The Sublime and Modern Architecture: Unmasking (an Aesthetic of) Abstraction

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INTRODUCTION

This paper proposes that an aesthetic capable of accounting for modern architecture has begun to coalesce in the postmodern period. Its fundamental category is the sublime.' The significance of the sublime as a subject of art and architecture lies in its conceptual reach or its spiritual dimension. The sublime refers to immense ideas like space, time, death, and the divine.

The 18th century saw the development of aesthetics based on a dialectic of the sublime and the beautiful, orginating in literature and crossing disciplinary boundaries to consider the visual arts. Kant's and Burke's treatises[2] form the basis of my discussion of these aesthetic concerns. Their categories of the beautiful and the sublime were applied to the study of nature, to the character of men, and to their artistic output, in particular, poetry, painting, and architecture. Roughly contemporary with these philosophical treatises, the architects E.L. Boullee and C.N. Ledoux advocated an architecture of the sublime, expressed in a reductive architectural language (albeit neoclassical) which led to their designation as the "first moderns."[3]

Around the turn of this century, avant-garde challenges to the pictorial traditions of painting were mirrored by architecture's rejection of the classical language and of historical eclecticism in favor of a new expression. The abstraction of form adopted by both avant-gardes did not signal an absence of content, but rather, a less accessible content. Jean-Francois Lyotard has characterized this content in painting as "presenting the unpresentable," the indeterminate, or the nondemonstrable.[4]

In 20th century architecture, any mention of the sublime and the beautiful seems to have been deliberately repressed by theorists and designers anxious to distance themselves from the recent past.' To assert a radical break with the history of the discipline, the terms of aesthetic theory had to be changed. A modernist polemic calling for an aesthetic tabula rasa (of abstraction) and the application of scientific principles to design supplanted the preceding rhetoric. Positivist emphasis on rationality and function marginalized

beauty as an architectural issue. Similarly, the subjectivity of beauty's reciprocal, the sublime, led to its demise.

By arguing that the sublime exists incognito in the work of the 20th century avant-garde, one can begin to re-situate the architectural discourse, and to displace formalism. (I will review the received formal preoccupations of theory during modernism only as they affect the sublime.[6]) The potency of the sublime as a transgressor of periods and disciplines is obvious in recent writing on this rehabilitated subject. In architectural theory, the sublime presents itself today in several guises, including the uncanny and the grotesque. These psychoanalytic and aesthetic categories, as used by Anthony Vidler and Peter Eisenman, will be read against Lyotard's postmodern model in a project of revision. The latter's notion of the sublime as questioning the foundations of representational painting will be examined as part of a definition of the contemporary sublime. These recent theoretical positions are fundamental in constituting a modernist aesthetic. They remove the mask of avant-garde repression which has limited our ability to see modem architecture in terms of a continuous dialectic of the sublime and the beautiful.

I am suggesting that the sublime offers an alternate, aesthetic route to understanding modernity. The recuperation of the sublime (and therefore of the beautiful[7]) as outlined herein will allow a significant opening up of the architectural discourse.

PHENOMENOLOGY

Contemporary architectural theory is heavily influenced by the philosophical domain of phenomenology, especially the work of Martin Heidegger and Gaston Bachelard,[8] which laid the groundwork for the emerging aesthetic of the contemporary sublime. Phenomenological approaches have foregrounded human sensory and spiritual apprehension of phenomena, via a process described as the "renovation of the body".[9] Visual, tactile, olfactory, and aural sensations are the visceral part of the aesthetic reception of architecture, a medium distinguished by its three-dimensional presence.

Recently, the bodily and unconscious connection to architecture has again become an object of study. Juhani Pallasmaa addresses the psychic apprehension of architecture by "opening up a view into a second reality of perception, dreams, forgotten memories and imagination."[10] This is accomplished in his work through an abstract "architecture of silence."[11] Pallasmaa's investigation of the unconscious parallels Freud's idea of the uncanny, while his architecture of silence resonates with the sublime.

Along similar lines, phenomenologist Alberto Perez-Gomez claims that the apprehension of architecture as meaningful requires a "metaphysical dimension" which "reveals the presence of Being, [or] the presence of the invisible within the world of the everyday."[12] (There is a strong correspondence between his definition of the metaphysical in architecture and the contemporary sublime, including Lyotard's claims about modernist, abstract painting.) But for Perez-Gomez, the invisible is to be signified with a symbolic, figurative architecture.[13] Following Boullee, I would argue that the abstraction of the sublime, "deprived of all ornament" as Boullee said,[14] offers a more promising existential foothold than a representational architecture.

MAN AND NATURE

A long-standing philosophical problem which has been highlighted by phenomenologists is the question of the relationship between man and nature. Nature as "the other" in relation to culture has been a stabilizing theme for centuries. In fact prior to industrialization, the production of meaning in architecture relied upon structured references to or associations with nature. Even today, architects' work literally and symbolically overcomes the forces of nature to provide shelter. The human struggle with a threatening Nature also characterizes Enlightenment ideas of the terrifying sublime. Thus, aesthetics also provides a philosophical framework to handle such issues.

AESTHETICS

Aesthetics analyzes a work of art or architecture "in regard to form and sensory qualities, its processes of production," and its reception, and proposes a theory of taste with standards for judgement.[15] According to Kant, the nature of aesthetic response is disinterested appreciation: a direct, active, and unmediated experience.[16] Let us now focus briefly on the mid 18th century consideration of the relationship between the sublime and the beautiful. This discussion will be followed by sections on the recent postulations of Jean-Francois Lyotard, Anthony Vidler, and Peter Eisenman.

BURKE AND KANT: THE 18TH CENTURY SUBLIME

The origins of the Romantic sublime can be found in Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful,* and Kant's *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime.* Their constructions of the sublime operated to "restrict the type and forms of experience that are held to be generative of sublime sensation"[17] and became the foundation for later definitions.

Typical of the formulations of both Burke and Kant is the pairing of the term sublime with that of the beautiful. Sometimes presented as opposites, and other times as potentially co-existent qualities, the sublime is always considered to be a higher order emotion by romanticists. As Kant said: "The sublime moves, the beautiful charms."[18] For him, the beautiful is the result of the mind working harmoniously while attending an object.[19] It is easily distinguished from the experience of the sublime which is an irrational, violent reaction.

Burke's definition of the beautiful is as measured as his sublime is visceral: "beauty is some quality in bodies, acting mechanically upon the human mind by the intervention of the senses."[20] On the other hand, his sublime is a curious mingling of pain and pleasure provoked by terror and awe in the face of overwhelming greatness. One fears deprivation of life, company, light, or freedom. The pleasure comes in the suspension of the threat of deprivation.

Burke and Kant thus explain the impact of the sublime in terms of the primary motivation of men: self-preservation, which can be manifested as fear. Beauty, on the other hand, inspires only a secondary motivation: love. In addition to the fury of nature, representing the effects of ravaging time and the depiction of mythological sites are common ways to invoke the romantic sublime. English garden follies and the Romantic painting tradition epitomize the fascination with the ruin and with sacred places. More generally, Burke cites the following absolutes as sources of the sublime: infinity, vastness, magnificence, and obscurity. One might extend to the political arena Burke's statement: "I know of nothing which is sublime which is not connected to the sense of power."[21]

It is clear that in architecture, manipulation of scale, monumentality, and light are important to evoke the sublime. Etienne-Louis Boullee's unbuilt work, comprising an "architecture of shadows," is one of the first deliberate investigations of the application of Burke's sublime to architecture.[22] The Reign of Terror clearly influenced the imprisoned Boullee in his designs for institutions of the state. Projected buildings such as the National Library relied on a minimalist palette and endless repetition of similar elements for their power.

Similarly, Ledoux's many unbuilt works relied upon an austere language of facade and rigorously pure geometry in plan and section. He investigated the sublime power of composition with platonic solids in projects like the cannon forge. Ledoux's *architecture parlante* developed to an extreme the 18th century notion of character[23], the idea of an appropriate expression for each building type. A number of his projects consciously pursued a sublime expression. Prisons, for instance, should inspire fear of crime and imprisonment. The Royal Saltworks were designed to inspire respect

and fear of the director in the king's laborers.

In the modem, industrial world the power of the machine and limitless technology came to be perceived as sublime. G.B. Piranesi's shadowy etchings of the Carceri illustrate the potential menace of technology.

As in Piranesi's chiaroscuro, clarity for Burke is antithetical to the passions.[24] He explains that it is through obscurity of language that poetry incites the imagination.[25] Burke's obscurity becomes important for the avant-garde because it creates distance from the subject and defamiliarizes the artistic object and medium.

LYOTARD

Lyotard has read this emphasis on poetic obscurity as a critique of the limitations of figurative representation in mimetic painting.[26] The rejection of figuration indicates that abstraction will be fundamental to Lyotard's modernist aesthetic of the sublime. Since the late 1970's Lyotard has been writing on the sublime, based on Burke and Kant, in relation to avant-garde art.[27] We shall examine his claim that the sublime is the one artistic sensibility characteristic of the

In the context of his discussion, which I will extend to architecture, Lyotard's sublime derives from facing the essential question for the discipline: What is painting? He argues that these difficult philosophical investigations should be the subject of twentieth century painting, instead of mimetic representation or narrative. This type of inquiry implicitly acknowledges the history of the discipline, without resulting in resemblance to precedents. The modern aesthetic question is not "What is beautiful?" but "What can be said to be art?"[29] These statements suggest that the question of beauty is somehow outmoded.

Lyotard notes that modern artists were forced into reflecting on their discipline by the challenge of photography and the technological perfection of its beauty. If the camera could master all the pictorial rules, then painters would subvert them. Thus came subversions of the traditions of linear perspective, tonality, the frame, surface, and medium of painting.[30] The sublime arises from the frustration of attempting to present the unpresentable, the indeterminate, or the invisible within the visible realm of art. The indeterminate might be color for painting, silence for music, or stillness for dancers. The commitment to critical work evident in the twentieth century avant-garde produced what Lyotard calls a "heroic" century of Western painting.[31] He continues: "The spirit of the times is surely ... that of the immanent sublime, that of alluding to the nondemonstrable."[32]

Abstraction, or negative representation in Kant's terms, is the vehicle to demonstrate the presence of absolutes such as infinity, the divine, or the end of history. (Even though Lyotard recognizes that "the inadequacy of images, as negative signs, [will only] attest to the immense power of Ideas."[33]) He defends the use of abstraction on the basis of Kant's notion that "absence of form" is a possible index to

the unpresentable. Thus modem painting should avoid figuration but not allusion, "a form of expression indispensible to works which belong to an aesthetic of the sublime."[34]

There is one other aspect of the sublime which Lyotard touches on: the importance of time. Visual representations of the passage of time were an important motif of the romantic sublime. For modernists, he says, "The avant-garde task is to undo spiritual assumptions regarding time. The sense of the sublime is the name of this dismantling."[35]

Lyotard advocates a critical position, resisting the corruption of the marketplace, working from within the discipline to focus on the most essential questions of contemporary artistic practice. The historical program of art, creating images of order and identity for a unified cultural community, is no longer possible or relevant. Instead, a self-referential focus will allow a different role for avant-garde art: "a metaphysical program of making the world transparent through reason."[36]

APPLICATION TO MODERN ARCHITECTURE

The application of Lyotard's ideas to architecture would result in a critical attitude toward the architectural canon, examplars of which might never manifest themselves directly in the work. The content of the work instead, would be the asking of fundamental questions and eventually, definitions of a new societal role for architecture.

In order to extend Lyotard's concepts further, architectural theory will need to determine what problems architecture faces today and what would constitute the equivalents to pictorial rules in this discipline. What is absence of form, or negative representation, in architecture? What is the indeterminate? Not building? Structure, or the limits of space? Does this kind of questioning constitute a deconstructionist undermining of the foundations of the discipline?

THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS IN ARCHITECTURE
Technology

Advanced technology has changed the relationship between man and nature by reducing the urgency of our survival struggle. It has even been suggested by deconstructionists that the ancient nature/culture opposition has been displaced, rendered irrelevant. If this is true, what stands in its place as the other in relation to architecture? Having conquered nature, the challenge now comes from the opposite end of the spectrum, from man's knowledge and its instrumentalized form, technology.

Technology in the form of a hyperreal, televisual culture comprises one of two threats to architecture's provision of a physical center of culture. The dematerialization of communication of the electronic global village challenges the solidity and permanence symbolized by architectural production. As Peter Eisenman says, "The electronic paradigm directs a powerful challenge to architecture because it defines reality in terms of media and simulation, it values

appearance over existence."[37]   So making or marking a physical place, expressive of an ordered public realm, may be redundant or rhetorical in the future.

Social Issues: Diversity and Community

The second current challenge is to the notion of community and the attainability of a cultural consensus which might be meaningfully represented in architectural language. What will be represented and will the language be understood by all? Thus the possibility of communicating the significance of place or any other meaning, fundamental concerns of our discipline for centuries, are endangered by societal changes and the collapse of the so-called grand narratives.

THE LANGUAGE OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE

Throughout the twentieth century, an aesthetic of the beautiful and the sublime in architecture has been suppressed by several alternative formal issues. First, the development of a new architectural language was problematized by the avant-garde in the categories of representation versus abstraction. For the most part, the content to be communicated by architecture was a limited expression of function. Mimetic representation was rejected in favor of the autonomy of form and an internal, self-referential discourse.

Next, architecture was preoccupied with the translation of spatial constructs from avant-garde painting like transparency and layering. Third, the 19th century legacy of typology repressed aesthetics with arguments about design method in terms of imitation versus invention.[38]

THE SUBLIME AND MODERN ARCHITECTURE

The significance of the sublime for twentieth century architecture is finally emerging in critical writing from recent years. The sudden rebirth of interest in the sublime is explicable on a number of levels. First is the emphasis on the knowledge of architecture through phenomenology, which foregrounds a fundamental issue in aesthetics: the effect on the viewer of a work of architecture. In the case of the sublime, the experience is visceral and spiritual. The immanent sublime is the path through which architecture achieves metaphysical import. Furthermore, it allows the recuperation of the other term in the pair: beauty. In recent theory, beauty is reemerging in the context of the sublime. One might expect that given its privileged position in Enlightenment theory, the sublime would repress beauty. But for the provocative theorist Peter Eisenman, the beautiful has instead been a repressor, dominating the grotesque.[39] Perhaps Diana Agrest's dialectical stance offers a model for reconfiguring the relationship between these two aesthetic categories: if the beautiful is the "normative" discourse of aesthetics, the sublime can be seen as an "analytical and exploratory discourse"[40] in opposition to it. This notion would coincide with another description of the sublime as a "self-transforming discourse" which influenced the construction of the modern subject.[41]

ARCHITECTURAL THEORISTS: VIDLER AND EISENMAN

Following psychoanalytic and deconstructionist models, several theoreticians argue that the route to a revitalized architecture requires uncovering its repressed aspects.[42] Within the concealed material, vulnerable assumptions are often found about the foundations of the discipline. For Anthony Vidler and Peter Eisenman, the uncanny and grotesque are buried. Vidler says, "the uncanny in this context would be ...the return of the body into an architecture that had repressed its conscious presence."[43] Clearly related to the uncanny is Eisenman's notion of the grotesque as "the condition of the always present or the already within that the beautiful in architecture attempts to repress."[44] Their ideas start to define the contemporary sublime.

VIDLER AND THE UNCANNY

An astute scholar of architecture from the 18th century to the present, Vidler has completed a study of the architectural uncanny.[45] The uncanny as described by Freud is the rediscovery of something familiar which has been previously repressed; it is the uneasy feeling of the presence of an absence. The mix of the known and familiar and of the strange surfaces in the German word for the uncanny, which literally translated is "unhomely." One common theme is the idea of the human body in fragments.[46] Vidler sees a "deliberate attempt to address the status of the body in postmodern theory"[47] which is necessitated by the fact that, as he says, "The body in disintegration is in a very real sense the image of the notion of humanist progress in disarray."[48] His uncanny is the terrifying side of the sublime, with the fear being privation of the integrated body.

The uncanny can also be considered at the social scale. Freud described it as a product of the anxiety of life in the turn-of-the-century urban milieu. Vidler hails the uncanny "as a dominant constituent of modem estrangement and alienation,"[49] in the same way that Lyotard sees the sublime as the essential modernist sensibility. In the "attempt to destabilize the conventions of traditional architecture," Vidler notes that "critical theories of estrangement, linguistic indeterminacy, and representation have served as vehicles for avant-garde architectural experiment."[50]

For instance, Bob McAnulty cites the recent theoretical investigations of architects Diller and Scofidio, which delve into the spatial structures and social practices that order our bodies, such as habits of domesticity.[51] The results, exhibited as museum installations, are decidedly uncanny, suggesting a haunted house, or one which operates in a different life-world. Dining chairs and a table hover above the floor, a double bed is cleaved along its length and hinged into two parts. In choosing the house as the site of their work, the architects defamiliarize the homeliest of spaces with unhomely effect.

Vidler makes a number of important connections between the uncanny and the sublime. First, his "spatial uncanny" is

dependent on and an outgrowth of Burke's articulation of the sublime.[52] Second, he identifies an "aesthetic dimension," of the uncanny, which consists of "a representation of a mental state of projection that precisely elides the boundaries of the real and the unreal to provoke a disturbing ambiguity, a slippage between waking and dreaming."[53]

By focusing his phenomenological study on the uncanny, Vidler hopes to discover the "power to interpret the relations between the psyche and the dwelling, the body and the house, the individual and the metropolis."[54] Theorizing the uncanny is the start of "rewriting modem aesthetic theory as applied to categories such as imitation, repetition, the symbolic and the sublime."[55] In an aesthetic agenda for modern architecture, the uncanny's role is to identify and critique these significant contemporary issues via the link forged with phenomenology.

EISENMAN AND THE GROTESQUE

Vidler recognizes the use of defarniliarizing "reversals of aesthetic norms, [and] substitutions of the grotesque for the sublime,"[56] as avant-garde formal strategies addressing alienation. Perhaps this explains Peter Eisenman's exploration of the grotesque as "the manifestation of the uncertain in the physical."[57] His interest in the grotesque clearly parallels avant-garde painters' use of the sublime to invoke "the indeterminate or nondemonstrable."

In the article "En Terror Firma: In Trails of Grotextes," Eisenman critiques the traditional contrast between the qualities of the beautiful (which is the good, rational, and true) and of the terrifying sublime (which is the unnatural, uncertain, and unpresent). He follows Kant in envisioning "a containing within,"[58] as an alternate to the exclusionary rigidity of dialectical aesthetic categories. Present within the beautiful is the grotesque, which encompasses "the idea of the ugly, the deformed, and the supposedly unnatural."[59] Eisenman's concern about oppositional categories stems from the "notion... [that] any form of the occupation of space [such as architecture] requires a more complex form of the beautiful, one which contains the ugly, or a rationality that contains the irrational."[60]

The utility of this expanded aesthetic category lies in advancing Eisenman's usual agenda: he sees the possibility of displacing architecture, and its 500-year dependence on normative beauty, through the grotesque. He claims the grotesque will "provoke an uncertainty in the object, by removing both the architect and the user from any necessary control of the object... it is now the distance between object and subject-- the impossibility of possession --which provokes this anxiety."[61] But there is a caveat: as with painters' attempts to present the unpresentable, we are warned that the grotesque "can be conceptualized, but not designed."[62] Eisenman thus hints at the difficulty of realizing this theoretical agenda.

CONCLUSION

So once more anxiety is encountered, whether the source is the sublime indeterminacy of avant-garde painting, the urban/spatial uncanny, or the grotesque in architecture. Whether presented as a modern phenomenon capable of social critique, or as an aspect of psychological encounter, the profile of the contemporary sublime is emerging. It encompasses Lyotard's and Eisenman's advocating disciplinary deconstruction and the indeterminacy of abstraction. Under the rubric of the architectural uncanny, it includes Vidler's phenomenological articulation. All of these recent theoretical positions lift the mask of avant-garde repression which concealed a continuous dialectic of the beautiful and the sublime in architecture. The interdependency of these terms means that if one is suspect, both are rejected. This occurred during the high modem period of this century, when aesthetic discussion was stifled in favor of other issues.

Contemporary representations of these conditions are essential in resituating modernist aesthetic discourse. Separated more by nomenclature than by substance, the sublime, the uncanny, and the grotesque also engage the major philosophical framework of phenomenology. A phenomenological consideration of architecture has started to displace formalism, a shift which has also been effected from feminist and post-structuralist ideological stances. The recuperation of the sublime (and therefore of the beautiful) has been part of a process of opening up the discourse.

NOTES

[1] Historically, the sublime can be traced to the writings of the classical rhetorician Longinus in the first centuries A.D. Translated into French by Boileau in 1674, *On the Sublime* deals with issues of form and style in oratory, the equivalent of literature in general for this time period. The republication of this ancient treatise had unexpectedly major effects on aesthetics.

[2] Edmund Burke, *An Inquiry into our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (Oxford, 1987) and Immanuel Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, trans. J. Goldthwait, (Berkeley, 1981).

[3] Joseph Rykwert, *The First Moderns: the Architects of the 18th Century* (Cambridge, 1980).

[4] Jean-Francois Lyotard, "Presenting the Unpresentable: The Sublime," *ArtForum*, 22.8, (Apr 1984), p.64.

[5] See Theodor Adorno on the corruption and exhaustion of the sublime in Vidler, "Notes on the Sublime: From Neoclassicism to Postmodernism," *Canon: The Princeton Journal*, 3 (1988), p.180.

[6] See longer version of this paper in *New Literary History,* Feb 1995. Thanks to the editor, Ralph Cohen, for his reading of the original.

[7] The link between these co-dependent terms cannot be easily severed.

[8] Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, (Toronto, 1964 transl.) and Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," from *Poetry, Language, Thought,* (New York, 1971 transl.), p.145-229.

[9] Alberto Perez-Gomez, "Architectural Representation in the Age of Simulacra," *Skala* 20, (1990), p.42.

[10] Juhani Pallasmaa, "The Social Commission and the Autonomous Architect," *Harvard Architecture Review* 6, (1987), p.119.

[11] Juhani Pallasmaa, Lecture at the University of Virginia, 1993.

[12] Perez-Gomez, p.42.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny* (Cambridge, 1992), p.170.

[15] Dagobert D. Runes, ed., *Dictionary of Philosophy Revised and Enlarged* (Savage, 1982), p.20.

[16] John Goldthwait's introduction in Kant, *Observations,* p.35.

[17] Peter de Bolla, *The Discourse of the Sublime: Readings in History, Aesthetics, and the Subject* (Oxford, 1989), p.20.

[18] Kant, *Observations,* p.26.

[19] Goldthwait in Kant, *Observations,* p.21.

[20] Burke, *An Inquiry,* p.xx.

[21] Manfredo Tafuri, *The Sphere and the Labyrinth: Avant-Gardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the 1970's* (Cambridge, 1990), p.30.

[22] Vidler, *Architectural Uncanny,* p.169.

[23] Alan Colquhoun, *Modernity and the Classical Tradition: Architectural Essays 1980-1987* (Cambridge, 1989), pp.57-87.

[24] Jean-Francois Lyotard, "The Sublime and the Avant-garde," *ArtForum*, 20.8 (Apr 1982), p.40.

[25] Burke, *An Inquiry*, pp.157-61.

[26] Lyotard, "The Sublime and the Avant-garde," p.40.

[27] Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge,* transl. Bennington and Massumi, (Minneapolis, 1984), p.71-82.

[28] Lyotard, "The Sublime and the Avant-garde," p.38.

[29] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition,* p.75.

[30] Lyotard, "Presenting the Unpresentable," p.67. Marcel Duchamp's readymades raised other radical questions for artists. For instance, about the alchemical validation of the artist's signature, the role of the hand in manufacture, ideas of the original and authenticity, and the privileged status of places of exhibition. See my article "Construction/Demolition, Object/Process" in *Proceedings of the 1991 ACSA Southeast Regional Conference* (Charlotte, 1992), p.42-7.

[31] Lyotard, "Presenting the Unpresentable," p.69.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Lyotard, "The Sublime and the Avant-garde," p.40.

[34] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition,* p.80.

[35] Lyotard, "The Sublime and the Avant-garde," p.43.

[36] Lyotard, "Presenting the Unpresentable," p.64.

[37] Peter Eisenman, "Visions' Unfolding: Architecture in the Age of Electronic Media," *Domus,* 734 (Jan 1992), pp.21.

[38] "The aesthetic discussion that emerged in the 18th century located an anxiety about the relationship between the individual and the type, the particular and the general... as the characteris-

[38 cont.] tically aesthetic epistemological problem," Frances Ferguson, *The Solitude of the Sublime: Romanticism and the Aesthetics of Individuation,* (New York, 1992), p.31.

[39] Peter Eisenman, "En Terror Firma..." in *Form; Being; Absence: Architecture and Philosophy,* Pratt Journal of Architecture, 2, (New York, 1988), p.111-21.

[40] Diana Agrest, *Architecture from Without: Theoretical Framings for a Critical Practice,* (MIT Press, 1993), p.1.

[41] Peter de Bolla, *The Discourse of the Sublime: Readings in History, Aesthetics, and the Subject* (Oxford, 1989), p.12.

[42] For example, Agrest believes the "system" of architecture (i.e., the Western architectural tradition) is defined both by what it includes and what it excludes, or represses. "Architecture from Without: Body, Logic, and Sex," *Assemblage* 7, (1988), p.29.

[43] Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny,* p.79.

[44] Eisenman, "En Terror Firma," p.114.

[45] Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny* and "Theorizing the Unhomely" in *Newsline,* vol.3, no.3 (1990), p.3.

[46] Lacanian developmental psychology has revealed that children do not immediately understand themselves as integrated beings. But once having perceived themselves as bodily unities, (via the mirror stage), the idea of the fragmented or "morselated" body is banished to the unconscious. This hidden knowledge, when reencountered, explains the impact of horror films and dismemberment fantasies. Vidler, "Theorizing the Unhomely," ibid.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny,* p.xi.

[51] Robert McAnulty, "Body Troubles," in John Whiteman, ed, *Strategies in Architectural Thinking,* (Cambridge, 1992), p.191-6.

[52] Vidler, "Theorizing the Unhomely," p.3.

[53] Ibid

[54] Ibid. The writing here echoes the chapter on "The House" in Bachelard's classic *Poetics of Space.*

[55] Ibid.

[56] Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny,* p.13.

[57] Eisenman, "En Terror Firma," p.114. All subsequent quotations are from this same article. [pp.115, 114, 115, 121, 116.]

[58] Ibid, p.115.

[59] Ibid, p.114.

[60] Ibid, p.115.

[61] Ibid, p.121.

[62] Ibid, p.116.