

TWO PYRAMIDS OF  
SNOFRU IN DASHUR  
(THE WRONG AND RED ONE)

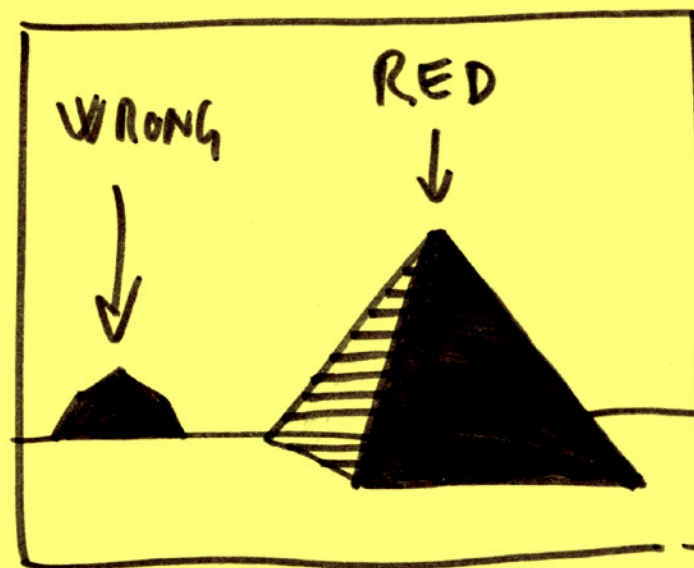
MACK

Pier Paolo Tamburelli

Grundkurs: What is Architecture About?

•••

**Grundkurs**  
**What is Architecture About?**  
**Pier Paolo Tamburelli**



In this collection of idiosyncratic lessons, architect and teacher Pier Paolo Tamburelli engages with the very foundations of architecture, proposing a series of new and open-ended perspectives on how we build the world. Developed for the 'Grundkurs', or 'basic course', at Vienna Technical University, Tamburelli's lessons are presented through the annotated sketches that form the basis of his lectures – variously rough and precise, sarcastic and sincere, and always uniquely expressive. This volume is a sourcebook of architectural ideas that form an accessible and discursive introduction to the discipline – one which pauses on the road to grand theories to learn from the intuitive processes of notetaking, drawing, and association.

Tamburelli's lessons are based around a series of dialectic couples, including Roof/Wall, Shelter/Memory, and Language/Action. The pairs are experimental and often provocative, offering a framework to be used to climb in the direction of architecture. Tamburelli trusts in the capacity of images to suspend the restraints of more rigorous theoretical approaches, embraces the flexible wisdom of the note, and relishes the intrigue of the cryptic messages we leave for ourselves. Reproduced here in their entirety, these eight lessons offer countless routes towards, through, and around architecture, providing newcomers and experts alike with an intimate and refreshing encounter with a millennia-old discipline.

With an introduction by the author and an afterword by Mark Lee, Chair of the Department of Architecture at Harvard GSD.

**Grundkurs  
What is Architecture About?  
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## Devil's Tower Becomes Architecture Because it is Precisely Chosen by the Aliens: An Introduction to the *Grundkurs* / Pier Paolo Tamburelli

This book collects sketches I made for eight lectures I gave at Vienna Technical University (TU Wien) in the 2021 winter semester. The lectures were part of the so-called *Grundkurs* or “basic course” that architecture students at the TU Wien take in the first semester of their first year. The course is meant as a first encounter with the discipline. Its fundamental question is nothing less than: “What is Architecture about?”

The *Grundkurs* was the first course I taught when I joined the faculty of the TU in September 2021. Although students still called it the *Grundkurs*, by that time it had changed its official designation to *Grundlagen des Entwerfens*: that is, “Foundations of Design,” or maybe “Fundamentals of Design,” if not “Basics of Design.” In homage to the peculiar strain of Viennese madness known as “logical positivism,” I’ve retained the old name here (for all its shortcomings, the jargon of logical positivism is better than the jargon of bureaucracy). *Grundkurs* indeed sounds very much like *Grundnorm* (the hypothetical rule that, according to Kelsen’s *Pure Theory of Law*, provides the foundation of an entire legal system) and suggests a similar purity of intent in addressing Architecture with a capital A, and addressing it all at once. Loyalty to the *Grundkurs*—at least to its name—signals a sincere desire not to skirt around the question, not to avoid the naivety required to ask: “What is Architecture about?”

I suspect the *Grundkurs* was the brainchild of Rob Krier, who held the chair of “Gestaltungslehre und Entwerfen” before András Pálffy and me. And I suspect that much of the substantial supply of architectural primers Krier has produced over his lifetime is related to the *Grundkurs*. In a way the very undidactic nature of my *Grundkurs* is a reaction to that fascinatingly unbearable set of instructions on how to design square and circular pillars, square and circular houses, square and circular squares, square and circular cities. While I cannot subscribe to the idea of a wholesale theory of architecture, starting with pillars and ending with regional planning, I do admire Krier’s courage and I have certainly been inspired by the narrative potential of his sketches. Probably also the deliberately ugly, punk tone of some of my drawings is a reaction to Krier’s, although I shouldn’t blame others for the way I draw, as I don’t know how to do it any differently.

While I do not wish to avoid the question “What is Architecture about?” I must admit that I have no answer for it: I cannot provide a complete theory of architecture, and even less a brief, introductory version of it. As a consequence, my approach to the *Grundkurs* has been rather open-ended and deliberately non-exhaustive. The eight lessons simply list eight sets of alternatives that I believe expose some of the fundamental problems of contemporary architecture. Each lesson addresses a dialectic couple: Roof / Wall, Shelter / Memory, Design / Analysis, Language / Action, Architecture / City, Profession / Art, Figure / Ground, Eclecticism / Classicism. All the lessons are organized as presentations made of fifty slides—I used a standard PowerPoint format—with each slide composed as a diptych. The image on the left always refers to the first semantic area (so Roof, Shelter, Design...), while the image on the right always refers to the second one (Wall, Memory, Analysis...); a few slides include just one image. Some pictures resurface time and again in different contexts and with different meanings. Readers will notice that I tend to have a greater sympathy for the terms in the second column (for art more than profession, for ground more than figure, and so forth), but this preference never develops into a real “theory,” neither is there an attempt at achieving much consistency (someone more committed to ground, for instance, should probably also prefer the profession to art, but...). The couples are “dialectical,” so there is somehow a thesis and an antithesis but no hint at a synthesis, to deploy a vaguely Hegelian terminology for a moment. Long live the great Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, but the theoretical ambition here is not so high. That is why, for instance, “architecture” appears as one of the alternative terms that are supposed to explain architecture itself. This conceptual sloppiness is, to a certain extent, deliberate, for the *Grundkurs* is nothing more than an introduction, a clumsy sleepwalking

in the direction of architecture. And this is also why this bunch of notes remains so proudly unsystematic and often succumbs to the temptation of the anecdote, unable to resist visual affinities, once again at the expenses of conceptual rigor.

This “prevalence of the visual” corresponds to two assumptions, one related to architecture as a discipline and the other related to a possible pedagogy of architecture at this particular moment in time. The first assumption is that architecture is a figurative art and that architecture’s fundamental experiences are visual experiences. This means that the first thing to learn in architecture is how *to see*, to educate the eye, to learn how to look at buildings and to look at paintings in order to acquire that capacity for educated seeing that Michelangelo aptly described as “having the compass in the eyes” (*le seste negli occhi*). The second assumption is that, in an image-based society, students would probably be attracted and convinced more by the beauty of images than by the rigor of an argument. So, my idea for the *Grundkurs* is that, first of all, students should *see pictures*, should become familiar with a set of canonical works and then, on the basis of these images, could start addressing all the problems that are associated with them.

The list of topics addressed in the eight lessons is certainly not conclusive (and by the way I also prepared a few other lessons, for example on Private / Public and on Necessity / Representation, that were never presented to the students and consequently are not published here). The selection of topics simply outlines a possible approach to architecture and attempts to address the question “What is Architecture about?” by also asking “Why is Architecture relevant in our culture?” I tried to give the students an idea of architecture as cultural production—an idea of design as an intellectual operation—and to define a context in which to situate this practice. The lessons are built around confrontations between opposing design solutions to the rather limited range of intellectual problems that architecture can tackle. They try to show how these different formal configurations depend on (and expose) different world views, different values. They try to show why architecture matters, why we attribute meaning to it, why and how it is possible to detect a project for an entire civilization in the way Leonidov assembles an inverted cone and a sphere or in the manner the head of a horse is squeezed into the pediment of the Parthenon.

The images used for the lessons are either scans from books in my office or materials found through banal online searches. While preparing the lessons, I redrew all the images from the screen of my laptop: the point of the sketches was just to identify and memorize the images and to gain the time, while making them, to think about something to say. Next to these scribbles I put notes, drew arrows, copied quotes, added bibliographical references. These short texts are generally in English (a rather basic English), with occasional quotes in Italian or German. They are generally written in block capitals, to be easily read while lecturing. The notes are not meant as a structured essay—and this is also the reason why they are not transcribed in this book, which is, after all, a book of sketches, and not a draft of an accomplished theory. Sometimes the oppositions suggested in the notes are very crude (see for instance the brutal pairing of “column / hero, column / tragedy” with “wall / comedy, wall / community”). Some may sound silly, others are by now unfathomable to me as well, such as “Devil’s Tower becomes architecture because it is precisely chosen by the aliens.”

The drawings are not particularly nice. They are also not so architectural, and they are rather different from the ones I do while actually designing buildings. In fact, the design sketches I make in the office are even more casual: I draw with whatever pen on whatever paper comes to hand—usually the back of recycled sheets. In the case of the *Grundkurs* notes, the pen and the paper are always the same: a black marker, neither thick nor thin, and two notebooks with slightly more proper paper. This otherwise unrequired nicety became necessary in order to maintain the continuity in format and expose the narrative

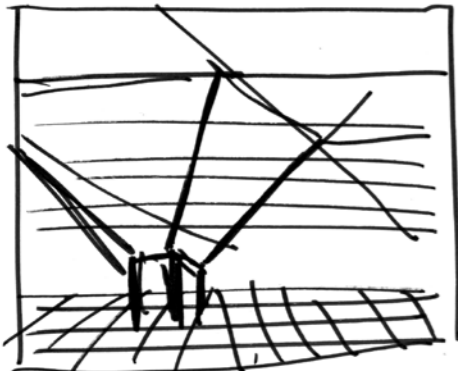
that runs through the different lessons. This continuity (together with the not entirely unintentional silliness of some drawings) ends up turning the drawings into a sort of comic strip. And I must admit that although I do not read many comics, and am definitely no comic nerd, I like them, and have even made comics (at school as a teenager and even more recently, but fortunately never dared to publish them).

Comics at least provide some relief from the unavoidable confrontation with the Italian tradition of teaching by means of sketches, as Carlo Aymonino and Enzo Mari did. Unlike Aymonino’s drawings, mine are never *en plein air*, never from real life; they do not correspond to travels, to romances, to girlfriends; they were all made at the kitchen table in front of a PowerPoint presentation, when the kids were in bed or at least should have been. They are rather detached, conventional, and independent of personal life; they simply serve as examples to build up the alternatives highlighted in the lessons. The only similarity with Aymonino are a few long quotes from classical authors, dropped in here and there to fix a few anchoring points for the argument and simulate some sort of intellectual decency. And in contrast to Mari, my drawings are far less “designed.” Mari’s pages are incredibly composed: text is always impeccably readable and fills the space among figures in a perfectly balanced manner. He addresses the readers directly, burying them under a frozen lava of unremitting and yet perfectly composed, moralizing accusations. My drawings are far less committed and far less aggressive. Their tone is objective/cynical, sometimes sarcastic. Maybe in the end the *Grundkurs* simply tries to guess “What Architecture is not about.”

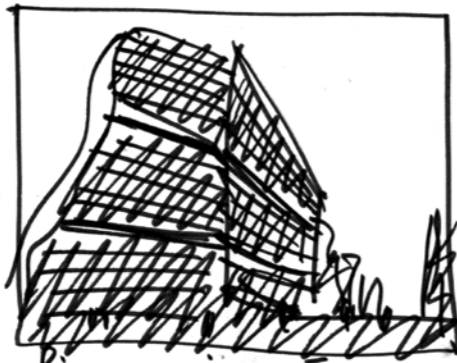


ROOF ROOF ROOF ROOF ROOF ROOF

WALL



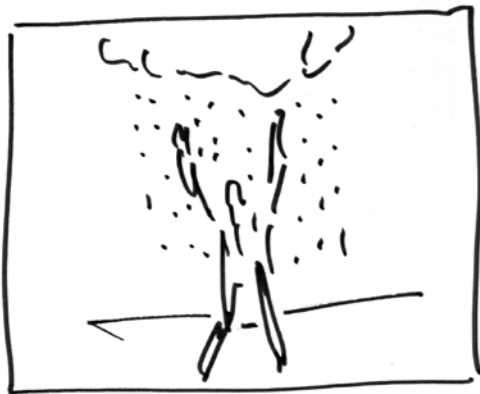
Norman Foster  
Stansted Airport 1981



Piranesi - Foro  
Augusto - 1757 ← per Piranesi  
VEDUTE DI ROMA Foro di Nuova

TECTURUM UTILITAS OMNIUM EST PRIMA ET MAXIMA  
Alberti, De re aedificatoria I, XI, p. 75 ed Postquam  
1450 ca.

IMMER IST DIE RAUMSCHLIESSUNG DIESER SUBJEKTES  
DIE ERSTE HAUPTANGELEGENHEIT, D.H. DIE ENFRIEDIGUNG  
ODER UMWANDUNG NACH DEN SEITEN ZU, NICHT DIE  
BEDACHUNG NACH OBEN  
Schmarsow, Das Wesen der architektonischen Schöpfung  
1893



Filarete 1460  
Magliabechiano

ROOF  
PHYSICS  
TECHNOLOGY  
ENVELOPE

SUSPICIOUS  
ABSENCE  
OF  
VIOLENCE



Hans Weidnitz 1495-1537  
Romulus Remus

WAN  
POLITICS  
PRACTICE  
SEPARATION

VIOLENCE  
AND  
CRITIQUE  
OF VIOLENCE

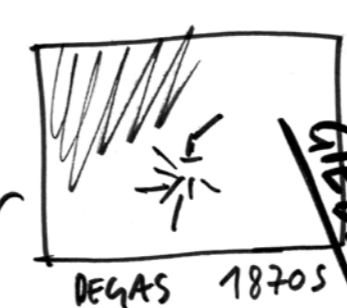
THE CITY  
ON THE  
BACKGROUND  
AS A  
SILENT  
POLITICAL  
SCENE

MA E' DA CREDERE CHE SUBITO ADAMO FU  
CACCIATO DAL PARADISO ET PIOVENDO ET NON  
AVENDO ALTRO PIU' PRESTO RIGVERO, SI  
MISSE LE MANI IN CAPO PER DIFENDERSI  
DALL'ACQUA. ET SICHOME COSTRETTO DALLA  
NECESSITA' PER VIVERE IL MANGIARE, COSI' L'ABITARE  
ERA MESTIERO PER DIFENDERSI DA MALI TEMPI  
E DALL'ACQUE. ALLUNO DICE CHE ~~PIU' PRESTO~~  
~~PIU' PRESTO~~ INNANZI A DILUVIO NON PIOVEVA,  
IO CREDO PIU' DI SI, SE LA TERRA DOVEVA  
PRODURRE I FRUTTI BISOGNAVA CHE  
PIOVESSE  
Filarete I, IV, 5



Although ~~entirely private~~  
architecture cannot be  
entirely private

THIS IS A PROBLEM FOR  
CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE  
AND A RESOURCE!



GALERIE  
DES  
MACHINES  
1889



ANDREA DI BONAIUTO  
SCAPPELONE SPAGNOLA 1360-70 ca.

PIRANESI ANTICITA' ROMANE 1756  
FOUNDATIONS  
THEATRE OF MARCELLUS



THIS THING  
IS NOT LIGHT  
IT JUST LOOKS



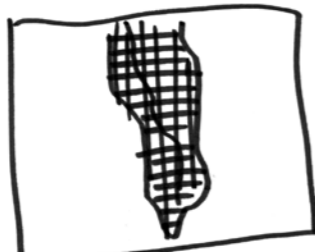
WALKING CITY ARCHIGRAM



Nolli map 1748



GEOLOGICAL SECTION



MANHATTAN GRID

(MANHATTAN IS POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF ITS GEOLOGICAL CONDITION)



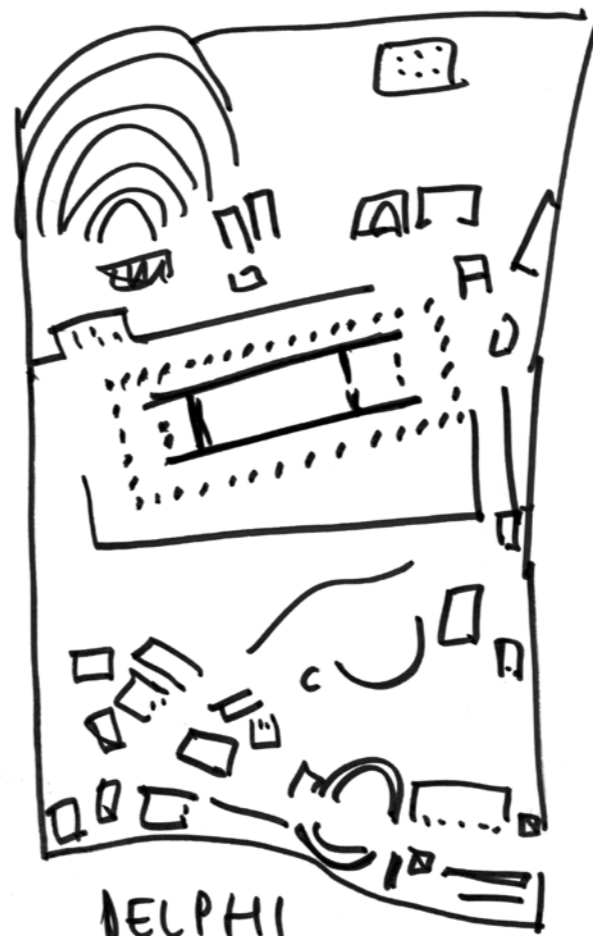
ACROPOLIS



DEIN EL BAHARI REPEATED WALLS

POINTS IN LANDSCAPE (UNTOUCHED)

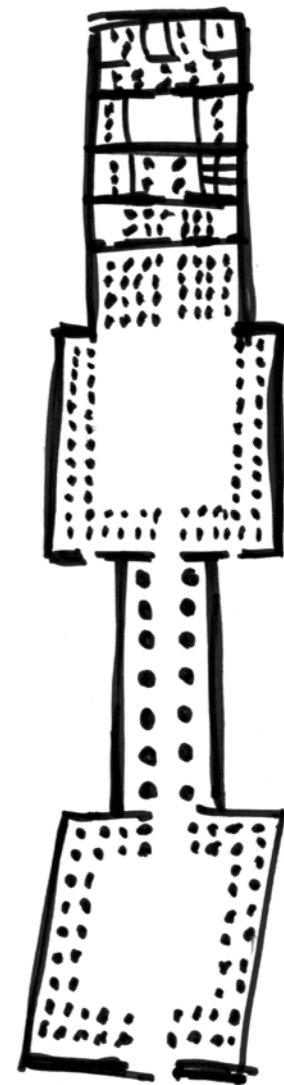
W.F. OTO, DIE GÖTER GRIECHENLANDS  
The appearance of the god in the precise place the lightning as a spatial paradigm  
Heraclitus "the lightning steers the universe"



DELPHI IX - III century BCE

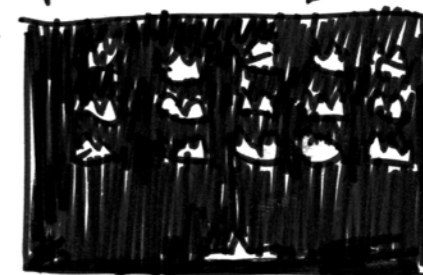
The visitor moves freely in space

The subject does not turn in space. He just moves rapidly left and right



LUXOR 1400 BCE AMENOFI III

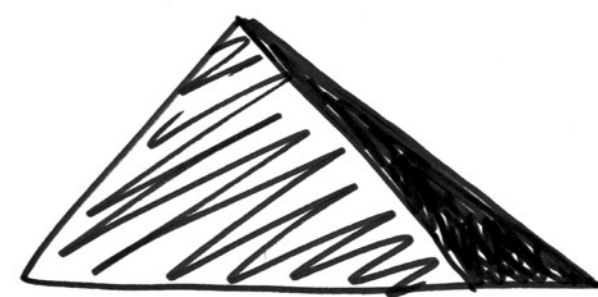
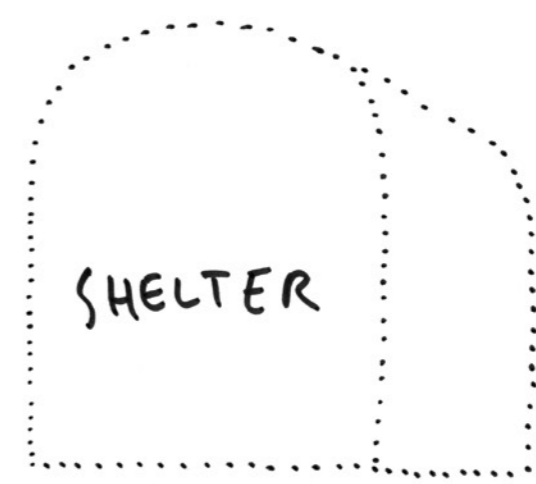
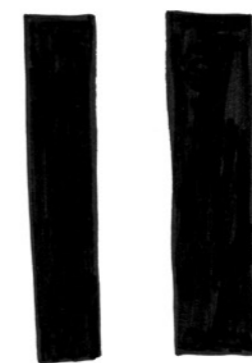
A series of walls to be looked at frontally



THE SPACE INVADERS LOGIC

MOVES ONLY LEFT/RIGHT → ← [sketch] →





MEMORY

THE SHELTER / MEMORY ALTERNATIVE IS FUNDAMENTALLY THE SAME ROOF/WALL ALTERNATIVE, JUST LOOKING AT THE SOPE INSTEAD THAN LOOKING AT THE TOOL



DE MENIL HOUSTON 1984  
RENZ PIANO



MASCO DEI  
METELLI

MEMORY THROUGH  
IMAGES

MEMORY THROUGH  
RITUALS

WHAT DOES ARCHITECTURE DO?

DEFINES AN ENVIRONMENT FOR A RECENT VERSION OF THIS APPROACH SEE P. RAHM, NATURAL HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE

KEEP OUR BODY TEMPERATURE AT 37°C

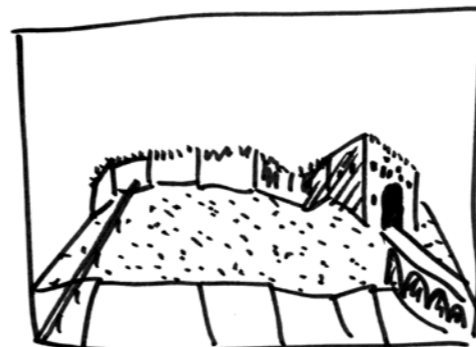
ARCHITECTURE AS CLOTHING (AS INSULATION)

ARCHITECTURE STARTS FROM THE HOUSE / ARCHITECTURE STARTS FROM THE TEMPLE

COUPLES BEHAVIOURS WITH PLACES  
DISTRIBUTES RESOURCES  
REPRESENT THESE BEHAVIOURS AND THESE DISTRIBUTION

A DETERMINIST READING OF THE HISTORY OF THE CITY CITIES CHANGE BECAUSE OF EPIDEMICS AND OTHER AMENITIES

ARCHITECTURE AS (REPRESENTED) POLITICS



ALEPPO CITADEL

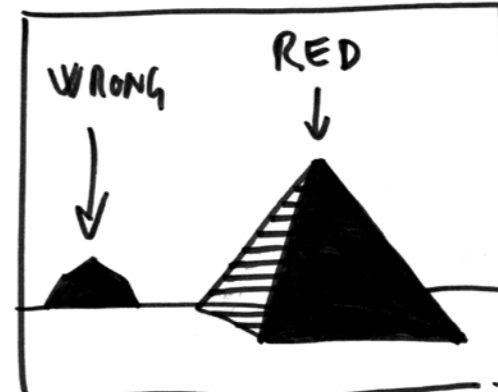
CITY WALLS/FORTRESSES AS ARCHITECTURE OF SHELTER THAT BECOMES SYMBOLIC

OF UNITY!  
OF PROTECTION?  
OF FEAR?

THIS IS THE MOMENT A RADICALLY NEW PARADIGM APPEARS



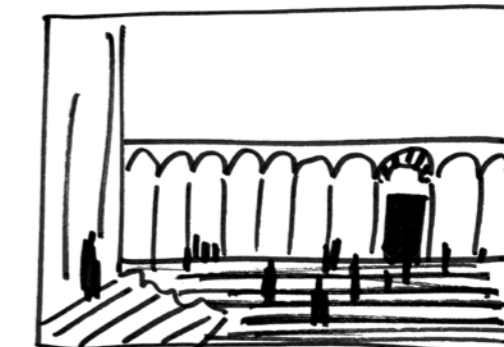
LAUGIER  
ESSAI 1753



TWO PYRAMIDS OF SNOFRU IN DASHUR (THE WRONG AND RED ONE)

From GIEDION "The Eternal Past" 1962

see late LC  
A CRITIQUE OF MODERNISM THAT DOES NOT GO BACK TO CLASSICISM



PISA CEMETERY

ARCHITECTURE AS DISTANCE AMONG DIFFERENT ACTIONS TO BE PERFORMED

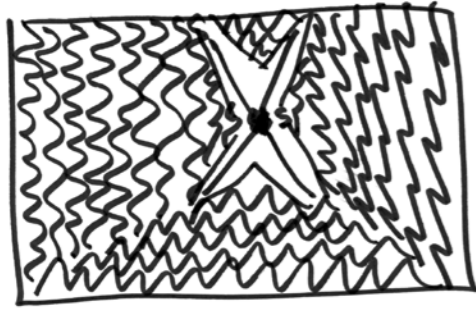
ARCHITECTURE AS CONTROL OF TIME ATTRIBUTED TO GESTURES  
PRECISION  
CLARITY

P.P. PASOLINI  
MEDEA  
1969

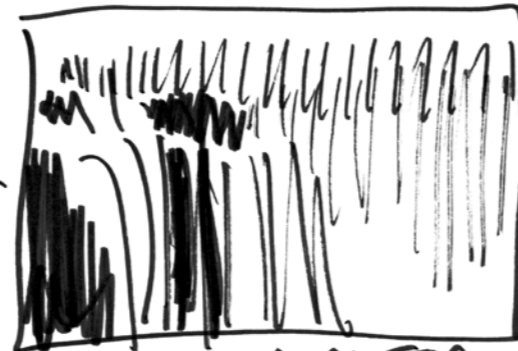
Theropolis of Corinth is made of exterior of Aleppo Citadel + interior PISA + cement way

ARCHITECTURE AS MONTAGE  
Blanchot  
Le Corbusier  
Stirling

(Rousseau's Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes 1755  
A. Smith, Wealth of Nations 1776  
D. Hume, Enquiry concerning Human Understanding 1768  
TWO YEARS AFTER!



AN ENVIRONMENT ENTIRELY DEFINED BY ARCHITECTURE



GERHARD RICHTER  
NIAGARA FALLS  
1965

THE TRANSFORMATION OF LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE AS CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

U. Gregotti, Il territorio dell'architettura, Milano 1966

SAME WAY TO DEPICT NATURE WITH NO INTEREST IN NATURE



ARCHITECTURE AS CLOTHING



Fischer von Erlach 1721  
CATERACTES DU NIL

WATERFALLS AS THE PLACE WHERE A MYTHICAL INTERPRETATION IS ASSOCIATED TO A PLACE  
ARCHITECTURE AS MARKING



SPACE TECH AS BRIDGE

STRANGELY SIMILAR RESULTS



HAGIA SOPHIA AS MERZBAU

SCHWITTERS MERZBAU 1933



ESTUFA 1933

PRODUCE A CONDITION  
REPRESENT A CONDITION



NATIONALGALERIE

MOUNT RUSHMORE, LINCOLN



ARCHITECTURE AS A NEW WAY OF LIFE



LOOS CHICAGO TRIBUNE



MERZBAU  
A CONSTRUCTION OF MEMORY, TOWARDS INSIDE?  
JUST A PRIVATE MEMORY?  
FRAGMENTS AS INNER FRAGMENTS?  
THE MERZBAU AS A PUBLIC INTERIOR?

MEMORY AS SYMBOL AS ICON



LOOS CHICAGO TRIBUNE



ROSSI SEGRATE 1965

SORT OF SCULPTURE



VALIE EXPORT  
AKTIONMOSE: GENITALPANIK  
1969

WORK ON ONE'S  
OWN BODY

THE BORDER  
BETWEEN BODY  
AND OUTSIDE (SOCIETY)

"THE PERSONAL  
IS POLITICAL"



R. Sennet,  
The Fall  
of Public  
Man, 1977



KISHO KUROKAWA  
NAKAGI 1972

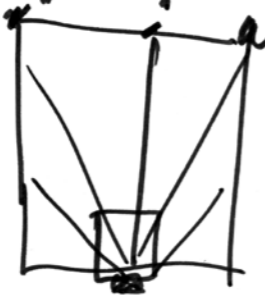


SOUVETAURILIA  
GEORGES DUMÉZIL,  
ARCHAIC ROMAN  
RELIGION, 1964

THE CONSTRUCTION OF A GENERAL  
EQUILIBRIUM BUILT THROUGH THE  
ACCURATE  
POSITIONING  
OF EXTERNAL  
OBJECTS  
"PRIVATE"  
SPHERE  
DOES NOT  
EVEN  
EXIST  
"Public" and  
"Private" are  
concepts that  
change  
through  
history



TEMPLUM  
IN TERRA



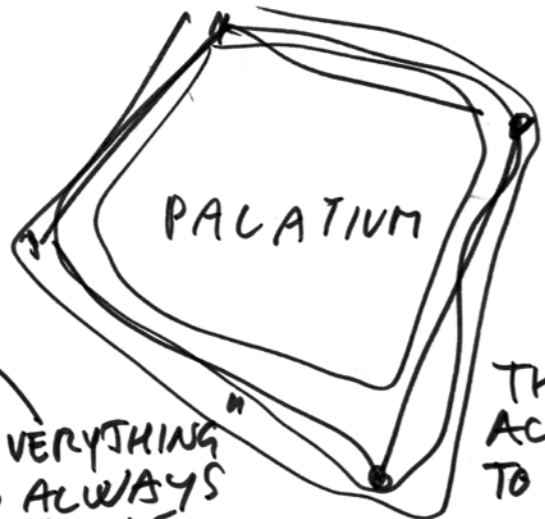
MOUNTAINS

TEMPLUM IN  
AERE  
ROME

EVERY RELIGIOUS  
RITUAL IS PRECISELY  
LOCATED INTO THE  
LANDSCAPE



THE  
OVERLAPPING  
OF REAL  
AND  
IDEAL  
GEOGRAPHY



"EVERYTHING  
IS ALWAYS  
POSSIBLE"

THERE IS ONE  
ACTION ASSOCIATED  
TO EACH PLACE

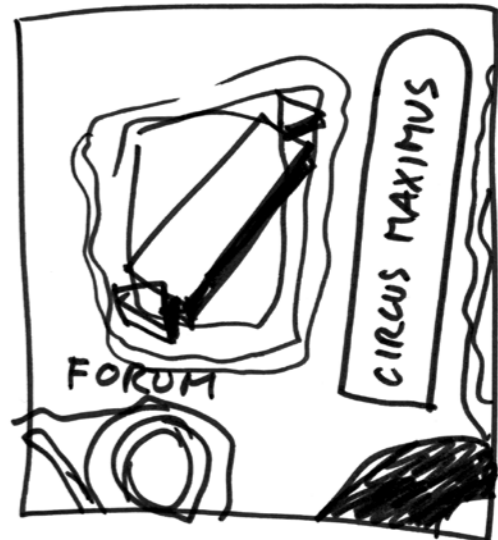
THE TOPOGRAPHY  
SURVIVES IN ROME  
OF XI CENTURY CE  
1,5 MILLION  
INHABITANTS

MODELLO  
GISMONDI  
1935-71  
SCALE  
1:250

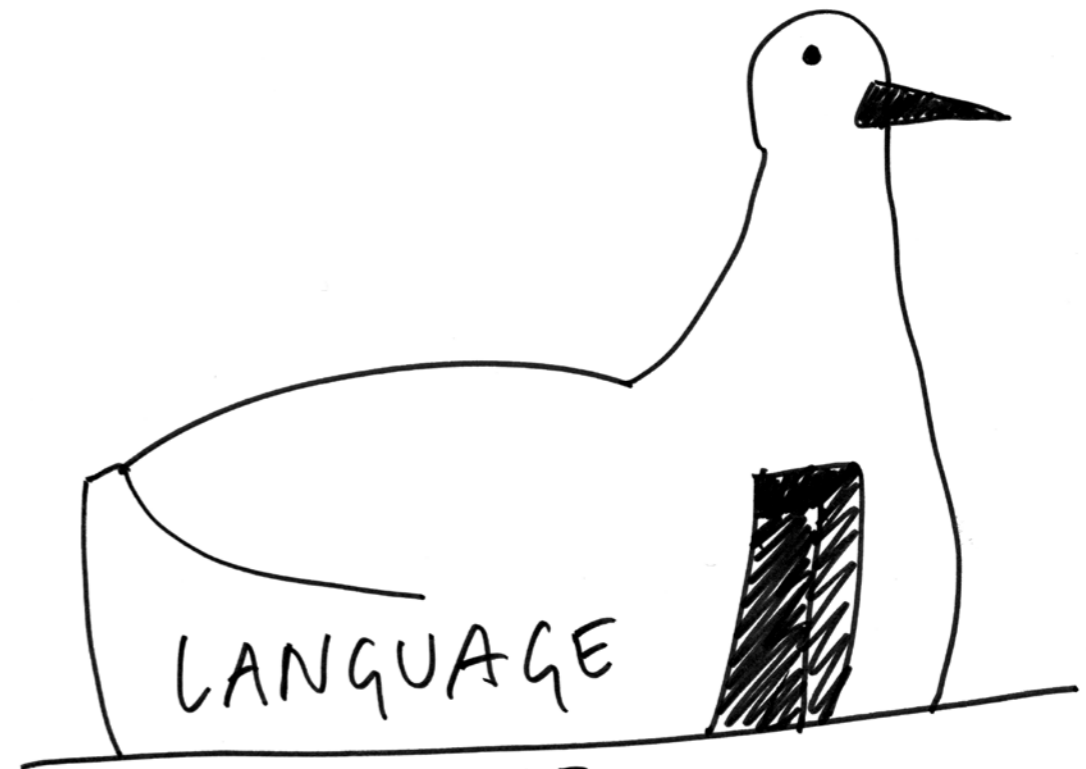


PLAN

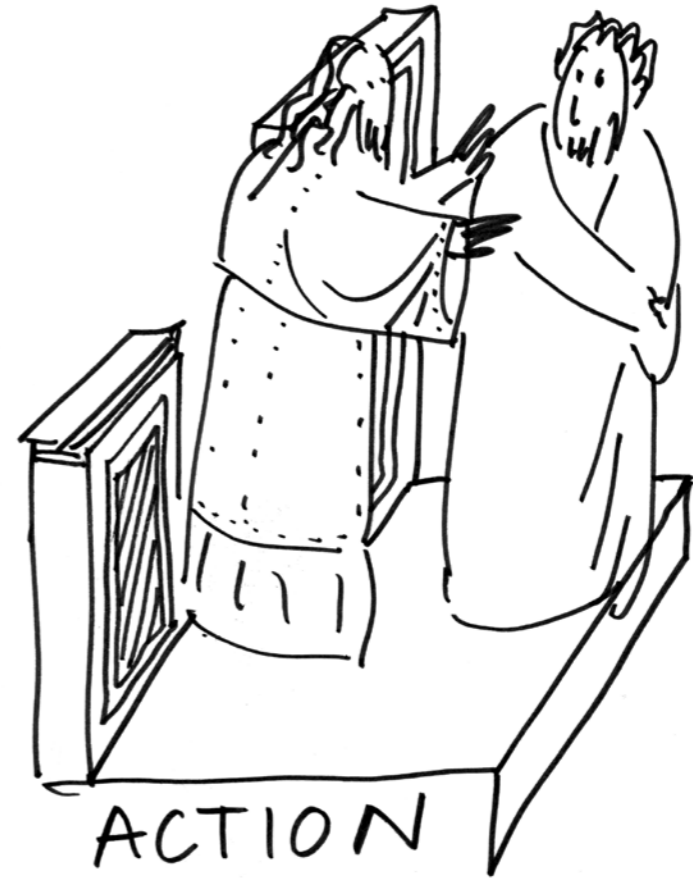
PIRANESI READS  
ALL THE FUTURE  
OF ROME IN ITS  
TOPOGRAPHY  
FOUNDATION AS  
THE FUNDAMENTAL  
ACT OF  
ARCHITECTURE



WALTER PICHLER  
PROTOTYP 3 - 1966



**I V**



**ACTION**



THE EXPULSION OF ST. JOACHIM FROM THE TEMPLE SCROVEGNI CHAPEL 1303-05

THE TEMPLE IS MADE OF BALDACHIN + PULPIT + PRAECINCT WALL

The wall is the precondition for the expulsion  
There is no action here without architecture



THE PRESENTATION OF THE VIRGIN TO THE TEMPLE 1303-05

THE TEMPLE IS ALWAYS MADE OF THE SAME PIECES: STAIRS, BALDACHIN, PULPIT, WALL. THESE ARE THE ELEMENTS THAT ALLOW ALL THE ACTIONS HAPPENING AT THE TEMPLE TO BE PERFORMED

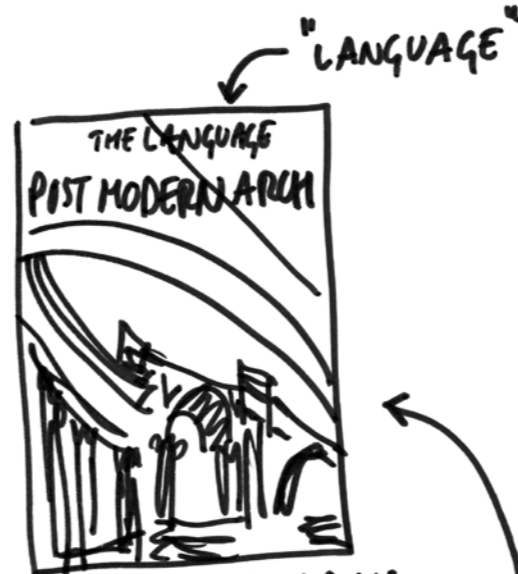
The relation among spatial boundaries and bodies inside is extremely tight. The walls are pressed onto bodies to force dramatic action "MIMIC BOXES"

While the buildings acquire a more realistic relation to people, the relation among space and action is lost

THE BUILDING IS NO MORE JUST A SET OF CONDITIONS FOR ACTION



TADDEO GADDI PRESENTATION OF THE VIRGIN TO THE TEMPLE 1330S CAPPELLA BARONCELLI SANTA CROCE

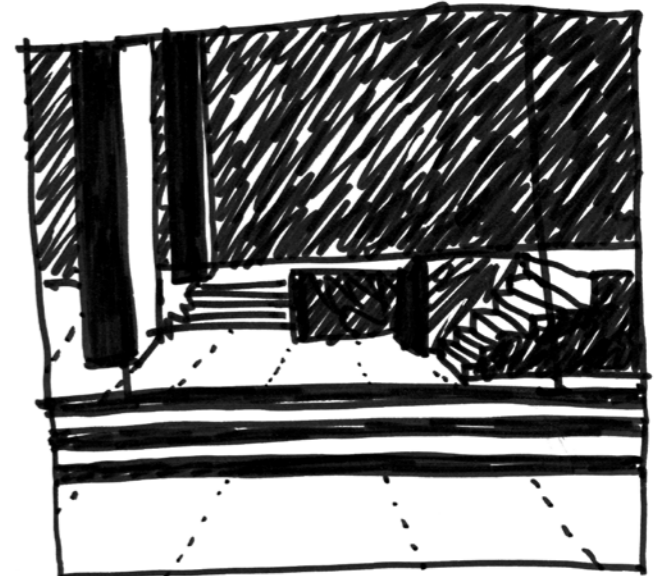


CHARLES JENCKS 1978 Piazza d'Italia New Orleans Charles Moore ARCHITECTURE AS SIGN

J. SUMMERSON, THE CLASSICAL LANGUAGE OF ARCHITECTURE, 1963

B. ZEVI, THE MODERN LANGUAGE OF ARCHITECTURE, 1973

U. ECO, LA STRUTTURA ASSENTE 1968

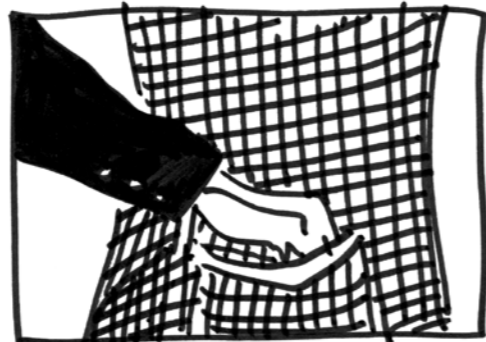


ADOLPHE APPIA SCENE FOR TRISTAN UND ISOLDE 1923

ARCHITECTURE AS THE PRODUCTION OF A SCENE TO EXECUTE GESTURES, AS THE POSSIBILITY OF A 'GESTURE'

2.0141 DIE MÖGLICHKEIT SEINES VORKOMMENS IN SACHVERHALTEN IST DIE FORM DES GEGENSTANDES

L. Wittgenstein, Tractatus logico-philosophicus, 1921



ROBERT BRESSON  
PICK POCKET 1959

THE MECHANIC STUPIDITY OF WAR. THE FIRST MINUTES OF THE MOVIE WITH ONLY SOUND OF SWORDS BEATING METAL ARMOUR. THE SEQUENCE OF GESTURES WITHOUT INTERPRETATION



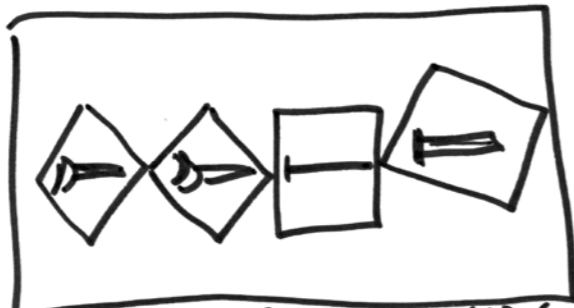
LANCELOT DU LAC  
1974



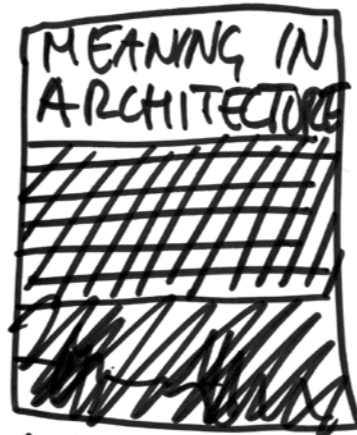
J. BALDESSARI  
THROWING THREE BALLS IN THE AIR TO GET A STRAIGHT LINE  
1973



ROY LICHTENSTEIN  
1962



BALDESSARI 1976  
FOUR PORTRAITS OF SWORDS ALIGNED



C. JENCKS  
G. BAIRD 1970

ACTION TAKING PLACE IN THE CITY



GIULIO PAOLINI 1965  
DIAFRAMMA 8

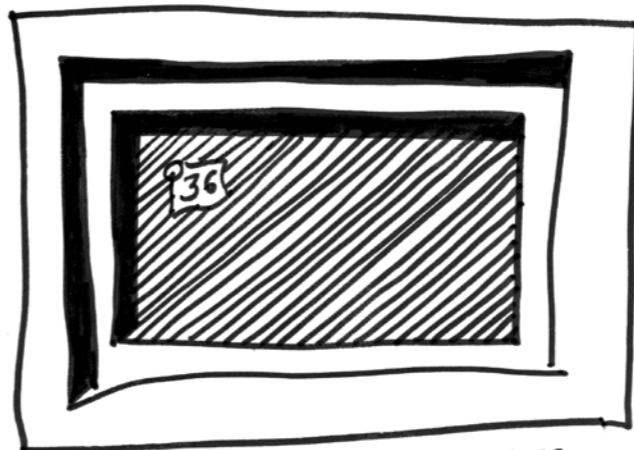
is still Giotto's problem  
human acting in space

ACTION TAKING PLACE IN THE CITY AND REPRESENTATION OF ACTION TAKING PLACE IN THE CITY



PAOLINI D867 1967

HOW TO FRAME ACTION?  
Paolini's problem is how to represent human acting in space (public space)



CORNELIS GYSBRECHTS  
CA. 1670

VICTOR STOICHITA, THE SELF-AWARE IMAGE, 1997  
(L'INSTAURATION DU TABLEAU, 1993)



PAOLINI 1/25  
1965

Paolini's problem is not only REPRODUCIBILITY, not only STATUS OF THE ARTWORK as in so much modern and post-modern art, it is also REPRESENTATION OF SPACE and REPRESENTATION IN SPACE

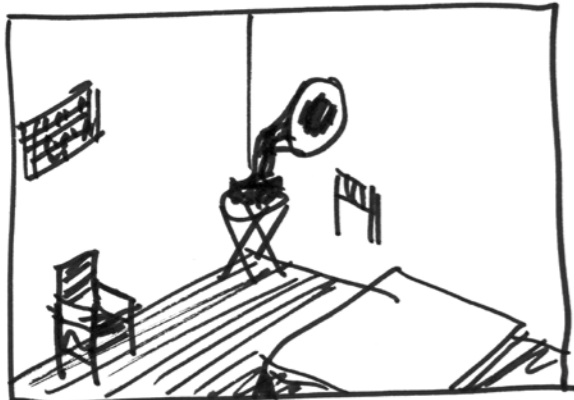


1926 STAM.  
 HANNES MEYER. HANS  
 SCHMIDT. EL LISSITZKY

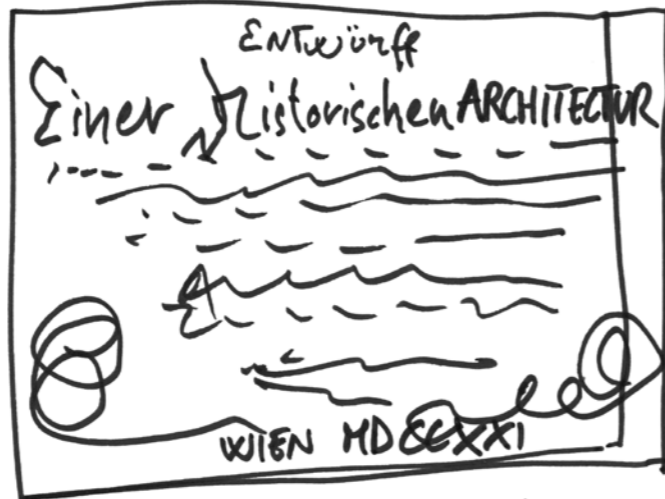
"STÄDTE ZU  
 VERMIETEN"

"WHEN CHANGING PLACE  
 OF RESIDENCE, IT IS NO LONGER  
 NECESSARY TO PACK THE  
 FURNITURE VAN, ONLY THE  
 LUGGAGE"

HILBERSEIMER. 1927  
 GROSSSTADTARCHITEKTUR



HANNES MEYER  
 COOP-ROOM 1926



HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURE  
 NOT ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

"OF ANTIQUITY AND OF FOREIGN  
 PEOPLE" (DES ALTERTUMS  
 UND FRENDEK WÖLKER)

"BAU-ART DER ALTEN JÜDEN, AE-  
 GYPTER, SYRER, PERSER UND  
 GRIECHEN"

86 FOLIOS - 5 BOOKS

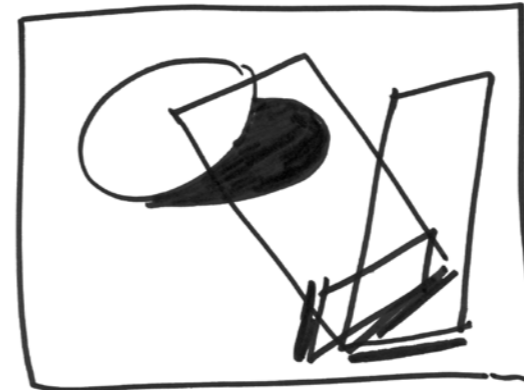
- HOW TO TRANSLATE  
 "ENTWURFF"

"UNE IDÉE GÉNÉRALE DE  
 LA DIVERSITÉ DES BATIMENTS  
 DE L'ANTIQUITE ET DE TOUTES  
 LES NATIONS"

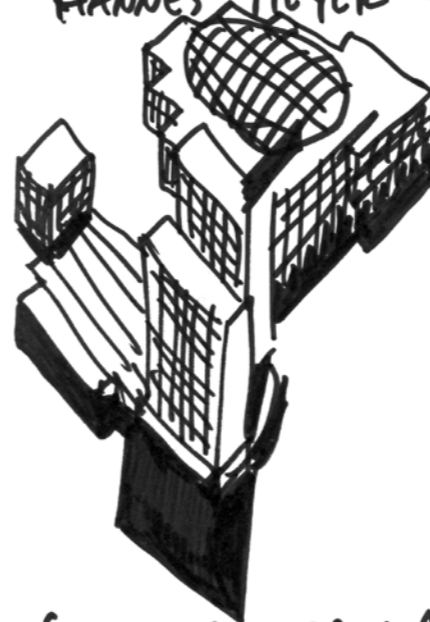
TAB II		
PAP STADT BABYLON		

FISCHER IS VERY ACCURATE

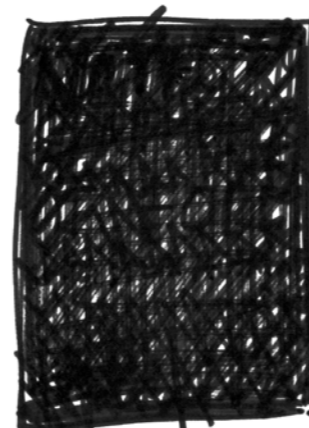
COLUMN FOR  
 SOURCES



HANNES MEYER 1926



SOCIÉTÉ DES NATIONS  
 1927 HANNES MEYER  
 HANS WITWER



"CONTEXT"

CHRISTOPHER  
 ALEXANDER  
 NOTES ON THE  
 SYNTHESIS  
 OF FORM  
 1964

EGGS

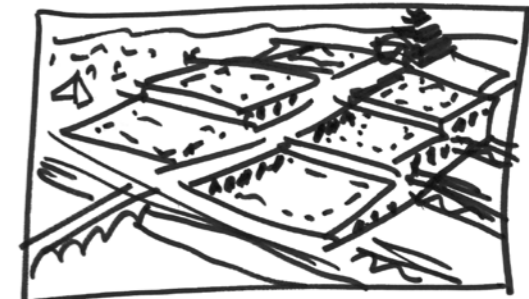


FELICE CASORATI  
 VOUA SUL CASSETONE  
 1920



EGG

PIERO DEVA  
 FRANCESCA  
 PALA MONTEFELTRO

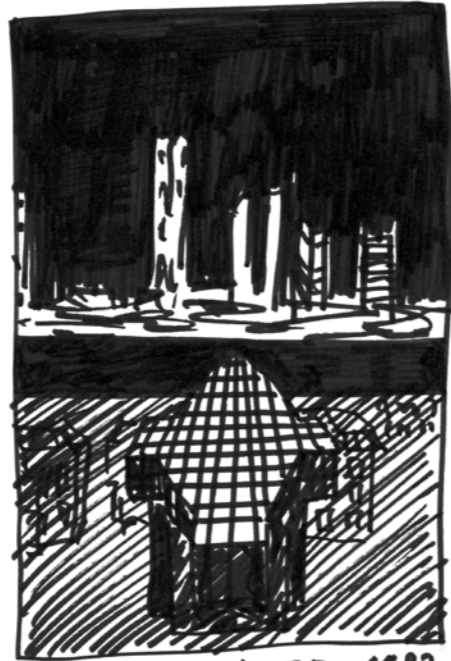


HANGING GARDENS  
 OF BABYLON  
 7 WONDERS

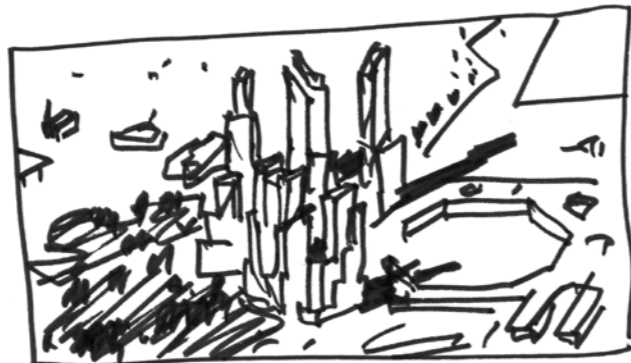
SEVEN WONDERS ARE  
 SEVEN

A PLURAL COLLECTION





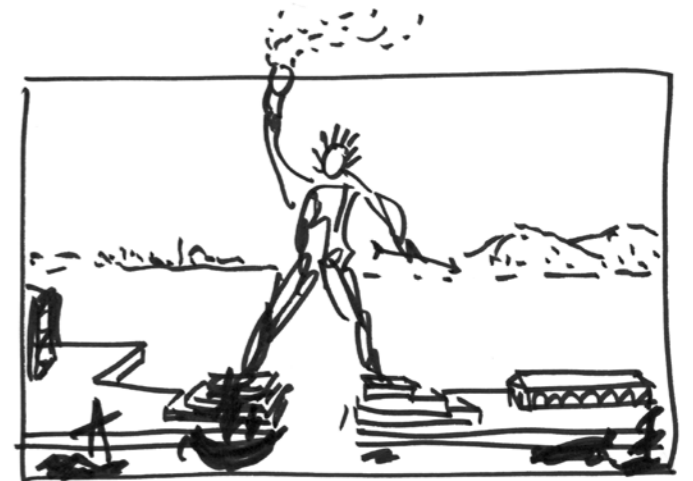
HANS KOLLHOFF 1982  
MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY  
FRANKFURT A.M.  
The possibility for  
the object to become  
city



KOLLHOFF - POTSDAMERPLATZ  
PROPOSAL 1992  
CAPITALIST REALISM



KOLLHOFF - WALTER BENJAMIN  
PLATZ - BERLIN 2000



FISCHER U.E. - COLOSSUS OF  
RHODES  
P.A. Clayton, M. Price, The  
Seven Wonders of the Ancient  
World, 1989



FISCHER - NIUE WATERFALLS



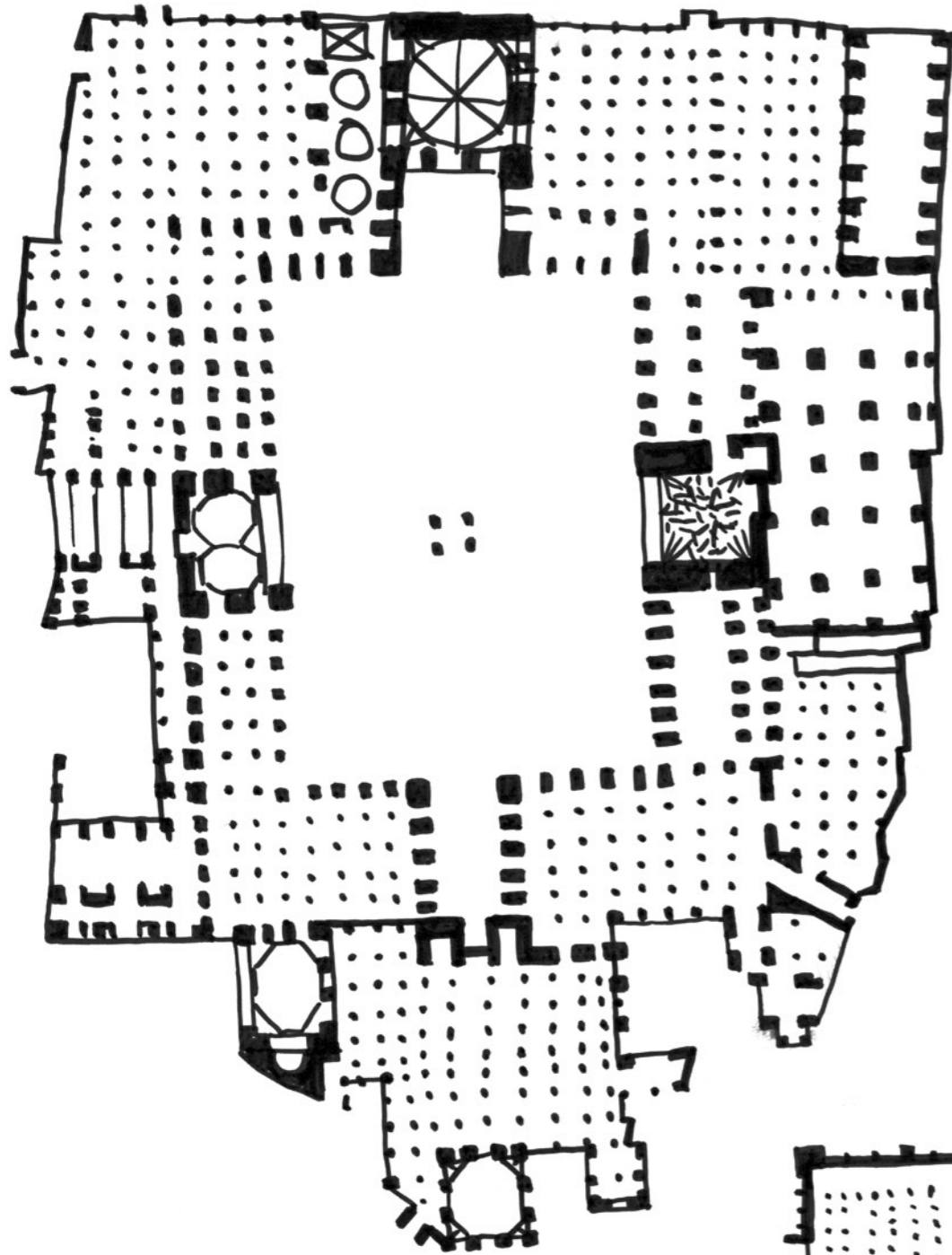
RICHTER NIAGARA  
1965



INIGO JONES 1655  
THE MOST NOTABLE ANTIQUITY OF GREAT BRITAIN



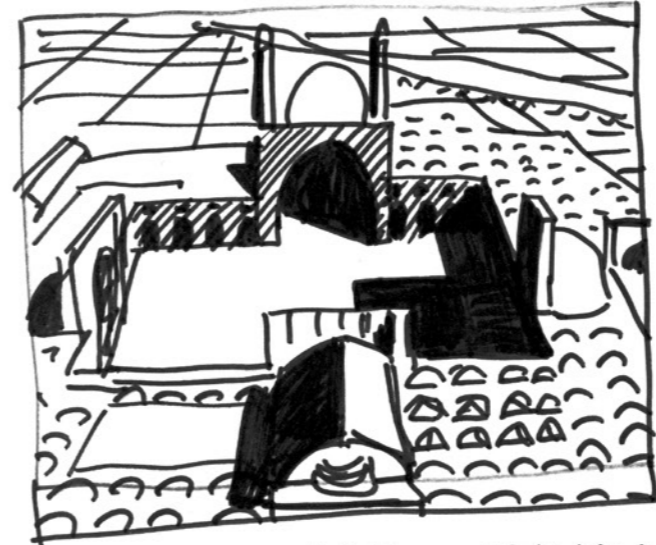
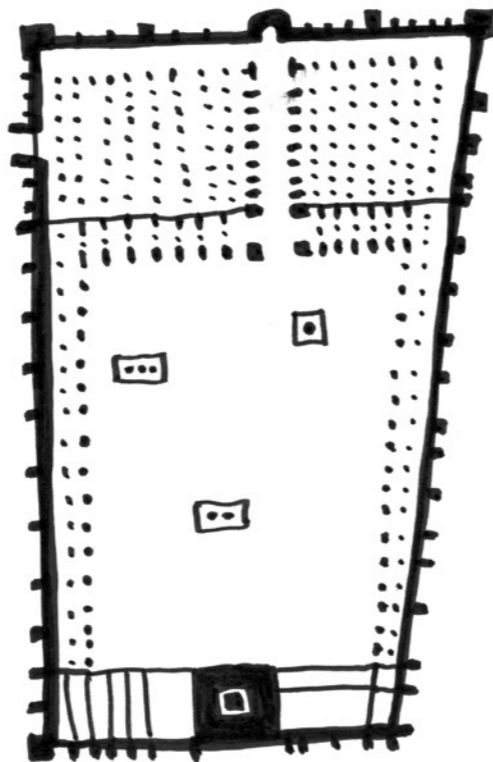
Fischer  
Stonehenge  
+  
Natural  
Rock  
near  
Salzburg



MASJD  
I-JAMI  
(FRIDAY  
MOSQUE)  
ISFAHAN  
BEGINS  
771 ~~AD~~  
AD

RELATION  
FIELD/EXCEPTIONS  
THE FIELD AS THE  
POSSIBILITY OF ITS  
EXCEPTIONS

GREAT  
MOSQUE  
KAIROUAN  
VII-IX  
CENTURY  
AD



MASJD I-JAMI ISFAHAN  
IF WE LOOK AT THE FOUR  
IWAN OF THE ISFAHAN  
MOSQUE FROM THE POINT  
OF VIEW OF VENTURI/SCOTT  
BROWN (LEARNING FROM LAS  
VEGAS, 1972) IDEA THAT  
ALL BUILDINGS ARE  
EITHER :



DUCK



DECORATED  
SHED

THE IWANS (COVERED IN TILES)  
ARE LIKE THE DUCK CHOPPED  
WITH THE DECORATED SHED



BELLY OF THE DUCK



KAIROUAN

## What is Architecture About? Eight Notes on the *Grundkurs* / Mark Lee

### 1. On the *Grundkurs*

The *Grundkurs* in architecture draws an outline of the foundations, rules, history, language, pace, process, and position of the discipline. Most importantly, it demarcates the first set of disciplinary boundaries.

Defining architecture entails making decisions on what architecture is and is not about. On one level, it is an act of disciplinary apartheid, building new walls (and consequently new slums) to separate what's in from what's out. On another level, this act of segregation promotes something that is often imperative in the formative stages of an education—a form of disciplinary autonomy.

Pier Paolo Tamburelli's *Grundkurs* draws the discipline's boundaries through eight lessons summarized as eight chapters in this book. Though there are examples from the fine arts, film, and design, its primary focus is always architecture. It defines clear and solid boundaries while offering limited external points of reference. In doing so, it serves notice that the aim here is to produce architecture, not sociology.

Disciplinary autonomy does not mean martial law: it does not have to last forever and does not equate to xenophobia. Imposed at the outset of one's education, it ensures much greater freedom down the road: "a dictatorship at the door and a democracy inside," is how Andy Warhol described this in relation to Studio 54.

### 2. On foundations

François Truffaut wrote that the entire career of a director is already present in his first 150 feet of film. Jean-Luc Godard said that you need "a beginning, middle, and end, but not necessarily in that order."

The *Grundkurs* is critical as it signifies the beginning of an architectural education, when the foundations of a life-long vocation are laid. Out of these first encounters with the discipline emerge the values and the ethos that the architect has to wrestle with, pin down, as they continue to evolve and transform in line with the trajectory of their practice.

Although the *Grundkurs* is situated at the beginning, there is a history of institutions where it is foregrounded as the apotheosis of the entire curriculum, from the Bauhaus in Germany to IIT in Chicago to Cooper Union in New York. The importance placed on the *Grundkurs* in these model pedagogical programs acknowledges that the question "What is Architecture about?" is one that recurs throughout an entire career.

Former professional basketball sharpshooter and coach Chuck Person said of his coaching technique: "I teach footwork, I teach the foundation. Most mistakes are made in the beginning. You can fix the middle, you can fix the top, but once you get started, it's hard to fix down low."

### 3. On rules

The art critic Dave Hickey dedicated his career to confronting both the pleasures and the misery inflicted by rules.

"I can remember being buoyed up, as a youth, by reading about Jackson Pollock in a magazine and seeing photographs of him painting. I was heartened by the stupid little rule through which Pollock civilized his violence. *It's okay to drip paint*, Jackson said. The magazine seemed to acquiesce: *Yeah, Jackson's right*, it seemed to say, grudgingly, *Dripping paint is now within the rules*. Even so, I had the right to be shocked a few years later when I enrolled in a university and discovered that Pollock's joyous permission had been translated into a prohibitive, institutional edict: *It's bad not to drip!* The art coaches said. *It means you got no soul! Yikes!*"

Norman Foster,  
Stansted Airport, 1991



Giovan Battista Piranesi, Ruins  
of the Forum of Augustus,  
Vedute di Roma, 1755

Antonio Averlino or  
Filarete, Adam, ca. 1465



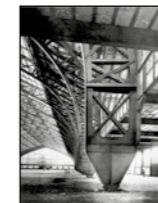
Hans Weiditz, Romulus  
and Remus, ca. 1530

Edgard Degas, The Star, or  
Dancer on stage, 1878



Andrea di Bonaiuto, Way of  
Salvation, Spanish Chapel,  
Santa Maria Novella, Florence,  
ca. 1365-67

Ferdinand Dutert, Galerie des  
Machines, Paris, 1889



Giovan Battista Piranesi,  
Foundations of the Theatre  
of Marcellus, Antichità  
Romane, 1756

Centre George Pompidou under  
construction, Paris, ca. 1975



Statue of Ramses, Abu Simbel,  
Reconstruction, 1964-68

Gordon Matta Clark, Conical  
Intersect, Paris, 1975



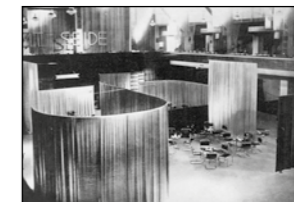
Renzo Piano, Richard Rogers,  
Centre George Pompidou,  
Paris, 1977

Temple of Hera II, Paestum,  
5th century BC



Akira Kurosawa, Ran, 1985

National Gallery under  
construction, Berlin, ca. 1965



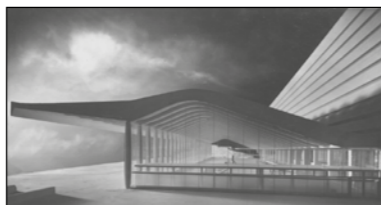
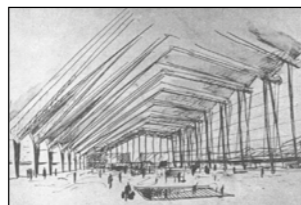
Lilly Reich and Ludwig Mies  
van der Rohe, Café Samt &  
Seide, Berlin, 1927

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe,  
National Gallery, Berlin, 1968



Roman Theatre, Orange,  
1st century AD

Ludovico Quaroni, Mario Ridolfi,  
Proposal for Termini Railway  
Station, Rome, 1947



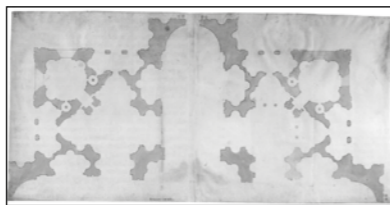
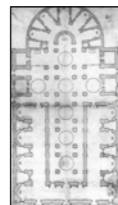
Eugenio Montuori,  
Model of Termini Railway  
Station, Rome, 1947

Adolf Loos, Proposal  
for the Chicago Tribune  
Headquarters, 1922



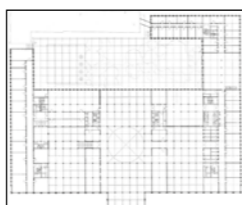
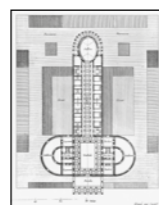
João Batista Vilanova Artigas,  
FAU-USP, São Paulo, 1969

Fra Giovanni Giocondo,  
Project for St. Peter's, 1506



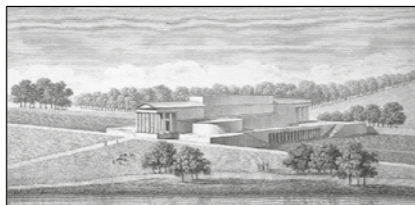
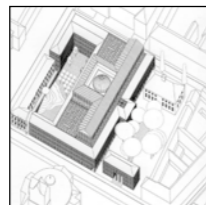
Donato Bramante, Project  
for St. Peter's, 1506

Claude Nicolas Ledoux,  
Plan of Oikema, or House  
of Pleasure, 1780



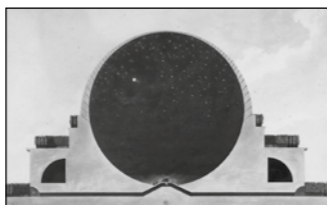
Oswald Mathias Ungers,  
Plan of Regional Library,  
Karlsruhe, 1991

Oswald Mathias Ungers,  
Axonometry of Regional  
Library, Karlsruhe, 1991



Claude Nicolas Ledoux,  
View of Oikema, or House  
of Pleasure, 1780

Etienne Louis Boullée, View  
of Newton Cenotaph, 1764



Etienne Louis Boullée, Section  
of Newton Cenotaph, 1764

Boris Iofan, Proposal for  
Palace of the Soviets, 1937

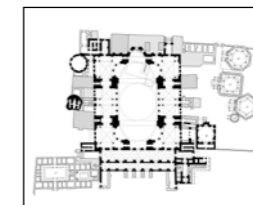


Raphael, School of Athens,  
ca. 1509-11

Hagia Sophia, Istanbul



Hagia Sophia, Istanbul



Plan of Hagia Sophia, Istanbul



Finding and Recognition of the  
true Cross, San Francesco,  
Arezzo, 1452-66



David Hockney, American  
Collectors, 1968



Giotto, Resurrection of Drusiana,  
Peruzzi Chapel, Santa Croce,  
Florence, ca. 1320



Giotto, Resurrection of Drusiana,  
Peruzzi Chapel, Santa Croce,  
Florence, ca. 1320



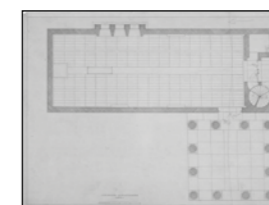
Gunnar Erik Asplund, Public  
Library, Stockholm, 1940



Sigurd Lewerentz, Resurrection  
Chapel, Woodland Cemetery,  
Stockholm, 1940



Alvaro Siza, Bonjour  
Tristesse, Berlin, 1984



Sigurd Lewerentz, Plan of  
Resurrection Chapel, Woodland  
Cemetery, Stockholm, 1940



Sigurd Lewerentz, Situation  
Plan of Resurrection Chapel,  
Woodland Cemetery,  
Stockholm, 1940



Johann Bernhard Fischer  
von Erlach, City for Alexander  
the Great on Mount Athos,  
Entwurf einer historischen  
Architektur, 1721



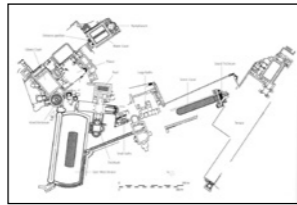
Olympia, View of Ruins



Jacopo Barozzi da Vignola, Palazzo dei Banchi, Bologna, 1565-68



Jacopo Barozzi da Vignola, Sant'Andrea alla via Flaminia, Rome, 1550



Villa Adriana, Tivoli, ca. 118-134 AD



Villa Adriana, Tivoli, ca. 118-134 AD



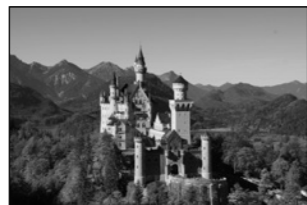
Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Villa Tugendhat, Brno, 1930



Salvador Dalí's House, Portlligat, Spain, 1930



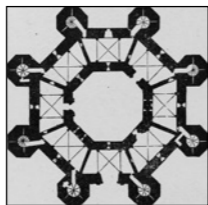
Hans Hollein, Travel Agency, Vienna, 1976-78



Christian Jank, Eduard Riedel, Georg von Dollmann, Neuschwanstein Castle, Bavaria, 1869



Castel del Monte, ca. 1240



Castel del Monte, ca. 1240

Carlo Mollino, Teatro Regio, Turin, 1973



Leon Krier, Atlantis, 1986



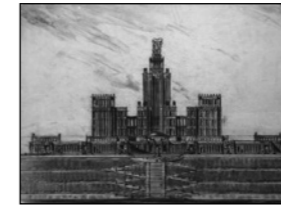
John Nash, Royal Pavilion, Brighton, 1827



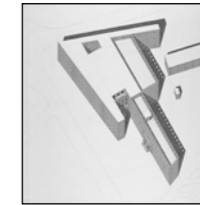
Leon Krier, Atlantis, 1986



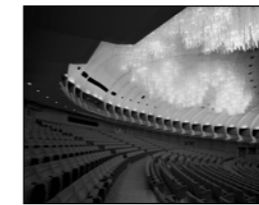
Karl Friedrich Schinkel, Zeltzimmer, Charlottenhof, Potsdam, ca. 1826



Boris Iofan, Moscow State University, Main Building, 1947



Giorgio Grassi, Biblioteca Comunale, Milan, 1990



Carlo Mollino, Teatro Regio, Turin, 1973



Anthony Mann, The Fall of the Roman Empire, 1964



Paul Klee, Main roads and side roads, 1929



Ilya Repin, Reply of the Zaporozhian Cossacks, 1880-91



Cartoon of Bolshevik leaders writing a letter to Lord Curzon, 1923



Vladimir Tatlin, Monument to the Third International, 1919-20



Werner Tübke, Early Bourgeois Revolution in Germany, Cyclorama, Bad Frankenhausen, 1976-87



Werner Tübke, Early Bourgeois Revolution in Germany, Cyclorama, Bad Frankenhausen, 1976-87



Gerhard Richter, Cow, 1964



Salvador Dalí, The Colossus of Rhodes, 1954



Werner Tübke presenting a 1:10 version of his painting to Erich Honecker

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The images for the book have been collected and classified by Patrick Pregesbauer.

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Finally, I would like to thank my daughter Delfina, who was often drawing next to me while I was preparing these lessons, and was never tempted to overwrite, erase, wet, eat, or burn any of my doodles.

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Pier Paolo Tamburelli

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