

The Carpenter's Apprentice

David Bell

Distractive Arts

In his influential essay of 1936 "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", Walter Benjamin argues for the consideration of film as a serious art form. Of particular interest is his discussion in section XV. Here he initiates, but does not elaborate extensively, an inquiry into the nature of the relationship between the work of art and those who experience it. He follows this by comparing film (the twentieth-century art) to one of the oldest arts—architecture. In doing so, he calls not only for a direct reconsideration of the nature of art in contemporary society but also, by implication, the necessity for a thoroughgoing re-assessment of our understanding of the art of building, long believed (even and especially by many early modernists, like Le Corbusier) to be governed by enduring principles based in the priority of form.

Benjamin makes his argument specifically to counter George Duhamel's critique of the legitimacy of film as serious art in *Scenes de la vie future*. For Duhamel, film is merely "...a spectacle which requires no concentration."¹ Not seeking altogether to refute Duhamel on this point, Benjamin avers this requisite lack of concentration as an essential quality of film and proceeds to ask if there can be a legitimate distractive art. Architecture he concludes is:

*The prototype of a work of art the reception of which is consummated by a collectivity [i.e., a social organism] in a state of distraction.*²

Benjamin surmises an important point of similarity between film and architecture to be the way each is appropriated—by a letting go of attention—and adds this basic point about architecture:

*Buildings are appropriated in a twofold manner; by use and perception—or rather by touch and sight... On the tactile side there is no counterpart to contemplation on the optical side. Tactile appropriation is accomplished not so much by attention as by habit.*³

Through these reflections Benjamin seems to suggest other possibilities for the experience of art in modernity besides those grounded principally in the divisiveness of Cartesian perspectivalism. According to Martin Jay this particular "scopic regime", dominant in the post-Renaissance production of art, inculcates a fixed, unblinking, disembodied point-of-view of the world and implies the perpetual presence of a transcendental subject which invents objects and submits them to a magnetizing Gaze of Truth.⁴ I presume that what Benjamin proposes is an understanding of the experience of art as something that occurs within differentiated fields of relationships and without the conceptual device of subject/object. This would perforce include observers who can be nothing other than non-veridical.

In establishing terms for a philosophy of cinema Gilles Deleuze ascertains that relationships such as those implied by

Benjamin's distractive arts

*do not belong to objects [or subjects], but to the whole... [This] whole is not a closed set, but on the contrary that by which the set is never absolutely closed, never completely sheltered, that which keeps it open somewhere as if by the finest thread which attaches it to the rest of the universe.*⁵

When Deleuze writes of "the whole" in relation to film it is important not to confuse his notion of whole with those of other film theorists, notably that of the eminent, neo-realist Siegfried Kracauer. In *Theory of Film*, Kracauer critiques what seems to him to be the prevalent idea that "Art" is the governing end of filmmaking. "Art" for him is something that:

*...thwarts the cinema's intrinsic possibilities... Art in film is reactionary because it symbolizes wholeness and thus pretends to the continued existence of beliefs which "cover" physical reality... The result is films which sustain the prevailing abstractness.*⁶

It is worth mentioning, given what has been said so far about both attention and abstraction, that John Schumacher, in his book *Human Posture; The Nature of Inquiry*, a work to which I will return later, notes that the irony of attention is that it provides us with the basis for its own abstraction from the senses.⁷

Although their notions about "whole" are very different, Deleuze and Kracauer

seem to share a belief in film's intrinsic open-endedness as its real creative strength. And perhaps echoes of Benjamin, who also asserts that film and its making penetrate deeply into the web of reality, can be heard in Kracauer's assertion that a prime characteristic of film is its ability to explore "the texture of everyday life", weaving together its space, time and kaleidoscope of action at various scales and conditions into an "unaccountable togetherness".⁸

Maya Deren, a pioneer avant-garde filmmaker, agrees with this intimacy between film and reality, although she does not, like Kracauer, seem to consider film to have the onerous mission of redeeming reality. Nor does she believe that the weaving together of film and reality should result in a seamless exposition. She argues that by "borrowing reality" and submitting it to the "controlled accident", i.e., the life of the world which is present but independent of the filmmaker's control, reality enters into the film. In turn she suggests that film has the power to become reality, not just simulate it. Describing her *Meshes of the Afternoon*, she states that it

*is concerned with the interior experiences of an individual. It does not record an event which will be witnessed by other persons. Rather it reproduces the way in which the subconscious of an individual will develop, interpret and elaborate an apparently simple and casual incident into a critical emotional experience.*⁹

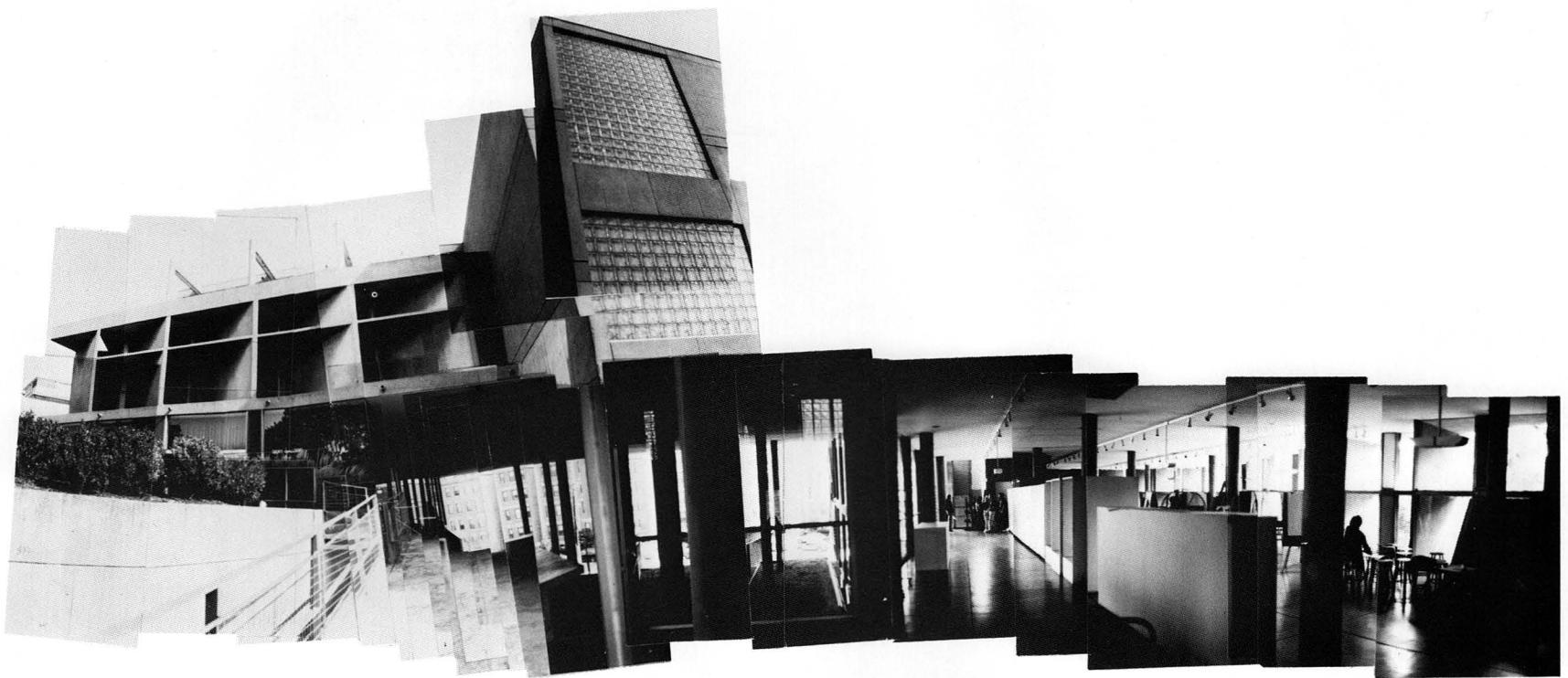


Fig. 1. Composite photograph of Carpenter Center

For her, film is neither a realistic documentation of events, nor a representation of them; it becomes situated among them as a result of film's own apparatus.¹⁰ As such it is political, moral, ideological, and will always go beyond perception by putting perception within its system, embodying it, because

*the camera does not simply give us the vision of the character and his world; it imposes another vision in which the first is transformed and reflected.*¹¹

Hence, the real should not be identified with so-called normal or "natural" vision. Even outside the camera, as Jean-Louis Comolli observes, there is the entire invisible apparatus of the cinema.¹²

Film, Architecture, Presence

The significant and obvious differences between film and architecture notwithstanding, the two share other qualities that are perhaps genetically related to

Benjamin's astute perception about distractive art. Neither film nor architecture seems to be predicated on presence to the extent that other (especially plastic or visual) arts are. In fact, they both challenge this notion. This may be because both, albeit in very different ways, are essentially concerned with the wholeness of motion in relationship to presence.

Andre Bazin, in his seminal *What is Cinema?*, makes the case for film as a

challenge to presence by comparing it to what is often regarded as its sister art form—theater.¹³ It is the difference between them which gives film its materiality. Orson Welles played on this difference with multiple ironic intentions throughout *Citizen Kane*, a film ultimately about the making of another film...the obituary newsreel of the enigma of Charles Foster Kane. In Welles' classic film, scenes of the powerful Kane at frequent moments in his life

are frequently held within the proscenium-like perimeters of various windows. In these instances Kane seems to be little more than a homunculus, a shade, a weightless *dramatis persona* scripted by others in the same film scene. These other characters are visible but outside the boundaries of the various windows and the transformative energies of their frames. Bazin's analysis bears on the examination of an exceptionally important component of film—the frame—which Welles analogized and critiqued as the window. More recently, Peter Greenaway analogized and critiqued the cinematic frame as the problematic, ostensibly neutral view-frame through the crosshairs of which the draftsman in the *Draughtsman's Contract* constructed precisely drawn views of an estate.

The frame in a film, Bazin contends, is not the analog of the theatrical stage. It is not a window to a microcosm like the theatrical set, but an opening to an extensive other world that, through a willing suspension of our disbelief, has the potential to appear to merge with our own. But its function as such an opening is complicated by its inherent movement content. As Deleuze points out, movement is an intrinsic and material property of film. Film opposes posed or transcendental form and the privileged gaze implicit to it.

*The frame is not simply a return to the photo: if it belongs to the cinema, this is because it is the genetic element of the image, or the differential element of the movement. It does not "terminate" the movement without also being the principle of its acceleration, its deceleration and its variation.*¹⁴

Something that moves out of the film frame does not go into wings "off stage", instead it moves into another part of the realm of the film, temporarily out of sight. It is entirely possible, Bazin argues, that substantive segments of a film may have both no actor and no text enunciated by the actors,

only various shots of mise-en-scene connected together to create a particular vision.¹⁵ This vision is perpetually restless. In other words, materiality, time, space, gesture, and movement provide the content. With this understanding, the film frame is as much a mask as it is an opening into a world which can seem in some indefinable way to be coextensive with our own. It is a mask because, as Bazin points out, it allows only part of the action to be seen at any given time during a film.



Fig. 2. Bridge-ramp at left

The out-of-frame space is constantly with us through its absence and as a subtle play with the frame's edges; events come and go, viewpoints shift. All of this serves as a productive distraction to focused central vision. Therefore film has the peculiar quality, completely independent of but valuable to its existence as a narrative device, of never really presenting (or presencing) itself as a whole. In fact, it challenges the established classical and empirical scientific notions of the whole as something that can be controlled by a centered subject/viewer/observer.

Architecture is very much like this yet can also appear to be unlike this, especially to architects. As something experienced, architecture is constantly masking itself. Inhabiting virtually any constructed spaces means we can never possess the entire situation of that inhabitation in any particular instant. One is reminded of Benjamin's distinction between attention and habit (It is important to understand, however, that both occur in our reception

of architecture by inhabitation). The sense of film with its constant movement, its mise-en-scene always adrift, parallels but does not duplicate the sense of *inhabitation* of architecture.

Yet architecture, as lived experience, is often conflated with or confused with its own representation. Whether as models, photographs or drawings, its usual forms of representation are governed by the codes of Cartesian monocular perspectivism, the disembodied view, the depoliticized view that suggests there are in a work of architecture immobile and transcendent forms and spaces that are revealed and possessed by projecting ourselves into its representation.

The film frame is obviously a two-dimensional entity. However, due to its mobility (both that of the camera as tracking instrument and camera/projector as the recorder/repeater of shifting images), it induces three-dimensional space. According to Noel Büsch, these movements suggest and employ a transgression of the frame's boundaries both laterally and perpendicularly to this plane.¹⁶ Whenever the camera pans side to side, moves in or pulls back, it does so to reveal other cinematic space.¹⁷ The periphery of the cinematic field, because of this potential out-of-fieldness, has an importance equivalent to the center of the frame's field. What is offscreen is allowed to become present within the frame while being literally invisible, e.g., a shadow or sound may "come into" the frame as fluctuating existence. For example, in Andrei Tarkovsky's *The Sacrifice* a deafening blast of wind overwhelms the quiet celebration of an old man's birthday to announce the outbreak of World War III. As Gilles Deleuze points out, this kind of spatiality (Deleuze calls it transspatiality) occurs even in the false continuity of montage and tends to heighten, instead of break, the sense of the whole as expansive, mutative and nonself-closing. The frame therefore

is movement potent. It is not a single cell of film, but exists only as the necessarily challenged limit for filmic space to unfold. Through its movement it provides images, or what Deleuze calls "movement images". The "movement image is not an image to which movement is added but one to which movement is implicit.

The cinematic process works to extract "pure movement from bodies or moving things."¹⁸ What is produced is not

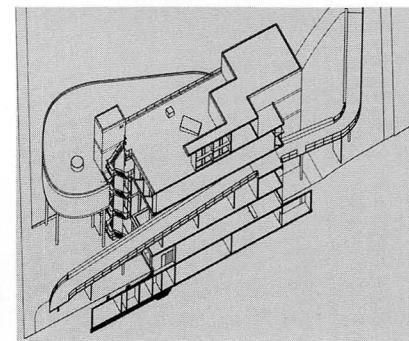


Fig. 3. Cut-away axonometric (Original drawing by Eduar Nilson, Courtesy Harvard University Press)

a static section, like that of architectural representation, but a "mobile section" constituted of extracted movements putting everything which constitutes a set (the ensemble of bodies, events, positions to which the cinematic apparatus is directed) into variation. The film frame inherently embodies vision in an expanded field. This vision, however, is not limited to film. It can stimulate our notions about the world through other disciplinary means. The vision manifested through film practices is neither a matter of psychology of perception nor one of decontextualized images allowing an unmediated communion between the viewer's eye and pure form. This vision is a cooperative, mutual construction of the person, together as mind and body, and the world. In an increasing number of films of the last 40 years, this vision has become further complicated by various temporal and spatial displacements, accelerated wanderings



Fig. 4. View from bridge

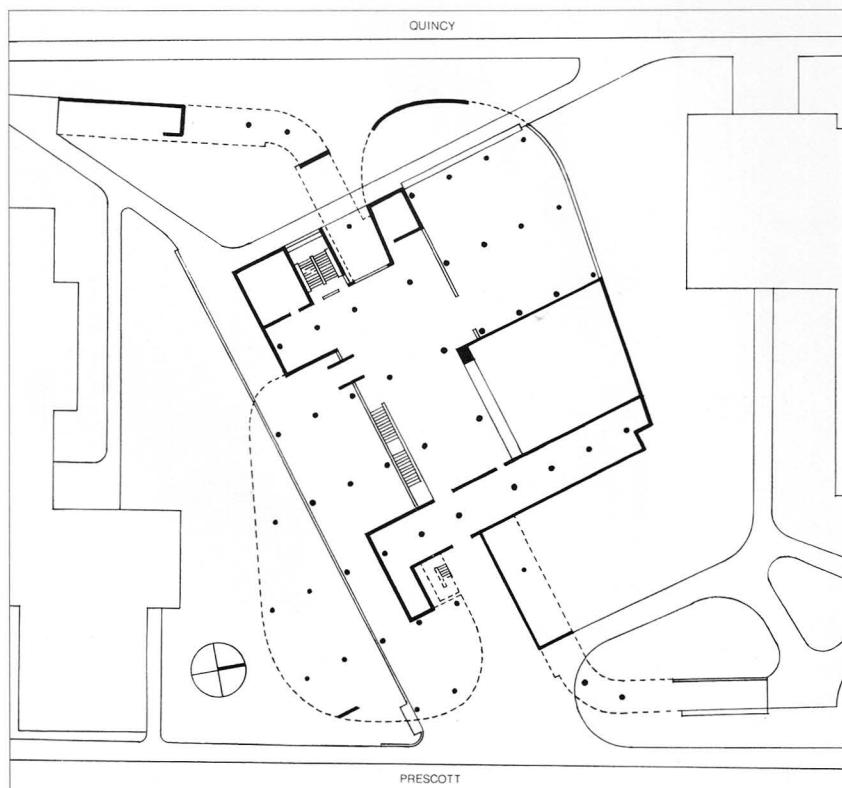


Fig. 5. Grade level plan

and challenges to “natural” seamless perception. Such films question the reality our prevailing cultural and social institutions condition us to view.¹⁹

Vision, Movement, World

In his book *Human Posture: The Nature of Inquiry*, referred to above, John Schumacher²⁰ discusses possibilities regarding motion, vision and space in the everyday world in ways reminiscent of some of Bazin’s, Deleuze’s and Bürch’s discussions on the nature of film.²¹ Human vision is an action intimately connected to and working with the world. Schumacher calls this *seeing*. The perspectival Cartesian world-view of classical physics and optics abstracted vision from the world and referred it to a transcendental, outside-of-time ego—the visual ego. Schumacher calls this *viewing*, which makes objective divisions and assumes a posture of transcendental immobility, i.e., that there is eternally present a visual Archimedean point from which nothing can ever be hidden or obscured. Both *seeing* and *viewing* constitute the way we are as humans in the world. An important premise for the vision Schumacher discusses is the notion that to varying degrees all events in the world become hidden away, i.e., out of sight, obscured, even when “in view”. These events and our seeing them are further predicated on a sense of the visual world, the world of *seeing*, in which one is

*always embedded in an order of movement, working with a “stretch” of space and time, with no favored reference point; each place—including my place—is connected to its neighbor, that is, co-made with its neighbor.*²²

“Space” in these terms is neither independent of our position in it nor of time. The far and near sides of such a “space” do not exist simultaneously as in classical physics (which in fact invented space as we commonly think of it), i.e., these sides do not really exist

in such a way that we can encompass them completely and veridically from a *point-of-view*. They exist for the most part through our action or intervention with them. The distance between far and near cannot be abstracted from time. This vision is inherently sensual and our predisposition to “view” the world leads us to suppress this sensuality.

Implicit to Schumacher’s notion of space and time is a lack of transparency. “Space” is not actually transparent to our vision. One cannot stand impassively detached from any objects, events, situations and their concatenations, “read” them and derive a true, complete picture of them. Such a notion of reading is a long standing formal strategy in both the design and criticism of architecture. As a practice, however, it is one among many for understanding architecture and is valid as long as one employs it with a critical reflectivity that acknowledges the inherent opacity of the visual world.²³ Space then becomes space-time movement, and the world becomes “the eye-head-brain-body-world system”.²⁴ Like the film frame, human vision is inherently a masking as well as revealing process.

Carpenter Center

Implied in the preceding remarks is a vast, virtually unexplored, realm of motion and “distractiveness”. An awareness of various filmic concerns and operations and their parallels with lived experience can help us to expand conceptually our current understanding of architectural theory and practice. I have chosen to examine Le Corbusier’s Carpenter Center in these terms because I think it illuminates and illustrates some of them quite well. I am neither trying to make a case from the uniqueness of the Carpenter Center in relationship to these issues nor am I trying to argue that it is representative of more general principles. And I certainly do not see it as supplying any

formulas for a new architecture. My comments about it grow out of my own repeated, diverse experiences of the Carpenter Center building and my study of it within the context of Le Corbusier's *oeuvre*. For several years these have formed the nucleus of a first-year graduate theory seminar that I teach. Though not made out of distraction, I believe the following discussion is distractive because it is not intended to articulate the nature of this work of architecture. Instead, I wish to travel along and occasionally slip to either side off that fragile boundary between articulation and the experience of architecture.

I believe there is something to one's experiences of architectural space at the Carpenter Center that to an extent lies outside any of Le Corbusier's own pronouncements, theoretical or otherwise. An example of such divergence emerges from examining briefly Le Corbusier's answer to a question put to him regarding Ronchamp and his own religious belief: "I have not experienced the miracle of faith, but I have often known the miracle of ineffable space."²⁵ Thus, even in a denial, he put the possibility of certain spatial experiences on the same plane with a kind of spirituality. But, while there are mysteries of spatial experience that may lie outside of language, this does not necessarily place them in a secularized, neo-Platonic evocation of spirit. They may exist in the shifting liminalities of our everyday experiences and actions in the world distinct from speech.²⁶ It is appreciation of these experiences that I am after.

Le Corbusier's Carpenter Center is governed by the principle of the section both transversally and longitudinally—especially with respect to its bridge-ramp. However, the representation of this particular sectional control using the conventional means of the section drawing, even with some modifications, is very limited. I tried on several occasions to develop a series of

sectional drawings that demonstrated this control but was unable to do so to my satisfaction. I concluded that because this bridge-ramp changes continuously along its length in either orientation or elevation or both, there is an implicit mobility, especially to its transverse sections. These mobile sections are somehow like the conventional architectural section simply because one can unquestionably conceive of their existence. Yet, one cannot quite represent them via the convention of the architectural section, singly or in a series like a cartoon strip. What ultimately seems more descriptive is the kind of photo-montage, in the manner of David Hockney, shown in Figure 1.

Each mobile section through the bridge-ramp must be understood conceptually as related intimately to the others and serves as a sort of frame of movement-image, i.e., it seems to be an attempt by architecture to emancipate "pure movement" from the experience of traversing this site (Whether this is possible or not must remain a moot point in this essay.) Such a quality Le Corbusier called the "promenade architecturale" — a use of movement around and through the building to help establish the sense of its whole. It is a concept that figures prominently throughout his architectural *oeuvre*. In *Towards a New Architecture* he states:

*The human eye, in its investigations, is always on the move and the beholder himself is always turning right and left, shifting about.*²⁷

Vision, for Le Corbusier, was profoundly connected to movement. This notion was very likely inspired in large part by his rich and rewarding experiences at the Acropolis.²⁸ There he confronted architecture as a fluid interplay of space, time, movement and landscape. Yet, being an idealist, his purposes were always to reveal some immobile and transcendent values in the forms and spaces of architecture. Movement in this sense allows one to

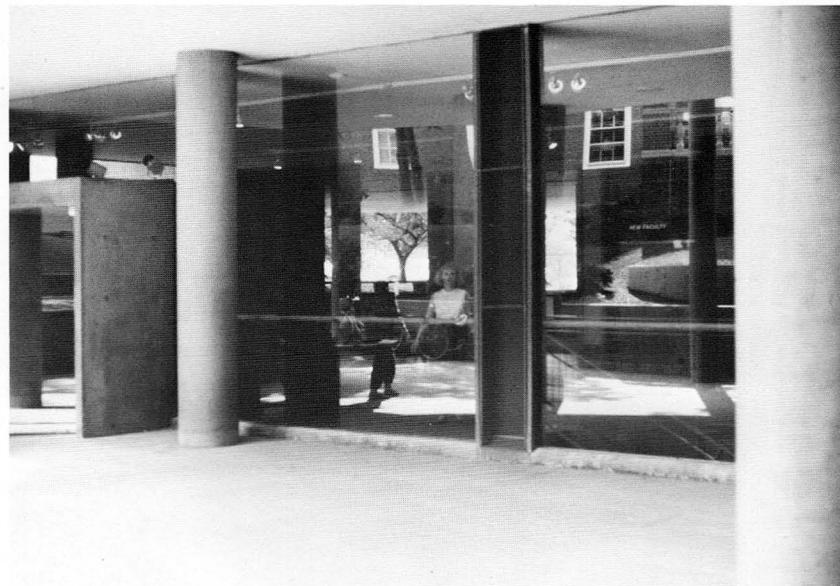


Fig. 6a. View through grade level plan



Fig. 6b. View through grade level space from interior



Fig. 7. View from grade level lobby to underside of bridge-ramp

achieve a kind of conceptual Archimedean point where the Idea of the building would crystallize. This might help to explain the sense of detachment the bridge-ramp seems to have from the rest of the building, acting almost as a kind of viewing platform (Figures 2 & 3). However, it does so paradoxically. It slices decisively through the building's cubic mass to construct a rich, deep space that utterly belies the cube's implied centrality. It occupies an indecisive or elusive "center", i.e., your memory of the cubic envelope, seen as you approach, allows you to posit a topographical center, presumed to be on the bridge-ramp. Here the entire structure surrounds you, but you are not given an opportunity to command this center stationarily, if indeed you could definitely locate it. Wherever you are along the bridge-ramp, except at its high point, you stand on a slope and are aware that the weight of your body is differentiated in gravity's field (The only level part of the bridge-ramp is at its zenith and here you encounter two flanking options for movement.) Even if you don't move, movement is internalized by your imbalance on this slope. You see the architecture that surrounds you and you know within your body that this seeing is neither a disembodied nor an immobile view. It is seeing grounded in a particular situation of forced instability and is inseparable from movement. Were this imbalance not enough, you might also discern that here in the building's dark heart, where its southern perimeter of concrete brise-soleil seems to hang in the distance like a luminous curtain of vapor, you have a curious sense of not really being in a building at all (Figure 4).

This bridge-ramp is clearly not the device of a transcendental revelation of the Carpenter Center as a winged cube. From here you are completely oblivious to several engaging qualities of its spaces. Such disjunction would almost a fortiori have to be the case given Le Corbusier's determined use of

the Dom-Ino strategy of differentiated spatial lamina. As Paul Venable Turner has observed, the invention of the Dom-Ino initiated a potent and difficult fusion of Le Corbusier's innate idealism with the positivistic architectural rationalism of August Perret; a fusion that came to characterize many other dimensions of the work of his career. There is, for example, at ground level a physically differentiated but visually continuous space, the axis of which cuts diagonally across that of the bridge ramp (Figures 5 & 6). The bridge-ramp is invisible to it except at a critical point on this axis where the west wall of the lobby opens to reveal the underside of the bridge-ramp and its support as placid abstractions in an idyllic landscape (Figure 7). From the bridge-ramp, however, the presence of this differentiated, diagonal spatial continuum is virtually obscured.

Completely unrelated to this lobby space counter-axis is the startling parallax space of the third-floor south studio. This space of shifting multiplicities has considerable tactile quality and resists being read at a distance (Figure 8). You become absorbed with it, feeling it, moving with it, discovering the slightly perceptible variations in the diameters of its columns, the initially oblique and momentarily disruptive sight of their placements as stochastic perforations of space rather than as a rationalized technical necessity.

In part, these perceptions result from your line-of-motion through the entry to this space either from the dappled limpidity of the fire stair enclosure or the now largely vestigial main entry at the apex of the bridge-ramp (Figure 9). The experience of this oblique movement must of course be coupled with the variable and complex curvature of the two tiered brise-soleil wall. It is simultaneously controlled by the Dom-Ino's linear perspective and the contrary of this perspective—an opening of depth caused by the brise-soleil's variably accelerating concavi-

ty. Woven into all of this, and in fact heightening the sensation of diffuse intensity, are the changing evidences of life and light in and at the edges of this studio. Perception seems somehow to merge with movement in this superimposition, this vibrating dissolve of space and human activity.

The cinematic qualities of “depth-of-field” and “out-of-field” both have correspondence to the experience at Carpenter Center where it is depth-of-field, in this case an architectural induction of movement, that provokes a confrontation with the out-of-field. Depth-of-field in the cinematic realism of Bazin’s theory is thought to be a way of unifying cinematic space, making it congruent with naturalistic pictorial space. However, both the film theorists Jean-Louis Comolli and Marc Vernet have argued convincingly that deep space (i.e., the space of “deep focus”) is a pluralizing agent.³⁰ The difference is important, because a pluralized space may also be open and dynamic. It can be argued that the space of the bridge-ramp, especially as it cuts through (i.e. literally sections) this building, could be understood in a purely intellectual way as *the* unifying concept. But you experience and come to understand this space as plural intensities. Deep space, particularly in the terms of Comolli and Vernet vis-a-vis film, is an evident but very complex phenomenon in the Quincy Street approach. As you round the curve on the bridge-ramp an oblique, regulated depth momentarily opens up (Figure 10). Then, as you assume a frontal relationship to it, the building completely encompasses your field of vision and loses its qualities of free standing, detached object in the landscape. Here occurs a heterogeneous and paradoxical play of the shallow depths and taut surface characteristics of the two wings framing the bridge-ramp at its precipitous high point. At this high point is an instaurant interval of blankness and emptiness where vision is momentarily arrested and

spatial depth in the classical sense of the “viewpoint” is annulled. The distant view seems irrelevant, covered by this perplexing openness. Space,—that is, naturalistic, pictorial space—past this point seems to disintegrate, its codes of perspectival uniformity ignored (Figure 11).

Toward Prescott Street space falls away along the bridge-ramp and is distorted by the obliqueness of the building wall across the street with respect to your position. Coupled with this, as you move, is the sensation of an enveloping and continuous outer perimeter formed by the Prescott Street building wall and the wall of the Faculty Club seen piecemeal and parallaxically through the brise-soleil to the south (also when the curtains of the Sert Gallery are drawn open the south wall of the Fogg Museum is included in this panorama). It is here that precise locations and reference points to the normative Harvard grid all become unclear and you lose the sense of spatial ubiquity, centered control and the privilege of the eye as a viewing apparatus. You must move head and body all around to take it all in, but taking it all in at once is not possible. Despite its darkened confines this place is no Camera Obscura. You are in a world where vision is deterritorialized by the vacillation of parallax and an oscillation between flatness and depth which seems to be both Purist and primitive. Existing categories of description seem to fail with this growing demand for rethinking or restructuring space in expanded terms with time and movement, in what John Schumacher calls “an order of co-making.”

In the end, what may be truly engaging about the Carpenter Center is how it undoes and I believe surpasses the ideology which it is partly intended to represent. Its displacement of the centered, authorial subject in relation to visibility through blankness is somewhat reminiscent of Le Corbusier’s



Fig. 8a. Composite view into third floor studio

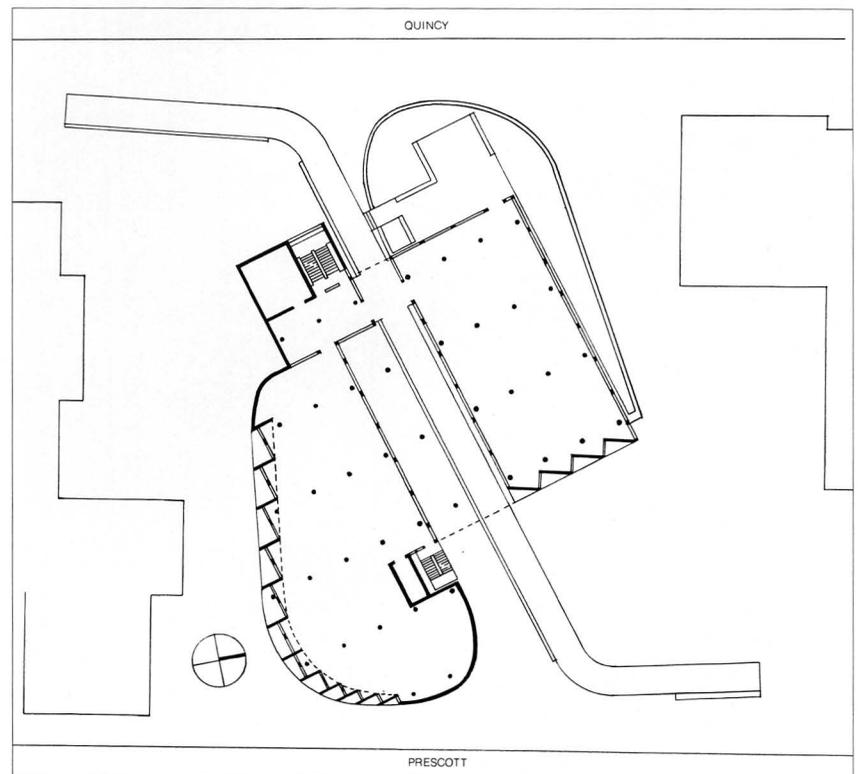


Fig. 9. Third floor plan



Fig. 8b. View into third floor studio



Fig. 10a. Approach from Quincy Street



Fig. 10b. Opening up of regulated depth

earlier, more immediately obvious and perhaps less adventurous excursions into this deflective realm at the Villa Schwob and La Tourette. The space/time/movement of the Carpenter Center bridge-ramp, itself neither inside nor outside, neither center nor non-center, is the *raison d'être* of this building which it pulls apart. Its distractiveness allows one to grasp only a small piece of the visible. It works to cancel the building's own purposes of representivity and is the building's "structuring disillusion".

This term, "structuring disillusion", relevant here to concerns relating architecture and representation, is what, as Jean-Louis Comolli states in his inquiry into the purposes of film,

*...offers the offensive strength of cinematic representation and allows it to work against the completing, reassuring, mystifying representations of ideology. It is that strength that is needed, and that work of disillusion, if cinematic representation is to do something other than pile visible on visible, if it is, in certain rare flashes, to produce in our sight the very blindness which is at the heart of this visible.*³²

Acknowledgment

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Notes

1. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" in *Illuminations* (Harry Zohn, trans., New York: Schocken Books, 1978) p.239.
2. *Ibid.*, p.240.
3. *Ibid.*, pp.240-241. Benjamin's statement may remind one of Adolf Loos' evocation of the fundamentality of architecture's sensual dimensions. See Adolf Loos, "Regarding Economy" (compiled by Bohuslav Markalous, Francis R. Johnes, trans.) in *Raumplan vs. Plan Libre* (Max Risselada, ed., New York: Rizzoli, 1988) pp.139-140 where Loos states:

What I want in my rooms is for people to feel substance all around them, for it to act upon them, for them to know the enclosed space, to feel the fabric, the wood, above all to perceive it sensually, with sight and touch, for them to dare to sit comfortably and feel the chair over a large area of their external bodily senses, and to say: this is what I call sitting!

4. See Martin Jay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity" in *Vision and Visuality* (Hal Foster, ed., Seattle, WA: Press, 1988).
5. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema I: The Movement Image* (Hugh Tomlinson & Barbara Haberjam, trans., Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986) p16.
6. Siegfried Kracauer, *Theory of Film* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960) p.301. Again there are some intriguing reminders of Adolf Loos. This time with respect to Loos' discussion in his 1910 essay "Architecture" wherein he asserts that "Art" has a limited role to play in architecture. Although Loos saw art as revolutionary and Kracauer saw it as reactionary, both believed it to be totalistic.
7. John Schumacher, *Human Posture: The Nature of Inquiry* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1989) p.77.
8. Kracauer, *Op. Cit.*, pp.71-72, pp.285-304.
9. Maya Deren quoted in P. Adams Sitney, *Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974) p.9.
10. Maya Deren, "Cinematography: The Creative Use of Reality" in *Film Theory and Criticism* (Gerald Mast & Marshall Cohen, eds., New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

11. Deleuze, Op. Cit., p.74.
12. Jean-Louis Comolli, "Machines of the Visible" in Mast & Cohen, eds., Op. Cit., pp.757-758.
13. André Bazin, *What is Cinema?* (Hugh Gray, ed. and trans., Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967) pp.95-98.
14. Deleuze, Op. Cit., p.83.
15. Bazin, Op. Cit., pp.102-107
16. Noel Burch, *Theory of Film Practice* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1973) p.17.
17. In rare cases, e.g. Louis Malle's *Zazie dans le métro*, actual parts of the filmmaking apparatus are allowed to intrude, thus disrupting the apparent continuity of cinematic.
18. Deleuze, Op. Cit., p.23.
19. This issue is addressed in depth in Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema II: The Time Image* (Hugh Tomlinson & Barbara Habberjam, trans., Minneapolis, MN; University of Minnesota Press, 1988) pp.223,224 ff. Here Deleuze discusses the increasing preoccupation of post-WWII cinema not so much with representing the world but the ways in which we both represent and think about the world.
20. Schumacher, Op. Cit. See especially "Part One".
21. See Jay, Op. Cit. Also in the same book see Norman Bryson, "The Gaze in the Expanded Field" and Jonathon Crary, "Modernizing Vision". Schumacher's discussion and observations parallel those on vision and art made by Bryson, Crary and Jay.
22. Schumacher, Op. Cit., p.67.
23. The complexity of these issues, which I gloss over too quickly in this article, have always been important and fascinating ones for me. I have discussed the notion and problematics of transparency in architecture in greater depth, albeit not exhaustively, in "Obscuring the Objects of Desire," *Threshold*, No.1 (New York: Rizzoli, 1982) pp.83-92. This article was not adequately proofread by the editors and there is an unfortunate transposition of text. Anyone who is interested may contact me for a copy of the correct version. Concomitant with this issue of transparency is a much larger one which regards architecture as fundamentally an ethical activity. I have attempted to address this in "INMEDIAS-RES", *VIA*, No.10 (New York: Rizzoli, 1990) pp.18-37.



Fig. 11. Composite straight ahead approach to bridge-ramp apex

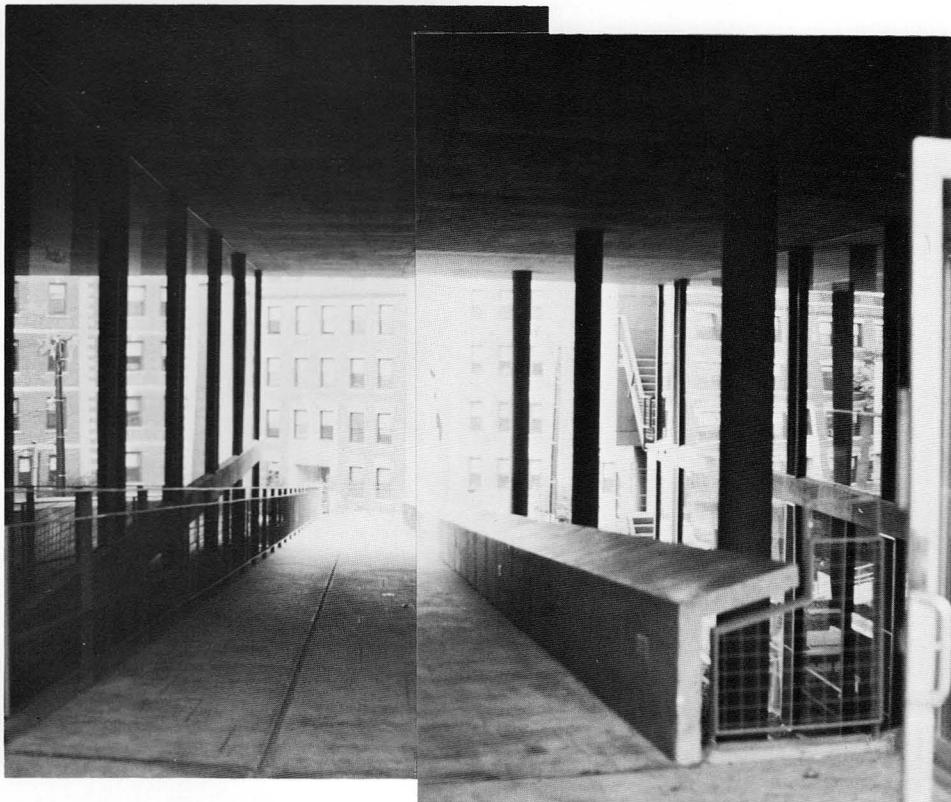


Fig. 12. View down bridge-ramp toward Prescott Street

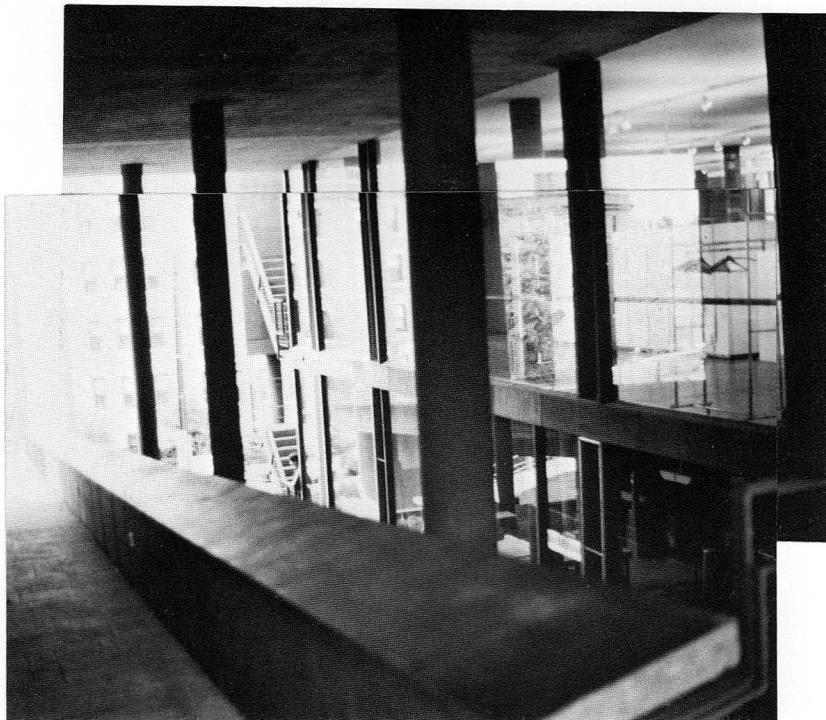


Fig. 13. Composite view to north glazed wall of third floor studio space

25. Quoted in William J.R. Curtis, *Le Corbusier: Ideas and Forms* (Oxford, UK: Phaidon Press, 1986) p.179. In *New World of Space* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1948) p.8, Le Corbusier makes a statement similar to this one. From its context, the neo-Platonic thrust of his thinking is evident:

The fourth dimension is the moment of limitless escape evoked by an exceptionally just consonance of the plastic means employed.

It is not the effect of the subject chosen; it is a victory of proportion in everything — the anatomy of the work as well as the carrying out of the artist's intentions whether consciously controlled or not. Achieved or unachieved, these intentions are always existent and rooted in intuition, that miraculous catalyst of acquired, assimilated, even forgotten wisdom. In a complete and successful work there are hidden masses of implications, a veritable world which reveals itself to those whom it may concern, which means to those whom it may concern, which means to those who deserve it.

Then a boundless space opens up, effaces the walls, drives away contingent presences, accomplishes the miracle of ineffable space.

I am not conscious of the miracle of faith, but I often live that of ineffable space, the consumption of plastic emotion.

26. In this observation I open a set of questions about ethics and practice which lie beyond the scope of the present discussion. Suffice to say here that such an inquiry would include Wittgenstein's differentiations between *gesagt* (saying) and *gezeigt* (showing).

27. Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture* (Frederick Etchells, trans.) New York: Praeger, 1960) p.177

28. See Richard Etlin, "Le Corbusier, Choisy, and French Hellenism: The Search for a New Architecture", *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. LXIX, No. 2 (June 1987) pp. 264-278 for a discussion of the historical dimensions of spatial perceptions and the Acropolis.

29. Paul Venable Turner, *The Education of Le Corbusier* (New York: Garland, 1977) pp.52-54. Pp. 45-55 and 122-127 provide a

concise and informative discussion of the productive opposition between the turn of-the-century French architectural culture's positivistic rationalism and Le Corbusier's own Idealist values, especially with regard to his development of the Dom-Ino.

30. Comolli, Op. Cit., pp. 754-755 and Marc Vernet, "Structuration of Space" translated from *Lectures du Film* (Paris: Editions Albatros) p.14.

31. The quotation is from Schumacher, Op. Cit., p.67. Although one might confidently make an argument that Purist painting intensifies the perception of the simultaneous presence of near and far, therefore reinforcing the "world-in-view", I think that a convincing counter-argument can be made that the various overlays, juxtapositions of views and paradoxes of vision in these paintings has just the opposite effect.

32. Comolli, Op. Cit., p.760