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THE FIFTH COLUMN
THE CANADIAN STUDENT JOURNAL OF ARCHITECTURE • LA REVUE CANADIENNE DES ETUDIANTS EN ARCHITECTURE

V.10-N.1
1998

Le titre de la revue canadienne des étudiants en architecture, THE FIFTH COLUMN, a pour but d'inviter le lecteur à l'interpréter à plusieurs niveaux. Le premier niveau suggère une référence architectonique, celle consistant à l'élaboration d'un ordre architectural contemporain à la fois respectueux d'un passé antique et répondant aux nouvelles conceptions de l'architecture. Sur un autre plan, THE FIFTH COLUMN rappelle son oriantation journalistique par sa connotation avec la "colonne" imprimée d'un texte. Enfin, "la cinquième colonne", c'est aussi, depuis Franco, le nom donné aux partisans clandestins sur lesquels chacun des deux adversaires peut compter dans les rangs de l'autre.

Ces trois références définissent dans son ensemble le rôle de THE FIFTH COLUMN. La revue a pour but de promouvoir l'étude de l'architecture au Canada, en terme de lien entre le passé et la futur. Elle tente également de stimuler et d'entretenir un sens aigu de la critque chez ses collaborateurs ainsi que chez ses lecteurs. Enfin, THE FIFTH COLUMN propose un forum où il est possible d'établir différents points de vue, non dans le seul but de les confronter mais plutôt de rendre possible leur évaluation objective.

Objectifs

Promouvoir l'étude et l'appréciation d'une architecture sensible à l'intérieur de la communauté architecturale ainsi qu'à de plus larges groupes, et par conséquent influencer le développement de l'architecture au Canada;

Promouvoir la constitution d'un forum dans le but d'encourager le diaglogue et les échanges d'idées entre les étudiants, les architectes et les individus intéressés de toute autre provence;

Offrir une alternative critique aux revues de type commercial, en publiant un périodique ayant ses racines à l'intérieur des Ecoles universitaires, traditionnellement pionnières dans l'évolution de la pensée architecturale.

Politiques éditoriales

1. Publier les articles d'étudiants, de membres du corps académique, de professionnels ainsi que d'autres groupes intéressés, qui autrement ne trouveraient que peu d'opportunités d'expression et de publication.
2. Publier une série d'articles dans chaque numéro explorant un thème spécifique qui contribuera à une compréhension approfondie et à une plus grande conscientisation de l'architecture contemporaire.
3. Publier des articles sur les diverses facettes de l'architecture canadienne dans le but de promouvoir la compréhension de ces différentes traditions locales et de leur influence sur la pensée architecturale contemporaire.
4. Publier des articles traitant des influences historiques sur le développement de l'architecture.
5. Publier les projets d'étudiants des différentes Ecoles dans le but de stimuler le débat architectural.
6. Publier des comptes rendus critiques de différentes oeuvres architecturales au Canada ainsi qu'à l'étranger afin de s'arrêter sur et d'influencer le développement de l'architecture au Canada.
7. Publier des comptes rendus critiques des différents événements, publications, conférences et expositions ayant quelque intérêt pour nos lecteurs.

THE FIFTH COLUMN (La revue canadienne des étudiants en architecture) publiée en printemps 1997.

THE FIFTH COLUMN, la revue canadienne des étudiants en architecture, est un organisme sans but lucratif, dont le but est de promouvoir l'étude de l'architecture. Les articles et opinions qui apparaissent dans la revue sont publiés sous la responsabilité de leur auteurs. Le but de reproduire dessins, photographies et extraits de d'autres sources est de faciliter la critique. THE FIFTH COLUMN n'est responsable ni des domages subis par le matériel envoyé, ni de sa perte.

The name of the Canadian Student Journal of Architecture, THE FIFTH COLUMN, is intended to be interpreted in a number of ways. First, there is an architectonic reference, the preoccupation with the development of a contemporary order of architecture that is at once respectful of antiquity and responsive to new conceptions of architecture. Second, there is a reference to journalism and the printed column of text. Finally, there is the twentieth century political connotation, an organized body sympathizing with and working for the enemy in a country at war.

These three references essentially define the role of THE FIFTH COLUMN. The magazine promotes the study of architecture in Canada at the present in terms of both the past and the future. It attempts to stimulate and foster a responsible, critical sensitivity in both its readers and its contributors. Finally, THE FIFTH COLUMN provides an alternative forum to established views not for the sake of opposing them, but to make it possible to objectively evaluate them.

Objectives

To promote the study and the appreciation of a sensitive architecture within the architectural community and general population, thereby positively influencing the development of architecture in Canada;

To promote a forum for and to encourage the dialogue between students, academics, professional architects and interested members of the 'lay' population;

To provide a critical alternative to the commercial trade magazines by publishing a journal that originates from the schools, traditionally the vanguard of architectural thought.

Editorial Policies

1. To publish articles by students, academics and professionals and by other interested parties that would otherwise find little opportunity for expression and publication.
2. To publish a series of articles in each issue exploring a specific and relevant theme which contributes to an understanding and a greater awareness of current architecture.
3. To publish articles on the diversity of Canadian architecture as a means of promoting an understanding of these local traditions and their influence on current architectural thought.
4. To publish articles discussing historical influences on the development of architecture.
5. To publish student projects from the various schools in order to stimulate architectural debate.
6. To publish critical reviews of current works of architecture in Canada, as well as outside the country, in order to reflect on and positively influence the development of architecture in Canada.
7. To publish critical reviews of activities, publications, lectures and exhibitions of interest to our readership.

THE FIFTH COLUMN (Canadian Student Journal of Architecture) published in spring 1997.

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All articles appearing in THE FIFTH COLUMN are indexed in /Tous les articles parus dans la revue THE FIFTH COLUMN sont indexés dans:
Architectural Periodicals Index, British Architectural Library, RIBA, London. Avery Library, Columbia University, New York.

students/étudiant(e)s
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THE FIFTH COLUMN
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815 rue Sherbrooke ouest
Montréal, Québec
Canada H3A 2K6

Legal Deposit:/Dépôt légal: Bibliothèque nationale du Québec

National Library of Canada ISSN 1229-7094

Printed by/ imprimé par: Data Resolutions, Montréal.
Produced at / Réalisé au: School of Architecture, McGill University.

Canadian Publications Mail Sales Product - Agreement No. 0531715 /
Envois de publications canadiennes - contrat de vente no. 0531715

Subscription and Back Issue Requests

The Fifth Column
McGill School of Architecture
Macdonald-Harrington Building
815 Sherbrooke Street West
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Single Issue:	$5.00
Double Issue:	$10.00

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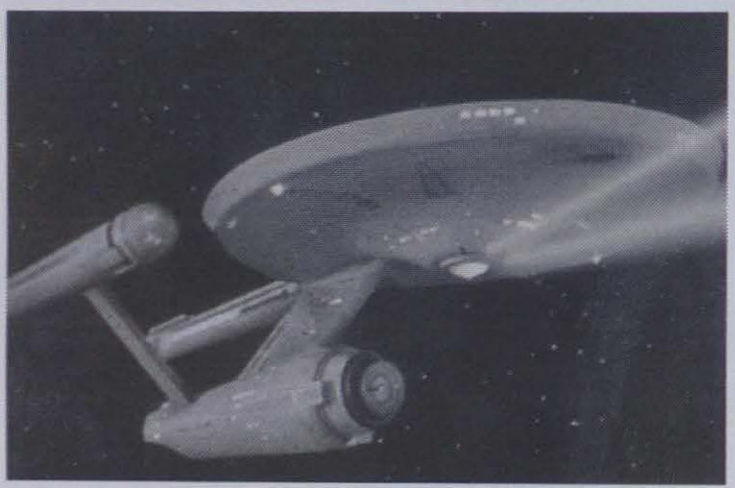
Editorial

David Theodore



Aller hardiment où nul homme n'est jamais allé avant.

One of the functions of our journal is simply to show what students are doing, without explicit criticism or commentary, to act as a clearing house for ideas about architecture. Thus this issue of *TFC* features some final projects of students at McGill and the Université de Laval.

In what ways are the projects presented here representative of what goes on in architecture school? How should *TFC* represent the projects? The three projects from Laval are the school's prizewinners. Presumably they represent the best, the *excellent*, the school's *excellent* achievement. They are examplary in a heroic manner, not in a democratic one. They do not claim to speak about what most students learn or achieve, but what the school sees as ideal achievements. They are Shakespeare, Homer and Goethe; they are Joe Louis and Sugar Ray Robinson; they are the Beatles.

The McGill projects, on the other hand, were chosen by concensus of *TFC* staffers before the school awarded its prizes. The reasons arose out of a partial participation in the making of the projects; these projects represent some kind of student's choice rather than an institutional choice. They are, perhaps, trendier: Witherson, Hamed, Portishead. But of course they are also not fully representative of what goes on in the school; far from it.

Obviously future features of student projects will be chosen in other ways. But I hope that criteria other than the pursuit of excellence continue to be used. Architecture is not an excellent adventure. There must be some way of characterizing what we do in school other than as a competition to be the best, even the best that we can be, or all that we can be, or even to reach our "full potential": we have other reasons for studying architecture.

Representation is not identity. We sometimes get confused about this. We talk as if our representatives have to be, do and mean exactly what we would be, do and mean if only we ourselves were there instead of our representative. But representation involves a faith, a trust; representatives are not copies. They speak for us, as us, but not necessarily exactly like us.

In this sense a representative can be an explorer, not just an exploration, the race as the prize. Whether students actually chart unmapped lands is irrelevant. No one should ask of us that we really take off into the unknown, but only that our reports, our representations of the journey, *speak* as representatives and not simply *show* as copies.

That's enough.

Correspondence

Erratum: Les noms de Kim Vachon et Brigitte Doyon ont été inversé par inadvertance dans leur article "Refuse: Exposition au Centre de design de l'UQAM" (vol.9 n.3/4). Kim Vachon est auteure de la première partie tandis que Brigitte Doyon a écrit la seconde.

My first encounter with The Fifth Column (vol.9 n.3/4) was a great pleasure.

Your objectives are clear and commendable and this issue certainly met them successfully. I like the rich mix of articles presented in a clear, uncluttered format.

In particular, I enjoyed Juliette Patterson's account of designing a plaza for Zihuatanejo, Mexico (p. 6), for its human warmth and the tactile quality of the visuals, Gavin Affleck's article on landscape (p. 22) with his insights into the work of two important artists as they apply to a holistic view of space in architecture, Michael Carroll's "thin house" (p. 42) for the appropriateness of its forms in their context (and for the wonderful range in his bibliography) and Caroline Noteboom's"Collisions Printing Cooperative" (p.36) for the community-based aims of her project, supported by the no-nonsense look of the visuals, including a drawing with tape still attached to the corners!

May I make a couple of suggestions? Although clean-looking, the pristine quality of the white cover and white pages felt a little cold. I would suggest warming the colour of the cover and pages slightly. As well, I would be very interested in occasional reviews by any of your contributors of high profile projects, e.g. Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao.

Mary Ann Mongeau

I just thought I'd write in to give you the proverbial shit sandwich. I've enjoyed the recent issues, especially the covers. (What's next? No cover at all?)

I'm pleased to see review sections, especially the book reviews. Critical commentary is always nice. However, it would be good to have some book reviewers with a little sympathy for the books in question. I wonder if your reviewer read the same book about Art Nouveau as I did [N. Schoenauer *Arts and Crafts Dwellings*, vol.9 n.3/4]. Your reviewers should consider that, unfortunately, many of us have time only to read reviews, not the books themselves.

Nice to see you're still alive.

J. Radu

Praise writ large is praise written down: I would like to congratulate you on your achievement, particularly on the last two issues of *The Fifth Column*, and express my support for this fine journal and its role in architectural education and practice in Canada.

These are two impressive volumes. Form and content beguile the eye and engage the mind, and there is much to appreciate. From the dynamic, tempered transparency of the cover of the penultimate issue, to the cool sheath wrapped around [vol. 9.3/4], one is tempted to judge these books by their outward appearance. Inside, however, there is much to stimulate as well. I especially admire the diversity and range of material. The variations in scale—the span of a career in the case of Marlene Druker's interview with John Patkau; the subtleties of Paul Laurendeau's localized traces—are matched by the variety of locations addressed. Other articles zoom out expansively to consider such issues as gender and spatial perception, and the musings of screen writer and director Paul Schrader, whose ideas about matters architectural are interwoven with a fascinating discussion of his own craft.

A significant feature of *The Fifth Column* relates to its position as a student journal produced at McGill University's School of Architecture. Thus it serves as a medium to record the soundings both of students coming to terms with issues they will face throughout their careers, and of experts in their field. Articles and assistance have been contributed by faculty members, current students, and graduates; such an ongoing collaboration reflects positively on the School as well as the journal, indeed on the profession itself. These are pivotal reasons to endorse *TFC* as integral to Canadian architectural discussion and pedagogy.

Rhona Richman Kenneally

Practicus Delirium: The Tropical Interdisciplinarity Of Lina Bo Bardi

Eduardo Aquino

Fig. 1. André Vainier, Lina , Marcelo Carvalho Ferraz in front of the SESC-Pompéia Factory.

After presentations in São Paulo, several countries in Europe, and a first North American stop in Chicago, the exhibition of Lina Bo Bardi arrived at the Centre de Design de l'Université du Québec à Montréal (May 29-September 14, 1997). It was a unique opportunity to encounter the work of this significant post-war Brazilian architect. The pioneering retrospective of a Brazilian architect in Canada, the show invited a closer dialogue between these two American peoples, who have in common their elaborate cultures and their vast and peripheral landscapes. It created the opportunity to enlarge discussions of post-colonial issues, and to embrace the particular circumstances through which the modern project was assimilated. The exhibition presented drawings, photographs, models, artifacts, furniture and a video documenting the facets of an extraordinary artist whose work in Brazil evolved for almost fifty years.

The exhibition was didactically divided into seven sectors: Space and Sociability, The Theatrical Space, The Object and its Image, The House, Ways of Exhibiting, Recuperation-Restoration, and Graphic Communication. The sensible and highly evolved arrangement of the show by Georges Labrecque and a group of young designers rendered an eloquent environment, acutely suitable to experience the idiosyncratic work of Lina Bo Bardi. The theatricality encountered in Lina's production was replicated here through the juxtaposition of two distinct walls: a transparent coroplast plane suggested the theme of technological exploration; and a used construction wood wall, into which was inserted a full-scale silhouette from an organic-shaped window of the Sesc-Pompéia factory (fig. 1), evoked the employment of local materials and shapes. Models were placed on the existing bright red transportation crates, and the furniture on used wooden palettes.

It is impossible to begin a reflection on the work of Lina Bo Bardi without first referring to the time of my own education as an architect during the early 1980s in Brazil. The popular political struggle of that time called for the return of the democratic model and the dismissal of the military regime. This movement culminated in the passionate social urge to uncover the political, intellectual, and cultural repression of the previous twenty years: a demand for a rectification of recent history. Surprisingly, even with the ardent efforts of the intelligentsia, that history was not entirely uncovered. Placed as an outcast, Lina Bo Bardi was subtly skipped from our history courses at the

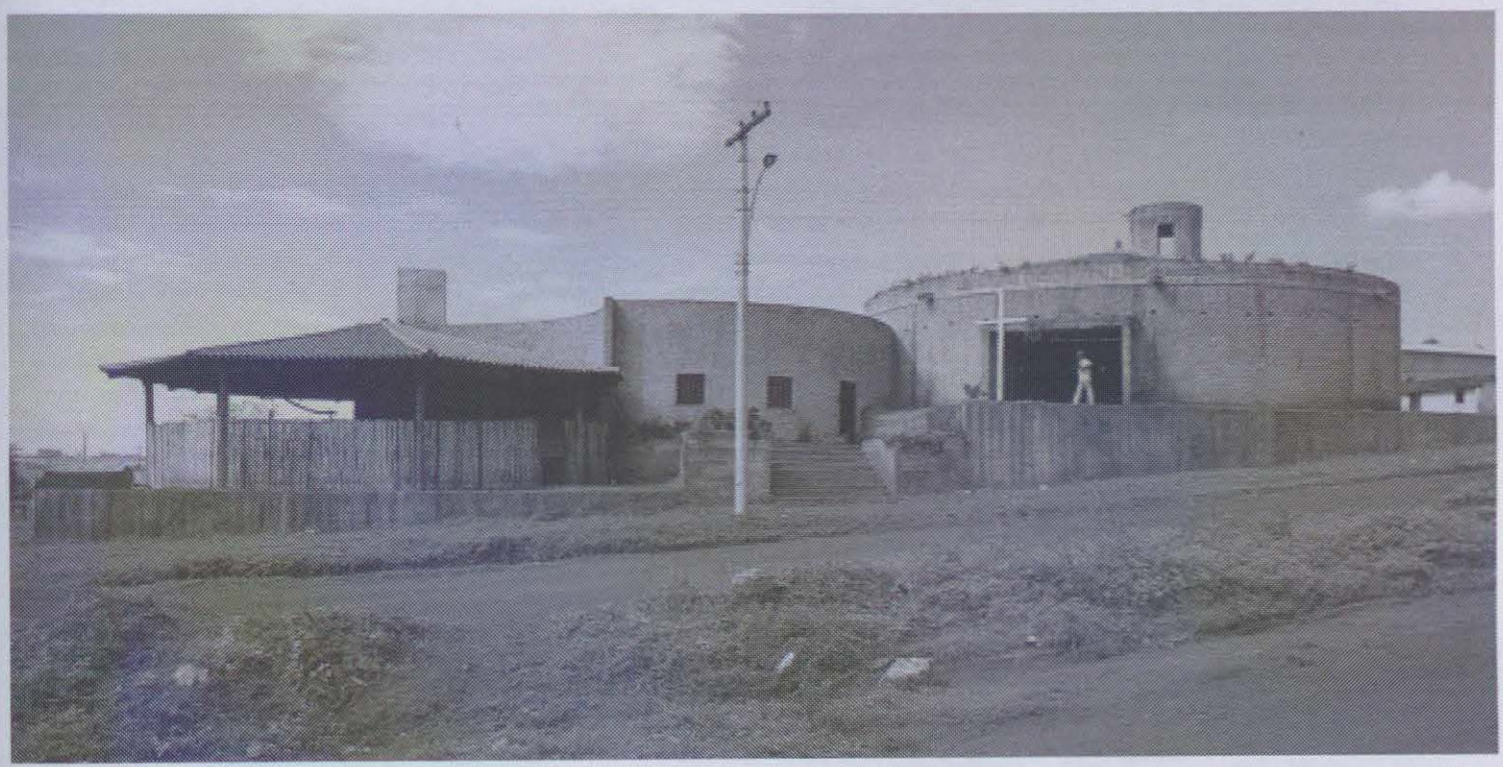


Fig. 2.

school of architecture. At that time, the nostalgic attempt to revive the golden age of Brazilian modern architecture expelled Lina's work from the critical forum which exclusively supported the ever-praised dichotomy of São Paulo's rational brutalism and Rio de Janeiro's plastic-sensual archetype.

At that time, São Paulo was experiencing with the expansion of a language that would consider technique as the poetic mark in the formation of a local architectural expression. The Paulista architects considered these two essential components, technique and poetry, as a single, united architectural entity.[1] Rio's architectural character, in contrast, was more visual, flamboyant and graceful. In Rio, architecture was fundamentally inspired by Rio's glamorous cityscape: placed between the mountains with their exuberant tropical forest and the open sea, architecture was contemplated as a reinterpretation of the landscape itself, or, in its curvilinear, Junoesque character, as inspired by "the curves of the sensual Brazilian woman," as Niemeyer constantly remarked.

Both the Paulista and the Carioca schools were profoundly influenced by the rationalism of Le Corbusier (Oscar Niemeyer in Rio) and Frank Lloyd Wright (Villanova Artigas in São Paulo). What made Brazilian architecture known internationally, however, was its powerful capacity to find local interpretations of these two significant foreign architects, especially through advanced experiments in the use of reinforced concrete research, one of the most appropriate construction techniques for tropical and sub-tropical climates.[2] The opposition of the two schools was encouraged by the international recognition the Carioca group instantly received after Le Corbusier's participation in the Ministry of Education building in Rio de Janeiro in 1936, and the later realization of Brasília by Rio's Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer (1957-60). Because it is visually more eloquent, and thus favors the creation of a "national image," Carioca architecture has an advantage over Paulista: it is more easily accepted by the foreign eye. The popular acclaim received by the Rio de Janeiro group, however, does not in anyway shadow the crucial contribution of the Paulista group.

Lina's architecture, on the other hand, as the whole of her practice, was too intricate a production to be easily placed in any tradition. She has baffled critics who cannot find the formal cohesion usually encountered in architects of her generation. Her architecture responded to people's immediate needs and cultural inclinations more than to conventional impositions of the International Style or the local post-Brasília paradigm. She courageously challenged all the rules and norms to create a powerful vision of a better society. A chameleonic presence, Lina absorbed lessons both from Modernism and from local techniques and practices, combining them in response to each encountered situation, learning from the specific setting rather than simply applying a personal and formalist agenda. For Lina, architecture was more than a medium for individual expression: it was a way of living, a method for social interaction, a political tool for change, an anthropological *modus operandi*. Thus if one contrasts the rough curves of the Espírito Santo do Cerrado Church (1976-82; fig. 2) with the pure elegance and sophisticated engineering of the São Paulo Art Museum (1957-68; fig. 3), one wonders about the wide, free spaces that exist in between these two apparently opposed expressions.

Lina Bo Bardi emerged as one of the most significant architects of the second wave of Brazilian Modernism, along with Affonso Eduardo Reidy, Rino Levi, Villanova Artigas, and more recently Paulo Mendes da Rocha. Prior to her arrival in Brazil from Italy, she was a collaborator with Gio Ponti as an editor of *Domus* magazine. Associating with the local vanguards almost immediately upon her arrival from Europe after the 1939-45 war, Lina created a body of work of extreme pertinence to architectural culture both in Brazil and internationally. Together with her husband and long-term partner Pietro Maria Bardi, she was a founding member of the first modern art museum in Brazil, a collector of popular art, and an educator. They formed a team that deeply influenced the character of design, visual arts and architecture in Brazil for more than half a century, leaving an indelible contribution to modernity in Latin America. Her research with native materials, craftsmanship, techniques and aesthetics advanced the understanding, preservation and respect of popular cultures. Her critical distance, her European view of regional and popular manifestations led her to a very pungent, mature language, crisscrossing diverse low and high cultural trends and techniques.

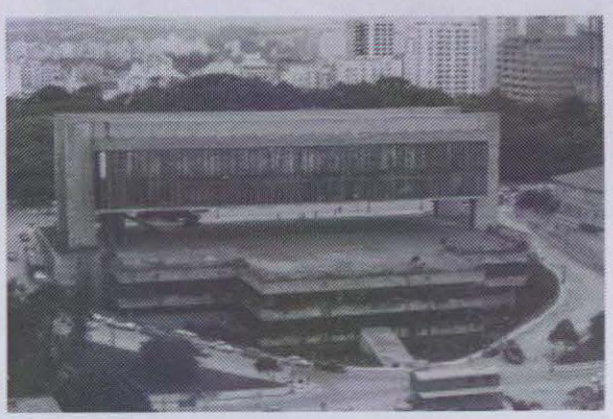
For younger architects Lina Bo Bardi represents more and more a real possibility for optimism and change. Lina precociously advanced notions of interdisciplinarity, multiculturalism, and diversity, so prevalent today. An explorer beyond cultural, linguistic, and geographic borders, she embraced the con-

tradictions of Brazil and its people, translating into many diverse media a voracious heterogeneity and syncretism, all of this in a time when artistic "purism" was in vogue. Little wonder it was so difficult to include her work in the critical discussions of the period.

A renaissance woman, Lina was never totally comfortable within the borders of the architectural scene in Brazil, and naturally engaged in the broader artistic milieux of theatre, popular music, popular regional arts, visual arts, and cinema. Her close proximity to the diversified character of that sizzling period of Brazilian culture created a natural distance from the isolated architectural debate, which was still marked by duality and division, a certain paralysis left after the the architecture boom of the 1950s and early 1960s. Her intuitive interdisciplinary strategies, constantly challenging traditional notions of architectural practice, were encouraged by the freedom she felt among these different groups. As a consequence, Lina's activities as an architect expanded toward theater and film set design, costume, exhibition, industrial and furniture design. Interdisciplinarity was a constant in her practice. It was not solely expressed through her poetic openness as a complete artist, moving freely from medium to medium, but most importantly it was represented through the intrinsic, inner development of her projects. In her decision-making process, she brought together the knowledge of the people working around her in their full expressiveness, without disregarding normative architectural criteria.

Fifó, a burntout incandescent bulb ingeniously transformed into a new kerosene lamp, illustrates well this interdisciplinary approach, showing at the same time the simplicity and complexity of her operations (fig. 4). Here, she turns a light bulb's function upside down, and flips it over again to recreate a utility which was already there in the first place, that is, a device to produce light. By constantly challenging the conservative rhetoric that developed during the dictatorial post-Brasília period, Lina opened the possibilities of experimentation, presenting us with an oeuvre of eloquent contemporary freshness.

The diversity encountered in Lina's work places notions of contextuality into a fresh perspective. Contextualism, viewed from the vantage point of the architectural practice, has traditionally been related to site constrains, landscape characteristics, specific urban dispositions, choices of material, etc.



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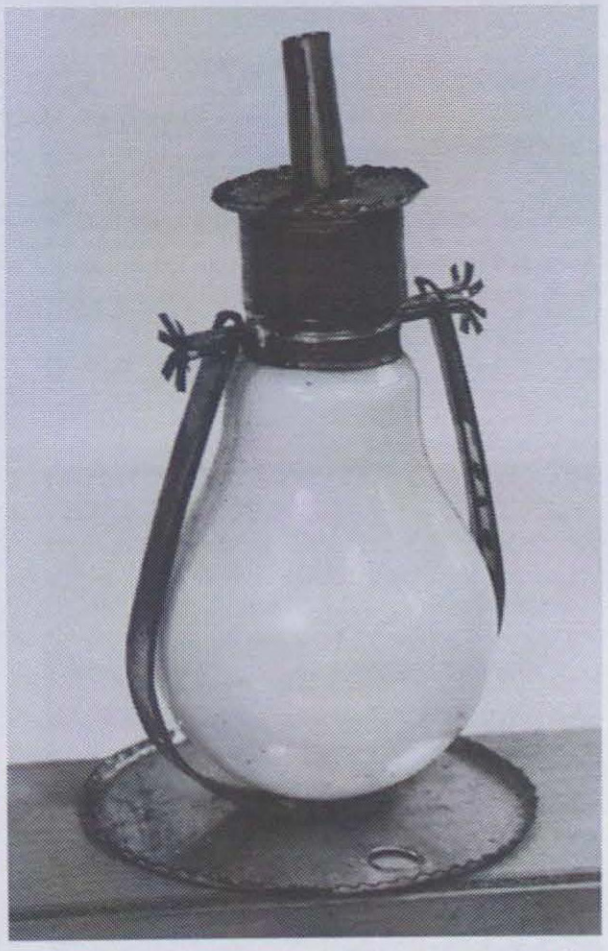

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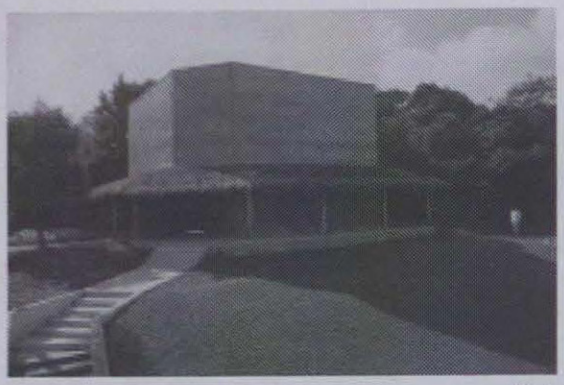

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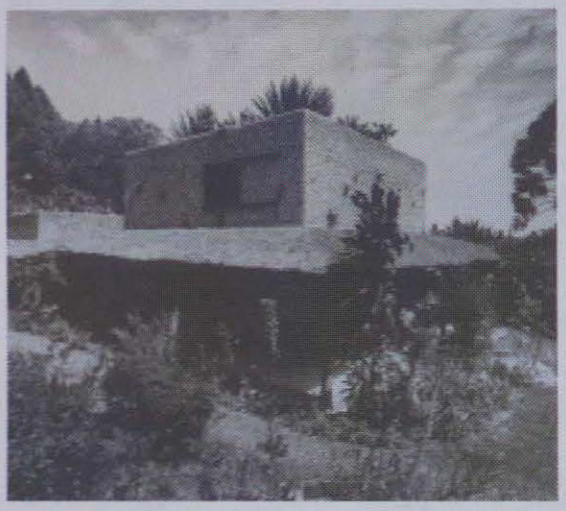

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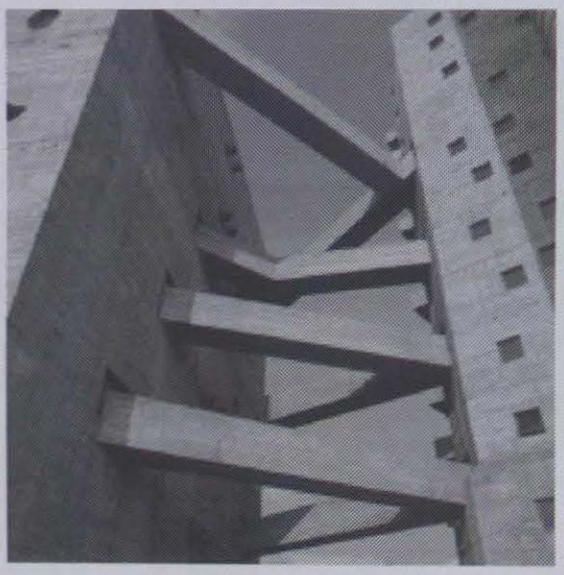


Fig. 7.

For Lina, context included the programming of a building, an ephemeral space or an object, that would thrive beyond inherited expectations. She would always start her research by talking to people and by making exhaustive notes about their complete *modus vivendi*. She looked closely into people's lives and behaviours, their idiosyncrasies, desires, dreams, and particular wishes. She regarded their histories, their cultural collections, their social bodies and political struggles with dignity, respect, and responsibility. Above all, she regarded people as the real generator of her propositions. This relationship was different from the usual client/architect relationship; she would always take every circumstance as a possibility for self-learning and exploration, at the same time that she would let herself be adopted as the agent for achieving that collective dream, more than simply providing for a primal physical need. Lina created an "architecture with skirts" that is not only visually denoted in buildings like the Valéria Cirell's Home (1958; fig. 5), or the Santa Maria dos Anjos Chapel (1978; fig. 6), but it is present in all her work through a powerful gesture of nurturing—nurturing what is already there, giving back the noble and appropriate place of one's own history. For Lina, the "site" initiated in the people's hearts, and the design process was a response to what she originally had found. Lina's most important material was the human one.

If there is a moment where a synthesis of Lina Bo Bardi's language can be detected, from the formal decisions to the process of a practice, from the understanding of her embracing attitude to the always-present technical rigour, it is in the Sesc-Pompéia factory, a moment of which she was so proud (fig. 1, fig. 7). The evocative concrete-cast sports complex is at the same time history-bound, preserving the local character of building through the renovation of the industrial pavilion, but it is as well a mark of her contemporary perception. The revamped program transforms an originally work-related place into a leisure center, "a place for doing nothing and being lazy" as she says. It is an inhabited place with the theatricality of people's universes, a vivacious and tangible allegory of life.

Everywhere she went Lina was able to influence artists and architects, specially the younger generations. "Dona Lina",[3] as she is dearly known in Salvador, Bahia, was one of the most important mentors of a local group of young artists (including Caetano Veloso and Glauber Rocha), who later were the piv-

otal figures in the creation of the "Cinema Novo" and "Tropicalismo," crucial moments that redefined and exposed the culture of Brazil to the world.[4] She has left us with a legacy that renders freedom to the architectural gesture, giving the same dignified importance to the sketch of a jewel or the design of an imaginary house,or to the creation of an ample institutional building. Her attention to and love of the practice of architecture, her openness of spirit and deep desire to change, her experimentalism, artistry, and passion remain as a significant motivation for the newer generations. For we have to face the challenge of architecture with the same open spirit she did.

1. "Paulista" means from São Paulo, and "Carioca" means from Rio de Janeiro.
2. Participating as a collaborator with São Paulo architect Paulo Mendes da Rocha's 1984 competition entry for the Public Library of Rio de Janeiro, I had the opportunity to witness the persistent dispute between these two groups of architects. In Mendes da Rocha's design there was a one-hundred meter span between two supporting walls that constituted the sheltering structure of the open plaza and the underground library. It would have been the longest prestressed, reinforced concrete span in the world. Paulo's proposition was defeated in favor of Glauco Campello's duller project. Campello washad collaborated previously with Oscar Niemeyer, who was then the leading member of the competition's jury. Years later, Oscar Niemeyer executed a one-hundred meter reinforced concrete span in the Latin American Memorial in São Paulo.
3. "Dona" in Brazilian Portuguese is an affectionate and honourable term equivalent to our "Mrs," accentuating, however, a mother figure image. The use of the first name to address a person is a respectful, cordial, and informal manner that translates a fragment of the Brazilian character. I couldn't possibly refer to Lina Bo Bardi in this text as "Bo Bardi."
4. Both movements, along with "Bossa Nova," played a crucial role in redefining "Brazilianess" during the 1960s. They are the followers of the 1922 event "Semana de 22" (Week of 22), a nationwide cultural festival in São Paulo which brought together the what were supposed to be most representative local expressions of the day. At that time literary figure Oswald de Andrade coined the ironic term "Antropofagia" to describe the Brazilian cultural process: a system that ingested, digested, and then expelled all foreign influences, especially the ones from Europe, melting them together with local native traditions to generate what has been loosely called "Brazilian culture," which is defined, in this way, by the total acceptance of the "Other." The literal translation of "Antropofagia" is cannibalism, so that the term recalls the fate of the first European explorers who were eaten by the natives during the first days of colonization.

Eduardo Aquino studied architecture in Brazil, and collaborated there with Paulo Mendes da Rocha. He presently works as an architect and artist in Montreal, and teaches design at Collège Marie-Victorin and interdisciplinary studies at Goddard College, Vermont.

Introduction aux projets présentés par l'école d'architecture de l'Université Laval

Alexis Ligougne, directeur

Pierre Lepage

Chaque année plus de soixante étudiantes et étudiants quittent l'École d'architecture de l'Université Laval après avoir obtenu le diplôme de baccalauréat en architecture. Ce programme de formation est couronné par le «Projet de fin d'études» qui, bien qu'équivalent en terme de crédits aux ateliers de design architectural qui le précèdent, est très différent par ses exigences et son encadrement.

L'étudiant doit démontrer sa capacité de mener avec rigueur chacune des étapes d'un projet, depuis le choix personnel d'un sujet jusqu'au développement d'une proposition en passant par l'étude des hypothèses les plus pertinentes qu'implique la problématique abordée. Le professeur, tuteur de l'étudiant, commente chaque semaine l'état d'avancement du projet. Il agit comme «déclencheur de réflexion», aidant à la prise de conscience de la complexité inhérente au projet et orientant l'étudiant dans la recherche d'une synthèse satisfaisante.

À la fin de la session, les étudiants présentent leurs projets devant des jurys composés d'au moins quatre membres : un architecte en pratique privée membre de l'OAQ ; un professeur d'une autre école d'architecture ; un professeur de l'École de l'Université Laval et le professeur tuteur de l'étudiant. Une fois les résultats connus, après délibérations des jurys, tous les projets ayant obtenu la note «A» sont exposés à nouveau pour la sélection de prix d'excellence par les professeurs de l'École. Les trois projets présentés ici ont donc été sélectionnés selon ce processus. Ils sont représentatifs d'un mode d'enseignement qui accorde une grande place à la liberté individuelle des étudiants, non des orientations spécifiques du programme ou d'une quelconque doctrine qui aurait cours à l'école.

Le terme «école» a deux acceptions. Une école est le lieu physique où se dispense un enseignement. C'est également une communauté de pensée entre des personnes qui adhèrent à une même doctrine à l'égard d'un objet de spéculation qu'elles partagent. Dans le monde occidental, ce sont des écoles au sens doctrinal du terme, soit L'École des beaux-arts (1818-1968) et le Bauhaus (1919-1933), qui ont façonné l'enseignement de l'architecture, même ici en Amérique du Nord. Des lieux mythiques y sont associés : Paris, Weimar, Dessau. Les écoles d'architecture issues de ces courants se sont peu à peu alors sorti de son carcan doctrinal pour se confronter à d'autres disciplines, notamment les sciences humaines, qui étudiaient l'espace dans le rapport

individu-société-milieu. La réalité architecturale s'est alors considérablement complexifiée, de sorte qu'elle appelait un enseignement nouveau. Cette époque a marqué la fin des «écoles» et la naissance d'une discipline universitaire nouvelle : l'architecture.

L'École d'architecture de l'Université Laval appartient à cette génération d'écoles universitaires ouvertes et inclusives où l'enseignement n'est plus fondé sur la transmission d'un savoir-faire du maître à son disciple, mais sur l'acquisition de connaissances en provenance de divers champs disciplinaires alimentant et enrichissant le projet architectural. Dans ce contexte, l'École d'architecture de l'Université Laval a développé les champs d'études qui correspondent aux problématiques architecturales et urbaines les plus actuelles au centre desquelles se situent la réalité sociale et les nouveaux besoins à satisfaire. Ce sont des domaines tels que l'habitation ; la conservation des milieux existants bâtis et naturels ; le design urbain ; les aspects constructifs liés au bon usage des ressources et à la valeur esthétique de la démarche architecturale ; l'informatique appliquée à l'architecture.

Au plan de l'enseignement proprement dit, l'École d'architecture privilégie :

1. L'équilibre entre l'acquisition de connaissances théoriques et l'application pratique du projet de design architectural ;

2. L'acquisition d'outils intellectuels qui permettent à l'étudiante et à l'étudiant de développer son autonomie par une connaissance critique.

En ce qui concerne les méthodes, l'École cherche à confronter l'étudiante et l'étudiant à la diversité des connaissances associées à l'architecture, des références culturelles et des approches au design architectural. Enfin, l'École privilégie une attitude responsable des étudiants en favorisant dans son enseignement le développement de la capacité des étudiants à reconnaître et à intégrer les éléments de la complexité inhérente à tout projet architectural. Elle s'attend à ce que le concept de pertinence soit au centre de la réflexion de l'étudiant, c'est-à-dire que l'intervention architecturale s'autojustifie par son adéquation aux besoins sociaux collectifs et individuels, aux milieux bâtis et naturels, aux moyens mis en oeuvre et à la signification culturelle du projet. Les trois projets présentés ici sont sensés répondre à cette démarche générale, chacun avec ses particularités programmatiques et contextuelles.

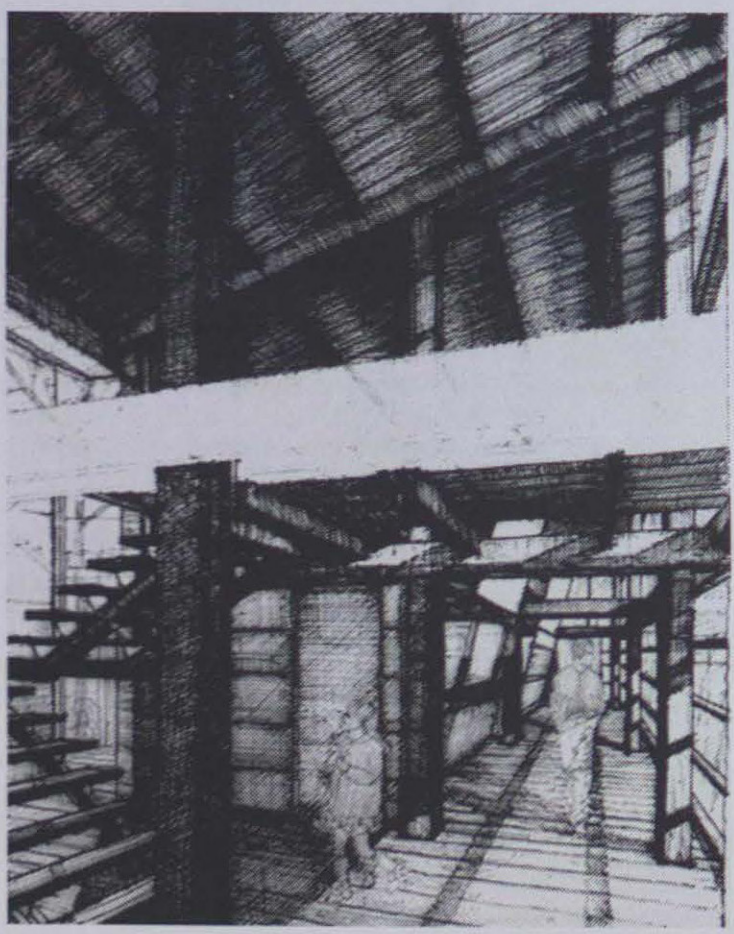
Alexis Ligougne est directeur de l'école d'architecture de l'Université Laval

Marie-Christine Pinard

Pierre Lepage

Base Archéo-Plein Air, île d'Orléans

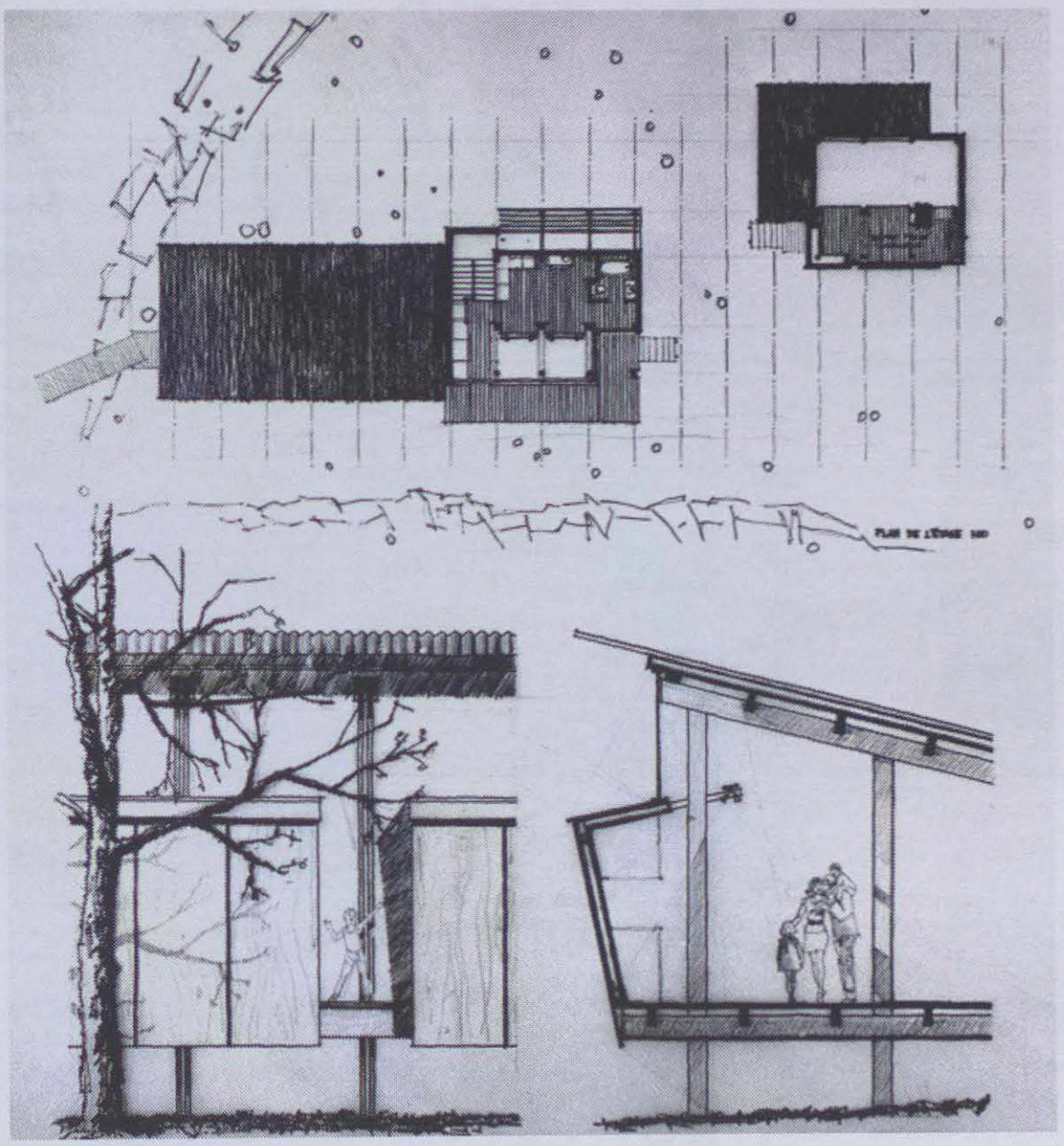
Premier prix d'excellence
Myriam Blais: Conseillère

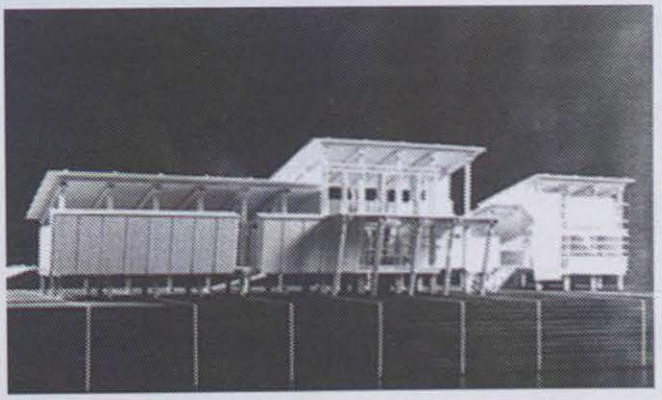


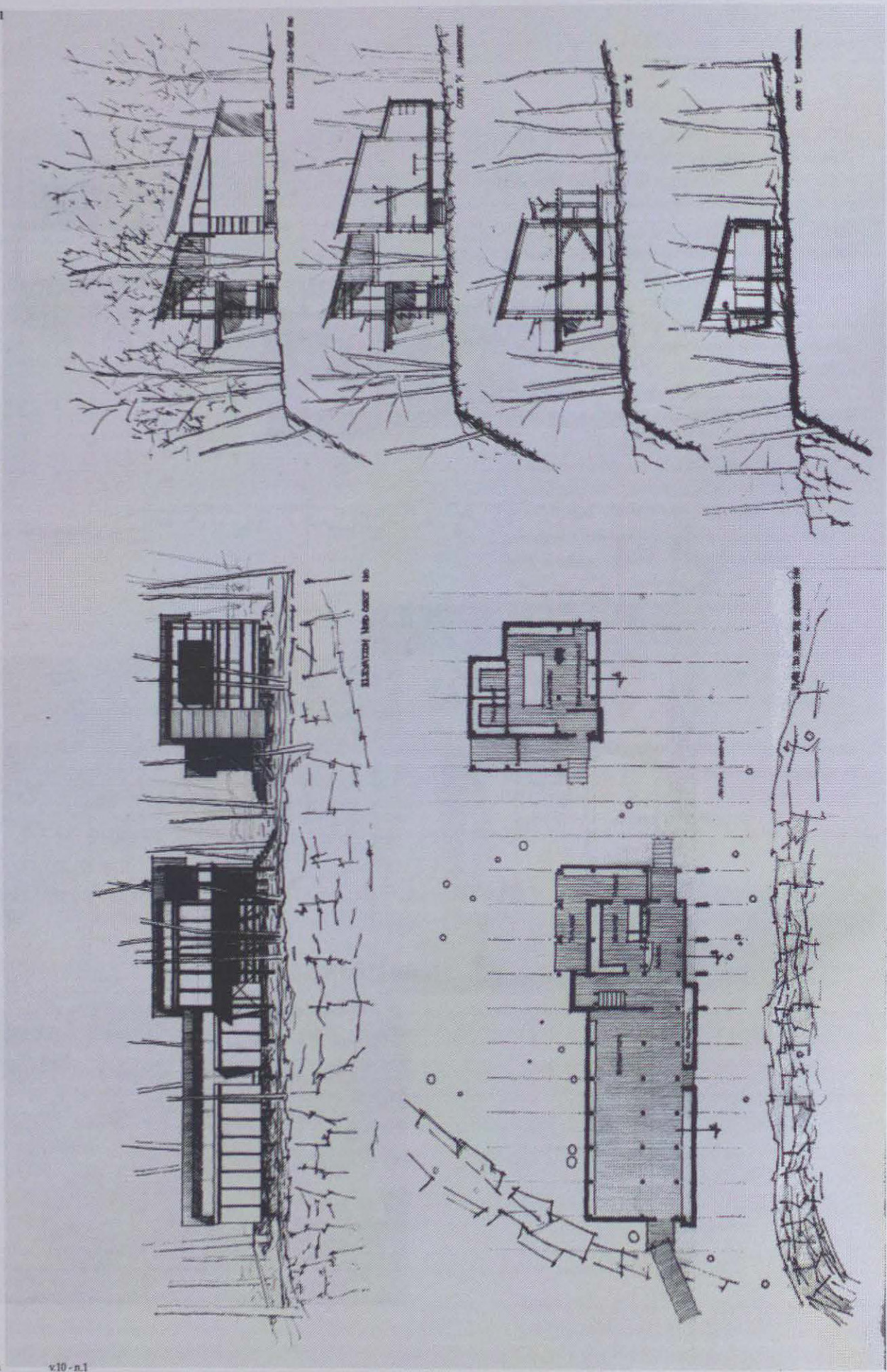
Situé dans les bois de la pointe Argentenay, à l'île d'Orléans, ce projet de Base Archéo-Plein Air a comme intention de porter un regard renouvelé sur la nature et l'histoire définissant ce lieu privilégié. Les promeneurs sont invités à parcourir un itinéraire ponctué de bâtiments à vocation variée, illustrant chacun à leur manière une sensibilité pour la nature des sites et leur représentation imaginaire par l'architecture. L'expression des structures et l'attention portée à la construction, aux matériaux (en particulier le bois) et aux détails agissent comme démonstration et renforcement de l'intention originale.

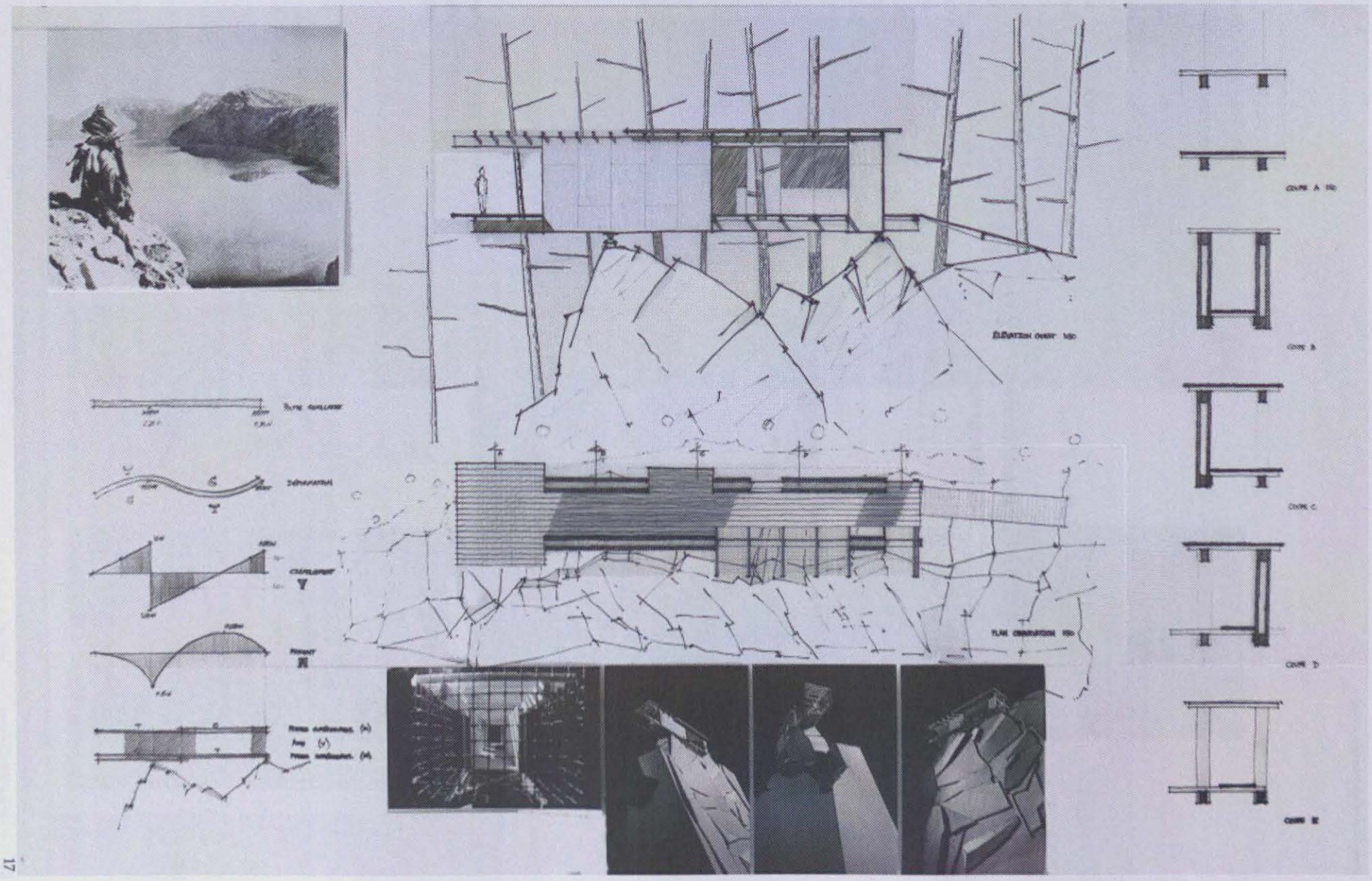
Aux abords du chemin de la pointe de l'île, deux bâtiments se dissimulent en forêt, faisant face au fleuve et longeant un cap de 40m de hauteur, à la fois refuge pour chercheurs, halte pour skieurs et abri pour curieux d'histoire. À l'intérieur du bâtiment principal a lieu une exposition des secrets de l'île, le long du mur épais et fendu de lumière. La face extérieure de ce mur, fuyant le sentier, constitue à la fois une pause et une continuité dans le parcours.

Le cap de granit, s'inclinant vers le fleuve Saint-Laurent, est le point culminant de la promenade. Un observatoire tranquille y poursuit l'élan vers le vide amorcé par le rocher à l'aide d'une poutre de 15 mètres de longueur, dont le tiers est en porte-à-faux. Cette dernière est dimensionnée selon l'échelle humaine. Souhaitons qu'à la découverte du paysage et l'expérience de la poutre, les vertiges les plus importants seront ceux de l'âme.





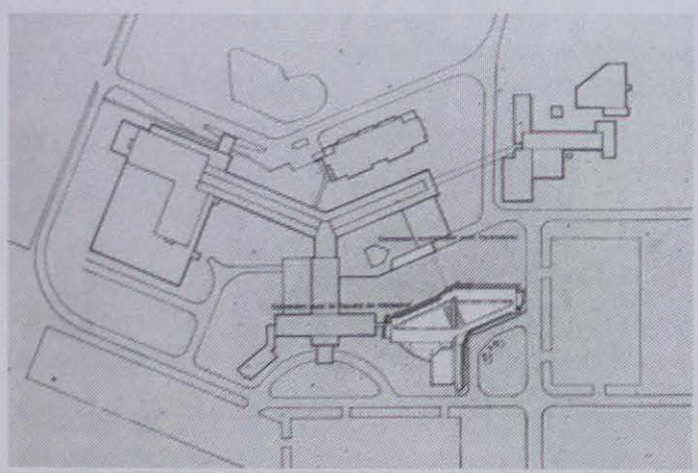




Marie-Christine Pinard

Institut de Pharmacologie,
Université de Sherbrooke

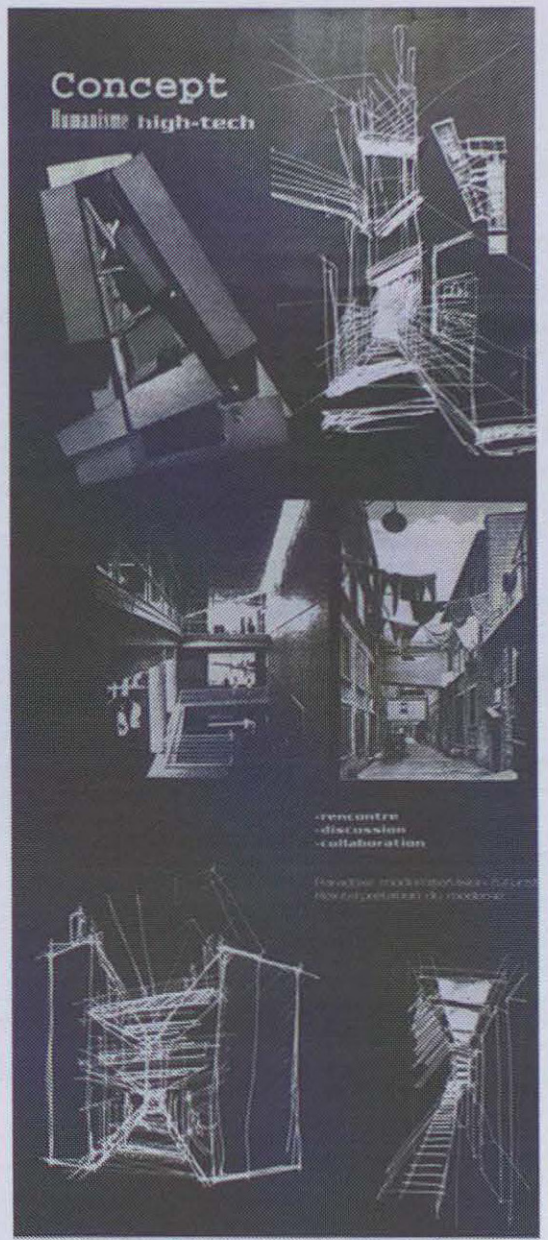
Deuxième prix
Gilles Tremblay: Conseiller

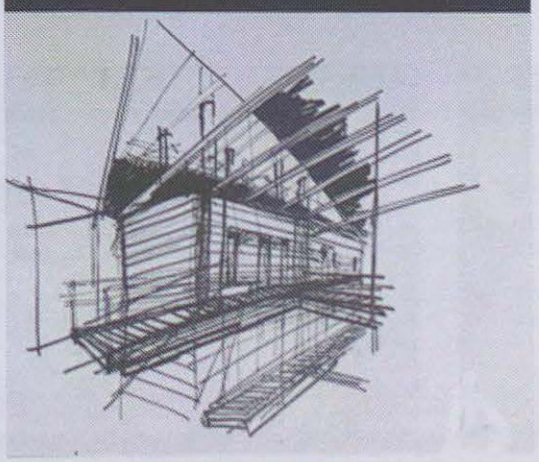


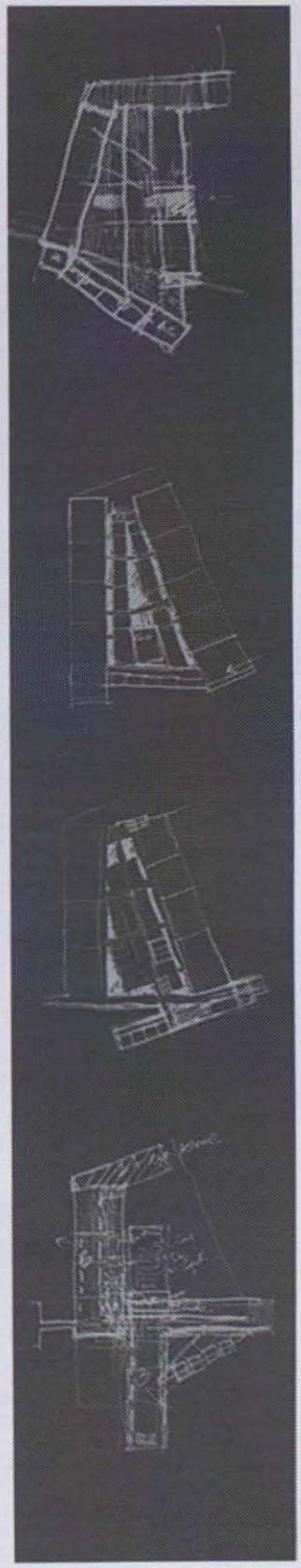
Ce projet, d'«humanisme high tech» par ses intentions sociales et son traitement formel, est conçu de façon à encourager les échanges entre chercheurs. Cette nouvelle mixité spatiale, impliquant des unités de recherche compétitives, doit toutefois permettre d'assurer l'intimité des chercheurs et la confidentialité de leur travaux. Pour cette raison, les laboratoires doivent être individualisés. Puisque c'est à la porte de chaque laboratoire que pourra s'opérer le changement social espéré, il faut miser sur les espaces communs pour l'encourager.

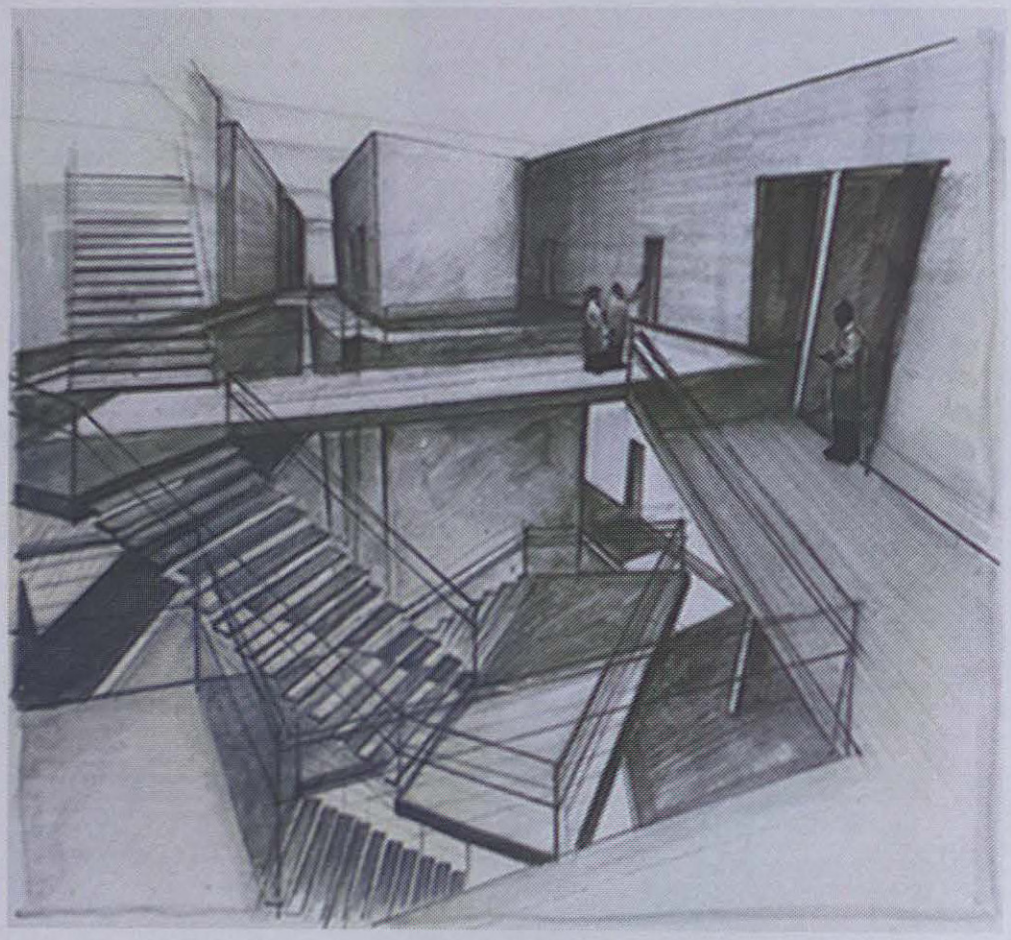
Le concept du projet s'inspire de l'aménagement des cours arrières des habitations populaires d'après-guerre où galleries, ruelles et passerelles contribuaient à générer les contacts entre les familles qui se les partageaient. Ainsi fonctionnent les laboratoires communs spécialisés, qui sont moins nombreux vu le coût de l'équipement scientifique. En distribuant deux rangées de laboratoires individuels l'une en face de l'autre de chaque côté de l'atrium, tout un jeu de circulation et de rencontres peut s'opérer. En refermant l'atrium à ses extrémités, le lieu devient plus privé. Sans ouverture en toiture, le caractère clos propre au milieu scientifique est respecté. En ouvrant le bâtiment au centre et en le dotant d'un puits de lumière, on le rend social, dynamique, interactif.

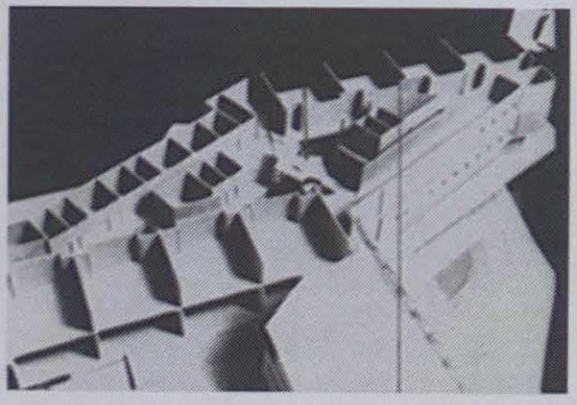
L'implantation du projet à côté d'un bâtiment institutionnel existant a amené les contraintes de proximité qui lui ont conféré sa forme. Pour éviter l'excavation coûteuse du site, l'étage mécanique est sorti de terre et exploité comme entrée, exposant ses entrailles derrière une paroi de verre et marquant la distinction public/aseptisé entre l'étage d'accueil et les étages supérieurs réservés à la recherche.

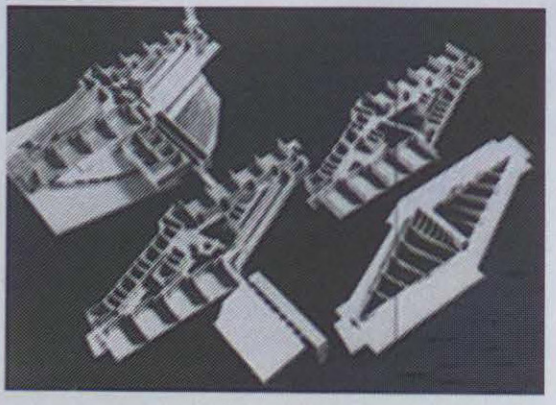

Concept
high-tech
·rencontre
·discussion
·collaboration

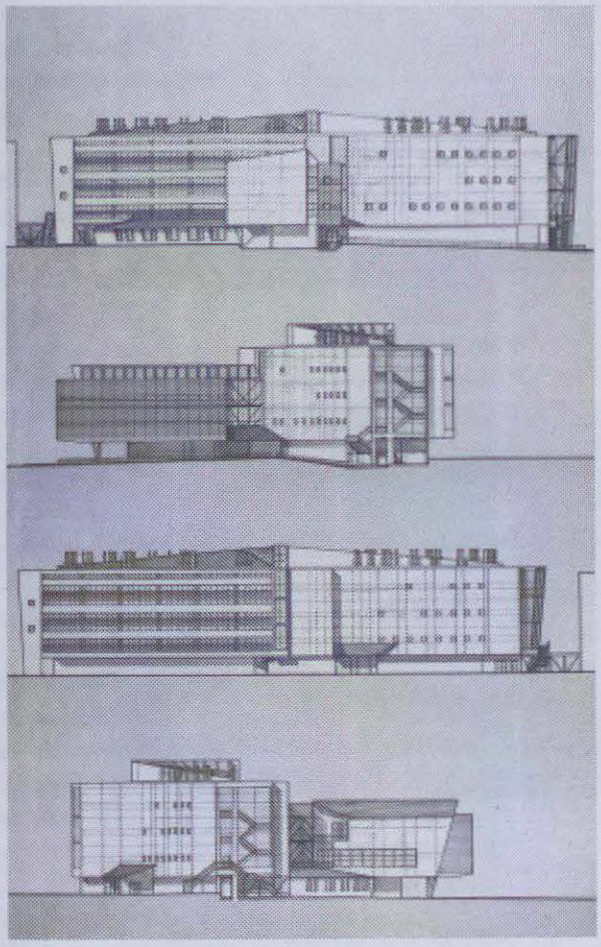


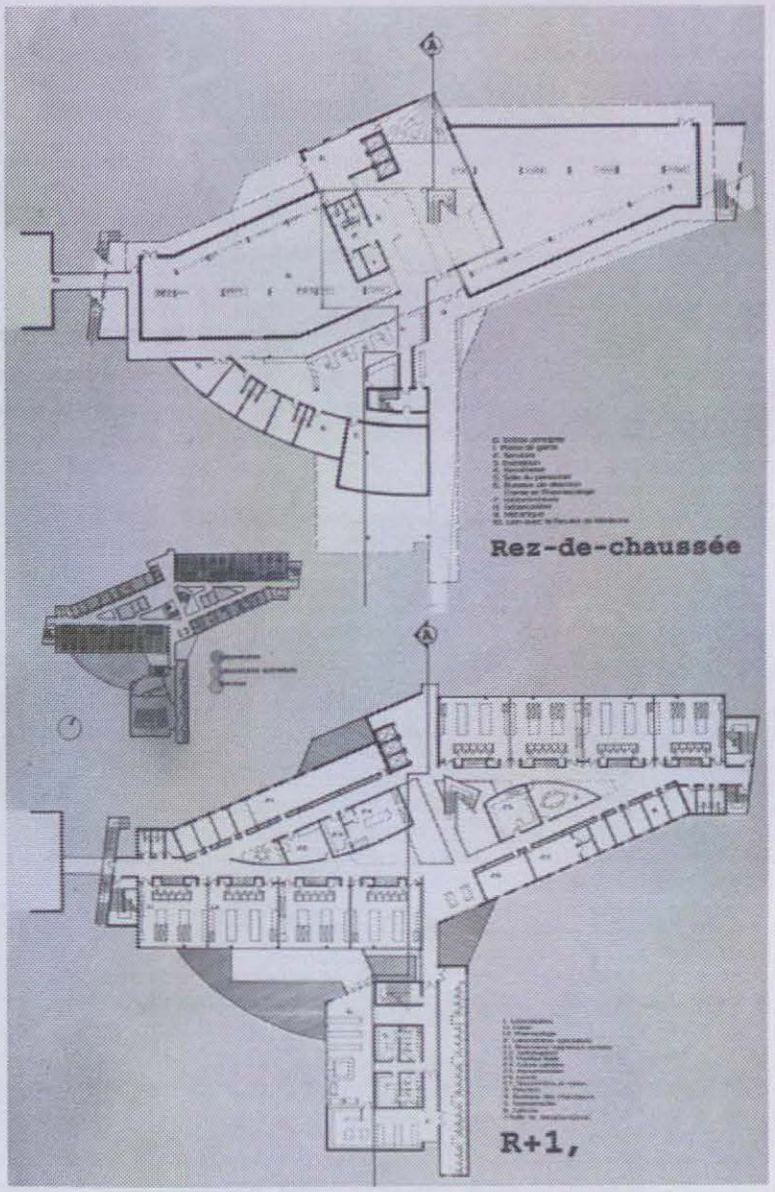








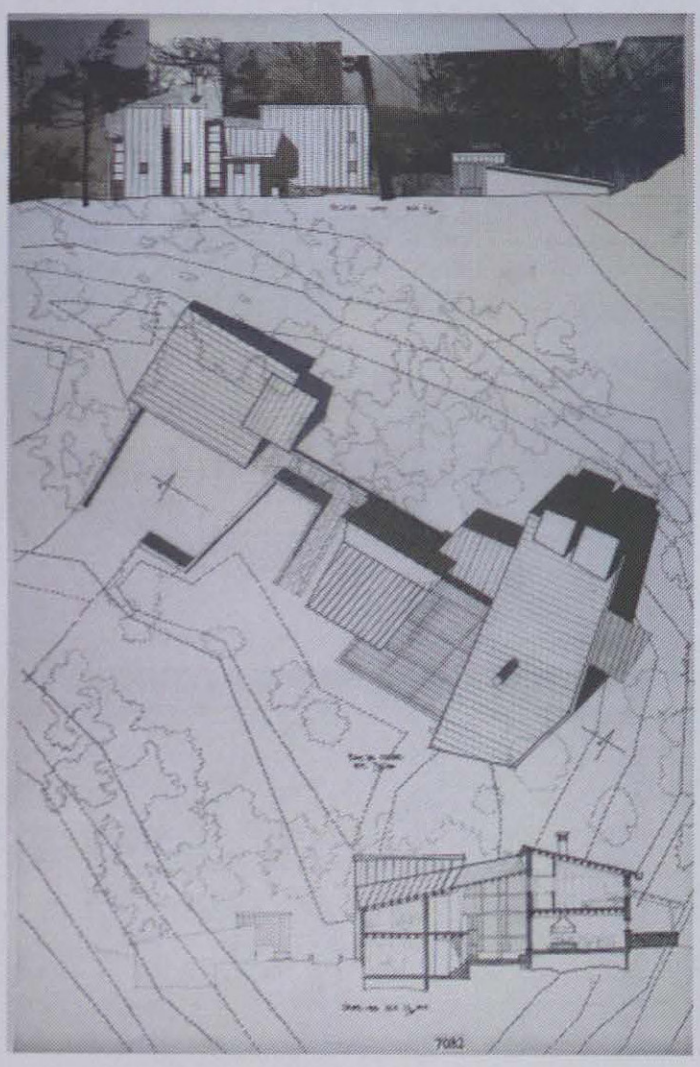



Rez-de-chaussée
R+1,

Jérome Henné

Maison individuelle extensible

Troisième prix
Jacques White: Conseiller

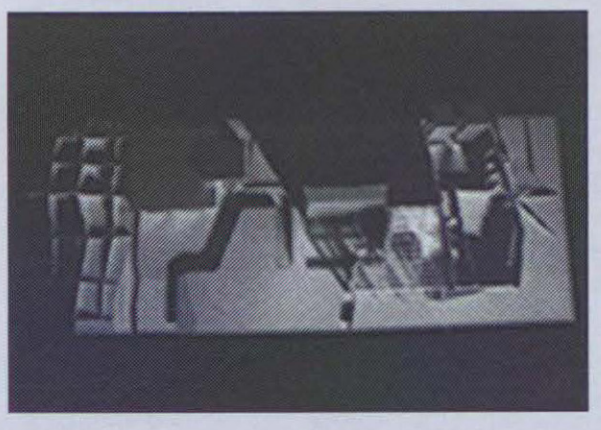


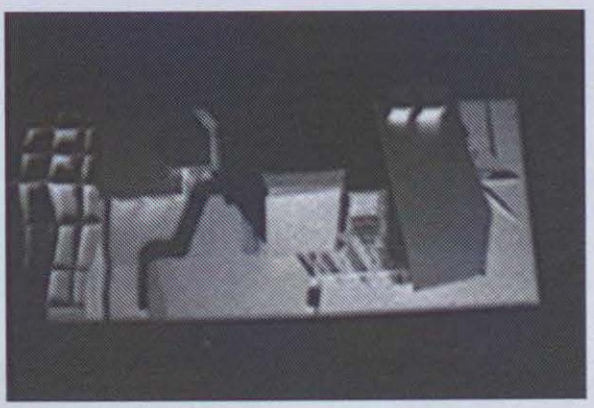
La maison traditionnelle québécoise était beaucoup plus qu'une habitation ; sculptée par le climat, elle isolait ou exposait ; née des coutumes et des traditions, elle générait des manières et des habitudes. À une époque marquée par un retour en force des préoccupations contextualistes, ce projet se propose de faire renaître la maison typiquement québécoise, adaptée aux moyens et aux modes de vie d'aujourd'hui.

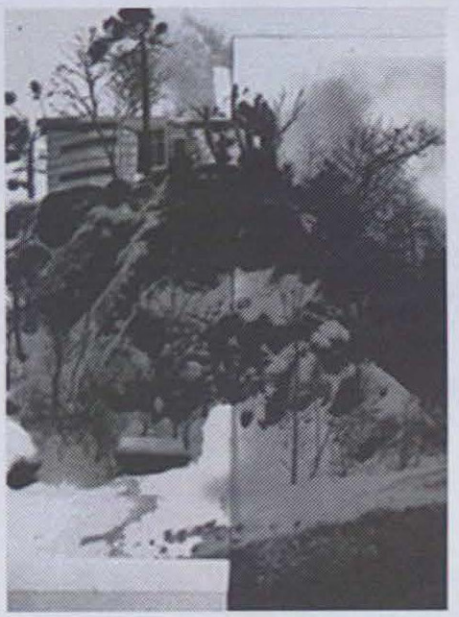
Quatre entités bien distinctes la composent, orientées en fonction des vents dominants, de l'ensoleillement et des vues. L'espace familial et le bureau, rattachés à la chambre d'invités qui peut aussi accommoder un enfant, forment deux volumes distincts, introvertis. Au coeur du projet, entre ces deux volumes programmatiques, un espace «quatre saisons» contrôle le climat. Des éléments mobiles en "onduline" régulent la température de toute la maison grâce au vent qui traverse cet espace et au soleil qui le baigne, selon la saison. De plus, un poêle le réchauffe par grand froid et des toiles intégrées au système structural le protègent des canicules. Finalement, le garage, déttaché et encaissé, est presque invisible.

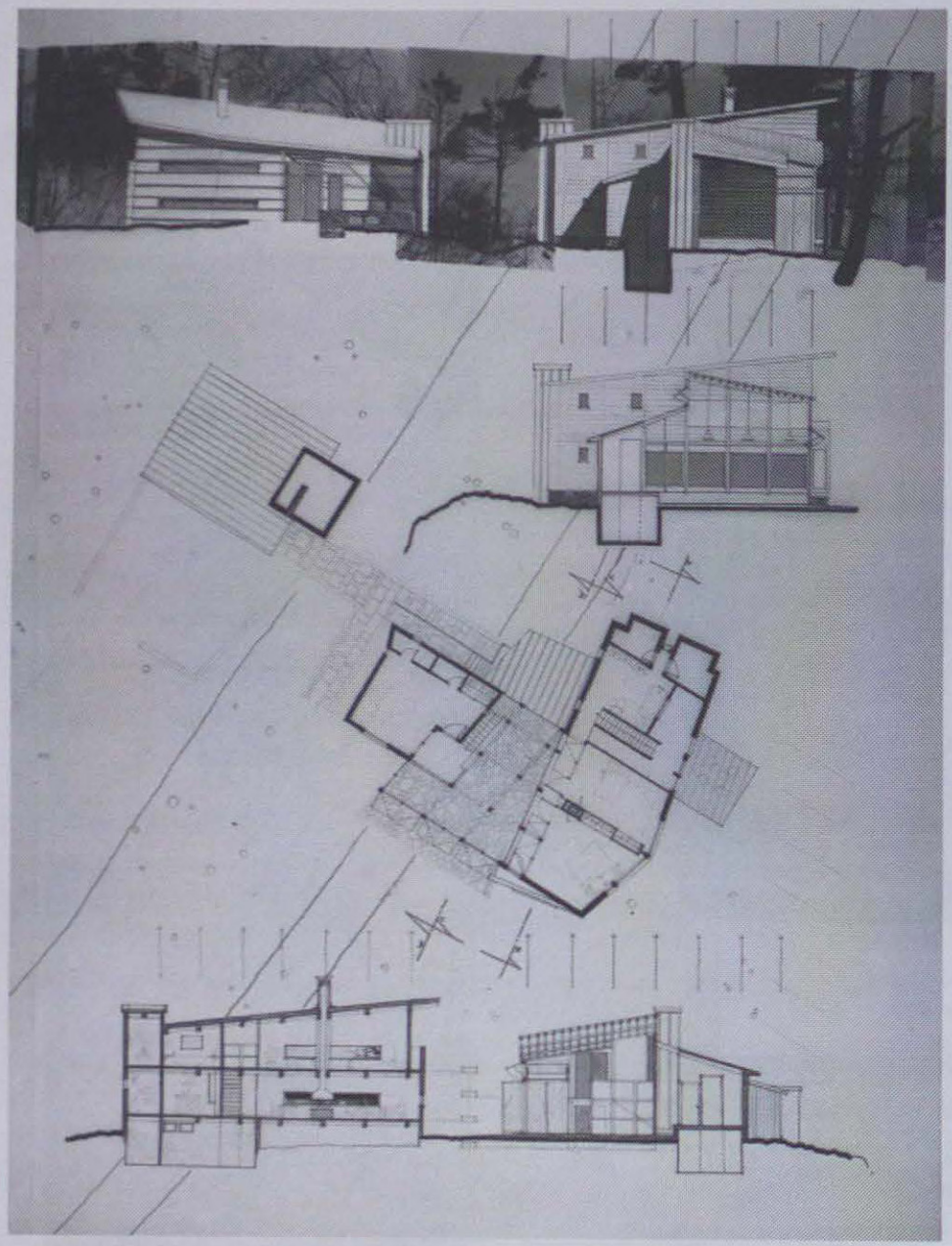
Les surfaces les plus exposées aux vents renferment les pièces usuelles de service et de transition. Il s'agit du tambour, entrée quotidienne et lieu privé relié à la cuisine; de la chambre froide; du garderobe de cèdre; du caveau; enfin, de la salle de fournaise. Une seconde entrée, celle des invités, s'ouvre sur le salon et la salle à manger.

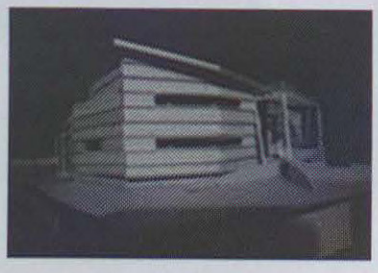
Le vent d'hiver glisse sur la façade arquée qui domine le fleuve, très peu ouverte, si ce n'est des fenêtres en bandeaux qui encadrent le panorama à la hauteur des yeux.

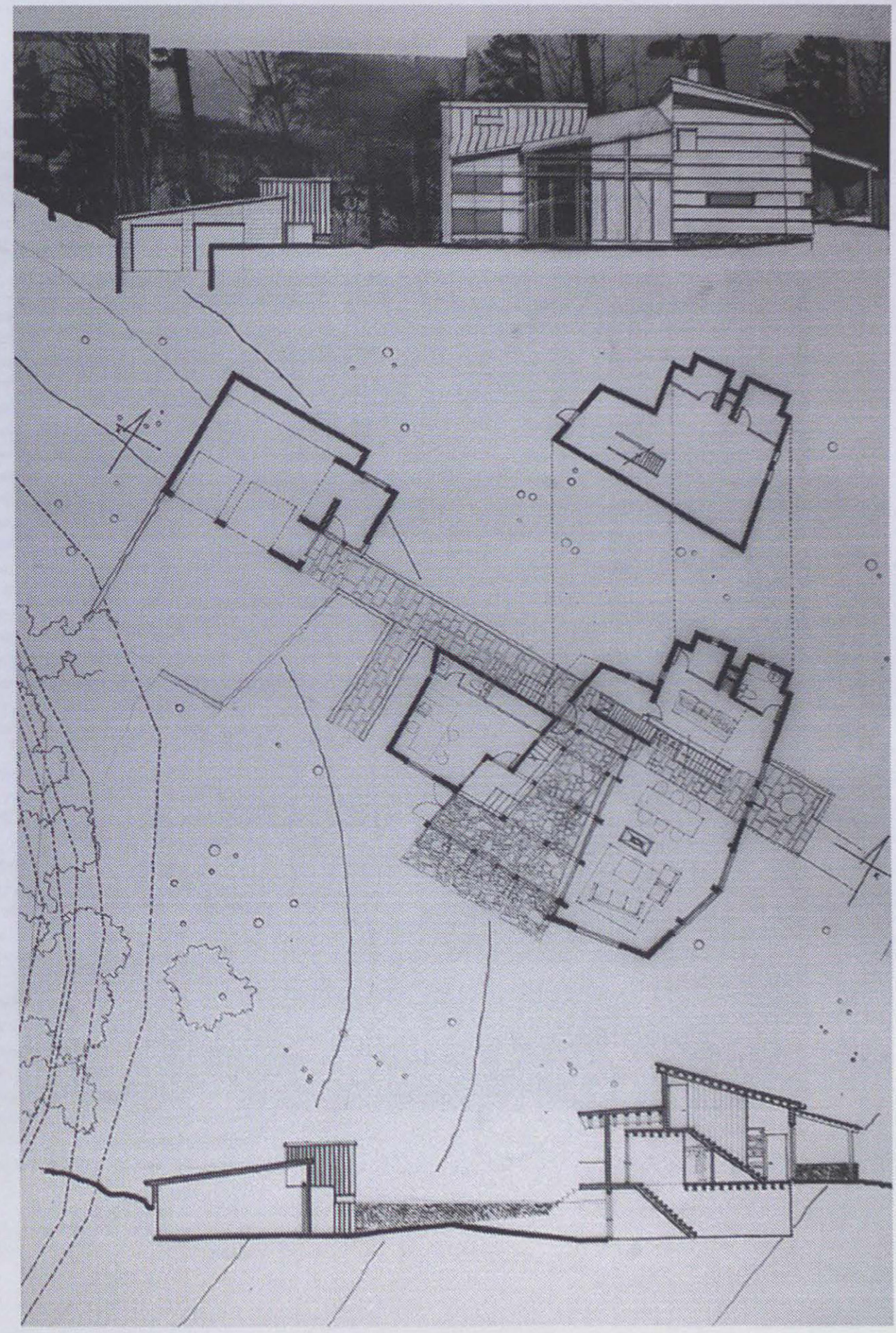












Introduction to McGill Thesis Projects 1997

Howard Davies, Adjunct Professor

The thesis term at McGill university lasts 4 months. Prior to starting the semester, the students are required to prepare a written report that establishes each project's philosophical and formal direction. Each student works closely with a member of the staff. Work is reviewed individually and in groups on a more or less on-going basis throughout the term.

Generally speaking, if one was to compare an architectural thesis from the 1930s at McGill to one done in the early 1980s, the similarities would be striking. In both cases there would be an emphasis on the representation of an architectural proposition using orthographic projection drawings, perspectives and a model. The main thesis idea would almost always be related to the formal resolution of an architectural image with a program (sometimes functionally innovative, sometimes sociologically) and a site (usual or unusual). In most cases the projects would attempt to solve problems and build a better world.

The past 10 years have seen the relative consensus and stability of this tradition challenged. In this respect McGill can be seen as taking part in a general re-appraisal of architecture and the position of the architect in society. This change could be anything from the result of an after "modernism" soul-searching to the initial off-spring of a greatly expanded and influential Masters level education/culture that has swept through almost every school of architecture in the world.

In some cases the completion of a thesis through the resolution of image/program/site is no longer the only goal. Instead the thesis effort has been re-directed towards a variety of aims including:

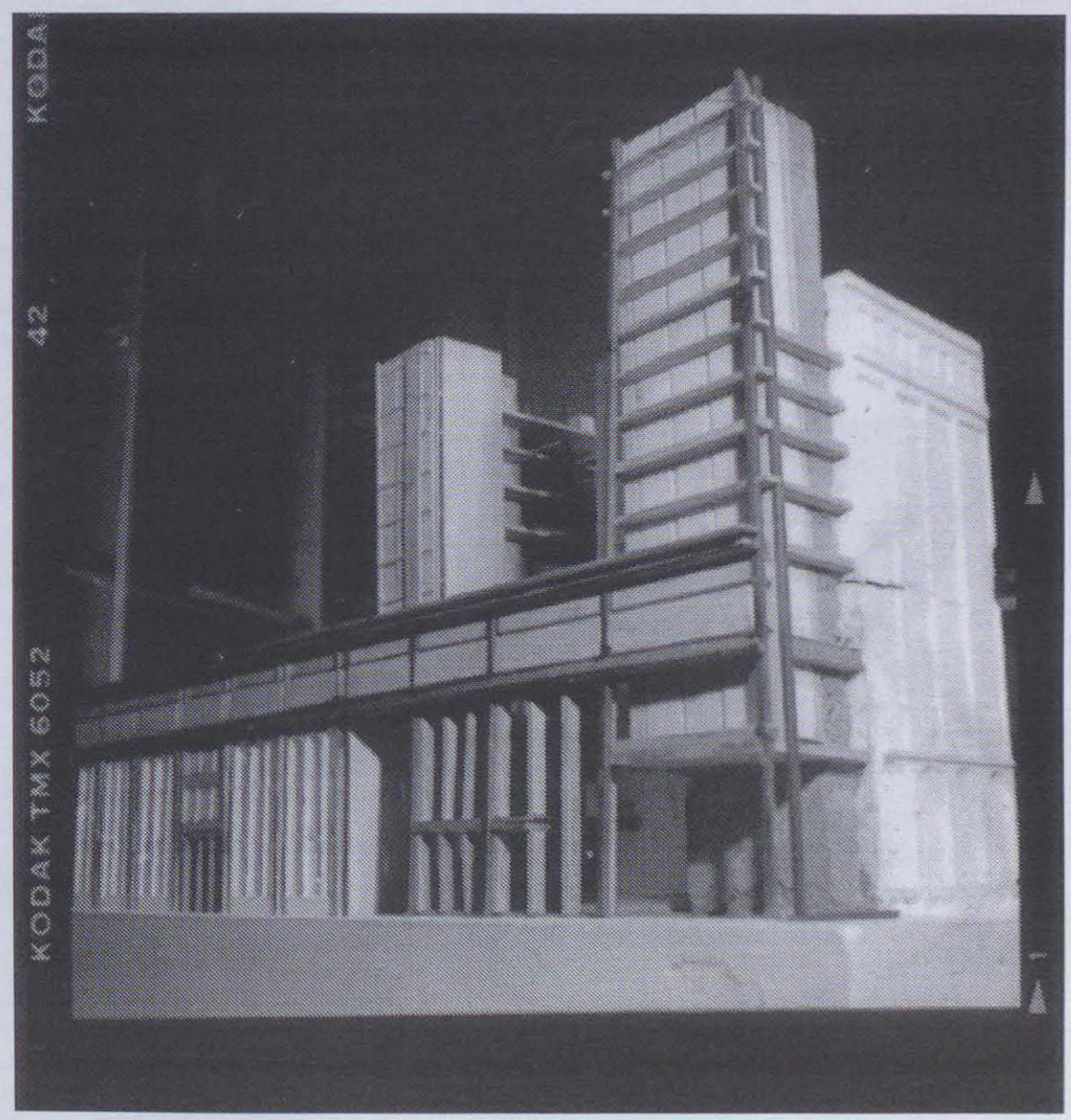
—expanding the definition of architectural activity within a cultural context: how might architecture interact both with it's creator and it's public to counteract a perceived loss of contemporary cultural relevance?

—exploring how architecture is media specific: does form follow method?

—examining the potential interface between philosophy and architectural form: is there rigour in Ricoeur?

As the century concludes and the architectural profession undergoes a serious re-evaluation of itself in almost every respect, including it's legal definition, it's economic basis and, ultimately, it's role in society, it is hardly surprising that these vicissitudes should be reflected in the work of students on the fringe of participation.

Howard Davies is the current Thesis Year Co-ordinator at McGill.

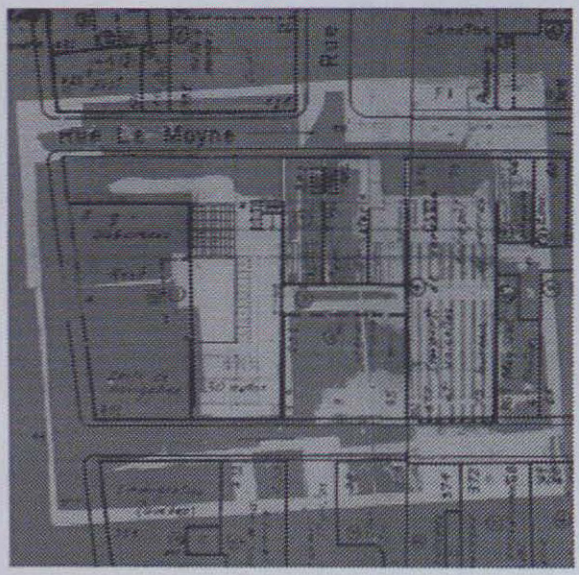


Anne Bordeleau

Anne Bordeleau

Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec: moi-mémoire-monde

Advisor: Adrian Sheppard



La bibliothèque, c'est l'univers, mais c'est aussi moi. Je suis le lieu de tant d'actions et tant de mémoires, et à moi se relient des millions de gens, des millions d'actions, des millions de mémoires.

Je ne me contiens plus.

En tentant de définir les choses de façon isolée, la conceptualisation dénie l'essence de la perception. Rien n'est approché de façon pure, chacun apporte une histoire particulière dans son assimilation du monde offert. Cette histoire constitue une base référentielle formée par notre mémoire, locus de nos interprétations.

Ce lieu n'est ni isolé, ni défini, ni fixe. C'est le lieu de nos actions passées et de nos actions projetées, le lieu des personnes rencontrées et des personnes espérées, le lieu des souvenirs et des désirs, des échecs et des réussites, du moi et du monde.

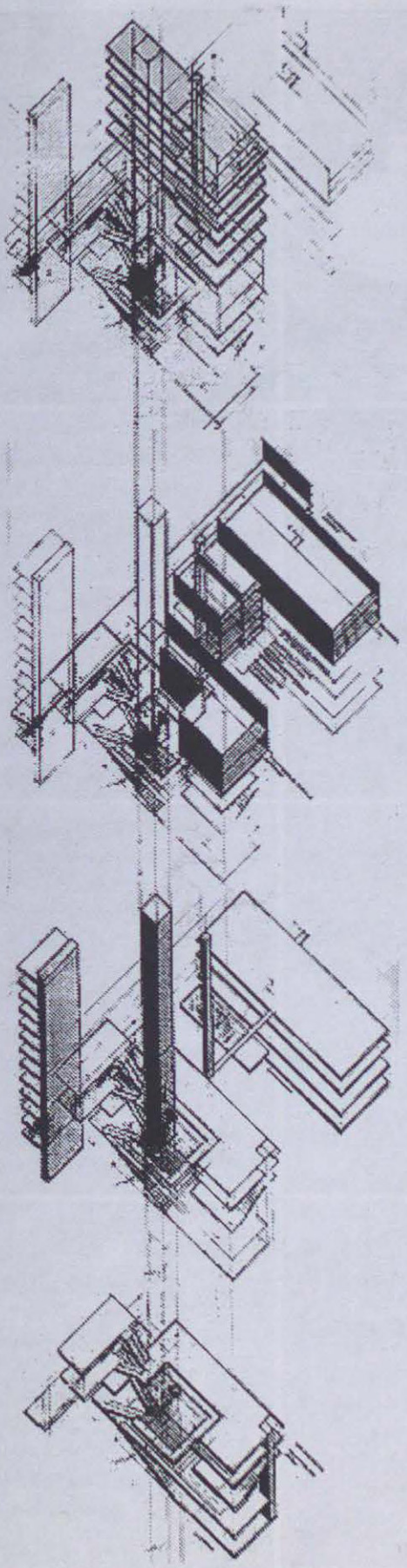
La perception implique déjà une prise de position: elle n'existe pas indépendamment de la mémoire et de l'imagination. Je place la mémoire entre la perception et l'imagination, motivant notre appropriation référencielle et redonnant de façon créative. Nos mémoires constituent en quelque sort notre identité dans un monde où il n'existe aucune limite tangible et où tout est en mouvement.

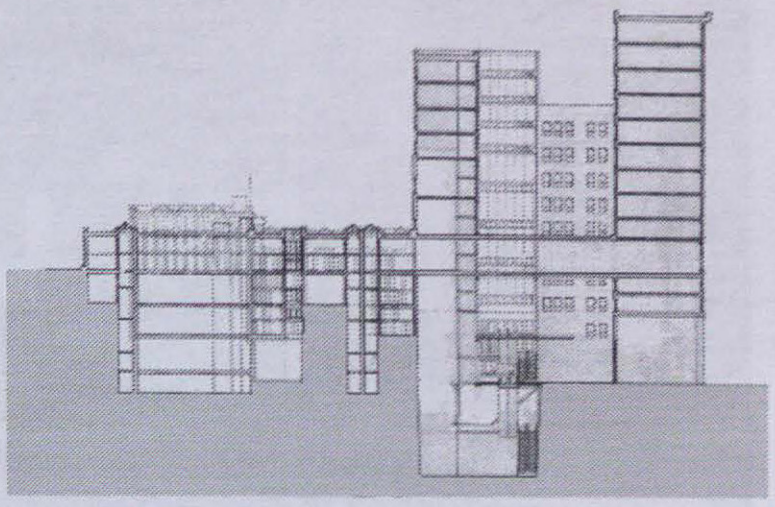
La nouvelle bibliothèque est située dans le Vieux-Montréal, au coin des rues Le Moyne et McGill. Elle habite des espaces résiduels et des édifices désaffectés; elle peut approprier de nouveaux vides au rythme de sa croissance.

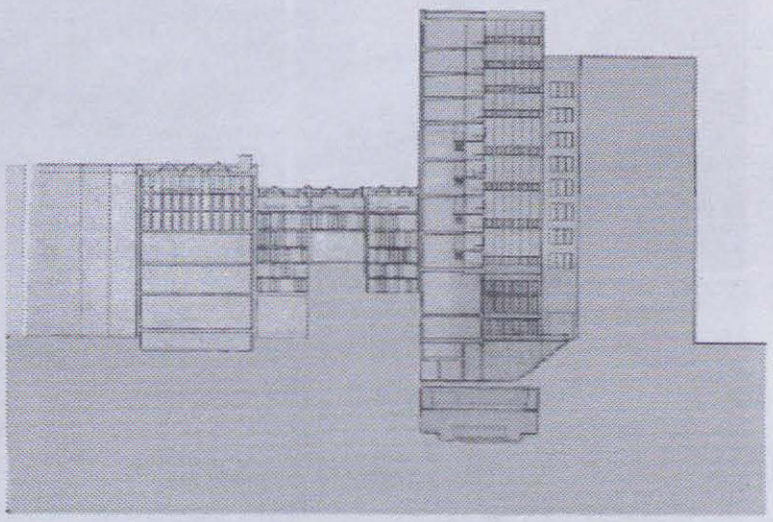
Les grands axes sont 1: celui de la circulation, du mouvement, du déplacement ou du passage, d'un endroit à un autre: le labyrinthe. 2: celui de l'action présente et momentanée; observée, fixée et transformée dans la mémoire, seulement récupérable et réutilisable par notre mémoire. 3: l'arrêt, l'assimilation, la transformation, la compréhension, l'interprétation ... d'un petit élément, dans la perspective du monde, par un petit élément, partie entière d'un tout.

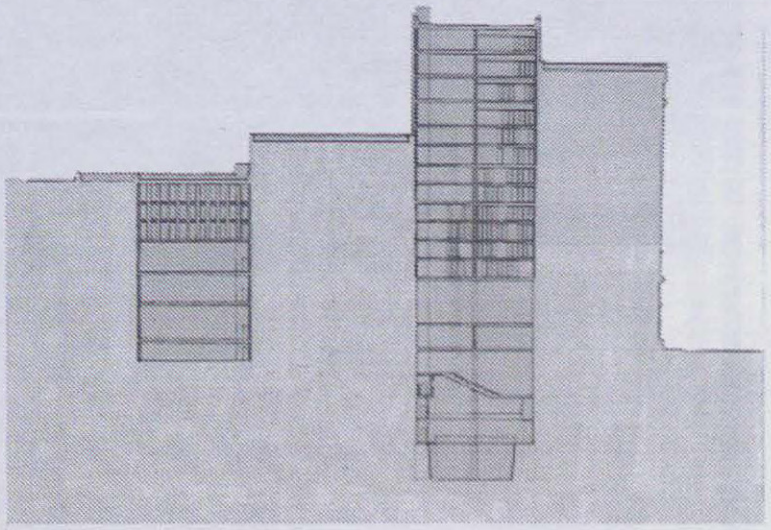
L'identité de chaque élément repose d'abord sur sa position et son contexte. Elle est dépendante du système de relation dans lequel il s'insère, de l'intentionalité qui guide cette insertion ainsi que de la couche de signification qu'il vient ajouter à l'histoire déjà incorporée.

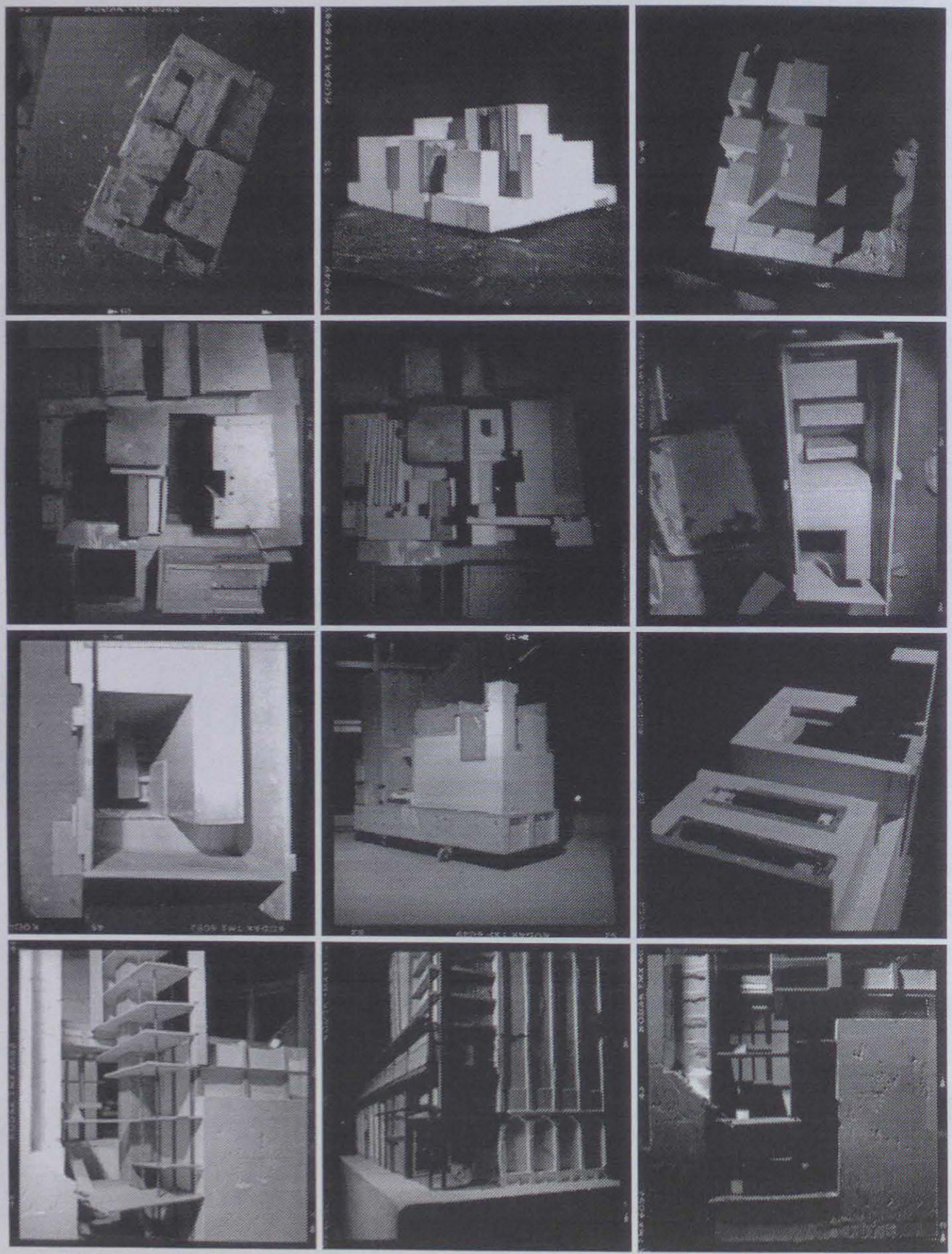
Mon identité est indéfiniment reliée au temps et aux contextes. Le seul point d'ancrage réside dans l'action responsable et consciente. Cette action éthique se fonde sur les mémoires qui me relient à tout: au monde incorporé, au monde remémoré, au monde imaginé.

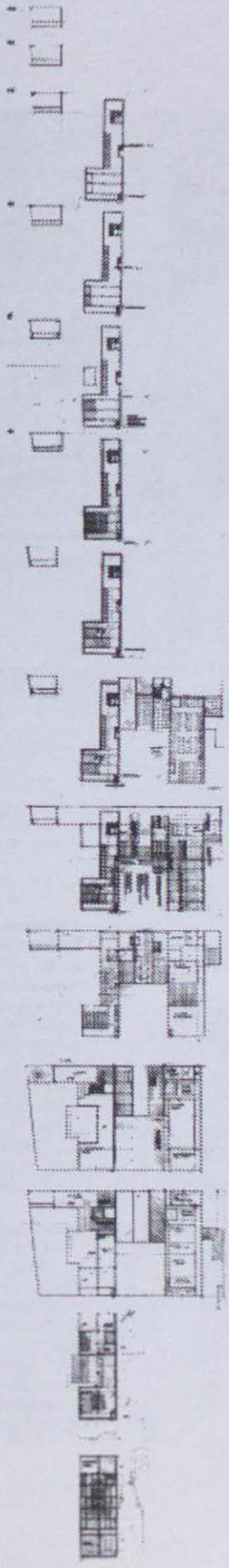












Du moi, au monde, du monde au moi:
un petit **malaise**.

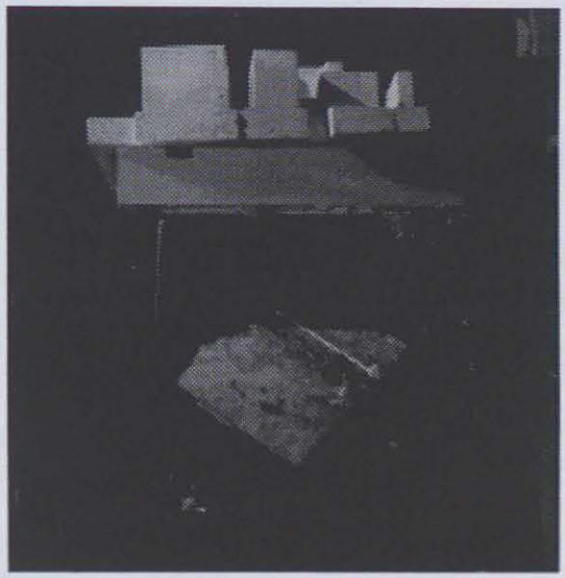
De retour au monde:
un petit **mensonge**. (chercher à identifier, à réduire, à comprendre):
la **technologie**, la **modernité**.

L'identification d'une cause possible de la médiation inconfortable:
la difficulté à se situer.

Une alternative vague:
l'**authenticité**

Ce que cela touche:
la **perception**, l'**oscillation**?
Et encore:
les **impressions**, l'**expérience**

Nos points de références...(dans le monde et en nous-même?)...une voie possible:
la **mémoire**, les **mémoires**.



"While what we know may increase indefinitely it is always conditioned by a central unknowing, while what we are may become ever richer and satisfying, it remains qualified by an empty place in the heart. Remembering does not cancel mourning but alleviates its pain like a salve, so that we may hold the empty place in mind and heart like a waiting vessel."

Carrin Dunne

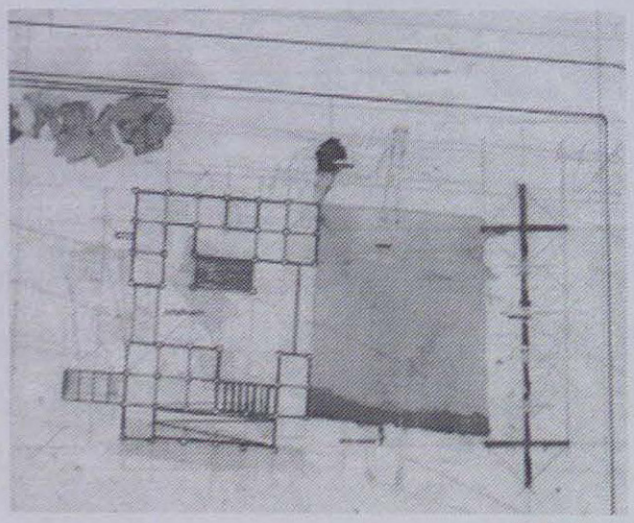
Heather Grey

A Mobile Home Park in the M.U.C.

Advisor: Annmarie Adams

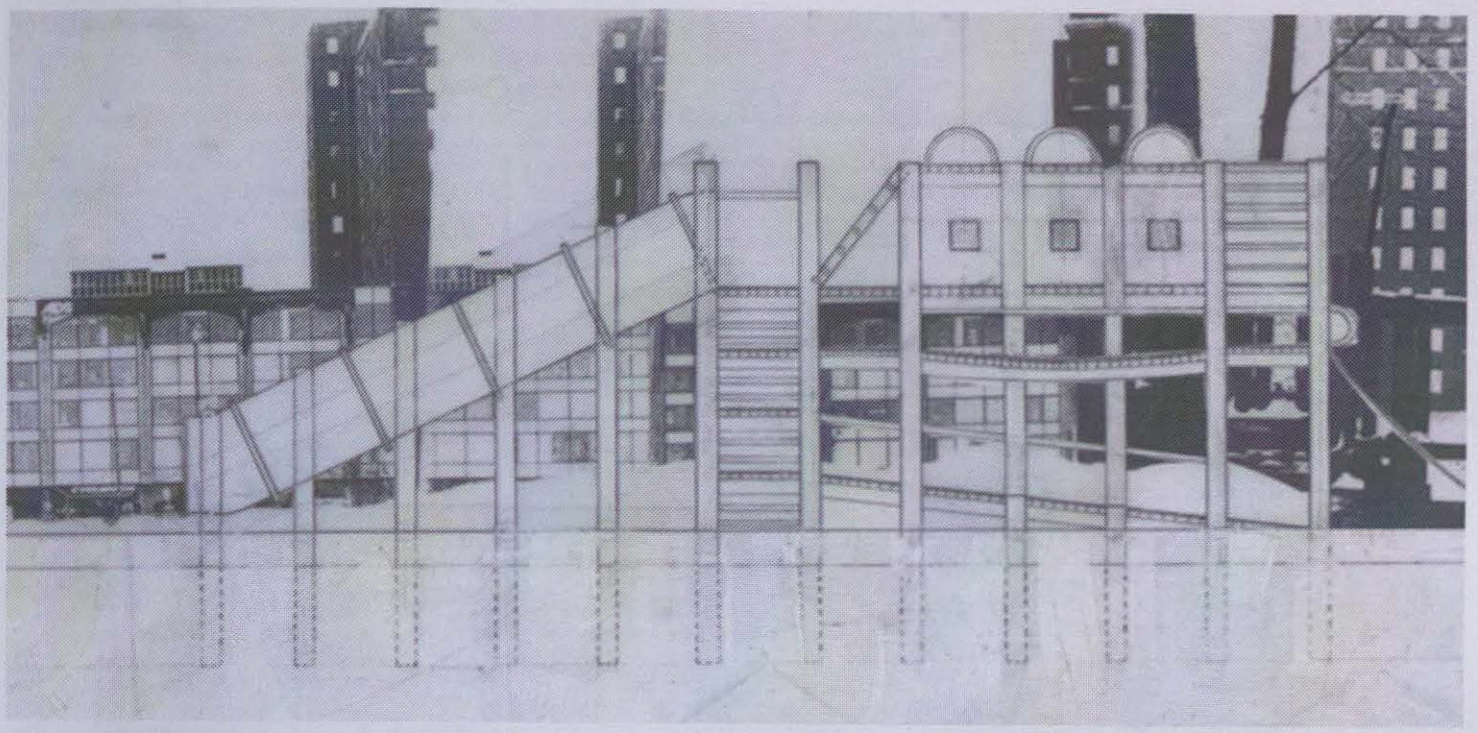
"We were all nomads once, and crossed the deserts and the seas in tracks that could not be detected, but were clear to those who knew the way. Since settling down and rooting like trees, but without the abiliity to make use of the wind to scatter our seed, we have found only infection and discontent.
In the city the inhabitants have reconciled two discordant desires: to remain in one place and to leave it behind for ever."[1]

This is a proposal for the use/re-use of abandoned lots in the city of Montreal. The provision of basic infrastructure- 1. water (subterranean) and 2. electricity (aerial)- renders the uninhabitable habitable by independent motile units. So drive on in, anchor yourself to the ground and attach yourself to the sky.[2]

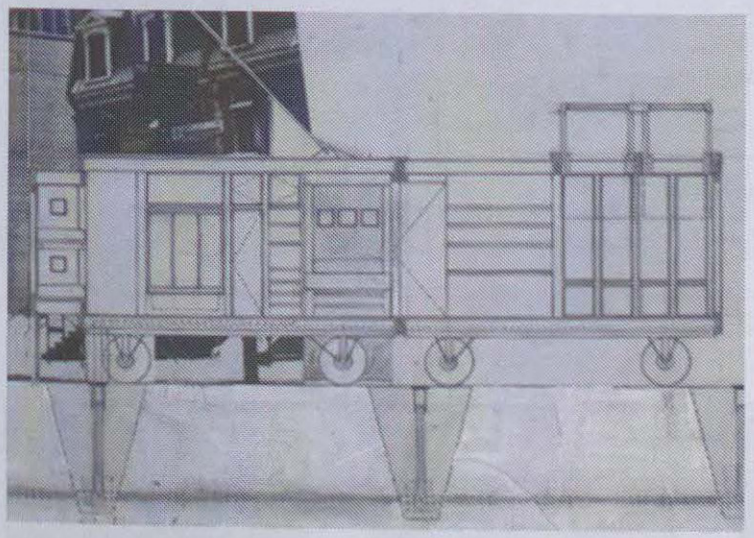


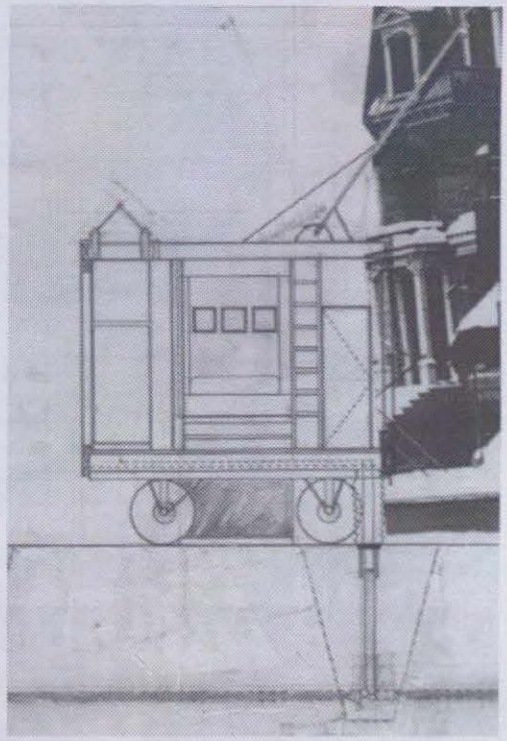
site plan: jungle

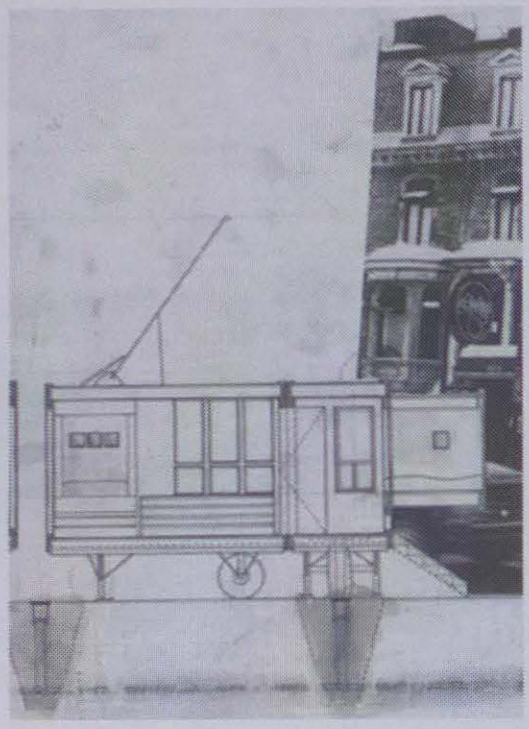
1. Winterson, J. *Sexing the Cherry* (London: Vintage, 1996): 43.
2. When I began my research for this project in September 1996, I started with Anthony Vidler's *The Architectural Uncanny* and Sigmund Freud. I am amazed to see now (January 1998) how far the project has come. Trying to summarize this project I am still feeling the repercussions of thesis (final project) and I find myself still exhausted with little left to explain.
Through the six months that I struggled with this project it became more complicated than it needed to be; the concept behind it is very simple. Faced with two opening premises; 1. the growing number of abandoned city lots in Montreal (it appears that the number of these has decreased over the last year, but when I started there were a lot) 2. the prospect that I would soon begin a nomadic existence and the essentials one needs in order to feel at home in any place), I propose one solution for the temporary use of the abandoned lots is to allow people to install themselves there (not permanently), while the city waits for a more permanent installation to be proposed/built.
The idea is to reclaim unused spaces and give the indecisive souls who search desperately for pathetic 1/2 apartments with month-to-month leases permanent homes while allowing them to move their homes freely within Montreal and even from city to city (and they don't have to carry boxes/furniture up any stairs).
What still remains to be finished, a year after beginning the project, is to construct a prototypical basic unit (for one person) and see if one could live with the minimum I had proposed. I am beginning to have my doubts.

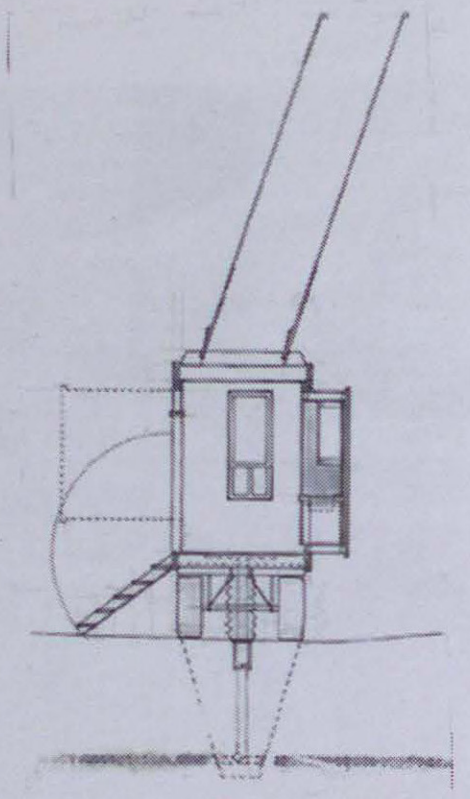


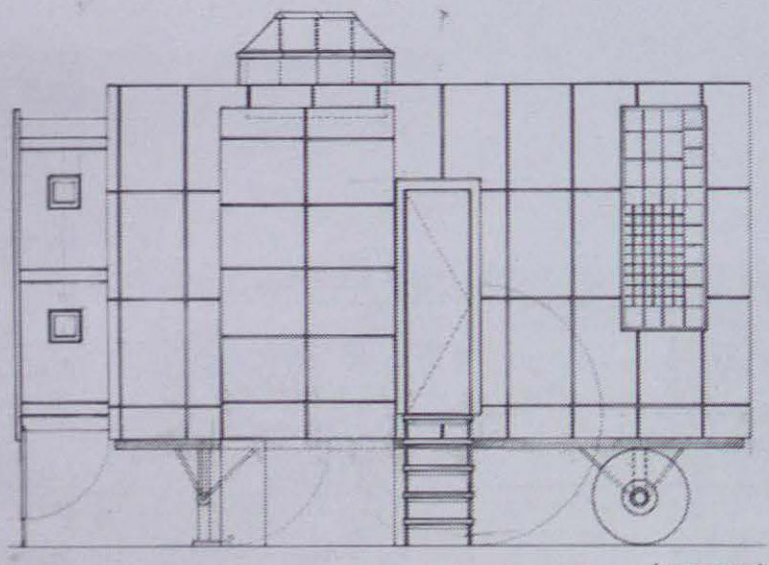
jungle elevation



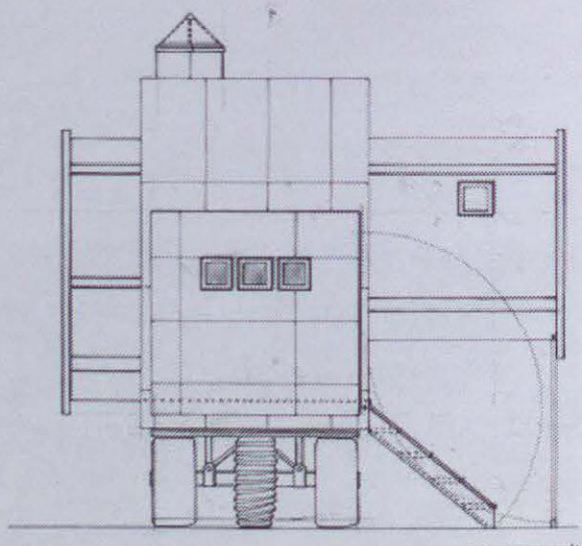








four-person unit
long elevation

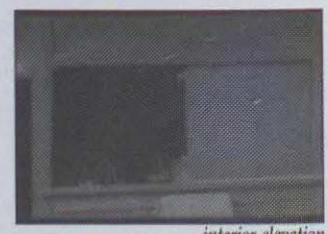


two-person unit
short elevation

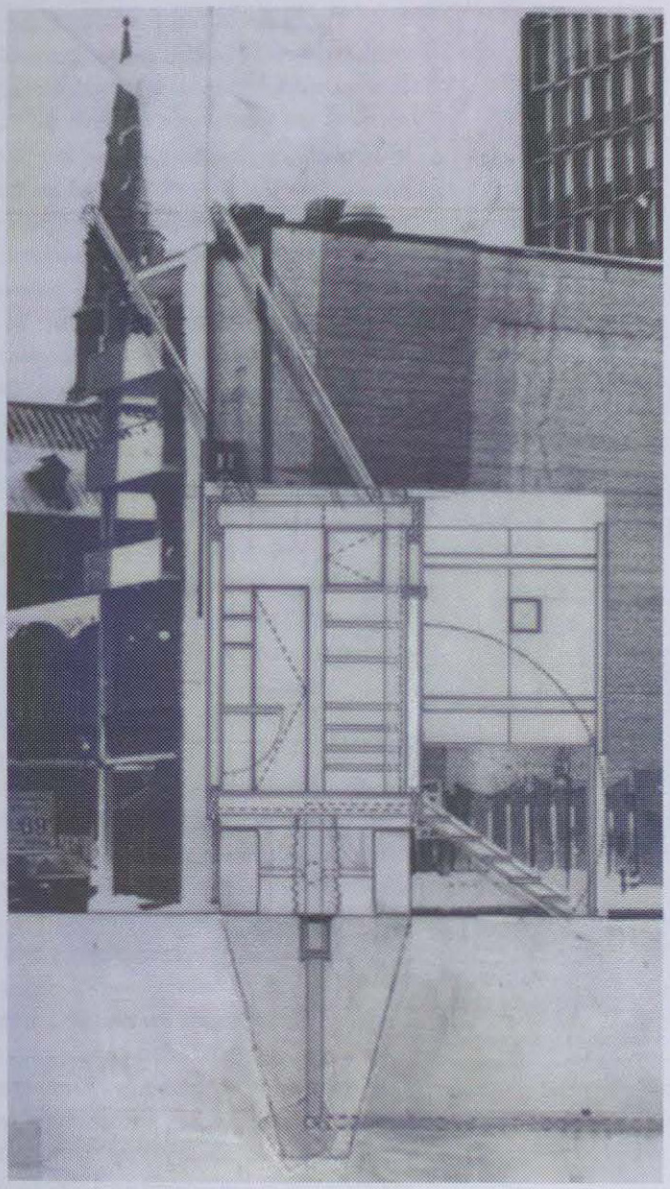
elevation

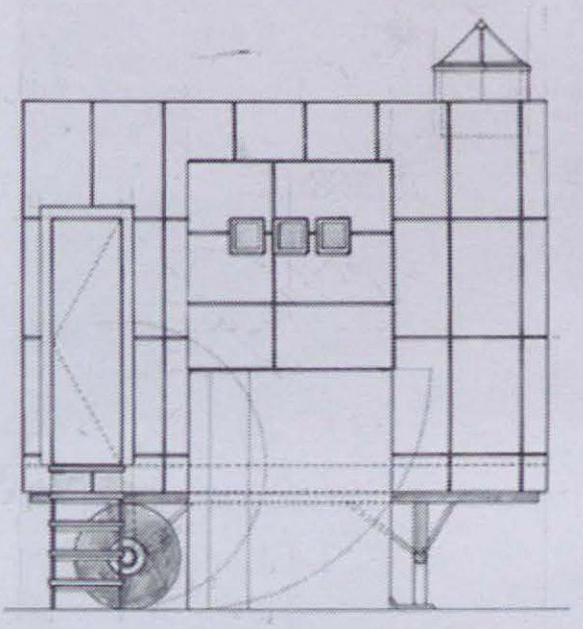
roof plan

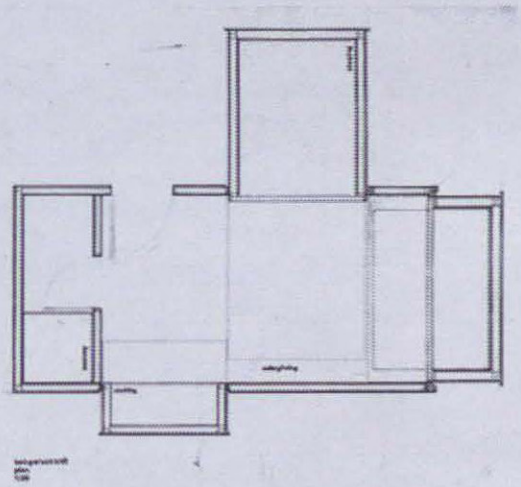
site plan

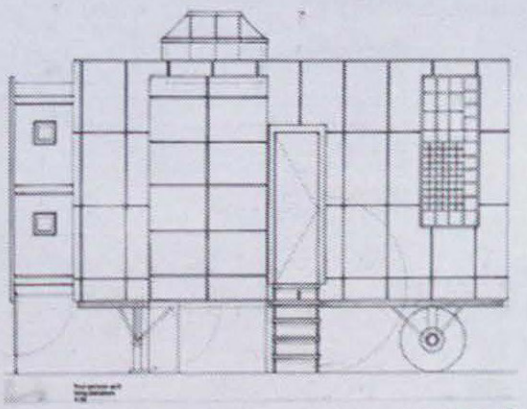


interior elevation









two-person unit
long elevation, plan,short elevation

Christine Burke

Building Beyond Shelter, Returning to our Sense(s)

Advisor: David Covo

Window showing East; painting: mylar and gouache, wood exterior frame (fixed), steel interior frame (partial rotation)

The chosen site lies East/West in the Red Light district between St. Laurent and Ste. Dominique streets, in between adjacent North and South firewalls, and on the z-axis, between the open sky above and the earth below. In its vacant condition it is a long narrow site whose volume is 40'x40'x144'; an exposed steel structure remains on site after a fire in 1993 destroyed the rest of the building. The unravelled history of the skeleton-like site became the inspiration for the theoretical intervention.

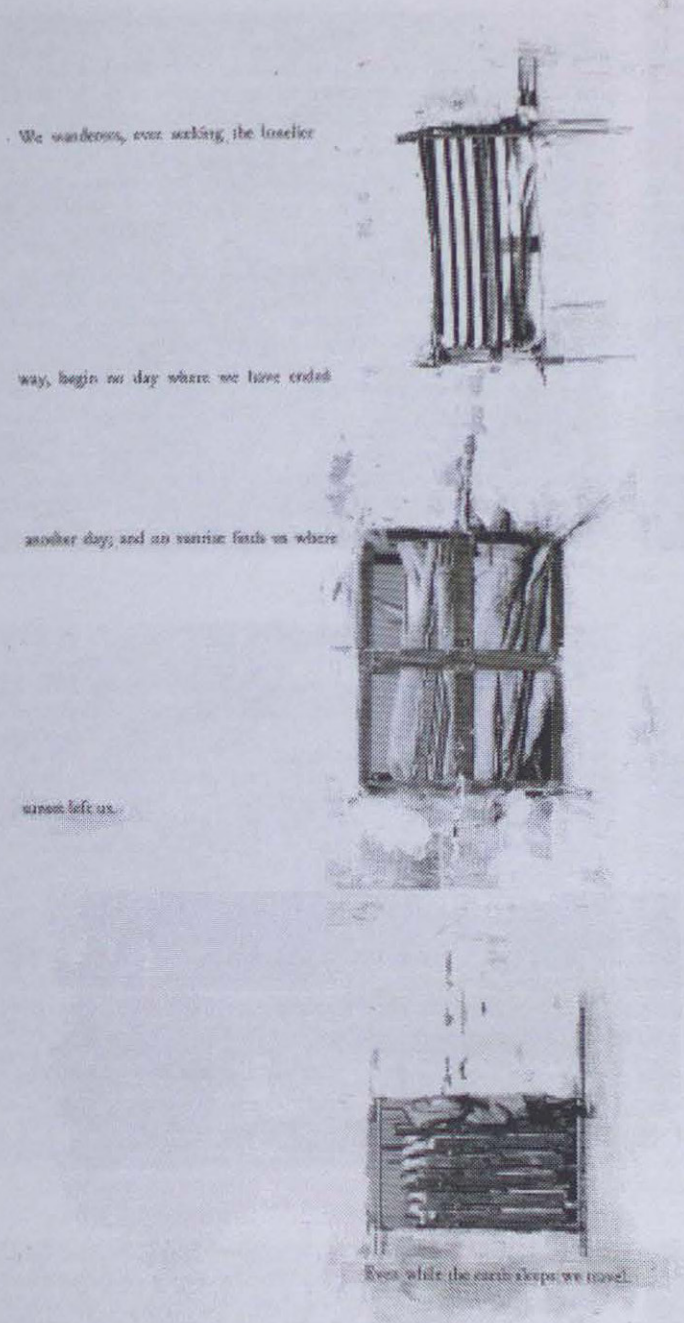
The process of the thesis produces the program, its primary goal being to make a new beginning on this site and to give heart back to the Red Light District. The site has a long history of neglect. The intention to transform the site from a black box of projected images into a new ground of subjective being emphasizes a revival of the body, its senses and its spiritual life.

The process begins when the existing site within the context of the city scape also becomes the container of the objectified body, imprinted within the volume and awaiting resurrection. When the mystery of the origin of the fire is mapped on this interpretation of the site, mythologies of creation that are within us all take their place in the creative process. Opening to the mystery that perhaps this fire is beyond scientific reasoning. and that our usual means of explaining and understanding things concretely can not always work, is the initiation into the unknown, where other ways of knowing may be discovered.

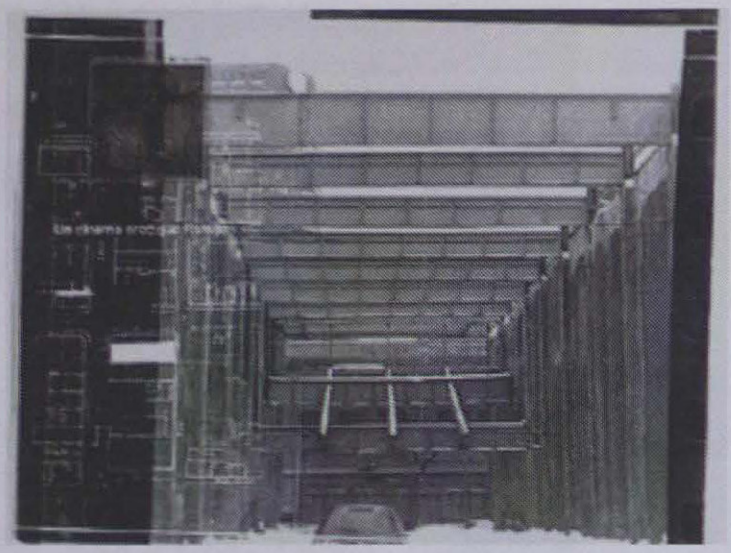
Two separate programs emerge: a little temple to the body, and an inn housing twelve homeless. They are fused together on the site like two hands clasping each other. Throughout the investigation, an attempt was made to express tangibly with materials the sensory experience of a person in the building. The sculptures, when combined together, tell the story of the transformation of the site, and if looked at in different ways. they inform smaller elements of the building, the overall approach to the site, and rituals of the living body.

The earth, enraged at its treatment and neglect blows fire from its core. Surfacing at Cinema EVE the flames burn the screen of images...the sky comes to rescue the earth and cries, flooding the ground,washing away the objectified bodies and depositing them at the bottom of the sea of tears. the ribs of the earth open up becoming a basin to collect the falling water. as the earth begins to breathe once again, pieces of the destroyed building float up and the twelve survivors are saved by holding on to the debris and anchoring themselves to the indestructible steel ribs. when the sun comes and brings light again to the world, the water dries up leaving a rejuvinating water on the ground and the passage to the core. the twelve rebuild their dwellings, sharing a solid ground above the moving sea of change, ever reaching up towards the light.

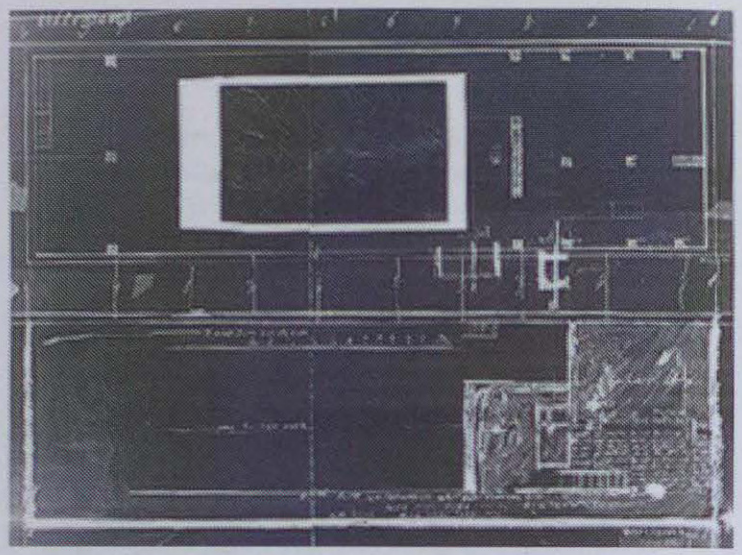
What we make is like a door opening that only leads us to discover more of the world.



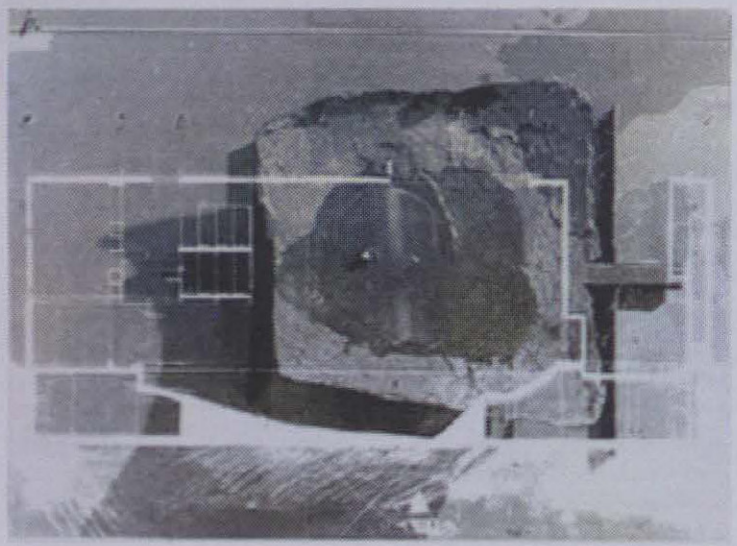
A bed, a door and a valise: latex, surgical thread, steel, wood door (sliced lengthwise), plaster cast



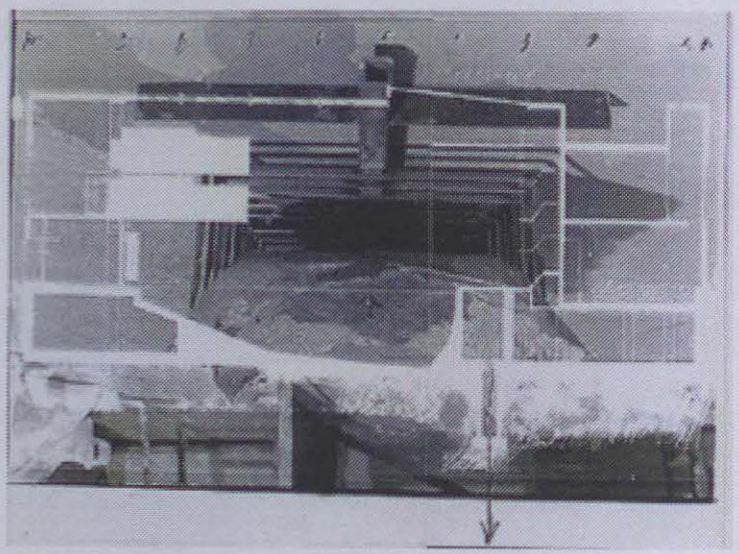
site



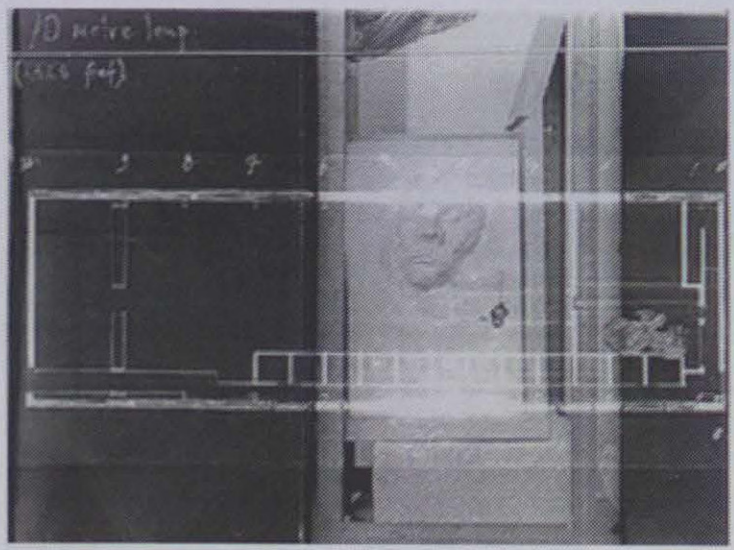
plan 1 and 2



section 2

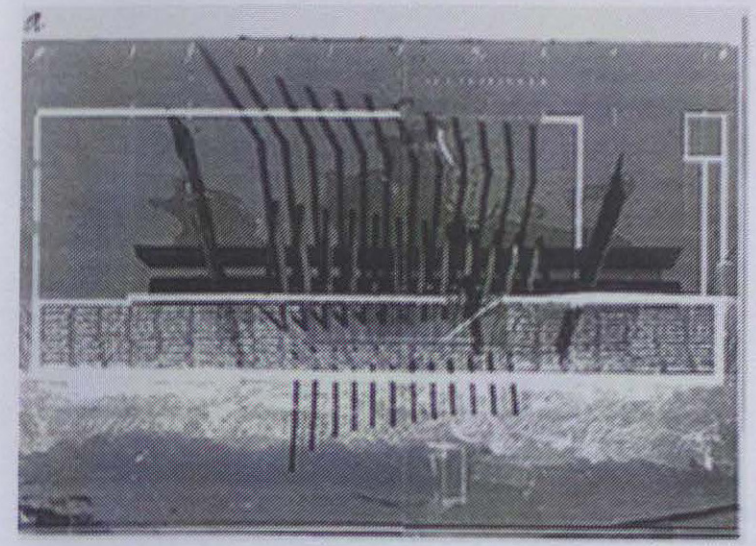


section 3

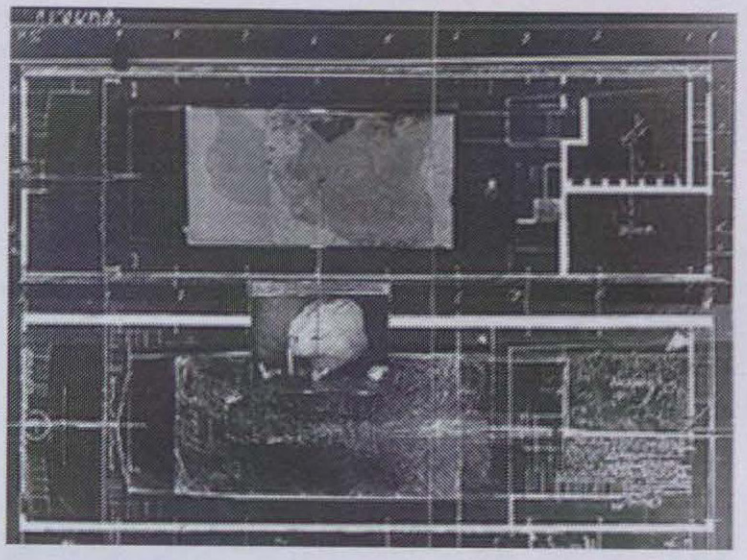


plan 6

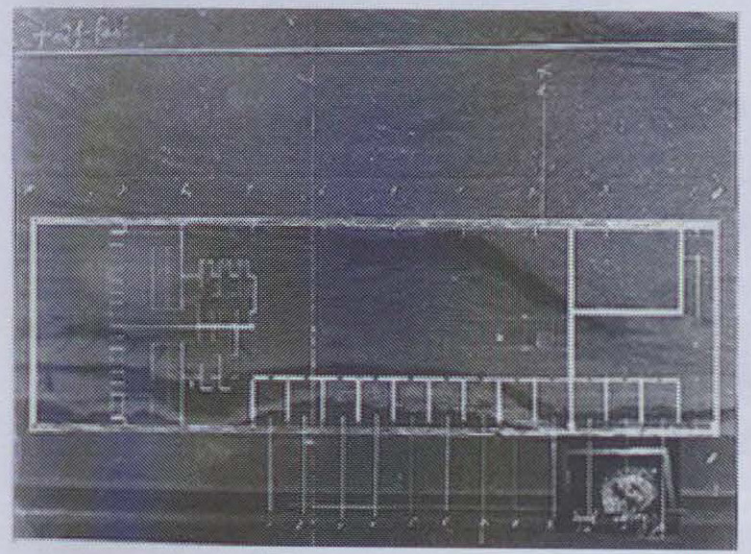
plan 7



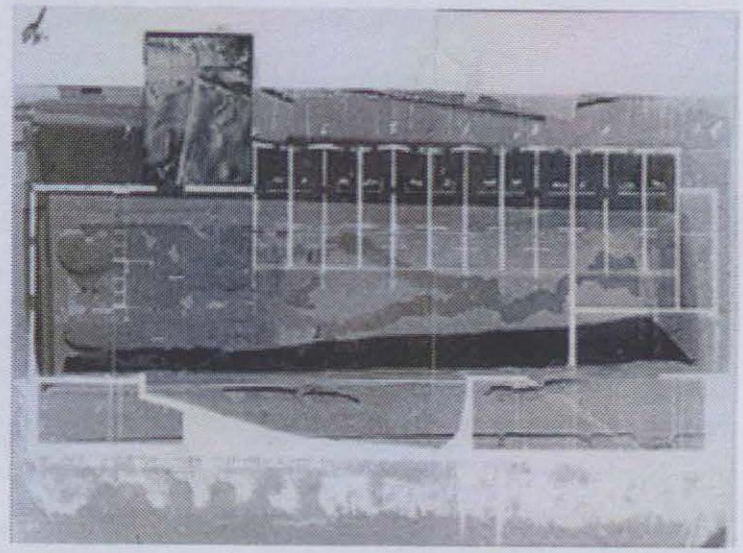
section 1



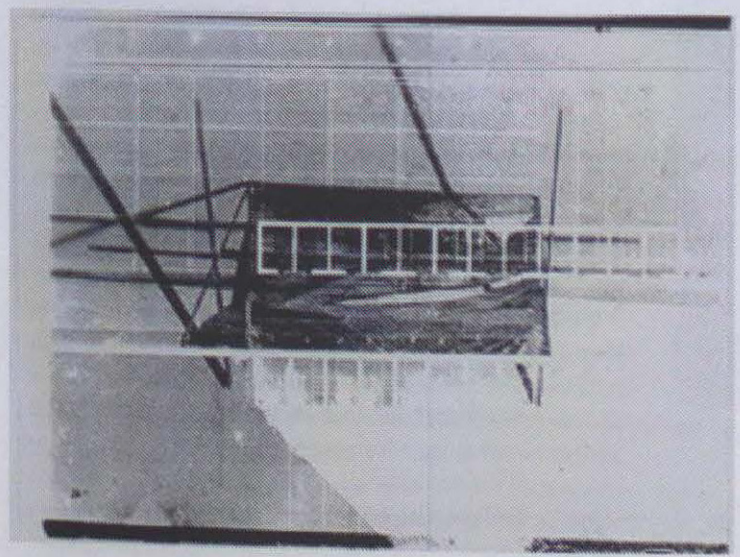
plan 3 and 4



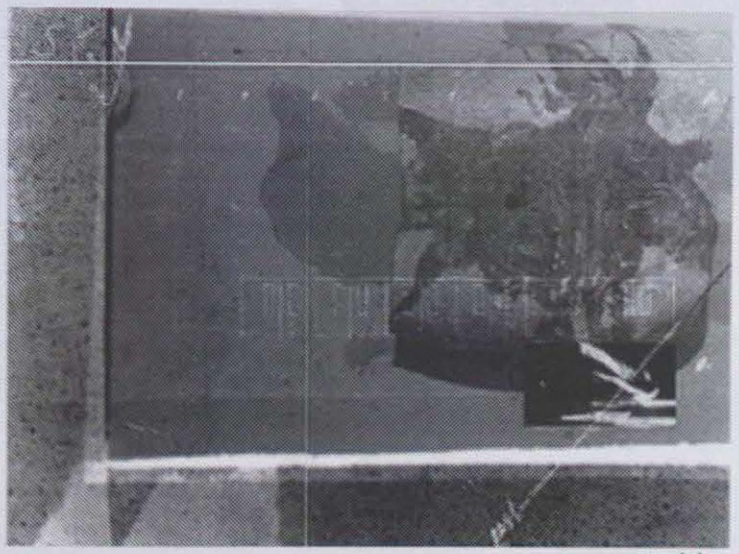
plan 5



section 4



plan 8



roof plan

Un témoignage de pierre

Timor Benichou

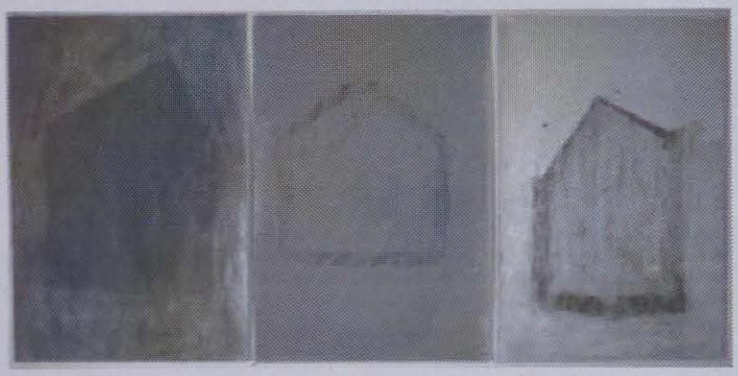


Fig. 1. Sans titre (1993)

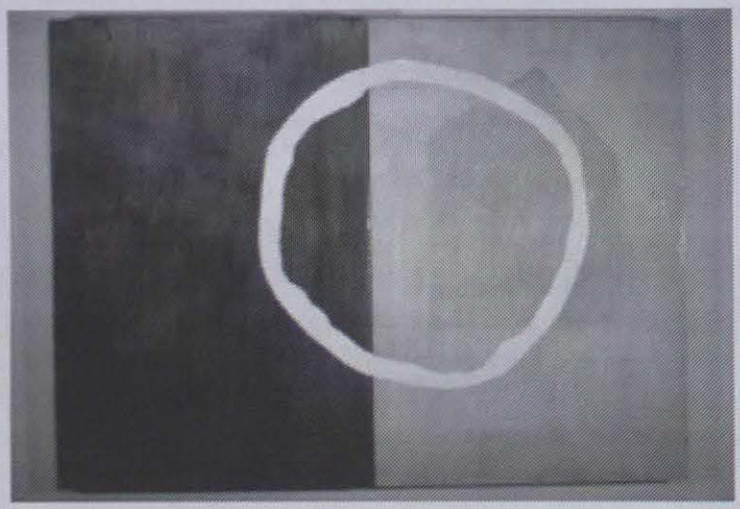


Fig. 2. Espace réel (1993)

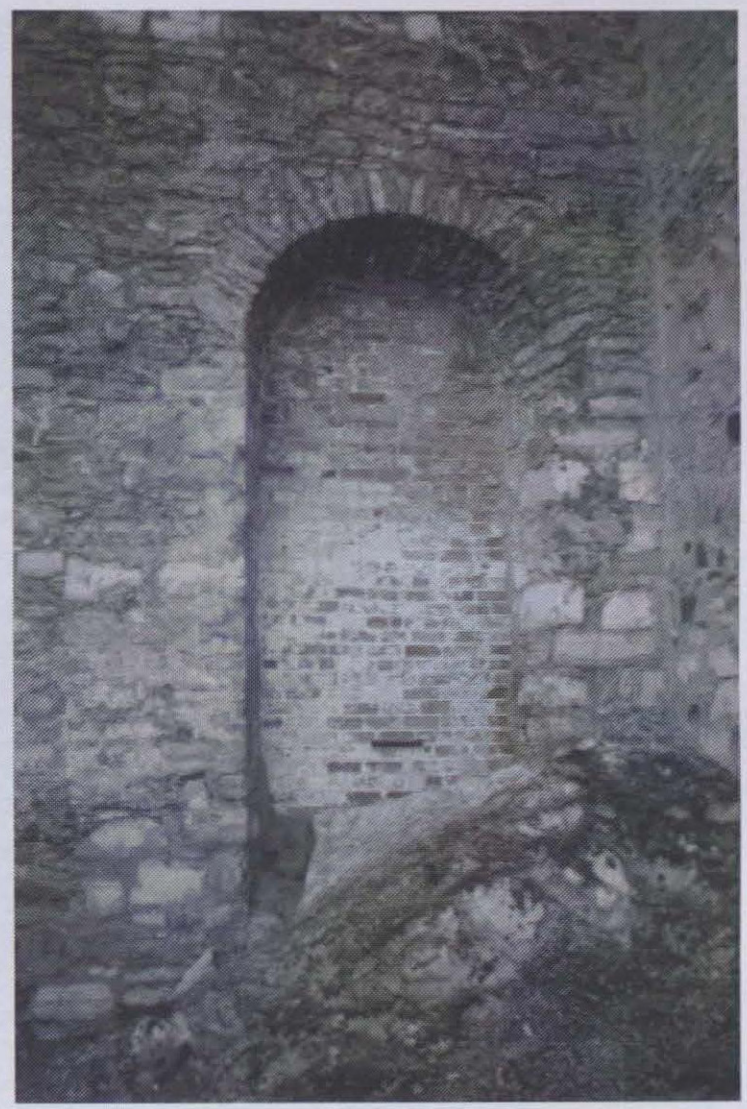
Supprimé en partie, en raison de la percée d'une nouvelle rue, le couvent des Soeurs grises est l'un des rares bâtiments anciens dont les vestiges se dressent encore au coeur du Vieux-Montréal. La prolongation de la place d'Youville et de la Pointe-à-Callières entraîna la destruction de la chapelle de l'ancient couvent des Soeurs Grises, dont le devant donne sur la rue Normant, au sud de la place d'Youville. La partie centrale du couvent date de la seconde moitié du XVIIe siècle et fut réalisée par les Frères Charron, membres d'ordres religieux voués aux vieillards et aux indigents. Madame d'Youville acheta le couvent en 1741 pour y loger sa congrégation des Soeurs de la Charité et en fit par la suite la première maison des Soeurs Grises. Cette maison demeure un des plus anciens exemples de l'architecture de l'ancien régime français à avoir survécu. Henri Venne, jeune artiste québécois, complétant actuellement une Maîtrise d'Art Visuel à l'Université Concordia, s'est intéressé de plus près à cet héritage de pierre et nous offre une série d'oeuvres entourant cette architecture riche en traditions.

En mariant la photographie et la peinture acrylique, Venne analyse depuis quelques années les mécanismes de la mémoire: la réalité se dissipe sous les multiples couches tantôt épaisses, tantôt lisses, d'une peinture aux couleurs de terre. La résurgence s'engourdit et l'évènement s'atténue jusqu'à devenir une évocation. C'est alors que le souvenir se transforme: d'abord constitué du vécu personnel, il évolue vers une abstraction à travers laquelle le spectateur peut se projeter: l'expérience se fait ainsi collective.

Au cours des années 1993-1994, Venne effectue une série d'oeuvres pour la plupart diptyques ou triptyques où il analyse le cheminement et les effets du temps sur les vestiges de la maison des Soeurs Grises. S'appuyant sur l'icône de cette bâtisse, il en démonte la forme architecturale, la décortique et la simplifie à l'extrême pour en comprendre le processus temporel. Il cherche ainsi à attester picturalement de l'action des siècles au moyen d'une observation linéaire de ses toiles, d'une narration exprimée de la gauche vers la droite. Ses deux premières toiles de la série " Sans Titre" de 1993 (fig. 1) se déchiffrent comme des triptyques dont chacun des éléments a pour valeur un des stades arrêtés du mécanisme d'évanescence du souvenir. La forme d'abord parfaitement définie se perd progressivement sous l'épaisseur de plus en plus opaque des couches

d'acrylique au chromatisme tellurique. Venne joue aussi avec la notion d'un contenu et d'un contenant. Les murs de la maison s'étendent et s'imposent. Désignés par des traits volontairement appuyés et insistants, ils rappelent un mode de construction vieux de deux cent ans. Henri Venne ne s'est bien sûr pas ému par hasard face à cette simple architecture. S'il la convoite et la pictographie, c'est qu'il est charmé par l'histoire architecturale et culturelle qu'elle nous conte. Son toit à double pignon est le garant d'une habitude constructive supprimée au XIXe siècle pour laisser place aux maisons en brique d'un ou deux étages surmontées d'une toiture plate. La construction en pierre des champs de l'ancien régime, facteur éminent de la beauté de cette bâtisse, est remplacée entre les années 1780 à 1830 par de bonnes pierres de taille rigoureusement symétriques. Cette architecture revêt donc l'image d'une tradition perdue, remplacée, détruite, que l'artiste cherche à conserver, à fixer dans le temps et l'espace au cours d'une étreinte suprême, picturale et bi-dimensionnelle. Nostalgique face au passé, méditatif face à l'authenticité d'un long vécu, il la géométrise pour en extraire l'essence première. Il module un intérieur et un extérieur, accentuant ainsi l'idée d'une mémoire compactée au sein d'un espace précisément délimité, comme pour la saisir et mieux la contrôler.

Henri Venne s'émeut devant une forme. Il la décline pour en atteindre l'état primitif. La réduisant à sa plus simple expression, il atteint ainsi le minimalisme le plus certain. Ses oeuvres "espace réel" (1993; fig. 2) et "je passe par deux fois devant la maison" (1994; fig. 3) offrent ici encore une lecture linéaire. Par la même utilisation du procédé de recouvrement de l'image sous des couches de plus en plus épaisses d' acrylique, l'artiste altère la réalité jusqu'à l'anéantir entièrement. L'icône se transforme, se simplifie et passe du rectangle au cercle signifiant l'intemporalité. La maison et son image se figent dès lors au sein d'un moment arrêté, pour enfin ne plus subir l'altération d'un temps détériorant. L'artiste évolue à travers l'ambiguité d'une géométrie représentée (l'espace architectural de la maison) et d'une géométrie présente (l'espace bi-dimensionnel d'une architecture en représentation). La réalité n'est plus la maison elle-même avec sa tri-dimensionnalité, sa perspective et son occupation d'un espace urbain, mais la photographie de celle-ci. C'est cette réalité représentée qui va être transformée et modifiée jusqu'à n'être plus qu'évocation. La toile "passé



Les vestiges de la maison des Soeurs Grises.

composé" (1994; fig. 4), par exemple, est un diptyque composé d'une photographie fragmentée en six rectangles strictement égaux et d'une toile réalisée à partir d'une succession de couches d'acrylique noire recouvrant l'ensemble de la surface. Venne décompose ici le processus de la mémoire. L'icône de la maison des Soeurs Grises se désintègre en une abstraction où l'évènement disparaît. Le souvenir se fait évanescent, fugitif. Les détails s'évaporent et l'ossature s'évanouit sous les couches successives du "temps acrylique." La lecture linéaire de l'oeuvre de gauche à droite, comme celle d'un texte écrit, nous conduit à l'abstraction figurée par la noirceur de jais d'une surface pleine. L'artiste nous inspire ainsi la méditation face à la non-figuration d'un souvenir enfoui dans les méandres d'un temps annihilant. La nostalgie d'un avant disparu s'atténue, faisant place au respect et à l'admiration d'un patrimoine évoqué.

La maison est présentée comme la mémoire d'un passé, la survivante d'une culture et d'une tradition perdue. Venne se fait ici le témoin de notre héritage, de notre passé architectural qu'il porte en culte. Nostalgique d'un savoir de pierre, d'un procédé de construction artisanal et d'une beauté pierreuse simple mais authentique, il nous plonge à travers l'abstraction grandissante de ses oeuvres (exemple du tableau entièrement noir de "l'espace réel") dans un état méditatif, respectueux face à l'authenticité des lieux, au vécu du bâtiment. Cette émotion causée par le temps qui passe et qui terni l'éclat évoque la période romantique du XVIIIe siècle où l'on s'adonnait volontiers aux louanges et à la vénération d'un passé si précieux et d'un temps qui envahit si noblement les lieux.

Venne est fasciné par la temporalité et par l'évanescence du souvenir. Il se penche sur la maison des Soeurs Grises comme un chirurgien qui examinerait la moindre partie du corps, la moindre blessure d'un malade mourant. Le choix des couleurs de terre vient rappeler cette notion de passé, cette perte d'éclat mais procure toutefois cette impression de chaleur sécurisante, d'intimité partagée qui rend l'icône si agréable au regard.

Une rénovation récente de la maison des Soeurs Grises apporte à cette série d'oeuvres son importance et sa signification puisque la brique rouge, la pierre à l'appareillage irrégulier, la poussière de terre enfouie dans les craquelures ainsi que les lézardes parsemées ici et là font désormais place à la tristesse d'un recouvrement de plâtre hasardeux, grisâtre et terne. L'authenticité et le charme du bâtiment sont à présent sacrifiés à une rénovation hâtive et irrespectueuse, transformant une bâtisse marquée par un temps historique en un simple amas de pierres.

Henri Venne se fait donc ici le témoin d'un passé et le conservateur d'un patrimoine affecté. Il s'approprie une mémoire architecturale et tente de retracer son passé jusqu'à en découvrir le premier état foetal et primitif. La géométrie quasi-minimaliste par laquelle il représente cette maison lui donne l'impression qu'il peut la contrôler, la représenter et la figer dans un temps inaltérable. La mémoire comme le souvenir deviennent bidimensionnels. Reniant la perspective, aspect d'un réel codé, il transforme le souvenir réel (la photographie de la maison) en l'évocation, en l'idée floue d'un avant perdu sous les couches de peinture. Venne s'émerveille et s'interroge devant l'évanescence du souvenir. Reniant la perspective, l'artiste impose une planéité statique qui nous plonge dans un état méditatif.

Émotif plutôt que conceptuel, le discours de Venne renvoie en somme à une attitude panthéiste et évoque la tradition classique de la nature et du passé comme oeuvre divine, intouchable et sacrée.

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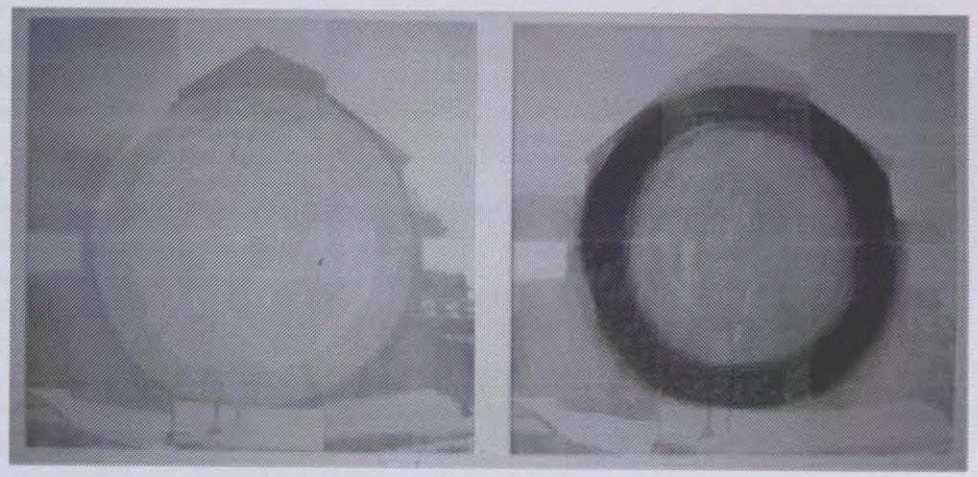


Fig. 3. Je passe par deux fois devant la maison (1994).

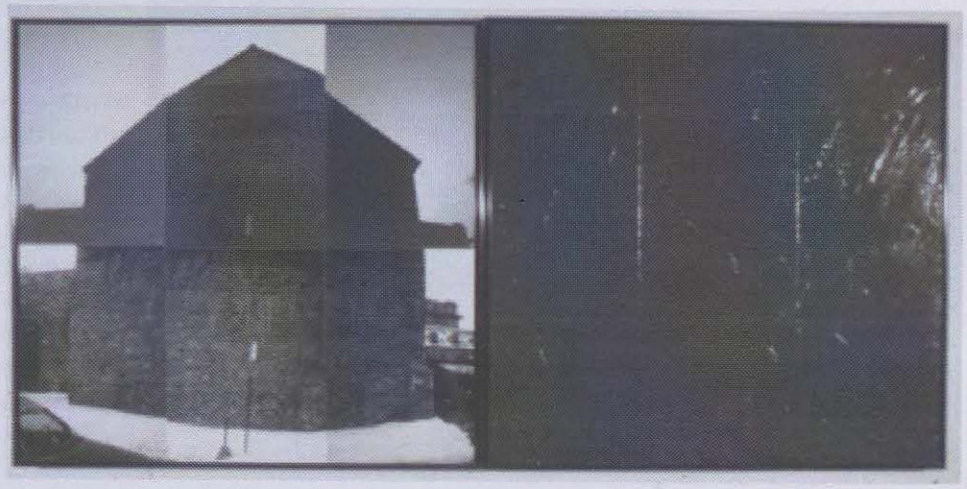
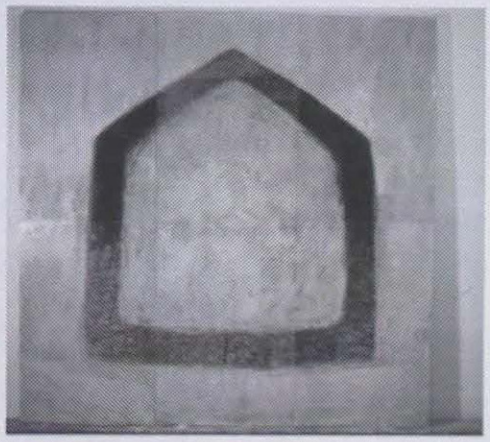


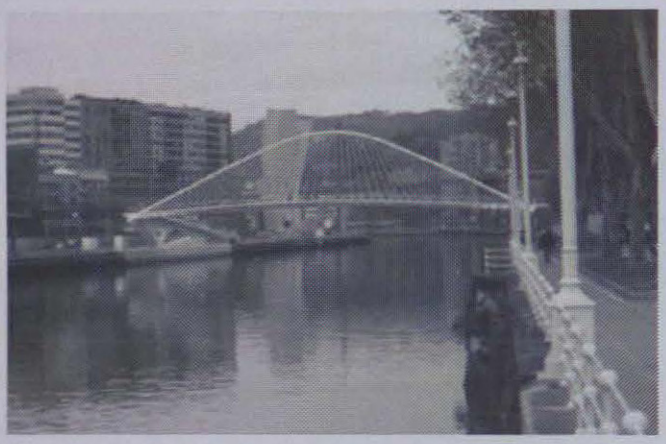
Fig. 4. Passé composé (1994).

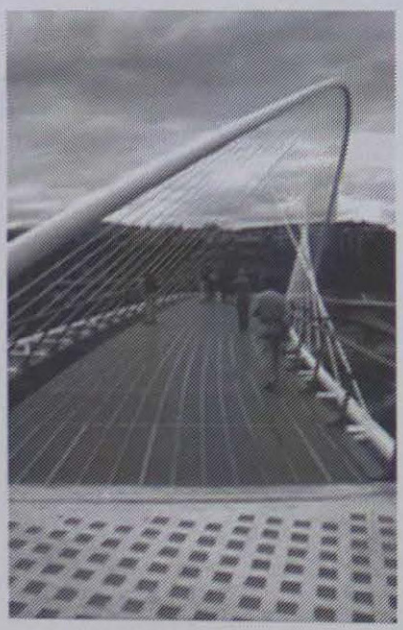


Façade (1993).

Fish Tales (Eight Vignettes and One Museum): Frank Gehry's Guggenheim, Bilbao

Text and Photos: Mohamed Talaat





Scene I

I remeber the cool bright summer day when I first saw a basking shark. It was beached in a rocky cove with its large snout landbound and its tail stretching into the water. Its jaw gaping open, towered above me and the wooden skiff pulled up alongside. I could see rows of fine teeth, not threatening, I thought, a filter feeder, maybe for plankton or krill. Peering into that gaping maw, I could appreciate how Jonah felt.

The water continued to lap gently against the pebbles.

Scene II

The Basques came to Newfoundland as early as the 16th century lured by the abundant fishing and whale hunting on the Grand Banks. There, on the rock overlooking Placentia, close to the fortress, are the graves of those who came and died here, on cold Placentia Bay.

Scene III

I arrived in the darkness, tired from the drive and, after wandering around this city, I stumbled onto a good pension (recommended in the NY Times_the reporter wasn't able to get a room when he came), a real find after the two grubby fluorescent lit "hostels" I had walked away from.

Atlantic weather, I thought to myself, chill with a misty fog settling in. I had been warned about Bilbao by the Mediterraneans of Barcelona: grey, dirty, industrial, provincial, they had said. Still, the brochures and photos seemed to contradict this opinion, but then travel brochures and promotional literature always present a well made-up face.

Scene IV

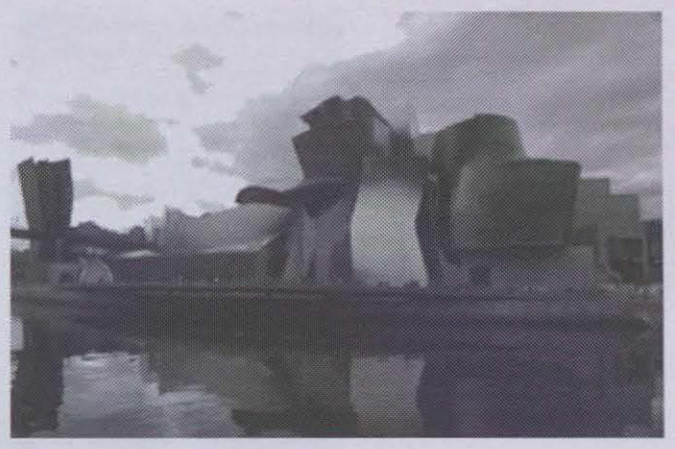
An overcast day and not enough sun for the slides. I walked along the river watching a curving facade follow the bend. Hmm, it negotiates a rising riverbank on one side and the river on the other. Still further, a skeletal white structure swept deftly across the same river. A beauty, a real beauty of a bridge. Calatrava at his best, articulating structure with an understanding of the act of crossing. The glass deck bowed gently downstream as though drawn by the current, reminding me of what it really means to walk on water.

Scene V

I saw it from across the river under a bright but grey sky. The forms shimmered in the light like silver grey scales of a giant fish flopping on the bank after being pulled out of the water, sculpted by Balla or Boccioni. A futurist dream of frozen motion, muscular, sinuous and light, opaque and reflective; a less literal interpretation of Gehry's fetish animal. I moved further along the river trying to accumulate an impression. I felt vaguely pretentious as I remembered something about the Cubists' multiple simultaneous views. Clever man. It is sculpture with clear references to fish, boats, industrial sheds, the grey of the river, the luffing sails of the fishing fleet and the cold swells of the Atlantic. But of course it is peculiarly individual, the honorable descendant of the Gehry line (the Aerospace Museum, the Vitra museum, the Art Gallery on that other river, the Mississipi in Minneapolis and now, this).

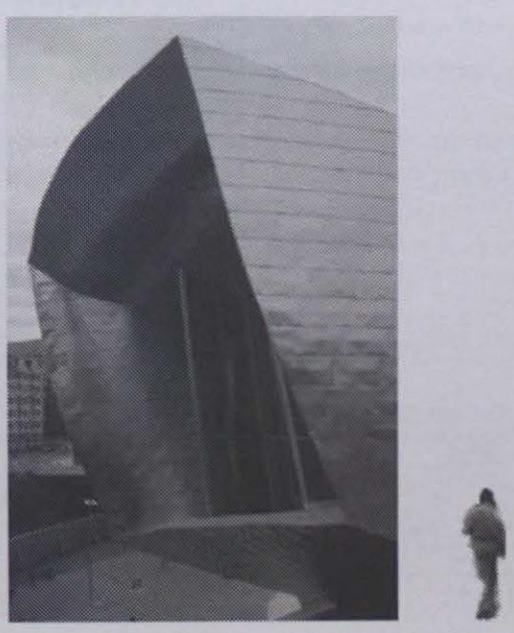
King Juan Carlos and the gallery's director, Thomas Krens, had dubbed it "the greatest building of the twentieth century." Typical hyped superlatives that I thought were more typical of Americans. It always had to be the tallest, the biggest, the longest. I intended to be more circumspect. The twentieth century had provided too many worthy candidates for that title. Le Corbusier was still fresh in my mind and I remembered all too clearly the stupefaction I felt standing in the chapel at La Tourette. There, was brute, raw, spine-tingling power in primal form, a dark rectangular concrete bunker!

I forgave the King and walked on ....



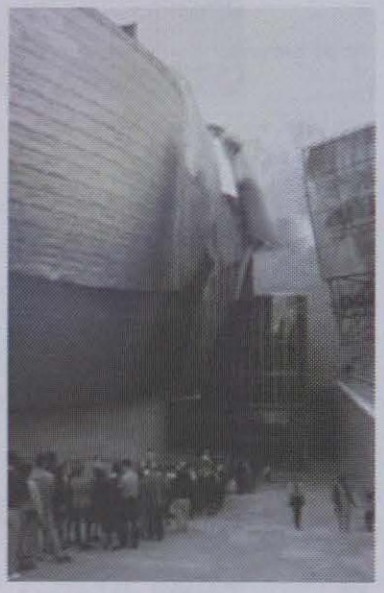
Scene VI

A marginal plot of land and $100 million in good hands. The site defined the essence of the "edge condition": reclaimed industrial/railroad land at water's edge with an imposing but regrettable overpass spanning the river at that point. Superbly sited, the gallery, tucks a limb under the overpass while projecting a TV screen skylight to its edge embracing it with a jutting limestone tree trunk on its other side (or is that the fish's tail?). The rest is an excercise in shimmering fluidity along the water. Horizontality predominates, echoing the flow of the water broken by the upward thrust of the of the more transparent atrium. It is useful to continue the analogy of the fish but in a more corporeal sense, exposing its bony skeleton in parts both inside and outside; spiky skeletal



structures hidden or revealed by breaks in the opaque skin.

I crossed the river on the overpass taking stock of what was around me: green hills nestling the winding river, the city of Bilbao, an eclectic collection of nineteenth century monuments from the railway station to the theatre, set in a matrix of modern and vintage housing, *medium grain*, in the urban planner's lexicon, connected defined public spaces and parkland on the riverside promenade. A comfortably bourgeois city—until this!



On the city side, the museum ends the avenue in a burst of metal.

Guernica is 30 kilometers away.

Still, on the city side there is more regularity: rectilinear masonry forms with a plaza leading down into the vertical fissure that is the atrium. It is a geological fault line extending up and down and through the body of the museum to reveal the river on its other side.The atrium centers the typical cluster building configuration so favoured by Mr. Gehry.

There is a large topiary Scottie dogging the edge of the plaza, courtesy of Jeff Koons.

I approached the entrance. I thought about that basking shark and those daring Basque seamen on that icy ocean. I am not quite sure whether I felt like Jonah on the verge of being swallowed or Alice about to discover Wonderland.

Scene VII

Scale problem!

This building was definitely modelled and rigorously controlled in section. It is monumental! My 6'2" frame was dwarfed. Multiple simultaneous views through and through (those Cubists are back!) coexist with sinuous plaster walls swerving sensually and some "*oh s-o-o* Constructivist" elements.

Alice meets Tatlin.

The "structure" revealed by a freeform cutout skylight suggests the whale being dissected from inside out, its carcass on the grey concrete slab. Serra's commissioned, "Serpentine," three undulating CorTen plates under the opening competes with the overly large shed/hangar it sits in. The only relief in sight is the Robert Morris Labyrinth: tight, tight, dark enclosing space of a maze, barely shoulder width.

There is a consistent weakness. Spaces are overly large for what they contain and the container often competes with or forces the work into unhappy contortions. It is, in a sense, a problem that is

analagous to the curatorial challenge of Wright's spiral in New York. The collection is an embarassment of riches; a well hung semi-lunar gallery full of Anselm Kiefer is only a fragment of this treasure.

But Alice is increasingly conscious of a funhouse atmosphere creeping up. The distorting mirrors and perceptual tricks of Bruce Nauman's installations only add to this feeling. Has Mr. Gehry spent too much time with Mr. Eisner?

It isn't simply a case of complexity or contradiction. There is an obvious playful quality to this building that recalls Vitruvius's third term, *venustas*, beauty or delight, but the effect is stretched thin to the detriment of that other Vitruvian virtue, *accommodation*. This is an exercise in Architecture as Art. The irregularities of form were 'tectonically' resolved by computer. This is how this building differs from something as audacious as the Sydney Opera House or even the nearby Calatrava bridge—more regular forms, perhaps, but with more tectonic rigour—form and material building constraints intertwined more clearly. The Bilbao Guggenheim may be more paradigmatic of the effect of the computer on the production of architecture. Structural rationality (or rationalisation) follows irrationality of form. Is this the prerogative of the "Architect as Artist"—*Artytekton*, so to speak.

I am being too harsh! I did delight in those vertiginous feelings of spatial torsion and the transparency of fissured space, people moving up, across and through in unexpected trajectories across space with light falling through cracks and openings. There are fine well-scaled spaces, "comfortable" places, the restaurant and coffee bar, filled, of course, with the maestro's bushel basket chairs as well as the book shop and ubiquitous museum boutique, full of things you can find in the other Guggenheim concessions closer to home.

Scene VIII

Sitting outside on the ramp leading to the plaza, now in sun. The green dog was still there. I scratched my head ....

Jonah had been spit out by the whale, but, alas, poor Alice was still in there.

The Architectural Review. December 1997. Two articles including photos, architectural drawings and opinions. Especially for the piece by Annette LeCuyer on the relation of the computer to building.
Art and Architecture as One by Ada Louise Huxtable in *The Wall Street Journal's* European edition on October 18th, 1997.
The Politics of Building by Paul Goldberger in *the New Yorker*. Interesting for its take on Basque politics and the building commission.
Guggenheim Museum Bilbao 1997. A museum publication, source of the sectional comparison between Wright's and Gehry's buildings.

Suggested Accommodation:
Iturriena Ostatua, Santa Maria Kalea 14, Bilbao 48005.
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Clean, cheerful, well appointed rooms with new bathrooms. Breakfast supplementary.
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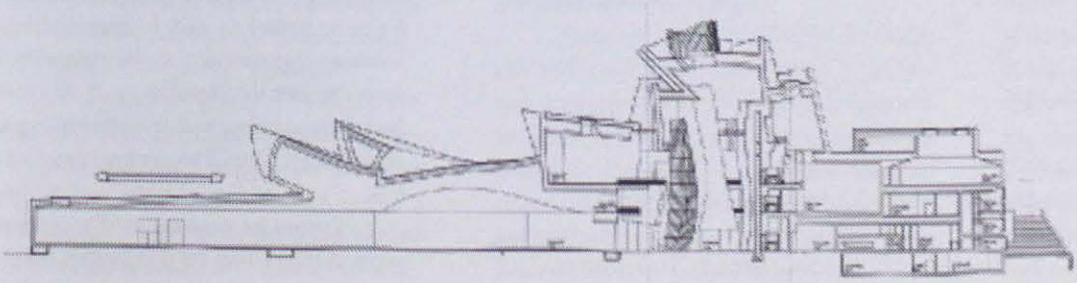
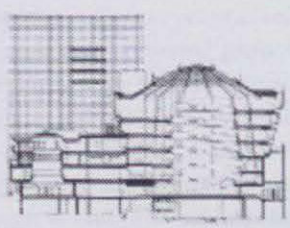
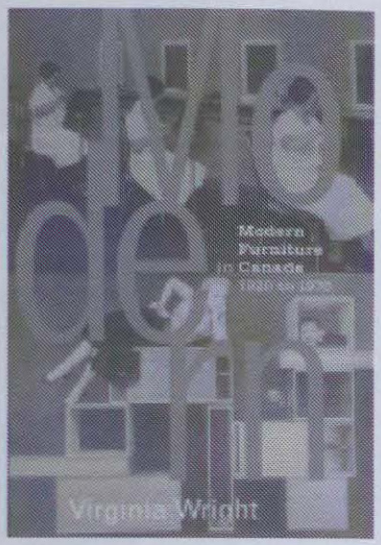
Mohamed Talaat, B.Arch. 1995 McGill (by default), is an architectural groupie living in Montreal where he practices medicine.





Book Reviews



Virginia Wright
Modern Furniture in Canada, 1920-1970
Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997
reviewed by Deborah Miller

This is a brave book. Like the architects of modernism who, wanting to bravely go where no one had gone before, set out to explore "space" as the final frontier, this book sets out to examine unexplored dimensions in the history of Canadian design. The territory Wright examines is shadowy rather than star-studded, however, daunting not for its vastness and evident richness, but for its purported meagerness and insignificance. All but ignored, the history of modern furniture design in Canada has drawn virtually no book-length, scholarly attention to date. It has also, as Wright points out, been neglected by galleries, museums and exhibition centers, none of which have developed a mandate to collect, conserve, publish and exhibit Canadian furniture of the 20th century. It is this surprising neglect, and implicit lack, that Wright sets out to both explain and redress. She hopes to provoke.a shift in appreciation and awareness, as well as in curatorial policy. The book's targets are, therefore, many and varied: historians, curators and government agencies are included, as well as designers and educators.

Organized chronologically, the book's seven chapters trace the development of mod-

ern furniture in Canada from its early appearance in the 1920s to its demise in the 1970s. Issues pertaining to the development of a professional design industry, design education and design advocacy are the focus, with the emphasis shifting, as the book progresses, from the emergence of a new type of design practitioner to the rise and demise of government support and public advocacy. Although all types of furnishings are addressed, domestic designs are favored, particularly in the many reproductions (mostly black and white) that accompany the text.

This emphasis on home furnishing stems in part from Wright's use of popular home decorating magazines, such as *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, as a key source. Wright argues that these magazines, along with national department store chains such as Eaton's and Simpson's, were the sole promoters of modern design in Canada prior to the Second World War. Wright also researched a number of professional and trade journals for the book, including *JRAIC, Canadian Architect, Canadian Art, Industrial Design*, and *Furniture and Furnishings*. Most impressive however, are the photographs and textual documents culled from national, provincial, municipal, university, corporate and private archives across the country, sources that bolster the national scope of the work. Through the resourceful mix of archival, trade catalogue and magazine photographs found in Chapter 1, for example, readers witness tubular metal and bentwood construction infiltrate "modern daily life in Canada," redefiningthe contours of an operating theater in a Vancouver hospital, a Toronto "School of Beauty Culture," a department store lunch counter, a suite at the Royal York Hotel, and Montreal-made Crane bathroom fixtures. The operating theater image, which opens the chapter, nicely summarizes the confident, if somewhat prosaic, debut of modern furnishings in Canada as scientific, sanitary "implements" designed to "perform."

A different perspective, however, one which renders the history of Canadian modernism significantly less "glossy," less consistent and less confident, emerges through Wright's subsequent discussion of the factors that shaped and/or failed to shape the course of furniture design over the next fifty years. "Progressive" visions, seamless efficiency and harmonious relationships may have characterized the new designs, but such attributes failed to inform the developing industry, which faced numerous obstacles such as an uncertain economy, conservative manufacturers, factious professionals jockeying for funding and influence, problematic government support, and little consensus as to the parameters, goals and national dimensions of modern furniture design. In Chapter 1, for example, which covers the 1920s, the promising introduction of streamlined designs is brought to an abrupt end with the stock market crash of 1929, an end, according to Wright, precipitated by the "extreme fragility of the consumer goods market."

During this brief but fruitful period, modern furnishings were the result of experimentation and collaboration between artists, craftspersons and manufacturers—not the work of architects or professional designers—and women were in the vanguard of change. Wright illustrates how, in their roles as sanitary reformers, magazine editors, writers, clients and consumers, women constituted modern furniture's earliest advocates and principal users. Many of the first environments to feature modern furnishings were either "women's" spaces (department stores, beauty parlours, hotels, and domestic kitchens, for example) or were subject to the concerns and demands of women reformers (working in hospitals, clinics and schools). Women surface throughout the book with refreshing frequency. They appear as students in the first professional interior decoration course to be offered in Canada (initiated by the Ontario College of Art in 1930); as the winners of prestigious design scholarships offered to students during the early 1950s; and among the country's award-winning industrial designers of the 50s and 60s.

Architects, meanwhile, surface belatedly and with considerably less aplomb. In the second chapter, which addresses the interwar years and ties the gradual professionalization of interior decoration and furniture design to curriculum changes at art schools, the establishment of craft-based schools (such as Montreal's Ecole du Meuble), and the formation of professional societies, Wright charges that Canada still had no authoritative figures arguing for a new theoretical framework for design, and no propagandists for industrial design and decorative arts beyond department stores and popular magazines. She notes that the profoundly conservative *JRAIC* neither reported on projects by the European avant-garde nor published photos of interior architecture or furniture. When the Canadian architectural profession finally entered the field of modern furniture design after the Second World War, its official position, dismissive of other design professionals, was a portent of factiousness and contempt, rather than productive collaboration.

Chapters 3 and 4, which focus on the fields of crafts and architecture respectively, elaborate on this growing tension. According to Wright, these oppositions, which persisted throughout the post-war years, were artificially created, professionally motivated and a handicap to the development of Canada's fledgling design industry. A growing and diverse group of trained practitioners was nonetheless now available "to meet the demands of new technologies and markets," and architects, if lacking in diplomacy, had design savvy. Wright credits Canadian architects with a number of innovative and exemplary, if sometimes illfated, modern furniture designs. A. J. Donahue and D. Simpson's 1946 prototype for the world's first molded-plastic chair, for instance, was denied a patent and never put into production. The design was three years in advance of Eames's two-piece prototype for MOMA, and 16 years ahead of the first mass-produced one-piece plastic chair designed by Marco Zanuso and Richard Sapper in 1961.

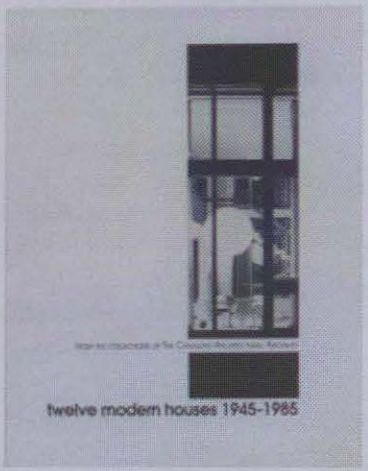
Wright's look at the role of the Canadian government, and at Donald Buchanan and the National Industrial Design Committee in particular, threads its way through the latter half of the book and culminates in Chapter 5, which examines the efficacy of committees, competitions and commissions in improving, promoting and preserving modern furniture design. Critical of Buchanan's single-minded commitment to large-scale industrial production, his continued promotion of architects as the best industrial designers and planners, and his

"reductive and dogmatic" approach to modern design, Wright finds many of his, and similar initiatives, either wanting, misguided, or, by the late 1940s, obsolete.

The remaining chapters examine the 1960s and 70s. Wright looks at the transfer of political responsibility for design from culture to commerce; the ensuing shift in financial support from public education and promotion to new industries such as aerospace (ever critical of architects, Wright blames the lapse of political will on Ottawa's politicians, bureaucrats and "their architect-advisors"); the deceptive flourish of design activity and media attention prompted by Expo '67, and the subsequent demise of modern furniture design in Canada.

In short, Wright manages to bring to light the unsung and often superior efforts of countless Canadian designers, architects, exhibition organizers and advocates. The industry's beleaguered past proves rich terrain after all, and Wright argues convincingly for the need to preserve this aspect of Canada's design heritage. However, readers familiar with Wright's earlier exhibition catalogue on modern furniture design may feel in some ways, like the title of the earlier work, "seduced and abandoned." Rather dry and plodding, the book-length treatment lacks the wit and forceful thrust that distinguished the earlier piece. And while the over 200 images are thoughtfully selected, the book would have benefited from the inclusion of some working drawings and templates illustrating the rendering styles, construction techniques and production methods characteristic of, or particular to, modern industrial designers. That said, however, the book stands as a singular and important contribution to the history of Canadian design, and hopefully, as a spur to researchers and curators across the country.

Deborah Miller is a graduate student in the Domestic Environments section of the McGill School of Architecture's Housing program, and author of the CAC's Sigrun Bülow-Hübe: A Guide to the Archive, *ed. Irena Murray (Montreal: McGill Press, forthcoming). [The Canadian Architecture Collection of Blackader-Lauterman Library, McGill University, recently acquired the archive of Sigrun Bülow-Hübe, one of Canada's leading industrial designers. The catalogue to the archive, which features over 3600 working drawings, templates, photographs and files, is scheduled for release in early December of 1997—ed.]*



Graham Livesey, Michael McMordie and Geoffrey Simmins,
Twelve Modern Houses 1945-1985
Calgary: Aris Press and University of Calgary Press, 1995.
reviewed by Gavin Affleck

Published on the occasion of an exhibition mounted at the Nickle Arts Museum in Calgary in 1995, this catalogue is a skillfully executed contribution to architectural history. Drawing on material in the Canadian Architectural Archives of the University of Calgary, *Twelve Modern Houses* brings together a dozen private residences designed by the most notable of Canada's post-war architects.

This is a book that takes pleasure in revisiting the ideas of a youthful phase of Modernism in an equally youthful country. As is not uncommon in eras of creativity and experiment, in that phase a shared ideal was expressed in a wide variety of approaches. Houses as formally disparate as Ron Thom's free-form Fraser Residence, John B. Parkin's austere Crashley Residence, and the Patkaus's metaphorical Pyrch Residence come together in this publication as a coherent effort to espouse Modernist ideals. As the authors point out, however, "most Canadian architects were pragmatic and informal with respect to Modernist theory" (page 2).

Twelve Modern Houses is marked by an abiding faith in the convergence of the university, the professions and the contemporary state that is refreshing for an academic publication. As a central theme, the desire to create, promote, and defend a national Canadian architecture is itself an intriguing idea. The book's double time frame (written in the 90s, referring principally to the 50s, 60s and 70s) puts this idea of cultural nationalism in unique perspective. As British critic Peter Buchanan has convincingly argued, Modern architecture in Canada was among the best in the world. The work was honest, uncomplicated,and energetic, and Canadian architects were clearly more preoccupied with creative concerns than with justifying their work. The effort by the authors of *Twelve Modern Houses* to situate Canadian Modernism in a larger international context is defensible as an historical exercise, but one cannot help but feel that a creeping Canadian sense of inferiority has overtaken work that in its time was distinguished by a singular and almost niave power.

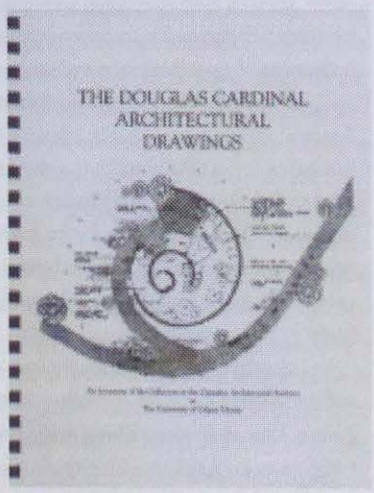
This desire to pinpoint the Canadian version of an international movement is the essential motivation of *Twelve Modern Houses*. To this end, the authors make a number of perceptive comments about how Canadian character has been expressed in architectural form: John B. Parkin's reticence, Arthur Erickson's ambiguity, Douglas Cardinal's idiosyncracy. Finally, however, the proof is in the pudding: the ultimate confirmation of national identity is the literary style of the text itself. Typical of the unassertively Canadian writing of *Twelve Modern Houses* is this passage from the introduction: "For us, the lack of dogmatism in the Modernist impulses testifies to a healthy independence that may in part constitute the elusive Canadian architectural character." (page 11). And the claims of Canadian pragmatism on the part of the twelve architects are given further weight by the discussion in the introduction of such practical concerns as the use-

fulness of an architectural archive and whether or not architect-designed homes are luxury items.

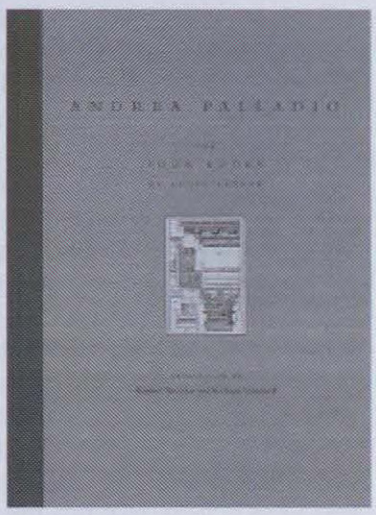
This book is proof that culture, if not a manufactured product, is at least a constructed reality. That cultural history is being created in Calgary (please bear with the northeastern arrogance of the reviewer) is an encouraging sign. *Twelve Modern Houses* allows that the dictum "history is the work of individuals" holds true as long as one considers the interpreters rather than the perpetrators. The individual interpreter in this case is Michael McMordie, who almost singlehandedly set up the Canadian Architectural Archives at the University of Calgary in the 1970s. With great foresight, McMordie set about collecting the drawings and papers of projects while they were being executed, long before they had archival value. Today, although one of the least known of Canada's architectural collections, the C.A.A. is a virtual treasure trove of source material on twentieth-century Canadian architecture.

If there is a disappointing note to this publication for readers of *The Fifth Column*, it is Graham Livesey's inabilty to retrieve the narrative power and Shopenhaueresque gloom of his precocious diatribe, "The Mediocrity Cult" (*TFC* 3.3/4, [1983]: 3). He has had an education (and a life) since then, and architecture is, after all, a question of experience.

Gavin Affleck is a partner in the Montreal-based firm Affleck + de la Riva Architectes.



Note: The Canadian Architectural Archives has also sent us Kathy, E. Zimon, ed., *The Douglas Cardinal Architectural Drawings: An Inventory of the Collection at the Canadian Architectural Archives at the University of Calgary Library* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1997). Compiled by Linda M. Fraser, the book lists over 12,000 drawings covering 135 projects from Cardinal's student days at the University of Texas in 1962 to the Museum of Civilaztion project finished in 1989. It includes a brief introduction to Cardinal's work by Rhodri Windsor Liscombe—ed.



Andrea Palladio.
The Four Books on Architecture.
Trans. Robert Tavernor and Richard Schofield.
Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997.
reviewed by David Theodore

The deluge of new topics in architectural history has not reduced the attention paid to traditional fine art subjects like Palladio and Palladianism. The Palladio machine is still going full steam. His buildings in northern Italy continue to be studied from every possible angle, placed in connection with art history, architectural history, and studies of social history, colonialism and geography. This enduring interest in Palladio, however, is not only the product of his buildings, but also a sign of the influence of his books. Palladianism is studied as often as Palladio; and Jefferson,for example, who never saw a Palladio building, certainly saw Palladio's book, the famous *Four Books on Architecture.*

This new translation is an important addition to the growing number of easy-to-obtain canonical documents of the history of architectural theory. It is one of a number of well-known Renaissance texts recently published both in facsimile (such as editions of Barbaro's treatise on perspective and his translation and commentary on Vitruvius [1567 edition; ed. M. Tafuri and M. Morresi, (Milan, 1987)]), and new English translations (including translations of Alberti's *On the Art of Building in Ten Books* by J. Ryckwert, N. Leach and R. Tavernor (Cambridge, Mass., 1988) and Serlio's *Tutte le opere, libri I-V* (V. Hart and P. Hicks [New Haven, 1996]).

Typically these editions are annotated, and include scholarly introductions and bibliographies. Together they form a set of "primary" sources, tools for students in the growing number of academic programs promoting an historical understanding of architectural theory. The re-publication and translation of theoretical texts is geared towards theory specialists, and not towards practitioners. This movement even has its own narrowly-focussed reference text: the English translation of Hanno-Walter Kruft's *A History of Architectural Theory from Vitruvius to the Present* (New York, 1994).

Palladio wrote several books. Two of these had military subjects and are relatively little-studied (an illustrated commentary on Caesar from 1575 and an unpublished commentary on Polybius). Three others had buildings as their subject and were immediate and long lasting popular successes: a book on the antiquities of Rome (unillustrated, 1554); one on the churches of Rome (also unillustrated, 1554, and first translated into English only recently by Eunice D. Howe); and the famous *Four Books* of 1570. It is significant that all three books were popular for hundreds of years. Too often scholars imply that it is really Palladio's buildings, of which the *Four Books* are only a notation, however ideal, that made his books so popu-

lar; or, concommitantly, that only the sharp graphics of the *Four Books*, and not its text, allowed for widespread interest in and influence of Palladio beyond Italy. But clearly Palladio had a knack for writing books. This knack is an important part of his continuing popularity. Palladio's treatise has had success as a Renaissance bestseller. This makes it different from Vitruvius's success as the first treatise, Alberti's as the "best" treatise, or Serlio's as a pattern book (even Palladio borrowed ideas from it).

I quattro libri has always been well-circulated. Even today copies of the 1570 editions are easy to obtain (in facsimile, of course: M. Biraghi [Pordenone, 1992] and E. Forssman [New York, 1979], and there is a recent critical edition ed. L.Magagnato and P. Marini [Milan, 1980]). Within ten years of publication Palladio's treatise was translated into Latin. English translations appeared only much later, in the mid seventeenth-century. Indeed, this tardiness is one reason for the persistent idea that the text was not essential to the promulgation of Palladian ideas. In recent years, the most widely available English version was the 1965 New York Dover facsimile edition of Isaac Ware's 1738 edition.

For this new version the editors provide an unobtrusive, useful apparatus: notes, glossary and bibliography at the back, as well as four diagrams illustrating Palladio's architectural terms for the parts of the orders (bases, capitals and entablatures) at the front. All of these technical terms are left in Italian in the text and defined in the glossary, obviating a lot of squabbling over the sense of the translation. The original woodcuts from the 1570 edition are used—Palladio's careful woodcuts which for the first time consistently presented buildings in plan, section and elevation. (Despite the interest in perspective in the Rennaisance, Palladio seems never to have drawn in perspective, not even a sketch.) The lay-out follows as closely as possible Palladio's placement of text and images. In this way the editors have managed to duplicate his combination of simple, concise commentary with precise, clear, scaled drawings.

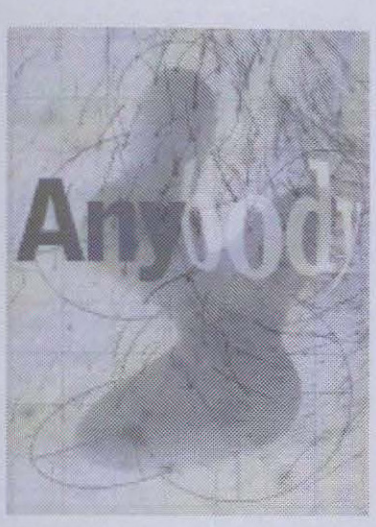
The introduction is based on Tavernor's 1991 *Palladio and Palladianism*, a short handbook updating but still heavily based on James Ackerman's *Palladio* and Rudolf Wittkower's classic *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism*. The bibliography on Palladio is very large, so these brief, coherent summaries are a good beginning for those new to the subject. The bibliography here is excellent (one could supplement it with that in Bruce Boucher's 1994 book, which has good colour photographs, too).

In short, this is a useful, readable and timely translation. It will probably become the standard English translation, relegating the Isaac Ware version to its proper place in the history of Palladianism. That is, Ware's translation will only be read to provide clues as to how Palladio was understood 250 years ago, rather than used by students to understand Palladio today.

And how do we understand Palladio today? The reception of *I quattro libri* has always been a useful guide to the architectural concerns of an era, our own included. Why is Palladio still important, and to whom? Does the treatise contain any important lessons for modern builders as well as historians? The typologies that Palladio was concerned with are rare commissions today. And we are not inclined to train architects to reconcile present-day problems with a stable social and cosmological order going back to antiquity. Palladio's authority, his canonicity, presents a problem for us in a world where Palladianism is both outmoded as a style and suspect as a symbolism—who but nostalgic reactionaries build today with the "divine" orders? Who still reads Palladio to learn how to build?

Tavernor's introduction stresses Palladio as a practical architect, that is, as a craftsman and a builder. He argues that Palladio's book was addressed more to practicing designers than to patrons and humanist scholars. Palladio may have felt that Alberti, Vitruvius and perhaps Barbaro had adequately covered the intellectual and theoretical organization of architecture. But we do not read Palladio's treatise for an easy-to-follow set of rules, graphic or textual, for making architecture. Today's Palladio is a writer, not a craftsman; and he is read by theorists, not builders. Understanding Palladio now means not just studying buildings or copying details, but interpreting and understanding Palladio's cultural and theoretical world: it means reading his writing.

David Theodore is a student in the History and Theory Masters Program at McGill.



Cynthia C. Davidson, ed.
Anybody.
Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997.
reviewed by Michael Carroll

Anybody comes from some where, namely a nonprofit corporation, Anyone, which can be found in New York at 41 West 25th Street on the 11th floor. Drop by. Anybody can. Anyone Corporation's mandate is to investigate the condition of architecture at the end of the millennium. Its aim is to challenge existing disciplinary boundaries and introduce seemingly non-architectural questions into architecture.

The publication *Anybody* documents the Anybody conference, held in June, 1996 in Buenos Aires. It was the sixth in a series of annual, international, cross-disciplinary conferences organized by Anyone. The Latin American location added a definite political twist to an already repressed and distracted contemporary body.

Anybody remains buoyant in a sea of its indeterminacy because *everybody* was at Anybody—lots of floaters along with the heavyweights as anchors and lifeguards. Anybody

was amoeboid, amorphous, unstable, morphing. But then imagine a Vitruvian male body tempered by psychoanalysis, political domination, prosthetic devices, feminism, and a tinge of queer culture.

Like the Tupac Amaru, Anybody's multidisciplinary congregation of examiners of the architectural body tended to pull that body apart. In this instance, however, dismemberment is not an act of execution but a dissection that will not allow us to reassemble the architectural body as we have known it.

The book's twenty-six articles cover a large field for anybody's recreation. The contorted body of Anybody is considered as five permutations of itself: The Idealized Body, The Body Politic, The Virtual Body, The Formless Body and The Architectural Body. This "anybody" is a moving target, and the goal of the game Is to escape any situation of capture or climax. Still the game does have some highpoints. Of particular interest is the Latin American factor found in "City and Fiesta: The Carnival of Salvador and the Nago City," and the demise of public space through the techniques of hyper-security in the private realm documented in Jean Francos's "From Public Space to Fortified Enclave." Also interesting is a certain humour that can be detected in Armando Silvas' article "Imaginary North/South" where he compares and contrasts the disposal of excrement and mooning in Irvine, California and Bogota, Columbia.

Especially insightful is Brian Massumi's analysis of a soccer field as a useful tool for framing the possibility for reconciliation that undecidability proposes. Massumi describes a game with no goalposts as an analogy to the possibility of an enfolding, non-dialectical position in a field without polarization. He thus manages in his fourteen pages to define the field of Anybody's play. This definition is supplemented by editor Cynthia C. Davidson's observations on the Boca Juniors soccer match that took place the day after the conference. She recalls the fervour of the crowd as two goals were scored with minutes left in what was until then a scoreless game. This demonstrated to her that the real game had no effect without its goals. We are only left to wonder if she was right.

The remaining articles try to define an architectural body that could hold a formless, virtual body. Elizabeth Diller's conceptually tight and witty interactive installation "Indigestion" combines strategies of installation art, interactive games and film noir. The dining table interface and its menu offer endless streams of courses and characters that propel the subsequent narrative in different directions. Insight is the goal, indigestion the desired result. It seems that art and especially architecture can cause heartburn, leading to the question "Where does one go for relief?"

Various architectures are considered as answers. In "From Body to Blob" Greg Lynn contemplates two types of design and drawing techniques that relate directly to a creatively mutable paradigm of the body: skeletons and blobs (isomorphic polysurfaces). The key to his position is that blobs are singular and continuous while multiple and discontinuous. Blob architecture seems to be a curious by-product of morphing software and wire frame diagrams, perfect for the bloated bodies of a late capitalistic culture. This view is supplemented by "The Demiurgomorphic Contour." Here Arata Isozaki and Akira Asada put forth the position that the advent of the prosthesis marks a departure from anthropomorphic form; the dissolution of the contour marks the beginning of an architecture of flux. The result is an architecture of bigness and lightness with the limit of amorphism.

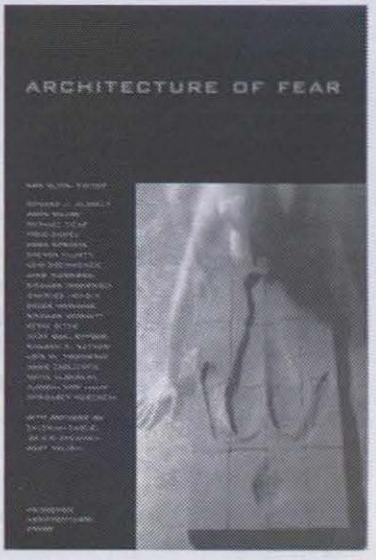
One of the most convincing architectural projects presented at the conference was Alejandro Zaera-Polos's project for Yokohama International Port Terminal. Its amorphous form lends itself to multiple readings in that it is both a building and a landscape. The Interstitial Space of Eisenman in his Zones of Undecidability also puts forth some interesting assertions, most notably that Piranesi in Campo Marzio articulated interstitial space in the smallest voids of his plan by adding additional figures between figures. Eisenman contends that his project for the "Church for the Year 2000 in Rome" is not figure or ground but figure *as* ground. His sketches are liquid crystal diagrams, caught between a static crystalline form and a flowing liquid. This concept is extended to the facade of the church which literally is composed of two liquid crystal screens. But as one participant points out, one never attends mass in a computer diagram.

The best part is saved until the end of *Anybody*, namely, the letters to Anybody, written by several participants of Anybody, just so nobody feels left out. For your benefit, I have devised a composite letter:

> "Dear Anybody:
>
> "I thank you for the shock of Anybody. I am still trying to put together all the pieces of the puzzle. My dissatisfaction concerns the presence of Latin America. We all live in a concrete, embodied reality, so a more suitable place should be found for this kind of intellectual game. What is the point of Any, if Any's point is pointless? Lets talk it over in Rotterdam (1998)."

With all that, all anyone has accumulated are airmiles for an aimless and contented body.

Michael Carroll is completeing his Master's Thesis in the History and Theory Program at the McGill School of Architecture.



Nan Ellin, editor.
Architecture of Fear.
Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997.
reviewed by Ricardo L. Castro

In the mid 1960s architects such as Christopher

Alexander, Charles Moore, Christian Norberg-Schulz, and Aldo Van Eyck, as well as theorists such as art historian Vincent Scully and geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, began to underscore the concept of placethrough their theoretical inquiries and practices. Place, or humanized space, arrived at that moment to enrich the critical discourse on architecture and the environment. The idea of place was in clear opposition to a view, based on the simpler and more abstract concept of space, conceived in Cartesian terms, and held by many of the architects and theoreticians of the modern movement.

Place became, in many schools in North America, the staple for graduate inquires, acquiring an important position as one of the key concepts in design methodology and theory. Analyzed from various philosophical stances, this concept did not escape the critical eye of philosophers and thinkers. Phenomenology, existentialism, semiotics, structuralism and even the more recent deconstruction analyses focused on the notion of place.

The notion of place has recently been examined from another perspective. Under the title *Architecture of Fear*, Nan Ellin, an assistant professor of urban design and planning at the University of Cincinnati, has compiled twenty essays. Contributors to this multi-disciplinary collection include a melting pot of professionals: architects, planners, urban critics/theorists, educators, geographers, writers, artists, photographers, a television producer, a choreographer, a sociologist and a physicist.

The pretext that allows the gathering of such a varied group of essays is simple, direct and udoubtedly alluring: contemporary landscape has been shaped by a preocupation with fear. Not surprisingly, the subtitle of Ellin's introductory essay to the collection is a rephrasing of one of the catchy aphorisms of modern architecture: "Form follows Fear and Viceversa." Ultimately, as the reader may infer from the various essays, the preoccupation with fear manifests itself at many scales and contexts ranging from the domestic, to the urban and ultimately to the cybernetic.

Architecture of Fear consists of four distinct sections. The first called "Fear Manifest," comprises eight works that focus on the various forms in which fear is physically expressed. The second section, entitled "Personal Manifestations/Solutions," includes three personal testimonials dealing with the role of the built environment as a locus of fear as well as a protection from fear. In the third section six essays addresses the issue introduced in the previous section, but this time at the group level, hence its title "Collective Manifestations/Solutions." The final section, "From Suburbia to Cyburbia," includes three essays that discuss the impact of the Cybernetic revolution on the contemporary sense of place.

For the sake of the brevity of this review I will only mention two significant texts of this collection.

Richard Sennet's essay "A Search for a Place in the World," is particularly engaging. It describes the character of a "new" city as a result of the great changes in current social and economic conditions. Sennet maintains that thanks to those changes "place has changed its meaning." The effect is one of weakening the identity of place with significant cultural consequences. In the lucid and engaging style that characterizes his writing, Sennet offers a strategy for a novel way of Place-making.

In his essay "Landscapegoat," Richard Ingersoll offers us a seductive thesis based on the notion of the scapegoat, that is, "an innocent figure able to absorb the blame for the cycle of violent conflicts in a vindictive society." Ingersoll's scapegoats are the landscapes designed during the late twentieth century. In New York, Dallas, West Oakland, Manhattan, and Barcelona he finds pertinent examples to illustrate his point. Ingersoll demonstrates through a cunning analysis that the "contemporary garden is thus a paradoxical artifact. While it establishes a reassuring sense of stability in its immediate vicinity, it also functions as a scapegoat and the antithesis to the reality outside its frame."

Unfortunately not all the parts in the collection resonate in the same effective manner as those briefly discussed above. The desire for a more coherent relationship among the various essays emerges early in the reading of the work. This aspect should not be overlooked simply because the editor states in her preface that the book is not an anthology or a comprehensive survey but rather a sample of works on fear and urban design. *Architecture of Fear* seems to have appeared in synch with a cultural situation that may well be called the culture of phobia and anxiety. Despite some of its rich content, this compilation of texts suffers from a fear to be selectively comprehensive.

Ricardo L.Castro is a fearless Associate Professor at the McGill Schoool of Architecture

Cynthia Cooper
Magnificent Entertainments: Fancy Dress Balls of Canada's Governors General, 1876-1898.
Fredericton, New Brunswick: Goose Lane and Hull, Quebec: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1997.
reviewed by Vanessa Reid

"A brilliant spectacle, replete with the deepest interest for the historical and political student, as well as delightful to the ... eye." Words written in response to Lord and Lady Aberdeen's successful 1896 fancy dress ball are equally appropriate to describe Cynthia Cooper's recent publication on the subject. While Cooper is a costume historian, her book, *Magnificent Enter*

tainments, is very much about the development of a distinctly Canadian urbanity and the spaces and societal functions integral to this country's emerging, and still precarious identity.

The four vice-regal costume balls that Cooper meticulously revives in *Magnificent Entertainments* were the high points of Canadian "Society" at the end of the nineteenth century. Each was conceived for specific social and political purpose—whether to win over Conservative Toronto or appease French and English Montreal—and each had an impact on Canadian public life. Through dazzling and vivid language, an abundance of rich and telling archival photographs and impressive detective work, Cooper evokes the complex and often contradictory values inherent in the evolution of Canadian national identity.

As historical research, *Magnificent Entertainments* sits between Sandra Gwyn's *The Private Capital: Ambition and Love in the Age of MacDonald and Laurier*, a colourful, insightful social history of political Ottawa, and Carolyn Young's *The Glory of Ottawa: Canada's First Parliament Buildings*, an investigation of the design competition for the capital buildings. While each has a different approach, each reveals careful research into the attitudes and activities of a burgeoning society and nascent dominion. Cynthia Cooper's publication contributes from a unique perspective, the extremely well-recorded, well-attended fancy dress costume balls.

Organized chronologically, Cooper's story takes the reader from Lord Dufferin's precedent-setting fancy dress ball at Government House in Ottawa (1876) to the three held by Lord and Lady Aberdeen in Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal from 1896-8. The tour-de-force was the Aberdeen's Historic Ball, which celebrated Canadian history, a "unifying and morally uplifting theme." While each ball had its own political and educational agenda, Cooper illustrates that dominant ideologies and conflicting motivations ran as murky undercurrents. She shows this specifically through costume, in the choice of and deportment in one's dress.

In general, themes for costumes ranged from royalty (which "added a veneer of high-mindedness to the indulgence of vanity"), to familial ancestors, literary figures or abstractions such as "Photography." While many costumes offered the opportunity to display family heirlooms, others allowed the wearer to break from strict codes of Victorian behaviour. Revealing costumes (which showed a woman's ankles) or "ethnic" ones such as "A Madrassee Ayah" or "Mic Mac Chief" allowed guests to play a role normally outside the boundaries of good taste.

The re-creation of stereotypes ran rampant. The impromptu native dance at the 1896 Historic ball served to show that 1) while Norse Vikings had been assigned to created their own dance, natives had been excluded as worthy members of a historic past and 2) that the perception of natives was locked in the colonial "noble savage" ideology. Furthermore, the lack of authenticity in costumes both for "exotic" characters and historic periods for the sake of fashion revealed that priorities still lay in show rather than tell. Cooper's critical perspective on costume and behaviour offers a great deal of insight into the links between dress and society.

Similarly, the spaces in which these functions took place had heavy political and social implications. The first two balls took place in Ottawa, the new capital of the nation, in 1876 at Rideau Hall, the official residence of the Governor General and, twenty years later, in the Senate Chamber of the Parliament Buildings. Both were symbolic, elite spaces. The former was the home of the Queen's representative in Canada and the latter, although a public building, was an exclusive space of power stratified along class and gender lines. Both buildings, in function and use, were closely linked to a British imperialist ideology.

The Victorian Era ball held at the Militia Armouries in Toronto and the Montreal Historic Fancy Dress Ball, a fundraiser for the restoration of the Chateau Ramezay, held at the Windsor Hotel, were somewhat less prodigious than the first two. Again, the choice of space was meaningful. The Windsor Hotel Ball for example, with the lack of historic references and symbolism in the contemporary surroundings, was somewhat less serious in its "educational" content. On the other hand, the transformation of the bare Armouries to the semblance of the interior of a luxury steamship was appropriate for the cosmopolitan Toronto guests.

Students interested in design, architecture and spatial use may be disappointed that Cooper does not delve into more detail on the transformation of these public buildings into social drawing rooms. She writes that "a team of architects and decorators set to work to transform the Armouries into a ballroom and supperoom." But was it significant *which* architects were chosen to do this work? How were they part of the Liberal-leaning Aberdeens' scheme of "winning over" Conservative Toronto ? And if, as the preface states, the political agenda was played out in the social arena—on the ballroom floor—then it would be important to show the layout of the ballroom, how the space was used and by whom. Plans of the buildings indicating sight lines and patterns of circulation would have shown how the ballrooms were stratified (or not) according to class, gender, language, social position and/or political affiliation.

On the other hand, students of material culture, gender or Canadian history will find *Magnificent Entertainments* a rich source of information and inspiration. This story, of course, relies on photographic sources and artifacts left by those who attended the balls—the wealthy and prominent members of society. As a history of the evolution of an urbane, Canadian elite, the photos are priceless; most were taken *after* the events to immortalize the costumee's glorious moment of pageantry.

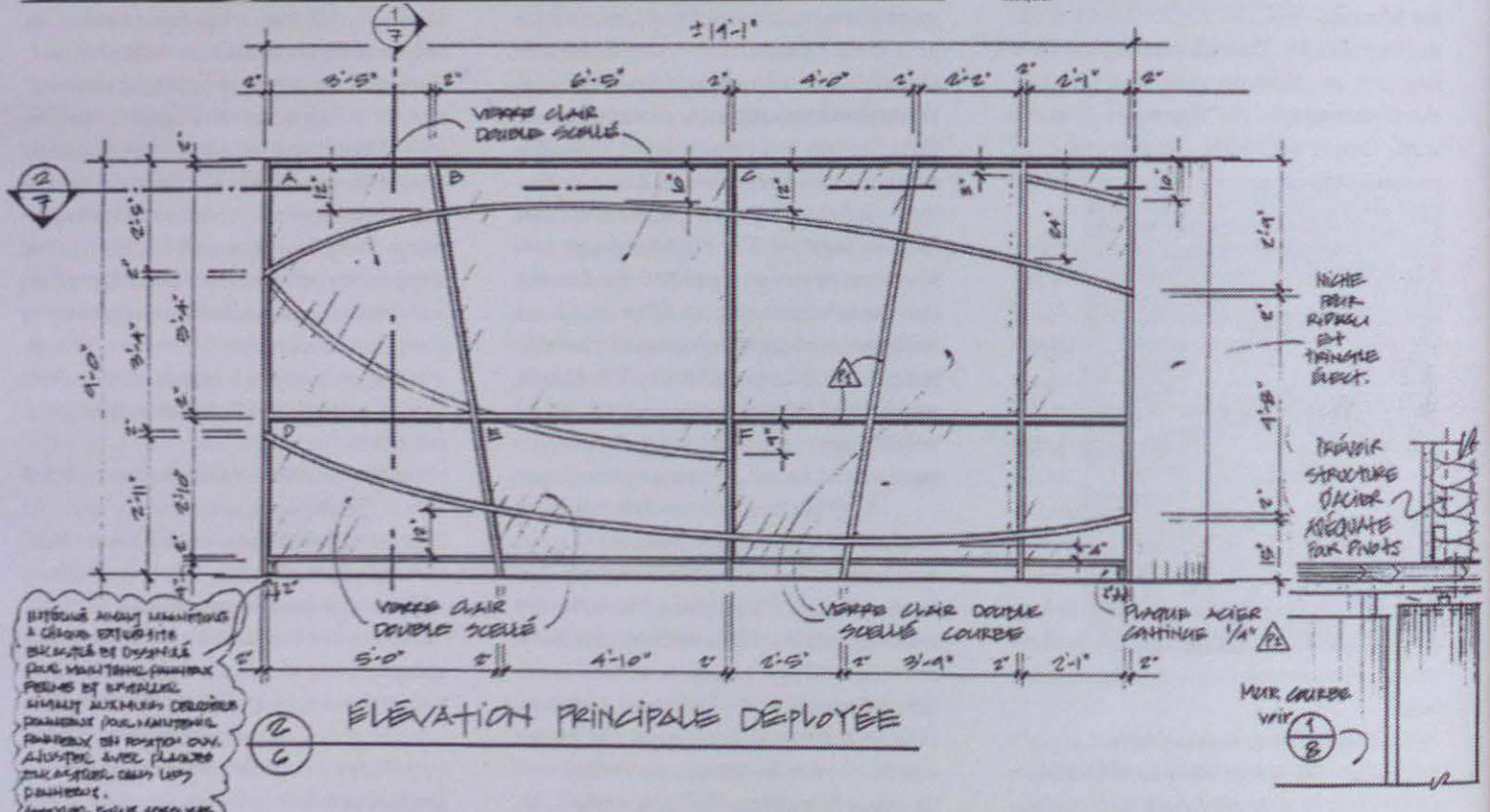
Cooper's exhaustive research captures the "ecstasy" and glitter of these events, the double-entendres and "incidental absurdities" of historical representation. With humour and a critical eye, the author reveals Canada as, in the words on one woman's costume, a "fruitful land beneath the snowy covering."

Vanessa Reid is a recent graduate of the Domestic Environments option of the Mcgill Masters of Architecture Program

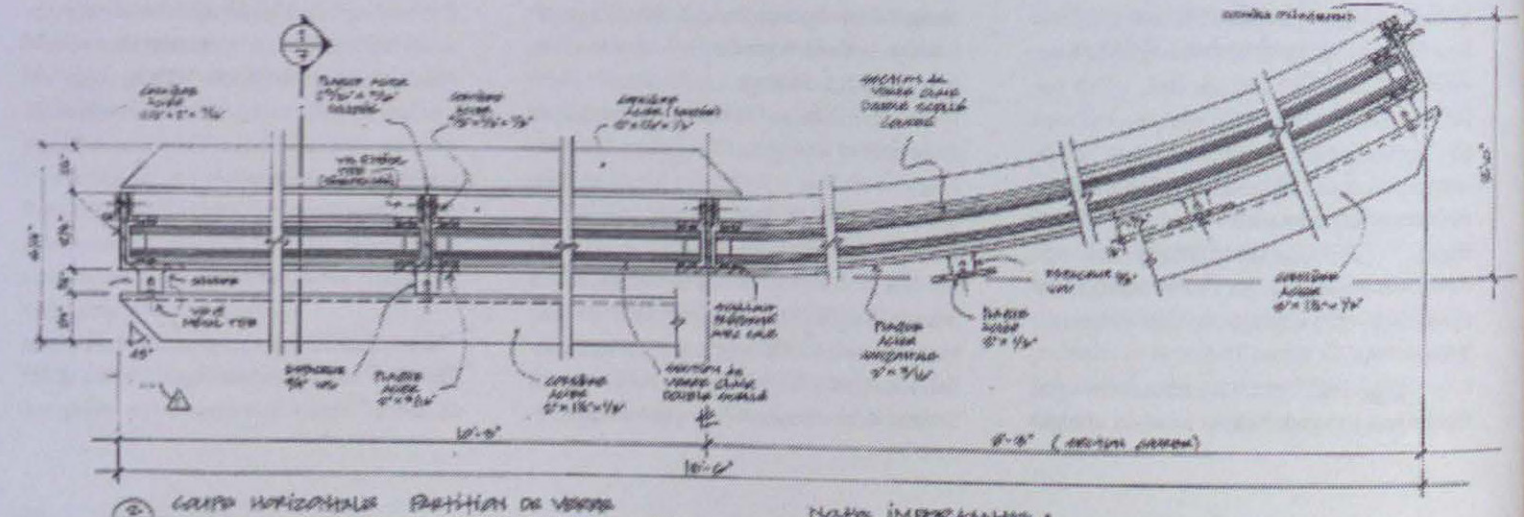
Partition de verre
Salle de conférence
Marsh & McLennan
Tour de la Cathédrale
8ième étage
Montréal

Langlois Smith Vigeant Architectes

Programme : Aménagement du hall de réception, de la salle de conférence ainsi que le design du mobilier intégré, pour des courtiers d'assurance de notorité mondiale se spécialisant dans la gestion de risque.



ÉLÉVATION PRINCIPALE DÉPLOYÉE



COUPE HORIZONTALE PARTITION DE VERRE

NOTE IMPORTANTE :