

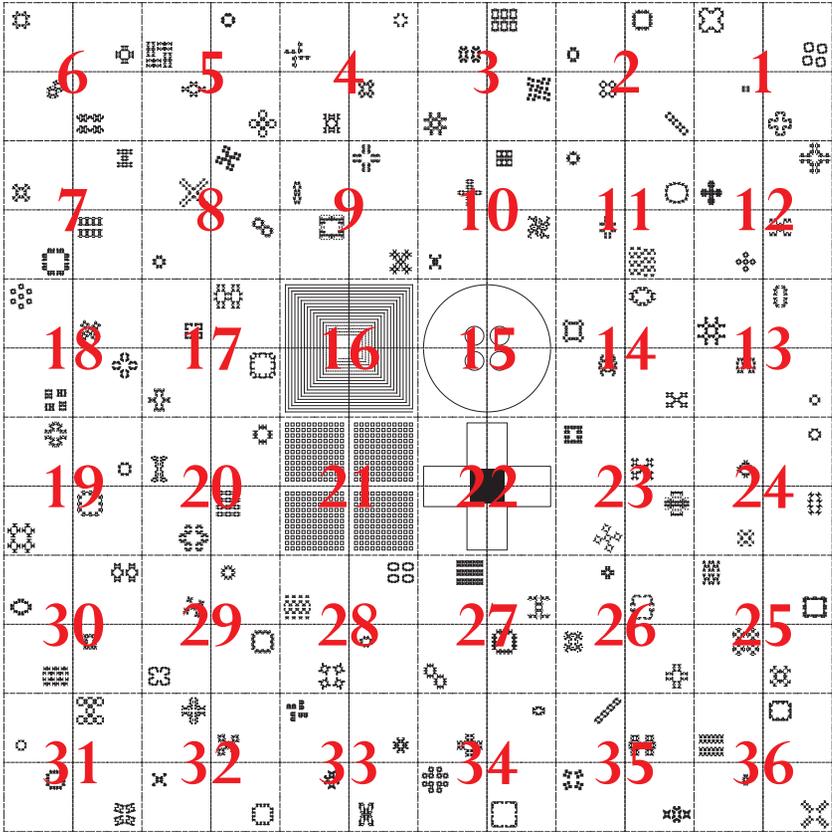
ACSA Faculty Design Honorable Mention

2016-2017 Winner Submission Materials

ATLAS OF ANOTHER AMERICA: An Architectural Fiction

KEITH KRUMWIEDE

New Jersey Institute of Technology



ATLAS
OF
ANOTHER AMERICA

Atlas of Another America
An Architectural Fiction

Atlas of Another America is a work of speculative architectural fiction and theoretical analysis that scripts a counterfactual history and alternate futures for the American single-family house and its native habitat, the suburban metropolis. Mass-marketed and endlessly multiplied, the suburban house, long the definitive symbol of success in America (and, increasingly, around the world), has become an instrument of global economic calamity and impending environmental catastrophe. Still, the house, as both object and idea, remains largely unexamined from an architectural perspective. Atlas of Another America corrects this oversight through projects and essays that reflect upon, critique, and reformulate the equation that binds the house as an object to the American dream as a concept.

The book's unique take on its suburban subject builds upon an important lineage of architectural research—from Piranesi and Ledoux to Branzi and Koolhaas—in which imaginary but not implausible worlds are constructed in order to reframe reality and reorient the discipline toward new territories of action. Like the most provocative work of these architects, the projects in An Atlas of Another America eschew formal innovation for its own sake and instead rely on the artful appropriation, exaggeration and reorganization of found forms to produce their oddly familiar visions in which past, present and future are intertwined.

The book, designed by the author, adopts the tone and format of an historical architectural treatise. The atlas of the book's title is comprised of the complete drawings of Freedomland, a fictional utopia of superhomes—communalist phalansteries constructed from consumerist single-family houses. A deep appendix includes a cross-referenced catalog of the plans used in Freedomland; the essay "Atypical Plans," a revision, through redaction and reconstruction, of Rem Koolhaas' essay "Typical Plan," reflects upon the causes and consequences of the American obsession with houses; the essay "Supermodel Homes" that considers the mad genius of David Weekley, one of America's most successful homebuilders; "Six Typical Plans," a taxonomic classification of suburban house plans; and "Notes on Freedomland," an essay that describes both the conceptual intent and design process of Freedomland (and the book as a whole) while situating the work within the broader historical and socio-political streams of architectural thought and action. The book closes with the architectural short story "New Homes for Homes," in which a young architect rewires familiar domestic products to produce new superhouses of collective living.

ATLAS
OF
ANOTHER AMERICA
BEING A DESCRIPTION OF
FREEDOMLAND,
A TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY SETTLEMENT SCHEME FOR THE AMERICAN NATION
IN THE
GRAND AGRARIAN DEMOCRATIC TRADITION
OF
MR. THOMAS JEFFERSON
BUT ALSO TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE CURRENT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ORDER;
COMPRISING
A COMPLETE GRAPHIC DISCOURSE ON THE DESIGNED ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SETTLEMENT
INCLUDING DETAILED PLANS
OF THE
128 UNIQUE NEIGHBORHOOD FARM ESTATES.
WITH
AN APPENDIX
CONTAINING DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE ORIGINS OF FREEDOMLAND
INCLUDING
"ATYPICAL PLANS,"
A MEDITATION ON THE AMERICAN DREAM, HOUSES, AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE ECONOMY,
"SUPERMODEL HOMES,"
IN WHICH THE AUTHOR RECOUNTS HIS TOUR THROUGH THE MODEL HOMES OF MR. DAVID WEEKLEY,
"SIX TYPICAL PLANS,"
AN ANALYSIS OF THE HOMES OF THE NATION'S GREATEST BUILDERS
&
"NOTES ON FREEDOMLAND,"
CONSTITUTING OPINIONS AND REMARKS ON THE NATURE AND CONTEXT OF THE WORK.
WITH AN AFTERWORD
BY ALBERT POPE
AND
A POSTSCRIPT,
"NEW HOMES FOR AMERICA"

ZÜRICH
2016



Birds Inspect the Plans of Freedomland
after *The Concert of Birds*, 1670
Melchior d'Hondecoeter

FREEDOMLAND

IN WHICH THE OBJECT IN VIEW IS TO UNITE,
IN A BETTER MANNER THAN HAS HITHERTO BEEN DONE
AND WITH A TASTE FOUNDED IN OUR VERY NATURE
WITH ECONOMY AND UTILITY,

AMERICAN HOMES

SO AS TO COMBINE ARCHITECTURAL FITNESS WITH PICTURESQUE EFFECT
IN THE SERVICE OF BUILDING COMMUNITIES
CONNECTED TO OUR NOBLE PAST AND PREPARED FOR AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE.

A DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE DESIGNED ESTABLISHMENT OF FREEDOMLAND

Neither need we have a labourer as useless, as is generally fancied, to establish in this manner a Colony, which may become not only an advantage, but a glory to the Nation. We have Proprietors before us most attentive, and apprehensive, in the ideas respecting them, wealth, safety, and liberty. Besides, like these, can never fail of having Numbers of Inhabitants from Every Corner. And, this once got together, 'tis no easy to disperse them regularly and with due regard to Order, Beauty, and the Confine of Security, as to have them in the full of being at Random, and destroying their Incomes by indulging their Humour: So that we have more than ordinary Cause to expect, that in a very short Time, we shall be able to present the world with a new Colony, as well as give the Author credit, in the following Explanation.

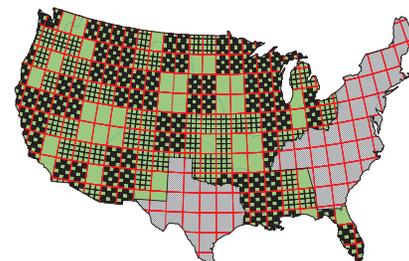
—Sir Robert Montagu, *A Discourse Concerning the designed Establishment of a New Colony in the South of Carolina in the third delightful Country of the Insects*, 1717.

Having been required by the times to draw up a detailed plan for the general improvement of American housing in the aftermath of the great financial crisis and its effect upon our collective confidence in the correctness of our living patterns, I humbly submit the following proposal.

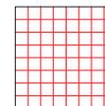
No topic more descriptive as did Sir Robert Montagu in describing his idealized proposal for the Margravate of Axina: "You must suppose a level, dry, and fruitful Tract of Land, to contain five Plains or Valleys" that, having been surveyed as part of the great parcelling of America according to the methods set forth in the Land Ordinance of 1785, is continuously gridded into square townships of six miles per side, each containing thirty-six one-mile square sections of 360 acres.

The grid, the framework for Thomas Jefferson's vision of a rural democratic society of citizen farmers, but also a great great granddaddy of rampant real estate speculation, provides the underlying structure for Freedomland, a new settlement model that reconciles emergent dreams for a agrarian utopianism with long-held national dreams, appetites, it now being fully established by learned persons, and increasingly acknowledged by ignorance, that our current settlement patterns are both unhealthy and unsustainable. Freedomland is presented, then, on the following grounds: rural, that local farming is good, being that it provides better food and makes better use of our increasingly limited resources than commercial agriculture; that urban living is also good, improving as it does the health, happiness, and prosperity of the population; and that the majority of Americans, the security of the above notwithstanding, will prefer to the material and spatial luxuries represented by the detached single-family house as a more expeditiously found to the suburbs.

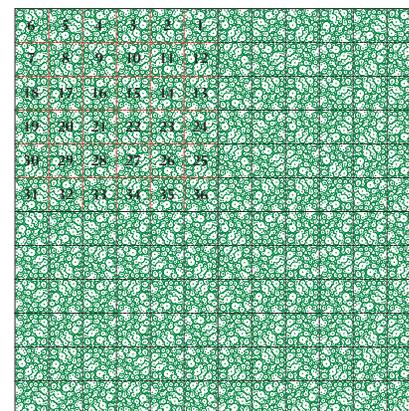
The plan of Freedomland results from the subdivision of a typical survey township into four equal squares, three miles to each side. The northwest and southeast quarters are established as new towns and further subdivided to form thirty-six square sections of 160 acres each, excepting that area dedicated to the town's primary roads which divide them at intervals of one-half mile. As in the original survey townships, these sections are numbered,



The Surveying of America

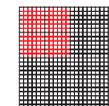


Reading from a notebook prepared by Thomas Jefferson, the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) governs the manner in which public domain lands in the United States are surveyed and appraised. The system was first established with the passage of the Land Ordinance of 1785, "in accordance for ascertaining the mode of disposing of lands within the 'Western Territory' and subsequently revised by the 'Northwest Ordinance of 1787'—which known as the 'Precedent Ordinance'—which established the public domain and confirmed the concept of the simple surveying of land. Under the Land Ordinance, a rectangular survey system was established, dividing 'the territory into townships of six miles square, by lines running the north and south, and other crossing these at right angles, or near by, ...'



The Survey Township

According to the 1785 ordinance, "No township shall be marked by subdivisions into lots of one mile square, or half acre, in the same direction as the original lines, and numbered from the top by 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and further south that the 'western side' shall be numbered, respectively, beginning with number one in the northwest corner, and proceeding west and east diagonally, through the township, with progressive numbers till the thirty-sixth be completed." The survey townships, laid off they go, to our country's temples, on the foundational grid of Freedomland, and the lands surveyed contain the maximum extent of its operation.



"beginning with the number one in the northeast section and proceeding west and east alternately through the township with progressive numbers, until the thirty-six be completed." The two remaining quarters are preserved in-use if necessary retained to their natural state as unincorporated retreats for the pleasure of the townships.

One survey township divided to form two square and two natural sections in the absolute minimum area necessary for the establishment of Freedomland. If this plan is aggregated to form a group larger than a single five square mile survey township, then a checkboard layout results, as a like manner to that proposed by Mr. Jefferson, producing, at the grand scale, an alternating arrangement of towns and country. There is no maximum limit to such an aggregate, save except for any geographical or political obstacles that may arise to thwart the just and proper extension of the settlement by the townships.

The four sections at the center of each town are occupied by a civic core comprised of the infrastructure necessary to the maintenance and preservation of the community. Whereas the original Land Ordinance reserved section 16, at the center of every township, for the use of education, at Freedomland—being recognized that the classic in nature and method of education are best left to individual families—the central squares are rightly devoted to more pressing and universal needs. The water square, an ever-growing, man-made pond of refuse, two acres in section 16; the water square, a circular reservoir nearly one-half mile in diameter, occupies section 15; the energy square, a forest of 20 by 20-foot solar panels, powers the town from section 21; and the market square, anchored in section 22 by a two-acre big box of community and commerce, provides a venue for public assembly as well as access to those products and services not produced through the prodigious industry of the township.

The thirty-two remaining sections are quartered by roads secondary to those above-mentioned to form four equal patches of 40 acres, less the dimension of the roads by which they are divided and served. The 128 individual neighborhood farm estates thus established, each an independent self-governing community, are further divided into four 10-acre squares of which three are dedicated to agricultural pursuits, while the fourth, in this manner, fully three-quarters of every town in Freedomland shall consist of green, and five of buildings.

Each neighborhood estate in Freedomland is comprised of between eight and sixty-four houses, with all these within any particular estate being one just like the next and in this manner ensuring a subordination of identity and consistency of character such that property values are protected and community values are promoted. Whereas architects have proven themselves disinterested, or perhaps just ill-prepared, to deliver designs desired by a majority of the American people, the houses in Freedomland are built according to design carefully selected from among the best produced by the country's greatest builders—designs that have proven to be highly popular with persons possessing the most discriminating tastes and therefore certain to attract the finest type of citizen. Depending upon the number of houses and the particular manner in which they are arranged, a neighborhood of houses may take on the character of either a large villa or a small village. Families are thus able to select the estate that most closely matches their spiritual, esthetic, and, consequently, social preferences, thereby affording them a life among like-minded neighbors with a shared sense of time and purpose.

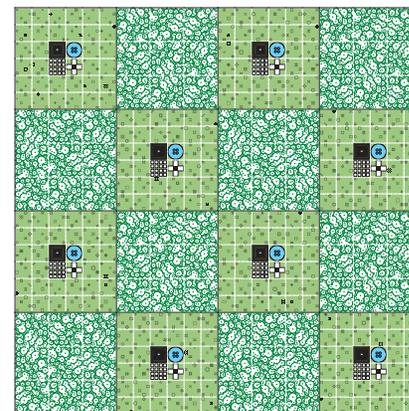
In being all known that people, by their very nature, are equally desirous of the pleasures of society as they are desirous of the pleasures of family, Freedomland seeks to offer both in due time. Taking advantage of the increasingly short life span of our homes—and in a manner similar to crop rotation—the entire estate, including the buildings, which are dismantled and rebuilt, rotates counter-clockwise every twenty years, completing a full rotation after eighty years. This has the positive effect of providing each resident, at regular intervals, with new homes that it is nearly the same as their old home. In each estate, this has the further beneficial consequence of producing an ever-changing prospect of both and open space throughout the town. Although the debris produced as a result of the dismantling and rebuilding will, in the early years, likely contribute to the rapid growth of the generation of waste at the center of each town, it is expected that the spirit of competition naturally occurring in a free society will, as in the past, stimulate alternative building technologies that cause the materials and methods employed in the ongoing re-creation of Freedomland to become ever lighter and more efficient. Such advances will allow each town to more sustainably pursue its civilized aspirations, enabling it to together in deep commitment to the stability and endurance of our beloved nation.

It is hoped that this description, concise though it may be, is sufficient to describe the sublime structure of Freedomland, its natural and rightful connection to the foundational principles of our great country, and its superiority to our current modes of settlement.

THE COMPLETE DRAWINGS OF THE SUBLIME SETTLEMENT OF FREEDOMLAND

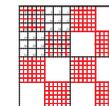
Take, for instance, the checker board for a plan. Let the black squares only be building squares, and the white ones be left open, in turf and trees. . . . The atmosphere of such a town would be like that of the country . . .

—Thomas Jefferson, from a letter to C.F. Venable, 1805.



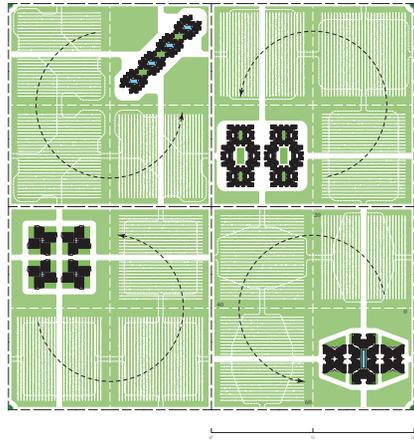
Checkerboard Logic

The subdivisions of the original survey townships, along with their progressive nature, the centuries previously approved for settlement, results in an alternating pattern of established and ungridded land similar to that of a checkerboard.



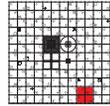
Finally, there seem to be but three Ways for a Nation to acquire Wealth. The first is by War, as the Romans did, in plundering their conquered Neighbours. This is Robbery. The second by Commerce, which is generally Cheating. The third by Agriculture, the only honest Way, wherein Man receives a real Increase of the Seed thrown into the Ground, in a kind of continual Miracle, wrought by the Hand of God in his Favour, as a Reward for his innocent Life and virtuous Industry.

—Benjamin Franklin, "Thoughts on the Examination, Concerning National Wealth," 1769.

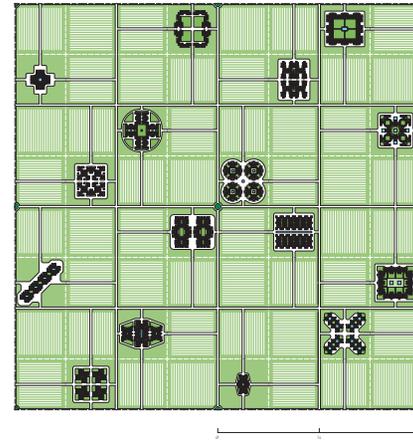


Farming and the Rotation of the Hooves

Each half-acre square (144 rows) contains a complement of four 48-acre neighborhood farm estates. Of the four 144-acre quarters in each estate, three are allotted to the cultivation of crops, while the remainder, including the roads, is reserved for a pasture similar to the practice of crop rotation each neighborhood is dismantled and rebuilt on the adjacent quarter each twenty years following construction to be continued when the time for building the houses down for perpetual services in that house, thereby making a virtue of the alternative life of the farmers. Every eight years the neighborhood makes one full rotation on its part. The selection and utilization of crops is the responsibility of each individual estate. It is expected that some rotations will engage others in both the construction of their houses and the utilization of their lands.

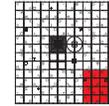


21

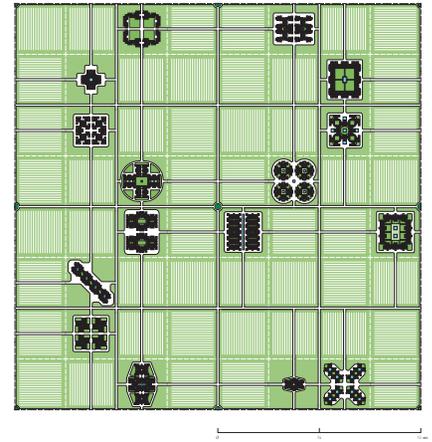


Year 40
Sections 21, 26, 31, and 36

Following the most rotation in ten years, the estates are once again dispersed—now of two evenly-rotated in total landscape.

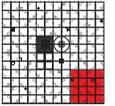


22

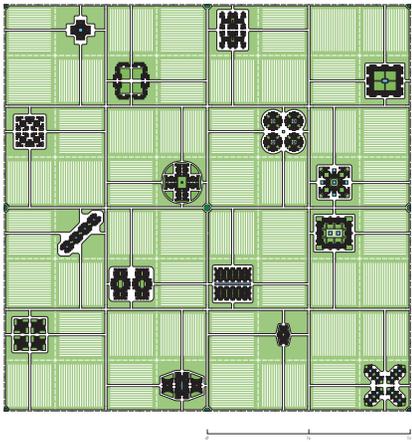


Year 60
Sections 21, 26, 31, and 36

In your sixty, Froebelized—transformed yet again, as some of the roads—now lined with water-use esters as total backdrops.

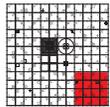


23

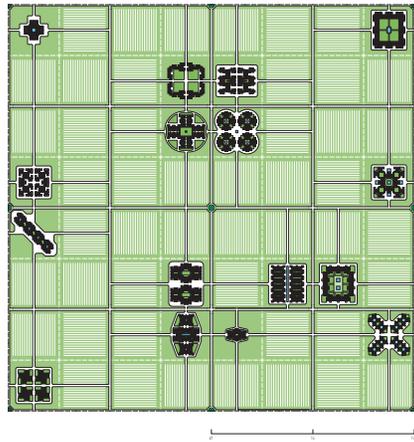


Year 80
Sections 21, 26, 31, and 36

In the rotation of Froebelized estate on a twenty-year cycle, an ever-changing program of both built and open space is produced in the town. In year zero, down here, the estate in the four corners at the southeast corner of town are distributed evenly across an agrarian landscape. The drawings on the following pages describe the changing arrangement generated by the rotational rule and movement in landscape consequences.

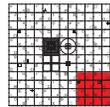


24



Year 20
Sections 21, 26, 31, and 36

As the rotation of the estates change with each successive twenty-year rotation, Froebelized is transformed and the countryside's progress is reflected. Here, in your twenty, as several estates entering at construction of the grid, other like clusters appear, along with the opportunity for new neighborly associations.

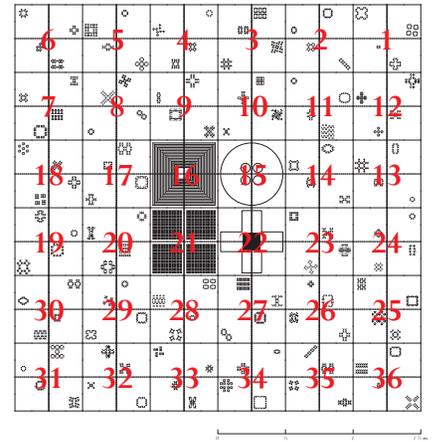


25

Section 1	NE	Elmore Fields	Section 11	NE	Robert West Gardens	Section 21	NE	Belinda Hill
100		Quarantine & Wells	100		Carl's Garden & Culture	100		Building the Green
100		Black Sea Manor	100		Walter's	100		10 Quarters of Queen's Quarters
100		Black Sea Beach	100		New House	100		Blue Hill
Section 2	NE	La Grande Place des Palmes	Section 14	NE	Charles Lacey and Emma's Club	Section 26	NE	Marion's Dream
100		Chapelton Cottage	100		Melbourne Square	100		La Belle Ballroom
100		Black's Square	100		Waldemar's Palace	100		The Suburban Group
100		Black's Square	100		Waldemar's	100		Angels' Hall
Section 3	NE	St. Nicholas Hill	Section 15	NE	Water	Section 27	NE	Imperialist House
100		Woolly's Avenue	100		Water	100		Imperialist
100		Woolly's Avenue	100		Water	100		The British Legion Fields
100		Woolly's Avenue	100		Water	100		The British Legion
Section 4	NE	Grand Water	Section 16	NE	Water	Section 28	NE	BANKERS' AND
100		Grand Water	100		Water	100		Bankers' Bank
100		Grand Water	100		Water	100		Bankers' Bank
100		Grand Water	100		Water	100		Bankers' Bank
Section 5	NE	100	Section 17	NE	100	Section 29	NE	100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
Section 6	NE	100	Section 18	NE	100	Section 30	NE	100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
Section 7	NE	100	Section 19	NE	100	Section 31	NE	100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
Section 8	NE	100	Section 20	NE	100	Section 32	NE	100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
Section 9	NE	100	Section 21	NE	100	Section 33	NE	100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
Section 10	NE	100	Section 22	NE	100	Section 34	NE	100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
Section 11	NE	100	Section 23	NE	100	Section 35	NE	100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
Section 12	NE	100	Section 24	NE	100	Section 36	NE	100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100
100		100	100		100	100		100

The Estates of Froebelized

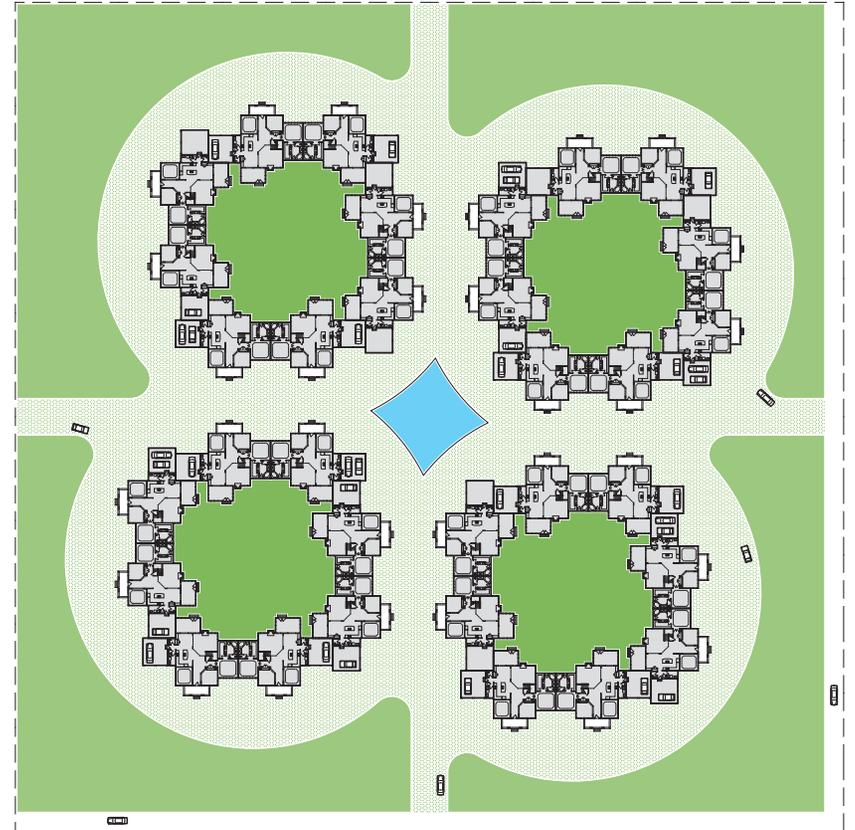
26



27



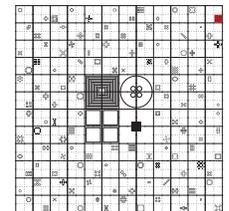
A Traveler Approaches Elysian Fields, Freedomland
 after *The Road in the Bye*, 1881
 Grigoriy Myasoyedov



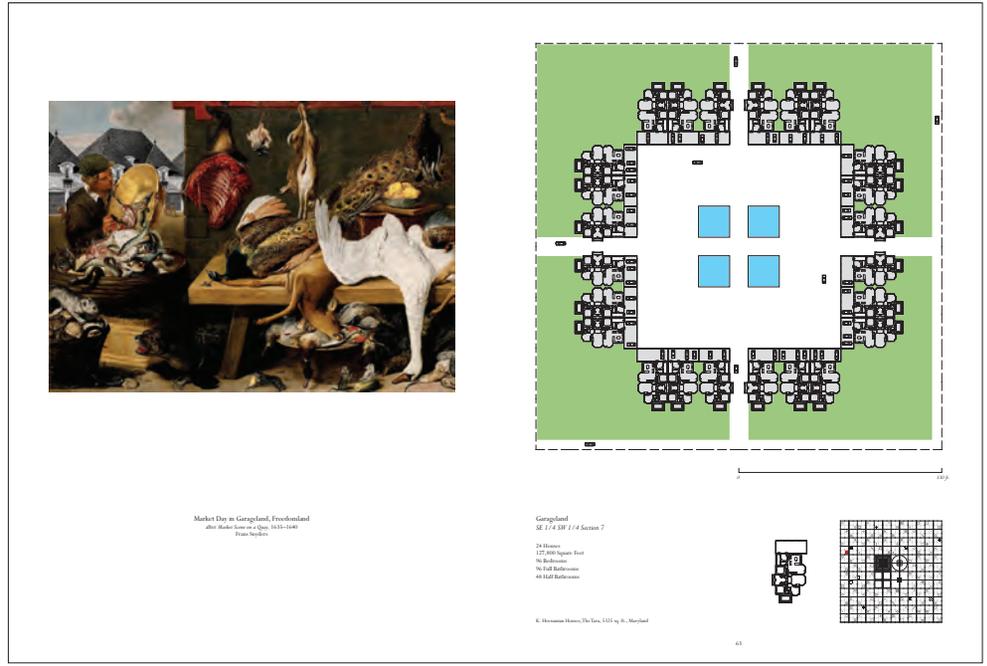
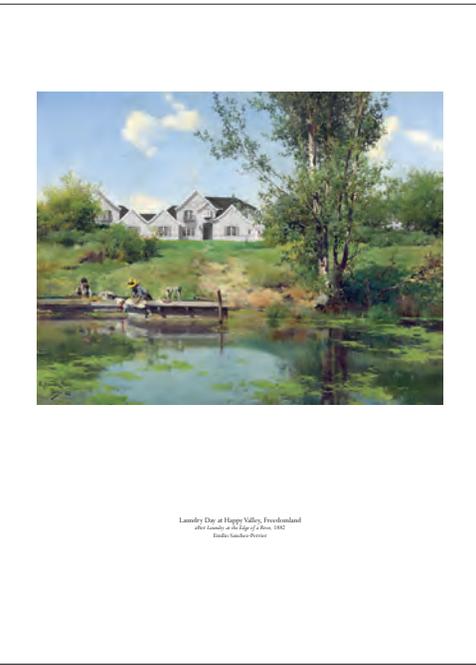
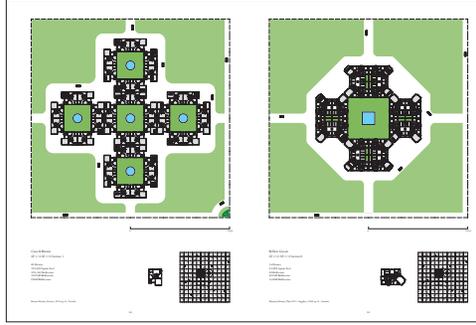
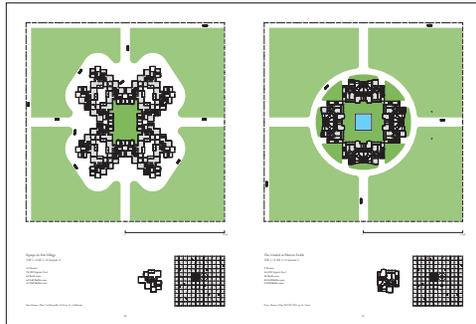
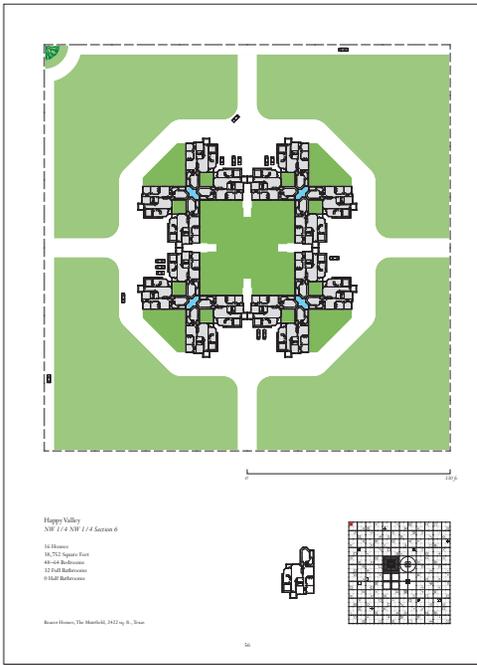
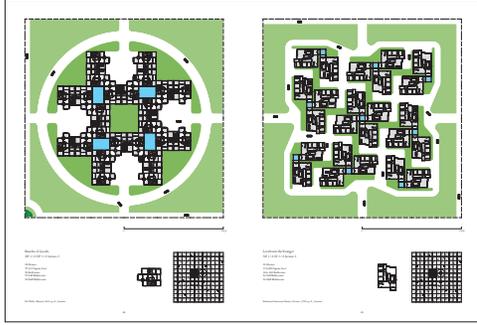
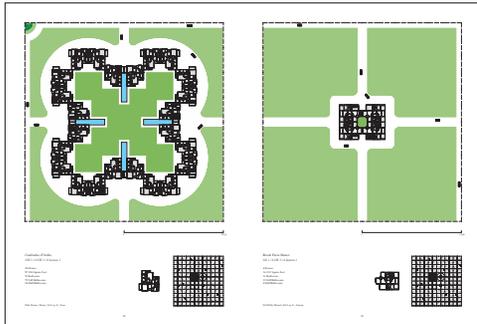
0 330 ft.

Elysian Fields
 SE 1/4 NE 1/4 Section 1

- 32 Houses
- 114,688 Square Feet
- 160 Bedrooms
- 128 Full Bathrooms
- 32 Half Bathrooms

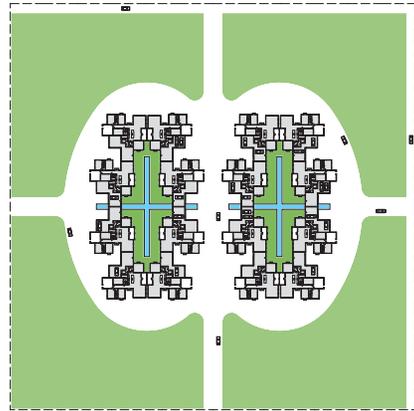


Ryland Homes, The Parson, 3584 sq. ft., Delaware





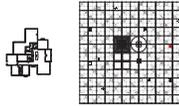
Hunting at the Edge of Freelandland
after Don Fleming, 1932
Arthur Freeland, 1932



Wilbur 8
NE 1/4 SE 1/4 Section 11

- 14 Homes
- 76,000 Square Feet
- 64 Bathrooms
- 64 Half Bathrooms
- 14 Half Bathrooms

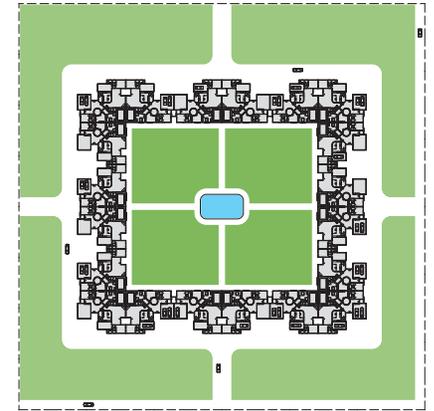
See Homes, Plan for Meadows, 942 sq. ft., California



91



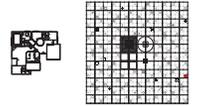
A Romantic Begins at Wilbur 168, Freelandland
after John and Sylvia Rosen, Ruby in Cotton Hat, 1977
George Noble



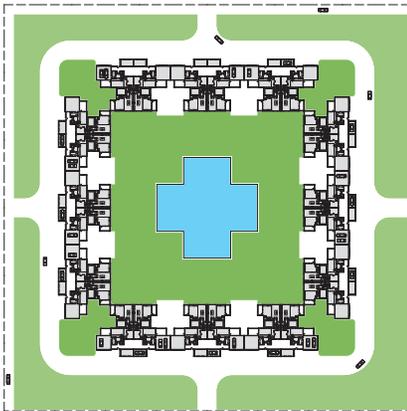
Wilbur 168
SE 1/4 NE 1/4 Section 25

- 20 Homes
- 66,000 Square Feet
- 60 Bathrooms
- 60 Half Bathrooms
- 10 Half Bathrooms

K. Roseman Rosen, Wilbur 168, 1000 sq. ft., Texas



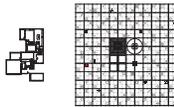
127



The Palace of Don Bartholomew
SW 1/4 SE 1/4 Section 19

- 24 Homes
- 16,200 Square Feet
- 172 Bathrooms
- 16 Half Bathrooms
- 24 Half Bathrooms

Palace Homes, The Process, 1880 sq. ft., Nevada



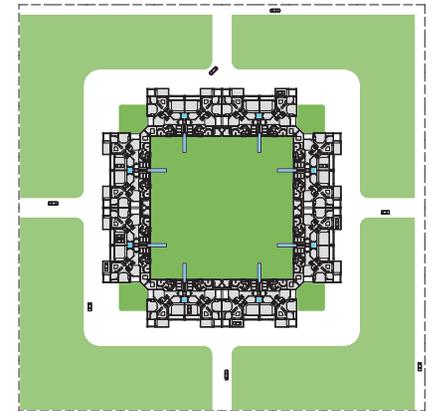
130



Don Bartholomew Meets with Workers at The Palace, Freelandland
after The Canyon of Culture, 1978
Henry Tracy Marks



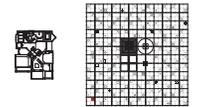
A Crowd Gathers in Forest Forest near Freelandland
after The Canyon of Culture, 1978-1978
Peter Broughall the Younger



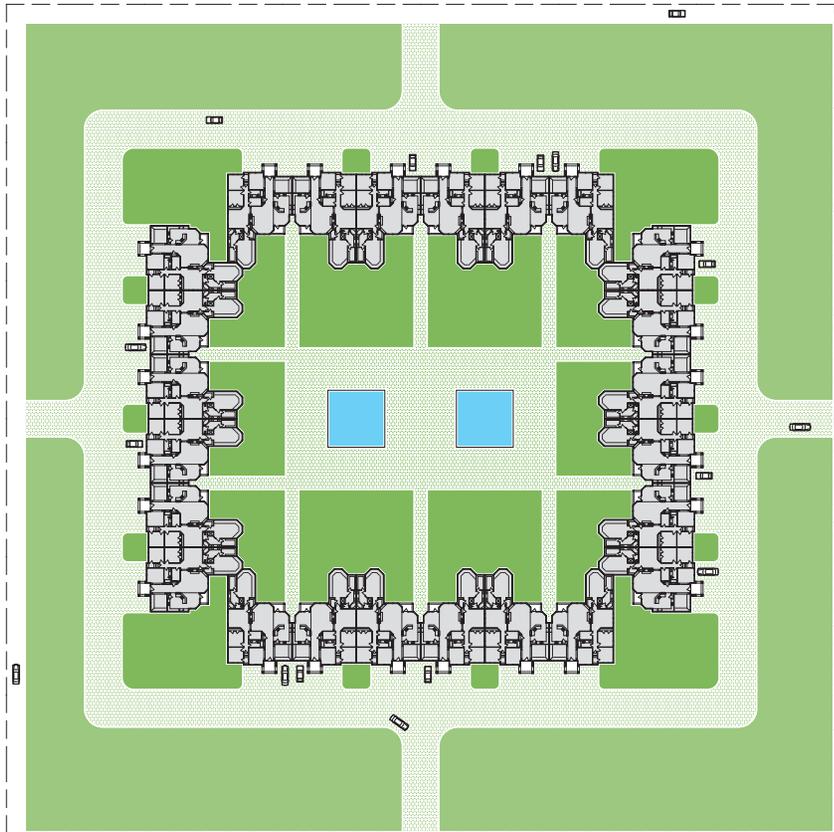
The Big House at Forest Forest
NE 1/4 SE 1/4 Section 11

- 14 Homes
- 71,500 Square Feet
- 400 Bathrooms
- 400 Half Bathrooms
- 14 Half Bathrooms

David Wilbur Homes, The Homes, 4000 sq. ft., Texas



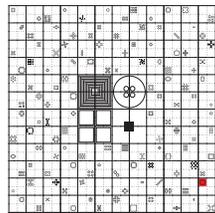
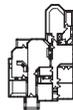
137



0 330 ft.

Parallelogram Park
 NW 1/4 NE 1/4 Section 36

- 24 Houses
- 58,128 Square Feet
- 72-96 Bedrooms
- 48 Full Bathrooms
- 0 Half Bathrooms



Beazer Homes, The Mairfield, 2422 sq. ft., Texas



The Architects of Freedomland
 after *A Group of Danish Artists in Rome, 1837*
 Constantin Hansen



AN APPENDIX

CONTAINING DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE ORIGINS

OF

FREEDOMLAND

INCLUDING

“ATYPICAL PLANS,”

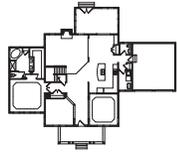
“SUPERMODEL HOMES,”

“SIX TYPICAL PLANS”

&

“NOTES ON FREEDOMLAND”

A View of Life in Freedomland
after *Vue Perspective, L'ovoir et École rurale de Meilland*, 1804
Claude-Nicolas Ledoux



The Homes of Freedomland

(Presented in order of their appearance in the plan, beginning with Section 1)

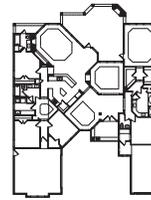
Richard Hoxey, The Plaza, 1934, by R. Hoxey
Section 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1



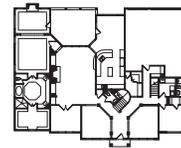
Felix Hoxey, The Manor, 1937, by R. Hoxey
Section 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1

[A]Typical Plan[s]

"Typical Plan," a self-described "mediator" on the American office building, was written by Rem Koolhaas in 1993 and published in S.M.L.M. "[A]Typical Plan[s]" a post-bubble revision, shifts the focus to the American house.



Richard Hoxey, The Plaza, 1934, by R. Hoxey
Section 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1



Robert Hoxey, Verdala, 1971, by R. Hoxey
Section 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1

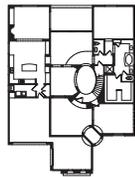
The notion of the atypical plan is **therefore disconcerting**: it is the **beginning and the end of Architectural History**, which is nothing but the **historical fetishization of the proto-typical plan**. [A]Typical Plan[s] **is a re-arrangement of fragments of an unacknowledged utopia**, the promise of a **glorious architectural past and a post-architectural future**.

Just as *The Man Without Qualities* haunts European literature, "the plan without surplus qualities" is the great **achievement of American housebuilding**.

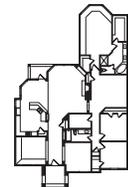
From the late **mid 19th century** to the early **1930s**, there is an **"American century" (and a half)** in which [A]Typical Plan[s] is developed from the **English country house** (with less creation of **luxurious domestic spaces of retreat** through the sheer multiplication of **rooms**) via early masterpieces of **modernist space like the Weissenhof Estate in Stuttgart, Germany (1927)**—to **separately distinct rooms linked by broad**

doorways, **by** **expansive bays and terraces**, the **sheer expansion of its porches**—to provisional

culminations such as **the Eames Building (1947)**, **Charles Moore's Kohn House (1958)** and **Frank Gehry's Gherkin (1996)**. **Robert A. M. Stern's Westchester House (1974-76)**. Together they represent evidence of the discovery and subsequent mastery of a **new, soon to be endlessly multiplied and publicly traded, architecture** **of** **provisional** **and** **reversible** **in** **the** **state** **of** **typical** **plan**.



Ed Noble, Wood, 1937, by R. Hoxey
Section 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1



Robert Hoxey, The Woodland, 1947, by R. Hoxey
Section 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1

[A]Typical Plan[s] is an American invention **fabrication**. It is **They are** **360-degree architecture**, **architecture** **of** **openness** **and** **specificity** **drunk on an excess of space and resources**. **They belong** to the New World.



The notion of the atypical plan is **therefore disconcerting**: it is the **beginning and the end of Architectural History**, which is nothing but the **historical fetishization of the proto-typical plan**. [A]Typical Plan[s] **is a re-arrangement of fragments of an unacknowledged utopia**, the promise of a **glorious architectural past and a post-architectural future**.



The notion of the atypical plan is **therefore disconcerting**: it is the **beginning and the end of Architectural History**, which is nothing but the **historical fetishization of the proto-typical plan**. [A]Typical Plan[s] **is a re-arrangement of fragments of an unacknowledged utopia**, the promise of a **glorious architectural past and a post-architectural future**.



The notion of the atypical plan is **therefore disconcerting**: it is the **beginning and the end of Architectural History**, which is nothing but the **historical fetishization of the proto-typical plan**. [A]Typical Plan[s] **is a re-arrangement of fragments of an unacknowledged utopia**, the promise of a **glorious architectural past and a post-architectural future**.



The notion of the atypical plan is **therefore disconcerting**: it is the **beginning and the end of Architectural History**, which is nothing but the **historical fetishization of the proto-typical plan**. [A]Typical Plan[s] **is a re-arrangement of fragments of an unacknowledged utopia**, the promise of a **glorious architectural past and a post-architectural future**.



The notion of the atypical plan is **therefore disconcerting**: it is the **beginning and the end of Architectural History**, which is nothing but the **historical fetishization of the proto-typical plan**. [A]Typical Plan[s] **is a re-arrangement of fragments of an unacknowledged utopia**, the promise of a **glorious architectural past and a post-architectural future**.



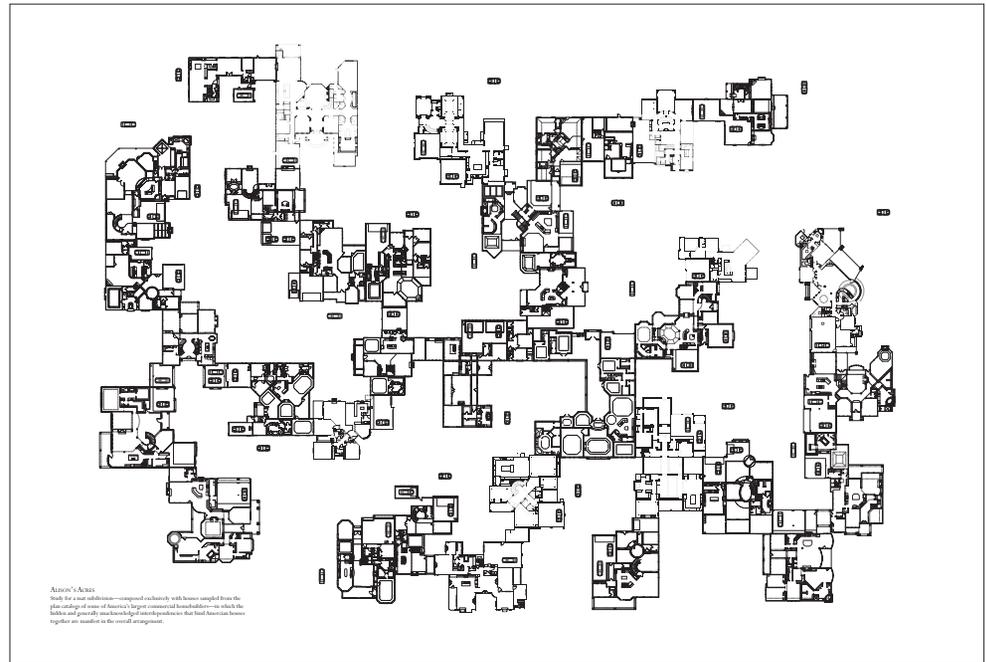
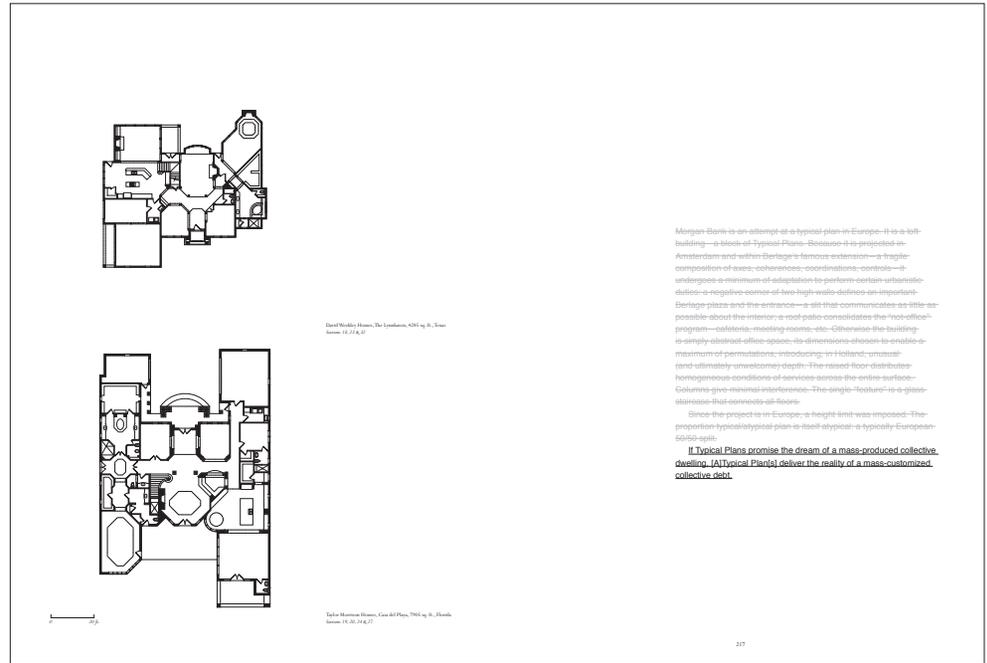
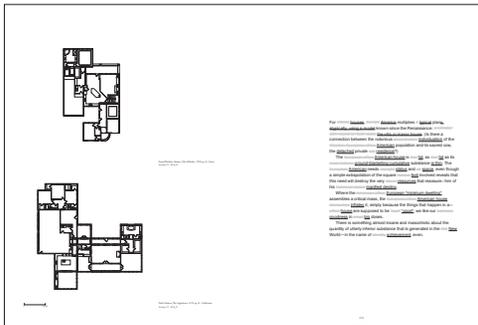
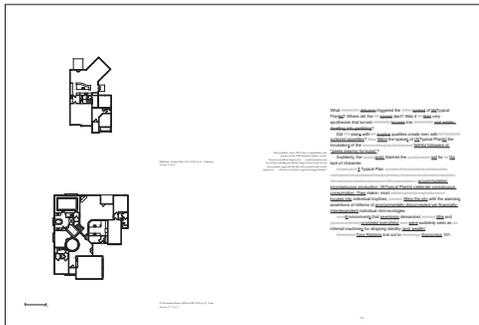
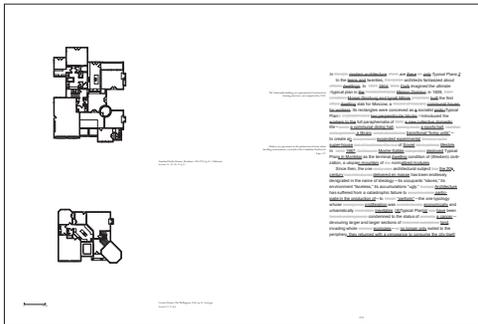
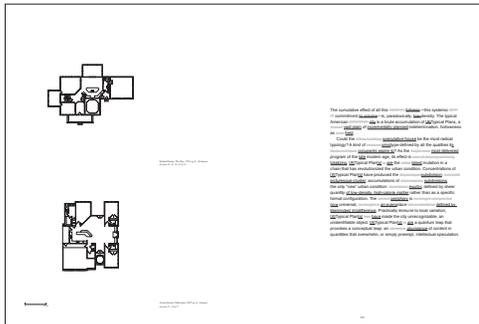
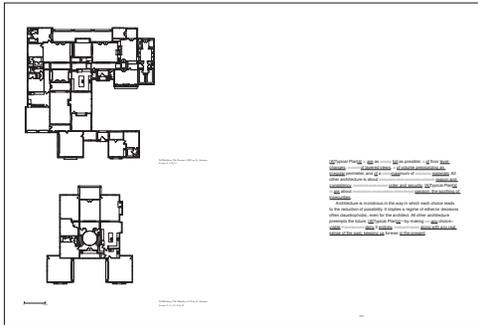
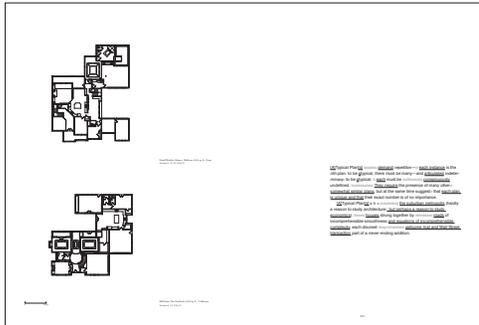
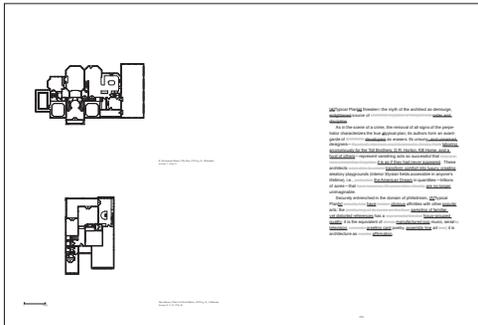
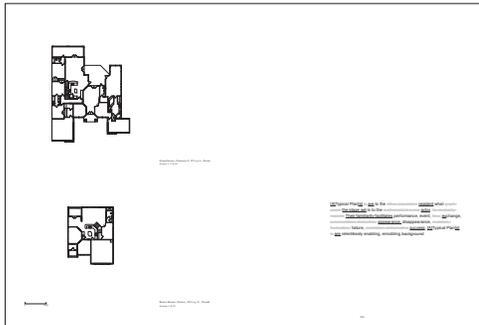
The notion of the atypical plan is **therefore disconcerting**: it is the **beginning and the end of Architectural History**, which is nothing but the **historical fetishization of the proto-typical plan**. [A]Typical Plan[s] **is a re-arrangement of fragments of an unacknowledged utopia**, the promise of a **glorious architectural past and a post-architectural future**.



The notion of the atypical plan is **therefore disconcerting**: it is the **beginning and the end of Architectural History**, which is nothing but the **historical fetishization of the proto-typical plan**. [A]Typical Plan[s] **is a re-arrangement of fragments of an unacknowledged utopia**, the promise of a **glorious architectural past and a post-architectural future**.



The notion of the atypical plan is **therefore disconcerting**: it is the **beginning and the end of Architectural History**, which is nothing but the **historical fetishization of the proto-typical plan**. [A]Typical Plan[s] **is a re-arrangement of fragments of an unacknowledged utopia**, the promise of a **glorious architectural past and a post-architectural future**.





FOUR-SQUARE

LAMINAR

CELLULAR

RECTITUD

NUCLEAR

BRANCHING

SIX TYPICAL PLANS

The suburban single-family house, more than any other object, is the primary symbol of success in America. It is the preeminent representation of its owners' aspirations, its functions to construct individual identity and register personal achievement. To own a home is to live the Dream.¹

American homebuilders have long capitalized on the equation, which binds that house as an object to the Dream as a concept. Over the course of the most recent housing boom, the catalog of available models exploded as builders sought ever more adequate ways of organizing those for their products. These products, the primary building blocks of the contemporary suburban metropolis, are carefully calibrated responses of convenience that connect with, and simultaneously create, the domestic expectations of consumers. What it might seem difficult to categorize these products as architecture, to discern their not-of-hand-at-a-time when much architectural research is dedicated to refurbishing the life of the suburban environment—

to discernment architecture from a line current of contemporary culture. Six, rather than report these models wholesale, it seems necessary to identify and outline the actionable intelligence embedded in them. This requires that we see these houses as architecture and assess them as such.

"Six Typical Plans" is the result of just such an assessment: it is an investigation into the organizational logic that he behind the speculative house's seemingly vernacular facade. The result of a comparative analysis of nearly 1,000 house plans, it illustrates a series of architectural strategies that govern

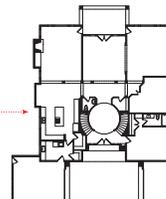
the design of the models deployed by American homebuilders.

The individual plan, as used in the marketing material of a homebuilder, maps out an idea of domesticity, a possible lifestyle for the prospective homebuyer. Many plans, when analyzed critically, offer evidence of an underlying set of an distinct plan type that stems from the core of the homebuilder's arsenal and allow them to deliver different levels of design to a diverse array of homebuyers. Two of these types, Four-square and Laminar, are essentially variations of long-used production house types. The other four types—Cellular, Rectitud, Nuclear, and Branching—call for some relationship to the simpler Four-square and Laminar organizational techniques and offer evidence of the builder's carefully considered reorganization and amplification of familiar domestic arrangements. These primary organizational arrangements are complicated by the layering and combined use of an array of design techniques, including the thickening of surfaces, the exploitation of diagonal lines of sight and movement, the sociographic layering of spaces, and the deployment of distinct room shapes and profiles. Thus, while only six basic types define the canons of the contemporary American production house, an innumerable number of variations, or models, allow the house to be marketed as a contained product, providing a sense of distinctive luxury to each buyer, regardless of income level.

1. "The American Dream: Charles Sheeler's work during the Depression." *Chicago Tribune*, 1934. <http://www.tribune.com>.
 2. "The house as an object." *High Line*, 2010. <http://www.highline.org>.
 3. "The house as an object." *High Line*, 2010. <http://www.highline.org>.
 4. "The house as an object." *High Line*, 2010. <http://www.highline.org>.
 5. "The house as an object." *High Line*, 2010. <http://www.highline.org>.

A TREE OF TYPES

Six primary plan types—Four-square, Laminar, Cellular, Nuclear, Rectitud, and Branching—lie behind the wide variety of their plans offered by contemporary American homebuilders. These types define a core set of organizational arrangements that guide the planning and design of a majority of American houses. While the plans of some houses are near-perfect examples of pure types, most incorporate properties from more than one type, as the types themselves exhibit qualities of morphological transformation. In this regard, a path can be traced from the simplest types, the Four-squares, to the more complex types, noting the organizational similarities and fundamental transformations along the way. It is interesting to note that the average price per square foot increases proportionally as the houses become both larger and more complex. This suggests that the cost of housing today is a function not only of size but also of design.

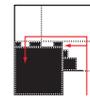
FOUR-SQUARE
Average price per square foot: \$110LAMINAR (Wee)
Average price per square foot: \$135LAMINAR (Deep)
Average price per square foot: \$140CELLULAR
Average price per square foot: \$142BRANCHING
Average price per square foot: \$150NUCLEAR
Average price per square foot: \$173RECTITUD
Average price per square foot: \$187

The Four-square becomes the Laminar as multiple rooms either by elongation or subdividing. When elongated, the plan is stretched out as a linear sequence of rooms. The first four spaces, thereby producing two long bars side by side. The process of subdividing rooms by adding space to the sides of the bars, producing three compared to three or more spaces.

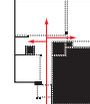
Cellular plans are organized as systems of rooms to maximize circulation. The plan is an equivalent to the spaces that comprise the most complex variety of the Four-square but is constructed by single principles.

Nuclear plans are often similar to Cellular plans for an elongated plan for a type of living control space. This offers an exterior control, particularly for the bar that runs, but some times a central kitchen or living room that serves as a hub around which the other residential functions orbit.

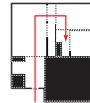
The branching paths in the circulation of branching houses are a further design move of the half-based strategy found in the Rectitud type. The branching method is frequently used in wider houses to fit small, corner spaces on the plan. Branching handles the designed here also accounts for perspective scale.



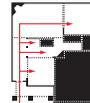
E.R. House, Plan 1906, 1806 sq. ft., Georgia



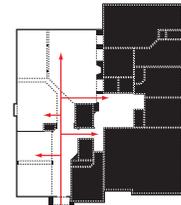
David Wickey House, The Stranahan, 2009 sq. ft., Georgia



Bauer House, Hartford, 2792 sq. ft., Indiana



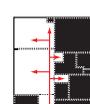
Richard Homes, The Prescott, 2004 sq. ft., Georgia



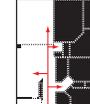
David Wickey House, The Central, 1859 sq. ft., Texas

FOUR-SQUARE PLANS
Four-square plans, typically of modest size and often compact, tend toward a two-bar arrangement with roughly centered entrances. Clear descendants of the traditional Four-square house, these plans are defined by spaces of relatively equal size grouped two by two in a more or less square formation, as shown here in The Hartford from Bauer House (shown as E.R. House), modestly sized (and named) Plan 1906. In most contemporary interpretations one of the quadrants is a garage. Often, an element usually found only in larger, more "formal" houses—such as the dining room in Richard Homes' The Prescott—will be nested into one of the quadrants. Other elements, such as the oversized entry column on The Prescott, are often added to the simple Four-square type to give it a greater sense of stature. A Four-square organization can be read in some plans even as the house begins to pull and grow. The Central from David Wickey exhibits a super-Four-square order but is beginning to reveal something more akin to Laminar, or even Cellular, arrangement.

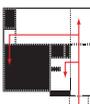
LAMINAR PLANS
One of the most commonly used types, Laminar plans use a layered formation of rooms and spaces to create linear organizational strips. The rooms can be quite regular with only the simplest internal subdivisions and cross-grain circulation serving connections across and between bands. The clearest examples of this type simply extend the bars of the Four-square either vertically, as in The Adams from Bauer House, or horizontally as in Plan 2008 from E.R. House. Two- and three-bar versions of this type have limited circulation between the strips, thereby creating more distinct zones (e.g., master bedroom and children's rooms) within each band. Laminar plans are often quite simple, taking the form of just two bands with a clear linear boundary dividing them and a narrow cleft dividing the entry. Other Laminar schemes are more complex in terms of the number of layers, sometimes resulting—as in David Wickey's The Parthenon—as a classic center hall column with layers added to one side to accommodate the garage, and in this case, the increasingly common extra-large "batter's room." Superficial Laminar plans, such as The Marlar from Tell Brothers, tend to grow laterally, adding band after band as the number of public rooms (and garages) accumulates in the more high-end houses. With an accumulation of rooms, this plan also suggests the next of the six types: the Cellular.



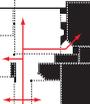
Bauer House, The Adams, 1577 sq. ft., North Carolina



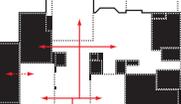
David Wickey House, The Parthenon, 1906 sq. ft., Texas



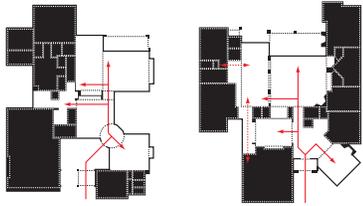
E.R. House, Plan 2008, 2008 sq. ft., Florida



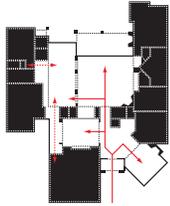
David Wickey House, The Parthenon, 1906 sq. ft., Texas



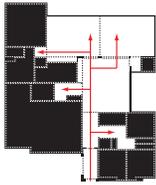
Tell Brothers, The Marlar, 1277 sq. ft., California



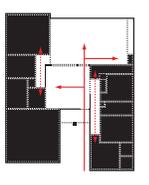
Standard Pacific Homes, Roseville, 116,473 sq. ft., California



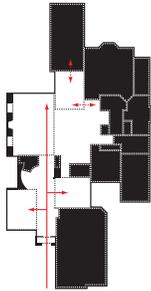
David Weekley Homes, Plan 3276, 4086 sq. ft., Texas



KB Home, Plan Five, 2724 sq. ft., California



KB Home, Madeline, 2126 sq. ft., California

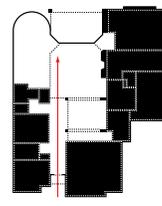


T&L Brothers, St. Michel, 1600 sq. ft., Texas

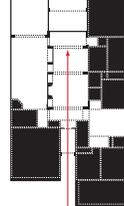
CELLULAR PLANS

Cellular plans are built from more or less regular clusters of rooms and other spaces that are lined up along hallways or passed directly one to another with no immediately perceptible overall order. Sprinkling or compact, thin schemes can produce the appearance of rooms piled on top of rooms, in which hierarchies between programs and spaces are obscured. In its more compact form, the cellular type can be used to create fairly efficient plans. Still, cellular schemes are more typically found in large plans with many rooms, a loose or rigid envelope, and drifting and disjointed circulation paths, such as David Weekley's Plan 3276 or the T&L Brothers' St. Michel, both in Texas.

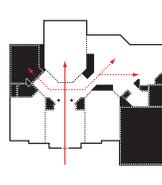
These plans almost never rely on symmetry—and rarely on an overall formal planning strategy—yet they often still produce expected programmatic adjacencies. In fact, while it is an extremely vague type, primarily due to the loose, room-by-room planning techniques, cellular plans often incorporate familiar elements from the other categories. T&L Brothers' mainline St. Michel plan betrays traces of Laminar logic. KB Home's Madeline anticipates the characteristics of Biocell schemes in being very full but ends in a large family room and in beginning to suggest a Nuclear organization centered around an what is referred to as a "box space," just inside the front entry.



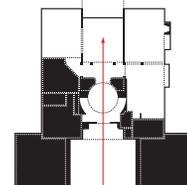
K. Hovnanian Homes, Brookbrook II, 4911 sq. ft., Texas



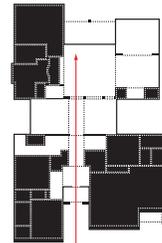
Mortgage Homes, Overhill, 3037 sq. ft., Arizona



NV Homes, The Monticello, 4923 sq. ft., Virginia



T&L Brothers, The Mirador, 5121 sq. ft., Arizona



Mortgage Homes, The Privilege, 4647 sq. ft., Arizona

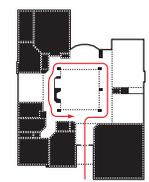
BIOCELL PLANS

In Biocell plans the axis through the entrance and a dominant central living space defines the main organizational structure of the house. The most classical of the types, it frequently produces symmetrical or near-symmetrical arrangements. Often the Biocell plan uses symmetry and inflated proportions, both outside and in, to generate a feeling of heft and weight. T&L Brothers' The Mirador, with ambitious tonal palette and grandiose, over-two-story-rooms arranged two or three to a grand formal entry.

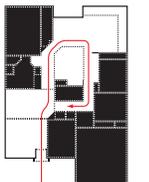
Other versions of the Biocell plan, such as Mortgage Homes' Overhill, lack the grand formal gestures of The Mirador while retaining the organizational principle of rooms and spaces with a clear axial connection from the front entry to a rear public room. Often Laminar in their basic layout, these plans frequently have a relatively compact perimeter.

Single-story Biocell plans, like Mortgage Homes' Plan 2042, sometimes employ a cross axis of major rooms to further subdivide the plan into distinct sections. Versions of the Biocell type, like K. Hovnanian's Brookbrook II, can appear nearly Cellular in their planning but are differentiated by the clear separation of a central space for circulation and gathering purposes.

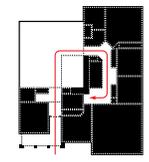
Finally, Biocell plans can begin to express qualities of the axial type, the Branching plan. The Monticello from NV Homes shows the clear central axis from front to back that characterizes the Biocell type, but because of its wide Laminar structure, a defined level of circulation is added that branches off from the main axis to serve the house's other public spaces.



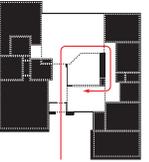
David Weekley Homes, The Wilcox, 2400 sq. ft., Texas



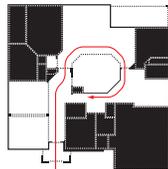
Bazaar Homes, Bazaar, 2300 sq. ft., Texas



KB Home, Plan One, 2157 sq. ft., California



KB Home, Plan Three, 2014 sq. ft., California

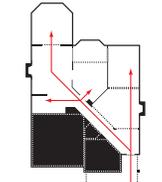


David Weekley Homes, The Crawford, 2711 sq. ft., Florida

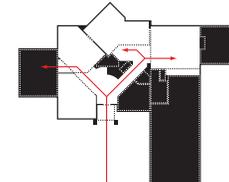
NUCLEAR PLANS

Nuclear plans, while often displaying traces of underlying Laminar and Biocell organizations, are characterized by a central space like a kitchen, living room, or courtyard around which the other spaces in the house orbit. The central space is either centrally enveloped by circulation spaces. The Wilcox from David Weekley closely approximates the Nuclear diagram in its pure form. In this plan, a central kitchen—the main living room—is surrounded by a perfect ring of circulation to which all of the other spaces in the house are more or less directly attached. In another David Weekley house, The Crawford, the central space is the kitchen. It is again surrounded by a ring of circulation. Not in this instance it opens only to the family room at the back of the house. The bedrooms, each in their own corner, enter this space. KB Home's Plan One is similar, but the ring of circulation is incomplete, creating a kind of domestic ad-hoc use of bedrooms.

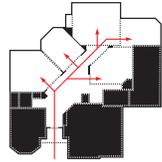
In Plan Three, also from KB Home, the circulation ring wraps around the kitchen and connects back through an open dining nook at the front of the house. This scheme further demonstrates the kind of sharing that occurs between and across plan types. It is to name merely a Biocell plan in which the central axis has been displaced by the nucleus of the kitchen.



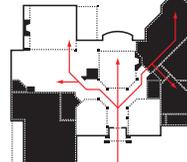
Bazaar Homes, The Franklin, 1200 sq. ft., Maryland



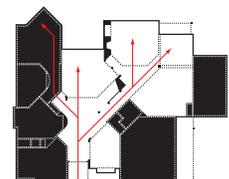
T&L Brothers, The Mirador, 4001 sq. ft., Colorado



Centex Homes, Shenandoah, 3434 sq. ft., Georgia



David Weekley Homes, The Lyndonian, 4521 sq. ft., Texas



David Weekley Homes, The Kratos, 4477 sq. ft., Texas

BRANCHING PLANS

All Branching plans share the distinguishing feature of a tree of branching circulation routes that originate at the entry to the house. This arrangement accentuates lines of sight and movement, which exaggerates perceived dimensions and distorts the relationships between spaces. In smaller, more compact houses, this effect is even more pronounced, as in Bazaar Homes' The Franklin, where a diagonal path from the entrance at the front to the family room at the back creates a longer line of sight, amplifying the apparent scale of the house.

Branching plans often combine properties of the Biocell type—a dominant central entrance hall—with operating iterations of the Cellular or Laminar types, displaying diagonal lines of circulation to stitch the rooms of the house together as the plan grows deeper (Centex Homes' Shenandoah) or wider (T&L Brothers' The Mirador).

The bifurcating, diagonal circulation routes in this type commonly produce highly figured plans, like David Weekley's The Lyndonian, composed of distinctly shaped rooms with chamfered corners, projecting bays, and layered spatial sequences. The oblique paths often also result in rooms rotated against the regular, orthogonal geometry of the house as can be seen in the Mirador plan from T&L Brothers. These rotations and internal embellishments often result in figured and irregular building envelopes as can be seen in all of the plans shown here.

While most builders have plans based on this scheme, it is used to the greatest effect by David Weekley, the master of the Branching plan, whose complex, layered plans—such as The Lyndonian and The Kratos—incorporate multiple branching paths, chamfered spatial boundaries, and contoured room profiles.



The Architect
after *The Misanthrope*, 1568
Pieter Bruegel the Elder

NOTES ON FREEDOMLAND

Constituting opinions and remarks on the nature
and context of the work

1 The notes hereto subjoined, contain sundry remarks upon the foregoing Designs; and as far as they go, and may happen to meet with the reader's approbation, they may be looked upon as so many architectural Maxims or Aphorisms: but previous thereto, I hope I shall stand excused, if by way of relaxation, from the dry exercise of measuring plans, I indulge in a few Miscellaneous observations and reflections, just as they happen to rise in my mind. The reader will, perhaps, now and then, be led a little from the point; but when that happens, it is hoped, the step or two he may take out of the main path, may lead him to some thing, not totally uninteresting, or unconnected with the matter in hand, although, perhaps, not always entirely original.¹

2 He who borrows an idea . . . and so accommodates it to his own work, that it makes a part of it, with no seam or joining appearing, can hardly be charged with plagiarism. . . . But an artist should not be contented with this only; he should enter into a competition with his original, and endeavor to improve what he is appropriating to his own work. Such imitation is . . . a perpetual exercise of the mind, a continual invention.² Nothing can come of nothing; he who has laid up no materials can produce no combinations.³

3 Like the combination of sounds, which is capable of producing new music to infinity, design and invention in Architecture . . . are in little danger of being exhausted by the most acute and persevering genius that ever did, or ever will exist. Many treatises have contained nothing more than a different arrangement of the same materials, and the very best have still left an ample field for the unlimited excursions of taste and fancy.⁴

4 Over the length and breadth of this country are scattered cities and villages by thousands, and public and private edifices innumerable; and yet we may fairly say, there are the buildings, but where is the architecture? There is the matter, but where is the manner? There is the opportunity, but where is the agreeable result? . . . Why is there comparatively so little beauty in American buildings?⁵

5 In a country like this, where the printing-press accompanies each stride that is made into new localities, and where every step is marked by a building of some sort, it seems inconsistent that there should be but little popular literature on architectural matters; yet such is undoubtedly the fact, and although Americans are certainly diligent readers and energetic builders, their habit of reading has scarcely had so much influence for good on their habit of building.⁶ Without recourse to a book of designs, the builder must in his own plans be necessarily tame and uniform, his edifices will be but a copy of each other, and that which he intended for an improvement, may, in reality, be a deformity.⁷

NEW HOMES FOR AMERICA

A very short architectural story

Working feverishly through the night on her new assignment, the architect shuffled through The Company's catalog of home plans, searching for the perfect profiles, the right balance of expression and order, natural embellishment and ordered meaning. Huddled over the machine, she made copy after copy, rereading the plans as she went, slipping over a hot bare or a blank sheet, and then matching it to its intended neighbor. She was on a deadline. Her employer wanted something new, something bigger and better—for all those empty rooms whose green children with children were returning, all those new, expanded families—but not something too new. "Work with what we have," they told her. "We know how to build these things."

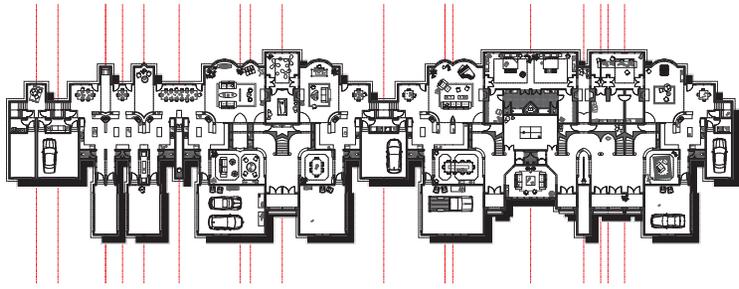
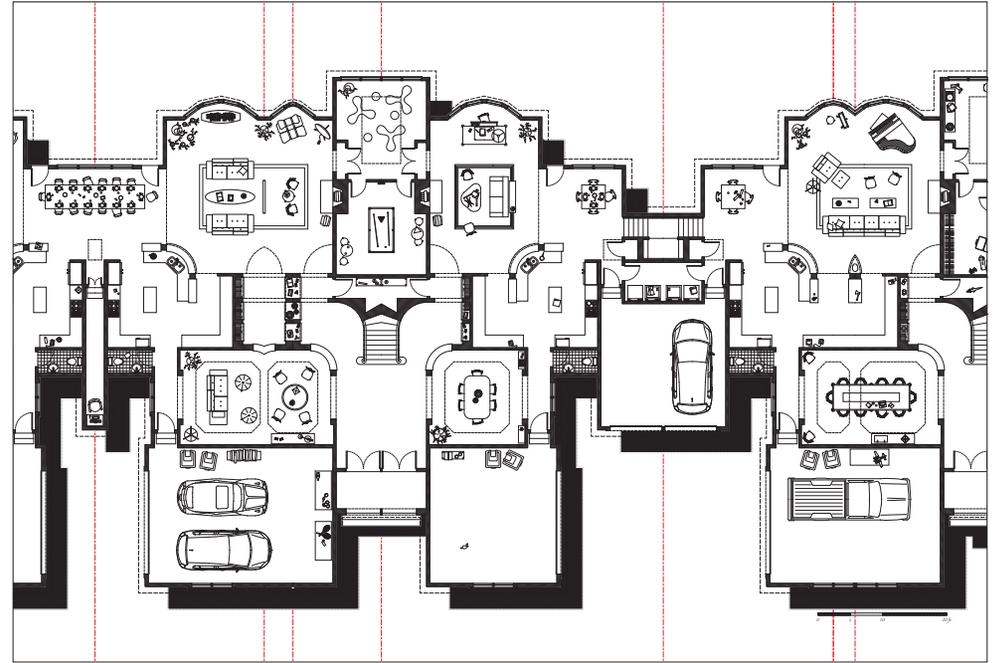
She remembered laughing derisively under her breath when the HR rep, reading aloud from the latest site brochure, described LifeDesign™ as the new reality: "Remember, you're not just designing homes, you're designing lives. Because as the boss says, 'LifeDesign™' blends the fundamentals of design, architecture, engineering, physics, psychology, and sociology to create a home that looks better—and lives better—than all the rest." At the time it sounded absolutely absurd, but now, she got it. And now, as her bones grew ever larger and more elaborate, she laughed aloud with uncontrollable glee as she imagined the fantastic new lives that would unfold along their length.

As day broke, she stood up and stepped back from the table, exhausted. She surveyed her creations, and she was happy. There it struck her: her homes needed names. The

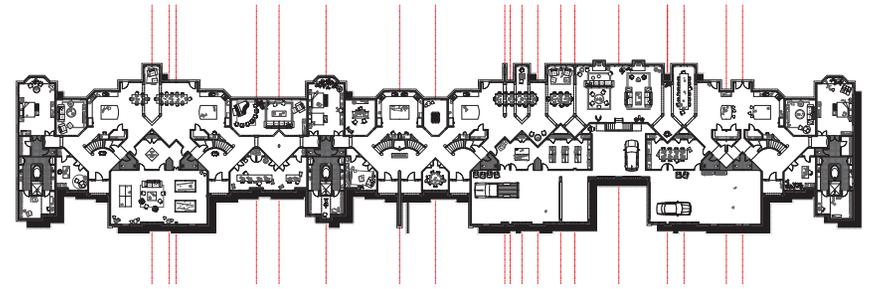
Company always named their plans. And they always used names that, through association, lent an air of sophistication or gravitas to their products. There were the plans named after Italian cities—The Verona, The Rome, The Pisa, The Milano—or famous artists (or architects)—The Picasso, The Rembrandt, The Van Gogh, The Palladio—or the Founding Fathers—The Washington, The Hamilton, The Franklin, The Jefferson. The names rarely had anything to do with the actual design—though occasionally a design resembling Mount Vernon might be called The Mount Vernon.

She realized that she wanted her homes to have names that were meaningful, names with history, names that spoke to her wild aspirations for the lives of those who would eat and drink, and laugh and cry, and love and hate in them. Then it came to her.

At the design meeting later that morning, she presented the fruits of her labor: The Buckingham, The Lockton, The Frontier, and The Crown. She could feel the look on her boss' face that she wasn't going to be around much longer.

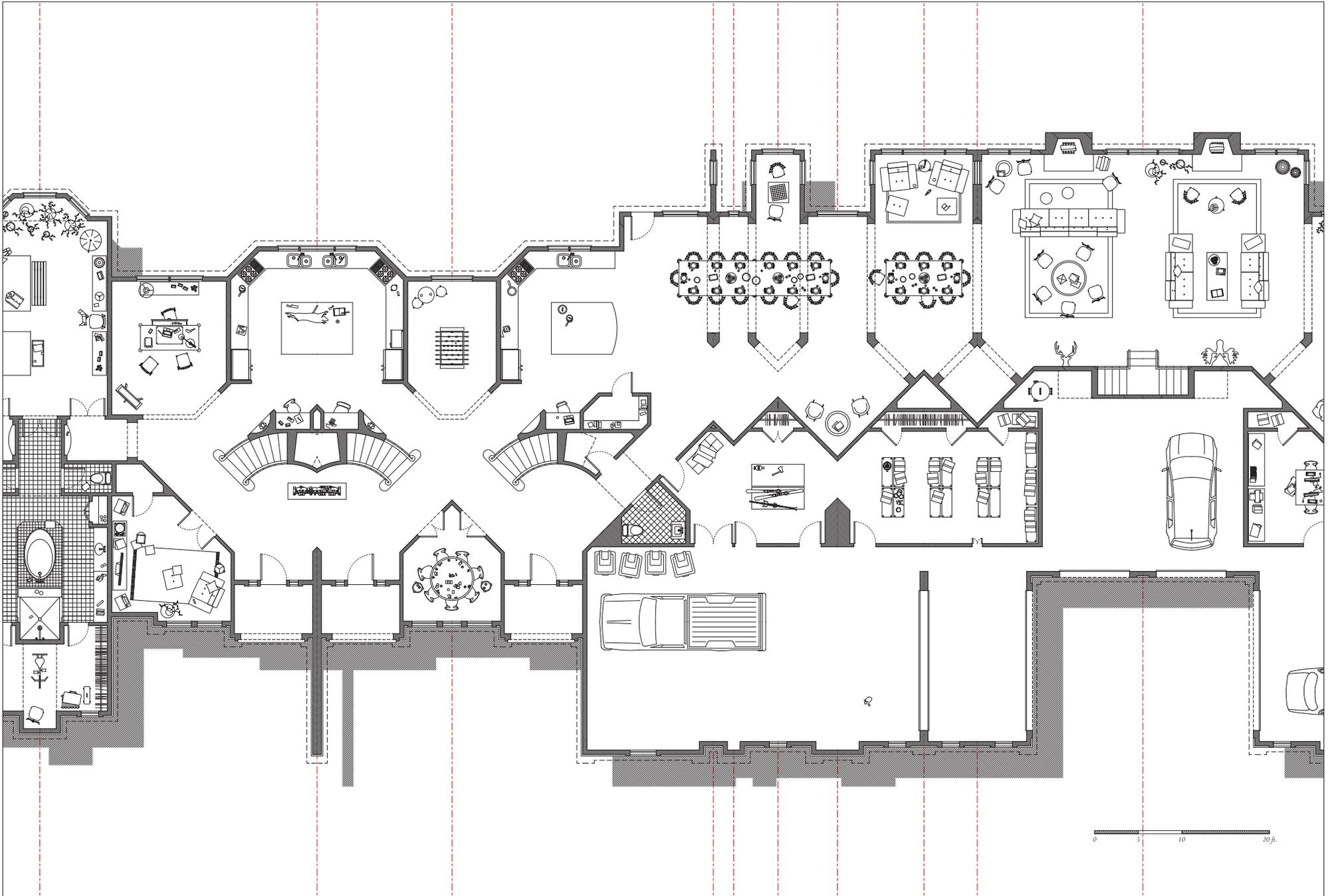


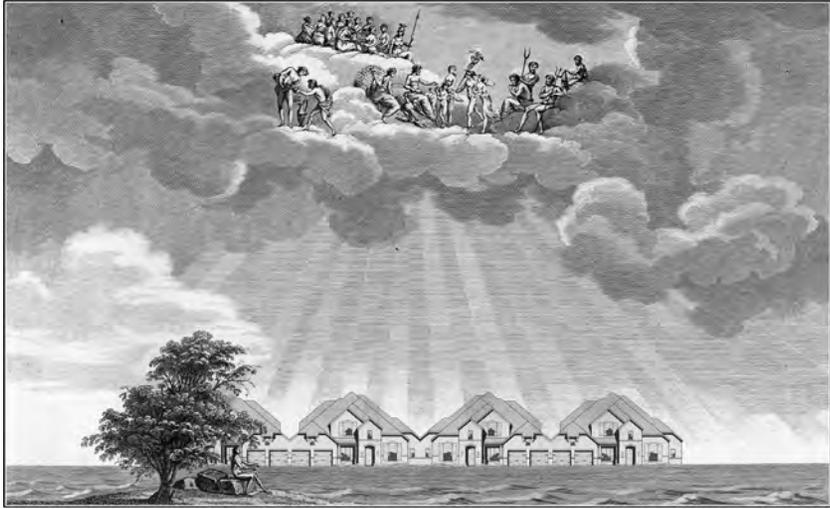
The Lockton
also 500 Bsq. - Magnolia model



The Crown
also 500 Bsq. - Carriage model







L'Abri de la Bourgeoisie
after *L'Abri du Pauvre*, 1804
Claude-Nicolas Ledoux