the exurban courtyard

URBAN AND OR. VS. EXURBAN

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thanks: Art Schaller, Nina Marshall, Karen Perkins
ANALYSIS OF PROJECTS, ETC.

The thesis proposal was followed, but not always intentionally. As listed, the major project was an exurban design composed of a series of minor projects. It just happened that one of the minor projects adopted the program for the "A Place for Contemplation" wood design competition. This minor project began to steal time and energy from the major project. The reason for this can only be the desire/need to design a "building" for my thesis. Unfortunately, much energy and time was lost due to this constant shifting of scale and priority.

The large scale EXURBAN DESIGN developed into a site plan and a series of sketches. The Place for Contemplation developed into a series of detail plans, sections, and elevations for the residential units and the common building.

Aside from the technical concerns of architecture, a set of paintings were completed through an independent study class through the art department. These paintings contributed to the thesis project in ways more numerous than current evaluation has enumerated.

CONTENTS
proposa
site photos
exurban design documents
a place for contemplation documents
graphic conclusion to the thesis and academic life
Development of a thesis idea.

"Then if someone could make both, the thing he is to imitate and the image of it as well, do you think he would hasten to give himself up to the manufacture of images, as the serious business and the aim of his life and the best thing he had?"

Plato, *The Republic*, Book X

Didactical hierarchy modeled after Plato's system.

\[
\text{ARCHITECTURE} = \text{IDEAL} = \text{OVERSOUL} \quad \text{impossible aspiration}
\]

"unique in the nature of things"

\[
\text{BUILDING} = \text{REAL} = \text{CRAFTSMAN} \quad \text{limits of the human realm}
\]

"eye upon the idea"

\[
\text{REPRESENTATION} = \text{IMAGE} = \text{ARTIST} \quad \text{"nothing of the real thing"}
\]

Design process derived from the thesis idea.

I. REPRESENTATION - development of a conceptual basis for the project
   (Intuitive) - production of images: graphic, poetic, spatial

II. BUILDING - functional configuration
    (Rational) - aesthetic maturity
    - tectonic (technical) resolution
Statement of Rationale.

The dilemma of architectonic representation arises from the differing reasons for the production of illustrations to portray the intuitive and rational processes associated with the making of architecture. Illustrations of an intuitive nature are often vague. Although they express the spirit of the project, the works disallow the logic requisite for construction. Illustrations of a rational nature define the project in functional and technical clarity. These works disallow the expression of time and emotion requisite for an architecture of meaning. This is the dichotomy. These proposed works will enhance this philosophical dialogue and define the necessary scope of the artist/architect.

Relevance of the thesis idea to the designer.

In The Republic, Plato establishes a series of levels of the truth. The object is classified by the words: ideal, real, and imitation. Plato rates the artist below the craftsman, who is in turn below "God". Although I agree with the emphasis Plato places on the process of making an object, I disagree with his opinion of the work of the visual artist. A series of two-dimensional images can represent both the spirit and the logic required for the production of objects and buildings. The skills required to illustrate ideas are as complex and as practical as the skills of the master craftsman.

The design process described above is quite appropriate for the conception of architectural works but falls short in providing the opportunity to view intuitive representation as an artistic end in itself. The proposed works will begin to bring this artistic end into view.
An architectural project to test or verify.

How can we define the tragedy that is taking place at the fringes of our cities? Justifications for strip/sprawl development must be understood in order to design buildings for this environment. This thesis will identify the dialectical relationships necessary for a spirited and meaningful exurban architecture. This exurban architecture must be established as a process of hybrid building. Hybrid, in that it must embody principles of both urban and non-urban typologies. Building, in that the functional and aesthetic emphasis must be maintained: the quality and craftsmanship of the result.

This thesis establishes a set of dialectics. The objective is to synthesize the fundamental aspects of urban and exurban environments. The essential aspiration for this synthesis is to improve the exurban context (functionally, aesthetically, and experientially).

The major project is an exurban design composed of a series of minor projects at shifting scales. The site for the major project is on the Southwest side of Muncie, Indiana (see sketch). This site was chosen for its current and potential variety of functions, activities, and usage patterns. The minor projects will be within the matrix of the major project, except for the Berkeley Art Project which is an independent competition design.

The evolving program for the major project consists of office, light industrial, retail, recreational, and residential functions. Absolute definition of the minor projects and their scope will be spontaneous.
An architectural project to test or verify.

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Preliminary Bibliography

Learning From Las Vegas - Venturi, Scott Brown, Izenour

Googie - Hess

Building and Rational Architecture - ed. Pophyrios

Leon Krier: Houses, Palaces, Cities - ed. Pophyrios

Modern Architecture - Wagner

Architecture: Form, Space, & Order - Ching

Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture - Venturi

Experiencing Architecture - Rasmussen

Intentions in Architecture - Norberg-Schulz
Looking south on Tillotson (notice the billboard)

Looking south and slightly west from Tillotson to the site
looking west to the paper company and the site

looking northwest to the paper company and the site
(notice the dense brush on the left)
the dense brush at the south end of the site (notice the change in elevation)
looking northwest towards the paper company across the field

looking west to the paper company across the yard
looking north from the southwest corner of the paper company

looking east from the southwest corner of the paper company
looking east into the courtyard of the paper company

looking south within the courtyard of the paper company
the remnants of the railroad tracks looking northeast

the historic depot
looking north from the bridge (the dominant elements)

Traveling on Millotson, the consumer is constantly confronted with planar objects perpendicular to his path. The objects are signs proclaiming and offering goods and services. There are few highway scale signs. The most striking of these is directly north of the Fisher-Hixson Realty office (their office has doll houses on the stoop). For a few days, there was a faded red Kremlin being offered for sale in the shadow of this single column structure. This is truly picturesque.
URBAN CONCEPTS
- Street walls, façade scale and articulation, materials and construction
- Responsive grid system, multiplicity of functions, residential types
- Density of people and architecture

EXURBAN CONCEPTS
- Open, green space, enhanced impact of environmental/site factors
- Object buildings, residential types
- Speed perception, accessibility, and parking
SITE DIAGRAM via the computer

The title abacus arises from the mathematical tool and the book *Liber Abaci* written by Leonardo Fibonacci. This book establishes the format for the Fibonacci series, a contributor to many proportional theories.
looking north on the main axis which is parallel with Tillotson
The plaza is a derivative and an outgrowth from the thinking of the exurban courtyard painting. The intention is to insert function and activity in a very subtle way.
looking north and slightly east from the parking lot towards the common building
looking southwest (notice the repetitive nature of the units)

looking west perpendicular to the main axis
the Fibonacci series informs the placement of the units (the 22nd unit is elsewhere)

library as the symbolic space for scholarly contemplation

hearth as the symbol of scholarly discussion

It is necessary then that those two spatial entities have a relationship across a large open space. This space serves as a catalyst in the reactions of the residents.

The library terminates the path and axis at the south end of the site. Surrounded by trees and with an admirable view, the residents will be able to immerse themselves in the works of their masters.
section study - indicating space utilization @ the upper floor.

13 Mar 1990

spring squares - a.m.

detail studies of the "strip mall" building with offices and studios on the upper floor. conventional scale
The alley slopes up and the floor level of the studio block steps to follow it. These spaces are raw spaces for the production of art. Both visiting and resident artists would utilize this facility. Important attributes: large quantities of daylight, quiet location, and the brutal durability of the materials.
residential neighborhood in the northwest corner of the site

three housing typologies exist: the single family house, the townhouse, and alley housing (over garages and carports)
Design Challenge

**CATEGORY ONE:**
**A PLACE FOR CONTEMPLATION**

Program Challenge
by Anthony Ames

**BACKGROUND**

For centuries, man has had to confront the many complex issues, changes and paradoxes of the age in which he lives. Now more than ever, life has taken on an incredibly accelerated pace with the introduction of highly technological advancements in rapid transit, supercomputers, instant bank-teller and facsimile machines. For many, life at such a pace creates a rather impersonal state of existence. Man is more apt to lose sight of his individuality and frequently neglects the opportunity of attaining a broader sense of meaning in his life. Only after a departure from the mainstream and everyday routine can man completely attend to physical, spiritual and psychological needs and values.

It has been the belief of many great philosophers, writers and entire cultures of people, that only through an extended involvement with nature can man simplify his existence, clarify his senses, and reduce life to its simplest terms. Then man may begin to contemplate life and all its beauties; contemplation being the highest expression of man's intellectual and spiritual life. It is a life which is fully active, fully awake, fully aware. It is spiritual wonder. It is gratitude for life, for awareness and for being. It is a unique and different experience for everyone.

**THE CHALLENGE**

This year's competition program, therefore, offers a unique challenge: "to design a place for contemplation...conceived in the form of a retreat--where one is sheltered from the requirements, obligations, routine and clutter of everyday existence. It is to be a place of sabbatical--for writers, musicians, artists and scholars--that allows for and encourages the quiet and patient search from the economically driven consumer-oriented values of our society. It is to be located in the landscape--rural or urban--on a site of the student's choice. The choice of the site becomes an important issue in establishing an attitude toward the contemplative nature of the project. The student's design of "a place for contemplation" shall be communicated through the use of wood and its components.

**PROGRAM**

The following spatial requirements are intended as guidelines only as the student may wish to address the project to a specific group of individuals such as painters, poets, etc.

400 s.f. General Office
1000 s.f. Living Accomodations for Caretaker
1000 s.f. Communal Dining Room
800 s.f. Kitchen
1000 s.f. Common Room
500 s.f. Library
650 s.f. Billiard Room
1500 s.f. Gallery w/ Storage
500 s.f. Mechanical
300 s.f. each for 22 Single Units w/ Bath as required
as required Toilet Facilities
as required Miscellaneous Storage

14,000s.f. Approximate program area

Note: Projects in which the spatial requirements vary by more than 10% should be accompanied by an explanation.
primitive design of the primitive hut

Interstate medians will be planted with gardens and primitive huts to feed and shelter the unwielding population. Open space and green space will be truly valued and shared. Every person must have an unpolluted outdoor space to breathe and think.

The living units must be anchored into the site along Fillotson in true billboard fashion. These elements will be perceived in several ways dependent upon viewpoint.
The spatial concept for the units is derived from an Essay on Architecture by Marc-Antoine Laugier. It utilizes the logic of the column, entablature, and pediment to define a flexible space that allows interaction between the interior and exterior.
COMMON BUILDING PLAN
looking down on the gallery/common room connection

looking north to the hearth with the gallery continuing into the distance