an alternative method of exercising
an architectural process

submitted by
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studio critics:
arthur schaller
yung-ho chang
i would like to acknowledge
the following people:

a special thanks to Art
for his patience and words of encouragement.
without his example the
study would not have matured

Jeff
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my mother and father
for their love and support

i thank you all

the book is dedicated to:
mrs. Gudmund Sivertsen
"The two things that strike me as important in renewing yourself are sabbaticals and the learning to live with the idea of failure." Gabriel said. "If you don't take time off to get out of the [rock] machine ... and explore the things that excite you and interest you, then you don't regenerate your batteries.

You've sometimes got to kill what (already) exists to get the space for a new life."

I just try to take a break and let my interests lead me on to the next thing.
an idea can come from anywhere

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an idea can come from anywhere...

to me, it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish the difference between building and architecture. it is of my reasoning that this belief is a result of a weakness in the use of a “problem-solving” method as a design process. in the past, at the start of an assignment, i was given design briefs mapping out concerns centered towards issues of practicality, function, circulation, work ability, etc. the assignments focused on a live project with a real site with the assumption that i would learn about architecture from developing a solution. the result tended to lean towards solving that problem for that site.

i do not wish to exhibit bitter feelings toward this traditional method or condemn any experiences in past studios, for they have provided me with a strong foundation to begin a career on.

design is the creation of meaning and its translation into physical form. it is also the synthesis for architecture to exist. although architecture is conceived, created and executed as a process, it is not problem solving. architecture has the capacity to demonstrate the richness of human experience, it represents inclusive themes or the both-and instead of the either-or framework. design as a synthesis towards architecture must then also be seen as inclusive: both symbolic and functional, separated and linked, rational and irrational, theory and practice, thick and thin, and so on.
if it can be assumed that a design project can shift away from problem solving because of the limitations and associated emphasis on the reduction of functional requirements or the application of technical expertise and the use of expressive systems, my intention is to use this opportunity to also explore and question the value of purpose while being introduced to the notion of meaning and the dual role each plays in the act of creating architecture. these issues, the transfer of “space” into the making of “rooms” or “place,” of transforming explicit functional requirements into implications of design and shaping intentions into architectural form, represent the question “What distinguishes the difference between building and architecture.”

the following collection of work is a summery of an nine month architectural thesis. the intent of the study was a personal laboratory investigating the question: “how does a designer begin an architectural process?” it was a time to explore and grow—an opportunity to test the eye that teaches the mind...

the study was explored at two levels. one documents. the other becomes more than a mere representation and attempts to capture the spirit of a building. each study abstracts the physical condition in order to transform that which i all ready see to that which i have not yet seen: the familiar to the unfamiliar.

throughout the study, the construction of models played an essential role in documentation, analysis, and design. it has been a tool, a means for expressing an idea— an idea about a building, a space, or an object in space.

the written portion of the work is only a supplement, they are merely a series of personal thoughts that were
collected during the study.

the study is incomplete. it doesn't answer a question, prove a point, or move a mountain. through out the study, there was no strong philosophy pushing the work in a particular direction. the outcome of the explorations is not a well drawn, skillfully assembled and composed set of parts. the projects simply contains suggestions for developing a dialogue between what exists as expressions of the place we dwell in and how to produce that meaning through conventional architectural means. hopefully the explorations will shed useful light on the relationship between fundamental questions about the sources of ideas, how to explore individual ideas, and to associate them with collective concerns about the whole as architecture. the explorations may never ultimately define architecture, but they provide techniques and methods that are transferable to other problems, programs or settings for design activity.

It is not the answer that matters as much as the the answer of the question "what is architecture" and that distinction is essential to our profession.

the study will continue: hopefully it will stimulate additional thoughts. the work is open to challenge as the exercise progresses.

the exploration was divided into three phases. the duration of each phase extended the length of an academic quarter. each phase became an extension of the previous, ranging from idea, to application, to development.

the first phase was devoted to the exploration of form. the forms were generated from a series of two-dimensional images. theses images, a total of six, were
created by drawing an image on one side of a cube. The cube was rotated ninety degrees and a second image was created on the side of the cube using the first image as a reference point. This exercise continued until all sides were filled. The next step involved personal interpretation of the images and the creation of a form.

For winter quarter, the objective was to add a collection of materials and a function to the experiment. The light fixture was chosen as the design element. A variety of building materials were selected on personal preference. A second objective was to take the process a step beyond the drawn image.

In the final phase, experimentation continued with applying the ideas into a three-dimensional space. The project is an artist's studio.
Fall Quarter

1. The search of a form
i begin with many questions...
about the world i live in,
the way we are taught to think,
myself,
above all- my ideas.

a lot has occurred in the past nine months or so,
perhaps, too fast for me to understand.
it has often been expressed to me
the importance to produce,
in the beginning I asked why?

do we write down our thoughts
so we can keep a record of what we think.

is it a list of 'things to do', or merely an act of security
do we mean to share them with anybody.

it is a way of expressing ourselves.

there are right and wrongs,
no backspace, no means of correction.
what is done is done.

I look at the product as... as the occurrence of
experimentation.
never bring your personal side of yourself into a controlled environment.

i started this study with an exercise i had started during the previous summer.

it started as a thought... an escape from the work that was being forced on me.

i was excited with what i had found.

i was not sure what i was doing, but that never was a concern.

i wanted to see what i had discovered.

it was a simple exercise.

i did not have anything to prove.
this all changed when a title was attached.
thesis.

the idea stopped.
i was forced to produce.
i wasn't like all the rest, i had no site,
  no program.
  no idea of my intent.

my friends laughed, i began to laugh.
i was hurt when no one showed at the jury.
unlike juries in the past, i really was looking forward to it.
because i was so unsure of what i had done. i wanted to
  learn... from my scars.
I was unsure of what I was doing. I wondered, do I continue the exercise?
Yes.
but I wanted to know... know all the answers.
I believe why I hated it as much as
I did was because I didn't
it is not that I don't understand it,
but rather I didn't try to understand it.

I didn't try.
2. Manipulation of an image
Winter Quarter

3. The desire to want to build
The Lamp

Types:
- desk lamps
- standing
- floor
- wall mounted
- hanging

Parts:
- the plug
- the cord:
  - single wire (hardware store)
  - typical double plastic cord
  - spiral cord (telephone)

Note: Various colors.
Materials

- Plywood
  - Easy to cut, paint structural
  - Available in all sizes

- Sheet metal
  - Small sheet at corners,
  - Not bendable

- Stratoflex
  - Long 2" thick of foam

- Glass/plastic
  - Stain glass, triangle
  - Expensive

- Card board
  - Low cost

Materials cont.

2. PVC piping

3. Copper tubing

4. Plastic tubing/ clear

5. Wooden dowels

6. Threaded rods

7. Duck (stove)
4. The reality of assembling materials
I want to see. I have read about architecture, heard about architecture, looked at images of architecture. I now simply need to see real architecture.

What does it mean to see?

Words only get in the way of my seeing
it is not the object that matters,
it is what you do with the object

should i take an idea that has been in my mind and bring it
to physical form. to share, or to put on the mantle. i
question doing this because would i really be creating, i feel
i have had this thought in my mind so long that i know
everything about it i would be repeating everything that i
had done with that lamp. i think it is interesting that i refer
to the lamp because of its function. i didn't start with the
idea of lamp, i just wanted to build, to use real materials.
the idea of lamp was of little concern.
everybody looks: "lamp?"
"TOTAL DESIGN -
Too much or a
5. The playing with an object
no longer a light, but a ...
I have always found the issue of death interesting.
I wonder what it is like to do something in
which there is no return.
Once we cross the line there is no looking back...
Where do we go, what happens to us.
I like the pain... the unknown, perhaps.

How does one comment on someone else's work?
i killed it!
6. Frustration, confusion, termination
i am on a roller coaster. i am laying on my back. i am moving to the
left - the right. i am up, then down. i see stars over head.
everything is so fast.

suddenly the car stops. i am thrown forward. for one brief moment
i am suspened in the air.

i drop into a steel funnel, sliding feet first on my stomach.

i land on a stage. people are staring at me. their identity was lost
through the bright lights

their faces became a mirror. i was looking at myself.

the mirrors became a wall of glass squares. the squares crack. they
fall one by one-from the ground up. standing on a round platform, i
slowly rise upward through the hole.

i am a finger puppet, someone keeps pushing a button and i do
summersalis.

a spontaneous moment to: peter gabriel's
I HAVE THE TOUCH.
some thoughts...

architecture is......

a. space as itself is meaningless, rather it is the element in the space that serves value,

b. the facade as a decorated billboard for a banal box... a thin veneer, pined to an object... seeking an identity... a personal favorite...

c. a program seen as an abstract kit of parts....

d. architecture as a visual experience...

e. honesty...finding the hidden beauty within the ordinary, ..... 

f. when architecture meets human needs and does not become an attention-seeking object, glorifying both architect and owner...
7. an object of two words
i wanted to be the person in the photo,
i wanted to have a studio like that one, then i will
call myself an artist. bs.
does putting on a business suite make me a
lawyer... no
yet we/i think that having space such as the place
we saw today would improve my work.
people made those places.
i look around and listen to how great it would be if
i had..... but what is stopping me...

8. The room and its partitions
i can produce the sound, but i cannot compose the music

i listen to peter.

in his work i find a person that expresses
the feelings that i try to find in myself.

i believe one must be honest with himself before he can be honest with his work.

our work is an expression of ourselves.

9. The standing story and the spinning reader
theme: S them impul...

stared after as with

each reaching ed formed

speech in additional
direction.
I feel it is important to have a place to call your own, one
that is removed from the world of others
and into a world of our own.
10. a place of my own
11. A fascination with stacking of planes
12. A favorable piece
13. An assemblage of the pieces
i look at what i have placed around me.

a nice neat organized notebook from past classes, i never
look at them.
i have arranged my books by different subjects, like a
library, history here, tech there next to “others” they all
have a number on a list stored in the computer.
the computer is the center piece of the work table.

peter’s tapes are always all over the place,
but it doesn’t matter, grab one and play it, i can not
remember the names of the songs anyway.

the room is divided by my loft into two spaces, work and
living.
why not one.

oh yes i wanted to hide the computer from the view of the
door-my connection with the world.
is this the expression i want to live in,
why not a white room with one table and a mattress?
change it.
an idea can come from anywhere.