CASE STUDY

ACT III: DRIVE-BY STEALING
A SURVEY ON THEATRICALITY
In an effort to determine what qualities I want my own theater to design to possess, I studied the designs of a variety of other theatrical infrastructures; not just theatres, but also museums, rides, and even theories. Remember, I’m approaching the definition of ‘theatrical’ as any experience that displaces you from your ordinary routine, letting you step into another world of hyperreality. I ranked them subjectively on a rubric I wish to apply to my own design, which covers aesthetics, experience, and pragmatism.

This led to a more in-depth study of the Panopticon as a theatrical space, detailed in the next Act.
SERLIO SAYS:
How to design:
-stage (eye level)
-audience (closer arrangement)
-comedic setting (closer yard)
-tragic setting (noble house)
-creative setting (fractured box)
-vanishing point (middle of 9 sq. grid with smaller buildings in front)
-backstage (for the cast to squeeze)
-sky (ammonium salt & water)
-colored lights (torch’s basin, torches, & dyes)
-thunder (rock as wood)
-lighting (iron rod & light paint dust)
-still people (painted)
-moving people (cut out on devotional grooves)

COMMON INTERPRETATION SAYS:
-Serlio is wholeheartedly concerned with practicality. For staging he outlines a how-to manual of efficient strategies for stage design following well-known conventions.
-Serlio is most interested in the emblematic opportunities of Renaissance perspective theory.
-Serlio follows Marcus Vitruvius’ rules without much desire for modification.
-However, he misreads Vitruvius.

In Book Five of De Architectura he states: “There are three sorts of scenery, the Tragic, the Comic, and the Satyric. The decorations of these are different from each other. The tragic scene is ornamented with columns, pediments, statues, and of the royal decorations. The comic scene represents private buildings and galleries, with windows similar to those in ordinary dwellings. The satyric scene is ornamented with trees, cures, hills, and of the rural objects in imitation of nature.”

(English translation by Joseph Gwilt, 1826)

I SAYS:
-Serlio is entrapped by the notion of ‘theatre as spectacle’, and is most concerned with suspending the audience’s disbelief in the most effective manner possible.

-He enjoys thinking of theatre as a magic show. The audience clearly knows that the colored lights are a trick, the lightning isn’t real, the cutout people are not alive, and the stage doesn’t really extend back into a city in a different world, but when the audience is unaware of how such a realistic effect is being achieved, that carried illusion is his satisfaction.

-He was following conventions of ventriloquism of the time, but his concepts of presenting just enough info to suspend disbelief carry on today.

-His methods for creating stage illusion are fascinating and could serve as spectacle in themselves if revealed properly.
"What emotions do we not feel in the contrast between deep shadows and limpid light, or between the delights of calm weather and the confusion of winds and tempest?"

- Servandoni

"Pleasure from a theatrical performance is not caused by the illusion. It is when we become aware of the working of the illusion and can appreciate the work a second time."

- Du Rosi

"Each is a doorway framing the next scene like a proscenium."

"From its early formation, character theory in architecture demonstrated some close affinities with the art of theatre, including themes of acting, the personification of characters, and stage set design."

- Le Camus

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I SAYS:

Previous character theory was very rigid. Le Camus advocated for a temporal progression similar to the dramatic unfolding of a play, and gradations in ornamentation throughout the interior of a building resembled a succession of stage sets in a theatrical performance. His narrative theories influenced John Soane to Frank Lloyd Wright, and have great potential in dictating the progression of a play.
departure

1) ORDINARY WORLD

2) CALL TO ADVENTURE

3) REJECTED CALL

4) MEETING WITH MENTOR

initiation

5) CROSSING OF THRESHOLD

6) TESTS, ENEMIES, ALLIES

7) ROAD TO INNER SANCTUM

8) SUPREME TRIAL

9) REWARD

return

10) ROAD HOME

11) FINAL CONFRONTATION

12) RETURN TO ORDINARY WORLD, CHANGED

"A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man."

-Joseph Campbell
adaptive paradigm

I SAY:
The New Globe Theater, also to be located on Governor's Island in a vacant fort, serves both as a precedent and potential context. Just as the Globe Theater in London serves as an alternative to the West End experience, the New Globe (though incorporating modern technology) will also serve as an alternative to the Broadway experience. It is not difficult to imagine an explicit relationship between events that might occur here and events that might occur at the revised Fort Jay. THEATRICAL ELEMENTS
- universal truths meet new technology (serico)
- clear buffer into its "world"
- varying engagement
- isolated universe tied only to heavens
- shared experience
- spatially reflective
- climatic space
urban conflict

THEATRICAL ELEMENTS
- rethinks the idea 'theatre as internal world'
- engages the context and public sphere due to verticality.
- dynamic spatial form changes thereby affect mood, primary space (not unlike Serlio’s conventions)
PNEUMATIC RELEASE

prologue

rising action

climax, but not the only?

looking up into a new goal

THEATRICAL ELEMENTS
-linear structure
-trick climax
-compression
-sequence reflection

confined, looking down at climax with new eyes

new heights squeeze you..

then release you into a grand view of your entire experience

and a new route returns you, now with a fresh outlook
entering the world

familiar gate

beautiful side of things

increasing in size...

...brightness...

...and opens...

until a broken fence hints at impending danger

we hear the t-rexes and see hints at its power...

a boat like ours, full of people...

has been stopped by predators

amidst eerie sounds and darkness, we enter a dark corridor

silence at first gives a false sense of security

suddenly out of the darkness, a wandering t-rex head appears

and it sees us, lunging for attack

until without warning we're dropped, enhancing our terror but bringing us safely back in broad daylight...

THEATRICAL ELEMENTS
- linear structure
- immersive engagement
- reversal of fortune
- deus ex machina
- shared experience
- complete world
- musical undertones
- proximity cues
- crisis uncertainty
Theatrical Elements

- Queue line outside draws you into the world by introducing you to the story (dramatized exposition)
- Exhaustive detailing throughout an original story in a familiar "hero" world
- Ride itself uses light to great effect
- Provides illusion of choice for multiple ride experiences

Perceived Volition
CASE STUDY

ACT IV: INTERNATIONAL HEIST

HOLDING UP THE SOUTH BANK
THEATRICAL_ foreign or exaggerated, often beyond believability.

GOOD THEATRICALITY _ serves as metaphor for our essential life truths.
SHAKESPEARE’S GLOBE
The classic. The original. Built to the exact specifications of the original Globe, and only a few hundred yards away, this pure theatrical adventure subsists without any modern construction or technology, including electric light, air conditioning, or even a roof to keep the weather out. The experience of a Groundling (center audience) was far more engaging and personal than any other theatre experience in my life. This was accomplished primarily by making us stand. What would have happened if we had to walk around?
Herzog and de Meuron took this derelict, deserted power station and transformed it into a world-class hall of modern art. What struck me most in the space was how despite its modern technology and complete transformation of program, it still felt like a power station. It’s grandness allowed me to perfectly imagine the enormous turbines that once required the space.
Denys Lasdun’s 1970s Brutalist work weave three entirely different theaters into one cohesive complex. I saw performances in all three theatres, and deeply admired the formal specificity with each to its intended staging, audience, and aesthetics. The Cottesloe is a small, flexible space full of catwalks and instantly reconfigurable seats and stage. The Lyttelton takes advantage of unidirectional audience sightlines, allowing for visual tricks that would be ineffective in the Olivier, its enormous theater in the round (seen in plan above).