

## Camouflage: Architectural Origins Everywhere and Nowhere

**EDWARD BECKER**

Virginia Tech

Despite centuries of architectural design, writing, and discourse, the discipline of architecture continues its laborious search for origin through the discipline's most closely held ideals and syntax – that of form, structure, materiality, ornament, and other signifiers. As the search for a more pure and arguably more ethical architecture of origins has recently gained a greater prominence in contemporary discourse – as evidenced by various exhibits at the 2017-2018 Chicago Architecture Biennial and the selection of work included in the recent Inscriptions exhibit at the Harvard GSD – one must question how the built environment of the everyday has strayed so far from the cultural and ethical imperatives that reside at architecture's core?

This Portmanteau playfully explores the paradoxes, idiosyncrasies, and mutations that occur when architectural ideals and syntax clash with the outside forces of economics, site-specific constraints, and culture.

The Portmanteau contains a series of multi-scalar 3D architectural artifacts/models that blur the lines between toy, building, and utensil while at the same time raising questions about the blurred lines between architecture's syntax of form, structure, materiality, ornament, and other signifiers relative to the wide array of buildings that comprise our collective built environments today. The 3D artifacts/models and the design of their related suitcase environment will help propose that architecture's origins are everywhere, but yet at the same time are nowhere, a conundrum of our shared and paradoxical built environment.

