

SITUATING LANDSCAPES

Perceptual Framework for an Urban Context



*"Wood Line", by Andy Goldsworthy. Presidio, San Francisco, California. Completed 2011.
Photograph of author. July 17, 2016.*

1. Whiston, Anne Spirn. *The Language of Landscape*. New Haven, CT and London, England: Yale University Press, 1998. 15.

*"Landscape was the original dwelling: humans evolved among plants and animals, under the sky, upon the earth, near water. Everyone carries that legacy in body and mind."*¹

Anne Whiston Spirn

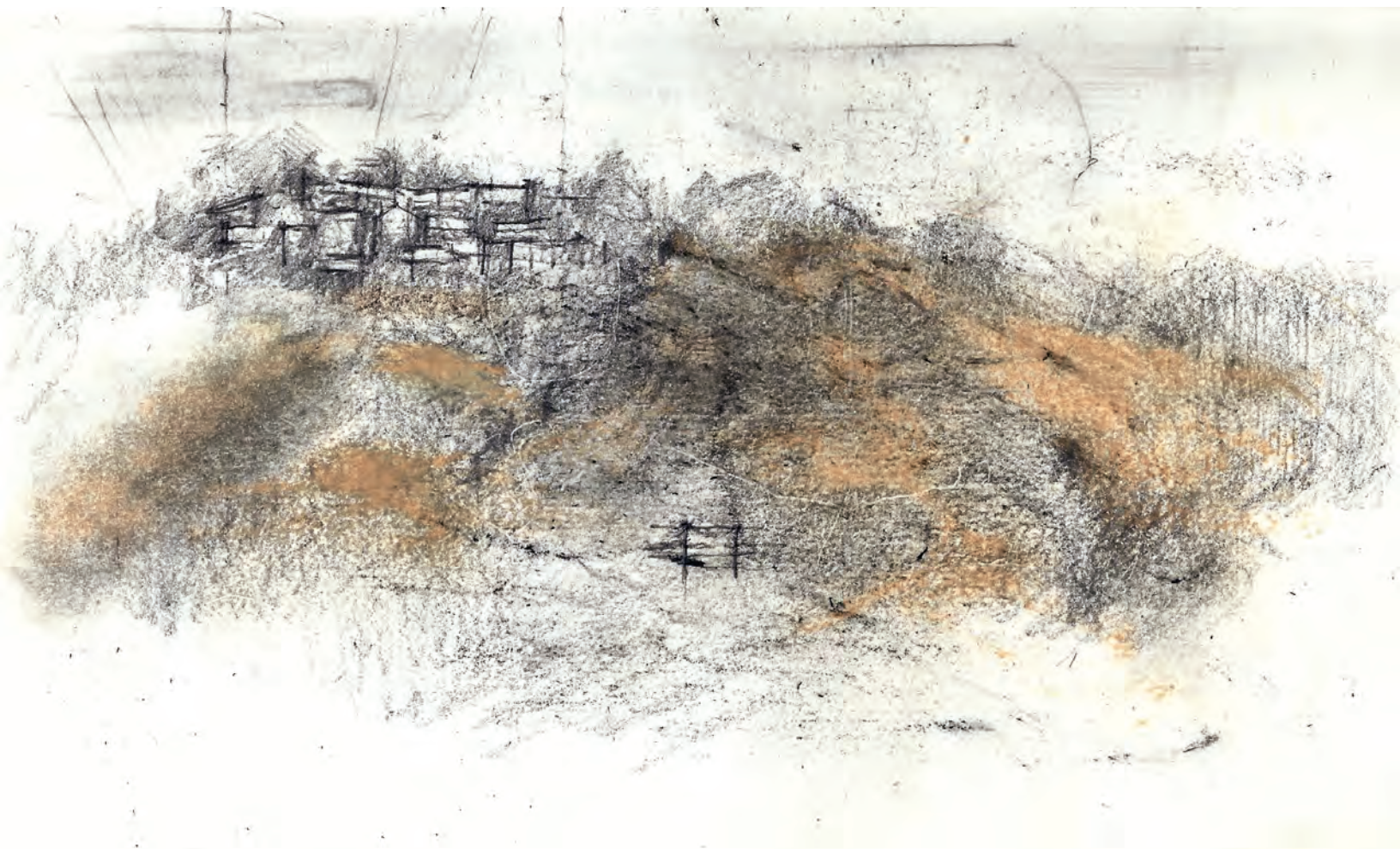
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*This thesis explores the power of architecture as a framework for perception,
in heightening awareness and redirecting attention,
toward an engaging and connective experience with the world.*



Drawing by author. 2016. Graphite and pastel.

ARCHITECTURE AND PERCEPTION, ARCHITECTURE AND THE LANDSCAPE

Architecture is uniquely situated to impact human experience. It engages us externally - through scale, relationship to the body, and sensory experience - and internally, affecting thought and emotion. Often, the things we build fail to recognize their experiential and connective impact, leading to under-engaging spaces that remove us from our surroundings. With a value system driven by efficiency and economy, our ways of building have facilitated a distancing from the landscape, or natural world. Landscape elements are often over-simplified or unconsidered. Our relationship to the world is sterile, static, and incomplete. We find ourselves living “in a series of (disconnected) interiors...built up against the world”.

REDIRECTING ATTENTION

In an urban setting, natural elements exist, obscured by layers of hard-scape and fast-pace. Four interventions, architectural experiences, attempt to unearth and draw attention to these elements. Air, earth, water, and light, found materials, are framed in an attempt to make them visible. They are extracted from an urban context, offering experiences of tactility, multi-scalar connection, and depth in time and space. The ambition is to challenge our understanding, alter our ways of perceiving, even if just for a moment.

1. Solnit, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2001. 9.

THESIS ESSAY

00 | DEFINITIONS OF LANDSCAPE

“...only humans...reflect, worship, make art, and design landscapes.”¹

Anne Whiston Spirn

The French artist Paul Cezanne devoted the majority of his career to the visual representation of Mont Sainte-Victoire, a mountain in Southern France (Figure 1). Over twenty years and sixty paintings, he investigated this landscape through analyses in color, geometry, and scale, striving to capture his elusive subject.

As humans, the natural landscape is inscribed in our story. Before building architecture, we lived in the landscape. Our deep, prehistoric connection to the natural world is evidenced by mythology, religion, vernacular dwelling, the National Park Service, and artistic representation, as in the work of Paul Cezanne. The landscape allures us, draws us in. It is embedded in our being - a remnant of our past.



Figure 1: Paul Cezanne. *Mont Sainte-Victoire with Large Pine*, 1887. Image source: <https://deyoung.famsf.org/files/>

The term *landscape* carries many interpretations. Commonly associated with landscape painting, it often evokes ideas of a distant view or framed image. Nineteenth century painters in Europe and America, predecessors of Cezanne, helped to establish this understanding through renderings of fierce wilderness, unspoiled panoramas, or idealized narratives in a natural setting. (Figure 2) In Western cultures, due to this lineage, *landscape* is commonly considered to be of the visual realm: an aesthetically pleasing natural view, seen from a single, distant vantage point.



Figure 2. Thomas Cole. *Course of Empire: The Pastoral or Arcadian State*. 1836. Image source: ARTSTOR.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary reinforces this interpretation, defining *landscape* as:

- a : a picture representing a view of natural inland scenery
- b : the art of depicting such scenery²

This definition reduces the definition of landscape to a representation. It describes the landscape as a purely visual element, experienced through multiple layers of separation: as a *picture*, representing a *view*, or the *art* which represents the picture.

Although traditions of landscape painting emerged through our inherent gravitation toward the natural world, today, ideas of landscape have been diminished by this interpretation.

In *The Language of Landscape*, Anne Whiston Spirn discusses a more inclusive definition of the term. She traces its etymology in Danish, German, Dutch, and English to a combination of two roots: *land*, meaning both a place and the people who live there, and *scape*, meaning “to shape”, and also, association or partnership.³

Spirn thus asserts landscape to include a place and its inhabitants, created by a mutual shaping of the two. This definition implies a sense of time, describing landscapes in an ongoing process of being shaped by, and shaping, those who dwell in them.

“To call some landscapes natural and others artificial or cultural misses the truth that landscapes are never wholly one or the other.”⁴

Similarly, in *Site Matters*, Carol J. Burns and Andrea Kahn attempt to unearth an appropriately encompassing definition of the term *site*. They identify a group of “closely associated terms”, including *landscape*, which contain “temporal, cultural, ideological, perceptual, scalar, and ontological dimensions...a culturally rich construct.”⁵ Like Spirn, Burns and Kahn expand the definition of landscape to one of cultural, experiential, and temporal depths. In her article, “Groundwork”, Robin Dripps works to define the term *ground*, literally and metaphorically.

“Metaphorically, ground refers to the various patterns of physical, intellectual, poetic, and political structure that intersect, overlap, and weave together to become the context for human thought and action.”⁶

The ground, in this definition, is a formative, influential, layered context. It is an active participant in the ongoing cycles of natural and human conditions.

These interpretations of the terms *landscape*, *site*, and *ground* begin to describe the definition of landscape that will be asserted in this paper:

Landscape extends beyond the visual realm. It is more than the aesthetic pleasure of a pastoral scene, frozen in time through layers of pigment. *Landscape* encompasses the active, ongoing forces that influence and shape a particular part of the earth. It is human, cultural, natural, and artificial. It involves the dynamic processes within the land itself, as well as those in constant participation. It is the natural earthen land, connected to temporal cycles, history, and personal and cultural associations.

Landscape is not a backdrop or background, but an active participant and influence.

At its best, the built environment respects and responds to the cultural, historical, metaphorical and phenomenological depths of the landscape, heightening our prehistoric, formative relationship to the world we inhabit.

“Clearly the problem of man and nature is not one of providing a decorative background for the human play, or even ameliorating the grim city: it is the necessity of sustaining nature as a source of life, milieu, teacher, sanctum, challenge and, most of all, of rediscovering nature’s corollary of the unknown in the self, the source of meaning.”⁷

Ian McHarg

1. Whiston, Anne Spirn. *The Language of Landscape*. New Haven, CT and London, England: Yale University Press, 1998. 18.

2. Merriam-Webster Dictionary, online.

3. Spirn, Anne Whiston. *The Language of Landscape*. 16-17.

4. Spirn, Anne Whiston. *The Language of Landscape*. 24.

5. Burns, Carol J. and Andrea Kahn. “Why Site Matters.” *Site Matters: Design Concepts, Histories, and Strategies*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2005. xiii.

6. Dripps, Robin. “Groundwork.” *Site Matters: Design Concepts, Histories, and Strategies*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2005. 59.

7. McHarg, Ian L. “The Plight.” *Design with Nature*. pp. 19-29. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1992. Originally published: Garden City, NY, 1969. 19.

INTRODUCTION: Architecture that Connects

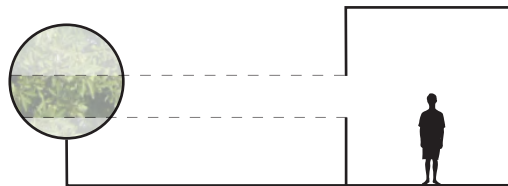
"[The bridge] does not just connect banks that are there, the banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses the stream."¹

Martin Heidegger

With this statement, Heidegger asserts that the creation of architecture establishes new relationships among what exists in the world. Before the architecture, there was no distinction between one side of the banks and the other. A bridge, by connecting the two banks, "expressly causes them to lie across from each other."² It creates space for the human to inhabit - enabling a new embodied experience, and memory, of the banks, or landscape. It also creates a perceived distinction or idea about this landscape, re-negotiating "relationships between people, earth, and sky"³. It makes what would otherwise be unseen or unidentified, recognizable. It creates "place"⁴, by situating the architecture in relation to the land, and the human as an active participant.

"[The bridge] allows people to understand the world around them in relation to it."⁵

Architecture situates humans in the world. The act of enclosure, the building of walls, establishes relationships between ourselves and that which surrounds us. With architecture comes the creation of two conditions: inside and outside. Walls, windows, paths, and thresholds mediate the division between the two and facilitate our interaction with them. Such devices, *by containing, framing, and moving through*, introduce new ways of relating to what exists.



Architecture informs our way of seeing and knowing the world by mediating our experience within it.

This thesis seeks to discover an architecture that connects, rather than divides. This connection concerns the ways that humans interact with the built environment, as well as the ways that architecture interacts with the natural environment. Architecture, strategically strung between humans and the natural world, serves as a bridge between the two.

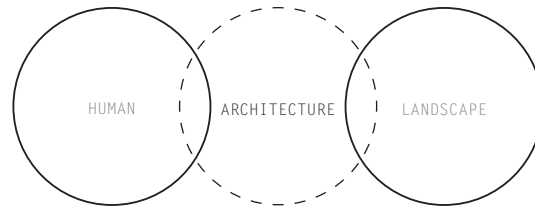


Diagram by author.

This thesis will explore the existing relationships between humans and the natural world, and the ways in which architecture continues to inform them. The first Part will investigate definitions of architecture as mediator, as facilitator of human experience, as a “bridge” to the world. Part 2 will unearth the current situation, which, arguably, is marked by an ongoing disconnect between humans and the surrounding world, or *landscape*. By tracing patterns of collective thought and culture, and their architectural manifestations through time, Part 3 will attempt to elucidate the current situation. It will explore the ongoing, shifting relationship between the human and the landscape through architecture, identifying existing strategies and their implications for situating oneself in the world. The final section will theorize methods for effectively reconnecting the human with the world, or landscape - stepping into territories of land art for precedent.

This thesis aspires to reveal the role of architecture in establishing our relationship to the world. It recognizes the intrinsic human connection to the landscape, and explores architectural strategies for mediating this relationship. By engaging the human and the landscape as active participants, architecture can build stronger relationships between the two, elevating the human experience and heightening our connection to the world.

“At the same time that architecture makes us aware of the depth of the earth, it makes us dream of levitation and flight.”

Juhani Pallasmaa

1. Heidegger, Martin. *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*. 354.

2. Heidegger, Martin. *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*. 354.

3. Sharr, Adam. *Heidegger for Architects*. New York, NY and London, England: Routledge, 2007. 49.

4. “Place” and “placeslessness” are terms that have become prominent in architectural discourse. Attributed to figures such as Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte, “placemaking” refers to design strategies that assume social and cultural values as central elements, promoting participatory design toward a sense of shared ownership over spaces. (pps.org) “Place” is essentially a human relationship to a particular space, developed through experience and solidified by memory. It is “the concretization of space,” or “the identification of place” (Sharr, Adam, 52-53). “Placelessness” is the opposite: it is “a lack of human identification with a place...the landscape’s loss of identity” (Sullivan, David. “Paradise Lost”, 2013. p 34. https://issuu.com/davidb4sullivan/docs/d_sullivan_finaldoc_reduced).

5. Sharr, Adam. *Heidegger for Architects*. 49.

6. Pallasmaa, Juhani. “An Architecture of the Seven Senses.” *Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture*. San Francisco, CA: William Stout Publishers, 1994. 37.

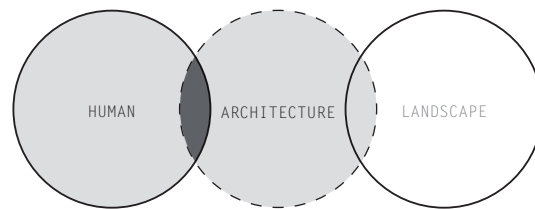


Stegastein Viewing Platform. Todd Saunders and Tommie Wilhelmson. Aurlandsfjellet, Norwegian National Tourist Route. Completed 2006. Image source: <http://abcnews.go.com/images/Travel/>

01 | ARCHITECTURE AND HUMAN EXPERIENCE

“...only architecture can simultaneously awaken all the senses...”¹

Steven Holl



- 1 How do humans relate to or experience architecture?
- 2 What are the tools by which architecture engages the human?
- 3 How can these tools be used to most fully engage the human in architectural experience?

Architecture has the opportunity to engage the human through all of the senses. The positioning of architecture in relation to the human body - as space, as shelter, as bridge - automatically sets up an intimate, active relationship between the two. Architecture is the shaping of space and materials in relation to the human. Its materials are of the earth, existing on the earth, and experienced by the human. They are subject to time, material properties, and human perception.

Architecture is not a static object, but an active human experience.

Phenomenologists like Martin Heidegger, Juhani Pallasmaa, and Steven Holl define architecture in this way. Quoting the Spanish writer Jorge Luis Borges, Pallasmaa reminds his readers that “The taste of the apple...lies in the contact of the fruit with the palette, not in the fruit itself.”² The object does not exist outside of the human experience, or perception, of it. Questions of ontology are raised in architectural discourse. People find various solutions, and thus various definitions of architecture and its role.

Foregoing questions of inherent “life” or “being” in objects outside of the human³, this thesis aligns with phenomenal thought, in that architecture is the creation of space for humans to dwell, and thus its prerogative lies in the shaping of this human experience. Architecture is the physical manifestation of our needs and desires for existing in the world. It is the intentional act of shaping experience. As such, it has a powerful role in facilitating our experience of, and relationship to, the world.

Architecture situates humans in the world.

- 1 How do humans relate to or experience architecture?
- 2 **What are the tools by which architecture engages the human?**
- 3 How can these tools be used to most fully engage the human in architectural experience?

Architecture is experienced by both the body and the mind: it is at once physically and mentally engaging.

Physical Experience

“Architecture, more fully than other art forms, engages the immediacy of our sensory perceptions. The passage of time; light, shadow and transparency; color phenomena, texture, material and detail all participate in the complete experience of architecture.”⁴

Architecture crafts sensory experience. The tools of architecture are time, space, light, sound, material and scale, in relation to the human body and its perceptual devices. Architecture engages the human through these tools. It is the interaction and simultaneity of these embodied experiences that leads to the power of architecture in affecting the human.

Imaginative Experience

Architecture is subject not only to natural processes and physical properties of the world, but also to veils of human perception and thought. It intersects with a specific moments, feelings, or passing thoughts - “haeccities”⁵ - and is also contingent upon individual memories or associations. Peter Zumthor writes of his childhood memories of his aunt’s kitchen, which continue to inform his ways of perceiving:

“...the small hexagonal tiles of the floor...were hard and unyielding under my feet, and a smell of oil paint issued from the kitchen cupboard. ...The atmosphere of this room is insolubly linked with my idea of a kitchen.”⁶

The experience of architecture persists through memory, and colors our ensuing perception. As it is mentally perceived in this way, it can also exist prior to physical engagement with it:

“There is an inherent suggestion of action in images of architecture, the moment of active encounter or a promise of use and purpose.”⁷

When we see a threshold, we mentally project ourselves through it. This is often the first act of architectural experience - the first moment of engagement. Martin Heidegger considers this “imaginative dwelling” to be as valid a mode of experience as the physical experience itself. He writes:

“...imaginary places, lost places or places not yet visited might be as immediate as actual tangible locations. Those places are still identified according to the same framework, through the mind engaging with the world.”⁸

Architecture, then, requires the physical and imaginative engagement of the human - it is equally embodied and interpreted. It engages humans through our sensory, perceptual devices as well as our memories and ways of thinking.

Architecture creates human relationships to spaces, developed through experience and solidified by memory.

- 1 How do humans relate to or experience architecture?
- 2 What are the tools by which architecture engages the human?
- 3 **How can these tools be used to most fully engage the human in architectural experience?**

Juhani Pallasmaa asserts that the “task of architecture is to create embodied existential metaphors that concretize and structure man’s being in the world.”⁹ Recognizing that humans experience architecture both physically, through sensory perception, and mentally, through imaginative projection or memory, the most powerful architecture must engage both.

As described by Heidegger’s bridge, architecture places the human in the world. At its best, it makes people aware of their position in this arrangement. He writes:

“...the bridge might occasionally prompt people to think about being. It has the latent potential to remind people about the fundamental power of their existence in the world.”¹⁰

Architecture, by situating humans in specific relation to the world and its sensory components, has the opportunity to alter our ways of perceiving both the world and ourselves. It can make us aware of our being, and thus elevate our lived experience.

1. Holl, Steven. *Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture*. 41.

2. Pallasmaa, Juhani. “An Architecture of the Seven Senses.” *Questions of Perception*. 37.

3. “OOO”, or Object-Oriented Ontology is a relatively recent idea challenging the phenomenal notion that objects only exist through human perception. Graham Harmon is the leading figure of OOO, which asserts that every nonhuman object exists autonomously, in that it affects perception of it. Objects are active, rather than passive, entities.

4. Holl, Steven. *Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture*. 40.

5. “temporal moments, episodic contrasts, or *haecceities* [are] individual, singular events that intersect with the places and things where they occur.” (Meyer, Elizabeth. “Site Citations” *Site Matters*. 111.)

6. Zumthor, Peter. “A Way of Looking at Things” *Thinking Architecture*. Lecture from SCI-ARC, 1988. p 7.

7. Pallasmaa, Juhani. “An Architecture of the Seven Senses.” *Questions of Perception*. 35.

8. Sharr, Adam. *Heidegger for Architects*. 64.

9. Pallasmaa, Juhani. “An Architecture of the Seven Senses.” *Questions of Perception*. 37.

10. Sharr, Adam. *Heidegger for Architects*. 50.



Tippet Rise Art Center. Ensemble Studio. Fishtail, Montana. 2015. Image source: http://images.adsttc.com/media/images/5789/0b10/e58e/ce2b/2200/003d/large_jpg/_DSC2209.jpg?1468599047

02 | A GROWING DISCONNECT



Architecture mediates the relationship between humans and the landscape. In this role, it has the ability to deny, rather than celebrate this relationship.

Much of the built environment is characterized by a hard line between inside and outside. Largely due to cultural values, buildings have tended toward a flatness, an objectivity, a lack of engagement with both the human and with what exists beyond its walls.

Norwegian architect and theorist Christian Norberg-Schulz describes the concept of “flatscapes.” Flatscapes are placeless landscapes, “lacking intentional depth, mediocre experience of place and lacking diversity in the landscape and significant places.”¹ Flatscapes have emerged and come to dominate the American landscape. The built environment has been shaped by driving ideals of efficiency, economy, and democracy. Ian McHarg warns of this in his 1969 book, *Design with Nature*. He writes that the world is built upon economics:

“...money is our measure...convenience its cohort...short term its span.”²

These values have produced buildings that do not relate to the human in scale or sensory perception (Figure 1), that value efficiency over experience (Figure 2), and that often fail to consider the spaces between buildings (Figure 3) - the full experience of architecture, from sighting to entry.

Rebecca Solnit describes the current world as a series of disconnected interiors - buildings and cars alike - “built up against [the world].”³

The built environment today is marked by a disconnected, disembodied experience.

“...a technological world fueled by an obsession to close (or ignore) the space between the body and the world, fulfilling all desires - a utopia of functionalism - and making a disembodied humanity ‘whole’ with a fully ‘constructed’ environment.”⁴

Perez-Gomez and Pelletier

1. Sullivan, David. “Paradise Lost”, 2013. p 34. https://issuu.com/davidb4sullivan/docs/d_sullivan_finaldoc_reduced.

2. McHarg, Ian. *Design with Nature*. 25.

3. Solnit, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2001. 9.

4. Perez-Gomez, Alberto and Louise Pelletier. *Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, First paperback edition, 2000. 11.



Figure 1. "Box stores" offer a democratized experience. The interior (and exterior) experience remains unchanged, regardless of its location. Their scale serves the scale of mass production and the car, rather than the human. Hard surfaces - concrete, asphalt, and synthetic materials - further detach the human from the place they inhabit. Image source: <http://www.airphotona.com/stockimg/images/15694.jpg>

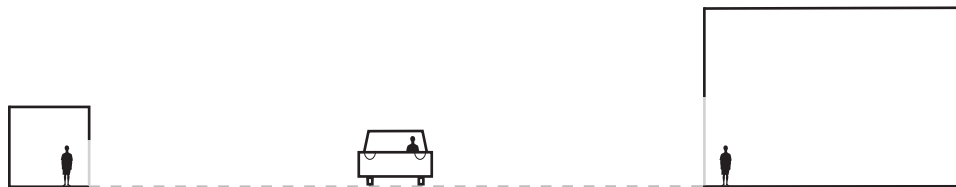
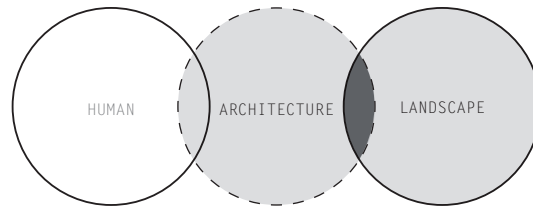


Figure 3. "Box Store Promenade" - A series of disconnected interiors. Diagram by author.



Figure 2. The double-loaded corridor sacrifices sunlight, ventilation, and view in service of an idea of spatial "efficiency". Image source: <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/44/6f/>

03 | INSIDE AND OUTSIDE, OVER TIME



How did we come to this disconnect?

Our collective understanding of the natural world has been reinforced by architectural strategies which have emerged from cultural values. An investigation into the lineage of American values, and their architectural manifestations over time, might reveal insight into the existing relationships between the human and the landscape, via architecture.

Dominion over Nature

"This is the image of the anthropomorphic, anthropocentric man; he seeks not unity with nature but conquest. ...If nature receives attention, then it is only for the purpose of conquest, or even better, exploitation."

Ian McHarg



Figure 1: Indiana farmland, bird's eye view: A product of the Jeffersonian Grid, which, passed through Federal ordinances in the 18th century, imposed the rational system of the grid (derived from the works of Palladio) to organize future settlements on the land of the Western United States. Image source: <http://architizer.com/blog/the-largest-landscape-the-grid-of-american-agriculture/>

Ian McHarg expresses disdain for the current relationship between man and nature, arguing against the subjugated position of the landscape. Landscape is not a “decorative backdrop for human play”², but rather something much more vital to our physical and spiritual existence. McHarg asserts that, as a fault, humans seek conquest over nature.

Robin Dripps considers the Renaissance to be the foundation of man’s separation from nature. She claims that the “theoretical opposition separating natural and human systems”³ began during this time. In addition to controlled garden spaces, this is apparent in a building’s relationship to the ground plane: detached from, or rising above the ground on a plinth. (Figure 2) The propagation of this sentiment can be found in the architectural trends of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, and beyond to Modernist ideals. *Prendre parti*, a motivation for architecture to “take a stand, unencumbered by attachments that might compromise formal authority”⁴ ascended as the primary way of designing in the Beaux Arts pedagogy. It “emphasized the independence of the building from its physical, political and environmental context”⁵ in contrast to its less popular antithesis, *tirer parti*. The impact of this methodology extended far beyond the school in Paris, influencing concurrent and subsequent schools of thought. Modernists, like Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier, for example, also sought a control over the landscape, detaching their buildings from the ground plane. (Figures 3,4) The concept of *tabula rasa* advocated for a clean slate, in lieu of a complex site, on which a building constructed by geometric orders would sit, in a state of static perfection.

McHarg attaches our desire to control the landscape to a more distant past, describing the “Western attitude” as rooted in monotheism:

*“The great western religions born of monotheism have been the major source of our moral attitudes. It is from them that we have developed the preoccupation with the uniqueness of man, with justice and compassion.”*⁶

He traces this idea of the “uniqueness of man” to the creation myths of Judaism and Christianity, which assert man’s dominion over nature as a God-given right. This primacy of man is further evidenced by theories of the geocentric universe. McHarg writes, “The Inquisition was so outraged by doubt cast upon the primacy of man and his planet that Galileo was required to rescind his certainty that the earth revolved around the sun.”⁷

Perhaps as early as the first widespread monotheistic religions, the idea of human order in contrast to, and dominating, nature emerged. This produced a growing distinction between human space and natural space - inside and outside. With built devices such as the walled garden and the plinth, we have found ways to attempt control over the landscape.

1. McHarg, Ian L. “The Plight.” *Design with Nature*. 24.

2. McHarg, Ian L. “The Plight.” *Design with Nature*. 19.

3. Dripps, Robin. “Groundwork.” 62.

4. Dripps, Robin. “Groundwork.” 75.

5. Dripps, Robin. “Groundwork.” 75.

6, 7. McHarg, Ian L. “The Plight.” *Design with Nature*. 26.



Figure 2: Claude Nicholas Ledoux, projective architectural design (unbuilt). 18th century.
The prominent plinth upon which this building sits removes it from the ground plane and any concerns or complexities it may bring.



Figure 3: Villa Savoye, Le Corbusier, 1929



Figure 4: Farnsworth House, Mies van der Rohe, 1946-51
These two Modernist projects foster a similarly detached relationship to the ground plane. Instead of sitting atop a heavy plinth, they are suspended above the ground by thin piloti - minimally intervening or acknowledging the site.



Figure: Central Park, New York. Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux. "The first landscaped public park" (<http://centralpark.org/history-of-central-park/>), which opened to the public in 1859. The park covers 700 acres of land. It is a controlled landscape - a massive version of a "walled garden" - existing only in the space designated by human planning efforts.

The Primacy of Vision

"The eye is the sense of separation and distance, whereas touch is the sense of nearness, intimacy and affection."¹

Juhani Pallasmaa

The value of vision over the other senses has long been affixed in Western culture. During the Western Renaissance, a hierarchy was assigned to the five human senses, recognizing vision as the highest, and touch as the lowest.² *Theoria*, the Greek word for contemplation, semantically equates thinking and seeing. It is the root word for "theory" in the English language, and is derived from the Latin word meaning "to see."³ Fourth-century philosophers like Plato and Aristotle considered their role as that of the "seer, detached from the physical and social world while he contemplates the verities."⁴ Descartes renewed this concept in the 16th century, when he said "*cogito ergo sum*": "I think therefore, I am." This "spectator theory of knowledge,"⁵ which validated vision as a vehicle of knowledge, has impacted Western thinking through the value of visual perception. Architecturally, it perhaps first existed in the Greek theater:

"Greek tragedy implicitly separated the orchestra or stage from the spectators in the amphitheater, signaling the transformation from a world of fully embodied participation in rituals...to a world in which the spectator participated vicariously through vision..."⁶

The more recent architectural condition has been, on several occasions, accused of privileging symbolism - communicative visible elements - over space. In *Learning from Las Vegas*, Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi conduct an in-depth investigation of the American vernacular landscape, using Las Vegas, Nevada as a case study. They find:

"... it is an architecture of communication over space; communication dominates space as an element in the architecture and in the landscape."⁷

The opulence of signage, in service of communication, both cultural and practical, favors the engagement of the eye over that of the body. This is further enforced by the automobile culture of Las Vegas, and America at large. The commercial highway strip, lined with billboards and buildings secondary to their signage, offers an exclusively visual experience, from the seat of a car (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Image from *Learning from Las Vegas*. Image source: <http://www.gizmoweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/las-vegas-car-view-of-strip-14-1024x657.jpg>

Even in the rhetoric of Brown and Venturi in *Learning from Las Vegas*, the emphasis on looking as a way of knowing becomes clear. They challenge the architect to “take a positive, non-chip-on-the-shoulder view” in examining Las Vegas; they claim that “architects are out of the habit of *looking* non judgmentally.” These statements assert the deeply ingrained practice of *theoria*, or using vision as a mode of understanding, in Western traditions.

1. Pallasmaa, Juhani. “An Architecture of the Seven Senses.” *Questions of Perception*. 34.

2. Pallasmaa, Juhani. “An Architecture of the Seven Senses.” *Questions of Perception*. 29.

3. http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=theoria

4. Nightingale, Andrea Wilson. *Spectacles of Truth in Classical Greek Philosophy: Theoria in its Cultural Context*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2004. 7.

5. Nightingale, Andrea Wilson. *Spectacles of Truth in Classical Greek Philosophy*. 7-8.

6. Perez-Gomez, Alberto and Louise Pelletier. *Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge*. 10.

7. Venturi, Robert, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour. *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1977. 8.

Vision and Landscape

In Sandy Isenstadt's article "Four Views, Three of Them through Glass", she describes the link between vision and landscape in American culture. She traces the changing role of the window view in the American home, as a medium for experiencing the landscape. In the post-war American home, the window view surpassed the hearth as the central element, turning the emphasis from interiority to exteriority. The decreasing necessity of the hearth, the increasing availability of glass as a building material, and the widely-disseminated suburban image of a "private landscape view"¹ facilitated this change.

"The American landscape became modern not through any particular formal motifs but by being seen routinely through glass."²

As the production of plate-glass advanced in the late 19th century, and glass was becoming more common in the home, architects began experimenting with its capabilities. Large windows in the home, unbroken by panes, faced some opposition as they brought into question the privacy and interiority of a domestic space.³ But by the 1930s, with the establishment of the American International Style after Philip Johnson's 1932 Exhibit at the MoMA, the window-wall was more widely accepted. Glass was better-received as "the miracle material of the Depression."⁴ Once large windows were established in the American home, the emphasis of the home shifted wholeheartedly toward the exterior, and homes were constructed with the logic of the view.

"The glass wall itself was valued less as a visible sign of the technical mastery of new materials and construction methods, as it had been for modernists in the 1920s, than as a technologically facilitated access to nature, which was conceived as a deep and unpopulated vista."⁵

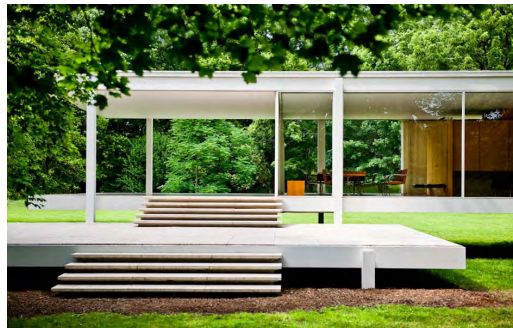


Figure 2: Farnsworth House, Mies van der Rohe, 1946-51
See Footnote 6.



Figure 3: Glass House, Philip Johnson, 1949

The home was constructed in service of the view. Through site-planning and transparency, postwar housing aimed for spatial continuity via an unmediated relationship to the outdoors.⁷ (Figures 2,3) With America's national heritage of pioneering the unbridled landscape, glass was seen as a "means to democratize the experience of nature".⁸ The home extended outward, responding to the American desire to "see out".⁹

Isenstadt asserts that the growing prominence of the view in the American home facilitated a "logic of looking,"¹⁰ which later shifted toward the television. Both the window view and the television screen, she points out, require a sedentary observer. "Views from windows, were, like paintings, fixed, and so lacked the variety and surprise that accumulate when walking."¹¹ The car, then, enabled the experience of moving through the landscape from a position of stasis, uniting ideals of Picturesque garden strolls with the fixed window view. (Figure 4) The static view became a cultural fixture, further disengaging the subject from the object, the spectator from the spectacle, the human from the landscape. It objectified the landscape via this separation.



Figure 4: Blue Ridge Parkway. Stanley W. Abbot. Virginia and North Carolina. Constructed 1933-1967.
Image source: <http://www.southeastdiscovery.com/myimages/blue-ridge-parkway-near-burnsville-nc.jpg>

The "logic of looking" described by Isenstadt emerged through changing technologies and social conditions, and ultimately became embedded in a collective American culture. The value of the view entered the domain of dwelling, the most intimate spatial sphere, where it shaped our relationship to landscape through vision. (Figures 5, 6)

"...the long diffusion of picturesque ideals that helped determine the form of American suburbs did not just change the look of the landscape; it changed how we look at landscape."¹²

From its introduction through the classical Greek concept of *theoria*, which privileged vision over other senses, the dominant role of sight has permeated Western culture. The primacy of the view has been reinforced through the built environment - from the Greek theater, to the commercial strip, to the landscape view - informing a collective value of visual perception.



Figures 5,6. *Slow House*, by Diller Scofidio + Renfro.

Described by the architect as “a passage...from a door to a window,”¹³ the design for this unbuilt work was generated by the dominion of the landscape view. The promenade, beginning with an approach in a car, proceeds upon entry through an expanding corridor that culminates in a fully-glazed window-wall overlooking the ocean. A television, mounted in front of the window, shows recorded views of the landscape, and can be controlled to show different seasons or weather conditions when desired. This project presents the landscape view as a prized commodity. The juxtaposition of the window and the digital screen acknowledges their increasing indistinguishability; it asserts their equal value in offering visual access to the landscape, or an image of the landscape. It objectifies the landscape. The project also brings the automobile into this conversation of view: the promenade carries the human from one window/screen view (the car’s windshield) to another (the landscape view through glass, and also through digital projection). In service of the view, the *Slow House* employs strategies of vision and promenade. It offers a sequence of three sensorially-deprived, visual landscape experiences.

1, 2. Isenstadt, Sandy. “Four Views, Three of Them through Glass.” *Sites Unseen*. 214.

3. Isenstadt, Sandy. “Four Views, Three of Them through Glass.” *Sites Unseen*. 218-219.

4. Isenstadt, Sandy. “Four Views, Three of Them through Glass.” *Sites Unseen*. 225.

5. Isenstadt, Sandy. “Four Views, Three of Them through Glass.” *Sites Unseen*. 226.

6. From the 1948 Marston Fitch article: “architecture, though visually opening to the landscape, increases the gap between man and nature by its ‘increasingly precise and complete control of climate and habitat indoors.’” (Meyer, Elizabeth, *Site Citations*, p. 115).

7, 8. Isenstadt, Sandy. “Four Views, Three of Them through Glass.” *Sites Unseen*. 226.

9. Isenstadt, Sandy. “Four Views, Three of Them through Glass.” *Sites Unseen*. 220.

10. Isenstadt, Sandy. “Four Views, Three of Them through Glass.” *Sites Unseen*. 231.

11. Isenstadt, Sandy. “Four Views, Three of Them through Glass.” *Sites Unseen*. 234.

12. Isenstadt, Sandy. “Four Views, Three of Them through Glass.” *Sites Unseen*. 240.

13. <http://www.architectmagazine.com/project-gallery/slow-house>

The Value of Distance

In phenomenal thought, the problem with visual perception is the distance it engenders. It is “the cool and distant realm of vision.”¹

The unaided human eye can see a distance of 2.9 miles before the horizon terminates the view.² Vision is the perceptual device that travels the greatest distance. This distance, culturally integral to the act of looking, has also informed our tendencies in perceiving the world and constructing space.

The Greek notion of *theoria* not only elevated the role of vision in Western culture and intellect, but also instilled this value of distance. In Greek theater, it was the distance between the spectator and the stage that enforced the act of viewing. Despite physical separation, the viewer could still participate, with sight. This validated detachment as a mode of understanding.

“This distance has marked Western civilization...It made reflective thought, authorship, and metaphysics possible.”³

The value of distance can also be traced through traditions of art, where distance and landscape became attached. Western landscape paintings, again, frame natural *vistas* - views from a distance. They assert value upon the expansive view, the omniscient view. Sandy Isenstadt explains that “nature” in the modern American home, was defined as “a deep and unpopulated vista”.⁴ “Deep” suggests distance — depth through space; “unpopulated” suggests a desire for a landscape void of human presence. Together, they extinguish any need to engage beyond the static, removed window view. Isenstadt also writes about the commodification of the view, as real estate appraisals eventually attached economic value to homes sited with a generous view.⁵ A “valuable view” in this case specifically meant a vista: hilltop homes proffered the greatest value because they afforded distant views. The human was able to look out upon the “landscape” - an image, separated from them entirely, except by vision.

Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan considers distance, for Americans, to imply the future, time ahead:

“...future-oriented Americans make a fetish of views. A guest who walks into his host’s house almost automatically drifts to the window to admire what lies outside the house, to admire - in other words - his host’s prospects... In our time, the desire for a picture window and for the expansive view suggests a need not only to command space but to see into the future and thus command time.”⁶

Architecture has also undergone a distancing from the landscape via representational devices. Methods of drawing reinforced a separation from the world by reducing it to ordered systems.

Cartesian geometry, invented in the 17th century by Renee Descartes, established a way of perceiving the world through X-, Y- and Z- planes, unrelated to any actual earthen elements. In the 18th century, Gaspard Monge translated this into “descriptive geometry”, which allowed the projection of three-dimensional objects onto a two-dimensional plane. Monge introduced this practice to the Ecole Polytechnique in Paris, where it became established and disseminated as a mode of architectural representation.⁷

The emergence of perspective drawing during the Renaissance also established a separation between the human and the natural world. In the fifteenth century, mirrors were used to flatten the world in order to perceive it as a rational image, to “discover’ a geometric order in the visual world.”⁸ Painters and architects both used the mirror as a perceptive tool. By the seventeenth century, perspective drawing became a generative device for architects. Architects began to design in perspective, to project buildings into the imagined, rationally-constructed space of perspective. According to Perez-Gomez and Pelletier,

“This effectively shifted the emphasis of the architectural task away from the traditional construing of symbolic ideas, or the poetic making of buildings, to the making of ‘pictures’ of buildings and theatrical backdrops.”⁹

The rationalization of visual reality through perspectival and orthographic drawing has dominated Western representation and architecture. This not only affected our way of seeing the world and our inclination toward this type of order, but also became integral to our process of shaping the built environment, and thus distanced us from our experience of the world.

Perspectival representation hinges on a single, static vantage point. It ignores the impact of binocular vision, visual distortion, and the viewer’s dynamic movement relative to objects in space. It removes the viewer’s participation in engaging with world. It presents a flattened, altered image of the world, from a distance, and sets this up as a value in the Western way of seeing.

1. Pallasmaa, Juhani. “An Architecture of the Seven Senses.” *Questions of Perception*. 29.

2. http://www.slate.com/blogs/bad_astronomy/2009/01/15/how_far_away_is_the_horizon.html

3. Perez-Gomez, Alberto and Louise Pelletier. *Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge*. 10.

4. Isenstadt, Sandy. “Four Views, Three of Them through Glass.” *Sites Unseen*. 226.

5. Isenstadt, Sandy. “Four Views, Three of Them through Glass.” *Sites Unseen*. 230.

6. Stefanovic, Ingrid Leman. “Temporality and Architecture: A Phenomenological Reading of Built Form.” *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*, Vol. 11, No. 3. pp. 211-225. Locke Science Publishing Company, Inc, 1994. Accessed August 9, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43029125>. 216.

7. Ockman, Joan. *Architecture School: Three Centuries of Educating Architects in North America*. Washington, DC: MIT Press, 2012.

8. Perez-Gomez, Alberto and Louise Pelletier. *Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge*. 25.

9. Perez-Gomez, Alberto and Louise Pelletier. *Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge*. 74.

The ways in which humans physically and intellectually relate to the landscape are informed by cultural and architectural means. Investigating the lineage of Western society, we find a succession of experiences that have influenced the current situation. American culture and architecture have evolved from this precedent of human dominion over nature, the primacy of vision, and the distancing or separation from lived experience and the natural world.

We assume that architecture and the landscape - inside and outside - are opposing entities, and that architecture, the human domain, should subjugate and protect from the landscape. Consequently, the world has been constructed as a series of interiors, climatically sealed from the unpredictable outdoors. The value of *being in the world*, of experiencing the landscape, has been diminished by replicable, transferrable experiences, which exist interchangeably in either 2- or 3- dimensions.

How can architecture, as the shaping of lived experience, re-define the relationships between the human and the landscape?

By recognizing these histories, we are better suited to intervene.



Claude Monet. "Poppies" 1873.

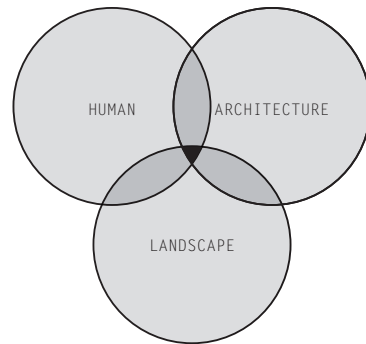
Image source: <https://byronsmuse.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/1873-claude-monet-poppies-2.jpg>

“What about other aspects, such as the effect of early morning light on undulating surfaces? Or consideration for the emergence of a wildflower color-field that quickly disappears into the background of a meadow?”¹⁰

Elizabeth Meyer

10. Meyer, Elizabeth. “Site Citations.” *Site Matters*. 110-111..

04 | A TOTALITY OF PERCEPTION



Understanding the ways in which humans experience architecture, as well as the ways in which architecture can establish relationships with the landscape, we must now find the points at which these intersect.

Applying tools of embodied and imaginative architectural experience toward an intentional connection with the world, or landscape, can deepen one's relationship to, and experience of, the world. Architecture must simultaneously acknowledge the human, while opening and responding to the landscape. It must listen to each, recognizing both as essential and active participants.

Strategies for Engagement: Ambiguity and Allure

Returning to W.J.T. Mitchell's comment on Christo's Central Park installation, *Gates*, he writes:

*"Sights and sites are memory places that may continue to work on us long after our first...glimpse of them. [In a sight/site] elusiveness and vagueness will elicit a continued 'filling in' by the imagination, an interpolation of memory..."*¹

The power of architectural experience persists through memory. As Mitchell claims, this memory can serve as more than an influential history, or lens, and rather elicit an elongated experience - a continual construction.² The building, or place, is appropriated internally by the human, who continues to dwell there.

Mitchell suggests that, in Christo's *Gates*, it is through "elusiveness" and "vagueness" that this is achieved. It is the ambiguous nature of such places that encourages prolonged dwelling. This ambiguity engages the human mind, through curiosity. It lures and captivates, and through ongoing processes of the mind, gradually reveals itself, or some interpretation.



Collage of Gates, by Christo. 2003. Image source: <http://christojeanneclaude.net/projects/the-gates>
 Project conceived in 1979. In 2005, 7,503 gates were installed for a period of 16 days.

Strategies of seducing the mind can also inform bodily movement. Mitchell describes the active, or immediate (rather than ongoing), experience of *Gates*:

“This formal mirroring of the whole in the part is what arrests and entices the beholder simultaneously, one moment urging the walker to stop at each gate, to use it as a frame for a new vista, to pause and reach up to the saffron veil just high enough for an adult to reach on tiptoe, and then to be propelled onward, to stride through.”³

While the uncertainty of the installation’s function and intention might stimulate both active and retrospective engagement, the spatial, material, and sensory qualities of the gates also serve to engage the human and landscape. Mitchell describes the compulsion to *move through*, to *pause* and view, to *touch* the enticing material. The work simultaneously engages the mind and the body. It compels multi-sensory participation, amplifying a lived moment, which then persists through memory or continual dwelling.

“Always and ever differently the bridge initiates the lingering and hastening ways of men.”⁴

Path and Frame

A path allows one to meander.

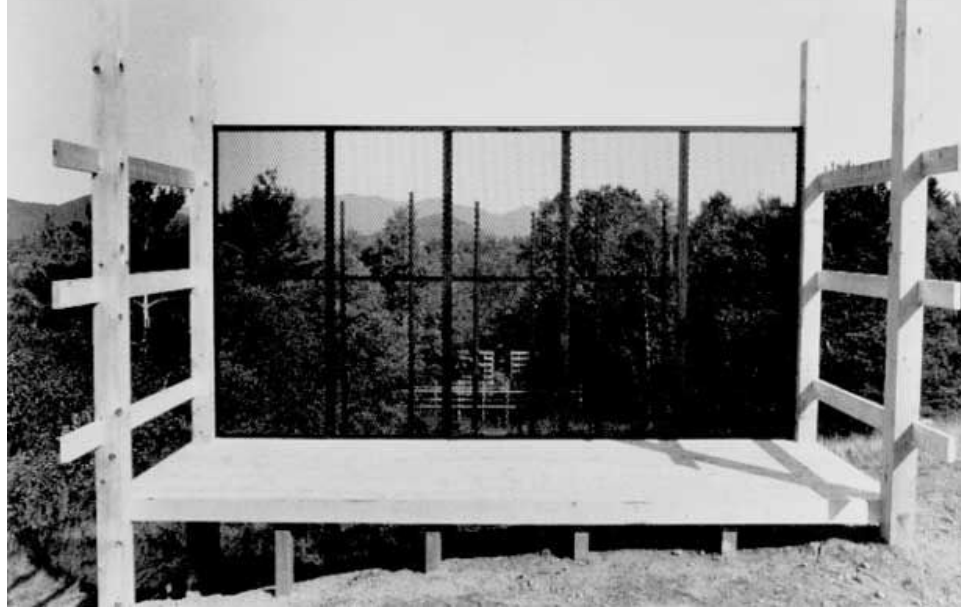
"I like walking because it is slow, and I suspect that the mind, like the feet, works at about three miles an hour. If this is so, then modern life is moving faster than the speed of thought, or thoughtfulness."
Rebecca Solnit

The traditional Japanese tea house is situated in a garden. The garden - *roji*, or "dewy path" - was conceived as a transitional path from the outside world into the "rarefied realm of tea".⁶ Despite often small garden spaces, the path itself could meander in order to extend the promenade: it "was convoluted both physically and psychologically to expand the sense of distance traversed."⁷

In the *roji*, the path is marked by stepping stones⁸ - "an inscription of movement within the garden".⁹ A path, as long as it is physically accessible, can be indicated by a variety of architectural devices. A path is a recognizable projection of movement. Christo's *Gates* mark the path with a series of built frames through which one passes.



Stepping stones in Katsura Imperial Villa. Kyoto, Japan. 17th Century.
Image source: <http://huntingtonblogs.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ishimoto-1.jpg>



"Veiled Landscape." Mary Miss. Lake Placid, NY. 1979.

Image source: <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/45/db/b0/45dbb0e0e5226984418077221f954ae2.jpg>

Mary Miss, an artist of primarily land-based art, employs various strategies to provoke movement. In her *Veiled Landscape* of 1979, she builds layers of frames and screens in the forest, set at different points along a path, which entice participants forward through space. The object, or frame, seen from a distance, encourages movement toward it. Upon arrival, the participant finds that the landscape view within the frame is obscured by a screening device. Each successive "veil" gets closer to revealing an unobscured image of the landscape.⁹ Sighting, projection, and anticipation, through the isolating device of a frame, move the human through this spatial experience.



A common thread among these manifestations of *path* is a certain amount of understanding, or openness, in the experience. Stepping stones, delicate frames, and objects placed across a visible procession, all allow the human to move along these pathways, while maintaining a connection to a larger scope. Movement is a choice, and is clearly situated in some grander context. This openness allows the human to move freely, on their own time, toward a destination. It connects discreet experiences into a continuous whole, and it situates the human relative to the world - like Heidegger's bridge.¹⁰ To meander is "to wander at random; to proceed aimlessly."¹¹ A path, designated by distant visual cues or by patterns on the ground, allows the human to exist at ease in the world and connect with it more fully.

"The random, the unscreened, allows you to find what you don't know you are looking for, and you don't know a place until it surprises you."¹²



The Forking Paths. Temporary installation by Christo. Lake Iseo, Italy. 2016.
Image source: <http://christojeanneclaude.net/projects/the-floating-piers#V-tClGVyTww>

Hidden Qualities

Christo's *Gates* make visible the wind. The Saffron fabric, in contrast to its rigid framework, fluctuates and moves with the breeze. It is a visible, tactile record of a natural, temporal, *intangible* element. It highlights something shifting and otherwise unseen.

Architecture can employ strategies that engage the human through “nonvisual”¹³ modes of sensory perception, in relation to the landscape. The natural world is ever-changing. Morning light falls differently upon surfaces than afternoon light. The scent and touch of the air changes from Spring to Summer. The sound of birds and insects at night becomes more pronounced as the days grow longer.

Jens Jensen, an early-20th century landscape architect, designed landscapes with their sensory, temporal qualities in mind. For example, he “planted red maples and sumac between a terrace and the setting sun to capture the intense glow of their back-lit autumn leaves” and he “noted the deep shadows cast by a grove of red cedars in moonlight.”¹⁴ By paying attention to the rise and fall of the sun, and the passage of time through the seasons, Jensen brought these phenomena to the forefront of human experience, forging a deeper relationship between the human and the world.

Capturing and distilling ephemeral qualities of the landscape in phenomenological ways, makes the human more acutely aware of them.

Against Dominion, Vision, and Distance

The strategies described above operate in contrast to the current, disconnected ways of relating to the landscape. Rather than asserting dominion over the natural world, they work in conversation with it, observing and highlighting its latent qualities. Instead of vying for a purely visual experience, they attempt to create a multi-sensory one. In lieu of distant, detached participation, they encourage active engagement with the landscape. A static view becomes a dynamic promenade.

Architecture, as path, frame, or isolated sensory quality, observes and reveals the landscape to the human. It serves as a bridge, activating and strengthening connections. Architecture becomes a catalyst to new ways of perceiving the world.

1. Mitchell, W.J.T. “Landscapes and Invisibility,” in *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision*, 40-41.

2. See Heidegger’s “imaginative dwelling” on page 23 of this document - citation 8.

3. Mitchell, W.J.T. “Landscapes and Invisibility,” in *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision*, 41-42.

4. Sharr, Adam. *Heidegger for Architects*. 47.

5. Solnit, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. 10.

6, 7. Treib, Marc. “Moving the Eye.” *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision*. 84.

8. The stepping stone “was first used as a functional vehicle for keeping the foot from the potentially hazardous earthen surface. Furthermore, a body wrapped tightly in a kimono may take a step barely one foot in length...” (Treib, 84)

9. Treib, Marc. “Moving the Eye.” *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision*. 84.

10. marymiss.com

11. See page 18: “[The bridge] allows people to understand the world around them in relation to it.”

12. Solnit, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. 11.

13, 14. Meyer, Elizabeth. “Site Citations,” *Sites Unseen*. 111.



Serpentine Pavilion. Herzog & de Meuron and Ai Wei Wei. Hyde Park, London. 2012.. Images from Google.



"Splitting" Installation and photo-joiner representations. Gordon Matta-Clark. 1974. Images from Google.



Buildings for the Allmannajuvet zinc mines. Norwegian Tourist route. Peter Zumthor. 2016. Images from Dezeen.

CONCLUSIONS

Architecture, the shaping of space and experience, facilitates the act of *being* in the world. Its walls, windows, and pathways can deny or allow access to the landscape. The intimate ways in which humans engage with architecture - through the perceptual devices of the body as well as the intellectual and imaginative habits of the mind - situate architecture in a position to affect human experience on many levels.

Both the human and the landscape are multi-layered, dynamic constructs. Architecture, situated between the two, must respond to the depth and nuance of each, as well as their interaction.

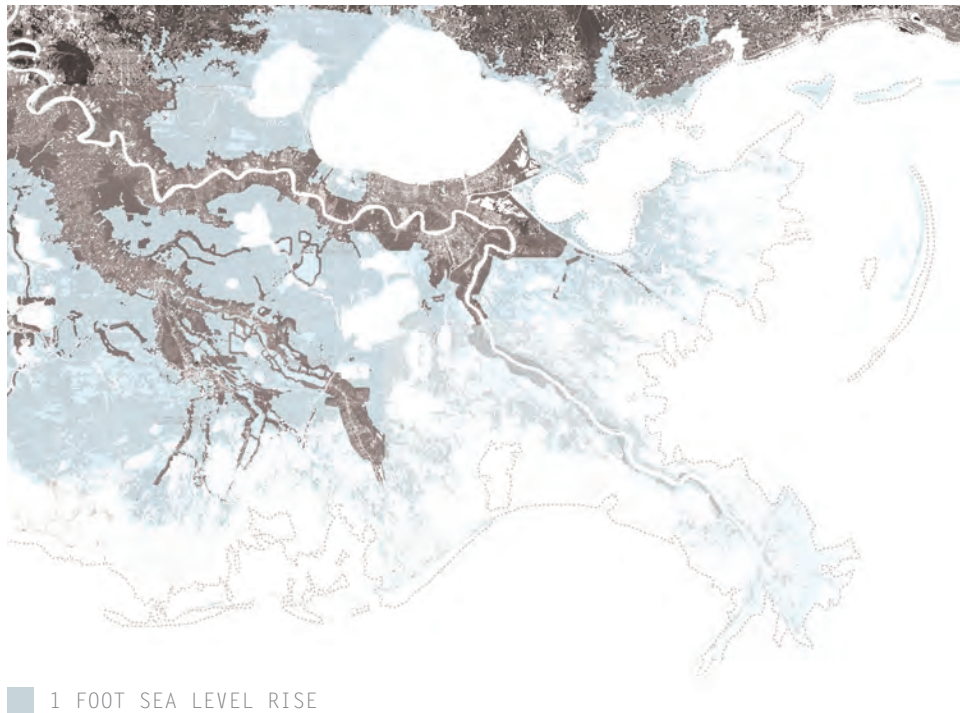
By investigating common perceptions of the role of architecture, as well as the role of landscape, in relation to the human, we find a disconnect. Architecture is considered to be solid, static, and certain - the opposite of the uncertain landscape. Walls - both opaque and transparent, divide the two, and isolate the human in a detached environment.

By employing architectural devices and strategies toward a dynamic, phenomenal human experience, perhaps we can bridge this divide and deepen the connection between the human and the world in which we live.

SITE SELECTION + PROGRAM

SITE SELECTION | *The Lower Mississippi*

This history of attempted control over the river and its deltaic land has led to a city separated from its natural landscape. Shared attitudes of fear, marked by force toward the river are built into the landscape and daily lives of its inhabitants. Levees, underground canals, and impervious surfaces create visual and physical barriers between humans and the natural landscape. As sea levels rise and the collared, thirsty land subsides, this fear and separation grows.



Ways of perceiving the landscape continue to shape it by influencing the actions and attitudes toward it. In a landscape of conflict, forging lost connections between natural and human forces is imperative in order to alter such perceptions, and the future of the Lower Mississippi.

Diagram by author. Underlay: Google Earth. Source: <https://coast.noaa.gov/slr/>

“The serious ecological degradation in today’s urban environment is largely due to this separation and disinterestedness.”¹

Kongjian Yu



Figure 1: 17th Street Canal, New Orleans.

1. Yu, Kongjian. *Thinking the Contemporary Landscape*, pp. 182.

Figure 1: <http://atlengthmag.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/CB07.jpg>

Diagrams by Author. Underlay: Google Earth. Content Source: Petrochemical America, pp. 142-143, 160-161.

SITE SELECTION | *Urban Context*



LANDSCAPE QUALITY | URBAN CONTRAST

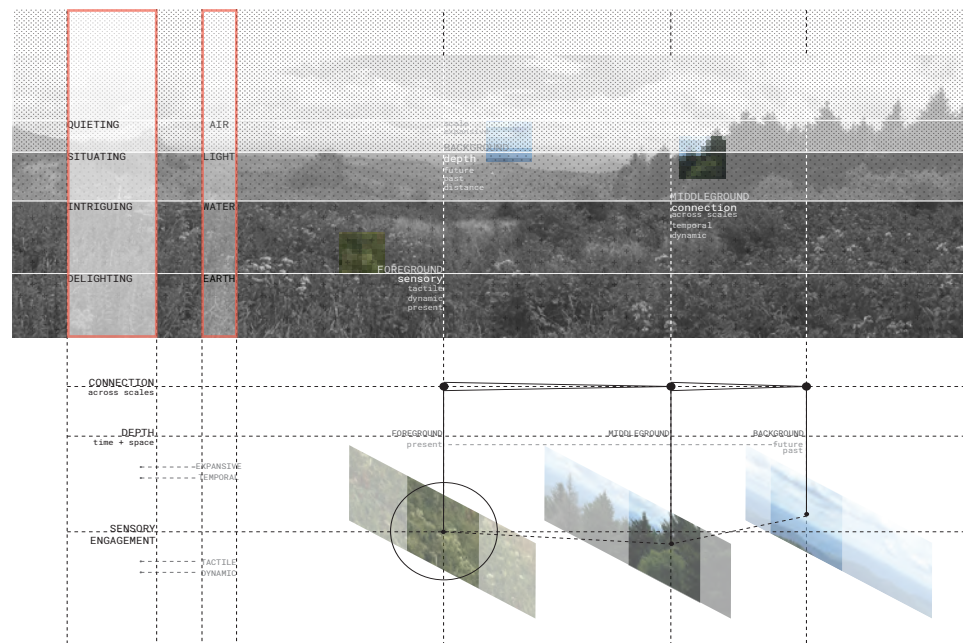
- 1 situate | removed, forgotten
- 2 intrigue | repetitive, flat
- 3 delight | mundane, ubiquitous
- 4 quiet | exposed, over-stimulating

Physical model + diagram by author.

SITE CRITERIA | *Landscape Qualities*

The sites are chosen from New Orleans' most urban context, the Central Business District (CBD). Qualities extracted from the experience of the landscape drive the site selection, locating places are bereft of these qualities:

Situating, Intriguing, Delighting, Quieting.



Each site is paired with a landscape “material” -

Air, Earth, Water, or Light

- materials that exist on each site, but often obscured or unnoticed.

The interventions seek to call attention to the natural world through experiential qualities derived from the landscape, engaging the human through depth, cross-scalar connection, and sensory engagement.

Diagram by author.

Grouping each landscape “effect” with a material and quality of the landscape provides a point of departure for design. The matrix could be rearranged, as these elements all exist in the landscape.

MATERIALS		EFFECTS		QUALITIES
AIR		SITUATE		EXPANSIVE
EARTH		INTRIGUE		TEMPORAL
WATER		DELIGHT		DYNAMIC
LIGHT		QUIET		TACTILE

PROGRAM AMBITION

Scholar stones are chosen for their characteristics that embody or represent those of the natural world, at the scale of a stone.



Similarly, the interventions seek to make tangible and accessible the vastness and complexity of the natural world, “in direct reach of all our senses.”²

2. James, Jeffrey. “Exist-Stencil” in *The New Pastoralism: Landscape Into Architecture*. *Architectural Design*, vol. 83: pp. 117.



Each intervention is a sequence of moments, immersing you for some duration - perhaps only briefly, in passing - but the memory of the experience will persist, for some time, altering the way you engage with the world.

Collage by author.

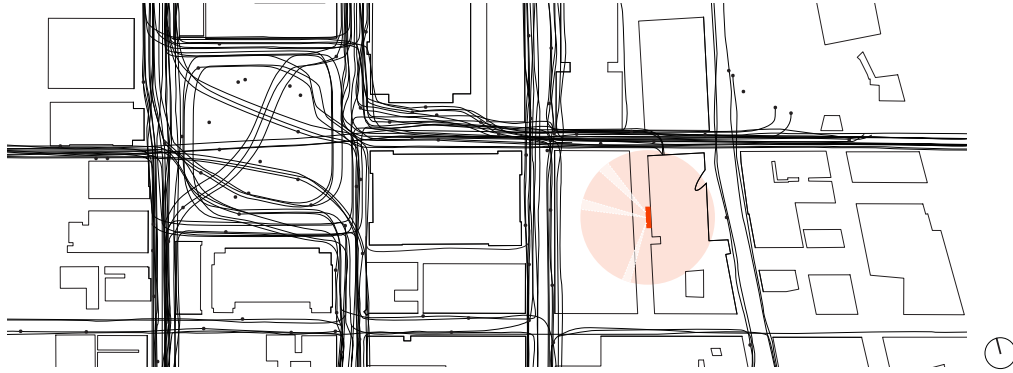
*“Humans’ survival as a species depends upon adapting ourselves and our landscapes - settlements, buildings, rivers, fields, forests - in new, life-sustaining ways, **shaping contexts that acknowledge connections to air, earth, water, life, and to each other, and that help us feel and understand these connections.**”³*

Anne Whiston Spirn

3. Whiston, Anne Spirn. *The Language of Landscape*. New Haven, CT and London, England: Yale University Press, 1998. pp. 25.

DESIGN

SITUATE | EARTH | EXPANSIVE



Site Criteria: Removed/Forgotten
Urban Manifestation: Back street/Alley

LIGHT ON EARTH

As the sun begins to set, the light bathes the stone surfaces of this back street,
Casting golden light, crisp shadows, dynamic surfaces of light.

The path lifts, reestablishing your relationship to the ground, the horizon, gravity.

First, prospect is denied as surfaces rise above eye level, calling attention to the surface on
which you stand, the sound of your footsteps.

Finally, vision.

Moments of reveal direct you to these moments of **light touching earth**.

As you exit, you return to the ground, to gravity, and are more aware of it.

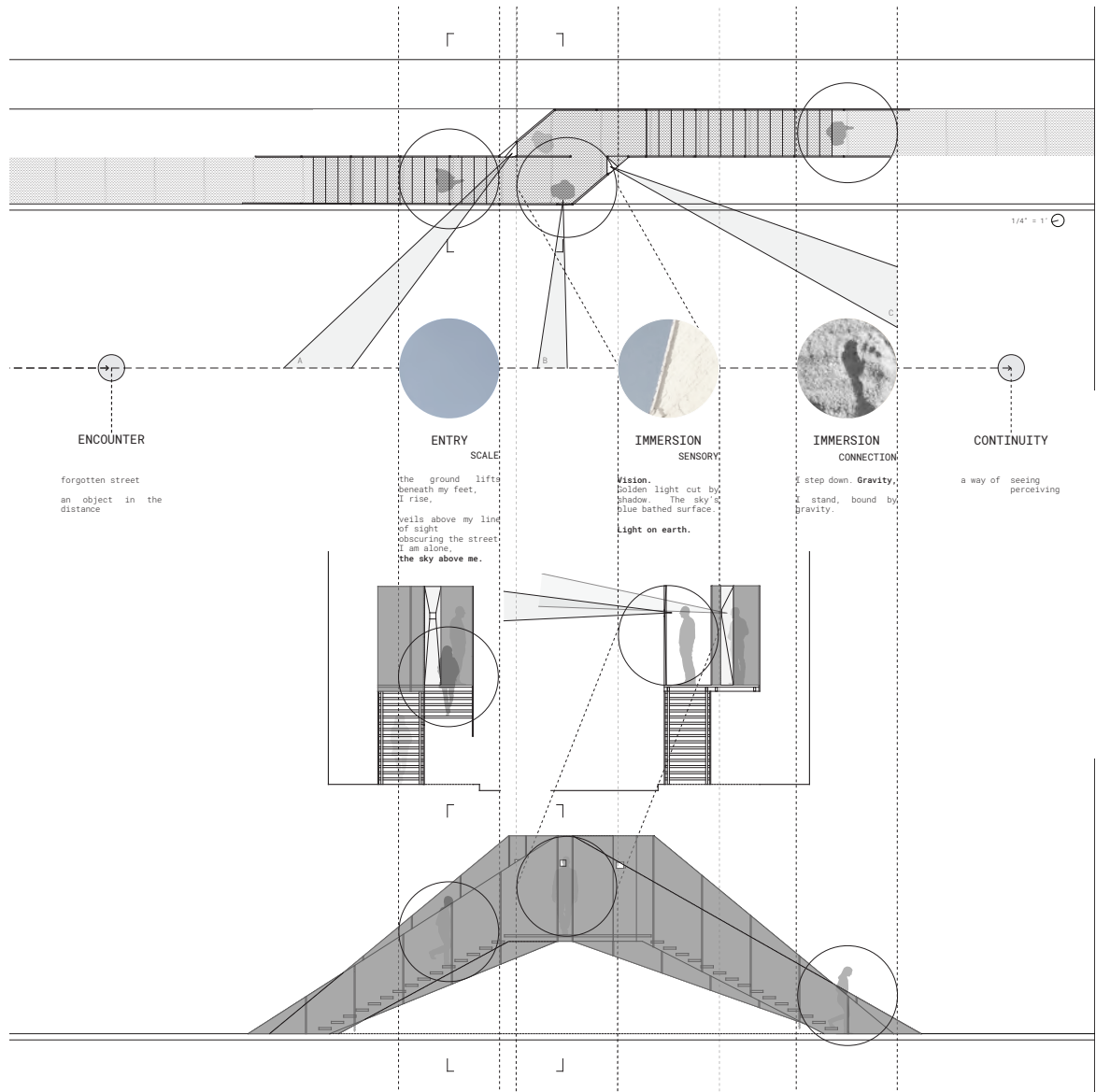


Diagrams + Drawings by author.

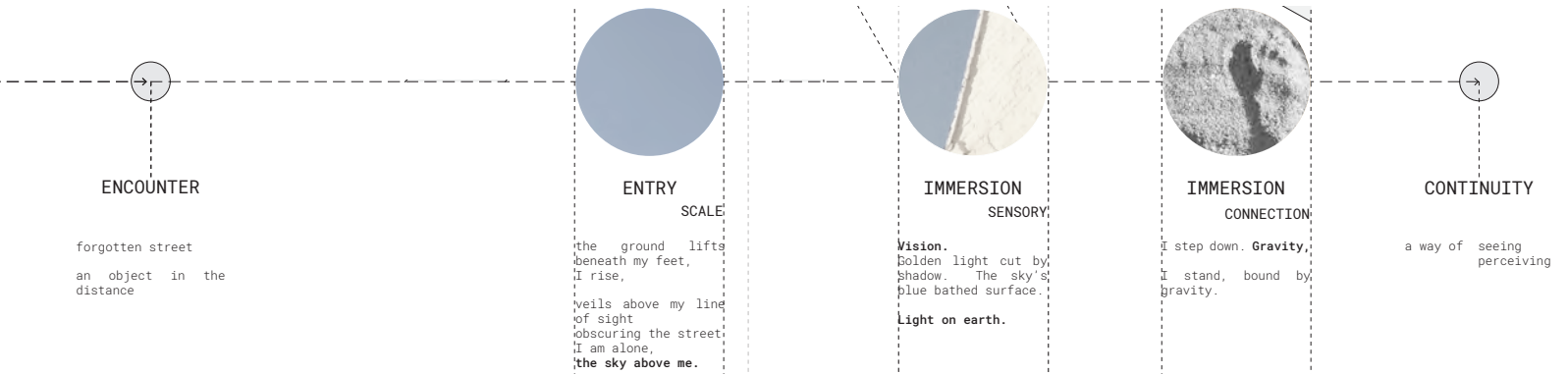


Drawing by author.

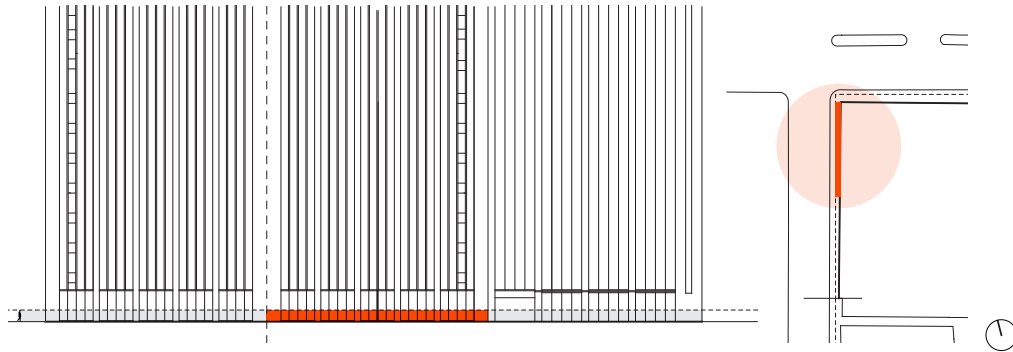
SITUATE | EARTH | EXPANSIVE



Drawings by author.



INTRIGUE | WATER | DYNAMIC



Site Criteria: Repetitive/Flat
Urban Manifestation: Non-human scale facade

ENTER THE WALL

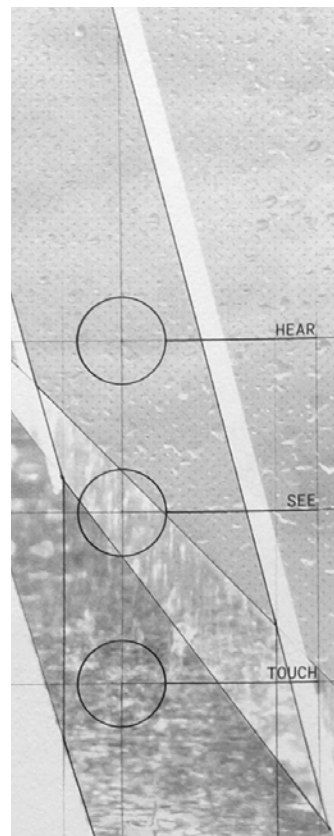
The wall, at its base, beside the human,
Peels away from itself, undulating, opening.

In a rain event, it is a surface of water,
Guiding water to specific places and
Guiding your path beside it, beside water.

The **wall opens**, and you **enter it**.

Now, water falls down a surface above your head,
Next to your body, and
Lands at your feet.

You can smell and hear the water.
You can see and touch it.



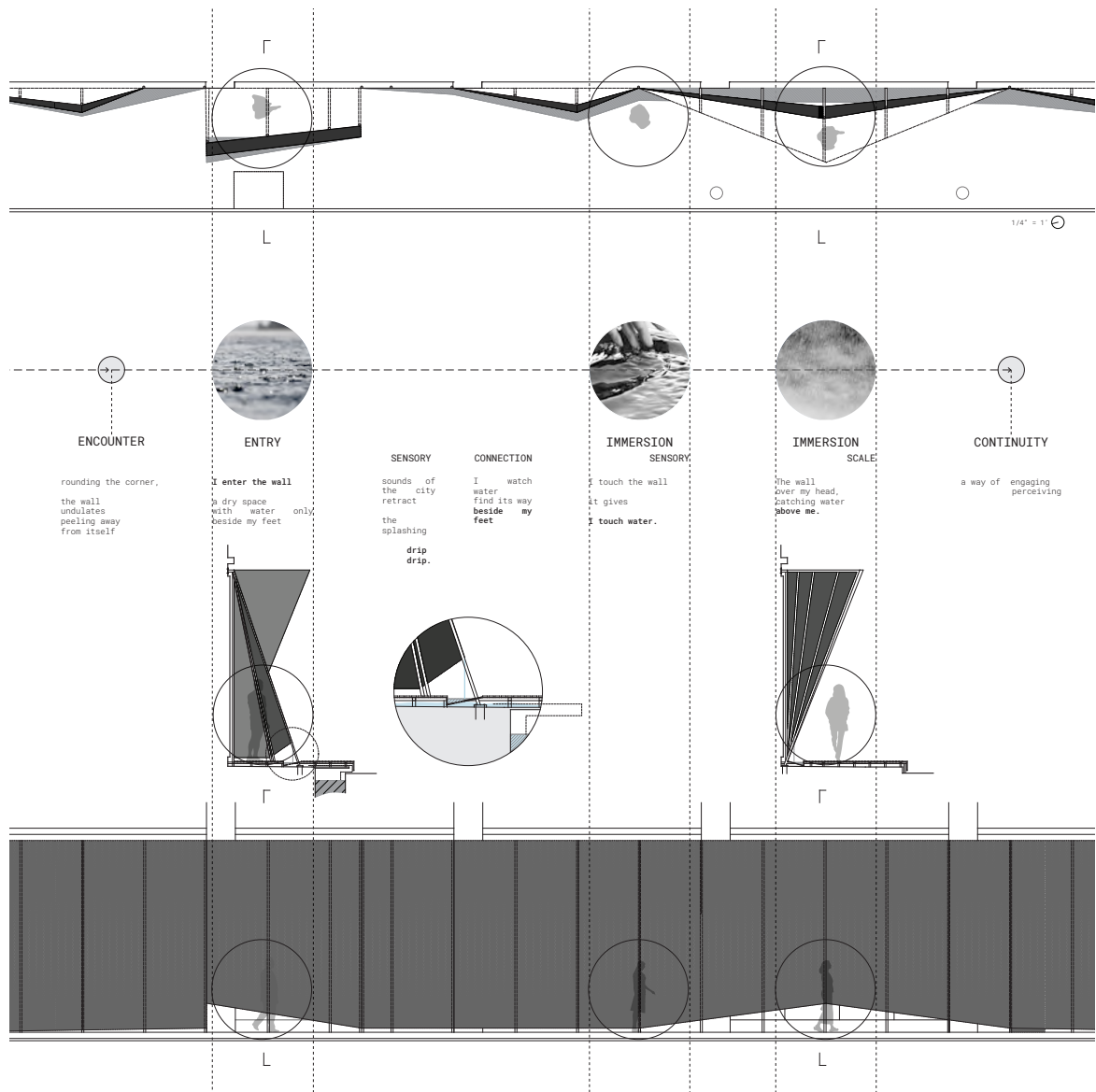
Diagrams + Drawings by author.



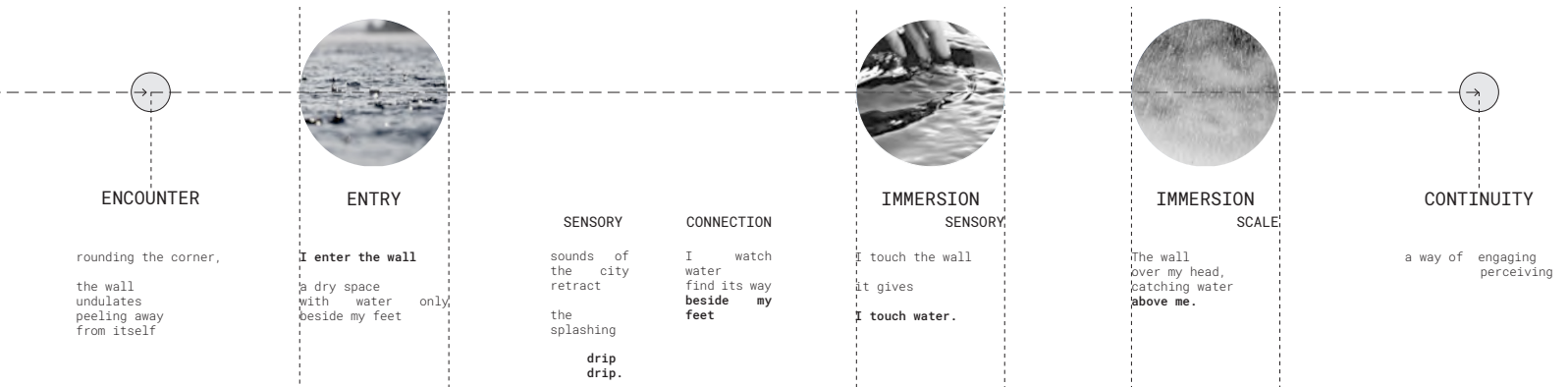
MONDAY
4:23 PM
19 JUNE 2017
82°F
91%RH
SOUTH WINDS
5MPH
RAIN 2 INCHES

Drawing by author.

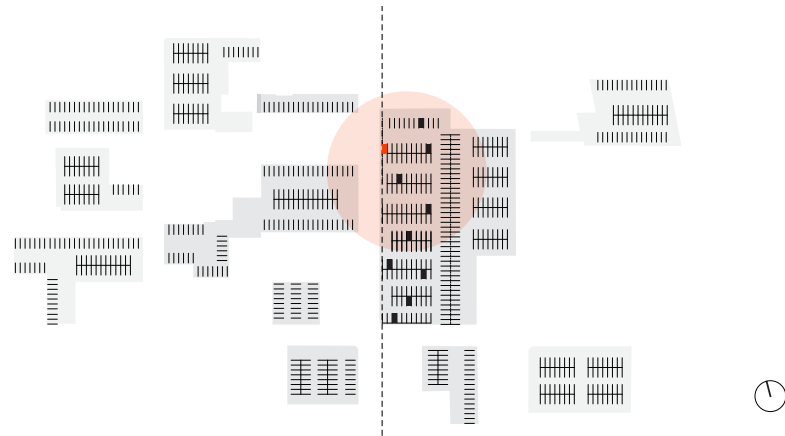
INTRIGUE | WATER | DYNAMIC



Drawings by author.



DELIGHT | LIGHT | TACTILE



Site Criteria: Mundane/Ubiquitous
Urban Manifestation: Parking lot

POCKETS OF SKY

Several structures permeate the parking lot.

This one mediates the edge.

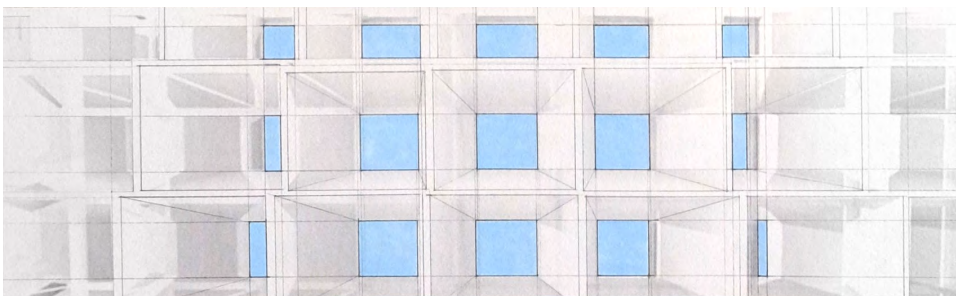
It is a heat sink, here, with surface temperatures over 100 degrees on a sunny day.

Light is diffused, absorbed, redirected, and
Suspended above the ground.

Below it is shade, and dappled light.

Once inside, beneath the canopy, in the shade,
You look up, and see

Pockets of sky.

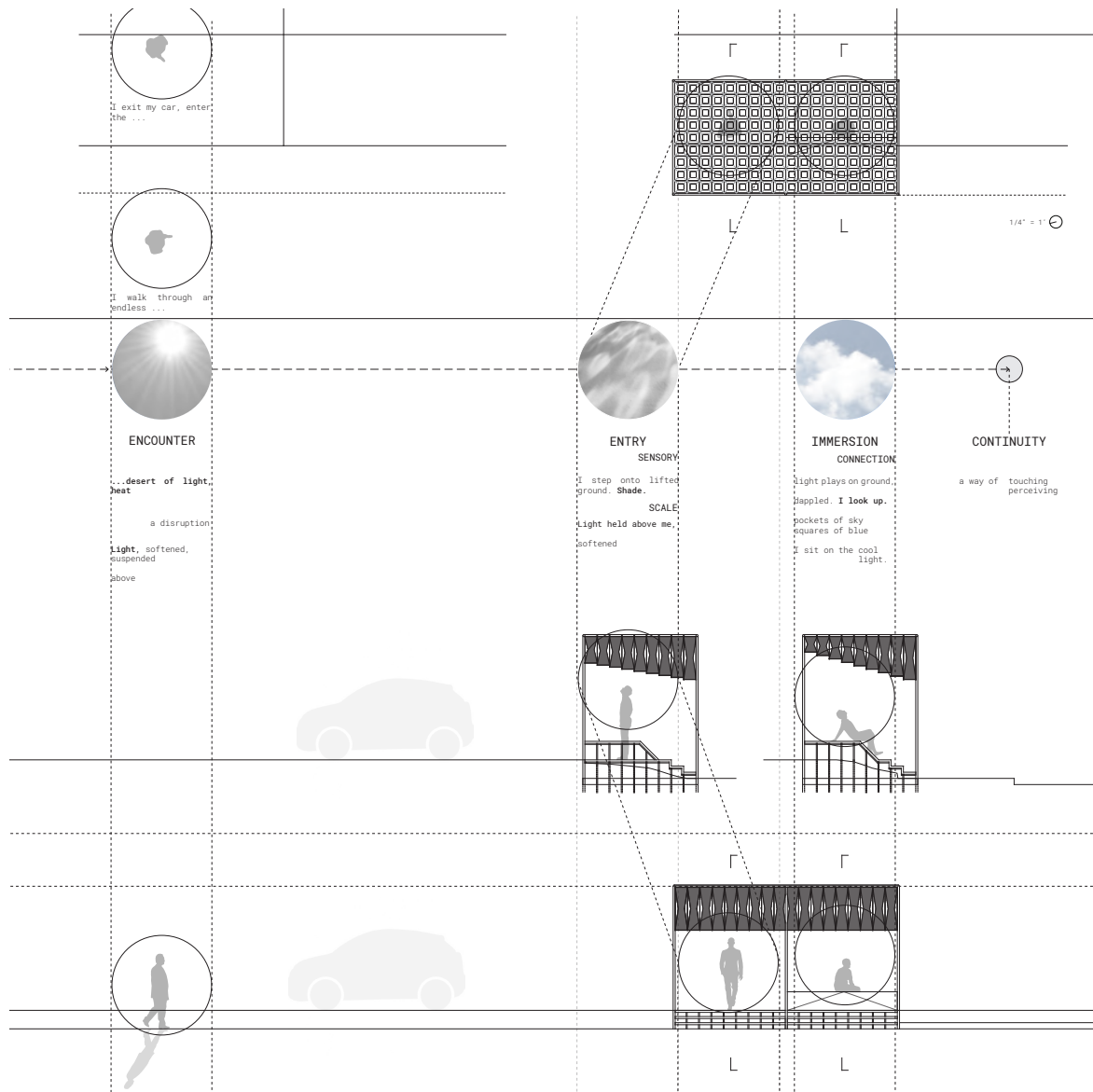


Diagrams + Drawings by author.

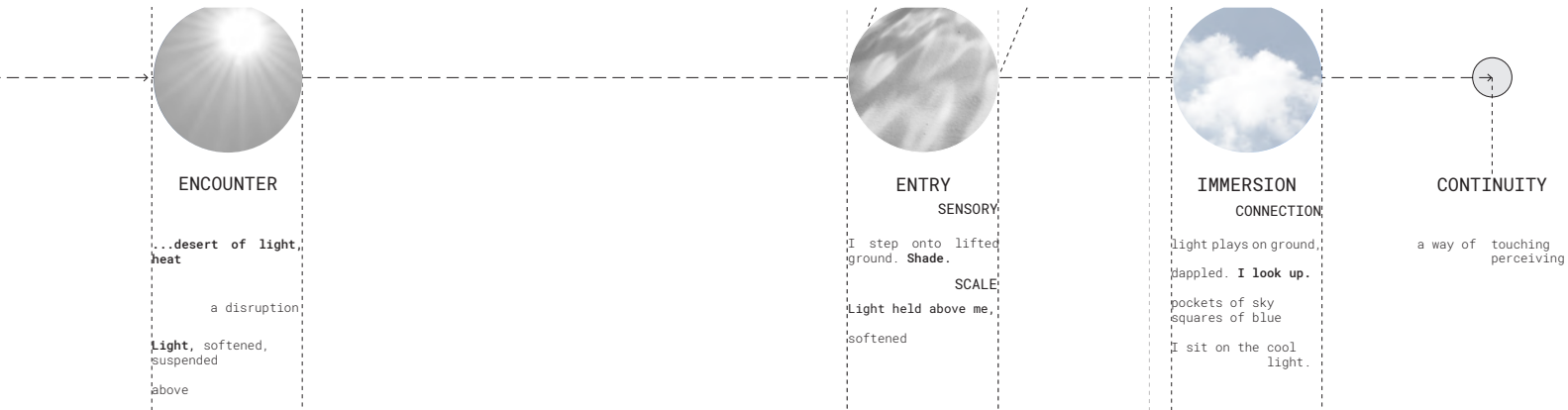


Drawing by author.

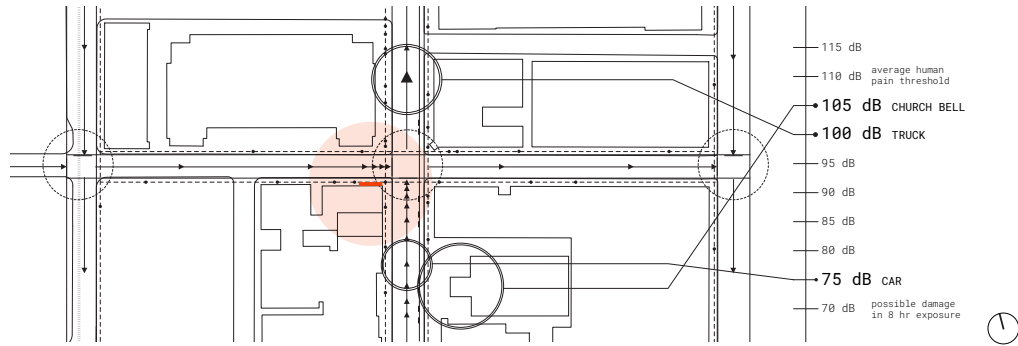
DELIGHT | LIGHT | TACTILE



Drawings by author.



QUIET | AIR | TEMPORAL



Site Criteria: Exposed/Over-stimulating
Urban Manifestation: Trafficked Intersection

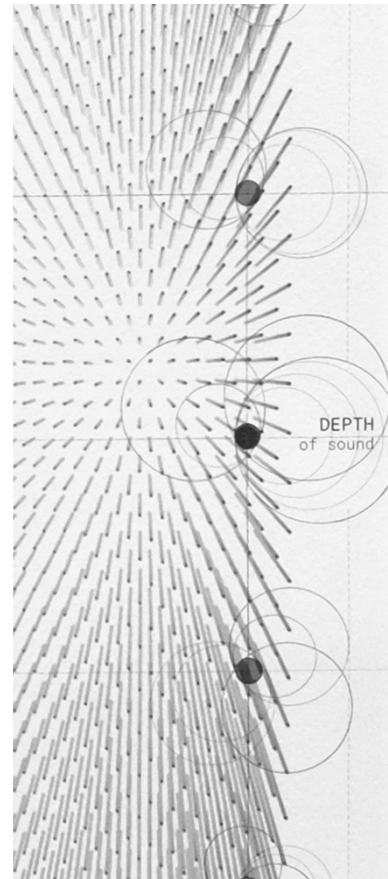
PALPABLE AIR

As you round the corner, or cross the street,
Looking up, you see the
Underside of the overhang
Scatter and disperse into
A thousand pieces.

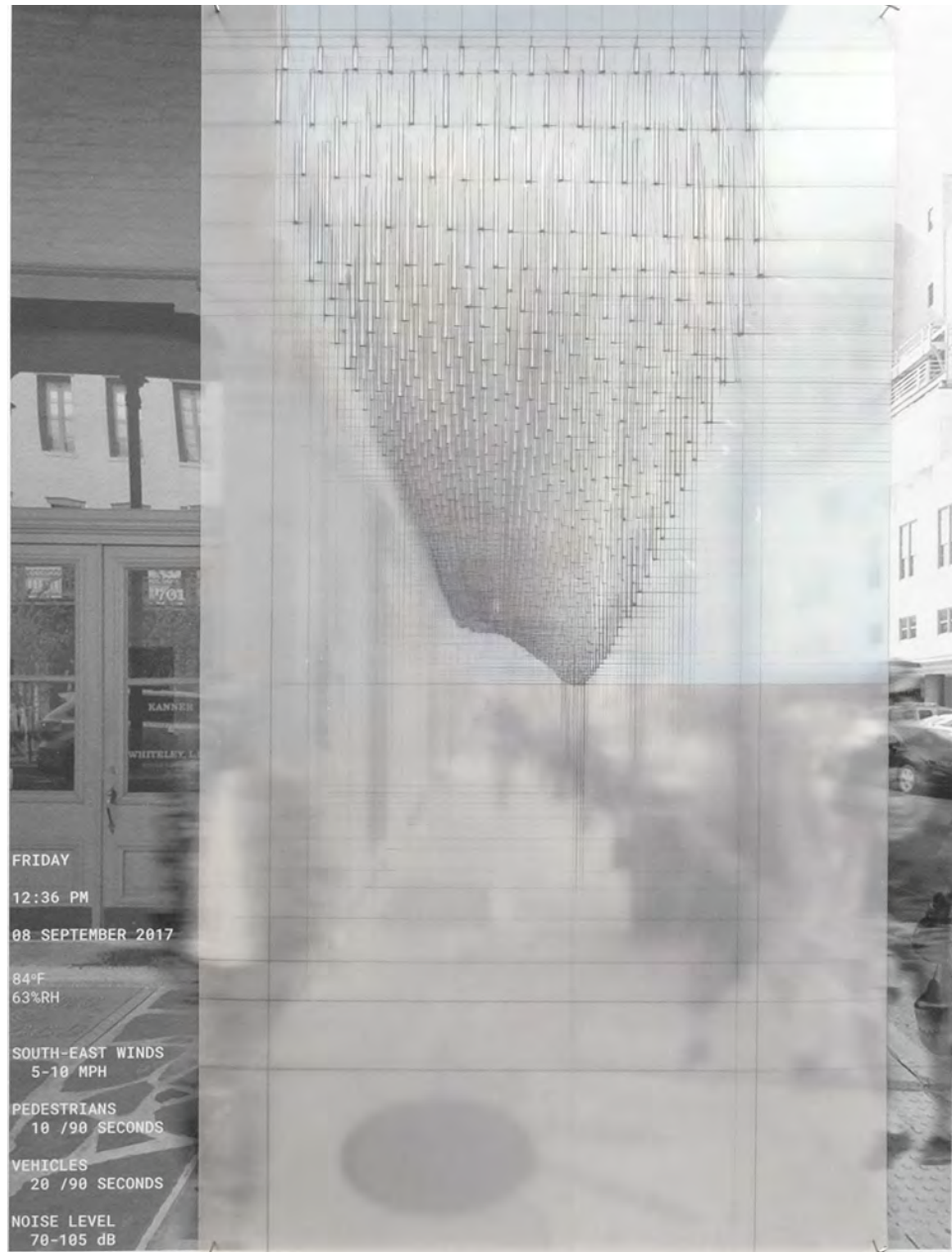
They shift and sway, moving as one,
More intensely with greater wind.

Their sounds drown out the sounds of the city, and
You become aware of the wind,

The air, made palpable.

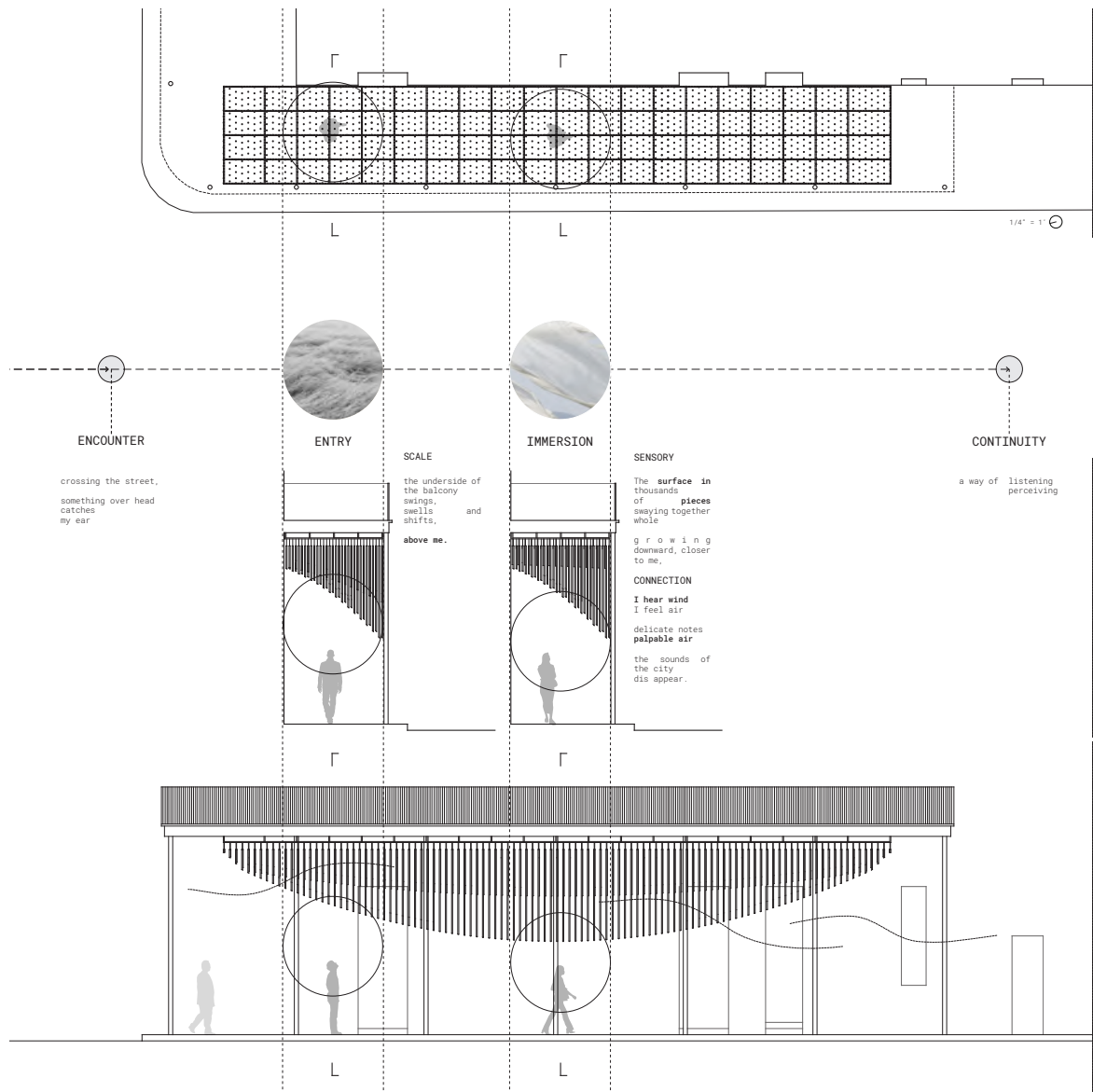


Diagrams + Drawings by author.

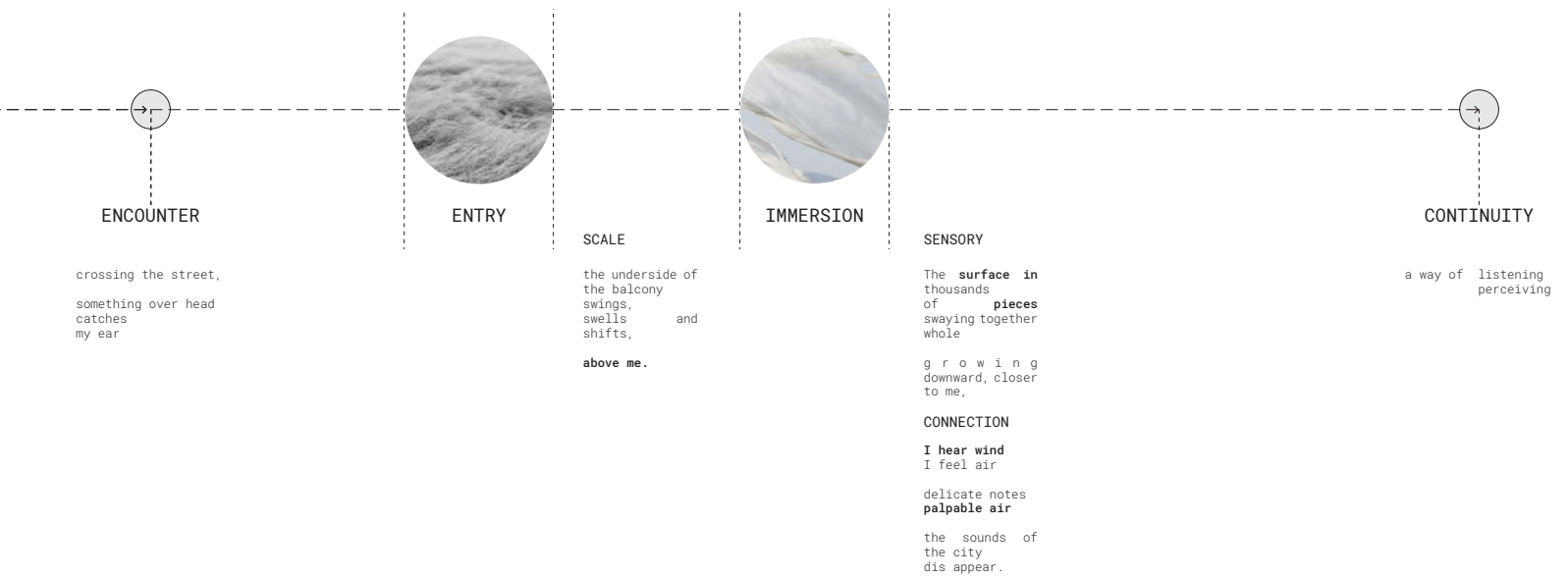


Drawing by author.

QUIET | AIR | TEMPORAL



Drawings by author.



APPENDIX
CASE STUDIES + PRECEDENTS

KATSURA IMPERIAL VILLA



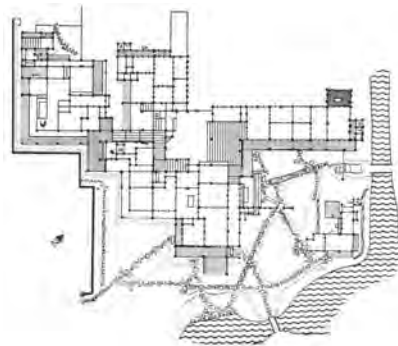
17th Century | Kyoto, Japan

The Katsura Imperial Villa consists of a series of integrated gardens and buildings, constructed over time. As an example of Japanese landscape design, the complex engages the human in the landscape visually and through bodily movement.

Various types of garden spaces provide for different experiences and ways of relating to the landscape. The “shakkei”, or “borrowed landscape” conceives of the distant landscape as though it were “captured alive” and brought to the viewer. An understanding of fore-, middle- and back-ground offer methods of negotiating distance, establishing relationships between near and far, often mediated or softened by the middle-ground. In contrast, the “single-depth perspective” of rock gardens, for example, accepts visual stasis instead of encouraging the eye to travel across distant views.

The garden, occupying spaces between buildings and pavilions, is often treated as a transitional path between experiences. The use of the stepping stones controls movement and pace through the garden. Japanese gardens engage extensively with natural elements in order to connect the human with the landscape and an understanding of time. Particular spaces are conceived with attention to seasonal variation; views are framed and manipulated to encourage intentional visual engagement; path is manipulated to create a particular spatio-temporal experience.

In the Japanese garden, “contrasts provide surprise and pleasure, and continually renewed ways of viewing and experiencing nature.” Such strategies of relating the human to landscape and natural temporal cycles may help to inform the development of this thesis project.



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY



Stanley W. Abbott
1933-1967 | Virginia, North Carolina

The Blue Ridge Parkway, stretching 469 miles through the Appalachian region, is America's longest linear park. Constructed between 1933 and 1967, it was the first parkway conceived for recreation and tourism rather than travel. Today, it is the most visited National Park.

The Parkway is a two-lane road, without traffic lights or billboards, leading to parks, vistas, and other resting points - "parks within parks".

This project is tied to America's historical cultural value of the car. Like a garden stroll from the comfort of a vehicle, it allows people to engage with the landscape at great speed and through changing vantage points.

"Like the movie cameraman who shoots his subject from many angles to heighten the drama of his film, so the shifting position of the roadway unfolds a more interesting picture to the traveler." - Abbott, 1939

According to author Anne Whisnant, the Parkway landscape is primarily "borrowed" (like the shakkei of Japanese gardens), capturing distant views along the path. It offers an interesting take on the park, or landscape experience, employing many of the same values in architecture and landscape architecture, at the scale and speed of the car.



THE HIGHLINE

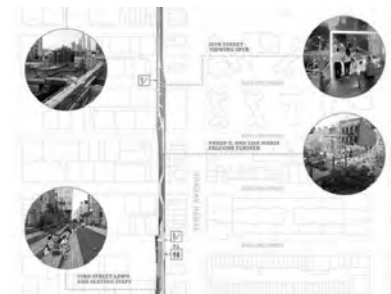


Diller Scofidio + Renfro, James Corner Field Operations, Piet Oudolf
2014 | New York, New York

The Highline is a 1.45-mile public park running along an out-of-use elevated railroad trestle. As a linear park, adopted from an old piece of infrastructure, it functions not only as a place of leisure but also as a pedestrian path. The park supports various activities, offering places for individual contemplation, gathering, and walking.

Lifted above the city streets, the park separates humans from car traffic, offers a new vantage point overlooking the city, and creates a place of collective use in which art or other media can be shared publicly. The Highline advantageously celebrates the opportunity for new perspectives, setting up frames (image 3) and viewing platforms in order to establish new relationships between the human and the city.

Recalling the “garden stroll”, the Highline allows people to meander through the landscape, discovering elements of surprise - events, temporary exhibitions, and the daily activity of the city. It reverses the typical landscape view: instead of looking out to the landscape from an urban setting or interior space, the park allows people to look upon the city-scape, from a place of immersion in the landscape.



THE FLOATING PIERS



Christo and Jeanne-Claude
June 8-July 3, 2016 | Lake Iseo, Italy

For sixteen days, visitors could walk 3 km across Lake Iseo, from Sulzano to Monte Isola and to the island of San Paolo. The saffron-colored fabric extended through pedestrian streets on shore, encouraging participants to enter the path and engage this artwork which was free and open to the public. According to Christo, *"The Floating Piers were an extension of the street and belonged to everyone."*

The piers, 100,000 square meters of fabric atop a floating dock system of 220,000 high-density polyethylene cubes, facilitated a new relationship between the human and the landscape. With the creation of a path, a person can now walk across a body of water.

The piers create access, and in doing so, a new relationship. As a temporary exhibit, all that now remains are drawings, photographs, and memories of the experience.

This concept of temporality, of creating a surprising relationship between the human (in motion) and the landscape, and strategies of engaging the public in a shared experience (and memory) may contribute to my thesis topic.

"Those who experienced The Floating Piers felt like they were walking on water – or perhaps the back of a whale... The light and water transformed the bright yellow fabric to shades of red and gold throughout the sixteen days."



VILLA SAVOYE

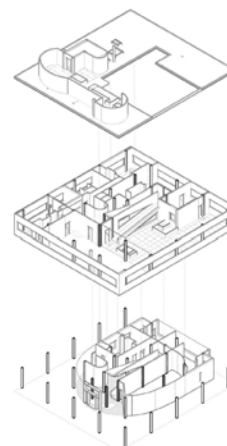
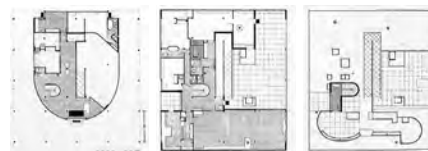
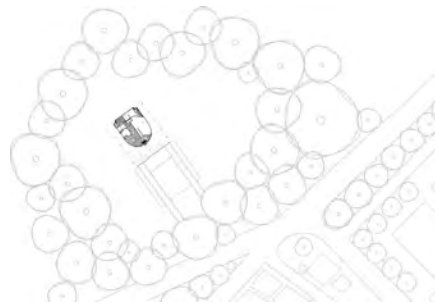


Le Corbusier
1929 | Poissy, France

The Villa Savoye, a weekend home for the Savoye family sited in a small commune outside of Paris, embodies principles of Modernism's International Style. Minimal guidance from the client enabled Le Corbusier to employ his Five Points of Architecture, helping him to realize the "home as a machine for living in."

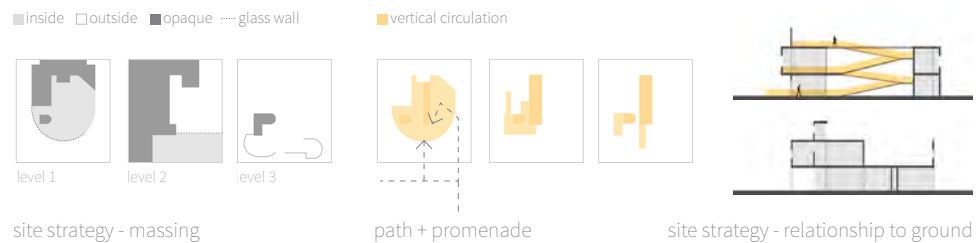
The ground floor accommodates service areas, including a garage, and the upper floors provide living spaces. Ribbon windows, courtyards and a roof garden bring ample light into the interior spaces.

The Villa Savoye represents technologies and ambitions of a universally-relevant, functionally efficient architecture: the International Style led to a culturally-removed, non-site specific type of building. This offers an interesting comparison to an architecture which strives to engage the human with the landscape and context. Employing new building technologies, namely the glass curtain wall and open plan, the Villa Savoye began to establish new visual and physical relationships between architecture and the landscape. This also contributes to the conversation on the interaction between building and site, looking to edge conditions, site strategies, and human experience.





Intentionally detached from its context, the Villa Savoye appears to float above the landscape as it sits upon pilotis. Green paint and glass on the recessed ground floor help it to further disappear into the background. A material



The open plan, enabled by the supporting pilotis, encourages the human to meander freely between spaces. A series of ramps connect the three levels, the intention of which is to slow the promenade and heighten the experience of movement between floors and spaces. A visual connection to the landscape surrounding is established with Le Corbusier's ribbon windows, which flow seamlessly across the walls, framing strips of view along the moving path

The Villa Savoye is based on principles of a universal, non-hierarchical architecture. For this reason, it is intentionally distinct from its context - sitting as an object, hovering above the ground. It pays great attention to the human experience, however, by facilitating an elongated path from floor to floor, and framing views of the landscape beyond as well as within the building. This concept of promenade, in service of the view, establishes a series of visual relationships between the human (in motion) and landscape surrounding.

FARNSWORTH HOUSE

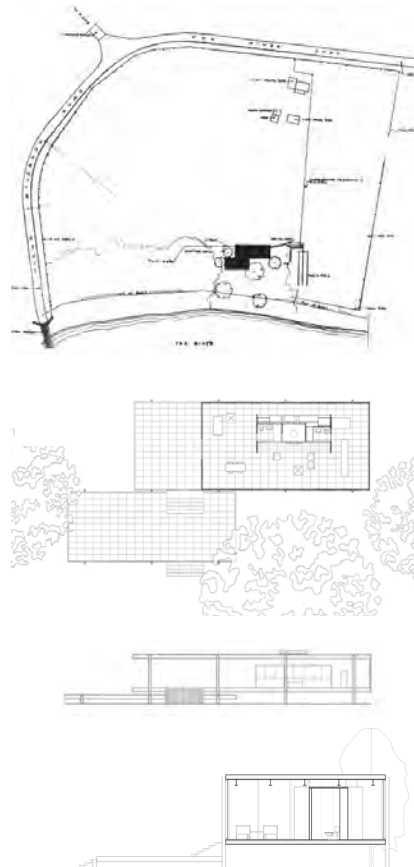


Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
1946-51 | Plano, Illinois

"If you view nature through the glass walls of the Farnsworth House, it gains a more profound significance than if viewed from the outside. That way more is said about nature---it becomes part of a larger whole." - Mies van der Rohe

The Farnsworth House, a weekend home for Dr. Edith Farnsworth, is sited outside of Chicago in a secluded 10-acre forested area near the Fox River. The house employs a minimal structural system, plan, and material palette, in order to achieve formal purity and subservience to the landscape. The entire exterior is glazed, creating total transparency between inside and outside.

The transparency of the Farnsworth House is an effort to connect the inhabitant to the landscape. This offers an interesting precedent for an architecture that strives to create a relationship between the human and the surrounding context. Related to the International Style, the house avoids any disruption of the landscape. With minimal points of contact, the house appears to float above the ground plane. This too offers a comparative approach to situating a building in the landscape.

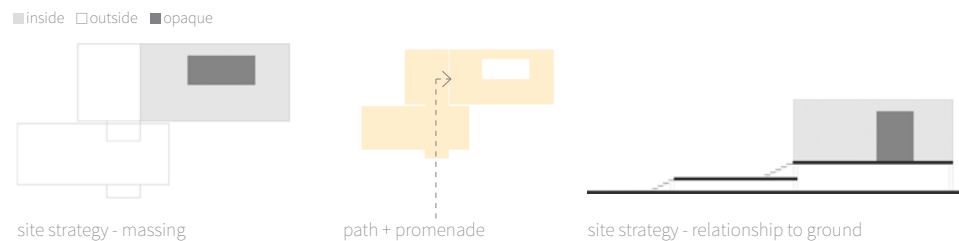


“...the glass pavilion takes full advantage of relating to its natural surroundings, achieving Mies’ concept of a strong relationship between the house and nature.”



The single-story house sits 5' - 3" off the ground, only making contact with land at the 8 steel columns and the 4 additional porch supports. In order to achieve this, the window mullions also provide structural support. The entry steps seem to float above the ground plane, reinforcing a sense of lightness and separation from the land.

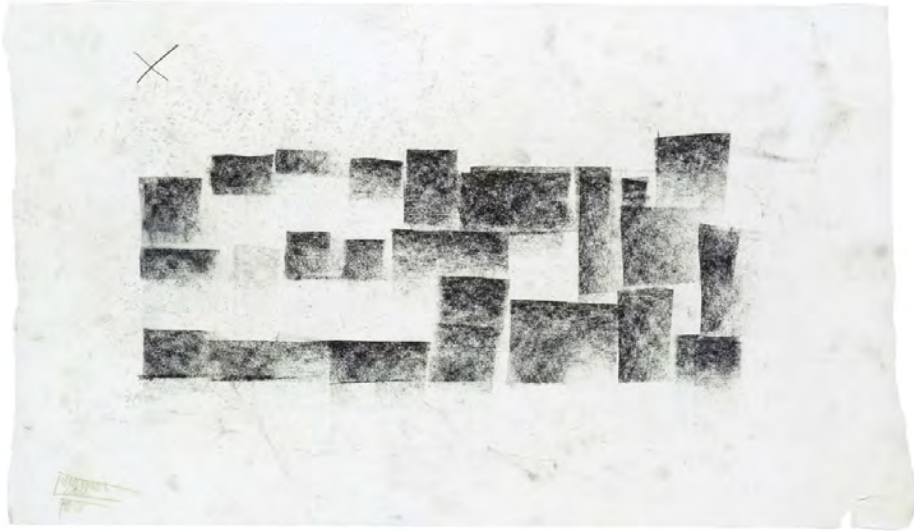
The home has precast concrete floor and roof slabs, a structural skeleton of steel, and glass curtain wall. The materials are foreign to the landscape, but serve to optimize transparency and lightness.



Floor-to-ceiling windows wrap the entire home. The edges of the home are literally transparent, punctured only by the 8 steel columns placed along the exterior. There is no hierarchy between inside and outside - no dialogue - only uniformly unobstructed views. Similarly, there is no hierarchy in plan or approach: the space flows freely, anchored only by the enclosed bathroom and storage space.

By providing complete visual continuity between inside and outside, and a free plan in a nonhierarchical site, the Farnsworth House does not direct nor compel the human. It does not encourage movement nor inspire investigation. It is unambiguous in its transparency - it places the human in a static space within the landscape, creating no relationship other than a juxtaposition.

THERME VALS



Peter Zumthor
1996 | Graubünden, Switzerland

The municipality of Vals - a small mountain village in the Central Alps - commissioned Zumthor to build new facilities for the valley's natural hot springs. Zumthor constructed the building with quartzite stones mined from a local quarry. The building sits within the naturally sloping topography of the land, nearly disappearing.

The stone became a generative metaphor for the design, conceived as blocks of stone with inhabitable spaces carved away.

The baths are arranged to offer "a sensory experience of hot and cold, light and shadow, materiality" (dezeen), moving the visitor between indoors and outdoors, and through a range of spatial conditions.

Zumthor is celebrated for achieving "a genuine example of timeless architecture...an architecture that triggers sensory reactions and experiences when visited" (arcspace).

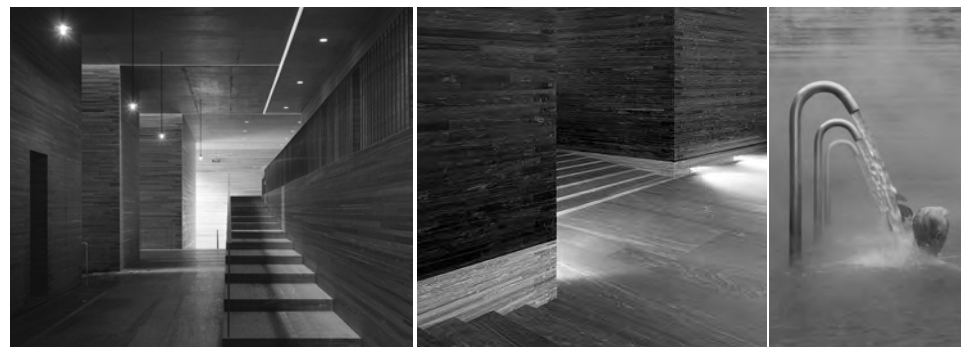
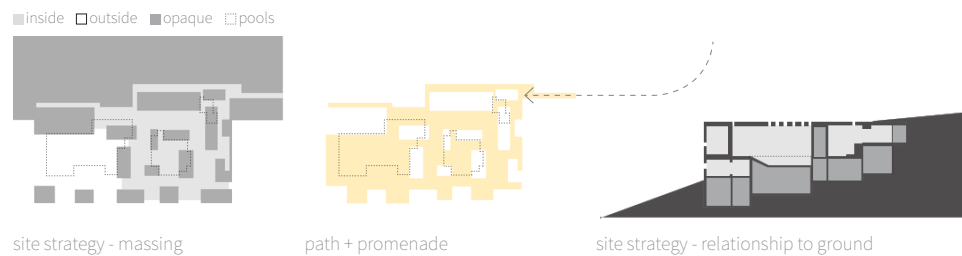
The Therme Vals, a project driven by materials and topography of its landscape, as well as a sensory human experience, offers a valuable precedent for an architecture which strives toward similar ambitions of engaging the building with the site, via the lived experience of a space.





The building is nearly invisible from above, blending into the sloping meadow hillside. From the road below, it appears as an embankment of stone with large openings, “not so much a building as an earthwork.” The material is gneiss, mined from a quarry a few hundred miles from the site; the water supplying the baths likewise emerges from the hillside itself. *“Stone and water: a love affair.”*

Voids, seemingly carved out of the massive stone building, open to vistas of the surrounding hills, reinforcing a relationship with the landscape. Smaller voids, also set deep within the thick building edges, allow light rather than view to penetrate the interior, facilitating movement or visual pleasure.



“We dreamed of a kaleidoscope of room sequences, affording ever new experiences - to the ambling, curious, astonished, or surprised visitor. Like walking in a forest without a path. A feeling of freedom, the pleasure of discovery.”

Visitors access the baths via an underground tunnel, stretching from the nearby hotel. The tunnel, subterranean, removes the visitor from the world outside. The senses, removed, are individually reintroduced. The sound of trickling of water emerges as the guest approaches, followed by a glimpse to the pools below and a framed landscape view. Inside, visitors experience an “unhindered freedom...to wander”, moving through various lighting conditions, inward or outward views, water temperatures, differing scales of space, changing ground plane, and interior/exterior conditions.

The Thérme Vals are physically and experientially integrated with the landscape - not only in materials and massing, but also in a human experience which engages the visitor through movement (path), thoughtful visual relationships, dynamic sensory conditions, and a freedom of discovery.

GARDEN OF FORKING PATHS



Beals + Lyon Architects
2012-2013 | Parque Araucano, Chile
1500m²

Winning proposal for the YAP-Constructo 2012-13

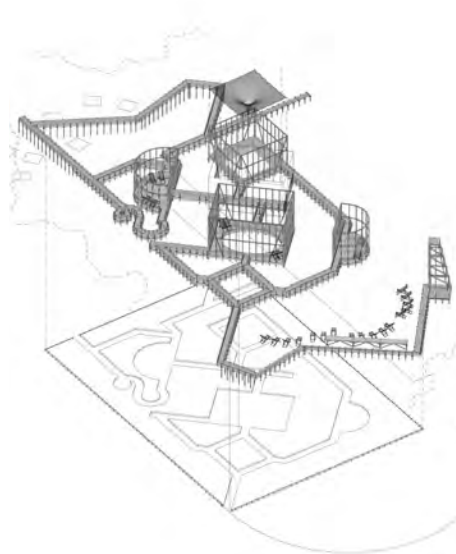


"...we would like the visitors to get lost, leaving the rush of the city behind..."

Combating the pressure of productivity, the "commuter" mentality of filling time with measurable value, the Garden of Forking Paths aims to reintroduce and celebrate the value of an "unproductive", liminal space. By constructing a series of experiences, connected by narrow paths through a corn field, the project enforces a slower pace, an act of exploration, and a multi-sensory experience, intended to connect visitors in new ways to their surroundings and to themselves.

"...This quietness will eventually allow them to perceive on a different way: slow, paused, useless, thus establishing a connection with their bodies through an unexpected sensual experience. This could bring a whole new understanding of space, capable to locate the body, back at the centre of architecture."

[from the architects, source: designboom.com]



Labyrinth

Programmatic Elements

Meander + Discover. Engage + Reflect.

Siting: "...we use a vegetal mass that creates a blurry or low-resolution environment, promoting perception through all the senses."

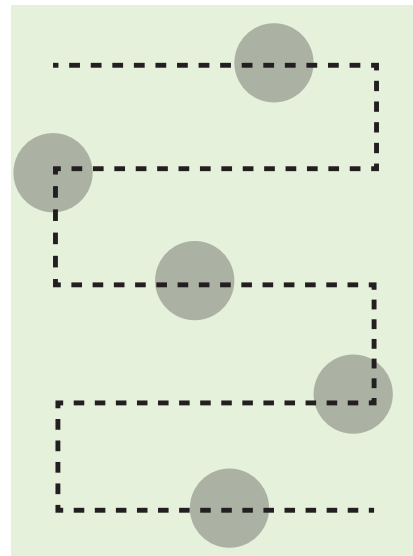
Experience: Combination of movement and stasis; combination of looking out and looking in.

Temporality: Modular system can be dismantled and reassembled, allowing the rediscovery of another overlooked section of the city. The "vegetal mass" - corn planted within the site - will literally be eaten by the visitors, leaving its remains to degrade into the earth.

Material: Yellow paint distinguishes built form from landscape.

Relationship to landscape: Literal transparency, through built framework [view]; physical proximity.

Relationship to ground: Lifted off of ground plane; constructed [grown] site.



MOMENTS OF STASIS, DISCOVERY, CONNECTION ■

LANDSCAPE (NATURAL) ELEMENTS ■

PATH /

SERPENTINE GALLERY PAVILION

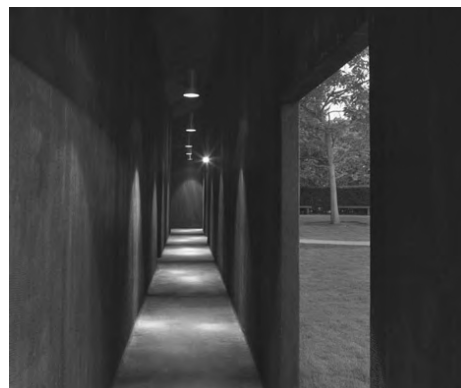


Peter Zumthor + Piet Oudolf
2011 | Hyde Park, London, England



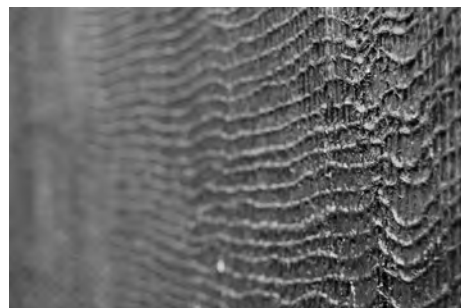
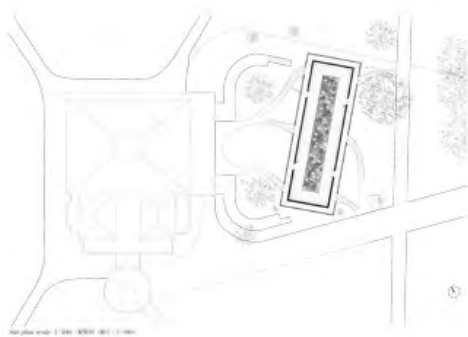
"...the flowers blooming and fading, people coming and lingering by the plants, talking, drinking tea, reading a book, walking around..."

Conceived as a Hortus Conclusus - an enclosed garden - 2011 Serpentine Pavilion offers a space for retreat and contemplation. A double-framed structure wraps around a quiet space of vegetation and light, removed from the larger landscape of Hyde Park. From the outside, one enters through a dark corridor: offset openings on either side of the structure allow access between outside and in. The visitor passes through a space of sensory-deprivation before reaching the sensory-stimulating experience of the garden.



"The Serpentine Garden sharpened my view of the plant world and intensified my sense of growing, blooming, and facing that this intimate setting communicated to me."

- Peter Zumthor



Hortus Conclusus

Programmatic Elements

Reflect + Observe. Sit + Walk.

Siting: A garden within a garden. Meandering paths stem off of more defined routes in the park, leading to the six points of entry.

Experience: Encounter: Approach and enter; discover. Inside: Option to move, circumambulatory, or to sit. Primarily stasis, with option for movement. Inward-focused.

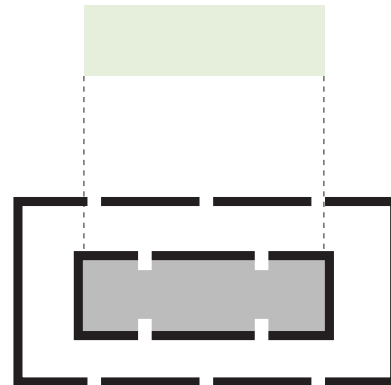
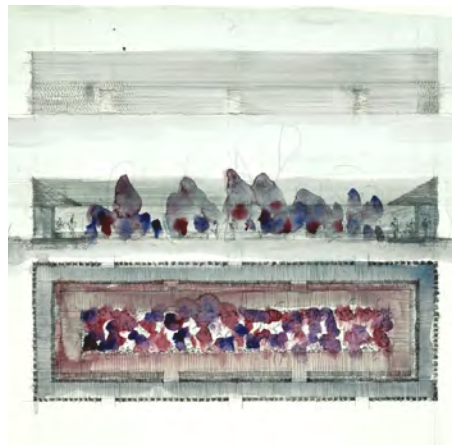
Temporality: Existed in built form for a temporary period of time (1 year?).

Material: Textural, subtle - as a backdrop, to celebrate the garden.

Relationship to landscape: Physical proximity - ability to see, smell, hear, touch. Nature as subject.

Relationship to ground: Occupiable space lifted slightly above ground; garden sunken slightly below.

7



MOMENTS OF STASIS, DISCOVERY, CONNECTION

LANDSCAPE (NATURAL) ELEMENTS



Mary Miss
2011 | Long Island City, Queens, New York

"It...recognizes the ad hoc, heterogeneous nature of the area; it's often hidden ecology, the history of manufacturing, the presence of small scale artisanal fabrication and artists."

- Mary Miss

This is a proposal for a new district, "City as a Living Laboratory (CaLL) District", as a place for innovation and collaboration. The project - a series of urban interventions - aims to activate the area, emerging in phases in order to gradually stimulate conversation "between the city and its inhabitants".

Strategies of repurposing materials and reframing the existing environment will ideally offer new ways of seeing and interacting with the city, inspiring collaborations among artists and other innovators.



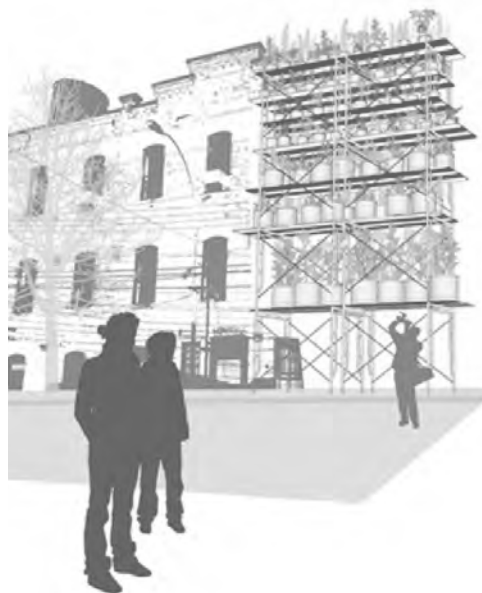
Power plant stacks will be re-used as gauges that make visible the city's water use, energy, and pollution production. Red and white stripes (also used in other parts of the project) carry a consistent language throughout the project, visually connecting its discreet elements.



Repurposed "vertical infrastructure" [utility poles, lamp posts, signs] mark the physical territory claimed by the district. Signs reveal the histories of the area.



"Slices of park" combat blank industrial walls.



Examples of re-purposed materials will be on display throughout the city, i.e. construction scaffolds support vertical green space.

Nodes

Programmatic Elements

Notice + Connect. Encounter.

Siting: Interventions at various scales permeate the city, within the identified district. This allows for different types of encounter and interaction, i.e. sighting from a distance; discovering along a path or in immediate proximity.

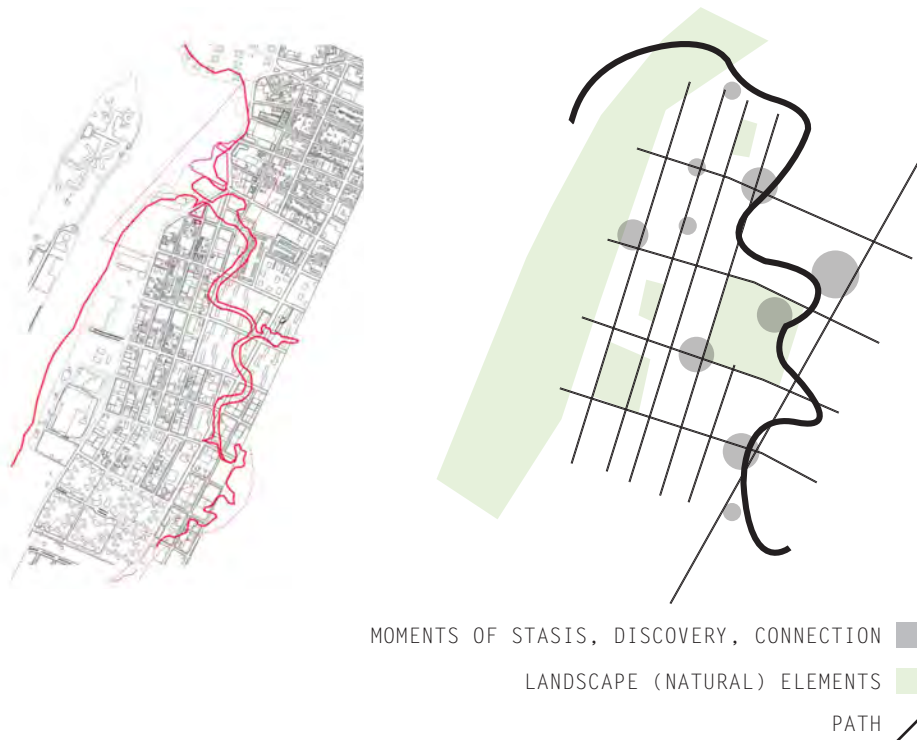
Experience: Surprise encounter; creating metaphorical connections; altering perception.

Temporality: Emerging in phases, the project takes on a life of its own. New elements appear over time, gradually occupying more parts of the district.

Material: *Of the site*, re-purposed from the site's past use. Color and pattern serve as a communicative device.

Relationship to landscape: Inserting (natural) landscape elements, and creating a new relationship between the human and the elements. Also, providing a framework, a hidden lens, into the cultural/historical landscape of the district

Relationship to ground: Various.



ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Burns, Carol, and Andrea Kahn. *Site Matters: Design Concepts, Histories, and Strategies*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2005.

This book offers a collection of articles written on the concept of “site” in architecture and landscape architecture. With contributing authors including Robin Dripps, Wendy Redfield, and Elizabeth Meyer (among others), it investigates the concept and role of the site - or ground, or landscape, or cityscape - within design discourse and praxis. Dripps’ article examines the role of the ground in architectural practice as well as art, linguistics, history, and myth. Elizabeth Meyer unearths a history of landscape architecture pedagogies over time. *Site Matters* examines the idea of site in terms of poetry, history, politics, and more, offering a rich understanding of the conversation surrounding the topic.

Isenstadt, Sandy. “Four Views, Three of Them through Glass.” *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision*. pp. 213-240. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007.

This article traces the role of the window - the landscape view - in the American home. Isenstadt posits that the window view began to compete with the hearth for centrality in the American home, as the hearth became increasingly obsolete and glass became increasingly accessible. With time and Modernism, which introduced the glass curtain wall, the home’s relationship to “nature” (defined by Isenstadt as “a deep and unpopulated vista”) grew in value, and the distinction between inside and outside diminished. The landscape view, in line with America’s “frontier” heritage, was made available to all through the suburban home’s backyard view. Isenstadt writes about the “domestication” of landscape, and a “logic of looking”, which removed the Picturesque value of moving through the landscape, both as a result of the window’s growing significance in the American home. She links the television to this lineage, as the new focus of the home, which combines the centrality of the hearth with the periphery of the view.

The article discusses not only different opinions concerning modes of interfacing with the landscape - from a sedentary position (i.e. the window view), or from active movement through the landscape - but also the unique American relationship to the landscape, or nature, or the view. From the study of the home, Isenstadt explores values of inside/out (and means of articulation) and of the landscape’s cultural value for America, ultimately offering an idea of how we, as Americans have evolved to look at landscape. These ideas could prove relevant to my thesis topic, in considering how architecture mediates the human relationship to the outdoors, keeping in mind the implications of culture and history.

Judson, Derek R. “Beyond Space? Exploring the Temporality of Architecture.” January 14, 2011, 1-144. Accessed September 6, 2016. https://curve.carleton.ca/system/files/etd/6af33814-85b0-430e-aa6c-1e35f0572e17/etd_pdf/855923f748bd4af1fa3921a967811c54/judson-beyondspaceexploringthetemporalityofarchitecture.pdf.

Derek Judson’s M.Arch thesis project from Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada, explores the idea of temporality and architecture. He questions the typical space-centric method of design, inquiring into the implications of a design based on the concept of time, or the “experiential moments” of architecture. Judson brings up some interesting perspectives on re-interpreting our current understanding of architecture. He refers to many philosophers and theorists within the realm of phenomenology - for example, Henri Bergson, Michel De Certeau, Sigfried Giedion, Martin Heidegger, Henri Lefebvre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Ignasi de Sola-Morales. He also offers the interpretation of his own design project, as a product of his research.

Leatherbarrow, David. "In and Outside of Architecture." In *Uncommon Ground: Architecture, Technology, and Topography*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2000.

Leatherbarrow examines the relationship between architecture and its site, challenging the notion of architecture as an autonomous object. Through seven chapters, he explores the role of architecture's context in shaping buildings and spaces, revealing different ways in which buildings can be attuned to their locations. He examines the building as a physical object in a location, as well as in relationship to space through boundary and extension. He discusses continuity as the building within physical and cultural "horizons".

McHarg, Ian L. "The Plight." *Design with Nature*. pp. 19-29. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1992. Originally published: Garden City, NY, 1969.

This section of McHarg's book first identifies what he considers to be the "plight" of the manmade city on the natural environment. He calls out cityscapes of refineries, highways, and other built objects and infrastructures driven by economy and convenience, as those which have caused destruction of the natural landscape, as well as a disjunction between the human and nature. He elevates nature beyond "a decorative background for human play", to "a source of life, milieu, teacher..." (p. 19). McHarg attempts to trace the origin of this urban plight through western history. He identifies the roots of western anthropocentrism to be in monotheistic religion, which preach the "God-given dominion" of man over nature. McHarg finds a contrast in the traditional Japanese culture, which sacrifices some independence of western society for a harmony of man and nature.

Some of McHarg's claims seem to oversimplify a bit: for example, the west's prevailing culture of man's conquest over nature as resulting from monotheistic religion. He might also be a bit over-zealous in his description of America as a successfully emancipated society with "widely-distributed wealth" (p. 24). In this section of the book, however, he introduces some interesting perspectives on the lineage of man's relationship to nature, as a product of cultural values. He also presents a description of man's innate and essential connection to nature, and valuable thoughts on the network of dynamic forces and beings that comprise this natural world.

Mitchell, W.J.T. "Landscapes and Invisibility: Gilo's Wall and Christo's Gates." *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision*. pp. 33-44. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007.

In this article, Mitchell introduces the faults of vision. He asserts that in seeing, we must contend with a natural editing, ignoring - a blindness. Because of the sheer magnitude of what is presented before the eye, we are forced to selectively (though subconsciously) perceive. In looking at a landscape, we tend to see what we can most easily comprehend: things which have names and logical explanations. But, within a view are many more things, as well as relationships and systems, that are rendered invisible to us. He describes this as "the paradoxical invisibility of vision itself" (p. 35). Through two examples of landscape art - Gilo's Wall and Christo's Gates - Mitchell explores how interventions can make "hypervisible" what is typically invisible in the landscape.

Naegle, Daniel. "Object, Image, Aura." *Harvard Design Magazine*: No. 6 / Representations/ Misrepresentations and Revaluations of Classic Books, 1998, 35-39. <http://www.harvarddesignmagazine.org/issues/6/object-image-aura>

This article examines representation in art and architecture. Naegle traces the "crisis of the object" - a critique of objective representation - through artists such as Kandinsky and Klee, into the role of representation in architecture. Photography, as a medium of modern architecture, had an impact on the architecture itself, i.e. "it beautified and protected it from the adverse effects of time, weather, and use". Architecture and its image, he asserts, began vying for importance and design intent. "The image of architecture bred an architecture of image." Le Corbusier, he writes, advantageously sustained a dialogue between architecture and representation, exploring ways in which they could meet in an "illusory space". Illusion, he writes, is the distance between appearance and reality; it is atmosphere, aura, and, for Le Corbusier, a new premise of architecture.

Stefanovic, Ingrid Leman. "Temporality and Architecture: A Phenomenological Reading of Built Form." *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*, Vol. 11, No. 3. pp. 211-225. Locke Science Publishing Company, Inc, 1994. Accessed August 9, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43029125>

Stefanovic received her PhD. in Philosophy from the University of Toronto in 1979, and in addition to teaching, has worked as a research director for an urban planning group. This article investigates the experience of time in built space, through a phenomenological reading. She employs her own reading of a building - Toronto's CN Tower - as a comparison with ancient Greek city planning and settlements, which were planned with the human viewpoint as the determining factor. Calling upon others such as Martin Heidegger, Richard Sennett, and Thomas Langan, as well as the work of Greek architect and planner Doxiadis, Stefanovic explores the role of cultural concepts of time and human perceptual perspectives in space planning, and the experiential implications of each. She discusses time as valued in "present-at-hand" (singular) moments, as well as at a larger scale (cyclical and overlapping, rather than linear) in terms of cosmic cycles and "human historicity", seeking to shed light onto the ways in which humans embed and experience time in space.

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