

Platform for Architecture



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Platform for Architecture

Murat Soygeniş

Platform for Architecture was an exhibition held by experienced and youthful architects from different parts of the world, one which chiefly aimed to bring together experimental examples. In defining architecture it is clear that experimental and unusual works are considered to be "architecture." An attempt was made with this exhibition to ensure that it would be made up of projects the aim of which was to be experimental, with an overarching approach that imposed no limitations as to age or place. Concordant with the criteria which the exhibition advisors group believed a project should have if it were to be included, it was specified that projects should be experimental and in line with current practice. Thus, conformant with this aim, the architectural products displayed were projects of an experimental nature from various geographical areas. As suggested by its title, one feature of the exhibition was that it brought together the products of architectural firms from different countries around the world, firms whose approaches differed greatly from one to the other. The projects in the exhibition constituted a cross-section of products by architects active in different regions, and laid no claim to being the most important or most famous examples from the countries they represented. That said, among the projects were examples frequently encountered in the architectural media. Another thing about the architects and their projects was that participants came from a number of continents and various corners of the earth. The fact that the greatest number of participants were from Istanbul, New York, London and Paris should not be taken to mean that, because these cities are world capitals, they produce the greatest number of experimental examples. It would not be apt to attempt making deductions or to reach conclusions from the statistics regarding participation in this exhibition. The latter should, rather, be taken as an architectural platform bringing together experimental examples.

Inventions

Peter Cook

Good morning. It's very nice to see so many people here at a time in the morning when certainly in London you wouldn't dare give a lecture. There would be like three men and a dog in the audience. I'm delighted to be here. It's my second time in Istanbul in thirteen months but I promise you the lecture will be a little different and I hope that it will cheer you up. I was listening to the fact that in Turkey you are also suffering from the same problems that architects are suffering from in the western parts of Europe. We're surviving somehow. It forces you to live on your wits, which perhaps some of us have been doing for a rather long time anyways.

I would like to start with something that is in a sense pan-European because Berlin is one of those cities which we have spent a lot of time in and we like very much. I have made a film there and made a building there and had several exhibitions. I still like to go there. It's also a spooky town. I gave a lecture earlier this week in London on the subject of spooky, which I won't go too much into but I think it is a special word, which is used more in America than in the UK but it is kind of creepy. It is a lot about mystery and religion and dreams and fears and beliefs. I'm not very good on that but I call it spooky, and treat it as a sort of something to put only one's little finger in and then retreat, quickly. There is a particular end to what was then a very old project from the 80s, when Berlin was just about to lose its wall but hadn't and therefore West Berlin was still West Berlin and it was propped up by American money very largely. At the end of a very wonderful street in Berlin, one of my favorite streets in the world; great, elegant, heroic, and sophisticated. At the end of the street, there is nothing. It doesn't lead anywhere; it just kind of peters out. At the end is this little lake, and there are some railway sidings, and nothing very much and some bourgeois villas and I thought "Right! What a wonderful place to do something." Let's make a first start by giving it an end point. I put all sorts of strange things there, like a library and some office buildings, and some spooky things, and this was mixing some of the early period of the Third Reich with the decrepit quality of that corner of Berlin, curiously at the end of this elegant street. I put it out in West Berlin because it

is "West" Berlin, and if you look in the right-hand side of the drawing, you see something which, you say to yourself, "My god, does it resemble a cactus?" Indeed, as the project developed, it was a metamorphic project, the cactus actually takes over the architecture and my sub-plot was that the west was way off west, it was the Arizona or the Utah west in the United States. If one could draw from the flora and fauna of the American west you could make a certain kind of architecture. The preposterousness of this, of course, is that it is a test of one's own inventive skills. The other thing is that as the project metamorphoses and drifts and changes, and I have always been interested in metamorphic architecture, and you get to a certain point in the project where it gets very, very spooky indeed. This project that a recent graduate from the Bartlett School made, who is also from Berlin; is a project which won him the Berlin prize last year, and in it you will find very, very fun spooky bathrooms. Things that look like bodies or something, I don't know what they are. The tradition of spookiness lives, and one's derivation of it is no further away than Hannover, where Kurt Schwitters made the Merzbau, and I have been lucky to go back and look at the reconstruction of the Merzbau twice. There, in provincial Hannover, in the 1920s and 1930s there was somebody inventing and discovering the effects of space upon the domestic. I am not sure what the rest of the family did with it, but at least this is an area where invention is only one thing. Looking out of the window at what interests you to look at is the other thing. Sometimes we post-rationalize.

This was a competition for Madrid, where we invented a series of parks or temporary walls for buildings sites and demonstrations and so on. Our walls were made out of rubbish material you could scrape off the street and connect together with a sheet of cement and make into a deliberately sort of *dégagée* kind of walling system. If I am interested in spooky corners and I take myself with me and I look out of the back of the car window and I look at very particular buildings that have influenced me for a number of years. I make this point as a kind of teacher in a sense, but in the late 1950s in a black and white illustration in a journal of architecture I saw a building that looked extraordinary, but it was a long way away. It was in Buenos Aires, and I thought I would never have the money to go to Buenos Aires. That went away into the recesses of my memory until decades later I was invited to

Buenos Aires and invited again. I have taken many photographs of this building, and I have walked around the building with the architect and I have taken my other European friends to see it. It still, to my mind, one of the three or four most exciting buildings in the 20th century and if anyone has a ticket to Buenos Aires you have to look at the bank, which was originally called the Bank of London and South America. It was done by Clorindo Testa who is a wonderful architect, who is still alive and very energetic. He made this extraordinary corner of the street, where he dangled an eyebrow over the corner such that it creates a condition of the right in the buildings that reads the other corners of the street as part of the room of the building. This is something which perhaps inherited from the Baroque, I don't know, or maybe he is just a very clever designer. This kind of thing is what you take with you. In that case it was interesting because I was inspired by the drawings, 20 years before, but re-inspired in a greater depth by the experience of the building. I would say to those of you who have either the money, who are probably sitting near the front of the hall, and those of who have the youth, who are probably sitting near the back of the hall, that either way, spend as much money as you can on going to look at good buildings. I say that although it is lovely to have bookshops, and although we all depend upon them, I have talked about this building for ages and I have taken photographs of it and written articles about it, you have to take my word for it because it's a dark slide with a little bit of concrete hanging down, but this is the experience of architecture.

My colleague bought this old windmill about a year ago in the eastern part of England where he originates from. It's not any surprise that on the project that he has particularly worked on for a small town in Estonia, that the idea of covering a building in tar and then letting small pieces of light into a vertical shaft surely is an influence. We take ourselves with us. My response to Berlin's way out west project was, I was asked to do a little piece of social housing and there one was inspired by nothing more than the natural conditions of the site. On the west was the park, on the west was the blue, and on the west was the setting sun. On the east was the courtyard; therefore, you put the bathrooms on the east and the living rooms on the west, and you made the double-height spaces on the west, in the northern European tradition of hugging any such light you can get and growing a few plants

in it, like winter gardens, and the building designs itself. So behind all of the utopianism that I am always into - I am a fully-paid member of the utopian society, if you like - there is a certain amount of observation, on the one hand, and common sense, which comes into architecture. On the other hand, sometimes one allows one's flights of fancy to say, if I am interested in vegetation, if I am interested in comfort, if I am interested in the relationship between ordered space and drifting space, then from time to time I make an abstracted composition. It's rather like doing a competition for which there is no prize and no winner, but you still put the same kind of pressure on. At the moment our office of CRAB - which stands for the Cook and Robotham Architectural Bureau - is working hard finishing the working drawings for a building which is, well the ground has already been broken, the building has already started, which is the Economic University's Department of Law, and the building for administration - it is two linked buildings. I wonder what observations I can make in respect to this building; there are three strange bedfellows in the thinking of this. One is the idea of a building that slithers, which has been a preoccupation of mine for a long time. One is the idea of white and space, as we are getting in this building here. We look out the window and we see the filter of the sun-blinds to the trees, to the light somewhere behind. To my mind this is a much more interesting situation for the interiority of the building, and the exteriority of it, more than simply having 'a window' that looks outside. The other one is what one might say in colloquial terms as "hanging out," or "being there" - the predicament of the student. I have been teaching for more than forty years, and my son is a student, so I think I know about the student predicament to some extent. I still enjoy, I suppose, the world of the architecture school.

Anyhow, there were a series of parallel competitions that were held, and the library and the learning center was won by Zaha Hadid, and we won one as well, the marketing and management was won by Toshi Abe from Japan, the finance building by Carme Pinos from Barcelona, and the executive academy by an architectural group from Madrid. The building itself disposes around a series of pockets of space, which was the description of the entrance. In more recent times we have developed a color system for the building, so that you see on the outside a series of striations running from dark earth colors near the earth, getting lighter and

lighter until you have a very pale yellow color that meets the sky. The interior corridors do the reverse pattern. As you move further and further into the bowels of the building, the floor gets lighter. As you get nearer to the top of the building, the floors get consequently darker. The use of streaks and striations is something that perhaps has been central to my work for a very long time.

This is again a late 1980s project, a sleek corner building which has other overtones. You do these projects and they stick in your mind or you stick them in your back pocket and you wait until maybe there is an opportunity to do slither art. Now, the sleek preoccupation goes back even to the end of the 70s, but in a piece of urban designing I did with Salvador Arroyo about four or five years ago for Spain, the sleek started to come back as part of some ideas about what to do with wind-catching. All the sleek styling goes back to our English 18th century landscape tradition. If you have a certain preoccupation, you dig around to see where it might have been. In an early competition project with Christine Holly which was for a library in the 70s, again the notion of slithering the building around in space instead of using cut block forms occurred, even though I was brought up as an elementalist.

So here we have the university building as it starts to develop. The law faculty, with its library on the left, and one of the floors of the building's lecture rooms on the right. You will see that the elements, or the pockets, are built around the sub-departments within the law faculty. There are noses that poke up; the noses are bright, bright rooms which are common rooms, eating rooms, and places for buying snacks, and so on. Then the striations occur, and as it has developed this is the entrance has become even more slithery and has acquired a layer of filters. There is a layer of filters which are manipulated to deal with light and sun conditions. As you will see later, these filters relate also to the location of the building, which is among the forest of the Hapsburgs which is now the proctor gardens.

In developing the idea of slithering, one has the advantage finally of a rather large building, which is the Kunsthau in Graz, which I will show you in a moment. The observation of the interesting use of space, between the hard building which is behind it, and the ability of the slithering building to push into that space is something rich. I find you have to build in order to find these things out. It's very ir-

irritating for many decades to be known as a drawer or a theorist, but still basically a designer, not getting enough feedback, because until you build it, you don't see the presence of the object, you don't see the presence of substance and the relationship between substance and shadow, substance and solidity, and substance and the gardens, and substance and filtration. You can draw and draw and draw and even make models until you are blue in the face, but you only reach a kind of information. Here we have the library, which I think is nearly the final version of this drawing, where one is defining certain conditions of space and pocketing and secrecy and specialness and little groups of people going off into huddles because don't forget, one has observed student life for more than forty years. Of course it is discussed in the office, one of the guys is arguing his point, the puzzled voice of the more experienced architect, and the rest are wondering who is going to win the argument, and I come in and act as a kind of editor, as one does in any office. The question is, even with these models, conversations and manipulations, the truth is that we don't really quite know whether the pink is really pink, and the shadow is really a shadow, and the double-height spaces are two-and-a-half double spaces or squeezed double height spaces. People guess, and we try, and I think that is the excitement of the building process.

Here we are at the garden over the library, and we have the filtration of the trees which exists there in that part of the garden as the first layer of filters. The sun screens are the second layer of filters, and then the ribbon building slithering behind. That is the notion of it. The library has its own idiosyncrasies; it is a strange beast with a double-height hump in the middle, with its private spaces where you can get glimpses out. I am always very interested in peeking, not just looking through a boring window, but peeking. As you walk over that, you walk on a landscape made up of a combination of boardwalk and planting, and roof-lights that you can sit on. Normally roof-lights are very high up, but on this building we can have the roof-lights on the roof of the library that you can sit on.

We imagine the impoverishment of drawing - a computer doesn't help that much. You never really know what the light is going to be like. I remember going to visit Daniel Libeskind's office when we were doing the Berlin museum, and he was doing 1/30 scale models. You could just about get your head inside and get some sense of the position and

the light, but even then they were styrene models, you know.

Now, the predicament of the students, the hanging out. This is Sci-Arc, probably one of the three most exciting architectural schools in the world, in Los Angeles, and a very wonderful building. But on Friday evening, when they have Friday evening drinks, they have to sit under this poor tent. The wish to have an inside-outside condition to a university building is something that intrigues me, whether it is in London, or here, or in Los Angeles. Our son was having his birthday party, probably about a year and a half ago, in our garden. These kids were not in university yet, but were about to be. What is interesting is that you can hang out in a garden in a suburb of London. When you get into university, for most students, you are put into a concrete box building, so it is not surprising that by 5 o'clock in the evening the building is empty, sometimes even at 4 o'clock. You certainly don't want to hang out there. Something has gone wrong with our attitude towards space.

Now here is another place that I visit very often because I have a class there, the Ecole Speciale in Paris. It has one of the most delightful gardens; it is one of the laziest colleges in Europe but it has very delightful gardens. I can report that the man with the hoola hoop is actually working for us right now. Not, I can assure you, because of his dexterity with a hoola hoop. Nonetheless this tells you something about the scenery. Half of you says, "That's wonderful, why shouldn't every university department be like this." The problem with Paris is Paris in the springtime. It's not as grubby as London or Istanbul or New York, but work gets done. Paris is Paris and it's nice, but that is another issue and I won't go down that path. It does interest me, the question: Should a university be nice? Or, should it be tough, and you play hard and you work hard? I guess I come from that kind of ethic. Of course one observes these things.

We didn't get slung out of the first of the three-stage competition. In the first or second stage I did this quick sketch of college life in Vienna, complete with people disappearing off into the distance and guys getting pissed under the table. Maybe we're on to something; maybe it ought to be like this. It doesn't always have to be cut and diced.

Very recently I responded to my locality. We live at Swiss Cottage in London, and I am interested always in designing by color, as an experiment, a stage in design. This is a very recent project. It is a

tower for London, with commercial activities, and some housing, some office space, and some recreational space. As you move up the building, the commercial cuts into the building, and starts to filter into recreational space. As you move further up the building, the mechanical conditions take over, and the housing starts to infiltrate. As we reach the top of the building we have a whole series of what I will later refer to as fun and games. This business of using the tower as a mode of experiment goes right back almost to my pre-Archigram days. The building on the left, the Montreal tower project, which was done when I was working for a big building company, was in fact the precursor of the plug-in city on the right. If you look at the bottom part of the drawing, you will see that this is the beginning of the plug-in cities, except that I hadn't called it that then; at that time, I didn't know it was that. The tower, which was kind of an internal competition project, was a useful prop upon which to attach various other ideas; it acted as a kind of three-dimensional idea board, upon which you could throw various propositions in the form of the different pieces of the project. The plug-in city introduced refinements of the idea and systematized the thing. Of course no idea comes from out of the blue and you do have half-made ideas, just like everybody. Some of them you put in your back pocket and you think, "I'll use that later," and others you throw out because they are not very good. Towers have always been very central to my experiment. The one on the left is a stage in a metamorphic tower where the thing starts off very sleek, and then gets more and more spooky, and then it gets very very curious and Gothic, and then in the cycle of things it returns to being totally sleek. The other one is about a dam, about catching water at the top of the tower, and then letting it dribble, with controlled dribbling, down the side of the building, thereby encouraging vegetation to grow on the southern face of the building. On the right, the vegetation is kept neatly behind the apartments. The apartments are on the River Seine in Paris, and the vegetation is on the river side. In the tower on the left, which was for a park in Sao Paulo, I had spent some time in Sao Paulo and I was inspired to try and reflect upon my take on Brazilian architecture by way of a megastructure which has an abundance of architecture placed around it.

The two towers on the right are from Brisbane, Australia, where again I was teaching for a month,

and I set myself the same program that I set for the students, which is something that I don't often do, but it was worth a try. This enabled me to observe a city that I didn't really know, which has not really a subtropical climate but it's a hot, sweaty town, with a lot of strange animals that crawl up the buildings. The early English colonialists devised a system for this: they put the buildings on legs and made the buildings out of metal, and used natural cross-ventilation. I looked at these old, early Brisbane houses and I thought, "That's rather good. I wonder if you could make a tower from that." So my right-hand tower is based upon the indigenous Brisbane metal building, and the left-hand tower of course anticipates the sleek towers which various architects seem to have been doing in the period since this drawing.

There are two or three more towers here; the two in the dark on the left there are for Oslo, which again is a city which I know extremely well. It has wonderful dark nights where the lantern becomes significant, where the cheap electricity from the early part of the 20th century enabled Oslo to develop these big lanterns. With these you get big illuminated patches as you get close to the street. I got off on that and I borrowed the lantern as a window, and then I made the higher windows bigger lanterns, room-size lanterns. Higher up the building there are apartment-sized lanterns. Finally at the top of the building is a celebration of the total tower by a giant lantern.

My wife comes from Tel Aviv, and the one with the red background there is a tower for Tel Aviv for a circle which was set up by Oscar Niemeyer, but never developed. He constructed the buildings around the edge, or helped build them. The circle in the middle was meant for three towers but still hasn't been built upon, so I suggested my three towers, the pink apartment tower on the left and the car park tower on the right. The interesting one is the middle one. It again is a kebab stick; it is a kebab-stick of various elements, or a club sandwich, depending on which you prefer, of different ingredients, each of which is articulated. So you might say that I have a love-hate relationship with the notion of elementalism because after a lot of modern architectural thinking and disposition and planning methods are based upon breaking things down into elements, articulating the elements perhaps, celebrating the difference between the elements and you see us doing that to some extent, even in slithering, in the other building. On the other hand

there is the question of what is the commonality between the elements, and here, one celebrates the difference between the elements. One says, the guy who is selling soap does not want to be in the same building as the guy who is selling sex; the guy who is running a club doesn't want to be in the same building as the guy who is selling books. The people who are living there, as bourgeois families, don't necessarily want to be articulated the same as the people who are a few floors up in a hotel room. Therefore each of them has a kind of mannerism, and you pile them up high, and you stick them on the kebab, and they still talk to you, as if they were separate buildings one upon the other. Very recently, in an issue of a magazine there is an article which is about exuberance.

This was when we were staying in Santa Monica last year, working at Sci-Arc, we would look out of the back window and see a very boring, grey concrete hotel; nonetheless when concrete is unimagi-natively handled, it is a pain. When it is wonderfully handled, of course, it is marvelous. So we looked at this lumpy thing and Santa Monica is a wonderful place, one of my favorite places, and I thought, "It doesn't have to be like that. The Sheraton Hotel does not have to be like that. Celebrate the fact that Santa Monica has a wonderful climate." So this was kind of my knee-jerk reaction, I woke up and saw this thing and said "It doesn't have to be like that."

I enjoy vegetation. You saw a little snippet of our garden; my wife said that in London you have an automatic garden, you don't really do anything and it just happens. So one grows up. There is one of the days when we had snow, which makes it look more romantic. I should remind you that for years and years, almost since the time of the Archigram, I have been tinkering with the idea of vegetation as an element of the vocabulary of architecture. Three years ago we were lucky enough, or sort of lucky enough, to do this project for Madrid which went through the planning process but then of course as you know, Spain, well the project just got stuck there, the problem of planning approval and no money. It was a notion of taking one the pure remaining 19th century villas and wrapping it with a built vegetation. You can see it explained here, where the two pieces of building on the left are actually pieces of small-scale shopping linked to the villa in the middle by a series of glass bridges and a little watercourse running between. In fact, the distance between those two sets of buildings

is two meters, and that looks different as a consequence of this building, because we use this two meter interstitial dimension. It was very useful and very agreeable. So I said let's put that idea in the back pocket and use the two-meter separation and the links. Also, another one in Spain where we won the competition but then it didn't happen because of money, was an eco-friendly office block. We draped the building with a series of computer-controlled screen devices, some bamboo trellises which deal with a damp condition that runs up the building.

A slightly earlier, and more theoretical project, is the "veg-house." The idea is a vegetative house that again changes over time. In the first stage of the veg-house there is simply a territory covered by a triangular roof with some bedrooms in it and some encouragement perhaps of the plantation. In the next stage of the project the encouragement of the plants is certainly working and variously the components are shifting somewhat. In the next stage of the project the encouragement of the plantation is definitely working and starting to lead to several kinds of spooky conditions with combinations of audio-visual equipment and plants, seats that become kind of roller beds, and pieces of vinery starting to grow above the thing. By this time, with the intermission of certain romantic English words about sliding and glades and weaving and folding, and you see the thing starting to get weirder and weirder, and then I say "Stop! I can't go on any further, it's gotten totally out of hand." Where did it go? Sometimes the project runs ahead of you.

A year ago I did a drawing when we were staying in Norway for Christmas and the New Year, and it's called "hidden city." It is a piece of landscape. Already the Vienna project was underway and I needed a break from the pressures of the project. I thought about land, and I thought about the possibility of artificiality entwined with vegetation. The straight blue elements are clearly built objects. But some of the other elements quizzically might be built objects. They might simply be organizations of the plantation or induced organizations of the plantation which imply that the presence of the built objects might be there. It might just be a funny way with vegetation. There is ambiguity; we might say there is a hidden city perhaps under that landscape. In fact it was a post-rationalization of a competition project that we came near to winning but lost, for a funny place called the Birmingham

New Street Station. The competition asked simply for a cosmetic wrap to be placed around the station. Our wrap was a multi-colored system of metal panels, aluminum panels, which are wrapped and change in color according to where you are going around the building. We developed it last year by making physical models. We made models with the line curves, and in fact if you look carefully you can still see that there is a rather crappy building sitting inside there because that was the requirement of the competition: you could not change the building. All you could do was dress it up. In a sense the Birmingham project was about a secret content lying or living somewhere under the vegetation, I think; at least in my curious, warped mind it was. The vegetative project itself there is definitely the point that there is man-made activity that is geometric. In its geometry, it is already in a state of decay, it is drifting away. I like the kind of tentativeness, the irony of the fact that the moment when you disclose that the thing is a tectonic construct, you then see the fact that it is already drifting away.

I'll move quickly to the last group of slides. I am starting with the theater project which we won in a competition, and it is in Italy which is always difficult for getting things actually done, but the latest is that the project is back on again, but they have moved the site, which I learned about only a week ago. So, we are back in business for this theater, which is a municipal theater in the small town of Verbania which is on the north coast of Lake Maggiore. My question to myself is: Is this making a nod to the bourgeoisie in a small town, or being a genuine serious place that people go to hang out? This is Verbania; there is our theater. There is certain indigenous coloration, and there are local materials, such as terra cotta which is used a great deal and which we rather like. The position of the theater, as you see, is at the end of a market square and the entry of the building is by a route which leads directly to the intricacies of the town and through to the lake. We've put the highest corner of the building towards the highest building in the marketplace. We celebrate the trade union house which is important in the local politics and we also develop the physiognomy of the structure itself. The view at the top is the tough side of the building against the tough side of the town. The view here is the softer side of the building against the softer side of the town, and it drifts from the auditorium space gradually down into the marketplace. We

were very interested in pulling the market into the building and making the building a casual place that you really would use. It's not just there for the big performance and going there for the big opening; but it is for that as well, that's the bourgeois aspect of it. People use municipal theaters to go and be seen, and then you go to sleep in front of the play probably. You go there to say hello, hello. That particularly happens in small towns; the performance happens before you get into the auditorium, because the performance is probably by a third-rate company anyhow, if it's a small town. I'm extremely cynical, but I like to play upon that cynicism; you work it, you make it.

We like to hang out in places like that one in the bottom right-hand corner. You have some wonderful spaces like that here in Istanbul; that one happens to be in Porto but it could be Verbania. There is also the thing about people just getting up there and playing, just hanging around, and somehow the building has to make it possible for both of these levels of activity.

Reporting now on a building which is already seven years old, the Kunsthhaus in Graz which Colin Fournier and I also won in competition. Again I ask questions about its actuality. Does it exist to the city of Graz, is it now kind of a family pet? When we did the first survey about its popularity, 70% of the people who saw the picture in the newspaper hated it, and only 30% liked it. Once it existed as a building, they made the same survey in the same newspaper, and the poll had reversed; 30% of the people still hated it, but 70% of them loved it. Colin and I always get smiles from people in shops and restaurants in Graz. Is it also an art gallery as theater? Is going to see exhibitions as much to do with theatrical experience as going for information? Various curators would differ on this point but my view on this point is that definitely it has to be theater and I have after all administrated the ICA for a number of years and run galleries, and I know what it is like to be on the other side of the desk. Is it also like a dressing room mirror to the town? Can the building to some extent talk back to the town? I think our building does this in two ways, which I will explain. So there is the family pet, it sits there quite comfortably within the scale of the town and if you question the notion of fruity architecture just look at the domes of the baroque churches in Graz. If you walk down just any street in Graz and suddenly, there it is! I like that. There it sits, with some pretty weird stuff around it. Graz is not just a plain

town, it has some spirit to it.

Here we see the sleek preoccupation again, the sleekness wrapping itself into the space. It looks to the Alps. In fact if you look at the plan, you see that the competition was for the placement of the bulk of the space on an odd-shaped piece of land, not a square at all. We have the building on the left, the old Eisernes Haus which is the oldest cast iron structure in southern Austria, a piece of local cultural heritage. The buildings at the top we couldn't touch but now they have been converted into the Haus des Arkitektur, which means that it is an architecture gallery.

There we have our building. In fact the site was sort of that kind of shape, and what we did, was if you take that shape and almost as if you squeeze it out of ketchup and it took up the shape, but you have minus a few meters for fire reasons, which we came to love the two meters because it's an important dimension. It would not have been possible without the computerization of architectural components and the computerization of drawings; we might or might not, who is to know, have come up with something like this in the 70s or the 60s. Probably not, but we might have done it. We couldn't have built it because it would have taken an excruciating number of drawings and guys cutting. The girl who came to London from Austria to land the cones; Colin and I screwed ourselves trying to wonder how the cones might exactly land on a piece of geometry that is shifting as you go around it. It took the girl less than a week. The first one took her four hours, the second one three hours, the next one two hours and she went home a day early. It's lovely that it is already in its six or seven years of history. It has played host to some very important artists. This is the late Sol Lewitt enjoying himself in our room. Most people enjoyed themselves. Don't forget that the nozzles are to let light in, the nozzles are correct, they face north, and just like in studios they don't let enough light in but they let some light in. So there's the light coming in from the north. It's set, but what a naughty nozzle; and he's not facing us, he's facing there. That's it. Put it in the back pocket.

Years and years and years before, Mike Webb in an Archigram exhibition called "Living City" had made some periscopes, and the periscopes looked out from the cocoon into the street and showed you London buses going down the road. People came into our wonderful cocoon and they queued to look through the periscope at the bus that they

had probably come on that morning. Weird. People are weird. Deny them something and they want it, and if you celebrate something, they want it more. So what's going on here! People are looking at the naughty nozzle because if you point through the naughty nozzle, there's the castle! If any of you have been to Graz, you cannot miss the castle. It's more prominent than Aya Sofya, it's out there; there's Graz, there's the castle. They see it every day; but still they queue to see the bloody castle. In fact, I would say that the building is a celebration of the city. You go up into the needle at the top and you enjoy the whole valley, the end of the Alps, the city which you thought you were familiar with is actually the best exhibit in town. Other things are, in a way, one's love of certain aspects of constructivism. Then at night, the city talks back, because you can record certain conditions of city life - the pulsations, the traffic - or you can implant art pieces, or even movies, because there are 920 pixels of light which are at 100 degrees of intensity can show back to you a reading of life. So the building is a mirror, if you wish it to be used as a mirror. So it's a family pet, it's a piece of theater, and it's a mirror.

We're building, finally, in Madrid a building for social housing. It's a hamburger. The top bun of the hamburger is the housing, the bottom bun of the hamburger in the ground is a 100-car parking area, the topping is some sports activity and the filling is some kiosks. There's the building. It is social housing, subsidized housing. The area will have 100,000 people living in it and I think a quarter of it, a third of it, has now been built. It's a blue building, again, and there you see the kiosks, at the bottom, although the city insists on CRAB designing the kiosks. We said "No, no," because the thing about kiosks is that they should be built by anybody, but they said "No, no, you have to design them because it has to go through the plan." So we don't have to combine 20 years of expensive architectural education thrown out of the door because we have to pretend that we are kiosk makers. Well I like kiosks. But there is also the memory of that wonderful building in Rio, where the bulk, the hamburger if you like, is lifted above the ground. In Niemeyer and Corbusier's case they didn't put it with kiosks but in our case it is an opportunity, for stuff to live under your legs - the city comes alive. A state of play. I should interject here that Spain, being in the economic situation that it was, that was as far as it got, and work has only just now started

again. It went so far that the guy went bankrupt but it is social housing and they have to complete it so now another guy has been found who is stupid enough to say he'll complete the building. Underneath is the planning of the kiosk lair and once you are told you have to design the kiosks, you start getting arty about it and then comes bits of almost Roberto Burle Marx. Here we see its antecedent, back to the Pinto project, the project for the urban design nearby where the notion was that the major buildings have these kiosks living underneath them. In fact wherever I go I am fascinated by the life of the city as reflected in its kiosks. In the top left-hand corner we are in Vienna and the Viennese are enjoying the substance of meat. There they are, enjoying their meat.

On the right-hand side, just behind our offices, there is a street where the proprietor of a rather successful restaurant two days in the week comes out on the street and cooks meat. He wants to be a butcher. In fact he's a sophisticated, clever guy. He wants to play English butcher the traditional way so there he is, in his striped apron, playing butcher. In the bottom, left-hand corner, is a city which I rather like and my wife hates, called Norwich, which has a market which has been on that site for more than a thousand years, in temporary buildings, which in an English kind of way enjoy themselves. So, again, the city lives through these structures.

Fun and games is something that we enjoy doing. Two particular projects I'll move to rather quickly; one is a bridge competition which we entered and did not win and then I heard that nobody won it and then I heard that they hadn't got the money. But we said "Bridge! Great idea. Footbridge, yes." And I said, "Wait a minute, footbridge, that's a bit boring, just walking over a river and back again. Why don't we put a kiosk on the footbridge." Then Gavin said, "Why don't we make the kiosk move. Like a clock." So I said yes, we don't want to have just any boring kiosk selling choco-ice to the kids, you could have a bar that opens up at night with legs that retract like a caravan. That way you could go out and have a couple of beers. Then we got a couple of lovely engineers to do a cute structure for it. Here we have the kiosk that moves on the bridge with a bar and recording the time. They didn't remotely have the money for this but this is one definitely sitting in the back pocket and I would like to invite anybody who has power, money and influence in Istanbul or in regions east, west or

sideways as we have a very useful combination of bridge - or it could be a pier, or a street even - it could have a bar, or whatever you have locally, or a little red wine, or soft drinks.

We recently unsuccessfully entered a competition for Taiwan for a pop-music strip on the edge of Taipei where the architecture moves from the western end, which is the city end, from being straight up, a very hard kind of architecture, and moves along as you go east and gets fruitier and fruitier. So here we are talking about a manneristic metamorphosis. The mannerism here of music houses and restaurants goes softer as you go to the east, and the east gets nearer the countryside with mountains on the other side of the street, with fruity pavilions against that. It is held together by a deck system and here we are at the other end of the project where you see the very exuberant music houses in what develops in our project into a park.

Back to the Pinto project, the Spanish project; the notion of walking, and being a flâneur, and being the person in a special room, being the person within the pavilion and looking, and gardening, and theater, really underscores a lot of the work that I do. Last weekend, actually on Friday, I was very soon to come to Istanbul, some friends of mine told me that they were trying to put on a festival in August, and they asked if I could do a quick project. They told me that they would get the money for it. At the entrance to the festival - my piece of the project is called the "magic mouse" - it is simply a structure that will stay there for a week. We will use tents, inflatables, and a dangling kind of airstrip structure. There will be a lot of people coming there, some audio-visual jukeboxes, some groups - a lot of stuff if you like from the Archigram heritage. This was my Easter weekend project. I like collecting the culture of the places I have seen. As I said at the beginning of the lecture, I am privileged to be able to spend a lot of time looking out of the car window. I am privileged to be able to visit cities that I don't know so well and going back to cities that I have become familiar with. I poke fun at them, not because I am over-cynical, I hope, but because I am amused by the reality of life, not just the things that architects are meant to look at. I am often looking at things you are not meant to be looking at, because it is more interesting and all of the correct stuff is in the books anyways.

In Tel Aviv, an extremely sophisticated civilization exists, despite its problems, but sometimes it is very disorganized. I am sure that this is an intel-

ligent man who sells these books and magazines but the shop itself is hilarious. I gave a lecture four years ago in Vienna, a city I have to go to very often, and somebody came to me at the end of the lecture and said, "You must go to - I can't remember the name of the street -" and I said "Why?" , but she wouldn't tell me. She said that I would know when I got there. In fact, in the window, there were sausages as part of urban design. If you could have sausages as part of urban design, then you have a culture. That's my theory. Yesterday I was in your town, and I looked at what we had come to celebrate and I looked to see other things which I didn't know still existed. I hope that you don't think I am poking fun at you, I think that the two are equally relevant; the two are reflections of yourselves, not just what we are supposed to look at, yes. The Hagia Sofia is wonderful. I have 64 photographs to prove that I was appreciating it. This shop window is hilarious. I have e-mailed it to 6 of my friends in London; I have e-mailed only 3 pictures of Hagia Sophia to my friends in London, because they know that there is stuff like that. What's the story guys? What is going on in this town? I intend to spend the next 2 days finding out. In east London, we sometimes do exuberance. We sometimes do research; we look at 43 different types of alternative typology, which was in the Venice Biennale. Gavin and I looked at marshlands. We looked at what will happen when global warming leads to London going under the sea. Can we survive? What kinds of structures can we make? They won't necessarily be like the plug-in city. They won't necessarily be like the Swiss Cottage town. They may have to be more basic, more raw, more spooky, more inventive, and more intriguing. This is the cycle of time. My god, the tower on the left is 1963 and the tower on the right is 2009. That is a reasonable amount of time upon which to dwell upon the problem. I am not sure, among you in the audience, I am only the speaker, you can tell what links the two, if anything. But we have interesting traditions. My colleague Gavin comes from the land below, the marshland, where there is an ambiguity between solid and water. Who is to say what is the real place? Is it the water, is it the solid, is it this constant febrile relationship between the presence of the two? In an observation from a piece of English parkland; in the foreground, man is in control of nature. The hedges are neatly trimmed; they are elegantly placed, almost in the French tradition. In the middle-ground, the trees are still ordered. But

in the background, in the mist - who knows? The land of demons and goblins. In the days when you were a great civilization, we were just guys splashing around in the marshland. Who knows?

Projects

A & D Wejchert Architects

Dublin, Ireland

Nurse Education Building, Waterford, Ireland, 2005

PLATFORM FOR ARCHITECTURE



A & D WEJCHERT & PARTNERS, ARCHITECTS

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 TEL NO: 00 353 1 661 0321 FAX NO: 00 353 1 661 0203 E-MAIL: mail@wejchert.ie



Nurses Education Building, Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland

Situated at the prominent city site of the Waterford Institute of Technology campus, the NEB is an integral part of the campus development plan. The overall organization of the building was the result of a series of decisions, which were made in order to create a building that would be a platform for architecture in the region and beyond. The building is a platform for architecture in the region and beyond. The building is a platform for architecture in the region and beyond.

The building is a platform for architecture in the region and beyond. The building is a platform for architecture in the region and beyond. The building is a platform for architecture in the region and beyond.

Accessibility and ease of circulation for all building users was a primary concern at all stages of the project. A full range of access routes, and connections, were provided to ensure that the building is a platform for architecture in the region and beyond. The building is a platform for architecture in the region and beyond.



Winner 2009 Green Good Design International Sustainability Award
 Winner 2007 RIAI Best Sustainable Building Award



Bahadır Basaran

Istanbul, Turkey

AVIVASA Headquarters, Istanbul, Turkey, 2006

MİMARLIK PLATFORMU PLATFORM FOR ARCHITECTURE

BB Mimarlık ve Danışmanlık Ltd Şti



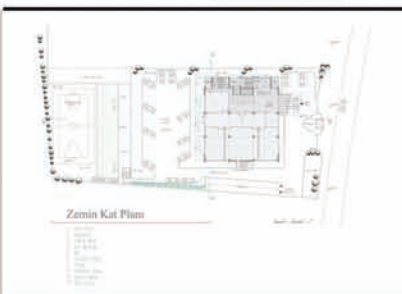
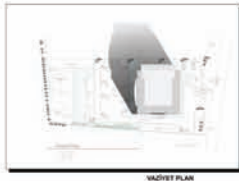
AVIVA SA GENEL MÜDÜRLÜK BİNASI, İSTANBUL

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Mim: Bahadır Basaran
Proje Yılı: 2004
Nispeti Yılı: 2004-2006
Yapımın Yatırım Alanı: 10.000 m²
Yapılış Alanı: 10.000 m²
Mimarlık: Bahadır Basaran
Mimarlık ve Danışmanlık: Bahadır Basaran

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Mimarlık: Bahadır Basaran
Proje Yılı: 2004
Yapımın Yatırım Alanı: 10.000 m²
Yapılış Alanı: 10.000 m²
Mimarlık: Bahadır Basaran
Mimarlık ve Danışmanlık: Bahadır Basaran

YERİ:
Yapım Alanı: Çekirge APT/2006, Etiler/Şişli, İstanbul/ATM
Yapım Alanı: Çekirge APT/2006, Etiler/Şişli, İstanbul/ATM
Yapım Alanı: Çekirge APT/2006, Etiler/Şişli, İstanbul/ATM
Yapım Alanı: Çekirge APT/2006, Etiler/Şişli, İstanbul/ATM

YERİ:
Yapım Alanı: Çekirge APT/2006, Etiler/Şişli, İstanbul/ATM
Yapım Alanı: Çekirge APT/2006, Etiler/Şişli, İstanbul/ATM
Yapım Alanı: Çekirge APT/2006, Etiler/Şişli, İstanbul/ATM
Yapım Alanı: Çekirge APT/2006, Etiler/Şişli, İstanbul/ATM



ZEMİN KAT PLANI

TEM YERİ ÇERÇEVESİ

ARKA ÇERÇEVESİ

MİMARLIK PLATFORMU PLATFORM FOR ARCHITECTURE

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BANKASYA GENEL MÜDÜRLÜK BİNASI, İSTANBUL

DESIGN: Bahadır Başoğlu

Site: Hacıhalı Çarşısı

Project No: 2007-0008

Project Year: 2007

Project Area: 20.000 m²

Project Location: Çarşısı

Project Name: Bankasya Genel Müdürlük Binası

Project Address: Akademi Çarşısı, Hacıhalı Çarşısı, İstanbul

Project Status: On the way

Project Contact: 0212 290 00 00

DESIGN: Bahadır Başoğlu

Location: Hacıhalı Çarşısı

Project No: 2007-0008

Construction Date: 2007

Construction Area: 20.000 m²

Location: Çarşısı

Construction: Bankasya Genel Müdürlük Binası

The address of construction: Akademi Çarşısı, Hacıhalı Çarşısı, İstanbul

Construction Status: On the way

Construction Contact: 0212 290 00 00

CONTRACTOR

Contractor Name: Y. Çelik İnşaat ve Yapı İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü

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Contractor Fax: 0212 290 00 00

CONTRACTOR

Contractor Name: Y. Çelik İnşaat ve Yapı İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü

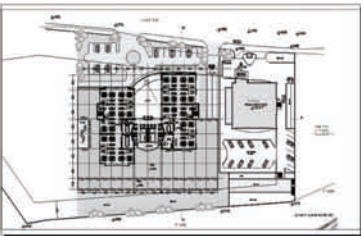
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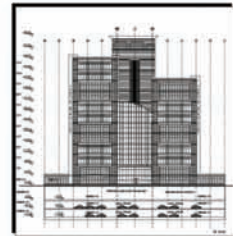
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ELEVATION

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KIPTAŞ İÇERENKÖY EVLERİ, İSTANBUL



Yerleşim: Sakarya Bölgesi
Mülk: Mimarlık Danışmanlık
Proje Tarihi: 2007-2008
Yapım Tarihi: 2008-2009
Nüfus: Ortalama 100-150 kişi
Kullanım: Konut
Mimarlık: BB Mimarlık ve Danışmanlık Ltd Şti
Yapım: MBBB Yapı

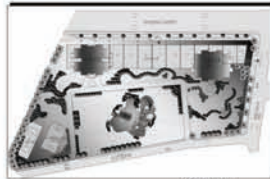
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SİTE
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Yapımın Adresi: Çarşı & Çarşı Çarşıları No:107 Üsküdar İstanbul

Çizim: Mimarlık Danışmanlık
Yapım: Mimarlık Danışmanlık
Proje Tarihi: 2007-2008
Yapım Tarihi: 2008-2009
Yapımın Adresi: Çarşı & Çarşı Çarşıları No:107 Üsküdar İstanbul
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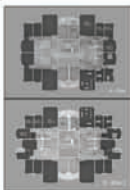
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