the following thesis explores the possibilities and effects of a large scale urban assault upon the vacancy. A series of incremental interventions seek to reestablish significant relationships between the INHABITANTS of a place and the built FRAMEWORK.
MIDDLETOWN 3  AN ASSAULT ON THE VACANCY
Stephen P. Dobbs
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Carlos Casuscelli
John McCreery
Brian Spalding
Department of Architecture
Ball State University
People say that plays are generally supposed to have a meaning; not this one. It's a celebration whose elements are disparate; it is the celebration of nothing. J.G.
INTRODUCTION- a journal entry of 3.9.91

the following is an assault on a neutral framework. it is a re-presentation of an urban dialogue, drawn from the history of a place and fated to carry out its intervention. the past re-surfaces in the present for the sake of a new reading, drawn from benevolent intentions yet not without a certain amount of necessary 'violence'. violation. not all bad under the present circumstances.

it is an incremental intervention, thus basing itself in time. it reveals itself in such a way that the 'reading' is constantly qualified, changing with the introduction and demise of each fragment. the project is elevated from one of static acceptance in the minds of the inhabitants to one of a living force in which POSITION and PROXIMITY are always in question. this is a necessary element of any architectural construct.

on the surface it is an inward focused plan. it is an experience in macrocosm. it this way it utilizes the city as a tool for understanding and acting. it explores the nature of the object and the space displaced by the object. in the present context the nearest available space for action is the VACANCY.

text, image, object, plan. all the means by which one attempts to create a cohesive picture of place are utilized here. it is a reading by a transient creator. this phenomena is not foreign to the framework in question, one only need read the Middletown studies. in a sense, the assault takes its place amongst these anonymous observations. an artifact of this place.
not what about a play? what better way to make the point — accessible. maybe, say, a narrative history in 4x days — one scene per day on each & wk a flush is built — as seen left after the curtain drops to create the historical discourse.

Yes sites in x days: a program of moment in this way the narrative is spoken, lived, seen, built — lives and dies in the span of the production, and remains afterwards in the Fickle Rees SES of collective memory.

Of course a requirement would be made for the most accessible materials — site, archaeology

... and is this process any different than that which is perceived otherwise? a life process... the narrative of a place... the words melded into earth and ether; just a matter of pushing the process into a sort of hyper-space — a divine condensation of time and event — the realization in script of that black hole which draws all to its necessity.

What better way to exploit the image of Rockwell received last fall?
by merely himself he could record the texts every movement

who can say.

immersing the participant in its active

vacancy

...and if the pit becomes a trash receptacle? ... the pit invites (re-moving or from the surface)
OBJECT

[Diagram]

VACANCY — HISTORY

vacation —

DESIRED

for there to be desire, there must be a void for it to fill, like a mold cast at itself. this is the VACANCY

OBJECT

present — past

(DESIRE) — HISTORY

future

Significance then comes from the tentacles of associations which the observer finds significant.

6.
THE ASSAULT

the context: a neutral framework named Muncie, Indiana.
THE BALLOON

- the balloon shall be the first intervention in this construct.

- playing the part of the non-static object it will become and remain the one untenable object in the assault. an object of desire.

- it is a microcosmic representation of the assault itself. the framework of the balloon precludes the plan which will eventually be traced upon the ground below.

- this first intervention consists of three primary elements to be assembled by the participants (inhabitants, citizens):
  1. a lightweight aluminum frame which in section shall provide the precedent for the plan of the assault. it is constructed such that a vacancy is created through the center of the balloon, the time/space.
  2. the fabric for the balloon. the fabric for the balloon shall be a thin light-reflective material. this will allow the object to retain a brilliance under all but the worst conditions.
  3. a chain link fence of 20' diameter and 10' height to surround the base of the balloon after its inflation and ascension. this object will be guarded.

- the balloon shall occupy the center of a vacant lot directly to the west of the existing courthouse. this is the site of the original courthouse; the initial attempt at an establishment of PLACE.
ROSSI ASKS: p. 106

... in the event and in the sign that has marked the event.

TECHNICAL

INTERESTING relation to those that inhabit it, is it not necessary to look at the MEANING by which interventions are made? That is, for example, the class of the business elite whose names adorn their buildings, and likewise the hillsides that have remained in use as TEMPORARY OCCUPANCY through (or within) a pre-existing shell or given. The LENDER and his environ and the "BENEFACTOR" and his environ.

One must consider MOTIVES unrelated to the motive before the act, and the myriad of victims in their circumstance, or should I say its circumstances.

What is he called but a block of benevolent dedication? As only that, its mission is the shat-stained image of its creator at the crosswalk.
THE TIME/SPACE

- an effort to create a meaningful (charged) public space.

- the initial gesture which reestablishes the center (a center), likewise invites a conflict with the space that represents the existing center. this is the site of the two previous courthouses. the 'mental' center. it now stands and shall remain void throughout the assault.

- i call this historical 'no mans land' the TIME/SPACE. over a period of time it is hoped this charged zone would become the region for the ritual of the importation of the objects (forthcoming). a public space in the making.

- in short, it expresses in space the dialogue between the old (new) and present (empty). a space, one could argue, that is the architecture.
once again, Hoppley, reliance on a character is to provide the sort of 'balled' action that the historical framework provides, that is, if one believes, history is what in the eyes of the present, take changes to will.

RECONSTITUTION OF THE WILL AGAINST THE PAST

In a sense, the 'williness' of the object is perhaps the recollecting of the depict sequence which bears the place, are's typical reactions to queer it will onto the new set of circumstances.

Generally, such a quaking comes about because it having necessary to deal with a new intervention are involved in it is the system of expectations that are automatically assumed settled.

this brings the use of the systems of understanding into the stockpots of re-interpretation.
the time-space for me represents that desire indelibly of
space in which time can be seen as a physical plastic/opaque
manifestation, a sort of 'historical' radiance between two
objects, what some might call ARCHITECTURE.

TIME/SPACE

|  |  |

A GATEWAY

representing

past

future

It is as if a cloth in its bedrock had been opened.
The recognition of this well opened & unopened at all scales.

These events create their own momentum.
THE CREATORS HOUSE

- the establishment of an arena of experimentation

- a circle with radius the length of the creators position is struck from the empty center. thus, a portion of the town is captured in a coherent geometric arena for the continuation of the assault.

- in a sense, this gesture guarantees a reality of participation on my part. i am a player in this great game of ideas. my experience is inextricably tied to the development of the assault now; my house perched there on the edge.

- the house shall have no function beyond remaining present throughout the process of the assault. it is a sign of commitment.

- the gateway to the west? the exit. a signifier spinning away from the center.
THE GATEWAY

- a gesture of the inhabitants. a slash through space marking a PROXIMITY.

- its significance lies in the nature of this proximity to the non-static center and the empty center. the latter being its point of origin as arc and subsequent transformation into boundary.

- it is the gateway to the east.

- it is primarily a circulatory system which bisects the neutral framework and the vacant remnants of the former mens club. the inhabitants of the structure become not only USERS of the building but PARTICIPANTS in the workings of the assault. this is a spatial recognition.

- its function shall simply be a title denoting public occupancy a place to meet a place to drink a place to buy and sell these titles, of course, will be modified with time and the wishes of the users.

- its plan is a mere consequence of the arc passing through the house of the creator.
THE RAIL LINE

- the framework for a ritual
- an intervention which will receive the remaining pieces conceived up to the present.

- the rail line is to be elevated above the center of the now existing Jackson Street. at the point where the rail meets the edge of the circular boundary a receiving station will occupy the vacancy directly south of the street.

- in form, this station is simply a platform with a grid of positive and negative space imposed on it. spatial vacancies.

- nine of the vacancies will be able to receive moveable flatbeds onto which pieces of the ensuing interventions will be unloaded and carried to specified sites within the arena

- these actions will create a new system of movement within the existing framework.
it would seem a next possible step would be the complete exploitation which is going on in the area, a complete exploitation, that is, of forces (ritual) taboo, outside of the boundary. this allows, once again, an assault on the supplied framework. the marked area, in fact, becomes a sort of lens (fish eye) through which disturbance is welcomed - eventually sought after.

in fact, is this not what the street could assume as its purpose - to carry off goods, they shall arrive quite anonymously - truly today it is to be blue line to be red.

as the way the streetcar may carry both goods  inhabitants.

and it is the first indeed to spread its way out of the area.

it is like the train in "sile" all in one.

as it inched forward as the point in a closed system.
This interpretation is for objects allowing the reaction to a static element which has its origins (not there).

- Should the balloon be on assault itself?
THE IMPORTED OBJECTS

- once the three permanent pieces are established, an appropriate framework will have been established for the reception of the IMPORTED OBJECTS/IDEAS. it is at this point that the assault gains its own sense of momentum, dependent, of course upon the will of the creator. these are the lucid creations, drawn from the realm of the intuitive.

- origins may vary. an historical fragment, perhaps, given form. a shared story, a newspaper headline, these things are the recorded narrative of a place. with the creator in the position of 'filter' they can be transformed into an embodiment of the word.

- the objects will be transported on the previously mentioned rail line. carried through town on this new level, they attain a history of their own. a new relationship is formed between the framework, the participants and the idea.

- this process of moving the imported objects into town will carry them through the time/space. the object in this vague field of recognition will become the only present.
THE FLAME

- a source to be handled with care, or burned into early extinction. it is up to those that receive it.

- means of construction: the silo is built of simple parts. a basic plywood construction of studs and sheathing. the unique component is the gas flame which will be installed at the mouth of its chimney. it will burn continuously.

- the 'life' of the silo depends upon the duration of the flame.

- once the flame (the only recognizable function being its containment) is dead, the silo will require an act of willful utilization on the part of the inhabitants. perhaps it will stand dead empty like so many vacant houses. perhaps it will become a new home for a person or better yet, an event.

- the silo will be delivered in components upon the rail line and constructed in an awaiting vacancy. the history it has obtained over the length of its journey will qualify the space it is to occupy with its ambiguous message. a dialogue of proximal relationship between the neutral background of the town and the idea.
the glyph of a rare, unique text... for the time is not an element.

we're all talking

The sound of the water was heard for miles around... however... despite the nearby sound... an affirmation of the correct settlement... the family fully recognized the permanence of their decision, for the river.
THE WATER CLOCK

-following the precedent of the first circular boundary struck from the empty (present) center, a second circle is struck of the same radius from the re-established center. in this way, the plan now completes it mimicry of the desirous object: the balloon.

-the residual area from this second, pure gesture, yields a crescent shaped wedge to the far west of the plan. the western lands? this place is demarcated as the dead zone. a GRAVEYARD is established at the northwest corner of the crescent where the river and the gesture intersect. two edges are defined: one at the mercy of the ideal circle, the other following th jagged edge of the riverfront. the willed and the fated.

-the collision of the existing water with the imprinted boundary allows for an intervention which engages the river and simultaneously addresses the graveyard: thus, a WATER CLOCK is proposed.

-the clock, like the silo, is delivered in pieces, unloaded at the receiving station and carried to the sacred site at the farthest edge of the construct. mark time.
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THE SCORPION HOUSE

- being derived purely from a dream that occurred in the early stages of the project, this is, perhaps, the most personal piece included in the network. In a sense it is the embodiment of all intentions for this project, for it is from this place that all the preceding ideas originate.

- its POSITION in the construct shall be at the termination of the rail line to the east. It is here that the ideas are born, constructed and sent on their ritual parade before the eyes of the public.

- its LOCATION is another issue. Its image comes and goes, fading in and out of focus, of a seemingly free will.

- its 'staff' shall consist of one: the creator. He, like the image of his dream house, comes and goes on a whim. He is a melancholy being whose position is always in jeopardy. He longs to share the responsibility of the conception with another.
From the scorpion house, each night, meaningful could be heard mumbling, and those in the prey wondered: what was happening behind that blue door. Excluding a large supply of the blue paper insects was collected — a ritual origami. In the early 50s, the creatures had been given a life of sorts, they were buried in the stone. From the little on-stick could come puffs of white smoke as the poison melded into air, creating all sizes. Some of lush blue stationary, others in thin ancient newspapers — painted blue to hide their message and their age, all of them sacrificed equally.
the old lady hasn't the slightest shortcoming about setting
mouse traps on her stove top.

... in any case the habitants of the scorpion house
was generally left to himself (devoid of suspicion that
it's until one day the public market a loud-voiced citizen
overheard him casually, ranging the DESIRE
under his breath... the skin of his hands emitted a
faint blue glow. sulphurous exhalations in ½ time,
the scorpion has the advantage of being a perfectly
ordered instrument of death, venom machine.

In addition, we know now from Dr. Reck's research
that the pressure of anyone stimulates a blue glare
an aura of pure energy (atmospheric stimulation).
so our findings lead us to a relationship of blue every
seventeenth blue machine - poison love - the ritual
of religious smoke pots emitted from the blue machine, a
whiteness whose depth invited a revery of smaller worlds
twisted in its folds of its billions. he recalled the smoke days
be used to play with as a child. their velvet emissions charmi
thing anything he had ever seen - the seas invitation - to
dive and lose oneself in its fading luminosity.

the inner machinations of its body within provide an
image to those who are lost as to my usual intention.
THE SCORPION HOUSE - walls of translucent paper -
glow at night from the fires within.
disarms the eye with the password to the place.
EULOGY

as I reflect on this thesis exploration to date, I am struck by the fact that the project undertaken has passed to two poles. one, the willed, the expected. the other, more an outcome of fate.

on one side of this centrifugal construct is the assault on the 'real' framework and a proposal for the construction of 'real' architectural objects. this is the realm of the traditional architect. a realm of ways and means to some great end.

at the opposite pole of the construct is the internal exploration which has taken place. that is, the discovery of a means to utilize ones arena of habitation as a tool to explore ones relationship to the objects which he creates. a sort of 'soul journey'.

the preceding text attempts to recount the nature of the former. these are the methods the architect can perhaps, best grasp.

the nature of the latter should remain my own, its exploration left to one who may find a shred of inspiration in its hidden processes. this is an internal architecture which requires no form for its justification.

i offer no absolutes as of yet. for the most part my findings are offered verbatim, fragments from a journey, snapshots and letters, a dustpan of ideas swept together and handed over for anothers perusal.

47.