoun with its subject; “tongue” implies the object outside of the situation, the function of this sign system and the observer’s interpretation; “in” reveals this physical imprint and its production process; “cheek” indicates the empty indexical mold and its absence object. It is one purist’s anatomic splitting.

4.1.2.2 Converging	89
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The converging happens when the resulting wall became a literal recording of its own construction or deconstruction, the photographs offering a supplemental reading that recorded the postural effort required to build it.

4.1.3 Evidentialization	91
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Indexicalization is the paradoxical way of merging the object with its sign, making the object the index of its own and the index the object of its reference.

4.1.3.1 The deficiency of the “photographic”	91
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It is not the division in Ellsworth Kelly’s painting because in the one-way conversion the object is trapped in the pictorial world and becomes only sign. It is not the division in Lucio Pozzi’s painting either because it is not legitimate for becoming an individual object in that when it is removed from its environment it is nothing but a sign.

4.1.3.1.1 Rayograph	91
---------------------	----

4.1.3.1.2 Indexical icon / Iconic index / Coded symbol	92
--	----

The first semiotic theories of photography tended to consider photographs as mirrors of reality or, following Peirce’s more elaborated conception, as icons. Later iconoclasts who tried to demonstrate the conventionality of all signs contended that photographs present “coded” versions of reality and as such stand closer to the Peircean notion of symbol. Finally, photographs have been assessed as indexes—that is, as traces impressed on a surface by the referent itself.

4.1.3.1.3 Real unreality	94
--------------------------	----

The images produced by camera are rendered photo-realistic, they borrow photography’s currency, its deeply historical ‘reality effect’, simply in order to have meaning.

4.1.3.2 The evidentiality of the “Archeological”	95
<p>It is the wall in Dan Hoffman’s construction process because it traces its own generation and meanwhile its sign-hood the can not exist without the timely physical presence of its object-hood.</p>	
4.1.3.2.1 Unreal reality	95
<p>Its unreality is that of the here, since the artifact is never experienced as an illusion; it is nothing but a presence – the paranormal character of the archaic artifact. Its reality is that of a having-been-there, because in archaeological findings there is the constantly amazing evidence: this took place in this way. Thus, as a kind of precious miracle, we possess a reality from which we are ourselves sheltered.</p>	
4.1.3.2.2 Without a meaning	96
<p>The artifacts create a vision of the object instead of serving as a means for knowing it. The truth is understood as a matter of evidence, rather than a function of logic.</p>	
4.1.3.3 The incompatibility	96
4.1.3.3.1 Artifactual effect	96
<p>Even if the photographic image is the object itself, the object freed from the conditions of time and space that govern it. But artifact always incorporates particular time and space.</p>	
4.1.3.3.2 Absence of similarity	97
<p>While we admit that a photograph is a kind of pictorial sign – be it symbolic, iconic or indexical – and that all such signs are first and foremost grounded in the illusion of similarity, quite the opposite, the artifact in archaeology conveys no such similarity.</p>	
4.1.3.3.3 Loss of causality	97
<p>Archaeology could say nothing about the causes of the transition from one way of thinking to another and it creates a vision of the object instead of serving as a means for knowing it.</p>	
4.1.4 The paradox of archeological indexicalization	98
4.1.4.1 Equilibrium	98
4.1.4.1.1 Evidential honesty and deductive uncertainty	98
4.1.4.1.2 Perceptual conclusiveness and comprehensive suspension	
4.1.4.2 Exhibiting architecture	100
4.1.4.2.1 Spatial immediacy and temporal anteriority	100
4.1.4.2.2 Physical presence and experiential remoteness	106

4.2 Magic bewilderment	120
4.2.1 Object + Absence of Sign	120
4.2.1.1 Semantic nothingness	120
4.2.1.1.1 Coping mechanism	120
It is the process of turning an event or familiar object into an automatic symbol. By this method of thought we apprehend objects only as shapes with imprecise extensions; we do not see them in their entirety but rather recognize them by their main characteristics.	
4.2.1.1.2 Desymbolization	121
If you have an object to describe, you should not to name it, or to give it a new name, or to write as if you are seeing it for the first time, you need to vanishes it in the automatism of perception and see it in its absolute superficiality, its semantic nothingness, and in its quality of “being there” instead of “being something”.	
4.2.1.2 Return of the “objecthood”	125
4.2.1.2.1 Legitimize objectivity	125
4.2.1.2.2 Spatiotemporally Coincidence	132
Every constituent of the object - the shape, the materials, the organization and the order etc – does not represent, signify, or allude to anything; they are what they are and nothing more.	
4.2.1.2.3 What you see is what you get	135
Instead of being a symbolic language recalling essentialist values, the compositional order of the object aspires to be without content. Its meaning is only given in perception, what you see is what you get.	
4.2.1.3 The boring real	139
4.2.1.3.1 To make the stone stony	139
The subtraction of the semantic occupation is to make one feel things, to make the stone stony. But what if the real has been already forgotten, the stony aspect of stone by no means excites any attention?	
4.2.1.3.2 To make the stone unstonny	139
The truth that artists or architects are after may be dramatically fresh and striking only if it has been forgotten first: if the object, in other words, pulls something contradictory and concealed out of its hiding place, otherwise if facing the object that is returned to you can say “it’s all true!” it have become familiar, as all other objects do, then we shall concentrate on the medium, the technical support we use.	

4.2.2 Magic Bewilderment	139
4.2.2.1 Escaping the theater effect	139
4.2.2.1.1 Theater effect	139
4.2.2.1.2 The conversion of theatricality	140
If you go to the theater and see Peter Pan flying above the stage, you ignore the wires: that is an unconscious ignorance of the real object and the willing belief of its conversion.	
4.2.2.1.3 The rejection of conversion in magic	140
If you go to the magic show and see David Copperfield flying above the stage, you do not ignore the wires. You do not care about what is David flying for but look for the wires. When you do not see any wires, magic happens.	
4.2.2.2 The Role of Bewilderment	145
4.2.2.2.1 The provocation of disbelief	145
Everything involved in the situation has to diminish the experience of watching a play, in which create the juxtaposition between the conviction that something cannot happen and the observation that it just happened.	
4.2.2.2.2 Subversion of cause and effect	145
Bewilderment can be a tickling stick that teases out alternative and contingent modes of thinking in order to deal with lapses in logic. The condition of bewilderment arises when the solidity of the narrative we call logic starts to melt away.	
4.2.2.2.3 Renormalization	146
The excessively alteration gets us into over-colorization, characters who are “characters,” and actions with a Hollywood-like event inflation. What is needed, in magic, is what physicists call “renormalization” – to relocate ontological peculiarity into real life.	
4.2.2.3 The Mechanism of the Magic	146
4.2.2.3.1 The uncertain syntax	146
What is important for magic is to discover the potential point of juncture or the seam that contains the primary object or phenomenon and allows for contact with another logical irrelevant ones. This place of joining or joint marks the defining the blurry border that completes an object or phenomenon while equally marking the space where the grafting of another can occur.	
4.2.2.3.2 Power of a different order	150

The magician have to implement these processes to scrutinize mechanisms of power of a different order, making the effect more perilous by relocating it to real-life scenarios or pitching it at a near-ontological intensity.

4.2.2.3.3 Recognition is re-cognitions 155

Recognition is re-cognitions: not finding ourselves where we expected to be but where we did not expect to be found, and at a moment when our defenses are down, we are taken down a path in which we meet ourselves coming in the other direction.

4.2.2.3.4 The productive lying 158

Lying involves obscuring what really happened with the representation of something that did not happen; it is a process of doubling, a bifurcation of possibilities. Perhaps it is this splitting of the world into two versions that makes lying so much more interesting, the fantastical and the mundane.

4.3 Fictional Involution 161

4.3.1 Sign + absence of object 161

4.3.1.1 Read and reality 161

4.3.1.1.1 Reading the reality: Drama 161

We dramatize an incident by taking events and reordering them, elongating them, compressing them, so that we understand their personal meaning to us – to us as the protagonist of the individual drama we understand our life to be. The reality is not the world itself but the way we make drama out of the ordinary matter of our lives.

4.3.1.1.2 Reading is reality: Death of the author 165

The essential meaning of a work depends on the impressions of the reader, rather than the "passions" or "tastes" of the writer; "a text's unity lies not in its origins," or its creator, "but in its destination," or its audience. In other words, meaning was a product of the reader not the object, a notion that implied the death of the author.

4.3.1.1.3 Reading censors reality: Automatism 165

The automatism records "what the head itself is unaware of", the mental facts that expressed the "true functioning of thought". It transforms the "reality into a kind of absolute reality, a surreality" in order to "include areas normally excluded from it."

4.3.1.1.4 Reading distorts reality: Paranoia 166

Paranoia was recognized in 19th century as a form of psychosis in which all kinds of unrelated experiences, images and events were

associated and perceived to have causal connections or relations to one central idea, becoming an obsession that was coherent for the subject of the delusion but meaningless to an outside observer.

4.3.1.2 Objective effacement	167
4.3.1.2.1 Paranoid-Critical Method (PCM)	167
4.3.1.2.2 Symbolic Dictionary	172

Objective effacement has nothing to do with the morphological or semantic registers of any particular object, but rather with the interpretive grid, the structure that has long permitted us to assimilate these registers.

4.3.2 Fictional involution	174
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4.3.2.1 Sign language	174
4.3.2.1.1 Theatrical and cinematic logic	174

The logic of sign is not only theatrical but is also cinematic. You have to set up an empire of signs and a theatre of representation, a theater in which the author would be replaced by the director and the spoken text replaced by mute sign language.

4.3.2.1.2 Allusion to meaning	175
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Sign language requires analogical thinking because it is a way of thinking in which one thing stands for another. The visual images is used to allude to abstract thoughts and ideas. It does not use descriptive or "proper" language. It only narrates psychological cause and effect and unconscious motivations and experience.

4.3.2.1.3 Script assemblage	175
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In a script, in order to generate meaning, you have to link various episodes together to make sequences, you have to generate suspense and you have to assemble things – through editing,

4.3.2.2 The job of involution	176
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4.3.2.2.1 Pleat of interpretation	176
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Involution refers to situation where a process or object is "turned in" upon itself. It is the systematic interpretation of images and the pleat these delirious interpretations back into the world.

4.3.2.2.2 Plant and payoff	176
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Plant and payoff refers to a specific object or idea introduced early in a drama which becomes an important factor during the final resolution. ... So the involution seizes upon the Leadbelly's "knife" as both embodying and witnessing the pleat, subtly unfolding its self-embedded interpretation through the course of paranoia phenomenon.

4.3.2.3 Practical Effect	177
4.3.2.3.1 The double image	177
4.3.2.3.2 Symbolic recombination	182
4.3.2.3.3 Fetishize	184
4.3.2.3.4 All in a sack	187
4.4 Political Reconfiguration	194
4.4.1 Meaning "Absence of Object + Absence of Sign"	194
4.4.1.1 Object, sign = privileging the third thing	194
4.4.1.1.1 Looking at the third thing	194
Looking at the third thing means a spectatorship in which all kinds of spectacles are performed by action of the third thing – the objects and signs – in front of an individual or collective spectators.	
4.4.1.1.2 Transmission of the third thing	195
What the spectatorship implies is there is always something on one side, in one mind or one body – be it a knowledge, an attitude, a perspective, a capacity, an energy – that must be transferred to the other side, into the spectator's mind or body. This distance between performer and spectator thus requires a mediating "spectacle" that stands between the artist's idea and the spectator's feeling and interpretation.	
4.4.1.1.3 The unequal spectatorship	195
In this inequality, the artist presupposes that the viewer does not know what the artist does know and that the viewer ignores the fact that he does not know what the artist knows thus hence is unconcerned about how to know it.	
Whereas in the same situation, the artist is not only sensitive to but also have apprehended what remains unknown to the viewer. In addition he also knows how to make it knowable, at what time and what place, according to what protocol. The artist always knows the exact distance between the collective viewer and what they are short of.	
4.4.1.1.4 The programmed gaze	196
This inequality presupposes the stupidity of the viewer and produces the spectacles that preempt the gaze of the spectator. The effect of the coming gaze from the viewer is totally under expectation and is programmed beforehand.	
4.4.1.2 Absence of object + absence of sign = renouncing the authority	196
4.4.1.2.1 Dissociating the privilege	196

“Absence of object + absence of sign” means that there is no such privileged medium, just as there is no privileged knowledge that is owned by one part but deficient in another. The spectator of the performance learns what the artist does not know. The looking process is actually an intellectual adventure, together with the artists, but cannot be actualized without any side equally involved.

4.4.1.2.2 Renouncing the authority 197

Therefore “absence of object + absence of sign” requires the artist renounce the authority of the knowledge imposed in his performance, work through unpredictable and irreducible distances, and an unpredictable and irreducible play of associations and dissociations.

4.4.1.2.3 A theater without spectators 198

This implies a new kind of theater where there is no spectators, where spectators will no longer be spectators, where both of them are performers and spectators, where both of them will learn things instead of being captured by the spectacular, and where the performers are in the auditorium and spectators become active participants on the stage joining a collective performance instead of being passive viewers.

4.4.2 Producing “ Absence of Object + Absence of Sign” 198

4.4.2.1 spectator as preformer 198

4.4.2.1.1 The opposition of activity and passivity 199

The blurring of the performer and spectator seems to echo one condition typically thought necessary for the relational aesthetic of art is the becoming-active of the spectator.

Turning spectator into scientist

Calls for a knowledgeable spectator who refuses identification takes distance from what he sees and asks why it is so. He must be pressed to abandon the role of passive viewer and to take on that of the scientist who observes phenomena and seeks their cause.

Turning spectator into participant

Spectator no longer seat in front of the spectacle, they are instead surrounded by the performance, dragged into the circle of the action, which gives them back their collective energy.

4.4.2.1.2 Dismiss the opposition of activity and passivity 201

Indeterminate result

At the heart of “absence of object + absence of sign” is the loss of any determinate relationship between a work and its audience,

between its sensible presence and an effect that will be its natural end.

Enactment of Equality

Producing “absence of object + absence of sign” begins when we dismiss the opposition between looking and acting and understand that the distribution of the visible itself is part of the configuration of domination and subjection. It starts when we realize that “interpreting the world” is already a means of transforming it, of reconfiguring it.

4.4.2.2 Performer as spectator	205
4.4.2.2.1 Associating intellectual adventure	205

The performer does not want to “teach” anything. It demands that the spectators be on the stage and the performers in the auditorium. It demands that the very difference between the two spaces be abolished, that the performance takes place anywhere other than in a theater. That entails the invention of new forms of intellectual adventure.

4.4.2.2.2 Blurring the looking and the acting	206
---	-----

This is what “absence of object + absence of sign” means: the blurring of the opposition between those who look and those who act, between those who are individuals and those who are members of a collective body.

4.4.2.2.3 Being performers and spectators at the same time	206
--	-----

In all those performances, in fact, it should be a matter of linking what one knows with what one does not know, of being at the same time performers who display their competences and spectators who are looking to find what those competences might produce in a new context, among unknown people.

4.4.2.3 Reconfiguration	214
4.4.2.3.1 Translation and reconfiguration	214

What artist provides to the spectator is not the knowledge and energy for future action, but the reconfiguration of the distribution of the sensible, the reconfiguration of the implicit law governing the sensible order that is based on the set horizons and modalities of what is visible and audible as well as what can be said, thought, made, or done.

4.4.2.3.2 Inventing the new idiom	216
-----------------------------------	-----

The artist has to use the new idiom to tell of his own intellectual adventure, the idiom that would be useful for those who wanted to know its true meaning, or the lesson for action that could be drawn

from it, and who would make their own translation from the point of view of their own adventure.

4.4.2.3.3 Thwart the expectations 222

Artists has to always look at something through the audience's eyes to discover how to produce forms for the presentation of objects, forms for the organization of spaces, that thwart expectations. The main enemy of artistic creativity as well as of political creativity is consensus - that is, inscription within given roles, possibilities, competences.

4.4.2.4 Political Reconfiguration 222

4.4.2.4.1 Politics 222

A political declaration or manifestation, like an artistic form, is an arrangement of words, a montage of gestures, an occupation of spaces. In both cases what is produced is a modification of the fabric of the sensible, a transformation of the visible given, intensities, names that one can give to things, the landscape of the possible.

4.4.2.4.2 Political Reconfiguration 222

Political reconfiguration is a revolution that would change not only laws and institutions but transform the sensory forms of human experience. It is an artistic intervention by modifying the visible, the ways of perceiving it and expressing it, of experiencing it as tolerable or intolerable.

The Explosion of the Meaning 237

5.1 The delirious translation 238

5.2 The Endless Inventory 240

APPENDIX 241

LIST OF FIGURES 246

BIBLIOGRAPHY 249

VISUAL READING

Chapter 1 Introduction

Technical support

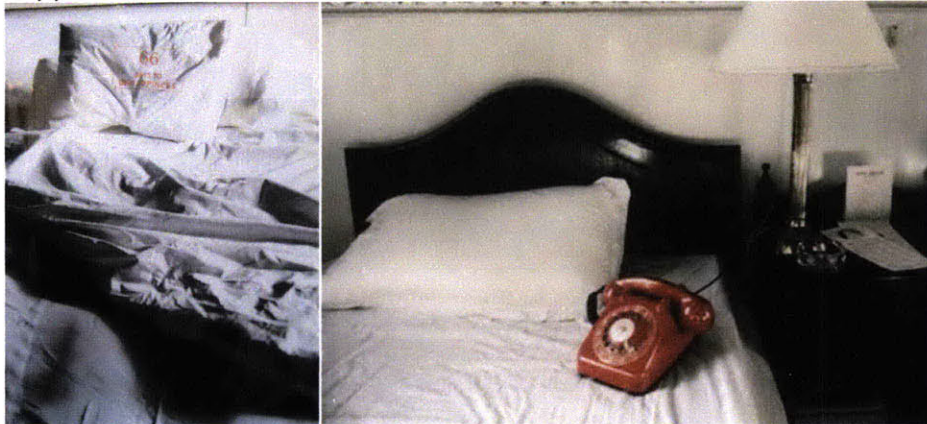


Figure 1.4 Calle Sophie, 67 Days to Unhappiness

Analogical Thinking

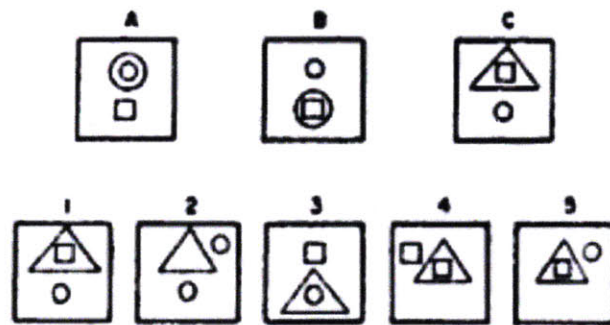


Figure 1.6 Thomas G. Evans, Geometric Analogical Program

Generative Diagrams

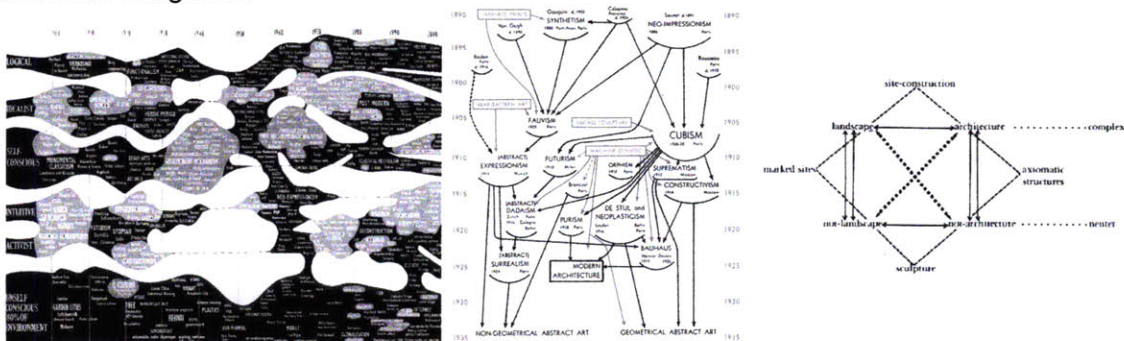


Figure 1.8 Charles Jencks, Evolutionary Tree

Figure 1.8 Alfred H Barr Jr, Cubism and Abstract Art

Figure 1.9 Rosalind Krauss, Sculpture in the Expanded Field

Chapter 2 Technical Support: Semiotic Square

Mechanism of Semiotic Square

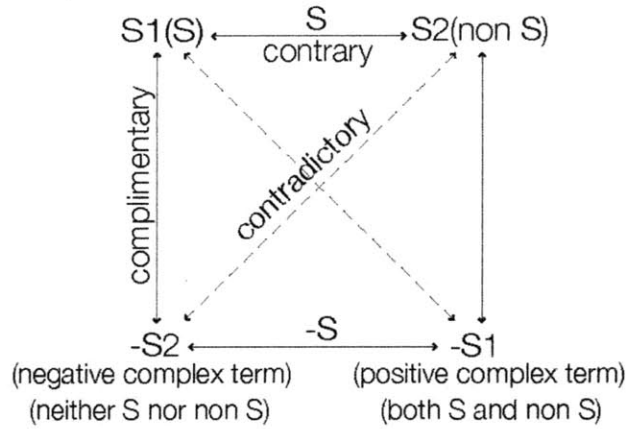
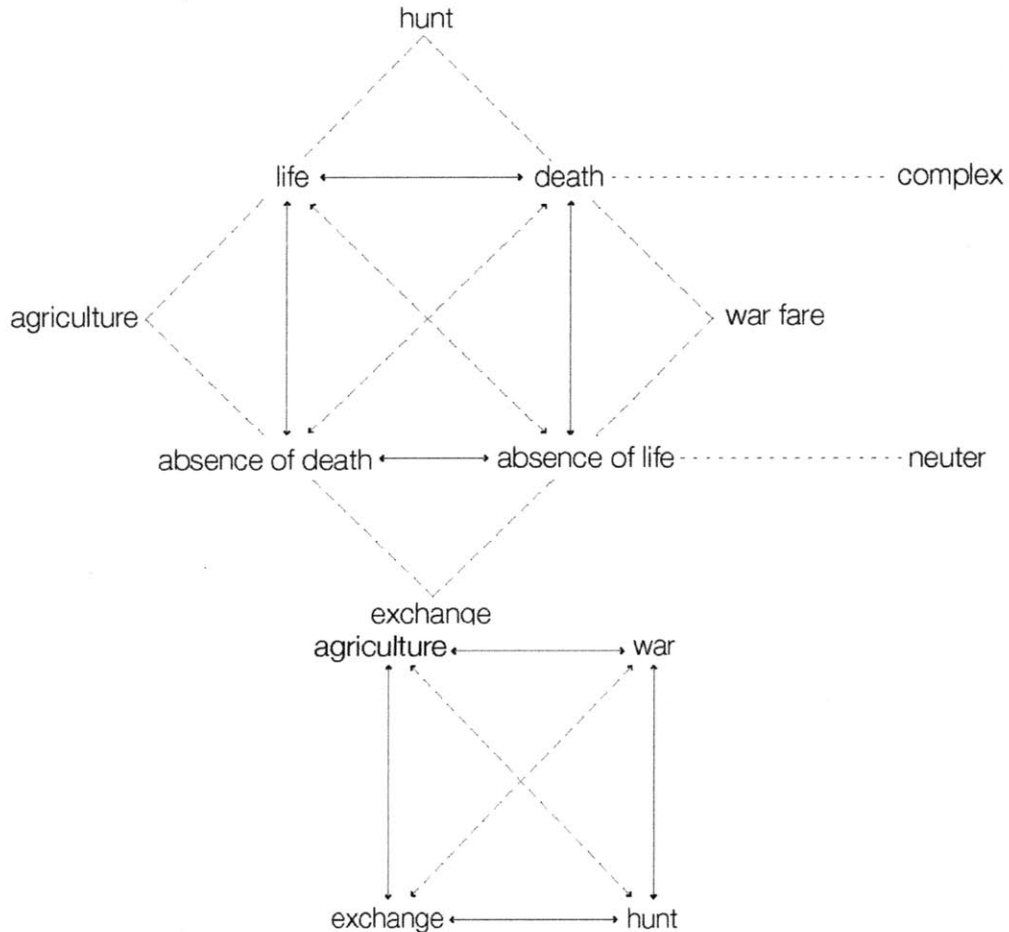


Figure 2.1 A.J. Greimas, Semiotic Square

Construction of the square



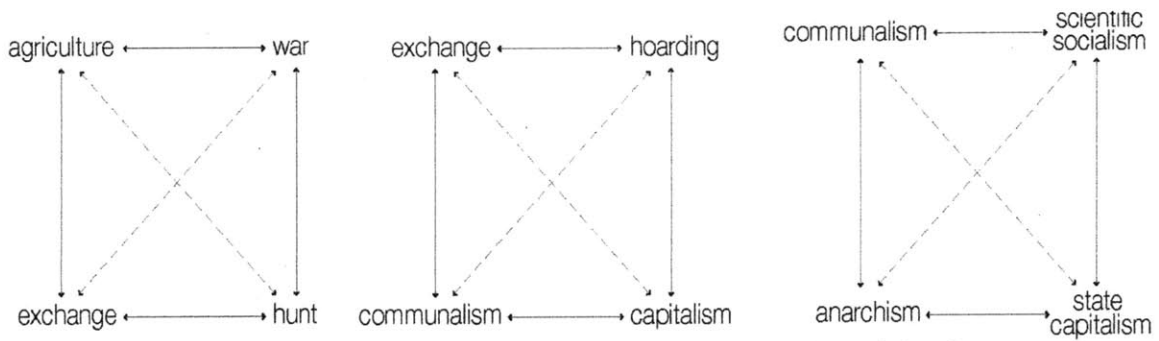


Figure 2.4-2.6 Fredric Jameson, Examples for Construction of the Square

Chapter 3 Construction of Binary Opposition

Elementary square

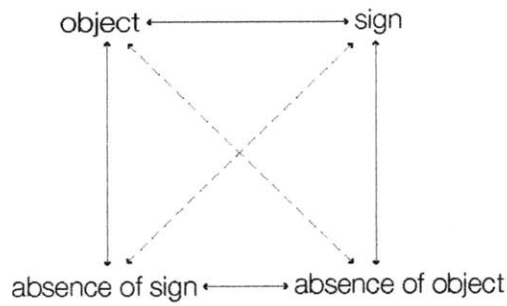


Figure 3.1 Author, Elementary Square

Expanded field

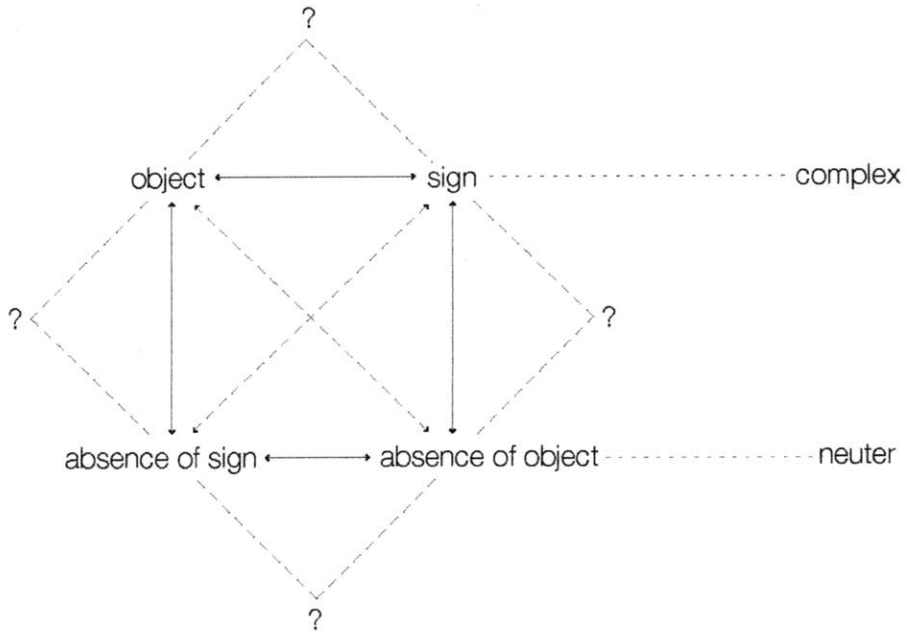


Figure 4.1 Author, Square of the Expanded Field

Chapter 4 The Expanded Field

Archeological Evidentialization

Object/Sign: Mutual Conversion

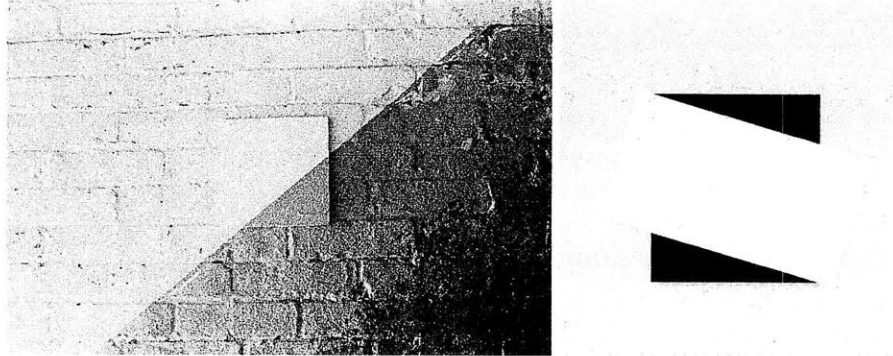


Figure 4.4 Lucio Pozzi, Painting in P.S.1
Figure 4.3 Ellsworth Kelly, White Diagonal II

Object=Sign=Object: Two become one

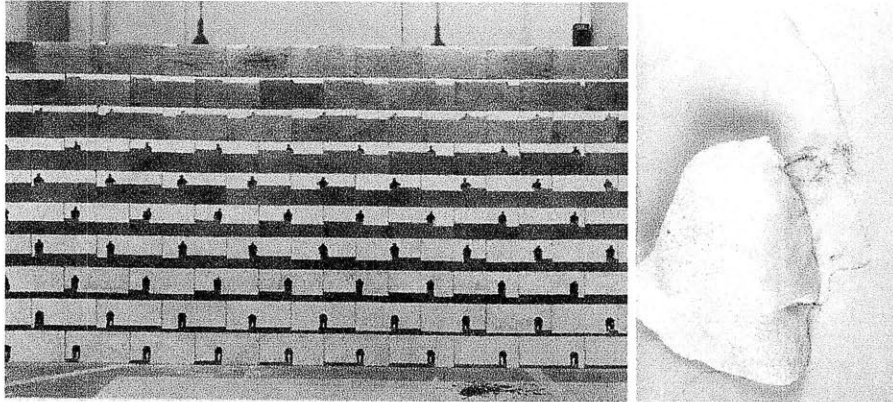
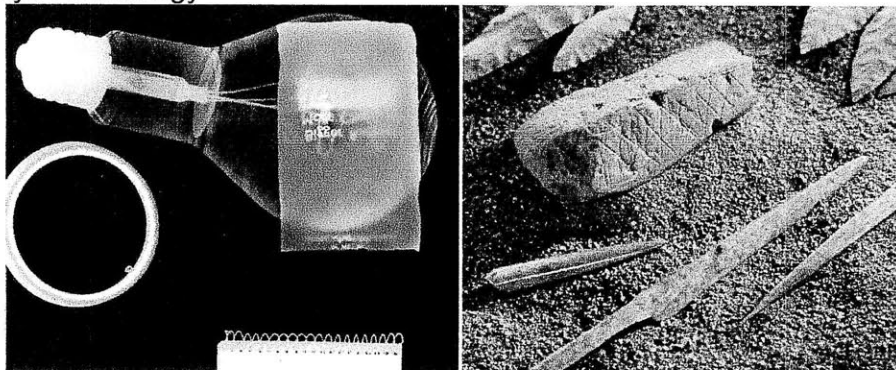


Figure 4.8 Dan Hoffman, Recording Wall
Figure 4.5 Duchamp, With My Tongue in My Cheek

Photography / Archeology



Man Ray, Rayograph
Figure 4.11 BBC, artifacts' document

Evidential honesty and deductive uncertainty

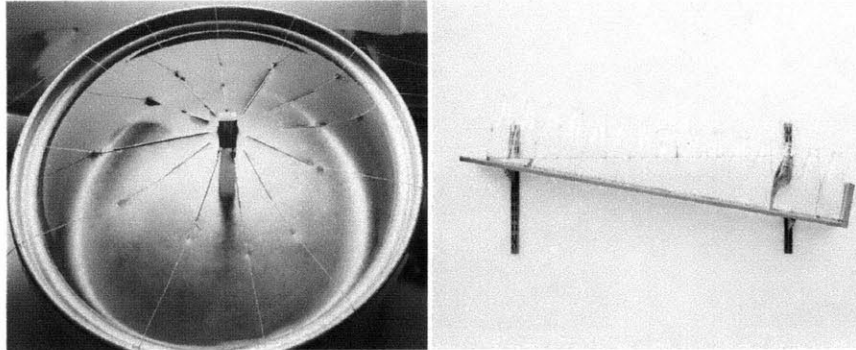


Figure 4.12 Caleb Charland, North Pole with Needles and Water
Michael Craig-Martin, On the Shelf

Perceptual conclusiveness and comprehensive suspension

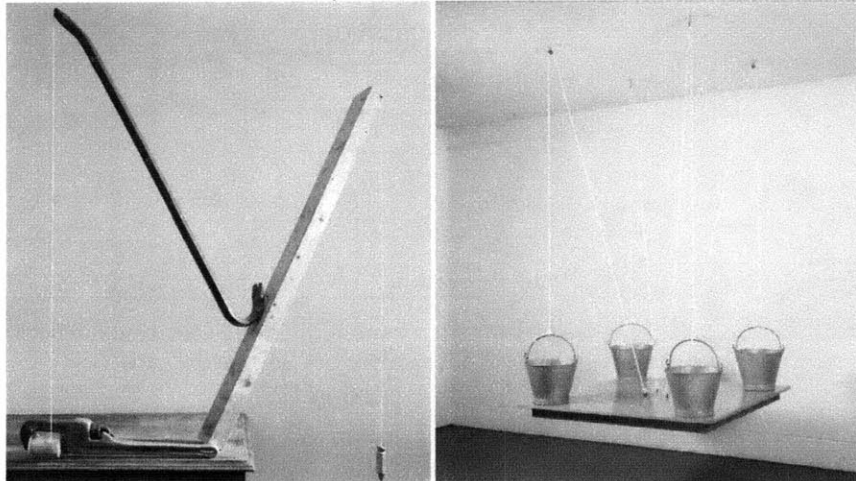


Figure 4.13 Caleb Charland, Crowbar with Plumb Bob
Michael Craig-Martin, On the Table

Spatial immediacy and temporal anteriority

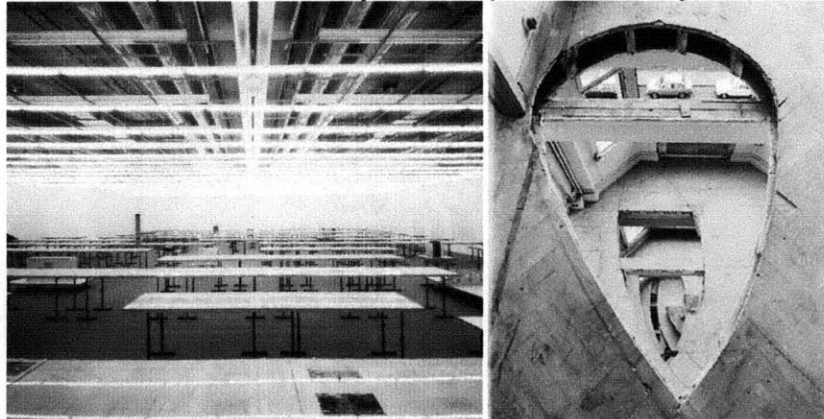


Figure 4.14 Remy Zaugg, Exhibition for Herzog & De Meuron in Pompidou Center
Gordon Matta-Clark, Doors, Floors, Doors

Physical presence and experiential remoteness

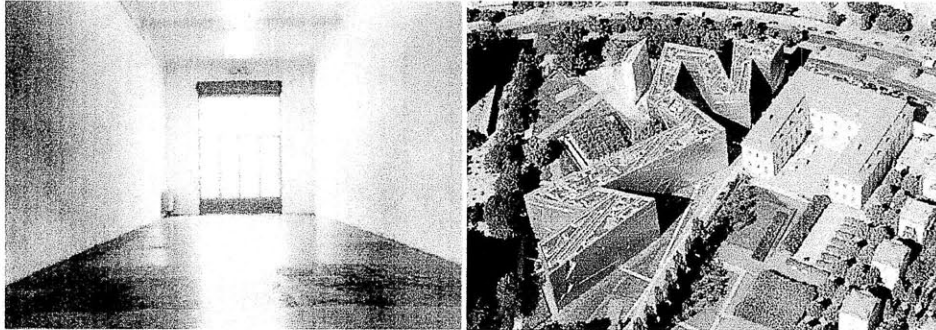


Figure 4.21 Remy Zaugg, Exhibition in a Single Room
Daniel Libeskind, Berlin Jewish Museum

Magic Bewilderment

Desymbolization

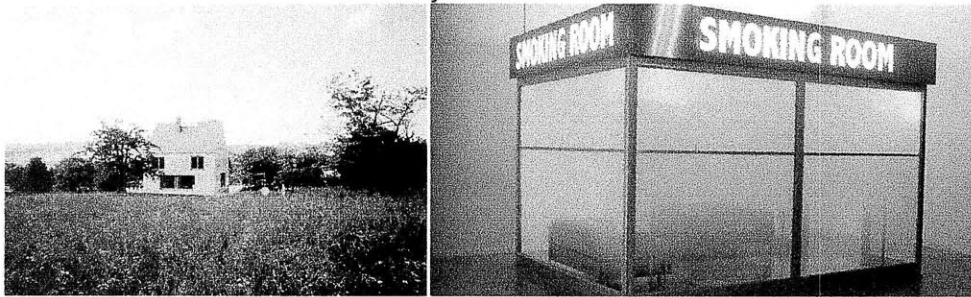


Figure 4.39 Herzog & De Meuron, Rubin House
Leandro Erlich, Smoking Room

legitimize objectivity

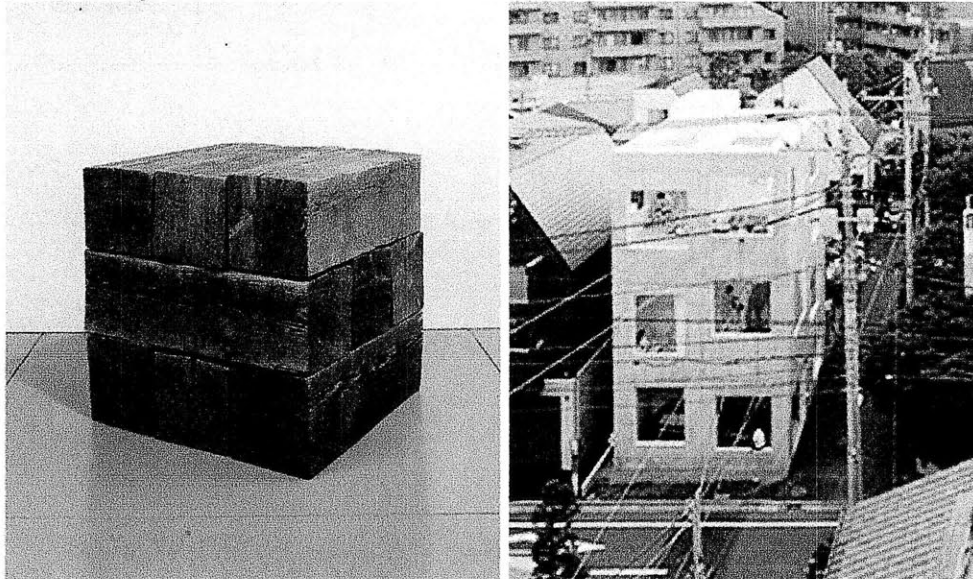


Figure 4.43 Carl Andre, Trabum
Sou Fujimoto, H House

Spatiotemporal coincidence with the viewer

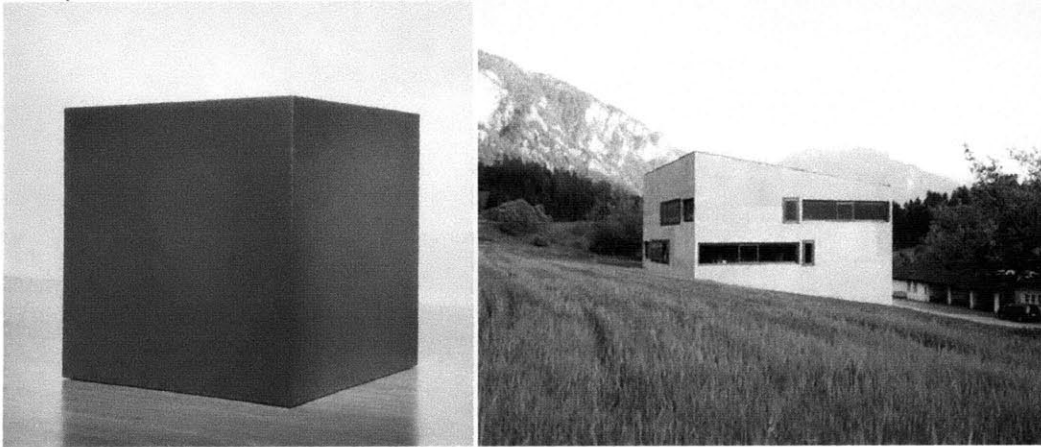


Figure 4.49 Tony Smith, Die
Valerio Olgiati, School in Paspels

what you see is what you get



Figure 4.52 Donald Judd, Untitled
Tadao Ando, Chichu Museum
SANAA, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa

Theater / Magic



Figure 4.57 Junya Ishigami, Tables
Ryue Nishizawa, Table House

Dislocation of the ontological unassociated

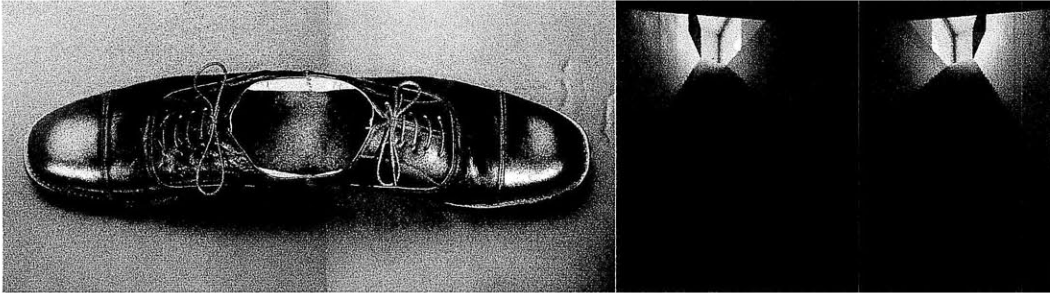


Figure 4.68 Ai Weiwei, One-man Shoe
Valerio Olgiati, Visitor Center for National Park in Zerne

the uncertain syntax

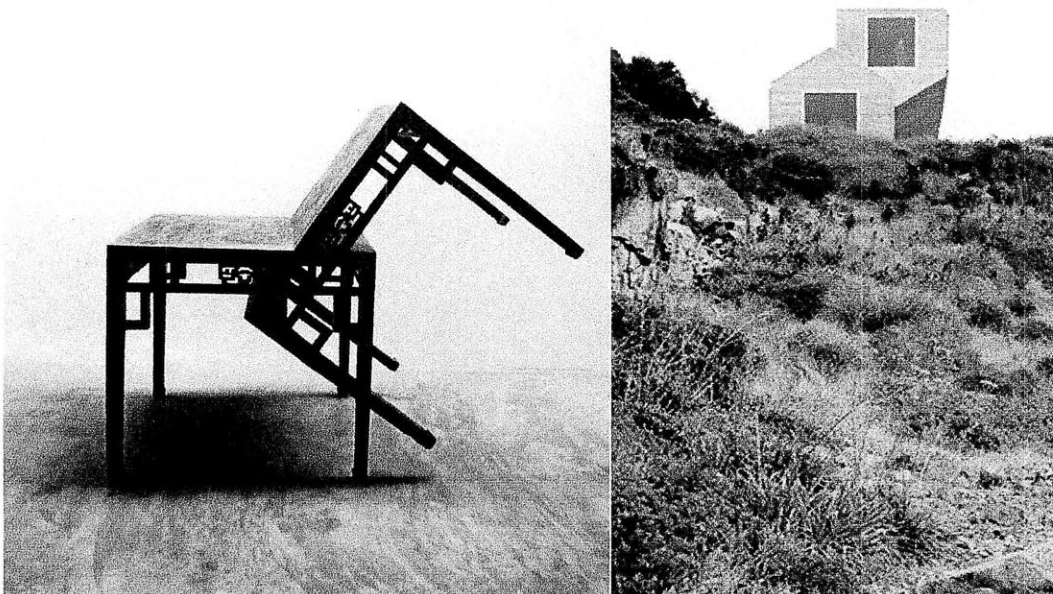


Figure 4.61 Ai Weiwei, Two Joined Square Tables
Cecilia Puga, Bahia Azul House

power of a different order

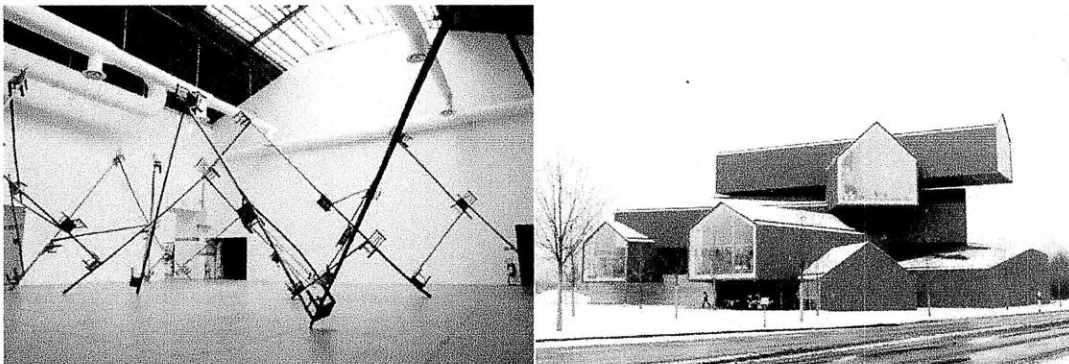


Figure 4.64 Ai Weiwei and Herzog & De Meuron, "Mock up, Beijing"
Herzog & De Meuron, Vitra Haus

the productive lying

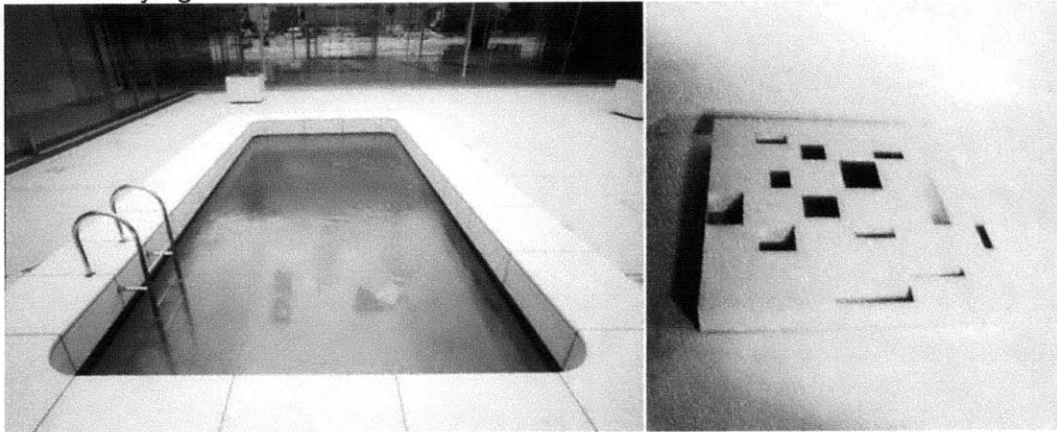


Figure 4.70 Leandro Erlich, Swimming Pool
Junya Ishigami, Graduation Thesis

Fictional Involution

Delirious interpretation

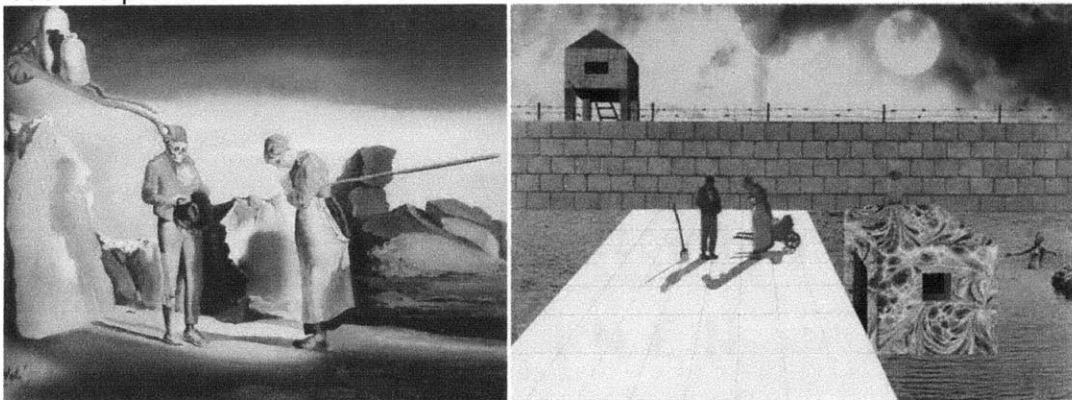


Figure 4.76 Salvador Dali, Le Mythe Tragique de l'Angelus de Millet
Rem Koolhaas, L 'Angelus

Symbolic recombination

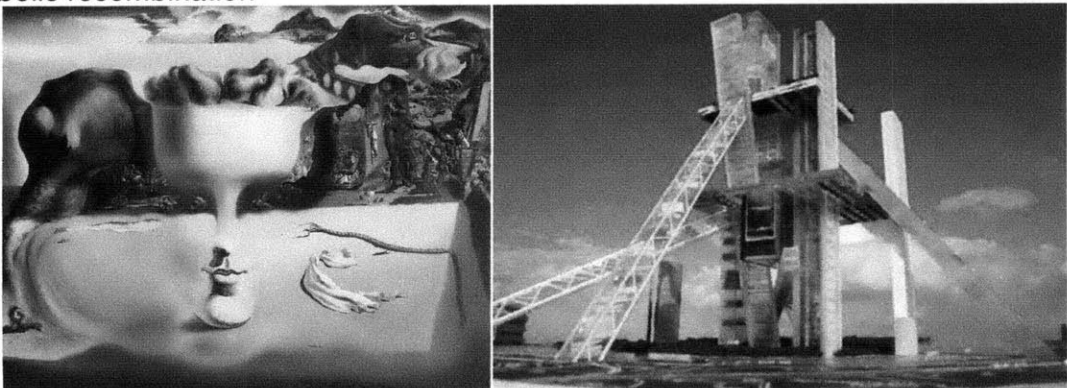


Figure 4.82 Salvador Dali, Apparition of Face and Fruit Dish on a Beach
Rem Koolhaas, Hyperbuilding in Thailand

The double image

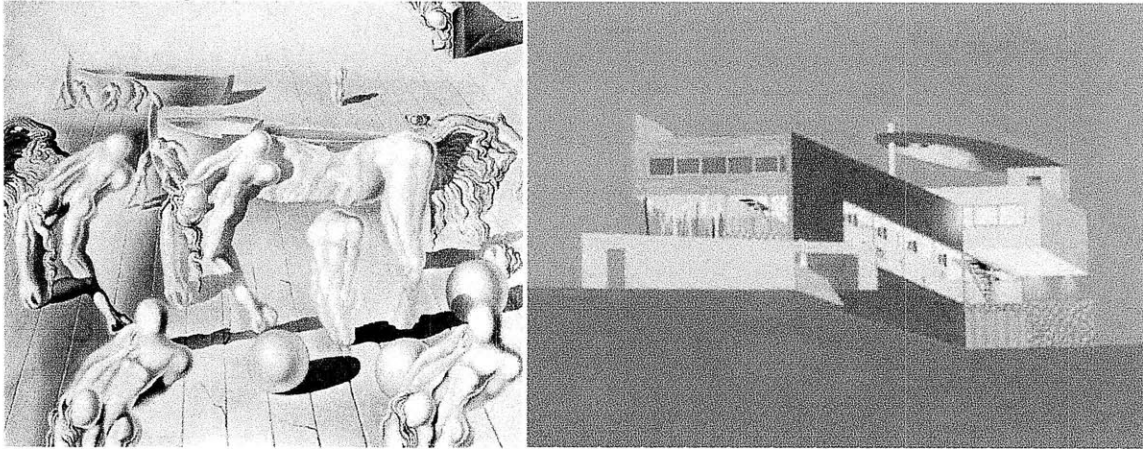


Figure 4.79 Salvador Dali, Invisible Sleeping Woman, Horse, Lion
Rem Koolhaas, Villa Dall'ava Saint Cloud Paris

fetish

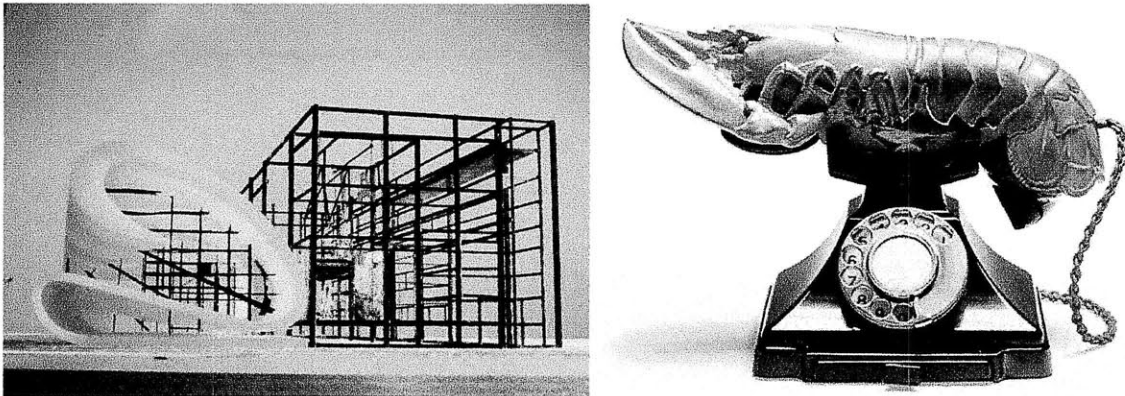


Figure 4.83 Rem Koolhaas, Guangzhou Opera
Salvador Dali, Lobster Telephone

All in sack

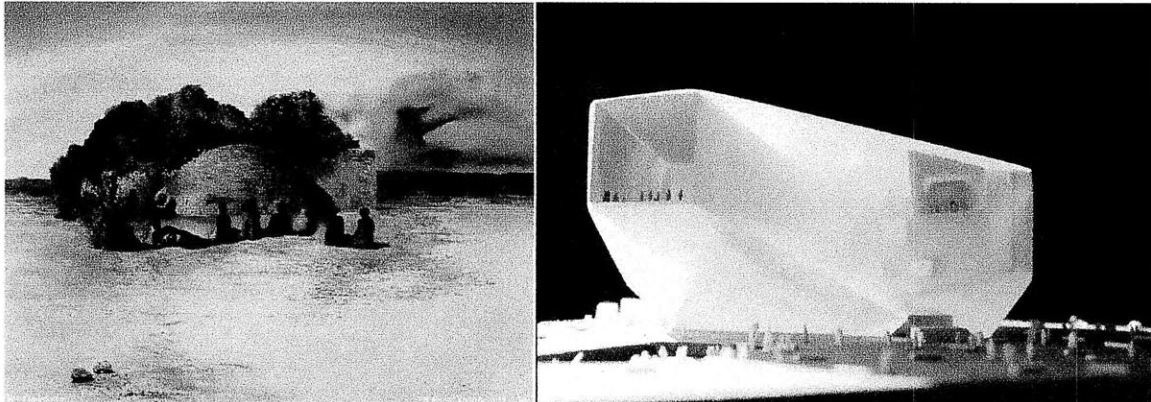


Figure 4.87 Salvador Dali, Paranoiac Visage
Rem Koolhaas, Y2K House

Political Reconfiguration

passive spectator

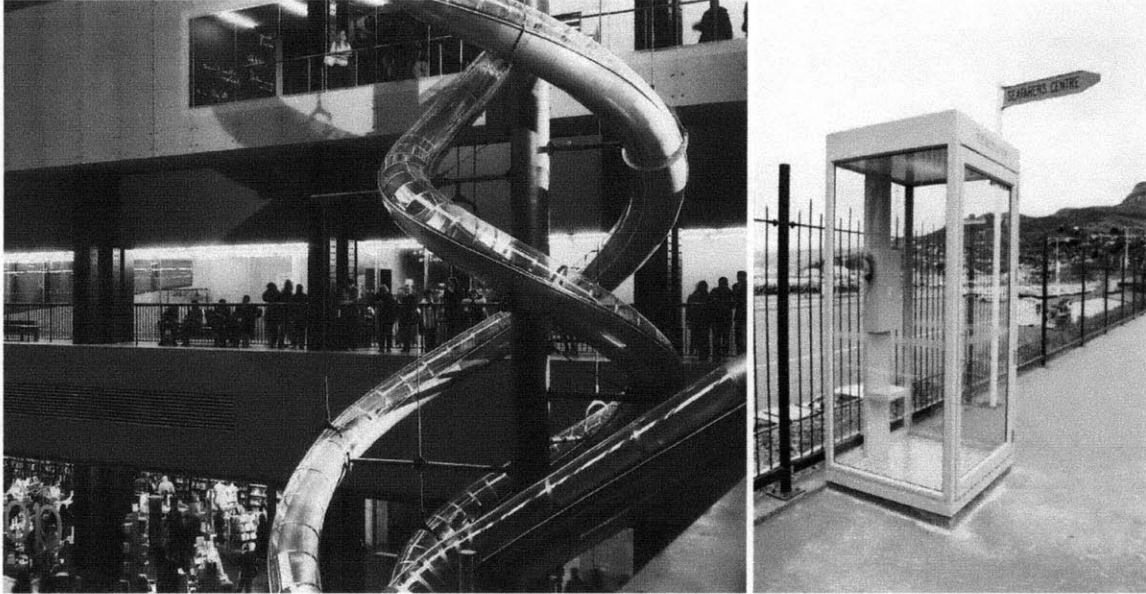


Figure 4.93 Carsten Holler, Test Site
Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset, I'm Thinking of You

political incorrect



Figure 4.125 Jango Edwards, Solo Clown Show
Erwin Wurm, Don't Care About Anything

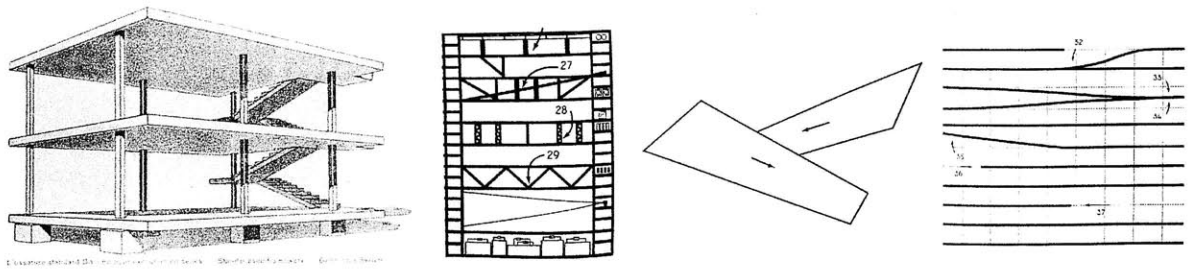


Figure 4.99 Le Corbusier, Domino House
Rem Koolhaas, Patent Office

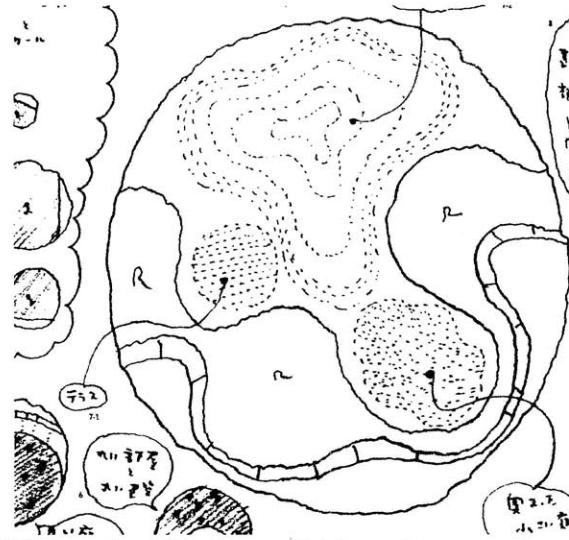
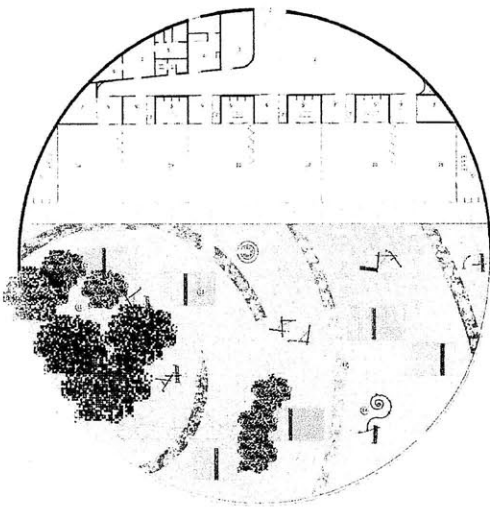


Figure 4.107 Abitare Magazine, SOS project (by Junya Ishigami)

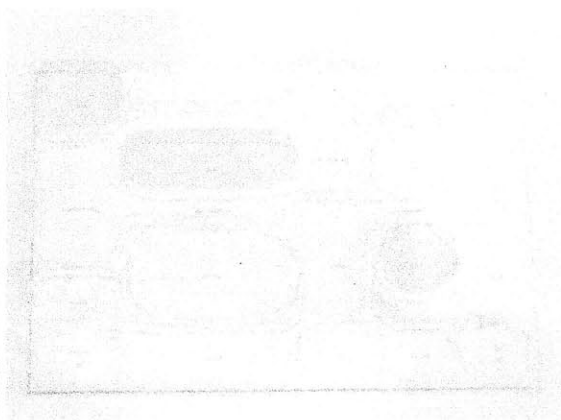
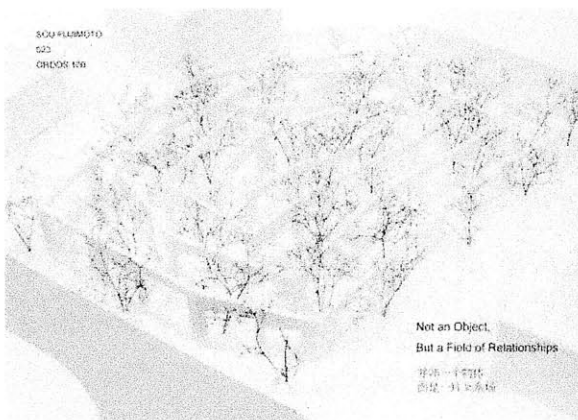


Figure 4.134 Sou Fujimoto, New Library and Museum of Musashino Art University
SANAA, Toldeo Glass Pavilion

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview: Where Art Meets Architecture
Statement of Intent
Methodology
Structure of Thesis

1.1 Overview: Where Art Meets Architecture

1.1.1 Reiterative Marriage and Divorce

“... The study of architecture has since classical times embodied the roots and concepts of the fine arts, the humanities and the sciences with a view towards enriching human life. However, during the last decades of the postwar era, the prevailing tendency in architectural education and practice has been an increasing displacement of imagination and traditional values by a meaningless use of technology, cybernetic instrumentality and scientific propaganda. The trend has created the false conviction that architecture has always been directed towards mere utilitarian purposes and adorned with fashionable taste. In fact, today’s dominant architectural creed is a profound reflection of manipulative schemes and alienating control. ...” ---- Daniel Libeskind

The situation described by Daniel Libeskind 30 years ago bears no difference with today. Ironically, it has become even more conspicuous on much of the experimental work of architecture emerging in the last decade along with a new wave of digital technology. Although disguised with obscure terminologies from diverse humanity and science territories, the genetic processes bear a homogeneous resemblance with minor differences: it reproduces itself by multiplying cells or modules in a rigid meshwork, each slightly varying from the ones connected to it, and each correlated to those around it in order to support infinite future modulation and modification, its sprawling features a stretchable and undulating surface and folds to achieve structural and programmatic performance wherever necessary.

In fact, this three-dimensional pattern comes from a tendency that causes historically reiterative marriage and divorce of the art and architecture – the abandonment of the strategies of immediate formal manifestations and pursues the reasoned form by generative process. The procedure of producing art has always been based on the immanence of the form itself and seldom on the application of a method for producing form, whereas architects often substitute the form as a central object of study with the methodology of the study of form.

Whatever operations they use to find form, the art and architecture have persistently shared the same fundamental essence - the psychophysical experience in a real time. Therefore no matter what the medium is, all artistic works including architecture express similar perceptual and mental ideas as well as the process of intellectual creation through their own dialect of form.

1.1.2 Flirt with Art: Architecture as Vehicle of Art

1.1.2.1 Mimic of Art

Starting from 1970s' some architectural institutions have continually dealt with the artistic design methodologies based on analysis of works of art and relevant ideas of philosophy in order to generate novel architectural images. But the outcome betrays a fact that architect do not want to confront. Artists seem able to manage the form with more ease and generate more inspiration such as Allan Wexler, Gordon Matta Clark etc, whereas architects endeavor to interrogate the world and produce something new but end up with resembling certain forms of art, for example, Peter Eisenman tried to involve art issues when designing his early house projects but eventual form just mimicked Sol LeWitt's work;



Figure 1.1

Daniel Libeskind's Micromegas drawing series apparently challenged the limitation of architectural drawings but the layout really invoked AL Held's early paintings;

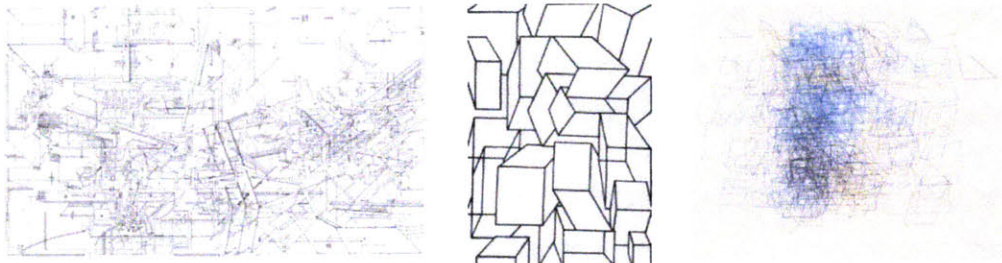


Figure 1.2

even in the most ambitious attempt to jump out of architecture's particular limitations after millennium – the Blur Building,



Figure 1.3

Scofidio and Diller just enlarged Morris's or Fujiko Nakayo's fog projects but ended up with what appeared was not a static cloud but a roaring water-spraying scaffold fighting against the blowing winds above Lake Geneva trying not to expose the skeleton inside at most time of the exhibition.

1.1.2.2 Paradox Desire

The reason comes from the paradox desire of the architecture ontology: on one hand, it fantasize to stand on the same stage with the art and serves to be the vehicle of art conveying any big ideas as art does. But as a strong form discipline, architecture is also a very problematic discipline, because it has a weak condition of sign: it does not have a system of explicit signs. It is difficult to express happiness, sadness, goodness, badness – any emotional or philosophic concept. What art can deal with, architecture cannot. On the other hand, it has to stand naked as a building where mundane life takes place and functions appropriately. "A painter can paint square wheels on a cannon to express the futility of war. A sculptor can carve the same square wheels. But an architect must use

round wheels.” Louis Kahn set up the limit for the realm of architecture and denied the shared metaphysics of art and architecture by claiming that fundamentally artistic work is useless whereas architecture is functional.

What is responsible for today architects’ ignorance of art is that architecture is only flirting with the art. It is fruitless if a building just wants to carry an artistic big idea. One needs rather to reconsider their understanding of the reality of art and architecture practice in a foundational way. To do that means to displace the conditions of art and architecture in a mediated world as they used to be – the conditions that saw art as useless and architecture as reasonable, as understandable, as appropriately functioning.

1.1.3 Post-Medium Conditional Art (PMC Art)

1.1.3.1 Rejection of Conceptualism

In several recent essays, Rosalind Krauss describes this phenomenon in the art world that the contemporary avant-garde has discarded the traditional mediums of painting and sculpture, which they view as exhausted, but are instead forced to do something as counterintuitive as inventing a new medium. They attack the formal emptiness of the dominant Conceptualism and try to reject it by reinvent their own medium into the subject matter of their art. Therefore, they search for new technological mechanisms as the “supports” for their own work. Rosalind Krauss further clarifies what she means by “technique support” with insightful interpretation of three works of conceptual photographer Sophie Calle,

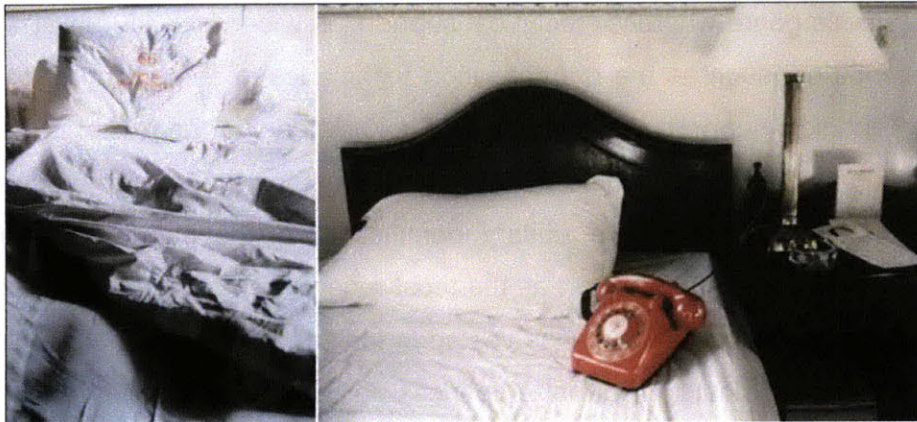


Figure 1.4

pointing out whose technical support should not be understood as conventional aesthetic medium such as photography or stage scenery but the investigative journalist's documentary research and what Jacques Derrida calls invagination (by which he means the folding of one story within another through the invention of a character who exactly repeats the opening of the first story, thereby setting it off on its narrative course once more.) In characterizing Calle's technical support, we need to watch its journalistic reports, which take the form of interviews with eyewitnesses in order to discover the identity of a missing subject. Calle has invented her own medium, using her interview technique and invagination narrative to construct a true picture of its missing protagonist, --as in *The Address Book* (1983), when Calle telephones the numbers listed in the little agenda she's found in order to build, through others' descriptions of its owner, a fantasy picture of this missing persona.

1.1.3.2 Technical Support

I believe what Rosalind Krauss called "technical support" in the post-medium condition should not be superficially understood as new physical substance (such as contemporary commercial vehicles cars, television or film, screen, the projector's beam of light etc) as the substitution to the traditional aesthetic mediums (such as oil on canvas, fresco, and many sculptural materials, including cast bronze or welded metal). It includes physical materials and embodied technologies that are new to the conventional art medium but also implies far more than that. The term "technical support" has transcend the term "medium" in that "medium" commonly reminds of the specific material support for a

traditional aesthetic genre whereas “technical support” is wider than the physical support of the representation (such as the dramatization techniques in screenplay or film editing technique). “Technical support” has the virtue of acknowledging the recent obsolescence of most traditional aesthetic mediums while it also welcomes the layered mechanisms of new techniques that make a simple, unitary identification of the work’s physical support impossible. Viewing the Conceptual art as the most recent form of kitsch as it had been in the past, this new avant-garde’s aim was vested in the “devices” that underlie all kinds of creative production. Against the formal emptiness condition of Conceptualism, this new authentic avant-garde calls for the artist to “imitate” the medium of his own craft from the outsider’s eye and makes that re-authenticated medium the artist’s subject matter.

From architectural prospect of view, one of the implications brought by the post medium condition of art is that art not necessarily be functionless or useless, instead function itself might even become the “technical support” for art as we may see in many works of Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset.



Figure 1.5

1.2 Statement of Intent

1.2.1 From PMC Art to PMC Architecture

1.2.1.1 Post-Medium Condition of Architecture

However, as a lesson learnt from 1970s' flirting situation, is it possible for architecture not to consider itself as the potential one of such "supports" for the post-medium condition of art but to reach for its own "technical support" and enter the post medium condition of architecture? Recent collaborations between significant architects and artists seems to share some light on the question, Herzog and De Meuron work with the artist Remy Zaugg and with Ai Weiwei, Greg Lynn with Fabian Marcaccio, David Adjaye with Olafur Eliason, Anish Kapoor with Cecil Balmond and with Future Systems, just name a few. Although the exact collaboration process of how art and architecture intertwines is still kept secretive and the buildings look different from each other, metaphorically speaking, they seem to be borne out of the same syntax that allows an architect to construct different sentences - even if it is difficult to grasp at the first glance. Is it possible to shift our attention from Conceptualism to the technological mechanisms as the supports of their own work, and go deeper into the nature of every medium by meditating the mechanism itself as the "technical support" and focus on re-authenticating these "devices" for architecture?

1.2.1.2 Defunctionalization

The departure point is not to think of architecture as form, but as operation. It can be interpreted from two very different levels. One is an operation of the physical medium such as craft of making buildings and spaces, the effects of materiality, tactility and spatial atmospheres. The other is regarding the operations in architectural practice abstractly, in ways of architectural thinking, design tools and strategies. These operations give direction to the physical medium and can be applied on any problem and the product of the process can be anything, so not necessary a building or a spatial design. Accordingly it is on this level of operation that architecture shares "technical support" with other post medium condition of art and allows "technical" thinking as a body of knowledge and a set of tools and operation to address a multitude of issues.

Therefore from this point of view, the fact that usefulness is a constitutive condition of architecture does not necessarily imply that its operation would arise from functional preconditions. But this displacement does not mean that architecture should not function. Rather, the displacement concerns the conditions of architecture does not mean it should function well, because all buildings function well, or that it should be structured well, or that it should contain well, or that it should be aesthetically well. What he meant was, it should 'look like' it functions well, it should look like it is built well. When Le Corbusier said, ' A house is a machine to live in', he did not mean it should really be a machine, because basically he was building bourgeois houses with 19th century functions. He meant that the operation of the house should be thought like a machine. And so they built an ordinary house with all the ordinary functions and made it look like a machine.

Defunctionalization is not dysfunction but the displacement of higher-order functions. What I propose is that indeed a building has to function, but it does not have to look like it is functioning appropriately. Indeed a building has to stand up. But it does not necessarily mean to look like it is standing up. As such, the problem of standing against gravity does not provoke to think of it merely as a construction problem, but rather as a medium to interrogate the construction of meaning. When it does not look like it stands up, or it does not look like it functions, then it calls for a new "technical support" to make it function and stand meaningfully. This is not questioning the architects' professional ability to make a bare building holding up human ordinary life but criticizing how far he or she can go beyond that.

1.2.2 Reinvent the "Technical Support" for Architecture

For in the face of the increased blurring of the distinctions among painting, sculpture, and architecture, through practices from performance art, installation art, site-specific art, land art, and the rest, media specificity has lost its consistent identity, which is to say, conversely, that art has finally freed itself from attachments to specific media and instead devote into the reinvention of the "technical support" for each medium. Then how do we define, and thereby induce from the individual integrity of each practice as a "technical

support” when there no longer seems to be any division between the apparent medium specificity? And more problematically how do we re-authenticate these “support” in the case of architecture?

1.2.2.1 Re-authenticate the “Support”

I count some of the work apparently sharing medium remoteness as “technical support” not only for art but also for architecture. The difference is that I am able to make arguments for it that do not rely on others simply sharing estimation of its aesthetic value or concept but rather on the rootedness of operational mechanism within the physical facts. I believe that this is the issue that brings us out of the current anxieties and debates about “conceptualism” in architecture and into the post-medium condition.

Hence the aim of the research is not based on the supporters' and advocates' interest in conceptual art or some specific problem in certain genre, but rather it deals with the same problem both artists and architects face in their post medium condition: it is not about the “brilliant” idea but meditation about the mechanism and “supports” permitting them to act on an idea – the rudiments of a language that express their attitude towards the world. I am looking for a more open, flexible “support” for an architectural practice that is confident in its own modes of operation and intrinsic disciplinary knowledge. In this sense, the narrative of the research is more like a ‘know-how’ writing for practice that is a continual source of innovation and change.

1.3 Methodology

This research is learnt from what I find I like and what turns me on. Many architecture researches are afraid to acknowledge what they like; they only research what they are supposed to like. But I enjoy analyzing what turns us on, because if I am sensitive to this post medium condition, what turns me on will become something relevant to it. The process features an irrational rationale that is basically constituted from three phrases.

The first comes from the feeling that after compare different projects in pool of my interest there are two or several works despite of the apparent irrelevant mediums producing from intellectually the same technique. And I see that the one or the other displace the meaning of physical presence by substituting the perceptible reality with the counterintuitive mechanism. Both of them finally please us by manipulate their own medium according to this specific tricking mechanism.

In the second phrase, in order to better understand our intellectual pleasure I try to argue that, in these projects, the effect sprang from the same source – technical support – the notion of which comes to us in the first place from material objects. It has generated rules that are applied to different domains: to actions, to thoughts, as well as to forms.

In the third phrase, reflecting on the value and distribution of these general rules, I noted that some originally reside in the limited specific category and that in this way in certain cases, it could be dis-categorised and reinvented to support architecture in the same way that in arts through commentaries and examples.

Therefore, I need to develop my own technical supports dealt with analogy and induction to achieve these goals.

1.3.1 Analogical Thinking

More generally speaking, the process is a kind of analogical thinking. Whenever anything attracts your attention – be it an object or idea – you are likely to ask yourself three questions: what that thing is, why is it there, and whether it should be a cause for alarm. This is the my first phrase that is descriptive internalization. When facing new problems, you need to adjust this description for the solution. To be specific, you have to compare the problem that you am working on reminds of a similar one that was solved in the past, but the method that was successful then does not quite work on the problem that you are facing now. However, if you can describe the differences between that old problem and this new one, those differences might help to change that old method so that it will work for the solution now.

1.3.1.1 Evans's Geometric Analogy

Thomas G. Evans (1963) wrote a program that performed surprisingly well in what many people would agree to be ambiguous, ill-defined situations. Specifically, it answered the kinds of questions in widely used "intelligence test" that asked about "geometric analogies."

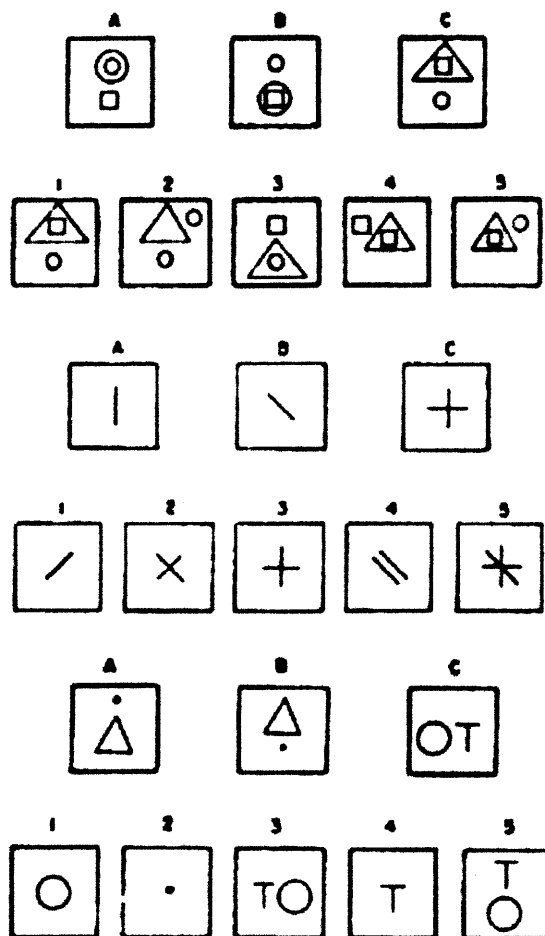


Figure 1.6

For example, a person was shown the picture TEST 1 and asked to choose an answer to: "A is to B as C is to which of the other five figures?" most older persons choose figure 3 – and so did Evans's program, whose score on such tests was about the same as that of a typical sixteen-year-old. If you ask someone why they chose figure 3, they usually give an answer like this: You can change A to B by moving the largest figure down, and you can change C to figure 3 by moving the largest figure down. This statement expects the

listener to understand that both clauses describe something in common – even though there is no big circle in figure 3. TEST 2 simply involved a rotation. TEST 3 involves systematic substitution of certain specified relations (e.g., LEFT for ABOVE) thus making it possible for analogy to relate the “vertical” transformation taking A into B to the “horizontal” transformation of C into 3.

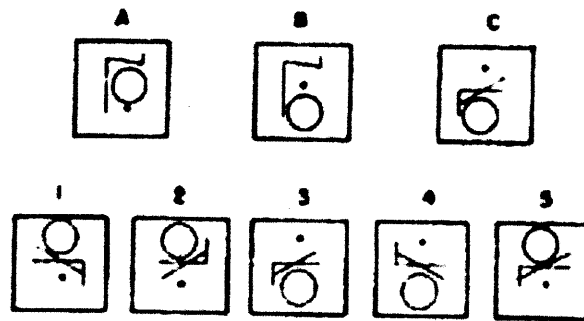


Figure 1.7

However when facing TEST 4, most adults tend to make a hasty decision to choose figure 5, but Evans’s program choose nothing. This is the typical failure in analogical thinking, also the same way in which architecture simply mimic art. This one shows what Evan’s program inspires to the real world – whenever we need to make a choice, the differences that will concern us most will depend on our goals. How similar they may seem to be will depend upon which differences one decides to ignore. But the importance of each difference depends upon one’s current intentions. Thus in TEST 4, many figures can also serves as an alternative answers.

Although these particular “geometric analogy” problems are not very common in everyday life, Evans’s program shows the value of being able to change our descriptions until we find ways to describe different things so that they seem more similar. This enables us to our knowledge about one kind of thing to understand some other, different kind of thing. But none of these descriptions should be too concrete (or they won’t apply to other examples), and none of them should be too abstract (or they won’t be able to represent the differences that are relevant). Discovering new and proper ways to look at things is one of our most necessary commonsense processes.

Jencks rely mostly on the substitution of x or y variables and the interpolation of principally one's own work – as in Peter Eisenman's rather elegant précis of his career in *Diagram Diaries* (1990) and, more recently, in the project/protagonist mapping Greg Lynn provides in *Greg Lynn Form* (2008). One might imagine locating one's interests or even inserting one's work into Jencks's "tree", but this remains essentially an exercise in casting.

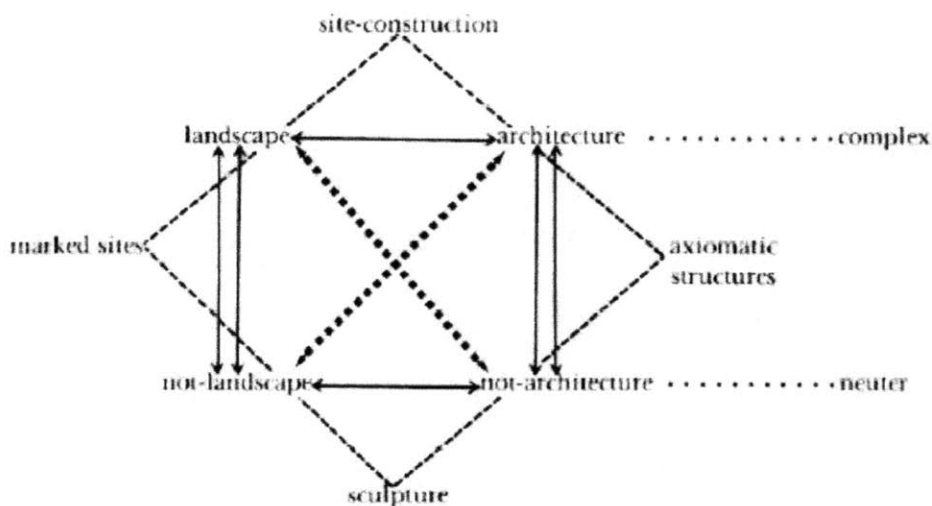


Figure 1.9

1.3.2.2 The Expanded Field

In her seminal essay, Krauss explores a new place for the art production of the 1960s and '70s through the construction of a Klein diagram. First, Krauss's diagram cleverly defines sculpture as neither architecture nor landscape and creates a diagram structured on the positive and negative poles of architecture and landscape. Then she established the premise that works like Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* or Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc* can no longer be defined as a sculpture, arguing that sculpture has come to be defined as not – architecture and not-landscape. In this way she is then able to "open" the field by including the negations not-architecture and not-landscape with their positive roots. The combination of these terms constitutes the expanded field, of which "sculpture" is one corner and the other corners of the diagram allow her to create new categories to classify and understand different artworks. A square of these four terms yields a larger diamond of positions that bridges them: between landscape and not-landscape, marked sites;

between landscape and architecture, site constructions, and so forth. For artists as disparate then as Alice Aycock, Robert Morris, and Robert Irwin, the “Expanded Field” was a generational touchstone.

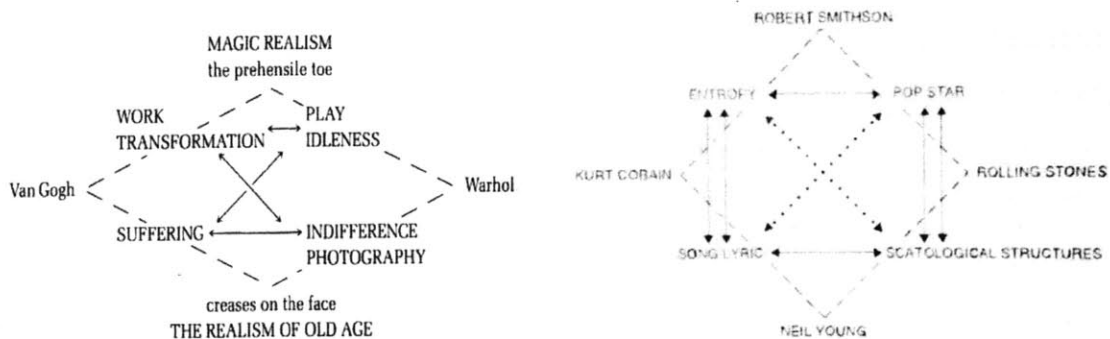


Figure 1.10

Artists who take up Krauss’s “Expanded Field” fight for interpretive or transformative room to undo some of its hold on their field. While Fredric Jameson made a foot fetish of Van Gogh and Warhol in order to extend a discussion of visual appropriation back into the 19th century, Sam Durant’s “Quaternary Field/Associative Diagram” (1998) offers a sardonic critique of visual culture through the mechanics of personality cults that joins Robert Smithson to Kurt Cobain via a shared circuit of shit, entropy, and the Rolling Stones.

Of the two diagrams, Krauss’s “expanded Field” has proven more adaptable beyond her discipline. Though certainly a product of specific time and milieu, the “Expanded Field” and the Klein diagram more generally, remains essentially atemporal in its logic, and thereby more applicable in any present. Underlying the “technical support” she has applied is a serious attempt to reconstruct the foundations of the discipline, not so much in singular terms but in broader concepts that acknowledge an expanded field, while seeking to overcome the problematic dualisms that have plagued every single discipline.

If such holds true for the destiny of sculpture in its postmodernist field, might we not be able to construe a similarly expanded field for architecture’s “technical support” for its present exploratory condition? Thus Krauss’s strategy allows me to conjure another, less defined diagram. In order to do so, I return to Greimas’s semiotic square, which gives me a more powerful “technical support”.

1.3.3 Semiotic Square as “Technical Support”

1.3.3.1 Why Semiotic Square

The diagram of semiotic square is not meant to limit or reduce the discourse by subdividing it into four simple groups. What it sets up is a complex dialogue that shifts around the diagram, often between corners. To some extent, the corners represent the most extreme and clear expression of one single concept, but in the meantime imply wide range spectrum of the subordinate and derivative concepts between these poles. The diagram is meant to help elaborate and organize the discourse of these concepts, and the links and relationship generated between corners should help understand similarities and differences between frequently polarized writings.

Furthermore, the square does offer a kind of “discovery principle,” but of a special type. It only inducts the fourth fecund corner and not necessarily means to replace intelligence or intuition. In spite of the fact that, it seems simply to map thoughts and interpretations arrived at in other systems, which seems less productive at the first glance, it is prolific at the outset to provide a well-organized and distinctive perspective hence highlights its pedagogical function along the discourse unfolded. One can, in other words, very properly use this visual device to map out and to articulate a set of relationship that is much more confusing and less economical conveyed in expository prose but these humbler heuristic capacities of the semiotic square may emerge as powerful metaphors to construe a new condition after its structural completion.

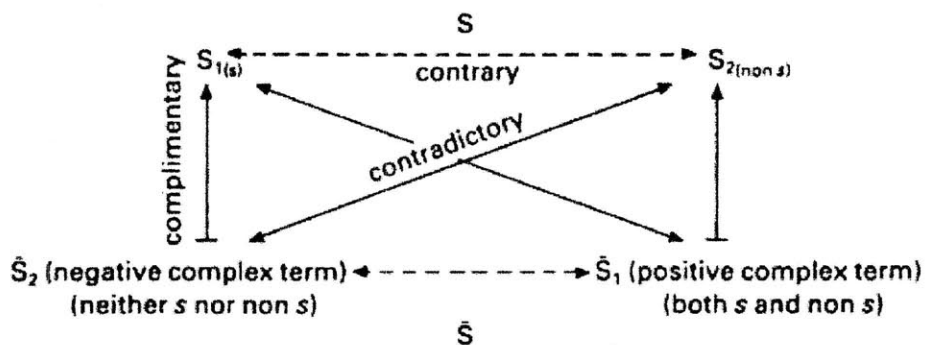


Figure 1.11

1.3.3.2 How to Use Semiotic Square

My proposed semiotic diagram is meant to help classify and understand the “technical support” that I have observed from so called “post medium condition” of contemporary art and architecture practice. At the same time, it involves an inherent critique of the discourse inside every “support” and attempts to release this “support” imprisoned inside their own discipline by the heuristic capability of the diagram’s structure. I will use this semiotic tool to open up the diagram into a new one that explores the options suggested by this post medium condition and to show how they might be present in current discourse.

However, my constructed semiotic square does not mean to exhaust all the literal and latent meaning in a text, in which way the subjectivity of the interpreter's framework will be highly understated, either is the semiotic square. Instead my narratives will just illuminate as they may sometimes be, and let the semiotic square provoke any inexplicit oppositions that are identified and emerge automatically in the mind of the interpreter rather than contained within the text itself.

1.3.3.3 The limitation and Explosion of the Square

Krauss revisited the diagram later (The Optical Unconscious), using it to trace the field of “accepted,” or traditional, modernism and an alternative modernism that she called the “optical unconscious.” In this case she uses the graph to limit a field instead of expanding it, showing both what was accepted – what was included in the modernism diagram, and what was repressed in modernism – the areas the diagram excludes, which end up represented in a second diagram that describes the “optical unconscious”. This second diagram implies that for Krauss, the semiotic square could also show the limits of a discourse.

Jameson shares Krauss’s understanding of the diagram as potentially confining. He sees the semiotic square as a cognitive map, “a virtual map of conceptual closure, or better still, of the closure of ideology itself, that is, as a mechanism, which, while seeming to generate

a rich variety of possible concepts and positions, remains in fact locked into some initial aporia or double bind that it cannot transform from the inside by its own means.”

On one hand semiotic square make a clear limitation, on the other hand, it is just this limitation that allow the potential for the interpreters to jump out of this limitation take place. In addition, the semiotic square privileges the last, fourth corner of the field as a syntax, a starting point of a new diagram. If the first diagram defines the limitation, there remain a number of alternatives that lies outside the restraint and that can help define the second and the third diagram which allows for an explosion of the meaning.

1.4 Structure of Thesis

“Chapter 1 semiotic square” is a detailed explanation of the technical support the whole research is going to use. It will first introduce the basic semic square which is helpful for the semiotic square construction. And then it will clarify the ten relationships within the semiotic square as well as expansion and induction method of every corner. At the end it will describe examples and instructions on how to construct the square.

“Chapter 2 Construction of Binary Opposition” is the construction of the primary binary oppositions and the extension to contrary terms that serves as the fundamental structure before the expansion. It will explicate the reason to choose them as semic, and further clarify the definition and classification of the concept along with the relationships in-between.

“Chapter 3 The Expanded Field” is the investigation of techniques that is able to realize the combination concept of every semic polarities, which is also the concrete exemplification of “technical support” I am trying to propose for the post medium condition of architecture.

“Chapter 4 Negation of a Negation” will reconstruct the second semiotic square with the metaphorical nominalization generated from the previous expanded field and use the

square to elucidate the complex relations between them. Finally it will induce the fourth fecund word with support of the square.

“Chapter 5 Conclusion: Explosion of the Meaning” will point out the limitation of constructed semiotic square and suggest its potential further interpretations.

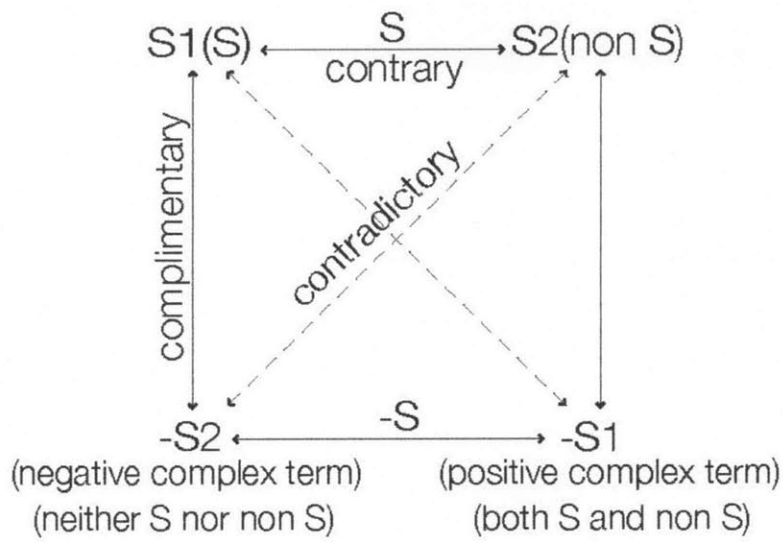


Figure 2.1

CHAPTER 2

Technical Support: Semiotic Square

An Era's Tool: Semiotic Square
Mechanism of Semiotic Square
Reinvention of the Square

2.1 An Era's Tool: Semiotic Square

Krauss looks to mathematics for the structure of the Klein diagram, but notes that it was used by structuralists like the Piaget group, and was applied in semiotics by French theorician A.J. Greimas. Greimas's work explores graphics that formalize theoretical relationships in order to find hidden structures at work in literacy narrative. In his work the diagram is called a "semiotic square." That postmodern writers have used the diagram repeatedly to explain or explore their time frames underlines a concern with dissolving simplistic oppositions into more complex frameworks. To use it now is to use an era's tools to critique its discourse, with the advantage of appropriate hindsight.

It has been applied not only in art world by Rosalind Krauss or Fredric Jameson, turning to other contexts, in relation to children's toys Dan Fleming offers an accessible application of the semiotic square. Gilles Marion has used the Greimasian square to suggest four purposes in communicating through clothing: wanting to be seen; not wanting to be seen; wanting not to be seen; and not wanting not to be seen (cited in draft publication by David Mick). Most recently, Jean-Marie Floch has used the grid to illustrate an interesting exploration of the 'consumption values' represented by Habitat and Ikea furniture.

2.2 Mechanism of Semiotic Square

2.2.1 Terms Explanation

2.2.1.1 Polarities

The working of the semiotic square are straightforward. When we add these terms, the diagram produces compound concepts of pure contradiction, or meta-concepts: both S1 and S2 – the complex axis, neither S1 nor S2 – the neuter axis. Once any unit of meaning [S1] is conceived, we automatically conceive of the absence of that meaning [-S1], as well as an opposing system of meaning [S2] that correspondingly implies its own absence [-S2]. These three relationships exhaust the logical possibilities of binary opposition.

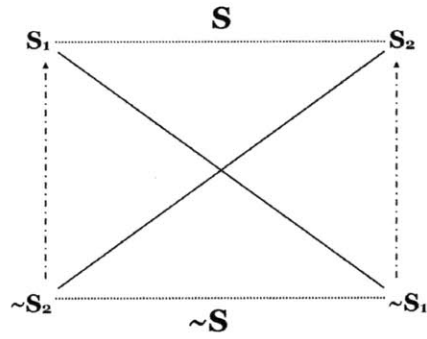


Figure 2.2

The positive complex term [-S1] articulates the axis of the first opposition (both S and non S); the negative complex term [-S2] creates a different context in which to understand the elementary semantic structure under consideration.

2.2.1.2 Relationships

A contrary relationship creates a double relation of conjunction and disjunction in terms of the presence or absence of some shared feature (in the black/white example, it is 'light articulated as colors')

A contradictory relationship creates that double relation in terms of a shared function (human perception: 'color')

A complementary relationship creates that double relation in terms of an implication ('white' implies the category of 'colouredness', but it implies other things as well: 'light', 'shade', 'hue')

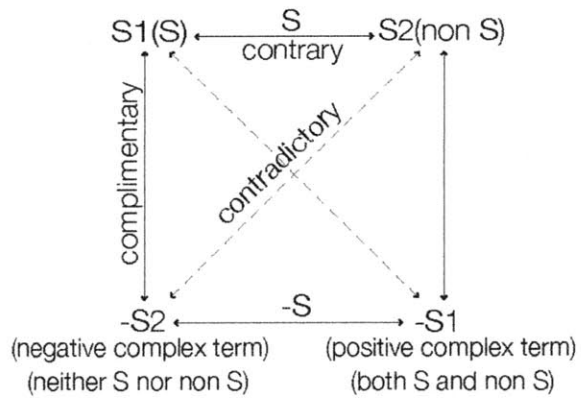


Figure 2.1

It is possible to clarify and heighten the relationship implied by this square by mapping them onto the phenomenon that linguists call neutralization. In its simplest form, neutralization operates in relation to a binary that opposes marked and unmarked terms, the marked term understood as conveying more information than the unmarked one. For example, in the pair old and young, young is the marked term, since to say “John is as young as Mary” tells us more than does “John is as old as Mary”, the latter simply conveying age, the former indicating age plus youthfulness.

2.2.2 Negation of a Negation

The last of these oppositions breaches the purity of logic and ‘entangles’ the elementary structure of signification with ‘meaning’ which is ‘apprehended by means of ‘ the differences of opposition.’ It does so by inscribing the negative within the semiotics of the square.

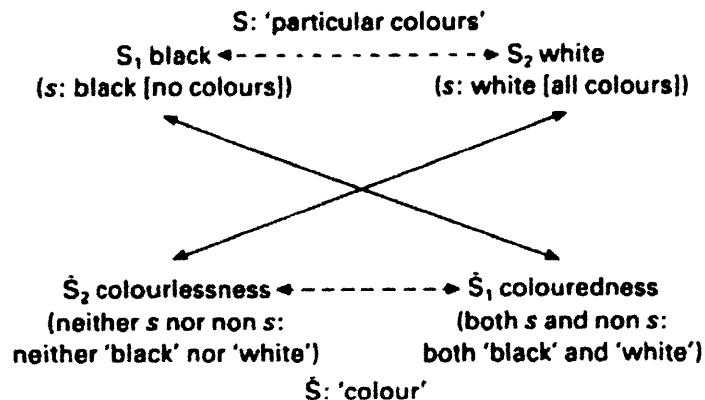


Figure 2.3

In the example above, colourlessness, neither black nor white, neither the absence nor the presence of light, inhabits that position. In this position colourlessness falls like a shadow across the square, a kind of fecund negativity whose absence, in the light of life, cannot be conceived.

2.2.2.1 Paradoxical Emergence

Fredric Jameson has made a recommendation to constructions of the fourth term which is the negation of the second term. Jameson specifies that this term is a place of novelty and

paradoxical emergence when the operation is successful: “It is always the most critical position and the one that remains open or empty for the long time, for its identification completes the process and in that sense constitutes the most creative act of the construction.” Jameson adds that the fourth term is usually a leap of intuition, or a great deduction.

In actual practice, it frequently turns out that we are able to articulate a given concept in only three of the four available positions; the final one, [-S2], remains a cipher or an enigma to the mind ... the missing term ... we may now identify as none other than the ‘negation of a negation’ familiar from dialectical philosophy. It is indeed because the negation of a negation is such a decisive leap, such a production or generation of new meaning, that we so frequently come upon a system in the incomplete state ... only three terms out of four given. The position inscribes what Shoshana Felman has called ‘radical negativity’ in the square.

2.2.2.2 The Fecund Fourth Word

Above all this position is ‘productive,’ it is what Felman describes as ‘fundamentally fecund and affirmative, and yet without positive reference.’ History only registers theoretical acts or idea-events within the structure – always an ideological structure – of opposition or alternatives, but it is precisely what lies outside the alternative that makes an event, that makes an act, that makes history. Paradoxically, the things that have no history are what make history.

2.2.2.3 Common Ground with the Initial

However, the negation of a term necessarily shares some common ground with the initial term because it included all that the term exclude. Jameson presents a clear example using the racial terms white and black, in which not-white includes black, but also all the categories that are not included in white.

2.2.3 The Construction of the Square

2.2.3.1 Finding the Generative Terms

To construct the semiotic square, we must first find the generative terms, the S1 and S2. To do so it is easier to have an array of terms “floating” in an expanded field, much like Krauss’s group of minimalists and land artists. Jameson gives three recommendations for the construction of the semiotic square. The first specific instruction concerns the selection of terms: “The first is the inaugural decision, not merely about the terms of the binary opposition to be expanded and articulated in the square as a whole, but also, and above all, the very order in which those terms are arranged. In other words, whether the founding binary is ordered as white versus black, or as black versus white. ”

2.2.3.2 The Order of the Terms

Jameson adds to his first recommendation that we must choose the order of the terms carefully. He specifies that the terms are not symmetrical but sequential, and because one comes first and the other second (or rather, because we perceive them that way), they are bound in a dominant/subordinate relationship. The significance of positionality within it is only one index of the way in which it can just as easily be considered to map a temporal process as to register a conceptual blockage or paralysis; indeed, the latter can most often be grasped as the very situation that motivates the former, namely, the attempt, by rotating the square and generating its implicit positions, to find one’s way out of the conceptual or ideological closure, out of the old or give – into which one is locked – somehow desperately to generate the novelty of the event, or of breakthrough.

2.2.3.3 Polysemic Conception

Jameson’s second recommendation is that the four primary terms of the square need to be conceived polysemically, each carrying its own set of synonyms and allowing for a slippage of meaning, which will allow further unexpected connections and even the possibility of an opening of one of the terms into its own fourfold system. The slippage of the terms must be understood not as the common ground they share but as parallel

columns or categories. This slippage starts with the choice of the words form and concept, since they are already loaded both with architectural meanings of their own.

2.2.3.4 One Sample

The opposition life(S) vs death (non S) generates the further opposition agriculture (S1) vs war (non S1) which in turn generates 'a third complex or mediating term': agriculture (positive) vs hunt (complex) vs war (negative).

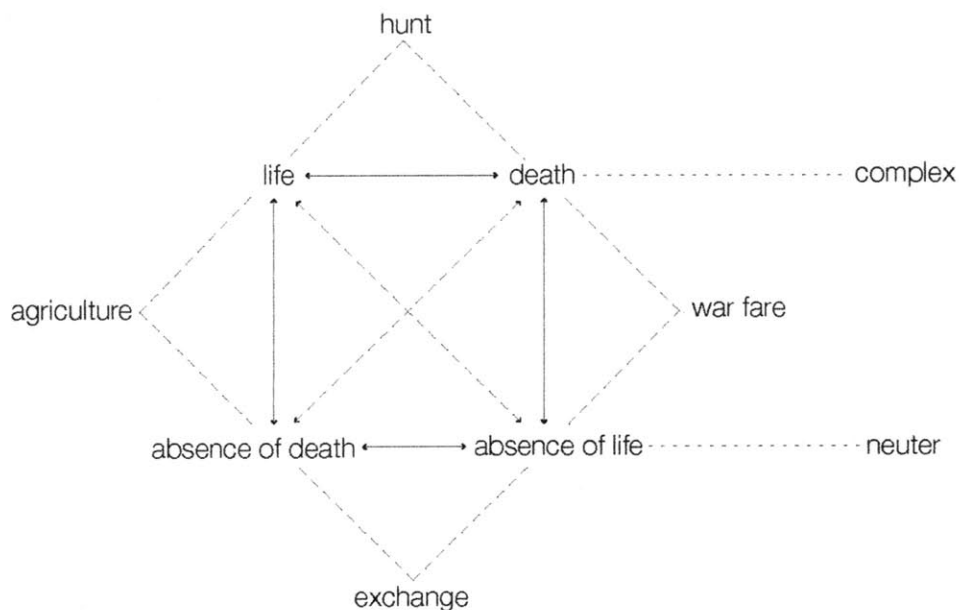


Figure 2.4

If hunting combines warfare and agriculture (both S1+non S1), it does so precisely by joining the opposed units in S1 vs non S1, the life-sustaining aspect of agriculture and the life-destroying aspect of warfare.

But exchange suggests itself as the absence of war and the contrary of hunting. Gathering for instance is contrary to hunting, but its contradictory is theft or pillage rather than warfare; it remains a form of 'harvesting'.

What makes exchange such a 'decisive leap' is that its inscription in the square can only occur when we have reconceived the semic element, S: in this new context what is life-sustaining about agriculture is its 'harvest': what is exchanged is 'already harvested'.

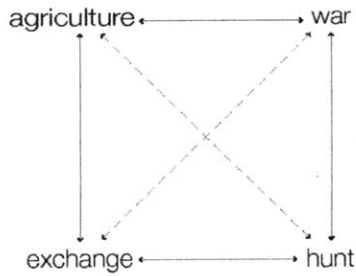


Figure 2.5

Such a new ‘conception’ requires reconceiving the other elements of the square as well: agriculture shares ‘harvesting’ with its logical contradictory, hunting, and in this context even the ‘life-destroying’ aspect of warfare can be conceived as a kind of ‘harvesting’ (whose pillage is the contradictory to exchange).

Thus the semiotic square allows us to rethink our conception of agriculture altogether, to see agriculture within a different framework of meaning so that its seemingly minimal element of ‘life sustenance’ can be seen as already ‘complex’: harvesting sustains life by means of a kind of destruction, which is accomplished by the ‘fecundity’ of exchange, neither life-sustaining nor life-destroying, but positioned to re-conceive the results of all these human activities as goods already harvested, as positioned within social and cultural life.

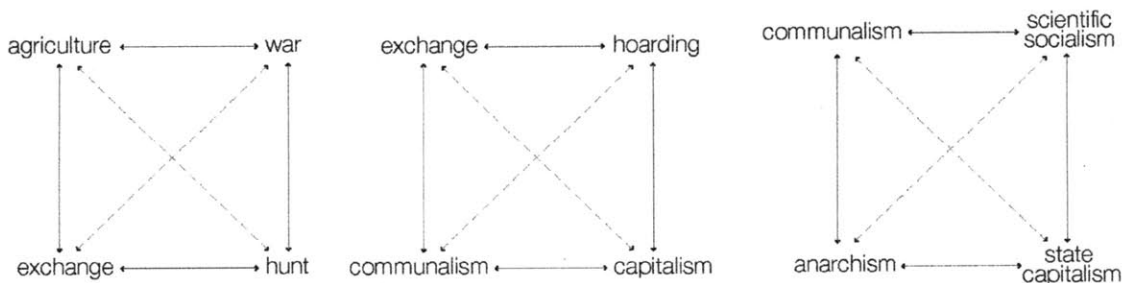


Figure 2.6

Greimas calls this process of discovering the complex in the simple an ‘explosion’ which creates the possibility of models of ‘transformation’, what Jameson calls ‘re-conception’.

2.3 Reinvention of the Square

2.3.1 Meaning Effects

As Felman suggests that the semiotic square should be considered as a structure comprised of 'positions' and 'meaning effects' rather than particular meanings. It is always ready to be invested with meanings and, in terms of the fourth position, always ready to 'explode' that structural investment, which means my emphasis will not rely on the meaning of the words but the job of the words.

2.3.2 Presence of Real Things

As Bataille wants the reader of his 'the language of flowers' to remain with the real presence of things, thinking through semiotic square also requires interpreters to see the square as an index always referring to the real obstinate fact rather than the abstractions provided by words or concepts, and to see how "the unstable reality would introduce the decisive values of things" – uncovering the hierarchies of privilege and power that operate our relationships with everything that is.

2.3.3 Nominalization

As a result of the fact that artists are not qualified to philosophize about art because they weren't properly trained in philosophical traditions, the same in reverse, that philosophers lacked the critical apparatus to practice as art because they are not indoctrinated in art discipline, the procedure of denomination in my semiotic square will not consist in the definition of the concepts but in the nominalization, that is to say, in the conversion of a verbal formulation into a nominal formulation which implies a positive and feasible operation for the interpreter.

2.3.4 Metaphorically Adjective Prefix

In order to use one term to adjust the meaning of the other and make a characterization more precise, I collage an adjective prefix with every nominalization. It functions as a metaphor that is able to verbalize and conceptualize opposition, bringing together

concepts or objects which otherwise would differ profoundly by identifying their common qualities or conceptual resemblance. This keeps echoes my method of thinking through analogy by collapsing two seemingly unlike things or abstractions. The aim is to displace meaning and provoke the interpreter's positive reproduction of their own meaning.

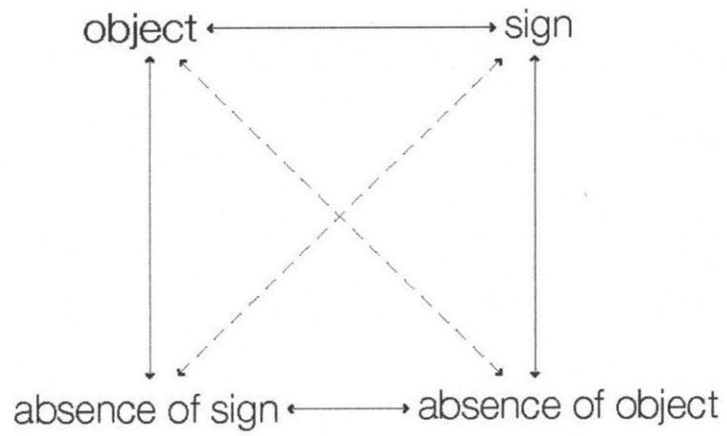


Figure 3.1

CHAPTER 3

Construction of Binary Opposition

What is Object?
What is Sign?

3.1 What is Object?

The first effect of Peirce's greater appreciation of the parallels between inquiry and his sign theory is a distinction between the object of the sign as it we understand at some given point in the semiotic process, and the object of the sign as it stands at the end of that process. The former he calls the immediate object, and the later he calls the dynamic object. A neat way of capturing this distinction is as the different objects arising from the "two answers to the question: what object does this sign refer to? One is the answer that could be given when the sign was used; and the other is the one we could give when our scientific knowledge is complete". (Hookway 1985, 139).

3.1.1 The Dynamic Object

The dynamic object is, in some senses, the object that generates a chain of signs. The aim of a sign chain is to arrive at a full understanding of an object and so assimilate that object into the system of signs. Using slightly more simplistic terms, Ransdell (1977, 169) describes the dynamic object as the "object as it really is", and Hookway (1985, 139) describes it as "the object as it is known to be [at the end of inquiry]". Indeed, Hookway's description shows an acute awareness of the connection between the dynamic object and the process of inquiry in Peirce's later sign theory. An example, from Liszka (1996, 23), captures Peirce's idea quite clearly: taking a petroleum tank half full with fuel, a variety of signs for this half-full state are available. Perhaps there is a fuel gauge attached to the tank, or perhaps the tank makes a distinctive sound when we strike it and so on. But, despite these various signs, the object underlying them all is the actual level of fuel in the petroleum tank; this is the dynamic object.

3.1.2 The Immediate Object

Ransdell (1977, 169) describes the immediate object as "what we, at any time, suppose the object to be", and Hookway (1985, 139) describes it as "the object at the time it is first used and interpreted". The immediate object, then, is not some additional object distinct from the dynamic object but is merely some informationally incomplete facsimile of the

dynamic object generated at some interim stage in a chain of signs. Returning to the petroleum tank example, when we strike the tank, the tone that it emits (which functions as the sign-vehicle) represents to us that the tank is not full (but it does not tell us the precise level of fuel). The immediate object, then, is a less-than-full-tank.

3.1.3 The Difference Between the Two

Clearly, the immediate and dynamic objects of a sign are intimately linked and Peirce consistently describes and introduces the two together. (See, (CP 4. 536 (1896))). However, the connection between the two is most clear when we consider the connections between sign chains and inquiry. The dynamic object is, as we have suggested, the goal and end point that drives the semiotic process, and the immediate object is our grasp of that object at any point in that process. Ransdell, for instance, says:

“The immediate object is the object as it appears at any point in the inquiry or semiotic process. The [dynamic] object, however, is the object as it really is. These must be distinguished, first, because the immediate object may involve some erroneous interpretation and thus be to that extent falsely representative of the object as it really is, and, second, because it may fail to include something that is true of the real object. In other words, the immediate object is simply what we at any time suppose the real object to be.” (Ransdell 1977, 169)

Put this way, it is clear how Peirce's growing concern to capture the parallels between semiosis and the process of inquiry leads him to identify two objects for the sign.

3.2 What is Sign?

We seem as a species to be driven by a desire to make meanings: above all, we are surely *Homo significans* - meaning-makers. Distinctively, we make meanings through our creation and interpretation of 'signs'. Indeed, according to Peirce, 'we think only in signs' (Peirce 1931-58, 2.302). Signs take the form of words, images, sounds, odours, flavours, acts or objects, but such things have no intrinsic meaning and become signs only when

we invest them with meaning. 'Nothing is a sign unless it is interpreted as a sign', declares Peirce (Peirce 1931-58, 2.172). Anything can be a sign as long as someone interprets it as 'signifying' something - referring to or standing for something other than itself. We interpret things as signs largely unconsciously by relating them to familiar systems of conventions. It is this meaningful use of signs which is at the heart of the concerns of semiotics.

3.2.1 Typology of Signs

Whilst Saussure did not offer a typology of signs, Charles Peirce was a compulsive taxonomist and he offered several logical typologies (Peirce 1931-58, 1.291, 2.243). However, his divisions and subdivisions of signs are extraordinarily elaborate: indeed, he offered the theoretical projection that there could be 59,049 types of signs!

Unfortunately, the complexity of such typologies rendered them 'nearly useless' as working models for others in the field (Sturrock 1986, 17). However, one of Peirce's basic classifications (first outlined in 1867) has been very widely referred to in subsequent semiotic studies (Peirce 1931-58, 1.564). He regarded it as 'the most fundamental' division of signs (ibid., 2.275).

Icon, index, symbol: This typology, the best known one, classifies every sign by the category of the sign's way of denoting its object—the icon (also called semblance or likeness) by a quality of its own, the index by factual connection to its object, and the symbol by a habit or rule for its interpretant.

3.2.2 Symbol

For Peirce, a symbol is 'a sign which refers to the object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the symbol to be interpreted as referring to that object' (Peirce 1931-58, 2.249). In this mode, the signifier does not resemble the signified but which is fundamentally arbitrary or purely conventional - so that the relationship must be learnt: e.g. language in general (plus specific languages, alphabetical letters, punctuation marks, words, phrases and sentences), numbers, morse code, traffic lights, national flags.

We interpret symbols according to 'a rule' or 'a habitual connection' (ibid., 2.292, 2.297, 1.369). 'The symbol is connected with its object by virtue of the idea of the symbol-using animal, without which no such connection would exist' (ibid., 2.299). It 'is constituted a sign merely or mainly by the fact that it is used and understood as such' (ibid., 2.307). It 'would lose the character which renders it a sign if there were no interpretant' (ibid., 2.304). A symbol is 'a conventional sign, or one depending upon habit (acquired or inborn)' (ibid., 2.297).

'All words, sentences, books and other conventional signs are symbols' (ibid., 2.292). Peirce thus characterizes linguistic signs in terms of their conventionality in a similar way to Saussure. In a rare direct reference to the arbitrariness of symbols (which he then called 'tokens'), he noted that they 'are, for the most part, conventional or arbitrary' (ibid., 3.360). A symbol is a sign 'whose special significance or fitness to represent just what it does represent lies in nothing but the very fact of there being a habit, disposition, or other effective general rule that it will be so interpreted. Take, for example, the word "man". These three letters are not in the least like a man; nor is the sound with which they are associated' (ibid., 4.447). He adds elsewhere that 'a symbol... fulfills its function regardless of any similarity or analogy with its object and equally regardless of any factual connection therewith' but solely because it will be interpreted as a sign (ibid., 5.73; original emphasis).

3.2.3 Icon

Turning to icons, Peirce declared that an iconic sign represents its object 'mainly by its similarity' (Peirce 1931-58, 2.276). A sign is an icon 'insofar as it is like that thing and used as a sign of it' (ibid., 2.247). Icon is a mode in which the signifier is perceived as resembling or imitating the signified (recognizably looking, sounding, feeling, tasting or smelling like it) - being similar in possessing some of its qualities: e.g. a portrait, a cartoon, a scale-model, onomatopoeia, metaphors, 'realistic' sounds in 'programme music', sound effects in radio drama, a dubbed film soundtrack, imitative gestures.

Icons have qualities which 'resemble' those of the objects they represent, and they 'excite analogous sensations in the mind' (ibid., 2.299; see also 3.362). Unlike the index, 'the icon has no dynamical connection with the object it represents' (ibid.). Just because a signifier

resembles that which it depicts does not necessarily make it purely iconic. The philosopher Susanne Langer argues that 'the picture is essentially a symbol, not a duplicate, of what it represents' (Langer 1951, 67). Pictures resemble what they represent only in some respects. What we tend to recognize in an image are analogous relations of parts to a whole (ibid., 67-70).

For Peirce, icons included 'every diagram, even although there be no sensuous resemblance between it and its object, but only an analogy between the relations of the parts of each' (Peirce 1931-58, 2.279). 'Many diagrams resemble their objects not at all in looks; it is only in respect to the relations of their parts that their likeness consists' (ibid., 2.282). Even the most 'realistic' image is not a replica or even a copy of what is depicted. We rarely mistake a representation for what it represents.

Semioticians generally maintain that there are no 'pure' icons - there is always an element of cultural convention involved. Peirce stated that although 'any material image' (such as a painting) may be perceived as looking like what it represents, it is 'largely conventional in its mode of representation' (Peirce 1931-58, 2.276). 'We say that the portrait of a person we have not seen is convincing. So far as, on the ground merely of what I see in it, I am led to form an idea of the person it represents, it is an icon. But, in fact, it is not a pure icon, because I am greatly influenced by knowing that it is an effect, through the artist, caused by the original's appearance... Besides, I know that portraits have but the slightest resemblance to their originals, except in certain conventional respects, and after a conventional scale of values, etc.' (ibid., 2.92).

Guy Cook asks whether the iconic sign on the door of a public lavatory for men actually looks more like a man than like a woman. 'For a sign to be truly iconic, it would have to be transparent to someone who had never seen it before - and it seems unlikely that this is as much the case as is sometimes supposed. We see the resemblance when we already know the meaning' (Cook 1992, 70). Thus, even a 'realistic' picture is symbolic as well as iconic.

3.2.4 Index

Indexicality is perhaps the most unfamiliar concept. It is a mode in which the signifier is not arbitrary but is directly connected in some way (physically or causally) to the signified - this link can be observed or inferred: e.g. 'natural signs' (smoke, thunder, footprints, echoes, non-synthetic odours and flavours), medical symptoms (pain, a rash, pulse-rate), measuring instruments (weathercock, thermometer, clock, spirit-level), 'signals' (a knock on a door, a phone ringing), pointers (a pointing 'index' finger, a directional signpost), recordings (a photograph, a film, video or television shot, an audio-recorded voice), personal 'trademarks' (handwriting, catchphrase) and indexical words ('that', 'this', 'here', 'there').

Peirce offers various criteria for what constitutes an index. An index 'indicates' something: for example, 'a sundial or clock indicates the time of day' (Peirce 1931-58, 2.285). He refers to a 'genuine relation' between the 'sign' and the object which does not depend purely on 'the interpreting mind' (ibid., 2.92, 298). The object is 'necessarily existent' (ibid., 2.310). The index is connected to its object 'as a matter of fact' (ibid., 4.447). There is 'a real connection' (ibid., 5.75). There may be a 'direct physical connection' (ibid., 1.372, 2.281, 2.299). An indexical sign is like 'a fragment torn away from the object' (ibid., 2.231).

Unlike an icon (the object of which may be fictional) an index stands 'unequivocally for this or that existing thing' (ibid., 4.531). Whilst 'it necessarily has some quality in common' with it, the signifier is 'really affected' by the signified; there is an 'actual modification' involved (ibid., 2.248). The relationship is not based on 'mere resemblance' (ibid.): 'indices... have no significant resemblance to their objects' (ibid., 2.306). 'Similarity or analogy' are not what define the index (ibid., 2.305). 'Anything which focusses the attention is an index. Anything which startles us is an index' (ibid., 2.285; see also 3.434). Indexical signs 'direct the attention to their objects by blind compulsion' (ibid., 2.306; see also 2.191, 2.428). 'Psychologically, the action of indices depends upon association by contiguity, and not upon association by resemblance or upon intellectual operations' (ibid.).

3.2.5 Ranking the Three Types

3.2.5.1 Conventionality

The three forms are listed here in decreasing order of conventionality. Symbolic signs such as language are (at least) highly conventional; iconic signs always involve some degree of conventionality; indexical signs 'direct the attention to their objects by blind compulsion' (Peirce 1931-58, 2.306). Indexical and iconic signifiers can be seen as more constrained by referential signifieds whereas in the more conventional symbolic signs the signified can be seen as being defined to a greater extent by the signifier. Within each form signs also vary in their degree of conventionality.

3.2.5.2 Motivation

Other criteria might be applied to rank the three forms differently. For instance, Hodge and Kress suggest that indexicality is based on an act of judgement or inference whereas iconicity is closer to 'direct perception' making the highest 'modality' that of iconic signs. Note that the terms 'motivation' (from Saussure) and 'constraint' are sometimes used to describe the extent to which the signified determines the signifier. The more a signifier is constrained by the signified, the more 'motivated' the sign is: iconic signs are highly motivated; symbolic signs are unmotivated. The less motivated the sign, the more learning of an agreed convention is required. Nevertheless, most semioticians emphasize the role of convention in relation to signs. As we shall see, even photographs and films are built on conventions which we must learn to 'read'. Such conventions are an important social dimension of semiotics.

3.2.5.3 Natural

Iconic and indexical signs are more likely to be read as 'natural' than symbolic signs when making the connection between signifier and signified has become habitual. Iconic signifiers can be highly evocative. Kent Grayson observes: 'Because we can see the object in the sign, we are often left with a sense that the icon has brought us closer to the truth than if we had instead seen an index or a symbol' (Grayson 1998, 36). He adds that 'instead of drawing our attention to the gaps that always exist in representation, iconic

experiences encourage us subconsciously to fill in these gaps and then to believe that there were no gaps in the first place... This is the paradox of representation: it may deceive most when we think it works best' (ibid., 41).

3.2.6 The Mutual Inclusion

It is easy to slip into referring to Peirce's three forms as 'types of signs', but they are not necessarily mutually exclusive: a sign can be an icon, a symbol and an index, or any combination. Peirce was fully aware of this: for instance, he insisted that 'it would be difficult if not impossible to instance an absolutely pure index, or to find any sign absolutely devoid of the indexical quality' (Peirce 1931-58, 2.306). A map is indexical in pointing to the locations of things, iconic in its representation of the directional relations and distances between landmarks and symbolic in using conventional symbols the significance of which must be learnt. The film theorist Peter Wollen argues that 'the great merit of Peirce's analysis of signs is that he did not see the different aspects as mutually exclusive.

Unlike Saussure he did not show any particular prejudice in favour of one or the other. Indeed, he wanted a logic and a rhetoric which would be based on all three aspects' (Wollen 1969, 141). Film and television use all three forms: icon (sound and image), symbol (speech and writing), and index (as the effect of what is filmed); at first sight iconic signs seem the dominant form, but some filmic signs are fairly arbitrary, such as 'dissolves' which signify that a scene from someone's memory is to follow.

Hawkes notes, following Jakobson, that the three modes 'co-exist in the form of a hierarchy in which one of them will inevitably have dominance over the other two', with dominance determined by context (Hawkes 1977, 129). Whether a sign is symbolic, iconic or indexical depends primarily on the way in which the sign is used, so textbook examples chosen to illustrate the various modes can be misleading. The same signifier may be used iconically in one context and symbolically in another: a photograph of a woman may stand for some broad category such as 'women' or may more specifically represent only the particular woman who is depicted. Signs cannot be classified in terms of the three modes without reference to the purposes of their users within particular contexts. A sign may

consequently be treated as symbolic by one person, as iconic by another and as indexical by a third. As Kent Grayson puts it, 'When we speak of an icon, an index or a symbol, we are not referring to objective qualities of the sign itself, but to a viewer's experience of the sign' (Grayson 1998, 35).

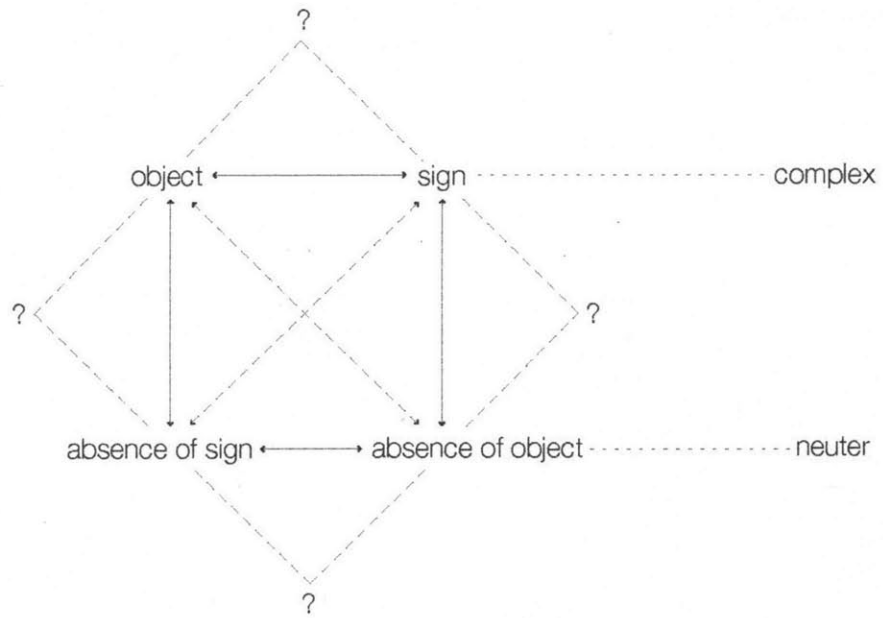


Figure 4.1

CHAPTER 4

The Expanded Field

Archeological Evidentialization
Magic Bewilderment
Fictional Involution
Political Reconfiguration

4.1 Archeological Evidentialization

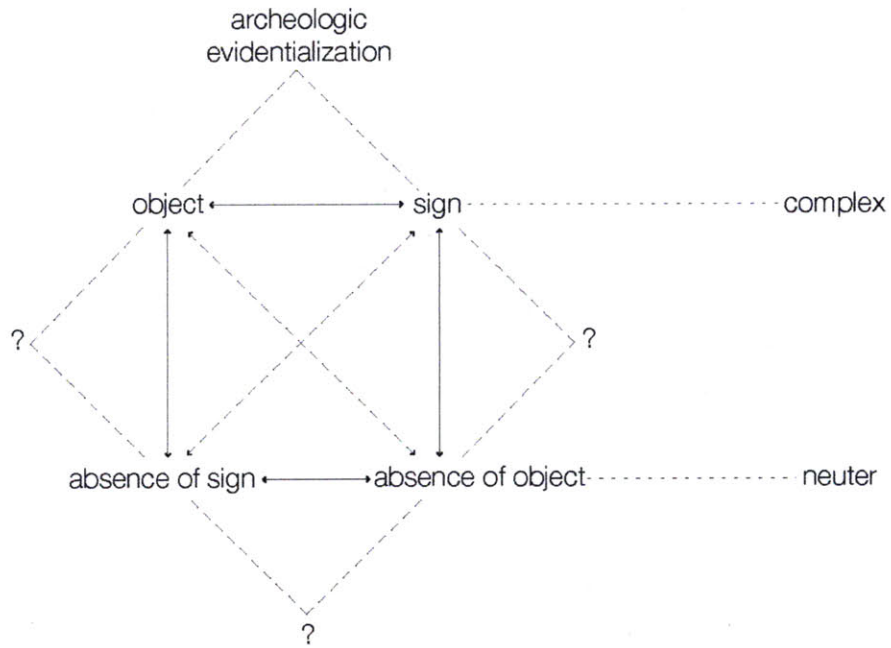


Figure 4.2

4.1.1 Object/Sign: Mutual Conversion

4.1.1.1 Signifying Object

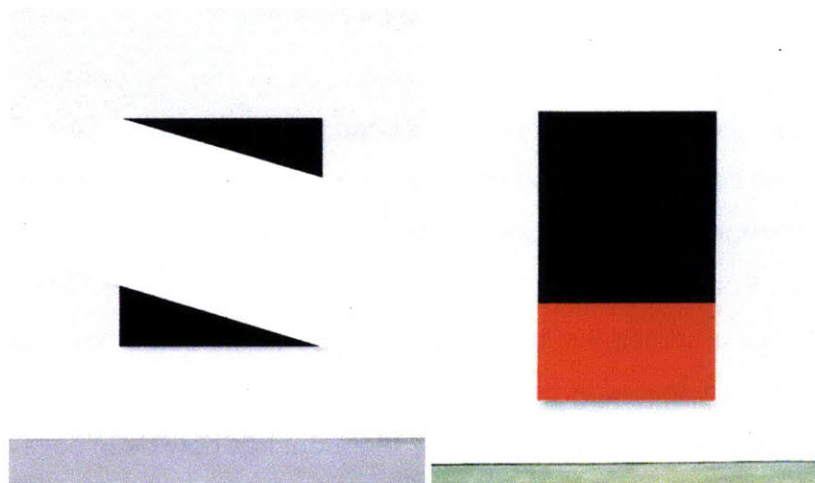


Figure 4.3

Ellsworth Kelly's painting as a whole functions to point to the natural continuum, the way the word "this" accompanied by a pointing gesture isolates a piece of the real world and fills itself with a meaning by becoming, for that moment, the transitory label of that natural event. If the surface of one of his panels is divided, that partition can only be understood as a transfer or impression of the feature of a natural continuum onto the surface of the painting.

Although this transformation is the process of objectifying sign, we may feel about the visual results of that schematic – that it yields sensuous beauty coupled with the pleasure of intellectual economy, or that it is boringly minimal – it is one that takes the process of pictorial meaning as its subject. It does not have to coexist with the real world in order to compensate its emptiness. It remains an abstract sign only in physical presence.

4.1.1.2 Objectify Signs

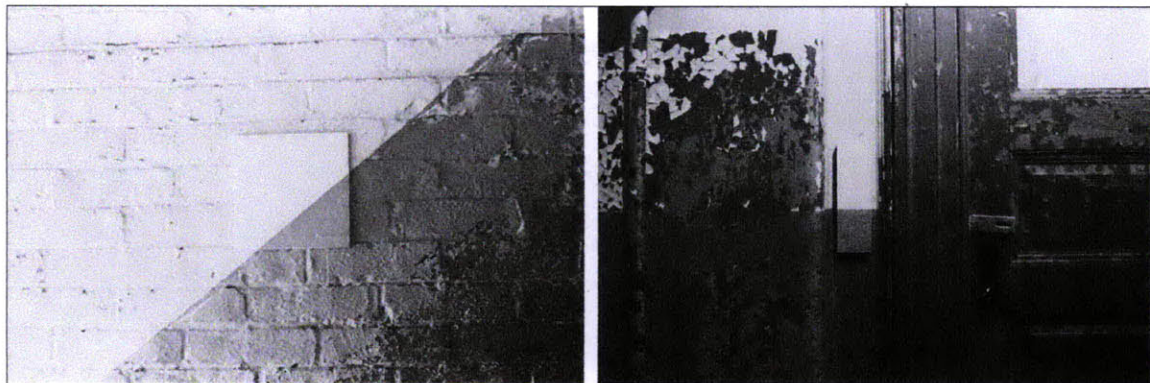


Figure 4.4

Dealing with the same theme of internal division, Lucio Pozzi's painting's colors – the boundary between those colors – are occasioned by a situation in the world that they merely register. The color of each half of a given panel matched the color of the underlying wall; the line of change between colors reiterated the discontinuity of the original field. The small panels that Pozzi affixed to these walls aligned themselves with the real world phenomenon, bridging across the line of change, and at the same time replicating it. For Pozzi, that act of taking an impression submits to the logic of effacement. The painted wall is signified by the work as something that was there but has now been covered over.

Countermanding Ellsworth Kelly's formal intervention in creating the work is the overwhelming physical presence of the original object, fixed in this trace of the cast. The significance of Pozzi's work is that the way he operates to substitute the registration of sheer physical presence for the more highly articulated language of aesthetic conventions delicately reinvents the function of index as a new medium to make possible the conversion of the sign into object, which means that the sign in the painting is nothing but the object itself.

Therefore, with the medium of index, paintings are understood, instead, as empty signs (like the word "this") that are filled with meaning only when physically juxtaposed with an external referent, or object, in which way it substitutes the reality with a sign of pronoun by interposing itself onto its reference world.

The operations one finds in his work are the operations of the index. Into the category of the index, we would place physical traces (like footprints), medical symptoms, or the actual referents of the shifters. The accumulation of dust is a kind of physical index for the passage of time. Cast shadows could also serve as the indexical signs of objects. Internal division of Pozzi's drawing is converted from its formal status of encoding reality to one of imprinting it. This operation is the operation of indexicalization, which depends on selection from the natural array by means of cropping and its indifferent etches of its support.

4.1.1.3 Signify Objects / Objectify Signs

Yet whatever the similarities in format the most obvious difference between the two is whether the work's meaning can be fulfilled by detaching from its surroundings, both visually and conceptually, whether it is free from any specific locale.

In the kind of Kelly, the demands of an internal logic are met by the use of joined panels, so that the seam between the two color fields marks an actual physical rift within the fabric of the work as a whole. The message imparted by the drawing is therefore one of discontinuity, a message that is repeated on two levels: the semiotic – the split between color fields and the actual – the split between panels.

However what we must realize is that this message is suspended within a particular field: that of painting, painting understood conventionally as a continuous, bounded, detachable, flat surface. The coherence of Kelly's work depends on one's seeing the logic of that connection. What this logic sets out is that unlike the continuum of the real world, painting is a field of articulations or divisions.

Therefore whatever occurs within the perimeters of Kelly's paintings must be accounted for with reference to some kind of internal logic of the work. This is unlike the Pozzi, where color and the lines of separation between colors are strictly accountable to the wall within which they are visually embedded and whose features they replicate.

In this set of works by Pozzi one experiences that quasi-tautological relationship between signifier and signified which is the very characteristic of index. Pozzi is reducing the abstract pictorial object to the status of a mould or impression or trace. And it seems rather clear that the nature of this reduction is formally distinct from other types of reduction that have operated within the history of abstract art.

4.1.2 Object=Sign=Object: Two Become One

4.1.2.1 Splitting

On a sheet of paper Duchamp sketches his profile, depicting himself in the representational terms of the graphic icon. On top of this drawing, coincident with part of its contour, is added the area of chin and cheek, cast from his own face in plaster.



Figure 4.5

“With my tongue in my cheek” is obviously a reference to the splitting mode. The verbal conjuring precisely succeeds to direct and redirect meaning. Literally what appears on the paper is the juxtaposition of signs of icon and index. But the caption betrays the inclusion of the object these signs referring to. Duchamp elaborate splits every identity along the lines of signs and its object with every single word in the caption: in addition to the separation of icon and index; “my” divides empty pronoun with its subject; “tongue” implies the object outside of the situation, the function of this sign system and the observer’s interpretation; “in” reveals this physical imprint and its production process; “cheek” indicates the empty indexical mold and its absence object. It is one purist’s anatomic splitting.

4.1.2.2 Converging

In "Recording Wall" Dan Hoffman erected an eight-by-sixteen-foot concrete block wall without mortar.

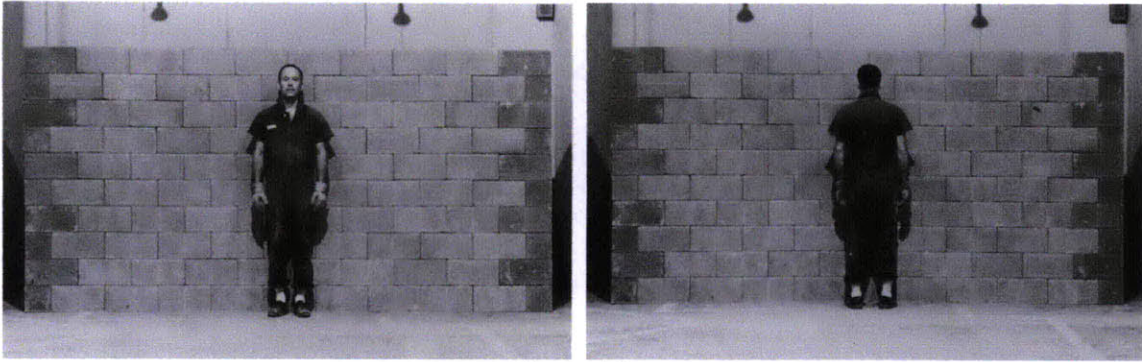


Figure 4.6

Each block was photographed as it was put in place. Cameras on both sides of the wall were activated by an extended shutter release located near the builder's foot. The photographs were then printed on the surface of each block using a liquid photo emulsion and the wall was reassembled in its original order.



Figure 4.7

This mediated layer restored the sign of a bodily activity to the assembly of industrially produced masonry units, a reading often lost in considering contemporary architecture. Modernism's utopian vision erases the mark of this toil in the work. A closer reading evokes the repetitive, Sisyphean labors involved in building and un-building the wall reminds us that building is an embodied task.

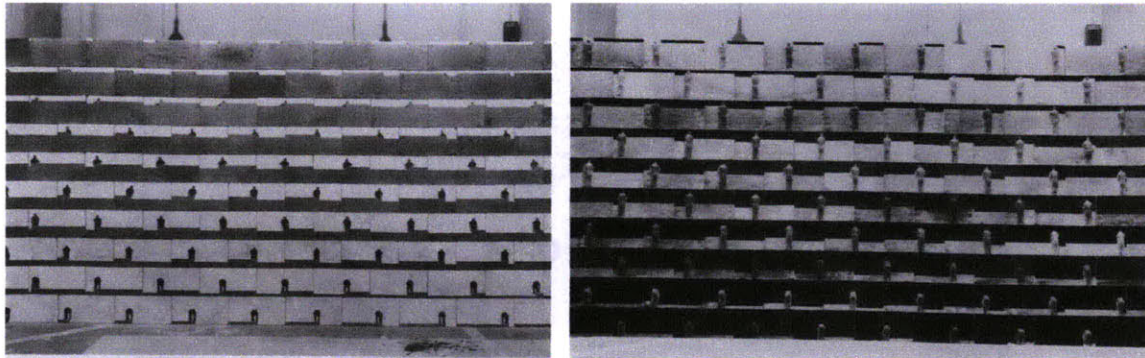


Figure 4.8

The converging happens when the resulting wall became a literal recording of its own construction or deconstruction, the photographs offering a supplemental reading that recorded the postural effort required to build it.

4.1.3 Evidentialization

Evidentialization is the paradoxical way of merging the object with its sign, making the object the index of its own and the index the object of its reference. It is not the division in Ellsworth Kelly's painting because in the one-way conversion the object is trapped in the pictorial world and becomes only sign. It is not the division in Lucio Pozzi's painting either because it is not legitimate for becoming an individual object in that when it is removed from its environment it is nothing but a sign. However, it is the wall in Dan Hoffman's construction process because it traces its own generation and meanwhile its sign-hood the can not exist without the timely physical presence of its object-hood. Then what makes the difference? I will call the failure of Kelly and Pozzi the deficiency of the "photographic" and the succeed of Hoffman the evidentiality of the "archeological".

4.1.3.1 The Deficiency of the "Photographic"

4.1.3.1.1 Rayograph

Man Ray is the inventor of the Rayograph or photogram – that subspecies of photo – through which he intended to force the issue of photography's existence as an index.

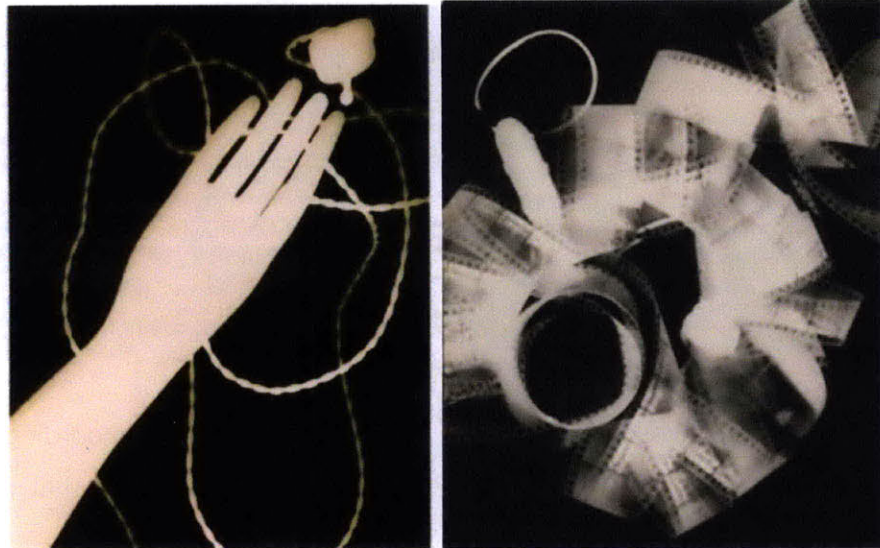


Figure 4.9

Rayographs or more generically termed photograms are produced by placing objects on top of light sensitive paper, exposing the ensemble to light, and then developing the result. The image created in this way is of the ghostly traces of departed objects; they look like footprints in sand, or marks that have been left in dust.

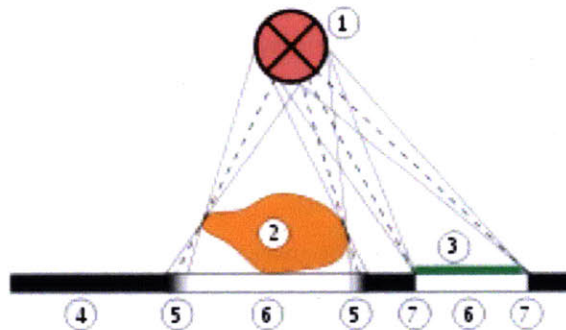


Figure 4.10

4.1.3.1.2 Indexical Icon / Iconic Index / Coded Symbol

But the photogram only forces, or makes explicit, what is the case of all photography. Every photograph is the result of a physical imprint transferred by light reflections onto a sensitive surface. The photograph is thus a type of icon, or visual likeness, which bears an indexical relationship to its object. Such images do of course 'resemble' what they depict, and it has been suggested the 'real force' of the photographic and filmic image 'lies in its iconic signification' (Deacon et al. 1999, 188). The photography is thus a type of icon, or

visual likeness, which bears an indexical relationship to its object. Its separation from true icons is felt through the absoluteness of this physical genesis, one that seem to short-circuit or disallow those processes of schematization or symbolic intervention that operate within the graphic representations of most paintings.

Whilst a photograph is also perceived as resembling that which it depicts, Peirce noted that a photograph is not only iconic but also indexical: 'photographs, especially instantaneous photographs, are very instructive, because we know that in certain respects they are exactly like the objects they represent. This resemblance of the photographs is due to the fact that they have been produced under such circumstances that they were physically forced to correspond point by point to nature. In that aspect, then, they belong to the second class of sign (indices), those by physical connection [the indexical class] 1 (Peirce 1931-58, 2.281; see also 5.554). C.S. Peirce says in "logic as Semiotic: the theory of signs" especially instantaneous photographs, are very instructive, because we know that they are in certain respects exactly like the objects they represent. But this resemblance is due to the photographs having been produced under such circumstances that they were physically forced to correspond point by point to nature. So in this sense, since the photographic image is an index of the effect of light on photographic emulsion, all unedited photographic and filmic images are indexical (although we should remember that conventional practices are always involved in composition, focusing, developing and so on).

The trouble with a purely indexical account of photography is that it cannot explain what the photograph is a picture of. There is no intrinsic reason for considering the cause producing a trace (and even so, we have seen many other causes can be held responsible for it) to be a more important type of cause than the others. Indeed, we can only explain the importance of the motif when we realize that a trace, in the most central sense of the term, contains not only indexical but also iconic aspects, and when we admit that a photograph is a kind of pictorial sign and that all such signs are first and foremost grounded in the illusion of similarity.

Henri Vanlier (1983) and Philippe Dubois (1983) derive their views from Peirce's ruminations on the index, while Jean-Marie Schaeffer (1987) takes indexes in the most

literal sense of mere traces in order to argue eventually that photographs can be either indexical icons or iconic indexes. When photographs are said to be indexical, they are treated as contiguous, particularly in terms of abrasion: that is, the referent has at some prior moment in time contacted and then detached itself from the expression plane of the sign, leaving on its surface some visible trace, however inconspicuous, of the event. However, as Vanlier notes, the photograph must be taken as a direct and certain imprint of the photons and only as an indirect and abstract one of the objects depicted.

Photographic and filmic images may also be symbolic: in an empirical study of television news, Davis and Walton found that A relatively small proportion of the total number of shots is iconic or directly representative of the people, places and events which are subjects of the news text. A far greater proportion of shots has an oblique relationship to the text; they 'stand for' the subject matter indexically or symbolically (Davis & Walton 1983b, 45).

According to Philippe Dubois (1983), the first semiotic theories of photography tended to consider photographs as mirrors of reality or, following Peirce's more elaborated conception, as icons. Later iconoclasts who tried to demonstrate the conventionality of all signs contended that photographs present “coded” versions of reality and as such stand closer to the Peircean notion of symbol. Finally, photographs have been assessed as indexes—that is, as traces impressed on a surface by the referent itself.

4.1.3.1.3 Real Unreality

In many contexts photographs are indeed regarded as 'evidence', not least in legal contexts. As for the moving image, video-cameras are of course widely used 'in evidence'. Documentary film and location footage in television news programmes depend upon the indexical nature of the sign. In such genres indexicality seems to warrant the status of the material as evidence.

However, it has also been argued that digital photographs inevitably lack indexicality, based on an understanding of “crucial distinctions between the analogue and the digital” in the way they record ‘reality’.[24] For instance, Frosh describes photographs as “codes without a message” – “repurposable visual content made of malleable info-pixels”. Whilst

digital imaging techniques are increasingly eroding the indexicality of photographic images, it is arguable that it is the indexicality still routinely attributed to the medium which is primarily responsible for interpreters treating them as 'objective' records of 'reality'. Gunning alternatively argues that digital photography, the process of encoding data about light in a matrix of numbers, is indexically determined by objects outside of the camera like chemical photography. Likewise, Martin Lister claims that even with a digital camera, "the images produced are rendered photo-realistic, they borrow photography's currency, its deeply historical 'reality effect', simply in order to have meaning".

4.1.3.2 The Evidentiality of the "Archeological"

Archaeology is generally taken to have become established in the nineteenth century with Jacques Boucher de Perthes' discovery of chipped stones in Somme river gravel quarries, alongside the bones of now-extinct animals. He interpreted the former as human artifacts (such as hand axes) and hence claimed that humans had existed for much longer than Biblical accounts apparently allowed (due to the inference that they appeared much older than anything mentioned in the Bible).

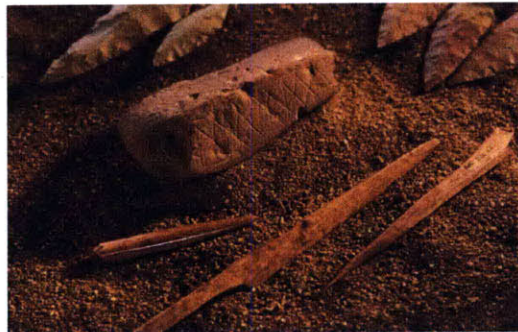


Figure 4.11

The identity of the archaeology is derived from its unique process – the collection of evidence and inductive inferences from them.

4.1.3.2.1 Unreal Reality

The indexicality of artifact in archaeology is not only of its object or of the knowledge of its object but even of its own objecthood - the properties of the medium, of production

process, of the engaging device, of the time and space traveled through and so on. This observation is quite parallel to the one made in the study of animal traces, according to which the same animal will leave different traces on different areas of ground in different time of the day.

The type of perception this artifact implies is truly unreal. It produces an illogical conjunction of the here and the formerly. It set up, in effect, not a perception of the being-there of an object, but a perception of its having-been-there. It is a question therefore of a new category of space-time: spatial immediacy and temporal anteriority.

Its unreality is that of the here, since the artifact is never experienced as an illusion; it is nothing but a presence – one must continually keep in mind the paranormal character of the archaic artifact. Its reality is that of a having-been-there, because in archaeological findings there is the constantly amazing evidence: this took place in this way. Thus, as a kind of precious miracle, we possess a reality from which we are ourselves sheltered.

4.1.3.2.2 Without a Meaning

If the semiotic sign finds its way into our life through the human consciousness operating behind the forms of representation, forming a connection between objects and their meaning, this is not the case for archaeology. An artifact is not a permanent referent for those mutable complexities of life which are revealed through it, its purpose is not to make us perceive meaning, but to create a special perception of the primary object. Therefore in archaeology, the truth is understood as a matter of evidence, rather than a function of logic.

4.1.3.3 The Incompatibility

4.1.3.3.1 Artifactual Effect

However, the photograph, contrary to a hoofprint, for example, can be said to be always primarily an icon. While both the photograph and the hoofprint stand for a referent that has vanished from the scene, the latter signifier continues to occupy the place held by the referent and it remains dated, whereas the photographic signifier, like that of the verbal

sign, is omnitemporal and omnispatial. Tokens of this type are apt to be instantiated at any time and place (although only after the referential event of and the time needed for its development). Even if the photographic image is the object itself, the object freed from the conditions of time and space that govern it.

In sum, in the case of a footprint or a hoofprint, both the expression and the content are located at a particular time and place; in verbal language, neither are; in the case of photography, it is only the content (or, strictly speaking, the referent) that is bound up spatiotemporally. Thus, hoofprints, present where the horse was present, tell us something like “horse here before”; the photograph of a horse, which most likely does not occupy the scene where the horse was before, only tells us “horse” and we must otherwise reconstruct the time and the place of the sign.

4.1.3.3.2 Absence of Similarity

While we admit that a photograph is a kind of pictorial sign – be it symbolic, iconic or indexical – and that all such signs are first and foremost grounded in the illusion of similarity, quite the opposite, the artifact in archaeology conveys no such similarity, because it is part of the mysterious reality that is out of all knowledge, waiting for us to decipher.

4.1.3.3.3 Loss of Causality

Archaeology could say nothing about the causes of the transition from one way of thinking to another and it creates a vision of the object instead of serving as a means for knowing it. Archaeology supports a historiography that did not rest on the primacy of the consciousness of individual subjects; it allowed the historian of thought to operate at an unconscious level that displaced the primacy of the subject found in both phenomenology and in traditional historiography.

4.1.4 The Paradox of Archeological Indexicalization

Rosalind Krauss summarize the art of the '70s very briefly by pointing to the pervasiveness of the photograph as a means of representation, including photo-realism, and all those forms which depend on documentation – earthworks, body art, story art, video. In the photograph's distance from what could be called syntax one finds the mute presence of an uncoded event. But I find an archaeologist's mind in some of these works which bears the paradox of archeological indexicalization I describe in the previous section. The meaning of the following works involves convergence of the "empty" indexical sign with its referential object, which is different from photograph representation.

4.1.4.1 Equilibrium

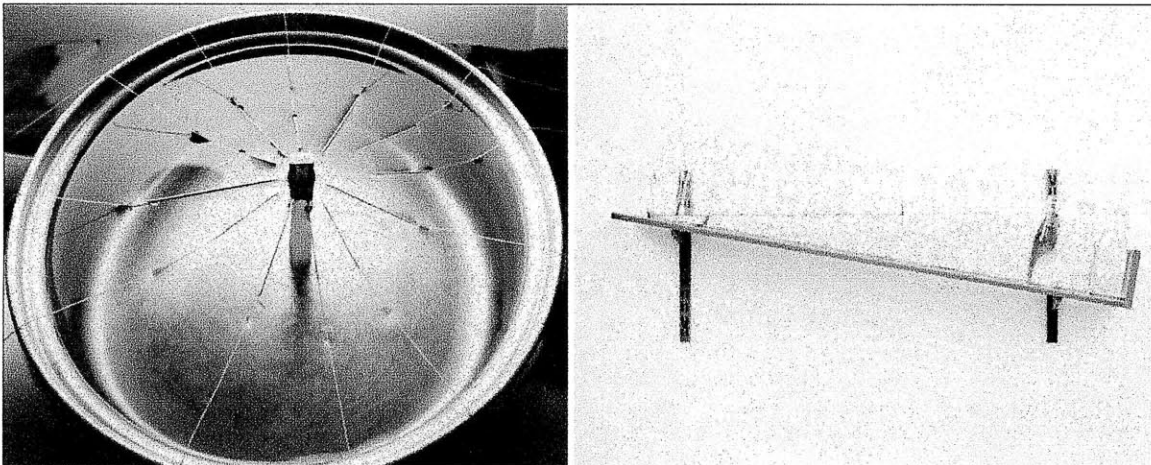


Figure 4.12

4.1.4.1.1 Evidential Honesty and Deductive Uncertainty

On the Shelf

Understanding constantly seems undercut by a rush of intuitive, irrational, (dis)belief, which threaten to override, subvert, or otherwise render duplicitous, clear-headed logic.

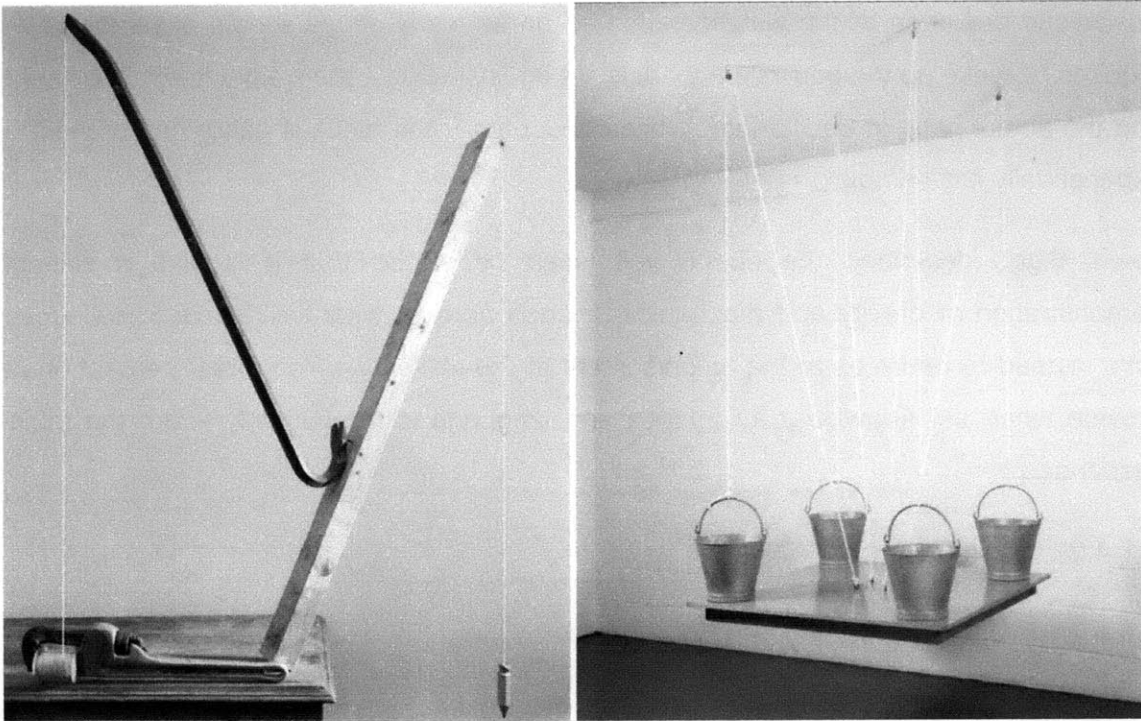


Figure 4.13

4.1.4.1.2 Perceptual Conclusiveness and Comprehensive Suspension

On the Table

The expository title is as deadpan and terse as its predecessors and yet the results are altogether different. Once again the problem Craig-Martin set himself was a typically, if deceptively simple one: how to balance a table in a quantity of water equal to its own weight. Although perfectly straightforward, the results were simultaneously ingenious and preposterous. Once again Craig-Martin employed balances, this interplay between intellectual understanding and sensory experience again provided the sub-text. And, once again, the artist worked with familiar objects, though this time they were ready-made, mass-produced, store-bought, cheap, new and easily purchased. No transformation was effected; more importantly, their usual functions were no longer interrupted. At the same time he turned the current preoccupation with the process of making into a concern with the process of apprehension, treating the physical acts of balancing and weighing as metaphor for intellectual activity. With the balancing, the old adage concerning the relative heaviness of a pound of feathers and a pound of lead is revisualised, as the image (the

illusionistic depiction of the weight, repeated on as many single sheets of paper as was required to make up the equivalent load) is set against reality, the weight itself. The imaged and the actual hang in equilibrium. While conceptually the piece is easily comprehended, experientially it is complex.

Lewis Biggs described the effect well when he stated that it is 'like a scientific demonstration of gravity and mechanics. It adds nothing whatever to our knowledge. It aims instead to return us to the astonishment at the ordinary which direct perception can provide when our knowledge of images and language is momentarily – like the table – suspended.'

4.1.4.2 Exhibiting Architecture

4.1.4.2.1 Spatial Immediacy and Temporal Anteriority

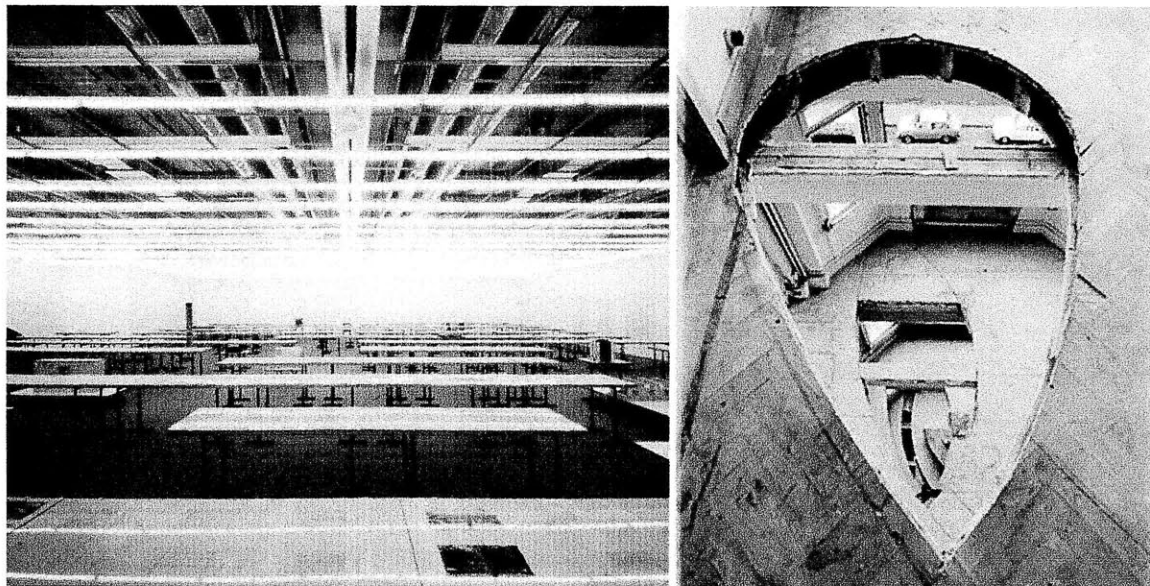


Figure 4.14

Exhibition of the Waste

What is an exhibition of architecture? At first sight at least it would seem that there is nothing simpler in the world-I would go so far as to say more stupid-than hanging pictures on walls. The oft-quoted "obstacle" for architecture exhibitions is that the buildings they show can never be present. What a paradox: the only real architecture present in the

exhibition is denied by the artifacts set up for and by the exhibition. There is always a problem with architecture exhibitions because by definition you're not seeing the real thing. At a Picasso exhibition, you would expect to see real paintings on the wall not photocopies.

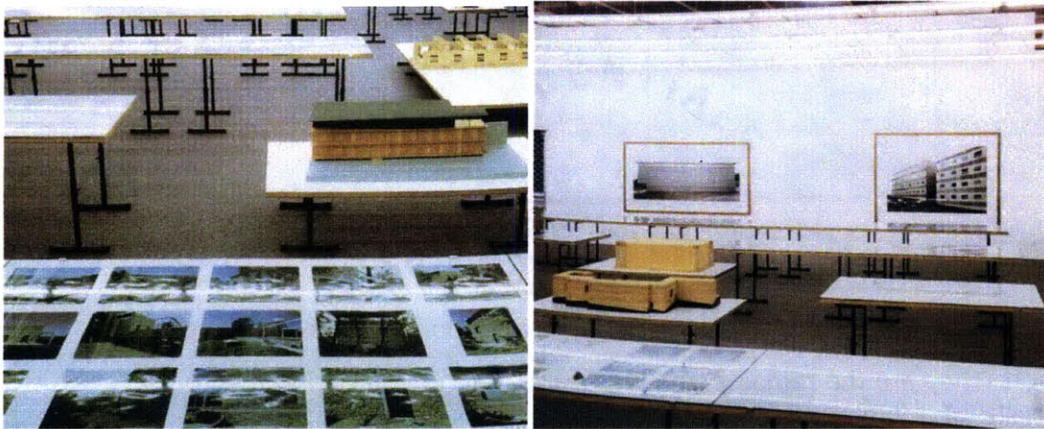


Figure 4.15

Traditionally, one might find anything and everything there, absolutely everything except architecture. Naïve thinking attempts to compensate for the absence of the buildings. Of course, the installation of a full-scale replica of an environment can very powerfully convey the spatial experience of the original; however, architecture exhibitions are often most successful if they do not try to simulate architecture itself. For want of the real buildings existing somewhere in the world, the exhibition of architecture can do no more than present, express, invite us to live through some research, a path, a quest, the movement of architectural thinking. Their strength often lies in celebrating the process and activity — the often flawed and messy journey behind the design and construction of a building, city or structure.



Figure 4.16

This form of presentation operates with documents, with traces left by architectural thinking, with the leftovers produced and abandoned in the course of the architect's research. They are the remains, the waste left behind you during the course of an exertion. Mounting an exhibition of architecture means therefore working with waste products. It is an attempt to construct, with these waste scraps, a new, self-sufficient reality, autonomous in its expression. If I had set the models on socles, then for the sake of semiological coherence I ought to have exhibited the sketches and plans in gilded frames and fix them to the walls.

I am aware that from the entrance to the exhibition you catch sight of everything, but without seeing anything. Apart from the fluorescent tubes on the ceiling and tables with their legs, there is not very much to see. One or two models emerge, a sign that there is something. The slightly raised models is like the rustle of an invisible presence. The parallel rows of tables in which the documents were presented, took up the entire space in an homogeneous way to within just a meter of the walls. The lighting was also homogeneous.

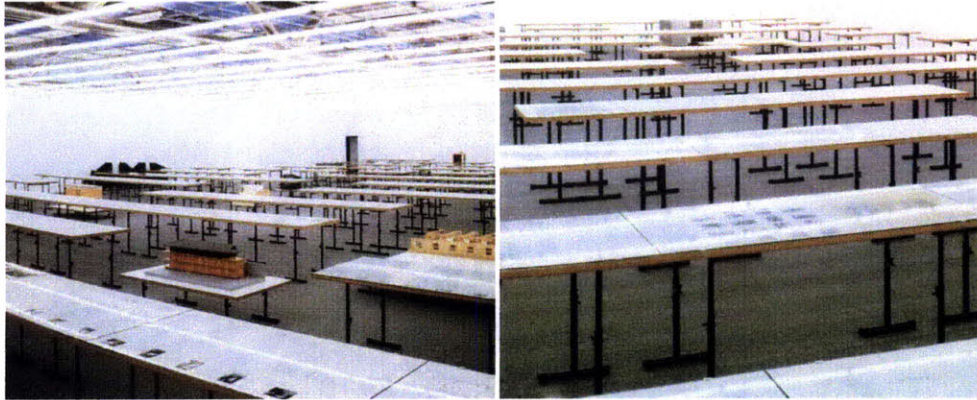


Figure 4.17

The door gave directly on to the rows of tables ordered from the front to the back, thereby permitting a chronological arrangement of the documents. The table near the entrance, the first we come across, were to be those which give a view of the beginnings of the research; the table situated at the back and which are the last to be looked at, were to be those containing the most recent projects. But these passages are not meant to cause disorder, they are not an invitation to pathological wanderings. The rows oriented from front to back confer to each point of the exhibition a spatial order permitting the visitor to find this orientation at any moment.

are seen as separate entities. Post-structuralism says, however, that these two have always been together. But in architecture they have always been together.

Thus in architecture, in order to find a transparency in this given opacity, in order to have a possibility of meanings, one has to pull the sign and signifier apart. One has to pull apart the one-to-one relationship between structure, form, meaning, content, symbolism etc, so that it is possible to make many meanings. This pulling apart is what I call a displacement. Why do we want to displace architecture today? Why is it necessary to separate function and structure from symbolism, meaning, and form? Because in the past architecture always symbolized reality. In other words, while language was one kind of reality, poetry another, music another, architecture was perhaps the ultimate condition of reality, because it dealt with physical facts, with bricks and mortar, house and home. It was physical place, the fundamental condition of reality.

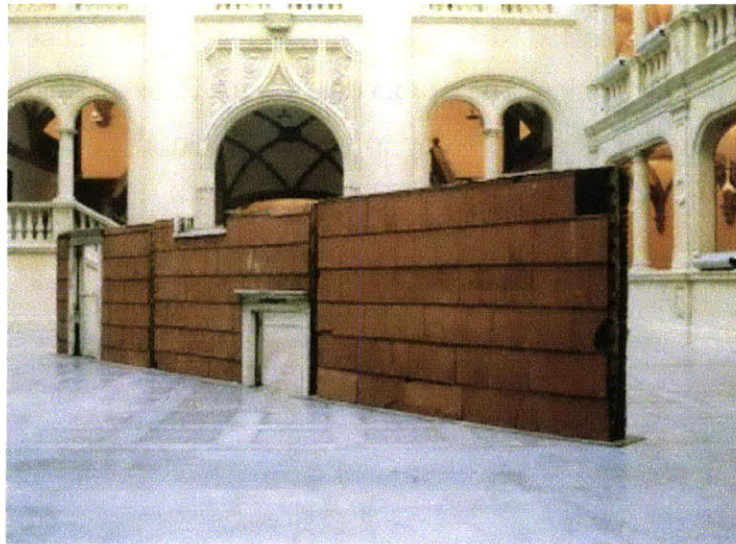


Figure 4.19

In the piece by Matta-Clark the cut is able to signify the building – to point to it – only through a process of removal or cutting away. The procedure of excavation succeeds therefore in bringing the building into the consciousness of the viewer in the form of a ghost. Like traces, the works Matta-Clark represents the building through the paradox of being physically present but temporally remote.

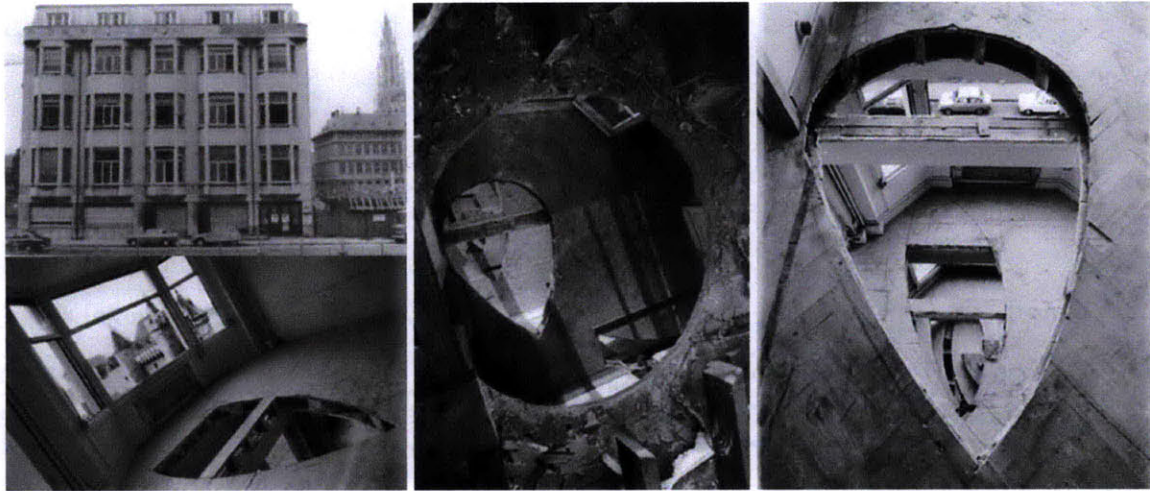


Figure 4.20

The ambition of the works is to capture the presence of the building, to find strategies to force it to surface into the field of the work. Yet even as that presence surfaces, it fills the work with an extraordinary sense of time-past. Though they are produced by a physical cause, the trace, the impression, the clue, are vestiges of that cause which is itself no longer present in the given sign. Their procedures were to exacerbate an aspect of the building's physical presence, and thereby to embed within it a perishable trace of their own.

4.1.4.2.2 Physical Presence and Experiential Remoteness

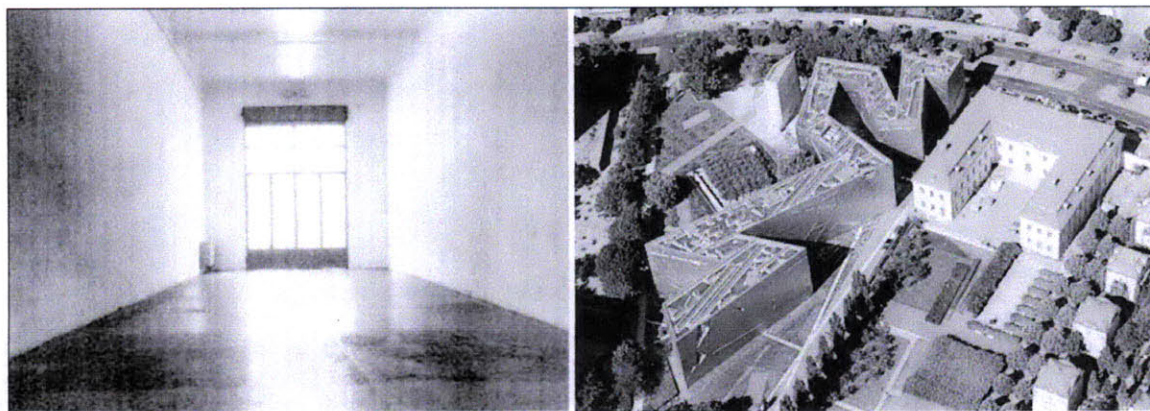


Figure 4.21

One Single Space

This place is the culmination or extension of the rectilinear access-route which descends from the street along a slight incline between a house and a high garden wall, toward the gallery situated in the back.

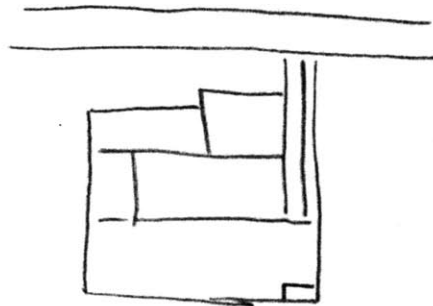


Figure 4.22

Very long, high, white, simple, immediately identifiable. At one hand, the large entry door and the rest of the wall are in frosted glass. At the other, in the dark, a floor added at mid-height creates two small, superimposed spaces linked by a narrow stairway; here are a few objects and pieces of furniture.

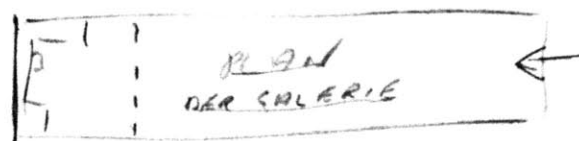


Figure 4.23

To walk the length of these two rows would be like strolling down an alley ending in a culdesac, forcing one to retrace one's steps. A movement in one direction, then in the opposite direction. Expressive poverty, indigence, aggravating banality. Thus the problem had been stated: How to thwart this rectilinear movement? How to oppose it, while at the same time using it expressively? How to use a pictorial work to create an obstacle capable of resisting the longitudinal dynamic; how to place something that would interrupt the trajectory and neutralize the impression of being confronted with a cul-de-sac.

Given its high format, it would contrast with the long wall, its verticality opposing the wall's horizontality. It is certain the smaller axis of the gallery would be actualized by the

subject's face-to-face encounter with the painting, and the perceptual relation governed by painting would oppose the dynamic of the two long walls.

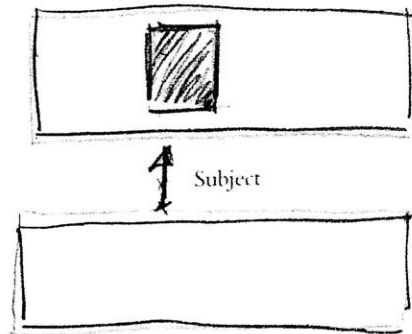


Figure 4.24

A small work made of two parts hung one above the other. Each graphic form demands the minimum surface that it occupies, and thus determines the dimensions of the support which is made to its measurements. A supremely concentrated work, from the spatial and semantic point of view. Almost self-absorbing.

Added to the visual and semantic certainties resulting from their coexistence. Thus the two similar paintings constitute an expressive whole. These two paintings, seeming doubles of each other, will attest to their doubling by remaining one alongside the other. Paintings hung at even intervals along the length of each of the two walls, face to face, would over-determine the movement leading from the street to the back of the gallery, occupied by domestic objects.

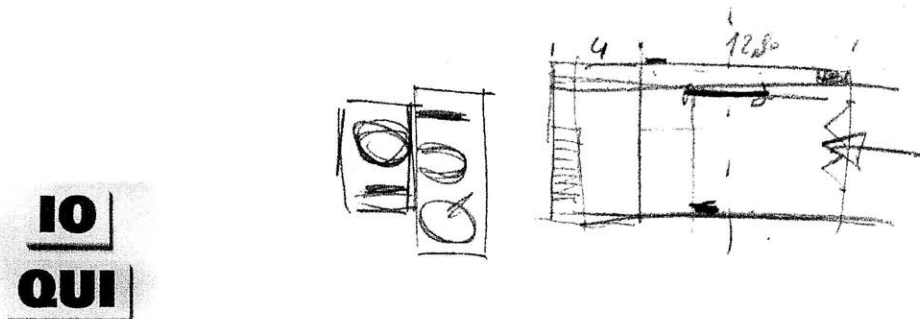


Figure 4.25

The three paintings should be three singular presences of the same painting. Three states, able to bring each other mutually into question, but also to enrich each other reciprocally.

What is more, the exhibition of each painting would be approached from an angle, and all would give the impression of being poorly oriented. And yet a painting demands a frontal encounter, it calls out for, provokes, insists on and imposes a face-to-face relation.

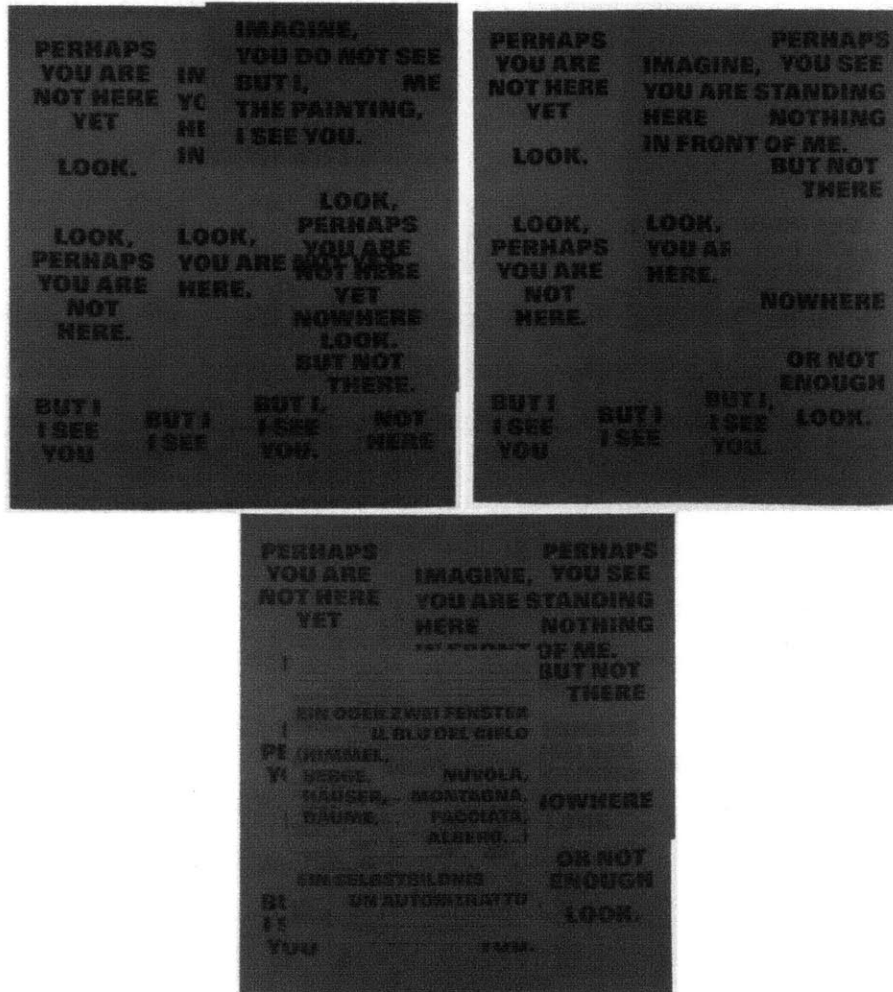


Figure 4.26

The alternating work on the two paintings, the evolution of one modifying the perception of the other. The two dark gray paintings with their black words, standing upright in the studio, now resemble one another. It should form part of the whole, show solidarity with the ensemble, merge with it, let itself flow into the uncertainty of the similar or the same. It should be itself, and in addition, it should also be with the two others, through resemblance.

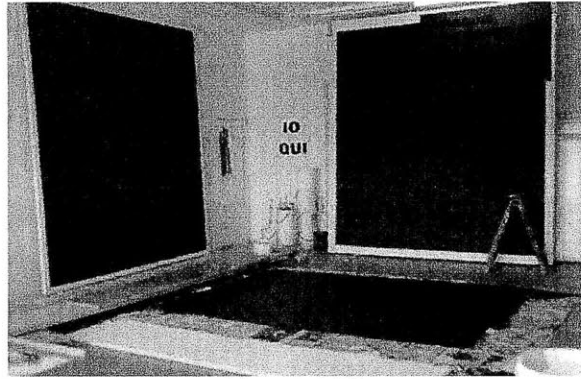


Figure 4.27

A multiple and indecisive painting. Indecisive not in its totality, but by the emergence of its constitutive elements. A kind of mnemonic palimpsest. A chaotic and yet structured thing, in the manner of a city with infinite bits of information that spring up and disappear, mobile impressions that combine, contradict, fade away, destroy or modify each other.

The subject would then pass from one canvas to the next, incapable of choosing one over the other, of looking at this one rather than that one. If the tree large, dense, similar paintings generate a dynamic perceptual network, interweaving and uncertain, constantly calling for other viewpoints and other positions, then the small work should be at once the stabilizing and the reflexive element: it should anchor the subject in a place, set him face to face with himself, speaking in his name.

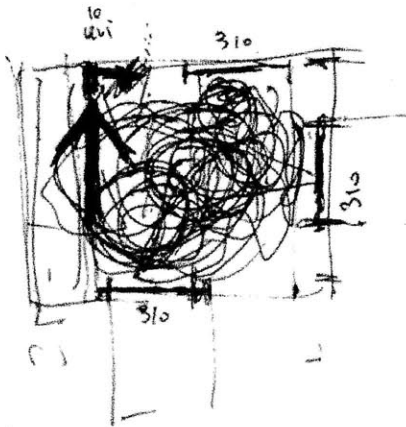


Figure 4.28

This point in space should bring the subject back to earth and root him in a precise place, contrary to the three large paintings which cause him to regret that he is not gifted with

ubiquity. The third painting could rejoin them and break their bipolarity, which tends to isolate and exclude from their system the two small, superimposed paintings, IO and QUI. The third painting should not stray too far from the first two, it should not take its distances by seeking refuge in an egotistical singularity or by becoming a lone wolf, nor should it oppose the other two and create a new polarity.

Lines of Fire

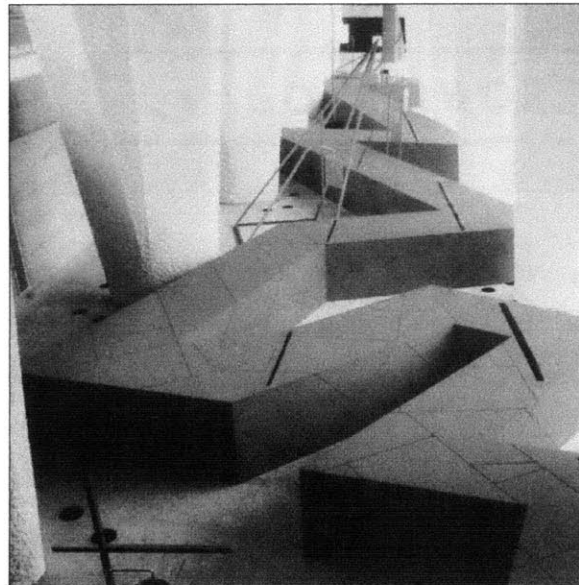


Figure 4.29

Line of fire establishes a series of different axes which counter the subject's path and call attention to the discrepancy between the experience and comprehension of space. The subject's mental tracing of a zigzag route is disorienting, even though an implied axis remains present.

Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum engages the index as a critique of architectural persistency, in particular that of linear axuality, which can be considered fundamental to Cartesian and classical space. There is nothing more indexical in plan and elevation than the random, arbitrary cuts throughout the museum. This is similar to Matta-Clark's cuts as the traces of that cutting, resembling a photographic plate of a series of arbitrary gestures.



Figure 4.30

One of the dominant persistencies of architecture is the traditional movement of the subject from the entry of a building through its major spaces, which are typically perceived through symmetrical sequences. In both the models of the project and in the realized building there remains a trace in the roof of the continuous axial path that is disjuncted, first by the angled body of the museum, and next by the actual inaccessible void which extends down to the floors from the roof trace, denying any continuity along the x-axis.

Libeskind, in presenting the axis as a trace, an inaccessible void, an da series of discontinuous segments, offers a critique of axuality, site specificity, and ultimately the classical subject/object relationship. These voided zones slice through the center of the zigzagging form of the museum, so that a void zone, which might be comprehended by a legible axis, is never experienced as such and instead becomes one of the devices to impede the subject's movement. The zigzagging from of his installation denies the idea of an axis, both as a real pathway and as a concept of an axis of symmetry.

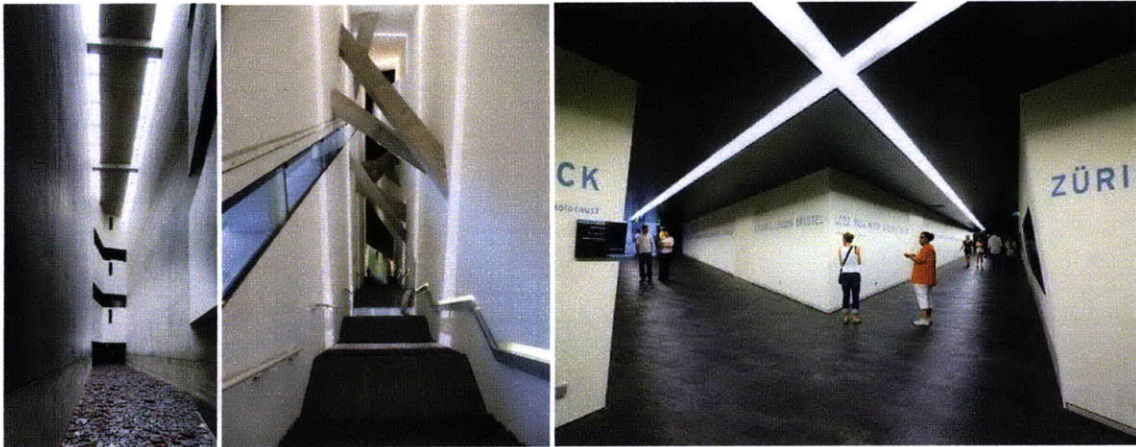


Figure 4.31

The scale of the Museum allows to articulate this disruption in more precise ways. Circulation plays a key role in a critique of the need to understand space through movement. The stairs of the museum do not provide connection, but in one sense function to interrupt continuous movement. The location of the staircases further denies any continuity of movement.

It is important to understand that one cannot follow a horizontal route, nor remain at a horizontal level when moving through the museum. The length of the building represented by spaces on the same floor cannot be experienced as the typical horizontal datum provided by a floor plane. Rather, the horizontal axis must be traversed through a sequence of interrupted levels, as stairs and ramps move the subject across the series of voids enclosed in the museum.

The visual parameters of what is being seen do not produce an overall image or gestalt, but produce something that is difficult to extrapolate from the experience of the building. Not only are the axes and floor levels denied as parts that ultimately relate to a whole, but the overall impression of a functioning whole is denied by the parts. Such disruptions frustrate programmatic and formal expectations, but more importantly separate the time of the experience of space from the comprehension of its organization. The Museum oscillates between the indexical and the symbolic, as the indexical register triggers a symbolic key, which then returns the symbolic to the arbitrary.

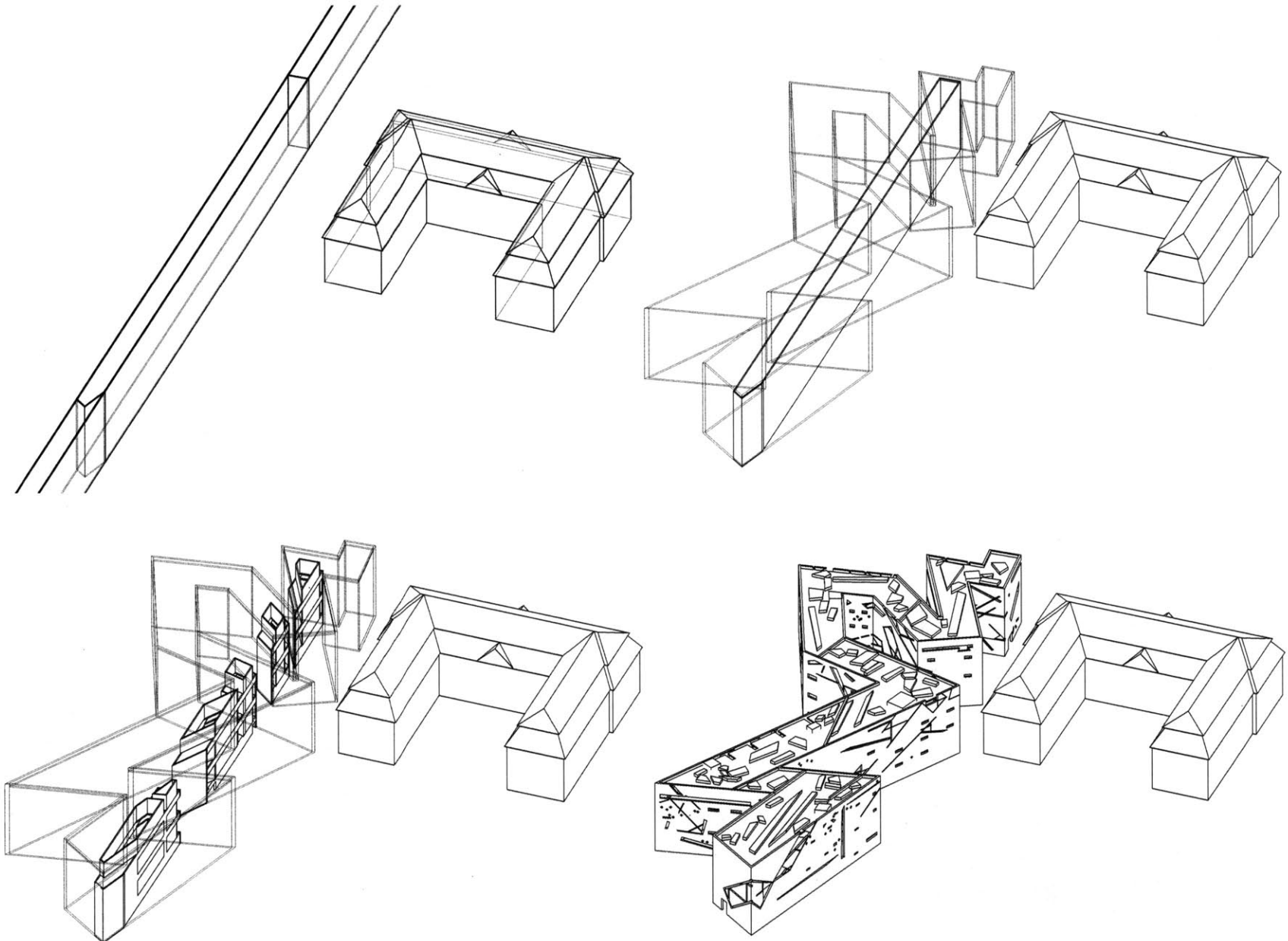


Figure 4.32

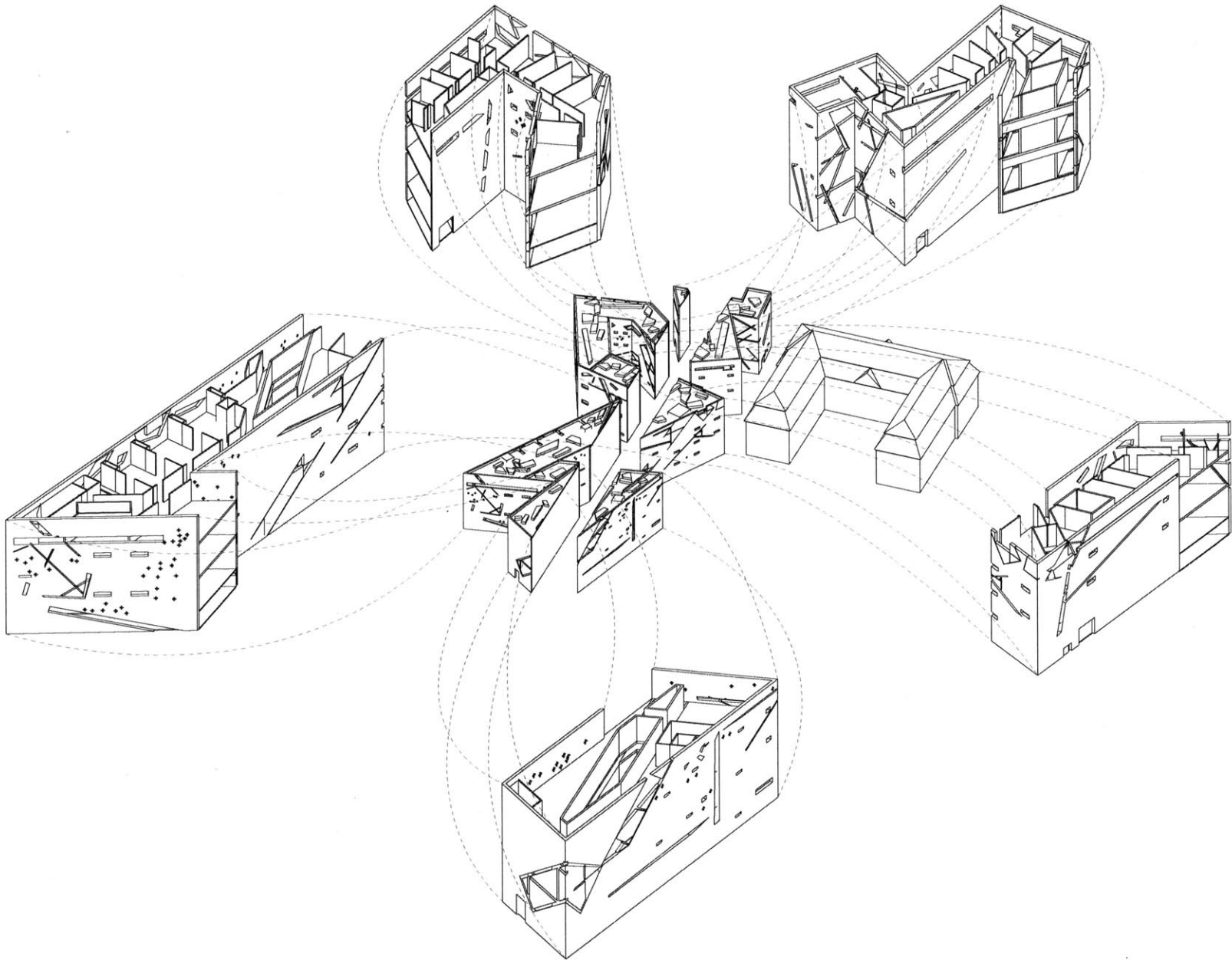


Figure 4.33

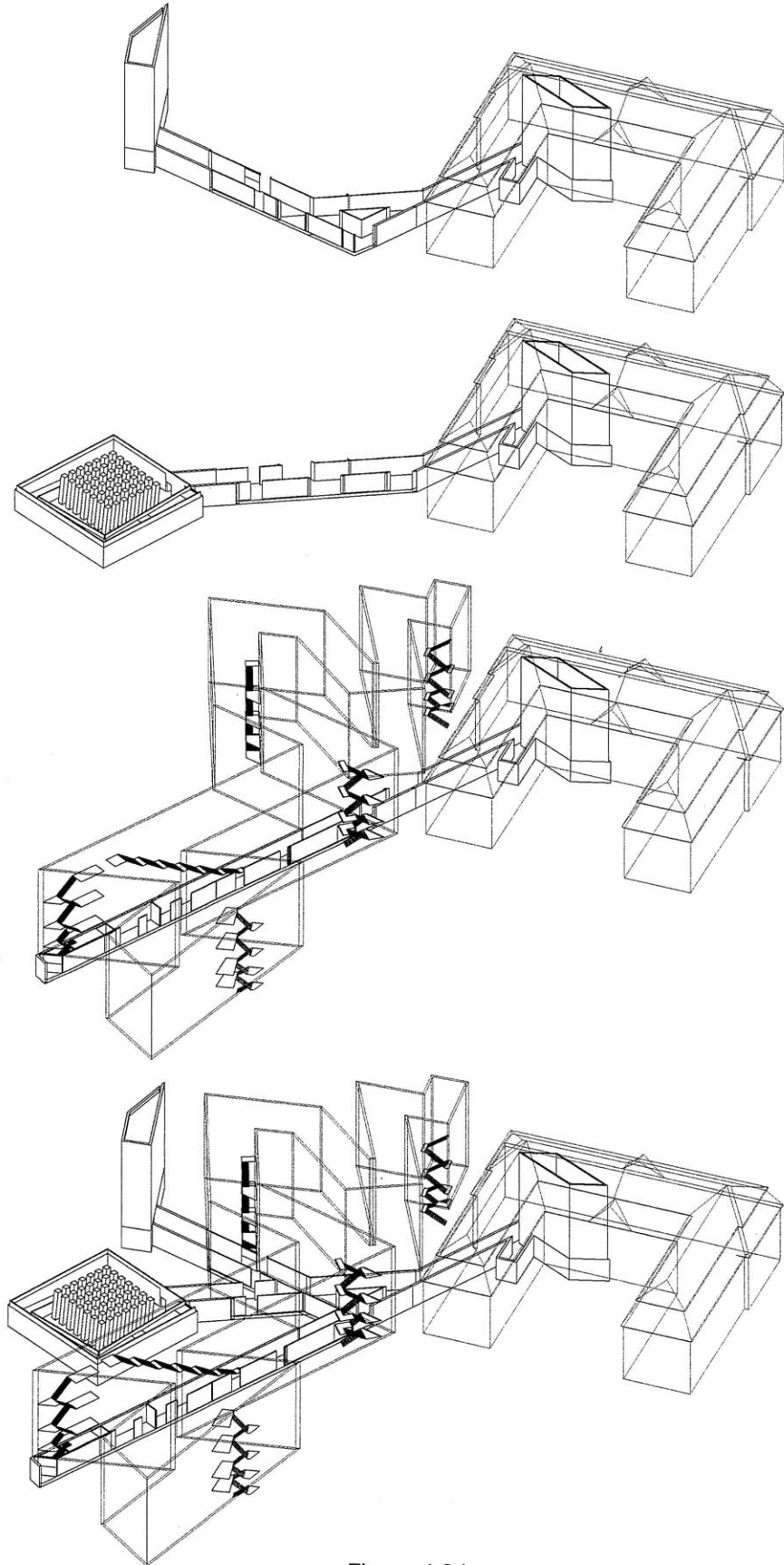


Figure 4.34

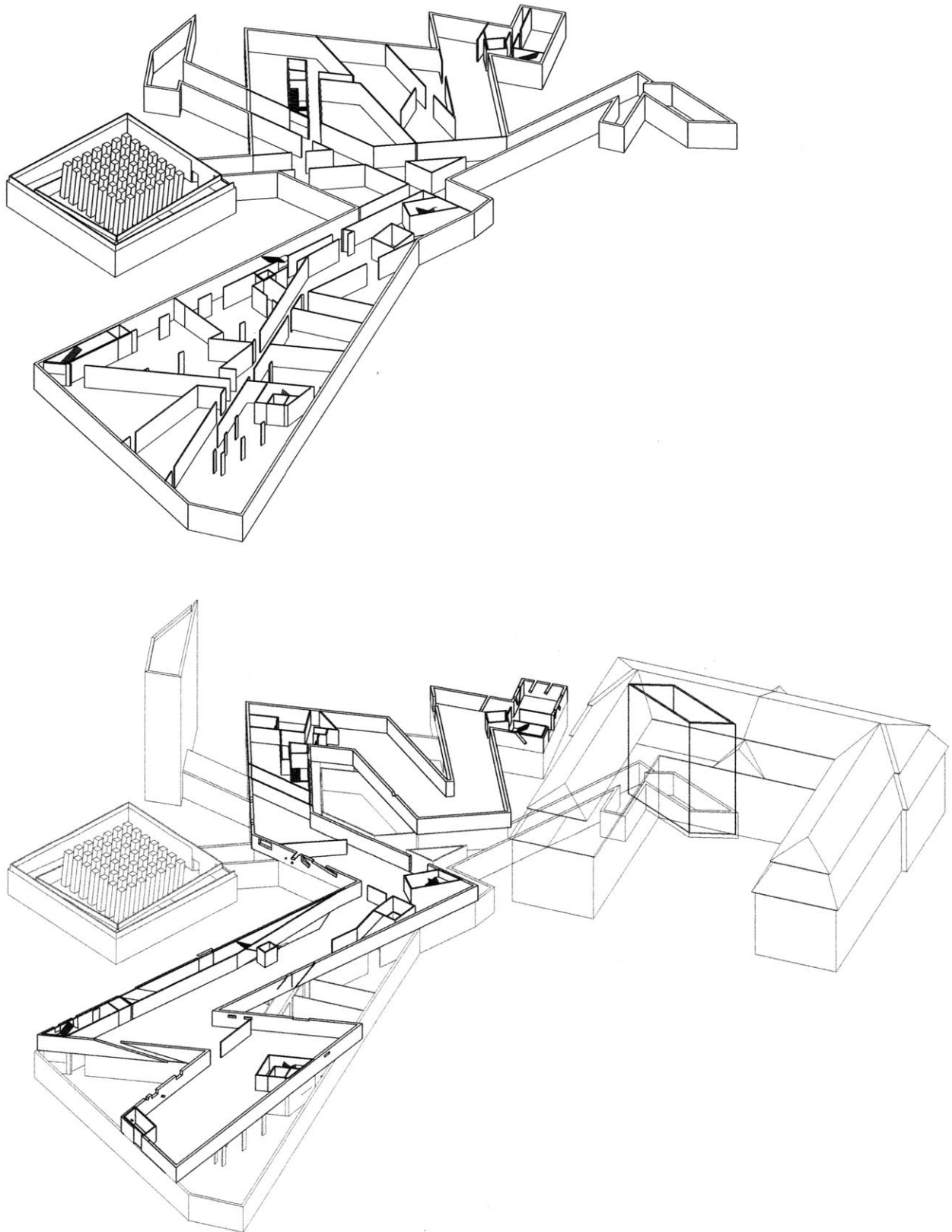


Figure 4.35

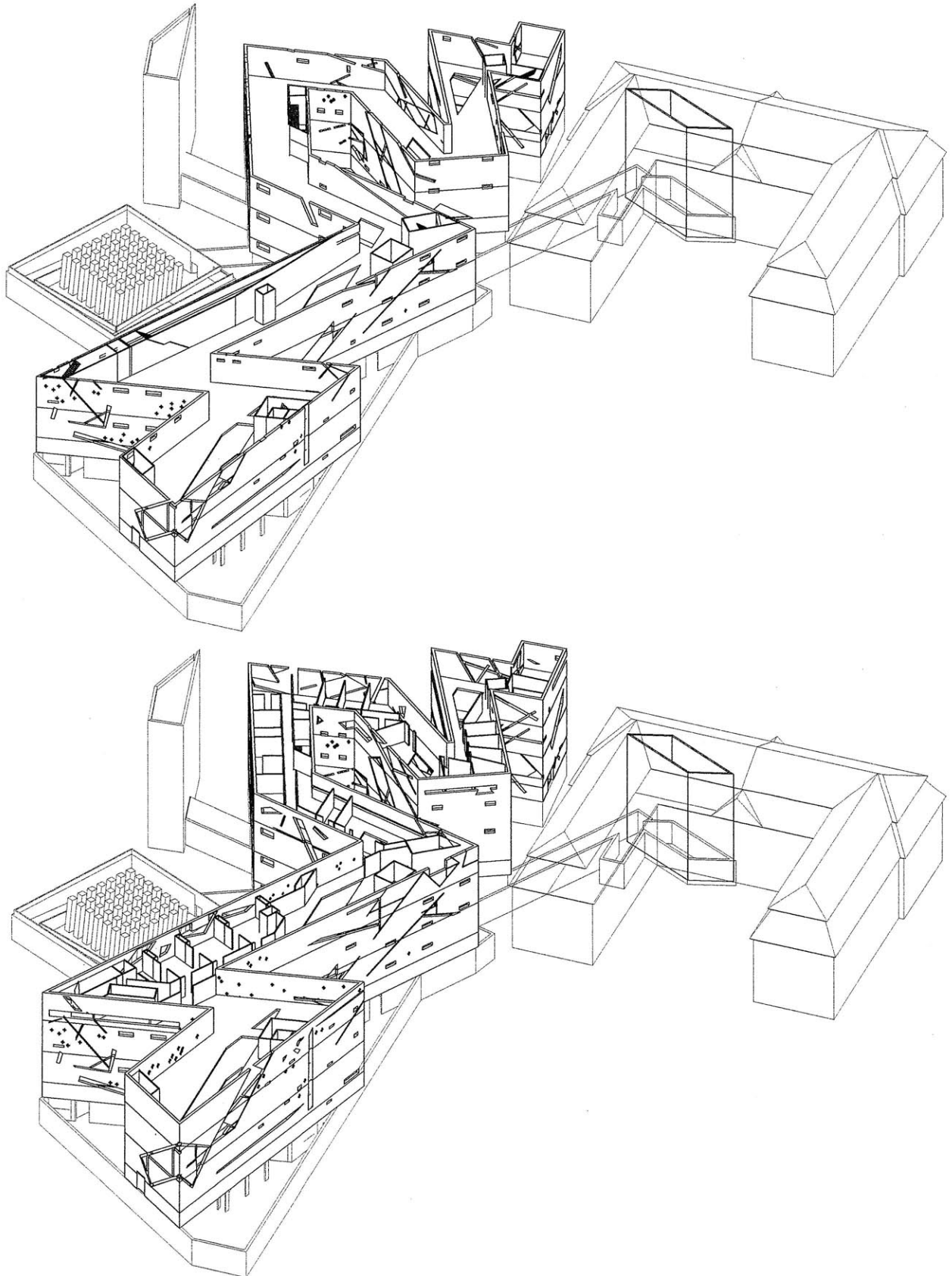


Figure 4.36

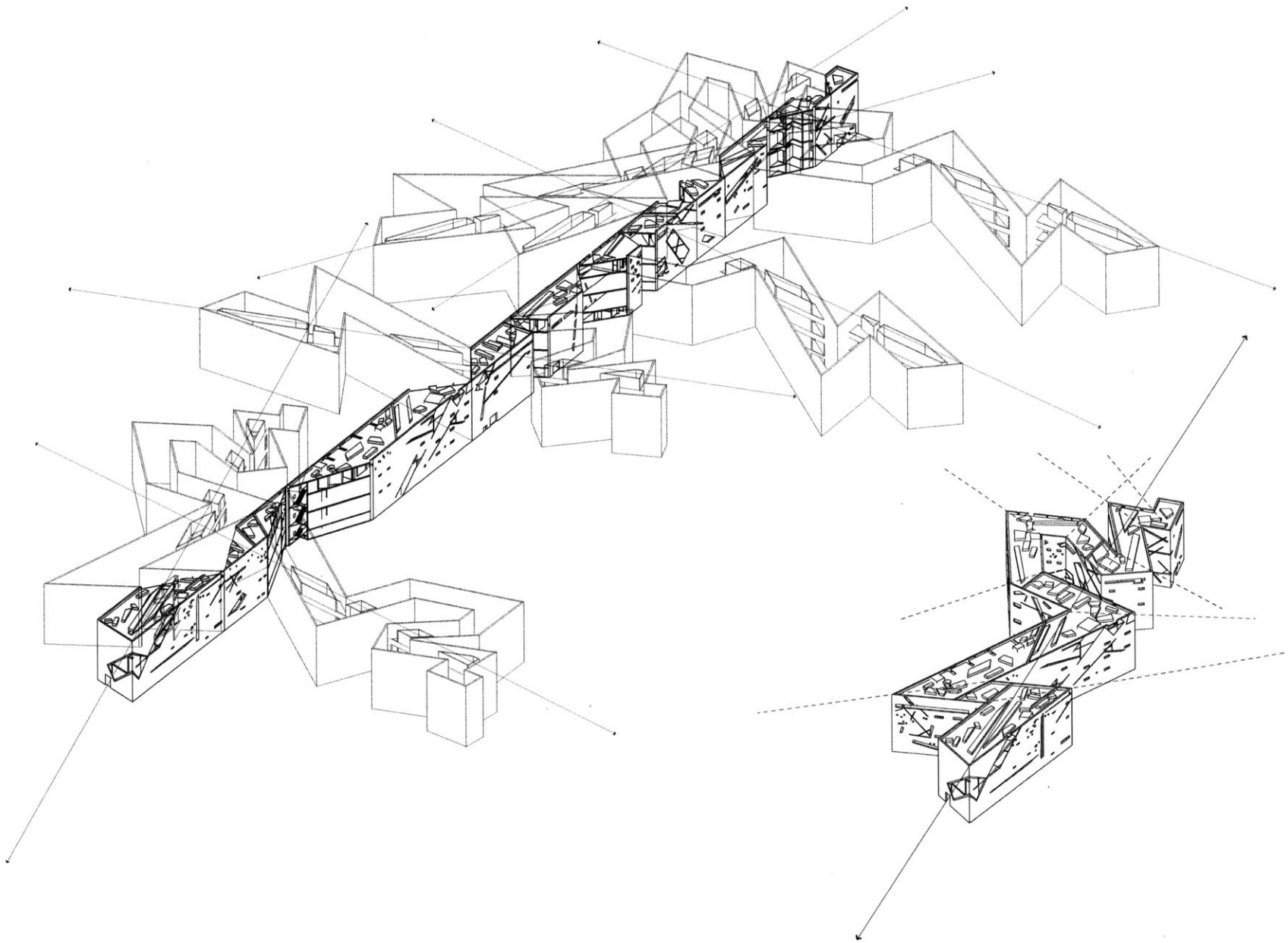


Figure 4.37

4.2 Magic Bewilderment

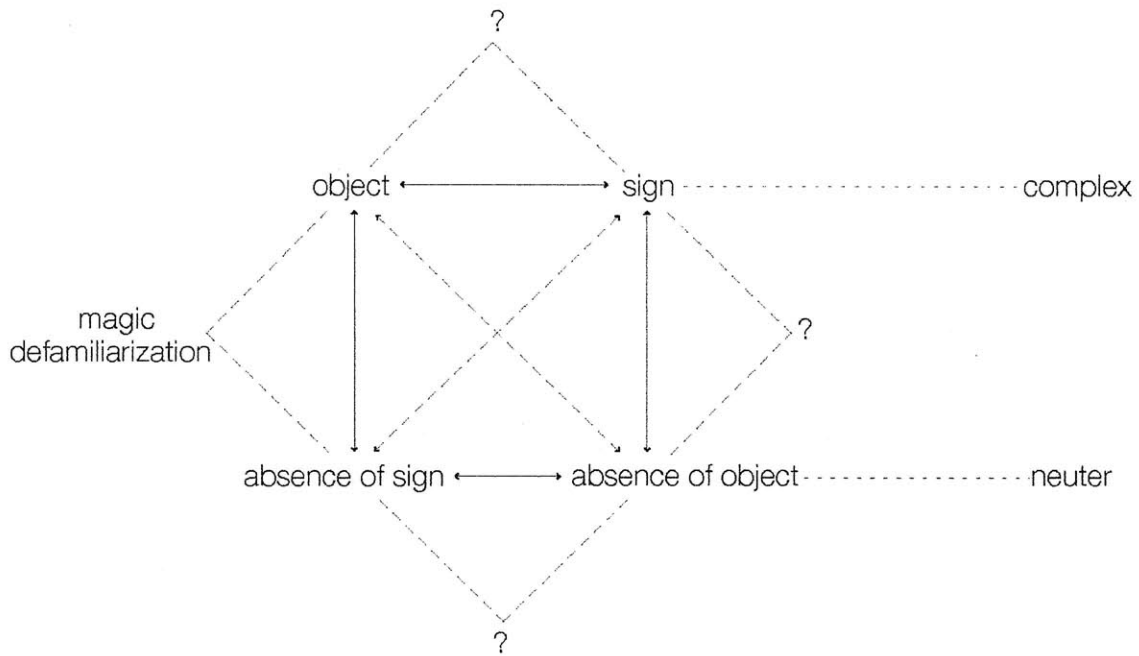


Figure 4.38

4.2.1 Object + Absence of Sign

4.2.1.1 Semantic Nothingness

4.2.1.1.1 Coping Mechanism

When we start to examine the habit of perception, we find that we are not to re-acknowledge one object every time when we seeing it. After we see an object several times, we begin to recognize it. The object is in front of us and we know about it, but we do not see it – hence we cannot say anything significant about it. We retreat it into our unconsciously automatic. In this process, things are ideally realized in algebra and replaced by symbols.

Viktor Shklovsky explains, “By this algebraic method of thought we apprehend objects only as shapes with imprecise extensions; we do not see them in their entirety, but rather

recognize them by their main characteristics,” He refers to the response of seeing the same thing several times as “algebrization,” which is what we’d now call a coping mechanism. Algebrization is the process of turning an event or familiar object into an automatic symbol. He goes on to say that familiarity follows what he calls an economy of perception. You can’t be equally attentive to everything. In order to drive to work, you can’t treat every corner, every piece of perceptual material, as new, as if it were an image in a poem by Mallarme.

The process of “algebrization,” the over-automatization of an object, permits the greatest economy of perceptive effort. Either objects are assigned only one proper feature – a number, for example – or else they function as though by formula and do not even appear in cognition. This characteristic of thought not only suggests the method of algebra, but even prompts the choice of symbols.

4.2.1.1.2 Desymbolization

By this “algebraic” method of thought we apprehend objects only as shapes with imprecise extensions; we do not see them in their entirety but rather recognize them by their main characteristics. We see the object as though it were enveloped in a sack. We know what it is by its configuration, but we see only its silhouette. Ultimately even the essence of what it was is forgotten. Shklovesky is talking about a process in which the object is stripped of its usual meanings it is desymbolized, widowed.



Figure 4.39

Shklovsky advises a search for elements that don’t fit – misfit details. He begins by arguing that if you have a familiar object or action to describe, you would do well not to name it, or

to give it a new name, or to write as if you are seeing it for the first time, in a state of what might be called profitable forgetting.

“Absence of sign” vanishes objects in the automatism of perception in this ways. It suggests the value of the objects lies in their absolute superficiality, their semantic nothingness, and hence, in their pervasive emptiness, in their inexorable condition of their self-sufficiency, and in their implacable quality of “being there” instead of “being something.”

That Herzog & de Meuron wished for a way out of the formula is evident in this small private house, the Rudin House in Leymen, France [1996- 1997]. The architects opted for the "canonical representation of a house," the most direct and literal image of what people hold to be a house. Pitched roof, chimney, windows, everything seems to serve the nonurban resident 's canonical idea of a house.

In some of his projects it was form, being responsible for image, that integrated functions, addressed circulations, and resolved structures. For Herzog & de Meuron in this project, iconography made sense only as memory. And with the reappearance of iconography, a dissociation of form and content was inevitable as well, manifest in all the imbalances and anomalies for which the architects seem to congratulate themselves.

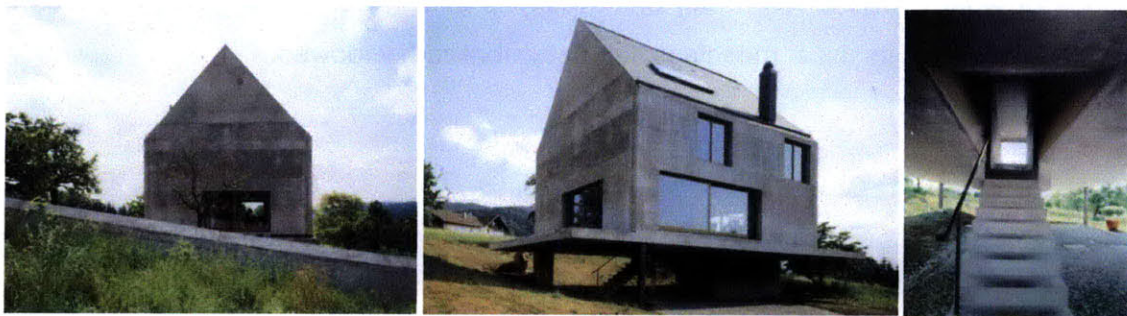


Figure 4.40

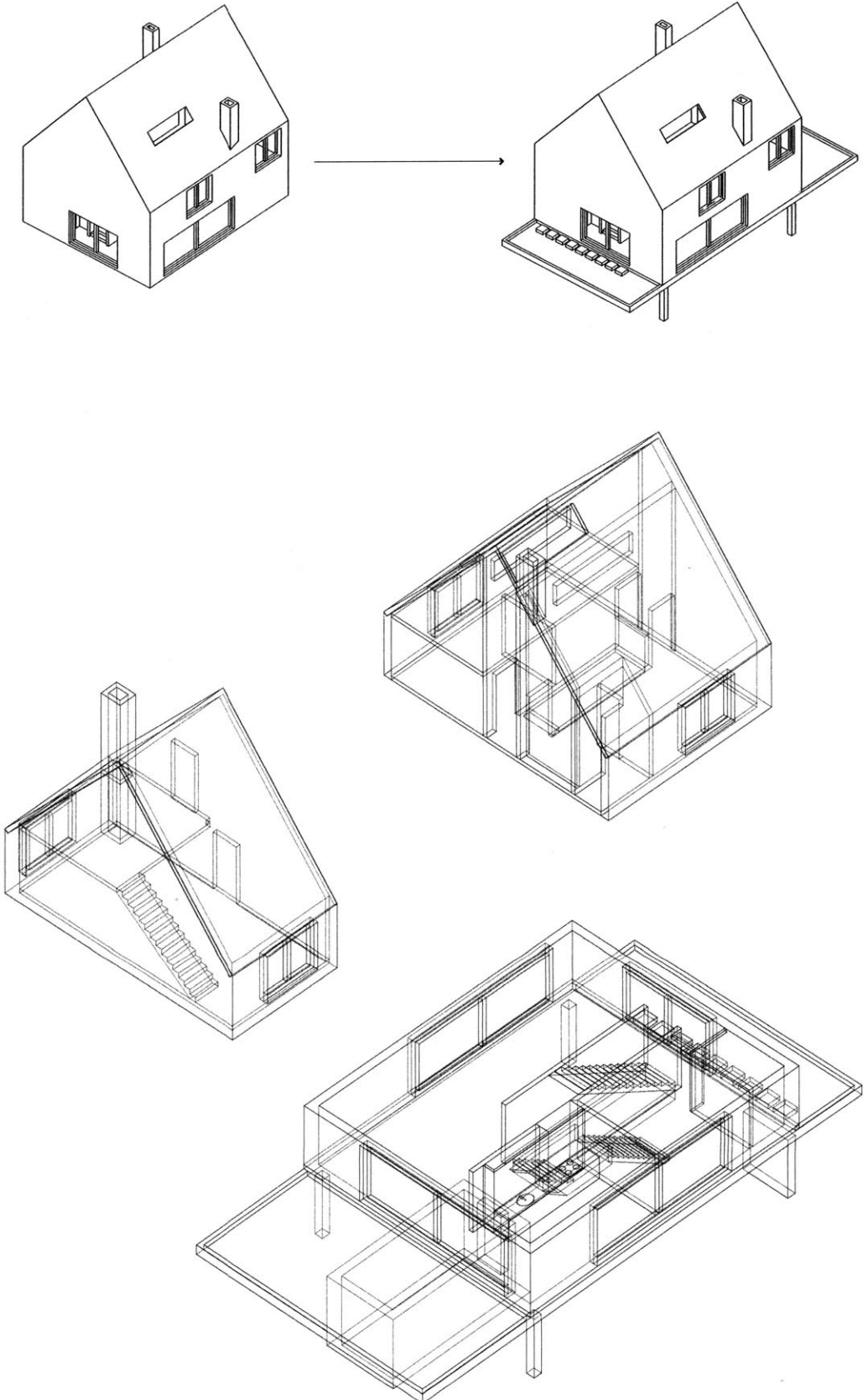


Figure 4.41

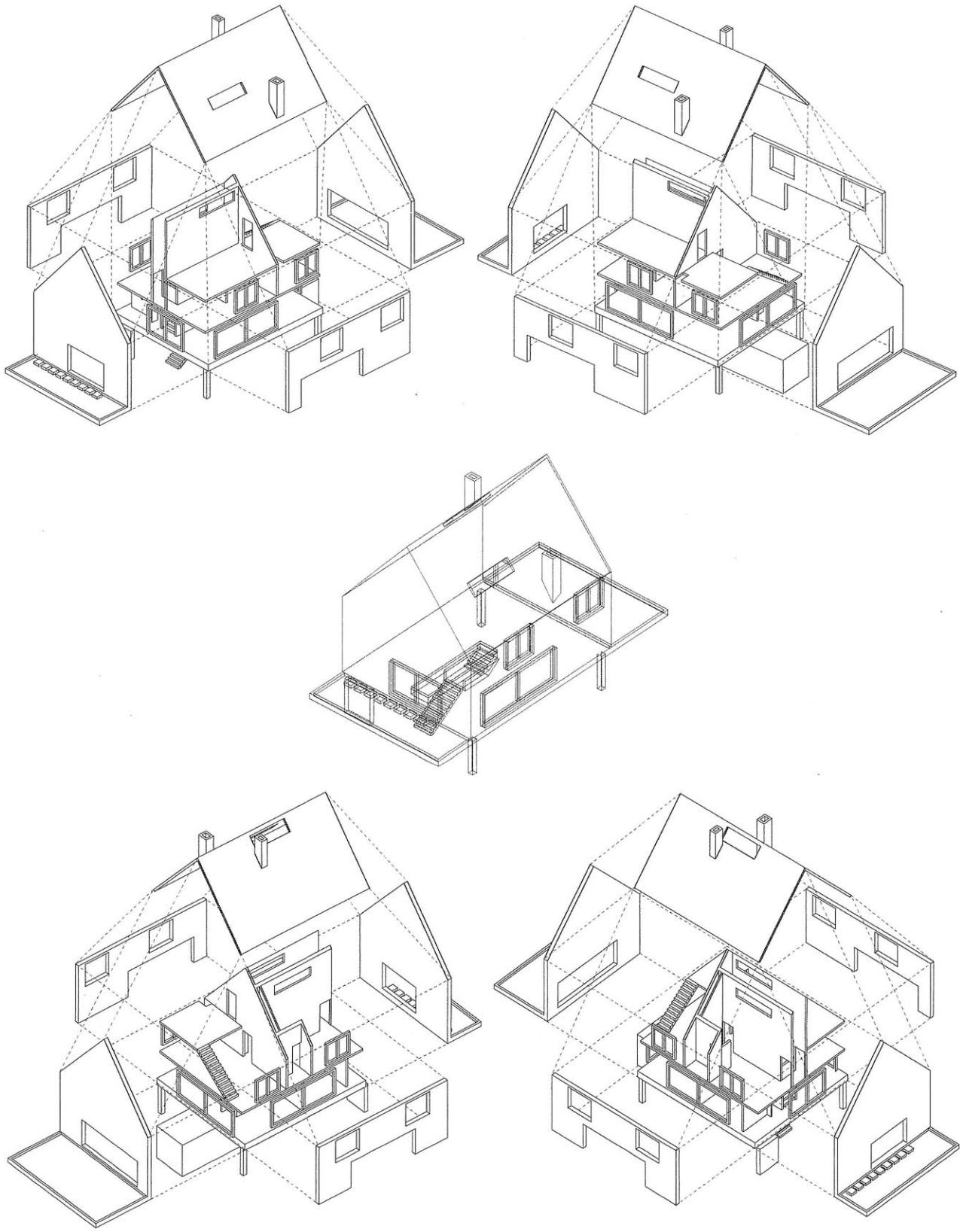


Figure 4.42

4.2.1.2 Return of the “Objecthood”

4.2.1.2.1 Legitimize Objectivity

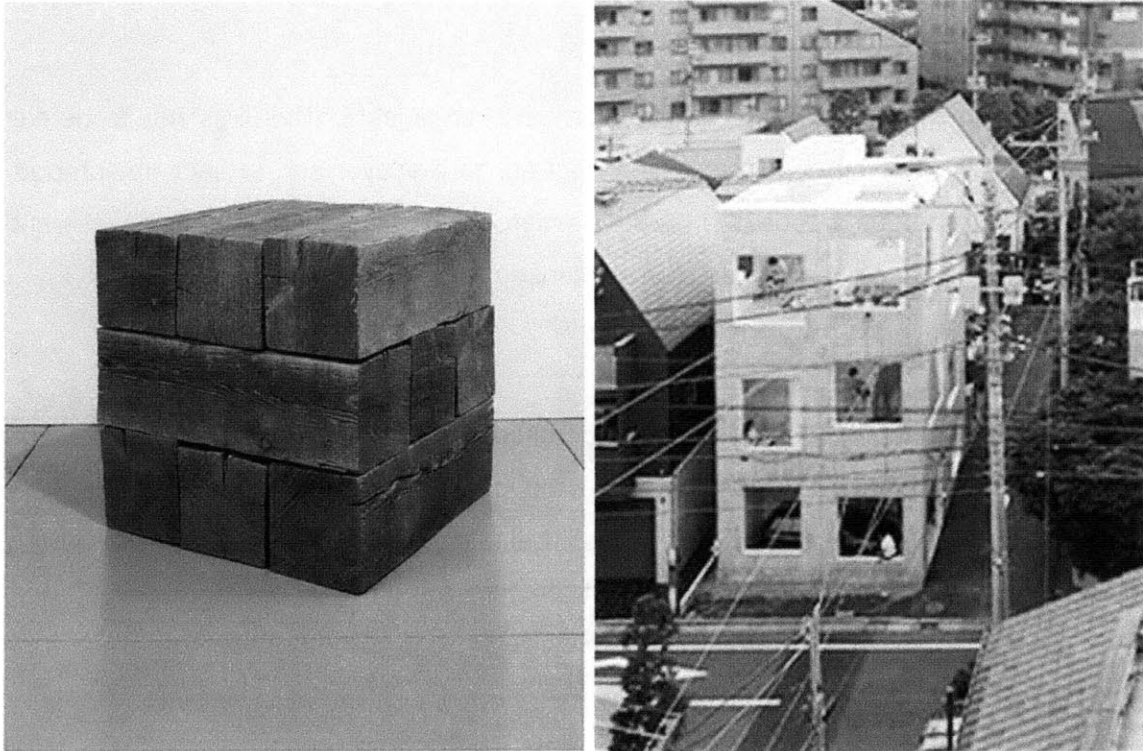


Figure 4.43

Constituent Specificity

Removing semantic meaning of the objects means the object is simply is itself. There is objectivity to the obdurate identity of a material. As a result, every constituent of the object - the shape, the materials, the organization and the order etc - does not represent, signify, or allude to anything; they are what they are and nothing more. Thus they pursue new materials, either recent inventions or things not used or not algebrized before in art, which vary greatly and are simply hollow in meaning - formica, aluminum, cold-rolled steel, plexiglass, red and common brass, and so forth. They are specific, aggressive and directly existing. All the component confront one in all their superficiality, its “objectivity,” its absence of anything beyond itself. It can only be defined through its own phenomenology - the way it is materially fabricated and inserted into the operative sphere of use.

Objective Order

Composition by parts should return to a objective sense of the whole: complex wholes ordered not by conventional relations of hierarchy, symmetry, or balance, but rather by serial orders, non-relational composition, and unified formal gestalts.

Properties as Given

Everything should be treated as a given property of objects. It aspires not to defeat or suspend its own objecthood, but on the contrary to discover and project objecthood as such. These properties can be interpreted as hieroglyphics; incomprehensible, yet wanting their stubbornly figurative and exotic characteristic to be deciphered.

Prolonged Experience

To make objects return to its own is to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged by the repetition of identical units. Endlessness, being able to go on and on, even having to go on and on, is central both to the concept of interest and to that of objecthood.

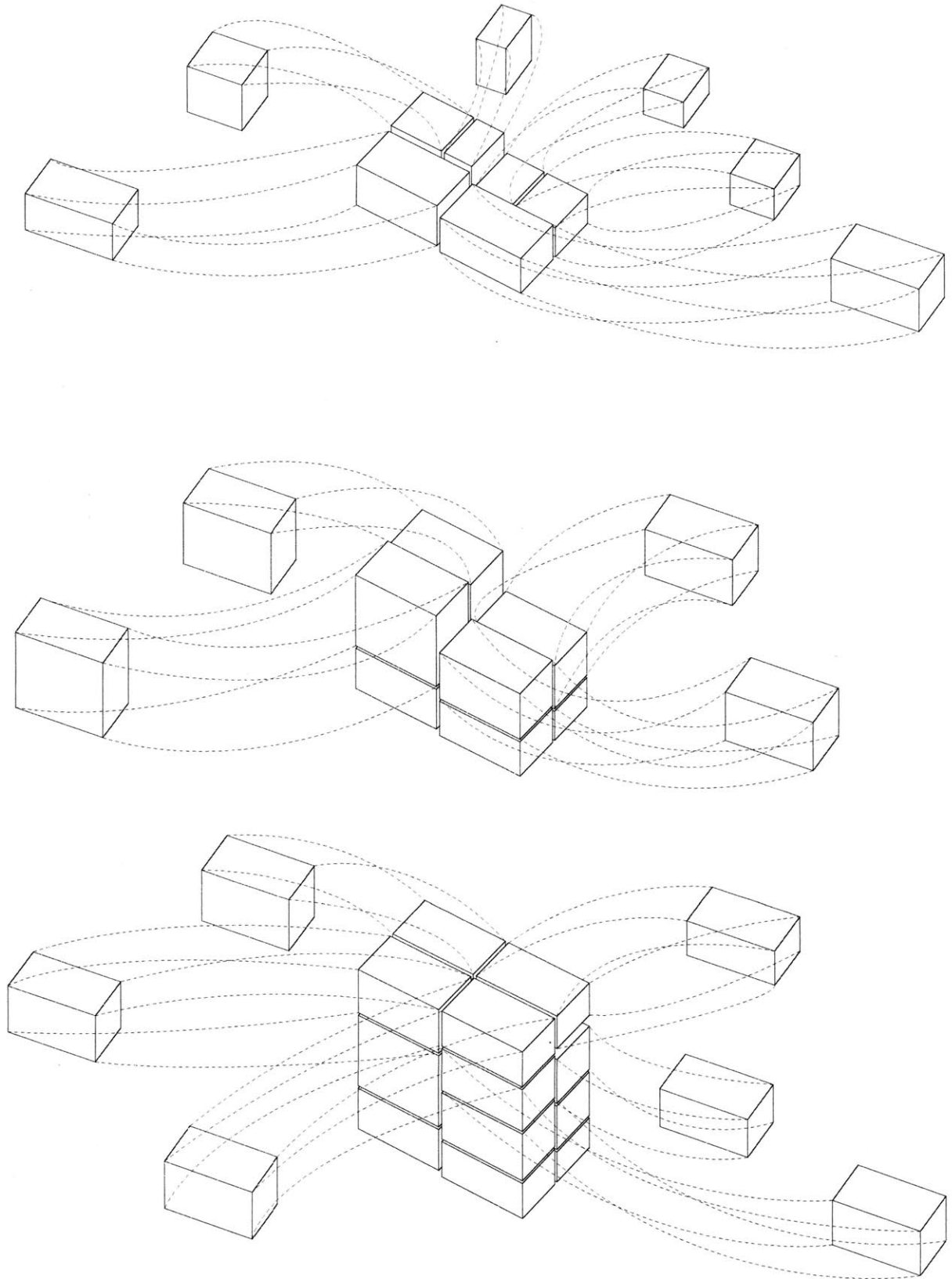


Figure 4.44

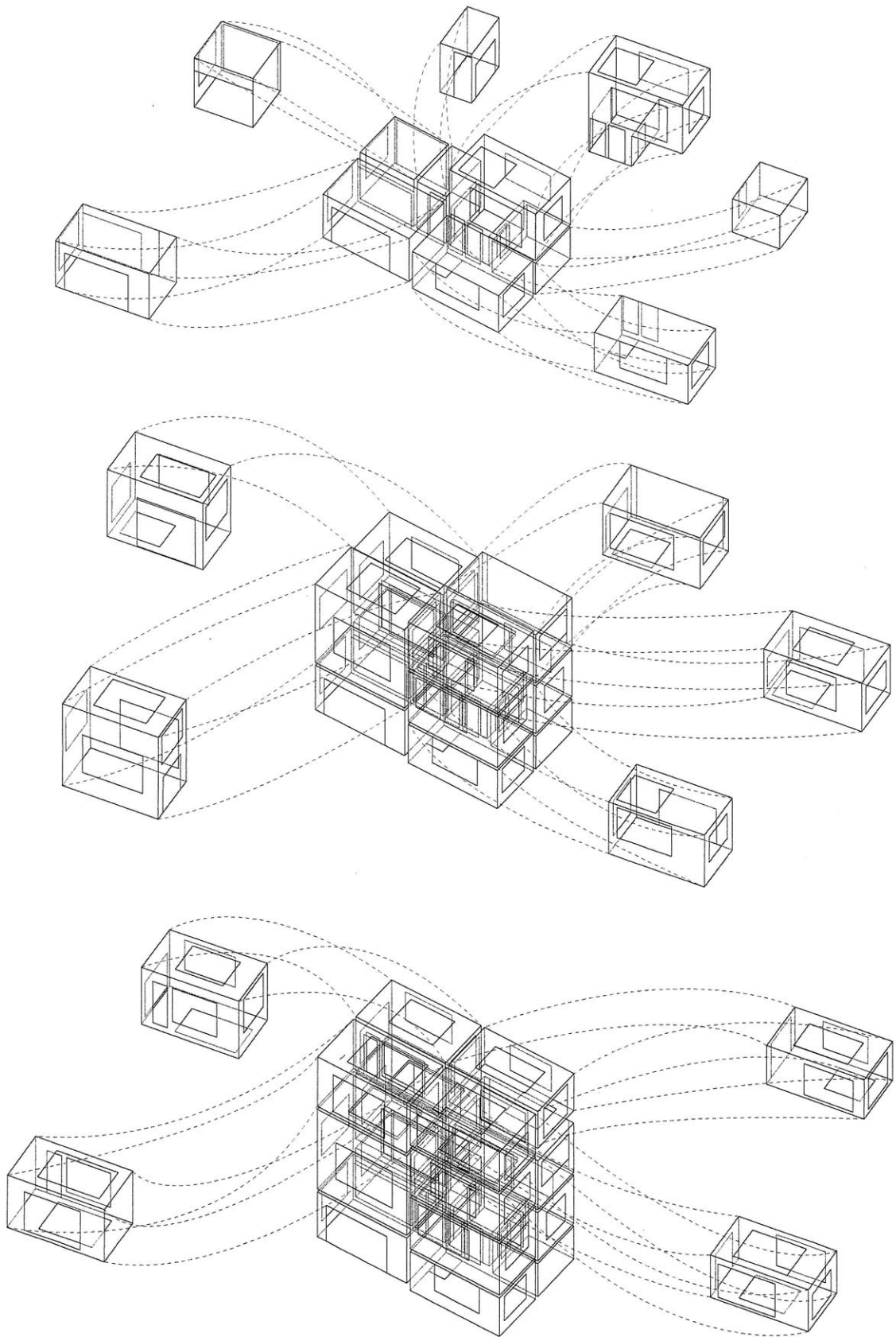


Figure 4.45

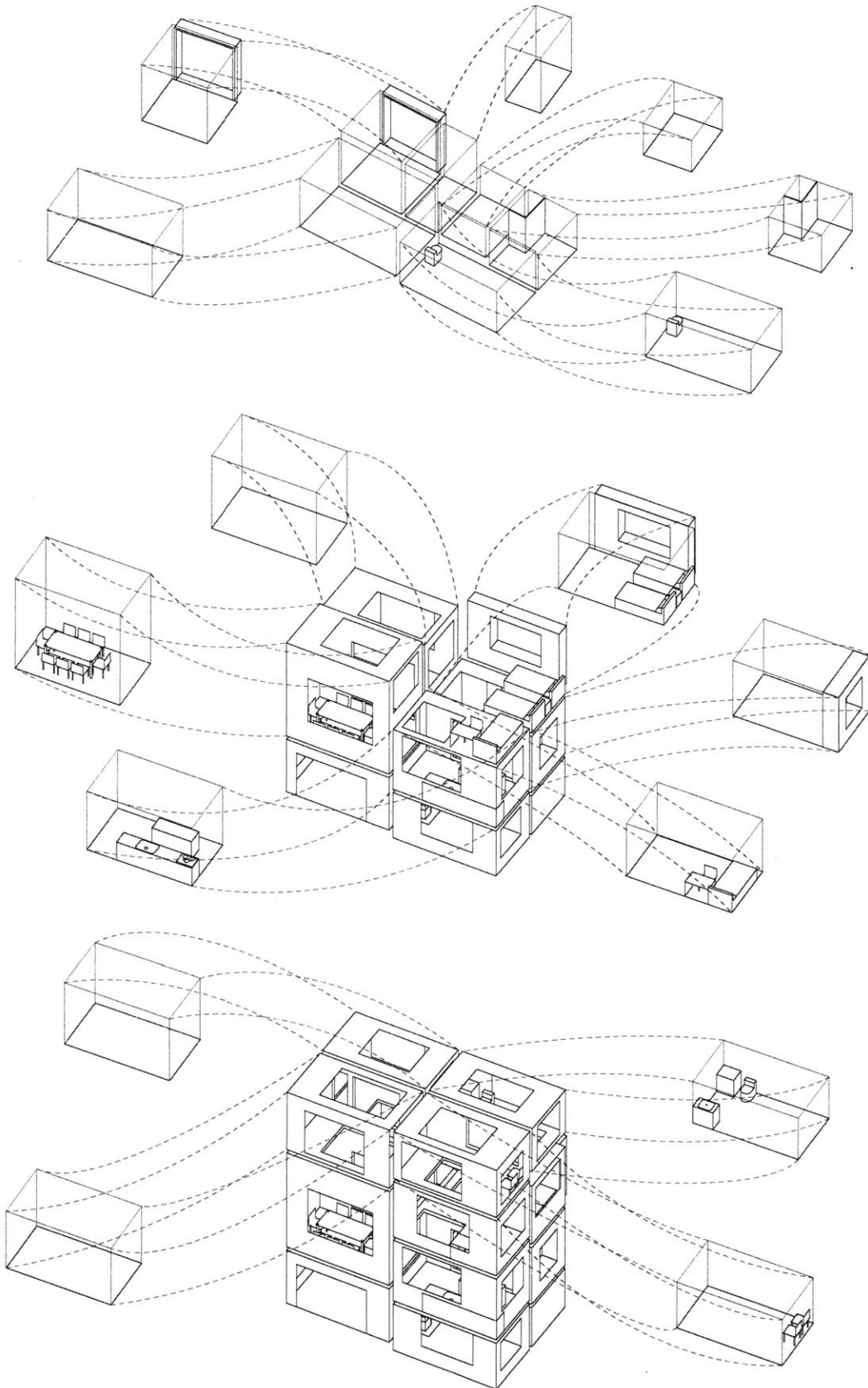


Figure 4.46

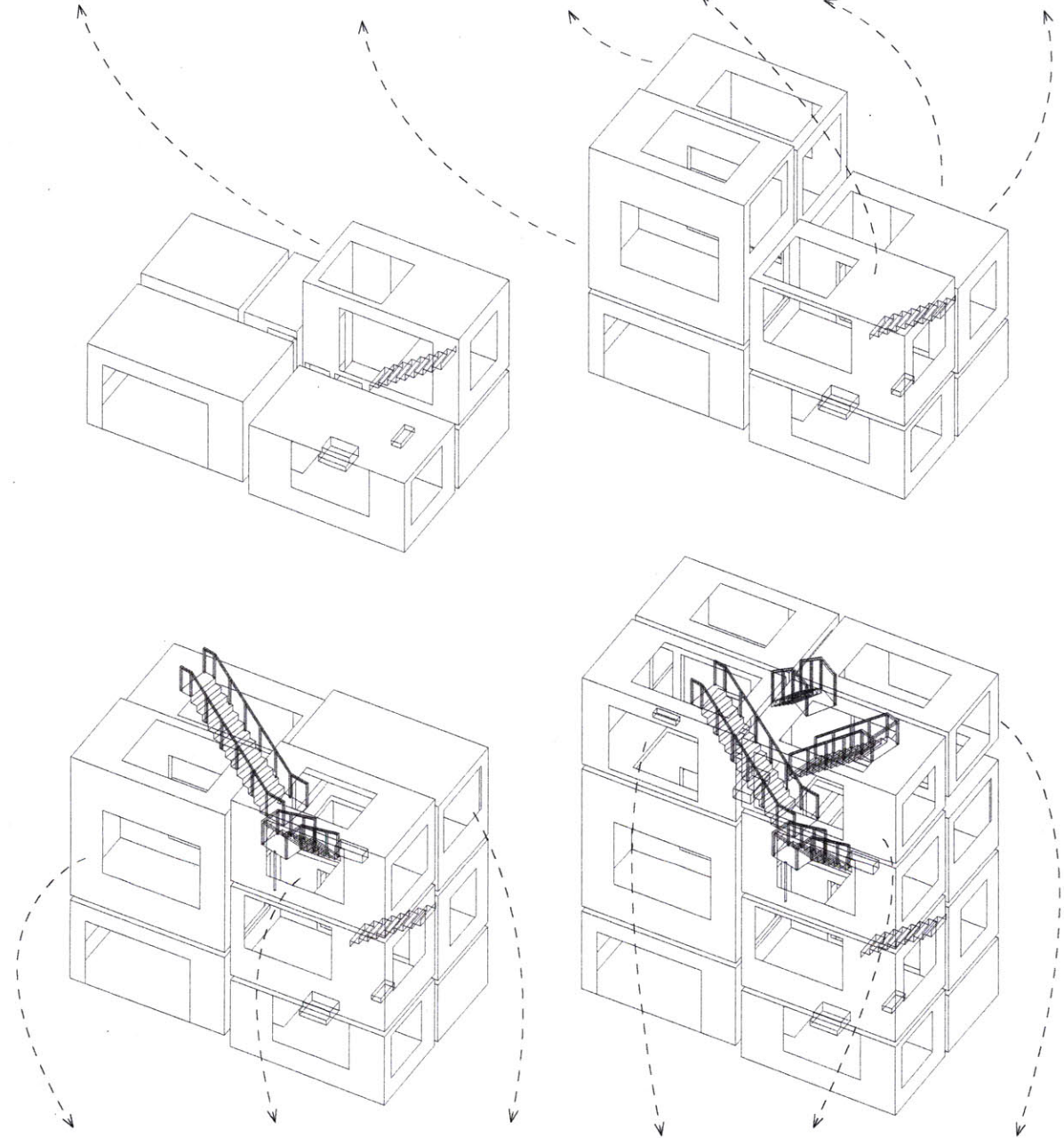
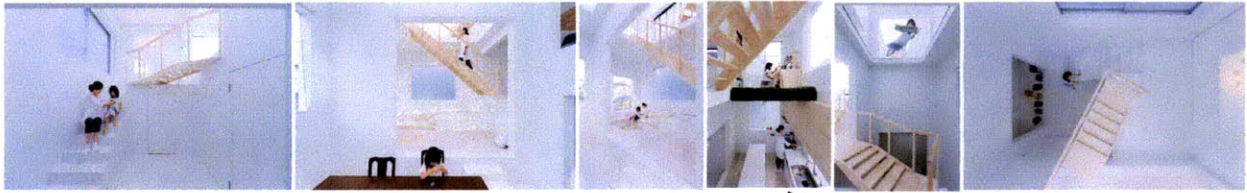


Figure 4.47

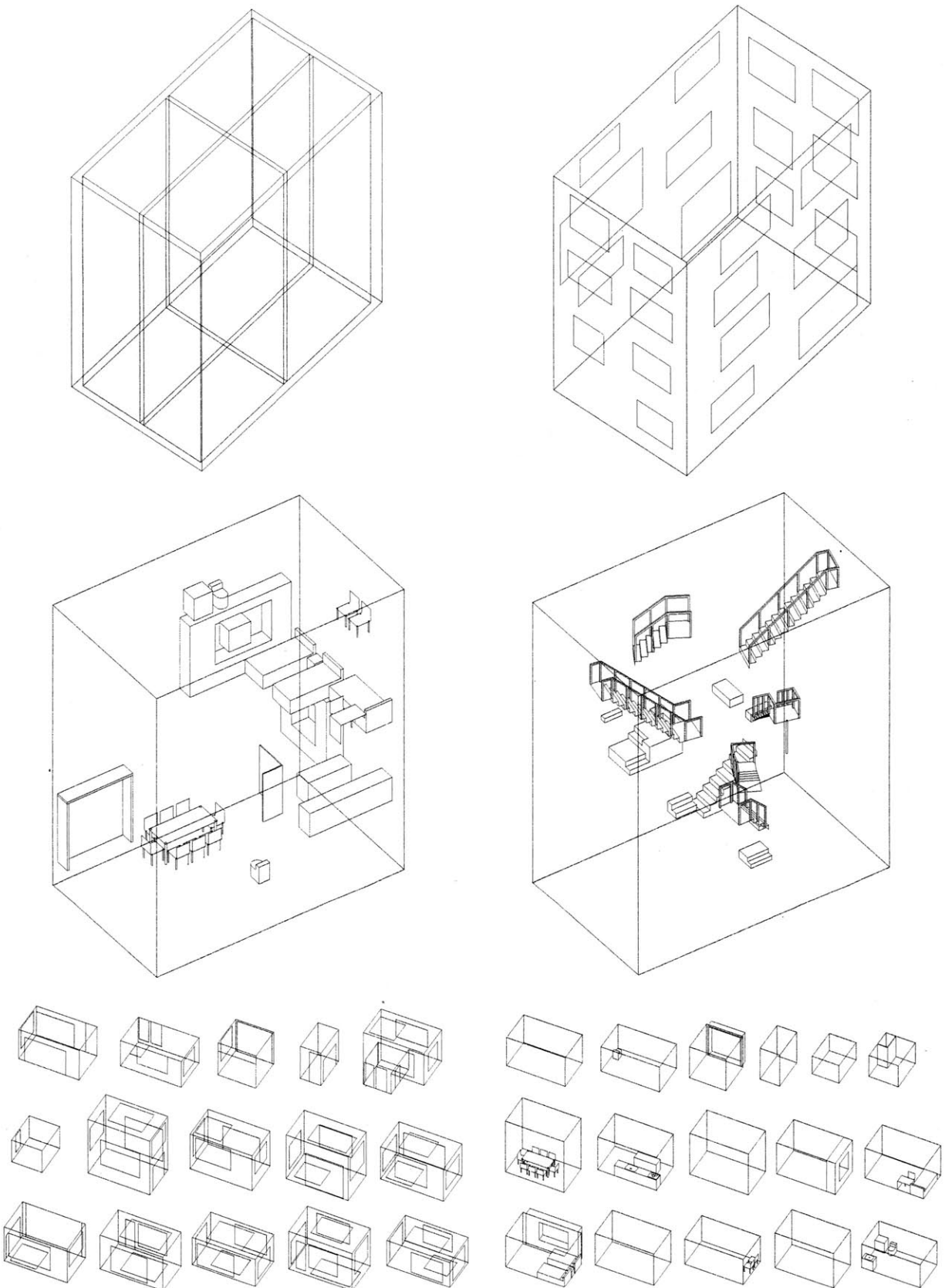


Figure 4.48

4.2.1.2.2 Spatiotemporally Coincidence

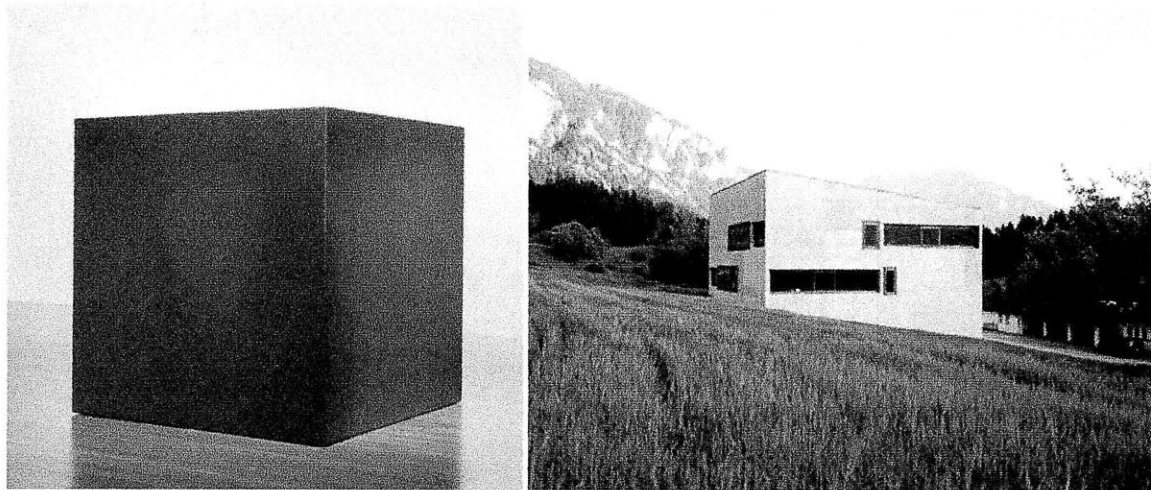


Figure 4.49

Situational Involvement

The return of the objecthood fights against the latent figurality of the object in the sculpture and the static privilege of the viewer in painting, which means it should not be imprisoned only in the aesthetic world. The object must create the actual situation or not at least torn down from its context in which the beholder confirms its coincidence with its own world, and encounters the object. The experience of literalist art is of an object in a situation – one that, virtually by definition, includes the beholder. There is nothing within his field of vision – nothing that he takes note of in any way – that declares its irrelevance to the situation, and therefore to the experience, in question. The object, not the beholder, must remain the center or focus of the situation, but the situation itself belongs to the beholder – it is his situation. Everything counts – not as part of the object, but as part of the situation in which its objecthood is established and on which that objecthood at least partly depends. The entire situation means exactly all of it – including the beholder's body.

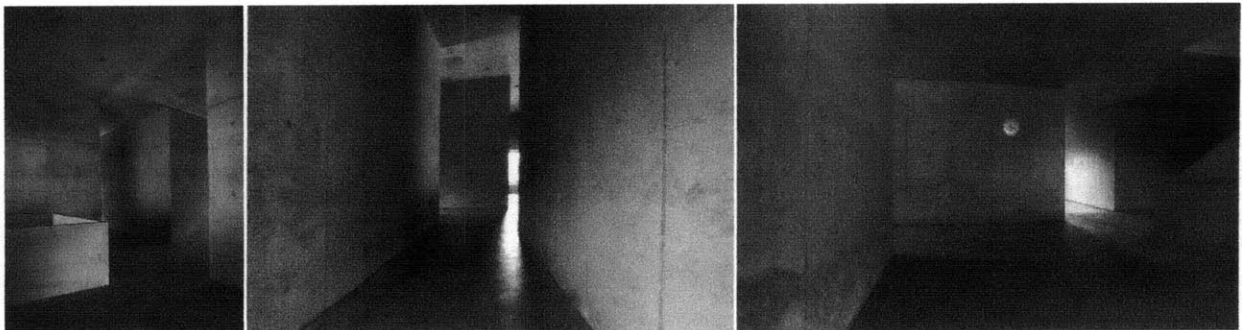
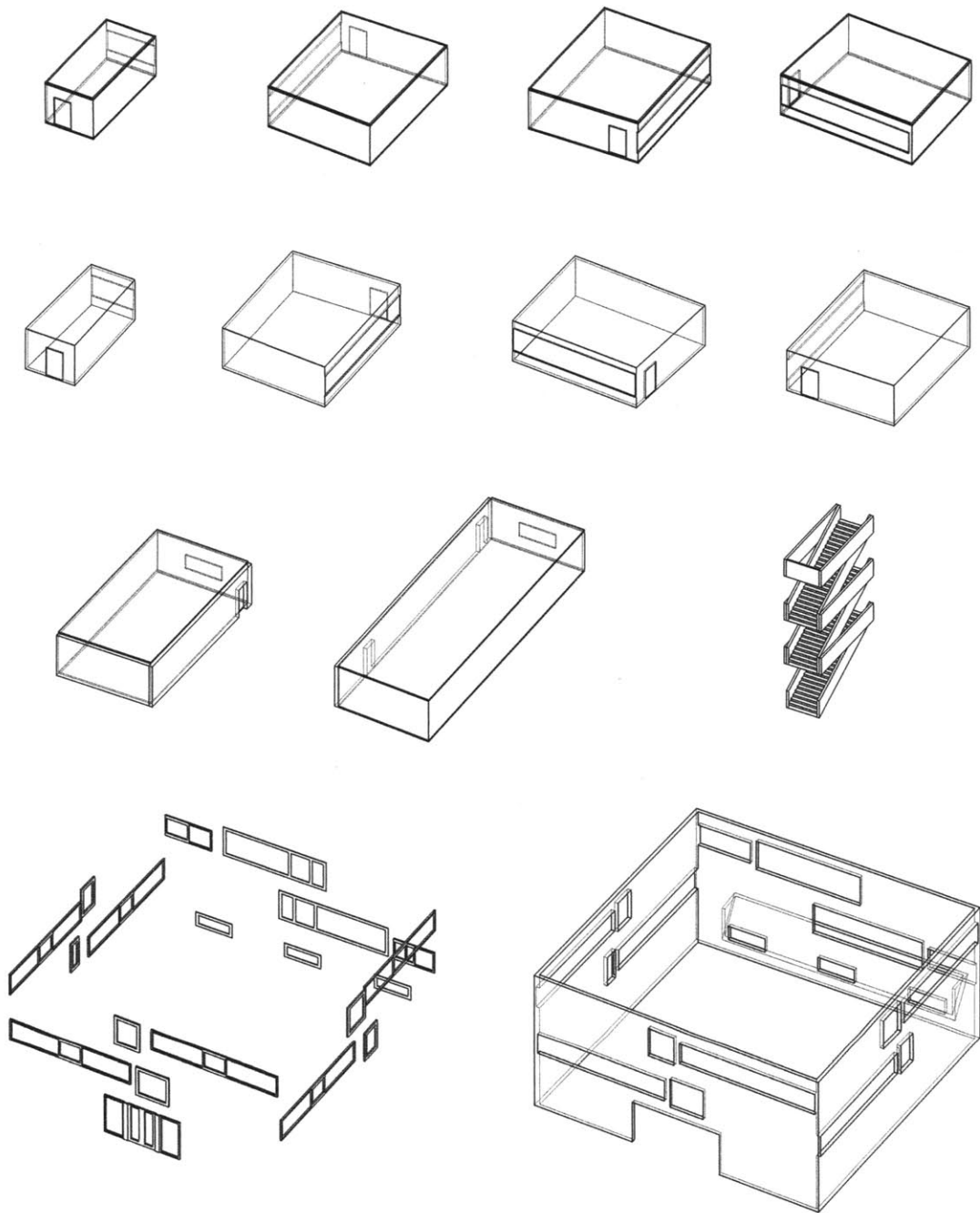


Figure 4.50

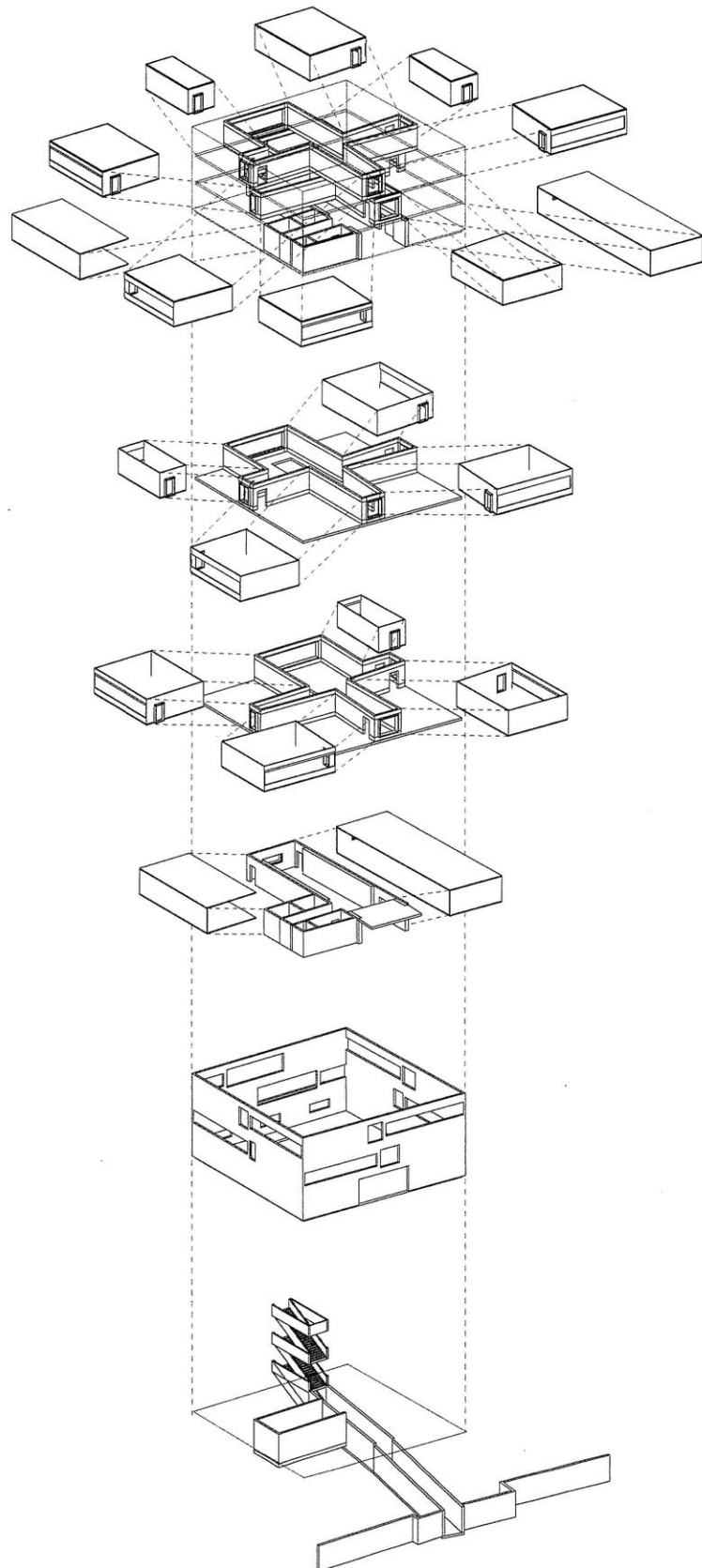


Figure 4.51

Incomplete Without Viewer

The situation really depends on the beholder, and is incomplete without him, it has been waiting for him. And once he is in the room the work refuses, obstinately, to let him alone – which is to say, it refuses to stop confronting him, distancing him, isolating him. The better new work takes relationship out of the work and makes them a function of space, light, and the viewer's field of vision. It is in some way more reflexive because one's awareness of oneself existing in the same space as the work is stronger than in previous work. One is more aware than before that he himself is establishing relationships as he apprehends the object from various positions and under varying conditions of light and spatial context. The awareness of scale is a function of the comparison made between that constant, one's body size, and the object. Space between the subject and the object is implied in such a comparison. The things that are literalist works of art must somehow confront the beholder – they must, one might almost say, be placed not just in his space but in his way.

4.2.1.2.3 What You See is What You Get



Figure 4.52

With the intention to legitimize objectivity, the capacity of perception to decenter form is greater than the capacity of ideal forms to ground perception. Unlike the reductivist provoking a style that is vaguely purist, essentialist and idealistic, instead of being a symbolic language recalling essentialist values, the compositional order of the object aspires to be without content. Its meaning is only given in perception, what you see is what you get. It works against recognition, and its objectivity functions less to uncover the essential than to assert the undecidable.

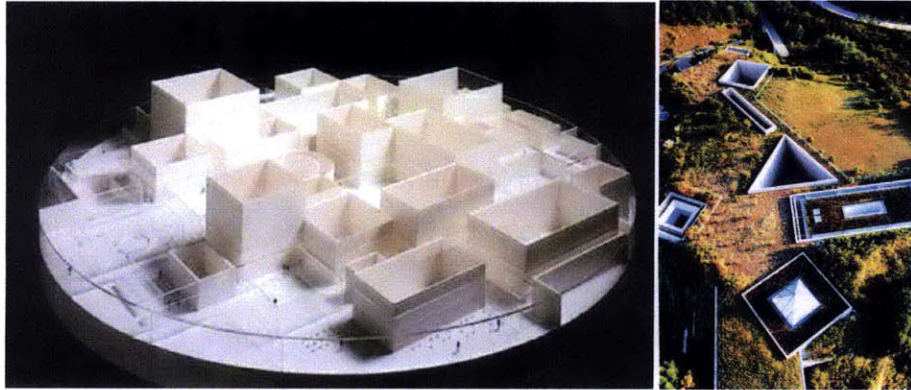


Figure 4.53

I concede that I am indeed living in the present. But that is all the more reason why I don't believe in trying to deny or conceal that fact by creating oppositional architecture ... I consider it anachronistic to take an impossible concept, present it as something of eternal importance, and completely base your architecture on it.

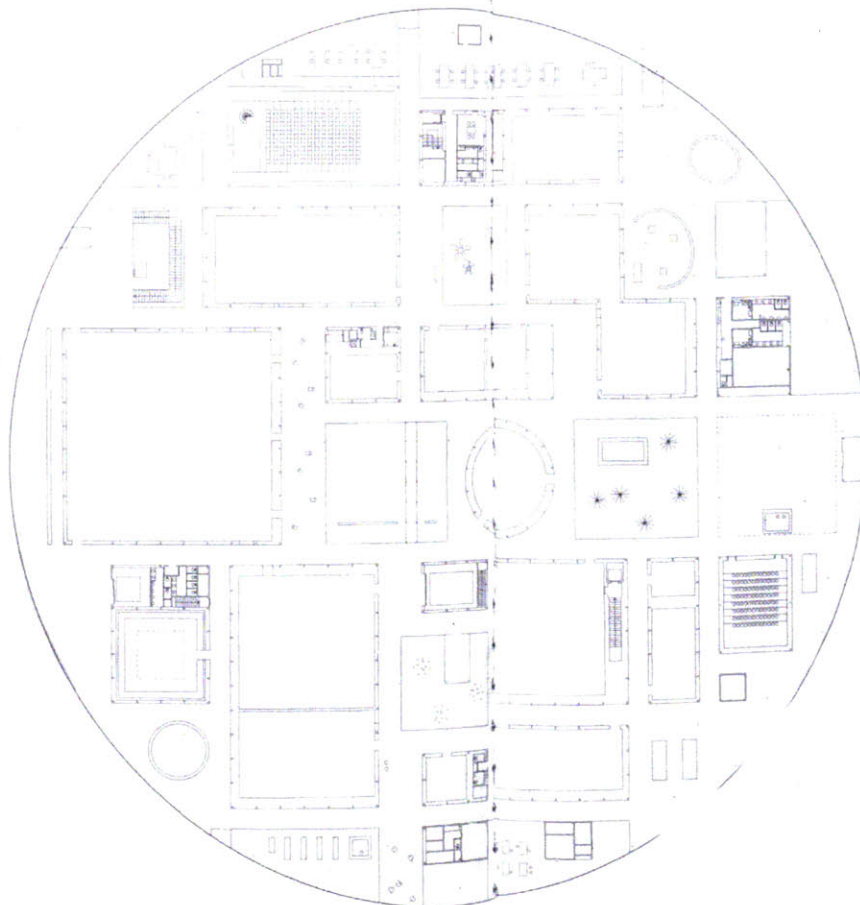


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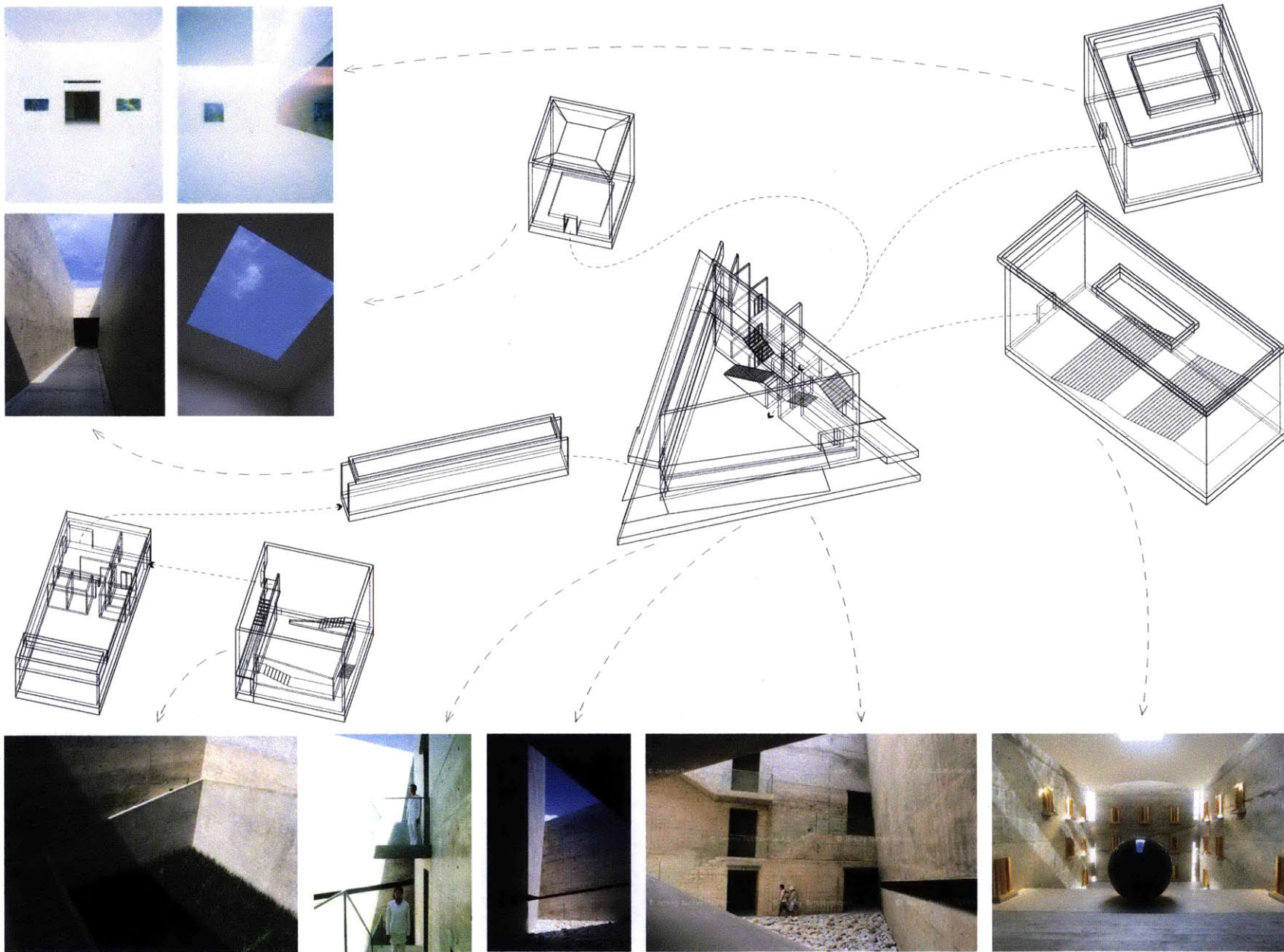


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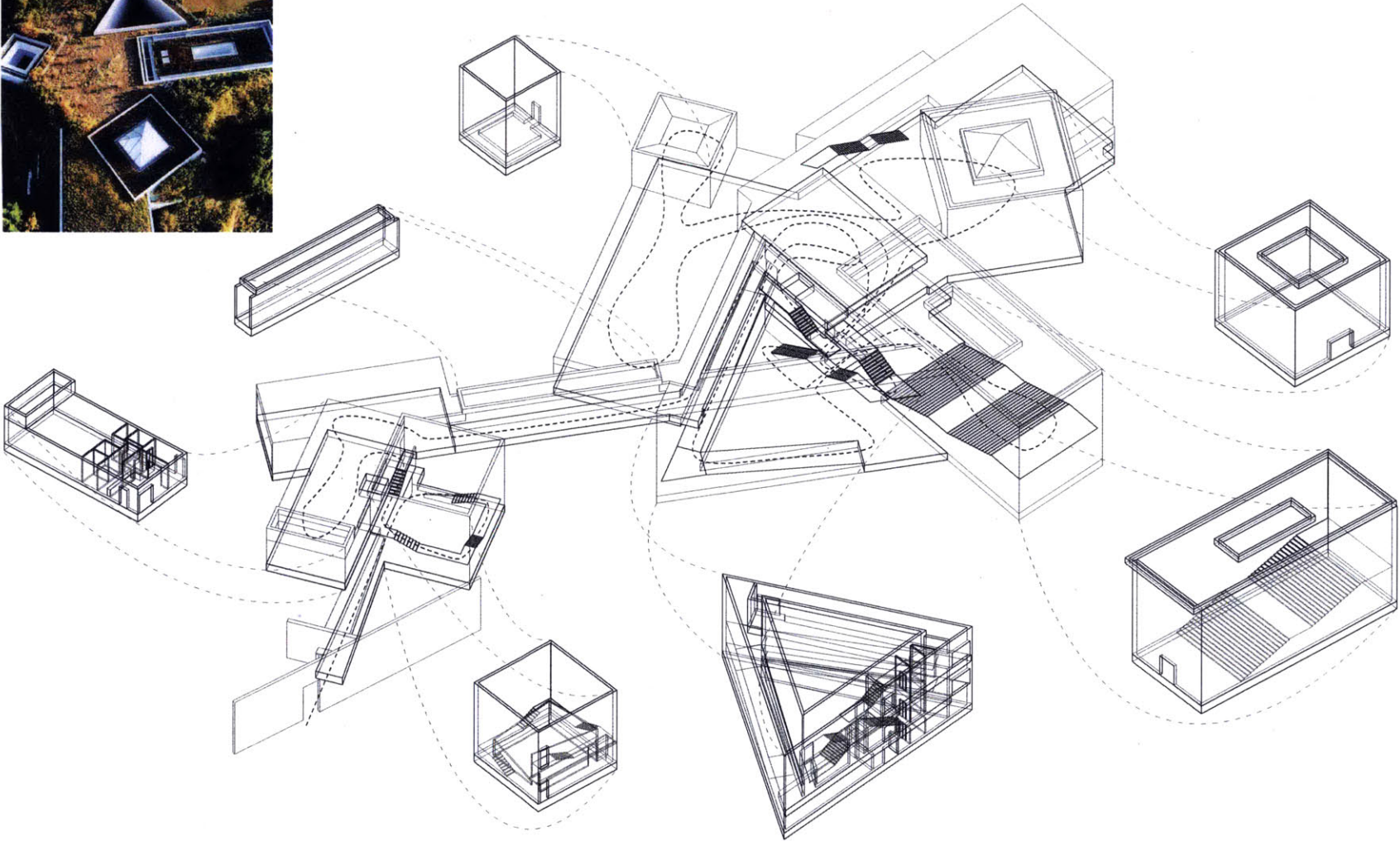


Figure 4.56

4.2.1.3 The Boring Real

4.2.1.3.1 To Make the Stone Stony

The attempt of returning to the real is to make one get rid of the unconscious automatism and recover the sensation of life. The subtraction of the semantic occupation is to make one feel things, to make the stone stony. But what if the real has been already forgotten, the stony aspect of stone by no means excites any attention?

4.2.1.3.2 To Make the Stone Unstony

The assumption that some artists or most modernism architects work from, that any valuable truth may essentially be dramatic, is clearly and unhappily mistaken what I would argue is that the truth that artists or architects are after may be dramatically fresh and striking only if it has been forgotten first: if the object, in other words, pulls something contradictory and concealed out of its hiding place, otherwise if facing the object that is returned to you can say "it's all true!" it have become familiar, as all other objects do, then we shall concentrate on the medium, the technical support we use, the purpose of which is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known.

4.2.2 Magic Bewilderment

4.2.2.1 Escaping the Theater Effect

4.2.2.1.1 Theater Effect

Objecthood was the theatrical precision with which art medium replicates the things of reality, obliterating the condition of the inventive and generative aspirations of art. The presence of the pure objecthood of things is a scenic depiction of attendance and a theatrical effect or quality - a kind of stage presence, on which the reproduction of realistic forms that occupies the same spaces as our bodily experience. This occurs through the

reproduction of the forms' "spectacular" simplicity, which is irremediable normalized and insufficiently abstract; it is not built up through the rigorous verification of artistic principles in the abstract and atopic space of art but rather is obliterated by realistically material and contextual situations.

4.2.2.1.2 The Conversion of Theatricality

In theater, the actor does all he can to bring his spectator into the closest proximity to the events and the character he has to portray. To this end he persuades him to identify himself with him (the actor) and uses every energy to convert himself as completely as possible into a different type, that of the character in question. If this complete conversion succeeds, then his art has been more or less expended.

Therefore in theater what matters is that his actions should be unconscious; otherwise they would be degraded. It is becoming increasingly difficult for actors to bring off the mystery of complete conversion that does not let the audience forget it is viewing a play.

4.2.2.1.3 The Rejection of Conversion in Magic

If you go to the theater and see Peter Pan flying above the stage, you ignore the wires: that is an unconscious ignorance of the real object and the willing belief of its conversion. But if you go to the magic show and see David Copperfield flying above the stage, you do not ignore the wires. You do not care about what is David flying for but look for the wires. When you do not see any wires, magic happens.

If you look for the wires and see them, that is bad magic. If you do not look for the wires because the possibility has not occurred to you, then you do not need magic since you must want to temporarily leave your real world and enter the endless wonders. If the possibility of wires does occur to you but you decide not to look for them, then that is indeed a willing suspension of disbelief. That is theatricality.

The conversion is not allowed to the magician, for he has to completely reject all that is not real. He limits himself from the start to show that there is no character displayed and he is

standing firmly on the same position with the audience. He only needs a minimum of illusion. What he has to show is worth seeing even for a man in his right mind.

It requires a genuinely held belief that what you are seeing prior to the magical effect is really happening (that the object really is there), or else the effect (that it is no longer there) cannot work. The strength of the effect is directly proportional to the belief that the object truly was where it was supposed to be. This belief is not willingly suspended disbelief; it is belief based on observable evidence. The more convincing this evidence (i.e. the more convinced you are that the object really is there), the stronger the magical effect.

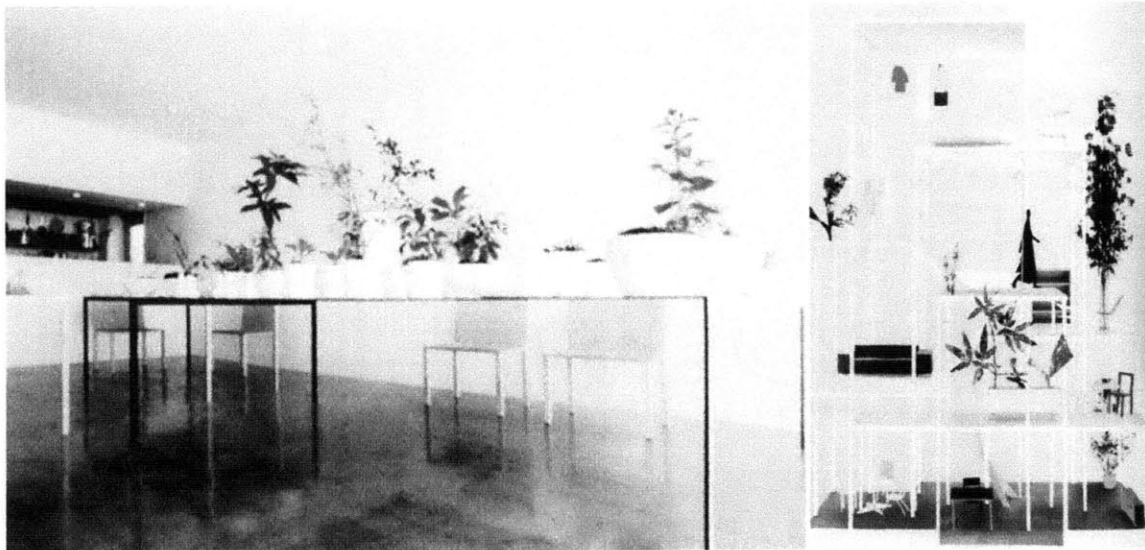


Figure 4.57

Magic is neither theater nor fiction, in that whatever theatrical or fictional elements might be involved, the essence of magic is to show the objectivity of the real with everything he can to remind you of that by showing that something impossible appears to happen in real time and space.

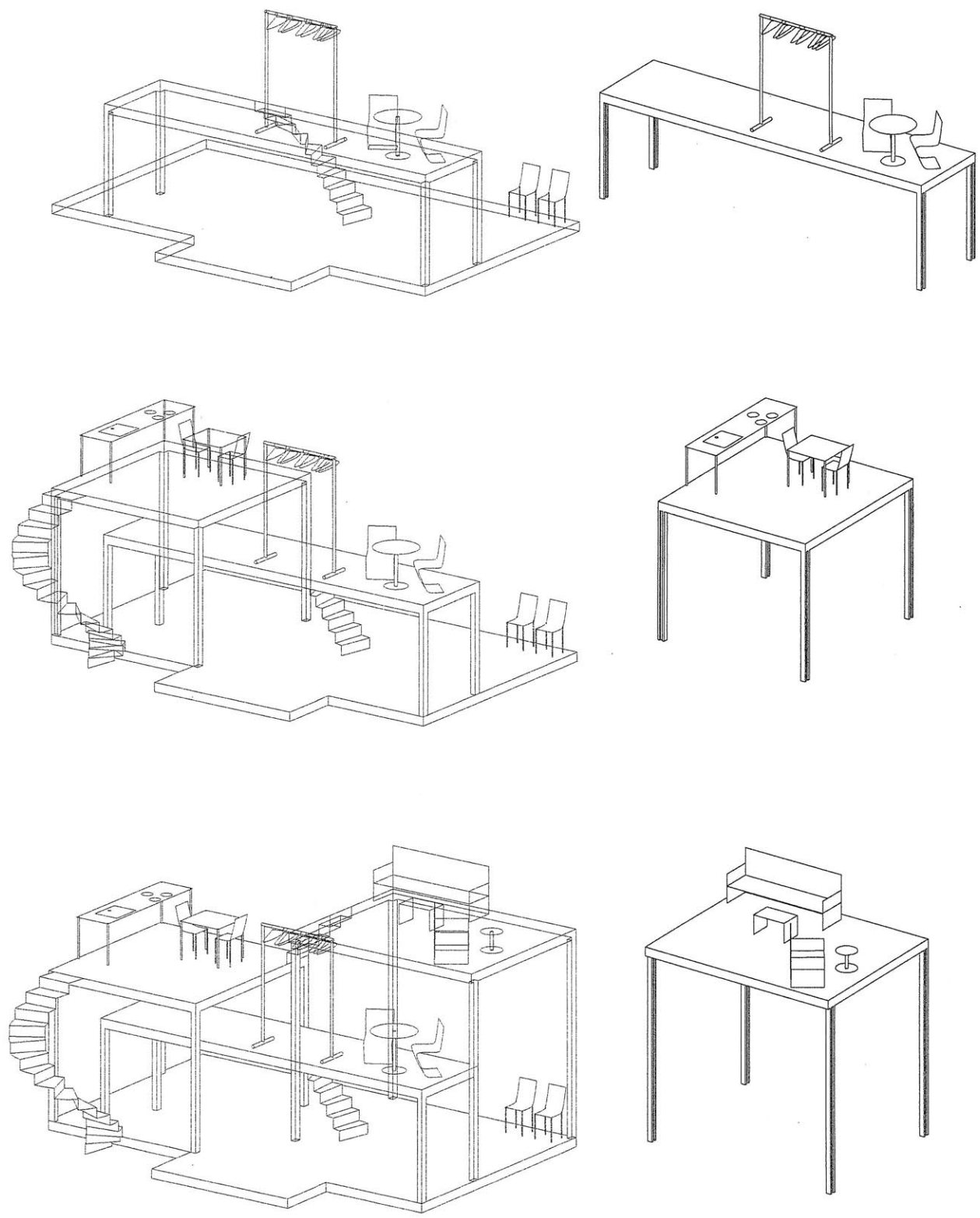


Figure 4.58

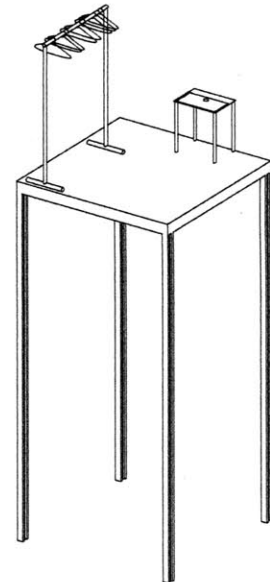
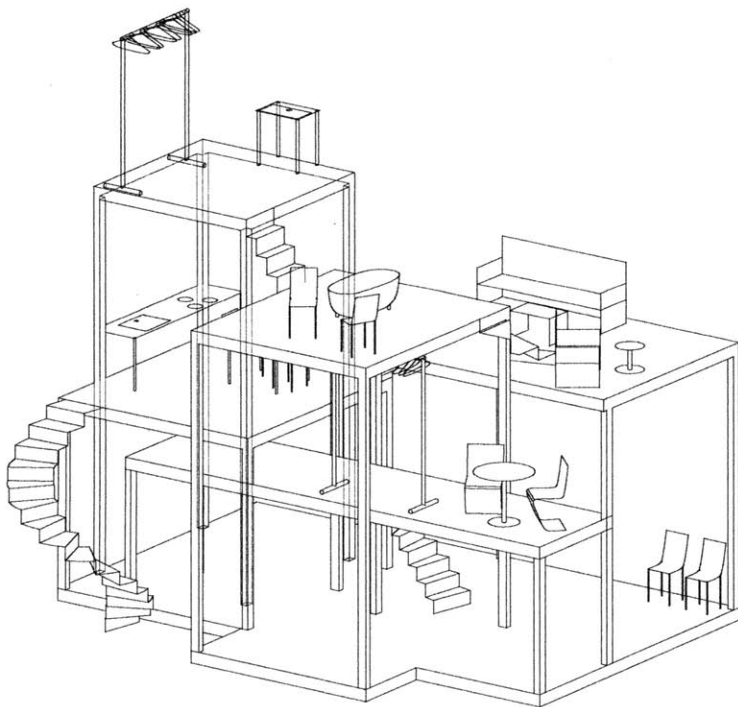
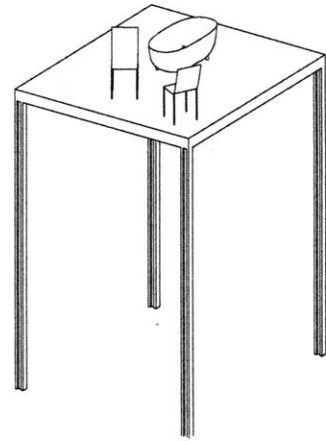
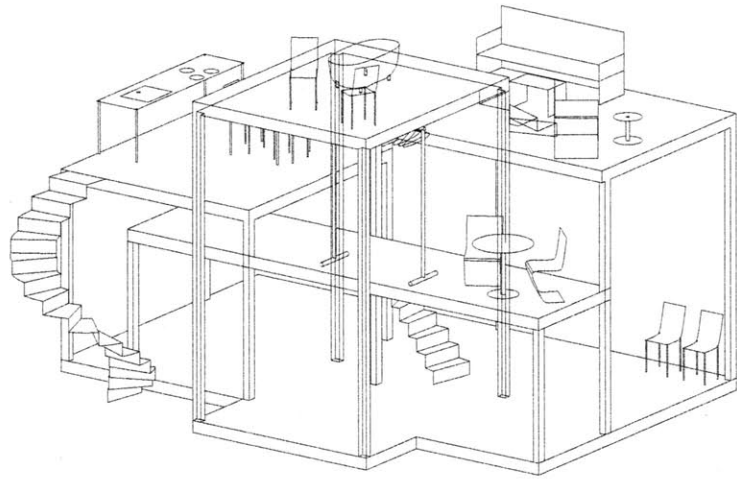


Figure 4.59

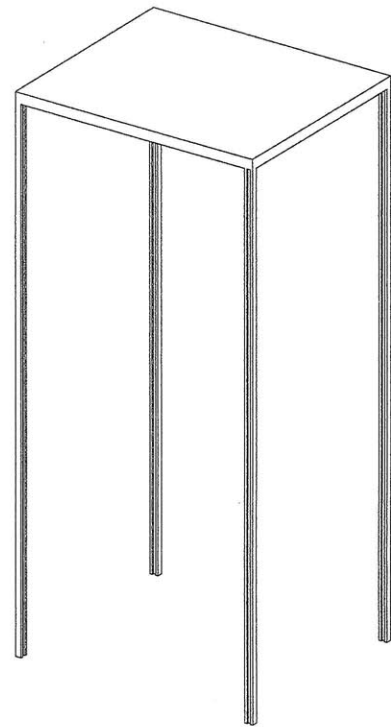
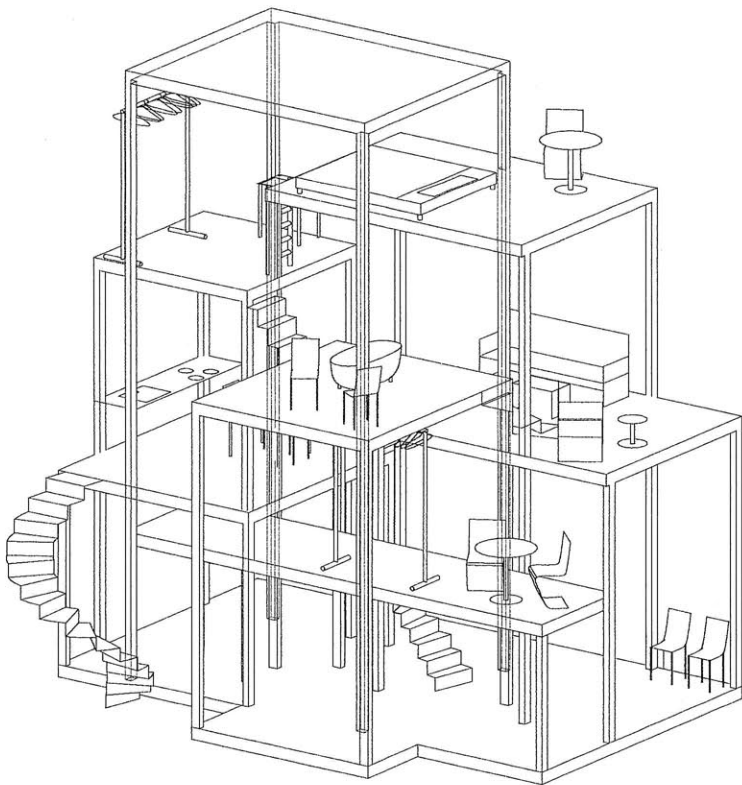
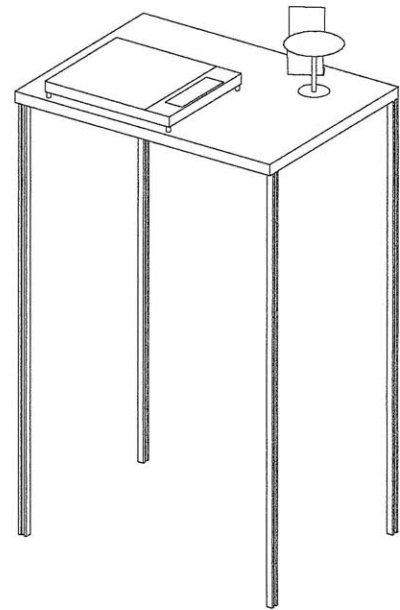
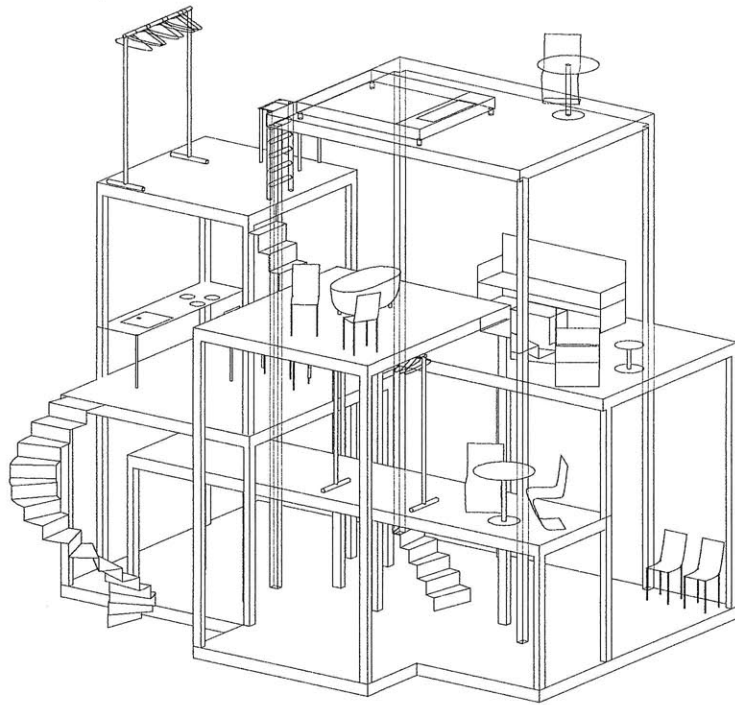


Figure 4.60

4.2.2.2 The Role of Bewilderment

4.2.2.2.1 The Provocation of Disbelief

To truly experience an impossible event, you must observe an event that you truly believe to be impossible. The everything involved in the situation has to diminish the experience of watching a play. It requires disbelief based on a conviction in order for the effect to produce the experience. If you suspend disbelief, the magic disappears.

This is the primary aim of magic as a performing art: the creation of juxtaposition between the conviction that something cannot happen and the observation that it just happened. A common demand made of art is that it should square up to complacency, narrow-mindedness and ignorance; create friction against workaday rationalism; elevate the absurd, the useless, the defunct the irreverent or the perverse, and generally transgress norms.

By adopting the perception-shifting tactics of the theatrical magician to explore questions of creative agency, the power of suggestion, and the fragility of belief, artists too subscribe to a meta-fiction of power that is ultimately a narrative of bewilderment, instrumentalised to productive, disruptive or controlled ends.

4.2.2.2.2 Subversion of Cause and Effect

The demand for truth, whether to materials or an idea, cannot be sustained, because art is essentially grounded in untruth, the fabrication of alternative versions of reality, often deploying the devices of the stage performer to subvert habitual assumptions of cause and effect. Bewilderment can be a tickling stick that teases out alternative and contingent modes of thinking in order to deal with lapses in logic. The condition of bewilderment arises when the solidity of the narrative we call logic starts to melt away.

4.2.2.2.3 Renormalization

This progressive or transcendent view of art might be compared with the perception of magic as the uncanny manipulation of matter usually in thrall to the laws of physics. The familiar act of flogging is made unfamiliar both by the description and by the proposal to change its form without changing its nature. But the transformation is not to distort the familiar or to create something totally alien to life but to simply quote the recognizable normal and display its uncanny. If empathy makes something ordinary of a special event, alienation makes something special of an ordinary one.

The key here may be to add an adverb: moderately strange, slightly strange. The moderately strange in the middle of the ordinary is the lens for focusing the ordinary. Without it, the ordinary has nothing against which to define itself. The excessively alteration gets us into over-colorization, characters who are “characters,” and actions with a Hollywood-like event inflation. What is needed, in magic, is what physicists call “renormalization” – to relocate ontological peculiarity into real life.

4.2.2.3 The Mechanism of the Magic

4.2.2.3.1 The Uncertain Syntax

What is important for magic is to discover the potential point of juncture or the seam that contains the primary object or phenomenon and allows for contact with another logical irrelevant ones. This place of joining or joint marks the defining the blurry border that completes an object or phenomenon while equally marking the space where the grafting of another can occur. To this degree the place of joining constitutes a syntax that holds forms, words and phrases together.

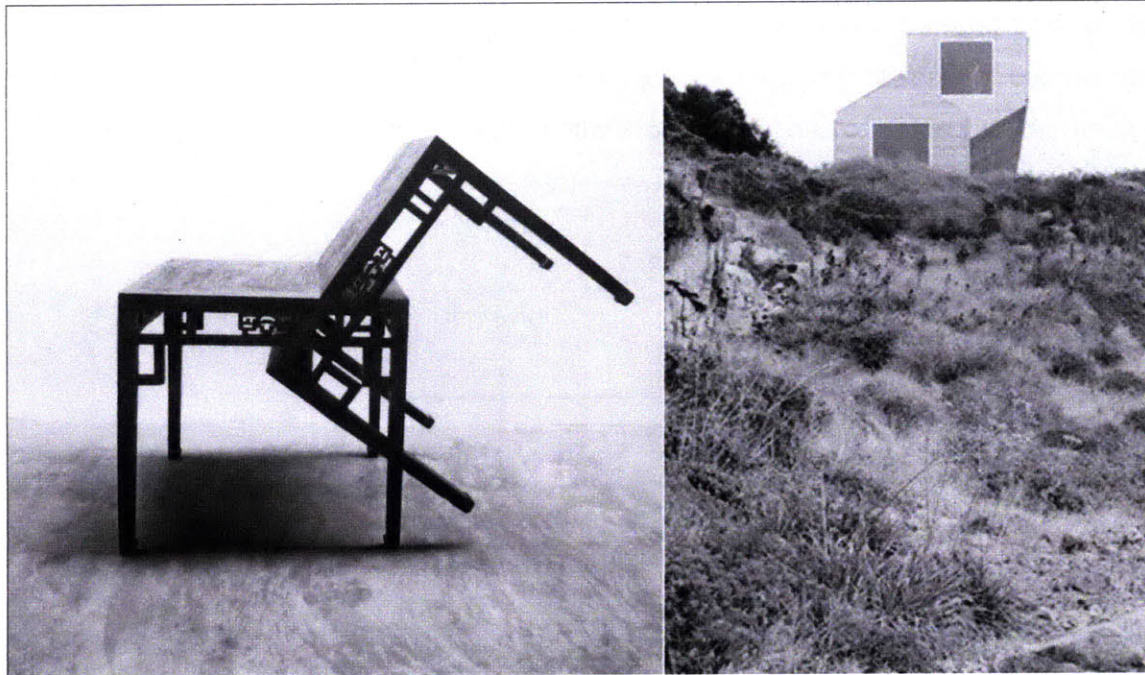


Figure 4.61

He simply inverts the modernist concept of ‘form follows function’ while maintaining the integrity of the exquisite carpentry and design. Moreover, overturning their practical function transforms these furniture pieces into inoperative but strangely elegant mutations that reintroduce the conceit of ornament and ritual back into the domain of art. While the piece may be experienced in different ways depending on one’s point of view, it remains an individual whole.



Figure 4.62

“In 1997, I started making furniture. By then I already had a profound knowledge of Chinese artifacts, jade, silk, bronze, wood. I was deeply impressed with the objects that had been made in the past five thousand years, and how these reflected the thinking of the

people who ordered them, who designed them and who created them: what it was that they wanted to express through these objects, as well as the technical difficulties they had to overcome. I wanted to see how to work with it, to overcome it.”

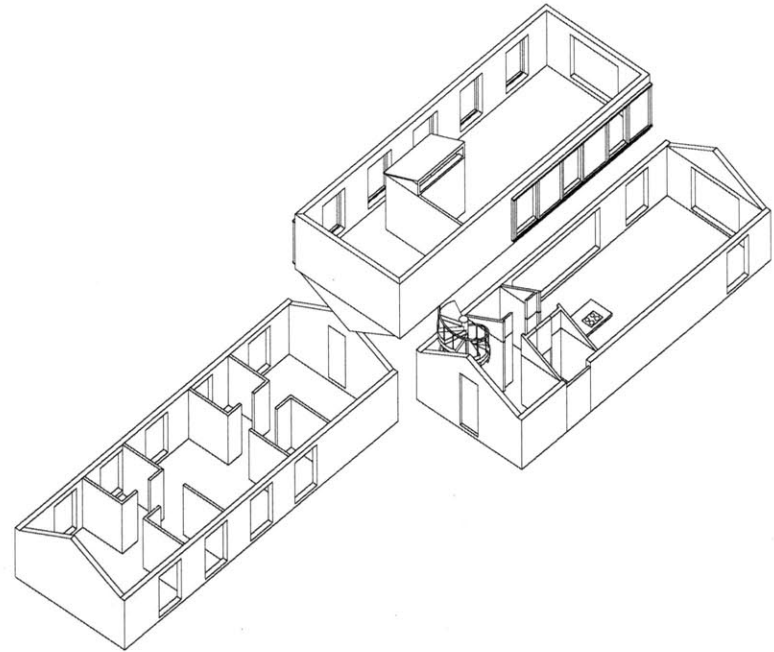
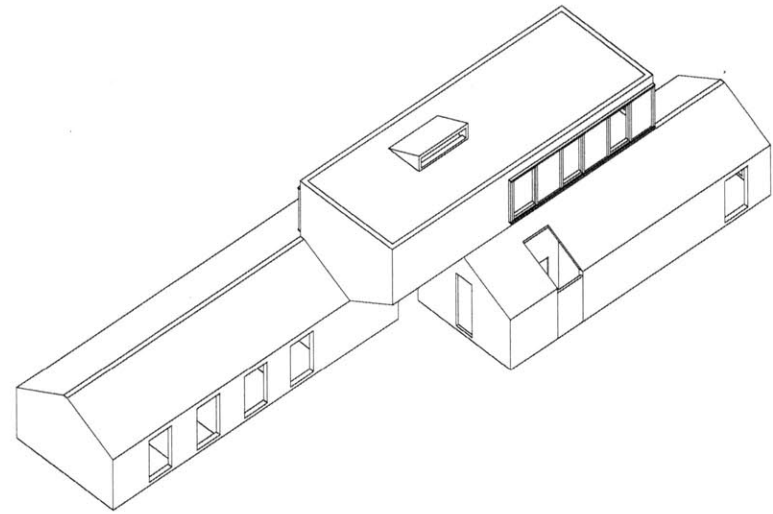
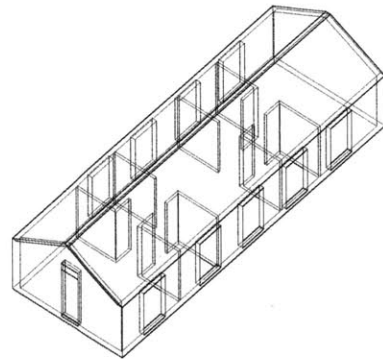
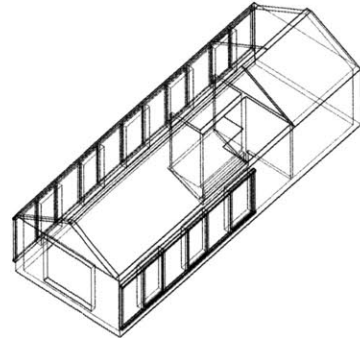
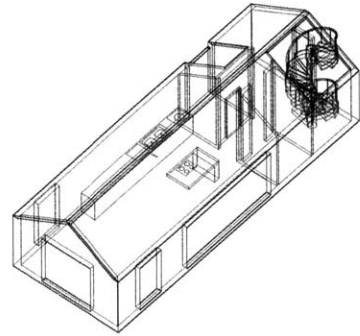
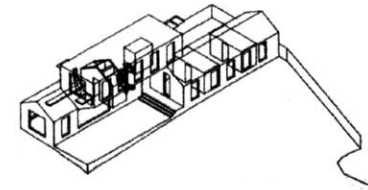
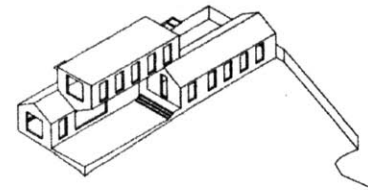
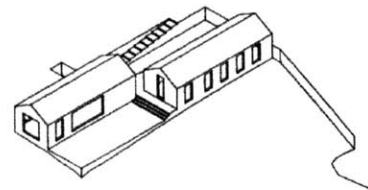
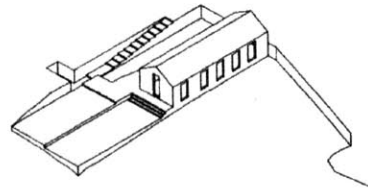
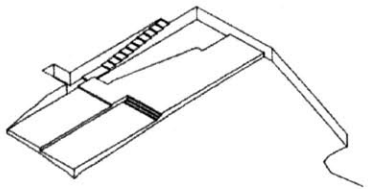


Figure 4.63

4.2.2.3.2 Power of a Different Order

The magician have to implement these processes to scrutinize mechanisms of power of a different order, making the effect more perilous by relocating it to real-life scenarios or pitching it at a near-ontological intensity.

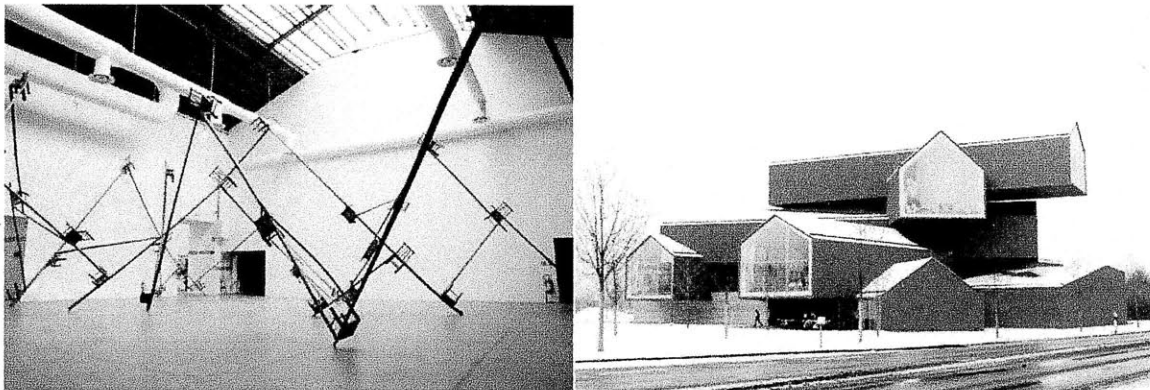


Figure 4.64

Ai has always been practical about the choice of materials he brings to the work. Practicality does not refer to the works themselves – the furniture series, for instance, is not intended to function outside of the realm of artistic expression - but to the means by which the material can be married with available skills in order to produce a work.

This was a radical turn for the architects. If they had previously treated material as the depository of architectural expression, they now seemed keen to recuperate the notion of type, the premise being that image is all that remains in the end, not structure. Hence an architecture where what prevails is an iconography stripped of attributes, empty. It may be pertinent to recall how Rem Koolhaas used the concept of iconography in the Lille convention center. For the Dutch architect, it was still possible to come up with synthetic architectures with a capacity for the figurative, and thus to speak again of iconography.

That this was the architects' intention from the start is evident when we compare the initial project with the built work . There are differences [chimneys, roofs, windows, etc .). but the similarities are more important. They are manifested where they count most, in the intentions. To the point that the projects can be taken as identical. But what were the

architects trying to tell us? Was this a mere academic gesture? Might they have been trying to be ironic about the way people look at architecture? Or did this small project contain a hidden desire to bury a whole manner of making architecture, the one Rossi had recuperated? Herzog & de Meuron's future architecture might answer these questions.

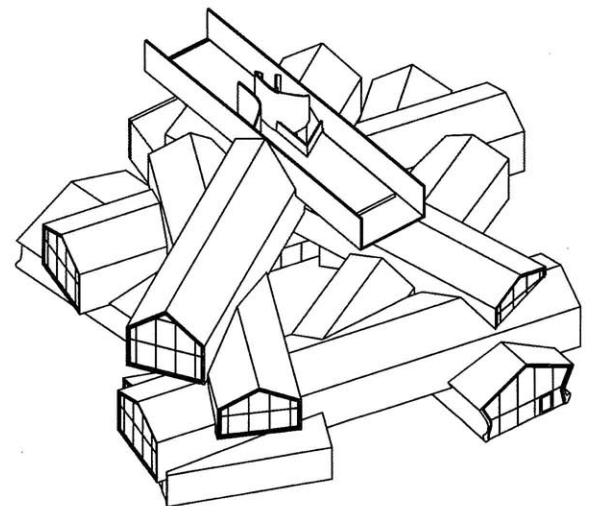
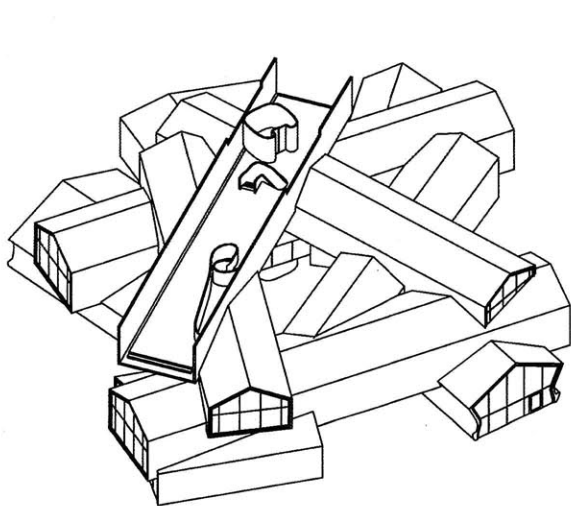
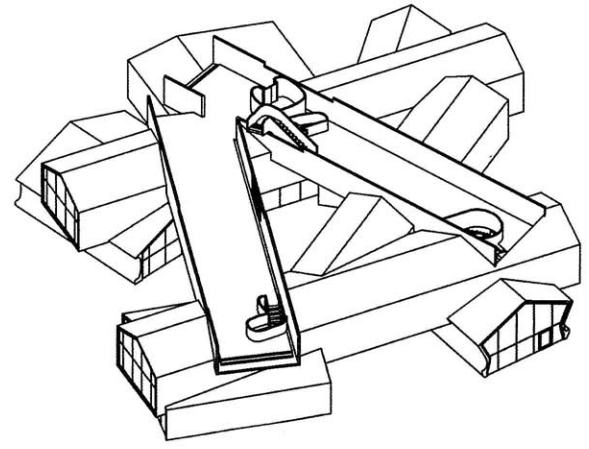
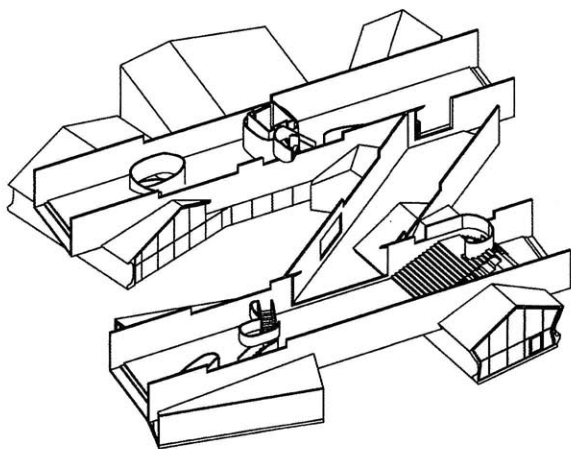
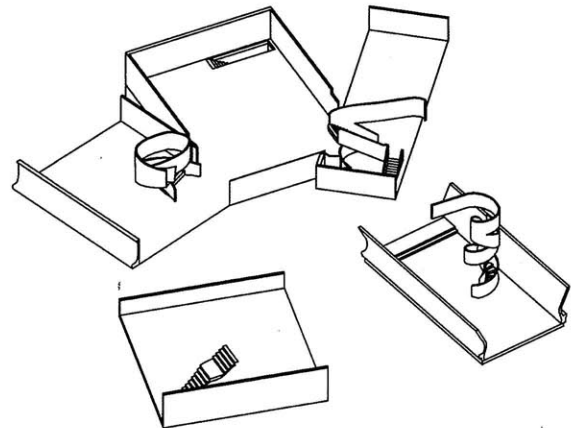
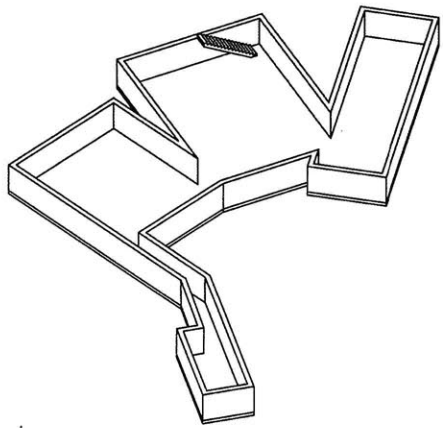


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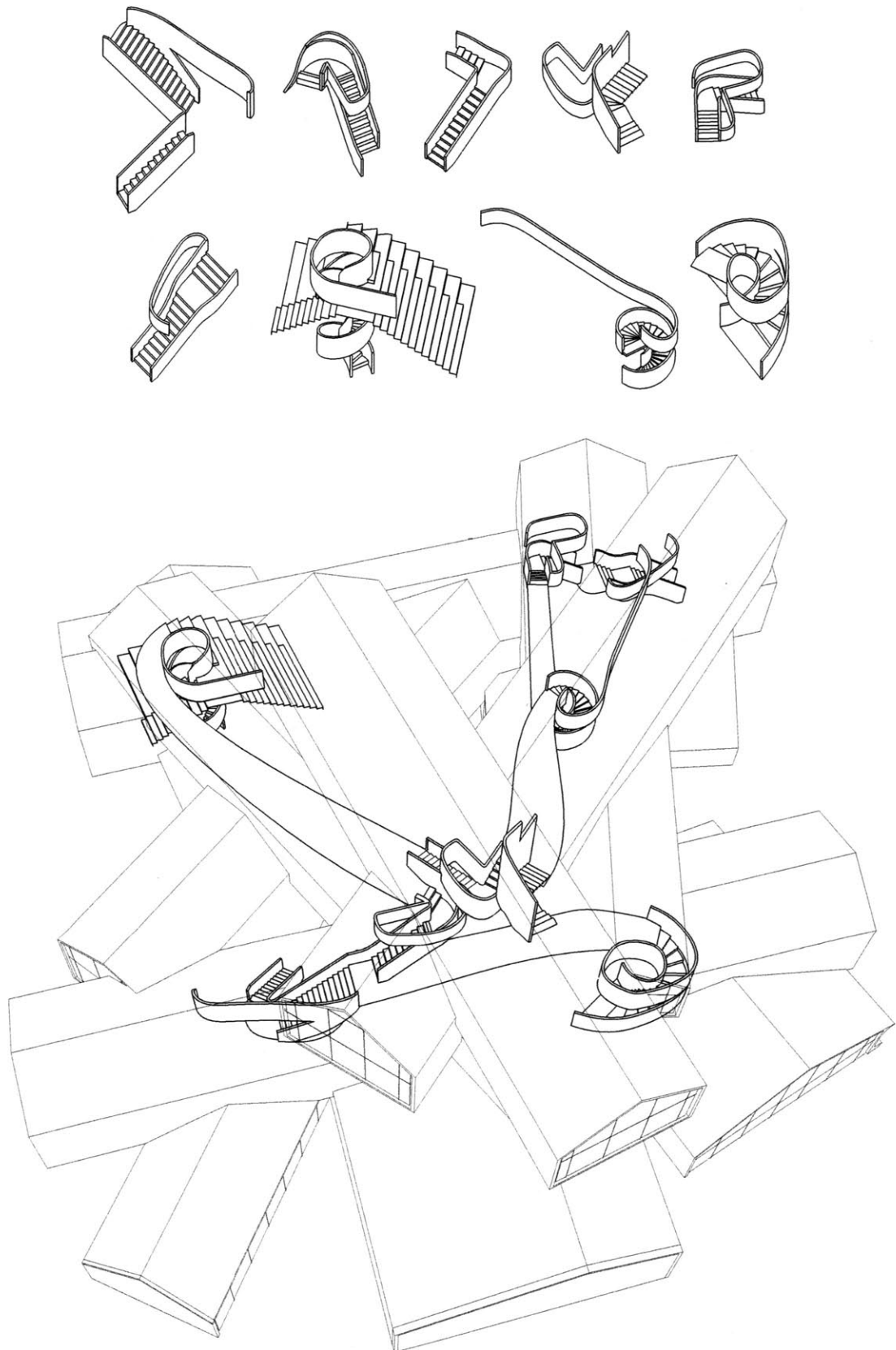


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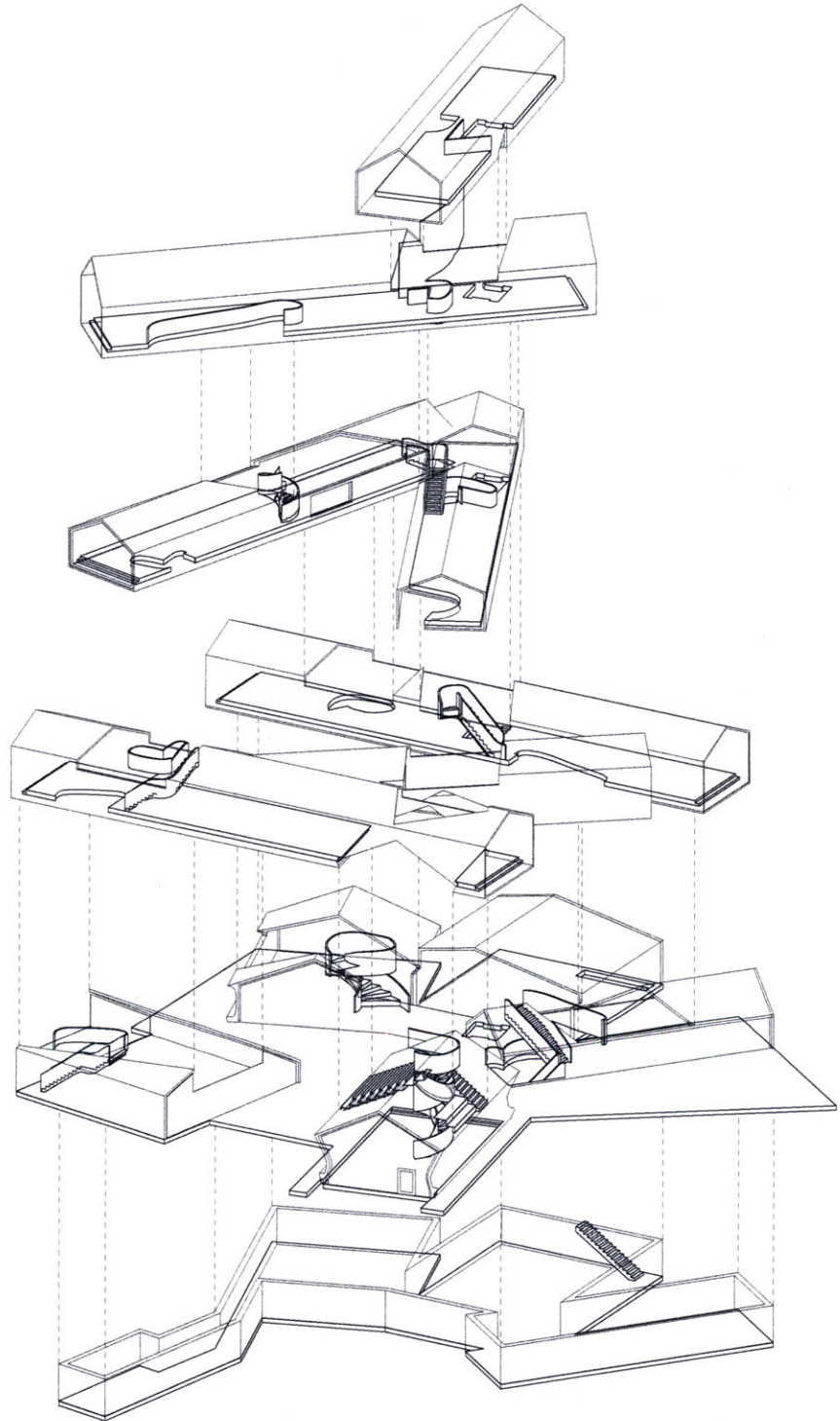


Figure 4.67

4.2.2.3.3 Recognition is Re-cognitions

The conjuring effects, relies on the apparently impossible events that is generated from the esoteric methods of the magician, really happens. Vanishing acts, inexplicable transformations and displays of extraordinary psychic powers are staples of the stage magician, and the artist may play with these same forms of manipulation and mystification, not for entertainment but to reveal something about the fundamental relationship between matter and the mind.

Recognition is re-cognitions: not finding ourselves where we expected to be but where we did not expect to be found, and at a moment when our defenses are down, we are taken down a path in which we meet ourselves coming in the other direction. Magic is finally more about the way in which we recognize ourselves in an action and simultaneously see someone we don't recognize. Something has been widowed, images have been freed from their meanings, something escapes us.

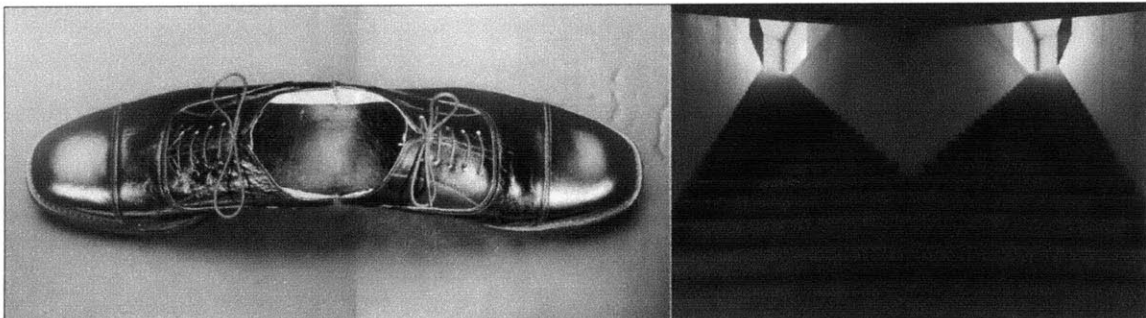


Figure 4.68

Equally, what Ai demonstrated then and continues to do so now, is a form of contingency based upon serendipity surrounding the occasion of the work. We may also say that the stock-in-trade ideas of the Dada movement – the chance encounter, the found object or *objet trouvee*, and the notion of metamorphosis or transforming potential of objects – become fundamental to Ai's orientation.

The skepticism, reticence and skillful *debrouillage* of Duchamp's work are pervasive in Ai's work, but iconoclasm and critique of history are uniquely his. Yet apropos of this

comment, I would suggest that rather than iconoclasm, Ai's approach may be better described as an exploration into the negative potentiality of an object. That is, the potential to create something out of a destructive act, though not necessarily with a view to creating meaning.

Ai is producer, the assembler, whose intervention follows the logic of the 'chance encounter' and deadpan titles. There is no particular artistic skill on display, emphasizing rather the material faktura and construction of these industrially produced objects. We may also say that the stock-in-trade ideas of the Dada movement – the chance encounter, the found object or objet trouvee, and the notion of metamorphosis or transforming potential of objects – become fundamental to Ai's orientation.

A form of aesthetic patricide and act of iconoclasm displaces existing conventions, erasing the original work of art and thereby dismantling its authority. Common to all is the challenge such actions present to the concept of value, authorship and the work of art. It was precisely as Duchamp had proposed, that is a structure by which to distinguish its value from the functionality of the commonplace and commodification of everyday life. Ai becomes the master of ceremonies, the producer who makes possible a change in perception and the ways in which value is assigned.

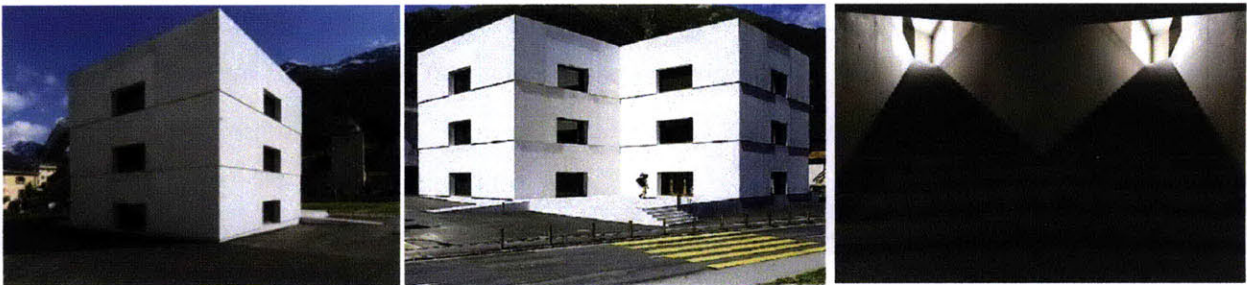
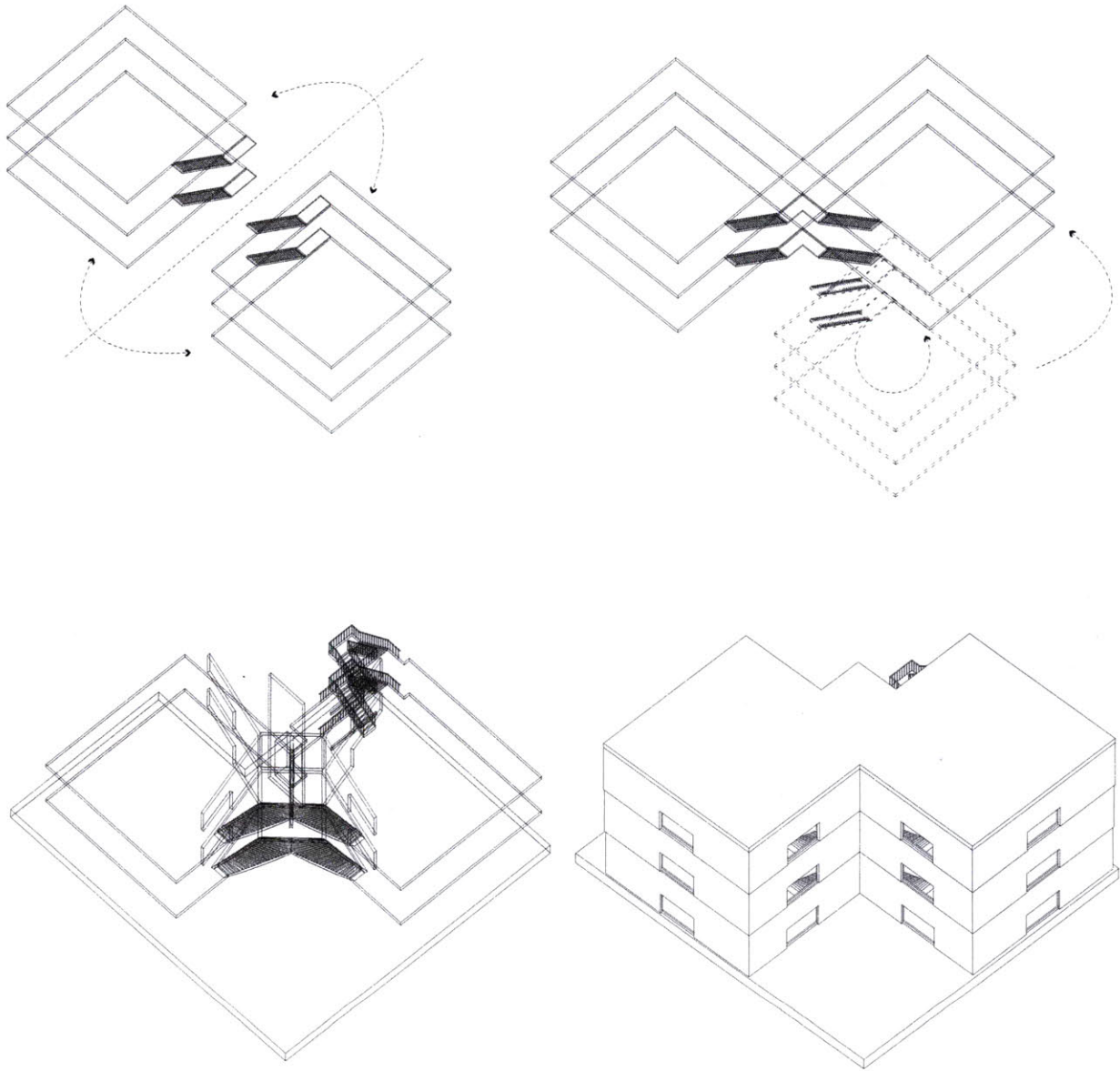


Figure 4.69

4.2.2.3.4 The Productive Lying

Authoritative control, the double bluff, the red herring, the contrived coincidence and the outright lie are familiar fictional devices that have suffused all aspects of culture and history, from everyday experience to global politics, reflective thought to decisive action. Just as it may be simplistic to ascribe 'truth' a higher moral position, it is also impossible to overlook the productive potential of lying. Lying involves obscuring what really happened with the representation of something that did not happen; it is a process of doubling, a bifurcation of possibilities. Perhaps it is this splitting of the world into two versions that makes lying so much more interesting, the fantastical and the mundane.

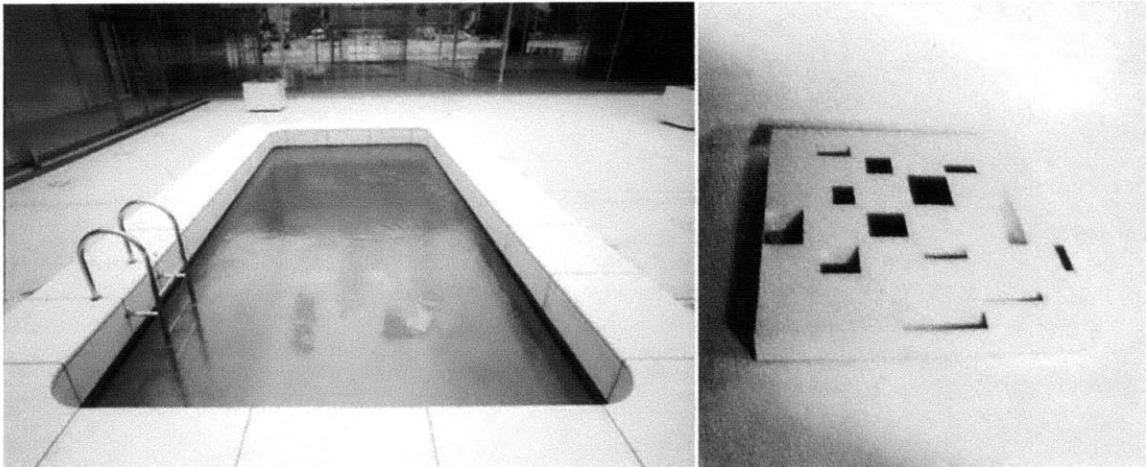


Figure 4.70

It may be more productive in telling story to choose a narrator or a narrative point of view of someone who does not know what his own story means.

We wake up next to someone we have lived with for years but suddenly do not know. It is like that moment when, often early in the morning, perhaps in a strange house, you pass before a mirror you had not known would be there. You see a glimpse of someone reflected in that mirror, and a moment passes before you recognize that that person is yourself. Literature exists in moments like that.

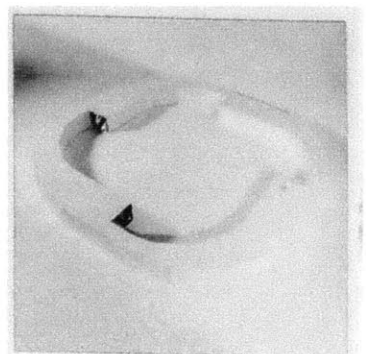
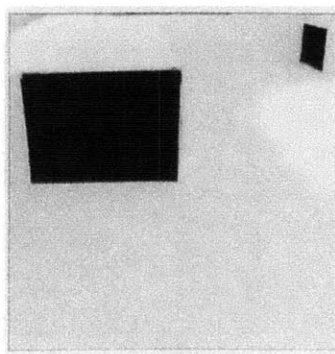
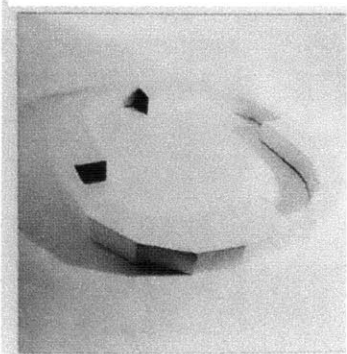
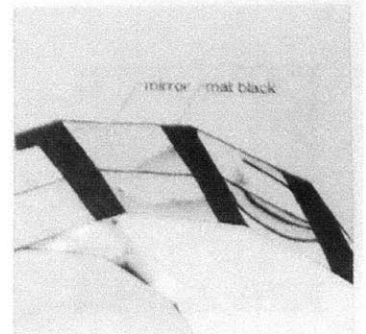
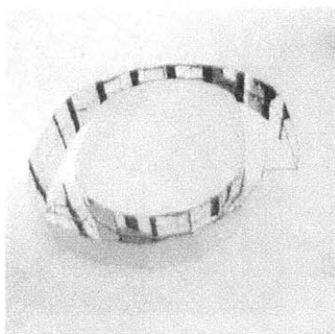
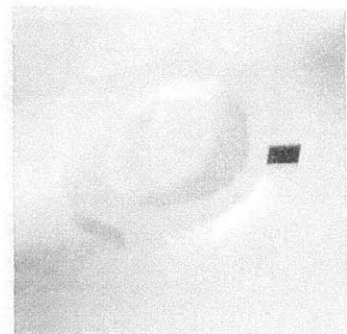
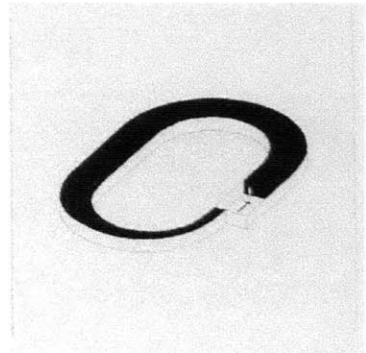
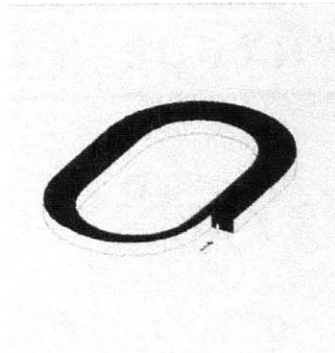
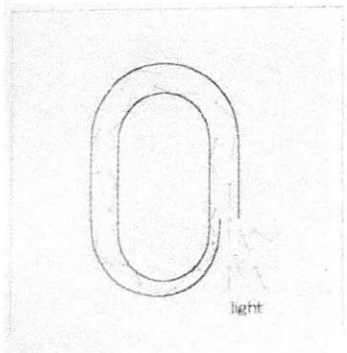
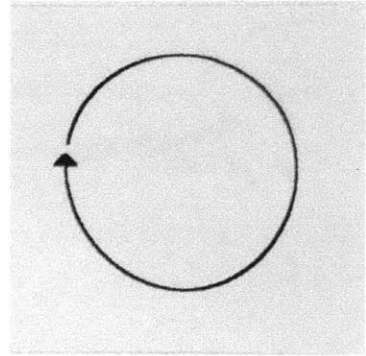
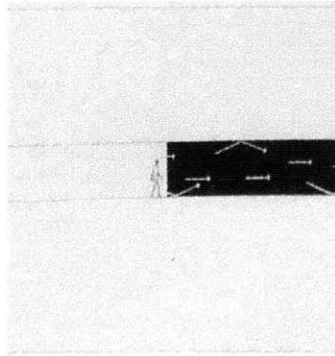
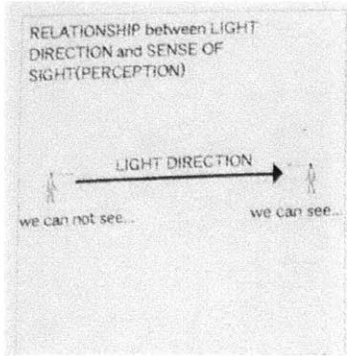


Figure 4.71

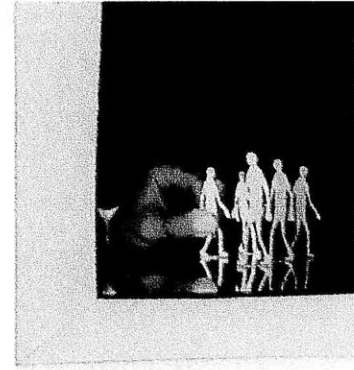
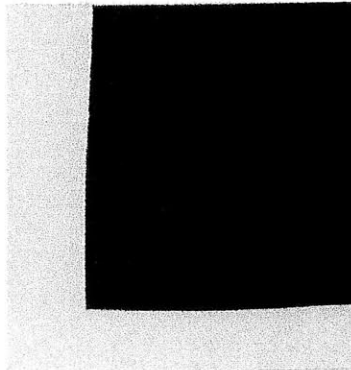
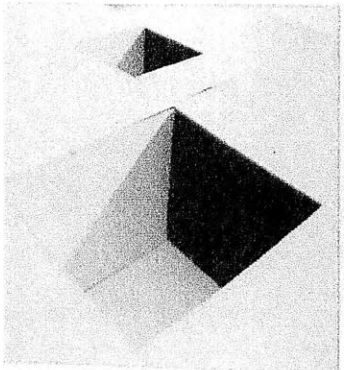
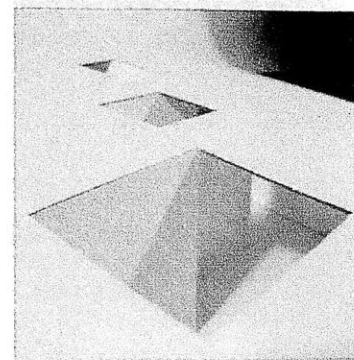
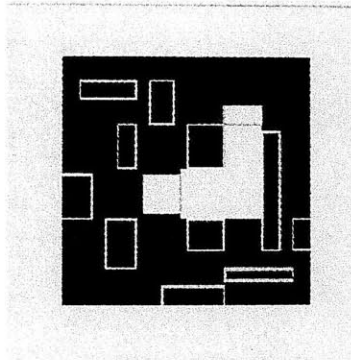
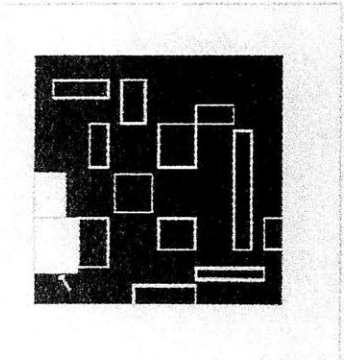
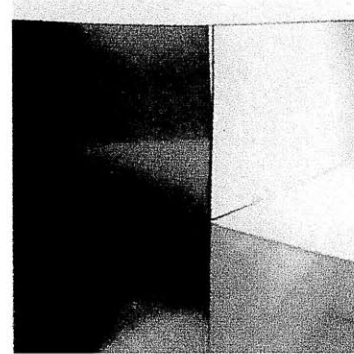
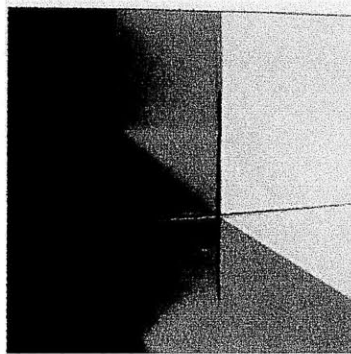
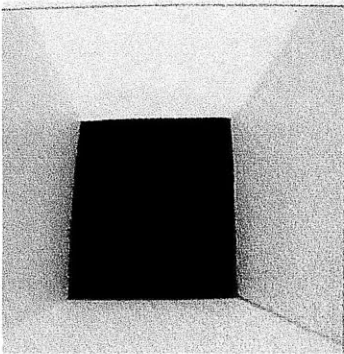
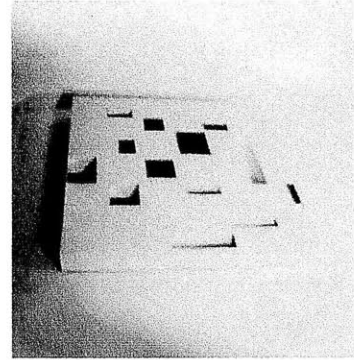
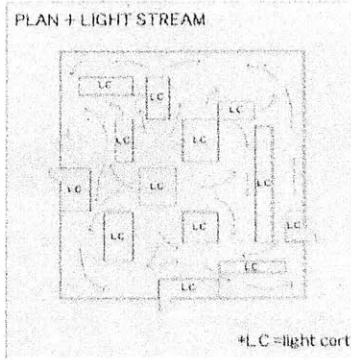
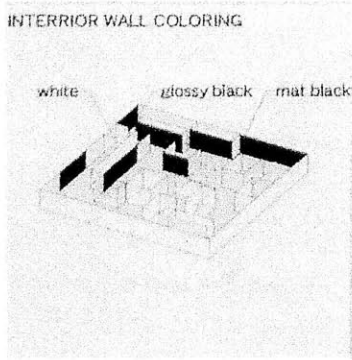


Figure 4.72

4.3 Fictional Involution

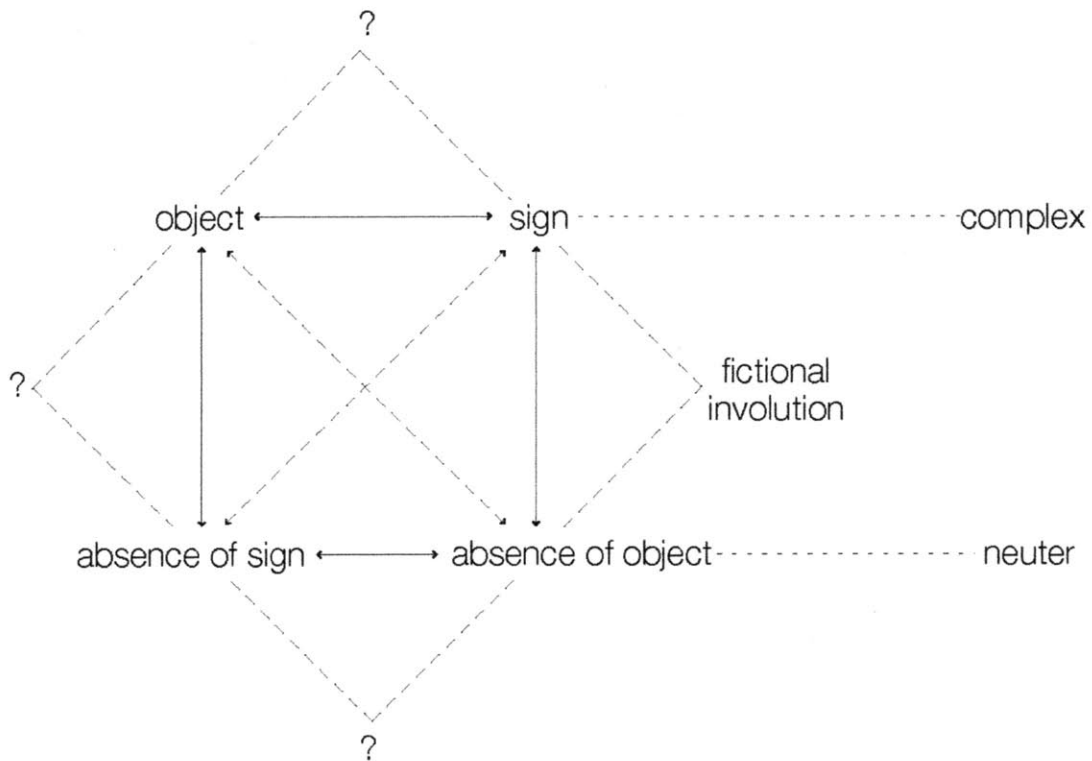


Figure 4.73

4.3.1 Sign + Absence of Object

4.3.1.1 Read and Reality

4.3.1.1.1 Reading the Reality: Drama

As David Mamet said in his book, *Three Uses of the Knife*, the “We dramatize the weather, the traffic, and other impersonal phenomena by employing exaggeration, ironic juxtaposition, projection, all the tools the dramatist uses to create and the psychoanalyst uses to interpret, emotionally significant phenomena ... We dramatize an incident by taking events and reordering them, elongating them, compressing them, so that we understand their personal meaning to us – to us as the protagonist of the individual drama

we understand our life to be.” Mamet suggestively points out how we dramatize our lives in our banal exchanges with each other about impersonal things like the weather. In doing so we endow our lives with significance. “For we rationalize, objectify, and personalize the process of the game exactly as we do that of a play, a drama. It is enjoyable, like music, like politics, and like theater, because it exercises, it flatters, and it informs our capacity for rational synthesis – our ability to learn a lesson, which is our survival mechanism.” The reality is not the world itself but the way we make drama out of the ordinary matter of our lives.

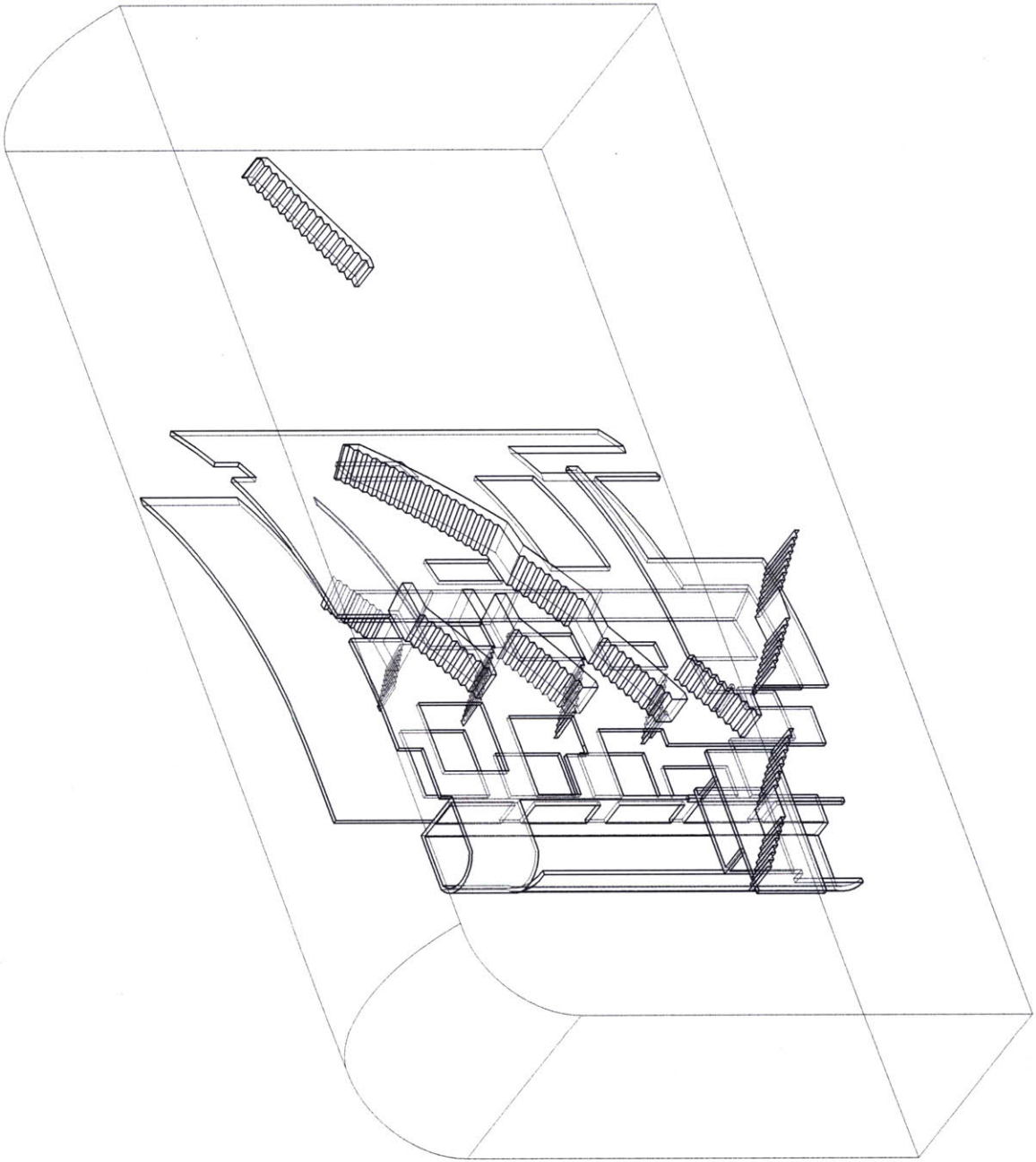
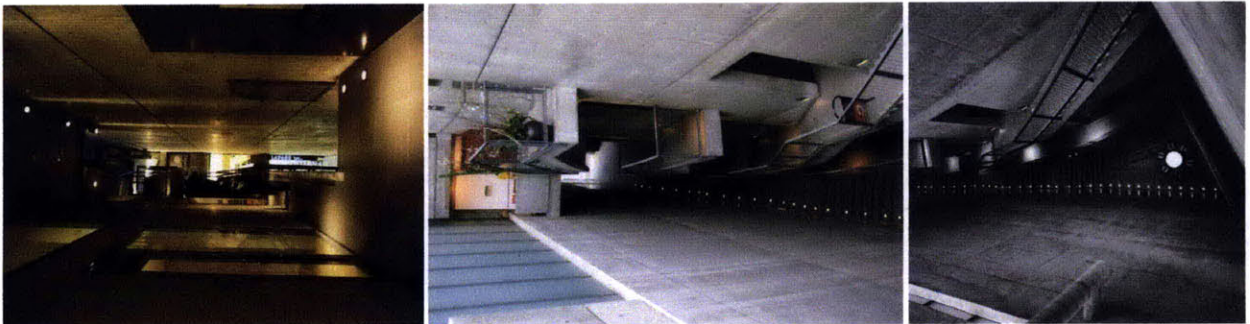


Figure 4.74



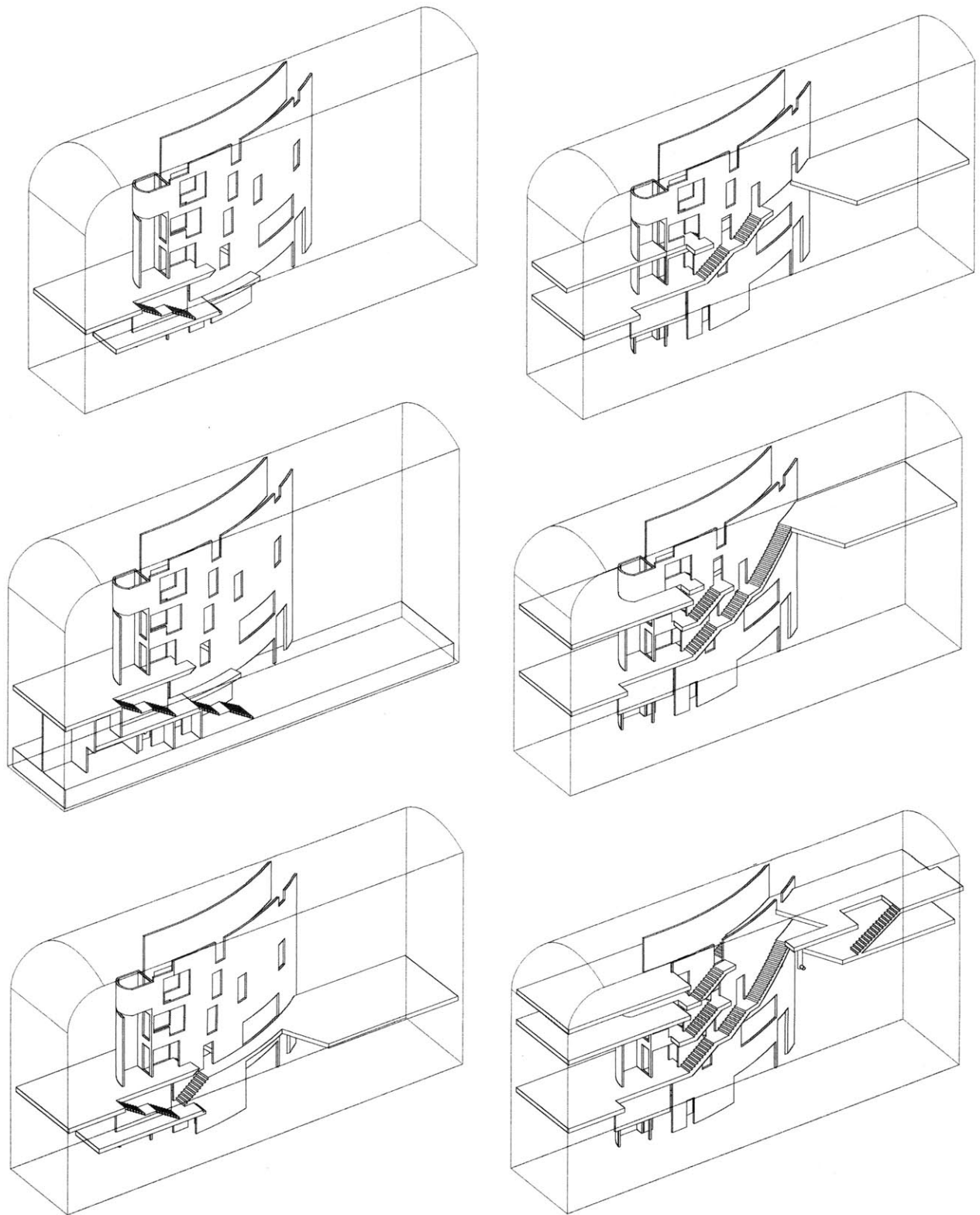


Figure 4.75

4.3.1.1.2 Reading is Reality: Death of the Author

Roland Barthes criticizes the method of reading that relies on aspects of the original source's identity — the author's political views, historical context, religion, ethnicity, psychology, or other biographical or personal attributes — to distill meaning from the author's work. In this type of reading, the experiences and biases of the author serve as a definitive "explanation" of the text. For Barthes, this method of reading may be apparently tidy and convenient but is actually sloppy and flawed.

In retrospect, Barthes argued that criticism should not only reproduce the text's message and assess its literary qualities, as the *ancienne antiquaire* argued. Readers must separate a literary work from its creator in order to liberate it from interpretive tyranny. The essential meaning of a work depends on the impressions of the reader, rather than the "passions" or "tastes" of the writer; "a text's unity lies not in its origins," or its creator, "but in its destination," or its audience. No longer the focus of creative influence, the author is merely a "scriptor". The scriptor exists to produce but not to explain the work and "is born simultaneously with the text, is in no way equipped with a being preceding or exceeding the writing, [and] is not the subject with the book as predicate." Criticism should also give additional meaning to the work, and the critic's text was both a commentary and itself a piece of literature having equal status to the object of study. In other words, meaning was a product of the reader not the object, a notion that implied the death of the author.

4.3.1.1.3 Reading Censors Reality: Automatism

The automatism records "what the head itself is unaware of". It is the spontaneous production of the inscrutable meaning purposelessly from the facts without conscious self-control or self-censorship. Automatism was seen as a form of realism. It was the recording of "mental facts" that expressed the "true functioning of thought", a part of Surrealism's "future resolution of dream and reality into a kind of absolute reality, a surreality, if one may so speak ... not a matter of opposing surreality to the real but to pushing out the boundaries of the latter in order to include areas normally excluded from it."

4.3.1.1.4 Reading Distorts Reality: Paranoia

Dali began to be interested in paranoia when it was a popular subject for medical research in Paris. At that time, paranoia is fashionable in Paris. Through medical research its definition has been amplified beyond simple persecution mania, which is only one fragment of a much larger tapestry of delusion. Paranoia was voluntary and active as opposed to automatic writing, which was a passive mental state. It was the differences that were important.

Paranoia was a term already in use on classical Greece to mean delusion or derangement. Paranoia could occur after an anxious or terrifying dream. It was recognized in 19th century as a form of psychosis in which all kinds of unrelated experiences, images and events were associated and perceived to fulfill causal connections or relations to one central idea, becoming an obsession that was coherent for the subject of the delusion but meaningless to an outside observer. Medically it was defined as a condition "lending itself to the coherent development of certain errors to which the subject shows a passionate attachment." in which the "errors" are typically worked into an organized system.

In fact, paranoia is a delirium of interpretation. Each fact, event, force, observation is caught in one system of speculation and understood by the afflicted individual in such a way that it absolutely confirms and reinforces his thesis – that is, the initial delusion which is his point of departure. Doctors agree in recognizing the speed and the inconceivable subtlety so frequently found in paranoiacs, who, taking advantage of motives and facts so refined as to escape normal people, reach conclusions that are often impossible to contradict or reject, and which in any case almost always defy psychological analysis.

Paranoia uses the external world as a means to assert the obsessive idea, with its disturbing characteristic of making this idea's reality valid to others. The reality of the external world serves as illustration and proof, and is placed in the service of the reality of our mind. The logic of the paranoid state of mind could be exploited, as " a form of mental illness which consists in organizing reality in such a way as to utilize it to control an imaginative construction."

The essence of paranoia is this intense relationship with the real world: 'the reality of the external world is used for illustration and proof... to serve the reality of our mind ...' paranoia is a shock of recognition that never ends. But as far as possible from the influence of the sensory phenomena with which hallucination may be considered to be more or less connected, paranoid activity always employs controllable and recognizable material.

The paranoiac always hits the nail on the head, no matter where the hammer blows fall. Just as in a magnetic field metal molecules align themselves to exert a collective, cumulative pull, so, through unstoppable, systematic and in themselves strictly rational associations, the paranoiac turns the whole world into a magnetic field of facts, all pointing in the same direction: the one he is going in.

4.3.1.2 Objective Effacement

4.3.1.2.1 Paranoid-Critical Method (PCM)

Use-value of the Paranoia

Paranoia was voluntary and active as opposed to automatic writing, which was a passive mental state. The significant difference between pcm and automatic writing resides in their use-value, in their respective attitudes towards reality. Dali conceived pcm as a critique and transformation of automatism, although pcm was in effect a kind of automatism.

Instead of the passive and deliberately uncritical surrender to the subconscious of the early Surrealist automatisms in writing, painting, sculpture, Dali proposes a second-phase Surrealism: the conscious exploitation of the unconscious through the PCM. Dali initiated Surrealism's second, or tale phase in which images would join words in automatist practices when he joined at the movement at the end of the 20s. He became renowned for his personality. Despite his affiliations with the Surrealists he was most explicit about what it was that differentiated him from them He chose allegiances and tastes unlike theirs and as much as pcm had much in common with automatism and despite the many oeuvres he made to place himself and his method at the center of Surrealist discourse he also invested much effort to distance himself from it.

Dali wanted to substitute the world of his imagination for the real world. He was critical of automatic writing's detachment from real circumstance, and believed that all states of automatism should intervene on the "level of action." Paranoid activity "uses the external world as a means to assert the obsessive ideas, with the disturbing characteristic of making [the] ideas reality valid to others ... the reality of the external world serves as illustration and proof, and is placed in the service of the reality of our mind."

For Dali, this was a way to elaborate and maintain his neurotic complexes, which he called "irrational knowledge: In this context his well-known statement "The only difference between myself and a madman is that I am not mad" takes on more specific meaning, Echoing Dali, Koolhaas "proposes a tourism of sanity into the realm of paranoia." Koolhaas uses pcm to intellectualize, objectify, his work and give it meaning: "I have had a longstanding interest in surrealism – he would say later – but more for its analytical powers than for its exploitation of the subconscious or for its aesthetics ... I was most impressed by its 'paranoid' methods, which I consider one of the genuine inventions of this century, a rational method which does not pretend to be objective, through which analysis becomes identical to creation."

Delirious Interpretation

In delirium of interpretation, each fact, event, force, observation is caught in one system of speculation and understood by the afflicted individual in such a way that it absolutely confirms and reinforces his thesis – that is, the initial delusion which is his point of departure. Dali meant his delirious interpretation to be "our paranoid faculty". He said in his writing that: "All this (assuming that other general causes do not intervene) allows me to at least advance the point that our images of reality themselves depend on the degree of our paranoid faculty and that, even so, an individual sufficiently endowed with this faculty may, theoretically, see at will the form of any real object change successively, exactly as in a voluntary hallucination but with this more important (in a destructive sense) difference, that the diverse forms assumed by the object in question are universally controllable and recognizable, as soon as the paranoid has merely pointed them out."

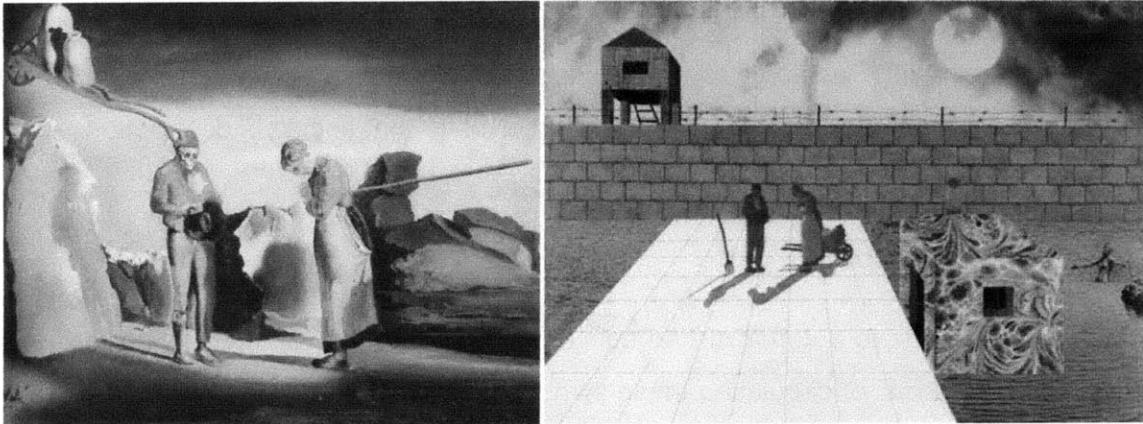


Figure 4.76

He illustrated his “paranoid critical interpretation” in his interpretation of L 'Angelus by Auguste Millet. It was from the Salvador Dali’s book *Le Mythe Tragique de l’Angelus de Millet* that Koolhaas took the “paranoid-critical interpretation” he was to apply to the study of New York and the invention of other merveilles of architecture. This is seen in Dali called this painting "the most troubling, enigmatic, dense, richest in unconscious thoughts." He explains the various levels of delirious interpretation he made with this painting in his book. Koolhaas explains Dali's interpretation thus: From what is at first a 19th-century cliché—a couple on a barren field, saying prayers in front of a wheelbarrow with a pitchfork stuck in the earth and a basket and a church spire on the horizon, Dali reshuffles the contents and fabricates his own tableau in which he discovers hidden meanings of sexual desire: the man's hat hides an erection; the two bags in the wheelbarrow become an image of the couple; the woman, with the pitchfork, becomes (literally) the image of man's desire, and so on." L 'Angelus a cliché that is given "a new lease on life." This is the crux of Koolhaas's investment in pcm: to "reshuffle" and give "subversive depth and resilience" to cliché.

Legalize the False

Paranoid-critical activity is the fabrication of evidence for improvable speculations and the subsequent grafting of this evidence on the world, so that a “false” fact takes its unlawful place among the “real” facts. By the active and paranoiac process of thought, it will be possible (simultaneously with automatism and other passive states) to systematize

confusion and to contribute to the total discredit of the world of reality. These false facts relate to the real world as spies to a given society. The more conventional and un-noted their existence, the better they can devote themselves to that society's destruction.

Circulation of the Symbols

Pcm was in contrast to automatism an active and concrete way of interpreting the world, as well as a "method" of circulating those symbolic perceptions in life. Pcm addressed the real circumstance in order to de-realize it. It was a form of "de-realization". This was the paradox of Dali's method.

Rem Koolhaas's Imitation

Koolhaas simulates delirium in the attempt to be paranoid-critical. like Dali repeating and rephrasing similar ideas several times in the course of an article. Many of the statements he makes are paraphrased from Dali's writings. In Koolhaas's thought it is the small differences to the status quo that are important. He emulates Dali's critical and oppositional role in the Surrealist movement. Just as Dali deliberately and contradictorily placed his work with pcm in the framework of the Surrealist movement, so Koolhaas would frame the dominant discourses of the modern movement and the profession to position himself counter to the various architectural frameworks with which his work had much in common.

1. Dali was the Surrealist who looked to the history of painting: Koolhaas addresses the history of modern architecture.
2. Dali writes "True Childhood Memories" and "False Childhood Memories" in his autobiography-The Secret Life of Salvador Dali. Koolhaas's own autobiographical dream narrative is "The House that Made Mies." He constructs a genealogy by connecting himself to Mies's only commission in Holland - an unbuilt house for the Kroller family. Koolhaas writes about having an hallucination about an image of Mies's project he saw when he was a child, just as Dali had dreams about

L'Angelus. But because Mies's house was unrealized, Koolhaas's story has a tragic/ironic component.

3. In his autobiography Dali describes his habits and fantasies as a child and speculates on how they could through pcm be given logic. Koolhaas echoes this when he says that his childhood fantasies of New York motivated his later research, which was partly the attempt to see if his earlier enthusiasms had any greater relevance.
4. Dali was involved in film and had a long-standing friendship with Luis Bunuel stemming from his school days in Madrid. Koolhaas's own friendship and working history is with Dutch film director Renee Daalder.
5. Koolhaas's relation to Madelon, symbiotic and of a shared sense of humor and mind set, has been observed to mirror Dali and Gala.
6. Vriesendorp's paintings are, like Dali's, in the miniaturist's scale. Almost all of them are very small, just over a foot wide. They also repeat motifs just as in Dali's paintings images of similar configuration recur.
7. Vriesendorp often depicted the postcards from her and Koolhaas's collection. Dali considered the picture postcard as symbols of the collective unconscious.
8. Paranoia as Method Compare Koolhaas's conceptualization of the New York Athletic Club with Dali's Suburb of the Paranoid-critical Town: Afternoon on the Outskirts of European History (1936).
9. Dali depicts three separate, self-contained architectural spaces, arranged horizontally across the landscape composed like three different stage sets. Each portrays a world that represented places Dali knew well. His painting incorporates images from other artists such as De Chirico and the two figures from the Angelus in various manifestations. The NYAC juxtaposes of activities such as apartment, Golf course, restaurant whose only relationship is their physical adjacency. Each floor is a different "performance."
10. The quintessential skyscraper, the essence of the 20th century, contains the garden of paradise, where Adam and Eve and temptation have been usurped by two boxers eating oysters at an institution dedicated to the body.

11. Dali's diagram of pcm demonstrates the desire - to make improvable conjectures tangible. Dali explicitly expressed this aspect: The paranoid mechanism, through which the image with multiple figurations is born, supplies the understanding with the key to the birth and the origin of the nature of simulacra, whose fury dominates the horizon beneath which the multiple aspects of the concrete are hidden.

4.3.1.2.2 Symbolic Dictionary

It is this type of alteration that the objective effacement wants both to describe and to attempt, an alteration that has nothing to do with the morphological or semantic registers of any particular object, but rather with the interpretive grid, the structure that has long permitted us to assimilate these registers. Dali meant his couplings to be not just shockingly paradoxical but also to stand for psychoanalytical symbols. Everything depends upon the ability of the author whose gaze transforms the object. The images produced by the paranoiacs associative mechanism are objectified after the fact, interpreted as symbols.



Figure 4.77

Order of Knowledge

After WWII the work of the French avant-gardes was taken up by artists who took the dictionary as a concept and practice of ordering knowledge. It was a form used to think about systems, whether physical, biological or social-producing systems and exposing existing systems. Systems were used to address the notion of the (ir)rational.

A Totality Without Authorship

For the Surrealists, the dictionary was a literary genre, in which the format, theory and pretensions of a kind of knowledge is treated as an authority even though traditionally it had no authorship was interrogated. Artists produced ready-made assemblages of information without a centre and without a unifying system, chance encounters that provoked a cadavre exquis of meaning. 273 Their objects exemplified a "scientific" procedure (a strategy and a technique). Michel Foucault called the dictionary/encyclopaedia the key model for the "general taxomania" of the Enlightenment.

Symbol of Truth

The dictionary is the alphabetical and categorical transmission of information through the use of the textual authority of systems of reference that historically participate in the institutionalisation and representation of truth, models and convention to reformulate the principles and intentions of the modern movement.

Reshuffle Knowledge

This sabotage derived its effectiveness from the contrast between the formal ruse – the very use of the "dictionary form", that is, one of the most obvious and conventional markers of the idea of totality – and the effect of surprise. The aim is to operate a de-classification in the double sense of lowering and of taxonomic disorder.

The fusion of logic and poetry found the dictionary and encyclopedia is important to Koolhaas. A retroactive reading in the framework of SMLXL situates Delirious New York as

a macro-dictionary. Passages are headed with titles, e.g., "end," "theorem," "alibis," with indefinite meaning both in the larger context of the book and the passages themselves. They remain unexplained, their sense never wholly precise. SMLXL features its own dictionary, a continuum running intermittently through the text. Its intention is to "illuminate the condition of architecture today ... aiming for comprehensive coverage of current architectural language, systematically recorded with maximum accessibility, clearer meanings, contemporary rules of usage, changing meanings of the past with modern, realistic representation of late-twentieth century [architectural] speech- -a complete picture of modern architecture." It evokes the spirit of J. G. Ballard's "Project for a Glossary of the 20th Century." But the task of this glossary is not to give the meaning but the jobs of words.

He began to define the initial figures of his symbolic vocabulary, "obsessive images' he would transform, case by case, into always varying merveilles of architecture. Just as Boullée, Ledoux and Lequeu proposed a new way of building based on the inherited narrative, symbolic and figurative meanings of nature so Koolhaas revises the forms, images and principles of "modern architecture," striving to make it vernacular, or "nature". This is the crux of Koolhaas's investment in pcm: to "reshuffle" and give "subversive depth and resilience" to cliché. Koolhaas's vision is made predominantly out of cliché and symbol. A cliché is a convention, stereotype, typology. These are received forms related as being public, comprising the "facts" and artifacts that make up the world as we know it.

4.3.2 Fictional Involution

4.3.2.1 Sign Language

4.3.2.1.1 Theatrical and Cinematic Logic

The logic of sign is not only theatrical but is also cinematic. You have to set up an empire of signs and a theatre of representation, a theater in which the author would be replaced by the director and the spoken text replaced by mute sign language.

4.3.2.1.2 Allusion to Meaning

Sign language requires verbal thinking, and then use visual images to allude to abstract thoughts and ideas. It does not use descriptive or "proper" language. It only narrates psychological cause and effect and unconscious motivations and experience. It uses visual metaphors and symbols to communicate Ideas. Conversely 'active verbs and phrases and highly visual nouns and adjectives are used to suggest images. Barthes called Cinema all analogical art because it is a way of thinking in which one thing stands for another. Newspaper stories are potentially filmic.

4.3.2.1.3 Script Assemblage

In a script, in order to generate meaning, you have to link various episodes together to make sequences, you have to generate suspense and you have to assemble things – through editing, for example. A script is a process. It provides a preliminary sketch or outline for a project that is to be constructed and given concrete form. Typically a script consists of a proposal – a short description of basic story lines, themes, topics and messages. Here the plot synopsis is broadened into short story form, serving as a guide for the writing of the complete script. It gives a play-by-play of all major actions and scenes in reduced form.

4.3.2.2 The Job of Involution

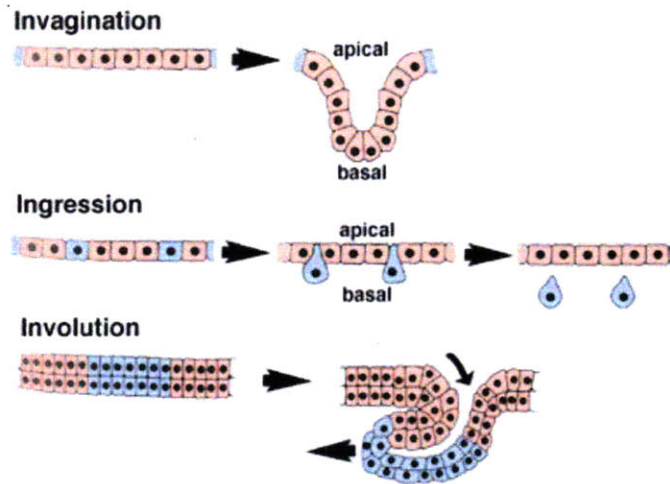


Figure 4.78

4.3.2.2.1 Pleat of Interpretation

Involution refers to situation where a process or object is "turned in" upon itself. It is the systematic interpretation of images and the pleat these delirious interpretations back into the world. It is ought "to materialize images of concrete irrationality with the most imperialist fury of precision, in order that the world of the imagination... may have the same objective evidence the same consistency the same persuasive and communicable thickness as the exterior world of phenomenal reality."

Through paranoiac phenomena, the involution pleat the world with complicated figuration which can theoretically and practically be multiplied everything depends upon the paranoiac capacity of the author. It becomes critical when the subject deliberately subjected a pleat of involutions that was determined by desire to analysis.

4.3.2.2.2 Plant and Payoff

We do not perceive randomness. In the absence of phenomena made significant by being directed toward itself, the infant will order unrelated events into a dramatic whole, a whole comprehensible under the delirious interpretation. The objects in themselves do not have any necessary cohesion; it is the culturally conditioned intellect that organizes perception. Different spectators see in this picture different images, needless to say that it is carried out with scrupulous realism.

Plant and payoff refers to a specific object or idea introduced early in a drama which becomes an important factor during the final resolution:

“The plant and the payoff are techniques used in all films and in all novels ... they also happen all the time in real life. Something you notice, you don’t know why, becomes important later ... if you learn to recognize and use plants and payoffs in writing and film you will also learn to recognize and use them in so-called real life.” It is the knife in

Huddie Ledbetter’s description(also known as Leadbelly): “You take a knife, you use it to cut the bread, so you’ll have strength to work; you use it to shave, so you’ll look nice for your lover; on discovering her with another, you use it to cut out her lying heart.”

So the involution seizes upon the Leadbelly’s “knife” as both embodying and witnessing the pleat, subtly unfolding its self-embedded interpretation through the course of paranoia phenomenon.

4.3.2.3 Practical Effect

4.3.2.3.1 The Double Image

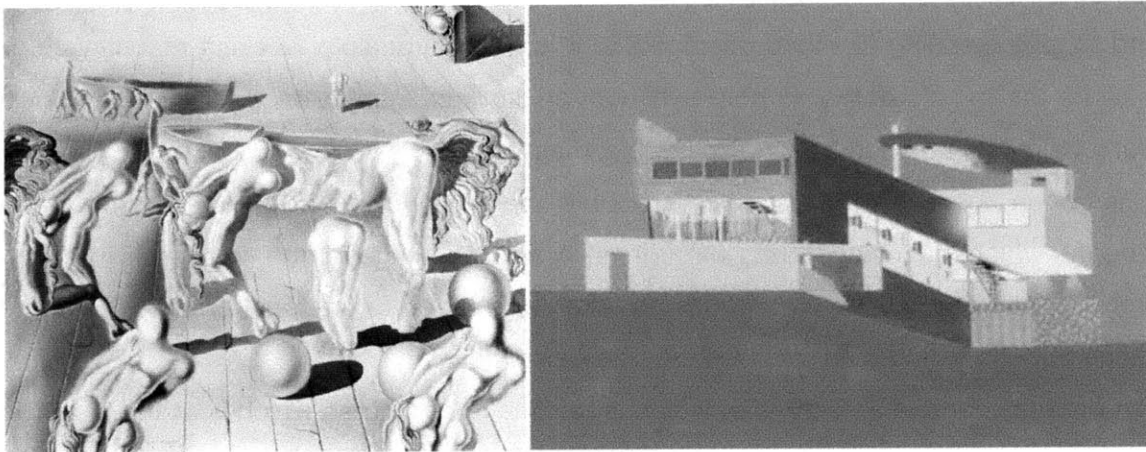


Figure 4.79

He invokes the myth of King Midas who had the power to turn everything he touched into gold.

Koolhaas adaptation/adoption of pcm can be defined as a way of pushing coincidental oppositions into contradictory assemblages, i.e. chance encounters. The work as a whole is marked by the collision of “unsuspected correspondences”.

It is through a decidedly paranoid process that it has been possible to obtain a double image: that is to say, the representation of an object which without the slightest figurative or anatomical modification, is at the same time the representation of another absolutely different object, itself also devoid of any kind of deformation or abnormality betraying some arrangement.

Advertising Metaphor

Advertising is filled with metaphors and analogies. The object that is advertised is being exchanged or compared with also carries with it numerous other meanings implied yet not explicitly stated that the product wishes to associate with.

Objects and terms are combined and recombined to produce something else.

The Double Image

Pcm is basically the systematic encouragement of the mind’s power to look at one thing and to see another – i.e. to perceive different images within a single given configuration and to give meaning to those perceptions. It is a visual analogy-seeking mechanism that exploits the mind’s ability to hold two contradictory images at once. Dali used it for his many paintings that can be read as double images.

It has been possible to obtain such a double image by virtue of the violence of paranoid thought which has made use, through skill and cunning, of the requisite quantity of pretexts, coincidences, etc., and has so taken advantage of them as to make the second image appear, which then replaces the obsessive idea.

The double image (an example of which is the image of a horse which is at the same time an image of a woman) can be prolonged, continuing the paranoid process, and the existence of another obsessive idea is then enough to make a third image appear (the image of a lion), and so on up to a number of images limited only by the level of the mind’s paranoid capacity.

The basis of associative mechanisms and the renewing of obsessing ideas allows as in the case in a recent picture by Salvador Dali now being elaborated, six simultaneous images to be represented without any of them undergoing the least figurative deformation ,athletes torso, lions head ,generals head horse, head horse. shepherdess's bust, deaths head.

The likening of pcm to reinforced-concrete construction-"infinitely malleable at first, then suddenly hard as a rock"-describes the process by which dream images are "hardened" - solidified, made tangible-through interpretation. The truly pc moment comes when the calcified images begin to liquefy and a stream of associations flows forth .

Koolhaas, in the use of images that look like other Images. departs from what is already a depiction. He is reading representation. The built form, the "model" and the pictures that look like images of the model together construct a particular reality. Rather than merely exhibiting pictures, Koolhaas's pictures are a mode of exhibitionism. a way of acting out a return to the modern movement. He continually and repeatedly refers to the recognizable images that constitute a large part of our received views. those included in every .history book from Gideon to Frampton and criticised by Tafuri as operative criticism.

Each time Koolhaas discovers hidden dimensions, producing something new, reveals new traits and possibilities, This is his "unconscious rhetoric ,,34.4 His pictures are his interpretations of his own work. seen through the screen of the images they refer to and the discourses they represent.

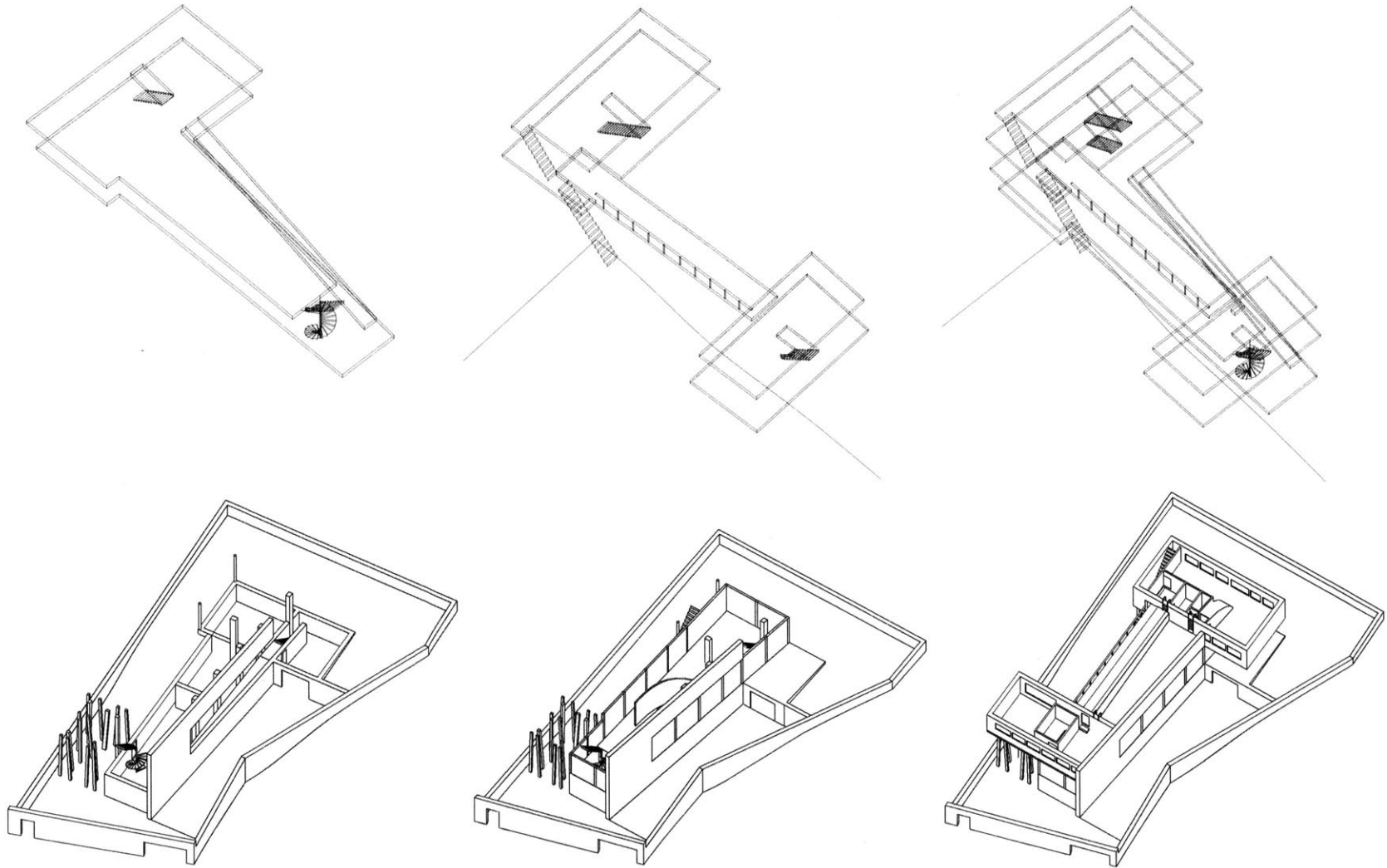


Figure 4.80

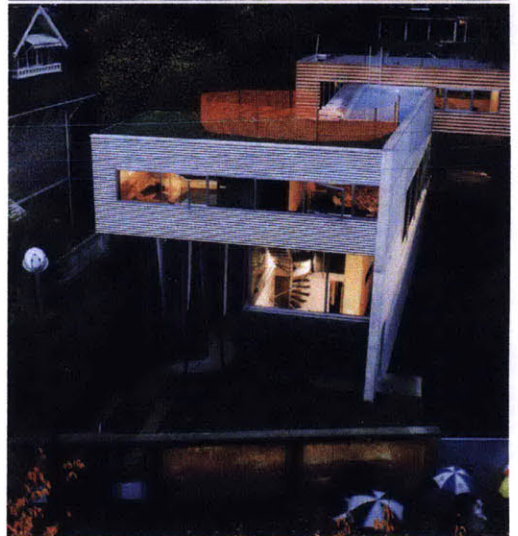
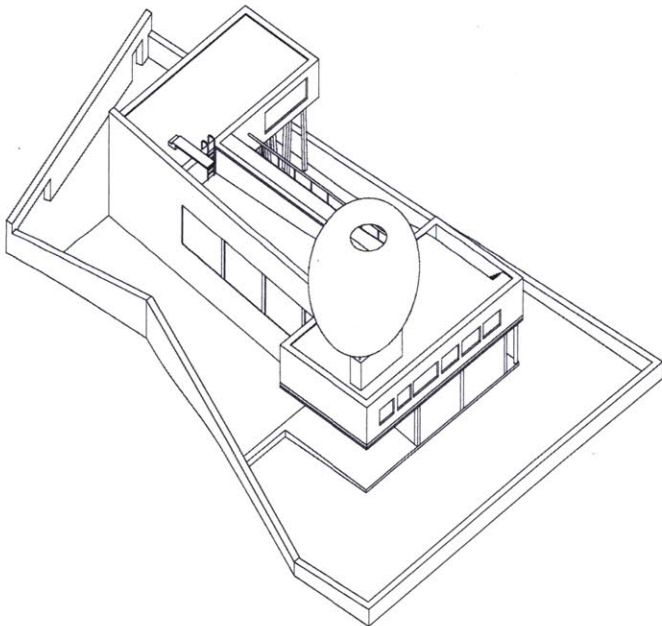
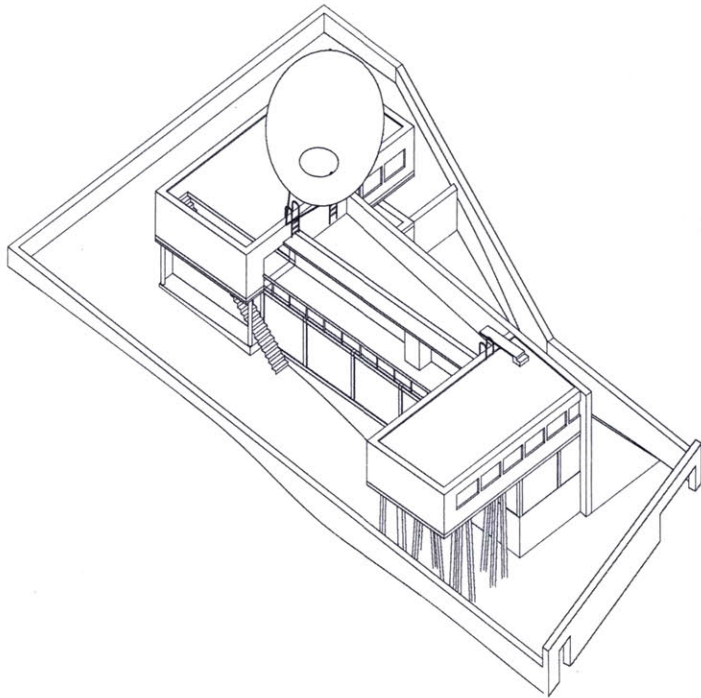


Figure 4.81

4.3.2.3.2 Symbolic Recombination

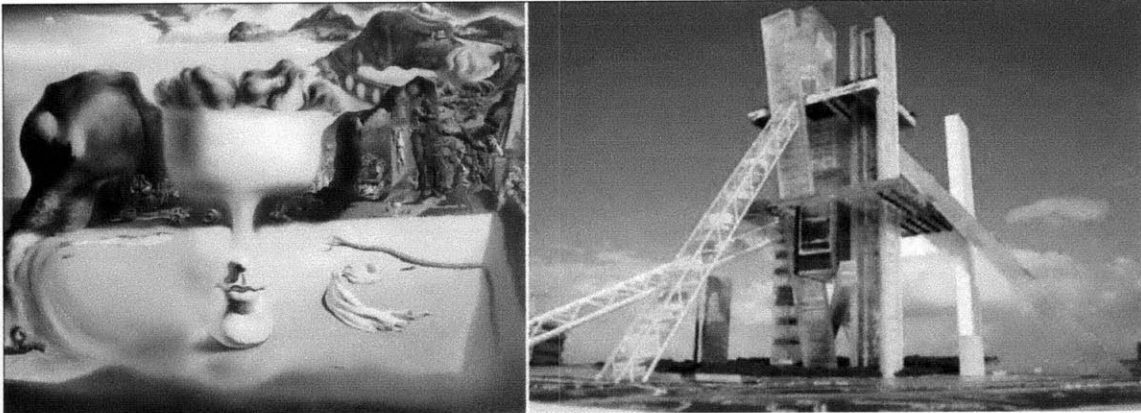


Figure 4.82

Koolhaas looks at the mass culture of modern architecture. He looks at how others have looked at its basic paradigms, in so doing revealing new and unsuspected facets of the clichés and myths constituting its construction. (A cliché is also another name for the mold, also called a stereotype, into which copper is deposited. This old-fashioned printing process is used in newspaper composition and layout where one letter or image could be reused in different ways. Koolhaas no doubt became familiar with this kind of tool while working in the Haagse Post layout and composition department.)

Koolhaas is interested in a more cruel reality, the reality we see in some American movies and which he found when studying New York City, it's the reality that developers build, developers know what it is to build today, it's they who use reason in their work, much more than architects who like to call themselves rationalists.

To be a rationalist today is to acknowledge this way of looking at things that is reflected in the contemporary city, the contemporary city that the young Koolhaas was so attracted to. An older Koolhaas built a personal replica of the metropolis that he had so enthusiastically described in *Delirious New York*, the formal world he came across in his study of the American city is the reality that he would like to build.

Subjective Interpretative Reassemble

Through a subjective interpretative process, architectural elements could be reassembled to create a new "image" or meaning. Through Ungers, Koolhaas learned to "think"

subjectively, through association. He learned to interpret through transformation, i.e. that to think analogically was to create meaning through the association or recombination of forms. Koolhaas used Surrealism to move beyond the theoretical. His Manhattan projects place analogical thinking in a Surrealist framework.

Koolhaas, hence, is a realist painter. But artists like Andy Warhol or David Salle can also be considered realists if we analyze their work from this perspective.

Koolhaas is not interested in design. He simply works with the elements given, whether by the construction industry or by popular use. He doesn't revel in invention. He prefers to preserve existing iconographies. Like Warhol, Koolhaas takes pleasure in the mere presence of known iconography. Neither of the two sees any reason to add anything else.

Filip Dujardin's Montage

After completing his studies in architecture history and photography, Filip Dujardin went into partnership with Frederik Vercruyse in 2000. They specialized in architecture Photography and soon became an established name in the Belgian architecture community. In 2006 they ended their partnership: each felt the need to go his own way. And so in 2007 Dujardin began a project that is nowhere near its end yet: the development of independent work in which he combines photographs of parts of buildings into new, fictional, architectonic structures. 'Perhaps,' says the photographer in his apartment-cum-studio in Ghent, 'the works come out of frustration. That I actually want to play at being an architect, instead of only recording the buildings of others.'

Before Dujardin started patiently fiddling with his montages into the wee hours ('Just ask my wife') he had made a series of photographs of sheds, informal and often dilapidated structures with unspecified functions, standing alone in the Flemish countryside. Dujardin: 'I've always been fascinated by aberrations, by honest, uncontrived architecture that has escaped the attention of architects. Several of my photo-montages build on that. They are transposed sheds, "uber-sheds", that I've cobbled together from the photographic material I had on hand.'

Other montages show structures that make you wonder. Might this not be a design by OMA, or by a forgotten, weird East European modernist who, having fallen through the

cracks of the bureaucratic system got to do his own thing for a long period in the 1960s? That wondering uncertainty is no coincidence: 'I use the same "tricks" that someone like Koolhaas uses to make a building an expressive creation. It's a question of taking thing to extremes. Magnifying the scale to the point that it virtually loses credibility. Challenging gravity with cantilevered structures that seem to go just a little too far.' An essential element of this is that Dujardin uses an aesthetic that seems to come from the 1960s or 1970s. In a high-tech version, the structural tour-de-force would raise far fewer questions. And the patina on the materials turns the buildings into arte-facts with a futuristic appearance, yet with a history as well. They carry a story.

Every montage, says Dujardin, is one project. It begins with an idea for a specific image. Often he starts off by building a model of the form he is trying to achieve—at first in cardboard, but he has recently discovered SketchUP. He then goes on a photo safari, often just around the corner, to find suitable buildings 'with a lot of the same things', so that they can be cut and pasted and serve as building material. In fact most of the fictional structures are building in Ghent, just resampled.

4.3.2.3.3 Fetishize

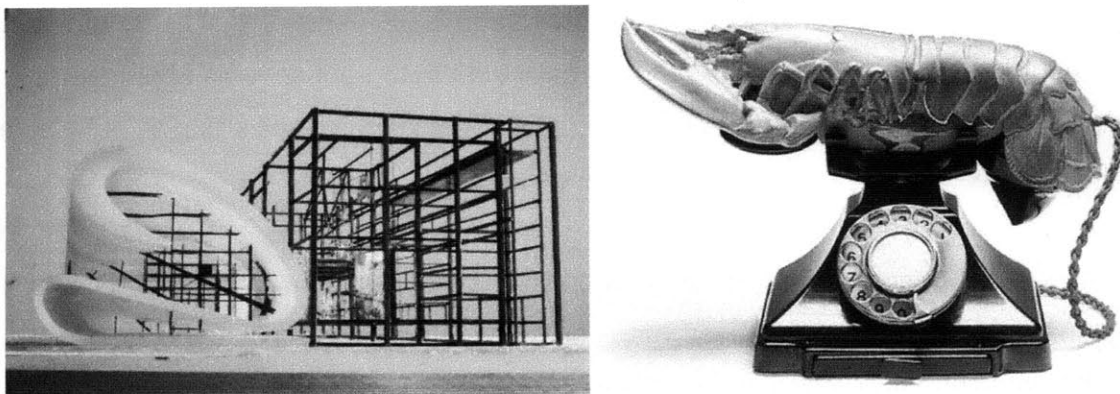


Figure 4.83

The notion of structuring through polarities is based on the surrealist chance encounter. Surrealism used the chance encounter to reconcile the contradictory conditions of dream (the unconscious, irrational) and reality (the conscious, rational).

They and other historical avant-garde artists used the ready-made as the linguistic expression of the collective unconscious. It was a mass-produced object that reflected the

condition of modernity. Koolhaas refers to this condition when he connects the Empire State Building to automatic writing, the practice used to reveal unconscious desires. The Empire State Building is a readymade built by "anonymous" contractors: "The last manifestation of Manhattanism as pure and thoughtless process... an automatic architecture. The surrender by its collective makers from the accountant to the plumber to the process of building taking place at the same time the European avant-garde is experimenting with automatic writing."

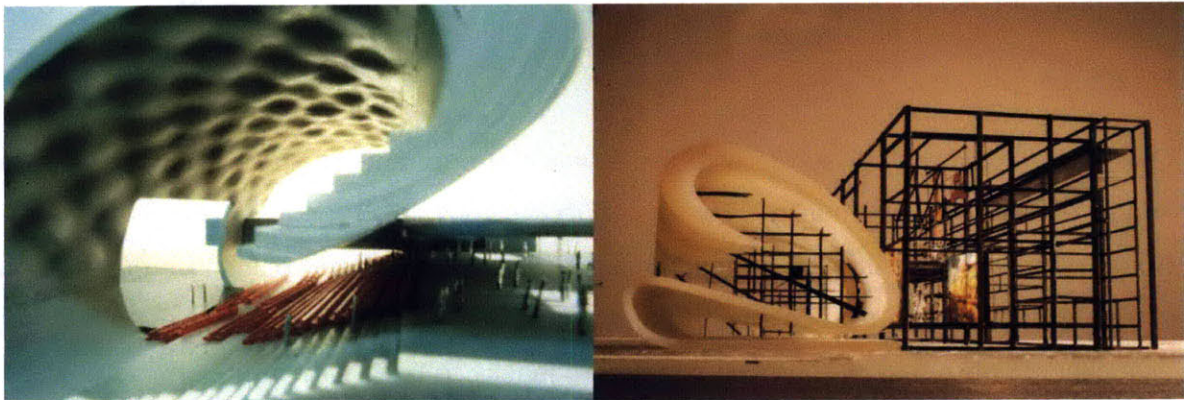


Figure 4.84

Unconscious Desire

They and other historical avant-garde artists used the readymade as the linguistic expression of the collective unconscious. It was a mass-produced object that reflected the condition of modernity.

Koolhaas refers to this condition when he connects the Empire State Building to automatic writing, the practice used to reveal unconscious desires.

The Empire State Building is a readymade built by "anonymous" contractors.



Figure 4.85

Surrealist Object

I was determined to carry out and transform into reality my slogan of the "surrealist object" – the irrational object, the object with a symbolic function – which I set up against narrated dreams, automatic writing, etc. ...

The surrealist object is one that is absolutely useless from the practical and rational point of view, created wholly for the purpose of materializing in a fetishistic way, with the maximum of tangible reality, ideas and fantasies having a delirious character.

Fur Spoon

One of the most typical surrealist objects was the cup, saucer and spoon made of fur imagined by Meret Oppenheim.

Surrealism was interested in the unforeseen effects in poetry and painting brought about by the principle of juxtaposing apparently unrelated things, inducing new effects by associating unlike things, thus bringing heterogeneity to light. One of the effects of shock was Surrealist beauty. Effects are the "delicate motor of paranoia ."

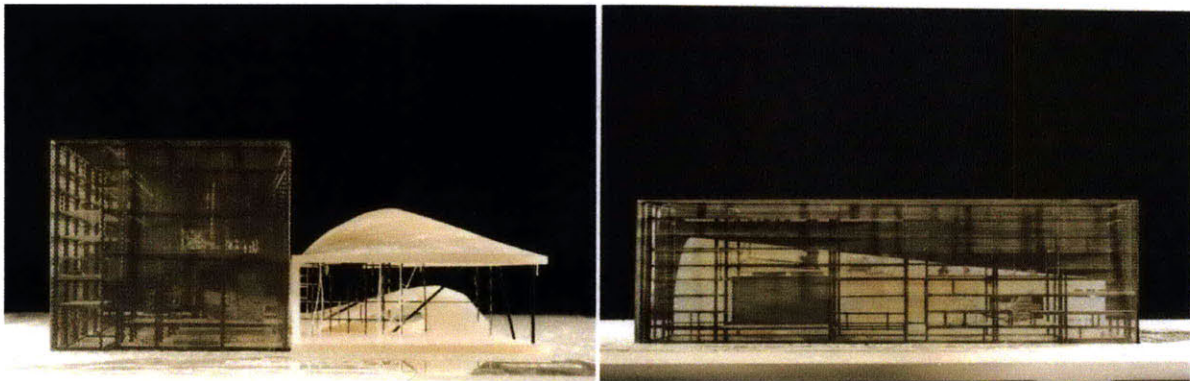


Figure 4.86

Patent Office: Disconnect

Method of defining a theater by strict separation of its components

The two parts that are usually combined in a theater into a single whole (stage and auditorium wrapped in public space) are separated to enable both to perform their designated tasks as efficiently as possible. The stage becomes a utilitarian illusion-factory; the auditorium a continuous consumption belt that begins as stairs, turns into foyer,

becomes stalls, warps up to meet the factory – the stage opening their only interface – and turns back on itself as ceiling, to end as balcony.

4.3.2.3.4 All in a Sack

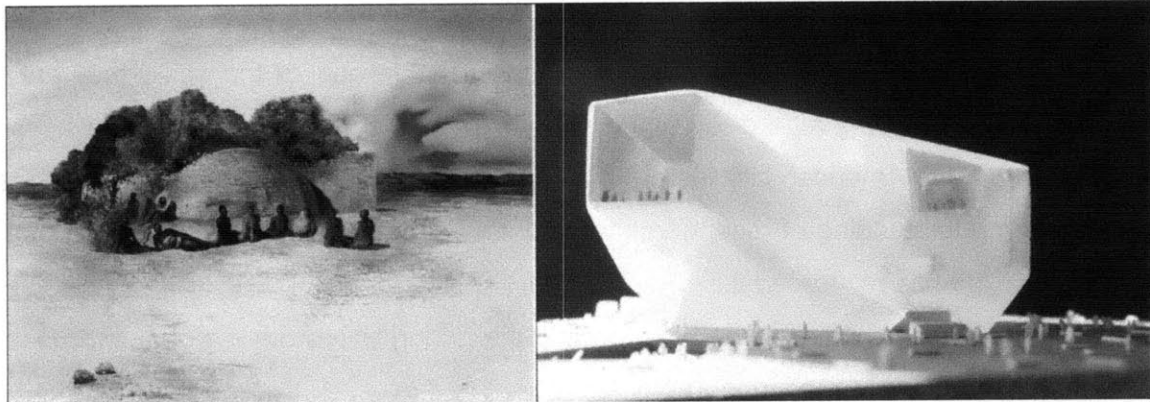


Figure 4.87

All Ideologies in a Sack

In Koolhaas's vision, architecture is capable of containing all ideologies. The only viable form of the public realm in the future was not (as in Europe) a homogeneous, overarching ideology of an entire territory.

Psychological space is a description of the effect Koolhaas seeks in his use of Dali's pcm. SMLXL is a demonstration and a metaphor of psychological space. It is not a book to be read in the conventional sense, i.e. , from 'cover to cover'. Projects are represented with various elements, frameworks, sequences. Images and text have different levels of significance and make connotative and denotative associations. The manoeuvre of finding an exact reference for every image or text would fix and limit the play of meaning.

Rather, it accommodates different types , speeds and depths of reading, lending itself to a kind of distracted 'flipping'(like channels of the TV). One of the pleasures of Koolhaas's text its openness to interpretation. (This is to be distinguished from the work shown, which sets the limits for its interpretation.) Koolhaas's system of reference is a gesture of seduction, in which the act of searching, finding and reading, leading to just-glimpsed

fragments of text whose meaning often remains indefinite, holds the promise of clear definition.

Building as Container - Shape Regardless of the Program

In effect, the architecture Koolhaas finds in the American city is an architecture in which buildings take shape from the perspective of construction and of the scale they are to assume in the city, totally regardless of the specific forms dictated by their programs.

In other words, the American city fosters the idea of the building as a container. This idea is key to an understanding of recent architecture, and surely Koolhaas's description of the city of New York has reinforced it.

Aware of all this, Koolhaas can be said to have the daring to restore a global and unitary view of architecture through iconography.

Architecture projects made with such proficiencies in mind normally treat program as a given, rather than reinterpreting function through the performance criteria of continuous, geometrically complex surfaces.

They opt to follow a (hyper)rationalist tradition, in which hierarchies and adjacencies in programmatic elements are the primary instigators of formal experimentation.

They rarely attempt to challenge the content of program, but rather seek to challenge the arrangement of that content.

Like the collage practices of pop artists, the arrangement and interaction of disparate pieces are toyed with to shape a set of potential massings, and merits of which are measured by the effectiveness of the overall shape as icon.

The "pragmatism" that the new Dutch work represents, as rich in possibility as it is poor in its current expression, is a pragmatism of the worst kind: it remains little more than ill-digested and reductionist Koolhaasianism, to which is added the bureaucrat's compulsion to justify impotence by inflating his or her own ineffectuality into an historical and aesthetic ideal.

Coolness

This work nevertheless represents an architecture of resignation and disorientation masquerading as enlightenment, an architecture of spiritual exhaustion presenting itself as scientific activity, as hip unsentimentality, and even as a “coolness” in the technical sense of possessing an apparent poise or collectedness that reigns over a fast play of relationships.

Naïve Market Behaviors

Host of Koolhaasian concepts of thesis this new school is assembled, is being considerably watered down and one-dimensionalized so that it no longer represents anything thicker than the rote numeric sequencing of market behaviors and demographic pressures.

Toy Forms - Pragmatism

Dutch this time, like the Italian, Japanese, Spanish, and Swiss ones that preceded it – is poised to seduce and submerge us with a quirky juxtaposition of toy forms and unsentimental bureaucrat logic.

What makes the work topical, necessary, and immediate, is the immensely refined and up-to-date “pragmatism” it is claimed to demonstrate.

It is at this point in their design method that the whole matters, but the parts do not.

The default state of collage is disparity and heterogeneity, and therefore devices to produce cohesiveness must be imposed. This method of design is not process oriented but thrives on the coincidence and happenstance of trial and error.

Achieving desired eccentricities for the graphically expedient stems from a logic-based, “if-then” design approach, one that resembles a “chain of command.” Building planning of this kind becomes necessarily hierarchical.

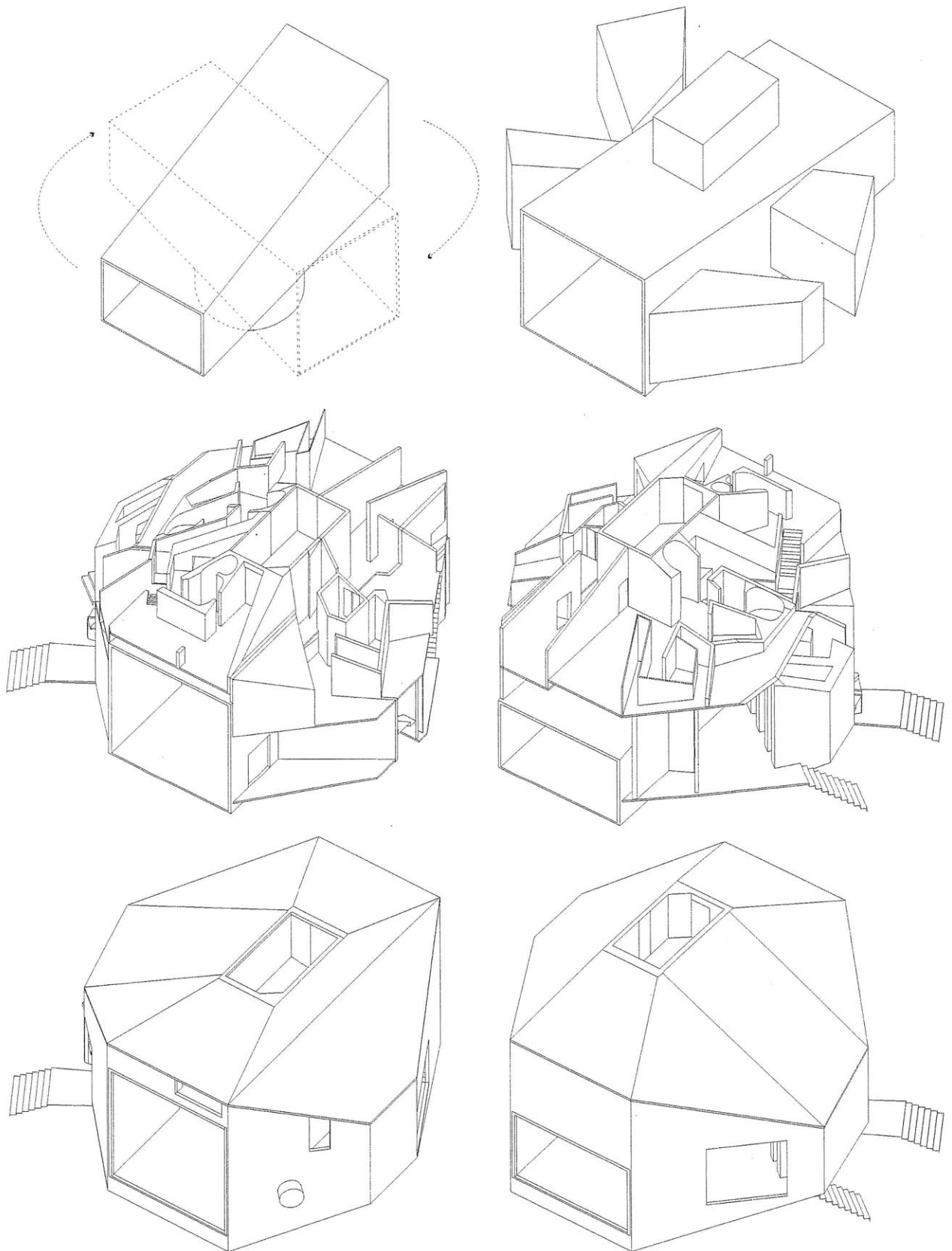


Figure 4.88

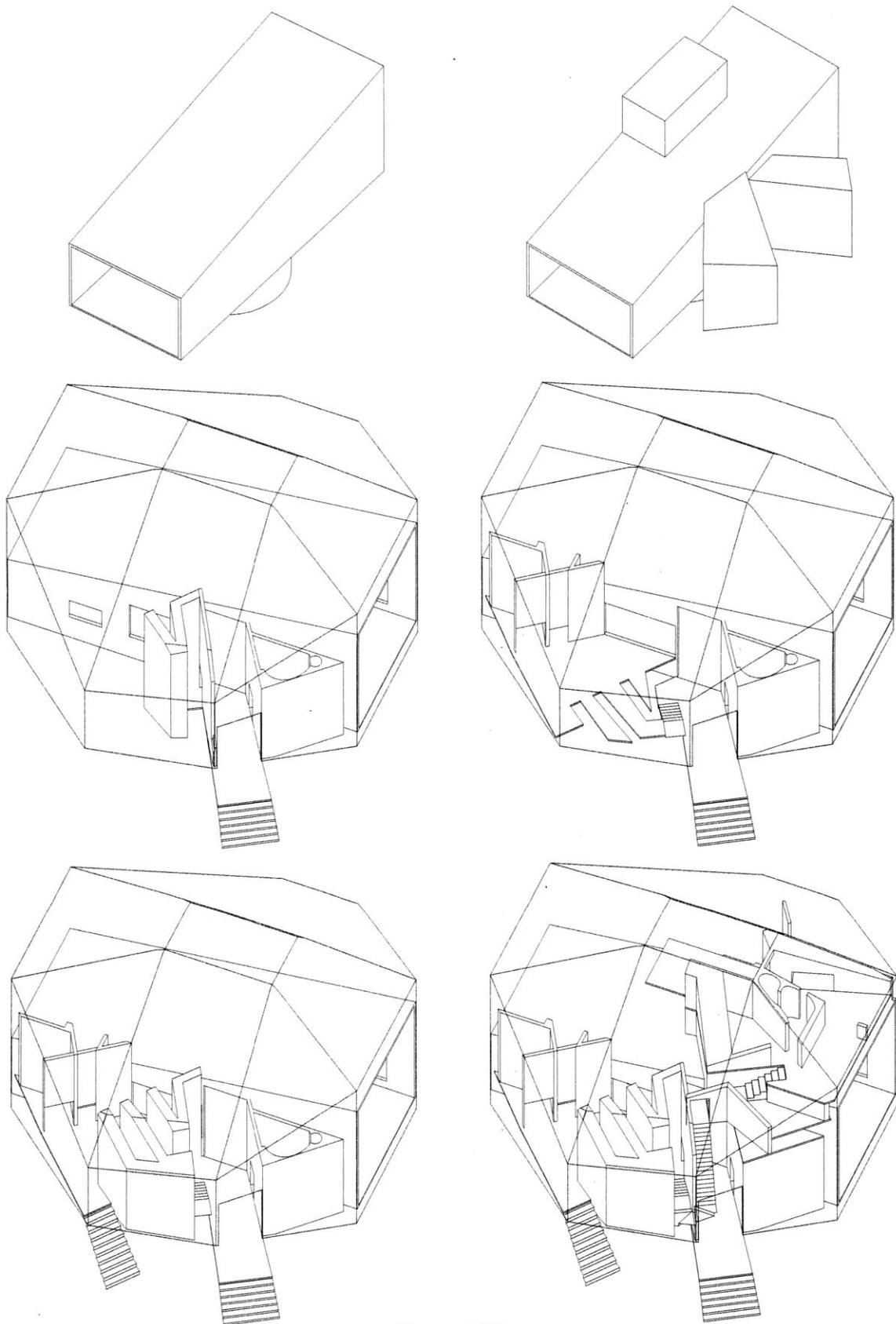


Figure 4.89

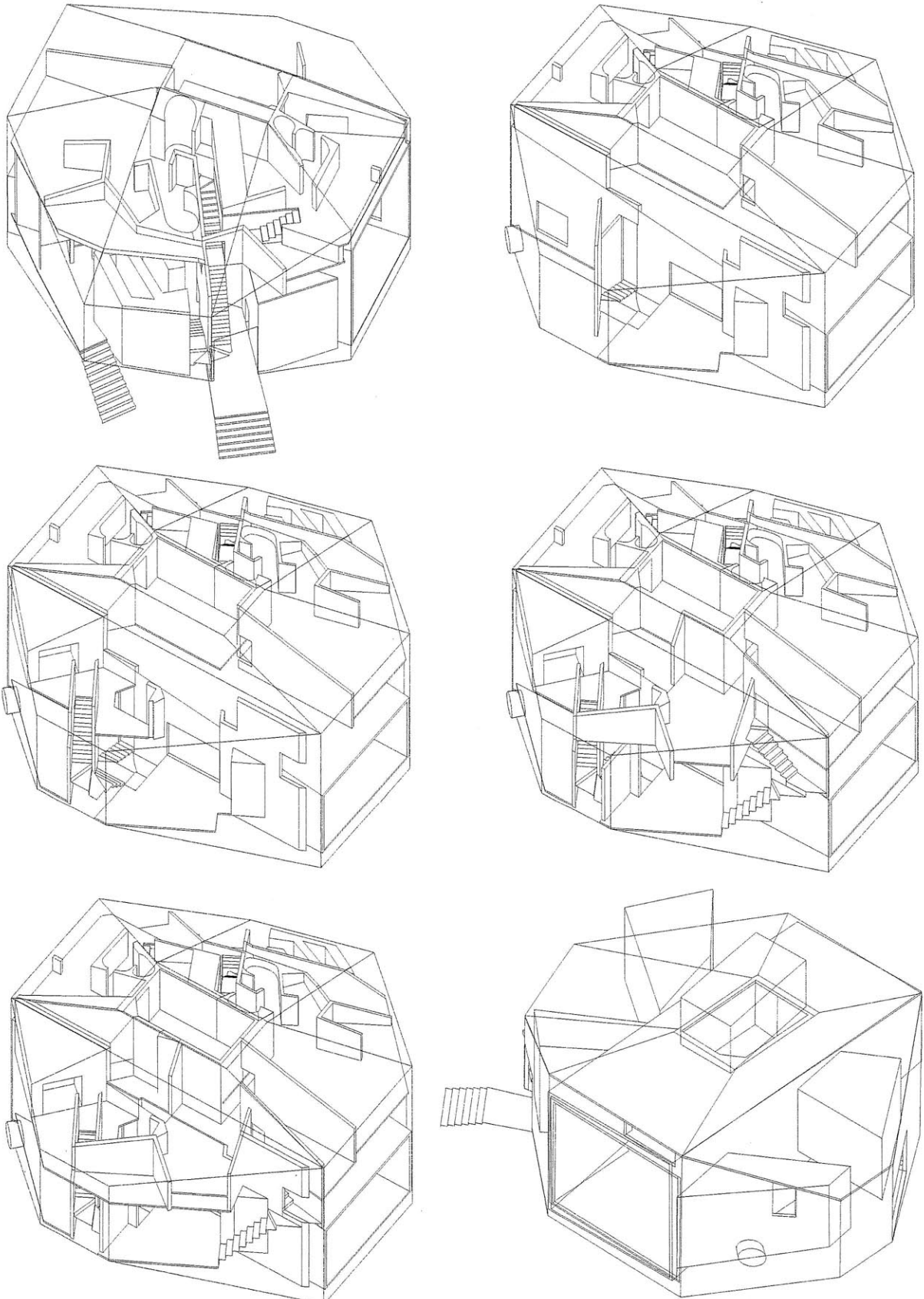


Figure 4.90

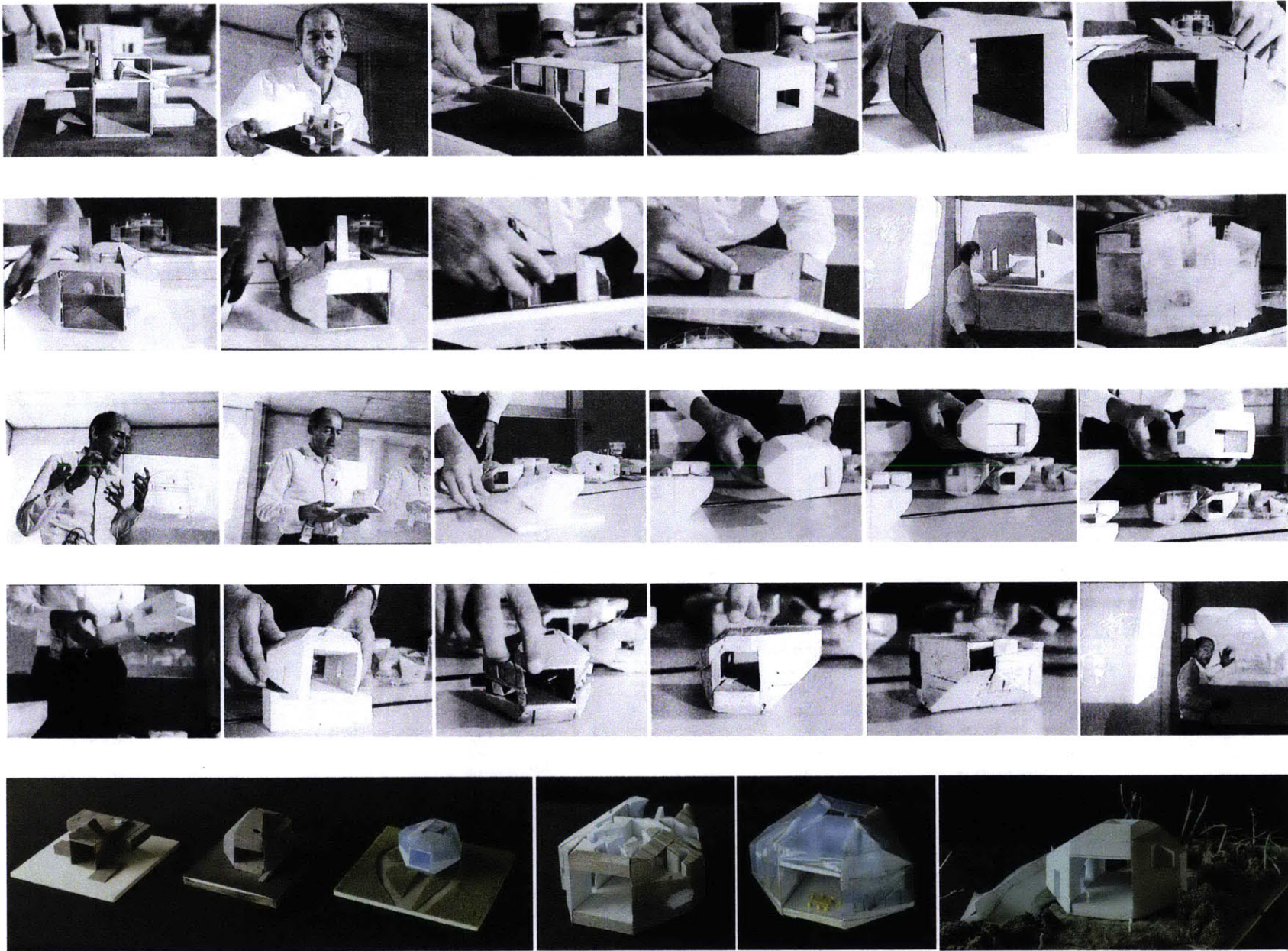


Figure 4.91

4.4 Political Reconfiguration

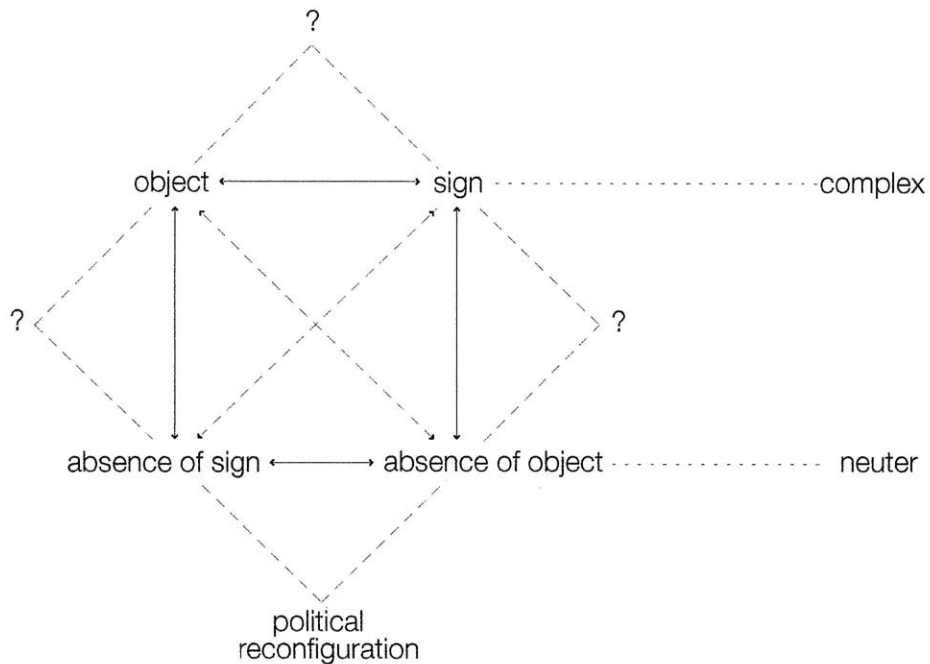


Figure 4.92

4.4.1 Meaning “Absence of Object + Absence of Sign”

4.4.1.1 Object, Sign = Privileging the Third Thing

4.4.1.1.1 Looking at the Third Thing

What artists and curators usually present are places where one circulates differently between things, images, and words; one may find tempos, sometimes a slow pace, sometimes a pause; one may experience simple or complex arrangements of signs, a montage of distant things, splitting of united things. Although in architecture the presence is slightly different, the situation is fairly similar: in a very general sense, there is a stage on which all kinds of spectacles are performed by action of the third thing – the objects and signs – in front of an individual or collective spectators; there is a spectator looking at these spectacle; there is a spectatorship between them. The spectacle is the third thing, to

which both two can refer, but which prevents any kind of "equal" or "undistorted" transmission.

4.4.1.1.2 Transmission of the Third Thing

What the spectatorship implies is there is always something on one side, in one mind or one body – be it a knowledge, an attitude, a perspective, a capacity, an energy – that must be transferred to the other side, into the spectator's mind or body. There is the distance between performer and spectator, in which a mediating "spectacle" that stands between the artist's idea and the spectator's feeling and interpretation.

This distance between them sets up a process of objective transmission: one piece of knowledge after another piece, one word after another word, one rule or theorem after another. This knowledge is supposed to be conveyed directly from the artist's mind or from the medium of their work to the mind of the spectator. What the spectator learns is the knowledge of the artists. It is a mediation between them, and that mediation of a third thing is crucial in the process of intellectual transmission.

4.4.1.1.3 The Unequal Spectatorship

In order to enlighten the spectator with adequate knowledge, the artist must always keep a step ahead of the spectator who is ready to be enlightened, refreshed, surprised, and fulfilled by the spectacle. Even when the performer doesn't know what he wants the spectator to do, he knows at least that he has to be aware of one thing – only to reconfirm the statement of opposition between two categories: there is one population that cannot do what the other population does; there is capacity on one side and incapacity on the other – that is the inequality between the collective spectator and the performing artist.

In this inequality, the artist presupposes that the viewer does not know what the artist does know and that the viewer ignores the fact that he does not know what the artist knows thus hence is unconcerned about how to know it.

Whereas in the same situation, the artist is not only sensitive to but also have apprehended what remains unknown to the viewer. In addition he also knows how to make it knowable, at what time and what place, according to what protocol. He knows something that the viewer will always be too late to know, short of becoming an artist himself, something that is more important than the third thing conveyed. The artist always knows the exact distance between the collective viewer and what they are short of.

4.4.1.1.4 The Programmed Gaze

Therefore in this unequal spectatorship the artists “teach” the viewers the knowledge of the knowledgeable with the progressive method, which dismisses all groping and all chance by explaining items in order, from the simplest to the most complex, according to what the viewer is capable of understanding, with respect to his age or social background and social expectations. This is also the similar to the pedagogical process in which the educator transmits primary knowledge to his student: the knowledge that he must have things explained to him in order to understand, the knowledge that he cannot understand on his own. It is the knowledge of his incapacity.

This inequality presupposes the stupidity of the viewer and produces the spectacles that preempt the gaze of the spectator. The effect of the coming gaze from the viewer is totally under expectation and is programmed beforehand.

4.4.1.2 Absence of Object + Absence of Sign = Renouncing the Authority

4.4.1.2.1 Disassociating the Privilege

What lies at the heart of the inequality between the viewer and the performer is the privileged medium conveying the knowledge or energy that is unknown to the spectator but fully possessed by the performer. It is distance generated by the privilege of the medium that separates the spectator and the performer and creates the hierarchy between them.

“Absence of object + absence of sign” means that there is no such privileged medium, just as there is no privileged knowledge that is owned by one part but deficient in another. The spectator can learn, sign after sign, the resemblance of that of which he is ignorant to that which he knows. He can do it if, at each step, he observes what is in front of him, tells what he has seen, and verifies what he has told. From the passive spectator to the scientist who builds hypotheses, it is always the same intelligence that the artist or performer has to work when they deal with the unknown.

Disassociating the privilege of the third thing means that the spectator of the performance learns what the artist does not know. The looking process is actually an intellectual adventure, together with the artists, but cannot be actualized without any side equally involved. The artist just encourages him to look for something and to recount everything he discovers along the way while the artist verifies that he is actually looking for it. The spectator learns something as an effect of artist's command. But he does not learn the artist's knowledge. To help his spectator eliminate the distance, the artist needs only dissociate his knowledge from his performance. He does not communicate his knowledge to the spectator. He commands them to venture forth in the forest, to report what they see, what they think of what they have seen, to verify it, and so on.

4.4.1.2.2 Renouncing the Authority

Therefore “absence of object + absence of sign” requires the artist renounce the authority of the knowledge imposed in his performance, the target audience, and the presupposed univocal mode of explicating the world, and makes himself equal to everybody. Thus in this way it dismisses the presupposition of distance between the two intellectualities. Associating and dissociating instead of being the privileged medium that conveys the knowledge or energy that makes people active-this could be the principle of “absence of object + absence of sign”. This principle has to work through unpredictable and irreducible distances and an unpredictable and irreducible play of associations and dissociations.

4.4.1.2.3 A Theater Without Spectators

What the dismissal of the knowledge and action - the action of knowing and the action led by knowledge implies the same situation for both the performer and the spectator because both of them have to pursue what they do not know, that is, an equality of the spectator and the performer. This means a new kind of theater where there is no spectators, where spectators will no longer be spectators, where both of them are performers and spectators, where both of them will learn things instead of being captured by the spectacular, and where the performers are in the auditorium watching the whole situation and spectators become active participants on the stage joining a collective performance instead of being passive viewers.

4.4.2 Producing “Absence of Object + Absence of Sign”

4.4.2.1 Spectator as Performer

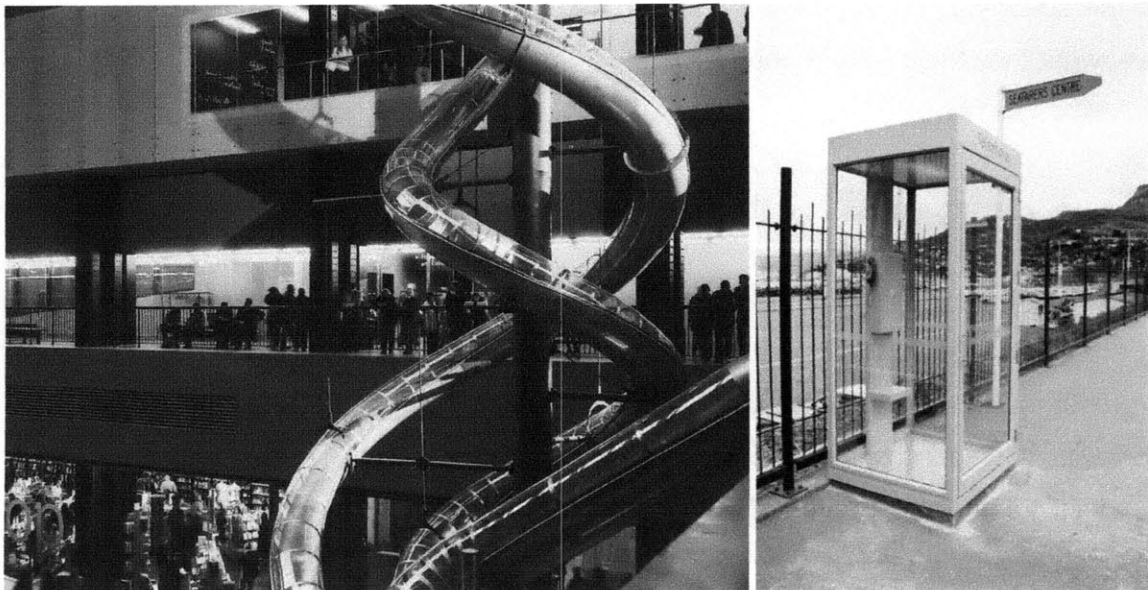


Figure 4.93

4.4.2.1.1 The Opposition of Activity and Passivity

The blurring of the performer and spectator seems to echo one condition typically thought necessary for the relational aesthetic of art is the becoming-active of the spectator. This way of thinking already implies a judgment—namely, that to be a spectator means to be passive. In this logic looking is deemed the opposite of knowing. It means standing before an appearance without knowing the conditions that produced that appearance or the reality that lies behind it. And furthermore the spectator who looks at the spectacle remains motionless in his seat, lacking any power of intervention. Being a spectator means being passive. The spectator is separated from the capacity of knowing just as he is separated from the possibility of acting. In this situation, even when the dramaturge or the performer doesn't know what he wants the spectator to do, he knows at least that the spectator has to do something: switch from passivity to activity.

Turning the Spectator into Scientist

According to the Brechtian paradigm, theatrical mediation makes the audience aware of the social situation on which theater itself rests, prompting the audience to act in consequence. What Brecht stigmatizes is the theatrical illusion which keeps the spectator in a state of hypnotism and passivity. And he calls for an active spectator, meaning a knowledgeable spectator who refuses identification takes distance from what he sees and asks why it is so. The spectator must be released from the passivity of the viewer, who is fascinated by the appearance standing in front of him and identifies with the characters on the stage. He must be confronted with the spectacle of something strange, which stands as an enigma and demands that he investigate the reason for its strangeness. He must be pressed to abandon the role of passive viewer and to take on that of the scientist who observes phenomena and seeks their cause.

Turning the Spectator into Participant

What Artaud disparages is theatrical practice which leaves the spectator untouched, passive. And he calls for a spectator who becomes a participant in the magical or hypnotic process of identification. According to the Artaudian scheme, it makes them abandon the position of spectator: No longer seated in front of the spectacle, they are instead surrounded by the performance, dragged into the circle of the action, which gives them back their collective energy. The spectator must eschew the role of the mere observer who remains still and untouched in front of a distant spectacle. He must be torn from his delusive mastery, drawn into the magical power of theatrical action, where he will exchange the privilege of playing the rational viewer for the experience of possessing theater's true vital energies.

These are especially true in the work of Carten Holler. The spectators are not only made unfamiliar to these everyday equipment, they also participate in the performance of the artists work. The solutions are opposing but they grapple differently with the same problem: turning the passive spectator – the spectator who only sees – in an active participant, in a persons who truly acts, whether this “true action” is viewed or as process of rational inquiry or magical possession.

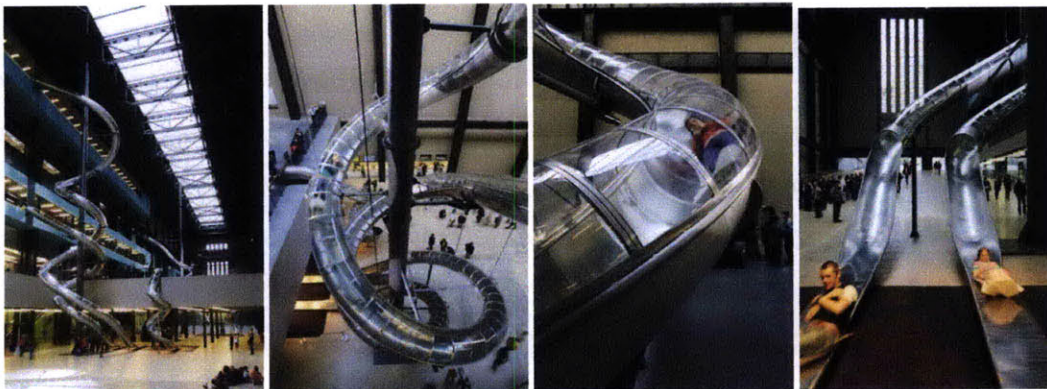


Figure 4.94

They present to the collective audience performances intended to teach the spectators how they can stop being spectators and become performers of a collective activity.

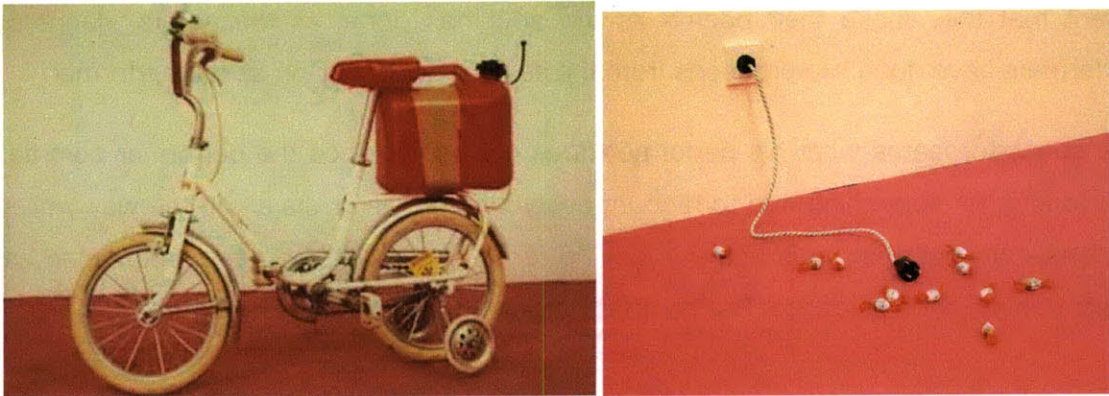


Figure 4.95

On the one hand the spectator must become more distant, on the other he must lose any distance. On the one hand he must change the way he looks for a better way of looking, on the other he must abandon the very position of the viewer.

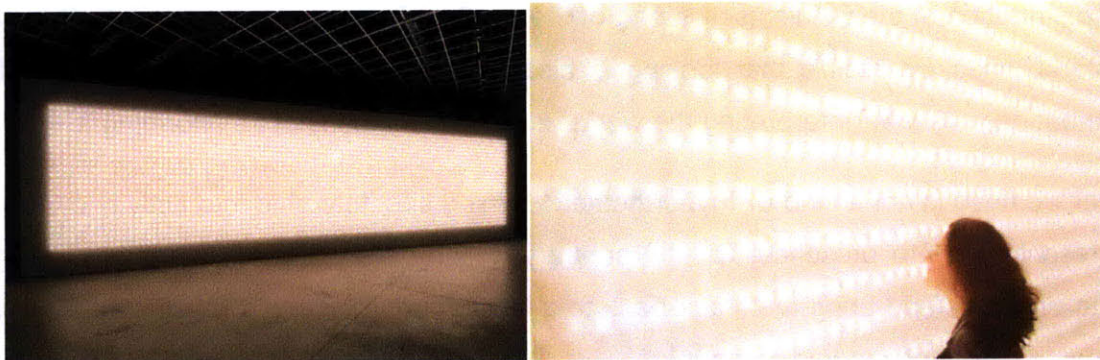


Figure 4.96

4.4.2.1.2 Dismiss the Opposition of Activity and Passivity

However, spectatorship is not a passivity that must be turned into activity. It is our normal situation. We learn and teach, we act and know, as spectators who link what they see with what they have seen and told, done and dreamed. There is no need to turn the passivity of the spectator, because the spectator is active, just like the student or the scientist: He observes, he selects, he compares, and he interprets. He connects what he observes with many other things he has observed on other stages, in other kinds of spaces. The interpreter makes his poem with the poem that is performed in front of him.

The spectator participates in the performance if he is able to tell his own story about the story that is in front of him. The spectators see, feel, and understand something to the

extent that they make their poems as the poet has done, as the actors, dancers, or performers have done. He proceeds from the same presupposition as the performer.

The spectator learns what his performer does not know, since the performer commands him to look for something and to recount everything he discovers along the way while the performer verifies that he is actually looking for it. The spectator learns something as an effect of his artist's guidance. But he does not learn the artist's knowledge.

Enactment of the Equality

Producing "absence of object + absence of sign" starts from the principle of equality. It begins when we dismiss the opposition between looking and acting and understand that the distribution of the visible itself is part of the configuration of domination and subjection. It starts when we realize that looking is also an action that confirms or modifies that distribution, and that "interpreting the world" is already a means of transforming it.

What we need is not a kind of "hypertheater," turning spectatorship into activity by turning representation into presence. On the contrary, theater should question its privileging of living presence and bring the stage back to a level of equality with the telling of a story or the writing and the reading of a book.

Theater should question its privileging of living presence and bring the stage back to a level of equality with the telling of a story or the writing and the reading of a book. It should call for spectators who are active interpreters, who render their own translation, who appropriate the story for themselves, and who ultimately make their own story out of it. The distance that the "ignorant" person has to cover is not the gap between his ignorance and the knowledge of his master; it is the distance between what he already knows and what he still doesn't know but can learn by the same process.

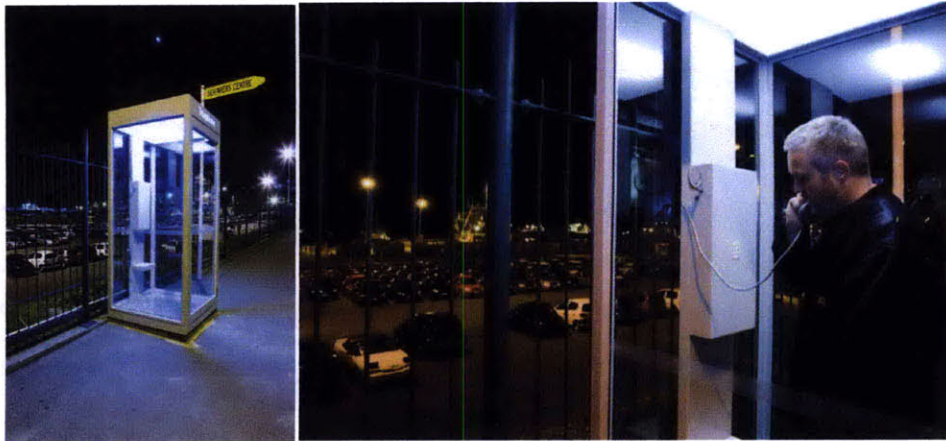


Figure 4.97

The indeterminate Result

At the heart of “absence of object + absence of sign” is the loss of any determinate relationship between a work and its audience, between its sensible presence and an effect that will be its natural end. To look and to listen requires the work of attention, selection, reappropriation, a way of making one's own film, one's own text, one's own installation out of what the artist has presented.

The work of art as in-between thing, the unanticipated third should be the material thing, foreign to both master and student, through which they can verify what the spectator has seen, what he has told about it, what he thinks of what he has told.



Figure 4.98

This effect is what exactly differentiate works of Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset from that of Carten Holler. In the work of questioning the individual and public “I’m thinking of

you” and “Phone home”, one may find that the work is incomplete without the participation of the spectator to the extent that it is created by the spectator. The transcript in the Appendix shows the part of the record of work.

The attempt to overcome it by setting ones own standards intervenes the signifying structures that have been constituting the meaning of the space. This is what is done in the collaborative works of Ingar Dragset and Michael Elmgreen. In their series "Powerless structures" and related works, the institutionalization and the reproduction of myths in the public space are explored in relation to identity in general.

In two live acts/performances that precede the "Powerless Structures" series, the visibility of an altered structure is apparent. In "Try" and "To Ken Ishii .. " an almost understated definition of the un-fixed identity spaces takes place. It is not an attempt to reveal intimate personal matter about the participators, but rather to construct a setting that in its overall structure exposes the structures in the constitution of identity spaces.

In "To Ken Ishii ... " the performers are encountered on the street as well. In this work two Asian men are sitting around inside the installatory setting, doing nothing but listening to the music by the Japanese OJ Ken Ishii in head phones. They are used as bodily compositional elements in an environment created for them that in itself does not have a specific contextual reference. Through the objectification, their visible identity is somehow dissolved, at least for the spectator who can only relate to them as a formal part of the installation. The passive presence of the performers is only interfered by the fact that they are listening to music.

This is a play on ambivalence that involves the spectator; the spectator, traditionally bound to see, is in a way invited to listen by being aware of the OJ's name through the title. But she will hear nothing. Instead she will just look at somebody listening to music and through this representation of hearing getting aware of her own exclusion of the act. In the live act installation, a mental wall of difference between spectator and performer is being constructed; a wall that points to the fact that we do not share the same spaces. Using performers of Asian origin marks the division between psycho-social spaces in a very explicit way. They are visibly different in out-look in comparison to the main crowd of the

spectators who must be considered to be mainly white Europeans as the live installation happened in Oslo, Norway.

4.4.2.2 Performer as Spectator

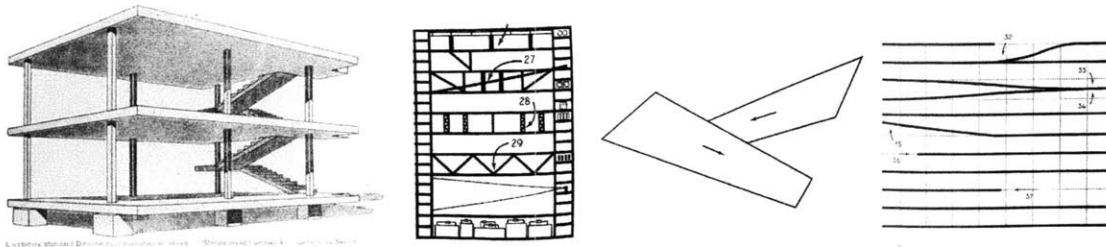


Figure 4.99

4.4.2.2.1 Associating the Intellectual Adventure

The performer does not want to "teach" anything. That program demands that the spectators be on the stage and the performers in the auditorium. It demands that the very difference between the two spaces be abolished, that the performance takes place anywhere other than in a theater. That entails the invention of new forms of intellectual adventure.

What has to be put to the test by our performances-whether teaching or acting, speaking, writing, making art, etc.-is not the capacity of aggregation of a collective hut the capacity of the anonymous, the capacity that makes anybody equal to everybody. This capacity works through unpredictable and irreducible distances. It works through an unpredictable and irreducible play of associations and dissociations.

It is the power to translate in their own way what they are looking at. It is the power to connect it with the intellectual adventure that makes any of them similar to any other insofar as his or her path looks unlike any other. Associating and dissociating instead of being the privileged medium that conveys the knowledge or energy that makes people active-this could be the principle of an "emancipation of the spectator," which means the emancipation of any of us as a spectator.

There is no privileged medium, just as there is no privileged starting point. Everywhere there are starting points and turning points from which we learn new things, if we first dismiss the presupposition of distance, second the distribution of the roles, and third the borders between territories.

We don't need to turn spectators into actors. We do need to acknowledge that every spectator is already an actor in his own story and that every actor is in turn the spectator of the same kind of story.

4.4.2.2.2 Blurring the Looking and the Acting

This is what “absence of object + absence of sign” means: the blurring of the opposition between those who look and those who act, between those who are individuals and those who are members of a collective body. This very constructed, at times playful, relationship to their history addresses a spectator whose interpretive and emotional capacity is not only acknowledged but called upon. In other words, the work is constructed in such a way that it is up to the spectator to interpret it and to react to it affectively.

4.4.2.2.3 Being Performers and Spectators at the Same Time

It should be the institution of a new stage of equality, where the different kinds of performances would be translated into one another. In all those performances, in fact, it should be a matter of linking what one knows with what one does not know, of being at the same time performers who display their competences and spectators who are looking to find what those competences might produce in a new context, among unknown people. Artists, like researchers, build the stage where the manifestation and the effect of their competences become dubious as they frame the story of a new adventure in a new idiom. The effect of the idiom cannot be anticipated. It calls for spectators who are active interpreters, who render their own translation, who appropriate the story for themselves,

and who ultimately make their own story out of it. An emancipated community is in fact a community of storytellers and translators.

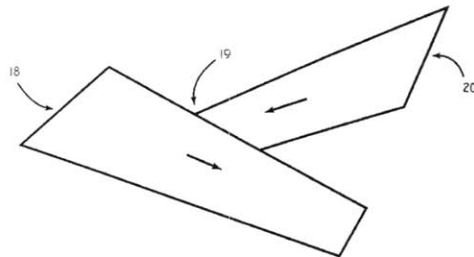


Figure 4.100

Loop-trick: System of intersecting ramps destroys the status of the individual floor. Introducing an X of intersecting floors in a two-story building creates a continuous surface that destroys the status of the individual floor, eliminates the notion of above and below.

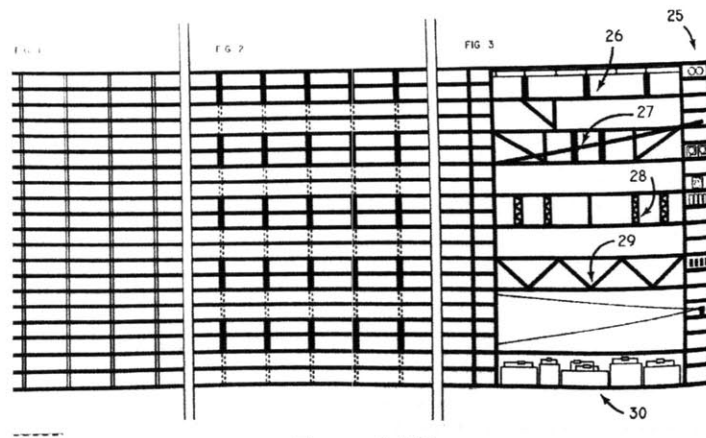


Figure 4.101

Stacked freedoms: System of vierendeel beams allows free occupancy of alternating floors. Instead of accepting structural depth as a “lost” segment of the section, it can be expanded and turned into habitable floors. The increasingly inhibiting legacy of cumulative structure is transformed into a regime of alternating structural absence and presence.

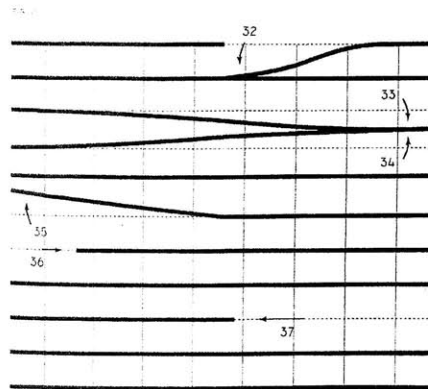


Figure 4.102

Inside-out city: Folding of “street” generates vertical interior boulevard that exposes and relates all programs in a single sequence. Deforming floor not in plan but in section potentially turns the seemingly inevitable separation of different floors into a continuous experience, while ending at the same time the regimes of spatial orthogonality that have dominated architecture.

The series of autonomous, generalist, and global projects in which Rem Koolhaas applies his reading of New York City culminates in two projects: one, his entry to the 1989 competition for the Bibliotheque de France; the other, an actual commission in the same year for the Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe.

Deforming floor not in plan but in section potentially turns the seemingly inevitable separation of different floors into a continuous experience, while ending at the same time the regimes of spatial orthogonality that have dominated architecture. Yet, by combining this new architecture with the traditional discipline of the structural grid, it can be imagined, supported, stacked instead of being condemned to a life as a blob; become communal instead of autarkic.

The Jussieu library at the University of Paris (1993) was conceptualised as a folded urban void. The library developed as an urban street in relation to its setting. The ramped floor of the library was rooted in the ground, connected to public transportation. This surface was viewed as a new kind of public realm, kind of social magic carpet in which the visitor "becomes a Baudelarian 'flaneur', inspecting and being seduced by a world of books and

information and the urban scenario. „308 Areas of the library were conceptualised as different types of landscape (vineyard, desert, forest, etc.)

The scheme relied on inversion to rescue the original significance of the project by

Albert designed in 1965." It would do so through inversion, by overturning the perception of the existing parvis: "intended as the essence of the campus, it is experienced as a residue, a mere slice of void sandwiched between socle and building." Exodus had inverted the meaning of the Berlin Wall- Originally conceived of as an instrument of exclusion. the wall became in Koolhaas and Zenghehs's project a means of fostering community. The project for Jussieu dealt with the organisation of social space and the building as its representation. Koolhaas had asked the project team to begin by reading an excerpt from Society of the Spectacle. Guy Debord's text set the stage for the theme of power and knowledge in the context of the university. Although ideas that collaborators might have harvested from the text were never made explicit, this aspect begins to suggest that power, when tied to an institution through architecture, is the product of knowledge (empowerment). OMA's project contrasts with the library built by Dominique Perrault.

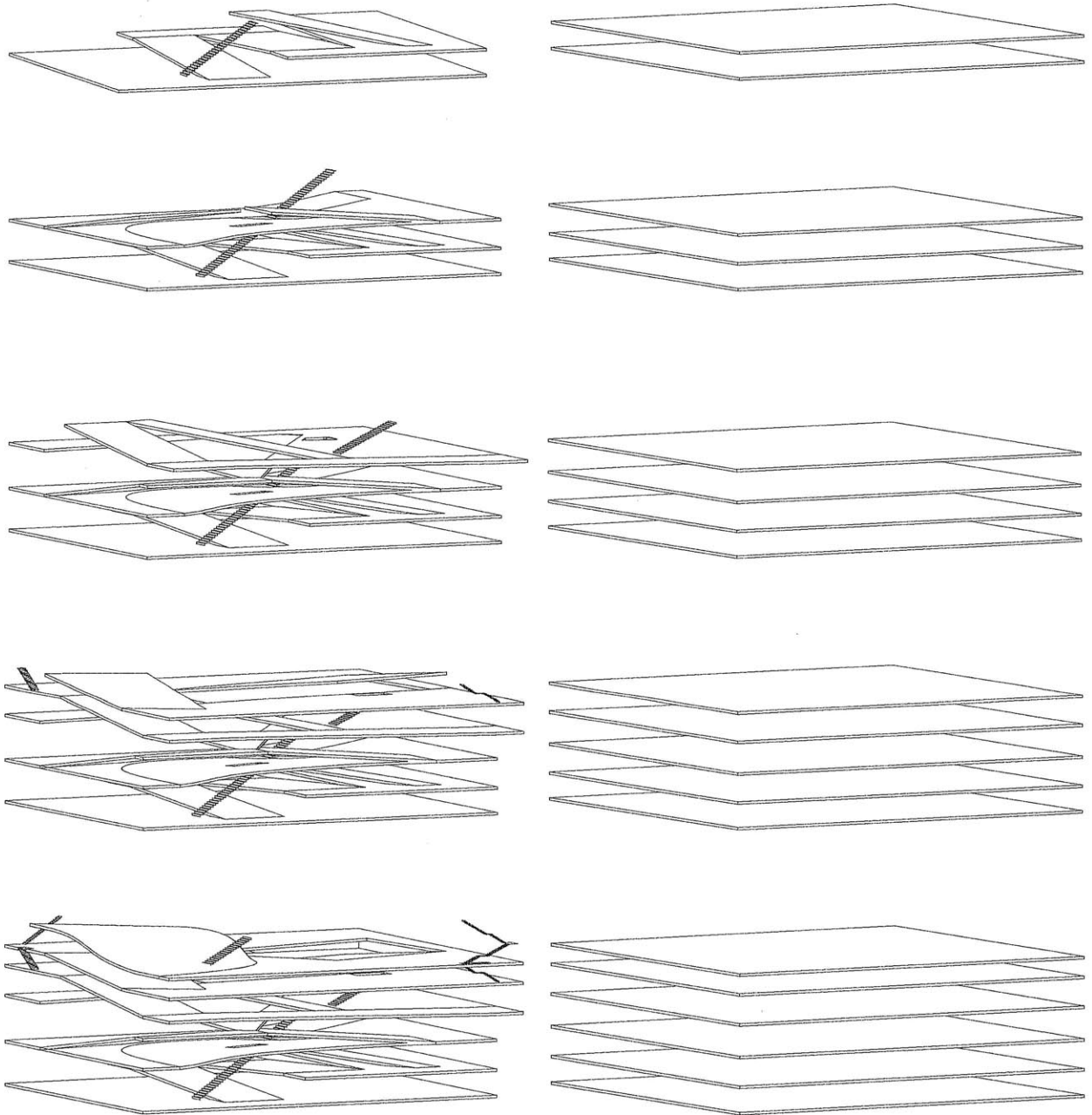


Figure 4.103

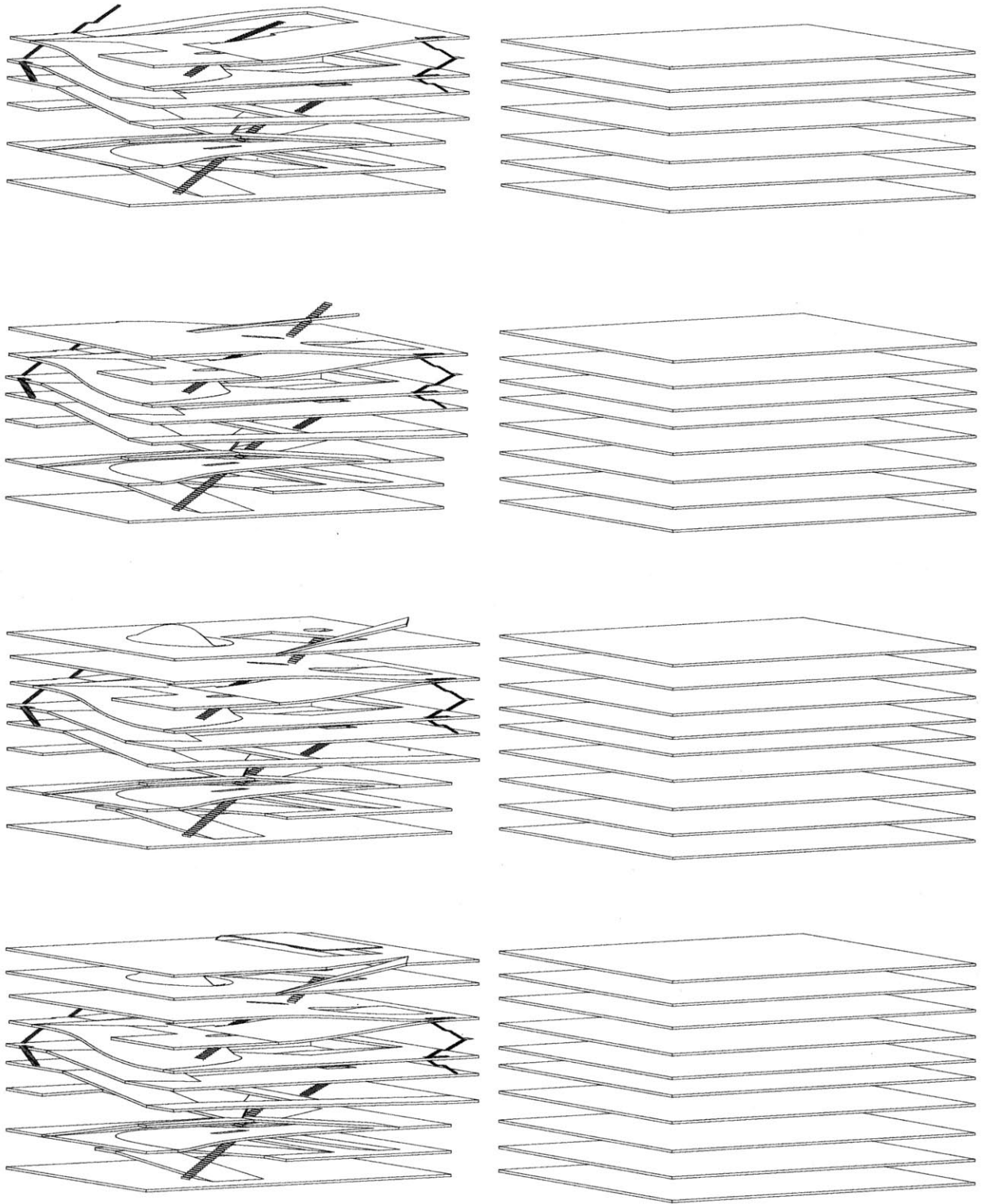


Figure 4.104

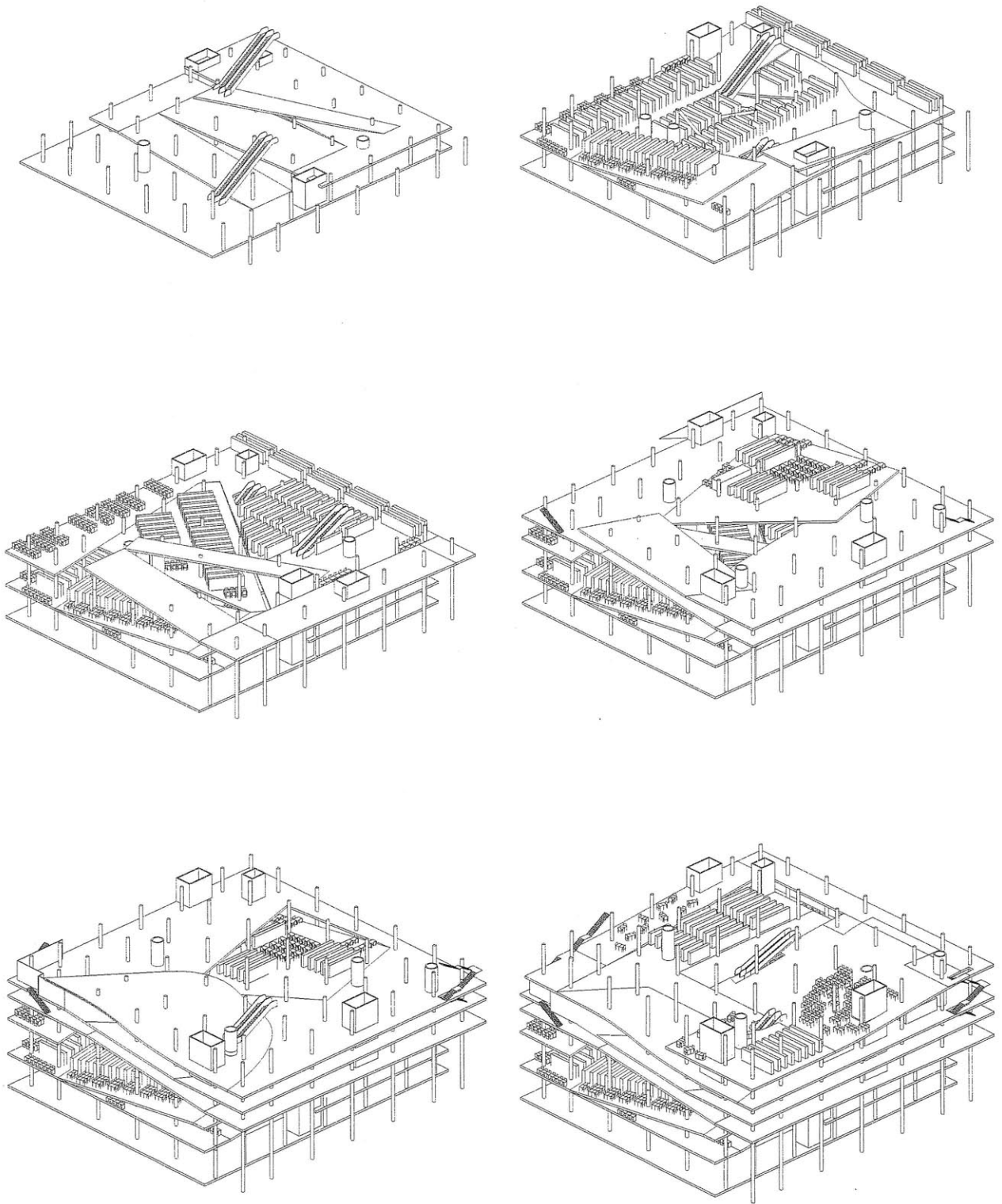


Figure 4.105

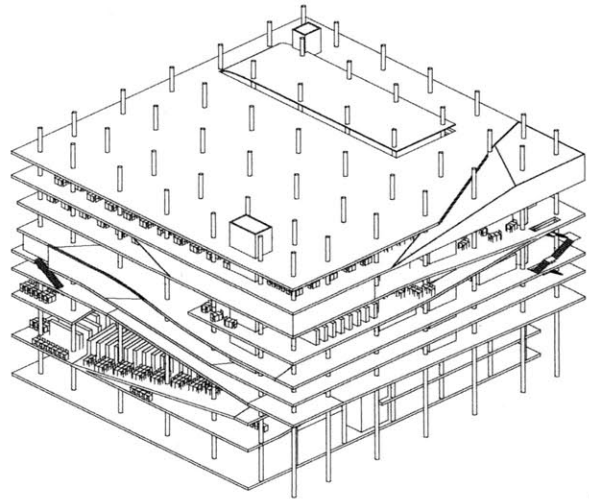
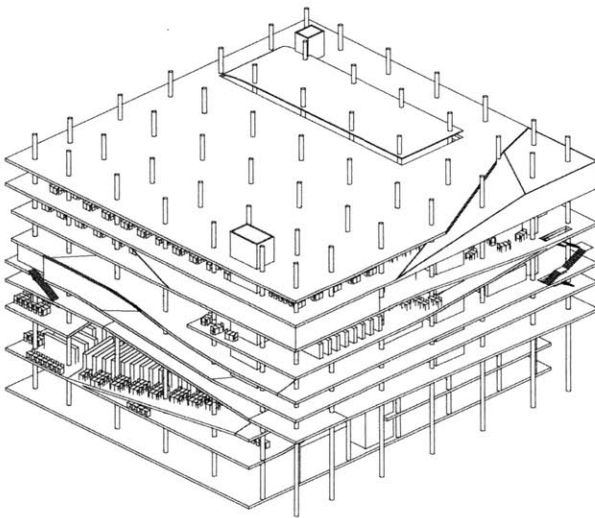
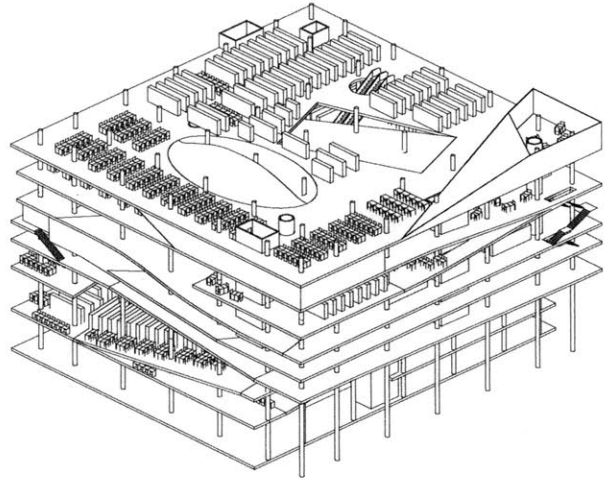
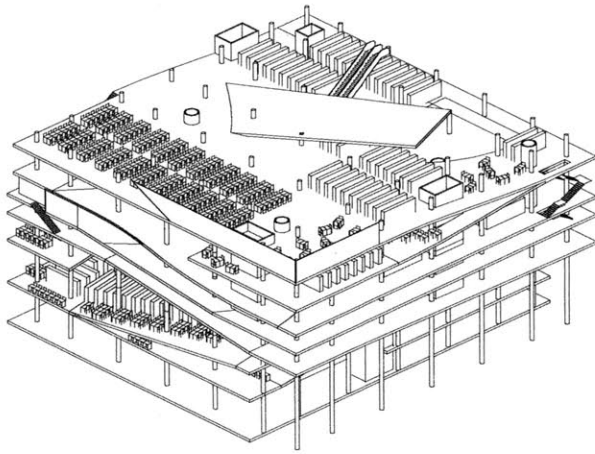


Figure 4.106

4.4.2.3 Reconfiguration

4.4.2.3.1 Translation and Reconfiguration

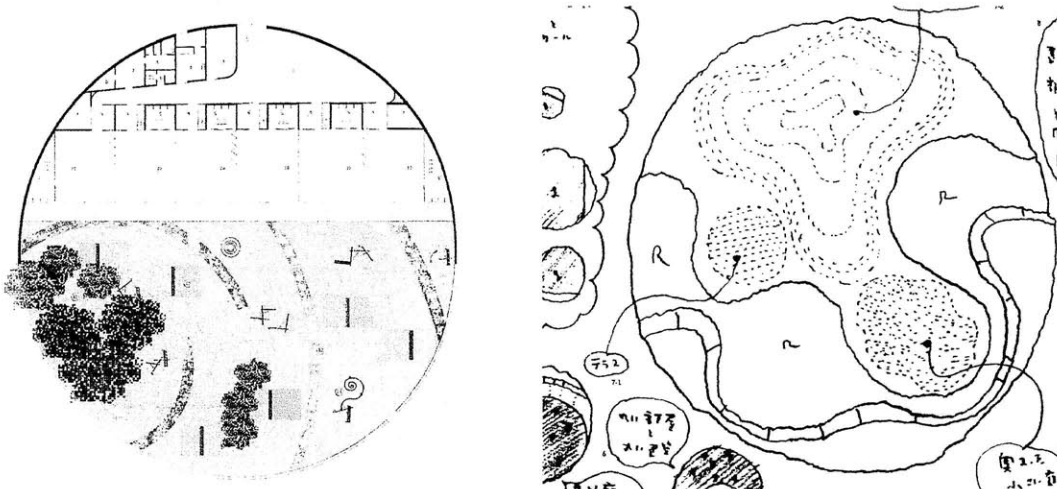


Figure 4.107

What artist provides to the spectator is not the knowledge and energy for future action, but the reconfiguration of the distribution of the sensible, the reconfiguration of the implicit law governing the sensible order that is based on the set horizons and modalities of what is visible and audible as well as what can be said, thought, made, or done. What had to be done was a work of translation, showing how different levels of discourses translate each other.

Junya Ishigami gave us a good example of applying this reconfiguration on architecture project. He revises another completed plan in a new way: “A very interesting aspect of your creative process is that, starting from a study of somebody else's project (built or not), in a way you identify an objective planning methodology, over and above the building that you are designing. Instead of having a single large front garden, you could gain another green space at its back by shifting the central section of the building forward. In this way the interior would be divided into two separate environments. Or else, in place of a single vast enclosure with a large interior and a large exterior, you could think of each classroom as having its own green space. This is how I design projects: I produce an infinite series of variations. If you like, starting from your design, we can try to think of some here.”

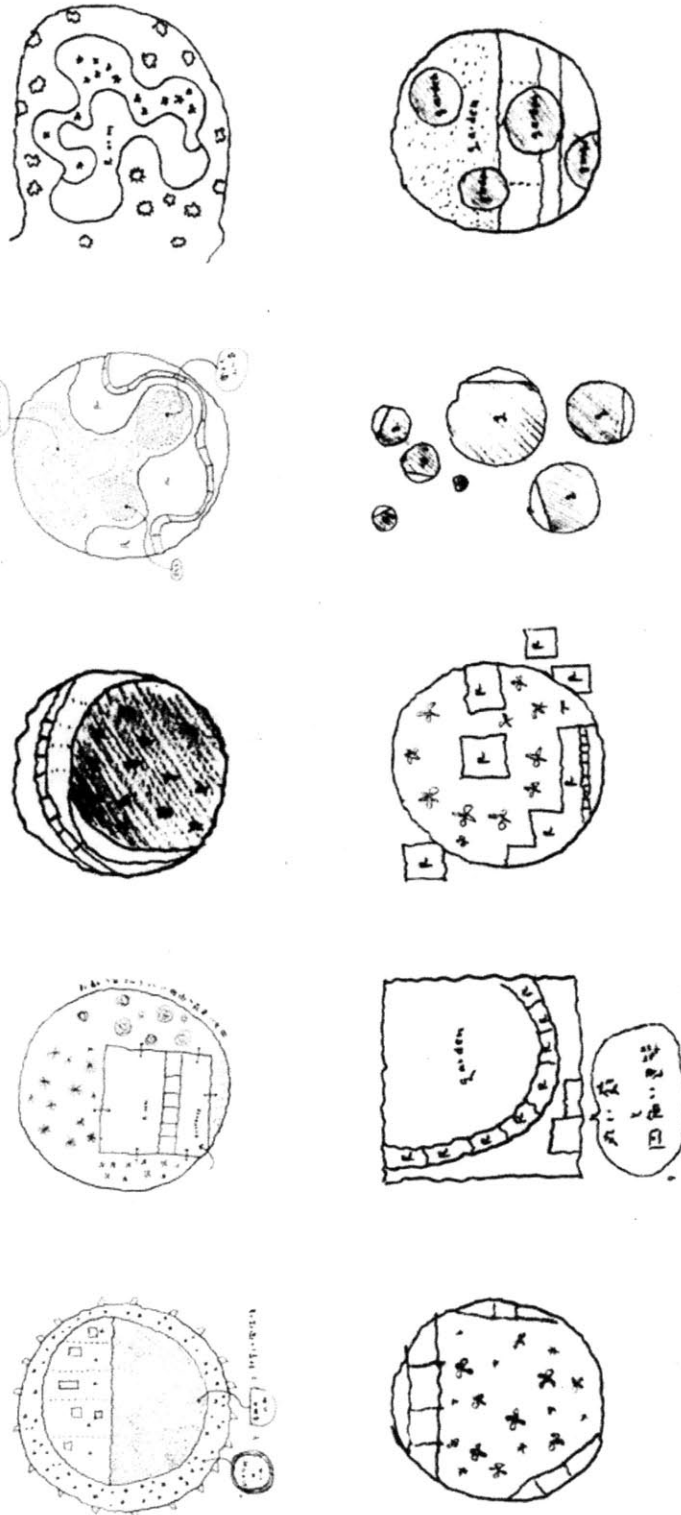


Figure 4.108

4.4.2.3.2 Inventing the New Idiom



Figure 4.109

Producing a new knowledge meant inventing the idiomatic form that would make translation possible. The artist has to use the new idiom to tell of his own intellectual adventure, at the risk that the idiom would remain "unreadable" for those who wanted to know the cause of the story, its true meaning, or the lesson for action that could be drawn from it. He has to produce a discourse that would be readable only for those who would make their own translation from the point of view of their own adventure.

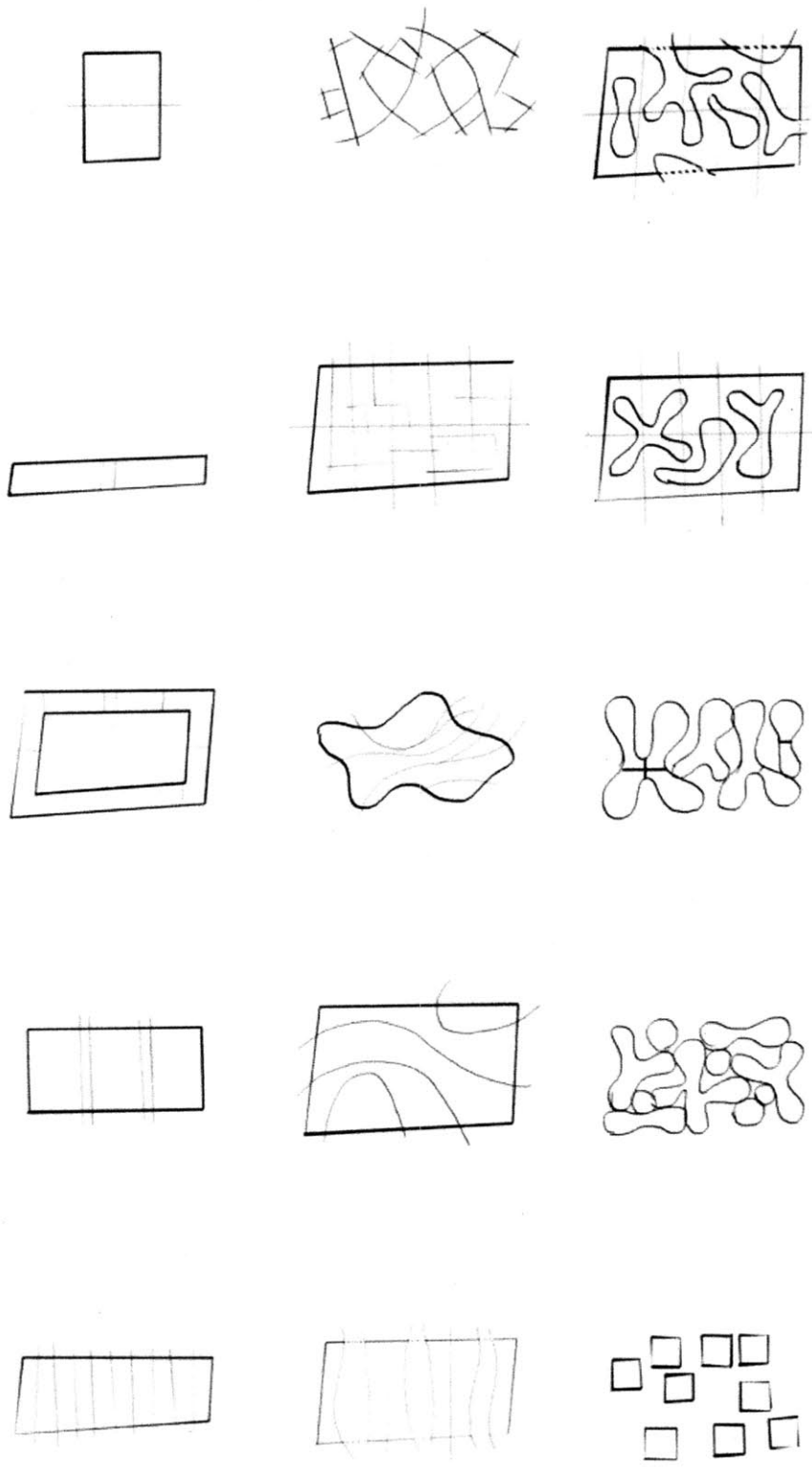


Figure 4.120

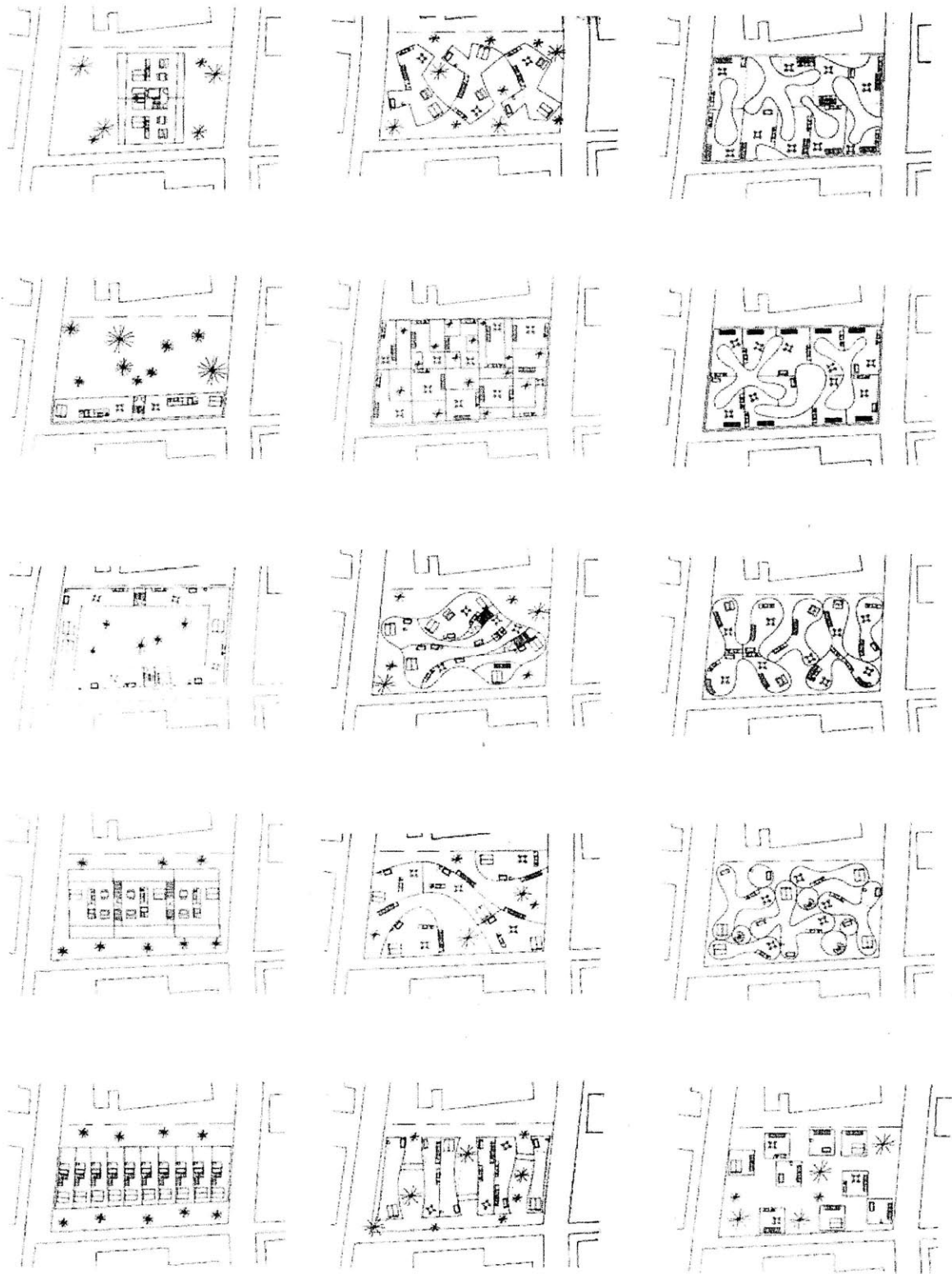


Figure 4.121

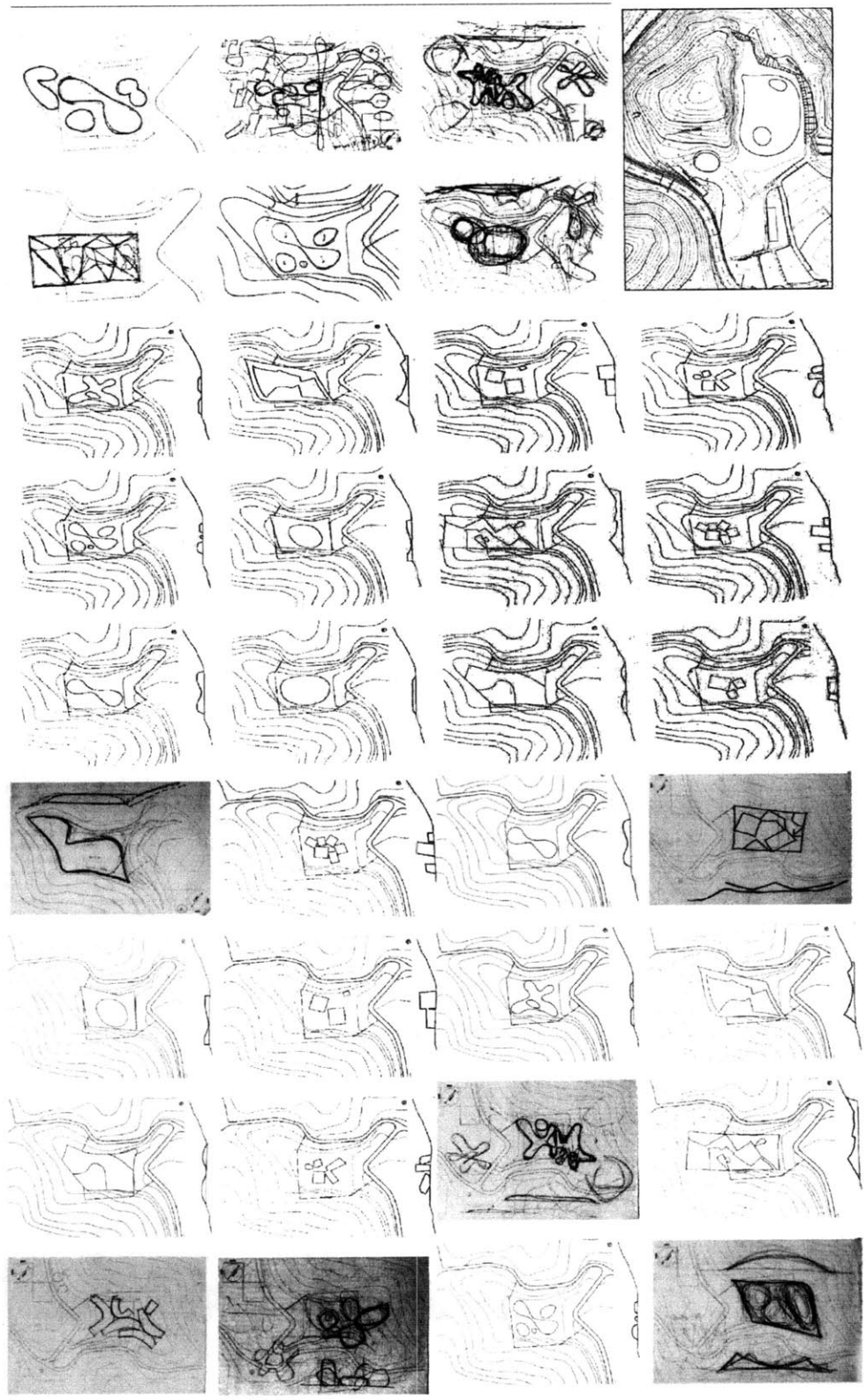


Figure 4.122

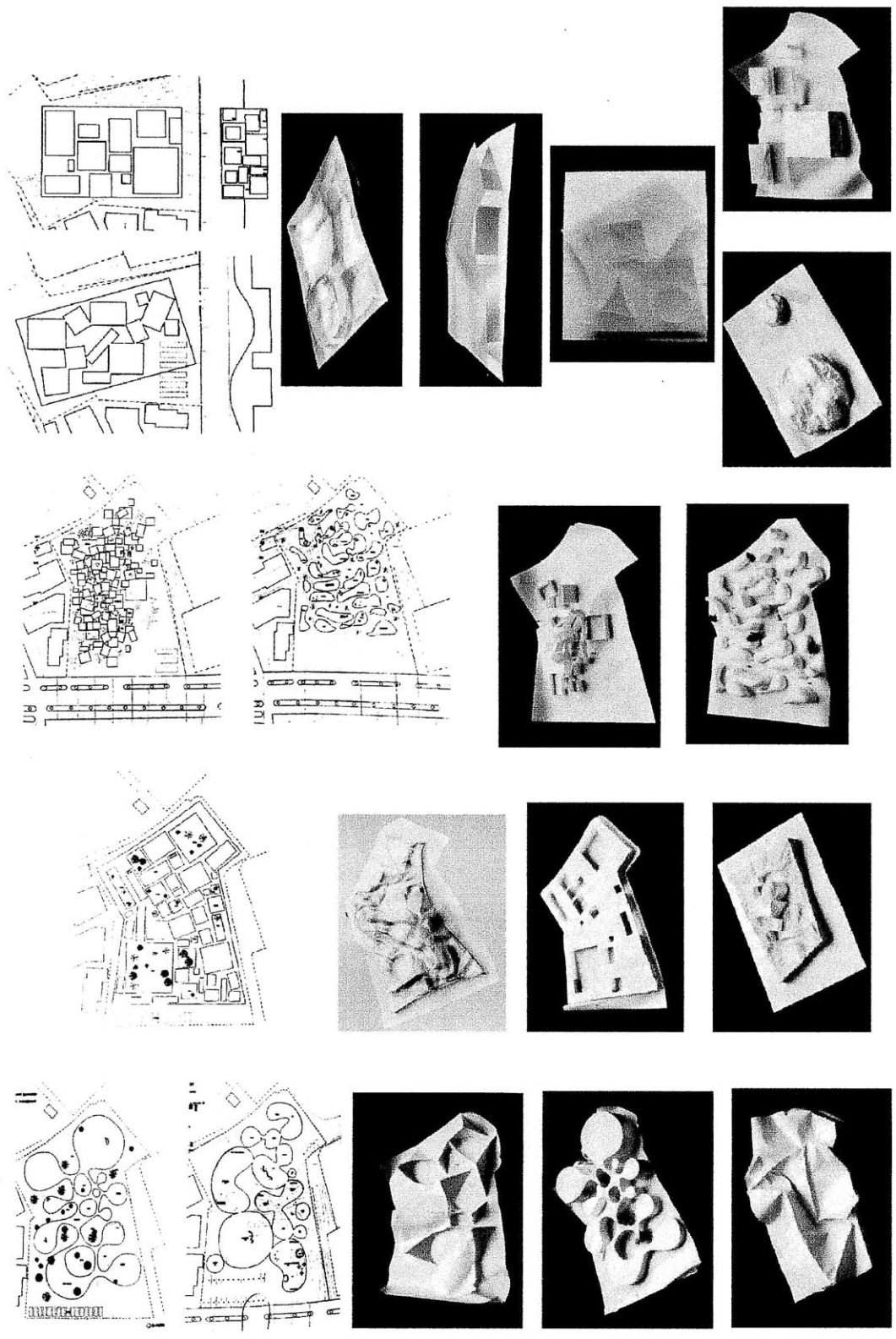


Figure 4.123

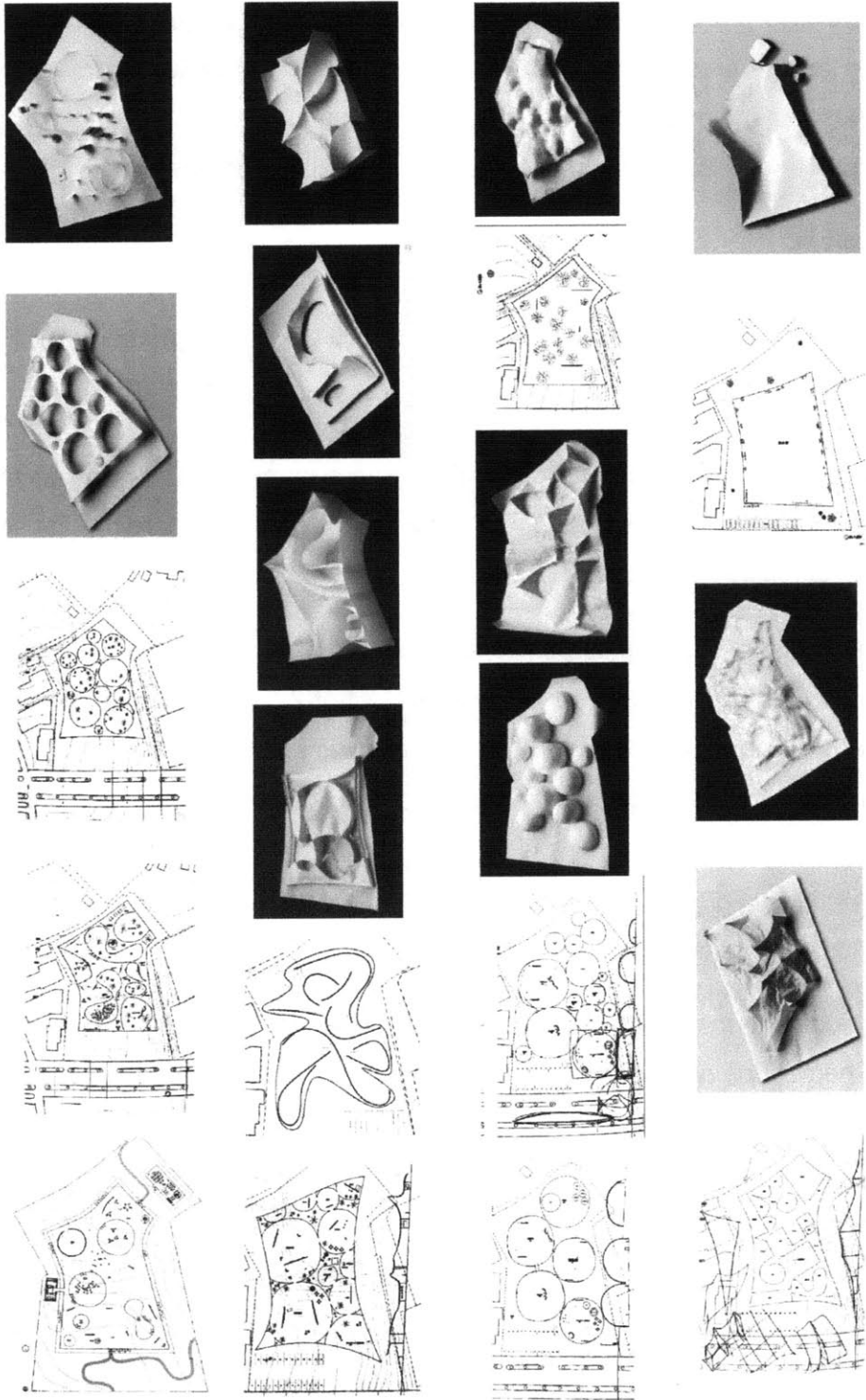


Figure 4.124

4.4.2.3.3 Thwart the Expectations

Artists has to always look at something through the audience's eyes to discover how to produce forms for the presentation of objects, forms for the organization of spaces, that thwart expectations. The main enemy of artistic creativity as well as of political creativity is consensus - that is, inscription within given roles, possibilities, competences.

4.4.2.4 Political Reconfiguration

4.4.2.4.1 Politics

Politics, meanwhile, has an aesthetic dimension: It is a common landscape of the given and the possible, a changing landscape and not a series of acts that are the consequence of "forms of consciousness" acquired elsewhere.

A political declaration or manifestation, like an artistic form, is an arrangement of words, a montage of gestures, an occupation of spaces. In both cases what is produced is a modification of the fabric of the sensible, a transformation of the visible given, intensities, names that one can give to things, the landscape of the possible.

4.4.2.4.2 Political Reconfiguration

Now we must examine the very terrain of the sensible on which artistic gestures shake up our modes of perception and on which political gestures redefine our capacities for action. What truly distinguishes political actions is that these operations are the acts of a collective subject offering itself as a representative of everyone, and of the capacity of everyone. This type of creativity is specific, but it is based on modifications to the fabric of the sensible, produced in particular by artistic reconfigurations of space and time, forms and meanings.

Theater appeared as a form of the aesthetic constitution-meaning the sensory constitution-of the community: the community as a way of occupying time and space, as a

set of living gestures and attitudes that stands before any kind of political form and institution; community as a performing body instead of an apparatus of forms and rules.

In this way theater was associated with the Romantic notion of the aesthetic revolution: the idea of a revolution that would change not only laws and institutions but transform the sensory forms of human experience.

Therefore an artistic intervention can be political by modifying the visible, the ways of perceiving it and expressing it, of experiencing it as tolerable or intolerable. The effect of this modification is consequent on its articulation with other modifications in the fabric of the sensible. That's what "aesthetics" means: A work of art is defined as such by belonging to a certain regime of identification, a certain distribution of the visible, the sayable, and the possible.



Figure 4.125

Wurm makes the viewer a team-mate in a game whose rules, in the sense of a rigorous, dictatorial subjectivity, he alone decides: he encourages us to think about Freud's backside with our head in a beanbag; he gives us a recipe book, with the help of which we can "grow" from Size 50 to 54 within only eight days; or he has us lie down on a white pedestal full of tennis balls.



Figure 4.126

In his Instruction Drawings (ongoing), he eases us into this departure from the patterns of sense by providing written instructions and beautifully clear diagrams to follow.



Figure 4.127

In his instructions, Wurm gives us a roadmap into the absurd: "Open your trousers-put flowers in it and don't think," he suggests. His directions are clear and easy to follow: "Take off your shoe and listen to it for awhile." The Instruction Drawings have the effect of making us unsure of that which is profoundly familiar, just as the sight of a person with a bunch of flowers protruding from his or her trousers will raise more questions than supply answers.

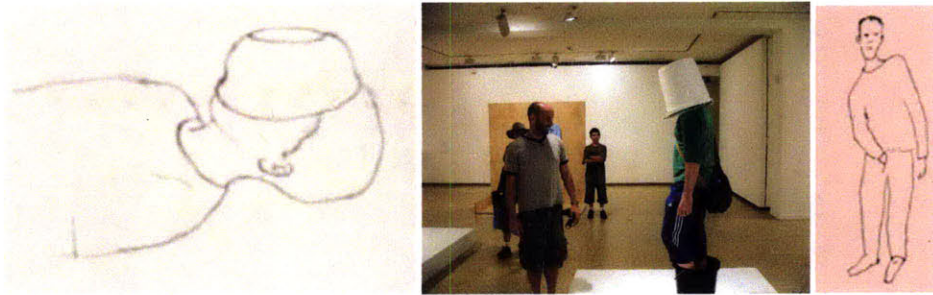


Figure 4.128

It is not the artist who gets himself dirty here, but solely the viewer, who follows instructions and sticks his head in a dustbin or a drain. Following Wurm's photographic directions you can defile someone else's flat by peeing on his carpet. Or you can spit in someone's soup, put your head down her cleavage, stare up her skirt or defy convention in any other imaginable way. It is reserved for the artist alone to direct, supply props, give instructions, draw, describe in words or take photographs.

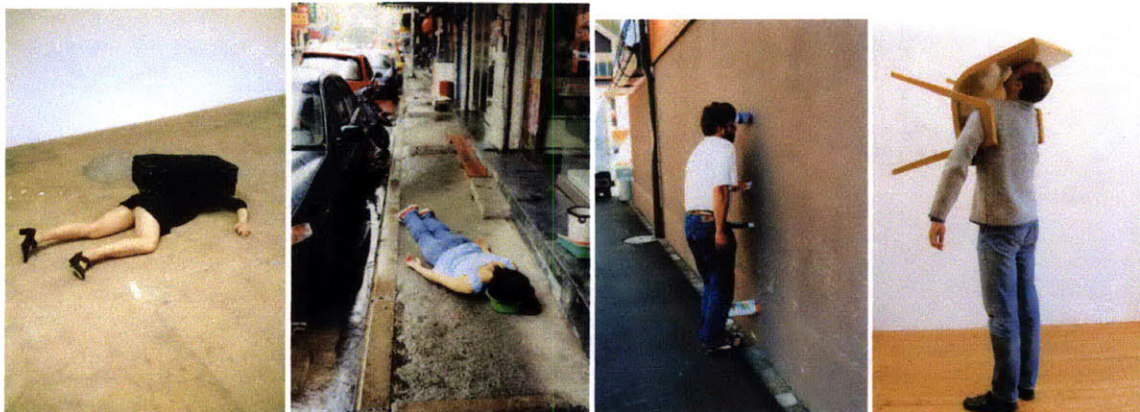


Figure 4.129

Aside from this extreme subjugation of the self to the power of context there is also a form of activation, which becomes particularly clear in the photo series Instructions on how to

be politically incorrect (2002/2003). The incitement to pee on someone's carpet, to spit in their soup, to fall on their cleavage or simply and drastically to fuck the Third World translates taboo or proverbial themes into real images, thus recommending the already mentioned approach of social deviance as a means of self-articulation.

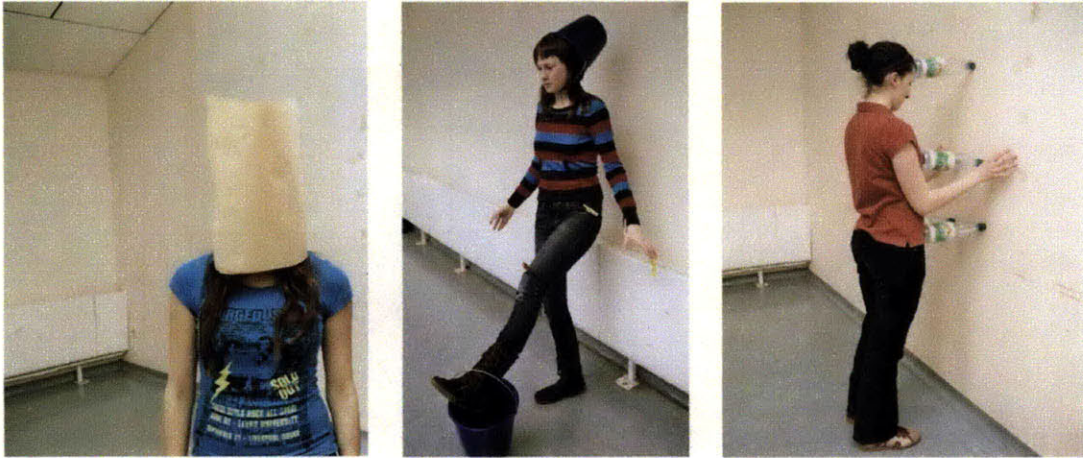


Figure 4.130

Rather than laugh-out-loud funny, the humor they put into play tends to be quietly corrosive. A vein of nullity and nihilism runs through it. As if countering our belief that art must mean something, this work is distinguished by its refusal to produce permanent forms and final positions, to fix meaning in any kind of normative manner.



Figure 4.131

If such "gags" were to be taken to extremes, we would be in the uneasy and tragic terrain of insanity. In asking Wurm's audience to assume the deadpan composure of a clown, these antics straddle the gap between empowerment and disempowerment. By embracing

doubt and the absurd, such actions require thinking and engaged audiences-collaborators willing to actively participate in the construction of meaning.



Figure 4.132

Wurm only supplies the instructions for these works; here too their execution and experience is left to others. This form of proverbially democratic sculpture has now found its way onto Internet forums, where it is communicated and sometimes subject to further invention by others. This mass artistic participation goes well beyond the democratising initiatives of the 1960s and 1970s, as the work of art not only outgrows the artist through the direct embodiment of a sculptural idea by an almost unlimited audience, it also breaks every limiting institutional boundary.



Figure 4.133

Something that I consider to be a prime criterion for art: everything can be seen, everything lies open, and yet one doesn't know how it has "essentially" been made. Important in this context is also the mechanised, repetitive form of Wurm's instructions. As in many of his works the aim is to take a normal activity to absurd lengths through

permanent repetition and then to bring it to a halt, through which it becomes a sculpture. but also a metaphor for the imprisonment of the individual within his social context.

"Your reality," says the woman to her companion, "is reasonable because it arranges your life and you have no doubts. But reality is the invention of liars. The reality of truth is the collective stupidity - because truth doesn't exist. We make it. That's it. It's so simple." We only have a single chance to deal appropriately with this non-existent reality and truth: to lose our selves. Or as the performer in *Tell* puts it, "I believe in things in which I have no idea - which I know nothing about." The self can only meet itself as a stranger - and no longer recognizes itself.

Political Reconfiguration

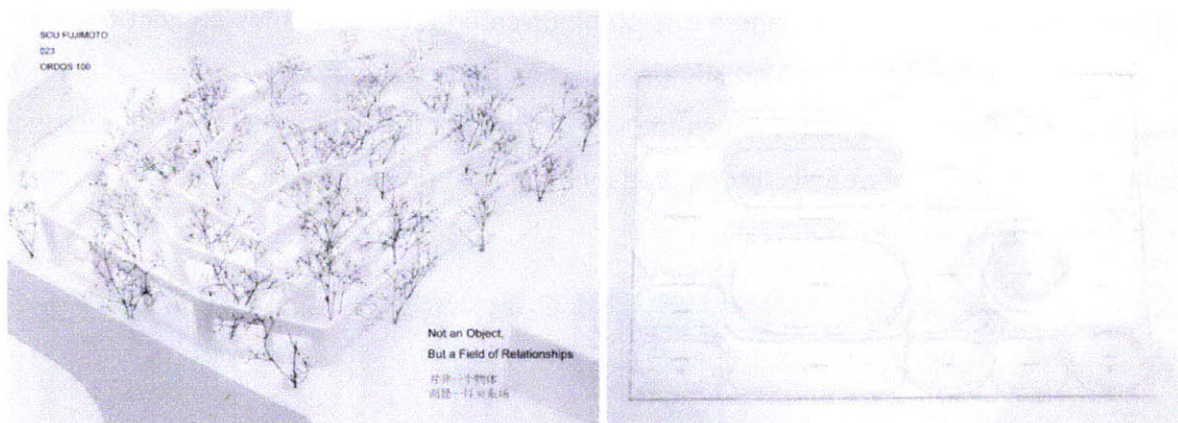


Figure 4.134

Now we must examine the very terrain of the sensible on which artistic gestures shake up our modes of perception and on which political gestures redefine our capacities for action. What truly distinguishes political actions is that these operations are the acts of a collective subject offering itself as a representative of everyone, and of the capacity of everyone. This type of creativity is specific, but it is based on modifications to the fabric of the sensible, produced in particular by artistic reconfigurations of space and time, forms and meanings.

Theater appeared as a form of the aesthetic constitution-meaning the sensory constitution-of the community: the community as a way of occupying time and space, as a set of living gestures and attitudes that stands before any kind of political form and institution; community as a performing body instead of an apparatus of forms and rules.

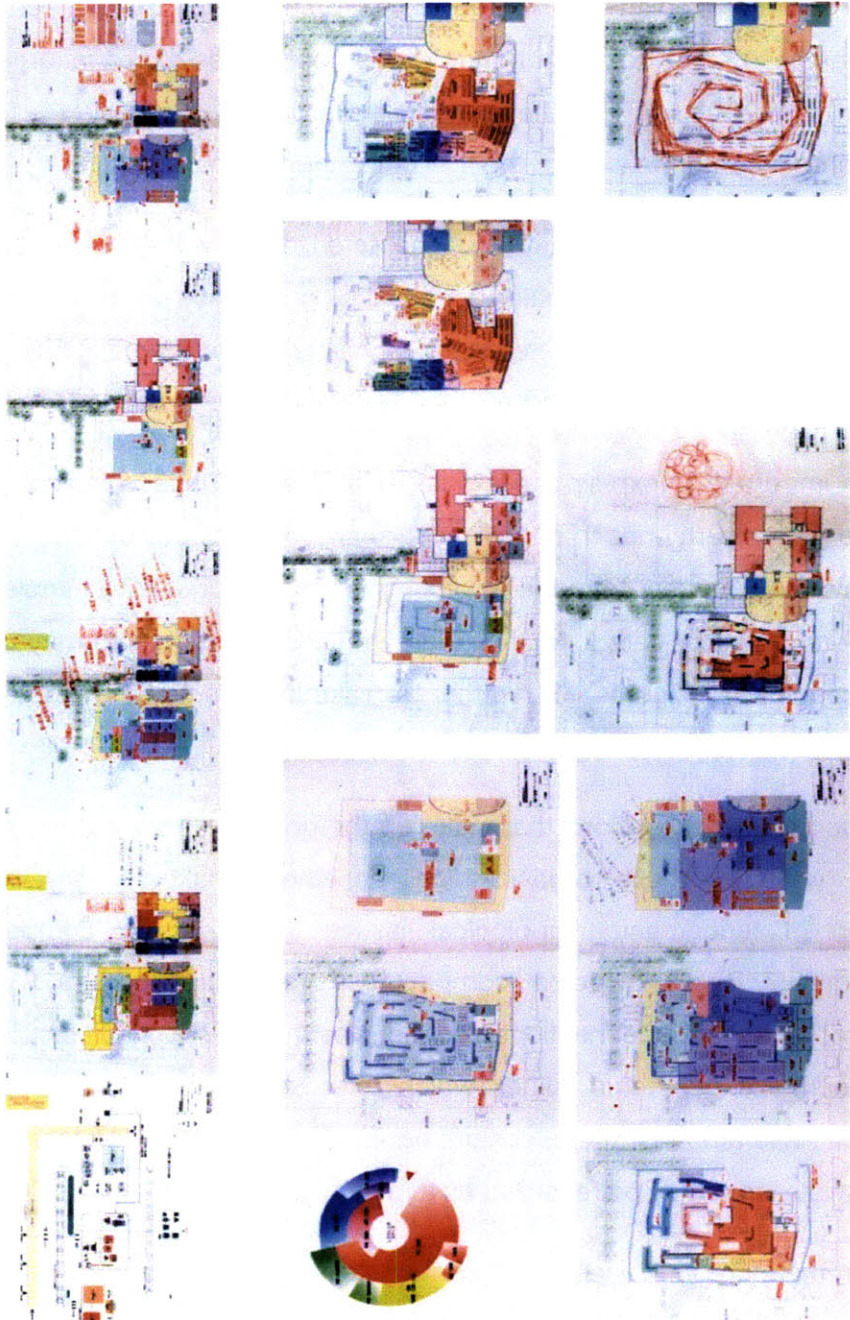


Figure 4.135

The consequence of this desire to remove, or at least drastically reduce, the hierarchies that have traditionally predominated in architectural production is that Sejima and Nishizawa always generate non-hierarchical organizational schemes (clustering or compartmentalization) which are, moreover, extremely clear. The career path of these architects has been an exploration of the diverse possibilities of spatial organization using this criterion. The value of what I have called the process of exclusion is to enable us to see the potentiality of forms as if for the first time, and with naivety.

It is not only restraint and delicacy that characterize her work, but a very precise and particular plan syntax, a composition by blocks that avoids all sense of montage-like collision; a smooth space that is neither agglomeration nor division, but rather cell-like and topological.

“For us it is important to explain the intrinsic relationships of each project quite clearly ... to show the idea clearly, not through figure, shape or form but by the most simple and direct way. When you want to judge whether it is a simple idea or a simple scheme, then the concept must read clearly.” As they state in the initial quotation, they do not strive to construct ideal forms – figures – but rather to make the concept – the organization of the components or spaces – explicit.

The fundamental spatial relations that make up the project are set out “in the most simple and direct way” in these organizational schemes, making them the elementary formalization of fundamental topological issues: clustering or compartmentalization methods, concentration or dispersal, compactness or breakup, aperture or closure, interior and exterior, limits and connections, continuities and discontinuities. These are pre-geometric or basic geometric issues which refer to the definition of spaces and the relations that arise amongst them, not the geometric figure taken by their shapes. Sejima and Nishizawa’s work may be regarded as a manual for architectural topology.

The sketch therefore only needs to contain lines and occasionally points, while the project’s development and construction should respect the plan’s schematic nature as

strictly as possible, without adding dimensions, without providing thickness, which would detract from the topological substance of architecture.

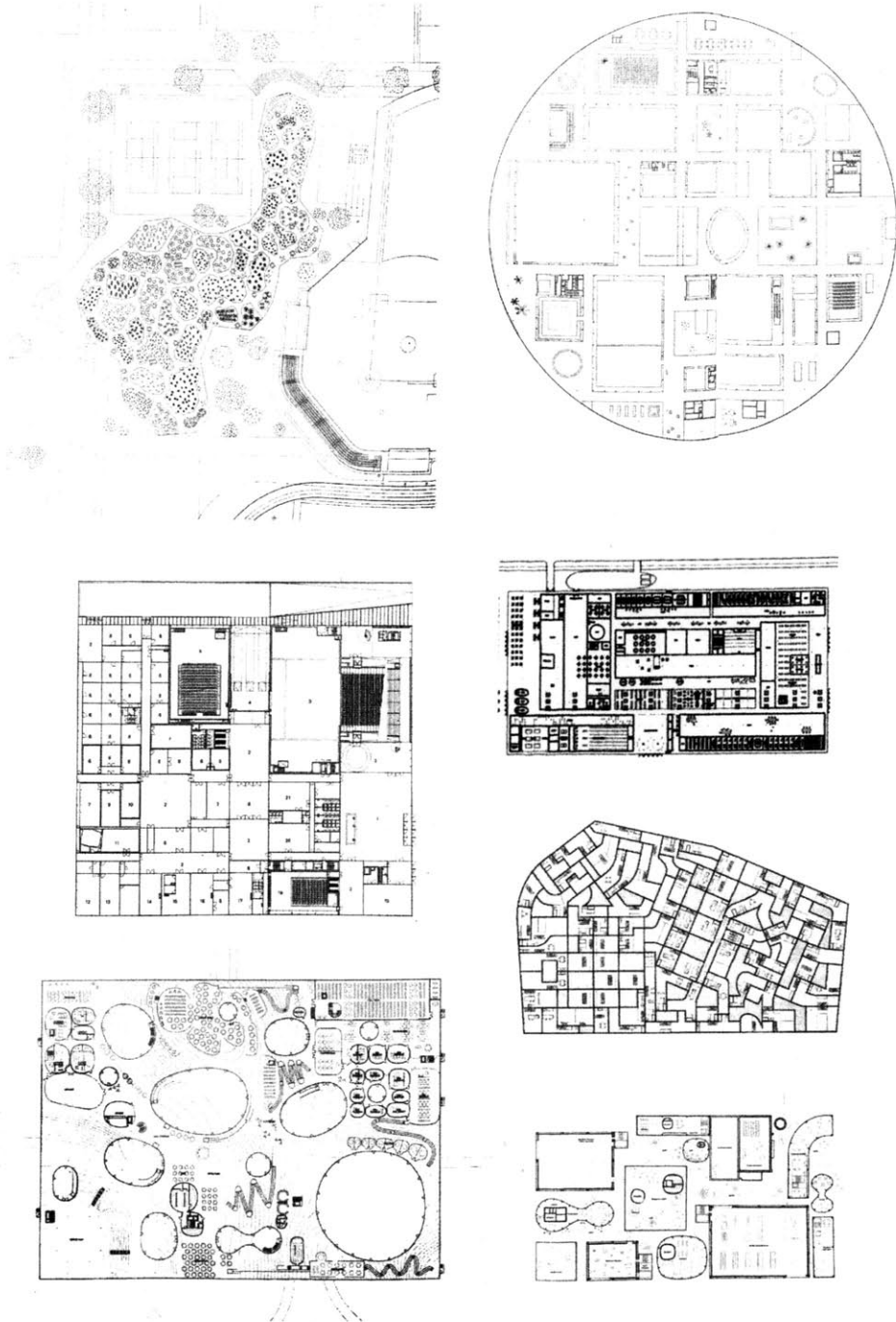


Figure 4.136

Because Sejima and Nishizawa regard the topological organization of the spaces, manifested in a schematic plan and sometimes a section, as a constituent reality of architecture, the structure is a component that must not be a feature while it should ultimately disappear perceptually. Sejima and Nishizawa have often expressed their interest in the way people experience their buildings. This is the reason for their topological enquiries, which do not provide solutions for mathematical problems, but instead, answers to experiential issues.

Toyo Ito: "According to Sejima, a building is ultimately the equivalent of the diagram of the space used to abstractedly describe the mundane activities presupposed by the structure ... She arranges the functional conditions which the building is expected to hold, in a final diagram of the space, then she immediately converts that scheme into reality." It can also be nuanced by saying that Sejima and Nishizawa produce diagram architecture, but not so much in the sense of a scheme of functional relations or activities, but rather with regard to the building's topological reality – the fundamental spatial relations.

Not about the shape but the topological relation of the shape. In case of Kanazawa, having a perfect circumference or not is not terribly important. The important thing is for the outline to be just one line. "We start with a very simple diagram on paper without thinking about gravity or the dimensions of the materials. In these diagrams, the ideas seem clear. In the process of moving from a 2D diagram to 3D buildings, we have to bear many things in mind. We try to make this transition very carefully, so as not to lose clarity. For example in a diagram where two spaces should be closely connected, the difference between having a 1m thick wall or a 16mm wall between them is quite considerable ... the relationship between the two rooms will be felt in quite different ways."

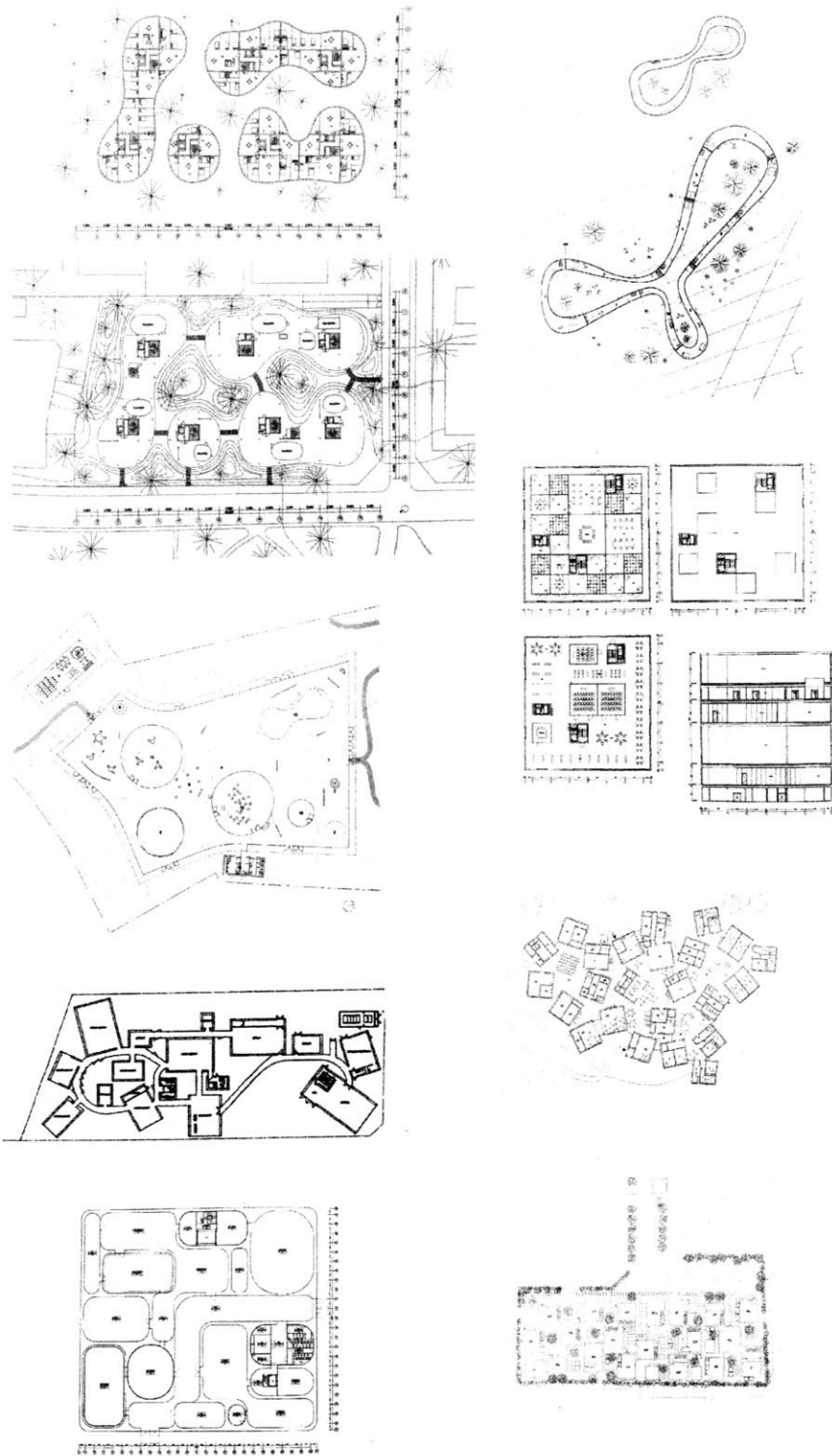


Figure 4.137

One of the distinguishing features of Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa's architecture is the schematic nature of the plans and sections that they use to define their projects. The most interesting aspect, however, is that these drawings are so schematic because what they define is everything that these architects regard as the substance of architecture. The definition of the spaces and the relations between them as expressed by these sketches forms the contents of architecture, which does not need anything more.

We sought a plan without hierarchy, a very public building where everything from circulation to classrooms are given the same spatial treatment. There must always be differently sized rooms. So you can take the rectangles produced when the overall rectangular plan is subdivided, and give one rectangle the role of a bedroom, another the role of a corridor or a courtyard... that is why it is flexible.

The consequence of this desire to remove, or at least drastically reduce, the hierarchies that have traditionally predominated in architectural production is that Sejima and Nishizawa always generate non-hierarchical organizational schemes (clustering or compartmentalization) which are, moreover, extremely clear. The career path of these architects has been an exploration of the diverse possibilities of spatial organization using this criterion.

In effect, the method of separating rooms and then grouping them is applied later in many of their projects. The distribution procedure is random, and the only criteria are proximity or distance, concentration or dispersal, without relying on the rules of classical hierarchy.

Similarly, concerning the issue of 'program', I first thought it was a rather simple issue. I understood it as mainly a matter of solving, so to speak, functional issues by properly dismantling non-functioning different elements and reassembling them as a solution. But I've gradually realized that solving problems is not enough. I have even come to think that simply giving form to required function is not sufficient, and that whether for homes, offices, or museums, our values and way of life should make themselves felt very strongly in the way buildings are used.

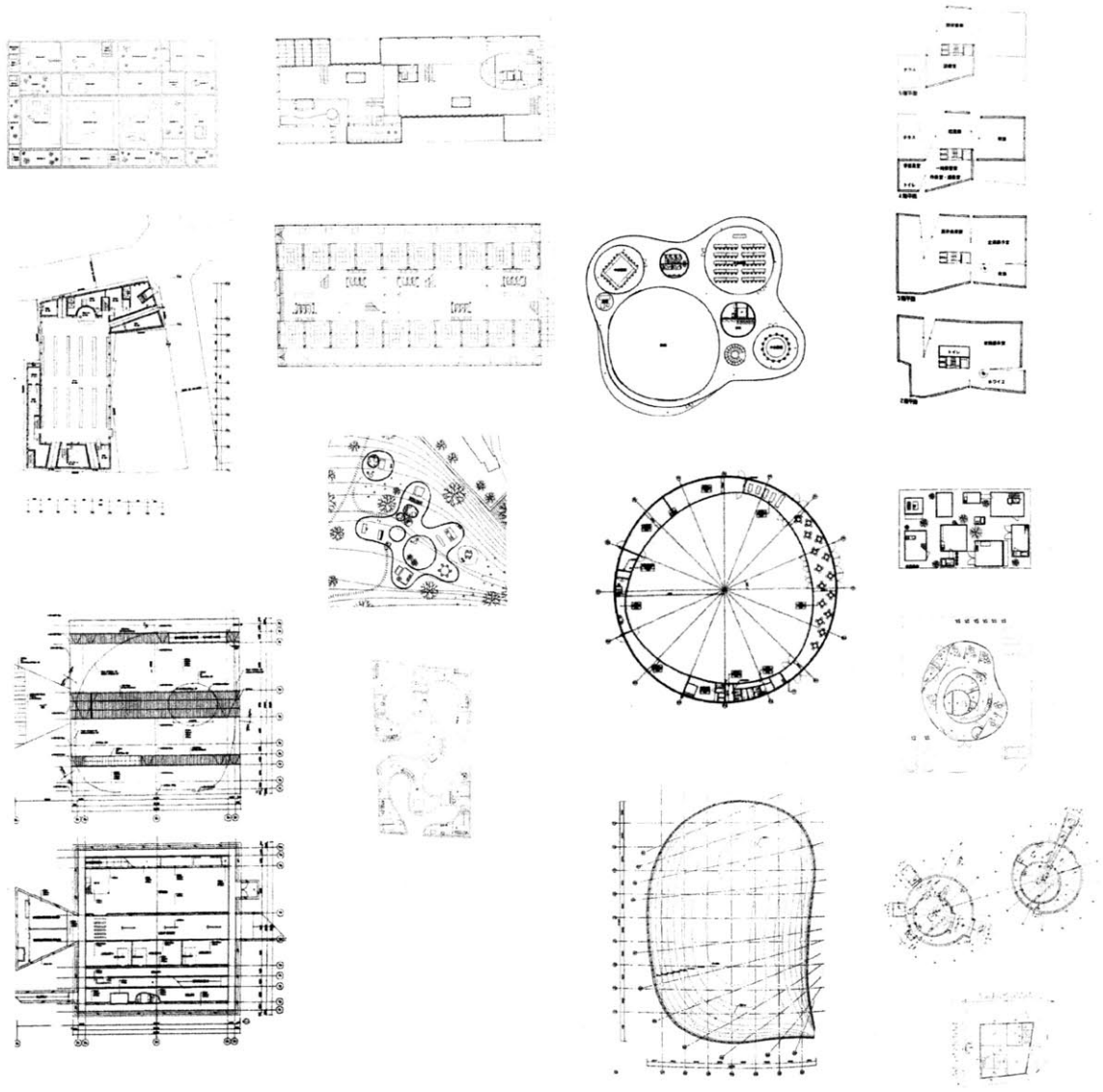


Figure 4.138

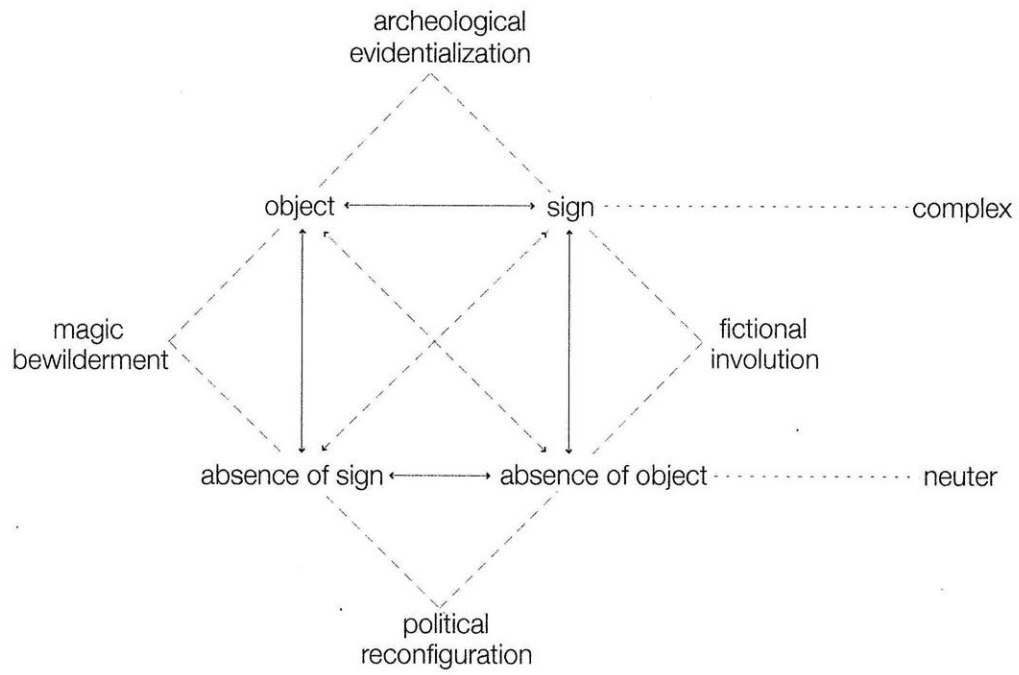


Figure 5.1

CHAPTER 5

The Explosion of the Meaning

The Delirious Translation
The Endless Inventory

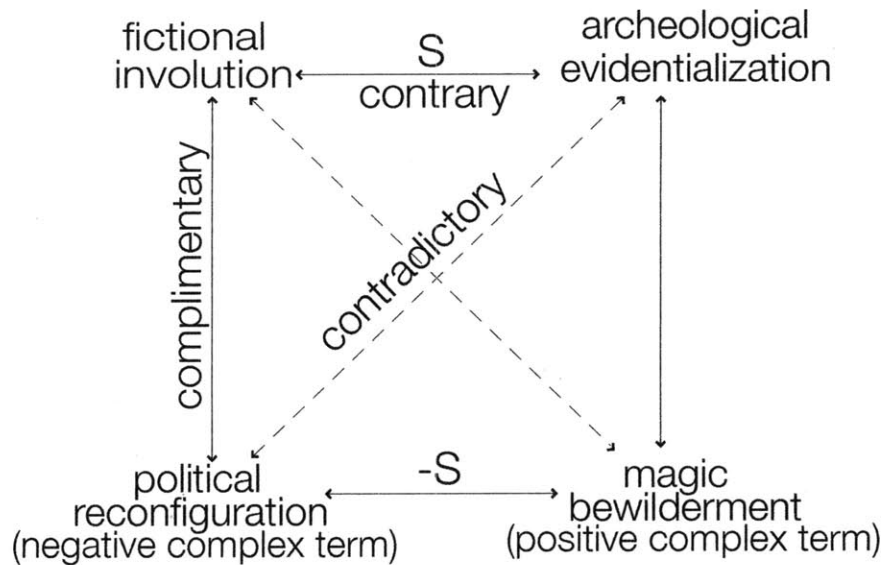


Figure 5.2

5.1 The delirious translation

As the semiotic square setting up the complex relationship between the different poles, the interpretation would unfold according to the following:

The complex axis creates the first opposition - fictional involution contrary to magic bewilderment.

The neuter axis creates the second opposition - political reconfiguration contrary to archeological evidentialization.

Archeological evidentialization is the absence of fictional involution.

Political reconfiguration is the absence of magic bewilderment.

Fictional involution implies the political reconfiguration.

Magic bewilderment implies archeological evidentialization.

The positive complex term archeological evidentialization is both fictional involution and magic bewilderment.

The negative complex term political reconfiguration is neither fictional involution nor magic bewilderment.

Facing the performance of the square, we may active our role of the spectator. Thus these technical supports allows us to apply new art intervention.

In archeological evidentialization, we make stone alibi.

In magic bewilderment, we make stone unstonny.

In fictional involution, we make stone gold.

In political reconfiguration, we make stone bump.

In fictional involution, to look is to invent.

In magic bewilderment, to look is to disbelieve.

In archeological evidentialization, to look is to forget.

In political reconfiguration, to look is to action.

Fictional involution is to make special ordinary.

Magic bewilderment is to make the ordinary special but then return to ordinary.

Archeological evidentialization is to make the ordinary another ordinary.

Political reconfiguration is to ordinary anti-ordinary.

Fictional involution is to program the gaze.

Magic bewilderment is to bewilder the gaze.

Archeological evidentialization is to prove the gaze.

Political reconfiguration is to emancipate the gaze.

In fictional involution, looking is through the sack.

In magic bewilderment, looking is to unveil the sack.

In archeological evidentialization, looking is to cast the sack.

In political reconfiguration, looking is to create a new sack.

.....

5.2 The Endless Inventory

In Magic bewilderment

Against unconscious automatization

Compositional innovation

Familiar form represented in unfamiliar properties

Prolonged perception

Create a vision instead of perceiving a meaning

Undistorted realistic image represented from various angles

Limit conversion and simply quoting the object

Signs dysfunctions

In fictional involution

Simultaneously with automatism and other passive states

Distort the relationship of the signifier and signified

Complete conversion into the object

Sign functions

Montage-like collision

.....

APPENDIX

Transcripts of calls made by gallery visitors from the payphones installed for the exhibition Phone Home. In an adjacent room, visitors could listen in on the calls, while these were being recorded at a pentagon-shaped table.

Elmgreen & Dragset. *This is the First Day of My Life*. Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2005.

- Click
- Your party is not available, please try again later.
- Hello?
- Hello.
- Are we recording?
- Who are you calling? (whistling echo sound in the background)
- (Hearty laugh) My Cod, what a chaos.
- This is Ethan.
- Hold on.
- Yo listen! This call is being monitored ok?
- You what?
- I'm calling you from the installation, this a test run. So you're being monitored right now-
- The restroom?
- No. This call is being monitored, I'm calling you from the gallery installation. You have an audience right now-you should just know that.
- Ahhhh! Is this a part of the piece? That's fun ... everyone can hear me?
- Possibly ... possibly. Actually you're one of the first people that we-
- I think there's gonna be a lot of dirty talk over this line.
- Potentially, that's part of the-
- It's all being recorded and someone's going to listen to it later?
- There's a couple of people listening right now.
- There's a couple of people that what?
- There's a couple of people listening right now.
- It's very faint, maybe you should turn up the volume on the piece. (laughing)
- Hmm. I think this is possibly the nature of the payphone. Can you hear me?
- Yeah.
- Ok, good, good, good.
- What, it's a cell phone in an installation?
- No, no, no, this is a payphone. It's a configuration of pay phones This is very interesting. Actually it's part of the process- you call people and you end up explaining where you are and what you're doing. It's kind of an interesting way to mediate the piece outside of the gallery.
- So where are you, on which street?
- I'm in the gallery!
- Oh, so where are the other payphones?
- They're all set up in a bank, in the main space, up against the wall.
- In where?
- In the main gallery space.
- Oh, oh, I see what you're saying. That's kinda fun.
- So, how's your valentine's day?
- How's what?
- Your valentine's day.
- Argh. It stinks. Everybody's gotten roses and chocolates and stuff at work, except

me. My boyfriend stinks. Alright, no he doesn't stink. But he's an iconoclastic rebel.

- Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- And I'm not buying it today.
- Yeah.
- So ...
- Well listen ... as much as I hate to do this, I'm gonna cut this short and go see how this thing is running.
- Yeah right. Let me know how it goes.
- I'll call you later.
- Bye.
- Cod it's hot. It's really hot in the phone booth.
- Hi this is Dave, I can't take your call right now. So leave your name, number and a message, and I'll get back to you as soon as I can. Thanks.
- Hi. Umm ... My name is Linda. I'm a friend of Karen Casper's, we're in New York City at an exhibit and the exhibit is box telephones. And um ... this particular exhibit is one where you make a phone call and it gets recorded. She gave me this number to call. I'm not sure who I'm talking to, but she told me to try using this number. Since you're not here, I guess we can't talk. But this is probably enough to be recorded. So, sorry we missed your call and maybe I'll talk to you another time-whoever you are. Bye.
- Hello, Kitty speaking.
- Hi Kitty, it's Sarah.
- I was just trying to get you actually.
- Really! Did you try my mobile.
- Yeah ... it didn't seem to work. So I tried the hotel and left a message there. I have to tell you that this phone call is being tape-recorded, 'coz [am actually

calling from an art installation.

- Do you want me to call you back?
- No no no.
- I can call you. Where are you? At the hotel?
- No no no. You don't need to call me. It's just- don't say anything sensitive because this call is being tape-recorded.
- Sorry?
- This phone is part of an art installation and the conversation is being tape-recorded.
- Oh, I see.
- So don't say anything. Don't mention names or anything. Ok?
- Ok.
- So, are you coming in on the same flight as Pam?
- Oh, that's ... I'm just a bit worried because there's a freezing rain warning and there's twenty centimeters of snow here.
- Oh my Cod!
- And ... what kind of snow do you have there'?
- Nothing.
- It's because there's a big snow warning for New York as well.
- Oh really? I watched the news this morning, but I think it was national, not regional.
- Ok. Well, I tell you what ... everything might be fine, it's Canada and we're used to snow. So is there a way I can call you, if I know there's any problem'?
- Well-what flight do you get in?
- It's Air Canada, flight 314, it gets in at 6:20, if all goes well.
- Ok. I will meet you at the hotel at seven o'clock-
- And if there's any delay, I'll call you to let you know.

- Okey do key! Say, have you got a cold?
- Yeah sorry, that's the other thing I meant

to tell you. But I'm gonna try and take lots of drugs and try to be quiet. I'm sorry I'm sick .

- No no no, don't worry. The thing is ... it's miserable outside, but we'll be inside at the Armory tomorrow, so we'll be out of the elements.

- Are you happy with the room.
- Yeah, it's absolutely fine and stylish. I mean ... I hope ... it's absolutely fine. . The other thing is, I have tons of invitations, like-

- Ok! Don't mention any names!
- Ok ok ok.
- Lots of love, look forward to seeing you tonight. Bye.
- Ok, bye.

- Hello.

.C'est Philippe ... urn "" Sebastian, I just wanted to ask you ... before you go to the loft, can you go into our room and just behind the door you'll see some bottles of wine and in the fridge.

- Yes?
- Can you take all t he wine you find along

to the party, 'coz we forgot.

- Ok. I'll do it-see you!
- See you. Ciao.
- Hi.
- Hey what's up?
- Nothing.
- Is Mom or Dad home?
- No.

. Ow.. .. Cool. I'm just cal ling 'coz I am at an opening.

- Ok.

• In New York ... it's like an opening that Sam works on. You know my roommate

Sam?

- Yeah,

• And one of the pieces in it is this telephone where you can call ... and it's ... you know ... Well it's actually a whole row of telephones ... and our conversation is actually getting recorded and there are people in the next room listening.

- Well that sucks.
- Is school good?
- Yeah, It's ok. I have two essays to write.
- Oh, that sucks.

- Yeah.
- So what do you have to write about?
- For French, I have to write about some~ body famous, but not well known.

- Ok,
- And for English I have to write about something I read.
- Ok. So what did you read?

. Errr ...

- Ah-so you're gonna have a good time on that one.

- Everything that rises must converge.
- Oh. Who's that by?
- Flannery O'Connor.
- Oh. Is it good?
- It's ok.

- I miss you. Have you grown more?
- No ... urn, maybe an inch.
- Really. Oh man.

..Yeah, like quarter of an inch.

- Are you good at basketball?
- Yeah, I'm getting better.
- You're not one of the tallest players, are you?
- No, actually I'm one of the shortest.

- Hello.
- Mom!

. Yes.

- Hi, it's Sarah.
- Yes honey. I'm glad that you're car is ok.
- But ...
- . This is not a good time?
- . Right, this is not a good time.
- What's going on?
- Well, we had a flood last night.
- Oh, you did?
- The living room pipe broke again. But it's not bad, it wasn't a bad one ...
- Ah Cod, I'm sorry-
- Luckily, because we were right here on top of it, Dad immediately turned off the big water.
- Good thing.
- But now we have t he guys from Glade here, the plumbers, and they're really good. They're working on it and - they need me right now.
- Where's the flood? Where did it flood?
- It... it...
- o In your bedroom? Did it go downstairs?
- o It came through the ceiling in the living room again ... and cut a big hole in the wall.
- Oh no! This is the living room, like, the fancy living room, not the kitchen? But it never flooded over there before.
- Yeah ...
- Hello?
- o Hi Mama.
- Hi there!
- How are you doing?
- o Oh good. Just came in.
- Oh good, I'm glad I caught you . I'm actually at an art gallery where part of the installation is that you phone people. So we're actually being tape-recorded.
- (Reluctantly) Oh, ok.
- But I thought it was a good time to call you and catch t he kids anyway.
- o Yes.

- How was Clara's birthday party?
- Fine. We just got home five minutes ago.
- Took a taxi with Emma's sister's nanny.
- Can I talk to them?
- o Tom's in the bath, but here's Cora. Cora, darling, here's you r Mummy! Quickly, because she's in New York. Hold the phone close to your ear, because she's a little faint.
- o Hello Cora. How are you doing?
- (Shy little voice) Yes.
- Did you have fun at Clara's party?
- Yes.
- Did you eat cake?
- Yes. You're very faint ...
- You sound perfect to me. Do you want me to try from another phone?
- No. I think it's you.
- (Operator) Hello. Your available credit will allow you ninety ~s even minutes.
- (Exasperated grumble) Hello, this is Ben Lewis, I' m trying to get in touch with Nicolas Bourriaud but this number's not working. Thanks. Bye.
- Hallo sister darling, hier spricht die Heidi, your big sister, who is now Joe-Heidi, eigentlich. I'm calling you from an Ingar and Dragset installation. Wenn du in New York bist, rufeinfach an, ich hab' eine neue Handynummer: 9177214 229. Lots of kisses, bis bald. Thankyou boys.
- Welcome to Lake Telecom. Please enter the number you wish to call now.
- Beep beep beep ...
- Your present available credit will allow you eighty-one minutes, . I'm calling you from an Ingar and Dragset installation.

- From a what?
- Ingar and Dragoet,
- Oh,
- Installation.
- Oh yeah?
- Our call is being recorded. Tanya Bonakdar.
- What?
- Yes, Tanya Bonakdar.
- Oh, oh, oh. (laughs)
- So, I want to give you my new mobile number.
- o Hang on a second Are you going to this Swiss thing?
- Yeah, I am.
- o Cood we should be there around seven.
- I go maybe at eight, a little later.
- Ok. Now I have a pen And now I have a piece of paper.
- 9177214229
- Shall we go and have dinner together?
- o Yeah, perhaps. I have a ton of people there, so I can't promise dinner, because it will be social powwow with people I haven't seen for a while.
- Right.
- But, ummm ... anyway, let's certainly Meet there.
- o Ok, see you later.
- Bye.

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Figure 1.4: Calle Sophie, 67 Days to Unhappiness

Figure 1.6: Thomas G. Evans, Geometric Analogical Program

Figure 1.8: Charles Jencks, Evolutionary Tree; Alfred H Barr Jr, Cubism and Abstract Art.

Figure 1.9: Rosalind Krauss, Sculpture in the Expanded Field

CHAPTER 2 Technical Support: Semiotic Square

Figure 2.1: A.J. Greimas, Semiotic Square

Figure 2.4-2.6: Fredric Jameson, Examples for Construction of the Square

CHAPTER 3 Construction of Binary Opposition

Figure 3.1: Elementary Square. Drawn by author.

CHAPTER 4 The Expanded Field

Figure 4.1-4.2: Square of the Expanded Field. Drawn by author.

Figure 4.3: Ellsworth Kelly, White Diagonal II

Figure 4.4: Lucio Pozzi, Painting in P.S.1

Figure 4.5: Duchamp, With My Tongue in My Cheek

Figure 4.8: Dan Hoffman, Recording Wall

Figure 4.11: BBC, artifacts' document

Figure 4.12: Caleb Charland, North Pole with Needles and Water and Michael Craig-Martin, On the Shelf.

Figure 4.13: Caleb Charland, Crowbar with Plumb Bob and Michael Craig-Martin, On the Table.

Figure 4.14: Remy Zaugg, Exhibition for Herzog & De Meuron in Pompidou Center and Gordon Matta-Clark, Doors, Floors, Doors.

Figure 4.21: Remy Zaugg, Exhibition in a Single Room and Daniel Libeskind, Berlin Jewish Museum.

Figure 4.32-4.38: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.39: Herzog & De Meuron, Rubin House and Leandro Erlich, Smoking Room

Figure 4.41-4.42: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.43 Carl Andre, Trabum and Sou Fujimoto, H House

Figure 4.44-4.48: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.49 Tony Smith, Die and Valerio Olgiati, School in Paspels

Figure 4.50-4.51: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.52 Donald Judd, Untitled and Tadao Ando, Chichu Museum and SANAA, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa

Figure 4.55-4.56: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.57 Junya Ishigami, Tables and Ryue Nishizawa, Table House

Figure 4.58-4.60: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.61 Ai Weiwei, Two Joined Square Tables and Cecilia Puga, Bahia Azul House

Figure 4.63: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.64 Ai Weiwei and Herzog & De Meuron, "Mock up, Beijing" and Herzog & De Meuron, Vitra Haus

Figure 4.65-4.67: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.68 Ai Weiwei, One-man Shoe and Valerio Olgiati, Visitor Center for National Park in Zernez

Figure 4.69: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.70 Leandro Erlich, Swimming Pool and Junya Ishigami, Graduation Thesis

Figure 4.73-4.75: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.76 Salvador Dali, Le Mythe Tragique de l'Angelus de Millet and Rem Koolhaas, L'Angelus

Figure 4.79 Salvador Dali, Invisible Sleeping Woman, Horse, Lion and Rem Koolhaas, Villa Dall'ava Saint Cloud Paris

Figure 4.80-4.81: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.82 Salvador Dali, Apparition of Face and Fruit Dish on a Beach and Rem Koolhaas, Hyperbuilding in Thailand

Figure 4.83 Rem Koolhaas, Guangzhou Opera and Salvador Dali, Lobster Telephone

Figure 4.87 Salvador Dali, Paranoiac Visage and Rem Koolhaas, Y2K House

Figure 4.88-4.92: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.93 Carsten Holler, Test Site and Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset, I'm Thinking of You

Figure 4.99 Le Corbusier, Domino House and Rem Koolhaas, Patent Office

Figure 4.103-4.106: Drawn by author.

Figure 4.107 Abitare Magazine, SOS project (by Junya Ishigami)

Figure 4.125 Jango Edwards, Solo Clown Show and Erwin Wurm, Don't Care About Anything

Figure 4.134 Sou Fujimoto, New Library and Museum of Musashino Art University and SANAA, Toldeo Glass Pavilion

CHAPTER 5

Figure 5.1-5.2: Drawn by author.

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