5-2015

Perfomance Pedagogy

Dana Hareli

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_Performance Pedagogy

_A Reconceptualization of the Modern Atelier
Performance Pedagogy
A Reconceptualization of the Modern Atelier

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Thesis, S2015
Performance Pedagogy, (n). a method of instruction in which the role of the instructor is one of a scholar-performer in a subverted classroom.

Spectatorship, (n). the act of observation by a spectator.

Theatricality, (n). the spectacle (dance, performance, art) against a background of stage-play and aesthetics.

Lecture-based teaching model; teacher-centered model, (n). a method of instruction by which an instructor presents and conveys critical information to an audience.

Student-centered teaching model, (n). a method of instruction that shifts the focus from the teacher to a learner’s individual development and autonomy.

Beaux arts, (n). a conservative model of teaching in which imitation of educational practices and mastery of academic learning is established.

Bauhaus, (n). a progressive form of art education which redefined the relationship between art, design and industrial manufacturing techniques.
The term “performance pedagogy” refers to a method of instruction in which the role of the instructor is one of a scholar-performer in a subverted classroom, implicating notions of theatricality and spectatorship. Evolving from the notion of the architect as a patron-master of an atelier to that of a generalist within a craftsmen workshop, contemporary architectural education practices should foster the notion of the architect as a scholar-performer through performance-based learning.

However, current formal and spatial configurations of the architectural studio inhibit the potential for theatrical interplay and improved learning. The deterioration of performance pedagogy in contemporary educational practices, fostering one-on-one teaching models in the place of lecture-based teaching models, is detrimental to the intrinsic theatricality of architectural design education. As faculty increasingly seek to build closer, interpersonal relationships with students as mentors and consultants under a student-centered methodology, the classroom, in its traditional form, becomes inflexible and rigid.

Hence, in renewing the encounter between the performer and the scholar, this thesis addresses the latent, theatrical merits of performance-based learning through the pedagogical and formal subversion of the traditional classroom. Through the adaptation of the Beaux Arts atelier, this thesis explores the intersection of surveillance and theatre typologies as a means of revolutionizing performance pedagogy in schools of architecture.
The dynamic between the scholar and the performer within the architectural discipline is unique to the latter, and may be seen through the exploratory learning process by which students and instructors rehearse and perform their work through lectures and critiques. While the critique establishes a student-centered method of instruction by which a student receives feedback from an instructor, the lecture spaces within a school of architecture offer a teacher-centered model of instruction by which an instructor relays information to an audience. Likewise, the architecture studio offers a teaching model that is fundamentally theatrical, conditioning acts of performance and spectatorship between students and instructors.

However, a recent trend in contemporary educational practices is doing away with lecture-based teaching models and the spaces which traditionally accommodate for larger audiences in favor of one-on-one teaching models and smaller, more individualized spaces. If the above were to be implemented within a school of architecture, this shift would produce isolated classrooms and frighteningly smaller, more compact pedagogical spaces, limiting the potential for pedagogical performance.

Although research in higher level teaching supports the displacement of the instructor from the role of an “expert” in a lecture-based teaching model to that of a “delegator” in a student-centered model, the lecture, in its traditional form, should not be abandoned, for it provides an effective method of transmitting information to an audience by means of didactic performance. Without the theater classroom model, the intrinsic theatricality of architectural design education is at risk.

Acknowledging the link between courses and the spaces in which they are taught, the Beaux Arts and Bauhaus educational models were studied in accordance with their studios and auditorium spaces in order to track the spatial and pedagogical shifts between both architectural movements.

In order to complete their training within the Beaux-Arts architectural education, students had to win competitions, complete a thesis project and gain work experience under a patron-master. The ateliers were divided up into small working groups with a patron presiding over them. Students in these ateliers were dependent upon each other, and there was a firm hierarchy established according to their skill level with a single ‘massier’ in charge. Lectures were also held in architectural theory, history, construction, perspective, mathematics, physics, chemistry, geometry, building law and general history.6

In the Beaux Arts educational model, a studio-centric education was established in which all courses were designed to be directly applied to the studio. The atelier, or the studio, embodied design competitions, architectural theory and technology.

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[2] Ibid.
While the Beaux Arts atelier pedagogically positioned the instructor as a central figure presiding over the work of his apprentices, the Bauhaus craftsmen workshop positioned the instructor at the forefront of the workshop, a bit removed from the production.

In order to complete their training within the Bauhaus architectural education, students had to first complete a series of preliminary courses of form and composition as well as practical arts training in workshops of various subjects, including printing, ceramics, stone sculpture, metal, glass painting, cabinetmaking, weaving, wood carving and book binding. Following the preliminary courses, students took courses in design, building construction and training in model building.

Thus, the Bauhaus educational model established a studio-centric education in which courses in the fine arts, craftsmanship and sculpture were applicable to the studio. Consequently, the model of teaching implemented in the Beaux Arts established a teacher-centered delivery of instruction, while the Bauhaus established a model of teaching which followed more of a student-centered delivery of instruction.


Ibid.
In contrast to the Beaux Arts and Bauhaus educational models, the contemporary educational model established a design-studio centric educational model in which courses work in parallel with and meet ideologically in the studio.

In order to receive a Bachelor of Architecture degree from L’Ecole d’Architecture de Marne-La-Vallee, students must complete a series of basic courses, taught in both lecture and tutorial format, in four general fields: territory, architecture, construction and representation. Following these preliminary courses, students enroll in four in-depth studies of their choice, which include topics such as sustainable development in the manufacturing process and urban forms in relation to energy efficiency and housing development. Lastly, students must enroll in core design studios and elective courses.

2 Ibid.
Although contemporary architectural education emphasizes a design-studio centric model, the future of architectural education lies within the decentralization of the studio and the integration of interdisciplinary subjects to the curriculum.

In practice, the importance of an integrated design approach may be perceived within the collaborative environment fostered by consultants, engineers and architects in the profession. Thus, by placing greater emphasis upon non-design courses, a more integrated approach to the architectural education may be achieved.

Thus, in the interest of providing a more integrated approach to the emerging practice, an architecture school of the future should balance both design and non-design courses as well as the student and teacher-centered deliveries of instruction. A reconceptualization of the modern atelier would therefore promote the reconciliation of both modes of instruction, fostering increased classroom flexibility.

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Genius loci, (n), a mnemonic device aiding in memory storage and retrieval through which a user maps memories and visual associations onto an architectural route.

Mnemonic device, (n), a memory technique aiding in the retention and recall of information.

Montessori classroom, (n), a tactile educational environment tailored to the individual learner.

Beaux arts, (n), a conservative model of teaching in which imitation of educational practices and mastery of academic learning is established.

Bauhaus, (n), a progressive form of art education which redefined the relationship between art, design and industrial manufacturing techniques.
Underpinning the term performance pedagogy lies the genius loci, a mnemonic device through which a user maps memories and visual associations onto an architectural route and rehearses passage through the space in this linear sequence.

The evolution of the genius loci began with Cicero, a Greek orator, who recited memorized speeches based on the above mnemonic device. The method implements the use of association between objects and locations to store and retrieve memorized information, which is ascribed to the said objects.\(^{10}\) Traditionally, the orator would recite a text or speech utilizing this method and travel through the spaces in the sequence of the text, while mentally following the path onto which the objects to be memorized are ascribed.\(^{11}\)

One of the earliest architectural manifestations of the genius loci is Camillo’s memory theater, in which the user overlooks a semicircular theater containing all the memories of the universe in tiered scrolls.


Giulio Camillo developed a great interest in the art of oration, which provided the basis for the mnemonic concepts within his theater. Frances Yates, in *The Art of Memory*, reconstructs Camillo’s theatre as a Roman theatre, consisting of seven tiers (each a symbolic mythological reference), and seven aisles (each representing one of the seven classical planets). This seven by seven grid creates forty-nine unique information nodes in the theatre.  

Employing the method of loci, Camillo’s memory theater functioned very much like a memory machine. Composed as a single room in a Vitruvian-like ampitheatre, the visitor activates the space by performing as a scholar on the stage and looking onto the seven sections of the auditorium, each housing emblematic images and signs communicating universal knowledge.  

By positioning the scholar on a stage in the center of the construction, Camillo renders the scholar as a performer, subverting the notion of memory acquisition from a private, individualized practice to a public performance.

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13. Ibid.
Unlike the structure of Camillo’s memory theater and the scholar-performer didactic, the Montessori classroom, an early 1900s solution to self-initiated learning, is shaped and informed by tactile activities and objects.

The Montessori method of education is a child-centered educational approach, which views the child as eager and capable of initiating learning in a supportive and prepared learning environment. The classroom is designed in order to encourage and support a child’s natural desire to learn.

In contrast to Camillo’s memory theater, the Montessori classroom dissolves the role of the scholar to that of a passive spectator through the eradication of spatial hierarchy in favor of insensitively bland learning environments.

Here, both formally and pedagogically, the spatial contingencies and intersectionality of the classroom are diminished to encourage self-initiated activities.

Thus, while the organization and layout of the Montessori classroom attempts to enable a child to actively explore his/her environment, the lack of hierarchy within the classroom plan discourages performance on the part of both the students and the instructor. Unlike the structure of Camillo’s memory theater, the Montessori classroom consists of a flat horizontal plane occupied by objects.

The deterioration of performance-based learning in the Montessori classroom model therefore prompts a discussion of the implications of theatricality on design education and the role of performance pedagogy in the architectural discipline.
In contrast to the Montessori model, the architecture studio, an adaptation of the atelier-based training of the École des Beaux Arts, offers a teaching model that is fundamentally theatrical, conditioning acts of performance and spectatorship between students and instructors.

Emerging from the teaching of the French Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, the École des Beaux Arts promoted conservative classical arts and architectural design based on the antique principles of ancient Rome and Greece. As in the Italian academies of the 16th century, all students at the École des Beaux Arts were obliged to perfect their drawing skills before progressing to figure drawing and eventually painting. The École remained the basic model for an art school until the foundation of the Bauhaus.

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16 Ibid.
Within the complex of buildings that comprise the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts, the Palais des Études features elaborate frescoes, intricate wall finishes and a courtyard, which once held classical statuary. The building also houses a semi-circular theater, the Hémicycle d’Honneur, where prizes are awarded to recipients of the Prix Nobel.

Through an analysis of the Hémicycle d’Honneur within the Ecole des Beaux Arts plan, one may deduce an axial relationship between the theater and the entrance to the building. However, as a node at the apex of the above axis, the theater appears as an addition to the otherwise symmetrical building plan. On either side of the theater are ateliers, where students would learn under the instruction of master architects.

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18 Ibid.
In comparison to the Beaux Arts model of education, the core objective of the Bauhaus model of education was radical: to reimagine the material world in reflection of the unification of the arts through craft.19

The Bauhaus combined elements of both fine arts and design education. The curriculum contained preliminary courses that immersed students in the study of materials, color theory and formal relationships, after which they entered specialized workshops, which included metalworking, cabinetmaking, weaving, pottery, typography, and wall painting.20

The facilities in the Bauhaus at Dessau include spaces for teaching, housing for students and faculty members, an auditorium and offices, fused together in a pinwheel configuration.21 The building is a reflection of the literal intersection of architecture, art, industrial design, typography, graphic design, and interior design.

20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
Through an analysis of the auditorium within the Bauhaus at Dessau plan, one may deduce an axial relationship between the auditorium and the entrance to the building as well as between the auditorium and the student workshops. As a point of intersection between the above axes, the auditorium appears to occupy a crucial node at the center of the technical school and the workshop building. On either side of the auditorium are classrooms, laboratories, cabinet-making workshops and machine workshops.

When comparing both schools’ auditoria, a pedagogical transformation may be perceived as the exclusivity and separation of the Beaux Arts auditorium from the circulatory plan is compared to the flexibility and integration of the Bauhaus auditorium within the school’s circulatory plan. The relationship between the curricula and the forms of instruction used in both schools may be found in the forms of their corresponding pedagogical spaces.
In Darkness, the author discusses memory aids for words and for objects and also the technique of using memory aids.

Simonides, a Greek, was purported to have created the first system of memory aids.

Ad Herennium is a book with no known author or title, and discusses two forms of memorization, one that is natural and one that is artificial. Memory aids were thought of as an artificial form of memory.

Although the art of memory was periodically forgotten in the fall of the Roman Empire, works of instruction were kept alive within the confines of monasteries.

It was common for mnemonic aids to be used in education for learning grammar and more complex ideas, such as the alphabet.

The peg system was introduced, where a given set of images serve as mnemonics, these images are associated with serial numbers; these images serve as the pegs.
The design studio in its present form and spatial configuration is a static landscape in which neither a student’s nor an instructor’s performance is elicited.

An analysis of contemporary schools of architecture reveals that current formal and spatial configurations of the studio inhibit the potential for theatrical interplay. Participation and involvement by students within critique-based settings is lacking, a reflection, arguably, of the inflexible spaces provided for such activities. The contemporary studio temporarily reconfigures itself via flexible partitions and furniture, disregarding the potential for hybridized architectural interventions.

Therefore, in light of the current spatial inadequacy and programmatic rigidity of the studio classroom, a reconceptualized modern atelier which would promote optimal flexibility is highly desirable.
The Monumental Stair

Within the Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture, a grand stair ascends four stories, forming a central space for informal gatherings, impromptu meetings, lectures and intellectual exchange. However, in this model, the opportunities for a performative environment are limited, given the nature of the static stair.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRESHMAN YEAR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Integral Theater

The auditorium within Milstein Hall provides both flexibility of program and function, and a permeable boundary between academic and public space. When not used in its full capacity, the seats in the lower portion of the auditorium may be transformed for exhibition or display, small meetings, and studio critiques.
The Elevated Platform

Within the Abedian School of Architecture, the building’s three levels are articulated through a series of figurative structure-defining endostructures that provide spaces for casual meetings and informal critiques. The sense of theater is apparent through the provision of flexible furniture for small congregations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRST YR</th>
<th>SECOND YR</th>
<th>THIRD YR</th>
<th>FOURTH YR</th>
<th>FIFTH YR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MATH 1148 (DEPENDANT ON FA 100R INTRODUCTION TO TECHNIQUES)</td>
<td>ARC 118 (COMPUTER APPLICATIONS AND SURVEY)</td>
<td>FIRST YR</td>
<td>SECOND YR</td>
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<td>FIRST YR</td>
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<tr>
<td>STUDIO VIII</td>
<td>STUDIO VII</td>
<td>STUDIO VI</td>
<td>STUDIO V</td>
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<td>FIRST YR</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHYSICS 1200 (PHYSICAL SCIENCE GE)</td>
<td>GE (CULTURE AND IDEAS)</td>
<td>FIRST YR</td>
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<td>FIRST YR</td>
<td>SECOND YR</td>
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<tr>
<td>STUDIO X</td>
<td>STUDIO IX</td>
<td>STUDIO VIII</td>
<td>STUDIO VII</td>
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<td>FIRST YR</td>
<td>SECOND YR</td>
<td>THIRD YR</td>
<td>FOURTH YR</td>
<td>FIFTH YR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCH 11-113 (DESIGN COMMUNICATION: THE OBJECT)</td>
<td>HSS 3 (THE MAKING OF MODERN SOCIETY)</td>
<td>FIRST YR</td>
<td>SECOND YR</td>
<td>THIRD YR</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIRST YR</td>
<td>SECOND YR</td>
<td>THIRD YR</td>
<td>FOURTH YR</td>
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<tr>
<td>STUDIO IX</td>
<td>STUDIO VIII</td>
<td>STUDIO VII</td>
<td>STUDIO VI</td>
<td>STUDIO V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIRST YR</td>
<td>SECOND YR</td>
<td>THIRD YR</td>
<td>FOURTH YR</td>
<td>FIFTH YR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCH 12-214 (ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN)</td>
<td>HSS 4 (THE MODERN CONTEXT: FIGURES)</td>
<td>FIRST YR</td>
<td>SECOND YR</td>
<td>THIRD YR</td>
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<td>FIRST YR</td>
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<tr>
<td>STUDIO VIII</td>
<td>STUDIO VII</td>
<td>STUDIO VI</td>
<td>STUDIO V</td>
<td>STUDIO IV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The table above represents a chart for academic years, indicating courses and credit hours. The diagram on the right shows a floor plan with labeled dimensions and sections.
The Performance Arena
Within the École d’Architecture Marne-la-Vallée, the large central space is designed to accommodate for celebrations, balls, artistic installations and symposia. Here, the amphitheater serves as an object poised within the space, accessed through a promenade of stairs and walkways.
_02 Methodology

_02.1 Strategy

_02.2 Tactic

_02.3 Precedents
Rather than simply eliminating spaces of student-centered, one-one-one instruction from a school of architecture and promoting the lecture-based, performance model, a hybridized, flexible classroom which newly reconciles both modes of instruction is in order.

By pairing the three primary pedagogical activities within a school of architecture (the studio, the critique, and the lecture) with one another, flexible classroom hybrids were explored. Sectional studies of the studio, the critique, and the lecture prompted an interest in the potential verticality that these spaces may deploy. A study of relevant mnemonic devices and mechanisms further informed the sectional hybrids by producing spaces of characteristic forms and unique profiles.
MECHANISMS OF PERFORMANCE
Objects in static condition become spectacle.
Objects in motion engage in spectacle.
The viewer of a performance or member of an audience.

THE OBJECT
ADAPTATION
TRANSPARENCY

MECHANISMS OF PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOLS OF ARCHITECTURE
Objects as isolated elements become spectacle.
Objects facilitating varying uses become spectacle.
Objects that allow for varying modes of viewing enhance performance.

COGNITIVE MECHANISMS OF MNEMONIC DEVICES
Things that stand out are more easily remembered.
Things that are either first or last in a sequence are more likely to be remembered.
Things that are represented both verbally and visually are more easily remembered.

VON RESTORFF EFFECT
SERIAL ORDER EFFECT
PICTURE SUPERIORITY EFFECT
VISION + TOUCH

MNEMONIC DEVICES AND TECHNIQUES
Unrelated yet connected things are more easily remembered.
Numbers associated with imagery are more easily remembered in a particular order.
Human interactions associated with pairs of letters and numbers are more likely to be remembered.

MNEMONIC LINK SYSTEM
PEG SYSTEM
DOMINIC SYSTEM
METHOD OF LOCI
Performance Spaces in a School of Architecture
Utilizing the three groups of classroom pairings (the lecture + the studio, the lecture + the crit and the crit + the studio), three perspectives were created to illustrate concepts of surveillance and theatricality latent within each hybridized pedagogical construction. The classroom, in its new configuration, becomes a tailored vessel for the performance of students and instructors alike.

Through the vertical subversion of the classroom, visual sight lines and exposure to content presented in both lecture and critique settings is increased. A reconceptualization of the modern atelier would therefore not only liberate the studio from its static form, but would also reshape the culture of the school and the interactions between students and instructors, fostering the notion of the architect as a scholar-performer.
In addition to the use of mnemonic devices and sectional hybridizations to inform the subverted classroom, three historic pedagogical theaters were analyzed. The relationship of the rise over run to the type of performance appropriate for each theater prompted an investigation into the potential of each to be implemented in the design studio.
Operating Theater

Camillo’s Memory Theater

Amphitheatre d’Honneur

Things that stand out are more easily remembered.

Things that are either first or last in a sequence are more likely to be remembered.

Things that are represented both verbally and visually are more easily remembered.

Sensory inputs of vision and touch are more easily remembered than smell and sound.

Unrelated yet connected things are more easily remembered.

Human interactions associated with pairs of letters and numbers are more likely to be remembered.

Numbers associated with imagery are more easily remembered in a given order.

Imagery associated with visual spaces are more easily remembered.
Von Restorff Effect Serial Order Effect Vision + Touch

Easily remembered. Things that stand out are more easily remembered.

Unrelated yet connected things in a sequence are more likely to be remembered.

Numbers associated with pairs of letters and numbers are more likely to be remembered.

Human interactions associated with pairs of letters and numbers are more likely to be remembered.

Imagery associated with visual spaces are more easily remembered.

Imagery associated with visual touch are more easily remembered.

Sensory inputs of vision and touch are more easily remembered than smell and sound.

Easily remembered.

Words that are either first or last in a sequence are more likely to be remembered.
Acknowledging the relationship between the coursework and the types of instruction used to relay information, sectional iterations were developed with an understanding of the classroom as a figural landscape of performance and learning. Each theater classroom embodied either a student-centered, teacher-centered or hybridized style of teaching.
02.3
Methodology
Precedents

Figure 01. Preliminary sectional axonometric.
THE BLACK BOX THEATER
WYLY THEATRE
A FLEXIBLE/OPERABLE THEATER
LIBERATES PERFORMANCE VIA VERTICAL STACKING OF FUNCTIONS
THE CONTINUOUS THEATER
A FLEXIBLE LIBRARY TAILORED FOR MAX. PERFORMANCE
SEATTLE CENTRAL LIBRARY

THE BLACK BOX THEATER
A CENTRAL COMMUNAL WORK SPACE
YALE SCHOOL OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE

TRANSPARENCY DEFINES BOTH INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR VIEWS
INTERIOR SIGHT LINES ENGENDER COLLABORATION
HOUSTON BALLET CENTER FOR DANCE
LIBERATES PERFORMANCE VIA VERTICAL STACKING OF FUNCTIONS
A FLEXIBLE/OPERABLE THEATER
WYLY THEATRE
THE CENTRAL ATRIUM
THE INTERIOR VIEWING DEVICE
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL GATHERING SPACE
MULTI-LEVEL INTERIOR SUPPORTS RANGE OF ACTIVITIES

L’ECOLE D’ARCHITECTURE MARNEE-LA-VALEE

OPTIMIZED CIRCULATION BETWEEN SERIES OF STACKED PLATFORMS
ORGANIZES CIRCULATION AROUND CEREMONIOUS JURY PIT
A FLEXIBLE LIBRARY TAILORED FOR MAX. PERFORMANCE
MULTI-LEVEL INTERIOR SUPPORTS RANGE OF ACTIVITIES
INTERIOR SIGHT LINES ENGENDER COLLABORATION
L’ECOLE D’ARCHITECTURE MARNEE-LA-VALEE

SCHEMES M, N, O
SCHEMES A, B, C
SCHEMES D, E, F
SCHEMES G, H, I
SCHEMES J, K, L

THEATER TOOLBOX

0 9.5’ 19’ 38’
THE CONTINUOUS THEATER

A FLEXIBLE LIBRARY TAILORED FOR MAX. PERFORMANCE

OPTIMIZED CIRCULATION BETWEEN SERIES OF STACKED PLATFORMS

THE CENTRAL ATRIUM

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL GATHERING SPACE

MULTI-LEVEL INTERIOR SUPPORTS RANGE OF ACTIVITIES

THE BLACK BOX THEATER

ORGANIZES CIRCULATION AROUND CEREMONIOUS JURY PIT

A CENTRAL COMMUNAL WORK SPACE

YALE SCHOOL OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE

TRANSPARENCY DEFINES BOTH INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR VIEWS

INTERIOR SIGHT LINES ENGENDER COLLABORATION

HOUSTON BALLET CENTER FOR DANCE

LIBERATES PERFORMANCE VIA VERTICAL STACKING OF FUNCTIONS

A FLEXIBLE/OPERABLE THEATER

WYLY THEATRE

THE CENTRAL ATRIUM

THE INTERIOR VIEWING DEVICE

THE INTEGRATED THEATER

L’ÉCOLE D’ARCHITECTURE MARNEE-LA-VALLEE

OPTIMIZED CIRCULATION BETWEEN SERIES OF STACKED PLATFORMS

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A FLEXIBLE LIBRARY TAILORED FOR MAX. PERFORMANCE

MULTI-LEVEL INTERIOR SUPPORTS RANGE OF ACTIVITIES

INTERIOR SIGHT LINES ENGENDER COLLABORATION

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL GATHERING SPACE

HOUSTON BALLET CENTER FOR DANCE

A CENTRAL COMMUNAL WORK SPACE

THE INTERIOR VIEWING DEVICE

THE CONTINUOUS THEATER

A FLEXIBLE LIBRARY TAILORED FOR MAX. PERFORMANCE

OPTIMIZED CIRCULATION BETWEEN SERIES OF STACKED PLATFORMS

SEATTLE CENTRAL LIBRARY
THE CONTINUOUS THEATER
A FLEXIBLE LIBRARY TAILORED FOR MAX. PERFORMANCE
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WYLY THEATRE

SCHEMES A, B, C
THEATER TOOLBOX
SCHEMES M, N, O
SCHEMES G, H, I
SCHEMES J, K, L
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HOUSTON BALLET CENTER FOR DANCE
A FLEXIBLE/ OPERABLE THEATER

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SOCIAL AND CULTURAL GATHERING SPACE
MULTI-LEVEL INTERIOR SUPPORTS RANGE OF ACTIVITIES

L’ECOLE D’ARCHITECTURE MARNEE-LA-VALLEE
OPTIMIZED CIRCULATION BETWEEN SERIES OF STACKED PLATFORMS
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WYLY THEATRE
THE CENTRAL ATRIUM
THE INTERIOR VIEWING DEVICE
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL GATHERING SPACE
MULTI-LEVEL INTERIOR SUPPORTS RANGE OF ACTIVITIES

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HOUSTON BALLET CENTER FOR DANCE
A CENTRAL COMMUNAL WORK SPACE

THE INTEGRATED THEATER

THEATER TOOLBOX

SCHEMES A, B, C
SCHEMES M, N, O
SCHEMES D, E, F
SCHEMES G, H, I
SCHEMES J, K, L
03.1

Experiment

Constants

Figure 02, Axonometric of the Boston Architectural College
Figure 03, Third level plan in 1965
Figure 04, Third level plan in 1986
The site for the proposed school of architecture is in Boston’s back bay on Newbury Street in the location of an existing school of architecture, the Boston Architectural College (BAC). The selection of this site stemmed from an interest in the school’s curriculum structure as well as the building’s interior alterations.

The BAC distinguishes itself as the only college in design that requires its students to complete academic coursework while simultaneously acquiring professional skills and expertise through non-classroom instruction and employment in their discipline. This approach allows students to work within the profession and attend classes in the evening, taught by instructors who are practitioners.

Another compelling aspect of the BAC building’s history is its interior classroom alterations from the years 1965 to 1998. When comparing the third level plans of the existing building in the latter time frame, one may see the interior becoming more and more compartmentalized as instruction shifts toward a student-centered methodology.
Figure 10. Looking South from Hereford Street
Figure 11. Looking North from Hereford Street
Figure 12. Looking East from Newbury Street
Figure 13. Second floor lecture hall
Figure 14. Third floor computer lab
Figure 15. Third floor hallway
Comprehending the interior of the proposed architecture school as a series of stepped horizontal surfaces, spaces of pedagogical performance were explored. Through longitudinal section studies, the classroom emerged as a flexible, variable component within a methodical landscape of circulation and performance. In each of the iterations, although parts of the building’s existing structure are preserved, new structure is introduced to reinforce proposed floor plates.
Figure 17, 1:15 scale study longitudinal section

Figure 18, 1:15 scale study longitudinal section
Figure 19, 1:15 scale study longitudinal section

Figure 20, 1:15 scale final longitudinal section
Figure 21, Front and back of 1:30 scale study relief model.
Figure 22: 1:15 scale study relief model
Figure 23: 1:15 scale final relief model
In the interest of expanding the undergraduate course offerings of the proposed school of architecture to include other disciplines and provide spaces for public gathering and performance, an analysis of the site reveals opportunities for the provision of such spaces. The nearby Berklee College of Music would be able to utilize the architecture school’s theaters for live performances and rehearsals. Located on the corner of Newbury Street and Hereford Street, the proposed school of architecture draws the pedestrian from the commercial avenue into an interior landscape of theatricality and spectatorship.

Figure 24, Ground level concourse showing digital screens
Figure 25, Formal extrusion through programmatic displacement
Figure 26, Interior performance landscape and circulatory flow
Figure 27, Exterior and interior atria as celebratory spaces
The circulatory route through the architecture school as a continuation of the commercial boulevard, Newbury Street.

The programmatic displacement of the school of architecture into adjacent fire house and mixed use building.
The promenade through the architecture school operates as an extension of the site’s existing public spaces.

The more prominent elevations of the architecture school face the north and east, facing Newbury Street.
Figure 28, Axonometric of the proposed architecture school
Figure 29, Sixth level plan of the proposed architecture school
The exterior enclosure of the proposed school of architecture conceptually mimics the interior by folding up and over the north and south faces of the building, continuing the language of the undulating surface. While most of the existing structure of the building is maintained, a layer of expanded copper mesh wraps the north and south elevations of the building, revealing, at times, the concrete structure of the original building. Consequently, the east elevation of the proposed building is comprised of a system of louvers, which effectively illuminates the large performance atrium located on the third and fourth levels of the building at night.
Each theater-classroom is equipped with stepped seating integrated with drafting tables as well as a screen on the underside of the theater. By creating these smaller theaters within a larger, performance atrium space, opportunities for viewing, instruction, and exposure to content is increased. Digital media in the form of presentation content, live footage of a lecture and student/faculty work may be projected on the screens which line the undersides of the theater-ateliers.
In response to the building’s existing rigid classroom configurations, the classroom is eroded both vertically and horizontally to create an interior landscape of performance and interior sight lines. Here, the architectural studio becomes a series of reconfigurable spaces of performance, which may accommodate for lectures by professors, individual desk critiques and student reviews’ critiques.
Acting as an operable, reconfigurable black box theater, the school may host conferences, video projections and both planned and unplanned activities organized around a central atrium as a social and cultural gathering space for all users. In conjunction with the proposed theater-atelier classroom, a new curriculum of architectural undergraduate studies is established with courses ranging from public speaking to drama/acting to cinematography.
Although the school would provide spaces for design studios, symposiums/ seminars, faculty presentations and critiques, it would operate as an event center where receptions and exhibitions are open to the public during the day. The visitor enters the building through a stair from the ground level concourse, which grants access to the building's large interior atrium space and upper-story critique spaces. The public promenade through the building is distinguished by a ribbon of digital screens projecting live media from lectures and critiques occurring within the school.
05

Appendix

04.1 Dictionary

04.2 Bibliography
Performance Pedagogy, (n). a method of instruction in which the role of the instructor is one of a scholar-performer in a subverted classroom.

Spectatorship, (n). the act of observation by a spectator.

Theatricality, (n). the spectacle (dance, performance, art) against a background of stage-play and aesthetics.

Lecture-based teaching model; teacher-centered model, (n). a method of instruction by which an instructor presents and conveys critical information to an audience.

Student-centered teaching model, (n). a method of instruction that shifts the focus from the teacher to a learner’s individual development and autonomy.

Genius loci, (n). a mnemonic device aiding in memory storage and retrieval through which a user maps memories and visual associations onto an architectural route.

Mnemonic device, (n). a memory technique aiding in the retention and recall of information.

Montessori classroom, (n). a tactile educational environment tailored to the individual learner.

Beaux arts, (n). a conservative model of teaching in which imitation of educational practices and mastery of academic learning is established.

Bauhaus, (n). a progressive form of art education which redefined the relationship between art, design and industrial manufacturing techniques.


Websites


