

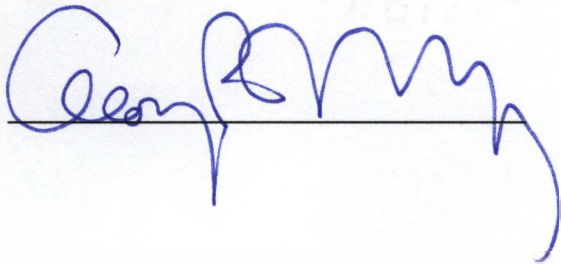
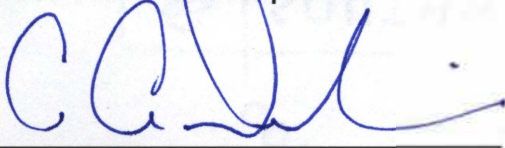
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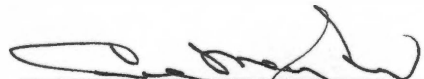


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The Surreal Strip Mall

A Thesis Presented for the Master of Architecture Degree

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Myles N. Trudell

May 2005

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to Peachey and my parents, and Luna and Gatsby.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge Mark Schimmenti, George Dodds, and C.A. Debelius for their guidance and support in the development of this thesis project.

Abstract

This thesis examines the surreal quality of sub-urban strip malls. Using the theories set forth in Robert Venturi's *Learning from Las Vegas* and Rem Koolhaas' *Delirious New York*, I present a proposal for the redevelopment of an underused strip mall in South Knoxville. The goal of this proposal is to use surreality as a tool to illuminate the absurdities inherent in many sub-urban developments, and to create a civic/commercial center to serve the community.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1	Proposition	1
Chapter 2	Site	23
Chapter 3	Program	32
Chapter 4	Performance Program	36
Chapter 5	Mashpee Commons	38
Chapter 6	Loyola Law School	41
Chapter 7	Building Codes	43
Bibliography		45
Appendix		47
Vita		62

List of Tables

Table 1: Museum	p.34
Table 2: Museum Superstore	p.34
Table 3: Library	p.35
Table 4: Day Care Center	p.35

List of Figures

Figure 1: Knoxville Convention Center	p.1
Figure 2: Las Vegas Strip	p.3
Figure 3: The Modern Strip Mall	p.3
Figure 4: The Decorated Shed	p.4
Figure 5: Luna Park	p.6
Figure 6: "Strangers on a Train:" The Sinister and the Surreal	p.6
Figure 7: The Downtown Athletic Club	p.7
Figure 8: Neglect of Context	p.8
Figure 9: "The Door"	p.10
Figure 10: Electricity: the Architectural Duplicator	p.11
Figure 11: Cadillac Ranch	p.13
Figure 12: Absence of Cause	p.14
Figure 13: The Forest Building	p.15
Figure 14: BASCO	p.17
Figure 15: Inversion of Scale	p.18
Figure 16: "The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoise:" Greed and Consumption	p.19
Figure 17: Salvador Dali's "The Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus"	p.21
Figure 18: Salvador Dali's "House of Venus:" Surrealism in Built Form	p.21
Figure 19: Chapman Ford Crossing: KGIS Map	p.24
Figure 20: Chapman Ford Crossing Property Sheet	p.25

Figure 21: Food Lion, Abandoned	p.26
Figure 22: Goody's, Still in use	p.26
Figure 23: Wal-Mart, Abandoned	p.26
Figure 24: Abandonment	p.27
Figure 25: Site Entrance Diagram	p.27
Figure 26: Existing Elevations	p.28
Figure 27: Existing Site Plan	p.29
Figure 28: Building Scale Plan	p.30
Figure 29: Topography Plan	p.31
Figure 30: The Museum Superstore	p.32
Figure 31: Conceptual Diagram	p.37
Figure 32: Mashpee Commons	p.39
Figure 33: Loyola Law School	p.42
Figure 34: Zoning Map	p.43
Figure 35: Building Codes	p.44
Figure 36: Location Plate	p.48
Figure 37: Site Plate	p.49
Figure 38: Collages Plate	p.50
Figure 39: Design Development Plate	p.51
Figure 40: Building Design Plate	p.52
Figure 41: First Floor Plan	p.53
Figure 42: Second Floor Plan	p.54
Figure 43: South Elevation	p.55
Figure 44: Section 1	p.56
Figure 45: Section 2	p.57

Figure 46: Section 3	p.58
Figure 47: West Elevation	p.59
Figure 48: Billboards	p.60
Figure 49: Gallery Perspective	p.61
Figure 50: Bridge Perspective	p.61

1 Proposition

Commercial box architecture of the sprawling metropolitan areas is beginning to devour civic and municipal building types. In Knoxville, DMVs and voter registration centers exist within East Towne Mall. Another DMV is located in a strip mall just beyond the town limits. Many of our public buildings find homes within the private realms of commercial sprawl. Those buildings that do not inhabit private commercial realms, imitate them. Libraries with extensive street front parking lots exist along Kingston Pike. The new Knoxville Convention Center, located in the city's center, bears a striking resemblance to a shopping mall, refusing to engage the street by employing setbacks and a lack of entrance from Henley Street [Figure 1]. Parking lots surround even west Knoxville churches, the central gathering place for many communities, distancing them from the streets and the buildings around them.

I will examine the transformation of a (partially) physically abandoned site (a strip mall, Chapman Ford Crossing) into a new civic/commercial center. The project



Figure 1: Knoxville Convention Center
[author]

will focus on the use of the surreal through the development of the sprawling urban landscape and how in many cases surreal has become real. The goal of the project will be to use the design theories set forth in *Learning from Las Vegas* while addressing the surreal disconnect of *Delirious New York* to create a successful sub-urban building design.

In *Learning from Las Vegas* Robert Venturi embraces the automobile-landscape, developing an urban architectural theory from the autoscape of "The Strip." Venturi's intent is to learn from the paradigm of autoscape architecture, good or bad: "We look backward at history and tradition to go forward; we can also look downward to go upward. And withholding judgement may be used as a tool to make later judgment more sensitive."¹ Looking "downward to upward" is a hierarchical viewpoint- to learn from commonplace or undesirable elements to create something desirable. The resulting analysis of the Las Vegas Strip gives way to theories of an architecture of "communication" over "space" [Figure 2].

The modern strip mall is a similar example: the architecture and merchandise are disconnected from the road. It is the sign that connects the driver to the store [Figure 3]. Venturi explains, "because spatial relationships are made by symbols more than by forms, architecture in this landscape becomes symbol in space rather than form in space."² Venturi calls this building type the "decorated shed,"

¹Robert Venturi, Denise Scott-Brown, and Steve Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1977).

²Robert Venturi, Denise Scott-Brown, and Steve Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1977).

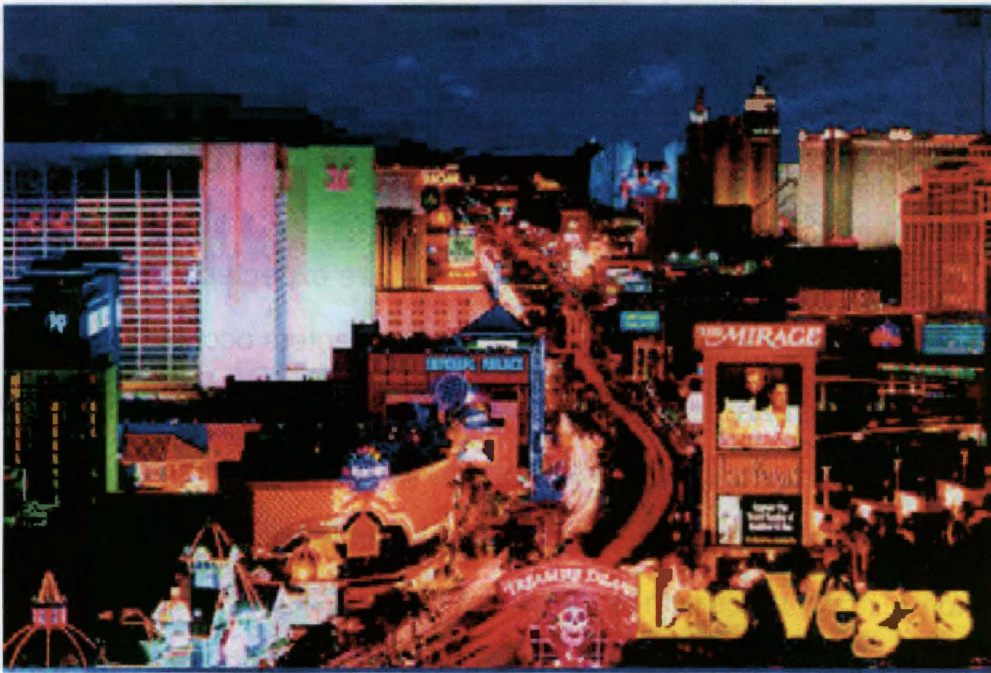


Figure 2: Las Vegas Strip



Figure 3: The Modern Strip Mall [author].

in which the building structure and spatial systems serve the program in a direct manner, and the sign or ornamentation is applied either to the structure or away from it. The sign and building exist independent of one another [Figure 4].

In many sprawling metropolitan areas, strip malls are expected. Removed from the city's denser areas, giant plazas and shopping centers occupy the main roads of more sub-urban, residential areas, dwarfing the quieter neighborhoods surrounding them. These are decorated sheds in their least sensitive form, enormous structures with glowing signs glued to the facade. Once inside the central stores, many times with more square footage, higher ceilings, and a bigger signs than their adjacent siblings, the context in which the building rests all but vanishes. The disconnection between the inside of a large strip mall grocer or retailer and the outside is so strong that the inhabitant may lose all sense of place and time. In fact, Venturi acknowledges the surreal component of casino design: "[Las Vegas] suggests that essential to the imagery of pleasure-zone

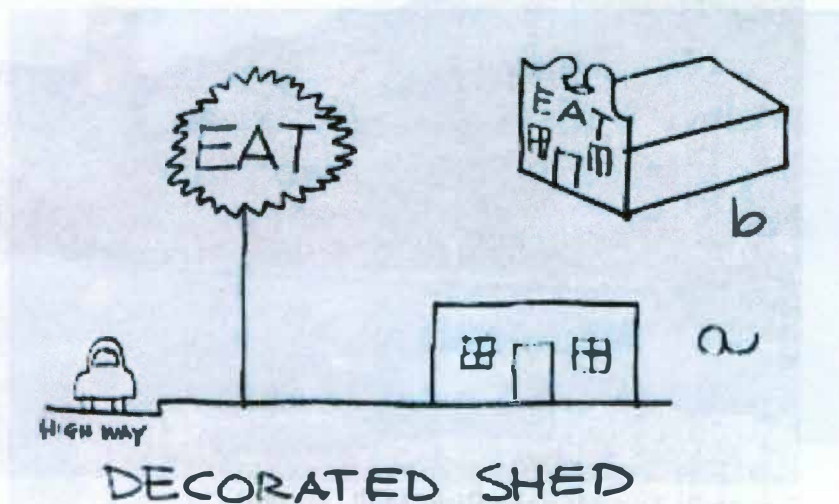


Figure 4: The Decorated Shed [*Learning from Las Vegas*, page 89]

architecture are lightness, the quality of being an oasis in a perhaps hostile context, heightened symbolism, and the ability to engulf the visitor in a new role.³

Delirious New York gives further attention to the seductive qualities of "pleasure-zone architecture," in which Rem Koolhaas speaks to the condition Venturi identifies in casinos in the context of Coney Island- "a fetal Manhattan"⁴. Coney Island's amusement parks create escapist experiences by building architecture that simulates such experiences as being underwater or in outer space [Figure 5]. Associations between the sinister and the surreal are common, especially in the amusement park sense present at Coney Island [Figure 6]. Eventually the quasi-surrealist architecture of Coney Island finds its way into Manhattan in the form of the skyscraper- "lobomized" architecture with a blank façade and an opportunity to create a foreign landscape on each floor [Figure 7]⁵. For Koolhaas, this is pleasure-zone architecture taken to its absurd end: an architecture of the surreal. These buildings have no place or identity, whose owners and developers can shape into anything imaginable.

The surreal character that Koolhaas recognizes in Coney Island and Manhattan is present, albeit less pronounced, in the strip malls found throughout the sprawl of metropolitan areas. Strip mall developments tend to be foreign worlds; decontextualized from the surrounding community, where the familiar seems unfamiliar and location lacks a sense of place [Figure 8]. These components

³Robert Venturi, Denise Scott-Brown, and Steve Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1977).

⁴Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1994).

⁵Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1994).



Figure 5: Luna Park



Figure 6: "Strangers on a Train:" The Sinister and the Surreal (Warner Brothers, 1951).

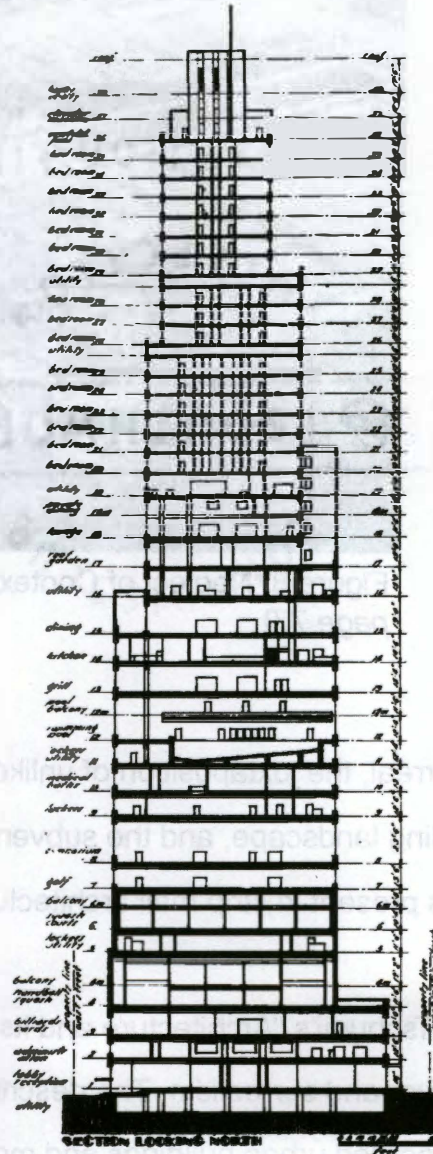


Figure 7: The Downtown Athletic Club [*Delirious New York*, page 153]

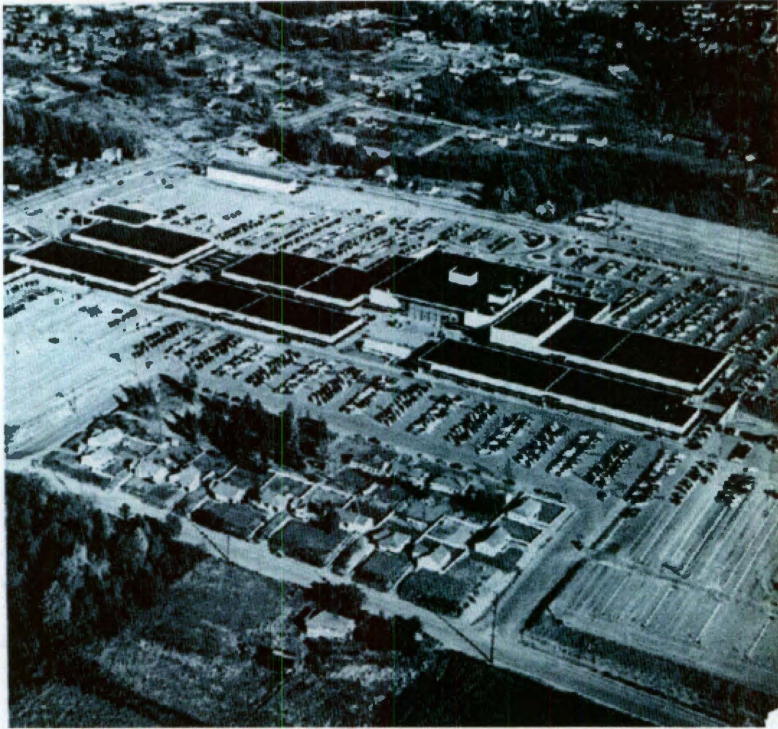


Figure 8: Neglect of Context [*Shopping Towns USA*, page 77]

of the surreal, the juxtaposition of unlikely elements, dislocation from the surrounding landscape, and the subversion of the normative, form the key elements present in strip mall architecture.

Bernard Tschumi's "Architecture and its Double" explores the link between architecture and surrealism. The description of proposed transformations of highly regarded urban buildings and monuments (such as splitting the Pantheon in half, or constructing a giant female glove to hold Paris monuments) from Surrealists of the 1930s includes this listing of "intensely valued surrealist procedures": "The various distortion techniques, the unexpected juxtaposition of 'distant realities', the incompatible scales or shapes, the defiance of the laws of

gravity, the linguistic contradictions, the junction of the natural and the oneiric."⁶ Some of these qualities, disparity of scale (see again Figure 8), unexpected juxtapositions, and the junction of dream and reality, while certainly unintentional, are applicable to strip mall architecture. Tschumi goes on to describe how Marcel Duchamp, frustrated with the Surrealists' preference for two dimensional painting, devised three dimensional pieces which required a human participant. Projects such as "The Door," in which the participant both opens and closes a door simultaneously explicitly joins architecture and surrealism in two key ways: 1) It takes the surrealism from the implied third dimension in paintings by the likes of Dali, Ernst, and Magritte into the actual third dimension: architectural space; and 2) It requires human involvement to be experienced [Figure 9]. It is this second point which Tschumi refers to as the "Violence of Architecture":

Any relationship between a building and its users is one of violence, for any use means the intrusion of one order into another. This intrusion is inherent in the idea of architecture; any reduction of architecture to its spaces at the expense of its events is as simplistic as the reduction of architecture to its facades.⁷

It is in these moments of violence that architecture becomes event; and with the simple juxtapositions of architectural elements, such as form which exists independently of program, an architect can create strange or disorienting participant-dependent events. It is these separations of architectural elements that Venturi observes in Las Vegas, and the modern strip mall has followed the

⁶Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double" *Architectural Design* 48(1978): p. 111.

⁷Bernard Tschumi, "Violence of Architecture" *Artforum* 20.1(1981): p. 44.



Figure 9: "The Door" [*Architectural Design*, 1978, vol.2-3, page 112]

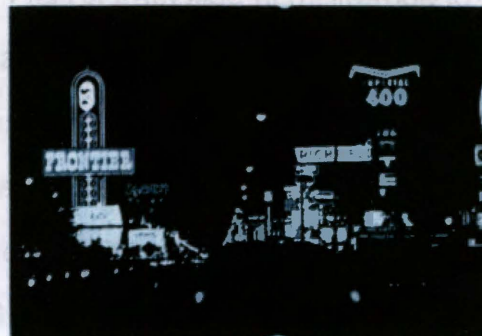
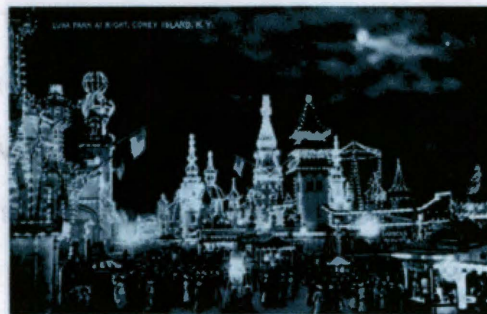
paradigm of the Las Vegas Strip. Koolhaas identifies the connection between the surreal and the event in Coney Island, quoting Luna Park developer Frederic Thompson: "It is marvelous what you can do in the way of arousing emotions by the use you can make architecturally, of simple lines."⁸ "Arousing emotions" in the context of Luna Park can only be interpreted as bewilderment. These techniques, in conjunction with electricity, "the architectural duplicator,"⁹ (electricity can create two worlds, one during day and one at night) make Luna Park, the Las Vegas Strip, and the modern strip mall examples of architectural surrealism [Figure 10].

⁸Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1994).

⁹Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1994).



Luna Park skyline by day ...



105. Las Vegas Strip at night



Figure 10: Electricity: the Architectural Duplicator [*Delirious New York*, page 40; *Learning from Las Vegas*, page 122]

In many ways, Duchamp's "The Door" is an icon for surrealism in built form. Duchamp takes something as familiar and commonplace as a door, and transforms it in such a way that the participant becomes disoriented or lost. This technique, the "event," the "arousing emotion," is the architecture of surrealism. "The Door" is a small scale representative of Coney Island, Manhattan, Las Vegas, and the strip mall. It is this precise quality, disorientation, an unexpected or otherworldly experience, that made Las Vegas and Coney Island such successes. The experience is the draw, the appeal. Las Vegas invites its inhabitants to become disoriented, to leave the rational and the expected behind.

A more recent example of surrealism in built form is Ant Farm's 1974 project Cadillac Ranch in Amarillo, Texas. The sculpture consists of ten Cadillacs deposited vertically into the desert earth, appearing as though they crashed into the ground from some non-existent higher ground [Figure 11]. Although Cadillac Ranch does not involve "event," as Duchamp's "The Door" does, it nevertheless serves as an example of displacement in built form. The Cadillac's front-end immersion into the desert earth causes the viewer to wonder how the car got into this position. The first logical explanation is that the vehicles drove head first off higher ground (perhaps a cliff or a platform) and landed head-first in the sand, but of course no higher ground exists in the desert. It is not just the presence of the automobile head first in the desert that makes Cadillac Ranch surreal; it is the combination of the presence of the cars and the absence of a logical explanation of how the vehicles got there [Figure 12]. To reiterate, if Cadillac Ranch included a crane which could have perhaps dropped the vehicles into the earth, the



Figure 11: Cadillac Ranch [Art Farm 1968-1978; www.killmytv.com]

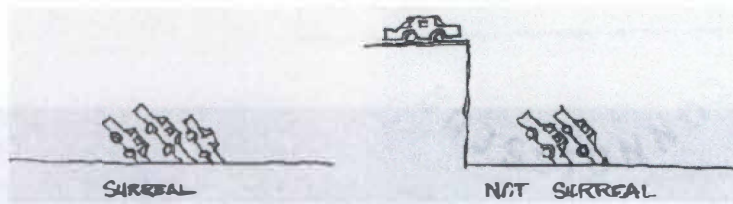


Figure 12: Absence of Cause [author]

effect would be lost. It is this intentional abandonment of rational explanation that makes Cadillac Ranch surreal. In order to produce an effect of this kind, the architect must come to an understanding of the rules of rationalism and logic; and then intentionally break them. Ant Farm's objectives throughout the 1970s embody these conceptual goals of surrealism, to bring to light the absurdities in reality. As Michael Sorkin writes in his obituary for Doug Michels, Ant Farm made "comfortable homes for incompatible ideas."¹⁰ The displacement present in Cadillac Ranch is one of the key elements of surrealism discussed in this thesis. In addition, Cadillac Ranch and "The Door" are similar to what exhibitions in the proposed museum portion of the this thesis program might be like, installation pieces that challenge the normative view of art.

The Forest Building [Figure 13] serves as a more specific case and precedent for Chapman Ford Crossing, the site for this thesis project. Built in 1984 by SITE Projects, Inc., in Richmond, Virginia, The Forest Building was designed on the concept of "architecture invaded and consumed by nature - or affected by the revenge of natural forces."¹¹ The building uses the perverse inversion of nature

¹⁰Michael Sorkin, "Of Dolphins, Comedy, and Architecture: Remembering Doug Michels and Ant Farm" *Architectural Record* 191.0(2003): p. 83.

¹¹Douglas Brenner, "Between Utopia and Apocalypse: Five Projects by SITE" *Architectural Record* 172.3(1984): p. 144.

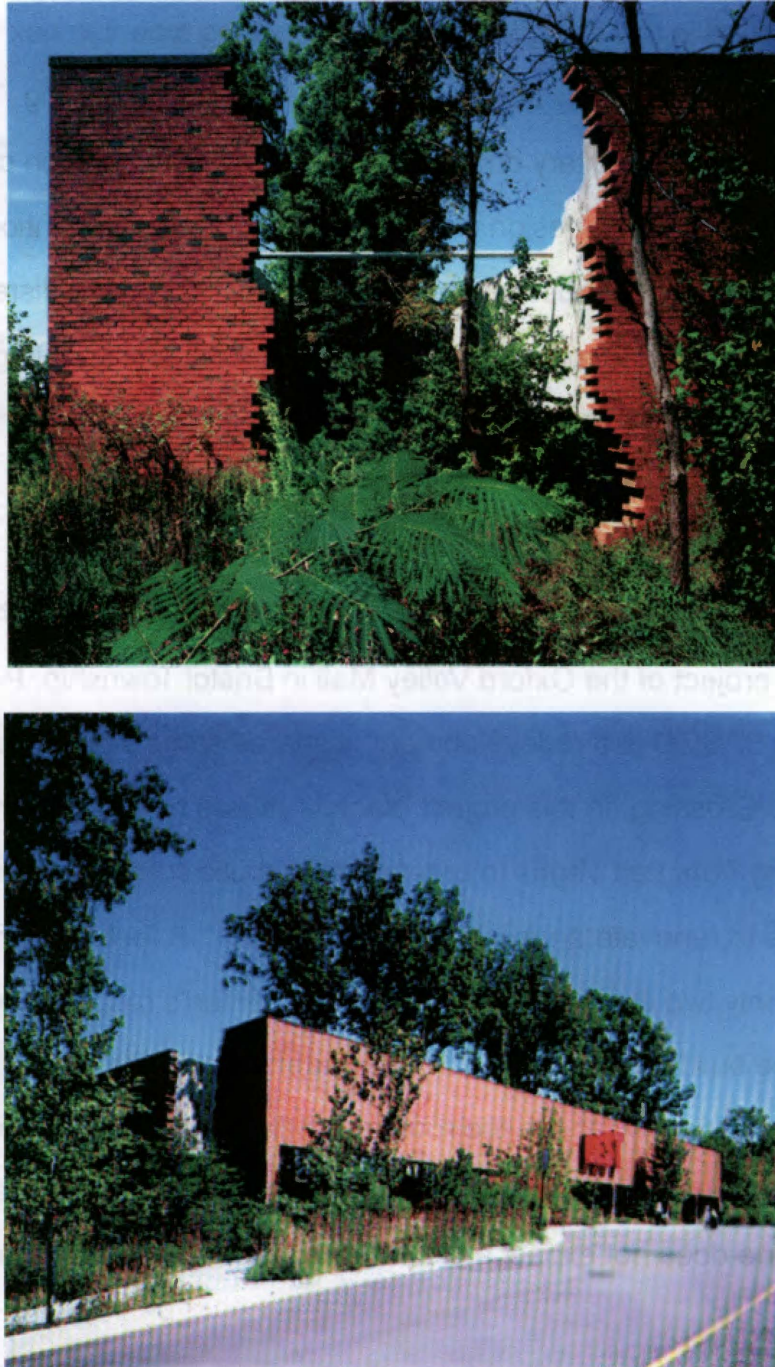


**Figure 13: The Forest Building [Architectural Record:
March 1984, p. 144-145]**

invading architecture as opposed to the normative view of architecture destroying nature. Dislocation, inversion, and subversion of the normative are all surrealist concepts employed in this design. The specific building type, big box commercial architecture, is particularly pertinent to Chapman Ford Crossing. The project stands as a critical commentary on commercial sprawl's destruction of the natural environment. The surrealist design is effective and clear in its intentions. The broken walls and overgrown landscape provoke feelings of ruin and disrepair. The front facade of the building, partially obscured by wildlife and boasting a large red "BEST" sign glued to the front, clearly informs the participant of the project's intent.

A building of similar nature is Venturi's own BASCO showroom, a 1979 reconstruction project of the Oxford Valley Mall in Bristol Township, Pennsylvania [Figure 14]. As BASCO is a redevelopment, it shares some similarities to Chapman Ford Crossing. In this project, Venturi utilizes his own theories set forth in *Learning from Las Vegas* to create a hyperbolic surrealism. The goal of the project was to renovate an existing shopping mall "16 feet high and 1,100 feet long with only two doors and no windows."¹² Venturi's response was literally to transform the building into a billboard; the letters are 34 feet high and four feet deep and extend well above the roof-line of the building. These enormous letters in front of relatively short building is a perverse inversion of scale and relationship. One does not expect a store sign to be larger than the store itself;

¹²Stanislaus von Moos, *Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown: Building Projects* (New York: Rizzoli International Publishing, Inc., 1987).



Figure 14: BASCO

BASCO is a reversal of the normative view. What makes BASCO surreal is the complete reversal of the components; without a clear juxtaposition of scale the effect is lost [Figure 15].

Since the publication of *Learning from Las Vegas* in 1972, the American autoscape grows larger and more prominent. The simplification of the decorated shed creates commercial, sprawling metropolitan architecture which is displaced, bizarre and absurd. Some of these commercial superstores are so large that one cannot see the back wall of the building from the entrance. One may have to travel great distances on foot once inside a store to reach a desired segment of the store. Often in cases such as sporting goods or electronics, these are actually little stores within the larger store, many even have street fronts or aisle fronts. Just as the Las Vegas Strip allows patrons the opportunity to get lost in detached shells filled with lights and gambling, the commercial box of the strip mall grants the opportunity to get lost in a separate world filled with commerce. Strip mall restaurants invite patrons to sit outdoors with great view of a vast parking lot. Just as Coney Island gave the patron an opportunity to live underwater or visit the moon, these strip mall restaurants allow you to dine at a street front cafe, just like the ones in Europe. Here is the simple juxtaposition of unlike elements: Street-front cafes do not belong on enormous parking lots, but somehow in

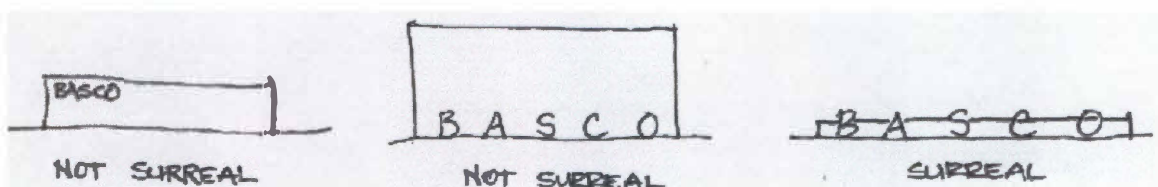


Figure 15: Inversion of Scale [author]

the strip mall, they do. That the imitation of experience is a poor one does not matter, the imitation was poor in Coney Island and it is equally poor in the strip mall; it only takes the willful disbelief of the patron, something to which the strip mall developer can always rely. All of this exists within small scale residential neighborhoods. The uncontrollable growth of capitalism takes hold wherever it can [Figure 16].

The precedent of Las Vegas strip architecture has influenced many cities to a negative effect, as the decorated sheds of sprawling metropolitan areas bear many experiential similarities to the casino culture of Las Vegas or the amusement parks of Coney Island. A disconnection from place, time and reality exists in casinos, amusement parks, and strip malls alike. This strange pleasure-zone architecture has subverted the normative idea of what a city should be. Strip malls that create these displaced and absurd realms are no longer perceived as



Figure 16: "The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie:" Greed and Consumption [*Rialto Pictures*, 1972]

such by the collective conscience. Most would not bat an eye at the sight of huge glowing warehouse-like structures sprouting up, seemingly from nowhere, on their own residential streets.

Koolhaas' attention to these details in Coney Island's dreamlike amusement parks provides key elements to this architecture of the surreal. These foreign, fantastic realms provided the public with completely escapist experiences. This intentional displacement from reality, which Koolhaas also saw in the skyscrapers of Manhattan, is a typical quality of sprawling metropolitan strip malls. This new sub-urban metascape represents a new "lobotomized" architecture for the auto landscape.

Koolhaas recounts Dali's first encounter with Manhattan; the surrealist artist holds an incredibly long loaf of bread as he disembarks the boat from his journey across the Atlantic, his intent to make the most fantastic impression on the press of Manhattan [Figure 17]. The press that greeted him did not mention nor notice Dali's absurd prank. Koolhaas describes the incident: "Dali's first discovery is that in Manhattan Surrealism is invisible. His Reinforced Dough is just another false fact among the multitudes."¹³[Figure 18]. The same can be said of the surreal strip mall. These foreign worlds have become so common that the public consciousness does not recognize their disparity with the areas they inhabit.

¹³Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1994).

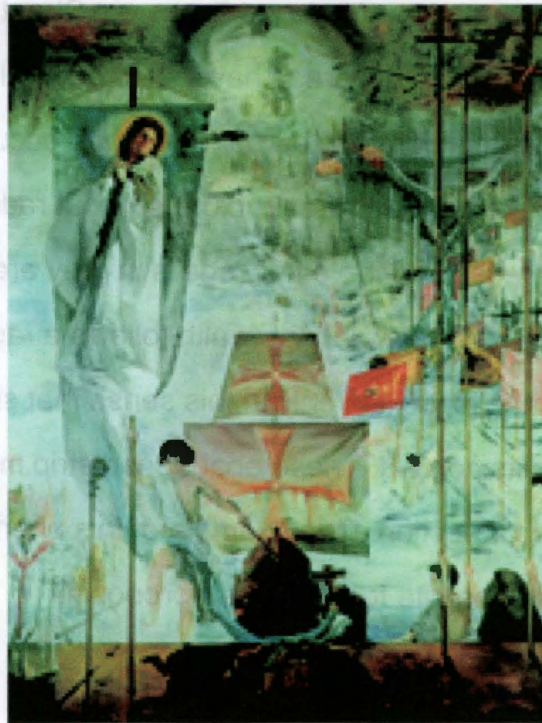


Figure 17: Salvador Dalí's "The Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus" [image: www.dali-gallery.com]

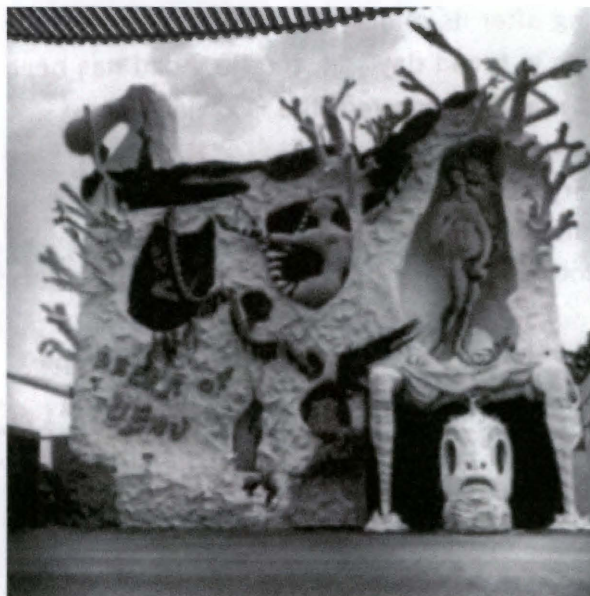


Figure 18: Salvador Dalí's "House of Venus." Surrealism in Built Form [*Delirious New York*, page 274]

Like Coney Island in *Delirious New York* and Freemont Street in *Learning from Las Vegas*, many commercial urban areas have been culturally or physically abandoned. Small towns and cities are burdened by half-occupied or entirely deserted strip malls. As growth and infrastructure spill out radially from city centers, strip malls follow, leaving the empty shells in grey areas between urban centers and thriving sub-urban sprawl. As wealth follows a rapidly expanding infrastructure, capitalism follows. It is only in this sense that strip mall architecture forms a connection with its context. These abandoned strip malls are the leftovers of an architecture of disconnection. One example of this phenomenon, Chapman Ford Crossing, serves as the site for this thesis proposal.

2 Site

Chapman Ford Crossing is located on Chapman Highway in South Knoxville [Figure 19, 20]. Chapman Ford is a deep commercial zone, which is entered between two fast food restaurants on the hill above the strip mall. The strip mall is programmed to hold three larger stores and several smaller ones in between. The larger stores once included Food Lion, Goody's Clothing Store, and Wal-Mart; at this time, only the Goody's remains [Figures 21,22,23]. The Wal-Mart is abandoned in favor of a new site for a Super Wal-Mart. Many of the linking secondary shops have "moved" with the Wal-Mart [Figure 24]. More than two-thirds of the strip mall is vacant.

Entrance to Chapman Ford is from the main entrance on Chapman Highway, which forks as the topography descends [Figure 25]. At this point, the potential shopper must decide which shopping destination is a priority. An additional secondary entrance exists on the Food Lion end of the shopping center, which exits up grade into a residential neighborhood. The shopping center is equipped with copious amounts of parking, with the majority on the Wal-Mart end. The parking lot is landscaped with lines of trees serving as traffic medians.

Surrounded by residential development in one direction, and undeveloped land in the other, Chapman Ford is an insular world [Figures 26-29]. Vast areas of paving and large scale buildings are far removed from the natural and residential communities that surround the site. The bizarre juxtaposition of scale promotes the disconnection from the surrounding environment. This is the "lobotomized" skyscraper on its side; the "decorated shed" without concern for context.

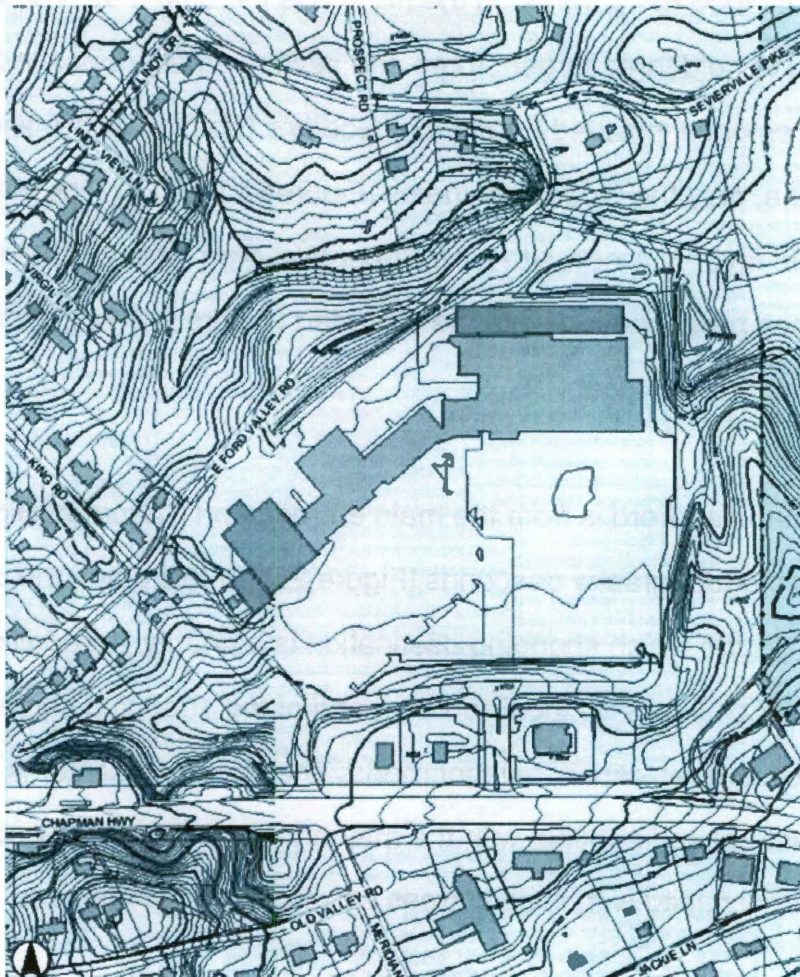


Figure 19: Chapman Ford Crossing: KGIS Map [kgis]

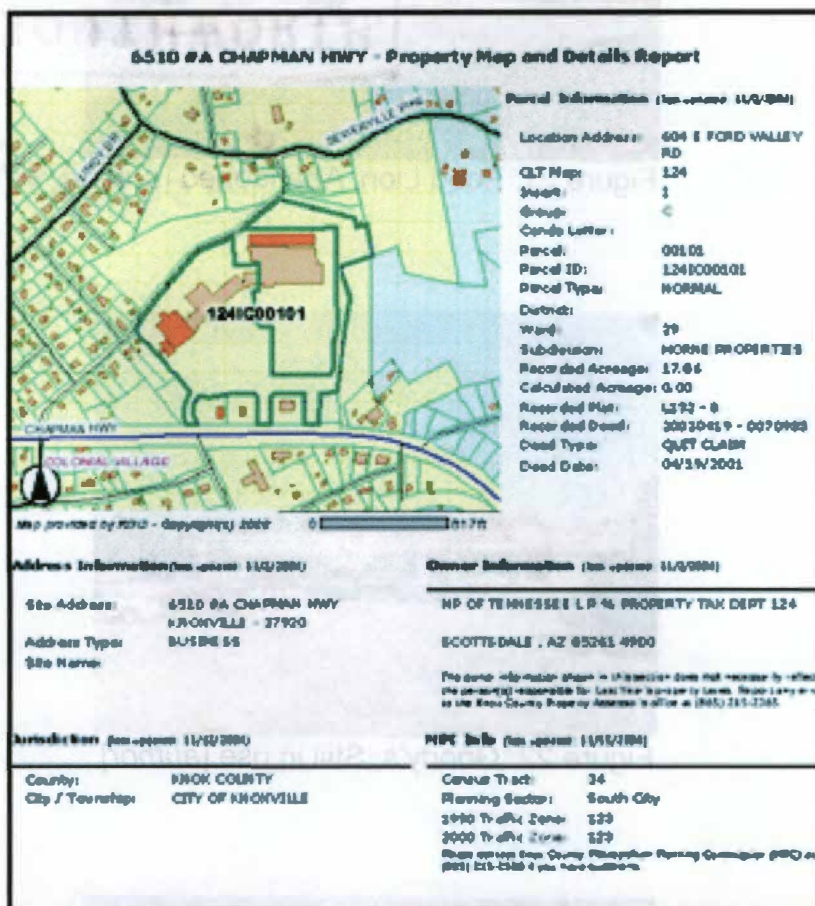


Figure 20: Chapman Ford Crossing Property Sheet
[www.kgis.com]



Figure 21: Food Lion, Abandoned [author]



Figure 22: Goody's, Still in use [author]



Figure 23: Wal-Mart, Abandoned [author]



Figure 24: Abandonment [author]

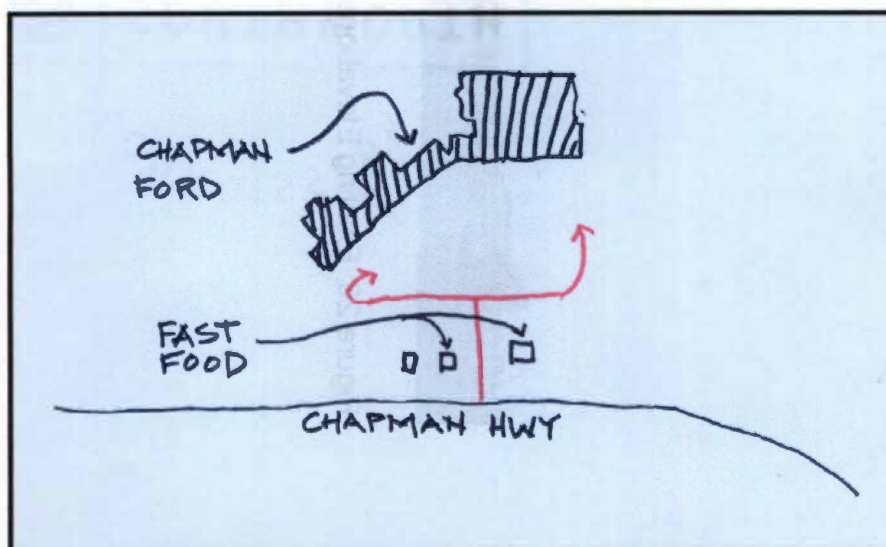


Figure 25: Site Entrance Diagram [author]



Figure 26: Existing Elevations. [author]

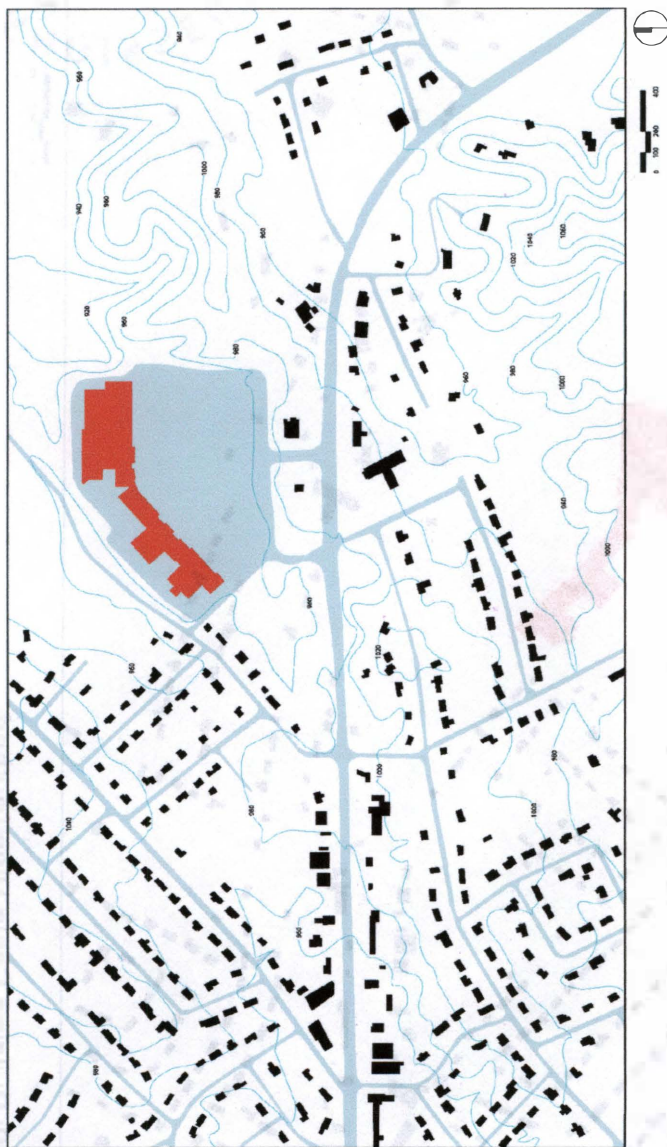


Figure 27: Existing Site Plan [author]

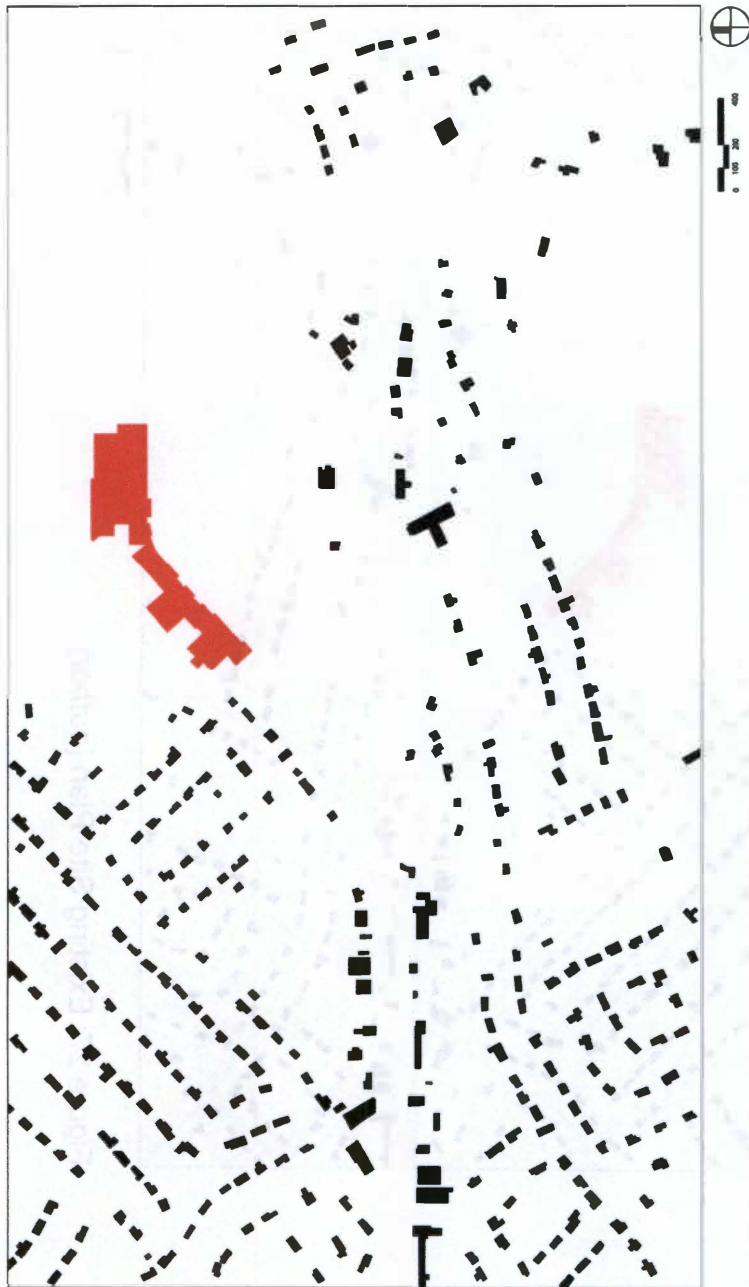


Figure 28: Building Scale Plan [author]

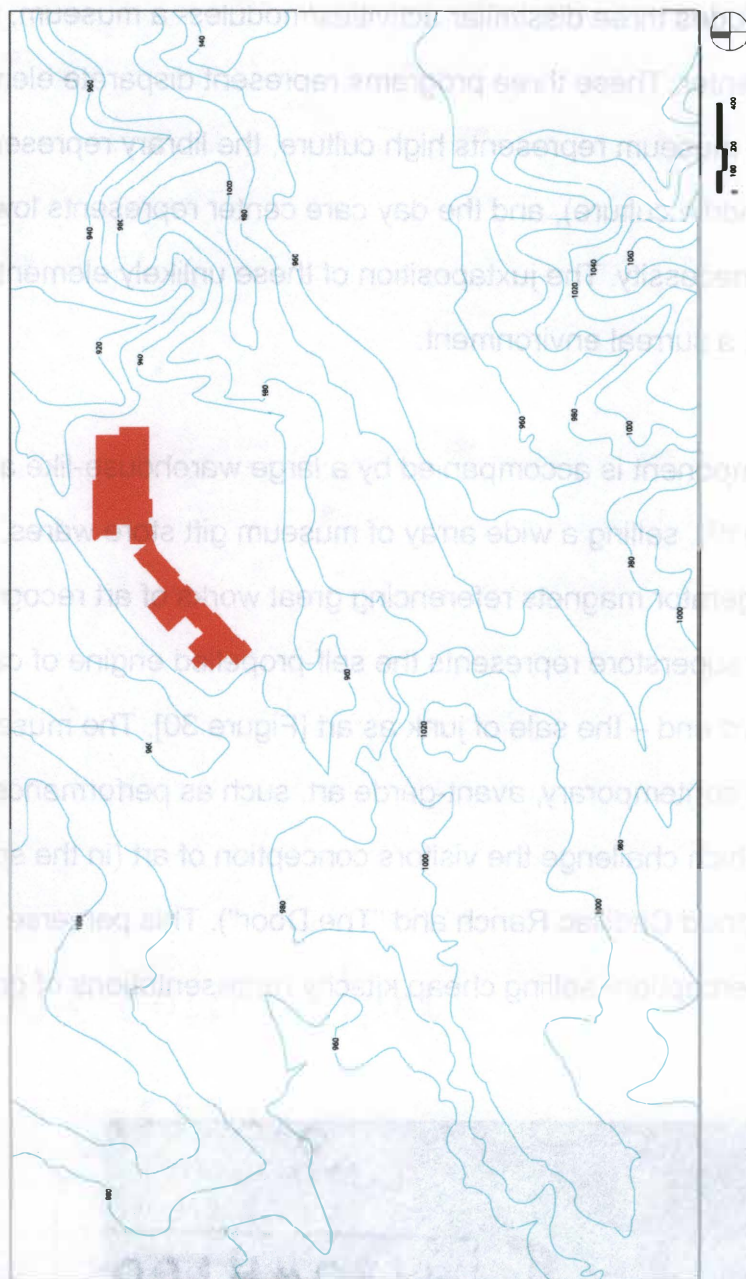


Figure 29: Topography Plan [author]

3 Program

This program includes three dissimilar activities/modules- a museum, a library, and a day care center. These three programs represent disparate elements in everyday life: the museum represents high culture, the library represents service oriented need (middle culture), and the day care center represents low-level social service or necessity. The juxtaposition of these unlikely elements provides the beginnings of a surreal environment.

The museum component is accompanied by a large warehouse-like art superstore (4000 ft²), selling a wide array of museum gift store wares, such as posters and refrigerator magnets referencing great works of art recognizable to the masses. The superstore represents the self-propelled engine of capitalism taken to an absurd end – the sale of junk as art [Figure 30]. The museum itself is filled with contemporary, avant-garde art, such as performance art or installation art, which challenge the visitors conception of art (in the spirit of the previously mentioned Cadillac Ranch and "The Door"). This perverse inversion of function and perception- selling cheap kitschy representations of great works



Figure 30: The Museum Superstore [author]

in a superstore (an absurd juxtaposition), and presenting more challenging art that may question the normative conception of art in the accompanying museum-creates a world of the surreal.

The library component addresses how profoundly the automobile influences architecture. The library will not function in the traditional sense, a walk-in building providing a place to read, study, and remain quiet- instead the Chapman Ford library provides a drive-through service. Much like a bank or a fast food restaurant, citizens drive through the library to check out and return books. Librarians will function much like bank tellers, providing citizens their requested books in the quickest fashion in order to allow citizens to hurry along with their busy days. This component of the project attempts to challenge the normative idea of a library and to take the existing autolandscape an absurd step further.

Finally, the day care center serves as both long-term and short-term day care. Long-term for those off to work, and short-term for those who prefer to shop at the museum superstore. In this way the day-care center serves both actual necessity, care for your children while you are at work, and a false necessity, a little peace and quiet whilst shopping for cheap reproductions. This false necessity speaks to society's overwhelming desire for consumption, a chance to trade what is important (children) for something inexpensive and fleeting [Tables 1-4].

Table 1: Museum

Space Name	Description of Space	Square Footage (ft²)
1. Entry/Lobby/Reception	including reception desk, a few representative works	2500
2. Gallery 1	for smaller works	4500
3. Gallery 2	for smaller works	4500
4. Gallery 3	a gallery for larger, perhaps inhabitable, works	7000
5. Auditorium	a round, black box theater space for performance art	3000
6. Curator's Office	office space	400
7. Storage	storage for art currently off display	6000
8. Restroom	men/women	300 (x2)= 600
9. Staff Area	break area	400
10. Mechanical	-	200
Total Museum Square Footage		29100

Table 2: Museum Superstore

Space Name	Description of Space	Square Footage (ft²)
1. Retail Space	large open space for retail items display	20000
2. Cash Registers	row of registers for customers to purchase items	2000
3. Entry	small open threshold area	700
4. Manager's Office	office space	400
5. Storage/Receiving	for surplus items and shipments	5000
6. Staff Room	break area	400
7. Restrooms	men/women	300 (x2)= 600
8. Mechanical	-	200
Total Museum Superstore Square Footage		29300

Table 3: Library

Space Name	Description of Space	Square Footage (ft²)
1. Stacks	a space large enough to house a small community sized collection	8000
2. Circulation Desk	circulation area that also functions as teller area for drive thru patrons	1000
3. Reading Area	small reading area for walk-in patrons and day care children	1000
4. Drive Thru	2 car widths wide drive thru area	600
5. Restrooms	men/women	300 (x2)= 600
6. Mechanical	-	200
Total Library Square Footage		11400

Table 4: Day Care Center

Space Name	Description of Space	Square Footage (ft²)
1. Playspace	indoor space for children's activities	3000
2. Playground	exterior area for children to play	2000
3. Kitchen	for preparation of snacks/meals for children	400
4. Administrative Office	office space	400
5. Restrooms	men/women	300 (x2)= 600
6. Mechanical	-	200
Total Day Care Center Square Footage		6600

4 Performance Program

This project is an architecture that works for and against its paradigm. On a critical level, the goal of the project is to use surrealism to highlight problems with strip mall architecture. Contrarily, as a functional project, Chapman Ford Crossing embraces its genre. The programmatic elements serve as critical commentary and surrealist architecture, but also as functional museum, library, and day care center. As a complement to the existant Knoxville Museum of Art, the Chapman Ford Museum benefits Knoxville culturally by exhibiting more avant-garde art. The library and day care center service the residential communities that surround them. As the city continues to expand, Knoxville will have an increasing need for these civic centers.

The museum and adjacent superstore are the largest component of the new Chapman Ford Crossing. These twin components serve as the "big box" for this strip mall project. The museum and superstore occupies the east end of the strip mall, where the Wal-Mart existed previously. The extensive parking on this end is subdued and rezoned. The structures do not embrace the inhabitants, but rather encompass them. The larger spaces are hollow enough to allow for amplified sound and echo to exaggerate size and importance. The museum/superstore area will take on different personas during day and night through the use of electric lighting, "the architectural duplicator." Use of indoor, outdoor, and indoor/outdoor spaces are employed to create inversions of normative views. A strong, defined entry threshold will bring the inhabitant into an lobby area that serves as a fork, a hinge or connector between the two opposing programs.

The library and day care, the two subsidiary programs, trickle off the end of the enormous end of the museum/superstore. As the strip mall progresses westward, the programs and structures are smaller, thinner and looser than the larger west end, the debris of the larger west end (as in the trail of snail or slug). The drive-thru for the library, the pick-up area and outdoor area of the day care center are the programmatic tools to begin separating pieces from the whole. As the pieces become smaller and break apart, the east end of the strip mall becomes the leftovers, the detritus, the Chapman Fords, and the west end becomes the force outward [Figure 31].

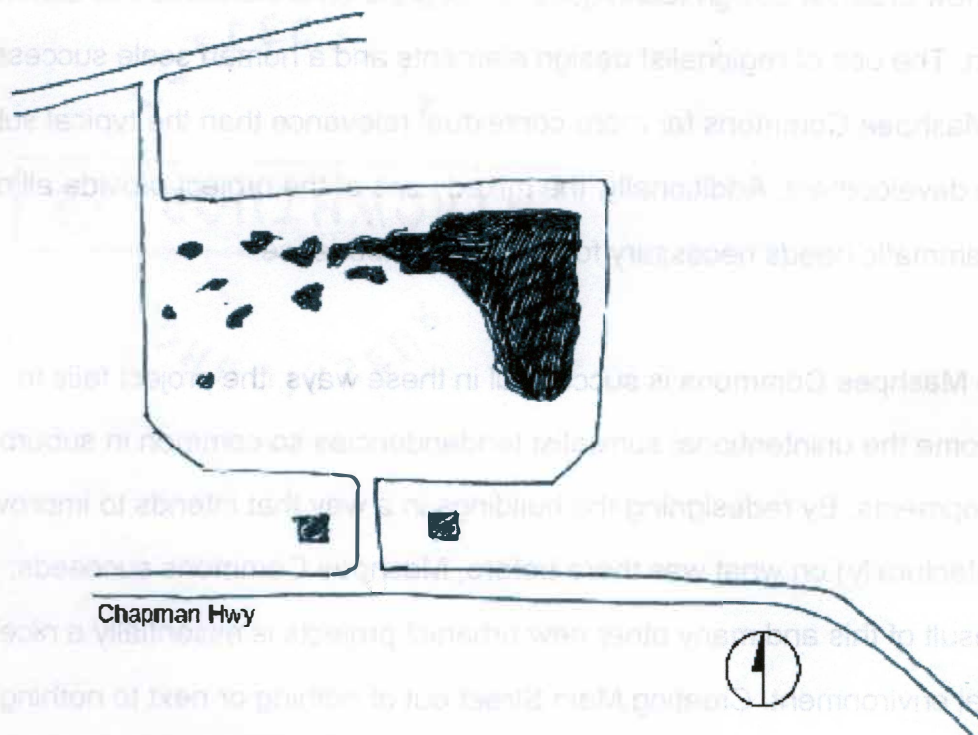


Figure 31: Conceptual Diagram [author]

5 Mashpee Commons

Duany Plater-Zyberk's Mashpee Commons is an example of the redevelopment of a shopping center into a town center [Figure 32]. Built in 1988 and located in Mashpee, Massachusetts, Mashpee Commons is an ambitious mixed use project including civic, commercial, and residential components. The project uses traditional Cape Cod style architecture in an attempt to give Mashpee Commons a contextual relationship with its environment. National and independent retailers, mixed income residences, and live-work units help the development to overcome many current urban obstacles. Civic components include a church and a library. The use of signage is relatively minimal.

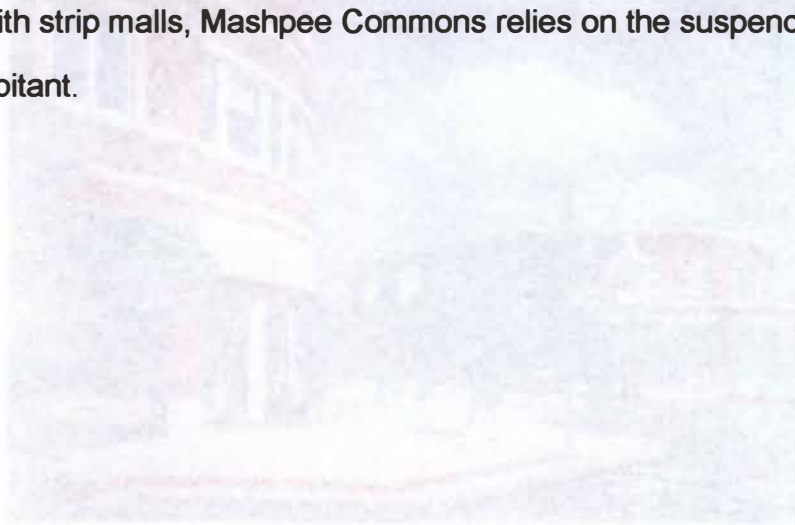
Mashpee Commons is an example of a thriving redevelopment program that uses new urbanist design techniques to integrate civic elements into commercial design. The use of regionalist design elements and a human scale successfully give Mashpee Commons far more contextual relevance than the typical suburban development. Additionally, the mixed uses of the project provide all of the programmatic needs necessary for an urban experience.

While Mashpee Commons is successful in these ways, the project fails to overcome the unintentional surrealist tendencies so common in suburban developments. By redesigning the buildings in a way that intends to improve (architecturally) on what was there before, Mashpee Commons succeeds; yet the result of this and many other new urbanist projects is essentially a nicer surreal environment. Creating Main Street out of nothing or next to nothing in



Figure 32: Mashpee Commons. [www.dpz.com]

this manner has the unfortunate effect of a stage set not unlike the Main Street of Disney World. In many ways developments such as Mashpee Commons hold much in common with Coney Island or the Las Vegas Strip: they offer the inhabitant a false experience, a pale imitation of an actual Main Street. Just as is the case with strip malls, Mashpee Commons relies on the suspended disbelief of the inhabitant.



(top left) Mashpee Commons, Mashpee, MA

6 Loyola Law School

Frank Gehry's ongoing development of Los Angeles' Loyola Law School [Figure 33] presents another renovation project. The renovation of Burns Building and subsequent addition of new buildings presents a loose town center. The buildings are relatively small for university buildings and use a combination of the industrial styles of the adjacent areas and a minimalist classical style. The structures are placed in a way that produces common areas for students and professors.

Like Mashpee Commons, Loyola Law School uses the style of the region in which it exists in an attempt to contextualize the architecture. The reason Loyola Law School is so much more successful in this contextualizing is that the buildings do not seem like replicas. Unlike Mashpee Commons, Loyola does not depend upon a nostalgic response from the inhabitant. Instead, Gehry uses some of the attributes of the surrounding architecture (building height, window size and depth) and combines it with a style dictated by program (Classicism) and his own style to create a group of buildings that is at once separate from and a part of the surrounding community and the law school community in general. This strategy, be the partial acceptance or partial denial of building type and surroundings seems a very successful one. Gehry's method is very much applicable to Chapman Ford Crossing's redevelopment. Like Loyola Law, Chapman Ford is at once true to its building type (the strip mall) and apart from it.

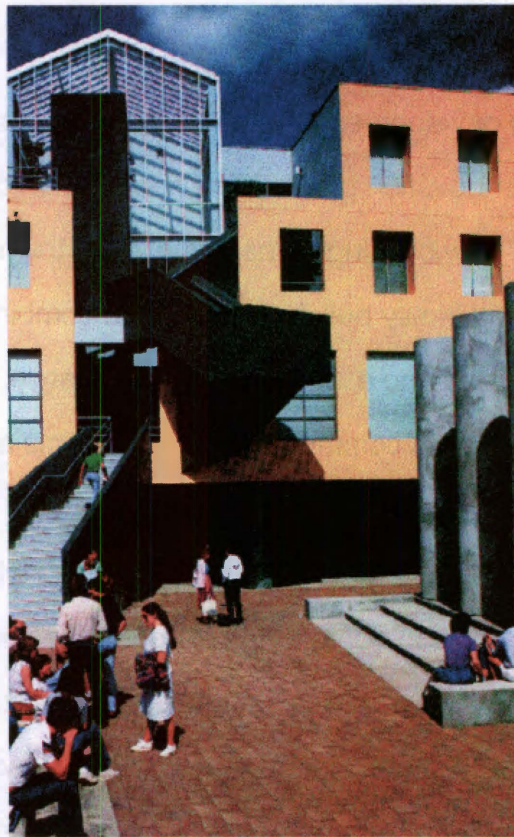


Figure 33: Loyola Law School [*Progressive Architecture*]

7 Building Codes

The following images show the zoning maps and building codes [Figures 34-35].

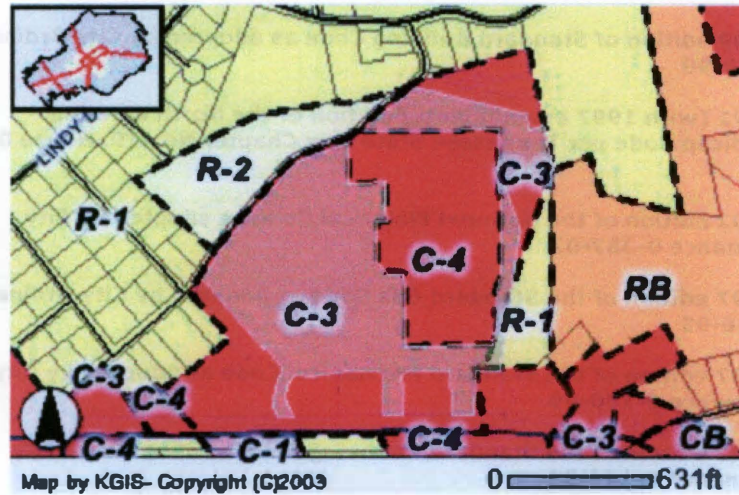


Figure 34: Zoning Map [www.kgis.org]

The following codes have been adopted by the City of Knoxville Inspections Bureau. These codes will be used to review and approve plans prior to issuance.

• **City of Knoxville Zoning Ordinance (with amendments) adopted by City Ordinance 3369 (available online at www.knoxmpc.org)**

• **1999 edition of Standard Building Code as adopted by City Ordinance 0-149-99**

• **1991 (with 1997 amendments) edition of the North Carolina Handicap Code per Tennessee State Law Chapter No 429, House Bill 55.**

• **2002 edition of the National Electrical Code as adopted by City Ordinance 0-387-02**

• **1997 edition of the Standard Gas Code as adopted by City Ordinance 0-146-99**

• **1997 edition of the Standard Mechanical Code as adopted by City Ordinance 0-150-99**

• **1997 edition of the Standard Plumbing Code as adopted by City Ordinance 0-148-99**

In addition, the Fire Inspection Bureau reviews plans for compliance with:

• **2003 edition of NFPA-1 & NFPA-101 Life Safety as adopted by City Ordinance 0-53-04**

• **1997 edition of Standard Fire Prevention Code as adopted by City Ordinance 0-27-99**

Figure 35: Building Codes [www.cityofknoxville.org]

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The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie. Dir. Luis Bunuel. Rialto Pictures, 1972.

Strangers on a Train. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Warner Brothers, 1951.

Appendix





Figure 36: Location Plate [author]

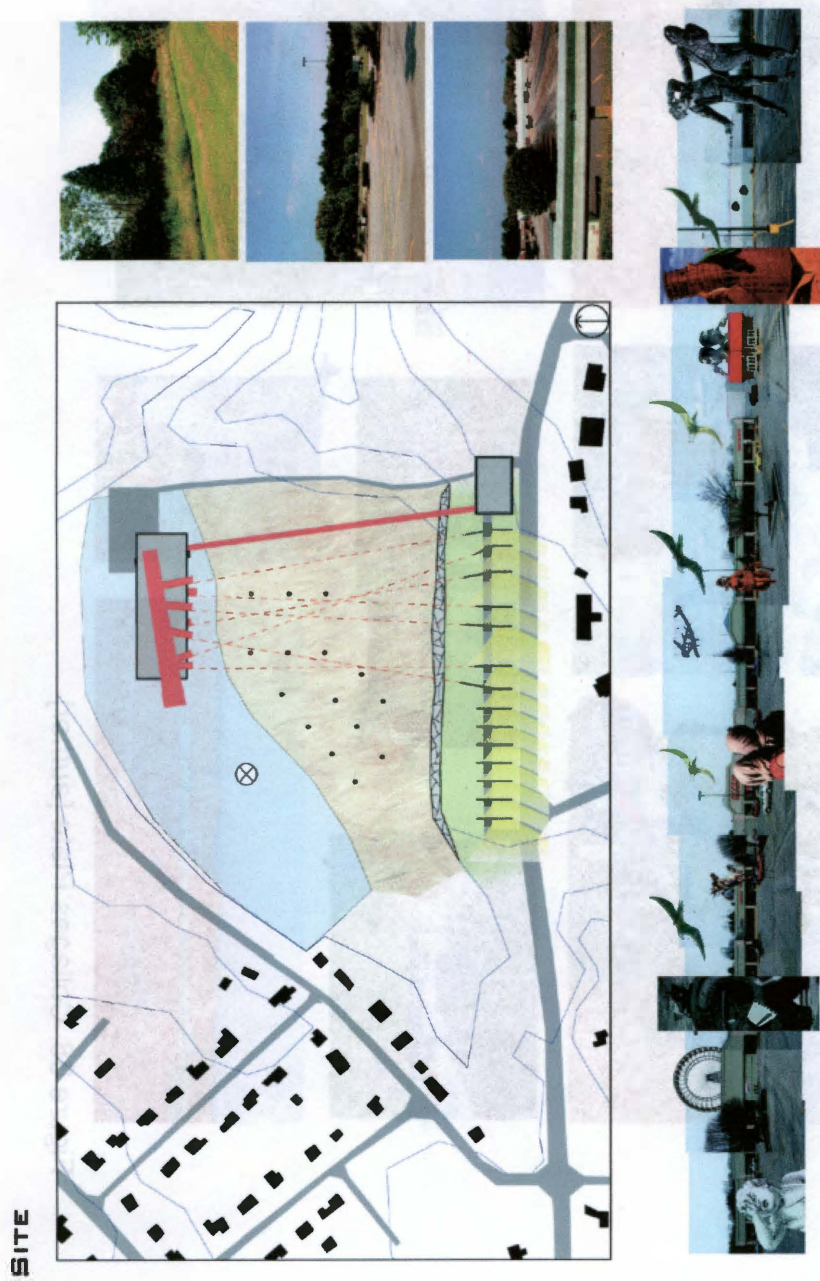


Figure 37: Site Plate. [author]

COLLAGES

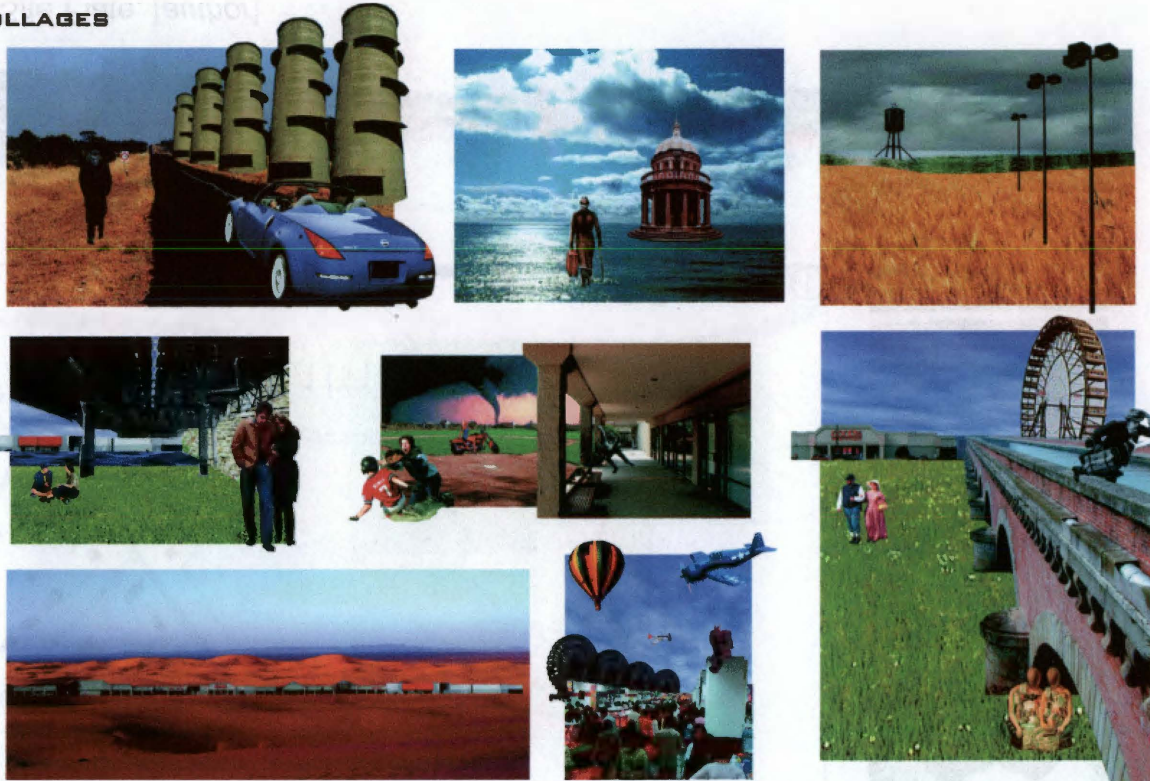


Figure 38: Collages Plate [author]

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

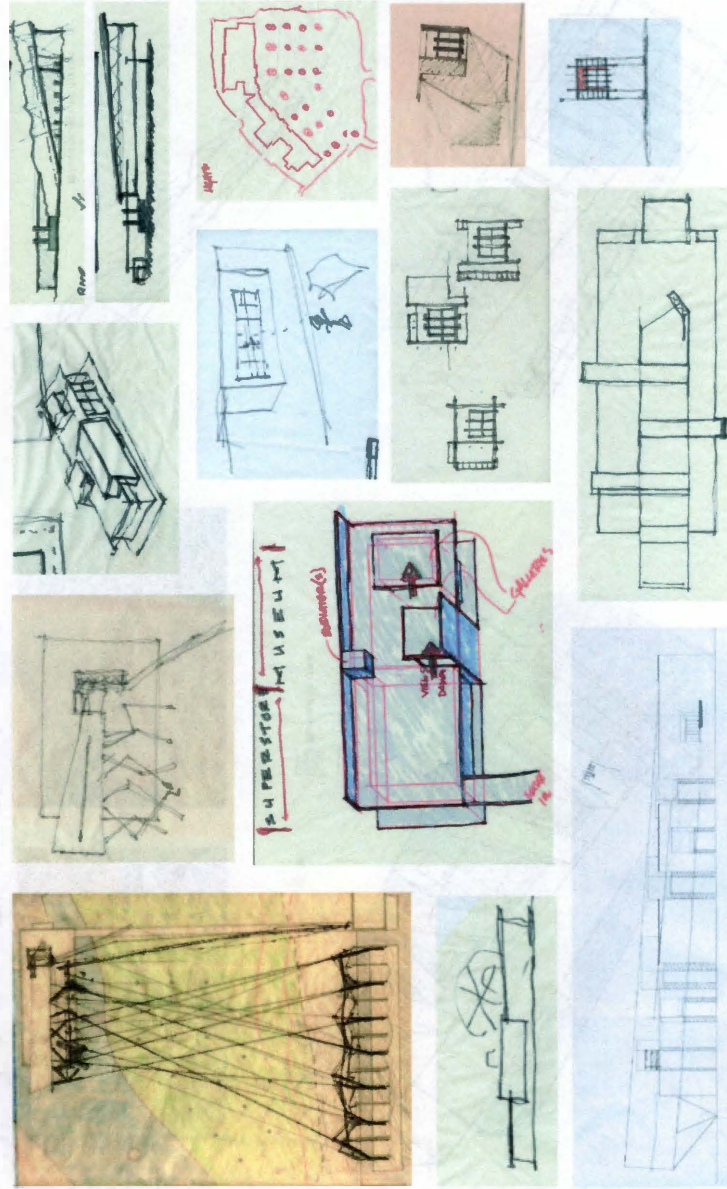


Figure 39: Design Development Plate [author]

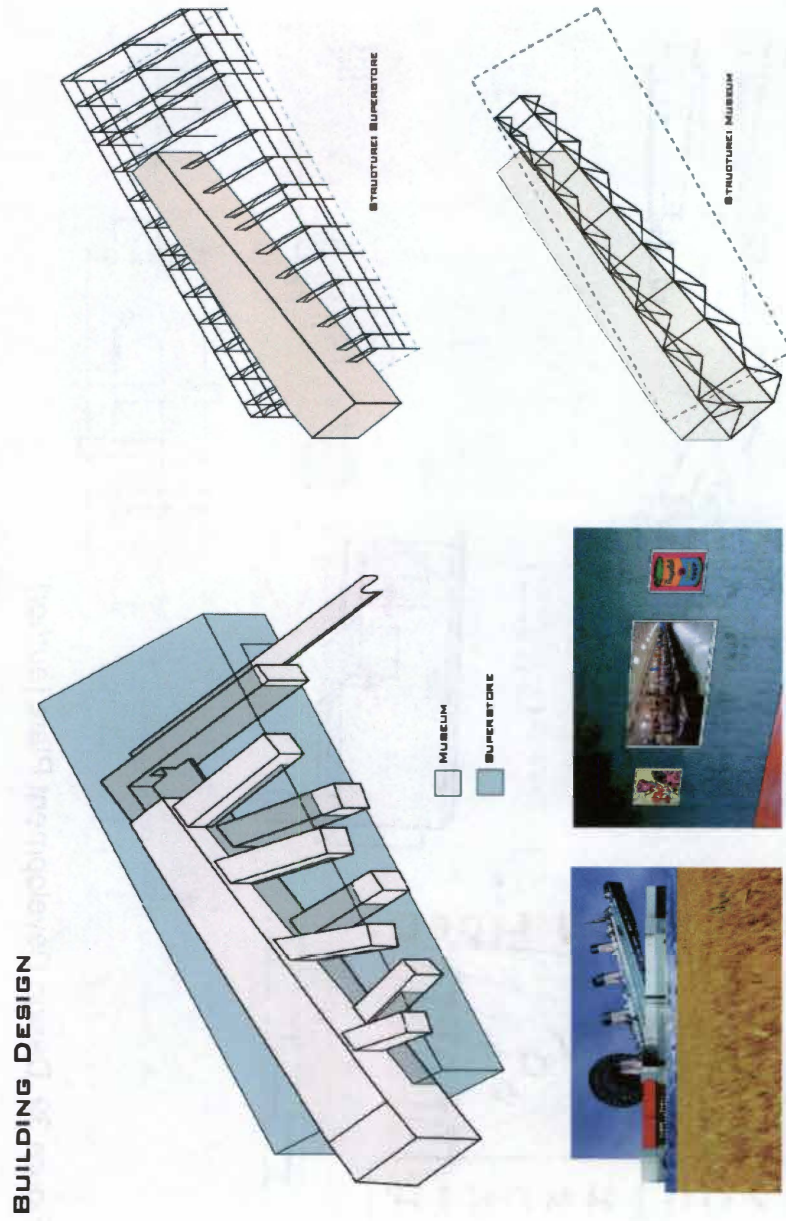


Figure 40: Building Design Plate [author]

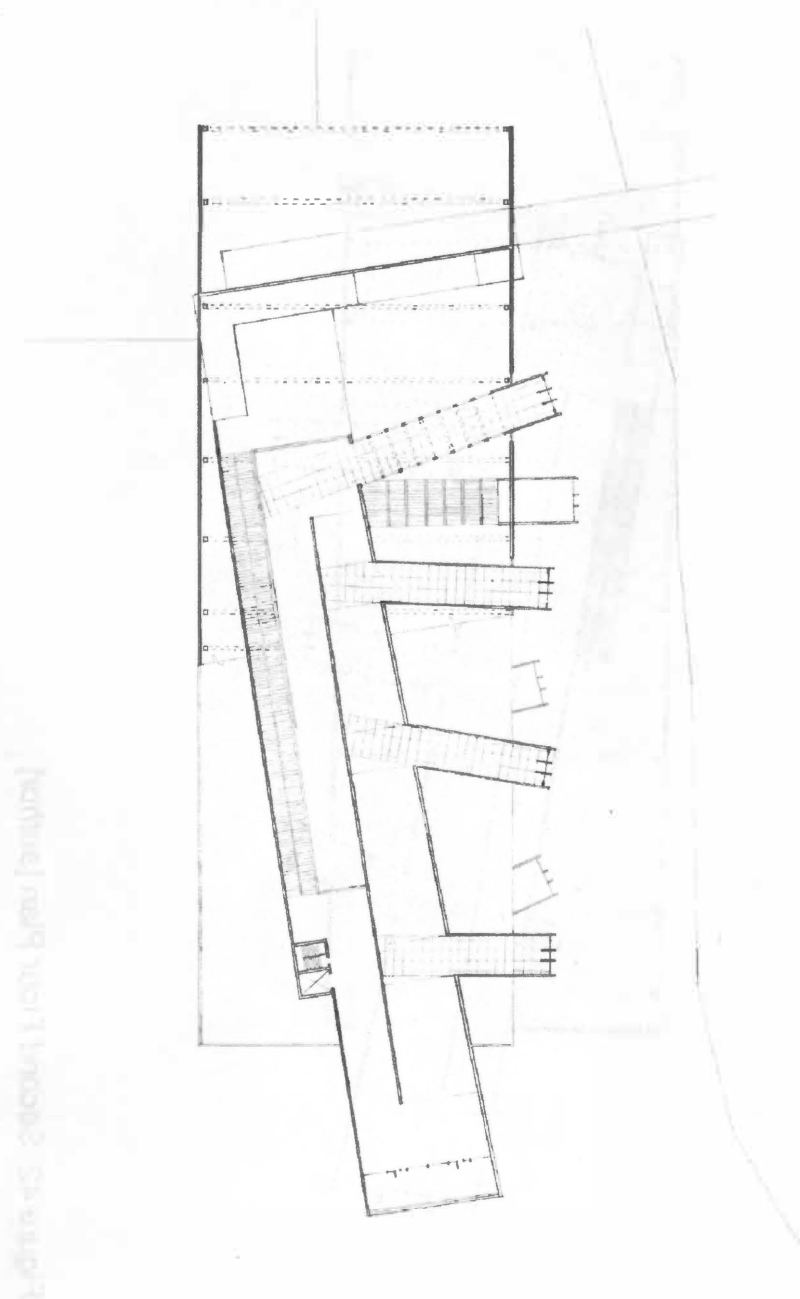


Figure 41: First Floor Plan [author]

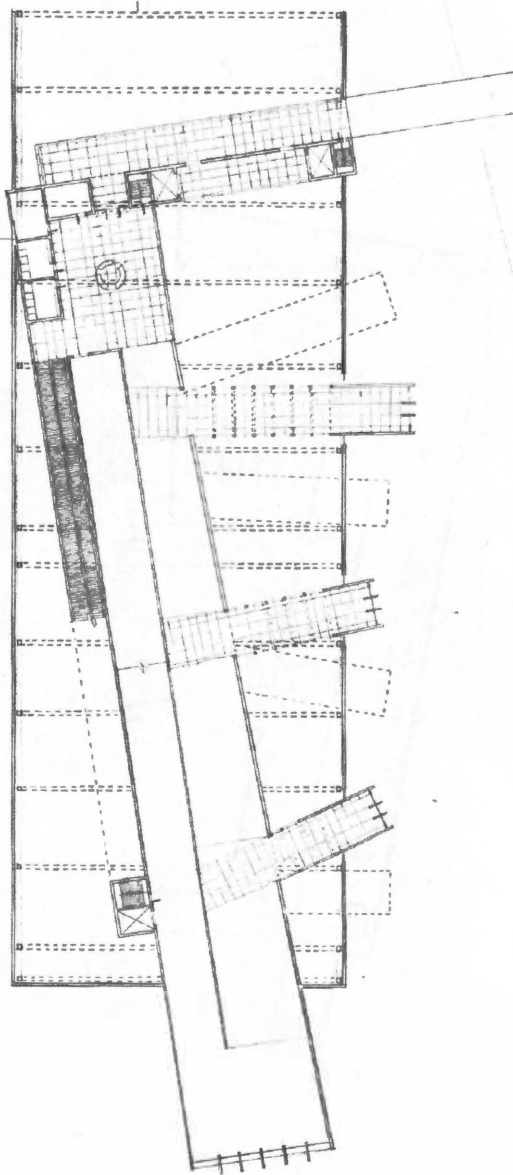


Figure 42: Second Floor P'an [author]



Figure 43: South Elevation [author]

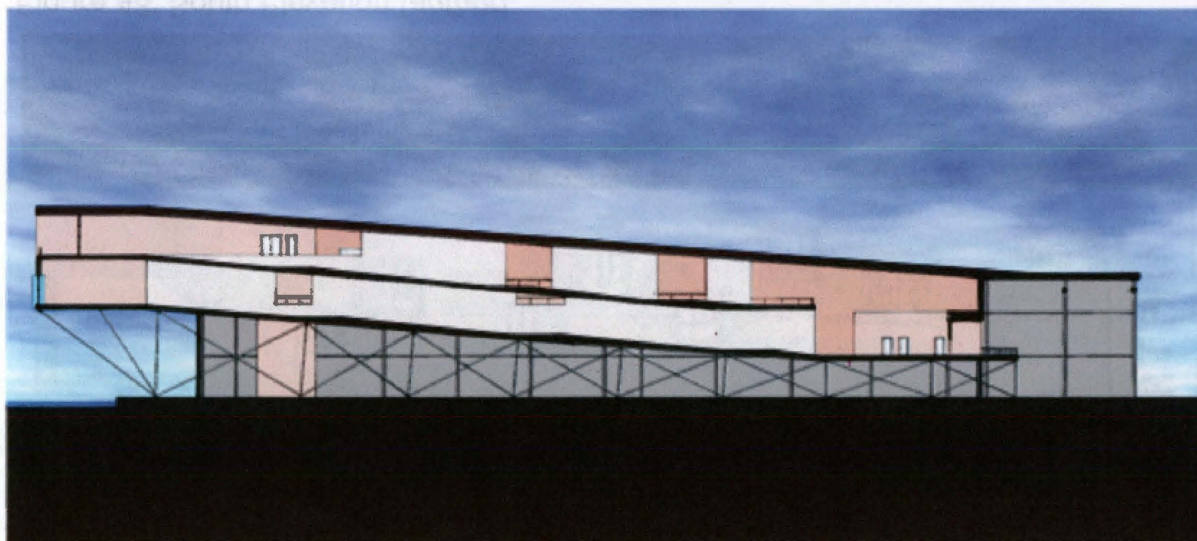


Figure 44: Section 1 [author]

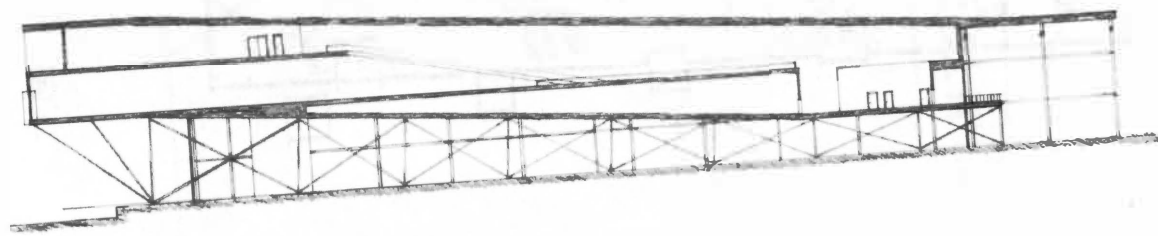


Figure 45: Section 2 [author]

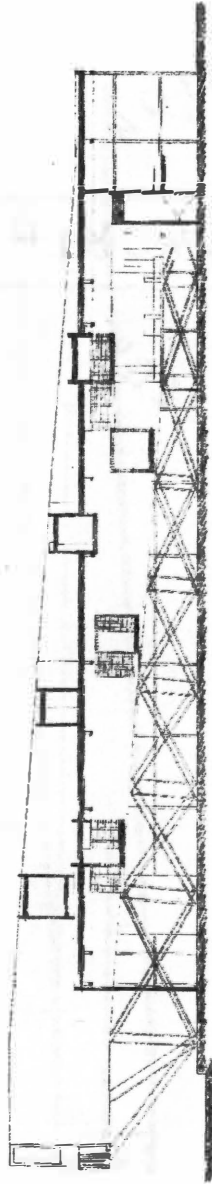


Figure 46: Section 3 [author]

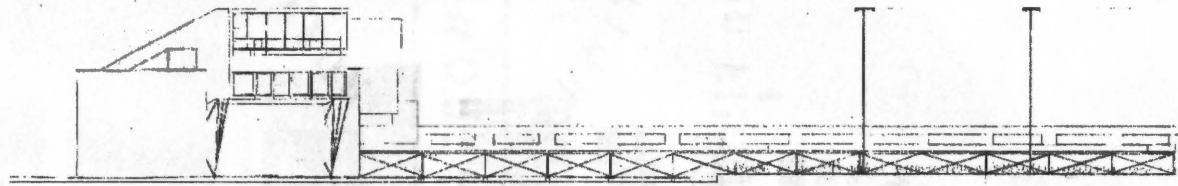


Figure 47: West Elevation [author]

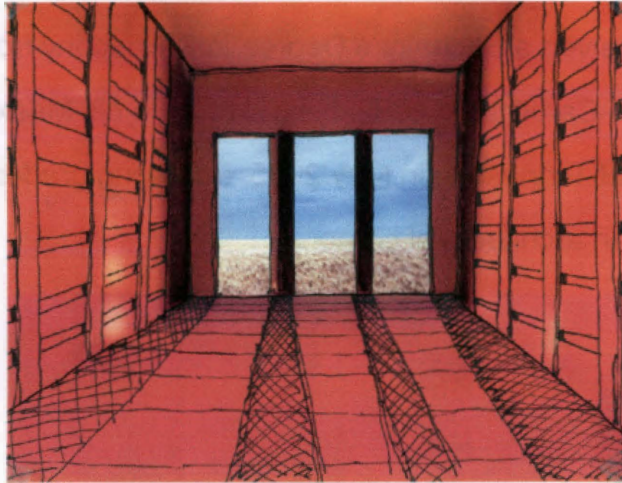


Figure 49: Gallery Perspective [author]

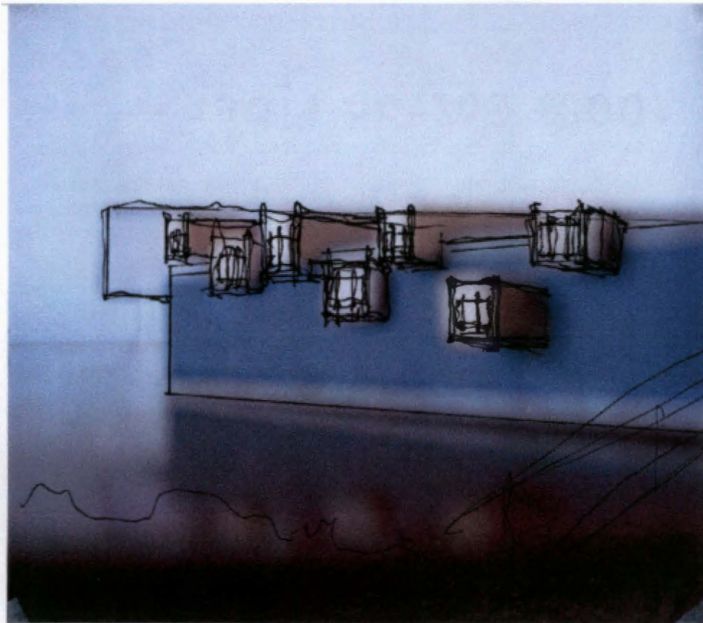


Figure 50: Bridge Perspective [author]

Vita

Myles N. Trudell received a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy from the College of Charleston, South Carolina, in 2002. He will receive his Master of Architecture from the University of Tennessee in May 2005. Following graduation, Myles will continue to pursue an architectural career.