OUTLINE

For the tantrums, the cries, the shouts, the "fou-rires"
the nagging,the overnights, the craziness,I present this book to my family for supporting me these 5
years .
Special thanks to Shoghag, Maissa and Cedric. I wouldn't have survived this without you.
Many thanks to my friends here, and out there. I wouldn't have survived .

Playing was always a part of my life. It was my escape. It still is.

As a child, I spent my time with my sister making up scenarios of people and spaces, of worlds that never existed. Of imaginary worlds. A world only in my mind.

Then life became too real, too overwhelming that everything disappeared. No more castles, no more princes and queens. No more.

What happened? I grew up.

Everything changed.

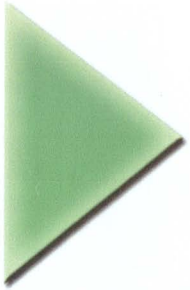
I was not allowed to play any longer. I was supposed to act in a certain way.

Playing became repressed in the back of my mind.

Till I got here; thesis phase.

So now I'm playing again.

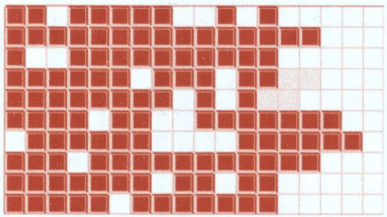
At the end, "Play cannot be denied. You can deny, if you like, nearly all the abstractions: justice, beauty, truth, goodness, mind, God. You can deny seriousness, but not play (Huizinga 3)."



WHAT IS PLAY?

Dutch Historian Johan Huizinga refers to the human species as Homo Ludens- man the player, where the term "ludology" which comes from "ludens", the Latin word for game has been suggestmed, to designate the non-existent discipline that studies games and play activities (Frasca,1999). Homo Ludens, as opposed to Homo sapiens, proposes that man has been playing long before being wise, as the Latin word sapient claims.

According to Huizinga, defining play is a hard task to engage in since it has no clear limits or boundaries. Therefore, his definition of play was based on the system of games. He claimed that a game is an act of freedom felt beyond ordinary life. Also, games move away from real life; they are found within a special sphere of human activity. Moreover, he states that a game is always played within time and space, giving it a sense of limitation and finality, in its place and duration that differ totally from everyday life. (Caillos,1961,4)



French sociologist Roger Caillos in his book "Man,Play and Games",also deduced a more specific set of characteristics that refer to games. He stresses first that games can be defined as an activity which is **free**, voluntary; where anyone can choose to join or not. It is also **separate** since it is limited by precisely defined space and time limits. Moreover, it is **uncertain** because the player is never certain of what the outcome will be; it defeats the purpose of the game. It is **unproductive** since it does not lead to any gains or losses. Furthermore, it is **governed by a set of rules**. Lastly, it is **make believe** since it embeds in the player a new reality that is far more important than life itself.

Furthermore, he breaks down games into two opposite poles: paidea and ludus, where paidea refers to the noun 'play', and ludus to the noun 'game'.
Paidea involves unrestrained fantasy and gaiety, but most importantly is "prodigality of physical or mental activity, which has no immediate useful objective, nor defined objective, and whose only reason to be is based on the pleasure experimented by the player"
Ludus describes the more impulsive enthusiasm. It is defined as an "activity organized under a system of rules that defines a victory or a defeat, a gain or a loss."

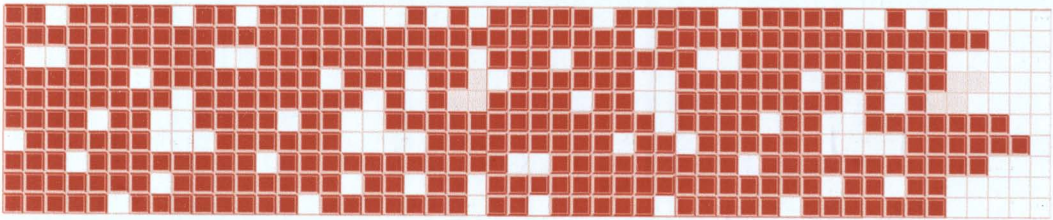
Generally, play can be categorized into three main types: social/dramatic play, active play, and discovery/constructive/free play (Beckwith).

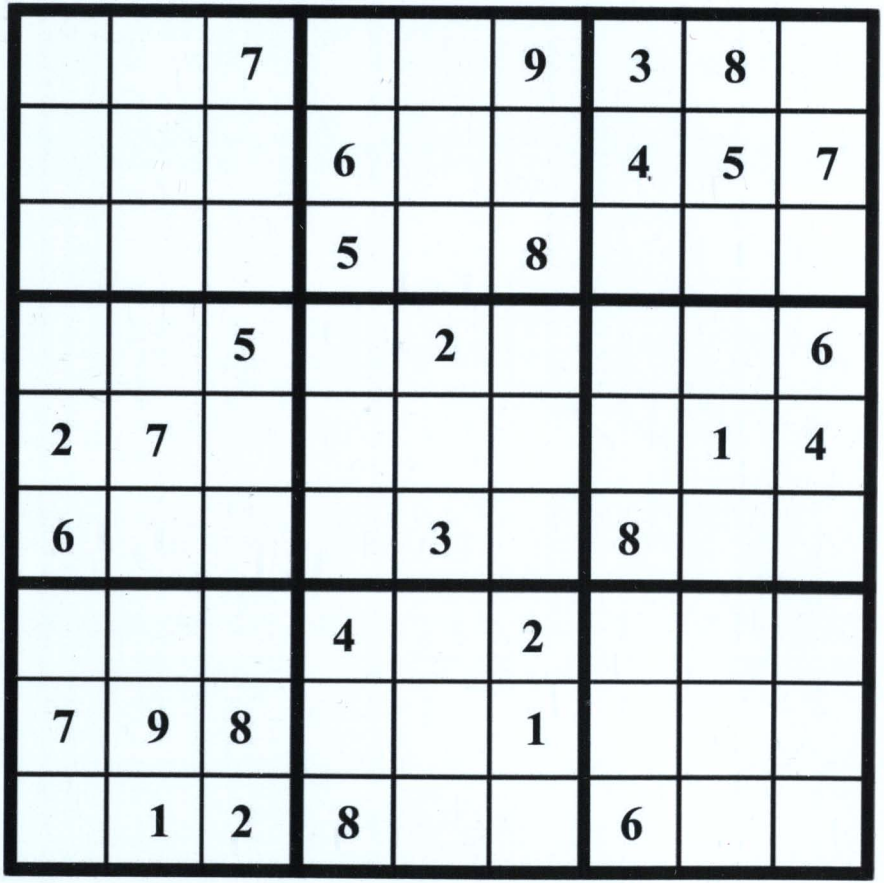
Social or dramatic types of play include play-acting like playing doctor or house .

Activity play includes running, jumping, climbing, and playing any kind of sports that require intense physical determination.

Discovery play involves exploration and construction, like playing in sandboxes, and using building blocks to construct fantasy worlds.

Personally, I am interested in both poles of paidea and ludus although very different; however their sole purpose is the transformation of the individual into another state of ultimate joy, or sadness. This happiness occurs when winning a game of cards, or simply going down the slide. Sadness and anger occur when losing a game, like when Brazil lost the 1998 soccer tournament against the French. Playing allows me to escape reality, transform to another state, discover new areas of fun, and construct fantasy worlds.Alberto Lacovoni claims that "the passion for playing, therefore, is a result of its ability to be a free and knowing diversion from the beaten path, a moment of re-creation of parallel universes in which we are freed of identity, rules and effect, physical and material bonds and the rigidity of the world we live in." (Lacovani,2004, 10) If playing was so cheerful why then do adults move away from it as they grow older?

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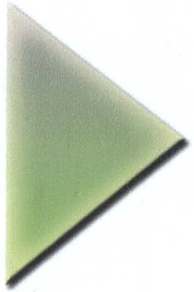
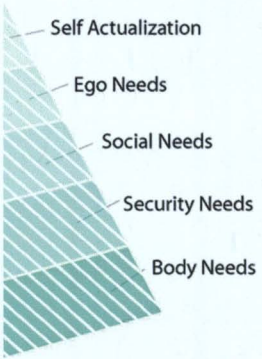
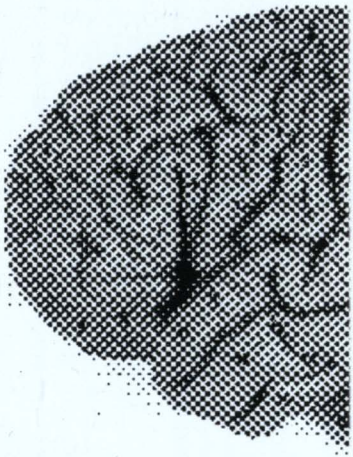


ADULTS + PLAY

When human beings reach adulthood, the playing switch is turned off. They no longer play, at least not as much as before. They seem to have inhibitions that stop them from playing namely, society. Moreover, in the minds of adults, playing is considered to be directly related to childhood which is a territory long gone. So, adults end up not playing. We spend our childhood playing and being urged to PLAY, and once we turn 18, we are supposed to stop so as not to be childish or silly. If the purpose of play is to prepare the child in various ways for adult life, then what is the motive for adult life?

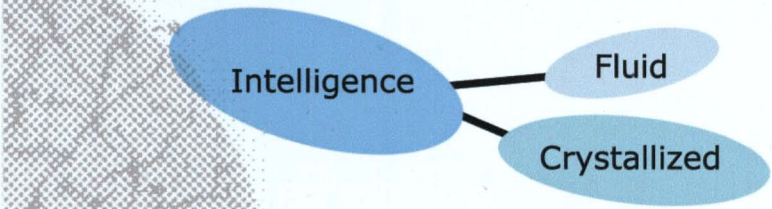
Play is known to be an ultimate tool for social interaction. It teaches us cooperation with team members, and hence induces in us abilities to learn, and be flexible. Furthermore, play is considered to be a stress -reliever which would help a lot if it were present at work, since it would trigger creativity and innovation, and increase energy levels avoiding burnout. (Bernie DeKoven,2009)





Also, psychologists indicate that human development continues throughout adulthood. Development of the human being includes obtaining skills that would allow them to perform certain tasks .The acquisition of these skills is very much dependant on the context in which the person is working in, and whether they are working alone or in groups. Fisher claim that this adult discovery -learning process can be acquired by experimentation, exploration, and practice; just as children do. In fact, they go on to say that "In all phases of adulthood, people need to update their skill repertoire in multiple domains constantly in order to adapt themselves to change"(Fisher,2003,32). When designing spaces, the architect goes back and forth in his/her mind to try to establish the best design for a certain space. This process is very much similar to what children do when trying to figure out how to play a game; a series of repeated trials and errors till skill and knowledge are finally acquired.

Fisher also differentiate between two different kinds of intelligence: fluid intelligence and crystallized intelligence. The latter is directly related to the skills and knowledge that one acquires from an agglomerate of experience such as vocabulary and general knowledge. Since, many skills decline with age, fluid intelligence relies on new activities and information that stop this process. Therefore, if we do not practice and train our skills, we might lose them earlier than we think. This is why old people are recommended to be solving cross word puzzles constantly so as to train their brains. Consequently, play may actually allow this type of intelligence to remain with us through our lives. (Fisher,2003,19)



In his book, The Development of Play , David Cohen points out to Maslow's pyramid of hierarchy of needs. The pyramid shows the human needs that initiate human motivation, starting with the most basic being the physiological needs of food and shelter reaching the highest levels of abstraction: self-actualization. According to Maslow, self-actualization occurs when one desires of becoming what one is "most capable of becoming" (Wedick). This idea can be achieved by play. For example, in order to better understand their patients the nurses of the British Medical Association, engaged in role playing games which thus gave them insight on the way they were treating their patients and more importantly they had fun with it. Therefore, this self-actualization can happen through play. (Cohen,1996,15)

If children's motivations lie in the exploration and the learning of their environment, then should one consider work to be adults' playground? Scientists, mathematicians, architects, designers, artists, and many more engage in the discovery of their environment by using different tools just as children do. However, this does not mean that they are playing, especially because of the laws and strict rules that most jobs entail. The fact that designers play at their work does not mean that they are actually getting the right type of play or else everyone would be happy. Therefore, working and playing become two separate entities.

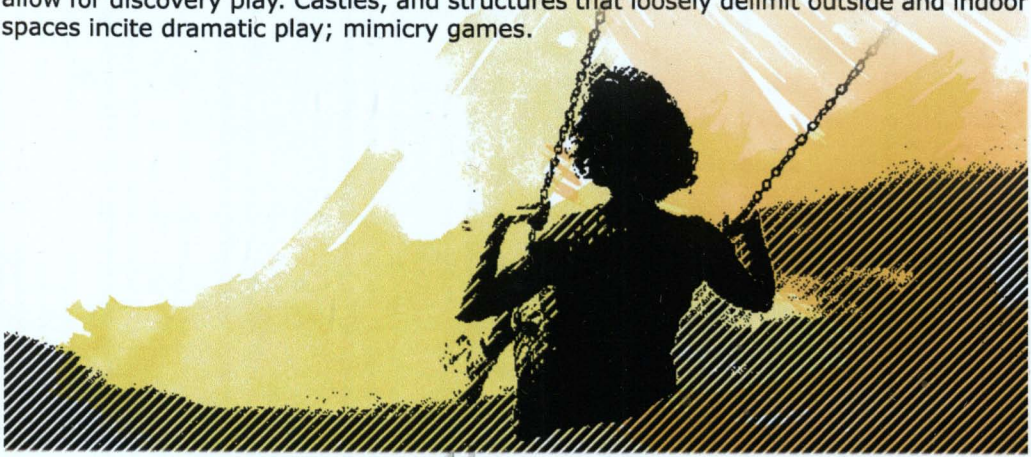
How, then, do adults play? Some, adults choose agon games such as tennis and basketball competitions. Others choose to play paintball, laser tag games, and any kind of game that is usually found in a specialized facility that follow specialized rules. These games induce activity play. Moreover, a massive 60% of Americans between the age of 18 and 35 enjoy playing video games that do not need a specific architectural place because the space is created in front of the users' eyes. Space is the common denominator between all these games.; a virtual space or an actual space; a playground.

ARCHITECTURE & PLAY

Some games need a room; a space which becomes the playground; an architecture that limits the players' chances and prohibition (Game Zone). As a child, hide-and-seek was my favorite game. The house was my playground. Thus, a space should be created in which play can trigger movements within a zone of ambiguity between brain and environment, and between the imaginary and reality.

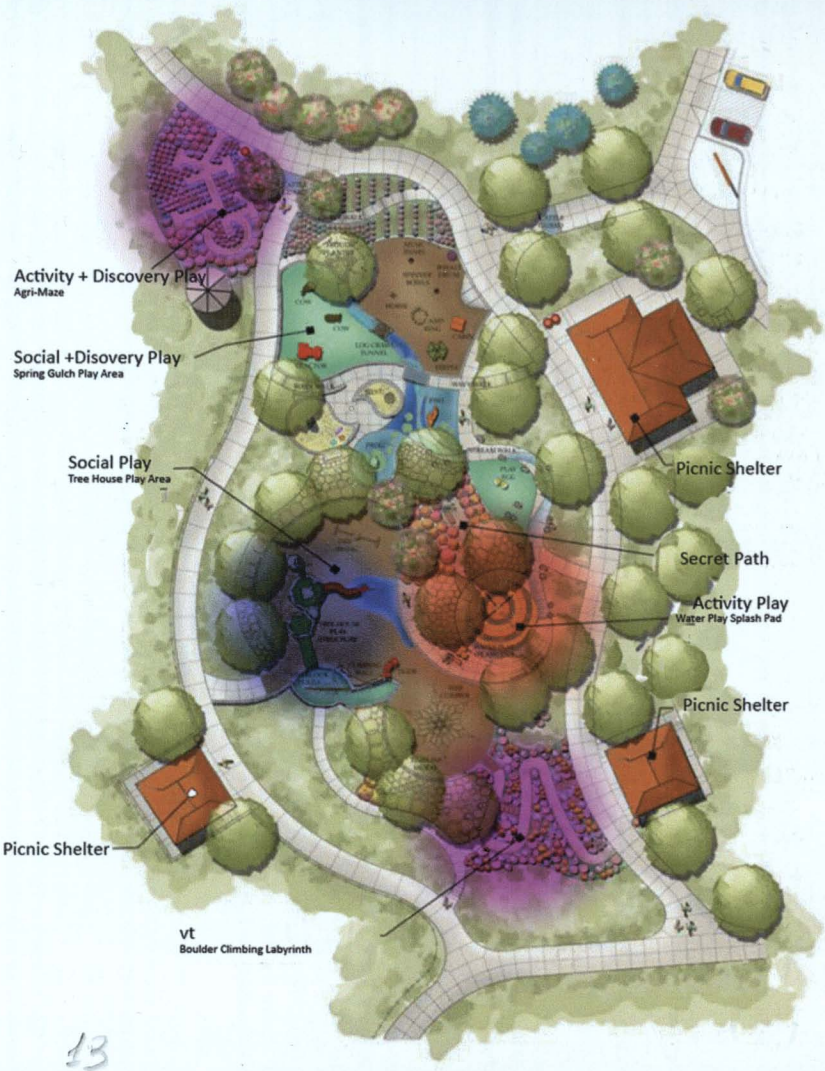
Nowadays, playgrounds denote the areas that are delimited by fences or concrete walls. They are closed off from the world, and adult intrusion. The child is free. She is the master of oneself. She can do whatever she desires. Fiction becomes reality away from home, and parents. "Here, though is a space where time can begin."(GaME ZONE, p.34)

These playgrounds were, and still are crucial to the child's development. In fact, to put it simply playing increases children's self-esteem and creativity, opens them to the environment, and helps in developing social, verbal, and problem-solving skills.
A considerable amount of research has been done about playground design in the 1960s and 1970s. It involved detailing play areas so as to provide children with the different types of play that were mentioned before. In order to stimulate the different kinds of play, playgrounds generally, are divided into various zones that contain play equipment that induce these types. Rope climbing, swings, slides, and monkey bars encourage activity play and Ilinx games. Sand pits, water fountains, and loose parts allow for discovery play. Castles, and structures that loosely delimit outside and indoor spaces incite dramatic play; mimicry games.



Sandstone Ranch Adventure Playground is divided into several play regions as seen in the plan. The different types of games are all present in the playground. The "water play splash pad" promotes the activity play since the kids splash each other. The " boulder climbing labyrinth" and the " agri-maze" allows kids to discover internal paths while climbing or walking leading to a surprise at the end of the path. The tree house play area is left for kids to imagine their own worlds within it. It is the place where most of the social play occurs. The "spring gulch play correal" is reserved for toddlers and contains in it water and sand areas that induce the exploration and creation of different structures like sand castles.

SANDSTONE RANCH ADVENTURE - PLAN



PLAYFUL SPACES

The sole purpose of playgrounds is the promotion of play. Even if an actual physical playground does not exist every kid has managed to find a space that they consider their own playgrounds.
The playgrounds that exist in adult life are seen in extreme sports centers, paintball courts, laser tag places and many more, there is a specific space where we as adults are allowed to play, beyond that, the chances of actual play are less.
Hence,playgrounds have become institutionalized. You need time, and money to be able to play. So, the only way to allow adults to play is to allow it to filter within their lives; within their work; within their relationships. Therefore, I ask how can one induce play through architecture in the monotonous everyday life of adults?
Google offices in Zurich, and Ramp house are two projects that have incorporated fun, play, and games within their spaces .

GOOGLE OFFICES,ZURICH
Camenzind Evolution Architects



Google offices in Zurich have tried to incorporate the idea of play within their offices. The Google building is a contemporary seven storey shell and core office block offering 12,000 m2 floor area for up to 800 staff members. The main emphasis in this project is the individual and the maintenance of a small community like workspace. Therefore, the architects thought that the employees should participate in the design process by asking them what functions they would like to have in the building. (Welch)

The actual office spaces are simple desk-and chair offices. So any other activities occur mainly while the people are on break, or need to relax simply. Moreover, this resulted in a multiplicity of communal areas that were playful and unusual.

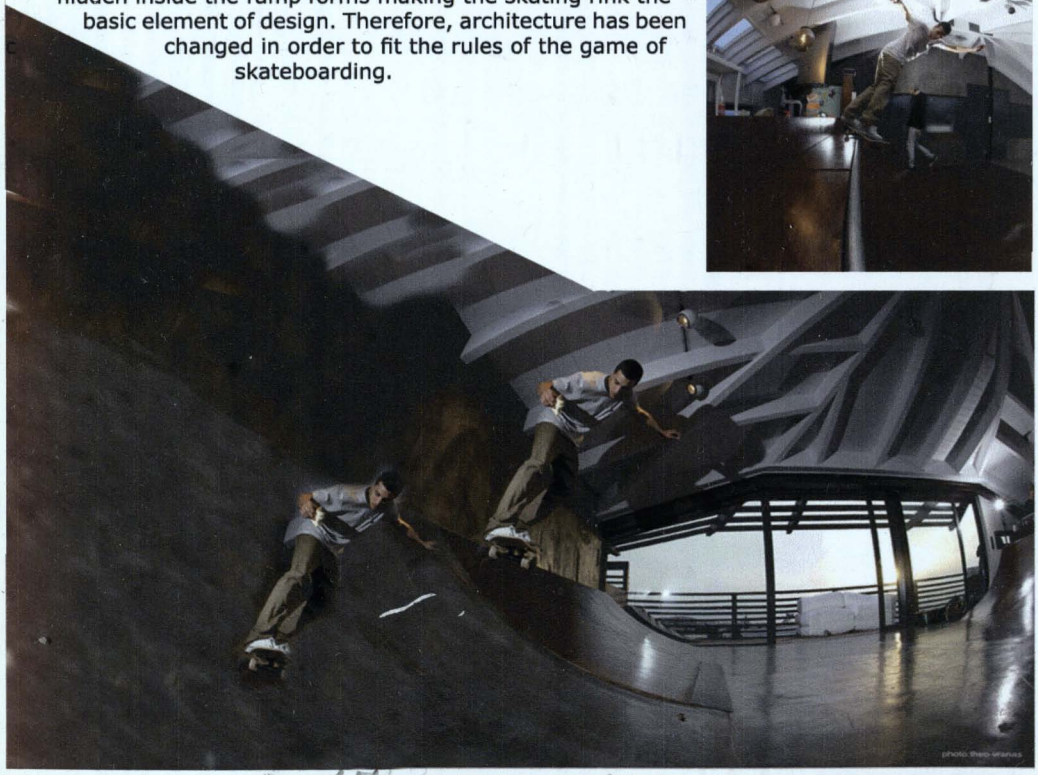
Some of these spaces were directly related to sports and games such as a table tennis, a billiard table, and video games that fall under the agon category. Others were reserved for relaxation, like the water lounge, and the massage spa. These communal spaces are dispersed throughout the seven floors and are connected by fire poles and slides generating activity play within. Moreover, these users actually play with these games and are not left standing alone.

However, in this case I should note that the main element that provided this play was the furniture within the building, and not the architecture itself . That is to say that the building was actually nothing but a regular office building of stacked slabs, but it was filled with playful furniture that generated independently from the structure.

IMAGE:

RAMPHOUSE,Athens
Archivirus

In this case, architecture is adjusted to allow playing. In fact, the ramp, the bowl and all the demands of a skating rink become the essential elements of the space. It was intended to be a ramp house and not a house with a ramp. Concrete walls are molded to form arcs in the ground that allow the user to skate easily. The concrete mixes with the wooden floor allowing the circulation either on foot or skating. The kitchen and the fire place are hidden inside the ramp forms making the skating rink the basic element of design. Therefore, architecture has been changed in order to fit the rules of the game of skateboarding.

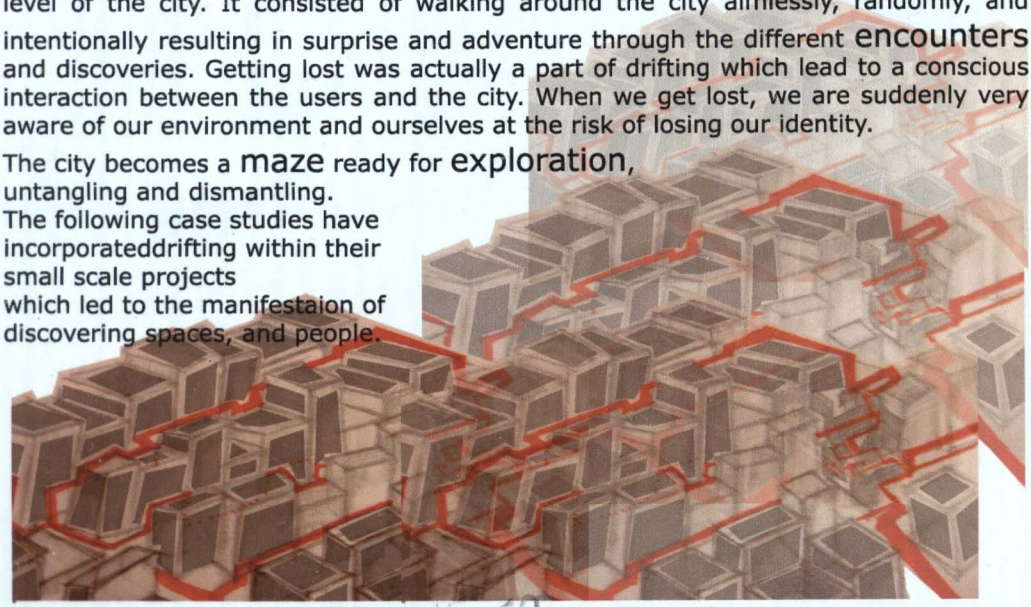


DISCOVERY

Discovery play that is manifested by mazes, forts and sand boxes in children's playground is also a key element in adult play. In fact, it can promote self-actualization within adults and could also prevent the loss of fluid intelligence. Through continuous practice and exploration one can achieve what one thrives for. These mistakes that occur on the road of learning allow us to understand our environment just like a child trying to build a sand castle: after several trials s/he understands that the castle will stand according to the amount of water he puts.
Also, putting people in these situations of exploration gives them the freedom to choose their actions and thus learn from their mistakes, which will allow the building of knowledge needed for fluid intelligence.

This idea of play was a notion much tackled by the Situationists. "Play must invade life as a whole" they agreed(Lacovani,2004,6).
This group of people tried to establish strategies to incorporate ludic activites within architecture. They proposed the idea of the situationist drift which extended at the level of the city. It consisted of walking around the city aimlessly, randomly, and intentionally resulting in surprise and adventure through the different encounters and discoveries. Getting lost was actually a part of drifting which lead to a conscious interaction between the users and the city. When we get lost, we are suddenly very aware of our environment and ourselves at the risk of losing our identity.

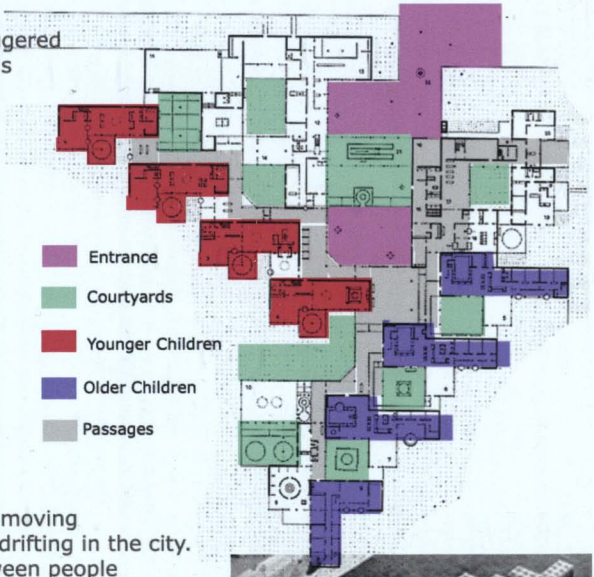
The city becomes a maze ready for exploration, untangling and dismantling.
The following case studies have incorporateddrifting within their small scale projects which led to the manifestaion of discovering spaces, and people.



Municipal Orphanage,Amsterdam
Aldo van Eyck

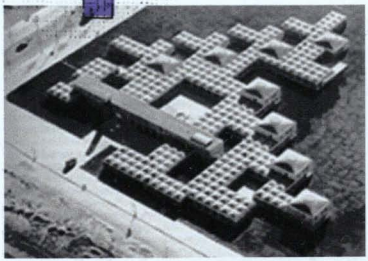
"Aldo van Eyck proposed that architects plan buildings and cities of labyrinthine clarity substituting a strict hierarchy of spaces with a more multifarious order. Labyrinthine clarity would thus grant the individual user of the building or a city a relative freedom of choice in the use and discovery of its spaces and places." (Sadler,1998,55)

In this project, Aldo van Eyck created a centralized structure with a series of staggered pavilions all around it.In fact, the layout is supposed to divide between two groups: the younger children's unit and the senior's.The older children's unit in blue is an elongated L-shaped space. The red units belong to the younger children.



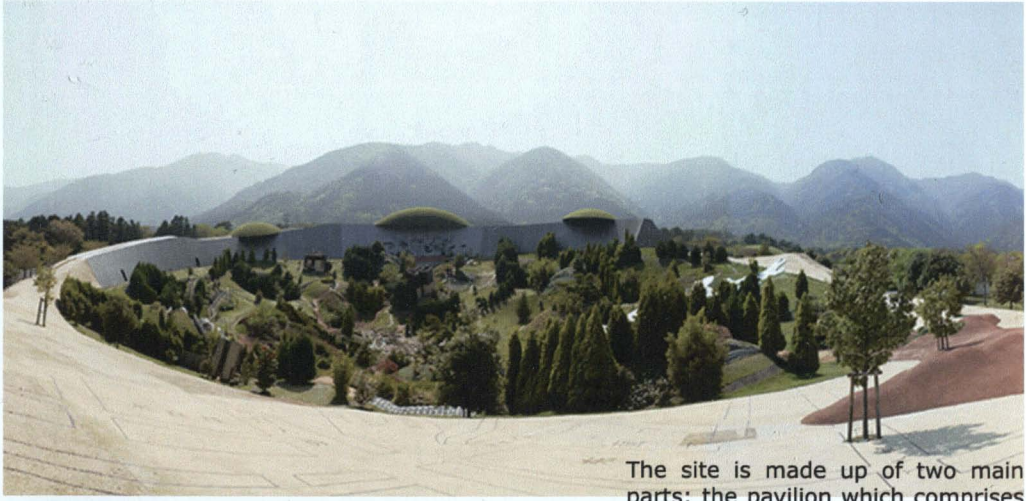
The connections between the units are zigzagged internal streets. The streets and the units extend on a horizontal level, creating a non-linear journey inside the orphanage.
The position of the zig-zagged walls controlls the vision of the user, and thus creates hidden spaces.

One cannot see the whole space without moving perceptually and/or physically much like drifting in the city. This gives the chances of encounter between people and spaces a different feeling than being in a linear space. That is because when one is in a linear space, s/he can clearly see what is happening in front of them; there is no need to change perception, unless the walls oblige you to turn.
I cannot deny that the idea of discovery ends when one knows the building, but it would still have created a sense of loss in space.



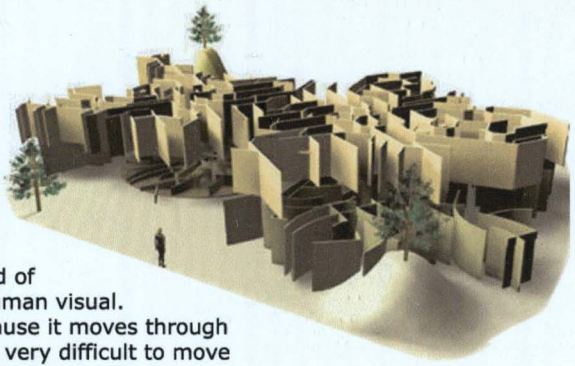
Site of Reversible Destiny, Japan
Shusaku Arakawa

It is an experience park for kids and adults located in Japan. It resembles a labyrinth that is meant to destroy the visitor's sense of stability. The architect was keen on the idea of creating opportunities for the user to actually encounter the unexpected. By guiding visitors through many different unexpected occurrences as they walk through its component areas, the Site offers them chances to rethink their physical and mental states.

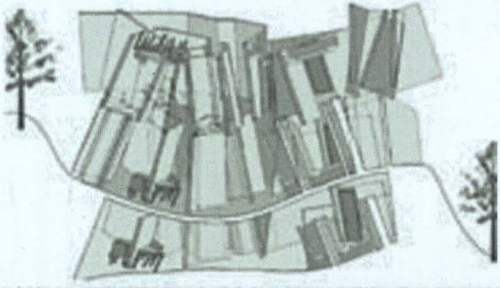


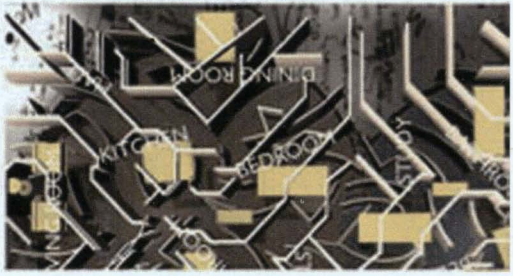
The site is made up of two main parts: the pavilion which comprises the offices of the park and the Critical Resemblance House and the Elliptical Field that is a dug out basin containing many parts as well. Particularly interesting, is the Critical Resemblance Hovuse. The building's maze-like interior made out of a particular array of stone walls. Between these walls one can find furniture dispersed around and between them that adds to the idea of discovery.

Critical Resemblance House
Shusaku Arakawa



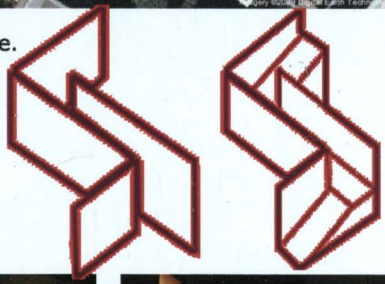
Critical Resemblance House is made of levels of "reworked labyrinth" .
A rectilinear group is laid out on top of a curvilinear group adding on to the complexity of the structure.
The position of the walls creates this kind of labyrinth effect and direct and control human visual.
The body becomes lost in the space because it moves through the composite passageways. It would be very difficult to move through the house in order to get to the kitchen.
By choosing the different pathways one is destined by his choices and receives either what they want or not. Maybe not so practical but the whole idea behind it is to get lost within our homes and basically play.

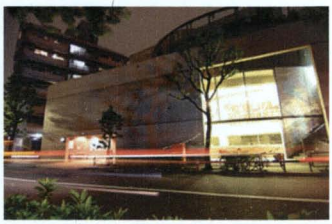




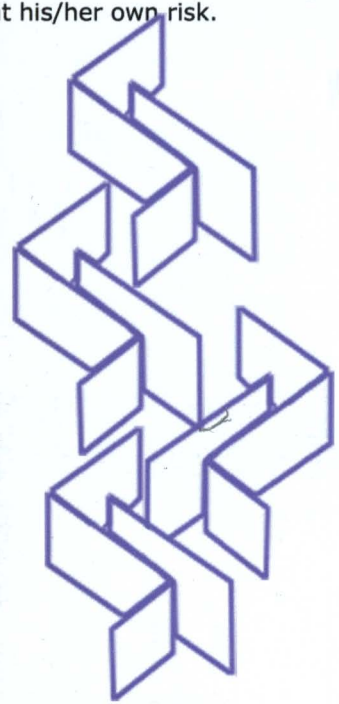
Collezione, Tokyo
Tadao Ando

Collezione is a mix-use building containing boutiques, galleries, an exercise club and a residence. They are all combined in a concrete mesh of shapes: two rectangular boxes, with an interlocking cylinder and a cube. This intersection of shapes create complex connection routes that are dramatic and challenging. The curved parallel walls create gloomy narrow passages. Also, the walls wrap around the stairs directing the movement of the people. The sketches on the right show the two different strategies used in order to create this drifting in space across the building. The stairs and the walls allow for the creation of a vertical labyrinth.

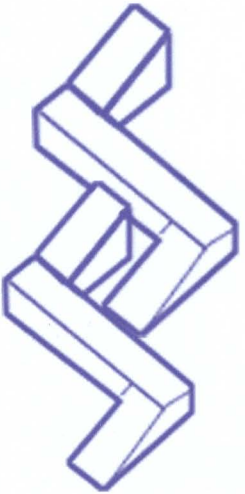




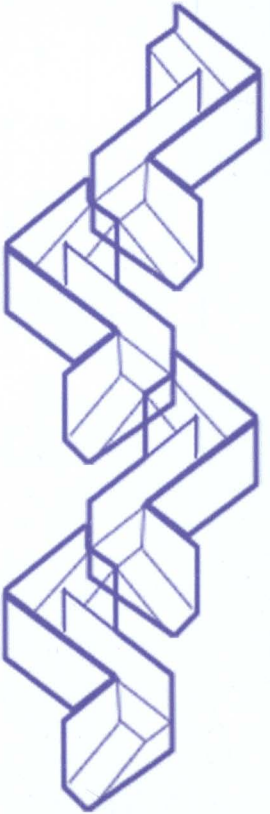
These different case studies show architecturally, the different strategies that have been employed to allow the idea of drifting leading to the discovery of space to occur. a space can create striking experiences all based on the user's choice. The sketches below show how walls are able to direct the person's vision and thus generate intriguing passages. The use of walls and stairs adds to the idea of exploration and the guidance of the user through the different passages that s/he chooses to go through at his/her own risk.



wall



stair

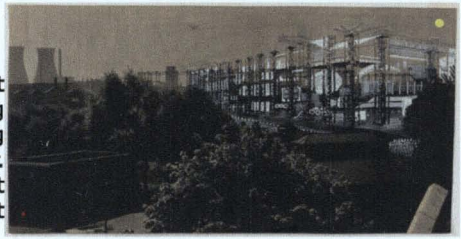


wall+stair

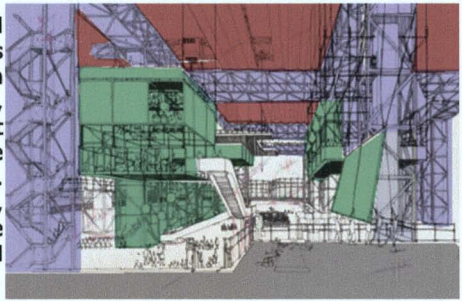
FLEXIBILITY

Users themselves create playfulness. In fact, play is very relative. What I think of as playful might not be playful to you. The different users can thus be given the choice to create their own playful space by supplying them with the basics. Architecture with all its robustness can provide this characteristic of interactivity and flexibility. "The determination of your environment need no longer to be left in the hands of the designer of the building: it can be turned over to you yourself" . (Lacovoni,2004,50) Hence, the building becomes nothing but a skeleton that holds in it the main functions. Moreover, it becomes a space of constant transformation according to the desires of the inhabitants. The structure is viewed differently every time because of its ability to change continually.

FUN PALACE
Cedric Price

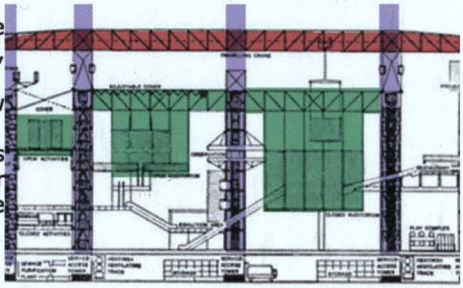


The whole concept behind the building was one that was capable of change and transformation according to the wishes of the users. Therefore, the building became a giant toy between the hands of the user. Price went around asking friends and colleagues about the different kinds of activities that they enjoyed that would induce fun.



The building was mainly made up of a fixed structural grid of steel columns and beams. The other elements are hanging theaters, activity spaces, and cinema screens. They are made out of prefabricated walls, platforms, floors, stairs, and ceiling modules that could be moved and assembled by the cranes. These units allow the formation of the different programs. Other columns contain service and emergency stairs, elevators plumbing and electrical connections. The building becomes a provider of electrical and mechanical services, and the rest is up to the user.

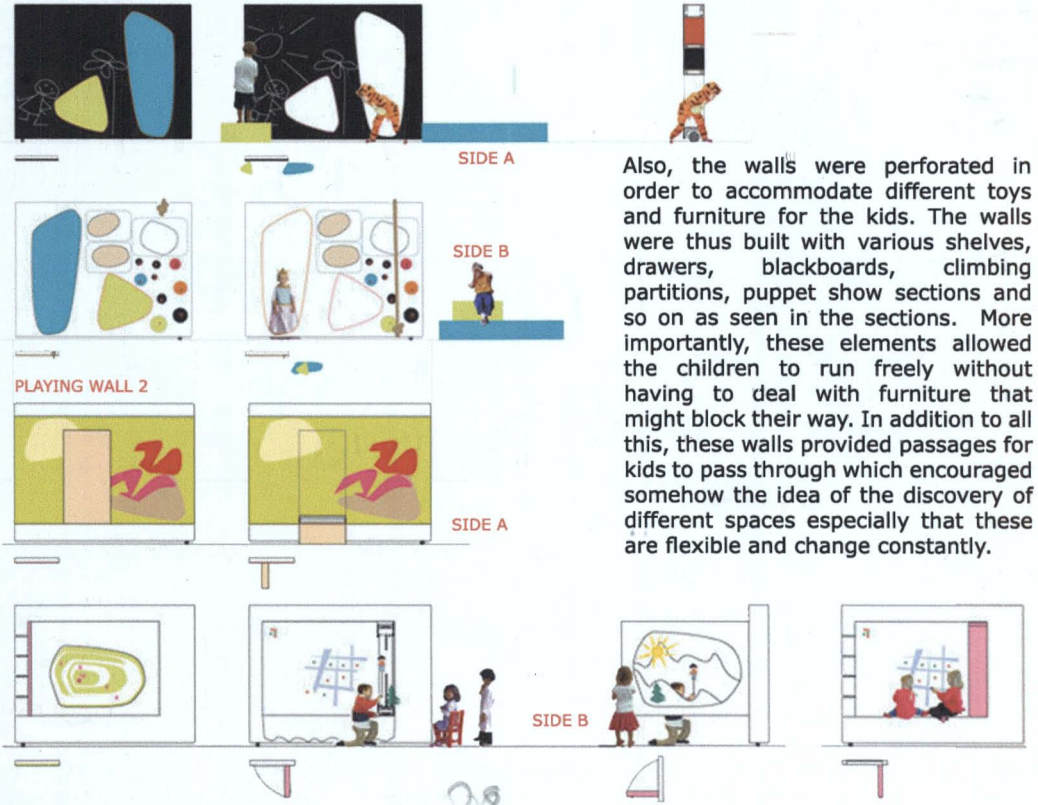
cranes prefabricated elements structural columns and beams



"Choose what you want to do – or watch someone else doing it. Learn how to handle tools, paint, babies, machinery, or just listen to your favorite tune.
Dance, talk or be lifted up to where you can see how other people make things work.
Sit out over space with a drink and tune in to what's happening elsewhere in the city. Try starting a riot or beginning a painting – or just lie back and stare at the sky."(Price)

Tromso Municipality Kindergartens
70 Architecktur

The kindergarten of 662 sqm was designed by 70 architecktur in 2006. The architects wanted to allow the kindergartens to have the possibility of a variety in the use of rooms. In fact, with the use of two adjustable walls that are mainly fixed in one end and having wheels on the other, a wide combination of small and large rooms are obtained. By this, the staff is easily capable of moving these walls according to the children and their needs.

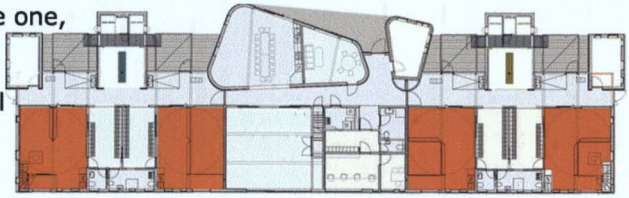


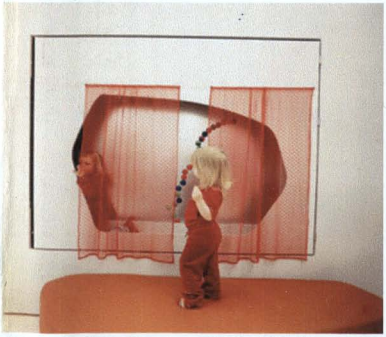
Also, the walls were perforated in order to accommodate different toys and furniture for the kids. The walls were thus built with various shelves, drawers, blackboards, climbing partitions, puppet show sections and so on as seen in the sections. More importantly, these elements allowed the children to run freely without having to deal with furniture that might block their way. In addition to all this, these walls provided passages for kids to pass through which encouraged somehow the idea of the discovery of different spaces especially that these are flexible and change constantly.

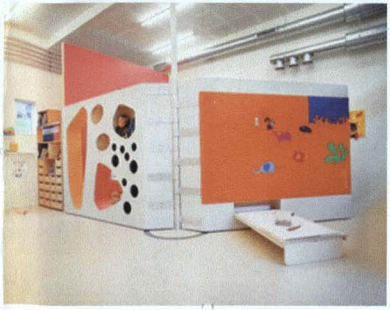
From the plan one can see how the longitudinal space has been divided into several areas on either side linked by the long corridor.

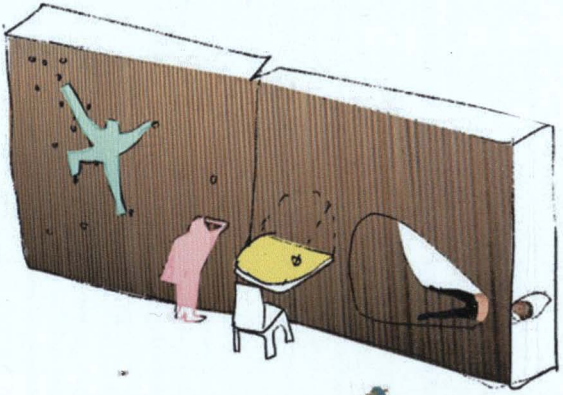
These areas included classrooms and four bases which contain the adjustable walls from one side. From the other side, the kitchen and playing rooms protrude out of the façade and get linked to the exterior playground and the roofed outdoor playground allowing an exploration between the inside and the outside.

Although the plan is a very simple one, it is the adjustable walls that create the playfulness of the space, allowing the kids to control mtheir own desires.









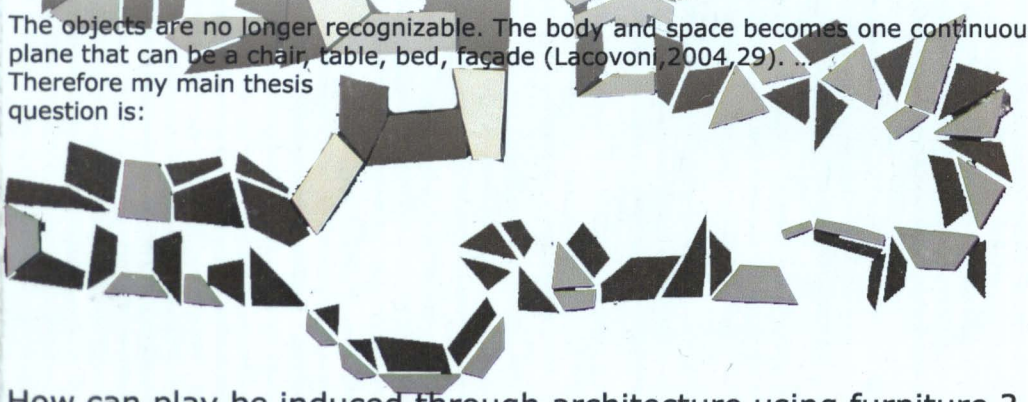
BODY & SPACE

Playing hide and seek led to the different ways in which I was shifting my body and perception, that determined the relationship between the body and space. The different constituents of my house-my playground- were viewed differently; the walls were big towers, the table was a roof, and the chair was a wall. Thus, home became a new terrain every time. Also, winning the game depended very much on the proper use of my senses; trying to hear the slightest, pitter patter of any approaching footsteps, and watching out frantically for any incoming seekers.

In that same way, children in the playground go through the dizzying happiness that "lies in having an environment in which the body can freely establish new forms of relation- the world as seen from upside down."In fact, Henri Lebfevre claims that space is the product of the relationship between body and the material that surrounds it. (Lacovoni,2004,29) Therefore, the architecture of space like my home becomes something that has never been seen before, since for the first time it is viewed not as it is. It should not give any sign of its function through its form, and thus allow for new and various interpretations of that same space.

"In this playground, a table isn't a table and a chair is not a chair not just because we can barely recognize them, but because we have taken the liberty of dismantling and recomposing them as we please" (Lacovoni,2004,29).

The objects are no longer recognizable. The body and space becomes one continuous plane that can be a chair, table, bed, façade (Lacovoni,2004,29). ..
Therefore my main thesis question is:



How can play be induced through architecture using furniture ?

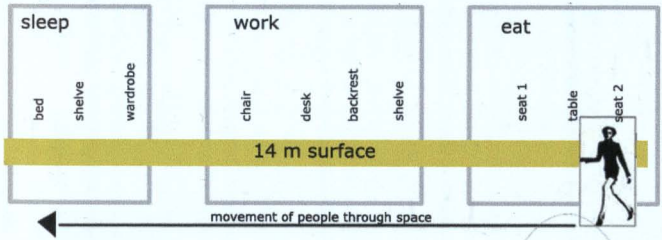
Turn On, London
Alles Wird Gut

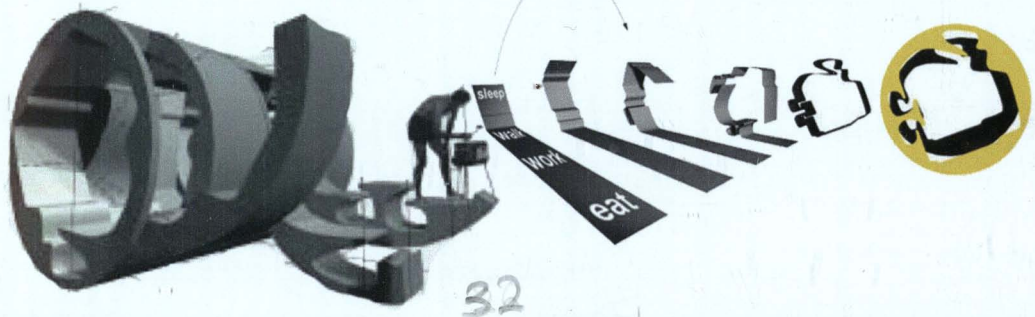
The architecture firm tried to develop a compact living prototype. They ended up with "hamster wheels". The design thus consists of cylindrical shapes that comprise of the main functions of a house: eating, working and sleeping.

The wheel studies the ergonomics of the human being that would fit these functions.Also, as the diagram below shows how they concentrated on the different furniture that are needed while sleeping,working,and eating. They discovered that the length needed for these wheels to contain all these functions was 14 m.

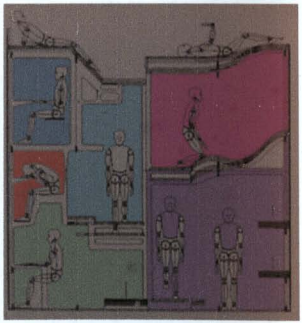
It works in such a way that when you move through it, the function changes. Hence, in the bathroom module, after finishing your shower you wheel around until the sink comes down which will allow you to brush your teeth.With the use of different modules one can create the best suited configurations to cater his/her needs. One can also create a house out of the combination of these wheels.

Seen in section without a person inside it, the structure is not comprehensible.

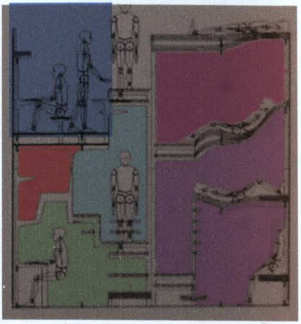


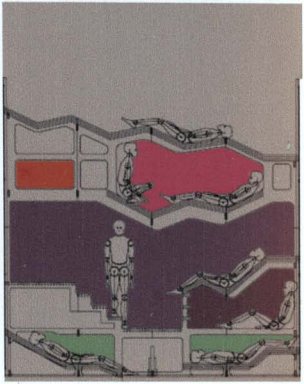


WORK/SPACE/PLY TIME, London
Alex Haw



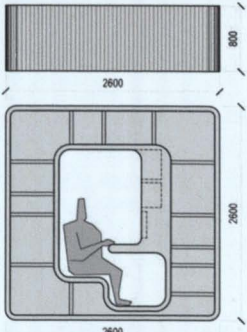
The structure is actually an office space that was designed for a competition which meant to uncover the changing nature of the workplace. The project aimed at exploring the different activities that occur in the workplace, between working, eating, resting and even sleeping. Alex Hawe based his design on the individual, namely on the body. He studied the ergonomic geometries of the human form. Then, he tried to focus on creating the most favorable and comfortable bodily positions that the individual can work in. This led to the formation of unusual spaces that are all open to each other. With the use of plywood sheets that can be assembled and dismantled easily, he was able to create areas where every person had his/her own seating space. Within this 25m2 he has managed to fit a big number of people and also accommodated for circulation by the use of stairs and ladders. Furthermore, the quality of space creates within, is not clear, and therefore, can be viewed in different manners. This would lead to various interpretations of the same space. (Richardson,2009, 200)





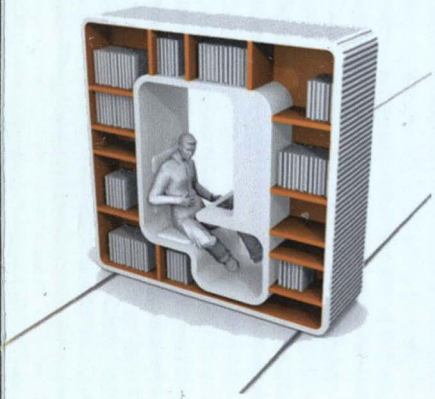
The incubator

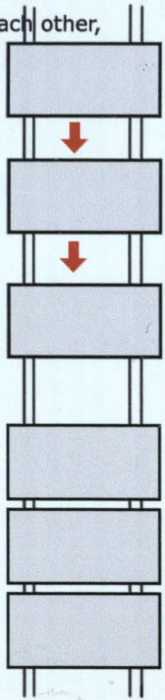
The incubator is a workstation that was designed exclusively for graphic, media, or game designers whose working processes depend very much on the computer. It is a square module that imprints within it the space necessary to fit a seated individual and his/her computer. The remaining parts are made out of shelves that fit books that the user might need while working.



The individual stations are set on tracks and can be dispersed in an open space. Hence, the station can be moved as one pleases. More importantly, the arrangement can be such that it facilitates individual work or team work situations.

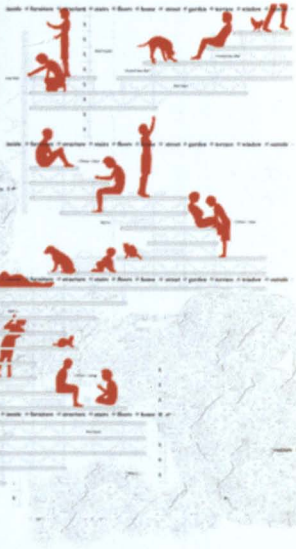
By simply, moving the pods next to each other, a team work situation is acquired. Therefore, extra space is created when the incubators are compacted together which gives flexibility in m space planning in the office.

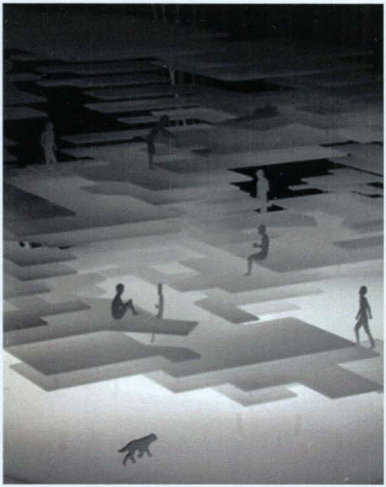


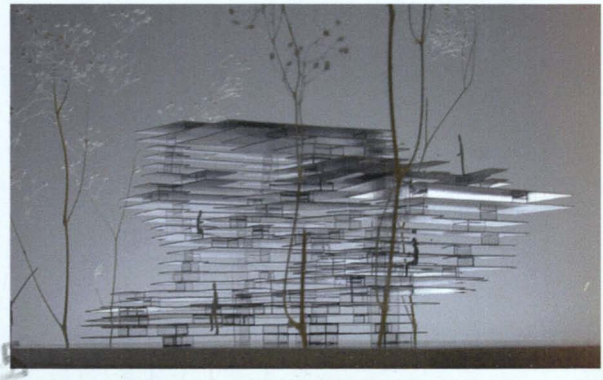


Sou Foujimoto

The space is built of a structure composed of sheets distanced 30 cm from each other. This distance is equal to the average height of a regular Japanese chair, half the height of a desk and double the height of a step. The planks are separated by truss systems. By this, the sheets became the floor, the bench, the bed, the wall, and the step. The different lengths of the horizontal elements allow the percolation of light.







Collages,models,and sketches showing the production of space based on the body of the human being.

		7			9	3	8	
			6			4	5	7
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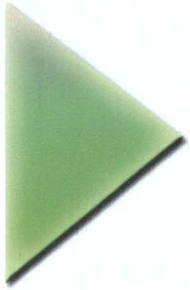
USERS

Since I am tackling the idea of adult play in architecture, then my main users start at the age of 18 and up. These users have to be ones that are willing to play, in order to make use of the building that I am designing. This is an important point to stress on because the mere laying down of toys and games in a space does not entail adults to actually play with them. Therefore, my users have to be people who would want to play with these toys. Consequently, the building has to combine people of different generations, and age groups all mixed to play. However, the building's purpose is not only to play because then, the age group might become limited. Furthermore, the building has to be used constantly, during day and night, and not occasionally so as to reinforce the idea of the same users discovering the space over and over again. Thus, a community of different age groups is formed not occasionally but on purpose. Therefore, the users are the students of a university accompanied by their professors.



PROGRAM

The choice of program came as a natural response to the user group. It is a faculty building that includes both students and professors. A faculty is a place that is not visited by coincidence; rather students go willingly to their classes. Professors spend a considerable amount as well between their offices and the classrooms. As mentioned previously, I want the building to be functioning day and night, and therefore the faculty that I will be designing is none other than my own faculty of architecture and design.

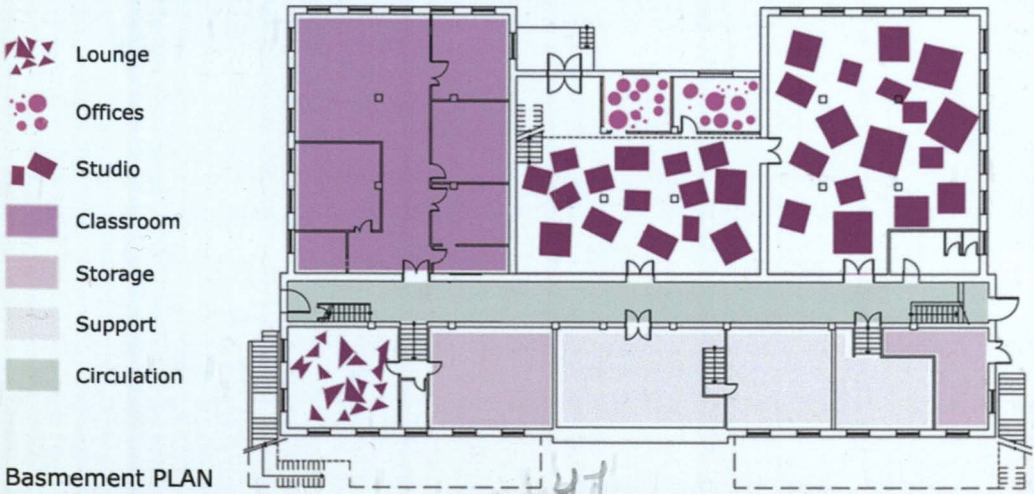
Students and professors spend a lot of time in the department working, eating, sleeping and hanging around. Obviously, this does not happen only during the day, it extends into the late hours of the night, especially for students. Because of the obligations of the curriculum, they are constantly working and not just during midterm and final periods. That is to say that students outside this faculty study the most during the midterms and finals which is proven by the large amount of scholars found in the library during these times. Instead, the department is continually filled up with people working, eating, and sleeping during the nights. Moreover, the faculty combines seriousness and playfulness at the same time. The serious side is the one linked to the more or less strict curriculum; the time where everyone is at work even professors who also have their own dues. The somehow more playful side occurs when people take their breaks, where some eat their lunch together; others smoke their cigarette, and some even enjoy doing a model. Therefore, social interaction is a key element in the generation of fun which is a derivative of playfulness.

Furthermore, the department will combine the new fields of landscape architecture and studio arts. These fields which now belong to the FAFS and FAS respectively share a lot of common academic grounds with the two fields. Furthermore, their lifestyles are very similar to ours. They spend a lot of time working on their projects in their respective schools. Joining the four disciplines together, enhances the education of each by the mere fact of being present in the same building. However, each school will have its own territory and gets linked to the others through common areas.

In order to understand the needs of each field I have studied their academic and social dynamics by analyzing their buildings, and interviewing people within each field. As mentioned before, social interaction is an important element not to be forgotten. Also, within my research I have considered the element of play and whether students and professors actually play.

First, I will start with the study of the building of the department of architecture and design and their corresponding studio and office life.
The current faculty is divided mainly into two main areas. On the southern side are laid out all the administrative, office spaces and seminar rooms, whereas the other side is mostly reserved for studios.

The underground level has always been reserved to first year architecture, graphic design, and landscape architecture that all share common courses together. Although, the space is divided into two areas: one for graphic design students and the other for architecture students first and landscape architects second, it has always been considered to be one space joined by the door that separates them. The fact that they have shared this space has allowed social interaction between them.



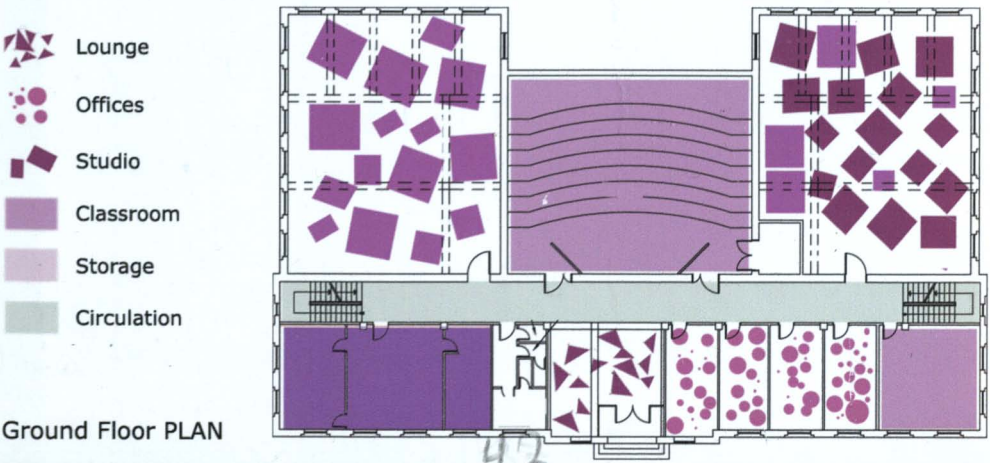
Basmement PLAN

This has been especially beneficial since it exposes the first year students of every field to each other and thus, allows them to form acquaintances and friendships that are needed in the first year because of the change of environment.

The users of the studios on the higher levels are constantly changing every semester according to their number. Currently, the studio on the first level is assigned to the second year architecture students. Since the number of students is big, they are barely fitting inside the studio especially with the presence of their models.

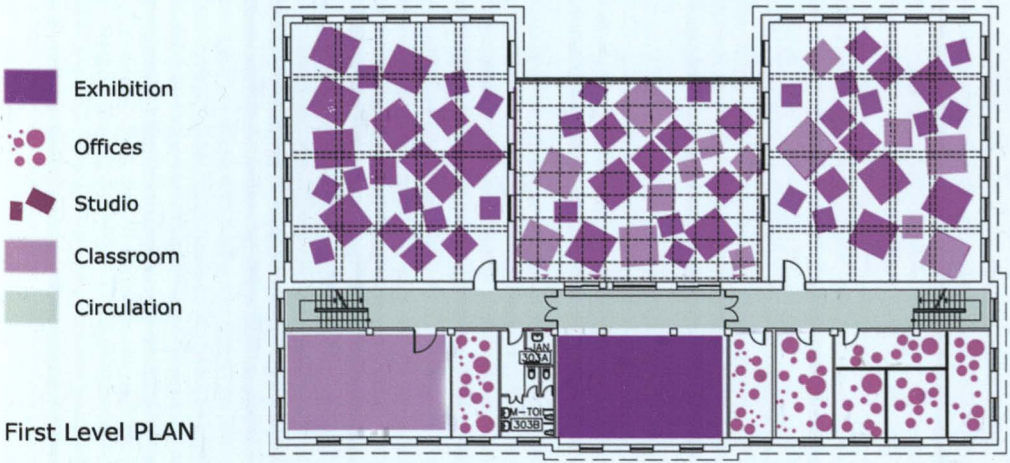
The other studio is shared between two vertical studios. It is important to note here how the third year and fourth year architecture students share vertical studios that allow them to learn from each other, and interact more as opposed to the previous years. Although students tend to group with their colleagues, but this does not prevent the social interaction from happening between both years since they are all located in the same room.

Normally, students use the lockers to separate themselves from the other studio. In some cases, it has been too claustrophobic especially with the lack of light coming in. Moreover, the separation with the use of lockers obviously does not stop noise. Many teachers have complained to their fellow space-users to keep the noise levels down.



Ground Floor PLAN

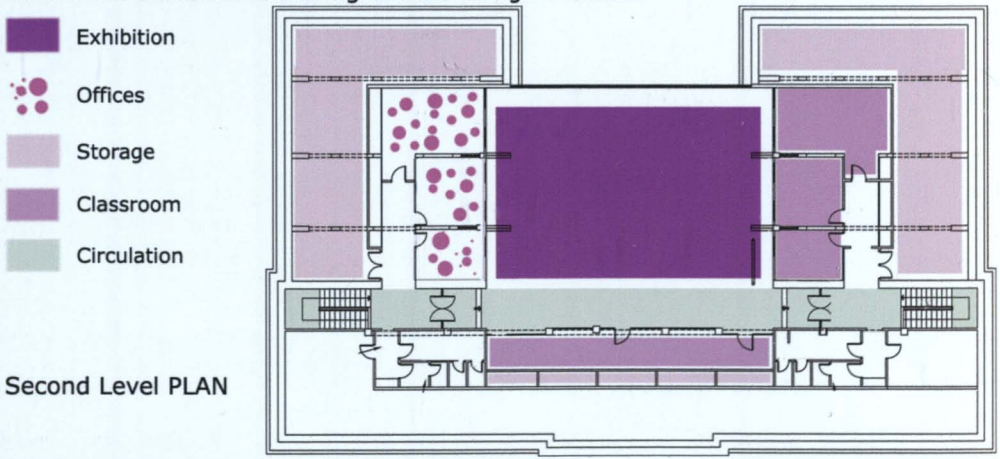
On the first floor, the studio is used by another vertical studio. The middle area is shared between the final year graphic and architecture students. This has proved to be a good arrangement, since both groups are doing their thesis studies and need a quiet and more isolated space that allows inspiration. However, there is not much interaction between the two clusters for no obvious reasons.
The last studio on this level is shared between the second and third year graphic design. The students have also separated themselves with the use of lockers. However, after individual interviews I conducted the communication between the two groups I have concluded that there is not much communication between the two sides.



First Level PLAN

Although studio life has been able to form social acquaintances, however one cannot deny how the common spaces have also managed to allow different people to communicate between each other. When I say common spaces, I mean the outdoor seating and smoking areas, and the indoor lounges. This is mainly due to the fact that when these places are visited the individuals would be seeking a change from whatever they are doing. It is at these times that play occurs the most.

The second floor is used by the Masters in Urban Planning and Design students. They take over the eastern side of the floor, while the western side is reseverved for offices of professors. The middle space is an exhibition space. Exhibition spaces are mainly located on the first and second floor, in the allotted space. However, sometimes because of the simultaneous use of this space, students exhibited their work in the corridors of the department. Personally, I enjoy these exhibitions since I get to know what other students are doing in their design courses.



Second Level PLAN

Office spaces are another important part in the faculty. The office spaces are distributed throughout the levels. Generally, the offices are shared between professors. However, since the full timer needs the space most of the time, s/he is the one who decides on the furniture within. The visiting teachers share the space with the full timer. All the offices consist mainly of the main desk, the teacher's chair, the guests' chairs, and the shelves. It is important to note how some of the offices have a board where they hang photographs, interesting projects, and anything that they like. The office space actually is a very personal space. These elements that the user adds in his/her office make the place more playful. Hence, it is up to the user to create his/her own world of play within this box. Moreover, teachers spend their time in the office working, so the actual time where they might play is on their break time. However, the teachers do not have a lounge allotted to them in particular, so there is no space particular space for relaxation, or eating, or communication with other members other than their own offices.

The landscape design studios and classes are located in the building of the faculty of agricultural and food sciences (FAFS). Thus the building is shared with people of different majors. After doing an interview with a Landscape architect, I learned that all the levels share two main studios. Each studio is shared by two different classes according to the number of students. Hence, they share their tables and their chairs together. However, since their design classes are not in the same time slot they do not use the same space at the same time. But this still creates problems, because students would still want to use the space outside design hours which would result in students searching for other resorts mainly the architecture building. Although the space is shared, social interaction between students does not occur a lot as one might think especially that they don't have a lounge appointed to them; rather the lounge is shared with the rest of the users of the building.

Moreover, the exhibitions are held in their studios or in the corridors that link the FAFS department building.

Landscape architects have to take agriculture courses which are specific to them. Therefore, I should accommodate in my building for additional classrooms. The laboratory sessions are going to remain in the FAFS' building. Greenhouses and plots for experimental gardening that allow students to explore and discover will be added to the program.

The fine arts department is mainly located in Nicely Hall. However, the classrooms are dispersed all around the building which leaves the rest of the classes allotted to other courses. The painting, watercolor, and drawing classes are given on the last floor of the building. These classes are shared between these different courses. Sculpture and ceramics courses are given in the underground levels opening up towards the green oval. Art history courses are attended in the department of architecture and design. Since, their classes are scattered around the building, the studio arts' students do not have a common lounge.

The annual exhibitions that are programmed mainly happen within the classrooms and in the corridor spaces of the building.

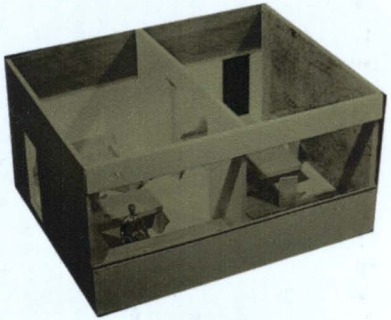
From this, i deduce that there is a lack of studio space shared by all the schools.Therefore, flexibility is a must in order to be able to fit all these schools together. Moreover, more lounges should be incorporated within the program so as to allow more chances of encounter leading to the creation of a community.

Furthermore, the program will contain mainly, the common needs of every school which are basically studios, classrooms, offices, exhibition spaces, and lecture halls.
For recreational purposes, the program will be injected with lounges, play areas, sleeping areas, dance rooms, free rooms. These rooms will be dispersed all around the new faculty so as to be shared by all the users thus promoting interaction and communication between the different schools.
Although the following case studies are not Design faculties, they expose strategies of flexibility, zoning, and interaction that interest me in my design.

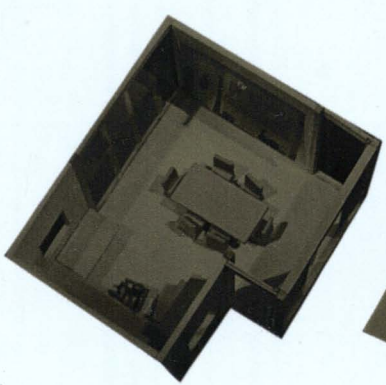
STATA BUILDING,USA
Frank Ghery

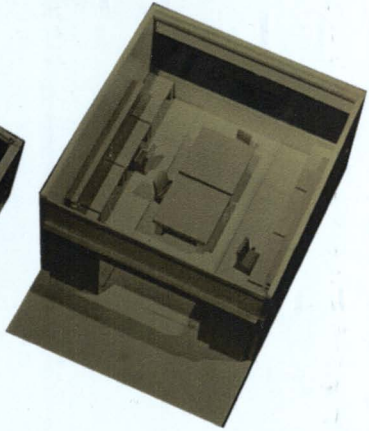
He divided the spaces after having studied the kinds of relationships present in these workspaces. The three main spaces are:

1)Private (Closed) Space: offices of faculty and researchers and graduate students. Every office should house one faculty , two staff or postdocs, or four graduate students. He was trying to find the right office size that would allow the 4 graduates to work comfortably. The main elements became the furniture that would actually delineate their offices. Furniture such as: office desk, personal and guest seating, meeting areas, files, shelving, and whiteboards.



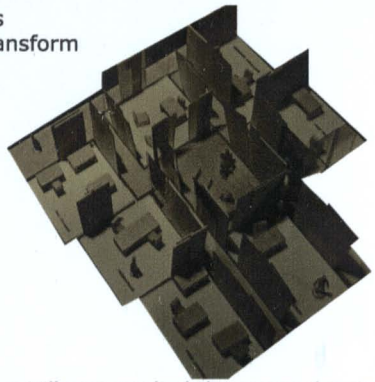
2) Collaborative (Flexible) Space:

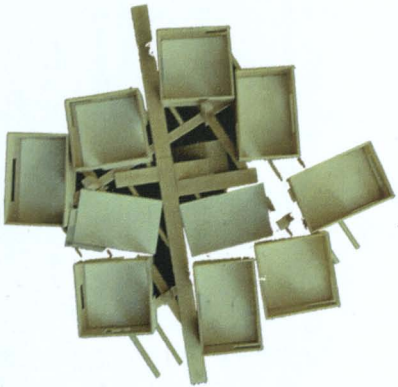




these spaces are mainly reserved for research labs. The research groups were seen as families who lived inside a larger neighborhood of researchers. Ghery divided these groups into cultures from which he extracted some sort of architectural relationship to the current state of research spaces and the interaction between the different people.

The Japanese House was one of these cultures . He was particularly interested in the sliding screens that can transform smaller private spaces
into larger open spaces.
The main advantage of these screens was the flexibility that they provided which made the user group the prime definers of Vtheir space.





The Orangutan Village: studied the group dynamics of the researchers who basically, retreated to a quiet study or to a lower level that included conversation and interaction.

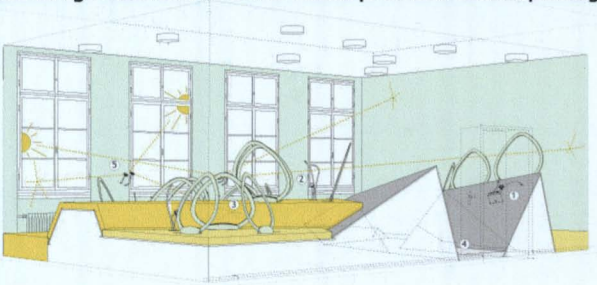
The Colonial Mansion: is constituted of a main office at the higher level, whereas the meeting rooms, lab spaces, and open-plan student work spaces are left below.

The Prairie Dog Town: The private spaces are set at a lower level, when the flexible spaces are put above.
The interior design of the center provides opportunities of deep individual focus and social interaction. This idea is manifested by using open staircases and moving the offices away from social areas to promote quiet work.

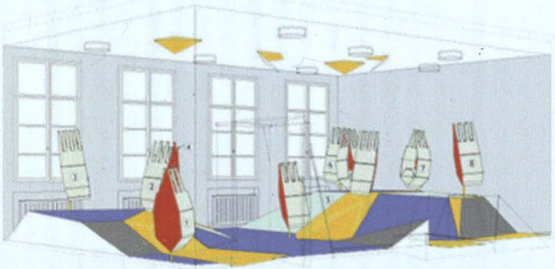
3)Preserved open spaces: are the main places where people group together which would allow more interaction and cooperation between researchers. These place are mainly, the café, dining room, a shared reading room, seminar room, outdoor terrace.(Joyce,2004,33)

Erika-Mann Elementary School , Berlin
Baupiloten

This School was refurbished in 2002 based on "The World of the Silver Dragon", a fictional setting created by the architects and the children. The floors and the walls of the school's upper stories were changed into a modular seating area. The walls turned into surprising elements that protruded out of them to create these seating areas and in some cases provided secret passages between these walls.

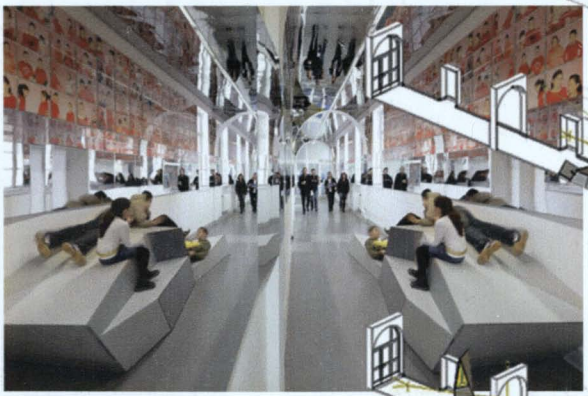


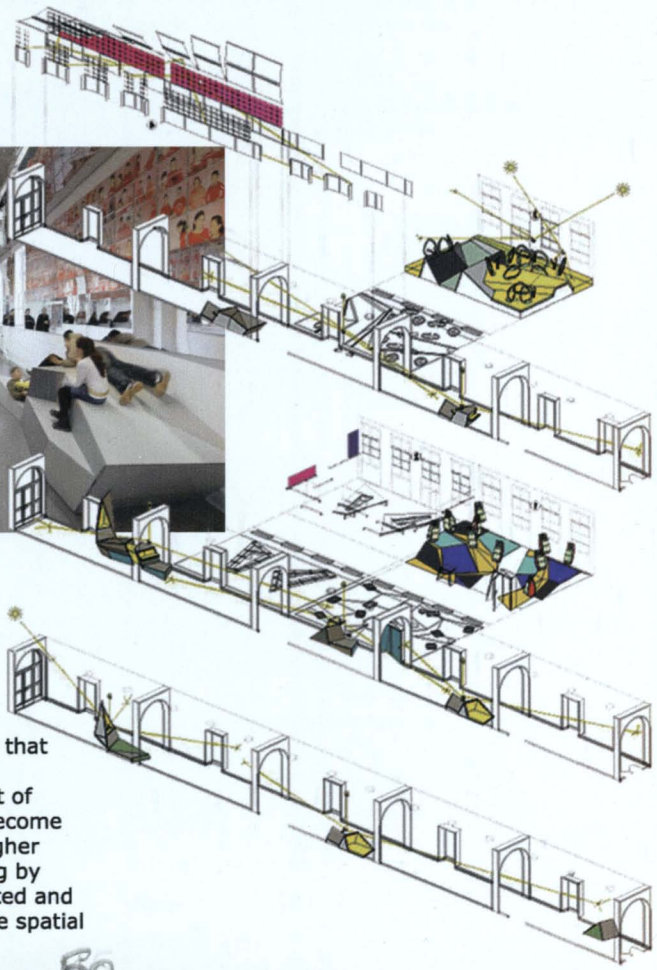
A "Chill Room" is made up of topography of seating-pedestals. The petals are dispersed around the pedestal and can are large enough for 2 to 3 children. These petals are flexible since they can be formed manually and can thus allow the kids to form their own environment.



The "Snuffle Garden" is also made of a landscape of horizontal and sloped surface. The flowers are laid out randomly inside. They are wooden fold-out-chairs on which children can sit –individually or together.

Erika-Mann Elementary School, Berlin
Baupiloten





The "Kaleidoscope" area is made up of an endless array of mirrors that distort the geometrical space. Moreover, the furniture peaks out of the wall, and thus the children become the actors of the space. On a higher level, a series of images are hung by the children that would be reflected and thus can transform constantly the spatial perception.

Program:

- 2 Lecture Halls Small lecture hall, 250 sqm Large lecture hall, 320 sqm
-2 Lounges , 90 sqm each

-1 Large Lounge and Kitchen, 200sqm
-1 Large Exhibition,250 sqm

-3 Exhibitions, 90 sqm
-2 Conference rooms, 150 sqm

-8 Classrooms of varying areas ranging between 50sqm and 150 sqm
-4 Workshops,120sqm

-1 Drawing/Painting Room 100sqm
- 1 Theater Room, 70 sqm

- 1 Music/Choir Room,60 sqm
- 3 Main Offices,50 sqm

-21 Offices average area,20sqm
-1 Library, 180 sqm

-1 Storage, 100sqm
-14 Studios

-Studios for each class, 200 sqm
-Studio for graduates,100 sqm

-Circulation/Lobbies
-Toilets/Showers

SITE

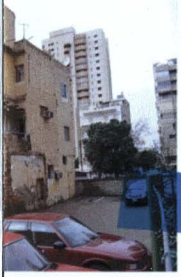
Since the American University of Beirut (AUB) is the only university having all its faculties in one location, it was obvious for the site to be located in its territory. The AUB site is divided into three parts: the upper campus directly linked to Bliss street, the lower campus directly linked to Corniche or Paris avenue, and the middle campus which links the upper and lower parts. The main characteristics that I was searching for were linked to the way the department functions as a community; a rather isolated community that is pretty territorial and to the idea of the discovery of a place. Therefore, the upper campus area was out of the question since it is too exposed to other university goers, which would lead to the infiltration of the people.

The lower campus is already used by the various departments and hence there are no empty lots that can be exploited. Finally, the middle campus' core is made out of a big forest that is part of the historical heritage, and one of the only green sites left in Beirut. The current location of the department is in the middle campus. The reason behind not choosing the current site is that I want the building to be less obvious than now since it stands alone between the engineering department and the corporation yard. Moreover, it is directly connected to the lower promenade of the AUB site which entails the presence of students as well.

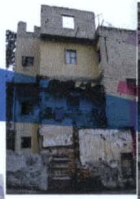
Therefore, another place in AUB was to be found.

The ideal location of the site was the current parking lots reserved for AUB employees. The site is actually located outside of the gates however, is still owned by AUB. The space can be divided into two main parts. The first part is surrounded on the southern side by the Scientific Research building(SRB), on the eastern side by the New Women's Dorm Hall (NWDH), and on the western side by the corporation yard and the residential building in front of it. The northern side is made up of a residential area of somewhat tall buildings that make up the cityscape. The site becomes a place in between; a place hidden away to be found and explored by the users; a pit. In fact, the site is currently delimited by the blocking walls of the nearby AUB buildings which make the space more isolated. Furthermore, another boundary posed is the existing residential building that cuts into the site. These elements give the site more enclosure and complexity.

It is important to note that from the pit one can see the neighboring buildings that are in the distance, such as the Vandcyk Hall, and the building in front.

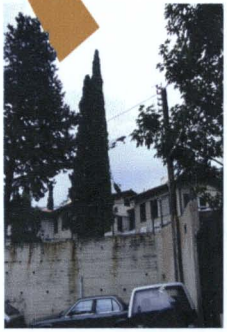


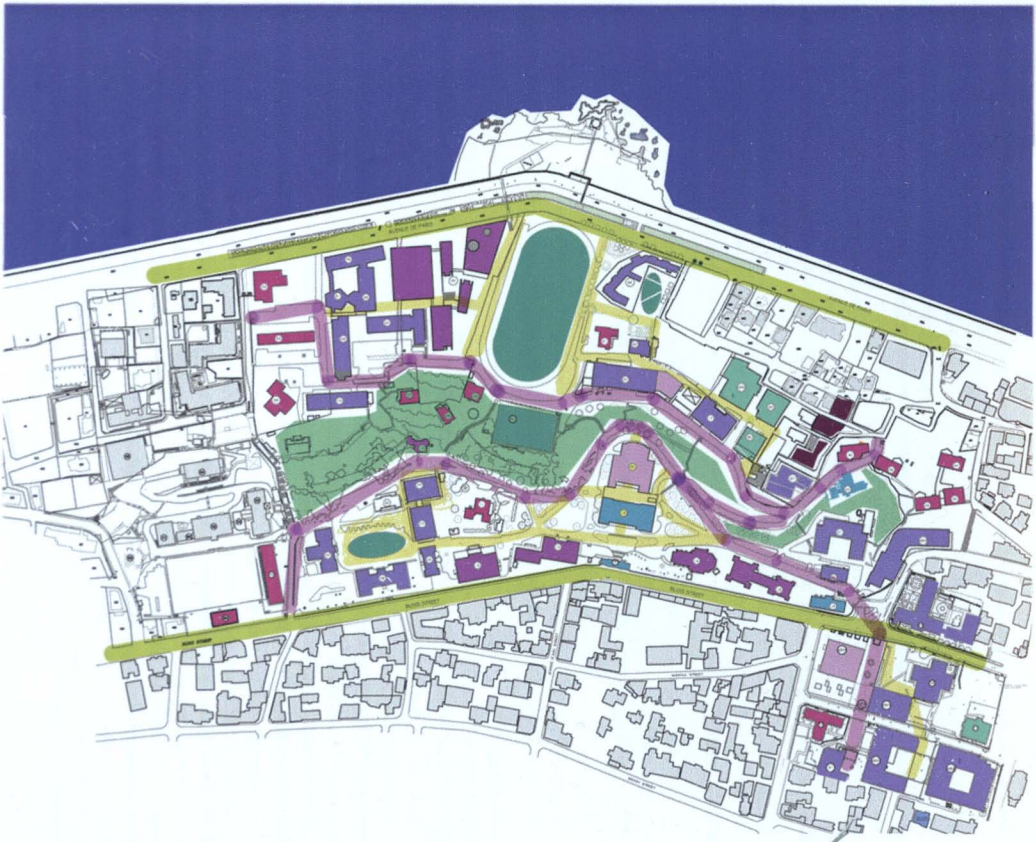




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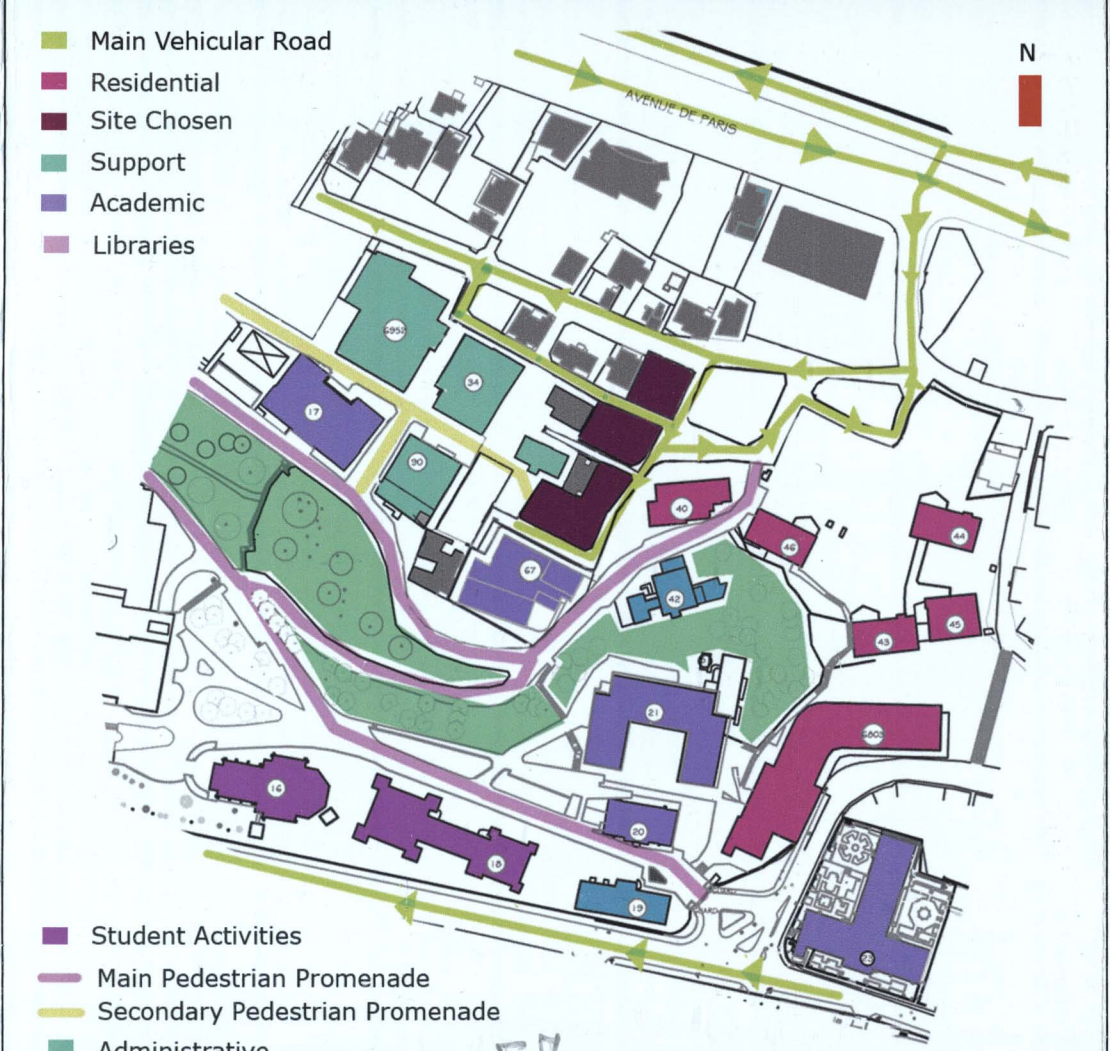
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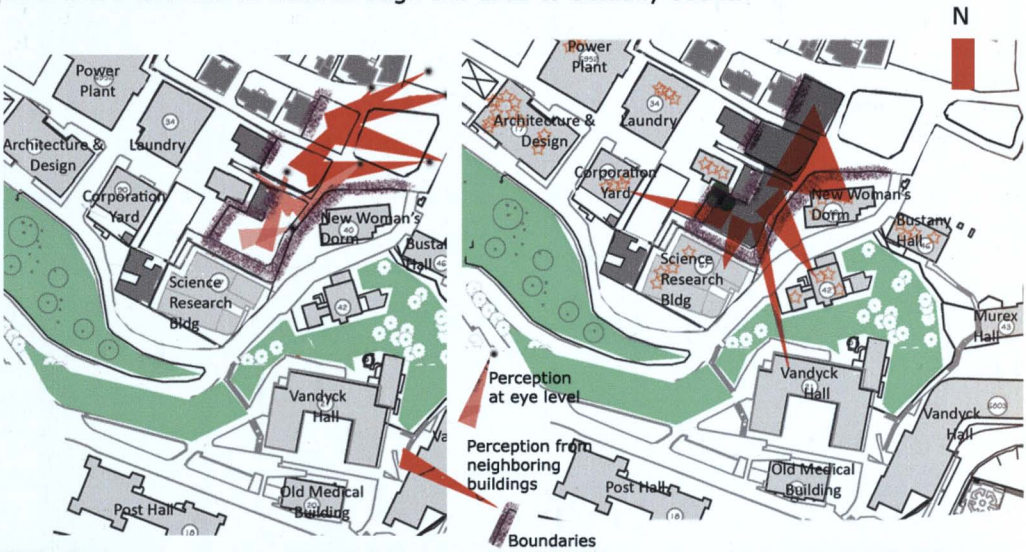
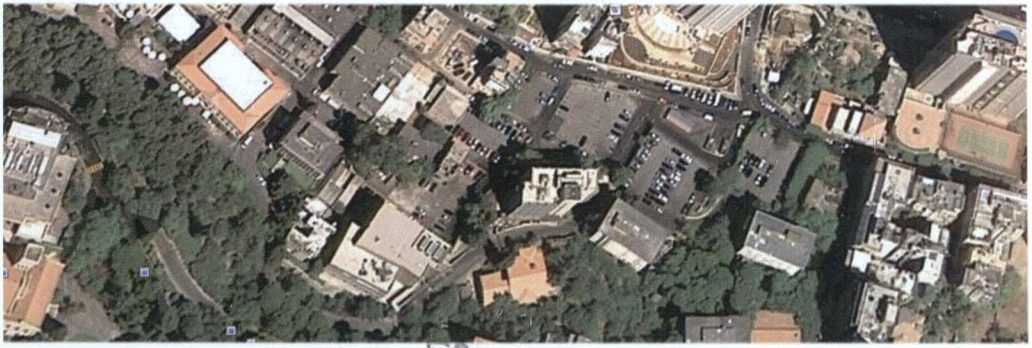
Student Activities
Main Pedestrian Promenade
Secondary Pedestrian Promenade
Administrative

The whole site is then dissected by a road that leads up to the gate. The second part of the place which is located in front of the first parking lot is surrounded by the same residential area on the northern and western side. On the eastern side however, the site is completely exposed. Hence, one can see the site from afar, unlike the second part where one has to walk through the area to actually see it.





Therefore, the first part of the site becomes completely linked to AUB, whereas the second part becomes linked to the city. The part that is exposed to AUB can be connected at two different levels based on the pedestrian promenades designed by the Facilities Planning and Designing Unit(FPDU). The FPDU who are in charge of the design of the master plan of the whole campus, are keen on the conservation of the primary and secondary promenades (shown in figure) . On one hand, the connection to the main path occurs through the SRB's ground floor level. On the other hand, the connection to the secondary walkway happens directly through its extension from the support facilities' area.

The site, although lower from the surrounding AUB buildings, cannot be perceived easily while walking. This is due to the fact that the SRB building hides its southern side away especially since its ground level is much higher. Also, the NWDH conceals its eastern side. Therefore, the only point where the location can be viewed from AUB while walking on campus is between SRB and NWD buildings.

Exposure to the city/AUB

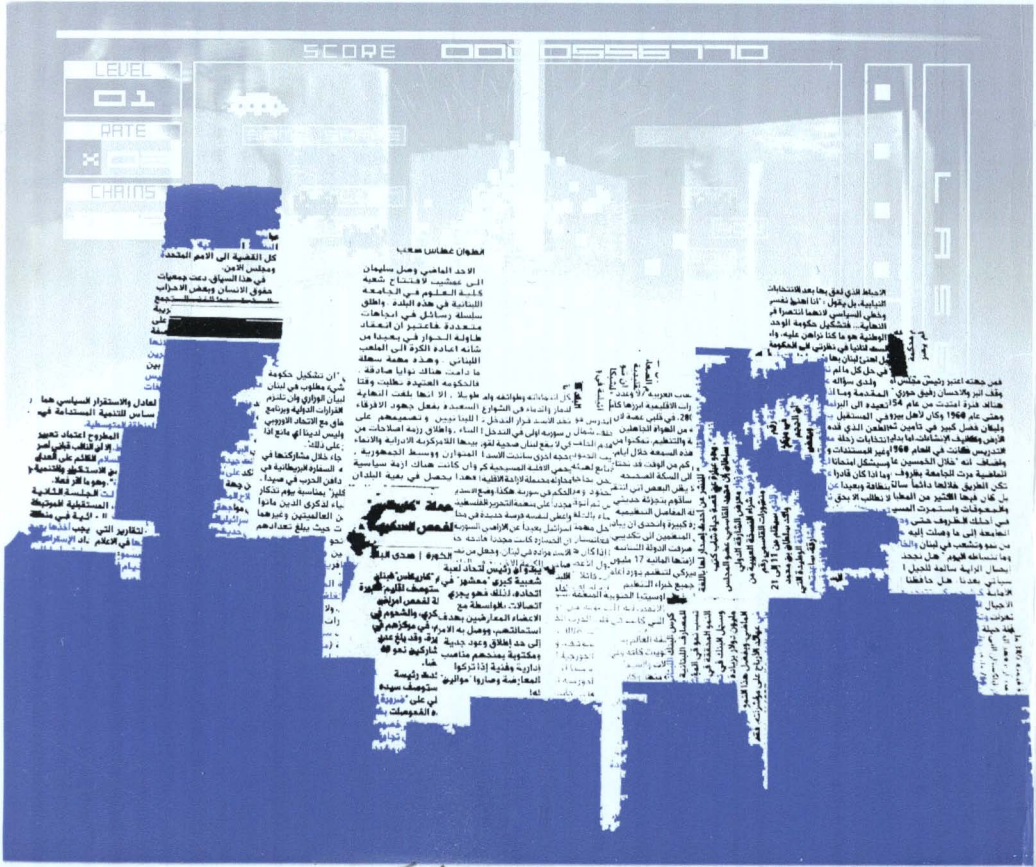
Chosen Site

Greenery

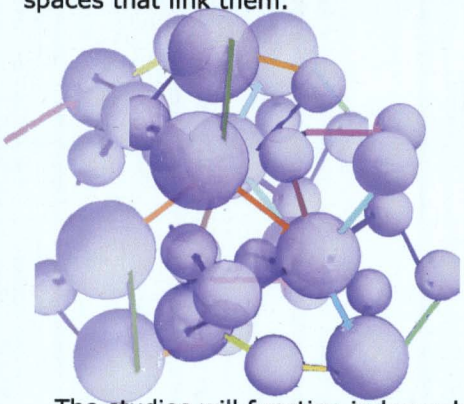
Boundaries

DESIGN METHODOLOGY

In video game design, the main focus is given to the user and the actions that s/he is going to take when playing the game. The actions s/he undertakes defines the game itself like in Pac Man the main action is walking, in Monopoly the main action is trading. Therefore, the action also known as "chore mechanic" that is generated can also be done.

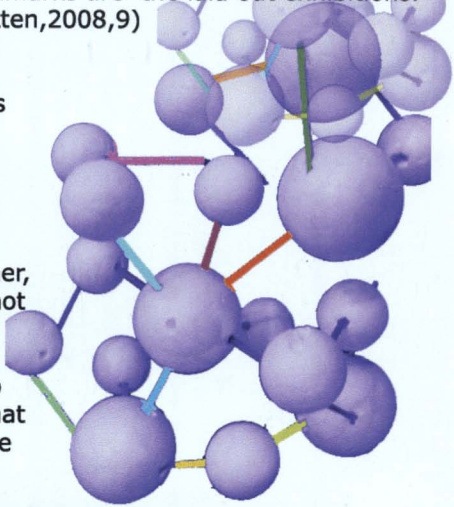


The main design starts with the dissection of the program. Starting at the most general level, the different schools that will form the new faculty will act on their own. Each school will be treated as a part of the whole. They are joined together through the communal spaces that link them.

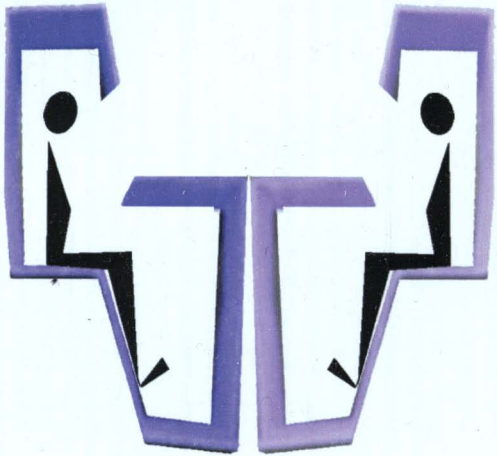


The space is laid out in such a way that is a reminder of Kevin Lynch's Five Elements of Urban Planning: Paths, Edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. The nodes are constitutes the space in which the students and facult members intersect. The corridors and connections are the paths. The studios are the districts. The edges are the buildings skeleton. Lastly, the landmarks are the laid out exhibitions. (Totten,2008,9)

The studios will function independently from each other, therefore the emphasis will be on trying to create studios that function on their own. They become districts of their own, set within certain boundaries . The building will allow students to freely roam around the system of spaces, speak with one another, exchange ideas, and help one another not necessarily defined by a linear path. Moreover, the students become the creators of their own space. Each studio will have its own distinctive character that changes every semester with the change of space.



However, studios will also be connected to the rest of the buildings. The connections between the different studios within the same school and within the other become a very important element in the design.

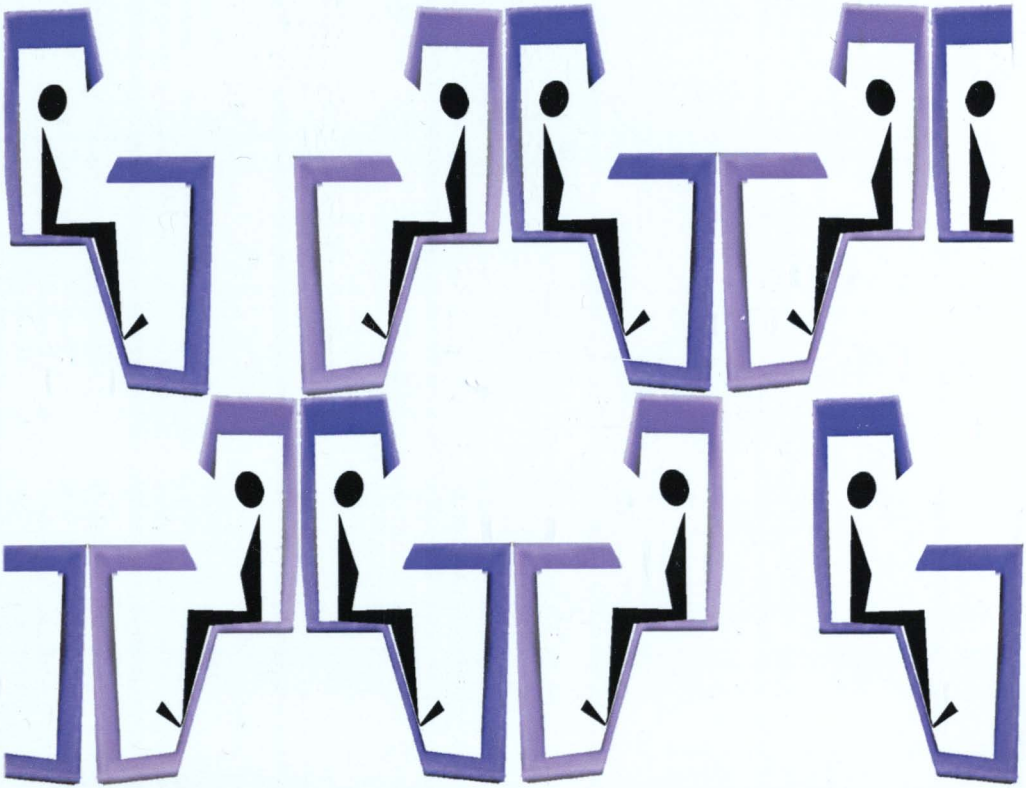


The main tool of design is furniture. With this furniture I have studied how a space for example a studio can be playful. The studio is mainly made out of tables, stools, chairs, and in some cases, panels.

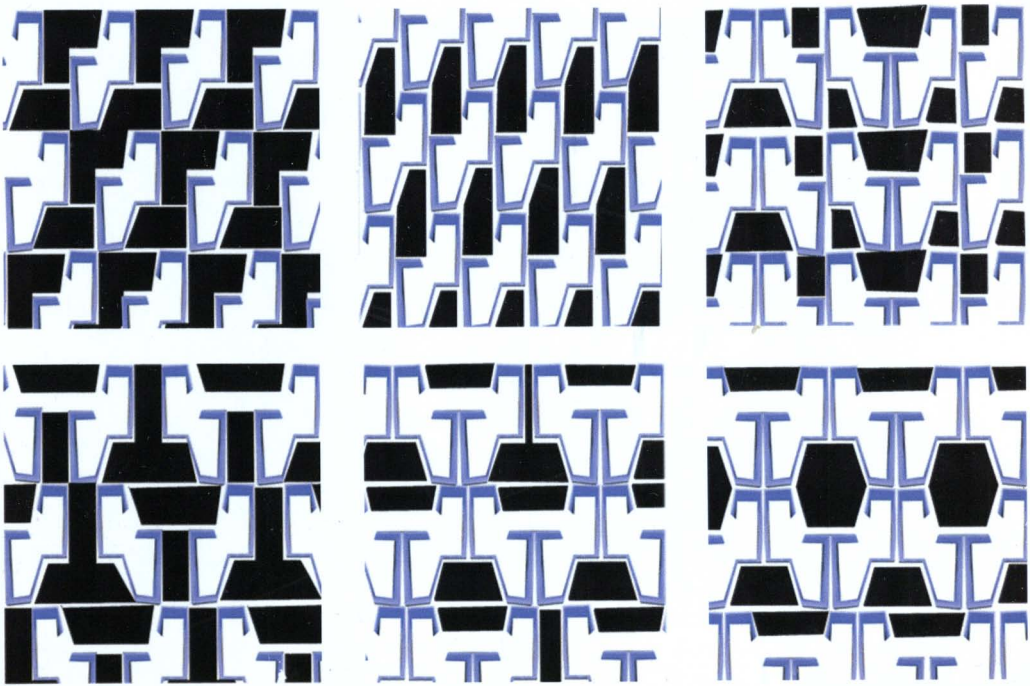
The module that I have designed incorporates all those elements. Moreover, the study of what happens in the studio was to be considered. These modules allow students to work alone, face to face, and to work next to each other in groups of 2, 3, 4. The arrangements of these units will result in the formation of intriguing spaces between them. The modules thus are the walls of the spaces between them.

Therefore, these elements become the building blocks of the design.

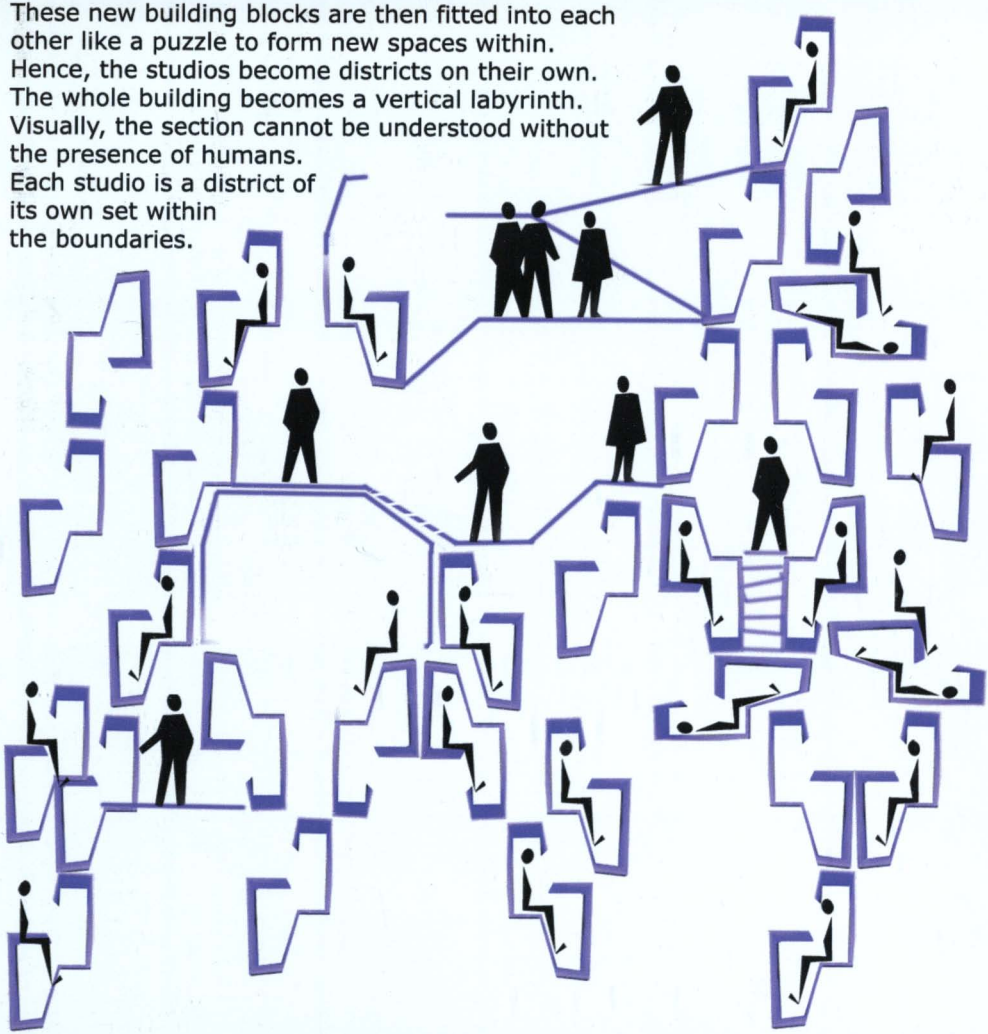
In the first case of arrangements, the modules are put facing each other. In the second case, the blocks are put beneath each other creating a zigzag form. Then, within each case, every module is distanced from the other, so as to allow a larger space to be formed. After that the arrangements are mixed with each other resulting in different interesting forms. Also these spaces are not obvious to the naked eye, they are rather hidden and therefore, cannot be discovered easily.



Moreover, playing with the units resulted in the formation of different configurations. By simply mirroring the module another form has been created. In this case, the student is invited to sit and work alone with nothing but a panel in front of him. This configuration is used when students would want to sit and work or meditate alone away from the rest of the people. Another pattern was formed by the mere rotation of the module: the students can now sleep in the units.



These new building blocks are then fitted into each other like a puzzle to form new spaces within. Hence, the studios become districts on their own. The whole building becomes a vertical labyrinth. Visually, the section cannot be understood without the presence of humans. Each studio is a district of its own set within the boundaries.



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