The Bazaar:

an architectural investigation of body,

privilege,

and indeterminate,

democratic urbanism

the programme and design of an emporium and dance club for Central Boston

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The Bazaar: an architectural investigation of body, privilege, and indeterminate, democratic urbanism

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Thesis, Spring 1996
overlay: Soul Ubac, from Photographic Surreal
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Introduction

The title of my thesis probably has you wondering if I know what I’ve gotten myself into. To this, I would have to answer; “no, not yet!” I am hoping that although I’ve engaged such heavily laden concepts as privilege and indeterminate, democratic urbanism, the reader might forgive the subjective nature of my definitions and assertions. It is not my desire to “tackle” these concepts so much as it is to find a personal means of “approaching” them. After all, philosophers, politicians, architects, and planners, etc. have labored for centuries over such ideas and, still, conclusions can’t be pinned down. I will engage some of their authoritative words and run with them. You’ll probably notice more running than engaging.

From comments from those who’ve read over portions of this report, I can assume that I have, to a large degree, adopted a specific and personal language to narrate this investigation. Normally, I would apologize for this, but there really is something of a voice in this report that demanded such syntax. It is not my wish to be exclusive. This investigation is meant to touch upon some very involved concepts and my syntax will reflect this.

I’ll let you in early on what seems to be generating the tone of this report. It might help elucidate the importance of this implicated excursion:

What I have observed herein is an overlaying of two modes of thought. They basically have at it with one another throughout the report. Yet, they are by no means distinguishable modes of operation. Instead, the first mode, a more objective, pseudo-scientific perspective, is almost immediately subsumed by the second, which is a monster I’ll call subjective rhetoric. I’ve allowed this intimacy out of a desire to see enacted a dialogue between what I see as the potential and the political of both my own and architecture’s means of engaging society. The potential is, so to speak, in the tools. The tools are the objective, logical, and pseudo-scientific conclusions we utilize to make our points clear. These are the givens. In the case of this report, potential is found in the body’s capability to perceive. This capability is the result of components which inform. And the political is all too eagerly broached by taking concepts such as privilege and democracy, which embed significance into the engagement of that potential. We utilize the political to go beyond clarity into the realm of justification. This is where things get tricky and where, I believe, organization and construction become architecture. This is where the human being who’s assembled this report, becomes identified as Karin Lucas. And that’s what this thesis is truly about. More later.
I uncovered the concepts of privilege, indeterminacy, democracy, and urbanism on my path to discover how the body and the city have come to understand and make use of one another. My initial statement of inquiry was simply this:

what is the nature of the relationship between the body and the contemporary American city?
Impetus for Inquiry

“[I was prompted to write ‘Flesh and Stone’ out of bafflement with a contemporary problem: the sensory deprivation which seems to curse most modern building: the dullness, the monotony, and the tactile sterility which afflicts the urban environment.” Richard Sennet]

If our ability to perceive, and thus, to learn, is being stunted by the monotony of our city/urban settings, then how might one urban construct bring about an arousing of our perceptive devices and provoke it to explore new syntax, new vocabulary in the dialogue between building and body? “[Using a semantic analogy], this abdication to high probability words and sentences [the monotonous drone architecture in the urban setting] results in a contraction of vocabulary. Furthermore, this means that fewer and fewer concepts become available to thought. The same rule applies to the vocabulary of urban events. Superficial identification on the basis of a few recognizable features frustrates perception of the rich variety of differences which may lie just below the surface of the obvious. Eventually the surface hardens and becomes impenetrable.” Dr. Peter F. Smith

The existing body/city relationship is showing signs of disparity; by this I mean that each - body and city, - in an ongoing dialogue, may be misrepresenting itself, and, thus, through its mutually- and simultaneously-defining relationship, may be misrepresenting the other - this misrepresentation perhaps even perceived as a mutual alienation or an anti-communication. It suffers, I believe, because those with the means to define the filter through which body and city inform one another (planners, architects, politicians - policy makers, policy undoers - etc.), have not allowed themselves to be informed by contemporary circumstances; circumstances which have inspired a demand for new relations with government or to sources of information, desire for means of and places for personal or collective expression, means of attaining anonymity, and of becoming a public being in a democratically-driven society. Further, that both body and city are in crisis of loosing significance as mediums and tools of expression, production, and evolution, as evidenced by the overwhelming investment in computer-based networks and symptomatic of abuse or unhindered, non-critical use of these networks as a sole source of information and communication.

In this Western, democratic society congestion is evident more in the density of available information through computer-driven networks than in the density of human population or, especially, interaction. What strikes me as unbalanced, to the point of absurdity, is westernized society’s delirious preoccupation with the congestion of the internet; the enormous wealth of diverse sources with which we attempt to define ourselves and make clear and justified our differences. Yet, just how clear can we make these differences and, by this means, is it a difference worth knowing; i.e. is this affective information? Within cyberspace there is a comfortable distance between confronter and confrontee, a distance built into the information transmitted (made tangible and acceptable by the limitations of the computer interface), by virtue of its virtual (but not quite) reality. Those who cry; “communication!” or “proliferation of information!” in their delight, do not recognize more substantial opportunities for less-limited interfacing are being eliminated with the tarring of each new parking lot and, conversely, the
construction each new corporate headquarters - a suburban office park or a business district skyscraper. Resultantly, it is a contemporary condition that cyber-information systems and body-information systems (all that a body is capable of perceiving and relaying) compete for viability. Physical proximity has become devalued; an undesirable, or a too jarring, place for communication. What is most unfortunate is that this preoccupation with our computer connections is blinding us to society’s fortunate acceptance of bodily sensations and the freedom of our physical lives. Will a shortsighted and obsessive leap into our technology allow us to forsake those characteristics of body and city with which we are least comfortable? This indicates a perversion of the relationship between the city and the body and demands a re-evaluation of the nature of the interface between entities, to render this interface potent, not impotent.

The Body and the City; Investigation Abstract

Involved in this inquiry has been an exploration of historical conceptions of the body and city relationship in Western societies. In the past, designers have seen the body as the ultimate source of its surrounding architecture and urban setting - the cause of the effect, and even used the parts of the body’s own master image as vocabulary to define distinct factions of an orderly social and urban framework. However, a more contemporary view of this relationship has been to view body and city as interdependent, mutually- and simultaneously-redefining entities. From here I begin to explore a new conception of the body’s activity in the city and the city’s activity in the body, as both body and city continuously evolve a code of living and socio-cultural inscriptions. My inquiry has evolved into a desire to understand that which exists between bodies or between body and city through which redefinition is taking place, and why conceptions of this interfacing or, at least, inter-referencing, have been rendered impotent in working toward redefining our society’s urban structures and, ultimately, redefining culture. I’ve begun to conceive of this exchange taking place at the interfacing of membranes, the character of which is defined by codes. As the body/city relationship is understood as one of mutual interchange, both rely upon varying degrees of intensity or congestion to make interface more or less potent, affective, and, as a result of dialogue, evolutionary.
impotent.

photo from "Scenarios," Wired, special edition, 1995. pg. 121

(This impotence suggests that controls - in the form of upheld traditions or industry or professional standards, etc. - have been placed here, disallowing healthy interchange.)

intensity congestion
Brief Historical Overview

Throughout the history of Western civilization, the characterization of the body/city relationship has found clarity (or, at least, development) through advances in the sciences or the amplification of religious and social ideology. All in all, the city has found in its organization and development according to the population’s perception of the body (composition, abilities, and limitations). Elizabeth Grosz in her essay “Bodies-Cities” and Richard Sennett in Flesh and Stone, describe several historical conceptions of the body/city relationship. I’ve summarized and divided these into two distinct means of perceiving and making manifest this perception of the relationship between body and city, as does Grosz.

Political Bodies 1 - a contingent relationship:
This first view binds this interrelationship to a cause and effect model. The city is relegated to a mere projection or end product of the body’s needs and desires, by whatever means are available to those which construct as a response to those desires. Both Enlightenment Humanism and Marxism shared the view of the subject as the active agent of production and eliminating, to an extent, the body outside of the rational (or potentially rational) mind, subordinating body to mind and suggesting a “ghost in the machine” conception of the individual. A one-way relationship dis-empowers the city (all its physically and psychologically tangible constructs) from effecting again the corporeal, its reaction and evolution, and divides body, mind, and spirit, by reason of each element’s relative importance in informing productive activities.

Body Politic 2 - a constitutive relationship:
In 1159, John Salisbury, in Politicatus, declares, “the state is a body.”5 Body and city find themselves evolving into a constitutive or analogous relationship. The Body Politic uses the male form as a representative model for the organization of political structure. As its impetus, it seeks to establish social order by means of reconciling the complexity and corruptness of the state with the beauty and graceful cohesion of the “master image” of the body. In what would seem today a very keen marketing strategy, Salisbury parallels the state (made impressive by its architecture of difference) and body, giving their relationship meaning and justifying hierarchical political and social structure by means of making town planning analogous to the familiar parts of the male body (minus the genitalia). This concept becomes codified by rationalizing strata of authority and privilege by equating each cultural entity with a part of the idealized body; e.g. the monarchy is the head or brain of the state, the law the nerves, the military is the arms and hands, the peasants the feet, etc. All this led to the planned city in accordance to the body’s organization, and complying with contemporary views of each part’s relative contribution to body’s health and utility to society. One described the palace or cathedral as the head, the market as the stomach, the hands and feet as the houses. This, in turn, dictated the movement of the body through the city; one should move slowly past the palace, as the brain is a reflective organ, and one should move swiftly through the market, as the act of digestion is like a quick-burning fire. With a new scientific understanding of the circulation of blood, planners placed emphasis upon the body’s circulation in the city, looking to make smooth and swift its paths, and looking to promote the free movement of air and nutrients to the city dweller.

Investigation pg. 05
“ghost in the machine”

"master image"

3 Grosz, ibid. pg. 244. Grosz uses these terms to distinguish between two pervasive models for body-city development.

4 Sennet, ibid. Sennet explains that when a society or political order references the body as a concept, it means only to consider the image and explicit anatomical order of an ideal, human form. The use of the body celebrated the nakedness of the body, but also the metaphoric meanings in the political spaces of the city, though the generic human form they sought to depict is clearly the male body ... When the Renaissance Venetians spoke of the dignity of the body, in the city, they meant only the bodies, ... in this way the body politic practices power, and creates urban form, by speaking that generic language of the body, a language which represses by exclusion." (pg. 24)

cited by Sennet, ibid. pg. 255.
And yet, if one is to be naturalized to either structure, one must be intimately familiar with the source of this representation. If there is to be a parallelism between commonwealth and body, then how does the creator of urban form (or political and social structure manifest in urban form) rid the populace of the notion of gender or idiosyncrasy - a (fortunate) consequence in the production of the unique individual? Neither model described above acknowledges body gender, nor physical or psychological idiosyncrasies. Both political body and body politic base their master image body and city on the well-proportioned, healthy, middle-aged, and Christian, male. This male, in theory, represents all members of a society and provides for their sanctioned desires. To allow any variance in form or ideology into the concept would be to foil the whole equation. Accordingly, there is concerted effort to subvert the divergent, incongruent individuals and their activities. Richard Sennet in *Flesh and Stone* remarks on the ultimate ineffectiveness of this scheme:

“In the course of Western Development, dominant images of the body have cracked apart in the process of being impressed on the city. A master image of the body inherently invites ambivalence among the people it rules, for every human body is physically idiosyncratic, and every human being feels contradictory ... desires. The bodily contradictions and ambivalences aroused by the collective master image have expressed themselves in Western cities through the alterations and smudges of urban form and the subverting uses of urban space. And it is this necessary contraditoriness and fragmenting of 'the human body' in urban space which has helped to generate the rights of, and to dignify, differing human bodies.”

Sennet’s observation marks a critical leap toward an understanding of the body and city as agents in a dialogue, with consideration to inconsistencies in and fragmentations of the human condition — the body/city dialogue is a compelling dialectic.

**The Body-City Dialectic**

The city is...the site for the body's cultural saturation, its takeover and transformation by images, representational systems, the mass media, and the arts - the place where the body is representationally re-explored, transformed, contested, reinscribed. In turn, the body (as a cultural product) transforms, reinscribes the urban landscape according to its changing (demographic, economic, and psychological) needs, extending the limits of the city...”

This new conception of the body and the city relationship is based upon a recognition that both simultaneously have a hand in evolving or stagnating the process of social inscription via interaction. The idea in architectural terms is that as we program and construct our architecture, our cities, we program and construct ourselves, and vise versa. A conversation, aided by our ability to perceive, generates, in the body, a way to act, react, to move, to think, to cower away. Using this concept as a base, it is pertinent to understand what conceptual (and, eventually,
physical) construct allows information to become a part of an individual’s or an architecture’s code. I am using a (pseudo-scientific) conceptual model of the membrane to understand the constructs of body and city which interface. Below are some personal working definitions of three components of an entity which give character to dialogue between two agents; body and city:

Working Definitions of an entity’s components:

**Code:** is an evolving pattern or language (set of languages) by which an individual (body, building, city) defines oneself, makes itself distinct in its operation and its range and scope of expression. This pattern grows from the assimilation of experience by virtue of ability, capability, and varied degrees of subscription to cultural constructs. Code is internal, at times covert - its exposure regulated by the membrane. The code itself defines its own exposure and informs the membrane of its responsibility to keep in or keep out information and make that information more or less appropriate for use. The code is outwardly understood in quantitative and qualitative terms - its implications at the interface both real and virtual. Its appropriated exposure is perceived by the receptive membrane - this other’s receptivity regulated by its own internal code. Code is defined out of necessity towards the survival of the individual. (Survival may be attained through stagnation or evolution. This is a subjective question - that of one’s desired quality of life.)

**Membrane:** a discriminating boundary which confronts incoming or outgoing information and filters them according to urgently inscribed codes of translation. It determines what information might ultimately be purposeful to the entity in efforts toward self-definition or communication with another entity (self or architecture). I see the membrane as ultimately perceivable and, to varying degrees, decipherable. This decipher-ability is a function of the membrane’s clarity - clarity in the sense of how much or how little experience or digested information is pressed up against the membrane confronted, how much do you perceive in the distance as you see through the membrane? This ordering of presented understanding is inscribed just as is the path inward from the membrane’s surface. The membrane determines the ability of an “other” to access the networks of experiential pathways and the code of the entity.

**Interface:** the space created by the language, clarity, and tone of confrontation between adjacent or intertwined membranes. (This confrontation can be perceived as intervention to violation.) It is the zone where degrees of understanding are achieved through the communication of codes (or defined, confined, and prescribed executions of those codes) of involved parties.
A "hologram," as metaphor for membrane, is a product of the decoding of a distinct pattern of interferences. Within each byte of the pattern, there is inscribed the code for all other bytes. Each is a compressed representation of a catalyst's (a laser beam, etc.) interception of an object, entity or idea - translatable to an experience (or interference), or a set of experiences. To access one byte within the pattern is to possess enough information to construct the entire pattern, as one byte has interdependent relation to all others. The hologram is revealed by the projection of a stimulus upon it allowing an observer to perceive a depth of information to which one reacts or through which interaction may occur. The "hologram" is a membrane through which information is accessed. One accesses selective information of the whole only to the extent that one understands the process of the pattern's inward construction. The construction of our urban structures and systems needs to acknowledge both body and city as depth-entities, with characteristics analogous to that of the hologram. A hologram records an image, a pattern. It is an inscription of experience. The hologram is a membrane through which dialogues are filtered and subjected to subjective preference. The confronter (the metaphorical laser) begins to reassemble experience or portions of it.
Working Definitions of the *agents* of these components:

*Body:* an assembly of, at least, skeletal structure, muscle, organs, circulation vessels and channels, and nourishing fluids, which by virtue of their construction and assembly are given a range of means of activation or understanding, define limits of experience and subjectivity, the breadth of which cannot be fathomed by one place or time. Which leads to the body's perceived cohesion, cohesion given only by the body's psychical and social inscription within an evolving set of circumstances. This inscription is but the surface of this body organization; the membrane through which information of all kinds is filtered rejected, admitted, and/or modified.

Elizabeth Grosz adds to this description:

> "The body is, so to speak, organically/biologically/naturally 'incomplete'; it is indeterminate, amorphous, a series of uncoordinated potentialities which require social triggering, ordering, and long-term 'administration,' regulated in each culture and epoch...[This] inscription [is a response to] a set of socially encoded meanings and significances, making the body a meaningful, depth-entity." 10

*City:* a complex interweaving of bodies and their patterns and networks of motion and physical (architectural, infrastructural, graphic), virtual, hyper-real, sociological, and cultural productions. Each of these productions, too, is an agent (i.e. *urban architecture* as agent) and, in being an agent, follows the identity of being an open system, engaged in this simultaneously redefining relationship. The city is a phenomena of potentiality, with zones of probable congestion and increasing frequency of interception of membranes. The city provides for an assembly of bodies and constructs continuously coordinating on infinite levels due to need or desire.
"[the city;]...a fundamentally disunified series of systems and interconnections, a series of disparate flows, energies, events or entities, and spaces, brought together or drawn apart in more or less temporary alignments."

Grosz, ibid. pg 248.
Privilege and Indeterminate Urbanism

"The permanence of even the most frivolous item of architecture and the instability of the metropolis are incompatible. In this conflict, the metropolis is, by definition, the victor; in its pervasive reality architecture is reduced to the status of a plaything, tolerated as decor, for the illusions of history and memory." Rem Koolhaas (emphasis added) 12

"We adopt our most cherished preferences [made justified by Privilege] in such a welter of approximation, prejudice, and passion that later, when confronted by a novel fact, we sniff at it and weigh it less for its exactness than for its capacity to serve or to counter our system of interpretation, our sense of moral comfort, our attachment to a network of personal relationships and loyalties. According to the laws that govern the mixture of words, attachments, wishes, hatreds, notions, and fears that we call "opinion," a fact is neither real nor unreal; rather, it is desirable or undesirable. It serves as an accomplice or plotter, as an ally or adversary, not as an object that needs to be known." Jean-Francois Revel (emphasis added) 11

What comes of these pseudo-scientific definitions is a critical observation of the state of the interface of city to body and the body's interception or perception of that interface. These definitions also provide auxiliary vocabulary which allows exploration of the degree to which that which organizes (i.e. promotes an establishment for - ) the inside of the structure determines the character and significance of the interface. By valuing the full depth-entity of interface, membrane, and code, and especially valuing the evolving quality of a membrane's inscriptions, I am arguably infiltrating the foundation upon which Privilege in contemporary, American society stands. Thus, in order to begin a critical observation of that interfacing's socio-cultural meaning, one must ask several questions: What is the nature of American urban architecture's discrimination and definition of Privilege (which gives justification for - and form to - discrimination)? Further, does this archaic definition of Privilege limit the experience of architecture as it monotonously and permanently inscribes the urban membrane? (Does society tolerate architecture for its impotence or apparent harmlessness?) I would argue (in either case) that it does and without consideration of contemporary consequences of this model's indiscriminate over-use. This is to say that in our process of creating architecture, designers have given themselves over to a limited and polarized conception of distinguishing between the Privilege of interior over exterior, of inclusion over exclusion - all of which are a function and a result of both body and city membrane's impermeability, simplification, and proscriptive nature.

For the purpose of developing a facility program through which I would explore the idea of the membrane's activation, it was necessary to re-define P(p)rivilege. Through this redefinition came a better understanding of how I believe body/city dialogue has brought both to an impasse. In the programming of architecture, there is often a reliance on the equating of Privilege and status. It is status which, historically, has allowed the architect to give order to architecture. Through this investigation of Privilege and status came established degrees of quality, relatedness, and overall positioning of spaces. The key word here is "established" as it describes the nature of an
urbanism is indeterminate; a coalescence of determinates soon to be confronted, exposed, altered, or destroyed.

And, by its nature, will such catalysts for American urban design ultimately undermine even the democratic drive, as, collectively, such a structure (the urban, architectural establishment) negates the efforts of providing flexible, indeterminately structured, spaces for reassessment and for the derivation and distribution of ideas and products, and opportunity for redistribution of territory according to need? And, too, will the present condition of construction in the American city prove not to support the democratic state of being, as it yet promotes the solidification, not fluctuation, of the power structure? Is it not the fluctuation of power and control - the near inefficiency of this strategy - that

photo by Herbert List; Staatsoper, Munchen
The archaic concept of Privilege which is that it establishes recognizable, dependable, secure positions. So Privilege is a device which aims to vindicate the desire or ability to hold, without threat of interruption or alteration, a set of personal truths. Privilege becomes, even architectonically, a distinct buffer against those ideas that are incompatible with one's own, ideas which do not uphold or reinforce established parameters within which one functions and survives. I would assert that this concept of Privilege is not congruent with the idea of living, and especially the idea of living in late, 20th century America. It is critical to recognize the amount of effort still given to the pursuit of establishing further specified, Privileged realms of functioning. Is it not understood that this pursuit, unchecked and indiscriminately appropriated, has become destructive rather than constructive of social/cultural health? I propose to work from a new definition of privilege. This is a privilege that relies upon the activation and variation of both body and city's membranes. The working definition of privilege below might begin to inform the membranes of how to be reconceived and realized, whether physical, psychological, or virtual membrane (in any case, a perceivable boundary).

*privilege*: a state of confidence accompanying the act of crossing a threshold between unknowing and knowing. It is only a ephemeral point of exposure, the acceptance or conscious rejection of input and the making purposeful this action/reaction. Privilege is to be actively engaged, sought after with effort and relies upon courage in confrontation. Privilege is found in the taking on of freedom and maintained only in dialogue with those elements which provoke those parameters which define our personal state of freedom to present themselves. To be more clear; freedom, a concept I will not claim to have investigated adequately, is defined by Erich Fromm, a psychologist, as; “True freedom is not freedom from constraint, but, rather to be constrained only by what one really is, by one's essence.” This begins to suggest that freedom is something that cannot be bestowed upon an individual, or collection of individuals (i.e. Americans), but is approached through challenge or confrontation of those ideas which define and confine your being. Privilege, by this new definition, is engaged in the opportunity to challenge, without threat of external repercussion, the parameters of your state of freedom.
"Nobody in their right mind chooses freedom...Nobody chooses freedom and absurdity but the circus performers.

And now a whole civilization is becoming a circus, and all its people performers in the absurd. We didn't choose it, but it has happened. An entire Epoch of human development...culminates in our freedom and emptiness. Now we will know what the circus performers

Fromm, Escape from Freedom. I appreciate the explicitness of this definition, and, for its explicitness, its inherent fruitfulness or potential. Potential, it seems, is what Janis Joplin had in mind when she stated; "Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose." I will only suggest here, because I enjoy suggesting it, that freedom may be a state of being that is undesirable, too dull to maintain unchanged. Perhaps it is this quality which underlies the criticism of the effectiveness of the Internet in bringing a (rather limitedly defined) higher quality of life to more people. With so much freedom of access, is there "nothing left to lose", and, resultantly, is there is nothing left to gain?


"How to infect architecture with its outside?...how to enforce an encounter, to effect a transformation or becoming?"
Elizabeth Grosz, "Architecture from the Outside," from Anyplace, pg. 18.
Compulsive Thoughts - Towards an Architecture of an Indeterminate, Democratic Urbanism

Architecture must exploit again the value of physical distance and depth of interface, to compliment the "hyper-real" - a collapsing of time and space into the pure surface of the electronic terminal (a term coined by Paul Virilio in his paper "The Overexposed City")

Physical architecture is physically approachable, physically reproachable, and creates, to varying degrees, potential for interaction and confrontation of body's who coalesce about it. This forthcoming, architectural project, The Bazaar, is meant to become a place in the city of Boston where the membrane is awakened to its own pertinence and effectiveness by means of intense confrontation.

The Bazaar is a place which provokes the individual to engage in a privileged act. Through it I mean to make manifest this question, despite the answer: Could it be that contemporary democratically-driven society can be defined by an increase in the frequency of accommodated confrontations between membranes, allowing for an ever-increasing potential for re-evaluation of one's own degree of permeability and the character of the filter that prescribes that permeability? This idea ought to be explored in the physicality of our architecture as it is, though more limitedly, through the architecture of our computer networks.
"cited by Grosz, ibid. pg. 251. Paul Virilio, "The Overexposed City," Zone!"
A Site in Boston for *The Bazaar*

"The distinction between high and popular culture, in its American version, emerged in the period between 1850 and 1900 out of the efforts of urban elites to build organizational forms that, first, isolated high culture and, second, differentiated it from popular culture... Boston in the nineteenth century was the most active center of American culture, and its elite - the Boston Brahmins - constituted the most well defined status group of any of the urban classes of this period."
Paul DiMaggio

In America, the period between 1850-1900 is marked by a concerted effort of the high-culture urban elite to definitively distinguish themselves from the popular masses. Prior to 1850, lines between high culture and the mass populace were blurry, especially between art and entertainment or commerce and culture. Even by the close of the Civil War, Boston's fragmented elite lacked the ability to coalesce opinion into a mythical, yet discernible, conception of high culture. However, from 1870-1900, the Boston elite - the Boston Brahmins - were able to organize (especially via the sacralization of high art) and made clear the boundaries which divided privileged, sophisticated tastes from popular, indiscriminating tastes. In due course came the designation of appropriate cultural and urban artifacts. Boston became known as "the one place in America where wealth and the knowledge of how to use it are apt to coincide." This contained knowledge, even presently, serves well as a wedge and as a polarizer, establishing, finally, discreet parameters for living. The Boston elite continues to formulate physical manifestations of these parameters and the means to preserve them as an impermeable, rigid social membrane.

**Physical Analysis**

This central Boston site is defined to the north and west by Essex St. meeting Edinboro St., respectively. And then limited to the south-east by a Surface Road - which mimics the path of the J. F. Fitzgerald Expressway beneath grade - and an Up-Ramp from the Expressway. The site fragments, in the form of small traffic islands, toward the north-east as it dives into this nameless Surface Road. These fragments direct streams of traffic up and into what has been called the "Central Artery." The triangular site sits at the junction of Chinatown, the Old Theater District, the Business District, the Leather District, and the Central Artery. The well-trafficked Surface Road and Up-Ramp divide the site physically from the Leather District to the east, though visual connection is maintained. The Up-Ramp from the Fitzgerald Expressway creates a barrier (a boundary in 3 dimensions) with a brief down-thrust of canyon walls and prohibits pedestrian crossing for 375 feet along the site's long flank (the hypotenuse of the triangular site).
On this triangular plot, I will treat each facade differently, presenting the code of each three facades in a distinct way. On one, D’Maggio, “Cultural Entrepreneurship in Boston,” Revisiting Popular Culture, pg. 377. by a network of membrane cells - architectural receptacles. On another, the code will be pressed up to a muted surface, portraying "cited by D’Maggio, ibid. pg. 377. only a vague appearance. One the third, (toward the Expressway) the code will be dissected, infiltrated or infiltrating. To all three sides, partial understandings of the code’s operation will be expressed with varying levels of user intervention and control of filtering constructs.
Architectural Cues Meet Social Cues -- Seizing Trace Catalysts, Exploiting, and Inverting

Seizing Trace Catalysts:
A secondary focus downstream of the “Central Artery,” this site rides the cusp the between Central Boston and the Leather District to the south. And, although the gouge of the Up-Ramp engages the edge - as it recedes into the earth, it has not yet promoted, as a catalyst, accentuation of this edge. The site’s long flank is, yet, indistinct and uncommitted to presenting anything more than an implied “wall.” What remains is a nebulous architectural barrier which might, if made more potent, provoke a dialogue between innerness and outerness, privileged and unprivileged.

Exploiting:
The J. F. Fitzgerald expressway channels beneath grade. Placed out of harm’s way, within a controlled stream of traffic, passengers of Privileged travel proceed on this concealed path. The path is vast enough to avoid the chaos and concentrated composing of the traffic of the Surface Road traffic above. The Expressway’s Up-Ramp will be penetrated, its users’ controlled, predictable ascent will be disturbed. Their myopic and stealthy trajectory exploited by a countering mass that shall expose the architecture’s sensual nature directly toward the hermetically sealed vehicle. The hermetically sealed observer shall become the observed. Confrontation cannot be avoided.

Inverting:
This site is an obscured perversion along the skin of central Boston. Recognizable as a latent loophole in the Privileged architectural fabric of Boston, the potential for the site is for it to be invested with a facility that might invert the conception of Privilege in Boston. By inverting, via the reconception of -(P)rivilege, one infests the formula of Privilege with the device to unwittingly annul itself, to make itself defunct.
like the wall

early Roman -- capture significance of this edge, make it a socially-structured memory of barriers or limits -- construct a present day archaeological artifact speaking to privilege/privilege discrepancy

LOOKING SOUTHWEST

LOOKING NORTHEAST

Membranes:

Chinatown an active, sub-culture
8 generations, its past and lack of present
window of operation, limited activation
street across the river of rush hour
increasingly

The Central Artery holds for a time the individuals
converge upon or depart from Boston by train, car, or foot.
encapsulated commuters - all similar with

Edinboro and Essex Streets exemplify the mid-rise
private life
Introduction to the Programme
for *The Bazaar*

"[American cities] are landscapes without beginning or end, labyrinths of accident, disorder, and uncertainty in which images of the city are continually destabilized, dematerialized, and erased, landscapes from which the protagonist is constantly expelled and forced to move on." Mark Anderson 20

"In a consumer society, the only recourse is to make one's work indigestible. Otherwise it will become the inevitable end-product of all processes of consumption: excrement."
Lebbeus Woods 21

The programme for *The Bazaar* will encourage this urban architecture to promote the idea that privilege is gained by risk, the risk of that stasis - body, mind, spirit - that is bound by the construct of a rigid membrane. This construct is ultimately projected by the body's inner code. This facility pronounces the concept of privilege as a fleeting, ephemeral state, chosen at distinct moments in time, and attired only by responding to and considering language, patterns, and stimuli, i.e. the right to exercise and challenge the integrity of the body's psychological membrane. Urban bodies and structures promote, through mental and physical constructs, potential for interaction, interdependencies, and the evolution of body and city definition, by increasing frequency of interfacings - a result of congestion of anything from bits to buildings to bodies. The programme of *The Bazaar* will work to define primary, compositional, and supplementary entities in terms of how urban bodies are absorbed or transgressed by the information each facility keeps in and/or releases. These forms and their respective codes, permeability, potency, and the type of information relayed into and out of them, affect the occurrence of zones of frequent interfacing through use, contribution, and reinscription; zones of intensity and congestion - the overall effect being the pronouncement of simultaneous, mutual redefinition between body and urban city constructs. This facility is to become a point of saturation for the city's membrane, in order that this feedback cycle of continuous redefinition will fall out of the virtual and become discernible in real time, real physicality for its potency.
Steven Anderson comments on Kavka and New York City in "Notes on a Travelling Narrative" in Modernity and the Text.

"Notes on the Cybernetic Circus" from *Avant Garde 5*
Summary of Programme

This programme will involve the overlaying of two facilities (and their auxiliary functions), collectively to be identified as The Bazaar. One is an emporium (a marketplace) facility. It is meant to become a highly permeable, decipherable, and unthreatening volume (working to dissolve Privilege by virtue of its culturally understood utility). It provides platforms for user-defined spaces of transaction, interaction, or exhibition. The second, a dance club, in contrast to the emporium, is driven by discrimination against the closed membrane (or perhaps mocking of the physical membrane), the determined code. The dance club closes itself from the street, allowing only partial bits of information (images, sounds, vibrations) through to 'antitalize, assault, and provoke response or insulation. Both facilities are to be used, if not to be hyper-active, 24 hours a day, 365 days throughout the year - increasing the potential for effectively intercepting and interfacing with bodies in the city. The dance club relies upon the emporium to draw a variety of users to the site, thus increasing the potential for a user to engage the dance club.

Programme Criterion

As The Bazaar is made up two primary volumes - the emporium and the dance club, these will initially be defined by the invention of their codes. The code$^{12}$ will describe the conceptual language used to determine the general nature of the volumes (volumes as entities). The code is the internal driver, the pattern of organization, and will regulate the permeability and depth of the volume's membrane$^{12}$. It is this code which makes distinct each facility's motive for discrimination and will establish definitions of privilege. It should describe the conceptual model for degrees of inclusion for each. It is attitude for or against inclusion which will also will determine each facility's propensity toward permanence or evolution. Primary elements will be further described by their membrane permeability that dictates the physical character of the membrane (the building's skin) and the accessibility of the observer to the stuff within, their interface$^{12}$ potency, which describes the degree to which a compilation of all stimuli and their guarding filters will effect the observer and user, and, finally, type of information relayed, which should, at least, remind the designer of the quantity and quality of the stimuli to accommodate and channel. Primary volumes are further described by their division into compositional volumes. Compositional volumes are described by their physical character, thermal character, and lighting. Supplementary components are not, necessarily, volumes, but access points or architectural actions which further distinguish the character of the volumes' membranes.
embedding one in the other, a coupling of membranes that which effects potency:

clarity (character of intervening plane determines mutedness)

completeness (portion of whole available for consumption)

Consult the Working Definitions on pages 7 & 8 of this report. These definitions have guided my development of the programme for The Bazaar.

inverting privilege, disallowing permanent constructs
accessibility (is a lack of access a provocative, potent idea?)
confounding fixed relationships between patrons or between patron and architectural field
disrupting the insolated individual by making stimuli potent

foreignness (curiosity toward unknown or repulsion are desirable for potency)

acceptability (confronting and elucidating limits of social constructs)
(primary) the emporium.
this place offers to the urban and urban bodies platforms user-defined fields or volumes of exhibition, distribution, and interaction and, according to personal organization of these spaces, the ability to select members and character of their consumers or audience, serving both the travelers on the street plane by day and night, but also the dance club, as place of repose.
users for small venue merchants (selling flea market goods, crafts, fresh or prepared foods, etc.), exhibitors, street performers, soapbox orators, their audiences and consumers.

code 1. dissolve privilege. the emporium’s composition is formally driven by the concept of landscape. This open landscape works to dissolve the barrier of perceived privileged entry by virtue of its visual and physical permeability, its dissolution of the physical boundary between interior and exterior, and by the Emporium’s practical and culturally-understood utilities (commercial and cultural functions are to be placed upon the landscape). Ultimately, permeability assures survival of the facility’s function as a commercial and cultural undertaking. It is an overall large degree of permeability of the general volume’s membrane that permits users within and travelers outside the ability to interface and share in the perceived details of each other’s circumstances, their activities inside and out. Ground level perimeter boundaries occur only to control, when necessary, extreme thermal conditions or maintain security. Otherwise boundaries are transparent, re-definable - a non-physical, implied interruption of a continuous, urban street plane.

code 2. elevation. the code of landscape is extended by a pattern of organization based upon elevation of the landscape. An architectural element attains privacy according to its elevation from the ground plane — conceptual contour lines move closer together (echoing the division of public/private in the adjacent loft buildings). The emporium’s bays and galleries (compositional elements) share the language of the landscape, yet are distinguished by their elevation within the landscape. The concept of landscape, despite the challenge of elevation, will still allow the freedom that is experienced with the dissolution of privilege constructs. This dissolution of privilege is achieved in view of the users own creation of physical or virtual space and selection of an audience or consumer group. Fixed physical constructs are limited to infrastructure for the bays and galleries.

membrane permeability: the perimeter membrane will be accepting of a variety of movement patterns to and from the city. Information will pass and be shared freely, undisturbed by fixed physical barriers, with limited physical filtration, without alteration, without device for permanent construction of codes of privileged entry.

interface potency: although potential for interface is high, as users will find themselves in mutual reliance upon one another as simultaneous distributors and receptacles of information. Goods and information vary from raw to processed. Users on either end of a “transaction” determine degrees of inclusion and the language by which accessibility would range from open to discriminatory, and the potency of the information relayed might vary from threatening to familiar and easily deciphered.

type of information relayed: the commotion of interaction amongst users, the actual and virtual distribution of goods and information. The ease of entry and use will be understood, relying upon the familiarity of most cultures with the concept of the emporium (the marketplace, flea market, the agora — for the exchange of also political and philosophical ideas).
A redefinable landscape maintains potential for reconfiguring territories. It is a zone of appropriated squatter architecture where the user is constrained only by the task of cooperation and resultant temporary organization. Space determined by the users, Space destroyed by the users.

SKETCH
(of a "war machine!?")

"Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari have written about the ways of nomads, with particular attention to the ways that nomadic tribes sustain a 'war machine,' an itinerant force that is irreducible to, and at odds with, stable forms of state power. The nomadic 'war machine' endlessly territorializes and deterritorializes: after usurping enemy territory, it moves on to the next point of provisional stasis. Nomadic space - indefinite, open and smooth - exceeds and disrupts the realm of stable social forms marked by borders and enclosures."

- (compositional) **the merchants bays**
  virtual transaction/exhibition bays of no pre-user definition, located directly below the dance hall as a consolidation of booths, platforms, performance settings, exhibitions, etc. defined by columns and divisible according to capability of infrastructure, demand on sources of power, water, electronic links, etc.

  **physical character:** at street level, a horizontal, free landscape plane. The plane is visually uninterrupted from (and a continuation of) the street plane, nearly imperceptible as a contained space from the city, with carved channels for the distribution of utilities.

  **thermal character:** climate extremes will be controlled by a transparent and retractable skin at the inner gallery's perimeter. Auxiliary heating systems shall be provided, though not relied upon. At most times of the year, natural systems of heating, cooling, and ventilation will be employed, as in an open-air market.

  **lighting:** height and depth of gallery is still undetermined and will effect the efficacy of natural daylighting throughout. Ambient lighting fixture shall be fitted into the undulating underside of the dance hall's form. Fixtures will follow outline of this underside and not attempt to maintain constant hanging height. Zones of greater and lesser available light will be established according to depth into the gallery and elevation of fixtures from ground plane.

- (compositional) **the perimeter galleries**
  a perimeter buffer system of corridors as promenade, or for repose, merchandising, or exhibition, etc., adjacent to inner streets (not the expressway) and divided from the merchants bays by the alley/gap.

  **physical character:** an outer corridor defined by a march of columns and set back from the sidewalk. Supplied, also, with utility infrastructure.

  **thermal character:** perimeter galleries are to be entirely open to the exterior environment year-round. The retractable, transparent skin will appear to the inside of the perimeter galleries (and to the outside of the alley/gap) providing a buffer against climate extremes for the inner Bazaar.

  **lighting:** natural daylighting (mostly northern lighting) will provide the majority of the ambient lighting for day operations. Supplementary lighting shall be a coupling of direct (hung fixtures) and ambient (embedded fixtures) systems.
. (compositional) the loft galleries

augment the perimeter galleries as a layer of galleries moving upward from the print of the perimeter galleries. Loft galleries bring with them, are adjacent to, alley circulation, and are accessible from both the ground plane bays and perimeter galleries and the dance hall. (see also (primary) the dance club . (compositional) the loft galleries)

physical character: raw, unfinished, malleable, spaces for transaction, interaction, exhibition, or repose. They are semi-enclosed, unlike the perimeter galleries, opening completely toward the alley/gap and selectively to the two enclosing secondary streets. The users have the ability to adjust the length of the space and amount of depth to be used as an exterior (balcony) space or an interior space, adjusting also the degree of light, etc. to filter in or out.

thermal character: this is a semi-interior zone and will rely upon ambient thermal transfer from the dance hall or the emporium. Retractable panels buffer climatic extremes below.

lighting: natural lighting may be chosen for or against by adjustment of both window aperture or by manipulating the placement of the exterior wall so as to provide use of either interior or exterior platform. Otherwise, user-controlled, ambient, embedded lighting will be provided.

( primary) the dance club .

this is a place of music, dance, performance, creation of movement and change, breaking and re-establishment of coded patterns of the individual and of the city.

for those who dance and those who watch others dance, creators of compelling images, sounds, and vibrations. those who desire a saturated environment, where desires and movement fall into a most potent manifestation, for those who risk themselves—that is, the code that drives them.

code 1. redefine privilege: the dance club’s primary volume and compositional elements are driven by desire to challenge the concept of privilege, to transgress the individual’s membrane and invade personal code. Here, privilege (the method by with the individual attains it) is not dissolved, but redefined. Privilege is not given by another (bestowed by constitution, as a reward), but taken on by the individual by choice. This code asserts privilege as a ephemeral state during which the individual is free to (or more likely to) reestablish the conditions of its being, to reassess the procedures of interaction. All of this due to the transgressive stimuli in the environment. It discriminates in so much as it confounds with new, evolving languages.

code 2. covert operation: the membrane is a closed volume, hard and solid with only points of permeation and entry. It is conceived of as a place similar to a speak-easy, a place of coverture, of place of risk and indulgence. Entry is not by privilege (or discrimination) in a usual sense—a judgment or reward of a person’s stasis and stature, but by an individual’s willingness to challenge their own code, open themselves to new inscriptions, to take part in an evolution of this entity, to become, themselves, evolved social beings. This is a code driven and maintained by the acceptance and assimilation of information. It exists in (and produces the effect of) a hyper-state, a congestion of realities.
transgression by choice/
engage
in the privileged act

ACCESS POINT, a discriminator, a CHECKPOINT. One point of complete physical transgression, the point at which the facade is overtly betrayed.
the dance club, continued

code3. transgressive: this facility is embedded in the landscape below and surrounding. It seeks insolation, yet information leaks out. It hints to the street plane the activities it contains. Like a circus tent, it allows shadows through as the players come close to the membrane surface. Like a cocoon, it masks the internal metamorphosis - movement mutely presses itself against the fibers. And sometimes the membrane tears or it wears a lucid inscription. It relays this information selectively with the objective of making more potent the interface between activity within and the observer outside, tantalizing the observer with partial images, evolving images... It seeks to charge even the exterior observer with the responsibility to challenge their stasis, their understanding of their body and the city - bites (as sharp as daggers, or sensual, compelling) transgress the boundary between outside and inside.

membrane permeability: points of unfiltered permeation are selective and few. There placement will be placed such as to reveal raw stimuli, if only in small bits, allowing the observer to conceive of the code which the bits tie back to. Thickness and translucency of physical membranes make up the filters through which raw stimuli is obscured, made less distinguishable. The dance club's membrane is distinct from the emporium's in that information must be pressed upon the membrane's surface in order to be perceived, whereas the emporium's pattern and activity is seen clear through (its code is, without filtration, is read upon its membrane). The membrane of the dance club actively translates and filters information and enlivens it, by virtue of its incompleteness. The character of the dance club's membrane - its points of clarity or coveryness - makes the code's complexity (or the collective energy and contributions of its users) known and, so, inquiry, deciphering, might begin.

interface potency: as the membrane reveals mostly incomplete information, less visual than audible and vibrational, the potency of the engaged interfaces should be great as such information might yield an observer's inquiries, anxieties, fears, excitement; might draw out personal rhythms, or promote insolation against unfamiliar stimuli. In any case, the enlivened membrane will make potent the interface by awakening, challenging, and re-inscribing the membrane of another.

type of information relayed: vibrations, obscured visions and sounds, partial glimpses of body's in motion, slimed or widened silhouettes, bodies pressed against surfaces, images projected, shadows responding to projections.
(compositional) **the dance hall**

as the interior of a circus tent, with spaces designated by implication only, enlivened by a saturation of moving bodies, images and vibrations projected upon them. An assaulting space by its hyper-reality, (perhaps its absurdity), its ever-changing state of character and organization.

**physical character:** this is the interior, its character is virtual, based upon the ephemeralness of a body in a position in a stream of motion. It is an empty volume but for its projections and its intercepting bodies and sets, a dark and raw space, large and open to several stories height.

**thermal character:** temperature shall fluctuate according to amount of heat generated by moving bodies - no mercy! Auxiliary heating/cooling systems will aid in keeping temperature within a bearable range and will keep the membrane re-inscription chamber at a temperature appropriate for the operation of electronic equipment.

**lighting:** flexible, artificial lighting schemes shall be supported mainly by the media infrastructure system.

**dance platform**
available space for dance, the construction of additional dance platforms, or performance sets

**stage**
a small venue for small stage shows, perhaps a mobile platform, or only inferred by transitory, overhead crown.

**black box**
available depth for performance or preparation, assembly, or storage of sets or props.

**membrane re-inscription chamber**
an enclosed, secure space for the assimilation of incoming media, and the production of useable graphic or audio bites to be projected against the dance hall’s membrane, with the effect of re-inscribing the facility’s skin with evolving images and sounds. Chamber should have a vertical adjacency to the nomadic node dock and cargo elevator and a horizontal adjacency to the black box.

**media infrastructure system**
for the proliferation and projection of re-inscriptive media.

**clothing check**
in proximity of entrances, enclosed and secure.

**drink service, storage**
at junction of dance hall and alley/gap to serve both users of the hall and the loft galleries.
. (compositional) **the side show galleries**

places for dance and performance, something like "go-go" cages, or the image of a mosquito caught in amber, becoming the membrane structure's receptacles, receiving bodies from the code - in this case, in the form of human bodies which fill them, press themselves against the surface, and the media projections against the bodies which produce perceived movement, shadows, muted contact with the surface. They are translucent apertures, points of visual access for the exterior observer.

*physical character:* selectively pronounced from the membrane structure as spaces for exhibitionist dancing, open to the interior as if opera boxes, with no fixed filtration devices. Depth and width of the side show galleries, like the loft galleries, are malleable.

*thermal character:* climate extremes will be controlled by a transparent and retractable skin at the inner gallery's perimeter. Auxiliary heating systems shall be provided, though not relied upon. At most times of the year, natural systems of heating, cooling, and ventilation will be employed, as in an open-air market.

*lighting:* infrastructure for variable lighting arrangements. Lighting inside might be low ambient light with images being projecting into the side show galleries from an inner source.

. (compositional) **the loft galleries**

darker, insidious, covert, or, at least, increasingly private, malleable spaces of repose, of interaction, or transaction. Lofts spring from the perimeter galleries below, yet are distinct in their effort to conceal their users in degrees ascribed by those users. They are accessible from both the dance hall and the ground plane lofts and perimeter galleries via the alley/gap.
(see also (primary) the emporium. (compositional) the loft galleries)

*physical character:* raw, unfinished, re-definable, spaces for transaction, interaction, exhibition, or repose. They are semi-enclosed, unlike the perimeter galleries, opening completely toward the alley/gap and selectively to the two enclosing secondary streets. The users have the ability to adjust the length of the space and amount of depth to be used as an exterior (balcony) space or an interior space, adjusting also the degree of light, etc. to filter in or out.

*thermal character:* this is a semi-interior zone and will rely upon ambient thermal transfer from the dance hall or the emporium. Retractable panels buffer climatic extremes below.

*lighting:* natural lighting may be chosen for or against by adjustment of both window aperture or by manipulating the placement of the exterior walls so as to provide use of either interior or exterior platform. Otherwise, user-controlled, ambient, embedded lighting will be provided.
receptacles

Is the wall against the expressway composed of layers, the inner meant to enclose the moving bodies against which images will be projected, enlivening the outer membrane layer? The filter then becomes the bodies within the bytes (the cages. Projections pronounce the bodies interacting with and responding to images and sounds. Therefore altering and redefining the inscription on the facility's skin.

photo by Berenice Abbott, "New York: Lower East Side"
(supplementary) the **discriminating absorbers**
these are specific ports of entry and exchange for the recovery or delivery of real and virtual goods; food stuffs, electronic data, admissions tickets, etc.

code the language taken up for the conception of the perimeter absorbers is of the supporting devices of the city's productivity, efficacy, the places of specific transaction, legitimate or clandestine, places of ease or anxiety. The absorbers become alleyways, transaction booths, windows through which one receives information and insurance of admittance, the docking point for input and output. The perimeter is composed of points of acceptances, allowances, the point where controls for discrimination are defined, where one must speak directly an exact, concise language in order to receive goods or be invited to join, or one freely moves in and out along any arc of travel, and claims a station for transaction.

**membrane permeability**: varied according to what is to be accepted and to be turned away. Permeability may be alterable by way of temporary shielding against entry, intrusion - a steel security door, a booth and an open or closed window. As the perimeter absorbers are auxiliary and specific about their operators, permeability is defined by extremes; off/on, open/closed, inviting/prohibiting, according to time of day and presence of users within inside and out.

**interface potency**: interface is potent due to the perception of difference as the observer becomes user, observer physically engaging in the stuff that has only been partially understood in passing, at the threshold into the transactional space between membrane and code.

type of information relayed: bodies (their membranes, the depth of their inscriptions, their codes, the complexity stability of these codes), goods, services, information collected by the nomadic nodes, money and admissions tickets, information about upcoming events, the leaking outward and inward of light, sound, smell, thermal qualities.

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**alley/gap**
horizontal and vertical circulation network accessing dance club entries and loft galleries, foreboding for its height and darkness and unfamiliarity.

**box office** as a part of the docking administration facility

**docking**
nomadic node/delivery dock an enclosed docking garage for the unloading and storage of this reconnaissance vehicle.
LOOK UP! into the labyrinthian layers of bodies; depth above you collapses against you, visual weight upon your brow

photo by Berenice Abbott, "New York: Warehouse - Lower Manhattan."
. (supplementary) the discriminating absorbers continued

docking continued

goods delivery unloading zone
sheltered, elevated delivery platform and ramping to level of the emporium.

docking administration facility
a small shelter for the keeping of delivery records and the positioning of personnel as needed.

devators
electronic elevator
comprised of uploading electronic system for the deliverance of electronic media into the membrane
re-inscription chamber

cargo elevator
for the transport physical materials into the available depth portion of the dance hall

passenger elevators
to levels of the dance hall and loft galleries

. (supplementary) the transgression of the Fitzgerald Expressway
the dance club's membrane is peeled away to insert bits of the dance club's activities into the cavern of the Expressway's Up-Ramp.

code: an aggressive action, set out to tear away the membrane of the city, to exploit hidden layers of movement, to violate the security and insulation of the underground expressway and its privileged users, to share with them a hint of the innerness of The Bazaar; its motions, lights, sounds, and vibrations.

permeability: exploitation replaces orchestrated permeability.

interface potency: interface between the automobile driver and the facility is made potent as a result of the sudden and exposure of underground to the interior. the intervention is meant to become potent by way of violation, interruption of sameness, security.

type of information relayed: information attained by users of The Bazaar will be of face value - evidence of existing infrastructure, evidence of this layer of concealed transients, evidence of an unusual immediate juxtaposition of evaders and the activities of The Bazaar, the appropriation and/or dissemination by the dance club and the underground transients of the motions, lights (headlights, too), sounds, and vibrations.

transgressive action:
the appropriation, occupation, and canoping of the air space above and within the Up-Ramp of the Expressway.

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the user submerges into the Up ramp. This is the way in. Friends wait for the user's arrival alongside the pedestrian ramp leading from the entry gate down into a holding place before ascent into the dance club — via the gap. They sit on stepped platforms that focus downward into the vehicular opening from the Expressway. As they congregate, loitering upon the stepped platforms, they become an audience — observing, scrutinizing emerging traffic, disrupting their evenflow
Conclusions

It is a difficult task to bundle up the raw nerves of this architectural inquiry. Severed and left bare, they tie so far inward that it is easier to focus on the immediate pricks of pain than to reach towards those suppositions that unwittingly allowed these lines to fall in the way of a sharp edge. Despite the depth of the focus of self-criticism, it may seem that what follows is personal list of regrets. Yet, I view this more as a delineation of those encounters which either elucidated discrepancies between the nature of architecture and my desire to undo it, or signaled opportunities in my process that were inadequately engaged that they grew into barriers against development of an architectural production. In other words, I wish to focus most on the suppositions that allowed me to make significant connections and revelations in some areas, yet, eventually, kept me from assimilating these significances into The Bazaar.

As is evidenced in this report, although I've garnered much, theoretically, from an inquiry into the relationship between body and city constructs (to the point of asserting that its neglect could prove to be the demise of democracy!), I've been reluctant to share the architectural amplification of these ideas. I am aware of at least two reasons for this reluctance, and ultimately, for my dissatisfaction with the process of designing The Bazaar. I think it is most critical that, for the purposes of developing an architectural construct, I did not give myself the tools to begin development with confidence. For as assertive as I've been with the conceptual premise of this facility, I did not allow myself to secure a starting point for design with a series of indisputable (or, at least, sustainable) “givens.” These givens, I believe, would have better directed my course. I might have avoided the self-inflicted severance of my process. Of the many possible givens, I might have gained a better understanding of the ideal scale of this project. For as many times as I was reminded to place in perspective the enormity of the facility, I was still at loss for just how enormous it truly would need or want to be. Also towards the cause of acquiring givens, my programme may have needed to approach supplying programmatic information as well. (As it has been explained to me, distinction between programme and program is desired in order to distinguish between a more “quality”-focused description (programme) and a “quantity”-focused (program) formula for design. The language of quality, though, was, in the end, not enough information to grab onto.) What has become abundantly clear during the course of this investigation is that not enough controls were placed upon both programme and design in order for me to maintain a workable distance between myself and The Bazaar. Ironically, the nature of the programme's formula for quality was designed against the concept of unwavering control. The ultimate dilemma surfaces here...

A second reason for my reluctance speaks more to my increasing growing aversion to see this through as architecture, than just a simple shyness in sharing underdeveloped design ideas. I can now only crack the surface of what I am sure will become a lifelong quest to reconcile a near impasse in my theoretical investigation. (Though I've noticed Rem Koolhaas is both confronting and reconciling this strange dichotomy). I'll try to state this succinctly; In an effort to respond to the concept of indeterminate urbanism, does the architect risk negating architecture? To elaborate; by attempting to create an urban architecture with the potential to evolve and allow for reinscription, does the architect alarmingly find her or himself with inadequate concepts and tools to make architecture an appropriate response to this desire? And, in my case, I'm further challenged with how to reconcile impermanence with the large scale of this facility? I wonder if by asserting that I wished to embed this architecture with the organization and the devices by which Privilege would in voluntarily negate itself, if I wasn't, at the same time, negating physical construct. As Diana Agrest asks in Architecture from Without; “...how to reveal these forces [codes which activate a dynamic process of transformation] without reducing them to a system, a closed construction.” Suddenly, suppositions which made way for a promising analysis of the condition of the body/city relationship began to cancel out my efforts to design The Bazaar.
Believe it or not, I look upon these lingering questions with fondness. They've positioned me not so much on the outside looking into the illusive concept of architecture, but perhaps placed me at the threshold between inside and out. From here I might be able to objectively see architecture, as we traditionally know it, not so much as a right, but an option; not so much a fortress or emblem, but a coalescence of energies and potentialities.

As those who listened closely to my angst can tell you, delivering myself out of the theoretical realm and into the process of architectural design has not be an incredibly successful venture. However, only the lack of architectural product at this time has been a disappointment. On all other accounts, I am elated to have discovered an ability to recognize in myself a voice of great amplitude and a momentum with which to carry it. For all the wild leaps of faith taken in my investigation, I feel that more of my desires are finding utility and pertinence in architecture. Via this metaphor of code, membrane, and interface, I've discovered a means of exploiting the foundation of architecture, so that I might respond to it more appropriately, with respect to my knowledge of other disciplines and of myself.

Note: If membranes in particular interest you, I would encourage you to look into a graduate thesis report by Eleni Karapa (Spring 1996). Her focus was much more on understanding the membrane biologically. And her interest was to draw out of biological concepts a language for viewing architecture. I found her investigation to be framed much more objectively, with greater suspension of judgment and significance. (That is to say, much less pseudo-than my pseudo-scientific.) From her presentation brochure: “Biological models can be studied and analyzed and their processes be abstracted and utilized in the reconfiguration of existing and the creation of new architectural processes.” I trust that this work will prove to be a significant point of departure for any student interested in the relevance of the membrane in architecture.
Bibliography (partially annotated)


Grosz explores historical concepts of the relationship of the body and city and discusses their failures in asserting definitions of this relationship based on causality and binary oppositions. She proposes a contemporary view of a body-city interrelationship as one involves simultaneous feedback and mutual-definition.


Jantsch offers a conception of a system; the body, the city..., as one of order through fluctuation. Jantsch also defines three forms of relationships which are the foundation for inquiry. The first, the rational approach, separates the observer and the observed, makes distinct the observed as "it" and is assessed objectively. The second, the mythological approach, focuses on the "I" and the "Thou" and establishes a feedback link between them. The third, the evolutionary approach, views observer and observed as inseparable, as a "we." Jantsch's definition relates to Grosz's view of the body-city inter-relationship; "the organizing principle is 'tuning in' by virtue of this identity, and the results are expressed in terms of sharing."


Sennet explores several historic urban centers (including Athens, Venice, and Paris) - their organization, boundary-making, and engaging aspects of urban forms as they related to each Western society's conception of the body. Sennet argues that these historical urban forms, for all their hypocrisy or repression, at least engaged the body, actively took part in defining it. He seeks to understand a contemporary condition of sensory deprivation in our sterile urban constructs. He asserts that Western civilization, through its architecture, has not dignified the idiosyncratic bodies, but persists in accommodating the master image of the body and subverting diversity, fragmentation, and evolution.


Dr. Smith attempts to explain somewhat scientifically the phenomena of human perception and memory building as these abilities are promoted and exercised via interaction with the urban setting. His psychological theory-driven suggestions of how memory-building imposes restrictions upon perception leads him to formulate a design strategy "which capitalizes on the diverse facilities of the human mind." (pg. 12.)