

the thirty- Sixth lecture

Urbanity Enfleshed



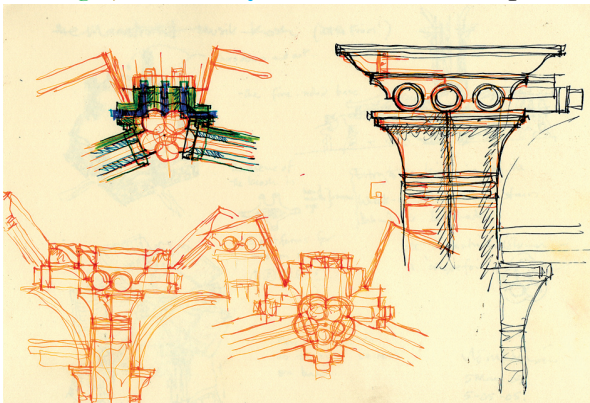


The Vrijthof-plein is one of the largest plazas in Europe. Neither of its two big churches, the newer for the Protestants and the older for the Catholics, face onto the Plein. They turn to it their Eastern, altar, ends. Stranger still is that Western end of the older church, dedicated to St. Servaas, has a monumental 'Westwerk' of the sort descended from the earliest, castellated, Christian basilicas of Roman Syria, but without any door below its great, imperial, Western rose. The entry is unobtrusive, fortified, and through the side. It is still a castle with four towers.

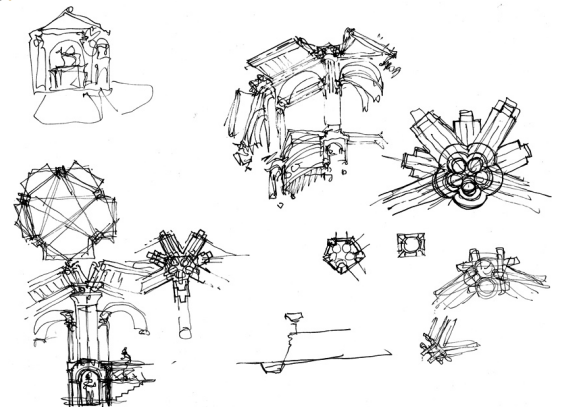
It was at this point in the scripting of these Lectures that JOA were approached by the City of Maastricht, in the most southerly tip of the Netherlands, and asked to design a "Musik-Kiosk", or bandstand.

A pressure-group within the city decided to promote a permanent 'Musik-Kiosk'. I was shown the city and my response to it was, perhaps, predictable. It has, like many old cities, its name from its Roman founders. It was constrained by protective walls until the late 19C. It has all of the last 2000 years inscribed into its body. Of late it has flexed its animus, which is large for so small a place, and built some powerful gestures. But, like any such late 20C enterprise, one is left wondering quite what it was all about. The lure of abstraction was power, power to unleash the forces of Engineering without the constraints of decorum imposed by decoration. But so what? What is a small city going to do with the powers of 20C engineering - go to war against another planet? What sort of tool is a Musik-Kiosk in this armada of machine-age progress? I need, surely, to labour this argument no more.

I would design a small 'monument' for this city that would introduce, in one place, like the infusion of some entirely alien body, the full panoply of my urbane equipment. What else would anyone expect of me? Surely not some squiffy formal manipulation from the arid aniconics of 'Decon'? But I had few illusions concerning its reception, even after being kindly entertained by the city. My experiences at Den Haag had been frustrating, to put it mildly. Europe, in which I include my own country, has become parochial. It is no less ignorant of iconics than anywhere else, but it is arrogant with a pride founded on its 'heritage'. The Netherlands is more adventurous than most, so I would try. At least it had not, as had Britain, long ago substituted History (qua 'Heritage') for Theory, with fatal effects upon its intellectual culture.

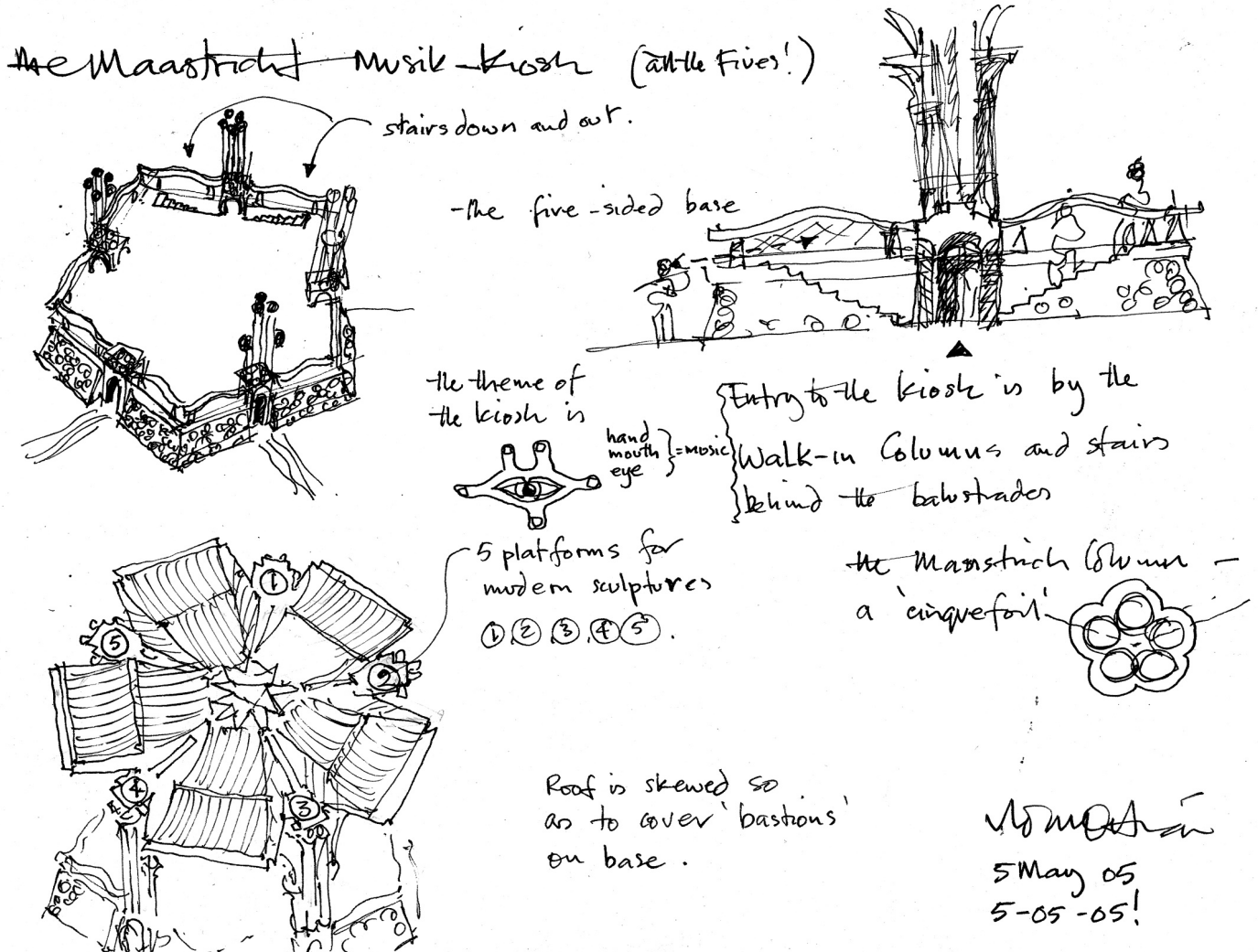


One of the emblems of Maastricht is a five-petalled floriation, or star. I needed, therefore, a cinquefoil column with major and minor capabilities.





The old Bandstand, according to the histories, was demolished during WWII to make more room for Hitler Youth parades. It was succeeded, in the 1960's, by a moveable one. Its billowing grey roof, edged in white, can be seen just to the left of the page-binding. This little bauble is periodically hefted up by a giant forklift and carried to a new spot on the trackless asphalt of the 'plein'. It has to be a convenience when one learns of the huge festivals, dedicated to music, jazz, food and so on, that periodically cover every square metre of this enormous space.



JOA knew, by now, indeed had known for several iconically fruitless years since the completion of Duncan Hall in 1995 (by now a whole decade), how to inscribe a ceiling within the most exiguous budget. I was confident that Scanchrome's acrylic paint and the synthetic substrate could both be engineered to have a long life under the dark and dry position of an exterior ceiling. I even had the sketch-design for the Hague Rotunda which its cultivated, art-collecting, developer-owner had allowed to be displaced by the conceptual banality of a stained glass dome derived, as its purveyor of adolescent combat-clothing proudly boasted, from the ceiling of an English Pub. It was time to move to the next problem, one that had exercised my mind (but never to any conclusion), for some 20 years. It was time to conquer the subject of sculpture.

Our designs, as they grew larger, had begun to show me that it was necessary to place sculpture upon certain of their critical points. Perhaps it was the dual disappointment of building hugely expensive giant black planters in both Cambridge, England and Houston, only to have both university administrations refuse to spend a few dollars to floriate them. I have always been puzzled by this - especially so in the British instance, with the native passion for gardening. But I was not downhearted.

Maybe the times wanted these columnar narrations to be terminated by another sort of 'object'.

Why not?

If the conceptual function of the Sixth Order was to frame-out and 'steady' the ephemeral events of an epiphanic conceptuality, mediated by graphics, why not extend this 'iconic engineering' to sculpture? Graphics are not not in any sense physically real. This is why they can have the effect that the graphically impotent Adolf Loos denigrated as "tattooing". Their inscription into a well-structured interior can so impregnate 'real', physical 'natural', quotidian space with ideas that their epiphanies come amongst us like welcome presences to humanise the dull materialities of steel, plasterboard and cement.

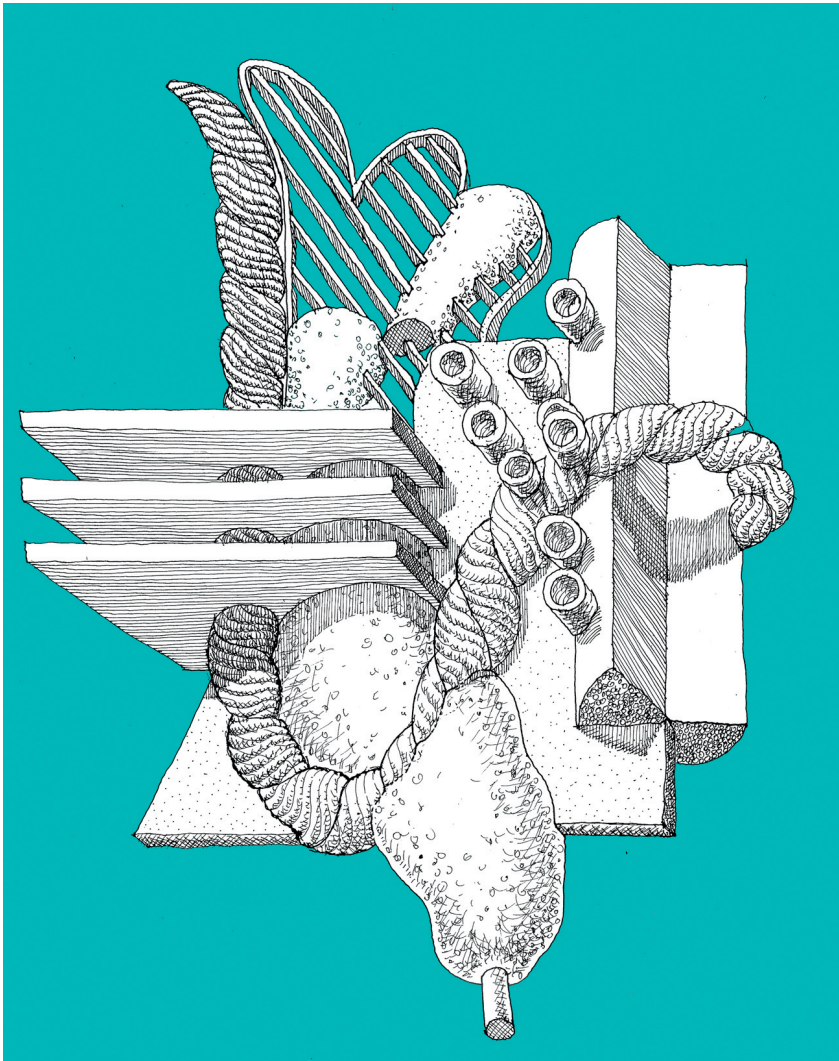
How would it be with some already-reified iconic 'presence'?

I found no difficulty in imagining where such 'presences' would go. They would be welcome, firstly, over the tops of columns. Secondly they would be welcome upon the entablatures of the Minor Order, as it comes to 'support' the springing of an arch. It began to appear that these creatures were 'surfers', riding the blue rafts of the entablature. But then they would have to be cast, in this position, as the agents of 'Reason', that is to say the 'Beauty' of the overseeing eye and its quadrating violence.

Back in 1981, at the time of Wadhurst Park, I wrote an essay recording that it was easier for me to inscribe an iconic 'text' when it was physically two-dimensional - like an inlay. For what is intaglio but a drawing made of solid materials. When addressing some hundreds of concrete technologists gathered by Messrs. Bayer, for the award of the first of their Bayer prizes (it was in the garden of the Victoria and Albert Museum), I called Wadhurst an essay in "solid colour". It was from this that I derived the idea of a "photolithic architecture". Decoration in relief, extending into the third dimension, seemed impossible to me.

Since that time JOA achieved large-scale iconic arrays. But these have been 'flat art' such as those on the floor and ceilings of Duncan Hall, at Rice. And both of these were 'lodged' securely within the framing of an Architectural Order. However when inscribing a three-dimensional form, as upon the columns of the Judge Institute, experience had shown me that I needed to fragment any compositions by the imposition of collage. I had done this even though I knew that it has been, for many decades, the ambition of those few critical thinkers whom one could read without intellectual ennui, to escape from the peculiar rhetoric of this century-old graphical invention.

My favourite contemporary sculpture, for example, is the great three-dimensional collage by the late, and much-lamented, Roy Lichtenstein on the sea front of Barcelona. It was so refreshing to escape from the wood-buthers and metal-bashing cohorts of 20C 'materialists'. And who was Lichtenstein but the artist, working entirely 'in the flat', who had managed to resolve the conflict between synthetic and analytic cubism by inventing a peculiar medium, all of his own, derived, one might almost say, from pointillisme? Everything he did was 'collaged' out of dots and dashes. In Barcelona these were rendered in the fractured chinaware canonised by Antonio Gaudi in Parc Guell.

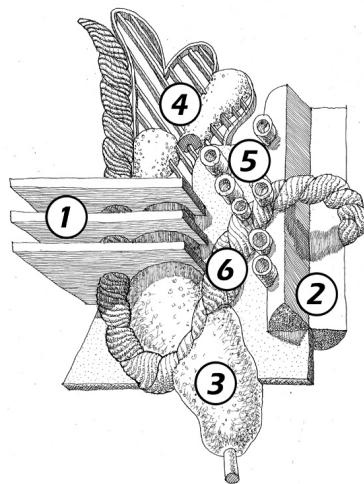


From this I conclude that the greater the idea, the more problematic the vehicle. A graphic, having already lost the third dimension, had no further need to deny a compositional clarity. A sculpture which already owned a state of being in the dimensions of physical reality, must submit to being decomposed by a fracturing collage.

Only iconic banalities, or ideas of the profoundest sort, can be enfolded, today, in that smoothly polished granite in which the trite and the terrifying finally meet in eternal identity.

To put it another way, the profoundest symbols are always banal, - life, death, negation, time, the sun, cosmos, nature, culture etc, etc. JOA's narrative sequences, of the sorts of temporality, for example, were easy to acquire and dispose. The only way to make these concepts tolerable, and to bring them to the level of public inscription without which no culture can live in any way that one could call 'noble', was to serve them up in the way that JOA did, that is to say formally fractured and spiced with esoterica.

For my first essay I took the region of the Delta in the phenomenology of Somatic Time. The Delta is the last event-horizon before the dispersal of the fluvial axis into the infinity of the ocean. After passing between the Square Tower (1) and the Round Tower (2) the River (3) splits into three streams to outline the Delta-shape (4). At this point it passes through the Hypostylar 'field of reeds' (5) an Architectural sign that always indicates Infinity as it finally heads into the Serpentine Coils of the Okeanos (6).



I began, therefore with the most important place for any exterior 'presence' - that of riding the roof-raft. I decided that these 'personifications' might also rotate, and placed them on a central pivot (which would anyway serve to physically mount them).

Being of an apprehensive nature, I began by disposing of the ending of the narrative of life - that is to say with its 'other', i.e. Death. This, in my iconography of the River of Somatic time, is the Delta. In fact the Beach is also one of the loci for the landing of the Ark of Renewal, or the Raft of the Colonists of Reason.

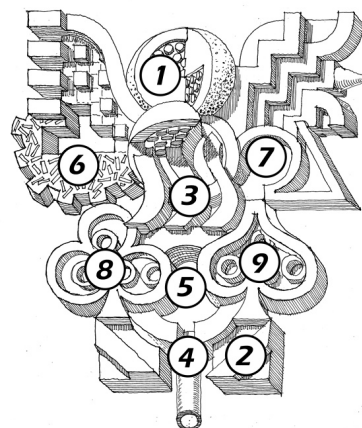
Like all iconic sequences, it can be read both forward and backwards - as both Alpha and Omega.

The sea advances and the sea retreats.

My next sculptural invention had a more ambitious iconography, spanning the whole fluvial narrative. I wanted to see how far and how fast one sculpture could go. In reality I would tend not to expend the whole iconography of Somatic time on one small fragment of a composition. It would be preferable to devote a separate sculpture to each event-horizon. This would serve to enrich the whole by elaborating the parts.

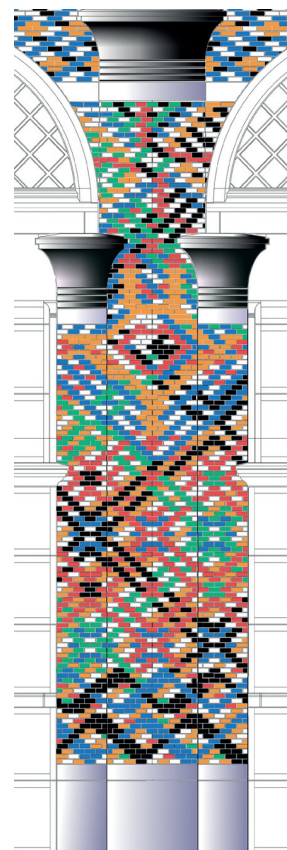


This sculpture travels from the 'Source' (1) at its head, down to an exiguous 'Delta' (2) at its foot. It proceeds by way of the River (3) here illustrated in the earlier icon of three waves. This is the central element of a nine-fold square of the City (4) whose four outer corners are the red cubes diagonalled in black. The pink circle could also be deciphered as the hollow trunk of the Nave (5). In that case the Nave would have been 'Penrosed' into the City. Flanking this central narrative are the Displaced Crossing (6) and the flanking Alpha to Omega Mountains (7). Below them, obscuring the upper two corners of the Nine-fold square, are the Club (8) housing the sky, and the Sword, misnamed the 'spade' from spathis, (9), housing the Earth. Both club and sword are arboreal icons for the hypostylar Forests of the Nave.





JOA's first design for the 'Order' of Maastricht Musik was somewhat perfunctory. But my Listener will know, by now, that JOA had already built elaborate Orders, such as that for Den Haag, while being continually frustrated as to the consummation of their proper purpose.



My first Architectural Order for Maastricht plays it as a rustic outpost of the Roman Empire. The columnar shafts are simple and bold, clustered into a cinquefoil footprint. The arch is minimally exiguous. In the same way as Buckingham Palace wanted something Gothic for Windsor, Maastricht wanted something 'Modern' for itself. I was not particularly pleased with this 'Ordine'. But my time was spent working on the sculptures it 'secured'. I made the entablatures of the 'Minor Order' project to support more sculptures.

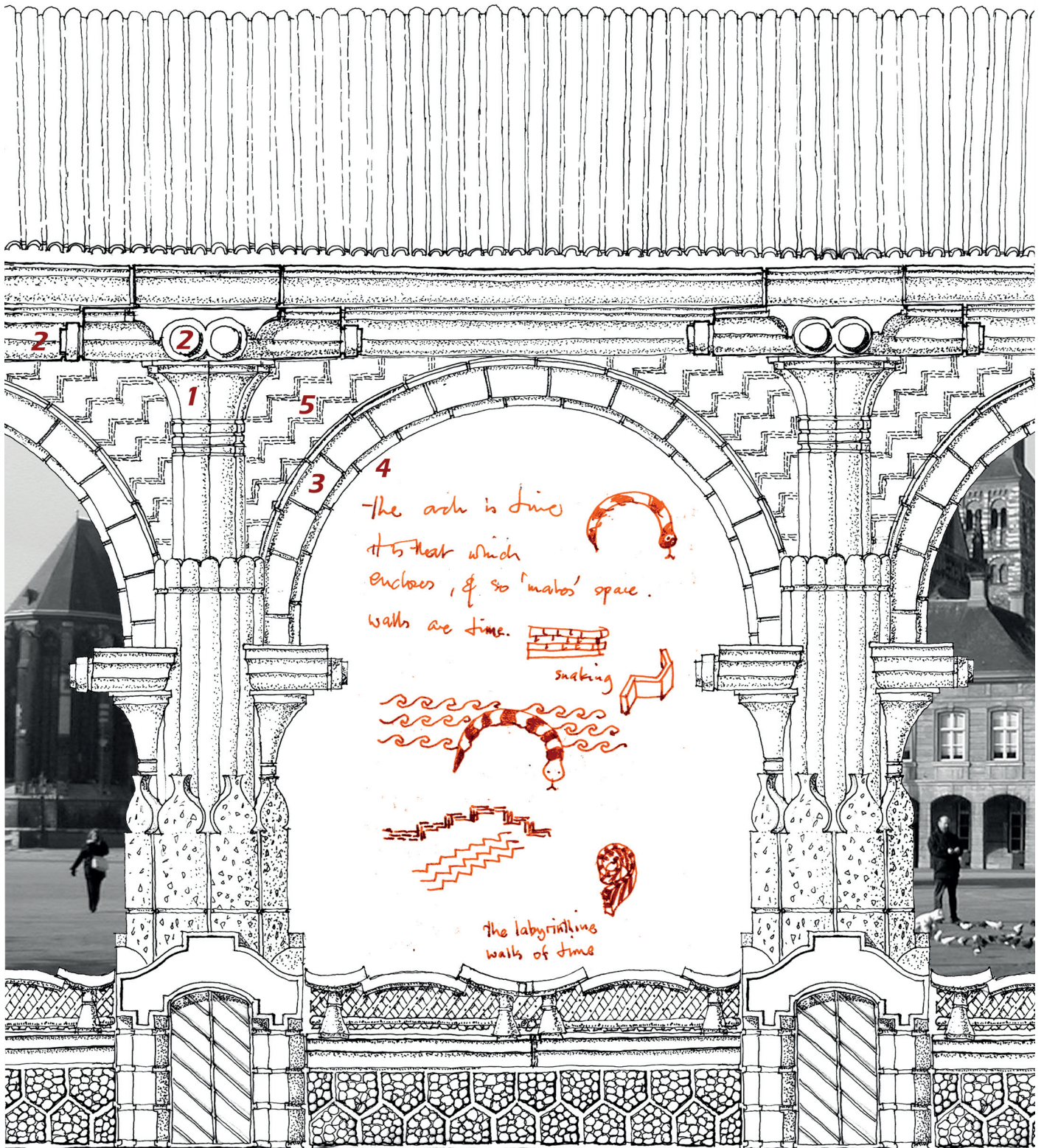
The original design for Den Haag clearly shows the "eye in the mouth in the hand" and, above it, the Cakra of Light.

This was to inscribe the epiphanic means to the conceptual landscapes that are the only rational ways to humanise the dull rubbish - cement, steel, etc, out of which an industrialised lifespace must be fabricated.

My interest, in this Maastricht job, was in my too-long-postponed assault on the fortress of public sculpture.

I felt that I had done enough at this point. The response from Maastricht was polite but not ecstatic. It had been made very clear that this was an attempt to 'raise the wind' via an engaging local journal and that JOA's services would be 'free'. It was an amusing holiday to visit the city. It is a quality of JOA that our imaginations work best when sprinkled with a light showering of cash. For if a project can not even pay a fee, how can one expect the other 90% needed to build it?

While I enjoy thinking I am in agreement with Descartes that the highest status is reserved for ideas that enter the mystery of physis, and become what he called "machines". But that is why L'Architecture Autre is so dull. Its ideas are puerile.



This 2006 version of the Musik Kiosk grafts-on the fuller iconics of the Wadhurst Millenium Pavilion. A main difference would be that the section (1), signifying 'Sight', or 'Fire' which was in structural cast glass at Wadhurst, would be in mirror-polished stainless steel. The Entabled Raft (2), also, would be better in 'photolithic' concrete rather than stainless and patinated copper. The fascias of the arches (3), are planned in alternating rose and white, while the 1/4 staggered-off stones marking their soffites (4), are slate grey and white. The effect is of a comet arching and falling. The infilling tympana to the arches(5), are blue with wavy, zig-zag, veins of the palest cream brick-tiles. The curving comets describe the fiery boundaries to the mundane space we occupy - under a marine canopy.

I was never happy with the random rubble base to the Musik Kiosk. It was a bit of chic Corbu 'Arte Povera' and unworthy of a city aspiring to Urbanity. So, a year later, when writing this section of these Lectures, I inscribed it with the icon of the serpentine undulation of infinity (6), to embrace its strata of primordial 'eggs'. These would need to be dark and shiny - like fresh coal iridescent with green. The undulating fissure would be of marbled glass 'cats-eye' spheres in a sequence of red, black, white and yellow. The other colours would be those of Wadhurst Park.

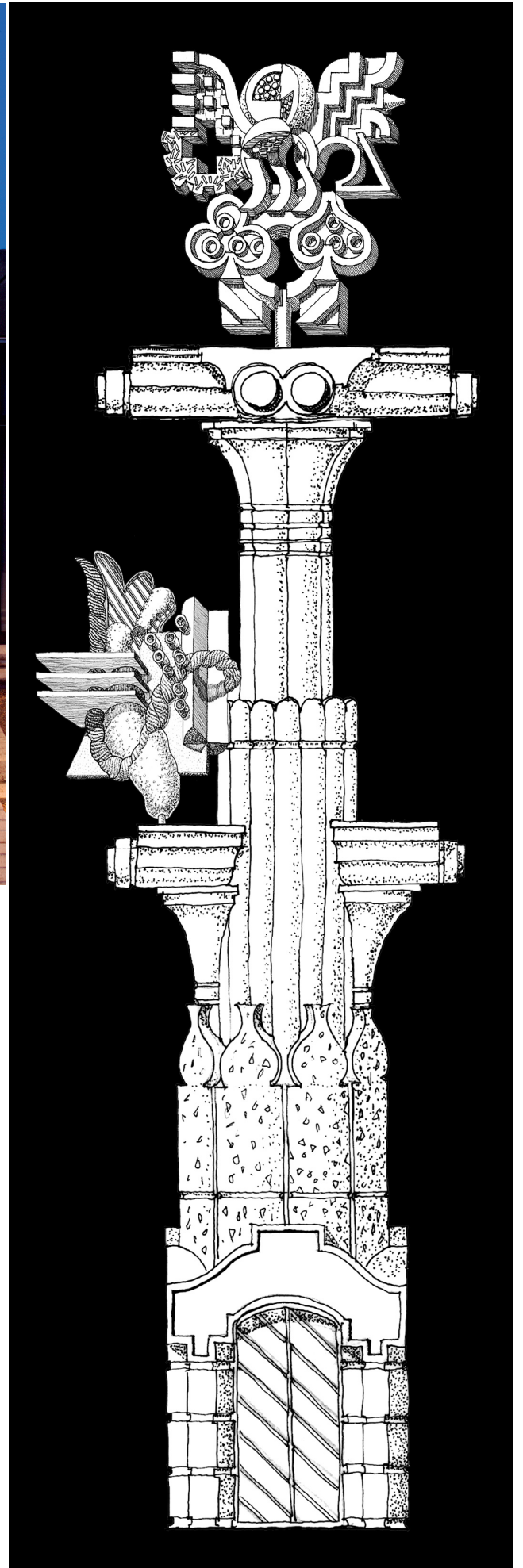


A column of the Wadhurst Millenium Pavilion under the sun's light. The external appearance is illustrated, but not its inner nature. This must be deduced from 'reading' its forms. These are denoted as 'symbolic' by being coloured.

The Wadhurst Millenium Pavilion, lit by burning the sun's energy from a million years ago. This artifice allows me to illustrate its nature as the columna lucis whose event-horizons narrate a phenomenology of the human.

Needless to say that **this project would go on to inscribe the ceiling** of this **bandstand**. Being **open and elevated** its **iconics** would soon become a **familiar element** of the **'self-image'** of Maastricht. I had **no false modesty** in insisting, in **JOA's standard contract**, that I designed this, along with all of the five polychromatic roof-sculptures. I had **already confirmed** that no **'painter of substance'** (such as **David Hockney**) will **inscribe a civic monument**, when they can **do something trivial in a Gallery!** I have argued that a **main cause of the 20C lifespace** was the final collapse of **the centuries-long iconic deficiencies of a too-naturalistic Western art**. Compared to this, a disaster so enormous as to be virtually invisible, **how can it harm to allow a single architect to attempt its redemption?**

What is there left to lose?



I quoted John Harris, on page three of Lecture Three: 'The End of Urbanity', when he described the way that Classicism under the Burlingtonian Palladians, when it finally came to dominate all aspects of English Architecture from the palatial and ecclesiastical to the modestly domestic and even industrial, used to **design the 'interior' with the same devices as the 'exterior'**. That is to say that this universalised English Classicism, source of millions of square feet of London and all of her satellites both at home and abroad, entirely failed to grasp the epiphanic capabilities of the 'architectural' interior. It is, I argue, the **main reason**, though a 'symptom' would probably be more forensically accurate, of the inability of the English to **conceive** of that vision of Urbanity which is the **sine-qua-non** of a successful city.

For it goes without saying that a city is a space, but more importantly a place, that looks inwards.

Paradoxically, however, and hard to grasp by the 'literal' English mind, is the fact that this 'inward gaze', is designed to look outwards in a more effective manner than to merely survey a territory of mist, trees and, if one is very wealthy: sheep. The heavy 'framing' of the Architectural Order (whatever its 'style') imprisons and crushes the 'viewer' the better that his imagination may (somewhat desperately) tunnel outwards via the 'perspectives' on the picture-planes of wall, and, more importantly, floor and ceiling, to look upon and bring into quotidian being, precisely what can NOT be seen out of Corbusier's dumbed-down picture-window 'pan de verres'. Needless to say, also, that the ferociously dogmatic iconic illiteracy imposed since WWII has left the Architects of the last half-century with a comprehensive inability to invent a picture-plane that could, as Heidegger used to describe it: "put ideas to work". This incompetence today extends even to the chocolate-box pictorial naturalism of the Western tradition, let alone the 20C tools bequeathed to Architects by the marvellous graphic inventions of the Western 'crisis'.

I go on, in this Third Lecture, to suggest (from my own experience with the Judge Institute in Cambridge), that this self-imposed illiteracy is not the product of some inherently 'Nordic' incapacity. It became very clear to me as I worked for Cambridge University, that it was due to an overwhelming desire NOT to publish the bases of our common culture. Or, to put it more directly, either to keep them a total secret, or if not that at least a mutually agreed repression. Can there be any wonder, with this 'dirty secret' of a common culture, that the gaze is turned outwards to focus upon 'unspoilt nature' and away from the grubby gambling-den of all the vices that the British have always believed their cities to be - and to ultimately turn them into. It is for this reason that The Architectural Profession, self-appointed guardians of this 'edge-city' vision of a view through glass upon unspoilt forests (growing, as Corbu proposed, upon the ruins of the once-upon-a-time Western City) are prevented, and gladly refrain, from composing 'interiors'.

Yet even 'the smallest room' can perform that rehearsal of the 'epiphanic reification of ideas' which is an absolutely necessary capability of an Urbane Architecture.

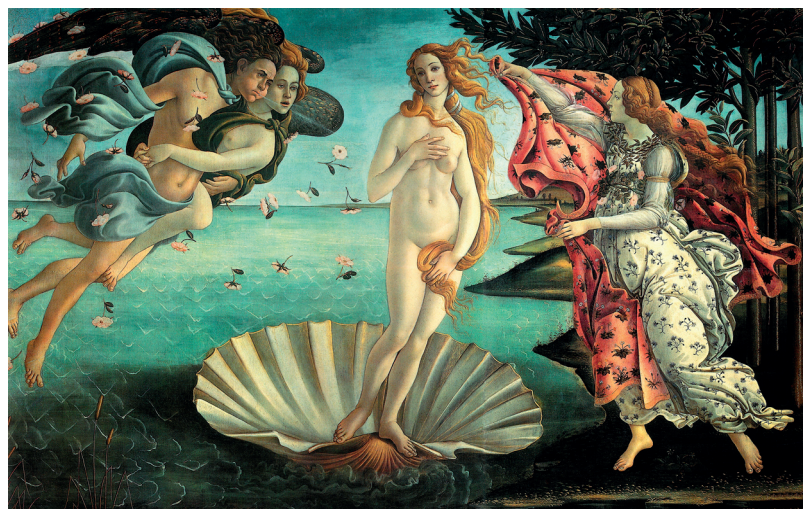
Many, today, cycle to work. One arrives all hot and sweaty.

Cycling gear can also get sweaty. So why not wash it?

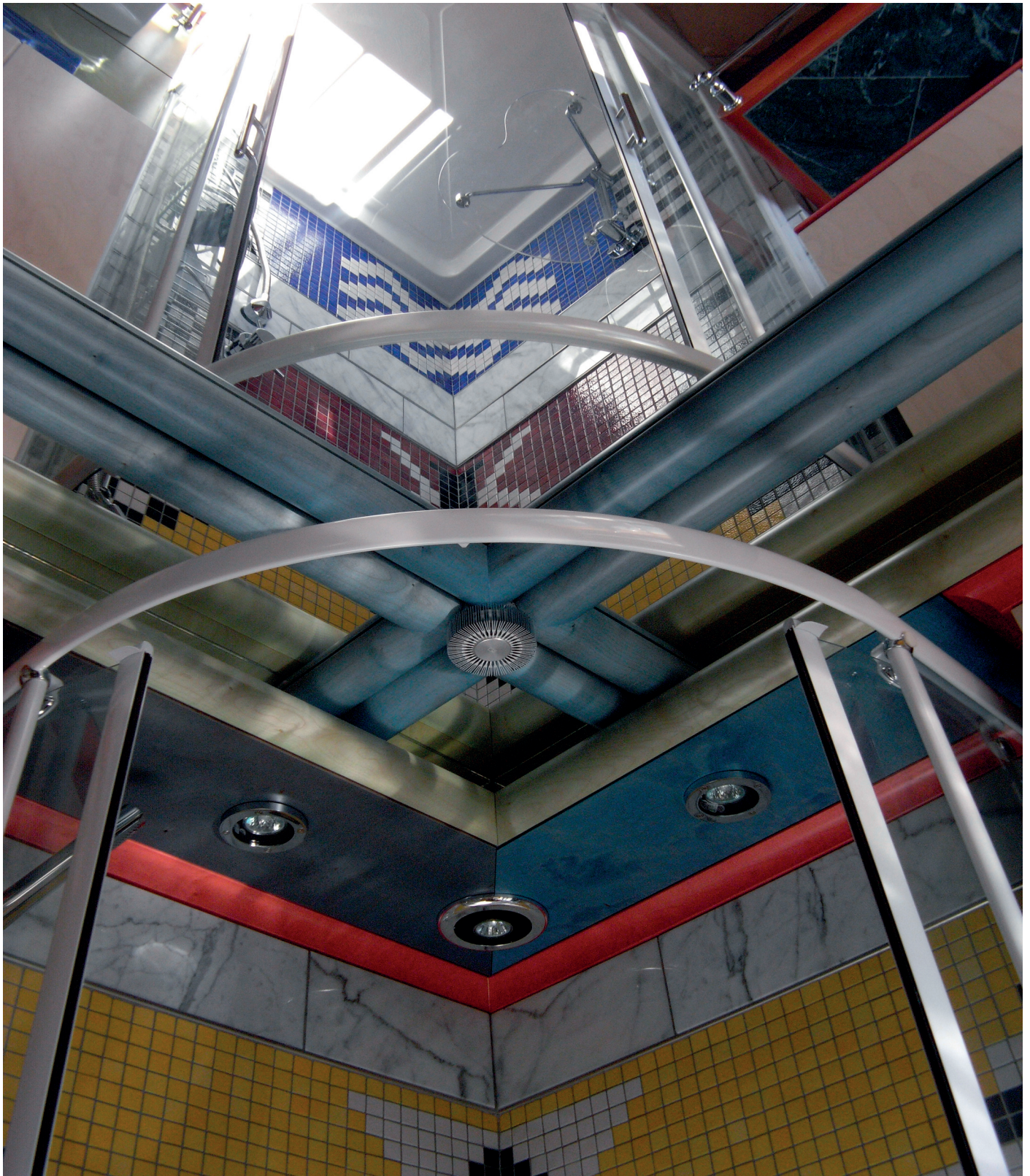
I liked to think that an Architect (gender notwithstanding) could rise from his/her deperspiration fully renewed and ready for the fray. JOA installed a room whence one could 'rise' again, like Aphrodite from the foam of the severed gonads of Chronos the Father of Time.

That is to say: Have a shower before clocking-in.

The room was on the topmost floor, with a low ceiling. I gave it a mirrored ceiling because there was only the sky above it. One day there will be time to inscribe it with something more reflective - excuse the pun. For now it unveils its 'cargo' in 'literal' rather than 'literary' mode by revealing it as the Shower Room qua Shower Room - altho' upside-down and back to front!



All pretty young girls and boys but useless for a view into 'Scientific Space - which is to say, for us, the 'Space of Time'. The miracle of early-20C Graphics, stimulated by every iconic culture save that of the Greco-Roman West, can focus the 'Now' - if only the 'Connoisseurocracy' would allow it.



The JOA Studio bathroom looking up at the mirrored ceiling over the shower. We see the doubled blue beams of the Adventitious Raft of the Entablature. A vertical power-beam of the Serlian sort occurs, like the 'Fiery Comet' of Pliny, at each intersection of the blue 'trabes'. The (mirrored) cavitation opened by the Columna Lucis is edged in (an ought to be stronger), green to represent the 'earthy' top surface of the excavated/exploded Heap of History. The ceiling of the Heap is marked in the corner by an extract-fan-cum-downlight. To the left of it the lacquered plywood ceiling shows Grey for the North and, to the right, Blue to the East. Below this is a red-lacquer cavetto moulding that makes a smooth transition to the vertical walls of the shower enclosure. There is no room in such a small space for anything approaching a full Architectural Order, so the 'framing function' discharged by that device is performed by a 'cage' of red-lacquered members (that are all cut and mitred from either torus (convex) or cavetto (concave) mouldings. The walls to the Shower Enclosure are banded in thin Carrara 'C' marble tiles, from B&Q, and Waxman vitreous 25x25 mosaic. As so often happens with ready-made units their modules did not coincide. Their alignment was 'recitified' by inserting thin strips of stainless steel oil-pressure tubing.



I recall 'finding', with great pleasure, in the Castel del Angelo, the room shown to the left. It was built at the end of the Cinquecento and is known as the 'Bath of Pope Clemente the Seventh'. The tank is at the far end.

One understands why the bath is stretched across the end of the room. It fits neatly under the arch, giving it a 'cosmic' sky. It also allows an attendant to help the infirm in and out of the tank. But it is not ideal if the bather wishes to sit and soak-up the meaning of the iconically-engineered surfaces. For the bather, happily soaking the body, must crane the neck around to one side in order to see the main features of the room.

The room below, which I never had the pleasure of seeing, is better disposed. Daylight (although candles are always preferable in such a room) comes from over the shoulder of the bather. This room, known as the 'Bath of Gian Matteo Giberti' is in the Vatican Palace. He can feed his reverie from scanning all of the surfaces of the chamber.

Yet there is something sad about these little bathrooms, all covered in gently erotic figures drawn from the 'pagan' mythology of the Hellenes.

The 'Stufa' of Pope Clement VII in the Castel Sant Angelo was built in the Cinquecento. Its iconic engineering is more developed than the bath shown below. But the placing of the bath prevents the bather (unless he wants a cricked neck) from enjoying the meaning of the narrative actions unfolding all around him (or, in another context, her).

Hellenic and Roman Antiquity proper had none of the Hebraic prudery brought by Christianity. The iconic engineering of such vaults would then have spanned waters of a public scale where many would enjoy the liquid warmth together - as they do in such cultures as Japan.

In Cinquecento Rome they seem miserable little chambers in which the naked body of the bather is guiltily exposed to a reminiscence of a more candid and less paranoid Italy.

It would not be surprising to learn that the technology of Antiquity extended to showers. Their concept of the ideal body had it standing erect. So the modern invention of the glass shower cube (icle) can be held to be at least, iconically, no decline and perhaps even an advance on the water-filled coffin-shape that is the typical bath.



The 'Bath of Gian Matteo Giberti, in the Vatican Palace, is smaller than that of Clement VII. Its ceiling recalls a garden pergola, as it is more literally rendered in the Cancelleria. For its 'coffers' are in an 'Enlightened' daylight-white instead of a 'Darkness of Superstition' night-blue. Its 'Fires of Illumination' are not within its 'coffering' but placed, as mine are, where Serlio 'finds' columns (of fire and light!), at the beam-intersections - a curious congruence with JOA's phenomenology, as one may see on the next page!

The **inscriptions** on the **surfaces** of these **sixteenth century bathrooms** pay the compliment to their **user** of offering him the **substance from which to fashion thought**. **Thought**, allowed freedom, is as **unlimited as the capacity of the Thinker**. So, especially **lying in a hot bath**, how could it be thought 'restrictive' to **iconically engineer the surfaces of a room**? The only 'restriction' is the iconic illiteracy of the Viewer. To the **literate** the iconologies expand the space - especially if this expansion be that of **Time** as well as **Space**.

in the case of **mirror**, however, the 'expansion' is actually 'restrictive' as the only 'vision' offered is of what one already is. But perhaps that is why it works for us when we are **naked** and unaccustomed to appearing as such!



Looking up from the shower-cubicle, via the mirrored ceiling, at the cupboard in the far corner. The four-square quadration of the Adventitious Raft, with its fiery power-column in each corner-intersection, can be seen to be resting on the green edges of the cavity opened by the discourse between the Raft and the Heap of History. The Blue ceiling of the East, to the left, and the Black of the North can be seen mitred together directly overhead. The Red ceiling of the West and the Orange of the South can be seen to the right and left respectively of the book-shelf in the centre.



This view upwards of the whole room shows more clearly how the quadrating (blue-log) Raft of Advent, with its power-beams at each 'crossing', lies over the 'hole' (rimmed with a green torus-moulding) in the upper surface of the Heap of History. The 'removal' of this upper-ceiling of the 'Heap' is confirmed by replacing it with mirror. It is a dangerous, but common, solecism to image, on a flat ceiling, anything more definite than the golden point of light that leaks through the dark blue 'floor' of the pyramidal Cone of Hestia. Here the low ceiling prevents one from achieving even the 'recession' in the picture plane obtained by the deeply coffered ceiling of a Roman Pal. Massimi below.

The ceiling-mirror shows the lower half of the room, but inverted. This offers the iconically-literate mind absolutely nothing of interest with which it may conjure, that it can not already see by simply looking downwards. Mirror effectively erases the iconic utility of the surface it covers. This is useful if the picture plane is insufficiently recessed for it to seem 'cut through' to reveal what lies behind its 'veiling' surface.

However the flat and proximate mirror does enormously multiply the visual complexity of the forms on view. This is diverting for anyone trained to appreciate the composition of forms deracinated of their meanings, as are all designers trained during the last half-century (or the final post-WWII death of the 'Styles'). In JOA we appreciate the jumble of forms reflected by this ceiling. However, it has been our project to bring the joyous power of the abstracted (cubistical) compositional technique to the equally joyful, but long-lost capability of inscribing 'meanings'.

Events may prove this a temporary abeyance. One hopes to return to inscribe this ceiling.



The bedroom-ceiling of the Principe of the House of Massimi showed his 'bloodstock' quarterings at its centre. The rest showed only the 'Raft' with its cargo of 'Hearth-Fire' Germs set within the serpentine streams of infinitude. While this is both visually 'splendoured' by gilding, and pregnant with metaphysical 'weight', there is surely room for progress via the more sophisticated iconic techniques of 'Modernity'. We can do better.



The Roman Clivio Argentario as a scaly-serpentine icon of flowing water. Snaking proto-hexagons serve as the River of Somatic Time and the 'Valley of the Republic'.

The colour of this image wonderfully combines the two meanings, Water and Time, of the serpentine icon. But I failed to find a blue-green hexagonal floor-tile!

The floor, on the other hand, was an easier matter. We have already explored, on pages nine to eleven of Lecture five: 'Babuino', how one of the earliest inscriptions, of intertwining snakes on the floor of the earliest level of Jericho, gave us the infinity-sign and the Ourobours serpent that represents the 'Time of the Eternal Return', endlessly circling the bounded space of human occupation. This figure of a marine chaos transforms, after positing the Timelessness of the Forest of Infinitude, into the River of Somatic Time - as seen in the Clivio Argentario, in Rome, above left. All of these ideas are fed upwards - to the literate - through their feet as they feel the electrically-warmed hexagonal (scaly) joints of the shower-room floor! Note that the hexagons (below) do not align with the walls. These are, in any case romantically (in the early-19C manner), rigidly contra-orthogonal. The axis of the scaly tiles 'flows' directly out of the the base of the shower to cross the tiny room on its diagonal.



The ceilings of most rooms accomodate few physical uses, which is why it so feeble-minded of our Architecturawl culture not to put them to some intellectual employment. Floors must be more 'physical'. Even here, however we set the mind a puzzle by hiding the loo-paper inside a cupboard. Note the surface of the sea in the 'Verde Alpi' marble sink-worktop tiles. They are laid on the diagonal because that is how water ripplles in a channel. The sea, of course, in the ex-Vedic phenomenology of the Time of Inception, hid the Heap of History that became this useful 'Camera'.

The first two terms of the 1955's first year of Architectural Studies were, at the Central London Polytechnic, devoted to exercises in what was known, vaguely (for nothing was really 'named') as the 'Bauhaus Method'. Our Professors, even if they had known it, would not have told us that we were being trained to become practising (early 20C, Husserlian) 'phenomenologists'. Their ambition, which was precisely phenomenological, was to train us to compose in a way that relied solely on the immanent properties of things - that is to say their colour, texture and shape rather than any properties 'attached' to objects by the conditions of their cultural genesis and employment.

Our first exercise was to tour the local rubbish skips and compose an object with our findings.

After that we had to reproduce this composition as accurately as we could with a still-life painting. We learnt, along the way, how to reify a small object and then how to then reproduce it (flat) on paper with line and colour.

Our Professor's political ambition, as we have already explored in Lecture Four: 'The Great Escape', was to train a generation of Designers who would have entirely freed themselves from the burden of any inherited 'historical' Architectural culture so that they could build the New. Post WWII, World that would finally, and radically, free Mankind from the sorts of pains and plagues that they, themselves, as young adults, had just experienced in WWII. What they really taught us was how to build with rubbish for (proletarian) Clients who (one must assume) they regarded as rubbish.

It soon became clear that some were able to perform these feats of 'abstract' composition with peculiar skill. These few, and they were always in the minority, led each yearly cohort with their inscrutable productions. Ultimately, even fewer (those blessed by the vagaries of circumstance) became the Leading Designers (I hesitate to call all of them Architects) who would be recorded as such by History. My only quarrel with this process, for this skill in 'abstract design' was never able to be 'taught' and one must recognise that that fate gives every individual distinct skills, was that the programmatic 'illiteracy' of this approach to Design has ultimately, after a half-century, destroyed first my Medium, and secondly (and less importantly) my Profession. The Public, in all of its guises, do not 'read' their lifespaces as a composition of deracinated and meaningless forms, textures, reflections, rotations, repetitions, colours and patterns! They have never been obliged (even if natively gifted), to learn, rehearse, and endlessly practice these beguilingly powerful compositional skills. The Public names their lifespaces, and composes it (if at all) narrationally. In England, because of this island's undisturbed archival records, this narrative has generally become what one might call 'micro-historic', leading-on to the pseudo-historic.

The investigation of this process has been studied, with ever greater insight' by persons who, very often have little skill, or experience, of that abstract compositional skill which both 'powers' and 'empowers' the Practitioner. The effect of this, sadly, has been that not only is their knowledge presented in such a way as to fail to interest the Practitioner, but the knowledge itself, by being generated by minds unused to the problems of even the PRACTICAL invention of the human lifespaces, pursue theoretical ambitions which have little to do with the mainly syntactic (ie. design-led) genesis of the phenomena they study.

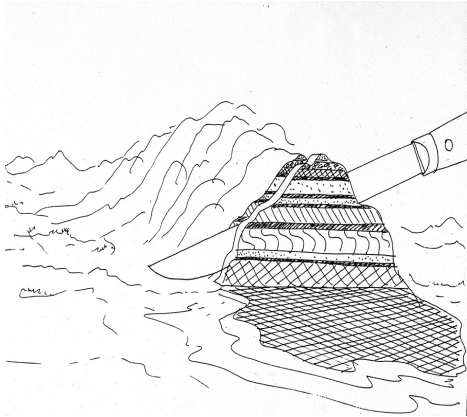
The leading Practitioners ignore the fascinating discoveries of the Historians, Critics and general Savants - few though they sadly are in this immensely important field. While the labours of these latter, brilliant though these have been during the 20C, have failed to save the medium they study from its catastrophic decline. The remedy is, of course, very plain. Theory must be written, or at least conceived, by those trained in the phenomenologies of abstracted design. Design, conversely, must (and should only) be practised by those well schooled in the meaning (iconology) of objects and their general, wider, public narratologies.

Nothing else will reverse the 'destruction by dumbing-down' of the City.

Nor should the iconically ambitious Architect ever despair of his highly-industrialised medium. Using the ready-made surfaces of our trade to reproduce the 'bilder-schriften' flourishes of his freely-moving iconically-literate pen is a discipline that often improves the ability to cargo ideas. Thus, for a graphic to survive the wet and wild conditions of a shower-enclosure it was necessary to use stone or vitrified ceramic. Fortunately B&Q provided some inexpensively sliced Carrara 'B' and Messrs Waxman some rather more costly French 'Briare' mosaic. It became possible to represent a few ideas.

When composing, it is often useful to quadrate the surface. It enables a naturally kinaesthetic 'reading' to occur. Dividing the shower into horizontal bands allows a reading of 'top to bottom' and vice-versa. Then folding the wall of the shower invites a centre-and-sides partitioning. Having done this it was discovered that removing a 'course' of marble tiles created a dimension that the mosaic would not fill. Large cement joints, in a shower, go mouldy and black. So these were filled with stainless steel piping manufactured to conduct fluids at high pressure. The fact that they glisten like bars of 'liquid light' as the water flows over them was a semantic which clinched the deal!

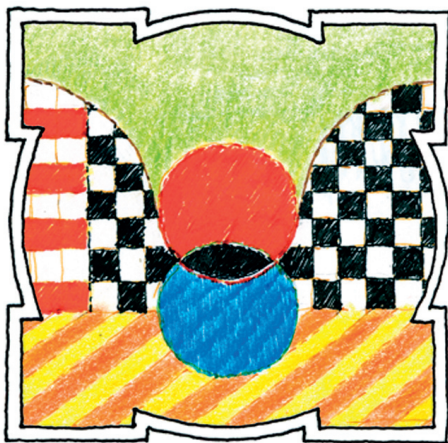




The first clarification of one of the icons for the idea of a 'mountain' came about during the first exercise of what I later termed the Tricorso'. It is reported on page 7 of the eponymous Lecture Six.



The black and white bands of the diurnal progression used to detail the icon of the (mountainous) Heap of History used to narrate the Phylogenetic and Ontogenic history told by the columnar component of the Sixth Order.

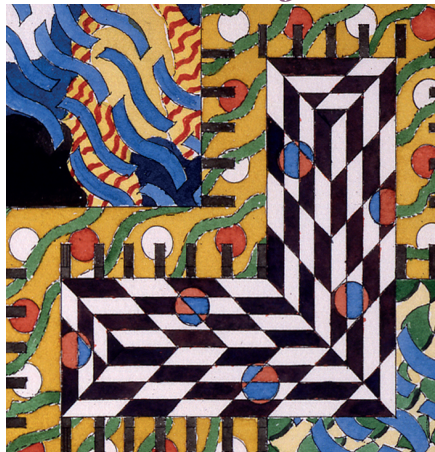


The 'parted' mountain occurs in the icon of the Source in the narration of the River of Somatic Time/ Valley of the Republic. The details of this icon are that it can be black and white to denote days and nights. Red and white denote cthonic fire and hypoatmospheric ice (Rice Ceiling).

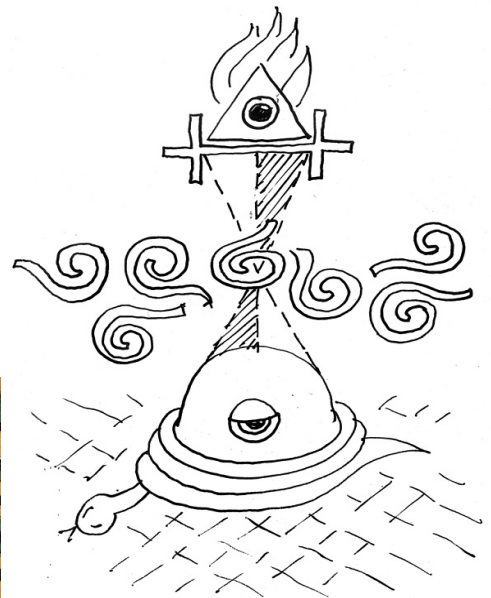


The ground of the upper register is yellow, as it was at Rice, denoting the realm of 'light' and the image. The images are of the parted Mountain/Heap of History and the agent the congress of matter and light underlying (also) the idea of the Photolithic material needed to build a lifespace proper to the enfolded intelligence that is Man. Deity is frequently represented by a pyra of illumination. Here the putatively 'highest' achievement of Humanity uses the same figure, but includes the 'dark side' as essential to Truth.

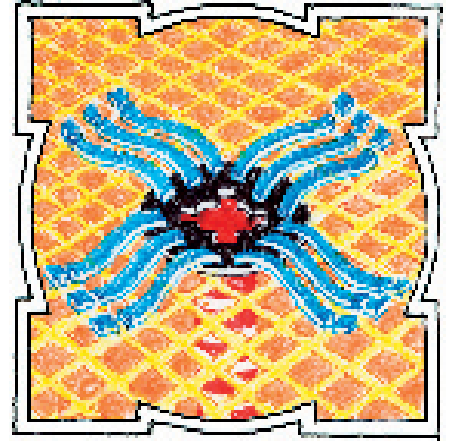
The triangular figure of 'Thought' appears on a yellow ground denoting 'light' between two halves of the 'opened' Heap of History. The 'mountain of darkness' is entered from above by the 'arrow of eschatological light'. An aspect of each enters, permanently, into the other. Its numbers are one, two and three - making six.



One of the quarters of the Parted Mountain on the Rice Ceiling with the diurnal chiaroscuro and the red-and-blue 'caves of fire and ice'.



The figure that appears, centred between the parted mountains can be read as the black mountain and white 'pyra'. The 'pyra' has been reversed so as to become the 'arrow of light', or Reason driving downwards to mate with the 'dark, submarine, mountain of the Heap of History. Then, in Lecture Sixteen: 'The Jaws of Death', the columnar Narrative of Ontogeny arose to culminate in the Sixth State of Thought.



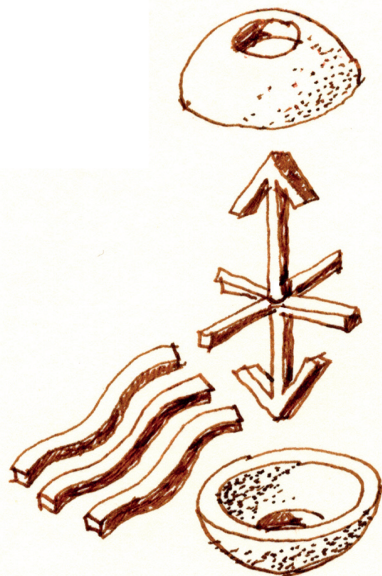
Upward Cycle

Stage 3: Air: the element of speech: Words flow from the volcanic mouth to quadrate and order the surface of the new earth. the complex speech that is necessary for thought arises from the recognition, by the Ego, of the Other. Speech is originally and continually social. Thought encompasses, by Speech, the older and more powerful medium of the Image.

This figure is that of the Ego. It establishes its narrative relation to the figures above and below by appearing between the diurnal chiaroscuro of the 'opened' Heap of History. The 'parted mountains' bracket a field that is the colour of 'enfleshment'. A columnar figure in black has the foot and a head of a seriphed letter 'I'. Words, when spoken most powerfully, as in singing, spring from the centre of the standing body. The four white processes can be read as the outflowing 'rivers of speech' as in Horizon 3 of the Upward cycle (top right). It is also the 'staff' of the psychopomp Hermes/Mercury whose 'snakes' are the white ribbons of a 'truce' mediated by the 'speech' of discourse.

'Sight' began its long history, many millions of years ago, with some light-receptor cells at the forward end of an axially-oriented submarine worm (such as we see in the lowest, blue-and-white figure). The brain-orientation suited to speech reached maturity less than half a million years back. Speech, signed by the central figure above, is much younger than sight itself. The horizon of 'Thought', signed by the

interpenetrating triangles on the yellow field, combines image and word. It is younger, in its turn, than the speech without which it could never have developed. This was proved when it was discovered that it was impossible to decipher the complexities of even the simplest ancient writing if its tongue was no longer vocalised by a living human.

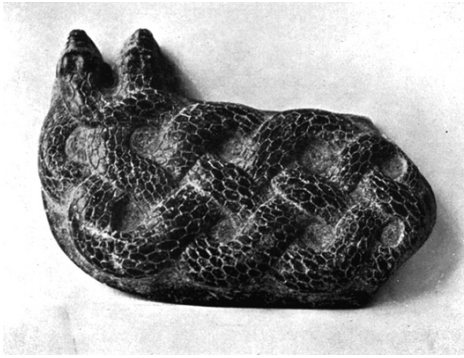


The geometry of human being is to be 'open' to the vertiginous dimensions of the above and the below while being in actual physical communion with the middle zone in which human life has only actually existed from its very beginning.

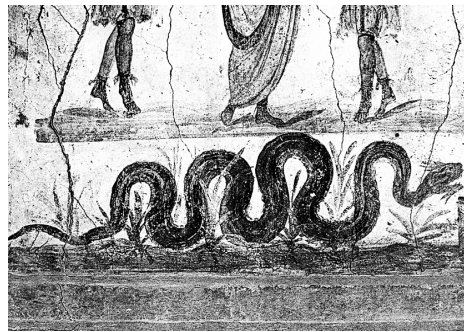
The icon's numbers are one, for the monadic Ego and four for the stability of enfleshed Being, the 'cubic' Earth.



Hermes/Mercurius (Fedex) delivering the poison-package of Pandora to Epimetheus. JOA chose Hermes to represent the Cambridge Business School because he was the only Olympian who was bright, inventive and got things done without physical violence. His 'baton' of power invokes the wings of Thought, Prophecy and the serpents of Time - beyond even death.



The figure on this steatite lamp-cover from Sumeria not only beats with the usual serpentine undulation, but weaves a mere linearity into a spatiality that is quadrated! One cannot avoid ruminating on the fact that this was a lamp and that the snakes end (with a certain formal awkwardness), to both look 'ahead' ...in the manner of the 'flow' of the Arrow of Historical Time!



The Romans pictured an ancient, because bearded, snake as the benign domestic guardian of their house. Their feet rest, for 'security', upon the powerful rhythmic beat of this marine monster. Chaos has been 'tamed' by being translated into the steady infinitude of the Proton Chronon.



The intertwining serpents of gender arose from the Ocean of chaos and entered the Forest-Desert of Infinitude as the 'Triadic' River-Arrow of History. Many an ancient building shows this to be the sequence proper to Architecture and Urbanity



In the beginning there was a submarine worm with an axial organisation that developed some light-sensitive receptors at its leading end. I propose that they swam around in threes, mother father and infant. Gendering introduces the shaking of the dice of genealogy along with the problematic of hierarchy and consequently politics. To which there are two solutions. The one chosen for this moment in time is anarchy, muddle and inaction. The other strategy is formality. Conflict between two entities is accepted. It is resolved by incorporating them both into a singular third. Conversely any monad may divide into two conflicted aspects before seeking to find its adequate 'opposite' so as to unite with it. Three is the number of vitality. The Monad is unmoving, The Dyad is equally locked in irresolution, albeit an unstable one. Only the Triad offers the 'distentio animi' necessary to Birth, Life and Death - an Historic Time that Arrows the sequence of past, present and future.

It is a pity the shower-tray was not bluey-green and chaotic like the sea or even black like the Osirian Earth. Sanitary ware tends to the chemically-cleaned white. At this point the narrative becomes that of good plumbing: that solution to all opacities. Goering reached for his gun, the Gentleman reaches for the flush. Both acts came back to haunt them. The best response to Chaos is to hear, first of all, the beat of the 'proton chronon', that endless rhythm of similitude in which every moment is the same as every other - the time before Time began. From this Monadic infinitude came the first division, when the Monad recognised the existence of its Other, an event so shocking to it that it could not but birth a cataclysmic offspring, the Third Being, (resulting from the 'impossible' epiphany of two Monads), which became History.

THUS WAS THE FIRST TRIAD, AN ARROW POINTING IN THE DIRECTION OF THE BIRTH OF AN UNSTOPPABLE FLOW: THAT OF HISTORIC TIME.

This phenomenon of 'axial flow' can be discovered in the many evidences of Architecture, as in the Cities whose existence Architecture mediates. However as with all visual and plastic narrations, the direction of such 'readings' is not always patent. A river flows from source to sea. Its fluid molecules disperse to be once more returned as rain to the fluvial catchment. The cycle repeats endlessly giving rise to the idea that its 'direction' is of secondary import. So it is with the use of the River as a figure in Architecture. Those who 'own' the Valley of their Instituted Home look down and out as much as they look up and in. The Faculty and Students of Rice University orient to their Deltaic Main Street entrance to the City of Houston more than to the telluric 'Nymphaeum' of the half-buried Rice Football Stadium.

Those who come from outside, to any Institute or City graced with an Architectural culture, will enter its (hopefully) ordered and legible landscape at the point where the chaotic Ocean of Circumstance presents the Institute's Iconic demonstration of a 'door', or 'Portus'.



The 'Verde Alpi' surface of the Sink worktop represents the surface of the Sea of Chaos upon which floated the Ember of the White Sun inside the cone of Hestia. The tiles are cut on the diagonal to help signal the way water flows in a channel. One's feet rest upon the floor of the sea, which are the tiles of the serpentine abyss.

'transcendent' status to the narrative content which it must have in order to be proper to the habitat of the 'talking animal'. It is for this reason that I found this ontology upon 'Nothing' and generate it from that most profound of Human experiences, the shocking recognition, by the Ego, of an 'Other' that is, in the beginning, nothing but a projection of Itself.

This will be a Tridentine Delta overlaying the Hypostylar Field of Reeds that make-up the Veil of Lethe which will re-set the mind prior to its engagement with the world of the Institute.

The functioning of all such 'doors' or 'horizons' depends both on their synaesthetic and empathetic affect as well as the iconic culture of their users. One of the most destructive concepts put about at the time of the French Revolution was that a Lifespace-Architecture could be scripted so that it would 'speak' directly to the unread masses. It has proved not only wrong but entirely destructive, as (even 200 years later) the 'universal accessibility' culture of the late, unlamented, Blairite administration has proved.

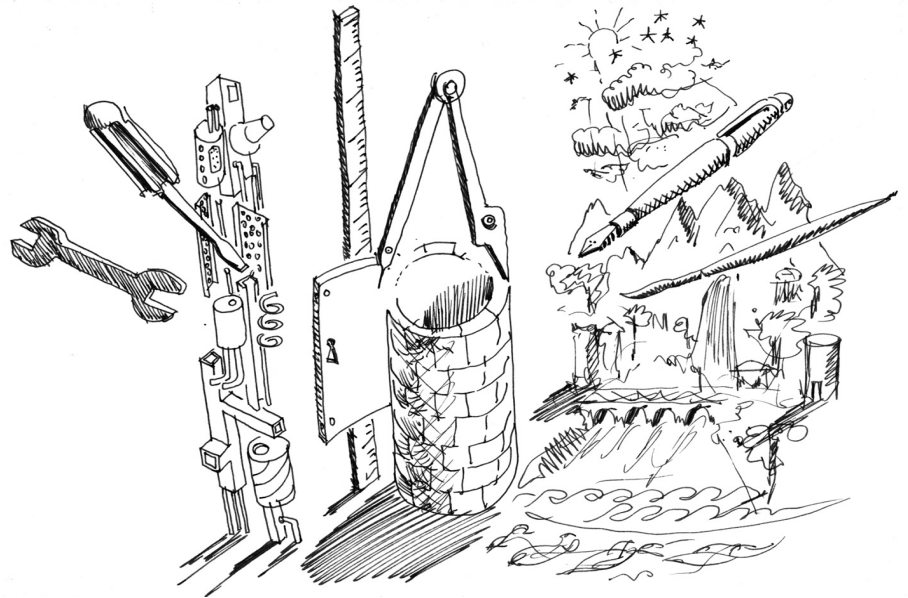
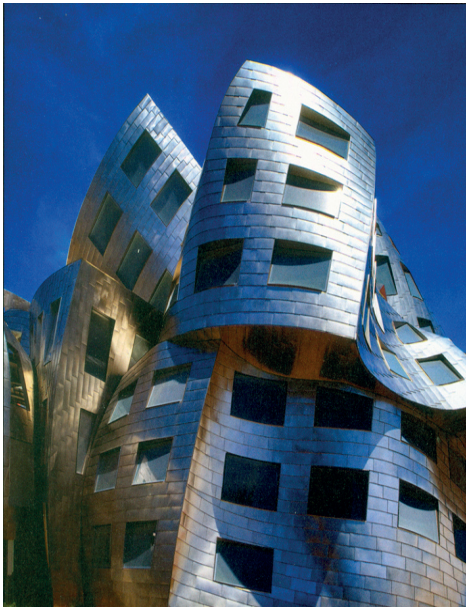
For an iconically literate lifespace to be properly legible it must be 'read' by an iconically literate 'readership'. For this to be possible, in an egalitarian politics, it must also be the case that this lifespace acquire a high level of impersonality while, at the same time, refusing any



The 'monad' of Harp at Swanley, shown above, greets the human entrant at the gates. Red-belted, blue-bottomed and yellow-bodied the Swanley anthropomorph sports a demonstrably prolix 'head', even offering two electric 'eyes'. Then, on penetrating further into Harpville the Entrant finds that this curious Being has morphed into whole buildings.

Its modular rhythms vary but the fact that Swanley has a powerfully patent Order was seen, by the whole Harp design team, to provide a 'political' solution to, firstly the tendency of the Owner to luxuriate in 'possibilities' in order to postpone a final decision and secondly, the possibility of hard feeling amongst the staff as to who would have an office of the best shape. It was clear to everyone that the offices all had a window and access to a 'service-duct' and that was that. The compensation was that the buildings came with an Architectural narrative that was readable up to the point that such inscriptions could be rendered into a site laid out à la De Stijl. The original, blue-glass-spandrel 'pans de verre' ex-Corbusian 'Architecture', shown to the right, was equally 'impersonal'. But all that it gave in return was the despair of Corbusier's self-declared iconic illiteracy. For did not the 'failed interior decorator' himself complain that "painting on walls destroyed them!"





In the 1960's we called this 'Modelling Through'. If one gave Welfare Modernism a good kick its subliterate orthogonalities went all Camillo Sitte Pittoresque. Today it's called "designing outside the box". Either way, as Gehry candidly admits: "Its Dumb". Did he mean mute, or stupid...or both?

The one of the Vitruvian Triad that has been consistently mis-translated, into English, is the central 'figure' of Commoditas. It is not the mere space-plumbing of the 20C Architect. The Latin word is cognate with 'Modus' meaning measure and rhythm, like metre in music and verse. Commoditas solves the 'politics' of an institution's lifespace in the way sketched on the previous page. The beauty of the Sixth Order is that its ample members both offer the plastic power needed to represent these 'measures' while accommodating the frames, pipes and wires of Firmitas and providing the pens and brushes of Venustas the canvas for inscribing 'Iconic Engineering'.

The line of descent passes from Corbusier to Gehry without passing through Architecture. It is the proof of the failure of the ambition to construct a totalising Ur-Architecture, by the Structuralist Semantics of the 1950's, whose prime exponent was Louis Kahn. Or would it be more accurate to describe this denouement as its deflection, by the Double-Breasted Doric denizens of the Connoisseurocracy, into the a-historical cult of Post-Modern Classicism represented by the Venturis' Complexity and Contradiction?

Nothing could happen until JOA invented the Sixth Order. Nothing will happen to improve the state of our cities until it, and others like it, are used as readily as once they were. The day that anyone could conceive of reifying an Urbanity, of any sort, without a capable Architectural Order must surely now, after 100 years of desuetude, be ready to down.

When, however there is no place to use a full Architectural Order to secure the stability of "walls destroyed by painting on them", one may have recourse to framings reinforced by being 'moulded'. I use the word in its restricted Architectural sense of an otherwise plain member, with insufficient hubris to aspire to the status of an Ordine, that is nevertheless animated by another much-disused device, that of the 'Moulding'.

The Ancient Architectural Orders could never be separated from their appropriate mouldings. But their mouldings could be separated from them, and used for some other effect. This liberty was used with capable results in the Baroque and Rococo. In a room as small as the JOA Room of Recovery I used only the simplest of mouldings, those of the cavetto, or 'scotia' are along the ceiling-cornice and that of the 'half torus' and quarter-torus 'steady' the edges of plane surfaces. Both of these 'framings' were lacquered a slightly transparent red. The 'Photolithic' strategy used by JOA requires that a material be coloured, in order to inseminate it with meaning, yet without losing the visual, or tactile, evidence of its materiality. It should look and feel solid and heavy.

These solid red frames represented the 'fiery light' that powers the 'matrix' which secures the walls against that 'instability' which so exercised Corbusier when he complained of the effects of the murals he castigated as 'the Rome of Horrors'. It is for the same reason that red colours the frames of the Architectures of Japan and China- neither of which distinguish column from beam and certainly lack the 'capital'. A fat red half-torus grips the 'sea-level' worktop to offer itself as the 'architrave' to the two half-round red columns framing the 'doorway'-panel hiding the linen basket and loo-roll before 'framing' the laundry-machines into the whitened-out obscurity they deserve.

The cupbord fronts are also whitened into the colour of that oblivion so desired by the 20C Avant Garde. Who wants to know of their contents (the JOA catalogue library and material samples), when there is metaphysical surface-scripting to conjure?



AFTERWORD for the THIRTY-SIXTH LECTURE: 'URBANITY ENFLESHED'.

It was already nine years, in 2005, after JOA had achieved everything we had worked for, back in Rice University, Texas, when we were approached for a very small project in Maastricht. The project was interesting, however, because it offered something of importance to our overall 'urbanistic project' that JOA had never previously had the opportunity to attempt: polychrome sculpture.

Sculpture, it hardly needs to be said, is the nearest in scale and being to our own upright figure. It serves to animate a place with Beings to which we can relate with ease, sometimes too much ease. The problem with sculpture, of the 'standing stone' type that JOA like to use, is not to make them 'life-like'. For that is all too easy. The task is how to make a sculpture capable of carrying ideas.

Here it is essential to use abstraction. Abstraction encourages polysemy, or the inscription of more than one way of recognising the identity of a form. Colour can work both ways. If colour is used 'conventionally' it can lead to people 'recognising' an object as made of wood, if it is brown, or stone if it is cubic and cream. Such Naturalistic 'recognitions' are to be avoided, as meaning ceases to 'work' as soon as it becomes identified one-to-one with the material presence of the physical object. A medium has to 'stand for, not 'be'.

This is why a graphic is always easier, or to put it otherwise is less 'dangerous' for the ambitious Scriptologist. A coloured figure that is merely 'flat' has little chance of obtaining that physical presence so desired by the vast majority of 20C Architects whose main ambition is to bring all cognition to a halt by creating a rounded, self-contained, physical object that is, if such a thing can be attained, perfectly 'present' yet perfectly UNCOGNISABLE.

It is also the explanation why graphical inscription, a.k.a decoration, is so anathematised. Painting coloured shapes onto an object destroys that preciously introverted ambition to become a meaning-free 'presence' that the iconically illiterate 20C architect so very much desires.

Polychrome sculpture transgresses the desire for that congruence of Nature (aka Matter) with Nothingness which the 20C has everywhere pursued in the belief that it will bring 'peace' to their disturbed psyche. Sadly the only "peace" that it brings is that one that "passeth understanding" - which is Death itself.

What could be a better proof of this than the death and destruction that the ethos of Naturalism has wreaked on the beautiful artifice of the Western City. A beginning could easily be made, through polychrome sculptures, to the project to bring the Urbanity of the Sixth Order and the Constant City to our ruined, dead, 'Modern' lifespace.