

BOMB

Raimund Abraham

Author(s): Carlos Brillembourg and Raimund Abraham

Source: *BOMB*, No. 77 (Fall, 2001), pp. 58-65

Published by: [New Art Publications](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40426617>

Accessed: 21/06/2014 11:06

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



New Art Publications is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *BOMB*.

<http://www.jstor.org>



CARLOS BRILLEMBOURG

RAIMUND ABRAHAM is an architect who creates conditions that demand a viewer or inhabitant consider the origins of architecture. His discipline elicits a confrontation between the ideal—imagined notions of perfection—and the real—its physical counterpart. His architecture, anchored in the specific nature of its

materials, questions and affirms the metaphysical realm. Abraham's is a deliberate and precise investigation of architecture's responsibility to be life-giving, and an acknowledgment of its function as the ultimate manifestation of our most essential dreams.

After a long struggle, the Austrian Cultural Center

on East 52nd Street, which Abraham designed, is now nearing completion. The facade of this 20 foot wide, 23-story building appears to hover above us, as it establishes a limit between the interior and architectural elements that protrude into the public space. It is a unique and singular testament to the art of building.

Raimund Abraham

(right) Raimund Abraham, *Austrian Cultural Center Construction*.
(side view)

(left) Raimund Abraham, *Construction*
(frontal view).

All images courtesy of
Atelier Raimund Abraham.



carlos brillembourg Raimund, tell me about your idea of tension between the ideal and the built as an essential condition for architecture.

raimund abraham Anybody who makes architecture has to recognize that phenomenon: it is the ultimate challenge. But one really has to define the context. Because this tension between the ideal and the built remains in the context of building—it's not taking place in the context of drawing. In the context of drawing, it's a completely different dialectic. When I draw, the drawing is not a step toward the built but an autonomous reality that I try to anticipate. It's a whole process of anticipation, anticipating that a line becomes an edge, that a plane becomes a wall; the texture of the graphite becomes the texture of the built. Now, when you *translate* the drawings, one also has to distinguish between the drawings you make in this autonomous process—where the drawing is the ultimate reality. I draw first for myself, not for somebody who is building—which means there has to be an absolute clarity in my mind, and the ability to retain the idea that I've established in the drawing, and furthermore, the anticipation that this idea will be buildable. Of course, it's a highly complex process, and I'm talking about the first stage, which is a dialectical confrontation—of whether what I draw will be built. From the moment I know that something is going to be built, my drawings become something else. And at that point I draw less and build models immediately. One really has to distinguish between those different phases.

cb It's a question of approximations through layers and also through different goals.

ra Yes. One has to reinvent, and in that sense, define what that ideal truly represents. Geometry, I would say, is the language of the ideal. And, of course, one knows precisely that what could be complete as a geometrical configuration could, in a way, not be built. So there is a transgression of ideal configuration—geometry—that has to be confronted with the buildable. When I say buildable, today you can build anything, in terms of technology. I mean buildable in that

materiality would be transformed by the ideal of geometry.

cb You are talking about a convergence of the ideal as translated *through* the geometry *into* the material.

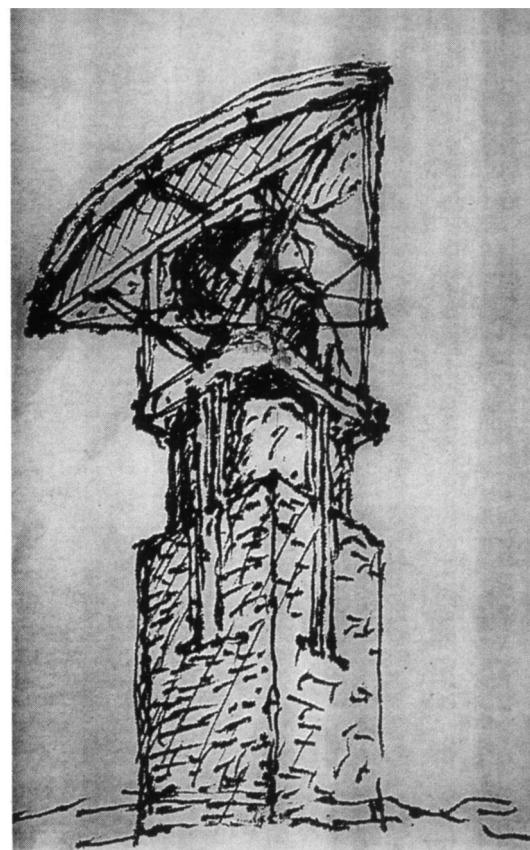
ra Absolutely. A wonderful example is the Pueblo Ribera Court that Schindler did in La Jolla—very modest, small atrium housing with wood construction. It has more or less deteriorated physically over the decades. And it's overgrown. Yet you can still read, through the profusion of ivy, the ideal lines that had first been drawn. You see, that's what I am really talking about with the buildable. That the geometry is more or less transgressing materiality, no?

cb So therefore the ideal reemerges.

ra Sure, but it has to be felt in its original intent. You see, that's another phenomenon that I think we have to discuss. If geometry is not confronted with materiality, it remains infinitely manipulatable. For example, if you take present-day fashion in architecture, you can see that there's no challenge to the limits of that geometric configuration. To modify Gertrude Stein's "Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose," you can say circle is a circle is a circle, square is a square is a square—until a material challenges it. A square in concrete, a square in steel, a square in stone, is a different square. Because the ideal line is challenged by the nature of the material. Each material has its own limits, its own potential, its own emotional power. So these two worlds are actually not reconcilable. It's neither form follows function nor function follows form. Form and function have to be confronted. And that is the power of architecture, or, I would say, the possibility that you deny function in architecture. See, I can say I deny light, illumination, I deny vision. The denial is a confrontation. The moment you recognize that utility and form are irreconcilable entities, you have architecture.

cb You seem to be saying there is a kind of tectonic reality, which is within the material.

ra Yes.



Raimund Abraham, *Surveyor's Tower*, 1997, Sketch.

cb Which implies almost an ideal geometry in itself. And there's a confrontation between that tectonic reality of the material and the latency of its idealized form.

ra It's a critical dialogue, which can be clearly applied to the computer issue, which is now a hot topic. How is the computer influencing architectural thought? From the moment you design with the computer, it is mind to mind. And there's never a confrontation with matter. So if the primary ideal is the thought, then the next is the ideal of each discipline you utilize to manifest that thought, which is the architectural drawing, no? The next step is the model. And then the use of the computer as a survey device to help overcome geometric complexities that would be harder for the hand to draw. The computer cannot substitute for this process. But at least when I do a drawing or model and then use the computer, the computer is already confronted with matter. Anticipated matter.

cb Some say the computer is now able to manufacture specific pieces of architectural material in a handcrafted fashion on a mass-produced basis.

ra It's the same argument about any

sophisticated machine that has assisted in the evolution of efficient production. If you look at Diderot's *Pictorial Encyclopedia of Trade and Industry*, which deals with manufacturing from mining to architecture, you find a knowledge of geometry and an anticipation of spatial conditions that have been lost. They are complex beyond what the computer could produce. The computer assists you in simplifying that process. It's different if you have to construct that curve, because then you have intimate knowledge of the translatability of that curve. If you go to Bilbao to see Frank Gehry's Guggenheim, and really look, after you've overcome the spectacular moment of the first visual encounter, and examine the details, spatial or structural, you discover that it has been built in order to satisfy shapes. It has not been designed to respect the confrontation between mind and matter. It simply is buildable. You see steel trusses running into Sheetrock walls and they will be there wherever they are needed. And that of course is when the computer is extremely helpful, because it more or less satisfies its own mind. Yet this mind is still extremely rudimentary. Coming back to the origins of your question, it is that confrontation between the ideal and matter that has to take place, or the process is meaningless. I say *meaningless* because you don't really know what the limits of the line are. If you have never lifted a stone, or a brick, or a bag of cement, you have no clue what concrete, bricks, or stones are, no clue.

cb Does it ever happen that you finish a building—it's built—and you keep drawing it?

ra No, never. I only make drawings that are necessary for satisfying a vision I have that is manifested in the drawing, or a drawing I need in order to build something. I met Aldo Rossi in the early seventies and he worked exactly the same way. It was why we began an immediate friendship—we shared the same convictions of making only what is necessary.

cb Aldo once said something very beautiful to me—which was very central to him. He said he actually never stopped drawing

a project, even after it was built, because the building of it was just one phase in his understanding of the project.

ra For me, when I finish a project, I forget it. If you asked me to draw a plan of a house that was built ten years ago, I couldn't do it. Because I've lost interest, there's no intensity. Also, I'm very bad at drawing something that exists. I'm never really tempted, when I go to see a fantastic site, to sketch it. I'm only interested in sketching to work out what does not exist. The moment I finish a project, it belongs to history, manifested in its own memory.

cb Your architecture recognizes a state of decay or erosion. Would you say that the erosion of the material to its most essential form uncovers a timeless, more essential architecture?

ra I would have loved to do that, to have erosion manifest itself. Can you be more specific and give an example?

cb In your drawings, your architecture is implanted within a landscape. And the forces of that natural landscape, the erosion and the plane of the sky against the horizon are carried literally into the architecture.

ra I would not call it erosion, but rather the anticipation of decay. Meaning that this is the fate of architecture. The ancients anticipated decay. Take the Acropolis, or the Parthenon, which has been destroyed twice and still is complete. Coming back to the first question—the ideal of that structure is built into every line. That's why you can also reconstruct the Great Temple from only a few fragments.

cb So the ideal is in the fragments?

ra Each detail reflects the total integrity of the building.

cb I couldn't agree more. The question about erosion came up because it seems evident in the drawings, which I understand now to be, in a way, not built projects, but projects of translation from an ideal into the physical form of the drawing.

ra I'd like to make a clear distinction among what I call imaginary projects, projects, and buildings. Imaginary projects are

autonomous manifestations of architecture. Whereas projects are how I invent the site, the habitation of the program, and all the conditions, which then become ideal images that I then have to confront. Now in projects, I'm dealing with sites that have their own past, their own limits, their own possibilities. If I take any competition project or any project in which I chose to participate in cities like Venice, Berlin or Paris, it is there where I've had to confront my ideal with preexisting conditions rooted in their own memory.

cb Or the ontological site . . .

ra In my imaginary work, I always think one to one, not in scale; the scale is simply a device to measure things. So, in the projects, I try to retain the ideal in respecting the limits of the site. Before I even think about constructing a building I have to fully comprehend the nature of the site, and those forces which determine the nature of that site, its historical past, its potential future. It's those forces that stimulate me, inspire me, and ultimately define my ideas.

cb In your writings you often speak about the ontological basis for architecture as originating from the disturbance of the archetypal site of the horizon. Is this the fundamental act of architecture, the destruction of this site?

ra The fatal nature of architecture is that it interferes with an equilibrium ideally or physically. It's what I call the ontological site, which reduces a landscape simply to the horizon, the collision between sky and earth. A more complex intervention can only be realized by understanding that fundamental way you either violate the sky or the earth. You have to understand the fragility of the world we live in. You can apply this same thing to cooking. When you slaughter animals, or you cut down plants, the only way to respect that violent act is to cook well. Cooking, not as a process of satisfying hunger, but a way of showing respect for what you have, and what you have killed.

cb Can you talk about the Austrian Cultural Center in terms of this dialectic



Raimund Abraham, *Times Square Tower*, 1984. Photo montage.

of destruction/creation—and of the sky plane and the ground plane within an urban context?

ra Within the context of this particular site, the dialectical condition is manifested by the lateral compression of the void, defined by the weight and height of the neighboring buildings, and the geometrical definition of the zoning envelope, as defined by the building code. The tower rising autonomously between the existing walls of the adjacent structures is defined by three syntactic elements, the Vertebra-Stair Tower, the Core-Structural Tower, the Mask-Glass Tower, signifying the counterforces of gravity: Ascension, Support and Suspension. Both the stair-tower as well as the curtain-wall strive for infinity: the stair-tower vertically, the curtain-wall diagonally. While the stair-tower is rising, the curtain-wall is falling by suspended sheets of glass and metal. There were two decisive issues for me in defining the material and geometric articulation of the curtain-wall. I have never been intrigued by the illusionary transparency of glass, but rather, like Mies van der Rohe, by its mineralogical origins: heavy and precise. To achieve the knifelike cutting edge of its planes, all outer metal frames are mitered toward an infinitely small line. The angle of its ascending planes is derived from the angle of its zoning envelope. The tower itself can be defined as an interstice between the stair-tower and the curtain-wall.

cb So, it is important for you to communicate this idea of suspended gravity on the facade.

ra Yes, but this is in all my projects. I never really know how an idea comes into being; there are many, many factors. When I look at my own completed work, I become as speculative as you or any other critic. I only eliminate speculation while I'm working. When a building is completed I become a spectator, because it doesn't belong to me anymore.

cb Looking at your drawings and your built work, there is a recurring theme of symmetry—the central axis is expressed

physically as an obstacle, and sometimes as a kind of incision—more specifically there seems to be a bilateral symmetry. What does symmetry mean to you?

ra For me symmetry has never been an aesthetic device but rather an ontological perimeter in the dialectical conflict of stability and instability. Depending on particular conditions of the site, the recognition of particular vectors, their impact on space and time shall articulate the dominance of special geometric strategies. It seems that the fear of symmetry in our time and in particular the association with its politicized abuse in history has led to an architecture ideology of asymmetry and consequently to a game of spectacular, but meaningless formal manipulations. In my work symmetry is always challenged, sometimes subtly, sometimes radically, but always in plans and sections, sometimes hidden within the interiority of space.

The tower of the Austrian Cultural Institute, a vertical slice 25 feet wide and 280 feet tall, became a deliberate manifestation of utmost formal reduction, challenging the indigenous variations of the surrounding buildings while the symmetrical spinal structure of its mask reflects necessity, not choice.

cb So for you symmetry can be fearful or oppressive, or it can be an organizational tool.

ra I would not grant it the power of fear but rather the power of oppression we recognize in many manifestations of architecture in oppressive political systems. But since the perception of architecture is contemplative and its focus is less demanding than the perception of literature, cinema or music, its oppressive power, its use for political propaganda is weakened and becomes less effective.

cb So architecture is ineffective propaganda.

ra You can walk down a street and ignore its details. You get a mood that can be either stimulating, inspiring or depressing, but to focus on the structures around you, you'd have to use a completely different strategy of perception. I remember Venice as a child, I was overcome by its beauty. The first time I lived there, it was a few

months before I started to look at details. How bridges were built, how stones were connected—and all of a sudden I had a completely different insight. The city became another reality.

cb What you are saying is that architecture is ultimately successful only in raising your spirits through attention, through close observation of the architecture itself. Because if it is depressing, you are not going to look at it.

ra Ultimately, the aspiration of an architect is to make something sacred. There has always been a confrontation between the profane and the sacred. Successful architecture carries some degree of sacredness—otherwise it is not architecture.

cb That is a very strong statement.

ra That is really what it is.

cb What role does technology play in the confrontation between the ideal and the built?

ra Technology can be either an inspiration and tool, or it becomes a domain where you more or less yield your possibilities. As an inspiration and tool, it is not necessarily evolutionary, although weak artists of all disciplines are always jumping onto new technology in order to be avant-garde. For example, after cinema there was video; video appeared to be a much more advanced device. I am not denying that video has its own recognizable validity, but cinema is a completely different discipline. Video didn't replace film, it wasn't more advanced. In the same way, to claim that digital reproductions are more advanced than painting would be silly. And architecture is exactly the same. I am building a little house for myself in Mexico, in a very remote place, and I had to recognize the limits of the available technology, which are adobe brick and wood, and I still succeeded in making a house that is very different from anything that has been built there. It is a question of translatability, what you can do with theory. You have to understand material, you have to have a dialogue with it, you have to ask questions about what it can do, what it can't do, which doesn't limit you at all in your

formal vision. It's fascinating to me that the bricks I used have the same color as the earth I dug into on my site. I exposed a lower layer of earth the same exact color as the brick. It was hidden down there, almost like when you puncture your skin and a drop of blood appears.

cb In your book, *Elementare Architektur*, you make a point about the architecture having developed in relationship to the land and the materials coming from that land. So the question of nature and architecture is a relationship that is always present.

ra It's there but you have to recognize it. I grew up in the Alps, so I made *Elementare Architektur* exactly at the transition from finishing my studies and really starting to think about architecture. I felt that I had to take my memory of the Alps and manifest it in an abstract way, recognizing the power of structures. Interestingly, I only chose structures that either store hay or house animals. Those structures don't yield to the taste of their inhabitants—which informs certain residential elements of that indigenous architecture, so there is a structural sacrifice. In elemental structures there was no necessity of aesthetic speculation—it was more or less the knowledge of the builder that determined design. Of course, it is not only the yielding to that knowledge—the builders also had formal ideas, such as a whole series of different door handles carved out of wood. Where is that coming from? It's not the necessity of the wood, it's the desire of the builder.

cb So there is a kind of creativity within this vernacular.

ra Within limits, yes.

cb So the question of technology and architecture has more to do with the nature of the materials rather than the substitution of one technology by a more advanced one.

ra It goes without saying, any technology offers different ideas.

cb We have to question the idea of history and advancement. Where are we going when we go forward?

ra I don't believe that there is any

advancement of thought. None whatsoever. There are different responses to the world, at different times. Furthermore, there is no manifestation of a new possibility totally independent from anything that happened before or after.

cb The Mayans use a circular calendar.

ra That's fascinating, because it reflects a different reading of the cosmos. That it's considered less advanced than our linear calendar is ridiculous. There was this struggle in America in the sixties where for economic reasons (naturally) they wanted to replace the U.S. measurement system with metrics. All of a sudden people fought to retain the old system because they realized it was cultural (baseball is not sport, it is culture). In each system there is a cultural consequence, cultural origins.

cb You often speak about Modernism as expressing a radical break with historical continuity. What exactly does that mean, if there is no diachronic history?

ra You see, until then, historical developments were described in terms of formal differences. Even within the Renaissance you had drastically different architecture, by Alberti and Palladio, yet it's all thrown into the bag of Renaissance architecture.

cb Actually, Palladio was more of a Mannerist architect than Renaissance.

ra I have to recapture the question.

cb It's about a radical break.

ra Right. Modernism, for me, was the first time that not only the past was challenged, but the language of each discipline was challenged. Going back to my description earlier about the horizon as an ontological site, try to reduce the whole world to a line where two dimensions collide. That was the intent—Malevich's attempt to paint the white square on the white canvas, Mallarmé's obsession with the whiteness of a blank page, you have Mies van der Rohe's unbuilt corner. They are all attempts at reducing language to its true zero, its condition, its origins. And that is ultimately what originality means, the ability to dig down, to

cut. In terms of my own confrontation with history, I always try to cut through it. I interchange historical events, a pyramid in Mexico with a Melnikov project . . .

cb You're talking about the collapse of time.

ra Absolutely; time becomes infinite when one succeeds at making a project that is not bound by time.

cb And that is your goal.

ra That is the desire. I know there is truth, and I desire to find it.

cb Can you speak to us about your role as an educator, somebody who has dedicated a great deal of his life to educating a number of architects?

ra Teaching forces me to engage in a critical dialogue with somebody else, and find a level of objectivity that allows me to have a fair critical argument. My role as a teacher is simply to clarify, although that's a bit simplistic. When I give a problem to the students, it's my problem, I am trying to anticipate how I could solve that problem. And my joy is when the students come up with a solution I haven't thought of. And in that process, I can help to clarify their intent. If a student has not established an idea, I do not teach. I don't give ideas. So I wouldn't call this being an educator, I am perhaps a provocateur. (*laughter*)

cb It's the Socratic method, education as dialogue.

ra I don't believe in education. When I think back to my days as a student, I didn't learn anything from professors. We formed a group of students who engaged in critical dialogues and almost ignored the faculty. As a teacher, I have a loyalty to the freedom of engaging in architecture, and there cannot be an ideological preference, an aesthetic preference by the faculty to exorcise that freedom.

cb I am interested in discussing the relationships among painting, sculpture and architecture.

ra Each discipline has its own narrative, which has to be challenged by the syntax of

its language. One could identify the narrative in architecture as use—none of the other arts have to be used. So in architecture, contrary to the limits of sculpture, any formal decision has to be confronted with utilitarian issues. If architecture succeeds in retaining its universal ideal, it will still reflect its confrontation with use. I can deny access, but in the denial one has to measure the confrontation that took place. I can make a room that is not accessible, for example, but it cannot be an accident, it has to be a conscious intellectual discourse with the project; that is the narrative in architecture.

cb There is a kind of contemporary confusion about the limits of sculpture and the limits of architecture.

ra Any discipline seems to somehow overlap by affinities. The earthwork definitely has architectural origins, but does not have to yield to the confrontation I just mentioned. So in that case the sculptor has an advantage in a way; the work can remain abstract without going through that painful process.

cb Were you influenced by Robert Smithson in the seventies, or other artists like him?

ra I am never aware of a *specific* influence—there are so many influences. I believe that architecture relates much more closely to other structural languages like cinema. I was very influenced by cinema, literature, music. These are the three disciplines that are most closely related syntactically to architecture, more so than painting and sculpture. This is where the confusion comes from regarding architecture as the top of the so-called visual arts. Architecture is not a visual art, architecture is a structural art. In music, if you shift one note in a classical score, one line to another line, it is another sound. It's been said that the essence of architecture is the understanding of how one stone sits on top of the other. It is the seam between the stones that defines intelligence or precision.

cb You had a deep friendship with Frederick Kiesler, an artist and architect.

ra That was an unforgettable experience. The last year of his life, when I visited him, I entered his studio and heard a faint voice from somewhere, so I followed the voice. He was working on a sculpture of a horse lying on its back with its legs stretched into the air. He was lying inside the belly of the horse and writing a poem in gold letters on the inner shell of the horse's body. And I realized immediately that there was such an incredible spatial affinity between the belly of the horse and his endless house and his obsession to discover a new space different from all space he had ever known; a total metamorphosis of a single idea removed from its content.

cb Your work always incorporates the presence of nature. In the drawings, there is the sensation of an architectural object presented within a natural field that is abstracted. Does this relate to your idea of the ontological origin of architecture, as this constant meeting of the sky plane with the ground's plane?

ra This came much later when I intellectualized my relationship to nature. Now my interpretation of nature is really rooted in my childhood. Growing up in the mountains, out in the country, I was always fully aware that one must confront nature and not deceive it. The farmer takes the plow and cuts it into the earth before he sows the seeds. Actually, in terms of architecture, my ability to measure precision really comes from mountain climbing, where your life depends on it. You have to read a wall of rock if you want to climb it; you have to understand its geology, and know, when you hold onto a piece of rock, that it's solid. And when you ski, when you race, you have to understand the crystal condition of the snow. The snow is not a white Christmas—it is a medium, a material you have to work with. Now, in my practice, I can intellectualize what was originally a pure experience. Take the measure of time, for example. I would say that time is physical. When I go back to my hometown and look at the mountains I climbed (which I cannot climb anymore), I know

how long it took to climb them. So by looking at the landscape I have a complete measure of space and time. And that is very important in reflecting upon architecture. Architecture cannot be an image, architecture is a construct.

cb So there is nothing picturesque about your view of nature.

ra Exactly. Incorporating nature in my projects is an obsession. I believe that anything you build is primary intervention in a landscape. Even if you look at an urban site—you can say that's a lot, or a void between buildings, yet you know that there is rock down below and sky up above.

cb When I look at your drawings, or pictures of your architecture, I conceive of architecture as a kind of verb. I see the walls, the entrance and the spaces interacting directly with the mind and the body and the materials of which they're made.

ra Meaning the work is an action. It is that act of being aware that the primary force is an event, an event in which you intervene. First you dig a hole or make a mount and then you decide if the mount is a pyramid, a cone, or a cube. Or you come upon a hole in the ground that is six feet long, two feet wide and five feet deep, and you know that that's a tomb, a grave to receive the body and turn it into earth again. That is the origin of architecture.

cb In your work you have insisted upon the program of the house as a kind of universal typology, this business of habitation as something that limits the original condition of architecture.

ra Well, habitation for me is about ritual. In terms of interpreting the program for a house, if you think in terms of bedrooms and bathrooms and living rooms and garages, then you are already doomed. We have to talk about sleeping, about eating, about cooking, no? *Living room*, I never understood what that meant, because you live everywhere. I really believe that there can't be a new architecture if there aren't new interpretations of archaic concepts. So coming back to your verb, I like that idea,

because the verb is frozen on a piece of paper yet it's kinetic, force is ever present.

cb How does one reconcile the confrontation of the original condition of architecture against the accumulated condition of habitation as seen through urban structures?

ra Urban structures for me are simply a man-made landscape, but to approach the city like you approach a landscape would really be a mistake. The city is a result of a highly complex program that can never be truly defined and categorized. Take so-called housing; housing is a weakening of *the house*. For whom is this housing? I don't know those people who are going to inhabit it. Now, one could maybe ignore this whole social complexity in the city, and start to identify only its typology, rather than try to interpret and verify the condition, and build according to it. The twenties and thirties in Europe were a manifestation of a compassion for social change—there was a house for the worker, a workplace for the worker, and the church. They tried to make sacred places for the worker and sacred places for the worker to work in. There was a respect for human programs. And I think what's been really detrimental to the understanding of the city in our time is a master plan mentality—which is still evident in the so-called urban typology. The mapping of the city is essentially like trying to extract some kind of artificial intelligence out of a highly complex organism. Which is a total misunderstanding of the city. In New York, for example, if you walk from all the way uptown to all the way downtown all of a sudden you realize that there are invisible thresholds—you cross over by one street and you are in a different world. So how can you ever speculate what will come into being? I believe if you build one thing, and this one thing is defined by clarity, compassion, and belief in the true survival of the city, then this singular building will become a singular force within the unpredictable metamorphosis of the city: "The house is the city—The city is the house." (Alberti) ◉