Abstract

As systems of meaning making, cults appear differently to their members than to society. The dialectal image of the internal and external definitions of a cult serves as the driving force for the design of a house for a cult to occupy within the suburbs. This house disrupts the infinitely homogenous landscape of the suburbs in the same way that cults disrupt and reorganize societies understanding of spirituality and domesticity. The deviation of the exterior of a Victorian Shingle house through misalignment from the suburban datum and the compliance of the interior to a regular and mundane datum draws attention to the form of the cult: the reality of a cult that between how flagrantly sinister a cult appears to the external society and how mundanely beautiful it appears to itself. A fuller, nonbinary architectural experience of a cult allows you to resist our tendency to demonize that which is only strange and see yourself in those who belong to different systems of meaning making. The singular experience of the house connects you to two systems of meaning making through a sequence of relation and distinction, occupying and recognizing the two systems simultaneously.

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