

近現代建築に見られる  
モニュメンタルな表現の意味と手法

-支配的表現の分類とその形態的表現の変化に関する考察-

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Master Thesis

**A STUDY ON THE MEANINGS AND TECHNIQUES OF MONUMENTAL EXPRESSION  
IN MODERN TO CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE:**

**Establishing Categories of Dominant Expression and Mapping the Metamorphosis of  
their Formal Expression**

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- 支配的表現の分類とその形態的表現の変化に関する考察 -



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## *Abstract*

Importing Cassirer's philosophical vision into the context of the built environment the paper hopes to hypothesise that in monumental expressions architectural symbolism is an instrumental component with which humankind uses as a multi-faceted platform to not merely signify, symbolise and establish relations between self and the other, but as a means to signify, symbolise and establish a critique of the self. Employing the semiotic and hermeneutic approach and through interpretative attempts the paper intends to decode monumental expressions in contemporary architecture as a body of cultural and theoretical signs and as a spatial and sculptural medium of conceptual intention and effect. To contextually ground the paper, the paper locates *monumentality* in the context of post-WW2 modernism as a critical reference point from where it has evolved into what it is in contemporary expressions. This will include its antagonistic relationship with the rigid maxim 'form follows function' and how architects like Kahn, who sought to rework modernism into a socially transformative architecture appropriate for the post-war context, investigated with monumentality through readdressing the issues of light, mass, structure, geometry and materials to create concern for the ritual of human experience. The transformational power of context has been commonly



accepted as the fundamental factor that constitutes the basis of the redefinition of meaning as symbolic expression undergoes ever-changing re-interpretation and re-translation, consequently reconceptualising the individual self. Through distinguishing three categories of dominant expression, the paper shows how monumentality has expanded and adapted to the symbolic will and desire of contemporary humanity. Like fashion or furniture design monumental expression in architecture is pressured to continuously adapt to new contexts and tastes and thus experience endless cycles of metamorphoses reminding us of our own mortality, limits, and finitude. In light of recent shifts between retrospective monumentality and futuristic digital manipulation in the visual realm of symbolic experience, symbolic expression finds itself in conflict with the multiple self as it tries to accommodate the persistence of memory and the urgency of the present.

# Chapter One-Introduction

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## Background

"What we call nature... is a poem hidden behind a wonderful secret writing; if we could decipher the puzzle, we should recognize in it the odyssey of the human spirit, which in astonishing delusion flees from itself while seeking itself."

- Ernst Cassirer 1955, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms Vol.2*

Ernst Cassirer, a German philosopher active in the early part of the 20th century, follows directly from the Kantian formalist tradition, but steps beyond to a new understanding of the basic structures of human knowledge. Cassirer's work moved away from Kant's pure forms of experience in favour of a symbol-oriented mode of understanding reality. In Cassirer's vision, scientific laws, religion, and language are all symbols created by the mind in attempting to produce a world of understanding. His greatest interest involved a search for the form of knowledge- how it can be created out of the chaos of perception humans face daily.

The second volume of his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* defines the task: to seek "the categories of the consciousness of objects in the theoretical, intellectual sphere, and starts from the assumption that such categories must be at work wherever a cosmos, a characteristic and typical world view, takes form out of the chaos of impressions." (Cassirer 1955; p29)

These categories consist of symbols, which mediate between perception and understanding. This emphasis on symbol breaks the rigid boundaries of Kant's categories to give the mind a greater role in constructing its own reality. In essence, the mind takes in impressions, processes them, and fits them into certain

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symbolic referents which enable it to understand its world.

Since the 19th century, the meaning of *monumentality* has been expanding.

Traditionally it referred exclusively to monument and grand imposing scale and many have referred to the Greek Temple, Parthenon as the example of the spiritual embodiment of monumentality, commonly deduced from observing its elevated location on the Acropolis, its enormous scale and perfectly proportioned columns. Louis Kahn defined *monumentality* as a quality that symbolically portrays magnificence, political and economic territorial identity. William JR Curtis referred to it as a quality that does not necessarily have to do with size but with the intensity of expression.

The thesis uses three categories to show the different expressions monumentality has expanded through post- WW2 modernism to contemporary architecture, and the purpose of this is to respond to the need to bring, root and articulate *monumentality* in the current context of the will and desires of humanity.

### **The Thesis' Intentions**

Importing Cassirer's philosophical vision into the context of the built environment the thesis intends to conduct the following:

- hypothesise that in monumental architecture expression and symbolic meaning are the instrumental components with which humankind uses as a multi-faceted platform to not merely signify, symbolise and establish

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relations between self and the other, but as a means to signify, symbolise and establish a critique of the self;

- Through distinguishing the architectural categories of dominant expression, to decode monumental architecture as a body of cultural and universal signs and as a dynamic and static medium of expressionistic techniques:
- Through reviewing the relationships between the distinguished categories of dominant expression, to map the evolving and the transformative with indications to future implications.

### Theoretical Survey

The paper intends to locate the discussions of semantic and semiotic inquiry in Umberto Eco and G.E. Lessing (amongst others) where architecture and art is analysed and understood as a codified visual versus textual system, and to discuss the contestations of Juhani Pallasmaa and Henri Lefebvre that architecture should not merely be confined to being understood through codified visual versus textual means.

From SK Langer's *An Introduction to Symbolic Logic* the paper intends to discuss precedent means of identifying symbolic referents by establishing a precedent for the relationships between *content*, *form*, *import*, *abstraction* and *interpretation* which will be the basis of the analyses in Chapter Two.

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Through Robert Venturi's *Learning from Las Vegas* the paper intends to locate the discussions of various critical yet cynical attitudes towards the issues around symbolic meaning in monumentality in the urban context.

Through Norbert-Schulz the paper intends to show the problems of maintaining perception-based processes that refuse to change in an ever-changing context.

With Julia Kristeva's psychoanalytic vision the paper intends to question whether her analogy of the Greek myth *Narcissus* could be interpreted as the fundamental framework in which the self is admired and critiqued as a reflection of itself in architecture through symbolic referents.

Through Bernard Tchumi's *Architecture and Disjunction* the paper intends to shed light on the use of architectural expressions and their symbolism as a theatrical and seductive platform of human engagement, characterized by "veils" hinting at the possibility of 'collision' and encounter whether the 'collision' or encounter occurs within the self or between the self and the other.

Through Pallasmaa's *Eyes of the Skin*, the paper intends to contextualise the limits of architectural experience in the visual realm, where the eye is the hegemonic sense in perception and through this weakness the paper intends to provide the platform in which the eyes's introspective manifestations encourage the way architectural expressions participate with humanity through narcissism and nihilism.

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The selected analysis examples are chronologically discussed using Kahn's Monumentality as the departure point towards reworking Modernism into a socially transformative architecture. Using its call for the aesthetic, spiritual and ritualistic experience of architecture the analysis discusses these in the techniques of their expression and their meaning in monumental architecture. The purpose of this is to assess the development and metamorphoses of monumental expressions from *Monumentality* (1944) into the 21<sup>st</sup> century through three categories of dominant expression which the paper will distinguish in Chapter Two.

In Chapter Three the paper will discuss the relationships between the categories of dominant expression with the view to mapping their impact on contemporary theories and expressions in monumental architecture. Robert Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (will be used as their springboard towards *decomposition* and *fragmentation* as a response to orthodox Modernism and thus a transformative platform in propelling the self's representation through architectural form as a revolt and competitor against utility.

In the final analysis, the paper intends to engage in a diagnostic attempt to establish and define a term for the Avant-garde monumental expressions in international contemporary traditions of the past five years hopefully with possible clues for the future of symbolic meaning and monumental expression in contemporary architecture.

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### Louis Kahn's Monumentality

“Kahn’s struggle with monumentality laid the groundwork for his later masterworks, and marked a phase of Kahn’s work characterised by an attention to geometry and structure as the embodiment of architectural symbolism. His synthesis of tectonic goals and modernisation inserted architecture into the mechanisms of democracy that was increasingly derived within technology and its processes – economic, machinic, numeric, or socio-political. The period around 1944 signalled a turning point for Kahn, and marked the emergence of a more politicised architect – even in the later stages of his career – than our profession has historically recognised.”

Michael Bell 1998

Louis Kahn’s essay *Monumentality*, published in 1944, is widely known as a turning point in the call for the use of architecture to symbolically portray magnificence, political and economic territorial identity in post-WWII Modernism through the careful manipulation of geometry and scale to harmonise with humanity’s will. Influenced by the remnants of classicism in Beaux-Arts, it further sought to place the realm of the spiritual in architecture by drawing on the enigmatic properties of light, shadow, spatial proportion and the celebration of juncture in structure. Modernism is generally known to hold many faces; the works of Kahn, Aalto and Wright were continuously attempting to rework and to update modernist practice into a socially transformative architecture in the context of post-WWII, but not necessarily rejecting the influential ideologies born from main stream modernists such as Gropius, Corbusier and Mies. They



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investigated with monumentality through readdressing the issues of light, mass, structure, geometry and materials to create in architecture concern for the ritual of human experience. In the antagonism against the rigid maxim “form follows function” Kahn’s monumentality sought the reincorporation of the craft “the joint is the beginning of ornament”, as a complementing aspect of architectural experience, and in doing so propelling the symbolic platform on which humanity engages with architectural expression.

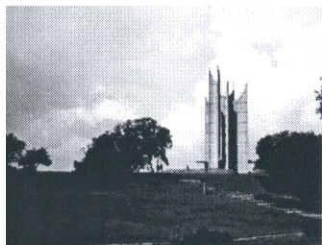
### **Monumentality as a Means to Express Power**

Spurred by an economic boost, the “massive gold surplus” post-WWII, architects in collaboration with powerful institutions saw in monumental expression a means to exercise power relations. In the United States it sought to prove that “economic might could be used as a tool of war”, in South Africa design functionalism of public buildings could now be substituted with an architecture that transcended utility, to become both monumental and grand to demonstrate progress in the implementation of Apartheid ideology. In South Africa Louis Kahn and also Paul Rudolph provided the exemplars for emulation. Their architectural principles were transmitted by South African graduates fortunate enough to have studied in the US under these mentors. Returning graduates were commissioned with honorific projects and rose to national prominence thereby winning over others for such architecture.

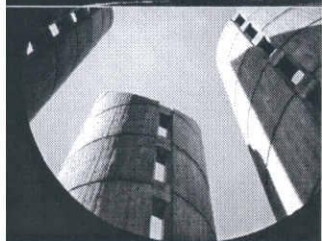
Thus, with the Apartheid ideology which promoted ethnically-based culture, for Afrikaners were created new monuments of commemoration, most notably the

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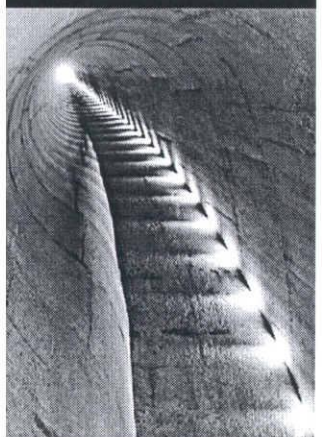
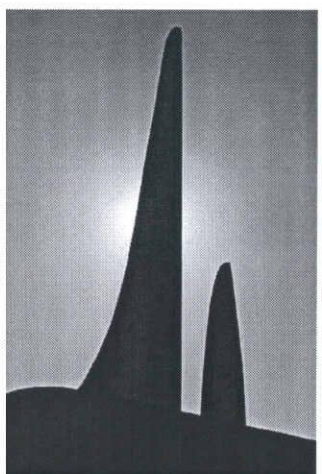


Voortrekker Monument,  
Winburg, South Africa,  
1968



Voortrekker Monument, Winburg and the Taal Monument, Paarl which particularly use scale and vertical geometric form for their dominating expression.

In this context monumental expression in architecture had an affinity to manifest itself exclusively on defining the boundaries of exclusion-inclusion with the built environment, with the view of establishing power relations between the built form and parts of society. The late French philosopher Foucault stated that “a society without power relations can only be an abstraction. The analysis, elaboration and bringing into question of power relations and the ‘agonism’ between power relations and intransitivity of freedom is a permanent political task inherent in all social existence”.



Taal Monument, Paarl,  
South Africa, 1975

### Monumentality as a Symbolic Ideological Construct

According to William JR Curtis in *Modern Architecture since 1900* monumentality in architecture is a quality that does not necessarily have to do with size, but with the intensity of expression. He found that the architect’s task was to handle public buildings with the appropriate degree of presence and accessibility: to establish the terms of a “democratic monumentality.”

As a human population we are subjected to codes and symbolic expressions in monumental architecture which represent and mean things to our diverse socio-cultural contexts. These very tools of representation and meaning have become part of the extensive vocabulary used in our built environment to demarcate boundaries between the spaces we inhabit in order to project and protect man-

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made socio-political ideologies. How have these signs and symbols been architecturally influential to our development as a human population within the urban and rural framework in which these expressions/codes are made, and what are the socio-political implications of their repetition in contemporary architecture while we continue our search for new tools for new expressions in the monumental realm?

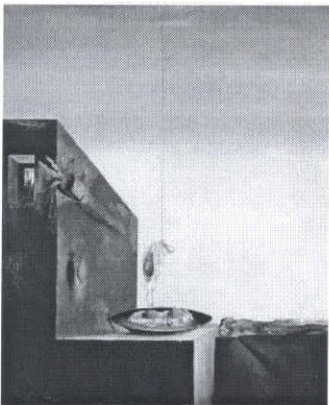
### Enquiries in the Metaphysical: Dali, Brancusi & the Greek Temple

#### Dali

Dali insisted in the *Secret Life* that he had “intra-uterine memories”. These were visual memories of the life before birth, and he claimed: “It was divine, it was paradise.” Dali held it was the source of “that perturbation and that emotion” which he had felt throughout his life when he confronted with the “ever-hallucinatory image” of two fried eggs:

“The fried eggs on the plate without the plate, which I saw before my birth were grandiose, phosphorescent and very detailed in all the folds of their faintly bluish whites.”

His intra-uterine memories provided Dali with the essential foundations of his lifelong pursuits. To him, it seemed increasingly true that the whole imaginative life of man tended to reconstitute symbolically by the most similar situations and representations of that initial paradisiacal state, and especially to surmount the horrible ‘traumatism of birth’ by which we are expelled from the paradise (the



Salvador Dali (Spanish, 1904-1989)  
*Fried Eggs on the Plate without the Plate* c. 1932  
Oil on Canvas



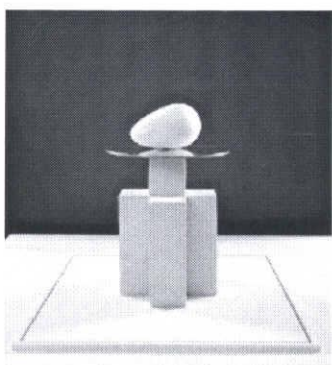
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womb), passing abruptly from the ideally protective world, with the “concomitant phenomena of asphyxiation, of compression, of blinding by the sudden outer light and of the brutal harshness of the reality of the world...”

### Brancusi's Contemplations: Spirit and the Elemental

If we are to take Dali's analogy as a metaphorical springboard, we should then propel with Brancusi's contemplations. A contemplative examination of elemental forms drawn from an elegant manipulation of basic materials, *Beginning of the World* is exemplary of Brancusi's oeuvre. In his quiet consideration of essential metaphysical issues, Brancusi clung to a relatively narrow range of identifiable forms—eggs, heads, heads resting on necks, birds, columns.



Constantin Brancusi  
(French, born Romania,  
1876–1957)  
*Beginning of the World*,  
c. 1920  
Marble, metal, and stone

Like so many of his contemporaries at the turn of the 20th century—the symbolists, the early abstractionists including Piet Mondrian, František Kupka, and Kasimir Malevich—as Brancusi strove to give expression to spiritual themes and philosophical issues, he discovered the most eloquent means of expression in nondescriptive or totally abstract forms.

Here the marble ovoid rests delicately, even precariously, on a round, polished metal surface. The sculpture is redolent with a diverse range of associations: new life, a precious newborn resting on a birthing dish, or a severed head on a salver. The marble ovoid and mirror metal disk are not anchored but rest on the cruciform limestone base, which reinforces an aura of solemnity.

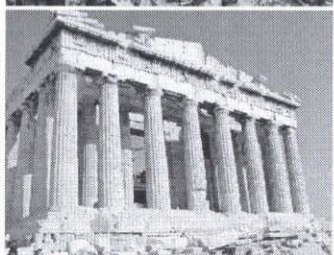
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Indeed, Brancusi's sober re-examination of the basics of sculpture, the essence of its materials, and the subtle relationship of object to base/pedestal, constitutes his crucial contribution to modern sculpture and architecture in the 20th century.

### The Greek Temple

Kahn always referred to the Parthenon as the example of the spiritual embodiment of the symbolically powerful expression of monumentality through its potent altitudinal location in the Acropolis, its scale and perfectly proportioned columns and the temple's inner sculptural expression of the deity it celebrated "Athena" in her aura, and from this the rebirth of this type of celebration in architecture will once again be.



The Parthenon, Athens,  
Greece, 5th Century BC

Indeed in the nineteenth century one witnessed a phenomenon typical of the history of art-when in a given period a code in its entirety (an artistic style, manner, a 'mode of forming', independently of the connotations of its individual manifestations in messages) comes to connote an ideology (with which it was intimately united either at the moment of its birth or at the time of its most characteristic affirmation).

One had at that time the identification 'Gothic style=religiosity', an identification that undoubtedly rested on other preceding connotative identifications, such as 'vertical emphasis=elevation of the soul Godward' or 'contrast of light streaming through great windows and naves in shadow=mysticism'. Now these are

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connotations so deeply rooted that even today some effort is required to remember that the Greek temple, too, balanced and harmonious in its proportions, could connote, according to another lexicon, the elevation of the spirits to the Gods, and that something like the altar of Abraham, on the top of the mountain, could evoke mystical feelings; thus one connotative lexicon may impose itself over others in the course of time and, for example, the contrast of light and shadows becomes what one most deeply associates with mystic states of mind.

### **Enquiries in the Semantic: Memory, Revival & Revision**

Ours is a time of cultural awareness and philological agility; with our special feeling for history and for the relativity of cultures, it has become almost secondary to ‘philologize’ in architecture. The modern ‘consumer’ of messages learns, decade by decade, to rediscover codes of reading for forms that have been antiquated, to rediscover forgotten ideological backgrounds and revive them in the process of trying to understanding compositions that have developed from them.

Humans learn, it is true, to ‘distort’ past forms, to read these expropriated messages in some ‘free’ or aberrant fashion, but one also learns to rediscover the keys to ‘correct’ readings of them: one’s cultural awareness leads him/her to a philological recovery of the proper codes, though his/her agility in recovery frequently results in curious semantic ‘shifts’.

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### Levi-Strauss's Semantic Fission

Claude Levi-Strauss defines *semantic fission* as an abstraction of the sign from its original context and a reinsertion of it in a new context, which in turn charges it with different meanings. But today the dynamics of rediscovery and revival tend to be more contracted and superficial, leaving the underlying cultural system undisturbed; we can see in the present pursuit of rediscoveries a rhetorical technique (now conventionalized) that in fact implies a stable ideology of a sort: a laissez-faire attitude toward values past and present.

We have, besides rapid and conspicuous obsolescence, a stream of recoveries. But our recoveries, in lightly pulsating alternation of acceptance and rejection, are far from 'revolutionizing' the bases of our culture. It is as if the present rediscoveries of codes and ideologies were the product of an immense rhetorical processor, whose overall operation connotes (and is directed by) the ideology of 'modernity' as 'tolerance' towards the entire past.

An ideology as indulgent as this puts one in the peculiar position of being able to take up practically anything from the repertory of known forms and read it (or have read it) without ideological repercussions; it permits one to entertain all the ideologies of the past as keys to these modern messages, but these are messages with which even the accretions can fail to make up for a certain loss of significance, because the meanings of the forms are more and more eroded and provisional.

And as Nietzsche vehemently put it, the "historical sickness" of the modern world is an excess of awareness, an awareness that, if not transformed into

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renewal, “acts as a narcotic”, as if to comprehend the present through displacement. This part of Nietzsche’s philosophical framework will compliment Venturi’s *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* as the theoretical basis for using *decomposition* and *fragmentation* as an analogy of the condition of the contemporary self in Chapter Three.

### **Scrutin’s Details of the Aesthetic Process**

The aesthetic process is conceived of as a special aspect of mind that deals with aesthetic matters in an analogous way to the way that processes of the visual system deal with vision. We can be consciously aware of the outputs generated by the aesthetic processes, just as we can be consciously aware of the visual precepts that the processes of visual perception generate.

Roger Scrutin (1980) finds that in aesthetic attention, thought, perception and feeling are inseparable and that being focused on a common object, they live and die together. The causal chain envisaged by the theory of the association of ideas must give way to a process that is conceptual, perceptual and affective simultaneously. If forms, details, and materials seem charged with emotion, this is because of a link with deep and enduring ‘fantasies’ which define for us the true content of every serious feeling.

Scrutin suggests that we understand the motives and feelings of the man of virtue and that by understanding the virtuous man we can, when the occasion arises, imagine what he would do. But the ensuing precept, even if reached thus indirectly, and in defiance of any universal law, may still be objective. It will be



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as objective as the notion of virtue from which it stems, and if it can be shown (as Aristotle tried to show) that our ideal of virtue is arbitrary but on the contrary imposed on us by the very nature of rational choice, then all moral judgements would derive their validity from reasoning which man can reasonably reject.

### **Tschumi's Architectural Expression as a Means for "Seduction"**

"There is rarely pleasure without seduction, or seduction without illusion. Consider: sometimes you wish to seduce. So you act in the most appropriate way in order to reach your ends. You wear a disguise. Conversely, you may wish to change roles and be seduced: you consent to someone else's disguise, you accept his or her assumed personality, for it gives you pleasure, even if you know that it dissimulates something else."

Bernard Tschumi 1994

According to Tschumi (1994), architecture is no different to seduction, going further to say that it constantly plays the "seducer", and that its disguises are numerous: "facades, arcades, squares, even architectural concepts become the artefacts of seduction."

Like "masks" these platforms of expression "veil" between what is assumed to be reality and its participants.

Consciously aimed at mystery and discovery, "masks" are of course a category of reason yet they possess a double role: they simultaneously veil and unveil, simulate and dissimulate. Behind all "masks" lie dark and unconscious streams, the domain of the unknown, that cannot be dissociated from the pleasure of architecture - discovery. The "mask" may exalt appearances yet by its very

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presence, it says that, in the background, there is something else, as if emulating the act of encoding and decoding symbols.

Fragments of expressions (bits of walls, of rooms, of streets, of ideas) are all one actually sees. These fragments are like the beginnings without ends. There is always a split between fragments that are real and fragments that are virtual, between memory and fantasy. These splits have no existence other than being the passage from one fragment to another: they are relays rather than signs, they are traces and they are in-between.

Architectural expressions act as recipients in which human desires can be reflected. Thus a piece of architecture is not architectural because it “seduces”, or because it fulfils some utilitarian function, but because it sets in motion the operations of “seduction and the unconscious.”

### **Norbert-Schulz’s Symbolism as a Perception-based Process**

According to Christian Norbert-Schulz, when we say that an object has unknown properties, this does not mean that it has an independent existence, only that our conception of the object is insufficient and has to be revised through future experiences. It would then appear that it is impossible to get direct individual knowledge of all the objects in our environment, but we take over instead the experiences of others through the symbol-systems. He further explains that

“Although these experiences often are communicated and used in a superficial way, they make us grasp objects far beyond our individual potentialities. The

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process of socialization is therefore both necessary and dangerous. It is needed to integrate the individual in the common world and to give him a feeling of security. It becomes dangerous when the adjustment to the accepted standards is exaggerated and brings forth prejudices and rejections of everything different.”

Norbert-Schulz’s ‘perception’ is a process that never comes to a close, but it is known that our prejudices may be so strong that we refuse to revise, and if we say that a person is ‘fossilized’ it signifies that his perception process has stopped. One has acquired a collection of more or less primitive data and has at any price to enforce reality into them. Rather than letting the perception go, one accepts a distorted perception of reality, clinging to this and is afraid of the insecurity which would result if the ‘world’ should lose its perception-bound reality.”

### **Architectural Semiotics: the Conflict with Privileging Vision**

Aldo Rossi and Umberto Eco attempted to fill the void between the overtly obvious and hidden meanings in architecture by providing us with a body of work that rests architectural meaning on the premise of code ideologies that prescriptively identify visual and functional elements as components of architectural expression.

Eco's *Function and Sign: Semiotics of Architecture* challenges Rossi's notion in *An Analogical Architecture* that a building's function can change without loss of meaning. For Eco function is the primary meaning denoted by architecture, but

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he does allow the “secondary functions” (the symbolic, the aesthetic, etc.) connoted by architecture to change with the passage of time.

Kevin Lynch’s attempts at the ‘reading’ of the city, supports this view by focusing on the legibility of architectural and urban features, but post-structuralist theorists and ontological thinkers like Juhani Pallasmaa and Henri Lefebvre have contested such views arguing that architecture should not just be perceived as ‘text’ or ‘visual processing’, and that to understand the environment as a visual codified system of meaning is to privilege the eye over the other senses.

Since the symbolic medium in architecture is most commonly understood in the visual realm, we will focus in this realm and focus in its strengths and limitations in this method of experience.

### **Narcissism and Nihilism: the thresholds**

In his book *Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (2005), Pallasmaa identifies two introspective manifestations in the “ocularcentric tradition” in architecture: *narcissism* and *nihilism*, where he argues that the privileging of the eye above the other senses “seems to weaken our capacity for empathy, compassion and participation with the world.”

The narcissistic eye is described as viewing architecture solely as a means of self-expression and as an intellectual-artistic game detached from essential mental and societal connections, whereas the nihilistic eye deliberately advances sensory and mental detachment and alienation.

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If the purpose of this manifestation is to deliberately detach and alienate (and from what specifically?), as Pallamsaa argues, this clearly raises some questions as to why? Like a game of cat-and-mouse, the quest for this ‘truth’ could be an infinite process, but through some observation one could further interpret this as a process of projecting one’s antagonistic mental image on an external medium to create in architecture an image of one’s reflection, like a self-portrait placed in the environment for the purpose of introspection, and perhaps self-admiration and further understanding of oneself.



Narcissus,

Julia Kristeva’s *Tales of Love* (1987), a psychoanalytic assumption on the discourses of love, brings us to

“witness an erotic scene between Narcissus and his double, all woven with impossible embraces, missed kisses, deluded contacts. With the eye, the mouth is the main organ of amorous longing, like the skin that is frustrated by a “thin film of water” that keeps them apart. At last the moment of understanding is at hand.

After many frustrations, Narcissus gathers that he is, actually, in a world of “signs”: “You nod and beckon when I do, your lips, it seems, answer when I am talking though what you say I cannot hear.” The exertion for deciphering leads him to knowledge, to self-knowledge. “He is myself! I feel it, I know myself now.”

Simultaneously, this manifestation perhaps also operates as an annihilating tool where what is symbolized becomes the source of exquisite pleasure and pain as one tries to reaffirm the infinitive mortal nature of self. According to existentialist thought (Sartre and Nietzsche), when we abandon illusions, life is

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revealed as nothing; nothingness is the source of not only absolute freedom but also existential horror and emotional anguish. Nothingness reveals each individual as an isolated being “thrown” into an alien and unresponsive universe, barred forever from knowing why yet required to invent meaning.

### **Self versus Nothing**

Solipsism is the metaphysical belief that one’s self is the only thing that can be known with certainty and verified, and also commonly understood to encompass the belief that only one’s self exists and that ‘existence’ just means being part of one’s own mind/ mental states – all objects, people, etc that one experiences are merely part of one’s own mind: nothing exists. Even if something exists, nothing can be known about it, and even if something could be known about it, knowledge about it cannot be communicated to others. Do architectural expressions have solipsistic characteristics? Are our ‘readings’ of ‘signs and semiotics’ in architectural expressions mere projections from our psychological preconceptions?

According to Kitaro Nishida, every judgement is restricted by the logic of its context, which in turn derives from a broader experiential domain that it cannot explain in its own terms . An empirical judgement, for example, excludes the subject of the experience and its internal logic precludes the consideration of the self. Yet, of course, there can be no empirical data without an experiencing subject; so, the logical place within which empirical judgements are made is within a broader experiential context that assumes the function of the self.

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If that broader context is then made the logical domain for judgements, we have idealism. In turn, according to Nishida, the experiential locus that makes idealist judgements possible cannot be spoken of logically within the domain of idealism. Nishida calls this experiential locus ‘place of absolute nothingness’, the ground of ‘acting-intuiting’, and to bring this analogy into the context of architecture one itches to call it the *site*, the *theatrical platform*, the *thresholds* and the *surfaces* in which we act out by symbolizing our innate faculties of desire using monumental expression as the means.

This region cannot be expressed in any traditional logical form, but is the basis of all logical expression. It is also the ground of value: spiritual, ethical and aesthetic.

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### **Architecture as a Pictorial Narrative**

The feasibility of such a domain as visual semiotics, a speciality purportedly concerned with the investigation of all kinds of meaning conveyed by means of the visual senses, may well be doubted: following one common interpretation, it should be excluded by the structuralist conception according to which form, not substance, is relevant to meaning.

To the extent that pictorial semiotics has been well-advised to turn to perceptual psychology in search of its foundations, we must suppose there to be some general organising principles of monumental expressions and other visually symbolic media, which are relevant to their transmission of meaning. If so, however, it will be necessary to distinguish those domains which are intrinsically visual in organisation, from those in which meanings which are differently constituted are merely secondarily conveyed by visual means.

The real issues of visual semiotics may then turn out to be still, or rather again, those characterised by Gotthold E. Lessing's analysis (according to Goran Sonesson 1988): if language is better adapted to the rendering of temporal succession, while visual representations lend themselves more readily to deployment in space, then how is that visuality and narrativity, as many critics of television and media have suggested, concurrently invade our culture?



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	expression		content	
	Art/Architecture	Linguistics/Music	Art/Architecture	Linguistics/Music
Material/resources	Static visibility	Linguistic system	Everything visual	Everything imaginable
Substance/units	Any resource	Whole texts	"Bodies"	"Actions"
Form/constraints	Spatial deployment, dense syntax	Temporal deployment, discrete syntax	Intended components, contiguous components, one ontological region	Minimal components, abstracted attributes, many ontological regions

Constraints on the arts according to Lessing, as reviewed by Wellbery, analysed in Sonesson 1988

The above diagram is slightly reformulated from Wellbery's review of Lessing's 1984 analysis (for purposes of relating it to architecture) and instead of exclusively referring to material, substance and form, Wellbery includes *resources*, *substance* and *constraints*. *Resources* are what is at hand, *units* are the principles of individuation which in time are actions, and in space are bodies. The *constraints*, eventually, are the rules, principles and regularities of the respective sign systems.

The illustrated divisions between art/architecture and literature/music seem somewhat meaningless in how we perceive and access architectural *expression* and *content* because "bodies" and "actions" are deductively *form* and *function*, and since there is a multiplicity in engaging content through expression it should

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not be limited to the semiotic constraints as demonstrated by Lessing and Wellbery.

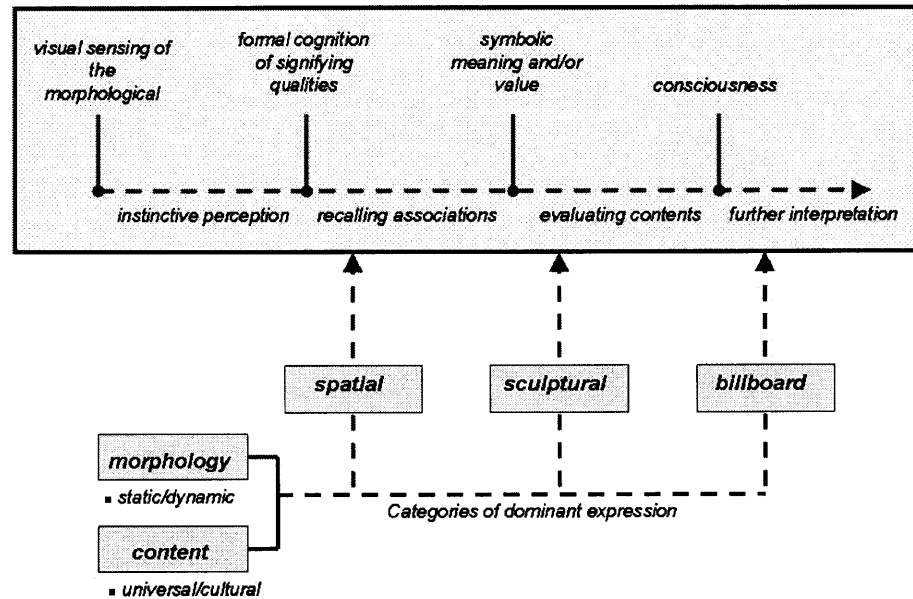
### **The Problem of Music and Meaning**

Suzanne Langer's symbol aspect, implying a distinction between what we perceive as happening in the music (the statement and development of themes, for example), and the effects that these percepts have on us, needs to be explicitly addressed.

The concept that there is an 'idea' and not just a structure or a scene can be illustrated by an example, such as that of a person listening to the second movement of Mozart's piano concerto no. 21 in C major. A few bars of this movement are sufficient to create a very specific mood, which is sustained and amplified through the whole of the movement. Listening to it being played, the dominant impression is of how well the musical choices made by the composer fit into the whole situation in this regard, the choices made having the appearance of being both appropriate and near optimal.

Perception of music is not 'mere perception' but perception allied to the presence of a different, more fundamental system.

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### Method of Analysis

Using the Gestalt System the perception process is generally based on its key properties i.e. emergence, reification, multistability, and invariance by employing the following, step-by-step:

1. Visual sensing of the morphological to propel instinctive perception
2. Formal cognition of signifying qualities to propel the recalling of associations
3. Symbolic meaning and/ or value to propel the re-evaluation of contents
4. An arrival at a level of consciousness and/ or understanding which is limited and open to further interpretation

Where the Gestalt System is a complete cycle at invariance, the analysis provides for variance based in the premise that perception processes are open to further interpretation

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In monumental architecture *the sculptural, the spatial and the billboard* as categories of dominant expressions are the instrumental components to engage the self with the “other” in its environment and also as means to critique the self. Using the semiotic and hermeneutic approach and through interpretative attempts the analysis of architectural contexts to be discussed in this chapter intends to distinguish between the following categories in monumental expression: *the sculptural, the spatial and the billboard*.

In doing so it hopes to show the power of site in its urban and cultural context in relation to the spiritual and political ethos, the visual expression of architecture is a mass of collective and constitutive ideas of a socio-cultural contexts, and through how through popular and consumer culture architectural expressions become obsessively symbolic and monumental.

The analysis will also look at the orientation of forms within their spatial framework and their relationship with the spiritual and political ethos, including the use of scale as a device for the expression of dominance and power or the absence of, and concurrently refer to (if deemed to be present) the use of symbolism as a device for the expression of identity in the aesthetic treatment of surfaces and structural elements.

The analysis of the examples which will be employed will be based on SK Langer’s *Symbolic Logic* where the following will be used for identifying symbolic referents:

- “1. Content: The things or material in a system
2. Form: The way in which the contents are related in a system.

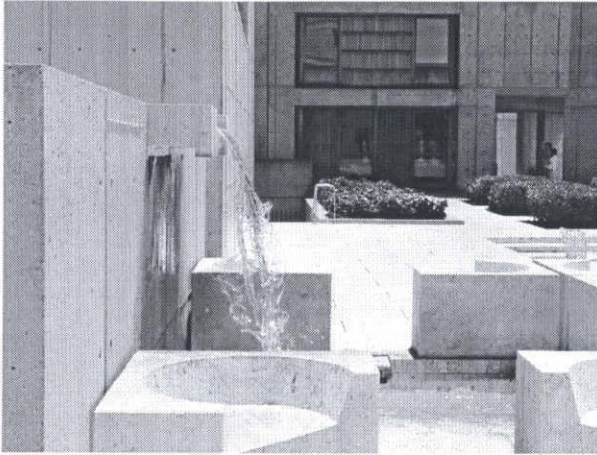
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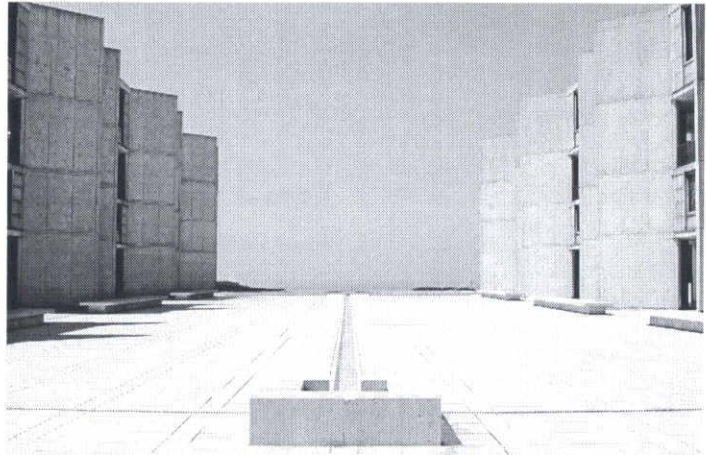
3. Import: The implication of independence of form from direct contents
4. Abstraction: Separating Form from Content, sometimes by discovering analogies.
5. Interpretation: Finding possible Content for Forms”

The examples were selected due each work’s intensity of expression within the categories within which the expressions will be assigned, beginning with *the spatial* category, followed by *the sculptural* and conclusively *the billboard*.

**the spatial**



Salk Institute for  
Biological Studies, La  
Jolla US, 1965, Louis  
Kahn



Barragan said to Kahn that he would not put a tree or blade of grass in the courtyard space of the Salk Institute, that it should be a plaza of stone, not a garden. "I (Kahn) looked at Dr. Salk and he at me and we both felt this was deeply right. Feeling our approval, he added joyously, "If you make this a plaza, you will gain a facade--a facade to the sky."

The Institute is a geometrized clearing in the landscape, and continually references and expresses the landscape - not itself or its designer. Characteristic of Kahn's classical geometric symmetry, the subtle, yet powerful axial expression through flowing water cuts and dominates the courtyard composition as it forces the eye into the horizon, ocean, into the sky and as the eye and flowing water move along the axis simultaneously they separate at the edge, where the eye extends into the ocean while the water drops into a sculpturally celebrated pool.

The focus into the courtyard narrative is framed and supported by the two parallel geometrically rhythmic buildings which reinforce the view to the horizon.





**Hiroshima Peace  
Memorial Park,  
Hiroshima, Japan, 1955,  
Kenzo Tange**

Tange's Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum serves as a magnificent gateway to the its Peace Memorial Park where the architect intended the open area under and through the building to accentuate the memory of the aggressive energy of ground zero (which references to the site's condition after the atom bomb drooped) and also serves as a platform where people should spend energy working for peace.





**Spiral Jetty, Salt Lakes  
Utah US, 1970, Robert  
Smithson**

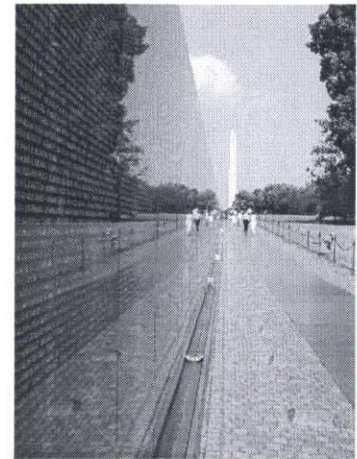
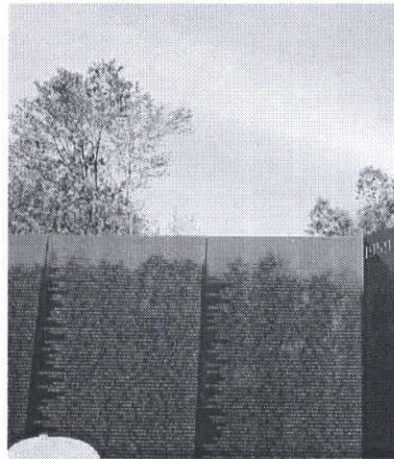


Using black basalt rocks and earth from the site, Smithson's jetty's 457m long and 4.6m wide coil stretches out counterclockwise into the translucent red water. Built during a drought the water level was very low and it was submerged for nearly 30 years when the water level returned to normal shortly after its completion. The cyclical submergence of the work exposes it to severe physical degradation and transformation in colour which in act itself is a grand entropic sculptural expression.

Usually lying a few metres below the surface level of the lake, it occasionally rises to levels of perceptibility in-keeping with the spiral's symbolism of continual change, evolution, infinity and enigma.



**Vietnam Veterans  
Memorial, Washington  
DC, USA, 1982, Maya  
Lin**

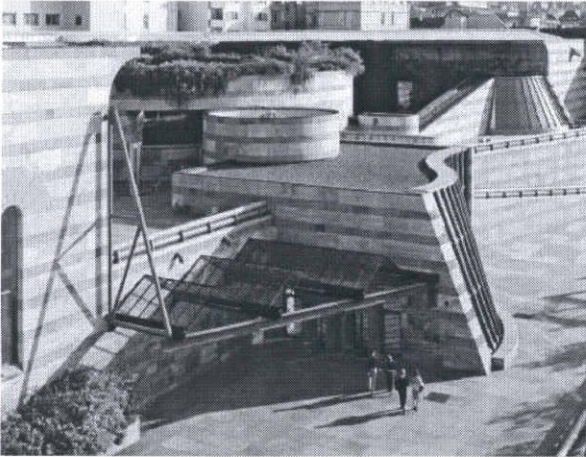


A commemorative linear incision in the landscape, the polished granite reflective surface – which is characteristic of the memorial – extends the reflected park into the wall of the dead. "The Vietnam memorial is a place where something happens within the viewer. It's like reading a book. I purposely had the names etched ragged right on each panel to look like a page from a book," Lin said.

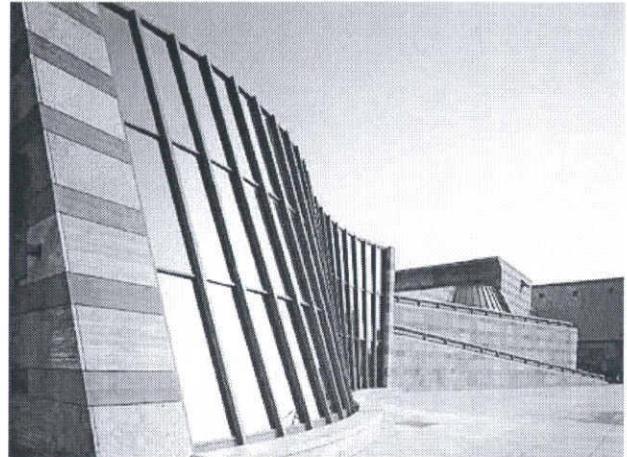
At close range the wall is chronologically filled with countless names of the dead reflecting and absorbing the living passersby, with the sheer volume of names expresses the inevitable consequences of war.

The memorial's emphasis on minimalism makes the horizontal expression powerful and evocative, maximising on the narration of the past at human scale facilitating an engaging and intimate experience. With Washington Monument as a one of the vanishing points, the path is also seemingly charged with patriotic symbolism.



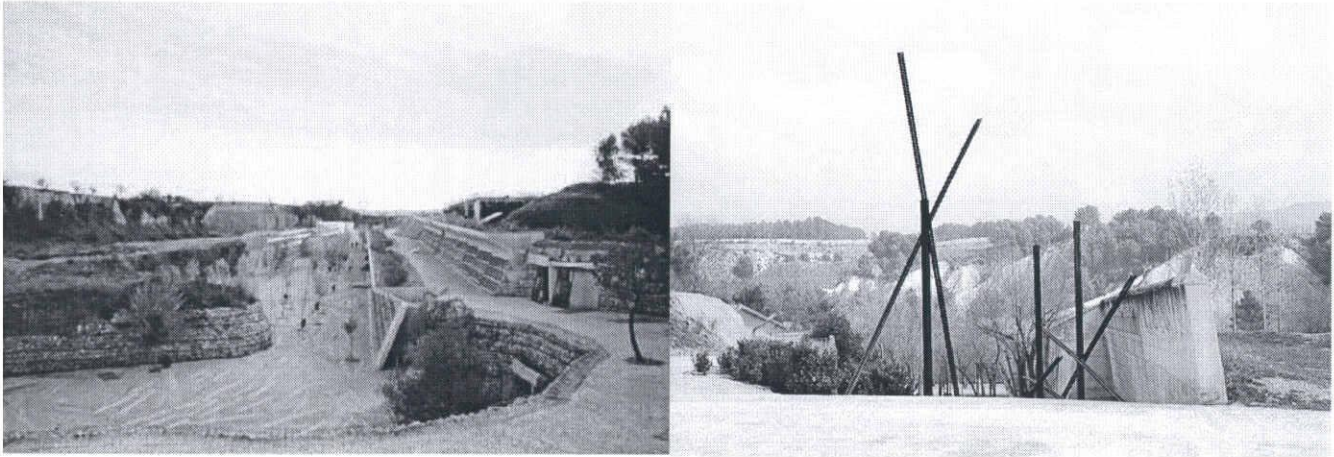


Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart,  
Germany, 1983, James  
Stirling



Described by Rafael Moneo as an architecture of “incidents” “and strong spatial emotions” Stirling was aiming for a building that would be both a monumental civic structure and an informal one, reflecting the evolving role of the Western museum as a place of popular entertainment.

Characterised by sweeping gestures of abruptly cut curvilinear edges, vivid colour at entrances, ramps and movement corridors, the theatrical ensemble is a stage of surprise in the midst of referencing through Romanesque windows and stylized mouldings. These playful and eclectic juxtapositions of traditional elements, along with the more contemporary presence of components in colored metals, result in a spatially dramatic and vibrant setting.



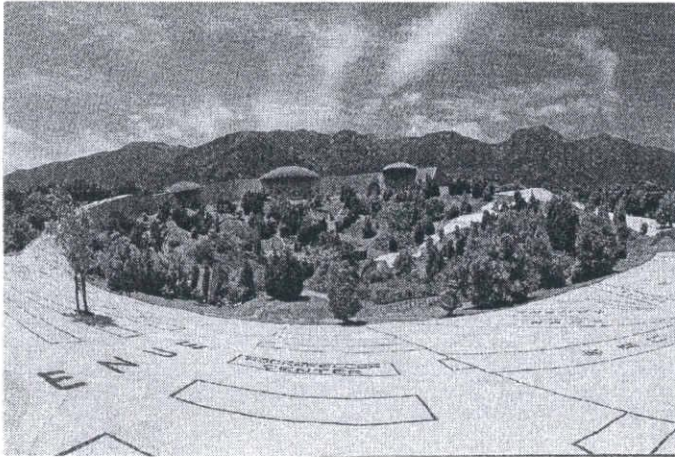
**Igualada Cemetery,  
Barcelona, Spain, 1991,  
Miralles & Pinos**

“To use this place is to make it disappear: like leaves on wooden paving or rain washing soil towards then bottom of the cutting.....But at the end of the construction, the data return: to leave the site in an ascending direction. The progressive occupancy of the cutting by soil and vegetation. And silence as one descends”, said Miralles.

Igualada cemetery is not a ruin proper – neither a natural nor artificial one. What we find here is not the thing itself, but the metaphor of the ruin. This metaphor is befitting to the space of death, for while the ruin functions like an emblem of worldly transience, its archaeological character yet testifies to that which remains or endures. Time is at work here in everything from its volatile topography, through its weathered surfaces, right down to its rusted furnishings. Erosion, subsidence, deterioration, fragmentation, and overgrowth are all visibly promoted.

Passing the threshold of the cemetery the descent along the journey begins and the movement corridors’ curvilinear embankment suggest an echo of the site’s ‘contours.’ The exposed deep clearing evokes references to a space of anticipating burial.





Site of Reversible  
Destiny, Yoro-gun,  
Japan, 1995, Arakawa  
& Gins



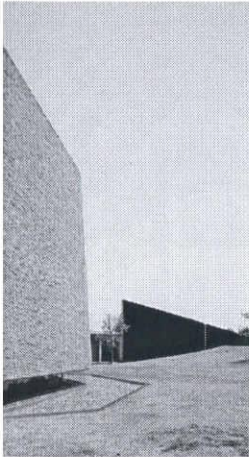
The artists' claim that through extreme physical dislocation, the park conjures a new kind of subject, unfettered by mortality. This architectural work of Arakawa and Gins, overtly employs representations of the labyrinth where the insertion of the unfamiliar propels the encounter between body and object into a state of crisis. This confusion is accomplished in several ways: the labyrinth which cuts through the undulated terrain (acting as a 'dis'organizing device), which in most instances deviates from the horizontal and has the effect of throwing the body off balance.

The iconography of the labyrinth takes over to such an extent that a reformulation of familiarity becomes nearly impossible. The labyrinth, as an image of "otherness", is juxtaposed with the familiarity of the domestic environment. This act of literal juxtaposition stages the problematic relationship between the representational and the procedural as coexistent within a project. The representation of labyrinthine elements undermines the operative qualities of a labyrinthine model in terms of destabilizing and resituating.

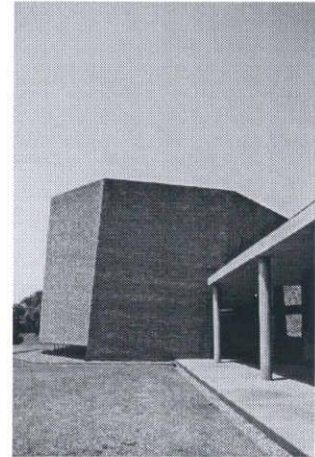
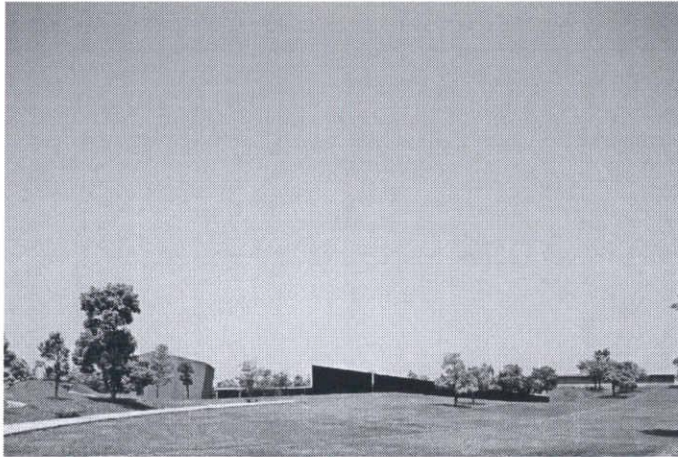


**Museum of Wood,  
Mikata-gun, Japan,  
1997, Tadao Ando**



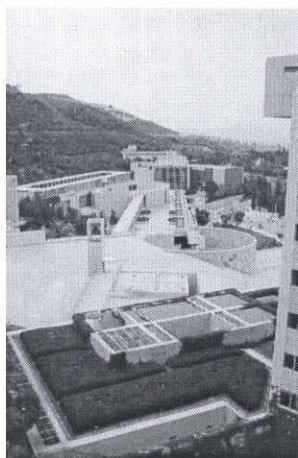


Kaze no Oka  
Crematorium, Japan,  
1997, Fumihiko Maki,



Located in the context of an ancient burial mound the landscape composition of Kaze no Oka Crematorium is characterised by slanting spatial gestures that echo the sinking of rocks into a curvilinear grass plane. Poetically, this treatment of the landscape reinforces the essence of the mound holding the rock-like forms gently sinking into it-an essence of being submerged into a natural plane. The precinct of the crematorium is structured as a fragmented and expansive open space.

Standing in silence each form owns varied volume and location. The wholeness of the building is not achieved by an overall system and geometry but by the air orchestrated by thresholds: varied material and light. Maki humanized abstract space into a memorable place.



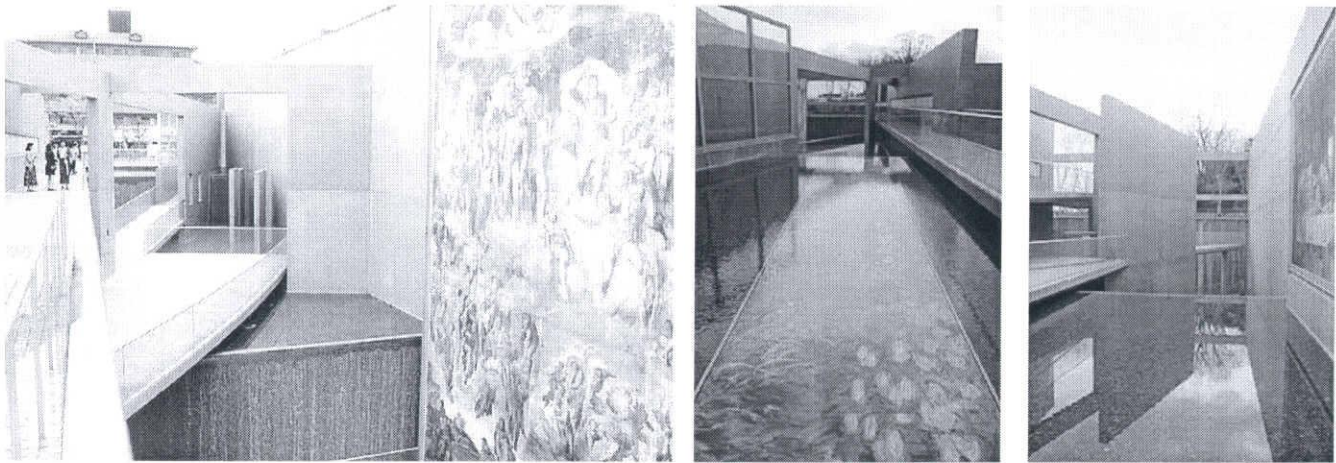
Yumebutai, Awaji  
Island, Japan, 2000,  
Tadao Ando



This rich interweaving spatial experience is constructed through a spatial sequence of interior and exterior, light and shadow, running water and still water and a framing of views to the sky, water and vegetation. The physical materials of these spaces, silky smooth concrete, rough stone, sea shells, translucent and transparent glass, water and vegetation are punctuated by more temporal materials; light sound and smell.

Through its construction this intricate complex of interior and exterior spaces not only serves in reconstructing the landscape that had been destroyed but also, through the idea of rebirth and reconstruction, serves as a memorial to the thousands who had lost their lives and the destruction of land in the massive earthquake that shook the Kobe region in 1995. This is the concept that guided the whole design process, which began with reforestation to bring areas which man had destroyed back to life, both symbolically and effectively.





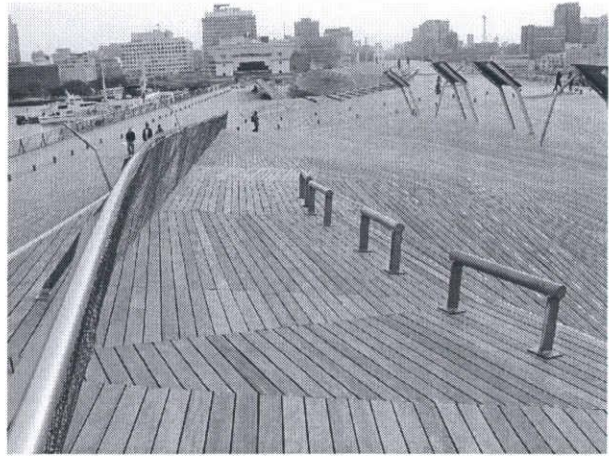
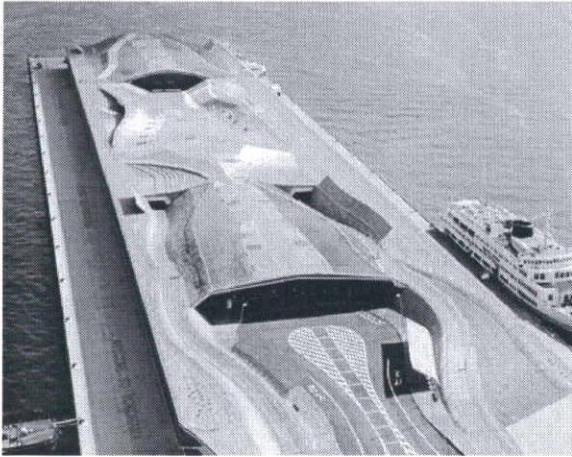
**Garden of Fine Arts,  
Kyoto, Japan, 2002,  
Tadao Ando**

Ando's project was conceived as a contemporary, volumetric version of a stroll garden. The scheme is open; large concrete beams on massive pillars, overlapping bridges and ramps, walls of cascading water and pools with paintings floating on the water surface.

Circulation is intersected by massive concrete walls, allowing views from different angles, and adding depth and variety to the exhibition spaces.

The greenish glass railing, in contrast to the concrete and stone surfaces, interact with the water surface reflecting the different materials.

The open-air Fine Arts Museum is situated below ground level to keep the view from the adjacent Botanical Gardens towards the Higashiyama mountains intact. The museum displays reproductions of famous masterpieces on ceramic plates with permanent, weatherproof properties.



**Yokohama  
International Port  
Terminal, Japan, 2002,  
Foreign Office  
Architects**

As a monumental extension of the urban ground, and constructed as a systematic transformation of the lines of the circulation diagram into a folded surface, Yokohama International Port Terminal is characterised by curvilinear spatial gestures that echo the undulation of waves. The precinct of the pier is thus structured as a fluid, uninterrupted and multi-directional public space, rather than a gateway with a commanding and fixed orientation.

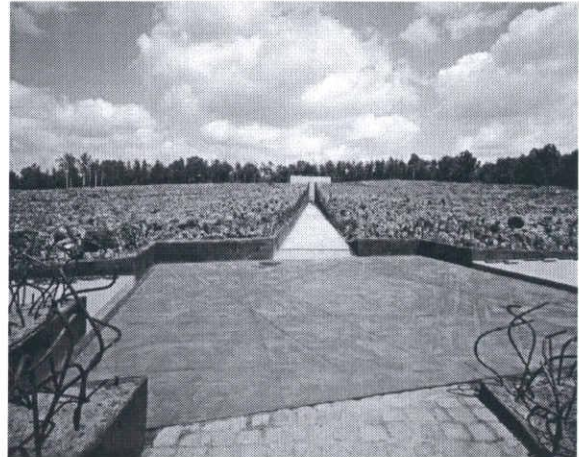
The upper level hovers on the horizon with a continuous surface of grass and wooden walkways that ‘peel up’ for entry to the ferry terminal, shops, restaurants, conferences spaces, exhibition spaces and parking below. A series of ramps and sloped floors create a continuous surface between levels that extends from exterior to interior and interior to exterior.

Poetically, the landscaping not only emulates the movement of waves towards the shore but extends the urban ground towards the sea.





Belzec Memorial, Belzec,  
Poland, 2004, DDJM



Built on a former six-acre Nazi death camp the Belzec Memorial's directional crossroads diagram is low-lying and open and this emphasises the center, the "square". The "square" leads the living down a narrow and sinking path that cuts into the burial ground of mass graves which are covered by different grades of material that represent a black ash burial field. The sequence of movement within the composition forces the living to engage with the haunting quality captured in the negative energy reconstructed through abstract expressionism.

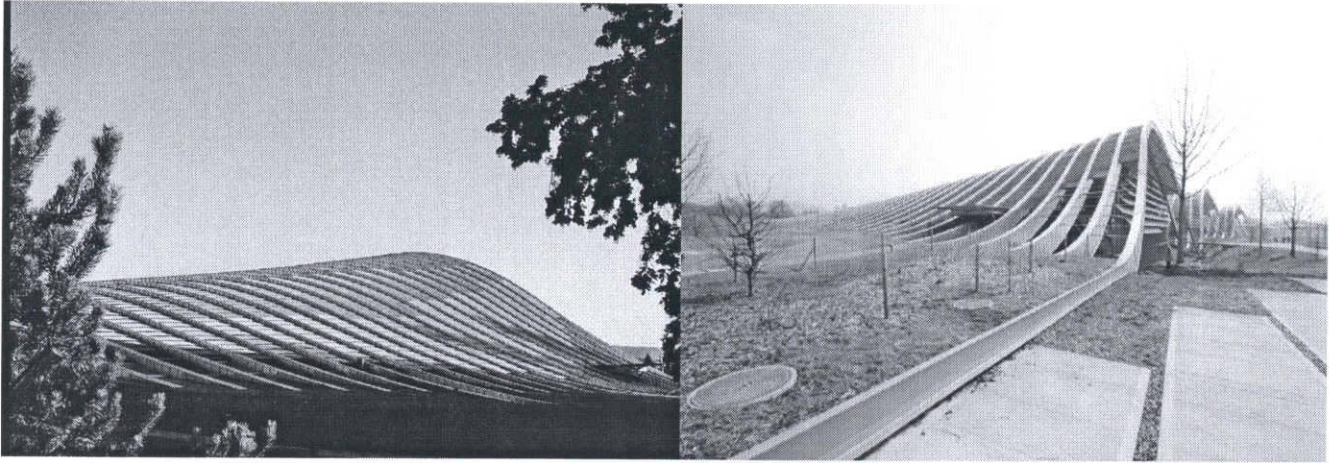


Holocaust Memorial,  
Berlin, Germany, 2005,  
Peter Eisenman

According to Eisenman, the stelae are designed to produce an uneasy, confusing atmosphere, and the whole composition aims to represent a supposedly ordered system that has lost touch with human reason. A 2005 copy of the Foundation for the Memorial's official English tourist pamphlet, however, states that the design represents a radical approach to the traditional concept of a memorial, partly because Eisenman “did not use any symbolism.”

Contrary to the above the stelae have close associations with tomb-like installations which is fitting with the commemorative context in which they are used. Even though the tomb-like installations are bare and void of decorative referencing to memorial or the holocaust, their grouping and layout suggest a cemetery and that in itself subtle yet powerful symbolism. Their varying height produces a slightly undulated rhythm when read as a whole with hints at absence where the pattern is disturbed by voids which is characteristic of Eisenman’s tendency towards decomposition.



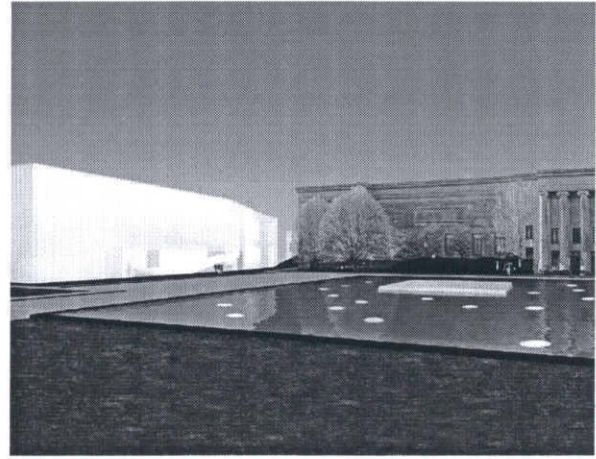
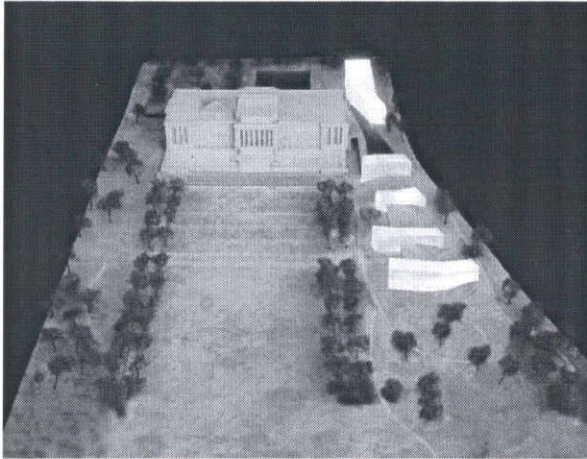


**Zentrum Paul Klee,  
Bern, Switzerland, 2005,  
Renzo Piano**

An undulating steel structure emerges from the landscape as if to echo the hills. “It’s a monument that celebrates the work of a brilliant miniaturist; a fusion of architecture and landscape”, says architectural critic Michael Webb of Piano’s efforts to commemorate the work and spirit of Paul Klee.

From the rear the building appears to gradually grow out of the earth in ribs of undulating steel, and as the ‘wave depth’ deepens towards the front edge the expression is more marked and acquires more sculptural qualities.

The minimalist and elemental attitude adopted with regards to scale, rhythm and form makes the form seem fused with and conceived from its site and void of contrasting potential. With undulation generally equated with curvilinear sensuous form the composition’s horizontal emphasis suggests a sensuous wave in motion, perhaps delight.

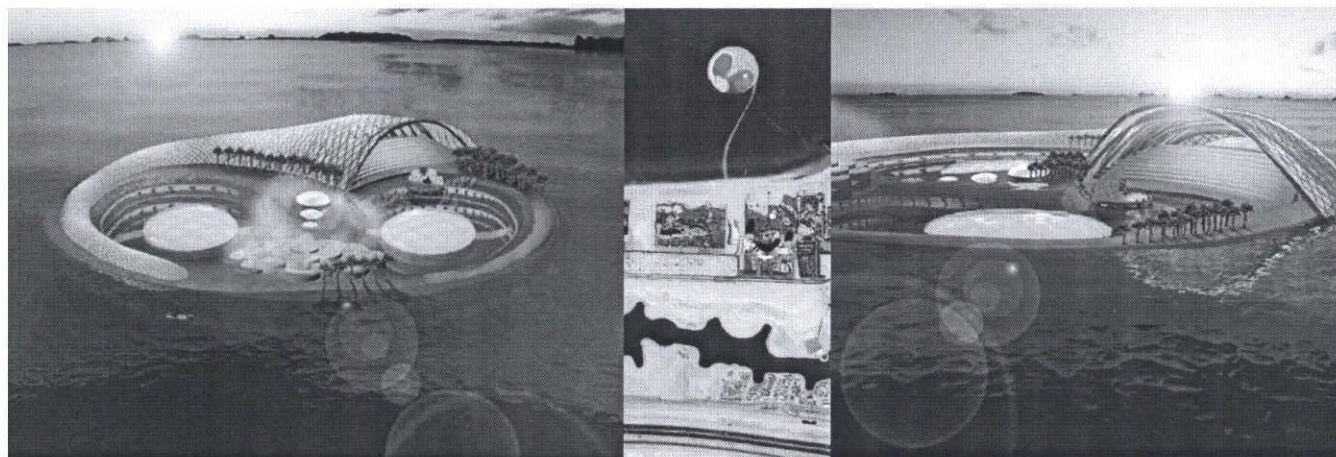


Nelson Atkins Museum,  
Kansas, USA, 2006,  
Steven Holl

Traversing from the existing building across its sculpture park, the five built "lenses" form new spaces and angles of vision, like a "a scatter of lenses fused in the landscape", says Holl. Contrast and variation are main theme in the design. By using different gradations of light in the building, Holl intended to bring a fluttering effect. Echoes of the lantern effect can be found here, includes a string of oversize skylights bulging from the institution's stately lawn, glow like a towering Japanese lantern. Bluish light flows in from the north end, gradation to the warm, yellowish light that flows in from the south end. There are nine different shades of light glowing in the building, and the effect varies depending on the time of day. "The light is working in this building like sound does in music," says Holl, explaining that his concept is like cuts through darkness as sound cuts through silence.

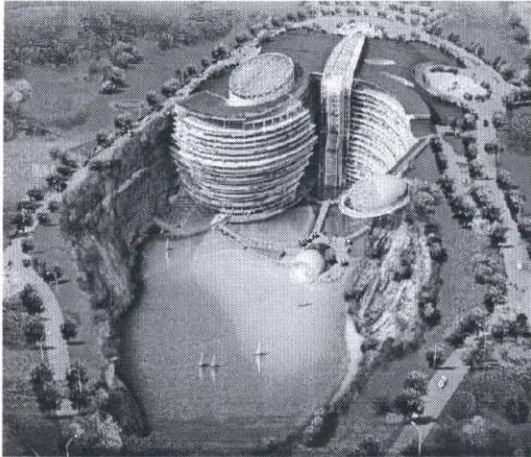
The "meandering" path in the sculpture garden above has its sinuous compliment in open flow through the continuous level of new galleries. Glass lenses bring different qualities of light to the galleries while the sculpture garden's pathways wind through them.



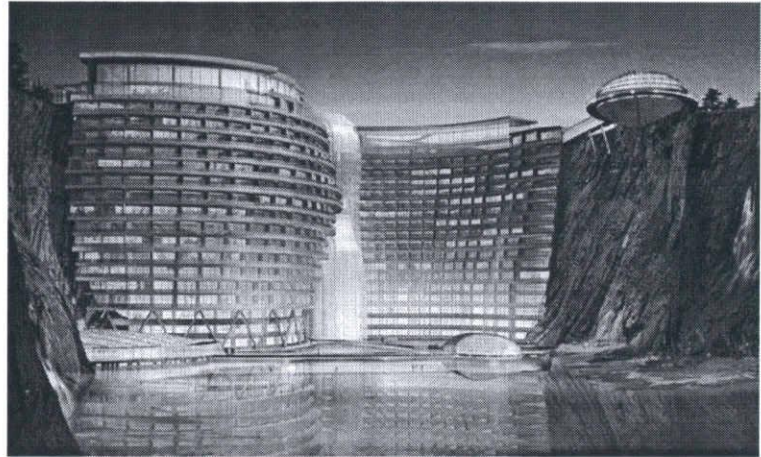


**Hydropolis Underwater  
Hotel, Jumeirah Beach,  
Dubai, due for  
completion 2007,  
Joachim Hauser**

"There have been many visions of colonising the sea - Jules Verne, Jean Gusto and several Japanese architects - but no one has ever managed to realise this dream," says Hauser. "That was the most challenging factor, and that's what makes it so fascinating. Despite being a dream of mankind for centuries, nobody has ever been able to make living underwater possible."



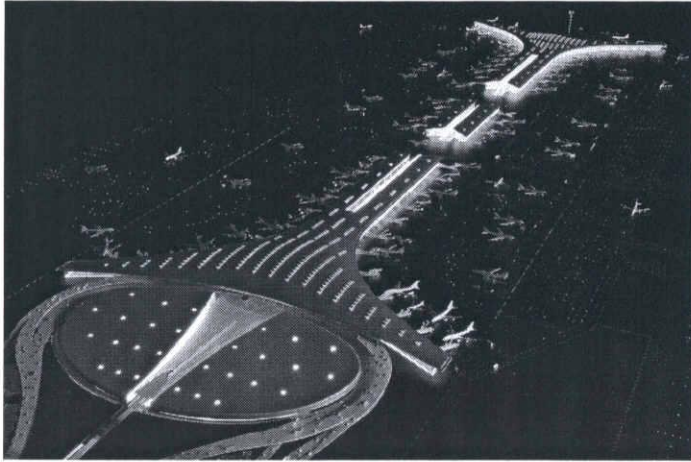
**“Waterworld” Resort  
Hotel, Songjiang,  
China, due for  
completion 200?,  
Atkins Architecture  
Group**



An aquatic theme runs through the design both visually and functionally. Curved wings of the main body of the guestrooms enclose a naturally lit internal atrium, which uses the existing rock face with its waterfalls and green vegetation.

Martin Jochman, who led the design team, says that they drew their inspiration from the quarry setting itself, adopting the image of a green hill cascading down the natural rock face as a series of terraced landscaped hanging gardens. In the centre, they created a transparent glass ‘waterfall’ from a central vertical circulation atrium connecting the quarry base with the ground level. This is meant to replicate the natural waterfalls on the existing quarry face.

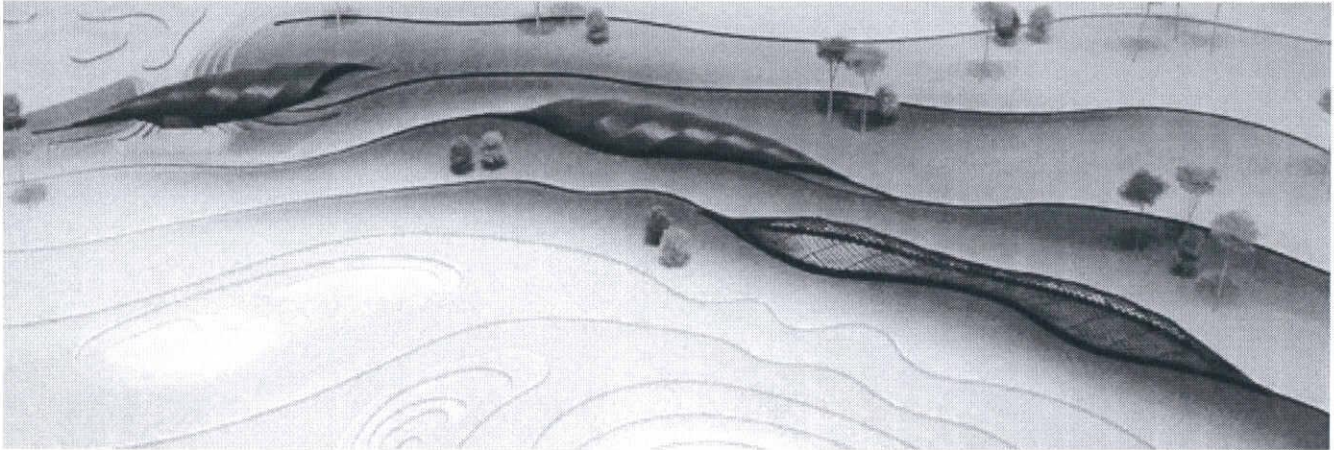




**Beijing International  
Airport, Beijing, China,  
due for completion 2007,  
Norman Foster**



Said to be an abstract expression of a dragon, Foster's design for the new Beijing International Airport is characterized by a soaring aerodynamic roof which reflects the poetry of flight, which is a literal reference to a strong mythical figure in Chinese symbols (the dragon.) Tipped to be the largest airport in the world after completion its sheer scale will perhaps be an overwhelming gateway expression to mark the entrance into Beijing for the 2008 Olympics.

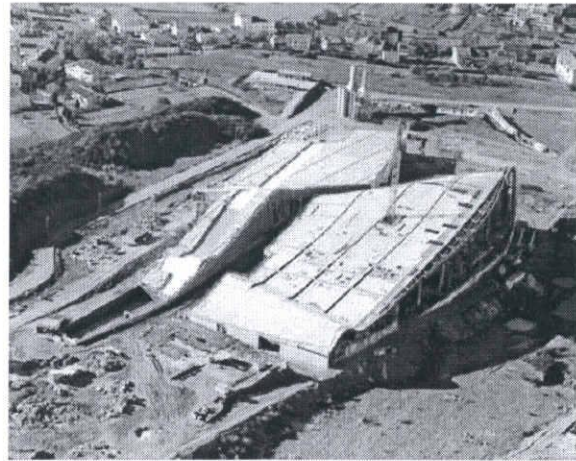
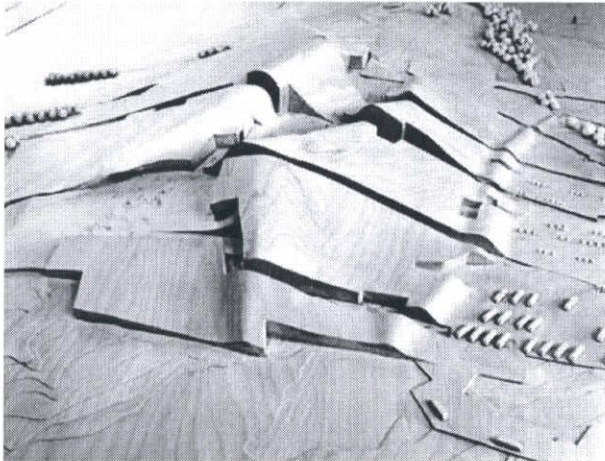


**Relaxation Park,  
Torrevieja, Spain, due  
for completion 2008,  
Toyo Ito**

Toyo Ito's poetic project (the Relaxation Park in Torrevieja) is designed as a spa and has been landscaped to "to mimic gently sloping sand dunes in which three shell-shaped structures have been embedded."

The structures house a restaurant, an information center, and an open-air pool and the basis of their forms are cocoon-like spiral frames that weave together the main structural elements: steel rods and timber joists that are then clad in plywood in certain areas. The result is a soft exoskeleton, with skin and bones alternately exposed and hung floors give the structures added rigidity.





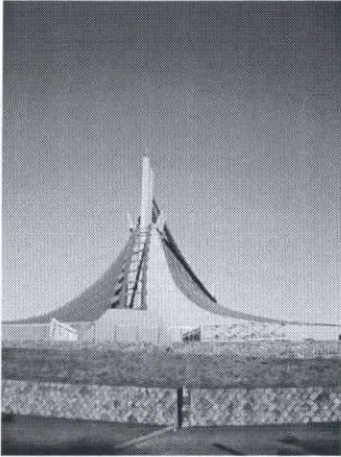
City of Culture of  
Galicia, Santiago de  
Compostella, Spain, due  
2011, Peter Eisenman

Eisenman's design evolves from the superposition of three sets of information.

First, the street plan of the medieval center of Santiago is overlaid on a topographic map of the hillside site (which overlooks the city). Second, a modern Cartesian grid is laid over these medieval routes.

Third, through computer modelling software, the topography of the hillside is allowed to distort the two flat geometries, thus generating a topological surface that repositions old and new in a simultaneous matrix "never before seen."

**the sculptural**

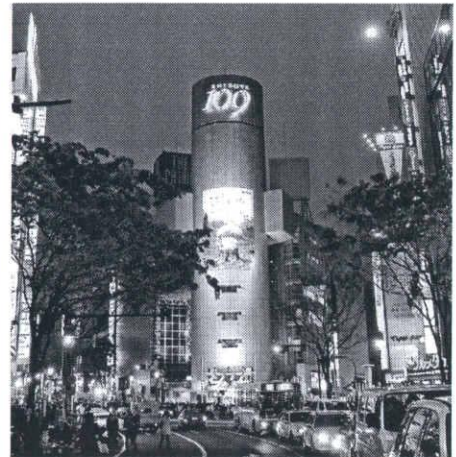


**National Yoyogi  
Gymnasium, Tokyo,  
Japan, 1964, Kenzo  
Tange**



Built for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics (which recognised the entry of the revitalised post-war Japan onto the world stage) the complex is often referred to by critics as a structure that symbolises Japanese architectural modernism. "The National Gymnasium for the Tokyo Olympics of 1964 was a magnificent product of twentieth century structural technology, as well as a bold and original conception of space. It is one of the landmarks of modern architectural history and assured the highest international reputation for Tange", said Fumihiko Maki.

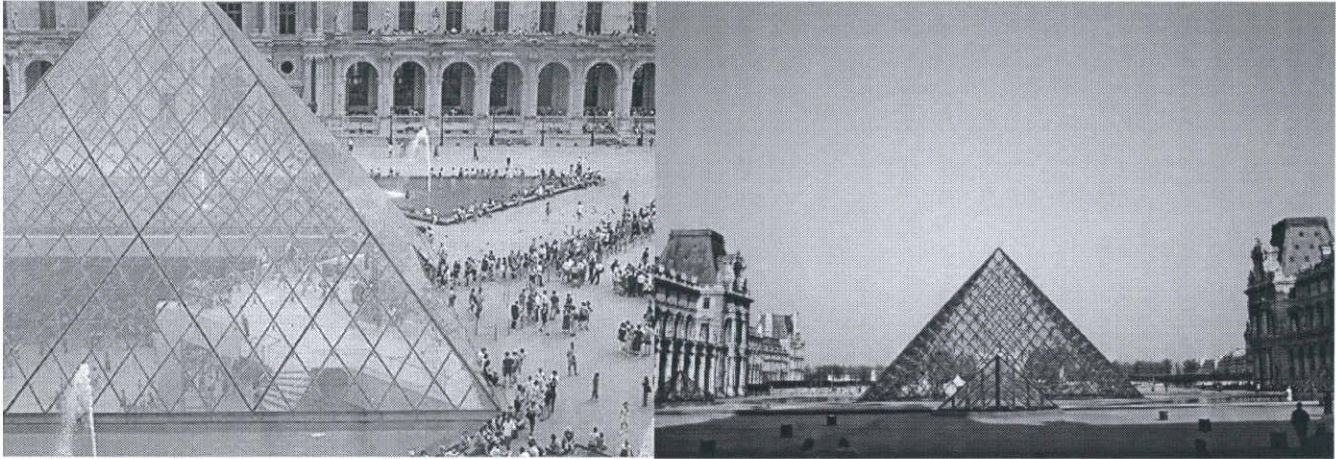




Shibuya 109, Tokyo,  
Japan, 1964, Takeyama  
Minoru

Characterised by a cylindrical towering landmark, the entrance edge acts as a curved advertisement face to the busy street. The slight setback of the of the building from the cylinder creates a void that emphasizes the tower as an independent form.

The metallic surface accentuates the form of the cylinder at night creating shadows against the shiny façade. The volumetric interplay of geometric forms is subtle, giving emphasis to the cylinder as the dominating form



**La Pyramide du Louvre,  
Paris, France, 1986, IM  
Pei**

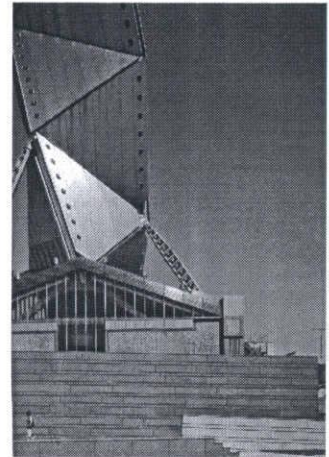
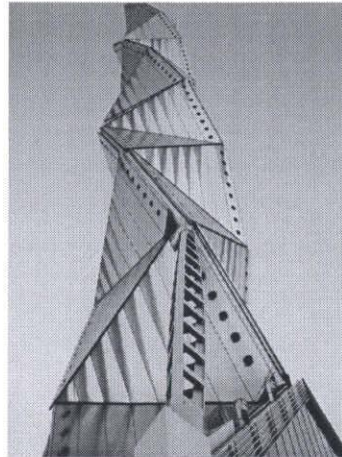
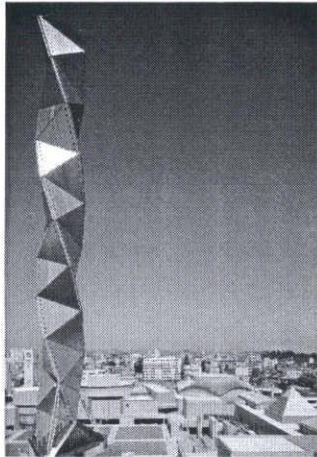
This expression uses and relies on form itself as the thematic device.

Characterised by the dominating form of the centralised transparent pyramid, the courtyard of the Louvre is obliged to transfix the eye on the sculptural expression of a particularly contrasting high-tech geometry against a platform of antiquity.

Demarcating the entrance into the Louvre, the lightness and transparency of the form is symbolic of nakedness, penetration and openness as it contrasts with heaviness and concealing surfaces of the Louvre.

The iconographic pyramid celebrates both courtyard and entry into the museum, it sits as a monumental artistic expression that refers to itself just as the artworks the museum houses.



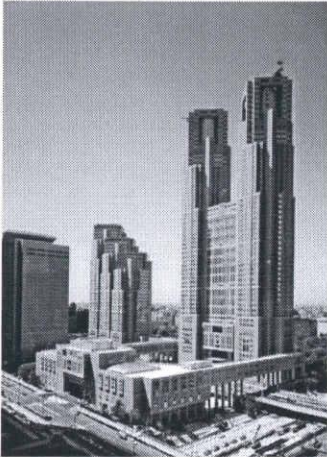


Mito Art Tower, Mito,  
Japan, 1990, Arata  
Isozaki,

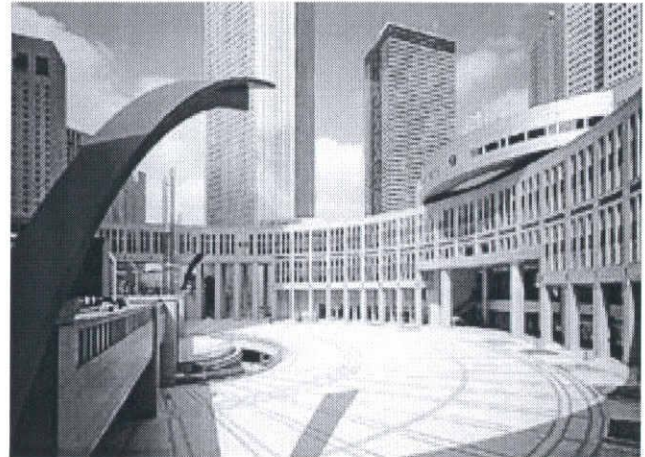
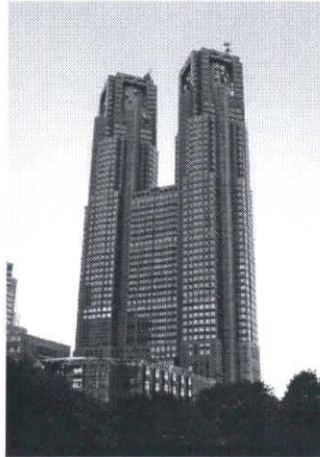
Twisting into the sky and soaring above the low-lying galleries the dynamic vertical expression recalls the zigzag geometry of Art Deco. Said to commemorate Mito's centennial as an official city, the tower is 100m high, and conceptually executed to demonstrate“ abstract pieces of sculpture rendered geometrically”.

The emphasis on sculptural expression is accentuated through the pierced and patterned reflective metallic surface. Heroic in its enormous twisting form it appears that it could be moving, drilling into the sky.





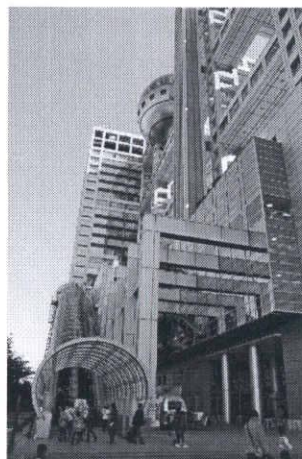
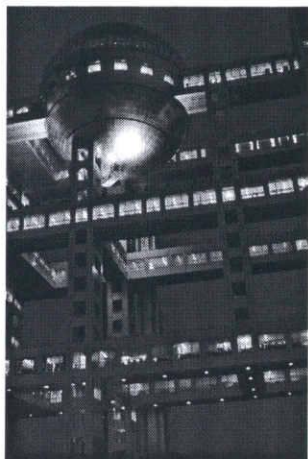
**Tokyo Metropolitan  
Government, Tokyo,  
Japan, 1991, Kenzo  
Tange**



This expression maximizes on scale and geometric manipulation of the distinctive two-tower split to mark the end of the vertical slab.

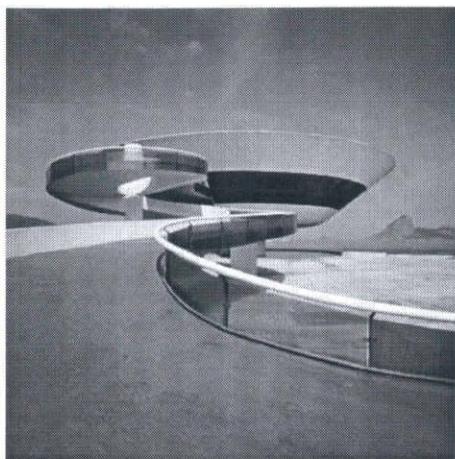
A sculptural yet spatial composition is set up by the towering glazed vertical component against the curved concrete horizontal form. Characterised by Corbusian sculptural expansiveness the enormous scale of the high-rise component of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government building is symbolic of the city's economic power through its demonstrative statement as an autonomous entity from Japanese bureaucraticism.

What is considered as its most notably distinctive sculptural quality is the symmetrical two tower split of the high-rise component which is often said to have similarity with the Gothic cathedral.



**Fuji-Sankei  
Communications Group  
Headquarters, Tokyo,  
Japan, 1996, Kenzo  
Tange**





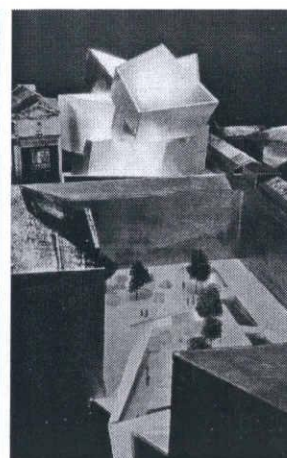
**Niteroi Contemporary  
Art Museum, Niteroi,  
Brazil, 1996, Oscar  
Niemeyer**



The form of the museum appears to suggest a flying saucer, seemingly poised for take-off on the edge of the water. Cantilevered out from a stout central stalk, the saucer-like volume of the building has an unmistakable iconic presence, its seductive, sci-fi geometry creating a “new landmark for the district.”



Extension to the  
Victoria & Albert  
Museum, London, UK,  
1996 competition  
winner, Daniel  
Libeskind



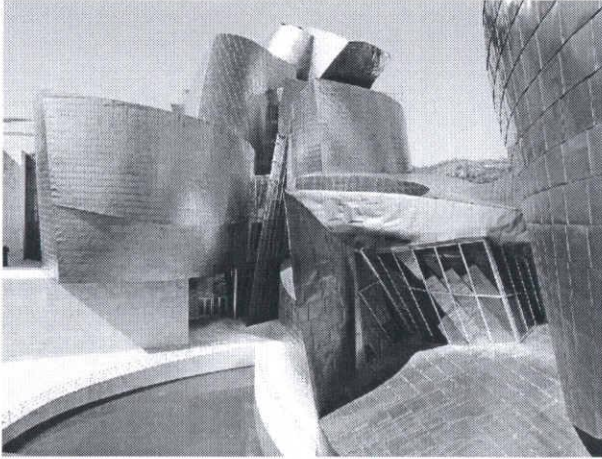
The wall geometries extend the floor plates into a fully three-dimensional experience, an entirely new set of possibilities for contemporary media presentations. The Spiral is a unique structure of twisting boxes. It is not a traditional spiral with a single centre and axis, but a contemporary spiral which opens a plurality of directions along many different trajectories, providing multiple routes, spaces and ambiance for the visitors. The building utilises a simple, continuous, interlocking wall system to create and articulate functions.

Eight years after the Victoria and Albert Museum chose Daniel Libeskind's radical design for a modern extension, the building still exists only on paper.

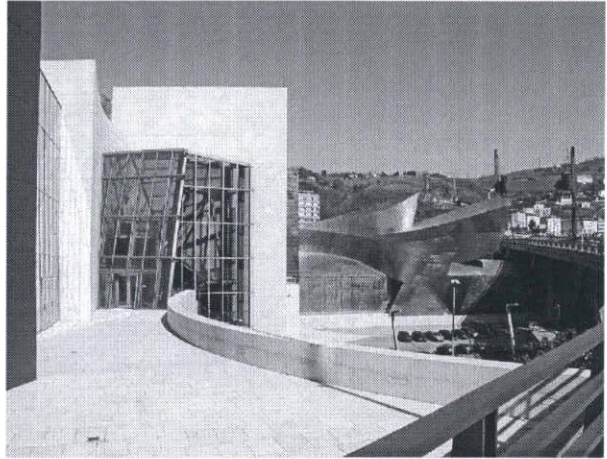
Mark Jones, the museum's director, has fought long and hard for the Libeskind extension, "London badly needs great contemporary architecture. I believe the Spiral would be a symbol of London's pre-eminence in design."

William Rees-Mogg, a former editor of The Times of London, wrote somewhat hyperbolically in 1996 that its construction would be "a disaster for the Victoria and Albert Museum in particular and for civilization in general."



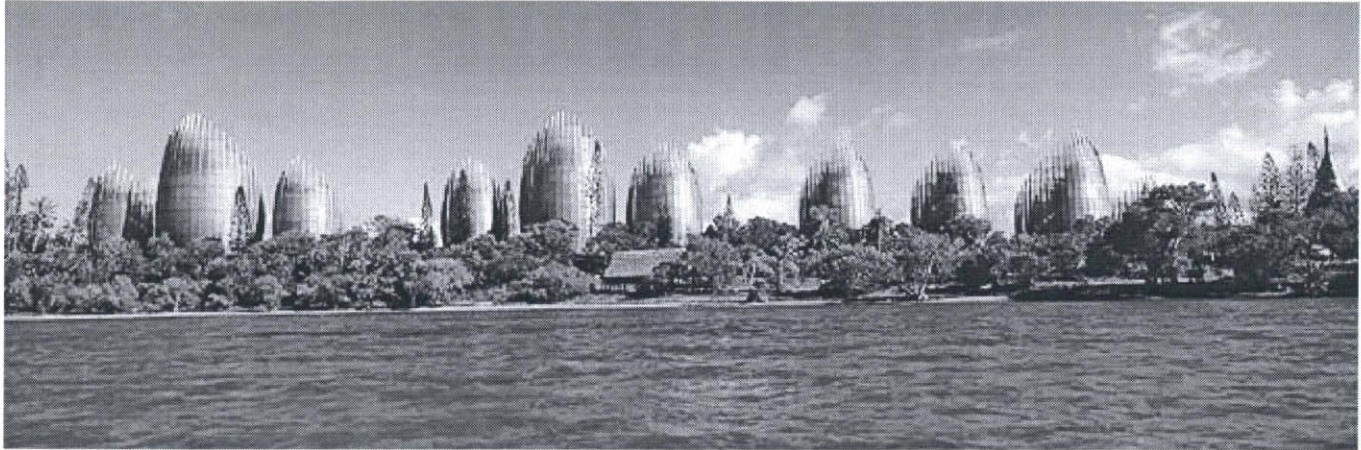


Guggenheim Museum  
Bilbao, Bilbao, Spain,  
1997, Frank O Gehry



According to Rafael Moneo in his comprehension of Gehry, “the Gehry of the Guggenheim models his architecture with absolute freedom. He is aware that he can take all these liberties because he has a technology at his disposal that allows it. He has, little by little, acquired the capacity to build whatever form he may model, and in the Guggenheim and in later works he makes use of the arbitrary as a support for an architecture with a formal world that, you could say, is his own.”

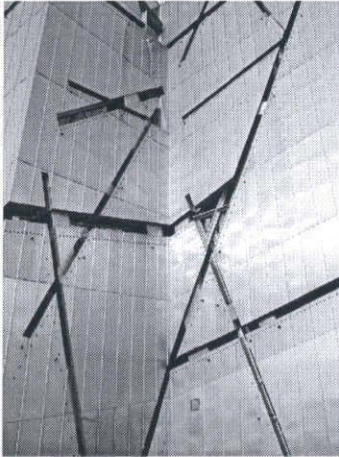
Said to be another personal stamp, the freedom with which Gehry models his architecture is ubiquitous in his work – sweeping reflective surfaces twisting into and against each other at dramatic angles. Reminiscent of Boccioni’s futuristic sculptural expressions volumes of irregular and contorted geometric forms seemingly at conflict with each dominate the formal expression. The sweeping formal gestures emulate movement, dynamism and theatre, it’s as if it is a play and man is the audience.



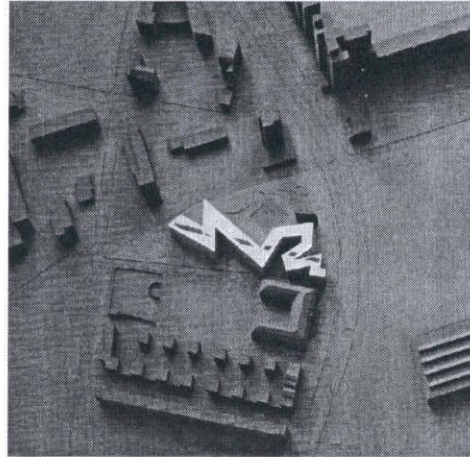
**Jean-Marie Tjibaou  
Cultural Center, New  
Caledonia, 1998, Renzo  
Piano**

Echoing a line of broken egg shells resting on the soft green of vegetation, Piano's composition appears aesthetically majestic between the horizontality of the sky and the sea, but it was not intended to refer to broken egg shells (of which is one's first impression) but to the identity of the Kanak. Reference to their identity is said to be "reinforced through the form of the building but also through its relationship with the natural landscape." The Center itself is similar to that of the villages in which the Kanak tribes live; a series of huts which distinguish the different functions and hierarchies of the tribes and a central alley along which the huts are dispersed.





Jewish Museum, Berlin,  
Germany, 1999, Daniel  
Libeskind

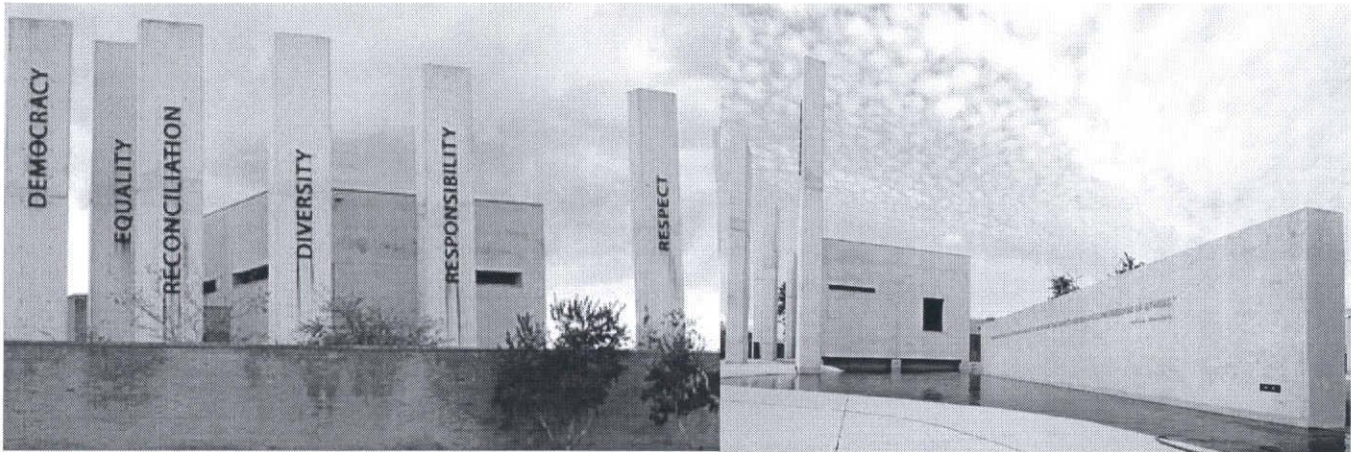


Comparable to the human anguish in Guernica, Libeskind stylizes pain and absence into structural yet theatrical lines symbolising the torturous journey of Jews in Berlin using an impenetrable void that cuts through a “tortured line” and symbolic lines of windows that resemble wounds.

Characterised by the ubiquitous composition of seemingly randomly placed intersecting lines that cut deep through the walls, the thematic concept of the interior “Holocaust void” is made holistic in its echo in the elevations

The void is visible to but cut off from the viewer. It is meant to structure the building like a backbone, furnishing its unfolding curves with a central axis. Through its inaccessibility, the void points to that which is absent, has vanished, but that must still be made present.

Though iconic and inherently sculptural in expression – the characteristic zigzag that establishes the horizontal expression – the interior seems dramatically spatial.

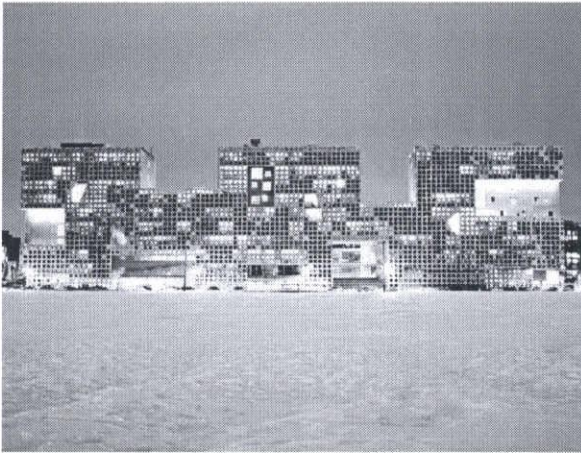


Apartheid Museum,  
Johannesburg, South  
Africa, 2001, Gapp  
Architects, Mashabane  
Rose Architects, Britz  
Roodt Vernootskap and  
Linda Mvusi Architects

Towering vertical elements are a monolithic and literal expression of the seven pillars of South Africa's constitution: freedom, respect, responsibility, diversity, equality, reconciliation and democracy.

The dominating vertical and horizontal expression frame a shallow water feature with a seemingly floating pierced concrete box at the far edge, this spatial play of rectangular geometric forms against each other using water as a pseudo floor-like device recalls Kahn's Satiyo Sangshad building.





**Simmons Hall MIT  
Undergraduate  
Residence, Cambridge,  
Massachusetts, USA,  
2002, Steven Holl**

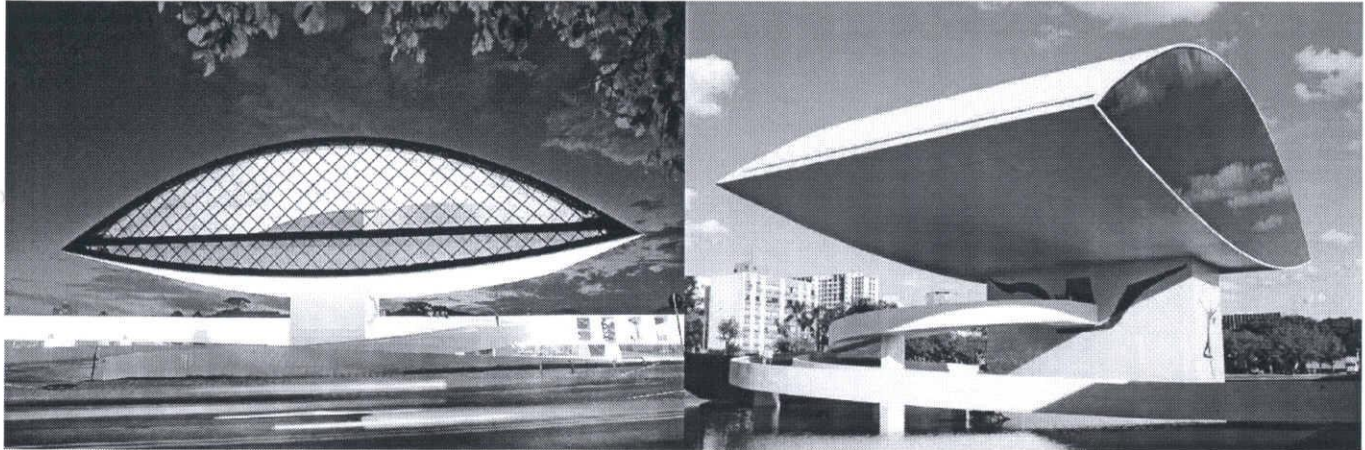


Inspired by the “sponge” concept is Holl’s translation of porosity through form.

Characterised by a playful and rhythmic composition of voids of varying size and depth, this porous treatment of form and façade establishes a playful sculptural expression. Considerably enormous in scale, this porous, punctured, colourful block leans towards an interpretation of a huge Lego-like toy.

The porous quality is also achieved by maximizing on the dappled effect, assigning each story with three rows of windows.

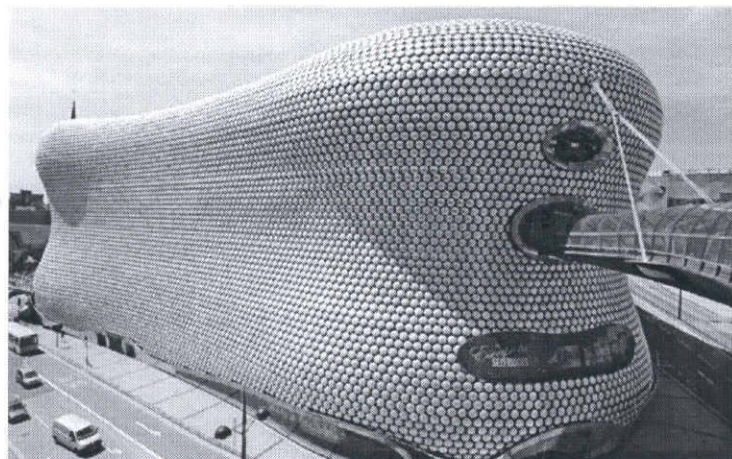
The seemingly random colouring of the deep setting of the numerous openings adds a warm child-like playfulness and excitement to the façade.



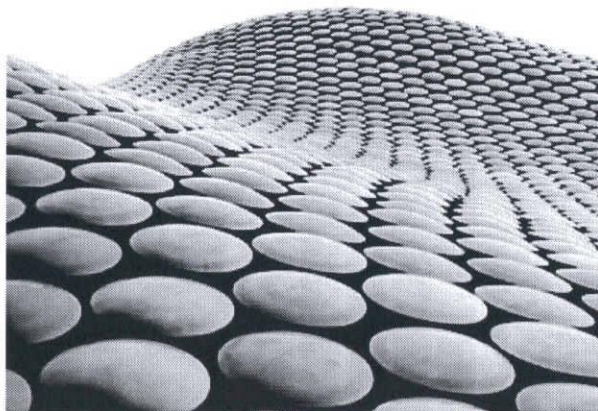
**Museo Oscar Niemeyer,  
Curitiba, Brazil, 2002,  
Oscar Niemeyer**

The Oscar Niemeyer Museum, somewhat a strange, beautiful, powerful, and lyrical composition is characterised by a sweeping coiling ramp that connects one across the pool to the sculptural “eye” into decorated box that supports the museum. The building is sometimes referred to as the "Eye Museum" because of its strong literal reference through form.

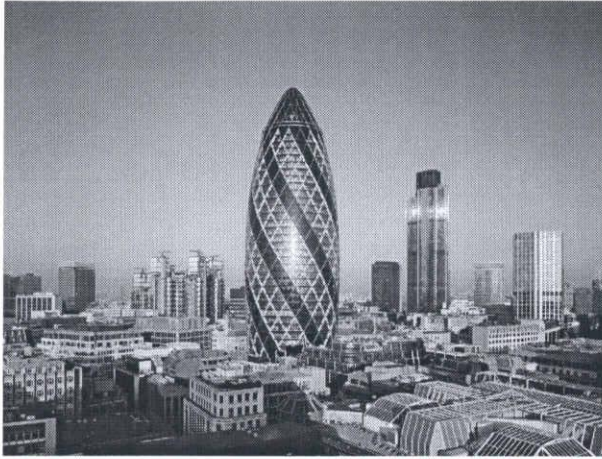




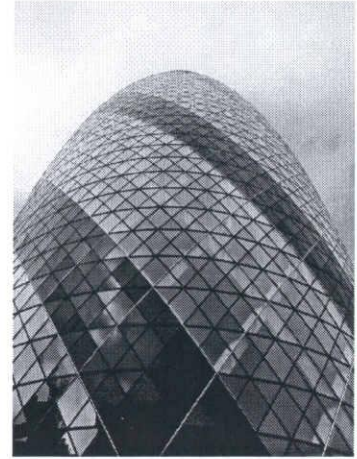
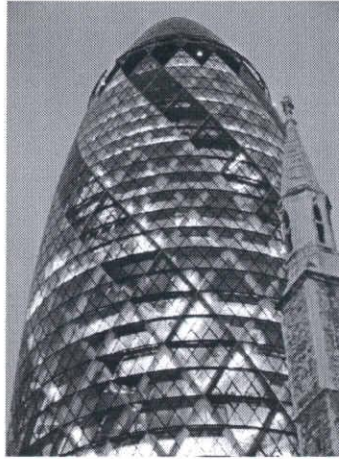
Selfridges, Birmingham,  
UK, 2003, Future  
Systems



The fluidity of shape recalls the fall of fabric on the soft lines of a body, as it rises from the ground and gently billows outwards before being drawn in at a kind of “waistline” to curve out again and over to form the roof, in one continuous movement. The building’s skin is made up of thousands of aluminium discs creating a fine, lustrous grain like the “scales of a snake or the sequins of a Paco Rabanne dress.” In sunlight it shimmers, reflecting minute changes in weather conditions and taking on the colours, light and shapes of people and things passing by - an “animate and breathing form.”

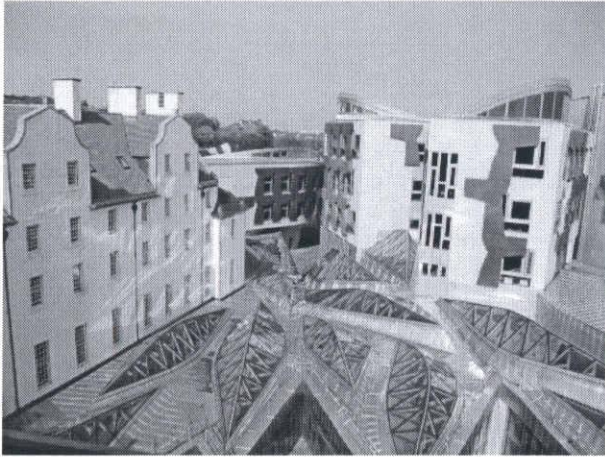


30 St. Mary Axe, Swiss  
Re Headquarters,  
London, UK, 2004,  
Norman Foster

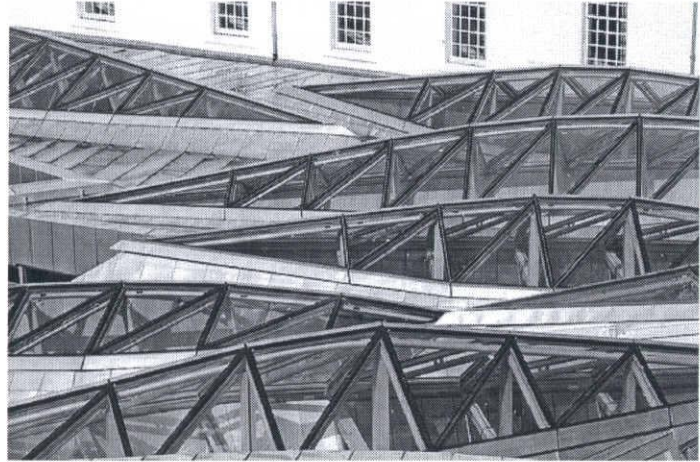


London's Swiss Re Headquarters' towering iconic form has been referred to as phallic thus it has earned the nickname "Erotic Gherkin" but is undoubtedly a fresh reinterpretation of the traditional angular skyscraper. Through its reflective patterned glazing it uses the helix form suggesting continuity as opposed to termination at the tip, and enormous scale as device to express the financial giant's economic prosperity. This sensuous sculptural treatment of form and surface emphasises the building as an artistic object rather than a building.



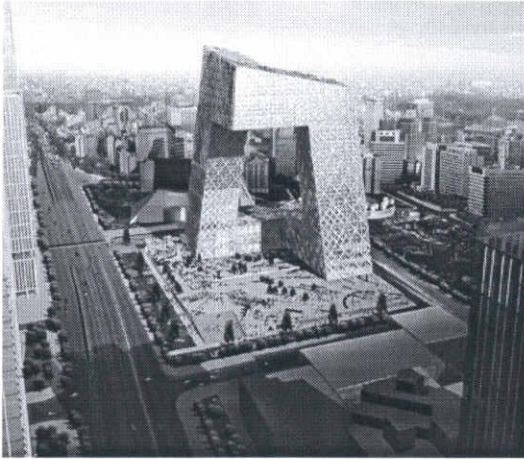


Scottish Parliament,  
Edinburgh, Scotland,  
2004, Enric Miralles

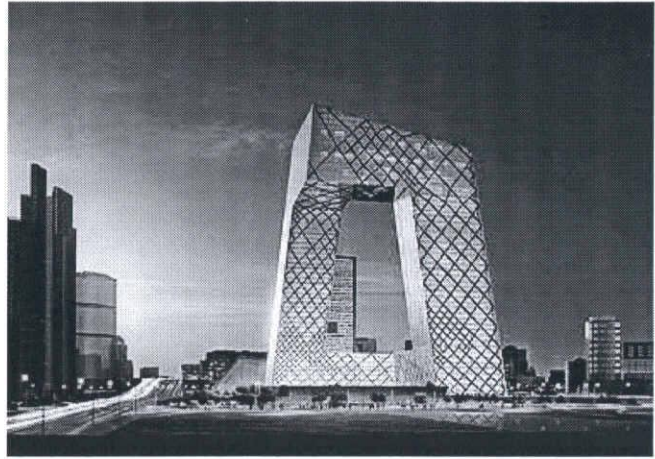


As opposed to symbolising political power over the people of Scotland, Miralles extends his characteristic landscape inspired curvilinear forms that propose the “de-institutionalised, aggregated and organic”. The dynamic leaf-shaped skylights brushing against each other sweep towards the courtyard as they taper their leaf blades, as if in movement from a breeze.

The evocative and dramatic expressions in Miralles’s forms are literally carefully translated which demonstrates an intuitive conviction to truth in formal expression of materials and their formal qualities.



Central Chinese  
Television, Beijing,  
China, due for  
completion 2008, Office  
for Metropolitan  
Architecture

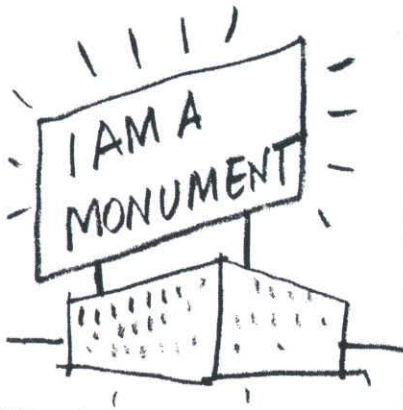


Said to be an iconic configuration of two high-rise buildings Koolhaas's design for the television network represents "a continuous loop of horizontal and vertical sections that establish an urban site rather than point to the sky". The irregular grid on the building's facades is said to be an expression of the forces travelling throughout its structure, recalling the abstract vein-like composition.

Reminiscent of Moore's feminine forms pierced with voids, it is a stylized sculptural expression with a spatial dimension introduced through the enormous void that characterises the composition and the design concept.

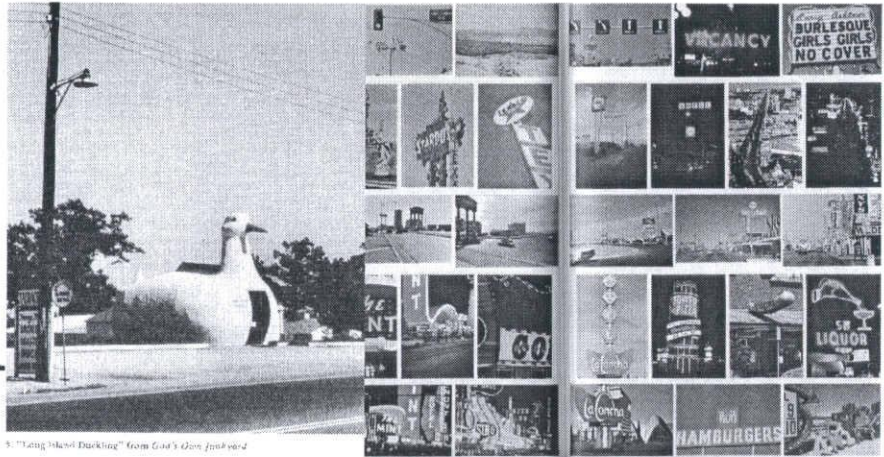
**the billboard**





135. Recommendation for a monument

Robert Venturi's  
*Learning from Las Vegas* 1972

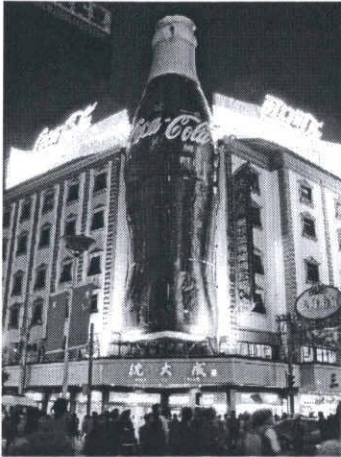


5. "Taking 'Shoo! Ducking' from God's Own piece of land

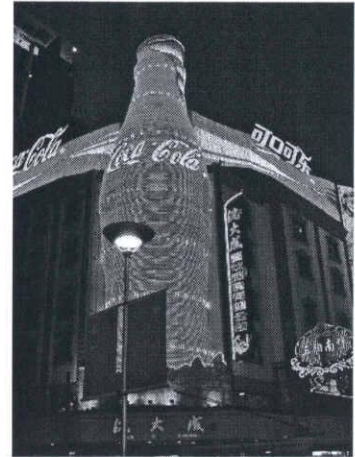
Robert Venturi's "Learning from Las Vegas" as a departure point towards highlighting competitive qualities in billboard expressions.

Where the scale and forms of buildings are secondary to the signs is characteristic of the Las Vegas commercial strip. Fuelled by an excessive consumer culture the signs are the advertisement of the buildings' establishment and the bigger and brighter ones are symbolic of the commercial propaganda that drives this practice in this realm of expression in architecture. The Las Vegas Strip at night is symbolic images in dark, amorphous space – the sky is alive. During the day, it is a different place.





Coca Cola sign on Shen da Cheng building, Nanjing Road, Shanghai, China

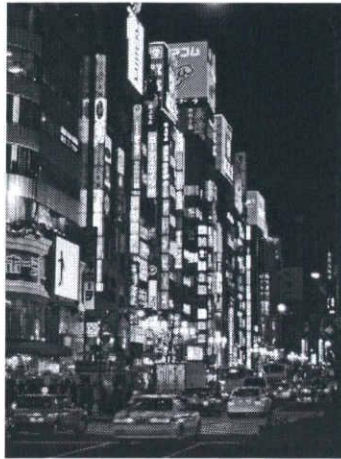


This expression uses a banal existing building as a prop to insert an extremely large advertisement in the shape of the popular commodity, the classic Coca-Cola bottle.

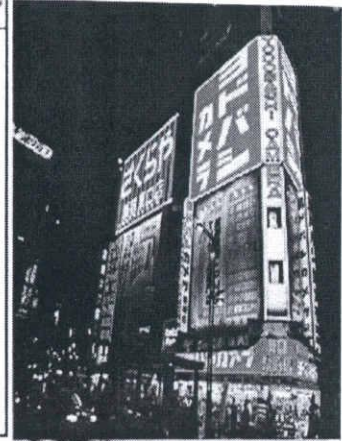
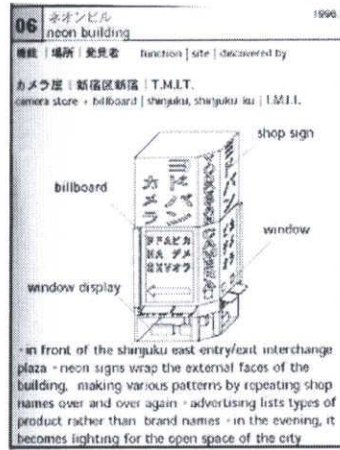
The 'billboard' effect is more of a sculptural application that consumes and bares no relation to the building it uses as a supporting device.

Shanghai's Shen da Cheng building consequently has its corner emphasized by the enormous Coca Cola advertisement that appears to dominate it. As a clever advertising ploy the red and white neon lighting keeps going up and down giving the bottle an appearance of being filled and empty while Nanjing Road pedestrians in perpetual motion are encouraged by the idea of quenching their potential thirst.

By placing itself so strategically it also becomes a landmark, and a source of sculptural illumination for this district.



Shinjuku East Exit  
Plaza, Tokyo, Japan

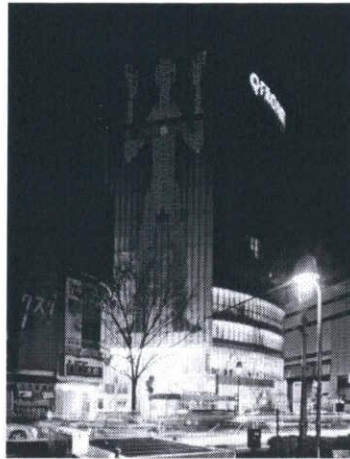


The clipping on of neon signs on facades as a ‘cladding’ device is characteristic of several Tokyo shopping districts but the billboard expression as a street elevation as a whole is more particular to Shinjuku’s east exit interchange plaza.

The expression is characterised by a constant repetition of product types that literally cover the buildings’ facades from above ground floor level, varying in numerous colours and sizes. Others lie perpendicular to the façade to address both oncoming pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Functioning as advertisements they also illuminate the entire street while people in perpetual motion are overwhelmed with an enormous collage of seemingly unending product types.



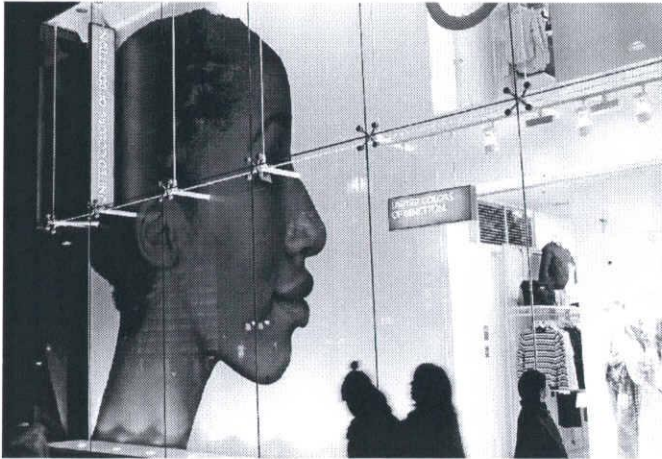


Q Front, Tokyo, Japan,  
1999, Tokyo Research  
Institute of Architecture

Shibuya's Q-Front building demonstrates an improved technological solution of merging the sign with the façade. This type of architectural façadism addresses the demands and clues it gets from a thriving and evolving consumer culture using the moving image which functions as an extension of our bodies.

Shibuya's commercial district, particularly Hachiko Exit, is densely packed with information, and is itself the physical being of contemporary man, an environment enabling man to externalize personal information for communicating with others.

The moving image on the façade thus acts as a symbolic signifier addressing the demands and clues from its cultural context.



United Colours of  
Benetton Harajuku,  
Tokyo, Japan, 2000,  
Kajima Design



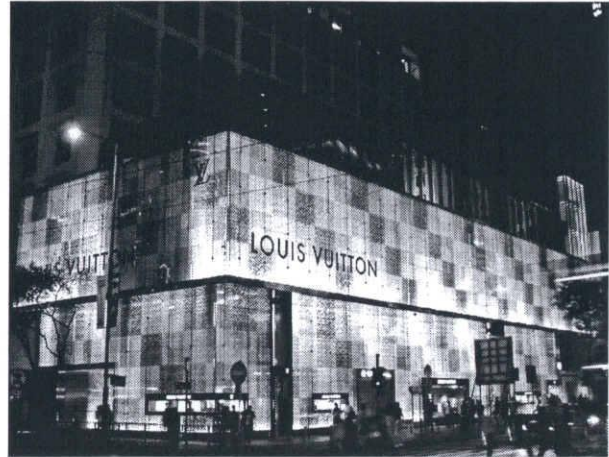
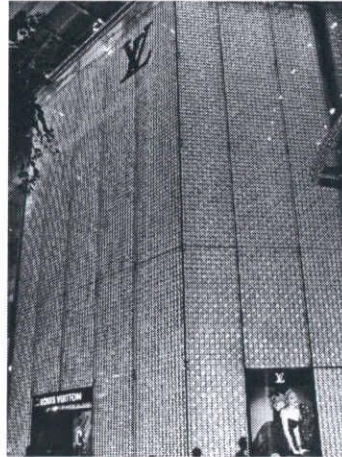
According to Kajima the point of reference for the Benetton store's design was based on the client's "two-pronged marketing strategy" which promotes "social conscience-type corporate image advertising that does not feature product, but the owner's personal philosophy that underpins the concept that the best product advertisement is the display window." In designing the Omotesando building, therefore, the aim was to maximize the latter concept while working in with the streets and enhancing both.

To offset Benetton's "unconventional publicity", the emphasis in all architectural elements embodied in the building was simplicity. The Benetton building has two basements and five above-ground floors. To a height of roughly eight meters, the first and second floors are seen through the trunks of the zelkova trees while simultaneously being clearly visible from the pavements flanking the avenue. The perspective is maximized by the placement of a single display window that is in fact a two-story, transparent façade "The design is in perfect accord with the Benetton concept", says Kajima.



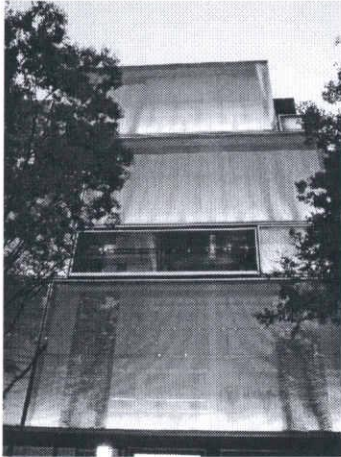


Louis Vuitton Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China, 2001, Peter Marino

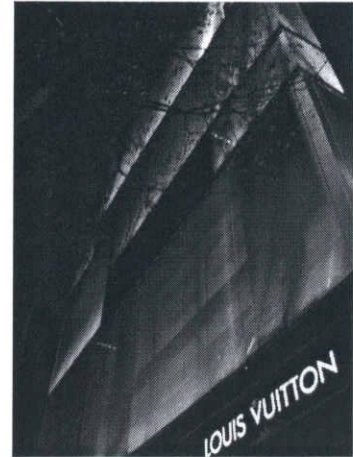


Located in the central district of Hong Kong, Marino's design for the three-story retail luxury boutique resembles a rectangular, semi-transparent box which is illuminated through a varying 'coloured' façade. "Features include an abundance of natural light and a main stair volume which appears to be carved out of a solid block of stone. On the stair, built-in LED panels display video images on each walking surface", he says, as if to extend the LV branding from the building's façade into the interior for continuity of the experience.

Sophisticated elegance that sets a high standard for contemporary design through integration of new technologies and materials towards engaging a new audience for this renewed brand, the jury noted that "they went beyond the effective use of technology by imbedding the technology into the architecture..."



Louis Vuitton  
Omotesando, Tokyo,  
Japan, 2002, Jun Aoki



Aoki's elegant façade composition for LV is characterised by a reflective and transparent staggered assembly identified by squared-off forms differentiated in terms of scale, proportions, finishes and quality of light. His design for the staggered assembly is drawn from the “pilling up trunks” concept which is a literal reference to the designer store's main commercial merchandise.

Known for his sophisticated composition of surfaces, the exterior is double layered with three different kinds of metal mesh fabric and two kinds of polished stainless steel panels; rose and gold. Glass panels with a striped pattern, as the inner layer, give depth to the appearance, while incorporating varying colours when illuminated at night.

By overlaying the silver colour of the metal fabric and rose and gold tint of the back panel, the colour is getting also ambiguous, and losing a sense of materiality. the superimposition of silver over the metal mesh with the gold colour of the steel panels behind combines with the transparency of the glass to create a strong impression of intangibility, and perhaps seduction.



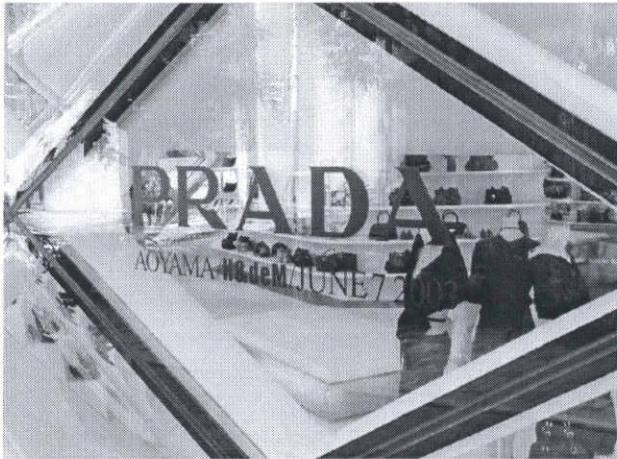


Apple Ginza, Tokyo,  
Japan, 2003, Bohlin  
Cywinski Jackson

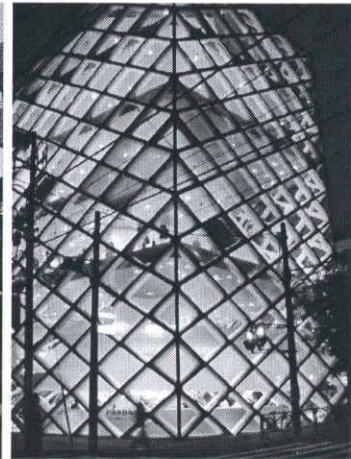
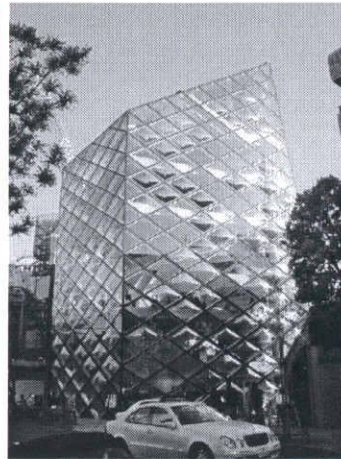


“To establish a strong presence, the new facade is a simple rectilinear form with uniform, clean lines and an elegant material palette. In a neighbourhood full of collaged facades in an incredible array of materials, the Apple building stands out with its minimal design”, says Jackson, but fails to mention any reference to the expression of corporate identity through the façade’s large and dominating logos of the Apple brand (which is characteristic of all the Apple stores of which he is architect.)

The facade uses bead-blasted stainless steel panels at the first three levels. The remaining five floors use an open-joint, glass, rain-screen system in front of floor-to-ceiling sliding glass doors. The double skin employs ceramic-fritted, laminated glass panels with a special interlayer, creating a minimal, elegant external curtain that provides a great contrast to and background for the Apple logo when the façade is illuminated.



Prada Aoyama, Tokyo,  
Japan, 2003, Herzog  
and de Meuron



Prada's Tokyo "epicenter", in the fashionable Aoyama district, is the brand's second radical approach to fashion-store architecture, following Rem Koolhaas's flagship store in New York.

Herzog and de Meuron intended "to reshape both the concept and function of shopping, pleasure and communication, to encourage the meshing of consumption and culture." Characterised by its strong diamond-shaped glass panes, which vary between flat, concave and convex "bubbles" the striking glass crystal appears soft despite its sharp angles as a result of the "bubble" effect on the façades, and the smooth curves throughout its interior and the adjacent courtyard.

The lighting effect at night brings out its sculptural quality, like a light box dressed in a pattern that recalls a fishnet stocking.

The building is strikingly unconventional, and in a context which is fuelled by competitiveness, it is befitting for its purpose as a unique yet seductive sculptural conception.





Dior Omotesando,  
Tokyo, Japan, 2003,  
Kazuyo Sejima & Ryue  
Nishizawa (SANAA)

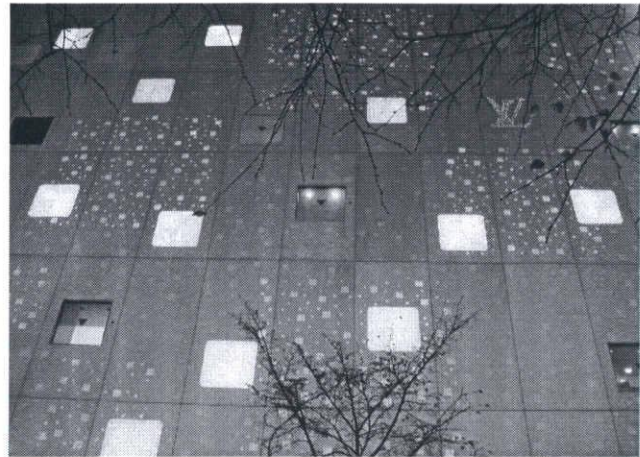
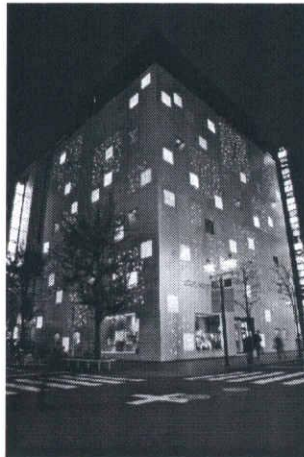


Sejima and Nishizawa's Dior building is a pristine white box with sharp edges and occupies the entire trapezoidal site. "Couture dress, the ultimate beauty in fashion", as the main source of inspiration in is expressed through the dramatic double-skin façade of transparent flat glass on the outside and softly curved, white translucent acrylic panels on the inside which is reminiscent of the "drape of a dress."

White stripes are printed on the acrylic walls so that the "building's appearance changes beautifully" depending on the light during the day and the level of penetration of lighting at night. A few white horizontal aluminium bands further break the continuous volume into several unequal segments while creating bands of luminous contrasts in the dark. This slender white box speaks of an elegant femininity that enables it to stand out effortlessly along the "star-studded" and competitive street.



Louis Vuitton Ginza,  
Tokyo, Japan, 2004 Jun  
Aoki

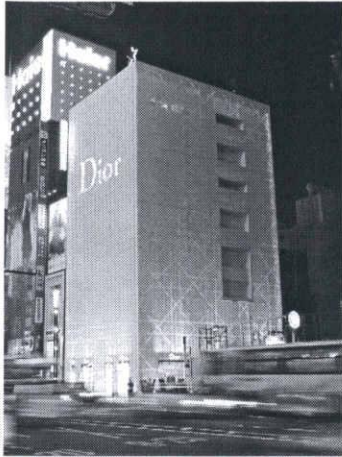


This expression uses artistic rendering of a geometric shape of varying size against opaque plate and glass panels which illuminate to create a starry mood in the dark.

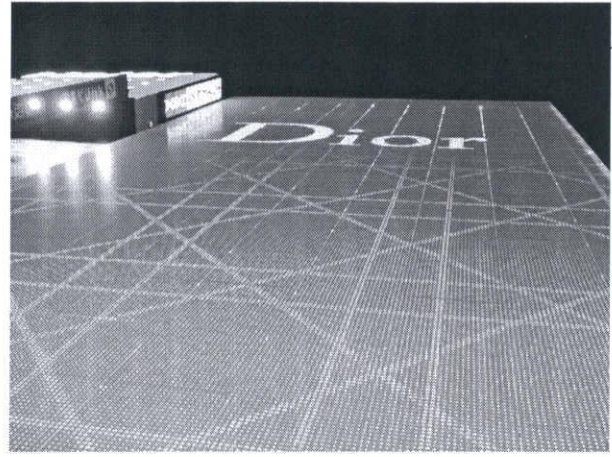
Characterised by beige terrazzo as a backdrop for the playful rendering, LV Ginza's facades are dappled with a speckling effect of squares merging against and within each in a seemingly random fashion, a visual feast of delicate yet mesmerizing lighting effects.

Having both sides to express this random square effect, the building further reads as a square itself, a gift box wrapped in a fancy sheet as it quietly and elegantly addresses passer-bys.





Dior Ginza, Tokyo,  
Japan, 2004, Kumiko  
Inui

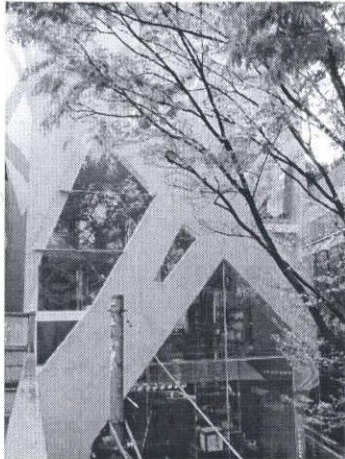


Inui is perhaps best known for her facades—each one a visual pun or optical illusion and in Dior Ginza, she composed the façade out of two overlapping sheets of aluminum, dotting the outer layer with perforations so they replicate the woven pattern of “Thonet’s famous chair that Christian Dior adapted as his signature motif”, says Inui.

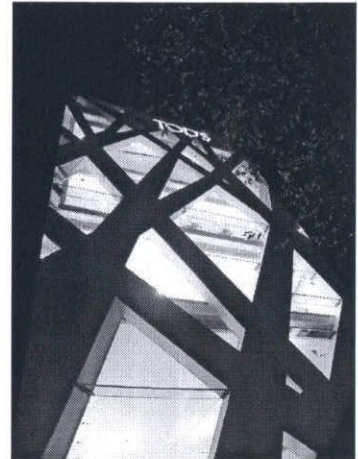
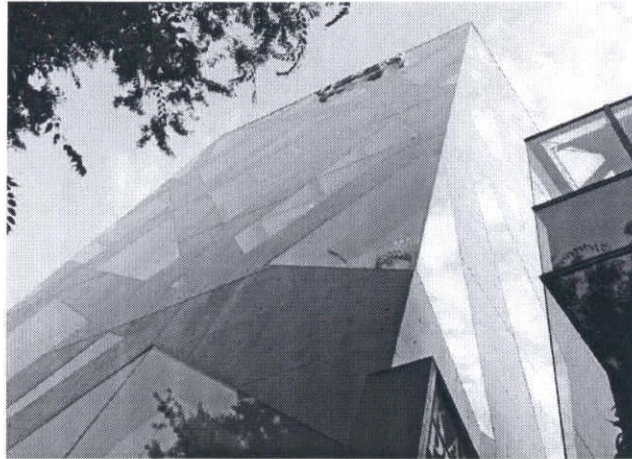
Patterned intersecting lines are slightly illuminated to create the backdrop for the highly illuminated Dior logo, but also give the surface an element that hints and gentle or abstract fragmentation, depending on one’s distance and angle from the façade the luminosity of the patterns change.

The building’s overall luminosity is hinted at and not exaggerated, which brings about a sense of delicateness and elegance, perhaps an attempt of in-keeping with the brand’s identity.





Tod's Omotesando,  
Tokyo, Japan, 2004,  
Toyo Ito

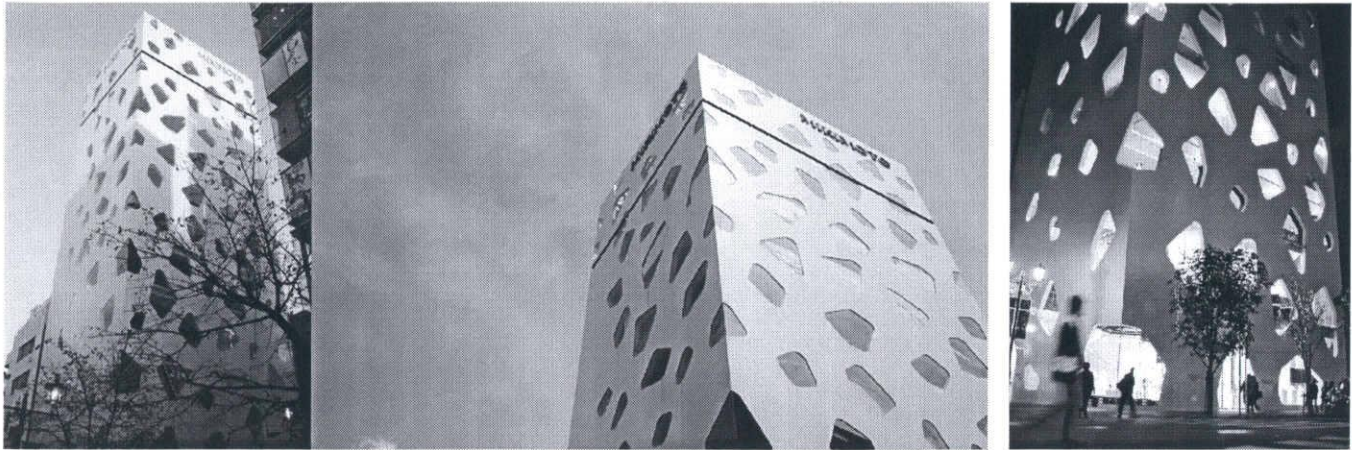


Naturalistic representation and abstract formalisation.

In Tod's Omotesando, the natural element, the tree, appears as an architectural motif with its direct symbolism; these trees, according to Ito, “lose their living materiality and become something neutral and abstract, like a sign”, says Ito. The intertwined series of trees is also important because when a lot of them are superimposed, a networked structural system is generated which has both a structural purpose and one of “social representation, of creating a new symbol for the people.”

While the dramatic vein-like composition mimics the crossing of the branches of trees that line the street if faces while reflecting them, the sky and the surroundings are also absorbed into the reflective surfaces.

A playful expression is achieved with more emphasis in the contrast between the dark vein-like pattern against the luminosity of light that pierces through the glass insets in the evening.



Mikimoto Ginza,  
Tokyo, Japan, 2004,  
Toyo Ito

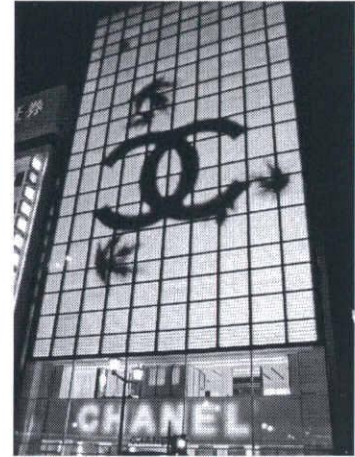
The hard-cornered tower is perforated, like a block of Swiss cheese, with blobby windows that seem to float across the grid-rejecting facade. At first instance, this could be a straightforward sequel to the much-praised Tod's completed just a year before. But while the exterior refers to the façade attitude of Tod's, the Mikimoto venture demonstrates a significant step forward in architectural refinement.

The unusual organic windows that dominate the façade, which have previously been poetically described as "bubbles drifting up from pearl-filled oysters or petals dancing as they scatter", creates an effect that dissolves the standard relationship between windows and floor numbers, distorting the viewer's perception of scale.





Chanel Ginza, Tokyo,  
Japan, 2004, Peter  
Marino

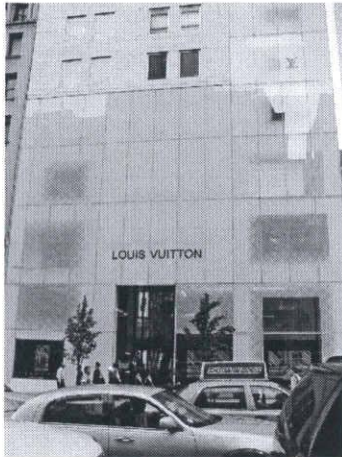


“Functioning as a 21st-century branding billboard, the building is a conceptual rendering of a classic Chanel tweed,” says principal architect Peter Marino.

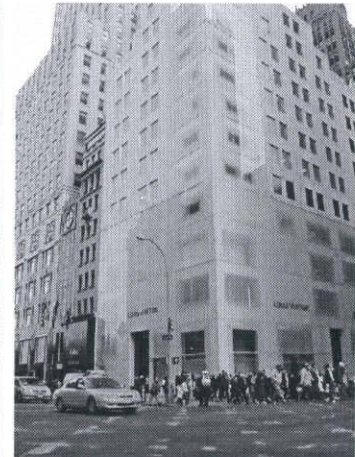
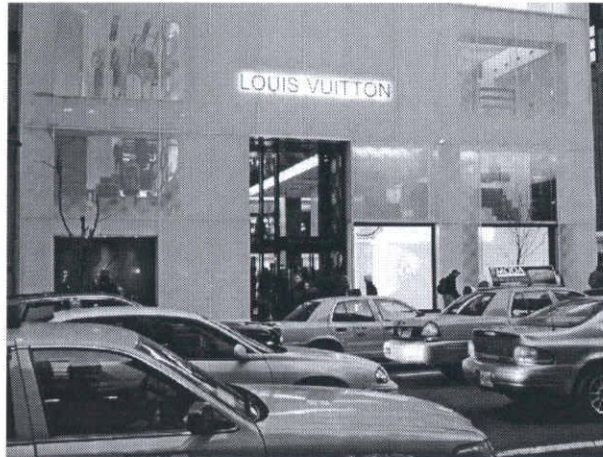
Chanel Ginza is layered with stainless steel in glass to symbolize quilting, an icon of Chanel, and is semi-transparent during the daytime and fully transparent at night. Programmed into the building’s massive LED display, Israeli artist Michal Rovner’s installation generates dreamy images on the façade of the Chanel tweed. Marino says that his “inspiration for creating the massive LED display was the Chanel tweed, which is as iconic as the brand’s logo. In fact, it is part of the fabric of the brand’s DNA.”

Rovner is known for using moving images of the human form as the central element of her artistic themes. The artist notes that “Tweed, Tokyo” and “Tweed, Osaka” reflect the perpetual motion of pedestrians who pass by the boutiques as if filmed from the sky. When animation brings it to life, this vibrant activity succeeds in teasing out pulsating tweed, and fusing the intricacies of architecture, textile, and mathematics into a singular expression of humanity.



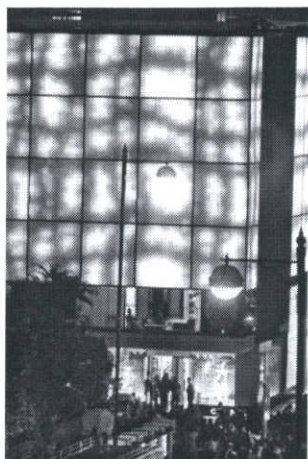


Louis Vuitton New  
York, New York, USA,  
2004, Jun Aoki

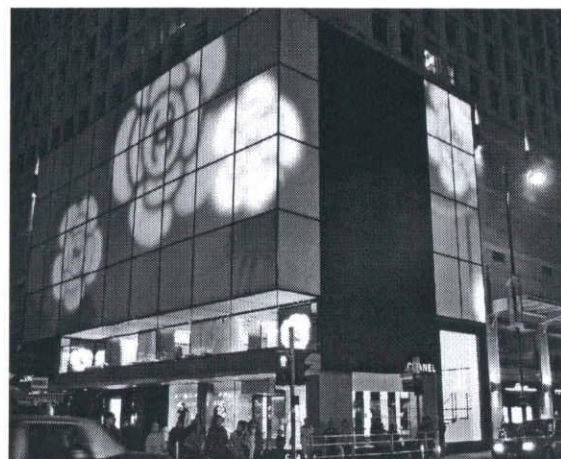


Aoki describes his glass façade as a playfully sleek meditation on crystalline transparency and clouded translucency. The white milkiness created by a ceramic coating on the inner surface of the glass extends into the window openings, where a white checkerboard pattern creates a gradual transition from opacity to transparency.

In the New York Louis Vuitton store the transition is intriguingly effective, both during the day and at dusk



Chanel Hong Kong,  
Hong Kong, China,  
2005, Peter Marino



“Fashion is architecture: It is a matter of proportions,” Coco Chanel once said. The legendary designer known as a 20th-century ‘trailblazer of style’ was also acknowledged as an innovator because of the careful construction of her seemingly simple suits. This is the basis on which the design of her flagship boutiques are architecturally conceptualized.

The building’s five-floor façade looks like the iconic box of Chanel's No 5 perfume by day, but at night transforms into a giant glittering screen, visible throughout the centre of town and across the harbour. Made with over 200,000 computer-controlled LEDs, the display shows ultra-high resolution images of a 'human fabric' expressed through the continual motion of thousands of pedestrians moving through the image. The installation is the creation of Israeli artist Michal Rovner, and is designed to resemble the house's famous trademark tweed, in the same vein that Chanel Ginza was conceived.





丹下健三、岡田斗司夫、  
海洋堂、大嶋優木  
Japan Pavilion, Venice  
2004

Akihabara, a flooded iconographic anime stronghold in Tokyo, uses anime and fetishism as a popular propagation of *the billboard*. We also have a peculiar parallel between personality and place that has united the otaku with this dense urban niche. Community of interest, not the result of planned urban development, takes an urban form where the anime icons are partially responsible for Akihabara's revolutionary transformation.



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Through distinguishing *the spatial*, *the sculptural* and *the billboard* as dominant categories of expression in monumental architecture it is evident that contemporary monumentality consists of interrelated media from the traditionally static to dynamic and from the evolving to transformative. Through the various expressions from contemporary buildings to urban contexts the signifying, symbolising and establishing of relations between self and environment were found to be instrumental in distinguishing these categories of contemporary monumental architecture. The most evident finding is that *the spatial* is an expression of the landscape and poetic, *the sculptural* an expression of the visually aesthetic, pulsating power and prosperity, and *the billboard* an expression with predominantly consumer cultural concerns. The most interesting finding is that the most recent architecture is more and more characterised by a morphic resonance that recalls decomposition and fragmentation, cinematic imagery merged with façades, and most importantly is that these expressions have become somewhat extremely seductive in referencing to sensuous form through *sculpture* and to Tschumi's seductive "masks" and "veils" through the *billboard*.

In the following chapter we will expand on the most strongest relationship between the dominant expressions, the billboard and the sculptural, as the platform for exercising the self's power relations within the context of contemporary popular and consumer culture, and how these, through flirtation, decomposition and fragmentation express humanity through celebrating both *life* and *death*.

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“Is there or is there not a useful phrase ‘ecstatic space – architecture’, or ‘euphoric space – architecture’, or is it simply a fall-out of consumerism, a much broader cultural situation? I think this is an architecture of persuasion. We have the Church, desperate to convert people, building these kind of sensuous ethereal buildings. We have the Cartier Centre; what is that if it is not an attempt to persuade you to buy Cartier? We have lurking in the background this fluctuating relationship of architecture and commerciality, which is nothing if it’s not persuasion.”

Charles Jencks 1999

### **The Exciting Domain of Post-Modernism**

Post-Modernism’s definition since the late 1970s centred on extreme hybridisation, crossing opposites, and double-coding. According to Charles Jencks the reason for jumping between categories and combining high and low art was to cut across the taste cultures fragmenting a pluralist society. Robert Venturi turned this into a method of combining ‘complex and contradictory’ elements, and Frank Gehry and Eric Owen Moss transformed it into a light-hearted and cataclysmic art.

With reference to ancient Greek language, one meaning of *ekstasis* was ‘to be put out of place’, disoriented, thrown off balance mostly in a psychic sense. In an ecstatic frenzy one does not know which passion to follow, which rule is operative; one is overwhelmed by a excess of choice – the disharmony of many drives. It can be disturbing or creative, confusing or pleasurable.

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Omotesando in Tokyo's Aoyama shopping district is characterised by designer retail outlets whose architectural statements are among several 'monuments' to the respective elite fashion houses. Consumption and culture are fused to reshape both the concept and function of shopping, pleasure and communication. Buildings sit as sculptural ornaments generously set back from the edge of the street yet provocative enough to command your view.

A theatrical logic informs the whole architectural, sculptural and pictorial precinct: the wide pavements act as props to a traditional stage, allowing varied speeds of pedestrian movement as the public participate as spectators or potential consumers while framed on the edges by a dramatic avenue of tall trees. The buildings' facades are the fashion houses' boundary and front to the hopeful street, the place of desired and possible economic transaction: here they compete for your attention through obsessive sculptural and pictorial means. This absorption in this medium constitutes the essence of the artistic sign. It is always, in part, self-referential, a sign which refers to its own plane of expression as part of the meaning.



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### Transformative Power and Metamorphosis

“Architects can no longer afford to be intimidated by the puritanically moral language of orthodox Modern architecture. I like elements which are hybrid rather than “pure”, compromising rather than “clean”, distorted rather than “straightforward”, ambiguous rather than “articulated”, perverse as well as impersonal, boring as well as “interesting”, conventional rather than “designed”, accommodating rather than excluding, redundant rather than simple, vestigial as well as innovating, inconsistent and equivocal rather than direct and clear. I am for messy vitality over obvious unity. I include the non sequitur and proclaim the duality.

I am for richness of meaning rather than clarity of meaning; for the implicit function as well as the explicit function. I prefer “both-and” to “either-or”, black and white, and sometimes gray, to black or white. A valid architecture evokes many levels of meaning and combinations of focus: its space and its elements become readable and workable in several ways at once.

But an architecture of complexity and contradiction has a special obligation towards the whole: its truth must be in its totality or its implications of totality. It must embody the difficult unity of inclusion rather than the easy unity of exclusion. More is not less.”

Robert Venturi in “Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture”, New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966

Venturi’s famous quote seemed to be contested by the following:

“The only thing that architects do, from time to time, is to create within those given circumstances more or less masterful buildings. There is an unbelievable overestimation of the power of architecture in terms of the good it can do, but even more, in terms of the bad it has done or can do. Architects have been instrumental in this assessment through their accusation of modern architecture. In the vicious complaints and criticisms they developed in the 1960s and the 1970s, and in howling with the wolves against the imagined misdeeds of modernism, I think architects have, in a very important way, weakened their own profession.”

Rem Koolhaas in Conversations with Students, ed Sanford Kwinter (Houston: Rice University

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School of Architecture; New York: Princeton University Press, 1996)

Koolhaas's stance on criticism against Modernism weakening the architectural profession is somehow ill-founded, as its criticism has actually enriched and diversified contemporary architectural thinking and practice. What is architecture if it is to be unquestioned, unaccountable and coercive? "Orthodox Modernism", as Venturi refers to it to be characterised by minimalist and neutral intentions, discouraged the dynamic and playful elements that could have connected it to human participation. By propping up the rigid maxims "form follows function", "less is more" as if to deny the capacities of human consumption and desire, it was in contradiction to the nature of humankind. The consuming appetite of human nature generally thinks "more is more".

### **The Futile Revolt Against Narcissism**

As a revolt against prioritising ornament/aesthetics, "orthodox Modernism" was a critical theoretical and practical stance in the realm of prioritising functionality after the delightful climax of High Renaissance, but the death to equating importance to aesthetic expression was an overlooked compromise. Society exists with power relations, and one without is an abstraction (Foucault 1982), and society reflects through architecture its desires (Tchumi 1994), and to inhibit these expressions is to inhibit the simultaneous fulfilment of utilitarian function and fantasy and memory. Are the aesthetic desires of humankind not a function of architectural experience? Were the vicious attempts at the 'clinical execution' of Modernist principles an echo of a pseudo-dictatorship? Do we deny the

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pressing expression of human spirit in favour of a machine-like entity? Do human beings want to be equated to machines?

### **The Self and Power Relations through Eisenman**

The linguistic-based theories of Eisenman also have a direct - but different - bearing upon concepts of self and power relations. In his essay '*Post-Functionalism*' (1976) he argued that Modernism was *not* modern precisely because it maintained the Western notion of the 'classical-humanist subject': self-possessed, cognitive, imperialist, heroic - in Descartes' terms, the 'master and possessor of nature'.

Many have argued that the 'subject' has little or no mastery over its environment. The earliest and still the most radical thesis is that of David Hume, who in his *Treatise on Human Nature* (1739) maintained that there was no evidence to prove we were anything other than an unrelated 'bundle' of perceptions, produced by sensations flooding in from outside. The self was a 'fiction'.

One of the main influences upon Eisenman was the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, who argued that the self is rendered *unstable* due to the unstable nature of the language through which it attempts to articulate itself. 'Meaning' is sustained through the exclusion of some 'other' polar element: 'black' and 'white', for example. But this *other* nonetheless remains to 'divide and haunt'. Meaning, therefore, and with it the identity of the individual, can never stabilize: they are prey to endless 'slippage' and 'deferral'.



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Eisenman continues to present his architectural work as an attempt to ‘destabilize’ the subject, primarily through the use of fragments and skewed geometries which he once said are intended to unsettle the user ‘*subliminally*’.

### **Eisenman’s “Decomposition”**

“A new sensibility exists. It was born in the rupture of 1945. This sensibility was neither predicated in the tenets of modernism nor brought about by their failure to achieve the utopia of the present. Rather, it emerged from something unforeseen to modernism, in fact that not since the advent of modern science, technology, and medicine has a generation faced, as it does today, the potential extinction of the entire civilisation.”

Eisenman 1984

This suggestion of an end *in* the present shattered the classical and triadic condition of the past, present and future time and, thus, its progression and continuity. Previously, the present was seen as a moment between the past and future. Now the present contains two unrelated poles: a *memory* of this previous and progressive time and an *immanence*, the presence of end – the end of the future – a new kind of time.

Eisenman’s “Decomposition” goes further in that it proposes a radically altered process of making from either modernism or classicism. “Decomposition” presumes that origins, ends, and the process itself are elusive and complex rather than stable, simple or pure, that is, classical or natural. However, decomposition is not merely the manifestation of the arbitrary, the intuitive, or the irrational or making something simple from something complex. By proposing a process

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which at root is the negative or inverse of classical composition, the process uncovers (or destructs) relationships inherent in a specific object and structure which were previously hidden by a classical sensibility. Rather than working from an original type toward a predictable end, decomposition starts with a heuristic approximation of end, and end which is immanent within the new object/process.

The result is another kind of object, one which contains a nonexistent future as opposed to an irretrievable past. “The removal of the identity and significance from objects signals a uselessness. The futile object and the process of decomposition are no longer arbitrary objects and anomalous processes, nor a mutation of classicism. In this new time they may have become albeit accidentally, the destiny of architecture today.”

### **Expressing Death by using Geometry**

In those of Libeskind’s buildings which speak above all of despair, exile, and annihilation, there is a deliberate “geometry of death” at work (Berlin’s Jewish Museum) — one so powerfully present that it threatens to suffocate any tokens of life that dare occupy its spaces. At the same time, we would expect to see, in those buildings that speak of regeneration, a corresponding “geometry of life”.

A “geometry of death” reverses the properties of living structure, while at the same time suppressing the mechanisms by which human beings connect to the world. The first component recognizes death outside of us — its rules are

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summarized as an absence of the organized complexity found in organisms, and the presence of structural disorganization that marks their death and decomposition. This definition encompasses not only formerly living structures in the process of decomposing, but also structures that could never have been alive in the first place — what are commonly recognized as “alien” forms. An alien structure threatens us, making us anxious.

Such structures do exert an undeniable fascination — this is the fascination that children and adolescents have for things that scare them. The second component of the “geometry of death” recognizes death within us. It indicates (or mimics) a failure of our cognitive mechanisms that is characteristic of the onset of our own death.

For a building to participate in regeneration there surely must be something generative about it, something life-giving in its very forms. Despite Libeskind’s words, it is the “geometry of death” which predominates in his forms, and which ultimately compromises those of his works through which he hopes to effect reconnection or reconciliation.

We also have the void or incision into the earth, the space of absence with Etlin refers to as

‘The descent into the earth....lowering the level of the cemetery a few steps from the surrounding terrain conveys an imitation of the “terrible but inescapable realm which we must inhabit when we die” (Richard A Etlin in *The Architecture of Death*).

It is not the simply the difference in level but rather the kinaesthetic feeling of



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walking down into the earth that stirs powerful emotions. In which “spirit is sensed to have been captured within an impenetrable mass.”

### **Naked Architecture, Buried Architecture and the Architecture of Shadows**

Experiencing a sense about oneself, about the silent partner that every mortal carries within, and about the unending nothingness that each person will become. It appears to us in the form of our shadows and then in shadows of the entire natural and built environment.

It is the presence of the self in death, a black silhouette without substance, a being of purely negative space and shadow. Here we can experience the presence of the departed who simultaneously remain on the other side of the void. We are there ourselves in an eternal space of nothingness, but still part of a larger order. Curiously, because we can occupy that space and feel that condition as an alternative mode of our own condition, not dispersed but rather confined within a negative image of our positive form, it offers a possibility of hope or consolation, or, at the very least, understanding.

### **Readings of “Deconstruction” as an Anaesthetic and Aesthetic**

A defining point for both postmodernism and for deconstructivism, Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction* argues against the purity, clarity and simplicity of modernism. With its publication, functionalism and rationalism, the two main branches of modernism, were overturned as paradigms according to

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postmodernist and deconstructivist readings, with differing readings. The postmodern reading of Venturi was that ornament and historical allusion added a richness to architecture that modernism had foregone.

Postmodern architects endeavored to reapply ornaments even to economical and minimal buildings, an effort best illustrated by Venturi's concept of "the decorated shed". Rationalism of design was dismissed but the functionalism of the building was still somewhat intact. This is close to the thesis of Venturi's next major work (*Learning from Las Vegas*), that signs and ornament can be applied to a pragmatic architecture, and instill the philosophic complexities of semiology.

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In 1955 Louis Kahn cautioned that 'one should not be surprised to find, in fact one would expect to find archaic quality in architecture today. This is because real architecture is just beginning to come to grips with a whole new order of artistic expression, growing in turn from the new set of tasks which society has set for the architect'. Where orthodox Modernism (during and post-Bauhaus) favoured little or no formal aesthetics as a goal, trends in contemporary expressions have compensated for its lack of contents i.e. expressive form through reviving and retranslating the metaphoric, dramatic and expressionistic qualities of the Mannerist, the Expressionist, the Baroque and High Renaissance. Through distinguishing *the sculptural*, *the spatial* and *the billboard* as symbolic categories of dominant expression in monumental architecture it is evident that contemporary monumentality consists of diverse yet interrelated media from the traditionally static to dynamic and from the evolving to transformative. Driven by fierce competition the techniques of symbolic expression employed in contemporary monumental expressions have become aesthetically and technologically innovative and sophisticated.

Through the various expressions the signifying, symbolising and establishing of relations between self and other, as a social and cultural domain of interaction and discourse, were found to be instrumental in distinguishing these categories of dominant expression. The most evident finding is that *the sculptural* uses dramatic artistic rendering of form as an expression of power and prosperity, *the spatial* uses eloquent positioning of forms as an expression of the landscape and poetic, and *the billboard* uses the manipulation of surface towards *archigraphic* identity as an expression with predominantly consumerist and

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iconic concerns. In reviewing the categories' relationships we find that the common denominator is *the sculptural* and that generally *the spatial* and *the billboard* have no apparent relationship. The strongest relationship is between *the billboard* and *the spatial*.

Transient, hip, trendy, information technology, social cohesion, global community, liberated chaos, over-deployment of technology, urbanism of pleasure and desire, interconnectivity, collective experience, hybridisation, multi-layering, living collage, density equated with increased quality of life.... these are the functional factors that drive the form of monumental expressions in architecture in cities today and are reflective of their societal cultural make-up.

Architecture that participates in people's culture and lifestyle; tastes and desires, in a meaningful way is the root of urban design trends in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: the same way High Renaissance connected people through music, painting, and sculpture...artistic expression. Cities around the world have generic qualities today, they're slowly starting to seem the same because we've become a global environment, and international architects are using similar techniques and ways of thinking in a variety of projects all over the world.

In effect 21<sup>st</sup> century cities have become dynamic reinterpretations of the maxim "form follows function" (but an exclusion of "less is more") and a huge yet honorific leap from "orthodox Modernism."



## Chapter Four-Conclusion

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# A STUDY ON THE MEANINGS AND TECHNIQUES OF MONUMENTAL EXPRESSION IN MODERN TO CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE:

Establishing Categories of Dominant Expression and Mapping the Metamorphosis their Formal  
Expression

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## Introduction

### **Background**

Since the 19th century, the meaning of *monumentality* is expanding. Traditionally it referred exclusively to monument and grand imposing scale.

Many have referred to the Parthenon as the example of the spiritual embodiment of monumentality. This was commonly deduced from observing its elevated location on the Acropolis, its enormous scale and perfectly proportioned columns. Louis Kahn defined monumentality as a quality that symbolically portrays magnificence, political and economic territorial identity. William JR Curtis referred to it as a quality that does not necessarily have to do with size but with the intensity of expression.

The thesis uses three categories to show the different expressions monumentality has expanded through post- WW2 modernism to contemporary architecture. The purpose of this is to respond to the need to bring, root and articulate monumentality in the current context of the will and desires of humanity.

### **Thesis's Intentions**

The paper intends to conduct the following:

- a) To hypothesise that in monumental architecture symbolic expression is the instrumental component with which humankind uses as a multi-faceted platform to not merely signify, symbolise and establish relations between self and the other, but as a means to signify, symbolise and establish a critique of the self,
- b) Through distinguishing the architectural categories of dominant expression, to decode monumental architecture as a body of cultural and universal signs and as a dynamic and static medium of expressionistic techniques,
- c) Through reviewing relationships between distinguished categories of dominant expression, to map the evolving and the transformative with indications to future implications.

### **Theoretical Survey**

The thesis locates the discussions of semantic and semiotic inquiry in Umberto Eco and G.E. Lessing where architecture and art is analysed and understood as a codified

visual and textual system, and to discuss the contestations of Juhani Pallasmaa and Henri Lefebvre that architecture should not merely be confined to being understood through codified visual and textual means.

From SK Langer's *Symbolic Logic*, it discusses precedent means of identifying symbolic referents by establishing a precedent for the relationships between *content, form, import, abstraction, and interpretation*. Through Robert Venturi's *Learning from Las Vegas* it locates the discussions of various critical yet cynical attitudes towards the issues around symbolic meaning in monumentality in the urban context.

Through Norbert-Schulz it shows the problems of maintaining perception-based processes that refuse to change in an ever-changing context. With Julia Kristeva's psychoanalytic vision it questions whether her analogy of the Greek myth *Narcissus* could be interpreted as the fundamental framework in which the self is admired and critiqued as a reflection of itself in architecture through symbolic referents.

Through Bernard Tchumi's *Architecture and Disjunction* it sheds light on the use of architectural expressions and their symbolism as a theatrical and seductive platform of human engagement, characterised by "veils" hinting at the possibility of 'collision' and encounter whether the 'collision' or encounter occurs within the self or between the self and the other.

Through Pallasmaa's *Eyes of the Skin*, it contextualises the limits of architectural experience in the visual realm, where the eye is the hegemonic sense in perception and through this weakness it provides the platform in which the eye's introspective manifestations encourage the way architectural expressions participate with humanity through narcissism and nihilism.

### **Thesis Structure and Content**

The selected analysis examples are chronologically discussed using Kahn's *Monumentality* 1944 as the departure point towards reworking Modernism into a socially transformative architecture. Using its call for the aesthetic, spiritual and ritualistic experience of architecture the analysis discusses these in the techniques of their expression and their meaning in monumental architecture.

The purpose of this is to assess the development and metamorphoses of monumental expressions from *Monumentality* into the 21<sup>st</sup> century through three categories of dominant expression which the paper distinguishes in Chapter Two.

Chapter Three discusses the relationships between the categories of dominant expression with the view to mapping their impact on contemporary theories and expressions in monumental architecture. Robert Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* is used as their springboard towards *decomposition* and



fragmentation as a response to orthodox Modernism and thus a transformative platform in propelling the self's representation through architectural form as a revolt and competitor against utility. In the final analysis, the paper engages in a diagnostic attempt to establish and define a term for the Avant-garde monumental expressions in international contemporary traditions of recent years hopefully with possible clues for the future of symbolic meaning and monumental expression in contemporary architecture.

### Method of Analysis

Using the Gestalt System we naturally structure the perception process based on its key properties i.e. emergence, reification, multistability, and invariance shown in the following diagram:

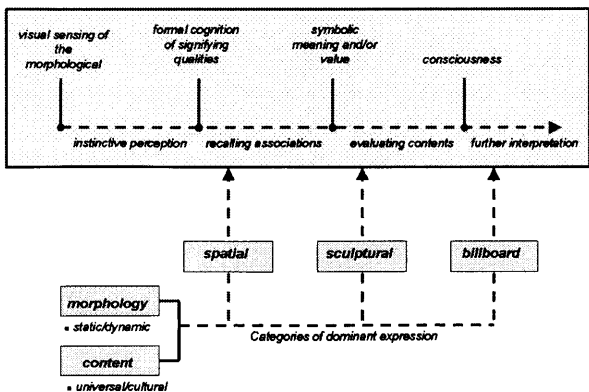


Fig. 1 Perception Process and Analysis Diagram

Where the Gestalt System is a complete cycle at invariance, the analysis provides for variance based in the premise that perception processes are open to further interpretation.

### Distinguishing the Categories

Using the semiotic and hermeneutic approach and through interpretative attempts the analysis intends to distinguish between the following categories in monumental expression: *the spatial, the sculptural* and *the billboard*.

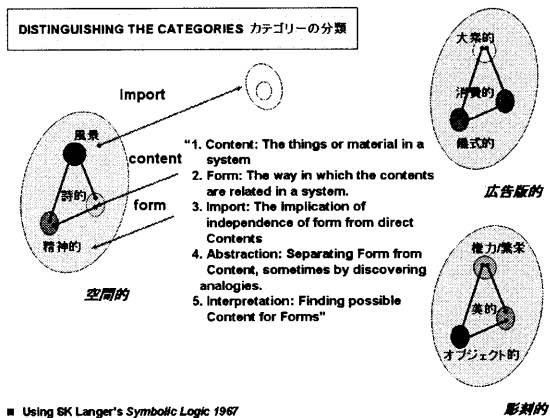


Fig. 2 Category Definition and Symbolic Reference Diagram

Using SK Langer's Symbolic Logic 1967, the above diagrams (Fig.2) were formulated employing the following which were used for identifying symbolic referents:

1. Content: The things or material in a system
2. Form: The way in which the contents are related in a system.
3. Import: The implication of independence of form from direct contents
4. Abstraction: Separating Form from Content, sometimes by discovering analogies.
5. Interpretation: Finding possible Content for Forms"

The examples were selected due to each work's intensity of expression within the

fragmentation as a response to orthodox Modernism and thus a transformative platform in propelling the self's representation through architectural form as a revolt and competitor against utility. In the final analysis, the paper engages in a diagnostic attempt to establish and define a term for the Avant-garde monumental expressions in international contemporary traditions of recent years hopefully with possible clues for the future of symbolic meaning and monumental expression in contemporary architecture.

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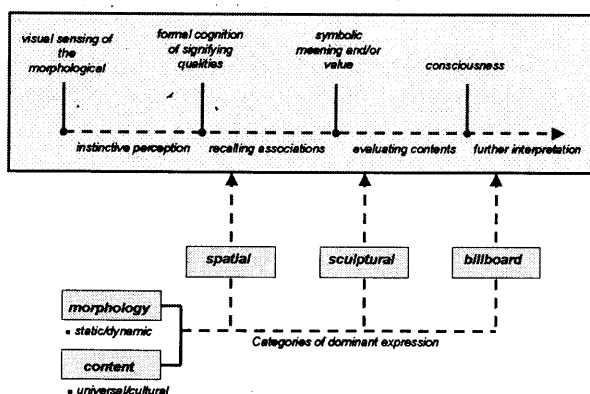


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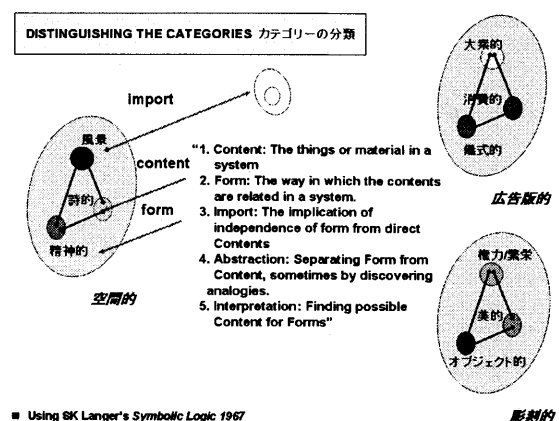


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The examples were selected due to each work's intensity of expression within the

categories within which the expressions will be assigned, *the spatial* category, followed by *the sculptural* and conclusively *the billboard*:

■ *the spatial:*

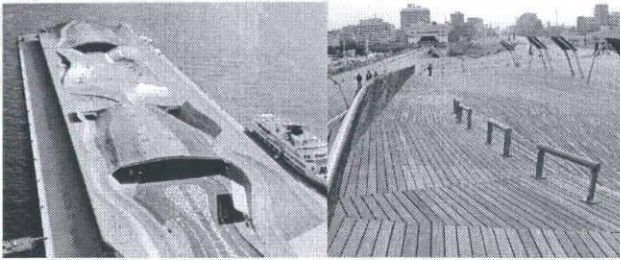


Fig.3 Yokohama Int. Port Terminal, Yokohama, Japan 2002, FOA

As a monumental extension of the urban ground, the Yokohama International Port Terminal (Fig.3) is characterised by curvilinear spatial gestures that echo the undulation of waves. The precinct of the pier is thus structured as a fluid, uninterrupted and multi-directional public space, rather than a gateway with a commanding and fixed orientation. Poetically, the landscaping not only emulates the movement of waves towards the shore but also extends the urban ground towards the sea.



Fig.4 Belzec Memorial, Belzec, Poland, 2004, DDJM

Built on a former six-acre Nazi death camp the Belzec Memorial's (Fig.4) directional

crossroads diagram is low-lying and open and this emphasises the center, the "square". The "square" leads the living down a narrow and sinking path that cuts into the burial ground of mass graves which are covered by different grades of material that represent a black ash burial field. The sequence of movement within the composition forces the living to engage with the haunting quality captured in the negative energy reconstructed through abstract expressionism.

■ *the sculptural:*

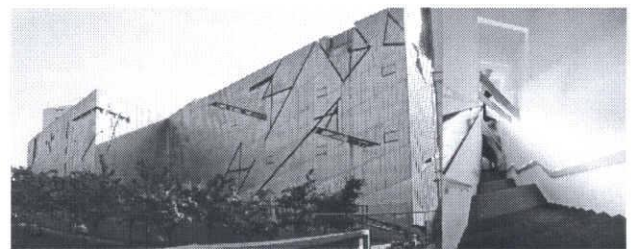


Fig.5 Jewish Museum, Berlin, Germany, 1999, Daniel Libeskind

Pain and absence is stylized into structural yet theatrical lines in Berlin's Jewish Museum (Fig.5), symbolising the torturous journey of Jews in Berlin. The building uses an impenetrable void that cuts through a "tortured line" (represented by the zigzag form) and symbolic lines of windows that resemble cuts or wounds. Through its inaccessibility, the void points to that which is absent, has vanished, but that must still be made present.





Fig.6 Swiss Re HQ, London, UK, 2004, Norman Foster

London's Swiss Re Headquarters' (Fig.6) towering iconic form has been referred to as phallic thus it has earned the nickname "Erotic Gherkin" but is undoubtedly a fresh reinterpretation of the traditional angular skyscraper. Through its reflective patterned glazing it uses the helix form suggesting continuity as opposed to termination at the tip, and enormous scale as device to express the financial giant's economic prosperity. This sensuous sculptural treatment of form and surface emphasises the building as an artistic object rather than a building.

#### ■ the billboard:



Fig.7 Robert Venturi's *Learning from Las Vegas* 1977

Where the scale and forms of buildings are secondary to the signs is characteristic of the Las Vegas commercial strip. Fuelled by an excessive consumer culture the signs are the

advertisement of the buildings' establishment and the bigger and brighter ones are symbolic of the commercial propaganda that drives this practice in this realm of expression in architecture. The Las Vegas Strip at night is symbolic images in dark, amorphous space – the sky is alive. During the day, it is a different place.

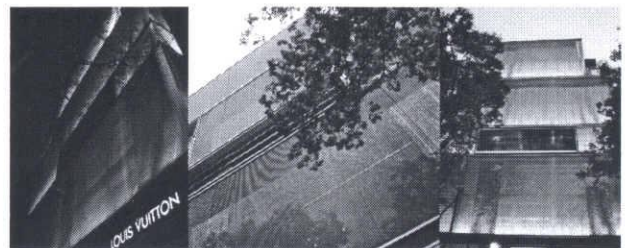


Fig.8 Louis Vuitton Omotesando, Tokyo, Japan, 2002, Jun Aoki

The elegant façade composition for Louis Vuitton (Fig.8) is characterised by a reflective and transparent staggered assembly identified by squared-off forms differentiated in terms of scale, proportions, finishes, and quality of light. The design for the staggered assembly is drawn from the "piling up trunks" concept, which is an abstraction of the designer store's main commercial merchandise. The superimposition of silver over the metal mesh with the gold colour of the steel panels behind combines with the transparency of the glass to create a strong impression of intangibility, mystery, and perhaps seduction



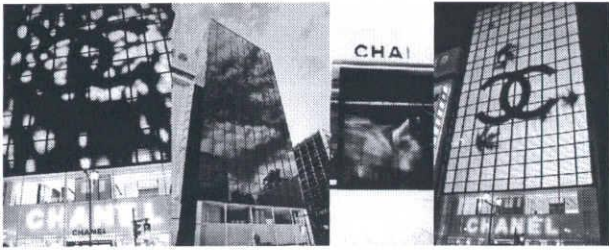


Fig.9 Chanel Ginza, Tokyo, Japan, 2004, Peter Marino

This is a graphically innovative technological solution, which merges the giant iconic logo with the cinematic façade. Referred to as functioning as a 21st-century branding billboard, the building is a conceptual rendering of “classic Chanel tweed”. Programmed into the building’s massive LED display is the logo animation, which generates dreamy images on the façade as if to dazzle the pedestrians in perpetual motion.

### Findings: Transformative Power and Metamorphosis

Through distinguishing *the spatial*, *the sculptural* and *the billboard* as dominant categories of expression in monumental architecture it is evident that contemporary monumentality consists of interrelated media from the traditionally static to dynamic and from the evolving to transformative. Through the various expressions from contemporary buildings to urban contexts the signifying, symbolising and establishing of relations between self and environment were found to be instrumental in distinguishing these categories of contemporary monumental architecture. The most evident finding is that

*the spatial* is an expression of the landscape and poetic; *the sculptural* an expression of the visually aesthetic, pulsating power and prosperity; and *the billboard* an expression with predominantly consumer cultural concerns. The most interesting finding is that the most recent architecture is persistently characterised by a morphic resonance that recalls decomposition and fragmentation, cinematic imagery merged with façades, and most importantly is that these expressions have become somewhat extremely seductive in referencing to sensuous form through *sculpture* and to Tschumi’s seductive “masks” and “veils” through the *billboard*.

Chapter Three expands on the strong relationships between the dominant expressions, the spatial-sculptural, and the billboard-sculptural. It expands on the spatial-sculptural relationship (Fig.10) as a platform for reflecting the self through decomposition and fragmentation to express humanity through celebrating both joy with pain, and life with death.

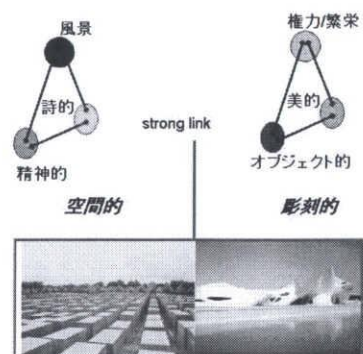


Fig.10 The *spatial-sculptural* Relationship Diagram

It expands on the billboard-sculptural relationship (Fig.11) as a platform for exercising the self's power relations within the context of contemporary popular and consumer culture, and how these, through 'flirtation' maximise on entertaining the rituals of commercialism and consumerism.

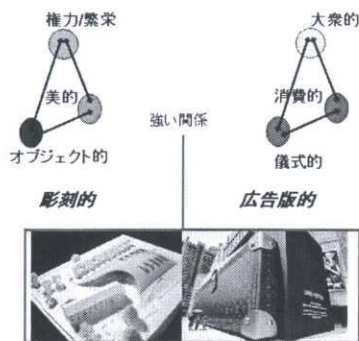


Fig.11 The billboard-sculptural Relationship Diagram

Driven by fierce competition the techniques of symbolic expression employed in contemporary monumental expressions have become aesthetically and technologically innovative and sophisticated.

## Conclusion

Through the various expressions the signifying, symbolising and establishing of relations between self and other, as a social and cultural domain of interaction and discourse, were found to be instrumental in distinguishing these categories of dominant expression. The most evident finding is that *the sculptural* uses dramatic artistic rendering of form as an expression of power and prosperity, *the spatial* uses eloquent

positioning of forms as an expression of the landscape and poetic, and *the billboard* uses the manipulation of surface towards *archigraphic* identity as an expression with predominantly consumerist and iconic concerns.

In reviewing the categories' relationships, we find that the common denominator is *the sculptural* and that generally *the spatial* and *the billboard* have no apparent relationship. The strongest relationship is between *the billboard* and *the spatial*.

Transient, hip, trendy, information technology, social cohesion, global community, liberated chaos, over-deployment of technology, urbanism of pleasure and desire, interconnectivity, collective experience, hybridisation, multi-layering, living collage, density equated with increased quality of life.... these are the functional factors that drive the form of monumental expressions in architecture in cities today and are reflective of their societal cultural make-up.

Architecture that participates in people's culture and lifestyle; tastes and desires, in a meaningful way is the root of design trends in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: the same way High Renaissance connected people through music, painting, and sculpture...artistic expression. Cities around the world have generic qualities today, they are slowly starting to seem the same because we have become a global environment, and international architects are using similar techniques and ways of thinking in a variety of

projects all over the world. In effect, 21<sup>st</sup> century cities have become dynamic reinterpretations of the maxim “form follows function” (but an exclusion of “less is more”) and a huge yet honorific leap from “orthodox Modernism”.

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近現代建築に見られるモニュメンタルな表現の意味と手法  
— 支配的表現の分類とその形態的表現の変化に関する考察 —

A STUDY ON THE MEANINGS AND TECHNIQUES OF MONUMENTAL EXPRESSION IN  
MODERN TO CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE:  
Establishing Categories of Dominant Expression and Mapping the Metamorphosis of their  
Formal Expression

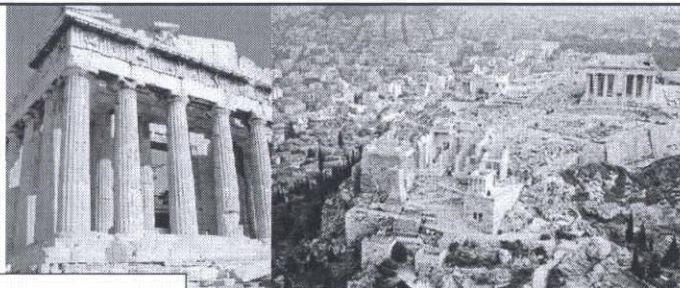
PURPOSE OF THE STUDY 研究の目的

富岡研究室 405M4B1 JOLOBE Nobethu

モニュメンタルな建築において 象徴的表現は 重要な造形上の手段のひとつです。この手段を通じて、人間は 多面的な表現を 徐々にかたちづけてきたのです。

モニュメンタルな表現は 自己と他者の間の関係 すなわち 人間社会を確立し 意義づけ シンボライズするためでもあるのです。

- ・モニュメンタリティの表現に適用される 表現を区分することを通じて 象徴的な建築を 文化的 普遍的記号にまで分解すること
- ・モニュメンタリティを 表現手法の形とはたらきにまで 解析すること
- ・モニュメンタリティの表現手法 相互の関係を観察することを通じて、  
現在 我々が眼にしている諸表現の 今後の発展・変貌の可能性を整理すること



BACKGROUND 背景

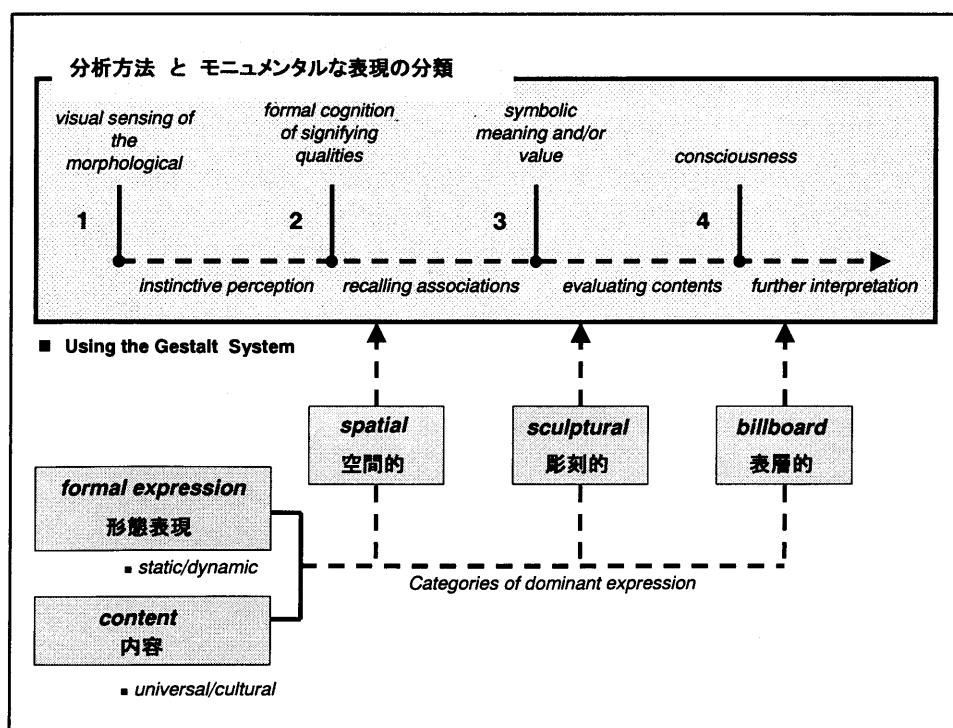
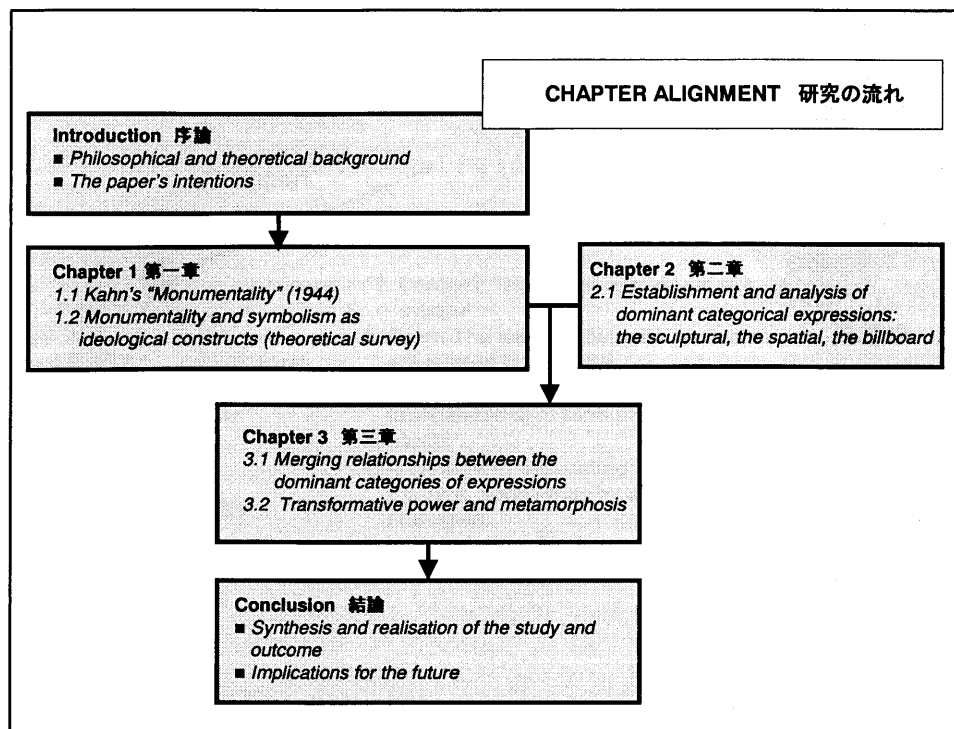
19世紀の産業と社会の大変革以降、建築の象徴性の意味は 大きく変化し また現在も拡大し続けています。もともと 象徴性という概念は 記念物や巨大建築物に付随した性格でした。

ルイス・カーン:「政治経済の 独自性と共に 地域的な優美さを 描き出すような質」

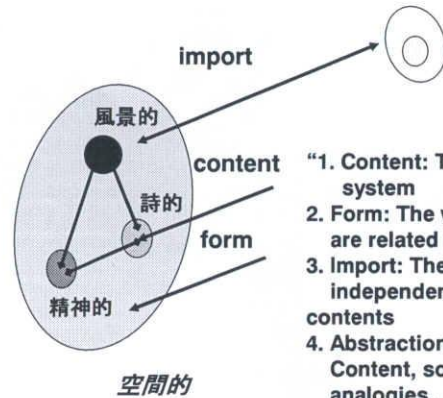
カーティス :「建物の巨大さより むしろ 建物の表現の強さに 関連するもの」

本研究では、モニュメンタリティの表現の広さをみせるため 3つの表現領域をつかって論じます。  
これは、現代の私たちが抱いている モニュメンタリティに含まれる 多様な意味を区分し その源泉を明らかにすることです。

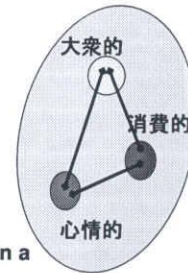




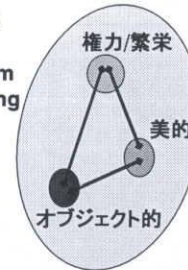
# DISTINGUISHING THE CATEGORIES カテゴリーの分類



1. Content: The things or material in a system
2. Form: The way in which the contents are related in a system.
3. Import: The implication of independence of form from direct contents
4. Abstraction: Separating Form from Content, sometimes by discovering analogies.
5. Interpretation: Finding possible Content for Forms

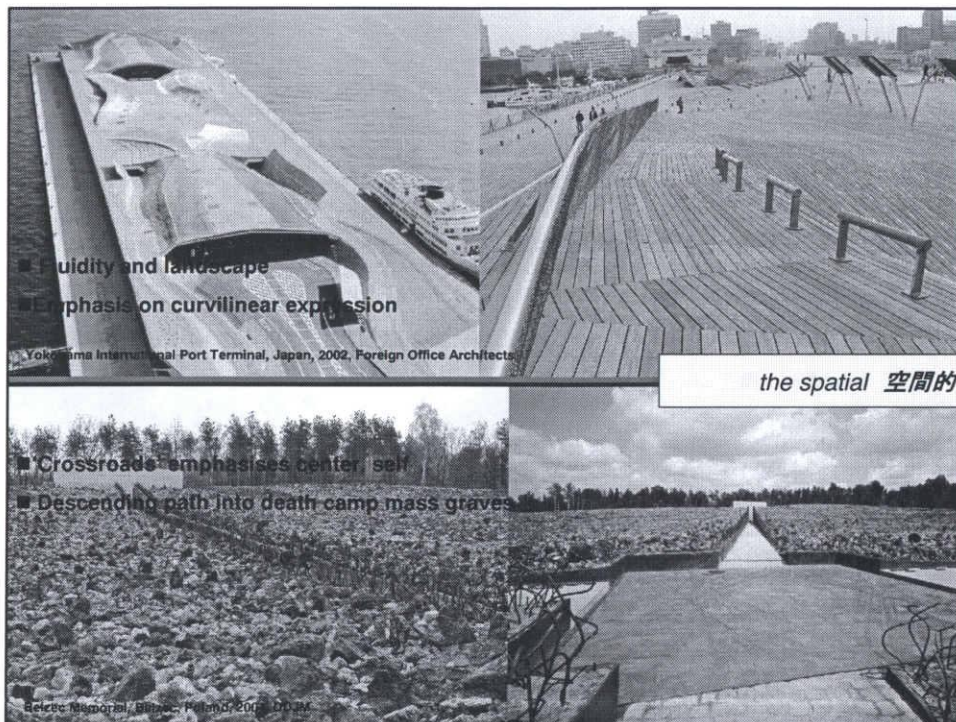


表層的

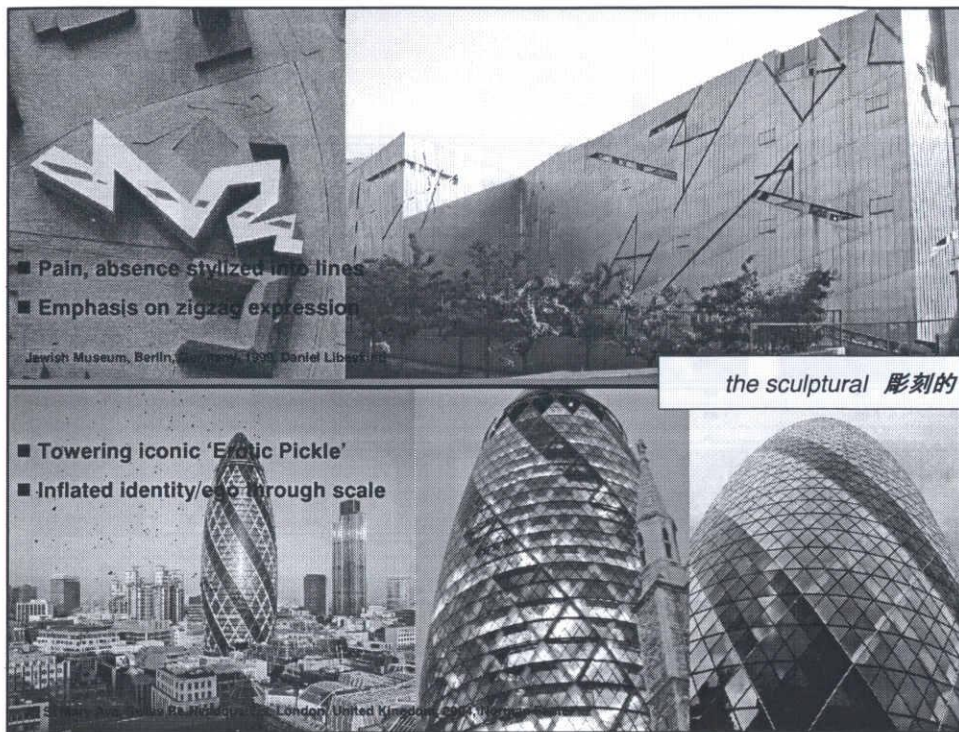


彫刻的

■ Using SK Langer's *Symbolic Logic* 1967









FINDINGS 成果						
1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	
						風景的 詩的 精神的
						権力/繁栄 オブジェク 美的
						大衆的 消費的 心情的

彫刻的 空間的 表層的表現カテゴリーを区分することによって 現代にいたる モニュメンタリティの変貌を理解できたと思います。これらが相互に組み合わせられ もともと静的で堂々とした表現を基軸としていたモニュメンタリティが 動的に変貌し 新しい表現を生み出してきたのです。

FINDINGS 成果						
2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2008	2010
						風景的 詩的 精神的
						権力/繁栄 オブジェクト的 美的
						大衆的 消費的 心情的

現在の建築デザインが 建築的構成の解体と断片化と 呼応する形態的うごめきを示しています。

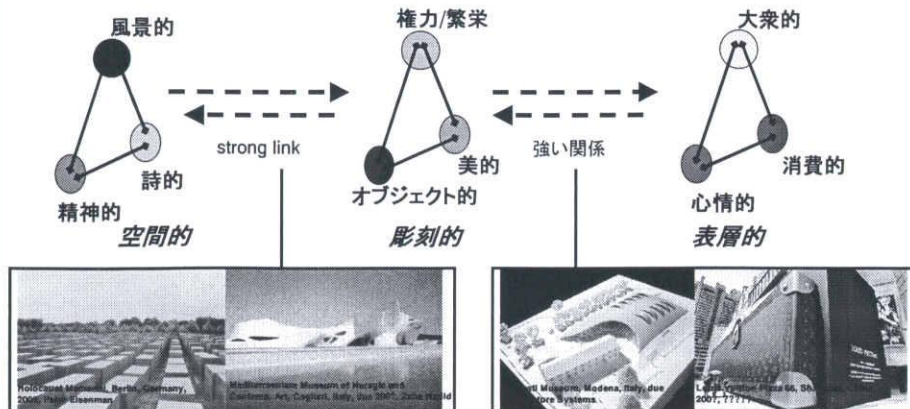
重要なのは このような表現が 物体的実体をもった彫刻的表現とくらべて またチュミの指摘した 看板の「マスク」と「ペール」の表現にくらべて きわめて意味的なものだ ということです。

現代の建築では、3つの表現領域間の 活発な競合が起っています。この結果 建築は美的にも技術的にも革新と洗練が続いています。



## REVIEW OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN DISTINGUISHED CATEGORIES

### 表現領域間の相互関係について



彫刻的表現が主として全面に立ち、他の2つが追随すること、空間的―表層的表現の間には、確たる関連がみられないことがわかります。

・空間的―彫刻的表現の関係は、現代、解体され断片化されてしまった、個々人の人間性への復帰を反映しているものと考えられます。

・表層的―彫刻的表現の関係は、人のたわむれを誘発し、商業主義にうきたつ心を、最大限に楽しませて、現代の世俗的、消費的文化の中での、自己の力の発揮の基盤を形成することと関連しています。

## CONCLUSION 結論

本研究では、建築のモニュメンタリティ、その象徴的表現を、自己と他者との関係を確立し、意義づけ、象徴することと捉え、その表現領域を、空間的、彫刻的、表層的の3つのカテゴリーに区分した上で、その社会的、文化的、相互関係について論じました。

本研究でもっとも重要な発見は、3つのカテゴリーそれぞれが、それに適する象徴内容の領域をたずさえていることです。

- ・空間的表現は、風景的、詩的な性格にもとづく、優美さ
- ・彫刻的表現は、権力と繁栄
- ・表層的表現は、世俗的、消費主義的な、アーキグラフィックな、自己主張

表現領域の関係に眼をむけると、彫刻的表現が前面にたち、空間的表現、表層的表現がそれに付随すること、空間的―表層的表現の間には、確たる関連がみられないことがわかります。

流動と先端を追う時代、それをもたらした情報技術と社会の組み立て、グローバリゼーション、広まる混沌、技術万能主義、欲望の都市空間、万物の相関関係の強化、経験の集団化、文化の混交、多層性、コラージュのような生活、高密度化を生じる充実とみなす心情

これら現代性の諸現象が、今日の都市建築のモニュメンタリティの表現の動因となっていることは明らかです。そして、それは私たちの社会文化の出自を、むしろ逆照射しているのです。