metamorphosis

An Analysis of Human Social Development

...a cocoon and coming out as a beautiful butterfly. A raw
Societies develop along a path socially and physically. Synonymous with this is the evolution of its members. The initial objective of this thesis was to examine how the social and individual maturation of society's young professionals can be influenced by architecture. Many question whether this correlation between architecture and human development exists at all, and that this would be too much to expect from a building, however it was my intent to find this connection through architectural composition and spatial experience.

Through this thesis exploration I intended to:

- Respond to human social development as a driving design component
- Examine how architecture and urban context influence this development
- Create a healthy social environment
The process of the thesis exploration began with an analysis of the physical and urban parameters of the site. Evident through the locations physical layering and social organization an understanding of the urban and social developmental history was revealed. Following the urban analysis an investigation of the users' ideals and issues was necessary to acquire an understanding of their social developmental needs. Through the urban analysis and user identification the correlation between human behavior and the built environment was established. Once identified this correlation was translated into a language for the spatial organization and experience of the thesis building. The site chosen for the thesis is located in downtown Indianapolis because of the presence of urban and contextual issues necessary to establish a developmental and social history. The thesis will conclude in a manner intended to express the thought process and dynamics of the benefit of architectural exploration through compositional methods and electronic media. The resolution of the thesis is intended to show this process of exploration and provide a springboard for ideas for the relationship between human social behavior and spatial design.
EXPLORATION OF THESIS

Metamorphosis... transformation, gestation. These words suggest a process. From these words it may not be visible what the process is, or what form it takes, but the end result is the same: the idea that a profound change has taken place. The connection between the process and the change implies that the elements and procedures within the process work together to determine the outcome. When you understand these elements then you can understand how to manipulate the outcome. In the process of human social and intellectual development all of the factors that effect human behavior also effect the outcome of this process. By taking a position that architecture affects human behavior it is implied that it has a direct connection with this process, and it therefore becomes a factor of social development.
By responding to the human elements of society through architecture, the benefits of a more interpretive and personalized built environment can assist individuals in the realization of social and personal development. The built environment surrounds us and is initially a direct response to the basic human need for shelter. Although complex, architecture can be associated with human behavior because we spend a majority of our existence immersed in architecture of some form. During which these experiences are seeping into our psyche consciously or unconsciously.
These factors became important when considering the users and building for this thesis. As a means of characterizing the users I examined three movies rich in artistic and graphical content that focused on the lives of young adults on a developmental journey. Through these movies I wanted to examine how the film directors and editors were able to manipulate my perception of the portrayed events through abstraction and graphical composition. From these movies I was able to formulate an abstract set of ideals for theoretical users of the thesis building. By employing this form of exploration an understanding of how compositional content and expression can change perceptions of reality and emotions was acquired.
I am a traveler...
The thesis building is a multistory housing complex. The target users for this exploration are young aspiring professionals under age 30. It is perceived that during this stage of human development we are most susceptible to influences and are just beginning to grasp the manner in which they come. It is also the time period when we may not have completely defined ourselves internally or developed an understanding of ourselves and our role in society. At the same time we are still in the mindset that learning and intellect are the keys to reaching the plateau of self-realization and self-understanding. For this stage of human development a few key factors were identified to be a necessity for further growth:

- Intellectual stimulation
- Financial assistance
- Close proximity to peers, urban stimulus, and living necessities

Through careful attention to the provision of these factors the developmental issues of the thesis users can be accommodated.
Known as the Crossroads of the Nation, Indianapolis is located within a day's drive of one-half the nation's population. It is also the leading center of manufacturing and commerce in the Midwest region. The tallest buildings appear in a ten-block area known as Mile Square, so named because the original city plat was 1 sq mi (2.6 sq km) in area. This is the business and historic heart of Indianapolis. Modeled after Washington, D.C., main streets radiate from Monument Circle at the heart of Mile Square to all parts of the city. At the center of the circle is the Soldiers and Sailors Monument (dedicated in 1902), considered by many as the symbol of the city.
The site is located on the corner of Alabama and Ohio Street, one block north of Market Square Arena, which is directly on axis with Monument Circle. This location was chosen because of its urban context and proximity to key amenities, intellectual and social resources, and the level of urban vitality needed for social and intellectual development.

The city was selected for the site of the University of Indiana with supports for the city of Indianapolis with supports for the thesis exploration. The site is approximately 450 x 450 feet and is divided into quadrants which would provide more efficient usage.

The site is divided into the following areas:

- Parking
- Circulation
- Shared utility core
- Shared building

The site is located in the immediate district.
PROCESS

The process of the design exploration initially entailed a series of mass model studies in FormZ computer rendering software. From these studies two mass model interpretations were developed. Following the series of mass models I developed a series of precedence studies that focused on conventional housing typologies, methods, and organization. Housing types that were focused on included the split-level, courtyard-atrium, quadruplex, duplex, town house, and row house housing applications. From these studies a 30' x 15' room module in the townhouse configuration was established. From this module a 60' x 60' structural bay module was employed for the initial spatial organization. Spaces that were to be included in the design that are supplemental to the apartments:

- Communal spaces
- Tech Labs
- Cafeteria
- Classrooms
- Commercial offices
- Clubhouse/ Lobby
- Entry/ Atrium space
- Grocery store

Hierarchy Concept
- Building Forms Follow a Rising Hierarchical pattern
- Provided for:
  - Clear Path of Progression
  - Easy Definition of Spatial Divisions

Fragmented Concept
- Building Was Composed of Multiple Fragments
- Provided For:
  - Exiting Interstitial Spaces
  - Representation of Unclear Thought
The space relationship study was detailed through model exploration. Through this exploration it was determined that the building would organize around a central element that allowed for the centralization of core components, and the supportive building uses ordered around this form. The building would also expose two significant facades, west being reflective of the corporate uses of the building, and the east reflecting the private. Architecturally the building represented a palette of materials including brick, site-cast concrete and a perforated metal screen on the west façade combined in a manner as to express design intent sculpturally.

Block/Screen Concept

- Building Was Composed of Major Block Form W/ Different Building Uses Attached
- Metal Screen Functioned as a Diffuser Between Building and City Metropolis
- Provided For:
  - Centralization of Core Component
During this model exploration with the expression of design ideas and composition through computer modelling, I began to experiment with the representation of human interaction with the instability and fluctuation of the building's structure. This required the building to be subjected to a series of renderings that expressed the uncertainty of the users in a way that the building responded. By using the information gained from the previous studies, I was able to produce a series of renderings that expressed the actual building at all but not being actually rendered. The use of skewed angles and perspectives gave the appearance of not being a clear direction in the road of the users. Through this study, I was beginning to understand how the architectural design can be worked out through the conventional process and explore the essence of the design. The building as more of an abstract artistic composition rather than a physical entity, allowed me to explore the building expressing the essence of the design through the conventional process.
Through the comparison and exploration of various forms, the design evolved into facade studies in sketch rendering form. It is in this stage where architectural elements such as window placement, mullions, and materials began to define the language of the building. As an artistic composition in a more realistic manner than what was explored electronically, it is at this point where the artistic qualities of the final composition began to surface. In my mind, as an important factor in how to understand the way human emotion can be influenced by architectural expressions.
At this point it was important to define how the building would organize itself spatially. The main objective was to begin the composition at this point. The resolution of building form at the break up the mass of the building and the major axis of movement, circulation, and important views. Design the building to match changes in form and study carefully the building form. The desired exposures for the building and the building were identified as the desirable exposures for the rooms to be in the middle to create a large sunlit atrium space that would allow the rooms to follow a path as you move around it. The atrium provides the opportunity for the circulation to the subsequent apartments of each level as well as providing a visual connection to each part of the building.
In conjunction with the division in the middle of the building forms were further divided according to the hierarchical progression of the users toward their stage of self-realization. As they travel the U-shape path around the atrium space the apartments intended for the users in the earliest stage of development are located at the end of the path. This forces them to follow a path that takes them by each of the other rooms, the community spaces, and around the atrium while maintaining the visual connection as mentioned before. As the users progress in their social development their location within the building moves closer in towards the beginning of the path.

Spatial Organization
- Apartment Levels
  - Incorporate Atrium
  - Space & Bridge-walk
- Space Representation:
  - Blue: Living Areas
  - Yellow: Communal/Intellectual Areas
Spatial Composition

Combined with the spatial organization an important factor of the thesis composition was the experience of the space. When addressing the question of "what elements encourage people to experience the space," I approached the resolution in a sculptural manner. It is at this point that the method of exploration was through electronic media. The success of this form of exploration is yet to be determined, but it provided the groundwork to approach the matter in a compositional manner. Through this exploration the experience of the intended dynamics of the spaces could be explored in order to raise issues and ideas for later analysis. This series of studies was focused on how the space was expressed compositionally with color and views.
Through the artistic composition of the interior floor area in combina-
tion with that of the decorative stairwell, and lobby space at the southwest corner of the site it was my intention to spark intrigue from casual observers as to what the building expresses within the interior gathering space. This intent was reflected in the west façade by the change in form and material. The intent was that at a distance the protruding of the first four floors could be viewed much like a painting, where the geometries are expressed in simple forms that carve themselves into the canvas of the building. At each end the forms seem to want to continue visually as the building material stops. These geometric forms are the large and small square window openings that address each corner of the building in size. They provide a full light-wall exposure for the library, and conference rooms located behind them on the interior 3rd and 4th floors.
The windows on the ground floor are diminished in size for the purpose of not drawing attention to the interior of the building as you pass by. Rather they are to lead their sight down to the corners of the building where they can enter. The small size of these windows also lends themselves to allow for the shops located on the interior to use the back wall for display. As one gets closer to the building the geometric delineation within the windows can be identified and further contribute to the overall artistic expression of simple geometries. The lobby space is intended to be experienced as a multipurpose clubhouse/gathering space. Sized to be able to host parties as well as lectures. The entire space of the lobby is composed of a glass wall that is delineated with the same geometries of the west façade. The intent is that the wall will provide the city as a backdrop to the users of the space, while the observers from the exterior can maintain a visual reference to the activities within.
SPATIAL EXPERIENCE
It is at this stage where the spatial organization, dynamics, and composition were to be explored holistically as a final expression. I stated that the intent of the thesis was to find how architecture can influence human development and emotion, and the focus was to provide the users with exciting interaction with each other through the experience of the integrated mall and atrium space. By exploring the thesis as an abstract electronic composition I realized that the dynamics of this experience have the most impact on human emotion. This form of media gave the opportunity to examine the experience of the atrium space through motion and music which was perfectly suited to show my thesis intent compositionally.
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