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I, Katherine L Tans, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture in Architecture (Master of).

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SITE UNSCENE: Architecture as Event Interface

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Site Unscene: Architecture as Event Interface

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SITE UNSCENE: Architecture as Event Interface
ABSTRACT

The tangible world is increasingly alienated by the accumulation of images that exist above it. That is, commodity signs and symbols have amassed beyond decorative add-ons to become substitutes for former urban vitality. Thus, updated appearances of commodity spectacle broadcast themselves, backgrounding architecture as an outdated underpinning. Highway intrusions exacerbate the situation by eroding the city into isolated segments and introducing a mass marketplace of highway consumers. In particular, this SIGN versus building predicament is dramatized in the postindustrial city where billboards often cover discarded factory buildings. These branded buildings exemplify Venturi and Brown’s decorated shed, defined in *Learning from Las Vegas* as a conventional building that applies symbols (in this case, billboards). At these layered sites, which contain an industrial past, highway superimpositions, and billboard overlays, the projection of advertisement is the only spectacle, and the consumer is its passive spectator. As postindustrial consumption accelerates, it becomes imperative to establish an architectural response that re-casts passive consumers as actor and audience, generators of the spectacle.

The methodology for designing at these complex sites includes negotiation between people’s varying experiential narratives in and around the site, exploitation of the dynamic nature and spontaneity of their interactions, and maintained stringency to the site’s physical context. The thesis project, located in Cincinnati, Ohio, asserts the significance of interface between spectacle and spectator at the site of an uninhabited factory building, branded in billboards, and tangled in a web of elevated highways and surface city streets. The design approach sets the stage for interactive event through circulatory movement and the interplay between visible public and unseen private functions. Recognizing the inevitability of branding at this highly visible site, the program takes cues from Cincinnati’s current initiative to rebrand the city as the “Consumer Marketing Hub of Innovation and Opportunity”; therefore, it includes a community event venue and educational facilities for the burgeoning creative class. This “site unscene,” in which the highway and city blindly encircle a decorated shed, exposes the problematic disregard of, yet potential for interface along these postindustrial edges.
A special thanks to my family for their love and support. Also, thank you to my thesis advisors Aarati Kanekar and Vincent Sansalone for always challenging me, and providing your wisdom and guidance through the development of this thesis.
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75  Tans Katherine, “Main Stage with potential interactivities.”  2011.


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Tans, Katherine. “Proposed Stage Concept.” 2011

Clark, Dustin. Personal Photograph. 5 Feb. 2011.


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PART 5: Design Response

Costumes of commodity continuously undermine the immediacy of lived urban experience. In other words, commodity signs package the city in unstable coverings, which act as stand-ins for the real life and energy that once flourished there. This commodity spectacle appears without reply, as an inaccessible object, which drives all lived reality below its surface. Thus, the built environment flattens into a landscape of passive consumption, alienating people into a margin of detached existence. As Guy Debord states, “the spectator feels at home nowhere because the spectacle is everywhere”; consequently, any interface between the spectator and their environment is utterly obliterated. The imagery of these commodity signs freely borrows time through nostalgic depictions of the past and scenes that envisage the future, without acknowledging present reality. According to John Frow, author of *Time and Commodity Culture* (1997), advertisements seek to subvert all knowledge of history whereby a surface is projected so that all profundity is lost. That is, the time of commodity flows freely above its own static community to the extent that, as Guy Debord states in *Society of the Spectacle* (1967), “history itself haunts modern society like a spectre.”

In the case of the postindustrial city, hollowed-out buildings leftover from the industrial era are especially prone to the packaging of commodity signs. These branded buildings are most prevalent at the urban periphery where distance from the city center is greatest, built form disseminates, and highways destabilize the urban edge. As the periphery decomposes, its relation to the city loosens and elements within it begin to oscillate between a range of built densities, speeds, and scales. Without a clear orientation or identity, these marginal zones tend to neutralize into a banal landscape of parking lots and branded surfaces on a billboard scale. Here, decorated sheds crop up, defined by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown in *Learning from Las Vegas* (1977) as a building typology in which decorative signs provide a series of facelifts up front, while the building is relegated to a modest necessity behind. Rather than deference to advertisement and the automobile at these locations, architecture must aim to interpret the difficult unity and exploit the collision of pent-up energy inherent in these city bounds.

In order to address these marginalized zones, the thesis project is situated in the postindustrial city of Cincinnati, surrounded by a knot of elevated highways and surface city streets at the edge of downtown, and contains a discarded factory building branded in billboards. The current building functions as a

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parking shed, and degrades behind the spectacle of billboards, which cover its facades and cap its rooftops. This advertising onslaught conceals the site’s local history outright, and asserts its own mass messages to an encircling crowd of obligatory spectators. To counter the numbness of this spectator passivity, commodity coverings must be detached, and architecture unpacked, to create an active dialogue between those within and around the site. Therefore, the thesis question becomes:

To counter the surplus of images packaging the postindustrial city, how can the architectural envelope open up an interface, activated by the exchange between spectacle and spectator?

In response, architecture must be conceived as a habitable medium of participatory interaction between its users and viewers. This scenographic approach involves careful composition of layered, intersecting, and juxtaposed spaces and movements in order to activate the interface between spectacle and spectator. The design intervention calls for the simultaneity of experiential narratives, which interface to allow for multiple interpretations and viewpoints. Conceptually, this approach inverts the decorated shed, which references Anna Klingmann’s “inverted shed,” as defined in her book *Brandscapes: Architecture in the Experience Economy* (2007). Klingmann’s contemporary derivation of the decorated shed transforms two-dimensional decoration into three-dimensional event space, which interfaces along the building envelope between inside and outside, and private and public, in the form a single synergistic environment. While the building envelope is a large component of this project, the deliberate intersections, transpositions, and proximities within and around the site and building are all integral to its dynamic performance. For this reason, the interface unfolds in various ways animated by conveyance, gesture, actions of people within it, and the manipulation of views through it.

To generate this intensity of interaction, the program is a conceived as a hybrid of different types, which interact to propel a sense of liveliness. This method of cross-programming is proposed by Bernard Tschumi as a strategy to create action by juxtaposing different events and heterogeneous user groups so that “architecture ceases to be the backdrop for actions, becoming the action itself.” In addition, this program proposal recognizes the site’s high visibility and suitability for branding, and, thus, turns to local branding initiatives. In 2010, Governor Stickland of Ohio designated Cincinnati as the “Consumer Marketing Hub of Innovation and Opportunity” in the region, as part of a statewide hub concept to differentiate Ohio’s cities and spur development of their urban cores. Cued by this hub designation, the program is hybrid type, containing a community event venue and educational center for Cincinnati’s creative class.

The cross-program of these types is deliberately clashed and synergized to accelerate the potential for event interface, formulated as interactivity within the site, and as showcased performance to an outside audience.

In order to approach this design intervention, Part 1 analyzes the specific site through applicable theory in order to frame the conversation built into and around the present site situation. It will discuss the site’s complicated urban context, and address current uses of its building. Derived from the site’s visibility and current billboarded building, Part 2 reinterprets the relevance of branding with the program proposal that relates to Cincinnati’s current identity. This part will describe the general programmatic arrangement, performance of various spaces, and potentials for exchange between viewers and users. Following the program proposal, Part 3 evaluates architectural precedents along the following lines of inquiry (relevant to the site analysis and named program): performance, icon, spectacle-interface-spectator, and movement. Six architectural precedents will be investigated through these themes to uncover strategies potentially applicable to the project at hand. With this inventory of potential strategies in mind, Part 4 deconstructs the site’s physicality in various visual and experiential dimensions in order to examine the given conditions of each interface. Finally, Part 5 reconciles the site’s physical conditions with the proposed program in order to fulfill theoretical interpretations and precedent themes set forth in previous sections. This final part will consist of design images, which outline a coherent design response in answer to the thesis question.

As a result of this investigation, Cincinnati gains a community platform that harnesses numerous independent efforts, including entrepreneurial, product development, and branding events, in order to connect and develop the city’s marketing strengths and resources. The facility supports the city’s existing economic strength and burgeoning creative class by providing a venue to host regional, and potentially national events, underpinned by educational curriculums. By focusing the publicizing this activity, it acts as a catalyst for cultural and economic progress that will help attract and retain talent for the job market, increasing Cincinnati’s tax base, and, in turn, enriching local quality of life. Utilizing Cincinnati as an example, this work provides an effective methodology to counteract the abundance of branded buildings, which gloss over inactivity and undermine the potential revitalization of postindustrial cities.

In a broader sense, this work tackles the perpetuating aestheticization of decayed inner-city space that masks the rich texture of social relations, embedded history, and contained complexity. The mass dissemination of images squandered upon city surfaces disregards the complexities of local palimpsest, deferring to a universal world of pastiche. To counter the numbness and passivity of image overload, this thesis challenges the limits of flat imagery by unpacking architecture as a multi-dimensional event interface. In essence, architecture is conceived as choreography, as the design of creating, arranging, and recording
sequences of form and movement. The architectural stageset fluctuates between foreground and background, cueing those within and around the building to assume interchangeable roles of spectacle and spectator. Composed scenes are open to manifold narratives, interpretations, and reciprocal relations, generating multiple, and often unplanned events in time and space. This thesis uncovers commoditized inner-city space, and creates an immediate dialogue of direct experience, in which site becomes the spectacle to see and be seen in.
Part 1 sets up a back-and-forth discourse between general theoretical bases and the specific site/existing building context. It utilizes a correspondent format in which the specific site/existing building content is indented from the more general theoretical discussion. Initially, the site is interpreted in the context of present and past urban fabric, and its resultant palimpsest is revealed. Then, in chapter 2, the existing building on site, which is used as a structure for billboard advertising, is identified as a branded building or decorated shed, and evaluated in terms of commodity spectacle.

Chapter 1: Site Context Implications

Deciphering Urban Fabric (General)

In order to decode meaning in the urban environment, Roland Barthes, French literary theorist and author of *Elements of Semiology* (1967), employs a language derived from the linguistic system of semiotics. According to Barthes, urban semiology refers to the philosophical theory of the signs, symbols, and traces, which people interpret to unfold the meaning of the city. Barthes explains that the city is not simply made of equal elements, but of strong and neutral elements that compose a rhythmic language, which speaks to its inhabitants. As the city evolves, places (signifiers) filled with complex meaning remain, but functions (signifieds) are transient. Consequently, signifieds are always extremely vague,

Figure 1. Cincinnati figure ground (thesis site in red)
dubious, and unmanageable to rigidify to a particular place. Thus, the function of the urban environment becomes ever more nebulous, and indecipherable for its inhabitants.

Applying this semiotic language to the theories proposed by Jane Jacobs, an American urban planning activist and author of *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), it becomes evident that she would promote an integral codependency of signifiers and signifieds. Jacobs argues that visual order should directly reflect the complexity of underlying processes, or functions/signifieds. In this way, the appearance and functioning of the city are inextricably bound so that the city becomes a multi-functioning organism, which constructs human life and self-organizes itself. Thus, the nonlinear dynamics of great cities become embodied in energy and experience, giving deeper significance to the city. Essentially, Jacobs argues that processes and functions should be closely knit into urban fabric in order to systemize the city in legible patterns able to be understood by inhabitants.

While Jacobs’ theories were the subject of conversation across the country, Robert Venturi, American architect and theorist, was writing his book, *Complexity & Contradiction in Architecture* (1962). According Peter Lawrence’s 2006 article entitled “Contradictions and Complexities: Jane Jacobs’s and Robert Venturi’s Complexity Theories,” Venturi’s complexity theories parallel those proposed by Jacobs. For instance, Venturi’s ridicule of the banal simplicity of modern city as “less is bore” echoes Jacobs’ prior derision of urban simplicity as the “great blight of dullness.” Both writers are clearly dissatisfied with the lack of complexity, and the unintelligible emptiness of the modern city. Lawrence points out that similar to Jacobs, Venturi argues for chaotic juxtaposition and interconnection in architecture, which results in a new kind of diverse, intricate urban whole. However, rather than Jacobs’ interwoven, cohesive city, Venturi promotes multiple, and even contradictory, interpretations of the city. Moreover, he welcomes problems and exploits uncertainties, arguing for the messy energy of the inclusive city, brimming with equivocal levels of meaning.

**MESSY ENERGY OF THE SITE (SPECIFIC)**

With these theories of urban comprehension (Barthes) and complexity (Jacobs and Venturi) in mind, the site model shown in Figure 2 reveals the messy complexity surrounding this thesis site. Located between elevated highways and bound by surface streets, the site for intervention is located just east of downtown Cincinnati, Ohio. The site location occupies an edge condition between the city to the west

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and the expansive suburbs to the east, only a couple blocks north of the Ohio River. Caught in a tangle of roadways at the periphery of downtown, it is bordered by the complex crisscross of overlapping datum lines and discordant densities of built form. While a charged network of roadway movement revolves the site, its center remains dull and relatively empty of habitation. Thus, the messy complexity circumscribing the site bypasses a dead center, and the potential for brimming energy at this location is evaded.

The present site situation is much due to the rise of highways and consequent erosion of cities around the 1960s. While the highways contribute to the intricacy of the site surrounds, they are also responsible for seizing neighboring buildings and swaths of land to streamline vehicular routes into and out of the city. The aerial photographs of Figure 3 document this urban erosion over time and the overlay of roads introduced and effaced to create the site palimpsest, shown in Figure 4 below. In the palimpsest, roadways are traced, erased, and even layered on top of one another in the form of elevated highways. On the following page, Figure 5 pulls apart this palimpsest and shows each incidence of urban change corresponding to the years of the aerial photographs. Through these images, it is evident that the transformation of urban fabric is mainly due to the superimposing highway network that severs the city into discordant sections.
URBAN EROSION

In response to this highway takeover, Jane Jacobs and Kevin Lynch, an American urban planner and theorist, confront the partitioned, automobile-scaled landscape with different strategies for urban revitalization. First, Jacobs argues that the city can work to repair itself with various uses and densities so that vehicular infrastructure becomes less prioritized. In *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), she describes the erosion of cities by automobiles as a habitual addiction of vehicular accommodations, which results in a cumulative process of city destruction. As a result, the city becomes more scattered and cumbersome, reinforcing the need for more automobiles, and perpetuating the cycle into a whole web of expressways. In the same way that this erosion of cities happens as a “kind of nibbling” process to accommodate vehicular congestion, Jacobs proposes a kind of reverse erosion – the attrition of automobiles by cities. For example, a new theatre could increase intensity of use at a street and hamper traffic, eventually discouraging vehicles from that street. Through this reverse erosion, Jacobs envisions a restored and thriving city that invites new and returned urbanites.

Taking a different approach, Kevin Lynch, in his book *The Image of the City* (1960), argues that the large-scale organization of highways provides evident structure and visual character, which is generally lacking in the multi-purpose, shifting nature of the city. According to Lynch, highways are hierarchical paths, which could be strengthened with “before” and “after” checkpoints that endow the journey with a series of distinct and meaningful events. These checkpoints are essentially landmarks that heighten the highway experience and reveal the presence of other city elements, increasing the visual scope of the traveler. Moreover, they may be arranged to sharpen the effect of motion parallax or perspective as clear visual objects, such as a great bridge or distant silhouette of a final destination.

While Jacobs promotes the reclamation of land lost to highways, Lynch points out that highway trajectories bring a new visual hierarchy of paths to the city. Since these writings, neither strategy, reverse erosion nor checkpoint landmarks, have been pursued in a significant, large-scale way. Consequently, the disjunction between highways and cities remains a problem, but also a potential opportunity for innovative design intervention.

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MARKING THE TRAJECTORY

Adopting Lynch’s strategy, the roadways encircling the project site at hand provide clearly decipherable paths that would be strengthened by the introduction of event. Combining this with Jacob’s argument for reverse erosion, the event could be created by intensifying use of the site. Therefore, for travelers, the banal continuum of highway movement would be interrupted by the event happening at site. The reinhabited site would be marked by a number of potential moments for people to participate in the event, either directly or through viewership.

chapter 2: EXISTING BUILDING IMPLICATIONS

EVOLVING SIGNIFIEDS

As discussed in through the theories of Barthes in chapter 1, signifieds, or building functions, constantly change while the built form that once housed them often remains. Accordingly, the site’s existing building contains a timeline of building functions, beginning as a factory and currently functioning for billboard advertisement and city parking (see Figure 9). In 1925, the McCullough Seed Company factory, pictured in Figure 8, was built on the site at the northwest corner of Eggleston Avenue and East Third Street (see Figure 7). This factory was part of an agglomeration of factory buildings sprouting up in Cincinnati during its industrial era. Initially, the factories were built near the Ohio River and along Miami and Erie Canal trade routes, but later proximity to railroads enabled them to disperse out into the suburbs. Eventually, highways provided the most efficient mode of transportation that replaced nearly all other forms of multi-modal infrastructure. With ongoing access to a vast network of trade routes, Cincinnati sustained itself as a thriving
industrial center. However, the rise of consumerism and subsequent decline of the industrialization resulted in the flattening of the next-door Frank Tea & Spice factory building into parking lot, and the conversion of McCullough factory building into parking garage.

“PROPERTIES plus MEDIA”

While the building’s interior is occupied with parked cars, “Properties Plus Media,” an outdoor advertising agency, sells the exterior façade and rooftop as billboard real estate. On their website, the advertising agency describes the site opportunity, “located at a major artery into the heart of downtown Cincinnati and at the intersection of four major thoroughfares, it guarantees premium viewership.” To demonstrate its viewership, “Properties Plus Media” provides close-up photos of North, South, and East approaches to the building with Daily Effective Circulation (D.E.C.) statistics from the Ohio Department of Transportation. Additional aerial photos with marked roadway routes show the building’s proximity to the Ohio river and downtown Cincinnati. No documentation is given for the west exposure facing downtown,\(^\text{13}\) indicating that the building has turned its back to the city. Despite the building’s neglect, it is a sought-after location for billboards. Notably, the billboards act as a showy costumes of consumerism, drawing attention to their own advertisement, but also to the decaying building behind.

COMMERCIAL “TICKY-TACKY”

Properties Plus Media appropriates this existing building for billboard tagging, placing it in realm of commercial vernacular architecture as defined by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown in their book, *Learning from Las Vegas* (1977). The authors assert that architects should acknowledge the symbolism of commercial vernacular, which is highly relevant to current consumer society. As shown in their diagram (Figure 12), the “I AM A MONUMENT” sign is adaptable to the automobile-scale of the environment unlike the more permanent, monumental architecture it is bolstered upon. Venturi and Brown identify this building type as a decorated shed and explain its significance, stating, “this is not the time and ours is not the environment for heroic communication through pure architecture.” Instead, this is a time when communication is valued over space, and the spelled-out statement “I AM A MONUMENT” is more symbolic than an architectural monument itself. In the case of commercial vernacular, a self-proclaiming sign frontage boldly defines itself, relegating the building behind to modest necessity.

Furthermore, the authors identify ordinary architecture in two categories, namely the “duck” and the “decorated shed.” The duck, according to Venturi and Brown, is a whole building, including space, architecture, and form, which is distorted into one big ornament. Whereas, the decorated shed is a conventional building that applies symbols.14

DUCK = space + architecture + form > ORNAMENT
DEC. SHED = (space + structure + program) + ORNAMENT

**SYMBOL vs. WORD ELEMENTS @ SITE**

Given these designations, the project site is clearly a decorated shed. Wherein, the architecture is programmed as a parking shed, or garage, and “Properties Plus Media” makes a business through the application billboard symbols, or decorations (see Figure 10, p.21).

In addition, the authors create a symbolic system, shown in Figure 13 below, to compare the space, scale, and speed of

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vast spaces such as the Highway Interchange and the Strip. When these icons are applied to the specific Cincinnati site, it reveals the amount of competing words on the factory building, which contrasts to the Procter & Gamble headquarters (to the right), which stands as a single symbol of corporate leadership (see Figure 13, p. 22).

BUILDING BRANDED THROUGH TIME

Although the installation, coloration, and size of signage has changed over time, word elements have been evident on this building since its factory era. For instance, the top image of Figure 14 shows the leftover trace of “J. CHAS McCULLOUGH,” which reveals that single letters were directly attached to the facade with a separate frame. This type of installation suggests a semi-permanent building usage, and its residual markings recall the origin of the term brand, which derives its meaning from the Old Norse word, brandr, meaning “to burn.” This genesis of the word has negative connotation, correlating with one of the current definitions of brand, namely, “to stigmatize: to accuse or condemn, openly or formally as disgraceful.”

After the McCullough sign is stripped from the building, billboards advertise the building’s functions in an attempt to attract new customers. For instance, the “PARK HERE/ENTER $70 MONTHLY” sign is a straightforward parking offer accompanied with a price tag, and illuminated by spotlights at night. In a similar way, the “BILLBOARD INFO / 421-1115” tag is a self promotion of the building’s surface, apparently catered to local billboard advertisers due to the lack of a telephone area code.

Lastly, the “‘HOIST’ / THE DRINK FOR AFTER YOU DRANK” billboard pronounces a local beverage available in Ohio and Kentucky. The advertisement is inserted into the frame of the billboard structure, indicating its interchangeability. Other recent billboards include a locally-oriented Bengals Pride “Miller Lite” advertisement, but also national brands including “Time Warner Cable” and “AT&T.” While the McCULLOUGH factory sign remained intact for over 50 years, the HOIST commodity sign is only exhibited for a few months. These contrasting time frames clearly illustrate the transience of commodity messages, which occur as a single episodes in a spectacular series.

This billboards tacked onto the building represent commodity spectacle as defined by Guy Debord in his critique of contemporary consumer culture and commodity fetishism in *Society of the Spectacle* (1967). In his theses, Debord traces the development of consumer society in which commodity images of mass media, or spectacles stand in as substitutes for authentic social life. This superficial manifestation of commodity spectacle prefers the sign to the thing signified, copy over the original, and appearance over essence. Thus, life in the consumer society is indirectly lived through representations, or the world of autonomous image, which demands passive acceptance of its appearance, supplanting all direct human interaction, as depicted in Figure 15.

Debord’s definition of spectacle closely translates to the modern usage of the term brand. A brand most commonly refers to a name, sign, symbol, slogan or anything used to identify and distinguish a specific product, service, or business. Similar to the spectacle, brands materialize as a mass dissemination of self-serving images. Wherein, the commodity spectacle or brand crosses the threshold of its own abundance, becoming out of reach and divorced from reality. Thus, the commodity spectacle or brand presents itself as enormously positive, indisputable, and inaccessible, and places people in the role of passive consumerism, alienated from active participation in authentic social experiences as illustrated in Figure 15.

**ARCHITECTURE versus BRANDING**

Expanding the definition of brand, this discussion turns to more recent theory on branding set forth by Anna Klingmann who critiques architecture’s resistance to the experience economy, in which branding flourishes. In her book, *Brandscapes: Architecture in the Experience Economy* (2007), Klingmann explains that cities have become undifferentiated brandscapes, or capitalist landscapes, which result in a “culture of copy.” She points out that critical practice in architecture resists close association with branding outright, denouncing its superficiality and impurity. In this stand against commodity culture, architecture marginalizes itself, lagging in the past while brands proliferate at the surface. So, despite the controversial reputation of branding, Klingmann argues that the concepts and methods of branding can be employed as strategic tools in architecture for economic and cultural transformation. Furthermore, according to Klingmann, the main strength of branding, often neglected in architecture, is the user, and his or her experience of a space. This participatory role of the user in branding differs greatly from the commodity spectacle described by Debord, and offers a potential method for active brand experience. Klingmann argues that architecture should expand from the perfection of itself, as an object, to address the transformation its the users as subjects.

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SIMULACRUM CELEBRATED

Contributing to this conversation about commodity signs and using the language of urban semiotics, Australian professor and literary theorist John Frow describes the present age as one that prefers the sign (signifier) to the thing signified. Wherein, capital accumulates to the point where it becomes a projected surface image. As a result, simulacrum disperses across the city, replacing depth by surface and subverting reality by illusion. In other words, commodity culture celebrates the fashionable spectacle in a perpetual state of hyperreality as a sort of costume drama. Moreover, Frow argues that present culture mourns the loss of history and memory, resulting in an imaging of time. He asserts that the time of commodity is an irreversible time, wherein the past is permanently manipulated resulting in emancipation from all historical reality. Hence, postmodern commodity culture sidesteps the complications of real urban fabric and architecture, opting to thrive in the exploitation of illusion.

SHED versus SIGN

Belonging to this realm of simulacrum, the thesis site faces its complex borders with blatant billboards that disregard local context and refer the viewer elsewhere. These signs are utterly self-referential, acting as costumes that mask the underlying site reality. As concrete inversions of reality, the brand-new billboards disguise the deterioration of the building behind. Consequently, although the billboard sign and building shed are developed separately, they become contingent on one another in the state of a decorated shed.

First, consider the shed with signs removed. The building appears to have gaping holes, which represent a missing identity. Thus, the shed needs the signs to mark it with some legible identity. Taking an opposing position, the building is erased so that the signs appear to float in thin air. Interestingly, this enforces the ephemeral illusion of the sign’s commodity promise. Evidently, the shed’s structure provides a necessary backboard upon which the signs are fastened to a particular place. Distant from reality, this image gets at the very essence of the out-of-reach spectacle. In case of shed without signs, the sign lacks any rootedness to locale, floating outside reality.

While shed and sign are conceived as separate entities, differing in dimensionality, degree of permanence, and
SHED INVERTED

In this line of thinking, Klingmann reinterprets the vocabulary set forth in *Learning from Las Vegas*, and calls for the blurring of boundaries between image (the decoration) and built form (the shed). Wherein, the following dichotomies cease to exist:

building / sign
architecture / decoration
reality / desire

As the named dichotomies dissolve, one element substitutes for another so that architecture becomes more integral and self-sustaining. Instead of the decorated shed in which image substitutes for the inherent deficiency of the shed, Klingmann introduces a derivative type, named the inverted shed. The inverted shed, as stated in the thesis introduction, is a contemporary, radicalized version of its predecessor, defined as a three-dimensional event space of visual signifiers, in which the building envelope acts as the area of articulation interfacing between inside and outside, and public and private. In this way, the inverted shed communicates on multiple levels of perception in the form of a single, synergistic environment.

BETWEEN IMAGE AND FORM

Klingmann’s inverted shed essentially mediates between image and form. Interestingly, there are moments in the current condition of the existing building that are decomposing into a state between image and form, as shown in Figure 20 (also, the document’s title page image). In this photograph, a painted sign on the side of the building purpose, they become interdependent in the case of the decorated shed. As shown, both scenarios of “shed minus sign” and “sign minus shed” are incomplete and insufficient. However, their interdependent duality, in the case of the decorated shed, delivers a confused message to the city’s inhabitants. In order to resolve this dichotomy, an interface must mediate between the shed’s reality and spectacular realm of the sign. Whereby, the architectural background and spectacular foreground invert, transforming into “shed with sign.” Essentially, this strategy reinterprets the company name “Properties Plus Media,” and proposes that the property reestablishes itself as meaningful architecture, integrated with the media of brands. The architecture versus brand opposition disintegrates, and synthesizes to build up a new kind of architectural interface.

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is peeling away from the building’s brick surface into unexpected forms that expand the architectural envelope in multiple dimensions. Thus, the building envelope begins to unpack itself and create moments where the underlayers of surfaces, previously unseen, transform into an interface between surface and space. Therefore, the closed-off building begins to delaminate and blur the boundaries between sign and shed.

**PART 1**

**CONCLUSION**

Starting with a theoretical discussion of urban interpretations, Part 1 addresses the messy energy of highways and associated erosion surrounding the project site. The site palimpsest is derived from a history of urban transformation, and reveals the pent-up energy revolving around this location. Chapter 1 concludes with Kevin Lynch’s strategy of marking highway trajectories with distinctive events to break up the journey along these otherwise monotonous paths. Then, zooming in on the existing building’s timeline of functions, Properties Plus Media’s use of the site reflects that of a Venturi and Brown’s decorated shed, and also involves Debord’s commodity spectacle and notions of branding. Recognizing the codependency signs and shed, the inversion of shed becomes an applicable strategy to open up a participatory dialogue of experience along the architectural envelope.
Cued by the present billboard spectacle at site, the program proposal aligns with Cincinnati’s ongoing branding initiatives to build upon and publicize the city’s strong creative class. The program is conceived as a hybrid type consisting of event space bolstered by an educational base, intended to host and sustain the creative community. These space types are arranged to interface with one another and their site surroundings through adjacencies, circulatory linkages, and various viewpoints. This program is considered a stageset of potential interactions, composing an interplay of seen frontstage functions and unseen backstage functions. Similar to the previous section’s layout, more specific discussion about the existing building’s use or proposed program are indented from the general background information that supports the future program.

Chapter 3: Local Identity

Billboard to City Branding (Specific)

Currently, the facade and rooftop of the site’s original factory building are leased to advertisers who broadcast to a mass marketplace of highway consumers. These advertisements act like wallpaper appliqué pasted where urban vitality once stood for itself, as shown in Figure 21. Signs are superimposed with no concern for the deteriorating building beneath so that the whole becomes closed off from its surroundings, leaving only advertising images to project beyond its surface. Moreover, the signs disregard local identity unless targeted toward a particular consumer group, such as Cincinnati Bengals fans. Thus, the present condition displays a disintegrated locale, which has resigned to the ubiquitous display of commodity promotion.

The proposal for future use recognizes the suitability of branding at this highly visible location, and hones in on initiatives to define the city as a brand. This type of local branding refers to the city of Cincinnati building a name for itself that has a lasting impact on public perception, and is based in its already-present strengths. Much more than a logo, it involves the coordinated activity of current independent efforts in order to integrate cultural and
Cincinnati's Creative Niche

As indicated by the 1956 sale of the McCullough Seed Company factory, Cincinnati experienced a postwar industrial downturn, and has since shifted toward a service economy. Following its thriving industrial era, the reputation of Cincinnati has remained relatively undefined, and the local economy suffers as a result. However, the city has evident assets as home to ten Fortune 500 Companies and as one of the Top 5 Consumer Marketing regions worldwide. Cincinnati contains the headquarters and/or largest offices of numerous leading marketing, branding, design, and advertising companies including Procter & Gamble, LPK: Building Leadership Brands, and Landor: Strategic Brand Consulting & Design. In addition to this community of professionals, many students are enrolled in local college design programs at University of Cincinnati and the Art Institute of Ohio, while many independent creatives and startup companies continue to crop up in the city. This creative class is growing and generating a continuous string of events, as shown in the lefthand timeline of the past 10 years (see Figure 22). However, most of these events happen apart from any larger efforts to establish a cohesive city identity. In order to unify this local niche, the creative class of professionals, students, and independents must join up in a collaborative effort to attract and retain local talent, and to build an national reputation.

Cincinnati: Hub Designation 2010

In 2010, an urban economic development initiative entitled “Agenda 360: Regional Action Plan” was proposed, which recognized that much of the region is stuck in the past, and must leverage the scale and diversity of its region in order to compete in the world economy. In response, the plan utilizes a hub concept that identifies the expertise of each major Ohio city, and reveals the diversity of the region. According to the Agenda 360, Cincinnati is designated as the “Consumer Marketing Hub of Innovation and Opportunity” based on the fact that the city has an “unmatched set of assets and capabilities to take a brand to market, and drive the market share” (see Figure 23, p.30). The hub title comes with a grant to be invested in strengthening the existing industry cluster and creating new businesses to bolster Cincinnati. Agenda 360 uses a local branding approach to transform Cincinnati into a leader for jobs and economic prosperity and opportunity by 2020. In line with this initiative, the program of this facility will cater to consumer marketing expertise, but also serve users that comprise the larger creative community in Cincinnati.


chapter 4: PROGRAM RESPONSE

HYBRID BUILDING TYPE

To bolster and broadcast Cincinnati’s creative community, the proposed program provides a platform for public events underpinned by an educational component (see Figure 24). These coupled facility functions are intended to act in reciprocal support of one another, and will be arranged to exploit multiple interfaces where members of this creative class meet or interact through visual viewpoints with one another. A circulatory network running through the site will conduct interactivity of those within and around the site, becoming an integral component of the roadway routes at its borders.

OVERALL PROGRAM ARRANGEMENT

The program types for public event and for more privatized education facilities are arranged on either side of the lower floors so that the spaces between them meet in the volume of the central tower (see Figure 25). Existing circulation including two stairwells, vehicular ramps, and a freight elevator pinpoint the corners and trace the edges of this tower, circumscribing an active area of interchange. Here, event and educational programmatic adjacencies, layerings, and mergings may effectively take place to exploit its interstitiality. On the southern side of the building, where the event program is located, a lower floor was added in the 1980s to raise the building up to a highway audience for billboard advertising. This billboard platform is conceptualized as a highway stage, or public auditorium visible to vehicular spectators. At the opposite end, a proposed park linkage will connect Sawyer Point riverfront park with the city greenspace of Taft Museum and Procter & Gamble plaza, which establishes better pedestrian accessibility and serves as an outdoor student gathering and amphitheater space.

Thus, the corner stages, namely the raised communal auditorium and ground-level student amphitheater engage the urban fabric and highway context respectively. Between them, circulation bridges negotiate their elevations while also winding through the central tower in a web of interactivity. Therefore, the program arrangement intends to open up an active exchange that invites a dialogue between the site and its surroundings through the interplay of corner stages and circulatory in-betweens. Part 5, “Design Response,” lays...
out the components of the design response, providing a more explicit explanation of the program organization and the overall design intervention.

**PROGRAM INTERFACE**

Below, Figure 25 shows how the bands of education center and professional platform, or event program, space types extend into shared spaces in the middle, and branch off into more independent functions on either side. As shown, the creative class platform occupies a greater portion of overall square footage, and more appropriately fits into the southern side of the existing building that contains extra floor space. The deliberate interface of program creates an exchange of users, which activates the facility and strengthens its joint functionalities with a more inclusive community of users.
VARIOUS USERS AND SCENES

These users may approach the site as a destination or just by happenstance due to its highly visible location. The following diagrams map out the paths potential users may take to the site, and suggests how their experiential narratives might unfold.
PART 2
CONCLUSION

Conceptually, the program is conceived as the choreography of movement and staged events, wherein people activate the facility and create scenes that are visible to a wide audience. Essentially, the use of this building becomes its branding. This version of branding is closer to that described by Anna Klingmann in Brandscapes: Architecture in an Experience Economy as an interactive brand experience,\textsuperscript{25} wherein people are participants rather than passive spectators. Instead of universal billboards packaging a local building, this program aims to self-publicize the local strength of Cincinnati by providing an event venue for local collaborations and to host national events, as well as offering university degree programs to train students who will potentially feed into the local job market. This approach follows Klingmann’s argument that architecture should act as an integral partner to enhance culture, commerce, and the future of the city and regional identities. Thus, the intervention at this site aligns with the hub concept proposed by Agenda 360, to establish a positive sign of progress for Cincinnati, using the event venue and educational component as support for the city’s creative leadership.

PART 3: Precedent Analysis

developing a conceptual inventory of strategies

GENERAL THEMATIC LINES OF INQUIRY

SPECIFIC ARCHITECTURAL PRECEDENTS

In this part, six architectural precedents, listed below, are analyzed through the following lines of inquiry: staging event, icon, spectacle-[interface]-spectator, and movement. These lines of inquiry are derived from the site/existing building implications of Part 1 and the program interface of Part 2. Each chapter analyzes the precedents along a single line of inquiry in order to develop a thematic set of strategies to guide the development of this thesis project.

CENTRE POMPIDOU (Paris) modern art cultural center
PRADA AOYAMA EPICENTER (Tokyo) high-end boutique
VITRAHAUS (Switzerland) contemporary furniture showroom
GLASS VIDEO GALLERY (Netherlands) video exhibition gallery
ISSEY MIYAKE (London) high-end boutique
MÖBIUS HOUSE (Netherlands) single-family house

chapter 5: STAGING EVENT

This chapter introduces the precedents in the context of their immediate site surrounds, highlighting site projections, through which the building envelope opens up and interacts with nearby buildings and roadways. While the precedents vary in program and site situation, each was chosen for its exemplification of Klingmann’s inverted shed (Figure 31 below), in which the building envelope acts as an area of articulation interfacing to blur the boundaries between inside and outside.26 The accompanying image of each building, in this chapter, captures a moment of performance wherein the building projects itself as an event space, spectacle, exhibition, and/or stageset. In contrast to the decorated shed’s characteristic two-dimensional billboard along the road, these scenes capture a moment where the shed is inverted to become a three-dimensional carrier of information to cars passing by, pedestrians, and/or users of the building. Thus, each precedent typifies some form of an inverted shed.

Figure 31. inverted shed, Anna Klingmann, Brandscapes

CENTRE POMPIDOU (Paris, Rogers & Piano, 1977)
In the heart of Paris, France, Centre Pompidou is a cultural center for contemporary works of art, and includes a public library, research institute, educational activity areas, and gallery space. Of all the precedents, the Pompidou's functional program is most similar to the hybrid program (an event and educational space for the creative class) proposed for this thesis in Part 2. As shown in Figure 32, the projected visibility the Pompidou's main facade is illustrated as a gradient that spreads across the large Parisian plaza and fades into more narrow pedestrian streets. This plaza facade is used as an information surface displaying building information such as current and ongoing exhibitions. At night, the building is illuminated so that light glistens on its metal skeleton structure, and its circulation tube is underlined in vibrant red, creating a remarkable spectacle (see Figure 33). In addition, the plaza occasionally becomes an event space in which the facade acts as a backdrop for light shows and other audiovisual performances. Hence, the facade literally becomes a projection surface, upon which images are presented to a large audience. Interestingly, the facade reveals traditionally backstaged building components, such structural and mechanical systems, but inverts upon itself as a frontstage feature to its plaza audience, as shown in Figure 34.

PRADA AOYAMA EPICENTER (Tokyo, Herzog & de Meuron, 2003)
Occupying a corner city block in Tokyo, Prada Aoyama Epicenter is one of the upscale fashion brand's major retail stores worldwide. Comparable to the thesis site, it is situated at a corner city block, and projects out to the numerous intersecting roads at its base as shown in Figure 35. The epicenter's form is not designed according to normal building elevations, but is substantially influenced by the angles of incidence, or offset perspectives, from which the site is experienced (see Figure 37, p.36). At this intersection, the epicenter stages itself boldly as a landmark, and often hosts high-profile flashy events as shown in Figure 36 (p.36), which are viewable from at least five different roadways. The building's vertical volume stacks the square footage, leaving part of the

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Near the corner of two intersecting highways, Vitrahaus is highly visible as a "welcome sign" to the Vitra campus in Weil am Rhein, Switzerland. As shown in Figure 38, the stacked building form projects out to those traveling at various speeds and distances on the bordering highways, and also to those entering the campus grounds on foot. Glass panes cap each volume and direct their house-shaped image in multiple directions, capturing a large viewing audience as shown in Figure 39. For the street audience, the glass panes appear as simple house images, but for pedestrians on campus, the projected surface reveals itself as a space showcasing furniture exhibitions and the visitors inside. By stacking longitudinal volumes on one another, much of the ground space is left for a central courtyard, inviting people to enter and wander up into the showrooms in order to enjoy expansive views. Due to the site’s high viewership and the building’s graphic expression, Vitrahaus invites those traveling along the highway to take notice and pedestrians on campus to experience the architecture. In this way, Vitrahaus relates to the complexity of the thesis site and offers a strategy of stacked volumes and iconic shapes to address both people in cars and pedestrians as an engaging spectacle.

**VITRAHAUS** (Weil am Rhein, Herzog & de Meuron, Switzerland, 2010)

Near the corner of two intersecting highways, Vitrahaus is highly visible as a "welcome sign" to the Vitra campus in Weil am Rhein, Switzerland. As shown in Figure 38, the stacked building form projects out to those traveling at various speeds and distances on the bordering highways, and also to those entering the campus grounds on foot. Glass panes cap each volume and direct their house-shaped image in multiple directions, capturing a large viewing audience as shown in Figure 39. For the street audience, the glass panes appear as simple house images, but for pedestrians on campus, the projected surface reveals itself as a space showcasing furniture exhibitions and the visitors inside. By stacking longitudinal volumes on one another, much of the ground space is left for a central courtyard, inviting people to enter and wander up into the showrooms in order to enjoy expansive views. Due to the site’s high viewership and the building’s graphic expression, Vitrahaus invites those traveling along the highway to take notice and pedestrians on campus to experience the architecture. In this way, Vitrahaus relates to the complexity of the thesis site and offers a strategy of stacked volumes and iconic shapes to address both people in cars and pedestrians as an engaging spectacle.

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GLASS VIDEO GALLERY (Gröningen, Netherlands, Tschumi, 1990)
The Glass Video Gallery designed by Bernard Tschumi reflects his belief that, as stated in this thesis introduction, architecture should not be a mere setting for actions, but should become the action itself. The gallery is located within a traffic roundabout where it is constantly circled by vehicles and has no particular building front. In response, its structure is glazed on all sides, reflecting and refracting cinema of imagery in every direction. In order to activate the gallery, its glazed envelope exposes all interior scenes so that the art and those experiencing it become subjects of the event. As shown in the snapshot of the gallery (Figure 41), video sequences produce unexpected, layered projections upon the glazed surfaces, re-presenting the images in completely different ways. Without these video reflections, the glass enclosure would seem to disappear at night, which affirms Tschumi’s position that there is no place without event. The simple glass frame animates and projects the exhibit event, opening up the architectural envelope as an all-encompassing interface.

ISSEY MIYAKE (London, David Chipperfield, 1983)
On a busy shopping street in London, the Issey Miyake storefront has limited “facetime” with its sidewalk audience. Issey Miyake does not try to differentiate itself by upstaging neighboring retail windows with the latest fashions, but instead clears the clutter of window display to reveal the scene inside. In the interior, merchandise is arranged along one side of the store so that only the clothing selected by shoppers, to try on or purchase, is featured on the store’s open floor. In this way, Issey Miyake opens up a platform for visitors to perform their shopping activity on stage. Unlike the Prada Aoyama Epicenter, this store is understated and inclusive, inviting the sidewalk viewers to enter and become part of the ongoing shopping event. Similar to the Glass Video Gallery, visitors of Issey Miyake become part of the performance, and the shopping window is a viewing portal into these shopping scenes.

[Figures 40-43]
MÖBIUS HOUSE (Utrecht, Netherlands, UN Studio, 1998)

Set back off a highway as part of a small, residential cluster, the Möbius House is visible from the street as shown; however, unlike the other precedents, it is not intended to be a public building projecting to a large audience (see Figure 44). Alternatively, spaces are arranged around central circulation based on the geometry of the Möbius band, which acts as a dynamic event platform that flexibly twists and loops daily activities in an intertwined structure. As seen in the interior image of Figure 45, views of the surrounding landscape unfold simultaneously with openings into living spaces, which shift between more public and private functions. Dissimilar to the other precedents, this is remote private residence, and is therefore designed to create views and experiences from the inside-out. In this case, the site is visible from a distance, yet more internalized around its central circulation to activate an event space within the house. This precedent has been selected for study in order to analyze how the spectacle-spectator dialogue can unfold along movement paths within the building from space to space, as opposed to the other precedents in which this exchange occurs mainly between inside and outside.

Figure 44. Möbius House, site projections
Figure 45. Möbius House, movement as event

chapter 5  
CONCLUSION

Through strategic site orientation, formal gesture, and material choices, these buildings project some type of event to their external environment, or among their interior spaces. In the cases of Centre Pompidou, Vitrahaus, the Glass Video Gallery, and Issey Miyake, an active dialogue between those inside and outside the building takes place so that all are participants in the spectacle. In contrast, Prada Aoyama Epicenter is a spectacle reinforced by its own glamor. It commands a presence that projects exclusivity, and limits the exchange between those inside and those outside the store. Whereas, the Möbius House design is less concerned with projection through the building envelope and instead utilizes the course of winding movement through its interior spaces as the trajectory for event. Vehicular movement plays a significant role in Vitrahaus, Tschumi’s Glass Video Gallery, and Prada Aoyama Epicenter, whereas pedestrian activity is the more pertinent consideration in the Centre Pompidou and Issey Miyake’s site contexts. Considering this, the more vehicular sites project out is various directions as the viewpoint for multiple roadways, while the building envelopes in pedestrian contexts seem to prioritize and open up only a single face to engage those passing by. Overall, site context and surrounding activity plays a significant role regarding where the interface or event most appropriately and effectively occurs.

chapter 6: ICON

Following this more general introduction to the precedents, this chapter strips each building design down to its most essential qualities through an icon analysis. Both Centre Pompidou and Prada Aoyama Epicenter have icons that are officially used for the branding purposes on their websites and for other
promotional purposes. In these cases, the icon is deconstructed and examined in detail to understand is conceptual development. For the other precedents, icons are created by extracting the key quality or characteristic of each building, and translating this into the basic language of an icon. Either way, the core concept of the building whether it is a facade feature, formal figure, or movement abstraction is disclosed as its most fundamental image.

CENTRE POMPIDOU

As shown in Figure 46, Centre Pompidou’s current building icon, used on their website, abstracts the main facade into open-ended horizontal lines overlaid by a pair of zigzagging, diagonal lines. The diagonals overlay the horizontals, signifying the prominence of the building’s externalized circulation tube, which projects out and snakes up the front facade (see Figure 48). Therefore, public circulation is symbolically pronounced at the forefront of the building, and faces a pedestrian plaza, emphasizing one of the Pompidou’s key goals: to open up an artistic and cultural exchange with the street pedestrian. This communal exchange is reiterated by the icon’s horizontal lines, which refer to the facade’s open framework, and communicate an open inclusivity that extends beyond the building into the surrounding cityscape. Notably, the original red icon that is no longer used (Figure 47) illustrates more detail of the facade structure, symbolizing the importance of the Pompidou’s revolutionary high tech 1970s structure. In this original icon, the circulation tube is represented as a single bold line, stating the building’s main feature. As this icon evolved into its current image, the circulation line split into a double line and now more clearly illustrates the interface through which visitors move between the building’s interior and exterior (see Figure 49). In addition, the context of foregrounded tree outlines and the detailed structural skeleton have been eliminated so that the current icon clarifies Centre Pompidou’s approach as an open, accessible building framework that invites the public to fill its voids and participate in a cultural exchange.

PRADA AOYAMA EPICENTER

Like the Pompidou, Prada Aoyama Epicenter promotes its own icon, used as a trademark for its store. While the Pompidou icon represents only one facade, the Prada icon is an open-ended fragment that captures an entire facade pattern. The building’s rhomboid-shaped structural grid repeats as an all-sided facade, which projects a sculptural, iconic presence that disregards any need for conventional signage. The design of the building, shown in the models on the following page is based on a single diamond-shape: its repetition, wrapping, and occasional extrusion. Conceptually, the diamond-wrapper may act as a cage
that contains Prada in a single discrete volume separate from the rest of the city. Clothed in a highly graphic wrapper, Prada Aoyama represents an icon for the fashion brand on several levels: the single diamond shape, diamond pattern, and overall diamond-like form of the building. As a result, any piece of its diamond-wrapper can be identified with the whole.

**VITRAHAUS**

Vitrahaus is also a highly graphic construction, conceived as a direct rendition of the western house archetype as shown in Figures 58 and 59, yet surprisingly does not have an official building icon. Therefore, the icon shown in Figure 55 was created for this thesis, based on the building’s repeated house-shaped windows. This specific icon was chosen because it represents the most unique and therefore the most recognizable house shape, appearing as if its profile is being compressed by the heavy load of volumes stacked above it. At night, the white house windows are illuminated as bright icons against the dark sky. Moreover, the house portals reach to the surrounding landscape as a highly visible welcome signs, which functions as a brand communication tool, and a metaphor to Vitra’s home and headquarters in Weil am Rhein.33 Herzog & de Meuron use sectional and model explorations to transform the house icon from simple pictogram into merged shapes, extruded space, and finally into a pile of stacked volumes in various orientations. Although the building is based on a simple house shape similar to the Prada diamond, Vitrahaus is not a mere iconic wrapper. Instead, the house icon is reinvented and transformed into multiple spatial configurations. In this case, the archetypal house icon of collective consciousness was deliberately chosen as the starting point of the design, and not developed after the fact.
GLASS VIDEO GALLERY

As opposed to the obvious icon of the Vitrahaus, an icon suitable for the Glass Video Gallery is less apparent since the gallery gives priority to changing images over permanent structure.\textsuperscript{34} To derive a symbol, Figure 61 shows two studies from different perspectives, in which essential lines are extracted to most simply illustrate the gallery’s form. These studies reveal a three-dimensional building uncharacteristic of a traditionally two-dimensional icon; thus, the finalized icon of Figure 60 illustrates a single elevation that reduces the structure to flat image and delineates a floating frame. Pilotis at the building base appear to lightly touch the ground, indicating the temporality of the structure, while also hoisting up the structure so that it appears to hover above the ground. The icon depicts an empty container, or two-dimensional blank border to be animated with various media images, which expresses Tschumi’s intent to negate the building with an almost invisible glass envelope in order to showcase virtual imagery. While exhibits constantly change and dramatically affect the gallery’s appearance, the gallery enclosure has taken on a permanence, as it has remained for 20 years. Therefore, the only lasting icon plausible to represent the building becomes the gallery itself, simply hoisted on pilotis as an outlined enclosure.

ISSEY MIYAKE

Like the Glass Video Gallery, much of the Issey Miyake store in London is left open for the exhibit of merchandise and movement of shoppers. The high-end fashion clothing store has a fully glazed storefront with no obstructions in the window in order to display its interior shopping activities to the street audience. The clean, clear lines that make up the space set the stage for shoppers to act as a fashion models on a runway moving between the merchandise and dressing rooms as shown in the studies of Figure 64. Therefore, the icon created for this thesis clearly expresses the store’s foregrounded activity, namely the shoppers who take on the role of runway models in the space. Reflecting the design intent of David Chipperfield, the icon understates the architecture of the space to allow for each shopper to fill the space with their individual presence, and play their part in activating the image of Issey Miyake.

MÖBIUS HOUSE

Also based on movement, the icon created for the Möbius House represents the main feature of the design: its continuous circulation paths. The entire structure is designed around two intertwined trajectories that seamlessly integrate daily living, working, and sleeping activities into a circulation loop. By folding, twisting, and layering circulation paths in drawing and model studies, the concept of a double-locked möbius develops as the building spine, and bordering spaces form around it. Although the möbius form is not explicitly stated in the building’s appearance, it is constantly experienced and reiterated.

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through the looped pattern of daily activities. Therefore, the only true icon of this house that symbolically communicates its design intent is the original möbius band concept.

**Figure 68.** Organizational studies around central möbius activity

## Chapter 6

**Conclusion**

Through this icon analysis, it has become apparent that larger, public projects including Centre Pompidou, Prada Aoyama, and Vitrahaus have more obvious icons. These memorable icons tend to correspond with more graphic, architectural envelope articulations. In these cases, the icon and the building it represents become almost interchangeable as branding and marketing materials. On the other hand, the Glass Video Gallery, Issey Miyake, and the Möbius House are smaller projects not necessarily in need of a highly graphic appearance or iconic presence. For example, the Glass Video Gallery is simply a hoisted glass container and Issey Miyake is a wide-open storefront window, which serves to showcase the activities inside the space rather than asserting their own iconic presence. However, the Glass Video Gallery contains temporary exhibits of contemporary media and artwork so that the only consistency is the glass container itself. Whereas, the Issey Miyake store continuously carries its own merchandise displayed along a single wall, prompting shoppers to act as runway models. As a result, the Glass Video Gallery icon is shown as a blank platform to be filled with artwork and activity, while the Issey Miyake icon shows the specifically intended activity of the shoppers. Also derived from movement in space, the Möbius House icon illustrates the concept of a one-sided, nonorientable surface, the möbius strip, around which the house is formed (and, named). Issey Miyake and the Möbius House have the most abstract icons because they are associated with the experience of space rather than its actual appearance. By reducing each building to an icon, its superficial and experiential features are weighed against one another to illustrate its most essential qualities.
To synthesize the results of this icon study, Figure 70 shows the precedents positioned in relation to one another on a surface-to-space scale. The buildings with a more spatial emphasis tend to showcase activity inside as the brand envelope. On the other end of the axis, more surface-based projects use the architectural facade as a the brand envelope to suggest interior activity.
As shown in Figure 71 above, an interface, or common boundary, occurs between spectacle, the event or display, and spectator, the observer of the exhibition. Relative to architecture, this interface is often the building envelope where the interior and exterior interact to form a space between those within and those outside the envelope. These envelope interfaces between interior and exterior were highlighted as site projections in chapter 5. The interfaces unfold in various ways, and may be animated by the conveyance, gesture, and actions of people within it, as well as the manipulation of views through it. Simply put, the interface either acts as a stage for events, or a lens through which one views scenes on the other side. Thereby, the staged interface is often inhabitable to invite the performance of people within it, and is itself the spectacle. Whereas, the optical spectacle is more nearly a surface through which objects are enhanced and/or manipulated by means such as distortion and reflection to appear as spectacle. Moreover, the staged interface allows people to enter into it and become part of the spectacle, while the optical interface creates an interchangeable duality between spectacle and spectator. For example, when looking through distorted glass, people on either side are spectators viewing, but they are also spectacles being viewed as a distorted images from the other side.

In the following section, the architectural precedents will be analyzed along their interfaces to explore the often reciprocal roles of spectacle and spectator that vary with factors such as viewpoint, lighting conditions, and activity. Each precedent is deconstructed and analyzed as a type of stageset, enabled by the interface(s), and activated by both the spectacle and spectators. The chapter transcribes isolated scenes and frames events that happen in an effort to expand beyond conventional architectural representation of surface and spatial configuration to a broader realm of movement and interaction of people in relation to architecture. The interface is never a static surface, but inevitably takes on a spatial quality whether it is actually inhabitable, projecting illusionary images, or almost disappearing into the space beyond. Notably, the experience of the spectacle and spectator may only be cued by architectural design, but never controlled completely because unpredictable events and activities, unplanned by the architect, will constantly occur. However, the following study reveals specific interfaces designed by the architect that set the stage for a series of interactions, appearances, and episodes.
Along the Pompidou’s front facade, circulation tubes project out from the main structure creating a theatrical display underlined in a “red carpet” during the day (see Figure 74) and illuminated to show the silhouettes of people moving through it at night (Figure 78). Suspended between interior and exterior, as shown in Figure 76, people move across the facade with access to all interior floors and views of the exterior plaza and Parisian cityscape beyond. The foregrounded circulation acts as an inhabitable interface that stages itself to the plaza audience, positioning the rest of the building backstage. Those “on stage” act as spectacles directed into specific movement patterns through the glass tubes in contrast to spectators on the plaza below who move about freely engaging in many activities. As shown in Figure 75, the building’s facade is its main stage, however, the audience on the plaza below, shown in Figure 74, can recreate their own events with a new set of spontaneous actors and audiences, becoming part of the theater and spectacle. For example, a group may start break dancing on the plaza and gather a crowd. In this case, those in the circulation tubes watch the spectacle from above, suddenly stepping into the role of spectator. Additionally, when those circulating on the face of the Pompidou step backstage into exhibition areas, they quickly switch roles and to become spectators of the artwork, as indicated by the interchanging arrows in Figure 75. Also, a rooftop restaurant with enclosed and open air spaces offers spectacular views of the city from above as seen in Figure 73. Although the building has its primary facade stageset, the spectacle appears on many levels both horizontally and vertically, constantly reassigning actor/audience roles in various scenes, to produce a dynamic performance, as illustrated in Figure 77.

PRADA AOYAMA EPICENTER

Occupying a corner city block, the Prada store’s diamond-shaped grid is glazed in a wrapper of convex, concave, and flat glass panels. The combination of curved and flat glass panels produce facetted reflections that are ambivalent and constantly changing in a distorting interface between the store and city. The effects of these differing geometries enable viewers on either side of the facade interface to experience cinematographic perspectives of Prada products, the city of Tokyo, and themselves. Notably, the panels are the inverse of themselves on either side of the glass. For instance, a person inside the store looking through a particular convex panel directly corresponds to someone outside the store looking through that same panel, which is concave from their perspective. The building’s glazed wrapper is essentially an assembly of lenses that produce illusionary appearances, forming a hermetic seal around its fashionable inventory that seems detached from reality. Through this lens, all becomes spectacle in a surreal context of layered distortions and juxtapositions, and the person is constantly spectator. Wherein, the building stages a performance of its own contents and fractures the city into a diamond collage of images. From both interior and exterior, the crystalline lens, or Prada interface, shatters and refashions its real contents and surrounding context into a cinema of illusion.

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Vitrahaus is composed of extruded house shapes stacked on one another that end in glazed interfaces that open up interaction between the furniture showrooms and surrounding landscape.\textsuperscript{39} Interior illumination and outside daylight invert the role of spectacle and spectator through the interface during the day and at night. During the day, as shown in Figure 86, windows act as telescopes to capture the landscape in a number of remarkable images that appear almost as house-shaped postcards. In contrast, Figure 89 shows illuminated shopping windows, which hover in the night sky and frame furniture in a series of spotlighted spectacles. The house-shaped glass panes cap each volume so that Vitrahaus showrooms telescope to the surrounding highways and landscape as a multi-level and multi-directional arrangement of interfaces. The elongated volumes, between these capping interfaces, twist around a central courtyard in an irregular configuration that creates a variety of interstitial spaces. In contrast to the Pompidou’s open plaza bordered by a single, long facade, this courtyard, shown in Figure 87, is bordered on all sides with stacked volumes, unexpected windows, and sudden openings to the surrounding landscape and sky. Within the courtyard, there are three types of views, shown in the diagrams of Figure 88, namely the (1) opaque building surface, (2) glazed cutouts on this surface, and (3) openings to the landscape. As a result, the play between spectacle and spectator constantly reverses as one moves through and around the courtyard, wherein people view scenes and also create scenes themselves as shown in Figure 91. This complex interplay within the courtyard and external glazed faces stages a theatre of dynamic spatial interaction.

Designed to exhibit television and electronic images, the video gallery challenges preconceived ideas of cinema spectatorship, which is traditionally housed in an enclosed black box for an exclusive audience. In opposition, the Glass Video Gallery brings the exhibit to the street by employing a glass envelope that functions as a transparent interface between the gallery and the city of Gröningen. The glazed surface is held by clips with minimal vertical supports and horizontal beams. Video kiosks alternate as independent structures inserted on either side of the gallery, limiting their obstruction in order to maximize the spectator’s cone of vision within the building and the gradient of view through and beyond the building (see Figure 95). With the constant flash of changing electric images projected from video screens, the glass structure is animated by the unstable movement of reflecting colors and imagery. Wherein, the interface reflects the immaterial representation of electronic media images on its transparent surface. These reflections becomes a more dramatic spectacle at night in contrast to the dark sky (see Figure 41, p.37). The gallery’s glass lining emanates the media display beyond the video screens, involving the entire gallery including the people inside to be part of the spectacle. In this case, both those inside and outside the gallery are invited to be spectators (and spectacles), and the glass envelope does not obstruct, but only animates the video spectacle.
While the Glass Video Gallery resists traditional cinema design, the Issey Miyake store challenges the conventional storefront by avoiding window display and unnecessary detailing. With distractions removed, sight lines of those passing by on the street are the compulsive motivators and engines of the store’s layout, as shown in Figure 98. When one looks into the store, a clear presentation of merchandise and the movement of shoppers unfold in an extended vista. The interior setting of long platforms and lined-up merchandise across from spotlighted dressing rooms invite shoppers to become fashionistas: parading, gesturing, and projecting their activity as a runway show to the street audience. Instead of a traditionally hidden dressing room area, this space is brought to the forefront so that those trying on the merchandise remain partially exposed as part of the theatrical performance, calling the audience to view as much of the stage as possible. Here, the traditional separation between the retail floor in front and dressing rooms situated in the back disappears so that all is brought to stage front. For that reason, an imagined interface exists between the line of merchandise on the left side of the store and the dressing rooms on the right, as shown in Figure 97, which guides movement back and forth across the store. Additionally, lighting and changing floor levels reference a stage setting, subtly “cueing” shoppers to adopt the role of a spectacles on display. So, those passing by on the street are invited to become spectators of the ongoing fashion show of the Issey Miyake brand.

Figure 96. Issey Miyake interface

Figure 97. Interior stageset: merchandise on left, dressing rooms on right

Figure 98. Gradient of View: sight lines of people from street

ISSEY MIYAKE

MÖBIUS HOUSE

In the Möbius House, a circulation loop links living, working, and sleeping spaces in a binding interface, which seems to fold back over onto itself. Throughout the house, glass and concrete materials alternate, and continuously shift appearance according to one’s perspective, sometimes appearing as a light glass skin slipped over the concrete house, and other times as a glass house framed by concrete members. The overlapping and intertwined assembly of spaces and materials are pulled apart in the exploded axonometric of Figure 100, revealing the complexity of layers and components that make up the building’s central, circulatory interface. Vertically, two stair zones (see Figure 101) link the double circulation bands between levels, continuously integrating movement within the building. The diagram of Figure 99 bolds visual connections, or glazed areas, between the interior and exterior, showing areas where someone could view the activity inside the house from the exterior. However, unlike the previously analyzed public buildings where the facade functioned as interface, this is a private residence in a rural setting so any spectatorship would likely happen inside the building along its circulation interface. Once inside the house, the space unfolds and re-folds, revealing and concealing various activity spaces. Based on the nonhierarchical, nondialectical concept of the möbius, this house does not aim at spectacle, and accordingly does not present a show to spectators. Instead, it invites the inhabitants to participate in a seamless integration of space, in which the entire assembly is integral to the interface.

Figure 99. Möbius House interfaces

Figure 100. exploded axonometric

Figure 101. vertical circulation links

Figure 102. circulation loop

Figure 103. interior interface: unfolding and re-folding space

chapter 7
CONCLUSION

Through this chapter’s analysis, the following features have become evident characteristics of spectacle/spectator interfaces: transparency, projection, distortion, activity, and movement. The diagrams of Figure 104 chart each precedent’s tendency toward the themes, revealing the interdependencies and oppositions among them. For example, Prada Aoyama and Vitrahaus are clearly oriented toward strategies of distortion and projection respectively, placing less value on the movement or activity as spectacle. On the other hand, the Pompidou, Issey Miyake, and the Möbius House are absolutely dependent on the activity and movement of people to trigger the spectacle. Thus, movement and activity as well as transparency and projection are often parallel in their measured emphasis.

By overlapping the findings in the synthesized diagram above, general contributions of a dynamic interface become apparent. As shown, movement and activity measure as major themes in three precedents, outweighing the other components of transparency, projection, and distortion. In the Pompidou, the face of the building is an inhabitable interface of movement, whereas in the Möbius House, movement forms the central spine and daily activities border its edges. Transparency is also an important concept in the case of the Video Glass Gallery, in which glazing covers the entire building. In contrast, the glass panes of the Vitrahaus strategically cap volumes that project out into the landscape. Other strategies of folding, shifting, and distorting architectural surfaces and spaces animate the interface, concealing and revealing different spaces. By charting these characteristics of interface, it becomes apparent that movement and activity of people are most integral to the spectacle/spectator interface.
chapter 8: MOVEMENT

Since movement has been clearly identified as a key component of spectacle, this chapter will specifically discuss circulatory organizations, and the resultant interactions, both physical and visual, that occur in each precedent case. This circulation analysis approaches movement as a sort of choreography of gesture, scenes, and sequences, which interplays between on- and off-stage, casting those in motion as spectacles and spectators.

CENTRE POMPIDOU

Turned inside out, the interior space of Centre Pompidou is liberated from the accommodation of circulation and service spaces to create unencumbered interior spans for adaptable use. Consequently, structure and service areas are externalized to the facade, which exposes the steel skeleton and diagonal bracing of the building’s structure as shown in Figure 106. Furthermore, vertical circulation is spread across the plaza’s facade as a tube-like appendage that stretches the length of the plaza and marches up the building’s face. Circulation is funneled diagonally through the single cylinder, and flattens to horizontal orientation to drop off people at the six expansive floors. The Centre Pompidou brochure, shown in Figure 107, lays out this fundamental organization of the building as an axonometric structure, which is then pulled apart into floors with their corresponding section of circulation tube linking to one another. Projected between interior and exterior, those inside the tubes enjoy panoramic views of the Parisian landscape, while those on the plaza can watch as people move across the building. In this way, people are necessary to activate the skeletal facade with vertical movement, which is perpendicular to the horizontal movement of pedestrian activity on the plaza grounds.
**PRADA AOYAMA EPICENTER**

At ground floor, the stairs of Prada Aoyama Epicenter appear to stack up as a single volume peeled and abstracted from the ground plane (see Figure 109). The stairs seem to float in space and reinforce the diagonal lines of the facade framework. At upper floors, as shown in Figure 108, stairways step away from the building’s facade and spiral up into the it core, containing those people inside Prada separate from the rest of the city. By pulling back the stairs and insetting floors at upper levels, the facade is freed from obstruction and allowed to stand purely as a crystalline structure. The convex and concave glass on the facade creates a kind of ambiguous transparency that obscures movement, creating a separation between the movement inside and outside the building. Wherein, those moving inside the epicenter are privileged visitors, and as they move up and into the building, they become more set apart from the city. While those walking along the street or driving by outside of the building are only allowed skewed views that suggest movement in the self-contained store.

**VITRAHAUS**

“This building is not at all static.” - Vitra CEO Rolf Fehlbaum

Vitrahaus offers visitors multiple paths that wind through the inside and outside of long volumes. For clarity, the building is simplified into five floor plans as shown in Figure 110, but the irregular stacking of volumes produces many partial floors that span between the five main levels. In this maze, more intimate spaces and generous monumental spaces flow fluidly with sudden visions of the outside landscape. The range of spaces, views, and circulation routes gives the building flexibility to survive independent of contemporary furniture moods and current fashion, as stated in the quote above. While the central courtyard and views of surrounding landscape may help orient the visitor, people are likely to find themselves lost in this pile of houses. The brochure shown in Figure 112 designates specific display clusters for the visitor, but the complex configuration of Vitrahaus does not compose a set of destinations. Instead, visitors are inclined to wander and discover new paths of spatial navigation.
GLASS VIDEO GALLERY
Clothed in a glass skin, the video gallery invites free movement in the green space around the building while also exhibiting itself to the vehicular traffic that flows just outside the site. Unlike the Pompidou’s plaza situated along a single side of the building, the gallery is intended for all-sided viewing from the exterior (see Figure 115). However, close-up views of the exhibit are reserved for those who step up and into the gallery. After climbing up the stairway onto the gallery platform, horizontal circulation is slightly offset to alternating sides of the central spine of the gallery in order to subtly direct visitors toward video installations, called out in gray tone in Figure 114. After viewing videos up close, the visitor descends the ramp that winds back down to the ground. Circulation is straightforward, basically linear, and entirely visible before one enters the gallery. All interior movement is viewable from the outside so that those inside the gallery become part of the exhibit.

ISSEY MIYAKE
The deep space of the Issey Miyake store is defined by an upper and lower platform as well as a short wall enclosure to designate zones of movement and activity: entrance, shopping, and dressing. These long platforms underline the entrance and shopping zones, while the short walls allow the shopper to stop and try on merchandise in a minimal enclosure. Through these simple elements and their careful arrangement, Chipperfield weaves movement in the space, creating an exchange across the store between the shopping and dressing zone (see Figure 116). This cross-movement extends outside the building to sidewalk pedestrians and street traffic along the front of the store. Furthermore, the nature of movement in the form of staging inside Issey Miyake depends upon reciprocal movement and viewing of the street audience.
MÖBIUS HOUSE

In the Möbius House, movement is intertwined as a single surface around which the various spaces of the house are molded, and therefore linked to one another. The concept of the möbius strip, a surface with only one side and one boundary component, is the conceptual basis for circulation throughout the house. The möbius is nonorientable and operates in a continuous loop, which is interpreted in the Möbius House as a twisting of spaces for 24-hour daily activities – living, working, sleeping – mapped along the crisscrossing bands of circulation (see Figure 118). Essentially, the house is composed of two interlocking circulation bands, around which a configuration of bordering spaces is formed. As inhabitants move along the dual circulatory trajectories of the building, their daily activities charge the entire house.

chapter 8
CONCLUSION

The following diagrams categorize the circulation schemes of the precedents in order to understand the particular characteristics of each configuration type.

CONTINUOUS, LINEAR CIRCULATION

Along a spine, circulation is an unified passage that can either be pulled apart from the main structure and fed into floors, or bind interior spaces. While one circulation scheme is strictly linear and externalized, the other widens and narrows to flexibly accommodate interior spaces. Externalized circulation focuses on surrounding views and display of those people in circulation, while the shifting scale of interior circulation guides the speed of those within it, and broadens the role of the space to also become social/meeting area.
**SINGLE-LEVEL, ZONED CIRCULATION**

Circulation on a single, rectangular platform may be directed and/or cued by installations or zones of use in the space. On one hand, the installations alternate on either side of the floor to direct a somewhat linear path complete with an entrance and exit marking each end of the path. In contrast, zones of use may be placed on opposite sides of the floor to encourage cross-movement and more freedom to circulate around the space.

**STACKED CIRCULATION**

When multiple floors are stacked on one another, upper floors tend to occupy a smaller footprint than the floors below. As a result, higher floors overlook lower floors from separate volumes or elevated mezzanines. In this case, vertical circulation acts as a common boundary along the edge, or occupies the corner of intersecting or vertically stacked floors. Here, vertical circulation is the necessary linkage and alignment between floors, unifying the building’s multiple levels.

Through this circulation study, it has become evident that each precedent arranges and celebrates movement differently. On the facade of Centre Pompidou, escalator tubes underlined in red celebrate movement suspended between interior and exterior. In Prada Aoyama Epicenter and Vitrahaus, the formal gesture and graphic appearance of the architecture dominates the spectacle, and movement becomes a subset to enhance the overall. In the cases of Issey Miyake and the Glass Video Gallery, transparent surfaces are used to showcase movement as a spectacle of fashionistas and gallery visitors. Circulation in the Möbius House, is the conceptual basis and physical spine of the entire design configuration. Considering these observations, unless the architecture takes on a highly graphic appearance, the arrangement, interaction, and visibility of movement become essential to the spectacle.
Overall, this precedent analysis focused on an interface of dialogue between spectacle and spectators, which was discussed at length in chapter 7. The other chapters topics, namely “Staging Event,” “Icon,” and “Movement,” are centered around and reinforce this interface, and the spectacle that takes place at each one of these buildings. While the spectacle referred to here is generated by interaction, Guy Debord in *Society of the Spectacle* (1967) discusses a different type of commodity spectacle, which independently represents an “uninterrupted discourse about itself, its laudatory monologue.” In chapter 2 (Existing Building Implications) of this document, Debord’s spectacle was discussed in relation to the billboard branding of the existing building on site. Thus, it is important to draw a clear distinction, and also explore possible relationships, between Debord’s self-serving commodity spectacle and the interactive spectacle of this precedent analysis.

According to Debord, the interface is negated by the monopoly of the spectacle’s appearance, which alienates the spectator. Debord refers to spectacle as an illusionary surface that appears everywhere, creating “a tangible world replaced by a selection of images that exist above it.” This particular description of spectacle relates to Tschumi’s Glass Video Gallery in which permanence is challenged by the representation of intangible video imagery. In this project, the space becomes an ensemble of mirrors and reflections of immaterial images, and attempts to deny the concrete reality of its light, glass structure. However, unlike Debord’s spectacle, this gallery spectacle is accessible to the spectator, showcasing not only the videos, but also the movement of the body as it travels through the exhibit space. Thus, the spectacle exists in reality, allowing the spectator to interact with and become part of the spectacle. In this case, the video spectacle exploits imagery, yet is not self-indulgent or inaccessible like Debord’s commodity spectacle.

On the other hand, Prada Aoyama Epicenter more nearly illustrates the self-referential spectacle that Debord describes. On the facade, lenses wrap the building, fracturing and disfiguring actual scenes into fragmented illusions of reality. This distortion prevents true visibility through the facade interface, separating the Prada spectacle from its real surrounding context, and alienating its spectators. However, the facade interface also inverts upon itself, wherein concave lenses are convex from on the other side, creating a formal dialogue between interior and exterior. Similar to Debord’s spectacle, the epicenter is indisputably reserved for privileged shoppers, aiming at its own exclusivity. Those spectating can only view warped fragments of the spectacle, knowing that the quality of the whole brand is preciously contained within the “bubble wrap” facade.

The other precedents do not relate so directly to Debord’s notions of intangible imagery and illusion, but create a spectacle through the reconfiguration and repetition of an iconic form (Vitrahaus) and the movement of people within, inside, and outside the interface (Centre Pompidou, Issey Miyake, and the Möbius House). In these precedents, and in accordance with the intent of this thesis, the spectacle cannot exist independently of the spectator, and often requires the movement of people to activate it.

**spectacle**
Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*
- concrete inversion of reality; covers surface of the world as visible negation of life, an illusion
- aims at nothing other than itself
- enormously positive, indisputable, and inaccessible

**spectator**
- alienated foreigner of the spectacle
- feels at home nowhere because the spectacle is everywhere
- can only reach fragments of the spectacle, in which the quality of the whole is obviously missing

Figure 122. Debord’s Spectacle-Spectator Relationship
PART 4: Physical Conditions

interpreting physical conditions per site interface

GENERAL EXPERIENTIAL SEQUENCES  \rightarrow SPECIFIC SITE INTERPRETATIONS

With the theoretical implications of the site already evaluated in Part 1, Part 4 revisits the site and investigates the physical situation and conditions of its existing building in detail. Before a thoughtful design can be presented for this complex site situation, the physical nature of its territory and borders must be more thoroughly understood. The orientation, alignment and adjacencies on each side of the site set up different narratives of experience, bringing about an array of design responses. Each chapter of this section will explore a different site experience, developing an inventory of key concepts appropriate to its particular physical conditions. The concepts are formed with consideration of the previously discussed theoretical, programmatic, and precedent analyses (Parts 1-3), and will be linked together in the next section, Part 5, which will propose an integrated design response.

Figure 123. Site and surrounding conditions
KEY MAPS
A merging of scales, speeds, and built form occurs in and around the site boundary, creating significant differences in the experience of each side of the site. For example, as seen in Figure 124, the fenestration pattern of each facade varies in response to the site’s history and present conditions. In order to tackle the complexity of this perimeter condition, site experiences will be examined for each facade orientation in order to evaluate the specific conditions inherent to that interface. For wayfinding purposes, each site experience is categorized according to its approximate cardinal direction as North, South, East and West experiential sequences (see Figure 125, key map), which corresponds directly with the chapter titles. Furthermore, the upper roof experience atop the existing building’s central tower, and the two lower roofs on either side will be studied with reference to the key map of Figure 126. Each chapter begins with roadway narratives along that side of the site, and is followed by a more detailed, conceptual discussion, which, in some cases, informs ideas for design intervention. These design responses are called out in **bold italic** text to differentiate them from the observations and insights about site conditions, and will be revisited in the next section, Part 5: Design Response.
SINGULAR TOWER HOVERS IN SKY
Traveling along the elevated 5th Street Viaduct, both to and away from the city, the existing building appears as a hovering tower with no real basis. In other words, from this perspective, there is no indication that the building’s base sprawls out on the ground just below the highway bridge. Particularly, when one is leaving downtown, the building appears as a stand-alone structure with almost no tall surrounding structures to give it context. Moreover, on the highway journey leaving downtown (Figure 129, sequence N2), the final “wall of density,” featured in Figure N2-A and the following scenes, eventually leaves the frame of view so that the building’s tower is showcased in view (see Figure N2-B). Traveling in the opposite direction, the scarcity of buildings at the edge of the city is heightened by the contrast of density seen in the view toward downtown (see N1-A). From this perspective, the tower seems to loiter as a sign post that quickly passes out of sight.

VARIED STRIATIONS: HIGHWAY BALUSTRADES
The 5th St. Viaduct bridge is more decorative than other nearby highway bridges, corresponding with the aesthetic of Ohio River bridges rather than a standard highway bridge structure. Most likely, its differentiation is due to its direct flow into the urban street grid of Cincinnati. Nevertheless, the bridge’s substantial and decorative structure includes balustrades along its edges, which act as viewing filters to the site, as shown in Figure 129, sequence N2. From a driver’s viewpoint, the building’s tower is seen through a striated filter, which ranges from lined screens (Figure N2-A) to dashes of alternating light and shadow (N2-B). In addition, traveling at high speeds accelerates the experience of these striations so that the repetition of vertical fencing rods blur into single gray tones and the light and shadow alterations happen at such a pace that they appear to flash intermittently. The concept of a striated viewing filter, which alters its appearance according to one’s pace will likely be a useful tool to accommodate the pedestrian pace and automobile speed simultaneously, enabling a play between what is revealed and concealed to various perspectives and audiences.
OPENING UP EDGES

The northern site edge is largely a thoroughfare for automobiles entering and exiting the parking garage (see Figure 133). Therefore, while most ground floor facade openings have been fenced shut or boarded up, this northwest corner is left open for automobile access, as well as the opposite southeast corner, as shown in Figure 130. Likely positioned for convenience, these openings are closest to downtown Cincinnati and the Ohio River. Thus, the corner portals may be reinterpreted as a welcoming gesture toward the city and its riverfront. The deconstruction of these corners could be effectively elaborated upon as a way of opening up the insular building, and dismantling its hard edges. The adjoining facades could be extended from dead-end corners to crisscrossing surfaces and spaces that intersect with and annex the surrounding cityscape.

PARK NETWORK PIVOT POINT

A fragment of 4th Street borders the northern edge of the site, but is severed from the rest of 4th Street, which belongs to the larger urban grid (see Figure 131). By reconnecting this section of 4th Street, the site would not only be linked to the city’s street grid, but also connected to the neighboring Taft Museum Promenade Park. Furthermore, at the northeast corner of the site, 4th Street intersects Eggleston Avenue, which leads to Sawyer Point Riverfront Park. In response, the site design can incorporate a greenspace connector between these parks with the northeast corner as the pivot point of this park network (see Figure 132). Markedly, this pivot point would support an continuous park path as a fulcrum around which the park network turns the corner.

Figure 130. Garage Openings at Corners

Figure 131. Urban Grid with 4th St. Fragment (site in black outline)

Figure 132. Pivot Point of Greenscape Network

Figure 133. Northern Garage
SURROUNDING PARK NETWORK

The current separation of 4th Street from the main city route not only isolates this area of the city, but also misses the opportunity to link the downtown greenspaces of [1] Procter & Gamble Plaza and [2] Taft Promenade Park to [3] Sawyer Point Riverfront Park (see Figure 134). **By simply relinking 4th Street to downtown, a connection between these greenspaces may be formed and supported by new park space on this northern edge of the site. The proposed path is primarily independent of the highway bridges on either side of the site, and may therefore be scaled for the pedestrian, to reconnect the site directly to the urban grid, and engender a larger network of parks in the area.**

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Figure 134. Existing Park Network and Proposed Site Link
PROPOSED PARK LINKAGE

As shown in Figure 136, the new greenspace would cover a triangular plot on the northern side of the site, extending south to Sawyer Point Riverfront Park, and west on 4th Street to integrate with [2] Taft Promenade Park. From there, it would extend northward along Lawrence Street to the Procter & Gamble Plaza. The association of these greenspaces with the Taft Museum and Procter & Gamble are relevant cultural, social, and even economical proximities and relationships for the site’s program. For example, visitors of the Taft Museum may wander into a public design exhibition of student work, featuring product inventions, on their way to Sawyer Point. The artistic and innovative culture of these proximate institutions along with active parkgoers creates a creative and engaged community immediately around the site. Moreover, the program of the facility intends to release the site from its idle stance, and position it as a public institution, which can only be sustained by an active community. Thus, proposed park linkage is one way to draw upon surrounding cultural assets, but also to reorient the pedestrian to the site, which has been fully handed over to the automobile. The new park linkage is an important step in reappropriating this site for the pedestrian, the community, and the city.
FIELDS OF ELEVATED PLANES
From the vantage of the northern lower rooftop (see Figure 139), elevated highways are seen at eye level as overlapping planes at various heights, as shown in Figures 137 and 138. Appearing to float in the distance, these bridges create the sense of being suspended above the ground among a field of elevated planes. In other words, the series of planes stepping up around the site elicits one’s own awareness of their relative position upon a lofted platform. In addition, these planes crop one’s views by slicing the landscape into horizontal vistas and framing the lower profile of the overall scene. In this way, surrounding scenes are backdrops to highway bridges situated in the foreground. In design response, the use of multi-level platforms and the framing of various vistas would integrate with and build upon the existing conditions.

SHADOW PROJECTIONS
As displayed in Figure 140, sunlight casts crisp shadows upon the ground and elevated planes of this northern landscape. Particularly, the shadows of the bridge truss and railings are projected as a sort of ribbon latticework that unravels the space of the bridge, and re-presents it as a collapsed surface. Perhaps, the placement and intricacy of new design elements could be created for the effect of their shadow projections. For instance, the staggered spacing of interlacing structures above will project a type of patterned carpet for the pedestrian walking on the ground plane below.
PERIPHERAL PROFILE
Traveling along the Ohio River bridge, the I-471 driver’s view opens a stretch of pavement marked by occasional highway bridges overhead as shown in Figure 143, sequence E1. The arrangement and form of bridges are the dominant language of differentiation along this otherwise monotonous path. The existing building’s eastern face appears for less than a second then suddenly disappears as one passes under another bridge. However, the central tower’s southeastern profile, shown in Figure E1-A, and the previous images of the sequence, acts a fixed mark of orientation along the trajectory. Perhaps, increasing the height and reconsidering profile of the tower experienced on this route would effectively cause driver’s to take notice of it.

ROADWAY WALL
Driving along Eggleston Avenue, as shown in Figures 144 and 145, sequences E2 and E3 respectively, the existing building faces the roadway as a massive wall. The eastern facade reveals its substantial breadth in chapter 10:

EASTERN SITE EXPERIENCE
Eggleston Avenue and I-471 North

...
PATTERNED FACADE FENESTRATION

The thick wall of the eastern facade has a repetitive and fairly unified pattern of fenestration (see Figure 146). Originally, the factory building held primary frontage to Eggleston Avenue and was bound on its back side by another factory building. The shorter northern and southern facades were only about 1/3 the length of eastern facade, and therefore secondary to Eggleston facade. *Retaining a large portion of this original front will uphold the building’s original intent, yet manipulations to adapt to the site’s present surroundings will be necessary to update the envelope.* Rather than a planar surface marked by a regular window arrangement, the surface boundary will expand to become inhabitable space and contract back again into surface. Currently, in relation to the other building facades, the Eggleston facade has more transparency, as shown in the lighter gray tones of Figure 147, especially along the central tower the lower left portion closest to the riverfront. Instead of these uniform window patterning currently independent of site context, *the new design will reconsider appropriate degrees of opacity according to adjacent structures and views.*

EXPANSIVE LANDSCAPE: FRAMED VIEWS

As depicted in the images of Figure 148, the alignment of windows creates a series of apertures through which the landscape is framed. Continuous bridge structures are broken by the discrete openings and closings of the viewing frame, therefore abstracting the vast highwayscape into confined picture frames. In some cases, the frames appear as scenes of a film strip, while in other instances, the frame emphasizes the perspectives of bridges beyond. Nevertheless, a relationship to cinematography is evident in the sequences, which are activated by one’s movement, and changing points of view in the interior space. On the other hand, the street tree’s organic profile appears be a singularly showcased by the viewing frame as a still scene. In the top photograph of Figure 148, the tree branches layer upon the chain-link fence building barrier, further fragmenting the view beyond.

The building’s deterioration is evident in the blotches and shattered panes of some windows, which blur and fracture the exterior view. In some instances, each pane varies in terms of discoloration, blemish, and disrepair, which reveals and conceals the scene in a sort of pixelated obscurity. This
traveling south along eggleston avenue in an automobile, the wide perspective of open roadway stretches onward. the existing building face vertically bounds the frame of view, and the US-50 bridge is poised in the distance, and becomes larger on approach (see figure 149). adjacent to eggleston avenue, as shown in figure 150, the sidewalk pedestrian is bordered by a line of trees on one side and by the building's strong vertical barrier on the other side. Notably, the building slab is lifted above the ground plane so that those on the building's first floor are lifted on a platform above those on the sidewalk, consequently disassociating interior and exterior, and decreasing the access between them. From the pedestrian perspective, a series of horizontal planes step up from the street, to the sidewalk, and finally to the building's first floor. In contrast, those in the automobile experience the building as a vertical wall.

In response, an interplay of horizontal and vertical elements along this facade will start to mediate between the automobile and pedestrian experiences.

Highway marks corner

As seen in figure 151, a highway column directly steps on the site’s southeast corner, intruding on the pedestrian sidewalk zone and blocking views through eastern windows. At this juncture, divergent scales of the building, sidewalk, surface streets, highways column, and even road and building signs collide. For this reason, a design intervention here will involve a partial dismantling on the existing building corner as well as a possible new appendage just above the highway girder.
STACKED DOUBLE PLANES
Parallel to the southern site border, US-50 highway is elevated directly above 3rd Street creating a tunnel-like condition for the pedestrian at ground level, and an alouf experience for those traveling at higher speeds on the highway above. As shown in Figure 153, the site’s existing building presents a pair of billboards to the highway (S1-A) in a similar triangular orientation as its neighboring building’s corner where the two largely glazed facades intersect (S1-B). Interestingly, the upper form of the site’s building recedes to the center of site and displays billboard signs to the highway, whereas the neighboring building opens up views to its interior activity right next to the highway. The elevated US-50 route is bright with expansive views of the landscape (Figures 153 and 155), whereas the experience beneath its structure, on 3rd Street, is much more compressed and cavernous (Figures 154 and 156). From both directions on 3rd Street, one is funneled below the shadow of highway superstructure and experiences dramatic changes in lighting. On approach, the tunnel experience is foreshadowed by beams and patches of light shining through the field of darkness (Figure 154), or by stark lines of shadow that appear to document one’s distance into the tunnel beneath the highway (Figure 156).

HIGHWAY UNDERSIDE = GROUND LEVEL ROOF
For the pedestrian, the underside of the highway simulates a type of sheltering roof structure and the highway supports delineate a regular vertical rhythm in this interstitial space (see Figure 162, p.70). However, the megascale overhead is towering to someone on foot below. For instance, the placement and immensity of supporting highway columns are at the scale of the highway, alienating the pedestrian while also belittling the appearance of buildings. In fact, one of the highway columns punctures the site’s southeast sidewalk shown in Figure 151 (p.68), asserting its dominant scale at this pedestrian intersection. In response, design elements, either as part of the building facade or as separate street elements, should cater to the pedestrian scale to create a more comfortable environment. The partial shelter, bound by the horizontal vehicular planes and partially by the vertical existing building facade, provides an intermediary space to intervene formally between interior and exterior, and harness interactivity between the speed and scale of the highway driver and the city pedestrian.
SLIT OF SUNLIGHT ACCESS

US-50 runs directly parallel to the building’s canted, lower southern facade leaving only a narrow opening between its structure and the building's facade as shown in Figure 157. Through this fissure, southern sunlight gains access and penetrates below the highway plane, highlighting the southern side of the site with contrasting patterns of light and shadow. The sunlight stream appears in various instances, including the negative space of the bridge’s shadow (Figure 158) and the beaming light radiating between the bridge and building facade (Figure 159).

CASTING PATTERNS OF LIGHT

When the sunlight penetrates the slit and falls upon facade openings, patterns of illumination fold around corners, distinguishing dimensions and volumetric proportions of the building. The effect accentuates the solid and void reciprocity occurring at this upper floor facade as shown in Figure 160. From the interior, light folds into the windows and highlights their exterior edges, indicating that some opening above is allowing light to penetrate. Incidentally, the sunlight does not fully infiltrate the interior much due to the thickness of the facade. Therefore, the thickness of the building envelope creates an interface of exterior sunlight meeting interior shade, which changes according to the sun's path through the day and season. In short, the depth of the envelope may be fully in shade, fully illuminated, or in partially in shade and sunlight. Considering these striking patterns and penetrations of light, new carved out subtractions of different thicknesses from the given facade will underscore the interface between interior and exterior as well as the margin between building and highway.
PERIPHERAL POCHÉ

At this moment where the edge of the bridge and 3rd floor facade meet, a luminous burst of light appears as shown in Figure 163. The brightness of illumination softens the hard boundary of the aligning bridge and building structures. This peripheral glow of light recalls the technique of poché, used in architectural drawing as an accent line weight to accentuate the outside perimeter of the object for visual clarity. Traditional poché involves the shading-in of solids such as inside wall edges. However, the technique is sometimes reinterpreted inversely so that walls are left unshaded, but their outside perimeters are lightly shaded-in to foreground the space between walls.44 Although the methods take opposite approaches, the implications of poché representation remain the same. Namely, poché is a drawing tool that places emphasis on solids and voids, subtractions and additions, and their reciprocal relationships to one another. Considering poché at this southern site edge, the solid bridge and building boundaries are accentuated by highlights of illumination, which represent the marginal void. On the other hand, in Figures 160 and 161 (p.70), light accents the solid facade and its figural voids. In either case, light acts as a poché, which can be further considered in subtractive and additive interventions along the southern facade.

Figure 163. Glow in-between Highway and Existing Building Facade

Figure 164. Interior Glow, illuminated corner on 4th floor

CORNER POROSITY

At site corners called out in the key map of Figure 168 below, light penetrates the two adjoining facades at once, duplicating its effect at these locations. In addition, the perpendicular orientation of corner openings align so that a visible porosity through the building mass is possible from various vantage points, both above and below the highway bridge (see Figures 165-167). Given the depth of the building envelope, this porosity through the building is almost entirely limited to the corner conditions. The sunlight spotlights these openings, in sharp contrast to the building’s dark interior. In the late afternoon, bright southern sunlight backlights the windows on the southern facade as shown in Figures 165.

EVIDENT INTERFACES

Through this investigation of the southern site experience, the building envelope, margins, and corners have become key areas of interest. In response, strategic additions and subtractions at these interfaces with regard to sunlight and porosity through the building will both intensify and enhance the poché of the envelope and its brimming boundaries. Inviting human activity to interact with and occupy this poché will perpetuate the dynamic of spectacle-interface-spectator in and around the site. As discussed in the introduction of Part 3, chapter 3 (Precedent Analysis: Spectacle-Interface-Spectator), the interface is never a static surface. Rather, it is a common boundary that unfolds and overlaps in various ways to set the stage for a human interaction, appearance, and event. Given this aim, the apparent poché of the southern site provides numerous interfaces for formal interventions and programmatic insertions.
HIGHWAY “STAGE”

Atop the lower southern roof (see Figure 172, key map), one stands just a couple feet above the highway as shown in Figure 173. Before US-50 was built, the building was only three floors at this south side, but once the highway was in place, a floor was added in order to step up to highway level (see Figure 169). The additional floor serves as a platform for a billboard structure to generate advertising revenue, as diagrammed in Figure 170. Built as a stage, or raised platform, for the exhibition of advertisements, this roof stage may be reinterpreted as a stage to present the identity and current activity taking place in Cincinnati. In essence, the roof would be used for direct presentation of activity rather than indirect representations of imagery. This reappropriation of the space takes advantage of the proximity of a highway audience to view the spectacle of activity on site.

VIEWING PLATFORM

On the other hand, the panorama of views to downtown Cincinnati, the Ohio River, and Mount Adams on this platform provides a spectacle for those viewing on site (see Figures 171, 173). The building’s elevation above the highway conveniently raises one’s line of sight just over the height of automobiles, which would otherwise obstruct these spectacular views. Thus, the spectacle/spectator relationship becomes interchangeable at this vantage.
chapter 12: WESTERN SITE EXPERIENCE

Culvert Street

MIRRORED ENCLOSURE
The experience traveling north and south on Culvert Street next to the site starts and ends beneath highway bridges, and is framed on either side by the existing building on site, and a similar factory building just west of the site. Built after the existing building on site, this neighboring building bears resemblance to its predecessor with a proportional form, corresponding structural expression, and similar materiality (see Figure W1-A). Hence, it appears to reflect the original, and the two buildings essentially mirror one another from this perspective on Culvert Street. Accordingly, before, behind, and on either side of Culvert Street, the site is framed by corresponding structures, namely highway bridges and factory buildings. While the bridges above create a north-south portal, the buildings below delineate east-west site barriers. Therefore, a sort of cross-mirroring takes place, marking the perimeter enclosure of the western site experience.

STAGNANT ADJACENCY
Despite the presence of peripheral elements, the center of this western site experience is essentially dead space, currently used as a surface parking lot (see Figure 176, sequence W2). This empty plot was once occupied by another factory building, which stood directly adjacent to the site's factory building. Since the demolition of this adjoining building, its site has remained unbuilt and open. Therefore, one's experience on Culvert Street, adjacent to a field of park cars, generates a feeling of placelessness. This stagnant zone in the western site experience further isolates the building from the city, and indicates the area's ongoing neglect. Thus, new formal moves will aim to activate this zone and reconnect the site to the city.
PALIMPSEST: LAYERING + UNLAYERING

Regardless of this facade’s orientation to the city, it is also the appears to be the most neglected face of the building as seen in the layers of peeling paint in Figure 177 and the discolored, cracked window in Figure 178. While this deterioration may be considered an eyesore, the unlayering of history apparent in its present physicality is reminiscent of its unintended exposure when the adjacent building was removed. In design response, this western side of the site calls for a new slices of building forms and layerings that recover and expound upon the palimpsest of this place.

ORIGINALLY UNEXPOSED FACADE

Due to the original presence of the adjoining Frank Tea & Spice factory building, the western facade was hidden from view (see Figure 179). For this reason, it has only sporadic windows and a high degree of opacity, as indicated by the dominance of darker tones in Figure 180. While this was appropriate to the building’s original context, the facade cants toward the south, and is now missing the potential of southern sunlight. Therefore, the design intervention will open up portions of this facade to take advantage of the bright natural light.

Figure 177. Neglected West Facade

Figure 178. Neglected West Facade

Figure 179. Sanborne Fire Map 1940-30

Figure 180. Degrees of Opacity, Western Facade, toward Culvert St
SUN DIAL: SOLAR PATH ACROSS FACADE

For clarity, this side of the site is named the western site, but it is more explicitly oriented to the southwest, as displayed in Figure 182. Therefore, the shadow of the US-50 highway bridge, to the south, may be tracked along this side of site as shown in the sun path study of Figure 181. As depicted, the highway shadows project well into the site in winter months when the sun is low in the sky, but project closer to the site perimeter in summer months, as documented in the photograph of Figure 183. Therefore, design intervention in this area should consider program functions above and below the elevation of US-50 carefully. In addition, the concept of layerings discussed on the previous page should consider these shadow projections in terms of degrees of opacity and screening patterns of materiality, as well as thickness and spacing.
TOP LOOKOUT
On the roof of the existing building’s 8-story central tower, a wide panorama unfolds all directions, as seen in Figure 185. This spectator deck is lofted in the sky, and unobstructed by any immediate adjacencies at this elevation, allowing the landscape spectacle to appear continuously without interruption. Thus, similar to Centre Pompidou’s rooftop restaurant, program placement at this lookout will take advantage of views and enhance city as spectacle.

CENTRALITY OF SITE
As illustrated by the all-encompassing view of its surroundings, the site occupies a hub location between downtown Cincinnati, the Ohio River, and Mount Adams. Despite the immediacy of difficult highway borders, these spectacular views literally stretch to the horizon. Thus, the site response must mediate between its bordering adjacencies and the larger context of the intersections that converge at its boundaries in order to effectivity capture the incongruous vitality of its locale.
Figure 188. Conceptual Design Responses to Physical Conditions

PART 4
CONCLUSION

Through this site investigation, physical observations and responses for each site experience have been developed. Above, in Figure 188, is a general summary of the conceptual design ideas developed in response to the site’s physical conditions. Generally, the eastern and southern sides of the site are more tightly bound by roadway borders, and have only a limited set of potential design responses, as oppose to the more open experiences on the northern and western areas of the site. Correspondingly, the design responses for these confined (east and south) edges include expansion and contraction at the eastern building envelope and carving out at the southern facade. In regard, to the thesis goals, these are the most feasible methods to manipulate these surfaces into more dynamic interfaces between the interior and exterior. On the opposite sides of the site, a design concept is necessary to activate these more undeveloped northern and western zones. Thus, the northern site edge will become an important linkage to the surrounding park network, and the western site area will become occupied by a set of slivered volumes that expound upon the state of unlayering and physical palimpsest characteristic of this originally unexposed facade. The following, and final, section will elaborate and clarify these design decisions in relation to the program, and most importantly to the thesis question, which calls for the opening up of the architectural envelope and site edge to activate the interface between spectacle and spectator.
To counter the surplus of images packaging the postindustrial city, how can the architectural envelope open up an interface, activated by the exchange between spectacle and spectator?

Challenging the limits of flat imagery, this design seeks to expand and expose the complexity of urban and built form at the site. Rather than marginalizing the consumer, the design intervention opens up architectural margins to activate a dialogue between site and surroundings, interior and exterior, and also among different interior spaces. Given the inherent energy of movement around the site, revealed in the above palimpsest (Figure 188), circulation through the site and building become the basis for interaction. These movement systems connect spaces physically and visually while also becoming the zone for event themselves. Currently, the existing building contains vehicular ramps, three stairwells, and a freight elevator, which all circumscribe the building’s central tower, designating it as the core of movement and activity. In particular, the southern side of the tower is bound by multiple movement systems, and becomes the “center of scenes,” from which program functions meet and circulatory bands unfold. This final section illustrates a selection of ongoing studies exploring the pent-up energy built-in to this site, and the intent to reactivate its bounds. Through the course of this project, the original thesis question, restated above, has become more involved with implications pertinent to the interface inquiry at hand. That is, the intended interaction between spectacle and spectator necessitates an exchange on multiple levels, including that between highway and building, city and site, the zones above and below highway bridges, and the functionality between event and educational program types. Thus, these design investigations unpack the interface from multiple perspectives that engage potential moments of interaction in order to prompt the spectacle.
EXISTING BUILDING FRAMEWORK: exposing & unwrapping

One initial interface study, shown in the images of Figure 190 below, involved an abstraction of the existing building’s framework in order to explore potential reflections, duplications, and unwrappings/re-wrappings that activate the building skin. This model and photographic investigation uncovers the building’s facade barrier, yet retains its proportional form while also introducing new layers that transform and morph the original. The use of light and reflection explodes the planar frame into a multi-dimensional realm, corresponding to the nature of an event interface.

Figure 190. Framework: exposed and unwrapped, model studies
OPENING UP THE INTERFACE
As opposed to the existing condition of billboard facelifts up front, the below model studies unfold the building form from the inside out (see Figure 191). These design responses reinterpret facade underlayers as exterior enclosures and exposed movement bands. In essence, these interventions invert the shed, dismantling its defensive stance so that it becomes a more integrated system of exchange with its built environment, users, and viewers.

Figure 191. Opening up the Interface, model studies
CROSS-PROGRAMMING ACTIVITY

This program diagram, shown in Figure 192, reveals the arrangement and relationship of space types per floor (see Figure 192). Generally, educational spaces are concentrated on one side of the site with professional spaces on the opposite end, which are both centered around the shared space of the central tower. On the ground floor, the lobby becomes a “catch-all” hub that captures people walking on the bordering streets and also accommodates people on the elevated 5th St. Viaduct with a pedestrian bridge to one lobby entrance. Existing garage entrances and interior vehicular ramps are utilized to direct vehicles immediately up to the second floor, which remains primarily occupied by parking. On the third floor, the zoning of program types split on either side of the central tower with shared informal meeting rooms connecting them in the middle. Below the highway, the lobby opens to capture a wide audience of users or visitors, parking is raised to the second floor, and interaction among users is relatively internal between program types. As one moves up the building, the fourth and fifth floors combine into a double height space, expanding this heart of interaction at the elevation of highway bridges. Here, a professional auditorium is positioned in line with a public gallery that exhibits works of the local creative class. At this highway bridge elevation, spaces cross and intersect in a dynamic interface, plugged with a publicly accessible auditorium and gallery.

As the tower rises above highway bridges (Floors 6-8), it accommodates shared spaces and its southern side, in particular, is charged at each level with movement, in the form of ramps, stairwells, and an elevator core. These towering functions enjoy natural lighting and views, and include a library/reference center, workstations, and, on the top floor, a public restaurant that can be reached directly without going through the lobby. In this upper zone, activity and movement, in the tower and along its building envelope, creates a dialogue with those both in and around the site on many levels: between interior/exterior, among interior floors, and also between the upper tower and the lower building portions.
A SPATIAL CHOREOGRAPHY OF MOTION

While the previous studies explored instances of movement bands, unfolding forms, and program arrangement more independently, these perspective diagrams synthesize those circulatory and formal moves into a dynamic interface (see Figure 192). The careful composition of circulation and juxtaposed spaces is choreographed to generate congregation in the central tower and linings along the site edges. The outer linings circulate out from the tower’s “center of scenes,” reinforcing the embodied energy of the site while also extending to its site borders. Various experiential narratives, engaged through visual vantages and direct interactions, drive the arrangement of various spaces and the formal relationships among movement interfaces. As a result, the stage is set to capture an intended audience, but also open to possible unscripted scenes in the spectacle/spectator act.
In a general sense, this thesis topic confronts the commodification of inner-city space that relegates architecture to a background position. Wherein, unscene architecture stands behind a billboard facade while a stream of automobiles and passive consumerism accelerates around it (see Figure 193). To counter this condition, the design intervention creates an immediate dialogue of direct experience among those within the site, and those traveling about its edges. The branded building is de-tagged and its present surrounds are reinterpreted in order to build upon the local palimpsest. The design response visualizes the site’s complexity by abstracting and exposing the dynamics of its embedded palimpsest, and resolves the contradiction of its present usage by linking the facility’s functionality to local identity. Above all, this work approaches architecture as an accessible spectacle, which invites people to assume participatory actor/audience roles, and, in turn, frames the simultaneous scenes of the event interface.

Figure 193. Revolving Movement, site model
BIBLIOGRAPHY


