ART AND ARCHITECTURE

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It is sometimes thought that Art, philosophy, and literature develop in hothouse environments, communicating little with each other, influencing but slightly each other's developments and discoveries. Though this view has often been challenged, the modern tradition... often imagines that genius and inspiration somehow overleap their cultural Ancestry and surroundings.

Erwin Panofsky

Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism
Architecture has become, in many ways, an entity unto itself. There is an attitude that by reaching into Architecture's own past, it's technology, or it's rhetoric, Architecture may solve its own problems and evolve. Architects tend to have their own terminology, their own values, and even their own social groups. The study of Architecture has become so esoteric that perhaps even the Architect has fallen prey to accepting applied values as opposed to developing an ability to discover or derive value. Architecture has become stylish. Historically Art and Architecture have been indicators of social attitudes, acting to interpret the "world view" of that society. The view which the proponents of Architecture seem to be advancing currently is one of intellectual games which divorce humanity from it's dependence upon the earth, and value systems which are based on volume, economics, and social position.
PRELIMINARY INQUIRIES

In order to examine the relationship of Art and Architecture, an attempt must be made to define the terms. Looking first at the result, then the derivation, Art can be defined as;

an attribute which can most easily be identified by its possession of the sub-attributes of aesthetic and information, and which promotes a feeling of elevation.

From this a possible definition of Architecture would be;

that which relates to the built environment, either physically or conceptually, and which possesses the attribute of art.

These are both working definitions, arrived at by beginning the questioning with "what is Art?". Is Picasso's Guernica Art? This is one of his most informative pieces, a political expression with moral implications, produced in a cubist vocabulary. Assuming that Guernica is seen as Art, then what of Picasso's Bull's Head. Is a magazine cover illustration Art, or a television commercial. A dictionary definition of the word "Art" is;

"The quality, production, expression, or realm of what is beautiful", which speaks some to the aesthetic but little to the meaning. Art would change or become invalid with style. Art could be utterly devoid of meaning. The use of the word Art must imply much more. Perhaps this quote from T. S. Elliot will be helpful;

...what happens when a new work of art is created is something which happens simultaneously to all works of art which preceded it. The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the new work of art among them...whoever has approved this idea of order...will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past.
Art is a psychological response to the environment which is bound to a concept of aesthetic. It is arguable that Art is a creature of the masses, while Architecture is bound to economics, politics, and conservatism (style).

Art may best be described as an attribute as opposed to an object. Something has Art rather than is Art. This may be paralleled with "blueness". Most objects are likely to reflect some blue light, and the more they reflect, the bluer they are perceived. Blue may be expressed as numbers on a spectrum, but it also has a psychological effect on the observer, and this effect is mitigated by time, location, and the styles of society.

Given that Art is an attribute as opposed to an object, it can most readily be understood by example. Adages which exemplify this authors views about Art include:

If a critic looks at a painting for the first time and praises it, it is a failure.

If a critic looks at a painting for the first time and questions, it it has some meaning.

If a critic looks at a "painting" for the first time and dislikes it, looks at it later and questions it, and returns a third time to praise it, that is Art.

And:

A "painting" is not Art, it is evidence that Art happened which the author intends to accept as truths.

Exaggerating the pragmatic process of defining Art, it might be compared to the second law of thermodynamics which describes an attribute of energy and as such matter.

This is a very simple concept, and understandable enough to be interpreted as one
of the catalysts of a "World View". Simply stated, this view is one of energy "running down". An example is winding a watch. Chemical energy (E) from one's hand is converted to potential E of a watch spring, which acts upon the watch hands as kinetic E, which becomes heat E which is statistically unrecoverable. It becomes background, loses it's identity. One part of the world ceases to possess that essence of itself which ordered it into an recognizable packet. Disorder and average are equivalent, because both words describe states which are featureless. The watch runs down and stops. There is no more change, no differentiation with the passage of time, no information.

Quoting Bronowski:

"... rearrangements of nature, which single out the statistical exceptions and make a feature of them, can be described by an instruction. Entropy is the negative of what is expected in an instruction (Szilard called what is unexpected the information in the message, the use has become general since then)."

Keying in on the word information, one can see the world as a huge composite of information packets. The range of human endeavor can also be looked at as energy packets. An idea may be compared to the chemical energy expended within the brain which is the impetus for the creation of a painting which is potential E, which acts upon an observer as kinetic E in order to modify his thoughts/ideas. These new thoughts combine with the rest of the spectrum in the observers mind, often becoming a part of the disorder. While the physical presence of the painting may be etched into the memory, often the energy/idea/information is lost as it is assimilated.
Nothing of humanity is permanent, however many objects are closer to permanent than a watch spring. Men built Stonehenge. Men expended the chemical energy to quarry the stone, move the stone, and lift the stone. The potential \( E \) still exists in the stone, balanced against the temporarily resistable force of gravity. The idea also remains, although muddied and diluted by the waters of time. Much of Stonehenge is now undiscernable heat, both physically and ideologically, but a presence remains.

William DeKooning's paintings effect the viewer much more than as "the realm of something beautiful." There is an emotional essence, a freshness at each viewing. If there is an initial abhorrence of the spectral quality of his women, it tends to volve into a sense of erotic beauty, and yet at each viewing the observer may find himself initially shocked.

Information and Aesthetic.

The \( E \) of the idea is converted into the potential \( E \) of the painting which refuses to succumb to gravity but continues to catalyze the \( E \) of the observers. Now returning to intuitive adages;

If a critic looks at a "painting" for the first time and praises it, it must fit into his existing concept of beauty (background noise), and as such provides little information.

If a critic looks at a "painting" for the first time and questions it, it is stretching his view of reality, and as such has at least temporary information.

If a critic looks at a "painting" for the first time and dislikes it, looks at it later and questions it, and returns for a third time to praise it, it has probably permanently effected the critic's ideas about all paintings, and is as such information. That is Art.
And:

A "painting" is not "chemical" E, it is evidence in the form of "potential" E that "chemical" E was expended.

From all of this it might be proposed that:

1) Art is information.

2) Art is identifiable in a field of disorder (life) and average (style/fashion).

3) Art is a higher E state and as such is very difficult to achieve.

4) Art is possessed by all things to a greater or lesser degree, if it is to an average degree, it is undiscernable.

5) Art is an exception, an anomaly (a mutation).

This discourse has been an attempt to generate a concept of Art as part of a "world view", by equating it with a scientific system. Art is perhaps mankind's loftiest creation, and the search for meaning the greatest goal.
SUMMARY AND WORLD VIEW

Architecture has now been defined by its attribute of Art and its involvement with the built environment, and Art by its attributes of aesthetic and information, therefore it becomes important to decide what information is to be transferred. At this time the "designer" must produce a statement of philosophy, the "World View". This is a very personal reaction of an individual who is inextricably part of society. This author's world view will be defined by a series of statements and a conclusion.

Humanities most persistent pursuit is to define and achieve meaning in its own existence. This meaning is to be found by attempting to understand and enhance the relationship between the realm of the biosphere, including humanities functional interdependence with it, and the realm of the mind including perception and fantasy.

The biological and intellectual are not independent, but extremes of a continuum, and perception at any moment in time is from discrete points on this continuum. The ability to understand the relationship of this vantage point to the continuum, as well as its position in time enhances perception.

Art is not an object but an attribute. The degree of art which is perceived to be possessed by an artifact is dependent upon the vantage point of the observer.

A Sense of Urgency. Humanity has evolved both as a species and as a cultural entity to
the point where it must become free from the desire to conquer the earth. Meaning must be derived from the ability to flourish with and within the biosphere, as opposed to using and consuming and controlling this system. The physically conquerable frontiers of this world are all but gone, yet humanity continues to act like unthinking visitors to an endless planet. As with any other species in the history of life, when a biological niche ceases to exist the species occupying that niche must change, evolve (mutate).

The ideas associated with meaning and purpose in life must change. The contemporary practice of equating personal worth with quantity of consumption must be supplanted by a value system which places the quality of interaction and depth of understanding in the position of the most venerated human virtues. Quality interaction with understanding is dominated by the attribute of Art.

In summation, meaning in life is a function of the perceived relationship between one's self and the surrounding world. The most satisfying relationship is that of non-passive understanding of the interplay between mind and nature as extremes of a continuum.
THE PRECIDENT

At the turn of the previous century there was an interesting interplay between the accepted Beaux-Arts tradition and several new design philosophies typified by the Art Nouveau, which were all set against the industrial revolution.

The philosophy behind the beaux-Arts forms was realism, where objects were seen as simply representations of principals. The abstractions which did exist were simply ones which used forms, including human forms, to represent concepts of bravery, honesty, purity, and so on. This tradition seemed to virtually turn it's back on the dehumanizing aspects of the Industrial Revolution. Humanity was an ideal form, and if any suffering came from it's advancement, it was merely a function of weak souls.

On the opposite edge sat Art-Nouveau. It appears that the arts are never able to interpret a variation in the world view without going through a complete reversal of their previous tenents. It could be ventured that this happened in the swing in popularity from Modernism to Post-Modernism, and certainly can be seen at the turn of the century with the Art-Nouveau reaction to Beaux-Arts type of thinking. Whereas the Beaux-Arts thought involved an abstraction of form in which a heroic, masculine ideal was featured, the Art-Nouveau strove for an organic, vulnerable, feminine expression. In his book on the subject Batersby tells us; the whole of the Beaux-Arts movement was directly involved with (a) mixture of hedonistic pleasure, tragedies, and scandals... The moral ideal began to be replaced by the sensual ideal.
Art-Nouveau was not, however, a degenerative style. The advocates were responding to a sterility which was perceived to arise from the Industrial Revolution. An attempt to, as Battersby continues:

... join together industry and art, to demonstrate that a piece of furniture, a fabric, a light-fitting, a pair of scissors or any object no matter how humble is as worthy of the attention of the artist as a statue or a painting.

was in line with a philosophy that humans were not morally ideal, but sensual creatures who responded favorably to objects which reflected their humanity.

Here are two sides grappling over the souls of mankind, both aware of the impact of new technologies, but taking, for want of a better phrase, a band-aid approach, to the situation. A full century is about to pass, filled with intellectual and political solutions which have not always worked. We are embedded in the industrial revolution, and working against the backdrop of an information revolution. Architecture must consider the relationship of man and nature in the contemporary climate. Design must pick up where it left off, exploring the relationship of man, Art, God, and perhaps the Earth Mother.
PROGRAM: THE ART LEAGUE

The program for on site development of the current facility is primarily derived from studies produced for the Art League as part of their own investigation of possible expansion. This study addresses studios, offices, theater and gallery spaces. General requirements for space, equipment, and relationship of functions has been suggested.

STUDIOS

One of the most popular functions is the ceramics studio. Originally planned as part of one large ceramics/sculpture/jewelry space, it has since been decided that ceramics should stand as a separate area. One of the primary requirements is easy access for deliveries of heavy materials. Natural lighting is also desired, along with the ability to have access to an outdoor work space. It is also necessary to have proper ventilation for kilns, with storage and sinks nearby.

The wood/stone sculpture-jewelry studios also require access to day lighting, as well as possible outdoor work space. A separation should be made between the processes such as founding, and those less physical activities. These studios as well as the ceramics would benefit from access to a room which could be used for lectures and slides.

The photography studio's main requirement is for a darkroom with six or more stations. There is also a need for a "dry" area for cutting, mounting, and showing slides. In this solution one room is unassigned, allowing it to function as a back-up space for all studios.
OFFICE AND CLERICAL

The need for a larger office and clerical area has been expressed, with the addition of a meeting or conference room. The need for more storage has been noted, particularly in the form of a video/archival library.

THEATER/AUDITORIUM

The Art League would like to develop a 300-400 seat auditorium with lobby, restrooms, and ticket booth. This theater would require a workshop, storage, loading docks, and dressing rooms with toilet facilities. Access to offices, rehearsal space, and a smaller performance space are also desirable.

GALLERY

The current multi-use gallery is considered to be insufficient. Such displays as touring exhibits and shows, works of local and regional artists, student works, and competitions tend to overburden the existing space. The gallery(ies) should be very accessible to the public, as well as to loading facilities. The Art League considers the display of "art" to be one of its most primary functions.
THE EXISTING SITE

The existing Art League building is located north of 67th Street, and east of College Ave., in the Broad Ripple area of Indianapolis. The proposed site includes four parcels of land as indicated opposite, as well as access to the land directly south and west of the current property.

The land to the south of the existing property is primarily occupied by single family residential buildings, many of which have been converted to small businesses. The pedestrian link to "Broad Ripple Village" is marginal at best. A strong barrier exists to the west and northwest of the Art League building in the forms of a four story apartment building and a day care center.

The major physical amenity is the location of White River. The site opens out to the north through an area which is steeply sloping and covered with vegetation. There are many large trees as well as lower growth which shows no sign of having been disturbed for many years. This portion of the site falls off into flood plain directly behind the existing building.

The parcel directly east of the site is also comprised of woods, and is separated from the river by a strip of single family properties. This land is much higher, and perhaps should be considered for a major building. Presently this parcel also contains a paved parking area maintained by the Art League.

Finally, the land to the South and East of the present building is a wooded property which is not owned or currently available to the Art league.
SITE CONCEPTS

The primary generator for the development of the site is its use as an access to White River. A path from the southern portion of the site toward the river is to be implied by a simple water element. This element is to begin as a part of a formal composition and
traverse through a decreasingly formal series of landscapes as it flows toward the river. The motion of the water is to be obstructed as little as possible, with the "stream" cutting the landscape rather than being controlled by it. Symbolically the stream is to represent the simplicity and directness of natural forces, and the increase in energy required to maintain a manipulated environment. It will also provide an underlying theme from which the observer can make personal observations about the relationship of man-manipulated landscapes and natural elements to a single constant.

A second generator is a linear element, the "Wall" which physically divides the site into a more formal realm relating to the "city", and the "Artists Compound". The outer areas are based on a two dimensional, geometric format, corresponding to functions such as parking, building entry, deliveries, and the like. In this zone the landscaping is to be formal to the point of exaggeration, in order to contrast with the less formal areas inside the wall/building barrier, and to the "natural" area adjacent to the river. The water element passing through this barrier is to indicate path and entry.

Before arriving at the river, the stream should pass through another separating element. This element is to be as subtle as possible, indicating a separation of the artists compound from the undisturbed area separating it from the river, without denying the possibility of a physical transition between the two spaces at any point. This is to represent the fact that this element is available to any artist willing to make the effort. Path should still be indicated by the water element, however the flow of the
pedestrian should be more allowed than implied.

Finally the stream/path should terminate before encountering the river, a symbol of the fact that it truly is a man-made element. a simple clearing and pool may be the best solution.

SITE AND BUILDING PLAN

The buildings are arranged into a form which envelopes the artists compound on three sides. Using the contours of the site, the complex begins with the studios to the north, which are lowest, and actually open into the compound. The structures then wrap the site to the south with the existing building, and continue around to the theater. This structure berms away from the compound and is seperated to the extent that access requires moving through the gallery/administration building. The illustration shows the functional attributes of the outer site. Vehicular entry comes from the west or south, with parking being separate for studios, gallery/administration, and theater buildings. Entry into the site is further separated depending on the intended activity of the patron.

The studio building offers the most opportunity for site interaction. The individual studios open directly into the compound, and the building itself opens both into it's parking/loading area, and into the formal court. This is representative of the need for artists to interact with and interpret both the more natural and more manipulated environments.

The gallery/administration building opens into the formal garden as well as into it's
parking/loading area. Access to the compound is visual only, to emphasize the activity of spectator, however access to the formal court is direct, and leads into the student gallery of the studio building. Access to the theater occurs at its lobby which also doubles as a gallery. This occurs through an enclosed rampway, which focuses on an even smaller court doubling as an emergency egress, and offers a very abbreviated view of the artists compound.

The theater has no physical connection to the compound, and is even removed visually through the use of monoliths which control the view between it and the inner site. Major entry into the building is from a gridded parking area, with the grid being emphasized by wire fences among the cars, designed to add to the aloofness of this building from the artists areas. This structure is intended
to represent man's creation of a totally abstract environment, with the theater patrons turning their backs on the outside world in order to enter the fantasy one. Gallery space buffers the theater itself from the view into the artists compound in order to form an intellectual transition.

**FORMAL ELEMENTS**

The two major elements of the geometrically manipulated portion of the site are the "wall" and the formal landscaping. The wall consists of a rubble stone structure eroding away from a 'chain link" fence over which it has been constructed. This is intended to play off of the low, random stone
barrier at the north end of the compound, with the "manufactured" portion of the wall rising out and above. The metal structure is to indicate a more evolved energy level at the south end of the site. By spanning the entire east/west length of the site with this structure, openings and perforations may be used to denote entry.

The formal landscape is used to create a very controlled pedestrian environment. The materials to be used in these areas are concrete and cut stone, manicured trees with uniform dimensions, and closely mowed grass. Seasonally flowering plants would also be included. It is important to note that the water element should cut freely through the concrete forms, indicating an ultimate hierarchy of control.
THE ART COMPOUND

The site is rotated in order to view into the compound from the north. The first "structure" encountered as one moves away from the river is a clearing with reflecting pool. The clearing is simply a depression lined with washed stone, allowed to flood with high site runoff, or provide a crude seating during dry periods. The pool is located in the center of the clearing and consists of a lower depression, also lined with gravel, that filters water so that it may be pumped back up into the formal garden.

The water is not to come in contact with the river. The element of the stream, which represents the values of nature at the southern extent of the site, comes to represent the man-made at this end of the continuum. The observers have the opportunity to evaluate their personal positions relative to this continuum. The mechanics of the water being pumped back up hill, expending energy to exemplify a symbol system, should not go unnoticed.
The only obvious purpose for the clearing is to accommodate the flow of the water. The persons using the space will have to define their own "rituals". Use of the space for drawing, painting, or simply observing the river is encouraged, however no "furniture" is to be provided. The user may find a stone to sit on, or wade in the water, or invent any activity which seems appropriate, but no such activities are to be specifically indicated.

The stream also passes through the undisturbed area. It moves along a series of terraces, allowing it to flow slowly and perhaps puddle where the bed is at its flattest. The amount of water moved is not to be great, allowing it to respond more intensely to climatic influences. During periods of rain the amount of water moving should increase several fold, while on the hottest days it may reduce to a trickle, or even dry up completely, leaving only a silty residue to indicate its passage. In the winter it will turn to ice, or become buried under a blanket of snow.

Gravel also lines the bottom of the stream, with the edges being indicated by random placement of rubble and field stone which do not entirely close it in, and in some cases may scatter out into the woods. The land and plant life around the stream is not to be manipulated, but allowed to grow freely. This may become a gallery in itself, with the addition of sculptural forms judiciously placed among the trees, shrubs, and vines, and acted upon by them. People will not be restricted from entering this portion of the site, however this author assumes that the path will be used as a transitional element, and that the underbrush will be used primarily by children playing games or pairs of young
adults succumbing to a primal urge.

The north wall of the theater degenerates to become the southern border of the undisturbed zone. A stone wall is used because it is such a primal indication of barrier that it should "read" even in a highly degenerated form, and because it does not create a harsh separation. At the point where the water and user flow through the wall, it should simply cease to exist as a barrier, returning again to some degree as it follows the edge of the woods.

The compound itself terraces into four distinct levels, relating to the outdoor studio spaces. The lowest terrace flows directly into the kiln area, tying the compound to the building in a way which makes it difficult to decide exactly where one ends and the other begins.

The terraces begin to form regular steps when moving toward the galleries or formal landscaping, showing a continuity between these elements. The stream flows through the terraces, again denoting its ultimate dominance.

Finally the terrace walls move toward the theater at a right angle, turning away before encountering the berm. The monoliths stand in the paths of the walls, further indicating a psychological separation.
VIEW of NEW STUDIOS (TOWARD FORMAL COURT)
VIEW OF NEW STUDIOS

The view of the new studios and the existing building is from the north-east portion of the art compound. Beginning at the righthand corner of the drawing one sees an outdoor space designed for the placement of the kilns. The element of a low, broken wall similar to the one separating the art compound from the woods exists between this outdoor studio and the terraces of the compound. This element is repeated at each outdoor work area, and also generates a ramp moving down through the site. The ramp is of course repeated inside the building at the circulation corridor.

The roof line of the studios remains constant, while the full height glazing steps down with the terraces. A timber element extending from the stone "wall" over the roof helps to define the extent of the studios and their outdoor work areas, while trying to pull the site into the building. This is intended to provide a contrast to the monoliths of the theater.

The "chain link fence" passes over the building, tying it to the existing Art League, and giving an idea of the essence of form to be found in the formal garden and townscape beyond. Uniformly manicured trees can also be seen through the entry to the formal court.

The existing building retains its rigid geometrical (boxlike) form, but it is also given floor to ceiling glass in the gallery area. It has an unobstructed view of the compound but no physical entry.
VIEW of THEATER (ENTERING FROM FORMAL COURT)
VIEW OF THEATER

The theater begins at the right hand side of the drawing with polished stone panels. As one looks farther to the north the monoliths evolve out of the building to imply the separation of philosophies in front of and behind the facade. The windows are raised above the ground level and set into a flush stone wall, and the whole composition is set above a berm.

Above the theater the rubble stone wall eroding into its "chain link" form is evident. Notice that this same stone shows up in the retaining wall for the terraces as well as the berm around the theater. This material also forms the north wall of the theater itself, breaking down into the wall which separates the art compound from the natural area as was previously discussed.

The theater facade is meant to feel impermeable in comparison to the studios. The effort was to develop a continuum of building facades relating to the continuum of ideologies, from those which are nature dependent to those generating fantasy environments.
THE MODEL

A series of photographs were taken of the model to give an idea of the overall form of the site as developed. Of particular note is the relationship of the formal garden to the buildings, and of the buildings to one another.
FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The result of this thesis was as much to rekindle a feeling of need for a cohesive value system as anything else. Examination of various projects generally left an idea of interesting stylistic manipulation of form with no ethical basis. The examination of Beaux-Arts and Art-Nouveau forms gave a glimmer of hope which is sometimes hard to maintain.

By developing an idea of what stylistically was to be achieved, a general idea of necessary forms for the project itself was generated. This program will probably be tried in several more incarnations in the attempt to generate a system with the type of meaning and philosophical content the author desires.

This thesis also generated a desire to further investigate historical forms relating to religious and ritual structures, with the hope of finding a continuity of meaning beyond the specific iconographies. This could allow a moralistic atheist a range of meaningful symbology.
READINGS:

RELATING TO PHILOSOPHY AND WORLD VIEW;

Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism
Erwin Panofsky
This book relates the effect of new ideas in religion and philosophy with symbol and structure in Architecture.

In Search of Cultural History
E. H. Gombrich
Book on causes and effects in cultural development, culture and science.

The Ascent of Man
Jacob Bronowski
The cultural history of humanity, with relationship to social and technological development.

Mysticism and the New Physics
Michael Talbot

The Dancing Wu Li Masters
Gary Zukav

The Tao of Physics
Fritjof Capra
The last three books relate to post-Einsteinian views of the physical world and seem to point toward a more random and less causal nature to reality. They also place more importance on the influence of man's understanding of his environment.

Godel, Escher, Bach
D. R. Hofstadter
A book analyzing the similarities in music, art, and mathematics in a philosophical vein. Importance of closed loops and continuua.

Natural Law and Science and Philosophy
Emile Boutroux

Nature and Knowledge
Jacob Bronowski
Books relating perception and nature.

RELATING TO HISTORICAL PRECEDENT;

The Arts in America
W. D. Garett
Book creating a general background in the development of American art.

The American Renaissance
M. Botwinick

Changing Ideals in American Architecture
M. Darnell
The previous two books relate to the effect that European style had on American art and architecture around the turn of the previous century.

The Work of Augustus Saint-Gaudens
J. Dryfoul
The Beaux-Arts movement as exemplified by a single artist.
Art-Nouveau
Martin Batterby
This is a book relating the
Art-Nouveau movement to the
technology and philosophy of it's
time.

RELATING TO PROGRAMING

Feasibility Study for The Indianapolis Art
League and Broad Ripple Playhouse
David Rottger, Architects
A study commissioned by the Art
League. The hypothetical solution
takes a very frontal approach which
seems to cut the site off from the
river and develops the theater as a
main focus.

RELATING TO THE PROJECT;
A survey of the literature was
undertaken which is too extensive to
be enumerated at this point.
Personal examination of the site as
well as contacts with Art League
personnel also influenced the design.