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Spring 5-2016

Total Fiction | The Artifice and the Armature

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Total Fiction: The Artifice and the Armature
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This thesis views architecture as a total fiction. It aims to explore the representational and communicative qualities of the architectural surface.

 Architects have always abstracted raw materials in order to create a larger conceptual basis for architecture but the relationship between abstraction and reality has not always been concrete. In the past, ideals of "truth" and "authenticity" have played a central theoretical role in defining how architects approach building. For example, John Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc decry various forms of material deceit, in favor of an authentic and truthful architecture. Alternately, architects interested in the communicative agency of architecture have questioned the dogmatic eradication of applied decoration from the architectural lexicon. This thesis views architecture as a total fiction. It aims to explore the representational and communicative qualities of the architectural interface.

Godfred Semper argued for the dematerialized character of the architectural surface. He viewed this suspension of reality as a necessary step in order to construct meaningful, symbolic form. He believed that surface forms and applied colors symbolize human events. Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi were similarly interested in an architecture of communication involving symbolism and mixed media. In a similar vein, Charles Jencks applied semiotic studies to architecture in order to develop a theory of architectural communication. More Recently, David Leatherbarrow and Mohsen Mostafavi write about the theoretical and practical isolation of the building surface as the site for architectural effect and meaning.

This thesis does not aim to present a theory for how architecture should be, rather, this thesis aims to explore the following questions: What kind of architecture would be created by delaminating the interface of architecture from the tectonic of architecture? Which is more desirable; honesty or deception?

Jean Baudrillard theorized that as we approach a post-modern society, there has been a great increase in the number of signs produced by the mass media causing meaning itself to become destabilized- to the point where we are not quite sure what's real and what's not real. Fiction and reality bump into each other, causing slippage between truth and fiction.

Los Angeles is where the relationship between representation and reality gets muddled. The hyper-real city is an architectural genre in its own right- and is the site of this thesis. The design of a film school located at the intersection of 4th St. and Hill St. (Bunker Hill) will explore questions of authenticity, honesty, ersatz and artifice.

TV antenna

Radio antenna

Water tank

Cooking fume extract

Air-conditioning ducts

TV·radio·stereo

Wall

This is an important framing moment

This 'monumental' idea remains the same. Piano's Center Project

This 'form' or grid

a that

There is both an idea about entrance and frame. Some of the side frames are monumental

The building opens itself at these two sinkholes. The building considered to be onion like

The concept is always the same but how it is articulated becomes more defined

...g a formal idea. Evoke it with or classical idea

The rotating solid primitive or 'skyscraper'

The surface peeling itself off of the fabric and the frame. It's not about the intersection of volumes

Bunker Hill
is a walled maximum
security prison.

Breaking out is impossible

Breaking in is insane

ESCAPE FROM
BUNKER
HELL

MURDER ON
MURDER ON
BUNKER HILL