

## **Richard Sommer: *dossier***

\_2-4

### **Personal Statement**

\_5-6

cover feature: **Turning Full Circle: One Spadina Crescent, University of Toronto**  
Ken Greenberg, *Canadian Architect*, October 2017

*public programming*

\_7-10

**New Circadia: adventures in mental spelunking**  
inaugural exhibition, *Architecture and Design Gallery*, Daniels Faculty 2019-20  
Concept, Design and Curation in collaboration with *Pillow Culture*, NYC

\_11

**Daniels Faculty, New Identity and Poster Series**  
Collaborations, 2011-20  
Bruce Mau Design (Identity) Catalogtree, MTWTH (Graphic Design)

\_12-14

**Symposia and Conferences Organized**  
1995 – 2018

*writing sample*

\_15-16

**“Time Incorporated: The Romantic Life of the Modern Monument”**  
*Harvard Design Magazine*, Number 9, 1999

*representative design and exhibition projects 1990 – 2010*

\_17

**The Democratic Monument in America, 1900-2000**  
traveling exhibition

\_18

**Olympic Games Cleft Auto Park: Georgia Dome**  
premiated competition entry: Olympics, Atlanta, Georgia

\_19

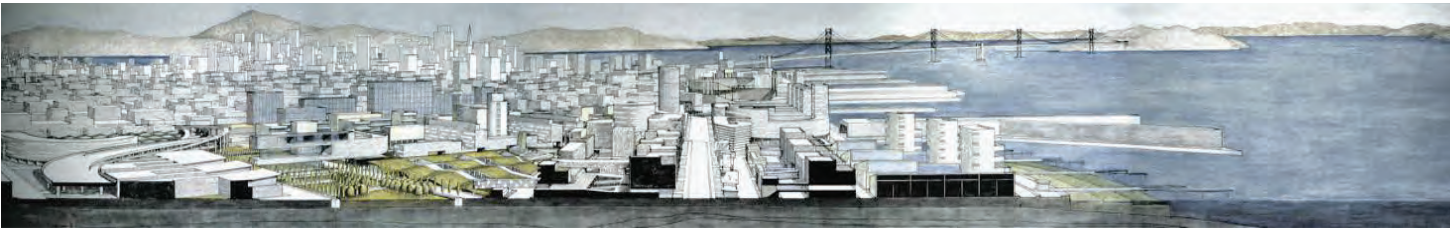
**Neopolitan Plan for Hell’s Kitchen / Hudson Yards**  
commissioned study: HKNA & Storefront for Art and Architecture exhibition  
Manhattan / West Side, New York

\_20

**Plan for Mission Bay**  
commissioned study and exhibition: San Francisco, California

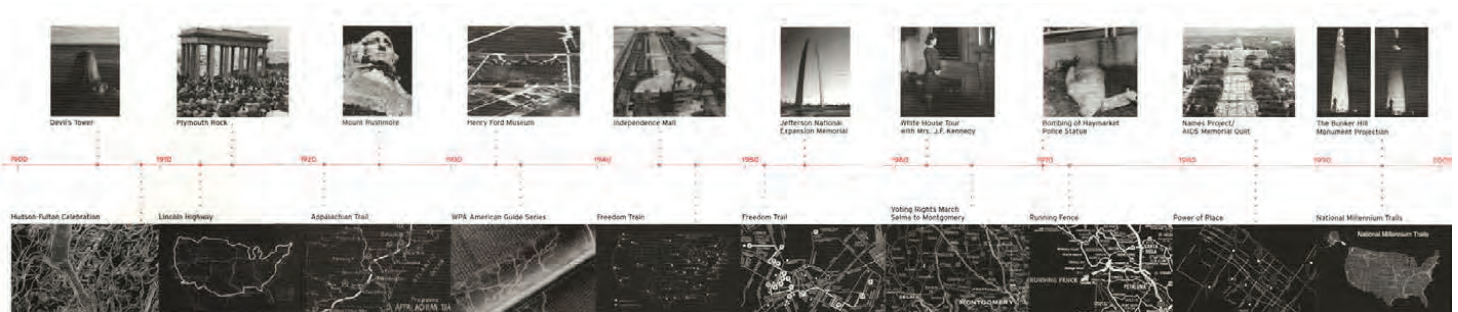
## Personal Statement

The CV that accompanies this dossier provides an account of the different places, roles, and activities that led to my current role as Professor, and Dean of the Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design at the University of Toronto. What my CV perhaps does not reveal is the diverse path I have taken in my development as a teacher, scholar, and designer. After completing my studies at the Rhode Island School of Design and Harvard GSD, my first ten years out of school were itinerant, moving between practice and teaching. When I started, I was trying to emulate the teacher-practitioners that had been my models and mentors, pursuing a practice with small projects, writing, competitions, and organizing symposia and exhibitions. During this time, I was focused on teaching as a means to develop ideas, and cultivate a community of students and peers. When I took my first teaching post at Iowa State, I had little or no knowledge of tenure, or understanding of the hierarchies and politics of colleges and universities. The roles I had at Iowa State, Columbia, Washington University, the California College of the Arts (as a scholar-in-residence) and the travelling I did under the Wheelwright Fellowship were critical to my development as a teacher, and to the formation of the program of research I have pursued as a scholar and designer. After my initial, itinerant years, the eleven years that followed at Harvard GSD were a period of focus and maturation. While at Harvard GSD, I also served as the O'Hare Chair in Design and Development and Visiting American Scholar at the University of Ulster (2005-10), where I worked with government agencies, academics, and other groups to develop proposals for the design of Northern Ireland's cities and towns as they were emerging from "The Troubles." It was during this period that I reconciled myself to the reality that not only by circumstance, but by choice, I had become more of a professor than a practitioner.



25-foot-long panorama: project and exhibition for Mission Bay, San Francisco, 1996-97

My teaching, research, writing, and creative work take the complex geography, culture, technology, politics, and historiography of the contemporary city as a starting point for pursuing a more synthetic, cosmopolitan architecture and urbanism. This work has evolved along two related lines, both concerned with the intersections between architecture, cities, and the politics of democracy. The first line, more applied and professionally oriented, reconceives urban design by strengthening the architect's role in city-building in light of contradictory forces – on the one hand, increasing requirements for democratic representation and community participation in planning processes, and on the other, the retreat of public sector actors that has come with the growing dominance of private real-estate markets in the construction of the city. Much of my teaching and curricular reform at Harvard GSD, the applied research I conducted in Northern Ireland, and my current leadership of "SuperStudio" at UoFT (a collaborative studio in which all of our Architecture, Landscape and Urban Design Students share the same brief) revolves around the theme of developing design methods to better manage the competing constituencies at play in almost any significant urban project. The second line of my work is a long term, historically-focused research project, pursued, in-part, with collaborator Glenn Forley, examines the transformation of monument-making in societies aspiring towards democracy, with a particular focus on the American experience. Recently, this has led to a focus on the way architecture models time ('deep,' historical, and mediated, see: New Circadia)



timeline: Democratic Monument in America, 1900-2000, Exhibition, 2000-02

I have had research, teaching and administrative experiences at a small private art college, a land grant university, and leading research universities in the U.S., Europe, and Canada, both public and private. These academic contexts have given me a wide perspective to draw on. From the beginning of my career, I have tackled the most essential tasks associated with operating a successful school of architecture: studio teacher and curriculum coordinator; lecturer and seminar leader, mentor to students, and advisor to student organizations. As I continued to teach, I also led





Perhaps my boldest achievement at UofT was imagining a site and building platform to serve the school's expanded mission. Opened in 2017, the Daniels Building at One Spadina Crescent reinvigorated one of Toronto's great civic landmarks, and is now catalyzing renewal at the western edge of the University's main downtown campus. The building features Fabrication Facilities, Exhibition Galleries, a spectacular polychrome Main Hall, and light-filled Design Studios unique in North America today. Celebrated as "one of the best buildings in Canada of the past decade" by the Canada's paper-of-record, the Globe and Mail, the Daniels Building at One Spadina has been widely published and received seventeen national and international design awards to-date. I count as one of my most important achievements as Dean that I was able to convince the University's leadership and others in the city and surrounding communities that we had the vision and could garner the financial support to undertake this large and complex 95M dollar project. Working closely with a multi-disciplinary team led by Nader Tehrani and Katie Faulkner of NADAAA, I have fought harder to realize this project than perhaps anything else in my professional life. I have literally put my job and reputation at stake to make sure critical aspects of this project's architecture and landscape would be achieved in way that would properly represent the school's newfound prominence and expanded prospects for the future. The design and configuration of the Faculty's new home embodies many of aspirations I have for the role that schools of architecture can play in the life of students, universities, cities, and the communities in which they sit. The Faculty just began its third year at One Spadina, and the building is helping to both transform the culture of the faculty, and the city that surrounds it.

As I prepare to complete my second term as a dean next year, and plan a return to my life as a professor, I have begun to reflect on the six schools where I have served, the diverse opportunities and circumstances they have presented, and my role within them. In each of these schools, I have sought to foster the kinds of creative environments and learning opportunities that would best serve students, my colleagues, and the broader communities at play. Becoming a dean has helped me to better realize, and develop, the skills and perspectives to orchestrate and promote the work of others. Along the way I have engaged thousands of students, and been a mentor to many individuals who have gone onto have prominent careers in academia, practice, and industry, some now with tenure, leading their own schools. As I have taken on increasing administrative and leadership roles over the course of my career, I have stayed engaged as a designer and scholar, and have never lost sight of the entrepreneurship and tenaciousness required to teach and undertake research in architecture and its allied disciplines. I understand the necessarily fragile nature of architecture within an institutional culture dedicated to research and creative inquiry through the making of things, and am deeply committed to it.



*Daniels Faculty @1 Spadina Crescent, looking south towards Lake Ontario*





cover feature: *Canadian Architect*, 2017



CANADIAN  
ARCHITECT



PM#43096012 OCT/17 V.62 N.50 \$6.95

Nader Tehrani &  
Richard Sommer



## TURNING FULL CIRCLE

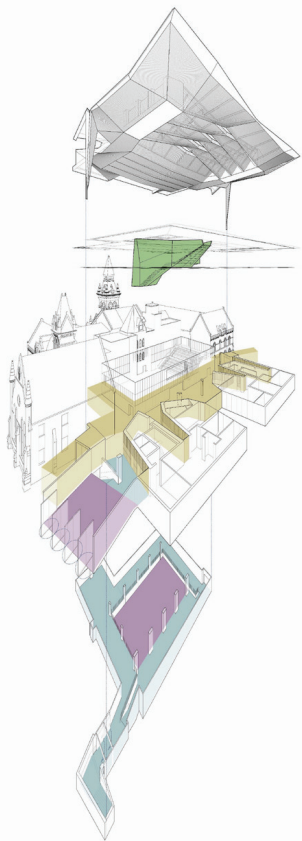


THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO'S  
NEW ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL  
TRANSFORMS A NEIGHBOURHOOD

PROJECT Daniels Building for the John H. Daniels  
Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design  
at the University of Toronto  
ARCHITECTS NADAAA with Adamson Associates,  
ERA Architects and Public Work  
TEXT Ken Greenberg  
PHOTOS John Horner







Established in 1890, University of Toronto's architecture school—of which I am an alumnus—has migrated to several makeshift locations over the years before landing in a purpose-built building. It has finally found its permanent home as the new Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design at the University of Toronto in a remarkable feat of form-making, site planning and city building.

The lead architects, Nader Tehrani and Katherine Faulkner of Boston-based NADAAA, apply the metaphor of "landscape" to the whole project, describing it as an occupy-able ground plane of layered strata whose topography has been manipulated inside and out, seemingly enlarging the terrain. Working with local architect Adamson Associates, heritage architect ERA and landscape architects Public Work, they seized as an opportunity to reshape the edge of the campus from hard border to interlacing blurred boundary, fluid and interpenetrating.

The circle known as One Spadina Crescent had been an idiosyncratic punctuation point and 19th-century touch of gentility in a patchwork of streets stitched together in a quasi-grid. Until now this circle has projected the unfulfilled promise of something special. In the postwar era, it was neglected and largely inaccessible, swallowed by streetscars and then car traffic. Now seen with fresh eyes as the emphasis shifts from auto-dominance to pedestrian life, its shift from introversion to extroversion is a civic invitation to the larger community.

It is fitting that the urban design catalyst for the western edge of the campus should be an architecture school. The reframing of the periphery revives the suppressed relationships of this campus corner on all sides of the circle: the prominent south-facing Spadina Avenue axis is celebrated with a raised belvedere and event space. A generous promenade circumnavigates the building within the circle. Five enhanced crossings of the traffic "moor" and ample bike parking extend the welcome mat inviting the public into the circle. These convivial gestures speak to a new understanding of the university's place in the city as committed steward and active contributor.

The formerly "blind" northern face of the building transforms from a back to a new front, re-engaging in dialogue with the city on all sides. From within the building, strategically placed openings offer 360 degree glimpses of the city outside, creating the pleasurable sensation of being in a ship moored off the edge of the campus. One enters that ship effortlessly through beckoning "portals" bringing the shared sense of the street indoors. Inside, much of the space is defined in plan and section by undulations in the floor, wall and ceiling that create subtly defined and fluidly interconnected places.

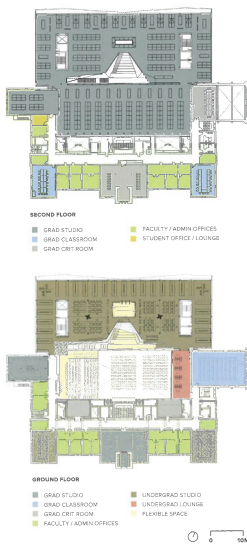
No opportunity to use space has been wasted. Defeating the traditional drive to maximize the net-to-gross floor area ratio, "unbounded" circulation spaces are also freed out as the important spaces of learning and gathering. The lower level is exposed by the earth "heaving" down to true ground, exposing and making it habitable. As Faulkner and Tehrani tell it, the visible surface is like the tip of the iceberg, revealing only part of what is usable space below.

Tehrani explains that the architects, in close collaboration with Dean Richard Sommer, conceived of the building as kind of a "factory," a foil for the work of the students themselves. This led to considerations of when to be generic, when figurative and when recursive. The result is respectful and strikingly new, restrained and yet dramatic.

The interior layout challenges traditional silos, focusing on the rituals of dialogue around the "cric" wherein design students present their work for scrutiny and discussion in a semi-public forum visible to observers from many vantage points. Its large column-free space covered by a cantilevered, canopy-like roof suggests a great range of ways to expand, contract and combine programs with a generous margin of flexibility appropriate to our time.



**UPPER LEFT** The stacks section of the library in the new building. The V-shaped brace supports the bleachers in the Principal Hall. **ABOVE** Within the historic structure, the interior is elegantly transformed and contemporized into another library section, plus offices and gathering areas. **TOP RIGHT** The Fabrication Laboratory—or "FabLab," as it is known. **BOTTOM RIGHT** Floor plans courtesy of NADAAA. On the subgrade level (not shown), a public gallery will serve as an anchor for the emerging "design arts district." As lecture venue and specialized exhibition space, it is expected to encourage debate and public interest in architecture, landscape and design after its completion next year.



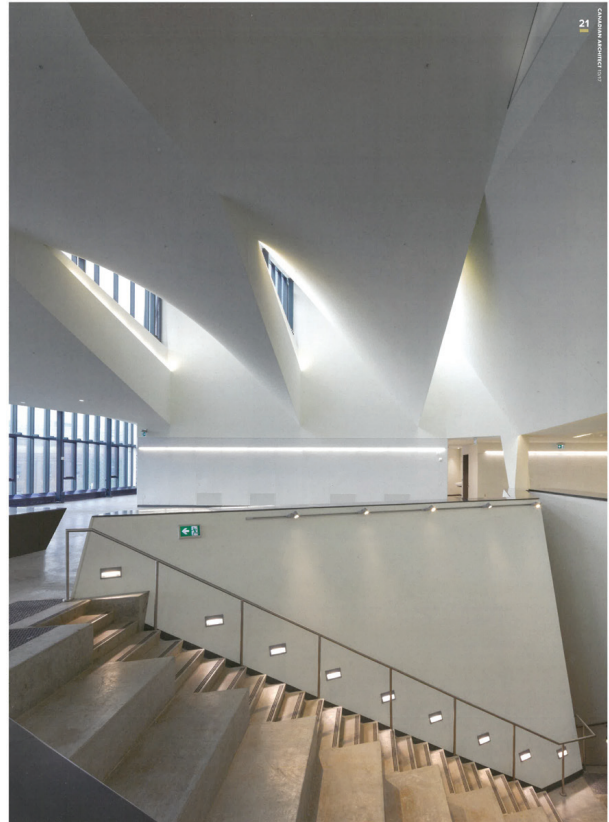
private to our time. The invitation to discussion is enhanced and dignified by the building itself in a variety of welcoming "spaces of appearance" in the studios and meeting areas enticing the opportunity to participate, broadened by the diverse student programs, interdisciplinary collaboration and increased community outreach and public programming.

The addition's unusual shape has a powerful logic. The circle's very completeness, disconnection and inward focus had projected a level of remove and aloofness. Within it, the neo-Gothic Knox College building had a clear front and back, but its rectilinear symmetry did not address its 360-degree context. The new expansion engages with Knox College beyond its original footprint with a simple and brilliant move, by extending rear lateral "wings" to frame and complete an implied but never realized interior "courtyard."

The architects ultimately embraced symmetry, while subtly inflecting the north-facing addition with the asymmetrical force of context—the University campus on the east side and the residential neighbourhood on the west side. Mitigating the singular frontal orientation of the historic structure are the penetrations on the east-west axis of Russell Street described to me by Tehrani as a little like "entering the building through the ears, not the nose."

A looping circulation system frames this new collective space, above the Flex Hall, a large auditorium for school and university community. This is all accomplished within a simple box, economical and compact, superficially banal but in fact spatially intricate providing low-ceilinged cave-like spaces of intimacy within larger organic cavern-like volumes that allow for overlook and a visual connection with the daily life pulse of the school. In combination, these design moves introduce a fine-grained permeability to the site, creating a city-like microcosm within a building.

The project carries on a rich architectural conversation across a century and a half. The old—orthogonal and heavily grounded, with cellular rooms of Gothic verticality—is in ardent dialogue the new, fluid, fractal, curvilinear, warped and interpenetrating. At the "joint," the



**ABOVE AND RIGHT** The historic areas are all treated sparsely, but boldly reveal the original surfaces and clearly delineate contemporary interventions.

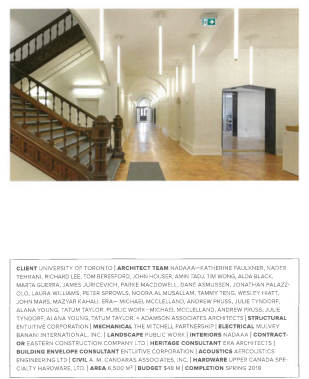
linking elements frame a shared collective passageway. In the new wing, abstracted echoes of the neo-Gothic subtly tie the whole composition together while conveying a contrasting lightness, transparency and luminosity in the night view.

The building's complex multi-layered roof is its *pièce de résistance*. Inspired by the Scottish trussed bridge Firth of Forth, says Tehrani, it is a highly performative "roofscape," combining daylight openings within the deep floor plate, water management and space-shaping structure. Its undulating warped form creates natural clerestories that shed tempered and variegated light on the studios and public spaces below.

Its north-facing windows exploit opportunities for natural daylighting, producing energy savings. For additional sustainability, the building incorporates stormwater harvesting for grey-water needs and irrigation; its white roof reduces energy by reflecting rather than absorbing sunlight.

What we see today is the first of a two-phase project to renovate and expand the iconic existing building and site for the current needs of the Daniels Faculty while allowing for future expansion and inevitable changes of pedagogy. The ultimate measure of its success will be its ability to be interpretable over time. Its open plan and flexibility embody the lessons inherent in Stuart Brand's *How Buildings Learn*. Richly layered, highly articulated and spatially remarkable, the new Daniels Faculty projects a great balance of challenges, enrichment and humility. **AA**

Ken Greenberg, FRAC is a Toronto-based urban designer, teacher and principal of Greenberg Consultants.



**CLIENT** UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO | **ARCHITECT TEAM** NADAAA—KATHERINE FAULKNER, NADER TEHRANI, RONALD LEE, TOM FERRESDORF, JENNIFER GIBBY, TIGER TAYLOR, ALAN BELLO, MARTA GUERRA, JAMES JUREWICH, PAIGE MACDONELL, DANE ARMSTRONG, JONATHAN PALAZZO, OLO, LAUREN WILLIAMS, RYAN SPENCER, ROSA ALI, NICKOLAS, SHERRY TONG, WESTLEY HART, JOHN WARR, MAZAR RAHALLI, ERA—MICHAEL MCCLELLAND, ANDREW PRUSS, JULIE TYNDORF, ALANA YOUNG, MICHAEL TRACER, + ADAMSON ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS | **STRUCTURAL** ENTENTE CORPORATION | **MECHANICAL** THE MITCHELL PARTNERSHIP | **ELECTRICAL** WALVEY, BARNUM INTERNATIONAL, INC. | **LANDSCAPE PUBLIC WORK** | **INTERIOR NADAAA** | **CONTRACTOR** OR EASTERN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY LTD. | **HERITAGE CONSULTANT** ERA ARCHITECTS | **BUILDING ENVIRONMENT CONSULTANT** ENTENTE CORPORATION | **ACQUISITION** AIRCOURTESY ENGINEERING LTD | **ENVIRONMENTAL** M. W. CARONAS ASSOCIATES, INC. | **MANAGEMENT** LIPPER CANADA SPECIALTY MANAGEMENT, LTD. | **LABOR** A. S. M. CARONAS ASSOCIATES, INC. | **FINANCING** LIPPER CANADA SPECIALTY MANAGEMENT, LTD. | **LABOR** A. S. M. CARONAS ASSOCIATES, INC. | **COMPLETION** SPRING 2018





Nathaniel Kleitman's Mammoth Cave Experiment, 1938

## NEW CIRCADIA: adventures in mental spelunking

Architecture & Design Gallery  
University of Toronto, 2019-20

concept / design / curation  
w/ *Pillow Culture*, NYC

**New Circadia** (*adventures in mental spelunking*) creates a metaphorical cave — a soft utopia — to inaugurate the Architecture & Design Gallery at the Daniels Faculty, University of Toronto. This immersive installation was inspired by Dr. Nathaniel Kleitman's 1938 Mammoth Cave experiment (the first instance of a scientific research laboratory for studying natural human cycles of sleep and wakefulness). New Circadia engages the city, our students, and the entire University community in a variety of experiences — including happenings, multidisciplinary performances, dialogues, film screenings, and nocturnes — to probe and conjure notions of geological, mythical, mechanical, and biological time.

*Circadian rhythm* (Latin: *circa*, approximate and *dies*, day) describes any natural biological process that recurs on a 24-hour cycle. Thus, in the tradition of utopias, *New Circadia*, can be roughly translated as "New Day."

### Going Underground

To go underground is to suspend a sense of time, to exit the everyday world, and to evade authority. To descend into a cave is to return to a lithic past enhanced by mythical, cultural, and historical associations with underworlds, oracles, magic, ritual, sanctuary, and seclusion. *New Circadia* offers a paradisiacal retreat in the pursuit of circadian reverie.

### Why New Circadia?

The biology that undergirds our well-being presumes being at rest during at least one-third of our lives. Nevertheless, the mechanization of life has evolved to an extent that we can be "plugged-in" at all hours. A central feature of this pursuit of an optimized state of productivity is a reciprocity between architecture and technology. The late-19th-century standardization of time that came with railroads and telegraphs; the 20th-century appearance of tall, electrified cities; and the 21st-century primacy of the World-Wide-Web, which has enabled the spread of a globalized gig economy that crosses time zones — all are part of this temporal "architecture" of modernity.

### Is it Time to Put Architecture to Sleep?

Architecture today is inextricably bound up in the urbanization of the planet. It needs to pay as much attention to marking time as it has historically devoted to manipulating space. And yet, the very culture of architecture has been built upon a fascination with adopting mindsets and accelerating technologies that facilitate long work hours and sleeplessness. How can architects counter the over-mechanization of everyday life? And how can architects convey the idea that idling — whether by sleeping, dreaming, napping, or meditating — is not lost, unproductive time, but rather an essential state of mind and body? By creating a dreamlike space where individuals and collectives can incubate states of rest, reflection, and reverie, *New Circadia* will test how architecture and landscapes can play a role in nurturing a greater interior life.



Mammoth Cave



Spelunkers, New Circadia



Changing Area/ Spelunking Gear



Introduction / Entry, New Circadia: Cycles of Daily Life



Introduction / Entry, New Circadia: Cycles of Daily Life



New Circadia: Passage





New Circadia: Felt "Mouth"



New Circadia: Soft Spelunking Gear



New Circadia: Lounge-Scape / Sound Works



New Circadia: Entry & Felt "Mouth"



Changing Area/ Spelunking Gear



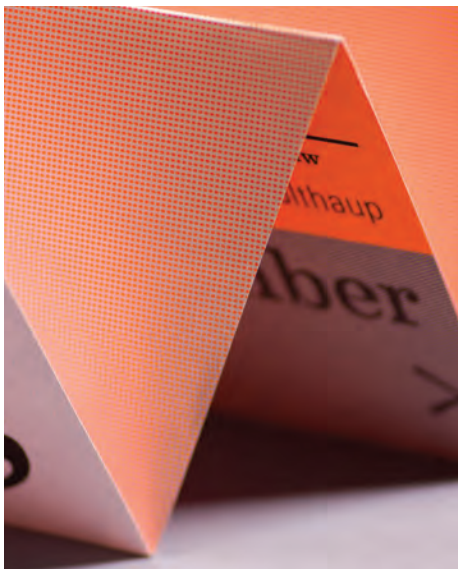
New Circadia: Lounge-Scape / Sound Works



New Identity  
& Posters

D  
AN  
IELS

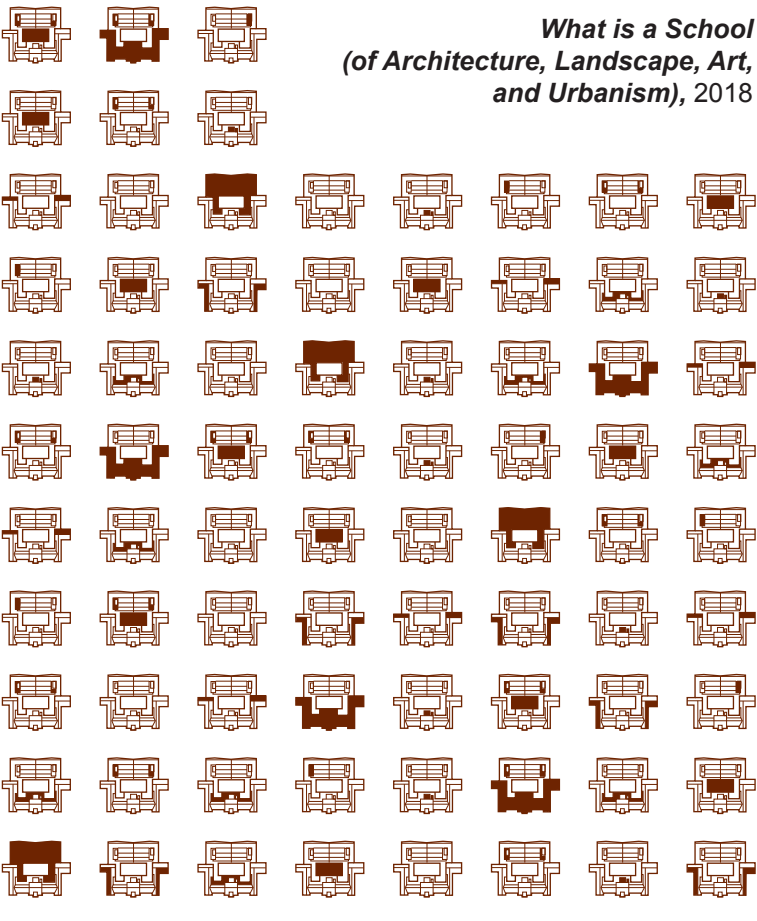
U  
OF  
T



folded & wearable public programming materials: w/ Catalogtree, Arnhem / Berlin  
new Daniels identity, logo and website, w/ Bruce Mau Design, Toronto  
[www.daniels.utoronto.ca](http://www.daniels.utoronto.ca)









**Feb 27-28, 2015**  
230 College Street, Toronto  
Student Presentations on  
Sunday March 1

afterempiricalurbanism.com

# After Empirical Urbanism

Friday February 27, 2:00pm

**Carto Graphics**  
Jill Desimini  
Harvard Graduate School of Design  
**Jesse LeCavallier**  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
**Sarah Williams**  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
**Mason White, moderator**  
University of Toronto

Friday February 27, 4:00pm

**The Bias of Data**  
Mona El Khaffi  
University of Toronto  
**Dietmar Offenhuber**  
Northwestern University  
**Mark Shepard**  
University of California  
**Uttan Byrne, moderator**  
University of Toronto

Saturday February 28, 10:30am

**Leveraging the Marketplace**  
**Robert Bruegmann**  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
**McLain Clutter**  
University of Michigan  
**Tim Love**  
Northwestern University  
**Roger Sherman**  
University of California, Los Angeles  
**Robert Levitt, moderator**  
University of Toronto

Saturday February 28, 1:30pm

**Fictions of the Ordinary**  
**Tobias Amthor**  
Kaiser College  
**Marshall Brown**  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
**Alex Lehner**  
University of Toronto  
**Michael Piper, moderator**  
University of Toronto

Sunday February 29, 3:30pm

**Use and Misuse of History**  
**George Baird**  
University of Toronto  
**Eve Blau**  
Harvard Graduate School of Design  
**Margaret Crawford**  
University of California, Berkeley  
**Kayla Varnell**  
Columbia University  
**Richard Sommer, moderator**  
University of Toronto

Sunday March 1, 1:00pm

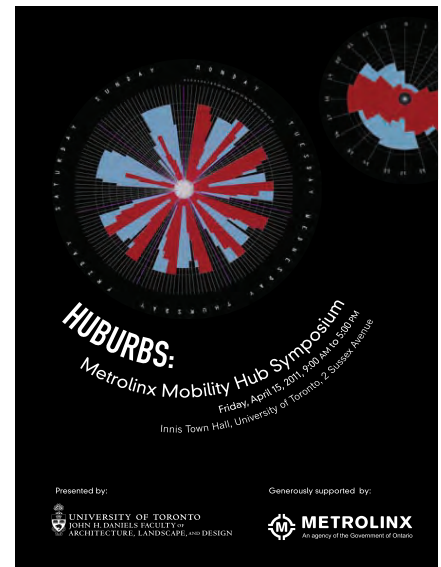
**Sunday Session**  
**Alexander Eisenschmidt**  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
**Graeme Stewart**  
ERA Architects, Toronto  
And Student presentations

**Daniels**



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
JOHN H. DANIELS FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE, LANDSCAPE, AND DESIGN

**After Empirical Urbanism, 2015**



Presented by:

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
JOHN H. DANIELS FACULTY OF  
ARCHITECTURE, LANDSCAPE, AND DESIGN

Generously supported by:

**METROLINX**  
An agency of the Government of Ontario



**Huburbs: Metrolinx Mobility Hub  
Book & Symposium, 2011**

**STUDIOSCOPE**  
design and pedagogy **april 12+13**  
2007

**Beyond The Model:  
New Modes Of Project And Teaching**

Studio-based forms of design instruction first emerged at the École des Beaux-Arts more than a century ago. Since then, the built environment has come under the influence of ever-expanding professional, administrative, and market-based regimes. How has the studio system evolved to address these changes? Does studio teaching reflect, interpret, or challenge modes of practice? Do we conceive of the design studio as a venue in which critical aspects of architectural, landscape, planning, and urban design practices are transmitted, or rather as the site where design is constructively distinguished from a larger array of technical or even scholarly knowledge?

In many schools, studio teaching still largely reflects the sites and scenarios that are the focus of contemporary practice. Adherence to established project genres is not just a matter of transmitting professional values but is characteristic of studio pedagogy itself, where models may be drawn from the history of architecture, the broader built environment, or other disciplines. Nevertheless, a shift has recently occurred in how studios embody research and design speculation. The very terms through which established parameters of design are typically rehearsed in the studio—site, social program, building function, and scale of intervention—have been placed into critical relief. There are, for example, studios today that focus primarily on fabrication techniques made possible by digital technologies, and studios that assume the hybridization of architecture, landscape architecture, plan-making, and engineering now virtually required for large-scale urban projects. Phenomena usually taken as a background against which to design now become the subject of design itself.

Morphological analysis, programmatic speculation, and ecology are becoming increasingly important to design practice, and there is a concomitant focus on these issues in studio teaching. Yet, behind the seeming pluralism that characterizes contemporary studio teaching lingers a debate dating back to the unending of functionalist approaches more than a generation ago. Revisiting a Beaux-Arts approach, the previous generation of design pedagogues substituted the more flexible legal term "precedent" for "model." Their aim in positioning architecture, landscape architecture, and urbanism as a complex genealogy of precedents was to undermine the rhetoric of functionalism and modernism's blind embrace of the new, and instead to pursue design as a consciously figurative, traditional, social art. Still in play in the passage from part to bubble diagram (and back again through the "precedent," the "conceptual" model, and the generative map) is the degree to which technical, social, economic, and political phenomena of an extra-architectural nature may establish the parameters of an architectural, urban, or landscape design.

**These are among the issues that will be addressed by the symposium Studioscope. This symposium and subsequent publication will bring together preeminent design educators and scholars to examine the historical emergence, contemporary complexity, and future prospects of the design studio. Focusing on those technical, representational, and procedural aspects of the design studio that make it a distinct pedagogical model, the symposium will illuminate and critically rehearse the most fundamental approaches and "schools." Both the center and borders of the studio genre will be explored, including the structure and content of "core" studios and innovative models of studio instruction from analogous fields.**

**The ultimate goal of Studioscope is to create a platform for examining the status of the studio within schools of architecture and related design fields as a means to open and illuminate channels of innovation within the genre.**

**GSD Studioscope Planning Committee**  
**Richard Sommer, Symposium Chair**  
Director, Master of Architecture in Urban Design Programs  
Associate Professor of Architecture and Urban Design  
**Jorge Silvetti**  
Nelson Robinson Jr. Professor of Architecture  
**Ingeborg Rocker**  
Assistant Professor of Architecture  
**Jerold S. Kayden**  
Co-Chair and Director of Planning Program, Department of Urban Planning and Design  
**Frank Backus Williams** Professor of Urban Planning and Design  
**Preston Scott Cohen**  
Director, Master of Architecture Programs  
Gerald M. McCue Professor in Architecture  
**Location**  
Harvard University Graduate School of Design  
Gund Hall, Piper Auditorium  
48 Quincy Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
617 495-2521  
www.gsd.harvard.edu/studioscope

**April 12, afternoon**

**Welcome and Symposium Introduction**

**Alan Altshuler**, Dean, Harvard Graduate School of Design  
Ruth and Frank Stanton Professor in Urban Policy and Planning, HGSD  
**Richard Sommer**, Symposium Chair

**Session I: The Studio Genre Today**

**Moderator: Toshiko Mori**, Chair, Department of Architecture  
Robert P. Hubbard Professor in the Practice of Architecture, HGSD  
Principal, Toshiko Mori Architect

**Tom Buehsh**, Chair and Professor of Architecture  
A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture + Urban Planning,  
University of Michigan

**Mark Robbins**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Syracuse University School of Architecture

**Adelle Nadeau Santos**, Dean and Professor of Architecture and Planning  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Mark Wigley**, Dean and Professor of Architecture  
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

**Session III: Analogous Models**

**1:30-4:00 PM**

**Moderator: Jerold S. Kayden**, Co-Chair and Director of Planning  
Program, Department of Urban Planning and Design, HGSD

**Frank Backus Williams** Professor of Urban Planning and Design, HGSD

**Music: Joshua Fineberg**, John L. Leeb Professor of the Humanities  
Department of Music, Harvard University

**Graphic Design: John Manda**, E. Ridge and Nancy Allen Professor of  
Media Arts and Sciences, Associate Professor of Design and  
Computation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

**Co-Director: SIMPLICITY**

**Fire Art: Thomas Lynn Mills**, Professor of Foundation Studies  
Rhode Island School of Design

**April 13, afternoon**

**Session IV: Core(s)**

**2:00-4:00 PM**

**Moderator: Laura Miller**, Associate Professor of Architecture, HGSD  
Principal, borfox/BLU

**Marlon Blackwell**, Associate Professor of Architecture  
University of Arkansas School of Architecture

**Principal: Marlon Blackwell Architect**

**Preston Scott Cohen**, Director, Master of Architecture Programs  
Gerald M. McCue Professor in Architecture, HGSD

**Principal: Preston Scott Cohen, Inc.**

**Greg Lynn**, Studio Professor, University of California at Los Angeles,  
School of the Arts and Architecture

**Principal: Greg Lynn FORM**

**Edward Mitchell**, Adjunct Assistant Professor,  
Yale University School of Architecture

**Principal: EMA Architects**

**Session V: Conclusion**

**Roundtable on Reforms and Alternatives**

**4:15-5:00 PM**

**Moderator: Richard Sommer**, Director of Master in Architecture and  
Urban Design Programs, Associate Professor of Architecture, HGSD

**Principal: borfox/BLU**

**Ellen Dunham-Jones**, Director, Architecture Program  
Associate Professor of Architecture

**Georgia Institute of Technology College of Architecture**

**Niall Kirkwood**, Chair and Program Director,  
Department of Landscape Architecture,

**Professor of Landscape Architecture and Technology, HGSD**

**Diane Lewis**, Professor of Architecture

**Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture, Cooper Union**

**Principal: Diane Lewis Architects**

**Robert Levitt**, Director, Master of Urban Design Program  
Associate Professor of Architecture

**University of Toronto Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design**

**Principal: Robert Levitt Studio**

**Fanah Moussavi**, Professor in Practice of Architecture, HGSD  
Principal, Foreign Office Architects

**Principal: Foreign Office Architects**

www.gsd.harvard.edu/

studioscope

**Studioscope: design and pedagogy 2007**

# 24

## New urban paradigms

Alternative visions for San Francisco's Mission Bay urban design

2.05.98 – 3.05.98  
CCAC San Francisco Campus  
450 Irwin St. @ 16th & Wisconsin St.

### Inquiries into the Master Planning of Mission Bay

Eight of the remaining projects to the Mission Bay Area, a Center for Critical Architecture and the School of Architectural Studies at CCAC have sponsored a series of critical, alternate proposals that explore the form of Mission Bay and the new UC Campus Master Plan.

EXHIBITION  
February 5 – March 5, 1998  
OPENING PARTY: Friday, February 6 @ 6pm  
FREE to general public

### Proposals by faculty members from SCI-ARC, UC BERKELEY, UCLA and CCAC

These project proposals, being done by faculty from some of California's Schools of Architecture and Urban Design, offer the opportunity to see how design can be used to mediate between a practice that might otherwise be characterized by conflicts between various financial, ecological, bureaucratic and community interests.

### SYMPOSIUM WITH PARTICIPANTS

Saturday, February 7, 2pm – 6pm  
cost: non-members: \$14  
members: \$7; free with student ID

### + Bay Run

An independent proposal by architect Michael Sorkin

Bay Run is a proposal for a new urban form in the Mission Bay area. It is a response to the existing urban fabric and the new UC Campus Master Plan. The proposal is based on a series of principles that are intended to create a new urban form that is both functional and aesthetically pleasing. The proposal is based on the following principles:

- 1. The proposal is based on a series of principles that are intended to create a new urban form that is both functional and aesthetically pleasing.
- 2. The proposal is based on the following principles:

## New Urban Paradigms: Inquiries into the Master Planning of Mission Bay, 1998

# CITIES IN THE MAKING

## Symposium: March 29-31, 1996

**1 Venting the Conventions**

**2 Parables From Practice**

**3 Surveying the Field**

**Cities in the Making, is a production of the Scholar-in-Residence Program at the CCAC School of Architecture.**

The project enters into the fray of recent discussions, often interdisciplinary in nature, which concern the post-modern city and the definition of public space. Cities in the Making will be distinguished by how it lays bare the theories and shifts through the ideas embedded in the new urbanism, thereby enabling us to explore these approaches in terms of the underlying techniques architects and urban planners actually use to document and project the city. The concepts of the project will be a symposium that critically situates our understanding of established theories and methods of urban design.

More specifically, the symposium will focus, both historically and within the work of contemporary urbanists, techniques associated with the work of **Kevin Lynch** (the city understood through the system map), **Robert Venturi** and **Danilo Scott Brown** (the city understood through a system of signs) and **Colin Rowe** (the city understood through historical mapping).

**Session One** will examine how these influential figures drew on different social, cultural and artistic theories, and the relationships these theories had to their search for a visually based, critical urbanism.

**Sessions Two and Three** will explore the ways in which these earlier ideas have been used, transformed or refuted by contemporary urbanists practicing in today's urban institutional settings. An exhibition of contemporary urban projects tied to these themes and a publication documenting both events will be produced subsequent to the symposium.

**Symposium events will be held at California College of Arts and Crafts 1200 12th Street, at De Haro San Francisco**

**1 VENTING THE CONVENTIONS**

**ERIC MUMFORD**  
Washington University, St. Louis  
American Urbanism: a symposium

**HASHIM SARKIS**  
Yale School of Architecture  
Kevin Lynch and the Civil Rights Movement

**DEBORAH FAUSCH**  
Yale School of Architecture  
Reading The Popular Landscape: The Semantics of Venturi and Scott Brown

**RICHARD M. SOMMER**  
Yale School of Architecture  
City as a Collage of Cities

**Panel session following Mitchell Schwarzer, moderator**  
California College of Arts and Crafts

**2 PARABLES FROM PRACTICE**

**ALEX KRIEGER**  
Ohio State University (Harvard University)  
(open) Space, Time and Artifacts

**EVAN ROSE**  
San Francisco Planning Department  
Ciphers of Regulation: The Integrated City

**MARGARET CRAWFORD**  
Brooklyn College, Institute of Architecture  
Everyday Urbanism

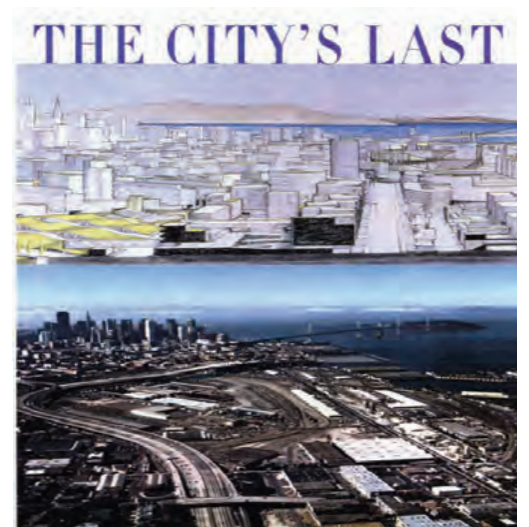
**WALTER HOOD**  
Harvard University/University of California Berkeley  
Imaginations for Urban Landscapes

**3 SURVEYING THE FIELD**

**BEN KATCHAR**, Curator  
Author: *Julius Knapf, Red Earth Photographs*

**The Cities in the Making Project** is made possible through the generous support of the Golden Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts and the DLF Foundation.

## Cities in the Making, 1995



# THE CITY'S LAST GREENBELT

## San Francisco's Mission Bay: a dream location as planning nightmare

BY EATHY LANG

San Francisco's Mission Bay is a dream location as planning nightmare. The city's last greenbelt is being torn apart by a series of developments that will transform the area into a new urban form. The city's last greenbelt is being torn apart by a series of developments that will transform the area into a new urban form. The city's last greenbelt is being torn apart by a series of developments that will transform the area into a new urban form.

The city's last greenbelt is being torn apart by a series of developments that will transform the area into a new urban form. The city's last greenbelt is being torn apart by a series of developments that will transform the area into a new urban form. The city's last greenbelt is being torn apart by a series of developments that will transform the area into a new urban form.

The city's last greenbelt is being torn apart by a series of developments that will transform the area into a new urban form. The city's last greenbelt is being torn apart by a series of developments that will transform the area into a new urban form. The city's last greenbelt is being torn apart by a series of developments that will transform the area into a new urban form.

## "The City's Last Greenbelt" San Francisco Examiner Magazine, 1998





essay (first writing on the subject):  
**Time Incorporated:**  
**The Romantic Life of the Modern Monument**  
 Harvard Design Magazine 1999

# Time Incorporated

The Romantic Life of the Modern Monument, by **Richard M. Sommer**

**WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DOES** monument-making offer for recasting the commemorative spaces of the contemporary landscape? Can monuments engender democratic spaces in a society whose building practices seem to reflect, on the one hand, the desire to express the free flow of matter and information, and, on the other, the overweening influence of the “value engineer”? I would like to respond to these questions by exploring, through a consideration of projects both built and unbuilt, new modes of monument making and reception—modes that are nomadic, temporary, and landscape-like. I will also explore how new forms of monument are struggling to embody critical and democratic values, often using ironic and allegorical tactics rejected by mainstream Modernism. But first I will examine how the Classical desire for permanence and the Romantic search for prescient forms of artistic expression persist in modern attempts at monumentality.

## ALLEGORICAL AND IRONIC MONUMENTS

At the start of 20th century, just before the Futurists’ rejection of the monument, Adolf Loos dissected the nature of the modern monument. In “Architecture,” Loos described architecture’s function as the ability to “arouse sentiments,” and argued that only certain kinds of architecture—the tomb and the monument—possessed the transcendent potential of “art”; all else was utilitarian “building.”<sup>1</sup> In making this distinction, Loos seemed to be rearticulating a Classical schema in which architecture, with the monument as exemplar, is understood to be a symbol of humankind’s ability to overcome the aleatory, destructive forces of nature. Yet Loos’s association of the monument with Classicism was ambiguous. In the same essay, he does more than equate the monumental function of architecture with art; he also claims that “the work of art is revolutionary: the house is conservative”—that is, art can be challenging and forward-looking, but architecture must fulfill the more everyday need for comfort.

Following Loos’s desire to elucidate the differences between things, one might distinguish between his categories *tomb* and *monument*. Like the religious reliquary, the tomb possesses a special aura because we understand that it contains a real body or artifact; it

thus effaces the “distance” of representation. This is what Loos was referring to in this seminal passage from “Architecture”: “. . . if in a wood, we come across a tumulus, six feet long and three feet wide, shaped by the spade into a pyramid, we become serious and something in us says: here someone is buried. This is Architecture.”<sup>2</sup> Because it does *not* contain the person or thing commemorated, the commemorative monument differs in essential ways from the tomb. Its power depends not upon the presence of the real body or artifact but instead upon the rhetorical force of a representational strategy—where no body exists, one must be metaphorically summoned.

Loos is at his discriminating best when he explores the relationships and differences between material facts and conjured auras, between everyday practices and transcendent values. Despite the effort Loos made to identify culture as a dividing line between “art” and “life”—part of his insistence, in the words of the Viennese writer Karl Kraus, that we not mistake the “urn” for the “chamber pot”—the greatest monument he designed was not a tomb or commemorative site but rather a skyscraper: his famous entry in the 1922 competition for a new headquarters for the *Chicago Tribune*, a high-rise in the form of a giant column.

Reviewing the text that accompanied Loos’s design, Manfredo Tafuri, who had once described the project as “ironic” and indeed prophetic of Pop Art,<sup>3</sup> revised his assessment and wrote, dismissively:

A single column extracted from the context of its order is not, strictly speaking, an allegory; rather, it is a phantasm. As the paradoxical specter of an order outside time, Loos’s column is gigantically enlarged in a final effort to communicate an appeal to the perennial endurance of values. Like the Giants of Kandinsky’s *Der gelbe Klang*, however, Loos’s giant phantasm succeeds in signifying nothing more than its pathetic will to exist—pathetic, because it is declared in the face of the metropolis, in the face of the universe of change where values are eclipsed, the “aura” falls away, and the column and the desire to communicate absolutes become tragically outdated and unreal.<sup>4</sup>

Yet only an interpretation this narrow would fail to understand Loos’s column as allegorical and ironic. The literary critic Paul de Man de-

scribed, in his writing on Romanticism, how allegorical and ironic modes of expression create works that embody the modern subject’s sense of alienation and difficulty in using language transparently.<sup>5</sup> In this view, the allegorical work, by deploying historical forms within a new context, challenges—or, in de Man’s terms, “evacuates” and “refigures”—longstanding traditions and received histories—in the case of the Loos’s Tribune Column, the tradition and history of Greco-Roman architecture.

Allegory is allusive, pointing to (rather than embodying) its content. Irony either dissimulates—pretends to be what it is not—or playfully multiplies the author’s voice, depending for its effect upon the difference between what an author says and what an audience understands the author to mean. Articulating the unparalleled ability of irony to engage modern audiences, de Man writes that “it seems to be only in describing a mode of language which does not mean what it says that can one actually say what one means.”<sup>6</sup> Whatever Loos’s intentions (he was, after all, a darling of the Dadaists), the radical shift in scale and function of what he called “The Big Greek Column” was taken by many as an ironic gesture, one that allegorized Sullivan’s tripartite high-rise and playfully implied a link between the newspaper column and the Doric column.

A more recent work of monumental art picks up where Loos left off: Claes Oldenburg’s 1968 *Proposal for a Skyscraper for Michigan Avenue, Chicago, in the Form of Laredo Taft’s Sculpture “Death.”*<sup>7</sup> Conceived after the artist had toured Europe’s “great monuments,” Oldenburg’s project uses the idea of the monument to suggest a radical redefinition of an urban site. Referring to a tour of the recently completed John Hancock Building with its architect, Bruce Graham of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Oldenburg found something lacking in Graham’s claim that the Hancock’s tapering form was derived purely from the imperatives of structure and program.

Oldenburg, who had spent many of his early years in Chicago, was ambivalent about the Hancock. He liked the building but resented its scale and how it “followed him around,” obliterating what he had come to view as *the* Chicago skyscraper: the Palmolive, later the Playboy, Tower.<sup>8</sup> Then, during a visit to the

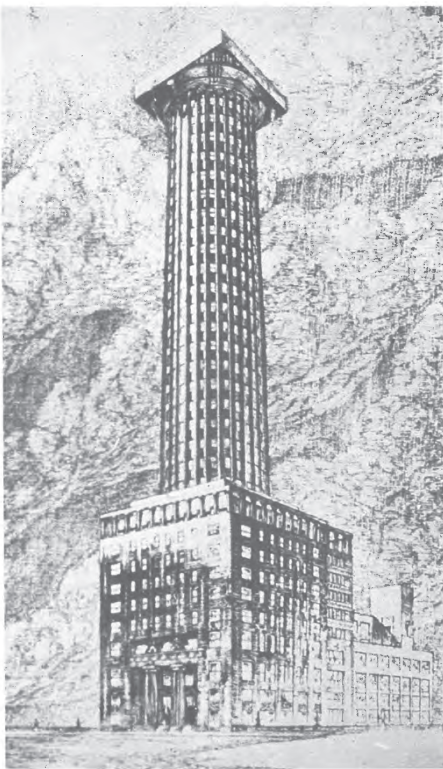


# Time Incorporated, Harvard Design Magazine, 1999

city's Graceland Cemetery, he noticed a resemblance between the shape of the Hancock Building and that of Larado Taft's 1909 memorial sculpture, *Eternal Silence*, and the black, obelisk-like tomb behind it. *Proposal for a Sky-scraper* explicitly echoes both the allegorical theme and formal organization of *Eternal Silence*.<sup>9</sup> Transposing, at gargantuan scale, Taft's figure—known locally as "Death"—to the front of the John Hancock Building—known locally as "Big John"—Oldenburg likens the tower to a tomb. "I liked the contrast between such a romantic idea (almost comical) of a building and the machine-made cool of the *Big John*," he wrote; moreover, he continued, the Hancock is "in fact a highly romantic funeral structure, an accidental result not calculated by the computer."<sup>10</sup> Oldenburg's phrase, "the Big John," is typical of the erotic allusions he makes to his work—the Hancock is likened to a toilet, a prostitute's client, and a penis, suggesting perhaps the ultimate conflation of an urn and a chamberpot. Aside from the ironic shifts in scale, material, and context, *Proposal for a Sky-scraper* is distinctive for how it alludes to Chicago's architectural heritage (and perhaps by association, to that of all Modern architecture). Significantly, by appropriating parts of well-known artifacts and linking them figuratively and syntactically to a new site, the project suggests a monumentality whose meaning is contingent upon its physical and cultural context and is thus neither "eternal" nor transcendent.

**TOWARD A MORE DEMOCRATIC MONUMENT**  
Often comic, ironic, and politically ambiguous, Oldenburg's "monuments" can be understood against a postwar atmosphere characterized by the tension between Modernist inhibitions concerning the monumental, symbolic functions of architecture and the widespread conviction that conventional forms of monumentality could not adequately commemorate atrocities as extreme as the Holocaust and Hiroshima. This conviction, combined with the (continuing) tendency of totalitarian regimes to exploit monumental forms of neo-Classicism, contributed to the decline of the traditional monument in post-war societies aspiring to democracy.

Without an understanding of these changes in context and sensibility, we might mistake Oldenburg's project as conceptually akin to Mount Rushmore.<sup>11</sup> At the Mount Rushmore National Memorial—sculpted by Gutzon Borglum from 1927 to 1941 and located in the Black Hills of South Dakota—the most expressive part of the human body, the face, is treated as a fragment and rendered large



FALL 1999 39



40 HARVARD DESIGN MAGAZINE

enough (twice the size of the head of the Giza Sphinx) to rival a landscape whose features suggest a geological rather than historical measure of time. In an act of appropriation similar to Oldenburg's, Borglum set the faces of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt within a mountainside where they can survey the nation they helped envision, metaphorically assuming the American continent as their collective body.

Mount Rushmore is undoubtedly a great popular monument, but its apparently uncontroversial subject masks the radical nature of its form and content—its unquestioning celebration of an American "manifest destiny." Revealed in recent literature to have been, at best, a "naïve fascist" and, at worst, an avowed racist, Borglum carved what was, in effect, an immense piece of U.S. propaganda that furthered, without a trace of irony, the mythology of the "founding fathers."<sup>12</sup> In marked contrast, Oldenburg works within the tradition of the postwar avant-garde and has used both ironic and allegorical modes of expression to engage a wider, more popular audience than would otherwise attend to the liberating lures of modern art.

After 1945, it became increasingly clear that the traditional monument's attempt to freeze moments in history was being eclipsed by the rapid pace of events and by increasingly dynamic forms of art and reportage. By the 1960s, everything about the conventional monument—both the "who" of victorious military and political leaders, and the "what" of honoring war and conquest—was being fundamentally challenged. With the growing political activism of the 70s, especially with the Civil Rights and Anti-War movements, certain revolutionary ideas articulated two centuries earlier by the Romantics reemerged in full, countercultural force. Foremost among these ideas was the passionate belief in human freedom—the conviction that principled individuals could resist a corrupt society and champion the oppressed. Through association with a range of liberation movements and the atypical protest events, including sit-ins, bra burnings, and draft-card burnings, these new Romantic ideas motivated new, more democratic forms of monument.

Among the most popular and effective of these new democratic monuments is the NAMES Project Memorial Quilt. Over the past decade, the AIDS Quilt has become immense through the ongoing, potentially endless multiplication of individual, three-by-six-foot (casket size) panels. Now a textile field of more than 43,000 memorials, the Quilt was made by the partners, families,

The Quilt has challenged the view of AIDS as a pandemic whose victims are largely from one subculture—it names and offers pictures of victims who had been, for many, merely statistics.

friends, neighbors, and admirers of those who died of AIDS.<sup>13</sup>

Cleve Jones, a gay activist in San Francisco, conceived of the NAMES Project in 1985, during a rally commemorating the lives of the city's assassinated mayor George Moscone and supervisor Harvey Milk. Realizing that the death count from AIDS in San Francisco had exceeded 1,000, Jones asked those attending the rally to place the names of people they had lost to AIDS on placards and to attach these to the facade of the Burton Plaza Federal Office Building—thus creating a quiltlike display.

Officially initiated in 1987, the Quilt has become the world's largest communal memorial. It has traveled to thousands of locations and been visited by more than twelve million people.<sup>14</sup> It has spawned an array of institutions and industries—local quilt chapters, documentary films, websites, books, and postcards chronicling individual panels and those they honor.<sup>15</sup> Displayed in full, the Quilt now occupies an area larger than ten football fields. In fact, it has been displayed fully only five times, each time on the Mall in Washington. During its last display, in 1996, it stretched from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial. Now an international phenomenon, the Quilt, in smaller sections, travels to many sites worldwide.

The Quilt as metaphor, and quilting itself as a traditional home-based craft, suggest conflict and irony in relation to the subject of the NAMES Project; but these dissonances actually enhance its power as a democratic monument. As a metaphor for the mix of ethnic groups and cultures that now coexist in the United States, the "patchwork quilt" has become a foil to the earlier myth of the "melting pot." The quilt metaphor suggests that differences in taste, color, and texture will be retained within a shared field; the melting pot requires a blurring of differences. The Quilt's processes of fabrication allow—within the three-by-six-foot format (aggregated to twelve-foot-square elements)—the contribution of panels of any kind. Through their website, by telephone or mail, and during their frequent quilting bees and public displays, the NAMES Project provides simple instructions on how to make durable panels. Project staff and volunteers oversee the assembly and distribution of the Quilt, encouraging open, public access and thus putting into practice the promise intimated by the metaphor of the patchwork quilt.

Although developed by the gay community, the NAMES Project now provides sites and rituals for grieving to a broader group who



FALL 1999 41

## Constructions of Memory

Helping us to focus on the unfinished business of history, the democratically conceived monument is not timeless, but rather time-full.

of California, the city of Berkeley, the state of California, and finally the federal government, on "free" the space.

According to van Kempen, *Experiment in Sovereignty* is an attempt to challenge our perceptions about the possibilities that exist between anarchy and totalitarianism—possibilities explored by the free speech movement itself. In theory (and fact), spaces such as the one van Kempen has created do exist—they are located in the "law-free" zones between national borders, where it is possible to commit unlawful acts, even murder, and remain beyond the jurisdiction of any nation. However, occupying a space too small to contain anyone or anything that could pose any danger, *Experiment in Sovereignty* questions the rule of law only conceptually. That the project was constructed after being approved by the university, but before releases were obtained from state and national authorities, demonstrates its essential nature as an act of faith.

**THE UTOPIAN FUNCTION OF THE DEMOCRATIC MONUMENT**  
Curiously, we have returned, with this last project, to a monument in the classical form of a column, albeit an imagined, utopian one. This project illustrates most dramatically the promise of the democratic monument—a monument capable of negotiating the contested spaces that help define democracy. Rather than ossifying a particular view of history, *Experiment in Sovereignty* asks questions and provokes discourse about the relationship between our ever-evolving understanding of the right to freedom of speech and the necessity

for laws that both defend and limit our ability to exercise this right.

By helping us to focus on the unfinished business of history, the democratically conceived monument is not timeless, but rather time-full. This concept of the monument is not so far-fetched—the Latin root of "monument" derives from the word for "mind" and "mindful." The Romantic philosopher Friedrich Schlegel claimed that "a historian is a prophet in reverse." Following this insight, one might recall the archaic function of the monument—as a revelatory mark or piece of evidence—within a modern concept of time. Instead of being cyclical and eternal, modern time is understood relative to both space and the transforming power of technology, from artificial light to the World Wide Web. In conflating the projective map and the retrospective memorial, the democratic monument performs a modern, utopian function by transfiguring time. Ultimately, such monuments remind us, in Ernst Bloch's words, that "something's missing"—that through historical imagination, a different, perhaps better world, can be conceived.

**Notes**  
1. See Adolf Loos, "Architecture" (1930) translated in *The Architecture of Adolf Loos*, catalogue written and edited by Yehuda Sufan and Wilfried Wang, assisted by Miklós Bolyai (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1985).  
2. Ibid.  
3. Manfred Tafuri, *Theory and History of Architecture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 384.  
4. Manfredo Tafuri, "The Disenchanted Mainstream" in *The American City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1979), 402-463.  
5. Paul de Man, "The Rhetoric of Temporality" in *Blind*.

new and Inaugural Entry in the *History of Contemporary Cinema* (Champaign: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 187-228.

6. Ibid., 211.  
7. Charles Oldenburg, *Proposal for a Monument and Building*, 1965-69 (Chicago: Big Table, 1969), 110-151.  
8. Barbara Haskell, *Case Oldenburg Object on Monument* (Pasadena, Calif.: Pasadena Art Museum, 1971), 67-68.  
9. As producers of Chicago's most prolific public art, Taft's works, such as the *Frontier of Time* (which also includes a stonehead figure), are conventionally allegorical and would be well known to Oldenburg.  
10. Haskell, 68.  
11. See Rex Alan Smith, *The Carving of Mount Rushmore* (New York: Atheneum Press, 1983).  
12. See Susan Scheraga, "The Women on Mount Rushmore" and "Democracy and the Shoppers" in *Language and Memory* (London: Harper Collins, 1995), 385-402.  
13. Panels devoted to various well-known individuals, including I. M. Pei, Michael Jackson, and Arthur Ashe, and others dedicated to people who lived more anonymous lives, have been seen by people who, though they may not have known these figures, felt compelled to make some public statement to them. See Cindy Berklin, *The Quilt: Stories from the NAMES Project* (New York: Pocket Books, 1988).  
14. For these and other facts and figures concerning The NAMES Project Foundation AIDS Memorial Quilt, see their website at [www.aidsquilt.org](http://www.aidsquilt.org).  
15. Ibid.  
16. See Peter Hawkins, "Naming Names: The Art of Memory and the NAMES Project AIDS Quilt," *Critical Inquiry* 19 (Summer 1993), 764-766.  
17. Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Walter Benjamin, in Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968).  
18. One hopes that, as the death toll from AIDS in America lessens and a cure seems possible, the Quilt may come to serve functions already a site and a permanent structure to house the quills are being sought.  
19. *Albert Speer Architecture 1932-1942*, edited by Leon Nier (Berkeley: Archive of Modern Architecture, 1985), 174-175.  
20. Robert Smithson was aware of this idea when he composed his ironic "Tale of the Monuments of Passaic New Jersey." A more banal example of this relatively new form of monument would be Boston's Freedom Trail.  
21. Renata Nih and Frieder Schorke, "Ban Stop," *Daidalos* 59 (March 1996), 116-143.  
22. Mark A. Breck van Kempen, as quoted in "Art for Free Speech" in *Language Architecture* 90 (August 1990), 18-19.  
23. Ibid.

*Richard M. Sommer is associate professor of architecture at Harvard Design School and principal of the firm HKS. He is organizing an exhibition on the democratic monument to be held at the GSD in the spring of 2000.*



Mark A. Breck van Kempen, "Experiment in Sovereignty," Berkeley, California

44 HARVARD DESIGN MAGAZINE





## **THE DEMOCRATIC MONUMENT IN AMERICA 1900-2000**

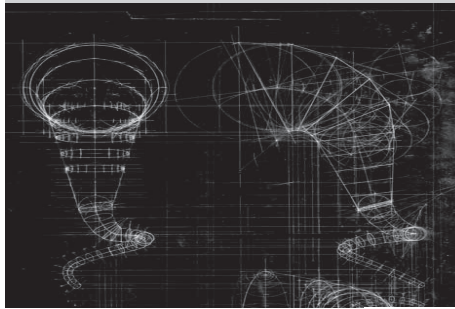
Traveling Exhibition  
2000-02  
Curator And Designer:  
Richard Sommer w/  
Fizer/Forley design

The Democratic Monument Exhibition explores the proposition that there is a new category of architectural objects that can be construed by situating concepts associated with the modern monument within the evolving political aspirations and practices of democracy in the United States. The exhibit is structured around a chronological survey of ten juxtaposed pairs of monuments representing each decade of the 20th century. Ostensibly dedicated to the themes of liberty, freedom, and equal representation—as opposed to the commemoration of war—each of the examples chosen has played a significant role in challenging the traditional conception of the monument through its symbolism, method of production, or means of reception. The exhibit's timeline, which contains approximately three hundred annotated images, maps and diagrams, locates the selected monuments in relation to political, artistic, and technological events of the past century. Two kinds of monuments have been chosen to represent each decade; Objects, often vertical in orientation and made of single or highly aggregated parts and Trails, horizontal in orientation and capable of rendering large swaths of the landscape with a singular theme or purpose.



Parsons School of Design Exhibitions  
The Arnold & Sheila Aronson Galleries  
66 Fifth Avenue

Aronson Gallery Installation, Fall 2001



## THE CLEFT AUTO PARK

Georgia Dome Olympic Site, Atlanta, GA, 1996



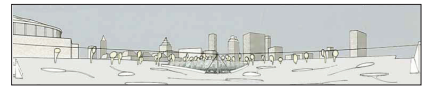
Georgia Dome

Cleft Auto Park transforms an old railroad yard into a Tailgating Lot (above) and a Hip-Hop Grotto (below). Inspired by FreakNick (from: "to fraternize and have a picnic"), an annual car-centric event sponsored by historically black colleges in the Atlanta, GA area, the scheme was originally conceived as an ancillary event-site for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta.

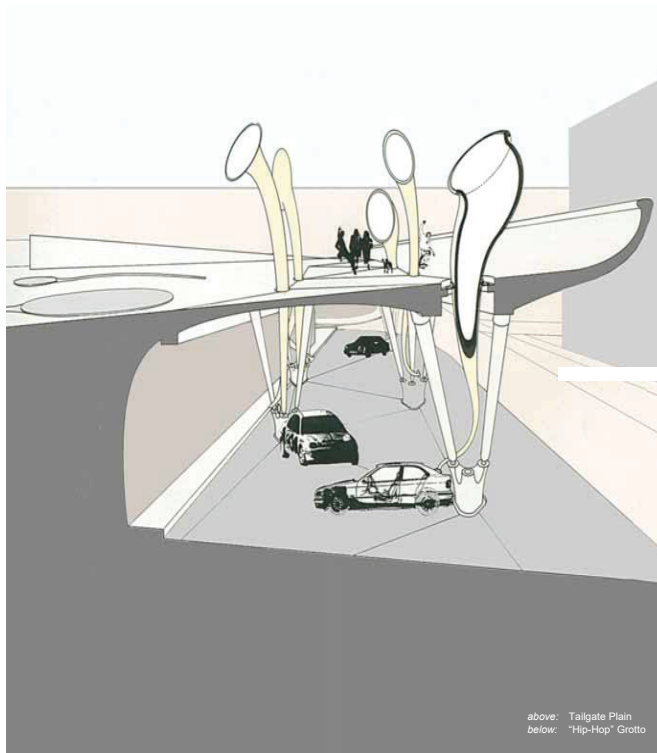
*The project is a play on myths and rituals associated with the original Olympics, as follows:*

The sacred character of ancient Olympia, site of the first Olympics, arose from its location in a geographic cleft. Over time, a continuous series of individual cults were superimposed on the site, one upon the other, and the actual location of the cleft was lost. This loss of origin coincided with Zeus's assertion of absolute mastery over the sanctuary at Olympia. What had been a footrace, and fertility games — marriages between God and Earth, symbolizing the dominance of earth gods and their representation of agriculture, — were gradually transformed into games representing the militant and immortal Zeus. Thus, the introduction of "heavy" athletic events such as boxing and wrestling combined with pushing, strangling, and twisting, all of which were derived from earlier rituals involving blood sacrifice. Interestingly, artistic activities, especially music, dance and theater, often preceded the 'combat' of naked bodies at other competition sites, but not at Olympia.

cont. below/



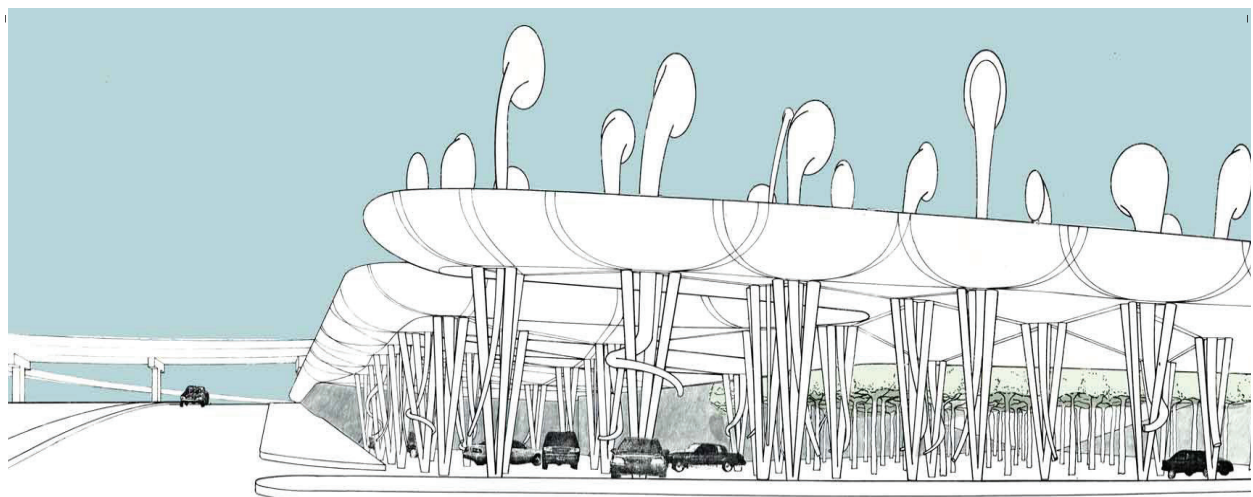
View towards Downtown Atlanta



above: Tailgate Plain  
below: 'Hip-Hop' Grotto



Axonometric of Tailgate Plain with the Georgia Dome

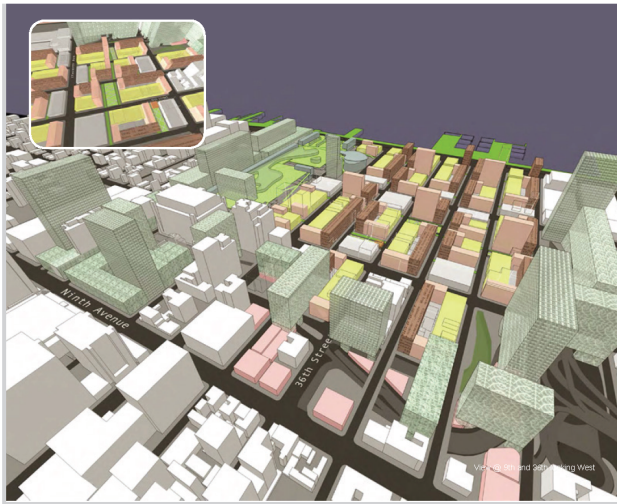


View towards the Cleft from the Stadium

### 3000 years later at another Olympic site:

As with the lost cleft of ancient Olympia, our cities are characterized by activities which leave marks and then fade from view. Such is the nature of this site in Atlanta, Georgia: parked cars occupying a geographic scar left by a railroad yard. With this background in mind we conceived of a car park to accommodate a series of modern rituals that supplement spectator sports. These rituals are redolent of themes transfigured from ancient reveries associated with Olympia and the Olympics, here embedded in the cult of automobiles and tailgating. Thus the project synthesizes two aspects of the tail-gating tradition, jazzmen playing horns out the back of a car, here replaced by a "grotto" of electronic mix-masters piping sound up from below, and above, the imbibing of distilled spirits, the grilling of meats and hero worship, i.e. Beer, Hot Dogs and fanatic behavior.



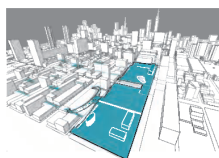
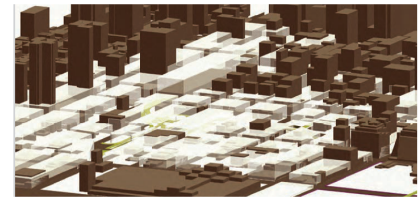


## NEOPOLITAN PLAN FOR HELL'S KITCHEN

commissioned study, exhibition  
and publication, 1999-01  
Storefront for Art and  
Architecture, New York, NY  
w/ Laura Miller, borfax/ B.L.U.

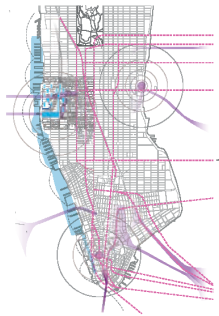


"Underdeveloped" according to powerful real-estate interests, Hell's Kitchen (the extended area of what is now called "Hudson Yards") should logically accommodate the expansion of Midtown Manhattan's density. Yet bridges, ramps, and major access points associated with the Lincoln Tunnel, as well as the Port Authority Bus Station, the Jacob Javits Convention Center, and rail yards form a barricade of "obnoxious" infrastructure, making the site resistant to laissez-faire development. Commissioned by The Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Association, the NeoPolitan Plan projected an admixture of use, height and bulk zoning, quite literally figuring the overlapping political and socioeconomic interests vying for Hell's Kitchen, one of the most contested urban sites in a major American metropolis in recent history. Going beyond project-based scenarios that respond primarily to one – or appease all – interests, agencies and constituencies, we invented design procedures to leverage one party's interests against the holdings or interests of others. The former Javits mega-site is re-parceled – forming a new NeoPolitan neighborhood, where housing, commercial uses, community programs, and open spaces hopscotch across the site strategically, serving the interests of local constituencies. Ultimately, the NeoPolitan Plan for Hell's Kitchen is less a "plan" than a design-based vehicle for private interest to become the subject of public debate and negotiation.

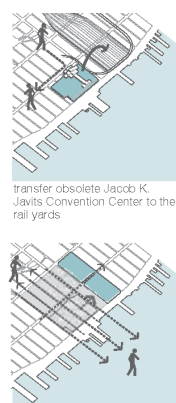


### Regional Flows

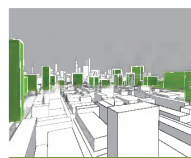
Existing Major Infrastructure  
Proposed Major Infrastructure



### STACKING THE YARDS

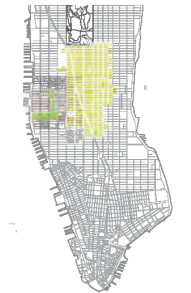


2 liberate five jumbo-blocks for a new west side neighborhood

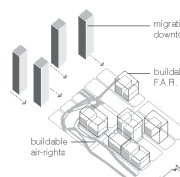


### Commercial Flows

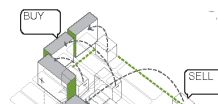
Existing Midtown Business District  
Proposed "Midtown-West" District



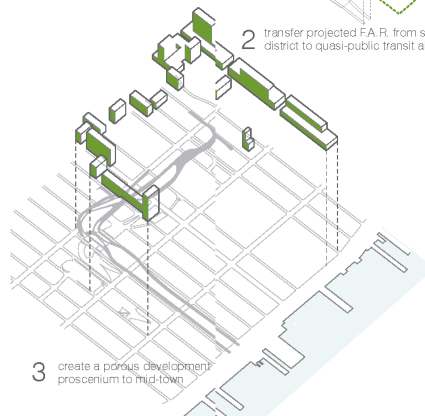
### MIGRATING MIDTOWN



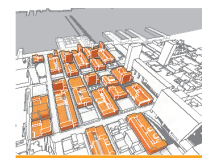
1 accommodate flow of density west



2 transfer projected F.A.R. from surrounding district to quasi-public transit air-rights



3 create a porous development proscenium to mid-town



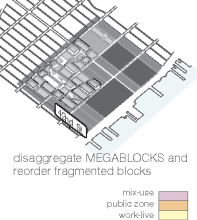
### Housing Flows

Existing Residential Development  
Proposed Residential Development



### PLAYING HOPSCOTCH

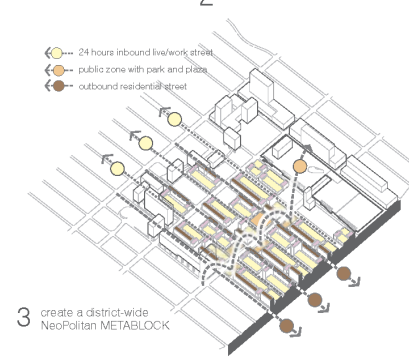
mega fragmented



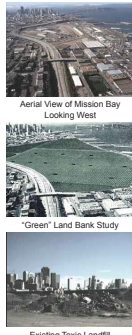
1 disaggregate MEGABLOCKS and reorder fragmented blocks



2 sample manhattan: its in the MIX



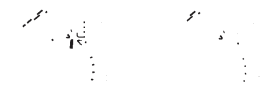
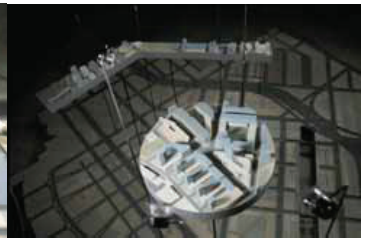
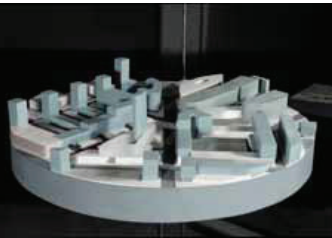
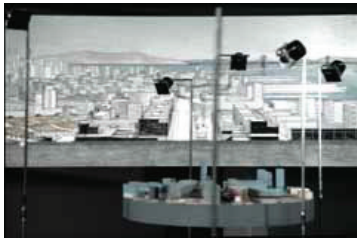
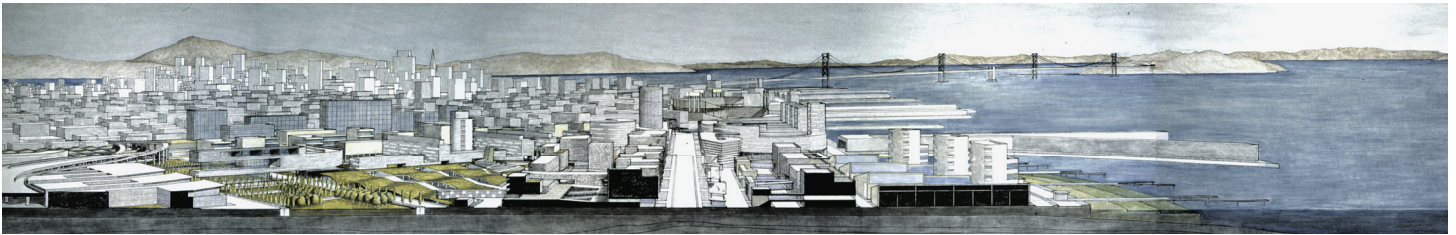
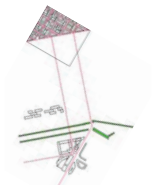
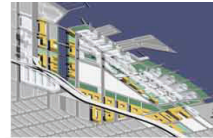
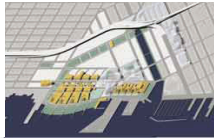
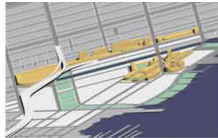
3 create a district-wide NeoPolitan METABLOCK



## PLAN FOR MISSION BAY

funded study and exhibitions  
San Francisco, CA 1997  
w/ John Bass, borfax/ B.L.U.

The project's overarching aim was to show how the various forms of commercial growth that have been considered for this site could be accommodated in a way that allows public interests to be better served by private development. This was achieved in two ways; one having to do with the form of the project, the other with its representation. The project situates proposed forms of Development, including a mixed-use research campus, housing & commercial development in such a way as to link profit with both a functioning and symbolic remediation of a large swath of the site's toxic ground (see the "Garden Girdle"). The project also proposes a much broader range of building and landscape conditions than were typically considered in San Francisco at the time—each linked to the highly differentiated programmatic needs and physical characteristics found at the center, edges and infrastructural extensions of the site. For example, the plan accommodates a range of densities, so that the pastoral predilections of the urban dweller (influenced by the spirit of American suburbia) and the need for some ecological restitution are addressed by building both a "Times Square" and a space for "Fresh Air".



Plans cut from 0 to 100+ ft.