

Master-/ Diplomarbeit

On Billowing

ausgeführt zum Zwecke der Erlangung des akademischen Grades einer
Diplom-Ingenieurin

unter der Leitung von O.Univ.Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Dr.phil. Kari Juhani Jormakka
E259 Institut für Architekturwissenschaften

eingereicht an der Technischen Universität Wien
Fakultät für Architektur und Raumplanung

von
Maria Magdalena Zeller
0126659
Taubstummengasse 2/18
1040 Wien

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On Billowing

①

Special Thanks to

my dear aunt Valentina for always believing in me;
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and especially my husband Cornelis who supports me in all my endeavours.

*For my Grandma
Marianne*

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“...the use of characteristic methods of a discipline to criticize the discipline itself, not in order to subvert it, but in order to entrench it more firmly in its area of competence.”

Clement Greenberg, Partisan Review, 1939

Billowing & No Ideology

Since Leon Battista Alberti’s theoretical overturning of ‘Vitruvius Ten Books of Architecture’ with his own, architecture has found itself broadcasting ever – changing alibis that define it as an artistic practice, the result of philosophical or political theory, or the product of measurable scientific data. This latter tendency is currently enjoying a resurgence in the profession as new courtships between program, technology, and sustainability emerge. However it aims toward no ultimate scientific truth, no penultimate discovery and no unifying theory for or against which its practitioners might continually drive. Instead, architectural development today, even the scientifically biased ones, tend to be somewhat elastic affairs. They rely on day to day, technological opportunities and happy accidents of yet unclaimed material palettes, programmatic arrangements, or digital processes. This elasticity opens architecture to the influence of manufacturing techniques, natural metaphors, personal relationships and an endless stream of seemingly weak forces. The susceptibility of this influence is however a great strength. It allows architecture to swim through the manifold currents of contemporary culture – emerging with new opportunities that enable the testing, adopting, and reforming of new formal and conceptual horizons.

In the absence of broad consensus, but bound by related interests in the specifics of these influences, smaller groups of architects converse casually, although rarely converge to tackle the intractable, much less produce anything as passé as a manifesto. Instead a system of ad hoc dialogues has formed. Ironically, architectural dialogue never been quite as much fun – or so informal.

But this relaxed form of dialogue comes with a price. In the absence of the articulated ideologies of yesteryear, or even their fruitful “oppositions” we are left with neither a collective consensus nor any prescriptive direction as to how architecture might proceed. If anything, it is clear that in a seemingly canon free architectural world, we no longer have an obvious vehicle with which to unite developments across the broadest of generational spectrums. This does not mean that meta–themes are not somehow in play, only that the diversity and volume of our group discourses obscure any larger theme. In the absence of a manifesto, we posit that any larger picture, if it is to exist at all, must arise from a collective of smaller and somehow tangentially related interests. There is a presence of multiple discussions dancing around the topic of aesthetics, affect, effect, sensation, beauty and other forms of sensory or emotive experience. This does not preclude thought, but rather introduces the idea that sensations associated with aesthetic experience are largely independent of active intellection and that the relationship between our architecture and us can be more than *only* linguistically and intellectually based.

Such a shift anticipates a conjoining of Renaissance anthropomorphism with Modernism’s rote mechanical – cum – political equalities into newly re scaled version of the Copernican principle, where, in the world of human sensation, *there are simply no privileged viewers.*



***The
Billow***

Introducing the Billow

Our design for the New Taipei City Contemporary Arts Museum developed “post-indexical”¹ features as it became more about atmosphere, where we would rather change the modes of alteration, than about to fully understand the process of creation of such effects.

The form of the museum took on the persona of its spectators or at least what we imagined the energy of the people to be when moving through a contemporary art museum. We wanted people to move concentrically, smoothly, eliminating the sharp turns; the ascending slopes showcasing each and one of them visitors into protagonists.

It is lifted off the ground, where the sense of public space is on the forefront, it belongs to anybody, no longer an exclusive possession of the building itself. Lifted up, so you would walk up, where you can feel spiritually elevated, where you leave behind the secularities.

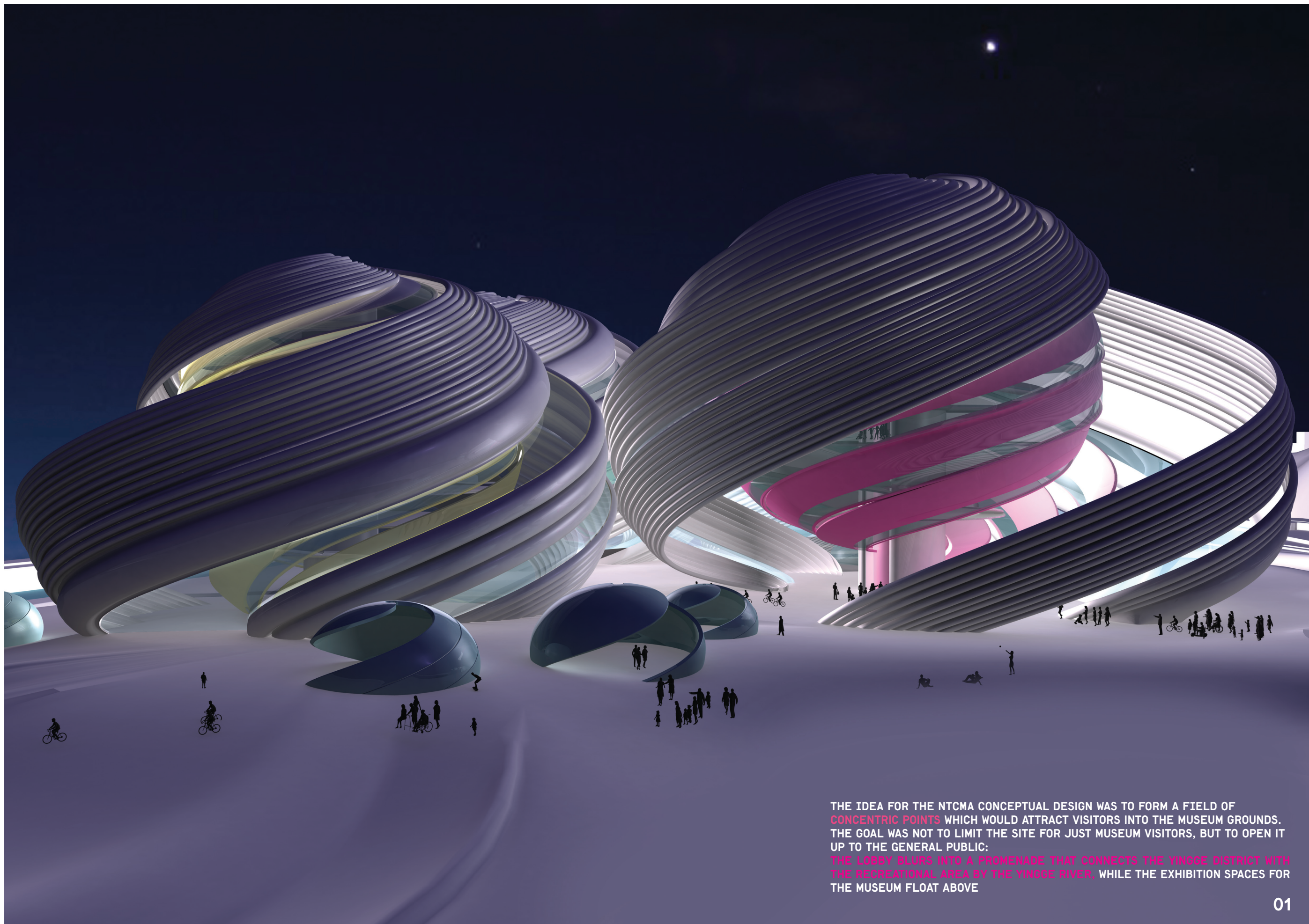
This action of lifting is tying back to Corbusier’s advocacy for a wide, democratic space through the use of pilotis: we lift the building up through this massive cylindrical core to create a generous promenade that is encouraging everybody approaching the site, to freely move throughout, reaching different destinations, resting, exploring, learning, chatting. Openings are created following the tessellation of the grid describing the polygonal object, where the standard mapping orthogonal mesh has been changed in order to have a different style of shaping possibilities of the object. The primitive is not a single flat surface but the volume of a sphere. By opening and developing the surface a new condition arises; the ribbons that reach into the ground are a welcoming gesture that should encourage people to actually engage with the building and being led into exploring its interiority.

The landscape works with the building in order to create a broad space that is designed to create private niches where to sit and have lunch or just read. Plinth and object are created independently to create an interesting condition, where one starts to look at the volumes and the awkwardness that builds up between them.

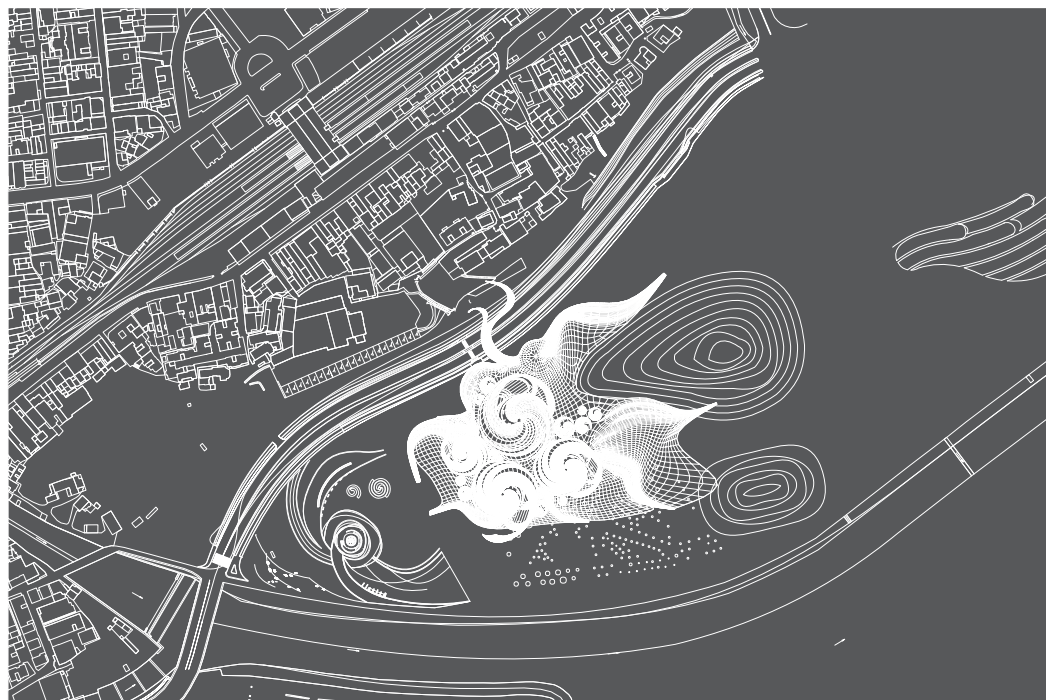
Also we developed a strong interest in autonomy: we did not want to arrange the program all under one roof. We rather organized it in sections and put together a kit of parts to view the whole rather than shove everything in one single object.

We like autonomy, because it reveals the purity of the form.

¹ Kipnis, Jeff. “@\$#!#!!”
Lecture Sci-Arc,
Los Angeles
2008



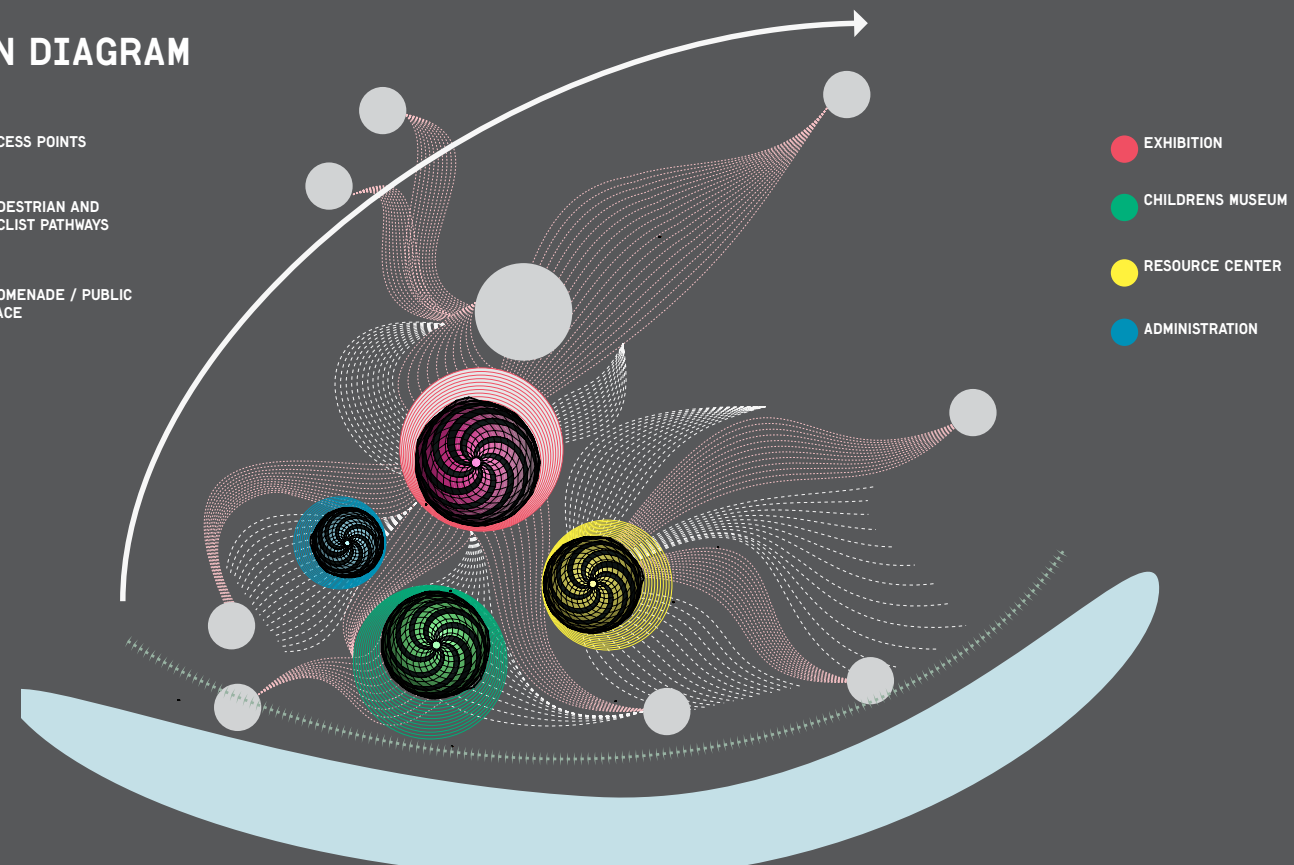
THE IDEA FOR THE NTCMA CONCEPTUAL DESIGN WAS TO FORM A FIELD OF CONCENTRIC POINTS WHICH WOULD ATTRACT VISITORS INTO THE MUSEUM GROUNDS. THE GOAL WAS NOT TO LIMIT THE SITE FOR JUST MUSEUM VISITORS, BUT TO OPEN IT UP TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC: THE LOBBY BLURS INTO A PROMENADE THAT CONNECTS THE YINGGE DISTRICT WITH THE RECREATIONAL AREA BY THE YINGGE RIVER, WHILE THE EXHIBITION SPACES FOR THE MUSEUM FLOAT ABOVE



SITEPLAN 1:3000

CIRCULATION DIAGRAM

- ACCESS POINTS
- PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST PATHWAYS
- PROMENADE / PUBLIC SPACE

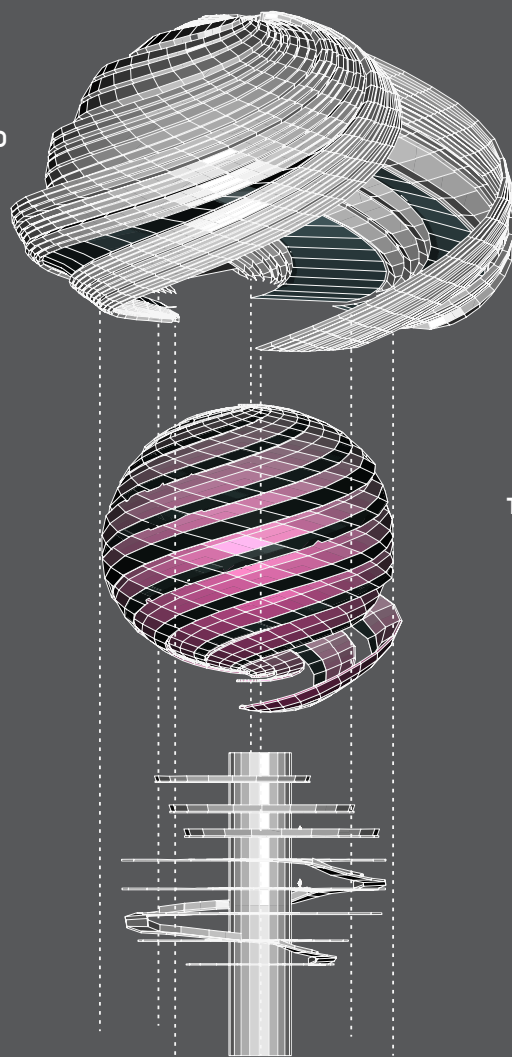


COMPONENTS

SEMI - ENCLOSED SHELL

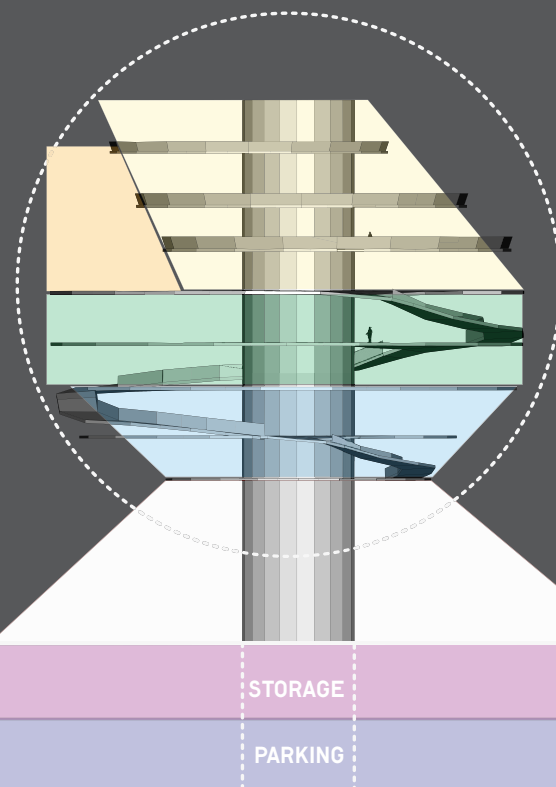
ENCLOSURE FOR EXHIBITION SPACES

CORE + LEVELS



SPACIAL DISTRIBUTION

SPECIAL EXHIBITION SPACE 3
TRIPLE HEIGHT SPACE



SPECIAL EXHIBITION SPACE 1

SPECIAL EXHIBITION SPACE 2

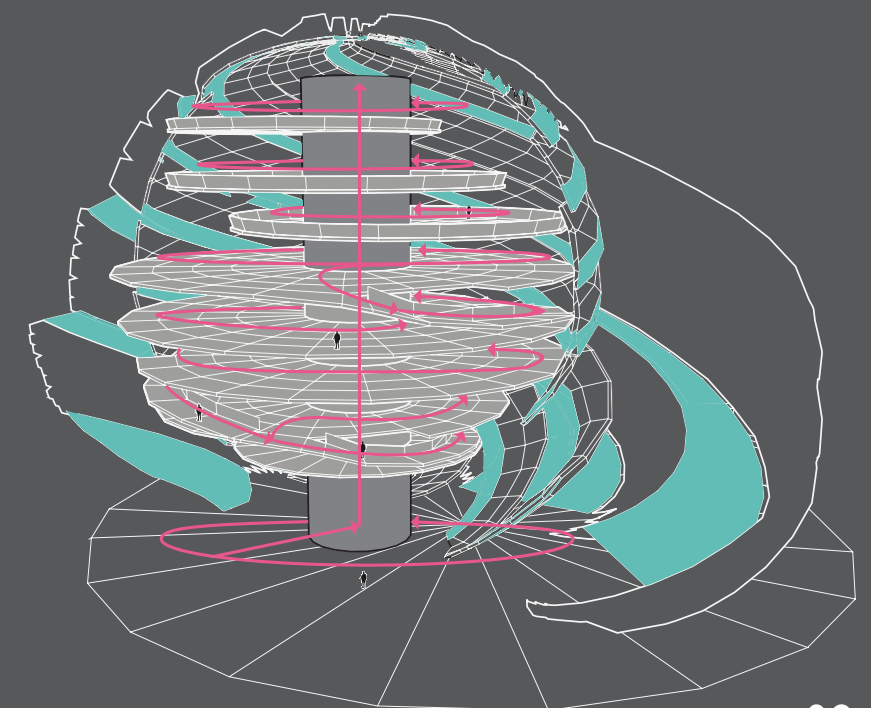
PERMANENT EXHIBITION SPACE

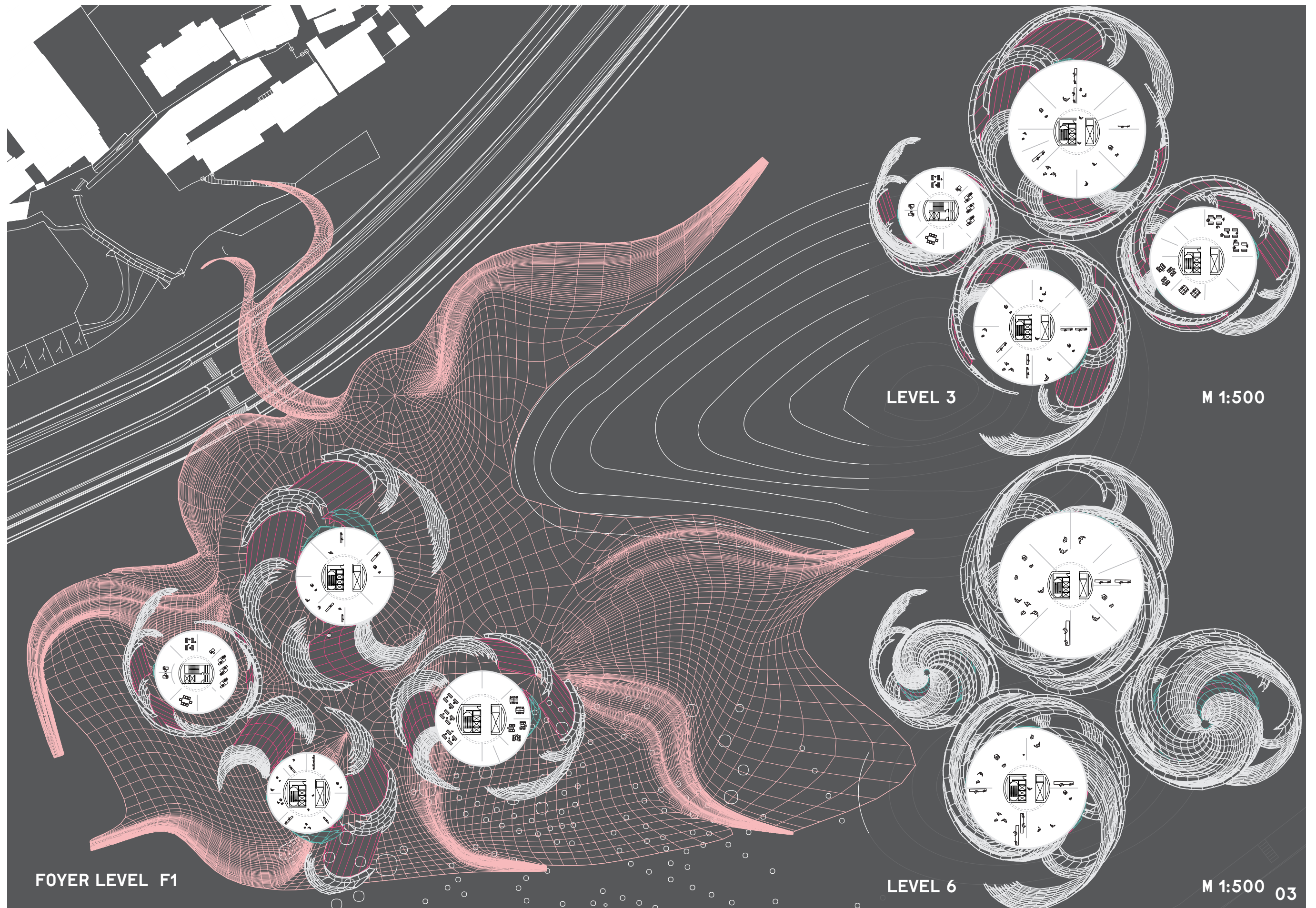
PROMENADE/
SEMI - ENCLOSED LOBBY

STORAGE

PARKING

AXO DIAGRAM SHOWING CIRCULATION UP THE CORE TO TRIPLE HEIGHT OVERLOOKING LEVELS. SPECTATORS WILL START AT THE TOP AND PROCEED DOWNWARD BY EITHER USING THE RAMPS OR ELEVATOR/STAIRCASE CORE, INTO AND AROUND THE SPECIAL/TEMPORARY EXHIBITION SPACES, THEN ON TO THE PERMANENT EXHIBITION SPACE, AND FINALLY END UP BACK ON THE PROMENADE/LOBBY.





SECTION M 1:500

+60 M

+52 M

+47 M

+42 M

+37 M

+30 M

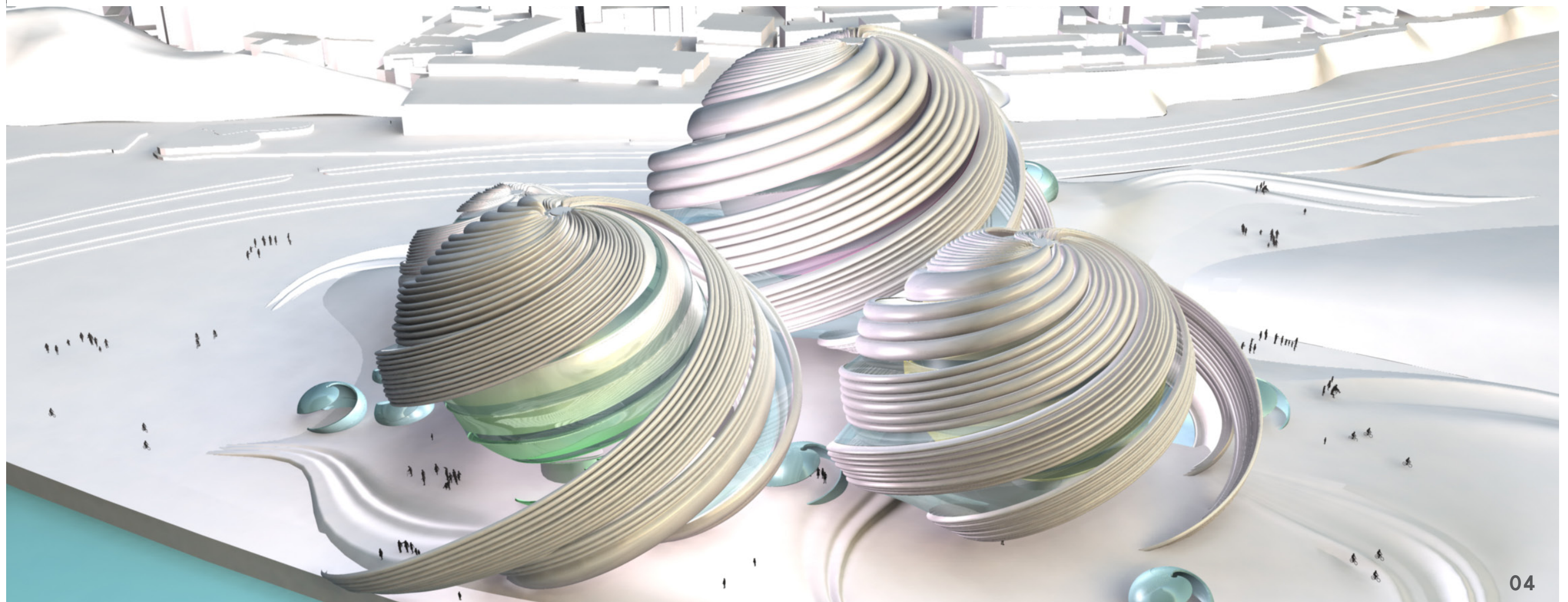
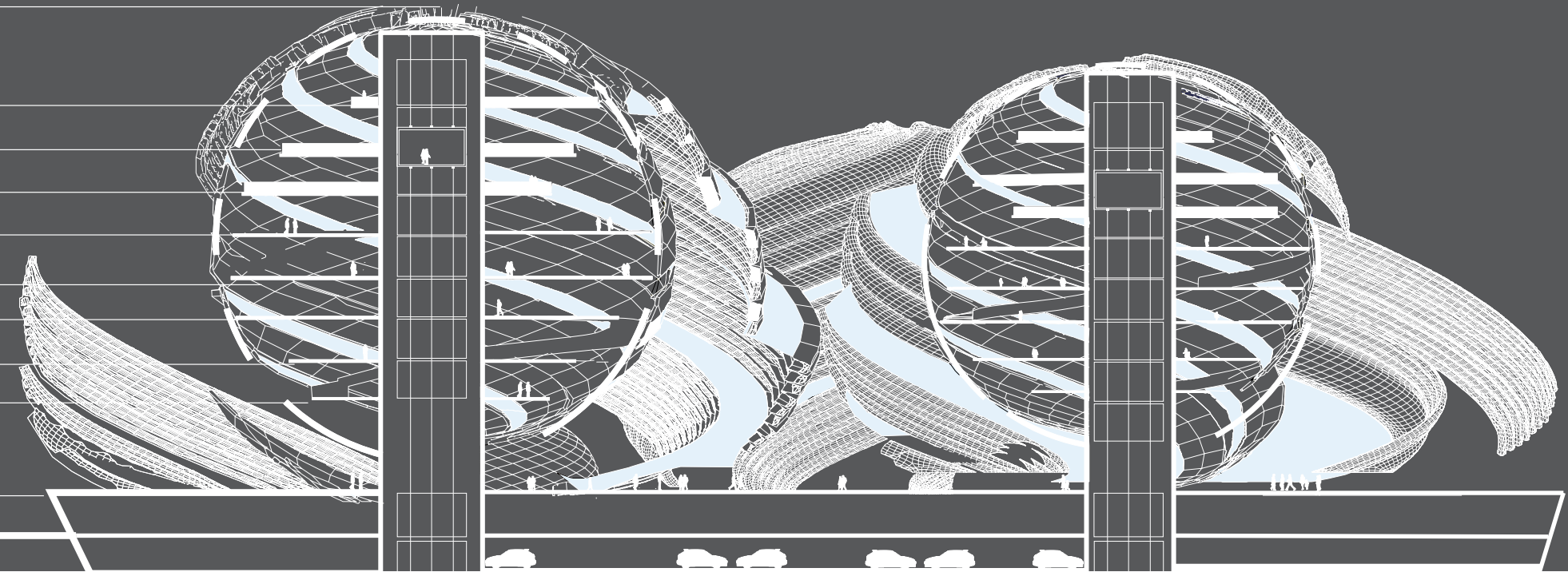
+25 M

+20 M

+15 M

+5 M

+/- 0

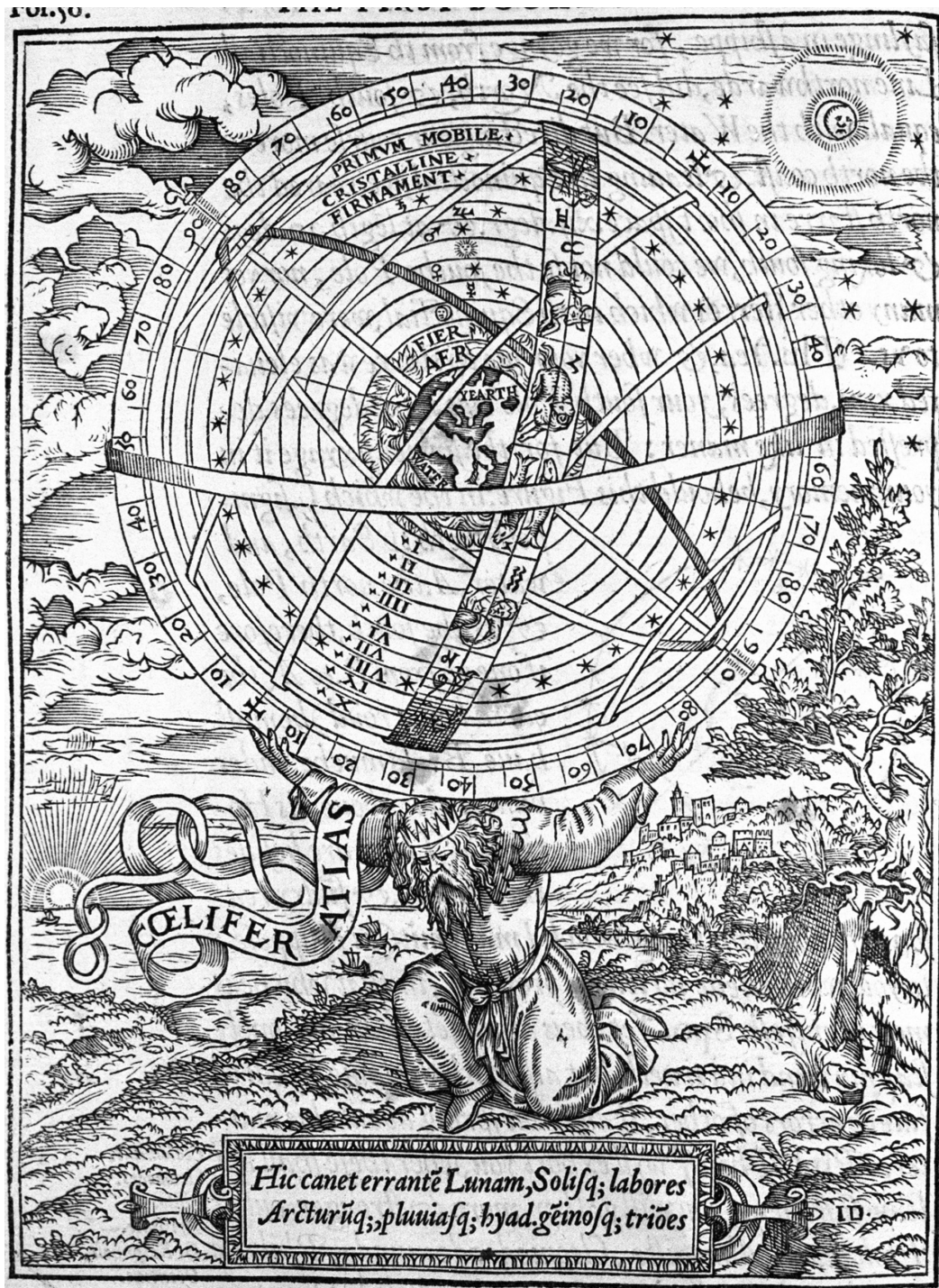


04

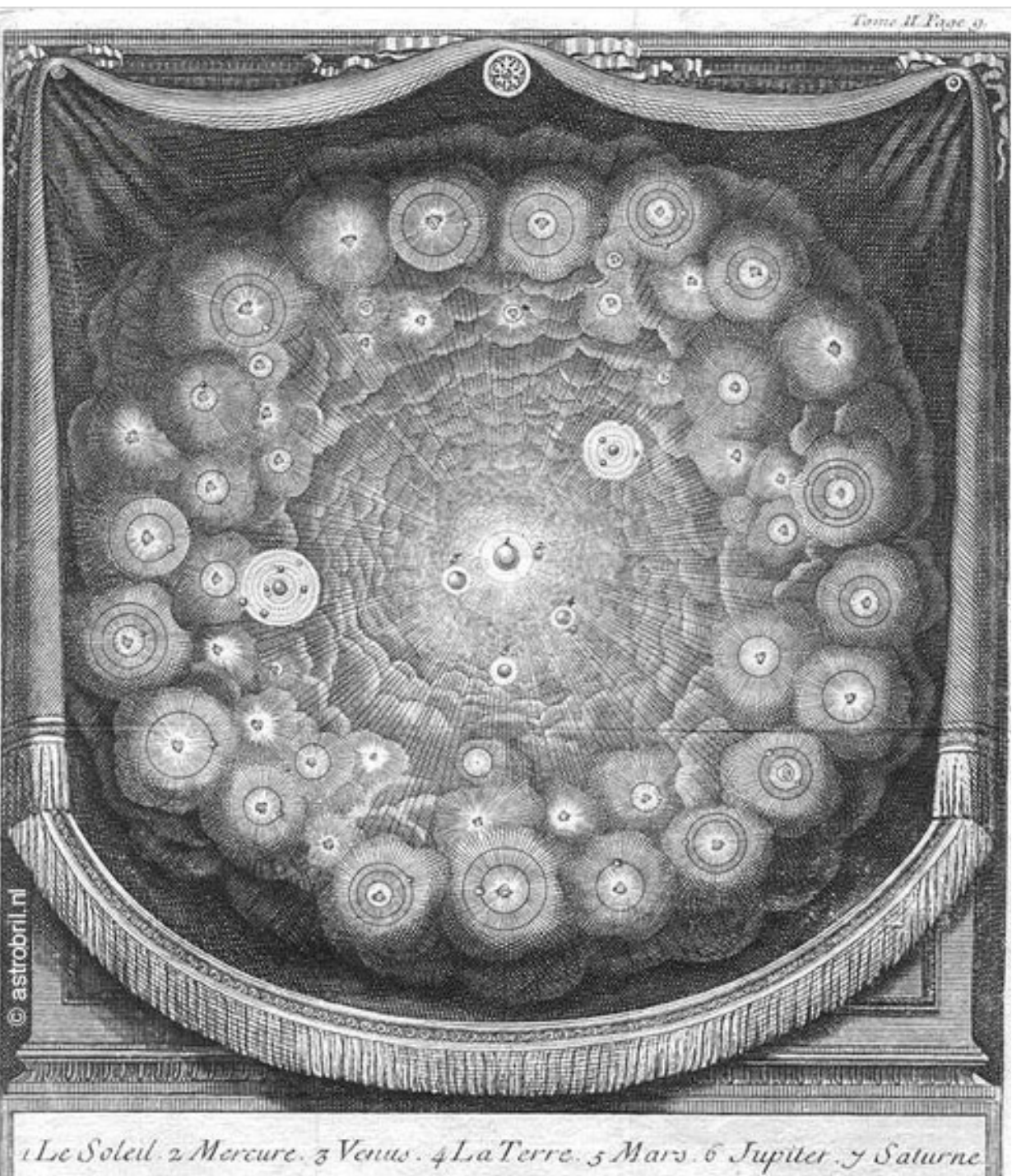
Relevance vs. Importance

“A Blissful ignorance of similarities”

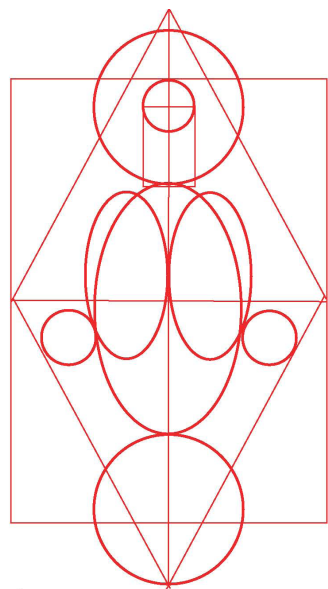
Kipnis, Jeffrey. “Toward a New Architecture.” AD: Folding and Pliancy, Academy Editions, London, 1993.



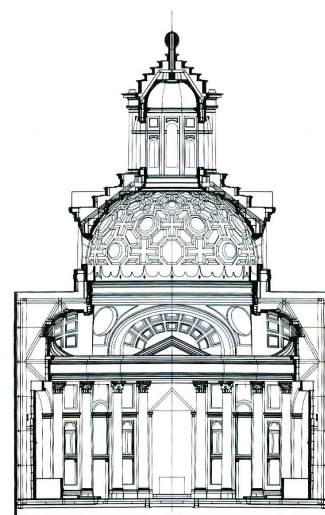
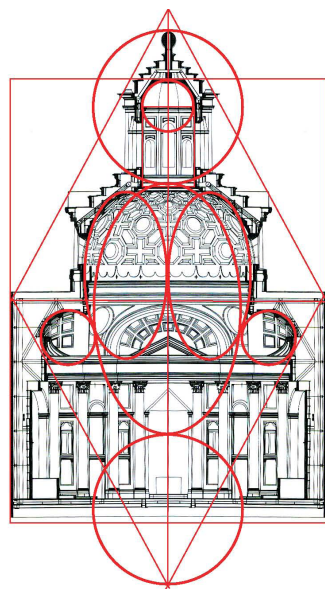
WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM,
THE COSMOGRAPHICALL GLASSE,
LONDON 1559



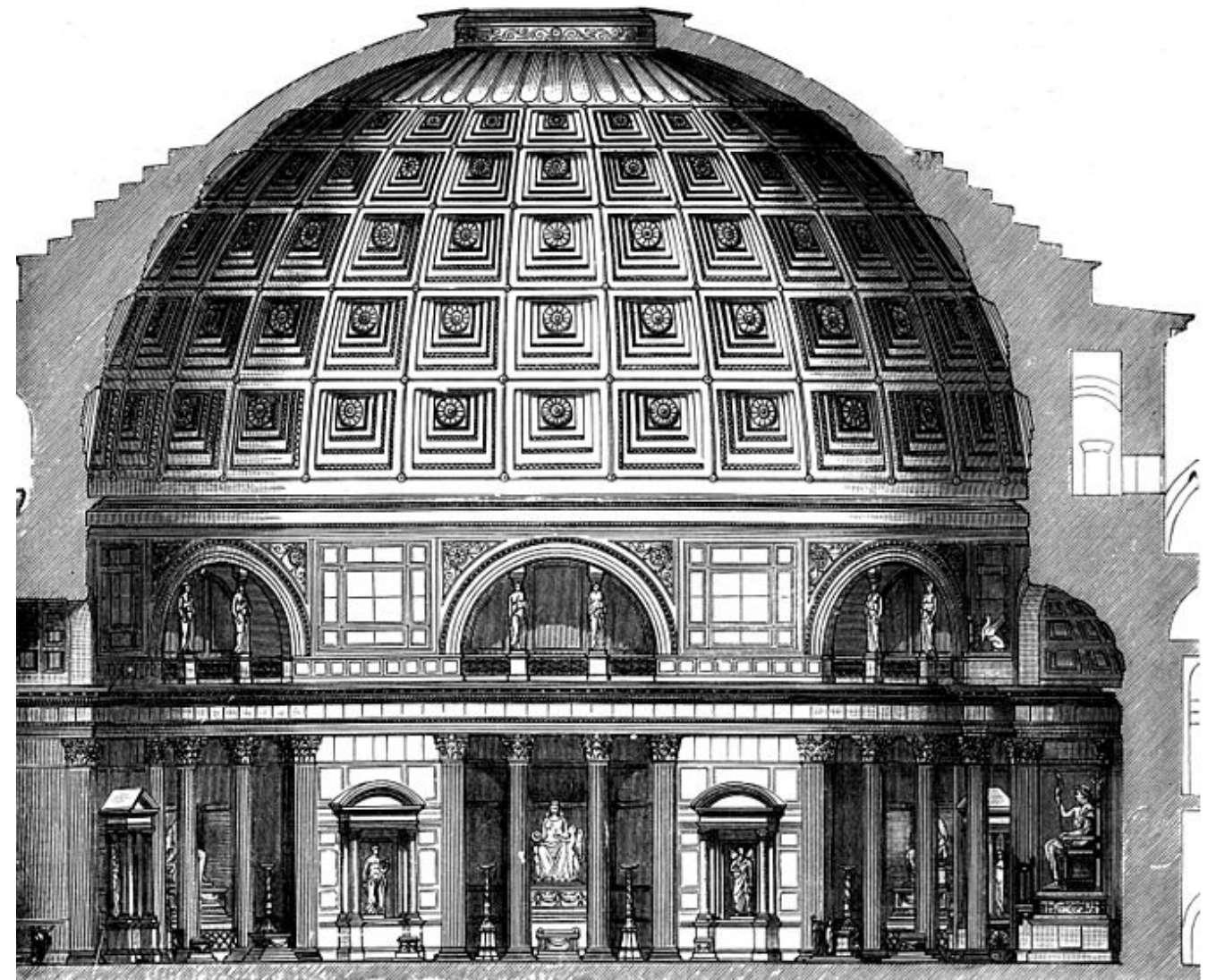
NOEL ANTOINE PLUCHE & JEAN BAPTIST DE FREVAL,
LE SPECTACLE DE LA NATURE,
CA. 1743.



Geometries of the section.



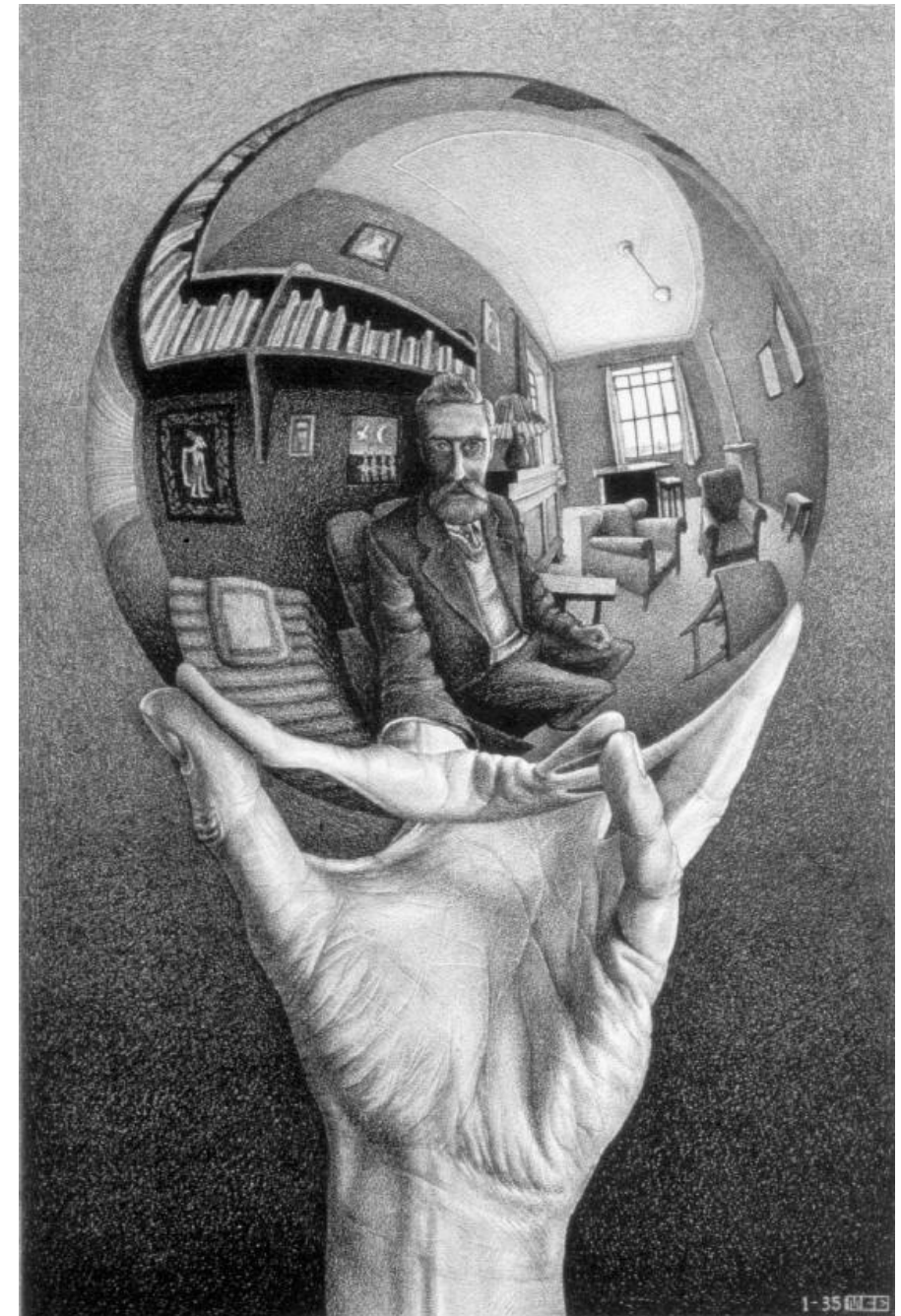
FRANCESCO BORROMINI, SAN CARLO ALLE QUATTRO
FONTANE,
ROMA
1634



PANTHEON,
ROMA
118 TO 125 AD

I will start this investigation of surface by looking at buildings and works of art of spherical shape.
Through creating a geneology of spherical buildings and observing them in a manner that privledges the differences
between them rather than the similarities I will establish a secondary relationship and separate them into groups.
The groups are:

- **LANDING**
- **PERFECT VS. DEFORMED**
- **MULTIPLE VS. SINGLE**



M.C.ESCHER,
SELF-PORTRAIT IN SPHERICAL MIRROR
1935

LANDING
FULL VS PARTIAL



EPCOT,
ORLANDO,
1982



BERG ARKITEKTKONTOR AB, GLOBE ARENA,
STOCKHOLM
1989



BERND & HILLA BECHER, GAS TANK,
1993



CHURCH, UNKNOWN



KENZO TANGE, FUJI TV BUILDING,
ODAIBA,
1995



B. TSCHUMI, PARK DE LA VILLETTE,
PARIS
1986

PERFECT vs DEFORMED



BUCKMINSTER FULLER, US-PAVILLON BIOSPHÈRE EXPO
MONTREAL
1967



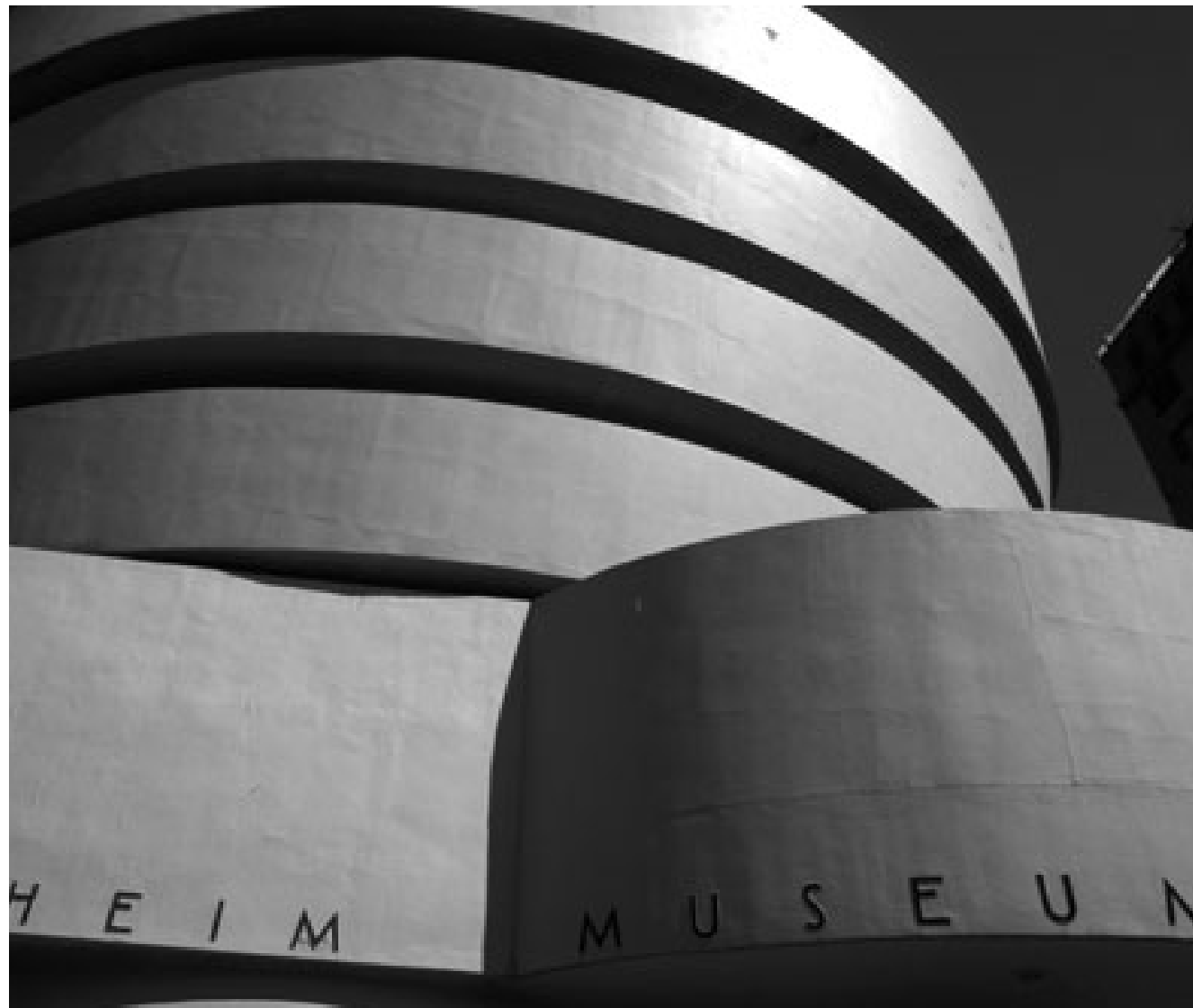
FOSTER&PARTNERS,
THE SAGE GATESHEAD,
2004



JERDE PARTNERSHIP AND ARCHITECT CO., CORE
PACIFIC SHOPPING MALL,
TAIPEI
2001



PARQUE FERIA IFEMA
MADRID
?

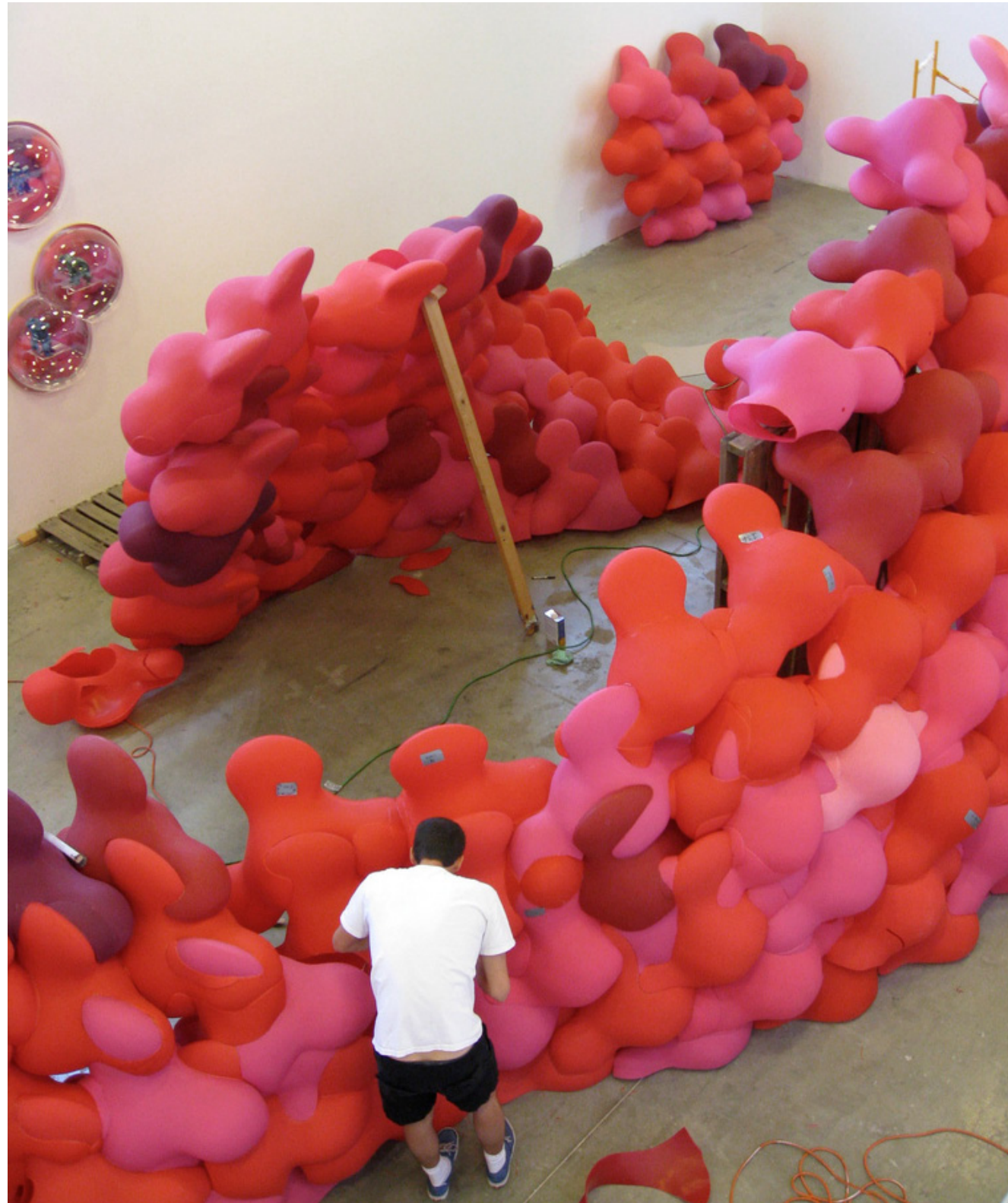


FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
NEW YORK
1959



GREG LYNN, EMBRYOLOGICAL HOUSE
1997-2002

SINGLE vs MULTIPLE

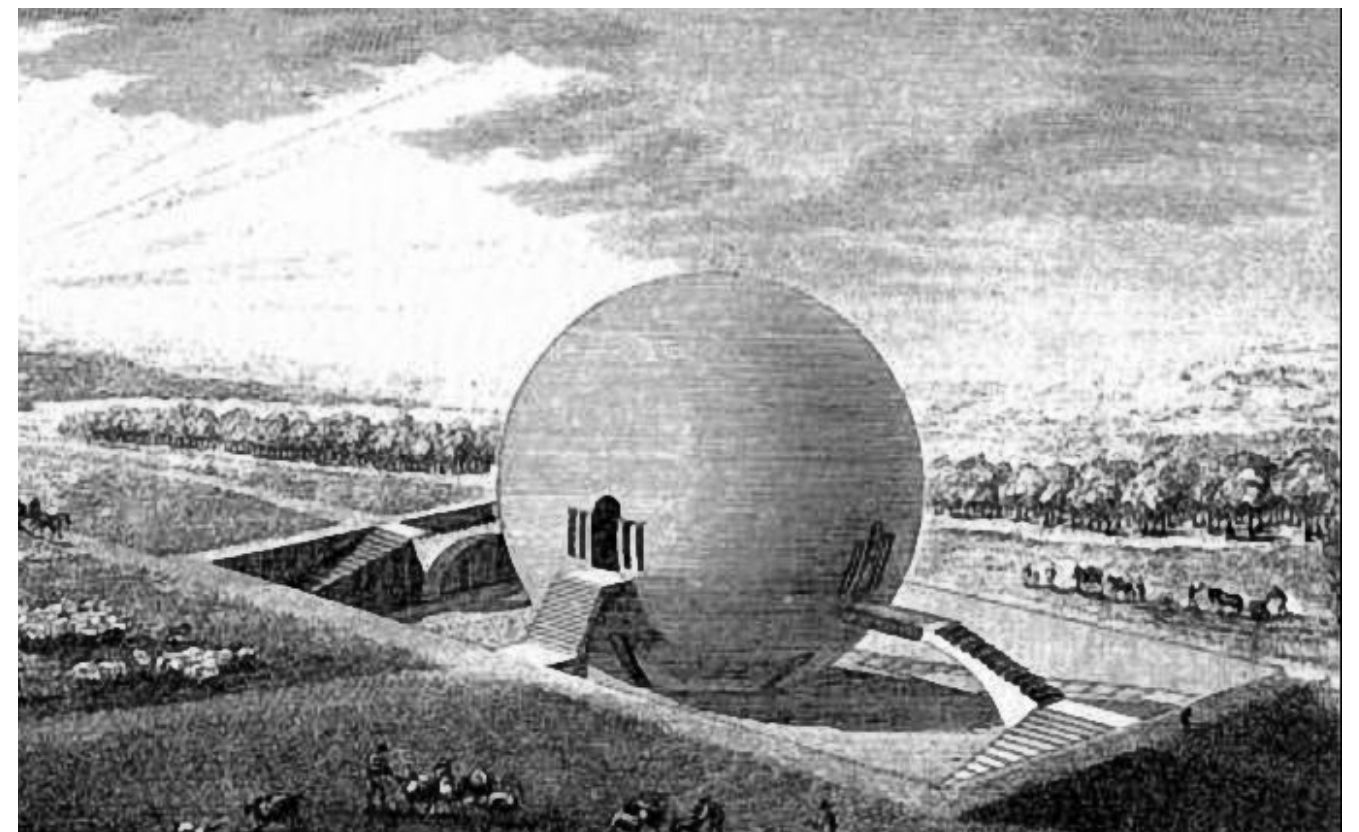


GREG LYNN, BLOWWALL,
LOS ANGELES
2008



GREG LYNN, BLOWWALL,
LOS ANGELES
2008

LEDOUX, HAUS DES GAERTNERS,
CHAUX
1789





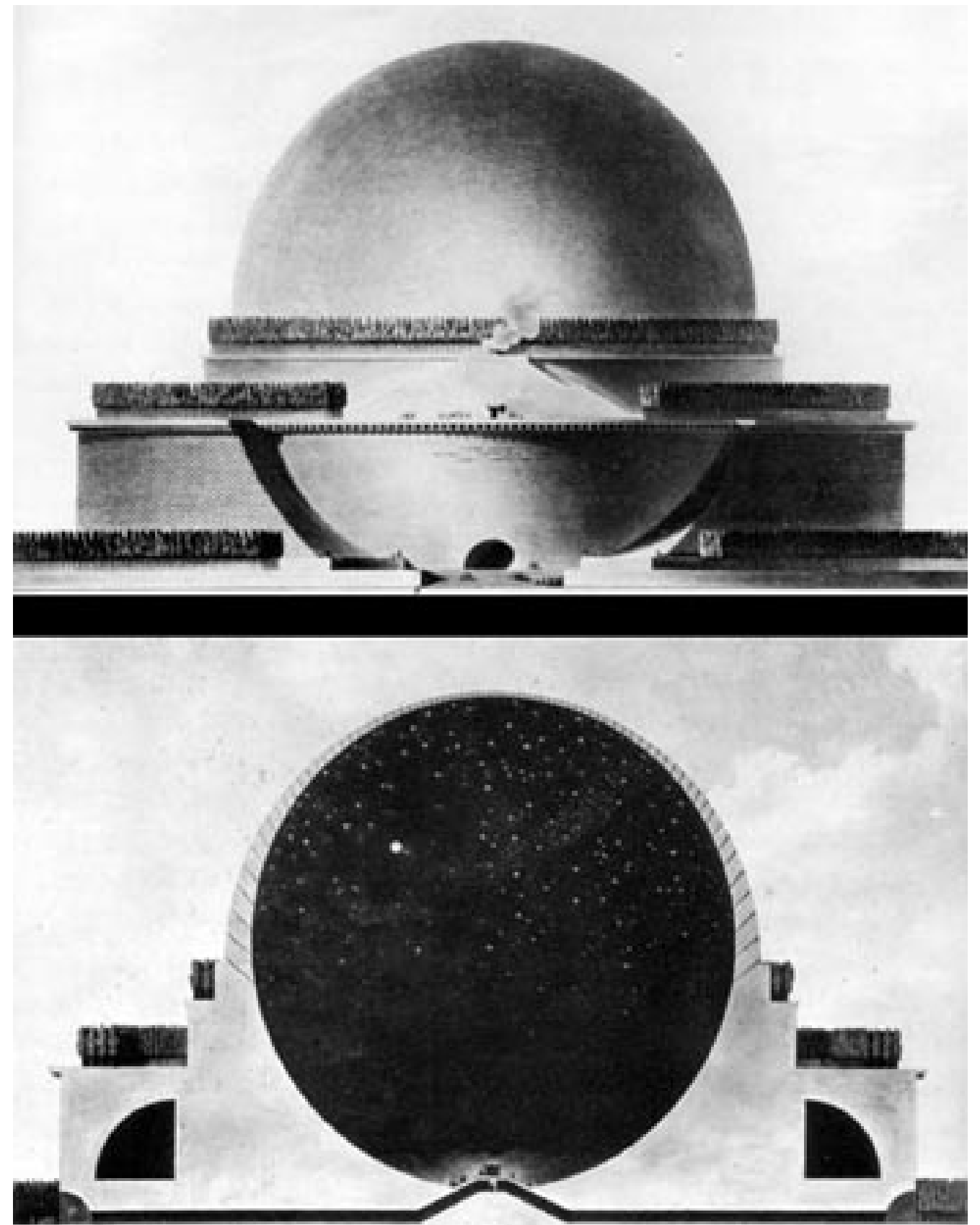
ANTTI LOVAG, BUBBLEHOUSE,
CÔTE D'AZUR
1970



UNITED ARCHITECTS, COMPETITION-ENTRY ECB,
FRANKFURT
2002

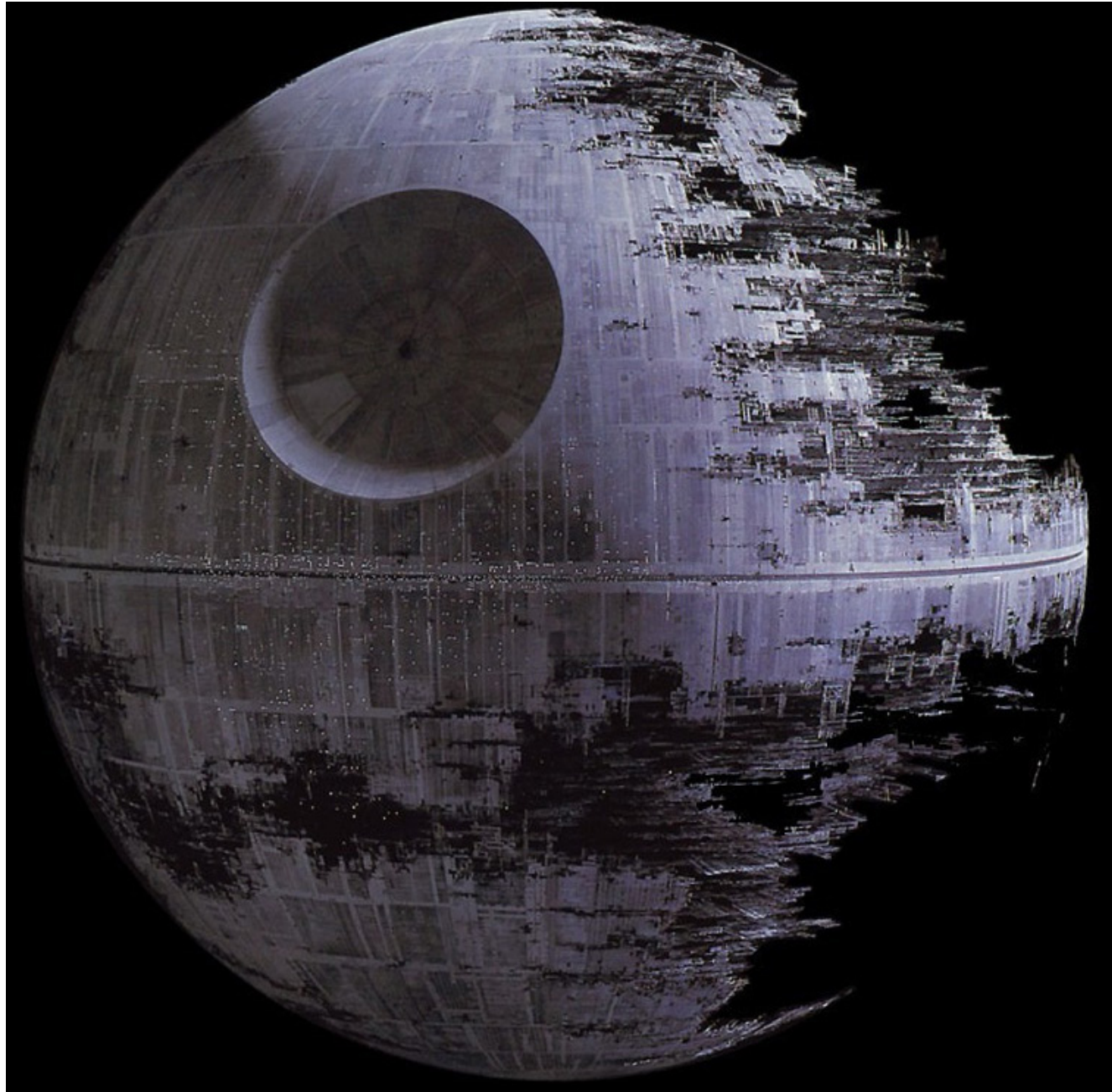


ANISH KAPOOR, ROYAL-ACADEMY
LONDON
2011



BOULLÉE, NEWTON MEMORIAL
1784

ODDS



DEATHSTAR, STARWARS



KAWASAKI SPHERICAL LNG TANK

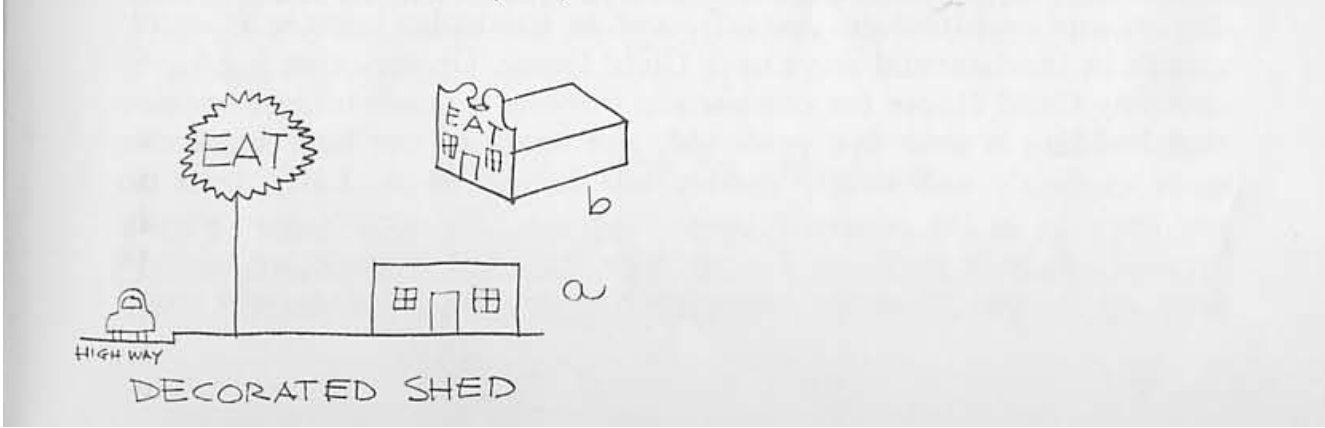
The
SURFACE AFFAIR

THE DECORATED SHED

The Decorated Shed



74. Road scene from *God's Own Junkyard*



R. VENTURI, D. SCOTT BROWN,
LEARNING FROM LAS VEGAS,
MIT PRESS, CAMBRIDGE MA,
1972, REVISED 1977

The center of this discussion and the disciplinary driver for the presented project will be what I call the *Surface Affair*.

It is important to introduce the contemporary investigations of the discipline of architecture. The question of the relevance of aesthetics and visualization in being an inextricable component of the current mode of architectural representation is also of importance in this dialogue. We will start by looking at the development of how surface has been dealt with since the early 1970's until now.

Separation of and skin and its body is brought into perspective by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown. As the role of the envelope becomes more evident in architecture Venturi & Scott-Brown single out the shed with a façade: a 2D front and a

volume behind. Usually there is a clear representation of program on the front.

In their project for Ricola, Herzog & De Meuron show an evolution of the Decorated Shed. Two separate entities are collapsed into one. Unlike in Venturi and Scott-Brown's project, the facade in this case begins to be interdependent and interchangeable, the surface on the envelope is devoid of meaning. It is a notable departure from the pure frontal notion of facade to a more inclusive one, in effect all the planes of the envelope seem to be affected from this shift. The facade is mostly treated with images that represent an artificial materiality, the graphics applied in repetition are used to create an effect but they have no significance, there is no representation of program, the images are used purely to produce texture.

The work of Yayoi Kusama exemplifies these techniques as well through the use of a very generic dot pattern she manages to dissolve figuration. The figure and the ground are no longer evident through her use of pattern,

But does it matter that the dots are actually different?
Or that the image used by Herzog & deMeuron are identical?



HERZOG & DE MEURON, RICOLA,
LAUFEN,
2000

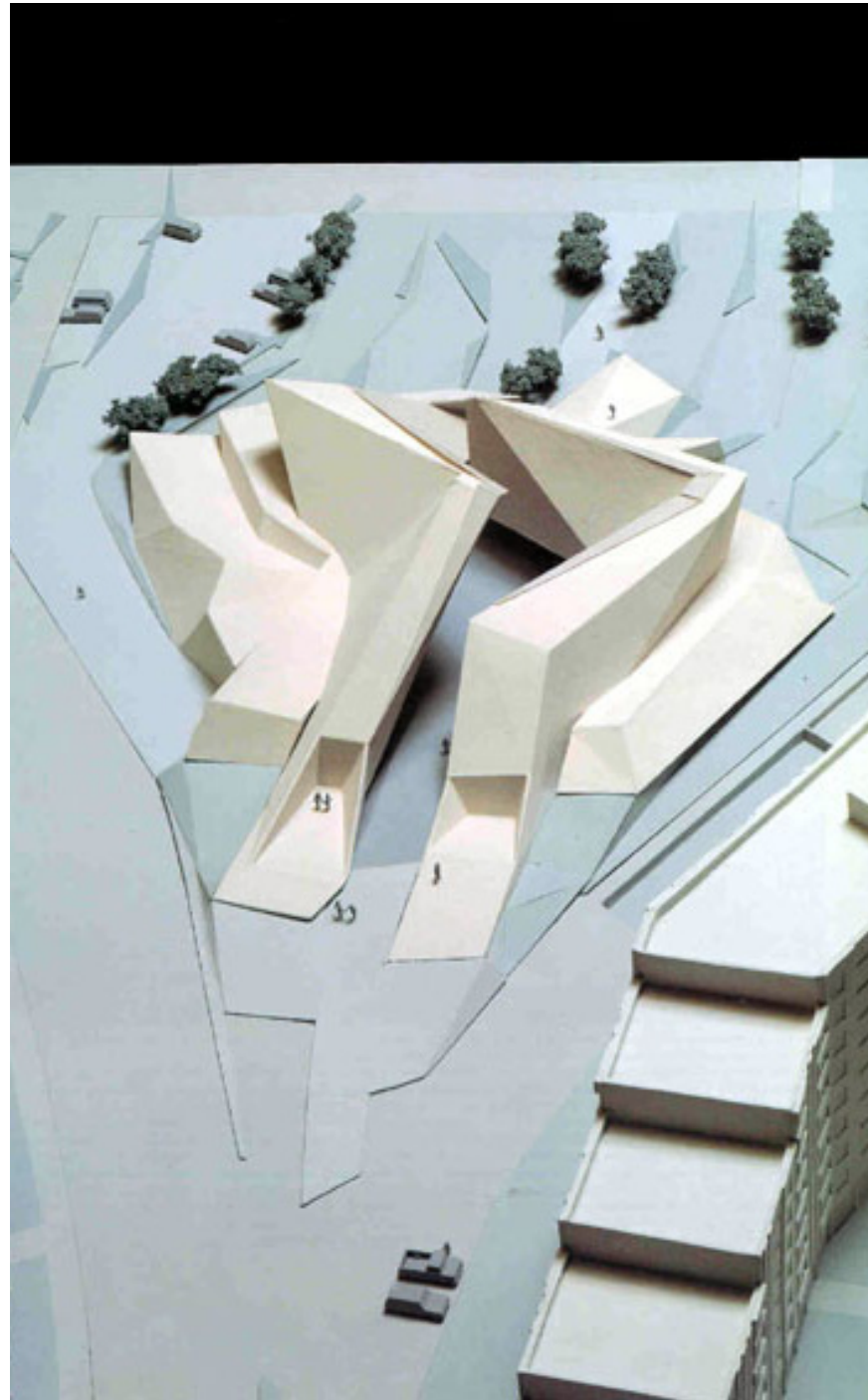


HERZOG & DE MEURON, RICOLA,
LAUFEN,
2000



YAYOI KUSAMA,
DOTS OBSESSION,
2004

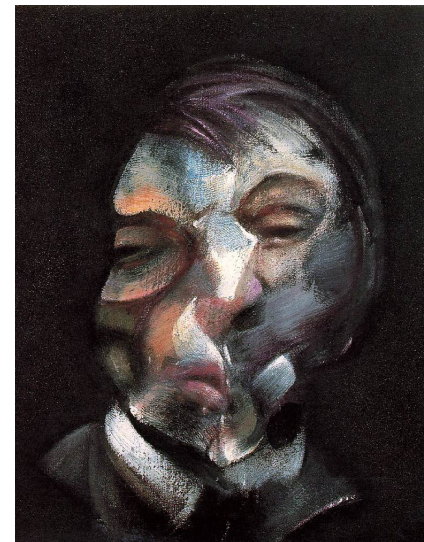
THE FOLD



The Fold defines the transition from elevation to body by dissolving the orthographic elevation into multiple planes.

Unlike the 'decorated shed' which simulates its setting with a singular sign, folding spreads an entire surface through a twinkling reflection of local touching and proximate particularities.

By breaking from the traditionally classic perspectival and Cartesian grid, the dynamic images of the digital age were almost mandatory. This led to a search of architectonic forms that were capable of continuous change in morphology which would express their constant moving in time. Moving not in the sense that the building would actually move, but rather suggest that the idea of the fold is something that must be perceived as a process and not a product that eventually led to an architecture which at best will



PETER EISENMAN,
CHURCH FOR THE YEAR 2000,
ROMA,
1996

FRANCIS BACON,
SELF PORTRAIT,
1972

evoke the feeling of motion.

In the nineties the philosopher Gilles Deleuze introduced the fashion of 'the fold'.

This notion did not suggest a difference in architecture, it rather suggested a new condition of the minimalist object.

Nevertheless this is the first time in architecture, where the ceiling, the wall and the floor not only had the same color, but were literally resulting out of one single surface. 'The fold' was translated into architecture as a reduction of difference, where all faces of the building would become less and less distinguishable.

The consequence is a shift from façade to a full envelope: Now the building is perceived as a single object with folded faces.

In Peter Eisenman's project for the Church for the Year 2000 in Rome, you can see how the envelope actually leaves the ground and truly becomes independent.

The triangulation of surface makes the folding geometrically feasible, so that façade shifts from classic front to side to top, as it could be everywhere on the envelope.

Francis Bacon's 1972 Self Portrait is descriptive of this concept in that the figure of the face is still evident but the ear is seen as shifting to the front and the mouth is moving to the right. The overall perception of the painting is still legible despite the re-configuration.

The spread of new technology has led to a change in the way architects

would design. Unlike before where time intensive calculations hindered architects ability to design with complex curvatures computer programs have liberated architects in being able to realize forms that would have normally been unmanageable both in planning and execution. The new technological paradigm is also predicated upon continuous variations, but instead of producing one variance out of many, it posits that many variants may be produced simultaneously or sequentially. Thus, the same tools for processing mathematical continuity can be used to mass-produce the infinite variants of the same.

*"Pliancy allows architecture to become involved in complexity through flexibility. It may be possible to neither repress the complex relations of differences with fixed points of resolution nor arrest them in contradictions, but sustain them through flexible, unpredicted, local connections."*²

² Lynn, Greg. "Folding in Architecture", AD, John Wiley, (2004); 24



PETER EISENMAN
CITY OF CULTURE OF GALICIA
SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA,
1999



DILLER SCOFIDIO + RENFRO,
INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART (ICA)
BOSTON,
2006

THE SOFT

The Soft

The Blob (also called 0 degree architecture) happens when the smooth surface is realized as a whole envelope and the identifiable elements of architecture are erased. This implies that there is no elevation or facade. There are no references to any architectural style or representations. Thickness and tectonic elements disappear as the blobs are self referential surface treatments without thickness.

Since Venturi and Scott-Browns *Complexity and Contradiction* (1966) there has been a call in architecture for compositional complexity. The notion of intricacy tries to move beyond the PoMo “pictorial collage aesthetics”³ as well as the Deconstructivist “formal and spatial collage aesthetics”⁴

The architectural design is now heavily based upon contemporary machine processes like CnC and 3D printing that allow for both a monolithic materiality and form while at the same time enabling a high degree of fineness in detail and connection. The use of digital technology is not limited only to generate architecture that otherwise would be just too complicated or chaotic to produce, but rather calls for a new mastery of the tools in order to make the work more rigorous elegant and yes, even beautiful.

Consequently process or development of the design is not a relevant parameter for criticisms anymore.

3 Lynn, Greg. “Intricacy”, ICA, Pennsylvania (2003); 30

4 Ibid.



ANDREW KUDLESS
P-WALL
2009

JEFF ROTMAN

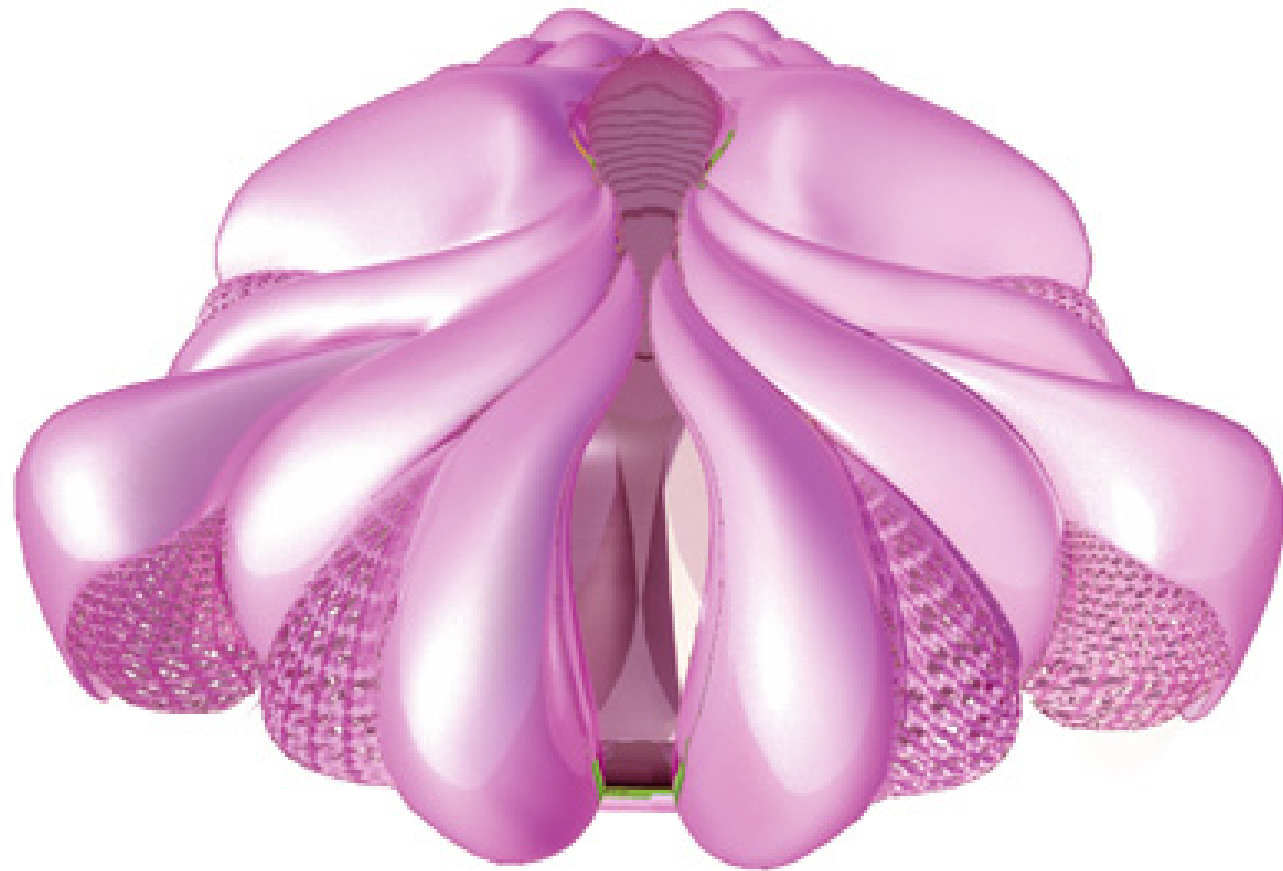
GREG LYNN, EMBRYOLOGICAL HOUSE
1997-2002



Greg Lynn's Embryo House clearly shows how the Blob derails any reference to architectural styles. Rather than classical contours, edges or frames the window openings are cut through the unique non-reproducible grid of the geometry. It may fall into line with Kipnis's idea that the exotic nature of these types of designs are dependent on their non-replicable qualities. Inspiration for this new way of designing has been drawn from biology and nature itself, looking on how surfaces are articulated, colored or subdivided.

This type of surface as well as the others that have been discussed are such that cannot be argued for through the previous architectural discourse. Typical architectural discourse builds upon typical notions of the architectural elements. The discussion of surface must be based within a new vocabulary because of its growing interdependent relationship to technology and new methods and techniques, that are built upon the typical notions of the architectural elements.

The discussion of the surface must be based upon a new vocabulary.



FLORENCIA PITA, MACEDONIA CONCERT HALL
COMPETITION,
MACEDONIA
2007



PETER COOK & COLIN FOURNIER
THE FRIENDLY ALIEN,
GRAZ
2003

THE THICK

The Thick

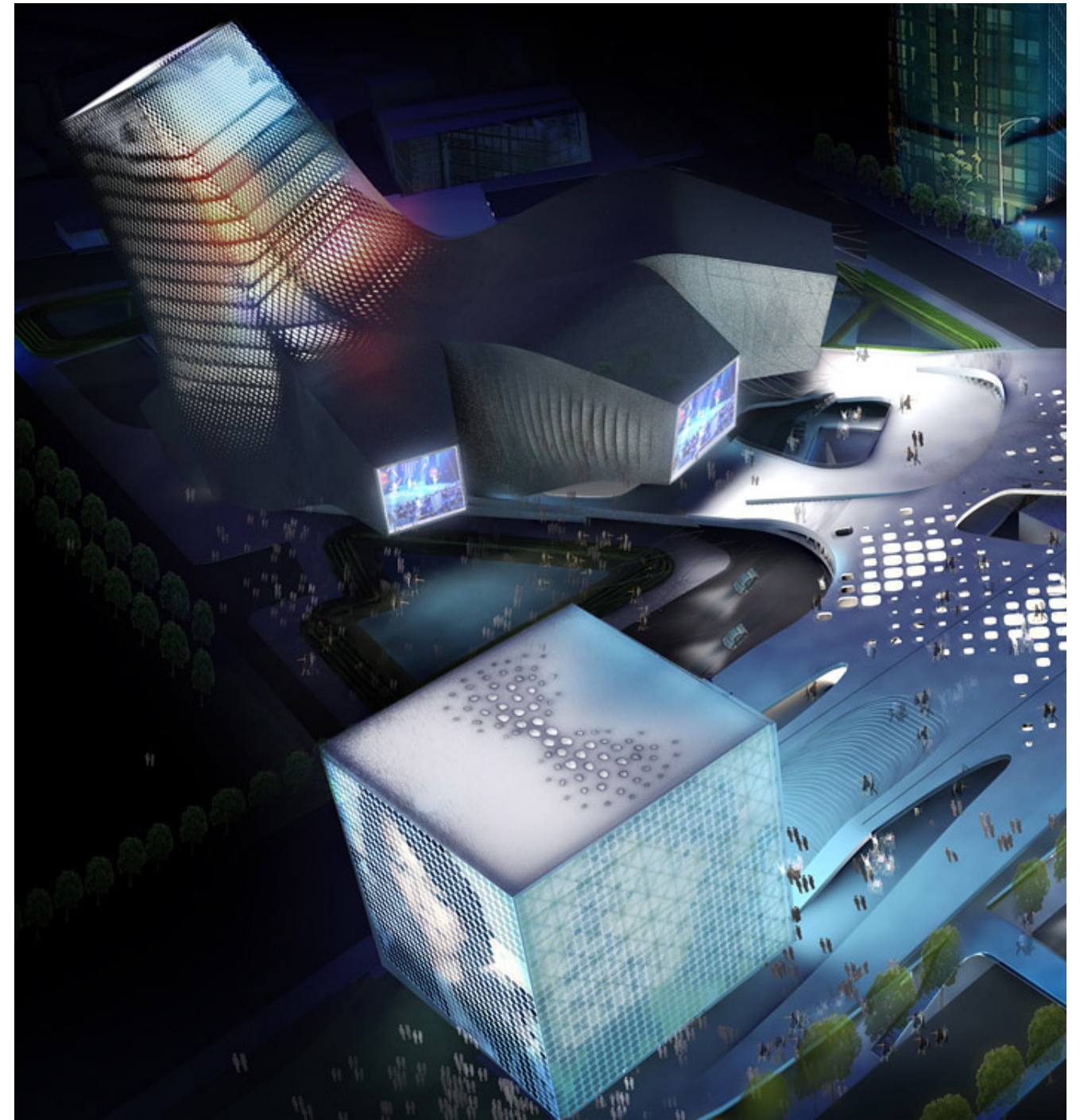
Like the Surface Soft, the Surface Thick also behaves as a surface treatment, but it has thickness or mass. The surface is composed of more elements to take on more architectural qualities. The elements are structural and material, they reference a system that gives you

gradients and there are openings, however there is still no underlying recognizable figuration. Again there is no need for referencing known elements of the architectural legacy, but rather it is necessary to expand the vocabulary by looking at another disciplines in

order to be able to code architecture again. Through trying to measure these new architectural approaches with conventional architectural standards one will most probably fail at being able to extrapolate the necessary arguments.



REISER & UMEMOTO,
SHENZHEN BAO'AN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT,
COMPETITION ENTRY
2007



Architecture often borrows from other disciplines in order to enrich its own discourse.

It is questionable if the implementation of other disciplines has strengthened or weakened the architectural discourse. Nevertheless it seems to be essential for architecture to derive meaning from another discipline to re-code itself and make itself understood and consumable.

REISER & UMEMOTO,
TAIPEI POP MUSIC CENTER,
WINNING ENTRY
2010

SURFACE POP

Surface Pop

“Oh so pretty!”

“Candy colored, embellished and fragrant, extremely artificial yet somehow graceful, that is the cunning of prettiness. The fantasy of the pretty is the fairy tale, where stories are implausible but rather amusing, a speculative fiction of the enchanted instead of the Scientific.

The design imaginary of the pretty unveils the uncanny nature of its tactics, rigorous and laborious they tend towards delight but they encounter amicable joy, neither gloom nor ecstasy, just play.”

Florencia Pita

The POP is perceived as an art of sentiment; there is a free–floating nostalgia that has been ascribed to the POP object. This approach is not trying to measure itself repeatedly against the familiar canons of architecture, or reinvent classic architectural elements such as openings and structure or even inventing a new architectural vocabulary. Rather this approach strives to create another condition. The goal is to inform the architectural design so that it will allow to generate new complexities, a hybridization of architecture. The design is no longer a single system, where from out of one surface comes landscape, building and everything. This does not allude or reference the post modernist fashion, rather its concern lies in bringing architectural elements and features back again. Elements such as cornices, openings, entries and so on.

In looking at Jeff Koons’s Caterpillar Ladder one can start to see the proposed notion come into play. The non–negotiating intersection of the two systems are deceiving, as the visible reality of the material is not perceivable. The incompatible nature of the two systems is clearly evident, they are even at odds with one another. The image and form coding the inflatable material is that of a caterpillar. The image coding requires a suspension of disbelief as the viewer understands that the material is a representation of a caterpillar rather than a caterpillar itself. The other part of this dislocation is the intersection of the inflatable with the ladder. The reality of the combination of these two systems is also a suspension of disbelief as we are presented with the unlikely combination. The deployment of disguise as a technique in Tim Hawkin’s work exemplifies another form where two distinct systems come together to form a secondary system. At first glance the image suggests an octopus, but on closer inspection one sees that the suckers on the tentacles are actually the artist’s mouth and the pinkish body of the octopus is in reality the artist’s hands. The arrangement of the parts allows for the collage to work and suspend the reality for as long as the viewer is tricked into seeing the whole octopus rather than the arrangement of parts.

In our case it is relevant to look at the way a piece of art/architecture is produced, to exemplify the shift from the instrument to instrumentality. Possibly because we are not judging merely an aesthetic quality but also the atmospheres which are produced. The object itself emanates atmosphere, “some kind of sensuous emission of sound, light, heat, smell, and moisture”.⁵ The theatrical effect of architecture is where architecture embodies a stage in which sumptuous atmospheres are developed and produced. Theoretically, this type of effect has had a long tradition in architecture. “Architects are special effects experts”⁶. The Situationists suggest a redefinition of architecture as pure atmospherics; Guy Debord argues in his critique of urban geography that there be a division of cities into psychic atmospheres, Debord introduces the term *psychographic* as a way to cope with this new understanding of atmospherics and the experience of the city. Atmosphere’s are born between a building and it’s context, where the building is employed as an instrument to construct one particular atmosphere within another one.

5 Wigley, Mark. “The Architecture of Atmosphere.” Daidalos 68 (1998); 18-27
6 Ibid



JEFF KOONS, CATERPILLAR LADDER, 2003

TIM HAWKINSON, OCTOPUS, LOS ANGELES 2006



As Peter Eisenman points out, with the end of the 18th century and the disappearing of the main patrons of architecture, a new consciousness arose: the *genius seculi*. If before the notion of genius loci was dominant in the production of architecture, (meaning that the special spirit of the place itself would inform the design) now it was ousted with the notion of the genius seculi. The genius seculi represents the spirit of the time, also called the Zeitgeist. The first in architectural history to show awareness of this change is Piranesi with Campo Marzio in 1762. He was the first to suggest that the creation of architecture is not solely place bound, but also time bound. Where the lines blur between real and constructed. The notion of the genius loci is intertwined with the notion of genius seculi: they exist in one another. This is where Eisenman points out the shift from the specific to the non specific condition. This is exemplified through sculpture in an inverted manner, where all of a sudden there was a need to be site specific with the work, which usually was not yet the case. For this instance we can look at Reichard Serra or Robert Smithson, whose large scale works are inextricably tied to the site.

In looking deeper into the idea of zeitgeist it is important to try to resolve an understanding of the logic in regards to the tool – is this part of our current zeitgeist? Does this tool result in a style or an expression that can be anchored to the time period in which it is most used? Or does its change with human sensibilities? Like Wölfflin says, Architecture expresses the ‘Lebensgefuehl’ of an epoch, it expresses man’s aspirations? It seems that in order to grasp the aspect and influence of tooling in this specific academic context we will have to talk about process to give a better understanding of how much form follows the logic of the tool, meaning Maya, Z- Brush and other programs that are not written to generate architecture. Through adapting a design tool like Maya a whole new set of investigations are now accessible. Where one has to be aware that this is a design engine that has been created for the purpose of digital animation, where dynamics and other character rigging features are shaping the architecture of the program,



VENTURI, SCOTT BROWN AND ASSOCIATES,
UNITED STATES PAVILION, EXPO '92, SEVILLE, SPAIN
(COMPETITION ENTRY),
1989

this prescribed purpose entails a series of possibilities and limitations when used for the production of architecture.

The ability to design using different geometrical representation methods, as in Splines, Polygons and SubDi and the ability to interfere, add, combine, create new commands in the engine itself, opens up a sheer infinite set of possibilities.

*Break the stigma of the tradition:
the straight line vs. the curve.*

While talking to my design partner Jaitip Srisomburananont, she mentioned a project she was working on for a studio led by Robert Mangurian. The modeling of actual bricks, which were an essential component to the brief turned out to be very time consuming and more cumbersome than to design with curvature:

“Going back to the very basics, Maya lends itself to formal explorations that involve the curve. All of a sudden, the curve makes more sense than the straight line at least in the virtual world.”

But when we think about reality and having something built we put convenience first the convenience of doing what has already been figured out. Why change what already works? Because we simply can, and we are able now with the progression of technology to build what we design in Maya. The idea that pure design is devoid of material or technological capabilities is such that can only truly exist within the digital realm – we are still anchored to externalities that do not always exist within the digital realm.

So what is pure design?

Is it something like Kant suggests where the medium itself can be content?

In the of Principles of Art History Wölfflin stated that each artist has his or her own personal style, but beyond this there is also a national style, and finally a period style, which rise and fall cyclically. “Not everything is possible at all times,” (Wölfflin)

So coming back to the idea of the form follow the logic of the tool:

can technical factors create a style?

In his dissertation “Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie der Architektur” (1886) Wölfflin attempted to show, that architecture had a basis in form through the empathetic response of human form.

In looking at Maya, it seems that there is a perceptible reference to the human body since it is a tool for animating and modeling human forms it is only natural that what we produce in Maya is inextricably tied to the designs of the body as an object – without even broaching into the ethereal or spiritual aspects of humanity.

These characteristics are tied into our designs done with Maya. We always want the forms produced to have a certain personality ascribed to them.

It no longer is an inanimate object, but becomes a living thing.

The character of the “thing” the animus is perhaps important in this time of architecture – its ability to evoke something that isn’t necessarily representational of the function it is achieving.

And is this maybe a motive why movement and dynamics have been such a big theme for many of our peers?

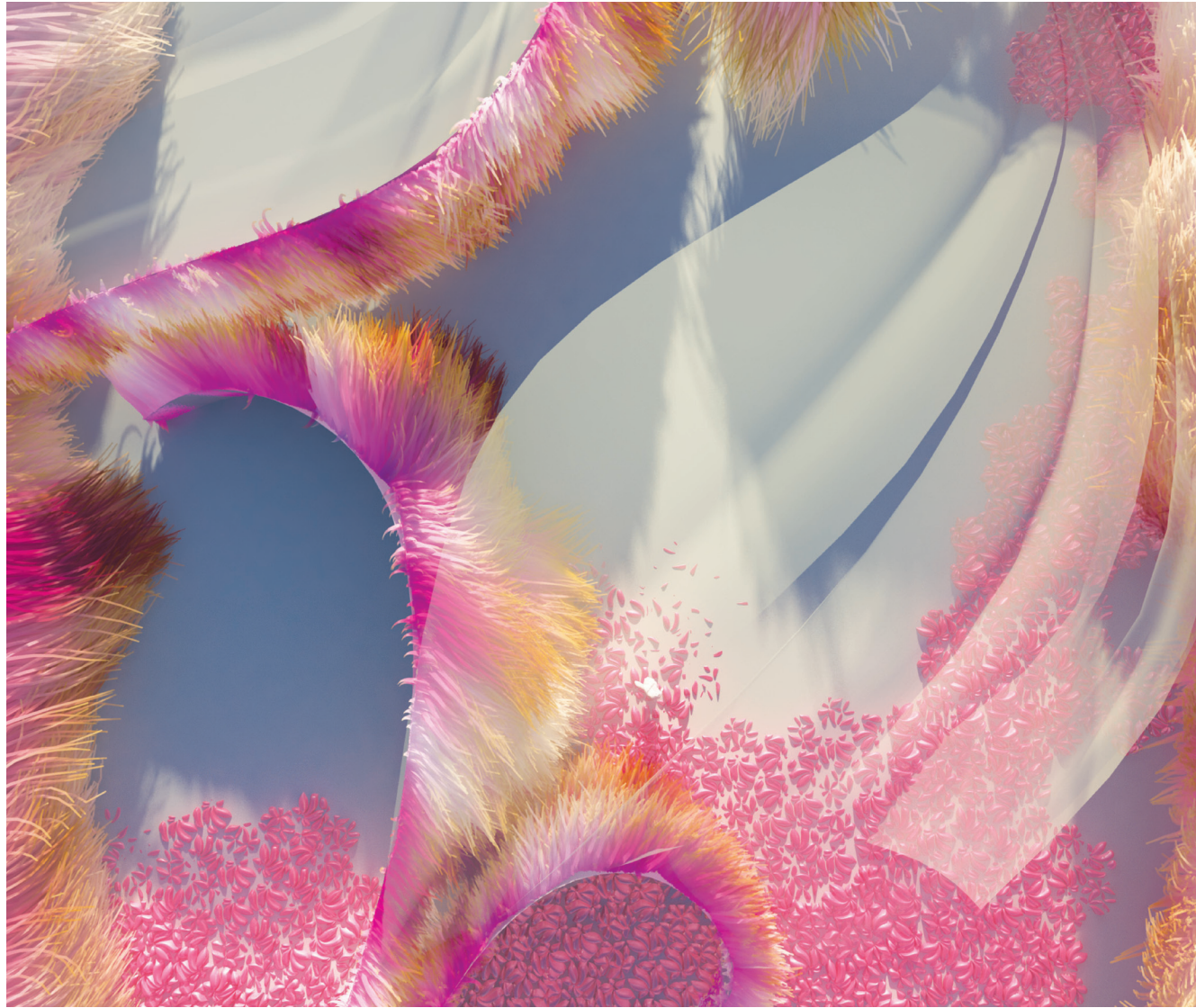
The way we chose to express the notions that inform our design are through the painterly effect: capturing something that is produced by hand, the extension of our “personality” being projected onto our designs. We would look back into the history and look at examples that use the curve instead of the straight line: sculptures, pottery, artifacts, buildings. We would start to time line it and lay it out on a spectrum, because we are not reinventing something, we are rather resurrecting an alternative that could be better if perhaps certain things were tweaked, an in how we choose to move through a building, how we choose to usher spectators through a museum. Why put a square peg into a round hole kind of question. Rather why put a round peg into square hole?

In this compilation of surface history we see the development from the Decorated Shed, to the Fold, to the Soft, to the Thick and finally to the Surface Pop. Through this evolution of surface we are able to detect the effort that has been taken into developing a new language for architecture. These new strategies are mostly derived by implementing notions which originated in other disciplines. This did not only lead to an expansion of the instruments for design, but also enriched and pushed the discourse into new realms. The earnestness of these influences has been under discussion ever since, and many times seemingly fertile alliances such as Derrida and Eisenman were harshly interrupted because of certain “pick and choose” attitudes which were not getting along with the serious disciplined strategies of their originators. Nevertheless one could question whether there is a certain emergence in the misunderstanding –or maybe– plain superficiality that allows for an untainted design strategy?

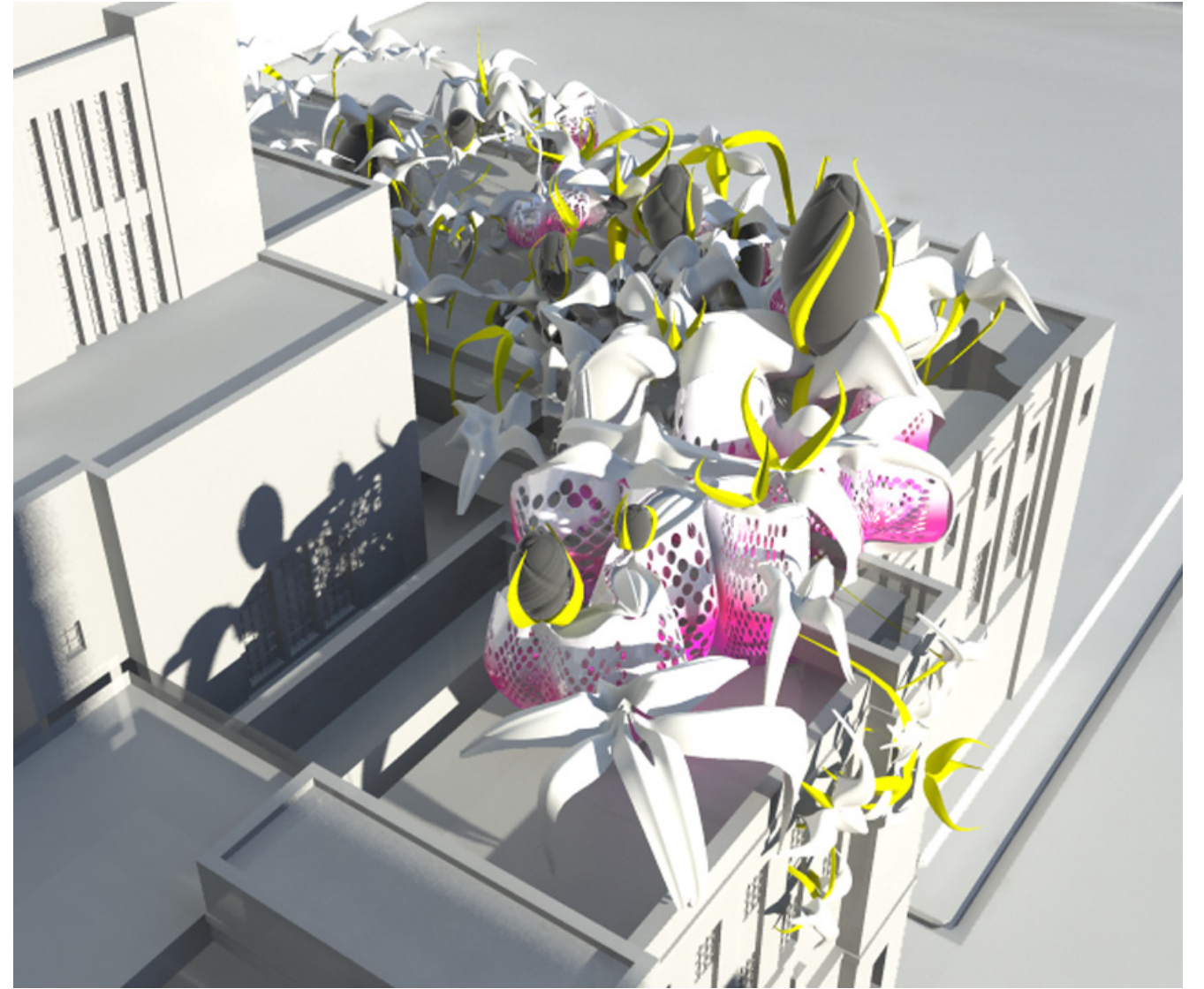
Technology has certainly changed our design possibilities and enabled a very vast field of influences on architecture. Its ability to create very unique and non-replicable entities connects it with human nature, where individuality is innate. The sculptural aspect of design enabled through new design tools brings architecture closer to the human body.

All these aspects work towards a liberation of design that forgoes past canons of architectural production. However the influence of technology itself should not be abused as means to an end, rather it should be perceived as an extension of possibilities.

Everything in moderation - Even moderation



MAGDALENA ZELLER
A PROPRIOCEPTIVE ENGAGMENT
LOS ANGELES
2010



MAGDALENA ZELLER
WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE
LOS ANGELES
2010

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- Atlas:
<http://www.hps.cam.ac.uk/starry/armillpoems.html>

- Univers:
<http://www.astrobril.nl/varia2.html>

- Escher
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