“This task is to restore continuity between the refined and intensified forms of experience that are works of art and the everyday events, doing, and sufferings that are universally recognized to constitute experience”

(Dewey 3).
acknowledgments

SPECIAL THANKS TO...

ANDY SEAGER STUDIO PROFESSOR

LOHREN DEEG THESIS ADVISOR

“WOODSHOP” BOB GITHENS TIPS, TRICKS, AND TOOLS

MICHAEL STULL FINANCING AND SUBCONTRACTING

JILL DEMUTH SAFETY SPECIALIST

LIZ MILLER WEBSITE CONSULTING
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACKGROUND</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT IS EXPERIENCE?</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOW TO “CREATE” EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUIDELINES DETERMINE FORM</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESIGNING FOR EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROCESS</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE INSTALLATION</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE DIALOGUE</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How different would our environment be if architectural spaces were really designed with the intention of creating an experience for its users? While experience is often a stated feature in various designs, it is difficult to know if it is actually realized when the final product is a small scale model. The ultimate goal of this project is to create a full size installation to experientially engage passers-by in an existing space. In an effort to realize this goal, many additional questions emerge. For example: What is an experience? How do you “create” an experience? What guidelines determine the form of the installation? And when a space is designed purely for the experience of its users is it still architecture or does it become sculpture? The process of reaching some answers is quite diverse and the resulting dialogue is varied and interesting. Every design project is an opportunity to create a space that interacts with its users. Architects have the opportunity to engage people with an environment that is not just the background to their experiences, but a part of them.
“Some spaces affect you. Other spaces combine with things/events to affect you. Still others are merely backdrops to things/events. That’s the reality of the built environment. Without all levels of diversity in experience, there would be no value to any of them.”

During the research phase of the project several small studies were done to begin the dialogue concerning experience, and to continue asking questions. This installation was aimed at making people aware of the idea of experience in a way that engages them physically and intellectually, thus being an experience of sorts in and of itself.
A live creature interacting physically, emotionally, and/or mentally with environing conditions

There are three key phases of an experience: initiation, conflict, and consummation in consciousness. It is very important that the users have a choice as to their level of interaction with the installation. This produces the mental and physical beginning of the encounter that must be achieved to set in motion a memorable experience.

"Experience" is a word that is often thrown around in architecture presentations, but whether or not the so-called "experiences" would register as such with the recipients is hard to determine when the ultimate realization of the project is a small scale model. How different would our environment be if architectural spaces were really designed with the intention of creating an experience for its users? This project was an installation to experientially engage passers-bys in an existing space, and an exploration of the answer to this question.

**WHAT IS EXPERIENCE?**

Experience can be defined as a live creature interacting with environing conditions, an interaction that is physical, emotional, and/or mental. It can be of tremendous importance or very slight, and is described with adjectives of interpretation. For an experience to stand in the mind of the beholder as such it must not be too automatic/familiar; experiences are notcased in beginnings and cessations but with an initiation and concluding, there must be "consummation in the consciousness of the participant" (Dewey 40). The diverse phases of the enduring whole develop movement towards consummation. They are characterized by struggle and conflict (again, physically, emotionally, and mentally) for the user, but there is a single quality that pervades the whole, and the different components of the experience exist in unity with one another. Specific enemies of experience are the humdrum, loose ends, and submission to convention in practice and intellectual procedure (submitting for no greater reason than that it is convention, is a great rival of experience).
HOW DO YOU “CREATE” AN EXPERIENCE?

Shown here is an interactive exhibit by Chen Zhen resulting from the cultural revolution in China and looking at conflict and misunderstanding in an engaging powerful way. Beating drums made of ordinary furniture with instruments of oppression (police clubs and fragments of guns and ammunition) and knowing the context out of which the work was created engages you physically and emotionally (Zhen).
"Things are experienced but not in such a way that they are composed into an experience" (Dewey 35).

Jonathan Block Friedman addressed this issue in a section of his book entitled "The Poetics of Music," he said, "that music, like other forms of expression, is a work that results from its creator’s discoveries" (94). Discoveries come from observing something worthy of note in common things, and from drawing inspiration from them.

Creating an experience means crafting an environment that engages people. Such an environment is the outcome of the designer’s discoveries and an opportunity for other people to make discoveries as well. Engaging people often requires a narrative for the participants to follow along with, a story that engages and illuminates the story beyond, a story that is food for thought and discussion. "It is crucial that the work breaks down the physical and emotional distance between the exhibit and the visitor" (Hanly 79). Such a story need not be wholly understood by each person; the way the story is perceived is not as important as the fact that it gets the mental attention of the onlooker, and transforms him/her from a detached witness to an engaged participant.

Friedman also says that "invention is not conceivable apart from its actually being worked out." Experience cannot be described as such until it is tangibly realized; in this area there is no substitution for full scale, it is important to see how people respond. Furthermore, people can interact with and discuss a built project in a way that is not possible with small scale representations. When dealing with a physical realization of the intentions of the designer it is possible to begin a dialogue with the audience about personal perceptions and interpretation.

"Writer, composer of music, sculptor, or painter can retrace, during the process of production, what they have previously done. When it is not satisfactory in the undergoing or perceptual phase of experience, they can to some degree start afresh. This retracing is not readily accomplished in the case of architecture – which is perhaps one reason why there are so many ugly building. Architects are obliged to complete their idea before translation into a complete object of perception takes place... Every work of art follows the plan of, and pattern of, a complete experience, rendering it more intensely and concentratedly felt" (Dewey 51).
What guidelines determine the form?

“A mode of composition that does not assign itself limits becomes pure fantasy” (Friedman 99).
Creativity only exists in the context of limitations; the designer’s discoveries do not come together into a recognizable form except as a result of their interface with restrictions.

Project boundaries naturally present themselves; they result from constraints such as budget, which in turn influences materials each of which affects the overall form, character, and buildability.

The Glass Video Gallery in Groningen, by Bernard Tschumi is an example of the way that the choice of materials and their connections have a significant impact on the design of the space (Papadakis 40).

The minimal budget and time span for this project necessitated the choice of materials that were readily available, easily assembled, and reasonably low in price. The choice to expose materials that are rarely left uncovered was an effort to avoid conforming to convention while still using materials that met the above qualifications. To avoid undermining the nature of the materials the surfaces were intentionally left untreated.
The goal of engaging users imposes certain restrictions as well. Scale, for instance, the size and proportion of the form must be relative to the size and proportion of the user that it is attempting to connect with (the exact relationship depends on what types of reaction the designer desires — should the space feel intimidating or comfortable, and so on).

Choosing a site that is easily accessible to a variety of people is a key component of engaging. Furthermore, the site will likely order other things such as size (especially concerning ability to transport), durability, and perhaps even the design vocabulary. The character of the chosen location can also influence the project. For example, the designer must decide if he/she wants to blend with the context or make a statement in contrast to it. Also, how people use the space normally can dictate how they will interact with something that appears in it. The users that the form is to engage come with a string of requirements as well. It is the designer’s responsibility to address the interests of the audience (what would surprise them?), to protect their safety, and to be able to record the interaction (if they so desire).

The Arts and Journalism building is a pleasant addition to the campus, but as a building that houses art, sculpture, and the students that create it, it is lacking character; judging by this picture, the site could just as easily be a mental institution. The work being displayed is confined to the display cases seen on the north wall of the corridor, leaving the sterile nature of the passageway experientially unaffected. Another interesting feature of the site is the two benches that are bolted into the middle of the circulation space (seemingly included by the architect to enhance a line that would only be obvious in the floor plan, which is not the dimension in which buildings are experienced). The installation had the opportunity to begin artistically cleansing the site by juxtaposing angles, visually textured materials and the like against the barren walls, and by setting one bench experientially against the other to drive home the point.

Average sizes associated with the human figure (Hoke 7).
“Art without convictions isn’t good art”  
(Painter’s Painting)

Of course, every designer will prioritize these restrictions (as well as any others they perceive), placing more weight on the ones they consider to be the most significant. Clearly individuals will answer all of the issues uniquely. Every thought, event, and individual you interact with influences the way you will respond to future thoughts, events, and people. These presuppositions are the lenses we see things through, they work together to shape our perceptions and the way we interpret them.

The question was printed on the piece of the installation to intellectually engage passers-by’s in the issues being investigated in the project and to solicit their response as a way of documenting their reaction. The web address listed below the question simply presented a couple of pictures of the project and requested some information about the people who took the initiative to compose it. The questionnaire asked specifically about the viewers year in school, major, impression of the project and if/when they believe that architecture becomes sculpture. After completing the questionnaire the viewers were offered an opportunity to review other people’s responses to the same question. The website received a sufficient amount of hits to gauge the general impression of the students (see appendix a for a listing of their responses).

“People aren’t interested in an experience that tells you everything you need to know, you’re more likely to remember an experience that you have to think about”  
(Lohren Deeg, midterm review).
DESIGNING FOR EXPERIENCE
ADDRESSING THE LINE BETWEEN ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE

ONE OF THE WAYS OF APPROACHING THE QUESTION ABOUT SPACES DESIGNED FOR EXPERIENCE IS TO ANSWER A RELATED QUESTION, WHEN A SPACE IS DESIGNED PURELY FOR THE EXPERIENCE OF ITS USERS IS IT STILL ARCHITECTURE OR DOES IT BECOME SCULPTURE?

JEAN DUBUFFET
CHAMBRE AU LIT SOUS L’ARBRE

THIS IS AN EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE SCULPTURE ALLOWING VISITORS TO “STROLL THROUGH MANY ENVIRONMENTS, BOTH INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR, A VERITABLE METAPHOR FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THOUGHT” (SOLOMON 178-183). MUCH OF DUBUFFET’S WORK SOUGHT TO BLUR THE LINES BETWEEN BACK AND FRONT, MASKED AND VISIBLE, PART AND WHOLE. HIS WORK IS ALSO AN ADMIRABLE EXAMPLE OF SMUDGING THE LINE BETWEEN ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE.

“WHEN THE NOTION OF ART, AND NOT ONLY THAT OF PAINTING, WILL HAVE CEASED TO BE CONCEIVED OF AS PERCEIVED, WHEN THE MIND WILL HAVE CEASED TO PROJECT ART AS A NOTION TO BE GAZED UPON, AND ART WILL BE INTEGRATED IN SUCH A MANNER THAT THOUGHT, INSTEAD OF FACING IT, WILL BE INSIDE IT; AT WHICH POINT, IT WILL CEASE TO BE AMONG THE THINGS APT TO BE NAMED” (SOLOMON 178).

LIAM GILlick
COATS OF ASBESTOS SPANGLED WITH MICA (2002)

“USING A COMBINATION OF TEXT AND INSTALLATIONS, GILlick PROVIDES DOCUMENTATION OF THE WAY SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REALITIES ARE SHAPED AND MANIPULATED. HE HAS A VERY VISUAL AWARENESS OF THE WAY DIFFERENT PROPERTIES OF MATERIALS, STRUCTURES AND COLOR CAN AFFECT OUR SURROUNDINGS AND THEREFORE INFLUENCE THE WAY WE BEHAVE” (LIAM GILlick). GILlick SEEMS TO BE AN ARTIST WORKING IN THE MEDIA OF ARCHITECTURE.
“Follies, to us, are prospective studies of future buildings; elements of the sculptures can and will appear within our upcoming projects” (Papadakis 78 - Coop Himmelblau).

Osaka Follies
Various architecture firms were hired to create “A society of plenty and charm for the 21st century” in the International Garden and Greenery Exposition at Osaka (Papadakis 78-81). Are they architecture or sculpture?

Jean-Pierre Raynaud
Espace Zero
“...creates a certain kind of atmosphere; it responds to the specificity of place while continuing to engender a sense of emotional disturbance desired by the artist” (Solomon 220-221). Raynaud designed a space for his viewers to experience that was ultimately built directly into the exhibit design. This work was designed by an artist, using his traditional vocabulary. Is it architecture or sculpture?
the process:

It is the intention of this thesis to create an installation to experientially engage passers-by in an existing space and to create a dialogue about the difference between architecture and sculpture.

Model No. 1 (scale 1/2” = 1’-0”)

- Requires total initiation on the part of the individual (limited audience)
- Positioning is good
- Modularity is underlying theme
- Expensive, problems with lighting, and is too unidirectional
Buildability Studies (Full scale connections)

- Developing a greater understanding of the nature of the materials
- Testing a variety of fastening techniques
- Seeks very bulky at full scale, needs to be the scale of the human hand not just the body
**Why fight the bench?**

- **No longer unidirectional, less expensive, fewer lighting problems and site limitations**
- **Allows for as much involvement an individuals pursue, can reach a broad range of audiences**

---

**Model No. 2 (scale 1” = 1’-0”)**

- **Nice relationship to the bench**
- **To vary the level of closure/shelter is a strong idea, projects movement**
- **Too rigid in the transition between members (predictable and uninteresting)**
MODEL NO. 3 (SCALE ROUGHLY 1/8" = 1'-0" AND 1" = 1'-0")

- Nicely projects the desired character (energy)
- Does not translate well into a larger scale
Model No. 4 (scale 1” = 1'-0")

- Nice combination of the strength of the other designs
- Defines multiple spaces (around the bench, “behind” the structure, etc.)
- Interesting composition, flexible enough to accommodate varying sites
The realization of the project at full scale was critical to understanding the experience that the installation was meant to create. Buildability dictated small adjustments to the design (mainly at points of connection). The full scale version brought to view several features that could stand some fine-tuning.
Typical Cut Sheet
A KEY ELEMENT OF THE INSTALLATION WAS A QUESTION (WHEN DOES ARCHITECTURE BECOME SCULPTURE?) AND A WEB ADDRESS PRINTED ON THE PIECES TO INVITE WRITTEN COMMENTS TO THE QUESTION (SEVERAL ORAL COMMENTS WERE ALSO OVERHEARD AND RECORDED). THERE WERE VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF RESPONSES THAT EMERGED FROM THE QUESTION, THEY WERE HINGED ON THE WAY THE INDIVIDUAL WOULD DEFINE ARCHITECTURE. WHAT IS INTERESTING IS THAT EVEN WITHIN THEIR SOMETIMES NARROW DEFINITIONS THERE IS PLENTY OF ROOM FOR PERSONAL PERCEPTIONS, AND TWO COMPLETELY DIFFERENT RESPONSES COULD CITE THE SAME EVIDENCE AS THEIR REASONING. CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RESPONSE.

"ARCHITECTURE BECOMES SCULPTURE WHEN IT DOES NOT SERVE AN IMMEDIATE TANGIBLE FUNCTION. ARCHITECTURE IS DESIGNED FOR USE (WALLS, LIVING SPACE, WINDOWS)."
Art (such as sculpture) has a purpose (beauty, to make one think, to see things in a different way) but nothing that is concrete. Art is for the mind and heart. While architecture might be beautiful and also fill many criteria of art it goes beyond to a physically functional aspect. These pieces are sculpture to me. They may be based on architectural theories but they do not have a function other than to be looked at or discussed. They are not tables or walls or etc.”

This person (a theater major—would a set be considered architecture?) has clearly defined architecture as related to function, and because he/she does not see a “tangible function” then these pieces (appears to be perceived as a series of pieces, and not as a whole) are sculpture. He/she suggests the absence of “walls, living space, and windows” as evidence of its lack of function. Another person, interacting with the same piece, could see it as no more than a tilted wall with slanting windows framing a more livable space around a bench; even within the definition of architecture as related to function, there is room for multiple interpretations.

Other people’s definitions of architecture were related to the degree of shelter that it provides, the relationship to the site, or the process the designer used to arrive at a solution.

“There is a question about setting of the architecture. I’d consider your project both, but the space that it occupies, it’s more sculpture. But it still holds onto architecture because of the experience and the design process that you went through in considering its design. Architecture, in my opinion, goes deeper into site consideration and human interactions.”
“...participants, who bring their own meanings and interpretations as they interact with the piece” (Zhen).

"Perhaps architecture is just sculpture that seeks to answer multiple questions and address multiple issues in a tangible way for the person to whom they concern."

Perhaps the most telling response is from an architecture major that just is not sure:

"I had trouble with the questions as to whether this is architecture or not. Technically it defines a space, but it is so sculptural most of the space is inferred."

In reviewing the responses it becomes clear that people took different routes in arriving at their answers. An accounting major actually looked up definitions for the words, which challenged him/her because the definitions did not line up with his/her preconceived understanding.

"My first reaction was that architecture becomes sculpture when it ceases to be practical. However, sculpture is art and a definition of art includes the conscious arrangement or production of sounds, colors, forms, movements or other elements in a way that affects the aesthetic sense. So in this way, sculpture and architecture are similar. They both produce three-dimensional objects some practical, some not."
“People influence and change the environment as it influences and changes them”
(Fisher 266).

Moving the installation to a different site of course called for some changes. Unfortunately the use of the space allotted was not ideal. Having the project nestled in to a corner did not allow for the type of interaction it was designed for (people could easily look at it, but opportunities to engage it — particularly as you walk through and past it, were limited). What was most interesting is that people in the architecture building felt the freedom to move the pieces as they saw fit, and create their own spaces, like the one shown above.

After a week on the site the installation evidently became part of the standard landscape of the corridor, as demonstrated by the fliers that were stuck in the cracks and tacked to it.
On the other hand, most people responded directly from their experience with sculpture and architecture.

"I don’t know when architecture becomes sculpture, but you are definitely testing the line...if in fact there is a line. I have always thought of sculpture as something that is this big pile of weird stuff that you have to interpret...and then of course there is the typical statue or the guy that made toilets art...who knows it seems to me that anything can be ‘art’ if you want it to be, so if you want this to be a sculpture then it is!"

Clearly the difference between architecture and sculpture is not a universally defined one. The diversity of answers confirms that there is not a distinct line. This project has brought out some key issues about the way to look at architecture. Every project is an opportunity to create an experientially engaging space (bearing in mind the need

As a person approaches the site from connecting corridors there are partial views of the installation that have the ability to begin the onlookers mental dialogue. The question printed on the installation answers some of the viewers questions (why is it here?) but also stirs additional questions. It is difficult to believe that anyone would be able to use the corridor without noticing the installation, nonetheless, the majority of passers-by moved right through the space without any indication that they were interested in the project. It would be exciting to know if people were thinking about the question/project even as they appeared uninterested.
FOR HIERARCHY AMONG DESIGNED SPACES). IT IS NOT JUST ABOUT AN ARCHITECT INTERACTING WITH HIS/HER CLIENT, BUT ABOUT SPACE INTERACTING WITH THE INDIVIDUALS THAT USE IT. IT’S ABOUT ENGAGING PEOPLE WITH AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS NOT JUST THE BACKGROUND TO THEIR EXPERIENCES, BUT A PART OF THEM.
appendix a:
The following is a collection of responses gathered from the website (which was printed on the installation) and/or heard in passing on the site.

When does architecture become sculpture?

Whoa, what a cute little house! [OVERHEAR COMMENT, MAJOR UNKNOWN]

Architecture is a sculptural habitat. Buildings should always be looked at as art and given the same personality as art. I am intrigued by the project. I keep looking for ways that the pieces progress and connect. Each time I see it, I see new angles and dimensions. [landscape architecture major]

I think architecture becomes sculpture when the thought process goes beyond function to form. Architecture has to reach outside its own limits to be sculpture. Someone like Victor Horta I would say brought architecture and sculpture together. Beyond that I think of sculpture as an art and art is something that is more original, architecture is hard to classify as sculpture because of the specific sizes of doors, windows, and the function it needs to perform. I would say that most architecture is not sculpture but that architecture could be sculpture if it broke some boundaries set by standards... Often times an artist has to go beyond form and put in personal touches... which is why making something as big as a building “sculpture” is probably not as feasible as one might think. [graphic design major]

The difference between architecture and sculpture results from the difference of the professions of the designers; they are trained differently, they design to meet different requirements. [Elementary education major]

Architecture always is sculpture. They are never mutually exclusive. It would not be a terrible fate if you would drop the word architecture or drop the word sculpture. If a structure can’t carry a live load safely, and it is supposed to, then go back and rework it. These are great material sketches. This work has to be done before a viable structure or sculpture is complete. This is not to say that this work does not stand on its own conceptually and materially. What are you trying to achieve? You have achieved something. I like the apparent sequential relationship between the structures. If this is research of some sort, it has to be a great start. [Industry and technology staff]

I think the central difference is in the client; architects are typically meeting the needs or another person, while artists are often working on their own whim. [Major unknown]

Where did the design come from? It looks like its disintegrating. [architecture major]

Architecture becomes sculpture when it deviates from the right angle norm. It can also become sculpture when it makes you think about the intent and use. This project made me wonder what kind of person designed it and what they were thinking when they designed it. The project screams creative and “thinking outside the box”. [Accounting major]

Perhaps architecture is just sculpture that seeks to answer multiple questions and address multiple issues in a tangible way for the person to whom they concern. [Major unknown]
To me, sculpture is just a work of art. Architecture goes beyond that to be a work of art with a purpose, i.e. defines space. Both are created by formation or construction as the result of a conscious act to express feelings, make a statement and/or create discussion, but **architecture serves a practical function.** The derivation of the form is interesting and creates a unique experience. I had trouble with the question as to whether this was architecture or not. Technically it defines a space, but it is so sculptural most of the space is inferred. It is very sculpture-like in the sense that one does not engage with most of the pieces beyond visual, and potentially tactile. I do think it is architecture though. [Architecture major]

Architecture becomes sculpture when it is freestanding and arranged in ways previously unseen or rarely seen at all. [Elementary education major]

Architecture is a form of sculpture. Anything in our tangible world is sculpture: something we can touch, hold, feel, see, and experience. Because architecture is all around us, many overlook its sculptural elements, it remains sculpture nonetheless. [Painting major]

There is a question about setting of the architecture. I’d consider the project both, but for the space that it occupies, it’s more sculpture. It still holds onto architecture because of the experience and the design process **architecture goes deeper into site consideration and human interaction.** [Architecture major]

**Architecture has a specific relationship to its environment** that is not always the case with sculpture. [Landscape Architecture major]

Architecture becomes sculpture when the ’architecture’ does not have a definite function. (Should be obvious to the user). I also wish that the pieces were connected physically in some way. Even if the final piece could be considered architecture because it creates an enclosure, the first four pieces I feel are pure sculpture because they lead up to the actual architecture. [Architecture major]

There is no pure answer. Personal aesthetics and preferences will present a biased opinion. [Dance major]

All architecture is sculpture. Some is more interesting to look at than others; most art is that way. I like the way the piece builds upon itself. **The gradual deletion of space leads the viewer into the piece and carries the viewer through it.** The fourth piece (counting from the left) is my favorite. [Elementary education major]

Clearly the difference between architecture and sculpture is not a universally defined one. Some would say function defines architecture, but that only evades the question because then you must also define an architectural function. Perhaps the classification of architecture is related to the concept of shelter and protection from the elements, but there are degrees of protection, and exactly which (and how many) elements must architecture address? **Perhaps you understand it as what it is (architecture or sculpture) because of the perspective from which you see it.** If you perceive it as functional (creating a more intimate space) you would call it architecture, but if you perceive it as decorative, emotionally interesting, and/or just making a statement (an intervention in a regrettable sterile environment), then you might call it sculpture. [Architecture major]
**Bibliography:**


**Hubbell and Hubbell: Artists and Architects.** Drew and James Hubbell. October 2002. <Hubbell and Hubbell .com>


Zhen, Chen. Jue Chang (50 Strokes to Each). The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston.