Narrative Film

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Canada

Abstract

Narrative , Film, Architecture
A Post Production Complex
Vancouver,
British Columbia.

Mark G.E. Aquilon
May 1999

This Master's Design Project attempts to address the fissures that have arisen between architecture, film, narrative and culture through the design of a post production facility.
This design project proposes a Post Production Facility for Independent film-makers in Vancouver British Columbia. The framework for this facility is already in place as the site is frequented by the film industry as a filming location. This project approaches the design problem with an attitude toward thinking about architecture in a more humble and conscientious way. By this I mean that the intervention reacts to and facilitates relationships between users of the facility, the public, the existing built forms and nature.

The design strategy responds to events surrounding the site creating its context. The strategy that unified this project was conceiving of the site as an "architectural promenade". With this strategy in place I examined our relationships to events; specific cues formed from the collisions, intersections, compressions, and expressions of gatherings found throughout the site. From here I was able to interpret a narrative journey which focused attention on the act of participating with the landscape.

Through a critical essay and the design of a facility for independent filmmakers, this project examines significant issues surrounding the role of architecture, narrative and film within this framework, and investigates architectural strategies that might combat this devaluation of our culture. The essay provides the theoretical basis for the architectural intervention through an analysis of the relationship between film, architecture and narrative; an interpretation of how these narrative based mediums fulfil or denigrate our cultural position, the architectural implications of this shift, and the status of meaning amidst these developments. I propose that an understanding and acknowledgement of the difference between place and "placelessness" is where meaning can be found in contemporary film, architecture and culture. The architectural intervention seeks to reveal these strategies through more humble architectural conventions by stretching boundaries and norms yet elevating the field of experiencing and understanding our relationship with the landscape and by transforming the "event " of narrative into an everyday occurrence that individuals acknowledge and celebrate.

If it is through place that we locate ourselves then it is through narrative that we recognize place.

Acknowledgments

I would like to take this opportunity to
thank those people who encouraged
and supported my architectural studies
at the University of Calgary

T a

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I n

The threshold provides the key to the transition and connection between areas with divergent territorial claims and, as a place in its own right, it constitutes, essentially, the spatial condition for the meeting and dialogue between areas of different orders.   Herman Hertzberger

Lessons for Students in Architecture. pg. 32

Introduction [conditions]
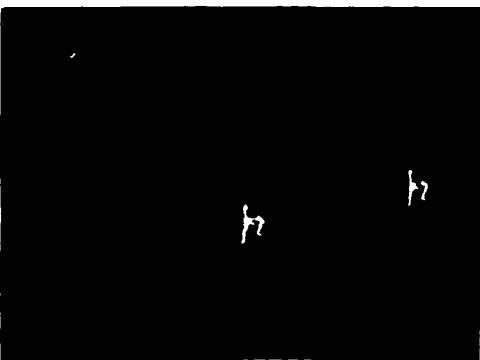
This Masters Degree project focuses on a post production facility for Independent film-makers located on the north shore of Burrard Inlet in Vancouver, British Columbia. The studio facility sits on a site once occupied by Versatile Pacific shipyards, however most recently the site has become a place for popular movie and television productions.

The document develops the context in which the post production facility sits. It documents the programmatic and site requirements of the facility and transforms them into the built environment through an awareness of our position in the world and suggests a way to design which considers our relationship with nature based on conventional methods and perhaps somewhat avant guard relationships. These discoveries can then be applied to the project in the hope of resolving the cultural abyss we find ourselves in regarding social/ cultural issues and what I charge results in the condition of "placelessness" within our culture.

This project is an investigation of the shifts in our perception of the world and our understanding of meaning as a result of these shifts. I feel the prominence we place on the technological nature of our contemporary consumer culture has resulted in the cultural condition of "placelessness". "Placelessness" being the nothingness of our daily existence more pertinently linked to the loss of any connection to our relationship with the landscape; where people exist simultaneously in places and without place.
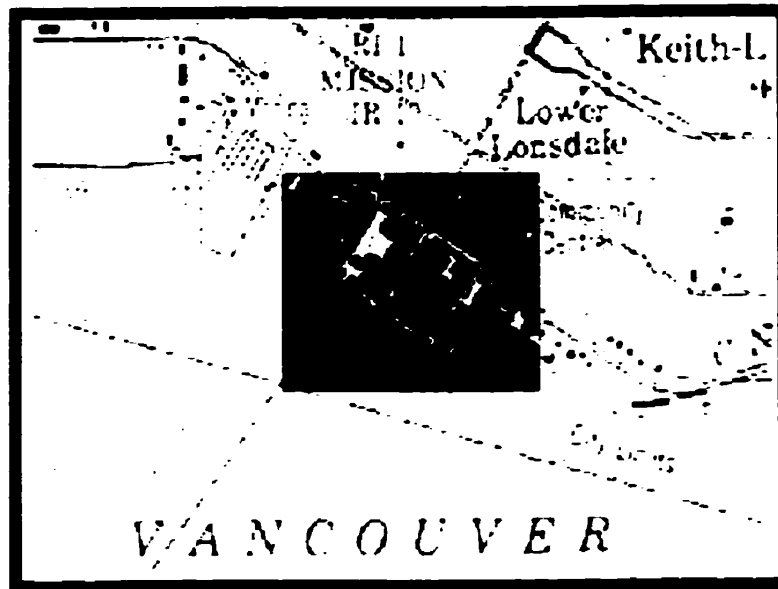

1. the threshold

1.

[Place and "placelessness" is a reality because it is constructed physically as we exist in "places" yet without "place" because of our technological context.]   In this way "placelessness" can be physically and temporally sensed, described, and acted upon yet forgotten in an instant. We can thus remove ourselves immediately from any context seemingly without consequence, however it has now created the social condition of "placelessness" within our culture.

"Placelessness" has tangible qualities because it manifests itself from a physical source [virtual reality, cell phones, internet, video conferencing, telephone, digital images, .etc] and becomes familiar through usage. The addition of the cultural representation of this manifestation into reality as we understand it forms "placelessness". As a time and place based culture we run the risk of dissolving all qualities associated with place through the familiar and even predictable advances in technology. Increasingly, as a culture we are systematically placing our memories in or on increasingly fragile two-dimensional mediums: i.e. photographs, television, film and digital devices.   While photographs are a fairly stable medium limited by time, we are creating ever increasingly complex forms of storage that may last only days or better yet, only hours through advances in digital technologies. The temporality and fragile nature of storing our memories in these devices confirms the modern condition of "placelessness".

2
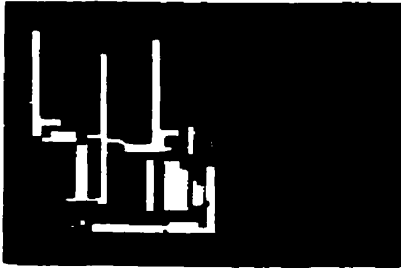
des

design project

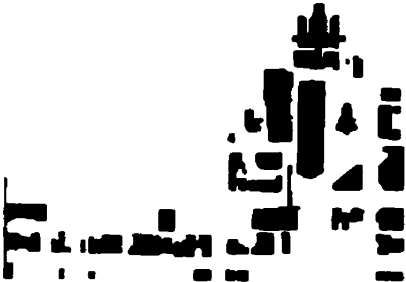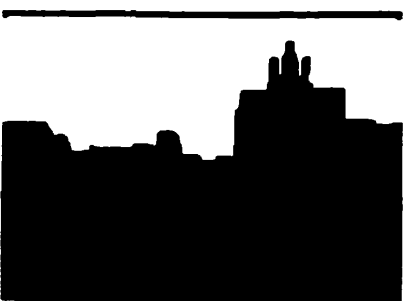2. site map

design project

site

3.site form

4.infrastructure


5.built form

6.threshold

I chose Versatile Pacific's shipyard as the location for a post production facility for independent film makers because of its geographic location within North America, the Lower Mainland, the City of Vancouver, and North Vancouver in particular. The Site is directly connected to the Vancouver's downtown core, secondly North Shore studios are only 5 minutes away and thirdly, the Bridge Studios are only 20 minutes away. However, the main impetus for choosing this loction is because the site is continually being used by film production companies as a location spot. When considering the design of a facility for an industry who's formal operations aid in the fragmentation of "place" within culture it was important to give the industry a place to centralize the production of films.

Versatile Pacific Shipyards has a large physical presence in North Vancouver yet its potential public nature is under utilized and de-composing with time. In this sense there is a fear among locals that its dilapidated state and commercial value as a waterfront site has marked this spot for developer condos, hotels and marinas. The site is situated along Lonsdale Avenue which runs North and South and Main Street which parallels the shore line creating the sites hard edge conditions that act to divorce the site from any public component. Adjacent to the site sits Lonsdale Quay, which is a significant and popular Vancouver outdoor market/ restaurant area, connected to the downtown city centre through a short ride on the sea bus. The existing infrastructure in this area is an eclectic mix of industrial, urban, commercial, public, and residential forms. I believe that the post production facility would rejuvenate the site without destroying the character which exists there.

Lonsdale market and the public walkway stop just short of the site where the lower road meets the corner and turns up Lonsdale Avenue. With this program in place it was logical to continue the mixed-use feeling of the area through my site and allow for public functions to take place on an extension of the "architectural promenade" from Lonsdale Quay. From an analysis of the site I found that the ideas inherent within the "architectural promenade" gives this area, the site and the project a common framework from which I was able to work.
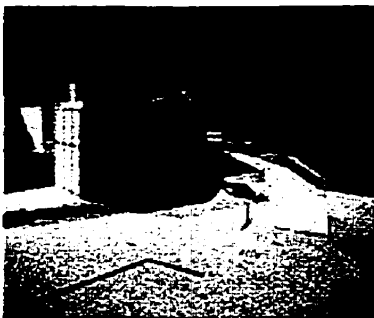
4.
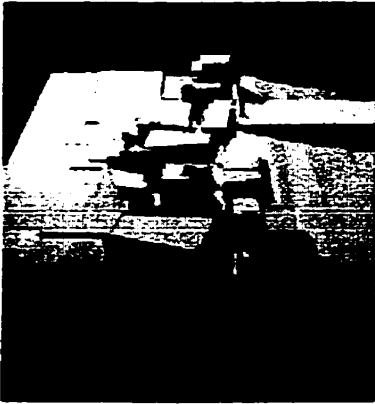
Physically I chose to extend the site outward towards Lonsdale and then lengthen the promenade from Lonsdale Quay market. This strategy proved to bleed the physical qualities of each site into the other, which created the needed link between venues. The promenade seemingly begins at Lonsdale market travelling throughout the production facility creating its spine. It then becomes the project's metaphor and an integral part of the theoretical discussion.


7 model shot

hybrid places

The promenade of the facility has been extended from the most public area, that being Lonsdale Quay. It penetrates the entire facility creating the spine that metaphorically bridges the fissures between the built forms. The promenade gives new meaning to the site, in that it crosses the conventional public realm with the private realm, thus allowing the public/private spaces to encounter the unexpected through participation in public/

8 promenade extention

private functions, spaces, and events. For programmatic concerns the individual production studios would be off limits to public access, however the conceptual framework of the facility allows the public realm to encapsulate the private realm. In this way the built form sits inside the public realm, which is the contextual site. The design strategies incorporate qualities from the public realm [being Lonsdale Quay] while relaxing the formal definitions of private space [as we understand them] to foster the unfolding of activities or events in these hybrid public/private spaces. Therefore, the public atmosphere of Lonsdale Quay flows into the site through the continuation of the "architectural promenade". Thus it creates a mixed site in which we engage and are engaged with our surroundings. This "architectural promenade" creates the physical link between itself, the structure and the site creating a mixed context and connection to place.

5.

9 west ramp

The design balances the notions of this hybrid space through the incorporation of the accessibility and functions of a public space, and the unpredictable nature and unfolding of events in the public realm. These hybrid spaces can be attributed to the notion of taking a narrative journey where our surroundings are a reflection of our place in the landscape. It was an integral part of the strategy that the public nature of this facility provided the participant with a legible quality through the recognition of the urban form's public nature and provide the mechanisms for guiding one through the site and the facility. These elements are designed to describe scales which are to be recognized as a hybrid space. This strategy in effect allows the participant to question and then to acknowledge the multiple levels hidden in their relationship with the landscape. It is our formal association

between the public/private spaces that gives legibility to the architectural promenade as a facilitator between public and private realms thus creating these hybrid spaces and a needed link to the site and place.

10. facility overview
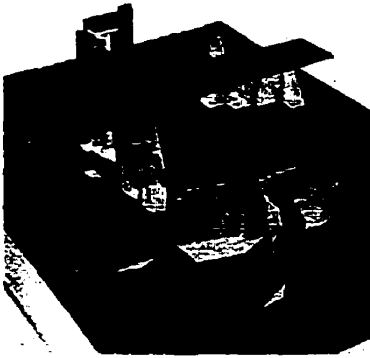
The promenade creates the processional, which facilitates the circulation through, between, around, within and above the structure. It is designed to expose the spectator to their surroundings and initiate an engagement with the building, site, and the city to create vignettes and events. The complex sectional relationship that results from the raised promenade and the ensuing ramp systems heightens the phenomenal relationship between us, the land, the ocean and the sky. The processional and elevated structure is utilized for three reasons. Firstly, so the intervention is sensitive to the site. Secondly, it develops a narrative journey which consists of a plot, a story with a beginning, middle, and end, with characters and unforeseen circumstances and events. Thirdly, it introduces a public aspect into the site through the working dimensions of the facility. The promenade is designed as an extension of the existing urban fabric, that being, the public nature of the area surrounding the site. Contextual conditions of the site offer opportunities to extend and enrich the public relationship between the North Shore community, the movie industry, and the abandoned Versatile Pacific Ship Yard of North Vancouver.

11 auditorium block
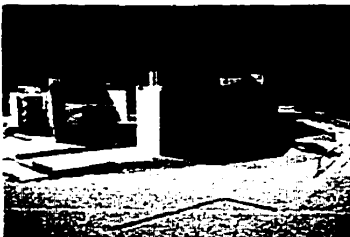
12 waterfront

public venues

6.

The facility's formal public venues, the auditorium and restaurant, are located nearest to Lonsdale Quay. This approach allowed for the design of conditions into the project and not the conditioning of the design process. They establish one entry condition and a destination to ensure a constantly revolving public dimension within the site. In conjunction with the auditorium and restaurant, the waterfront promenade and Pier reinforce this idea of a public realm on the site. The working aspect of the facility would also house traffic at various times of the day and night contributing to the public nature of the site and creation of the hybrid space. The entry for those employees who choose to drive their car is directly across Main street. The facility utilizes the old parking system and entry condition established by Vesitile Pacific Shipyards which is located across Main Street. All facility employees attain entry to the site on foot through either the North or West gates. For employees using the sea bus as a link, the west gate is the most direct route to the facility. It is an essential part of the strategy that everyone enters the site on foot creating events and unexpected meeting places. This way people are more inclined to stop, mingle, and discover the landscape around them.
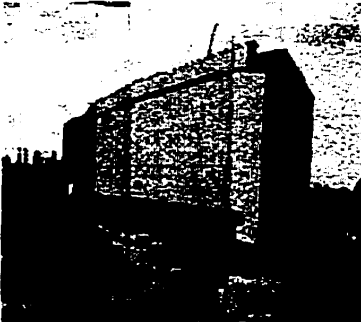
c o

context

13. pier

14. built form

15. sound stage

The structure responds to the strong directional characteristics that are inherent in the site as a result of the historical tenets of a shipyard. Every element on the site points either inward toward the land or outward to the ocean. The facility attempts to contrast the unidirectionality of the site by strengthening the physical line between land and ocean creating threshold. The facility sits horizontally against the existing built forms setting up various conditions creating places for events.

It is an essential part of the strategy that the architectural experience can be intensified through the layering, overlapping, and juxtaposition of architectural elements such as context, form, program, and materiality. Programmatic elements of the facility juxtapose the experience of the promenade in a manner that is only evident through an individual's experience of the journey through the site and facility. When an individual visits the facility and experiences the surrounding space and spaces, they will see not only their relationship to the structure, context, site and existing built forms but the facilities relationship to these architectural conventions. The architectural strategy is to emphasize the relationship of the building to its site and context and provide for potential events and activities to unfold. The site can be engaged in the design through framing unexpected views, blending public and private spaces to create hybrid space, developing the building's relationship with nature, and the acknowledgement or denial of the site's preconceived directions and tenets. The strategy contends that the context of an architectural work can be manipulated in relation to the expected location dictated by precedents, program, and function. Positioning the building in an unexpected context comments directly on its meaning and allows its theoretical site to have a foundation and connection to place. In this way the site imbues a sense of the building's relationship with nature and creates a potential for self- awareness in individuals or groups. Further, positioning the facility to act as a threshold, comments on its reason for being and allows "place" to have a theoretical foundation and a richer connection to site, film, architecture, culture, and narrative.

7.

pro

process & program

16 occupying space

journey – plot

The architectural intervention develops a strategy based on formal characteristics relating to a story and develops a plot with characters and themes accordingly. Through this idea a parallel was drawn between the built form and the strategy. This parallel enlightens the idea of the narrative journey which heightens our awareness of social, cultural issues and our relationship to the environment. In this way the promenade facilitates the idea of narrative and is the foundation or building block of the story. The plot which forms from the story line, is reflected in the fissured structure as a critical comment regarding the state of our relationship to nature. The promenade creates the needed link with the landscape, the existing built forms and develops the spine of the facility which spawns the idea of the journey reflecting on the level of our engagement with nature.

8.

17 marking threshold

threshold - fissures

The threshold can be defined in dozens of ways however, I chose to introduce the intervention as a new threshold. This new threshold creates place speaking directly to our cultural condition of "placelessness". In this way threshold turns the theoretical site into an event to be viewed, experienced and recorded at any level. The facility is placed sensitively on the wharf system hinting at the dynamic yet respectful relationship between land and ocean. In section, the facility has been elevated above the datum of the ocean to establish an anatomical scale and the relationships that form between the facility and the user at high and low watermark. The built form's relationship to land is of a delicate nature; touching the landscape at the point of public entry. In plan the built form counters the push and pull relationship of the existing structures with the ocean. The participant is moved vertically and horizontally in unison through the facility by way of the promenade, revealing the nature of the project, the site and the nature of their narrative journey. It is

important that the built form creates a narrative with the site through an event that marks threshold and rectifies the fissures created between architecture, film, and culture. These architectural gestures create events which are uncovered by the participant in the horizontal, vertical, plan and sectional qualities of the built form. These conventions act to balance the natural and constructed, public and private spaces within the dense urban fabric to reflect on our place in the landscape. This strategy of design within our placeless society provides architecture with an active and reactive dimension. A design where the permanence associated with an individual's transformation cannot be consumed by anyone or anything. This involves the incorporation of the sublime into the design, allowing for change and engagement between the world, the space, and the people moving and existing in it at different scales and perspectives.

program
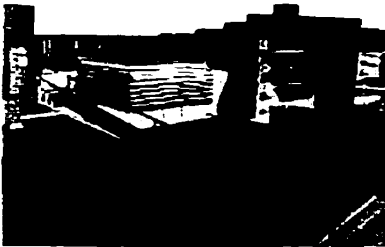
18. east ramp
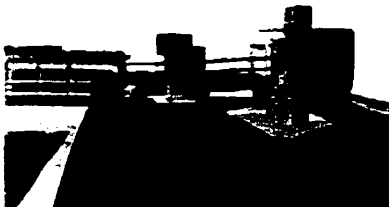
The requirements of a post production facility outlined the strategy from which I was to operate under. The sensitive nature of a post production facility calls for individual, insular and introverted studios with public presentation spaces. Individual in that they are singular working studios, insular in that they are sound sensitive and introverted by which the studio can be closed off from all direct access and light in order to facilitate editing, 9. mixing, image enhancing and digital processing necessary for editing film. This functional based program posed many challenges yet inspired a design strategy that allowed for communication, interaction and groupings creating the desired freedom on a larger scale. Technically there is one architectural convention [the promenade] surrounded by distinct spaces that create the idea of the narrative journey. One facilitates the event [the promenade] and the other [the hybrid realm] creates a productive working & living environment for the North Shore community. The project is such that you can be entirely isolated in your working studio and step into the most public of spaces, the promenade. In this way interior and exterior relationships are accentuated along with our awareness of this dynamic.

19. conference block

20. working facility

21. hybrid space

The structure should always be considered singular. It is a structure that houses a Post Production facility for independent film-makers. However, within this environment the structure can be broken into eleven separate entities. The official public area contains executive offices, the reception area, which is where public and private inquiries will be made, a restaurant and a thirty-five seat viewing auditorium. The restaurant will be open to the public to facilitate the traffic generated from both the complex and the architectural promenade extending from Lonsdale Quay which is the public market for the North Shore community. Next, the working content of the facility contains mixing studios, production studios, sound studios, pre-production studios, editing studios, ideas studios, tape-disk transfer studios, image enhancing studios, conference rooms, and administration offices. With this program requirement it stands to reason that restraint in technical requirements would be coupled with a highly dynamic public/private space which I refer to as the hybrid realm generating the facility.

10.

des

design documentation

These graphics analyze the temporal nature of the site at different scales which helped to inform the location and design of the facility.
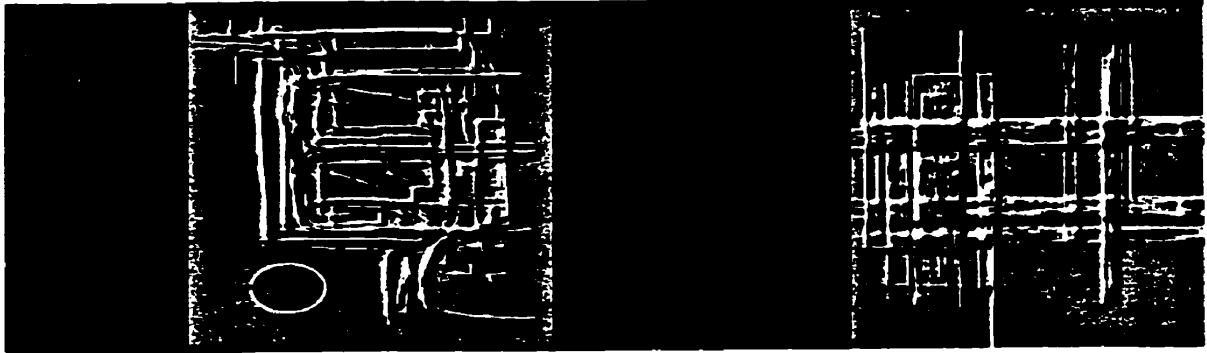
Each image represents elements on or around the site that were significant conditions to work with which helped to locate and create a place for the facility.
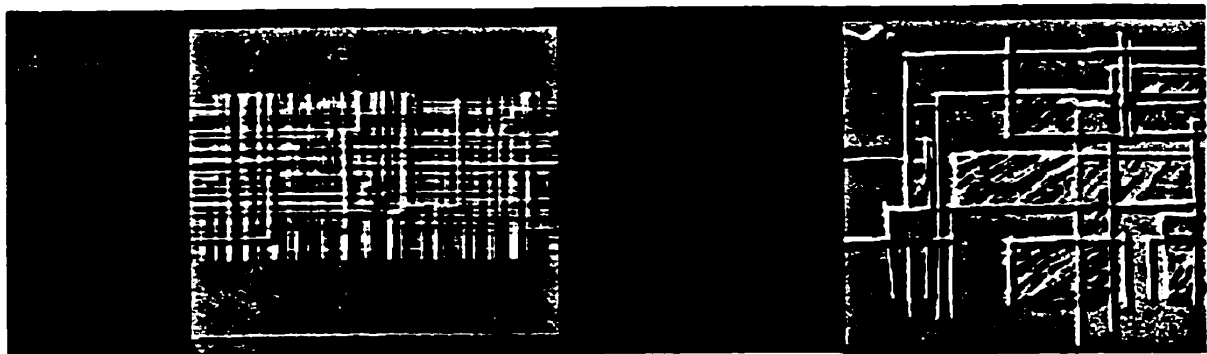
The nature of the site is uncovered in the working dialogue between pedestrians, traffic, work, built forms, materials, and functions.
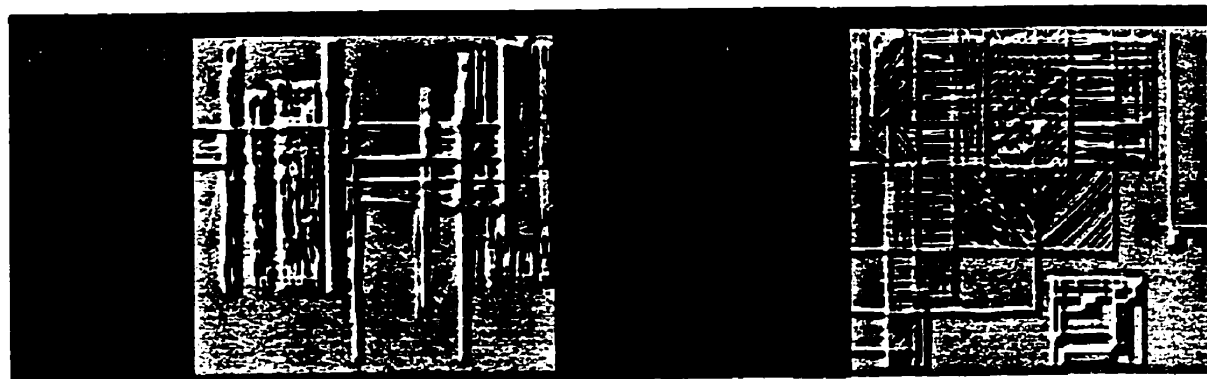
These conditions translated into circulation diagrams, groupings, layers, public private realms, edge conditions and a number of other factors which developed the

architectural strategy for this facility.

They defined the location for the facility, enlightened the promenade as a metaphor for the narrative journey and developed the link between the site and Lonsdale Quay.

12.

figure ground graphics

Site plan: first image

fissure graphic: second image

promenade graphic: third image

first level: forth image

second level: fifth image

third level: sixth image

The following figure/ground images graphically describe the patterns and level of involvement that exists around us daily that we are consciously unaware of. Curiously these figure/ground images are analogous to the questions I am exploring.

The problem being, that most people have been conditioned to operate on only one level of awareness and that it is as simple as shifting scales [large or small] that informs people at another level of awareness which enriches our experience with the object at another level. Therefore, by shifting scales we have the opportunity to view our place in nature in a way that was previously foreign to us. It is hoped that this line of thinking would encourage people to continue this line of questioning with all facets of our lives and not just films and architecture.

13

site

fissures

promenade
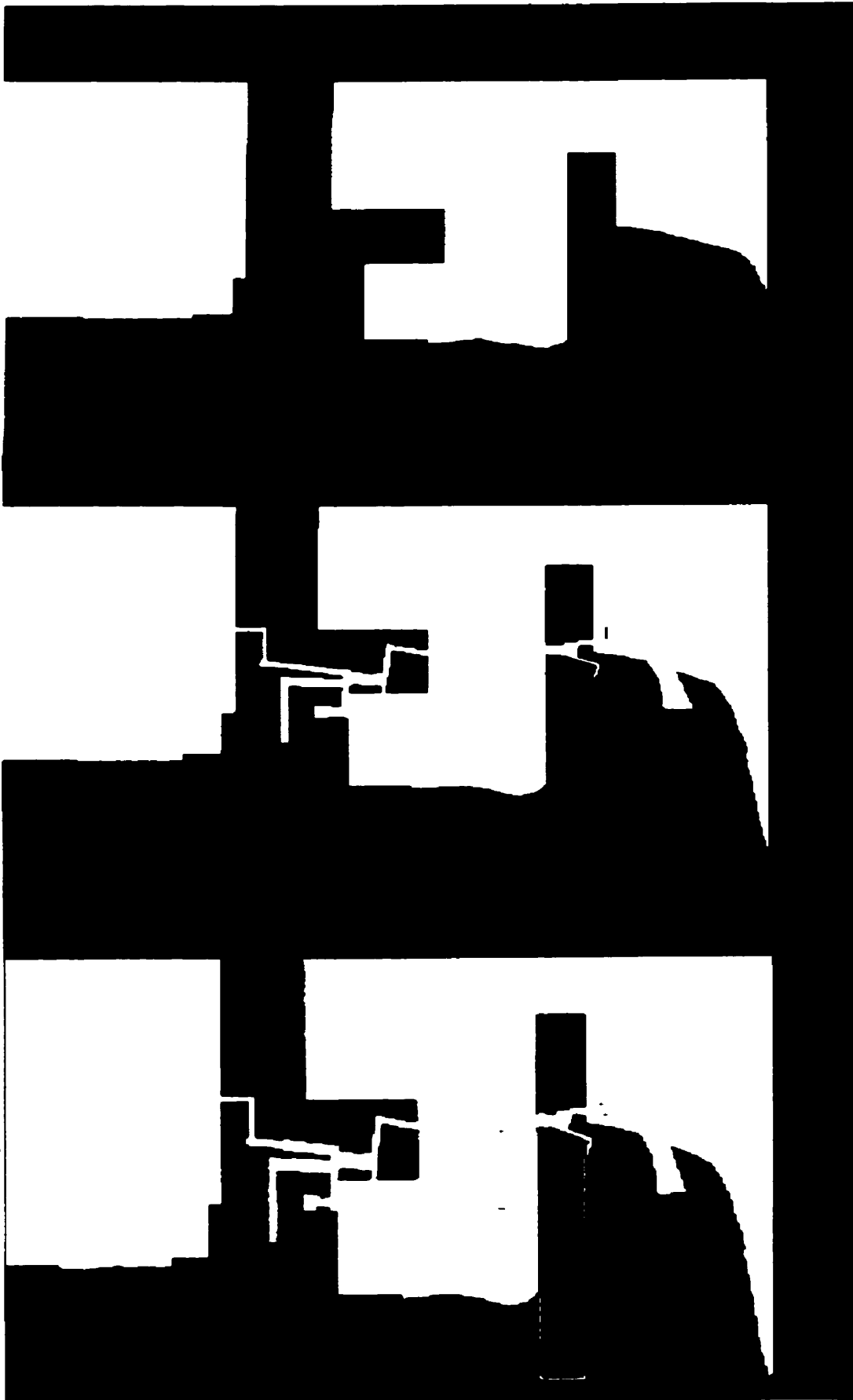
The fissure graphic is simply the reflection of the architectural promenade yet it describes the state of the site as a reflection on our cultural values. I charge that our value system is somewhat misaligned and fragmented due to the influence of our consumer driven culture.

Further, the image of the promenade addresses the issues of 'placelessness' on the site and in our culture at all levels. It does this by creating the context that informs the design of the facility and secondly it becomes the metaphor for the idea of a narrative journey. In this image the idea of the plot running through the facility is tied to the story or in architectural terms the promenade links the once divided site and structure and guides the spectator through their journey.

14.

first level
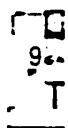
1 storage
2 restaurant
3 auditorium
4 production
5 sound
6 mixing
7 tape transfer
8 storage
9 conference

second level
promenade level
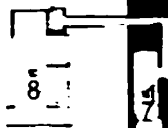
1 office
2 auditorium
3 production
4 sound
5 mixing
6 tape transfer
7 storage
8 conference

15.

third level
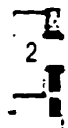
1 office
2 conference

30. Site axonometric
    scale 1:100
    facing north
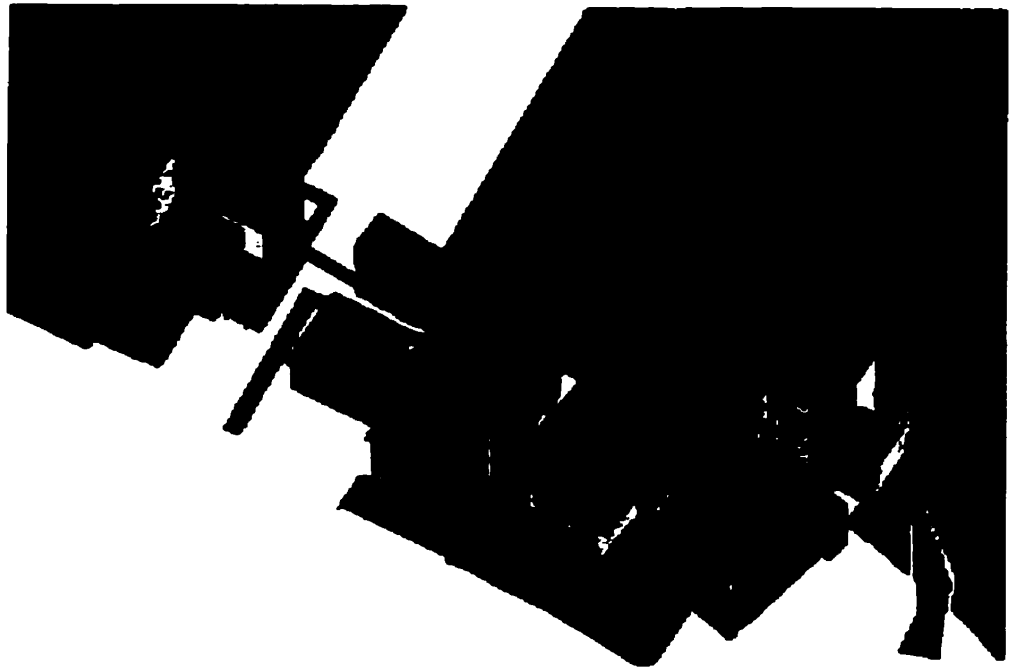
31. Site axonometric
    scale 1:100
    facing south

16.
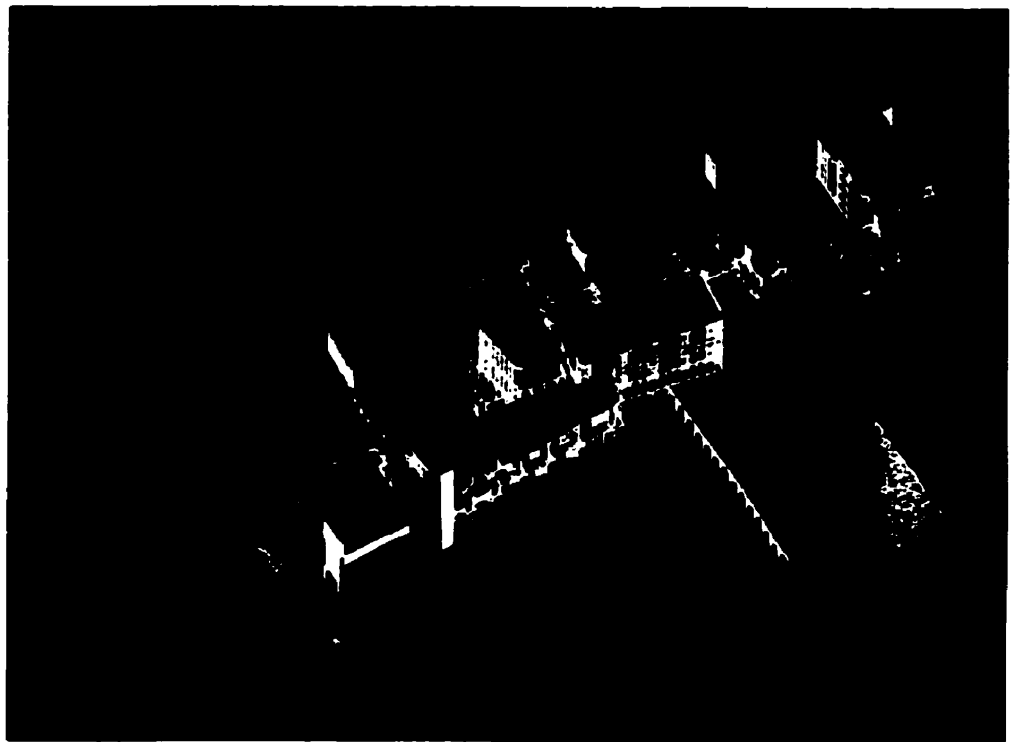
32. elevation west
    auditorium & restaurant
    scale 1:100
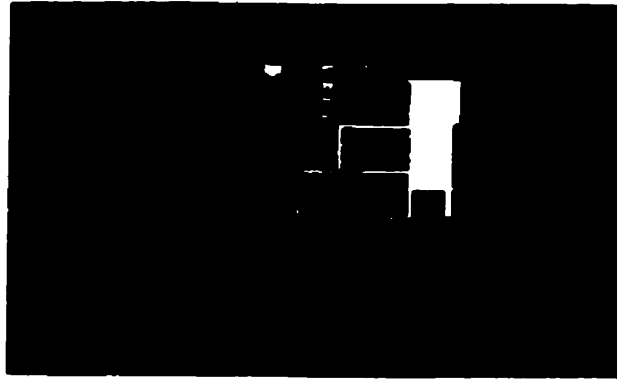
33. elevation west
    working interior
    scale 1:100
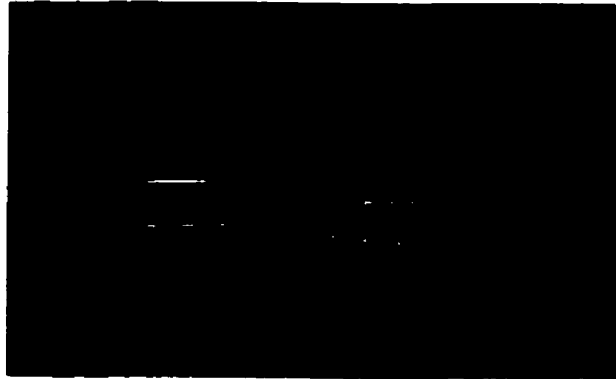
34. elevation west
    conference block
    scale 1:100

17.
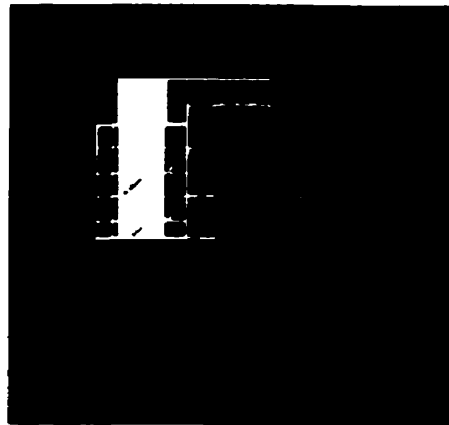
35. elevation east
    conference block
    scale 1:100
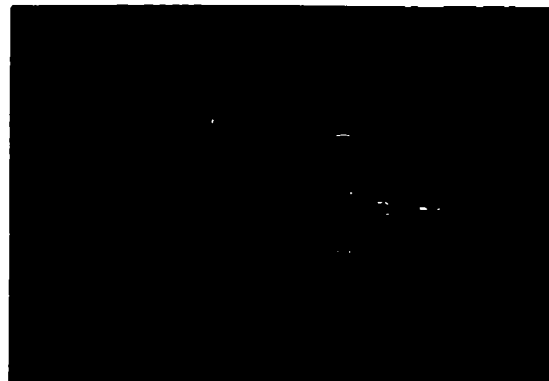
36. section
   auditorium& restaurant
   scale 1:100
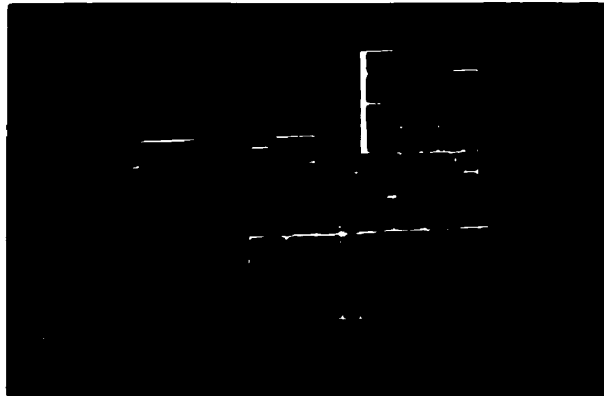
37. section
   conference block
   scale 1:100

18.

cri
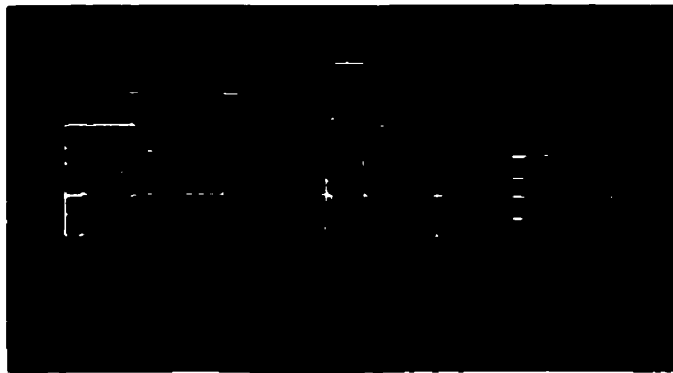
Critical Design Strategy

Narrative [as journey]

38. elevation
scale 1:100

Through a critical essay and the design of a facility for independent filmmakers, this project examines significant issues surrounding the role of architecture, narrative and film within this framework, and investigates architectural strategies that might combat this devaluation of our culture. The essay provides the theoretical basis for the architectural intervention through an analysis of the relationship between film, architecture and narrative; an interpretation of how these narrative based mediums fulfil or denigrate our cultural position. the architectural implications of this shift, and the status of meaning amidst these developments. I propose that an understanding and acknowledgement of the difference between place and "placelessness" is where meaning can be found in contemporary film, architecture and culture. The architectural intervention seeks to reveal these strategies through more humble architectural conventions by stretching boundaries and norms yet elevating the field of experiencing and understanding our relationship with the landscape and by transforming the "event " of narrative into an everyday occurrence that individuals acknowledge and celebrate.

19.

If it is through place that we locate ourselves then it is through narrative that we recognize place.
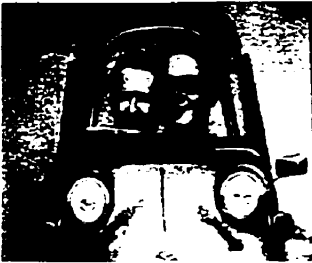
39. journey

A significant component of my design strategy was to conceive of narrative as a journey. A journey that marks specific, non-specific codes and signs at a conscious and unconscious level within the individual. Therefore by constructing the site as a journey certain markers reinforce our understanding of this journey through the event of narrative and create a connection with place. The narrative and the site can be directly engaged in the design through the architectural promenade which frames views, layers boundaries between public and private spaces, accentuates the building's relationship with nature and acknowledges or denies the site's preconceived directions and tenets. The strategy contends that the context of an architectural work can be manipulated in relation to the expected location dictated by precedents, program, tenets, and functions. Therefore by positioning the building in an unexpected context comments directly on its meaning, allowing its theoretical site to have a foundation and connection to place. In this way the site imbues a sense of the building's relationship with nature and creates a potential for

self awareness in individuals or groups. Further, positioning the facility to act as a thresh-old comments on its reason for being and allows "place" to have a theoretical foundation and a richer connection to site, film, architecture, culture, and narrative.

Changing scales
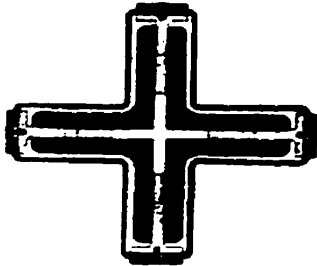
40. intensify

In order to arrive at this understanding of narrative it was a natural progression to change scales, which in turn incorporated other factors into the design and location of the facility. I found that by broadening design influences, the number of possible solutions increase accordingly. Projects are more successful when elements usually seen as outside the realm of the project are brought to bear on the problem and, in fact, inform the process. All of these factors helped to inform and develop the promenade as a strategy.

In this sense the facility sits as a metaphor reflecting on the nature of our cultural condition regarding "placelessness". The facility is split into a series of structures set in juxtaposition with the existing built forms and with one another. Therefore, it is the role of narrative and in terms of the facility, the promenade, that creates a unified "place" which reflects on the individual's "place" in society and the landscape. In this way "place" becomes recognizable as a reflection of an individual's journey which physically manifests itself in the individual who begins to recognize and question their position within the facility and in nature.

20.

Rem Koolhaas states that, "identity must be continually assumed and immediately called into question." [784] I interpret this to mean that "by questioning we become aware". Accordingly, the architect and architecture should question their/its role and place in nature because it is through questioning that they/it become aware of their/its position. Architecture is a self-actualizing construct using culture as an avenue in which it's place in the world can become realized. Therefore as a culture we must also question our role and the role of the environment we exist in to create places capable of forming memories. The sheer quantity of the buildings in our environment that are passed off as architecture are not architecture. Architecture questions its place in the landscape whether it is as an object in it, or a part of nature. The question is always there. What is its position, how does it express it?

In such a situation, "the [fissures] chasm between [place] and [placelessness] narrows; we experience a growing sense of orientation." (Ewan 1988, 269, 271) Stuart Ewan feels that for "meaningful alternatives to come into being, the dominance of surface over sub-

stance must be overcome" through the "reconciliation of meaning." (Ewan 1988, 271). As contemporary culture shifted so did our understanding and perception of the nature of consumer products from one of production to one of consumption. This has led to a condition of disposability and "reproducibility as conditions of a cultural production system that had hitherto explored uniqueness and permanence." (Harvey 1989, 346) Most social scientists feel that the importance of craftsmanship in our contemporary society has been lost. To date "society [is] driven to create a perpetual desire for need, for endless difference and instant gratification and satisfaction." (Faurschou 1987) The loss of meaning and creation of placelessness can be linked to the techniques of mechanical reproduction and technological advancements resulting directly from the shift in meaning attached to the role of consumption within our society. The meaning of these objects is believed to have become weakened because the role of the object has changed. Products have now become abstracted through the manufacturing process; consumerism has lost any sense of uniqueness (if it ever had any), resulting in the modern condition of placelessness.

41. images

Juhani Pallasmaa feels that our placeless condition results from "the ceaseless bombardment of unrelated imagery [which] leads only to a gradual emptying of images of their unique content. Images are converted into endless commodities manufactured to postpone boredom; humans in turn are commodified, consuming themselves nonchalantly without having the courage or even the possibility of confronting their existential questions." (Pallasmaa 1996, 22)

21.

Place

To create meaning in this context is to create a structure that is somehow different from the forms that exist now and forms that have already been consumed by culture. The architect in this contemporary context is to define an architectural position outside of the consumptive realm that is not self-referential or passive. It may seem contradictory to establish a facility for an industry that aids in the dislocation of place, however in today's climate technology allows placelessness to flourish within every facet of our culture and not just in film and architecture . The Film Production industry operates at a level of sophistication that allows it to be without a central location and still distribute its product over the entire globe through digital communications. In this way they are entirely divorced from studios and production houses yet in constant communication, through systems integration, over global networks with the use of phones, computers and satelite feeds. Hence, by establishing a centre (or place if you will) for a post production facility it was hypothesized that the facility, the location and the strategy of creating a narrative

throughout the facility enriches the nature of a public domain, and encourages film-
makers to question their role in contemporary culture and the environment. Convention-
ally, place establishes certain expectations of a building's scale, context, use, spatial
quality, significance, and materials. A point of departure for critical architecture is the fact
that the human experience cannot be consumed like a film. The key to a human experi-
ence is through the engagement of the senses with the architecture. Experience that is
incapable of being consumed can be created through the incorporation of change, the
unconventional, and the unexpected into the design.

42. reflections

The current state of cultural identity is at a critical juncture. As it stands we find ourselves
positioned at the end of the millennium with no apparent direction. Some advocate
pushing forward with guns blazing at any cost, seduced by technology and the hollow
promises it brings. I believe a humble strategy is appropriate when considering an inter-
vention. At the core of my concern is this cavalier attitude toward technology, which has
proven to be an illusion. To initiate my investigation I invoked the question, "how did we get
into this position, and where do we go from here? Science and technology have failed in
their attempt to free us from a direct dependence on 'place'. (Schulz:3) If we are to gain
an experiential foothold we have to be able to orient ourselves; we have to know who and
where we stand in the world. The impetus for this resolution of place is concentrated on
the role of narrative within our culture. Hence as a quality and physical manifestation
"place" contains all the properties reflected in narrative. If narrative is accepted as a
design praxis it will instill in us a conceptual framework from which a sensitive design can
manifest itself. This does not mean that every strategy must enlist identical formal rules
associated with narrative. This means a project may develop its own strategy based on
similar yet very different configurations of a narrative or some other convention.

22.

Narrative is primarily a construct that facilitates our participation in culture. Ricoeur best
describes narrative as, a relationship between " [people] man and the world, between
man and man, between man and himself." Put more simply narrative is our cognizant
awareness of the day-to-day "events" that go to make up our lives. The failing of narrative
is that it requires some form of active participation by the spectator. As suggested earlier,
I believe we no longer fully acknowledge the tasks we fulfill throughout the course of a day.
This is partly out of necessity and partly from laziness, due in part, because our lives have
become over inundated with technology, slogans, advertising, and commercials. Begin-
ning at an early age we learn to block out selective portions of our day thus neglecting the
full experience of life in a narrative form. You could call it a fact of living in a technological

world. Narrative is neutral, it has no preconceived notion of who we are or what we want as a participant. As spectators we can engage narrative or disengage from it. Narrative is culture and "culture is narrative". Everyone engages narrative because we are part of culture yet it is the depth of the engagement that we must begin to question. Narrative has the ability to address all shortcomings and successes of culture. It has the depth to reach an individual or the group. Narrative is ideally suited to place itself at the discretion of the user/spectator to create a mixed site of events and memories which can be engaged at any time but it requires the avenue to reveal itself and the willing participation of the spectator.

Narrative enlightens the paradoxical relationship between culture and technology as a relationship that becomes more predictable and unbalanced with each passing moment. I charge that through narrative we can examine the full breadth of the dilemma between people, culture, their environment, and technology. From here it is easier to value the truth in people, our environment and the relationships that form from these events. Rather than narrowing the scope of our contact with each other we should look to develop it. When the seemingly benign and somewhat banal element of technology is removed from our contemporary culture our path becomes clear. I am hoping that my design responds to qualities and constructs hidden under narratives umbrella to inform my design strategy. The qualities that I refer to would hint at elements within life that enrich our relationship with the landscape at a variety of different levels, for example: memories, events, and activities.

23.

Event as strategy

43. events

The strategy of event is utilized as a design praxis rather than just relying on conventional, formal, functional, economic, stylistic and programmatic concerns to realize an architecture of depth that reflects on our relationship to place. I use the event as a strategy for which activities might manifest themselves through the spectator's movements or views. The event in architectural discourse is an elementary way to manifest the design of conditions into a project and avoid the conditioning of designs. I utilize the architectural promenade within the design as a metaphor for re-connecting or bridging, if you will, the fissures that have arisen between narrative, film and architecture in contemporary culture. The architectural promenade creates a venue for events and non-prescribed meetings to occur between public and private realms. The project accomplished this through the interaction between levels architecturally, publicly/privately, experientially and phenomenally or wherever architectural space compresses, expands, collides, or expresses

itself. As a model for film and architecture the promenade is utilized as a strategy for engaging the spectator in the "act" of participating in one's environment.

In this way, the site imbues a sense of the building's relationship with nature and creates a potential for self-awareness in individuals or groups. Further, positioning the facility to act as a threshold comments on its reason for being and allows "place" to have a theoretical foundation and a richer connection to site, film, architecture, culture, and narrative.

The complex has been fissured into ten separate buildings for programmatic, architectural and metaphorical reasons. The programmatic concerns deal with the technical solutions appropriate for the sensitive nature of the work carried out in a post production facility. Metaphorically the complex is fissured in a reaction to the nature of our social condition. Architecturally the strategy was to create a convergence or intersection of events and describe relationships that would not have to be recognized had the building not been there. Bernard Tschumi charges that, "it is architecture defined as much by the activities around it, as it is by the space it encloses". (99) Thus, the promenade works as a structure for creating an individual or communal narrative journey. Architecture can be considered as a medium on which events unfold therefore it is logical to deduce that through an architecture of event, we can create or intensify interactions between people.

Bernard Tschumi suggests that we examine a "new architecture", one that reacts to the present confusion of genres that we have today.(Tschumi:1991) Tschumi charges that "architects must eventualize, or open up, what in our history or tradition is understood to be fixed, essential, monumental." (Tschumi:1991) Tschumi focuses on the processional and catalytic nature of architectural expression, "the event which takes place within as much as the space that contains it." (Tschumi:1991) Fundamentally, Tschumi designs for individuals and their experiences. He acknowledges that people have different perceptions to different events and allows for as many readings as there are interpretations. This is the underlying focus of my examination of narrative within film and architecture; design with the intent that there are as many readings of an event as there are people. This investigation hinges on how today's society participates in and acknowledges the production and interpretation of narrative. Society is made of, and has always participated in, narrative. Society consists of individuals who by circumstances, interact with and around one another thus creating a culture. This observation in itself is nothing new. It is evident to anyone who studies or is aware of social issues, however in this way it can be said that everyone participates in narrative whether they are conscious of it or not. The way society acknowledges their participation in narrative is more disconcerting. Disconcerting in that we operate at so many levels and that our lives have become so complex

24.

that we have to lead selective lives in order to cope with overload. The direct result of this is that we are aware of certain aspects of our lives yet totally neglectful of other events. This type of selective awareness limits our relationship to the world, to people, and therefore, to narrative. By applying a design strategy similar to Bernard Tschumi's , which works on a heightened level of understanding people's positions in nature, architects can layer a site with elements which in turn heighten a person's relationship to place.

narrative defined

The Oxford English Dictionary defines narrative as, " the action of relating or recounting, or the fact of being recounted; an instance of this. ...That which is narrated or recounted; a story, narrative, account." O.E.D (pg.: 220) According to the O.E.D, narrative is an adverb, which is a word or phrase that modifies or qualifies another word, expressing a relation of place, time, circumstance, manner, cause, degree; to narrate is the word narrative qualifies. To narrate, according to the O.E.D., is a word of action, ie. a verb.(Concise Oxford Dictionary:12) Therefore narrative is made up of actions, events, circumstances, happenings and outcomes that individuals relate to daily events. Ricoeur feels that if action can be "narrated it is because it is already articulated in signs, rules, and norms: action is always mediated symbolically." (433) In this way, narrative is made up of actions, happenings, signs, rules, and events in a constructive order to establish plot and story, which conveys a message to the participant. We are encased within the greater effects of narrative. Narrative is fundamentally based on time, place, memory and one's relationships to other things or our place in the world.

25.

The beauty of narrative is that it is so adaptable as a construct. It has the ability to present itself to a universal audience while simultaneously addressing individual concerns. Narrative can be described as an "irreducible dimension of the understanding of the self." (Ricoeur:433) It is defined grammatically, literally, physically, psychologically, theoretically, experientially and so forth. The point I am raising is that if each of us experience narrative differently, architects should design for the relationships that form through these individual experiences. If narrative is definable as a story of the self, then the story of our individual lives is the basis of a pre-narrative structure common to everyone. In these circumstances, architects should consider everyone when designing. This however is not the only case: narrative is this and much more. If architects approach designing with this understanding of narrative they are likely to produce a project which speaks to the individual and to a group at a variety of different levels. This layering of a project deepens

44. events

people's understanding of the relationship they have to a project and in turn, their relationship to narrative and with others. Architecture is ultimately about the relationships formed between people and their environment. So if people are prompted and aware of past, present and future events, individuals can learn to become their own narrator without completely becoming the authors of their own lives. Everything is predicated on the fact that by understanding our individual story we become reconnected to our place in the world.

We belong to history before
telling stories or writing history.
The game of telling is included
in the reality told.

PaulRicoeur

The notion that the spectator engages the textual process(physically read) of constituting the modernist text is one where narration is both a product of narrator and reader; just as the text must create (inscribe) its reader, so a reader must create the text in its telling. The problem is the text specificity of people; we read selectively. People must break from today's dominant form of "MTV" type of communications where our attention is limited to a 30 second clip. Christian Metz describes this shift in thinking "as a move away from conceiving of a film as an object and a move toward conceiving of a film as a site." (Metz: 41) This requires the spectator to interpret each project in its uniqueness, "creating a kind of mixed... site in which specific and nonspecific codes meet and combine with one another." (Metz:41) We must acknowledge that the narrated story is always more than mere enumeration in simple or serial or successive order of incidents and events. It follows that architecture and film if using narrative as a strategy would be more than stylistic forms and fulfil more than programmatic concerns, they would be experiential. In doing this, our comprehension and understanding of how narrative is conveyed through the physical properties of events, translate into the conceptual basis on which a strategy can be formed. This way the site imbues a sense of the building's relationship with nature and creates a potential for self-awareness in individuals or groups.

In terms of this project it is the response to site which constructs the basis of the narrative for the building. This strategy tells us that, the "existential purpose of architecture is to make a site become a place, that is to uncover the meanings potentially present in the given environment." (Schulz:7) We need to examine the richness or layers that every site

26.

contains before a framework can be put in place. With this response to our given environment "placelessness" is not driven to our homes. In today's situation our homes are a single street and house number. If a strategy to create place was the norm in our culture, homes would question their environments and express their relationships with nature.

architecture as strategy

More specifically this project suggests a way to respond to and think about architecture. The design strategy is based on creating events that reinforce the relationship between things and their environment. This brings about a project with direction and depth beyond the anonymous consumer culture we live within. I feel that a primary quality of film and architecture is to educate and inform. By this I mean to convey to the participant the nature of the question that is being addressed at any level and any scale within each project. [Whether it be a built form, a film or life] This does not mean that a successful project is measured only if the participant experiences all of its possible levels. A successful project should make the answers available if the participant is looking for them. Therefore, it can be said that a film or project which does not offer this to the participant has failed; failed in two ways. First, there has probably been some spectator who has left the film or project wanting more than just titillation. Secondly, projects that address only one level of involvement negate a relationship with something else. More specifically, a relationship to the landscape, the participant or culture. Therefore it was the objective of this project to consider the state of our "place" in the world and the level to which narrative, film, and architecture engage contemporary culture to create places that imbue meaning in people's lives.

27.

A seminal work of architecture has the ability to communicate its essence to all facets of society at any level. The greatest gift architecture and film have is the opportunity to educate. Their languages describe certain rationales which reflect directly upon any realm in society. Architects need to examine the line of questioning in which they approach a design before considering a site intervention whether it is a garden shed or a

commercial high-rise.

The strategies in which architects approach such issues have to change in order for the rules which reveal the essence (nature) of a project to the participant to be evident. The important concern here is that people are conditioned by the postmodern condition of an unreal existence and that this absolution of reality has eradicated our ability to see things in their true nature. The prominence of consumption in contemporary culture is an extension of the postmodern condition that we exist within. One critical postmodern position can be defined by reality is constituted by our representation of it. Postmodern representation "...embraces the language of commerce and the commodity. If our reality is constituted by representation, and one of the postmodern means of representation is the mass consumed product, then reality in a postmodern world is derived primarily by our consumer driven economy." {Ewan: 442} Reality is abstracted by this machine into conditions which I charge affects our physical and perceptual understanding of who and where we are at anyone time and place.

Conventionally, life has been understood as something existing physically in the world. Post-structuralists contend that representation defines life, resulting in a condition of a relative reality that elevates the means over the ends. Juhani Pallasmaa charges that "the language of art is the language of symbols that can be identified with our existence... the experience of architecture is an interaction between our embodied memories of the world". (451) Adrian Stokes claims, "it is also vital that if we are to experience an architectural meaning and sense of being in the world; the effect of the building should find a counterpart in the world of the spectator's experience". (Dudley:4) The approach we take must associate some familiar form of understanding narrative in the present, from the past, in relation to creating a new form of expression in the future.

28.

Architects can not just focus on a different apparatus of analysis. They must turn around their approach in thinking about the role of narrative within the discipline. The conceptual framework in which architects approach strategies of design has to change. As a society we have to understand the way in which we examine and interpret events. Perhaps this means discounting the norm and questioning all contemporary approaches toward design which are quite evidently failing, while trying to discover methods with depth of interpreting the greater picture. To do this, architects and people must look for deeper ways of

understanding life and its authenticity.

Today as a society people must participate in and acknowledge narrative in any of its forms in order to progress. This means architects and film-makers have to emphasize the properties inherent in narrative to film and architecture in order to forge a relationship of substance with the spectator throughout society. Narrative is comprised of both random and prescribed events; architecture and film must prompt these events so the spectator may discover a narrative from which they can forge a relationship with the film or the built form. Events can be considered random in that an individual's path crosses unexpected happenings, creating rich intersections and relationships which layer our daily lives. Today the traditional scientific approach has dominated our understanding of narrative. We are either recited or dictated to, rather than thinking and discovering narrative for ourselves. This has resulted in the loss of our connection to the richness of narrative and its influence over our place within nature. It was in simpler times when an understanding between people and the qualities that exist within the exchange of ideas {between people} which currently we as a society have misplaced. Our (rudimentary) fundamental understanding of narrative has been replaced by the mass consumption of products through advances in modern technology. This shift in meaning allows individuals to be in no place and an infinite number of places all at the same time. Once again the evidence points to the paradoxical relationship we have fostered with modern science and technology resulting in our loss of narrative and ability to forge diverse relationships with the landscape. Architecture and film must utilize their inherent relationship to narrative and technology to re-establish other ways of revealing place. It is crucial that as mediums of expression and education, film and architecture instill the qualities and relationships between individuals and their place in the world. This can be accomplished by creating a mixed site in which place is recognized and developed by the individual at any level of personal engagement. However, it is crucial that multiple narratives are available for the further development of the individual's relationship with nature.

Film

Film is historically at a critical juncture; society is beginning to recognize that we have been organizing our lives around empty and unattainable rules and promises due in part

29.

to the power of cinematic representation and the consumer driven culture. It is true that at its inception cinema was based on the discovery of new forms of expressing and representing life, however the progressive influence of our consumer driven economy has erased any sense of films original intent. I believe that a majority of the films and architectural projects available to the consumer are based primarily on a pastiche of borrowed imagery that problematizes more than ever the individual's presence and threatens our understanding of the world. I charge that these borrowed images and styles lack any intention and quality of the original and therefore haven't any narrative value other than an arbitrary nature which leads to countless other problems.

From the advancements of industrialization, film-making steadily evolved from a toy to an industry. Film captures motion linking space-time, and reality through representation. Film has the inherent quality to transcend or transverse time and space through our perception, introspection, memory, imagination, reflection and so on. However, we must remember that with the nature and quality of the images derived from today's films, increases in realism are extensions of the illusion. The picture on the screen is just that, it is an illusion; it is a product that lacks the level of thought that might address multiple levels of narrative for a variety of individuals. We are being misdirected as a culture because there isn't any reflection of the individual levels of narrative in society besides the economic and mechanical production of the film.

It is as if poetry and music have lost their associative properties which reflected their essential qualities. "Erza Pound likened it to the fact that music degenerates if it moves too far away from dance, and poetry lessens if it becomes too far removed from music and song." (Pallasmaa:450) Therefore architecture and film in this respect will lose any semblance of quality if they become too far removed from narrative. He states that the renewal of an art means rediscovering its deepest essence. (Pallasmaa: 450) Architects and film producers have lost the ability to ground themselves in the formal understanding of their discipline to that of a consumer driven product. This disconnection I believe, stems from the inability to remain tied to the idea of discovery. Architecture and film no longer question their environment and relationship to nature. Architecture and film are narrative constructs that use plot to make up a story without ever intending to develop a narrative.

Architects and film producers have lost their ability to see the meaning in each medium respectively. The relationships that are formed between the project, the spectator, and the narrative is therefore, devoid of meaning. Ultimately it is our response to the relationships created by the product which constructs the basis of the narrative for the built form or film.

Only when questioning the fundamental nature of a project in relation to its environment will we be in a position to understand the basis of communication as it relates to the levels of narrative discourse in film, novels, histories, and architecture, at an experiential level.

Thankfully there has been a concerted effort to 'discover' an architecture that is interested in a definition through events and activities which can respond to the 'acts' of its inhabit- ants', at a multitude of levels. (McKinley: 36)   The strategy of event is utilized rather than just relying on functional programmatic concerns to realize an architectural strategy that reflects on our relationship to place. A strategy should develop out of the study of the site's relationship to external and internal forces. Bernard Tschumi considers the architectural event primarily through the use of the open and adaptive plan as a means for blending and fusing' programmatic concerns that create a new understanding for the architecture. Tschumi is using the event for the activity that might manifest itself through the spectator's movement or views. From this Tschumi is able to "create an architecture of sequences, framing and fusion as expressed in a complex section and free plan." (Tschumi: 1998)   In this way, Tschumi addresses as many levels of involvement in the project as possible and welcomes the opportunity to address issues surrounding his environment. Jun Aoki, has taken the current idea of movement and event to a more tectonic level. He states in "Circulation Bodies', that 'contemporary life requires an architecture which allows a free and open movement rather than a segregated, function based plan'. (Aoki:1998)   Of particular interest to Aoki is Le Corbusier's 'promenade Architecturale'. As a student of Le Corbusier's "Five Points on Architecture', Aoki creates the precedent in his design strat- egy of the "places for events'. (Aoki: 1998)   He claims that he creates "places for events' rather than function based rooms'. For Aoki, 'the notion that things to be connected come first is a manifestation of the interpretation of humans as creatures possessing a clear purpose or destination and moving towards it.. In contrast, what is tacitly assumed when one sees connectors as primary is a human being initially without definite goal or purpose, who generates them in the process of moving around. For me there is a greater sense of reality in the latter view of people'. (Aoki: 1998) Like Aoki and Tschumi, it is our recognition and participation in narrative through events and vignettes throughout the day that make us aware of our relationship to nature and the narrative that is our life. Or simply put, it is the trials and tribulations of our normal existence that we should be cognizant of which give us a heightened awareness of existing within nature and not above it.

"As style becomes increasingly ubiquitous, other ways of knowing, alternative ways of seeing, become scarce. The ability to stylize anything—toothpaste, clothing, roach spray, dog food, violence, other cultures around the world, ideas, and so on—encourages a comprehension of the world that focuses on its easily manipulated surfaces, while other meanings vanish to all but the critical eye." (Ewan 1988]

The critical notion here is that at the beginning of the 20th Century, during modernism's infancy, its creators experienced it as a whole at a moment when only a small part of the world was truly modern. Modernization has cast a net that no one can escape. We have lost our grip on the contradictions that early modernists had to grasp at every moment of their lives in order to live. Paradoxically, "modernists may turn out to understand us - the modernization and modernism that constitutes our lives - better than we understand ourselves". (Marshall Berman: 48) We live in a time where there is so much technology and scientific data that no one could possibly understand the volume of information we are subjected to. This is where the problem lies; specialization leads to isolation. The stress of the modern world has convinced people that salvation lies with the consumption of entertainment.

32.

45. censor

In this document, the medium presented and perpetuated by the Hollywood studio machine can be considered as the superficial side of the film industry. The effects these productions have on culture are destructive because these films perpetuate the unidimentional relationship between the spectator and a narrative which reflects on the unidimentional relationships people have with one-another and their environment. These films present to the spectator only one level of involvement with narrative, people or the landscape. Hollywood films negate the level of narrative involvement that is encapsulated in a film. The independent film-maker exists so that with each spectator there must be a new interpretation. Each spectator layers the reading of a film with multiple narratives that interact with the movie creating a personal relationship with the film. At yet another level, these films strive to reflect on specific and broad cultural boundaries, which condition people respectively at a subconscious level. With this reading, films then become evolving sites. They become involved with different individual narratives which spill out of the

auditorium into the homes and work places of the spectator.

This human condition can be described as something that forges meaningful relationships between people, where they interact with one another and with the environment. These relationships should enrich and inform the individual of their abilities to respond to their place in the world. Architecture should attempt to foster strategies that bring about a reflection of the world through integrity, and diversity which redirects us towards a new landscape. Film should consider it's mass appeal and the control it has over popular culture and it's responsibility toward that culture. Film-makers should strive to incorporate as many different narratives into a film as possible and surpass the consumptive superficial rewards.

Architecture has been limited by its acquiescence toward the commodification of culture. Film-makers and architects used to approach design projects thinking that individuals were aware of their environments. They developed projects that became richer when design strategies incorporated dimensions legitimizing the connection between people, events and the landscape. Film's original strategies worked to enrich our relationship with our environment. Simply put film and architecture explored our place within time and space. These strategies resolved unique spatial conditions relating to time and the individual, however today they have become forms without their original meaning.

33.

Take for example the notion of a wall and its elements. Early Modernists like Marcel Breuer and Walter Gropius read a wall as being comprised of more than it's load bearing capacity. The initial modernists saw walls and elements of the wall as things: " that define the space, walls are no longer punctuated by small windows but have been dematerialized.... The walls that are not transparent float in the space of the house rather than produce it. Lines of glass now define the space while seemingly replacing the transition between in and out, while acting without confliction". (Casebier: 54) In fact, the window as we once knew it has been deconstructed. Just as the wall takes on a new condition of now defining fluidity and perceptual transparency, language describing the result also changed. Language ebbs and flows, as does our spatial awareness of the inner and outer limits of architecture seen through the limits of materiality or non materiality,

defined by our spatial awareness. This awareness in perception enriches the level of engagement between people and the landscape. Evidence of this shift in perception to describe events plays particular interest when used in conversation. One might say, "I caught a film yesterday", "do you want to take in a movie". This plastic and flexible notion of grammar and syntax reinforces the shift in modern peoples perception of current discourse.

Far too often this has led to empty formalism within our built environment and films. However the result does not have to lack the inventive and rich notions that where once prevalent in the conceptual frameworks of architecture and film. As we have seen, the notion behind the flexibility of modern architecture translated over to contemporary discourse. This characteristic gives hope to those architects and film-makers who seek to develop projects fostering meaningful relationships between people and their environment. Christian Metz takes this one step further and thinks we should think of the film as a site, creating a mixed site in which we are engaged. (Casebier: 54) For the modernists the screen was seen as either a window on the world that separated one from the environment while others believed that the window broke barriers and connected the spectator to the event. With either reading the individual can potentially experience this window through their own individuality enriching their connection to place.   34.

The problems in film and architecture lies in the pastiche of borrowed imagery that problematizes more than ever the spectator's presence and threatens our understanding of the world. These borrowed images and styles represent attributes which mean nothing and haven't any narrative value other than that of an arbitrary nature. Architecture must posit its values in the relationships that form between the individual and the environment and disregard consumptive rewards. It is through this approach that forms will result from this discovery and reflect the relationship between the site and the participant that reveal the levels of narrative to the spectator.

the relationship

Narrative emerges out of an intersection of the processes involving filmmaker and spectator activity reflecting broad cultural/social factors. This spectator-text relationship has

the potential for authentic self-awareness. This awareness of the environment and realization of ourselves in the environment is the strategy from which film makers and architects should operate. Just as narrative emerges out of the intersection between film-maker and spectator, architecture according to Bernard Tschumi, "supports events that emerge out of the intersection between unexpected and unforeseen catalysts." (Tschumi: 1998)   He continues to say that, "the static notion of form and function long favored by architectural discourse need to be replaced by attention to the actions that occur inside and around buildings - to movement of bodies, to activities, to aspirations; in short, to social and political dimensions of architecture." (Tschumi: 13)

Casebier feels that film makers should approach each project so that "the spectator does not stand outside of an object called a film, perceiving its representations and other features, but rather may be, inscribed within the text, as active participant in realization of text." (Casebier: 54) Christian Metz feels we should think of the film as a site, creating a mixed site in which we are engaged. (Casebier: 54)   This is a beautiful way to describe our relationship with the environment and its built forms. Moreover, in this activity, the spectators utilize specific memories, or "codes" in order to construct the meaning and representations of the text as it creates the level of narrative accordingly. According to Casebier these codes include cinematic codes, cultural codes, individual filmic codes, which can include architectural codes and spectator's codes. This particular view places the spectator as an active participant, whereas, some strategies place the visual nature of film as a complete entity with its' meanings in it; and the relationship of the viewer to it, is that of a passive participant. This way the spectator merely watches a complete story unfold without participating directly in it.

35.

des

design methodology{conclusion}

It may seem contradictory to develop a program based on an industry which has assisted in creating a placeless society. The reason behind this decision was because of the power of film to educate on a mass scale. In theory, it was undertaken to prove that if this type of facility could instill and encourage a product based not on economic gains and still be successful then it would be used as a model for other facilities that reflected these principles. The design took its impetus from an in-depth analytical study of the site. I made a conscious decision to approach the architecture with a logical and definable theoretical foundation that would create an architecture of depth reflecting on its place in nature.

36.

Therefore, I chose to consider the role of narrative within cultural discourse and how it can be used to enrich and empower life. Narrative brings into the foreground our paradoxical relationship with technology and nature. I discovered that as a result of the evolution of our culture in a consumer driven economy we are far too quick to embrace technology when it disembowels us and abuse nature when it sustains us.

This project attempts to address the fissures that have arisen between architecture, film, narrative and culture through the design of a post production facility. I attempt to employ a design strategy that responds to events surrounding the site creating its context. The strategy that tied this project together was conceiving of the site as an extension of these events, thus creating new narratives through the convention of the architectural promenade. By exploring our relationships to events, specific cues formed from the collisions, intersections, compressions, and expressions of gatherings in and around the architectural promenade. From this I was able to interpret a narrative journey of events that provided a framework to facilitate a project of depth in this particular location which reflected on people's place in nature.

This didn't mean I had to re-invent the wheel because I was presented with a new design challenge. All it meant is that I approach the project with the same diligence, fortitude, vision, depth and rigor of the people who did invented the wheel. This does not mean that we simply resurrect nostalgic or romantic notions when addressing design issues of the present as this would lead to empty formalism. The reason for this is because there are a number of different factors involved today which the strategies of yesterday did not have to consider. The problems of bad design usually lie within the approach taken and the questions being asked by the designer when investigating a design challenge. For this project I stategized that by broadening the definition of narrative to include similar yet different mediums (film and architecture) would in turn broaden the number of possible solutions on which grounds I could operate. Projects are more successful when elements usually seen as being outside the realm of the designer are brought to bear on the problem and, in fact, inform the eventual completed design. These are by no means new constructs; many have written on the development of strategies which connect the individual to place. The strategy developed from one which both informs and instills a sense of presence between the participant and the built form's relationships to site, environment, metaphor, narrative, film and architecture.

37.

The changing nature of our culture has left us seemingly in a position of peril. This project attempts to address the fissures that have arisen between architecture, film, narrative and culture through the design of a post production facility. I attempt to employ a design strategy that tries to respond to events surrounding the site creating its context. The strategy that tied this project together was conceiving of the site as an extension of these events, thus creating new narratives. By exploring our relationships to events; specific cues formed from the collisions, intersections, compressions, and expressions of gatherings. From this I was able to interpret a narrative journey that I thought best provided a strategy to facilitate a project of depth in this particular location. This essay explored the perceptual shifts that have happened as they relate to our architectural and filmic experience and consumption; that is, how we experience existing built forms and interpret architectural discourse, and how to design in the presence of these shifts.

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