STABILITY IN CHANGE: A COMMUNITY FOR TOMORROW

AN ARCHITECTURAL THESIS FOR AND ABOUT PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN A RAPIDLY PROGRESSING SOCIETY.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents, Roy and Sandi Carlson. Their continuing support in my education and their belief in my ability to succeed has made all the difference. Thanks.
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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an inquiry into what architecture should be in the evolving age of information. In a society which is becoming increasingly more technical, it is an investigation into the needs of people, not the needs of technology. Change, which is inevitable, is occurring faster today than any time in history. The thesis is an attempt to understand how the architectural environment can establish a sense of stability in a changing society.

I believe architecture can do a much better job of fulfilling the needs of the people it serves. The first step toward a better solution is the recognition of the new needs and problems facing the people of today's society. The solution begins with a rebirth in awareness of the perceptual capabilities of man.

The purpose of the thesis is a search for a possible direction that my work as an architect could take in the future. It is also a search into the values and convictions that I personally have in the field of architecture.

The project used to demonstrate the thesis is a socially cohesive community center for a development of 700 residents. As the project came together, it combined many diverse elements to create a new type of living environment. The project began based on a kibbutz settlement in Israel. It was then adapted to a completely new context and culture in the United States. The project accepts and welcomes the informational society and in turn responds to it. The community provides an alternative lifestyle for its residents. It is an attempt at an architectural solution which better serves and stimulates the people who use it. The community is hypothetically located west of Raleigh, North Carolina approximately 10 miles south of Research Triangle Park.

If the thesis were to be measured simply by what the author has learned about himself during the investigation, its success would be invaluable.
"if we are to survive, we must organize events so that change, which is inevitable, occurs by small catastrophes, not large ones."

Peter Smith
THESIS POSITION

Modern architecture in general has failed to stimulate the users to their full potential. Technology within itself is not an answer. The answers to the direction that architecture must take in the future can be found in the people of an emerging age. Architecture has the ability to be translated to the user at many more levels than just an expression of technology or a cliche from the past that is somehow misrepresented. As the society we exist in changes and advances, architecture has a wonderful opportunity to be an optimistic expression of the times, if only the architect will listen!

To provide stable environments in the rapidly progressing age of information, this thesis is an investigation into four inter-related items.

1. First, and most importantly, the thesis is an attempt to understand how the architectural environment can establish a sense of stability in an age of rapid change. This stability is achieved through physical, emotional, and intellectual perception.

2. To adapt the communal living environment of the kibbutz into a new culture and emerging age of information in the United States as an alternative way of life and stronger social environment.

3. To achieve a balance between man, technology, and the natural environment.

4. To help man differentiate himself from a hyper rational technology.
THESIS STATEMENT

My approach states that by enhancing and stimulating all aspects of human sensory perception (physical, emotional, and intellectual), architecture can provide a framework of consistency in a world of constant change.

Members of today's society need a framework to deal with rapid change. Through the full utilization of human senses, people become more in touch with themselves and their environments. Architecture which is appropriate to a new age can provide the consistent psychological familiarity which establishes the stability in life needed to deal with rapid change.

The needs of the user are changing more rapidly than ever before. Architecture must recognize these new needs which produce new problems. This is not a thesis about high technology architecture. It is a thesis about people who deal with and live in a highly technical and evolving age. There is clearly a difference.

Providing stability in peoples' lives through the architectural environment is a rather wide open place to begin, but as I progress through the upcoming arguments and conclusions, the specific focuses and techniques used to achieve this goal should become more clear.
RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

The direction this thesis and project has taken is based upon 3 specific sources of investigation. The work of Sherry Turkel in *The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit*, Peter Smith's *Architecture and the Human Dimension*, and John Gardner's *Self Renewal* provide the foundation for my investigation into this thesis. From each of these works, conclusions were drawn which I felt related directly to the field of architecture.

As our society moves into the age of information, described in Alvin Toffler's *The Third Wave*, new needs and problems appear. Sherry Turkel explained many of the new needs and problems facing the people of today's world. This thesis attempts to deal with these emerging needs. The following are some of the needs that the architectural environment can provide for:

Expand upon the elements of life. (The elements that separate man from machine.) This includes emotion, personal interpretation, motion, and sequence of experience. The architecture should be of the people, not of the technology.

Clearly define the extremes of the environment. These are limits which follow an understandable set of rules. This will be discussed shortly in the conceptual model of stability. The phenomenon of this need can be seen in the infatuation with
the video game. The danger is not in mindless play, but in the infatuation with the challenge of pushing one's self to the limit without fear of disaster. People feel a need to exist in a simulated rule governed world to provide the consistancy and stability they are lacking in their own lives.

There is a need to feel in control of the circumstances that are presented. As this project is revealed to the user, the pieces are revealed to be understood. The user is manipulated toward the areas in which he can feel in control of his circumstance. This is often interpreted as a change in elevation in order to look down on a situation before choosing whether to participate or move on to another event. Control of circumstance is the freedom to make a choice. The choices are clearly defined as opposed to being infinitely flexibile. The options are provided and then the choice is made by the user.

In today's complex world, there is a need to work with whole problems. Fragmentation is far from satisfying. I believe the most rewarding and stimulating way to deal with whole problems is through the assemblage of its parts. These parts are not fragments, but are defined pieces that can be put together to better understand the whole. This assemblage combats the problems created by revealing the whole environment at once. An environment that is easily understood from a single expression has less chance of continually stimulating the user after repeated exposure. In other words, the perceptual stimulation is lost over time because the emotional arousal is diminished in a completely revealed environment.

Finally, I conclude from Turkel's work that architecture should be a quest to hold onto the understanding of the human mind as unique. It is something other than the machine. The experience must be more than a rational, logical sequence of events. It must be emotional and complex, yet stable.

In John Gardner's Self-Renewal: The Individual and the Innovative Society, he points to several ways which stability can be achieved in a highly progressive society.

The first conclusion drawn from Gardner is the fact that we cannot return to a simpler world and we should not want to. I feel that a back-to-nature solution is not a solution that is progressive. It simply avoids the problems and delays the inevitable.

Stability in change can be provided through purposeful effort. I feel the architectural environment should make demands to achieve a specific purpose. An effort to achieve a special feature in a building increases the awareness of that feature as well as increases the appreciation of that event. Stability in purposeful effort is exemplified in the role of one's job used to earn a living. Day-to-day efforts, which are rewarded upon fulfillment, provide stability in just about everyone's life.
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An architectural event can function on the same theory. A pattern of obligations which are then fulfilled in the architectural environment is one underlying principle of stability in this thesis project.

Another important theory supplied to this project is what Peter Smith describes as Teleological Aesthetics. This theory relates directly to obligation and reward in the architectural solution. Teleological Aesthetics is defined as a progression to a goal or climax. Complexity resolves itself into unity. Stress is generated in order to provide relief. My project deals with four aspects of Teleological Aesthetics:

1. Repetition of architectural elements create a movement compulsion which, by its very nature implies the existence of a goal which is seen as a reward for the effort.

2. The presence of a visual part of the goal can be used. The goal is partially revealed to create the drawing power of the movement.

3. An excitement of expectation can be created through the implication of a goal by means of a prestige gradient.

4. Once a goal is reached, it is seen in relationship to the routes which led to it. This is the means to understanding the whole through the assemblage of the parts.

These research conclusions are the foundation for the conceptual model of stability and the thesis arguments which follow.
THREE ASPECTS OF SENSORY PERCEPTION

The thesis investigation deals with three levels of sensory perception to translate meaning and aesthetics in built form and, in turn, provides stability through a better understanding of one's environment.

PHYSICAL PERCEPTION

This perception deals with how the user physically experiences the spaces he or she inhabits. The physical perception must go far beyond a visual experience. Sound, touch, smell, balance, and temperature are all important to better define an element. Exposure to the natural environment is a way to increase this level of perception. Another way is the intentional complexity in the built form, and the increased variety of forms perceived by the user to better understand his environment. Architecture must move beyond visual impact and into a physical experience at every possible sense.
EMOTIONAL PERCEPTION

Peter Smith describes emotional perception as the primary reward system in aesthetic experience. This perception of the environment is the initial reaction to the stimulus that one receives before the intellectual response occurs. I feel this emotional response is very important to the architecture of today. Emotion is what separates man from the technology he creates. Smith states, "Arousal on the higher intrinsic plane of mental activity is associated with challenge and the ego centered desire to prove superior and organize the world." I believe this desire to understand the complexity of the architectural environment provides the stability of that environment. The need to emotionally understand one's situation inherently provides a goal (or reward) for the user. This project deals with emotional perception in several ways. The physical complexity stimulates the emotional need to "figure out" the system. The project also deals with a balance between mystery and transparency to create curiosity in the user. This is achieved through the revealing of various parts of the project as pieces rather than as a whole. The initial emotional reaction to the physical environment creates the desire to intellectually understand the situation. This is where the third level of perception provides stability in understanding.

INTELLECTUAL PERCEPTION

Intellectual perception can be defined as the capacity of the mind to construct whole models by means of probability established by portions of the building. Smith describes this in his discussion of Teleological aesthetics. The human mind has incredible capabilities that the architectural environment can relate to in its expression. The initial reaction triggers the need to intellectually understand, and the intellectual capacity of the mind provides a reward as complexity resolves itself into unity.
CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF STABILITY

This node diagram is the graphic representation of my approach to providing stability within an architectural environment in the age of information. Each node represents two polarized elements which can be dealt with in the project. Each node defines three zones. There is an element at one extreme, an element at the opposite extreme, and there is a grey area between which must also be considered to provide the balance. Stability comes from successfully manipulating both extremes as well as the ground between.

In an age where hyperrationality invades some aspects of everyone’s life, I am proposing an architecture which is ordered but not hyperrational. In a stable situation, order cannot exist without the presence of disorder, mystery cannot exist without transparency, obligation cannot exist successfully without rewards, and so on. How can one really understand order without being able to relate to disorder? How can one fully understand the whole without first understanding the parts? Spontaneity and vitality are as important to the architectural experience as the rational systems which provide the underlying order.
There are six key relationships in this diagram that the project attempts to deal with. The relationships between:

- Reward - Obligation
- Mystery - Transparency
- Separation - Confrontation
- Pluralism - Single focus
- Order - Disorder
- The whole - Fragmentation

There are other elements that must also be balanced to achieve stability.

- Novelty - Familiarity
- Risk - Assurance
- Ease - Demand
- Simplicity - Complexity
- Time - Distance
- Reality - Fantasy
- Harmony - Diversity

As the diagram implies, the field may be entered from any angle. It is not a straight line process. The most important place to start is with an optimistic outlook for the future.

**CONCEPTUAL MODEL**
SUMMATION OF THESIS ARGUMENT

The society we live in today is in transition between the age of the industrial revolution and the age of information. Many imbalances have occurred. The needs of people today and the problems facing them have changed drastically as society evolves. Change occurs more rapidly than ever and it is becoming increasingly more critical to deal with changes in circumstances to maintain a balance in one's life and a stability in one's environment. The architect has a responsibility to the people to create environments which best serve their evolving needs.

This thesis argues for an architecture which is more responsible to the progressive needs of the people it serves. Specifically, architecture has the capability to provide a sense of stability in a world of constant change. Stability comes about in architectural environments in four ways.

FIRST there is stability in purposeful effort to obtain a goal. This is a system of obligation and reward which is portrayed in sequences of events.

SECOND there is stability in a heightened awareness of the environment.

Through the full utilization of human senses, people become more in touch with themselves and their environments. This includes physical, emotional, and intellectual perceptions.

THIRD the relationship between man, nature, and technology is very important. Each of these three elements must be clearly defined. Present day technology tends to confuse the notion of what is the essence of man. Technology also confuses the definition of what is natural and what is man made. The clear understanding of each of these three elements is necessary for stability to exist. A comfortable balance must be created.

FOURTH a balance between extremes must be achieved to provide stability. Extremes exist within everyone's life. The architect must have the capacity to deal with contrasting extremes and resolve them in the architectural environment. The area that exists between two defined extremes must also be consciously considered by the architect.

The architect of the future can and must do a better job of providing for the true needs of the people he serves.
"We cede to the computer the power of reason, but at the same time, in defense, our sense of identity becomes increasingly focused on the soul and the spirit in the human machine."

Sherry Turkle
THE PROJECT
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

As a demonstration of the thesis, the project is the design of a new type of community facility to increase the social cohesiveness of a community for tomorrow's technologies. The project draws from many different directions and is therefore an assemblage of parts that combine to form an active and cohesive social environment. I am combining the agrarian life and stability of the kibbutz society with the culture of the United States, which I believe is moving beyond the age of the industrial revolution into the age of information. By adapting the communal living environment of the kibbutz into this new context as an alternative way of life, a stronger social environment is born.

The project is located on a wooded site a few miles west of Raleigh, North Carolina, in the Research Triangle area. The scenario for the project is that it is a supporting community for one of the large corporations within Research Triangle Park. It would house full time employees of the company as well as temporary people employed by the company who might only be in North Carolina for a week or month. A wide range of people would be invited to live here. The corporate executive as well as the maintenance people, the retired employees and even the students of North Carolina State could all live here to provide a strong demographic mix.

Specifically, the project focuses on the design of a center facility for a community of approximately 700 people. It is an attempt to provide a stability and balance in the lives of people who must deal with rapid, constant change. This stability comes from the balance of the natural environment and the current technological environment which is continuing to grow. The center is a collection of buildings which set themselves into the landscape, not to become one with the natural environment, but to be in harmony with it. The built form is clearly defined as a man made element.

The Kibbutz Ramat Yohannon is used as a model to begin the project. The information I gathered while I was living on the kibbutz has had a great impact on my values of community. These values are hopefully portrayed in this new project type. The new project type is architecture for the age of information. It is a response to a change in the needs of the people who exist in society. Unlike the kibbutz, it is a purely social community and not economically self-supporting. The residents work in Research Triangle Park and socially participate in this community. The obligation to participate in ones society brings about two important results. A person gains more stability in his or her own life while at the same time improves society as a whole.
THE DESIGN SOLUTION
ENTRY PERSPECTIVE
The natural landscape plays an important role in the design solution. Nature itself portrays the perfect example of stability in change. It is in constant change all the time and is still the most consistent element which exists in our environment. The natural landscape is used to define exterior spaces, create microclimates within larger spaces and provide protection from unwanted environmental conditions in a natural way.

VIEW WEST ALONG STREAM

SITE CHARACTER
1. Club room
2. Nursery
3. Office of nursery
4. Semi private playroom
5. Children's activities room
6. Study room
7. Restroom
8. Classroom
9. Preschool education center
10. Children's quiet room
11. Technology workshop
12. Hobby room
13. Exterior deck
14. Computer Laboratory
15. Observation level
16. Administration
17. Conference room
18. Information/secretary's office
19. Activity room
20. Atrium space
21. Mechanical space

ACTIVITIES CENTER
CHAPEL AND PHYSICAL RECREATION CENTER PLANS

CHAPEL
1. Entry foyer/bell tower
2. Coat storage vestibule
3. Sanctuary
4. Pulpit
5. Organ
6. Choir
7. Alter
8. Storage
9. Office
10. Balcony

PHYSICAL RECREATION CENTER
11. Foyer
12. Office
13. Dance Studio
14. Locker room
15. Weight training room
16. Hot tub/Health spa
CHAPEL ELEVATION
PHYSICAL RECREATION CENTER ELEVATION

STRUCTURAL TOWER OVER ENTRY
LIBRARY
1. Foyer
2. Office
3. Book stacks
4. Circulation desk
5. Exterior reading deck
6. Card catalog
7. Book stacks
8. Reading tables
9. Study space
10. Resource center
11. Storage
12. Post office
13. Health center
14. "Necessities" store

LIBRARY, POST OFFICE, HEALTH CENTER
AND RETAIL FLOOR PLANS
OPENINGS IN WALL FRAMED BY FREESTANDING COLUMNS

ARCHED OPENINGS BETWEEN BUILDINGS

LIBRARY BEHIND WALL

"WALL" ELEVATION
COMMUNITY DINING FACILITY

1. Kitchen
2. Dishwashing
3. Office
4. Restroom
5. Serving area
6. Dining
7. Mechanical space
8. Exterior dining

DINING FACILITY
COMMUNITY DINING FACILITY

1. Kitchen
2. Dishwashing
3. Office
4. Restroom
5. Serving area
6. Dining
7. Mechanical space
8. Exterior dining

DINING FACILITY
PERFORMING ARTS THEATER

1. Box office
2. Lobby
3. Restroom
4. Stage
5. Backstage support area
6. Theater seating
7. Observation level
8. Mechanical under seating

THEATER PLANS
THEATER BLDG. SECTION
"Arousal of the high intrinsic plane of mental activity is associated with challenge and the ego centered desire to prove superior to problems and organize the world..."

Peter Smith
- Teleological Aesthetics in Architecture relates to the capacity of the mind to construct whole models by means of the probability established by a portion of the building.

- Once the goal is reached, it is seen in relation to the routes which led towards it, thus, a means to understand the whole through assembling the fragments.

- Understanding the whole through its parts

- Intellectually: complexity resolves itself into unity - effort to understand increases the reward of understanding.
- Each point of reference reveals part of the community.

- Architecture is a series of sequences experienced through time and brought to life by motion.

- Each point of reference tends to control the space it relates to.
ORDERED SYSTEM

CONSCIOUS VIOLATION BRINGS HIERARCHY

HIERARCHY COMES IN DISORDER, BECAUSE DISORDER MUST BE CONSCIOUSLY PERCEIVED TO BE UNDERSTOOD.

ORDER CANNOT EXIST WITHOUT DISORDER!
- Rhythm of architectural elements create a movement compulsion that implies a goal.

- The goal implies a reward for the effort of the movement.

- The goal is revealed gradually: excitement of expectation.
OBLIGATION TO EXPERIENCE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Nature has the capacity to stimulate all of man's senses if he is exposed to it.
Reveal a piece of the goal before it is fully understood.

The goal (reward) is partially revealed to create the drive to power the movement.
The project presents itself with complexity then gives the pieces to resolve into unity mystery transforms into transparency.

Axis is terminated by an element of mystery set in the natural environment.

- Complexity
- Unity
- Mystery
PROJECT CONCLUSIONS

The project reflects in physical form several basic conclusions I feel will lead to a stronger architectural solution.

First of all, the project becomes intentionally complex in expression to increase awareness in the user. Within this complexity, the project provides points of reference from which the environment can be better understood. There is a sense of stability created as complexity is resolved into unity. The points of reference are translated into nodes and landmarks, and are connected by paths. Often these points of reference are elevated above a situation in order to give the user a sense of being in control.

Reference nodes occur at various scales in the project. A landmark occurs at the community scale to provide the identity of the building and this is then related to a smaller node at the scale of an individual space.

Within the systems of complexity that exist in the project, an order is established. The geometries and juxtaposition of form tend to follow certain relationships. The circle is a powerful ordering device as well as an axis which connects the entry of the complex at the top of the hill to the point where the reservoir becomes the stream at the base of the slope. These systems are established, but vitality is increased in the environment through the violation of underlying orders. (Order cannot exist without reference to disorder.) The project is seen as an investigation into many possibilities in the designed environment. Conceptually, psychologically, physically, and programatically it brings together a wide range of elements in search of a more appropriate, and more stimulating architecture.
PROJECT PROGRAM

The program for this project has evolved from two sources. First, the Kibbutz communities of Israel are used as a model to determine many of the functions for this new type of community center. In the second place, following research into an evolving society in the United States, other elements are added to fulfill new needs. These elements of the Kibbutz are considered with further research to generate the program. The program was an evolving process concurrent with the developing design.

DINING FACILITY: 12,000 Sq. Ft.

The dining facility provides each meal to the entire community. The living units themselves would only have minimal kitchen facilities. The event of dining therefore becomes a major element of social interaction. This constant day to day interaction is important to providing a stable and active social environment. When a resident decides to move into the community, he also chooses to participate in the dining facility. It is not an optional feature. Ideally the facility employs members of the community to make it function.

Upper level 8290 Sq. Ft.
Lower level 3710 Sq. Ft.

TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP 4,900 Sq. Ft.

One of three functions within the community activities center, the technology workshop is a communications hobby center. The facility serves several purposes. On the second level it is connected to the nursery and serves as an area of preschool education. In its upper levels there are computer lab spaces, classrooms for adult education, and semi private lab spaces and lobby rooms for individual projects. The workshop is a community element where the user can interact with the current, leading edge of technology as he chooses, but in turn must then interact with other people, as opposed to an "electronic cottage" society which Touffler discusses. This is a place where the people can utilize their knowledge and interests outside of their occupations, as a means of improving their world.
NURSERY 5400 Sq. Ft.

The nursery is the second function of the community activities center. As lifestyles are changing, the need for child care is becoming much more important. This is a facility of preschool education and stimulation during the day that can also provide a support function for the theater during performances. As the family unit breaks into more single parents and both parents working, the needs of the children are increasingly important. This facility includes quiet areas for different age groups, classrooms, and an interior recreation area which is linked to an exterior play area.

RECREATION/ADMINISTRATION 7800 Sq. Ft.

The third function in the community activities center contains the general recreation areas, meeting rooms, and administration. Activity areas are provided to centralize the interaction of people. Above these functions is the club room for large scale functions. This space has the capacity to hold small scale performances and is also served by an outdoor terrace area overlooking the main open space. The club room also provides support to the theater with the preshow and post show activities. The administration of the community occurs in this space, along with public conference rooms.

ATRIUM SPACE/MISC. CIRCULATION 3810 Sq. Ft.

The major inner open space occurs in the community activities center and relates to the major exterior open space.

PERFORMING ARTS THEATER 21,770 Sq. Ft.

The theater serves the community, its inhabitants, as well as the surrounding communities of the area. Ideally, it should be a profit making element in the community to help support itself. The theater is placed at the top of the hill as the most public oriented function of the center.

Seating capacity = approx. 500 people
Lobby area 6700 Sq. Ft.
Seating/circulation 9675 Sq. Ft.
Support space 5390 Sq. Ft.